

RAÚL M. GRIJALVA
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NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
RANKING MEMBER

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, ELEMENTARY, AND
SECONDARY EDUCATION

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE
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March 31, 2023

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Quigley
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member Quigley,

I am requesting \$3,344,825 for the construction of the Agua Fria Trail Phase 2 Pedestrian Bridge for the City of Avondale, in fiscal year 2024.

The funding will be used to construct a pedestrian bridge that would connect two separated multiuse paths located on the south and north sides of the drainage channel immediately north of Interstate-10. Currently the only method to access Friendship Park, a 67-acre park and its amenities via bicycle or as a pedestrian from any direction is through high traffic volume streets. The pedestrian bridge will provide an efficient and safe alternative and will meet the service demands of locals and further enhance connectivity in the area.

The total cost of this project is \$6,407,825. The request for federal assistance is \$3,344,825. No federal funding has been used for this project, although FHWA grant dollars managed by the Arizona Department of Transportation were used to construct other portions of the Agua Fria Trail in the past, specifically Phase 1 which included the portion of the trail directly below Interstate-10 and adjacent to this project.

The project will be ready to start in the fourth quarter of 2023 with an estimated completion date by the fourth quarter of 2027.

The project has demonstrated broad community support including the Maricopa Association of Governments, The Lower Gila River Collaborative Coordinating Team, Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce, Avondale Little League, and La Jolla High School, among others. In addition, the project is part of the FY 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Maricopa Association of Governments.

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because it would provide an efficient and safe connection to recreational areas and businesses. The Agua Fria Trail is designed to allow residents to travel without using a vehicle. It will also provide greater access to the 67-acre park and its amenities, including 10 multi-purpose fields, 2 Little League ball fields, 1 softball field, 5

picnic ramadas, a dog park, 3 playgrounds, 2 tennis courts, 2 basketball courts, a fishing lake, splash pad, and walking paths. The bridge will be designed with accessible ramps to ensure that all users have access. According to ACS Summary Data from 2015-2019, Census Block Groups in and adjacent to the project area contain minority, low-income, or linguistically isolated populations; however, no permanent adverse socioeconomic impacts are anticipated because of this project.

The proposed project will connect most Avondale parks including the completion of a loop of the Sun Circle Trail and will connect surrounding regional parks/recreation areas such as Estrella Mountain Regional Park, Tres Rios Wetlands and the Base & Meridian Wildlife area. In addition, there are more than 70 businesses employing more than 2,200 people within 1 mile of the park. The proposed bridge is adjacent to an industrial complex which largely serves as a shipping and manufacturing hub for the Phoenix metro area. The City believes those businesses and entities that operate out of and adjacent to the complex will be able to realize greater employee recruitment and retention, as well as significant health benefits by providing a trail to an active park.

The project meets eligibility requirements, is shovel ready and able to obligate funds within a year. Thank you for your consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Raúl M. Grijalva". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

