

Council Agenda Item 26-0668R



MEETING DATE: July 27, 2026

SUBJECT/TITLE: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF A GRANT FROM THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$105,000 TO SUPPORT PLACE-BASED ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FOR YOUTH AT HARTLEY NATURE CENTER.

SUBMITTED BY: Allison Brooks, Project Coordinator, Parks and Recreation

RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: N/A

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION: N/A

BACKGROUND: This resolution authorizes acceptance of a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the amount of \$105,000 to support place-based environmental education for youth. This grant was developed through a noncompetitive application process to support Hartley Nature Center programming and incorporation of Tischer Creek restoration into educational programs. The EPA cannot directly award the funds to a nonprofit and a governmental entity must be the intermediary. A concurrent resolution (26-0669R) authorizes a subrecipient agreement to facilitate the pass-through of these grant funds to Hartley Nature Center for implementation of Watershed Connections: place-based experiential environmental education for youth.

Watershed Connections is an initiative to engage K–12 youth in experiential environmental education focused on the Tischer Creek watershed—a cold-water tributary to Lake Superior and the St. Louis River Area of Concern. The purpose of this project is to provide educational programs connecting youth to previous and ongoing restoration work, fostering a deeper appreciation for the downstream Lake Superior ecosystem. Activities will support exploration of watershed science, aquatic biodiversity, and ecosystem stability. Outcomes include improved public awareness and understanding of watershed dynamics and the importance of tributary ecosystem health for 2,918 youth, deepened appreciation of cold-water trout streams through delivery of six fishing programs, and enhanced public and community partnerships with at least five youth-serving agencies for the collaborative delivery of programming opportunities. Subrecipient activities include delivery of 70 school field trips serving 2,541 students, up to 30 engagement programs with youth-serving agencies serving an anticipated 300 youth, and brook trout fishing experiences for 72 youth. Intended beneficiaries include program participants and their families, and those who recreate and enjoy Hartley Park and the Tischer Creek watershed.

BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT: The City will be a pass-through entity accepting the federal award of \$105,000 and sub-awarding the grant to Hartley Nature Center for implementation of the project. Hartley Nature Center will complete the project deliverables and the City will reimburse Hartley Nature Center for project services with funding through this federal award. The City will only provide administrative support for grant reporting and reimbursements.

OPTIONS: Authorize acceptance of the \$105,000 grant from the EPA and the subrecipient agreement with Hartley Nature Center to support environmental education programming for youth, or decline the award and subrecipient agreement to cancel the programs and pass-through funding.

NECESSARY ACTION: Authorize acceptance of the grant.

ATTACHMENTS: Exhibit A – Federal Award