



GREAT RIVER PASSAGE CONSERVANCY

With Saint Paul's 17 miles of river, 26 miles of river edge, and 3,500 acres of publicly owned land, we have an unparalleled opportunity to become the River Capital and unite our region's two greatest assets: its people and one of the three great rivers of the world, the Mississippi. Together, we can bring the river from the edge to the center of public life, where we live not just by the river—but with it. This goal feels even more essential in the COVID-19 era, when Saint Paul needs forward-thinking projects to accelerate our city's economic recovery, build community connection, and help our river environment thrive.

In 2010, Saint Paul city departments, nonprofits, business owners, national park, state, and county agencies, environmental organizations, and residents came together to create the Great River Passage Master Plan. Building on the three foundational years of deep community engagement that shaped the 2013 City Council-adopted Master Plan, the Great River Passage Initiative was founded in 2016 to create a strategy for master plan implementation and begin the process.

Against that backdrop, Saint Paul's leadership—from city departments to business owners to state agencies—is committed to supporting

the Great River Passage as it aims to advance ecological health, build equitable access to the river, and help businesses and communities along the river thrive.

The Great River Passage Conservancy was founded in late 2018 to rally philanthropic support for the Great River Passage Initiative's goals and projects.



greatriverpassage.org

PARTNERSHIP WITH CITY

When the GRPC was created, an organizational structure was created to clearly define partner roles and responsibilities along with the creation of the GRPC/City agreement. Prior to the launch of the capital projects, a second agreement was put in place that outlines in detail project specific roles and responsibilities.

As part of the GRPC/City partnership, and as part of the Saint Paul Park and Recreation 2022 budget, the GRPC created a GRPI 5-year plan and

organizational structure that reflects the various agreements and supports the plan.

To date, as the philanthropic supporting arm of the Great River Passage Initiative, the Great River Passage Conservancy has raised over \$2M+ to support the planning and design stages for three capital projects.

2021 Annual Report



GRPC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Peter B. Myers (Board Chair)

Owner, Myers Communications Group

Tanya Bell

Founder, Grand Real Estate Advisors

Cameron Boyd

General Counsel, Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC)

Monica Bryand

Executive Director, Voices for Racial Justice

Shelley Buck

President, Prairie Island Indian Community

Jay Haapala

Associate State Director of Community Engagement, AARP

Joe Nayquonabe Jr.

CEO, Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures

Katie Nyberg

Former Exec. Director, Mississippi Park

Sam Olbekson

CEO, Full Circle Indigenous Planning + Design

Elisa Rasmusen

Senior Manager, Community Relations, Excel Energy

Jake Reint

Vice President of Public Affairs, Flint Hills Resources

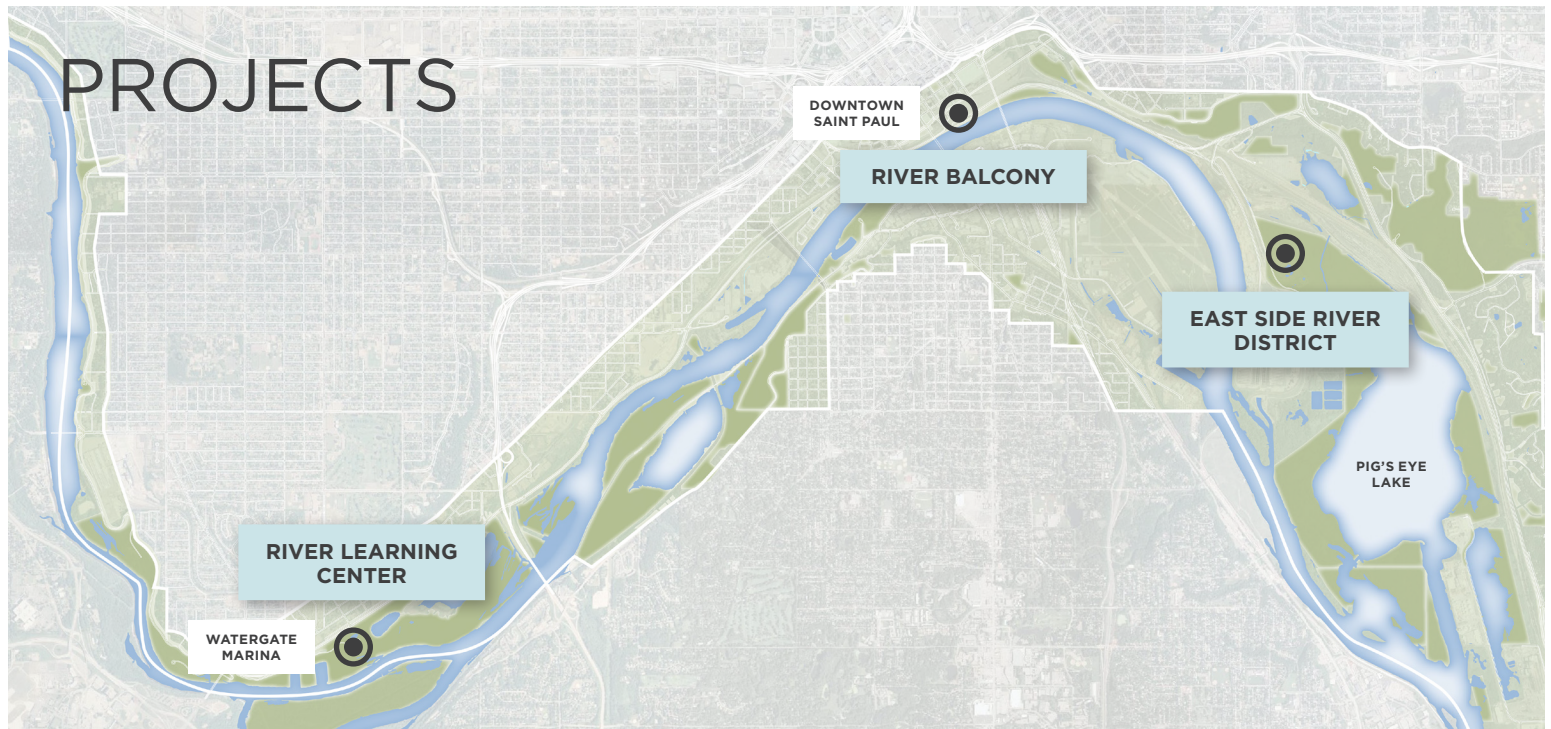
EX OFFICIO

Andy Rodriquez

Director, City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation

Russ Stark

Chief Resilience Officer, City of Saint Paul



MISSISSIPPI RIVER LEARNING CENTER

Project Description

GATEWAY

The River Learning Center is a city-led project combining a mixed-use, river-focused space and a National Park Service Headquarters at the Crosby Farm Regional Park, serving as a national gateway to the Mississippi River and providing year-round experiences of the land, water and culture of the River.

Schematic Design and Engagement

Great River Passage Conservancy and the City of Saint Paul worked with New York-based W Architecture & Landscape Architecture on the River Learning Center's schematic design process. Following months of community engagement, the final schematic design was presented in November 2022. A transition period to address partner roles and responsibilities, finance strategy, programming planning and a bonding initiative is underway.

2023 Minnesota State Capital Investment Request

Design and Construction: \$23,500,000

Bonding Brief

Partners

City of Saint Paul
Great River Passage Conservancy*
National Park Service**
Mississippi Park Connection*

Funders

Individual Donors
Wilderness Inquiry
MPC
CRWD
Winnebago
Anfinson Fund
Shepard Family Fund
Conchineal Foundation

Project Manager

Anne Gardner
Lead Landscape Architect
Department of Parks and Recreation

*The two non-profit partners have a fundraising agreement for the schematic design phase.

RIVER BALCONY

Project Description

PROMENADE

The River Balcony is a proposed 1.5-mile promenade along downtown Saint Paul's river bluff, connecting public spaces, civic landmarks, and development sites, providing new connections to the river and sparking economic development along the riverfront.

Schematic Design and Engagement

In November 2022 the new schematic design of the River Balcony was completed by an interdisciplinary team of designers, engineers and engagement specialists led by James Corner of Field Operations. With schematic design complete, we are now focused on these critical steps to bring the project's vision to fruition:

- Create Governance Structure
- Define partner roles and responsibilities
- Develop finance strategy
- Evaluate phasing timeline

Funders

City of Saint Paul
Ramsey County
Metropolitan Council
Ecolab
Knight Foundation
Securian Financial
Xcel Energy
Ruth and John Huss
District Energy St. Paul RiverCentre
Visit Saint Paul
Capitol Region Watershed District

Project Manager

Brett Hussong
Lead Landscape Architect
Department of Parks and Recreation

EAST SIDE RIVER DISTRICT

Project Description

LANDSCAPE

A dynamic 1000-acre urban landscape that reveals the complex systems and stories of the East Side, heals a compromised landscape, connects the area to the wider city, and protects culturally sacred sites and sensitive ecological systems.

The next step for this collaboration is to raise \$600k public and private funds for the schematic design process.

Funders

REI
Saint Paul Regional Water Services
National Endowment for the Arts





GREAT RIVER PASSAGE CONSERVANCY 2021 INITIATIVES

RIVER NARRATIVE TOOLKIT

greatriverpassage.org/toolkit

Working in collaboration with our partners and stakeholders, the Great River Passage Conservancy has put together a river narrative toolkit – an all-inclusive guide to talking about Saint Paul as the River Capital. As your organizations showcase Saint Paul and look to attract businesses, visitors, residents, investments and programming to our great city, we want to provide you with beautiful imagery and consistent messages, facts, and statistics to position the city as the River Capital and talk about the Mississippi River as an asset and attraction for your key audiences.

The toolkit includes messaging, social media handles and hashtags, naming conventions for the river, and photos and video for you to use freely in your communications as needed. Our hope is that together, we will begin to amplify and elevate Saint Paul's greatest natural asset – the Mississippi River – and take advantage of all the benefits it offers and the investments, activity and vibrancy it attracts.



SAINT PAUL RIVER NARRATIVE TOOLKIT: BUILDING THE RIVER CAPITAL

Welcome to Saint Paul's river narrative toolkit – an all-inclusive guide to talking about Saint Paul as a River Capital and promoting its position on the banks of the Mississippi River. In this toolkit you will find messaging, social media handles and hashtags, naming conventions and photo and video for you to use freely in your own communications. Our hope is that together, we will begin to amplify and elevate Saint Paul's greatest natural asset – the Mississippi River – and take advantage of all the benefits it offers and investment, activity and vibrancy it attracts.

Included in this toolkit is messaging around the City of Saint Paul's Great River Passage Initiative, the Great River Passage Conservancy and the three capital projects being driven by the City and Conservancy along the Mississippi River in Saint Paul.

Questions on how to use the toolkit? Feel free to reach out to Ashley Aram at ashley@gooffpublic.com.

Questions on what's happening with the Great River Passage work? Reach out to Mary deLaitre at mary@greatriverpassage.org.

River narrative messaging

As your organizations showcase Saint Paul and look to attract businesses, visitors, residents, investments and programming to our great city, we want to provide you with consistent messages to position the city as a River Capital and talk about the Mississippi River as an asset and attraction for your key audiences. We encourage you to use some or all of these messages, in no particular order, as it makes sense for your organization. Please feel free to change up the language to match your voice and tone. The key statistics and data points should provide engaging and relevant content for you when talking about the Mississippi River.

High-level messages

- Saint Paul is uniquely located on America's fourth coast: the Mississippi River. The river is homeland to the Dakota people and holds cultural importance for the tribal community and indigenous residents.
- As a River Capital, our city's unique history, culture and economy are connected to the 17 miles of river that flow through it.
- Saint Paul's future is the river, which is why business, government and nonprofit leaders are collectively focused on reconnecting to our greatest natural asset.
- Building on a 40-year legacy, this work is accelerating. More than \$2.7 billion of investment is currently going into projects along Saint Paul's riverfront alone.
- We know that building a better River Capital through capital investments, programming and activities, and partnerships along the river will spark further economic development, attract and retain residents, and improve community health and well-being.

DESIGNING FOR EQUITY: EQUITABLE IMPACTS FRAMEWORK

In 2020 the Great River Passage was selected to join the High Line Network along with 35 other initiatives across North and Central America. As part of that partnership, we were chosen as one of six initiatives across the country to take part in the High Line Network's 2021 Equitable Impacts Framework (EIF).

The EIF collaboration is supporting GRPC to define our organizational approach to equitable development and set specific, meaningful, and measurable goals that maximize community benefit (economic, social, cultural and environmental) for our projects and programs.

The initial phase of the EIF partnership with Harvard Graduate School of Design and Urban Institute was illuminating, helping us understand how to:

- Cultivate long-term relationships with communities that have historically been disconnected from the river and excluded from city building planning and design
- Adjust planning, design and engagement systems to make sure community voices are heard and help shape projects
- Better understand the roles and responsibilities of both the GRPC and the city in advancing equity
- Phase 2 entailed working with the Urban Institute to develop an equity strategy and implementation plan.

In 2022, we worked with Culture Brokers to further develop this vision and approve an equity plan that will guide the organization and weave what we learned over the EIF process into our three capital projects.

CONVENINGS

List of Convenings

In the fall of 2021, we held the East Side River District's convening with nine key partners sharing presentations on their dynamic projects to 36 participants from 15 different agency and non-profit organizations. All told, there are 23 projects planned or underway in the district, and \$490 million of planned investment in the area as we all continue to come together and reveal, heal, connect, and protect the river and land of the ESRD.

In December of 2021, the Great River Passage convened a gathering, Common Water: Building our River Community.

25 partners delivered brief presentations about their public programs, events, education or hospitality business offerings along the 17 miles of the Mississippi. The intent was to create a shared base line of all activities currently happening at, on, or about the river.

From this shared base we have a refreshed understanding of one another's work, we can identify potential connections and gaps, and will collectively work to build and broaden our Saint Paul river community. The River Connectors Convening is a biennial gathering originated in 2019.

CONTACT

Great River Passage Conservancy
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greatriverpassage.org

