



**For Immediate Release**

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**Community Shapes 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Park Equitable Development Plan**

**Washington, D.C. (September 17, 2015)** – In an effort to ensure the future 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Park can serve as an anchor for *inclusive* development, we have posted a draft list of actionable recommendations as part of a year-long “Equitable Development Task Force.” These recommendations have been created by community residents, business owners, policy experts and government officials who have convened multiple times over the last nine months. Public input has been an essential part of Bridge Park’s Equitable Development Task Force, created to develop a series of specific programs and policies to encourage inclusive development in the neighborhoods surrounding the park. Recommendations cover three topics: **workforce development, small business enterprise, and housing.**

In addition, Bridge Park staff will also host a community meeting on Saturday, October 3 to help shape the final version of the recommendations.

**Equitable Development Plan Online for Review:**

Equitable Development Plan available [here](#) for public comment. Comments accepted through September 30, 2015.

**Equitable Development Community Meeting**

**When:** Saturday, October 3, 2015; 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm

**Who:** FREE and open to the public. *Light refreshments provided.*

**Where:** THEARC, 1901 Mississippi Avenue SE, Washington DC 20020

**Metro Stations:** Congress Heights and Southern Avenue (green line, street parking available)

**RSVP:** Click [here](#) or visit [bridgepark.org/events](http://bridgepark.org/events)

Economic development is one of four key goals of the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Park, a project of the Ward 8 based non-profit Building Bridges Across the River at THEARC. While Bridge Park’s design strategies will increase connectivity and interaction between those living on both sides of the Anacostia River, more must be done to ensure that residents living near the site will benefit on a continued basis from the success of this signature new civic space.

The Equitable Development Task Force has worked with community stakeholders, government officials, business owners, and policy experts to identify actionable recommendations that the park and its partners can take in three areas: **workforce development, small business enterprise, and housing.** The Task Force has created an Equitable Development Plan comprised of detailed recommendations and timelines for

implementation to be reviewed at the public meeting on October 3 and announced at the November 5 Community Development Finance Summit presented by City First Bank of D.C.

Task Force Time Line

- **Fall 2014** – Core Task Force members met to collect and analyze data about nearby neighborhoods to understand the existing conditions
- **February 2, 2015** – Brainstorming session with representatives from government agencies, non-profits and foundations to create initial recommendation list
- **May 1, 2015** – Community stakeholder meeting to review and comment on initial recommendation list and help prioritize actions
- **June 27, 2015** - Public meetings for additional feedback on policies and procedures that can ensure equitable and inclusive development in adjacent neighborhoods
- **September 17, 2015** – Equitable Development Plan posted online for community review and comments
- **October 3, 2015** – Public meeting to review Equitable Development Plan
- **November 5, 2015** – Share recommendations at Community Development Finance Summit
- **November 2015** - Begin implementation of Equitable Development Plan

The 11th Street Bridge Park has the potential to represent more than just an innovative public space with a direct physical link between two neighborhoods. In particular, the park can symbolize a new unity and connection between a booming area of the city and one that has long been overlooked and excluded from the city’s economic progress.

The Task Force began meeting in the Fall of 2014 collecting data on existing conditions – home ownership rates, median income, unemployment – so that future recommendations are based on an accurate understanding of the adjacent neighborhoods. The core Task Force includes: Peter Tatian and Brett Theodos, Urban Institute; Carla Harris, Ward 8 Workforce Development Council; Ed Lazere, D.C. Fiscal Policy Institute; Kimberly Driggins and Sakina Khan, D.C. Office of Planning; Adam Kent, LISC DC; and Scott Kratz and Irfana Noorani, 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Park. This initial research illustrated the stark divide among communities on both sides of the river.

	<u>West of the River (Capitol Hill / Navy Yard)</u>	<u>East of the River (Anacostia / Fairlawn)</u>
<b>Total Population</b>	22,117	21,259
<b>Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing</b>	\$653,737	\$262,601
<b>Renter Occupied Units</b>	49.2%	73.4%
<b>Unemployment</b>	5.5%	20.9%
<b>Child Poverty</b>	23.6%	51.8%

Recognizing that signature parks can increase nearby property values, it is important to strategize an actionable plan early in the process. In February, May and June, the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Park collaborated with LISC DC to convene over 100 community stakeholders, policy experts, government officials, non-profits and foundations representatives. These discussions focused on strategic recommendations to ensure that the new park will address potential economic and housing displacement while providing opportunity for nearby residents and businesses.

Working with the community, the Bridge Park's Equitable Development Task Force and Equitable Development Plan can become templates for how cities can invest in and create world-class public spaces that are inclusive.

**About the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Park, a project of Building Bridges Across the River at THEARC**

As the old 11<sup>th</sup> Street traffic bridges that connect Washington, D.C.'s Capitol Hill and historic Anacostia neighborhoods have aged out, a local non-profit Building Bridges Across the River at THEARC – and the District government are transforming this old infrastructure into the city's first elevated park: a new venue for healthy recreation, environmental education and the arts.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Park will be a place unlike any other in Washington, D.C. – one that supports the community's physical, environmental, cultural and economic health. After a seven-month design competition informed by more than 500 community meetings, the design team of OMA+OLIN was selected in October 2014. With the design in place, Bridge Park staff has launched a capital campaign to construct this new civic space, securing more than \$10 million to date. For more information and to see the OMA+OLIN renderings, visit [www.bridgepark.org](http://www.bridgepark.org).

The Town Hall Education Arts Recreation Campus (THEARC) is a \$27 million, 110,000 square-foot campus located east of the Anacostia River in Washington, D.C.'s Ward 8. The mission of THEARC is to improve the quality of life for residents of Washington, D.C.'s East of the River community, a key goal of the future 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Park.

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