



Legislation Text

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A Resolution Supporting the City of Colorado Springs Sponsorship of a Ring the Peak Planning Grant Application to Great Outdoors Colorado

Presenter:

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Summary:

The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department proposes to sponsor a Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Connect Initiative grant application, "Complete the Ring Planning Project" on behalf of the Trails and Open Space Coalition and Friends of the Peak. The \$100,000 grant application will assist with engaging in a planning process to close an 8 to 12 mile gap in the Ring the Peak Trail on the southwest side of Pikes Peak. Trails and Open Space Coalition and Friends of the Peak are the primary partners leading the proposed planning process. A Memorandum of Understanding will define the roles and the responsibilities of the City and primary partners.

The proposed planning process will build on current efforts in identifying and providing a non-motorized recreational trail that will complete the southwest Ring the Peak trail gap that may be used by a variety of user groups wishing to circumnavigate Pikes Peak. As part of this process, the partners have identified the major constraints on trail locations such as protecting municipal water supplies and sensitive wildlife habitat, as well as preserving private property rights. The major deliverable of the planning grant will be a "Connect the Ring Master Plan" to be produced by an experienced and qualified consultant team hired as part of the planning process. A vetted master plan will assist with facilitating the construction and implementation phases of the project.

The grant application will request \$100,000 from GOCO and the required matching dollars include \$5,000 from TOSC and \$5,000 from Friends of the Peak. At least \$15,000 of in-kind grant support from TOSC, Friends of the Peak and Palmer Land Trust will be included in the grant application budget. The current TOSC effort for Ring the Peak is partially funded by the El Pomar Foundation (\$7,500) and the Pikes Peak Community Foundation (\$1,500) for TOSC staff's time commitment to the project.

No City funds are requested in support of this application or planning project.

Previous Council Action:

N/A

Background:

GOCO's Connect Initiative seeks to further its new strategy of connecting Coloradoans to the outdoors by assisting communities in developing safe, non-motorized trail systems that provide access to outdoor destinations and experiences. The Ring the Peak Trail has been designated by the Governor's office as one of the 16 trail gaps to close in 2016. In March 2016, TOSC submitted a concept paper in response to the

GOCO request for proposals for the Connect Initiative. The proposal for Ring the Peak was not sufficiently 'shovel ready' for implementation funding, but was recommended for a planning grant application. This item supports the City's strategic goal related to building community and collaborative relationships by working with TOSC to further enhance and preserve connectivity between trails, open spaces and parks within the Pikes Peak region.

Financial Implications:

The City has agreed to sponsor the partner non-profits as GOCO requires that a qualified government agency submit the application, and receive and disburse funds for this planning grant. No City funds are needed nor requested as part of this sponsorship application.

Board/Commission Recommendation:

On September 8, the Park and Recreation Advisory Board will review this resolution and the grant submission request.

Stakeholder Process:

The Cities of Cripple Creek, Victor, Manitou Springs and Teller and El Paso Counties have been engaged and are aware of this planning grant application to GOCO. To date, letters of support have been received by TOSC from Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department, El Paso and Teller Counties and the City of Manitou Springs. The Bureau of Land Management has provided a letter of support, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife has agreed to provide a letter of support. Tourism and business interests that have provided letters of support for Ring the Peak include Colorado Visitors and Convention Bureau, Colorado Regional Business Alliance, Norwood and the Heritage Tourism manager for the City of Cripple Creek.

Alternatives:

City Council may choose not to pass a Resolution of Sponsorship for the Ring the Peak Planning grant application. Doing so would limit the ability of TOSC and Friends of the Peak to apply for a GOCO planning grant and would result in a loss of traction afforded by the 16 in '16 State designation of the Ring the Peak Trail.

Proposed Motion:

Pass the Resolution supporting the City's sponsorship of the Ring the Peak Planning Grant application to Great Outdoors Colorado.

N/A