



# City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Department Source: Parks and Recreation

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: April 3, 2023

Re: Stephens Lake Park Cost Share Agreement – Missouri Department of Conservation

## 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 cost to purchase materials and equipment for two Stephens Lake Park Arboretum projects. The cost share agreement will cover expenses associated with the purchase of tools and equipment needed for the Stephens Lake Park Arboretum volunteer program and will cover the cost to develop signage for two tree trails through Stephens Lake Park. The total anticipated cost for the two projects is \$4,766. Staff anticipates the volunteer program will start summer 2023 and the tree trail signage will be installed by fall 2023.

## Discussion

The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting approval of an ordinance authorizing the City Manager to enter into a cost share agreement with the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) to purchase equipment and materials for two Arboretum projects at Stephens Lake Park. The cost share agreement will reimburse the City 90% of the total cost for the equipment and materials. The total estimated cost is \$4,766 and MDC will reimburse the City up to \$4,289.40.

Park staff estimates using \$2,954 for the purchase of tools and equipment needed to outfit the newly established Stephens Lake Park Arboretum volunteer program. Volunteers will be assisting in the maintenance of native and ornamental landscapes throughout the Arboretum grounds. Duties completed by volunteers include pulling invasive weeds, mulching, collecting leaves and planting new plant material. Volunteers will also assist with the care of native and ornamental trees, including light pruning, mulching, planting and watering.

In 2017, Stephens Lake Park was awarded Level II accreditation by the ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program and the Morton Arboretum. This was earned for achieving high standards of professional practices deemed important for the arboreta and botanic gardens, including planning, governance, public access, programming and tree science, planning and conservation. The establishment of the volunteer program will allow park staff to continue to achieve the Level II accreditation status and provide an opportunity for citizens to expand their knowledge related to the care and maintenance of native and ornamental trees and landscapes.



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Park staff will use the remaining funding, totaling \$1,812, to purchase signage to establish multiple interpretive tree trails throughout the Stephens Lake Park Arboretum. Staff plans to use the funds to purchase 120 five inch by three inch laser etched aluminum signs. Each of the signs will be placed at the base of trees in the Arboretum to provide park users with educational information about the selected trees. The tree trail routes will be finalized over the next three months and staff anticipates placement of the signage by late summer 2023.

Staff will utilize social media accounts and informational signage at the park to advertise the new volunteer program opportunity. Once the tree trails have been established in the park, staff will utilize informational signage, social media accounts and a press release to alert the public about the new park feature.

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 Stephens Lake Park Arboretum projects is \$4,766 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 after completion of the projects.

Long-Term Impact: None

## Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

### Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Operational Excellence, Secondary Impact: Not Applicable, 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.