



RiverFirst

INITIATIVE

NEWS RELEASE

Thursday, April 11, 2013

Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board Shares Next Steps on Six RiverFirst Priority Projects, Thursday, May 2

Two opportunities to learn about Scherer Park/Hall's Island, new riverfront trails and other amenities

Thursday, May 2, 2013

11 AM – 12:00 PM *Community Open House*

6 – 8:00 PM *Public Meeting: Presentations begin at 6:10 PM*

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

2117 West River Road, Minneapolis, MN 55411

Map & Directions

Minneapolis, Minn. – As Minneapolis increasingly recognizes the value of natural assets like the Mississippi River to the urban environment, parks that combine recreation with ecological function and stewardship become more important. As part of RiverFirst, the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board is completing schematic design and feasibility for six Mississippi Riverfront parks and parks access projects that exemplify important facets of multi-use, sustainable parks of the future.

On Thursday, May 2, community members have an opportunity to learn more about these RiverFirst Priority Projects at an Open House from 11 AM – 12:00 PM or a Community Meeting from 6-8:00 PM. Both events are being held in the Board Room at Minneapolis Park Board headquarters, 2117 West River Road, Minneapolis.

The Minneapolis Park Board's RiverFirst Priority Projects include a new East Bank Trail connecting Boom Island Park with Sheridan Memorial Park, Scherer park, 26th Avenue North Pier, Plymouth Bridge enhancements, and the Lowry Bridge Connector. These projects are each located on or near the Minneapolis Upper Riverfront and will begin help to complete a circuit of amenities that interconnect with each other, as well as existing city and regional trails. Guidelines for park-supportive development at the Scherer site will also be presented, along with a Floating Wetlands feasibility study.

The Minneapolis Park Board is a RiverFirst Initiative Managing Partner, together with the **City of Minneapolis** and the Minneapolis Parks Foundation. Each organization is leading one or more RiverFirst Priority Projects while working together to identify public/private approaches to funding and secure partnerships to implement the expansive RiverFirst Vision.

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About the Community Meetings

Presenters at both meetings will include representatives from the RiverFirst Design Team of TLS/KVA – Tom Leader Studio and Kennedy & Violich Architecture – as well as Minneapolis Park Board planning staff.

At the 11:00 AM Open House, the public can view presentation boards and ask questions and provide input to the Park Board and the Design Team. During the 6:00 PM community meeting, the public will hear a presentation of final schematic design for the six projects and have the opportunity to ask questions and engage in a discussion with the Design Team and Park Board Planning staff.

Also that evening, the community will hear preliminary findings from the forthcoming RiverFirst Finance Strategy. The Finance Strategy is a comprehensive analysis of the broad funding landscape and detail recommendations for public and private fundraising for RiverFirst Priority Projects.

All meeting materials will be available after May 2 on the Minneapolis Park Board's website at <http://www.minneapolisparcs.org/default.asp?PageID=1352>, where project details and updates are posted. For information about the Minneapolis Parks Foundation's RiverFirst work, visit <http://mplsparksfoundation.org/projects/riverfirst>.

About RiverFirst

RiverFirst is a multi-agency, multi-year effort to bring sustainable destination parks and trails to both sides of Minneapolis Upper Riverfront, along 5.5 miles from the Stone Arch Bridge to the city's northern limits. The RiverFirst area is included in both the Central Riverfront Regional Park and Above the Falls Regional Park. RiverFirst Projects will create new Mississippi River experiences for residents and visitors, as well as form critical connections to, across and along the Mississippi River urban corridor. The RiverFirst Initiative is an interagency partnership of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, City of Minneapolis and Minneapolis Parks Foundation – together with community and agency participants and the public – to realize the RiverFirst Vision and support the implementation of RiverFirst Projects. RiverFirst began with the Minneapolis Riverfront Design Competition in 2010; the first Priority Projects are anticipated to open in 2016. Learn more at <http://RiverFirst.com>.

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