



Date: April 29, 2016
To: Patrick H. West, City Manager *T.M.L.*
From: Arturo Sanchez, Deputy City Manager, City Manager's Office *AS*
For: Mayor and Members of the City Council
Subject: Knight Cities Challenge Grant Award

On April 12, 2016, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation (Foundation) named the City of Long Beach a winner of the Knight Cities Challenge. This will provide \$300,000 in grant funds to create the nation's first office space in a City park. In the coming weeks, the Foundation will prepare formal grant documentation that will be brought to the City Council for consideration and approval. This memo provides information in advance of the City Council agenda item.

Knight Cities Challenge Competition

For the second year in a row, the Foundation held the Knight Cities Challenge. Any individual, business, government or nonprofit could submit an innovative idea to the Challenge provided that: (1) the submission would be implemented in one of 26 "Knight Cities" and (2) the idea focused on one or more of three drivers of city success: talent retention, economic opportunity, and civic engagement. The Foundation, based in Miami, Florida, has 26 designated "Knight Cities." These are communities where Knight-Ridder newspapers once operated.

The Long Beach Community Foundation has a long standing partnership with the Knight Foundation, and coordinates multiple Foundation activities locally. On October 5, 2015, the Long Beach Community Foundation selected and convened a meeting of local organizations, including the City's Innovation Team (i-team), to foster collaboration and in order to spark innovative ideas for submission. The City's i-team had already identified the need for affordable workspace as a challenge facing entrepreneurs in the downtown. This need was met by a provocative idea from Commune Communication regarding working outdoors in public spaces. So, at the Long Beach Community Foundation convening, the "Outdoor Office" concept was born. A brief proposal was submitted to the Foundation in October 2015. The Foundation received over 4,500 initial proposals from 26 cities.

The Outdoor Office Concept

The Outdoor Office seeks to promote creativity, integration, and collaboration by encouraging residents to take work to the park. To facilitate this, the City proposed equipping a city-owned public space with high powered Wi-Fi, charging stations,

comfortable and flexible seating, shade, lighting, and a place to grab coffee. By providing amenities that overcome barriers to working outdoors, the Outdoor Office will facilitate a change in how we approach work.

The Outdoor Office provides space for interconnections to develop, rather than casual interactions that may occur on transit, sidewalks, and in cafes. The City of Long Beach, along with Downtown stakeholders, will engage in consistent dynamic programming that draws diverse crowds to the Outdoor Office. Dynamic programming will reach out to the different audiences that live, work, and play in downtown Long Beach.

Refining the Proposal

In January 2016, the Knight Foundation announced the Outdoor Office had advanced to be one of 158 finalists. In response, the City assembled design and programming experts to see if they had interest in the concept and capacity to contribute to realizing the concept in Long Beach. The contributors worked together over the course of four weeks to assemble and submit a second application. Contributors included Commune Communication, Downtown Long Beach Associates, California State University Long Beach, WE Labs, the adjacent property owner, Studio 111, and several City departments.

During this time, the team also considered potential locations to realize the concept. The concept relies on a high population of daytime workers. As the center of employment, downtown Long Beach was determined to be the ideal area. Within downtown, three sites were considered: Lincoln Park, Promenade Park, and Harvey Milk Promenade Park. Lincoln Park was not selected as it will be undergoing renovation related to the Civic Center. Promenade Park, located at the intersection of the Promenade and Transit Mall, was not selected as it is accessible only via transit or by foot; there are no adjacent bike lanes and no vehicular traffic is permitted. This limits the park's accessibility and visibility. Furthermore, there are plans to construct a tot lot at the park, making the park less suitable for a work environment.

The meaning, message, size, and location of Harvey Milk Promenade Park make it an ideal location to realize the concept. The Outdoor Office is intended to be a meeting point that supports social and economic integration of our diverse city. Harvey Milk Promenade Park is situated at the epicenter of Downtown along its new Promenade and can serve as the literal and symbolic epicenter for economic integration. The Park's namesake, Harvey Milk, represents the forward thinking, innovative, and socially integrated agenda. The Outdoor Office proposes a forward thinking, innovative space, where everyone is welcome.

On April 12, 2016, the Knight Foundation publicly announced the Challenge winners and its award of \$5 million to 37 projects. This includes the Outdoor Office submitted by the City of Long Beach, and "Placemake the Vote," submitted by Long Beach-based City Fabrick.

Next Steps

In the coming weeks, the Knight Foundation plans to prepare a grant agreement, which will be shared with the City of Long Beach and brought before the City Council for

approval. This will formalize our commitment and begin the 18-month time frame for project implementation. The project begins with community engagement, which will be maintained throughout the project. For the project to be successful, many stakeholders must feel a sense of ownership of the park so that they continue to use the amenities even after the grant period ends.

It is of paramount importance that Harvey Milk Promenade Park continue to serve as a memorial for Harvey Milk and other leaders in the LGBT movement. As more users are drawn to the Outdoor Office, more people can be exposed to the life and legacy of Harvey Milk. In this way, the message of the Park is amplified. Beyond the existing memorial, it is the City's intention to incorporate the message and meaning of the Park into the added amenities in ways that are respectful, creative, and inspiring. Finally, the programming at the Park must intentionally and specifically include programming for the LGBT community and its allies.

Please let me know if you require additional information.

AS:JK/rat

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