



Department Source: Parks and Recreation

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: December 19, 2022

Re: Agreement for Donation of Real Estate – Alspaugh Property

Executive Summary

The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting City Council approval of an ordinance authorizing the City Manager to sign an agreement to accept the donation of a 201-acre property owned by John and Carol Ann Alspaugh. The property is located in Columbia's third ward at the intersection of Vandiver Drive and Mexico Gravel Road. As part of the donation, the family has requested that the property be designated as a park in perpetuity and be named the John W. Alspaugh Park. The park will be maintained as a combination of greenspace and nature area in order to preserve the wildlife and natural landscape of the property. As part of the 2021 Park Sales Tax renewal, staff allocated \$300,000 in FY2029 for the development of a nature area in northeast Columbia and will use these funds for improvements to the park property. Staff will explore other funding opportunities to begin the development of the park at an earlier date and will return to City Council to discuss approval of the park master plan and potential improvements once additional funding has been identified.

Discussion

The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting approval of an ordinance authorizing the City Manager to sign an agreement to accept the donation of a 201-acre property owned by John and Carol Ann Alspaugh. Staff is also requesting City Council approval to name the property "John W. Alspaugh Park."

Park staff began discussions about the potential donation of the 201-acre property with John and Carol Ann Alspaugh in June 2020. The discussions focused on the development of a park that would preserve the existing site conditions, protect the wildlife within the property and provide access to nature for Columbia citizens. Park staff had multiple meetings with John and Carol Ann Alspaugh and created a proposed plan for how the property could be maintained as a park. After these discussions, John and Carol Ann Alspaugh made the decision to proceed with the donation of the 201-acre property to the City of Columbia with the following stipulations:

1. The land will be used as a City park in perpetuity.
2. The park will be named the John W. Alspaugh Park.
3. The park will be maintained as a greenspace, as opposed to being developed into athletic fields or courts, and wildlife shall be protected as much as possible.
4. No new hard surface traffic roads can be constructed within the park but nature walking trails may be established.



City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

5. There are two known cemetery areas located on the property, including Antioch Cemetery and Hinkson Creek Cemetery. The Hinkson Creek Cemetery exact location is unknown other than reflected by headstones piled around a large oak tree in a wooded area on the south side of Mexico Gravel Road. The City agrees to mow and generally maintain the area around the two cemeteries. The City will erect a marker designating the general area of the Hinkson Creek Cemetery and will create a nature trail that would provide access to the area designated as the cemetery. The City shall not however, be obligated to restore, relocate or otherwise repair or maintain specific burial sites, human remains, or monuments.
6. No motor vehicles or bicycles will be allowed beyond the designated parking areas.

The donation of the Alspaugh property is the largest land donation ever given to the City of Columbia for park purposes. The property will fill a large void in the Department's Natural Area Plan as there is very little designated nature area acreage in the third ward. This property will provide citizens from throughout Columbia with the opportunity to access different types of nature including wooded forest, native prairie and open greenspace. The property is located adjacent to two primary priority acquisition service areas in the 2013 Neighborhood Parks Plan.

The property also serves as a key third ward location for the 30-mile loop trail through the City of Columbia. The park will serve as a trailhead for the northern section of the Hinkson Creek Trail. This portion of the Hinkson Creek Trail is scheduled for design in FY2027 and construction in FY2030.

As part of the 2021 Park Sales Tax renewal, staff allocated \$300,000 in FY2029 for the development of a nature area in northeast Columbia and will use these funds for improvements to the Alspaugh Park property. Staff will explore other funding opportunities to begin the development of the park at an earlier date to provide park access for citizens. Park staff will return to City Council at a later date for approval of the park master plan and proposed phase I improvements after the public input process is completed and a recommendation is made by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: There is no fiscal impact with the donation of the property.

Long-Term Impact: Park staff anticipates initial annual maintenance expenses of \$3,000 to \$4,000 per year at the park. The maintenance costs associated with the park include mowing, trash collection, invasive species removal and miscellaneous expenses.



Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

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

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Land Use & Growth Management, Secondary Impact: Livable & Sustainable Communities, Tertiary Impact: Mobility, Connectivity, and Accessibility

Legislative History

Date	Action
N/A	N/A

Suggested Council Action

Approve the legislation authorizing the City Manager to sign the agreement for donation of real estate for the acquisition of the Alspaugh property and approve "John W. Alspaugh Park" as the official name of the property.