



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: David Gill, Director of Parks & Recreation
DATE: December 2, 2021
SUBJECT: FY 2021 EDA American Rescue Plan Act Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Grant Opportunity

Recommendation:

Accept this report to authorize the City Manager apply for grants for the two projects listed.

Background

The approved Master Plan for Terrill Park has Concord's first Artificial Turf Field, new dog park, additional parking and a paved path along the Merrimack River that supports the long-term vision of a North-South paved route of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail. Final design and permitting was completed in 2019 and was included in the City's Capital Improvement Plan as a four-phase multiyear project.

Working with the Friends of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail, the City was awarded a Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant to complete Phase 1 of the Terrill Park Master Plan. Phase 1 opened in Fall 2020 and included: new dog park, new small parking and the first section of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail. The cost of this phase was just over \$380,000 and was funded by the Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant, City of Concord, Friends of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail and the Concord Rotary Club. The new dog park is maintained by the Pope Memorial SPCA.

Phase 2 of the Park Master Plan includes: Artificial Turf Field, Field lighting, parking lot with lights and related site improvements and is currently listed in the FY24 CIP as a \$2.5 million-dollar project. The new park is fully designed and permitted (AOT, Army Corp, NHDES, etc.) Phase 3 is listed in the FY27 CIP while the final phase is currently listed in the FY29 CIP.

With the completion of the first section of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail the City again working with the Friends of Merrimack River Greenway Trail applied for another Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant to help build a new section of trail starting near Loudon Road and going south along the river approximately 4,000 feet. This section is currently under design and permitting and the City was recently notified the LWCF grant was awarded.

The boardwalk section of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail that will connect Terrill Park with the new section coming south from Loudon Road is listed in FY23 CIP as a \$1 million project.

The recommend maximum grant amount is \$3 million per project. The end of the application period is Dec 31, 2021.

Discussion

Last month the City received notification of the FY 2021 EDA American Rescue Plan Act Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Grant Opportunity. This federal grant was created to help communities invest in infrastructure that improves tourism, economic resilience and outdoor recreation. There is a 20% match required unlike the Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants that require a 50% match.

Working with City Administration we recommend submitting two grant requests. One to complete the second phase of Terrill Park and another for the boardwalk section of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail.

If successful we will report back to City Council with related budget resolutions.

Grant Request 1: Terrill Park – Phase 2

The second phase for Terrill Park will dramatically improve this undeveloped and relatively unused park. This phase builds the City’s first artificial turf field, field lights, new parking lot, open space and related site improvements. The park is relatively easy for the entire community to access as it is directly off I-93. Artificial turf fields are now common in many communities as it provides an all-purpose field that can open as early as February and remain open as late as November and are not affected by heavy rain that often closes regular grass fields. As an example, in February 2019 there were at least four artificial turf fields open in NH, while many of our regular grass fields did not open until May 1 due to a wet spring. Artificial fields can also be lined for several events, sports and host local/regional tournaments. The daily schedule can be for many different users back to back – first use might be soccer, then lacrosse and then field hockey. Another benefit of this location is the field and park can be built without affecting other fields/parks as construction will take 12-14 months.



Grant Request 2: Merrimack River Greenway Trail Boardwalk

The vision of a North-South paved multi use trail in Concord has been years in the making. The benefits of a paved path as part of the larger Greenway Trail is that it allows better use of the trail (all inclusive) as it supports use by cyclists, residents using strollers, walkers and even people using skateboards. Although the entire north-south trail is years away from being built with this grant request we will connect the trail along the east side of the Merrimack River between the Manchester Street Bridge and the Loudon Road bridge. This would allow residents and visitors alike access from downtown Concord to the trail and the great views along the river. This grant request would include: design, permitting and construction.

