



Arapahoe County

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Board Summary Report

File #: 25-435

Agenda Date: 9/8/2025

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To: Board of County Commissioners

Through: Gini Pingnot, Director, Open Spaces

Prepared By:

Michele Frishman, Grants and Acquisitions Manager, Open Spaces

Presenter: Michele Frishman, Grants and Acquisitions Manager, Open Spaces; City of Aurora; High Line Canal Conservancy

Subject:

1:15 PM *Joint Project Request from City of Aurora for Triple Creek Trailhead Site Improvements

Purpose and Request:

The City of Aurora and the High Line Canal Conservancy (Conservancy) will present a joint project request to support the design and construction of site improvements at the Triple Creek Trailhead in Aurora. Open Spaces supports the project and requests that the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) award \$585,000 in High Line Canal Working Group funds to the City of Aurora.

Alignment with Strategic Plan: Good Governance - Understand and respond to community needs, interests, and values.

Background and Discussion: In 2023, the Open Space and Trails Advisory Board (OSTAB) recommended and the BOCC approved setting aside \$4 million of Open Space Acquisition and Development funds to support projects originating from the High Line Canal Working Group through 2028. The working group pledge was envisioned to support various High Line Canal joint projects such as natural resources restoration and new park and trail amenities to improve the user experience. The funding is also contributing to the development of the Natural Resource Management Plan and the Stormwater Transition and Management Plan for the High Line Canal, as well as other needs. To date, approximately \$3 million of the working group pledge remains available.

Aurora and the Conservancy are working in collaboration to plan and construct new site improvements at the existing Triple Creek Trailhead adjacent to the High Line Canal on the south side of Colfax Avenue in Aurora. The project would be built on land owned by the City and would include planting, circulation paths, seating areas, natural play elements, a bike skills course, wayfinding signage, and interpretive features, based on a master plan for the site and requests from the local community. These amenities are expected to provide an inviting environment for a largely underserved population in north Aurora to spend time outdoors, enjoy the High Line Canal, and access the intersecting Sand Creek and Triple Creek trails.

Aurora has requested that the County contribute \$585,000 toward the project, which is half of the total project cost of \$1,170,000. Open Spaces requires at least a 50-percent match for joint project

funding. Aurora and the Conservancy would provide the matching funds of \$585,000 through a grant they received from Great Outdoors Colorado.

Alternatives: Approve, modify, or deny the proposed recommendation.

Fiscal Impact: \$585,000 in High Line Canal Working Group funds, which reside in the Open Space Acquisition and Development Fund. The fund balance exceeds this amount.

Alignment with Strategic Implementation Strategies: The attached framework helps Arapahoe County institutionalize values-based, transparent decision-making, documenting how we make decisions and carry out actions to achieve the County's strategic plan.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends that the BOCC award \$585,000 in High Line Canal Working Group funds to the City of Aurora to support the new Triple Creek Trailhead site improvements.

Concurrence: OSTAB recommended the requested funding at its meeting on June 23, 2025.