

## RESOLUTION 2024-04-09

**A RESOLUTION OF THE DOWNTOWN INVESTMENT AUTHORITY (“DIA”) AUTHORIZING THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION BY THE SOUTHSIDE CRA OF A STANDALONE RESTAURANT IN ST. JOHNS RIVER PARK ADJACENT TO FRIENDSHIP FOUNTAIN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS IDENTIFIED ON EXHIBIT A; INSTRUCTING ITS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (“CEO”) TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY ACTION TO EFFECTUATE THE PURPOSES OF THIS RESOLUTION; FINDING THAT THIS RESOLUTION FURTHERS THE BUSINESS INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (“BID”) PLAN, INCLUDING THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA (“CRA”) PLAN; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, DIA is the designated Community Redevelopment Agency for the Southbank CRA, for which a BID Plan, inclusive of a Community Redevelopment Plan, was adopted by Ordinance 2014-560-E as updated by Ordinance 2022-372-E; and

**WHEREAS**, the adopted BID plan is the single comprehensive plan for Downtown as required by Chapter 55, including the plan for Downtown parks; and

**WHEREAS**, the CRA Plan for Southbank expressly identifies *Landmark Public Park System on the St. Johns River* and the *Complete Renovation of St. Johns River Park and Friendship Fountain* as projects to be completed on the Southbank; and

**WHEREAS**, The St. Johns River Park project expressly mentions the “addition of a restaurant with outdoor seating” as an amenity that will benefit park visitors and boaters; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to a prior Redevelopment Agreement with RD River City Brewery, LLC dated June 29, 2021, it was contemplated that such restaurant would be developed on private property adjacent to the park however such agreement was terminated on January 11, 2023, due to Developer’s failure to proceed; and

**WHEREAS**, Halff and Associates was engaged by Acon Construction Company, the project general contractor, to design the park and amenities, and identified a site within the park on which they recommended construction of a small standalone restaurant that would be complementary to the concession stand and planned park amenities; and

**WHEREAS**, the 6,500 plus or minus square feet portion of the park located closest to Museum Circle and depicted on Exhibit B, has been envisioned as the future location for a standalone restaurant (“Park restaurant site”); and

**WHEREAS**, recent studies by the Jessie Ball duPont Fund (done in conjunction with national consultants and local non-profit stakeholders), Perkins & Will, Agency, Olin and GAI as well as community engagement meetings conducted by the City of Jacksonville and the DIA regarding riverfront parks have all identified the public’s desire for food and beverage options on the riverfront, in many cases ranking among the most desired amenities, and

**WHEREAS**, the approved CIP projects for St. Johns River park include a concession stand but did not contemplate inclusion of a restaurant as one of the park amenities; and

**WHEREAS**, the DIA may use CRA funds *to add to the scope* of an approved CIP project but may not contribute to the completion of the existing scope; and

**WHEREAS**, it is expressly contemplated in the CRA Plan that CRA funds could be used for *one or more new riverfront park spaces or elements*; and

**WHEREAS**, at the direction of the Board, DIA procured the services of a professional market study and hospitality consultant to advise on the feasibility, timing, and type of restaurant that should be considered for this and other waterfront park sites; and

**WHEREAS**, the hospitality consultant, Streetsense, determined that St. Johns River Park site offers a *prime opportunity* to capitalize on the riverfront and recently renovated Friendship Fountain; and

**WHEREAS**, Streetsense determined that the optimal time to open the food and beverage location would be when park construction is complete in 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, Streetsense determined that the concession stand and a possible future restaurant on the adjacent parcel were complementary to the currently proposed restaurant and would contribute positively to the park's overall appeal and success; and

**WHEREAS**, the DIA finds that this resolution and the funding of design and construction of a small, boutique restaurant within St. Johns River Park, a City public park, furthers the following BID Plan Redevelopment Goals and Strategic Objectives:

**Redevelopment Goal 3:** Increase and diversify the number and type of retail, food and beverage, and entertainment establishments within Downtown; and

Strategic Objective: Encourage growth of outdoor dining and entertainment options, most specifically within designated food and beverage districts and on the waterfront.

**Redevelopment Goal 4:** Increase the vibrancy of Downtown for residents and visitors through arts, culture, history, sports, theater, events, parks, and attractions; and

Strategic Objective: Increase number of daily visits to Downtown; and

**WHEREAS**, the design of any future restaurant or facility in the park should be guided by the *Riverfront Design Guidelines and Activity Nodes Plan* for Downtown Jacksonville that was completed in 2019 by SWA Group in conjunction with Haskell Company and incorporated in the BID Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the theme of this destination park as adopted in the SWA Plan and the BID Plan is "Exploring the St. Johns River" and the park amenities have been designed to depict that theme and include a John Ribault themed playground, Bartram's native gardens, Timucuan themed concession stand and other activation influenced by the essential role of the St. Johns River in shaping Jacksonville's past, present and future; and

**WHEREAS**, St. Johns River Park is now under construction and its completion is expected in 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, based on the CRA plan, the public's desire for food and beverage establishments on the riverfront, the recommendations of Streetsense and the timing of park construction, DIA staff recommends that the Board proceed with design and development of a standalone restaurant on the Park Restaurant Site.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Downtown Investment Authority:

**Section 1.** The DIA finds that the recitals set forth above are true and correct and are incorporated herein by this reference.


**Section 2.** The DIA approves the design and construction of a standalone restaurant on the Park Restaurant Site in St. Johns River Park in accordance with the terms set forth in attached Exhibit A.

**Section 3.** The DIA instructs the Chief Executive Officer of the Downtown Investment Authority to take all necessary action necessary to effectuate the purposes of this Resolution.

**Section 4.** This Resolution shall become effective on the date it is signed by the Chair of the DIA Board.

WITNESS:

**DOWNTOWN INVESTMENT AUTHORITY**

  
\_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_ James P. Citraro, Chair

Date 4/17/24

VOTE: In Favor: 6 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

**Exhibit A to Resolution 2024-04-09  
St. Johns River Park Restaurant Site**

Property:	A 7.82 plus or minus acre parcel of land commonly referred to St. Johns River Park and Friendship Park and depicted below in Figure 1.
Location of Park Restaurant Site:	An approximately 6,500 plus or minus square foot section located on the Property Southwest of the Friendship Fountain and on which a restaurant would be located as depicted in Figure 2.
General Size	The restaurant will have approximately 1,800, and no more than 2,400, square feet of indoor, conditioned space with the remainder of the parcel used for outdoor seating, some of which may be covered. The restaurant is envisioned to provide more outdoor seating than indoor to maximize the views of the park, river, and city.
Design Theme	<p>The design of the restaurant should be guided by the <i>Riverfront Design Guidelines and Activity Nodes Plan</i> for Downtown Jacksonville that was completed in 2019 by SWA Group in conjunction with Haskell Company and incorporated in the BID Plan.</p> <p>St. Johns River Park is the Primary Node for the Southbank and is themed with the Exploration of the St. Johns River. The restaurant building will integrate with the design of the park and take influences from the surrounding park amenities, like the Ribault themed playground, the Timucuan themed concession stand and the Bartram’s native gardens.</p>
Potential Retail Option	<p>The market study provided by hospitality consultant Streetsense suggested a weekday gourmet retail operation that would accommodate some weekday activity with retail items and a light food and wine menu that could grow as the area evolves.</p> <p>The retail section, if included, would be in the Southern portion of the building facing the park’s entrance and anticipated to be approximately 25% or less of the total indoor area.</p>
Suggested type of establishment:	Consultation from Streetsense, a global creative collective that specializes in hospitality consulting, suggests a gourmet market, wine bar and tapas restaurant would be a desired operation for this Southbank location. A venue that could grow in service periods as needed, it could open as a gourmet shop and wine bar with very light food offerings on weekdays, a full service, tapas style menu in the evenings and a riverfront brunch on the weekends. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the DIA and COJ Parks will review the demographic data regarding those visiting the fountain as well as the expected demographics of park visitors once the playground is completed, prior to making any final decision on the establishment type, and prior to marketing to prospective tenants to ensure the type of service complements park users.
Design and Construction Costs	Figures provided by Streetsense, aligning with results of recent similar projects, estimate a buildout cost of \$195-\$255 per square foot for site work

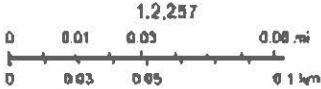
	and the base building and an additional \$175-\$225 per square foot for tenant improvements. Assuming a maximum size of 2,400 square feet at the maximum cost of \$480 per square foot, the total cost, not counting FF&E provided by tenant, would be \$1,152,000. With average architectural and design fees being 7-15% of total cost, the estimated design cost is approximately \$170,000. Soft costs, construction overhead and contractor profit bring the total to approximately \$1,700,000.
Owner/Landlord	As a City Park facility, upon completion, the COJ Parks Recreation and Community Services (PRCS) Department would be the Using Agency assigned City responsibility for operation and leasing management.
Development Timeline	Suggested by Streetsense, the goal is to open the restaurant as close to the opening of the park as possible. Depending on the negotiations with potential tenants, the design and construction phase could take a minimum of one year to a maximum of two years. The design team will be selected from RFP respondents in April 2024 and could begin design immediately. DIA will assist PRCS in the pursuit of engaging an operator shortly thereafter to allow for more operator input to design.
Potential Operator Lease Terms:	Like other current public-private partnerships such as Palms Fish Camp, owning the land and building allows more operational direction and ensures better maintenance of the building and grounds. Built as an amenity to the park, ensuring operating hours during busy park periods will be strongly encouraged, if not required. In exchange, the chosen operator will receive reasonable lease terms on a riverfront parcel adjacent to the newly renovated Friendship Fountain.
Compatibility note:	Streetsense views neither the concession building nor any future restaurant on the adjacent private property as competitors. Instead, these are regarded as complementary enhancements that will contribute positively to the park's overall appeal and success.
Community outreach and input:	The architectural design team will conduct a community workshop to receive input from the public prior to developing the design concepts that will ultimately be presented to the Board for decision.
Verification of costs:	Upon approval of the design, the DIA and architectural design team will bid out the construction and present the final construction cost to the Board for approval.
Re-investment of rental receipts	All revenue from the rental payments received by Parks, Recreation and Community Services, shall be re-invested into the building, maintenance and/or programming of St. Johns River Park or other capital improvements to St. Johns River Park.
MOU, Leasing, Marketing and Building Management	The DIA and City of Jacksonville Department of Parks Recreation and Community Services ("Parks") will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") regarding the use of rental receipts described above. In addition, in recognition of the commercial leasing expertise of DIA, the MOU will direct Parks to utilize the services of DIA to assist with marketing, leasing and management of the restaurant building throughout its useful life,

Figure 1.

### Duval Map



March 28, 2024



East County Place Community, City of Jacksonville FDEP ©  
OpenStreetMap Members, Edit, Weather, Google, SkyGraph  
Geographic Information Systems, Inc. METRODATA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau  
USDA, US DOT



Figure 2.

