



Board Summary Report

File #: 24-105

Agenda Date: 2/26/2024

Agenda #:

To: Board of County Commissioners

Through: Katherine Smith, Open Spaces Department, Interim Director

Prepared By:

Josh Garcia, Planner, Open Spaces and Ray Winn, Planner II, Open Spaces

Presenter: Josh Garcia, Planner, Open Spaces and Ray Winn, Planner II, Open Spaces

Subject:

1:45 PM *Kiowa Creek Open Space Development Grant Application Approval

Purpose and Request:

Staff will present three grant opportunities to assist with funding of the archery range and bridge at Kiowa Creek Open Space and request approval to apply for these grants. The BOCC is also being asked to approve authority for the Open Spaces director to sign grant applications.

Background and Discussion: The Kiowa Creek Open Space is located on the northwest corner of Kiowa Bennett Road and Mitchell Road, in Bennett, Colorado, and is approximately 265 acres of unimproved open space. The property was purchased in 2009 to be developed and maintained as an open space park, for future passive use recreation. In 2020 and 2021, staff worked with the consultant DHM and the public to develop a Master Plan for the Park. The Master Plan was presented and adopted by the BOCC in August 2022, Resolution # 22-434.

The final park improvement concept includes many passive recreation amenities while preserving and showcasing the beauty of the riparian habitat of Kiowa Creek. We anticipate this park to be a major regional recreation destination in the eastern portion of the County. The amenities include an extensive crusher fines trail network and natural surface equestrian and mountain bike trails, picnic areas, pavilions/outdoor classroom, wayfinding and interpretative signage, 2 parking areas including horse trailer parking, boulder seating, picnic tables, shade structures at major viewpoints, archery range, restrooms (vault toilet) and drinking fountain, bike racks and bike repair station, and trash cans. All of these amenities presented in the Master Plan Concept were overwhelmingly desired and supported by the public outreach feedback.

Currently, staff is working with Stream Landscape Architects on designing and construction documents, as well as the Location and Extent plan, and expect design to be completed by Fall/Early Winter, 2024. The bridge to cross Kiowa Creek has been broken out as a separate project due to the higher-than-expected cost of \$1,255,900. The main park project, minus the bridge, did receive Open Spaces Trails Advisory Board approval for funding in April 2022, for \$4.5 million. The main park, minus the bridge, is still on budget for this approved funding. Once OS has a final estimate and any grant funding approved, we will be going back to OSTAB and BOCC for final park funding approval. BOCC approval for grant applications does not establish final construction funding approval.

The cost increase for the bridge is due to the length of bridge and the type of structure needed to cross the Kiowa Creek floodplain. In the original conceptual Master Plan, the design was to create a more primitive, break-away boardwalk crossing that was not ADA compliant or vehicle accessible. Three issues have come up that have necessitated an increase in bridge engineering and cost: The Bennett Regional Trail was thought to be many years out, Bennett has accelerated the completion, issued an RFP for design and construction documents of the regional trail. The archery range's users have expanded, and County is now partnering with CSU Extension Archery Club and a better more developed access will allow these clubs and other users easier and more direct access to the range access. Break-away boardwalks are not allowed in the floodplain, the Master Plan consultant DHM, made an error or misconstrued the floodplain regulations for planning and significantly underestimated the cost for this type of crossing. The bridge will be part of the regional trail for the Town of Bennett, so it needs to meet certain standards to achieve this.

With the increased cost of the regional trail bridge, Open Spaces staff would like to offset some of these costs and pursue a Colorado Parks and Wildlife State Trails Non-Motorized grant and a GOCO Community Impact Grant to pay for a portion of the cost of the bridge. Open Spaces would request \$250,000 from the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Non-Motorized Grant program in the form of a construction grant and request up to \$500,000 from the GOCO Community Impact Grant program to help offset the cost of the bridge. The application for these two grants would be in September and October 2024. In addition, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) offers a Shooting Range Grant Development Program to help fund construction and improvements of shooting ranges including archery ranges. Open Spaces would like to apply for a grant to help fund the construction of the archery range at Kiowa Creek. The estimated cost of the Archery range is \$160,000, and Open Spaces would like to request \$80,000 of this cost from CPW. This grant application is due March 15, 2024.

Fiscal Impact: Open Spaces staff presented the Master Plan and Original Cost estimate to the BOCC in August 2022. However, after meeting with PWD stormwater engineers shortly after the Master Plan completion, we felt the Master Plan cost estimate did not account for the appropriate bridge, so we did not seek funding approval at that time. Now we are into 60% design with a different consultant and have a much more reliable cost estimate. Therefore, in order to keep the project close to the original budget, staff feels that these grants provide a great opportunity to provide the public with the same amenities promised in the original Master Plan. By approving this request, the Board is approving the Open Spaces Department to apply for three grants to help pay for the construction of the future bridge and archery range at Kiowa Creek Open Space. There will be no fiscal impact to apply for the grants. The grants, if successful, will help offset the overall cost of the project to provide amenities promised in the original Master Plan and if the BOCC does not approve project funding, the County does not have to accept the grants. Once a better financial estimate for the project has been identified, staff will bring this to the Board for approval.

Alternatives: The Board could decide to delay, modify, or deny grant funding for this project

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

- Be fiscally sustainable
- Provide essential and mandated service
- Be community focused

Staff Recommendation: Open Spaces recommends the BOCC approval of the applications.

Concurrence: The Kiowa Creek Open Space Master Plan was presented and adopted by the BoCC in August 2022, Resolution # 22-434. In addition, the main park project, minus the bridge did receive Open Spaces Trails Advisory Board approval for funding in April 2022, for \$4.5 million.