

P I T T S B U R G H **BUSINESS**TIMES

South Shore Riverfront Park opens

Pittsburgh Business Times by Tim Schooley, Reporter
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Joe Wojcik The riverfront park opened Wednesday at SouthSide Works.

The long-awaited South Shore Riverfront Park opened Wednesday, adding another piece to the SouthSide Works development and enhancing an important link in Pittsburgh's riverfront trail system.

To celebrate the opening of the 3.4-acre park that spans from 25th to 29th streets, Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl, Riverlife and the Soffer Organization hosted a tour that showed off the project's amenities and charted what was still to come at the riverfront site.

The park was the culmination of the original plan for the redevelopment and was "a place where everyone is welcome to enjoy one of the city's greatest assets, the rivers," said James Lee Soffer, vice president for the Soffer Organization, the developer of the 34-acre SouthSide Works.

At least a year behind schedule, South Shore Riverfront Park will cost a total of \$13 million to develop, with a \$3 million final phase expected to be completed next spring that will clean up the portion of the park closest to river, extending the trail to the water's edge and adding a landing for a water taxi.

With \$10.6 million in public funds and \$2.6 million in private money invested, South Shore Riverfront Park includes a 1,000-seat amphitheater, a water fountain for dogs, and various artifacts from the site's previous history as a Jones & Laughlin Co. steel mill, along with its trails. Also planned to be added to the park is a new 300-slip marina to be operated by David Maxwell, who operates a marina in O'Hara Township.

"The full economic impact of SouthSide Works will now be realized through this park," said Ravenstahl.

Kyra Straussman, director of real estate for the city's Urban Redevelopment Authority, said the park will be maintained through a partnership of the Soffer Organization, the URA and Riverlife, the riverfront advocacy nonprofit organization, starting from a \$1 million fund. An assessment district for the SouthSide Works development is also being planned in which the project's various tenants and business owners would pay a small regular fee for park maintenance and programming.

The URA has contracted with Dan Biederman, a New York-based park consultant, to establish events at the park, added Straussman, along with pursuing promotions and sponsorships. Expect for a slow rollout of scheduled events this summer on trial basis, she added,

The opening will also be celebrated in an event on Thursday, May 3, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., called "Rhythm n' Flow. " The URA-produced event will feature live music, crafts for children and light snacks and beverages provided by Hofbrauhaus, located next to the park. Hosted by WYEP Morning Mix DJ Cindy Howes, "Rhythm n' Flow" is sponsored by the city of Pittsburgh and Riverlife.