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Pedestrian bridge is a step in the right direction for Greenways

By Laura Hagan

Finding a way to connect two parts of the Oldham County Greenways project is no longer an issue and won't cost the county anything to build.

The process has begun to bring a new bike and pedestrian bridge to Oldham County as part of the county's Greenways project – connecting a path for cyclists and pedestrians from La Grange to Jefferson County.

Oldham officials recently approved a work order for URS Corporation to provide design and engineering services for a bike and pedestrian trail overpass project in the county.

The proposed bridge, located adjacent to Exit 17 off Interstate 71 and the active CSX railroad line, encompasses 600 feet and will be 10 feet in width.

"We've always had a major hole in that plan," Judge-Executive Duane Murner said, "how to get across Interstate 71."

The cost for design services is \$80,000, which requires no local match and will be reimbursed by a federal grant. Murner said the county has no monetary responsibility for the project, which costs a total of \$880,000.

Deputy Judge-Executive Paula Gish said the Greenways plan also ties in to the re-alignment of 393 – the trail will go up to and around Oldham County High School. The proximity to Wendell Moore Park, the Oldham County Aquatic Center and YMCA could also add to the foot and bike traffic on the path when it's completed.

She said the bridge project is something that would be tough for the county to fund and the county's lucky to have the project funded.

"We feel very fortunate," she said. "I think this will be a spark to keep everyone enthused about the (Greenways) plan," she said.

Emily Liu, interim director of planning and zoning said once the work order is approved, the process can begin. She anticipates design completion early next year.

Liu presented a rough draft of the proposed look of the project. Magistrate David Voegelé said he hoped the court will have final say on the design of the project.

"If we're given (some) alternatives, we should be able to choose the one we like," he said.

The county hopes to host a public forum in mid-October for residents to offer feedback on design ideas, but the project will take some time.

"Realistically, it could be a year or two before we walk across it," Gish said.

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