



West 8 is Ranked Highest for Middle Branch Waterfront Revitalization Project

BALTIMORE, Md. (July 26, 2019) – West 8, an internationally acclaimed landscape architecture practice based in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, is the firm ranked highest to advance the Middle Branch Waterfront revitalization project on behalf of the City of Baltimore and the residents of South Baltimore, visitors, and stakeholders.

West 8 and two other leading firms - James Corner Field Operations and Hargreaves Jones – participated in a design competition managed and developed by the Parks & People Foundation on behalf of the City of Baltimore and facilitated in coordination with community-based organizations such as the South Baltimore Gateway Partnership. The purpose of the competition was to help the City identify and rank highly-qualified teams of professionals to design and plan for the future of the Middle Branch Waterfront. Each competing team, which included local firms, has a respected portfolio of designing and delivering landscape projects of this scale.

The ranking of the three teams was made by a jury of local leaders and national experts: Geoffrey W. Washington, chair of the board of South Baltimore Gateway Partnership; Michael G. Middleton, Jr., Chair of South Baltimore 7 (SB7); Susannah Drake, Founding Principal of DLANDstudio in New York City; Kate Orff, Director of the Graduate Urban Design Program Columbia University and Founder of SCAPE, a landscape architecture and urban design firm based in New York City, and Reginald Moore, Director of the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks. The jury was facilitated by Reed Kroloff of the design selection firm Jones/Kroloff, based in Chicago, and observed by Dr. Franklin Lance, Interim President and CEO of Parks & People Foundation.

Each of the firm’s proposals were evaluated for technical merit, feasibility of the ideas, ability to integrate community feedback, originality of design vision, responsiveness to the competition’s objectives and to the site and its context, as well as the overall quality and clarity of the presentation materials.

Parks & People forwarded to Mayor Bernard C. “Jack” Young a list ranking the jury’s assessment of the three firms’ proposals and qualifications. Mayor Young accepted the ranking and directed City departments to begin analyzing issues that should be addressed in contract negotiations with West 8 in planning for a phased, multi-year design and construction project. If the City and West 8 cannot reach acceptable terms, the City will continue down the list in rank order.

“I am extremely excited to learn that the jury recommended West 8 as the landscape architecture firm to advance the Middle Branch Waterfront Plan,” said Mayor Bernard C. “Jack” Young. “We received three impressive proposals, but I agreed with the jury of community leaders and experts in the field that West 8’s vision most closely aligns with what residents want to see in their communities. I want to thank all three firms for their hard work and inspiration throughout this selection process, and also the members of the jury for lending their time, expertise and thoughtfulness as we work to create a better Baltimore for residents and visitors alike.”

About West 8

West 8 is an award-winning international office for urban design and landscape architecture, founded in 1987; with offices in Rotterdam, New York and Belgium. Over the last three decades West 8 has established itself as a leading practice with an international team of 70 architects, urban designers, landscape architects and industrial engineers. West 8's New York office was established after winning an international design competition in 2006 for the design of Governors Island Park - a 172-acre island in the New York Harbor. For more information visit <http://www.west8.com/>

About the Middle Branch Waterfront

The Middle Branch of the Patapsco will be home to Baltimore's next great recreational and natural waterfront, with water and land-based amenities sited along 11-plus miles of the shoreline, connected within a network of parks, trails, and public facilities. A transformed waterfront will generate opportunity for investment while creating a new front yard for nearby neighborhoods in South Baltimore. For more information visit www.middlebranchwaterfront.com