

Memorandum

Community and Economic Development Department

To: Rock Island City Council
Subject: NPS African American Heritage Grant
Date: February 4, 2022



In February 2021, at the request of Pearson Consulting and Media Link, the City submitted a grant application to the National Park Service (NPS) to fund their 20th Century African American Historic Resource Research Project. Once awarded, the intent was for the City Council to approve a subrecipient agreement and pass the grant funds through to Pearson Consulting and Media Link. It was necessary for the City to be the applicant because only cities are eligible to apply. The grant amount is \$33,500 and the Project is part of the larger QC PastPort initiative.

The Project's scope of work includes the identification of ten historic African American sites in Rock Island. These sites would be documented according to the Secretary of Interior Standards for Historic Preservation by Pearson Consulting. Media Link would then use the information provided by Pearson Consulting to create audio recordings, a site finder, website information, and physical signage located at each of the identified sites. Pearson Consulting and Media Link said they would be working and consulting directly with local historians and residents that have direct experience concerning 20th Century African American history in Rock Island.

Following public comments, concerns about this project were expressed and City staff were directed to ask the National Park Service for clarification on what the City can and cannot do regarding this grant. The NPS clarified that the City may choose to move forward with the project consultants as originally proposed, may go out for bid and select new consultants, or return the grant and not proceed with the project at all. It is the City's grant and the City may decide how to proceed. Grant funds cannot be accessed by any consultant until a subrecipient agreement is approved by the City Council.

Here are the alternatives that the City Council can choose from:

1. Proceed with the project as originally planned and consider a subrecipient agreement with Pearson Consulting and Media Link at the Council's February 28 meeting;
2. Post an invitation to bid and consider alternative consultants to undertake the project, then vote to approve a subrecipient agreement with a new or existing consultant; or
3. Return the grant to the NPS and not proceed with the project.

Recommendation:

The Community and Economic Development Department recommends that the City Council move to approve one of the three options above.

Submitted by: Miles Brainard, Interim Community & Economic Development Director

Approved by: John Gripp, Interim City Manager