

Legistar File No. 13031: Update on the Glacial-Drumlin Trail Connection to Madison

- 1.0 **Goal.** To facilitate pedestrian and bicycle transportation between the City of Madison and the Village of Cottage Grove and affect a connection between the Capitol City Trail and the Glacial-Drumlin Trail along the Union Pacific Railroad line.
- 2.0 **Recommendations.** To affect the goal, the following recommendations are proposed:
 - 2.1 That the City support the WDNR in its efforts to contract with a consultant for the preparation of plan for the corridor, said plan commencing at the existing trailhead in the Village of Cottage Grove to Wagon Trail in the City of Madison. It is hoped that the existence of the plan assist in further funding efforts.
 - 2.2 That the City of Madison commence efforts, including the necessary budgeting to acquire right of way between I39 and Wagon Trail immediately south of the railroad right of way.
 - 2.3 That the City sponsor an Enhancement Grant for the completion of the trail.
 - 2.4 That the acquisition of the necessary right of way for the trail between Wagon Trail and Buckeye Road (CTH AB) be deferred pending the purchase of the corridor by the State of Wisconsin.
- 3.0 **Discussion.** In 1997, the City of Madison Memorandum of Agreement with the State of Wisconsin, Dane County, and the City of Fitchburg regarding the Capitol City Trail, including the connection of the trail to the to the State's Glacial - Drumlin Trail, which connects Waukesha to the Village of Cottage Grove. The agreement generally provides that the State will assemble the right of way between I39 and Cottage Grove and the City will connect the trail between Buckeye Road (CTH AB) and I39.

The development of the Trail is managed by WDNR (the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.) Mary Zickerman of the WDNR reports that the City of Madison and the Village of Cottage Grove have assembled all but three parcels, in a cooperative venture. The Village needs to install sewerage facilities to along the corridor to handle its population growth.

The trail does not parallel the railroad corridor, due to the presence of wetlands. And, the expectation is that a significant portion of the trail will be on boardwalk to lessen the impact on the wetlands.

Segments of the proposed trail are on both sides of the railroad corridor. The most westerly segment, between Wagon Trail and Underdahl Road is on the south side of the rail corridor. There exists a connection across the railroad right of way at Wagon Trail, which is currently a farm access to the cropland in Second Addition to the World Dairy Center.

Sharing the path with the current railroad operator is not considered an option. The Union Pacific has not found it in its interests to negotiate for bike paths on its right of way, although the Wisconsin Southern Railway Company, which operates freight trains on the corridor, seems to be more receptive.

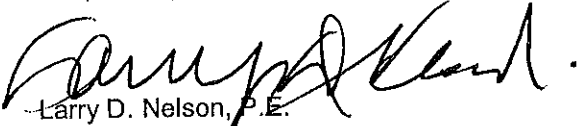
The City is presently completing final plans for an "interim" segment of the path between Cottage Grove Road and Buckeye Road that does not require acquisition of railroad property. Scheduled for construction this Spring, it will consist of a paved path in

Acewood Park from Leo Drive to Deerwood Drive, with connections to Cottage Grove Road via Vernon Ave and to Buckeye Road via existing public walkways in easement. Further development of the path between Cottage Grove Road and Wagon Trail does not appear feasible without a change in ownership of the rail corridor or a change in policy by the current owner.

Of interest is the Governor's stimulus proposal, which included purchase of the corridor.

In 2005, the WDNR was the recipient of a Federal Earmark of \$240,000 to complete the Glacial – Drumlin Trail. Rep. Tammy Baldwin sponsored this legislation. With the progress of land acquisition, Dana White Quam, WDNR project manager, is proposing to contract for the consulting design of the path in 2009. The plan would be the basis for an enhancement grant request in 2010. If the grant was approved, work could begin in 2011.

Respectfully submitted,



Larry D. Nelson, P.E.
City Engineer

Attachment: WDN Drawing entitle GD Extension