



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 2052-2020, **Version:** 1

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**Background:** This ordinance authorizes the Director of the Recreation and Parks Department to apply for grant funding from the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) for Transportation Alternative Program funding which will be used to build a section of the Big Walnut Trail, from the Little Turtle Community to Cherrybottom Park and the Alum Creek Trail.

In October 2020, MORPC will be accepting applications for federal funds for bike and pedestrian improvements, including regional trail projects. This ordinance authorizes the Director of the Recreation and Parks Department to submit a grant application to MORPC to build a 2.5 mile section of the Big Walnut Greenway on the northeast side of the city, from the Little Turtle community to Cherrybottom Park. The project also includes a direct connection from the Big Walnut Trail to the Alum Creek Trail at Parkridge Park (Northland), thus building a key east/west trail linkage of two of Central Ohio's major greenways. This grant will provide funding to build significant trail infrastructure for the city's Northeast communities, including an underpass beneath State Route 161, a direct connection to Blendon Woods Metro Park, a stream crossing to connect neighborhoods on the west side of the river, and a section of trail along Sunbury Road linking to the Alum Creek Trail at Parkridge Park. Over 15,000 Columbus residents live in neighborhoods served by the new trail section. Once completed, the trail will connect residents to retail, health care, attractions, and over 40,000 jobs at major destinations including Easton and the North Hamilton Road mixed use corridor.

This ordinance authorizes an application for grant funds only, and is not a commitment to expend City funds. MORPC requires that the City agrees to obligate the funds at a later date which will satisfactorily complete the proposed project and become eligible for reimbursement under the terms and conditions of the grant. If the grant is awarded, future legislation will follow to authorize acceptance, appropriation, and expenditure of City funds.

**Principal Parties:**

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission  
111 Liberty Street, Columbus, OH 43215  
William Murdock, Director, (614) 228-2663  
Contract Compliance Number, Tax ID: 004591, 31-1009675  
November 15, 2020

**Emergency Justification:** Emergency action is requested to obtain approval to apply for said grant as it is required for submittal on October 9, 2020.

**Benefits to the Public:** Cycling, walking, running, and active trail uses provide highly recognized year-round benefits to urban lifestyles. Access to trails and to key destinations is one of the top rated priorities noted by residents. The Northeast communities have no regional trail access, and the project will provide significant connectivity for over 15,000 residents, as well as major employment centers with an estimated 40,000 jobs, 6 parks, and over 24 miles of existing Alum Creek Trail. Completing this project provides the critical central core of trail infrastructure to build new extensions to Hoover Reservoir, Rocky Fork, Northland, as well as local path connections along the city's current roadway improvement projects. There are regional linkage plans which connect this project to the surrounding cities of Westerville, Gahanna, and New Albany.

**Community Input/Issues:** The department is receiving letters of support from the community, the Central Ohio Greenways, civic associations, area commissions, and city-wide trail users.

**Area(s) Affected:** Rocky Fork/Blacklick (33), Northland (35)

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

**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 Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) for Transportation Alternative Program funding which will be used to build a section of the Big Walnut Trail, from the Little Turtle Community to Cherrybottom Park and the Alum Creek Trail; 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 Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) for Transportation Alternative Program funding which will be used to build a section of the Big Walnut Trail, from the Little Turtle Community to Cherrybottom Park and the Alum Creek Trail; 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 October 9, 2020, all for the preservation of public peace, property, health, welfare, 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 is hereby authorized and directed to apply for grant funding from the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) for Transportation Alternative Program funding which will be used to build a section of the Big Walnut Trail, from the Little Turtle Community to Cherrybottom Park and the Alum Creek Trail. 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 Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) Transportation Alternative 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.