



BRAINERD CITY NEWS

JULY — AUGUST — SEPTEMBER 2014

Mississippi Riverfront Project Steering Committee Establishes Priorities

Since March 2014 a 35 member steering committee has been meeting to develop recommendations for Mississippi Riverfront design ideas. To begin implementing its Mississippi Riverwalk initiative, the City Council hired the University of Minnesota Center for Rural Design (CRD) to create design ideas. The steering committee has been working with CRD to identify design idea priorities, give direction to CRD on which riverfront areas on which to focus its design work, and to make recommendations about the design ideas to the City Council.



The steering committee has been focusing its work on a 2 mile river section from Washington Street (Hwy 210) south to Little Buffalo Creek. This section is characterized by floodplain in the south area and steep bluffs in the north area. Both geography types present its own set of design challenges.

Mississippi Riverfront improvements were an initiative put forth in 2008/09 when a Blandin Foundation Leadership Class suggested that improvements were needed. It obtained a \$5,000 grant and hired Short Elliott Hendrickson to develop a Mississippi Riverfront Vision Plan. The Vision is for an 8 mile corridor plan from CSAH 3 (Mill Avenue Bridge) to the Highway 371 Bridge. After several years of interested individuals meeting to keep the Vision alive, the current 2 mile riverfront section, which is mostly publically owned, was identified as a place to begin the Vision implementation.

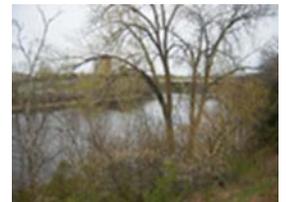
Vision Planning Principles include:

- Honoring the river as an irreplaceable, natural cultural and economic resource
- Preserve and enhance ecological health of the river.
- The riverfront should have multiple modes of transportation/circulation opportunities
- Plan for a mix of uses
- Connectivity of the river to the community



Vision projects include:

- Community gathering for performance, celebration, and informal gatherings
- Pedestrian bicycle paths
- Enhance the current trail system
- Restore plant and animal habitat



In 2013 the Brainerd City Council made the Mississippi riverfront improvement a priority by including a riverwalk in its strategic planning goals. The City Council appointed the Mississippi Riverfront Steering Committee in early 2014 and it has met three times to identify riverfront design ideas on which to focus. In May it conducted a public workshop to get public input on riverfront ideas and priorities. At its June meeting it established the following riverfront priorities. The riverfront should:

1. Have a trail with landings and vistas; have Kiwanis Park established as a trail head; connect with downtown and is part of an interconnected local state and national trail system; promote Brainerd as trail and river hub.
2. Have venues such as an outdoor amphitheater, performing art center and an arts, and history interpretive center and cultural park or center; have opportunities for civic engagement for art and craft fairs and farmers market.
3. Become a destination by repurposing high value properties and redeveloping underutilized property; offer "destination" quality eating, beverage and shopping; use land banking to acquire riverfront property.
4. Maintaining the south riverfront as a natural area for passive recreation that includes wetland boardwalks and pathways to appreciate the flora and fauna of the area.

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Mississippi Riverfront Project cont.

- 5. Have green space in Kiwanis Park for active recreational opportunities; include a year around pedestrian and snowmobile bridge; boat, canoe and kayak access points.
- 6. Have facilities and amenities that create an enjoyable riverfront experience; have a way finding network of directional and information signs and markers.

The next step for the Steeling Committee is to identify specific priority areas for CRD to focus its design efforts. For example where along the river should an amphitheater be located or which properties should be repurposed? Once CRD has specific priority locations, it can create design illustrations for Steering Committee review. It is anticipated that the illustrations will be available for Steering Committee and City Council review this fall. If acceptable, the plans will be used for detail design work and cost estimates.



If anyone has questions about the riverfront project please contact the City of Brainerd Planning Department.

City to Permit Small (NOT TINY) Houses

A social movement is occurring in the country where people are downsizing the space in which they live. The typical American home is around 2,600 square feet (sf), and this movement is creating tiny homes as little 100 sf. People are joining this movement for many reasons, but the most popular reasons are because of environmental concerns, financial concerns and seeking more time and freedom.



In 2013, the Brainerd Planning Commission began research on this movement and whether permitting dwellings less than the allowed 750 sf would be good for our city. Brainerd's core area has developed with many small houses and currently has many substandard lots on which a traditional size dwelling cannot be constructed. The Brainerd Planning Department estimates, based on county land records that there are over 600 house less than 750 sf in size and over 1,000 parcels less than 7,000 sf in area.

While researching this issue the Planning Commission invited local contractors and real estate professionals to comment on this movement and also provide some insights on issues for Brainerd. Neither profession provided the Planning Commission with information that was in support of or opposed to the issue.

The Planning Commission recommended and the City Council has approved the ability to construct a house as small as 500 sf. A house less than 750 sf must have a minimum width of 18' and is permitted on a nonconforming lot. Also a dwelling less than 750 sf can be constructed upon approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). This process provides the neighborhood, Planning Commission and City Council to review the proposed small house and determine whether it is a "good fit" or appropriate for the neighborhood in which it is proposed.



The Planning Department has already received inquiries about building a small house. Our approval has been featured in the Star Tribune, MPR Radio, and Facebook. If you desire to learn more about this movement, a place to start is at www.thetinylife.com.

Brainerd Fire and Rescue Department

Brainerd Fire and Rescue Department is a dedicated team consisting of full time staff consisting of the Fire Chief, Administrative Specialist, six Fire Equipment Operators and 34 Paid on Call Firefighters.

We provide fire and rescue services to the City of Brainerd, City of Baxter and the City of East Gull Lake and eight townships; including Crow Wing, Fort Ripley, Long Lake, Maple Grove, Nokay Lake, Oak Lawn, St. Mathias and Unorganized Territory. Our service area is over 300 square miles and we serve over 35,000 residents. In 2013, we responded to 1,253 emergency calls.



The Main Fire Station is located at 23 Laurel Street in Brainerd and is staffed 24/7. The Sub-Station is located at 1301 Mill Avenue in Brainerd. The two stations house 4 Engines, 4 Tankers, 2 Ladder Trucks, Rescue Equipment and Trailers.

Brainerd Fire and Rescue Department offers Fire Extinguisher training, Confined Space and Hazardous Materials Awareness training, Fire Safety Inspections, Public Education and Station Tours, Blood Pressure Checks and Child Seat Placement Assistance.



Did you know that many people don't test their smoke alarms as often as they should? Smoke spreads fast. You need working smoke alarms to give you time to get out.

Feel free to contact us at 218-828-2312 or at 23 Laurel Street, Brainerd with any questions or concerns.

Join the Brainerd Fire Department at its Open House on October 9 from 5 to 7 pm to learn about fire safety.

Brainerd Parks and Recreation Department is in full swing

The Brainerd Parks and Recreation Department is in full swing with youth and adult programs, in addition to a number of youth baseball state qualifying tournaments.

The department hosted four youth baseball tournaments in June for ages 10, 11, 12 and 13. Brainerd drew 49 teams to the four tournaments. In addition to Brainerd and Baxter teams, most of the other youth teams came from the metro area. Each team stays two or three nights in local motels and resorts.



The impact on the local economy is huge. On average, each team will reserve 12 rooms for two or three nights. Plus, teams spend money at restaurants and entertainment in the Brainerd Lakes area.

The Parks and Recreation Department is also busy with its summer programs. There are 798 youths registered for daytime and evening programs. There are also 62 adult softball teams which play five nights a week at Memorial and Mill Avenue parks.

In other department news:

- A \$25,000 scoreboard was recently installed at Stewart C. Mills Sr. Field. The scoreboard was donated by the Mills family.
- The Brainerd Lions club donated \$2,000 for a flag pole at Buffalo Hills-Lions park.
- The Brainerd Kiwanis club donated labor and material to re-shingle the pavilion at Kiwanis Park.
- The Miracle League began its inaugural season and 39 physically and mentally disabled youths and adults registered. Everyone is having a lot of fun playing baseball for the first time.
- The Miracle League field is also being used for other youth programs – such as t-ball and kickball – during the daytime hours. The field is perfect for youngsters to learn to hit, field ground balls, and learn to throw as the field is suitable for younger players learning to play the game.
- The Miracle League sponsor arch, Bonnie Cumberland Memorial Field sign and a pedestal noting Darlys Every's inspiration for the field should be completed by mid-July.



Brainerd Information

Population 1900 to Present

1900	—	7,524
1910	—	8,526
1920	—	9,591
1930	—	10,221
1940	—	12,071
1950	—	12,087
1960	—	12,898
1970	—	11,667
1980	—	11,489
1990	—	12,353
2000	—	13,178
2010	—	13,590

Median Household Income — 2010 Census
 Brainerd — \$29,458
 State — \$57,243

Median Age — 2010 Census
 1990 — 33.1
 2000 — 32.8
 2010 — 32.2

Households — 2010 Census
 1990 — 5,197
 2000 — 5,623
 2010 — 5,851

S. 6th Street Reconstruction Planning Begins

Members of the Walkable Bikeable City Committee and Planning Commission meet with MNDOT representative Jim Hallgren to review S. 6th Street reconstruction options. MNDOT has scheduled the reconstruction for the spring – fall 2017. This section is a 5 lane roadway which is being considered for recount three lanes. This will accommodate bike lanes and allow for a boulevard. Sidewalks are planned to be part of the reconstruction project.

The City of Brainerd secured a \$438,000 Transportation Alternative Program Grant to provide a trail from Joseph Street to the Industrial Park Lanes/Buffalo Hills Lane intersection. The trail will also be constructed during the 2017 construction year.

An open house to review the plans is being scheduled for late August. The general public is welcome to attend and residents along the corridor will be notified of the meeting. Look for the day, time and meeting location to appear on the city website in August.



THANK YOU Girl Scout Troop 393

The City of Brainerd would like to recognize and give a big THANK YOU to Girl Scout Troop 393 for planting and keeping the raised flower bed at Washington Street and 6th Street looking so beautiful. Troop members are:

- Delanie Collins
- Malian and Mariko Hermerding
- Megan Suk
- Amanda Unger
- Jaden Wagoner
- Rachel Wind
- Nova Lee Wind
- Leader: Ruth Unger
- Parent: Kathleen Maloney Hermerding

City Council Contact Information

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The History Corner

A: Answer to the question in the last issue: re: Centennial buildings: *Can you find these 3 locations (2 of the 3 are even dated)? Can you find us more? Are there any 1914-built residences? Does your house turn 100 this year?*

There were 3 major buildings built in 1914: The **City Hall** (dated), the Fire Hall, and the **Parker Bandstand** in **Gregory Park** (dated). Local researcher Ann. M. Nelson has rounded a vast collection of "Happenings" of 1914, and recorded them for you read about online here: http://www.crowninghistory.org/brainerd_1914.html. All 3 and more were highlighted during the very successful Brainerd History Week. Let's start looking NOW for 1915 buildings and happenings!

Q: With all of the history talk in 2014, it is a good time to talk about another factor that has been brewing over the last few years, and is gaining steam... historic markers! Do you know where Brainerd's historic markers are located? There are only a few from Brainerd's early past, and some are just now being erected. In 1971 for our Centennial, 18 markers were planned, yet none was erected. Some were put up in 1975 for the nation's Bi-centennial. 18 were planned, and in 2008 we found only 8 on site .



Historical Interpretive Markers

Next time you are on the Cuyuna Lakes State Trail on East River Road or on the Buffalo Hills Trail in Kiwanis Park look for historical interpretive markers such as this one that describe a person, location or event important in Brainerd's History.