August 30, 2013

News Release

For Immediate Release

City to begin work on Ward Branch Stormwater and Trail Improvement Project and Close Park

Beginning Sept. 3, the City of Springfield Department of Public Works will begin work on the Ward Branch Stormwater and Greenway Trail Improvements Project, a multipurpose project that includes stream bank stabilization to protect road embankments and improve water quality as well as continuation of the development of the Ward Branch Greenway.

The project will extend from Bradford Parkway and Independence on the east end to Republic Road just north of Twin Oaks Country Club on the west end. It will utilize existing structures at National Avenue and James River Freeway for bicycle/pedestrian underpasses. Connections will be made to the Bradford Office Park, Cox Medical Center and the neighborhood west of Cox. Future extensions being planned will extend the Greenway Trail to the east to Fremont and to the west to the existing Ward Branch Greenway Trail in Shadowood Subdivision providing continuous trail to the Library Center on South Campbell. In addition, it will eventually connect to the Link, a north-south bicycle/pedestrian route connecting other greenway trails, universities, and downtown.

Stabilization of the banks of Ward Branch reduces the amount of harmful sediment that washes downstream through neighborhoods, into the James River and eventually to Table Rock Lake.

The $1.5 million project cost includes a projected $1.3 million for construction and an additional $200,000 for design costs. All properties were acquired voluntarily with no use of eminent domain. Flat Creek Excavating is the contractor for the project.

Also beginning on September 3rd, the City of Springfield Department of Public Works will begin work in Close Park on the Drummond Lake spillway. This project includes stabilization and beautification of the spillway to address erosion that has occurred after floods in recent years. The project includes enhanced views of new water features being created. It also includes improvements at both ends of the South Creek culvert under Scenic Avenue and improvements to the South Creek Greenway Trail.

The project improves public safety, reduces erosion in South Creek and improves aesthetics within Close Park.

The $1.1 million project cost includes a projected $900,000 for construction and an additional $100,000 for design costs. Hartman Construction is the contractor for the project.

It is anticipated that both projects will be completed by spring 2014. No significant traffic impacts are anticipated. Completion of these projects represents the completion of all projects...
that were promised to be constructed under the 2006 Springfield-Greene County Parks/Stormwater Sales Tax. That tax had a sunset in June 2012.

Also, construction of these improvements will necessitate the removal of a number of trees at each project. The City is preserving as many existing trees as possible, and will also improve the overall tree canopy along the future creek corridor. The City had a professional tree canopy evaluation completed for both projects, which were used to guide final project design to minimize tree loss. Tree Canopy removed will be replaced at two times the rate it is lost on site or at other locations along Springfield waterways and public properties.

For more information, contact Chris Dunnaway, City of Springfield Professional Engineer, (417) 864-1901; Casey Kellner, City of Springfield Urban Forester, at (417) 864-1135; or Terry Whaley at Ozark Greenways, (417) 864-2014.