

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A VISION FOR MINNEAPOLIS RIVERFRONT PARKS

SUMMER 2017 | COLLECTION AND IDEAS



Overview of Engagement Process

Juxtaposition Arts envisions the youth of North Minneapolis entering the creative workforce as dynamic innovators and problem solvers with the confidence, skills, and connections they need to accomplish their educational and professional goals, and to contribute to the revitalization of the communities where they live and work.

The Environmental Design Studio is one of four JXTA Lab programs. We teach youth skills in architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning to create custom community engagement projects for clients. Our team is led by professional designers who mentor highly skilled neighborhood youth to produce insightful design projects that will positively impact North Minneapolis and the Twin Cities.

In 2017, Enviro Design partnered with the Minneapolis Parks Foundation to create a youth-led engagement process with a strong focus on racial equity and inclusion around RiverFirst park projects.

We created several on-site engagement strategies to educate the public about the Great Northern Greenway River Link and Upper Harbor Terminal redevelopment projects. Both of these RiverFirst projects represent a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reconnect all of Minneapolis to the Mississippi River. RiverFirst will connect 11 miles of once industrial riverfront to the Grand Rounds scenic parkway system and redefine how North and Northeast neighborhoods experience the Mississippi.

Currently, North Minneapolis has no river hotspots where locals can go for events, fun, and connection to the river. New parks can foster these community connections and create a hub of economic and cultural growth.

We feel it is important for Northsiders to be a part of the process: To say what we think is important and what we want to see in these new developments. We invite you to talk with us at JXTA about your thoughts and vision.

Sam Babatunde Ero-Phillips & the Enviro Design Team
September 2017



RiverFirst Projects

The Great Northern Greenway River Link will connect North and Northeast to the river and link to downtown via a series of street improvements along 26th Ave N, a new pier overlooking the river, repurposing a train bridge for pedestrian access, and linking a bike trail to connect to Theo Wirth Park.

The Upper Harbor Terminal is a 48+ acre site along the Mississippi River. In the coming months, the City of Minneapolis, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and UHT development team will be working to create a master plan for redeveloping the Upper Harbor Terminal Site into a place that has a new public park and private development with a variety of input. JXTA youth apprentices have been studying this site for almost two years. The Upper Harbor Terminal is important because of its unique location and the opportunities that can grow from it.



Map of Community Engagement Events



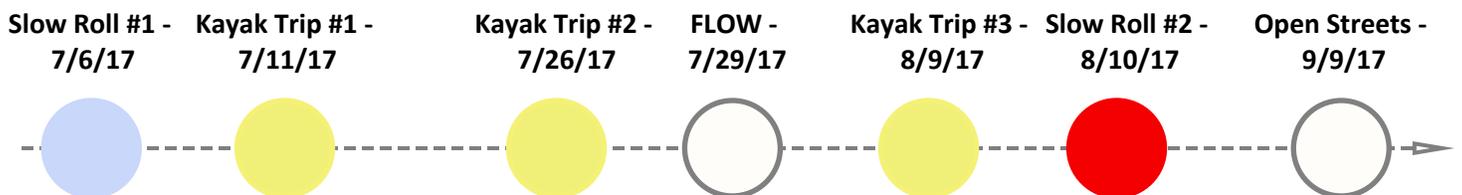
Key To Sites Visited:

- 1 JXTA Campus
- 2 Jordan Park
- 3 Folwell Park
- 4 Webber Park
- 5 North Mississippi Regional Park
- 6 UHT Site
- 7 26th Ave Pier
- 8 Farview Park
- 9 Boom Island

Minneapolis Slow Roll was a series of events where the Enviro lab went out on bikes with other groups to personally see the areas that are currently being redeveloped along the riverfront. We started from Juxtaposition Arts and biked throughout North Minneapolis, generally in areas with parks, along with the Upper Harbor Terminal and 26th Ave and River Link. We also went kayaking along the Mississippi River with Project Sweetie Pie, Urban Strategies, and Asian Media Access. On these trips, we discussed the development of the Upper Harbor Terminal and 26th Ave and River Link, while observing the site from the perspective of the river.



Timeline of Engagement Events



Apprentice Interviews

In the summer of 2017, four new Step-Up apprentices joined the Enviro Design Studio. Here are their reflections on the community engagement project.



Name: Maryan Aden
Age: 17

"They were saying how they wanted the sites to be a place for youth and that they are excited to see what the future holds for the sites." - Maryan

How has the community engagement process changed your view of the river?

Lanijah Warfield-Write: It made me appreciate the river way more than I do. It's nice to hear the vision of removing the industry along the river so we can make it more accessible to everyone and clean up the environment.

What did you do before Step-Up?

Maryan Aden: I spent all my time going to school, hanging out at home, and babysitting. When I first started working in the Enviro Design Studio, I became more aware of the community especially 26th Ave River Link and the Upper Harbor Terminal site.

How did it feel to ride a bike for the first time?

MA: We were going on a slow roll and I didn't know how to ride a bike, so I quickly told Sam. He replied that it was fine and I would be able to ride a three wheeler bike. I got on the three wheeler and rode the bike from Juxtaposition Arts to 26th Avenue. I crashed a couple of times, but it felt good to say I rode the bike to the site.

What were the kids' ideas for the river?

MA: My lab and I went on a kayaking trip with Project Sweetie Pie to see the UHT site and it was really fun. When I saw the site I was really amazed because I had never been that close to the Mississippi River. We held group discussions with the youth from Project Sweetie Pie, Urban Strategies, and Asian Media Access.



Name: Lanijah Warfield-Write
Age: 16

What did the kids we partnered with learn from these engagements?

LWW: I think they learned to think creatively and have fun doing something they've never done. I feel since after the event we have more open discussions which always is a good way to get feedback.

What do you look forward to along the river?

LWW: I just want more interactive hands-on things along the parkway. I also think they can have more eco-friendly things. The first time I kayaked was with JXTA. I like it because I get to still use my rowing skills but with kayaking.



During our 2nd kayaking trip we gathered along the edge of the river to examine the Upper Harbor Terminal site.

What community members want to see on the Upper Harbor Terminal Site (Feedback gathered during FLOW, Northside Arts Crawl)

Getting To The UHT

- Transit
- Light Rail
- Parking
- Biking / Walking

Safety

- Park Security
- Lighting
- Cops
- Kids
- Community

For the youth

- Arcade
- Movie Theaters
- Ice Skating
- Art/ Music Center
- A space for kids to hang out at after school
- A nice big park
- Friendly for Kids
- Space to have birthday parties

Parks

- Parks for adults
- Green space
- Focus on ADA accessibility
- Indoor park
- Water parks
- Trails for biking
- Dog Park



"I feel since after the event we have more open discussions which always is a good way to get feedback." - Lanijah

After the field trips, the Enviro Design Apprentices learned to develop a rendering that captured their ideas for reimagining the sites they just visited.



How did you feel after seeing 26th Ave on the Mississippi side?

Pheng Xiong: Looking at 26th Ave on the Mississippi side, I was stunned by the emptiness that was there. Such a sight that borders the river does not belong there. The Enviro lab has designed a rendering of a vision that is believed to be a better version of the sight. We recommend more green areas including possibly a greenhouse or garden, with a few benches, and night lights, as it would be more inviting and comforting for the people of North Minneapolis to view the Mississippi and hang out in the area.

How did this lab prepare you for college?

PX: Before I started this program, I had an idea of how Photoshop works, but now my skills have progressed exponentially. The skills I learned in Enviro were extremely helpful and will be of great use, especially when I become an Animation major at Augsburg College.

(Left) an existing view from the end of 26th Ave looking south and (below) a rendering of what that site can become.

"The skills I learned in Enviro were extremely helpful and will be of great use, especially when I become an Animation major at Augsburg College." - Pheng

What have you learned in Enviro since joining?

PX: Being in JXTA's Enviro lab, my eyes have opened to what the Northside really looks like. I do not go outdoors as often, and there were places that I almost did not know had existed, such as the Upper Harbor Terminal and the length of 26th Ave. I also became aware of how the parks were not as attractive to people in North Minneapolis anymore. The redevelopment and opening of 26th Ave will be an attraction in North Minneapolis. Knowing that a bike path is being built on this street so near me, gives me a bigger trail to bike.



Did you know about the site prior to joining JXTA?

*Keanu Vang:*As a local fisherman, I fish at the Mississippi River quite often. I fish from North Mississippi Regional park all the way to Downtown. I pass by the Upper Harbor Terminal Site regularly. I've seen the site being unused for a few years now and thought why couldn't it be connected to the North Mississippi Regional Park and accessible to the public?

What would you like to see at the UHT site?

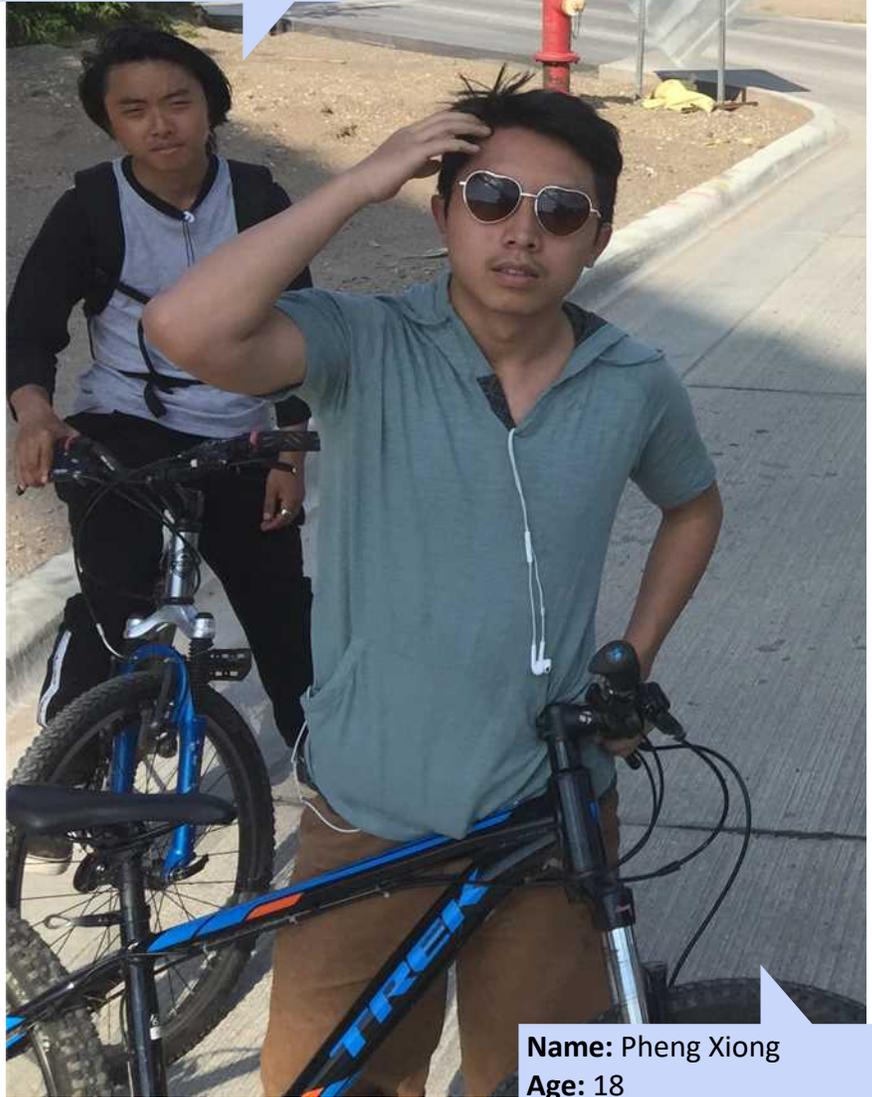
KV: As someone who regularly bikes by, I can't wait for a path to connect North Mississippi Regional park to Ole Olson Park. I don't like going around the site to get to the next park. I'd like one long trail connecting the parks along the Mississippi and a long walkway/dock along the shore for people and bikers.

"As someone who regularly bikes by, I can't wait for a path to connect North Mississippi Regional park to Ole Olson Park. I don't like going around the site to get to the next park." - Keanu

Has joining JXTA deepened your understanding of the site?

KV: Then I happened to work at JXTA Arts which is working on the site. Here, I learned what the site was used for and development plans. I was stoked when I heard we were in the planning process of the site.

Name: Keanu Vang
Age: 18



Name: Pheng Xiong
Age: 18

What community members want to see along 26th Ave (Feedback gathered during FLOW, Northside Arts Crawl)

- What Would Improve Access To The River From 26th Ave**
- New Trails between 26th Ave and Ole Olson Park
 - New Dock/Pier Overlooking River
 - New Bus Route
 - Nice Ride Station
 - Off Street Parking
 - Safer Roads
 - Better Lighting

- What Would Attract People To The Site?**
- Community Gathering Spaces for Events
 - Bike Repair Shop
 - Water Fountains (for drinking)
 - Pop-up Concession Stands
 - Public Art
 - Benches
 - Bathrooms

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A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO
OUR PROJECT PARTNERS:

SLOW ROLL
PROJECT SWEETIE PIE
URBAN STRAGETIES
ASIAN MEDIA ACCESS
MINNEAPOLIS PARK & RECREATION BOARD

ENVIRO DESIGN STUDIO

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KY'MARI LOVE, LANIJAH WARFIELD-WRITE, MARYAN ADEN, MATT COPPESS, NILA BROOKS,
PHENG XIONG, QADIYM WASHINGTON, SHELIQUE COMBS & TATIYANA GROSS