



## **AGENDA ITEM ANALYSIS**

Project/Issue Name: 25-R-02 A Resolution of the City Council Authorizing the City to Apply for Grant Funds through the USDA Rural Business Development Program for the J.R. Martin Park Farmers' Market Project.

Submitted By: Kris Parks, Parks and Recreation Director

Date: January 7, 2025

### **Issue Statement**

A resolution to apply for grant funds from the USDA's Rural Business Development Program for the JR Martin Park Farmers' Market.

### **Discussion and/or Analysis**

The Parks and Recreation Department is applying for up to \$500,000 for the construction of a farmers' market at JR Martin Park. The USDA's Rural Business Development Grant supports entrepreneurship and job creation. The farmers' market will provide direct-to-consumer sales for local farmers and small businesses focused on value-added food products.

The grant application does not require a match. The Parks Department will leverage the existing plan for JR Martin Park's expansion and available bond funds for the project to demonstrate to the USDA the local investment in the project and aid in the grant application's success. The grant application does not add any new planned capital expenses to the Parks and Recreation Department's budget.

Farmers' markets are natural business incubators because they lower the threshold for starting an enterprise by eliminating the need for a new business to open a retail store front. Once a product has had success at a farmers' market, the business entity can then determine if their business model is financially viable and scalable for future growth. The Parks Department is exploring community partnerships that will help vendors grow and create new jobs, however, the Parks Department will manage and operate the market.

### **Recommended Action**

Staff recommends approval.