



AGENDA MEMORANDUM

One-Reading Ordinance for the City Council Meeting of November 15, 2022

DATE: November 15, 2022

TO: Peter Zanoni, City Manager

FROM: Robert Dodd, Director of Parks and Recreation Department
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Coastal Management Program Grant

CAPTION:

One-reading ordinance authorizing the acceptance of the Coastal Management Program Grant from the Texas General Land Office in the amount of \$175,000 for Phase 1 of the Oso Bay Hike and Bike Trail project along the Old Tex-Mex railway spur in City Council District Four, with \$117,060 in-kind match from the Parks and Recreation Department; and appropriating \$175,000 into the Parks and Recreation Grants Fund.

SUMMARY:

The Parks and Recreation Department will use the Coastal Management Plan Grant funds to complete Phase 1 of the Oso Bay Hike and Bike trail project along the Old Tex-Mex railway spur, which runs from Flour Bluff to the Oso Bay Wetlands Preserve.

BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS:

Flour Bluff is an area with unique recreational opportunities for its approximately 24,000 residents and thousands of annual visitors. In 2021, during the adoption process for the City's new Area Development Plan, a hike and bike trail concept was introduced and ranked as a priority by area residents. The desire for a hike and bike trail also was expressed during multiple Flour Bluff Citizens Council (FBCC) meetings. The proposed, conceptual trail would connect the recreational opportunities available in Flour Bluff to the Oso Bay Wetlands Preserve. The connection would be accomplished by repurposing the route of the Old Tex-Mex railway spur into a hike and bike trail.

The overall goal of the proposed project is to create a recreational connection from the Flour Bluff area into the Oso Bay Wetlands Preserve. The Coastal Management Program (CMP) funds will help to fund the repurposing of the Old Tex-Mex railway spur into an ADA accessible hike and bike trail that would connect and expand the area into an already established Hike and Bike Oso Bay Wetlands Preserve Trail. The hike and bike trail would ultimately provide non-motorized access for hiking, fishing, wildlife viewing, and kayak launching. The project also would have the potential to elevate the Flour Bluff community into a regionally recognized outdoor destination for recreationists and environmental stewardship.

The project must be done in phases as required by the Texas General Land Office's CMP Grant contract. Phase 1 of the project will focus on completing a feasibility and structural engineering

assessment of the existing railroad trestle along the Old Tex-Mex railway spur and developing a Master Plan. Phase 1 of the project is estimated to cost \$175,000. The total project cost is not yet determined, as Phase 1 needs to be completed in order for a total project cost to be estimated. Phase 1 focuses on a feasibility and structural engineering assessment to confirm that the project can be done along the Old Tex-Mex railway spur running across the bridge. The total length of trestle bridge is less than .50 miles. However, the trail would be designed so that in the future the trail length could be increased. The project is estimated to be completed in 18 months. The timeline is from December 2022 to May 2024.

The fiscal impact in FY 2023 from the General Fund is a \$15,000 in-kind match for printing stakeholder engagement materials, as well as volunteer labor to assist with stakeholder engagement. The in-kind match also includes \$102,060 for salaries and benefits for three staff: Director of Parks & Recreation, Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation, and a Landscape Architect from Parks & Recreation. The CMP Grant requires the in-kind match for three staff members that will work on project.

The City's current 10-Year Parks & Recreation Master Plan highlights hike and bike trails as a top recreational priority for Corpus Christi residents. The need for hike and bike trails and additional public access to outdoor recreation areas in Flour Bluff also was a priority in the survey results collected from the City's consultant, Halff & Associates, during the most recent 10-Year Parks & Recreation Master Planning process.

The area that is being considered for the proposed hike and bike trail is negatively impacted by illegal dumping and illegal fires. Additionally, the existing road to the the Old Tex-Mex railway spur has not been maintained. Converting this area to a useable recreational space for the public would not only enhance public access for recreational purposes and align with the current 10-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan, but also it would reduce the amount of ongoing public safety issues.

ALTERNATIVES:

The alternative is not to approve the acceptance of the Coastal Management Program Grant; however, this would not help to enhance public access to recreation and not resolve public safety issues in the vicinity. If this grant is not accepted, staff will work to identify funding elsewhere.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The fiscal impact in FY 2023 from the General Fund is a \$15,000 in-kind match for printing stakeholder engagement materials, as well as volunteer labor to assist with stakeholder engagement. The in-kind match also includes \$102,060 for salaries and benefits for three staff: Director of Parks & Recreation, Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation, and a Landscape Architect from Parks & Recreation. The CMP Grant requires the in-kind match for three staff members that will work on project.

Funding Detail:

Fund: 1067 Parks and Recreation Grants
Activity #: 824310 CPM Cycle -27
Mission Element: 142
Project # (CIP Only): N/A
Account: 530000 Professional Services

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the acceptance of the Coastal Management Program Grant, Texas General Land Office, as presented.

LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

- General Land Office Contract
- Application
- Work Plan and Budget
- Ordinance