

City Council approves feasibility study for multi-use trail

MSA Professional Services will investigate two possible trails within city limits

By Marcus Neseemann
RIVER NEWS REPORTER

Bicyclists and their pedestrian friends could have two new trails to utilize within the city of Rhinelander by 2016 after the City Council on Monday authorized a contract with MSA Professional Services to complete a feasibility study and grant application.

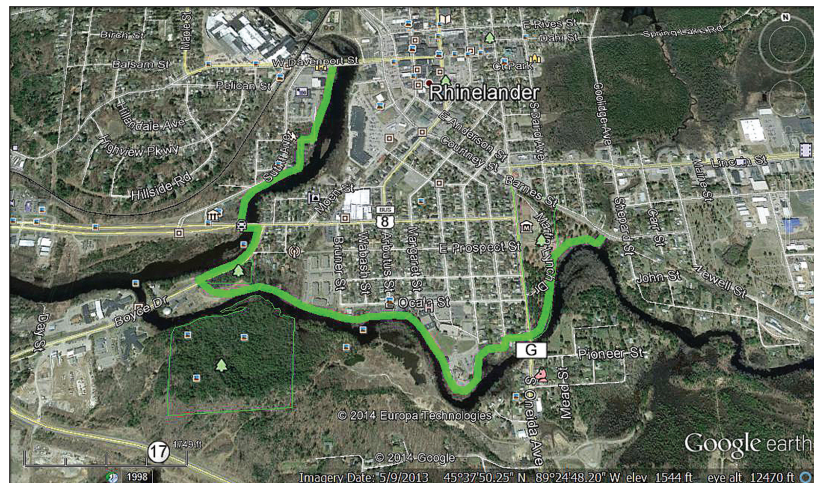
The city's Parks, Buildings and Grounds Committee approved the proposal immediately prior to the council meeting.

The cost of the study and application is \$14,000. The money will come from the city's debt service fund.

Some alderpersons hesitated after hearing the price tag and questioned whether this is an expense the city can afford. They pointed out that the city had to scramble to make cuts to the 2015 budget to cover a gap created by a drop in the city's assessed value.

One of the adjustments made to the budget included moving money set aside for a new police squad to the debt service fund.

Some alderpersons expressed concern over using the debt service fund for the project, however Alderman Alex Young, who



Submitted photo

The Rhinelander City Council on Monday approved a contract with MSA Professional Services to investigate the feasibility of two multi-use trails within the city limits. Alderman Alex Young created this map, which shows where the two trails could be located. The study will be used to finalize the trail locations.

took part in creating the plan for the two new trails, said they would be worth the investment.

"This is a capital project that's going to last way longer than a car's going to last when it's done," Young said.

"I think there's a big difference between building infra-

structure that's going to last you 20 or 30 years ... versus something like a squad car that's only going to last five (years)."

Young was able to ease the concerns of his fellow alderpersons and the council unanimously approved the proposal.

The trails

The specifics of the trails are not yet known, though broad outlines have been prepared to guide the study.

Jim Bollmann of MSA explained what the group would be doing in terms of the feasibility study.

See Trail, Page 9A