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Regional Partners Introduce Community & Economic Impact Report for Origin Park

Greater Louisville Inc, and One Southern Indiana partnered today to unveil the results of the HR&A-authored Community & Economic Impact study for Origin Park. Among other findings, the report projects that the construction and operation of Origin Park will create over 3,200 jobs and $264 million in economic activity. In addition, it will drive $8-$23 million in new tourism spending and improve workforce productivity by advancing the region’s health and wellness.

Origin Park is being led by River Heritage Conservancy, a non-profit public park conservancy. Since beginning its work in late 2017, the Conservancy has secured nearly 220 acres of land for the future park. Through a North American design competition, OLIN Studio was selected to be the lead designer for the park. OLIN worked with local architects and place-makers Joseph + Joseph/Bravura to shape the final park design. The plan was rolled out in mid-2020 with prominent global urban green space advocate Gil Penalosa and has been the subject of national and international coverage as the innovative design recasts the potential for urban waterfronts.

As the park plan neared completion, it became evident to the team that an evaluation of the park’s impact on the community should be conducted. HR&A Advisors, Inc was hired to complete this analysis. With offices in New York, Dallas, Los Angeles, Raleigh and Washington DC., HR&A’s team has helped communities from Brooklyn to London, and Cincinnati to Hong Kong reshape their communities through initiatives that create job-producing, economy-strengthening assets. Their analysis of the Louisville/Southern Indiana market took six months and was led by a multi-disciplinary team of urban development professionals from across the nation.

“This park plan builds on a tremendous legacy of great public spaces from around the world. By incorporating the lessons learned from those places, this park will fill a gap in the region as it competes in the global marketplace for people, investment, and economic activity. In addition, it will provide extraordinary recreational amenities and build wealth for the people of the North Shore,” said Candace Damon, Vice-Chairperson of HR&A.

“GLI’s mission is to make Greater Louisville a great place to live and work, which is why we see Origin Park as a win-win for our community and regional economy. Origin Park will beautifully complement Waterfront Park giving our residents and visitors a top-tier outdoor space. It will also boost our regional economy through job creation and new revenue.”

Scott Martin, Executive Director of River Heritage Conservancy, has been in this position before having helped create extensive public parks in Kentucky, Virginia, and Idaho. “Origin Park will occupy a powerful piece of American landscape,” said Martin. “This is our opportunity to celebrate all those who came before, rewild our urban core, and heal a forgotten and abused river system.”

“Creating a major urban park is a rare and tremendous opportunity,” stated Wendy Dant Chesser, President and CEO of One Southern Indiana. “With the industrial transformation at River Ridge, we have seen what our region can do when it activates its world-class assets. Origin Park will bring to the North Shore a resource that will be accessible and instantly memorable to all. This type of placemaking will advance our region’s reputation as the place to live, learn, work, play and stay.”
For a copy of the executive summary or the complete impact study go to Reports & Studies (originpark.org). For more information on the report, or to conduct an interview with a member of the River Heritage Conservancy team, please contact Vern Eswine, 502-552-7431.