

Community is encouraged to attend Minnesota Design Team visit

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The Pilot-Independent

Last Updated: Tuesday, June 07th, 2005 03:15:52 PM

Architects, landscapers, urban designers and planners, all volunteers, arrive in Walker Thursday to spend the next two days in almost-constant motion in and around Walker.

The Minnesota Design Team (MDT) will hear from and talk with individual citizens, organizations, government officials and others, tour the city and surrounding areas, and try to learn all they can about the community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, both now and in the future.

Armed with that information and input, and using their professional skills and experience, they will spend most of Saturday developing concepts for what the greater Walker community could become; and how those goals could be accomplished.

Friday morning MDT will hear a series of informational reports by various community groups and local governments. Then MDT members will divide up for lunch at several locations with groups of invited citizens. After lunch, the afternoon is filled with tours of the area on foot, by bus and by boat.

Friday night is "The Great Community Get-Together," starting at 5:30 p.m. at Moondance Fairgrounds Saloon east of the Y. The entire community is invited to a free fish fry supper. After the fish fry, around 7 p.m., the design team will explain what they do and what they hope to accomplish for this community.

The audience will have a chance to submit their ideas, questions, concerns and hopes for this community to MDT in a confidential format. After learning as much as they can about the Walker area and its residents, MDT volunteers will spend all day Saturday in work sessions to compile, analyze and discuss that information.

The design team's proposals will be announced at an all-community gathering Saturday night at WHA Auditorium. The presentation starts at 7 p.m., with the question-and-answer period at 8:30 p.m. in the Commons area.

In the coming weeks and months, Walker Area Partners, working with the Healthy Communities Partnership (HCP), will consider those proposals, as they work to create a long-range vision and plan for the community.