



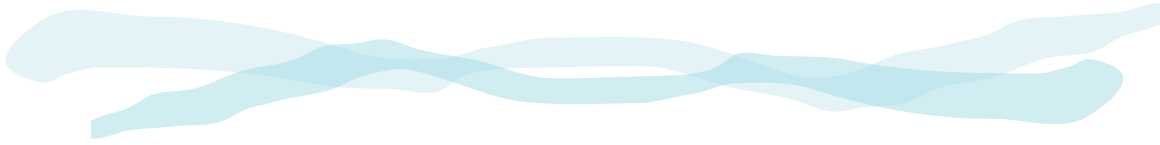
# Currently

GREAT RIVER PASSAGE CONSERVANCY



2024 Annual Report

# Flowing Together



Dear Great River Passage Conservancy Supporter,

As we reflect on the past year at the Great River Passage Conservancy, we are inspired by the progress we've made in bringing Saint Paul's riverfront to life. In 2024, we encouraged people to explore the river through new events, deepened our partnerships with community leaders, and advanced transformational projects that will connect more people to the Mississippi River in meaningful ways.

This spring we are building on that momentum. The River Learning Center is moving closer to reality, with a visionary design team shaping its future. The Downtown Riverwalk is taking important first steps, transforming forgotten spaces into welcoming connections between downtown and the riverfront. And in the East Side River District, we are making strides in ecological restoration, working with partners to revitalize natural areas and improve access.

None of this would be possible without the supporters who share our vision for a city more deeply connected to its river. Your partnership fuels this work, and we are profoundly grateful.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

With the river,



**Jodi Massey** | Interim Executive Director  
Great River Passage Conservancy



**Peter Myers** | Board Chair  
Great River Passage Conservancy  
Owner, Myers Communication Group

# RIVER LEARNING CENTER

A major milestone in bringing the River Learning Center to life was the selection of architecture firm VJAA and landscape architects TEN x TEN to lead the next phase of design. These local firms have national expertise in riverfront projects and are deeply committed to environmental stewardship, making them ideal partners.

Joining them is Full Circle Indigenous Planning + Design, which will continue to facilitate engagement with Native American tribal leaders and organizations, ensuring Indigenous perspectives remain central to the project's development.

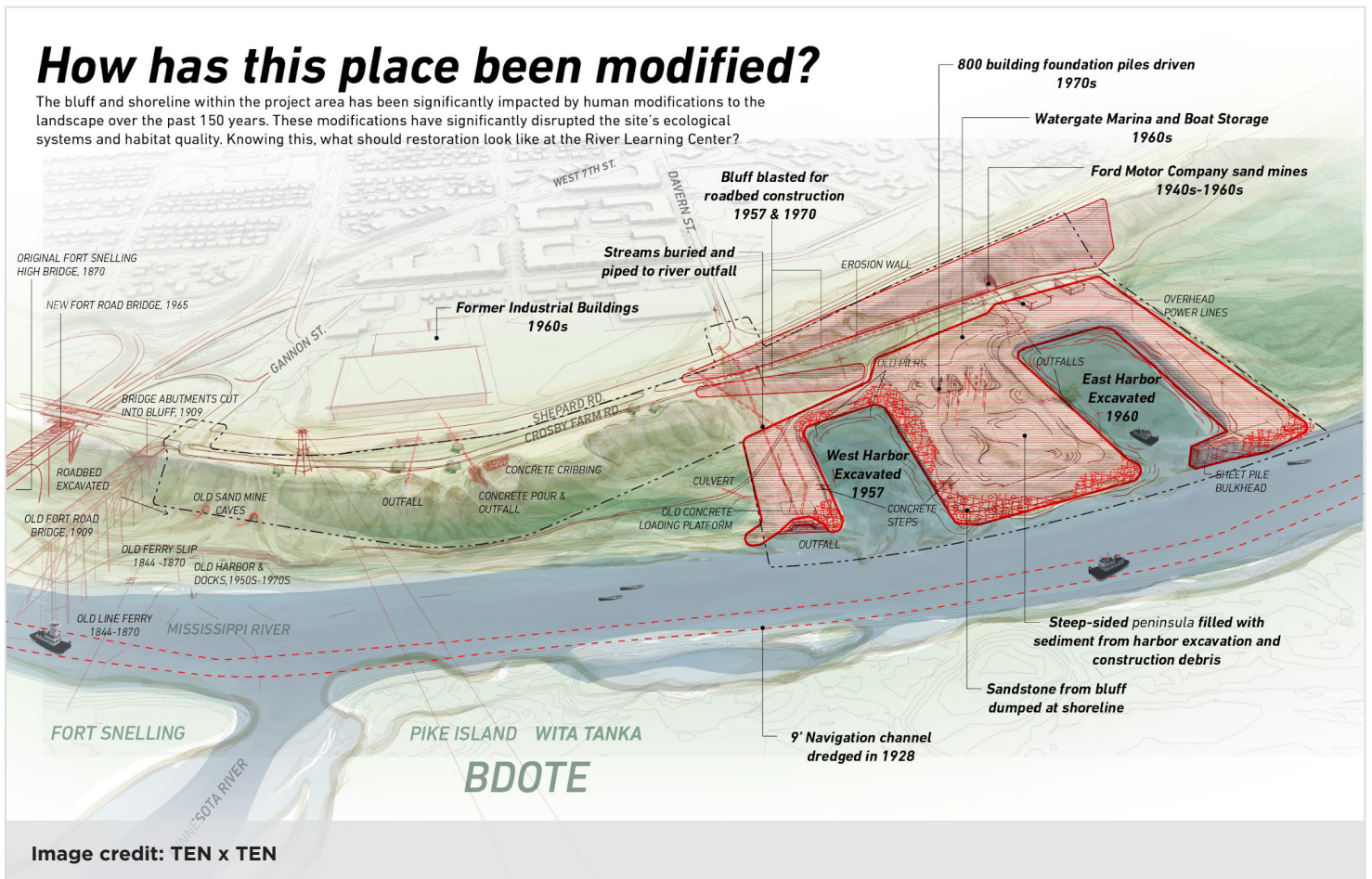
Together, this team will refine the concept plan, integrate community input, and advance the design toward final construction documents by December 2025, bringing us one big step closer to creating a dynamic new gateway to the Mississippi River. Meanwhile, we are piloting events to activate the site and explore future programming opportunities.

Our Winter Play Day drew over 400 attendees in January, and partner-led programs like Park After Dark, History Cruises, and Mystery on the Mississippi have helped us collaborate with future River Learning Center partners to test a range of program types. These efforts not only activate the site but prepare us to work well together before the Center opens.



**The design team has been assessing how to best remediate, restore, immerse, and thoughtfully integrate our work within this sensitive and amazing river site. Because the Bdote is the traditional and ancestral homeland of the Dakota people, this step in the process continues to expand our collaborations with the Indigenous partners to ensure their views and practices are woven into the project.**

-Jennifer Yoos, VJAA



# RIVER BALCONY / DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONT



Photo credit: Peter Myers

We are leading the effort to unite downtown partners under the Saint Paul Riverfront vision, aligning projects like the River Balcony and RiversEdge to guide development, funding, and programming. A new website, [saintpaulriverfront.com](http://saintpaulriverfront.com), launched as a hub for exploring the projects transforming the riverfront. Working in partnership with the City of Saint Paul, Ramsey County, and downtown stakeholders like the Science Museum of Minnesota, MN Wild, and Downtown Alliance, we are advancing a cohesive vision for the downtown riverfront.

One of the key steps is completing the Downtown Riverwalk, a pedestrian loop connecting downtown Saint Paul to the Mississippi Riverfront. The two-mile loop will feature interpretive locations focusing on a range of subjects, including cultural history, geology, river commerce, and ecology.

A central feature of the Riverwalk will be a reimagining of the railroad underpasses at Sibley and Jackson streets. Today, these passageways are dark, uninviting, and often perceived as unsafe, deterring pedestrians and cyclists from accessing the riverfront. To turn the underpasses into vibrant, welcoming gateways to the Mississippi River, we are transforming these spaces through public art installations.

Fundraising efforts in 2024 will allow the Riverwalk to be implemented in 2025, with the underpass improvements expected to be completed in 2026.

As these larger-scale and longer-term projects progress, we aim to bring people to the river along the way. Last summer, we hosted events like Patio Thursdays, History Walking Tours, and JazzClectic on the River.

# EAST SIDE RIVER DISTRICT



Restoration and community activation efforts continue across this 1,000-acre district, particularly at Pig's Eye Regional Park. In partnership with the city and University of Minnesota scientists, we are planning bioremediation projects to explore how plants can accelerate cleanup and restore a healthy landscape. We launched this initiative with a November webinar that introduced the public to these efforts and previewed upcoming ecological experiments.

This spring, we will begin experiments, including two demonstrations of a biochar filtration system. Community events are being planned for this fall to share progress and engage the public in the restoration efforts.

We continue to collaborate with partners like the DNR, Army Corps, Wakanj Tipi Awanyanjapi,

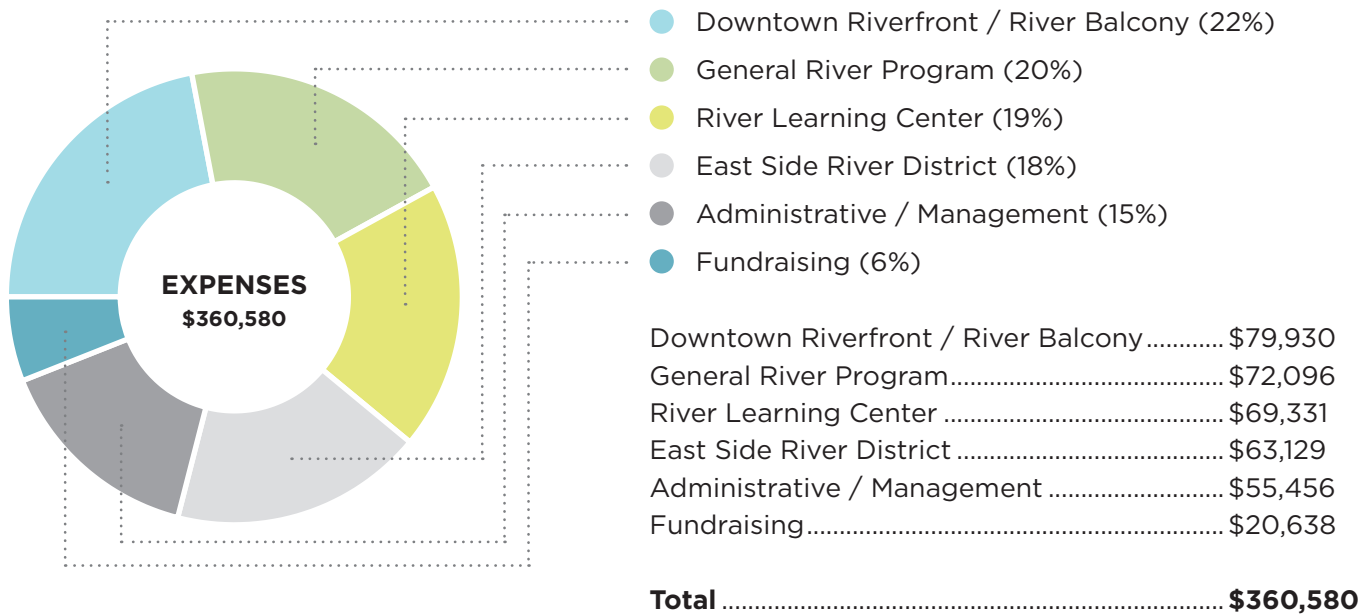
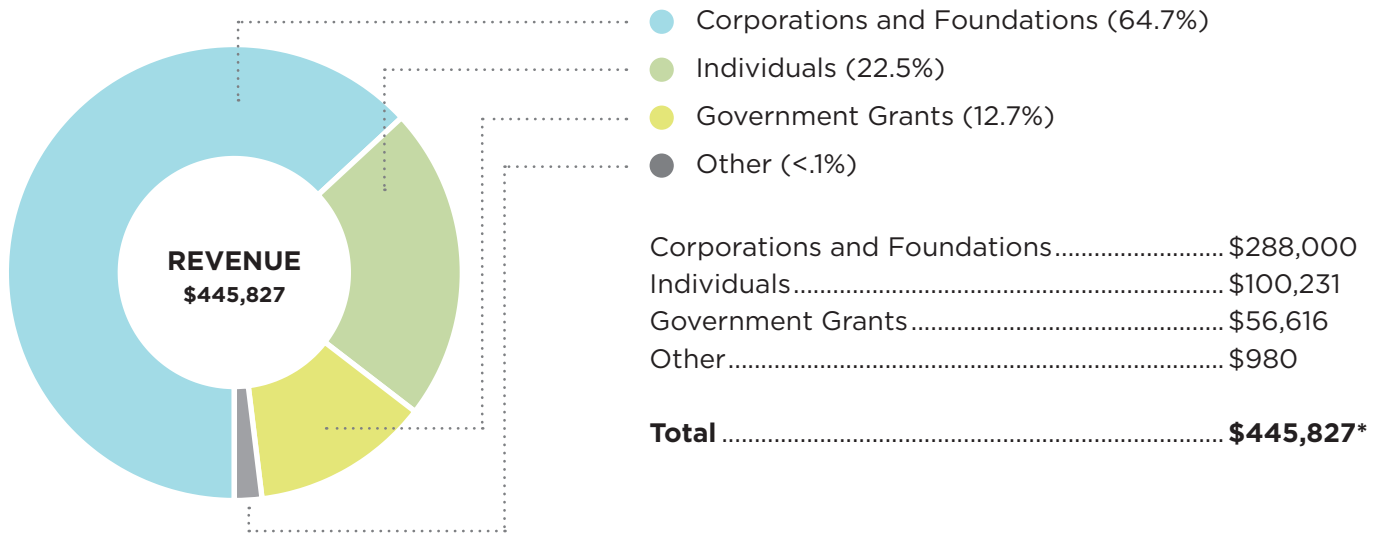
Urban Roots, and Friends of Pigs Eye, while also working closely with the Pig's Eye Dump Task Force, an MPCA-led multi-agency task force charged with developing a plan to clean up and restore Pig's Eye Dump. Their cleanup and restoration plan will be completed in February 2026, with "future public use" being the most important factor in the state's decision to fully remediate the site.



**Our research at Pig's Eye gives us the opportunity to highlight current hotspots of pollution concern at the site, while also exploring methods to reduce the effects of these toxins on wildlife.**

**-Emilie Snell-Rood, Professor & Associate Head, Department of Ecology, Evolution & Behavior, University of Minnesota**

# 2024 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



## STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES

Total Current Assets.....\$301,584  
Total Current Liabilities.....\$20,127

Total Equity ..... \$281,457

**TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY ..... \$301,584**

## NET ASSETS

Without Donor Restriction.....\$143,457  
With Donor Restrictions.....\$138,000

# 2024 DONOR LIST

We are grateful to the individuals and organizations listed below who are supporting the transformation of Saint Paul's relationship to our 17 miles of Mississippi River.

## CONTRIBUTIONS \$25,000+

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Flint Hills Resources  
Hardenbergh Foundation  
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Knight Foundation Fund of the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation  
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# GREAT RIVER PASSAGE CONSERVANCY

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Great River Passage Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent of the law.

## ABOUT THE GREAT RIVER PASSAGE CONSERVANCY

The **Great River Passage Conservancy** was founded in late 2018 to rally philanthropic support for the Great River Passage Initiative's river-focused projects designed to build economic vitality along Saint Paul's stretch of the Mississippi River. All on Dakota homeland, these three projects—the River Learning Center and National Park Service Headquarters, River Balcony, and East Side River District—respond to the enduring qualities of the Mississippi River that link it to Saint Paul and the wider region's historical, cultural, environmental, and economic well-being.

With Saint Paul's 17 miles of river, 26 miles of river edge, and 3,500 acres of publicly owned land, we have a unique opportunity to become the River Capital and unite our region's two greatest assets: its people and one of the three great rivers of the world, the Mississippi.

By advancing major projects along the Mississippi River that allow all people to experience the river in new and equitable ways, the Great River Passage Conservancy fosters environmental stewardship, community health, and economic development.

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