



Legislation Text

File #: 18-0197, **Version:** 1

A Resolution Authorizing the Acquisition of Approximately 31.918 Acres Owned by Jacob Snell and Shantell Snell for the Purpose of Public Open Space and Trails as an Extension of Cheyenne Mountain State Park

Presenter:

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Summary:

On April 1, 1997, an ordinance implementing a sales tax for trails, open space and parks (TOPS) was approved by the citizens of Colorado Springs. This tax went into effect on July 1, 1997. In 2003 this ordinance was amended to extend the TOPS sales tax through 2025. The TOPS Working Committee is responsible for setting priorities and making recommendations for the expenditures of TOPS funds. The TOPS Working Committee has identified the 31.918 acre Snell property located adjacent to Cheyenne Mountain State Park as having open space values that merit preservation. Acquisition of the Property would serve as an extension of Cheyenne Mountain State Park, and would provide future trail access for the Cheyenne Mountain Heritage Trail.

Previous Council Action:

N/A

Background:

The Snell parcel, more specifically known as Tax Schedule Number 75000-00-244, consists of approximately 40.25 acres. The Snell's desire is to sell 31.918 acres while retaining 8.33 acres and a home site for private ownership. The property is located west of Highway 115 at the terminus of Rock Creek Canyon Road and adjacent to Cheyenne Mountain State Park.

The 2014 Park System Master Plan identifies this area as an open space candidate. This area has some of the highest natural resource values in our community including unique geology, wildlife habitat, forests and the Rock Creek water resources. The TOPS Program partnered with Colorado State Parks in 2001 to acquire the original 1,600-acre Cheyenne Mountain State Park. Between 2008-2011 and in 2016, the City purchased additional property to the west of the Park to provide trail connections to the top of Cheyenne Mountain. The property provides an opportunity to advance the future development of the Cheyenne Mountain Heritage Trail, offering a truly unique trail experience circumnavigating the base of Cheyenne Mountain.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife has agreed to manage, maintain and operate the property. This management responsibility is consistent with other City owned property that comprises Cheyenne Mountain State Park. Public access to the property would be provided through Cheyenne Mountain

State Park, via the existing trail system within the Park.

Acquisition of the Snell property would include a permanent access easement through the 8.33-acres of property to remain in private ownership by the Snell's. The easement will serve as ingress/egress for management and maintenance purposes.

The Snell's have agreed to sell the property and associated permanent access easement for \$135,500, contingent on City Council approval. The acquisition will be purchased with TOPS Open Space funds.

This item supports the City's strategic goal relating to investing in infrastructure by expanding the green infrastructure of the community through the addition of park land.

Financial Implications:

Acquisition of the Property will require funding of \$135,500, plus \$3,500 in real estate transaction costs from the TOPS Open Space Category.

Colorado State Parks will be responsible for management, operations and maintenance of the Property. The City will amend the current Cheyenne Mountain Management Agreement between the City of Colorado Springs and Colorado State Parks to include the property.

Board/Commission Recommendation:

On April 4th, 2018 the TOPS Working Committee voted unanimously to recommend the acquisition of the property for the amount of \$135,500 with the TOPS Open Space funds. On April 12th, 2018, the Parks and Recreations Advisory Board voted unanimously to recommend acquisition of the property for the amount of \$135,500 with the TOPS Open Space funds.

Stakeholder Process:

The TOPS Working Committee meetings (February 7th and April 4th) and Parks Advisory Board meetings (February 8th, and April 12th) provided opportunities for public comment. In addition, TOPS staff has met with the manager of Cheyenne Mountain State Park who supports the acquisition of the property.

Alternatives:

City Council could decline to approve the acquisition of the property.

Proposed Motion:

Move approval of the acquisition of the property as an extension of Cheyenne Mountain State Park in the amount of \$135,500, plus \$3,500 in real estate transaction costs from the TOPS Open Space Category.

N/A