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For Immediate Release

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**Eagle Creek Park Foundation has received a \$2.6 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. through its Strengthening Indianapolis Through Arts and Cultural Innovation initiative.**

**Indianapolis, IN** - The grant will help fund a significant new park project, the Eagle Creek Park West Side Trail, that will make accessible more than 1,000 acres of existing park land for public use, including seven miles of new maintained trails. The grant joins \$300,000 already pledged by the ECPF and the Scott Starling Nature Sanctuary.

“The West Side Trail has been part Eagle Creek Park’s Master Plan for more than 20 years, and we gratefully thank Lilly Endowment for making it possible,” said Alex Upchurch, president, Eagle Creek Park Foundation. “Eagle Creek Park welcomes a growing number visitors every year, currently more than one million, so the timing couldn’t be better to open new land for the public to enjoy.”

Ground breaking for phase one of the West Side Trail will begin in early 2019, with plans to finish the third and final phase in 2021. The land is located along the west side of Eagle Creek Reservoir. The West Side Trail project includes two ADA-accessible trails, pedestrian bridges and scenic overlooks. The project is designed to help protect the land while making it easily accessible for recreational pedestrian use.

Congratulations to the West Side Trail Steering Committee, which has worked diligently for more than three and a half years to develop the plan for the project. Chaired by Foundation Director Emeritus John Pankhurst, the committee includes representatives from Indy Parks, City of Indianapolis Office of Land Stewardship, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Scott Starling Nature Sanctuary and the Eagle Creek Park Foundation Board and Advisory Committee. Thanks are also due to Foundation members for valuable and constructive input, especially during member events.

To stay up-to-date on project announcements, the Eagle Creek Park Foundation has set up an email list serve that’s open to the public. Register at [www.eaglecreekpark.org](http://www.eaglecreekpark.org). The public can also follow project updates and progress on Twitter @eaglecreekpark #leiarts.

***The Eagle Creek Park Foundation was formed in 1978 to promote, preserve, protect and enhance Eagle Creek Park, an island of nature surrounded by an urban landscape. It is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit made up of volunteers who help support the future of the park. The Foundation relies on membership and donations to fund park improvements, trail restoration projects and environmental education programs within the park. For more information, log on [EagleCreekPark.org](http://EagleCreekPark.org), or call 317.327.7116/***