



# MEMO

**To:** Mayor and City Council Members

**Cc:** Steve Schainker, City Manager  
Brian Phillips, Assistant City Manager  
John Joiner, P.E., Public Works Director

**From:** Tracy Peterson, P.E., Municipal Engineer

**Date:** December 3, 2021

**Subject:** 2019/20 Storm Water Erosion Control Project (Ioway Creek from 6<sup>th</sup> Street to 13<sup>th</sup> Street)

This memo is to inform the Council of the proposed outreach plan for the erosion control project planned for Ioway Creek in Brookside Park. **If City Council Members think staff is off the mark with the proposed outreach plan, the project can be referred for discussion at a future Council meeting. Otherwise, staff will proceed with implementing the plan outlined in this memo as we continue with this project.**

An inventory of drainage ways within the city has been established based on National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II requirements. Following the floods of 2010, an Urban Stream Assessment was updated, which rated the stream banks of each tributary of Ada Hayden, College Creek, Clear Creek, Onion Creek, Worle Creek, Ioway Creek, and the South Skunk River. This assessment identified areas where stabilization is a priority.

This annual program is for stabilization of areas that have become eroded in streams, channels, swales, gullies, or drainage ways that are part of the storm water system. **The specific project location is along Ioway Creek through Brookside Park.** This location has been prioritized due to significant erosion/creek bank instability, movement of the creek, damaged storm sewer pipes/outlets, high E. Coli, invasive plant species, and degradation of in-stream habitat. There is also significant erosion of a steep slope below the garage located at 927 Brookridge Avenue. The updated Ames Stream Assessment indicated this section of stream as high to very high bank instability and aggradation (excess sediment in the channel).

## **ACTIVITY TO DATE:**

Earlier this year, Public Works Engineering staff and the engineering design team of WHKS & Co. held a series of three public meetings (neighborhood, community stakeholders, and general public). Needing to start somewhere, we discussed and had displays that explained the problems in the area as to why this project has been included in the CIP and showed a concept of what the project could look like.

During each of the meetings, our team actively listened to what each person had to say and suggest. We received a range of comments from complete support for the project, to criticism of our RFP process, to wanting to keep the area wild and unmaintained. It was a common comment that people want to see the vegetative restoration plan, which will come as part of the next design phase.

Our staff has had numerous conversations/meetings with Friends of Brookside Park, which is interested in raising money to enhance the re-vegetation plan. We also held follow up one-on-one meetings with each resident adjacent to Ioway Creek and walked their property to hear what their concerns are and what they are supportive of as part of this project. We also held several meetings with Iowa DNR staff, including fisheries and rivers, who are all very supportive of this project. We presented twice to the Parks & Recreation Commission, which has also been very supportive of the project, saying that it is long overdue.

**In actively listening, we have now come up with an updated project approach and are working on vegetation zone/species ideas.**

## **NEXT STEPS (PROPOSED OUTREACH PLAN)**

Our next steps will include:

1. **Distribute a letter to area residents**, letting them know that we will be hosting a series of project meetings after the New Year (this is to relieve some questions/worries that we continue to receive regarding when the project is moving forward and if there will be further opportunities for resident involvement).
2. **Meet with Parks & Recreation staff in December** - We have heard several comments that question the long-term maintenance of the park, including maintenance after this project. Therefore, we want to be prepared with information for the public meetings. Our initial concept is for the City to contract short term (3-5 years) to establish the native vegetation and manage invasive species. Following that 3-5 year period, maintenance would transition to Parks and Recreation staff. Public Works Engineering is also establishing a Maintenance Plan with this project, which will be finalized only after consultation with Parks and Recreation.
3. **Meet with Lori B (Friends of Brookside Park)** to review the plan to be presented to the public in the Spring. She has been very supportive of the project and would like to see the re-planting plan (more design detail than we had at concept phase). We want to present the new plan and obtain her feedback ahead of the general public meetings. We would hold this meeting in December or January.

4. **Host a series of three public meetings.** These will be hosted in Ames City Auditorium in January/February. Each meeting will each have a separate focus area:
  1. The first meeting will focus on alignment, hydraulics, Iowa River Restoration Toolbox, improving water quality, oxbow restoration opportunities, and DNR Fisheries input.
  2. The second meeting will discuss existing invasive species, options for re-vegetation, discuss trees to be removed and which can be saved, habitat restoration and enhancement (bees, birds, wildlife), and educational and recreational opportunities.
  3. The third meeting will be a general meeting for another opportunity to give us input and ask questions before finalizing design and applying for permits.
5. **Present updated project to Parks and Recreation Commission.**
6. **Go to City Council** for approval of plans and specifications and soliciting bids (assuming support is received at the public meetings and any adjustments are incorporated into the plans).

Funding sources for the overall project are \$432,000 from the Storm Water Utility Fund and \$337,000 from the State Revolving Fund (SRF) Sponsored Project Grant. An additional grant application for \$100,000 is being submitted to Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS).