

COMMUNITY

Community initiative to revitalize Demetral Park Track and Field



This rendering shows the proposed Demetral Park field.

By Nathan Default
Eastside Community Track & Field Project

A coalition of community members, families, athletes and local partners has launched the Eastside Community Track & Field Project — a grassroots initiative to transform the aging track at Demetral Park into a modern, safe, high-quality training venue for Madison East High School athletes and Madison residents. The project aims to provide East’s track and field and cross-country teams with a dependable, walkable place to train, as well as a welcoming resource for walkers, runners, families, youth sports and the broader community. “A modern track at East High would transform how our athletes see themselves and their team,” said Jessa Victor,

head girls cross country coach at East. “It shows them that their community believes in their potential — and that belief builds confidence every time they step on the line. This project isn’t just about upgrading a surface; it’s about uplifting our athletes and instilling pride that carries into everything they do.” The effort is powered by local residents, businesses and nonprofit partners in collaboration with the Madison Public Schools Foundation. The campaign is raising funds to design and construct an upgraded, durable, accessible facility that serves all ages and abilities, with dedicated practice times for East athletes and open access for neighborhood use. Your support makes a difference. Learn more and support the project at: eastsidecommunitytrack.com/



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The River Food Pantry prioritizes sustainability in new building



The River Food Pantry’s new building on Packers Avenue includes a 112kW solar array installed on the roof area above the dining room.

By Becca Bolton
The River Food Pantry

As construction wraps up on The River Food Pantry’s new facility at 3301 Packers Ave., you might catch the glint of sunlight reflecting from 207 solar panels on the building’s southern roof that will provide clean, renewable energy for the facility. While the solar panels are perhaps the most visible sustainability infrastructure incorporated into the new pantry, they are only one facet of the pantry’s commitment to sustainable practices. The 112kW array will provide enough power to operate the first all-electric commercial kitchen in Dane County while working in conjunction with a geothermal heat-pump HVAC system and energy efficient lighting to substantially reduce both the pantry’s environmental footprint and future operating costs. Installing electric vehicle chargers for both the pantry and public use is also in the works. Other sustainability measures include a larger processing capacity for The River’s food recovery operations, which already redirect nearly two million pounds of food and supplies from local landfills each year, and an expansion to its collaboration with Green Box Compost to compost inedible food recovery items and kitchen scraps. “Pocket gardens” hosting native plants and pollinator habitats are spread across



Members of the Sierra Club help plant native trees that their group donated to The River in September.

the site’s exterior to promote a resilient natural landscape. The site’s trees, generously donated by Dane County and Trees for Hope/The Sierra Club, are also native species. “The River strives to be a pillar of our community, and that requires embodying our community’s values and making sure that the area remains an environment where people can live, work and visit comfortably,” said Ryan Holley, The River’s grants manager. “Incorporating sustainability measures speaks to issues that many of our staff, clients, volunteers, and other stakeholders care about. At the same time, promoting ecologically responsible operations helps ensure that Madison’s Northside continues to be a healthy, scenic locale for both The River and our neighbors throughout future years.”

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