

From the Executive Director of Parks requesting authorization to make a capital funding commitment to the restoration of the Mitchell Park Domes contingent upon further approvals of a Lease Agreement, Development Agreement, and other necessary agreements between Milwaukee County and the Milwaukee Domes Alliance, by recommending adoption of the following:

AN ENGROSSED RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Mitchell Park, located at 524 West Layton Boulevard, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53215, was established as a Milwaukee County (the County) park in 1890, and in 1967, a horticultural conservatory consisting of three beehive-shaped, conoidal glass domes opened to the public, replacing a prior greenhouse structure constructed in 1898, which conservatory as subsequently expanded, is known as the Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory, or the Domes (the Domes); and

WHEREAS, the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Culture has operated and managed the Domes as a living plant museum since its 1967 opening, including caring for the over 1,800 plant species housed in the Domes; and

WHEREAS, the Milwaukee Domes Alliance (MDA), formerly known as Friends of the Domes, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, privately-funded organization established in 1989, whose mission is to provide inspirational experiences at the Domes that restore connections to nature and community, and MDA has provided financial and programmatic support to the Domes since its inception, and operates at the Domes, pursuant to the Agreement between MDA and the County dated December 13, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the Domes have experienced structural deterioration, which has threatened the County's ability to safely operate the Domes, and the County is unable to fully cover the cost to repair and reconstruct the Domes to ensure their continued operation into the future; and

WHEREAS, MDA has worked closely with the County to create a plan for the historic restoration and rehabilitation of the Domes and surrounding facilities, to be implemented and carried out by MDA (the Domes Reimagined Plan), as more fully described in File No. 24-723; and

WHEREAS, on November 7, 2024, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors approved 2025 Budget Amendment 06, codifying a \$30,000,000 commitment (the County Capital Contribution) to be paid over six years to MDA in support of the Domes Reimagined Plan, and authorized the County to negotiate a long-term Lease Agreement (the Lease Agreement) with MDA, which would transfer operational control of the Domes to MDA; and

WHEREAS, the County and MDA have diligently negotiated the Lease Agreement and Development Agreement to govern the transfer of the Domes to MDA, outline considerations for the County Capital Contribution, and all other aspects of the Domes Reimagined Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Committee on Finance, at its meeting of July 17, 2025, recommended adoption of File No. 25-458 as amended (vote 6-1); now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, subject to annual appropriation, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors (County Board) authorizes the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Culture (DPRC), in coordination with the Office of Strategy, Budget, and Performance (OSBP), to include the Milwaukee County (the County) contribution in future County capital budgets as installments, with the total contribution not-to-exceed \$30,000,000 (the County Capital Contribution), in support of the rehabilitation and improvement of the Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory (the Domes); and

BE IT **FURTHER** RESOLVED, that the approval and release of the County Capital Contribution is contingent upon approvals by the County Board of **both the a** Lease Agreement and Development Agreement between the County and the Milwaukee Domes Alliance, **and further contingent upon compliance with the terms and conditions set forth in those agreements;** and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that it is the policy preference of the County Board to include a provision in the final agreements stating that, should the Milwaukee Domes Alliance (MDA) be unable or unwilling to continue operating under the terms of the Lease and Development Agreements, the facility and all related rights shall revert to the County, and that no transfer of the lease to another entity shall occur without the approval of the County Board; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County Board authorizes DPRC, the Department of Administrative Services, the Office of the Comptroller, OSBP, and the Office of Corporation Counsel to execute any contracts and/or documents necessary to complete the project, in support of the intent of this resolution.

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