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NEWS RELEASE

32nd Street pedestrian bridge officially opens Wednesday

Durango, CO: The city of Durango is hosting a grand-opening event at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 31 at the corner of 32nd Street and East Third Avenue to celebrate the completion of the 32nd Street bridge.

Construction of the bridge and underpass provides Durango residents with 9 miles of safe and continuous trail along the Animas River.

“This project is many years in the making and is coming together very well. The foresight, planning, and hard work from the community, elected officials and staff to make this a reality is a testament to Durango’s will and determination,” said Parks and Recreation Director Ture Nycum. “I’m just excited that I had a small part in getting the project to the finish line.”

Those who recreate along the Animas River Trail will now be able to travel from Oxbow Park and Preserve at the north end of the trail to River Road by Home Depot without having to cross traffic. Thirty-second street is the third-busiest road in Durango.

Assistant Parks and recreation Director Scott McClain said the Animas River Trail has always provided a balance of being a recreation amenity as well as a way residents to commute safely by bike or on foot. “Having the grade separation at 32nd street makes it much more friendly for everybody,” he said. “But especially for kids who may be coming and going to school or just playing along the trail.”

Cost of the project was nearly \$3 million dollars, with the roughly half the funds coming from the city’s 2015 sales tax. The other half was from Great Outdoors Colorado, an organization funded by state lottery proceeds.

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Thirty-two trees were planted along the new route, including 20 varieties of shrubs and trees. A public art piece is planned for the loop leading up to the underpass, paid for with Lodgers' Tax Arts and Culture funding.

Over the past 46 years the Animas River Trail has grown into one of the city's most valuable assets. According to a 2022 economic impact study Durango's trails bring in \$8.75 million to the city each year.

In the coming years, the city will extend the SMART 160 Multi-use trail to the Three Springs community. The SMART 160 project is currently under design and construction funding is in the city's 2022 and 2023 Capital Improvement Projects.

Residents looking to celebrate the opening of the Animas River Trail's new connector are encouraged to walk or bike, as there is limited parking available.

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