

KINNICKINNIC RIVER CORRIDOR PLANNING STRATEGY

The River Falls City Council has identified the Kinnickinnic River Corridor as a strategic priority in the coming years through the adoption of the City's first Strategic Plan. They have also adopted a timeline and strategy that results in the creation of a Kinnickinnic River Corridor Plan, which will guide the protection and development of the City's greatest natural resource.

The Council's timeline and strategy continues to be updated as reflected in this document and following stakeholder input. As the planning process comes into focus, funding will be planned to ensure a comprehensive study and education process for the community.

To date, the City of River Falls has budgeted \$100,000 for the hydroelectric licensing process through 2016. Additional funds to support the study and planning processes will be budgeted in the City's 2017-2018 and 2019-2020 biennial budgets. Opportunities also exist for funding options in addition to the City's resources and every effort will be made to identify and work with partners on supplemental funding sources from other public and non-profit sources.

Interim Licensing and Corridor Planning Period (2015)

Spring/Summer

In response to the input from stakeholders, the City is working in consultation to develop a list of studies agreed upon for early implementation and to be completed prior to the start of the planning process. The goal of these studies will be to inform the initial body of knowledge that will be drawn from by the future Corridor Planning Group.

Sediment Studies – Following the alternatives analysis recently completed by the City's consultant at the end of 2014, there remained the question of the potential costs of dam removal regarding the character and volume of sediment in the impoundments. This area of study will most greatly inform the planning process by identifying the potential costs associated with sediment management. A consultant will be selected in July, in consultation with stakeholders, to complete the studies related to the character and volume of sediment.

Recreational Use – The City is also collecting baseline recreational use data to meet current reporting requirements and to inform the corridor planning process. Data is being collected over a course of days and peak weekends of the number of users in various locations and their activities. Data will also be collected from the fishing and kayak outfitters that provide recreational opportunities in the project area.

NOTE: The studies listed above are not exhaustive of all the information that will be collected prior to the beginning of the River Corridor Planning Process. The City also acknowledges the experience and expertise of many stakeholders in evaluating the environmental impacts of hydroelectric facilities on the nation's waterways. The City will continue to work with stakeholders through the summer on developing additional study plans to inform the Kinnickinnic River Corridor Planning Process to be completed through the Fall and Winter of 2015/2016.

Fall

City staff will be working with a consultant with experience in river corridor planning and their technical firm to draft the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Kinnickinnic River Corridor Plan. Stakeholders and the public will have an opportunity to provide input on the RFP prior to it being issued and again on the proposals that are received. The contract will be awarded by the City Council.

The City will continue to work with stakeholders on information gathering and continuing the directed studies agreed upon for early implementation.

Kinnickinnic River Corridor Planning (2016-2019)

The following outline is intended to guide expectations for components of the corridor planning process. It is subject to change based on the experience and expertise of the planning consultant; however, the process will be built around the decision point in fall 2017 on the future of hydrogenation at either or both facilities.

2016

Winter

After the planning firm is hired, a Corridor Planning Group will be formed. The Planning Group will direct much of the continued study and will build on the work of City staff and stakeholders. Information gathering will continue through 2016 and 2017 and integrated into the community input process on the question of whether to continue with hydro generation at the Project.

Selecting the planning consultant will begin the first stage of the planning process, which will end with an adopted Corridor Plan. Later stages will consist of the implementation activities.

Spring/Summer/Fall

The Corridor Planning Group begins work on:

- Identifying the Vision, Mission, and Goals of the Corridor Plan
- Engaging in issue-identification
- Assessing existing conditions and reviewing available information
- Establishing Plan objectives
- Identifying gaps in information that will be needed in order for a decision on the future of hydroelectric facilities

The Corridor Planning process will likely be divided into phases based on the section of the River through the City. Planning surrounding the River Falls Hydroelectric Project Boundary will be the first phase of the process, and the upstream and downstream sections will occur afterwards. The Project Boundary area will be planned for first because of the necessity to come to a decision on the future of the hydro facilities by Fall, 2017.

2017

Winter/Spring

At this time, the City, stakeholders, and planning firm will begin community education efforts on the various aspects of the Plan. Issue categories may be centered on hydroelectric generation and operations, future maintenance of the dams, storm water issues (Lake George Management Plan,

downtown runoff, etc.), recreation opportunities (fishing, kayaking), trail systems (connections, types of trails), and natural resource concerns (species identification).

This part of the process will involve an extensive public outreach campaign that can include community meetings, open houses, surveys, and established working groups.

Summer

The final stage of data gathering will be completed at this time. The results will be published online and provided to the Corridor Planning Group.

Fall

After reviewing all of the available information and receiving recommendations from the Corridor Planning Group and others, the City Council will decide on whether to continue with hydroelectric generation and one or both of the facilities.

2018

Winter/Spring

The planning firm and City staff will begin preparing summary reports and drafts of the Plan to the Corridor Planning Group. The drafts will be prepared in sections based on each area of the Plan for their review.

Spring-Fall

Public input meetings will continue throughout the year on the drafts of the Plan. Public input and the Corridor Planning Group will continue to shape the final Plan. A comprehensive draft of the final Kinnickinnic River Corridor Plan will be available by the end of 2018.

2019

Winter/Spring

The Corridor Planning Group, in consultation with the public, City Staff, and the planning firm, will draft an action and funding plan for the implementation of the final Kinnickinnic River Corridor Plan. Pending review and approval by the appropriate public boards and commissions, the City Council could adopt the Kinnickinnic River Corridor Plan as early as the Summer, 2019.

FUTURE FERC LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

The following table illustrates the licensing processes following the community decision of whether to continue hydro generation or remove one or both facilities. With license expiration on August 31, 2023, notice to FERC of intent to relicense or surrender would occur in mid-2018. Following approval of the Kinnickinnic River Corridor Plan and related implementation and funding plans, activities may commence in accordance with those plans.

In response to the input from stakeholders, the City of River Falls is requesting only a five-year extension of its hydroelectric license to August 31, 2023. That should provide adequate time for the study of the corridor and a comprehensive public engagement and education process.

| Year | FERC Licensing Requirements Relicense | FERC Licensing Requirements Surrender |
|------|--|--|
| 2017 | End of Fall: Community decision to support continuation of hydro generation at one or both of the facilities. | End of Fall: Community decision to discontinue hydro generation and remove dams at one or both facilities. |
| 2018 | Between March 1 and August 31, 2018: 1) Must notify FERC whether licensee intends to file or not to file an application for a new license 2) Must submit Pre-Application Document at time of notice of intent (more comprehensive information generated from studies that guided the Corridor Plan) | Between March 1 and August 31, 2018: 1) Must notify FERC whether licensee intends to file or not to file an application for a new license 2) Within 90 days from notice, must file a schedule for the filing of a surrender application |
| 2019 | [Integrated Licensing Process] | [Once the Kinnickinnic River Corridor Plan is adopted, actions may commence towards its implementation. Activities for surrender and dam removal will be contingent upon FERC surrender requirements and guided by the approved Corridor Implementation and Funding Plan.] |
| 2020 | | |
| 2021 | | |
| 2022 | | |
| 2023 | License expires August 31, 2023 | License expires August 31, 2023 |