

City of Wheat Ridge Parks & Recreation Commission

Wednesday, February 15th, 2023
6:30 PM

Wheat Ridge Recreation Center Conference Room
OR

Join via Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82346022916>

MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Cambria Rollo, Pat Cervera, Ralph Habben, Andy Rasmussen, John Route

Commissioners Absent: Karen Stanley, Kathy Koniz,

Guests: Taylor Broyhill – Logan Simpson

Staff Present: Andrew McDonald – Forestry & Open Space Supervisor

1. Determination of Quorum & Call to Order

- a. Meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

2. Introductions

- a. **Taylor Broyhill** – Associate Planner with Logan Simpson

3. Approval of Minutes

- a. Postponing minute approval till March meeting

4. Unfinished Business

a. Open Space Management Plan

- i. **Last time that Taylor presented to Commission, it was a series of preliminary recommendations that were they were looking to carry forward in the plan. Have since presented those same recommendations to City Council with a few tweaks made based on the Commissioners and City Council feedback.**
- ii. **Have worked on developing cost estimates for the recommendations. Specifically, those that result in capital projects or have defined costs associated with them.**
- iii. **Karen emailed Commissioners homework that was to work through an online tool to prioritize projects and recommendations. Taylor walked through the online tool. This feedback is important as there are 18 projects on the list and funding is limited so this gives staff and the city a priority framework to work from.**
- iv. **Will go over the 18 projects and move them into 4 categories based on value and cost.**

1. **Value is the value to the Wheat Ridge community and Cost is the dollar amount of the financial cost**
2. **4 categories**
 - a. **High Value, Low Cost**
 - b. **High Value, High Cost**
 - c. **Low Value, Low Cost**
 - d. **Low Value, High Cost**
3. **Questions**
 - a. Commissioner Rollo asked if the cost would be City Cost or include Grant funding. Taylor explained that the cost associated with projects is the total cost of the project, not the breakdown of where the money would come from.
4. **Projects**
 - a. **Wetland Restoration near Prospect, Anderson, and Johnson Park TH** – Taylor showed a map of the areas that the restoration would be directed at. The main goal would be to help restore the environment as well as the natural overbank that helps control seasonal flooding. Approx. Cost is \$280,000
 - b. **Tabor Lake Trail & Habitat Restoration** – showed conceptual illustration of the Tabor Lake project. Approx. Cost is \$800,000. This includes the trail establishment as well as habitat restoration. This project is already funded, and the City is applying for grants to help supplement that funding.
 - c. **Carr Street Multi-Use Trail Connection under I-70** – This would give trail access where there isn't access already. This would include having to get an easement as the street that you see on the map is actually private property. The Approximated cost is just for the construction costs as there is no way to estimate the cost of the easement. Approximated cost is \$350,000 to \$500,000
 - d. **Improve Existing Trail Connections at Parfet, Garrison, Oak, and Hoyt St.** - This would include making them ADA compliant, improving the quality, and improving signage as well as on-street signs on some of them. Approximated cost is \$800,00 to \$1,000,000.
 - e. **Kipling Crossing Traffic Connection** – recommendation is to pursue a traffic study that would set the city to work with CDOT to improve the crossing. Since last met, preliminary analysis was Approximated cost completed and a potential solution for a pedestrian hybrid beacon that would give direct crossing capability on Kipling. Anything like this will require a study to justify this project to CDOT that would require a solid count of the number of people who are crossing at this location, pedestrians and bicyclists. A study from a traffic engineer would also be required to evaluate the impacts for North and South

bound traffic in that area. This would be for the study not the crossing construction. is \$50,000 to \$200,000.

- i. Commissioner Rollo asked if this would be to bypass the preexisting tunnel to go under Kipling. Taylor explained that the general impression is people are just not using that tunnel based on observations and Strava feed maps. The study would be having someone out there physically counting or trail counters establishing how many people are crossing. CDOT has very specific specifications on measurements.
- f. **Wayfinding Sign System Plan** – update the wayfinding signage like directions and mile markers. There is a Co-Branding effort for the Peaks to Plains Trail, which Clear Creek Trail is part of. And within the City of Wheat Ridge, there is a need to let people know where they are within the trail and connections to exit the trail. This would be a more detailed study of what kind of signs need to go where and the design of the signs. This is just for the plan, not the creation of signs and any installation costs. Approximated cost is \$20,000 to \$65,000
- g. **Boundary Survey of Entire Greenbelt** – will help determine where the boundaries of public and private land and determine who is responsible to maintain and determine rights to improve. Approximated cost is \$70,000 to \$50,000
 - i. Commissioner Rollo inquired if Andrew knew of any areas that are currently areas that cause these concerns and when the last one was done? Andrew explained there are some areas that get a little complicated with the City of Arvada, City of Denver, and CDOT as well as some private property areas that cross the creek. Not sure when the last one was completed.
- h. **Construct Off-street Trail Segment from Harlan to 52nd** – this would eliminate any trail users having to ever needing to merge with vehicle traffic. Approximated cost would be between \$2,000,000 to \$3,000,000 with most of the cost estimation being driven by the cost to build a bridge across the creek.
- i. **Conducting Tree Assessment and Establish new planting on Green Belt** – areas have been identified along the creek and Green Belt where trees are not as healthy as they should be as well as areas that could benefit from new vegetation to help shade the creek that would be beneficial to aquatic life. Approximated cost of \$20,000 to \$45,000.
- j. **Effort to Reduce Trail grade at Youngfield & I-70** – There is a steep grade and issue with sight distance in that area. Recommendation would be to grade back the hill to decrease more gradually as well as additional work to widen the trail.

Approximated cost is \$500,000 to \$700,000.

- k. **Conservation Trail Expansion at West Lake and Social Trail Reclamation** – Aiming to help balance that more natural back country experience in that area but also balancing that with the habitat areas there. The plan would be to formalize the trail in there so the city would maintain it but it would also include some aggressive reclamation efforts as well. Taylor showed conceptual plan that been developed. Approximated cost is \$185,00 to \$205,000.
- l. **Lake Recreation: Fishing Pier (Bass Lake) & Watercraft ramp/dock (West Lake)** - this is to establish a designated location for the related activities to help provide better access as well as reduce the erosion that has been occurring in those areas. This would be lumped in with the conservation trail expansion, see approximated cost under Conservation Trail Expansion.
- m. **Improve Existing Trailheads at Miller St, Otis St, and Johnson Park** – There are varying levels of improvements that are needed. Some of the suggestions are as simple as ADA parking space at Miller trailhead or as complex as working with other agencies at Otis trailhead to improve quality and experience in that area. Approximated cost would be \$335,000 to \$380,000
- n. **Streambank Stabilization near Arapahoe Bar** - attempts at solving the same problem. In the area around the Arapahoe Bar there is extensive erosion, so much that there are parts that are starting to undercut the trail itself. For a long-term solution, the city has been working with the School of Minds that would involve creating stabilization walls as well as adding stairs to create a single point of access. Approximated cost up to 2.2 million for the long-term solution.
- o. **Safety Railing along Trail Erosion near Arapahoe Bar** – this is a short-term solution. Would need to be set in concrete but the erosion under the trail is still occurring. Approx. Cost is \$540,000 to \$1,200,000.
 - i. Commissioner Rollo inquired if the idea was both were necessary. Taylor said that ideally one should be the decision. Based on the price tag for the long-term solution, they wanted to provide a short-term solution. Both are not necessary. Ultimately in the end, the bank will need to be stabilized and the railing is a short-term fix.
- p. **Conduct Raptor Nest Inventory & Monitoring Surveys** – Raptors have been observed but there is no data on how many, nests, health, etc. Would establish a baseline and then would come back a couple times to confirm observations. This will help the

city make decisions on how to preserve the habitat.

Approximated cost is \$230,000 to \$240,000

- i. Andrew mentioned that the city is hiring a Seasonal Natural Resource Specialist that he is hoping will help in getting this project rolling. Unknown how it will affect that approximated cost. It's a seasonal position potentially running from April to October.
- v. Will be comparing input from Commissioners with the input received from Staff to provide a framework for tackling the projects.
- vi. Taylor will be leaving the feedback form open over the weekend for the rest of the commissioners to go through and provide their feedback.
- vii. All estimated costs are available on the Cost Matrix but there are areas that have been grouped together as mentioned when going over each project. There are some cost savings having a contractor come in once to handle the projects that are similar.

viii.

5. New Business

6. Upcoming City Council Meeting

- a. **Upcoming City Council Meeting** – No Parks & Rec Items

7. Staff Updates

- a. **Parks, Forestry & Open Space Manager**

- i. Offer has been made and hope to have him accept and attending next meeting

8. Future Agenda Items

- a. **Dog Park on East Side of Town**
- b. **Future use of Rec Center Barn**

9. Commissioner Comments

- a. **Commissioner Habben** – A pickleball group was created on Facebook. There is about 200 members in this group now. Lots of positive feedback so far.
- b. **Commissioner Rasmussen** – The improvements on Prospect Park are great.

10. Adjournment

- a. Meeting was adjourned at 7:38 PM