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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 24, 2020

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CITY OF FRANKLIN RECEIVES AMERICAN WATER CHARITABLE FOUNDATION GRANT

Splash pad to be built in new downtown amphitheater area

FRANKLIN, IN – The City of Franklin has been selected to receive a \$250,000 grant from the American Water Charitable Foundation to create a splash pad as part of the larger amphitheater project located in downtown Franklin, Ind. The pad will be constructed on the southeastern portion of the project area, adjacent to the new parking lot on South Main Street.

The grant is part of the Building Better Communities signature program of the American Water Charitable Foundation and administered by the National Recreation and Park Association. The program, now in its seventh year, helps communities served by American Water to enhance or create public park spaces or programs that encourage the community to engage in water and nature inspired play, connect to the natural world, and focus on environmental education and water-based recreation.

The City of Franklin is one of only two recipients nationwide to receive this grant for 2020. Mayor Steve Barnett stated, “I am very grateful for the support of the American Water Charitable Foundation, Indiana American Water, and the National Recreation and Park Association for this splash pad. This pad will not only increase the opportunities for physical activity for all of our children, but will encourage an appreciation for the natural resources such as water for their parents. I look forward to seeing this community project completed and bringing yet another amenity for our residents and visitors alike.”

“Through our work, we have found splash pads are a wonderful way to ensure water access for all, while supporting our conservation focus and engaging community members in environmental education,” said Carrie Williams, president, American Water Charitable Foundation. “Giving back to communities we serve is part of the culture at American Water and we are pleased to partner with the City of Franklin, to provide this outdoor play space so families can enjoy the wonders of water, while also learning the valuable role we all play in protecting our environment.”

Chip Orner, Franklin Parks and Recreation Director, plans to have completion of the splash pad in conjunction with the new playground, walking trail, and amphitheater in mid-summer of 2021. “This pad will be the first for the city and will complement the recreational summer activity the current aquatic center provides and allow us to extend the water play season in the spring and fall.”

“For more than 130 years, being a good neighbor and giving back to our partner communities is a core part of who we are as a company,” said Indiana American Water President Matt Prine. “We are committed to providing high-quality water service and are proud to lend support through the American Water Charitable Foundation to this exciting project and the City of Franklin as they continue to enhance the quality of life for local residents.”

“We are proud to support the essential work of park and recreation professionals in the City of Franklin to provide their communities with equitable water-based education and inclusive play opportunities,” said Kellie May, NRPA vice president, programs and partnerships. “NRPA is proud to support this important work through our partnership with the American Water Charitable Foundation.”

Local parks and recreation play a vital role in the planning and development of parks designed to engage and educate. These parks improve health and wellness, support conservation and environmental sustainability efforts, revitalize neighborhoods, and better connect communities.

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About American Water Charitable Foundation

The American Water Charitable Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides a formal way to demonstrate the company’s ongoing commitment to being a good neighbor, citizen and contributor to the communities where American Water and its employees live, work and operate. The Foundation helps support American Water employee-identified nonprofit endeavors.

About the National Recreation and Park Association

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that all people have access to parks and recreation for health, conservation and equity. Through its network of 60,000 recreation and park professionals and advocates, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit www.nrpa.org. For digital access to NRPA’s flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit www.parksandrecreation.org.