



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

DATE: February 25, 2025

TO: Mark Washington, City Manager

COMMITTEE: Fiscal Committee

LIAISON: Molly Clarin, Chief Financial Officer

FROM: Laura Cleypool, Assistant Director
Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT: **Parks & Recreation Budget Amendment Request for appropriation from the Children's fund**

Background

In October 2006, City Commission approved the establishment of the Children's Fund to allocate resources to children and youth programs within the city. The objective was to improve the lives of children who live in Grand Rapids through recreational and vocational programming. The Grand Rapids Children's Fund was created through the addition of an income tax checkbox on city income tax forms. Individuals who pay city income tax can donate a portion of their refund to the Children's Fund each year. The current balance of the fund is \$133,000. Annually, the Parks and Recreation Department and Our Community's Children collaborate on use of these funds. Following is a recommendation on use of these funds for the current year.

Request

GRow1000 Summer Youth Employment Program

The GRow1000 Summer Youth Employment Program was established in 2020 by City Manager Dr. Mark Washington. Over the course of five summers, the program has employed 1,150 youth ages 15 to 24 in meaningful summer jobs at over 100 unique job sites. This annual program includes paid pre-employment training for youth, orientation for employer partners, employer/GRower meet and greets, onboarding paperwork assistance for families, six weeks of employment, weekly professional development workshops, and an end-of-program celebration.

Every year the City of Grand Rapids, through Our Community's Children, engages several city departments, school districts, non-profits, faith-based organizations, businesses, media, youth and parents in the efforts of recruitment, communication, and fundraising. Donations and grants allow the City to subsidize wages of youth matched with non-profit organizations who do not have the financial means to cover the cost of wages. For-profit businesses are invoiced for their participation at the end of the program. The department of Our Community's Children is requesting \$75,000 to support the 2025 program.

GR Outside: GR Outside, a division of the Parks and Recreation Department, seeks to utilize Children's Fund dollars to update and expand its kayak programming inventory. In 2024, GR Outside led paddling programming on the Grand River with over 1,000 youth

participants. It is incredibly important that all youth in Grand Rapids have an opportunity to develop a connection with the Grand River, regardless of their family's income, or their home's proximity to the river. Additional sizes and styles of kayaks, paddles, and life vests are required to properly equip participants and expand paddling programs. GR Outside is requesting \$15,000 for this purchase.

As the department continues to lean into the four-season model of providing outdoor experiences to youth in the Grand Rapids community, expansion of the inventory in appropriately sized gear and clothing is needed. Providing warm and waterproof clothing is critical to successful youth participation in outdoor winter activities and excursions. Additional funding of \$15,500 will be used to purchase youth sized boots, coats, skates and other protective gear.

Youth Summer Baseball Program: The Parks and Recreation department has had a long-standing partnership program with the Grand Rapids Police Department (GRPD) to support a summer youth baseball program. Parks and Recreation is working in collaboration with GRPD to replace outdated equipment including bats, balls, bases, helmets and other protective gear. The cost will be shared. The department is requesting \$12,000 to contribute towards this purchase.

Free Summer Day Camp Program Support: The Parks and Recreation department has been successfully running free summer day camps for seven years, one of which is run in partnership with the Baxter Community Center. The goal of the summer day camp program is to fill each day with activities that contribute to participants intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth, all while having fun. A significant part of the experiential learning process has been through local excursions. Examples of these opportunities include excursions to museums, airports, First Tee golf at Indian Trails Golf Course, and nature hikes within our local park trails. As the camps continue to grow, the funding available through the Parks Millage is further stretched for optimum impact. The addition of \$4,500 to the 2025 program budget will allow significant expansion of these inspirational experiences for participants. Funding of \$6,000 is also requested for new hardware to support registration, check-in and participation tracking for the three-city run camp site locations.

In addition to expanding experiences within the City-run camp sites, the department is seeking to add to the contract with Baxter Community Center for the camp at Joe Taylor Park. This contract has been fixed for many seasons due to funding limitations. The addition of \$5,000 to this year's contract will allow further development of camp administration and infrastructure at this partner location with Baxter Community Center.

Impact

The Departments of Parks and Recreation and Our Community's Children are well-positioned to elevate the opportunities available for our community's youth. Both programmatic funding requests described above align to the intent of the Grand Rapids Children's fund, the City's Strategic Plan and the Parks department's Master Plan.

<u>Sources/Appropriations</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Amount (From)/To</u>
<u>Transfer Out</u>		
1010-261-1020-3390	Children's Fund	(\$133,000)
1010-261-1020-9955	Children's Fund Transfers-Out	\$133,000
<u>Transfer In</u>		
2080-751-5030-6995	Parks Operating Fund Transfers-In	(\$30,500)
2080-751-5040-6995	Parks Operating Fund Transfers-In	(\$15,500)
2080-751-5070-6995	Parks Operating Fund Transfers-In	(\$12,000)
2080-751-5030-9760	Parks Operating Fund Equipment	\$15,000
2080-751-5030-7520	Parks Operating Fund – Supplies	\$15,500
2080-751-5040-8010	Parks Operating Fund – Contractual Services	\$9,500
2080-751-5040-9805	Parks Operating Fund- Computer Equipment	\$6,000
2080-751-5070-7520	Parks Operating Fund – Supplies	\$12,000
2730-698-7000-6995	Other Grants Fund – Transfer In	(\$75,000)
GROW20-AGROW1025		
2730-698-7000-7040	Other Grants Fund – Temp Wages	\$75,000
GROW20-AGROW1025		

cc: David Marquardt, Director of Parks and Recreation
 Connie Bohatch, Managing Director of Community Services
 Shannon Harris, Executive Director
 John Judnich, Recreation Supervisor
 Scott Saindon, Deputy CFO
 Otniel Kish, Budget Analyst