

May 21, 2021

Ms. Heather Lamboy
City of Aurora – Planning Department
15151 E. Alameda Parkway
Aurora, Colorado 80012

Dear Ms. Lamboy:

On behalf of the Inspiration Metropolitan District, it is my privilege to submit this application to construct a hard-surface ADA-accessible regional trail connection between the community of Inspiration and the Piney Creek Trail network. This project of approximately 1,500 linear feet will link the trail system in Inspiration in Douglas County to the City of Aurora trail system in Arapahoe County – creating both a physical and symbolic connection for our community and our neighbors.

This is a collaborative project with the City of Aurora Department of Parks, Recreation and Open Space, which will construct the northern half of the connection to the Douglas-Arapahoe county line. The Inspiration Metropolitan District will construct the southern half, which alternates between City of Aurora and unincorporated Douglas County and is located almost entirely within the Public Service Company of Colorado right of way. Because of the jurisdictional boundaries, these are two separate projects and this submittal addresses only the improvements to be constructed and maintained by the Inspiration Metropolitan District.

The project is consistent with and advances the goals of the Arapahoe County Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan¹, the Douglas County Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan² and the City of Aurora Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan³. Importantly, the completed project will deliver significant recreational benefits to the public in both Douglas and Arapahoe counties with the cost borne entirely by the Inspiration Metropolitan District.

In addition to linking the 1,900 families in Inspiration to the vast trail systems of Metro Denver – including the Cherry Creek Trail network, the High Line Canal Trail network and the High Plains Trail network – this project also creates an easy connection for the neighboring Douglas County community of Livengood Hills, which has collaborated closely over the past several years with the Inspiration

¹ <https://www.arapahogov.com/DocumentCenter/View/6293/Arapahoe-County-Bicycle-and-Pedestrian-Master-Plan>

² <https://www.douglas.co.us/documents/2030-ptos.pdf/>

³ https://www.auroragov.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_1881137/File/Business%20Services/Economic/Transportation%20Planning/Bicycle%20and%20Pedestrian%20Planning/015491.pdf

Metropolitan District on the submitted alignment. In addition, we have consulted with the family of Laurence Metherd, who is the largest adjacent landowner with a parcel directly east of the proposed trail. We are also finalizing a license agreement with Xcel Energy, which partially funded the project through Pawnee-Daniels Park Transmission Project mitigation monies, to construct the trail in its right of way⁴.

When complete, the trail connection will protect sensitive wetlands and other natural areas in the Piney Creek watershed by containing foot, bicycle and equestrian traffic to the trail. At present, numerous casual trails have been cut through the area, which is home to migratory waterfowl, deer and a dwindling herd of pronghorn. The primary negative impact will be short-term construction noise and disruption. The bulk of grading to achieve ADA-required grades of less than 5% will occur north of Piney Creek within the Inspiration Metropolitan District, with less intensive preparation occurring between the north side of Piney Creek and the county line. Construction hours will be limited to weekdays between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5 p.m., with Saturday work occurring only in emergency situations.

It has taken many years of work by many volunteers to reach this milestone. This project demonstrates that neighbors working together with their local governments can achieve outcomes with broad public benefits. We look forward to working with you toward a timely approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Curtiss', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Aaron Curtiss
Vice President
Inspiration Metropolitan District

⁴ State parcel numbers 2235-061-00-001 and 2235-061-00-002