

 <p style="text-align: center;">Council Communication Office of the City Manager</p>	Date: January 27, 2014
	Agenda Item No. 48 Roll Call No. <u>14-0179</u> Communication No. <u>14-031</u> Submitted by: Benjamin R. Page, Park and Recreation Director

AGENDA HEADING:

Approving the Southwest 14th Quiet Street Conceptual Plan.

SYNOPSIS:

Approving the conceptual plan for the Southwest 14th Quiet Street, which will connect the Southtown Trail near Gray’s Lake Park on the north to the Blank Park Zoo on the south along Casady Drive and Southwest 14th Street.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$225,000 estimated

Funding Source: Fiscal Year (FY) 2013-2014 Capital Improvement Program, Page – Park Improvements – 11, Multi-Use Trails, \$167,957 State Recreational Trails grant, and \$57,043 G.O. Bonds Issued.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

On June 13, 2011, by Roll Call No. 11-1046, the Des Moines City Council adopted the Bicycle and Trail Master Plan as a part of the City’s 2020 Community Character Plan. The plan identified three (3) priority projects that could have a major impact on bicycling in the City; one of the three (3) was a “quiet street” connection between Gray’s Lake Park and the Blank Park Zoo. That level of importance was attributed to this north/south connection through the City’s south side because presently that area does not have a safe bicycle route to connect to downtown or into the 550 miles of the Central Iowa Trail System.

A “quiet street” is a lower-volume, lower-speed street on which motorists and bicyclists share the same space through the aid of signage, pavement markings, traffic-calming elements, intersection treatments, and traffic diversion elements that help to establish it as a preferential route for bicyclists. These treatments reduce vehicle speeds and create a safer and more comfortable environment for all users. The signage and pavement markings serve as way-finding devices and reinforce to all users that bicyclists are on a preferred route. A quiet street’s particular treatments are determined through a conceptual design process which addresses the specific needs of that corridor.

In some communities, quiet streets are called “neighborhood greenways” or “bicycle boulevards.” Although the concept is relatively new in the United States, in the past several years it has been

implemented in numerous cities throughout the country including Albuquerque, Austin, Baltimore, Berkeley, Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver, Las Vegas, Long Beach, Minneapolis, Oakland, Phoenix, Portland, San Antonio, San Jose, Seattle, Tucson, Washington D.C. and Columbus, Ohio.

In 2009, a master's degree student at Portland State University prepared a study entitled, *Resident Perceptions of Bicycle Boulevards: A Portland, Oregon Case Study* to gauge how residents felt about the Southeast Salmon Street Bicycle Boulevard, upon which they lived. A 29% response rate was received from the surveyed residents, the majority of whom felt that the bicycle boulevard had a positive impact on home values, quality of life, sense of community, noise, air quality, and convenience for bicyclists. The study also showed that after the improvements were made, 39% of the respondents who had lived on the street prior to implementation of the bicycle boulevard were now more likely to bicycle.

Because the quiet street is a new type of facility for the City, bicycle planning experts Alta Planning + Design were hired to guide a staff team and residents through the conceptual design process. Staff representation included Parks and Recreation, Traffic and Transportation, Community Development, Engineering, Public Works, Police, Fire, DART, the Blank Park Zoo, and Des Moines Public Schools.

On June 18 and 19, 2012, the City hosted public open houses to introduce the SW 14th Quiet Street project. The first open house described the parameters of the project and presented the purpose and tools for creating a quiet street. Approximately 80 attendees, the majority of whom live in the affected Watrous South and Gray's Lake Neighborhoods, attended this first meeting and had the opportunity to discuss questions and issues one-on-one with staff and consultants.

After gaining residents' input, the consultants prepared several options for traffic-calming elements along the corridor and presented them at the second open house held the following day. The approximate 40 residents who attended this second meeting gathered into small groups around corridor maps, discussed the proposed options, and provided feedback.

In the months following the open houses, Parks staff worked with small groups from both of the neighborhood associations and other members of the staff team to finalize the elements to be proposed from among those listed in the "tool box" of quiet street techniques listed in the *Urban Bikeway Design Guide* prepared by the National Association of City Transportation Officials. The traffic-calming techniques are also supported by the Institute of Transportation Engineers and Federal Highway Administration. It was important that the techniques implemented help calm traffic while also allowing the City's Police, Public Works, and Fire Departments to provide efficient public service to citizens. The elements recommended are reflected in the attached conceptual plan and include way-finding signage, shared lane markings, speed-feedback signs, median islands, a countdown crosswalk signal, a raised crosswalk by Wright Elementary School, and an island on Southwest 9th Street at the Blank Park Zoo entrance which prohibits a left turn by northbound traffic turning west onto Rittenhouse Street.

On November 25, 2013, City staff held a public meeting to present the conceptual plan to a group of approximately 60 residents of the neighborhoods and interested parties. Staff from Parks and Recreation, Engineering, Traffic and Transportation, Public Works, Police, and Fire Departments were available to answer questions. Although the nature of this meeting was informational only, it appeared the majority of those in attendance approved of the quiet street and the conceptual plan.

The plan has received various forms of support from several other citizen groups:

- On December 16, 2013, the Park and Recreation Board reviewed the Southwest 14th Quiet Street conceptual plan and a majority (12-2) voted to recommend to City Council that it approve the plan.
- On December 9, 2013, the Des Moines and Polk County Trails and Greenways Advisory Committee reviewed the conceptual plan and unanimously recommended approval.
- On September 10, 2013, the concept was presented to the Traffic Safety Committee for informational purposes, with no action to be taken.
- On June 24, 2013, by Roll Call No. 13-0977, the City Council approved an amendment to the Des Moines 2020 Community Character Plan to incorporate the Gray's Lake Neighborhood Plan as an element. In that plan, it is stated that the neighborhood "strongly supports the creation of the Quiet Street."
- As a part of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program, the Gray's Lake Neighborhood Committee was allocated \$665,000 in Neighborhood Infrastructure Revitalization Plan (NIRP) funds by Public Works for infrastructure improvements including sidewalks, curb, concrete and asphalt road repair. Public Works recommended needs and related costs to the committee members, who then prioritized and selected the projects they felt most necessary to the needs and appearance of the neighborhood. In anticipation of implementation of the proposed quiet street project, they considered the road condition of Casady Drive and Southwest 14th Street between Bell and Watrous Avenues to be among the highest priorities and chose to allocate \$237,430, or nearly 36%, of their NIRP funding to portions of those streets needing repair.

The City received a State Recreational Trails grant for this project in combination with the Southtown Trail (formerly referred to as the Gray's Lake Neighborhood Connecting Trail), which was completed in 2012. It connects the quiet street to Gray's Lake Park, which is located at the northern end of the Southwest 14th/Casady Drive corridor. The grant requires that all construction on both projects be completed by October 2014.

Since 2009, the City, through its Des Moines Resident Satisfaction Survey, has surveyed residents about their level of satisfaction with the ability to safely ride a bicycle on City streets. The percentage of "satisfied" and "very satisfied" respondents has increased from 28% in the 2009 survey to 37% in 2013. Staff believes implementation of the quiet street concept in Des Moines will serve to further increase this percentage in the future.

This project supports the City's goal to be a "Sustainable Green Community," which includes offering "safe, reliable, and convenient transportation alternatives that reduce reliance on automobiles and parking facilities." The quiet street also supports the adopted goals to make Des Moines a Bicycle-Friendly Community (BFC). The City achieved the bronze-level BFC award in 2011 and strives to achieve the silver level; improvements to the on-street bicycle network are one method which will help to reach that goal.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: June 13, 2011

Roll Call Number: [11-1046](#)

Action: [Adoption](#) of Bicycle and Trail Master Plan as an element of the 2020 Community Character Plan and authorize City Manager to appoint an advisory committee to coordinate fundraising and

implementation strategy. ([Council Communication No. 11-360](#)) Moved by Moore to adopt; City Manager to provide Council with a pool of candidates for appointment to the Advisory Committee. Motion Carried 7-0.

(A) [Recommendation](#) from Plan and Zoning Commission. Moved by Moore to adopt, and approve the proposed amendment. Motion Carried 7-0.

Date: May 23, 2011

Roll Call Number: [11-0938](#)

Action: [Receive](#) and file Trails and Greenways Advisory Committee recommendation of the Bicycle and Trail Master Plan as an element of the 2020 Community Character Plan. ([Council Communication No. 11-314](#)) Moved by Hensley to receive and file. Motion Carried 7-0.

Date: April 6, 2009

Roll Call Number: [09-556](#)

Action: [Proposal](#) and agreement with Alta Planning + Design, Inc. for the provision of professional consulting services for the development of a Bicycle and Trails Master Plan, not to exceed \$99,950. ([Council Communication No. 09-189](#)) Moved by Hensley to approve. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Plan and Zoning Commission

Date: June 2, 2011

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Recommend approval of the Bicycle and Trail Master Plan as an element of the 2020 Community Character Plan.

Board: Park and Recreation Board

Date: December 16, 2013

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Recommend approval of the conceptual Plan for the Southwest 14th Quiet Street.

Board: Park and Recreation Board

Date: May 24, 2011

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Recommend approval of the Bicycle and Trail Master Plan as an element of the 2020 Community Character Plan.

Board: Park and Recreation Board

Date: December 28, 2010

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Recommend approval of the addition of the Gray's Lake Neighborhood Connecting Trail to the City of Des Moines multi-use trails master plan map.

Board: Traffic and Transportation

Date: September 10, 2013

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Presented concept for the SW 14th Quiet Street. No action; informational only.

Board: Traffic and Transportation

Date: May 10, 2011

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Recommend adoption of the City of Des Moines Bicycle and Trail Master Plan as an element of the 2020 Community Character Plan.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Approving bid for construction of the quiet street elements.

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