



**TO:** Mike Van Milligen, City Manager

**FROM:** Kristin Hill, Communications Specialist

**SUBJECT:** Upper Bee Branch Creek Light-Pole Banners, Interpretive Signs, and Fiber Utility Cabinets

**DATE:** March 6, 2017

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide information and design concepts for the light-pole banners, interpretive signs, and fiber utility cabinets for the Upper Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project.

## BACKGROUND

As part of the Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project, the City of Dubuque is restoring approximately one-mile of the Bee Branch Creek. Daylighting the buried creek will allow stormwater from flash floods to safely move through Dubuque's North End Neighborhood without flooding adjacent properties. Amenities along the restored creek includes a bike/hike trail, lighting, benches, amphitheater/outdoor classroom, waterfall overlook, community orchard, interpretive signage, parking, and lighting.

## DISCUSSION

**LIGHT POLE BANNERS:** The Upper Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project includes 85 light poles located along the bike/hike trail and on the Rhomberg Avenue and E. 22<sup>nd</sup> St. bridges. Brackets and arms can be installed on each side of the light poles to hang 14" (width) x 24" (height) custom banners. The purpose of the banners is to enhance the ambiance of the park by adding subtle, yet differentiating, visual interest.

Four custom light pole banner designs have been developed. Two of the designs identify the space as the Bee Branch Creek and are representative of the Bee Branch Watershed brand, featuring colors and graphics from the flood mitigation project logo. Other consistent brand elements on the banners include the honeycomb pattern and tall grasses with Black-Eyed Susan flowers. These are used in other places along the creek including the interpretive signs and trash receptacles. By repeating these elements throughout the park, it creates a visually cohesive space.

The intention of the other two custom banners is to create sense of community and neighborhood pride, celebrating the rich history of Dubuque and its historic North End. The

designs include silhouettes of Dubuque's most iconic buildings including the Town Clock, Julien Dubuque Monument, Shot Tower, and to specifically represent Dubuque's North End, the Dubuque Malting and Building Company. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the space that is now Comiskey Park was an active baseball field. The famed baseball player Charles Albert Comiskey, who played with the Dubuque Rabbits from 1879-82, became the namesake for the field in 1929. In honor of this neighborhood history, the banner design also includes a silhouette of a baseball player. A church steeple and residential homes complete the design. City staff are recommending to install banners on every other light pole and to alternate the four designs. This will be around 45 light poles with two banners each, one on each side of the pole, totaling approximately 90 two-sided banners. The estimated cost per banner is \$26 for a total banner fabrication cost of \$2,340.

**INTERPRETIVE SIGNS:** Design plans for the Upper Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project also include eight interpretive signs that will be spaced throughout the linear park. Sign content features historical and educational information about the project and creek amenities including neighborhood history, understanding watersheds, natural systems and low impact development, stream habitat enhancements, prairie restoration, frequent flash flooding, the art of the spillway, and the Bee Branch community orchard. Design specifications for the Lower Bee Branch Overlook also includes an interpretive sign. This sign details the history of the basin and the types of birds that can be spotted at the 16<sup>th</sup> St. Detention Basin.

**UTILITY CABINET WRAPS:** Also in the Upper Bee Branch Creek corridor, will be five large stainless steel utility cabinets for fiber optics. The cabinets are approximately 45" (width) x 64" (height) x 27" (depth) and will be located in highly visible areas including along the hike/bike trail and near the E. 22<sup>nd</sup> St. parking lot, amphitheater, and E. 24<sup>th</sup> St trailhead. Cities across the U.S. have begun wrapping utility cabinets with creative artwork to enhance the look and feel of areas within their communities. Adding images or photographs discourages graffiti while showcasing a neighborhood's identity.

Two sets of five designs, one for each utility cabinet, have been developed. Set one features photographs of native flowers, insects and wildlife, biking, waterfowl, and other recreational activities that can be enjoyed along the creek. Set two features images of bikes, flowers, rain clouds and umbrellas, butterflies and ladybugs, and a mosaic landscape of the sun, sky, and trees. Both options will enhance the look of the utility cabinets and add to the character of the park. City staff are recommending that one design set be chosen so that all five utility cabinets are similar in style. The estimated cost per utility cabinet is \$1,235, which includes installation, for a total of \$6,175.

## **BUDGET IMPACT**

The improvements would be funded through the FY17 appropriation in the amount of \$15,550,000 for the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project. The interpretive signs are to be provided through existing, awarded contracts for the Bee Branch Project. The existing budget provides funding for the light pole banners. The utility box wraps are a newer concept and not originally envisioned. The funds to provide and install these would come from the remaining project contingency.

**REQUESTED ACTION**

We respectfully request approval of the light pole banner, interpretive sign, and fiber cabinet designs and to proceed with fabrication.

Cc: Randy Gehl, Public Information Officer  
Deron Muehring, Civil Engineer  
Steve Brown, Project Manager