 <p style="text-align: center;">Council Communication Office of the City Manager</p>	Date: November 6, 2017
	Agenda Item No. 30 Roll Call No. <u>17-1901</u> Communication No. <u>17-769</u> Submitted by: Benjamin R. Page, Park and Recreation Director

AGENDA HEADING:

Approval of Lower Fourmile Creek Greenway Master Plan.

SYNOPSIS:

Staff recommends approval of Lower Fourmile Creek Greenway Master Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT: NONE

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The development of a master plan for the Lower Fourmile Creek is a joint project between the City of Des Moines, City of Pleasant Hill, Polk County, Polk County Conservation, Polk County Soil and Water Conservation District (PCSWCD) and the Fourmile Creek Watershed Management Authority (FCWMA).

The Fourmile Creek Watershed is located in south central Iowa. The majority of the watershed is located in Polk County, with small upper areas within Story and Boone Counties. The portion identified for greenway improvements in this plan is located in the lower third of the watershed, identified as Lower Fourmile Creek (See attached map). This portion of the watershed flows through the cities of Altoona, Ankeny, and Bondurant; however, the majority of the lower watershed is within the cities of Des Moines, Pleasant Hill, and unincorporated Polk County. For the purpose of this master plan, greenway improvements were investigated for the main channel, Fourmile Creek, and the area within its 500-year floodplain.

This greenway master plan follows several other planning efforts along Fourmile Creek, including:

- 2000 Central Iowa Greenways Framework Plan
An early step in developing a vision for protected greenway systems throughout central Iowa.
- 2006 Rapid Assessment of Stream Conditions Along Length (RASCAL) Assessment
PCSWCD conducted a RASCAL assessment. Critical contributors to erosion included: above normal precipitation, runoff volumes, and increased impervious surfaces. The information was used to prioritize areas of concern along the stream for restoration.

- 2012 FCWMA
Formed in the fall of 2012 under a Chapter 28E agreement. The FCWMA was formed due to a history of flooding concerns in the area. Water testing data also indicated water quality was an important item to address.
- 2011-2013 Fourmile Creek Watershed Study
From 2011-2013, a study was conducted and a report of findings was released in December 2013. The report includes a summary of the findings: covering the watershed characteristics, the hydrologic and hydraulic assessment, the watershed concerns, the storm water management assessment, and the storm water master plan.
- The Tomorrow Plan (2013)
This plan was adopted by the region as a forward-thinking plan for the sustainable development of the Greater Des Moines region over the next 40 years. The plan provides a voluntary guide of best practices. Goal 2 - Initiative 2 focuses on greenway development.
- 2013-2015 Fourmile Creek Watershed Management Plan
In April 2015, the FCWMA adopted a Watershed Management Plan. A joint effort, the plan compiles information about the watershed characteristics, pollutants, and stream assessments. Goals were identified for watershed improvements through stakeholder and public involvement. An implementation plan with prioritization, budget, and funding opportunities was provided. Goal #3 of the plan proposed the adoption of a greenway system.

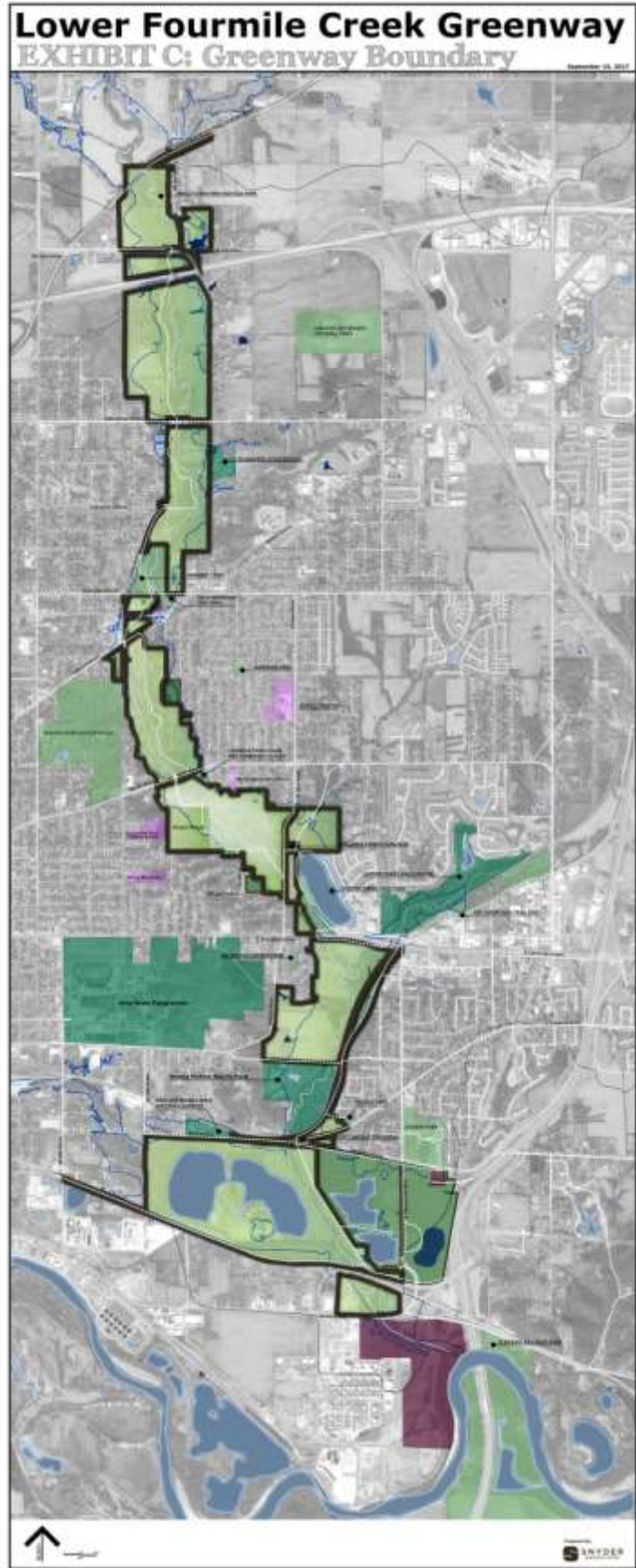
The Lower Fourmile Creek Greenway Master Plan is one (1) of the first steps in implementing the Fourmile Creek Watershed Management Plan's vision. Greenways are an integral part of a community fabric. They provide connections between neighborhoods and local destinations. They can provide vibrancy to a community which attracts and retains people of all ages. They encourage alternative transportation and access to recreational resources and the natural environment. They also play a critical role in protecting and enhancing a community's water quality, as well as reducing flood risk and damage. This master plan will address these critical components and identify potential recreational and educational amenities the greenway system can offer. The key objectives of this plan are as followings:

- Flood Management And Water Quality –
Based on work done in the Fourmile Creek Watershed Study, stream corridors were identified as a crucial component of storm water management and flood hazard mitigation. Some of the key sustainable strategies that were identified in the study include property acquisition and stabilization of streambanks.
- Identify A Greenway Boundary
The 2013 Watershed Study determined that lowering the flood elevation to protect existing structures was not economically feasible. The acquisition of affected properties was determined to be the best alternative to mitigate hazards from flooding. The master plan will identify desirable properties for acquisition and define a proposed greenway boundary. The master plan will also provide a recommendation for who will be responsible for management, maintenance and operation of the greenway.

- Native Habitat Protection And Management
Identify areas for natural resource protection and potential enhancement. The restoration of natural habitats helps improve water quality and reduce negative impacts from storm events.
- Make Connections
Further improve trail connections for alternative transportation routes to neighborhoods, commercial centers, and park facilities. Currently the Gay Lea Wilson Trail runs north and south within the study area.
- Public Access And Service
Enhance livability by redeveloping flood prone areas into a sustainable multipurpose corridor with additional recreational amenities and public access.
- Education
Provide locations for outdoor teaching facilities and monitoring sites for performance based measures.
- Economic Development
Foster positive growth and economic development through trail connections and compatible uses with existing and planned commercial centers.
- Implementable Steps
Provide management strategies and priorities for the greenway, funding resources, and anticipated maintenance needs and potential costs. Due to the regional nature of the greenway, multiple entities are involved. Key components of the plan include recommendations for consistent implementation and designation of responsible jurisdiction for maintenance, management and improvement needs.

The full master plan can be found online at: <https://fourmilecreekwatershed.org/greenway-plan/>

Staff recommends approval of the Lower Fourmile Creek Greenway Master Plan, and that staff begin working with Polk County and Polk County Conservation regarding a management and maintenance agreement for the oversight of the entire greenway. Such agreement would be reviewed and considered by the Parks and Recreation Board and the City Council prior to adoption.



PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: August 27, 2012

Roll Call Number: [12-1381](#)

Action: [Intergovernmental](#) 28E Agreement with various entities to create the Fourmile Creek Watershed Management Authority. ([Council Communication No. 12-455](#)) Moved by Mahaffey to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Park and Recreation

Date: October 24, 2017

Resolution Number: 17-072

Action: Motion by Facto to approve the Fourmile Creek Greenway Master Plan. Second by Feltner. Motion carried.

Board: Park and Recreation Board

Date: September 26, 2017

Resolution Number: 17-065

Action: Motion by Boggus to receive and file Fourmile Creek Greenway master plan. Second by Potter. Motion carried.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Consideration of an agreement with Polk County Conservation regarding the management and operations of the Fourmile Creek Greenway.

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