



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Community Foundation to Build First Universally-Accessible Playground in the Region

Lansing, MI - The Capital Region Community Foundation is building the first universally-accessible playground in the region, designed to promote inclusivity and the health and well-being of ALL children. And because the playground will be fully accessible, parents and grandparents who have physical limitations will be able to enjoy playing with their children and grandchildren. **This extraordinary \$1.5 million+ playground-park on the downtown Lansing riverfront will be a destination for families throughout our region and beyond.**

This project is important because families in our community who have children with special needs have to travel over an hour to find a universally-accessible playground, such as those in Grand Rapids and Commerce Township. **The Community Foundation's designers have far exceeded ADA requirements in order to create a completely barrier-free environment where all children and adults, regardless of ability, can play side-by-side throughout the entire park.** Children with sensory disabilities (such as visual impairments) or developmental disabilities (such as autism or Down syndrome) will have lots to explore as well. The playground-park will **maximize inclusivity and normalize differences**, while promoting the healthy development of all children for generations to come.

"Can you imagine being a child with a disability and having to watch from the sidelines as other kids play?" said Laurie Baumer, executive vice president of the Community Foundation. "While some playgrounds in our region include accessible equipment, this playground is different. Universally-accessible means every piece of equipment is accessible to all. Even the riverbank features are accessible."

Leadership and partners

The project is led by the Community Foundation, in partnership with the City of Lansing.

CASE Credit Union, through its CASE Cares program, is a major financial partner with the Foundation. Wieland is the construction manager. Viridis is the park's architect and Sinclair Recreation is designing the playground portion of the park.

"The brand-new universally-accessible playground at Adado Riverfront Park will be a fantastic addition to the City of Lansing's Parks system. Lansing is a diverse and welcoming city and it's

vital that we offer options for children of all abilities to enjoy. I appreciate the effort and support from the Community Foundation, who continues to help create vibrancy and move Lansing forward,” said Mayor Schor.

About the playground-park

This unique park will be located on the Grand River in downtown Lansing, highly visible near the southwest corner of Saginaw Street and Grand Avenue. The 66,000-square-foot park will include a custom, state-of-the-art, all-access playground that is 9000 square feet and is being carefully **designed in collaboration with Disability Network and the Mid-Michigan Autism Association**. Approximately 50 families who have children with disabilities have been surveyed for input on the design. The park will also include a picnic deck, pavilion, dedicated barrier-free parking, and **universal access to the river’s edge with a boardwalk and large platform** designed for all children and adults to be up close to the river for viewing, picnicking and fishing.

Timeline and status

Preliminary site plans and an estimated budget have been developed. Final design and amenities are dependent on funds raised for the project. Environmental studies on the site have begun, with permitting, construction documents and bidding to follow this summer. Site work is targeted this fall and construction will be completed in 2022.

Fundraising and sponsorships

The total raised to date is approximately \$700,000 toward the \$1.5 million goal, including matching funds from the Community Foundation. **The Community Foundation will match all private funds raised, dollar for dollar**. Sponsorships are available for playground equipment, the pavilion, riverside deck, and playground naming rights. Multi-year pledges are accepted. Sponsorships include permanent, artistic signage. The Foundation reserves the right to adjust sponsorships and costs as the project evolves.

For more information, contact Laurie Baumer, Executive Vice President of the Community Foundation, at (517) 281-9054 or LBaumer@ourcommunity.org.

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The Community Foundation is passionate about creating vibrant, thriving communities throughout Michigan’s capital region. The Foundation serves donors to meet their unique charitable goals, supports area nonprofits with grants and coaching, and leads innovative projects that drive community growth. The Community Foundation (also known as the Capital Region Community Foundation) is a tax-exempt public charity whose mission is to lead philanthropic solutions that build vibrant communities in Ingham, Clinton and Eaton counties.