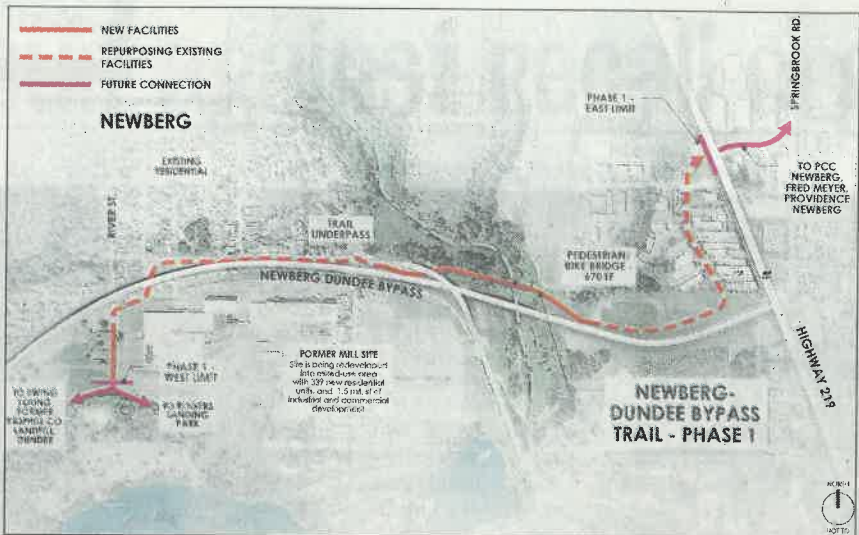


The Oregon Transportation Commission has awarded the Chehalem Parks & Recreation District \$1.82 million toward construction of the Newberg-Dundee Bypass Trail.

COURTESY GRAPHIC: CPRD



CPRD gets some help from city for bypass trail

By GARY ALLEN
Pamplin Media Group

In 2021, the Chehalem Park and Recreation District applied to the Oregon Department of Transportation for a \$2.6 million Oregon Community Paths grant to help fund planning and construction of the Newberg-Dundee Bypass Trail. As designed, the trail would extend from Highway 219 along the southern edge of the city and be part of a larger overall trail that would reach from Rex Hill to Dundee.

The city of Newberg lent its support to the application for the grant, which required a 30% (\$780,000) match by the park district. The Oregon Transportation Commission sent the CPRD the good news a few months later that it had awarded \$1.82 million toward bringing the project to fruition.

The city, according to a report presented to the City Council at its June 6 meeting, continued to work with the CPRD on development of the project, including encouraging the park district to approach the city's budget committee with a request for \$400,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds the city received from the federal government.

However, the budget committee denied the park district's request, which prompted then-interim city manager Will Worthey to approach CPRD officials about the city taking the lead on the South River Street segment of the

proposed trail as another means of contributing.

"The conclusion of those discussions was the city providing \$25,000 to CPRD toward the design of the South River Street trail segment," the council document said.

The city's next step in the process came after a pre-application meeting with CPRD officials in March to discuss the city charges that would be required as part of construction of the trail. The CPRD queried city officials if they could waive some or all of the charges for design reviews, permits, technology and engineering land use fees, as well as site development plan reviews, inspection fees and more.

All told the city estimated the ask at between \$64,839 and \$80,589. The range is broad because the park district does not yet have specific site designs or estimates of construction costs. The figure includes the \$25,000 already donated toward the cause by the city.

That engendered animated discussion at the council's June 6 meeting.

"I think (the trail is) going to be great for the community," CPRD Superintendent Don Clements said. "It's going to connect Newberg and Dundee together, where you'll have a walkable path all the way. That we don't have right now — there's no way to do that."

Clements advised the council that the park district had sunk "about \$800,000" into the project so far, so "anything you could do would be greatly appreciated."

Before the council began de-

liberating on the motion, Mayor Rick Rogers declared that he would not vote because his wife is a member of the CPRD board of directors, although he added that he believed that wouldn't constitute a conflict of interest.

Longtime councilor Denise Bacon wasn't sold on the idea of fee reductions, characterizing herself as the anti-funding other taxing districts councilor.

"We're already at \$25,000. I would not be comfortable with more," she said. "We have to pay our bills and we have to pay our staff, right, it's not like this is all free. I might be willing to go to another \$10,000 — that would be my limit ..."

Councilor Jefferson Mildenberger said he might be in favor of a discounted rate as well, while councilor Mike McBride suggested waving 50% of the fees so the city would gift between \$34,000 and \$40,000 in fees, permits and whatnot. Council Elise Yarnell Hollamon said she was OK with either waving the whole amount or the 50% discount.

Councilor Stephanie Findley concurred: "I'm more comfortable with the 50 percent because I am in the same boat as feeling really conflicted about really liking this project and wanting it to happen and also knowing that doling money from one taxing district to another feels not in our best interests for our budget and what we're doing at the city."

In the end, the council agreed to rewrite the motion so as to reduce the fees, permits and other charges by 50%, then voted 4-1 in the affirmative.