


COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

	Number:	23-318	Meeting:	June 26, 2023
	Agenda Item:	17	Roll Call:	23-0894
	Submitted by:	Benjamin R. Page, Park and Recreation Director		

AGENDA HEADING:

Approval of Memorandum of Understanding for the Riverwalk Dog Park and Lauridsen Skatepark Parking Lot with Polk County.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Polk County, Iowa and the City of Des Moines for the exchange of approximately 2.24 acres of City-owned parkland real estate for Riverwalk Dog Park facility improvements to be provided by the County and owned by the City. The public parking lot improvements which will be owned and operated by the County will serve patrons of the Lauridsen Skatepark, the Riverwalk Dog Park, and future Central Place Levee Trail.

FISCAL IMPACT: NONE

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

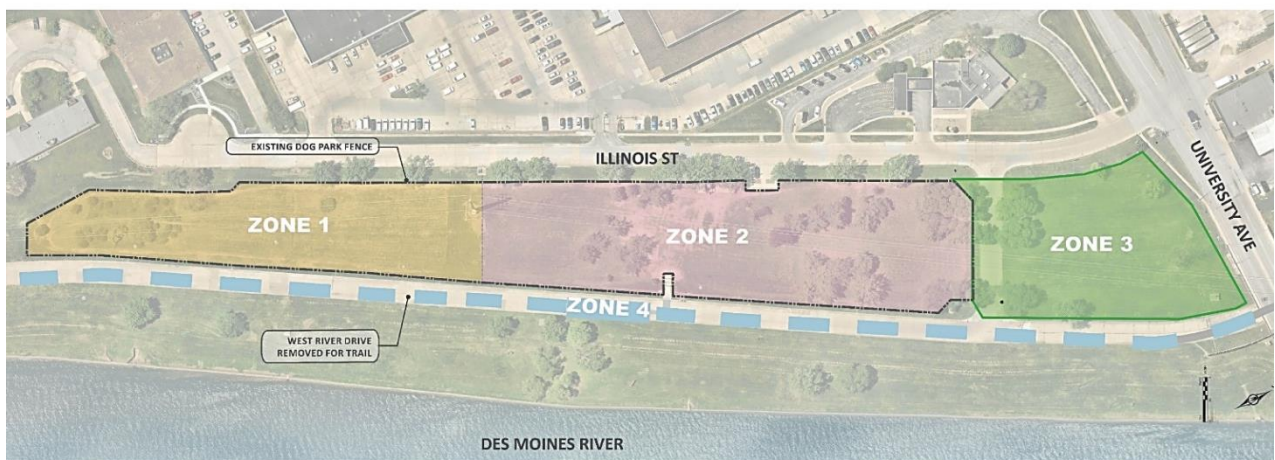
- Developed in 2020-2021, the renowned Lauridsen Skatepark lacks dedicated parking facilities despite a high level of need. As a result, Polk County in collaboration with the Polk County Conservation Board has proposed the development of a shared use public parking lot on a portion of the Riverwalk Dog Park property located between Interstate-235 and University Avenue on the west bank of the Des Moines River.
- A public meeting hosted by Polk County Conservation for this proposal was held on March 7, 2023. Approximately 20 area residents attended to hear a brief presentation on the proposal and provide input. The composition of attendees was a mix of skatepark, dog park, and trail patrons. Some concerns were raised about the amount of hard-paved land cover and preservation of trees in the area and there was a strong desire for a drinking fountain to be added to the dog park. Collected commentary will continue to be considered as the parking lot project's design development progresses.
- City staff negotiated the potential exchange of approximately 2.24 acres of parkland real estate which is currently City-owned and is to be considered for vacation and transfer to the County via Quit Claim Deed in exchange for Riverwalk Dog Park facility improvements to be provided by the

County and owned by the City upon City Council acceptance and public Parking Lot improvements which will be owned and operated by the County on the vacated and transferred property and will serve patrons of the Lauridsen Skatepark, the Riverwalk Dog Park, and future Central Place Levee Trail.

- The proposal impacts the southern portion of the Riverwalk Dog Park. These impacts are proposed to be mitigated by providing an equal offset of dog park area lost to the parking lot project by expanding the dog park north. In the provided Riverwalk Dog Park - Proposed Alteration Diagram, Zone 1 is existing dog park that would be repurposed for parking and Zone 3 would provide the equal dog park area offset.
- Other proposed improvements to be funded by Polk County Conservation for the Riverwalk Dog Park include the installation of a drinking fountain with dog waterer within the dog park, an additional dog park access gate in the vicinity of the parking lot, additional maintenance access gates, and off-street parking as provided by the parking lot improvements.
- Other additional benefits to the City provided by the MOU includes water quality treatment practices associated with the proposed parking lot and the demolition of a portion of West River Drive providing a capital construction cost savings for the future Central Place Levee Trail Phase 1 project.
- As shown on the provided Concept Rendering of Proposed Improvements, Polk County Conservation may occupy the southern portion of the parking lot for special event staging, but public use of the northern portion may not be impeded at any time for special events.

Riverwalk Dog Park – Proposed Alteration Diagram

LAURIDSEN SKATEPARK PARKING LOT & DOG PARK DIAGRAM



- ZONE 1** EXISTING DOG PARK REPURPOSED FOR PARKING
- ZONE 2** EXISTING DOG PARK TO REMAIN UNCHANGED
- ZONE 3** PROPOSED DOG PARK EXPANSION AREA
- ZONE 4** CENTRAL PLACE LEVEE TRAIL AREA IMPROVEMENTS

Concept Rendering of Proposed Improvements



PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S): NONE

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Parks and Recreation Board

Date: March 28, 2023

Resolution Number: 23-020

Action: Motion by Ogle to receive and file the Riverwalk Dog Park parking lot presentation. Second by Bollard. Motion carried.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Future Council actions include hold hearing for property vacation and transfer, and acceptance of dog park improvements.

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