



For Immediate Release

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City of Kentwood Receives State Grant to Support Trail Improvements

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant Will Help Enhance Accessibility on Paul Henry Thornapple Trail

Kentwood, Michigan, Jan. 18, 2024 – The City of Kentwood has been awarded a \$300,000 grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund to support improvements to the Paul Henry Thornapple Trail.

MNRTF grants were awarded to eligible government agencies, school districts and recreation authorities. Groups across Michigan submitted funding applications which were evaluated based on criteria such as access to natural resources and proximity to large population groups. In its application, the City noted the Paul Henry Thornapple Trail’s interconnectedness within multiple Kentwood parks and surrounding cities and townships as well as its proximity to natural areas such as woods and ponds.

“We’re delighted to receive these funds from the Department of Natural Resources in support of our vision for Kentwood’s trail systems,” Mayor Stephen Kepley said. “The grant is one example of our promise to voters in 2022 when they approved the parks millage that we would continue to pursue grant funding, ensuring taxpayer dollars go as far as possible to fund park and trail improvements.”

The City plans to use the funds to replace and restore asphalt portions of the Paul Henry Thornapple Trail running from Kalamazoo Avenue SE and 44th Street to East Paris Avenue and 60th Street, for a total of 2.8 miles of trail. These updates will enhance trail accessibility and create a sustainable trail foundation.

“The Paul Henry Thornapple Trail is a well-used and well-loved recreation resource in our community,” said Val Romeo, Kentwood Parks and Recreation director. “We’re excited for this opportunity to invest in this resource so it can be enjoyed by community members of all ages and abilities for years to come.”

The funds will be distributed in the fall of 2024, and the City anticipates it will begin making trail improvements in 2025. A construction partner will be selected through the city’s bidding process.

The improvements will also be funded in part by the permanent parks millage passed in

August 2022.

More information about the parks millage and upcoming park and trail projects can be found at kentwood.us/millage.

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