

St. Ann Center's "Good Earth Celebration"

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A major soil cleanup on Milwaukee's North Side will soon turn a long-vacant lot into a new community arts and entertainment venue. The soil remediation, set to begin in mid-August, will be done on a two-block parcel belonging to St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care-Bucyrus Campus.

To kick off the improvement project, St. Ann Center will host a **Good Earth Celebration** on **Friday, Aug. 11, 10 a.m.-noon** at the **Bucyrus Campus, 2450 W. North Ave.** Sr. Edna Lonergan, president and founder of St. Ann Center, will give background on the cleanup and redevelopment project that has been years in the planning. Jon Peterson, project manager with the U.S. EPA, will explain the positive environmental impact on the north side neighborhood.

The event will also feature performances by local entertainers and children from St. Ann Center's day care program—a sneak preview of the type of performances planned for the **Indaba Community Band Shell**, scheduled to be completed by the outdoor concert season in spring 2018.

More than six tons of dirt affected by petroleum-based pollutants and metals will be excavated and trucked to a landfill by **Dakota Intertek Corp.** Remaining soil will be graded to form a contoured hill that will be capped by a synthetic membrane and clean soil—making it safe in accordance with federal and state requirements.

One side of the hill will be shaped into an audience area for 350 spectators, plus a large wheelchair-accessible seating area. The back of the hill will form a children's sliding area. The band shell was designed, by **Zimmerman Architectural Studios**, to avoid neighborhood noise pollution—its canopy and two wings, which accommodate accessible bathrooms, a green room and storage area, will contain the sound to the Bucyrus Campus. A lighted walkway to the band shell will provide

a safe, tree-lined environment for concertgoers and neighborhood residents.

St. Ann Center, an intergenerational day care for children, the elderly and adults with disabilities, purchased the 7.5-acre parcel in 2014 for \$1 from the City of Milwaukee. An old neighborhood, the property was fully developed by 1894, primarily as residences, with a city tool yard on the west side and auto repair shops along North Avenue. Between 1951 and 1969, many on-site buildings were demolished to prepare for construction of the Park West Freeway. After the freeway project was canceled, the remaining buildings were demolished. The vacant land was a neighborhood concern until purchased by St. Ann Center.

Besides being economical, the cleanup plan will protect the health of neighborhood residents. By limiting the amount of dirt removed, less gasoline, water and energy will be used to transport affected soil to a landfill, and less dust and greenhouse gas will be emitted.

The cost of the cleanup project will be offset by \$147,000 in grants from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and \$400,000 in U.S. EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grants. St. Ann Center is working with Parklawn Assembly of God Church to raise money for the operation of the band shell. Those interested in contributing to the band shell can donate at: stanncenter.org/bandshell.

State and local officials and community leaders will be on hand for the Good Earth Celebration, honoring the Earth and a new community gathering place.

Good Earth Celebration Program: 10 a.m.

- Welcome/background on cleanup process: Sr. Edna Lonergan, OSF
- Recognition of partners: EPA, WEDC, DNR, City of Milwaukee, Dakota Intertek Corp., TRC Environmental Corporation, Parklawn Assembly of God
- EPA remarks: Jon Peterson, U.S. EPA
- Announcement of Indaba Community Band Shell and Lighted Walkway project: Bishop Walter Harvey, Parklawn Assembly of God Church
- Blessing of the construction site
- Entertainment by local performers and St. Ann Center children