

The following is a list of general comments submitted as part of the 2014 online survey related to the Minnesota River Valley Strategic Plan. These comments are not specific to any survey question. A summary of responses to the 2014 survey questions is available under the Documents Library tab.

<p>The river bottoms from Mendota Heights (Sibley house) to Bloomington Ferry is amazing for biking. It is a true treasure of the area. It feels natural and is very nice. It would be great to keep it as is with some improvemenst. The old 77 bridge will be great to have back.</p>
<p>Love the trail and the mountain bike uses, including the Penn Cycle winter races. Maintenance needs to be consistent.</p>
<p>I feel like if residents are looking for paved trails to walk and enjoy nature there are plenty of options already. Hyland park has a great network of paved trails and the network of bike paths is extensive around Bloomington. What we don't have a lot of are natural areas with natural surface trails. These trails are unique to this area and can't be found just anywhere. Putting in this paved path would jeopardize/destroy that valuable asset. If people want to walk and bike on the river valley there is plenty of opportunity to do so now. However putting in the paved trail will eliminate the natural allure of the current trail system. I don't think any changes need to be made and I hope that our natural assets can remain unchanged.</p>
<p>To change the current trail system would be a mistake. There are plenty of paved trails through and around Bloomington that would be just as easy if not easier to connect to this larger trail system.</p>
<p>Keep mtb single track.</p>
<p>The city if full of asphalt. Leave the trees alone.</p>
<p>The river valley trails that exist currently are a valuable resource used by many and would be lost if the state builds the proposed trail. The current trails requires minimal city resources to maintain versus a state trail that would be subject to often damaging floods. I oppose this state trail segment.</p>
<p>Please keep the natural surface trail as much as possible</p>
<p>The Minnesota River Valley is my back yard and I love it. I often am on the bike trail that goes along 494 but the scenery gets distracted by the noise of the cars and trucks. It would be absolutely amazing to have paved bike trails within the nature deeper.</p>
<p>I use the trail virtually every day. I run the trails daily, and I also coach cross country running and track at Kennedy High School. I have brought hundreds of kids to the trails in 15 years of coaching, The dirt single track trail is what keeps all of us coming back. I love that we have this amazing trail right outside the door. I can pick up the trail just .5 mile from my home, and I would never know I was in a metro area. It is amazing, and it is the reason we have not left Bloomington for some other cities.</p>
<p>Please leave the trails a natural area. We don't have much left like it.</p>
<p>As long as it's a good place to run, I'll be happy.</p>
<p>The natural trails the valley have to offer are wonderful the way they are, us runners and bikers appreciate them immensely.</p>
<p>I love using the trails for running, and hope they continue to stay like they are, natural and comfortable</p>
<p>I have been using the Minnesota River Valley for recreation for my whole life. What really makes me passionate about the landscape is that it is very untouched. This is something I would like to see stay in the future. Vending Machines, buildings, and other amenities, while convenient, personally take away the magic of what is the Minnesota River Valley.</p>
<p>It's such a great area to run but nobody knows it?? Please keep trails runner friendly!! This can only help appeal to more people and make Bloomington even more arltrtractive!</p>
<p>I'd like to maintain separate trails for running and biking if possible.</p>
<p>I love the trails in the MN River Valley.</p>
<p>Don't change the trail type. Paving and added permanent facilities would forever ruin the bottoms.</p>
<p>With the amount of flooding that occurs, it makes no sense to have anything other than a natural trail. There are so many other places to bike and hike that are more attractive. The bugs in the summer down there are some of the worst. I can't imaging hiking that area in the summer. I've been biking down there for over 20 years and I can't imagine spending money on nice trails only to have them destroyed every year or so.</p>
<p>Less is more. I like the undeveloped resource but would like kayak or canoe access to the lakes along the river</p>

The area is fine how it is. Minimal interference is key. Save tax dollars and don't change it because city council members want re election votes.

I would prefer that the trails in the Minnesota Wildlife Refuge area stay the way they are. I have already noticed over the years that I see less wildlife as the trails have become more popular. If the trails are further developed, the area will essentially just turn into another park. There will be too many people in the area for the possibility of wildlife viewing. I used to see deer in the area frequently but now I rarely do. Please leave the area wild. It doesn't need to become yet another area where there are lots of people and little wildlife. There are already enough areas in Bloomington and the surrounding area that satisfy that need. We can also save taxpayers money and/or spend the money on more important things like education.

Mountain Biking is primary reason for visit

The natural beauty of the river valley needs to remain undeveloped in order to preserve its true value to us. Let's keep it a place where future generations can go and learn about nature in its real habitat without ski trails, trail lights, rest room buildings, etc. The fun is in the adventure and not the comforts of home. Thank you for allowing me to provide my two cents worth.

leave it the way it is

This area floods almost yearly. Fort Snelling State Park and the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge can give you estimates of the costs associated with maintaining the trails along the Minnesota River bottoms in those areas which would probably be comparable. There is already trails for mountain biking that I use weekly. They are poorly maintained. I do as much trail maintenance as I can, but fallen trees and deep sand always present problems. There should probably be a bridge over the outlet from Nine Mile Creek sturdy enough to withstand yearly flooding. For an example, see the bridge connecting Pike Island to the rest of the Fort Snelling State Park. I would like to see bike accessibility along Nine Mile Creek to allow access to the trail system. It would be nice to have grooming done for cross country ski trails similar to Fort Snelling State Park also. I fear you will take away some of the best single track mountain biking in the Twin Cities and encourage you to enhance the trails without removing them or flattening them out.

Cross country ski trails and canoe/kayak access would be great! Also, reopening the Old Cedar Bridge would be a great trail connection again.

We love how the Minnesota River Valley is kept simple, assessable and easy to use especially viewing wildlife, bird watching and fishing. We do not want to see it become over programmed or used. Let's keep the wildlife the focus. There are lots of parks near by that can provide the groomed lawns for sports, picnicking and large gatherings.

install a dock on the river at old lindale

Parts of the bituminous asphalt washed away near Bloomington Ferry Road. This can not be good for the river and lakes. Also Nature should be Natural, not paved over. Think of what you are teaching people. All can access this area with no need for paving it. Off road tires are made for wheel chairs, children would rather skate board at a modern skate board park, roller bladders have Lake Nokomis and such to go around, parents are not hauling tricycles to these areas as it is too much hassle to load them and the kids up, and the bikers who do want to use the trail want natural surfaces.

Also, if you understand rivers, you would understand not only do they flood and wipe away structures, but river banks are in constant flux. In truth, it would seem as no fore thought has gone into this plan of potentially putting down costly and likely not lasting asphalt surfaces. If federal grant money is the driving force, perhaps simple maintenance would be a more effective use for it. Send someone down to clear the fallen trees from the dirt paths.

Thank you,

Nancy

I love the area, I used to live off of old cedar. And I went down to the river bottoms to run. It was a highlight of living there. I'm a mountain biking and nature lover. I would use both natural trail and singletrack. My biggest concern for the city is maintaining the improved surface. I wish more people including handicap people could see the treasure that is the river bottoms. I think it's going to be a balancing act. The area can't be perfect for everyone. Please leave the singletrack area, it's a very popular sport that is growing.

the least amount of development is best. Leave it alone, as it is. The more "stuff" you do with the area, the less I will be interested.

no new paved trails in the MN river flood plain in Bloomington

Please add more river crossings. 1 at 169 and 1 at HWY 77 is not even close to adequate. If the southern suburbs had paved trail access to, along and across the MN river, I believe usership would increase significantly. Also, the USFWS does an extremely poor job maintaining the trails south of the Bloomington ferry bridge crossing. Both summer and winter. They have communicated to me via email that this section of trail is a very low priority for them.

- Keep natural surface trail.

- Provide better crossing at 9-mile creek (i.e. bridge)

- Minimal impact will require minimal maintenance.

All I want is a bridge to be built over 9-mile creek. That is all. I would prefer to leave everything else the same as it is.

I believe that the MN River Valley is the last wild area with easy access from the MN Metro Area. It is not only a fabulous park, but due to its geography along the river, it is an extremely unique way to actually commute and cover ground between Minneapolis/St Paul and the SW suburbs. This is true not just of this area, but the world. Due to this fact, I think developing the MN River Valley is a dangerous thing. This, in addition to the yearly flooding makes me believe the best course of action is to preserve and protect its current state. For our state and its residents. Thank you!!!

Keep it natural. No changes are needed. Spend resources elsewhere.

The beauty of the Minnesota River Valley is that the trails are in their "natural" state. We love these trails for walking, running and mountain biking and love that they are just a block from our front door. To pave these trails would take away from the natural beauty of the area and the "ruggedness" of terrain, which is why we like to use the trails. There are so many more paved trails around the Twin Cities for people to use if they need even surfaces for their activities. I would worry about making these trails handicap accessible for people. One bad move and you could quickly be falling down the side of the embankment. Nine Mile Creek and Hyland both offer the option of being on paved trails. Please do not change something that is already enjoyed exactly the way it is, in it's natural state.

Don't pave it, don't change it, if you do the wilderness feel will be lost. The area floods every year so without building massive levees all of the work will be for nothing.

Living on Overlook Drive east of Dwan, I am very aware of the amount of wildlife traffic we have in the neighborhood. A very high priority should focus on traffic control along the bluff where we are frequented by deer, coyotes, raccoons, turkeys, fox and other animals. Increasing the traffic flow on streets near the bluff will be counter-productive to your efforts.

The state knows this is a flood plain, right? What possible use can a paved surface be on a flood plain?

With the prevalence of flooding in the MN River valley, it is critical to consider post-flooding maintenance costs associated with any taxpayer-funded trail.

There are many great multiuser paved trails in the Twin Cities. Please consider the special nature of the river bottoms off-road trail system and the many current users when you plan new trails. Also please consider the growing sport of cyclocross and maybe partner a modest permanent course as other metro areas (Louisville, KY) have. Lots of gov't development is spent on major recreation pursuits like hockey, soccer or baseball. This area requires only a little support and protection to benefit a current large user population. Please don't mess this up.

It mostly needs to be left alone so that people can enjoy it's natural beauty. There are already natural trails formed from walker, runners and bikers. A couple garbage receptacles might be nice to deter people from littering. But, not everything needs to be developed. This is part of the reason we live here.

Leave the river bottoms how they are! You will be spending a lot of money paving the bottoms and then they will be underwater for most of the year anyway. Some things should be left untouched for the most part and the river bottoms are one of those places.

The River Bottoms are one of the few natural, wild places left in the entire Metro area. I use it, and I use it a lot. I'm a mountain biker, and I firmly believe that any rigorous trail improvements are going to be a waste of time and money. I see the damage that yearly flooding creates, from moving full-sized trees to washing in sand bars that are fifty yards across and many feet deep. Any paved or improved trail will

sustain heavy damage every year, and sometimes several times per year. The trail is a jewel for every person who is willing to take the time to enjoy it; I don't think it needs "improved".
My highest priority is better recreational biking trails and hiking trails that link up long distances with good access. Mountain biking is not my interest - although it will be for others.
Please leave the area as wild and undeveloped as possible. It is that feeling that I go there for, and I would be sad to lose that as it's nearly impossible to replace close to the metro, or anywhere. My family and friends frequent this area in all seasons because of the uniqueness of the terrain, accessible nature of the trails, and for the wild nature of the area. Structured park development would irreversibly change the nature and feel of this area. The river bottoms should be left as wild as possible.
Thank you for your time.
Ben
First priority should be protection of the environment and the fabulous natural resource we have in the Mn River Valley
Please don't allow this beautiful natural resource to be ruined by development.
The MRB is a very sensitive ecosystem that offers an immense amount of activity the way it stands now. It is also prone to flooding every year, which could damage any manmade material through erosion. This is a wonderful place that should be open to the public, but one that should not be flooded with too many people. This may endanger the integrity of its natural beauty.
I would like to know how the Overlook Drive connection brings safety to the reasons that this project is being pushed. There are reasons in here like Bird watching and Wildlife. You can't say that Overlook Drive meets code and then go for a nature preserve in our backyards. It's counterintuitive.
We love the area the way it is. I significant upgrades are provided, we might as well go to Lake Calhoun.
It's a natural floodplain which naturally resurfaces itself. When I am there I feel like I am a million miles away from civilization but with the safety of my cell phone. I am concerned that people want to bulldoze paradise and put up a paved trail which will be destroyed by Mother Nature.
Keep it Wild! We can provide some amenities while keeping the wilderness undisturbed and in tact.
Please maintain the wildness of the refuge.
New facilities should be resistant to flood damage to minimize rebuilding.
Minimal impact to the area should be the highest priority.
Please preserve the current single track MTB trails. I've been riding them for over 20 years and they're still my favorite. I fear that additional development will jeopardize the natural character of the area and the current feeling that you're much more remote than you actually are. The river bottoms are a real treasure.
The city should be cautious about over-improving the River Valley Area, holding as a priority the natural and wild soul of the land. Adding garbage containers, and improving practical and historical signage would have a positive impact.
Please do not consider putting a paved trail in the river valley - it would be a very expensive way to detract from the user experience. Keep things as they are - not everywhere needs to be manicured. The river valley means a lot to many of us BECAUSE of its natural, undeveloped state.
The draw to the Mn River Valley for my family is its untouched wilderness and wildlife. It would make our hearts sink if this area were to be developed with paved surfaces and buildings etc.
The river bottoms have been, and should remain, a lower maintenance recreational area for all. It should remain wilderness driven and NOT have a paved trail running through the middle of it.
Paving this is a complete waste of money. With the frequency of flooding the pavement will be gone very quickly, not to mention the amount of trees that fall in a year and overgrowth from the weeds. Keep it natural.
Please don't pave it.
There is enough pavement in the metro. Please consider that this stretch of the river is treasured for its natural character and minimally invasive developments. Cheers!
It's time to leave the wild as wild as possible. Enough tinkering in the natural world. Put the money into parts closer to where they may be used more often.
Please do not pave river bottom trails! We appreciate the natural surface. There are plenty of paved

trails already in the cities.
Keep it as natural as possible. It isn't necessary to develop every flipping square inch of real estate in the Twin Cities area!!
Please don't do anything to the trails. The river bottoms are perfect just the way they are in their most natural state. It's the last untouched part of Minneapolis and it's so nice to go hiking and biking down there. It would be a shame to see it changed.
Please do not add any additional pavement to the area. It is important to keep the area natural. Paving is not a one time intrusion. There are groups who are willing to maintain the trails if they are kept natural.
The river bottoms have been a very important part of my choice to live within the Twin Cities area. My ability to quickly and easily access nature, despite living in an urban area has been very important to me. I worry that providing a paved path with more facilities will destroy this natural area. I understand that these facilities make nature more accessible to individuals with disabilities, however it also makes it more accessible to individuals who do not have respect for nature and eventually end up destroying the environment. I also am worried that the natural paths that are currently there and available to mountain bikers, will be taken over by people walking on the trails.
Developing an area that floods seem unnecessary. I love coming to visit this area because you can feel completely removed from the cities within a short distance. I don't think that we should this beautiful wild area by making it into a manicured park.
I think it's very important to keep natural surface single track mountain biking trail in the river bottoms. If it can coexist with a paved trail, the paved trail would be acceptable.
River bottom trails are awesome. More single track would be great or a mix of single track and crushed rock.
Seems like a wait of resources to put an paved our large natural trail on a flood plain. What happens if it floods like this year? What damage and mains needed?
Love the River Bottoms. Paving would be a ridiculous waste of money based on usage and flooding issues!
I moved here because the river is exactly like it should be. 15 years of hard paid taxes. NO pavement. It will not last a season.
When was the vote to ask the citizens if we wanted it or not ????????
We drive from Avon, MN about 85 miles each way to ride the mountain bike trails. We like the wilderness feel to the area. Adding a parallel trail will take away from the natural feel of the trails. I can ride the Woebegone Trail if I want a paved trail.
Installing paved trails is a bad idea. They will be completely unsustainable. It's a waste of money. It's a flood plain
I love this space because it is a natural and wild space. We have such an abundance of sculpted and paved trails in the metro, but this is truly a special place because of how it is managed. Additionally, why would we develop an area that is flooded significantly every year? The trail in it's natural and current state still sees a lot of users. The river bottoms is special. Please keep it that way.
the river bottoms are a beautiful and pure escape from the cities. please don't change it
We LOVE the River Bottoms! We ride our bikes there year 'round (aside from flooded times), sun, snow, warm or cold! Please keep the single track - it's an amazing natural resource hidden in a big town, and so wonderful to bring visitors to.
PLEASE keep the River Valley wild, so people now and future generations can observe and enjoy nature.
Leave the mountain bike trails alone.
I would be very upset as a mountain biker, XC skier and hiker if changes to the River Bottoms trails were made.
Honestly, I am not interested in spending any more of my very high taxes to improve access, etc to the MN River Valley. It is sufficient as is.
I suggest you do not put in asphalt trails in area's prone to flooding. Asphalt does not hold up when flooding occurs. You cans see results of this by looking at the walking trail around Lake Harriet in Minneapolis.
I am a new resident and live a block from trail access. We bought our home there due to the trail access. I would appreciate a more road bike/gravel friendly trail to bring visitors on as well as a picnic

shelter. I would not want to lose the mountain bike trail, however, in order to continue to enjoy both summer and winter mountain biking with my fiancé. I would welcome improvements to the mountain bike trail where there is a lot of sand.
It's gorgeous as is. Myself and my family all enjoy the natural beauty, it would be a shame to pave it.
Do not develop the river valley area, it's perfect the way it is. The area floods almost every year, building infrastructure that will just get degraded or destroyed is a waste of time and money.
Please keep it wild and peaceful! This is a beautiful natural area that deserves to remain so.
good idea to do this
Please keep the trail (mostly) natural surfaced! Thanks!
I love the river bottoms and riding, running and walking there is such a unique experience that sets urban Minnesota apart!
Myself and my family love to bike along the dirt river bottoms! Please don't change that!
I fear that any investment in non-natural surfaces will be money wasted as yearly flooding will not allow it to remain intact without continual maintenance.
Singletrack mountain bike trails are top priority
Please make the proposed MN Valley trail that the DNR installs asphalt so that it can accommodate all and be easily maintained. A separate Mountain Biking trail can be accommodated as well off to the side, but the main trail should be bituminous Thank you
Please keep the mountain bike trail!
Due to annual flooding it seems monetarily risky to build and try to maintain a non-natural surface trail.
The river bottoms are one of the last remaining wild places in the greater metropolitan area. I implore you to do as little to no development to maintain the uniqueness of the valley.
Don't pave the river bottoms!! The trails are awesome just the way they are
No pavement, please!
The Minnesota River Bottoms are one of my favorite places to find peace with my bike in any season. Please DO NOT do anything to change it or pave it. Also, some kind of recreation center in a flood plain sounds like a terrible idea and a poor investment.
One of the reasons I like the MRV is because access is somewhat limited. When I visit, it feels wild, remote, and disconnected from the city. These features must be retained no matter what improvements are implemented.
please keep the river bottoms natural!!
Paving the trail system will destroy an amazing outlet for city dwellers to enjoy a rustic environment. Also due to the recent floods, the infrastructure will quickly wash away.
The river bottoms are unique and special because of how natural they are. Please don't add paved trails ect...there are plenty of other locations in the cities for these.
The River Bottom is not the place for a paved trail or modern infrastructure. It's one of the last "wild" places in the cities and added accessibility takes away from those who do use this space to get away from it all. Not to mention, development of any sort in an area that floods annually is a huge waste of money. Unless there are levees installed, which again, would take away from the nature of this "wild" place.
Sincerely,
Wild-River-Bottoms-Lover
Please no paved trail!
Please consider keeping the flood plain in its raw form. Any change will throw off the current equilibrium and introduce changes that will require constant maintenance
The Minnesota River Valley is one of the last untouched parts of the Twin Cities. It offers about the closest thing to "wilderness" that we residents of the Twin Cities can get with out driving for 2+ hours. Please do not turn the river bottoms into a park with paved trails, playgrounds and walking trails. It is fine the way it is and any development will only sully what we have.
I love the river bottoms area because it is accessible by light rail and bike but still has wilderness elements of being far in the woods. It's a beautiful area and the wilder it is kept the better in my opinion.
The MRV is an important and continuously fluctuating natural area that should continue to be that.

<p>Altering that area with a paved trail and too much infrastructure will only damage/disrupt this area. I believe it may even be wasting money as the floodplain is no place for permanent/modern infrastructure. Some things can be left untouched and WILL be thoroughly enjoyed. My only suggestions is increasing knowledge of what this area has to offer and possibly adding trail sign kiosks at main entrances.</p>
<p>Great mtb resource. Hate to see it go</p>
<p>Please leave the wilderness area intact. No parking lots, bathroom buildings, etc.</p>
<p>Having a wild area so close to the urban areas of Minneapolis and St Paul is one of the biggest perks of living in the Twin Cities and I would really like to see the Minnesota River Valley stay wild and undeveloped.</p>
<p>The River Bottoms area is unique in it's wildness - I can appreciate how difficult it is to balance this wildness with better access and infrastructure but the final balance between these will be the measure with which the project is finally evaluated. There's no where better in the Twin Cities to be in nature alone.</p>
<p>I would like a pedestrian/bicycle crossing of the Minnesota river at 35W. Bloomington Ferry to Hwy77/Cedar (assuming the bridge gets re-opened there) is a long spanse with no bike crossing.</p>
<p>I would like it to remain a wild environment where biking and hiking can be enjoyed in the natural existence. Adding trails, bathrooms, parking, etc, would directly lead to me stopping utilizing this area. I currently use it because it is remote and quiet and I love it.</p>
<p>This is one of the last truly wild areas in the Minneapolis area. My desire is that it stays as wild and untouched as possible. I like that it floods yearly and do not think putting a lot of money into permanent facilities or trails is a good use of money. The area should remain as untouched as possible and be allowed to go through the natural cycles of the area.</p>
<p>The MN River Valley is a hidden gem of the Metro because it still has a "wild" feel. I live in south Mpls and frequently bike down to enjoy the area. The bridge is a key connection for bikers and feel restoring the bridge is an asset. However, investing money into further development seems like a waste as the area is prone to annually flooding and will detract from it's wild charm.</p>
<p>It would be my preference to leave the trails and access as-is. The Minnesota River Valley is a wonderful nature retreat that is great for outdoor activities w/o needing pavement, concession stands, fishing piers, playgrounds etc. People appreciate that fact that is a just a trail in a quiet environment with great river views.</p>
<p>Please consider Dwan from Cross country skiing. You don't need to groom it, just keep it open. And more Trail access please</p>
<p>trail signage is very important, plus bathrooms that are clean and accessible. I bike to parks quite often to journal, think, swim and picnic.</p>
<p>There are very few natural spaces left in the Twin Cities and the MRV is one of the largest. I would like to see this area remain as natural as possible. Plus, the area is a floodplain and floods over each season. Investing money in paved trails and facilities that will be under water several months a year just doesn't make financial sense. The MRV is special and I'd love to see it stay that way. Please don't change a thing!</p>
<p>I like it wild</p>
<p>The MRV is a great resource as is. It is a rare piece of wilderness accessible by bike in the metro. Any development of the MRV would ruin its natural, wild quality.</p>
<p>The Minnesota River Valley is an excellent example of wild space in a metro setting and should stay that way. Bloomington is lucky to have it. It is also an important water shed for the city and overflow for the Minnesota river. I don't see the value increase in the park verses the money spent to fight the river's expansion and contraction. Use the Bloomington budget on more sustainable projects with higher returns on investment.</p>
<p>The draw of the Minnesota River Valley is the current natural state of the trail/hiking system. With the (almost) annual flooding of many parts of the trail every year brings change to the area, that is fun to explore every spring. Certainly connections to different, or new/extended, trails make the system more accessible, which is good. Changing the trail system to a wide paved (and supporting erosion control systems that would be needed) would detract from the natural and ever changing characteristics of the Minnesota River Valley that makes the area special.</p>
<p>In a city where everything is developed, leaving this place as natural as possible makes it more special than anything that could be engineered or designed to replace it.</p>

<p>I do not feel that a wide corridor should be made through the MNRV. Anything wider than what is currently there would be a major impact on the area. The only real improvement I feel would be a benefit to the area would be a bridge over 9 mile creek. Beyond that, any permanent improved surface trail would be a maintenance nightmare, cost the taxpayers a lot of money, and completely ruin the natural beauty of the area that is so hard to find in the metro area.</p>
<p>I enjoy the mountain bike singletrack, I don't see how a paved or improved surface trail would hold up to yearly flooding and freeze-thaw cycles</p>
<p>Please leave the area natural and don't screw up some of the best urban mountain biking trails in the country!</p>
<p>I love mountain biking their the way it is. Natural trail and save the old growth trees. it always floods so dont waist our money .</p>
<p>There are too many paved trails.</p>
<p>This space is the metros last true natural area. please do not ruin it with large paved structures.</p>
<p>I very much like the Minnesota River Valley The way it currently stands. I would be greatly disappointed if it became overdeveloped. The Minnesota River Valley is one of the last wild spaces in the metro area it would be a great tragedy to take that away.</p>
<p>I believe keeping this area wild and natural is essential to our community. Wild areas in an ever growing urban world promotes health and educates our youth.</p>
<p>Please leave the MN River Bottoms alone. They are our last "wild" place in the twin cities. It is a unique area that makes Bloomington an amazing destination to get out of the concrete jungle.</p>
<p>Please keep the wild nature do this area alive. Please do not over develop this area. The trails are amazing as it is and one of the few wild and natural areas easily accessible to people in the twin cities. Do not destroy this treasure!</p>
<p>Please please please keep the bottoms wild. It's seriously the most important asset that the cities has and would be an absolute shame to develop it.</p>
<p>Hey-- some places near urban areas should stay wild, so we are reminded that not all of the world bends to human whims. This is a jewel-- it should not be paved not made available to everyone. It should take work to reach. Humans otherwise have a tendency to drive out other life by their activities and disruption. Please also keep lighting to an absolute minimum. The DNR has some excellent examples in Itasca State Park.</p>
<p>A natural surface trail is the only sensible, economic option as this is in a flood plain and costs for anything else would be astronomical every year</p>
<p>I really would love a more continuous biking trail - didn't clearly see that option in the survey - both along the river and options to cross the river to bike in Dakota County</p>
<p>While I am in support of creating some infrastructure for people to access this area what makes it so special is how raw and natural it is. Pavement will ruin this area. Also based on how much flooding takes place I don't know how smart it would be to invest is creating areas that will be damaged by yearly flooding. From the very first time I went there I could not believe that a place like that exists so close to the city. Please don't spoil it.</p>
<p>I would rather a paved trail not be built. We have so few natural areas that it would be a shame to see one of the last wild areas disintegrate into a manicured park. And with the flooding potential it doesn't seem to be a smart investment.</p>
<p>Keep it wild please. There are so few untamed spaces left in the area</p>
<p>Putting in a paved trail in an area that floods every year is a waste of money. The mountain biking community uses the Minnesota River Bottoms as a trail that is great for all skill levels. There are many other trails in the area that are already paved and accessible for others. By paving this trail, you will send many mountain bikers to other areas to spend their money.</p>
<p>I like that it is a fairly wild space. I think the more stuff you add, the worse it will be. With that said, if you have to add trails make it dirt.</p>
<p>Please don't pave or do anything to unnatural to the last wild place we have in the cities. The River Bottoms is the number one reason myself, my family, and hundreds upon thousands of people live in this city. Without them I (and many others) would move to more natural places like Montana, Oregon, or even Duluth. Don't make this more accessible, it is wild for a reason (if the floods don't prove that every year).</p>

I enjoy the Minnesota River Valley very much as it is. I think if there would be a lot of structures and paved paths that would deter me from visiting as often as I do. It is the last place in the metro area that feels wild and untouched.
This is an amazing wild and wonderful place and we are blessed to have something like this in our city's backyard. Please don't pave it too much.
Please keep the single track!
leave it be, I love the river bottoms. It's one of the last completely natural places in the cities and it should remain so
I am firmly opposed to any major redevelopment of the area. As it is, the Minnesota River Valley is an outstanding natural resource in its natural state. Being in such close proximity to the Twin Cities, it draws many users because of its remote feel, its scenery and its wildlife. While of course maintenance is necessary to keep the area accessible, we need to also maintain the natural beauty and respect the wildlife and ecosystems that exist there. Adding more trails, especially paved ones, would be the worst thing to happen to the Minnesota River Valley in my lifetime.
Keep it wild! No more pavement.
The River Valley is an unspoiled gem. Don't ruin it.
Investing in infrastructure in an area that is perennially under flood waters for a portion of the year is something that should be cautiously measured before making substantial investments to develop flood sensitive areas.
Bike access across the river to Eagan. 11 years ago you closed this old cedar bridge and nothing has been done to make bicycle commuting to the city any easier via Bloomington. Get it done already
Additional changes and impact to the Minnesota River Valley will only take away from the natural beauty. If the concern is making the area more accessible and welcoming, i would recommend updates to parking/trail heads....possibly the addition of parking, picnic tables, and shelters to these areas, but i believe the trails should remain as is with only improved maintenance. NO PAVEMENT.
we love to mountain bike on the dirt year round on the MNRV please keep this a major part of the valley!
Due to the significant impact flooding can have on this area, I think the land is best left in a more natural state. The beauty of this area is that it changes with the river and flooding. I think it would be a huge impact on city resources to maintain a paved/limestone/etc wide trail (see black dog road in Burnsville). However, the volunteer run trail setting by the mtn bikers and hikers seems to be manageable.
I believe the MN River Valley in its natural state provides people and animals a way to experience the wilderness as it should be. There are plenty city paved trails for many to use. Please keep this gem of an area as mother nature intended.
Please do not install a paved trail!
Please leave some areas without huge trails- the natural ones are a lot more fun/mysterious (like an obstacle course) and the people who currently use these trails consistently maintain/improve them voluntarily on their own time and dime (so if maintenance crews did not have vehicle access they would still be cared for). Please do habitat surveys before any work commences. Do NOT harm the 200+ year old cottonwoods along the river, and PLEASE limit damage to other vegetation as well. With more trails and maintenance however, an effort to remove invasives should be undertaken (there is a lot of buckthorn, canary reed grass, etc).
Support greater access while preserving biking trails. Parking at Normandale RR bridge. Built up trails or ramps for wetter areas. Explain how trails can be preserved or restored after flooding.
Keep the MN Valley as natural as possible for the sake of the wildlife. Introducing asphalt pavement will invite motor vehicles into the now pristine environment.
More entry points, and additional trails
Please do not pave the river bottom trails. It floods very often and will only cost tax payers money to fix it. If it is left natural, it will fix itself. Why are people so lazy that they feel that all trails need to be paved? Don't forget about the chemical run off from the pavement into the river either. Don't ruin the awesome trail system that is down there
I would love to see more access for hiking and birdwatching throughout the MRV.
I have recently purchased a fat bike and was planning to ride the single track in the winter. Please do not remove these trails.
MORC has been a wonderful advocate for multi-use trails in the state. Their opinion should have

considerable weight as they are the ones creating and maintaining trails.

A paved trail, or even an improved trail, will be flooded every spring and cause thousands of dollars in trail damage and require extensive maintenance. Bloomington's tax dollars are better spent in other places. The only improvement that should be made is to make a wider dirt surface trail. This will introduce many more users who may not be aware of it right now. Once these people are introduced to what the area has to offer, they will no doubt agree that the MN Valley Wildlife Refuge and Bloomington land should be left wild. It is truly incredible that somewhere on the inner fringe of a metro area is still vastly untouched. It would be a shame to add more asphalt and ruin it.

Adding asphalt or aggregate trail will cost a great deal of money to start with and cost the same amount every year when large sections need to be rebuilt due to flooding. Common sense should prevail in this case, leave an untouched area untouched. Access for a large number of people does not require asphalt, it requires intelligent planning .

Keep thinning the deer herd as they are destructive to landscaping plants and trees at homes bordering the Park.

I have been mountain biking in the Minnesota River valley for 20 years. Most years the trail is completely inundated by Spring flooding. I see the "improvement" of trails in the Bloomington corridor as a waste of money, engineered trails won't last long. I see many folks hiking, running and fishing when I'm on the trails. I also see many families riding the trails, families who aren't cycling enthusiasts per se, as the trails aren't very challenging in terms of terrain and it does seem like 'wilderness' in the city. The current feeling of the valley is special. Who is the trail improvement going to serve?

Please keep the existing multi use natural trail. A paved trail makes no sense given the rivers tendency to flood seasonally. A graded lime stone double track along with a single track does make some sense, but the double track could take a lot of tax dollars maintain.

How on earth would you maintain a paved trail on a flood plane? It would get destroyed every single spring. What a waste of money!!! It's hard to get the resources to maintain a natural surface let alone a paved trail being destroyed every spring. I know your politicians but please use some common sense. Thank you AJ Peterson

I have ridden the bottoms trail several times when visiting Bloomington from out of state. I ride there because of its accessibility and natural surface trail. With the amount of flooding I would think an asphalt trail would be a nightmare of maintenance and repair. Plus you already have MILES of paved trails. Leave this as natural trail. Please

The current trail is a Destination Trail already that has given enjoyment to thousands of people at no cost to taxpayers. Embrace it for its success currently and manage it without effecting its current appeal. The city needs to conduct a study of the current users during peak time (Sept - Nov) to really find out what a jewel it is. Get down there and see for yourself before drawing conclusions,

There are plenty of "people" parks so i would prefer to keep MRV as natural as possible. The improvements you are discussing are good for "people" but rarely have any benefits for wildlife.

Need a groomed fat bike or snow bike trail in the winter, need a 2-way cross country mountain bike trail.

To me, it seems a little silly to spend time and money to install the proposed wider trail, especially one that's anything more than a dirt path. With the sandy soil and the frequent flooding, paving seems like a giant waste of money. Look, I'm a mountain biker, so I'd love to see things stay just as they are down there, but I'm not going to pretend my way of enjoying the area is more important than the way others want to enjoy the area. I think the MTB trail can peacefully co-exist with another, wider trail through the area. However, paving or doing any huge improvement projects seems like it'll be about as responsible and productive as just lighting money on fire. Additionally, part of the charm of the river trail is that it changes a bit from year to year due to the flooding. Installing a more permanent trail would take away the elements of exploration, immersion in nature, and a feeling of getting lost in the woods despite being someplace you've been hundreds of times before. Those are rare things to have so close to the city, and I hope they're taken into consideration.

The MN river bottoms is and always have been a flood plain. Access and stewardship of the river

bottoms is and has been going on for decades for those who want to enjoy it in its natural state. Isaac Walton League and MORC have been maintaining and educating people for decades about the river bottoms. Bloomington has a great biking network but needs to maintain the trails they already have. Many need to be resurfaced because there becoming to rough to enjoy, needless to say the river bottoms would be a maintance nightmare. As along time Bloomington resident im not in favor of developing the river bottoms, we should maintain what is already in place!

The natural appearance of the MRV is important to us. We enjoy the trails mainly for walking and biking. It's a unique destination we enjoy with relatives and friends visiting from other states. It's also a photography destination for us throughout the year.

Please keep the river bottoms as natural as possible. No paved trails for mountain biking please! Thanks!

I live in Eden Prairie near the EP/Bloomington border (Hwy 169). My work is sometimes in Bloomington and sometimes in Burnsville.

- I use the Bloomington Ferry singletrack for mountain biking personally and to encourage my kids to try the activity.

- I use the Bloomington Ferry pedestrian bridge to bicycle commute when going to Burnsville.

- My family uses the Bloomington Ferry hiking paths and trails in the winter for biking, xc skiing, and snowshoeing.

- We often stop at businesses around Dred Scott fields when going to/from activites along the Bloomington Ferry trails.

I appreciate the trail system and multiple possible activities I can personally use and also expose my children to.

Relevant to question 12: I do not work or reside in Bloomington, but my child attends school in Bloomington, so I am in the city every day.

I live in Richfiled and ride my bike on the natural trails in the River Bottoms about once a month in the summer but every week in the winter. A paved trail would hinder the trail that is currently there (wide enough for both riders and hikers - families with kids and dogs!), not to mention the construction and upkeep costs. The river floods every year, which we see as mountain bikers since the trail and soil around it changes. I can't see how an asphalt trail would improve the trail we have now. Just take a look at the flooding we had this year.

please leave the river bottoms alone, nature does not need improvement. The idea that it's still a wild place with only a ribbon of trail through it is what is most appealing. Adding "improvements" would only tarnish the last wild experience in the metro area. I absolutely love the river bottoms and would not like to see changes that would effect the wildness like experience my family and I enjoy on a regular basis. JP from Burnsville

I do not feel that an improved trail is a wise use of funds given the known issues with flooding in the MN River Valley area. Any improved trail will just be washed out and require additional funds to repair/replace. I would rather see funds go towards a natural trails and other ammenities (rest rooms, signage, access, parking).

A paved trail would be a travesty! Please keep any/all trails natural!

Like it just the way it is. As nature has it.

Given the river floods often, I am concerned with a trail being made out of something like asphalt.if it is made, I think the trail should be made of natural materials that require minimal maintenance/cost to take care of given the fact that the river will flood and cause damage from erosion, sand, silt,etc.

The River Valley is beautiful as is. It's easily accessible by bike or transit and is a rare chance to reach a mostly undeveloped wilderness area by foot and by bike all year round. Any development would turn it into another generic park.

The MN river valley is a precious natural area that is rare in that it is a last remaining holdout of a "wild" place within the city limits. This area is prone to flooding, harsh vegetation, many animals and many, many mosquitoes.

It has remained mostly wild for many years because it is a harsh place to inhabit and the few man made structures that have been built crumble under repeated flooding. BUILDING UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD BE A HUGE WASTE OF MONEY.

This area is a perfect breeding ground for mosquitoes. So much so that even people who love to mountain bike in the area or utilize the trails in other ways stay away from it due to the insane amount of bugs in the area. Those who would be encouraged by a paved trail to enter this wild area would immediately be devoured by mosquitoes and stung by stinging nettles before falling into a giant pit of sand after a bridge falls apart due to flood damage.

Some places in nature are resistant to development and unfit for consumption by much of our society.

PLEASE DO NOT PAVE THE RIVER BOTTOMS!!!!

Having grown up in Shakopee and now living in Edina, I've mountain biked in the River Valley between the Old Ferry Bridge Road and 35W - on toward Cedar for the past two decades. It has been one of the most convenient and enjoyable places for me to ride.

Please do not pave the river bottoms trail! I love going to the river valley and enjoying it in the natural state that it is (flood plain) I think it should remain natural and would love to someday share the river valley mountain bike trail with my children!

Who's going to repair a paved trail every spring when it floods? How quickly will interest in that cost be lost? Perhaps those council members looking for a "legacy project" before they retire should erect a monument of themselves somewhere else. Paving a trail down there is absolutely ridiculous. DO NOT DO THIS.

Keep the trail natural. That's what appeals to the people that use it. Concentrate on getting the cedar ave bridge fixed.

I am strongly concerned that a paved or widened trail through the River Bottoms would compromise or replace the existing singletrack trails there. I frequently mountain bike these trails for the remote wilderness feel of the area and stop frequently for wildlife and bird viewing during my rides. Meanwhile, I also treat the trails as workout and fun trail so I would hate to see the existing trail get modified in some manner, let alone eliminated! Please keep the singletrack!!

Keep the natural surface for mountain biking.

I really like the trail the way it is; in regard to a paved trail. I think doing things like adding a second or third route in key areas will reduce congestion. as a mountainbiker; who lives and works in Bloomington, i use the trail for both recreation and to get to/from work. adding a directional mountain bike route in addition to a separate walking corridor would be good. most hikers are not an issue with shared space; but dog walkers can be. some signage to help users move into key areas would help. though I've not experienced any issues myself with user conflict; I have heard stories. finally, the creek crossing west of Lyndale lot [and Moir park access] needs to be solved. I have volunteered with several others at different times in the last 15 years to help put in or take out the raft.

thanks
Adam

Please leave the trail the way it is! There are plenty of other developed places for people to ride bikes in the Twin Cities. This is a hidden gem that shouldn't be developed. Signage would help, but please don't change the trail!

I believe that putting a paved trail on the river bottoms is a incredibly dense idea for an area which consistently floods. Upkeep would be expensive every spring after the flooding to repair the blown sections of trail. I'd prefer to see the existing single track trail stay intact and not add more to turn it into a park.

Paved trails in a flood zone is a bad idea and a waste of resources. Most of the miles of trails stay open and packed by the cyclists that ride the trails all four seasons.

Adding a paved trail in addition to the dirt trail would really take away from the aesthetic value of the environment. The most useful thing for me and people I know is better awareness and access of the trail as I only became aware of it through friends.

It seems like a stupid idea to place a paved trail in a flood plain. I hope Bloomington realises how much maintenance it will take to scrape off all of the sugar sane, repair the washouts and re-build the paved trail if they go that route. Leave the river bottoms a natural surface trail. It already IS a great trail. Why

do people think they need a paved highway-like trail to enjoy nature? If you wanna see and experiance nature - get out in the woods, off the beaten path!
Please maintain the existing natural surface multi-use/MTB as much as possible. Addition of an improved/wide trail is fine, but the cycling destination opportunities that exist must continue to be present.
I hope the natural feel of the river valley is maintained. There are many options for paved trails and more heavily developed recreation areas. The natural aesthetics of this area are one of its biggest values.
Waste the taxpayer money on something else. Nature is natural. Pavement is not.
LEAVE MOST OF IT TO NATURE
Keep it natural. Paved / asphalt paths don't make sense for this area. Even gravel will wash away during flooding... Save the money, and use it elsewhere.
The solitude and unkempt nature of the existing trails is my main draw to the River Bottoms. Please strongly consider keeping them the way they are.
Please do NOT add a separate mountain-biking trail. I have used the current trails since 1963 and use them almost daily from work.
This area floods quite often and paving that area would result in high maintenance costs. We Morc members have had a strong affiliation with the river bottoms natural trails and have done our fair share of trail cleaning all on a volunteer basis. I wish for it to stay that way. Also Minnesota has become the Fat Bike capital of the nation being it all started here. The river bottoms is our haven to ride them especially in the fall and winter months. We have enough asphalt trails. When it floods that asphalt may end up in the river. Don't we have enough pollution in that river?
Many people already use the mountain bike trail. I would suggest enhancing their experience I the best use of the area as opposed to creating something new that may or may not be utilized. Plus when the area floods like this year, natural surface trails will be easier and less costly to repair
We moved to Bloomington 6 years ago with the purpose of living close to the River Bottoms Mountain Bike Trail. It is hugely important to our family and we are hopeful that it will continue to be maintained in a way that allows bike access. Thank you.
Please don't build a road/trail. Leave it natural. I'm a mountain biker and enjoy it as is. I believe hikers, runners, walkers, etc enjoy it as is. Adding a 12' wide road/trail will wreck the experience. Also the area floods every yeah and maintenance would be costly. A lot of mountain bikers won't use the area if you wreck the current single track that runs from sibley house to ferry bridge.
Trying to improve an area that gets washed out by flood every few years is near pointless. In my mind the only improvements possible would be around notification to visitors about the constantly changing nature of the existing trail
I don't have specific suggestions, but I love mountian biking and hiking/snow shoeing on the trail!
I am against any new improved biking trail in the MN River Valley, asphalt or gravel. I believe it will ruin the natural beauty down there, harm nature, and ruin the existing silent sports that go on down there at this time. I also believe it is a waste of taxpayer money to build an improved surface trail in a floodplain that has flooded 9 times in the past 10 years. I love parks and in most cases I am all for tax money being used to build facilities, but in this case, I think it is short sighted to build an improved trail surface trail in a flood plain. The continued maintenance due to constant flood damage would be very expensive. There is a reason that Black Dog road across the river is being abandoned. It is due to maintenance costs from flooding. Why would there be an attempt to make the same mistake across the river. The area is fine as is and currently serves many users. Please don't change it.
Please keep the area as natural as possible. Sanitation and cleanliness are a priority, but only so far as to not interfere with wildlife in the area. I very much have enjoyed using the trails since I was very young. My father was born in Bloomington and lived there until he enlisted in the military. He often brought our family to the River Valley for family mountain biking excursions, and one of my favorite aspects was the limited influence of the city on the growth of the park. It's a great recreational area the way it is and it would be a shame to spoil it with asphalt and concrete.
we want the river valley to remain a natural area, with highest priority put on preserving existing residents and property owners privacy and land values.
I'm really against such a wide trail being installed. Keep it narrow - 24" of natural dirt for hiking and biking. No one wants to hike on a 5 foot wide trail and it wrecks the feeling of being out in nature.

This was a poorly designed survey
I don't think a paved trail in a river bottoms area with frequent flooding is a responsible use of resources.
The flooding in June this year helped to point out that a natural surface trail is likely the best solution for the area. The maintenance costs for a paved trail would likely be a significant difference given the trail is in a flood plain.
The need to address the safety of vehicles in parking lots is paramount. Many people do not go to the river facilities because damage to vehicles happens so frequently.
Bloomington native, and I know Savage is working on their trail system too. It would be great if they were connected.
Please keep it Natural and Wild !! It is a Wild life Refuge !
I don't want to see the loss of mountain bike trails. If anything there needs to be an increase in mountain bike single track. But if there is a paved thru way for commuter type biking, I'm all for that!
I own a small business in Bloomington (Krenz Hoff,LLP, a patent law firm) located one block north of the Lyndale Ave parking lot (10800 Lyndale Ave. S). I use the River Bottoms mountain bike trail almost every day for mountain biking in the summer and for snowshoeing at least a couple times per week in the winter. My business partner runs on the trail about once per week. Proximity to the trail was a big factor in locating the business in Bloomington. We considered alternative locations in Edina and Eden Prairie, but settled on Bloomington after we saw how accessible the trail was from the office location, despite it not being as convenient location-wise (I live near Chaska) as the alternatives in Edina/EP. I would be much less likely to use the trail if it were paved or if there were a paved trail alongside the natural trail, as I feel it would lessen the natural experience of riding a natural trail. Also, I fear that with the frequent flooding that a paved or improved surface trail would not be sustainable and would be a maintenance headache, to say the least. There is a good chance we would relocate the business out of Bloomington if the natural surface trail or the riding experience of same was compromised by the planned changes. A solid bridge over 9 mile creek for the mountain bike trail would be a great way to spend a portion of the funds, in my opinion. Thanks for the opportunity to comment. Kurt Krenz
A couple of concerns about the proposed state trail:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cost of installation and maintenance of an asphalt or crushed limestone surface. It seems with the frequent flooding either the trail would need frequent repair or it will quickly fall into disrepair 2. Space concerns regarding both a state trail and the existing singletrack. The single track trail is already sufficient for hikers, bird watchers, trail runners, and bikers. Every time I'm down there, I see multiple user groups enjoying the same trail. Plus it's cheap to maintain.
Thank you for the feedback opportunity!
Love the idea of canoe kayak launch. And access to the trails from convenient place. Would love if you explored more neighborhood access points and how to develop those. I live on Orchard Springs Road and have no safe way to get there by bicycle. Old Shakopee is very unsafe.
Please don't put up fake rock walls and blacktop walkways. Keep it as natural as possible.
I'm interpreting this as the plan is to install some type of trail along the river and not just leaving it as is. I frequently ride my bike from the Sibley House site to the bloomington ferry bridge and I want to see this area stay exactly the same. A paved trail would ruin the area and it's unrealistic to maintain it with the flood patterns.
Please keep dirt trail at river bottoms
I think the new Minnesota River Trail should be a natural surface Treadway like it is in the Minnesota Valley State Recreation Area. With the flooding that had been experienced this year, a paved or aggregate trail could be costly to maintain in the event of future flooding.
leave the trail the way it is, but a bridge across 9 mile creek would be nice
Single track mountain biking is big plus for me
We would so love cross country skiing trails to allow great opportunities year round. Also, there's such natural beauty down there...to us, the less asphalt, the better.
I have enjoyed the single track mountain bike trail along the river valley for many years. It is a unique opportunity in Bloomington that complements the many other miles of paved trails in the city. Better upkeep and maintenance of the mountain bike trail would lead to myself and others using it even more

<p>than it is now. It is probably the best trail in the metro area for beginners along with being one of the longest and most beautiful. Definitely a gem that is worth protecting and continuing to maintain.</p>
<p>My favorite place. I am an avid mountain biker. My sons and I love the natural beauty. Mountain Biking, running, hiking with the dog are our favorite activities. Thank you for planning to improve this trail.</p>
<p>I want the MN River Bottoms Mountain Bike trail preserved. Any efforts to add paved trails should not impact this trail.</p>
<p>My suggestion would be to keep the Minnesota River Valley as natural as possible. So much of our land has been developed, in fact, over developed. Let nature be nature!</p>
<p>The river bottoms mtb trails have been in existence for a number of years, back when I was learning it mountain bike this is where I went. I no longer live in the immediate area, but there is no other facility like the river bottoms in the area that provides a flat, beginner level mountain bike experience. It is an excellent facility for the beginner rider, it would be very disappointing to see the mountain bike trails paved over. I believe there is sufficient access to the river bottoms with the natural trails that exist for bird watchers, fisherman, and mountain bikers to all access the area easily.</p>
<p>Please keep this area NATURAL!!! There's no need for all that commercial crap!</p>
<p>I do not think putting a trail in the river bottoms is a good idea. The mountain bike trail that is there is perfect. It floods every year and the MORC team spends so much of their time cleaning it up and making it a great place for bikers. Who will be responsible for the upkeep of the new trail? What will happen when the river floods every year? Who will maintain the trail? Why would a paved trail even be a good idea? My in-laws live on the bluff and we enjoy visiting for the peace and serenity. We do not want to hear construction equipment nor see the area become overrun.</p>
<p>I love the untouched, undeveloped nature of this valley, and I hope that it is not heavily developed. Besides, it floods every year, so money spent on developing it (buildings and paved trails) would be wasted (or have to be re-spent every year).</p>
<p>The current trails have survived years of flooding and are enjoyed by lots of hikers and bikers. Please don't screw them up.</p>
<p>A paved surface is a waste of money and resources.</p>
<p>I have enjoyed the use of the MN River bottoms for over 35 years. It is flooded in the spring almost every year. Maintenance of a paved trail will be a nightmare for the City of Bloomington, and a waste of taxpayer money. Flooding and cold winters will buckle the trails and leave all kinds of debris behind. I would rethink planning any type of paved trail in the river valley. Heavy equipment to create the trail will be disastrous to wildlife, trees, natural swamps and the river. The committee should look at how green spaces were destroyed to the north bike/hike trail of Hyland Park in Bloomington when Three Rivers' Park put in the ski trail last year. A better use of money would be the improvement of bike trails and sidewalks already in existence in Bloomington that.</p>
<p>Keep trails wild! Trail runners love remote and wild single track and there is not enough of it around.</p>
<p>More mountain bike trails</p>
<p>Please do not pave the trails!</p>
<p>Prefer to keep the area as natural as possible.</p>
<p>I feel it is critical to keep a natural surface mountain bike trail along the river. If a second trail is to be built in addition I would like to see it paved, but would not want to see it compromise the singletrack trail. Also a more permanent solution to the Nine Mile Creek crossing would be nice.</p>
<p>I personally like to mtn bike the River Bottoms. PLEASE DO NOT BLACKTOP THE TRAILS. There are plenty of blacktop trails already. Please keep this singletrack!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Thank you</p>
<p>A paved or purpose built trail will not be maintainable along the river bottoms due to flooding.</p>
<p>The natural trails in the Minnesota River Valley have been created, improved and maintained over several decades. I have "grown up" riding bicycles and hiking in the River Valley in my back yard and continue to enjoy area on a regular basis as an avid mountain biker. I am also a registered Civil Engineer in the State of Minnesota. I have many concerns with the goals of the Master Plan as they threaten the natural setting of the Wildlife Refuge. I take issue with creating a wide path in the River Valley because not only would it destroy the current alignments of the single track mountain bike and hiking trails, it would also be extremely destructive and disruptive to the natural setting of the refuge during construction and after completion. A continuous trail through the park would effectively divide and isolate areas of the refuge that were previously undisturbed.</p>

Maintenance of such a trail will be an expensive and relentless task. The annual flooding of the Minnesota River deposits large amounts of silt, fallen trees and other debris. The natural trail currently navigates these features with a continuously changing trail alignment. Currently, the trail is maintained by a group of volunteers and dedicated trail users that groom, mow and clear the trail of downed trees and debris. I would argue any attempt at a permanent surface intended for pedestrians will not withstand the repeated seasonal flooding of Minnesota River and would likely not be maintained regular enough to create a safe recreational environment.

If the City of Bloomington wishes to embrace this natural setting there are a couple of points I want the planning committee to review. First, as a single track mountain bike trail in its current state, it is a gem within the metro area that gets use from cyclists all year long. The flat terrain offers novice riders a chance to experience the thrill of mountain biking without the high risk posed by other metro trails, or the need for sophisticated bicycles to navigate them. Mountain biking as a sport has increased in popularity over several decades both regionally and nationally, and I think the City of Bloomington could benefit by embracing this with improvements to the single track, rather than turning it into a multi track trail for road bicycles and inline skaters.

Other cities and counties have made commitments to mountain bike trails, such as Dakota County Lebanon Hills and Three Rivers Parks Elm Creek and Murphy-Hanarahan, with positive response from the recreation community. Not only would the cost of such a project be magnitudes lower than the proposed trail, there is already a community of riders willing to take stewardship over the project to help funding, planning and maintaining.

I hope the planning committee finds my arguments to not install a multi track trail beneficial in efforts to preserve the natural setting of the Wildlife Refuge and maintain the current single track alignment.

For trails to be wheelchair accessible, it is a must that they be hard surfaced.

a paved trail will attract a lot of visitors that enjoy road biking, roller blades, and other more "street friendly" recreation. It may not fit the "natural" environment and might not be the best way to go for that area, but personally, I would love to go road cycling along the river--especially if it was a long trail system that connects to other trails. A nice single track for mount bikes will attract many off road cyclists. Just look at the popularity of the Elm Creek park singletrack. It is an amazing trail system and attracts a huge number of cyclists. Off road cycling opportunities around the city are such a great option to have!

I am okay with the river bottoms the way they are. Could be helpful if the trails were trimmed of weeds a couple times per summer. I have seen it flood out many times. Because of the flooding, I don't think asphalt would be a very good idea down there. I recommend spending that money on some type of bridge over nine mile creek that won't float away in the floods.

More Mtn biking please

I grew up in E. Bloomington. 25 year resident. I commute on 77 daily from/to Eagan. Strongly support the restoration of the old Cedar Bridge to be used for hiking/biking to connect to Eagan. It is such a beautiful area & the birds/wildlife I experience on a daily basis as I drive through the valley is worth maintaining.

My experience with the MRVT in Shakopee is that the existing asphalt trail does not hold up to the flooding in the area. I bike that trail occasionally and don't see a lot of use that justifies the cost of building and maintaining a asphalt trail in the Minnesota River flood plane.

In the Bloomington area. I feel that it is critical to maintain and improve existing single-track natural trail and improve water crossings. This is an important trail to the regional hiking and mountain biking and snow shoe communities. It is seeing increasing year-round use.

I am all for increasing accessibility to this convenient natural resources, but I do not believe that the cost to build and maintain a tar trail in an area that floods most years, is not a good use of our tax payer dollars. That money can be better spent on sustainable multi-use natural surface trails.

Please do not pave this trail. MORC does a wonderful job of up keeping the trail. A paved trail down there would be covered with debris throughout the year due to the landscape and would ruin much of the nature that mountain biking enjoys. Trailhead work would be nice though (a bathroom).

<p>Completing the old cedar bridge pedestrian crossing will help increase use of the river bottoms areas. Keeping a trail approved and marked for mountain biking the length of the river valley is important.</p>
<p>I think there should be some open archery hunting zones on river valley for deer Management !</p>
<p>The Minnesota River Valley is a special place. When walking, hiking, and biking down there on the natural surface trails, I truly feel like I am miles away from a metro area. I agree that making something like this accessible to everyone is a nice thought but replacing the existing natural surface trail with an improved surface of any kind, will destroy the experience. To add to that, any improved surface trail will just be a money pit due to the amount of flooding that happens down there. The existing trails are always changing with the floods and this is the ebb and flow of that area, but an improved surface will constantly require repairs and maintenance for many, many years. It just doesn't make sense to spend a bunch of money to install improved surface trails on a flood plain.</p>
<p>I use the river bottoms for single track mountain biking almost weekly. Placing a paved trail will ruin the feel down there and it will be washed out often which will need regular maintenance. Placing more effort on maintaining the dirt trail system seems like the best option. It would be nice to have a bridge over the 9 mile creek though. Thank you for listening to the residents!</p>
<p>Please keep the interior of this space as natural as possible. Connecting trail can help access but pavement along the river would be a mistake.</p>
<p>My largest concern is with the sustainability of a permanent trail along the river during flooding period, such as this spring/summer. The river bottoms trail is still currently underwater in areas this, I can't imagine a paved trail being sustainable for such a flood, and the required maintenance would impact usage substantially. The placement just does not seem wise from a trail building standpoint. Also I am in strong support of natural surface trails, regardless of the paved trail, a natural trail needs to exist for the mountain bikers to ride in this highly used area. These are also the users who "maintain" the current natural terrain trail, the 9 mile creek crossing, and keep things in order along the entire trail system. You need to keep this user group happy, as they are the core volunteer trail stewards who take pride in responsible and sustainable usage.</p>
<p>Mountain bikers seem to be the dominant presence there. Please be sure to keep them in mind with whatever plans are made! Thank you!</p>
<p>please do not put a paved trail in this natural beauty!</p>
<p>we love to off road bike in this area in both summer and winter!</p>
<p>Please keep it natural. A man made hard surface trail is completely inappropriate and will lead to expensive repair costs given the frequent flooding.</p>
<p>The largest user group in the area is the off road cycling community. Working with MORC and IMBA would greatly improve the off road trails in the area.</p>
<p>Being a regular user of the RiverBottoms for the past 10 years, I know that the area frequently floods. Most springs and sometimes a second time. The flooding leaves behind vast areas of sand, downed trees and other debris. It is a challenge to keep open/maintain the natural surface trails that currently exist, I can't begin to imagine the idea and cost of not only installing but trying to maintain a paved trail. The runners and bikers that currently use the area for recreation use it because it is a natural area. Speaking for myself, I would not likely use the area if a paved path was installed.</p>
<p>It's a bad idea on a lot of levels.</p>
<p>Hard paving the Minnesota River Valley is a complete waste of money. This year and previous years of heavy rain is a perfect example of why we should not invest time or money on hard surface trails. Please do the responsible thing and keep the trails natural dirt. Thank you.</p>
<p>Very happy Bloomington is planning to renovate the pedestrian bridge - Bravo!</p>
<p>I very much enjoy the very primitive nature of the trails as they currently are, with much of it as a narrow, winding, single-track path. There are very few opportunities for such hiking and biking so close to the Cities. I have concerns that a wide state trail being installed would destroy some of this natural feel to it, even if a single-track trail was kept adjacent to it. There is also the regular repair and maintenance that would be needed given the river's tendency to flood: the current natural path adapts well to flood-induced changes. Overall, I believe the trails as they currently exist are a great and unique asset to the city, and that very little need be done to change anything. Many of the proposed expansion options feel to me like they would provide experiences you can get in just about any of the metro cities, but none of them has what Bloomington already has right now.</p>

PLEASE do not pave any further portions of the MN River Bottoms. There is already PLENTY of paved trails/paths/sidewalks in the area!
Living just south of this area I feel residents of Shakopee use this almost as much as Bloomington residents.
I enjoy the current trails on the Minnesota river and feel that the river flooding would cause a lot of damage to anything other than a natural surface. I feel that it would be beneficial to have a better way to cross Nine Mile Creek as the raft can be tricky and sometimes is cut loose. You can't rely on the downed trees to be there after a flood.
Important to maintain natural appearance
If you build it they will come!!!
More bike trails would be awesome, both mountain bike and family friendly
I like the wild and unspoiled nature of the River Valley, and I would hate to see it paved or developed. There are lots of paved trails throughout the city and metro area and fewer unpaved and more natural areas. Please keep the River Bottoms rustic and primitive. It is nice to have wild and scenic places that aren't developed and paved. Did I mention unpaved? Thanks!
Keep things natural and undeveloped.
Leave it alone. It is wonderful to have something natural so close to a city. You cannot improve on nature.
I'm a runner who enjoys escaping city and suburban roads. The natural trail bottoms are valued and I hope they can remain as natural as possible.
My only concern is the cleanup after flooding to make the trail usable.
Good maintenance and upstate signage, but keep the area as natural and "unimproved" as possible. Keep the trails natural or semi-natural along the river. There are paved trail options abound including 3 Rivers trails and the entire Minneapolis park system. Keep the Minnesota River Valley trails natural!
More shore line fishing access needed, Without causing too much distress to natural habitat. Benches along trail would be ideal for disabled and handicapped that are not wheelchair bound. These would allow for resting points along the trail for all and could provide a unique opportunity to view wildlife or birds. A few drinking fountains along the way would help as well, but items the least intrusive upon natural habitat are best. Thank you! :)
Lets keep it Natural, ie no paved trails please!
I enjoy this space and appreciate its accessibility via lightrail. Please don't ruin it by paving it.
Please do not spend any money on "improved facilities" in the Minnesota River Valley. This spring, along with previous springs, should have shown how wasteful it can be. The area floods almost yearly with the number of flood events going up yearly. It is a natural area and should be left natural. The current single track trail that is used by multiple user groups is self sustaining or easily maintained by a small number of volunteer workers, keeping it clear and useable.
Pave the trails would ruin one of the great resources in the Twin Cities. I moved back from Chicago for these trails. Please, please, please don't pave the trails.
Please keep the natural beauty. There are so few spots left where people can enjoy and appreciate nature in the city.
Please maintain some less-developed areas and unpaved trails
I am strongly opposed to putting paved trails in the Minnesota River Bottoms. The Minnesota River Bottoms are enjoyed by people at the moment precisely because of their lack of paved trails. Installing paved trails would compromise the natural environment as well.
A paved trail surface does not make sense based on the frequent flooding that would likely damage the trail. Also a paved surface would detract from the natural aspect that the River Valley offers.
Because the trails by our house down by the river (south of auto club rd) are used both by pedestrians and bikers, it is really hard to use them. If you are walking, you continually have to move off the trail to let bikers pass. We used to love to walk these trails but have stopped using them because it's too hard to walk with all the bikers.
Thanks
The single track is the best venue in the cities for fatbiking
Keep the bike trails in the river bottoms natural surface. Bikers prefer it and it will be much cheaper to build and maintain.

<p>please maintain that natural beauty and outdoor feel to the river with adequate recreation such as boating, kayaking etc facilities....I would hate to see asphalt, signs everywhere and to "domesticate" what is a wonderful yet undiscovered "up north" feel to the metro area.</p>
<p>I may not have said enough about safety. Not sure what daytime walking for older adults is like. If it's not safe for a pair of women or someone to walk alone?</p>
<p>Would love to see natural and historical learning opportunities for children, young adults and adults from a historical Bloomington perspective so that we learn more about the community we live in. Something that would be a 'must' field trip for schools.</p>
<p>It is of great importance to me that these trails remain rustic and undeveloped. THAT is what make the River Bottoms a unique asset to our city. Ordinarily, people have to travel far outside the city to find such a wild and natural space to occupy. Please leave it in its current state!</p>
<p>We already love using the MN River Valley, I think what would be the most helpful right now is just better signage/maps. I would not want to see the trails widened/paved because the way they are now is really pleasant for their rustic state. It feels closer to nature</p>
<p>The immediate thing that can be done is to add garbage cans to the trailhead before crossing the river. There are tons of garbage cans at Dred Scott but nothing down by the MN River Valley. This just leads to more trash being thrown on the ground. Listening to the neighbors that live right around the MN River Valley is of utmost importance as their opinions should be highly valued over government money--they are the ones who have to live next to the trail and see what happens on a daily basis. What happens at the trails also affects their home property values and not always in a good way like the city leads house owners to believe.</p>
<p>We have lived in Bloomington for nearly 20 years and I do not recall ever hearing of these trails, the advantages they provide or how to access them. I would like to learn more about them!</p>
<p>The trails themselves could use maps at the trailheads with difficulty (elevation) and distance info. Also, as a hiker or dogwalker the mountain bikers were always polite but dangerously fast and close!</p>
<p>The river valley is a great resource it also attracts bad actors in the summer evenings. Underage drinking and partying. Bloomington police are responsive but be careful what you build or these activities may increase.</p>
<p>In the long term, Anything that is done, if done correctly will iprove our living standards as well as raise our property values. I think the residents of Bloomington would like to see this area done right so as to contribute to the quality of life. Please, don't go cheap on this revitalization. Put the money into today and it will pay off in the future. Even if this requires us to pay more in taxes!!!!</p>
<p>I know this probably goes against the norm, but in the long run we all now thiat it will pay off and people will be clamoring to move into Bloomington. I am excited to see the this resource used in a thoughtful (pleasae keep it as natural as possible) but usable manner.</p>
<p>It's a beautiful recreation area, and its proximity is part of the reason I bought my house. I would like to see it maintained in a natural state so it continues to be a refuge for animals, etc., but upgrade signage and maintenance to promote its 4-seasons use by residents.</p>
<p>Improve trails for regular biking and hiking. Not just for hard core mountain biking.</p>
<p>The new bike trails are impressive. I live in Rivercrest, hope the bike traffic isn't to bad at our driveway.</p>
<p>Why do we always have to improve nature. By "fixing" this trail you will ruin the natural order of the woods and river. Can't we leave it alone. It's fine the way it is, limited access brings greater association with nature. "You don't know what you have til it's gone."</p>
<p>Please do not ruin this area and pave the trail. There are plenty of other paved trails in the city that others can use. I love the natural state this is in. I grew up in Bloomington using these trails and really love using them. I do like the upgraded access off Overlook near France. This needs to be kept natural for mountain biking and natural trail use such as hiking and running.</p>
<p>Please keep as natural as possible!</p>
<p>I use and love the valley everyday. Hiking,running,biking and wildlife observation. I think it is best left natural.</p>
<p>would like the master planners to try to keep any revisions from disturbing wildlife and birding opportunities</p>
<p>I hope the natural environment and wildlife are respected in the planning</p>
<p>I'm opposed to any kind of paved trail. As history has shown there tends to be damage (broken and</p>

displaced asphalt) to trails after flooding of this area. This damage would cause safety concerns for users of these trails whether walking, running or biking.
I am concerned that a paved trail will eliminate or detract from the natural surface trail
Please think this through and not screw it up like big government typically screws big projects up.
I have been using the MN River Valley trails a lot for over 45 years, since I was 7 or 8 years old. They are a fabulous resource for mountain biking, hiking, cross country skiing, and snowshoeing. I would really hate to see any of the trails paved, covered with gravel, widened, or regraded heavily to take out the interesting hills, curves, and intimate, rustic nature. People (especially kids) need places to explore nature that are relatively wild, not overdeveloped and "citized". We have plenty of wide, paved, low-graded trails at Bush Lake, Hyland, Moir Park, Nine Mile Creek, and numerous other parks in the city. Please don't take away what makes the MN River Trails special and unique. Please work with MORC and/or IMBA to take advantage of their expertise in developing single track mountain biking trails. They have helped to do fantastic things with the mountain bike trails at Murphy-Hanrehan and Lebanon Hills.
It is important for people to have access to this wonderful natural environment, however, this access should not destroy it.
Excited for the improvements!
Let's keep it natural.
Please read my comments I left in previous areas of this survey. Thank you.
Link Nine Mile Creek pathway to the new Minnesota Valley trail so longer walks are possible. As a single female, I don't always feel safe walking down there by myself. Don't know how to fix that issue, though, since public access is important.
We enjoy walking our dog almost daily by the river, my wife has grown to love the wildlife and nature she sees daily. We also run and bike the trails occasionally. We live between France and Normandale, the improvements to access the river by Goodrich ave have been awesome. We expected that to resolve the issues we've had accessing the river, unfortunately this has been a tough year with the flooding. I must add the parking restrictions near the Masonic Home rail road bridge are bothersome. Restricting parking on this access road to the river because of a few home breakins doesn't seem to be the optimal way to resolve the issue. This area is such a resource to Bloomington, I feel the fewer improvements the better, keep it natural. Just keep the few access points you do have open as much as possible during the year.
I have recently heard about proposed "improvements" to the Minnesota River Valley area in Bloomington. In my opinion, many of these "improvements" would have serious negative effects on the unique character of the area. The Twin Cities, including Bloomington, have lots of parks. They do not have lots of extensive natural areas suitable for wildlife. The Minnesota River Valley is unique, and is heavily used by wildlife enthusiasts for those reasons. If the area is overdeveloped, I and many others will stop using it.
This river valley is a priceless natural resource and a refuge of national importance. Please focus on wildlife and keeping the area as natural as possible!
Currently there is an access crossing next to private property that is restricted by landscaping, is narrow and it would be great if we could access the river and creek trails without having to leave the neighborhood by car. We would walk the trails more often. Thank you.
We love the expansive natural setting. Appreciate the city looking at what it will take for our children to safely appreciate the same expansive natural setting for generations to come - please don't make major changes to it like challenge courses or other man-made distractions.
The City should facilitate collaboration between the refuge and the MOA. The MN River Valley in Bloomington could become the premier destination in the metro if the City finally woke up to the fact that its entire southern border is a national wildlife refuge which incorporates a transportation system of vital importance to MN's economy -- and which has a rich cultural history. The Lyndale boat landing would be an ideal place for interpretive kiosks etc. describing the commerce, history and natural resources. The public works dumping ground west of Lyndale should be consolidated and the area given to the refuge.
I think this is a great area in the City and welcome the chance to make it more usable in the future.
Lack of trash receptacles leads to a lot of citizens littering - I am also concerned with the quality of the water both in 9 mile creek and the MN river
We do not want a 10-12' path developed for the trail. Leave it natural as it is.

thanks
I live close to the Bloomington ferry bridge and love the natural, undeveloped trails. Many enjoy the trails for walking, running, and biking. I would be sad to see the natural setting be too developed. The flooding would create a big maintenance need where now it just changes the trails and recreates naturally. The mn valley is a treasure in Bloomington!!
The 12' wide trail is a horrible idea. The Wildlife Refuge should be managed to sustain natural habitat and allow wildlife to live its life and reproduce. It shouldn't be managed so that it can be overrun with people or so that bikes can go zooming along at high speeds.
Please do not over-improve the river valley. Kepp the mountain bikes out - keep it a natural area. With more and more areas being paved over it is more important than ever to keep areas wild, especially IBA's needed for migrating birds.
As this project moves forward, please bear in mind that much of this area floods regularly (and has recently). When flooding occurs, much of the landscape changes significantly - trees are uprooted and moved, sediment gathers several feet deep, etc. I'm concerned that we'll make an 'improvement' that won't be kept up and will make the area less usable and accessible in the future. I'd prefer to see city funds go toward upgrading the facilities at our current parks, rather than spreading the city funds thinner.
please do not change anything. Leave this area as it is meant to be. ---wild. NO picnic tables. It just encourages garbage.
Connecting bike routes to trails in surrounding communities is a high priority for me (and others, including bike commuters), but not really part of survey. Bike-ability along Bloomington side of MN R. could use considerable improvement, especially connecting Fort Snelling area trails to places upstream.
Keep the trail natural. Please do not use asphalt. The notion of a better trail is great, but keep it as natural as possible.
It's a wonderful area for bird watching - my husband and I come to the area often.
I do not live in Bloomington but visit frequently, most often to enjoy the natural areas there. These are the kinds of places to make a community good to live in and visit. The Refuge is a treasure.
Please leave the area alone. There is no need to encroach on the area any more. The residents enjoy the undisturbed area and the fact that it is not "trendy" and does not attract large numbers of people.
We use this area SPECIFICALLY for watching birds, wildlife and simply spending time in the untouched green space which is becoming so scarce. What a treasure it is to still have an area like this in the city. The less it is managed with hard surface roads the better. Hard surfaces are not kind on joints. Additionally, paved trails can become a hazard in winter, cyclists can be a hazard to pedestrians (just visit one of the Mpls lakes), and the pace of activities they encourage can become a hazard for reptiles and amphibians who must make their necessary treks through habitat. Please seriously consider some
compromise solutions that benefit more people, and wildlife, too.
Please do what needs to be done to preserve the trails and shoreline, but do not make it look like a city park. We LOVE the natural aspects, with all the pros and cons (flooding & messy trails). PLEASE let it remain natural- i.e.; no asphalt, concrete, fences, etc.
I hope you take time to evaluate the impact a wide trail will have on the wildlife. This means more traffic for their habitat and so I would hope you will allow for additional unspoiled area for them to live and prosper in. Once the birds, plants and animals are gone they don't come back.
The whole purpose of the wildlife refuge, should actually be a refuge for wildlife. While city planners can and will do whatever they want with city property that neighbors the refuge, let's just hope it is done responsibly. Please do not take away the ability to walk the trails quietly.
please leave it 'unimproved'. I personally only like to walk, and feel the bicycling people go too fast to be safe for walkers, frightening at best.
Please keep this area in it's NATURAL state with natural walking/hiking trails. There are enough parks and beaches full of plastic kids gyms that are great for families but create tons of noise when they get used or never get used at all. It's time for all ages to learn to enjoy and respect the natural components that this river valley has to offer. Let everyone use their imagination to create their own good time without all the added "stuff" that we as Americans think we need to create enjoyment. How fun it is to climb a tree, examine it's bark and leaves, or explore the flowers and growth underfoot!
Stay Natural

<p>We live in a condo overlooking the valley so some of my answers reflex the fact that we have access from our unit.</p>
<p>It is a very special place that needs to be protected. Thank you for this opportunity to express my opinions.</p>
<p>We love this area and keeping it natural is very important to us.</p>
<p>I am most interested in bird and wildlife viewing and I'm very concerned the proposed upgrade will take away the 'wildness' of the area that allows me to observe wildlife. In my opinion the least amount of development that still provides access would be best.</p>
<p>Don't overdevelop! It wastes money and destroys the integrity of the areas you wished to make "accessible". A small dirt trail (with proper erosion safeguards) is all the access anyone needs. The value of the area will greatly diminish with the more concrete and facilities built. Keep the river valley wild. Few other areas of this quality remain near the cities. I'll be sad to see quality trails that provide a quite connection to nature become just another over paved, overly lit and wild-lifeless road and 10ft bike path.</p>
<p>While I do enjoy trails in the Minnesota River Valley, wide trails lead to fragmentation of forested habitats, which is a concern to Minnesota's declining forest-dwelling birds. Many birders (myself included) visit the Minnesota River Valley, so I think we would all appreciate that birds are taken into consideration when proceeding with the Master Plan.</p>
<p>This is a very special area within the metro. Too many times "improvements" end up ruining a place like this. Keep it natural, not urbanized. There are lots and lots of urban parks around, but few places like this. Don't make it lose its specialness by making it more like everywhere else.</p>
<p>Please keep the area as favorable as possible for wildlife and birds.</p>
<p>Cedar Avenue bridge is a premiere birding and wildlife spot. Maintaining habitat should be the highest priority. There are plenty of recreational type parks and this area should be left as natural as possible especially since it is part of the MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge. It may need a little habitat management such as exotic weed control, but over-managing for recreation and picnicking is not really part of the mission of the Refuge, so the area should remain as natural as possible.</p>
<p>This is a wonderful amenity so close to high populations and it should be kept in a wilderness state.</p>
<p>Wonderful natural space. Would not like to see it change very much. Need a quiet place in the urban landscape.</p>
<p>Please keep this area natural and in concert with wildlife protection. There are plenty of other asphalt surfaces elsewhere for people that want that.</p>
<p>Some improvements for accessibility are appropriate (best between the bridge and the Bass Ponds?), but paving large sections, or opening the area to trail biking, would destroy the special value of this natural area.</p>
<p>Highest priority is to protect the wonderful natural resources while allowing observation of wildlife.</p>
<p>Please keep disturbances to natural grades and existing vegetation to a minimum both in planning and construction to the minimum possible (with the exception of buckthorn and honeysuckle infestations.) Please use aggregate (not bituminous) in any parking surfaces! Thanks for the opportunity for input.</p>
<p>Please preserve the Minnesota River Valley in its present semi-wild form. Don't prettify it, put in rec buildings or make it more "accessible" -- the metro has no shortage of such areas, let's keep the "wilder" regions the way they are.</p>
<p>please fix the bridge for biking and make little or no other "improvements"</p>
<p>Keep the birds in mind</p>
<p>Highest priority for me is having wildlife habitat and not overdeveloping the area to the extent that it would have a negative impact on wildlife.</p>
<p>I would suggest saving the money and leaving the space alone. It has worked well for hundreds of years</p>
<p>I grew up in Bloomington. Permanent bridges would be nice. Paved trails would be expensive to maintain. The river valley is too isolated for a person in a wheelchair to use alone safely. I am a walker</p>
<p>It appears that you have neglected to identify all of the Minnesota Wildlife Refuge lands that are mixed in with City lands by Lyndale Avenue</p>
<p>open the gate to the parking lot at the bass ponds, at the bottom of the hill on 86th street. I have aging</p>

parents and inlaws that we'd like to take down there but they can't walk the hill ...
I've been hiking there since I was a teen and I'm now 65.
Low key entrances to the trails near the MN River and I-35W intersection need to be kept up better. i.e. Hopkins Road
The Refuge is the number one reason I love working in Bloomington, it is the last piece of wilderness easily accessible from Minneapolis. It's annual flood cycle, the seasons, etc. Are all beautiful and breathtaking. I fear the loss of the natural resource from overdevelopment. Once it's gone it's gone. and Bloomington has one of the most special areas in the State. It's a treasure.
One of Bloomington's greatest resources. Planning for the MRV must take into consideration the Bluff and riverbottoms area. Resource management should be of the highest priorities. Control of invasive species is important.
You are well aware of the flooding of the Minnesota River. I question the ability to maintain an asphalt trail. I love it. I feel like I have my own private park.
Utilize more prairies/ oak savannahs within city-owned property
This is a unique landscape within an urban area. It is vital to keep this area as natural as possible. They are many, many places to go with paved trails, groomed parks and buildings with all the modern conveniences. Finding and keeping an area natural is very important for education, nature and enjoyment. This is a absolute jewel in the park system, please, please, please keep it and treat it as such.
The water quality of the river is appalling. More should be done to improve it. The valley needs and improved bike trail and more access to it.
I am very concerned about further development of this resource impacting the primary objective of this being a wildlife refuge. Do we really need more / bigger trails?
I do not walk the bluff trail any more because the mountain bikers have taken over and the trail has become over grown and their is a poor line of sight
A. Memorial to Dakota Village at the historic mouth of Nine Mile Creek (similar to Kaposia memorial in South St. Paul. This village was the most important Dakota Village in Minnesota. Mountain bikers now act like they own the Minnesota Valley floodplain. They go anywhere they want at any speed that they want. Their most common greeting is "sorry I almost ran you over" or an obscene gesture. They are a real menace to hikers, wildlife and the natural vegetation. They insist on creating new trails within feet of existing trails to heighten their sense of adventure. City of Bloomington has done absolutely nothing to rein them in or punish their bad behavior. They ride the bluff trail like they own it, and to hell with everybody else.
Need access to river bridge on cedar. Would really like to be able to walk or ride a bike on a paved trail to the river. The valley is so close but there is no good walking accessories use from our neighborhood any more
Please communicate information periodically via Facebook.
The unimproved singletrack trail along the Bloomington River Bottoms is a unique and valuable treasure to have in such a large metropolitan area. The current lack of a 10-12' improved trail allows visitors to be much closer and in touch with the near-wilderness available to them. An improved surface trail, even a natural surface one would be a loss to the community and an unfortunate legacy to leave our grandchildren.
Keep the trail a natural surface, paving this trail in a flood plain will be a waste of money for maintenance and cleanup after floods. I do not support paving of any kind on the river trail
Please prioritize natural resource heritage of the native plant communities and ecosystems of the city-owned properties in the river valley and adjoining areas.
With the City of Bloomington approval of the Old Cedar Avenue Bridge Rehabilitation and bicycles being allowed to use this bridge as a new gateway to the City it will lead to an increased steady stream of bicyclists commuting to Bloomington and mountain biking the Minnesota Valley River Bottoms recreationally. I'm VERY concerned. The impact of this bridge renovation will be great on the surrounding areas from this bridge. I completely disagree with reports done in the bridge analysis that state "rehabilitation is not expected to severely impact or disrupt other resources, group communities, or other environment." I run the bottoms 3-5 days a week. I lost 50 lbs doing this and it changed my life. The bottoms are already dangerous at times while I am running, often being confronted by a fast-moving bicyclist rounding a blind corner. During the height of summer, I cannot run without a bike

encounter just about every time I run. It's nice right now with the trail being under water and bicycles not able go through because I can still get a great run in taking alternate paths.

The bicycle group Minnesota Off Road Cyclists, along with many other groups I'm sure, are pushing for the bridge and maintaining a mountain bike track. There is a bike trail of sorts at the entrance I use and directions are on their website. There has been support by the City of Bloomington and bicycles in the river bottoms with bicycle events (Phat Bike Race in January 2014) coordinated between MORC, Penn Cycle with approval with the City of Bloomington, which also concerns me. There is an older video on My Space you can search under "White Knuckle Riders" that will show you the usage of one bicyclist in the Minnesota River Bottoms, which is indicative of the mountain biking sport in general, showing him tearing up the dirt, jumping off wood piled up, accelerating down banked curves complete with two wipeouts. I have taken pictures of the single lane trail I run where there is no way a bicyclist can see a hiker until they are on top of them. There are many round blind corners that are hazardous to both bikers and hikers wherein I have had to jump out of the way or am startled from behind. They expect me to step off the trail (abundant itchweed down there) so they can pass. They don't wait for a safe passing area. I have been told "that's why I announced myself" when I complained that I had the right-of-way. Just because you announce yourself doesn't mean you can pass whenever you want. Minnesota statutes references etiquette that basically means pass safely. There is no signage. Most of my running trail is single-lane. Imagine: bike rounding a blind corner fast, and I'm coming from the other direction up a blind hill.

I many times encounter families walking the river bottoms, pet owners walking their dogs (four people and three dogs just this evening alone), I've seen bird watchers, young boys exploring, and girl scout troops. I have also seen leftover remnants of bonfires, parties, etc. I hope that there is some plan in the works to protect the pedestrians and not cater to the bicycle enthusiasts with all their manpower and money. Give the river bottoms to the pedestrians, nature observers, bird watchers, girl scouts/school and joggers. I would recommend not allowing mountain biking on these trails. For people to access the trail by my house they have to park on a rounded corner or an elementary school. I don't think you'd promote parking at an elementary school and trying to enforce that during the school year and school day.

This completed survey is confidential for internal master plan purposes only and is not to be available to the public.