



Public-Private Partnership to Revitalize Newark's Military Park

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Newark Municipal Council approves redevelopment of a new, improved park

NEWARK, N.J. -- October 24, 2012

The Newark Municipal Council has unanimously approved the redevelopment of Military Park in downtown Newark and chose the Military Park Partnership, a new nonprofit headed by public and private sector leaders, to lead the revitalization project.

"Today represents the culmination of years of planning and collaboration between the City and our corporate and philanthropic leaders to secure the long-term future of one of our City's most significant and storied parks. With new office towers on the way from Prudential and Panasonic, and new residents moving downtown, a revitalized Military Park will be the central community public space," said Mayor Cory A. Booker.

The Military Park Partnership was formed by the City of Newark, Prudential, and The MCJ Amelior Foundation for the explicit purpose of improving and operating a reinvigorated Military Park. The Partnership has hired urban parks expert Dan Biederman, President of Biederman Redevelopment Ventures, to launch the effort.

One of Biederman's best-known revival projects is Bryant Park, which transformed in 1992 from a crime-ridden, drug-filled, to-be-avoided location behind the New York Public Library to a seven acre jewel and quiet haven for New Yorkers in midtown Manhattan. Biederman said the same transformation can happen in Military Park, giving downtown Newark a signature public space and vibrant town square.

"I'm delighted to partner with the City of Newark on this exciting project," said Biederman. "The space is in dire need of improvements – from seating, to lighting, to flowers and trees, and a number of its elements need restoration. When the job is

completed, residents of Newark will have a wonderful, safe, secure, and revitalized town square.”

Military Park is currently underutilized and in need of significant renovations. It is across the street from the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, a cultural anchor for the entire state. The Partnership plans to fix the park’s physical problems and program the park with dozens of activities and amenities to turn the venue into a new attraction and downtown destination for those who visit downtown and live and work in Newark.

“This is the next step in the combined efforts of the City of Newark and the Military Park Partnership to re-energize one of downtown’s historic parks,” said Vaughn Crowe of The MCJ Amelior Foundation, a Military Park Partnership board member. “We hope to break ground this coming spring, and then enlist local groups to provide live music, performances, games, fitness classes, and dozens of other activities for Newarkers to enjoy.”

The new Military Park will aim to be financially self-sustaining, based on the model that Biederman pioneered at Bryant Park and successfully expanded to other public spaces, including Herald and Greeley Squares in New York and the new Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, which is opening at the end of this month.

“Urban parks greatly improve the quality of life for communities, their residents and visitors. That’s why we are proud to be a part of this partnership to revitalize Military Park, one of Newark’s oldest and most treasured public landmarks,” said Lata Reddy, Vice President, Corporate Social Responsibility at Prudential and President of The Prudential Foundation.

About the Military Park Partnership (MPP):

The Military Park Partnership is a public-private partnership between the City of Newark, Prudential, the MCJ-Amelior Foundation, and the Theater Square Development Corporation. It is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization created to carry out

physical improvements to Newark's Military Park and operate the park on behalf of the City.