

PUBLIC MEETING – MAY 16, 2018

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

Why are we making improvements to the detention basins?

This is the Easter Lake Watershed, and this is the watershed- all of this area drains through these ponds into Easter Lake. So, it's a good percentage of the actual overall watershed. You can imagine that if we can improve the water that is flowing through these ponds you can improve overall water quality in Easter Lake.

So, when they did their analysis in the 2012 study, they identified concerns and a few ideas of what they would do to these ponds. They were constructed in the 90s and into the early 2000s coinciding, and prior to, some of the housing development that continues to go on. The watershed itself has a mix of agriculture areas, undeveloped areas, there seems to be a lot of development that is occurring in the watershed that has its own water quality concerns, so it's a rapidly changing watershed.

One of the first things we did when we got involved in this study was see how full the basins were of sediment, because the theory was that over the last few years especially with all the construction going on inside the sub-basin that they would be full. Sure enough, they were about 25% to 30% full. That is about the time you should dredge. If you allow these basins to fill up too much over time they become less effective. The whole purpose of these (ponds) is detention, but really the major purpose is to clarify the water as it flows through. Stormwater flows over the surrounding watershed, it picks up a lot of grit and pollutants, and other things. What happens when it flows through these basins is, it has to travel all the way from the upstream to downstream end and drops out a lot of this material. Not only that, there is vegetation around the sides that provides water quality benefits. You can imagine as these things fill up, travel time becomes less, there's less volume to fill up these basins, and so they become less effective at clarifying water.

With Easter Lake being down right now, this is the perfect time to go in drain out the basins, dredge the basins while we're at it, make some additional improvements to try and improve the way these basins clarify water over the long term, and improve maintenance for the City of Des Moines as they look towards the long-term care of these facilities in the future.

Like Bruce said, the purpose of this meeting is to get your input on it. We have come up with some conceptual ideas of where we want to go – we call it a conceptual design. We come up with some definite improvements. We have not entered the detailed design phase which is when we put together the drawings and specifications that the contractor uses to construct. This is the time for you to put in your comments and get your ideas on this project and to hear what you have to say about it because now we are going to move into design and can incorporate those comments.

So this is the overall map of the basins. There's seven of them. Some of you live either around or near them. All the basins except basin 4 have been drained and the purpose of that is to consolidate the dredge material. It becomes much easier to remove that material if we allow it to dry out over a period of time, so that is why they have been drained.