

**46, MISSOURI-MADISON RIVER FUND RECREATION PROJECT
FY2027 GRANT APPLICATION FORM**

Project Name: River Drive North Trail Repair

Reservoir or River Segment: Black Eagle County(ies) Cascade

Site Name (or project location): River's Edge Trail

Applicant Name: Arthur Smovir

Position and Agency: Trails Coordinator, City of Great Falls

Telephone: (406)-791-8984

Email: asmovir@greatfallsmt.gov

All projects are required to have a Project Sponsor to be considered for funding by the River Fund. Project sponsors serve as active members of Missouri-Madison Regional Working Groups and will consult with applicants on projects. Sponsorship denotes that the proposed project meets the basic criteria for consideration (below). A project that does not meet the basic criteria or does not have a project sponsor will not be scored by the Regional Working Group.

Project Sponsor Name: Kevin Vining

Position and Agency: Parks Manager, City of Great Falls

Telephone: (406)-791-8982

Email: kvining@greatfallsmt.gov

The Basic Project Criteria below must be met for a project to be considered for funding:

1. The project is consistent with the FERC Project 2188 License.
2. The project occurs in the Missouri-Madison Project Area.
3. The project must be consistent with or support management plans in the Project Area
4. The project provides a public recreation benefit.

Refer to the Grant Application Instructions for further clarification on these criteria.

Awarded River Fund grant funds or NorthWestern Energy matching funds may be used for the purchase of materials, supplies, and equipment, or to pay contractor services or other non-agency project components. Project funds may not be used to pay agency or applicant overhead expenses, such as agency staffing costs for design and engineering, project management, or administrative expenses. Funds may be used to pay costs for contracted design and engineering, as appropriate. Accounting of project expenses must be included in status reports provided for the annual River Fund Board meeting.

Requests for review of draft applications must be submitted two weeks prior to the submission deadline.

**MISSOURI-MADISON RIVER FUND RECREATION PROJECT
FY2027 GRANT APPLICATION FORM**

Project Cost Breakdown and Financial Request:

Complete the financial section below by providing total project cost (to the nearest dollar), contributions by applicant and cooperators, request for NorthWestern Energy match of agency funds (see detailed instructions), and River Fund Grant request. Document in-kind contributions by public agencies for determination of NorthWestern Energy match request. A description of funding sources and in-kind contributions should be included in the Project Description.

	<u>Nearest Whole Dollar</u>	
Total project cost:	51,890	
Applicant Contributions – cash	5,000	
Applicant Contributions – value of in-kind:	3,000	
Other Contributions – Please list by source:		
River’s Edge Trail Foundation	1,000	
		Percentage of Total Project Cost:
Total Applicant and Other Contributions:	9,000	17%
NorthWestern Energy Match Request:	8,000	15%
River Fund Grant Request:	34,890	67%
Proposed Project Implementation Period:	Spring 2027	

1. Has this project been previously submitted for funding consideration by the River Fund Board, either as a separate project or part of another project? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, please identify which years the application was submitted and, if the project was previously funded, list the amount funded by year.

2. **Project Description:** Provide a description of the proposed project. Be sure to include specific project elements that are planned, and any associated cost detail.

The City of Great Falls Park and Recreation Department is requesting funding to remove and replace approximately 230 linear feet (1,840 square feet) of deteriorated asphalt trail along the River's Edge Trail system. This section of trail was built in 2004 and has reached the end of its service life exhibiting significant cracking, surface deterioration, and structural failure that negatively impacts user safety and accessibility.

The existing trail will be completely removed and reconstructed to provide a long-lasting, durable surface for pedestrians, runners, cyclists, individuals using mobility devices, and other non-motorized trail users. The new trail will be constructed to the existing dimensions of 8 feet wide with 4 inches of compacted asphalt pavement placed over a properly prepared aggregate base.

To improve the longevity and structural performance of the trail, the project will incorporate Mirafi MPG 100 paving grid fabric beneath the asphalt surface and again at a 2 inch depth. Mirafi fabric is a fiberglass-reinforced asphalt paving interlayer that provides pavement reinforcement, helps retard reflective cracking, and creates a moisture-resistant barrier when saturated with asphalt. Typically extending the life of asphalt by 30%-50%.

Project elements include:

- Removal and disposal of approximately 230 linear feet of existing asphalt trail.
- Installing a 12-inch wide 18-inch-deep trench between River Drive pavement and trail to anchor paving fabric in place
- Place two pieces of 12.5 feet wide Mirafi MPG100 paving grid fabric in trench.
- Backfill trench with crushed gravel to 95% density
- Lay lower run of fabric, tack per installation guide, and pave 2-inch of asphalt at current trail width
- Place remaining paving grid on new asphalt, tack per installation guide, and pave remaining 2-inch asphalt lift
- Restoration of disturbed shoulders and adjacent trail edges.
- Traffic control and temporary trail closure measures during construction.

The estimated project cost is \$51,890. Major project costs include \$3,000 for City staff project management and oversight, \$5,223.65 for gravel and aggregate base preparation, \$16,947.50 for Mirafi MPG100 paving grid fabric, \$18,415.25 for asphalt materials and paving, \$2,475.75 for asphalt removal and disposal, and \$3,560.00 for equipment mobilization. A 5% contingency of \$2,328.00 is included to address unforeseen project costs that may arise during construction.

Completion of this project will restore a critical segment of the River's Edge Trail, improving safety, accessibility, and reliability for thousands of residents and visitors who use the trail each year. The addition of paving grid reinforcement represents a cost-effective investment that will maximize the lifespan of the new pavement and help ensure this popular recreation corridor remains in excellent condition for decades to come.

3. **Project Phasing:** Briefly discuss whether the project could be phased over more than one year or construction season.

This project is planned for completion during a single construction season and is not well suited to a multi-year phased approach.

4. **Cultural Resource Management:** Cultural Resource Management (CRM) requirements for any activity related to this Project must be completed and documented to NorthWestern Energy as a condition of awarded River Fund grant funds or NorthWestern Energy matching funds. Grant and matching funds may not be used for any land-disturbing activity, or the modification, renovation, or removal of any buildings or structures until the CRM consultation process has been completed. Agency applicants must submit a copy of the proposed project to a designated Cultural Resource Specialist for their agency. Private parties or non-governmental organizations are encouraged to submit a copy of their proposed project to a CRM consultant they may have employed. Private parties and non-governmental organizations may also contact the NorthWestern Energy representative for further information or assistance. Applications submitted without this section completed will be held without any action until the information has been submitted.

Summarize how you will complete requirements for Cultural Resource Management.

The City of Great Falls will comply with all Cultural Resource Management (CRM) requirements prior to the commencement of any land-disturbing activities. A copy of the proposed project will be submitted to the City's designated Historic Preservation Officer/Cultural Resource Specialist for review and determination of any applicable cultural resource requirements.

The proposed project consists of the in-kind removal and replacement of an existing 230-foot section of asphalt trail within the established River's Edge Trail corridor. Work will be confined to the existing trail alignment and associated trenching necessary for the installation of the Mirafi MPG100 paving grid system. No modifications to historic buildings, structures, or previously undisturbed areas are anticipated.

Any recommendations or requirements resulting from the City's cultural resource review will be completed and documented before construction begins. Documentation of CRM compliance will be provided to NorthWestern Energy as required before grant or matching funds are used for any land-disturbing activities

5. **Scoring Criteria.** Respond to the following Scoring Criteria. Start answers after ►.

5.1 Does the project occur at a 2188 license site?

Yes

5.2 Project is for operation and maintenance of an existing recreation site. Describe if the project will meet operation and maintenance needs. Higher points awarded to projects that are higher priority and are not a recurring expense. Lower points awarded to projects that are low priority and/or have been previously funded. It is unlikely that the timeframe of River Fund would address emergency operation and maintenance needs but could support non-emergency operation and maintenance needs.

This project is a high-priority, non-emergency maintenance project that addresses the long-term operation and maintenance needs of the River's Edge Trail. The existing 230-foot section of asphalt trail has reached the end of its useful life and exhibits significant deterioration that affects user safety, ride quality, accessibility, and ongoing maintenance requirements.

Over the past several years, the City has performed routine maintenance, including crack sealing and asphalt patching, to extend the life of this trail segment. However, the pavement has deteriorated to the point where these temporary repairs are no longer effective. Patching no longer provides a durable solution, and the frequency and extent of repairs required have continued to increase. Complete reconstruction is now the most cost-effective and responsible approach to restoring the trail.

This is a one-time capital investment and is not a recurring operational expense. The project has not previously received River Fund funding and represents a proactive approach to preserving an important public recreation asset before deterioration results in more extensive and costly repairs.

Completing this project will help ensure the trail remains safe, accessible, and enjoyable while protecting the City's investment in the trail system for many years to come.

5.3 Project involves collaboration with other agencies or organizations. Identify project partners other than NorthWestern Energy or River Fund, if any, and describe their participation. Document all funding sources and all in-kind support and services to a project, because all are sources of partnerships and in-kind contributions from public agencies qualify for calculation of NorthWestern Energy matching funds. If there are no project partners, explain why.

The City of Great Falls has partnered with the River's Edge Trail Foundation, which has committed \$1,000 toward the cost of this project. This financial contribution demonstrates the Foundation's continued commitment to preserving and improving the River's Edge Trail system and serves as an important local investment in the long-term sustainability of this community asset.

Following completion of the trail reconstruction, the City will also partner with United Way of Cascade County to organize a volunteer service day focused on enhancing the newly improved trail segment. Volunteers will assist with painting recreational trail stencils on or near the new section of trail, helping create an engaging and welcoming experience for trail users while fostering community stewardship and volunteer involvement.

In addition to these partnerships, the City of Great Falls Park and Recreation Department will provide approximately \$3,000 in in-kind staff support for project management, contract administration, construction inspection, coordination with the contractor and project partners, and project closeout. These services will be provided by City staff and will not be charged to the River Fund grant or NorthWestern Energy matching funds.

In addition to these partnerships, the City of Great Falls Park and Recreation Department will provide project management, contract administration, inspection, and ongoing maintenance of the completed trail. These staff services represent significant in-kind support and demonstrate the City's long-term commitment to maintaining the River's Edge Trail for the benefit of residents and visitors.

5.4 Project provides a benefit to public recreation in the Project Area and addresses specific issues and goals of the Missouri-Madison Comprehensive Recreation Plan (CRP). Identify how the project provides a benefit to public recreation and describe how the project specifically addresses issues and goals in Chapter 2-1 of the CRP.

This project provides a significant benefit to public recreation by preserving and improving an existing segment of the River's Edge Trail, one of Great Falls' most heavily used recreational assets. The River's Edge Trail provides year-round opportunities for walking, running, bicycling, wildlife viewing, and other outdoor recreation activities for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities. Reconstructing this deteriorated section of trail will improve user safety, accessibility, and overall trail quality while ensuring continued access to this important recreation corridor.

The project directly supports the goals identified in Chapter 2-1 of the Missouri-Madison Comprehensive Recreation Plan, including:

“To provide safe and well-managed recreation sites and dispersed use areas that provide enjoyable user experiences across a spectrum of opportunities and seasons.”

The replacement of this deteriorated trail segment will provide a smoother, more reliable, and safer surface for a wide variety of users, including pedestrians, runners, cyclists, and individuals using mobility devices. Improving this existing trail segment will enhance the overall user experience and help ensure the River's Edge Trail remains a high-quality recreation resource throughout the year.

“Continue to improve and expand recreation opportunities that offer universal accessibility.”

While this project does not expand the footprint of the River's Edge Trail, it improves an existing recreation opportunity by restoring a failing section of accessible trail infrastructure. The new asphalt surface will provide a more consistent and accessible travel route for users of varying ages and abilities, helping maintain the trail as an inclusive community recreation resource.

“To maintain or proactively increase public safety for recreationists in the Project Area.”

The existing pavement has deteriorated beyond the point where routine maintenance, including crack sealing and patching, is an effective long-term solution. Reconstructing the trail will eliminate surface failures and provide a safer, more predictable travel surface for recreationists. The installation of Mirafi MPG100 paving grid reinforcement will also extend the life of the new pavement, reducing future deterioration and helping proactively maintain a safe recreation facility.

This project represents a proactive investment in an existing public recreation asset. By replacing failing infrastructure before more extensive repairs are required, the City of Great Falls will continue to provide a safe, accessible, and enjoyable trail experience while maximizing the long-term value of public and grant funding.

5.5 Project responds to a clearly identified need. Describe and document the need for this project and how the project would address that need. Cite specific sources, as possible, to establish need and support the project. Discuss consequences if the funding request is unsuccessful. For a new construction or acquisition project, identify how post-project, long-term costs (such as site maintenance and management) will be provided.

This project responds to a clearly identified need to replace a failing section of the River's Edge Trail that has reached the end of its useful service life. The existing 230-foot asphalt trail segment exhibits extensive cracking, surface deterioration, and structural failure that cannot be effectively addressed

through routine maintenance. Over the past several years, the City of Great Falls has performed crack sealing and asphalt patching to extend the life of the trail; however, these temporary repairs are no longer effective, and the pavement continues to deteriorate.

The need for this project has been identified through routine inspections conducted by the City of Great Falls Park and Recreation Department, ongoing maintenance activities, and observations from staff responsible for maintaining the River's Edge Trail system. The deteriorated pavement creates a less safe and less accessible surface for pedestrians, runners, cyclists, families with strollers, and individuals using wheelchairs or other mobility devices.

The proposed project will address this need by removing the failed pavement and reconstructing the trail with a reinforced asphalt section using Mirafi MPG100 paving grid fabric. This design will provide a stronger, longer-lasting pavement structure that reduces reflective cracking, improves ride quality, enhances accessibility, and lowers future maintenance costs.

If this funding request is unsuccessful, the City will be forced to continue relying on temporary patching and crack sealing despite those methods no longer providing an effective long-term solution. The trail surface will continue to deteriorate, increasing maintenance costs, reducing user safety and accessibility, and ultimately leading to more extensive and expensive reconstruction in the future. Delaying the project also increases the likelihood of additional pavement failures and greater disruption to the public when reconstruction eventually becomes unavoidable.

Following completion, the City of Great Falls Park and Recreation Department will assume full responsibility for the long-term operation and maintenance of the improved trail segment. The reconstructed trail will become part of the City's existing trail maintenance program, which includes regular inspections, sweeping, vegetation management, snow removal, and preventative pavement maintenance. The incorporation of Mirafi MPG100 paving grid reinforcement is expected to extend the pavement's service life and reduce future maintenance needs, providing a more cost-effective public investment over the life of the trail.

5.6 Project design options have been considered, estimated, and a preferred design selected. Well-designed projects reduce occurrences of budgetary overages, design changes, and additional complications. Discuss the current design phase for this project, demonstrate that the project has been well vetted, and include cost estimates.

The City of Great Falls has thoroughly evaluated this project and selected a design that provides the greatest long-term value while minimizing future maintenance costs. During project planning, City staff evaluated several rehabilitation options, including continued crack sealing and patching, asphalt overlays, and full-depth reconstruction. Based on the extent of pavement deterioration, continued maintenance and overlay options were determined to be inadequate because they would not address the underlying pavement failure and would likely result in continued reflective cracking and premature surface deterioration.

The preferred design consists of full removal of the existing asphalt pavement, installation of a reinforced pavement section utilizing the Mirafi MPG100 paving grid system, and placement of a new 4-inch asphalt surface in two 2-inch lifts. A reinforced edge trench will anchor the paving grid in accordance with the manufacturer's installation specifications, providing increased pavement stability and extending the service life of the trail. This approach represents the most cost-effective lifecycle solution by reducing future maintenance needs and delaying the need for future reconstruction.

The project scope has been developed by City of Great Falls Park and Recreation staff based on field evaluations, current pavement conditions, manufacturer installation requirements, and consultation with paving contractors familiar with reinforced asphalt construction. Construction quantities have been calculated, and cost estimates have been prepared using current local pricing for asphalt removal excavation, aggregate, paving grid materials, asphalt paving, traffic control, and site restoration.

The City is confident that the selected design is constructible, cost-effective, and appropriate for the existing trail conditions. Upon award of funding, the project will be competitively bid in accordance with the City's procurement requirements, ensuring the project is completed at a fair and competitive cost while meeting all required construction specifications.

5.7 Project supports or protects other resources and is consistent with or supports resource plans in the Project Area. Describe how this project will protect resource values (such as public access, water quality, fisheries, wildlife, habitats, and cultural resources) and support other resource and agency plans, including Project 2188 License plans and land use and land management plans in place in the Corridor. Management plans should provide justification for the project.

This project supports and protects important recreational and natural resources by preserving an existing segment of the River's Edge Trail without expanding its footprint or creating new impacts to surrounding habitats. The project consists of an in-kind replacement of a deteriorated trail segment within the existing trail corridor, minimizing disturbance to adjacent vegetation, wildlife habitat, and cultural resources.

Maintaining this trail segment preserves safe public access to the Missouri River corridor and the recreational opportunities it provides. The River's Edge Trail is a key component of Great Falls' non-motorized transportation and recreation network, providing access to parks, open spaces, scenic viewpoints, and the Missouri River. Replacing the failing pavement will ensure that residents and visitors can continue to safely enjoy these public resources.

The project also protects natural resources by reconstructing the trail before further pavement failure occurs. Replacing the deteriorated surface with a reinforced asphalt section utilizing Mirafi MPG100 paving grid fabric will improve the long-term structural integrity of the trail, reducing future pavement failures and minimizing the need for repeated maintenance activities that can disturb adjacent soils and vegetation. Because the work is confined to the existing trail alignment, no new recreation corridors or previously undisturbed lands will be impacted.

Construction will incorporate appropriate erosion and sediment control measures and temporary traffic control to protect nearby resources during construction. Any required Cultural Resource Management review will be completed prior to the start of land-disturbing activities in accordance with River Fund and NorthWestern Energy requirements.

This project is consistent with the City of Great Falls' ongoing management of the River's Edge Trail system by emphasizing the preservation and maintenance of existing recreation infrastructure. It also supports the goals of the Missouri-Madison Comprehensive Recreation Plan by maintaining safe, accessible, and well-managed recreation facilities while protecting public access to the Missouri River corridor for current and future generations.

6. Insert map(s) showing the location of the proposed project, drawings and design work related to the project, and a reasonable number of photos (as available) here.



