



March 14, 2018

Dear Community Members:

**What's next for the Kinni Corridor in River Falls?**

After the City Council's recent passing of a resolution in support of the Kinni Corridor Committee's recommendation to relicense the hydroelectric facilities while planning for their eventual removal, the most common question we have been asked by community members is, "Now what?"

In late 2013, the City began the federal relicensing process for two hydroelectric dams on the Kinnickinnic River within the City. The Federal Energy Regulation Commission (FERC) granted an extension of the license term to 2023 and delayed any notice by the City to FERC until 2018.

In 2016, the City Council authorized the creation of a committee to help guide the community engagement and planning process for the Kinni Corridor Project. The Kinni Corridor Project Committee has been meeting regularly for the past 15 months to help guide the process and to provide needed input. The Committee is expected to provide a draft recommended plan to the City Council in 2019.

Prior to the February date, the Committee, along with the City staff and the consultant team, had created a website [www.kinnicorridor.org](http://www.kinnicorridor.org).

The Kinni Corridor Project Committee agreed to forward a recommendation to the City Council to endorse ultimate removal of both of the City's hydro facilities and to recommend that the City Council choose to relicense the City's hydro project for the last time, with a target date for removing the Powell Falls facility by 2026 and operating the Junction Falls for a longer period.

The City Council resolution sets an aggressive goal for removal of the lower dam of 2026 (the soonest practical according to our consultants), sets a target date for the upper dam removal of 2035-2040, and sets the groundwork for a public-private partnership for carrying out these steps in a fiscally responsible way (without the use of general property taxes.)

## So... Now What?

### **The Committee/The Plan**

*The Committee is only about half complete with its work on the Plan. You can find the timeline on the project website at: <http://www.kinnicorridor.org/about/10-kinni-corridor-project-planning-timeline-2016-2019>. The final plan is likely to be completed at the end of 2018 and will include an implementation timeline to be used by the community going forward.*

### **FERC/Relicensing**

Relicensing is being initiated and a Preliminary Application Document (PAD) will be submitted to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) by the end of August. This process will be led by the River Falls Municipal Utilities with the assistance of a consultant and the guidance of the City's Utility Advisory Board.

### **Public-Private Partnership (PPP or P3)**

Brainstorming and best practice modeling have begun. The formation of this group will take a back seat in the short-term to finishing the plan and relicensing efforts. It is estimated that the outline of a P3 would be developed over the next months and be formed sometime in 2019. This is the group/entity that will be charged with implementing the plan the community comes up with guided by the Corridor Committee's work and further community engagement.

### **Focus for the Community**

We believe the community's focus and engagement should continue to be with the Corridor Planning process and the various opportunities to shape the ultimate plan. Now that the determination of a corridor without dams has been made, the community can go about the work of visioning further what the corridor will look like 30 years from now and put that vision into a written plan and a draft implementation timeline.

We want to thank the community for their engagement and especially thank the Corridor Committee for its continued effort and leadership in helping the community determine its vision going forward.

We can take a deep breath and admire the work we did together. Then, shortly, we get to work again on the final plan.

  
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City Administrator