

Greenway Technical Committee (GTC) Staff meeting
9 AM - Tuesday, May 18, 2021
Icon Sports Center, 1060 47th Ave South, Blue Line Club Meeting room
Grand Forks, ND
Meeting Notes

Reid Huttunen, EGF Parks & Rec
George Hellyer, GF Park District
Bill Palmiscno, GF Park District

Catherine Johnson, MN DNR
Kim Greendahl, City of GF

I. Old Business

- A. Cross-country ski request:** The GF city engineering staff has gone on record stating that they will not support a request to groom a ski trail on the levee system. This item will be marked as closed.

II. New Business

A. Off-road vehicles in the Greenway

Requests for motor vehicles in the Greenway continue to increase. A local business recently made a request to use a golf cart to transport their clients to and from a parking lot in downtown GF during road construction. GF law enforcement had planned to host a portion of an atv parade on the trail system next month. The business request was denied, and law enforcement agreed to reroute the parade to city streets.

Off-road vehicles continue to be a problem on both sides of the river. Complaint calls have been increasing and more areas are showing signs of damage from the vehicles going off-road. It is all types of vehicles and all ages of riders.

EGF is working on adopting ordinances to replace the policies that were adopted back in 2005. Reid plans to install traffic deterrents and landscaping to keep atv and other vehicles out of the woods in EGF. This will be paid for through a grant that was awarded a few years ago. Enforcement is key to this issue. A public information campaign can also be done later this season.

B. Opening meetings to public

- i. The committee will return to the pre-COVID 19 schedule of hosting public meetings beginning in July. The schedule will revert to old schedule of staff meetings on even months and public meetings on the odd months. The location will remain the same.

III. Bicycle, Pedestrian & Greenway, Advisory Group: No report

IV. Agency updates

- A. City of EGF:** Council approved the overlay project from Eagles Point trailhead to the south pedestrian bridge. The pool will be opening June 4 or 7.

- B. GF Park District:** Elks Pool will open June 7 and Riverside will open June 14. Work has started on phase two of the skate park. Hours of operation may change due to a shortage of lifeguards.
 - C. City of GF:** No report.
 - D. Minnesota DNR:** The campground host positions have been filled for the season. The rest of the staff positions are beginning to fill up too. There are very few sites open for Memorial Day weekend. Repairs have been done to fix the potholes in the campground.
- V. **Next meeting date:** Greenway Technical Committee Staff 9 AM Tuesday, June 15, 2021, Icon Sport Center, 1060 47th Ave South, Blue Line Club meeting room.
- VI. **Upcoming events & meetings**
- **Bicycle, Pedestrian & Greenway Advisory Group mtg:** 6 PM Wednesday, June 9, 2021, GF City Hall, 255 North 5th Street, room A101.

Support documents:

- Email from Mark Walker, GF asst. city engineer, re: grooming a trail on the levee
- Golf cart request from Toasted Frog

Submitted by: Kim Greendahl, Greenway specialist

RE: Grooming a ski trail on the levees

Walker, Mark <MWalker@grandforksgov.com>

Wed 4/21/2021 12:29 PM

To: Greendahl, Kim <KGreendahl@grandforksgov.com>

Kim:

I am assuming the proposed groomed ski trail would be placed on the levee top and the groomed trail would extend up and down the levee side slope. I also assume that this configuration would be proposed at numerous locations as the levee is not continuous due to the numerous sections of floodwall and numerous Greenway and roadway access opening in the levee. Furthermore, because there are numerous trail connections that pass "up and over" the levee and through the levee to access the Greenway trail system, the proposed ski trail would need to cross some of these trail connections and the Greenway trail itself.

Unless I have misunderstood the intent of the proposed groomed ski trail, Engineering would not support a ski trail as proposed. The main reason is that during the development of the flood protection system in Grand Forks, we met with a number of concerned residents who lived adjacent to or near the proposed levee. Many residents expressed concern that they objected to people who might access the levee tops and be able to look into their back yards and their windows. I recall this concern being expressed frequently by a large number of property owners living adjacent to the levee. At the time, we as staff felt this was a legitimate concern and assured the residents that no activity was being proposed by the City or the Corps that would encourage traffic on the levee tops and that if frequent traffic on the levee tops would occur, the City would take actions to discourage it such as creating local ordinances that prohibit traffic on levee tops. If we were to allow a ski trail to be placed on the levee tops adjacent to residents, we would be going against our word and I believe that we would receive numerous complaints from adjacent residents.

The other issue that is concerning to me is the potential damage that a groomer could cause especially as it traveled up and down the side slopes. As you well know, the Corps periodically inspects our flood protection system identifying unacceptable defects that affect the overall rating of our flood protection system. FEMA uses the Corps' overall rating to certify that we are protected from the 100 year flood threat which keeps the City out of the 100 year flood plain. As you know, the Corps has given us poor ratings for areas of turf that are damaged, rutted, eroding, cracking, etc. and we work hard to minimize the areas of turf damage as an unacceptable overall rating of our flood protection system would place the majority of the City into the 100 year flood plain. Also, we have periodically seen shrinkage cracking in the levee at the sledding hill and suspect the cracking is caused by hard snow pack and heavy foot traffic on the levee. I suspect a groomed trail may cause similar cracking. Cracking of the soil is of a concern during times of high water as the cracks can create a way for water to penetrate the earthen levee. Cracking of the soil on the river side of the levee and at the top is especially concerning.

If the groomed ski trail is to cross the Greenway trail or the access trails, this would be of concern as well. Since snow is removed from the Greenway trails in the winter, they would need to be kept free of snow at the ski trail crossing locations to preserve the Greenway trails for the Corps' intended purpose.

For these reasons, Engineering would not support using the levee tops and side slopes for a groomed ski trail. Although I have not asked the Corps for their position on this question, I suspect that they would likely object to it as well. Often the Corps will not provide an opinion without first reviewing a detailed plan of what exactly is being proposed and exactly where it is being proposed. Ultimately this may require a fair amount of work only to be not approved in the end. Also, the Corps would likely not approve of it if there is public objection and would not approve without Engineering Department support which we could not provide for reasons identified above.

Mark S Walker
Assistant City Engineer
City of Grand Forks
701-746-2648 (office)
701-740-6757 (cell)

From: Greendahl, Kim <KGreendahl@grandforksgov.com>
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 2:49 PM
To: Walker, Mark <MWalker@grandforksgov.com>
Subject: Grooming a ski trail on the levees

Mark,

I received an inquiry from a local ski group asking about the possibility of using the levee for grooming a cross-country ski trail. I know there is a local ordinance prohibiting motor vehicles on the levee, but I am not aware of anything else in ordinance that would prohibit the activity. The grooming equipment wouldn't be on the levee any more frequently than a mower and sledding is allowed so we haven't blocked all activity on the levee. Designing a course using the levee would present the challenge of not interfering with adjacent activities and property owners, but that could be considered after determining if the levee could be used for the trail.

My first question is does the Corps prohibit this type of activity on the levee?

Kim Greendahl - Greenway Specialist - City of Grand Forks - P.O. Box 5200 - Grand Forks, ND 58206--5200 - Phone: (701) 738-8746 - e-mail: kgreendahl@grandforksgov.com

Greenway Project Request Form

Contact name – Jonathan Holth	
Address – 124 N. 3rd St.	
City – Grand Forks	State & zip – ND 58203
Phone – 701.772.3764	Cell phone – 701.390.4678
Email address – jonathan@evvios.com	
Start date: 5-3-21	
Is this request: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One time event <input type="checkbox"/> New installation <input type="checkbox"/> Improvement to existing facility	
Brief summary of request: - With the impending construction on N. 3rd St., the parking at The Toasted Frog will be eliminated. Our customers only option to park close by will be in the parking lot on the Greenway. We would like to provide golf cart valet from that parking lot up to the Toasted Frog during the dinner rush on certain days. Likely between the hours of 5:30 and 9:30 p.m.	
Support for the activity or facility. How many people typically participate in this activity, is there a user group established in the area, etc.: - There would be one person running the golf cart back and forth between the parking lot and N. 3 rd St.	
What is needed to facilitate this project? Space, structures, etc? Please attach a diagram of the proposed layout of the activity or facility, if appropriate. - None	
What, if any, costs are associated with this project? – All costs will be handled by The Toasted Frog.	
How will these expenses be paid? Fundraisers, sponsor, etc.	

Does this project require ongoing maintenance? NO If so, who will maintain the facility?
Will this event or facility be open to the public?
Does this activity or facility involve the use of harmful chemicals, excavation or fire? If so, please describe. - NO
Please explain how the proposed event, facility or program will ensure access for people with disabilities. Examples could include accessible parking, access to participate in the event or activity, accessible portable toilets or providing effective communication for people who have a hearing or a visual disability. For more information on ADA accessibility, contact Options Resource Center for Independent Living (218-773-6100). – This would increase access to the restaurant for people with disabilities by making it easier to access the restaurant from the parking lot.

Please submit this completed form and other supporting documents to be considered to:

Greenway Manager
City of Grand Forks
P.O. Box 5200
Grand Forks, ND 58208-5200
701-738-8746

For office use	Date received	
Received by:		