



Legislation Text

File #: 22-672, **Version:** 3

Ordinance No. 22-77 amending Ordinance No. 21-112 (2022 Budget Appropriation Ordinance) for a supplemental appropriation to the Trails, Open Space and Parks (TOPS) fund in the amount of \$275,000 for the master and management plan and implementation at the Blodgett Open Space

Presenter:

Britt Haley, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, Director Nominee
David Deitemeyer, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, Senior Landscape Architect
Chris Fiandaca, City Budget Manager

Summary:

The attached ordinance is a supplemental appropriation to increase the 2022 TOPS budget and appropriate funds in the amount of \$275,000 for the purpose of a master and management plan for the Blodgett and Pikeview Buffer Open Space properties (hereinafter referred to as “Blodgett Open Space”). The source of funds is the current TOPS available fund balance which is estimated to be \$5,772,815. Of the \$275,000 requested, approximately \$200,000 is anticipated for the planning process and the remainder of the funds would be expended on implementation of initial master and management plan recommendations.

Background:

The TOPS Program acquired the initial 167 acres of Blodgett Open Space, on the northwest side of Colorado Springs, in the Spring of 2001. In 2003, a new master plan was developed for the purpose of providing public access, resource inventory, wildlife habitat, trail development, and resource conservation.

In 2018, the TOPS Programs acquired 64 acres on the southern boundary of the existing Blodgett Open Space. In the following year, staff conducted an interim master plan for sustainable public access, public use, wildlife conservation and land management of the 64 acres. The Blodgett Open Space Interim Master Plan provided the addition of a 15-vehicle space trailhead, known as the South Blodgett Trailhead, the construction of approximately 800 linear feet of new trail for improved trail connections to the original open space, and the adoption of the existing access roads into the trail system for public use.

In the fall of 2020 and spring of 2021, the TOPS Program acquired an additional 153 acres (in two phases) adjacent to and further south of Blodgett Open Space. This portion of the open space, referred to as the “Pikeview Buffer” abuts the Oak Valley neighborhood to the east, and the Pikeview Quarry to the west and has historically been used socially for hiking, biking, enjoying wildlife and dog walking.

With the recent acquisitions, the significant need and opportunity has grown for the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department to conduct a new master and management plan for

this entire area of open space. The new master and management plan allows the Department to conduct a holistic public process for the 384-acre open space. This will include planning for future conservation and development of the entirety of the Blodgett Open Space, balancing public access and use with the preservation and conservation of the natural and cultural resources as well as development and implementation of a strategic land management plan. The new master and management plan will provide guidance over the next 10-15 years.

The need for an updated Blodgett Open Space master and management plan was identified over the last few years through dialog with the Friends of Peregrine Parks and Open Spaces, adjacent neighbors, and community members. During consideration of the 2023 TOPS Capital Improvement Projects budget development presentations, several of the TOPS Working Committee and Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Advisory Board members expressed their support for an updated master plan for Blodgett Open Space

Previous Council Action:

On December 14, 2021, City Council approved the 2022 Budget per Ordinance No. 21-112, which included the appropriation of the TOPS Fund.

Financial Implications:

The supplemental appropriation increases the 2022 TOPS Fund expenditure budget by \$275,000 and does not affect the General Fund budget or fund balance. The source of these funds is the TOPS available fund balance, in the open space category. The current estimated TOPS fund balance is approximately \$5,772,815, and after this supplemental appropriation it will be approximately \$5,497,815.

City Council Appointed Board/Commission/Committee Recommendation:

The TOPS Working Committee is responsible for recommending projects for the expenditure of TOPS funds. The supplemental appropriation request for the master and management plan is for \$275,000 from the TOPS fund balance, currently estimated at \$5,772,815. The TOPS Working Committee recommended approval of the supplemental appropriation request at the August 3rd, 2022, meeting.

The supplemental appropriation request was presented to the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Advisory Board on August 11th, 2022 and they subsequently recommended approval of the item unanimously at their September 8th, 2022 meeting.

This request was presented to the City Council Budget Committee on October 11, 2022.

Stakeholder Process:

The TOPS Working Committee meetings and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board meetings provide opportunity for public comment on the request for a supplemental appropriation from 2022 TOPS funds.

Alternatives:

N/A

Proposed Motion:

An Ordinance Amending Ordinance No. 21-112 (2022 Budget Appropriation Ordinance) for a Supplemental Appropriation to the Trails, Opens Space and Parks (TOPS) Fund in the amount of \$275,000 for the Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan

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