

Staff Report

File #: 21-3**Version:** 1**Date:** 1/25/2021**Item #:** 5.e (3.3b)

TO: Mayor and City Council**THROUGH:** Steve Powers, City Manager**FROM:** Peter Fernandez, PE, Public Works Director**SUBJECT:**

Grant application to the Oregon Community Paths Program to fund construction of Pringle Creek Path connecting under Commercial Street SE to Riverfront Park.

Ward(s): Ward 1

Councilor(s): Councilor Stapleton

Neighborhood(s): CANDO

Result Area(s): Safe, Reliable, and Efficient Infrastructure; Welcoming and Livable Community.

ISSUE:

Shall the City Council authorize the City Manager to submit an application to the Oregon Community Paths Program to fund construction of the Pringle Creek Path connecting under Commercial Street SE to Riverfront Park and, if successful, enter into an agreement with the Oregon Department of Transportation to accept the funds?

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize the City Manager to submit an application to the Oregon Community Paths Program to fund construction of the Pringle Creek Path connecting under Commercial Street SE to Riverfront Park and, if successful, enter into an agreement with the Oregon Department of Transportation to accept the funds.

SUMMARY:

The Oregon Community Paths Program is accepting grant applications to fund construction of off-street walkways and bikeways that address barriers to connecting communities and complement on-street walkways and bikeways. The Pringle Creek Path meets the intent of the Community Paths Program. Construction of this path would complete a critical connection in the City's network of off-street walkways and bikeways by connecting paths along Pringle Creek and Mill Race to Riverfront Park and the miles of connecting paths through Minto Island Park and Wallace Marine Park.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

The estimated cost of this project is \$5.3 million. The grant application will be for the maximum amount of \$4 million. The remaining costs will be covered by South Waterfront Urban Renewal Area funds.

The Oregon Community Path Program is funded with a combination of state and federal funds. An estimated total of \$14 million is available for the Oregon Community Path Program through 2024. The maximum grant award amount for a construction project is \$4 million. The required match depends on the funding source, 30 percent for state funds and 10.27 percent for federal funds.

If funded, this project will connect to the existing paths at the Civic Center, under Commercial Street, along the north bank of Pringle Creek, under the railroad, and into Riverfront Park near the Eco Earth. An illustration of the path concept is attached to this report. This path connection is included in both the *Salem Transportation System Plan* and the *Comprehensive Parks System Master Plan*. The connection is also identified in the *Riverfront Park Master Plan* and is included in the *South Waterfront Urban Renewal Plan*. The City has an easement for the path along the north bank of Pringle Creek.

The grant application is due on January 31, 2021. Awards are expected to be announced in summer 2021. If successful, the Oregon Community Paths Program requires that projects be completed within five years for state funds or within three years for federal funds. Staff is confident that this project could be delivered in accordance with these deadlines.

BACKGROUND:

In 2020, the Oregon Department of Transportation announced a new grant program, the Oregon Community Paths Program. Oregon's Community Paths Program is a competitive grant program that supports investments in biking and walking facilities that are "off system," meaning facilities that are not primarily on or along a roadway. Off system facilities may be routes or segments that traverse a park, between housing developments, along greenways, on old rail lines, or areas that are not otherwise within the public road right-of-way.

Pringle Creek passes through Pringle Park as it flows towards the Willamette River. There is an existing network of paths along Pringle Creek and the Mill Race with connections extending to Bush's Pasture Park, the Salem Hospital, Willamette University, and more. The segment west of Commercial Street is the one missing link to connect these existing paths and parks to Riverfront Park and from there to both the Peter Courtney Minto Island Bridge and the Union Street Pedestrian Bridge.

Pringle Creek joins the Willamette River at the southern end of Riverfront Park. In 2019, the City completed the Pringle Creek Daylighting and Restoration Project along the segment of Pringle Creek located between Commercial Street and the rail line. The removal of the concrete slab from the former Boise Cascade building and restoration of the creek set the stage for connecting the existing

trail along Pringle Creek from Civic Center to Riverfront Park, crossing under Commercial Street.

Robert D. Chandler, PhD, PE
Assistant Public Works Director

Attachment:

1. Pringle Creek Path Concept