



Legislation Text

File #: 0751-2023, **Version:** 1

Background: This ordinance authorizes the Director of the Recreation and Parks Department to apply for grant funding from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF) which will be used to build a section of the Olentangy Trail from Northmoor Park to Clinton Como Park.

The Olentangy Trail is Central Ohio's most used greenway trail. Recent trail count data shows over 4 million trail miles per year are traveled on this path. The central 0.6 mile segment of the trail between Northmoor Park and Clinton Como Park was never completed, forcing users to leave the trail and use a one mile signed on-street route which travels on five different streets. The route is widely recognized as difficult to navigate, congested, narrow, and unsafe. The route includes constricted sections where combined two-way car and trail traffic is on 11 feet to 13 feet wide pavement. It also includes a narrow crossing of North Broadway at Milton Avenue, documented as one of the region's most dangerous intersections for bicycle and vehicular crashes.

This project will complete this final trail gap by constructing a crossing of the Olentangy River at Northmoor Park and travel along the west bank of the river. At North Broadway, the trail will use a new, fully functional bike and pedestrian crosswalk with signal. This is being constructed as part of the North Broadway and 315 interchange improvements for the new Ohio Health campus. The trail then continues south and crosses the river to Clinton Como Park, where it rejoins the existing trail. To accommodate the increase of overall Olentangy Trail use, the new pavement will be 12 feet to 14 feet wide.

ODNR administers statewide grant funding for the construction of trails and this ordinance authorizes an application for 2023 COTF grant funds only. ODNR requires that a resolution, ordinance, or other written documentation 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 from within the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund.

Principal Parties:

Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks
2045 Morse Road, E-2
Columbus, Ohio 43229
Marlin Holloway, (614) 265-6471

Emergency Justification: Emergency action is requested in order to obtain approval to apply for this grant as it is required to be submitted by April 14, 2023.

Benefits to the Public: Cycling, walking, running, and active trail uses provide highly recognized year-round benefits to urban lifestyles. Access to trails and key destinations is one of the top rated priorities noted by residents. Over 30,000 residents, 100 businesses, six parks, and 15 schools are within the trailshed of this project.

Community Input/Issues: The Recreation and Parks Department has engaged extensively with the key stakeholders and neighborhoods impacted by this project. The department will continue to seek support and input throughout the project. The department has received letters of support from the Clintonville Area Commission, Ohio Health, private developers, the community, and trail users.

Area(s) Affected: Citywide (99)

Master Plan Relation: This project will support the Recreation and Parks' Master Plan by improving access to trails and greenways corridors while providing safe connections to the regional trail network for nearby neighborhoods.

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 Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF) which will be used to build a section of the Olentangy Trail from Northmoor Park to Clinton Como Park; 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 Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF) which will be used to build a section of the Olentangy Trail from Northmoor Park to Clinton Como Park; 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 so the grant application can be submitted by the April 14, 2023 deadline; **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 Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF) which will be used to build a section of the Olentangy Trail from Northmoor Park to Clinton Como Park. 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 Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF) 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