

Narrative Discussion

1. What is the project?

The Bee Branch Creek Trail - Phase 1 project extends south from the existing Lower Bee Branch Trail across the Sycamore Street bridge at the intersection of 16th Street and Sycamore Street, then southeast under US Highway 61/151 along the shoreline of the 16th Street Detention Basin, then south to 12th Street adjacent to the Alliant Energy solar array, then east approximately 600 lineal feet towards Kerper Blvd. The project will consist of a 10-foot paved multi-use trail built to SUDAS and AASHTO Standards to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians.

The project site is level ground along the rip-rapped shoreline of the 16th St. Detention Basin and in the Iowa DOT property between 12th Street and 11th Street along highway. The site is generally covered with grass and/or gravel.

General construction activities will include: earthwork and subbase; installation of pipe culvert; installation of asphalt pavement and pavement marking; installation of sidewalks, chain link fence, and signs; installation of electrical service, bases, and controller for pedestrian scale street lights; seeding; and erosion and sediment control.

2. Why is the project needed?

The Bee Branch Creek Trail – Phase 1 project is part of a multi-phase trail project along the restored Bee Branch Creek that will extend connections to two regional trails -- Dubuque Heritage Trail and Mississippi River Trail – as well as to the citywide trail system.

The project will provide a connection to the new solar array installed by Alliant Energy adjacent to the route of Phase 1 of the Bee Branch Creek Trail along the 16th Street Detention Basin and 12th Street. The 1.2-megawatt solar array features an educational display and information to teach visitors about advancements in clean energy technology. It started generating clean energy in September 2017. Alliant Energy plans to construct a 10-foot paved trail adjacent to the educational features of the solar array site that will be open to the public.

3. If your project is a trail or sidewalk project, how will it enhance connectivity to other existing transportation facilities or provide linkages with local amenities, activity nodes, or points of interest?

Regional Connections

The Bee Branch Creek Trail – Phase 1 project will extend a connection to two regional trails: Dubuque Heritage Trail and Mississippi River Trail. The County and City sections of the Heritage Trail are part of the backbone system of the State Recreational Trail Plan. The Dubuque County Heritage Trail is a National Recreation Trail.

Portions of the Dubuque County Heritage Trail and the City's Heritage Trail Riverfront System are part of the designated route for the Mississippi River Trail (MRT) through Iowa. The MRT is a 2,000-mile bike trail system being developed through the river cities and river landscapes in the 10 states along the Mississippi River from Lake Itasca to the Gulf of Mexico.

Connections to Amenities

In rural Dubuque County, the Heritage Trail is a 32-mile off-road trail of crushed limestone that follows an abandoned railroad line from Dyersville to Dubuque. The eastern trailhead, Heritage Pond and Trail Interpretive Area, is located 3 miles north of Dubuque on U.S. 52 at Rupp Hollow Road. Fishing and picnic areas are available at Heritage Pond.

The trail links the communities of Dubuque, Dyersville, Farley, Epworth, Graf, Durango and Sageville in Dubuque County. Dubuque County's portion of Heritage Trail connects with the City of Dubuque's portion of Heritage Trail along the former Chicago-Great Western Railroad right-of-way via a bike/pedestrian bridge over U.S. 52 and an underpass under Iowa 386 (John Deere Road).

In the City of Dubuque, Heritage Trail is a 13-mile trail system that extends south to the Mines of Spain State Recreation Area, with side routes to the *America's River* project at the Port of Dubuque, to City riverfront parks, and the Mississippi River using signed routes on City streets and several off-road trail segments where possible. Bicyclists and pedestrians can safely access a variety of recreational uses, including hiking, biking, jogging, picnicking, fishing, and other recreational facilities at City and County parks and recreational facilities.

Accessibility

The City of Dubuque's Heritage Trail segment is accessible to Dubuque's Downtown, North End, Point, and Washington Neighborhoods. These areas have a higher percentage of older residents, the economically disadvantaged, persons with disabilities, nondrivers, and minority populations. The Bee Branch Creek Trail – Phase 1 project is part of a phased trail connection to the Jule public transit service and amenities at the City's Intermodal Transportation Center on Elm Street, which will improve access to the transportation system for these groups.

4. How does your project relate to the transportation system and what is its functional relationship, proximity, or impact to an existing or planned transportation facility?

The Bee Branch Creek Trail – Phase 1 project the project functions as part of a free citywide bicycle and pedestrian network with connections to regional trails. The project extends links to existing bike/hike trails, and links to proposed and existing portions of the bicycle and pedestrian network in the immediate area. The project is part of a multi-phase trail project that will extend connections to two regional trails -- Dubuque Heritage Trail and Mississippi River Trail -- as well as to the citywide trail system.

to the Jule public transit service and bike/pedestrian amenities at the City's Intermodal Transportation Center on Elm Street.

5. If this project is part of a larger multiphase project, how will your project complement the phases already completed or planned for the future?

The Bee Branch Creek Trail – Phase 1 project is the initial part of a multi-phase trail project. It will extend the regional connections to the Dubuque Heritage Trail and Mississippi River Trail via an off-road trail. Completion of Phase 1 of the Bee Branch Creek Trail will shorten the distance to reach the Jule public transit service and bike/pedestrian amenities at the City's Intermodal Transportation Center on Elm Street.

Later phases of the Bee Branch Creek Trail will continue the 10-foot paved off-road trail, thereby further enhancing accessibility for older residents, the economically disadvantaged, persons with disabilities, nondrivers, and minority populations.

6. How ready is your project to begin?

All funding is in place, preliminary engineering has been done, and no land acquisition is needed, and active discussions have been held with key stakeholders: the Iowa DOT and Alliant Energy. This state of readiness will allow the Bee Branch Creek Trail – Phase 1 project to move quickly once awarded.

7. Are there environmentally sensitive or culturally significant areas that may be affected by your project?

The Bee Branch Creek Trail – Phase 1 project will not affect any environmentally sensitive areas. The project site is level ground along the rip-rapped shoreline of the 16th St. Detention Basin and in the Iowa DOT property between 12th Street and 11th Street along highway. The site is generally covered with grass and/or gravel.

The project will not affect any culturally significant areas. The project is within the Area of Potential Effect (APE) approved by the State Historic Preservation Office for the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project as part of the Section 106 consultation and mitigation process. The historic / architectural survey and evaluation report and the required archeological surveys were reviewed and approved by the State Historic Preservation Office.

8. To what degree will the proposed project fulfill the goals and/or priorities of the most recent MPO or RPA long-range transportation plan?

The Dubuque Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (DMATS) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Dubuque and the surrounding urbanized area. The DMATS 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan was adopted in October 2016, and amended in January and November of 2017. Top and High priorities were established in the Plan for the DMATS urbanized area. The Bee Branch Creek Trail project fulfills the following priorities, goals, and objectives of the DMATS 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan:

Top Priority 2. Transportation projects and programs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the region's dependency on oil, reduce vehicle miles traveled and improve regional air quality.

- Goal: Protect and enhance the natural environment and support energy conservation and management.
 - ✓ Objective 3: Increase the percentage of trips made by bicycling or walking.

Top Priority 3: Transportation projects should support high-density, mixed used development that helps decrease reliance on personal vehicles.

High Priority 1: Transportation projects that promote healthy lifestyles, like biking and walking.

- Goal: Provide a high degree of multi-modal accessibility and mobility for individuals. This should include better integration and connectivity between modes of travel.
 - ✓ Objective 5: Provide more trails to connect destinations throughout the community, including the completion of existing regional and local trail systems.