



Legislation Text

File #: 15-117, **Version:** 1

ACTION REQUESTED:

Communication from the City Manager with a Request to Allow a Volunteer Committee to Pursue Creation of RIVER'S EDGE PARK, including a Fenced DOG PARK, along the River Front. (1st District)

BACKGROUND: At its January 15, 2015 meeting, the Downtown Advisory Commission (DAC) discussed and endorsed an idea to create "River's Edge Park," a multi-function park, including a fenced dog park, on land bordered by the river, Michel East parking lot and railroad tracks.

An aerial photograph of the identified area is attached. The property does not have any present, active uses. It is also not owned by the City of Peoria. The area identified in red is privately owned by Archer Daniels Midland (ADM). The area identified in blue is Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) right-of-way associated with the Bob Michel Bridge. City staff has contacted both parties seeking permission to either acquire or use the property. IDOT has granted permission for use contingent upon the City receiving similar permission from ADM. ADM, through their local attorney, has agreed to subdivide parcel 18-17-402-021 and donate the land shaded in red on the attached map to the City. ADM has further agreed to pay the associated costs of preparing a survey and appraisal. The City would only incur the minimal cost of recording the deed.

The park concept as introduced to the DAC would be for a multi-use park that would include a significant portion dedicated to a fenced, off-leash dog park. A conceptual rendering is attached. The Peoria Humane Society has agreed to be a principal donor and to organize and manage the fundraising effort. The park would serve as an amenity to those living downtown as well as an attraction that might bring more people to the riverfront.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: The planning and construction of the project will be completely covered by donations. The City may need to adjust its contract with the Peoria Park District to include the dog park within its Riverfront maintenance contract, but any increase would likely be minimal. No other City funds will be used for the park.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONCERNS: There was considerable discussion regarding the concept at the DAC meeting. Many downtown residents spoke in favor of the project. It was also supported by the Peoria Humane Society and Peoria Riverfront Association. Representatives of the Young Professionals of Greater Peoria supported a concept that would have included broader uses and would not support a fenced dog park. There was some additional concern from other attendees that access to the water be preserved. It was clarified that the fenced area would not extend to the water and that a linear, non-fenced park would remain. The DAC voted 5-1 to support the concept of a multi-purpose park in this area that included a fenced, off-leash dog park.

IMPACT IF APPROVED: Staff will pursue the land donation from ADM and securing permission from IDOT for use of the land. A committee of volunteers will work to plan the park and secure donations.

IMPACT IF DENIED: The effort will end.

ALTERNATIVES: Council could direct staff to explore different uses for this area, which may or may not result in similar interest from the community or willingness on the part of ADM to donate its property.

EEO CERTIFICATION NUMBER: Not applicable.

WHICH OF THE GOALS IDENTIFIED IN THE COUNCIL'S 2014 - 2029 STRATEGIC PLAN DOES THIS RECOMMENDATION ADVANCE?

1. Vibrant Downtown: Riverfront/ Central Business District/ Warehouse District

WHICH CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR(S) FROM THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DOES THIS RECOMMENDATION IMPLEMENT?

1. Reinvest in neighborhoods.

DEPARTMENT: City Manager's Office