

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Park Advisory Commission

FROM: Josh Landefeld, Parks & Recreation Services Manager

DATE: November 15, 2022

SUBJECT: Memorandum of Understanding – To set forth the terms and stages through which the Bandemer-Barton Trail and Underpass Project will proceed

Attached for your review and recommendation is a resolution for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation Services and the Washtenaw County Park and Recreation Commission (County) to collaborate on a project known as the Bandemer-Barton Trail and Underpass Project (Project). This MOU is intended to describe in general terms the anticipated stages through which the Project will proceed and the relative anticipated roles, efforts, obligations and responsibilities that the City of Ann Arbor (City) and the County of Washtenaw (County) expect to undertake in conjunction with those efforts and phases.

The Project includes a pedestrian tunnel that will extend beneath the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) railroad tracks between Barton Nature Area and Bandemer Park and would provide a highly desired non-motorized connection. The project also includes extending the Border-to-Border Trail (B2B) through Barton Nature Area, while a non-paved trail is retained. This project is a critical gap on the B2B trail, which is a part of the statewide Iron Belle trail, and is one of the final hurdles to overcome connecting the City with the parks and along the Huron River. This project will also improve non-motorized traffic around the North Main Street & M-14 corridor by providing a safe pedestrian and bicycle gateway to the City.

A feasibility study was completed in 2020 which confirmed the project feasibility and provided a preferred design and updated costs. The City and County have begun design engineering on the project with the goal of construction in 2024 or 2025. Funding opportunities have become available through our partners at the County and HWPI, and the Iron Belle Trail has become a priority for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources grants.

The MOU attached herein describes this partnership understanding and the roles and processes to be used towards the goal of creating this highly desired non-motorized connection that can ultimately serve residents of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, and the surrounding region as part of the statewide Iron Belle trail.

Prepared by: Hillary Hanzel, Landscape Architect IV  
Reviewed by: Josh Landefeld, Parks & Recreation Services Manager

RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND SIGNING A MEMORANDUM OF  
UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CITY OF ANN ARBOR PARKS AND  
RECREATION SERVICES AND THE WASHTENAW COUNTY PARKS AND  
RECREATION COMMISSION TO PARTNER ON THE BARTON-BANDEMER  
CONNECTION

Whereas, a feasibility study was completed in 2020 which confirmed the project feasibility and provided a preferred design and updated costs;

Whereas, the City and County have begun design engineering on the project with the goal of construction;

Whereas, funding opportunities have become available through our partners at the County and HWPI, and the Iron Belle Trail has become a priority for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources grants;

Whereas, the project would provide a highly desired non-motorized connection that is a critical gap on the Border to Border Trail, which is a part of the statewide Iron Belle trail;

Whereas the project would connect the City with the parks along the Huron River and non-motorized connections around the North Main Street & M-14 corridor;

Whereas, the City of Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation Services and the Washtenaw County Park and Recreation Commission (County) are currently collaborating on the design engineering for the project;

Whereas, the MOU attached herein describes this partnership understanding and the anticipated roles, efforts, obligations and responsibilities of the parties and the processes to be used towards the goal of construction of this highly desired non-motorized connection;

RESOLVED, that the Parks Advisory Commission recommend signing a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation Services and the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission to partner on the Barton – Bandemer connection, along with potential improvements to the B2B trail in Barton Nature Area.