

ITEM #:	31
DATE:	08-12-25
DEPT:	P&R

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: ONTARIO PARK PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE REAP GRANT SUBMITTAL

BACKGROUND:

In fall 2023, the City completed the purchase of 50 acres of property from the Sands-McDorman Family, located at 5658 Ontario Street, to be developed into a community park. The City had been pursuing this property since 2011. **Currently, there is \$100,000 available to contract with a firm to develop a master plan for the park.**

In fall 2022, the City received two substantial grants to purchase the property:

1. Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) awarded the City \$200,000 through the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program. The Iowa REAP program is for the enhancement and protection of the state's natural and cultural resources. The City has received multiple REAP grants that have been used for various park development projects, including bridges.
2. A \$175,000 grant was received from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). A requirement of the LWCF grant is that the park has to be opened to the public within three years of acceptance of the funds. The plan is to open the park to the public in September 2026.

One of the issues that needs to be addressed prior to opening is the lack of safe access to the 40 acres of the property on the south side of Clear Creek, which bisects the park. The solution is to construct a bridge over Clear Creek to provide that access. Although the master plan has not been developed, it is apparent that one or more bridges will be included in plan.

Currently, there are no funds budgeted for the construction of a bridge in the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), however, the Iowa DNR has REAP funds available for this type of project. **Staff is in the process of applying for the maximum allowable amount (\$200,000) that would go toward the construction of a bridge, which would provide access for individuals to safely access the 40 acres of property on the south side of Clear Creek.**

Preliminary estimates to complete a 70-foot-long by 10-foot-wide bridge with the capacity of 10,000 lbs., with design, is approximately \$300,000. Possible funding sources for this project is the Geitel Winakor donation, Local Option Sales Tax, or the Park Development Fund.

A requirement of the REAP application process is approval of the application by the City Council.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Authorize staff to submit the REAP grant application requesting \$200,000 for the design and construction of a bridge over Clear Creek in Ontario Park, 5658 Ontario Street.
2. Do not approve submission of a REAP grant application.
3. Refer this item back to staff.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Staff is excited to start planning the development of Ontario Park. The main goal in opening the park is providing access to the entire park for the users as well as maintenance staff. The City has received multiple REAP grants in the past for the development of park land. Staff believes this another excellent opportunity and project that is worthy of this type of grant.

Even though a Master Plan has not been developed for this new park, Staff is confident that this bridge will be included in the plan. Taking advantage of this grant opportunity at this time appears to be a wise alternative. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council approve Alternative #1, as described above.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Ontario Park Bridge Project.pdf](#)