



## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 16-620, **Version:** 1

---

### A Resolution Supporting an Application to Great Outdoors Colorado for the John Venezia Community Park Universally Accessible Playgrounds

#### **Presenter:**

Karen Palus, Director - Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services  
Tilah Larson, Senior Grants Analyst - Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

#### **Summary:**

The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department is currently seeking a \$350,000 Great Outdoors Colorado grant for the equipment and construction of the playgrounds within the John Venezia Community Park. Should the grant request be successful, the Great Outdoors Colorado funds will help to provide the necessary funding to ensure that the play equipment at the Venezia Park meets not just ADA-accessible standards, but also meets the more stringent universally-accessible rating. In doing so, the playground at our newest community park will become one of the region's most accessible and inclusive playgrounds.

Great Outdoors Colorado offers competitive grants to eligible entities for a variety of park, trail and open space needs across Colorado. Great Outdoors Colorado grants are wholly funded through state lottery proceeds. Staff is seeking a Resolution of Support from City Council as a necessary step to completing a Great Outdoors Colorado Grant Application.

#### **Previous Council Action:**

City Council approved the 2015 application to GOCO for this project.

#### **Background:**

In accordance with the Colorado Springs Parks System Master Plan recently completed in 2015, the City pursues a variety of park facilities and recreation opportunities for the Colorado Springs community. The Master Plan identifies a significant deficit of large developed community parks in the northern reaches of Colorado Springs. In 2005, the John Venezia Community Park site was identified as a priority for development; support for construction of the park was reiterated during the development of the 2015-2025 Parks System Master Plan public process.

In 2006 an extensive public master plan process was conducted for the John Venezia Community Park and development patterns all indicated the need for development of the John Venezia Community Park site. In 2009 the original John Venezia Community Park Master Plan was approved by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. However, due to funding issues and the economic downturn, the construction of the community park was placed on hold indefinitely.

During the fall of 2014, funding solutions became available to aid in the initial phases of construction

of the community park. When additional funding was identified, the Parks Department again took the master plan to the community to ensure the plan would meet the recreational needs of the community. An additional three public meetings and re-approval by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board resulted in the current Venezia Park plan.

The City previously submitted an application to GOCO in 2015, but our proposal was not funded since we did not have specific play elements identified in the application. We have since selected the playground elements and can provide the necessary specificity sought by GOCO's review board.

Construction of John Venezia Community Park is currently underway and we anticipate constructing the playground in spring 2017. This item supports the City's strategic goal relating to investing in infrastructure and building community through the addition of a much-needed community park in northeast Colorado Springs.

#### **Financial Implications:**

The City has already appropriated roughly \$2 million dollars from the TOPS Program and \$7.5 million from Parkland Dedication Ordinance (PLDO) funds. In the 2017 budget, an additional \$800,000 is proposed from the TOPS Program. Construction of John Venezia Community Park is anticipated to total \$12 million. Receiving this \$350,000 GOCO grant will allow the Parks Department to stretch our dollars.

#### **Board/Commission Recommendation:**

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board previously reviewed this application and was provided an update regarding the application at their October 13, 2016 meeting where they reiterated their support for the project and the application to GOCO.

#### **Stakeholder Process:**

Enter stakeholder process. Enter N/A if not applicable.

#### **Alternatives:**

In 2006 an extensive public master plan process was conducted for the John Venezia Community Park. This planning process engaged the community in three public meetings which established the vision and programming for the park. Demographics, geographic deficiencies in community parkland, current user trends, and recent development patterns all indicate the need for development of the John Venezia Community Park site.

In 2009 the original John Venezia Community Park Master Plan was approved by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. However, due to funding issues and the economic downturn, the construction of the community park was placed on hold indefinitely.

During the fall of 2014, funding solutions became available to aid in the initial phases of construction of the community park. When additional funding was identified, the Parks Department again took the master plan to the community to ensure the plan would meet the recreational needs of the community. In addition to taking the master plan design back to the community, two additional public meetings were held to determine what playground equipment was desired. Prior to a selection of the playground equipment, the Parks Department presented the eight options received to the 4th grade class at Academy International Elementary School and to a group of parents with children who have a disability, professionals who work with children and adults with disabilities, and the general public.

During these two public meetings we were able to hear what the children, parents and professions, wanted to see in the playground and were able to incorporate those elements in the final design.

**Proposed Motion:**

Move Approval of the Resolution Supporting an Application to Great Outdoors Colorado for the John Venezia Community Park Universally Accessible Playgrounds

N/A