

Contact: Nick Hernandez
Phone: (620) 441-4415
Fax: (620) 441-0869
nhernandez@arkansascityks.gov

City Manager's Office
City of Arkansas City
118 W. Central Ave.
Arkansas City, KS 67005



News Release

City receives \$840,091 grant to extend, complete hike-bike trail

KDOT Transportation Alternatives grant matched by Cowley College, Westar

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (February 5, 2019) — Nearly 10 years after its original construction, the hike-bike trail atop the Arkansas River levee will be extended and completed as a full loop in 2020.

The City of Arkansas City learned last week that it will be the recipient of a \$840,091 Transportation Alternatives (TA) grant from the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) to complete Phase II of popular trail. The total estimated cost of the extension project is for an amount not to exceed \$1,156,323.

The new trail sections will be 10-foot-wide concrete sidewalk, matching the current trail. A new, high-visibility crosswalk will be installed near the Water Treatment Facility on West Madison Avenue/U.S. 166.

Approximately 8,500 linear feet of new trail, or about 1.6 miles, will be constructed. The extension also includes 15 new sidewalk ramps, two highway crossings, and collapsible and permanent bollards.

The City will be responsible for a 20-percent local cash match, but thanks to previously announced contributions from Cowley College and Westar Energy, no local tax money will be used for this project.

The City also will bear the costs of preliminary engineering and design, which will commence later this year, as well as right-of-way acquisition, utilities, non-participating items such as fitness stations and a chain-link fence that will be installed along the Mill Canal for pedestrian safety, and any cost overruns.

Currently, the City's estimated cost share is \$316,231.80. Cowley College has pledged \$87,000 toward the project as part of a deal to acquire the Carver Park property, while Westar's pledge will be used to complete the local match requirement.

Construction is anticipated to begin sometime in 2020, once design and engineering are complete.

In addition to the obvious benefits to health and wellness that walking and biking trails contribute to by promoting active lifestyles, this trail extension also will help to improve public safety immensely by diverting pedestrian and bicycle travel from streets and older, incomplete sidewalk networks.

For immediate release

more

Phase II extension project scope

The Phase II hike-bike trail extension project will begin at the northern terminus of the current trail, just to the northwest of Paris Park Pool, and continue to the southeast along the historic Mill Canal.

The new trail will continue southeast past Paris Park, Cowley College's main campus, the Arkansas City Public School District's bus facility and the City's brand-new Water Treatment Facility, crossing West Madison Avenue/U.S. 166 in a 30-mph zone with a crosswalk, and continuing southeast along a recently cleared former railway corridor that now is owned by the City.

It then will connect with three blocks of already completed 10-foot sidewalk along First Street. This concrete was poured in 2017 as part of the installation of a wastewater line to serve the new water plant.

Directly to the south, where First Street intersects with West Tyler Avenue (west of the U.S. 77 bypass), a second segment of Phase II will be constructed that proceeds south for two blocks, jogs east one block to the west side of U.S. 77, and follows that highway south to West Lincoln Avenue. Sidewalk ramps already were installed here as part of the recent South Summit Street mill and overlay project.

Phase II then will turn west along the south side of Lincoln Avenue until it connects with the southern terminus of the current hike-bike trail, at the corner of Sixth Street and Lincoln Avenue.

About the hike-bike trail (Phase I)

The current hike-bike trail in Arkansas City is 2.36 miles long and consists of 10-foot-wide concrete pathways along the top of the Arkansas River levee. It starts at the northwest corner of the Paris Park Pool parking lot and continues west and south to the corner of Sixth Street and Lincoln Avenue, just west of the Charlie Dow Sports Complex.

The trail has nine concrete access ramps, 67 signs, 88 linear feet of crosswalk markings, 10 benches, two litter receptacles, nine collapsible or permanent bollards and two 7-foot pole gates.

The north terminus of the current trail (Phase I) is adjacent not only to the pool, but also a small skate park and the Agri-Business Building. Along the way, the trail connects to a property formerly known as Carver Park, recently acquired by Cowley College. Further west, it climbs to the levee at the entrance to Chestnut Park, a recently developed boat ramp area on the Arkansas River.

The current trail also connects to a 0.9-mile-long asphalt walking trail around the perimeter of Veterans Memorial Lake. This area is scheduled for significant development this year as a low-income

more

senior housing project takes shape east of the lake area. As part of a development agreement, a small unpaved section of the lake trail will be paved and completed by the developer.

The current hike-bike trail, authorized in 2005, was constructed in 2010 and 2011 using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) dollars obtained in cooperation with KDOT. It since has become one of Arkansas City's most popular recreation destinations. The trail features a spectacular lighted pedestrian bridge across U.S. 166 that has become a highlight entrance into Arkansas City.

Construction work was performed by Dondlinger & Sons Construction Co., of Wichita, for an amount not to exceed \$1,512,287.00. Architectural and engineering services were provided by Smith & Oakes, Inc., a local company that also will provide the same services for the Phase II extension project.

Community support for project

In a community survey administered as part of the City's 2013 Comprehensive Plan, respondents showed strong support for the City's walking and biking trail system, with 93 percent saying they were neutral, satisfied or very satisfied.

Furthermore, respondents also strongly supported (73 percent neutral, agree or strongly agree) further construction of pathways and sidewalks to promote walking and bicycling within the City.

"Consideration should be given to utilizing the (Mill) canal area, levee areas (and) former railroad corridors as the backbone for a pedestrian network," the Comprehensive Plan states. The Phase II extension project will use all three of these types of corridors to minimize construction disruption.

When asked if they supported extension of the current hike-bike trail, 54 percent said they did, especially in order to improve safety for travel to Cowley College's southern sports complex.

The need for this safe travel is even more pronounced five years later after the construction of the Travis Hafner Training Center, which also now houses the college's Athletic Department offices and serves as a primary hub of activities for the college's student-athletes.

Although the posted speed limit at the current crossing on South Summit Street is 30 mph, it is close to a transition zone to 45 mph and speeding is a frequent occurrence in the area. A safer pedestrian crossing will help to ensure the safety of Cowley students as they travel to and from the sports complex.

Cowley College submitted a letter of support for the City's TA grant application for this project, as did the Arkansas City Recreation Commission, RISE Cowley, USD 470, Visit Ark City and Westar Energy.

###