



701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Department Source: Parks and Recreation

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: November 17, 2025

Re: Landowner Community Assistance Program Grant– Missouri Department of Conservation
Impacted Ward: Citywide

Executive Summary

The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting an ordinance authorizing the City Manager to sign a cost share agreement with the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC). The cost share agreement will reimburse the City 90% of the total invoiced cost for contract labor to remove 20 dead ash trees at Albert-Oakland Park. Tree removal will be performed by Arthur Ratliff Tree Service through a term & supply agreement. Parks and Recreation staff have received a quote of \$22,843.80 for removal of these dead ash trees. Removal of these trees will improve the ecology and aesthetic of the park, and prevent hazards or damage risked by dead limbs/trees falling. To meet the cost share requirement, Columbia Parks and Recreation will purchase and plant two native trees for each dead tree removed in Albert-Oakland Park.

Discussion

With the arrival of the Emerald Ash Borer, Parks and Recreation staff have seen a rapid decline in the health of ash trees in our park system. Early on, staff were monitoring and treating trees in high use areas then removing them as they died. As the infestation has progressed, staff have ended most treatments, and have resorted to removals as time allows. Unfortunately, staff has been unable to keep up with the necessary removals, and have started to rely on contractors to aid in the effort of keeping parks safe and aesthetically pleasing. This has become a costly endeavor, and staff are seeking help to fund some of these removals.

Albert-Oakland Park, located at 1900 Blue Ridge Road, Columbia, MO 65202, has 20 dead ash trees ranging from 14" to 30" Diameter at Breast Height (DBH.) These trees are located widely distributed through two high-use disc golf courses within the park. These trees have been identified as hazardous based on their proximity to highly traveled walking routes, and it is critical that they be removed.

The grant funding would be used to pay a contractor to perform tree removals at Albert-Oakland Park. Arthur Ratliff Tree Service has quoted \$22,843.80 to remove the 20 identified hazardous trees. To meet the cost share requirement of the grant, Parks and Recreation will purchase and plant 40 native trees in the park. After removals have been completed, park staff will replant two trees for every tree removed, per the requirements of the grant. All replanted trees would be native Missouri species, in either 3- or 7-gallon containers, purchased from Forrest Keeling Nursery. Parks and Recreation Forestry staff will perform the

planting labor, including mulching, t-post supports, and caging for protection. New trees will be watered regularly for at least one-year post planting to increase survival probabilities. Missouri Department of Conservation contributions and funding will be publicized via the official Columbia Parks and Recreation social media accounts.

Staff will return to City Council at a later date to appropriate the funds reimbursed to the City by the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: The total estimated cost for the tree removal by the contractor is \$22,843.80 and the City will be reimbursed for 90% of the total cost through the cost share agreement with MDC. Staff will return to City Council to appropriate the reimbursed funds.
Long-Term Impact: None

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Organizational Excellence, Secondary Impact: Safe Community, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Environmental Management, Secondary Impact: Land Use & Growth Management, Tertiary Impact: Livable & Sustainable Communities

Legislative History

Date	Action
N/A	N/A

Suggested Council Action

Approve the ordinance authorizing the City Manager to execute the cost share agreement with the Missouri Department of Conservation.