

From: Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
[mailto:mnparksandrec@public.govdelivery.com]
Sent: Wednesday, August 28, 2013 5:38 PM
To: Hofstede, Diane T.
Subject: Public input sought for trail improvements along west river bank

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Sept. 3 first meeting for West River and James I Rice Parkway trail project

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) seeks community input on plans to improve 3.5 miles of bicycle and pedestrian trails and related amenities along the west bank of the Mississippi River from Franklin Avenue to Plymouth Avenue in Minneapolis. A community [survey](#) and series of community meetings are planned, with the first meeting on Sept. 3.

Throughout the planning process, members of an appointed Community Advisory Committee (CAC) will work with MPRB staff and consultants to engage the community to develop a preferred plan for trail improvements, including new surfacing, lighting, signs, and amenities such as drinking fountains. Trail improvements will meet federal and MPRB design and safety standards. The final recommendations of the CAC will be forwarded to the MPRB Board of Commissioners for review and approval.

Mark your calendar and plan to participate:

CAC Meetings Sept. 3, Sept. 24 and Oct. 15 -- 6:30-8:30 pm, MPRB Headquarters Board Room, 2117 West River Road. The 21-person appointed CAC will meet. All meetings are open to the public and will include an opportunity for public participation and/or comment.

Community Open House Oct. 1 -- 6:30-8:30 pm, MPRB Headquarters Board Room, 2117 West River Rd. An opportunity to review planning efforts to date.

Take a survey before Sept. 16! The [survey](#) is at www.minneapolisparcs.org (see survey link in lower left column of home page) or by calling the MPRB's customer service center weekdays at 612-230-6400 for a paper copy. Completed paper surveys can be mailed to,

or dropped off at, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Attn: W River Trail Survey, 2117 West River Road N, Minneapolis, MN 55411.

The existing bicycle and pedestrian trails in the project area are part of the Grand Rounds National Scenic Byway. “The trails are among the most heavily used in the state, with over 1.6 million visits to the area annually,” says MPRB President John Erwin. “They provide vital recreational and commuting connections within our community and region. The rehabilitation of these trails will use federal funds that we applied for and received. This is part of the Park Board’s recent efforts to increase non-property tax based support through increased grant writing.”

The trails run parallel to the West River Parkway and James I Rice Parkway along the Mississippi River through the Mill District, one of the most historic in Minneapolis. They link three regional parks: the Mississippi River Gorge, the Central Riverfront, and Above the Falls. The trails are part of a regional system with direct connections to the Cedar Lake Regional Trail and the new U of M Trail.

Members of the CAC for the West River Parkway/James I Rice Trail Improvement Project have been appointed by Park Board Commissioners, other elected officials, neighborhoods, and trail user groups.

The MPRB has received \$1.7 million in federal funds to improve the trails. Regional Park Operation and Maintenance funds will provide the required local construction match as well as project planning costs.

For more information about the project, to sign up for emails about project updates, or to take the user survey, visit the project webpage at www.minneapolisparcs.org/currentprojects (project name: West River / James I Rice Parkways Trail Improvements) or contact the project manager, Deborah Bartels at dbartels@minneapolisparcs.org.

Questions from media:

Dawn Sommers, Communications & Marketing Manager
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
Office: 612-230-6407 / Cell: 612-221-9915
dsommers@minneapolisparcs.org

Questions from the public:

Deborah Bartels, Project Manager, Planning
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
612-230-6438

dbartels@minneapolisparcs.org