



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: David Gill, Parks and Recreation Director

DATE: September 29, 2020

SUBJECT: Land and Water Conservation Grant Request

Recommendation:

Through the City Manager, authorize the Parks and Recreation Department to apply for a Land and Water Conservation Grant to help build a new section of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail.

Background:

This summer with funding from the City of Concord, Friends of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail, the Concord Rotary Club and a grant from the Land and Water Conservation Fund we built the first section of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail along the river in Terrill Park.

Phase 1 of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail shows a connected trail from the bridge at Manchester Street along the river through Terrill Park and up to the bridge at Loudon Road (see map below). Working with the Friends of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail and the Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee we would like to apply for a Land and Water Conservation Grant to build the trail from Loudon Road south along the river to a common connection point for the boardwalk that will connect to Terrill Park (see map below).

This new section will be built on city owned land to the west of the corn fields along the banks of the Merrimack River. Building this section of the trail will allow residents and tourists alike unique views of Concord and the Merrimack River. In addition to building the Greenway Trail we would also work with the Conservation Committee to create a walking trail around the corn fields to the east. The new hiking trail offers unique views of downtown Concord as well as offers numerous opportunities for bird and wildlife watching.

Both of these trails will also offer wonderful opportunities for informational signs highlighting Concord's rich history of farming as well as use of the Merrimack River. The trails will not affect the current farming practices in the area.

The Land and Water Conservation Grant has a 50/50 match requirement. The grant match does not have to be matched with cash – donated time and materials also count. The Friends of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail have once again agreed to help raise the match requirement. Over the past ten years the Friends have raised over \$150,000 in cash and hundreds of hours of volunteer time to help the City design and build sections of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail. City staff will also review Recreation Impact fees to see if any could be used towards building the new recreation trail.

The deadline to apply for the grant is October 30, 2020 and we would be notified of grant awards in the spring of 2021. If awarded the grant we will have three years to build the new section of trail.

Map of Merrimack River Greenway Trail and Hiking Trail around corn field



Red = Greenway Trial, Blue = hiking trail



Yellow = proposed route of Greenway Trail