

Southside walking trail suggested to council

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
Thursday, 10 June 2010 19:44 -

No transportation grant support in 2010.

A walking trail from Platte River Drive to Fourth Street has support from the Gothenburg City Council.

However going for grant funds this year probably won't work.

After he was asked to look into a Nebraska Department of Roads grant at a June 1 council meeting, city administrator Bruce Clymer said Thursday there's a moratorium on 2010 grants for hiking/biking trails.

"They are putting in the process of adopting new rules, etc. and are also working through the old projects before they take on anything new," he explained.

That means the soonest the city could apply for a grant is April of 2011. If approved, the project probably wouldn't even begin until the spring of 2012.

Council member Jeff Whiting, who owns a restaurant along where the walking trail would be located, requested the council look into feasibility of such a trail.

Turning lanes on Highway 47 onto Fourth Street have eliminated highway shoulders for people to walk or bike near where it intersects with Fourth Street.

Clymer noted that the project would include pedestrian bridges over the Cozad Canal.

Anne Anderson, director of the Community Development Office, said the tourism committee

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supports such a trail.

Chris Miller, an engineer with Miller & Associates Consulting Engineers of Kearney, said he's seen communities back out of transportation grants because of costly requirements in building trails.

"Some communities have built them on their own," Miller said, noting that one community used highway allocation funds to build a trail.

Miller was asked to estimate the cost of a trail from Platte River Drive to Fourth Street.

In other action, council members passed an ordinance authorizing the issuance of bonds to pay for street improvements on 22nd and 23rd Streets—between Avenues G and H—and Fifth Street and Jefferson Street.

Scott Keene of Ameritas Investment Corp. said the bonds will not exceed \$500,000 with a 10-year amortization schedule.

Keene noted that with lower interest rates at 3.5% to 4%, he'd like to lock them in next week.

That meant the council introduced the measure and waived the next two readings so the ordinance passed.

"It's good timing so we're saving the city money," he said.

In other action, the council gave the go ahead to block off 10th Street for a half block east of Lake Avenue for the annual Farmer's Market set to begin July 15.

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Anderson, on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce's retail committee, requested the change because vendors have outgrown the sidewalk in front of the two banks and the retail committee would like to add more activities such as barbecue and entertainment.

"We've had up to 10 vendors at a time especially during sweet-corn season," Anderson said.

Another reason for the change is because

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