



Legislation Text

File #: 2103-2023, **Version:** 1

Background: This ordinance authorizes the Director of the Recreation and Parks Department to apply for grant funding from the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program. The Clean Ohio Conservation Fund is accepting applications for funding to preserve natural areas and greenway corridors. If awarded, the funding will be used to acquire properties for preservation of the City's natural resources.

OPWC administers statewide grant funding to preserve natural areas and greenway corridors and this ordinance authorizes an application for 2023 Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program grant funds only. OPWC requires that a resolution, ordinance, or other written documentation to obligate funds for the project as part of the application. This ordinance is a commitment to provide the necessary match funds at a later date to satisfactorily complete the proposed project and become eligible for reimbursement under the terms and conditions of the grant. If the grant funding is awarded, future legislation will follow to authorize acceptance, appropriation, and expenditure of City funds.

This grant application is intended to secure funding towards fee simple acquisition of various sites in Columbus, including a 14.5 acre greenspace along Alum Creek, near Agler Road and Sunbury Road in the City's Northeast Community and an eight acre greenspace on McNaughten Road in the City's Far East Community.

Alum Creek Preservation - Agler and Sunbury Road:

This project will acquire three properties in the central area of Alum Creek, near Sunbury Road and Agler Road. For the past 20 years, the Recreation and Parks Department has been acquiring parcels along the 22 mile Alum Creek Corridor, and Clean Ohio Conservation grants have helped fund these efforts. The acquisitions will protect over 1,100 feet of the Alum Creek Riparian Corridor. This corridor is nearly 200 feet wide and includes 12 acres of mature floodplain forest, several forested wetland areas, and several acres of upland meadow. Two of the existing structures and a driveway would be demolished.

McNaughten Road Greenspace Protection:

This project will also acquire two parcels along the McNaughten Road corridor in the Far East Community of Columbus for greenspace preservation and a neighborhood park. The residents along the two and a half mile stretch of McNaughten Road, from East Broad Street to Livingston Avenue, have no parkland or protected natural area. The past three years have seen a substantial number of apartment development projects proposed or built. These parcels are among the last remaining in the entire corridor that are possible for greenspace preservation. This parkland is on the south end of the McNaughten Road Corridor, near East Main Street. In 2019 and 2023, Columbus Recreation and Parks studied the McNaughten Road area as part of a citywide land plan. These neighborhoods rated among the City's least served for parks and open spaces.

Principal Parties:

Ohio Public Works Commission
Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program, Clean Ohio Conservation Fund - District 3
65 East State Street, Suite 312
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Emergency Justification: Emergency action is requested in order to obtain approval to apply for this grant as it is required to be submitted by September 1, 2023.

Benefits to the Public: Protection of the City's high quality waterways, greenway corridors, ravines, and urban forests is of great benefit to current and future generations. These sites are within rapidly urbanizing areas of the city and preservation of key natural sites is one of the main missions of Recreation and Parks. Conservation of the sites proposed relies heavily upon outside funding assistance to achieve these benefits.

Community Input/Issues: During the past decade, residents in these communities, and the city at large, have expressed strong priority for more greenspaces, protected stream corridors access to nature, walking paths, and urban forest conservation.

Area(s) Affected: Northeast (41), Far East (58)

Master Plan Relation: This project will support the Recreation and Parks' Master Plan by protecting the environmental health and resilience of the City's waterways. It will provide long term protected corridors for walking, biking, and outdoor experiences while improving the equitable access to trails and greenways.

Fiscal Impact: No fiscal action is required at this time. Future legislation will accept, appropriate, and encumber funding for this project as needed if the grant is awarded.

To authorize the Director of Recreation and Parks to apply for grant funding from the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program which will be used to acquire various properties for preservation of the city's natural resources; and to declare an emergency. (\$0.00)

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the Director of the Recreation and Parks to apply for grant funding from the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program which will be used to acquire various properties for preservation of the city's natural resources; and

WHEREAS, this ordinance shows the City of Columbus's support for all application requirements; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operations of the Recreation and Parks Department in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Director to apply for this grant funding as it is required to be submitted by September 1, 2023, all for the preservation of public health, peace, property, safety, and welfare; **NOW, THEREFORE**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. That the Director of Recreation and Parks be and is hereby authorized and directed to apply for grant funding from the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program which will be used to acquire various properties for the preservation of the city's natural resources. This Council hereby supports this action.

SECTION 2. That this ordinance authorizes an application for the grant funds only and is not a commitment to expend City funds.

SECTION 3. That future legislation will accept, appropriate, and encumber funding for this project as needed if the grant is awarded.

SECTION 4. That the City of Columbus does agree to obligate the funds required to satisfactorily complete the proposed project and become eligible for reimbursement under the terms and conditions of the Ohio Public Works Commission

(OPWC) Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program.

SECTION 5. That for the reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and approval by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.