

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	December 16, 2024
Action Required:	Approve Resolution
Presenter:	Brenda Kelley, Redevelopment Manager, Chris Gensic, Park and Trail Planner
Staff Contacts:	Brenda Kelley, Redevelopment Manager Chris Gensic, Park and Trail Planner Taylor Harvey-Ryan, Grants Program Manager Riaan Anthony, Director of Parks & Recreation
Title:	Resolution to appropriate grant funds from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation in the amount of \$393,456.60 for the Pollocks Branch Pedestrian/Trail Bridge (1 of 2 readings)

Background

The City of Charlottesville has received notification of award in the total amount of \$393,456.60 from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation for the construction of the Pollocks Branch Pedestrian Bridge. Of this total amount, \$314,765.28 is funding from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and \$78,691.32 is the City's match from previously approved project CIP funds.

This new Pollocks Branch Pedestrian Bridge will provide residents and visitors new safe, stable and accessible pedestrian connectivity to the creek and the emerging Rivanna Trails network, crossing the water at the end of Rockland Avenue and leading directly into CRHA's South First Street residential community. This new bridge also supports the city's walkable watershed concept with the ideas of clean water, healthy communities, and connected, vibrant neighborhood places in an effort to improve urban creeks, preserve community assets, and generate community pride. When completed, the Pollocks Branch Pedestrian Bridge will become part of the ever-expanding Pollocks Branch trail network and will provide an important link to the city's trails system. Building this bridge over the Pollocks Branch waterway will create a much needed, centrally located east-west bicycle and pedestrian link within the six-block long urban area separated by the waterway between Elliot Avenue and Rougemont Avenue.

In addition, this neighborhood is expected to experience a significant growth in population with the redevelopment of the Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority's (CRHA) nearby South First Street residential complex.

The proposed bridge will also provide new and safe access to the developing Pollocks Branch greenway to Jordan Park. This greenway is planned to connect the downtown area with Moores Creek and the Rivanna Trails system. The bridge will traverse the Pollocks Branch waterway at the

end of Rockland Avenue connecting to the Pollocks Branch Trail that traverses the eastern boundary of the CRHA South First Street community.

Discussion

At its November 4, 2024 meeting, the City Council approved Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to fill a shortfall of estimated funding for the construction of the Pollocks Branch Pedestrian Bridge. Through that agenda item and during that presentation it was reported that the City was awarded \$307,639.69 in funding from the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation following submittal of a competitive application through the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). Staff also reported that they had just been notified of an additional award of funds under the RTP program in the amount of \$7,125.59.

Approval of this request will appropriate the full amount of funding from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation totaling \$314,765.28, to facilitate construction of the new bridge.

Alignment with City Council's Vision and Strategic Plan

This request is closely aligned to City Council's vision of the City of Charlottesville as a community in which everyone can thrive, stemming in part from its contributions to enhancing public access to Recreation and the city's abundant greenspaces.

Community Engagement

This proposal benefits from a high degree of community engagement in that numerous community groups and organizations have been involved in the planning of the Walkable Watershed concept since as early as 2015. The Redevelopment Committee of the Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority (CRHA) and the Charlottesville Public Housing Association of Residents (PHAR) envisioned this bridge as part of the redevelopment of South First Street, and were the primary planning group for this overall project.

Budgetary Impact

There is no impact to the General Fund as the project will be funded using a combination of grant funds and funds previously appropriated for SIA Immediate Implementation in the City's Capital Improvement Fund.

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the attached Resolution to appropriate the grant funds awarded by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Alternatives

If grant funds are not appropriated, the grant funds awarded will have to be forfeited and returned to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. If this were to happen, there would not be enough funding available to proceed with the project.

Attachments

1. RESOLUTION appropriate grant funds RTP 121624