



Memo

City Manager's Office

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TO: Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Steven L. Schainker, City Manager

DATE: January 8, 2010

SUBJECT: 6th Street Railroad Bridge

In accordance with your most recent direction, I transmitted the attached letter to Brenda Mainwaring from the Union Pacific Railroad expressing your continued interest in accepting ownership of the 6th Street bridge conditioned upon us working together further to develop a more acceptable arrangement that would relieve them of their liability and mitigate the financial obligations for both parties.

Brenda emphasized in her attached email response that the Union Pacific "has arrived at our best possible offer, which is to donate the bridge and the land to the City." However, she further relates that "if the City would like to offer a timely counter proposal, we are willing to review it. In the meantime, I have asked our Engineering department to begin the process of acquiring the necessary permits for removal of the bridge."

I realize that the future of this structure is very important to a number of our citizens. I do not want to propose a counter proposal to the Union Pacific officials in the hopes of reaching an agreement to save the structure only to find out that it is not supported by the City Council. Therefore, I am requesting direction as to a final proposal from the City.

You will recall that an analysis performed by WHKS & Company indicated that while the structure is in relatively good condition, it was recommended that the following items need to be addressed in order to assure adequate safety and integrity of the bridge:

- Up to 10% of the railroad ties were rotting and need to be replaced
- Railing and decking planks need to be installed
- The deteriorated backwall planks and piles at each abutment need to be replaced
- The clearing and grubbing of trees growing under the bridge needs to be accomplished
- The west approach will require fill since it is two feet below the bridge deck

The estimated costs associated with the above improvements plus the connection to the City's shared path system are as follows:

\$ 61,000	(decking, railing)
\$ 20,000	(abutment)
\$ 50,000	(asphalt paving, excavation, path preparation)
\$ 26,000	(engineering and contingency)
<u>\$ 72,000</u>	(construction of path across railroad tracks on Hazel by UPR workers)
\$229,000	



BRENDAMAINWARING@UP
.COM

01/04/2010 12:29 PM


To bobanncamp@aol.com, jjoiner@city.ames.ia.us,
sschainker@city.ames.ia.us

cc

bcc

Subject Union Pacific bridge donation

History:

 This message has been replied to and forwarded.

Dear Mayor Campbell, Steve and John,

I received Steve's letter dated December 28, indicating that the City Council is interested in accepting ownership of the abandoned Union Pacific bridge but would like to discuss ways that Union Pacific might mitigate the financial obligation.

Steve, as you know, Union Pacific has presented the City of Ames with written offers for the sale of the bridge in previous years. In each case, you indicated that the expense to purchase and salvage the bridge was too high for the City. As indicated when you and I met last September and again during our conference call in October, Union Pacific has arrived at our best possible offer, which is to donate the bridge and the land to the City.

If the City would like to offer a timely counter proposal, we are willing to review it. In the meantime, I have asked our Engineering department to begin the process of acquiring the necessary permits for removal of the bridge.

Brenda Mainwaring
Director, Public Affairs IA NE
Union Pacific Railroad
1400 Douglas Street, Stop 1550
Omaha, NE 68179
402-544-4749 (office)
402-203-6026 (cell)
402-501-0011 (fax)

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City Manager's Office

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Phone: 515-239-5101
Fax: 515-239-5142

December 28, 2009

Ms. Brenda Mainwaring
Director, Public Affairs IA NE
Union Pacific Railroad
1400 Douglas Street, Stop 1550
Omaha, NE 68179

Dear Brenda:

I want to thank you for allowing the City of Ames more time to consider the Union Pacific Railroad's offer to donate its Squaw Creek bridge and adjacent land. The extra time allowed staff to gather the necessary information to help the City Council members make a more-informed decision.

As we agreed, the City engaged the services of WHKS & Co. to perform a structural analysis of the bridge and develop cost estimates pertaining to our trail system. The structural analysis revealed four important findings: (1) The timber abutment backwalls at either end of the bridge are in poor condition and will need to be replaced. (2) Twenty-four railroad ties are deteriorated to a point where they must be replaced. (3) The clearing and grubbing of trees beneath the bridge is required. (4) A large hole at the western approach will need to be filled.

The total estimated cost to construct necessary surface and safety improvements to the bridge and make appropriate connections to the City's existing trail network is \$229,000. Quite frankly, this amount is significantly more than we first anticipated. I am sure that you are equally cognizant of the costs involved since the cost to remove the bridge could be in excess of \$200,000.

After reviewing the results of the analysis, the Council members wanted to make it clear to you that the City of Ames remains interested in accepting ownership of the bridge. However, given the higher-than-expected costs associated with this donation, they have asked me to meet with you to explore a joint strategy for saving the bridge.

It is the City Council's sincere hope that the Union Pacific Railroad is equally desirous of preserving this piece of railroad history. Therefore, the City is asking that the Railroad agree to further work

Ms. Brenda Mainwaring
December 28, 1009
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together to identify a creative solution that will save the bridge, eliminate the Railroad's liability, and mitigate the financial obligations for both parties. I would appreciate your contacting me at your earliest convenience for further discussion.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Steven L. Schainker
City Manager

Copy to: Mayor and City Council
John Joiner, Director of Public Works