



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## AMENDED OVERTON PARK PARKING PLAN HAS CONSENSUS OF SUPPORT FROM ZOO, OPC

**July 18, 2016** – District 1 City Councilman Bill Morrison announced today an amended version of Mayor Jim Strickland's Overton Park parking plan that further amplifies the reconfiguration of the Memphis Zoo's existing lot and permanently ends Greensward parking.

The amended plan has the support of the Memphis Zoo and the Overton Park Conservancy, giving it a consensus of support in advance of its consideration at Tuesday's Memphis City Council meeting.

The amended plan provides a minimum of 415 new spaces in the Zoo's existing lots, a permanent separation of parking from the Greensward via a berm, the formalizing of 200 spaces on North Parkway, converting the current General Services area to recreational and green space with additional park parking, and installing parking technology to make maximum use of surface parking.

"We live in wonderful city with incredible people and world-class amenities and I am excited that all parties came together to find a solution," Councilman Morrison said. "I hope we as a city can take this spirit of working together and use it to find solutions to more issues facing our great city. I know working together to solve issues will only make our city greater."

"I am glad that the process that began with mediation in January has led us to this consensus among all of our important Overton Park partners," Mayor Strickland said. "I support this amended version of my July 1 plan."

### Quotes from principals in the issue:

**Memphis Zoo President & CEO Dr. Chuck Brady:** "Today, the Memphis Zoo and representatives from the City of Memphis agreed to a compromise regarding parking at the Memphis Zoo. This compromise, which gives the Memphis Zoo 415 standard-width parking spaces in and adjacent to the Zoo's main parking lots, will help alleviate the Zoo's parking concerns. While this is less than our current allocation for overflow parking days, we are committed to making this compromise work so we can continue providing the world-class experience our visitors have come to know and expect."

**FedEx executive and Zoo board member Richard Smith:** "This plan as amended alleviates the reasonable concerns of City Council and Zoo board members regarding convenience and safety for visitors. It creates almost 1,000 incremental spaces in and around the park, with a minimum of 415 being added as 'front door parking' within the Zoo's own lot. Combined with a second backside entrance to the



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Zoo and new technologies to improve logistical efficiency and user experience, it is a viable alternative to continued grass parking. The new berm's incursion into the Greensward is minimal; and with the General Services area being converted to park parking and predominantly recreational space, it provides a substantial net increase of urban green space for Overton Park. I therefore believe it is a win-win for the City of Memphis, and once fully implemented should put an end to this controversy once and for all.”

**Overton Park Conservancy Executive Director Tina Sullivan:** “Overton Park Conservancy's approach from the beginning has been to work collaboratively on solutions that benefit both the park and the Zoo. Many elements of this plan were outlined in the Transportation and Parking Report prepared earlier this year by a team of parking and traffic planning experts, who conducted extensive public outreach. We are very pleased to have achieved the consensus we were seeking with our partners. We're grateful to Mayor Strickland and the City Council for their careful deliberation of the future of these important public assets, which will continue to thrive for generations to come.”

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