



TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Lee Feldman, ICMA-CM, City Manager

DATE: March 3, 2015

TITLE: Birch State Park – Florida Recreational Trails Grant Support

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the City Commission adopt a resolution supporting the submittal of a grant application by the Friends of Birch State Park, Inc. to the Florida Recreational Trails Grant Program for the Trestle Trail Project.

Background:

Hugh Taylor Birch State Park is a State park managed through the Florida Park Service. The Park is located on 180 acres between the Atlantic Ocean and the Intracoastal Waterway in Fort Lauderdale. Friends of Birch State Park, Inc. was founded in 1999, and is a Citizens Support Organization recognized by the Florida State Park System, and a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation whose function is to organize community support for fundraising efforts toward the preservation, conservation and enhancement of Hugh Taylor Birch State Park.

Friends of Birch State Park, Inc. is working with the leadership and staff of Hugh Taylor Birch State Park to identify, pursue and administer \$10 million in funding opportunities for priority projects within Hugh Taylor Birch State Park, including:

- Trestles Trail, which follows the path of the old Birch State Park Scenic Railroad
- North-South Trail, which will connect to the Trestles Trail as well as the East Coast Greenway network of trails
- Arts and Education Center
- Seawall Reconstruction (partially funded through a \$2 million state appropriation)
- Floating Intracoastal Dock (\$150,000 funding for planning secured through Florida Inland Navigational District and Broward Boating Improvement Program grants)
- Long Lake cleanup and removal of invasive plant species
- Renovations of Terramar, the home of Hugh Taylor Birch to restore a Visitors Center
- Updated and Improved concession facilities

Friends of Birch State Park, Inc. is seeking support for an application to the State of Florida Recreational Trails Program for \$250,000 to fund the Trestles Trail. The trail will follow the path of the defunct Birch State Park Scenic Railroad and will create a multi-use trail for walkers, hikers, bikers and nature enthusiasts including the rehabilitation of the two remaining train trestles (please see Exhibit 2 Draft Site Plan – the Purple Line follows the Trestles Trail proposed route, the Pink Line shows the proposed North-South Trail).

The State Recreational Trails Grant cycle this year has not yet been released; however, in past years the applications are generally due in late March to early April.

Resource Impact

There is no resource impact with this item.

Strategic Connections

This item is a *Press Play Fort Lauderdale Strategic Plan 2018 Initiative*, included within the Infrastructure Cylinder of Excellence, specifically advancing:

- **Goal 1:** Be a pedestrian friendly, multi-modal city
- **Objective 2:** Integrate transportation land use and planning to create a walkable and bike able community.
 - Initiative 4: Develop bike amenities.
 - Initiative 6: Develop and implement the Connectivity Master Plan to improve accessibility.
- **Goal 3:** Be a community that finds opportunities and leverages partnerships to create unique, inviting, and connected gathering places that highlight our beaches, waterways, urban areas, and parks.
- **Objective 1:** Improve access to and enjoyment of our beach, Riverwalk, waterways, parks, and open spaces for everyone.
 - Initiative 1: Create playful areas for all ages, considering families, active and passive sports, and pets.
- **Objective 2:** Enhance the City's identity and image through well-maintained green space, parks, major corridors, gateways, and medians.

Attachment:

EX 1 – Application Summary of Activities
EX 2 – Draft Site Plan
EX 3 - Resolution

Prepared by: Karen Mendrala, Principal Planner

Department Director: Diana Alarcon, Transportation and Mobility