



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Project Title: 26th Ave North Overlook

MPRB Division: Planning
Project Manager: Kate Lamers

As required by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) Code of Ordinances, every construction or redevelopment project undertaken within the MPRB Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is to have a community engagement plan. The plan serves as a guide for the community engagement process through the multiple phases of planning and project development. The plan may be modified as circumstance warrants during project duration. Substantial modifications are to be communicated to stakeholders and the MPRB Board of Commissioners.

Project Description

The 26th Ave North Overlook project aims to redesign a currently underutilized parcel in the North Minneapolis riverfront, creating quality public space that takes advantage of the site's natural amenities. The roughly 8,000 square foot parcel is located at the eastern end of the 26th Ave North/Great Northern Greenway Link, just 700 feet north of Ole Olson Park and the northern end of the Above the Falls trails on West River Road N. Currently, this parcel has active industrial parcels on either side. The land itself, which is the extension of the City right-of-way for 26th Avenue North, is mainly empty, with overgrown vegetation and invasive species on a steep slope down to the water. In its current state, the parcel does not offer opportunities for accessing the river or for other outdoor recreation activities, nor does it constitute a destination. The envisioned park and overlook will reprogram the site, making it a point of interest for North Minneapolis residents and the public. The parcel offers a great opportunity to create public space on the Mississippi riverfront, in an area with limited riverfront access. This project also may be able to incorporate strategies for the protection and enhancement of the shoreline by promoting diverse native habitat and possibly managing storm water.

Completed in 2017 the shared-use pathway on 26th Avenue North (sometimes known as the Great Northern Greenway Link) constitutes an important milestone in improving bike/walk connectivity in North Minneapolis. The off-road route links Theodore Wirth Park in the western part of the city and the western bank of the Mississippi River, connecting neighborhoods, public buildings and Farview Park along its route. The 26th Avenue North Overlook, being at the eastern terminus of the route, will offer a destination for multimodal users on their journey across North Minneapolis. Eventually, as the trails and parkway are expanded along the river, the overlook will sit near an important intersection of park related transportation.

This project is conceived as part of the Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan and the RiverFirst Initiative, a historical public-private collaboration between the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board

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and the Minneapolis Parks Foundation (MPF). Adopted in 2012, the RiverFirst Initiative, attempts to redesign the riverfront of the Mississippi river to create quality public space and protect the river ecosystem. Since the development of the RiverFirst plan, MPRB and MPF agreed to collaborate in the development of the plan’s priority projects, including the 26th Ave North Overlook. MPF is funding the overlook project.

MPRB submitted a request for proposals in July of 2018. TenxTen Landscape Architecture and partner firm, 4RM+ULA Architecture, were selected as the design consultants for the project. The construction is planned to begin in April 2019 and finalize in November 2019.

Project funding source

This project is funded by the Minneapolis Parks foundation through private donations.

<u>Capital Sources</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Expiration</u>
Philanthropic donations through Minneapolis Parks Foundation	\$1,000,000	n/a
<u>Supplemental Sources</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Expiration</u>
n/a		

Engagement Recommendation

Level of Engagement: Consult

	Inform	Consult	Collaborate	Partner
Engagement Goal:	<i>To provide stakeholders with factual, balanced, and timely information to help them understand the project.</i>	<i>To obtain stakeholder feedback on project analysis, alternatives, or decisions.</i>	<i>To work directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that perspectives are consistently understood, considered, and reflected in project decisions.</i>	<i>To partner with stakeholders in each aspect of decision making in order to develop and implement collaborative project solutions.</i>

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<p>MPRB Promise to the Public:</p>	<p><i>The MPRB will keep stakeholders informed.</i></p>	<p><i>The MPRB will keep stakeholders informed, listen to and acknowledge feedback, and work to ensure stakeholder feedback is reflected in alternatives developed.</i></p>	<p><i>The MPRB will work with stakeholders for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate recommendations to the maximum extent possible.</i></p>	<p><i>The MPRB and partner entity will be accountable to their roles as negotiated in the partnership and regularly evaluate overall success of the partnership.</i></p>
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MPRB will **consult** the community regarding the proposed design and construction of the 26th Ave North Overlook. This project will benefit from the community input gathered previously through engagement conducted for the Above the Falls Master Plan and RiverFirst Projects, including Waterworks and the Upper Harbor Terminal. Past input has brought diverse perspectives to the discussion about the future of the Mississippi riverfront. MPRB will strive to incorporate community insights gathered previously into this particular project.

An appointed Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was in place to guide the creation of the Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan. Since the proposed overlook and park is considered as part of the scope of these projects, an appointed CAC for the remaining design and construction process is not required by ordinance or policy.

Juxtaposition Arts (JXTA), hired by the Minneapolis Parks Foundation, has facilitated the first round of community engagement for this project. Starting in 2016 and continuing through 2018, JXTA along with MPRB, led slow rolls, kayaking trips and other activities, taking North Minneapolis residents to the site of the proposed overlook. This part of the community engagement process helped raise awareness about this specific project and the larger RiverFirst initiative. The team gathered community input through several methods. Some participants visited the site and then responded to survey. Other members of the public participated in design and visioning workshops or engaged through conversation with the project team.

MPRB will facilitate further community engagement opportunities in the form of a public meeting, hosted in proximity to the project site, and outreach to the Hawthorne Neighborhood Council. Additional outreach efforts will focus on gathering input from other community groups that have not been significantly involved in other engagement efforts. Staff anticipates a focus group meeting with Southeast Asian community members, and outreach to the Minneapolis Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities (MACOPWD).

Anticipated Project Outcomes

The primary outcome will be the construction of the 26th Avenue North Overlook.

The project supports the following elements of the MPRB Comprehensive Plan

- Theme: Dynamic parks that shape city character:
 - Goal: Parks shape an evolving city.

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- Goal: Park facility renewal and development respects history and focuses on sustainability, accessibility, flexibility, and beauty.
- Goal: Focused land management supports current and future generations.

Stakeholder Roles and Responsibilities

All stakeholders are expected to work collaboratively to create and refine design concepts and shall provide input toward final project recommendations for approval by the Board of Commissioners. Participants are expected to engage in the process in a manner that promotes respectful civil discourse and enhances mutual understanding of all stakeholder viewpoints. Any requests for public or project information should be directed to the project manager.

Identification of Project Stakeholders and Advisors

The proposed construction of the 26th Avenue North Overlook is considered to affect people who live, work or visit this area of North Minneapolis, as well as the users of the 26th Avenue North trail. MPRB staff will attempt to involve, engage, and notify people through a variety of public outreach methods and working with existing community groups. Staff will pay special attention to ensure that groups who often do not participate in public process, such as recent immigrant groups, those living near the poverty line, seniors, youth, and persons of color are engaged in the project.

Project Management Team

MPRB staff will establish an interagency Project Management Team (PMT) to coordinate administration, design and construction processes including the work of outside professional services. The PMT will consist of staff from MPRB and MPF.

Project Advisory Committee

Staff will convene a PAC of MPRB staff and key staff from other agencies. The PAC will provide technical insight into the research, outreach, planning, and proposed vision and goals associated with the project. The PAC will assist with understanding of agency processes and capabilities as they relate to the plan, and will then assist with acceptance and institutionalization of the plan. The PAC will include MPRB Commissioners, Minneapolis Parks Foundation (MPF) Board members, possible representation from Council Member Jeremiah Ellison's office, and staff of both MPRB and MPF.

General Public

MPRB staff will use the following core methods to keep the general public up to date on the project: Public informational open house(s), digital communications, presentations to community groups, maintaining a project website, the GovDelivery email subscription service and social media posting, emails to stakeholders and focus group contacts, and other communications as appropriate.

Project Stakeholders

MPRB staff will maintain regular contact and coordination as needed with stakeholders that may have a particular interest or involvement in the project. This group may include, but is not limited to the following:

- North Minneapolis residents
- North Minneapolis community and advocacy organizations

- Adjacent property owners
- Trails users
- River related organizations such as the Above the Falls Community Advisory Committee
- The City of Minneapolis Public Works and other departments
- Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO)
- MPRB – all departments

Outreach and Research Methods

Different outreach and engagement strategies will be used to reach out to different demographic groups. The project team will utilize culturally appropriate outreach and engagement methods and will provide interpretation and translation where it is needed and most effective.

1. Direct community engagement

Phase I, led by North Minneapolis based Juxtaposition Arts, included visits to the site and surveys. MPRB staff will facilitate additional engagement, which will include at least one public open house. Open houses and other meetings will provide the public with an overview of the project and gather feedback on the concept and schematic design.

MPRB staff, with consultants as needed, may convene focus groups, or attend existing meetings, in order to broaden engagement.

2. Social/Digital Media and Website

The MPRB staff will maintain an up-to-date project website and will use news releases, the GovDelivery email subscription service, and other digital media, as appropriate, to keep stakeholders up to date on the project.

3. Language Translation

MPRB Planning staff will work with MPRB Community Outreach staff to determine translation needs. Translation services may vary by geographic area. MPRB Community Outreach staff will advise on what materials should be translated and when/if to provide verbal translation services at open houses and other community events.

Tentative Project Schedule

2016 - 2018	Community engagement in North Minneapolis by MPRB staff and Juxtaposition Arts
October – November 2018	26 th Ave N Overlook project kickoff and schematic design

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Mid November 2018	Public Open House
November 2018 -January 2019	Design Development
February – March 2019	Construction Documents
March 2019	BID set
April 2019	Construction begins
November 2019	Construction anticipated completion

Resources

A portion of the funding dedicated to staff time and consultant fees will be utilized for community engagement. In addition, the project budget includes costs of mailings and other notifications.

Evaluation Summary

Following project completion, the project manager will analyze the effectiveness of the engagement process from both stakeholder and organization points of view and will provide a brief summary statement. The summary statement will indicate how the process advances policy goals, and will assist the Board and staff in evaluating and informing an ongoing community engagement process.

Summary Statement: *Statement pending plan completion*