

**CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION:**

ITEM _____

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA**

98-434

SYNOPSIS —

AGENDA:

City Council is requested to approve the proposed Four Mile Creek Trail alignment as outlined in Attachment #1.

SEPTEMBER 28, 1998

SUBJECT:

FOUR MILE CREEK TRAIL
- PHASE III

FISCAL IMPACT —

TYPE:

The preliminary cost estimate for this project is \$1.4 million. Currently, there is \$539,633 available from grants awarded to the City from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) for this project. A third grant from the IDNR requesting an additional \$300,000 is pending a decision later this fall.

**RESOLUTION
ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE**

SUBMITTED BY:

RECOMMENDATION —

DONALD TRIPP
PARK AND RECREATION
DIRECTOR

Approve the Four Mile Creek Trail alignment as outlined in Attachment #1.

BACKGROUND —

By Roll Call No. 97-121, City Council adopted a resolution to enter into an agreement with the IDNR to begin development of part of the Four Mile Creek Trail between Easton Boulevard and Hubbell Avenue. The agreement included a financial grant from the IDNR for \$250,000 to construct 3/4 mile of trail. Also, by Roll Call No. 98-2087, City Council authorized the Mayor to sign a grant application to IDOT requesting \$500,000, and by Roll Call No. 98-2212, City Council authorized the Mayor to sign a grant application to the IDNR requesting \$300,000.

Earlier this year, a memorandum was distributed to Mayor Preston Daniels and Members of the City Council which apprised Council of the Four Mile Creek Trail status. In the February 9, 1998 memorandum, staff informed Council that several residents, during a public information meeting, stated their homes may be affected negatively by a trail alignment which follows the sanitary sewer easement along Four Mile Creek. Since the City does not possess a surface easement along this route, it would be necessary to negotiate an agreement with several homeowners. Furthermore, several homeowners stated they would not willingly sell these surface easement rights to the City. Therefore, staff stated they would research a variety of trail alignment alternatives and schedule another public information meeting to try to decide the best possible alignment for the trail.

In a more recent memorandum to City Council dated August 13, 1998, staff provided an update of the public input process used to begin to develop a consensus for the preferred trail alignment. Over the past seven months, five public meetings were held with residents in the Four Mile Creek area. More than 250 invitations were mailed to residents in the Four Mile Creek area to attend each meeting. Attendance at these meetings has been very good ranging from 25 - 40 people at each meeting. Staff has attempted to be responsive to the requests from the participants.

Many factors were considered while determining the preferred trail alignment alternative:

- Trail user safety.
- The number of homeowners whom each trail alignment alternative affects.
- The impact of each alternative on floodway and floodplain issues.
- Environmental sensitivity to plant materials and wildlife habitats.
- The cost for each trail alignment alternative and the cost associated with acquiring rights-of-way from

personal property owners.

- Maintenance and operating costs.
- Compatibility with the IDNR grant to allow for multiple recreational users including walkers, joggers, rollerbladers, bicycle and unicycle, etc. and to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations.

Staff believes the proposed trail alignment is the best alternative route because it is a very safe project by constructing four underpasses at street crossings including Easton, Hubbell, Euclid, and Douglas. The east side of the creek alignment north of Easton has the lowest effect on the number of homeowners through this area. Disabled persons can access the trail by staying along the creek, and the project will have very positive visual impacts for trail users. Two pedestrian bridges over the Four Mile Creek will allow trail users to view the creek from a close perspective, and it is the most favored alignment based on information from the public meetings.

The Park and Recreation Board reviewed this proposal earlier this month with several homeowners from the Four Mile Creek area who were present. There was overwhelming support for the recommended alignment. One homeowner opposed a section of the trail which may pass through his property on the east side of the creek. We are assessing this detail and it appears that we can also resolve this objection with more detail planning of the project.