



Working to protect the Mississippi River
and its watershed in the Twin Cities area.

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Dear Planning Commission members,

We are writing today to share our support for the 26th Avenue North Overlook project presented by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) is a non-profit organization with a mission to engage community members and other stakeholders to protect, restore and enhance the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities Region. We represent thousands of people in the metropolitan area who care deeply about the river, including a growing membership of over 2,700 people and more than 3,200 volunteers and 2,000 advocates engaged each year.

For too many years, North Minneapolis residents have been cut off from the Mississippi River. The riverfront, which in other parts of the city is a recreational asset, is lined with industrial uses and is largely inaccessible to nearby neighborhoods. These disparities in access, health, and recreational opportunities must be reversed. We support MPRB's efforts to carry out the Above the Falls Master Plan and provide new riverfront parks and trails in this part of the city.

Given this, the Overlook is an important destination to draw residents to the river, provide a gathering place, and connect the 26th Avenue Greenway and Farview Park to the river. We appreciate the extensive community engagement process MPRB conducted to design this park and respond to stakeholder concerns. The end result is an inviting space that, despite its small footprint, will encourage visitors to connect with the river, the natural environment, and their neighbors, all while being constructed in a way that carefully considers the protection of birds and other wildlife.

We support the project as proposed and encourage the Planning Commission to approve this application. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Colleen O'Connor Toberman
River Corridor Program Director