



Arapahoe County

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Board Summary Report

File #: 22-410

Agenda Date: 8/9/2022

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To: Board of County Commissioners

Through: Shannon Carter, Director, Open Spaces

Prepared By:

Michele Frishman, Grants and Acquisitions Manager, Open Spaces

Presenter: Josh Phillips, High Line Canal Conservancy

Subject:

3:00 PM *Funding for High Line Canal Tree Risk Assessment

Purpose and Request:

Representatives from the High Line Canal Conservancy will present a joint project funding proposal to perform a new tree risk assessment along the entire length of the High Line Canal. Staff and the Open Space and Trails Advisory Board (OSTAB) support the proposed project and recommend that the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approve up to \$70,000 in Open Space Acquisition and Trail Development funding.

Background and Discussion: In 2016, Denver Water and the jurisdictions along the High Line Canal completed a canal-wide tree inventory, which resulted in more than \$1 million in efforts to prune and remove trees that posed a risk to trail users. Since then, the canal's mature trees continue to decline, and the High Line Canal Collaborative has determined that another tree risk assessment is needed. The Conservancy's contractor will evaluate 9,291 trees along the canal corridor using the Colorado Tree Coalition tree risk assessment protocols, resulting in detailed data about potential risks.

The work is estimated at \$161,000, and each of the other jurisdictions along the canal is expected to contribute \$9,000 toward the project. The Conservancy is requesting up to \$70,000 in matching funds from the County.

The High Line Canal is an important and popular recreational amenity in the metropolitan area, spanning 71

miles across 11 jurisdictions. The County has contributed to improvements along the canal for many years.

Based on current conditions, staff agrees that a new tree risk assessment is needed to ensure the safety of trail users and maintenance staff working along the canal. With all the other jurisdictions expected to contribute equally to this effort, together exceeding the proposed County contribution, staff recommends providing the requested matching funds.

Fiscal Impact: Up to \$70,000 from the Open Space Acquisition and Trail Development fund awarded to the High Line Canal Conservancy. The fund balance exceeds this amount.

Alternatives: Approve, modify, or deny the funding request.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

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

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends that the BOCC approve the contribution of up to \$70,000 in Open Space Acquisition and Trail Development funds for the High Line Canal Tree Risk Assessment. BOCC approval would be contingent upon the execution of an agreement between the County and the Conservancy.

Concurrence: On June 27, 2022, OSTAB voted to recommend the project to the BOCC for funding.