

**“The nation behaves well if it treats its natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased, and not impaired, in value.”
— Theodore Roosevelt**

LAKEFRONT DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION (LDAC) PROPOSAL

Contact Information:



Gary Grunau
101 W. Pleasant St. Ste. 204
414-455-3750
gary@grucongroup.com

No one disputes the importance of public parks. The democratic spaces belie the term “common areas”. Great men and women have dedicated time and treasure to the restoration and preservation of these quite uncommon places where people go for both solitude and community.

Juneau Park and Cathedral Square are exceptional examples. However, over the past several years the quality of these parks has declined as a result of drastically reduced funding and staffing to maintain and manage the parks. Many unsuccessful attempts have been made to remedy this issue – each time that a palatable remedy is brought forward, funding is unavailable to successfully accomplish it. To address this issue, The East Town Association Inc. and Juneau Park Friends have each signed a Letter of

Intent to work together to create a Neighborhood Improvement District (NID) for the betterment of these two community resources before they are beyond recovery.

This proposal briefly describes the historical significance of each park, the current state of disrepair of each park, and the proposed improvements to restore the parks to their prominence while preserving and commemorating their historical significance. The proposal requests that LDAC direct the County Parks Commission to enter into negotiations with a newly created entity (the “2Parks NID” or the “NID”) to create a operating agreement that will provide for the improvement and sustainability of Juneau Park and Cathedral Square as outlined below. This proposal does not look to expand either park. Nor does it look to promote control of the parks by any entity other than Milwaukee County. It only serves to outline the impairments and impediments of the parks – which are currently under and will remain under the jurisdiction of the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County – and to promote a viable, sustainable solution through which improvements which will preserve and enhance the beauty of the downtown area and our graceful lakefront can be achieved and sustained, overcoming the long term funding issues that have plagued proposed solutions in the past.

While Juneau Park is under LDAC review, this proposal includes Cathedral Square as these two landmark parks are closely linked by heritage and sustainability and are facing similar issues.

Juneau Park – In General

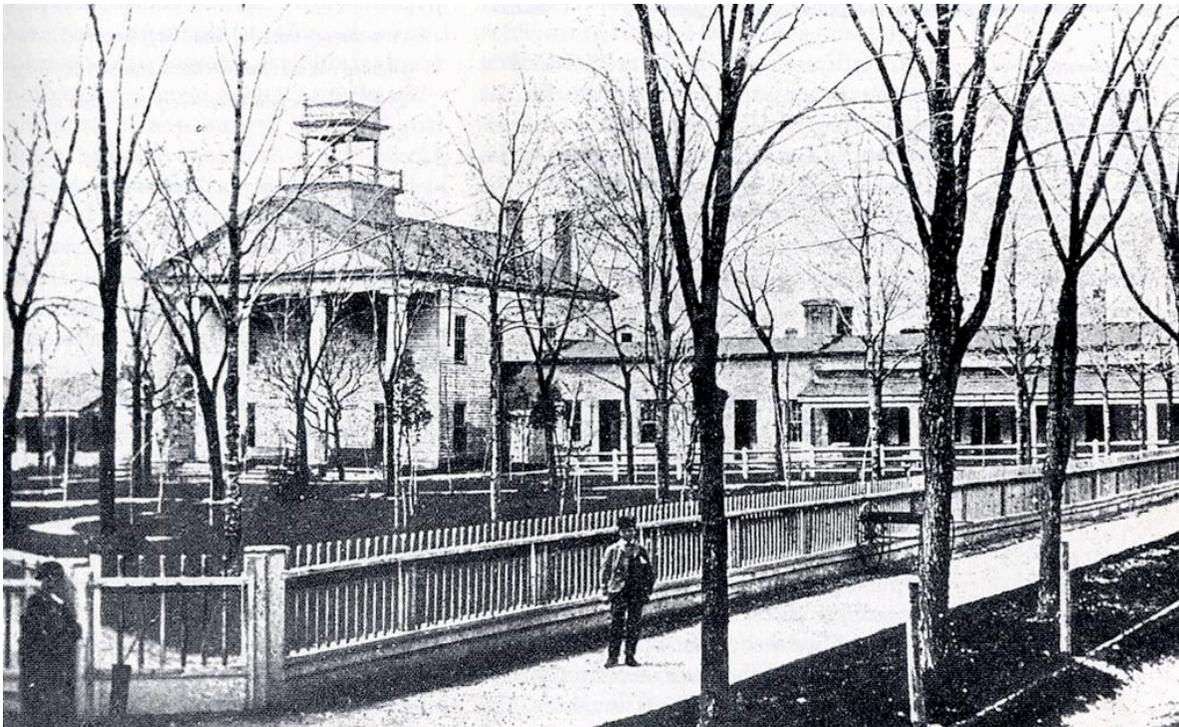
Named after Solomon Juneau, Milwaukee’s first mayor, Juneau Park was originally developed as a ‘vista park’ where citizens came to the edge of the city to enjoy panoramic views of Lake Michigan. Originally, the park was a narrow strip of land along the bluff above a busy railroad depot.



Now Milwaukee's gateway park consists of a nearly 16 acre parcel on Milwaukee's lakefront where an urban skyline gives way to the graceful curves of Lincoln Memorial Drive and Lake Michigan. The park is located east of Prospect Avenue bordered by Juneau Avenue on the north and Mason Street on the south and consists of large expanses of lawn with many mature trees, asphalt walks and partially wooded bluffs. Within the Park there is a statue of Leif Erickson, a statue of Solomon Juneau, a replica log cabin, a small restroom building, benches and pathway lighting. It is home to a section of the Oak Leaf Trail attracting cyclists, walkers and joggers.

Cathedral Square – In General

Originally known as Courthouse Square, the land known as Cathedral Square was donated by Milwaukee cofounder Solomon Juneau in 1836, and housed a court house and jail. In 1854, a mob of 5,000 people converged at the jail to rescue Joshua Glover, a runaway slave captured and imprisoned by federal marshals. During the American Civil War, parkland south of the courthouse was used as place to assemble for troops leaving for or returning from the front. A second courthouse was built on the site in 1873, and was used until 1931 when the current Milwaukee County Courthouse was built. The jail was moved to another site in 1886, and the area became a park in 1939 after the second courthouse was razed. In 2006, Cathedral Square was designated as a National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom site by the National Parks Service.



Now consisting of 2.3 acres of lawn, mature trees and walkways, Cathedral Square rests in the shadow of St. John Cathedral just four blocks west of Juneau Park. In the heart of downtown Milwaukee between Kilbourn Avenue and Wells, Jackson and Jefferson streets, Cathedral Square is home to many popular public events such as

Jazz in the Park, Bastille Days, and the East Town Market. The City currently offers free WiFi service in the park making it a popular meeting place for those who work and/or live downtown.

Juneau Park – Decline

The days of Juneau Park serving as Milwaukee’s well-manicured and welcoming front yard are long gone and the park is seeing increasing physical decline each year. This vista park has suffered from decades of erosion along its bluff leading to mudslides during any period of significant rain. Lake Michigan can no longer be seen from the park’s paths and perches due to over grown invasive vegetation, which prevents native plantings from taking root and growing. Native plant restoration would act as a



deterrent to storm water runoff preventing further erosion of the bluff. The bluff sits precariously over walking paths that are in disrepair. The area is poorly lit creating an unsafe place to walk, jog, bike or contemplate the beauty of our lakefront. It is not a worthy gateway park to the City’s prize jewel -- Lake Michigan.

If the park continues to exist under its current condition, the bluff will continue to erode leaving it unusable and dangerous. The land will be gone. As it was dedicated to a founding father of our City for the enjoyment of visitors seeking solitude and community,

the park, overlooking our greatest natural resource, will no longer exist and with it our legacy for future generations.

Currently, Milwaukee County maintains Juneau Park with very limited funds. The proposal includes developing a maintenance plan in conjunction with Milwaukee County with the intent of hiring a private concern to maintain grass area, flowers beds, and the bluff and plaza areas described later in this report



Cathedral Square - Decline

Cathedral Square has long been the victim of haphazard planning. This once-proud and historic people's plaza is the site of portable toilets, trailers, scattered picnic tables, a long-forgotten and defunct fountain, neglected landscaping, a temporary stage and a play area for children that includes a swing set and two sliding boards.

Like Juneau Park, Milwaukee County maintains Cathedral Square with very limited funds. The proposal includes developing a maintenance plan in conjunction with Milwaukee County with the intent of hiring a private concern to maintain grass area, stage and pavilion areas.



Juneau Park – Improvements

As Milwaukee's front yard and a gateway park to the lakefront, the improvements to Juneau Park will draw visitors coming to and from other annual lakefront events and provide a star-spangle view of Milwaukee's grand July 4th fireworks display. While the following proposed improvements are subject to public approval and therefore subject to change, the anticipated improvements to Juneau Park will preserve and protect the scenic and natural beauty of the lakefront through restoring the bluff and its vistas; and abating future soil erosion through native plantings and permeable surfaces to discourage storm water runoff. Proposed improvements include the following:

- Stabilize and restore eroding bluff for use, safety and aesthetics value.
- A bricked-paved public plaza with benches and flower beds at the statue of Solomon Juneau near Kilbourn Avenue is planned as the main entry to the park. Historic markers will denote the importance of the land.
- A path down from the bluff will be improved by the County and therefore made safer.
- Pedestrian and bike access will be improved and amenities added.
- Overlooks will be provided, increasing visual opportunities of the lake.
- Bluff restoration and removal of invasive vegetation will be performed. Invasive species of brush, trees and tall grasses will be eliminated. Native plantings will restore the natural vistas of Lake Michigan and abate the threat of erosion. Traditional flower beds will be installed at the newly created Kilbourn Plaza in response to Preserve Our Parks member concerns.
- Park paths will be widened in response to concerns from County Parks' staff.

- The plan will include vegetative permeable surfaces to create a natural flow and absorption of storm water abating concerns of water pollution. There will be no increase of impervious pavings in Juneau Park.
- The major north-south path will be installed with a more durable surface in part to allow Milwaukee Police patrol to drive through the park to maintain security.
- Harp lights and tree uplighting will be added in response to neighborhood requests to make the park unique and well lit at night.
- High-grade receptacles for litter will be included.

In response to neighborhood concerns, there is no plan to develop a music venue at this time and no buildings are contemplated as part of the improvement plan.



While funds have been secured through FEMA to specifically prepare and stabilize the bluff, the 2Parks plan will address the overall condition of the bluff to mitigate the possibility of future erosion – not to just shore up the current problem. There will be no direct egress to the lake due to the impediment of heavy Lincoln Memorial Drive traffic.

The foregoing improvements, will promote active and passive use of the park, will include visitors wishing to enjoy its views, walking, jogging, biking, child's play, nature walks and the July 4th fireworks. With added garden beds, the Park may be open to garden walk events, art fairs and make for a worthy backdrop for photographers and artists.

Significant avenues for access to Juneau Park to accommodate increased traffic to the park already exist. Extensive street parking and access to a bus line will enable visitors from near and far to come, gather and recreate. As a public park, the Kilbourn Plaza area will welcome all – County residents and County visitors, pedestrians, joggers, cyclists, sun bathers, stargazers and nature lovers alike. The park's pathways will accommodate those with disabilities. As is currently the case, no public motored vehicles will be allowed in the park.



Cathedral Square – Improvements

For decades, Cathedral Square has been the summer concert venue for Jazz in the Park, the epicenter for Bastille Days and the site of tranquil Saturday mornings at the East Town farmers market. These treasured Milwaukee events will continue in a space that will attract residents and tourists while preserving the Square's important history. While the proposed improvements are subject to public approval and therefore subject to change, the current planned improvements for Cathedral Square include the restoration of the southern two-thirds of the Square to mirror its original historic design. (When planned in the 1830s, Solomon Juneau designated that a portion of the Square never be the site of a permanent structure, remaining always as a grassy area where the public could gather in the heart of the City.) The improvements will also re-open the Square's views of the historic buildings and landmarks such as St. John Cathedral. Improvements include:

- Temporary structures will be replaced with a permanent band shell and park pavilion with restrooms located on the north-end of the Square along Kilbourn Avenue. The pavilion will house storage, restroom facilities and a green room for entertainers. The pavilion design includes a green roof. Placing the permanent structures closer to the street will reduce congestion of car and truck deliveries.
- The defunct fountain will be removed.
- Solomon Juneau's original vision of a grassy area will be restored.
- Mature trees will be retained and a grove of trees on the north-end of the Square, which will include a play area, will be added.
- High quality plantings and paving surfaces using permeable material to abate storm water runoff will be installed. There will be no increase in impervious pavement.

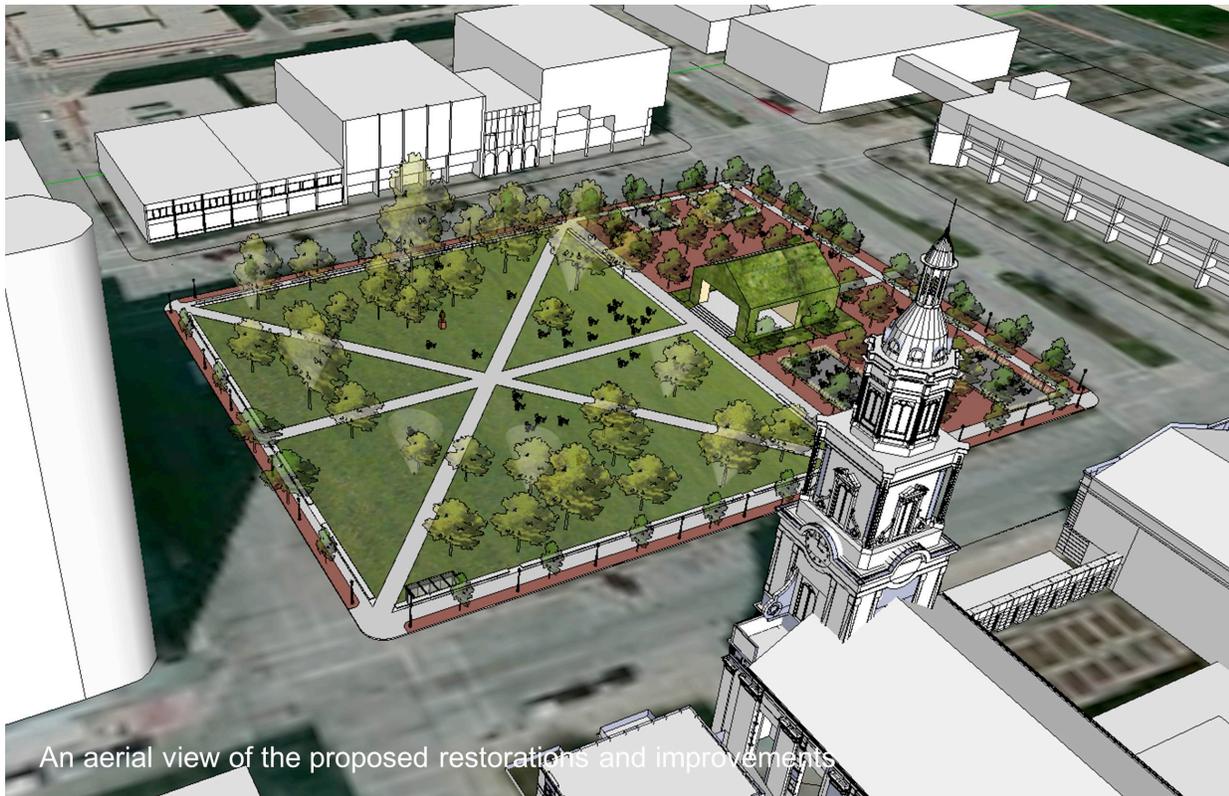
- Durable benches of sustainable material will be installed along the perimeter of the Square and lighting will be added for safety and ambiance.
- Informational markers will be created and placed to designate the Square's historic importance.
- The location of the jail and Joshua Glover's jail break will be marked.
- A permanent bus stop structure, with historic information, will be built on the Square's perimeter.
- The Square will be equipped with high-grade receptacles for litter.

It is the plan's intention to control sound with a permanent band shell with speakers aimed toward the grass and audience mitigating unwanted noise pollution.

The people's plaza will be as Solomon Juneau envisioned -- an area where residents and visitors of the County will join in community for music, play, relaxation and support of local flavor. As all events in the Square are seasonal or temporary, the restored lawn area will be maintained for its original intended use. The offering of WiFi in the park will continue to draw the public throughout the work day and into the evening. With the abundance of eateries near the Square and the addition of mobile food vendors, food and drink will be available. The improvements of the Square will continue to draw people into our thriving downtown area increasing revenues for area businesses.



As is currently the case, no public motored vehicles will be allowed in the Square, and there is no anticipation of increased traffic congestion due to improvements. It will be consistent with its current use. However, the Square is accessible by foot from Kilbourn Avenue, Wells, Jackson and Jefferson streets with perimeter street parking as well as extensive other street parking nearby. Additionally, nearby parking structures are in place and access to a bus line will encourage visitors from near and far to come, gather and recreate. The easy access and egress will facilitate those with disabilities. As a public park, music, festivals, a farmers market and food vendors will welcome all.



The proposed improvements to Cathedral Square will restore the legacy entrusted to the citizens of the City and will pay homage to our history through design and the preservation of its history for generations to come.

The 2Parks Project Benefits the Community at Large

The 2Parks NID anticipates the creation of construction, maintenance, hotel, hospitality, cleaning, restaurant, convention and airport jobs as Milwaukee's two improved and restored parks will be a destination for visitors to our City. It is anticipated to increase business in the surrounding areas, property values and employment.

The 2Parks NID

Unlike other proposals to remedy the conditions at Juneau Park and Cathedral Square, the 2Parks NID offers a financially sustainable model for both improvement to and continued maintenance of the parks. This financial sustainability will be supported through a NID. Establishing the NID is supported by Juneau Park Friends, more than 300 members of the East Town Association, NEWaukee, The Spirit of Milwaukee, more than 130 signed petitioners who are property owners and occupiers of properties affected by the NID and the City Plan Commission, who unanimously endorsed the NID.

To fund the NID, a maximum assessment rate of \$0.25 for each \$1,000 of assessed valuation will be imposed on the property tax of businesses and residents in an area bounded by the Milwaukee River on the west, Clybourn to the south, Lake Michigan on the east and Ogden to the north, representing almost \$2 billion worth of assessed valuations the majority of which will be paid by businesses in the NID. This assessment will be modest for the outcome that will be seen. For example, an owner with a property valued at \$200,000 will see an annual assessment of \$50. In exchange for that, over \$3.5 million will be collected and expended for the improvement and maintenance of Juneau Park and Cathedral Square, and yearly maintenance will be provided. This assessment will be fixed in the NID's governing documents which will also state that the assessment cannot be raised unless 60 percent of the businesses and 90 percent of residential owners within the 2Parks NID approve an increase. Additionally, the NID's governing documents will state that should a dedicated source be created to fund the

park system, the NID will be dissolved so that there is only one dedicated funding source for all parks, and persons residing in the NID will not be forced to pay to fund the parks twice.

The NID will pay for the improvements described above for each park, which are anticipated to cost approximately \$2 million per park. While the improvements to the parks are necessary, the true benefit of the NID lies in its ability to ensure ongoing maintenance (and annual evaluation of the operations of the parks as described below) because not only will there will be sufficient funds to improve the parks, there will be sufficient, consistent cash flow to fund the maintenance of each park. And maintaining both parks together encourages cost efficiencies from greater purchasing and contracting power.

The 2Parks NID would be run by a publicly elected board and do business at meetings open to the public. All board members will be elected once a year at a public meeting with all owners and residents entitled to vote. The board will also include community representation from the two organizations that are key stakeholders in both parks: the Friends of Juneau Park and the East Town Association. All meetings of the 2Parks NID board will be open to all residents. The operating plan for the 2Parks NID will be reviewed annually by the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County. Upon approval by the County of each park's annual operating plan, carrying out the plan will be the purview of the 2Parks NID, but the control and security of the parks will remain with the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County.

At the present time, the Friends of Juneau Park and the East Town Association have paid for legal and design fees to create the proposed 2Parks NID. Volunteers have donated countless hours to assist in the design concepts and to develop the proposal with City and County officials. Official public meetings regarding the 2Parks NID have been held as follows:

June 14, 2011 - Milwaukee County Parks Committee
July 19, 2011 - Milwaukee County Parks Committee
Sept. 10, 2012 - City Plan Commission (CPC)
Oct. 1, 2012 - CPC unanimously recommended approval
Oct. 11, 2012 - Community and Economic Development Committee (CEDC)
Oct. 23, 2012 - County Parks Advisory Committee
Dec. 10, 2012 - Community and Economic Development Committee (CEDC)
Jan. 7, 2013 - Community and Economic Development Committee (CEDC)
Jan. 8, 2013 - County Parks Advisory Committee
Jan. 29, 2013 - Milwaukee County Parks Committee

No permanent buildings or other improvements or maintenance plans or contracts will move ahead without approval by departments within the City of Milwaukee as well as Milwaukee County. The 2Parks NID will need to respect hiring and contracts that are within standards set by both governing bodies. The 2Parks NID welcomes input and its entire focus is to encourage neighborhood representation and involvement.

Conclusion

The 2Parks NID respectfully requests that the LDAC recommend to the County Parks Commission that the Commission enter into negotiations with the 2Parks NID to create a governing agreement that will provide for the improvement and sustainability of Juneau Park and Cathedral Square as outlined in this proposal. The 2Parks NID is the only viable option to save and protect the legacy of those who came before us who had a vision for the community to enrich the quality of life in Milwaukee for us and for generations forward.