

CITY OF RICHLAND CENTER - AGENDA ITEM DATA SHEET

Agenda Item: Deferred Maintenance Concerns – “Black Trails”

Presented by: Jasen Glasbrenner

Meeting Date: Public Works Committee on 07-17-2025

Background: The Aaron Black Section of the Pine River Trails is roughly 6 miles and runs through the City’s industrial park and extends north toward Bowen’s Mill. This segment was originally established as part of a broader community trail initiative and honors Eagle Scout Aaron Black. While the trail includes three trailheads and covers scenic wooded and prairie areas, it sees limited public use compared to other City park facilities.

Despite infrequent use, the Buildings & Grounds crew dedicates a significant number of hours to mowing and maintaining this trail corridor. Given ongoing staffing limitations and broader maintenance demands, staff is reviewing whether continued intensive upkeep of this area is the best use of resources.



Maintenance Strategy Options:

- 1) Maintaining current mowing and brush clearing levels as part of the regular Buildings & Grounds work schedule.
 - This is not a viable option when considering priority and current staffing levels
- 2) Designate the trail area as an un-maintained hiking area and only provide maintenance to the entrances. Any other maintenance would be done on a time permitting basis.
- 3) Consider decommissioning the trail completely.
- 4) Exploring partnerships with community groups (e.g., trail clubs, service organizations) to assist with upkeep or enhancement.
 - This is not a viable option with current staff levels of Public Works, however, this could be an initiative of another group.

Department Recommendation: Given the lower usage of the Aaron Black section of the Pine River Trails, the priority level that a limited use trail represents, and staff levels that cannot keep up with the maintenance demands on the department, the DPW is recommending designating the trial section as an un-maintained hiking area and only providing maintenance on a time permitting basis.

Action Requested:

Public Works: Motion to adopt Maintenance Strategy Option # _____ for the Pine River / Aaron Black Trails in the North Industrial Park area.