



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ijams Supports Preservation of South Knoxville's Urban Wilderness

Ijams Nature Center supports a review of the proposed James White Parkway Extension Project to preserve the integrity and growth of the South Loop of Knoxville's Urban Wilderness.

While businesses along Chapman Highway are still reeling from the extended closure of the South Knoxville Bridge, groups such as the Urban Wilderness Arts & Trade District and local neighborhood associations are gathering momentum to create a dynamic economic and cultural engine for South Knoxville that will bring prosperity to this sector and create a strong community for residents to live, work and recreate.

As it stands, the James White Extension Plan will compromise the catalyst for South Knoxville's prosperity – the Urban Wilderness.

Ijams has worked closely with Legacy Parks Foundation and Appalachian Mountain Bike Club for several years to develop Ijams, adding 125 acres and six miles of multi-use trails for hikers and bikers. Critically, developments at Ijams now connect to other City parks, including Marie Meyers Park and William Hastie Natural Area. New trail connections also provide new opportunities for residents in the South Haven and Southside neighborhoods to directly access the park on foot or on bike.

South Knoxville has changed dramatically since the James White Parkway Extension Project commenced in 1977. During the past decade, preservation of the sector's richest natural assets, including and beyond Ijams, has been recognized and supported by community members and local government. There is a genuine sentiment among many residents and community groups today that South Knoxville's time has come. The Urban Wilderness has been the catalyst, attracting millions of dollars in property purchases alone that have been directly linked to locations with nearby trail access.

Ijams Nature Center is a 300-acre wildlife sanctuary and environmental learning center, providing community-wide connections and experiences through education, conservation, recreation and responsible environmental stewardship for all people.

For more information, please contact Paul James at 865-577-4717, ext. 118 or email pjames@ijams.org.