

PREPARATIONS FOR TWO RESTORATION PROJECTS WILL CONTINUE, AS AN OPPORTUNITY OPENS FOR PARKS IN MOST AND OSTRAVA-PORUBA

(13 November 2017) Prague – **Having been shortlisted for the last selection round under the Parks grant program, projects aiming to restore the Central Park in Most and the Chateau Park in Ostrava-Poruba face prospects of receiving assistance from the Karel Komárek Proměny Foundation. Instead of the customary selection of a single finalist, the board of trustees has given a chance to both parks. Preparatory work done next year will be the decisive factor.**

Selected from a total of 28 applications from all parts of the country, the two projects **have passed through three evaluation rounds** of the Parks grant program. The first round consisted of an initial assessment, in the second, the foundation visited the selected localities, and during the third round, municipal officials presented their projects before the foundation's board of trustees.

"We think that the plans for the Most and Poruba parks have many similarities. They both have a high potential as regards the localities themselves and community life attached to them. However, a detailed analysis has shown that both projects need more time before the first execution stage can begin, which includes preparing specifications for architects and participative planning. In view of that, the board of trustees has postponed by one year its decision on the award of assistance, which includes 25 million crowns in grants. In the meantime, we want to help the cities with the necessary preparatory work," explained Jitka Přeřovská, Director of Karel Komárek Proměny Foundation, adding that the foundation will discuss further action separately with officials from Most and Poruba in the coming weeks.

The foundation's assistance for which applications have been made in response to the current invitation for proposals under the Parks program consists of **as much as 25 million crowns in a grant and technical support during all stages of the selected multiyear public space restoration project**. The process includes ongoing involvement of people from the local community and an architectural competition.

"We will now present each of the cities with the outcome of our analysis, and we will recommend the areas on which they should focus in the upcoming months. We consider the preparatory process to be of key importance in both cases, and we will offer each of the cities technical consulting as well as 500 thousand crowns in financial aid. The decision to award the main grant will be based on an assessment of the development of the two projects in the course of next year. I want to emphasize that this is not a competition. We are prepared to award a grant in the full amount to both cities," Přeřovská added.

Meetings with officials from Most and Ostrava-Poruba will take place between now and the end of the year. If both cities continue to follow the recommended course of action and both are awarded a full grant for their project, the foundation will not issue an invitation for proposals under the Parks program in 2018. Since invitations for proposals under the program are issued to all Czech cities in the fall of every even year, awarding a grant to both Most and Ostrava-Poruba would mean that the next invitation for proposals will be issued only in 2020.

The Parks program is the longest standing grant program of the Karel Komárek Proměny Foundation. Its objective is to **assist municipalities with the conceptual development of the public space in parks**. The foundation's support relies on partnerships with the local community and planners, where the aim is to create living, functional, and sustainable areas. Assistance disbursed under the program has already supported the complete restoration of five localities, most recently the Loučná riverfront in Litomyšl. A sixth project is currently under way in the borough of Pilsen-Slovany. To date, the Karel Komárek Proměny Foundation has contributed over 120 million Czech crowns in assistance for the development of urban parks.

Contact Information:

Petra Hrubošová / +420 225 010 276 / +420 775 654 314 / petra.hrubosova@nadace-promeny.cz

Photo: Chateau Park in Ostrava-Poruba and Central Park in Most (Proměny Foundation archive)

Adjoining a local sports center, the **Central Park** used to be the most frequented locality in **Most**. However, the city's past disappeared in a coalmine a half of a century ago. Since then, Most has been gradually rebuilt, and its inhabitants have been creating the city's new history. A part of that is the Central Park – remembered in the local community as the favorite spot for spending free time in the new city. Today, however, even though the park has ample green areas with rich vegetation, the water cascade situated in its center is not functional, and the park is frequented by few visitors and faces numerous other problems. Municipal officials want to change the current situation, and have invited the local community to take part in planning a restoration effort. The objective is to follow in the footsteps of the Central Park's former atmosphere and popularity among Most's inhabitants and to promote spontaneous community activities.

Chateau Park in Ostrava-Poruba is the only park in the Borough of Poruba, directly adjoining the heritage zone. Together with St. Nicholas Church built in the 15th century, the chateau was formerly the heart of Poruba. During the 1950s, the originally farming town began to transform into a modern urban settlement. Today, it is the most populated of 23 boroughs that form the chartered city of Ostrava. The development pushed Poruba's chateau to the outskirts of the built-up area. At present, the locality is in a state of disrepair, obstructed by various barriers. The city wants to create a continuous park space that will functionally interconnect the original and new areas built in the socialist realism style. During the planning process, the city partnered with the local community to create a vision of a park that is inviting, accessible, safe, and offers facilities for active pastime, entertainment, and relaxation.

(The texts about the parks have been written using projects proposed by the cities of Most and Ostrava-Poruba.)

Karel Komárek Proměny Foundation is a private nonprofit organization established in 2006 to support the development of the urban environment in the Czech Republic and to promote broad public awareness of the importance of architecture, landscaping, and quality environment for living. The Foundation disburses grants and provides consulting services and technical support for projects targeting the public space and school gardens. Other activities include the organization of educational activities related to urban development for children and adults. The Karel Komárek Proměny Foundation and its projects have received several awards from both specialized institutions and public organizations. For more information visit: www.nadace-promeny.cz