



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 2312-2021, **Version:** 1

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**Background:** This ordinance authorizes the Director of Recreation and Parks to enter into a grant agreement with the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) for the 2021 Clean Ohio Conservation Fund (Round 15) - Refugee Road, Mason Run Preservation Project. This ordinance will also authorize the appropriation of grant and matching funds. The grant amount is \$1,008,000.00 and the local match amount is \$432,000.00. There is a total of \$1,440,000.00 being authorized by this ordinance.

In February of 2021, the Department applied for Clean Ohio Conservation Funds towards fee simple acquisition of three sites in Columbus, including one along Big Walnut Creek in the Northeast area of the city and two along Mason Run, in the city's Mideast Community. In May of 2021, the Department received notice that the grant was approved. This particular grant involves the site along Mason Run.

Mason Run is a primary tributary stream of Big Walnut Creek. It goes from John Glenn Regional Airport to Winchester Pike at Three Creeks Park. This project would protect a substantial tract of 78.6 acres of land on the city's southeast side, between Refugee Road and Kimberly Parkway. The site contains approximately 56 acres of woodlands and nearly 21 acres of open meadow and floodplain. Five existing access points surround the perimeter of the property. The span of the site, from Kimberly Parkway to Refugee Road, is over a half of a mile long, placing almost 5,000 residents within a 10 minute walk. In 2007, the Department acquired an adjacent 21 acre conservation property along Mason Run, and, in 2009, acquired a 24 acre natural area at the confluence of Mason Run and Big Walnut Creek. This all brings the total impact of connected stream corridor protection to nearly 1.25 miles.

**Principal Parties:**

Ohio Public Works Commission  
Clean Ohio Conservation Fund, District 3  
65 East State Street, Suite 312  
Columbus, OH 43215

**Emergency Justification:** Emergency action is requested as the Department has signed a purchase contract for the Refugee Road property and the funds need to be available to acquire the property.

**Benefits to the Public:** This project will help protect the city's high quality waterways, greenway corridors, ravines, and urban forests. These sites are within rapidly urbanizing areas of the city and preservation of key natural sites is one of the main missions of the Recreation and Parks Department. Conservation of these sites 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 a strong priority for more protected stream corridors, headwater tributaries, access to nature, walking paths, and urban forest conservation.

**Area(s) Affected:** Mid East (57)

**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 protection corridors for walking, biking, and outdoor experiences. Improved and equitable access to trails and greenways will also be achieved.

**Fiscal Impact:** This ordinance will authorize the appropriation of \$1,008,000.00 in grant funds in the Recreation and Parks Grant Fund 2283. This ordinance will also authorize a grant match of \$432,000.00 from the Recreation and Parks

Voted Bond Fund 7702. \$432,000.00 is budgeted and available from within the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund 7702 to meet the financial obligations of this grant match. There is a total of \$1,440,000.00 available for this project. Future legislation will be prepared to expend these funds once the acquisitions are ready to move forward.

To authorize the Director of Recreation and Parks to enter into a grant agreement with the Ohio Public Works Commission for the Refugee Road, Mason Run Preservation Project; to authorize the Director of Recreation and Parks to accept a grant in the amount of \$1,008,000.00 with a minimum local match of \$432,000.00; to authorize the appropriation of \$1,008,000.00 in the Recreation and Parks Grant Fund 2283; to authorize the transfer of \$432,000.00 within the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund; to authorize the amendment of the 2020 Capital Improvements Budget Ordinance; and to declare an emergency. (\$1,440,000.00)

**WHEREAS**, Ordinance No. 0330-2021 authorized the Director of Recreation and Parks to apply for funding through the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) Clean Ohio Trails Fund and OPWC has awarded the City of Columbus a grant for the 2021 Clean Ohio Conservation Fund - Refugee Road, Mason Run Preservation Project; and

**WHEREAS**, it is necessary to authorize and direct the Director of Recreation and Parks to accept a grant in the amount of \$1,008,000.00, with a minimum local match of \$432,000.00, and enter into an agreement with the Ohio Public Works Commission for the 2021 Clean Ohio Conservation Fund - Refugee Road, Mason Run Preservation Project; and

**WHEREAS**, it is necessary to authorize the appropriation of \$1,008,000.00 to the Recreation and Parks Grant Fund; and

**WHEREAS**, it is necessary to authorize the amendment of the 2020 Capital Improvements Budget Ordinance 2521-2020 in order to provide sufficient budget authority for this legislation and future projects; and

**WHEREAS**, it is necessary to authorize the transfer of \$432,000.00 within the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund; 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 enter into the grant agreement with OPWC and accept the funding as the Department has signed a purchase contract for the Refugee Road property and the funds need to be available to acquire the property, all for the preservation of public health, peace, property, safety, and welfare and, **NOW, THEREFORE**

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

**SECTION 1.** That the Director of Recreation and Parks is authorized and directed to accept a grant and enter into a grant agreement with the Ohio Public Works Commission for the Refugee Road, Mason Run Preservation Project. The amount of the grant is \$1,008,000.00 and requires a minimum of \$432,000.00 in City matching funds. There is a total of \$1,440,000.00 available for this project. Future legislation will be prepared to expend these funds once the acquisitions are ready to move forward.

**SECTION 2.** That from the unappropriated monies and from all monies estimated to come into said fund from any and all sources and unappropriated for any other purpose during the fiscal year ending December 31, 2021, the sum of \$1,008,000.00 is appropriated to the Recreation and Parks Grant Fund 2283 per the account codes in the attachment to this ordinance. Appropriation effective upon receipt of executed grant agreement.

**SECTION 3.** That at the end of the grant period, any repayment of unencumbered balances required by the grantor is hereby authorized and any unused City match monies may be transferred back to the City fund from which they originated in accordance with all applicable grant agreements.

**SECTION 4.** That the funds necessary to carry out the purpose of this ordinance are hereby deemed appropriated, and the City Auditor shall establish such accounting codes as necessary.

**SECTION 5.** That the City Auditor is authorized to make any accounting changes to revise the funding source for all contracts or contract modifications associated with this ordinance.

**SECTION 6.** That the City Auditor is hereby authorized to transfer the unencumbered balance in a project account to the unallocated balance account within the same fund upon receipt of certification by the Director of the Department administering said project that the project has been completed and the monies are no longer required for said project.

**SECTION 7.** That the transfer of \$432,000.00 or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized between projects within the Recreation and Parks Bond Fund 7702 per the account codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

**SECTION 8.** That the 2020 Capital Improvements Budget Ordinance 2521-2020 is hereby amended as follows in order to provide sufficient budget authority for this ordinance and future projects.

**Fund / Project / Project Name / Current / Change / Amended**

Fund 7702; P513000-100000; Acquisition - Misc. (Voted Carryover); \$26,892 / (\$26,892) / \$0

Fund 7702; P513003-100000; Columbus City Schools Acquisitions 2020 (Voted Carryover) / \$84,249 / (\$84,249) / \$0

Fund 7702; P513000-100000; Acquisition - Misc. (SIT Supported); \$1,423,100 / (\$320,859) / \$1,102,241.00

Fund 7702; P510922-513000; Refugee Road, Mason Run Preservation Grant Match (Voted Carryover) / \$0 / \$111,141 / \$111,141

Fund 7702; P510922-513000; Refugee Road, Mason Run Preservation Grant Match (SIT Supported) / \$0 / \$320,859 / \$320,859

**SECTION 9.** 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.