

For more information, contact:

Katy Baumbach
Ohio City Incorporated
814-450-7948
kbaumbach@ohiocity.org



Jamie Dalton
Falls & Co.
216.696.0229
jdalton@fallsandco.com

Julia Ferra
NLDP/Mandel Foundation
216.776.6170
jferra@ndpccleveland.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Irishtown Bend Park Receives \$5 Million Challenge Grant
from Mandel Foundation**

*Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation Award Ensures Strong Future for 23-Acre Park
Promoting Equity and Vitality in Cleveland's Ohio City Neighborhood*

Cleveland, OH (December 6, 2022) – In an effort to help gain fundraising momentum, Community development partners LAND studio and Ohio City Incorporated announce a significant award for Cleveland's **Irishtown Bend Park**: a \$5 million challenge grant from the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation.

The grant from the prominent Cleveland-based foundation is a major step forward in raising funds to create **Irishtown Bend Park**: a 23-acre dynamic, shared public green space that connects downtown and Cleveland neighborhoods to the Cuyahoga River, Lake Erie, and beyond. The plans for **Irishtown Bend Park** prioritize equity through diversity, accessibility, and inclusion and were shaped by the resident-led *Committee of Champions*, which puts residents of neighboring Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority properties at the center of park planning. When complete, **Irishtown Bend Park** will enhance community health and connections, expand the city's green space, promote economic growth, and establish the missing link between the 101-mile Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail and Lake Erie.

“The Mandel Foundation believes in the growth and vitality of Cleveland's neighborhoods, which ultimately spurred our decision to invest in this project through a significant challenge grant,” said Jehuda Reinharz, Mandel Foundation President & CEO. “The efforts to increase leadership through the involvement of all residents bordering the location of **Irishtown Bend Park** closely aligns with the Foundation's commitment to investing in community leaders to promote inclusive communities of choice.”

The Mandel Foundation’s challenge grant means the Foundation will match—dollar for dollar—up to \$5 million total in additional donations collected now through the end of 2024 to help build **Irishtown Bend Park**. This grant will effectively double donations from foundations and corporations.

“The Mandel Foundation remains committed to community engagement and the neighborhoods of Cleveland,” said Stephen H. Hoffman, Mandel Foundation Board Chair. “The empowerment of community residents to champion and lead efforts in Park planning ensures the sustainability of the **Irishtown Bend Park** project and the long-term economic and community benefits for Cleveland’s near west side.”

The vision for **Irishtown Bend Park** is made possible through a strong public and private partnership. LAND studio, Ohio City, Inc., Cleveland Metroparks, West Creek Conservancy, the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority, Cleveland Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA), City of Cleveland, Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA), Cuyahoga County, the State of Ohio, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS), and Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless (NEOCH) are among those working together to advance **Irishtown Bend Park**.

“**Irishtown Bend Park** is nationally significant and is being watched by cities across the country. The park will be a climate-resilient landscape, designed to combat the negative impacts of climate change on people and the environment. We will plant more than 1,000 trees, improve river habitat, and create a natural space in the heart of the city for residents that for generations have been able to see the Cuyahoga River and Lake Erie but have never been able to get there,” said Greg Peckham, Executive Director of LAND studio.

Development of the Park will begin following the stabilization of the Irishtown Bend hillside, which is separately funded and is being led by the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority. Fundraising for the construction of the Park and its amenities is ongoing. Inquiries regarding donations to support the challenge grant should be directed to Deanna Palermo, LAND studio director of foundation relations, at dpalermo@LAND-studio.org.

“**Irishtown Bend Park** will fundamentally reshape how our neighborhoods interact with our waterfront. This is a space designed with the community, for the community,” said Tom McNair, Executive Director of Ohio City, Inc. “This grant is a huge step towards turning this once-in-a-generation opportunity into reality.”

###

About Irishtown Bend Park

Irishtown Bend Park represents a generational opportunity to build a world-class, 23-acre, community-designed riverfront Park on the west bank of the Cuyahoga River. Named for the Irish immigrants who settled on the hillside in 1825, the Park will bring a vast, accessible public green space to the heart of Cleveland’s Ohio City neighborhood. It will also preserve valuable riverfront land, connect residents to the region’s growing trail system and provide never-before-seen views of the Cleveland skyline. The Park is championed by a unique collaboration of community partners from the public, private and nonprofit sectors working together to spur economic development, create equitable recreational opportunities along

the Cuyahoga River and will be the missing link connecting the 101-mile Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail to Lake Erie. For more information, visit irishtownbendpark.org.

About the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation

Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel established their first foundation in 1953 in their hometown of Cleveland, Ohio. Their philanthropic legacy is continued through the **Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation** and the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Supporting Foundation. The work of the Foundations is grounded in the belief that exceptional leaders, inspired by powerful ideas, are key to improving society and the lives of people around the world. The Foundations have identified five areas of engagement that receive support, which include: leadership development, management of nonprofits, humanities, Jewish life and urban engagement. For more information, please visit mandelfoundation.org.

About Ohio City Incorporated

Ohio City Incorporated (OCI) is the community development corporation serving the Ohio City neighborhood. OCI serves this diverse community of committed people by driving new investments, preserving the history of the neighborhood, and promoting an authentic urban neighborhood. OCI is committed to making Ohio City Cleveland's most complete neighborhood, a destination for celebrating the urban experience and an ideal setting to make a home, raise a family, start a business, serve others, and live a full life. For more information, please visit: www.ohiocity.org.

About LAND studio

LAND studio, [a local non-profit organization](#), is a catalyst, convener, and collaborator. For more than thirty years, LAND studio and its predecessor organizations have managed a range of public art installations, cultural programming, and civic space development projects across the city of Cleveland, engaging the community, including residents, local leadership, and a network of nonprofit and civic partners. LAND studio expands opportunities for public art investments and seeks ways for its work to reflect Cleveland's diverse neighborhoods. LAND studio is also the creator of the ***The City is the Museum*** app.