It’s a lucky community that can claim a river in its backyard. From its tidal marshes to the historic urban waterfront, the river that gave our city life is also one of our most important open spaces: a linear park at the very heart of our community.

Momentum is building for greater public access to the Petaluma River as people turn their attention to this unique natural resource and call for better opportunities to enjoy it. Unfortunately, high costs and burdensome regulatory processes have limited the development of new access sites, while aging docks and infrastructure threaten our existing and limited boating facilities.

The Floathouse Small Craft Rental Center, a unique dock-based facility in Petaluma’s Turning Basin, will quickly become an exciting fixture on the waterfront—a bright, vibrant magnet for public access to the river. Not only will it provide a much-needed downtown location to rent all kinds of boats and easily get out on the water, it will complement the community’s recreation and education resources through classes, camps, and a variety of boating promotions and events.

Quite simply, river access is a community asset. Will you join us in helping make Petaluma a world-class Rivertown?
The Petaluma Small Craft Center (PSCC)

Thousands of people all over the area have already experienced the Petaluma River thanks to the Petaluma Small Craft Center (PSCC). PSCC was founded a decade ago by river enthusiasts from boating clubs, businesses and river advocacy groups committed to building community through boating. Ten years of determined and consistent collaboration have positively impacted the community’s experience and perception of our river, building an active network committed to even more, and better, public river access.

Our summer camps have put hundreds of kids in kayaks, sailing dinghies, rowing shells and outrigger canoes, and on standup paddleboards, too. For many kids, our camps act as a gateway to membership in local clubs like Lokahi or He’iNa‘u outrigger canoe clubs, the North Bay Rowing Club or River Town Racers, the latter a racing kayak club PSCC sponsors under its nonprofit umbrella. To extend the same opportunities to underserved youth, PSCC is proud to partner with Mentor Me, the Boys & Girls Club of Marin and Petaluma, COTS and others to provide camp scholarships. We facilitate joyous community experiences on the river through Day on the River, an annual boating festival held in Petaluma’s Turning Basin in early June. The entire community is invited and encouraged to try out a cornucopia of people-powered small craft provided by our local clubs and boating businesses including Clavey PaddleSports, Petaluma SUP, Wind Toys and the Guideboat Company. Our volunteers put hundreds of people on the water in a single day, working together so that one day soon when The Floathouse comes to town, every day can be a “day on the river.”

Invest In River Access: Build The Floathouse

It’s ironic that while the Petaluma River defines Petaluma, and is our longest “park,” there is very little easy (or public) access for people-powered recreation. The Floathouse will help remedy this unmet need.

A dock-based facility situated in the northwest corner of the Turning Basin would provide an effective means of bringing small craft rentals to the community. The 120 feet of easily accessible low dock are well suited for launching and landing people-powered small craft, including kayaks and canoes, pedal boats, rowboats, standup paddle boards, sailboats and electric boats too. Of course, people with their own boats will be welcome to launch at The Floathouse or tie up at the docks while they explore the wonderful shops and restaurants of downtown Petaluma.

“A small craft rental center in downtown Petaluma could serve as a hub for not only rentals, but also lessons and the dissemination of educational materials on boating safety, ethical paddling, and the many interesting locations to visit along the Petaluma River. As importantly, the rental center would serve those who don’t own their own boat or paddle board, or who don’t have the means to store or transport a boat or board to a launch site.”

--Ann Buell, Coastal Conservancy

Your River; Your Legacy

Currently, a campaign “LAUNCHING A RIVER LEGACY” is underway to fund the construction of The Floathouse Small Craft Rental Center. Over $240,000—or nearly one quarter of the project goal of $1,000,000, has already been committed by individuals, businesses, foundations or other public agencies. The cost to construct the docks, The Floathouse office, and the restroom facilities, as well as to purchase the rental fleet is estimated at $800,000. An additional $150,000 will be set aside to help with operating expenses during the first three years of The Floathouse growing to become a sustainable enterprise. Finally, another $50,000 will be invested in the preliminary design, engineering and permitting costs of the future Community Boathouse to be located at the Riverfront project in southern Petaluma.

“The exciting project offers long awaited strategic and affordable access to our incredible Petaluma River—right on the Turning Basin! It is with my perspective as a civil engineer and construction professional that I can speak to the cost effective design of the overall project, and attractive aesthetic of the architectural features we will soon see on our river. PSCC has had the tenacity and commitment to pursue this project through myriad challenges getting us to this point. This is indeed the right project at the right time!”

--Gina M. Benedetti-Petnic, C.E., City of Petaluma Planning Commissioner
Launching a River Legacy—Be a Part of Something Special

One day soon, we’ll be gathering on the docks at The Floathouse, ready for a quick evening paddle after work, or dropping our kids off for summer camp, or taking out visiting friends for a cruise aboard an electric launch, and we’ll be asking ourselves, “Remember when Petaluma didn’t have easy river access for everyone?”

Well, the groundwork is done. The Floathouse project is shovel ready.

THIS IS WHERE WE NEED YOUR HELP.

SPREAD THE WORD
Not everyone has heard about the project yet and what it will bring to the community. So please talk it up with those you know who care about the river, recreation, boats, kids and families.

DONATE TODAY
Please consider making a serious investment in community building by making a financial donation to support the construction of The Floathouse Small Craft Rental Center.

IN-KIND GIFTS WELCOME
Donations of construction materials or labor could provide substantial cost savings. We are happy to share our plans and project estimates with you.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE
By making a planned or deferred gift to PSCC through your will, trust, or estate plan, you can launch a lasting river legacy and help us maintain our commitment to accessible programming and facilities well into the future.

YOUR NAME HERE
There will be a variety of naming and recognition opportunities available in honor or memory of our donors or those whom they choose to recognize with their gifts. Opportunities will include The Floathouse facility, office, docks, benches and restroom. There will also be boat-naming opportunities throughout the fleet of small craft as well as other equipment including life jacket, paddles and oars.

By supporting this campaign now, you can help us build The Floathouse and be open to the public in the summer of 2017.

Our Goals for 2017 & Beyond: Build The Floathouse & The Boathouse

The Floathouse: Dock-based rental center for people-powered watercraft; a beacon of boating in Petaluma’s Turning Basin

The Boathouse: Projected Build 2018
A community boathouse for everyone: Hawaiian outrigger canoeists, kayakers, rowers, SUPpers, sailors, walkers, cyclists, visitors & viewers!