

**CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION:**

ITEM _____

98-483

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

AGENDA:

OCTOBER 26, 1998

SUBJECT:

**WALNUT CREEK TRAIL
MASTER PLAN**

***RESOLUTION
ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE***

SUBMITTED BY:

**DONALD TRIPP
PARK AND
RECREATION
DIRECTOR**

SYNOPSIS —

To approve the Walnut Creek Trail Master Plan, which will connect Gray's Lake Park and Water Works Park to the western Des Moines neighborhoods and suburbs generally following the alignment of Walnut Creek. A map is attached to the roll call and a copy of the Master Plan is filed at the City Clerk's office for more detailed information about the project.

FISCAL IMPACT —

The preliminary cost estimate for the entire project is \$4.5 million. Total length of the trail project is 3.5 miles. The cost of the trail project is shared as follows: 65 percent Des Moines, 34 percent West Des Moines, and 1 percent Windsor Heights. Each city's portion is determined by the length of the trail in each jurisdiction. Funds are not yet budgeted in the Capital Improvement Program.

RECOMMENDATION —

Approve the Walnut Creek Trail Master Plan.

BACKGROUND —

On March 23, 1998, by Roll Call No. 98-913, City Council approved a 28E Agreement between West Des Moines, Windsor Heights, and Des Moines for design, planning, and engineering services for trail development along Walnut Creek and Raccoon River. Adamson Clark Landscape Architecture was the consulting firm hired to work with the three local governments to develop the trail master plan.

Walnut Creek Trail is identified as one of the top five trail projects in the City of Des Moines. This project requires special attention because it has been designated as part of the American Discovery Trail which is a national project connecting the east and west coasts. Therefore, it not only has local importance, but it also has statewide and national significance. It is the connection with the Clive Greenbelt/Windsor Heights Trail and provides a direct link between downtown Des Moines and all the western suburbs.

The first responsibility of the consultants was to develop a Core Committee consisting of representatives from the local governments, neighborhoods, and local businesses to establish priorities and criteria for the trail project. Once the initial trail development criterion was established, public meetings were held to gain additional ideas from others interested in the process. The consultant team sent personal invitations to businesses and residents located near the Walnut Creek area. Invitations were also published in the *Des Moines Register* for interested persons to share their ideas into the process.

The first day of a two-day workshop brought representatives from the three local governments into the input process. Representatives from City Council, Park and Recreation Board, and Planning and Zoning, and staff from Engineering, Community Development, Traffic and Transportation, Police, Fire, and Park and Recreation provided information concerning their area of expertise. The second day provided an opportunity for the neighborhood and business representatives to share their thoughts and ideas.

In all, three public information meetings were held to gain ideas and support for the project. The first meeting was a fact-finding process. The second meeting provided opinions to various trail alignment alternatives. The final meeting identified a preferred single trail alignment route and general consent from the participants. Approximately 75 people have provided information into the input process, and the total number of participants who have attended various meetings is more than 200 people.

The process used and the work completed by the consulting firm to develop the Walnut Creek Trail Master Plan has been outstanding. The Walnut Creek Trail Master Plan has been formally approved by the West Des Moines and Des Moines Park and Recreation Boards, all three local governments' Planning and Zoning Commissions, and by the Windsor Heights and West Des Moines City Councils. After Council approval of the Master Plan, the next steps are the following: identifying project funding and applying for grants, purchasing easements or right-of-way acquisitions, completing design and construction documents, and beginning construction of the project. Timing for this project is variable and totally dependent on the availability of funds and the success of being awarded grants.