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Jimi Hendrix Park ‘Little Wing’ Phase 1 opens Oct. 7

If landscapes were lyrical, the layout of the newly opened Jimi Hendrix Park in Seattle might be reminiscent of a scene created by one of the iconic musician’s songs. Gently curving walkways, comfortable benches, sculpted green lawns and a central plaza create a welcoming atmosphere for visitors to Jimi Hendrix Park.

Situated on 2.5-acres in Seattle’s Central District, the area landmark honors the hometown music great for his artistic contributions not just to the Pacific Northwest, but on the world stage. With Phase 1 now completed, the park will be opened to the public on Oct. 7, 2016. Phase 2 is still in the works with an expected unveiling in 2017. This initial phase, named “Little Wing,” marks the much anticipated introduction of a project six years in the making. The construction fencing will be removed during the day on Friday, Oct. 7. The public is invited to join members of the Jimi Hendrix Park Committee between 2 and 4 p.m. for “Little Wing Ramble: A Walk Through Jimi Hendrix Park.”

The Friends of Jimi Hendrix Park Committee, Jimi Hendrix Park Foundation and Seattle Parks and Recreation collaborated to bring this dream to life, celebrating Jimi Hendrix. It is a long-awaited dream come true for the family of Jimi Hendrix and all those who love his artistry, said Janie Hendrix, founder and director of the Jimi Hendrix Park Foundation.

“This beautiful park will provide a welcoming and inspiring community gathering space as well as a place for fans of Jimi’s music to celebrate his indelible contributions to the music world,” said Hendrix, the sister of the legendary guitarist, who has been involved since the planning stages. “Seeing the work in living color, now tangible and not just on paper or a drafting board, is like hearing Jimi’s music for the first time. It’s overwhelming.”

Located at 2400 S. Massachusetts St., adjacent to the former Colman School that now houses the Northwest African American Museum, the new park fits in beautifully with the cultural essence of the area. The park features a grand entrance and stairway adorned with Jimi's signature at the corner of Massachusetts and 25th Avenue South, lending convenient access. A walkway toward the central plaza incorporates a timeline of Jimi's life and career embedded in the pavement, making it historical and educational. In keeping with the musical emphasis, lyrics from the iconic Hendrix songs "Angel" and "Little Wing" are etched into a purple ribbon along the timeline. But the creativity doesn't end there. New plantings of trees and flowers decorate the terrain, as well as four rain gardens with native plants and a butterfly garden with flowering shrubs to improve environmental sustainability.

For added convenience, an additional access point recently was added with the construction of a paved walkway from 23rd Avenue South, with funding provided by the Seattle Neighborhood Park and Street Fund.

The park design by Murase Associates of Seattle was inspired by the music and art of Jimi Hendrix and also involved public participation from the neighborhood. Contractor EERG of California led the construction process during the past year. Funding of \$1.5 million was raised through countless individuals, grants and donations from sources including the Seattle Parks and Green Spaces Levy Opportunity Fund and the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Neighborhood Matching Fund. Major donors include:

- Hard Rock International
- KISW Radio
- Experience Hendrix LLC
- Authentic Hendrix LLC
- King Conservation District
- Northwest African American Museum
- Seattle Parks Foundation
- Fender Musical Instruments Company
- Monterey International Pop Festival
- Nisqually Indian Tribe Charitable Fund

Phase 2 of the park will include installation of a colorful central shelter to serve as an amphitheater for live performances and multi-use. The shelter's canopy is funded by 4Culture and a King County Council Building for Culture Grant. An additional \$329,000 must be raised in order to create the iconic "wave wall" displaying silhouette images of Jimi Hendrix on the north ridge of the park. Both components will complete the second phase. Following the installation of the central shelter, a grand opening celebration is planned for the summer of 2017.

To learn more about the project and to make a contribution to the construction of Phase 2, please visit the Jimi Hendrix Park Foundation website, www.jimihendrixparkfoundation.org.