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Title: A Resolution Supporting the City of Colorado Springs Inspire Initiative Grant Application to Great Outdoors Colorado on Behalf of the Pikes Peak Coalition

Presenter:
Karen Palus, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director
Tilah Larson, Senior Grants Analyst

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A Resolution Supporting the City of Colorado Springs Inspire Initiative Grant Application to Great Outdoors Colorado on Behalf of the Pikes Peak Coalition

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Summary:

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO)'s Inspire Initiative is a five-year strategy aimed at inspiring Coloradans, particularly kids, to appreciate, enjoy and take care of our great outdoors. The initial Inspire Initiative Grant supported a planning process to address the growing disconnect between youth and the outdoors. Upon completing the planning process communities have the opportunity to apply for up to \$3 million for implementation.

The Pikes Peak Region Coalition, which includes the City of Colorado Springs, is submitting an implementation grant focused on engaging the Hillside and Adams communities by creating nearby nature-based engagement opportunities at Prospect Lake and Fountain Park. Additionally, scaffolded programming and career pathways will create meaningful connections to the environment, build skills, and provide stewardship projects and job opportunities for youth.

Previous Council Action:

On December 8, 2015 City Council passed a resolution of acceptance supporting the agreement with

GOCO for funds for the “Out the Door Pikes Peak!” planning initiative.

Background:

The Pikes Peak Coalition is engaged in an 18-month planning process to develop solutions and break down barriers that limit youth’s meaningful engagement with nature. Barriers like time, transportation, money, access, and lack of interest and understanding keep kids from getting outside and developing the lifelong passion for the great outdoors.

The Pikes Peak Coalition focused on the Hillside and Adams neighborhoods as our target region. As part of the planning process and based on GOCO’s direction, the coalition identified opportunities for improvements to local places, programming that engages youth and families from the backyard to the backcountry, and career pathways that provide internships and job opportunities.

Local backyard improvements to parkland include expanding recreation opportunities at Fountain Park to incorporate a youth dedicated biking facility and nature-based improvements at Prospect Lake, such as creating a naturalized lake edge, expanding the playground facilities to include natural play components, a youth fishing pond, improvements to the beach house, and expanding on water play opportunities.

Programming and career pathways will be supported by local partners such as Catamount Institute, the YMCA, Rocky Mountain Field Institute, Mile High Youth Corps, UpaDowna, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, El Paso County Nature Centers, and Kids on Bikes. The programming matrix will provide meaningful and accessible engagement opportunities for youth ages 4-24 and families.

This item supports the City’s strategic goal relating to building community and collaborative relationships by bringing together a wide array of partner organizations to benefit the community’s youth through enhanced outdoor recreation and educational opportunities.

Financial Implications:

GOCO will award up to a \$3 million grant, which has a required 25% overall match with at least 10% cash and 15% in-kind.

Cash match for parkland improvements:

- \$250,000 from Parkland Dedication Ordinance Funds, which will be budgeted in 2018

Match requirements for programming and pathways:

- Each program provider is responsible for providing the necessary match for their proposed programming and career pathways

Additional in-kind services and grant opportunities will be sought in support of the grant.

Board/Commission Recommendation:

On May 11, 2017, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board reviewed and approved this Inspire Initiative grant application.

Stakeholder Process:

Staff has worked with members of the Hillside and Adams neighborhoods, Rogers and Adams Elementary Schools, and community youth through a variety of meetings and events.

- 1000+ responses from youth and adults through a community survey
- 534 youth engaged through outreach events

- 40 educators provided feedback
- 35 park users provided feedback during intercepts at Prospect Lake
- 63 community members provided feedback during an Adams Community Event at the school
- 26 community members provided feedback during a Hillside Food Pantry distribution event
- 38 community members participated in a motorized boating public meeting
- 33 community members participated in a Prospect Lake public meeting
- 4 community members participated in Fountain Park public meeting

Alternatives:

City Council may choose not to pass a Resolution of Support for GOCO Grant funds for the “Out the Door Pikes Peak!” implementation initiative. Doing so would preclude the Parks Department from pursuing a Great Outdoors Colorado Inspire Implementation grant in any dollar amount for the “Out the Door Pikes Peak!” effort and the Pikes Peak Coalition would not otherwise have the funding necessary to implement the proposed projects.

Proposed Motion:

Move approval of a Resolution of Support for a Great Outdoors Colorado grant request in the amount of \$3,000,000 for the “Out the Door Pikes Peak!” Inspire Initiative.

N/A