



## City Council

### Neighborhood Pathways Program Review

**Agenda Date:** 2/4/2014  
**Agenda Item Number:** 6.A  
**File Number:** 13-1074

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**Type:** decision **Version:** 1 **Status:** Passed

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#### **Title**

Neighborhood Pathways Program Review

#### **Recommended Action**

##### **Committee Recommendation:**

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee recommends changes to the Neighborhood Pathways Program listed in Attachment #1.

##### **City Manager Recommendation:**

As recommended by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, move to accept recommended changes to the Neighborhood Pathways Program listed in Attachment #1.

#### **Report**

##### **Issue:**

Whether to accept recommended changes to the Neighborhood Pathways Program. These changes would be implemented in 2014, the second year of the program.

##### **Staff Contact:**

Sophie Stimson, Senior Planner, Public Works Transportation, 360.753.8497

##### **Presenter(s):**

Sophie Stimson, Senior Planner, Public Works Transportation

#### **Background and Analysis:**

A neighborhood pathway is an off-street connection for bicyclists and pedestrians that shortens trip lengths and provides inviting route alternatives. Pathways connect streets to parks, trails, schools and other streets where no motor vehicle connection exists.

The City's Neighborhood Pathways Program was started in 2013 as a result of a City Council initiative to improve neighborhood walkability. Council specified that instead of working from a list of prioritized projects, the program should address improvements that neighborhoods believe are important. In addition, the City would provide a variety of options to implement the improvements. Projects could be entirely grant funded and completed by residents, entirely City constructed, or a collaboration between the City and a neighborhood.

## 2013 Project Selection

The Council specified that Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) be closely involved in shaping and implementing this program. The BPAC kicked off the program with a call for projects in September 2012. BPAC created a two-stage application process. The preliminary application is simple and focuses on the value of the pathway to the neighborhood, and how the pathway can be improved. From the pool of preliminary applications, full proposals are requested. Full proposals ask for a detailed description of the improvements and the amount of funds requested. The attached Status of Projects describes the status of the 2013 pathways projects.

## Program Changes

This program represents an innovative approach to working with residents in making improvements to their neighborhood. Because this program is new and unique, the City and neighborhoods found many ways to improve the program.

Staff and BPAC gathered feedback and observations about the program, including:

- Proposals from more neighborhoods would be ideal;
- Criteria would help determine which projects would compete well;
- BPAC's extensive role in the program was questioned;
- Obtaining insurance is a new responsibility for neighborhood groups;
- There was disappointment when a project wasn't approved, because the project was out of scale for the amount of funding in this program;
- Projects in environmentally sensitive areas were not approved;
- Project estimating is difficult for neighborhood groups; and
- Communication between the City, applicants, residents and contractors is important.

In the fall, staff and BPAC outlined changes to the program based on this feedback. In early January, staff shared the changes with the Coalition of Neighborhood Associations (CNA). The attached Proposed Program Changes is a detailed review of the program steps and proposed changes.

## Some of the major changes proposed include:

- Seek the CNA's help to promote the program to more neighborhoods. Six neighborhood groups applied in 2013.
- To save time, at the preliminary application stage, staff will provide BPAC a recommendation on which projects to advance to the full proposal stage, based on research of property ownership, environmental considerations, and the complexity of the projects.
- To simplify the full proposal stage, staff, instead of the applicant, will develop cost estimates for the project instead of the applicant.

## The proposed timeline for 2014

Because the application process requires extensive review by staff and the BPAC, the application process will occur one year, and those projects will be constructed the next year. In 2014, the application process will determine projects for construction in 2015, and the 2013 projects will be constructed. See the attached Proposed 2014 Timeline.

**Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):**

BPAC, project applicants, and the CNA reviewed and commented on the proposed changes to the Neighborhood Pathways Program. The attached Proposed Program Changes reflects the major process changes brought forward by these groups.

**Options:**

1. Accept recommended changes to the Neighborhood Pathways Program. The lessons learned from the first year will make the program even more successful.
2. Propose different changes to the Neighborhood Pathways Program. Direct staff to modify implementation of the program based upon Council's guidance.

**Financial Impact:**

Funding for the program comes from the Parks and Recreational Facilities Funding Measure revenues. The program is funded in the 2014 *Capital Facilities Plan* at \$125,000 per year.