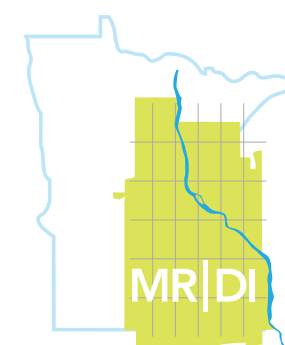


RiverFIRST:

A Park Design Proposal and Implementation Framework for the Minneapolis Upper Riverfront



Sponsored by Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

Minneapolis Riverfront
Development Initiative

March 15, 2012

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MRIDI Team

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

Jayne Miller, *Superintendent*
Bruce Chamberlain, *Assistant Superintendent for Planning*
Dawn Sommers, *Communications & Marketing Manager*
John Goodrich, *Executive Assistant*
Tom Johnson, *Engineering Technician II*
Tyler Stearns, *Communications Intern*

Project Management Team

Mary deLaittre, *MRIDI Project Manager, Principal, Groundwork: The Foundation for City Building*
Janette Law, *Public Relations, Tableau Pro*
Pamela Miller, *Graphic Design*
Jeff Lin, *BustOut Solutions*

Economic Advisors

HR&A Advisors

Candace Damon
Danny Fuchs
Dara Goldberg

Step-Up Interns

Ciera McDuffie
Kendall Ray
Abdifatah Yusuf
Martice Creamer
Ahmad Aly
LaJeanna Fuller

Design Team

KVA Architecture & Planning

Sheila Kennedy, *AIA*
Frano Violich, *FAIA*
Jungmin Nam
Kyle Coburn
Jeffrey Mansfield
Katie Heinrich

TLS Landscape Architecture

Tom Leader, *ASLA*
Sara Peschel
Erik Prince
Lily Ciammaichella

Structural Engineering

Hauke Jungjosian, *Knippers Helbig, New York, NY/ Stuttgart, Germany*

Ecology

Peter MacDonagh, *Kestrel Design Group, Minneapolis, MN*
Sarah Sutherland, *Kestrel Design Group, Minneapolis, MN*
Marty Melchoir, *Inter-Fluve, Madison, WI*

Construction Management

Nate Pearson, *Mortensen Construction, Minneapolis, MN*
Clark White

Introduction

8 November 2011

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411

Dear Commissioners,

We are at an historic moment. Just as Minneapolis’ civic leaders 125 years ago had the opportunity and foresight to create the park system we all enjoy today, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) now has the opportunity to substantively plan for future generations of park users.

In this spirit, the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative (MRIDI) submits a comprehensive vision, recommendation and implementation plan for the RiverFIRST design proposal. The work of a team comprised of Kennedy & Violich Architecture (KVA), Boston; Tom Leader Studio (TLS), Berkeley; HR&A Advisors—a real estate and economic development planning firm from New York City; and Groundwork: The Foundation for City Building—a Minneapolis-based planning firm which managed the process—this report is the culmination of a 12-month process and a milestone in what will be a long-term Upper Mississippi River development strategy.

Process

In September of 2010, the MPRB and The Minneapolis Parks Foundation, along with creative partners The University of Minnesota College of Design and Walker Art Center, launched an international design competition addressing Minneapolis’ Upper Riverfront. The competition, the Minneapolis Riverfront Design Competition (MRIDC) sought design proposals for the area of the Mississippi River extending from the Stone Arch Bridge, north 5.5 miles to Minneapolis’ city limits, including land along both sides of the river.

The goals of the competition were to create a vision that:

- Established parks as the engine for economic development along the river
- Knit both sides of the riverfront together with their surrounding communities, thereby transforming the river from a barrier to a connector
- Re-focused the city toward one of the three great rivers of the world, an extraordinary environmental amenity that defines Minneapolis’ civic identity—past, present and future

The competition attracted 55 preliminary designs from 14 countries on five continents. From that pool of applicants a jury of 14 community decision makers and design professionals selected four award-winning landscape

and urban design teams as finalists. The four teams included Ken Smith Workshop, New York; Stoss Landscape Urbanism, Boston; TLS/KVA, Berkeley; and Turenscape, Beijing. Each were paid \$30,000 and given two and a half months to create a vision. During this time, the MRIDC sponsored a series of community engagement events to cultivate support, provide information to the designers about our community and its river, and educate the next generation of park stewards. The competing design teams made a public presentation of their work at the Walker Art Center to an overflow crowd in January, and the following day the jury selected the winning team. TLS/KVA and their RiverFIRST proposal were selected for their depth of research, innovative and inspiring design, and fulfillment of the competition goals. There was tremendous interest in and support of the design competition—a testament to the community’s love of parks, passion for the Mississippi River and desire to be inspired by innovative city building.

In April 2011, MPRB established the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative (MRIDI) as an interdisciplinary, comprehensive and integrated planning endeavor to follow through with the promise of the competition, to connect citizens and visitors with new multi-functional Upper Riverfront parks. The MRIDI team was charged with taking the RiverFIRST proposal from vision to reality, researching the feasibility of the eight sites and 3 systems that made up the plan and creating workable plan for short- and long-term development. Beginning in April, TLS/KVA and HR&A Advisors launched a three-month, in-depth information gathering process that was led by the MRIDI project team and included the Steering, Advisory and Technical committees and the public. From June through August, as the team continued to refine its proposal, the MRIDI implemented a multidimensional community engagement process to present the RiverFIRST concept to interested communities, gather input and identify priority projects. What follows are the results of that intensive effort.

Approach

The RiverFIRST proposal is critical to the creation of a larger regional parks and trails network, as well as ecological and infrastructure systems. It fills a gap in the Mississippi River parks and trails system and contributes significantly to the improved water quality of the river, completes a critical connection in the larger City of Minneapolis Grand Rounds and links into the existing corridor initiatives taking place on both sides of the river. Furthermore, it creates a healthy community network and opportunities for economic development, by tying into the expansive regional parks and trails system managed by the Three Rivers Park District and the Metropolitan Council. When realized, the RiverFIRST proposal will enhance our regional identity and reinforce our role as civic leaders in the 21st century.

Strategy

The MRIDI has operated along seven strategic tracks to produce the development plan for the Upper Riverfront. This design-based process incorporated research, analysis and synthesis to produce—and realize—a feasible implementation process that is equal parts inspiration and sustainability.

Organizational Development. Create community-based Steering, Technical and Advisory committees to help shape the design development strategy.

Planning and Design. Research, analyze and synthesize information to create the final deliverable: recommendations for a long-term development framework and short- term project(s) identification.

Community Engagement. Reconnect the broader community with the river and provide opportunities for community members to substantively engage in the creation of the design development strategy and contribute their knowledge of the river and neighborhoods.

Resource Identification. Identify public and private financing to ensure sustainable development.

Political. Cultivate support and advocacy.

Integration. Analyze existing plans, projects, proposals and organizational structures to coordinate efforts and outcomes, including Above the Falls and the Park Board’s Comprehensive Plan(s).

Communication. Maintain the open exchange of information among the MRIDI, the public and stakeholders, communicate clearly, frequently and with transparency.

It is within this context that we submit this report, to assist the Commissioners to imagine what could be and to make informed decisions. Our hope is that we can continue to work together, as a community, to build on our past success and create an even better region for the future.

Thank you for this historic opportunity,

Mary deLaittre
MRIDI Project Manager
Principal, Groundwork: The Foundation for City Building

Executive Summary

The Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative (MRIDI) is a visionary planning effort for the Minneapolis Upper Mississippi River corridor that has comprised extensive research and analysis, design inquiry, community outreach, and consensus building. The Initiative is a collaboration among its sponsor, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB); two design firms—Kennedy & Violich Architecture (KVA), Boston and Tom Leader Studio (TLS) Berkeley; HR&A Advisors, a real estate and economic development planning firm from New York City; and Groundwork City Building, a Minneapolis-based planning firm which is responsible for guiding the process, with public relations firm Tableau Pro.

The 5-month long collaboration of the MRIDI followed a 6-month process that began with an international design competition which awarded the commission to KVA/TLS out of 55 entries from around the world. It culminates with this comprehensive vision and implementation framework for 5.5 miles of the Minneapolis Upper Mississippi River corridor.

RiverFIRST

The KVA/TLS concept, RiverFIRST, offers a dynamic vision for a renewed and revitalized Upper River corridor through a proposed series of eight areas of opportunity. RiverFIRST well fulfills the three goals of the design competition:

- Establish parks as the engine for economic development along the river
- Knit both sides of the riverfront together with their surrounding communities, thereby transforming the river from a barrier to a connector
- Re-focus the city toward one of the three great rivers of the world, an extraordinary environmental amenity that defines Minneapolis' civic identity—past, present and future

The eight RiverFIRST areas of opportunity include:

Riverfront Trails: The RiverFIRST trail system—a combination of pedestrian and bicycle trails along the river's banks and "Knot Bridges" attached to existing bridges—will complete critical connections in the Grand Rounds system, and better connect North Minneapolis to Northeast Minneapolis for pedestrians and cyclists.

BioHavens: A protected network of floating islands made of robust, lightweight geo-textiles and 100% recycled PET materials, the BioHavens will create riparian habitat for endangered species and migratory birds by providing nesting and staging areas for endangered aquatic and land animals and plants while also cleaning water.

Downtown Gateway Park: A dramatic gateway to Minneapolis at the historic gateway site of the Hennepin Avenue Bridge, linked to the new Public Library via a proposed signature park and to Nicollet Mall via a linear park. This project is lead by Trust for Public Land and downtown interests.

Farview Park Expansion: This major new park extension bridges Interstate 94 and reconnects the high point of the city and communities in North Minneapolis with the Mississippi River. The proposal could ultimately cap the portion of I-94 between N 26th Avenue and 28th Avenue N with a major expansion of Farview Park and the greening of both streets.

Northside Wetlands Park: A molded alluvial wetland landscape is reclaimed to create a civic-scaled climate change eco-infrastructure, providing bio-filtration for storm water flows, increased flood protection, and new riverfront habitats.

Northeast Riverfront Park: Ravine landscapes remediate storm water and form stepped eco-stairs for flows of water, people, and wildlife, and serve as high points to overlook the Mississippi, as well as downtown Minneapolis.

Scherer Park: With the restoration of Hall's Island and the creation of a river beach cove, Scherer Park will serve as a recreational entry point to the Mississippi trail and park system for kayaks, bikes, skiers, runners and walkers. The park will become a signature 21st-century urban park landscape. It will be the center of a riverfront destination flanked by Boom Island and Sheridan Park and surrounded by a vibrant mix of development that will energize the riverfront.

Spirit Island: A sacred place for the Dakota Indians for generations, the now vanished Spirit Island will be symbolized by an illuminated river weir, which marks the site as the oracle and soul of the river. This visual gesture will mark a commitment to a much deeper cross-cultural understanding so important to the life of our city.

Executive Summary

Implementation

Local Solutions, Regional Impact

The Minneapolis park system is renown for the network of parkways, trails and greenways that interlink regional park destinations. The RiverFIRST proposal builds on this powerful legacy with the creation of riverfront regional parks connected by a sophisticated network of ecological, infrastructure trail systems. It fills a gap in the Mississippi River parks and trails system and contributes significantly to the improved water quality of the river, completes a critical connection in the larger Minneapolis Grand Rounds and links into the existing corridor initiatives taking place on both sides of the river. Furthermore, it creates a healthy community network and opportunities for economic development, by tying into the expansive regional parks and trails system managed by the Three Rivers Park District and the Metropolitan Council. When realized, the RiverFIRST proposal will enhance our regional identity and reinforce our role as civic leaders in the 21st century.

A Focus of City-Building

Like the Minneapolis Grand Rounds have done throughout history, the RiverFIRST proposal establishes the Minneapolis Upper River corridor as a central public amenity around which economic development in this part of the City will focus.

Multiple Leaders

The proposal provides the opportunity for multiple organizations, institutions and community interests to take leadership and/or collaborative and supporting roles in implementation, depending on the project and the myriad variables that define the project.

Flexibility

The RiverFIRST proposal offers built-in flexibility to phase investments and to be opportunistic. Land availability, funding changes, philanthropy and development interests prompt the importance of altering course to capitalize on opportunities. The RiverFIRST proposal facilitates flexibility for those overseeing implementation.

Phasing

Given its ambition, RiverFIRST will likely be built over a generation, or more. Successful completion of the plan will depend in substantial part on thoughtful phasing. Getting the first phases right will set the stage for the long-term build-out of the grand vision presented in this document. The early phases will need to embrace at least four criteria for success:

- Bring the city from all neighborhoods and backgrounds to the river
- Foster advocacy for plan completion from citizens, businesses, and institutions alike
- Secure positive media attention and promote a Minneapolis brand of 21st century parks
- Cooperation among public sector agencies and partnership with private sector organizations and institutions

Priority Projects: 0-5 Year Plan

Based on the refinement of preliminary plans, extensive community engagement, and the five guiding implementation criteria listed above, a series of systems and sites have emerged as priority demonstration projects for implementation in the near term:

Riverfront Trail System + Farview Park Connections:

Development of pedestrian and bike trails, “Knot Bridges” and implementation of the Farview Park connections to the River via the North 26th Avenue Greenway and 28th Avenue connection. The 26th Avenue North Greenway along with the 22nd Avenue Northeast Greenway create an environmental education corridor connecting Edison High School to Nellie Stone Johnson Community School.

BioHavens: Builds on the highly successful demonstration project launched in August, 2011 by ASLA at Spring Lake in Minneapolis.

Scherer Park: The proposal leverages a new signature riverfront park for economic development, and captures a portion of that value for the long-term operations and maintenance of that park

Northside Wetlands Park: Re-establishes historic floodplain wetlands that create a public and ecological amenity offering an opportunity to partner with research and education institutions. The park could anchor and create value for the Upper Harbor Terminal redevelopment.

Downtown Gateway Park: Establishes a downtown park destination of national significance, reestablishes an open space link between downtown and the riverfront, and leverages existing efforts led by the Trust for Public Land and downtown stakeholders.

These five projects each have the potential to establish a successful first phase of development that can build momentum for the overall completion of RiverFIRST over time. They can be pursued simultaneously, with support from multiple stakeholders, or in smaller combinations, depending on resource availability.

Executive Summary

Long Term Vision: 5 Years and Beyond

Farview Park Extension: Builds on priority projects with the establishment of the 26th Avenue and 28th Avenue connections. The longer-term vision would realize a green cap over I-94 and transform the existing garbage transfer station into a river-related community education facility.

Northeast Riverfront Park: Long-term acquisition of land and easements allows the creation of park, storm water cleaning ravines, neighborhood connections and river access.

Spirit Island: Begins a process of substantive engagement with the Dakota community to determine interest in the creation of a commemorative art project and long-term collaboration to realize the project.

Capital Funding

Great ideas supported by great designs—like those envisioned for River FIRST—paired with strong leadership from government, citizens, businesses and institutions, have significant capacity to attract capital. Groundswells of popular support for compelling projects can secure substantial capital funds from local, state, and federal governments. While a strategy for capital funding is being developed for each project consideration should be given to:

- Investment from local institutions interested in particular portions of the RiverFIRST plan should be priority stewards
- Portions of signature projects should be targeted for philanthropic investments from individuals, foundations, and not-for-profit organizations
- Use of the Elwell law and other funding strategies should be investigated to supplement other sources with funding from special assessments
- MRPB, the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, and the Metropolitan Council should be prepared to make capital funds available for each of these projects to help leverage third-party sources

Operations and Maintenance Funding

Similar to capital costs, operating expenses and ongoing maintenance of these sites will be sourced from a combination of public and private funding, as well as in-kind landscape management and strategies for developing earned income. A substantial portion of funds for operations and maintenance must be provided by MPRB, as is standard practice in Minneapolis and cities across the country. A stable and substantial base of City funding is a prerequisite for maximizing philanthropy, and will be required to ensure the park meets its civic aspirations.

RiverFIRST will need to maximize opportunities for raising funds from private resources for ongoing maintenance of the new parks wherever possible to ensure that the costs of maintaining new parks is sustainable within MPRB's operating budget.

In the initial years of the park development and operations, MPRB funding will likely be the only major source of operating revenue for the park. Over time, however, as the vision is implemented and the MRIDI system becomes more successful – and requires more investment – MPRB will need to rely on several potential sources of additional revenue to fill the likely funding gap. These sources should include the following:

- **Real Estate Development and Assessments:** With the implementation of Scherer Park, new value will be created for the surrounding district. Therefore, since real estate is typically the greatest potential source of privately-generated funds for parkland operations and maintenance, and since either MPRB or the City of Minneapolis control developable land in the district, development on and/or around Scherer, Boom Island, and Sheridan Park should be prioritized. And, in exchange for the right to develop, development agreements should outline long-term participation in operating expenses.

- **Institutional Partnerships:** Portions of the RiverFIRST plan should be stewarded by major institutions in Minneapolis and the region. Allowing existing organizations to operate programs on the sites contemplated for redevelopment can support the plan's operational sustainability by displacing a need for public funds to maintain the lands. MPRB, the City of Minneapolis, and other project stakeholders should explore how organizations like the St. Anthony Falls Laboratory or the University of Minnesota, among others, might support the ongoing operations of certain RiverFIRST proposals through institutional programming. Certain sites may even be deeded (within the bounds of certain restrictions due to regional park funding) to such organizations with agreements for public access and programming in perpetuity.
- **Environmental Benefits:** Implementation of certain elements of the RiverFIRST plan, such as the wetlands at Upper Harbor Terminal and the stormwater ravines along the Northeast Bluffs, can reduce the amount of impervious surface along the riverfront and can also clean stormwater. As a result, property owners may be able to avert stormwater fees, which can run into the tens of thousands of dollars every year. Where there is a net saving of stormwater runoff, MPRB should seek to capture the excess in stormwater fees that a property owner would have to pay if runoff were not averted or cleaned, so long as the property owners' net operating income is not disproportionately negatively affected.
- **Philanthropy, Sponsorships, and Programming:** In addition to the three primary sources targeted above, RiverFIRST stakeholders should cultivate the philanthropic community, potential corporate and institutional project sponsors, and major events like those held at Boom Island, to help offset the costs of operating the new parks. While these sources will be important for the sustainability of the plan, they are likely to be limited in terms of total dollar value.

Governance

Implementation of the RiverFIRST plan will affect lands owned by many different parties, each of whom will have responsibilities for plan stewardship. It also will have economic and fiscal impacts of interest not only to MPRB, but also the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, and the entire Twin Cities Metropolitan Region. Stewardship of the RiverFIRST plan, both in terms of implementation guidance and ongoing parkland operations and maintenance, must, therefore, be a collaborative effort.

The City Department of Planning and Economic Development should work closely with MPRB as it finalizes the revised Above the Falls plan to ensure that land use recommendations and investments in public infrastructure are properly coordinated. These two agencies must also work together to attract appropriate development to riverfront sites and set in place agreements for such real estate developments to provide ongoing sources of funds for parkland benefits.

The five priority projects for RiverFIRST should follow an action plan established by lead organizations:

- MPRB should spearhead the completion of the Riverfront Trail System/Farview Park connections and the recreational/supportive development of Scherer Park.
- The City Department of Planning and Economic Development should advance the comprehensive redevelopment of the Upper Harbor Terminal site, implementing the proposed wetlands as part of its plan.
- The Trust for Public Land should continue to work with downtown stakeholders, the City of Minneapolis and MPRB to implement the Downtown Gateway Park.
- Multiple key organizations should collaborate to implement BioHavens (floating islands).

Suggested Next Steps

The project team will present and deliver copies of the RiverFIRST proposal and implementation framework to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board on September 21, 2011.

MPRB Staff intent for the project from this point forward is to allow an “incubation period” for the revised RiverFIRST plan over the next two months. That time could include a formal public comment period, ongoing project management and communication activities, as well as preparation by Staff of proposed next steps for consideration by the Board later this year. Examples of next-step actions are:

- Formal approval of the report
- Authorization of phase 1 implementation/construction documents
- Authorization to initiate a collaborative effort with the City of Minneapolis to update the Above the Falls Master Plan.

RiverFIRST Guiding Principles

21st Century Challenges

The Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative provides a chance to consider how the Minneapolis park system can protect the national ecological heritage of the Minneapolis Riverfront and the Mississippi River, foster community health, support economic opportunity and prepare Minneapolis with resilient and sustainable eco-infrastructure for generations to come. There are 21st Century challenges that are global in nature and local in impact. Mississippi River access may increase in value as energy costs rise and warming climates reduce winter port closures. Greenhouse gas emissions need to be controlled. Storm water systems must be adapted to account for increasing uncertainty in local climate variability. Urban growth must be accommodated. RiverFIRST considers these challenges as the means to enable a blue & green way of life to flourish in Minneapolis and to attract the brightest creative minds to live in Minneapolis.

The Mississippi is still a working place for industry, but current economic opportunity is hindered by the dislocated relationship between Minneapolis and its river. A planning strategy that prioritizes the Mississippi, that puts

it first, is intended to renew the river's strength and diversity as a living ecosystem. In doing so, the physical, societal and economic health of the city is placed first. RiverFIRST is guided by the dynamics of the river. Water carves and erodes to form the river that supports and sustains diverse habitats. RiverFIRST is guided by similar principles that embrace the notion that cities evolve over time and must be allowed to accommodate changes in environmental, social, and economic climates.

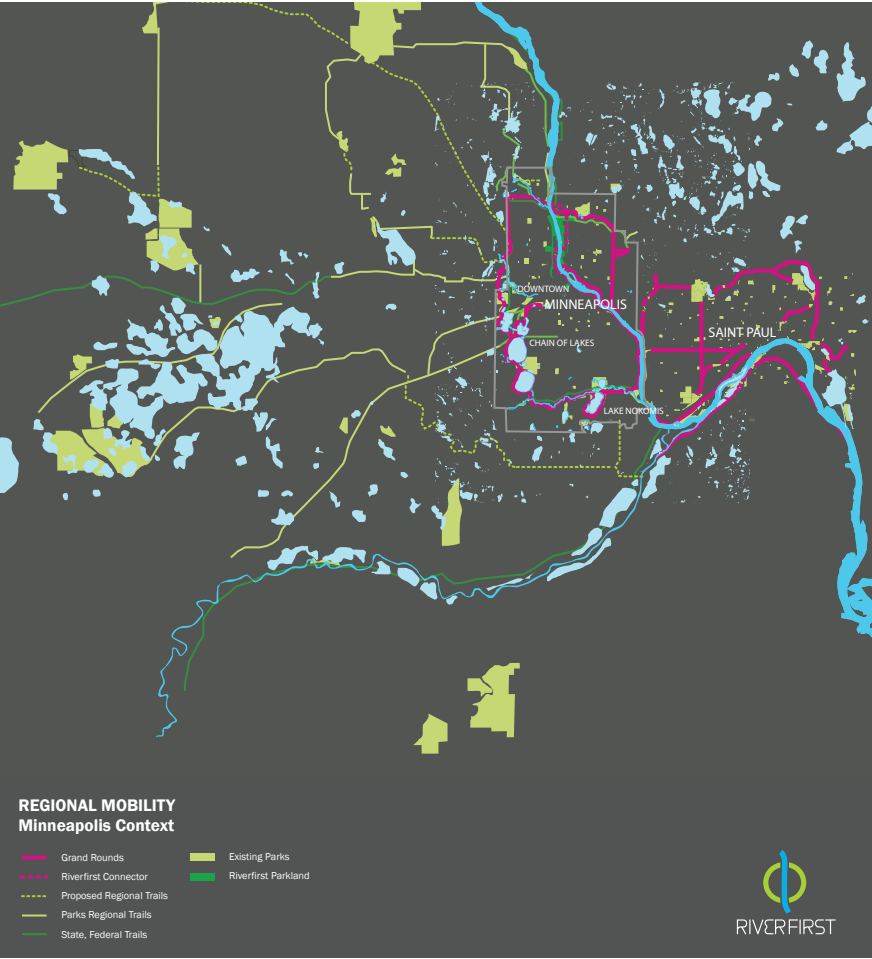
Design Principles

RiverFIRST is based on four design principles. The first, Go with the Flow, reflects the dynamic characteristic of the river itself and becomes a model for other systems such as public access, mobility, and energy infrastructure. This principle is based less on the addition of the physical characteristics that are common to planning but rather on a subtractive approach that exposes the underlying nature of a place, sometimes literally unearthing existing conditions in an effort to recover its identity. The daylighting of buried stormwater systems is an example where the act of excavation not only points to the significance of a tributaries relationship to the river but simultaneously remediates or cleans the stormwater before entering the river. The effect provides measurable benefits including increased visibility of the river and thus security, and reduced park maintenance.

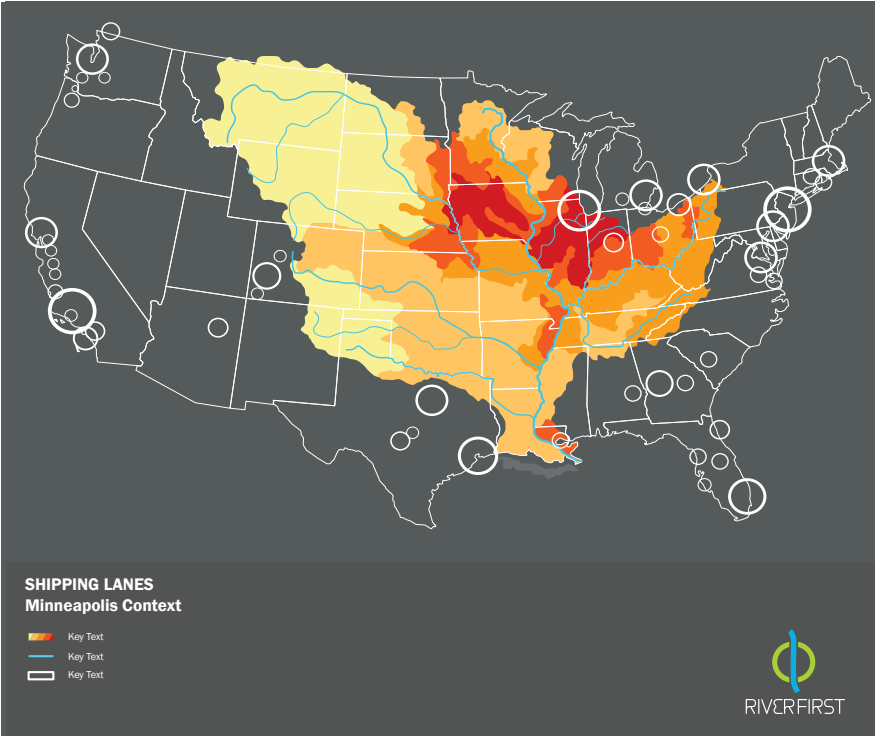
Where Go with the Flow reflects mobility and access, the second principle, Design with Topography, is more physical in nature. The great range of geographic diversity begins not only with the site's highest point, Farview Park, but also includes the depth of the river and all points in between. Understanding the nuanced difference in surface shape and features of this landscape creates opportunities for multiple-scaled combinations of submerged, emergent, riparian, and meadow upland. This sensibility has the potential to guide an urbanistic strategy toward built form that results in buildings that optimize orientation for natural light, energy harvesting, and stormwater management.

The third principle, Both/And, addresses the unlikely juxtaposition of the Mississippi River to its immediate surroundings, in particular the Northside industrial district which has suffered through neglect and a weak economy. Both/And provides the groundwork for a condition where two seemingly conflicting circumstances can be allowed to co-exist, even be strengthened by the others presence.

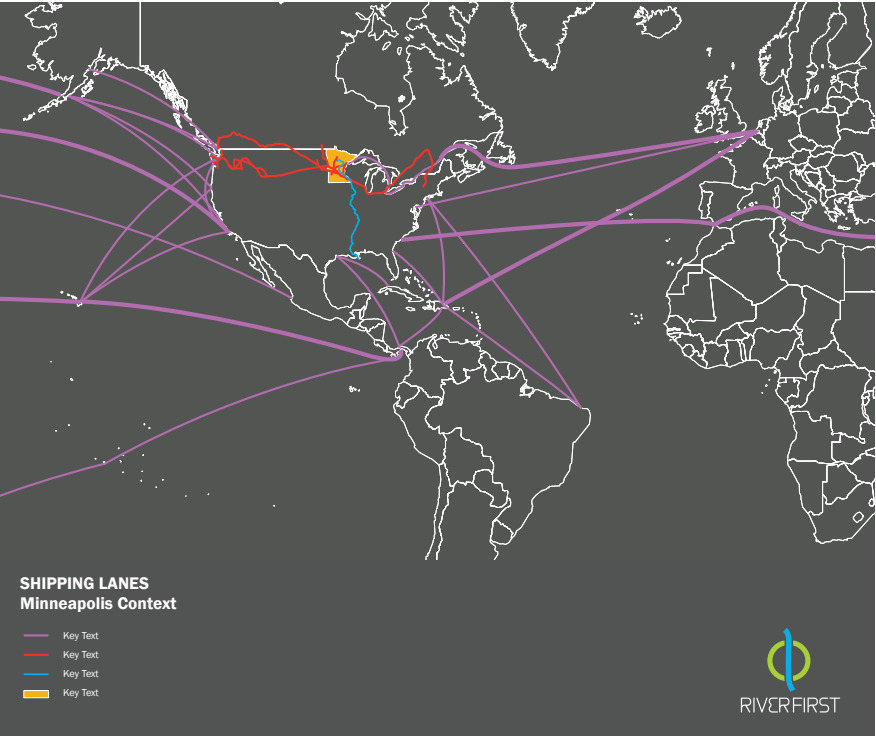
Finally, Park Plus, reflects the contemporary role that cities must play to address the challenges of the 21st Century. Parks today are expected to exceed our normal understanding of a park as a social gathering space, rather it must play a role in reducing energy consumption through environmental stewardship, minimizing maintenance costs, and providing places that support health and safety.



Extended regional trail system

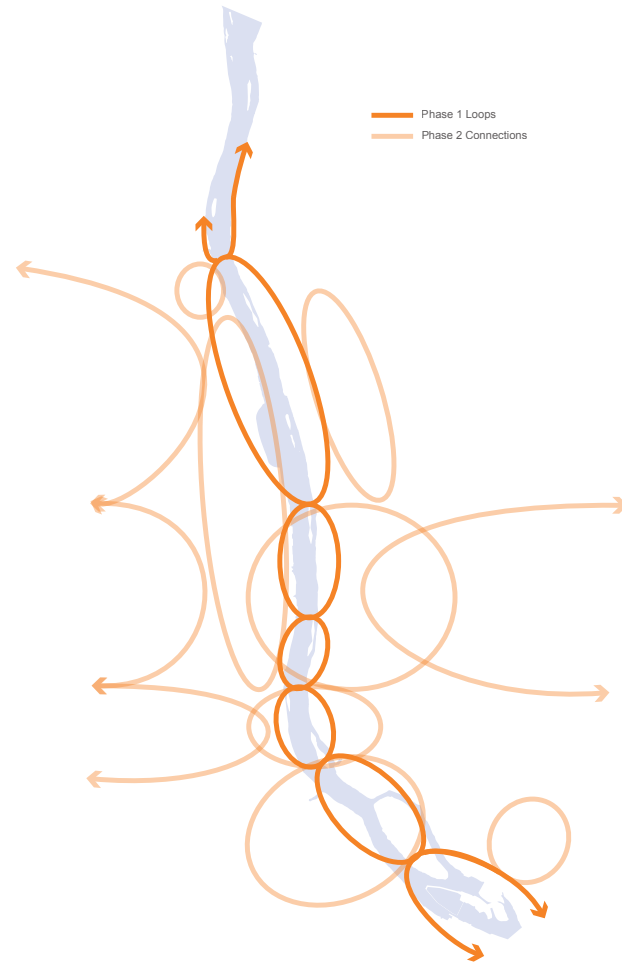


Mississippi River Nutritional run-off



Mississippi global transportation links

RiverFIRST Guiding Principles



Loops

The North-South Trail System connects with east-west pedestrian walkways (Knot Bridges) in a series of recreational River Loop circuits that link North and Northeast Neighborhoods. In so doing, sections of the river can be encircled and begin to create a series of interconnected “rooms” each with a specific urban and natural character. This simple idea has great strength as a means of orientation and breaking down a river that is regional in scale to something in neighborhood sized chunks. The trail system will have the most flexibility and variety in terms of routes when options for crossing the river are positioned within a five minute walk. One could imagine a series of linked rubber bands stretched around each room along with the idea that these flexible loops can also be expanded to take in the entire 5 ½ miles of riverfront and northward beyond. In the same way, loops can and should expand into both the Northside and Northeast neighborhoods so they are flexibly joined to the river based system. The result is a flexible, web-like circulation structure that can organize movement over a significant area of the city. Five minute pedestrian loops can then be joined onto large intermodal systems like the Prairie Loop Shuttle that encircles the entire site using Railroad rights-of-ways.

Moisture Gradients

Landscape is created by the varying interactions of soil and water. Much of the RiverFIRST effort concerns putting seasonal stream and river water back in contact with riverbanks and uplands that have been cut off by piped outfalls, bulwarks and embankments. The more we can increase these soil/ water contacts in terms of length, area, and varying saturation conditions, the greater the species diversity and ecosystem resilience can be created. These varying levels of new moisture in the soil — from constant saturation to drier fast-draining uplands will largely determine the ecosystem types we see in this river reach in the coming years. So not only the plants but the associated, interrelated food web of amphibians, insects, birds, and mammals that depend on them are fundamentally organized by moisture gradients in the soil. Historically, along this stretch of the Mississippi we had the possibility of highly varied ecosystems in close proximity due to the river’s varying encounters with shorelines, tributaries, and islands. Of course numerous alterations to the channel have reduced this condition. RiverFIRST is working carefully with topography and day-lighted storm flows to dramatically expand the topographic, hydrologic, and consequently, small scale ecological diversity throughout this reach.

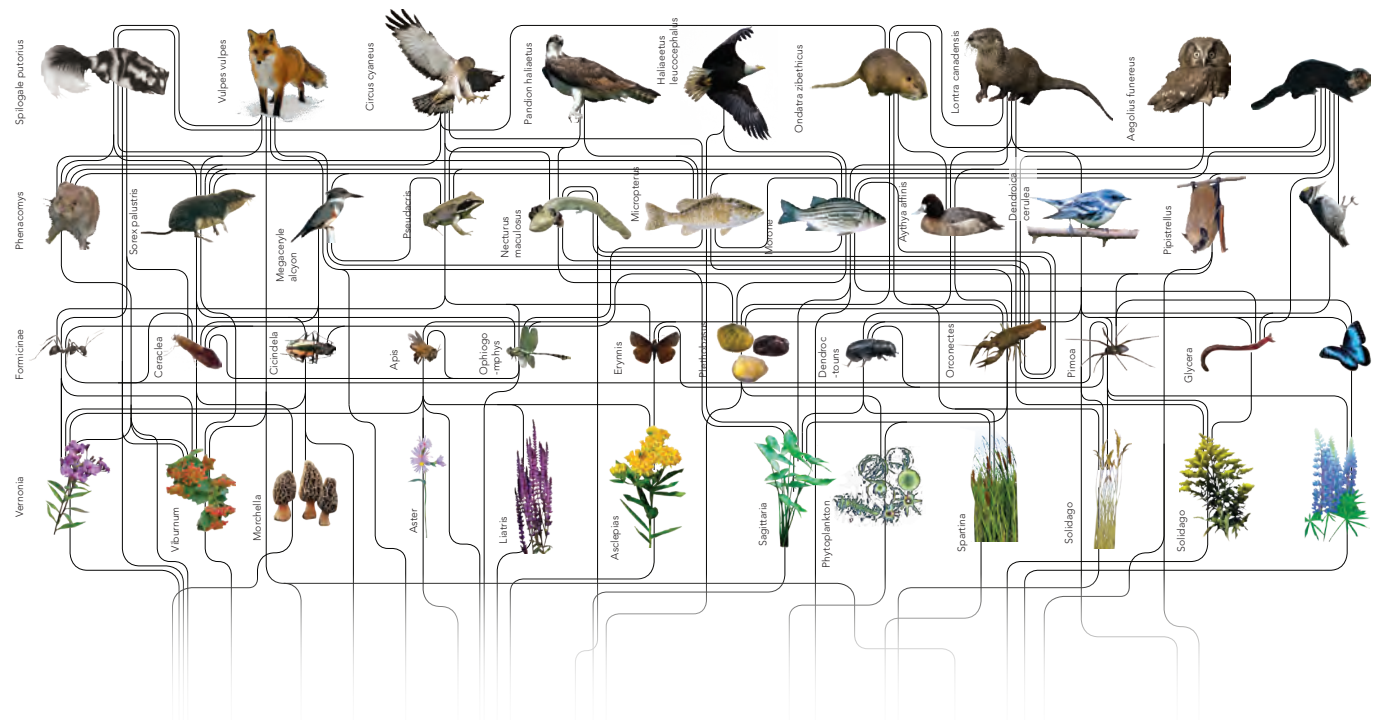


Guiding Principles Urban Ecology



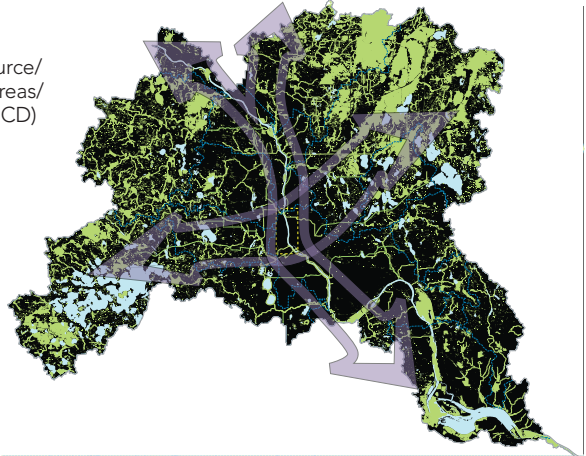
Foodweb

97 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) are known or predicted to occur within the RiverFIRST site. This food web examines a small collection of those SGCN and illustrates the necessity for biodiversity in order to achieve conservation goals and create a renewed urban ecology.



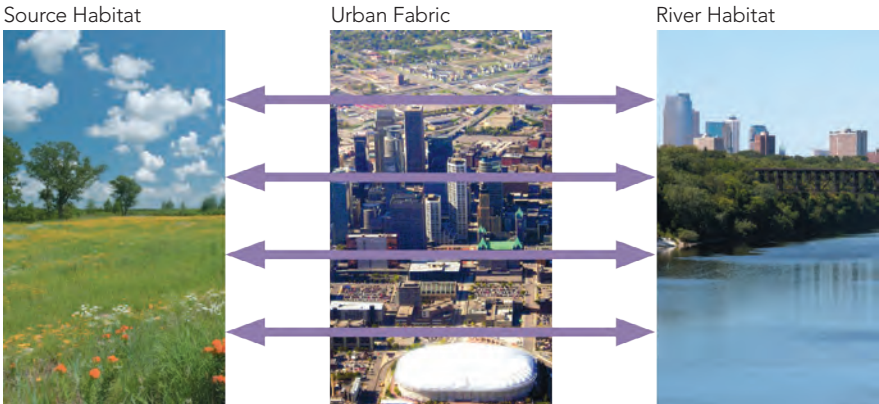
Regional Corridors

- Green-Regional Natural Resource/ Areas Significant Ecological Areas/ Wetlands and Wet Areas (MMCD)
- Green Lines-Trails
- Blue-Water Bodies
- Purple Arrows-Flyway and Terrestrial Corridors



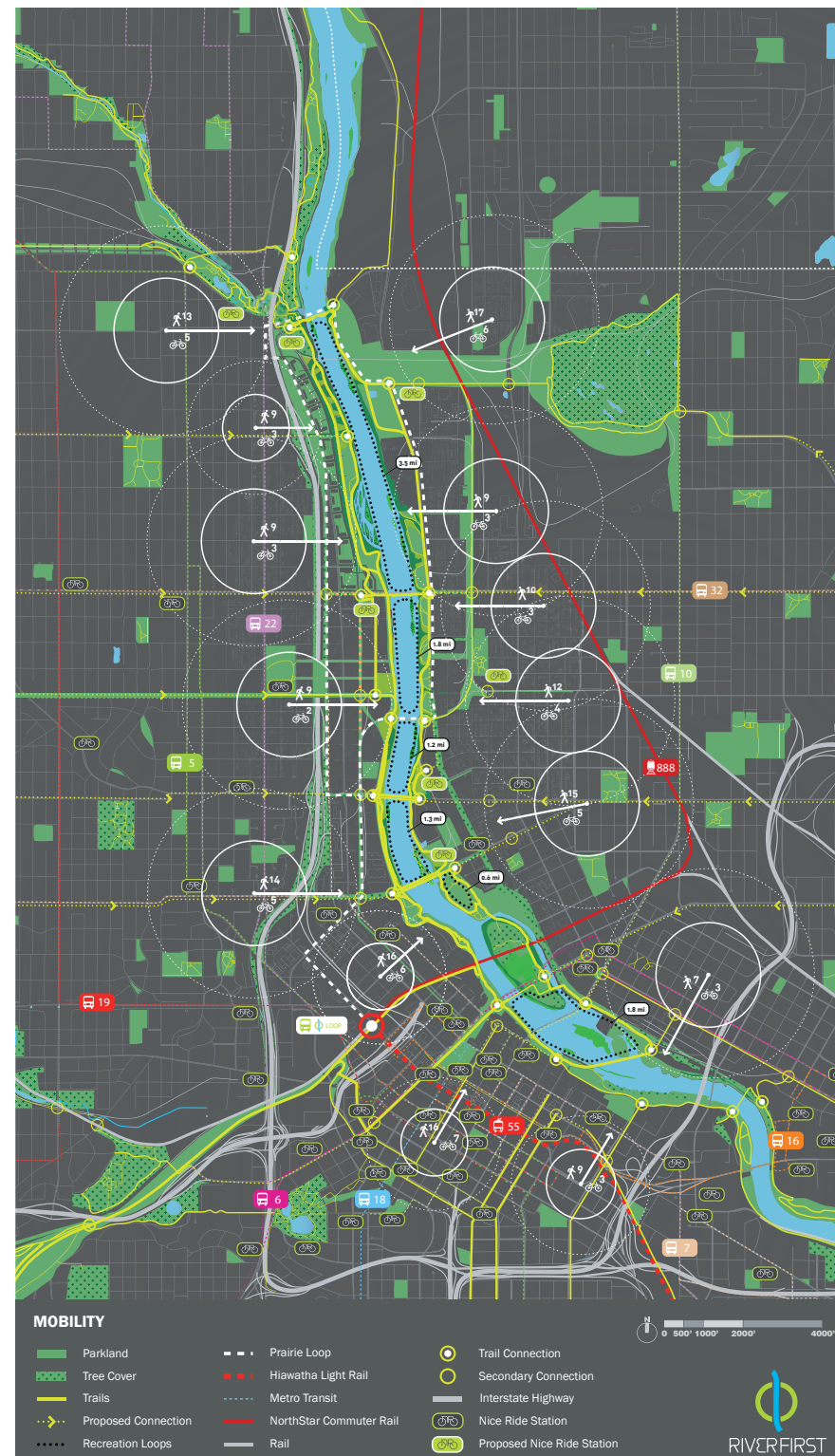
150 years ago, this reach of the Mississippi was a focus of diverse biological activity ranging from bacteria in the soil to the dead plants they break down, to the insects, amphibians, snakes, birds, and mammals that consume each other in a complex food chain. This vast interrelated system relies upon a healthy river and tributaries and generous riverine areas of moist and often saturated soils to support it in place. The more mobile species also rely on the river and related corridors to facilitate movement as they seek shelter and food over a wider range. Urban interventions, especially in this reach, have fragmented every aspect of the system creating a “missing link” not only in the Grand Rounds but in the Mississippi Flyway and terrestrial corridors. In everything it does, RiverFIRST seeks to reverse this disconnection and fragmentation through specific measures concerning renewing the natural hydrology within urban conditions, increasing area’s native landscape types, and cultivating natural attractors for species that may be in decline or have left the area entirely.

Urban Ecology Corridor



The physical result is tree-like in nature, with the Mississippi itself as the main trunk and tributary corridors as some of the key structural branches — such as Shingle Creek to the North, Basset Creek and others to Southwest connecting on to the Chain of Lakes and beyond, and a new proposed natural corridor to Columbia Park to the Northeast. Once a rich habitat with Sandy Lake at its core, this current golf course has the potential for restoration as a lake and wetland complex. This crucial piece of ecological real estate can also function as a future Central Park of Minneapolis as its urban margins increase in density over the next 20 years. I-94, like most urban highways is laced with endless swaths of open soil which lay sterile and create another blockage in the system of habitat and natural species cover. This could be transformed into diverse urban forest by cultivating every available embankment and sliver of residual land with native trees.

Guiding Principles Mobility



The RiverFIRST proposal incorporates new and existing transportation initiatives to create a sustainable, multi-modal and interconnected public transportation system for commuting, recreation, and mobility in Minneapolis. The Minneapolis Flyway, a comprehensive new North-South pedestrian and bicycle Park Trail System, is linked with a East-West Knot Bridge pedestrian and bicycle paths supported by the exiting foundations of City and County bridges.

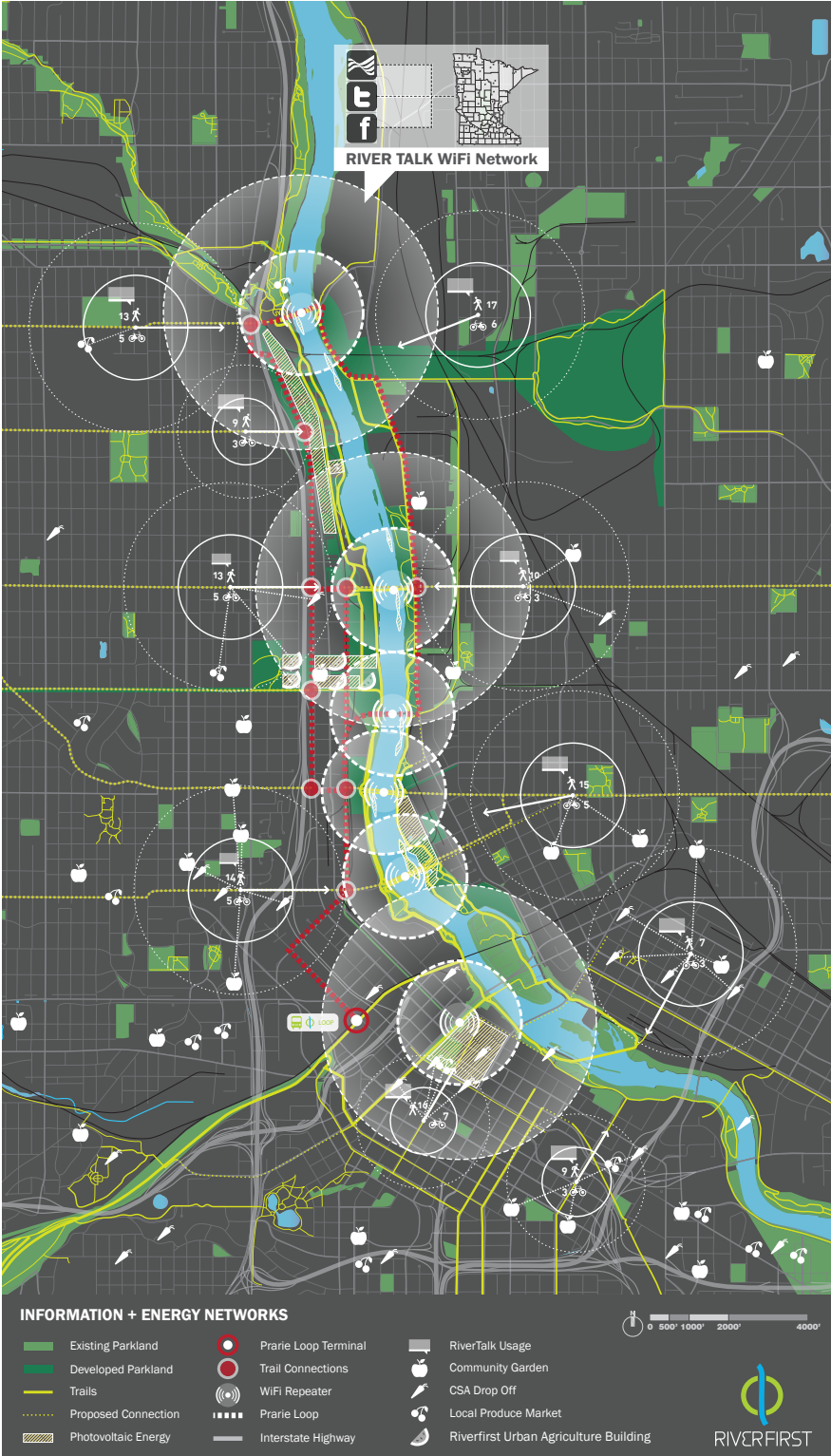
Access to the Trail System is provided by existing bus routes, the proposed clean electric bus Prairie Loop route and a series of new bridge crossings over I-94 that connect the North Neighborhoods with the River. Pedestrian connection improvements to N Dowling Avenue, N 34th Avenue (Perkins Hill and City View School), Lowry and Broadway are proposed to compliment the central RiverFIRST connecting feature, an overpass that links Farview Park, the City's historic high point, with the River.

Mobility Scales



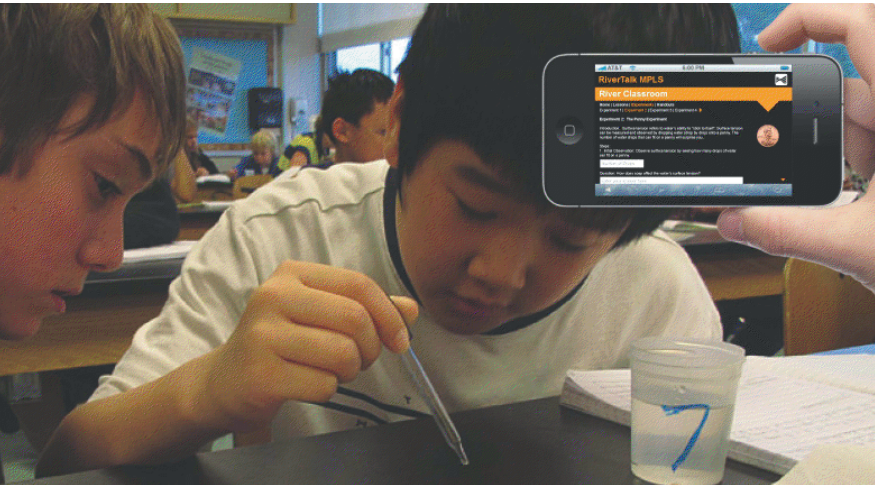
The new Cedar Lake Bike Trail links the River with Target Field, improving suburban and regional public access to the river on the Hiawatha LRT, the North Star and future Central, Southwest, and Bottineau LRT lines. Existing train rail lines are retained to facilitate sustainable transportation logistics for a new eco-business innovation district that can benefit in the future from renewable Minnesota wind energy and locally generated solar energy on Parklands. Residents from North and Northeast Neighborhoods will be able to walk, bike or take a clean electric shuttle to work. Nice Ride stations and public kayak launching sites at the Urban Boat Builder's facility on 28th Avenue North and Scherer Park increase the public accessibility of the RiverFIRST multi-modal transportation initiative and create a world class recreational and bike commuting network.

Guiding Principles Green Networks



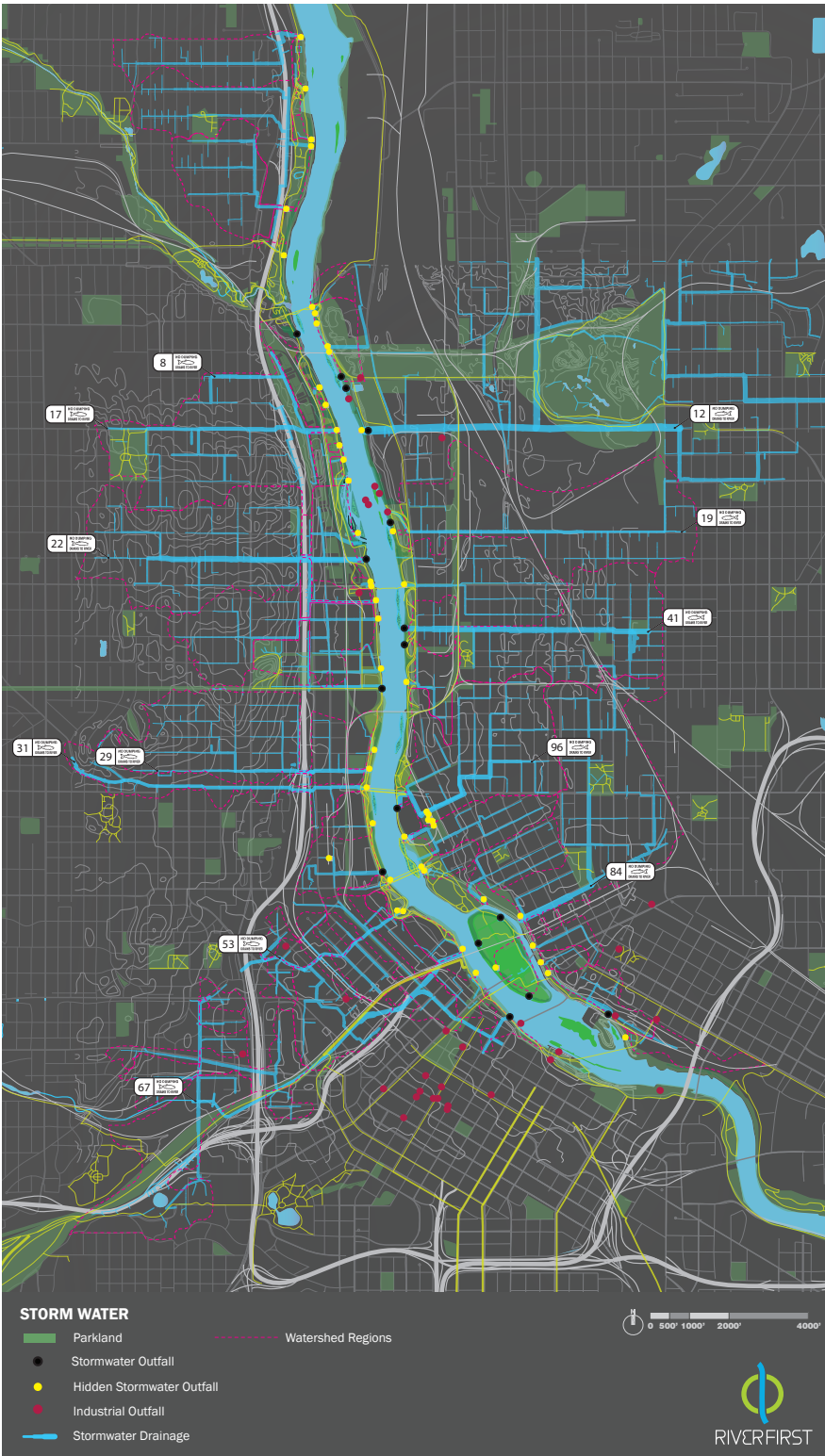
The RiverFIRST proposal leverages the development of Riverfront Parkland to improve the health of the River and the health of the City and its Neighborhoods. At the larger urban scale, RiverFIRST creates and interconnects a series of synergistic Green Networks that are comprised of sustainable bike routes and pedestrian trails, existing Neighborhood based community gardens and local food initiatives, new civic clean energy resources and the WiFi River Talk network, providing public outreach and education on local conservation. Renewable energy in Parklands provides clean power for charging electric vehicles and on shore power (OSP) for green industry, reducing future energy cost risks, noise and emissions.

RiverFIRST Parklands create significant new opportunities for urban agriculture, help provide for municipal food security and expand neighborhood access to healthy food and nutrition in ways that build communities and local business enterprises. Together the RiverFIRST



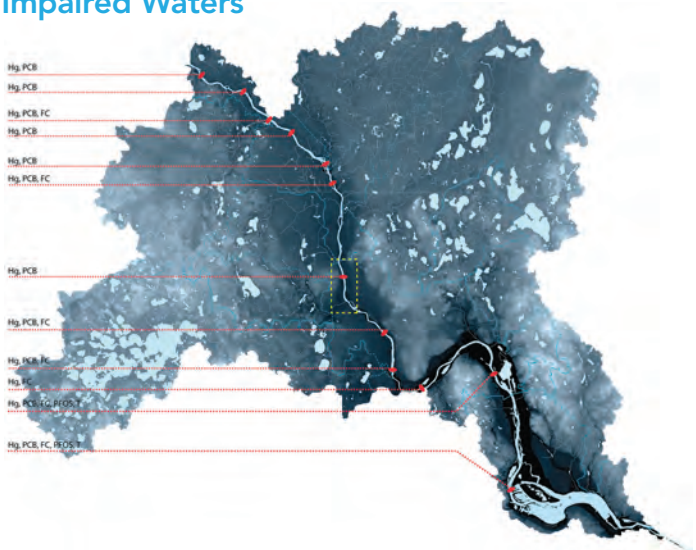
Green Network systems link Neighborhoods with significant new urban agriculture resources, including native edibles, that build upon existing community gardens, Farmer's Markets and sustainable organic and slow food establishments.

The Green Networks combine to build a large, diverse constituency of citizens who are informed about health, community based food, recreation and the benefits of a sustainable River. New initiatives are envisioned, such as the development of sustainable consumer products: 1% RiverFIRST clean road salt and natural lawn fertilizer products to raise public awareness of how everyday consumer practices can improve River ecology and community health far beyond the Minneapolis Riverfront.



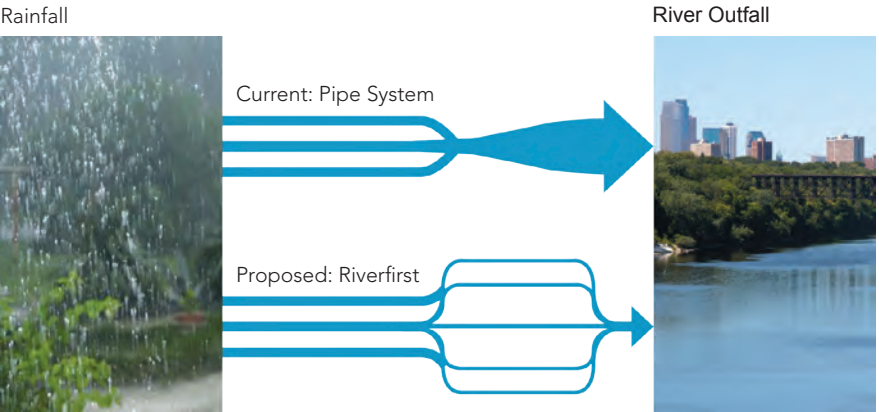
Watershed – Impaired Waters

- Hg – Mercury
- PCB – Polychlorinated bipheyls
- FC – Fecal Coliform
- PFOS – Perfluoroctane Sulfinate
- T – Turbidity
- NaCl – Sodium Chloride



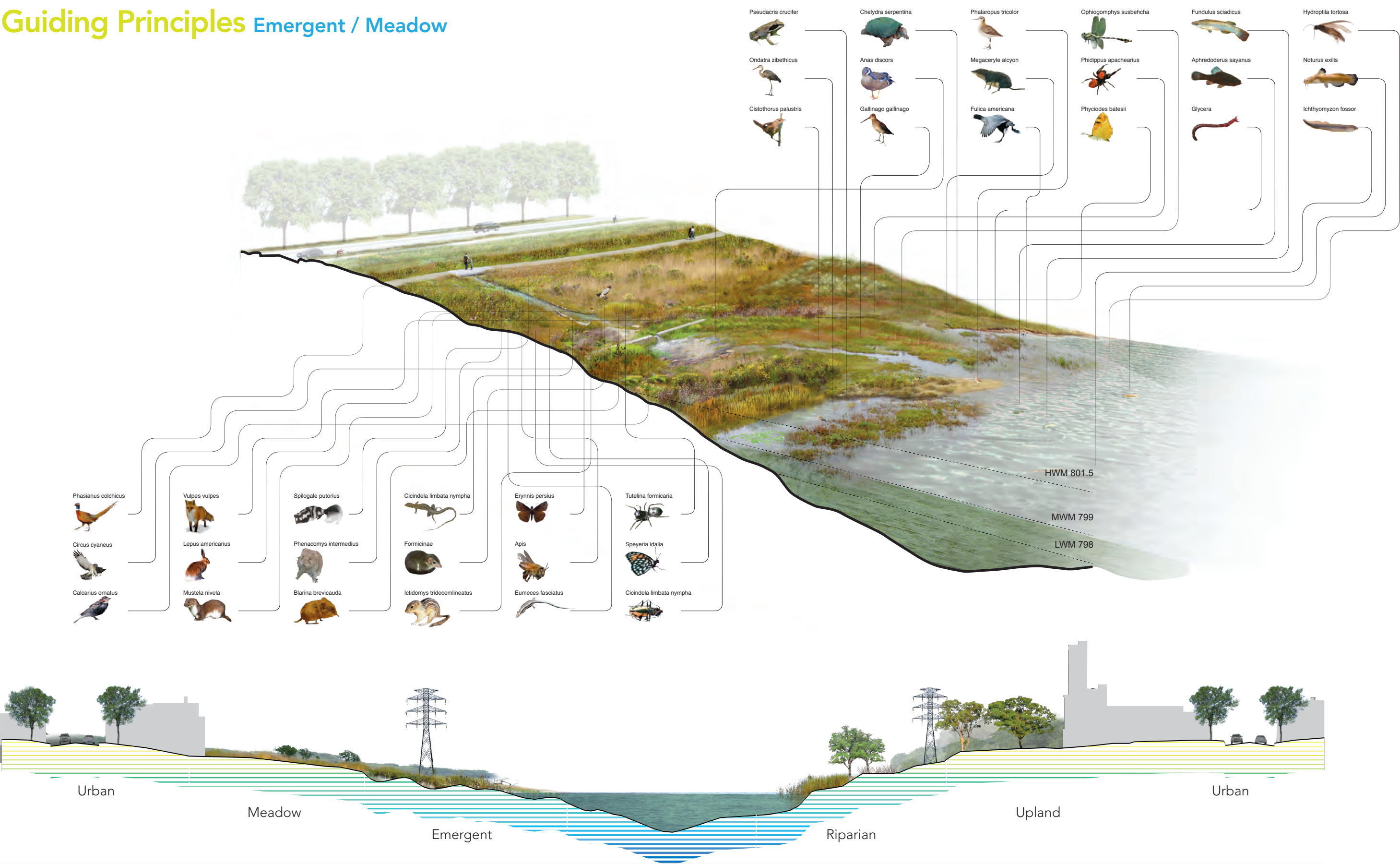
The basis of RiverFIRST lies in restoring the relationship of land to water, the notion of B’dote in Native American cultures, where every joining of waters has a sacred and also practical status in that these moments of hydrologic connections maintain the heath of the overall tree-like system. As “limbs” have become severed and polluted over the years the natural function of these tributaries has been lost. The watersheds which feed this reach of the Mississippi now contribute a range of urban pollutants including mercury, PCB’s, and most importantly salt from roadways. Reversing this trend requires a system-wide solution within each watershed. But the zone along the river where piped outfalls occur is a fundamental place to start transforming the current hard infrastructure into a “soft” one where storm flows are brought to the surface wherever feasible to be naturally cleansed by riparian corridors and wetland features cultivated with bio-filtering species.

Stormwater Flows

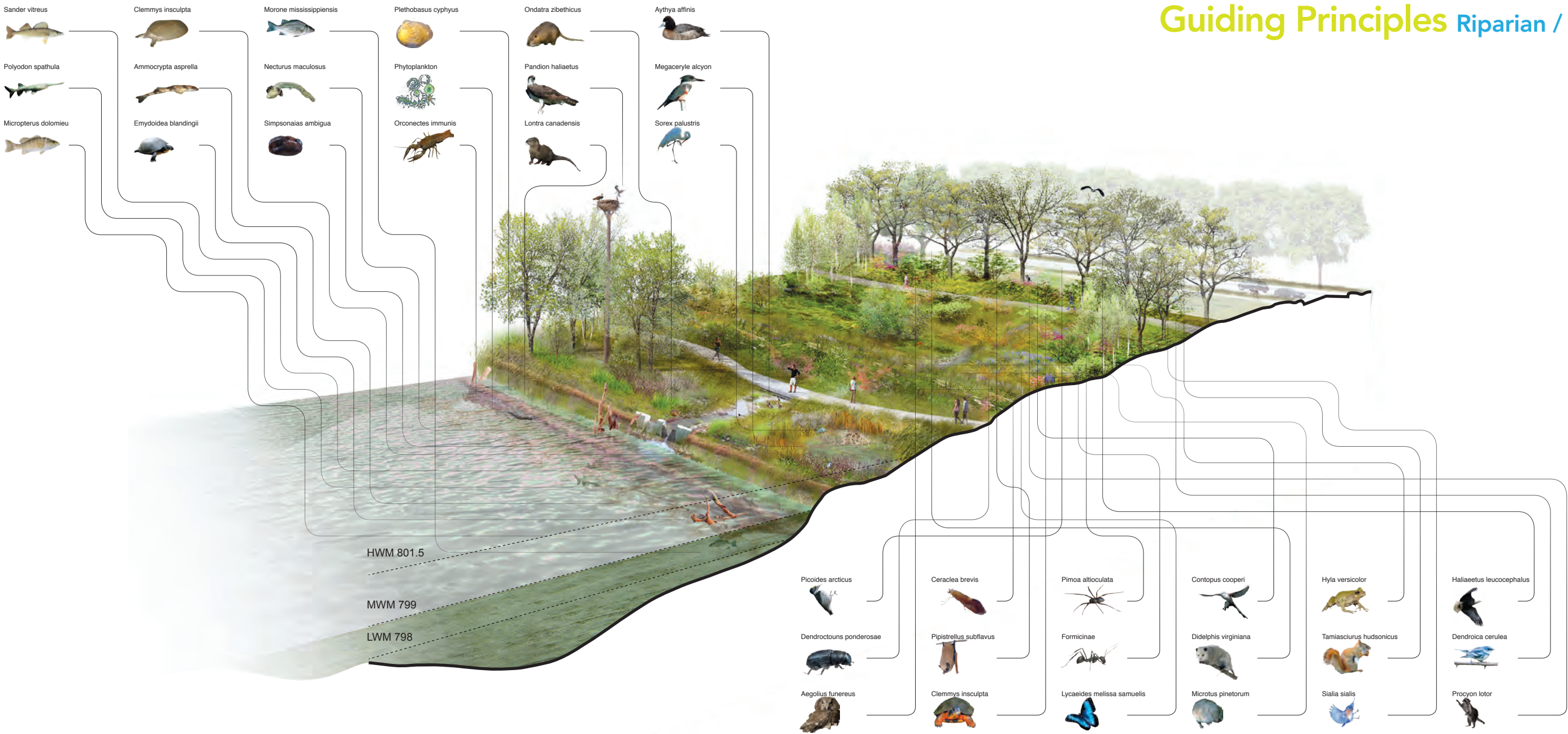


RiverFIRST proposes a system of bio-filtration opportunities including a new 20 acre wetland at the current barge port that can receive and clean large quantities of North-side storm flows while also creating rich and diverse new emergent ecosystem based on what had previously existed there. A stair-step series of biofiltratrion terraced gardens along N Dowling Avenue also provides an environment for cultivating native “crops” such as American lotus and Arrowhead which historically fed Native Americans and waterfowl. At the Northeast side, existing parks provide a starting point for a series of new storm water ravines and seasonal creeks which gently slope from Marshall St. to the river, allowing both people and water new access to the shoreline. These measures provide a powerful starting point within each watershed in terms of treating pollutants at their most concentrated, but also create a new visibility for a natural hydrology that will support new urban ecosystems.

Guiding Principles Emergent / Meadow



Guiding Principles Riparian / Upland



Meadow

This iconic habitat zone starts at the edge of the Twin Cities and stretches to the south and west of the state. These landscapes are dominated by grasses; a perfect habitat for small mammals and their predators. Typically the topography is flat with slight depressions and gentle slopes.

Emergent

This zone of shallow water is often manipulated by the rivers force and sedimentation; a multitude of rushes, sedges, and grasses scatter refuge for the river's wildlife inhabitants. A living machine that absorbs flood waters, with the ability to filter pollutants, these waters team with insects, reptiles, and fish.

Riparian

This dynamic zone needs bank stability since anthropogenic forces have increased the stress of wave action and decreased natural flood plains. Defined by drastic topographical changes from scouring, this zone is a key link between land and river as it provides the opportunity to increase habitat and biodiversity.

Upland

Where the moisture regime changes a diverse canopy of timber emerges, layered with a myriad of sub-canopy and ground-layer vegetation, providing a rich habitat for fringe species that "go to" the river for food and reproduction needs. This zone provides essential habitat buffering to urban adjacencies.

Overall Plan

First Steps and Future Growth



Introduction

The planning strategy to develop the 5 ½ mile stretch of riverfront and adjacent urban upland along the Mississippi is to prioritize five strategic implementation sites that over a 0–5 year timeframe together establish a framework for future visions outlined in two further phases, a 5–10 year and 10–20 year plan. In the near term, a system of north to south riverfront trails are complimented by east to west bridges that establish a network of circulation and access opportunities to the Mississippi River and its adjacent neighborhoods. Site specific demonstration sites create anchors at strategic locations along the river that establish the foundation for a vision for the Mississippi that will support the region’s neighborhoods that are rich with cultural and ethnic diversity, artistic production, and multi-scaled industrial business served by freeway, rail, and barge.

0–5 Year Strategic Implementation Plan

The first intervention is a 6 mile Riverfront Trail System from Plymouth Bridge to Camden Bridge and back down to Boom Island. This system of trails includes a series of floating Biohaven Islands that are dedicated wildlife sanctuaries intended to reintroduce and support riverfront habitats. The Riverfront Trail System is a continuous trail and bikeway proposal that will use existing public parkland as well as private property requiring access through either the purchase of land or easement agreements. As a result of active industries along the Northside, riverfront trails are proposed to be elevated allowing industries to operate while the public enjoys park amenities and wildlife habitats. In the event that easements are not possible an interim bikeway is proposed along N 2nd Street thus providing a link between the riverfront trails that terminate north of Broadway Bridge and North Mississippi Park.

The second intervention is the N 26th Avenue Greenway Extension and improvements to 28th Ave N which establishes an initial implementation for the plan’s long-term vision to extend Farview Park to the river through this area’s industrial district. This is complemented by the 22nd Avenue NE Greenway from Edison High School to the River. The combination of the two greenways create an environmental education corridor connecting Edison High School in Northeast to Nellie Stone Johnson Community School in North and a new paradigm in street design.

The third intervention, the Scherer Park District, develops the 11-acre Scherer Brothers property recently acquired by the MPRB for public park land along with development that includes a mix of uses to support an energized park. The plan for Scherer Park includes restoration of Hall’s Island and the narrow river channel between Hall’s Island and the Scherer site. The plan would create roughly an 7 acre park and 4 acres of development on the Scherer site. This third intervention also includes establishment of Sheridan Park and development of new residential housing adjacent to the Grain Belt Brewery.

The fourth intervention is the Northside Wetlands Park, currently the site of the City of Minneapolis’ Upper Harbor Terminal. This project proposes to create a 25 acre wetland on a portion of the 48-acre site currently used as a materials handling facility for coal, steel coil, and dredge spoils from the river. This 0–5 year plan proposes to consolidate the port facility to the northern end of the site making space for the wetlands project.

Downtown Gateway, the fifth intervention, provides a destination downtown park adjacent to the Central Library as well as reestablishment of an open space link between Downtown Gateway, Nicollet Mall and the Mississippi River.

5–10 Year Vision

The 5–10 year Vision includes the further growth of projects that have been implemented in the 0–5 year plan and introduces new areas for development. For example, the Farview Park Extension strengthens its connection from Northside through the addition of a two-block land bridge that spans I-94 and extends the landscape of Farview Park down the hill toward the river. North 27th Avenue, lost over decades of industrial development, is restored as a walk-street and lined by rain gardens that bring stormwater from Farview Park to the river. The Farview Park Extension culminates in the redevelopment of the City-managed Trash Transfer facility for use as a river-oriented enterprise and educational/interpretive experience such as a boat builder. This 12-block sector from Farview Park to the river becomes the core of a new Eco-Business District that serves as a model for others to follow.

To extend the recreational and community energy created at Scherer Park, a mix of recreational enterprise uses such as a café, pavilion and museum would be developed in the area around the Marina at Boom Island. At the Northside Wetlands Park the Upper Harbor Terminal port facility is replaced by park space, a renovated Cold Storage Building, and structures for public amenities, solar arrays, and areas to store dredge spoils. This first large scale project north of Lowry will serve as a prototype for future developments.

The 5–10 Year Vision introduces a new area of development—the Northeast Riverfront Park which proposes to utilize MPRB-owned parcels to create stormwater mitigation by regrading parkland at existing outfall locations.

10–20 Year Vision

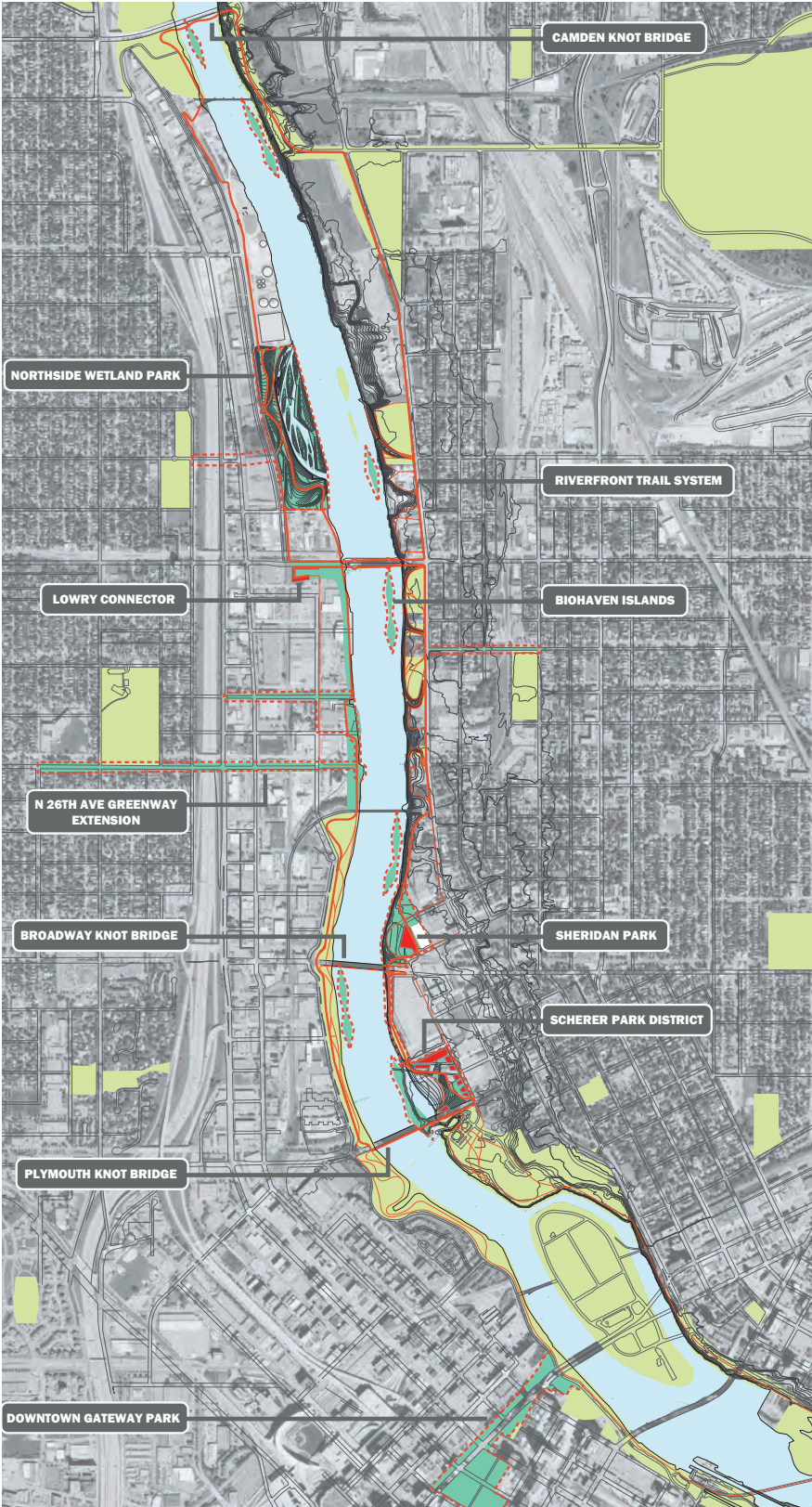
The longer range 10–20 Year Vision is to create opportunities within the framework of the plan for added development that reinforces both the RiverFIRST initiative and City of Minneapolis redevelopment goals. The plan attempts to preserve the city grid framework and to introduce new and innovative programs supportive of environmental stewardship and providing opportunities for a mix of creative industries, commercial amenities, and residential growth. An example is the vision for a one-mile land bridge over I-94, seamlessly reconnecting north Minneapolis neighborhoods to the recreational and scenic amenity of the river corridor. Clusters of development are encouraged at east-west corridors such as Plymouth, Broadway, Lowry, Dowling and N 41st Ave, and at north-south intersections such as N 2nd St and Marshall St NE.

Finally, the Spirit Island site, located where the former Spirit Island once existed just below Saint Anthony Falls and obliterated during the construction of the lock and dam system, is included as a central piece of the RiverFIRST project. Once a sacred ground for the native Dakota community, it is the intention of the RiverFIRST proposal to establish a process that will lead to the celebration of Spirit Island as a gesture that marks a commitment to a much deeper cross-cultural understanding so important to the life of our city.

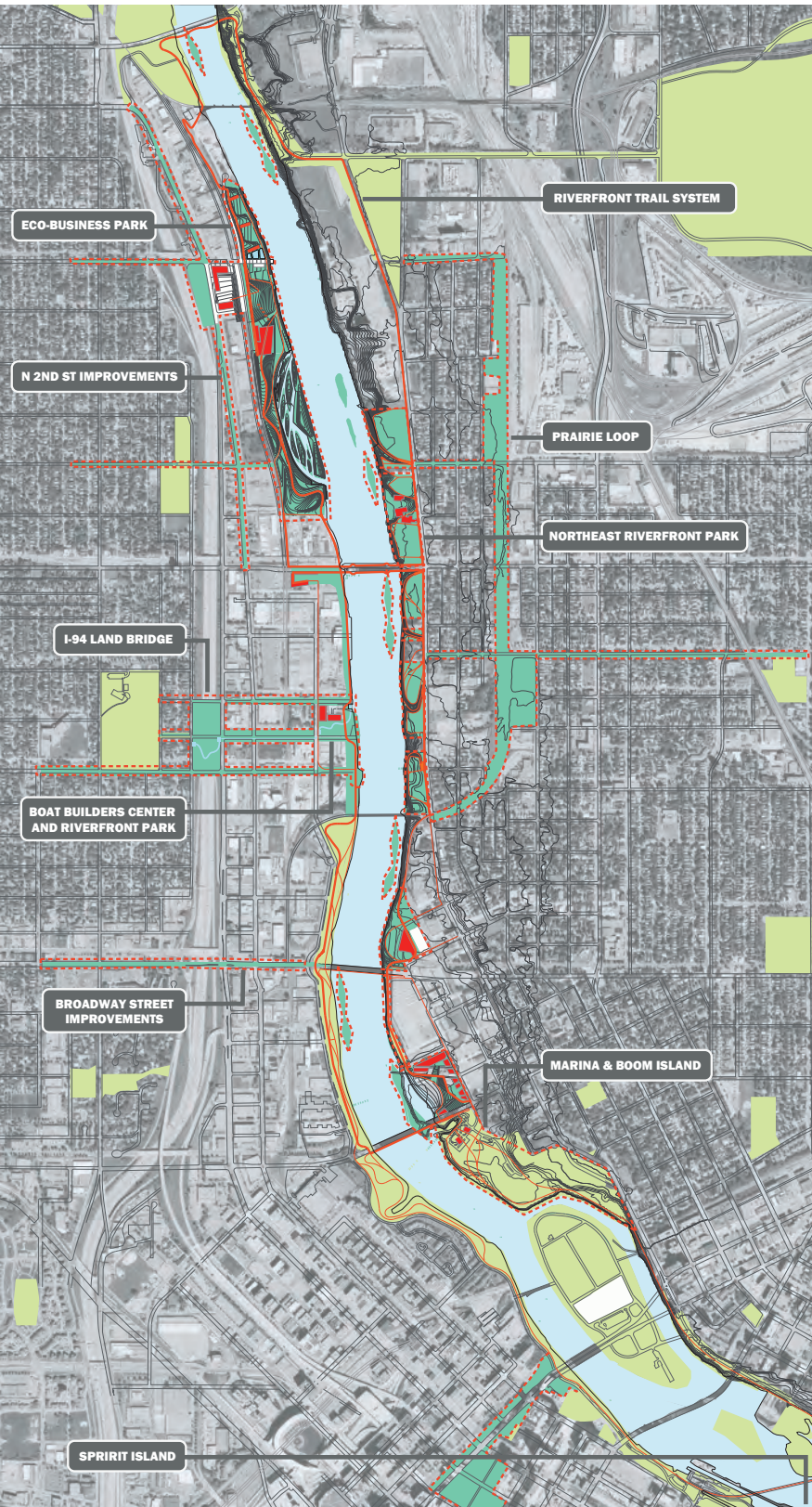
Ultimately, it is the vision of RiverFIRST to transform the 3-mile stretch of Northside industrial land as a place where both ecologically-responsible business industries and mixed use developments can co-exist and that share a common interest in preserving the health of the Mississippi River providing a bridge to it from communities such as Northside that previously have had no access to its riverbanks. The RiverFIRST plan provides riverfront park land with trails, bikeways, bridges, and walkable streets that support and help foster strategic development opportunities that take advantage of the area’s proximity to a growing downtown Minneapolis, the diverse Northside and Northeast neighborhoods to the East and West, and unique parks to the North.

Overall Plan First Steps and Future Growth

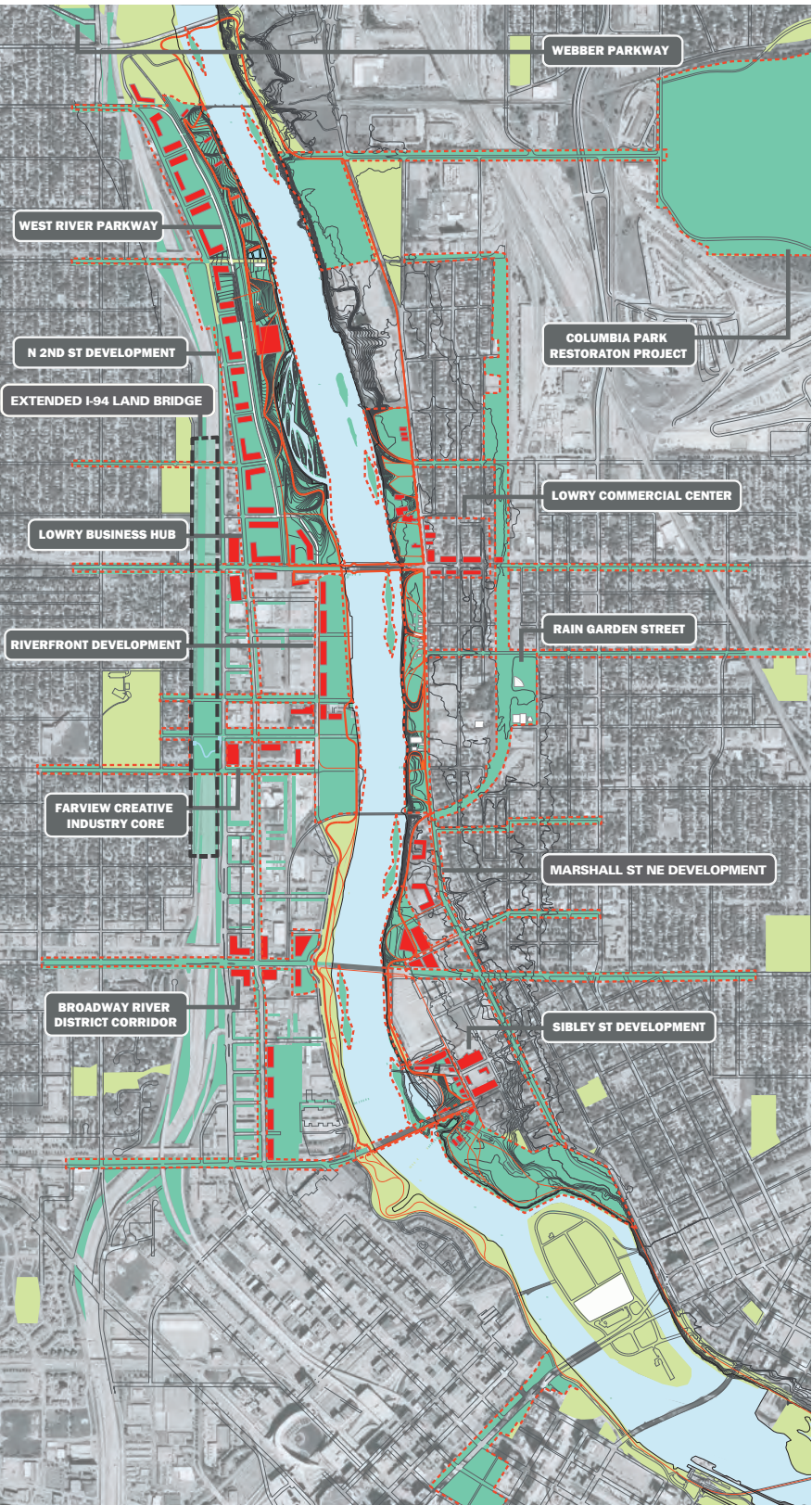
0–5 Year Implementation Plan



5–10 Year Vision

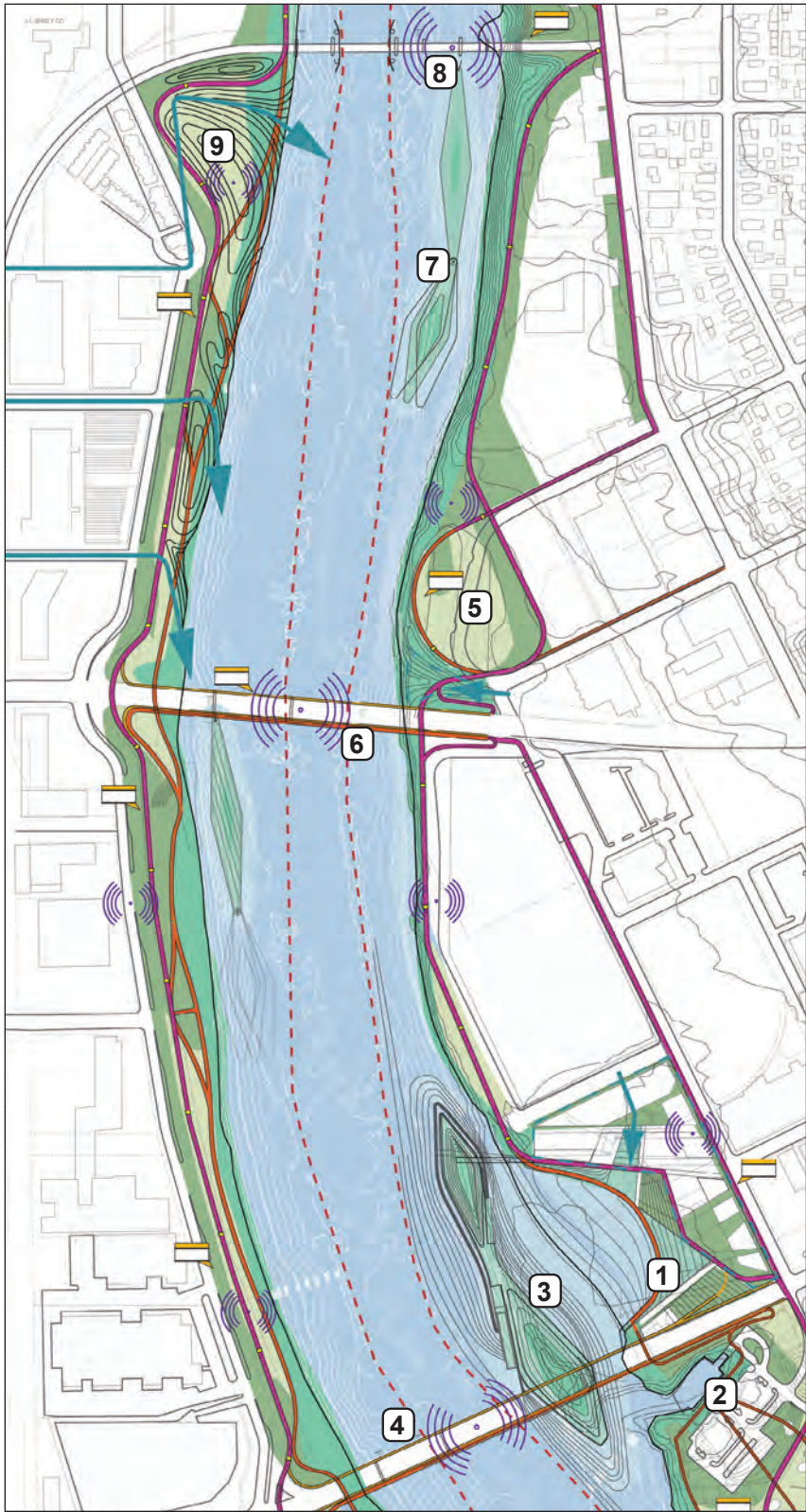


10–20 Year Vision



Priority Project 0–5 Years

Riverfront Trail System: Plymouth to BNSF Trail Loop



1. Scherer Park
2. Boom Island marina
3. Restored Hall's Island
4. Plymouth Knot bridge
5. Sheridan Park and Development
6. Broadway Knot Bridge
7. Biohaven Island
8. BNSF Pedestrian Bridge and Third Rail Cafe
9. Riverside Commons Park

Named after the Mississippi Flyway, one of the world’s most significant North-South bird migration routes, this proposed public Trail System will provide six miles of new, Riverfront recreational trails for pedestrians, bicyclists and x-country skiers. The North-South Trail System connects with East-West pedestrian walkways (Knot Bridges) in a series of recreational River Loop circuits that link North and Northeast Neighborhoods.

Site lighting, grouping cyclists and pedestrians with appropriate lane ways, open view corridors, WiFi access through the proposed River Talk network and convenient vehicular and pedestrian Trail access points will help to ensure public safety as the riverfront develops. The Trail System can serve as a 21st century model for new operational efficiencies in bio-remediated storm water irrigation, modular construction, and low maintenance solar powered snow melting systems.



Plymouth to Broadway is the first and most easily achievable loop in the system of loops moving northward with no special bridging required N-S

BNSF bridge link requires a major acquisition of strategic rail bridge still in marginal use

BNSF link would allow major bike traffic on N 26th Avenue to connect to major routes on NE side

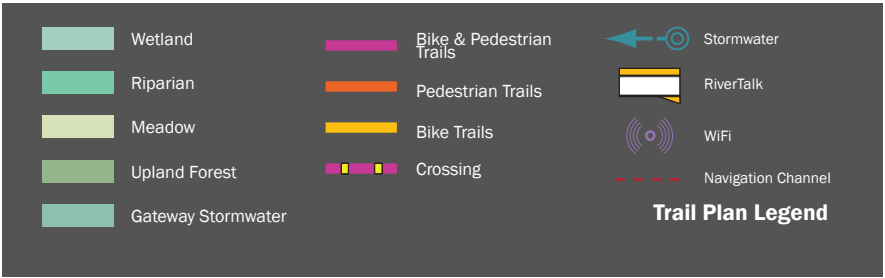
Graco river frontage already in process of easement creation

Park at Riverside condos creates screening of residents from industrial activity and new acoustic green living plant wall park in at “triangle” creates cleft for storm water collection

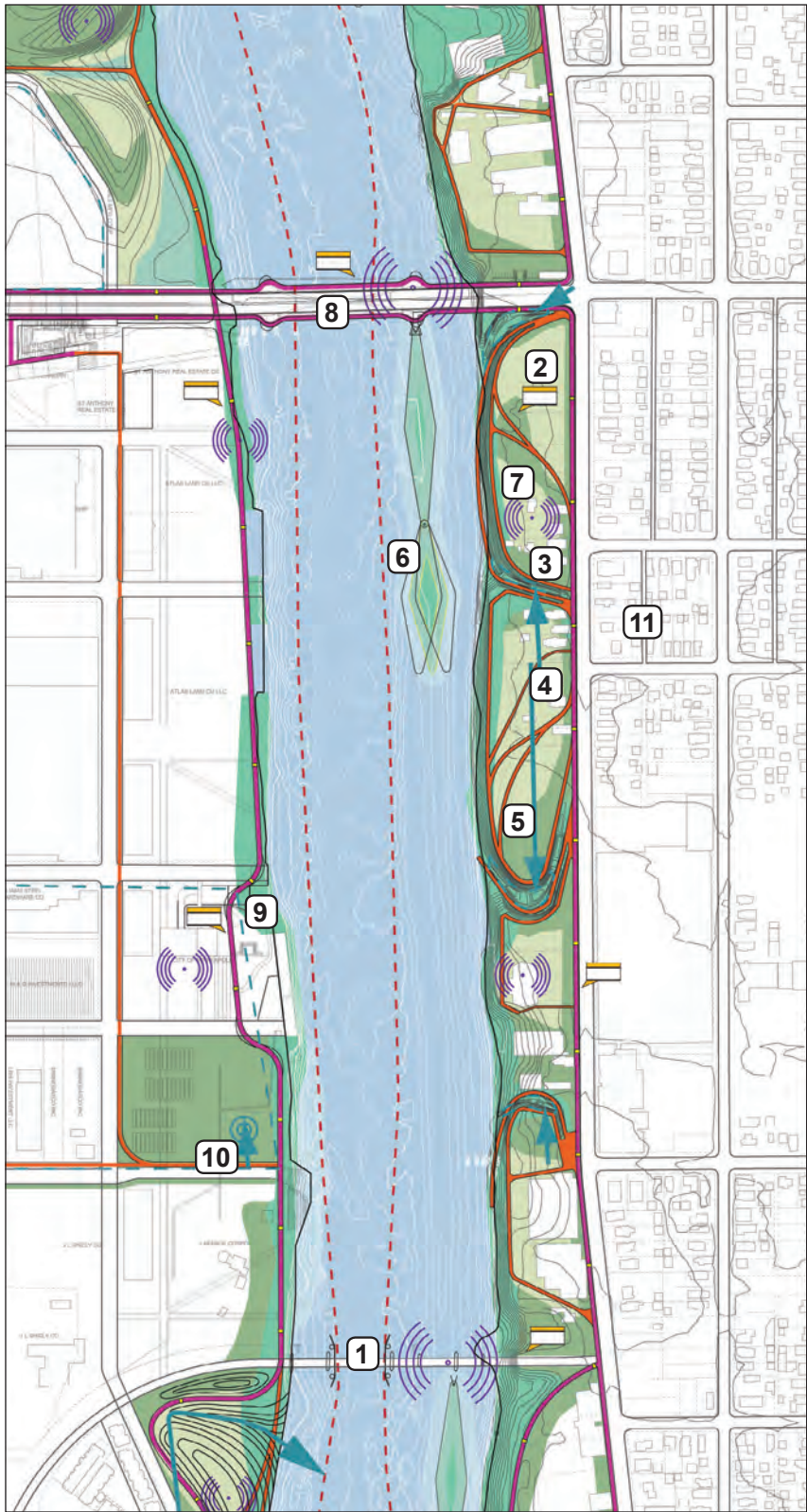
Access to the Trail System is from city streets, bike trails and bus lines as well as from the proposed Prairie Loop clean electric bus line. When the Flyway Trail System crosses over land owned by existing industry, it bridges over operational areas. Representatives of all industrial land owners were contacted by the Design Team to discuss and develop criteria for the Trail System. By creating a public presence along the riverfront, the Minneapolis Flyway trail system will jumpstart the RiverFIRST Parklands and create the connective ‘glue’ to link Downtown and Neighborhoods with the River and with existing and new Parklands. The trail system can be implemented in a series of cost effective modular segments that can be constructed over time.

Preliminary Development Budget

A preliminary budget of \$27 million has been estimated for the Riverfront Trail System segment from the the Plymouth Avenue bridge to the BNSF railroad bridge. Trail sites along the riverfront that are private property will require both easements and fee acquisition resulting in additional development costs that are not reflected in the total capital cost.



Priority Project 0–5 Years Riverfront Trail System: BNSF to Lowry Loop

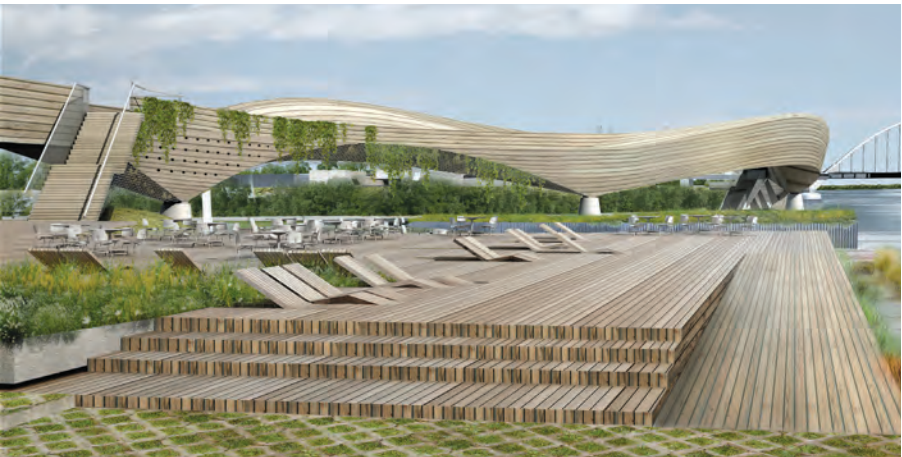


1. BNSF Pedestrian Bridge and Third Rail Cafe
2. Edgewater Park
3. New Ravine Trail
4. Gluek Park
5. New Ravine Trail
6. Biohaven Island
7. Children's Art Camp
8. Lowry Bridge
9. Flyway Bridge
10. N 26th Avenue N Greenway
11. 22nd Avenue NE Bike Route

The Minneapolis Flyway Trail System serves the City and Parks as a comprehensive riparian conservation spine. The Trail System provides a rich range of landscape habitat to support endangered cornerstone species. Naturally cleansed storm water is integrated along the Trail System in small scale bridge crossing points that allow natural drainage as well as animals to move freely underneath to sustain species and habitat movement. The Trail System provides an armature for the re-establishment of the historic riverbank canopy, which in turn supports pollinator and food web species for Warbler, Flycatchers, Vireos, Orioles and other migrating species, as well as supporting river cleaning mollusks and fish that sustain Heron, Osprey, and Eagles. The Conservation Strategy unifies the form, material expression and public experience of the Trail System. Constructed sustainably of reclaimed wood modules, with low maintenance recycled rubber walking surfaces, the Trail System allows bio-diversity to return to the river and flourish over time.



- East side — through trail shifts to Marshall with various “eyebrows” where bikes and pedestrians loop to the river’s edge.
- Ravines allow gently sloped flows of people and day-lighted storm to river’s edge
- Lowry crossing engages with and modifies construction in-progress
- West side has three of most challenging trail connections — under BNSF, over 2 different active barge docks using Flyway bridges
- Easement and land acquisition at these locations among most strategic for long term success of Grand Rounds
- Interim fall-back location at Pacific St.
- Below-bridge space at west end of Lowry developed as park and possible commercial along with remodeled storm water detention

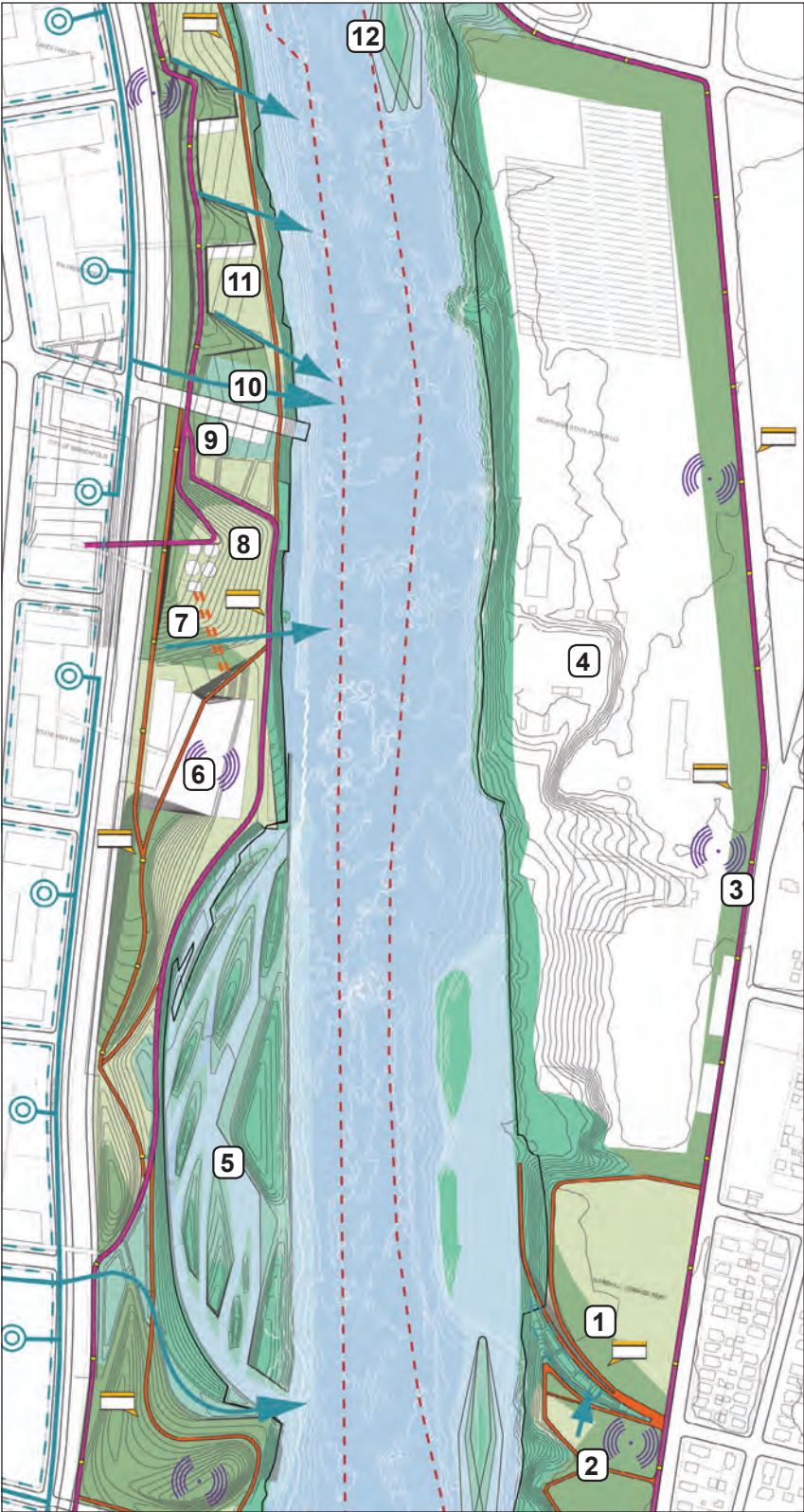


Preliminary Development Budget

A preliminary budget of \$15 million has been estimated for the Riverfront Trail System segment from the BNSF railroad bridge to the Lowry Avenue North bridge. Trail sites along the riverfront that are private property will require both easements and fee acquisition resulting in additional development costs that are not reflected in the total capital cost.

Priority Project 0–5 Years

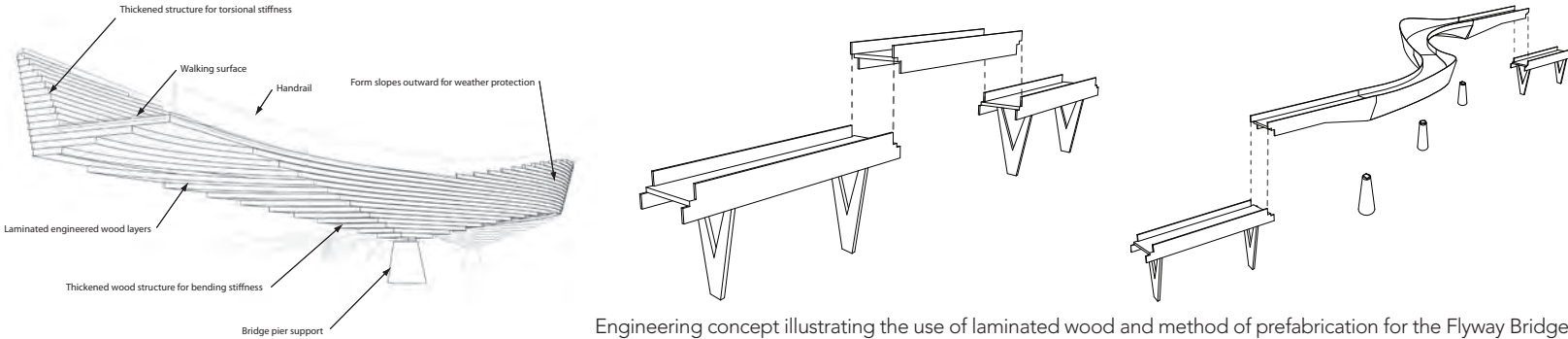
Riverfront Trail System: Wetlands Marshall Loop



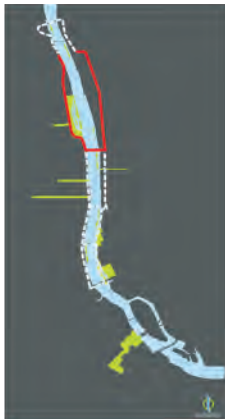
1. Marshall Terrace Park
2. New ravine trail
3. East side urban farm
4. Excel Plant
5. New wetlands park
6. Remodeled Cold Storage Bldg.
7. Remodeled Grain Elevator
8. Amphitheater Slope
9. Photo-voltaic Arrival Canopy w/ pavilions
10. Biofiltration wetland gardens
11. Park "Rooms"
12. Biohaven Island



Prefabricated wood-based structures allow for rapid installation



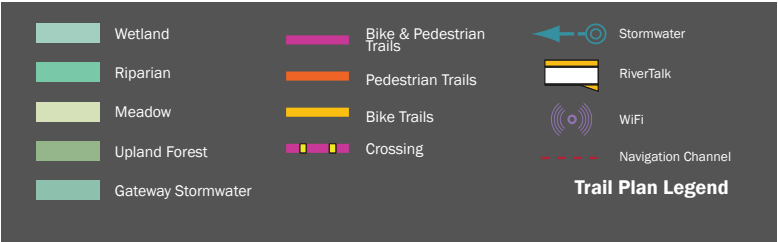
Engineering concept illustrating the use of laminated wood and method of prefabrication for the Flyway Bridge



East Side—"eyebrow" system stops at Excel with no riverfront access allowable
Marshall "through-way" continues uninterrupted to St. Anthony Parkway.
Easement parcels east of Marshall opposite Excel can be developed as urban farming to continue park sensibility around Excel
West side riverfront trail enters its richest moment looping around new wetland park
Thru-bikes kept to rear of Port property along rail corridor
Key connection and highway bridge at N 34th Avenue from North side neighborhood to new park
Trail ascends to the top of the existing cold storage building on sloping landforms
North of existing cold storage building "Ridge trail" follows the crest of new dredge fill landforms against the rail lines—"shoreline trail" follows water's edge

Preliminary Development Budget

See page 21 for combined costs of this proposed trail loop.



Priority Project 0–5 Years

Riverfront Trail System: Camden North Mississippi Loop



1. Canadian Pacific Bridge
2. Biohaven Island
3. North Mississippi Park
4. Shingle Creek
5. Existing Boat Launch
6. Rail Bridge Undercrossing

Preliminary Development Budget

A preliminary budget of \$15 million has been estimated for the Riverfront Trail System's Camden Bridge/North Mississippi Regional Park segment. Trail sites along the riverfront that are private property will require both easements and fee acquisition resulting in additional development costs that are not reflected in the total capital cost.



- Completing vital connections to North Mississippi Park and to Shingle Creek Grand Rounds link
- Knot bridge or Camden bridge walkway essential to complete the loop
- Canadian Pacific bridge not available for any pedestrians or bikes but connecting under on west side is crucial connection and brings existing boat ramp into the rest of the park
- Connection to Shingle Creek can be made via highway undercrossing for the creek



Bicycle Path, Dupont Maryland



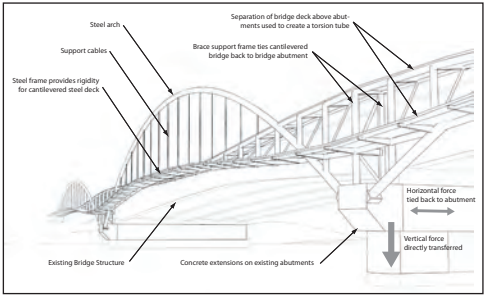
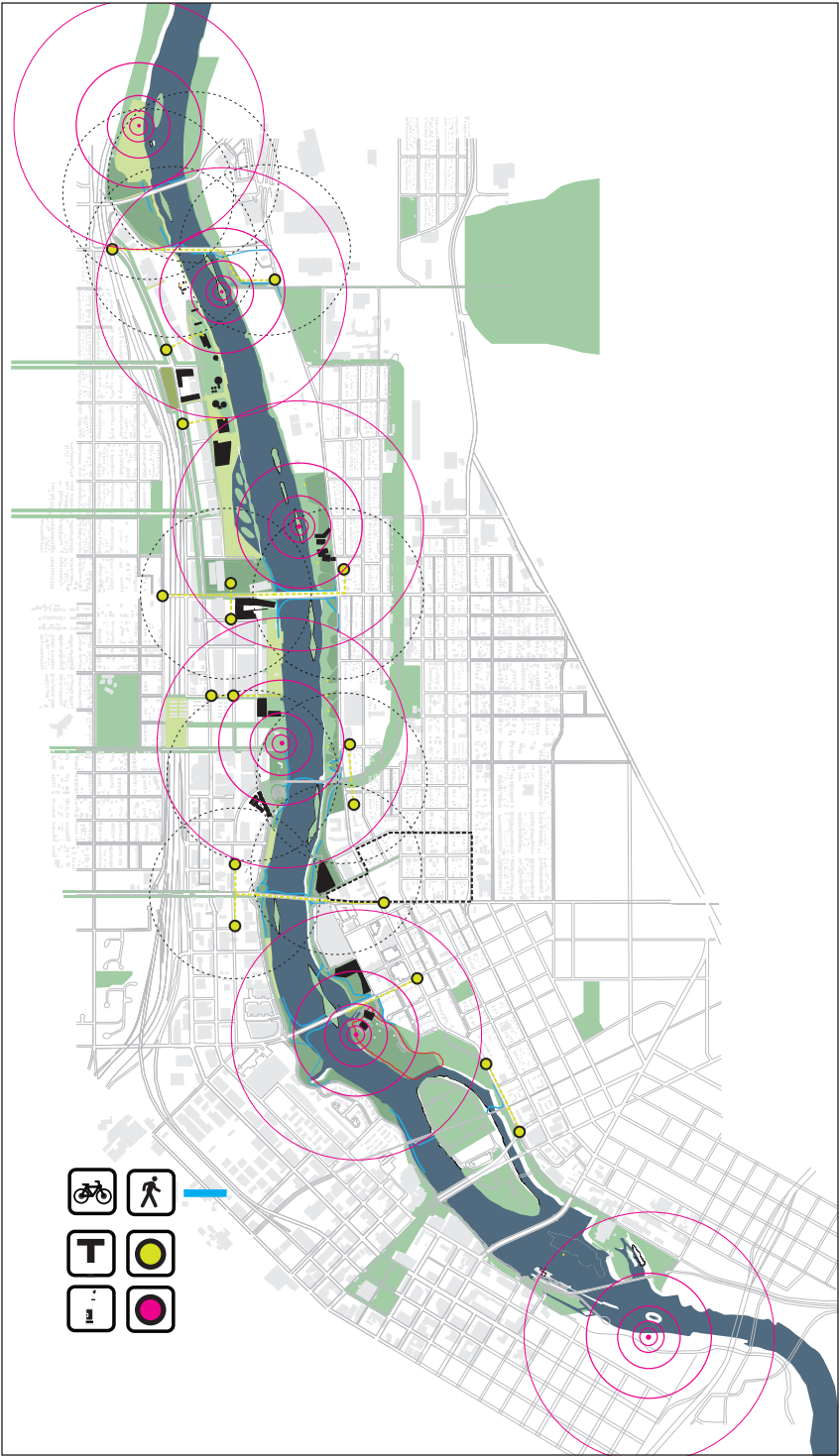
Bicycle path, Copenhagen, Denmark



American River Bike Trail, Sacramento CA

Priority Project 0–5 Years

Riverfront Trail System: Knot Bridges



Engineering sketch illustrating Knot Bridge structural concept



Reclaimed BN/SF Bridge looking east toward the Third Rail Cafe



Marsupial Bike and Pedestrian Bridge Milwaukee

The RiverFIRST Trail System initiative is designed to create new synergies between existing City and County Bridges and a set of proposed water remediation and ecological conservation assets. Knot Bridges are designed to be supported from the existing foundations of bridge structures, and provide needed pedestrian linkages with the north-south river Trail System.

The Knot Bridges tie or “knot together” roadway and the River Trail levels, providing the “missing links” in section that connect the disparate heights of existing bridge roadways with the lower natural river bank topography. Natural land grading is used to make the Knot bridges ADA accessible. On each bridge crossing, Plymouth Bridge (slated for repairs), Broadway Bridge, BNSF Railway Bridge, the new Lowry Bridge (under construction) and the Camden Bridge the RiverFirst vision provides a bridge specific design strategy to implement dedicated bike lanes and pedestrian pathways. Knot Bridges are constructed of lightweight steel members with a low maintenance recycled rubber decking. The Knot Bridges support the clean



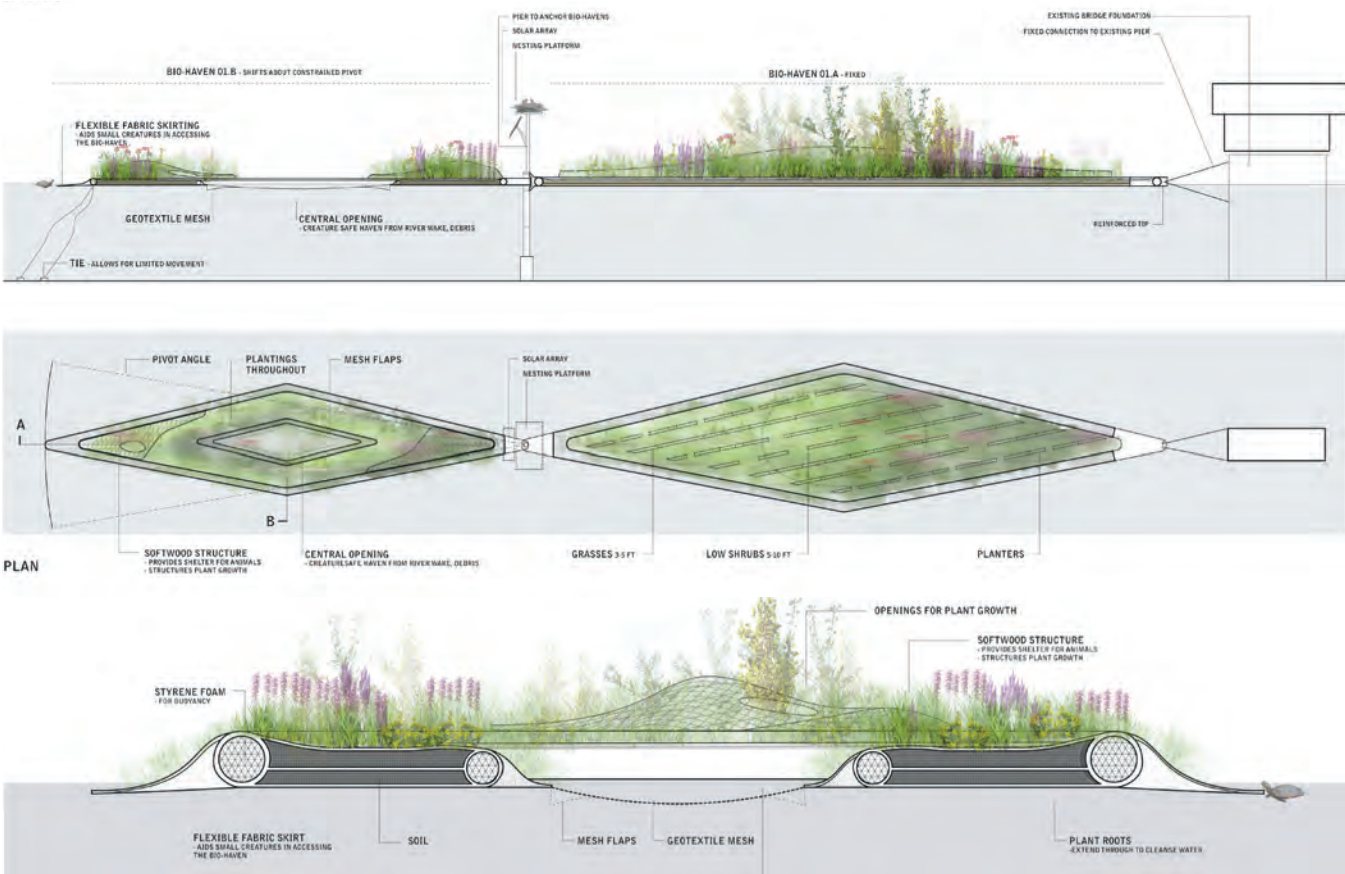
energy equipment needed for the solar powered WiFi River Talk network and solid state lighting systems. Efficient pathway lighting is envisioned to enhance public safety and create a beautiful new bridge profile on existing bridges without creating light spill.

The Knot Bridge system creates an unprecedented ease of access to move along North South park trails and East West across neighbourhoods that have been historically separated by the River. Knot Bridges, together with the River Trail System complete the series of connective River loops that link the Parklands, Neighbourhoods and Downtown. Together, The Knot Bridges and River Trails Systems create a comprehensive recreational and sustainable commuter biking system for the City of Minneapolis.

Preliminary Development Budget

A conceptual development cost of \$18 million has been estimated for Knot Bridges at the Plymouth, Broadway, and Camden Bridges and includes the repurposing of the BN/SF Bridge as a bike and pedestrian trail.

Priority Project 0–5 Years Biohaven Islands



Species List:

Acorus calamus	Carex vulpinoidea	Lobelia siphilitica	Sagittaria latifolia
Allium canadense	Boltonia asteroides	Lysimachia quadrifolia	Scirpus atrovirens
Anemone canadensis	Chelone glabra	Lythrium alatum	Scirpus cyperinus
Asclepias incarnata	Elymus virginicus	Pedicularis lanceolata	Solidago riddellii
Aster novae-angliae	Eupatorium perfoliatum	Phlox divaricata	Verbena hastata
Aster umbellatus	Iris versicolor	Pycnanthemum virginianum	Vernonia fasciculata
Calamagrostis canadensis	Juncus effusus	Rudbeckia hirta	Veronicastrum virginicum
Caltha palustris	Leersia oryzoides	Rudbeckia subtomentosa	Zizia aurea
Carex hystericina	Liatris ligulistylis	Thalictrum dasycarpum	

A system of floating Biohaven Islands, anchored on existing downstream bridge pier foundations, creates a conservation feature that can be viewed from the pedestrian Knot Bridges along the River Trail. Biohaven Islands provide bio-remediation to cleanse river water and provide more than 7 acres of protected riparian habitat for migrating birds and endangered species. These include native mussels, Blanding’s turtle, osprey, Loggerhead Shrike and Karner blue butterfly. Biohaven islands can be adopted and supported by local organizations or corporations as special sites for native berries and plantings.

People who walk along the Trail System Loops will have the experience of being able to pause at the mid-point of the River and observe native vegetation, bird and wildlife activities. Kayakers will be able to experience the Biohavens from the

water. The River Talk WiFi network, integrated in the Knot Bridges, supports the Biohaven experience by provides educational conservation information to the public that can be accessed through a mobile phone.

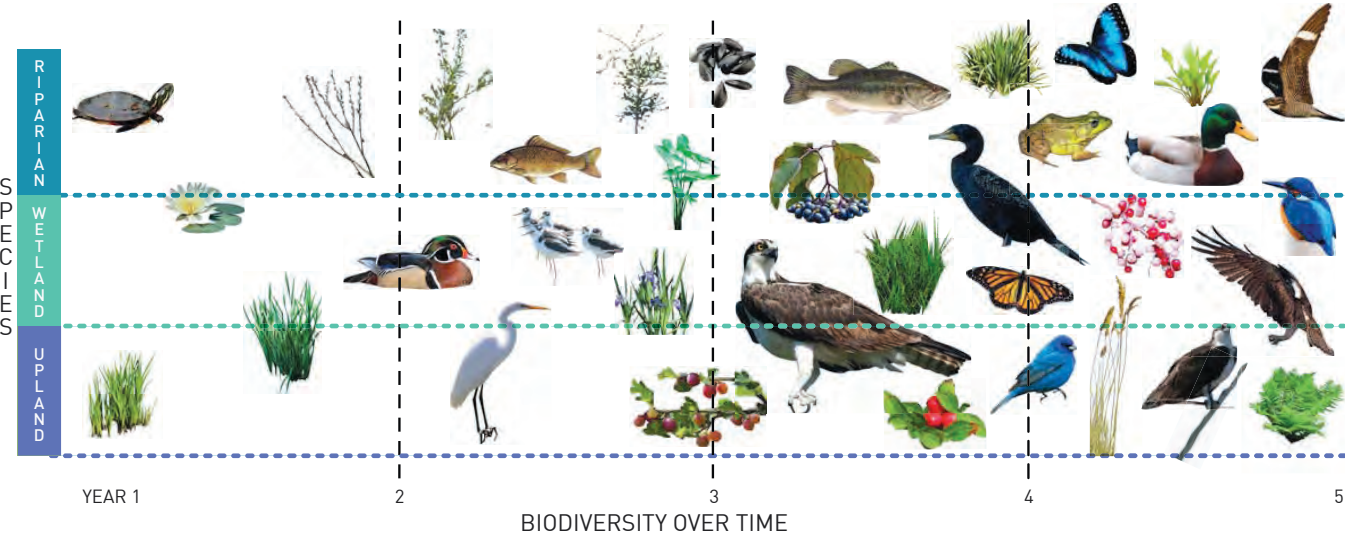
RiverFIRST uses soft engineering principles and the natural buoyancy of the river. Instead of costly hard and resistive structures, buoyancy is provided by innovative and locally fabricated fiber foam made of 100% recycled PET (water bottle plastics). Soil and gravel are placed atop the island to provide a nutrient medium for plants and shrubs. Islands are tethered fixed anchors outside of the existing Navigation Channel. A hinge connection allows the downstream island to shift slightly, accommodating different water levels and allowing sunlight down to the river bed below.



Floating Island Remediation, Chippewa Flowage, Northern Wisconsin



20,000 SF Floating Island, Montana, US Army Corp of Engineers



A pair of Biohaven Islands offers the river a bio-remediation capacity that can absorb 32 kg/day of phosphorous or about (1681 gallons) of dish soap per day, based on the new Minnesota regulation of .5% max phosphates in detergent. 636.63 kg of nitrates per day can be naturally removed by the planted root systems. Each day, the Islands would have the capacity to bio-remediate the nitrate content of about 224 twenty five lb bags of lawn fertilizer.

Preliminary Development Budget

A conceptual development cost of \$12 million has been estimated for 6 clusters of Biohaven Islands that run from the West side of the Broadway Bridge to the West side of the Canadian Pacific Railroad Bridge, facing North Mississippi Park.

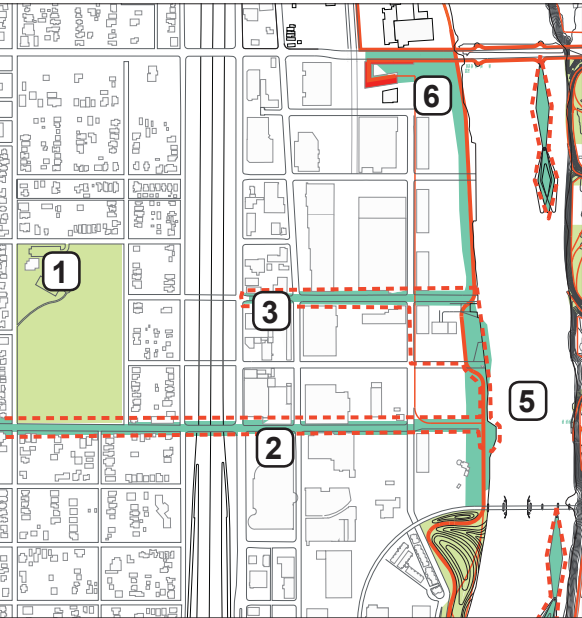
Priority Projects 0–5 Years

Farview Park Extension

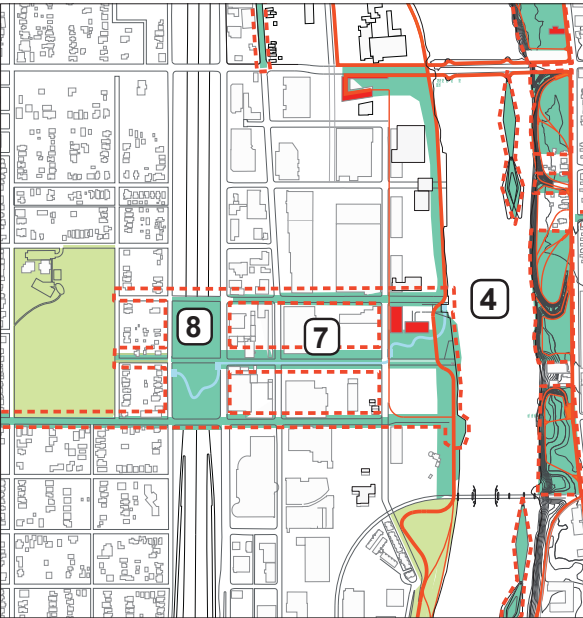


Aerial View of Farview Park Extension from east shoreline, BNSF bridge to the left, Lowry Bridge to the right

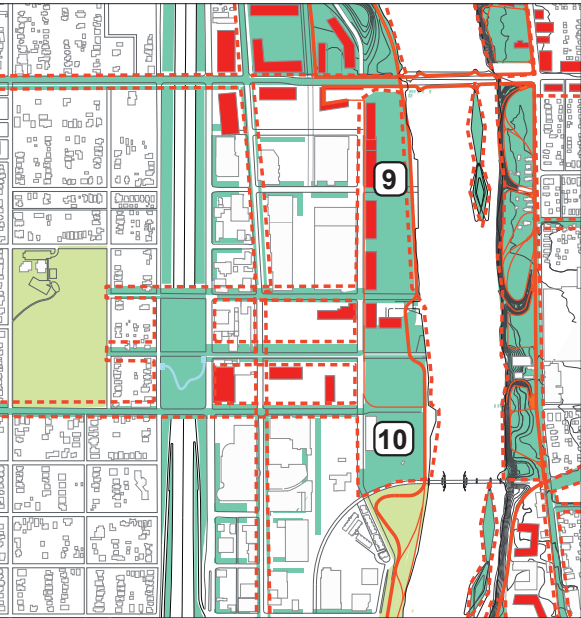
0–5 Year Implementation Plan



5–10 Year Vision



10–20 Year Vision



This major new park extension bridges over Interstate 94 and reconnects the high point of the city and communities in North Minneapolis with the Mississippi River. The Team envisions ultimately capping the portion of I-94 between N 26th Avenue and 28th Avenue N with a major expansion of Farview Park. However, this longer-term plan, which will require significant public funding and a lengthy design and approval process, is intended to grow from the short-term implementation of the N 26th Avenue Greenway. This initial connection from Northside communities to the riverfront is seen as imperative to the success of the MRIDl plan as an economic development initiative; it will bring more people from upland communities to the riverfront, and can bring more people using the trail system into the communities of the Northside.

Design Objectives

- Improve connectivity and access to public amenities for Northside residents
- Increase access to open space and the riverfront trail network
- Stimulate higher value industrial development with denser jobs/acre ratio
- Create new 21st-Century parkland for the communities of the Northside.

Design Features

Open space: The Farview Park Extension design proposes a land bridge farm and open space, green corridors along N 26th Avenue and 28th Avenue N, a put-in for non-motorized boats, an open space core between N 26th Avenue and 28th Avenue N corridors to promote new, denser business development, and a seasonal stream corridor at N 27th Avenue for area storm water biofiltration.

Trails/bridges: The already-planned N 26th Avenue Greenway will be the first portion of this project implemented, reestablishing the connection of N 26th Avenue to the riverfront, and providing new access to a riverfront trail system for the communities of the Northside.

Development: No new development parcels are contemplated as part of this plan in the short-term. As details of the planned capping of I-94 are advanced, new development parcels may be created adjacent to the greenway.

Preliminary Development Budget

A preliminary budget of \$5 million has been estimated for the 26th Avenue North greenway and 28th Avenue North streetscape improvements (0-5 year Priority Projects). Budget estimates have not yet been generated for the I-94 land bridge, 27th Avenue North improvements and other Visionary Projects.

1. Farview Park
2. N 26th Ave. Greenway Extension
3. 28th Ave. N streetscape development
4. Urban Boat builders and Put-In Park
5. Flyway Bridge
6. Lowry Bridge Connector and park
7. N 27th Ave. Orchard / Farm corridor
8. I-94 Land Bridge
9. Riverfront Development and open space
10. Lafarge area redevelopment

Priority Projects 0–5 Years
Farview Park Extension



Flyway Bridge — boaters view

Priority Projects 0–5 Years

Farview Park Extension



View from Farview Park to Land Bridge, urban farming and park extension



View from Flyway bridge toward Lafarge and BNSF bridge



View of Flyway Bridge looking East



Green Roof (Before & After)
Newton Street Farms NYC



Green Roof (Before & After)
Eagle Street Rooftop Farm, NYC



Seneca Freeway Park, Seattle, WA

Priority Projects 0–5 Years Farview Park Extension



View of Flyway Bridge from shoreline trail



Site section through North Pacific Street NE and the Proposed Riverfront Park

Urban Agriculture along the 27th Ave.

Pacific St.

Urban Boat Builders Center

Flyway and Water Front Park

Priority Projects 0–5 Years

Scherer Park District



Aerial view looking South over the Scherer Park District

With the restoration of Hall’s Island and the creation of a river beach cove, Scherer Park will serve as a recreational entry point to the Mississippi trail and park system for kayaks, bikes, skiers, runners and walkers. The park will become a signature 21st-century urban park landscape. It will be the center of a riverfront destination flanked by Boom Island and Sheridan Park and surrounded by a vibrant mix of development that will energize the riverfront.

Design Objectives

- Create an active urban park that leverages new on-site development for year-round activity and recreation
- Establish a destination landscape complemented by a program for the site’s development that helps bring the public to the riverfront;
- Produce a flexible design and development program that maximizes revenues to support the park operations on an annual basis;
- Create a public open space that is safe and active 24/7;
- Develop the site such that it is mindful of its adjacent uses;
- Forge connections — both physical and programmatic — that contribute to the activation of Boom Island;
- Establish a major trailhead for bike, hike, running, skiing.

Design Features

Open space: The Scherer Park landscape and park are envisioned to feature a kayak cove, public beach, day-lighted seasonal streams and riparian habitat, small picnic meadows and greens, a reclaimed Hall’s Island, and a swimming barge. At Sheridan Park, just north of the Scherer site and a critical component of a comprehensive Scherer Park District, a playground is envisioned for use by multiple age groups, as is a Veteran’s memorial. On Boom Island, potential improvements include a land form “archipelago” throughout the park for spatial variation, to direct water flows, and to focus habitats.

Trails/bridges: Scherer Park will feature a major trailhead, will be thoughtfully oriented to the network upriver and downriver, and will serve as the crossroads of multiple routes.

Development: Well-designed and programmed adjacent development is central to establishing safe and activated urban parkland while also generating revenues to fund ongoing parkland operations and maintenance. For these reasons, several areas around Scherer Park are strategically proposed for development. They include the eastern edges of the former Scherer Brothers site, the areas around the marina in Boom Island, and the City-owned parcel adjacent to the planned Sheridan Park, between 13th and 14th Avenues Northeast. Development recommendations recognize that in the case of Boom Island, restrictive covenants on the land as well as neighborhood interests will require careful consideration of any development-related uses.

Preliminary Development Budget

A conceptual development cost of \$28 million has been estimated for the site work and park landscape for Scherer and Sheridan Parks. Costs do not include site remediation.

0–5 Year Implementation Plan



5–10 Year Vision



1. Restored Hall’s Island
2. Kayak Cove Swimming / Skating Barge
3. Hall’s Island Bridge
4. Commercial Development
5. Sheridan Park
6. Boom Island marina development

10–20 Year Vision



7. Boom Island park topographic/forestation enhancements
8. Broadway Corridor Development

Priority Projects 0–5 Years Scherer Park District



Bo01, Malmö, Sweden



Bo01, Malmö, Sweden



Waitangi Park, NZ

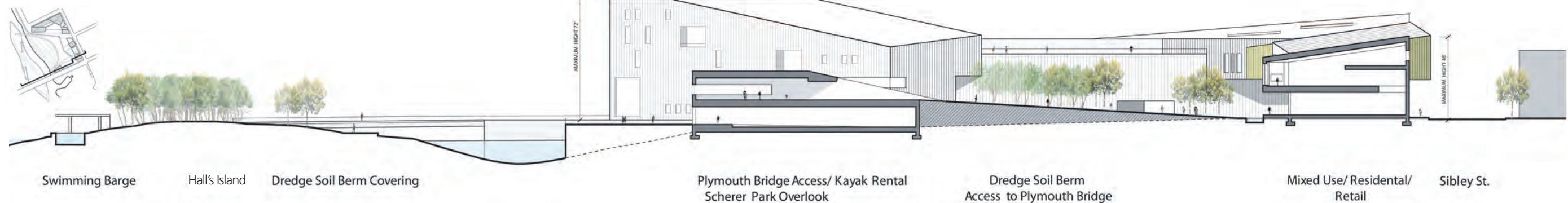


Metamorphosis 1:
Jose Ulloa Davet + Delphine Ding



View of Hall's Island from River

Site section looking north (Hall's Island on the left)



Priority Projects 0–5 Years
Scherer Park District



Winter View of Hall's Island from Plymouth Bridge, Swimming / Skating Barge in foreground

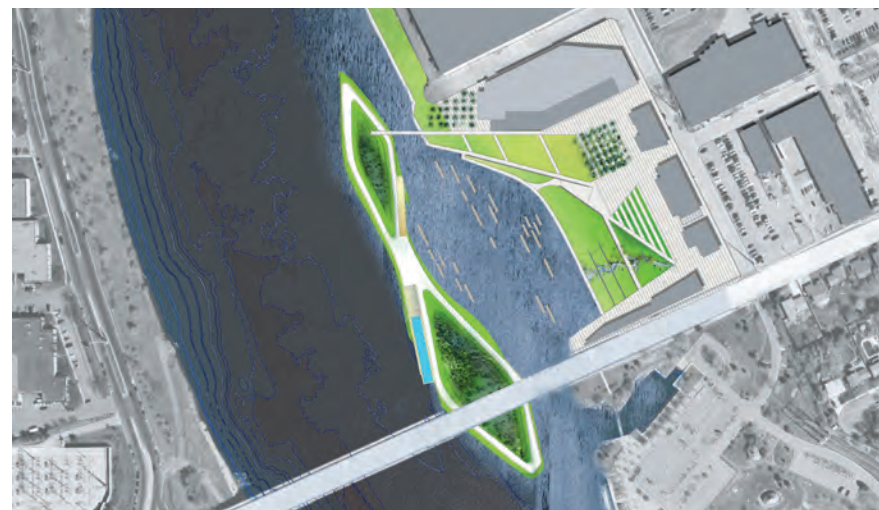


Site section through Scherer Park looking South, Hall's Island on right

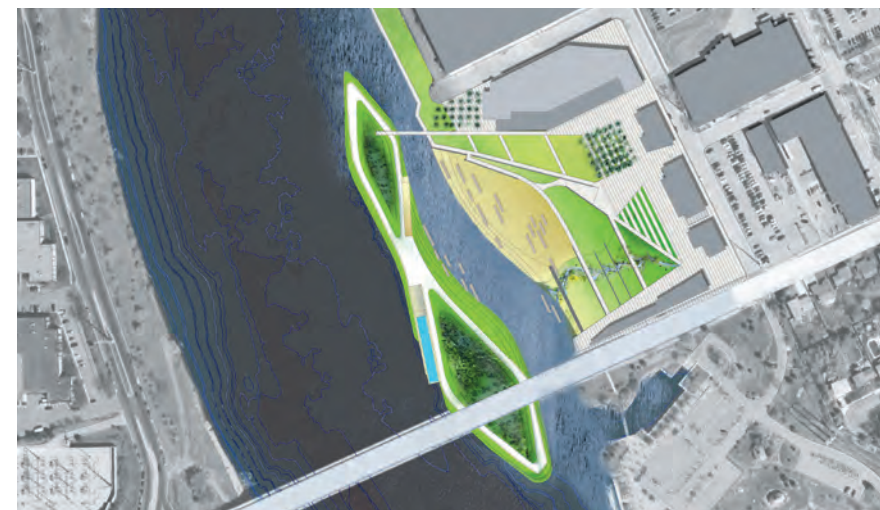
Priority Projects 0–5 Years Scherer Park District



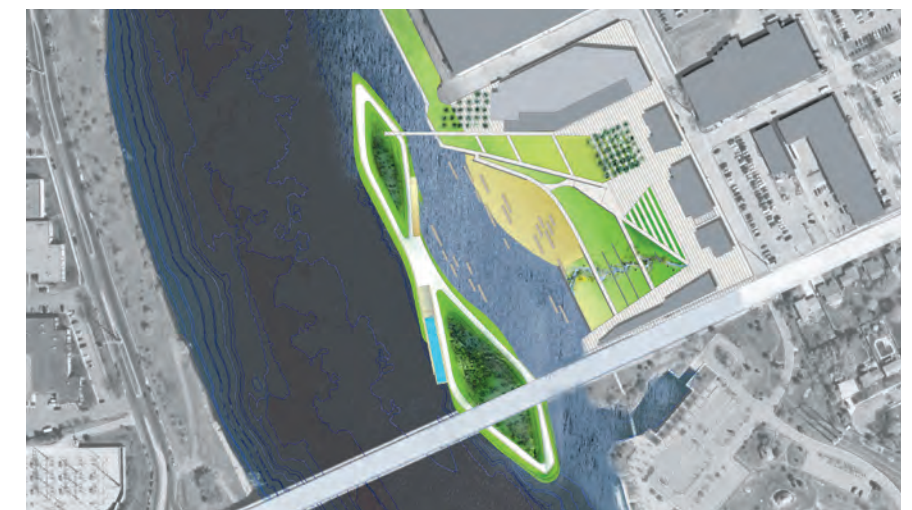
Summer View of Kayak Beach from Hall's Island Pedestrian Bridge



Flood scenarios for Scherer Park: high water level



Flood scenarios for Scherer Park: low water level



Flood scenarios for Scherer Park: summer water level

Priority Projects 0–5 Years

Northside Wetlands Park



Northside Wetlands Park, Aerial view

The transformation of the southern half of the Upper Harbor Terminal to the Northside Wetland Park seeks to leverage City-owned land to provide for a new alluvial wetland landscape targeted to create a civic-scaled open space amenity that provides bio-filtration for storm water flows, increased flood protection, new riverfront habitats, and opportunities to touch the water. This redevelopment would create new value for the remainder of the City's site, and for adjacent land uses, which will be the subject of the refined Above The Falls plan, currently under review by the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development. The intent is to create an environmentally-beneficial plan that also creates brand value for the entire district north of N Lowry Avenue, while leaving substantial flexibility for future development—whether industrial, commercial, or residential.

Design Objectives

- Promote a more sustainable landscape;
- Create a wetland to serve as a public space amenity, storm water remediation feature, and habitat for local fauna;
- Connect to North Neighborhoods and provide access to the riverfront and river trails;
- Link pedestrian/bike path to North Mississippi Park;
- Establish a brand identity for the area north of the Lowry bridge and to the east of I-94.

Design Features

Open space: The site redesign features wetlands that provide a series of side channels to remediate Mississippi River water through bio-filtration. The wetlands create habitat structures at the water's edge to encourage and promote native fish and wetland species. The storm water wetlands intercept runoff from adjacent industrial and residential watersheds for retention and bio-filtration. There will be Native Meadow and Oak Savannah plant communities along upland topography. The site will also have topographic landforms to define spaces and create upland habitat initiated from excavated wetland fill and use of dredge spoils.

For recreation, the redesign also includes a kayak launch ramp that provides access to the river, a kayak water course through wetlands channels, an open lawn/meadow for passive uses, and potentially an amphitheater space for hosting events or serving as an outdoor classroom. A pedestrian and bicycle path elevated above the wetlands provides an elegant path for strolling on the river.

Trails/bridges: The design calls for a pedestrian/bike bridge over the interstate to connect Northside neighborhoods to the waterfront and link Perkins Hill Park and the Cityview School to the river. There is also a pedestrian/bike path trail system connecting the site to North Mississippi Park & Webber Park. Perkins Hill Bridge provides access to the riverfront at a critical point between Lowry and Dowling Avenue.

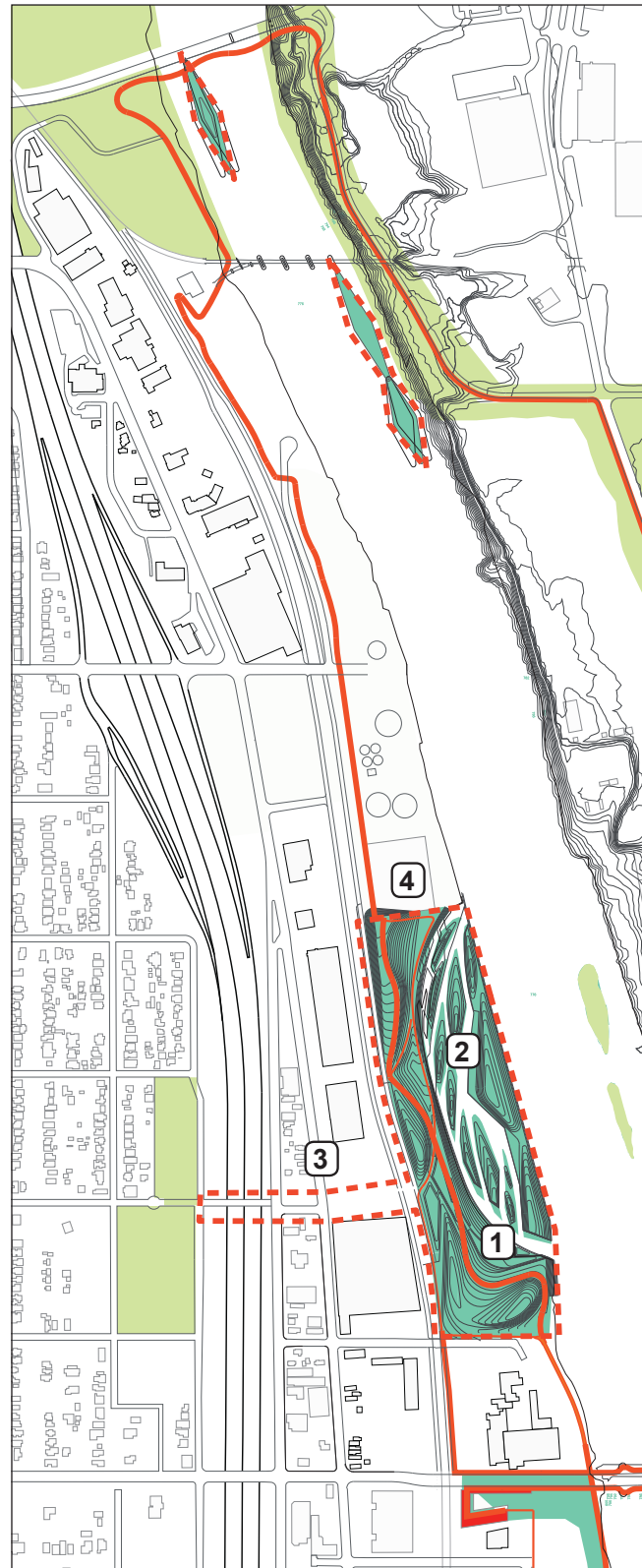
Development: Only a portion of the Upper Harbor Terminal site will be developed as parkland and trails. The remainder of the site will be utilized for improved industrial operations or redevelopment. The Team is working in collaboration with the City to identify what types of redevelopment may be feasible, over what period of time, and how the wetland and trail system can increase the likelihood of successful redevelopment.

Preliminary Development Budget

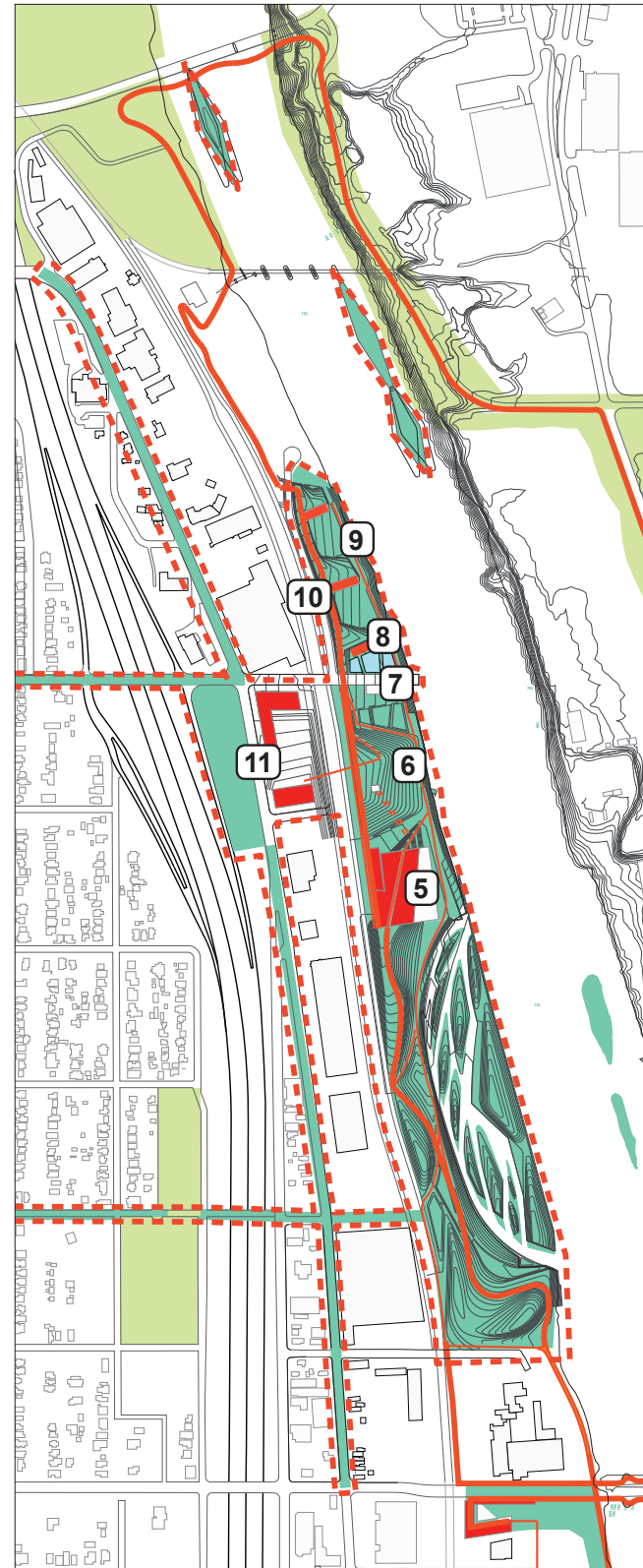
A conceptual development cost of \$54 million has been estimated for the site work and wetland landscape for Northside Wetland Park. Costs for site remediation are not included.

Priority Projects 0–5 Years Northside Wetlands Park

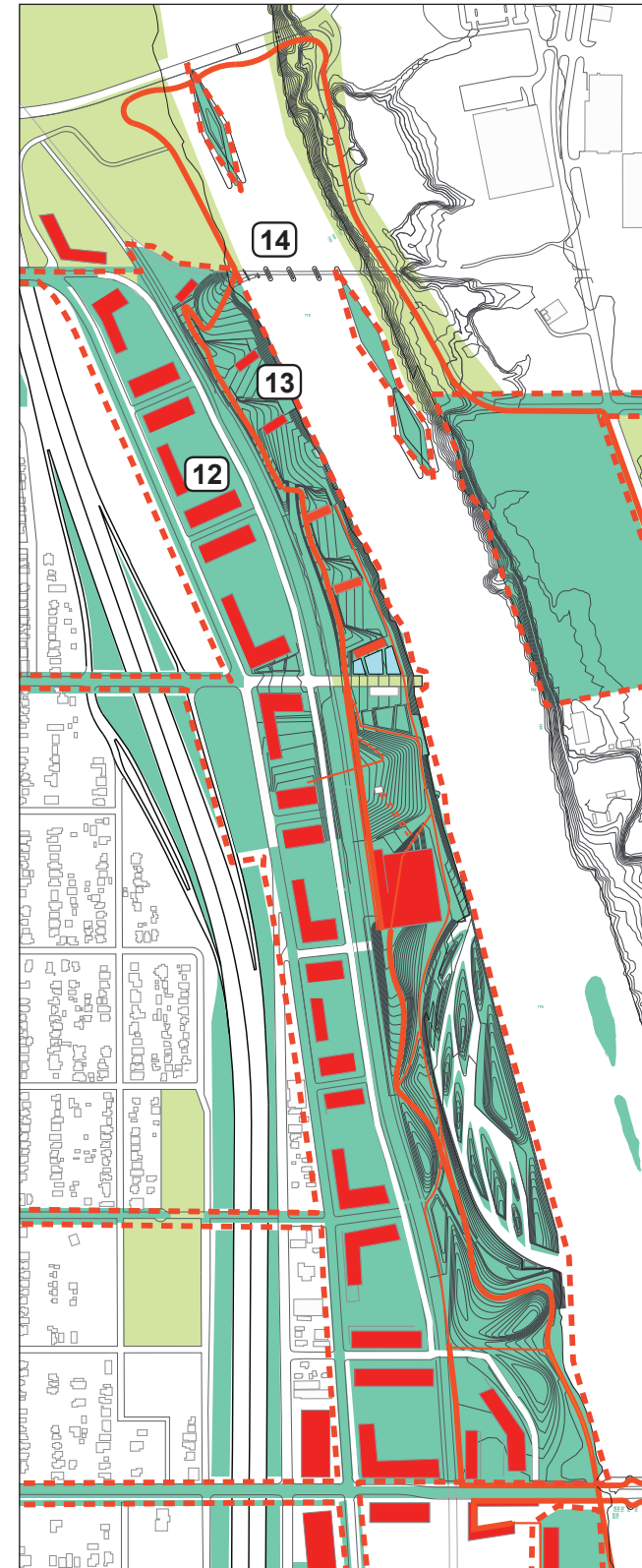
0–5 Year Implementation Plan



5–10 Year Vision



10–20 Year Vision



1. Northside Wetland Park
2. Sediment collection islands
3. North 34th Ave. pedestrian connection
4. Existing Cold Storage Building
5. Cold Storage Building remodeled to year-round recreation center
6. Amphitheater slope
7. PV arrival canopy
8. Biofiltration wetland terraces
9. Park "rooms"
10. Forested Ridge trail
11. Initial development site
12. Development sites
13. Additional park "rooms"
14. Canadian Pacific undercrossing

Priority Projects 0–5 Years Northside Wetlands Park



Aerial view over Northside Wetlands Park



Urban wetland, Shanghai



Centenary Riverside, Rotherham UK



Restored wetland, Seoul



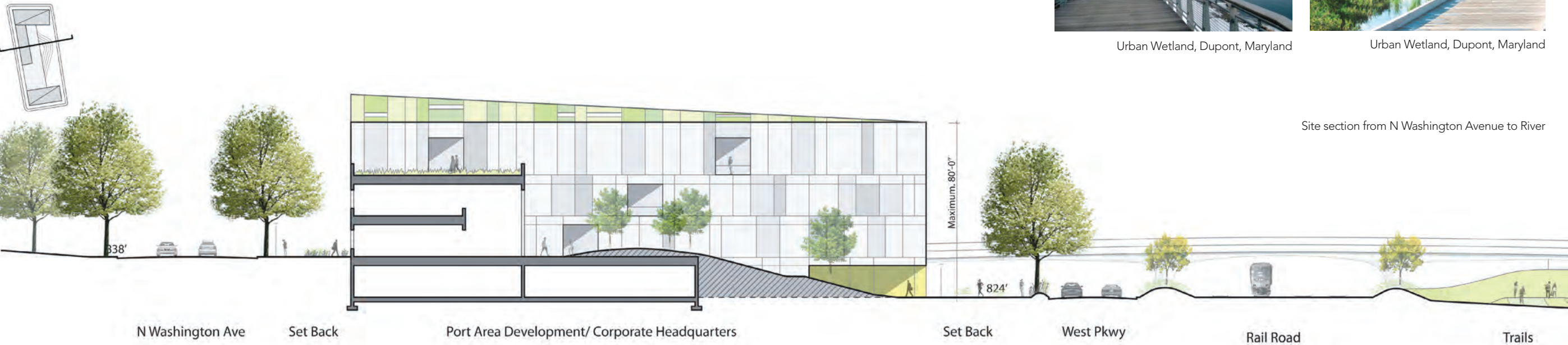
Restored wetland, Seoul



Urban Wetland, Dupont, Maryland



Urban Wetland, Dupont, Maryland



Priority Projects 0–5 Years
Northside Wetlands Park



View of Cold Storage Building remodeled as year-round recreation center

Priority Projects 0–5 Years
Northside Wetlands Park



View of Northside Wetland Park from the south, grain elevator beyond



Park “Room” as dredge spoil holding site



Park Room as meadow / picnic site



Park Room as native crop cultivation area

Priority Projects 0–5 Years
Northside Wetlands Park



Kayaking in the Northside Wetlands Park

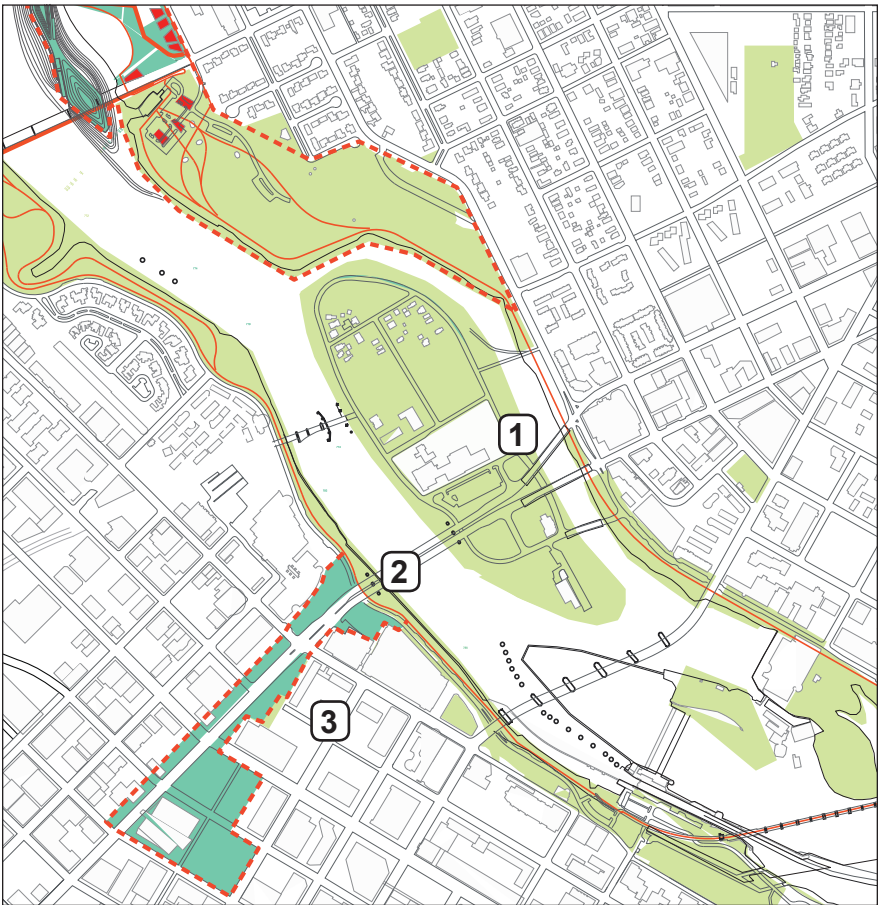
Priority Projects 0–5 Years

Downtown Gateway



Aerial view of Gateway and Library Square

The development of Downtown Gateway is an exciting effort to create a dramatic gateway to Minneapolis’ downtown at the Hennepin Avenue Bridge and link it with a proposed signature downtown park, located in the vicinity of the new Library and Nicollet Mall. This project, led by the Trust for Public Land and various downtown interests, complements RiverFIRST by essentially extending Nicollet Mall to the river. As the Gateway concepts develop, RiverFIRST proposes that a native riparian corridor descend directly down to the river’s edge in parallel with more urbanized connections leading upward to and from the Hennepin Avenue bridge crossing. A bridge landing that is strongly framed by riparian forest highlights the significance of the river as an active natural system within the downtown. RiverFIRST plans to closely follow the development of this important project and proposes to work with the Gateway design team to contribute ideas on pedestrian and hydrologic connections to the river. RiverFIRST recommends that daylighted storm flows become part of the program and landscape framework of the new park.



- 1. Hennepin Bridge landing
- 2. Urban riparian corridor
- 3. Library Square

Visionary Projects 5–20 Years Spirit Island



Site of the original Spirit Island

A sacred place for the Dakota Indians, the now vanished Spirit Island had been physically symbolized during the design competition phase by an illuminated river weir, which marked the site as the eye and soul of the river. This visual gesture is envisioned more as an opening commitment to a new cultural understanding that needs to be realized than as a physical project ready for development at this point. RiverFIRST plans to have many more conversations with Native American groups, perform additional research, and discuss design ideas before it attempts to fully embody recollections of this heritage in relation to the riverfront redevelopment. At the same time,

the poignancy of the Spirit Island story and the concept of its renewal are strong attractors and rallying points for the larger task to come. Engaging the community might involve a workshop to develop ideas for Spirit Island and a walking tour of the Upper River with local Native Americans interested to join the effort. Future efforts might include convening a council of representatives from interested groups and tribes as guidance for RiverFIRST initiatives. In addition to developing this site, the redesign poses significant potential for a deeper type of municipal accomplishment in its ability to personally and physically reconnect Spirit Island to its cultural past.

Visionary Projects 5–20 Years

Northeast Riverfront Park



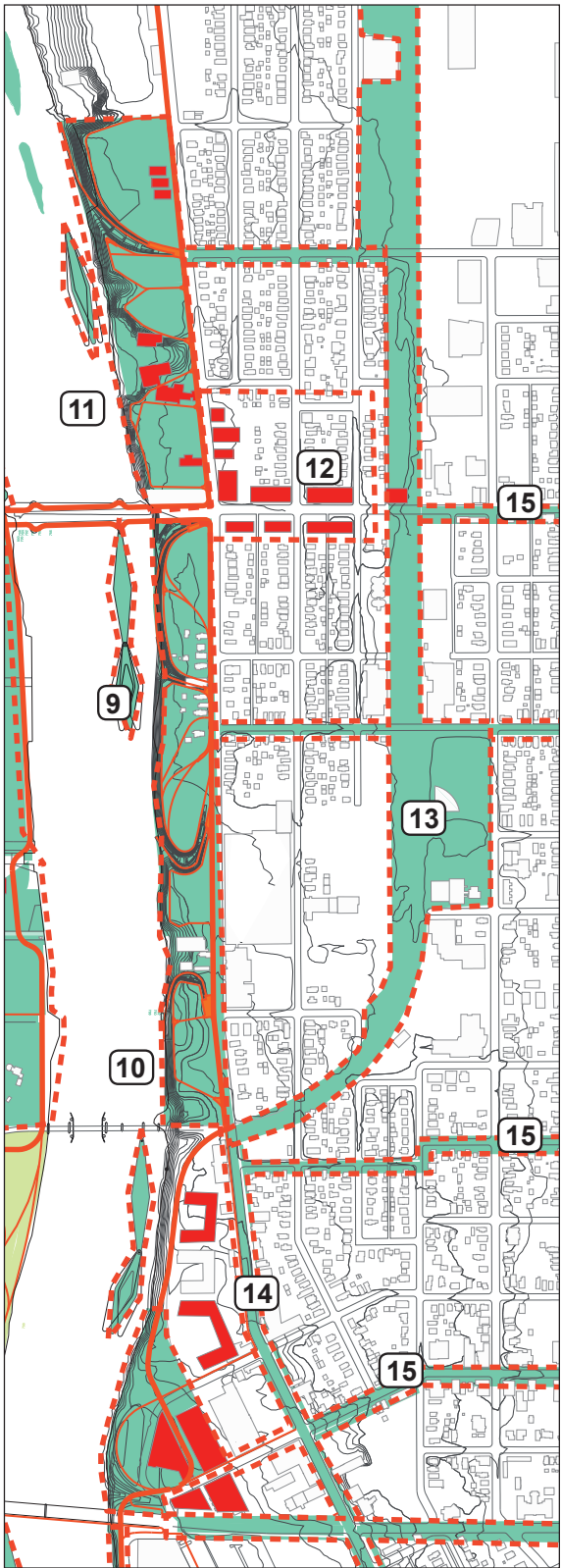
Aerial view of East Side park – biofiltration path and ravine at Gluek Park

For Northeast Minneapolis, RiverFIRST follows principles of carving produced by the constant flow of water against the river’s limestone bluffs. Ravine landscapes remediate storm water and form stepped eco-stairs for flows of water, people, and wildlife, and serve as high points to overlook the Mississippi and downtown Minneapolis. These new open spaces, contemplated primarily as resources for the environment and local residents, will intermingle with existing smaller privately-owned parcels along the riverfront that contain a variety of uses. Some of the ravines are envisioned to provide public access to the river, with the potential for small boat launches and docks.

- 1. BNSF Pedestrian Bridge and Third Rail Cafe
- 2. Sheridan Park
- 3. Psycho Suzy’s
- 4. Gluek Park
- 5. 22nd Ave NE Bike Route
- 6. Edgewater Park
- 7. MWMO Headquarters
- 8. Marshall Terrace Park
- 9. Kid’s Art Camp
- 10. Bed and Breakfast
- 11. Marshall Terrace Housing
- 12. Lowry Commercial District
- 13. Prairie Loop Bike Way
- 14. Riverfront Residential Development
- 15. Rain Garden Streets



0–5 Year Implementation Plan



5–20 Year Vision

Visionary Projects 5–20 Years

Northeast Riverfront Park



View from Marshall Street NE into biofiltration ravine and path

Design Objectives

- Establish consistent presence of East Side Riverfront park as a city-wide and neighborhood open space;
- Build upon existing parks, structures, and businesses that support park environment and enlarge the amenities for Northeast residents and businesses;
- Provide continuous bike and pedestrian linkage along Marshall Street NE, and topographically-defined bike and pedestrian routes along or overlooking the river's edge;
- Retain heterogeneous neighborhood character of best existing structures and businesses; and
- Remediate and bio-filter existing storm water outfalls.

Design Features

Open space: The design for this site includes elevated river edge overlooks, wetland / biofiltration storm water treatment corridors leading to river, fishing piers and small boat docks, native forest and understory restoration along banks, an upgraded forest canopy at existing park spaces, and bike and pedestrian thru-ways at Marshall Street NE.

Trails/bridges: Implementing new trails in this section of the riverfront will be challenging, given substantial private ownership, small parcelization, and challenging topography. Therefore, a new bikeway is envisioned primarily along Marshall Street NE; trails that run alongside the river are a longer-term prospect.

Development: Any new development along this stretch of the riverfront will be spearheaded privately by private landowners.

Visionary Projects 5–20 Years
Northeast Riverfront Park



View from Bluff overlook to biofiltration ravine and boat dock



Ravine Section – Live Staking Bank Stabilizations

Visionary Projects 5–20 Years
Northeast Riverfront Park



Bicycle Path, Copenhagen, Denmark



Birch



Storm water Stream, Portland, OR



West 8 Mobius Garden
for amphitheater area



Cobble Unit Paving



Trail of Tears Overlook



View of Kid's Art Camp Commons among repurposed existing houses



Implementation Framework

Successful implementation of MRIDI will be a collaboration of efforts by the MPRB, the City of Minneapolis, and several other organizations, both public and private. Given its ambition, the MRIDI plan is one that will likely be implemented over a generation or more. Successful completion of the entire plan will depend in substantial part on thoughtful phasing: getting the first projects right will set the stage for the long-term build-out of the grand vision presented in this document. These early projects will need to embrace at least four criteria for success:

1. Ability to bring the community from all neighborhoods and backgrounds to the river;
2. Ability to foster advocacy for plan completion from citizens, businesses, and institutions alike;
3. Ability to secure positive media attention and promote a brand of 21st century parks and development for the City of Minneapolis; and
4. Capacity of public sector agencies to work together, and partner with private sector organizations and institutions to conclude transactions.

Based on the refinement of preliminary plans, input from extensive community engagement, and the four guiding implementation criteria listed above, five projects have emerged as priorities for implementation in the near term:

1. **Riverfront Trail System + Farview Park Connections:** Development of pedestrian and bike trails, “Knot Bridges” and implementation of the Farview Park connections to the River via the N 26th Avenue Greenway and 28th Avenue N connection.
2. **BioHavens:** Builds on the highly successful demonstration project launched in August, 2011 by ASLA at Spring Lake in Minneapolis.
3. **Scherer Park:** The proposal leverages a new signature riverfront park for economic development, and captures a portion of that value for the long-term operations and maintenance of that park
4. **Northside Wetlands Park:** Re-establishes historic floodplain wetlands that create a public and ecological amenity offering an opportunity to partner with research and education institutions. The park could anchor and create value for the Upper Harbor Terminal redevelopment.
5. **Downtown Gateway:** Establishes a downtown park destination of national significance, reestablishes an open space link between downtown and the riverfront, and leverages existing efforts led by the Trust for Public Land and downtown stakeholders.

These projects each have the potential to establish a successful first phase of development (Priority Projects) that can build momentum for the overall completion of the MRIDI vision over time. They can be pursued simultaneously, with support from multiple stakeholders, or in smaller combinations, depending on resource availability. Although any one could be successful in and of itself, their combined completion would signify a marked transformation of the upper riverfront landscape.



Implementation Framework

Capital Funding

Great ideas supported by great designs—like those envisioned for MRIDI—paired with strong leadership from government, citizens, businesses and institutions, have significant capacity to attract capital. Groundswells of popular support for compelling projects can secure substantial capital funds from local, state, and federal governments. Although support will need to be concentrated around a particular project for a given source of funds, Legacy Amendment Funds should be contemplated for implementation of the restoration of Hall’s Island, for the creation of wetlands at Upper Harbor Terminal, and for new connections in the regional trail system. Knot Bridges and the entire riverfront trail system should leverage other local, state, and federal funds for transportation enhancements, as they provide substantial benefits to Minneapolis’ significant number of bicycle commuters, in addition to their recreational benefits. Use of the Elwell law and other funding strategies should be investigated to supplement other sources with funding from special assessments.

Investment from local institutions interested in particular portions of the MRIDI plan like the wetlands at Upper Harbor Terminal or other environmental restoration projects should be a priority for plan stewards, even if it requires disposition of public lands in some cases. Portions of signature projects should be targeted for philanthropic investments from individuals, foundations, and not-for-profit organizations like the Trust for Public Land. Nonetheless, MRPB,

the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, and the Metropolitan Council should be prepared to make capital funds available for each of these projects to help attract third-party sources. They should also work closely with leadership in the City of Saint Paul to ensure that capital campaigns are coordinated with the Great River Passage plan, making MRIDI not only an economic development initiative for the communities above the falls, but also a branding and regional promotion of the river corridor as a national treasure.

Capital funding will take time to secure. The likely public costs of permitting, design and construction of the Priority Projects described above is \$174M. Raising such a sum of money will not be easy, and will take passionate and well-organized advocacy from residents and elected officials on the Northside and in Northeast, as well as leaders both public and private from throughout the City and even across the region. Nonetheless, the ideas behind the MRIDI initiative, and the designs proposed for new landscape improvements have already demonstrated the capacity to earn widespread support. In downtown, sustained advocacy over more than three decades led to approximately \$289 million in strategic public investments; investments that leveraged private investment of nearly \$1.4 billion.

Operations and Maintenance Funding

As with capital costs, operations and maintenance expenses will require contribution from a combination of public and private sources, as well as in-kind landscape management and strategies for developing earned income. A substantial portion of funds for operations and maintenance must be provided by MPRB, as is standard practice in Minneapolis and cities across the country. A stable and substantial base of City funding is a prerequisite for maximizing philanthropy, and will be required to ensure the park meets its civic aspirations.

The MRIDI market context makes generating funds through public-private partnerships particularly challenging: it is not in a downtown location, it does not pass through particularly economically affluent neighborhoods, and Minneapolis is not a city projected for significant near-term population or employment growth. MRIDI will have to maximize opportunities for raising funds from private resources for ongoing maintenance of the new MRIDI parks wherever possible to ensure that the costs of maintaining new parks is of limited consequence to MPRB’s already constrained operating budget.

Implementation Framework

In the initial years of the park’s development and operations, MPRB funding will likely be the only major source of operating revenue for the park. Over time, however, as the vision is implemented and the MRIDI system becomes more successful—and requires more investment—MPRB will need to rely on several potential sources of additional revenue to fill the likely funding gap. These sources should include the following:

Real Estate Development and Assessments: An analysis by Bay Area Economics demonstrates that an average development site in the Above the Falls study area has negative residual land value: the potential revenues that could be achieved through redevelopment do not exceed the costs of development. However, there are two land uses that appear to have some positive market value for development: low-rise residential development, and sites that can support (and attract) a major owner-operator looking to make a long term investment in their company (the Coloplast headquarters, for example). With the implementation of Scherer Park, new value will be created for the surrounding district. Therefore, since real estate is typically the greatest potential source of privately-generated funds for parkland operations and maintenance, and since either MPRB or the City of Minneapolis control developable land in the District, development on and/or around Scherer, Boom Island, and Sheridan Parks should be prioritized. And, in exchange for the right to develop, development agreements should outline long-term participation in operating expenses.

Failed attempts to leverage developable lands for the purposes of ongoing maintenance in other cities suggest that specific land uses and parcel sizes on these sites should remain flexible to permit potential deals to emerge, although general permissible uses should of course be controlled by the objectives set forth in the MRIDI plan.

Several different means of capturing the value from new development should be explored. In each case, MRIDI should seek to leverage any funds from land disposition as a long-term source of operating funds, rather than as a one-time infusion of capital. Where MPRB owns

property and where restrictive land covenants allow, it should consider leasing sites for development, entering into concession agreements, as it does for food concessions on the lakes, or entering into purchase-money mortgage structures, among other potential deal structures that will ensure sustainable operating revenues. Where the City owns property, it should work with MPRB to link capital improvements on the riverfront to a dedicated stream of annual operating funds to be generated through redevelopment of the City’s sites.

If the proceeds of all three sites were to be devoted to maintenance of the new Scherer Park and land disposition took the form of long-term ground leases to private developers, these sites could, over time, significantly mitigate pressure on MPRB’s annual operating budget for the new trails and other parks proposed as part of the MRIDI vision.

The City and MPRB should also explore establishment of a Housing Improvement Area around Scherer Park and other nearby parks to leverage the likely increase in local property values from the creation and operations of parklands. This special assessment district should include all residential properties within easy walking distance of Scherer and Sheridan Parks, and should capture a portion of the increased value of existing homes. Future residential development introduced in the district should also contribute to the operations and maintenance of these new parks, should such a legislative mechanism be established. Such a district should be structured to cover a high quality of care for the parkland. The exact portion of total parklands maintenance costs will depend on:

- The final Scherer Park plan, including the costs of maintaining the restored Hall’s Island and new public beach, as well as the costs of providing free public programming on the site, and
- The development program selected for the lands proposed for private development.

Institutional Partnerships: Portions of the MRIDI plan should be stewarded by major institutions in Minneapolis and the region. Allowing existing organizations to operate programs on the sites contemplated for redevelopment as part of MRIDI can support the plan’s operational sustainability by displacing a need for public funds to maintain the lands. MPRB, the City of Minneapolis, and other project stakeholders should explore how organizations like the St. Anthony Falls Laboratory, the University of Minnesota, and the Trust for Public Land, among others, might support the ongoing operations of certain MRIDI sites through institutional programming. Certain sites may even be deeded to such organizations with agreements for public access and programming in perpetuity.

Environmental Benefits: Implementation of certain elements of the MRIDI plan such as the wetlands at Upper Harbor Terminal and the stormwater ravines along the Northeast Bluffs can reduce the amount of impervious surface along the riverfront and also clean stormwater. As a result, property owners may be able to avert stormwater fees, which can run into the tens of thousands of dollars every year. Where there is a net saving of stormwater runoff—where impervious surface is made porous or where wetlands and bio-filtration mechanisms can reduce the amount of stormwater pollutants flowing into the river—MPRB should seek to capture the excess in stormwater fees that a property owner would have to pay if runoff were not averted or cleaned, so long as the property owners’ net operating income is not disproportionately negatively affected.

For example, the operator of the City-owned Upper Harbor Terminal currently pays nearly \$160,000 in annual stormwater fees related to the site. To the extent the site’s ultimate redevelopment plan reduces expanses of impervious surfaces without limiting the operational value of the site, and to the extent the proposed wetlands will clean stormwater runoff from the site and even others in the area, the net savings in stormwater fees should be retained in the area to support operations and maintenance of the wetlands or MRIDI parks overall. Redevelopment of the site that can produce such benefits to stormwater management in the area should be tied to an agreement that Public Works makes those net stormwater fee savings available to the site’s steward, or a new assessment should be put in place to capture the net savings for local use by another means. Such a structure could also be put in place in other locations along the riverfront, where the plan improves natural systems for managing stormwater runoff, from the Northeast Riverfront parks to Biohavens.

Philanthropy, Sponsorships, and Programming: In addition to the three primary sources targeted above, MRIDI stakeholders should cultivate the philanthropic community, potential corporate and institutional project sponsors, and major events like those held at Boom Island to help offset the costs of operating MRIDI parks. While these sources will be important for the sustainability of the plan, they are likely to be limited in terms of total dollar value.

Governance

The MRIDI plan affects lands owned by many different parties, each of whom will have responsibilities for plan stewardship. It also will have economic and fiscal impacts that concern not only MPRB, but also the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, and the entire Metro Region. Stewardship of the MRIDI plan—both in terms of implementation guidance and ongoing parkland operations and maintenance—must therefore be a collaborative effort.

The City Department of Planning and Economic Development should work closely with MPRB as it finalizes the revised Above the Falls plan to ensure that land use recommendations and investments in public infrastructure are properly coordinated. These two agencies must also work together to attract appropriate development to riverfront sites and set in place agreements for such real estate developments to provide ongoing sources of funds for parkland benefits. Finally, government agencies and elected officials at all levels must work together to secure significant capital funds for priority MRIDI projects to attract appropriate institutional and philanthropic investment.

Where new parks and trails are created, MPRB will likely assume the responsibility for coordinating their ongoing operations and maintenance, even if that management is not provided by MPRB itself; the Park Board is best positioned to maintain public open space. However, before MPRB accepts these substantial responsibilities, assurances must be in place that sources of earned income—from real estate development and assessments, to institutional partnerships, to the monetization of environmental benefits—can be reliably developed, with all relevant intergovernmental approvals.

Implementation Framework

Ultimately, the five Priority Projects should follow an action plan organized by lead organizations:

1. MPRB should spearhead the completion of the **Riverfront Trail System**. The Park Board owns and maintains the Grand Rounds, and completion of the trail system through the MRIDI study area is a core capacity for the organization. Nonetheless, the City should provide substantial support to MPRB in these efforts, both in the form of land acquisition or easements for the trails—on either public or private property—and in the form of capital fundraising, positioning the trail system for capital funds not only from the City, but also from transportation enhancement funds from all levels of government. The 26th and 28th Avenue Greenway portion of the project should be a priority project and should be considered the first phase of implementation of the **Farview Park Extension**, which will require substantial support from the Minnesota Department of Transportation, in addition to the City of Minneapolis, MPRB, and neighborhood constituents.
2. MPRB should also spearhead the development of Scherer Park. The Park Board owns the **Scherer Park** site. Nonetheless, the plan will require the support of the City Department of Planning and Economic Development in two significant ways: land uses and development controls for these sites must remain relatively flexible, and the proceeds of disposition of the City-owned site adjacent to Sheridan Park and the Grain Belt Brewery complex should be devoted to MPRB’s operations and maintenance of district parks.
3. The City Department of Planning and Economic Development should advance the comprehensive redevelopment of the Upper **Harbor Terminal** site, implementing the proposed wetlands as part of its plan. The City should also seek to leverage institutional partnerships as part of its redevelopment plan to ensure that this new public park is well maintained in perpetuity.
4. The Trust for Public Land should continue to work with downtown stakeholders and the City of Minneapolis and MPRB to implement the **Downtown Gateway**. It will be useful to have an element of the plan spearheaded by a prominent national not-for-profit, and TPL’s efforts are well underway. The City and MPRB should provide support to this important private partner, as necessary.
5. Multiple key organizations should collaborate to implement **BioHavens** (floating islands).

Implementation Guide

To maintain momentum and cultivate greater public trust, near-term implementation of projects is essential. This will require action by many leaders and collaboration with supporting partners. The Implementation Guide is an outline of the projects, leadership, milestones, budgets and funding sources.

- MPRB – Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
- City – City of Minneapolis
- CIB – City of Minneapolis Capital Improvement Budget
- County – Hennepin County
- Three Rivers – Three Rivers Park District
- CP – Canadian Pacific
- BNSF – Burlington Northern Santa Fe
- MPF – Minneapolis Parks Foundation
- DNR – Department of Natural Resources
- ACOE – Army Corps of Engineers
- NPS – National Park Service
- U of MN – SAFL – University of Minnesota, St. Anthony Falls Lab
- MNDot – Minnesota Department of Transportation
- MWMO – Mississippi Watershed Management Organization
- AFCAC – Above the Falls Citizens Advisory Committee
- TPL – Trust for Public Land
- DID – Downtown Improvement District

Project	Lead Agency	Partners	Capital Budget	Action to Progress	Milestones	Capital Sources	Operating Sources
Planning Initiatives							
RiverFIRST	MPRB	City, MPF	N/A	Approval – Schematic Design	Plan approval: Feb. 2012		
Above the Falls Policy Review	City	MPRB, AFCAC	N/A	Approval	Plan approval: early 2012		
Above the Falls Master Plan	City , MPRB	AFCAC	N/A	Plan Update	Plan adoption: late 2012		
Priority Projects: 0–5 years							
Riverfront Trail System							
Plymouth Ave to BNSF Loop	MPRB	City, BNSF	\$ 27m ^{1, 2}	Feasibility Study/Schematic Design	Schematic Design approval by MPRB	MPRB Regional Park funding; Local transportation funding; Transportation grants; public-private partnerships	City, MPRB
BNSF to Lowry Ave Loop	MPRB	City, BNSF	\$ 15m ^{1, 2}				
Lowry to Camden Loop	MPRB	City, Three Rivers Park District	\$ 15m ^{1, 2}				
Knot Bridges	MPRB	County, City, CP, BNSF	\$ 18m ^{1, 2}	Feasibility Study/Schematic Design	Schematic Design approval by MPRB; agreements with partner agencies	MPRB Regional Park funding, Local transportation funding; Transportation grants	City, County, MPRB
Biohavens™	MPRB	NPS, ACOE, DNR, MPF, U of MN – SAFL	\$ 12m ^{1, 2}	Feasibility Study	Feasibility study completion in 2012	MPRB Regional Park funding, grants, philanthropic	MPRB, philanthropic, grants
26th Avenue North and 28th Avenue North Greenways (Farview Park Extension)	MPRB	City	\$ 5m ^{1, 2}	Schematic Design, State bonding request	Schematic Design approval by MPRB, agreement with City, successful State bonding	MPRB funds, State bonding, local transportation funding,	City, MPRB, public-private partnerships
Scherer Park District							
Scherer Park, Hall's Island and pedestrian connection to Boom Island Park	MPRB	City, ACOE, NPS	\$ 28m ^{1, 2} Includes Sheridan Park Connection	Feasibility Study/Schematic Design	site cleanup 2012; Schematic Design approval by MPRB	MPRB Regional Park funds, philanthropic	MPRB, public-private partnership
Sheridan Park	MPRB	City		Veterans memorial completion, Water Street extension	Phase I park completion	MPRB Regional Park funds, State bonding, philanthropic	MPRB, public-private partnership
Northside Wetlands Park	City	MPRB, U of MN – SAFL	\$ 54m ^{1, 2}	City Council determination on Upper Harbor Terminal	Close or consolidate Upper harbor Terminal	Public-private partnerships, MPRB Regional Park funding, U of MN – SAFL, local transportation funding	City, MPRB, public-private partnership
Downtown Gateway	City	TPL, MPRB, DID	tbd	Define comprehensive project scope	Determine project scope, budget and partner responsibilities	tbd	tbd
TOTAL FOR PRIORITY PROJECTS (0-5 years)			\$ 174m + Downtown Gateway (see notes below)				
Visionary Proposals: 5–20 years							
Farview Park Extension							
Land Bridge over I-94	MNDot	MPRB, City	tbd	Feasibility study	MNDot acceptance	—	—
Convert Transfer Station to river destination site	City	MPRB	tbd	—	—	—	—
Northeast Riverfront Park	MPRB	MWMO, City	tbd	Schematic Design, land assembly	Schematic Design approval by MPRB	—	—
Spirit Island	MPRB	ACOE, NPS, HPC, Native American communities	tbd	Convene project partners, define project scope	Determine project scope	—	—

Notes

1 Project budgets include soft costs and contingency.

2 Land acquisition costs not included.

Community Engagement

In keeping with the “two-way education” and “Both/And” themes of the MRIDI and RiverFIRST, respectively, the MRIDI actively gathered input from a wider and deeper base of communities, while simultaneously encouraging relationship-building among Upper Riverfront stakeholders and the broader community as a whole. The MRIDI community engagement strategy included several interactive and design-based ways for the community to re-engage with the river and share their knowledge with the MRIDI. This strategy has been informed and supported by the invaluable active involvement of Director of Community Outreach Cordell Wiseman and three CSA staff, Jamie Neldner, Paul Jaeger, and Larry Umphrey along with many community contacts.

What follows is a summary of activity and survey results.

Youth Ambassadors

A community calendar of all event assignments is posted online.

Six paid part- and full-time interns received training on RiverFIRST, the MRIDI, Minneapolis Park Board, and River Is. As a team, they represented the MRIDI at more than forty community events during an intense nine-week internship, June – August. Internships were managed in partnership with STEP-UP Achieve.

Youth Ambassador Events:

- Red White Boom
- Hawthorne Huddle
- Northeast Farmers Market
- Free Family Fun Days, North Mississippi Regional Park
- Folwell/Webber-Camden
- Creekview Ice Cream Social
- Minneapolis Farmers Market
- Dickman Park Neighborhood BBQ
- Extended weekend evening programming for teens at Minneapolis Parks: Fairview Park, Logan Park, Folwell Park, North Commons Park
- Calhoun Isles Community Band
- King Park Ice Cream Social
- Minnesota Sinfonia
- West Broadway Farmers Market
- Upper River Forum
- Driveway Tour Puppet Show Folwell Park
- MRDI Community Meeting Bottineau Park
- River First Challenge
- Northside Arts Crawl
- Music & A Movie
- Live on the Drive Concert Series
- Festival of Fathers
- Indiginous Series Concert
- Redeemer Lutheran Church
- Excel Energy 100 Year Anniversary
- NRCC Back to School Event
- Urban League Family Day

Community Meetings

A community calendar of all presentations is posted online.

MRIDI Project Manager met with and presented the RiverFIRST proposal to key community individuals, institutions and neighborhood organizations, as well as participated in a variety of community events. The MPRB also hosted a total of three community meetings in North and Northeast Minneapolis, (after the initial five held at MPRB) with CPED and Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership making brief presentations alongside MRIDI. Many organizations also hosted events featuring the MRIDI and meetings have taken place with Riverfront land owners.

Community Engagement Meetings

- 5 MPRB Hosted Public Meetings @ MPRB
- MPRB Hosted North Mississippi Regional Park
- MPRB Hosted Bottineau
- MPRB Hosted Farview Park
- RiverLife/Dakota Community Members
- Great River Event
- Stone Arch Discussion Group
- Dakota Representative
- LaFarge
- Juxtaposition Arts
- Give + Take hosted by NRRC and Works Progress
- Hawthorne Huddle
- Jordan Neighborhood Representative
- Lind Bohanan
- Audubon
- Folwell/Webber Camden
- Hawthorne Neighborhood
- McKinley Neighborhood
- GAF
- North Loop Neighborhood Association
- Pohlad Foundation Sponsored North Neighborhood Consortium
- Walker Art Center – Field Office
- St. Anthony West by Sally Grans
- FMR Mississippi River Challenge
- Heritage Park by Jamil Ford
- NRRC by Jamil Ford
- Cleveland Neighborhood

- Harrison Neighborhood
- NE Chamber of Commerce
- Jordan Neighborhood
- NE Network East Side Coop
- Holland Neighborhood
- Building Community Exhibit
- Asian Media Access
- Catalyst Hosted Northside CDC Event with Emerge, Neon, WBBA, East Gateway Partnership
- Jordan Listening Group
- Total Man Ministry
- Victory Neighborhood
- AIA
- MCTC Class Presentation

Community Connections

- Margo Ashmore, North/NE News
- Jackie Cherryhomes
- Roger Cummings, Juxtaposition Arts
- Amy Fields, East Side Coop
- Jamil Ford, Heritage Park/NRCC
- Scott Gray, Urban League
- Larry Hiscock, Harrison
- Bishop Howell, Shiloh Temple
- Ange Hwang, Asian Media Access
- Paul Jaeger, MPRB
- Christine Levens, NE Chamber Commerce
- Lauren Maker
- Maren McDonell, Harrison
- Mary Jamin Maguire, MCTC
- Barbara Milon, Phyllis Wheatley Community Center
- Max Musicant, Catalyst
- Jamie Neldner, MPRB
- Kim Nowicki, North Mississippi/Konig Center
- Pat Nunnally, U of M RiverLife
- Lynn Riskedal, Jordan
- Alameda Rocha
- Mona Smith, Allies: Media/Art
- Jodie Tanaka
- Larry Umphrey, MPRB
- Liz Wielinski, MPRB
- Corky Wiseman, MPRB
- Annie Young, MPRB
- David Zander, Asian Community Liaison
- Makeda Zulu-Gillespie, UROC
- Malcolm, BRC

Appendix A

Community Input Survey

Full survey results available online

A comprehensive survey, made broadly available online and in print, delved into experience and opinions with the Mississippi River, the Upper Riverfront and Minneapolis parks, in addition to individual responses to key RiverFIRST themes, philosophies and proposed projects. We have 709 completed surveys which is equal to 4.75% return rate for a 1/2 mile radius along the river.

Key Themes

Reviewing the data from the Community Input Survey, it is clear community members love their parks and are passionate about the Mississippi River. A few key themes are clear from the data:

- Natural areas and trails are features respondents value
- People go to the river to relax, recreate and socialize
- Respondents identify with the Both/And approach to the RiverFIRST proposal — creating multi-functional parks in mixed use settings
- Connecting communities to the river and one another is an important goal
- Riverside Trails, Scherer Park, Farview Park Extension, Downtown Gateway and the Wetlands are the priority parks.

Select Survey Results

What part of town do you live in?

Minneapolis	558	81%
Twin Cities Metro (outside of Minneapolis or St. Paul)	76	11%
St. Paul	34	5%
Elsewhere	12	2%
Greater Minnesota	5	1%
Total	685	100%

If you live in Minneapolis, what is your neighborhood?

Near North	159
Northeast	132
Camden	86
Central	20
University	13

What features of Minneapolis Parks you like best?

Natural areas	478.....	73%
Trails	464.....	71%
Neighborhood parks	425.....	65%
Parkways	356.....	55%
Boulevard/street trees	341.....	52%
Regional parks	263.....	40%
Recreation centers	149.....	23%
Athletic fields	108.....	17%
Meeting spaces	101.....	15%
Other	74.....	11%
Courts	49.....	8%

What parks services or programs do you think are important?

Community events and celebrations	503.....	77%
Environmental programs	461.....	70%
Arts and cultural programs.....	439.....	67%
Children's programs	421.....	64%
Teen programs.....	384.....	59%
Senior's programs.....	271.....	41%
Adult programs.....	270.....	41%
Other	59.....	9%

How often do you go to the Upper Riverfront in Minneapolis, which spans east and west banks from the Stone Arch Bridge downtown to the city's northern border.

Several times a month	213.....	33%
Several times a year	188.....	29%
Nearly every day.....	133.....	21%
Once a year or less.....	79.....	12%
Never	28.....	4%
Total	641.....	100%

What do you go to the Upper Riverfront for?

Relaxation (strolling, being in nature, enjoying views, etc.).....	438.....	73%
Recreation (running, biking, fishing, boating, etc.).....	368.....	61%
Socializing (picnics, playdates, hanging out, etc.).....	289.....	48%
Cultural events.....	189.....	31%
Other, please specify	94.....	16%

Rank the following RiverFIRST ideas in order of importance:

First number is the count of respondents selecting the option, followed by the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Mobility – Improve suburban and urban access and use of the river with continuous trails and green transportation on both banks and across the river.21440%

Water – Create park-like streams from the neighborhoods for both storm-water management and community enjoyment.15929%

Health – Improve the health of the community and river with sustainable urban agriculture opportunities in the parks.13124%

Green Economy – The proposal suggests green and clean industries that more naturally go with parks.....6212%

Select three RiverFIRST areas of opportunity that you would like to see developed in the next five years:

Continuous Riverfront Trail, connecting
with regional and national park trails
and both sides of the river.....40171%

Scherer Park, restoring the original island and creating a wading beach and places to kayak and canoe.265.....47%

Farview Park Link, connecting
North Minneapolis with a continuous park
over I94 and to the river24643%

Westside Wetlands, returning part of the Minneapolis Port back to its natural state with pedestrian access.....15026%

Downtown Gateway, connecting 4th and Nicollet downtown with the Hennepin Avenue Bridge.....148.....26%

Northeast Bluffs, creating overlooks and
"daylighting" clean storm-water streams
from the neighborhood to the river. 131 23%

Spirit Island, mark the historic site of the eye and soul of the river with a Native American designed memorial. 117 21%

BioHaven™ floating island habitats.....87 15%

Green Port, making the barge port more efficient and using the extra space for public parks or other uses.70 12%

Rank these RiverFIRST points of view in the order that you agree with most strongly:

First number is the count of respondents selecting the option, followed by the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

"Both/And" – Integrate different ways to use parks like work/play and private/public to create more access and attract more people. 188 36%

"Go with the flow" – Use streams and natural land features to guide water flow, instead of blocking it with levies and dams.15930%

"Parks plus" – Beyond being beautiful
and for recreation, parks can function
to benefit the community and make them
more sustainable.14127%

"Design with topography" – Make the most of the different heights of the banks and the way the river moves along them.....70 13%

Please rank the following goals in order of importance:

First number is the count of respondents selecting the option, followed by the percent of the total respondents selecting the option.

Transform the river from a barrier to a connector by knitting both sides of the riverfront together with the surrounding communities.....24645%

Re-focus the city toward one of the three great rivers
of the world—the Fourth Coast of the U.S.—
an extraordinary environmental amenity
that defines Minneapolis’ civic identity,
past, present and future.22742%

Establish parks as the engine for economic development along the river.....91 17%

River Is/Could Be

Comments and images available online

A multidimensional interactive project that gives voice and vision to community members’ river experience and ideas.

Stakeholder Committees

The MRIDI’s three community-based committees are part of the design-based Development Strategy. First convened in April, the Steering, Technical and Advisory committees, along with the public, were tasked with responding to three increasingly detailed MRIDI project team presentations with suggestions, critiques, and resource identification.

Committee members were also asked to provide information specific to their areas of expertise and be the primary conduit of information between the organizations or people they represent and MRIDI designers and project team.

The **Steering Committee** (appointed) includes civic and business leaders who provide guidance and resource identification for the MRIDI.

The **Technical Committee** (appointed) provides expertise and resource identification in fields relevant to the successful implementation of the Upper Riverfront Framework.

The **Advisory Committee** provides on-going input and feedback to the MRIDI. This committee is open to and comprises representatives from the broad range of riverfront stakeholder groups, including neighborhood organizations, non-profits, CACs, TACs, and others.

Steering Committee

- Mark Addicks, General Mills
- Paul Adelmann, Xcel Energy
- David Ahlers, Graco
- Susen Bennett, Minneapolis Parks Foundation
- Andrew Blauvelt, Walker Art Center
- Mark Bollinger, MPS
- Bob Bruininks, University of Minnesota
- Jacques Brunswick, Guthrie
- Tiana Carretta, MNDOT
- Bruce Chamberlain, MPRB
- Bobby Joe Champion, State Representative
- Mike Christenson, CPED
- Jay Coogan, MCAD
- Roger Cummings, Juxtaposition Arts
- Jody Dell, Coloplast
- David Drach, Canadian Pacific
- Tom Dunnwald, East Side Co-op
- Kari Dziezik, Hennepin County
- Rebecca Fabunmi, MNDot
- Kaywin Feldman, Minneapolis Institute of Arts
- Amy Fields, East Side Co-op
- Bob Fine, MPRB
- Tom Fisher, University of Minnesota
- Jenna Fletcher, TPL
- Cris Gears, 3 Rivers Park District
- John Griffith, Target Corporation
- Susan Haigh, Met Council
- Sara Harris, DID
- Linda Higgins, State Senator
- Cecily Hines, Minneapolis Parks Foundation
- Diane Hofstede, City Council Member
- Barb Johnson, City Council Member
- Bernadeia Johnson, MPS
- Phyllis Kahn, State Representative
- Paul Labovitz, National Park Service
- Brian Lamb, Metro Transit
- Diane Loeffler, State Representative
- Peter McLaughlin, Hennepin County Commissioner
- Tom Meyer, MS&R
- Jayne Miller, MPRB
- Joe Mullery, State Representative
- Cortland Nelson, DNR
- David Norback, RSP Architects
- Jon Olson, MPRB
- Kevin Reich, City Council Member
- Paul Reyelts, Minneapolis Parks Foundation

- Bill Rudnicki, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux
- R.T. Rybak, Mayor
- Susan Schmidt, TPL
- Patrick Seeb, St. Paul Riverfront Dev. Corp
- Michelle Snider, MRPA
- Doug Snyder, Mississippi Watershed Mgmt Org.
- Thomas Sorel, MNDOT
- Mark Stenglein, Hennepin County Commissioner
- Ralph Strangis, KSK
- Mark Strawn, LaFarge
- Al Swintek, Centerpoint
- John VonDeLinde, Anoka County Parks
- Liz Wielinski, MPRB
- Craig Wilson, ASLA

Liaison

- Cordelia Pierson, MRP

Technical Committee

- John Anfinson, NPS
- Lois Eberhart, City
- Denise Engen, Met Council
- Tom Leighton, City/CPED
- Haila Maze, City/CPED
- Pat Nunnally, U of M
- Russel Snyder, Army Corps
- Lorrie Stromme, MWMO
- Dave Wiggins, NPS
- Jan Youngquist, Met Council

Liaison

- Cordelia Pierson, MRP

Advisory Committee

- Dan Brady, St. Anthony West
- Edna Brazaitis
- Tom Diamond, Friends of Henry Park
- Janny Fortman, Sheridan
- P. Victor Grambsch, Nicollet Island East
- Sally Grans, St. Anthony West
- Nancy Hovanes, NE Mpls Farmers Mkt
- Irene Jones, Friends of Mississippi
- Kevin Kelly, Audubon
- Lois Kelly, Stinson Park Conservancy
- Cheryl Kranz, Visitor Experience

- Chris Linde, NE Mpls Farmers Mkt, St. Anthony West
- Linda Mack, MRP
- Lauren Maker, Victory
- Steven Mayer, Effective Communications Project
- Mary Jamon Maguire, AFCAC
- Bruce Nolan, Webber-Camden
- Sue Pilarski, Riverview-Hawthorne
- James Rosenberg, Bottineau
- Laura Salveson, MNHS
- John Slack, NLNA
- Bob Spaulding, FOM
- Barbara Sullivan, Windom Park, AFCAC
- Carletta Sweet, DMNA
- Ted Tucker, Planning Commission
- Susan Vikse, AFCAC – Hawthorne
- Scott Vreeland, MPRB
- Georgianna Yantos, Hawthorne
- David Zander, Lind Bohanan
- Malcolm, BRC

Liaison

- Cordelia Pierson, MRP

Finance Sub-Committee

- Jayne Miller, MPRB
- Bruce Chamberlain, MPRB
- Liz Wielinski, Commissioner MPRB
- Robert Fine, Commissioner MPRB
- Barbara Johnson, Minneapolis City Council President
- Dianne Loeffler, State Representative
- Linda Higgins, State Senator
- Patrick Seeb, St. Paul Riverfront Corporation
- Cecily Hines, Minneapolis Parks Foundation
- Susan Schmidt, Trust for Public Land
- Ralph Strangis, Kaplan Strangis Kaplan
- Douglas Snyder, MWMO
- Cordelia Pierson, Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership
- Arne Stefferud, Met Council

Appendix A

Communications

Media statistics:

- Community and media contacts – 129
- Combined website hits – 2120/month
- Newsletter – 822 subscribers
- Facebook: 330 fans
14,028 Post views/impressions
- Twitter: Total 1,712 Followers

MRIDI information was delivered for display and distribution to all 47 Recreation centers as well as locales along the river.

MRIDI materials were made available to neighborhood block clubs for National Night Out.

Advertising – Insight e-news blast and Spokesman Recorder e-news blast

Media placements for the last 18 weeks:

Headline/Segment	Outlet	Original Pub/Air Date	Reach*
The Art Cunningham Show	NWCTV	24 Aug	
On display in IDS: 40 projects in the works	Finance & Commerce	15 Aug	1,374
The Riverfront: A new view of North Minneapolis	The Daily Planet	15 Aug	50,000
The Riverfront: A new view of North Minneapolis	Insight News	12 Aug	34,800
More ways to find the river	The Daily Planet	12 Aug	50,000
Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative moves forward with community engagement phase	TheLine.com	10 Aug	
VOICES // Before the falls: Thinking about urban renewal on a particularly stinky stretch of the Mississippi.	By Chuck Terhark, The Journal	1 Aug	40,000
PROPERTIES IN PLAY: Projects Underway	The Journal	1 Aug	40,000
RiverFIRST Seeking Community Engagement	Eastside Food Co-Op News	1 Aug	15,000
	Camden News	29 Jul	13,200
Minneapolis Upper Riverfront Future: Join in the Discussions!	RiverTalk, IonE, U of M	27 Jul	
The Judy Corrao Show	MTN/Ch. 6	31 July	80,000
Which Way Should Riverfront Development Go	The Star Tribune	27 July	296,605
Northeast meetings consider RiverFIRST, bike summit	The Daily Planet	24 July	50,000
Your input sought on North, NE Minneapolis riverfront plans	Arts & Arch/LA Librarian Information Exchange (U of M)	21 July	
Featured Events: Engage with RiverFIRST planning	North News (NENorthNews.com)	July	
Your input sought on North, NE Minneapolis riverfront plans	Friends of the Mississippi River	18 July	
A new riverfront for Minneapolis	Insight News	8 July	34,800
Weekly News Program	KFAI-FM	1 July	24,300
How to tie the river to North Minneapolis?	North News (pdf)	29 June	29,000
Forces aligning to rezone north, northeast Minneapolis riverfront	Friends of the Mississippi River	20 June	
	The Journal	20 June	40,000
Embracing the Mississippi	MPR	19 June	
Interview	MPR	19 June	
Have a say on river ideas	Northeaster	14 June	32,000
Upper Riverfront Parks Development Meeting	Mpls RiverCurrent 6-8-11 (pdf)		

Headline/Segment	Outlet	Original Pub/Air Date	Reach*
News Release: From trails to tributaries, public invited to comment on future Minneapolis Upper Riverfront parks, June 22	Folwell NA	3 June	
News Release: From trails to tributaries, public invited to comment on future Minneapolis Upper Riverfront parks, June 22	Webber-Camden NA	3 June	
RiverFirst May Be Opportunity for North Minneapolis?	RiverTalk, IonE, U of M	1 June	
Parks plan for the Upper Riverfront begins to take shape	MinnPost.com	27 May	250,000
Minneapolis riverfront redevelopment would begin at site of old lumberyard	Finance & Commerce	26 May	1,374
Tonight – Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative Public Meeting	Mill City Times	25 May	
Rollin’ on the River	Neerland & Oyaas	20 May	
Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative April 28, 2011 Steering Committee Meeting Part 1	Mill City Times	17 May	
Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative April 28, 2011 Steering Committee Meeting Part 2	Mill City Times	17 May	
Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative Public Meeting #1 Thursday, April 28, 2011	Mill City Times	17 May	
Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative Public Meeting #2 April 28, 2011	Mill City Times	17 May	
Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative Public Meeting #3 April 28, 2011	Mill City Times	17 May	
Riverfront planning meetings	NorthNews Events	May	
Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative Update	Mill City Times	12 May	
From ‘Design’ to ‘Initiative’ on the Minneapolis riverfront	Friends of the Mississippi	17 May	
Mississippi riverfront design competition winner sharpens focus on redevelopment plan	The Line	4 May	
What to do with Minneapolis riverfront?	KARE 11 News	30 April	106,940
What to do with Minneapolis riverfront?	MinnesotaNewsPress.com	30 April	
\$267K in contracts for Minneapolis riverfront redevelopment; Designers want public input as planning begins	Finance & Commerce	29 April	1,374
Riverfront planning	NorthNews	27 April	29,000
Park board hosts riverfront meeting	Finance & Commerce	26 April	1,374
Tonight – TLS/KVA Presentation and Design Q & A – Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative	Mill City Times	18 April	
Saturday, April 30, 2011 – Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative Public Meeting	Mill City Times	14 April	
Friday, April 29, 2011 – Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative Public Meeting	Mill City Times	14 April	
Minneapolis Riverfront Design Initiative is Seeking Public Input	Marcy-Holmes NA	13 April	
You’re Invited to Participate in Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative	LandOf.org	11 April	
MPRB Announces the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative	Folwell NA	7 April	
MPRB Announces the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative	Webber-Camden NA	7 April	

*Daily, weekly, or monthly, for original platform only. Retrieved 8/15/11 from outlet’s website or other reliable source.

Comments and Letters of Support

Several organizations and individuals volunteered Letters of Support for RiverFIRST. In response to this magnanimity, we actively solicited Letters of Support and Input from individuals and organizations alike in an effort to collect the love the community has for Minneapolis parks, their passion for the Mississippi River and enthusiasm for the RiverFIRST vision.

Organizations

- Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee
- American Institute of Architects, Minneapolis
- Asian Media Access
- American Society of Landscape Architects, Minnesota
- City of Minneapolis, Council Member Diane Hofstede
- Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association
- Joint Neighborhood Letter – Folwell Neighborhood Association, Hawthorne Neighborhood Council, Jordan Area Community Council, McKinley Community, and Webber-Camden Neighborhood Organization
- Friends of Henry Park
- Friends of the Mississippi
- Hawthorne Neighborhood
- Jordan Area Community Council
- Lind Bohanan Neighborhood Association
- Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership
- Mississippi Watershed Management Organization
- Northeast Chamber of Commerce
- North Loop Neighborhood Association
- Sheridan Neighborhood Organization
- University of Minnesota College of Design
- U of M RiverLife
- City of St Paul
- STAWNO
- Trust for Public Land
- Victory Neighborhood Association
- Walker Art Center
- Windom Park
- Susan Vikse

August 8, 2011

Mary deLaittre, Project Manager
Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
2117 West River Road N
Minneapolis, MN 55411

RE: Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative – RiverFIRST

Dear Ms deLaittre:

The Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee (AFCAC) is an organization charged with guiding and pro-actively supporting the implementation of the City and Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board’s (MPRB) adopted *Above the Falls: A Master Plan for the Upper River in Minneapolis (ATF Plan)*. We are excited with the renewed energy and resources brought to the river through the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative (MRDI). AFCAC reviewed the broad visions presented in the RiverFIRST proposal (with an emphasis on the identified Upper River demonstration projects) and offer the following comments for consideration. We look forward to working with you as more detailed plans and designs are brought forward to implement the visions presented in the RiverFIRST proposal.

Continuous Riverfront Trail

A comprehensive riverfront park and trail system, with a continuous public green space along both banks of the river, is one of the most critical elements of the *ATF Plan* and we are thrilled that the RiverFirst proposal continues to embrace this vision. Riverfront parks and trails are a key amenity necessary for attracting and sustaining land use change along the Upper River. We also support the Park Board model used around all of the lakes and along the rest of the Mississippi River in Minneapolis – public green space with walking/biking trails between the shoreline and a parkway (e.g. East/West River Road). In addition, pedestrian and bike-friendly river crossings and trail connections on all bridges (over the river and I-94), and through adjacent neighborhoods, are critical components of the system.

Scherer Park

The restoration and recreation facilities envisioned at Scherer Park are fully supported by AFCAC, and we are excited about the provision of unique swimming and boating opportunities. To enhance the current proposal, we suggest that the plans for Scherer Park be fully connected to and integrated with adjacent Boom Island and BF Nelson Parks (including the completion of the trail along the shoreline in the 5 year plan, rather than the 20 year plan). We suggest the land uses along the river be limited to parks, trails, community gathering spaces and river-related commercial/hospitality uses (e.g. boat rentals, restaurants, museums, hostel/camp grounds, hotels); and that any private, residential uses be outside of the park area and east of Sibley Street NE.

Farview Land Bridge

We believe that the Farview Land Bridge provides a bold new connection that was not envisioned in the Above the Falls Plan, and we support this concept of a connection to the river for Minneapolis neighborhoods in North Minneapolis, which are disconnected from the river by I-94, railroads, and existing development. However, we wonder if the current proposal is too large, and suggest two smaller land bridges (the 2nd one being at 34th Avenue to connect Perkins Hill Park and Cityview School to the river), an example of this concept is the “River Terrace Pedestrian Deck and Grand Stair” described on page 80 of the Above the Falls Plan.

Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee

Ms. Mary deLaittre
July 26, 201
Page 2

We suggest that any design ensures that pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages/abilities feel welcome and safe. We support the restoration and diverse mix of uses contemplated in the River City Innovation District, including Urban Boat Builders; but question the necessity of a marina at 27th Ave; we would support a fishing pier and small boat landing at this location, for non-motorized craft. We question urban agriculture as a component of the Land Bridge, and suggest natural plantings to enhance wildlife habitat.

Wetlands/Green Port

We fully embrace the ecologically progressive storm water treatment park (restored wetlands) that will serve as a model for municipal eco-infrastructure integrated with park and trail amenities. We support new and enhanced connections from the Northside to the river; however, we question the location of a new connection at North 35th Avenue given topography in the area. We suggest this new connection be located at North 34th Avenue to avoid topographic constraints and provide a direct connection from both Perkins Hill Park and Cityview School to the river.

We are strongly opposed to continuing the port use at this site – as discussed in many forums for the past 20 years, it does not make sense economically or environmentally. The city made a decision to close the port in 2010 (and has, obviously, extended that deadline), and rolling back this policy would be detrimental to the vision for the Upper River and the vitality of the surrounding neighborhoods, the city and the region.

East Side Riverfront Park

We fully support work to complete an east side riverfront park riverward of Marshall Street NE, including riverside walking and biking trails and commuter bicycle facilities along Marshall Street NE. We also support the gradual acquisition the of private homes within this park area (between Marshall St. NE and the river) and the re-use of some of these buildings for public purposes (e.g. Children’s Art Camp, Bed & Breakfast); we do not support a new residential cluster in the space anticipated to be vacated by Marshall Block – this is land anticipated to be within the park boundaries, and is one of the few areas on the east side with enough land to include some wooded area (similar to the North Regional Park area). We also have some concerns about the plan to create ravines along the east side of the river, particularly in Gluek Park where the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently completed contaminate remediation/restoration – and believe this idea needs further study.

Thank you for considering our comments; we appreciate your invitations for community involvement and encourage you to expand and enhance community involvement as the RiverFIRST proposals move forward. If you have any questions regarding these comments please contact us. We look forward to working with you as more detailed plans and designs are brought forward to implement the visions presented in the RiverFIRST proposal.

Sincerely,

Mary Jamin Maguire, Co-Chair
AFCAC - Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee

Ph: 612-781-2589
majama@visi.com

Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee cont.

Appendix B



Ms. Mary DeLaittre
mary@minneapolisriverfrontdevelopmentinitiative.com
Project Manager

Dear Ms. DeLaittre,

It is my pleasure to express support of the draft report of the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative on behalf of the Board of the Minneapolis Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). Consisting of roughly 1,500 professional architects, associated designers, and allied construction industry leaders, the Minneapolis Chapter of the AIA has long advocated for improving the quality of the built environment. We find that bold vision laid out in the MRDI report is consistent with many of the principles and values shared by our members, and we enthusiastically recommend its approval.

In general, the features of the five projects identified in the interim report parallel several key principles advocated by our local Urban Design Committee; namely the creation of livable communities through walkable and bikeable neighborhoods, vibrant parks and public spaces, multi-modal transportation systems, sustainable design solutions, and a strong respect for neighborhood identity.

In addition to our overall endorsement of the MRDI we recommend that wherever practicable projects that benefit historically underserved communities of North Minneapolis be given priority status.

Thank you,



Phillip Koski, AIA
AIA Minneapolis Chapter President

AIA Minneapolis
275 Market Street, Suite 54
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55405
612-338-6763
www.aia-mn.org

1 of 1

American Institute of Architects, Minneapolis



August 22, 2011

To the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board:

Asian Media Access is submitting this letter to enthusiastically support the Minneapolis riverfront Development Initiative (MR|DI). We believe that the MR|DI will be a catalyst for further sustainable, cultural, recreational and economic development along the riverfront, and one that will hopefully stimulate similar outcomes in the communities that are connected to the river.

The MR|DI design-based strategy and community engagement efforts are approaches that we feel will maximize the success of the initiative, and Asian Media Access intends to lend support whenever possible and relevant to the mission our organization: to "Connect the Disconnected".

As a non-profit organization working to support the well-being of the Asian American & Pacific Islanders, Asian Media Access would like to see increased engagement of under-served communities throughout the development process, and would be willing to use our experience in community outreach, and in collaboration with the MR|DI, to make certain that Asian American & Pacific Islander communities in the area are being heard and given the opportunity to contribute to the development activities.

We thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact Asian Media Access with any questions, comments and/or concerns.


Sincerely,



Ange Hwang, Executive Director
Asian Media Access

2418 Plymouth Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55411
Tel (612) 376-7715
Fax (612) 376-7730
amamedia@amamedia.org
www.amamedia.org

Asian Media Access



September 1, 2011

Mary deLaittre, Project Manager
Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative (MRDI)
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411

Dear Ms. deLaittre,

The American Society of Landscape Architects Minnesota Chapter (ASLA-MN) is a proud sponsor and supporter of the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative (MRDI).


ASLA-MN represents nearly 300 professionals in the landscape architecture profession through advocacy, education, communication, and fellowship. The American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) has more than 18,000 members and 48 chapters, representing all 50 states, U.S. territories, and 42 countries around the world.

As a licensed profession in the state of Minnesota, landscape architecture encompasses the analysis, planning, design, management, and stewardship of the natural and built environments. Landscape architectural projects range from academic campuses, conservation and natural areas, historic landscapes, parks and recreation, transportation corridors, urban design, water resources, and commercial and residential properties.

MRDI's RiverFIRST vision exemplifies the best of landscape architecture as it "builds on our region's rich Mississippi River heritage — and passion for parks, nature and wildlife — to design and bring to life places along the Upper Riverfront where neighborhoods and businesses can grow and community members from near and far can enjoy recreational and cultural activities in a place truly like no other."

ASLA-MN applauds and wholeheartedly endorses MRDI's efforts to bring 21st century landscape architecture to the Mississippi River.


Sincerely,



Craig A. Wilson
ASLA-MN President-elect

AMERICAN
SOCIETY OF
LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTS
MINNESOTA
275 MARKET STREET
SUITE 54
MINNEAPOLIS, MN
55405-1627
www.asla-mn.org
T 612.339.0797
F 612.338.7981

American Society of Landscape Architects, Minnesota



City Council
Diane Hofstede
Council Member, Third Ward

350 South 5th Street – Room 307
Minneapolis MN 55415-1383

Office 612 673-2203
Fax 612 673-3940
TTY 612 673-2157
diane.hofstede@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

September 7, 2011

Dear President Erwin, members of the Park Board, Superintendent Miller, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Staff Partners, Mary deLaittre:


Congratulations to you for undertaking the RiverFIRST project and acknowledging the importance of the 5.5-mile stretch of one of the three greatest rivers in the world, the Mississippi River.

The selected 5.5 mile long stretch of the riverfront provides a unique opportunity in our city to focus our attention to the birthplace of Minneapolis. It is an opportunity to acknowledge the historic importance to our region. It is an opportunity to preserve and improve the rich ecological and environmental systems. It is an opportunity to connect our rich past and our future.

The 5.5-mile study has examined the bowels of the underutilized sites in order to revitalize challenged areas of our city such as the Fairview Park expansion to the river, and the upper harbor terminal. Careful analysis of such areas in order to add vitality, living wage job opportunities, and an expansion of our tax base for support of parks and city services needs to be pursued and evaluated as another means to revitalize and reshape this area of our city.

The Park Board’s wise decision to purchase the former Scherer Lumber Company site adjacent to the Boom Island Park and BF Nelson Parks, and the current improvements underway will allow greater connectivity to both parks, Graco Corporation’s International Headquarters, and the newest park in the Minneapolis Park System, the Sheridan Memorial Park. As part of the planning however, complete connections to the Lowry Avenue Bridge and Northward toward the City’s edge needs to be included.

The Plymouth Avenue Bridge, which connects the North West River road in North Minneapolis across the river to Northeast Minneapolis between the Boom Island and former Scherer Brothers site, is scheduled for repair and funded for completion in 2012. The repair work by the City of Minneapolis affords the Park Board and the city of Minneapolis Public Works department, and the Third Ward Council office the unique opportunity to include the extension and connections between North and Northeast biking and walking as a part of the bridge scheduled repair. The inclusion would connect North Minneapolis across the Plymouth Ave Bridge to BF Nelson and Boom Island Parks going North to the former Scherer Brothers site



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City of Minneapolis, Council Member Diane Hofstede

and along Graco headquarters to Sheridan Park going North to the city’s edge.

In addition, the Plymouth Avenue Bridge connects to the Boom Island and BF Nelson Parks and bike trails being installed going South along the Riverfront to Hennepin, and the river, 1st Ave Northeast to Downtown and to the Stone Arch Bridge, across to South Minneapolis and the Downtown business district. Going East the Boom Island and BF Nelson Park trails connect to 5th Avenue NE bikeway which connects to 5th Street Northeast and extends the bike trail South into Southeast Minneapolis, 1st and Hennepin, to Central Avenue and to the University of Minnesota, and the Stone Arch Bridge into South Minneapolis and the Downtown business district and the University of Minnesota West Bank district. These important connections, in collaboration with the Plymouth Avenue Bridge repair, would expand biking/walking experience to a broad range of users, and connect North, Northeast, Southeast, and South Minneapolis, thus completing critical connections to and around our city.

The unprecedented opportunity to collaborate in order to extend our biking options in this area, to expand our boulevards, trees and other green amenities, and to include Graco and others in the greening of this area for our city should not be missed. The Park Superintendent, the Public Works Director, President John Erwin and I have informally committed to such a plan, but the Plymouth Avenue bridge repair plans do not include a formal commitment to such a strategy. The potential of extending the trails planned for the Boom Island, BF Nelson Parks, and former Scherer Brothers site Park along an easement by the Graco Headquarters to the Sheridan Memorial Park and the Bridge needs to be included in the RiverFIRST plan as a top priority or this opportunity will be missed.

The former Scherer Brothers site is the most, “project ready,” with the advance work of the Park Board to secure funding for clean up and trail connections. However the realistic, economic, and practical needs of the community need to be coupled with the romantic glossy pictures of the ideal.

The former Scherer Brothers site, BF Nelson and Boom Island Parks are located in successful residential and commercial nodes that enjoy the respect of the gentle combination of ecological, residential, commercial, and recreational functions coexisting and thriving. The community would expect no less in the future. I can not stress the importance to the economic commitment that has been made by the residents and businesses of this area. My commitment is to work with the Park Board, their staff, our businesses, and our residential community toward mutual success in the future of this area.

The financial needs of the Park Board and the residential and ecological needs must be examined carefully in order to find a balance that does not impact the city’s and neighborhood’s commitment to family housing and supports created by passive park usage.

We are all stewards of our great riverfront, a riverfront that birthed a great city. It is the heart and soul of how we define ourselves and is how the world finds us on the world

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Diane Hofstede

City of Minneapolis, Council Member Diane Hofstede cont.

map. It is the flyer-over zone for thousands of migratory animals and it is our namesake. In all of this, we are defining our legacy. It is our string of pearls. It is not only the 5.5 defined miles in the RiverFIRST project, but it is the River, as we look North or South to our commitment beyond.


The St. Anthony Falls area is beyond the scope of the project, but due to the historic, natural and economic potential, I encourage it be considered in the context of the project planning area. To separate and or ignore the unique sites in the city and the world would be a mistake. The redevelopment of the St. Anthony Falls historic district is an economic, ecological, and historic opportunity. The most recent designation of the Pillsbury A Mill as one of the 11 most endangered historic buildings in the United States has added national significance to the development of the Mill District area. To put the Historic Pillsbury A Mill in context of its historic equivalent, Mount Vernon also retains the same historic designation. Several development proposals are actively examining this area. It is in the interest of the Minneapolis Parks system, the National Parks Service, the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board, the University of Minnesota, the University of Minnesota District Alliance, our Neighborhoods, others, and the city of Minneapolis to collaborate in order to insure the full potential is accomplished along with the proposed 5.5 mile identified area in the RiverFIRST plan.

In recognition of our past, I encourage the Park Board to embrace the history of our indigenous people who for generations held our great assets close to their hearts. It was the roar of the St. Anthony Falls that stifled the cries of the women in the birthing area along our river, and it was the lost Islands where family members were honored and buried; it is our obligation to celebrate and thank those who were our intergenerational caretakers.

As this project unfolds, I ask that we all commit to the exceptional and not the expedient, never forgetting our legacy, significance, and potential of this unprecedented opportunity.

I thank each of you and pledge my support to work toward a Riverfront that wows with natural wonder, is a place to reflect in the quiet that only our natural environment can supply, that encourages us to look up to the sky that we share with world, and welcome the glory that is accomplished by thoughtful decisions.

Sincerely,



Diane Hofstede
Minneapolis City Council-3rd Ward
350 South 5th Street, Room 307
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1383
Diane.Hofstede@ci.minneapolis.mn.us
612-673-2203

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Diane Hofstede

City of Minneapolis, Council Member Diane Hofstede cont.

Appendix B



DMNA
DOWNTOWN
MINNEAPOLIS
NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION

40 S. 7th Street, STE 212 PMB 172
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402
Phone: (612) 659-1279
Online: www.thedmna.org

September 2, 2011

Mary deLaittre, Project Manager
Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411

Dear Mary:

The Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association (DMNA) is pleased to submit this letter in support of the RiverFIRST’s proposed projects and Phase One implementation priorities for the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative (MR | DI).

As the officially recognized neighborhood organization for Downtown East and Downtown West, whose northeasterly boundaries run along the Mississippi River, DMNA’s mission is to promote the common good and enhance the quality of life of the residents, businesses and employees in downtown Minneapolis. In furtherance toward that mission, our major activities include supporting neighborhood improvement projects. Therefore, we earnestly believe that RiverFIRST’s multifaceted and multidimensional vision for a renewed and revitalized riverfront clearly meets and/or exceeds that criterion. The DMNA has shown its support for the MR | DI process, albeit in a minor role, through board member participation on its advisory committee, encouraging others to as well as attending its public meetings, and by disseminating information regarding its activities.


Of all the proposed RiverFIRST projects, which are primarily focused on redevelopment beyond DMNA’s geographic purview in the Upper Riverfront, the Library Square Park project would be of utmost importance as it would create a much needed and much discussed walkable green gateway connecting downtown to the river. Nevertheless, all proposed projects emphasize the importance of providing access to and along the Mississippi River, and the health benefits and recreational amenities resulting thereto, which resonates with the DMNA’s mission and warrant our continued support.

The DMNA will continue its advocacy and support of the RiverFIRST proposals to bring about the continued revitalization of the Minneapolis riverfront.

Sincerely,

Gerry Ewald
DMNA Chair

Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association



Hawthorne Neighborhood Council
2944 Emerson Avenue North • Minneapolis, MN • 55411
Tel: 612.529.6033 Fax: 612.529.0218
www.hawthorneneighborhoodcouncil.org

Board Members

JoAnne Kelty
Chair

Jim Wentzell
Treasurer

Dee Phillipps
Secretary

Kevin Czmowski

Susan Friedman

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Erik Lindberg


Bev Scherrer

Staff

Jeff Skrenes
Housing Director

Alexandra Jasicki
Director of Community Affairs

Kathy Welch
Office Manager



August 2, 2011

To: John Irwin, President – Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board,

Folwell Neighborhood Association, Hawthorne Neighborhood Council, Jordan Area Community Council, McKinley Community, and Webber-Camden Neighborhood Organization are submitting this joint letter of support of the MRDI Initiative as well as the River FIRST concept which includes the development of the Farview Park Land Bridge, a project that seeks to enhance the accessibility of the river for the residents of North Minneapolis.

We feel very strongly that the proposed Farview Park Land Bridge would give the residents of our neighborhoods the opportunity to use and learn about the river in ways they have never been able to before. However, it seems as though this particular project has been slipping down on the greater list of projects deemed fund worthy. We understand what the completion of the Farview Park Land Bridge would mean to this community. People who have lived almost on the very banks of the Mississippi River, yet have never had access to it, would now be able to do so. The impact of this project would also be felt economically as users frequent existing businesses along the riverfront as well as those businesses that may seek to offer their goods or services at a riverfront location in the future.

The relationship between the Farview Park Land Bridge and the 26th Avenue Greenway/ Bikeway Project is very obvious, and the completion of these two initiatives in tandem would create an amazing link to the River for all residents of North Minneapolis and solve a major roadway crisis along 26th Avenue North.

Although the Perkins Hill connection to the Mississippi could be strengthened, we understand that it wasn’t part of the original proposal, and we strongly encourage that this particular connection be reviewed and put back on the table for consideration.

We would also like to recognize the need for collaboration between MRDI/ MPRB and neighborhood organizations, such as ours, and we will work collectively to do whatever is necessary to further the efforts of this collaboration.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

“To improve the quality of life in the Hawthorne neighborhood through empowering the residents in order that they can address the physical, cultural, social, and economic needs of the community”

Joint Neighborhood Letter – Folwell Neighborhood Association, Hawthorne Neighborhood Council, Jordan Area Community Council, McKinley Community, and Webber-Camden Neighborhood Organization



Hawthorne Neighborhood Council
2944 Emerson Avenue North • Minneapolis, MN • 55411
Tel: 612.529.6033 Fax: 612.529.0218
www.hawthorneneighborhoodcouncil.org

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August 2, 2011

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Although the Perkins Hill connection to the Mississippi could be strengthened, we understand that it wasn’t part of the original proposal, and we strongly encourage that this particular connection be reviewed and put back on the table for consideration.

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If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

“To improve the quality of life in the Hawthorne neighborhood through empowering the residents in order that they can address the physical, cultural, social, and economic needs of the community”

Joint Neighborhood Letter cont.

Friends of Henry Park
2119 Skyway Drive
Saint Paul, MN 55119

September 2, 2011

Mary de Laittre, Project Manager
Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative
Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board
2117 West River Road N
Minneapolis, MN 55411

Dear Ms. De Laittre,

Friends of Henry Park is a Highwood neighborhood based non-profit that works to support and enhance the Mississippi River Critical Area and Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA). Highwood is a Mississippi Riverfront neighborhood in Saint Paul. Highwood residents have long been strong advocates for the river corridor and recognize the importance of this as a Regional, State and National amenity. Friends of Henry Park works on park acquisition and habitat restoration in the Highwood area and works to support the National Park as a whole. In the words of Senator Wellstone “we all do better when we all do better”.

The work of the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board to provide a continuous riverfront park on both sides of the river is commendable. A continuous trail along both shores of the river will fill gaps in the planned continuous MRT from Lake Itasca to New Orleans. Reconnecting the neighborhoods with the riverfront is an important part of the Critical Area and National Park planning, and efforts to bring this to a reality offer many benefits for park users and the neighborhoods themselves.

Friends of the Mississippi River and AFCAC letters offer valuable input that should be commended. Friends of Henry Park supports and encourages the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board in your efforts to provide a continuous riverfront park, trails and restore the natural shore along both sides of the Mississippi River. Your efforts will benefit our Region, State and Nation.

Friends of Henry Park



Friends of the Mississippi River
360 North Robert • Suite 400 • Saint Paul, MN 55101 • 651/ 222-2193 • www.fmr.org

Working to protect the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities

July 8, 2011

Mary deLaittre, Project Manager
Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative (MRDI)
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
2117 West River Road N
Minneapolis, MN 55411

Dear Ms. deLaittre,

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) is a local non-profit community-based organization that works to protect and enhance the natural and cultural assets of the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities Region. We have 1,700 active members, and more than 3,000 volunteers annually who care deeply about the river's unique resources. FMR has worked for more than a decade on policy and advocacy for new parks and trails along the Mississippi River in north and northeast Minneapolis. We participated in creation of the Above the Falls (ATF) plan and have served in a leadership role with the Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee (AFCAC) for nine years. In 2004, FMR partnered with Minneapolis CPED to fund and carry out the Upper Harbor Terminal Redevelopment Study, which looked at development scenarios, design and feasibility of closing the terminal and developing the 48-acre city owned site into parks, trails, residential and commercial uses. In 2008, we served on the Minneapolis Riverfront Blue Ribbon Task Force that recommended formation of the Minneapolis Riverfront Corporation (now Partnership) and Irene Jones, FMR's River Corridor Program Director is a current member of the MRP Board of Directors.

First we applaud the MRDC/MRDI effort and believe that it has significantly added to the forward momentum of realizing the vision for expanding riverfront parks and trails in Minneapolis. Thank you for the intense amount of work that has been carried out in such a short time period. The RiverFIRST proposal by TLS/KVA includes many exciting, creative and intriguing ideas worthy of serious consideration, and we look forward to our continued involvement as the process unfolds and more detailed plans and priorities are established. Thank you also for the opportunity to provide comments on the potential projects and directions presented so far. Our comments at this point are broad and over-arching and address project choices and priorities. We will likely submit more detailed comments regarding specific project elements/amenities once the concepts have been further refined.

Scherer Park
We like the Scherer Park concept and we believe this is the site that should be given the highest priority for implementation in this process. We love the emphasis on getting people down to the water, with easy river access for canoes and kayaks. We also really like the idea of restoring Hall's Island and creating a side channel to support a safe, calm experience on and near the river. We support the possibility of private development on the landward side of the property, but we are not in favor of anything too tall that would block the neighborhood visually from the river and vice versa. Perhaps this is an overused concept, but a restaurant like "Sea Salt" might work well here, and it would not violate restrictions for the type of development allowed in regional parks. Ideally any development should be very river-oriented and serve the local businesses in the area as well as park

Friends of the Mississippi

users. Bike and/or boat rentals, a restaurant that serves lunch and sells picnic lunches, an ice cream or coffee shop, etc. could become a fairly busy hub during daylight hours.

Our only complaint about the Scherer park concept is that it does not include significant improvements to Boom Island and B.F. Nelson Parks. These parks won't be experienced individually, but rather as part of a cohesive whole. We believe there is a unique opportunity to create a large and unified signature park close to downtown. A park that encompasses gateways to both the Above the Falls Regional Park and the Central Riverfront Regional Park, ties the two areas together, and helps to bring people from downtown to destinations north.

Completing the loop trails up to Broadway and the railroad bridge should also be very high priority and rolling it together with the Scherer plans might help with momentum. Getting a trail across the railroad bridge would be a major achievement. We are intrigued by the knot-bridge concepts, but would need to review more detailed plans for these before weighing in.

Farview Land Bridge Connector
FMR is very supportive of taking steps to better connect the north side to the river and parks. We love the idea of a land bridge, but we feel that, the way this bridge is conceived, the cost would very likely be prohibitive in general, and much too costly relative to the many other needs in the Above the Falls Plan. Even if we could find the tens of millions of dollars to build it, there are many other park projects that could be done to improve the park and connect north side residents, possibly with much greater impact per dollar spent.

We would like to see a range of alternatives for connecting north Minneapolis to the river with a comparison of costs and benefits. One concept that might be more cost-effective is a bridge between Lowry and Dowling, where the ATF Plan suggests a new crossing. This section includes a longer stretch between existing freeway crossings, and it would connect to a city-owed river location that is poised to become park much sooner than the heavy industrial area south of Lowry. A cost estimate for building a land bridge was included in the Upper Harbor Terminal Redevelopment Study. Other options that should be considered are adding one or more pedestrian crossings and/or doing some greening and traffic calming design measures for the freeway bridges and approaches between Lyndale and the river (Plymouth, Broadway, Lowry, Dowling). Particularly compelling among these is a strengthening of the Broadway Avenue corridor just south of the proposed land bridge. Much community energy and focus has gone into the West Broadway Alive! plan over the last five years, and focusing on improving this existing corridor – perhaps with a redesign of the Broadway Bridge and surroundings to make it less intimidating for pedestrians – might be a worthwhile alternative.

In general, we think there should be less emphasis on creating one grand connection, and more emphasis on adding pedestrian bridges over I-94 where needed, and strengthening existing connections through design-conscious zoning. Even where connections exist, the fabric of the east side of I-94 was rarely designed to be hospitable to bicyclists and particularly pedestrians. A variety of uses – including industrial, commercial, and residential – can be designed to be set back only minimally from the street, with windows, materials and other treatments that enliven the streetscape. A rigorous design focus on selected east-west connectors would do much to encourage increased travel between the heart of North Minneapolis and the Mississippi riverfront.

We do like the elevated walkway concept along the river included in the Farview connector plan and would support the idea of finding a way for trails to connect while barging continues. The Quad Cities has some examples of this on the Illinois side. Getting trails and a parkway through this section of the ATF plan will be very challenging and we appreciate the creativity put into this concept.

Friends of the Mississippi cont.

Appendix B

Wetlands/Green Port Demonstration

While we appreciate the effort to provide space for economic development to help pay for new parks, we strongly disagree with the resuscitation of the Port of Minneapolis in the RiverFIRST concept. We believe that any planned improvements to port operations, "green" or otherwise, would be a rollback of good policy for the river's future. Current policy for both the City of Minneapolis and MPRB is for the Upper Harbor Terminal (UHT) to be closed and converted to new uses, and for the property adjacent to the river to become parkland. Even the City's current policy review of the ATF plan does not contemplate continued operation of the port – but rather it is looking at changing the land uses adjacent to the planned new riverfront park in that area. We support reviewing the land use plan here, but not the boundaries of the park plan, and we feel it is imperative that the MPRB stand by its current policy. There are many players at the table here, and MPRB is the last organization that should be advocating for improvements to the port at the expense of riverfront parks. If consolidating the port with no improvements is shown to be necessary to support incremental development of the property into parkland, we would not oppose that, but a clear phasing plan and projected date of closure for the UHT would be beneficial for all parties and stakeholders involved.

FMR has a large stake in the future of the UHT. Working with the non-profit American Rivers, FMR raised \$50,000 towards completion of the UHT Redevelopment Study, and we have been advocating for several years for the City to close the port and give land to MPRB to build a park that will encourage private redevelopment in the area. (Incidentally, we explored the idea of asking another governmental unit to provide funding to MPRB to buy city-owned land, and state legislators, congressional representatives and the Metropolitan Council staff said it was not likely because the outside world looks at the City and MPRB as one local government.)

In terms of actual park development, we are open to many concepts. We like the restored wetlands and treatment of stormwater suggested for the southern half of the site, but we would be open to other options, especially ones that tie in parkland at the northern half of the UHT site. During the UHT Study, connections to North Mississippi Regional Park were identified as critical to the success of redevelopment in this area.

The UHT Study was constrained by design to follow the ATF Plan, so it only looked at different residential use scenarios and densities. Now the City is contemplating alternative uses such as office or light industrial. We recommend planning for this site should look at the City's land use alternatives and at the same time explore different park concepts that could support those uses. For example, the wetland park concept might work nicely with a corporate campus or mixed-use development, but a narrower linear park without the wetland features could be lined by agricultural uses that give the sense of more open space. In both cases, including community gardens would put eyes on the park during evening hours.

East Side Riverfront Park

Planning the future trail alignment and securing easements in this stretch is critical, but we consider it to be a lower priority than getting trails in from Plymouth to the railroad bridge or closing and redeveloping the UHT. The stormwater treatment associated with this concept is interesting and innovative, but it has the potential to slow the process of getting trails put in and/or to disrupt recently renovated parks, such as Gluek and Edgewater. Obviously, additional planning and permitting would need to occur for us to get a better sense of the project specifics. Removing, replacing and or moving the earth in this area will be complicated and the cost should be carefully considered. One other thing to consider is that bluffs in this area are not really natural. The historic topography sloped back gently to large expanses of flat prairie, and many of the steep "bluffs" are actually made of fill and may not provide the best soils for plantings or the long-term stability needed for trails and overlooks.

Friends of the Mississippi cont.

Islands

We like the use of islands throughout the RiverFIRST proposal and strongly support plans and efforts to re-establish islands and restore native vegetation to existing islands within the ATF Plan. The river historically had many islands in this reach, and islands can provide extremely important bird and wildlife habitat in a highly developed urban area. Providing a string of habitat islands from Nicollet Island to the destroyed Heron Rookery would be a great way to improve the ecology, corridor connections and wildlife watching opportunities in the area. We are intrigued by the bio-haven islands and interested in learning more. Because they absorb nutrients, but not sediment, we think their ability to improve water quality is limited, but they could provide important habitat. Our preference would be to restore natural islands in the river where feasible.

Presently there are three active docks in the Upper Harbor – the Port, Aggregate Industries and Northern Metal Recycling. If the Port closed, the Army Corps of Engineers would no longer need to dredge the nine-foot barge channel north of the Lowry Bridge. This would save federal dollars and open up an opportunity to restore natural islands or just let them form on their own.

Thank you again for your work on this initiative and for your consideration of our comments. Please feel free to contact Irene Jones or me at 651-222-2193 if you have any questions or wish to discuss these comments with us directly.


Sincerely yours,

Whitney L. Clark

Whitney L. Clark
Executive Director

CC: Bruce Chamberlain, MPRB Assistant Superintendent for Planning

Friends of the Mississippi cont.



Hawthorne Neighborhood Council
2944 Emerson Avenue North • Minneapolis, MN • 55411
Tel: 612.529.6033 Fax: 612.529.0218
www.hawthorneneighborhoodcouncil.org

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July 29, 2011

To: John Irwin, President – Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board,

Hawthorne Neighborhood Council is submitting this letter in support of the MRDI Initiative as well as the River FIRST concept which includes the development of a Farview Park Land Bridge – a project that seeks to enhance the accessibility of the river for the residents of North Minneapolis.

We feel very strongly that the proposed Farview Park Land Bridge would give the residents of our neighborhood the opportunity to use and learn about the river in ways they have never been able to before.

However, it seems as though this particular project has been slipping down on the greater list of projects deemed fund worthy. For a neighborhood whose residents voices are not always heard, it can be quite difficult to generate the numbers of attendees you would like to see at meetings where such priorities are discussed and weighed. But, we understand what the completion of the Farview Park Land Bridge would mean to this community. People who have lived almost on the very banks of the Mississippi River, yet have never had access to it, would now be able to do so. The impact of this project would also be felt economically as users frequent existing businesses along the riverfront as well as those businesses that may seek to offer their goods or services at a riverfront location in the future.

We would also like to recognize the need for collaboration between MRDI/ MPRB and neighborhood organizations, such as ours, and we will work collectively to do whatever is necessary to further the efforts of this collaboration.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me:

Sincerely,

JoAnne Kelly

JoAnne Kelly
Board Chair

cc: Mary de launre, MRDI

"To improve the quality of life in the Hawthorne neighborhood through empowering the residents in order that they can address the physical, cultural, social, and economic needs of the community."

Hawthorne Neighborhood

2009 James Avenue N Minneapolis MN 55411

Ph: 612-886-4539

www.jordanmpls.org

Jordan

Area

Community

Council

Mary deLaittre

mary@minneapolisriverfrontdevelopmentinitiative.com

Project Manager

Dear Mary:

Jordan Area Community Council (JACC) is excited for the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative proposals for the development of the Mississippi River. Jordan is a neighborhood connected to the river via West Broadway Avenue, 26th Avenue, and Lowry Avenue as main streets leading towards the river and the amenities offered by the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation.

For years, JACC has been working towards the development of the 26th Avenue Bike Greenway, striving to connect the residents of Jordan (and North Minneapolis, in general) to the river. The RiverFIRST proposal creates an awesome recreational destination as well as a safer bike transitway for the residents to the entire city of Minneapolis and beyond.

A priority project would be the development of the Farview Park Land Bridge, seamlessly connecting North Minneapolis to the river. JACC will continue its work in moving the 26th Ave. Bike Greenway forward, connecting the Theodore Wirth Parkway to the river.

We are excited to have the River developed into a wonderful and usable Parks and Recreation area that will bring pleasure and value to North Minneapolis.

Sincerely,

Lynn Riskedal

Chair, JACC Board

Jordan Area Community Council

Lind Bohanon Neighborhood Association

Mary deLaittre

Project manager, Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative

Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, 2117 West River Road

Mpls. MN 55411

September 8, 2011

Dear Mary,

RE: Lind Bohanon Neighborhood Association (LBNA) Letter of Support

This letter of support is from Lind Bohanon Neighborhood Association located north of Camden. Connected to the Mississippi river by bridges across I94 at 53rd and 49th Streets, and by two underpasses, LBNA is a gateway to the existing trail systems that go upstream to Coon Rapids, and LBNA is a gateway to the stretch of river needing trails to be completed to downtown.

LBNA strives to improve the Lyndale Corridor, create jobs, engage youth in positive activities and bring residents to the riverfront to engage in activities in the Mississippi North Regional Park. We believe riverfront development is important and support the MRDI efforts to improve public access to the Mississippi above the falls.

Priority project one– Lind Bohanon as a destination point – a reason to visit, eat and shop:

Lind Bohanon has been working on developing Lyndale Ave as a more viable business corridor. So a high concern for us is making sure that the commercial and business area on Lyndale Avenue North is featured into the MRDI planning process. We regard this stretch of Lyndale in Lind Bohanon as a gateway into Minneapolis. So for us, a priority project would be to link the bike paths north of Camden to downtown. We need to improve the two underpass section of trail in LBNA that go under I94 with more signage. We need more attention to making these more attractive safer recreational walking trails and biking paths. We support the Farview extension at 27th but we would also like to see more attention given to making the area above Camden Bridge more of a destination point, with more promotion of the restaurants and coffee shops in LBNA. It is an existing commercial corridor. We recommend an increased focus on developing the Lyndale corridor in LBNA to match the current focus on the west-east corridors such as Broadway, Plymouth, Lowry and Dowling.

Priority project two – cleaning up the industrial sites area south of the Camden Bridge boat launch area – phasing out all trucking, garbage disposal, dumping and recycling from this area. Right now it is a source of pollution and very unattractive smells at this end of the North Mississippi Regional Park

Sincerely,

David Barnett

LBNA board chair

612/522-0814

David Zander

LBNA representative to the ATFCAC

612/529-8964

Lind Bohanon Neighborhood Association

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Liz Wielinski,

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

Executive Director

Cordelia Pierson

minneapolis

RIVERFRONT

partnership

A Great River For A Great City

minneapolisriverfrontpartnership.org

August 12, 2011

Mary deLaittre, Project Manager

Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative (MRDI)

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

2117 West River Road

Minneapolis, MN 55411

Dear Ms. deLaittre:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the RiverFIRST projects and Phase One implementation priorities for the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative (MRDI).

The Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership mission is revitalizing the Mississippi riverfront in Minneapolis, creating a great river for a great city - and further strengthening our region. As a private, charitable organization, the Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership brings together businesses, community leaders and public agencies that will shape development along the Mississippi. The Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership has been contributing to the MRDI effort through staff collaboration, director and staff service on all the committees, and assistance with technical questions, financing strategies, and community outreach.

We applaud the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) for committing time, talent and resources to accelerating the Above the Falls (ATF) Plan with this park design initiative. While the MPRB has achieved many of the ATF Plan's objectives since 2000, MRDI has brought in creative design concepts that breathe new energy into the ATF Plan. The MRDI has drawn media attention that helps foster advocacy for plan completion and can affect city planning in the area. This attention complements our work expanding the constituency for the riverfront, increasing expectations for investment and change on the riverfront, and increasing political support to overcome challenges.

We will highlight some themes that apply to all the proposals, and have attached separately our comments on the RiverFIRST approach and the specific proposals.

One key element stands out in our review: The importance of providing broad access to and along the Mississippi River in Minneapolis. We highlight strategies to achieve that, some in the RiverFIRST proposals and some suggesting revisions.

The MRDI proposals largely resonate with the Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership's vision of a revitalized riverfront, with its four key dimensions:

Exceptional Parks and Trails:

Three elements are key:

Continuous on the riverfront

Connected with businesses, homes and commercial areas

River-related activities and features

Creating continuous public trails and green public space along the riverfront is essential to create a destination riverfront that fosters private investment. Making frequent and strong connections with this riverfront will further encourage vitality and active use; on the North side, creating walkable connections to the Mississippi at least every half mile can provide critical access. Carefully selecting park features that are river-related will create a Mississippi River park that draws regional and national visitors.

Healthy Ecosystem:

Any development in the Mississippi River corridor should have a positive impact on the health of the water, wildlife and plants here and downstream. Selecting native plants

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and landscaping that enhances this internationally significant corridor will improve ecosystem health. Urban agriculture does not necessarily offer that positive impact.

- World-class History and Culture:**
Preserving riverfront history and engaging creative, artistic talent – particularly in North and Northeast Minneapolis – will make this riverfront unique and vibrant. This area provides excellent interpretive opportunities: the transformation of a prairie river to a lumber, brick, and metal industrial area that helped build our region. The City’s historic asset inventory for the riverfront neighborhoods may provide more ideas for incorporating the city’s past into its future. Building on community knowledge and strengths in history and art will attract advocates key to implementation.
Dakota and other indigenous people provide valuable insights for improving our riverfront connections. The St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board will be a vital ally in engaging indigenous people to shape the riverfront’s future in a spiritually and culturally meaningful way.
- Vital, Livable Communities:**
Art is a powerful, creative force. Artists in Minneapolis – particularly North and Northeast – can enrich park design and development.
Park design and adjacent land use both affect the vitality of the parks. Wise park investments help attract investments in private spaces. As the City is now evaluating land use guidance for this area, these park design ideas help inform that policy discussion. However, some of the RiverFIRST recommendations suggest land use changes from the ATF Plan that conflict with plan goals, such as locating new housing on the riverfront in Northeast Minneapolis, or investing in a green port. The RiverFIRST recommendations are most helpful when they provide guidance for implementing the ATF Plan and its land use guidance.

In addition to our own mission and vision, we are applying the criteria offered by the RiverFIRST team and HR & A Finance Advisors PSA (“HR&A”).

- The RiverFIRST team proposed a set of four criteria:
 - Community benefits
 - Timing and land ownership (feasibility of securing land)
 - Municipal need (connection with identified city priorities)
 - Demonstration capacity
- HR&A recommended the following criteria for Phase one implementation:
 - Activation: connecting all Minneapolitans with the river
 - Advocacy: fostering advocacy for plan completion
 - Attention: securing and sustaining media attention
 - Transactions: demonstrating public sector ability to conclude transactions

We will highlight some themes that apply to all the proposals, and have attached separately our comments on the RiverFIRST approach and the specific proposals.

Three elements will affect successful implementation:

- Existing Organizations as Collaborators:**
HR&A’s criteria resonate strongly: **Advocate, Attention, Activation, and Transactions.** Partnerships, including the Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership, stand ready to collaborate on all of these, and contribute to more detailed planning.
The Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership can play a leadership role in advocating for RiverFIRST implementation, sustaining attention on the riverfront, providing programming to activate the riverfront, and continuing work on the land acquisition and private fundraising teams. The Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership is a community asset to leverage MPRB success, just as the

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Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership cont.

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river itself is an asset. Convening key partners now to identify leadership and support roles for implementation will ensure effective collaboration.
In the Central Riverfront, the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board will be an important planning and implementation partner.

- Critical Area Goals and Standards:**
Any development – private or public - in the critical area is subject to Mississippi River critical area guidelines. These guidelines reflect a broad range of community benefits for our Mississippi River.
Applying the MRDI criteria, park development following these critical area standards has both “community benefit” and “demonstration capacity;” it can provide best management examples for habitat restoration, water quality, and scenic improvement.
- Feasibility and Comparative Costs and Benefits:**
Access to comparative financial analysis would assist in ranking the projects. We look forward to offering more specific comments about priorities when that information is available.

Design Principles and Responses to 21st Century Challenges:
The four design principles and responses to 21st century challenges proposed by RiverFIRST seem to match the opportunities of the Upper River. In specific application, some challenges emerge.

Design Principles:

- Go with the Flow:** Shaping the river’s edge to complement hydrology, public access, and habitat will help make a developed park easier to maintain and more active. It would be very helpful to understand better how to design nature-based parkland in an urban setting, maintaining sight-lines and safety.
- Design with Topography:** In theory, this concept is appealing. In application, however, this needs further development; creating ravines on the East Bank, for example, may be extremely challenging with current soil conditions.
- Both/And:** This appears to be a phasing strategy, providing public access to areas not ripe for public acquisition or land use changes. The drawback is decreasing momentum for those changes.
- Parks Plus:** The modern park is expected to serve a range of public benefits beyond recreation, such as clean water and healthy ecosystems; stating this principle is helpful. Park design affects the type of economic development that follows; it is important to differentiate design based on the intensity of public activity adjacent to the park.

Four Responses to 21st Century Challenges:

- Water:**
It would be helpful to test how the proposed biofiltration systems would actually remediate Minneapolis’s stormwater management system. The east bank, where ravines are proposed, is predominantly fill; the Marshall Flittie property shows the historic topography, sloping from Marshall to the Mississippi. The cost-benefit of the tributary creation and bio-filtration proposal needs to be more fully described; the same water quality benefits might be achieved in ways with more water quality benefit and less impact on diverse park uses or hospitality.
- Health:**
Urban agriculture is cited as a key strategy to leverage parkland to improve the health of the river. However, in an internationally significant habitat corridor, developing a habitat restoration plan that incorporates “blueway” strategies to improve water quality and reduce flooding could provide much greater regional and national benefit for the Mississippi River. Instead, urban agriculture that contributes to habitat and human health may be recommended for open space near residences in existing neighborhoods.
- Mobility:**

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Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership cont.

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Non-motorized and transit access to this area will help activate the riverfront and foster constituency building in this area. This is an excellent key theme. The National Park Service has just completed a regional Alternative Transportation Plan for Mississippi River access, and would be an excellent partner for implementation.

- Green Economy:**
The connection between the park development and attracting green tech needs to be developed further. This topic seems more relevant to the city’s land use policy review.

In reviewing the projects, we offer the following recommendations on project priorities:

- Continuous Riverfront Trail
- Indigenous Ideas – important throughout project area
- Bridges to the Riverfront: Access to the Mississippi from All North Minneapolis
- BF Nelson to Sheridan Area

Those four initiatives meet the RiverFIRST and HR&A criteria best. Four other projects seem valuable, but not in place of the four above for immediate implementation:

- Eastside Riverfront Park
- Westside Wetlands
- Biohavens
- Library Square

Finally, the Green Port project does not seem to meet several RiverFIRST and HR&A criteria, as it is inconsistent with current and proposed plans for the area.
Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to working with you to shape these proposals further, and advocate for creating a great river for a great city.

Sincerely,

Cordelia Pierson
Executive Director

2117 West River Road North, Minneapolis, MN 55411 612-465-8780 x212

Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership cont.

Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership

COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC PROPOSALS:
Projects and Areas of Opportunity:

1. Riverfront Trail:

This element should be a key component of any riverfront park development scenario. A continuous riverfront trail on both sides of the river, with connections across at bridges, is an essential improvement, and should be a first priority for implementation. It would activate the riverfront, and foster advocacy for plan completion, including continuous public open space along the Mississippi and providing access to the riverfront. It would require collaboration between the MPRB, the City, Hennepin County, and other public agencies; results would demonstrate the public sector’s ability to conclude transactions. It is consistent with community, city, regional and national priorities for completing the Minneapolis Grand Rounds – a National Scenic Byway – and the Mississippi River Trail from Lake Itasca to the Gulf of Mexico.

An alternative should be offered to the potentially expensive elevated trail along the river’s edge. A five-year plan to improve and promote the Second Street North bike corridor would reserve trail funding for a more permanent riverfront trail solution, when river uses have evolved.

2. Spirit Island; Realizing Present Indigenous Ideas:

Like the continuous riverfront trail, another key opportunity is actively listening to indigenous ideas in riverfront park design. The St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board’s plan *Power of the Falls* highlights the opportunity to engage indigenous perspectives in future park development and interpretation. A Native Voices group convened, including several Dakota leaders, agency staff and advisors. One of the participants suggested indigenous art and interpretive information at several sacred sites in the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, including near the falls. Honoring and enhancing existing places of spiritual importance will lend depth to all peoples’ experiences.

Taking time to shape specific projects is vital to include in the recommendations from RiverFIRST for any riverfront park development planning. A key opportunity fast approaches with the 150th anniversary of the 1862 conflict.

3. Farview Park to Mississippi Expansion:

Connecting North Minneapolis more directly to the river is both critical and daunting. This proposal, with several elements, offers some good examples of “RiverFIRST.” Strengthening North Minneapolis connections with the Mississippi riverfront can help both the neighborhoods and the region grow into the 21st century. Making the 26th Avenue North Green/Bikeway a river access route and providing fishing piers at 26th and 28th avenues are two short-term projects that can meet RiverFIRST objectives.

- 26th Avenue North Green/Bikeway and Stormwater Connection

Treating water as an asset and amenity-builder is a great idea. The stormwater improvements sound great, especially along the shoreline and near 26th Avenue North.

However, putting a water feature through the middle of industrial property and across a railroad seems challenging for a five-year implementation period. Instead, incorporating this water quality improvement into the pending 26th Avenue North Green/Bikeway would help achieve a high priority regional connection between the Mississippi River, Farview Park, and the Grand Rounds/Wirth Park. This would serve community benefits while integrating with long-term industrial land uses west of I-94.

- Direct River Access and Boat Builders

The fishing pier at the end of 26th Avenue is an excellent proposal worth moving ahead on quickly, as the land is apparently already publicly owned. At 28th Avenue North, the same opportunity for river access or at least a river view exists; current signage states “Park Don’t Dump.”

A Minneapolis branch of Urban Boat Builders somewhere in the Upper River area is a great addition. While an evaluation of potential sites may lead to a different location, the idea is strong.

- Land Use Suggestions:

While fostering a “river city innovation district” and eco business park are interesting, they seem beyond the scope of a park plan.

- Land Bridge – or Frequent, Multi-purpose River Access

The two-block wide land bridge requires further feasibility analysis and would benefit from comparison to other bridge locations and designs. Three issues raise questions about the effectiveness of the land bridge in achieving its stated goals.

First is distance from large residential areas. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board has analyzed park access city-wide, and identified North Minneapolis as underserved for parks within a half-mile of residents’ homes. It is not clear how one wide land bridge will meet their park needs or substantially increase river access in many North Minneapolis neighborhoods.

The second is the relatively weak potential for increasing community amenity and property value by locating an open space amenity next to an existing and proposed industrial area. A park investment without residential or commercial activity nearby may be perceived as unsafe, without “eyes on the park” or active park uses. Industrial redevelopment might not increase property values to help pay for the park improvement. Alternatively, a land bridge between a residential area and proposed residential or mixed use area could more effectively increase property value, and result in a more active and populated park. Sites closer to the existing Upper Harbor Terminal, as recommended in the Above the Falls Plan, might be more successful.

The third is the type of land use proposed: urban farming. This land use would be welcome in the neighborhoods. Siting it outside the Mississippi River Critical Area,

closer to homes and not on former industrial land could serve both the ecological and health goals of RiverFIRST much better.

Providing green, bike and pedestrian friendly connections across the highway to the Mississippi River corridor is an important alternative to explore. River access across I-94 every quarter mile would do more to create value throughout North Minneapolis and activate the riverfront. Selecting one wider, greener bridge - potentially at 26th Avenue North – would complement a stronger network of river connections. From south to north, an inventory of river connections at quarter mile intervals suggests opportunities for greater river access.

- Between Plymouth and West Broadway: No highway crossings exist. Is a bicycle/pedestrian bridge possible?
- West Broadway: A coalition is stepping up advocacy to put proposed improvements on county and city capital improvement plans for this county highway. As a vital gateway to North Minneapolis, this area now shows little connection to the Mississippi River. Attention to this major river gateway is welcome.
- 26th Avenue North: Improving and greening this connection to encourage community redevelopment is now being planned. This will be a great achievement for North Minneapolis and the region, providing an east-west connection within the Grand Rounds, connecting Wirth Parkway to the Mississippi River.
- 29th Avenue North, half way between Lowry and 26th Avenue: At Farview Park, the greatest activity area is on 29th Avenue. A bike/ walk bridge here would connect the activity area at Farview Park to the Mississippi, and serve residents north and west of the park.
- Lowry Avenue: Great attention is focused on this commercial corridor.
- 34th or 35th or between Lowry and Dowling: This area has no river connection, and the Dowling entrance is not welcoming. This could connect Cityview School and Perkins Hill Park to the Upper Harbor Terminal area, which is proposed for redevelopment in the ATF Plan.
- Dowling: McKinley neighborhood has asked for improvements to this gateway to the river and their neighborhood.
- 41st Avenue: Similar to Dowling, this access to the Camden Boat Launch could be improved as a community and river gateway.

4. Scherer Area: BF Nelson to Sheridan Area

This area – from BF Nelson to Sheridan, on both sides of the Mississippi – can perform well on all the HR&A criteria. So close to downtown and a freeway entrance, it is accessible for local and regional users as well as tourists. By extending the Mississippi River Trail and offering additional river-related recreation, it can effectively activate the riverfront. By providing a diverse population with access to arts, natural shoreline, and healthy recreation, this site has the potential to foster strong advocates, and continue to attract media attention. Finally, the area is publicly owned, with strong prospects for public and private funding. However, the area should be considered as a ¾-mile area, not one parcel.

The ¾-mile riverfront area between BF Nelson Park and Sheridan Park on the east bank and between Bassett Creek and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board headquarters on the west bank offers fabulous opportunities for achieving riverfront revitalization. As a unit, this area uniquely ties the Above the Falls Regional Park to the Central Riverfront and St. Anthony

Appendix B

<p>Falls Historic District. Tying the west and east banks together in a unified plan will accelerate completion of the west bank development as well. This can more directly serve North Minneapolis residents and businesses, especially at Broadway, North Minneapolis’s “main street.”</p> <p>Some exceptional opportunities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Healthy Ecosystem:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Restored shoreline serving many public benefits: improved water quality, improved habitat, stabilized shoreline, fishing access (healthy ecosystem)○ Restored Hall’s Island○ Stormwater “treatment train” design integrated into the park design for the Sheridan to Boom section, with an example already in place in front of the MPRB building• Exceptional Parks and Trails:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Continuous Mississippi River Trail, part of the national trail system, and both east and west banks; access over bridges and to Hall’s Island○ Non-motorized boat recreation – launches, support facilities (racks), rental○ Beach access – east bank○ Non-motorized riverfront access and recreation - bicycle rental; transit access○ Gathering places for diverse populations• World-class history and culture:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Community activity center, with both public uses and hospitality (restaurants)○ History and arts activity areas○ Work/live art studio spaces (Sheridan/Grain Belt area)• Vibrant, livable communities:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ City-identified commercial activity center at Grain Belt Brewery○ More private development near the park improvements, particularly if complementing the park activity and not conflicting with existing office and industrial uses○ Restaurants or food trucks <p>By broadening the focus from the Scherer property, the RiverFIRST proposal would be able to tie park development more directly to existing and proposed private and public uses.</p> <p>Comments on specific aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continuous trail: Build the trail within five years; do not delay 20 years for the north south trail. Connect the trail to Boom Island under the Plymouth Bridge.• Arts activities could be located in existing buildings near 13th Avenue Northeast and Pierre Bottineau Library, strengthening and complementing the Northeast Arts District. This area is on higher ground, less susceptible to flooding, and Artspace is currently operating nearby.• The playground recommended near Sheridan Memorial Park would then serve the arts center well, especially near a riverfront natural area and with strong historical interpretation. Attracting children and families to the river with playgrounds designed with history and nature in mind will encourage healthy risk-taking and hands-on play in nature.• Creating an urban launch point in this area is both intriguing and challenging. Hydrology, sediment movement, and water quality will all need to be addressed. <p>Page 4 of 6</p>
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Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership cont.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hall’s Island: Could a new island be created instead of carving into existing land? Could the river’s existing hydrology be used to build the island and replicate historic conditions better?• A narrower public space at the Scherer site could accommodate private development with public-oriented commercial uses on the first floor, and potentially public space on the roof. These features may help finance park acquisition and development. <p>5. Northeast Bluffs: East Side Riverfront Park</p> <p>Some aspects of this plan stand out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completing the pedestrian and bicycle riverfront trail and the commuting bicycle lanes on Marshall Street NE are both very important in the regional park and trail network; these trails and parks could highlight the historic Red River Oxcart trail.• Increasing public ownership on the river side of Marshall, particularly between 18th Avenue and the Xcel Riverside Plant, will provide greater public value and easier management. Hospitality and education uses for existing buildings west of Marshall is compatible with public access to the area, as long as a riverfront trail can be threaded through the area.• Supporting more river river-related uses – canoe rental, boat building – will activate the river itself as well as the riverfront.• Restoring riverbank quality with native planting and forestation will encourage more access to the riverfront for fishing and reflection.• Creating more river overlooks would help identify Marshall as our “East River Road.”• Expanding Sheridan Park and increasing arts and other public activities are great complements to the riverfront park development further south. <p>Other aspects are not desirable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carving ravines into the riverbank through this area does not restore a historic landscape, but simply cuts into fill. This may cause slope stability issues closer to Marshall, and would make a riverfront trail more complex. It would be helpful to quantify the stormwater improvements achieved in this way; perhaps it could be achieved in a few sites.• Creating new housing at Marshall Flittie, one of the few sites still naturally sloping down to the river, removes an excellent river access point; that housing would be appropriate on the east side of Marshall instead. <p>6. Westside Wetlands:</p> <p>Improving stormwater treatment at this site is appealing. Implementation of this fascinating proposal relies on two key issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Feasibility: Will the science work? Or will it fill in rapidly?Opportunity cost: Will developing a substantial wetlands park limit other park development options for the Upper Harbor Terminal area? <p>Creating a connection between the Mississippi and Perkins Hill Park is a great improvement. (see Farview discussion above)</p> <p>7. Biohavens:</p> <p>Page 5 of 6</p>

Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership cont.

<p>This is an intriguing idea, worth testing in a major riverine environment. This can proceed independently of a park development plan, in tandem with any of the proposed RiverFIRST primary projects.</p> <p>8. Library Square Park/Gateway to Downtown Improvement District:</p> <p>While an improved connection of the Mississippi River with downtown is a regional priority, it should not be a substitute for improvements further upstream. Building a downtown constituency for Upper River investments is key, but competing for limited public and private funding could become an issue.</p> <p>On the design of the park itself: Other specific park designs might be more successful in achieving downtown goals of vitality and economic development. Park plans developed by the City of Minneapolis and private partners like the Trust for Public Land likely provide more specific guidance for that area than RiverFIRST offers.</p> <p>9. Green Port:</p> <p>The Upper Harbor Terminal and port uses are likely not long-term uses, and do not take advantage of the site’s values. Public investment in a green port should be discouraged, as less important than other riverfront priorities.</p> <p>Page 6 of 6</p>

Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership cont.



1224 Marshall Street NE, Suite 201
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55413-1036
(612) 465-8780
(612) 465-8785 fax
www.mwmo.org

MEMORANDUM

June 9, 2011

Date: MR|DI Consultant Team and MPRB Senior Staff
To: Daniel Kalmon
From: Staff Comments: The RiverFIRST Development Proposals
Re:

The Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO) is committed to protecting, managing, and improving the water resources within its boundaries. The MWMO provided the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative consultant team with studies on past and present natural resources and infrastructure within the Watershed. The RiverFIRST development proposals have integrated this information well.


The following staff comments reflect the consistency of the RiverFIRST proposal with the goals and policies found within the MWMO's May 10, 2011 Watershed Management Plan.

- MWMO staff support RiverFIRST development proposals where water-based recreation experiences are not degrading water quality and surrounding habitat
- MWMO staff support all elements of the Riverfirst development proposal that improve water quality, aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems and reduce flooding along the river; for example, stormwater ravines, wetlands, and floodplain restoration. The MWMO encourages the use of bioengineering for all restoration efforts along the river. The MWMO has developed a Riverbank Restoration Manual and Planning Software to aid in this type of restoration along the river.
- The MWMO has identified the Critical Area Corridor as a priority area for ecosystem restoration. As such, any projects in and adjacent to the riverway should meet Critical Area's goals and standards.
- MWMO staff encourages volume, rate control and water quality treatments in upland areas of the watershed (upstream within the pipeshed) that complement the habitat improvements and site level treatments occurring along the river corridor.
- MWMO staff encourages a timely prioritization of the development proposals and a capital improvement schedule so that MWMO and Park Board staff can work together to identify elements of the projects that may be eligible for MWMO capital project funds.
- MWMO staff encourages RiverFIRST to develop a financial cost benefit analysis for the proposed projects. Each project should include an assessment of the impacts and the benefits of the project to the Mississippi River's ecosystem and stormwater management and conveyance system.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the RiverFIRST development proposals.

MWMO Staff Comments: The Riverfirst Development Proposals

Mississippi Watershed Management Organization



NORTHEAST
MINNEAPOLIS
Chamber of Commerce
An Affiliate of the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce

Mary -

Thank you for participating in the Chamber's recent panel. Please consider us a willing partner and supporter of the river's growth and future use.

Christine

Northeast Chamber of Commerce



August 4, 2011

Ms. Mary deLaittre
Groundwork
4949 Woodlawn Blvd
Minneapolis, MN 55417

RE: Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative

Dear Mary:

The North Loop Neighborhood Association (NLNA) supports the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative (MRDI). We appreciate all the outreach you have done over the past months on this project, including your most recent presentation at the Planning & Zoning (P&Z) committee meeting on July 20th.

The NLNA supports the project as presented. The neighborhood would like the MRDI design team to consider the following:

- Enhancing and providing additional riverfront access.
- Provide access from the North Loop Neighborhood from 8th Avenue North.
- Look at the opportunity to daylight Bassett Creek and provide a new connection along its historic alignment.
- To include bicycle crossing across the river, extending the Cedar Lake Bike Trail.
- Adding recreational trails across the new Plymouth Avenue Bridge.

Mary, please let me know if I can answer any questions, and thanks again for all your work.

Sincerely,



David R. Frank
North Loop Neighborhood Association

North Loop Neighborhood Association

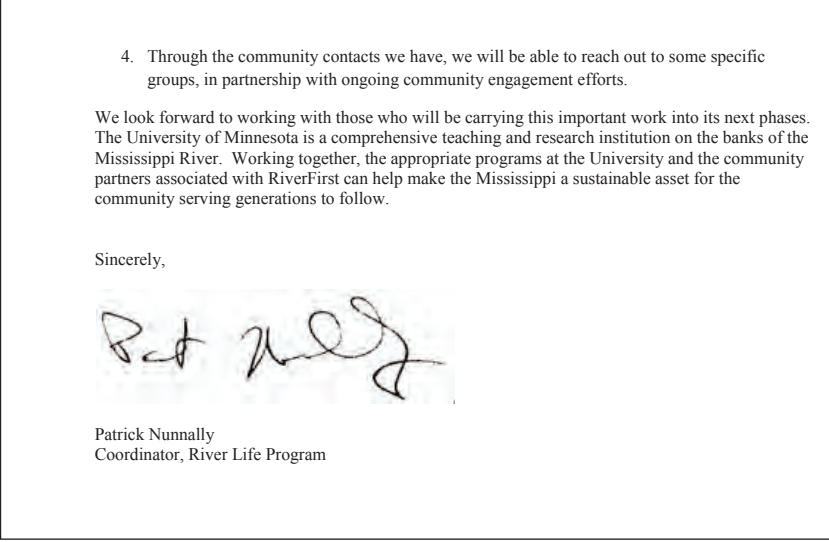
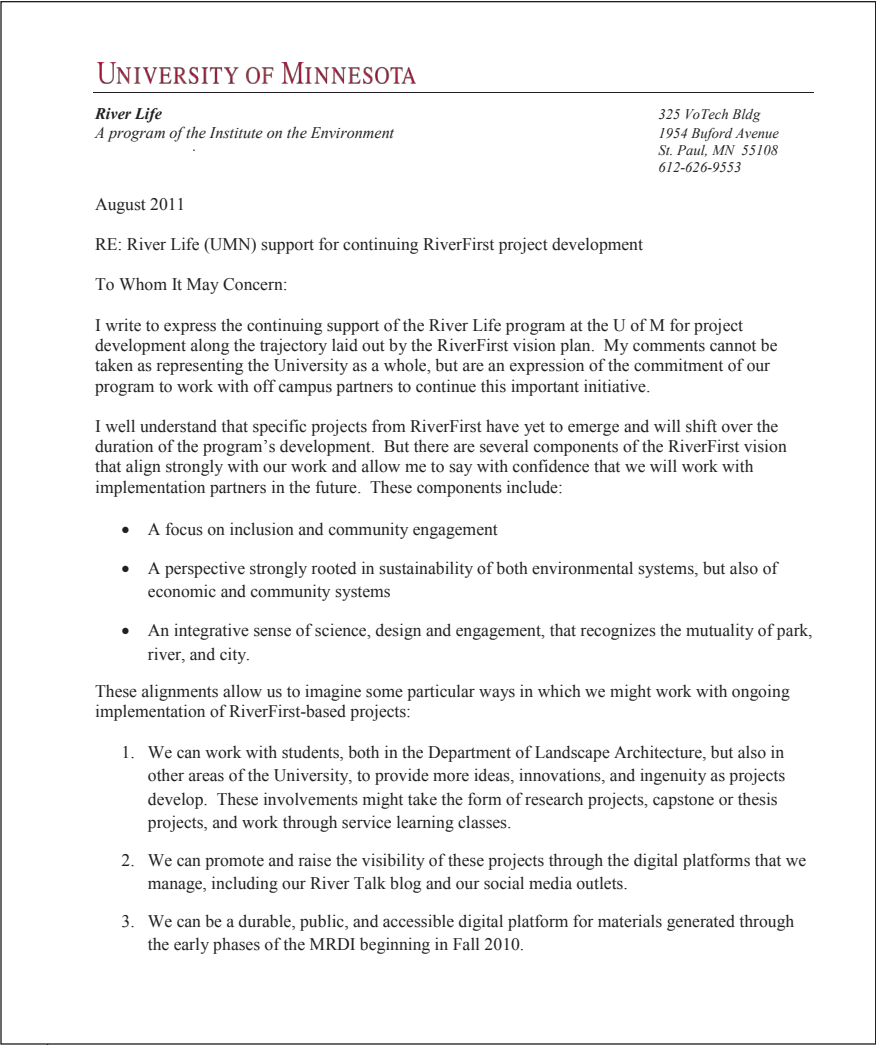
Appendix B



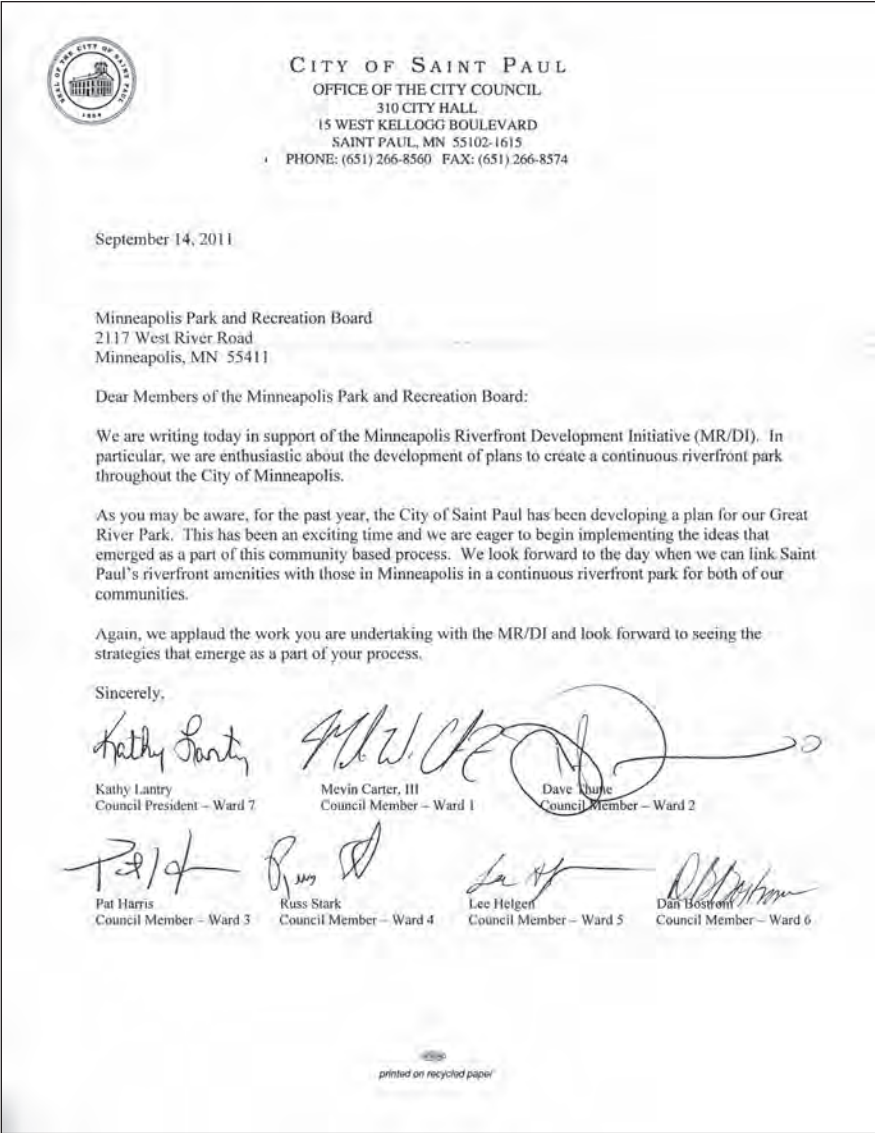
Sheridan Neighborhood Organization



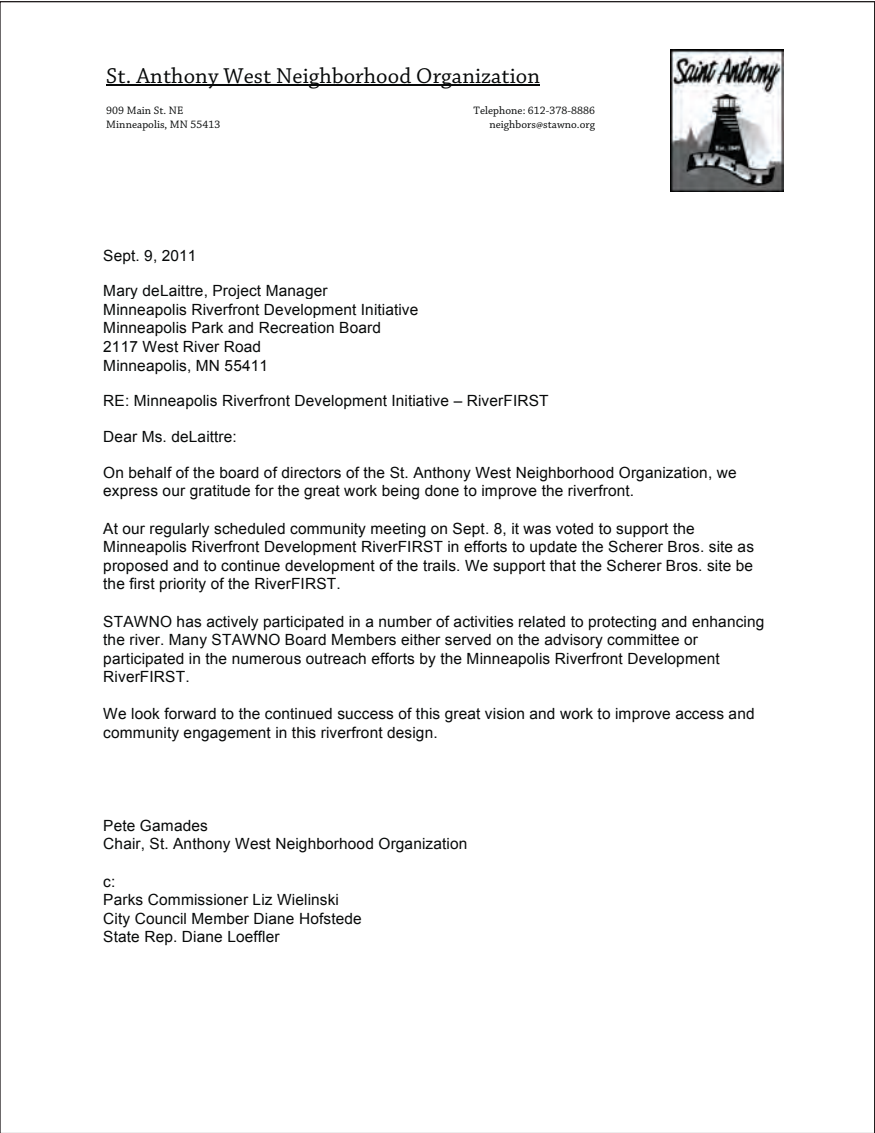
University of Minnesota College of Design



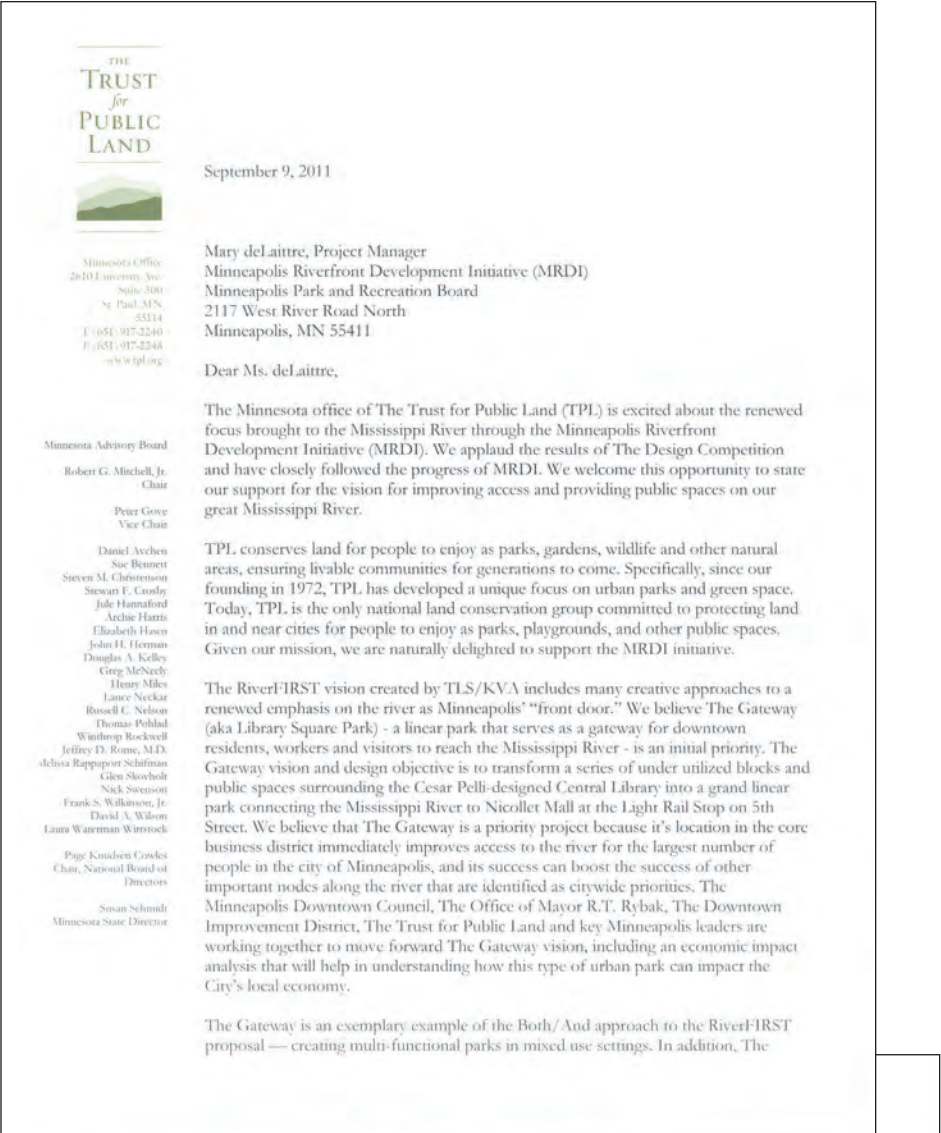
U of M RiverLife



City of St. Paul




STAWNO



Trust for Public Land

Appendix B



VICTORY

Neighborhood Association

2200 44th Avenue North

Minneapolis, MN 55412 (612) 529-9558

E-mail : info@victoryneighborhood.org

Website : www.victoryneighborhood.org

August 31, 2011

Mary deLaittre
Minneapolis Park and Recreation
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411

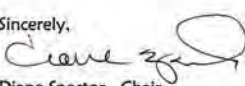
Dear Mary,

Thank you for the presentation on the RiverFIRST proposal at the August 24, Victory neighborhood meeting. The Victory Neighborhood is located in north Minneapolis, only a few miles from the Mississippi, however our access to it has been severely hampered by the construction of I94. We do have access through the North Mississippi Regional Park but that park is virtually hidden behind the freeway walls and many people do not even know it exists.

The RiverFIRST proposal is exciting in that it promises both access to the river and environmental stewardship of the riverfront. Victory's priority projects for the RiverFIRST project would be those supporting the "greening" of the riverfront in North Minneapolis. Those would be the "green" harbor and the reclamation of the wet land. We would also support walking and biking paths that could be used for both recreational and commuting purposes and connect us to downtown.

We will continue to work to support the RiverFIRST proposal by holding a seat on the Advisory Council. The seat is currently held by Victory resident Lauren Maker.

Sincerely,



Diane Spector, Chair
Victory Neighborhood Association

The purpose of this organization shall be to protect and promote neighborhood interests and the health, safety and general welfare of the residents within the organization's geographic jurisdiction in a non-partisan, educational and cooperative manner.

Victory Neighborhood Association

WALKER ART CENTER
MINNEAPOLIS SCULPTURE GARDEN
1750 Hennepin Avenue
Minneapolis Minnesota 55403 USA

TEL 612.375.7600
FAX 612.253.3588
walkerart.org

September 1, 2011

John Erwin, President
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411


Dear John,

I am writing to express the interest of the Walker Art Center in continuing to work with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board on its on-going Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative (MRDI), RiverFIRST. I was a member of the jury that reviewed the submittals and selected the RiverFIRST proposal, and last January the Walker Art Center played host to the Minneapolis Riverfront Design Competition, which featured presentations by the four finalist design teams. My colleague, Ashley Duffalo, who helped with the production of the Design Competition, would also like to represent her support for the proposal.

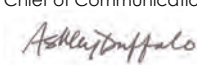
As an institution that already has a deep and vested partnership with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Department in the stewardship of the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, the Walker sees MRDI as another opportunity to foster the long-term relationship between our two organizations. A project like RiverFIRST is important to the Walker, which has a long history of presenting exhibitions and educational programs related to urban planning, architecture, and design. As evidenced by the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden and Walker Open Field, we are an institution that is committed to the growth of urban green space in Minneapolis.

We look forward to providing a programmatic platform for further discussion on the evolution and realization of RiverFIRST and to continue to build on our partnership with your board for furthering Minneapolis' great park system.

Best,




Andrew Blauvelt
Chief of Communications and Audience Engagement, Curator of Design



Ashley Duffalo
Program Manager, Public and Community Programs

EDUCATION & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS
WALKER ART CENTER
DESIGN
QUALITY ARTS
WALKER ART CENTER
REMAINDER
NEW MEDIA INITIATIVES
PERFORMING ARTS
WALKER ART CENTER
COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Walker Art Center



Windom Park

citizens in action

2314 Lowry Avenue NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418
(612) 788-2192

Aug. 19, 2011

Mary deLaittre, Project Manager
Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411

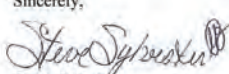
RE: Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative - RiverFIRST

Dear Ms. deLaittre:

The Windom Park Citizens in Action neighborhood organization is excited about the renewed focus and resources brought to the Mississippi River through the MRDI. Giving our communities access to the river through bicycle and walking paths, developing green spaces, and showing concern for the health of the river and our river communities are goals that we share.

We believe there should be highest priority on serving esthetically deprived communities in both Northeast and North Minneapolis. We believe that giving our half of the city the large green spaces, loop trails and natural areas found on the south side of Minneapolis will stabilize and incent investment in our neighborhoods and businesses.

Sincerely,



Steve Sylvester
Board President
Windom Park Citizens in Action

info@windompark.org www.windompark.org

Windom Park

Individuals

- Kathy DeBoer
- Tom Dimond
- Brian M. Finstad
- Rosemary Froehle
- Chris Linde
- William McGaughy
- Dawn Misencik
- Karen Runyan
- Jeff Skrenes
- Susan Vikse

Appendix B

Hi Mary,

My name is Kathy DeBoer and I am the co director of A Chance to Grow located at 1800 2nd St NE, next to Bottineau Park. ACTG is a non profit serving children. In the development, I heard that the old railroad tracks behind us would possibly be turned into green space.

I have a suggestion. We have the smallest school forest in the state of MN (DNR school forest program) at the edge of our property. It has just 33 native trees and a rain garden, an area for children to garden. We would LOVE it if the area behind us could be an extension of native grass and trees for our urban students to explore. Eastside Neighborhood Services is next to us and they have a childcare program and school too. I'm sure they would utilize the area if available. Perhaps our children could be involved in planting trees?

Please let me know if we can be involved?

Thank you,
Kathy

Kathy DeBoer

Tom Dimond
2119 Skyway Drive
Saint Paul, MN 55119

August 1, 2011

RE: RIVERFIRST comments

I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the riverfront planning. Below are some observations and comments for your consideration as you refine the plan and set priorities.

Strong support for Above the Falls Plan

Public input has demonstrated strong support for the Above the Falls Plan. The frustration many have expressed is the slower than hoped for implementation. There is agreement that much has been accomplished and now is the time to make significant strides forward. The discussion just strengthens the resolve to implement the ATF plan.

Restore the natural environment

People put a high priority on restoration of the natural environment. This has been expressed in many ways. They want clean water so you can enjoy swimming and fishing in the river. They caution against trendy ideas like artificial islands. They said the artificial islands may serve a purpose and be okay, but emphasized the artificial islands are no substitute to restoring existing islands and replacing lost islands with real islands. Emphasis is on real protection and restoration of land and water. There is support for protecting wildlife and protecting and enhancing wildlife habitat.

Support for housing, retail and commercial

The Above the Falls Plan calls for converting industrial areas to commercial, retail and housing. It has been mentioned that the City planning effort may recommend industrial instead of housing, commercial and retail in some areas. This has generally received little or no support. People speak in support of the highest and best use of the land. They point out the limited number of jobs per acre and the incompatibility of trucks, noise and pollution. They express support for redevelopment that will enhance the riverfront and adjacent neighborhoods. It was pointed out that there are many vacant industrial properties throughout the City. The riverfront offers a unique opportunity for higher value redevelopment. Many people mention

Tom Dimond

Appendix B

the significant renaissance of other areas along the river as examples. They express their desire to have the same transformation along this stretch of the river.

Green connections

There is support for green connectors. The most discussed is the Farview land bridge over the freeway. There is support for significant enhancement of the connection at Broadway. People envision enhanced pedestrian and bike access, trees, vegetation and art that will attract people to the river, and attract people from the river to Broadway businesses. There is also interest to enhance the connection to the Perkins Hill neighborhood. On both sides of the river, there is support for daylighting streams and storm water outfalls to clean run-off and restore habitat.

Saint Anthony Falls

Saint Anthony Falls is the only waterfall on the Mississippi River. Restoration of the Falls themselves and restoration of flow over the Falls should be part of any long term plan for the river. The Falls are greatly diminished by the sloped apron design and diversion of water. The National Park Service, State of Minnesota and Minneapolis should work together to develop a long range plan for restoration of Saint Anthony Falls.

Whitewater restoration

Restoration of the rapids and flow of water over the rapids would return an important element to the river. The rapids could also provide a major attraction for kayaks. Whitewater restoration is another area the National Park Service, MN DNR and Minneapolis should work together to develop a plan.

Island restoration

Islands were a prominent element of the river when European settlers came to Minnesota. Restoration of islands, including Spirit Island, would restore important features to the river.

Asian Carp

There are four species of Asian Carp that threaten the Upper Mississippi River. Plans for the river should include steps to ensure that the Asian Carp do not get to Minneapolis. If they reach this area they can have a devastating impact on the ecology of the river.

Tom Dimond cont.

Swimming pond

The Scherer Park should have a swimming beach on the shore and a natural swimming pond on Halls Island. Swimming ponds have worked well in our regional parks and are more in keeping with the interest to restore a more natural edge to the river. In the winter, it could accommodate pond hockey.

Limit structures on river side of Parkway

The 20 year plan shows buildings along the river side of the parkway between BNSF and Lowry bridges. The Parkway should open up to the park and river.

Extend North Mississippi Park to Lowry Bridge

Redevelopment of the Upper Harbor as riverfront park offers a significant opportunity to advance the Above the Falls plan. The neighborhood has waited a decade and should not have to wait another 20 years to see the park developed. The proposal restoring a more natural shore is excellent and should include the full length of the shore. The old cold storage building should be removed as called for in the ATF Plan. Old industrial structures should be removed to allow restoration of natural areas and provide better connectivity. Restoration of the shore from Lowry to North Mississippi Park will provide a significant amenity. Interest has also been expressed in an amphitheatre overlooking the river on this site.

Streams and ravines

Daylighting streams will enhance the natural environment and serve as an amenity. Access to the river can be enhanced. This idea has received very positive responses. People have encouraged expanding the idea.

West River Parkway

The proposed location of the West River Parkway could be enhanced on the north end with a direct connection to Webber Parkway. This would create a continuous parkway of Victory Memorial Drive, Webber Parkway and West River Parkway. There is clearance for Webber Parkway to extend across Interstate 94 parallel to the west side of the railroad. This would provide the opportunity for a continuous parkway.

Priorities

Generally, the top priority should be assembling parkland along the full length of the river. It is essential to implementation of a park plan. Delay in acquisition increases cost and risks losing key parcels.

Tom Dimond cont.

Ranking importance is like trying to decide which link of a chain is most important. They all are important. Windows of opportunity should help guide next steps. Closing the Port and developing the park along that stretch of the river, along with the Scherer site, are low hanging fruit. Making a decision to move forward with development of the park on the port site would eliminate a significant roadblock to a continuous park. The full length of the park on this site should move forward.

Elected officials have indicated they are willing to lead on this issue and should be encouraged and supported. The Port and Scherer are top candidates for immediate work because they are publicly owned. Building removal and site cleanup would be an important first step. They represent a significant opportunity on each side of the river. The Port and Scherer are adjacent to existing parkland. One extends the park from the North and the other extends the park from the South. The two provide east-west and north-south balance of effort.

The Scherer site and the Port will both create opportunities for people to get down to the water’s edge and access the water. Scherer will have a swimming beach. Both Scherer and the Port will accommodate small watercraft, including kayaks and canoes. Development of the Scherer and Port sites will provide watercraft destinations on both sides of the river and a loop route for water interconnection of these sites.

There should be a process that allows the public to stay engaged and keep all the efforts moving towards implementation. Thank you for your consideration.

Tom Dimond cont.

Hi Mary,

I am so excited about the future of the riverfront. I actually was living in South Minneapolis and moved to a house near 26th Ave and 4th St N in the Hawthorne Neighborhood of North Minneapolis. Many people questioned why I would make such a move. There were a number of factors, but among them, I had just completed reading the Above the Falls Master Plan and was inspired about the future of the river front.

I feel strongly that the highest priorities should be about connections. North Minneapolis has been so disconnected from the riverfront and the rest of the city in so many ways for so many years. My personal opinion is that the highest priority should be a 26th Street connection to the river as 26th serves as a "spine" to so many North Minneapolis neighborhoods. If this correspondance could be included in any official "public comment," it would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Brian M. Finstad

Brian M. Finstad

I attended the neighborhood meeting at Farview Park In North Mpls in early August. I am a 40+ year old resident of North Mpls. I made written and verbal comments about my ideas/concerns regarding proposed development at that time. Since then I have heard nothing nor seen anything in the news about further meetings,development, etc. I know that there are some meetings scheduled for September in which some decisions will be made. Could you please inform me when, where these are and whether they are open to residents to attend? I would like to have my comments below shared with the developers, decision makers for the future riverfront development.

1) At the meeting I was at someone suggested strategically zeroing in on the Port Area of Mpls for initial development since that is land already owned by the city of Minneapolis and that it would be an ideal spot for an amphitheater/eating type space like Lake Calhoun, Harriet, etc. I also had come to the meeting to raise this idea of a restaurant on the west side--(It's seems shortsighted to have a great river like this running through an urban area and not develop some great eating spots overlooking the river). I am thinking of restaurants of both the type of Psycho Susies in NE as well as the more family type restaurant like at the other parks Lake Calhoun, Harriet, etc.

I strongly support such a development and believe that this would be a strategic move to start with developing that area first and then do the build-over 94 from Farview Park and doing the greenway on 26th Avenue and other development after the initial pavilion/amphitheater restaurant. Several others at the meeting also liked that idea--many of us routinely go over to Lake Harriet/Lake Calhoun for concerts, meals by the lakes and we need such a development over north and would love to support the North Side business that would grow around such a development. I also frequently walk the loop around the river in the Mill District and enjoy eating at those restaurants.

2) We need positive redevelopment that will draw people to the North Side of Mpls--many turn out for the music events, ie Live on the Drive on Victory Memorial Drive and at North Commons Park and I believe with the addition of a building/pavilion or some type of structure like at Lake Harriet on the west side of the river would attract people to the North Side and could have some business opportunities that would not happen with a greenway which could be a later development.

3) If one thinks about North Mpls, there is very little to draw people from the other parts of the city over to see how beautiful it is or to become familiar with it and to feel safer. We don't have the hospitals, the colleges and universities, the art institutions that are all on the south side. People from the suburbs and within south Mpls drive back and forth across this area to/from jobs,hospitals, cultural/sporting events, restaurants -- but very little of this activity is available in North Mpls to draw people. For this plus so many other reasons I believe developing the West bank of the river should have highest priority which should be in alignment with the city's concern for development in North MPIS and the

Rosemary Froehle

first project to be developed should deliver a big bang for the buck as I believe an amphitheater/eating type complex would accomplish.

4) I liked many of the ideas proposed but talked with you afterwards about how sparse/bare the drawings of the development on the west side looked compared to those on the east side. You indicated that these were preliminary drawings and I understand this however it was striking to me to see the difference and I wonder, once again, about how equitable the North Side is being considered. 5) I very much liked the ideas proposed for the east side and believe connecting the 2 sides of the river through a build-over freeway type bridge (such as in Duluth) is a great idea.

I realize a great amount of work has already gone into the proposals and I thank you all for your consideration of these ideas/concerns.

Mary, I am concerned that there has been so little ongoing public education/media about these developments, planning, etc. Perhaps I have missed it but I don't recall seeing anything in Mpls papers since the initial awarding of the contract for further proposal development. As a north side resident who listens to radio stations, reads newspapers and tries to keep up with local news I haven't seen anything although I realize I might have missed it as I am in/out of town some during the summer months. However I do share the concerns raised by Rep. Joe Mullery in the August 31 North News in the letters to the editor section. I would welcome a phone call, or some contact with more information so I could be kept more informed plus would like to take this info to our block club, my North Side book club and other community connections. My cell phone is 612-616-6633. Again thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.

Rosemary Froehle

Rosemary Froehle cont.

Appendix B

Hello,

First off, I'm very thankful to be a part of the advisory committee representing the Northeast Minneapolis Farmers Market, it's been a pleasure to participate in the formulation of the development of the upper Mississippi - I love the teamwork. We at the market are excited with the designs, especially for the Scherer Park site. We think that incorporating a space and facilities for a farmers market is an obvious pairing.

One of the major challenges facing the longevity of local Farmers Markets is finding stable, permanent locations. Currently we operate out of the parking lot of St. Boniface Church on 7th Avenue and University. We are very grateful for this donated location, but also feel limited in space, amenities, and hours of operation.

Over our twelve years we have become a beloved institution in Northeast Minneapolis. People come to the market for not only for produce, but to be a part of the community. During my time at our information booth, I am constantly amazed at the number of people who voluntarily express their appreciation for the market. To be able to take this grass-roots appreciation and blend it into new Scherer Park would be a great way for the existing community to feel welcome and to give the new development a sense of the existing community.

We plan to get-the-word-out about the what's happening with *RiverFIRST* and the possible inclusion of the Northeast Farmers Market in Scherer Park. We do offer a free table for non-profit agencies at the market, and would love if someone from MRDI or TLS/KVS would attend one Saturday to present the current plans and get feedback from the community.

Thanks again for your attention to the community and incorporating suggestions made by the Advisory Committee. Please contact me if you'd like more information about the Farmers Market, or would like to meet to discuss our possible inclusion into Scherer Park. Heck, just stop on by the Market on a Saturday morning - green beans are in!

Chris Linde
Northeast Farmers Market Board of Directors

Chris Linde

On Sep 2, 2011, at 3:13 PM, William McGaughey wrote:

With respect to the "Port of Minneapolis" (Joe Mullery letter, NorthNews), we need something intellectual there. London has its free-speech forum at Hyde Park. Why not a free-speech forum at Port of Minneapolis? I would propose that the self-appointed speakers be given five minutes apiece to make a statement. The statements would be videotaped and shown on one of the city's cable-television channels.

Since this would probably require a paid administrator, I would propose additional activities at this site to get more bang for the buck: chess or checkers boards, table tennis. More ambitiously, we could create a mini-university that offers videotaped instruction in certain fields of interest. There are experts in the Twin Cities who could set up these various activities.

In summary, north Minneapolis could become a center of intellectual ferment - nothing too ambitious but a beginning. I'd be happy to flesh out this scheme further if there is any interest.

William McGaughy

Hi Mary,

I am unable to attend the Riverfront project meeting tonight but would like to give my 2 cents to take into consideration if possible.

As a single Mother of 3 great kids, and a Lifelong Mpls resident, and a boating and fishing enthusiast, I would like to see a few things incorporated into the project if possible. Here is a list of what I would enjoy and use on a regular basis.

- 1) Some restaurants/stores with docking areas on the river so that while boating on the river with the kids, we could stop off and have lunch and know that the boat is safe.
- 2) A dock gas station on the water for boaters that want to be out all day and may need more gas. It would make sense to have this somewhere near St. Anthony falls if possible.
- 3) More areas with grills and picnic tables for family BBQ's and events on the river. **"This one is really needed"**
- 4) An area or two that is fenced off for shallow swimming on the river.
- 5) Maybe some hammocks spread out around the edge of the river for a lazy day and some reading on the river.
- 6) I would also like the North Mississippi Regional Park trail to be expanded from the Camden boat landing to the West River Pkwy trails near Broadway Avenue. This would allow walkers and bikers to move along the trail from 694 all the way into Downtown and beyond. Currently the trail ends and you have to get onto Washington or 2nd Ave. streets to Broadway before you can get back on them. This is ridiculous and should have been done years ago. **I think this one is by far the most important.** It only makes sense to have these trails. Currently there are trails that expand the entire length of the Mighty Mississippi River in Mpls except in this location.

I realize that some of these requests are a little out of the box but they are things that myself and others would enjoy. If you have any further question, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration!

Dawn Misencik

Dawn Misencik

Dear Commissioners,

I have recently attended two meetings (7/26 and 8/4) concerning the RiverFirst and the Riverfront Partners plans. I AM EXCITED!

Watching the three excellent presentations last night at Fairview Park with very enthusiastic feedback, and having driven both sides of the river this weekend using the new riverfront map, it became clear to me that city neighborhoods are unnaturally segregated due to industrial/inaccessible areas, Hwy 94, and the Mississippi River. ***This plan is impressive in it's ability to change these divisions and connect neighborhoods within the city.*** The idea of connection through parks, green spaces and accessing the mighty Mississippi is brilliant, especially when our park system is so renown and valued in other areas of the city. To expand the system creates a full north-south connection, a holistic, accessible heart for this city to connect through. (I feel the beat....)

GREAT JOB!! Thank you for all of your continued hard work. It IS appreciated!!

Karen Runyon
Humboldt Lofts
Mill District
ksrunyon@visi.com

P.S.
BMW is sponsoring global discussions on urban planning solutions through their lab currently at the Guggenheim:
<http://www.bmwguggenheimlab.org/>
<http://www.bmwguggenheimlab.org/what-is-the-lab>

Karen Runyan

Mary,

I know I've put in a comment form and spoke at last week's meeting at Farview. But a neighbor and I went down to the River this weekend and just kind of watched people use it, and we looked at a few other sites along the design plan area. Here is what we noticed.

Quite a few people, especially Asians and African Americans, were going to the River to fish. But yet there is virtually no physical connection built into the bike and foot paths that invites people to go directly to the River, to touch it, to be in it. In fact, some neighbors thought that the lack of such a dedicated path meant that we aren't supposed to go all the way to or in the River - even though the bike and pedestrian paths go within a few feet of the water. Adding occasional paths directly to the water will increase people's connection to the Mississippi.

The second thing we noticed was the Fuji-Ya building. We know it's been embroiled in a lawsuit, and that there are still some sore feelings over how the Park Board handled the acquisition of the site. (Personally, I agree that the family owners were unduly harmed, that the site should never have been acquired, and the Park Board really bungled this in just about every way. But that's neither here nor there when it comes to what to do with the site now.) Given the prime location of a site that's already under Park Board control, I was surprised not to see the building or surrounding area as part of the overall plan. I'd like to see a similar approach to the Spirit Island part of the design plan. In fact, the site itself could have design and use input specifically from the Asian-American community. Regardless of how it is developed, I would like to see something on the plans that says "Here is the Fuji-Ya site. It's exact use hasn't been determined yet, but it is important enough to include as a piece of the overall redesign of the area."

Jeff Skrenes

Jeff Skrenes

Hi Mary - You asked for comments from people on the RiverFirst Design - so here are a few of my thoughts. I am very excited about the entire design and in particular the continuous trails on both sides of the river - I strongly feel that should be a #1 priority - I am also very excited about the Farview land bridge. Unfortunately I have the strong feeling that there are some decision makers who are making choices for the residents of the north side that are not what the residents would like. To my knowledge, the north side residents are strongly in support of the land bridge the way it is planned. There seem to be suggestions floating around that it is not practical, economically viable, or there are other fine alternatives like redoing the Broadway bridge and the Broadway gateway project. While I would agree that the Broadway Bridge needs to be redone I do not know how that would help in getting pedestrians over the freeway.

1. There are 55,000 cars that pass by Broadway and Washington Ave everyday. I am not an architect nor a city planner but I do not know how one would make this safe for bikes, pedestrians and the motorized wheelchairs I see coming down Broadway on a daily basis. Furthermore, at the River Road, cars are constantly running through the red light - I myself have almost gotten hit more than once trying to cross on a green light

2. It is my understanding the Mayor Rybak is very interested in obtaining the BN Railroad bridge. Should this occur, the railroad track running closest to our development would not be in use. I notice that in the 20 year plan, the bike trail behind our development runs along these tracks. Should the city acquire this bridge sooner than later I would hope that this trail could be implemented soon.

Again, should this occur, it would seem reasonable to me to build a wall for safety on the Cemstone side of the trail. This would accomplish two things - keep bikes safe from the dust and debris that is constantly coming from the factory and, if built high enough, could give our neighborhood some relief from the noise and dust as well. Additionally, the land next to us is for sale, in parcels - If the Park Board were to buy the parcel directly next to our development would that be a more seamless transfer To 22nd from the railroad bridge then circling around the railroad tracks? Especially since at least two or three of the tracks will probably remain for sometime?

3.I am very excited to see that the 26th Avenue bike trail is included in the 0 to 5 year plan. Safety issues regarding the bike trail along 26th should definitely include an off road bike trail on 26th, at a minimum as soon as 26th crosses 2nd Street or Washington. Also,

retaining walls should be built to protect bikers from the trucks that are always on the road and the debris that is everywhere.

As far as the cost of the land bridge - It is my understanding that actual construction is around 10 million? Let us remind the city that close to 9.2 million (I think that is the correct number) was spent to connect the last one mile of the Cedar Lake Trail to the river. This allows our suburban neighbors to ride to the river safely on off road trails - yet my neighbors across the freeway have no safe access. In completing the Cedar Lake trail, the city negotiated with a major league baseball stadium, the Railroad and the Federal Reserve Bank. If they truly want to help the northside they should be able to negotiate with a few businesses owners especially since the park board, I believe, has the right of eminent domain to acquire parkland.

Finally, many of us really want to see the Farview land bridge begin in the first phase. What can we do to make this happen? In your opinion, who do we need to talk to help move this along?

Thanks for listening
Susan Vikse

Susan Vikse

Appendix C

45-Day Public Comment Period

The MRDI conducted a 45-day public comment period, soliciting information from the public both online and by written comment forms. The public was notified about this process online via the MRIDI Comment Page and on printed comment cards available at multiple Minneapolis Parks locations and distributed to more than 50,000 homes and businesses through community newspapers. We sought additional input by advertising the formal comment period in a daily newspaper, and distributing a news release announcement to scores of local media outlets and neighborhood association contacts.

Email

Rebecca D

I particularly enjoy the idea of connecting the bicycle pathways along the river as well as creating more options for cross country skiing. The transformation is an important vision for city growth and recreational areas for decades to come.

Chris

I'm 100% in favor of these improvements. Minneapolis is doing a great job of creating spaces that draw people from the region. We live in Minnetonka and use our bikes nearly every weekend to go into Minneapolis. And many of these trips are along the river (headed to Sea Salt). Creating better park/trail infrastructure to in North/Northeast will give more options and draw more people into Minneapolis. \$175 million is CHEAP in government budgets; for prospective, the proposed bridge in Stillwater is \$670 million!

Lisa

I am thrilled by the ideas presented in the Riverfront Initiative. This initiative will not only enhance the recreational opportunities and community pride for people around here, it will bring greater awareness and appreciation for the Mississippi and the eco-services it provides (from drinking water to a migratory corridor for 40% of our nation's waterfowl). What an amazing resource we have running through the heart of these neighborhoods—it is time we treasure it.

Ronald Mead

This is a truly exciting proposal. One of the things early city planners got right was to reserve so much of our water fronts for public use. This continues that remarkable and unusual tradition. It is a lot of money and that means a lot of jobs. We are still reaping the benefits of the WPA and CCC projects of the 30's. This will be at least as valuable.

I just ask that we don't forget about the forlorn little block of Main St between Hennepin and 1st Ave NE. Currently it has two lanes and a turning lane in both directions and a very pedestrian-hostile environment. It would serve its traffic needs just as well with one fewer lane in both directions and leave room for people, bikes, and trees.

Hubert Poulin

I like the idea of more parkland along the river, though I wonder how funding will be found.

I encourage people to think about this project from the long-term perspective.

What will be great fifty or on hundred years from now?

My hope is that as much wildlife habitat as possible can be cultivated and that the plan includes places where people can quietly reflect and restore themselves close to trees and clean water.

Shawn

An amazing concept, on all levels. Naysayers scoff at the price and point to the recession, but their views are short-sighted. In hard times, governments turn time and time again to spending on infrastructure, parks, trails and natural resources, as this directly creates jobs, opens up opportunities for private spending and increases the health of the population. RiverFirst promises to promote a green industry along the river, create more jobs, build healthier neighborhoods and increase area tourism. We have seen revitalized areas improve economically time and time again. There is no reason this area would not do the same. What's more, there is proof that "naturalizing" and "revitalizing" industrial or depressed areas can fend off crime, as the area becomes more popular, frequented and even policed.

Having addressed the economic boon of something like this, I think it's also important to appreciate the proposal from a philosophical perspective. There is nothing that represents Minneapolis more than the notion of a clean, usable Mississippi....one that is both functional (allowing for industry, barge traffic and the like) and beautiful. In a world of rapid industrialization and rampant development, it is rare to create space for nature. The idea of restoring wetlands and native vegetation, building floating islands and merging green space with commerce and neighborhoods is a step in the right direction. I think it is something everybody can and should stand behind.

As regards the cost issue, it should be possible to break this project into various stages, each with its own funding and timeline. That will bring this idea to life piecemeal, rather than having it all wait until proper funding is secured. A serious fraction of funding could come from the Lessard Heritage Council, which designates money for parks and trails.

Hoping this idea comes to life.

Henry Hubben

More green space, fewer buildings. More gardens, less turf grass. More native plants, fewer cultivars.

Addriene

Appreciation for this information is over 9000—thank you!

John Ekblad

Dear Park Board,

I am a taxpayer, and an avid bicyclist. So, first, how is it that all this money is available, when all levels of government are squealing about no funding. If indeed Mpls is overflowing with money, then this project can be considered.

Second, since I commute along Washington Av and 2nd St N the whole length of this project, some 200 days out of the year, I urge you to include some APPEALING bike paths. For me, I'm interested on the west side of the river. We need to link the path that goes by your Park Board offices on West River Road with the one in Webber Park. Then we need to advertise a super Grand Rounds route! But these trails need to appeal by having minimal street crossings.

Is it too late to go under the Lowry Av bridge approach?

Walter

I agree 100%. Camden definitely needs more businesses!

Matt

I think that this proposal is a great idea, while not every detail is perfect this part of the river is probably one of the most under utilized bodies of water in the area. Every other lake and navigable body of water in the area are used extensively for recreation. If this proposal only increases the use of the river it will be worth the 175 million or whatever the price ends up being. The increases in property value and taxes easily will make up for this price, I would guess that this will be a win/win investment for everyone. My number one addition/suggestion would be making sure that there are places for public access for boats, kayaks etc.

Looking forward to this project.

Andrew

Looks good. I'm excited about bringing the Northside to the river. One thing: in executive summary for the Fairview section, it is 26th and 28th *Avenues* N.

Appendix C

Jeff Salzbrun

X2! Northeast Resident! I especially love the big drawn out oh boy website! The funding paragraph sound like the money is just lying around we just have to hire a consulting team to find it! Come on america the money comes from your wallet.

175 million! Wake up people! It's 2011. Time to stop the ridiculous spending!

Psycho Suzi's is a fine example of how the private sector can do a nice job and hopefully profit!

Steph B

I think this is a wonderful idea for North Mpls. and the river. It's about time that the north side has parks and trails along the Mississippi. We should use the river like so many other cities that are along the Mississippi do. It's a treasure lets start using it!

Brett H

I love this idea and it will definitely influence whether I decide to stay and raise my family in Camden where I've lived for more than 13 years or move to the suburbs, as my wife and I often discuss. My suggestion/wish is that we get some businesses up toward the Camden side near Shingle Creek. Camden is as safe as any area in Minneapolis and is very affordable, but I've had people tell me they would not consider living there for the sole reason that there are no businesses. In nearly every other area of Minneapolis there are neighborhood coffee shops, restaurants, bars, salons, convenience stores, etc. This is almost non-existent up here. There are recent success stories such as Papa's and Victory 44, which show that this neighborhood can sustain quality venus and even attract people to come here. It's a vicious cycle, I know, poverty & urban flight is followed by loss of business, and the cycle continues. Here's a great opportunity to revitalize this area and make it an attractive place to live.

Kara

No one wants to be viewed as a park hater. So let me start with I LOVE PARKS! But I think there needs to be a public discussion about where the money is going to come from to build these parks. Once the parks are built how will they affect the existing buisness or residential areas that are already in these areas? As "Steve" in a previous email states "parks drastically increase the

property value of existing homes and buisness". But, what he fails to mention is that history has shown time and time again increased property value = increased property taxes. And lets not forget the "improvement transportation tax" which was implemented in July 2009 which increased our sales tax to 7.775% in Minneapolis. There is no doubt in my head that we, Minneapolis, will see another increase in its taxes to pay for these parks. So buisnesses are forced to do one of two things increase prices or take a substantial hit on their margins and potentially go out of buisness. Concerning resid

ents, all ready existing residents now unable to afford their property taxes or the food and drink at their local watering hole will be expected to forclose their homes and/or move from their existing neighborhoods. Now don't get me wrong I am not saying keep things as they are and never try to improve neighborhoods I just think we need to re-examin history and make sure there is some sort of protection for the people that are already here.

Second: The propsal argues there should be public access all up and down the river. I would argue that unlimited access to the river would be an extreme security risk for all currently owne private access points . Public Marina's offer one access point in which security can continuosly monitor. Being able to access the river at any point becomes extremely difficult to maintain proper security. You are also putting the already existing buisnesses and residents at a much greater risk of crime and resulting in an increase of their security measures. If everything is open to the public its not people that have been welcomed to these residents homes or guests visiting an establishment its anyone at any time that can be on the easment that runs through their property. Increase security= more money and the potential of more problems and more vandalism.

I am not saying NO PARKS...but what I am asking is for the Minnesota Parks and recreation board to work with the already existing residents and commerial properties. Recognize the hard work that has been put into make themselves a safe, profitable and desirable "destination place" and a staple within their community. REALLY LISTEN to them and don't just bulldoze through them just so you can get "your way".

Ross R

It's great and wonderful to keep developing parks, but my concern is that the parks already developed be kept up. The Park Board seems to lack money to keep up what it already has.

Dick Carlson

Minneapolis has become the city it is in part because over a hundred years ago, the movers and shakers decided to set aside our existing parkland. This new plan may rival their vision. I grew up in the former Mississippi Courts, at 49th Avenue and Lyndale Avenue North, and I was thrilled when my former home was turned into North Mississippi Regional Park. At age 62, I hope I live long enough to see this new plan done also. Count me as a supporter, and if you have to raise my taxes, I'll pay the extra gladly.

Michael Romens

Thank you for your work on this project.

I am writing about multiple properties on the west side of Marshall that are currently on the market.

Public acquisition of the lands underneath several low rise light industrial buildings would enhance adjacent neighborhoods overnight and spur development and tax base on the east side of Marshall where there is more space. Clearly, all along the river banks and lake shores in the rest of the city and in St. Paul, most citizens feel a stronger connection to our natural aquatic amenities because of free public access.

I would like to know why this has not been near the top of your list when there are willing sellers and low prices.

Steve

Parks drastically increase the value of the surrounding properties. In a saturated market that can barely support further residential or commercial development, using parks to raise current land values and catalyze future growth is by far the best option.

Eric Sell

This is a great idea and I fully support it. I wish this project would continue down river pass the U of M.

Mike

I think the city of Mpls. should develop the river front, but it shouldn't be so focused on parks and trails. It should be about residence and commerce (not industrial commerce). Let it be a place to generate taxes for the city's coffers, not be the most valuable land around and be a drag on the city's money. Parks are great and it's what helps makes Mpls. a wonderful city to live in. Though we need create a river front for all to use, with a Marina, Restaurants, Hotels, Retail, single family homes, & Dense population homes. We should not be running trails through peoples property, we should be letting people develop that property to create taxable land.

Nordeaster

I love the outdoors and would like to see more recreational use along this stretch of the river. There are several issues with this idea, \$175 million being one of them.

What becomes of the shoreline where the grade is steep and there is no room for a path and beach. Take Psycho Suzi's for example. This would create a drastic erosion issue. What becomes of thier new deck? Are we going to reinforce the hill side with foam?

Does the city really think that homeowners and business owners are in favor of loosing thier private beach and backyard? I wouldn't want strangers walking/biking through my riverfront, using my dock, stealing from my boat and litering on my yard.

A seven acre park in the old lumber yard is a great idea. People will figure out how to get there without destroying private property along the river.

Foam bogs? I'm sure they will look great, for a year. They will never last. Freeze/thaw and current will put these "green" islands right where they belong; down the damn and into New Orleans. Maybe the homeless who will inhabit the islands will get a free ride to more desirable weather conditions.

\$175 million. Can't we come up with a better way to spend the money? Fix the parks we currently have. Hire more park employees. Purchase a weed whip so the overgrown mess can be cut around the south side of Gluek park. We can't maintain what we have now, so lets build more.

I encourage the people of Northeast to speak up before some out of state park planning board turns our town into an amusement park.

Appendix C

Deborah Bauknight

I think the amount of work and effort really shows in the level of detail given in the packet with all the maps and future views. I am pleased with the overall approach and the identification of the timelines.

As a neighborhood resident of the Northside I particularly want to support the first phase of the Farview Park Expansion and the Riverfront Trails. Just getting access to more of the riverfront will make a big difference. I also support the Scherer Park initiative as that is something that I would use. I believe it is important to include opportunities for food consumption such as kiosks and restaurants. Also the Northside Wetlands Park and Bio Havens are important to mitigate our human impacts on water quality. The Northside Wetlands Park also appears to have the opportunity for food and other public amenities. I also support the sustainability of these projects with the wireless access, solar energy to fuel some of the improvements, and the use of recycled materials and sustainable design.

Thanks for all your hard work.

Carl

This proposal borders on criminal. At a time when the city is laying off police and firefighters to squander money on parks, bicycles and fountains is reckless. (acting with a willfull disregard for human life)

I propose that the city take the budget for this project and divide it equally between the police fire and the sherriffs office.

Nicollet Island Resident

A recession is in fact a great time to invest in infrastructure projects -- labor and materials can be had at a bargain, and have a disproportionate effect on consumers' incomes at large than they do in flush times. Just one of many reasons to pursue this project.

Nicollet Island Resident

Totally agree with more cross-country skiing!

Nicollet Island Resident

I whole-heartedly support the vision of this proposal. There is definitely a need for greater connectivity along the river, and the mobility analysis here shows that accessibility would be provided for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users. As a resident of Nicollet Island, I can attest that going North on a bike for me is a challenge, while a I feel I have a whole river (and city) to explore going south.

I also LOVE the idea of the downtown park. I have been baffled for years why Minneapolis has so many ugly surface parking lots. Turning the lot across from the beautiful new Minneapolis Central library would create a civic space that would create value for decades to come.

I could not tell what the giant wing-like structure was in the new Boom Island Park -- is it a skating rink? I am a little skeptical of such a large structure, but like the overall vision for the park to extend north to the industrial space, and to be more vibrant/useable in general.

Thanks to the design team for great work -- I am looking forward to seeing the projects grow in the next 0-5 years!

Steven Cosgrove

I have several reactions to this plan, many of which are encapsulated in the comments that have already been posted. As a Northeast resident, I appreciate that a strong park system helps to develop strong communities. I support extending the fantastic park and trail system that starts at the Plymouth Bridge heading south.

But as a taxpayer, I too worry about the cost. The Plymouth Bridge has been closed to vehicle traffic for over a year, and the Lowry Bridge is not yet finished after years of being closed. If funding is not available for those projects, I wonder where the funding will come from for this project. I had the pleasure of taking a riverboat cruise a few weeks ago, and I speculate that it will take hundreds of millions of dollars to reclaim industrial property into parks. The proposal contains plenty of artist's depictions and photos from other states and countries, but it does not contain many photos of the site currently, nor does it contain detailed information on how much it would cost in today's dollars. Even though this is a routine political tactic, I am still disappointed because this proposal does not provide enough information to comment fully. Even without this detailed information, it is clear that the long term vision will be very expensive.

I oppose the Downtown Gateway Park because of the high site acquisition costs and because it is not necessary in the overall development. The rationale given in the proposal is to connect the library to the river, which is nonsensical. There is no rational purpose to connect the library to the river. The alternative rationale seems to be that there used to be a park there. This argument fails because the better use for this property is to generate tax revenue without a serious negative impact on the environment.

I would stress to the decision makers that the projects need to be completed at a manageable cost. Aside from the Downtown Gateway Park, the other parks in the 0-5 year proposal deserve careful consideration.

Jim Skoog

I support the RiverFIRST proposal 100%. I am glad to see the riverfront trails as a top priority. I think significant attention should be directed toward the development of west side riverfront trails between Broadway Ave. and the Camden Bridge to ensure that they become a reality within 5 years. I would further support a more aggressive timeline to develop west side riverfront trails between Broadway Ave. and the Lowry Bridge within 2-3 years. The riverfront trails are the key to this plan and it is essential that they are developed in the very near future to maintain momentum implementing the RiverFIRST proposal. I am afraid that if the riverfront trails do not become a reality within 5 years that the RiverFIRST plan as a whole will loose energy and become forever stalled.

Also, I think a pedestrian/cycling component should be added to the BNSF bridge. This could be a knot bridge or a trail on the bridge. This is something that should be aggressively pursued as the bridge already exists near trail connections (18th Ave. trail on the east and riverfront trails on the west, south of Ole Olson Park).

Finally, I think the concrete domes at the Upper River Harbor Terminal could be rehabbed to be something very cool. They should not be torn down. They could be converted into a globe shaped "Planet-earth pavilion" (see Ahmedabad's Science City in India), a painted globe sculpture, an amphitheater, an interactive laser light show space, or many other artistic structures. The domes are a gem.

Thank you for considering these comments regarding the RiverFIRST proposal.

Greg Rosenow

We just completed our Old Highland to Old Man River Outing yesterday afternoon and I would like to bring up an alternative for the planners to the crossing of the I 94 freeway at Plymouth Ave for a more pedestrian/biking friendly access to the river.

When I 94 was being constructed, in the late 70 s, along with Lynn Park between Plymouth and 18th Ave N the city was proposing a greenway on 16th Ave N between Wirth Park and the River. There plans for Lynn Park included Hall park which was split by Lyndale with a pedestrian/bike bridge to connect the park which has park space and tot lots to serve both sides of the development. The plans for the freeway, at the time, also included a pedestrian/bridge to cross the freeway and connect to the river.

On our walking tour we went through Lynn Park and pointed out that the existing park path, to this day, includes an earthen ramp off to one side that leads up to the freeway noise wall that is maintained and is part of Hall Park. From the top of the ramp one can look straight across to 16h Ave N. between Washington and 2nd Ave N. at the south end of the Colony Gas station.

There is already public ownership, Hall Park on the West side and the right of way for Washington Ave on the East side. To connect the two we just have to have the feds and State complete I 94 by constructing the bridge that was on there original plans.

Our walking tour included crossing I 94 at both Plymouth and Broadway neither one of which is a pleasant experience on foot and less so by bike.

Appendix C

Monique Ami

As a northside Minneapolis resident I feel the comments about the” direct link to one of the impoverished neighborhoods” and the suggestion that opening access to the area is going to cause a great spillover in crime to wash over the area are mean-spirited. I am not experiencing tons of crime. I do not feel unsafe walking here at night any more than I did when I lived in Bancroft and Kingfield neighborhoods of south Minneapolis. We have no coffee shops in McKinley, few stores and businesses and lots of great people and wonderful neighbors. How did this area of the city get to be impoverished and lacking in economic development? Part of it stems from people’s impressions of “how it is” up here. I hear a lot of comments usually negative about my area... then people come here and say, “Wow, it is really nice around here” I live in McKinley (Lowry to Dowling from the riverfront to Dupont Ave N), not Shingle Creek or Victory neighborhood. We really need something that would be great for all residents, not just the northside. As far as I know there is no plan to charge people for using the new parks and trails, so being wealthy is not a requirement. Lots of the kids and adults around here have bikes and northside families use parks all the time.

The coal pile, garbage heap, shipping containers and general industrial “ick” running on the west side of the river from the nicely, (yet economically?) landscaped area (just grass and a trail) down by Broadway Pizza all they way up to North Mississippi Regional Park have to go no matter what. If the money to finance it disappears, then at very least buy as much of the riverfront land as possible on the west side of the river, plant grass and lay down a nice bike trail. Believe me, looking across the river from Psycho Suzie’s is not a pretty sight now and even the absence of the industrial would be a huge improvement. As far as I can tell there isn’t any residential or “amenity-like” business on the west side of the river. DO save the Psycho Suzie’s area... that business is a great asset to the community (even if you do have to park five blocks away because it is so popular!).

We need this. I love the plans and it sounds like a wonderful place to hang out... Maybe a bit too “touchy-feely, tree-huggy” than I would go in some areas, but overall it is an excellent plan. Nothing wrong with touch-y feely, tree-huggy, but would that boggy area be a good thing in the long run or would it be overrun with mosquitos?

Susan Vikse

Great job! I am very supportive of the RiverFirst design and particularly supportive of the priority projects that, hopefully, will be completed in the 0 to 5 year time span. The completion of the Riverfront trail system and the Farview Park Connections will give long over due river access to an underserved neighborhood.

I also wonder, with the recent discovery of Invasive carp DNA, if the closure of the Ford Dam locks (thereby eliminating barging) would then allow the trails on the west side of the river to be built on land, saving considerable dollars and enhancing the west side river trails. It should also allow full development of the Northside Wetlands Park and create more value for the Upper Harbor terminal.

Scott Nieman

This cannot happen soon enough. Tear down the St Anthony Lock and Dam first, then rid of the tiny few businesses that exploit and pollute the shores of the Mississippi. We the People own these shores, and lease them from our children and their children ad infinitum.

Sue Pilarski

Wonderful design — River First. Its time we had a plan that utilizes the quality of the great Mississippi River. It is time, however, for the heavy industry on the river to get creative and plan for the future of their industry. They have had the benefit of the river usage for a very long time. Its now time to change.

Jeff Skrenes

I absolutely love this plan. I was nervous that the Farview land bridge would be scaled back too much or dropped entirely. But I think this proposal strikes all the right notes in regards to the scope and timing of the redesign. North Minneapolis needs the same kinds of community connections to the river as other parts of the city, and this project goes a long way towards making that happen.

Susan Kulstad

This is a terrific proposal with great public involvement & design. Moving forward during this hard economic time will help with community development and jobs, and is a good time for public projects that can be accomplished more affordably then if delayed. I look forward to seeing these recommendations carried out over the next 5 years.

About Psycho Suzi’s, a great neighborhood place, my take is that the new trails will only help bring sustained business there (even if they require some cooperation to adapt for the install). This would bring in walk & bike traffic, stopping in for refreshment.

Greg Clifford

Riverfront parkland is no better than the water that runs through it. Sewage treated at digestion temperatures upstream and those below should never enter the river at all. UMN studies have brought new insights and technologies to light that need to be demonstrated in ways that turn this waste into energy, without odor, noise, or biological pollution entering our children’s safe play areas. These are basic design requirements.

400-500 grain elevator silos stand in Minneapolis, most within six blocks of the university, and should be preserved as part of our visual heritage in a useful and responsible way. I should hope that they would be converted into bioreactors to clean these wastes and prevent them from entering our riverpark system. As a model for others, especially upstream, this would tie up the loose ends of environmental responsibility and city livability.

Dean Engstrom

There should be a large work of art at the 45 degree latitude point near the Grain Belt Brewery. Something as massive as the St. Louis gateway arch could be planned to be built when the economy is better. Until then, local artists could be commissioned to mark the points on both the east and west shores. I would like to see a nationally recognised iconic structure, as unique to our city as the gateway arch is to the St. Louis Mississippi River waterfront. The river is narrower in Minneapolis than St. Louis so we could span the river. I like the idea of a 4 cornered pyramid “arch” with 45 degree sides marking the spot. There could even be urban gardens hanging from the structure, or a viewing platform at the apex. If space is reserved at the intersection of the Mississippi and the 45th parallel for a future project, it’s boundaries could be marked by smaller scale artworks that fit the current tight budget. It could become our iconic gateway to the upper Mississippi lake country.

K Runyon

I have attended several of the presentations on this project and found the design and the process very thoughtful. This design will tie many neighborhoods together that are difficult to access currently. I believe the parks really are a beating heart for a community. I live downtown and I’ve seen the riverfront community and pedestrians grow with each project along the river. I support this vision and hope the process will continue toward development!

Jason Little

I can’t say enough nice things about this plan. The Mississippi north of downtown is such a waste as it is now. Capitalizing on its potential could do as much for Minneapolis as the new Embarcadero did for San Francisco, Navy Pier did for Chicago, and the High Line is beginning to do for New York. I envision our river as not only a place we as residents go to recreate, recharge and congregate, but as a destination on par with MOA, Valleyfair and the Zoo. I hope this project can hit the ground running, creating jobs both in the short term in construction projects, and in the long term as more flock to our city as there is more to do and see!

Greg Clifford

It’s my wish that the MRDI would demand that the University of Minnesota should annex the Pillsbury milling blocks adjacent to two zero-emissions facilities there on the riverfront.

Preserving the visual heritage of the milling sites and elevators is best left in the hands of the “U”, rather than another failing real estate developer. A noiseless, odorless, emission-free, bio-energy demonstration site (as they’ve done and the kind we want to see) is what I’d propose.

Purified water is what should be enjoyed on the way to the river’s edge. Solutions to environmental quality problems should be demonstrated. That is, gaining clean energy, water, and air, and building good-paying jobs that will last. I can’t believe people would spend a billion dollars in public funds for a stadium and leave the kids a river with treated sewage.

How it’s made is just as important as how much money is made. Let’s do it right and let everyone else copy our success.

Appendix C

Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee

The Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee (AFCAC) has been charged with advocating for the implementation of the Above the Falls Master Plan since its adoption in 2000. The Master Plan plan supports the long range vision of continuous, contiguous parks and trails along both sides of the Mississippi River in North and Northeast Minneapolis. We are pleased that the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) established the Mississippi Riverfront Development Initiative (MRDI) after the Minneapolis Parks Foundation and other partners completed the Minneapolis Riverfront Design Competition. The resultant RiverFIRST Park Design and Implementation Framework for the Minneapolis Upper Riverfront (RiverFIRST) substantially supports and strengthens the Above the Falls long range vision and provides guidance on implementation priorities and phasing.

For example, RiverFIRST:

- gives first priority to completing the 6-mile riverfront trail and bikeway system in North and Northeast Minneapolis, which is at the heart of the Above the Falls plan. We have two suggestions regarding this priority. A current project, planning/implementing trail and bikeway connections to and from the new Lowry Bridge, currently under construction, is paramount to fully achieving this vision within 5 years. We also urge MRDI to support continuation of the pattern used throughout the rest of the city, in regard to land uses next to lakes and the river - i.e. public, green space with trails along the water's edge, with a parkway (or parkway-like) road bordering the public space (which would be Marshall St. N.E. on the east side). We do not support any private homes within this linear park, and do support some hospitality/recreational uses, with public access - and agree that a minimal 70% park/green space is reasonable.
- prioritizes the 26th Ave N Greenway Extension and improvements to 28th Ave N to provide long needed connections to the river from North Minneapolis, specifcally Farview Park. We suggest that the connection at the riverfront should provide recreational and cultural amenities for residents and visitors.
- prioritizes the Scherer Park District. We suggest that this park design be integrated with the adjacent (Boom Island) and nearby (Grain Belt, Sheridan Memorial Park, and BF Nelson) parkland.

- prioritizes reuse of the Upper Harbor Terminal (UHT). However, we think more work needs to be done with Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) on transition land uses at the UHT that integrate park, trail, ecological systems and development that enhances and benefits from a riverfront park when the UHT closes.

The merger of RiverFIRST and CPED's Above the Falls Policy Review and Implementation Study are critically important to implement the vision for parks, trails and anticipated land use change along the upper river. AFCAC represents neighborhood, business, and environmental interests and expects to be fully engaged in this process to update the Above the Falls Master Plan. AFCAC looks forward to continued discussions with MPRB, the City, and other partners to continue the path of transformative land use change and establishing a continuous, contiguous park and trail system along the upper river.

Sincerely,

Mary Jamin Maguire, Co-Chair
AFCAC

Lauren Maker

First, I want to say how impressed I have been with the design team--they have been very open to listening to public input from everyone in the community. Unfortunately, the opportunites for Near North and particularly communities of color to shape this design have been fairly nonexistent. And the results reflect that--not much is suggested for the Near North area of the river. And while there have been challenges to getting input due to the tornado, that should have increased to efforts to get input; it did not. In spite of specific representations of meetings to happen in Near North, that were also promised by the Park Commisioners, they did not happen. That pattern needs to change as these projects move forward.

Second--we don't have a lot of specific information needed to analyze these proposals. For example, the trails don't reflect any cost of getting easements or acquisition of land--rather a big factor.

All that being said, lots of great ideas and innovative concepts! A downtown park should be far down on the priority list --the downtown portion of the riverfront has been receiving huge public investment--it's time the rest of the upper river gets the main attention and funding.

Mail

Charles and Toni Dellwo

Sounds good. But I think we should fix our streets first.

Bonnie Beckstrom

I wouldn't use it. Who is going to pay for it and who is going to pay for upkeep and security? I'm not for having my taxes raised both Minneapolis and Hennepin County to pay for something I wont use.

Christine O'Neil

We are very positive about all the plans for the riverfront proposal. It is very exciting to plan for rehabilitation of this historic and valuable river and shoreline. It will be a boost to Minneapolis and increase livability for residents. Thank you for this work.

Debra Blake

The overall plan is fantastic and I applaud the vision of all those involved. I am particularly interested in and concerned about the details of projects on the west side of the river that affect the Northside, which has been cut off by the Interstate. To reconnect North with the river as soon as possible, please consider moving up the time table for the land bridge from Farview over I-94 to be completed within 10-12 years rather than 10-20. The longer the project is projected for completion the less likely the initiative will be sustained.

Other concerns:

1. More fishing docks and canoe/kayak inputs need to be placed on the west side of river
2. Remove the idea of gardens from the land bridge – they will just end up ugly weed patches. Gardens are more successful when located close to people's homes. The MPRB needs to be responsible for land bridge maintenance as extension of Farview Park.

M. Parrett

I think it's a good idea, for bikers, joggers, hikers, people who like to sightsee, fishing?

My concern is safety and security for all those individuals. Security and police control due to increase of crime!

Marge Meger

How can we think of three new parks and miles of pathways and trails and the same time talk about getting rid of policemen and firefighters?

Somehow we are getting our priorities mixed up. If we don't feel safe on our streets how are people going to feel safe in parks and on paths and trails?

Rose McMurchie

Stop Spending My Money.

How can you even think of spending more of our federal money when our economy is in the tank? I think they should do away with the Minneapolis Park Board. We have enough bike green trails. But when you do get this debockle through. Charge a fee to use them. Because you don't listen to the majority of the people who say, no more.

C. Clarke

Build ethnic establishments to represent the ethnicity of the total areas history – definitely do not sell out to the highest bidders. A truly historical note of who-what! Thank you!

Ryan Gardner

I LOVE IT LET'S GET IT DONE!

Terry Day

Love the idea of 'Parking" the river. Its about time. Would love to see an old street car going along the river from St. Anthony Main. Or water taxis going along the river from various points like St. Paul, M'haha Falls, Lake Street, Franklin Brewery Arts District. They have water taxis in Winnipeg and they are great. Love the kayak beach and hope it gets developed.

Phyllis Bertan

Instead of wasting tax payer's money on parks, put the land to good use by putting in condos, townhouses, assisted living. This way the city is getting revenue from the land rather than wasting time and money clearing it. We have plenty of parks in the city and northeast for children and adults. We don't need more parks or bike paths.

C.E. Rosengren

We have enough parks. Do not put more into new parks. If you have too much money to spend use it to maintain and upgrade the parks we have. More is not better. As a lifelong resident of Minneapolis I don't look forward to higher taxes which is inevitable for the idea of more parks. No new parks.

Duwayne Grussendorf

The financial situation is so bad, it would be foolish tp even consider the riverfront project.

Bill Smart

I really like the proposal. I would like to see a plan for St. Anthony Parkway from 5th Street to the river. I think this area would tie into the proposal neatly.

Richard Johnson

Keep it simple, no masonry – remember Nicollet Mal and Hennepin County Courthouse Plaza. Natural vegetation, no fountains, too cold.

Barry Grandy

‘My feeling about all of these is, we should be looking at the homeless kids and familys they have no place to live or food to eat. And winter is come And all people are thinking about is fiting a war and fixing hwys over and over, And fixing parks. Will people and kids are homeless and not eattng they need help ASAP.

Anonymous

No more parks – have too many parks now, most have no people in them. Save the tax payer some money.

Shirley Cashin

Waste of resources! How many people ride their bikes compared to how many drive a car? Initial cash and upkeep.

Every other month the papers have a plea for more money because light rail is not thriving mode of transportation. Improve roads and bridges they meet the needs of many more people besides bike paths. Parks are good idea but bike paths are not.

Malcolm Collins

Thanks to all who have persevered to come up with all these good plans – this will be a very positive change for Camden area of the river. I support each of the proposed parks!

Monica Valbuena

I think that is a great idea!

Linda Barry

I think its great. Its about time North and NE areas get some parklands instead of everything being concentrated in South Minneapolis ie Lake of the Isles, Lake harriet, Lake Calhoun etc.

Also, re-do Sandy Lake – Columbia Park Golf Course so we have a lake NE. Thanks.

Steve O’Toole

I support and enthusiastically applaud this proposal. My wife has lived in Camden for 20 years and enjoys using the bike pats throughout the city. However it has always been a drag once we crossed Broadway North and had to ride along 2nd Avenue N. to get to Camden.

It will virtually complete the ring of green space around the city as well as give the northside something positive and beautiful.

John Sylvester

Any park space is good. Public use of land for relaxation an recreation on our great river, historically so interesting and important, is a genuine plus. That’s the way it should be. But then I have always been in love with the Mississippi River. A commercial type space should be provided, some type of boat dock/marina and that should be city or county operated, giving travelers/ tourists access to the river.

David Zander

- 1. I like it
- 2. A lot of money needed
- 3. There needs to be more emphasis on Camden/Lind Bohanen North Lyndale Avenue as the Gateway into the trail system. More effort to clean up the area near the Camden Bridge and extend the North Mississippi Regional Parkpark trails down towards the downtown trails. Camden is the Gateway, not downtown the gateway. A gateway is into a city. Camden bridge is the northern gateway.

Glad to see efforts for North Minneapolis not just south Minneapolis greenways.

Tony Lobash

It sounds fabulous – Please make it so.

David Miklethun

As a resident of North Minneapolis I am thrilled to note the myriad ways in which this project will work to connect our community with the riverfront. In particular, I am interested in making sure that bicycle and walking trails connect to the existing trails at North Mississippi Regional Park, allowing for a safe, continuous ride from downtown to the park.

Mike – Barnes Plumbing

Wondering if the plan is to move more business south of Lowry if on and off ramps have considered for Lowry Ave. due to the current congestion of Broadway and with the Dowling exit looking to be more residential type area. Resident are sure to not want commercial traffic thru there.

Bill Schoen

I appreciate the move away from over reaching transformative land-use planning.

Riverfront parks/trails may not be practical at some existing industrial locations.

Susan Mowen

I love parks! How many additional people would this employ? Even though I love parks I feel feeding and medicating people is more important. Please redirect these funds to feeding and medicating. Thank you.

Steve Trahms

I live in Lind Bohanon. There is not a good bike path that connects from the Camden Bridge to downtown on the west side of the river. What are you doing about that?

Gail Behrens

We love it and are very excited about the new bike trails. We think it’s a good way to love paying taxes.

Richard Otterness

My comments may be slanted. I’m a runner, biker, motorcyclist, and senior male plus I live by Folwell. I’m opposed to wasting money on parking meter and pay lots in the whole system. Collecting costs more than received.

The project on 37th between Penn and Knox even though multi purpose is a pinst attempt to connect parks (Folwell and Victory) plus Lood them throughout neighborhoods. Continue the bike paths to the river system, Camnen, and Fairview.

The lime green renter bikes seems foolish. Bikers buy and maintain their own bikes. Who would pay and be seen on the silly looking things.

More trails? I don’t see the existing trails exactly crowded.

Anonymous

NO NO NO

Donald Kist

Overall the plan seems too ostentatious and expensive. For instance the lit up weir on a Dalcota sacred spot seems tacks and a token gesture.

A much more functional use of the area with bike and people paths would be much more appropriate given today’s economy. Or is this plan designed for the 2-3% of our society who can afford such decadence. Benches, native plantings, a few scenic overlooks are what is needed. Let the natural beauty of the river area do the rest.

Rick Lein

Overall, quite extensive and visionary for an industrial section of the river. The wetlands idea would be a waste of labor and mateirals overtime in the area. Flood! Where do existing home fit in this grand concert? Remember how the seasons affect the river and scale back some of these California cool ideas!

Kevin Obsatz

I love it! I’m so excited about all of this excellent park and trail development!

Thank you for investing all these resources in our Neighborhood.

Daniel Koehler

Please! Stop thinking about spending money you don’t have.

I have lived here in Columbia park area for over 30 years. Our park is a waste land. It has been in disorder forever. Trashed at night and ignored by day. You the park board take half of the space and give it to the rugby people. You chop the parking lot in half putting all sorts of cars out into the residential area when you have the events there. There is no staffing there to accommodate the neighborhood it should be serving. Over the years my kids now my kids now grand kids go to Huset part in Columbia Heights for park board activity.

I really feel you could take better care of all the parks and land you already have. You don’t need to put any more on your plate at tax payer’s expense.

One hundred seventy five million dollars, that’s a lot of money folks.

You don’t have my support to spend-spend-spend.

Appendix C

Anonymous

I think you are all dummies. Why do we need more parks? Economy is so bad and were planning new parks, does anyone have a common sense or brains to realize we don't have money.

Jane Sprague

It looks good to me. I can offer no criticism, but I do have a question: is the industry going to be moved from the banks of the Mississippi, specifically American Iron, Marshall Concrete, and Siwec Lumber? Moving would create a hardship for the businesses, but it would certainly improve the riverbank.

Times change: there are no longer sawmills polluting the river in Minneapolis: the above businesses should follow suit. Does the include a pedestrian/ bicycle bridge over I-94? It should.

Lori Schleis

I think its high time someone paid more attention to the north side. The ideas are well thought out and sustainable. We have a chance to become a Twin Cities destination: that can only lead to new businesses and folks realizing that North Minneapolis is more than poverty and gang bangers.

Jean Streetar

From the history that I have learned about the NE it is overdue to have amenities that relate to water (river), history, culture, arts, and nature. This project continues the efforts of early planners to connect people to parks and recreations. One reason I value my community, it is an ambitious plan and the time line is stretched out. I think people will read to see continued progress and will appreciate efforts to keep the project visible, in the news or communicated city wide.

Robert Danielski

It sounds good especially the bike trails. I ride boom island park to the stone arch bridge etc. Also can some of the bike trails etc. be used for country ski trails or will they build paths that can be used for cross country trails? When they build the new bike trails I hope they are not bumpy like the ones the go on the west side of the river to the stone arch bridge.

Dustin Blankenship

I really like the overall plan more parks are needed around the Mississippi river. Anything the city can do to increase access to the river through like paths and walkways as well as the parks would be beneficial.

Angela Rodgers

Please keep all land for parks . Do not sell any parcels to make money. God is not creating any new riverfront land and once the parcels are sold, it will be difficult to ever get back.

Gen Lanc

I would kike to see easier access to the river from Downtown Minneapolis. When I worked as a concierge at the convention center it was way to difficult for tourists to get to the river and to the Ansen Northrup. It was so much easier to go to the Mall of America . I would like to see our river area become as attractive with shops - the historical boat - restaurants, etc. much as Duluth did with Lake Superior.

Loretta Ridley

Our family believes that this is inappropriate use of our tax dollars when they don't have enough money budgeted to repair roads, bridges, and funds for transportation are being lessened. Beautification is something to be done at a time when there is a surplus budget.

Anonymous

In this economy, the state nor Minneapolis has money for extra frivolous ideas. We here have more than enough park trails now. They are all empty.

Myrra Trestan

Go for it! What an opportunity to expand on what is already a wonderful realization. Theodore Wirth and others of communal enjoyments of nature! The walks, trails, parks and lakes of Minneapolis are a model for others and a boon to residents and visitors alike.

Susan Spillreh

I am all for parks on the Mississippi. Anything that opens up the river so more people can enjoy it. Thank you for taking on this project.

Angeline Mutka

More parks - you got to be kidding. Not safe to use the ones we have more area for crime. People need to think of what they need not what they want.

Mark Matheny

It is imperative to complete a commuter bike path along the west side of the river ASAP.


Provisions should be made for a future light rail line from downtown to Champlin and Coon Rapids along the corridor also. This will allow pedestrians to access the riverfront from the entire metro.

Tom and Darline Hartwell

This is an excellent proposal which will enhance wildlife habitat and at the same time give more folks more access to trails and recreational things. We support this! If young people had more opportunities to enjoy birds and wildlife and study them it might steer them away from other evils.

Kevin Workman

What an excellent addition to the incredible Minneapolis park system. I always have loved the river, and to say the least it is about to time we cannot just look at it but use it. It is a gem in the upper Midwest and I cannot wait for the long overdue beach addition at the old lumber site. Keep up the excellent work, it is a hidden treasure but let other people enjoy it as well! Thank you, cannot wait!!!



Friends of the Mississippi River

360 North Robert • Suite 400 • Saint Paul, MN 55101 • 651/222-2193 • www.fmr.org

Working to protect the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities area

November 4, 2011

Mary deLaittre, Project Manager
Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411

Dear Ms. deLaittre,

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) is a local non-profit community-based organization that works to protect and enhance the natural and cultural assets of the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities Region. We have 1,700 active members, and 3,000 active volunteers who care deeply about the river's unique resources.

We have been an active participant in helping to shape the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative, and would like to share our thoughts on the draft proposal released in September. At the outset, we are quite pleased with the visionary work that went into RiverFIRST, and we think this effort moves riverfront planning forward in Minneapolis.

That said, we want to share our honest assessment of how effective the process has been to date and our suggestions about how it might move forward in the future. When the Riverfront Design Competition transitioned into the MRDI, we expected the ensuing process to focus on detailed design and implementation for one or two key sites within the RiverFIRST design concept. Instead, the process attempted to move eight projects forward to an implementation strategy—an approach we believe was overly ambitious. Although we contend that RiverFIRST was enthusiastically received by the community, we feel the initiative was too broad in scope for the limited time period, and it did not adequately allow the public and key stakeholders to have a meaningful and constructive dialogue about priorities and implementation strategies.

Among the things we think has been missing from the process is the clear articulation and wide embrace of a core set of planning values that frame the City and Park Board's work on the Riverfront. With a good example is the St. Paul Riverfront Corporation's Ten Principles of City Building, developed with consultant Ken Greenberg in the mid-1990's. The City of St. Paul and Riverfront Corporation time and again return to these ten principles, along with some corollary work, to guide and ground thinking about riverfront planning and development. Many similar

Friends of the Mississippi River

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concepts clearly underlie the RiverFIRST work, but they have not been so clearly articulated, widely vetted, or deeply understood by the public.

Likewise, we think there should have been a more deliberate or transparent scoping process. Such an investigation might have more publicly documented people’s perceptions of the existing conditions on the riverfront, and together, begun to point to opportunities and barriers. We think the authors of the RiverFIRST proposal probably went through some form of these exercises internally. But in the long run, it would be best to invest these conversations in a venue that would engage the insights of the public and other stakeholders at the ground level.

We are still unclear about what the significance of this product will be in the long-term. We think it serves very well as an inspirational and visionary document, but it is important to emphasize that it needs to be better aligned with current plans and policies (or vice versa) before it is implemented. Friends of the Mississippi was one of many stakeholders that contributed to the creation of the existing Master Plan for this area, and has continued to act as a steward of that plan through our service on the Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee. Importantly, the *Above the Falls Master Plan* enjoyed far more community input and engagement through a more robust and well-defined public participation process. As a Master Plan adopted by the City and Park Board, it is also official policy.

Certainly older plans such as the 1999 *Above the Falls* can benefit from being revisited and periodically refined, and a visionary product such as the RiverFIRST proposal can help inspire a productive discussion around possible changes that could be made. However, we believe that *Above the Falls Master Plan* should serve as the official starting point as we consider practical changes in policy directions for this area, even as we draw on RiverFIRST for renewed vision and inspiration.

With those thoughts in mind, we now move into comments on specific components of the RiverFIRST proposal.

Northside Wetlands Park

The core concept underlying the Northside Wetlands Park is the conversion of some or all of the Upper Harbor Terminal to new parkland and associated redevelopment. This is a tremendous opportunity. FMR takes great interest in this area, as we partnered with the City and Park Board in 2004 to produce the *Upper Harbor Terminal Redevelopment Study*, which contemplated a similar transition of this area from port to park and redevelopment.

We are pleased that in the long term, RiverFIRST appears to project a total closure of the Port, however we would prefer to also see Port closure in the short-term strategy. Additionally, while we love the wetlands concept, we also are open to park development of other types, depending on what the adjacent land uses will be going forward. We understand that CPED has people with national expertise studying the viability of future transition scenarios for the Upper Harbor Terminal, and this review could not be timelier.

Just in the single year the MRDI has been in process, the City has substantially re-oriented how it thinks about commercial traffic on the Upper River. The threat of Asian Carp has brought a substantial shift in City thinking about the Upper Harbor Terminal. The October 8th *Star*

Friends of the Mississippi River cont.

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Tribune quotes Mayor Rybak’s “strong support” for closing the locks that serve the port to deal with the Carp threat. In the weeks since, DNA evidence of Asian Carp has been found just below the Ford Dam near Minnehaha Park.

Now more than ever, it is clear that the time has come to move to transition the Upper Harbor Terminal to new uses with a stronger future. With these quickly unfolding events in mind, we suggest it is increasingly apparent that any plan to slowly transition the Upper Harbor Terminal could well be a waste of time, resources, and momentum. Instead, it may make the most sense to move toward a full closure of the Terminal in the 0-5 year timeframe.

As a next step, we believe the City and Park Board need to *jointly* move forward sooner rather than later with the creation of a detailed Master Plan for the Northside Wetlands Park. We recognize that the RiverFIRST proposal suggests the City work as the lead implementer of the Wetlands Park vision. However, given the depth of the Park Board’s stake in this project, and the need for both park and economic development to move forward together, we suggest a joint approach to this project makes more sense.

Farview Park Extension and East-West Linkages to the River

The RiverFIRST proposal’s least convincing parts may be those that address bike and pedestrian linkages from the river to the surrounding neighborhoods. The connections we’re concerned about here are mainly the east-west connections to the river. Northeast neighborhoods already enjoy some natural river connections via bike and foot, though more could be done. But it is the connections from the river to the North Side neighborhoods that deserve very careful thinking, and substantial investments. Not only are these neighborhoods disproportionately filled with residents of limited mobility, but also the bicycle and pedestrian-oriented connections between the river and the north side are almost completely non-existent on the ground today.

So it is understandable that the RiverFIRST proposal worked to address this shortcoming, matching the scale of the problem at hand with a grand gesture that works to solve it – the Farview Park Land Bridge. In the abstract, this proposal made some initial sense, connecting green spaces and the 26th Avenue bikeway together in a dramatic proposal. But as time has progressed, some very valid concerns have been raised about this proposal that cast considerable doubt over whether it is the best approach to addressing what is undeniably a pressing problem.

City planners have indicated some of the important industrial uses along the riverfront between 26th and 28th Avenue would be nearly impossible to relocate in the near term. Even in the RiverFIRST proposal, the trails through this area would largely be raised up on a bridge to allow for continued industrial uses along the river’s edge. This raises questions about why we should invest so much for a land bridge to direct people to an area with so little promise to be a true riverfront park amenity. Our concern about cost is not the amount being spent to connect North Side neighborhoods to the river, but that so much money is being spent on *one single project*, in a world of limited funding. We believe there may be other more viable approaches that spend the same amount of money, but actually do far more to enhance overall connectivity between the North Side and the Riverfront.

We suggest that before moving ahead with the Farview Park Land Bridge, it may make sense to work with community stakeholders to hold an intensive, multi-day planning exercise to develop

Friends of the Mississippi River cont.

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and evaluate a range of alternatives to enhance connectivity with the North Side neighborhoods up and down the river. Such planning work could help deepen connections to North Side residents that were often underrepresented at key points in the process, and it would help refine the preferred vision for reconnecting the North Side to the Mississippi Riverfront.

We strongly support completion of the 26th Avenue Greenway as a high priority effort for the near-term.

Riverfront Trails

We commend the RiverFIRST proposal for its focus on Riverfront trails.

While these diagrams give the semblance of a continuous trail system being developed, many of them by necessity remain somewhat abstracted and conceptual. We would like to see the trail system identified throughout the proposal labeled more clearly. Because many of the trails run across what is now private property, we take the trails to be visionary of what could take shape in the longer term (5-20 year time horizon), and we’d like to see the Park Board begin to vet and confirm the future trail alignments on both sides of the river.

As part of the 0-5 year implementation time horizon, we hope to see substantive design, engineering and public engagement to chart the plan and phasing needed to implement the river trail system. We hope that those designs can be formalized soon with the help of a willing public.

There is one area where we take some exception to the trails depicted. The riverfront trail system depicted on page 19 shows trails along both sides of the river. However, trails along the east side of the river do not take consistent advantage of the riverfront to provide a *continuous* trail experience away from Marshall Street as the previous Above the Falls Master Plan suggests could be achieved.

While perhaps unintentional, we think this depiction represents a major step backward for a continuous riverfront trail. Though topography, boat ramps and other obstructions make a continuous trail adjacent to the river difficult, we don’t see any obstructions that would make such an alignment insurmountable. The continuous riverfront trails represented in the Above the Falls Master Plan provide an important reference point to underscore long-term desires to move toward an unencumbered trail system along the Mississippi River riverfront.

Knot Bridges

We think the Knot Bridges are an interesting idea that will prove useful in specific locations along the Upper River. Given the limits of funding, we see no compelling need to attach the Knot Bridges to bridges that already have adequate biking and walking lanes. However, some bridges do not already provide the facilities in the way we would like, or topography makes connecting to them difficult.

There are two instances where we think knot bridges make particular sense to us. The height of the Camden Bridge makes getting from the riverfront up to the bridge level difficult on the west bank of the river. Instead, a knot bridge here seems a useful addition. Likewise, if agreement cannot be reached to allow bicycle and pedestrian traffic on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe

Friends of the Mississippi River cont.

Appendix C

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bridge, we would be wise to investigate the addition of a knot bridge in this area, pending any necessary railroad approvals.

Scherer Park
We are truly excited by much of the vision for Scherer Park – the beachfront access to the river, the re-creation of Hall’s Island, and focus on making this a gateway park are all critical elements to the success of the entire Upper River. We are also pleased this is identified as a high priority project for the near-term.

Our primary concerns at Scherer Park revolve around the nature of the in-park development. The enduring genius of the Minneapolis park and parkway system boils down to a critical design tenet. Waterfront spaces are designed to be fundamentally public park spaces. Away from the waterfront, bike and walking trails parallel the waterfront; behind that runs a parkway, and behind that is the realm of private development. It was park designer Horace Cleveland who so brilliantly embedded this clear delineation of public and private space into the design approach we see across Minneapolis parks, and it has ensured countless generations of residents feel shared ownership over Minneapolis’ parks and waterways.

We can support the placement of buildings within parks, so long as their uses are fundamentally public – food vendors and occasional restaurants, equipment rental, park buildings, and restrooms. However, we do not support private development within a new public park. In that vein, this proposal suggests on page 29 that one of the buildings on the site be Mixed Use/Residential/Retail. While the building is at the back of the site, we have a strong preference that such private uses be placed instead across the street (in this case Sibley Street) to maintain the clear delineation between public and private, and to help the positive influences of the park extend as far as possible into the surrounding neighborhood. Two potential options for achieving this "parkway" delineation would be to realign Sibley Street so it is closer to the river, or to re-establish the vacated Water Street.

Northeast Riverfront Park
The core of the Northeast Riverfront Park concept borrows heavily from the good work in the *Above the Falls Master Plan*. However, like our concerns about Scherer Park above, we are concerned that the plan backtracks from the *Above the Falls* plan, and appears to potentially allow private buildings within the space between Marshall and the river. It is true that there remain a number of private uses in this area; however, we believe it would be a mistake to accept they will continue to exist in the long-term. We urge that the bulk of these buildings be removed from the 5-20 year vision map on page 40 to be consistent with existing, adopted policy in the *Above the Falls Master Plan*. The RiverFIRST Proposal suggests that some private residences be re-used for an art camp. We remain skeptical of this concept, and are concerned it may simply provide an easy excuse not to transition these parcels to park space as called for in the *Above the Falls Master Plan*.

Those are our specific comments on the RiverFIRST proposal. We’d like to conclude as we began, with a focus on process. The Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative has provided a smart compelling vision for the future of the upper river. As we suggested at the beginning, and as is mentioned in the proposal, the next step is to go about incorporating the best elements of the RiverFIRST proposal into a renewed *Above the Falls* Plan.

Friends of the Mississippi River cont.

Page 6

We believe the RiverFIRST process points us toward some loose ends that deserve further deliberation at some point before we revise the *Above the Falls* plan. First, as referenced previously, we should give careful consideration of alternatives about how to connect the North Side neighborhoods to the riverfront. Second, we should wait for specific recommendations from the Minneapolis City Council on how to proceed with land use changes for the Upper Harbor Terminal. Third, and importantly, we believe there is a need to revisit, refine, and better communicate some of the principles that underlie the *Above the Falls Plan* as well as the RiverFIRST proposal, and come to some consensus around a shared set of principles for City-building along Minneapolis’ riverfront parks.

This work all brings us to revising and refining the existing *Above the Falls Master Plan*, which should be undertaken with considerable and meaningful public input. A public process would take key findings of CPED’s Above the Falls Policy Review & Implementation Study, and integrate those with the key work from the RiverFIRST proposal, and produce a compelling, renewed, and shared vision for the next generation of riverfront development in Minneapolis’ Upper Riverfront.

And absolutely essential to this effort is an appropriately detailed implementation plan. The implementation plan included with the RiverFIRST proposal only provides the barest of information. Each project proposal should ideally be broken down into a variety of components, with costs, potential funding sources, and responsible implementers listed for each, along with expected dates of completion. The more detailed the implementation plan can be – while staying true to reality – the more likely our chances of success.

Lastly, we think that plans for the upper river should advance a single identity for this area. Plans for this part of the river are known through many identities: the Above the Falls Master Plan, the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Initiative, and RiverFIRST, along with the general phrase Upper River. Some names are more plan-focused, others are more geographic-focused, but the key documents ultimately adopted by the Park Board and City should be strongly encouraged to agree on one shared name for this area.


We appreciate the opportunity to comment, and appreciate your attention to the many ideas and issues we have raised. We welcome further questions, and we look forward to being a partner in helping to turn these visions into reality. Please don’t hesitate to call me at 651-222-2193 ext. 11 with questions, ideas or concerns.

Sincerely,

Irene Jones
River Corridor Program Director

Cc: Bruce Chamberlain, MPRB Assistant Superintendent for Planning

Friends of the Mississippi River cont.



HOLLAND NEIGHBORHOOD
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

SERVING, REPRESENTING & BUILDING THE HOLLAND NEIGHBORHOOD IN NORTHEAST MINNEAPOLIS

November 2, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

As stakeholders and residents of the Holland neighborhood, we would like to offer our support of the Minneapolis Riverfront Development RiverFIRST initiative and proposed projects and request that Holland be included as a community connector or “Green Finger” in the RiverFIRST plan.

The Holland neighborhood is located in the heart of Northeast Minneapolis, bounded by Central Avenue on the east and University Avenue on the west. This neighborhood takes its position as part of the Mississippi watershed and as a connector to the river very seriously and would like to see the RiverFIRST plan reflect this significant connection. Holland is currently the site of a number of initiatives that relate to water quality and the deepening of this neighborhood’s connection to the river itself:

- o **22nd Avenue NE Bikeway:** this recently completed bikeway, which is already identified in current drafts of the MRDI plan, creates an explicit connector between the Holland neighborhood and the Mississippi river. In fact, the 22nd Avenue Bikeway runs through the heart of what has been identified as Holland’s green campus, a large green space at the center of the neighborhood that consists of the Edison School campus and athletic fields, Jackson Square Park and Public Works’ Flood Mitigation Basin.
- o **Green Campus Blueprint:** a cross-jurisdictional land management plan created by representatives from City of Minneapolis, Minneapolis Parks & Recreation and Minneapolis Public Schools in conjunction with Preventing Harm Minnesota and with funding from Mississippi Watershed Management Organization. The Blueprint outlines Best Management Practices to maximize water quality and creates a path for all three jurisdictions to work collaboratively to implement those practices in the contiguous green spaces of the Edison High School campus and athletic fields, Jackson Square Park and Public Works’ Flood Mitigation Basin.
- o **Green Campus Project Implementation:** based on a Mississippi Watershed Management Organization-funded feasibility study, the three jurisdictions (City of Minneapolis, Minneapolis Parks & Recreation and Minneapolis Public Schools) in conjunction with neighborhood stakeholders, are poised to launch a multi-year greening initiative in the Green Campus project area that will focus on improving the quality of the water that passes through this area on its way to the river. The project implementation will include both infrastructure improvements (water recapture and re-use through rain barrels, underground storage, etc.) and

Holland Neighborhood Improvement Association

educational outreach (community awareness building, Edison student service learning opportunities).

- o **GREEN Community Schools:** Edison High School, which is situated in the “Green Campus”, was selected to be the second GREEN Community School in the nation. GREEN Community Schools is a joint initiative of the MGR Foundation and environmental activist Jayni Chase and her husband Chevy Chase. The initiative funds a GREEN Resource Coordinator for the school for a three year period to work with school staff to integrate green subject matter into the curriculum. Coordinator Ashley Mueller has been working with MWMO and the Green Campus Project to increase educational outreach to students in terms of water quality issues and projects.
- o **Green Initiatives Stakeholder Group:** based on community involvement in the Green Campus project and neighborhood representation in the MRDI process, the Green Initiatives Stakeholder group has sought to make more explicit the connections between the Holland neighborhood and the river and its watershed. Through a series of community events – a presentation of the Green Campus project at the NE Network Forum on May 12, 2011; two community stakeholder meetings regarding neighborhood involvement opportunities on June 29 and August 4 – a partnership was formed between the Holland Neighborhood Association and Metro Blooms to offer rain garden workshops and funding for installation. As a result of this partnership, ten rain gardens were installed on residential properties in the Holland neighborhood this fall.

That these many Holland-based initiatives coincide with the development of a plan for a vibrant river front design is more than serendipitous. Members of the Holland neighborhood have been closely involved in the MRDI process and this neighborhood is very committed to supporting the development of the river front, while at the same time celebrating and enhancing this neighborhood’s connection to the river. At the same time, Edison GREEN Community Schools coordinator Ashley Mueller has been assisting with environmental curriculum and community garden activity programming at Lucy Laney, the K-8 school adjacent to Fairview Park. What a wonderful opportunity to bring these two schools together as river schools in the RiverFIRST plan!

Thank you,

The Holland Neighborhood Improvement Association Board

Holland Neighborhood Improvement Association cont.

November 4, 2011

Ms. Jayne Miller
Superintendent
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis MN 55411

Mr. John Erwin
Board President
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis MN 55411

Dear Ms. Miller and Mr. Erwin:

The Gateway Steering Committee and The Trust for Public Land, as its coordinator, wholeheartedly support The Gateway - a linear park that serves as a gateway for downtown residents, workers and visitors to reach the Mississippi River - as a priority for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board’s RiverFIRST proposal.

We are excited by the renewed focus on the Mississippi River through the RiverFIRST proposal. Improving access, increasing the sustainability of our green infrastructure and providing the public with more opportunities to pursue health and recreational activities on our great Mississippi River is a shared goal. We especially support The Gateway priority – an initiative that will transform under-utilized blocks surrounding the Cesar Pelli-designed Central Library into a grand linear park connecting the Mississippi River to the Central Business District (CBD), including the existing Gateway Park owned by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MRPB).

We believe The Gateway is a top priority for the following reasons: 1) The Gateway’s location in the CBD greatly improves access to the river for the largest number of people in the city of Minneapolis, increasing the health benefits achieved by an active citizenry with easy access to parks and recreational facilities. 2) The economic impact of the Gateway is estimated to increase existing property values by \$147 million, and spur \$108-\$249 million in redevelopment at five surrounding sites. 3) The success of the Gateway can build momentum for the development of other important amenities along the river that are identified as citywide priorities. 4) The Gateway will showcase an attention to design excellence and green infrastructure that will attract high quality businesses, workers, visitors and residents who demand a vital, livable and healthy downtown.

The Gateway Steering Committee -- including representatives from the Minneapolis Downtown Council, The Office of Mayor R.T. Rybak, the Downtown Improvement District, the Trust for Public Land and the MPRB -- are working together to move The Gateway vision forward. We envision a strong partnership with MPRB, including MPRB representation on a Gateway

Gateway Steering Committee

Technical Advisory group which formulates design and funding plans.

In addition to The Gateway priority, The Trust for Public Land stands ready to assist with other RiverFIRST priorities by offering its expertise and experience in conservation real estate, park making, finance, economic impact and other technical assistance.

Thank you for considering our letter of support. Please do not hesitate to contact Susan Schmidt, The Trust for Public Land at (651) 999-5317 to discuss this letter on behalf of the Gateway Steering Committee.

Sincerely,

The Gateway Steering Committee Members

Daniel L. Avchen - Chairman and CEO, Hammel, Green & Abrahamson

Lynn Casey - Chair and CEO, Padilla, Speer, Beardsley

John (Jay) Cowles III – President, Unity Avenue Associates

Andrew S. Duff - CEO & Chairman, Piper Jaffray Companies

John D. Griffith - Executive VP, Target Corporation

Jeremy Hanson Willis - Mayor’s Chief of Staff, City of Minneapolis

John H. Herman - Partner, Faegre & Benson LLP

David M. Motzenbecker - President, Minneapolis Planning Commission; Landscape Architect

Russell C. Nelson - President, Nelson, Tietz & Hoyer

Tom Pohlad - Pohlad Companies

Winthrop A. Rockwell - Partner, Faegre & Benson LLP

R.T. Rybak - Mayor, City of Minneapolis

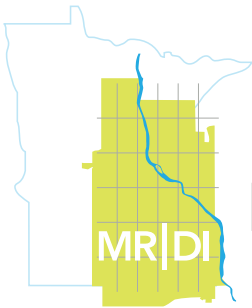
David A. Wilson - Managing Partner, Accenture

Note: John Erwin, Board President, MPRB, is a member of the Gateway Steering Committee, but by virtue of his relationship with MPRB is not participating in this letter.

Gateway Steering Committee cont.

We would also like to thank all the committee members, community connections and the public who have contributed their knowledge and expertise to supporting the RiverFIRST endeavor:

- Mark Apfelbacher
Paul Backer, Hennepin County
Lisa Beck, MPRB
Linda Bergstrom, MPRB
Becky Braun, MPRB
Ann Calvert, City of Minneapolis
Bruce Casselton, Urban Boatbuilders
Jerry Christiansen, River Services, Inc
Craig Coronato, Wenk LA
Rachel Crabb, MPRB
Jerry Earley, MPRB
Brian Finstad
Arlys Freeman, Midwest Floating Island
Don Gange, City of St. paul
Kelly Grissman, 3 Rivers
David Grout, MPRB
Brette Hjelle, City of Minneapolis
Meliss Jenny, USACE
- Dan Kalmon, MWMO
Kristen Klingler, City of Minneapolis
Steve Kotke, City of Minneapolis
Tom Leighton, City of Minneapolis
Christine Levens, NE Chamber
Christopher Linde, NE Farmers Market
Chuck Lutz, City of Minneapolis
Michael Maratea, GAF
June Mathiowetz, City of Minneapolis
Haila Maze, City of Minneapolis
Dawn Misencik
Jason Morin, Holcim
Kristy Morter, SRF
Ashley Mueller, Green Community Schools
Gretchen Musicant, City of Minneapolis
Joel Nickel, Aggregate Industries
Calvin Noble, MPRB
Kari Oquist, MWMO
- Debra Pilger, MPRB
Marylynn Pulscher, MPRB
John Rabe, MPRB
Ann Rexine, 3 Rivers
Jennifer Ringold, MPRB
Rau Rochelle, MPRB
Michael Schmidt, MPRB
Ralph Sievert, MPRB
Harold Skjelbostad, Biko
Fotis Sotiropoulos, SAFL
Shane Stenzel, MPRB
Mark Swanson, MPRB
Jim Tittle, Nice Pictures
Jeff VanGuilder, MPRB
Craig Vaughn, SRF
Randy Windsperger, MPRB
Joseph Yanta, USACE



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