

Memorandum

To: Mayor and Council
From: Tom Baker, Town Administrator
Date: May 17, 2016
Re: Funding Request: BLM Environmental and Cultural Clearances

Purpose: The purpose of this item is to consider staff's funding request of \$17,500 for BLM Environmental and Cultural Clearances for the 400 acres of BLM land north of the Colorow Trail.

Background and Discussion: As background information I have attached the April 19th staff memorandum.

The funding partnership for the \$20,000 cost for BLM Environmental and Cultural Clearances consists of RFMBA \$2,500 and Town of New Castle \$17,500. CVR HOA has agreed to contribute \$3,750 in 2016 and 2017 for specific trail work, but not studies. Our trails will need signage and other work and CVR HOA funds can contribute to those items. For example, the new trailhead for Colorow will need to be signed and trailhead parking in Alder Park will also need signage. RFMBA/New Castle Trails will lead trail planning, building and maintenance. All three partners will contribute in important ways.

Recommendation: The recent IMBA Trail Care Crew visit (May 5-7) demonstrates how much local interest and commitment exists for soft trails for biking, running and hiking. We have an opportunity to conduct the environmental and cultural clearances this summer/fall (BLM will oversee work) to be prepared to plan and build trails next spring/summer (2017). If we want BLM to fund this work, then 2018/19/20 is likely the earliest they can provide funding.

Trails can be part of our future economy and the IMBA session identified other communities that are successfully implementing this strategy. Staff supports this funding and recommends:

1. Authorize the above funding partnership with BLM, CVR HOA, IMBA/RFMBA/NCT, and TONC to fund environmental clearances in 2016. This will require Council to authorize up to \$17,500 in partner funding (Economic Development line item) and RFMBA to contribute \$2,500. CVR HOA will provide funding (\$3,750 in both 2016 and 2017) for specific trail related work (not studies).
2. Direct staff to draft and authorize the Mayor to sign a letter to BLM proposing the above work and partnership.

Memorandum

To: Mayor and Council
From: Tom Baker, Town Administrator
Date: April 19, 2016
Re: Trails: Update and Request for Funds – BLM, Warrior, CVR

Purpose: The purpose of this memorandum is two-fold: first, to give Council an update on work being done to expand the community's soft trail opportunities with private property owners and public projects; and second, to request Council join a partnership to fund, in 2016, the needed environmental and cultural clearances for the BLM land north of the existing Colorow trail.

New Castle Trails: Adam Cornely has had separate discussions with Lakota Canyon owner Warrior Golf and Castle Valley Ranch owner Aaron Atkinson regarding the use of their respective properties for soft trails. As Council knows, NCT and NCTC goals are to increase the soft trail opportunities in New Castle for community economic, health, and quality-of-life benefits. These goals fit exactly with our desire to be a LiveWell HEAL town (healthy eating, active living). Currently, Warrior appears amenable to public use of trails on their land if they can be protected (liability). I spoke with Tami Tanoue from CIRSA and she outlined an approach to accomplish this task. First, create an easement for the trail to be used by the public; within the easement agreement we refer to the CRS that limits private liability for publically used amenities; we identify Warrior as an additional insured (for use of this trail or trails); and we also indemnify Warrior. Warrior Golf seems amenable but will require a one-year renewable agreement and the right to stop public use if it impacts their business operations negatively. Warrior's trails will provide easier access to upper BLM land than will the Colorow trail.

CVR discussions continue in a positive fashion. NCT's/Town's goal is to connect the Jolley trail network with the Medaris trail network. It appears that this is possible without infringing on developable property; however, Mr. Atkinson will likely require the same assurances as Warrior, if we can reach an agreement.

NCT and the Town (Mike Callas) are working on two new trail segments for 2016. The first is with Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers (RFOV) – NCT has been staking an alignment to the Jolley Trail extension (an extension to the extension!). This project can be done as a RFOV project in 2016. The second, is a project for our May 5-7 International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) event. This project has implications for our BLM partnership. In essence it is creating an alternate access to the Colorow trail using town open space north of Alder Park. While this is a steep property we believe we can incorporate switchbacks so that the grade is moderate. This approach allows for several benefits: Colorow trail users can park in the Alder Park parking lot, which is a big plus for BLM because Lariat Loop access has created numerous and constant complaints from property owners about inappropriate parking; easier directional signage to guide users to Alder Park; and we demonstrate to BLM that we are not deaf to their concerns about "appropriate access" and will be good partners.

BLM: On March 22nd, Adam and I met with BLM representatives Brian Hopkins and Greg Wolfgang. The purpose of the meeting was to create a mutually beneficial process for the BLM/Town/NCT to build a more extensive network of soft trails north of, and connecting to, the Colorow trail. We feel we have

developed a serious and positive relationship with BLM staff and have an understanding of what it will take to develop this partnership so that we can plan and build trails on this BLM land. Additionally, Adam and I had the opportunity to brainstorm with Brad Gates CVR HOA president. Mr. Gates is interested in having CVR HOA play a positive role in improving the town's quality-of-life and will consider becoming a funding partner in this effort.

The following is a suggested approach:

1. In 2016, the BLM will facilitate environmental and cultural clearances on the 400 acres north of Colorow trail. Due to the BLM's budget process, they do not have 2016 funds to accomplish this task. The cost is approximately \$20,000 and we propose a funding partnership of the Town (\$10k), CVR HOA (\$7.5k) and IMBA/RFMBA (\$2.5k).
2. Using these completed clearances the BLM will internally conduct an Environmental Assessment (EA) of these lands during the 2016/17 winter season.
3. The completed EA will be our authorization and guide for trail building in 2017.
4. Formally adopt an MOU between BLM, TONC and NCT to serve as a general framework for cooperation to manage, maintain and address local issues. This MOU does not commit any partner to the allocation of funds.

Request: Staff requests the following:

1. Authorization to use the Alder area open space for a formal access to Colorow Trail. This will be part of the May 5-7 IMBA training.
2. Authorization to work with Warrior and CVR investors to create a liability environment that is acceptable to them with the guidance and input of CIRSA and the Town Attorney.
3. Authorize the above funding partnership with BLM, CVR HOA, INBA/RFMBA, and TONC to fund environmental clearances in 2016. This will require Council to authorize up to \$10,000 in partner funding (Economic Development line item).
4. Authorize the Town Attorney to review existing MOU between TONC and BLM to determine if amendments are needed and bring to Council for approval at a future meeting.
5. Authorize the Mayor to sign a letter to BLM proposing the above partnership.