



Legislation Text

File #: 18-0124, **Version:** 2

Ordinance No. 18-32 amending Ordinance No. 17-116 (2018 Appropriation Ordinance) for a Supplemental Appropriation to the Pikes Peak - America's Mountain Fund in the Amount of \$13,500,000 for the Pikes Peak Summit Complex Project

Presenter:

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Summary:

The City of Colorado Springs Pikes Peak - America's Mountain division proposed and received approval for the design and construction of a new Pikes Peak Visitor Center. With the anticipated successful completion of the environmental assessment and design phase of project in May the division is preparing for the proposed construction groundbreaking in June 2018.

Previous Council Action:

N/A

Background:

Pikes Peak - America's Mountain (PPAM) is an enterprise operation of the City of Colorado Springs. PPAM operates the Pikes Peak Highway under a Term Special Use Permit issued by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). Included in the operation are the associated visitor facilities including the Summit House, Glen Cove Inn and Crystal Reservoir Gift Shop, and the Pikes Peak Recreational Corridor for activities such as hiking, picnic grounds, and interpretive trails. Revenue is primarily generated from gateway entry fees and concessionaire fees. These fees provide visitor and Ranger services, highway maintenance and construction, facility maintenance and construction, interpretive and educational services.

Pikes Peak - America's Mountain is one of the most visited mountains in the world and a top tourist attraction for the state of Colorado. Annually, more than 700,000 people reach the summit via the Pikes Peak Highway, the Broadmoor Pikes Peak Cog Railway (Railway) or by utilizing one of the hiking trails including Barr Trail. Pikes Peak is an American icon with tremendous history; it is a National Historic Landmark (NHL) and has deep meaning for the community and beyond.

The new Summit Visitor Center should provide a quality visitor experience that demonstrates the significance of Pikes Peak - America's Mountain. The completion of this project will restore the summit to its natural setting as well as preserve the visitor experience.

The current summit house was built in the 1960's. Three additional support facilities are located on the summit of Pikes Peak including a utility building (Plant) to support the summit house, a

communications building operated by Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) and a building operated by the United States Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine (USARIEM). All buildings have exceeded their useful life and need to be replaced.

Pikes Peak - America's Mountain staff presented a plan to the USFS recommending the consolidation of these facilities into a "summit complex" of two buildings: Visitor Center, Plant Building which will include support utilities and the CSU communication center with microwave tower, and a High Altitude Research Laboratory (HARL) for USARIEM. (Note: the buildings will be co-located and present a unified visual appearance.)

The summit complex concept was approved by the USFS in 2014. With this approval, the summit complex partners began project development with the ultimate goal of completing design, construction and summit restoration by the end of 2020. PPAM solicited and awarded services for the required environmental assessment, design, and construction management/general contractor services.

Currently, the PPAM team is anticipating the completion of the environmental assessment and subsequent completion of the design in May 2018. Current proposed ground breaking for the multi-year construction project is anticipated for June 2018.

This item supports the City's strategic goal relating to investing in infrastructure by replacing the current Summit House with a new energy-efficient facility that will provide a much-improved visitor experience.

Financial Implications:

The attached supplemental appropriation for \$13,500,000 will allow PPAM to begin construction of the Pikes Peak Summit Complex. The source of these funds is available from the available fund balance. These funds will be placed into the Summit Complex Project account which provides a clear auditable trail of the use of these funds.

Board/Commission Recommendation:

Pikes Peak - America's Mountain staff have presented to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board a project update annually since February 2015 that provided an update on the project and a review of the enterprise operation.

Stakeholder Process:

Initially, the USFS conducted a scoping meeting to begin the EA process on August 25, 2015. The PPAM enterprise division engaged the public in four public meetings: October 7, 2015, January 26, 2016, October 18, 2016 and June 1, 2017. Between the public meetings the PPAM division and its consultants explored alternatives that were raised by the public.

Alternatives:

Decline the supplemental appropriation.

Proposed Motion:

Move approval of the supplemental appropriation to the Pikes Peak - America's Mountain Fund in the Amount of \$13,500,000 for the Pikes Peak Summit Complex Project.

An Ordinance amending Ordinance No. 17-116 (2018 Appropriation Ordinance) for a supplemental appropriation to the Pikes Peak - America's Mountain Fund in the amount of \$13,500,000 for the Pikes Peak Summit Complex Project.