

Contact:

Nathan McLeod, Parks Planning, Design
and Projects
mcleodn@ci.missoula.mt.us
(406) 552-6261

600 Clegg Lane
Missoula, MT 59801
www.missoulaparks.org



MISSOULA PARKS AND RECREATION PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release through December 31, 2024

City launches Caras Park river access project at Brennan's Wave

Enhancing accessibility and environmental sustainability in Caras Park

The City of Missoula is pleased to announce the launch of the Caras Park River Access project at Brennan's Wave, a key component of the [North Riverside Parks and Trails Master Plan](#). The project is designed to improve accessibility, enhance viewing capacity, and promote environmental sustainability along the Clark Fork River. Construction begins Monday, September 23.

The project includes new ADA-accessible ramps from Ron's River Trail down to the water's edge. A new, expanded river overlook will increase viewing capacity and improve safety by adhering to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines. Terraced seating adjacent to Brennan's Wave will add viewing capacity and seating and help connect Caras Park to the river.

By creating stabilized river access points in Caras Park, the project will help eliminate user-made trails, reducing erosion and impacts on water quality. Adding sustainable native vegetation to the levee will help shade the riverbank, reducing increases in water temperature. These measures will help decrease negative impacts on aquatic life, including the federally endangered bull trout.

The \$1.68 million project is primarily funded by a \$1.2 million grant from the Economic Development Administration. Local matching funds are provided by the Missoula Redevelopment Agency, Missoula Downtown Foundation, 2018 Open Space Bond Funds and the Park District fund balance.

"The Caras Park River Access project is a crucial step in our ongoing efforts to restore and enhance the urban riverfront," said Nathan McLeod, Parks and Recreation Associate Director for Planning, Design & Projects. "By providing hardened river access points, we're improving recreational opportunities and protecting the river ecosystem."

This initiative is part of the larger [Clark Fork River Restoration and Access project](#), which seeks to restore riverbanks in downtown Missoula. Caras Park was identified as a primary location for providing reinforced river access due to its popularity for events and gatherings and proximity to Brennan's Wave, downtown amenities, and parks and trails.

Construction is scheduled to begin September 23 and continue through December, with project completion expected in spring 2025, weather permitting. During construction, Ron's River Trail will be closed from Beartracks Bridge to the Carousel, including the river overlook and Brennan's Wave access from Caras Park. While no work will occur within the river and Brennan's Wave will remain open, river users are advised to exercise caution near construction areas. Caras Park will remain open throughout construction. Parking lots in and around Caras Park will serve as a construction staging areas, resulting in reduced parking availability.

For more information about the Caras Park River Access project or the larger Clark Fork River Restoration initiative, please visit <https://www.engagemissoula.com/clark-fork-river-restoration-access-project>.

Media Note: Please see attached conceptual plan and trail closure notice.



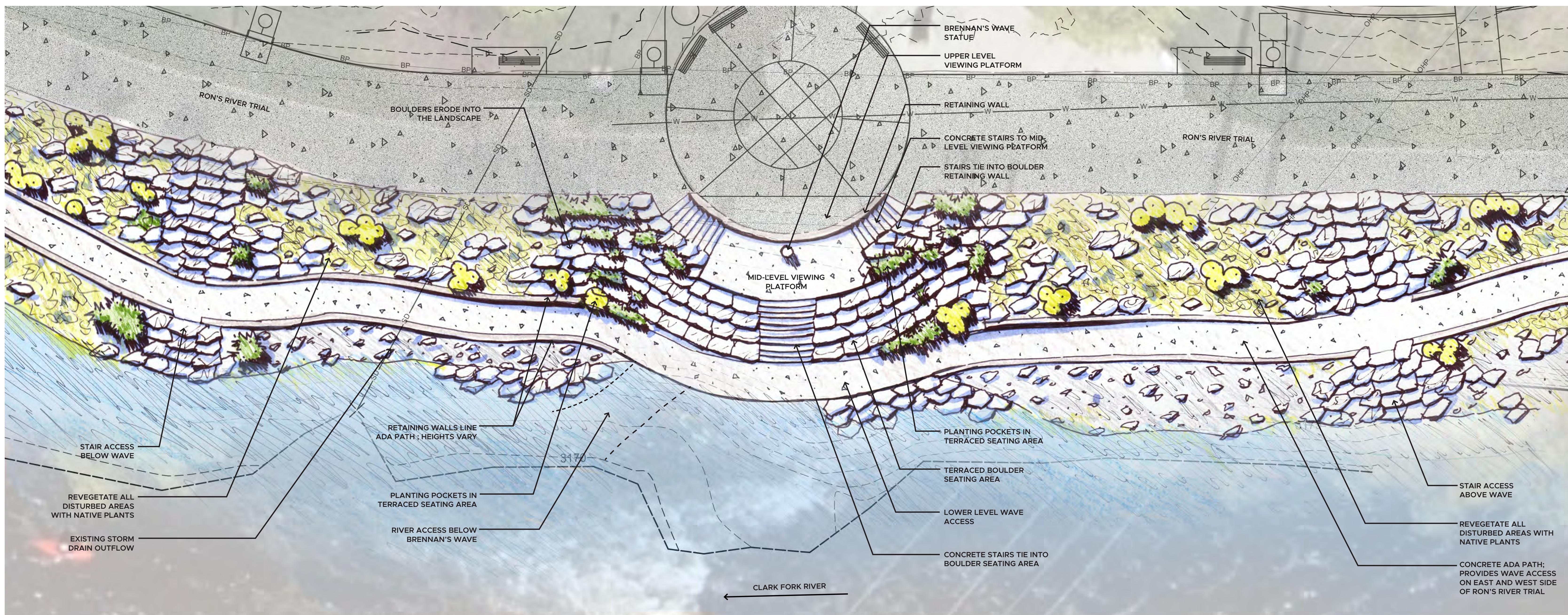
TERRACED SEATING FACES RIVERFRONT



SPECTATORS VIEW SURFING WAVE FROM TERRACED SEATING AREA IN DAYTON, OHIO



LARGE TERRACED BOULDERS LEAD FROM RIPARIAN ZONE INTO RIVER



CARAS PARK RIVER ACCESS & RESTORATION

Posted 9-18-24

Thank you for your patience and continued support throughout the project.

UPON COMPLETION

- Improved River Access and River Bank Restoration that balances river recreation with river ecosystem health and restoration.
- Accessible route to the bottom of river bank.
- Brennan's Wave viewing area.
- Improved river access for recreation opportunities.

Questions?



Contact us!

SCAN QR CODE TO SUBMIT QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

WHAT TO EXPECT

- September 23, 2024 construction work to begin.
- Ron's River Trail closure through project duration.
- Closure of parking lot for construction and equipment staging.
- Increased truck traffic.
- River bank closure within the project limits.
- Ron's River Trail to be open on or before January 1, 2025.
- Site restoration spring of 2025.

**TRAIL CLOSURE
STARTING 9-23-24**

PROJECT MANAGER

Nathan McLeod

Associate Director - Planning, Design, Projects

Office: 406-552-6261



artistic rendering

