

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

Sen. Ray Holmberg, Chair  
March 3, 2021

International Peace Garden  
Tim Chapman, CEO

Chairman Holmberg and members of the committee:

I am Tim Chapman, the Chief Executive Officer of the International Peace Garden testifying on behalf of the Garden in support of an extension of funding for capital projects underway.



Thank you for the time and attention in reviewing the progress and accomplishments of the International Peace Garden. We are grateful for the committee's support in the 2019 Session and look forward to continued support and understanding as we approach the 2021-2023 biennium. We are also grateful to the House of Representatives, Governor Burgum, North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department and Director Dr. Andrea Travnicek for their guidance.

We are excited to share that we have completed some of the smaller projects in our capital budget and are close to design completion on our larger projects, including the world-class Conservatory and events center, children's educational and experiential play area and renovations to other key public facing infrastructure and rental facilities. Thanks to the State and Provincial commitments the Garden is truly on a path to sustainability through public-private partnerships. Our projects will be enhanced through corporate and private sponsorships as we have started a capital campaign process to ensure these public investments last for many decades.

The 66<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly approved historic capital funding at the Peace Garden for the 2019-2021 biennium up to \$6,078,828 of reimbursable costs, if matched 1:1 by a non-state agency. The Province of Manitoba agreed to match the state's commitment, but due to the unexpected provincial election being called in 2019 that match was not confirmed until Spring of 2020. This delay along with uncertainty brought by the pandemic tightened the timeline to have the state funds efficiently used by June of 2021 considering the size and complexity of the scope. The Provincial funds are available through 2023.

As stated in the 2019 legislation all expenses must be matched 1:1 before submitting to the state for reimbursement. This required the Garden to hold off on spending and design initiation on our Scope of Work until the Provincial match was disbursed, which happened in the full amount of \$7,500,000 Canadian Dollars on April 24, 2020.

While we awaited the Provincial match, IPG worked with Colliers Project Leaders – our Program Manager for the Scope of Work – to develop 10-year revenue projections based on the

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deferred maintenance and enhancements. Colliers has done a remarkable job in engaging architects, engineers and contractors on both sides of the border to ensure this historic international effort is shared by Americans and Canadians alike. JLG Architects of North Dakota paired with LM Architectural Group of Manitoba to lead all design and engineering and they have also done remarkable, efficient work despite our short timeframe. Colliers has detailed these efforts, cash-flow projections and the program's progress in their attached letter.

All efforts are being made to expedite construction to meet the current biennium's deadline while also emphasizing the importance of good stewardship of the public funds. All costs relating to the State's funding can be committed to by June 30, 2021, though an extension – as approved by the House – of the capital funds to align with the Provincial deadline of 2023 would allow for better stewardship of the remaining funds. An extension would also allow the Garden to add funding support through the capital campaign, which is expected to begin this spring following a feasibility study.

Also attached are designs of the key projects within the scope. The Garden has struck a balance of addressing longstanding deferred maintenance that will lead to more revenue opportunities and increased energy and operational efficiency. Upon completion of the projects, we will be far better suited to host school groups, business and organizational conferences, banquets and marquee gatherings of state, provincial, national and international leaders. All these components are critical to a healthy non-profit that benefits from both public and private support.

Despite the pandemic, the International Peace Garden is a well-positioned outdoor and indoor attraction ready to welcome a society keener on park settings for recreation, respite and safe gatherings. The Peace Garden State and Manitoba are joined by one of the world's most unique institutions. There is no other botanical garden or park of this size, potential and legacy situated on an international border. We are excited with your support to continue advancing the Garden's call for cooperation and peace among people into the future through sustainable year-round offerings to all generations.

Thank you for your attention and all your work advocating for North Dakotans during this unprecedented time.

Tim Chapman



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