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## **WASHINGTON PARK FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

- **Why is this investment being made in Washington Park?**

The \$47.3 million renovation and expansion of Washington Park is an important and critical next step in the overall renaissance of Over-the-Rhine. This investment will return the park to its original stature as a beautiful, safe, public, green space with a variety of features for all neighborhood residents as well as visitors to enjoy. The proximity of Washington Park to Music Hall, SCPA, the Art Academy of Cincinnati and other arts venues, combined with the historical significance and Italianate architecture of OTR, will make the Park an entertainment and arts destination locally, regionally and nationally. It will stimulate additional private economic development, which will further improve the quality of life for the neighborhood and its residents.

- **When will construction begin on Washington Park?**

Construction is expected to begin in late summer 2010. Work will begin on the underground garage on the northern most edge of the park.

- **How much bigger will the park be?**

The park will expand from six acres to eight acres and extend all the way from 12<sup>th</sup> Street to 14<sup>th</sup> Street.

- **How many entrances are there to the garage and where are they?**

There are two vehicular entrances and exits, one at Race and 13<sup>th</sup> streets and one on Elm Street right across from Music Hall.

- **How about entering and exiting the garage on foot?**

There are three pedestrian entrances and exit areas. All have elevators and wide steps. They are located at Elm and 14<sup>th</sup> streets, Race and 14<sup>th</sup> streets, one at 14<sup>th</sup> Street and at Elm Street directly opposite Music Hall.

- **How big is the garage and who will use it?**

The garage is two-levels, underground and will include 450 spaces. It will replace the surface lot that is currently located on the site of the former Washington Park Elementary School. It will include a green roof to increase the green space in the

park. It will be used by people who live and work near the park, including the new School for Creative and Performing Arts (SCPA), as well as visitors to SCPA, Music Hall, restaurants, other businesses and major OTR institutions. It will also be used by people who visit the park.

- **Washington Park is a neighborhood park, what kind of visitors will it attract and why?**

Washington Park is a neighborhood park that has served OTR residents since 1855. A renovation to benefit longtime residents is long overdue. In addition, the renovation and expansion will make Washington Park a local and regional attraction. The addition of amenities like outdoor performance stages and an event plaza will allow Washington Park to be programmed with events and activities. SCPA, Music Hall and other arts organizations in OTR are expected to utilize the park for a wide variety of free, outdoor, public entertainment.

- **What about amenities for kids?**

Nearly an acre of the park will be dedicated solely to children. Fixed attractions in the accessible park include an interactive water attraction that will feature 402 pop jets that shoot water eight feet into the air, six interactive, arching water jets and cascading steps as well as smaller elements for young children including a shallow stream that connects to the playground. The park's play area will combine traditional and sculptural elements to create a safe and creative play environment that connects to the water feature. It will include many unique and fun features including a canal boat, double slide, sand pit, musical elements, swings and climbing wall. (See fact sheet for more details.)

- **Lots of "stuff" to do, but this is a park. What about green space?**

Washington Park will include an expansive civic lawn; green space about the size of a football field. It may be programmed for performances and events, but it will also be used for active and passive recreation, like tossing a Frisbee or lying on a blanket with a book. The existing green space at the south end of the park will also be retained for passive use. A Dog Park, about one-quarter acre in size, will be added as well as 7,000 SF of planting areas with emphasis on colorful beds flanking the water feature, historic bandstand and park entries.

- **What about the trees, there must be some very old, beautiful trees in that park?**

There are. The park's design and construction methods call for the retention of as many healthy trees as possible. Dead and diseased trees will be removed. Construction will require some trees to be uprooted and replanted. There are currently 118 trees in the park, including nine street trees. When the park is

complete, there will be 177 total trees in the park and the surrounding street. (See fact sheet for more details.)

- **What about other historic aspects of the park, like the bandstand?**

The park contains many historic assets including the historic bandstand, Civil War cannon and busts of Civil War heroes that will be restored and preserved.

- **Safety is going to be a big concern for people in regard to the park. What is begin done to keep the park safe?**

There are several factors that play into creating a safe, inviting public space.

- Lighting is a big part of safety in any large public space. Lighting plans for Washington Park call for recommended standards for public safety balanced with appropriate levels for a neighborhood park surrounded by homes and businesses. The lighting will vary depending on the time of day and level of activity in the park. For comparison sake, it will have lighting levels similar to that in place at the recently constructed Friendship Park on the riverfront.
- Cincinnati Park Board staff and Cincinnati Police will establish safety standards and procedures for the park, as is the case with all City parks.
- Actively managing and programming a public space is another very important aspect of safety. The events that are being planned for Washington Park will keep it filled with people and activity, similar to Fountain Square.
- The Park and Garage will have staff, ambassadors and security on site 24-7.

- **In line with safety is keeping the park clean. How will that work?**

The park will be managed similar to Fountain Square and include the assignment of ambassadors responsible for keeping the park clean on a daily basis. In addition, park maintenance staff will be hired through the Park Board to maintain the park on a regular basis, similar to the way Eden Park, Ault Park and other City parks are maintained.

- **What about other park amenities like restrooms, food, information, etc...?**

The park will include a year-round restroom buildings and dedicated family restrooms in the children's play area, concession and catering stations, vending station and a security and audiovisual control room.

- **How is the renovation and expansion being paid for?**

The renovation is a true public/private partnership with \$25.53 million in private funding and \$21.85 in public funding. (See fact sheet for a detailed funding breakdown.)

- **How will revenue from the garage be used?**

It will be used to operate the garage, pay off the debt from the CEF Loan and the State of Ohio Department of Development Loan and for capital repairs and improvements.

- **Will this project create jobs?**

Yes, initially it is estimated about 920 FTE prevailing wage construction jobs. Once complete, it will create an estimated 30 FTE permanent jobs servicing and maintaining the park along with the garage.

- **Will the entire park be fenced off as soon as construction begins?**

During a public meeting on May 20, 3CDC was asked to keep a portion of the park open for as long as possible. Once a contractor is selected, we will work with that firm to honor that request. A portion of the southern end of the park will be kept open as long as possible, but ultimately it will be the contractor's call, based on construction industry best practices and safety standards.

- **Why couldn't the pool have stayed open until construction began?**

It was the decision of the Cincinnati Recreation Commission to close several deep water pools across the city based on neighborhood usages, including the Washington Park pool. Ziegler Pool, located at 1311 Sycamore St., is still open and the hours have been extended. The pool will be open until 7:30pm on both Friday and Saturday evenings. Ziegler will also be open an additional two weeks in August. The other City pools are set to close the end of July.

- **The new plan does not include basketball courts, is that still an option?**

The park does will not include any courts, but there are nearby public courts and we are exploring additional neighborhood locations for additional public basketball courts.

- **Will the current public restrooms in the park remain open?**

The current park restrooms are open late April to October seven days a week from 7AM to 8PM and will remain open until the contractor determines they need to be closed for construction.

- **How long will the park close?**

The construction process is estimated to be complete in late 2011.

- **How long will the garage construction take?**

We expect it to take about 16 months.

- **How will the park closing and updates on the construction be communicated to neighborhood residents, businesses and visitors?**

Because of the variety of users, communication will come in a variety of ways. 3CDC and the Park Board will regularly update neighborhood social service agencies and ask them to spread the word to their clients. We also plan to establish a community advisory board, working through the Emanuel Center. In addition to providing information, we will provide flyers or posters when necessary that can be posted for clients and visitors to see. We will also use traditional media and social media to reach out to residents, business owners and visitors. We will also keep the 3CDC and Cincinnati Park Board websites updated with the latest information.

- **What health hazards or risks (like noise and dust) are there with construction?**

As with any major construction project there will be some amount of noise and dust. We believe they are minimal. Dust should be within the confines of the fenced off area of the site and regular construction hours should minimize noise and allow residents to experience few surprises in regard to noise issues.

- **How will park closure inhibit churches, apartments, arts & culture community around the park?**

The elimination of some on-street parking surrounding the park and closing off the sidewalks around the park will be the only impact neighbors should experience.

- **What are the safety and security concerns for the Cincinnati Police and Cincinnati Park Police?**

As long as non-construction workers stay out of the fenced off construction zone, there should not be any out-of-the ordinary safety or security concerns with the project.

- **What about parking limits on 14th street for residents and visitors?**

During construction there will not be any parking on the park side (south) of 14<sup>th</sup> and from time to time there will be parking restrictions on the north side of 14<sup>th</sup>. Otherwise, side street parking should be available.

- **What about street parking on Race and Elm streets between 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> streets?**

Street parking will continue to be available on Race and Elm on the non-park side of the streets. On the park side, several metered spaces on Race and Elm will be eliminated when construction begins. They will be eliminated north of 13<sup>th</sup> Street first and then move south as construction begins on that end of the park.

- **Where will the Race and Elm Street bus stops be relocated during construction?**

The stops will be relocated to both the north and south end of the park outside the construction zone at 12<sup>th</sup> Street and 14<sup>th</sup> Street.