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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RIVERSIDE PARK UPDATED PLAN ENHANCES PUBLIC SPACE

Proposed features adds to park's image as a go-to place in Muscatine

MUSCATINE, Iowa – Members of the community of Muscatine gathered in the Riverview Center Wednesday night to hear representatives from Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc. (SEH) discuss possibilities to enhance the park and create a “must go to” place for visitors to the City of Muscatine.

“The intent is to create a signature destination place,” Ed Freer of SEH said. “A place for people to come and enjoy being with family and friends while taking in the Mississippi River. It should complement the Mississippi Driver project, Downtown Muscatine, and the new hotel along with other possible developments. It should also attract riverboats.”

Freer has been one of the guiding forces in the development of Riverfront Park and was part of the team that undertook the task of envisioning the park 20 years ago. The vision of that 1997 Consensus Plan Mississippi Riverfront today has been successfully implemented over the past 20 years and the latest update expands on those achievements according to Freer.

Included in the 2017 update is the creation of an entertainment venue within the park, options for the former boat launch, creation of a destination for Mississippi Riverboat Cruises, offering food and beverage options, and increasing boat launch amenities. One of the main objects of the updated plan will be increasing and improving pedestrian connectivity.

The downstream portion of the park will continue to feature the green space that is a main feature of the area at the present time. Included in the update is an enhanced amphitheater and



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entertainment area that will not diminish the green space but will provide a better area for performers and audience members.

The upstream portion of the park will continue to be the dominate boating area of the facility with the update including plans for a fish cleaning station, a boat washing station, and a concession area.

The central area of the park is where most of the updates are planned beginning with the former boat launch ramp that could be turned into a scalloped terrace with seating areas and planter boxes of native plants that will enhance the riverfront. A transient boat dock that will include a riverboat cruise dock will be located at Pearl City Station. Areas that can be used for a farmer's market along with areas that could function as a beer garden are also part of the update.

"This is the front porch of the city," Freer said. "It is a place to come and relax and be with friends. The enhancements we have recommended are doable and will connect the park to the rest of the city."

Although cost figures were not discussed, City Administrator Gregg Mandsager did note that some of the items in the update can be done relatively inexpensively.

"We can start small and continue to improve the park as we go," Mandsager said. "We don't have to do everything at once, just start somewhere and move on from there."

Individuals who attended the meeting were invited to view renderings of the update and make suggestions on what they like or do not like about the plan. The Riverside Park plan will continue to be updated with citizens update before a final version is presented to the City Council.



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