



Legislation Text

File #: 0175-2014, **Version:** 1

Background:

The Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF) Grant is a state-funded and administered reimbursement program through the Ohio Department of Natural Resources that will cover up to 75% of funding for a trails project. In order to guarantee the best possible score on our grant application, the City of Columbus (the applicant) must rank the Scioto Greenways Trails Project as its #1 COTF-eligible project in the 2014 application cycle.

The \$2,500,000 Scioto Greenways Trails Project is a discrete portion of the larger Scioto Greenways project that involves many phases (removing the Main Street Low Head Dam, restoring the Scioto River, building 33 acres of new greenspace, and constructing 1.5 miles of new trails) and is already underway.

The Scioto Greenways Trails Project, which will not begin until December 2014 and for which we are seeking COTF support, will include the construction of linear trails. These trails will be shared bike and pedestrian paths, replete with landscaping and furnishings appropriate to both the environmentally sensitive riparian environment and the aesthetic quality of Columbus' civic core. The new trail segments will tie into a broader system of trails, including a 60-mile regional trail network including Scioto, Olentangy, Alum Creek, and I-670 Trails, which connect five Central Ohio municipalities. Additionally, the trails will form part of the Ohio-to-Erie Trail, which will eventually extend from Cleveland to Cincinnati via Columbus. In the immediate area, the trails will improve connections between Dodge Park, Bicentennial Park, the COSI area and Genoa Park, Battelle Park, and North Bank Park, while from a regional perspective, they will connect the Scioto Audubon Metro Park, OSU Wetlands Park, and Antrim Park.

Fiscal Impact: We are requesting the maximum COTF award - \$500,000 - for the Scioto Greenways Trails Project. Eighty percent (\$2,000,000) of the \$2,500,000 project will be matched by Federal Highway Administration funding for local public agencies, administered by the Ohio Department of Transportation. There are no City funds involved in this portion of the Scioto Greenways Project.

To authorize the Director of the Recreation and Parks Department to apply for a grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources - Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF) in the amount of \$500,000.00 for the Scioto Greenways Trails Project; and to declare an emergency. (\$500,000.00)

WHEREAS, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources - Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF) is accepting applications for trails projects for the 2014 cycle; and

WHEREAS, the Recreation and Parks Department wishes to apply for a grant for the Scioto Greenways Trails Project; and

WHEREAS, the Clean Ohio Trails Funds will be matched by Federal Highway Administration funding for local public agencies, administered by the Ohio Department of Transportation and no City funds are involved in this portion of the Scioto Greenways Project; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the Recreation and Parks Department in that it is immediately necessary to apply for said grant to meet application deadlines thereby preserving public health, peace, property and safety; **NOW, THEREFORE**

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

SECTION 1. That the Director of Recreation and Parks be and he is hereby authorized and directed to apply for a grant with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources - Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF) in the amount of \$500,000.00 for the Scioto Greenways Trails Project.

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 follow to authorize acceptance, appropriation and expenditure of funds.

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 Clean Ohio Trails Fund 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 10 days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.