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Committee applies for Safe Routes grant

By Carrie McDermott • Daily News carriem@wahpetondailynews.com
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The Breckenridge Active Living Committee has applied for a Safe Routes to School grant through the Minnesota Department of Transportation, competing against eight other applicants in the region. If awarded, the \$268,694 grant would be used to build and extend sidewalks. The project has an estimated cost of \$401,868.

Courtesy Metro Creative Graphics

The Breckenridge Active Living Committee has applied for a Safe Routes to School grant through the Minnesota Department of Transportation, competing against eight other applicants in the region. If awarded, the \$268,694 grant would be used to build and extend sidewalks. The project has an estimated cost of \$401,868.

The grant is an 80/20 match, meaning the city would need to provide 20 percent of the construction costs and all engineering costs, approximately \$133,00.

The city would have five years to raise the local share.

The committee will know by the end of March whether their grant request was awarded.

The city received a planning assistance grant in 2016 through West Central Initiative. A Transportation Alternatives Grant provided a large share of the funding to build the shared-used path.

In other news, the committee met Wednesday, Feb. 14 and reviewed signage options for the shared-use path that now runs along Highway 75 from the Wilkin County Veterans Park up to CHI St. Francis Health. Mile marker signage will be installed along the path including sponsor signage, and a message board sign will also be installed, although where it will be placed is undetermined as of now.

Committee members discussed options for its location, including city property at Veterans Park, or the potential for working with a business along the route to utilize parking space. The message board will include recognition signage of sponsors, as well as a map of the trail and other community information.

A ribbon cutting for the path is tentatively scheduled for June, once all the signage and benches are in place. The path is now usable.

Public Services Director Neil Crocker updated the group on lighting options for the path, which would be an estimated \$70,000.

Committee Chairman Shawn Roberts asked the group to consider sponsoring a signature event in the city, whether it be the annual triathlon held during National Night Out in August, or a new event such as a disc golf tournament which could be part of the Blue Goose Days celebration.

Public Services Director Neil Crocker shared an opportunity to install pickleball courts where the existing city tennis courts are located, near the high school. Pickleball is a sport for all ages using a paddle and a whiffle ball. It combines elements of tennis, badminton and ping-pong, and its popularity is growing in Minnesota. He is working to get quotes for project costs.

The committee also reviewed their brochure and suggested updates and changes to the information.

The next meeting of the Active Living Committee will be at 9 a.m. Wednesday, March 15 at Breckenridge City Hall.

Carrie McDermott

