

Avondale seeks grant to connect 2 parks on river

by Daniel Burnette

staff writer

A trail to connect Avondale's Coldwater Park and Friendship Park is in the works.

The city already received a \$433,786 grant in 2003 for the first phase of the project. On July 10, the City Council approved submitting an application for a second grant worth \$500,000.

The grant, through the Arizona Transportation Enhancement Program, requires the city to commit 5.7 percent of the grant, or \$28,500, to the project.

The 1.75-mile trail, for pedestrians and cyclists, will cross the Agua Fria River near McDowell Road. Coldwater Park is at 10 N. Eliseo C. Felix Jr. Way, while Friendship Park is at 12325 W. McDowell Road.

City officials are anticipating construction beginning in 2007. A completion target hasn't been set yet because the city is coordinating construction of the safety railing along the trail with the Maricopa County Flood Control District, said Dan Davis, Avondale's director of Community/Recreation Services.

Even though funding is being done in two phases, the city is looking to get the design done for the entire project

and to complete construction as one project, Davis said.

The project is being designed and is going through review with the Arizona Department of Transportation. ADOT administers the state Transportation Enhancement Program. An environmental study on the area also is under way, Davis said.

The path itself will be 12 feet wide with 2-foot shoulders on either side. It will have five access points that meet the requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act, so that people with handicaps may use the path.

A safety railing will be installed along the top of the river levee to keep pedestrians and cyclists from the steep slope that goes down to the river bed.

The path will begin on the west side of the river bank at Coldwater Park, running generally near Van Buren to the east side of the river, then under Van Buren continuing north along the east side of the river, going under I-10 and ending at the entrance to Friendship Park, according to a memo that Janeen K. Gaskins, city grants administrator, supplied to the City Council.

Although construction won't begin until next year, the vicinity of the path will be featured in a run and fun walk during this fall's Billy Moore Western Heritage Days.

The events will begin in one park and finish in another, with a trip down to the Agua Fria River bed in between, Davis said.

The city will have some display boards up at the event that will outline the pathway project, Davis said.

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