



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** RES 22-973, **Version:** 2

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Seeking robust community process and representative engagement for Phase II of Phalen Regional Park China Garden.

WHEREAS, the City of St. Paul had entered into a development agreement with the Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society on November 30, 2017, for Phase I of the Phalen Regional Park China Garden project; and

WHEREAS, Phase I of the Project was completed earlier this year in 2022 that included the Xiang Jian Pavilion, Hmong Heritage Wall, West Entrance Gate, and the 9 Art Stones at Phalen Regional Park; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department and Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society began the community engagement process of Phase II of this project in October 2021 and has had seven meetings of the Design Advisory Committee (DAC); and and has before it a great opportunity to reconfigure, expand, and improve its development and community engagement process; and

WHEREAS, the DAC comprises of a diverse group of Saint Paul residents, both hmong and Chinese members of Asian-descent, and other individuals with a long-term commitment to the China Garden including members from the MN China Friendship Garden Society's Hmong Advisory Committee and Chinese Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, there are four major features that comprise Phase II: the Hmong Plaza, the Chinese Moon Bridge, the extension of the Xiang Jiang Pavilion garden, and a permanent donor wall; and

WHEREAS, the Hmong Plaza is the most significant and functionally most complex feature of Phase II and will require the most extensive input from the at-large Hmong community; and

WHEREAS, authentic engagement and contribution requires participation from community members and stakeholders from many backgrounds and many perspectives; and

WHEREAS, there remains a great opportunity to dissolve and reconfigure the Hmong Advisory Committee, expand the participation in the DAC, specifically in relation to the culturally significant design elements of the Hmong Plaza, and, thereby, improve the community engagement process; and

~~WHEREAS, establishing a committee of diverse local stakeholders to advise the Minnesota China Friendship Garden would build support and credibility to guide the next phases of the project; and now, be it~~

WHEREAS, dissolving and reconfiguring the Hmong Advisory Committee and expanding the Design Advisory Committee with more diverse local stakeholders would build support and credibility to guide the next phases of the project; and now, be it

~~RESOLVED, the Saint Paul City Council requests that the Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society establish a broadly diverse community advisory council to guide it through Phase II of its project and show its commitment to diversity and inclusion on its board and committee composition; and be it further~~

RESOLVED, the Saint Paul City Council requests Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department and the Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society to expand the DAC to create a more broadly diverse committee; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Saint Paul City Council requests the Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society to dissolve and reconfigure the Hmong Advisory Committee to guide it through future phases of the Phalen Regional Park China Garden project.

~~RESOLVED, the Saint Paul City Council requests that planning for Phase II of the Phalen Regional Park China Friendship Garden only resume once such a community advisory committee is named and seated~~