



Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska
Parks & Recreation Department

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MEMORANDUM

Date: May 11, 2017

To: Parks & Recreation Commission

Cc: Josh Durand, Parks Superintendent

From: Brad Muir, Natural Resource Manager

Project: **PRC 17-11:** Youth Employment in Parks 2017 Projects

INTRODUCTION

Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) is a joint program of the Anchorage Park Foundation and the Municipality of Anchorage's Parks & Recreation Department. Since 2007, YEP has hired over 300 Anchorage youth to complete park improvement projects resulting in millions of dollars of improvements to Anchorage Parks and Trails.

YEP aims to engage a new generation of young leaders in the conservation of public lands through meaningful job training, employment and education. A major component of the YEP program is education and civic engagement. Through the course of the ten week program, YEP teens learn about environmental stewardship, natural resource conservation and land management. Each week, the YEP program sponsors an education day and at the end of the program teens participate in a mentorship week that links their new skills to future careers.

PLANNING AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Youth Employment in Parks projects receive input from the community and guidance from Parks and Recreation staff to ensure that park improvements are consistent with the goals of the (2006) *Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource and Recreation Facility Plan*.

Parks and Recreation staff has also worked closely with government agencies and non-profit partners to identify projects that capitalize on available funding and achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

Last year, the Youth Employment in Parks teens completed \$201,529 worth of improvements in Anchorage Parks and Trails. This summer, the YEP teens will complete an additional \$247,000 in improvements in Anchorage Parks.

The following six YEP projects are proposed for summer 2017:

1. Kincaid Bluff Trail
2. Campbell Creek Restoration
3. Valley of the Moon Park Improvements
4. Lions Park Improvements in Girdwood
5. Jewel Lake Rain Gardens and Drainage Improvements
6. Davis Park Disc Golf Course

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN PARKS (YEP) CREW PROJECTS

Kincaid Bluff Trail **\$35,000**

In July 2016 a Humpback Whale washed on shore below the Jodpher Motocross track. Thousands of people descended the bluff to see the whale up close. Erosion, trampled vegetation, formation of ruts, and bluff instability occurred as a result. The need for a sustainable access trail to the Wildlife Refuge was seen. The Department of Fish and Game and Anchorage Parks and Recreation with Ptarmigan P-trails have worked together to design a sustainable beach access trail in this area. Beginning in May a volunteer group, Ptarmigan P-trails and YEP will work to construct this trail and revegetate the eroded and unstable areas, as well as install signage. The funding was provided by the Department of Fish and Game.

Kincaid Beach Trail Improvements **\$17,000**

The YEP crew will spend one week at Kincaid Park finishing the Kincaid Beach Trail. YEP crews will be managing vegetation, revegetating eroding social trails, and improving trail tread on the recently constructed Kincaid Beach Trail. This will be funded from the remaining funds from 2014 \$50,000 State Legislative Grant awarded to the Anchorage Park Foundation.

Campbell Creek Restoration **\$80,000**

The YEP crew will spend two weeks at the Campbell Creek. The crew will have multiple tasks: (1) Restore 3 areas of shoreline along Campbell Creek, (2) install two Elevated Light Penetrating (ELP) Boardwalks above restored streambanks (3) remove invasive weeds along the Campbell Creek greenbelt, (4) plant a variety of native plants and trees. The scope of work is currently being developed in coordination with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The funding will come from a US Forest Service through the Alaska State Forestry program awarded in 2016.

Valley of the Moon Landscaping **\$30,000**

The YEP crew will spend one week working at Valley of the Moon Park. The crews will work on landscaping improvements associated with the green infrastructure of the site. The landscaping will be in conjunction with parking lot upgrades to help with the beautification of the project and to help facilitate the infiltration for stormwater runoff. This project will aim to source and plant native plant material. The funding will come from the 2015 parks bond.

Lions Park in Girdwood **\$20,000**

The YEP crews will spend one week at the Lions Club Park in Girdwood. The YEP crew will construct picnic tables and pads for the tables, thin vegetation, improve park trails, and work on upgrades to the volleyball court. This project will be funded by the Girdwood Parks and Recreation Department.

Jewel Lake Rain Gardens and Drainage Improvements **\$30,000**

The YEP crew will spend one week at Jewel Lake Park. The crews will work on improving drainage of current rain garden by replacing fine soils with a better draining subsurface, replant the raingarden, remediate drainage issues in field and improve ADA accessibility to beach, regrade grass field utilizing cut materials and re-seed. YEP crews will help install a zipline in the 2017 construction season in preparation for the planned playground improvements in the 2018 construction season. The funding will come from the 2015 parks bond and from the Anchorage Park Foundation's Clean and Green funds.

Davis Park Disc Golf Course **\$35,000**

The YEP crews will spend two weeks at Davis Park working on a new 9 hole disk golf course as identified in the Master Plan. The YEP crew will remove vegetation from the fairways, construct tee boxes, build trails to tees, and install baskets. Funding for this project will come from the 2016 park bonds.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The proposed Youth Employment in Parks projects have been reviewed and are supported by Park Planning staff. The Department recommends that the Parks & Recreation Commission pass the proposed resolution in support of the Youth Employment in Parks projects as presented.



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PRC RES NO. 2017-11

Youth Employment in Parks - 2017 Projects

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to both the Mayor and the Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission has the responsibility and duty to provide for the long term vision of our park system by ensuring that a balance of parks, natural resources, and recreation facilities provides for the health, welfare, and safety of all residents of the Anchorage Bowl; and

WHEREAS, the Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) is a joint program of the Anchorage Park Foundation and the Municipality of Anchorage's Parks & Recreation Department and is focused on providing Anchorage teens with meaningful job experience, outdoor education and environmental stewardship skill in Anchorage Parks and Trails; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department, the Anchorage Park Foundation, and various project partners has dedicated or achieved \$247,000 in funding to support the 2017 Youth Employment in Parks; and

WHEREAS the Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) is in its 11th year of operation with a planned scope of work that includes trail work, bank restoration, interpretive sign installation, slope stabilization, landscaping and vegetation rehabilitation, and park beautification projects to be completed during the 2017 YEP program season; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the scope of work submitted by the Department for the 2017 Youth Employment in Parks Projects.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 11th day of May, 2017.

Chair
Parks and Recreation Commission

ATTEST:

John Rodda, Director
Parks & Recreation Department