

RESOLUTION NO. 65 - 2017

AUTHORIZING SAUK COUNTY TO BUILD THE PRAIRIE DU SAC/SAUK CITY UNIT OF THE GREAT SAUK STATE TRAIL AND APPROVING A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE STATE OF WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES TO TRAIL DEVELOPMENT, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Background: A rail corridor transits portions of the villages of Sauk City, Prairie du Sac and the towns of Prairie du Sac, Sumpter and Merrimac, including a portion that runs through the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant currently owned by the USDA, Ho-Chunk Nation and the State of Wisconsin. The US Surface Transportation Board and the State of Wisconsin Departments of Transportation and Natural Resources have agreed to a Rails-to-Trails conversion for this corridor and have executed the required agreements to allow this conversion to take place. In anticipation of these developments, Sauk County, the villages of Sauk City and Prairie du Sac and the towns of Prairie du Sac and Merrimac joined in creating the Great Sauk Trail Commission to oversee development, operation and maintenance of the trail. Sauk County also facilitated the creation of the Friends of the Great Sauk State Trail as a private, non-profit to support the trail. It is the intent that future development of the Great Sauk State Trail will extend through Devils Lake State Park and eventually reach the City of Baraboo and ultimately link with the 400 State Trail in Reedsburg creating a truly regional trail. Sauk County has previously approved the cooperative plan for development of the Great Sauk State Trail including authorizing the preparation of the rail line for trail development. Upon approval of the attached Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, removal of the rail infrastructure and construction of the trail can begin. The first segment for construction identified as the Prairie du Sac/Sauk City Unit runs from a point in the Village of Sauk City beginning on Water Street across from the former railroad bridge leading into Dane County to a point at the property line of the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant. Funding in the form of a Knowles Nelson Stewardship Grant (\$400,000) has been approved, and funds from Sauk County and the villages of Sauk City and Prairie du Sac (\$207,500 each) and the Town of Prairie du Sac (\$10,000) have been received. The Friends of the Great Sauk State Trail have committed to a capital campaign intending to raise \$167,500 toward trail construction. Sauk County also intends to provide in-kind contributions including labor toward construction of the first segment of the trail. This Resolution specifically provides the authority to begin the development of the Great Sauk State Trail to include removal of rail infrastructure and construction of the Prairie du Sac/Sauk City Unit consistent with funding received and budgeted. This Resolution also approves an MOU with the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for Sauk County to develop, operate and maintain the Great Sauk State Trail to include the Prairie du Sac/Sauk City Unit as well as extending through the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant, portions of which are now known as the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. It is intended that as funding becomes available, that construction of the trail will continue through the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area.

Fiscal Impact: [] None [x] Budgeted Expenditure [] Not Budgeted

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 64-2007, Sauk County supported a Rails-to-Trails conversion of the former Milwaukee Road and US Government Railways beginning at the Sauk City bridge and continuing through the Badger Army Ammunition Plant contingent upon continued rail service between Madison and Reedsburg; and,

WHEREAS, the State of Wisconsin has acquired the Madison to Reedsburg rail line ensuring that rail service to Sauk County will continue; and,

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 4-2014, Sauk County approved the creation of the Great Sauk Trail Commission to develop, operate and maintain the above referenced trail in concert with the villages of Sauk City, Prairie du Sac and the towns of Prairie du Sac and Merrimac with the understanding that the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources would enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Sauk County for the direct development, operation and maintenance of the trail; and,

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WHEREAS, the Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission, the State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation and the Department of Natural Resources have worked closely to complete all the necessary work to begin development of the trail including obtaining the necessary approvals from the US Surface Transportation Board, entering into the required agreements to effectuate a rails to trails conversion, and Sauk County and the Transit Commission entering into agreements to have Sauk County remove the rail infrastructure with funds received from the salvage of rail materials used to reimburse Sauk County for the costs of removal; and,

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 6-2016, Sauk County committed \$520,000 toward "Tier One" trail planning and construction, with Tier One now referred to as the Prairie du Sac/Sauk City Unit, and funds have been received or have been approved sufficient to commence construction of the Prairie du Sac/Sauk City Unit; and,

WHEREAS, the Village of Sauk City has pledged to provide for the costs of the installation of traffic signals at the Philips Blvd and Water Street crossings (\$23,600), and the Village of Prairie du Sac has pledged to provide the costs for the North Eagle Gate connection (\$53,675.62); and,

WHEREAS, the Friends of the Great Sauk State Trail, a private, non-profit friends group, have pledged to undertake to raise \$167,500 and a Knowles Nelson Stewardship Grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources will provide a matching \$400,000 toward construction of the Prairie du Sac/Sauk City unit; and,

WHEREAS, the next step before construction can begin is the approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources which has been drafted by the DNR, reviewed by Corporation Counsel, and is attached hereto as an Appendix, said MOU granting to Sauk County the ability to develop, operate and maintain the Great Sauk State Trail from the bridge in Sauk City through the Badger Army Ammunition Plant/Sauk Prairie Recreation Area; and,

WHEREAS, your undersigned committee does recommend that the following be approved by the County Board.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors, met in special session, that the Memorandum of Understanding with the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as attached hereto as an Addendum is hereby approved, and the County Board Chairperson and the County Clerk are authorized to sign this MOU on behalf of Sauk County; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Sauk County Highway Department is authorized to construct the Prairie du Sac/Sauk City Unit of the Great Sauk State Trail utilizing budgeted funds and funds to be received from the Knowles Nelson Stewardship Grant and the Friends of the Great Sauk State Trail as well as transferring up to \$582,555.38 from general fund balance to the Parks Department budget which will be reimbursed to the Highway Department budget for labor by the Highway Department personnel assigned to the project.

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For consideration by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors on May 30, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

HIGHWAY AND PARKS COMMITTEE

TIMOTHY MEISTER, Chair

HENRY NETZINGER

BRIAN PEPER

RICHARD FLINT

DAVID RIEK

Fiscal Note: The total project cost estimate for construction is \$1,859,831. The total contributions are \$1,277,275.62, which includes \$400,000 from the Knowles Nelson Stewardship Grant; \$207,500 each from Sauk County, Village of Sauk City and Village of Prairie du Sac; \$10,000 from Town of Prairie du Sac; and \$167,500 from Friends of Great Sauk State Trail initial capital campaign. The Village of Prairie du Sac is anticipated to contribute \$53,675.62 for construction of the north eagle gate connection and the Village of Sauk City is anticipated to contribute \$23,600 for the purchase of street crossing lights on USH 12 and Water St, as well labor for the installation.

MIS Note: No information systems impact.