



# City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Department Source: Parks and Recreation

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: June 15, 2020

Re: Agreement with the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission for the installation of an African-American Heritage Trail marker

## Executive Summary

The Parks & Recreation Department is requesting a Council ordinance authorizing the City Manager to execute an agreement with the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission to install an African-American Heritage Trail marker in the Commission right-of-way at the corner of Ash Street and Providence Road. The heritage marker will identify the location of the Cummings Academy. The Cummings Academy was opened shortly after the end of the Civil War and was the first school for black children in Columbia, Missouri. The heritage marker has already been fabricated and is ready to install. After the execution of the agreement with the Commission, park staff will install the heritage marker.

## Discussion

In May 2015, members of the Columbia community dedicated a historical marker, located on Walnut Street, recognizing the former Sharp End Business District. The historical marker recognizes the history of the Sharp End Business District, which served as the cultural and economic heart of Columbia's African-American community for more than 50 years. After the installation of the marker, members of the Sharp End Heritage Committee began to work with City staff to expand the number of markers within the downtown area to highlight other historic African-American locations within Columbia. The development of the project continued with the identification of thirty-nine historic sites within the central portion of the city that highlight Columbia's African-American history. Over the past four years, the committee has been fundraising for the purchase of twenty-one historical markers to highlight the individuals, buildings and/or businesses at each location.

In order to install the heritage marker for the Cummings Academy, the Parks and Recreation Department is requesting a Council ordinance allowing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission. The proposed location for the heritage marker is located in Commission right-of-way on Providence Road. The agreement will provide the City with authorization to install the heritage marker at the corner of Providence Road and Ash Street. The heritage marker will identify the location of the Cummings Academy. The school was the first school in Columbia for black children. When the school started to experience overcrowding, the Columbia Public School District authorized the construction of a new school on Park Avenue. It was named Excelsior School and was later renamed Douglass School.

The Cummings Academy heritage marker has been fabricated and is ready to install once the agreement is executed with the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission. Park



staff will coordinate the installation of the marker and will be responsible for the long-term maintenance of the heritage marker.

### Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: The Parks and Recreation Department will have expenses of less than \$300 for the installation of the Cummings Academy Heritage Marker.

Long-Term Impact: None

### Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

#### Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Not Applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

#### Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Not applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

### Legislative History

Date	Action
03/08/19	(PH11-19) Proposed installation of 21 historical markers along the African-American Heritage Trail in public rights-of-way in central Columbia. <a href="https://gocolumbiamo.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3904180&amp;GUID=9FDD55D1-25EB-49B0-8677-7A480080E508&amp;Options=&amp;Search=">https://gocolumbiamo.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3904180&amp;GUID=9FDD55D1-25EB-49B0-8677-7A480080E508&amp;Options=&amp;Search=</a>

### Suggested Council Action

Approve the ordinance authorizing the City Manager to execute the agreement with the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission.