



Legislation Text

File #: RES PH 17-170, **Version:** 1

Adopting the River Balcony Master Plan as an amendment to the Great River Passage Master Plan.

WHEREAS, one of the projects recommended in the *Great River Passage Master Plan* is the River Balcony, a 1.5-mile pedestrian pathway from the Science Museum to Union Depot along the top of the downtown bluff; and

WHEREAS, the River Balcony was envisioned to contribute to the economic vitality of downtown, and extend and reconnect community life to the Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, in anticipation of the adaptive reuse of the U.S Post Office and Custom House, which sits on the path of the proposed River Balcony, an inter-departmental City staff team engaged the Minnesota Design Center, BKV Group and Landscape Research to prepare a master plan and Phase 1 schematic design for the River Balcony; and

WHEREAS, a Project Review Team comprising property owners along the River Balcony route, CapitolRiver Council representatives and other key stakeholders advised the consultant team and City staff throughout the process; and

WHEREAS, the City hosted roundtables, design team workshops, a public open house in September 2015 and a public meeting in April 2016 to engage the public in preparation of the Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Master Plan lays out a vision for the River Balcony as a publicly-accessible pathway connecting public spaces and bluff-side redevelopment sites from the Science Museum to Union Depot that will be designed to accommodate walking, outdoor seating, gathering and related public activities, and that will be a catalyst for economic development; and

WHEREAS, a set of core goals establishes the role of the River Balcony in not only activating the public realm along the river bluff but also in catalyzing high-quality private development on key sites along Kellogg Boulevard; and

WHEREAS, the goals of the River Balcony are to: 1) reconnect downtown to the river visually and physically; 2) provide a public linear path along the downtown river bluff with occasional vertical connections to the river's edge; 3) activate private development on the Ramsey County West/Adult Detention Center, Ramsey County East and Custom House sites; and 4) connect public spaces and private development sites along the river's edge in downtown; and

WHEREAS, the Master Plan contains design guidelines for the River Balcony and adjacent private development sites; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission released the draft *River Balcony Master Plan* for public review in April 2017 and held a public hearing on May 19, 2017; and

WHEREAS, on April 13, 2017, the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission adopted Resolution #17-07 recommending adoption of the *River Balcony Master Plan*; and

WHEREAS, on June 2, 2017, the Planning Commission adopted Resolution #17-32, finding that the *River Balcony Master Plan* is consistent with the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan and recommending minor changes to the document to respond to public comment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul City Council hereby adopts the *River Balcony Master Plan* as an amendment to the *Great River Passage Master Plan*, which is part of the Comprehensive Plan, with the following changes:

1. Specify the use of “bird-safe glass,” “dark-sky-friendly lighting” and “pollinator-friendly native plants.
2. Add references to encourage the River Balcony to be a model park for green, technological and Zero Waste features.
3. Consider alternatives to wood decking as further design and performance studies are conducted; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council requests that City staff forward the *River Balcony Master Plan* to the Metropolitan Council for final adoption.