



City of Broken Arrow

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Broken Arrow City Council
Meeting of: 09-17-2017

To: Mayor and City Council
From: City Manager's Office
Title:

Presentation of the Upper Adams Creek Watershed Partnership Opportunity

Background:

The Upper Adams Creek watershed corridor consists of an Adams Creek tributary that runs from the Broken Arrow Expressway near 9th Street (Lynn Lane) in a north by northeast manner through the Shops at Broken Arrow and the adjacent Park at Adams Creek developments to the Adams Creek confluence on the Greens at Broken Arrow golf course. The tributary begins in one of the community's most significant commercial districts that includes several key commercial businesses such as Target, Marshalls, Dick's Sporting Goods, Lowes, Olive Garden, Applebee's and most recently Ulta as well as many others. In addition, this watershed corridor has two (2) significant ecological and flood control components, the Parks at Adams Creek wetlands and the Fairway Park Regional Detention Facility. The regulatory wetlands is located immediately north of the expressway and west of the Cinemark Theatre and extends north to the southern edge of the Westwind subdivision between the Dick's Sporting Goods and Lowes business developments. The regional detention facility is located immediately across the street from the Broken Arrow High School. The above described properties are owned and maintained by the City of Broken Arrow.

It is crucial to note that Broken Arrow Public Schools owns property that abuts the City-owned lands. Their property essentially forms and completes a corridor from the Shops

at Broken Arrow to Nienhuis Park nearly one and a half miles to the north.

Since 2008, the City has constructed and expanded the flood control capabilities of the regional detention facility through two (2) separate general obligation bond propositions. This past year, the city completed its efforts in connection to these bond obligations. To date, the City has spent nearly \$900,000 in general obligation bond funds to construct the regional detention facility.

Over the past few years, City Staff has learned that several different science classes from the Broken Arrow High School use the detention facility and the wetlands for water quality testing and other environmental science “hands-on” and “in-the-field” training lessons. Through this communication, City Staff began envisioning a unique and mutually beneficial opportunity to potentially partner with the Broken Arrow Public Schools along this corridor and effectively create a learning and recreational opportunity while maintaining a sufficient flood control protection.

Essentially, Staff envisions establishing and developing a collaborative partnership between the City of Broken Arrow and the Broken Arrow Public Schools in such a manner as to effectively create an outdoor environmental and ecological classroom or “hands-on” field training center using the existing flood control facility, natural floodplain and regulatory wetlands. The desired goal is to provide and maintain sufficient flood protection for the community, while improving the overall water quality and enhancing the natural habitat along this corridor.

The goal is to engage our educational partners, both students and educators, to develop and implement cost-efficient measures to accomplish the aforementioned vision. Many cost-efficient ideas have already been discussed that can assist in accomplishing this vision, such as rain gardens and bio-swales to help filter out pollutants, cascade fountains to help introduce aeration into the ponds, floating wetlands to help remove food sources necessary for algae growth. Other ideas include a litter or trash removal program, a biological life inventory of the ponds, and an aviary habitat to help promote specific species of birds in the area.

In addition, several monitoring and testing programs have been discussed to ensure that we are accomplishing our stated goals. Furthermore, improving the walkability and access to certain features have also been discussed. Likewise, these potential improvements should be more environmental-friendly like nature trails or pervious paving if implemented.

Lastly, engaging the public is crucial to the success of any program, specifically one like the proposed partnership. This aspect also provides a unique opportunity for today’s students to learn how to become tomorrow’s leaders by interacting with our community in a controlled setting, specifically our residents and businesses. Staff has discussed the

need for administrative ideas and organization to create a plan. We have discussed simply concepts such as naming, branding, communication through social media messaging as well as developing a land plan for the corridor.

Above all, we have discussed governmental control and what that means and how it works with a potential program of this nature.

It is important to note that no actions have been taken. We are presently only at the envisioning and dreaming state. If this concept meets with the Councils approval, Staff will proceed with further development of the possible program.

Staff believe that we can create and develop a unique and unprecedented opportunity for our city, our schools and our citizens through this collaborative partnership. Staff requests Council's direction to proceed in our conceptual efforts to establish this partnership.

Cost: To be determined (None at this time)

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Reviewed By: Engineering and Construction Department
Streets and Stormwater Department
Parks and Recreation Department
Assistant City Manager - Operations
Legal Department

Approved By: Michael L. Spurgeon, City Manager

Attachments: PowerPoint Presentation

Recommendation:

Direct Staff to proceed in developing a collaborative partnership between the City of Broken Arrow and the Broken Arrow Public Schools with respect to the Upper Adams Creek Watershed.