

May 8, 2008

Statement
by Walter Metcalfe, Dr. Peter Raven, and Dr. Robert Archibald
Concerning the St. Louis Riverfront
and the Grounds of the Gateway Arch

Last summer, St. Louis Mayor Francis Slay asked us to offer our counsel about how St. Louis can transform its Riverfront into a world-class destination for the people of our region and visitors. We were guided by these principles:

- Preserve and protect the Gateway Arch as one of the world's greatest monuments;
- View the Riverfront, the Arch grounds and what are currently the depressed lanes of Interstate-70 as one integrated project area;
- Maximize the use and impact of St. Louis' two greatest physical assets, -- the Gateway Arch and the Mississippi River -- for the long-term benefit and enjoyment of area residents and tourists;
- Ensure that the future of the project area is guided by individuals with a long-term vision for St. Louis and accountability to the public.

As part of our work, we, along with the Danforth Foundation, have been in communication with the National Park Service about the Foundation's report of last August.

We are gratified that the National Park Service is initiating this public planning process.

Over the last eight months, we also have worked with professionals and other parties to determine what is needed to fulfill the vision of a world-class riverfront for St. Louis. These are our broad conclusions:

- The Riverfront, Arch grounds and Memorial Drive ultimately must be planned and considered as one project area, notwithstanding separate ownership. Unless they are thought of as one, the vital historical and current relationships among the river, the park and downtown St. Louis, might not be captured. Unless they are planned and carried out as one, the project will suffer from fragmentation of design and administration and inconsistent standards of quality and execution.
- Not only should the experience of visiting the Arch and riverfront be richer and more enjoyable – the improvement should be measurable. The number of visitors must increase and the length of their visits extended. .
- Toward that end, a major new destination attraction to complement the Arch, such as a museum or other cultural facility, is absolutely essential. The design quality of this facility should be worthy of its proximity to the architecturally magnificent Arch. The subject and content of the facility should be national in scope and be consistent with the westward expansion theme of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial.
- Visitors must have access to seasonal activities on the riverfront, such as food and beverage kiosks, benches to sit on and enjoy the river, and other recreational and learning resources. Year-round attractions, such as restaurants, are needed on the Arch grounds.

- To make the connector between the Arch grounds and downtown appropriate in scale and impact to the Arch, it must link all three blocks of I-70 and Memorial Drive between Pine and Walnut Streets.
- A regional not-for-profit trust should be organized to raise funds for, operate and maintain the new destination attraction. One model is the Presidio Trust, which manages one portion of the grounds in San Francisco's The Presidio while the National Park Service manages the balance. Another model is the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia's Independence National Historical Park. A third is the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial itself, where Metro (formerly the Bi-State Development Agency) built and now maintains and operates the Gateway Arch Parking Facility and Gateway Arch Tram.
- An international design competition, similar to the one that led to the selection of Eero Saarinen's design of the Arch, should be conducted for both the major destination attraction and the entire area.
- The project should be completed by October 28, 2015 – the 50th anniversary of the completion of the Arch, and celebrated in 2016, the centennial of the National Park Service. To accomplish that, a strict timetable is necessary.

We have shared these conclusions with the Danforth Foundation and with Mayor Slay. We will share our views formally and in greater detail with the NPS by participating in the hearings the NPS holds here in connection with its General Management Plan.

Walter Metcalfe is senior counsel and former chairman of the Bryan Cave law firm. Dr. Raven is director of the Missouri Botanical Garden. Dr. Archibald is president and CEO of the Missouri Historical Society. Mr. Metcalfe will be available to discuss their conclusions with members of the media today from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. He will be joined by Sen. Danforth. To schedule an interview, please call Paul Wagman at 314-606-1283.