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Rich Dwyer (middle), senior vice president at Kent Corporation, and Greg Jenkins (right), executive director of the Greater Muscatine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, join Muscatine Mayor Diana Broderon for a check presentation from Kent Corporation to the Pearls of Progress project Tuesday at Wine Nutz.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Muscatine - where the river takes a turn for the better



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November 28, 2017

GOAL REACHED! PEARLS OF PROGRESS FULLY FUNDED

Fund raising effort to receive CAT grant completed thanks to citizens of Muscatine

MUSCATINE, Iowa – Mission accomplished.

The Pearls of Progress Project fund raising effort has reached its goal to raise the funds necessary to qualify for the Enhance Iowa Board \$500,000 Community Attractions and Tourism (CAT) grant. The Pearls of Progress Project, which actually consists of four separate projects, can now move forward as “fully funded”.

The announcement came from Greg Jenkins, one of the co-chairs for the Community Improvement Action Team (CIAT), during a victory celebration at Wine Nutz Tuesday (Nov. 28) night. The CIAT initiated the Pearls of Progress fund raising campaign in September and received a boost from Kent Corporation who matched donations made during the campaign.

During the fund raising effort at least 238 donations were made to the Pearls of Progress project not counting cash donations or donations through the dog park according to Muscatine city planner Andrew Fangman who was the main grant writer for the CAT application.

“I think this is an impressive number especially since most of these were for more than \$50,” Fangman said. “It really speaks to the deep community support for this project.”

The Pearls of Progress is a joint project of the City of Muscatine, Muscatine County, and the Muscatine County Conservation Board, and coordinated by the Community Improvement Action Team (CIAT) and the CAT Grant Committee. The focus of the project is to make Muscatine a more attractive place to live, work, play, visit, and do business.

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The four selected components represent an \$8.02 million investment in the community. The components include converting the former HNI headquarters into a new library and community center, construction of the Westside Trail that will link Discovery Park to Kent Stein Park, construction of the Muscatine Dog Park, and construction of four rental cabins at Deep Lakes Park.

The Enhance Iowa Board approved the City of Muscatine's \$500,000 Community Attractions and Tourism (CAT) grant application for the Pearls of Progress Project on October 11, contingent on the remaining small funding gap of \$420,000 be closed by November 15. The City of Muscatine received notice Tuesday (Nov. 28) that the State of Iowa was satisfied with the fund raising effort and the grant approved.

MUSSER PUBLIC LIBRARY & HNI COMMUNITY CENTER

The Musser Public Library & HNI Community Center is a \$6.16 million project that will move the library from its current location into the former HNI corporate headquarters where the library will be able to provide greatly enhanced opportunities for the citizens of Muscatine. Two of the biggest benefits for the move to the new location is that the former HNI headquarters is 25 percent larger than the present library and there are 109 off-street parking spaces. Adequate parking is something the current location does not have.

In addition to serving as a gateway to the downtown area, the Musser Public Library & HNI Community Center will offer multiple meeting rooms for organizations, non-profit groups, and individuals to collaborate. The gathering and collaborative spaces, free activities, events, and life-long learning opportunities provided by the Musser Public Library and HNI Community Center will not only enhance the vitality of Downtown Muscatine but also enhance the vitality of the entire community.



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WESTSIDE TRAIL

The Westside Trail is a \$795,758 project that will build a 1.75 mile walking, running, and biking trail from Kent Stein Park to Discovery Park. The trail will complete a 15-mile trail network through the City of Muscatine connecting all of the major recreational amenities.

The Westside Trail would link a 3.5 mile network located in northwest Muscatine and a 4.5 mile trail that stretches from Deep Lakes Park along the Mississippi River through downtown to its eastern terminus at Solomon Road. The linked trail would significantly increase bike and pedestrian mobility while providing a big plus in the attraction of business and prospective employees to the area.

MUSCATINE COMMUNITY DOG PARK

One of the most talked about projects for the past four years has been the creation of a Community Dog Park. The off-leash dog park would be the first of its kind in the Muscatine area and would be located off of Houser Street across from Kent Stein Park on 14 city owned acres.

Four separated fenced areas include a half acre area for senior dogs, a 1.5 acre area for small dogs, a three acre area for large dogs, and a training field attached to the large dog area that will be used for training, other structured events, and as a backup to the other fenced in areas when turf maintenance and recovery is needed.

The Muscatine Community Dog Park had an estimated price tag of \$243,081 which includes development of the fenced areas, an entrance shelter, two water fountains, six benches, trees, a shed, and four shelters.



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DEEP LAKES PARK CABINS

Four rentable cabins will be built in Deep Lakes Park. These would be the first rentable cabins in Muscatine County and a major step in the ongoing development of Deep Lakes Park. The \$1 million project would build four cabins on Lake Ivy inside the park off of the Pettibone Avenue entrance and next to the Kent Stein Park to Deep Lakes Park trail.

The cabins would sleep six to eight people, be open year round, and have all the modern amenities needed.

BACKGROUND

The City of Muscatine, Muscatine County, and the Greater Muscatine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GMCCI) have joined forces to promote, develop, and implement the Muscatine Pearls of Progress Project that is designed to help make Muscatine a more attractive place to live, work, play, visit, and do business.

The Community Improvement Action Team (CIAT), a consortium of public and private individuals, has spearheaded the research and selection of the components to be included in a Community Attractions and Transportation (CAT) grant application to the Enhance Iowa Board.

Bundling multiple projects together into one single project has proven to be a successful strategy for Muscatine in maximizing community buy in and support. Strategies learned from the successful completion of the 2002 Pearl of the Mississippi Community Improvement Project were instrumental in the planning of the 2017 Pearls of Progress Project.

The \$9.62 million 2002 project included the construction of the Muscatine Aquatic Center, the Environmental Learning Center, the skate park at Musser Park, the Riverview Center in



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Riverside Park, and installation of period lighting downtown. Weed Park was also featured in the 2002 project with an extension of the trail network from the riverfront to Weed Park, improvements to the Rose Garden, renovations to the tennis courts, installation of new playground equipment, and enhancements to Weed Park Lagoon. The CAT program ultimately contributed \$1 million to the project.

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