



Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission

MEMORANDUM

To: Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission
 From: Robert L. Tetens, Director
 Date: March 12, 2013
 Re: 2013 Connecting Communities Awards

Background

At the February Commission meeting staff presented the 2013 **Connecting Communities** project proposals. The Connecting Communities program was initiated in 2009, WCPARC pledged to make available up to \$600,000 each year during the 2010 – 2014 period (\$3 million in total) toward the cost of eligible projects. The following applications were received representing eight projects in six communities and requesting a total of \$1,825,000 in funding:

<u>Community</u>	<u>Requested</u>
City of Ann Arbor	\$300k
Village of Dexter	\$300k
Northfield Twp.	\$230k
Pittsfield Twp.	\$400k
Superior Twp.	\$300k
Ypsilanti Twp.	\$295k

Staff presented an overview of the applications and distributed a packet of information to Commission members that included the project applications, project summary sheets, and the Connecting Communities Program Description and Review Criteria.

Discussion

In January staff met with the Greenway Advisory Committee (GAC) to discuss the project applications and score the projects against the adopted Connecting Communities criteria. Based on input from GAC, staff developed a final ranking of projects and suggests that the following four projects receive Connecting Communities funding:

Village of Dexter - This project will complete a 1,300 foot section of the River Terrace Trail in Dexter. The River Terrace trail is an important link in the Border to Border Trail and will connect Dexter-Huron Metropark to the Village of Dexter. Completing this last segment of trail will achieve the desired non-motorized connectivity from Dexter-Huron Metropark to Hudson Mills Metropark west of the Village. Over one mile of the trail was constructed in 2012 by WCPARC including a new 170-foot bridge spanning the Huron River. The current proposal will extend the trail to Central Street in the Village and pass between the Dexter DPW building and the railroad. This final phase of trail will require approval from MDOT to allow construction in the railroad easement (formerly owned by Norfolk Southern). The Village of Dexter has requested \$300,000 for the project. Based on an updated construction estimate, staff supports an award of \$225,000 for the project.

Ypsilanti Township – This proposal includes three segments of trail along Whittaker, Tuttle Hill, and Textile roads. The Commission has funded two previous trail segments along Textile road for a total of \$350,000. The first project was constructed in 2012 and provides a much needed connection between Bridge Road and Lakeside Park. The Township is requesting a total of \$295,000 for the three segments. Staff recommends awarding \$75,000 for construction of the 1,000 foot segment along Textile Road. Since the Township has not yet completed the project awarded in 2012, staff suggests deferring the two other segments until the 2014 round of applications.

City of Ann Arbor - In both 2011 and 2012 the City submitted applications to construct the initial segment of the Allen Creek Greenway. Specifically, these applications were for the construction of a trail segment on the city owned 415 W. Washington site near downtown. These applications did not score well due to limited connectivity to other trails or public spaces. The current proposal is also a segment of the proposed Allen Creek Greenway but is focused on the 721 North Main site (also city owned). The project is integrated with the overall vision to create/complete/enhance pedestrian and bike connections from downtown and west side neighborhoods to river-side parks and the Border-to-Border Trail. Although the current proposal doesn't make a connection to the B2B, it is intended as the first phase and the proposal includes a detailed study of alternative routes for extending the trail to the north. The City is requesting \$300,000. The City is also applying for a grant of \$300,000 from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF). Staff recommends awarding \$150,000 to the City as a contribution to the local match for the MNRTF grant.

Pittsfield Township – In 2010 and 2011 the Commission awarded \$590,000 to Pittsfield Township for the construction of the very popular Lohr-Textile Greenway (LTG). The Township is now proposing to construct phase II of the LTG by extending the trail 1.76 miles east along the north side of Textile Road. The new segment will extend the trail from the intersection of Lohr and Textile to the east past State Street, to the Marshview Meadow Park and the Pittsfield Preserve. Due to extensive wetlands along Textile Road, construction of the trail will be difficult and costly. The Township is also applying for grants through the MNRTF and the Federal Transportation Alternatives Program to help fund the \$1.8 million dollar project. Staff recommends awarding \$150,000 to the Township to contribute towards the local match for the MNRTF grant.

WASHTENAW COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION								
CONNECTING COMMUNITIES 2013								
COMMUNITY	ROADS or ROUTE	LENGTH	TOTAL COST	REQUEST	PREVIOUS CC AWARD	REMARKS	RATING	PROPOSED AWARD
Ann Arbor	North Main St	1,500 ft	1 M (entire project)	300 K	none	first part of Allen Creek Greenway (trail cost +/- \$60K)	5	\$150 K
Village of Dexter	Dexter Huron Metropark to Dexter	1,300 ft	300 K	300 K	none	eligible B2B project	1	\$225 K
Northfield Twp	Barker Rd	phase 3 2,925 ft	600 K	230 K	120 K (2010) 250 K (2011)	Phases 1 and 2A complete; 2B scheduled for spring 2013	4	0
Pittsfield Twp	Textile Rd	1.8 mi	1.8 M	400 K	300 K (2010) 290 K (2011)	phase 2 of Lohr-Textile Greenway	3	\$150 K
Superior Twp	Prospect Rd Geddes Rd	2,700 ft 2,200 ft	406 K 267 K	300 K	none	Twp has relatively well developed nonmotorized trail system	5 7	0 0
Ypsilanti Twp	Textile Rd Tuttle-Hill Rd Whitaker Rd	4,032 ft	310 K	295 K (225 + 70)	100 K (2010) 250K (2011)	Township has pledged \$100,000 for project engineering	2 8	\$75 K 0
							TOTAL	\$600 K

Recommendation

After careful analysis of each project considering the adopted Connecting Communities criteria, it is my recommendation that WCPARC resolve to grant a total of \$600,000 for project funding to the following communities:

- Village of Dexter \$225,000
- Ypsilanti Twp. \$75,000
- Ann Arbor \$150,000 local match for MNRTF grant
- Pittsfield Twp. \$150,000 local match for MNRTF grant

Each community has committed to long-term maintenance of their respective trail segments. Project funding will be made available to each community when a contract for project construction has been executed. The funding will expire if a contract has not been executed within two years of the approval date. In the cases of the City of Ann Arbor and Pittsfield Township, the funding will expire if the respective community is unable to secure the necessary grant funding.