Garrett Park Capital Budget - Long Range Planning ideas

Stephen Paczkowski - Town Council - May 2023 Meeting

o This document is a quick illustration of a proposed alternate way of planning the Garrett Park townscape into the future.

o I've been kicking this idea around in my head in recent years on council, in parallel to the last 6 years where I've specialized as the go-to "CapEx planner" in my day job.

o I've also factored in stories I've heard of Garrett Park government, residents etc. trials and travails of previous decades. I tend to ask around about how things happened or didn't happen prior to the time I moved here 14 years ago.

o In my experience serving on town council in Garrett Park, I've found capital projects to be exceedingly slow going and difficult to tackle.

o An example is Town Hall:

  o I originally joined council in 2017 looking to move that project into it's first renovation totally designed for its use as a Community Center vs its original use as a chapel and Sunday school.

  o The project is easily over $1 million and could have options over $2 million. The first 5 of my 6 years on council had a small percentage of that funding budgeted, under 150k.

  o At the same time, there were community wishes to have fabulous renovation, while keeping events low or no fee.

  o ARPA funding, originally planned as limited to drinking water, stormwater, broadband infrastructure, coronavirus financial setbacks, and a few other specific uses, became available to more public uses about a year ago. A little less than a year ago, Town Government discussed the potential of attributing much of that funding to Town Hall. There was finally some funding to match the desire to renovate.

o There's actually enough funding to tackle many other projects if they are planned a bit differently than has been the method.

o The town solidified its budgeting process (as I've heard it) about 20-30 years ago.

o Capital projects have been budgeted starting with a category and at $0. Revenue not planned/spent for other uses has been distributed across many categories over the years, generally in small amounts, and also often with a vague plan/ intent. An example is the town holding a few hundred thousand dollars in recent years to move 2 telephone poles, but not for the rest of a meaningful redesign of Park Pace by the train station.

o My proposal is to instead build a brief project narrative for various town needs and wants and to place those estimated projects into current or future years when they would be ready to do and have appropriate funding.

o Projects could be visioned, and if supported by the town government, placed at an appropriate out year of a 10-year plan (or whatever length of future planning is appropriate for GP.

o A parallel goal would be to emphasize Capital projects for all of maintenance, preservation, renovations, and new amenities for the town, by being as judicious as possible on operating budgeting/ spending to maximize the capital budget contribution.

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Capital Expenditure - 10 Year plan for Garrett Park

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	10 year total
Capital Balance- from Previous Year	2,500,000	1,875,000	1,744,750	1,125,728	284,621	640,832	1,008,006	1,557,975	2,144,340	3,189,293	
Interest earned on unused	25,000	18,750	17,448	11,257	2,846	6,408	10,080	15,580	21,443	31,893	160,705
Starting Capital Balance	2,525,000	1,893,750	1,762,198	1,136,985	287,467	647,240	1,018,086	1,573,555	2,165,784	3,221,186	16,231,250
Budget- Total Revenue	1,700,000	1,751,000	1,803,530	1,857,636	1,913,365	1,970,766	2,029,889	2,090,786	2,153,509	2,218,114	19,488,595
Budget- Operating Fund	1,400,000	1,200,000	1,100,000	1,000,000	900,000	900,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,100,000	10,600,000
Budget- Capital Contribution	300,000	551,000	703,530	857,636	1,013,365	1,070,766	1,029,889	1,090,786	1,153,509	1,118,114	8,888,595
Reserve	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	
Total Available for CapEx	2,625,000	2,444,750	2,465,728	1,994,621	1,300,832	1,718,006	2,047,975	2,664,340	3,319,293	4,339,300	24,919,845
Projects by Category for FY											
0 Planning											0
1 Streets/ Paving	100,000		100,000	500,000	200,000	500,000		100,000		100,000	1,600,000
2 Sidewalks/ ROW	150,000		100,000	200,000			100,000				550,000
3 Arboretum	50,000	80,000	80,000	90,000	50,000	50,000	80,000	110,000	60,000	60,000	710,000
4 Parks	300,000	400,000		150,000	250,000	100,000		300,000			1,500,000
5 Facilities/ Buildings	100,000	150,000	1,000,000	300,000	100,000		200,000			100,000	1,950,000
6 Infrastructure				300,000			100,000				400,000
7 Equipment	20,000	40,000	40,000	20,000	10,000	50,000	10,000	10,000	20,000	30,000	250,000
8 Technology			10,000	50,000	10,000				50,000		120,000
9 Other	30,000	30,000	10,000	100,000	40,000	10,000					220,000
Total Projects for FY	750,000	700,000	1,340,000	1,710,000	660,000	710,000	490,000	520,000	130,000	290,000	7,300,000
Ending Capital Fund (planned)	1,875,000	1,744,750	1,125,728	284,621	640,832	1,008,006	1,557,975	2,144,340	3,189,293	4,049,300	17,619,845

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o Projects by category feeding into FY plans on the previous page's chart are just round numbers for examples of the how the capital budget could be built up and arguably should be spent down more, and then replenished.

o Visioned projects would have a Project narrative or tracking sheet (this is something I was looking forward to working with Dona Dobosz on, as she was also an advocate of this. Council will miss you, Dona!)

o A project narrative sheet would list:

    o What- a project or initiative abstract on what's needed, with description, sketches etc.

    o Why- what is the benefit to residents, how large of a benefit, and how much of the town population is likely to use the amenity? Is the cost of what's desired reasonable based on the utility, or need, or amount of use by residents?

    o How- process to achieve the project, with a high-level cost estimate chart, a list of in and out of town collaborators and consultants, and a feasible project schedule

    o Project information like external funding options, their deadlines, permit needs, etc.. The town could then plan projects with goals for a ratio of town and external funding. The sheet could track progress on funding goals, official approvals etc..

o I'd suggest moving as many ongoing expended maintenance items as possible into the capital budget, as they are synergistic with new and major renovation projects toward preserving and improving the townscape into the future. E.g's: tree plantings, tree pruning, landscaping, repaving

o Gathering capital and maintenance projects more comprehensively and holistically would also help on Historic Preservation and the overall appearance of town.

    o For example, some parts of the town's historic plan have changed over the years, but are restorable to the original intent in many cases as part of a renovation in that area.

    o An example would be the street alignments and street widths that have shifted around based on just winging it decades ago aligning the street edges, or based on trees and other elements that may or may not still exist, and even just same plain old politics. Town could have a goal to fix subject A in the future, and do so when project B occurs in that area.

o I want a Garrett Park that gets gradually better over time, while preserving its history and design. I strongly believe a more thorough planning process will help the town get there.

o The town and town government should also plan in year 125 of incorporation for what the town and its residents will value in the future, e.g. in year 150 in 2048.