Minneapolis
Park & Recreation Board

Resolution 2017-374

Resolution Approving Memorandum of Understanding to Explore Options of the Towerside Green Space Model for Ownership, Development and Management

Whereas, The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) is authorized to contract with public and private entities in the performance of its duties;

Whereas, MPRB, the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO), and Prospect Park Properties (PPP) share responsibility for improving environmental quality and access to green space within the Towerside Innovation District and the MWMO's Watershed within the City of Minneapolis, and these entities also recognize the benefit of working in close partnership at the intersection of the vision and mission of the respective organizations;

Whereas, The parties will focus on the exploration of models for the Towerside Innovation District Green Spaces, specifically the Phase 1 Signature Greenspace;

Whereas, The parties agree their mutual goals can be best achieved through a joint agreement around green space ownership, development, design, programming, and management in the Towerside Innovation District with a shared commitment to innovation in sustainability, design, and programming;

Whereas, The parties recognize the increased need for green space, public space, and stormwater treatment facilities to support the intensified density of the district;

Whereas, The community has expressed extensive support for future public green space depicted in the Towerside District through years of planning and design, and from statements of support from the Prospect Park Association and other key stakeholders.

Whereas, PPP and its affiliates are in the process of developing three extremely dense projects on three contiguous city blocks adjacent to the Phase 1 Signature Greenspace, which, when fully permitted, these projects will have contributed more than $1,000,000.00 in Park Dedication Fees;

Whereas, The option to purchase and preserve the land slated for the Phase 1 Signature Greenspace will expire 18 months after September 30th, 2016 on March 31, 2018.

Whereas, This agreement is to advance the conversation around the signature green space in Towerside as part of an exploratory phase, and not to take action with design, acquisition, programming, build out, or maintenance until an agreed upon model is determined;

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Whereas, This resolution is supported by the MPRB 2007-2020 Comprehensive Plan, which envisions “Dynamic parks that shape city character and meet diverse community needs;”

RESOLVED, That the Board of Commissioners approve the Memorandum of Understanding with Prospect Park Properties and the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization to explore options of the Towerside Green Space Model for ownership, development and management; and

RESOLVED, That the President of the Board and Secretary to the Board are authorized to take all necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.

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TO: Planning Committee

FROM: Michael Schroeder,

DATE: November 29, 2017

SUBJECT: Resolution Approving Memorandum of Understanding to Explore Options of the Towerside Green Space Model for Ownership, Development and Management

BACKGROUND

This resolution considers approving a Memorandum of Understanding between the Prospect Park Properties, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization to explore green space models in the Towerside district for design, development, ownership, management, and programming. This MOU represents a next step in the ongoing role of the Park Board in the Towerside Innovation District planning effort, building off of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Prospect North Partnership for Participation in the Planning of the Prospect North Innovation District in 2016.

Towerside

Towerside is 370 acres of development opportunity extending from the University of Minnesota campus in Minneapolis and east into Saint Paul. The district is served by three Green Line LRT Stations, lies at the center of the metro area interstate highway system, and is adjacent to the University's medical, academic, athletic, and bio-discovery research facilities. Towerside is the only designated innovation district in the region with the intent to bring together entrepreneurs, residents, researchers, developers, and businesses within a new, equitable, restorative, healthy, and arts-inspired community. It is an intended national model for developing a thriving urban community. While the focus of this MOU is the future green spaces that fall within the Towerside District, the larger vision for the District is integral to the green space model.

About the MOU

The MOU would set forth an exploratory phase to determine a design, development, ownership, management, and programming model that will work to integrate the goals of innovation, equity, and accessibility to all potential green spaces in and around Towerside, including the Grand Rounds Missing Link. The green space scenarios will include design and programming work to date by all Towerside stakeholders and the East of the River Park Master Plan that is working to master plan all existing and future neighborhood parks in SE and NE Minneapolis. The exploratory phase will include community engagement facilitated by MPRB for Phase I and Phase II green spaces as part of the East of the River Park Master Plan.

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FUNDING/COST SUMMARY

The MOU carries no financial commitment on the part of the MPRB.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the Memorandum of Understanding with Prospect Park Properties and the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization to Explore Options of the Towerside Green Space Model for ownership, development and management.

This action is supported by the following vision and goal statements in the MPRB 2007-2020 Comprehensive Plan:

Vision Theme 3:	Dynamic parks that shape city character and meet diverse community needs.
Goal:	Parks shape and evolving city.
Goal:	Park facility renewal and development respects history and focuses on sustainability, accessibility, flexibility, and beauty.

Due to an issue of timing, staff requests the Board of Commissioners review and approve this action at Committee and full Board at the November 29, 2017 meeting. This is due to upcoming March project milestones and no scheduled MPRB board meeting in December 2017.

ATTACHMENTS:

- MOU PPP_MPRB_MWMO-111317 (PDF)

Prepared By: Carrie Christensen, Senior Planner, Strategic Planning
Review:

Cindy Anderson	Completed	11/16/2017 12:17 PM
Adam Arvidson	Completed	11/17/2017 12:12 PM
Michael Schroeder	Completed	11/18/2017 7:59 AM
Jayne Miller	Completed	11/19/2017 7:09 PM
Planning Committee	Pending	11/29/2017 5:40 PM