

 <p style="text-align: center;">Council Communication Office of the City Manager</p>	Date: January 28, 2013
	Agenda Item No. 28 Roll Call No. <u>13-0124</u> Communication No. <u>13-036</u> Submitted by: Benjamin R. Page, Director of Park and Recreation

AGENDA HEADING:

Approve a contract between the City of Des Moines and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) for acceptance of a \$300,000 Resource Enhancement and Protection grant award for a Watershed Improvement Project at Greenwood Park Pond.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend approving a contract with the IDNR for the acceptance of a \$300,000 Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) grant award for a Watershed Improvement Project at Greenwood Park Pond.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$350,000 total - \$300,000 revenue from a REAP Grant award and \$50,000 expense through issuance of G.O Bonds.

Funding Source: 2012-2013 CIP, G.O. Bonds from Urban Conservation Projects, CP040PKS990000, PKS 167, page 21.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The purpose of the grant is to enable the DNR, acting for the State of Iowa, to assist the City in accomplishing two (2) major areas of REAP’s focus - the development of land and the enhancement and protection of open space areas, in this case Greenwood Pond Watershed Improvements. This project received the second highest REAP grant score among the ten (10) applications received from Iowa cities with populations over 25,000. In addition to the IDNR’s demonstrated support through the REAP program funding, the project has been supported by the Des Moines Founders Garden Club, the Des Moines Art Center and the proposed IDNR’s Fisheries Program.

The contract is for a grant award to provide for 100 percent of development costs, up to the award amount of \$300,000. The City’s contribution is estimated to be \$50,000 for engineering and design. All work specified in the project proposal must be completed by December 31, 2014.

This grant will provide funding to improve the watershed above the pond in Greenwood Park. Greenwood Pond has served as a popular recreational resource for Des Moines since the park’s land purchase in 1894. Directly surrounding the pond is a work of sculpture by artist Mary Miss; it is named “Greenwood Pond: Double Site.” Also in this and the adjoining Ashworth Park are the

historically renovated Sylvan Amphitheater, Des Moines Art Center, Clare and Miles Mills Rose Garden, Ashworth Memorial Swimming Pool, Bergman Academy school for children - preschool through 8th grade, playgrounds, rental shelters, nature trails, paved multi-use trails, tennis courts, and a wading pool.

In recent years, the pond has been suffering the perils of an urban watershed that includes vast amounts of sedimentation and other impacts from storm run-off. The result is a body of water that is becoming increasingly shallow and suffering from large blooms of duckweed each summer, and therefore providing less opportunity for recreation in and around the pond.

The key to improving the problems in the pond lies in improving the watershed above it. This must be completed before the pond can be dredged to remove the sediment to improve water quality. This project is consistent with the Greenwood Park Master Plan and the grant funding will allow the project to include the components that follow.

- Detention Basin Repairs – Project elements include rebuilding two detention basins upstream of the Greenwood pond, that extreme rain events in 2008 and 2010 have severely damaged and destroyed. These basins were the primary means of keeping sediment out of the pond. The process for repair of the basins will include:
 - Rebuilding earthen dams that create the detention areas;
 - Rebuilding outlet pipes and overflow areas to prevent the dams from being destroyed in future large storm events;
 - Excavating sediment in the detention areas;
 - Reseeding with native vegetation.
- In-Stream Restoration – Project elements may include in-stream and stream bank restoration techniques. Techniques actually utilized will be determined at the time of design and construction, with an overall goal to greatly reduce sediment that is released from the creek into the pond. They may include:
 - Re-grading the shoreline to create a slope of less than 3:1, where possible;
 - Armoring the stream bank with an erosion blanket and native plant seeds that will help hold soil in place;
 - Planting native plant plugs along the creek, where needed;
 - Repairing damaged lawn areas with native plants or low maintenance buffalo grass.
- Land Restoration – This project component will include:
 - Creating a restoration and management plan based on the City's natural resource inventory. This will include working with Dr. Tom Rosburg to determine the best land restoration techniques and maintenance to bring back this historic landscape and protect it for future generations;
 - Treating and removing invasive and dead plant species along the creeks and throughout the woodlands;
 - Seeding areas of bare soil with a mix of native species to stabilize soil.
- Interpretive and Educational Signage Installation – Included will be:
 - Implementing informative signage along the watershed;
 - Placing REAP signage along with all educational and interpretive signage.

Upon completion of the watershed improvements, ongoing management will include monitoring and treating invasive plant populations and preventing erosion while native plants are becoming established. Proper stewardship includes selective herbicide application, seed collection and supplemental seeding/planting, prescribed fire, mowing and monitoring. Volunteers will be involved in a stewardship process; this will be a community strengthening and educational exercise that supplements a permanent and structured stewardship program.

This project advances the following City goals:

Pride in Community Assets: The City will set the standard for constructing and maintaining attractive buildings, parks, and infrastructure that represent our world-class city and generates civic pride.

Public Safety: Residents and visitors will experience a sense of safety in all neighborhoods and in all activities.

Sustainable Green Community: Des Moines will be a leader in setting policies and practicing service delivery innovations that promote environmental sustainability. Des Moines will offer safe, reliable, and convenient transportation alternatives that reduce reliance on automobiles and parking facilities.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S): NONE

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE

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