

Department Source: Sustainability

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: April 20, 2026

Re: Authorize the City Manager to Accept the Catalyst Fund Grant

Impacted Ward: Ward 3

Executive Summary

Upon authorization, the City Manager will sign the grant agreement and funds to support neighborhood level engagement in the Whitegate area will be made available to the Office of Sustainability (OS). Engagement activities will occur April 2026 to August 2026 with the goal of identifying appropriate heat relief strategies and implementation pathways. This is a no-match grant totaling \$5,080. The City is required to provide expense, progress and final reports as a condition of the award.

Discussion

Once authorized, the Office of Sustainability will implement a focused heat resilience engagement campaign in the Whitegate Neighborhood. This Ward 3 neighborhood is one of Columbia's most vulnerable neighborhoods as identified in the 2022 Heat Mapping study, Show Me the Heat.

In 2022, the City's Office of Sustainability worked with community volunteers, organizations, and consultants to build a heat map of Columbia. The map shows some areas in Columbia can be nearly ten degrees hotter than others on the hottest days. The residents who live in those hotter areas tend to face other challenges, including lower incomes and lack of community resources.

Starting with intentional engagement, this project in the Whitegate Neighborhood prioritizes working directly with residents, businesses, community-based organizations and city staff to **design, plan, and implement a heat relief solution** that will fit the needs and interests of the people who are most impacted.

The project consists of a variety of events, meals, walking tours and open-houses.

The expected project outputs are:

- 1.) A strong line of communication between residents of Whitegate Neighborhood and the City of Columbia.
- 2.) Regular meetings between residents, organizations, and city staff to maintain heat resilience at the neighborhood level.

A more detailed description of the methodology, planned events and partners are in appendix A of the attached Memorandum of Understanding.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: None, expenses will be covered by “up front” payment of grant funds.
Long-Term Impact: None

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact[Strategic Plan Impacts:](#)

Primary Impact: Inclusive and Equitable Community, Secondary Impact: Reliable and Sustainable Infrastructure, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

[Comprehensive Plan Impacts:](#)

Primary Impact: Livable & Sustainable Communities, Secondary Impact: Not applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Legislative History

Date	Action
N/A	N/A

Suggested Council Action

Authorize the City Manager to accept the grant agreement with the Urban Sustainability Directors Network Catalyst Fund.