

RIVER ECOLOGY & GOVERNANCE TASK FORCE

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS & TRAILS WORKING GROUP

Notes and Tasks to undertake from the April 12, 2019 Community Connections & Trails Group

Notes

Trails

The following presentations were shared with the group:

- Chicago River Path - John Buck & Eckenhoff Saunders Architects
- Chicago River Trail Action Plan - Active Transportation Alliance (ATA)
- Chicago River Trail Gaps – Department of Planning and Development

ATA is working in two geographies on trail gaps and bike access: Riverwalk and from Belmont to Lathrop. ATA has advisory committees that will meet 3-4 times with a report on each of these areas anticipated in September.

Updates on projects and clarifications were provided by the:

- South Branch Park Advisory Council – working with CPD on activities at the boathouse
- El Paseo Garden Group – working on mural along Loomis, the bike connection between Pilsen and Bridgeport, working with South Branch Park Advisory Council on programs
- North River Commission – need to have integrated access to the river for the community. Activities are the key to engagement.

Discussion continued regarding goals, objectives and principals for the group. Issues raised at the meeting were: information sharing; coordination of projects; developing priorities; criteria for priorities from communities.

Immediate/Short Term Ideas

- Map the list of potential locations for floating boardwalk/trails which ATA provided and include South Branch Framework trail recommendations.
- Identify gaps in the trail where people get lost and develop “detours” around the gaps for residents and tourists through pavement markings, signage and/or an App
- Engage CDOT trails staff in upcoming meetings on trails and review status of river trail projects
- Friends of the River suggested combining DPD’s gap analysis with their recent public lands assessment.
- Work with DPD on social and community scope for ACOE (see Long Term System Approach below)

Long Term System Approach

DPD has officially requested the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) assistance as part of their Planning Assistance to States (PAS) Program to develop a framework plan for a larger feasibility study to evaluate opportunities to restore the ecosystem of the Chicago area river system. USACE and DPD discussed that the framework plan will be informed by the group. USACE noted that ecosystem restoration of the river system could be a large initiative to be implemented over 20 or more years.

Tasks for members to undertake by April 16

Organizations are encouraged to:

1. Outline the geographic boundaries of their organizational interest. DPD will map.
2. Begin drafting principals, goals, objectives and send in bullet format list:
 - a) Top 3 guiding principles to direct decision making
 - b) Top 3 Community outreach/ communication strategies

DPD to dos

- Collect the community areas of activity and map to assist in engaging other communities.
- Collect the principals, goals and objectives for meeting on Thursday, April 18.