



Board Summary Report

Date: March 13, 2019

To: Board of County Commissioners

Through: Shannon Carter, Open Spaces Department Director

From: Josh Tenneson, Grants and Acquisitions Manager

Subject: Joint Project Funding Request – Triple Creek Trail Construction Project

Direction/Information: To provide information and seek direction on a proposal from the City of Aurora requesting funding for the Triple Creek Trail Construction Project.

Request and Recommendation:

The recommendation from Open Spaces staff and the Open Space Trails Advisory Board (“OSTAB”) to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) is to approve the funding request from the City of Aurora for \$500,000 towards the Triple Creek Trail Construction Project as is further described below.

Background:

The long-range vision for the Triple Creek Greenway Corridor is to create a continuous 27-mile corridor that stretches from the South Platte River in north Denver that follows Sand Creek and its tributaries south to the Aurora Reservoir and Arapahoe County Fairgrounds. The Triple Creek Greenway Corridor project will create 14 miles of new trail and greenway in east Aurora and unincorporated Arapahoe County. The project will provide significant regional benefits for thousands of bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians by creating new access points and trail connections.

Since 2009, Arapahoe County has helped fund the planning and property acquisitions required for the trail through four separate joint projects (totaling \$4,205,000). After a decade of planning and property acquisitions, the City of Aurora is now poised to begin constructing the Triple Creek Trail, beginning in the northern portion of the greenway.

Links to Align Arapahoe:

- Increase Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Increase Community and Regional Partnerships
- Improve Park, Trail and Open Space Opportunities
- Improve Customer Experience
- Optimize Use of Resources
- Enhance Quality of Life

Discussion:

This joint project will construct approximately three miles of trail from Aurora Sports Park to Gun Club Road along the Triple Creek Corridor. In keeping with the Triple Creek Greenway Corridor Study, this regional trail will be primarily soft surface to be horse-friendly and compatible with the character of the

natural environment. The portion of the trail that will be concrete is located at low water crossings and where it provides a link to the Stephen D. Hogan Parkway (6th Avenue) sidewalk. The project will also include several creek low water crossings, roadway crossings, and a trailhead at the property on Gun Club Road.

Project highlights include:

- Three miles of trail
- 8' wide soft surface
- 6' wide concrete near low water crossings
- Four low water crossings
- Two shared low water crossings with E-470/High Plains Trail (in addition to the other 4)
- Connections to 6th Ave Parkway (aka Stephen D Hogan Parkway)
- Concrete pathway under E-470
- One at-grade crossing (Piccadilly Rd)
- Small trailhead (20 cars)

A consultant team and staff from a number of Aurora departments have defined the trail alignment and details, and construction documents are approximately 75% complete. The final bid package will be reviewed and ready for advertisement as early as May 2019, but it will be held until full funding is in place.

Project urgency:

The timing is critical to construct the Triple Creek Trail segment for the following reasons:

1. Triple Creek Trailhead – the completion of the trailhead on Colfax and Tower Road this summer will encourage new users to explore open spaces in this part of the county. By constructing the Triple Creek Trail, users will be aware of well-defined, safe, environmentally friendly access to and through these areas.
2. Stephen D. Hogan Parkway (6th Avenue Extension) – construction of the road extension is underway, the road crosses the Triple Creek Corridor, and it is anticipated to be complete in the fall of 2019. Construction of the Triple Creek Trail through this area immediately following the parkway will provide pedestrian and bicycle connections as well as help speed the recovery of wildlife connections and vegetation in the area.
3. High Plains Trail Construction – The continuation of the High Plains Trail north of Quincy to tie in with 6th Avenue Parkway will be undertaken in the next year by E-470. Coordination of design and construction of the connections between this trail and Triple Creek are critical, especially given grades and drainage issues where the highway crosses Coal Creek.

Project budget:

Funding for this project would be comprised of \$500,000 from Aurora (currently available), \$500,000 from Arapahoe County Open Spaces Joint Project Funds (current request), and \$2,000,000 from a Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Connect Grant (pending request). The GOCO Connect Grant concept papers are due in April, with final award notification in the fall of 2019.

Alternatives:

Delay, modify or deny funding.

Fiscal Impact:

The Open Space Resolution authorizes the County to contribute funds from the Open Space Sales and Use Tax for eligible joint projects between the County and municipalities or other governmental entities in the County. \$500,000 of Joint Project funding from the Open Space Acquisition and Development Fund pledged to the East Metro Working Group will go towards this project. The fund balance exceeds this amount, and there will be \$1,840,000 left in the BOCC pledge to the working group if the BOCC approves this funding request. Furthermore, Arapahoe County will not incur annual maintenance costs for this project

Concurrence:

East Metro Working Group concurs with this recommendation.
OSTAB unanimously concurs with this recommendation.

Attorney Comments:

None

Reviewed By:

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Grants and Acquisitions Manager

Shannon Carter, Director
Intergovernmental Relations and Open Spaces

Tiffanie Bleau
Assistant County Attorney

Janet Kennedy, Director
Finance

Attachments:

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