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HRP GROUP RELEASES COMMUNITY-LED TEN-YEAR PLAN FOR THE BELLWETHER DISTRICT

Community Benefits Commitment was developed over 18 months by a delegation representing more than 20 community-based organizations in South and Southwest Philadelphia to uphold the priorities of neighboring residents and businesses

PHILADELPHIA - October 21, 2024 - Today, HRP Group, developer of [The Bellwether District](#), released its Community Benefits Commitment, a community-led plan to strengthen the company's commitment to sustainability, job creation, and community investment over the next decade of the site's development. The commitment was developed through over a year and a half of facilitated meetings with the project's Community Advisory Panel (CAP), as well as a parallel process to capture the voices of other community stakeholders. The commitment has the support and participation of 16 CAP organizations representing more than 20 diverse coalitions within South and Southwest Philadelphia, uplifting resident voices and centering shared community priorities.

“Since commencing our redevelopment work in 2020, we have been focused on fostering a transparent dialogue with the South and Southwest Philadelphia community, including engaging organizations that represent the diverse neighborhoods surrounding The Bellwether District through our Community Advisory Panel,” said **Roberto E. Perez, CEO of HRP**. “We are so pleased to share this community benefits commitment, which doubles down on our three pillars of community, environmental, and economic sustainability, and we are grateful to the organizations that are joining us in building a more sustainable future for South and Southwest Philly.”

CAP member organizations represent residents of South and Southwest Philadelphia in various sectors, including community development, public safety, transportation, education, faith, and the environment. Collectively, these organizations support the priorities and serve the needs of area residents, many of whom experienced the negative impacts of the site's former use.

The programs and initiatives included in the commitment are projected to exceed \$10 million in value and are built on the foundation of five overarching priorities including:

- **Community First.** Creates The Bellwether District Community Investment Fund to support community needs, steered by community partner organizations;
- **Transparency.** Commits to public-facing, quarterly reporting on current development, workforce, and community investment activities;
- **Inviting Spaces.** Invests in onsite and offsite infrastructure improvements ensuring both safety and accessibility;

- **Environmental Stewardship.** Invests in onsite and offsite infrastructure aimed at reducing the development's carbon footprint and increasing green and open spaces; and
- **An Equitable Economy.** Invests in workforce development and diversification initiatives to prepare residents for the jobs of the future.

The commitment reinforces The Bellwether District's focus on sustainable development practices, which includes:

- Removal of the former refinery infrastructure resulting in an overall 16% reduction in carbon emissions citywide to date.
- The removal of 18.5 million gallons of petroleum product, 260,000 gallons of light non-aqueous phase liquids, 344 aboveground storage tanks, and 137,000 feet of pipeline; and
- The reuse or recycling of 280,000 tons of material.

The commitment also upholds initiatives to support workforce development and a more inclusive economy:

- As part of a \$2 million investment, The Bellwether District will continue its Career-Connected Learning program – which has engaged more than 1,500 School District of Philadelphia students and employed over 120 high school and middle school aged interns to date – and has committed to a 10-year scholarship commitment to Community College of Philadelphia for area students.
- The project will also prioritize local job creation and an inclusive, equitable distribution of contracts among minority and women-owned businesses.

Participating CAP member organizations are: ACANA; Bartram's Garden; Eastwick Friends and Neighbors Coalition; Eastwick United Methodist Church; Empowered CDC; Friends of Penrose; Grays Ferry Community Council; Packer Park Civic Association; Point Breeze CDC; Resident Action Committee II; Southwest CDC; South Philadelphia Business Association; Universal Audenried Charter High School; United South Southwest Coalition; West Passyunk Neighborhood Association; and Wilson Park Resident Council.

You can read the Community Benefits Commitment [here](#).