



NEWS ADVISORY

July 9, 2019

For immediate release

Ribbon-cutting Set to Celebrate MRL Park July 11

The City of Missoula invites the public and news reporters to a grand opening and ribbon-cutting for the new Montana Rail Link Park in the Franklin to the Fort and Southgate Triangle neighborhoods on Thursday, July 11, at lunchtime. Refreshments begin at 12:15 p.m. and the ceremony at 12:30 p.m. Speakers will include:

Mayor John Engen

Stacy Posey, President, Montana Rail Link

Karl Englund, Chair, Missoula Redevelopment Agency Board

Andrea Dahl, Franklin to the Fort Neighborhood Council Leadership Team Co-Chair

John O'Connor, Parks and Recreation Board

Jean Zosel, Executive Director, Garden City Harvest

The new 4.5-acre park features a playground, a picnic shelter, community garden, multi-use sports court, lawn volleyball court, dog park and open play spaces. The park's design is the result of an extensive collaborative community process. Neighbors ranked open green space, a dog park, a playground and a community garden among the most important elements they wanted in a new park. A design team led by DHM Design Landscape Architects developed the master plan into a detailed park plan. The dog park opened late last fall and has been a huge draw for the neighbors, human and canine. The community garden, managed by Garden City Harvest, opened this spring in time for planting.

The railroad-themed park features authentic railroad features donated by MRL, including steel wheels sets and railroad lights and signals. On the east side of the park is the Golden Spike

section of the Bitterroot Trail, marked with a bronze medallion and recalling the spikes used to commemorate the completion of a length of railway.

The park is in the middle of neighborhoods underserved by parks and was made possible by the City's purchase of the land from Montana Rail Link in 2017 for a price substantially below market value using Tax Increment Funds and Open Space Bond funds. Design and construction costs of approximately \$1.7 million were financed by Tax Increment Funds. The park is a collaborative project between the Missoula Redevelopment Agency and Missoula Parks and Recreation.

Parking for the event will be near the Camp Mak-a-Dream offices at 2110 S. Johnson St.

Contacts for interviews:

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