



CHRIS ABELE, MILWAUKEE COUNTY EXECUTIVE  
JOHN DARGLE, JR., DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE

Date: August 28, 2017  
To: Jason Haas, Chair, Parks, Energy and Environment Committee  
From: John Dargle, Jr., CPRP, Director, Milwaukee County Parks  
Subject: **Milwaukee River Greenway - Pleasant Valley Park Trail  
(INFORMATION)**

**ISSUE**

Informational report on the Pleasant Valley Park Trail.

**BACKGROUND**

Pleasant Valley Park was once one of Milwaukee's most popular beer gardens. A place that was visited by thousands of people and was host to restaurants, band shell, steamboat docks, and extravagant landscaping. Overtime, the site has reverted into a natural area. The informal hiking trail network within Pleasant Valley Park has led to park user conflicts and potential threats/degradation to sensitive natural areas within the park.

Multiple factors have led to this including unsustainable social trail construction, unauthorized use, and unapproved vegetation management. In accordance with the Milwaukee River Greenway Master Plan, Parks objective in this area is to provide sustainable public access while protecting sensitive natural areas and/or features within the site. In order to meet this objective, standard procedures for designating and designing new trails must be undertaken to include a public process of review and feedback.

The main trail within Pleasant Valley, that runs parallel to the Milwaukee River, has shown clear signs of instability. Trail widening from the unsustainable design has led to widespread vegetation loss and degradation. The lack of access into the park has created extensive social trails that further impact the surrounding ecosystem. The absence of an official designation has made rule enforcement difficult and conflict between users has increased. A shortage of routine maintenance has created safety concerns for daily users. With a plan in place that follows the vision of the Greenway master plan, and adheres to the guidelines of the River Revitalization agreement we can successfully begin re-designing and restoring this trail system. The designation of



this trail will not only restore the natural area, but also provide the access, safety and recreational opportunities the constituents of our county deserve.

**RECOMMENDATION**

No action requested. Informational item unless further action required.

Prepared by: Gage Brogan, Trails Coordinator

**Approved by:**

  
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John Dargle, Jr., CPRP, Director

**Attachments:**

- Attachment 1 – Greenway Aerial Map
- Attachment 2 – Supplemental Data

**Copy:**

- Chris Abele, County Executive
- Raisa Koltun, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
- Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chairman, County Board of Supervisors
- Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board of Supervisors
- Marcelia Nicholson, Vice-Chair, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee
- Willie Johnson, Jr., Supervisory district 13
- Allyson Smith, Committee Coordinator, Office of the County Clerk
- Jessica Janz-McKnight, Research & Policy Analyst, Office of the Comptroller