

Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan

2019 Plan Update – User Guide

The purpose of this memo is to help viewers understand the basic planning process that resulted in a 2013 draft of the Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan and the 2019 draft released for a new public comment period on February 14, 2019. The memo outlines the key changes and describes anticipated process. For more information, sign up for email updates on the [Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan project webpage](#) or contact the project manager: Kate Lamers, 612-230-6486, klamers@minneapolisparcs.org.

Planning Process

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) adopted the first Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan (ATF Plan) in 2000. From 2012 – 2013, MPRB updated the ATF plan in a process that was jointly conducted with the City of Minneapolis and the City's 2013 Above the Falls Master Plan Update. The MPRB plan addressed the Above the Falls area, generally planned riverfront park from the Plymouth to the Camden Bridge, while the City's plan addressed land use and development in the surrounding areas. MPRB posted a 2013 draft ATF Plan update for a 45 day public comment period in July, 2013, but never adopted the plan. Because of uncertainty around the regional park boundary at the City owned Upper Harbor Terminal (UHT) property, MPRB put the ATF Plan on hold until the City and MPRB could agree on a boundary. Since 2015, the two agencies, joined in 2017 by a master developer, have collaborated on understanding UHT redevelopment options and defining a regional park boundary.

With a regional park boundary at the UHT, MPRB has updated the ATF Plan and will be seeking first MPRB, then Metropolitan Council approval. MPRB is redoing the 45 day comment period (from February 14 through April 1). After reviewing comments, MPRB will revise the plan, and submit it to the elected Board of Commissioners for approval. Before the Board considers the plan, there will be a public hearing where community members can speak directly to the elected officials. If approved by MPRB, staff will submit the plan to the Metropolitan Council.

What's Changed?

MPRB has updated the 2019 ATF Plan so that the document has current references and maps. Much of the draft plan remains unchanged since 2013, with updates generally falling into two categories. Throughout the document, MPRB has made small updates where project implementation has been proceeding. In general, the language around these projects documents the progress through early 2019:

- Sheridan Memorial Park
- Graco Park
- East Bank Trail
- Halls Island

MPRB has also added and expanded a few larger sections, including:

- The Upper Harbor Terminal Appendix A describes the engagement and planning process since 2015.
- Appendix B includes comments and documentation from the Upper Harbor Terminal engagement.
- The Equity Analysis in Section 3 Public Engagement contains more information on how the ATF Plan can align with other efforts to address equity and environmental justice in the area.
- Section 2 Park Background includes more information about Indigenous Land and recent changes to the river.
- Section 8 Accessibility includes updated information about current MPRB accessibility work

What's Next?

Question 1: How can I provide feedback during the 45 day comment period?

Through the online survey (*please contact canderson@minneapolisparcs.org, 612-230-6472 for interpretation or translation*)

Paper surveys at the Bottineau, Farview, Folwell, Logan, North Commons and Webber Recreation Centers, as well as the Carl W. Kroening Interpretive Center and Mary Merrill MPRB Headquarters. (*please contact canderson@minneapolisparcs.org, 612-230-6472 for interpretation or translation*)

Comments sent to the project manager (above).

Above the Falls Community Advisory Committee meetings (typically the last Tuesday of the month from 7 – 9pm at Mary Merrill Headquarters. Sign up on the [Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan project webpage](#) to get notifications.

Question 2: What happens after the 45 day comment period?

Staff will organize and compile comments, determine their impact on the plan, post the findings along with a revised plan, and present to the Board of Commissioners for consideration. At that meeting (likely in May, 2019) community members will be able to speak directly to the elected officials at a public hearing.

Question 3: How are you gathering comments on the plan?

See the [Community Engagement Plan](#) on the project webpage, which staff may update as needed. The 2019 ATF Plan update engagement is somewhat unusual because it continues two robust engagement processes (2013 ATF Plan and UHT engagement) and is not a stand alone process.