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August 7, 2023

Executive Director Brian Preston, and
Dubuque County Conservation Board Members
Dubuque County Conservation
13606 Swiss Valley Road
Swiss Valley Nature Center
Peosta, Iowa 52068

Subject: Request for Paving Heritage Trail from Dyersville Trail Head to Prier Road as a Partnership Project

Dear Executive Director Brian Preston and members of the Dubuque County Conservation Commission,

Please consider a significant project that could benefit Dubuque County's recreational and economic growth. Specifically, I am referring to paving the Heritage Trail from Dyersville Trail Head to Prier Road.

At the City Council meeting on July 17, 2023, there was a conversation regarding the potential paving of Heritage Trail. The proposal was for your board to take on this project as a trial run, starting with shorter sections between Dyersville Trail Head and Prier Road.

I want to discuss partnership opportunities with the Commission. It will benefit everyone involved if your board evaluates the public's response and the effects of the trail on our county. This way, we can achieve a mutually beneficial outcome. This initiative would enable your board and the public to make well-informed decisions regarding future regional infrastructure development.

By paving a section of the Heritage Trail, we can showcase the benefits of an enhanced trail system that will attract more outdoor enthusiasts and recreational visitors to our region. Additionally, a paved trail will provide safer and more enjoyable experiences for cyclists, hikers, and pedestrians and contribute to the local economy by promoting tourism and increasing business opportunities for the community.

While we understand there have been previous discussions and concerns about funding and political considerations, the potential long-term advantages of a paved Heritage Trail far outweigh any initial challenges. Undertaking a partnership project can help dispel doubts and demonstrate this project's real value for our residents and visitors.

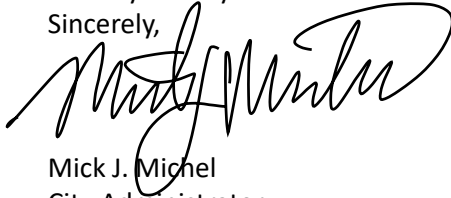
Our city and Dubuque County have a proven track record of successful collaboration on various projects. Our city is trying to complete its citywide trail system. The Commission must pave the Heritage Trail to help us achieve our mutual objective of providing recreational and economic opportunities for the region. As a team, we are confident that we can accomplish this goal through transparent communication and innovative strategies.

I request that the Dubuque County Conservation Commission reconsider its decision on funding opportunities for the Heritage Trail as of September 2022. Collaborating and establishing partnership opportunities to develop a phased construction project would be beneficial, beginning at the Dyersville Trail Head and extending to Prier Road. This approach would enable your board to highlight the advantages of a paved trail section, proactively address any concerns, and gain support from the community and local businesses.

On behalf of the City Council and our residents, I request a meeting to discuss the partnership project in detail, its potential positive impacts, and how we can collectively address any challenges that may arise.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mick J. Michel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Mick J. Michel
City Administrator