



## Legislation Text

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A Resolution Supporting the City of Colorado Springs Sponsorship of a School Yard Initiative Grant Application to Great Outdoors Colorado on Behalf of Thomas Edison Elementary

**Presenter:**

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**Summary:**

The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department proposes to sponsor a Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) School Yard Initiative grant application on behalf of Thomas Edison Elementary. The \$110,000 grant application will assist with supporting the construction of unstructured play and outdoor learning facilities for youth. An Intergovernmental Agreement will define the roles and the responsibilities of the City and the primary partner.

The school will replace aging metal play sets, fields of pea gravel and cracking concrete slabs with nature-inspired climbing structures, soft all-weather surfaces, play and learning areas featuring natural materials like four-season sensory gardens, outdoor classrooms, or water features that can simulate floods and erosion. The project may also include traditional play equipment to complement natural components and provide a variety of play opportunities.

The grant application will request \$110,000 from GOCO and the required matching dollars will be raised by the school.

**Previous Council Action:**

N/A

**Background:**

GOCO's School Yard Initiative aims to create school grounds that inspire more active physical play and enhance learning about nature and the environment. Because all School Yard Initiative projects are required to be open to the public during non-school hours, the benefits extend far beyond the student body.

School Yard Initiative grants support schools and local governments in constructing outdoor spaces where kids have frequent opportunities for unstructured play and outdoor learning. All school yards must be designed, in part, by the student population to ensure the components constructed are the most appealing and beneficial to the users they will serve. This program emphasizes projects that reach underserved youth and families who may otherwise have limited access to quality parks.

This item supports the City's strategic goal relating to building community and collaborative

relationships through the opportunity to support this grant application which, if successful, will result in additional play spaces that further enhance our community's park system.

**Financial Implications:**

The City has agreed to sponsor the partner school as GOCO requires that a qualified government agency submit the application, and receive and disburse funds for this planning grant. City funds are neither needed nor requested as part of this sponsorship application.

**Board/Commission Recommendation:**

The Park and Recreation Advisory Board voted in support of the sponsorship at their Oct 13, 2016 meeting.

**Stakeholder Process:**

GOCO requires that the school undertake a planning process with their students as part of the grant application. The school has engaged the students they serve to ensure that the playground facility meets their needs and desires.

**Alternatives:**

City Council may choose not to pass a resolution supporting the grant application. Doing so would limit the ability of the school to apply for a GOCO School Yard Initiative grant.

**Proposed Motion:**

Move to Approve the Resolution of Support for the City of Colorado Springs Sponsorship of the School Yard Initiative Grant to Great Outdoors Colorado on Behalf of Thomas Edison Elementary

N/A