

Crozet Neighborhood Improvement Funding Initiative (NIFI) Project Description

Project Name: Western Park

Location: Old Trail

Description: The Master Plan Report for Western Park at Old Trail which was published in November 2009 was created with a great deal of community involvement and professional expertise. As a more thorough understanding of the available land donated to create Western Park evolved, challenges to implementing the plan as currently drawn were revealed. As identified in The Crozet Master Plan, the natural setting of the land donated to create Western Park presents unique opportunities for a park in the designated growth area of Crozet. However, a revised Master Plan is necessary to explore matching fund opportunities at the County and State level in order to make Western Park at Old Trail a reality.

Cost Estimate: Option 1- \$50,000 to fund a revised master plan. This is a best guess based on the cost to prepare the original plan. Input from FES staff and County Parks and Rec planners will be an integral component of determining realistic estimate.

Option 2- \$50,000 to fund initial work on implementation of the park, such as initial clearing, grading and erosion control.

Timing/Schedule:

Summer 2017	- Preliminary work by County staff
Fall 2017	-- Hire landscape architecture firm to revise plan
Spring 2018	- Research matching fund opportunities
Summer 2018	-- Submit revised plan

Justification: The Comprehensive Plan requires concentrated growth areas in order to preserve our scenic views, rural areas and to protect our natural resources. The Crozet Community was designated as a growth area and the County adopted a specific master plan for the area in 2004 to ensure the community grows in a way that is beneficial to its residents and the community as a whole. The plan includes a strategy to create a network of public parks and greenways in the watershed of Lickinghole Creek in order to protect natural systems; preserve areas of topographical, historical or cultural interest characteristic of Crozet; create recreational space; and link neighborhoods to the larger community.

The Crozet Master Plan identified the Western Park site as a key location in this open space network. The 36 acre site offers access to the scenic and healthy Lickinghole Creek, as well as high points with Blue Ridge Mountain views. Its proximity to County schools, neighborhoods, retirement communities, Old Trail and the greenway system offer opportunities for important links for cyclists and pedestrians in conjunction with the County's objective of establishing a regional trail system. In addition to donating the land for Western Park, the developer of Old Trail has provided topsoil, trails, grading and storm water measures valued in excess of \$300,000.00.

Population density in the designated growth area of Crozet will basically double over the next ten years. Completion of Western Park is a necessity if we are to serve the entire community and avoid putting too much pressure on existing facilities. Western Park also presents an opportunity for more efficient use of our resources by including within its confines several of the other projects identified through the NIFI process. Funding the revised Master Plan for Western Park at Old Trail is consistent with each of the guiding principles for project evaluation for the Neighborhood Improvement Funding Initiative.