



AGENDA MEMORANDUM

Corpus Christi B Corporation Meeting of January 20, 2020

DATE: January 7, 2020

TO: President and Honorable Board Members,
Corpus Christi Business and Job Development Corporation

FROM: Mike Culbertson, COO, CCREDC
mculbertson@ccredc.com
(361) 882-7448

Grant for Botanical Gardens

CAPTION:

Motion authorizing a business incentive agreement with The Botanical and Nature Institute of South Texas, Inc. dba South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center in the amount of \$89,000 for the resurfacing of the nature trail at 8545 South Staples Street

PURPOSE:

The company is requesting the grant to improve a nature trail.

BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS:

The South Texas Botanical Gardens and Nature Center is requesting \$89,000 for the installation of 3500 feet of new A.D.A. accessible trails to increase visitor access to more remote natural areas adjacent to Oso Creek referred to as Oso Creek Ridge. The proposed caliche/granite trail will replace existing grass/mulch trails in this area which are not accessible after rain. The new 10-foot wide trail will be constructed with a 4-inch caliche base and 1-inch decomposed granite top, an affordable, commonly used trail option that provides a natural look and eliminates the potential introduction of oils and chemicals associated with asphalt to sensitive native upland and wetland habitats.

Currently this 21-acre section of Oso Ridge is only accessible during dry periods by those with good walking mobility with trail consisting of primitive mulch and mowed grass pathway. Establishing caliche/granite pathways on the Oso Creek Ridge provides stability for wheelchair and mobility scooter access to explore natural areas, increasing access to brushland regions at our site by over 400 percent. The existing Mary Hope Brennecke Nature Trail provides native habitat access to about 4.5 acres. The proposed paving of Oso Creek Ridge Trail would make an additional 21 acres of brushland/grassland accessible plus visibility of adjacent our large 52-acre open shallow wetland and Oso Creek, all of which provides great birding opportunities for nature tourists.

The proposed 10-foot wide pathway also will allow emergency vehicle access to this 21-acres which has direct access to S. Staples Street near the Oso Creek Bridge in the event of problem that requires first responders or other support vehicle access.

Expanding the trail also provides structured direction for visitors interested in exploring our unique South Texas ecosystem in a safe, controlled space and reducing unknowingly wandering off the established pathways which can be more dangerous with uneven ground and potential dangerous camouflaged wildlife encounters. Defined pathways also encourage additional exploration of youth groups which visit, providing easier access to more pristine section of the property. Solidifying pathways also provide opportunities to attract fitness tourists to runs and walks in natural areas as opposed to the regular events along roadways and developed urban areas.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board may choose to fund a lesser amount or none at all.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

This item will use \$89,000 of the Type B funds

Funding Detail:

Fund: 1145
Organization/Activity: 15020
Mission Element:
Project # (CIP Only):
Account: 530000

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of a grant of up to \$89,000 to The Botanical and Nature Institute of South Texas, Inc. to improve their nature trail.

LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

Request
Agreement