



NEWS RELEASE | February 5, 2019

Minneapolis Parks Foundation Hires Paul Bauknight as first Project Implementation Director

Minneapolis, Minn. – The [Minneapolis Parks Foundation](#) today announced that **Paul Bauknight** has joined the organization as Project Implementation Director, a new position. The Minneapolis Parks Foundation is an independent donor-supported non-profit that helps envision and deliver transformative parks and public spaces by working closely with public partners and in collaboration with the community. As the primary philanthropic partner to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, the Parks Foundation is nearing completion of the [RiverFirst](#) Capital Campaign, which will bring \$18 million in private sector support for two transformative Mississippi Riverfront projects – [Water Works](#) and the [Great Northern Greenway River Link](#).

As Project Implementation Director, Bauknight will provide strategic implementation expertise to philanthropic pursuits, including and beyond RiverFirst. Bauknight will also be responsible for stewarding processes and partnerships needed to deliver projects throughout the Minneapolis Park System that are supported by the Parks Foundation, bridging community engagement through design to completion. He will serve as the primary liaison between key partners in the public and private sector and will coordinate with community stakeholders.

“We are delighted that Paul is joining the staff of the Minneapolis Parks Foundation in this important new role,” says Tom Evers, Parks Foundation Executive Director. “His expertise as an accomplished architect and community developer, coupled with his extensive experience working in and with a diverse tapestry of cultures and backgrounds throughout the Twin Cities, and especially North Minneapolis, means that the Parks Foundation will continue its efforts to meaningfully connect all communities in Minneapolis to the benefits of our parks and the natural world.”

In 1991, Bauknight founded The Urban Design Lab, the largest African-American owned design firm in Minnesota. Through his work as the President/CEO of The Urban Design Lab, Bauknight developed the concept that was the catalyst for current Penn-Plymouth location of NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center. He also designed the Minneapolis Urban League building, at the same intersection, as well as Lucey Laney School, Seed Academy, and Summit Academy OIC, among many other projects.

Bauknight is the founder of Community Renewal Through Innovative Building (the CRIB), a non-profit educating and engaging young people to renew, transform, and create healthy sustainable communities of color by working at the intersection of the built environment and social change. He has also twice served as Interim Project Director of the African American Men Project. Prior to joining the Parks Foundation, Bauknight was the Director of Urban Placemaking for North Minneapolis-based [Urban Homeworks](#), where he managed the core operating programs including Real Estate Development, Construction, Property Management, and Equity and Engagement. He is a graduate of Virginia Polytechnic University.

- more -

“Throughout my career, I’ve been passionately committed to working at the intersection of physical, social/cultural, and economic systems to create solutions that are steeped in place, sustainable, and benefit the community,” says Bauknight. “As the Project Implementation Director, I look forward to applying that same commitment to the transformative work the Parks Foundation both envisions and already has underway.”

About the Minneapolis Parks Foundation

The Minneapolis Parks Foundation transforms human lives through parks and public spaces by aligning philanthropic investment and community vision. Since 2003, the Parks Foundation has raised more than \$20 million for transformative parks projects in Minneapolis. Currently, the Parks Foundation co-leads the RiverFirst Initiative with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and is responsible for private fundraising and implementation of the Water Works and Great Northern Greenway River Link projects. The Parks Foundation also supports innovative Minneapolis parks projects, including Little Free Libraries® at all recreation centers, through equity funding, and champions world-class design through its Next Generation of Parks™ Event Series. Learn more at MplsParksFoundation.org.

###