

 <p style="text-align: center;">Council Communication Office of the City Manager</p>	Date: February 20, 2017
	Agenda Item No. 34 Roll Call No. <u>17-296</u> Communication No. <u>17-074</u> Submitted by: Jonathan A. Gano, P.E., Public Works Director

AGENDA HEADING:

Approving and authorizing \$50,000 contribution to Iowa Agricultural Water Alliance to implement conservation practices through the Natural Resources Conservation Service regional conservation partnership program.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend approval of \$50,000 contribution to be utilized over a five (5) year period to support the implementation of agricultural conservation practices in priority watersheds including Walnut Creek and Fourmile Creek as part of the Flood Protection Plan’s upstream mitigation study. The Iowa Agriculture Water Alliance (IAWA) in cooperation with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) are leading a statewide Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) project that received \$9.5 million in federal funding from the Natural Resources Conservation Service for the \$47 million project.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$50,000

Funding Source: FY2018/2023 Recommended CIP, Page – Storm Water Improvements – Page 6 - Flood Mitigation Improvements. SM087, Storm Water Utility Fees.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The \$111 million Des Moines – WRA Flood Mitigation Project, approved as a joint agreement in June 2015 between the Iowa Flood Mitigation Board, the Des Moines Metropolitan Wastewater Reclamation Authority (WRA) and City, included \$500,000 to be used for an Upstream Mitigation Study. The \$50,000 cash contribution to IAWA will be considered part of the Upstream Mitigation Study project already planned by the City. This Upstream Mitigation Study project is eligible, for grant purposes, to be considered local match for federal funds that are being provided to \$47 million RCPP project to install conservation practices on agricultural lands in seven (7) priority watersheds, four (4) of which are upstream from the City of Des Moines.

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program project is building an innovative public-private collaboration focused on improving water quality, soil health and habitat for at-risk species. The partnership has brought together diverse stakeholders from multiple sectors committed to improving water quality as guided by the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy.

The initiative is focused on engaging 45 local, regional, and statewide partners, such as agribusinesses, agricultural retailers, seed companies and agricultural organizations, to deliver and demonstrate water quality practices and technologies proven to have a significant impact on reducing losses of nitrogen and phosphorus. These practices include cover crops, nutrient management, strip-till and no-till, drainage water management, bioreactors, saturated buffers and wetlands, many of which feature flood reduction properties, as well.

The project will merge traditional approaches to deliver conservation through scaling up conservation planning and conservation practices with a non-traditional, highly innovative precision agriculture platform integration component that will lead to greater practice adoption and improved conservation outcomes. The initiative will help leverage private sector precision agriculture tools to deliver conservation and water quality improvement.

The State of Iowa is leading the project through the IDALS and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and are contributing \$4.75 million. The IAWA is a co-lead and administrative coordinator of the project. Private partners include the Iowa League of Cities, the Nature Conservancy, Conservation Districts of Iowa, and the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, and agricultural interests and are contributing \$33 million. Other public partners in the grant include both the Walnut Creek and Fourmile Creek Watershed Management Authorities (WMA), the WRA, Iowa State University, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and two (2) soil and water conservation districts.

The \$9.5 million federal grant was the largest award in the country in 2016. These funds will be leveraged with \$4.75 million in state funding (\$2.5 million from IDALS and \$2.25 million from IDNR) and \$33 million from the private sector. The local match from the WRA is valued at \$1.25 million. Farmers and landowners will be making additional investments that are not included in these amounts.

The City is a member of the Walnut Creek and Fourmile Creek WMAs. Each WMA was created to support cooperation among communities to address water quality and flooding issues with an approach that considers the entire watershed. Each WMA received a grant from the IDNR which funded the development of a watershed management plan. The Fourmile Creek Watershed Management Plan was completed in April 2015 and the Walnut Creek Watershed Master Plan was completed in June 2016. Both plans recommend water quality conservation practices in both urban and rural areas within the watersheds.

IAWA will use the \$50,000 cash contribution from the City of Des Moines to pay for technical assistance and/or financial assistance for conservation projects that improve water quality in eight (8) priority watersheds. Priority for City funds will be within the Walnut Creek and Fourmile Creek watersheds.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: June 22, 2015

Roll Call Number: [15-1093](#) and [15-1094](#)

Action: Items regarding the Flood Mitigation Application: ([Council Communication No. 15-357](#))

(A) [Approving](#) agreement with the Flood Mitigation Board and the Des Moines Metropolitan

Wastewater Reclamation Authority. Sponsor: Mayor Cownie. Moved by Moore to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

- (B) [Authorizing](#) the use of sales tax increment revenue to fund the costs of the Des Moines-WRA Flood Mitigation Project. Sponsor: Mayor Cownie. Moved by Moore to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

Date: April 20, 2015

Roll Call Number: [15-0702](#)

Action: [Intergovernmental](#) 28E Agreement with various entities for the Walnut Creek Watershed Management Authority. ([Council Communication No. 15-205](#)) Moved by Hensley to adopt; refer to the City Manager to compare the 28E for Walnut Creek Watershed Management Authority to the 28E Agreement for the Four Mile Watershed Management Authority regarding the ability to have an association administer and raise funds to support the improvements and for possible amendment to the 28E for Four Mile. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE

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