



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: **Budget Amendment – Nature Everywhere Seed Grant (\$50,000)**

Background

The Department of Parks and Recreation has had a long-standing partnership with Grand Rapids Public Schools to ensure that scholars have the opportunity to go outside into schoolyards or parks. GR Outside provides classrooms with equipment and clothing through the GR Outside Gear Library and supports opportunities such as field days, ‘Canoemobile’, outdoor learning experiences, and more.

The Parks and Recreation Department remains committed to deliberately addressing health and wellness disparities in our community. Strategies have been formally outlined in the department’s Strategic Operating Plan and the 2022 Parks Master Plan. The department’s Healthy Community priority is to “Increase the number of youth connected to nature through expanded recreational, educational, leadership and employment opportunities”

Request

GR Outside, a division of Parks and Recreation, has received a grant from the Children & Nature Network in the amount of \$50,000. This grant opportunity is intended to build capacity for local strategies that connect children to nature more equitably. The funding will be used to develop a part-time position that will focus on connections between GR Outside and Grand Rapids Public Schools.

The seed grant builds upon past work through the Connecting Children to Nature Implementation Plan, which began in 2015 through Our Community’s Children in partnership with Grand Rapids Public Schools and was funded through the Children & Nature Network and the National League of Cities.

This grant will allow GR Outside and Grand Rapids Public Schools to further increase the number of opportunities available to scholars while continuing to address racial and socioeconomic disparities in access to nature and nature-based activities.

<u>Sources/Appropriations</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Amount (From)/To</u>
2730-751-7000-6747 CNN25-A25CCTN	Other Grants Fund – Other Grants	\$50,000
2730-751-7000-7040 CNN25-A25CCTN	Other Grants Fund – Temporary Employees	(\$50,000)

cc: David Marquardt, Director of Parks and Recreation
 Connie Bohatch, Managing Director of Community Services
 Karie Enriquez, Project Manager
 Scott Saindon, Deputy CFO
 Otniel Kish, Budget Analyst