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Memorandum

Date: 6/30/2026

To: Tara Vasicek, City Administrator

From: Betsy Eckhardt, Director of General Services

RE: Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant Application

Recommendation: Approve the resolution authorizing the City of Columbus to submit an application to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for a Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant for the Pawnee Park Trail Connection Project.

Discussion: The proposed resolution authorizes the City to apply for a Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant in the amount of \$250,000 to construct the Pawnee Park Trail Connection Project. The project will create a new shared-use trail segment connecting the existing Pawnee Park trail system, Pawnee Plunge, and the recently added trail to go over the Loup River bridge, improving connectivity, accessibility, and recreational opportunities within Pawnee Park.

The project supports the goals of the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan as well as the Nebraska Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan by expanding trail connectivity and improving public access to outdoor recreation. If awarded, the project is anticipated to be constructed during the 2027-28 construction season.

Fiscal Impact: The total estimated project cost is \$325,000. The City is requesting \$250,000 in RTP grant funding, with a local match of \$75,000 to be funded through the City's Capital Improvement Program and other eligible local funding sources. No expenditures are authorized through this resolution; it authorizes only the submission of the grant application.

Alternative: Do not approve the resolution. The City would be ineligible to submit the RTP grant application and would forgo the opportunity to secure grant funding for the Pawnee Park Trail Connection Project.

Signature: *Betsy Eckhardt*

Concurrence: *Sydney Mroczek*

Approved: *[Signature]*