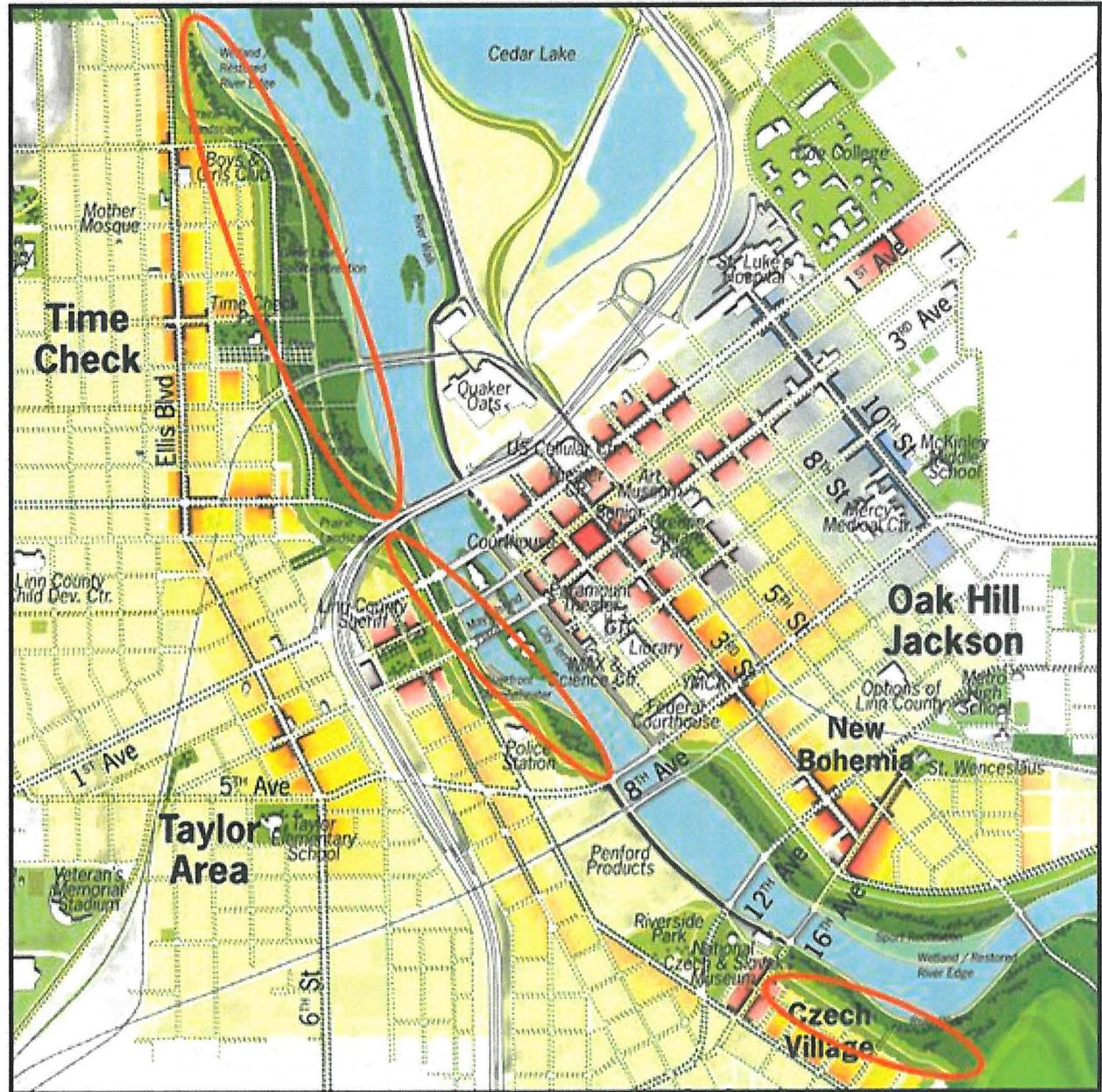


Greenway Areas

- Last piece of river corridor rebuilding
- Designed to meet the needs of adjacent neighborhoods
- Greenway areas connected by trailway system
- Creating the continuous trail loop & linking to over 32 miles of the Cedar River Trail, part of the American Discovery Trail System





Impact of the Flood

- 10 square miles (14% of the city)
- 7,198 parcels
- 18,000 residents (5,390 houses)
- Over 300 city facilities

- Over 1,400 total voluntary acquisitions
- 577 in greenway and flood management areas



Greenway Concept

- Ignites the core of the city
- Easy Interstate access
- Spurs additional business investment and tourism
- Enhances the quality of life for adjacent neighborhoods



Greenway Elements





Cedar Rapids Greenway Project

In 2008, historic flooding had a devastating effect on Cedar Rapids. Six years later, the community is rebuilding at an unprecedented rate, coming back stronger than before. The City is completing the final pieces of the river corridor and is committed to transforming the neighborhoods hardest hit by the flood into greenways where a healthier community can grow.

Project Description

- The project includes three sections of greenway totaling 110 acres.
- Greenways were identified in multiple planning processesⁱ involving over 2,000 people.
- Project elements are based on a needs assessment and level of service analysisⁱⁱ and include:
 - 3-4 multi-purpose athletic fields for football/soccer/ultimate practices, games and tournaments
 - Trail enhancements that improve connectivity between downtown and west side neighborhoods
 - Potential skate/bike park or urban dog park that bring people together
 - Signature, contemporary design and landscaping that ignites civic pride and identity
 - Natural areas and wetlands
- The total project cost is \$30 million. The City of Cedar Rapids has invested approximately \$15 million in acquisition and demolition and is seeking initial funding for the remaining \$15 million.

Key Benefits

Economic—Parks and greenways are a good financial investment for a community.

- Greenways help to attract and retain the next-generation workforce.
 - Green space is one of the best indicators of an up-and-coming “Next City.”ⁱⁱⁱ
 - Quality-of-place amenities retain young knowledge workers who drive innovation and economic growth.^{iv}
 - A good environment is the most important amenity in attracting high-technology workers.^v
- Parks and greenways support economic development.
 - Proximity to downtown will encourage businesses to locate downtown.
 - Park space supports increased multi-family housing in the downtown area.
 - Greenways will increase private investment in growth areas like Kingston Village.
 - Corporate CEOs say quality of life for employees is the third most important factor in locating a business, behind only access to domestic markets and availability of skilled labor.^{vi}
- Parks and greenways boost home sales.
 - Real estate brokers and homebuilders advocate parks as one of the top residential selling points.
 - 50% surveyed would pay 10% more for a house near a park or protected open space.^{vii} 65% of home shoppers surveyed felt that parks would seriously influence them to move to a community.^{viii}
 - A high-quality park system can boost land values of homes in close proximity as much as 22%.^{ix}
 - City Council has targeted resources to the core of the community. The greenway will enhance the 460 residential units that have been rebuilt in the core neighborhoods as well as 200 units that will be added by the end of 2015. This commitment by Council in cooperation with a dedicated effort by the Cedar Rapids Community School District has increased enrollment to urban schools.
- Parks and greenways attract and retain affluent retirees^x.
- Parks have substantial economic impact.
 - Estimated the dollars spent per visitor at parks in Iowa is \$25.37. For Linn County that amount equates to approximately \$19,534,900.^{xi}
 - Estimated dollars spent per visitor on trails is \$8.80. The estimated economic impact in Linn County is \$1,792,604.^{xii}

Healthy Community/Blue Zone

- Greenway and trail connectivity will provide health and fitness opportunities to achieve Blue Zone goals.
- Creating places to be physically active can improve individual and community health and result in a 25 percent increase of residents who exercise at least three times per week.^{xiii}
- Visits to parks reduce stress and lower blood pressure.^{xiv}

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- ⁱ City of Cedar Rapids, Framework Plan for Reinvestment and Revitalization, December 2008; City of Cedar Rapids, Neighborhood Planning Process, September 2009; City of Cedar Rapids, Parks and Recreation Master Plan Process, April 2010;
- ⁱⁱ Parks and Recreation Master Plan Needs Assessment and Public Involvement 2008-2010; Parks and Recreation Master Plan Inventory and Level of Service Analysis; Geo-Referenced Amenities Standards Process Level of Service Analysis
- ⁱⁱⁱ Next Generation Consulting
- ^{iv} "How Cities Use Parks for Economic Development," (American Planning Association)
- ^v "Competing in the Age of Talent" Richard Florida, 2000
- ^{vi} National Parks Service.
- ^{vii} "How Cities Use Parks for Economic Development," (American Planning Association)
- ^{viii} "How Cities Use Parks for Economic Development," (American Planning Association)
- ^{ix} "How Cities Use Parks for Economic Development," (American Planning Association)
- ^x "How Cities Use Parks for Economic Development," (American Planning Association)
- ^{xi} Economic Value of Outdoor Recreation Activities in Iowa 2012 Report
- ^{xii} Economic Value of Outdoor Recreation Activities in Iowa 2012 Report
- ^{xiii} The Benefits of Physical Activity Provided By Parks and Recreation Services, National Recreation and Park Association
- ^{xiv} "How Cities Use Parks to Improve Public Health," (American Planning Association)



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February 10, 2014

Members of Transportation, Infrastructure
and Capital Budget Subcommittee

Attn: Senator Matt McCoy and Representative Dan Huseman

I want to take this opportunity to write this letter in support of the City of Cedar Rapids' request to your committee for funds for the city's "Greenway Project."

The elected and business leaders have worked tirelessly these last five (5) years to rebuild the core central city. The Greenway Project will transform over 110 acres of flood prone land into usable park and recreation spaces. The \$30 million project will not only provide flood relief but create opportunities that will attract workers and their families for companies like Alliant Energy.

I know the legislature has many requests for funds. In all my years in and out of government, I can honestly say I have never seen such a "win-win" project. The City has already invested \$15 million. They are not asking for a "free lunch."

I hope you and the members will give this request your full consideration.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom Aller".

Thomas L. Aller

cc: Mayor Ron Corbett
Mr. Jeff Pomeranz, City Manager



February 11, 2014

The Honorable Matt McCoy and Dan Huseman
Iowa General Assembly
Transportation, Infrastructure and Capital Budget Subcommittee
State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Chairmen McCoy and Huseman,

The Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance strongly supports the City of Cedar Rapids' efforts to secure funding for the development of greenway areas affected by flood damage. The community of Cedar Rapids has made great strides since the devastating floods of 2008. Since then the City has improved our flood prevention plans, reinvested in our housing, businesses and neighborhoods and rebuilt many public facilities. Yet, there is still much work to be done.

Growing core central districts in Cedar Rapids, particularly the area this funding would impact most, is one of the keys to attracting and retaining an effective workforce. One of our organization's most important strategic goals over the next two years is to enhance our region's workforce numbers with an aggressive recruitment campaign. We believe funding for an attractive greenway and riverfront provides us additional tools in meeting our workforce challenges.

The Cedar Rapids metro area business community applauds the City's commitment to leveraging every investment dollar to enhance our community. I encourage you to invest in the future of Cedar Rapids, Iowa's second largest community. A successful Cedar Rapids means a successful Iowa.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dee Baird".

Dee Baird, Ph.D.
President and CEO
Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance

VISION:

TO BE THE TOP
ECONOMIC GROWTH
REGION IN THE
COUNTRY.

MISSION:

TO SERVE AS THE
CATALYST FOR
ECONOMIC
DIVERSITY, GROWTH
AND PROSPERITY
FOR OUR REGION.

VALUES:

WE VALUE OUR
MEMBERS AND
STRIVE TO EXCEED
THEIR
EXPECTATIONS.

WE EMBRACE
INNOVATION IN
OUR WORK.

WE FOCUS ON
COLLABORATIVE
RELATIONSHIPS IN
EVERYTHING WE DO.

WE ARE
COMMITTED TO A
HIGH-PERFORMANCE
CULTURE, CENTERED
ON CORE
COMPETENCIES.



8 February 2014

Senator McCoy and Representative Huseman,

As a Cedar Rapids-based entrepreneur, property owner, and startup backer, I'm deeply involved in my city's comeback after the devastating flood of 2008. My 65-employee-strong software company, Geonetric¹, is investing more than \$6 million in a new facility in the New Bohemia district in order to help Cedar Rapids recover. We're also developing several aggressive programs to assist startups in our region, including Iowa's first 90-day startup accelerator program².

Part of building a strong business, or starting a new business, is having the quality of life needed to attract the right talent. Cedar Rapids has already begun to invest in infrastructure and amenities that make it possible to recruit that talent to support our current and future businesses:

- The **NewBo City Market** has been an incredible success, with products and food offerings that my team loves (so much so that we're building our new offices across the street!)
- Our **new amphitheater** brings the community downtown for music and events that weren't possible before
- We've **improved bike lanes, added public art and created new green space**, which are inviting and highly important to GenX and GenY, which makes up a huge proportion of software engineers, web designers, and entrepreneurs.

Still, there's more to be done. We have only made a small dent in the number of bike lanes we think our community needs, and a lot of our potential green space remains brown, rather than green. The Greenway project is the next leap forward for our community's recovery, addressing these shortcomings. Listening to more than 2,000 citizens' input, the City has created an impressive Greenways plan for new parks, green spaces and trails that will enhance the quality of life factors that my company needs to continue to grow. The startup accelerator will even use these amenities to attract entirely new entrepreneurs from out of state to move here, and start their businesses here!

Cedar Rapids has already invested about half the total needed to make this project a reality. I urge you to support this project by funding the remainder that's necessary to complete it. Iowa's second-largest city has made an incredible comeback after a tremendous tragedy, and I hope I can count on your support for our continued recovery.

¹ www.geonetric.com/

² www.iowastartupaccelerator.com/

If you'd like to discuss why I believe this project is critical to the future of our city, don't hesitate to call me directly at 319-221-1667, or email me at eric@geonetric.com.

Thank you for all you do for the State of Iowa.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Eric M. Engelmann', written in a cursive style.

Eric M. Engelmann
President & CEO, Geonetric, Inc
Founding Team Member, Iowa Startup Accelerator