

STAFF REPORT

To: Mayor and City Council Date: October 25, 2016
From: Ken Putnam, Transportation Department Director Prepared by: Lucy Crown Greenway Coordinator
Via: Gary Jackson, City Manager

Subject: Acceptance to apply for and receive funds from NCDOT via the 20166 Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant for the Swannanoa River Greenway Phase Two

Summary Statement: The NCDOT released a request for grant applications for the 2017 Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Program. City staff proposes to apply for a corridor study for a section of the Swannanoa River Greenway that parallels the Swannanoa River and lies between Biltmore Ave. and S. Tunnel Rd.

Review: The NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning grants are small grants to assist with corridor studies for bike and pedestrian projects to encourage bike and pedestrian comprehensive planning. These funds will assist in up to \$36,000 for a corridor study, requires a 40% match and has a November 10, 2016 due date. If awarded, the City of Asheville would receive the funds in early March. We would like to request \$36,000 with a \$24,000 match requirement from the City.

We would like to propose the grant for a segment of the Swannanoa River Greenway, a 2.2 mile long project that parallels Swannanoa River Rd and the Swannanoa River from the intersection of Biltmore Ave. to S. Tunnel Rd. If awarded the funds, we will conduct this study simultaneously with the first phase, the "East Asheville Greenway" segment of the Swannanoa River Greenway that is proposed to be implemented in the bond referendum.

This study area is a key segment of the City's Greenway Master Plan. It is also identified as a priority area in the AIM Plan and is a crucial segment of the Wilma Dykeman Plan. This request of acceptance is supported by the Asheville Multimodal Transportation Commission and the Greenway Committee.

The City's match will either be funds that have been raised by local non-profits who are dedicated to the implementation of the Swannanoa River Greenway or from the City's general funds. The decision depends on the success of the bond referendum. If the bond referendum is successful, the raised funds can be taken from the first study that starts at S. Tunnel Rd. and heads east to Azalea Park. If the bond referendum is not successful, we will need to use funds from the general funds.

It complies with Council's 2036 Vision of 1) a Well-planned and Livable Community; 2) a Clean and Healthy Environment and 3) Transportation and Accessibility.

Once finished, this feasibility study will poise this project for engineering and final design work.

Pros:

- This will be an adjoining greenway study to "East Asheville Greenway", otherwise known as the Swannanoa River Greenway Phase One.
- A completed feasibility study will provide guidance for

Fiscal Impact: City will be required to provide a \$24,000 match for the study. Depending on the passing of the bond referendum, funds could come from raised funds made available by local non-profits who are dedicated to the implementation of the Swannanoa River Greenway Corridor.

Recommendation: City staff recommends City Council approve a resolution authorizing the City Manager to accept donations to conduct this greenway feasibility study.

Attachments:

- (1) Resolution
- (2) Map

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO APPLY FOR AND RECEIVE FUNDS FROM THE NCDOT 2017 BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM TO CONDUCT A GREENWAY CORRIDOR STUDY IN THE SWANNANOA RIVER GREENWAY CORRIDOR – PHASE ONE

WHEREAS The City Greenway Master Plan identifies this project area as part of the Swannanoa River Greenway Corridor that extend from Biltmore Avenue to South Tunnel Rd.;

WHEREAS, this segment is identified as a priority project on the City's AIM Plan; the City's Greenway Master Plan and the Wilma Dykeman Plan;

WHEREAS, this segment of the Swannanoa River Greenway Corridor would be a contiguous extension of the first phase of the same greenway;

WHEREAS, the study area is experiencing rapid development growth and utility expansion and the need to create a plan that will identify the greenway type and location in a quickly changing environment;

WHEREAS The North Carolina Department of Transportation requested proposal for bike and pedestrian corridor studies to encourage the development of such comprehensive plans and have asked for proposals to be submitted on November 10, 2016;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

That the City of Asheville continue with the application process for this grant program and, if awarded, the City Manager accept the funds for a feasibility study for the East Asheville Greenway, a segment of the Swannanoa River Greenway.

The City Manager is hereby authorized to execute any and all documents, approved by the City Attorney, to approve this feasibility study.

Read, approved and adopted this 25th day of October, 2016.

City Clerk

Mayor

Approved as to form:

City Attorney

