



July 1, 2019

Sarasota City Commission  
1565 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Sarasota, FL 34236

Dear Mayor Alpert, Vice-Mayor Jen Ahearn-Koch and Commissioners,

The attached draft Implementation Plan is for discussion at the July 15 City Commission meeting.

This is the next step in the process to implement the first phase of The Bay Park Master Plan. The process began with a Master Plan for the 53 acres of city land approved by the City Commission on September 6, 2018.

The implementation plan includes all of the required components delineated in the long-term partnership agreement between the City of Sarasota and The Bay Park Conservancy, approved unanimously by the City Commission on April 15, 2019 and signed by the City and Conservancy on April 24, 2019.

We will preview the draft implementation plan at the July 15 meeting and gather feedback and input. The overall objective of this preview is for us to return to the City Commission with a firm and finalized Implementation Plan recommendation for approval at the August 19 City Commission meeting.

An approved Implementation Plan will lead to a Site Plan recommendation in early 2020 and ultimately to building permits in the spring/summer.

Expect us on July 15 to review the further refined Phase 1 plan for the park, the process and schedule for development and implementation, and the financials and fundraising progress to date.

We continue to focus even more on conservation, environmental protection, restoration and enhancement in the design of the first phase of the park.

Because of this focus, we have more definition on an improved design for the bayou and mangroves and for the sunset pier on the southwest edge of the park. We plan to submit permits to enhance the bayou and mangroves over the next month. The improved sunset pier design is the direct result of a series of environmental studies and environmentalists' input that called for a location and a shape that respects and protects our natural resources... seagrass beds, coral-like growth, and the natural bay shoreline, bayou and mangrove habitats.

The sunset pier will actually improve community access to Sarasota bay, enable both a wide range of opportunities to interact with the natural coastal environment and better sunset viewing.

As we continue to meet with citizens in the community and broaden engagement through social media and our website, the sunset pier continues to be by far the most desired feature in the first phase of the park. While there may be a range of opinions about some design and usage details, virtually everyone wants more accessibility to the Sarasota bay and its bayfront.

We are also exploring potential design improvements to the Boulevard of the Arts entry to the park on the south edge, and for the public lawns that rise up from the shoreline towards the east.

We have actually reduced the scope and intensity of the first phase of The Bay Park. We are not proposing or showing a permanent restaurant. We are planning shade structures, amenities and service structures along Boulevard of the Arts.

Most of the park will consist of the restored bayou and mangroves, the sunset pier and a small ecological beach, and public lawns.

The public lawns will serve as a living learning laboratory for The Bay Park Conservancy to experiment with a wide range of arts, cultural and educational events, as well as the fitness, health and recreational activities that the community has an interest in enjoying as part of a preferred public park experience.

Discussion is ongoing regarding the potential redesign of Boulevard of the Arts. The City Planning and Development Department is very much involved as this is a city street. We are engaged in a series of conversations with the full range of current and future residents on the Boulevard. The good news is that aspirations and objectives are similar for all involved: a beautiful residential

street, and a beautiful entrance to the south edge of The Bay Park. Not surprisingly, there are some differences of opinion about these future plans which may involve changes for current residents.

Implementation Plan approval is the next step in the development process for the first phase of The Bay Park Master Plan. It will be followed by a more detailed and specific Site Plan which will go through the City's Site Plan approval process, which includes the Planning and Development Services Department, the Planning Board and the City Commission, before final approval is granted for construction and build-out of the first ten acres of The Bay Park.

As you will see in the enclosed materials, there is no change to our current estimate for the capital cost of the first phase of the park, or for operating costs for The Bay Park Conservancy for the next three years, during which time the park will be constructed and developed. Capital cost estimates will be updated as the Implementation and Site Plans become better defined and as we onboard a Construction Manager as our Owner's Agent, and retain the team to execute the Phase 1 construction.

In the two months since we signed the long-term partnership agreement, we have hired an Advancement Director and begun to talk to supportive private foundations and philanthropists who are interested in funding community amenities like public parks that are open, accessible, free and welcoming to all.

We have raised \$11MM in commitments and \$4.9MM in cash in the very early days of our effort. We would like to again reiterate that we will not commence construction without having raised all the necessary funding to complete the construction. There is no debt for Phase 1. The release of funds by The Bay Park Conservancy for capital commitments and construction will be contingent on City Commission approvals of the implementation details required by our agreement, approval of the Site Plan, continuing city co-investment and the greatly appreciated ongoing support of our City's management and staff.

There is a significant opportunity for a joint City and County partnership TIF investment in the Bay Park Master Plan initiative. We will be prepared to discuss the advantages of TIF financing for the City, the community, and this development initiative at the July meeting.

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We look forward to previewing the emerging plan for the first phase of this park with you on July 15.

Sincerely,

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Cathy Layton, Chairman

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AG Lafley, Founding CEO

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Bill Waddill, Chief  
Implementation Officer