

MPC 5.d - Attachment 1.a: Middle Fork Willamette River Loop Path

Description of Request

Purpose

Willamalane Parks and Recreation is continuing project development of Phase 2 of the Middle Fork Willamette River Path. They are seeking \$70,000 in current Surface Transportation funds to support completion of final plans, specifications, and estimates. This memo requests MPC approval of the required MTIP amendment.

Background

This project will construct a regional Multi-Use Path along the north bank of the Middle Fork Willamette River from Dorris Ranch to Clearwater Park. The attached map in Exhibit A shows the project location and extent. This is an important component of a planned project for a loop path along the Middle Fork Willamette River and Springfield Mill Race with a bridge across the river to Lane County's Howard Buford Recreation Area (Mt Pisgah). Construction of the planned 4-mile Middle Fork Willamette River Path will establish the Springfield backbone of a regional alternative transportation network. The Middle Fork Path will ultimately connect the Eugene and west Springfield riverbank path system with southeast Springfield neighborhoods, with only minor portions of on-street bike lanes. This larger bike system is developing as funds are secured.

The request to amend the MTIP concerns Phase 2 of the project, which will address the Dorris Ranch to Quarry Creek Bridge segment of the path. Completing Phase 2 will finish the linkage between downtown and southeast Springfield.

The project received an appropriation of \$3 million from SAFETEA-LU in 2005, allowing the District to proceed with the design, engineering, permitting, and acquisition of necessary property for the entire length of the multi-use path. This funding also allowed Willamalane to construct Phase 1 (Clearwater Park to Quarry Creek) in 2010. In September 2009 the MPC approved \$250,000 in FY 2010 STP-U funds to construct the bridge across Quarry Creek as a part of Phase 1. Construction of the bridge is on track for bidding in March.

The Middle Fork Willamette River Path project is included in the Regional Transportation Plan, the Willamalane Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan, and Eugene-Springfield Transportation System Plan. It is also included on the regional priorities list that was submitted to the area's federal delegation by the local governments in 2009.

Staff Evaluation

This amendment will add \$70,000 in Surface Transportation funds to the engineering phase of this project to support completion of final plans, specifications, and estimates. All required permitting has been completed; land-use permits and ROW phases are almost complete (within next 60 days). It only remains for the final plans for this

segment to be developed and given to ODOT for review. This work will prepare the project for construction and bring Dorris Ranch-Quarry Creek segment (Phase 2) plans to a point where this segment is ready to go to bid.

In order to be well-placed to receive the second round of ARRA funds, should they become available, a project will likely need to be ready to go to bid as soon as the construction funding is secured. If there is no second ARRA, these plans will still be viable and will prepare the project to be in a position to receive other available funds in the future (Transportation Enhancement funds and United Front requests).

This request is similar to that made to MPC for the South Bank Viaduct project where it was necessary to get funds programmed for early completion of work that is necessary to take advantage of imminent construction funding opportunities

A second part of the amendment would be to move \$50K from construction to engineering to cover the land use review and approval costs that have already been incurred.

MPC approval is necessary to award Surface Transportation Funds-Urban (STP-U) funds that are apportioned by formula to the MPO. Thus, this amendment is non-administrative and needs to be considered by MPC. The Transportation Planning Committee (TPC) considered the proposed amendment at its meeting on January 28th and unanimously recommended that MPC approve the funding as described below.

Public Involvement

Project Public Involvement

Over the course of the project development, Willamalane Parks and Recreation has conducted numerous public outreach and information events, including:

1. Periodic updates on the Willamalane web site.
2. Periodic articles in the Willamalane Program Guide (distributed to all residents in the District).
3. Article in the Eugene Register-Guard on June 22, 2007.
4. Middle Fork Path Questionnaire mailed to approx 735 path neighbors on June 11, 2008, with approximately 100 responses.
5. Public Open House on June 27, 2009, with approximately 50 attendees.
6. Six updates to the Willamalane Board of Directors between June 2006 and Dec 2009
7. Two updates to the Springfield City Council, in July 2007 and December 2009.

Willamalane's Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan also included input from over 750 local residents who identified the provision of off-street bicycle paths as the most desired outdoor facility the District could provide.

MPO Public Involvement

The MPO's Public Participation Plan (PPP) calls for a public comment period, public hearing, notice to interested parties and web notice for proposed STP-U funding decisions. The notice to interested parties and the web notice for this proposed funding decision were distributed on January 29th. The public hearing is scheduled as part of this agenda item on February 11th.

The PPP states that a public comment period "generally is 30 days." Due to the time-sensitive nature of this project, staff is requesting that MPC consider action on this amendment at the February 11th MPC meeting, after a 13-day comment period.

Other Considerations

The proposed amendment has been reviewed for its impact on air quality conformity. It is an exempt project under OAR-340-252-0270 and has thus been found to not trigger the requirement for a new regional conformity determination. Fiscal constraint of the MTIP has not been affected.

MTIP Amendment 2010-11: Key 14655, Middle Fork Willamette River Loop Path

Total cost: Approximately \$3.3 million, of which \$250,000 are STP-U funds were previously authorized by the MPC for construction purposes. The proposal is for an additional \$70,000 of STP-U funds for preliminary engineering purposes.

Action Recommended: Hold Public Hearing.

Approve Resolution 2010-01 amending the FFY08-11 MTIP.