



Legislation Text

File #: RES 17-1091, **Version:** 1

Authorizing the Department of Parks and Recreation Great River Passage Initiative to submit a Grant application to the F.R. Bigelow Foundation for multi-year support in the amount of \$120,000 (year 1 \$60,000, year 2 \$40,000, year 3 \$20,000) for creating the Great River Passage Conservancy, and if approved, accept the grant, and enter into agreements with the F.R. Bigelow Foundation as are necessary to accept the funding.

WHEREAS, the Great River Passage is both the 17 miles of the Mississippi River that flows through and defines St. Paul and a City led Initiative to enhance, better connect to and steward one of the three great rivers of the world and its surrounding natural and built environments; and

WHEREAS, the goals of the GRP Initiative are:

- Create greater awareness of and access to the river for a larger, more diverse community.
- Deliver shared experiences that bring people together to enjoy the river landscape.
- Improve community health and well-being and promote a culture of care and respect for the environment.
- Stimulate economic development; and

WHEREAS, The Implementation strategy and work plan for the GRP Initiative focus on:

- Capital Projects: Transform riverfront with centers of activity that provide diverse, authentic river landscape and cultural experiences.
- Programs and Events: Offer river-oriented programming based on adventure, recreation, ecology, and storytelling that connect people to the diverse features of the river.
- Engagement: Connect, orient and engage the community around the river.
- Leadership: Create sustainable organizational structures that ensure the long-term success of the Great River Passage; and

WHEREAS, the GRP Conservancy will be an independent 501c3 non-profit that works in partnership with the City of Saint Paul and SPPR. The mission of The GRP Conservancy is to work with partners to further connect the Saint Paul community and region to its valued civic amenity, the Mississippi River; and

WHEREAS, the primary role of the GRP Conservancy will be to raise private funds to support GRP Initiative capital projects, operations and maintenance, and engagement programs. The Conservancy will also coordinate communications and marketing to generate increased awareness of the initiative and provide support to SPPR in public sector fundraising; and

WHEREAS, the concept of a GRP Conservancy has been vetted with City, and County political and staff leadership, civic and philanthropic leadership, and Saint Paul mayoral candidates, all to great support. Leadership recognized that the long -term success of the GRP Initiative hinges on private support which would be accessed by the Conservancy; and

WHEREAS, SPPR already has a previously established public/private partnership conservancy model in place with the nationally recognized Como Regional Park and Como Friends. The GRP Conservancy will be modeled on the Como Friends structure; and

WHEREAS, if awarded the grant funds will be used to:

- create the founding board,
- apply for 501c3 status for the GRP Conservancy
- hire an Executive Director and supporting functional consultants,
- launch fundraising including cultivating individuals, foundations and corporations, communications and marketing; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the City of Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation Great River Passage Initiative is hereby authorized to apply for a F.R. Bigelow Foundation Grant, and if approved, accept the grant, and enter into agreements with the F.R. Bigelow Foundation as are necessary to accept the funding.