



Smarter Transportation, Better Community

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## MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

### Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board

Thursday, October 22nd, 2020 at 1:30 PM

#### VIRTUAL MEETING:

- Public **must** register to attend using [this link](#). Only register if you plan on speaking on a specific agenda item during public comment. Registration will be cut-off 2 hours prior to the meeting start time. Information on how to join will be sent to your email address. Joining the meeting can be done on many devices with internet access or via phone.
- If you do not plan on speaking on a specific agenda item, please watch the meeting on Facebook Live at <https://www.facebook.com/CorridorMPO/>
- Policy Board members will be emailed separate meeting invites to join the virtual meeting.

#### Roll Call

#### Public Comment Period

#### Action/Discussion Items

1. **Approve Minutes from July 16, 2020 Meeting** [ATTACHED](#)
2. **Corridor MPO Study and Plan Grant – Hilary Hershner** [ATTACHED](#)
  - *Action Required: Motion to approve Executive Committee's recommendation to Policy Board*
3. **Update on STBG and TAP Balances – Brandon Whyte** [ATTACHED](#)
  - *Report item.*

#### Next Scheduled Meetings

- Policy Board: 1:30pm, Thursday, January 21, 2021 – Virtual Meeting, more info to follow
- Exec. Comm.: 8:30 am, Wednesday, November 11, 2020 – Virtual Meeting, more info to follow

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a MPO program, service, or activity, should contact Hilary Hershner at (319) 286-5161 or email [h.hershner@corridormpo.com](mailto:h.hershner@corridormpo.com) as soon as possible, but no later than 48 hours before the event. This public announcement satisfies Section 5307 program of projects requirements for transit project public review and comment.



## CORRIDOR MPO POLICY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

### Virtual Meeting

Thursday, July 16, 2020 at 1:30 p.m.

Member	Present	Not Present	Alternate	Notes
Chuck Hinz	X			
Scott Olson	X			
Brad Hart	X			
Ashley Vanorny	X			
Scott Overland	X			
Jeff Pomeranz	X			
Sandi Fowler	X			
Jen Winter	X			
Ken DeKeyser	X			
Roy Heseman	X			
Adam Thompson	X			
Bernie Frieden	X			
Bill Bennett	X			
Brent Oleson	X			
Nick AbouAssaly	X		Mike Barkalow	
Randy Strnad	X			
Lon Pluckhahn	X			
Eric Van Kerckhove		X		

**MPO Staff Present:** Bill Micheel, Hilary Hershner, Liz Darnall, & Matt McLaughlin

Chairperson Olson called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Roll call answered with seventeen (17) members present and one (1) members absent.

### AGENDA

#### Public Comment

There were five public comments received in total.

Three public comments were received regarding the FFY21-24 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP): One comment in support for the Sac and Fox Trail Extension. Ensure a northern connection to and from the park to the High School is provided; One comment is a concern about safety on the West Main Street Trail in Robins. Would rather see the funds used elsewhere in Robins; One comment is upset with the loss of transit to Systems Unlimited located at 925 American Way SW.

One public comment was received regarding the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan: Comment received from the AARP which were supportive comments on the final plan.

One public comment was received regarding the FFY20-23 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP): Comment questioned, "Is this going to create a \$395,000 shortfall for Phase 5 or these funds will not be needed to complete Phase 5?"



## **Action Items**

### **1. Policy Board Minutes from June 18, 2020 meeting.**

Roy Heseman moved to approve the minutes from June 18, 2020. Seconded by Bill Bennett.

Vice Chairperson Chuck Hinz requested a correction from June 18, 2020 minutes. He mentioned that under Action Item No. 2 it reads “Bill Micheel shared the FY202)…” He requested it be changed to “FY2020.”

The motion carried.

### **2. FFY2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Liz Darnall shared the FFY2021-2024 TIP. Darnall gave a summary of this year’s TIP process. She stated in September 2019, applications for TIP funding released to jurisdictions; in December 2019, Jurisdictions submitted funding requests; in February 2020, TTAC small groups (road, trail, transit) reviewed project submissions by mode; in May 2020, Executive Committee and Policy Board approved projects for funding; and in July 2020, final TIP is due to Iowa DOT on July 16<sup>th</sup>. Darnall shared maps of the projects by mode that were funded. She shared the STBG project funding and other funding project statues. She also stated that the City of Marion requested change from draft. Darnall stated that the Iowa DOT has approved the change if the Policy Board agrees to it and Marion agrees to some conditions. Darnall stated that the change is to move \$395,000 from Phase 5 of CeMar trail and to put \$67,000 to preliminary engineering, \$88,000 to Phase 2, and \$240,000 to Phase 3. She mentioned that there is no additional funding being added, just shifting between different phases of Marion’s portion of the CeMar trail. Darnall mentioned that the conditions that the Iowa DOT ask the City of Marion to agree too are the following:

- 1) Not ask the MPO for any additional funding for any phase of this project.
- 2) Agree to actually do the project (Phase 5) – this is important so that the changes the Iowa DOT make remain legal. If this Phase of the project doesn’t happened, then the project is different than the original project and then is in violation of federal processes. Also, Phase 5 is what makes the project regional, it connects Marion to CR.

Darnall stated that MPO staff and City of Marion have discussed this and the City of Marion needs to make a verbal “on the record” agreement to this project during today’s meeting. Darnall also shared that Phase 5 is in FFY 21-24 TIP and that Preliminary Engineering (PE) was in FFY 20-23 TIP along with Phase 2 and Phase 3 which will need to be amended. Darnall stated that Policy Board can adopt the TIP with the change and will need to amend last year’s TIP as well. She stated that staff had opened a 30-day public comment period on July 13<sup>th</sup> and received 1 public comment; which was shared with the Policy Board at the beginning of today’s meeting, regarding the shortfall of money during Phase 5. Darnall stated that Yes, this will create a shortfall during Phase 5, but the City of Marion wants to move money around now to those Phase’s as they are low on funds and believes that Phase 5 will come in under budget. And if it does not come in under budget, they know that they will have to eat that cost. Darnall also mentioned that the Policy Board can approve the TIP Amendment pending no other comments received. If further comments are received; Darnall stated that there can be a Special Policy Board meeting in August or the Policy Board can grant the Executive Committee power to review and consider approval in August.

Bill Micheel shared that the Executive Committee recommended approval of the FFY21 – 24 TIP and that Staff’s Recommendation is to motion to approve the FFY 21-24 TIP with Marion’s requested change and to motion to approve amendment to FFY 20-23 TIP pending no further public comment. Additionally, grant Executive Committee power to review and consider approval if further public comment is received.

Chairperson Olson, requested verbal agreement from the City of Marion. Lon Pluckhahn from the City of Marion agreed. Chairperson Olson asked if there was any other comments or questions from the Policy



Board. Ashley Vanorny wanted clarification on funding distribution during the phases. Additionally, she asked what would happen if there was no funding for Phase 5. Micheel stated that is why the Iowa DOT has asked for that commitment of completing that Phase and that the City of Marion would not be able to ask for more money and would need to fund that Phase themselves.

Jeff Pomeranz motioned to approve the FFY2021-2024 TIP with the Amendment. Seconded by Vanorny. The motion carried.

Chairperson Olson called for a motion to allow the Executive Committee power to review any additional public comments that are received and consider approval in August. Brad Hart motioned; seconded by Bennett. The motion carried.

### **3. 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Draft**

Liz Darnall shared the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Darnall stated that they started this project in October 2018 and by the end of 2018 they started framing the Plan; they did data collection, LRTP best practices, assessments of Connections 2040, performance-based planning.. In 2019 the Planning process started with vision and goal setting, project evaluation criteria, Vision Project applications, evaluation of projects, modal funding split. Additionally in 2019 was Public Engagement. They conducted public survey, open houses, public comments solicited. In late 2019 through 2020 they started drafting the plan. Darnall recapped Policy Board's activity with the LRTP Plan. Darnall stated that in June the Draft Plan was approved by the Executive Committee and public comment period opened following. Also in June, the Draft Plan was approved by the Policy Board. Darnall stated that the public comment period closed yesterday and they received the one comment from AARP that she shared with the Policy Board at the start of the meeting. She also stated that they received one comment from the District DOT and made the changes to the draft; additionally, they received 6 to 7 comments from the State DOT that were minor and did not change the plan but were made. Darnall mentioned that today would be adoption day of the plan. She stated that the Executive Committee recommended approval of the 2045 LRTP to the Policy Board and that staff's recommendation is to approve the 2045 LRTP.

Bennett motioned to approve the 2045 LRTP. Seconded by Vice Chairperson Hinz.

Brent Oleson asked if staff could discuss the scoring criteria. Darnall responded that the scoring criteria was based off of the seven goals of the plan. The goals were adopted by Policy Board in January 2019. She mentioned that projects went through TTAC and were reprioritized them based off of what their communities/jurisdictions need; then it went through Executive Committee and Policy Board. She mentioned that Staff makes an objective recommendation based off scoring. She further stated that as projects moved through the different committees and boards projects were funded not just on high scoring but on the jurisdictions and community's needs.

Chairperson Olson requested a future agenda item to further discuss scoring.

The motion carried.

### **4. Corridor MPO Study and Plan Grant**

Hilary Hershner shared the Corridor MPO Study and Plan Grant. Hershner stated that this grant will provide an opportunity for member jurisdictions to access federal planning funds to hire a consultant to complete a plan or study they may not otherwise be able to fund. Policy Board approved this with FY21 TPWP adoption. The grant is up to \$95,000 in federal planning (PL) funds from Corridor MPO. When paired with 20% local match, total project funding equals \$120,000. Hershner also stated that the MPO will be the



primary project manager. Hershner shared the process for selecting and executing a project with federal planning funds will be broken down into three phases:

- Call for project applications, application review and selection
- Consultant RFP and selection
- Project execution

Hershner stated that applications are due to Hilary by August 10, 2020 at 5:00 pm. Hershner shared the required information for the MPO Study and Plan Grant. She mentioned that one of the required pieces of the application is a Policy Board Sponsor; which acts as the project sponsor for each member jurisdiction and primary point of contact during discussions about the project at the Policy Board meetings. Hershner reviewed the project timeline.

Chairperson Olson had two questions regarding the MPO Study and Plan Grant:

- 1) Do the applications go through TTAC or go straight to Executive Committee and then the Policy Board?
- 2) Can 'we' award more than one project?

Hershner responded with Yes to both questions. She stated the Executive Committee and Policy Board will be making the decision. TTAC members will be involved with the consultant selection. Hershner stated that yes they can award more than one project and will split the \$95,000. No further questions were asked.

### **Reports/Member Updates**

#### **Adjournment**

Vice Chairperson Hinz motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Bennett. The motioned carried. The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Amy Cannon, Administrative Assistant



## **Item 2: Corridor MPO Study and Plan Grant**

### **Purpose and Background**

The Corridor MPO Policy Board has approved the use of federal planning funds, through the FY 2021 Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP), to fund a study or plan from a member jurisdiction. The purpose of the grant is to provide an opportunity for member jurisdictions to access this funding to hire a consultant to complete a transportation related plan or study they may not otherwise be able to fund. Plans or studies that have regional significance are encouraged and all proposals will be considered.

The grant includes up to \$95,000 in federal planning funds from the Corridor MPO and when paired with the required 20% local match from the member jurisdiction(s) awarded funding, total project funding equals up to \$120,000. While the federal planning funds available from the Corridor MPO are capped at \$95,000, the member jurisdiction can commit a larger dollar amount to increase the sum total value of the project.

Corridor MPO will be the primary project manager. Corridor MPO staff will manage the project(s) completion on behalf of the member jurisdiction awarded funding with significant guidance from that member jurisdiction. The purpose for this arrangement is to avoid introducing a third sub-grantee of federal funding. In addition, Corridor MPO staff will help facilitate discussion between and amongst member jurisdiction staff, the consultant, and Corridor MPO Boards and Committees as necessary.

As required for all projects which include federal funding, inclusion of public engagement is a requirement. Corridor MPO staff, the consultant, and the member jurisdiction awarded funding will collaborate to complete this requirement.

### **Summary of Project Applications**

Corridor MPO staff received three (3) project applications from four (4) jurisdictions for the Study and Plan Grant funds. The jurisdictions and their projects are listed below:

- 1.) Linn County – Highway 100 Bridge over Cedar River (Biechler Bridge)
- 2.) City of Marion – Indian Creek Recreation Access Concept Plan
- 3.) Cities of Cedar Rapids and Hiawatha – Edgewood Road Extension Preliminary Roadway and Intersection Design (PRID) Study

Starting on the next page, I will provide a brief summary of each project application. More information about each project is available in the attachment following this cover sheet (begins page 9).





*1.) Linn County – Highway 100 Bridge over Cedar River (Biechler Bridge)*

**Project Description:**

This project is the first phase of an approximately 1,150 foot bridge over the Cedar River as part of the Highway 100 Trail. The project would look at the viability and condition of the existing bridge piers and will produce a minimum of three design alternatives based upon the piers' structural integrity. A preliminary cost estimate and analysis report will be prepared for each of the three (or more) design alternatives. The bridge is a part of the Highway 100 Trail and will connect both sides of the trail, linking southwest/northwest Cedar Rapids to northeast Cedar Rapids.

**Cost:**

\$95,000 – Grant Request (Corridor MPO Federal Planning Funds Available)  
\$155,000 – Linn County Match  
**= \$250,000 Project Total**

*2.) City of Marion – Indian Creek Recreation Access Concept Plan*

**Project Description:**

This project will present proposed improvements to the Indian Creek stream corridor to attract future funding enhancing recreational activities for canoeing, kayaking, fishing, wading, and nature education. Improvement projects will include streambank stabilization, channel protection, impoundments, and carry down structures to access the stream. There will also be opportunities to add amenities to existing and new parks and trails to enhance the use and connectivity of the Metro trail system. The information contained in the proposed Indian Creek Recreation Access Concept Plan will assist Marion, and other municipalities in the Indian Creek watershed, in formulating implementation strategies; providing stakeholder groups with conceptual designs to further planning efforts; and generate excitement and momentum around the multiple benefits inherent in potential stream access and water trails projects.

**Cost:**

\$48,000 – Grant Request (Corridor MPO Federal Planning Funds Available)  
\$12,000 – City of Marion Match  
**= \$60,000 Project Total**

*3.) Cities of Cedar Rapids and Hiawatha – Edgewood Road Extension PRID Study*

**Project Description:**

This project is to fund a Preliminary Roadway and Intersection Design (PRID) Study from Blairs Ferry Rd NE to Tower Terrace Road. A previous PRID study was completed for this area in 2008, but an updated planning document is necessary to provide key information for the City of Cedar Rapids, City of Hiawatha, the public, and other stakeholders. The planning document will review details, concepts, and cost estimates developed in the 2008 PRID study to ensure they match current conditions, and add new detail



and recommendations critical for next steps. This planning analysis is necessary for funding applications, economic growth, and successful public outreach.

The major scope of items include: review of the 2008 PRID study and update traffic projections; set design criteria; develop conceptual plans including proposed cross section(s); identification of environmentally sensitive areas and provide options for avoidance or mitigation; recommendation on phased project limits; define limits of the acquisition corridor, including property acquisition and easements; public engagement and feedback; cost estimates; and identify funding sources and schedule.

**Cost:**

\$95,000 – Grant Request (Corridor MPO Federal Planning Funds Available)  
\$25,000 – Cities of Cedar Rapids and Hiawatha Match  
**= \$120,000 Project Total**

**Updated Project Timeline**

Due to the derecho storm on August 10<sup>th</sup>, the timeline for the project has changed. Below is the updated timeline that will be used going forward.

Date/Timeframe	Action Item	Project Phase
6/29/2020	Call for project applications released by MPO	Call for project applications, application review, and selection
8/10/20, six (6) weeks later	Proposal deadline (applications due)	
10/22/2020	Policy Board considers and approves project	
Within five (5) weeks	Development and release of RFP(s)	Consultant RFP and selection
Within five (5) weeks	RFP(s) due to Corridor MPO	
Within three (3) weeks	Selection committee meeting and consultant interviews, if necessary, and selection of consulting firm	
Within four (4) weeks	Contract execution	Project Execution
12 to 18 months	Conduct PL study or plan	
12 to 18 months later	Policy Board adoption (project completed)	

**Executive Committee Recommendation**

The Executive Committee made a motion, which was passed unanimously, to recommend the Policy Board fund the Linn County project at \$55,000 and the City of Marion project at \$40,000.



## LINN COUNTY CONSERVATION

### PROJECT NAME:

Cedar River Bridge, Highway 100 Trail Phase One: Conceptual Design and Engineering

### PROJECT SPONSOR:

Linn County Conservation

### POLICY BOARD SPONSOR:

Brent Oleson, Linn County Board of Supervisors

### CONTACT PERSON:

Randy Burke, Planner at Linn County Conservation

[randy.burke@linncounty.org](mailto:randy.burke@linncounty.org)

319-892-6456

### ESTIMATED COST:

\$95,000 – Grant Request (Federal Aid)

\$155,000 – LCC Match

\$250,000 – Project Total

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

This project will be the first phase of the design of an approximately 1,150 foot bridge spanning the Cedar River as part of the Highway 100 Trail. This phase will look into the viability and condition of the existing bridge piers and will also produce a minimum of three alternate designs based on the piers' structural viability. A preliminary cost estimate and analysis report will also be prepared for each conceptual design. This phase of the Highway 100 Trail will connect the future phases of the Highway 100 Trail which will link SW Cedar Rapids to NW [NE] Cedar Rapids, including the Cedar Valley Nature Trail with its connection to four counties and about 400,000 residents.

### PURPOSE AND NEED NARRATIVE:

This bridge is the final phase of the Highway 100 Trail planning. Currently, the design is being finalized on the segment of the trail running through the Linn County Conservation Rock Island Botanical Preserve from 42<sup>nd</sup> Street to the east side of the Cedar River. This is a five-phase project. Phase 1 was let in June and will be completed spring of 2021. Phases 2 and 3 are currently under an alignment study with a preliminary construction schedule to begin in FY23 for Phase 2 and FY25 for Phase 3. Phase 4 will be the Biechler Bridge and Phase 5 will be the segment from the east bank of the Cedar River to 42<sup>nd</sup> St NW [NE]. Phases of this project will likely not be completed in order, but as funding for various segments allow with the bridge component being the final phase of construction. Once complete, the Highway 100 Trail project will connect the Cedar Rapids Cherokee Trail on the south with the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street on-street trail

facility on the north. These trail connections will serve as the primary trial loop on the west side of Cedar Rapids, connecting major areas of future development as illustrated in the EnvisionCR planning document that anticipates explosive growth on the west side of the City due to the construction of the Highway 100 by-pass. This part of the trail network will also link major Linn County and Cedar Rapids parks with amenities such as campgrounds, destination playgrounds, pools, splash pads, reservable shelters and large event areas, making this project key for community attraction, tourism, and workforce attraction.

## **LONG TERM GOALS NARRATIVE:**

### **1.) Increase the safety and security of the transportation system for all users**

Completion of this trail connection will significantly expand the metro separated trail offerings, allowing alternative transportation for commuting and recreation from NW to SW areas of Cedar Rapids. This will significantly enhance bicycle and pedestrian safety due to the current limitations of Edgewood Road which serves as a disconnect at the Cedar River bridge from the NW and SW portions of the city for bicycle traffic. The era of COVID-19 has promoted an explosion in separated trail usage for recreation and commuting. Other City programs such as e-bike rentals are opening the horizon of what is possible for residents and visitors to commute on these trails for recreation, exercise, work, and shopping. This project request will also set the stage for County preparedness should Federal programs begin to fund significant infrastructure projects as being discussed. Bringing Federal dollars to local projects like this becomes more likely when planning and design work is already being accomplished.

### **2.) Support the economic vitality of the region by enhancing global competitiveness, travel, and tourism**

Today's most attractive communities for travel, tourism, new businesses, and workforce retention are communities that specialize in trails, parks, and healthy and safe natural environments. This Highway 100 trail and bridge corridor is a key component to offer a major new trail spine that links major businesses, residential and recreational centers in Eastern Iowa. This trail is the centerpiece of the Highway 100 corridor development plan. Any other trails for alternative transportation in the development area will connect to the Highway 100 Trail. This development area is 14,500 acres. Included in the area are new schools, businesses, and recreational opportunities. The area is planned for at least 30,000 additional residents as projected by EnvisionCR. These residents will be able to utilize the Highway 100 Trail to access community amenities and economic centers.

### **3.) Prioritize transportation investments that result in sustainable development, increased public health, and preservation and enhancement of the natural environment**

The County Highway 100 Trail will be a separated trail in its entirety. One section of the trail traverses through Morgan Creek Park. This section of the trail is included in the Linn County Conservation Morgan Creek Park Phase 1 redevelopment, which includes park amenities, a series of wetlands and the in-park segment of the Highway 100 Trail. This project is a 5.5 million dollar improvement for the community, accessible by Highway 100 Trail and will be complete in 2021. The investment in the trail system will include selection of materials and construction techniques to increase sustainability. The Biechler Bridge, along with Morgan Creek Park, will be

major destination points for the Highway 100 Trail corridor, promoting active living and outdoor, nature-based exercise with are critical health related assets for the community. With the COVID-19 pandemic this year, we have learned that trail usage on County and City trails has exploded. People need to get out and enjoy the outdoors and the natural environment while maintaining social distance. Users can continue to exercise physically, but getting outside during this time has also been a major mental street relief. The trail, and especially the river crossing, provide access to the natural environments that allow users multiple experiences that promote community health.

**4.) Increase accessibility, mobility, and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight**

The trail provides accessibility, mobility, and connections to multiple economic centers, schools, churches, and recreation centers. When the bridge is completed, it provides an additional river crossing in the community. Completed connections to other Cedar Rapids trails will offer major new trail facility connections to four counties and about 400,000 residents.

**5.) Invest in resilient, efficient system management and operation that also promotes energy conservation**

By utilizing the existing rail line corridor and the existing railroad bridge piers and abutments, we are increasing the efficient of this trail development that conserves other portions of the environment.

**6.) Maximize preservation of the existing transportation system**

We are preserving older transportation system with the bridge and trail alignment. Key to this preservation success will be the inspection and study of the existing rail piers in the Cedar River to confirm integrity for use by this bridge. Use of these existing piers will save millions of dollars for this project.

**7.) Mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation to improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system**

By utilizing existing piers, there are no additional impacts to the stormwater/potential flooding impacts to other portions of the trail system. The Highway 100 Trail development, with all its phases, will have opportunity to direct stormwater flow to wetlands or bioswales that slow stormwater and allow better infiltration before entering tributaries of the Cedar River.



# Biechler Bridge Project

Trail Route to Palo and Wickiup Hill

Alternate Trail Route

Mitigation Properties

Rock Island Preserve

SEGMENT 2

42 nd ST Trail Option  
Connect To Edgewood  
Road Trail

PHASE 3

PHASE 2

Trail underpass of Covington Rd.

Covington

Creek crossing  
structure needed

Future Trail  
Route: West  
on Ellis Rd.

Trail along 80th. ST.

Alternate Trail Route

PHASE 1 UNDER  
CONSTRUCTION FALL 2020

Morgan  
Creek  
Park

Cherokee Trail  
City of Cedar Rapids



TRAIL PLAN  
HIGHWAY 100

SCALE: 1"=1000'

SITE LOCATION IN CEDAR RAPIDS

Highway 100

Highway 30 Interchange





Cedar River

Highway 100

Iowa Northern Railroad

Bridge Piers

+/- 1000'

PROJECT SITE

Segment 3, Phase 3,  
Currently in design.  
Construction anticipated  
in FY 24/FY 25.

Segment 2 Hwy. 100  
Trail. Project bids  
late 2020, early 2021.  
Construction in 2021



SCALE 1"=200'

# BEECHLER BRIDGE STUDY

## SITE LOCATION PLAN



## CITY OF MARION

### PROJECT NAME:

Indian Creek Recreation Access Concept Plan

### PROJECT SPONSOR:

Lead – City of Marion

Co-Sponsor – Indian Creek Watershed Management Authority

### POLICY BOARD SPONSOR:

Lon Pluckhahn, Marion City Manager

### CONTACT PERSON:

Todd Steigerwaldt, Water Department General Manager at City of Marion

[TSteigerwaldt@cityofmarion.org](mailto:TSteigerwaldt@cityofmarion.org)

319-743-6310

### ESTIMATED COST:

*Marion is requesting \$48,000 toward development of the Indian Creek Recreation Access Concept Plan with Marion matching \$12,000 for a total estimation cost of \$60,000.*

\$48,000 – Grant Request (Federal Aid)

\$12,000 – City of Marion Match

\$60,000 – Project Total

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The City of Marion seeks funding for development of the Indian Creek Recreation Access Concept Plan (Plan) for the Indian, Dry and Squaw Creek riparian corridors through Marion. This request is an outcome of the work by a committee in Marion called Creekside Pride convened to bring more residents to the creeks in the community for recreation, enjoyment and protection. The intent of the Plan is to present proposed improvements to the stream corridor to attract future funding enhancing recreational access for canoeing, kayaking, fishing, wading and nature education. Improvement projects will include streambank stabilization, channel protection, impoundments and carry down structures to access the stream. There will be an opportunity to add amenities to existing and new parks and trail extensions to enhance the use and connectivity of the Metro trail system.

The Plan will include visual graphics of specific locations for stream access improvements with plan views, design renderings, cost estimates and brief text narratives describing the existing conditions and elements of the proposed improvements for each site. The Plan will provide community leaders the information necessary to move forward with the process of funding and implementing improvement projects to reconnect to this vital natural resource. As an example, the Plan will be roughly similar to the Fourmile + Mud Creek Waterways & Greenways Regional Engineering Study completed by the Des Moines MPO and IGS. Some conceptual designs from



the Fourmile + Mud Creek Study are provided in Attachment 1 as an example of the deliverable produced as part of the proposed Plan.

The Plan will focus on the Indian Creek greenway through Marion as shown in a map of initial potential locations to study for stream access in Attachment 2. However, Marion is interested in expanding the study to the Dry Creek and Squaw Creek greenways with benefit of this funding request from the Corridor MPO. There are several trail projects in various stages of development in Marion and this Plan will contribute to the potential amenities and the long-term protection of those investments. Existing trails are damaged by flooding year after year and one way to mitigate those impacts is through streambank and channel protection projects that will be identified in the proposed Plan.

The Indian Creek Watershed Management Authority is in full support of Marion's proposed effort to increase recreation in the watershed. In fact, several implementation strategies in the 2015 Indian Creek Watershed Management Plan are directly aligned with this proposal including:

- Support efforts to connect urban residents with their creeks
- Coordinate stream corridor improvements including streambank stabilization, debris clean-out and improvement to rock substrate
- Encourage more vegetated buffer along the stream corridor to protect habitat and enhance recreation

The information contained in the proposed Indian Creek Recreation Access Concept Plan will assist Marion, and other municipalities in the Indian Creek watershed, in formulating implementation strategies; providing stakeholder groups with conceptual designs to further planning efforts; and generate excitement and momentum around the multiple benefits inherent in potential stream access and water trails projects.

#### **PURPOSE AND NEED NARRATIVE:**

In 2017, the City of Marion and the Marion Chamber undertook a community visioning process called ImagiNEXT culminating in the creation of Marion's Future Four Initiatives. ImagiNEXT generated over 3,000 ideas from residents combined into four community initiatives that represent opportunities for placemaking and enhanced quality of life. One of those initiatives focused on Indian Creek and its tributaries.

As one of Marion's most significant natural features, the Indian, Dry and Squaw creek corridors offer both challenges and opportunities. Since most Marion residents live within the creeks' watershed, they are motivated to prevent regional flooding and are interested in recreational and educational ideas that embrace their creeks. Innovative projects combining these concepts will enjoy widespread community support. Some projects assigned to the Creekside Pride initiative are:

- Develop year-round recreational options in and around Indian, Dry and Squaw Creeks
- Build a man-made lake/pond
- Offer educational opportunities & amenities while installing wetlands and trails
- Enhance existing green space with gardens and other amenities

Trails were the most frequently submitted ideas within the ImagiNEXT process. The Marion selection committee understood, however, that the City had planned and funded over \$14 million worth of trails to come online within the next 3-5 years. They could have named trails to the Future Four Initiatives and had a very quick win, instead, they stayed true to the city's tag line to *Reach Higher!* and chose other high ranking amenities that are challenging to achieve - Creekside Pride was one of them.

Marion as a community could do a better job of taking care of its best natural assets – Indian, Dry and Squaw Creek corridors. Historically, Indian Creek was once a much larger body of water that has dwindled in size and quality due to agriculture and sanitary sewer practices to the north, and booming construction to the south. The Creekside Pride Initiative seeks to restore Indian Creek and its tributaries back to a source of pride and joy for Marion residents and surrounding areas.

Flooding, streambank erosion and water testing over the limit for indicator bacteria are all issues facing Indian, Dry and Squaw creeks as they pass through the City of Marion. Reoccurring flash floods have caused significant damage in the Indian Creek watershed over the years. According to the Indian Creek Watershed Management Plan, peak flows will increase as urban development continues with greater increases during more frequent lower rainfall events than during less frequent high rainfall events. Increasing awareness to protect the floodplain is important as climate change predicts higher rainfall events more often for the Midwest. Creekside Pride wants to undertake the Indian Creek Recreation Access Concept Plan (Plan) to identify projects that will improve safe access and protection of the creeks and study the potential to create water trails to add recreation amenities to the existing pedestrian and bike trail system in Marion as seen in Attachment 1. Another outcome of the Plan will be to identify improvements to protect existing trails through stream restoration to reduce erosion of stream banks.

## **LONG TERM GOALS NARRATIVE:**

### **1.) Increase the safety and security of the transportation system for all users**

Indian Creek is prone to flooding and the Marion Parks Department has had to rebuild the granular surface trail in Donnelly and Thomas Parks numerous times as a result. Land use decisions and increased precipitation events brought on by climate change will continue to shape the Indian Creek riparian corridor through flooding and erosion. According to the Indian Creek Watershed Management Plan, more than 80% of the streambanks in the watershed exhibit minor to moderate erosion and 8% are severely eroding. As the City of Marion invests in new trails and trail maintenance, it will be increasingly important to protect that investment with a watershed approach to flooding and erosion.

The proposed Indian Creek Recreation Access Concept Plan (Plan) is a step in that direction by studying opportunities to bring more people and attention to the creeks flowing through Marion. The Plan will frame the creek corridors as a resource for recreation and enjoyment rather than merely a conveyance for stormwater. More attention to the amenities offered through stream access points, will garner support for improvements needed to protect existing trails from significant erosion and flood damage.

Trail and greenway development along creek corridors provide opportunities to improve water quality and restore native habitats. Greenway and trail projects along Indian Creek, Dry and Squaw creeks could incorporate native plantings, stream bank stabilization, trash removal events, outdoor classrooms, natural playscapes and educational components that transform local creeks from stormwater drainage systems to cultural, educational, and recreational assets.

## **2.) Support the economic vitality of the region by enhancing global competitiveness, travel, and tourism**

Creeks flow through our backyards and the hearts of our communities. Healthy creek corridors supply safe drinking water, protect communities from flooding, provide habitat for fish and other wildlife, support family-friendly recreation, and serve as local economic drivers. However, this value is often not recognized. The Indian Creek Recreation Access Concept Plan (Plan) will seek to change that by highlighting the significant opportunities provided by our creeks. The creek corridors to be studied for the Plan align with the planned locations for new trails in Marion. Attachment 2 is a map of 10 initial locations for possible stream access and Attachment 3 is a table listing those locations with site descriptions and the float experience starting at that point of the creek. The possibility of adding new types of amenities like stairs to the water level or areas for canoe and kayak access will increase the draw of the existing trail system. The potential of developing stream access and/or a water trail in the City of Marion will lead to an increase in recreation options for the Metro area.

Creating walkable and bikeable environments can help stimulate the local economy by reducing consumers' transportation costs, increasing access to local businesses, attracting private investment, raising private property value, and attracting recreational and tourist activity. Greenways with stream access and water trails can have a similar affect, functioning like magnets that attracts economic activity. While residents and tourists alike come for the trails, they stay for lunch, shopping, hotels, and other amenities. Many communities are highlighting their trails and bicycling opportunities as the central focus of their tourism and economic development strategies, acknowledging the spending power of trail users and their economic impact on the local economy. Cities across the country are reaping the financial rewards of public investment in trails and greenways and funding this planning effort could help Marion and the rest of the communities in the Indian Creek watershed do the same.

## **3.) Prioritize transportation investments that result in sustainable development, increased public health, and preservation and enhancement of the natural environment**

The proposed Indian Creek Recreation Access Concept Plan (Plan) will contribute to better health of the area population by improving the access, use and enjoyment of Indian Creek in Marion. Obesity and sedentary lifestyles are major contributors to chronic disease for both adults and children. The public health community recognizes that non-motorized or "active" travel and recreation helps citizens meet recommended levels of physical activity, thereby reducing the risk of chronic disease and associated health care costs. Trails, stream access, paddling and other water related activity contribute to an environment that will encourage and promote healthier, more active lifestyles for residents.

Indian Creek and Dry Creek are impaired for indicator bacteria testing over the limit for children's recreational use. Connecting people to the creeks will result in more support for water quality improvements in the watershed. The Plan will be a good first step in achieving that goal. The picture was taken from a kayak floating Indian Creek.



**4.) Increase accessibility, mobility, and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight**

Trails and riparian corridors are a natural pairing and adding more stream access and potential water trails are natural extensions. Providing trails and access to greenways along creeks connects trail users to the natural environment, offers opportunities for wildlife viewing, and provides unique educational experiences. Both Indian and Dry creeks on the west side of Marion and Squaw Creek on the east side of Marion provide ample opportunity for the development of greenway corridors to meet the transportation and recreation needs of Marion residents and visitors. The proposed Indian Creek Recreation Access Concept Plan (Plan) will add to those opportunities and lead to more connections and enhanced use of the existing trail system throughout the Metro area.

This effort is aligned with Marion Master Trails Plan updated in 2017. A significant portion of the existing and planned trails in Marion involve the Indian, Dry and Squaw creek corridors. These are just a few of the projects underway.

- **Boyson Trail** – upgrading the crushed limestone trail along Indian and Dry creeks to a paved trail and reconstructing an existing bridge
- **Gemstone Trail** – will utilize the former Indian Creek Road right-of-way to create a trail connecting the sidepaths on Tower Terrace Road to the sidepath on Lucore Road

- **Krumboltz Trail** - crushed limestone trail following Indian Creek in Thomas Park to Highway 100 **CEMAR Trail** - utilize the Indian Creek corridor to provide connections to parks and neighborhoods in Marion and connect Downtown Cedar Rapids with Uptown Marion
- **Indian Creek Trail** - utilize greenspace areas along Indian Creek to connect the Boyson Trail (just north of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue) to the future Tower Terrace Road sidepaths

As these and other trails are built in Marion, consideration for future flooding events must be taken into account when determining alignment, surface type, and sub-surface preparation within the creek corridors. The proposed Plan will be a useful part of that effort.

**5.) Invest in resilient, efficient system management and operation that also promotes energy conservation**

See discussion of mitigating flood impacts to the trail system in the other responses.

**6.) Maximize preservation of the existing transportation system**

Flooding and streambank erosion are significant issues facing Indian, Dry and Squaw creeks as they pass through the City of Marion. Reoccurring flash floods cause ongoing damage to the existing trails in Marion leading to repairs and increased maintenance costs.

The Indian Creek Watershed Management Plan (Plan) summarizes a hydrology study that can simulate more urban development and/or different rainfall amounts. As urban development continues the model predicts higher peak flows and the same for higher rainfall events in the future. Combination of the two lead to even higher peak flows that will continue to threaten the existing trail system in Marion. Increasing awareness to protect the floodplain is important as climate change predicts higher rainfall events and urban development continues.

Creekside Pride believes the Plan will lead to projects that will improve safe access to the creeks and increase the awareness to protect creek corridors. The Plan will also study the potential to create water trails adding recreation amenities to the existing pedestrian and bike trail system in Marion. Creating more trail users will lead to a greater demand to preserve the creek corridors as a resource. Another outcome of the Plan will be to identify improvements to protect existing trails through stream restoration to reduce erosion of stream banks.

**7.) Mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation to improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system**

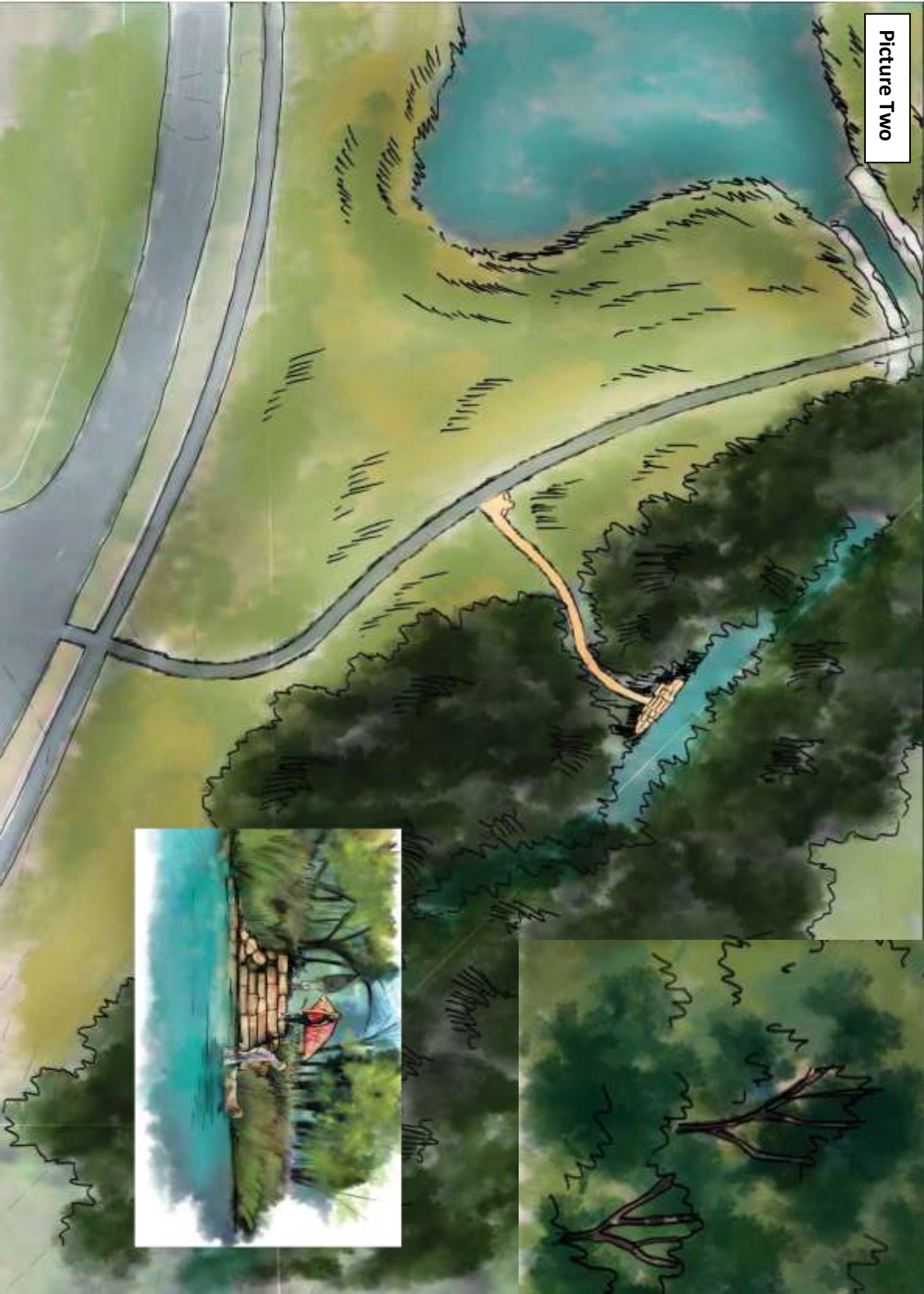
Roadway litter and urban pollutants threaten the expanded use and enjoyment of the creeks flowing through Marion. The Indian Creek Watershed Management Plan (Plan) will identify opportunities to install rain gardens and bioswales upstream to filter roadway litter and pollution. Another important factor for potential water trails is the water level at different times of year. Indian Creek and its tributaries are prone to flash flooding in rain events and low water levels during dry conditions. Slowing stormwater and releasing it gradually is one way to equalize the creek's flow. Stormwater practices that infiltrate water or impoundments throughout the watershed system will be considered in the Plan.



ATTACHMENT 1

**Pictures One and Two:**  
Conceptual renderings of stream access points from the Fourmile + Mud Creek Waterways + Greenways Regional Engineering Study completed by the Des Moines MPO and IGS.

**Picture Three:**  
Photo of limestone steps to access a stream.





ATTACHMENT 2

Map One:  
Map of potential stream access points in the City of Marion to be included in the Indian Creek Recreation Access Concept Plan. There are ten locations that will be considered, but more will be added as the project progresses along the Dry Creek greenway in Donnelly Park and the Squaw Creek greenway.

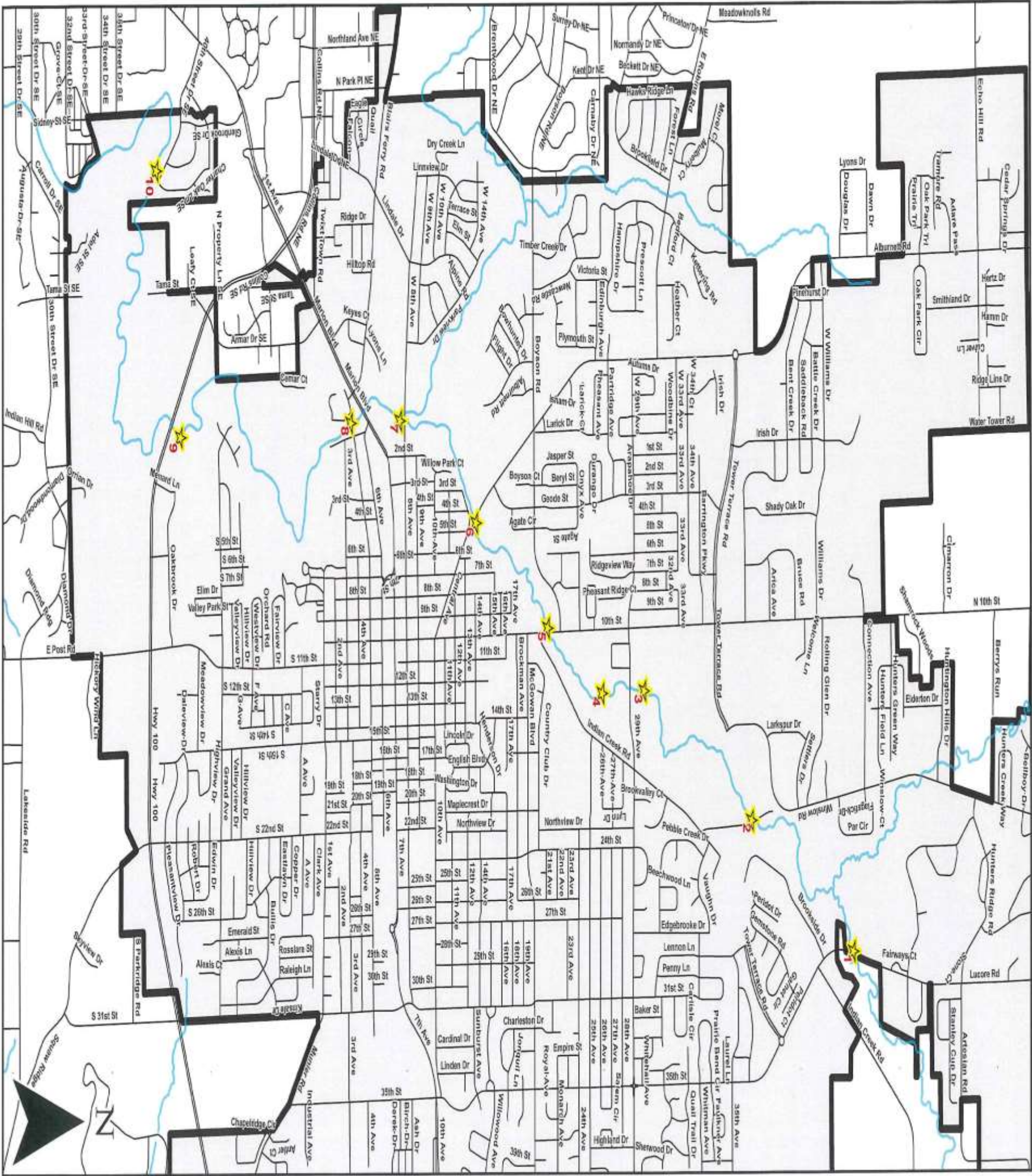




Table One: Potential Stream Access Locations with Descriptions of Area and Float Experience

Location	Name	Access Difficulty	Parking	Drop-off	Access Description	Float
1	Lucore Road Bridge	Hard	No	X	Drop off location north side of bridge either side of road. 6" curb to jump to unload off street or just unload with hazard flashers on street. Riprap access east side, tall vegetation west side of road. Steep ditches	Narrow Stream, tight corners, intermittent golf course views, wildlife, adventuresome
2	Winslow Road Bridge	Medium	Yes		City owned land SW side of Bridge, use driveway to park. Former residential lot	Creek widens, couple small rapids, travel through Linn Mar Woods
3	Linn Mar School	Medium	Yes		Parking at Indian Creek School - flat portage to creek	Lots of large rock south side of bridge. Short bumpy stretch. Backyard adventure area.
	29th Avenue Bridge	Medium	Yes		Parking at High Schoool - steeper but paved trail to creek on west side of creek	
4	2420 Indian Creek Road	Easy	Yes		Driveway west of 2420 Indian Creek Road. Drive down to former driving range parking lot. Head west down path to get closer to sanding beach access point with foot trail	Smooth float / backyard adventure scenery / Creek narrows
5	Indian Creek / 10th St.	Moderate	Yes		NE corner of intersection is city ground. Use first existing driveway off Indian Creek Road. Park in grass. Short carry to creek bank	Wider creek, can be shallow in this stretch
	Boyson Rd / 10th St.	Moderate	Yes		City ground. First driveway south side of Boyson Rd west of 10th Street	Taller vegetation to get to creek bank. 3'-4' banks. Backyard adventures / wildlife
6	Central Bridge - Lingerer Park at 390 Geode St	Moderate	Yes		Paved Parking lot. Flat portage to creek access under bridge. Tall vegetation along creek, soft access point	Wider creek, natural setting
7	8th Avenue Bridge	Moderate	No	X	Water Department Shop. Hard paving close to creek south side of bridge by roller dam. Also can put in below roller dam	Muddy above roller dam. Taller vegetation. Portage point for roller dam east bank
8	Thomas Park	Easy	Yes		Parking close to creek, easy access	Several shallow areas off and on. Travel through park grounds
9	Mendard's	Hard	Yes		Steep incline to creek/parking lot. There is a sidewalk along Hwy 100 but longer portage	Wider stream, steeper banks, wilderness area.
10	40th Street Drive SE	Moderate	Yes		City owned FEMA ground south side of street. 150'+ feet portage to creek	

## CITY OF CEDAR RAPIDS

**PROJECT NAME:**

Edgewood Road Extension Planning Study

**PROJECT SPONSOR:**

City of Cedar Rapids (lead)  
City of Hiawatha

**POLICY BOARD SPONSOR:**

Jen Winter - Public Works Director at City of Cedar Rapids  
Bill Bennett – Hiawatha Mayor

**CONTACT PERSON:**

Nate Kampman, Cedar Rapids City Engineer  
319-286-5628  
n.kampman@cedar-rapids.org

**ESTIMATED COST:**

\$95,000 – Grant Request (Federal Aid)  
\$25,000 – Cedar Rapids and Hiawatha Match  
\$120,000 – Project Total

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The City of Cedar Rapids and City of Hiawatha have agreed to continue studying the regional benefits of a 1.9 mile extension of Edgewood Road NE from Blairs Ferry Road NE to Tower Terrace Road. In 2008, a Preliminary Roadway and Intersection Design (PRID) study was completed for the Edgewood Road Extension, however, an updated planning document is currently lacking, which will provide key information for the City of Cedar Rapids, City of Hiawatha, the public, and stakeholders. The seven goals of the 2045 long range transportation plan will be integrated into this updated document. The planning document will review details, concepts, and cost estimates developed in the 2008 PRID study to ensure they match current conditions, and add new detail and recommendations critical for next steps. This planning analysis is necessary for funding applications, economic growth, and successful public outreach.

The major scope items:

- Review the 2008 PRID study and update traffic projections
- Set design criteria
- Develop conceptual plans including proposed cross-section
- Identification of environmentally sensitive areas; provide options for avoidance or mitigation
- Recommendation on phased project limits

- Define limits of the acquisition corridor; including property acquisition and easements
- Public engagement and feedback
- Cost estimates
- Identify funding sources and schedule

#### **PURPOSE AND NEED NARRATIVE:**

The proposed planning study will identify key environmental, social, engineering, and financial items for the Edgewood Road Extension. These items will need to be solved through a collaborative process with the public, stakeholders, agencies, and jurisdictions. The planning document will have a robust implementation plan for how to move forward with the Edgewood Road Extension. The last planning study of the Edgewood Road Extension was completed in 2008 and needs to be updated. The plan will be comprised of the following key elements:

*Design:* The design criteria at the planning level sets a framework for how the final project will function, what the corridor will look like, and who benefits from elements included. Access spacing, travel lanes, and right of way width along with vertical and horizontal curve limits play a significant role on the project impacts and safety of different users.

*Concept:* Conceptual plans are an important tool at the planning level to be put in front of the public and stakeholders to start to generate conversations. These conversations are important so adjustments can be made to the plan so it fits better into the local context.

*Environmental:* The identification of environmentally sensitive areas during the planning process allows time to review avoidance or mitigation alternatives. It is also a long-term savings to the project in terms of time and money if significant redesign can be avoided early in the process.

*Stewardship:* Project limit phasing can help reduce long construction impacts to adjacent property owners and be more efficient with resources. It also allows funding to take place over a longer time to reduce large budget spikes for jurisdictions.

*Outreach:* Public engagement is a vital part of the planning process because it allows the public to understand elements about the project and to provide feedback and input. Public support for a project is a key pillar to a successful project. A project can meet all its technical goals but if the public does not support it then it can be viewed as a failure. Early public input is another long-term savings of time and money if significant revisions can be avoided.

*Budget:* Providing updated cost estimates, funding sources, and a schedule will set a path for how the Edgewood Road extension could move ahead. This information can help jurisdictions implement a long-term plan for how the project can be completed. A long-term plan also is important for property owners and developers in the corridor because it lets them start planning for the future.

#### **LONG TERM GOALS NARRATIVE:**

##### **1.) Increase the safety and security of the transportation system for all users**

The planning study will set design criteria for use on the future design of Edgewood Road corridor.

Setting design criteria for:

- Horizontal and vertical alignment
- Sight distance
- Access spacing
- Clear zone
- Green infrastructure locations
- Non-motorized crossing locations

Access control and proper spacing for intersections will reduce vehicle-vehicle crashes and vehicle-non-motorist crashes. Also identification of non-motorist only crossing locations will reduce crashes.

The extension of Edgewood Road will provide connections to the existing roadway network. These connections provide for a more robust transportation system. If a blockage or delay occurs somewhere else in the system Edgewood Road will help provide an alternate route and needed redundancy to recover more quickly. The more extensive arterial system the Edgewood Road extension provides helps not only citizens and freight navigate around issues but also emergency services more quickly assist during emergency situations.

## **2.) Support the economic vitality of the region by enhancing global competitiveness, travel, and tourism**

An Edgewood Road connection between Tower Terrace Road and Blairs Ferry Road improves local mobility within the street system and also Interstate 380 access for regional destinations. Better access to markets for commodities and locally produced goods makes the local economy more efficient and competitive. The trail along Edgewood Road will connect neighborhoods to community assets such as parks and other recreation. Pedestrian and bicycle activity promotes economic development and tourism.

The Edgewood Road connection creates a more robust roadway network supporting connectivity between large and small employers and where employees live. Efficient transportation networks support increased productivity and employment expansion. Access to developed areas of current economic activity support businesses, employment, and tax base. During extended blockages Edgewood Road would provide a detour to keep products and services moving throughout the local and regional economy.

## **3.) Prioritize transportation investments that result in sustainable development, increased public health, and preservation and enhancement of the natural environment**

The planning study will identify a trail alignment and determine where connections to existing trails and sidewalks can be made. Non-motorized, active transportation options help improve public health and lessen congestion by reducing the number of vehicle trips. Many residents who do not own their own vehicle are transit-dependent, and rely on public transportation in order to access destinations such as grocery stores, shopping centers, or employment. Cedar

Rapids and Hiawatha believe all members of the community deserve safe access to services and destinations, regardless of how you get there.

Identification of sensitive environmental areas at the planning level can lead to opportunities for a community asset, helping to preserve the environment and increasing public awareness of the environment.

**4.) Increase accessibility, mobility, and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight**

Operational strategies identified in the planning study will increase accessibility, mobility, and improve the movement of people and goods. New connections the Edgewood Road extension make will improve network connectivity and provide system redundancy.

**5.) Invest in resilient, efficient system management and operation that also promotes energy conservation**

The planning study will review intersection control at major intersections to recommend the most efficient operation. Reduction of congestion reduces energy consumption and provides the most efficient travel. The study of a trail alignment supports energy conservation through active transportation and makes the system more efficient by reducing vehicle trips.

Showing in the study where to plant different varieties of plants can lessen storm water runoff and eliminate the need to mow those areas, saving energy.

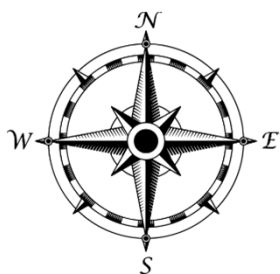
**6.) Maximize preservation of the existing transportation system**

The current section of Edgewood Road, south of Blairs Ferry Road, carries a large volume of traffic and is an important connection across the Cedar River for the west side of Cedar Rapids. The extension of Edgewood Road will draw traffic from the parallel routes of 18th Avenue and Miller Road. These streets are not designed to handle significant volumes. By removing trips from these streets the local roadway system will last longer.

**7.) Mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation to improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system**

The planning document will recommend Best Management Practices (BMP's) to reduce impacts of storm water runoff. Other green design features and sustainable construction methods will also be part of the document. Tree planting and pollinator zones can be effective at reducing the storm water runoff impact. A comprehensive storm water pollution prevention plan is another way to reduce the short term storm water impacts during construction.





MPO Funding Balances Historical and Projected

