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PLAIN TALK



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The Vermillion City Council has agreed to a plan that reroutes a portion of the city bike trail. Some parts of the trail have been closed due to erosion issues along the Vermillion River.

(Photo by Travis Gulbrandson)

Erosion prompts reroute of bike trail section

By Travis Gulbrandson

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Erosion usually is discussed in terms relating to agriculture, but last week the city took steps to curb its effect on local hikers and cyclists.

Due to ongoing problems related to erosion, the Vermillion City Council voted to relocate a section of the Vermillion River Hike/Bike Trail and study two others for possible relocation.

Following the council's vote, the "East Section" of the trail that is falling into the river along the right-of-way of Austin Street will be relocated within the platted streets adjoining Block 3 and

Block 4 of the original City of Vermillion.

This section was closed to the public earlier this year.

City Engineer Jose Dominguez said this section would cost approximately \$38,000 and will require the 2013 budget to be revised for its inclusion.

"The erosion issues that are occurring along the Vermillion River are a natural cause that may have been expedited by the floods that occurred in 2009, 2010 and 2011," Dominguez said. "As may be seen by walking the trail, both banks of the river are experiencing – and have experienced in the past – the

bank erosion that is negatively affecting the trail."

In addition to the "East Section," two other parts of the trail have been closed off and will require rerouting.

The first is the "West Section," which is located directly south of the west trailhead located on West and Broadway streets.

Dominguez said an overlook above the bluff would need to be constructed next to the river where the trail was abandoned.

The second section is referred to as the "Middle Section," and can be found along the river adjacent to the southeast corner of some property on the 900 block of Broadway Street.

Dominguez recommended that the city consider constructing a new trail north within the South Walnut Street right-of-way toward the east/west alley within Block 4 of Van Meter's Addition. The trail would then go west along the alley until it reaches the Morse Street right-of-way, at which point it would go north to Broadway Street.

The cost of these options would be \$20,000 and \$84,000, respectively, Dominguez said.

Although the city council approved the relocation of the "East Section," they only identified the other two for further study.

When the city abandons its easements on the "East Section," the land will revert to the property owner, Dominguez said.

"We don't own the land, per se. The property owners are just letting us use it," he said.

As such, the concrete of the trail is required to be removed and the land restored, although Dominguez said he did not know if that will be possible because of the level of the river.

Dominguez added that if the council had not chosen to reroute the "East Section," repairs would

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City council approves 'wayfinding' signs

By Travis Gulbrandson

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The Vermillion City Council voted to install approximately 17 "wayfinding" signs throughout the community that will direct visitors to local points of interest.

The action was taken at the council's regular meeting on July 15.

The project will place signs near various locations around town, such as the downtown business district, city parks, the University of South Dakota Office of Admissions and Vermillion High School.

The project been under discussion for the past three years, and is estimated to cost approximately \$20,000, which was included in the 2013 BBB budget.

"I think it's a fabulous opportunity for us as a community, the (Vermillion Chamber &

Development Company), city staff and the council to look at developing a style guide for not only wayfinding signs, but also welcoming signs at the entry points (of the community)," said council member John Grayson.

The signage has been considered since 2010, when the city was approached by the University of South Dakota about installing signs along such streets as Cherry and Dakota to direct USD traffic to admissions.

However, due to the locations and types of signs involved, neither the South Dakota Department of Transportation (DOT) nor the city allowed their installation, City Engineer Jose Dominguez said.

According to a memo distributed to the city council, the signs did not meet the Manual on Uniform Traffic

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'BALLAD OF TRUTH'



Lady Locksley, portrayed by Jill Tyler, sings "Ballad of Truth" to her son, the young Robin Hood, played by Carson Johnsen, during Sunday's matinee performance of the Vermillion Community Theatre's production of "Robin Hood: Spirit of the Greene." The unique, homegrown musical, first presented 10 years ago, began a four-day run July 19. The last performance of the musical was staged in the Vermillion High School Performing Arts Center Monday night at 7 p.m. To see or purchase images from this event, visit spotted.plaintalk.net.

(Photo by David Lias)