



## City of Grand Forks Staff Report

Committee of the Whole – July 14, 2025

City Council – July 21, 2025 (updated 7/17/2025) & August 4, 2025

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**Agenda Item:** Grant Funding Agreement between North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department with City of Grand Forks for Downtown Gateway and Greenway Project-Phase I

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**Submitted by:** Kim Greendahl, Greenway Specialist  
Melanie Parvey, Water Works Director  
Todd Feland, City Administrator

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**Staff Recommended Action:** Approve Grant Funding Agreement between ND Parks and Recreation Department and City of Grand Forks with National Park Service for the Land and Water Conservation Fund for Project #8525 for Downtown Gateway and Greenway Project Phase I, subject to final review and approval of the City Attorney and any necessary budget amendments.

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**Committee Recommended Action:** Motion by Osowski, second by Lunski to move item to City Council with a recommendation to approve.  
Motion carried unanimously.

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**Council Action:** 07/21: Motion by Fridolfs, second by Lunski to postpone to August 4, 2025. Motion passed unanimously.  
08/04:

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### **BACKGROUND:**

On September 25, 2024, the City of Grand Forks (City) application for the Gateway and Downtown Renovation Project was awarded funding from the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program administered by the United States National Park System. The award is for \$3,489,750.00 with a 1:1 local match for a total project cost of \$6,979,500.00.

The project area is in the Greenway downtown area, located on the south side of Demers Avenue near the Red River at approximately 109 Demers Avenue. The Greenway was constructed as part of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Grand Forks Flood Protection Project system that was constructed over 20 years ago after the flood of 1997.

In 2022, the City hired an architect to look at updating dated components of the entry area and ended up developing a master plan to be used for future consideration for design and construction. The master plan included input from surveys sent to the public, public input meetings, and strategic input from a steering and stakeholder committee.

After the master plan was completed, the City worked closely with the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department team and was successful in receiving a grant from the National Park Service Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program for phase I of this project.

The proposed Downtown Gateway and Greenway project plan consists of developing a user-friendly outdoor space for a multi-generational audience. Phase I of the project will create ADA Access for connecting trails throughout the park. There will be a monument that identifies the public park and serves as a place for the public to gather. The nature promenade will be built as a calming space for the public to reconnect with the river and nature. A park shelter will be built to host public gatherings. Finally, the play area will consist of outdoor recreation activities to include slides, bouldering, and ropes area. The project will continue to be designed this year and built over a two year time span with estimated completion in 2027.

### **ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF FACT:**

- On April 1, 2024, the City Council approved the submittal of the funding application with the North Dakota Park & Recreation for consideration from the National Park Service Outdoor Recreation Legacy Program (ORLP).
- Projects must be in an area designated as Disadvantaged Status by the Council on Environmental Quality Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST).
- ORLP is administered under Section 200305 of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act, which provides that project sites assisted with these funds must be maintained and accessible exclusively for public outdoor recreation use in perpetuity.
- Each dollar of federal share requested must be matched by a dollar of non-federal share. Match can be in the form of cash, donations, or in-kind donation.
- Funding for the local match will be from the Flood Protection Capital maintenance Fund 4154. This had previously been proposed to be paid back by fund 2163 at \$175,000 annually. Per the Mayor's direction with the 2026 budget, it is proposed to fund this project out of fund 4154.
- On Jan 21, 2025, the City Council approved a contract in the amount of \$590,684 for design services with Houston Engineering Services; this was approved as part of the pre-award services by the grant as listed in the grant funding agreement.
- The engineering services agreement will develop preliminary design and include the hydrology and hydraulic analysis of the project working directly with FEMA and USACE to further review their approval of the project.
- Staff will bring back a contract for final design, bidding project and construction project review.
- The staff and design team are currently gathering additional public input on the project. The team plans to attend Farmer's Market on Saturday, July 12, 2025, and will share the feedback as they continue to design the project. The updated designs will be added to this report.

### **SUPPORT MATERIALS:**

- Downtown Gateway and Greenway Project Phase I concept plans- from Farmer's Market on July 12, 2025
- Grant Funding Agreement between North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department and City of Grand Forks
- LWCF & OLRP Program Manual 2023, NDPRD
- LWCF Federal Manual 2023-10-01