Summary of Downtown Des Moines Dam Debate

April 26th, 2016

The following are the responses we heard from participants in the Dam Debate cohosted by the Register and the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Of the following, which best describes you?

- I am a Des Moines resident: 61%
- I am an active user of the rivers: 26%
- I just work downtown: 4%
- I thought there was free lunch: 2%
- None of the above, just interested in the future of Des Moines: 7%

If I am downtown and near the rivers, I am typically:

- I currently do not visit the river areas: 2%
- Just driving by: 4%
- Visiting an entertainment venue: 15%
- Taking a lunch break: 1%
- Using the paved trails: 67%
- Bird watching: 5%
- Fishing: 6%
Of the following, I hope the Greater Des Moines Water Trails and Greenways Master Plan:

- Only maintains what is existing now: 2%
- Promotes more development: 5%
- Creates more fish and wildlife habitat: 17%
- Increases entertainment options: 4%
- Increases recreational opportunities: 72%

Along the Women of Achievement Bridge river segment, I would most like to see:

- No changes to what is there now: 2%
- Formalized park elements, historic homage: 23%
- Combination of both native materials and mown grass: 48%
- Native grasses and other plants along river: 24%
- Lawn space at water's edge: 3%
When visiting the Women of Achievement Bridge river segment, I would most enjoy

- No changes, I would not visit this segment: 1%
- Additional venues on the river: 14%
- Increased fishing and wildlife viewing opportunities along the river corridor: 7%
- Unprogrammed recreation space and natural materials: 58%
- Active parks (places for kids to play, skate boarding park, etc.): 20%

On the Women of Achievement Bridge river segment, I would most like to see:

- No changes; keep dam in place: 1%
- Naturalized system of riffles and pools: 14%
- Split channel with combination of above: 67%
- Kayak/canoe/tube friendly with wide channel drops: 10%
- Whitewater course with narrow channel drops: 9%
When visiting the Women of Achievement Bridge river segment, I would most like to:

- No changes, I would not visit the segment: 1%
- Take a water taxi: 2%
- Just watch the river, relax, enjoy the view: 23%
- Attend festivals/events/restaurants: 21%
- Learn about the history of Des Moines and its rivers: 2%
- Rent canoe/kayak/tubes: 50%
- Birdwatch: 2%
- Fish: 1%

For the Two Rivers District segment, I would most like to see:

- No changes to what is there now: 0%
- Combination of both native materials and mown grass with river access: 24%
- Native grasses and other plants along river: 24%
- Modification to levees to promote river access (fishing piers, places to play, places to enjoy the...): 51%
- Lawn space at water's edge: 1%
Within the Two Rivers District segment, I would like to be able to:

- No changes, I would not visit this segment (0%)
- Take advantage of unprogrammed public spaces and parks on the river (26%)
- Attend activities along the river, visit restaurants or bars (27%)
- Enjoy additional opportunities for fishing and wildlife watching (12%)
- Have ability to use a motor boat launch (9%)
- Directly access the water through plazas and trail system (27%)

At the Two Rivers District segment, I would most like to see:

- No changes; keep dam in place (2%)
- No drops to allow motor boats into downtown from south (no pool of water maintained) (15%)
- Both of the above -- Split channel with wide and focused drops (pool of water maintained) (49%)
- Wide drops that are kayak/canoe/tube friendly (pool of water maintained) (20%)
- Focused drops to create whitewater opportunities (pool of water maintained) (14%)
When visiting the Two Rivers District segment, I would most like to:

- I would not visit this segment: 0%
- Just watch the river and relax: 8%
- Attend festivals/events/restaurants along the river: 21%
- Participate in whitewater activities: 9%
- Motor boat to downtown destinations: 11%
- Canoe/kayak/tube down the river: 44%
- Birdwatch: 5%
- Fish: 2%

Percent of Participants
Prompt: In a few words, what is your biggest concern about this effort ...
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We need opportunities</td>
<td>I want a great surf wave</td>
<td>Safety, water quality, water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upstream</td>
<td>please</td>
<td>depths, hazards added</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It won't happen soon</td>
<td>Water quality and habitat</td>
<td>Cooperated use up river</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enough!!!</td>
<td>River needs more recreation!</td>
<td>Pipe dream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choices too restrictive</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Failure to see the value of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitewater opportunities</td>
<td>Lawyers</td>
<td>the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Upstream water levels</td>
<td>Flood proof facilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prompt: In a few words, what are you most excited about with this effort ...

Paddling
Whitewater!
Whitewater!!!!!!!
Whitewater park
Surfing waves
Dog playing opportunities
More access to rivers!
Whitewater
Reconnecting the rivers
Swimming
Downtown FUN
Recreate!
Kayak access
Family friendly
Canoe in town
Access!
Public space
White water and habitat
Being able to use the river more
Habitat
Business growth
Development
Natural connections for an urban population
Not excited at all
Increased engagement with the area
Touching water
That it will happen!
Usage of the river
Using river downtown
Attracting visitors
Public access to water
Increased recreation
Water access downtown
RIVER ACCESS

Opening rivers and kayaking downtown
Bringing people to the river.
Touching the water
Access
River vitality
Attention for rivers
dam removal
Development
Lunch on the river
Using river as a resource
Engaging the river
DAMDEBATE Downtown
Development
White water!
Integration into DM life
Increased recreational opportunities
Hosting national events
Tubing during lunch
Dams might be gone
Kayaking
Public planning
Integration
Water access
Transformation
Access/use of rivers
Getting Iowans in the river
No more Center Street dam
Bringing multiple generations together
Whitewater
It'll make DSM cool!
Connecting with our best natural asset
Recreational opportunities
Wildlife
Economic development

Boating
To being river into downtown culture
Touring the river
Healthier populace
Whitewater variable flow
Reinvent downtown again!
Increasing day and night outing opportunities
Interacting with the rivers
A new dynamic in city
Vibrant city
More people enjoying river
Access to the river
Recreation and access
Expanded opportunity for power boats in downtown DSM
Stand up paddle boarding
Getting better access to river
Cleaner water mindset
Revitalize downtown
Fun on river
Recreation! Conservation!
Ecotourism!
Opening river to more people! Back to nature.
Power boating opportunities
The value it brings to the city
Enhancing river 4 public use
A live river
power boat path unending
Better experiences on the river
Becoming Indianapolis!
Increased awareness of rivers.
Actually using the river in this area
Saving upstream
Seeing increased activity downtown
Higher property values downtown
Paddling accessibility
Swimming, access to river
Celebrating our natural resource
Whitewater
More river activities
powerboat access
Expanded entertainment district.
Where are the kayakers now??
Activating our rivers
Beautification
River water quality advocacy
Power boating downtown
Active outdoor activities downtown
Opportunity to expose citizens to rivers in an environmentally beneficial way
Increase River activity for all!!
Losing the ditch
Rivers no longer ignored
That the river becomes central to recreation in downtown
Multiple benefits to diverse stakeholders
Improving the health of our rivers and our connection to our river roots
Habitat
River + Beer = Fun

Access and recreation opportunities
I would like to meet all of the whitewater folks!
Downtown growth opportunities

10