



Legislation Text

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Resolution of acceptance for a Great Outdoors Colorado Local Government Park and Outdoor Recreation Grant in the amount of \$350,000 for the Manitou Incline Trail Enhancement Project

Summary: In the fall of 2013, the City of Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department submitted a grant application to Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) requesting \$350,000 in funding to support the Manitou Incline Trail Enhancement Project. We are pleased to announce that this grant application was successful and GOCO has awarded the City the full \$350,000 request. This funding will supplement additional project dollars and will bring much needed repairs to the Incline, helping to make it safer and more sustainable for the more than 300,000 annual users of the trail. In order to receive the \$350,000 grant, Great Outdoors Colorado requires a Resolution of Acceptance from City Council (Attached - 'Exhibit A').

Great Outdoors Colorado's request for a Resolution of Acceptance is a requirement for any grant they award. The standard language within a Resolution of Acceptance states the City of Colorado Springs supports completion of the Manitou Incline Trail Enhancement Project and additionally contains the following three clauses:

1. City Council authorizes the Director of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department to sign a grant agreement with Great Outdoors Colorado for the Manitou Incline Trail Enhancement Project (Attached - 'Exhibit B').
2. City Council authorizes or has authorized the expenditure of necessary funds to meet the terms and obligations of the grant and grant agreement. Project funding is described in detail in the 'Financial Implications' section of this memo.
3. The Resolution will be in full force from the time of its passage.

It is important to note that all funds required for the Manitou Incline Trail Enhancement Project have been previously appropriated by City Council through a combination of Trails, Open Space, and Parks Program Funds (\$50,000) and Conservation Trust Funds (\$80,000). The combined \$130,000 in City funding represents approximately 8% of the total project budget.

If City Council chooses not to pass this Resolution of Acceptance the \$350,000 Great Outdoors Colorado grant will be forfeited. Alternatively, passing this Resolution of Acceptance will give the City \$350,000 in lottery-funded grant dollars to complete the Manitou Incline Trail Enhancement Project.

For many years, the City of Colorado Springs has worked closely with the City of Manitou Springs, the US Forest Service, Colorado Springs Utilities, the Manitou and Pike's Peak Railway, and the public to creatively and sustainably resolve issues that face the Incline. With the support of this Great Outdoors Colorado grant, a trail that was often viewed as a community nuisance now has the potential to become an unparalleled community asset.

Previous Council Action: City Council accepted the Manitou Incline Site Development and Management Plan at their February 22, 2011 meeting and subsequently entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Manitou Springs on February 28, 2012. On January 8,

2013, City Council approved the authorization of recreational use on the Mt. Manitou Incline. City Council passed a Resolution of Support for a Local Government Park and Outdoor Recreation Construction grant application to Great Outdoors Colorado on February 26, 2013.

Background: After many years of community discussion about the future of the Incline, in 2010, the Cities of Colorado Springs and Manitou Springs initiated a planning process that brought together the Incline property owners (Colorado Springs Utilities, Manitou and Pikes Peak Railway Company (COG), and US Forest Service (USFS)), users and area residents to create a Manitou Incline Site Development and Management Plan to guide the management, operation and legal opening of the Incline. The plan was accepted by the Colorado Springs and Manitou Springs city councils in 2011. The communities later entered into an IGA to establish the roles and responsibilities for each city. In addition, the City of Colorado Springs entered into an Executive Agreement with Colorado Springs Utilities, a License Agreement with the Manitou and Pikes Peak Railway Company, and a Special Use Permit with the USFS for use of the various segments along the Manitou Incline.

The final step to make this project a reality is to pass a Resolution of Acceptance for the \$350,000 Great Outdoors Colorado Grant. The trail enhancements cannot move forward without the financial contributions of all the project supporters, including GOCO.

Financial Implications: Established in the IGA with Manitou Springs, the City of Colorado Springs is responsible for the general oversight, trail enhancements, and maintenance of the Incline to include applying for grants to fund improvements. The cost to repair the Incline is roughly \$1.58 Million. Funds for the Manitou Incline Trail Enhancement Project have been compiled from a variety of sources. In 2012, \$50,000 was appropriated from the Trails, Open Space, and Parks Program (TOPS) (Trails Category) and \$80,000 was appropriated from Conservation Trust Funds (CTF). The City of Manitou Springs appropriated \$40,000 from their 2014 budget within the Barr Parking Lot Fund. Colorado Springs Utilities has contributed \$250,000. The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department was successful in receiving two large grants to assist with the construction, \$350,000 from Great Outdoors Colorado and \$200,000 from Colorado State Trails. The Incline sustained significant damage from the September flood event; as a result, the City has submitted a request to FEMA for \$556,486 in funding. Finally, the Incline Friends have been actively fundraising and are able to contribute \$60,000 for construction.

Passing a Resolution of Acceptance for this Great Outdoors Colorado grant award will not obligate the City to appropriate any additional funds or to undertake any new financial obligations. Grant funding was anticipated for this project, so an estimated amount was included in the grant allocation and appropriated as part of the 2014 budget. Since the City and our many project partners have secured the majority of required project costs, we believe it is in the best interest of the City to leverage these dollars by accepting this \$350,000 grant from Great Outdoors Colorado.

Board/Commission Recommendation: The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board received an update on the Great Outdoors Colorado grant award and the Manitou Incline Trail Enhancement Project at their May 8th board meeting. The Board supports moving forward with the planned project.

Stakeholder process: Beginning in 2010, the public process surrounding the Incline project has been extremely extensive and admirably inclusionary. From the first tentative steps towards legalizing the Incline to the creation of a Site Management and Development plan, stakeholders have been

regularly consulted and frequently relied upon for input. The insights gained through the stakeholder process have guided this project and led to the point where construction is now extremely close at hand.

The public and key stakeholders were similarly consulted as the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department prepared the Great Outdoors Colorado Grant application. City Council passed a Resolution of Support for the application in early 2013. The Incline Friends, the City of Manitou Springs, Congressman Doug Lamborn and others offered letters of support for the grant. Finally a petition of nearly 900 signatures from enthusiastic Incline hikers was submitted in support of the City's grant application.

As the project continues to progress, the Incline Oversight Committee (a group of Colorado Springs staff, Manitou Springs staff, and citizen representatives) will continue to provide oversight and input to guide project implementation and management of the Manitou Incline.

Alternative: Council is being asked to pass a Resolution of Acceptance for a Great Outdoors Colorado Local Government Park and Outdoor grant in the amount of \$350,000. Council may elect not to pass a Resolution of Acceptance. Doing so would forfeit all of the grant dollars.

Recommendation:

Pass a Resolution of Acceptance for a Great Outdoors Colorado Local Government Park and Outdoor Recreation Grant in the amount of \$350,000 for the Manitou Incline Trail Enhancement Project.

Proposed Motion: Move to accept a Great Outdoors Colorado Local Government Park and Outdoor Recreation Grant in the amount of \$350,000 for the Manitou Incline Trail Enhancement Project.