



parks · recreation · cultural services

TOPS

**TOPS Working Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 2, 2015**

Members Present: Jason Alwine, Lee Milner, Cathy Grossman, Nancy Hobbs, Joe Lavorini, Jeff Mohrmann, Sarah Musick, Becky Wegner, Sarah Blakeslee

Alternates Present: Jim Klever

Parks Board Liaisons Present: Scot Hume, Jackie Hilaire

Parks Board Liaisons Absent: N / A

Staff Present: Chris Lieber, Karen Palus, Kurt Schroeder, Kim King, Christi Mehew

.....
Jason Alwine brought the meeting to order at 7:34 am.

Agenda Preview

Announcements

Chris Lieber

- The Bluestem Open Space Management Plan meeting will be held on December 8, 2015 at 4 pm at the Parks Department.
- The University Park and Sinton Open Space Management Plan meeting will be held on December 8, 2015 at 6:30 pm at the Garden Ranch YMCA.

Karen Palus

- Announced the poinsettia tree made by Donna Sanchez and her staff is on display in the lobby of the City Administration Building.
- Distributed holiday ornaments to the TOPS Working Committee members.
- Announced the poinsettias on the table are a holiday gift to the TOPS Working Committee members.
- The Feliz Navidad brunch, a joint gathering of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and TOPS Working Committee will be held on Thursday, December 10th at 11:00 am.

Approval of Minutes

Motion – to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2015 meeting:

- Sarah Musick - 1st, Nancy Hobbs - 2nd, Approved – Unanimously

Citizen Discussion

Action Items

1. **2016 Supplemental Budget Appropriations** (Presented by Chris Lieber – [see below](#))

The projects below were identified as priorities for consideration to be funded from the TOPS fund balance, requiring supplemental appropriation to the 2016 CIP Budget. The capacity to include these three projects in the 2016 CIP Budget is due to an increase in TOPS tax revenue in 2015 and an adjusted revenue projection for the TOPS fund for 2016.

- **Garden of the Gods Park Restrooms** – The existing restrooms within the Garden of the Gods Park does not meet the current needs and demands of 2 million visitors per year. Funding in the amount of \$470,000 is needed to pursue professional architectural services, refined cost estimates and phased construction contracts necessary to address this need.

Public Input

Melissa Walker (Friends of Garden of the Gods) spoke in favor of the TOPS Working Committee funding this project.

- **Deerfield Hills Park and Community Center Restroom Renovation** - The City is pursuing a major, \$2 million renovation and expansion of the Deerfield Hills Community Center. The first phase of this project in the amount of \$700,000, targets the highest priorities and needs for the Park and Center including: renovation of the restrooms to address ADA accessibility issues, site improvements including new sidewalks and pedestrian ramps, the addition of a new room at the front of the building for programs and preschool, safety and security both internally and externally. Funding for Phase I has been secured from several funding sources including:

| | |
|--|--------|
| Community Development Block Grant (CDBD) | \$400K |
| Conservation Trust Funds (Lottery) | \$100K |
| General Fund (Facilities) | \$ 70K |

Additional funding from the TOPS Parks Category in the amount of \$130K is requested to complete Phase 1. The proposed TOPS funding will be directed specifically towards the restroom renovations to serve both Deerfield Park visitors and Community Center guests.

Public Input

Bill Koerner (Trails and Open Space Coalition) asked that the vote be split into three sections. He distributed a memo ([see memo below](#)) that does not support the use of TOPS funds for the Deerfield Community Center renovation project. TOSC asks that the TOPS Working Committee not fund the restroom at Deerfield Hills Park and find other ways to fund the restroom rather than through the TOPS Parks Category.

- **Manitou Incline Phase 2 Improvements** – The City applied for two grants, a Community Development Block Grant-DR for \$2 million and a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant for \$1 million to advance the repairs to the upper third and lower third of the trail corridor. The City was awarded the \$1 million Hazard Mitigation Grant but did not receive the \$2 million CDBG-DR grant. Funding in the amount of \$255,421 from the TOPS Trails Category is recommended to match the \$1 million grant and complete the 2nd phase of the Manitou Incline improvements. The total project cost is \$1,021,682 with \$766,262 funded by FEMA.

Proposed Motion

The TOPS Working Committee votes to approve a supplemental appropriation for the Garden of the Gods Restroom Renovation from the TOPS Parks Category in the amount of \$470,000; and the Deerfield Hills Park and Community Center Restroom Renovation from the TOPS Parks Category in the amount of \$130,000; and the Manitou Incline from the TOPS Trails Category in the amount of \$255,421.

Garden of the Gods Park Restrooms

Motion: 1st - Lee Milner, 2nd - Jeff Mohrmann, Approved – Unanimously

Deerfield Hills Park and Community Center Restroom Renovation

Motion: 1st - Jeff Mohrmann, 2nd - Becky Wegner, Approved – Unanimously

Manitou Incline Phase 2 Improvements

Motion: 1st – Jeff Mohrmann, 2nd - Cathy Grossman , Approved –8 to 1

Presentations

2. Pikes Peak Avenue Open Space Application (Presented by Eric Eaton – [see presentation below](#))

- Eric Eaton presented a property located at the end of Pikes Peak Avenue. A map was displayed of the property along with stakeholder information, animal and plant taxa, threats to the property and potential opportunities for recreation.
- A subcommittee consisting of two TOPS Working Committee members, Nancy Hobbs and Lee Milner, volunteered to tour this site and report back to the Committee.

3. Bear Creek Park Addition Parcel – TOPS Open Space Application (Presented by Cyndy Kulp)

- Cyndy Kulp presented a property located adjacent to Bear Creek Park at 707 Cresta Boulevard. The property consists of two lots with four active springs and a home.
- The property is owned by the Broadmoor with a plan to build stables; however, this plan has been on “hold” due to an unfavorable response from the community. The development plan has been approved for residential property and the Broadmoor was planning on changing that to a horse stable.
- Lee Milner, Nancy Hobbs and Chris Lieber toured the site in November. The Friends of Bear Creek Regional Park and Skyway Home Owner’s Association support this open space application.
- Tim Wolken (El Paso County Parks and Recreation Director) spoke in support of the City’s acquisition of the property. If the City of Colorado Springs goes forward on this acquisition the County would be open to discussion regarding the maintenance of this property.
- A TOPS Working Committee tour of the property will be scheduled in January 2016.

Staff Reports - N/A

Citizen Discussion - N/A

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn – 1st – Lee Milner, 2nd –Cathy Grossman, Approved - Unanimously

COLORADO SPRINGS PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

TOPS WORKING COMMITTEE

Date: December 2, 2015

Item Name: 2016 Supplemental Budget Appropriations

Summary:

On April 1, 1997, the Trails Open Space and Parks (TOPS) Ordinance was approved by the citizens of Colorado Springs, establishing dedicated funding for trail, open space and park projects. In 2003 the TOPS Ordinance was amended to extend the TOPS sales tax through 2025. The TOPS Working Committee is responsible for setting priorities and making recommendations for the expenditures of TOPS funds.

Each year the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department conducts a public process to assist in establishing priorities for the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget. On July 8, 2015, the TOPS Working Committee reviewed proposed projects and recommended TOPS Projects for inclusion in the 2016 Parks and Recreation CIP Budget. On July 9, 2015 the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board reviewed and recommended the Parks CIP Budget for inclusion in the City's CIP Budget. Three additional CIP projects have been identified as priorities for consideration to be funded from the TOPS fund balance, requiring supplemental appropriation to the 2016 CIP Budget. These projects include: Garden of the Gods Restroom Improvements, Deerfield Hills Park and Community Center Restroom Renovations, and Manitou Incline Phase 2.

Previous Council Action: N/A

Current Status:

Through the 2016 CIP Budget process, numerous projects were identified for future funding, including: Garden of the Gods Restroom Improvements, Deerfield Hills Park and Community Center Restroom Renovations, and Manitou Incline Phase 2. The capacity to include these three projects in the 2016 CIP Budget is afforded due to an increase in TOPS tax revenue in 2015 and an adjusted revenue projection for the TOPS fund for 2016.

Garden of the Gods Restroom Improvements: The existing restrooms within the Garden of the Gods do not meet the current needs and demands of 2 million visitors per year. Funding in the amount of \$470,000 is needed to pursue professional architectural services, refined cost estimates and phased construction contracts necessary to address this need. Alternatives that will be considered as part of design process include, but are not limited to, additions to the existing restroom facility at the Gateway parking lot, replacement of the existing restroom with a larger restroom, renovation of the existing restroom and construction of additional restrooms at key locations throughout the Park. Funding for the Garden of the Gods Restroom Improvement Project is recommended from the TOPS Parks Category fund balance in the amount of \$470,000.

Deerfield Hills Park and Community Center Restroom Renovations: Deerfield Hills Park and Community Center serve over 60,000 adults and youth on an annual basis. Located within Deerfield Hills Park, the restrooms within the Deerfield Community Center serve the Center as well as the numerous associated park facilities including the outdoor sprayground, picnic pavilions, community gardens, playground, and volleyball court. The Community Center provides a wide array of programs that utilizes the surrounding park for activities including: low cost or free preschool, early childhood education, nutrition and fitness classes, community gardening, Kids on Bikes cycling clinics, Girls on the Run training site, neighborhood events and meetings.

The City is pursuing a major, \$2 million renovation and expansion of the Deerfield Hill Community Center. The first phase of this project (\$700,000) targets the highest priorities and needs for the Park and Center including: renovation of the restrooms to address ADA accessibility issues, site improvements including new sidewalks and pedestrian ramps, the addition of new room at front of building for programs and preschool, safety and security both internally and externally such as lighting and alarm system. Funding for Phase I has been secured from several funding sources including

| | |
|--|--------|
| Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) | \$400K |
| Conservation Trust Funds (Lottery) | \$100K |
| General Fund (Facilities) | \$ 70K |

Additional funding from the TOPS Parks Category in the amount of \$130K is requested to complete Phase I. The proposed TOPS funding will be directed specifically towards the restroom renovations and exterior ADA improvements – to serve both Deerfield Park visitors and Community Center guests.

Manitou Incline Phase 2: In 2014, the Parks and Recreation Department made significant safety improvements to the Manitou Incline. These improvements, funded through a variety of granting sources and TOPS Trail Category funds, addressed the “middle third” of the overall trail corridor. To advance the repairs to the upper third and lower third of the trail corridor (estimated to cost \$3 million), the City applied for two grants, a Community Development Block Grant-DR (CDBG-DR) for \$2 million and a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant (HMGP) for \$1 million. Each grant was intended to serve as the required match for the other. The City was awarded the \$1 million Hazard Mitigation Grant but did not receive the CDBG-DR grant. As a result, funding in the amount of \$255,421 is necessary to provide the match for the \$1 million Mitigation Grant. Funding in the amount of \$255,421 from the TOPS Trails Category is recommended to match the \$1 million grant and complete the 2nd phase of the Manitou Incline improvements. [background: Total Project cost: \$1,021,682, FEMA portion: \$766,262]

Financial Implications: Funding in the amount of \$470,000 is recommended from the TOPS Parks Category for the Garden of the Gods Restroom Improvement Project. Funding in the amount of \$130,000 is recommended from the TOPS Parks Category fund balance for the Deerfield Park and Community Center Restroom Renovation Project. Funding in the amount of \$255,421 is recommended from the TOPS Trails Category for the Manitou Incline Phase 2. In accordance with the TOPS Ordinance, the Parks Category and the TOPS Parks Category are restricted to a maximum of 20% of the TOPS fund balance. The TOPS Parks Category and the Trails Category have sufficient funds balances to support these three projects.

Proposed Recommendation: A motion approving a supplemental appropriation for the Garden of the Gods Restroom Renovation from the TOPS Parks Category in the amount of \$470,000; and the Deerfield Hills Park and Community Center Restroom Renovation from the TOPS Parks Category in the amount of \$130,000; and the Manitou Incline from the TOPS Trails Category in the amount of \$255,421.



Trails and
Open Space
Coalition

1040 South 8th Street, Suite 101
Colorado Springs, CO 80905
719.633.6884
info@trailsandopenspaces.org
www.trailsandopenspaces.org

12-1-15 rev. 2

RE: TOPS WC Meeting Committee talking points on the use of TOPS Parks funds for the Deerfield Community Center

TOSC supports the Parks Mission: TOSC has a long history of supporting the mission of the Parks Recreation and Cultural Services Department. We agree that Community Centers are a valuable asset and resource for our community offering community programs, especially in low income areas.

However, TOSC does not support the use of \$130k of TOPS Parks funds for expanding the restrooms at the Deerfield Community Center. TOSC supports these funds coming from the General Fund. The TOSC Board voted unanimously on Nov. 19 with 2 abstentions.

Rationale:

Use TOPS for its intended purposes. TOPS must be used for what it is intended and renewed for, the acquisition and maintenance of trails open space and parks. If use for Community Centers was an intended purpose, the ordinance would have stated this. It doesn't.

Honor the votes of the people: TOPS must be consistent and maintain the trust of the voters that TOPS funds will be spent where intended. TOPS has been supported by the voters in 1998, 2003 and 2012. In the coming years we will need to go back to the voters and ask for a TOPS extension.

This is a 'slippery slope'. TOPS Funds have never been used for Community Centers in the past and shouldn't be used now.

This could set a precedent. It will be more difficult to prevent use of TOPS Parks funds for other and future Community Centers proposals.

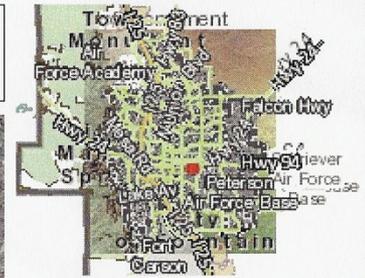
May not be able to fund worthy parks projects. We lose the opportunity to fund needed parks maintenance and infrastructure improvements by spending it on Community Centers.

TOSC supports developing long range Parks funding solutions: Ongoing and deferred maintenance, needed renovations of parks assets, fulfilling the Parks System master Plan can save the City money and provide a more positive experience for parks users, which the taxpayers expect and deserve. A sustainable parks funding must be found to accomplish these goals.

Proposing....

Sand Creek Open Space





Legend

- National Forest
- Parks
- Military
- Towns
- Schools
- Park Trails
- Urban Paved
- Urban Gravel
- Urban Natural
- Golf Fairways
- Parcels
- Hospitals_2.5K
- Schools_2.5K
- Roadway_Patch_2.5K
 - Interstate
 - Major Roads
 - Local Roads
 - Ramps
- Roadway_2.5K
 - Interstate
 - Major Roads
 - Local Roads
 - Ramps
- Parcel_Boundary_2.5K
- Park_Labels_2.5K
- Airport_Labels_2.5K

1: 5,087



0.2 0 0.08 0.2 Miles

Notes

Who ?

- Dabarbet LLC
- Cloud Family Partnership LTD
- Colorado Springs School District No. 11
- Colorado Springs Flea Market ?
- Others ?

Surrounding neighborhoods mostly minorities

What?









Why ?













63 Bird Species

What?

- > 700 animal taxa
- > 100 plant taxa



Threats to Property and Habitat

- Homeless camps
- Dirt Bikes and ATVs
- Erosion
- Litter, dumping
- Fire
- Invasive Plants



Homeless Camps



ORVs Cause :

- Erosion
- Noise Pollution
- Wildlife Casualties



Erosion







Dumping and Litter







Fire



Invasive Plants



Pipeline Construction: 3/21/2015





Pipeline Construction: 6/30/2015



Pipeline Construction: 10/01/2015



Potential Opportunities for Recreation

- Pedestrian (hiking, jogging, dog-walking)
- Horseback Riding
- Viewing of wildlife and scenery
- Watching aircraft
- Playground, community garden in fill area

























The End ?

Thank You!



- Chris Lieber
- Julie Lafitte
- Bill Koerner
- Richard Bunn
- Heidi Eaton