

## **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Financial Affairs Committee

**From:** Mark Hammond, Development Director

**Date:** March 6, 2025

**Subject:** Master Planning Agreement Between the City of Wauwatosa and Irgens – Milwaukee County Research Park

### **Overview**

The Milwaukee County Research Park is a vital economic asset for the City of Wauwatosa. However, in order to maintain its competitiveness, maximize tax base and employment opportunities, minimize vacancies, and better complement surrounding local and regional developments, significant infrastructure improvements and a broader re-imagining of the area are necessary. To address these challenges, the City has proposed a collaborative master planning effort with Irgens, a trusted private development partner with a strong track record of investment in our community.

### **Partnership with Irgens**

City staff initially proposed this potential joint master planning effort to Irgens. This followed a confluence of factors including the vacancy of the GE build and an overall realization of the need for re-imagining of the Research Park. Irgens accepted this opportunity in the spirit of being a good partner to the City, without any upfront commitment from the City regarding future infrastructure funding or financial incentives. Irgens has consistently honored its commitments, contributed positively to the local development landscape, and has a history of working constructively with the City rather than resorting to litigation.

### **Key Terms of the Agreement**

- The City and Irgens will jointly undertake the Master Planning process for the Research Park.
- The effort will be led by Eppstein Uhen Architects (EUA) with The Sigma Group providing infrastructure analysis and recommendations. Both have significant experience within the Research Park.
- The planning will focus on repositioning the Research Park for long-term viability, improving infrastructure, enhancing connectivity, and increasing property diversity.
- The City and Irgens will equally share the cost of the Master Planning process, with a total budget of up to \$150,000 (\$75,000 each). The City portion would come from TID 6.
- The City will pursue amendments to TID 6 to facilitate implementation of the Master Plan and support future infrastructure improvements.

### **Recommendation**

This Agreement represents a strategic investment in the future of the Research Park and the City's economic base. By partnering with Irgens, the City can ensure a well-planned, competitive, and dynamic employment center that maximizes property values and complements broader regional goals. Staff recommends approval of the Master Planning Agreement and the associated cost-sharing commitment.