



Legislation Text

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A Resolution Supporting the Acceptance of a Grant from the Colorado Department of Transportation for the Rock Island Trail from Sand Creek Trail to Constitution Avenue Project

From:

Karen Palus, Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
Chris Lieber, Parks Development Manager

Summary:

The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department received a Transportation Enhancement grant in the amount of \$613,549 for the construction of the Tier 1 Rock Island Trail from the Sand Creek Trail to Constitution Avenue. This new 1.7 mile long trail segment will serve non-motorized commuters traveling on foot or by bicycle seeking to connect to the City's extensive trail system as well as recreationalist walkers, runners and bicyclists. Students attending Rocky Mountain Classic Academy and Horizon Middle School will also directly benefit from the completion of this project. In addition, this segment of trail will link residential areas and also commercial with numerous restaurants and retail businesses located at or near the intersection of Constitution and Powers.

The total cost of this project is anticipated to be approximately \$1.1 million dollars. \$613,549 will be provided by the Colorado Department of Transportation through the Transportation Enhancement Grant. The remaining budget cost of \$468,967 will be funded by TOPS Trail Funds previously appropriated by City Council in budget years 2014 and 2015. These TOPS Funds will serve additionally as a grant match to meet the requirements of the Colorado Department of Transportation grant agreement.

In order to receive the \$613,549 in Transportation Enhancement grant funds, City Council is required to pass a Resolution of Grant Acceptance that approves the acceptance of the grant and states that the Mayor of Colorado Springs will sign a Grant Agreement with the Colorado Department of Transportation for the Rock Island Trail project. On April 9th, the Park and Recreation Advisory Board voted unanimously recommending that City Council pass a Resolution of Grant Acceptance for this project.

Previous Council Action:

City Council appropriated \$468,967 in TOPS Funds in budget years 2014 and 2015 for this project.

Background:

The City of Colorado Springs first began construction of the Rock Island Trail in the mid 1980's. This proposed project represents an important and logical next step in the extension of the Rock Island Trail to the east. For the first time, the Cimarron Hills Neighborhood and Stetson Hills Neighborhoods, located east of Powers Boulevard, will have direct access to the extensive Colorado Springs Trail

System. This proposed project also enhances the Sand Creek Trail project, Palmer Park to Constitution, by providing an extension of the Rock Island trail via the Sand Creek Trail. In Colorado Springs, there are very few trails available for commuter and recreational users east of Powers Boulevard. In most recent years, development in Colorado Springs has expanded east of Powers Boulevard at an accelerated rate. The completion of this key segment of non-motorized trail the next logical section of trail towards the eventual connection to El Paso County's completed segment of the Rock Island Trail in Falcon.

The Rock Island Trail is the primary east/west trail corridor serving Colorado Springs. The 2014 Park System has identified the Rock Island Trail Corridor as a high-priority trail corridor for Colorado Springs. This important trail will eventually connect to the Pikes Peak Greenway, the Banning Lewis Ranch area and eastern El Paso County. The existing segments of the Rock Island Trails currently serve thousands of residents west of Powers Boulevard. The completion of this proposed project will provide immediate access to the east side of Powers Boulevard. This proposal focuses on the section of trail between the Sand Creek Trail and Constitution Avenue. The proposed trail will allow users to travel safely through the Cimarron Hills neighborhood while enjoying the view of beautiful Pikes Peak. A pedestrian bridge will be installed to travel safely over Sand Creek. It also provides key connections to neighborhoods, shopping areas at Constitution and Powers, Rocky Mountain Classic Academy Elementary School and Horizon Middle School.

In 2012 the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department submitted a grant application for the 2013-2018 Transportation Enhancement grant round for this project. The \$613,549 application was successful and pending passage of a Resolution of Acceptance by City Council, construction of the Rock Island Trail from Constitution Avenue to the Sand Creek Trail project will proceed in late 2015. The funds provided by this grant will leverage already allocated TOPS trail funds to create a trail project that is larger in scope and more beneficial in outcome than would be possible with the support of Transportation Enhancement funds.

Transportation Enhancement grants are Federal funds made available to the Colorado Department of Transportation to support projects including the construction of Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities. The City as well as the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department have been the recipient of multiple Transportation Enhancement grants in the past. In order to receive Transportation Enhancement funds, City Council must pass a Resolution of Acceptance and the City must enter into a grant agreement with the Colorado Department of Transportation.

Financial Implications:

The Rock Island Trail- Sand Creek Trail to Constitution Avenue project is estimated to cost \$1,082,516. \$468,967 in TOPS funds has been appropriated in 2014 and 2015 for this project and currently available for expenditure. By passing a Resolution of Acceptance, the City will receive an additional \$613,549 in Transportation Enhancement Grant funds to complete the Rock Island Trail from Sand Creek Trail to Constitution Avenue. Acceptance of this grant does not require further appropriation of funds.

Board/Commission Recommendation:

On April 9th, the Park and Recreation Advisory Board voted unanimously recommending that City Council pass a Resolution of Grant Acceptance for the Rock Island Trail from Sand Creek Trail to Constitution Avenue project.

Stakeholder Process:

The 2014 Park System Master Plan identifies the Rock Island Corridor as a high-priority trail corridor for both active transportation commuters and recreational trail users. The plan encourages continued development of the Rock Island Trail in order to serve citizens living in eastern Colorado Springs. The Park System Master was developed with public input gathered through an extensive public outreach process. The plan was adopted by City Council in 2014.

Alternatives:

City Council may choose not to pass a Resolution of Acceptance for the Transportation Enhancement grant funds for the Rock Island Trail- Sand Creek Trail to Constitution Avenue. Doing so would forfeit \$613,549 in Transportation Enhancement grant funds that would otherwise supplement \$468,967 in already appropriated TOPS funds dedicated to this project.

Proposed Motion:

Pass a Resolution of Acceptance to receive \$613,549 in Transportation Enhancement grant funds for the Rock Island Trail Project.

N/A