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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LATEST COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PHASE KICKS OFF FOR NEW PARK AT PENN'S LANDING

Philadelphia residents from all neighborhoods invited to give input on the future of the highly anticipated new public park along the Waterfront



PHILADELPHIA (September 23, 2019) – On October 17th, the public is invited to join the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC), the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), and the City of Philadelphia (the City) at a public meeting and open house about the new Penn's Landing. This Interstate 95 project includes the reconstruction and expansion of a new bridge over I-95 that will support a new 12-acre riverfront civic space, the

extension of South Street Pedestrian Bridge, and the construction of a portion of the Delaware River Trail. This meeting will launch a multi-year community engagement effort and will be a chance for Philadelphians from across the city and from every background to hear the latest on the design for the new Penn's Landing, contribute ideas on how to use the new public spaces, and learn how to continue to be a part of the Waterfront's transformation.

"The new park at Penn's Landing will completely change how residents and visitors experience the Waterfront," said Joe Forkin, president of DRWC. "We've always believed that the input from the people who live in Philadelphia—who have a deep understanding of and love for the river, the parks, and the programming and events—is key to making this new park a success."

The new park at Penn's Landing will be built between Chestnut and Walnut Streets, Front Street, and the Delaware River in conjunction with the construction of a new cap over I-95 and Columbus Boulevard. With funding in place from PennDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the City, and philanthropic partners including the William Penn Foundation and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and the preliminary engineering phase complete, the project is moving into final design. The multi-million-dollar project is anticipated to begin construction in late 2021 and be complete by 2024. This investment is a key recommendation of the [Master Plan for the Central Delaware](#) which aims to increase access to the Waterfront for residents and visitors alike. Recent projects like the successful renovation of Cherry Street Pier and creation of Spruce Street Harbor Park have proven that public access to the river is vital to the community, local economy, and the city in general.

Over the course of the last decade, DRWC has worked with consultants to determine the feasibility of building a new park at Penn's Landing that could cap the highway and achieve the many design and accessibility goals that were voiced through previous community engagement efforts. With construction funding in place and design progressing, DRWC is returning to the community to discuss the specific ways in which the park could and should be used. The new Penn's Landing aspires to balance the destination with the everyday—drawing residents from across the city to a place they call their own, while also serving as an attraction for visitors.

To develop a comprehensive and strategic plan for engagement around this new space, DRWC selected a team led by PennPraxis and that includes Little Giant Creative, Southeast Asian Mutual Assistance Association Coalition (SEAMAAC), Make the World Better Foundation, and the Village of Arts & Humanities. Knight Foundation is supporting engagement efforts to ensure that Philadelphians from every neighborhood and background are part of the process, and that they see their input reflected in the park when it opens. The process includes public meetings, focus groups, online and social media, and other in-person activities that will take place both at the waterfront and at events in other parts of the city. The majority of the engagement will take place over the course of the next year as the design of the park is being finalized. DRWC will continue engagement through the remainder of design and construction to both continue gathering ideas and information from the community as well as to communicate updates about the park construction and opening.

The public meeting and open house on Thursday, October 17th from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Lodge at Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest (101 S Columbus Boulevard) will provide an opportunity to learn more. The meeting will include site tours from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., a

presentation from 6:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., and an open house from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. More information is available at www.delawareriverwaterfront.org and www.95Revive.com.

Participants may register for the event for free and sign up for site tours using this [link](#).

ABOUT DELAWARE RIVER WATERFRONT CORPORATION (DRWC)

DRWC is a 501(c)(3) created in January 2009, exclusively for the benefit of the City of Philadelphia and its citizens. The fundamental purpose of DRWC is to design, develop, program, and maintain public amenities such as permanent and seasonal parks, trails, and streetscape improvements to transform the waterfront into a vibrant destination for recreational, cultural, and commercial activities for the residents and visitors of Philadelphia as is consistent with the goals of the Master Plan for Central Delaware. Daily programming throughout the entire year is changing the way Philadelphians see and converse about the waterfront, and is helping to create spaces and communities that connect residents and visitors to the waterfront. Visit delawareriverwaterfront.com for more information.

THE DRWC CONSULTANT TEAM

- **PennPraxis**

PennPraxis is a social impact design and engagement non-profit practice within the School of Design at the University of Pennsylvania. The mission of PennPraxis is to support design action and thought leadership to advance inclusion, innovation, and impact in communities that design does not typically serve. Since its founding in 2001, PennPraxis has been working in Philadelphia to further conversations on the value of design, and increasingly how to support equity and inclusion through design, public participation, and community ownership.

- **Little Giant Creative**

Little Giant Creative (LGC) is a minority-owned, full-service creative agency that works with local and national companies and institutions to develop and execute custom brand strategies and events. LGC prides itself on applying its significant expertise to a variety of community and social justice-related programs, including Urban Share Junkets, Women Led Cities, and the Institute of Hip Hop Entrepreneurship along with other groundbreaking initiatives through its nonprofit vertical, Creative Cities Lab. These programs seek transformative change in cities by fostering community engagement, media literacy, and the expansion of economic opportunities for people of color.

- **Make the World Better Foundation**

Make the World Better Foundation (MTWB) works with communities to connect people and inspire stewardship through public space revitalization projects. They believe community-based redevelopment projects have a unique ability to strengthen neighborhoods by creating a sense of ownership over public spaces, and bringing together community members, resources, and various other stakeholders to revitalize civic spaces. They engage residents in all phases of a project, from concept through design, construction, and ultimately ongoing programming and maintenance. This participatory design process fosters local leadership that endures after construction is

finished, encouraging continued stewardship, resulting in healthier and more empowered communities.

- **SEAMAAC (Southeast Asian Mutual Assistance Association Coalition)**

SEAMAAC is a 501(C)(3) organization working mainly in South Philadelphia whose mission is "to support and serve immigrants and refugees and other politically, socially and economically-marginalized communities, as they seek to advance the condition of their lives in the United States." SEAMAAC provides a wide array of direct services and takes an active approach to building community leadership through education, organizing and advocacy. Their core work includes education, health and social services, and community development. The latter includes work primarily on public realm projects: Mifflin Square Park, Vendor Village/SoPhiE Food Truck, 7th Street Commercial Corridor, and Affordable Housing/Quality of Life. They have identified and honed unique ways of engaging with the myriad cultures that co-inhabit their service area, relying heavily on the shared appreciation of food and arts and crafts as an opportunity for sharing culture.

- **Village of Arts and Humanities**

The Village of Arts and Humanities is a national leader in arts-driven community development, with the belief that art is essential to our daily activities. It is creativity in thinking, in methodology, and in implementation. The Village's creative campus of 15 arts parks and 10 buildings is home to a suite of innovative programs that work at the intersection of art, education, social justice and community development in order to: amplify and leverage the creative power of our community residents; build bridges across race, class, age and expertise; question and replace unjust and ineffective systems; and stabilize our disinvested neighborhood. For 32 years, The Village has served as an incubator for social innovation, where concepts that emanate from community are validated and implemented. It is where community-based conceptualization and goal setting establish people's meaningful connections to place. And it is where their work rekindles the spirit of humanity, together.

ABOUT PENNDOT (Pennsylvania Department of Transportation)

PennDOT oversees programs and policies affecting highways, urban and rural public transportation, airports, railroads, ports, and waterways. More than three-quarters of PennDOT's annual budget is invested in Pennsylvania's approximately 120,000 miles of state and local highways and 32,000 state and local bridges. PennDOT is directly responsible for nearly 40,000 miles of highway and roughly 25,400 bridges, a system first established in 1911.

Roughly 7,200 of PennDOT's complement of nearly 11,375 employees are engaged in the maintenance, restoration, and expansion of the state highway system. They work in central headquarters in Harrisburg and 11 engineering districts, with facilities in all 67 counties. PennDOT also administers the state's 11.8 million vehicle registrations and 10.3 million driver's licenses and IDs, and oversees safety and emission inspection programs. To learn more, visit www.penndot.gov.

About the City of Philadelphia Office of Transportation, Infrastructure, and Sustainability (oTIS)

oTIS directs the policies and practices that improve quality of life in all of Philadelphia's communities through safe and sustainable infrastructure. Each day, oTIS moves Philadelphia toward a sustainable future that promotes quality of life for all residents and visitors to Philadelphia. The department champions a shared vision, focused on the mobility and safety of all who use Philadelphia's streets and roadways, supporting inclusion and equity across Philadelphia's diverse and vibrant communities. oTIS leads a portfolio of departments, including the Streets Department, Philadelphia Water Department, and the Office of Sustainability. To learn more, visit <https://www.phila.gov/departments/office-of-transportation-infrastructure-sustainability/>.

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