



SOUTH BEND RIVERFRONT PARKS & TRAILS CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

PREPARED FOR THE CITY OF SOUTH BEND

SOUTH BEND RIVERFRONT PARK AND TRAIL CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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01 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

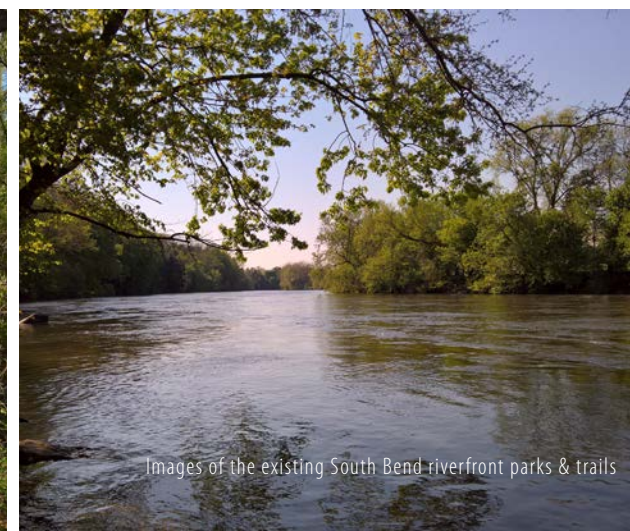
The Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework represents a unifying vision for the City of South Bend, which aligns the City's long-term strategic plans and development goals into a single document to guide the future direction of park and trail development along the St. Joseph River in South Bend. The City has a land area of about 45 square miles, with a population of about 100,000 residents. Just north of South Bend's Downtown area rests St. Mary's College and the University of Notre Dame, which serve as anchors to the City. The St. Joseph River is one of South Bend's strongest assets, spanning about 8 miles within the city limits. The City has over 70 city parks, and the untapped synergy between them and the River offer an exciting park and trail system to be enjoyed by all.

The Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework is a collection of powerful ideas that will catalyze significant change and invigorate new life in the City of South Bend. These ideas establish a flexible framework for coordinating physical change and connectivity across the City's park and trail systems. The project is reflective of the goals and objectives of a multitude of stakeholders, including residents, business owners, local university officials, city officials and public safety professionals. This document is designed as a long-range tool that can respond to unexpected future changes and opportunities. The Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework focuses on improving the connectivity between the city-wide park and trail system with stronger connections through safe non-motorized routes. This project provides particular focus on the downtown parks and trails with conceptual plans for high priority sites and recommendations for three other city parks. This project also offers recommendations on branding to strengthen the identity of the park and trail system as well as carry a common language into future phases. This document places emphasis on providing realistic, yet visionary solutions to reach the City of South Bend's future goals by building upon key drivers and guiding principles established for this report. Many of the concepts

are designed to optimize municipal resources and adjacencies. The Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework outlines parameters to strategically phase opportunities over short-term, mid-term and long-term time horizons.



Aerial of South Bend, highlighting downtown focus areas



Images of the existing South Bend riverfront parks & trails

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

VISION

The Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework (Riverfront Parks & Trails) envisions a South Bend with a robust park and trail system, highlighting the St. Joseph River as a primary destination and recreational artery for the city. This report will assist the City of South Bend to be recognized as a burgeoning city that thrives on inclusive design and a commitment to high quality recreation amenities to enhance the quality of life for city residents and visitors.

GOALS

The Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework identifies opportunities for growth and improvement for the City of South Bend, while also emphasizing an integrative approach to connectivity. This project represents a specific “point in time” view and vision for the future. The core mission of this document is to improve the connectivity within and between the existing parks and trails system, with a particular focus on the specified Downtown areas, to support and align with the current efforts initiated and completed by the City of South Bend. The Riverfront Parks & Trail Conceptual Framework will guide the City of South Bend through a strategic plan that will:

- Reinforce the trail and park system as a **network of facilities**
- Ensure **multi-functional and unique** public open space to serve current & future needs
- Embrace **ecological values** associated with the corridor
- Embrace South Bend’s **cultural diversity** in the planning process
- Reinforce **neighborhood connectivity** with the river parks
- Support **economic development** opportunities
- Establish **design standards** for the entire system
- Establish **designs for key priority locations**



Image of the St. Joseph River

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework was completed over a 10-month period that consisted of five planning phases. It began in June 2016 with the DISCOVERY Phase, which was followed by ANALYSIS, IDEA GENERATION, REFINEMENT, and DOCUMENTATION. The process provided the opportunity to develop a collective vision for the riverfront park and trail system to refine goals and to give them physical form within the report.

DISCOVERY

The planning team worked with the City of South Bend to identify goals, establish objectives, and review information related to existing conditions through site visits and existing documentation. Participatory planning proved to be an effective element for this phase in identifying the needs and demands of the residents and neighbors who frequent South Bend’s riverfront parks. This process anchored the project to reflect the comments and vision of the City’s residents and stakeholders, while integrating strong design principles and considerations to unify the entire system. With three community forums, dozens of stakeholder meetings, over 2,000 online comments and survey repsonses, and hands-on charrette workshops, the team was able to engage with residents, business owners and other constituents to understand their vision for the various sites, and the larger system as a whole. Each meeting offered a digital presentation, and information stations that allowed participants to comment, scribble, or highlight opportunities and limitations with the existing conditions and the conceptual proposals. These meetings guided the plan development process by providing iterative checkpoints, while maintaining local communication and support. The frequent opportunities to “report back” kept the project in line with the general consensus of public comments, keeping the design locally-grounded and locally-driven.

Engaging and building trust with the residents and stakeholders of South Bend was important in learning more information about the scope of the project, and the ways in which good design can positively impact the various South Bend neighborhoods. The purpose of the

community outreach strategy was to collect data and information that would better inform the design concepts and principles presented in this document.

The community meetings were great opportunities to shift the planning process from a macro-level to a micro-level in considering connectivity between South Bend’s neighborhoods and the riverfront’s parks and trails. The residents of South Bend offered strong opinions and recommendations on how they wanted the parks and trails to be improved to catalyze more outdoor and riverfront activity. Through various methods of comment collection – at the organized forums, bilingual presentations, through comment cards and via Internet – residents expressed special interest in upgrading the parks and trails around several themes:

- wayfinding and access,
- public facilities and buildings,
- connectivity between the neighborhoods and trails,
- character and identity, and
- safety and security.

These community meetings were especially important in understanding how residents use these sites. This involved process developed a robust DISCOVERY phase and the project considers these uses and inputs for the Downtown priority sites, and the larger park and trail system as a whole.

ANALYSIS

Next, the team developed graphic and written analyses of the City of South Bend, which identified critical systems and development opportunities. Using spatial and geographic data, the team produced maps that highlighted the opportunities and constraints of existing and proposed conditions within South Bend as they related to the riverfront’s parks and trails. This mapped information included existing conditions such as parcel data, roadway and



Images from Community Meetings with South Bend Residents

bike trail information, water and hydraulic systems, zoning and land use, and existing park and trail information. Additional research reported demographic characteristics, such as an understanding of the spatial distributions of household income, and race and ethnicity. The team also utilized the South Bend Parks and Recreation 2014 Community Needs Assessment to incorporate identified gaps and future needs and opportunities for the riverfront parks and trails. This included a summary of current conditions used to determine needs and gaps while recognizing the changing desires for amenities, services, and facilities within parks systems.

Stakeholder meetings were especially important in understanding the key players along the St. Joseph River. While visitors use the river’s edge for recreational activity, constituents like the Department of Natural Resources, Public Safety, Public Health and others require access to the water for research, harm prevention and program facilitation. Understanding these other players helped to inform access requirements for the parks and trails along the river. Furthermore, the St. Joseph River is a dynamic water body and often can disadvantage users during weather events. The project considers these elements for the priority sites, and uses this information to establish design guidelines that would be carried throughout the parks and trails system city-wide.

IDEA GENERATION

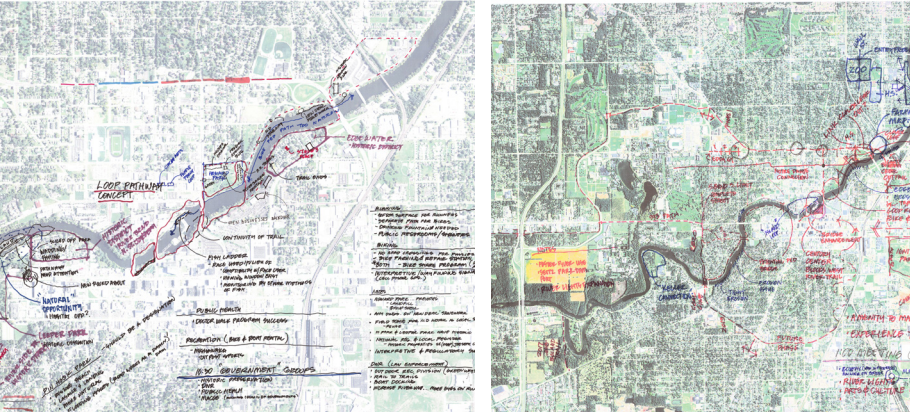
A significant component of this report are the recommendations for South Bend’s high priority sites. With a particular focus on Howard Park and Seitz Park, the team developed alternative plans that encompassed the findings from both the DISCOVERY and ANALYSIS Phase. These alternative plans manifested from a series of design charrettes and design reviews that allowed the team to get closer to the desired outcome. These sessions allowed for collaboration with stakeholders like Wharf Partners, the University of Notre Dame and the Department of Natural Resources to further understand other uses for the site to establish stronger guidelines and parameters.

REFINEMENT

Based on the input from city and community constituents, the planning team prepared a single draft for each priority site, and the greater Connectivity Plan, combining the best components for the plans from the IDEA GENERATION Phase. Howard Park and Seitz Park were developed the most to align with the City of South Bend’s redevelopment timeline, and other park sites including Pinhook Park, Leeper Park, and the Stiver-Pier-Island connection. They each were conceptualized as schematic framework plans to serve as a guide for future redevelopment. The Connectivity Plan was developed as an overall guide on building and improving on the existing riverfront trail system in South Bend.

DOCUMENTATION

In the final phase, the planning team summarized their findings and recommendations. This document highlights the project’s findings, including improvement to the riverfront trail system, conceptual designs for Howard Park, and Seitz Park, and an implementation plan for each phase. This report also includes framework sketches for Pinhook Park, Leeper Park, and the Stiver-Pier-Island Park connection as a guide for future development.



Stakeholder Meeting Notes

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework documents three major elements: High Priority Sites, a Connectivity Plan, and schematic designs for other parks in the South Bend park system.

HIGH PRIORITY SITES

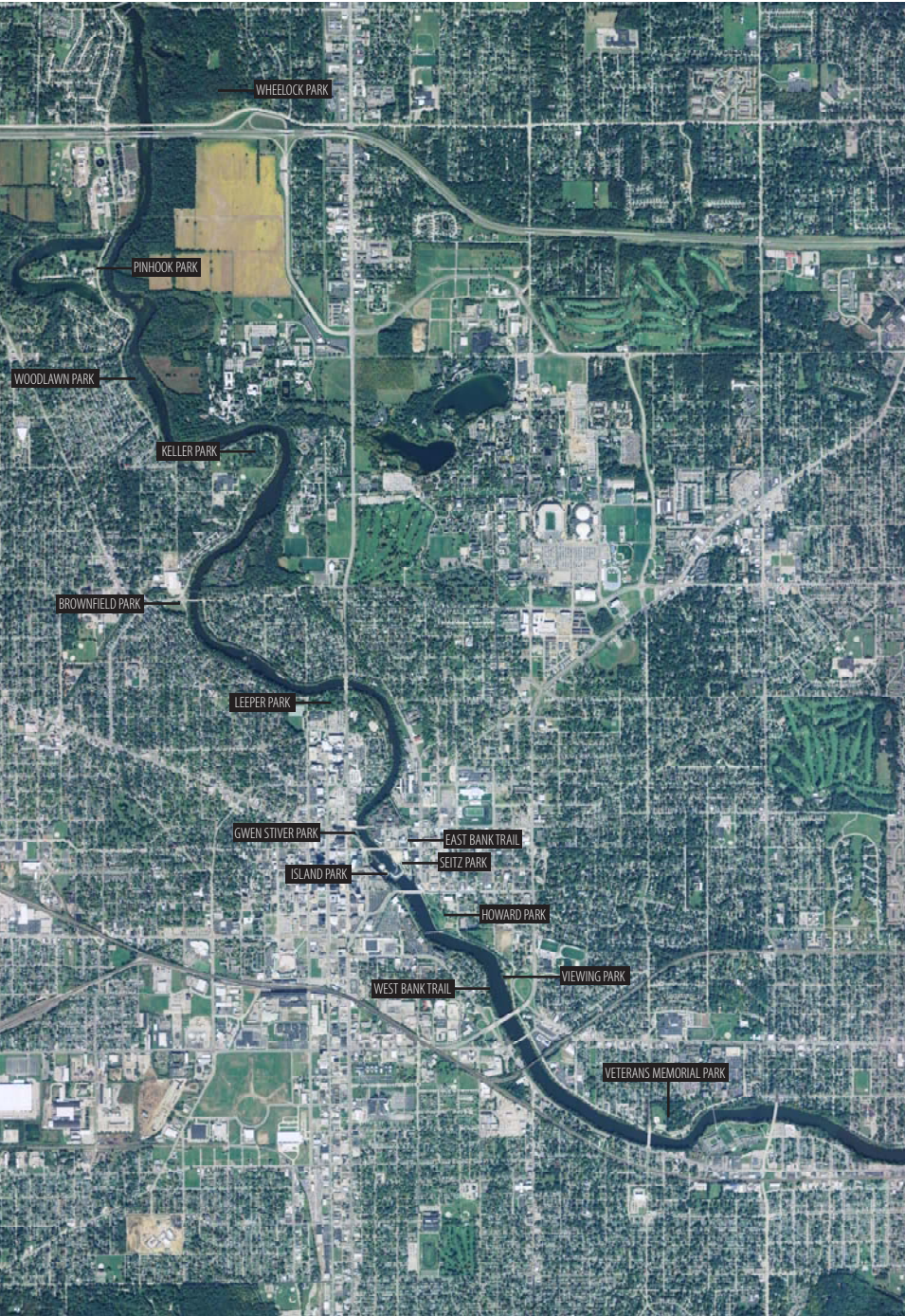
South Bend has over 70 parks within its parks system. However, The Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework identifies high priority sites for in-depth analysis and design proposals. Howard Park and Seitz Park were identified as such because of their proximity to the riverfront and relative importance in the overall park system.

OTHER PARKS

South Bend also wanted to consider the redevelopment of other instrumental neighborhood parks. To accomplish this, and to align these parks with the goals of the The Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework, schematic designs for Pinhook Park, Leeper Park, and Stiver-Pier-Island connection were developed and included in this document.

CONNECTIVITY PLAN

South Bend’s riverfront park and trail system spans about 72.5 miles within the city limits. Presently, there are many connections via non-motorized paths and roadways, but many of these courses do not offer strong connections between each other, to other parks, and to adjacent neighborhoods. This discontinuity limits the accessibility of the riverfront trails to the larger South Bend community. The Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework recommends a variety of non-motorized facilities and links through a Connectivity Plan to improve on the system’s overall continuity. The primary goal is to improve the connectivity between the parks and trails, the physical and visual connection between neighborhoods and to develop loops of varying length for a variety of users.



Map of Project Focus Areas & Other Parks

02 AREA ANALYSIS

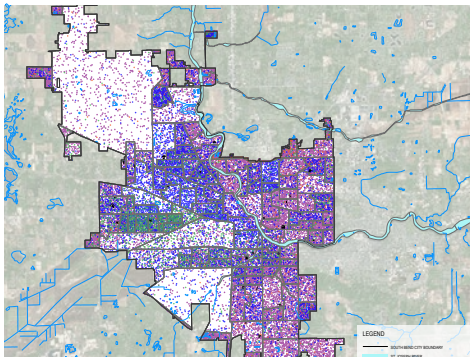
GIS STUDIES

A robust study was conducted to better understand the site area opportunities and challenges. Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data and mapping, the team was able to understand the City's current conditions, especially as it related to:

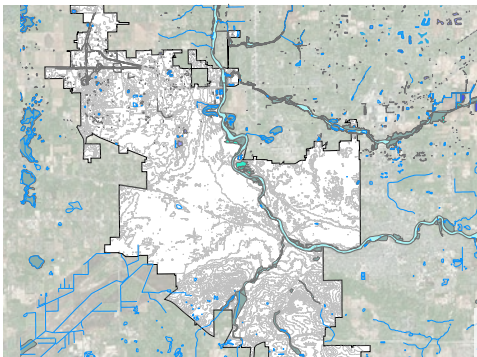
- Topography
- Hydrology
- Parkland
- Programming
- Public v. Private Ownership

The area analysis also considered the demographic landscape of the City of South Bend to better understand trends, disparities, and community needs, including:

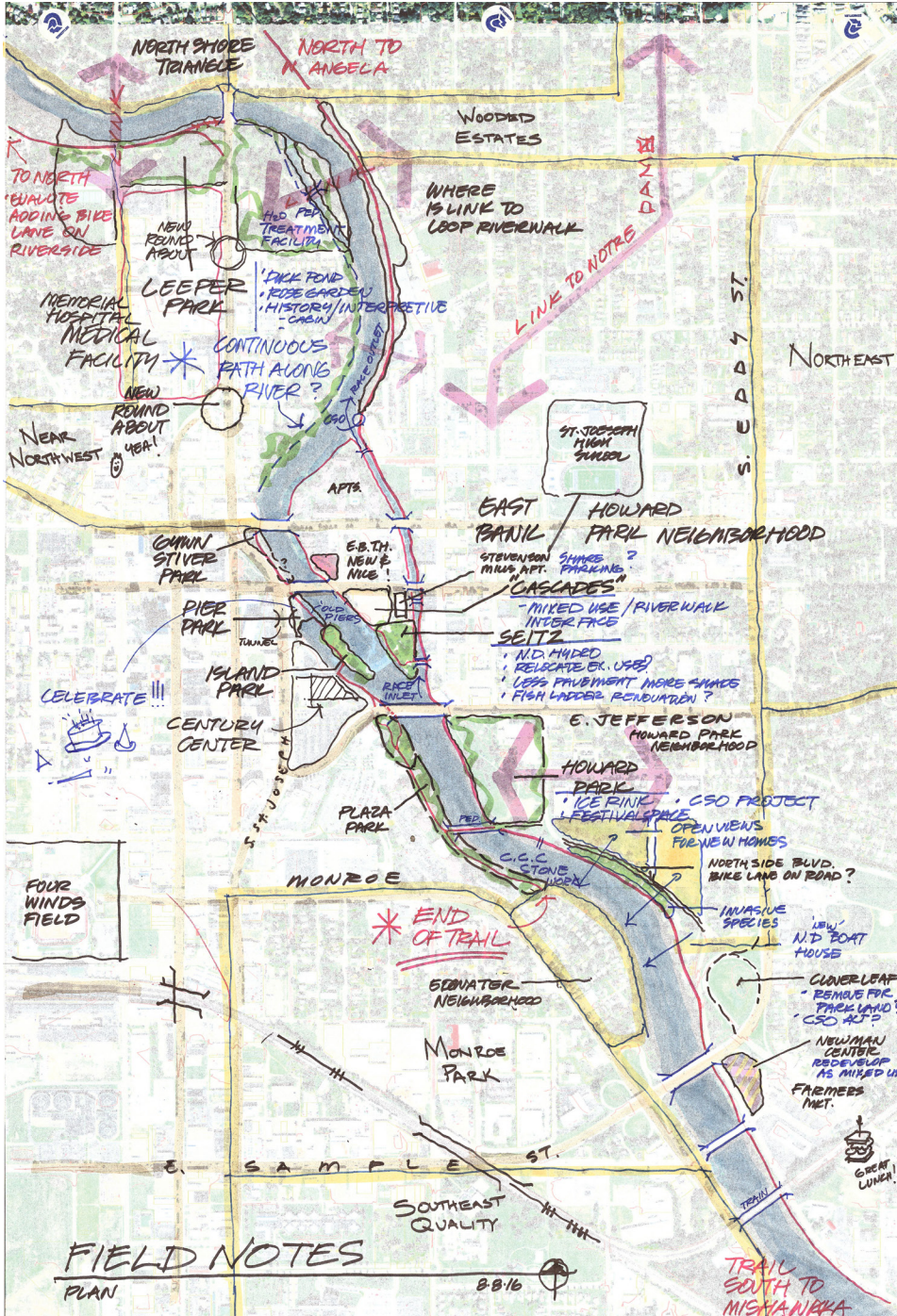
- Income
- Racial Demographics
- Homeownership Rates
- Event Participation
- Park Use Statistical Data



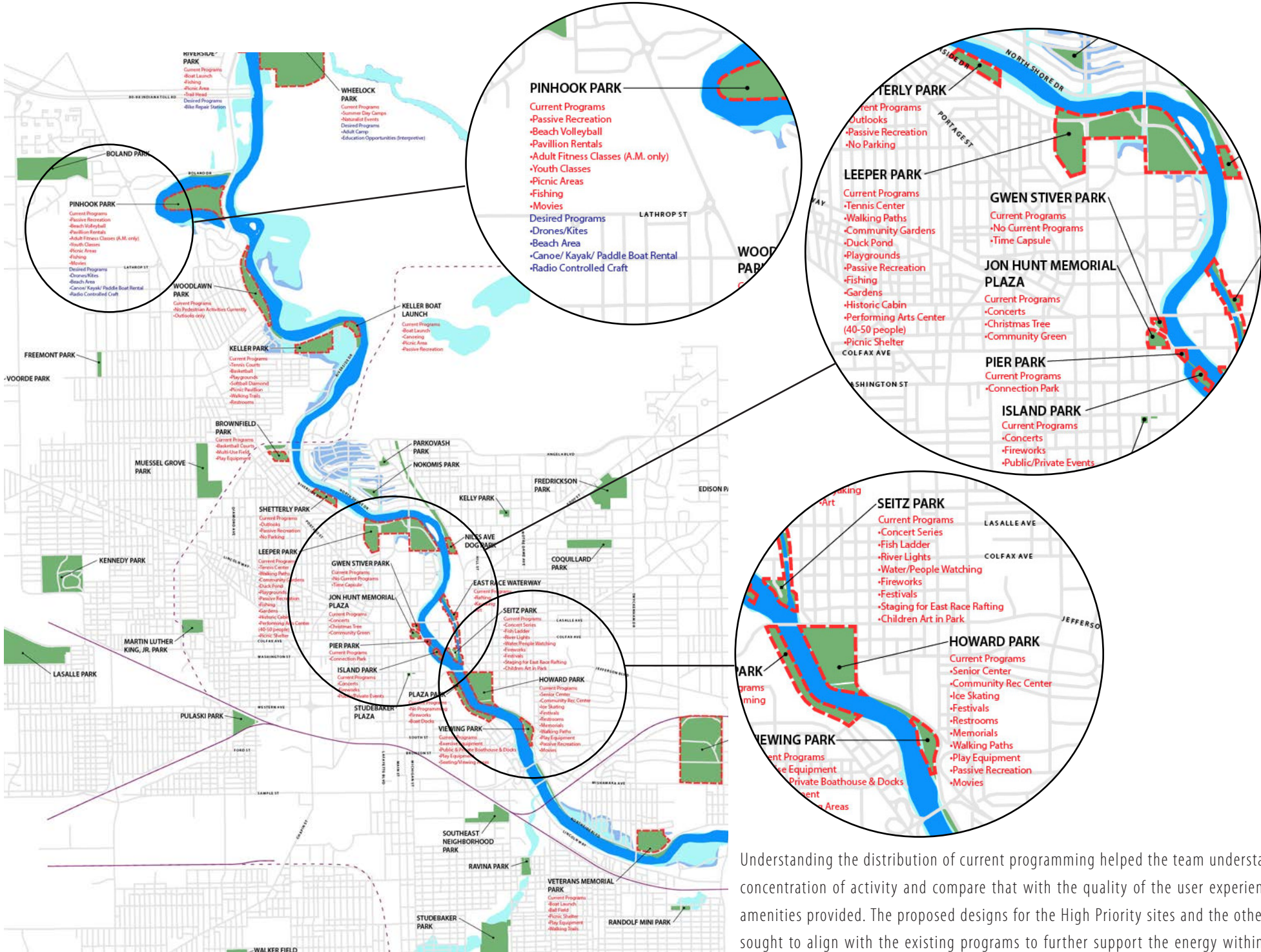
GIS Demographic Map



GIS Hydrology Map



Field Notes



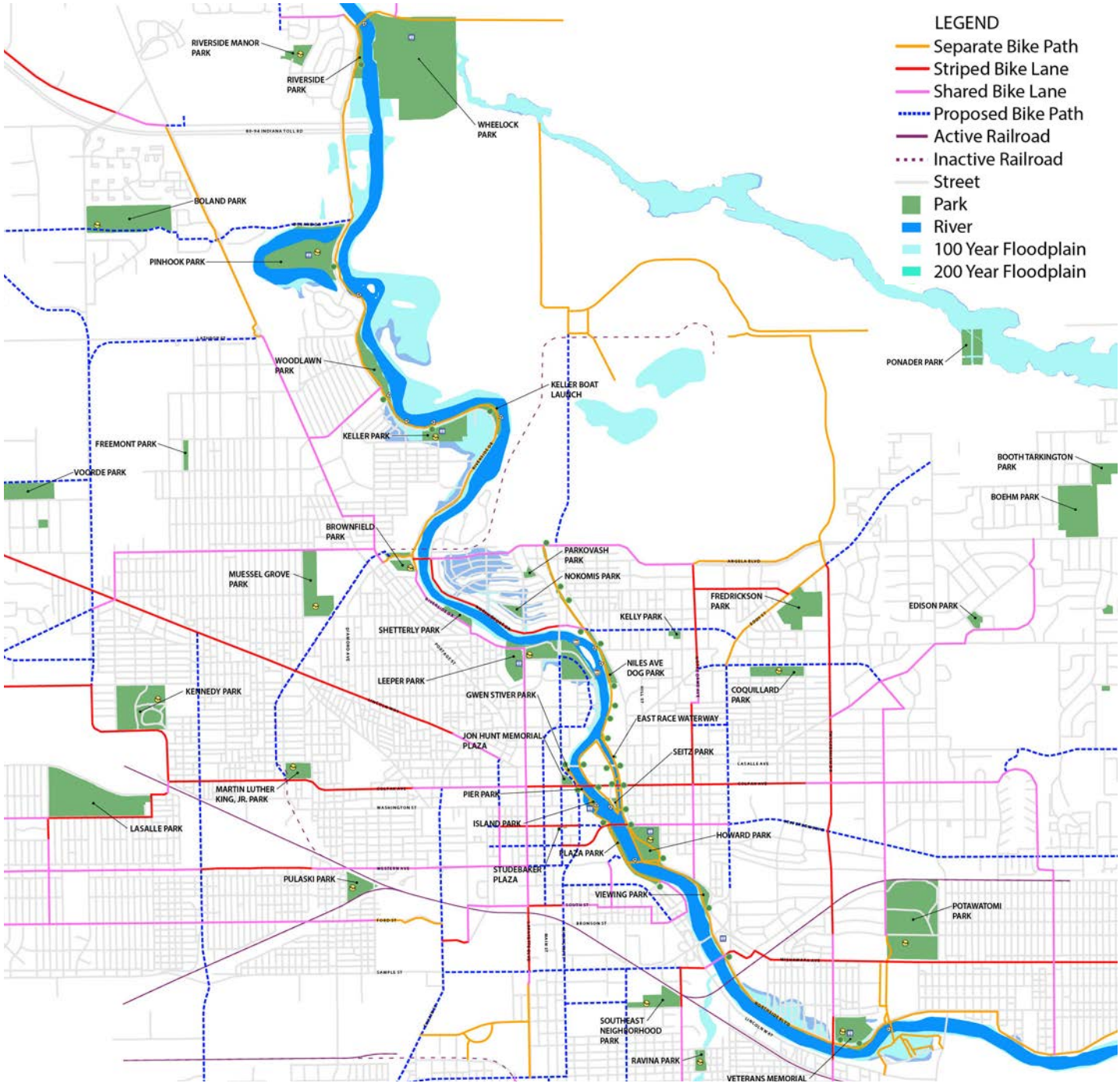
South Bend Parks Program Study

Understanding the distribution of current programming helped the team understand the concentration of activity and compare that with the quality of the user experience and amenities provided. The proposed designs for the High Priority sites and the other parks sought to align with the existing programs to further support the energy within South Bend.

RIVERFRONT OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Currently, the City of South Bend has a non-motorized network for the city, but in many areas, the trails do not provide adequate connections or destinations. Furthermore, some neighborhoods are better served than others, which limits civic participation and good access to city resources

There are clear opportunities to promote better connections between different areas in the city, to bring more residents to shared public amenities. There is also a clear opportunity to build on the off-road experience along the St. Joseph River’s edge and to improve river access. South Bend has a wealth of park property along the river and can use these edges as nodes, greenways, and other connections to bring South Bend residents to the river, and the focus areas identified in this report.

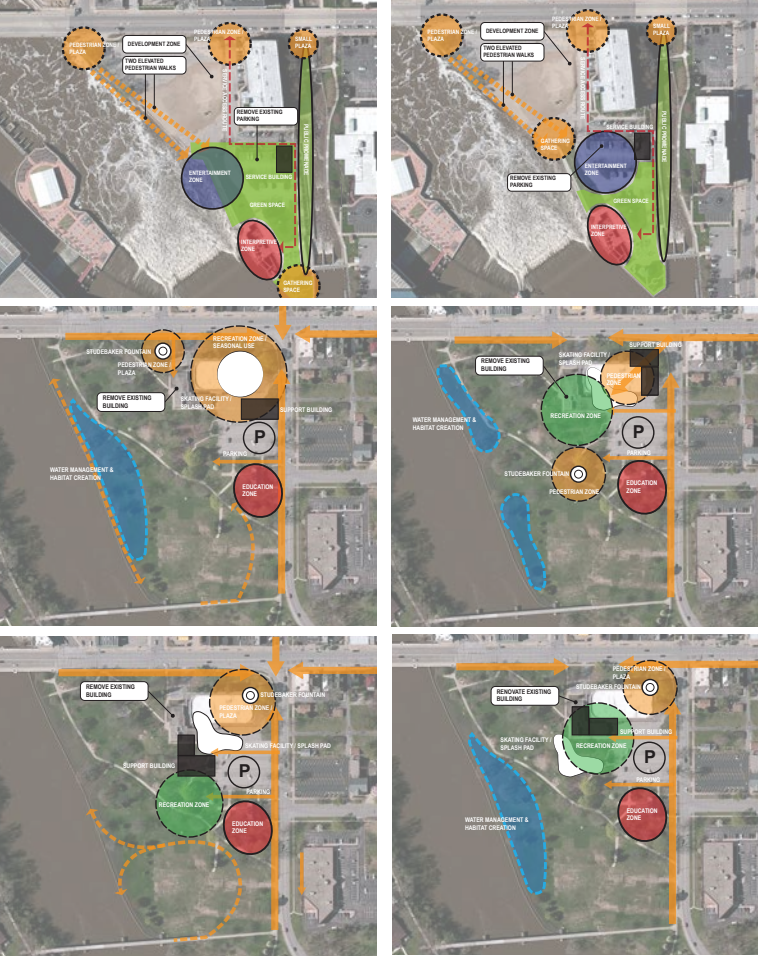


Existing Non-Motorized Network for the City of South Bend

FOCUS AREA OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Scaling down to the High Priority Sites, the team was able to identify the fixed and flexible elements and programs of both Howard Park and Seitz Park. For Seitz Park, the fish ladder, the River Lights and a performance space were critical fixtures that needed to remain in place, or be included in the park’s final design and program. The fish ladder, operated by the Department of Natural Resources, monitors fish populations and trends in the river, and this operation is crucial in understanding the long-term health and quality of the water. The River Lights, South Bend’s gravitational lighting installation provides an incredible night-time experience that attracts residents and tourists alike. Similarly, a performance space is critical to the park’s identity and annual programming. Seitz Park requires coordination with other key players, including adjacent private developers and the University of Notre Dame’s hydroelectric project.

For Howard Park, the park building, ice skating, and the passive landscape were critical fixtures that needed to remain in place or be included in the park’s final design and program. The building, to be operated by the South Bend Venues Parks and Arts Department, would be used to house events and realize economic opportunities that the park can capitalize on. The passive landscape was preferred to host the most flexible spaces of large and small events, and ice skating was an important facility to maintain for special recreation. Howard Park also has historic significance, manifested through the Memorial sites and balustrade wall at the river’s edge. The riverwalk at Howard Park is heavily used by pedestrians and bikers, so the park’s proposal also seeks to capitalize on that traffic. Each site was considered with great scrutiny and sensitivity, and the final design plans and programs for both Howard and Seitz Park represent a consensus direction from the planning team and the South Bend community.



Schematic Park Program Study

03 HIGH PRIORITY SITES

HOWARD PARK

Howard Park is one of South Bend’s largest riverfront parks, hosting nearly 12 acres. Howard Park has a very passive landscape with a recreation building, ice skating rink, playground, and open fields. Because of its size, Howard Park is home to some of South Bend’s largest festivals, events and celebrations. Notably, the Cinco de Mayo Festival and the Celtic Fest are major city-wide events at the park, at times hosting over 2000-3000 participants. The recreation building on the site also provides programs as a senior activity center that hosts events for South Bend retirees. The ice skating rink has been removed due to outdated equipment. However, ice skating is an important activity at Howard Park to be included in future plans.

Howard Park is also the location of many memorials and historic features. The Vietnam Memorial and the Worker’s Memorial are both sited in the park within ceremonial landscapes. Howard Park offers strong history and a gravitating focal point for South Bend activity and culture. However, many of the features are outdated, underutilized and under whelming for its proximity to the river and Downtown.



Howard Park Aerial View



Howard Park Existing Conditions





Howard Park Aerial View

The vision for Howard Park includes a new combined ice and water feature, play areas, new buildings, an event lawn, and a stormwater/habitat feature. The recommendations for Howard Park strive to offer multiple spaces for various sized events, and to be a prominent destination for residents and visitors. The Howard Park recommendations include:

1. New Plaza – A new at-grade entry plaza opposite Hill Street to establish a presence on Jefferson Boulevard. This may be a location for public art, wayfinding and signage. It is suggested that two new buildings be located there to create a vital new public space off of St. Louis that can be flexible in its programing.
2. New Buildings – Two new buildings are recommended at the corner of Jefferson Boulevard and St. Louis Street. The building fronting Jefferson (shown as a 4,800 SF footprint with two-stories) can serve park administration functions, and small-scale retail services. The building facing St. Louis (shown as a 2,400 sf footprint with one-story) may accommodate vending for multi-season activities along with housing the mechanical needs for those

amenities.

3. Interactive Water/Ice Skating Feature – This feature is one of the primary attractions to Howard Park and it is critical that it is multi-seasonal in its capacity. Howard Park had a long association with ice skating and it was important to maintain through the park's reimagining. Rather than a traditional rink configuration, skating here is envisioned in a more organic form allowing users numerous experiences and even the potential to create space for pick-up games such as broomball. This configuration can also provide an opportunity to support private events without closing the entire facility. This feature should be creative in form and interactive in its capacity surrounded by various types of seating for observation.

4. Child Play Area – The child play area should also be creative in its form and provide numerous opportunities for exploration and discovery. Separated by age groups, it is important to consider security and safety in the design of these areas providing containment that is integrated into the site.

5. Central Event Lawn – This space is intended to accommodate larger festivals and musical performances. The gently sloping lawn should be graded to focus attention on a stage area backing to the river. The stage area should be designed as a plaza for daily use but could fit a trailer-mounted stage as needed. Service to the stage area is shown off of St. Louis and a 20-foot wide path around the lawn space facilitates circulation. This path can also serve as vendor space for art fair type of events.

6. Athletic Fields – This lawn expanse is planned for informal sports and passive uses.

7. Stormwater/Habitat Zone – These multi-functional areas are intended to accommodate stormwater from the park, high spring groundwater events and provide interpretive and interactive opportunities. A low berm separates these areas from the Riverwalk and they should include stepped areas to get close to the vegetation. These areas are envisioned as rain gardens and to be planted with a wide variety of flowers and grasses creating habitat for numerous species.

8. Memorial Landscape – This area is proposed to for relocation of some of the smaller memorials in the park. The Vietnam Memorial was originally intended for a quiet location where it would be “discovered”. The ultimate location for this is to be determined but suggested for the south side of the path south of the event lawn.

9. Historic Park Building – The building will serve new Venue, Parks & Arts staff needs.

10. Sloped Hill – This area has historically been the sledding hill in Howard Park and is maintained in that capacity.

11. Flexible Parking Space – This area should be designed with structural soil to accommodate overflow parking for large events but serve as lawn a majority of the time. The amount of parking and extent of the area needs to be evaluated but this space could easily accommodate 50 cars.

12. Festival Street – St. Louis is envisioned as a flexible space. Under normal conditions, it would be maintained as part of the street network. Back-in, angled parking is suggested along the western edge. During festivals, the street could be closed to expand the functional area of the park providing an exciting pedestrian space.

13. Riverwalk – A new 20-foot wide Riverwalk is proposed to accommodate a variety of users and even to provide space for small vendors or exhibitions. The existing balustrade is maintained and repaired where needed.



Howard Park Existing Conditions



This illustrative section shows the proposed festival street at St. Louis Street. The festival street is envisioned to host a series of organized events, including food fairs, art tours, artisan booths, food truck events, and local music and creative events. During times of inactivity, St. Louis offers shady on-street parking for park users and adjacent residents.



Chandler Non Profit Food Truck Benefit, Phoenix, Arizona



Seattle Street Food Festival, Seattle, Washington



NoHo Food Truck Collective, Hollywood, California

This series of precedent images were used as inspiration for the proposed festival street at St. Louis Street.



This illustrative section shows the proposed riverfront edge with the stormwater/habitat zone. The riverfront edge maintains the historic balustrade, but offers a wider pathway to accommodate a variety of users. The stormwater/habitat zone is slightly depressed to hold stormwater and provide habitat near the river edge to promote hands-on learning.



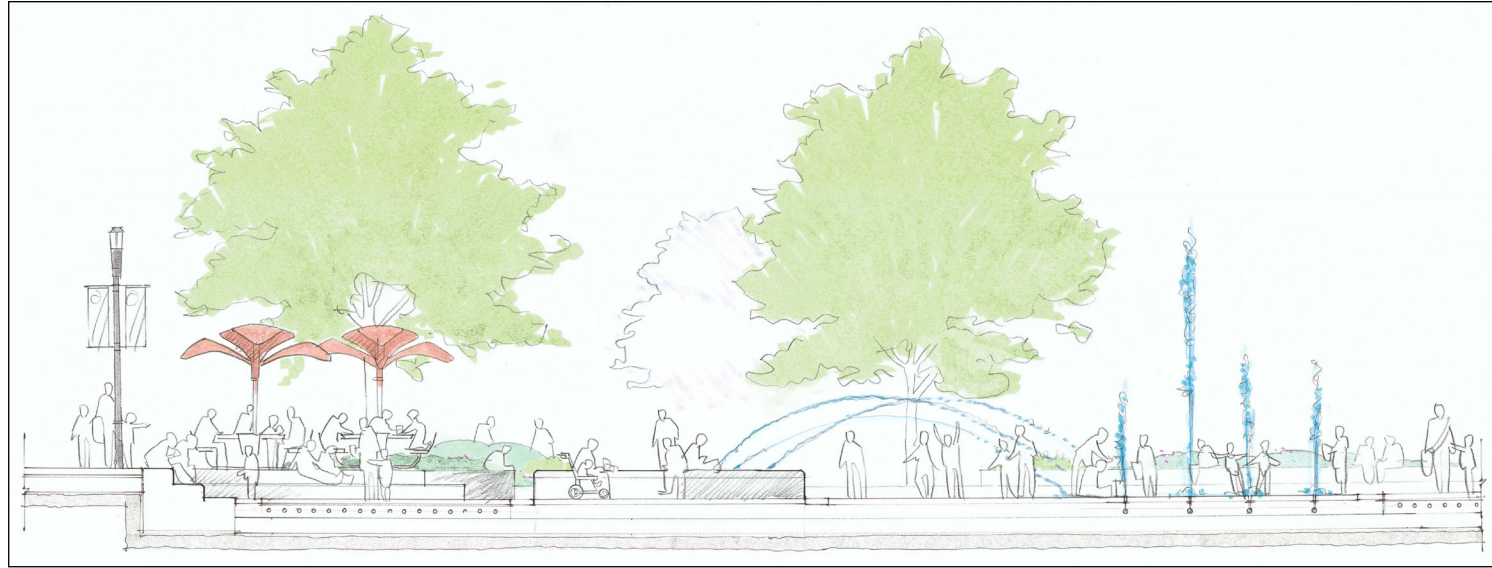
Mill Creek Park, Dexter, Michigan



This series of precedent images served as inspiration for the habitat creation and overlooks proposed for Howard Park.



Rendered Image of the Riverwalk and the Stormwater/ Habitat Zone at Howard Park



This illustrative section shows the activity at one of the main plazas, near the proposed park building locations. In the spring and summer seasons, this space can be activated as an interactive water feature, with adequate shady places for park users to watch the activity, eat and enjoy lunch in the park, or play in the water feature. This special place was designed to keep Howard Park a downtown destination.



This illustrative perspective shows how the plaza space can be used in the winter season as an ice skating amenity. Rather than in the traditional rink configuration, the skating experience is intended in a more organic shape even allowing some areas to be separated for private events. The plaza offers many amenities, like a cafe, seating, a fire pit and a center platform for ornaments, sculptures or festive elements.



Warren City Center, Warren, Michigan



This series of precedent images served as inspiration for how the interactive water feature might look and operate within a landscape similar to that of Howard Park.



Huntington Station ice Rink, Long Island, New York



Maggie Daly Park, Chicago Illinois



Elkhart Skating Ribbon, Elkhart Indiana

These series of precedent images informed the proposed ice skating facility at Howard Park.



Rendered Image of the Winter Scene at the Ice Skating Facility at Howard Park

SEITZ PARK

Seitz Park is one of South Bend's most active parks on the river, with a strong annual program for outdoor festivals and events. Presently, Seitz Park hosts a summer East Race Concert Series, bringing up to 500 people per event. There is a pavilion with seating that anchors musical and theatrical performance throughout the series.

Seitz Park is also home to the South Bend River Lights, an illuminated installation and driving tourist attraction. The River Lights provide an interactive experience with users, who can manipulate the lights to reflect local culture or aesthetic. There are two installations at Seitz Park, and another one across the river at the Century Center, which creates a beautiful light show at the St. Joseph River. The River Lights contribute greatly to activating South Bends local nightlife.

Even in dormant periods, Seitz Park is active. Seitz Park is the location of the first man-made white-water rafting venue. The East Race begins at Seitz Park and continues north for about 0.3 miles. Since its opening in 1984, the East Race has seen nearly 300,000 visitors and participants, also becoming a driving tourist attraction. Seitz Park is also used as a monitoring station by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, who operate a fish ladder on the site. This fish ladder is used to track, count and record fish populations in the river to identify water quality and aquatic health. While there are limited entry points, residents and visitors can walk around the fish ladder.



Seitz Park Existing Conditions & Events





Seitz Park Existing Conditions

The recommendations envision Seitz Park as a vibrant, active center on the river that accommodates the existing and proposed programming and adjacent development. The vision for Seitz Park includes:

1. New Plaza — A new, enlarged plaza at Colfax Avenue provides an inviting entrance to Seitz Park. This plaza could include public art, signage and wayfinding and attractive landscaping.
2. East Bank Trail — The East Bank Trail is a critical link to Seitz Park from Colfax and needs to be integrated into the overall park plan. It is intended to be a minimum of 20' feet wide and ADA-accessible, providing space for small vendors and potentially even exhibitions along its length.
3. Pavilion/Comfort Station — One of the substantial recommendations for Seitz Park is a new pavilion with attached comfort station, shown at approximately 5,000 sf. The need for a comfort station at Seitz Park was strongly suggested by the public. The remainder of this building could serve as vending during concerts or for private parties.

4. River Lights — The existing River Lights are an integral part of Seitz Park. It is recommended the plazas surrounding them be improved with seating and decorative landscaping.

5. New Bandshell — In connection with the new pavilion, a new bandshell is recommended that is compatible in style and provides an improved venue for performers and viewers.

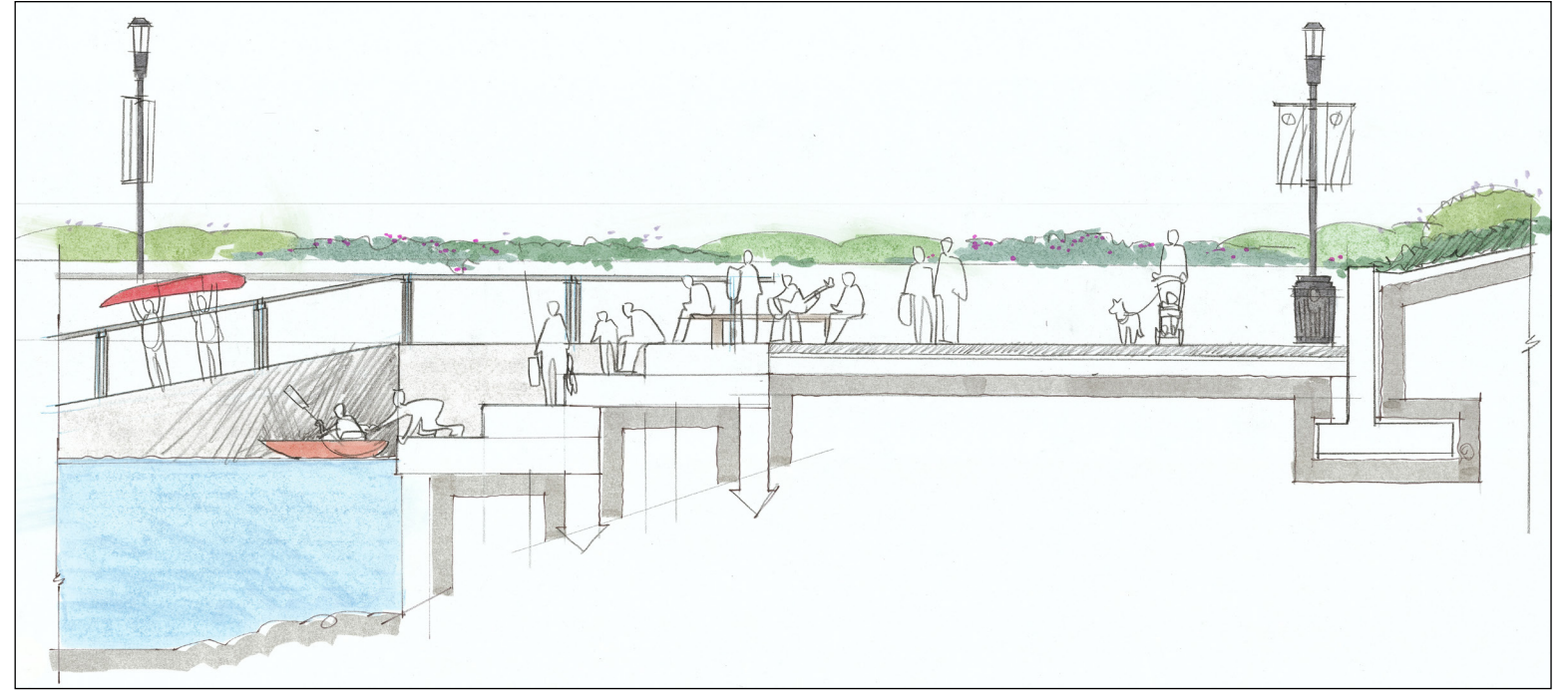
6. Fish Ladder — The existing fish ladder provides important research and data collection for the IDNR. It is suggested that interpretive opportunities be integrated with this facility so that visitors can understand how it is serving its purpose.

7. New Park Entrance — A new entrance from the east side of the park is recommended off of Niles Avenue. This entrance, aligned with Washington Street, would require coordination with AM General. This includes a new bridge across the East Race, wider than the existing crossing at the race gates, to facilitate better circulation.

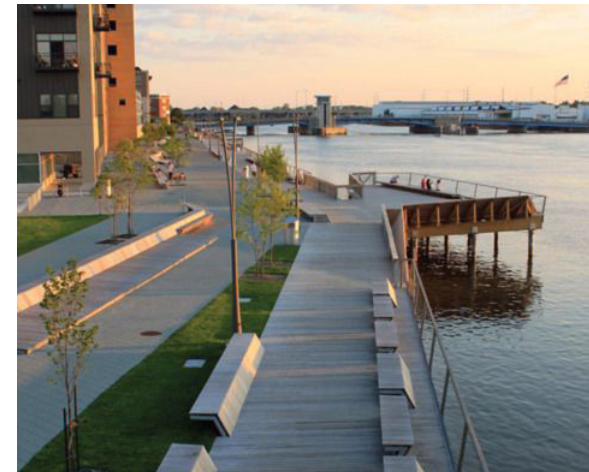
8. East Race Path — It is recommended to widen the path and improve seating opportunities along the west side of the East Race. This can be accomplished by removing some of the grading and existing concrete structure and adding new steps to improve the exhibition potential in this area. This includes a new plaza at the south end of the path.

9. Development Zone — This is a privately-held parcel that is currently in the planning stages for a mixed-use development.

10. Stephenson Mills Apartments — Private apartments with surface parking to the south.



This illustrative section shows the proposed East Bank Trail which connects Seitz Park to Colfax Avenue and another segment in the East Bank Trail. This connection has a close relationship to the river, with a new portage for kayak and canoe launching.



The City Deck, Green Bay Wisconsin



Sea Organ, Zadar Croatia



Chicago Riverwalk, Chicago Illinois

This series of precedent images served as inspiration for how the portage edge might look to help users gain access to the St. Joseph River.



This illustrative perspective shows the proposed Seitz Park Pavilion, a new location for special public and private events. The Pavilion will also serve as a comfort station and information kiosk for park users, and will house storage and support facilities.



This illustrative section shows the new river edge at the East Race. A tiered and widened river edge provides a variety of spaces for users to over look the activity of the East Race. The adjacency to the Seitz Park Pavilion makes this area a central destination during all times of the year.



Bryan Park Kiosk, New York City



Orange Memorial Park, San Francisco California



Atlantic Seaport, Boston Massachusetts



Chicago Riverwalk, Chicago Illinois



Sea Organ, Zadar Croatia



La Grand Cantine, Paris France

This series of precedent images served as inspiration for the proposed Seitz Park Pavilion.

This series of precedent images served as inspiration for how the East Race might change in adding more levels to accommodate both active and passive activity.



Rendered Image of the East Race at Seitz Park

04 OTHER PARKS

There are other parks in South Bend that can help enrich the user experience along the river, namely Pinhook Park, Leeper Park and the Stiver-Pier-Island Connection. These parks all offer something special to the broader South Bend Parks system and can become critical desinations within the entire riverfront trails system. The following recommendations seek to revitalize these parks in a way that is complimentary to their present function while maintaining them as special assets for the City of South Bend.

PINHOOK PARK



Pinhook Park Existing Conditions

The Pinhook Park Framework relies heavily on the historic uses of the park as a means to diversify the programs that exist with the current parks system. Today, Pinhook Park has a very passive landscape, but historically, Pinhook Park hosted dynamic recreational activities, including a beach, boating and fishing. The framework pays homage to the historic qualities of Pinhook by bringing some of its old uses back to the present. The framework also considers improvement in the hydrology of the site.

Pinhook Park sits in an oxbow in the river, but with the development of Riverside Drive, the water flow was cut off to accommodate vehicular travel. This has created water quality issues, limiting recreational use as well as interfering with aquatic life. The goal of this framework is to return Pinhook Park to its historical quality, in both activity and health.

The Pinhook Park framework proposes:

- Revitalization of historic elements such as a refurbished beach, volleyball courts, a renovated beach house, and picnic areas.
- Improved kayak and boat launch to provide for educational and instructional opportunities.
- A new trail system to connect Pinhook’s programs and with other trail systems, including the Boland Trail, internal connection/trail, and an off-road connection at Riverside Drive that connects to trails further north.
- To address the water quality issues with the site, the sketch recommends evaluating the feasibility of opening two channels underneath Riverside Drive to connect the oxbow to the flowing St. Joseph River.



LEEPER PARK

The Leeper Park framework draws heavily from the historic George Kessler plan of 1915, and the Leeper Park Rehabilitation Plan of 1998 to align with the historic qualities and preservation goals of the original park design and the Historic Preservation Commission of South Bend and St. Joseph County. Compared to the other parks within South Bend, Leeper Park has more formal elements, including a radial rose garden, promenades, and several historic structures. Leeper Park also hosts many fixtures and remnants from the Works Progress Administration during the New Deal era, including several water pump stations and a reservoir. The framework accommodates the recently installed lavender labyrinth.



Leeper Park Existing Conditions

The Leeper Park Framework proposes:

- An integrated path system throughout the park to improve accessibility between spaces. The path system strives to connect the spaces and across the dividing roads to promote better cohesion between Leeper Park’s distinctive areas.
- The maintenance of the tennis courts, but the conversion of the underused ballfields in to a multi-purpose field with a relocated play area.
- The Studebaker Fountain on axis with the lavender labyrinth. Several WPA pump houses remain in place as respites and historic markers.
- The radial rose garden, amphitheater, and sensory garden remain in place, but expands and renovates the play area and the historic buildings north of Bartlett Street to accommodate new play structures and a comfort station.
- An off-road bike and pedestrian path that connects Riverside Drive to Leeper Park including a boardwalk under Michigan Street.
- A pedestrian refuge island on Michigan Street at Riverside Drive to control turning movement and provide a safe pedestrian crossing.



STIVER + PIER + ISLAND PARK CONNECTION

The Stiver + Pier + Island Connection framework tackles challenging elevation changes to get bikers and pedestrians down to the St. Joseph River. The plan also takes advantage of South Bend’s Smart Streets Initiative along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard which includes a roadway reductions, dedicated bike lanes, parallel parking and safer pedestrian crossings. Stiver Park is located at the corner of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and LaSalle Avenue, and Pier Park is located at the corner of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Colfax Avenue, both of which are depressed several feet below their respective intersections. The South Bend residential community expressed concerns about the paths down to each park, and the path between them, calling them dangerous, inaccessible and unsafe. The Stiver +

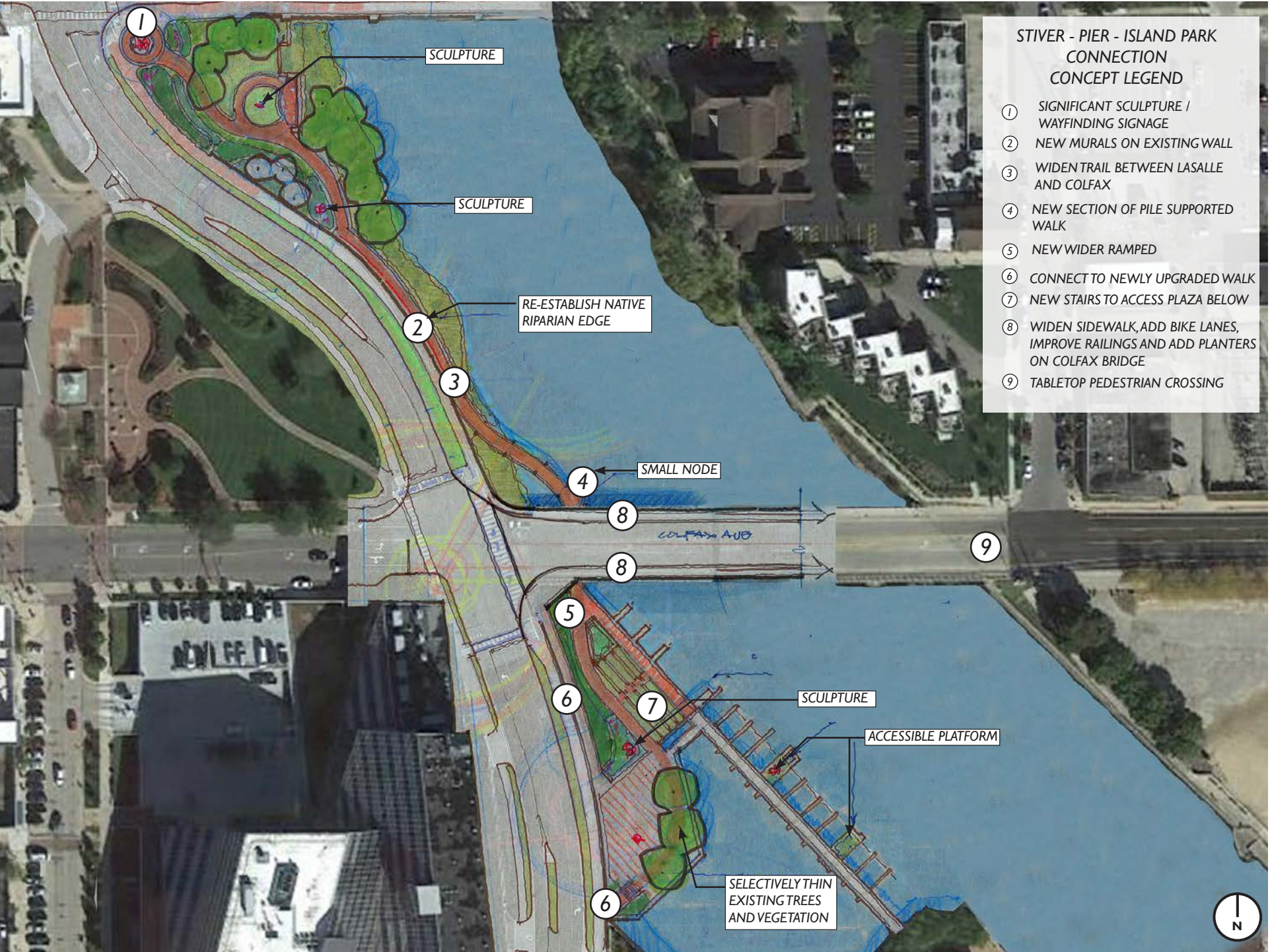


Stiver Park, Pier Park and Island Park Existing Conditions

Pier + Island Connection framework addresses these concerns and recommends a safer path that connects the parks together, and to the larger trail system including Island Park and the West Bank Trail.

The Stiver + Pier + Island Connection framework proposes:

- An “Art Walk” that begins at a trail head at the corner of LaSalle Avenue and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard
- A “Sculpture Park” at Gwen Stiver Park, to embrace the park’s existing hardscape and obtrusive concrete furniture.
- A mural wall along the retaining wall that borders the west side of the proposed path. Because of the aggressive grade change, the necessary retaining wall creates a dark corridor that is uninviting. The framework recommends a mural on this wall to alleviate the hard edge.
- A new boardwalk connection under the Colfax Bridge to connect the two trails and the two parks. Users can continue onward to Island Park and the West Bank Trail, or terrace up back to the street, just north of the Century Center.
- There are also wayfinding recommendations through signage to alert and divert the public when Island Park is closed for special events.



STIVER - PIER - ISLAND PARK CONNECTION CONCEPT LEGEND	
①	SIGNIFICANT SCULPTURE / WAYFINDING SIGNAGE
②	NEW MURALS ON EXISTING WALL
③	WIDEN TRAIL BETWEEN LASALLE AND COLFAX
④	NEW SECTION OF PILE SUPPORTED WALK
⑤	NEW WIDER RAMPED
⑥	CONNECT TO NEWLY UPGRADED WALK
⑦	NEW STAIRS TO ACCESS PLAZA BELOW
⑧	WIDEN SIDEWALK, ADD BIKE LANES, IMPROVE RAILINGS AND ADD PLANTERS ON COLFAX BRIDGE
⑨	TABLETOP PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

05 Riverfront Parks & Trails

CONNECTIVITY PLAN

The City of South Bend has a well developed existing non-motorized system. In fact, the City of South Bend has been recognized and awarded as a Bicycle Friendly Community since 2010. With a long-term plan for a 123-mile South Bend Bikeway network, the City currently promotes bicycling as an alternate form of transportation. The trail and bike facilities system is planned to extend from Logan Street to Darden Road, ultimately connecting the South Bend paths to other biking facilities in neighboring municipalities.

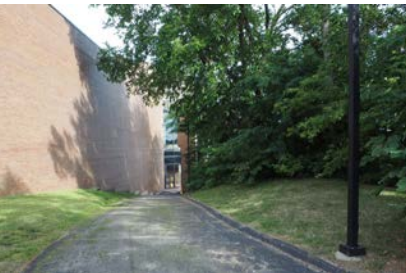
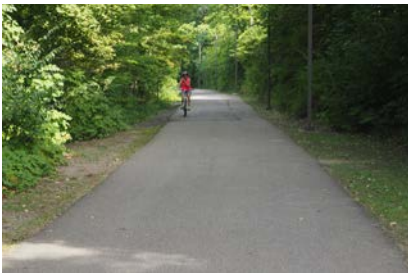
The Connectivity Plan reviews the existing and planned systems to identify other connections that can be made to further link neighborhoods to parks, the Downtown, and other trails. Connections across and along the St. Joseph River are also important, especially in grabbing more users toward the riverfront parks. While the City of South Bend has a well developed existing trails and bike path system, addressing existing gaps are great opportunities to improve the connectivity between parks, downtown destinations and South Bend neighborhoods.



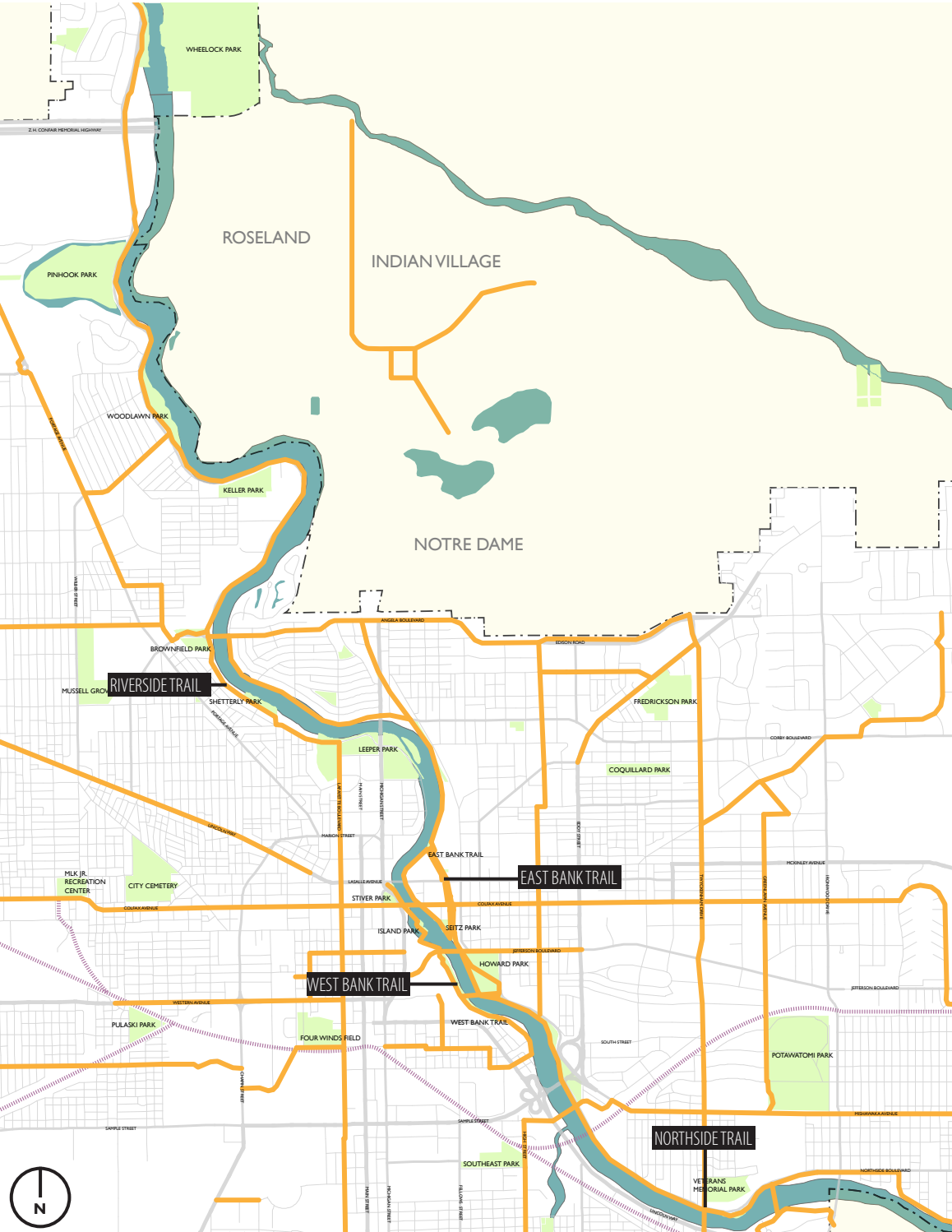
EXISTING NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS

The following map shows the existing non-motorized trails within South Bend. The current trails provide a network of on-road bike lanes and an extensive off-road system including:

- Riverside Trail
- East Bank Trail
- West Bank Trail
- Northside Trail



Existing Trails in South Bend



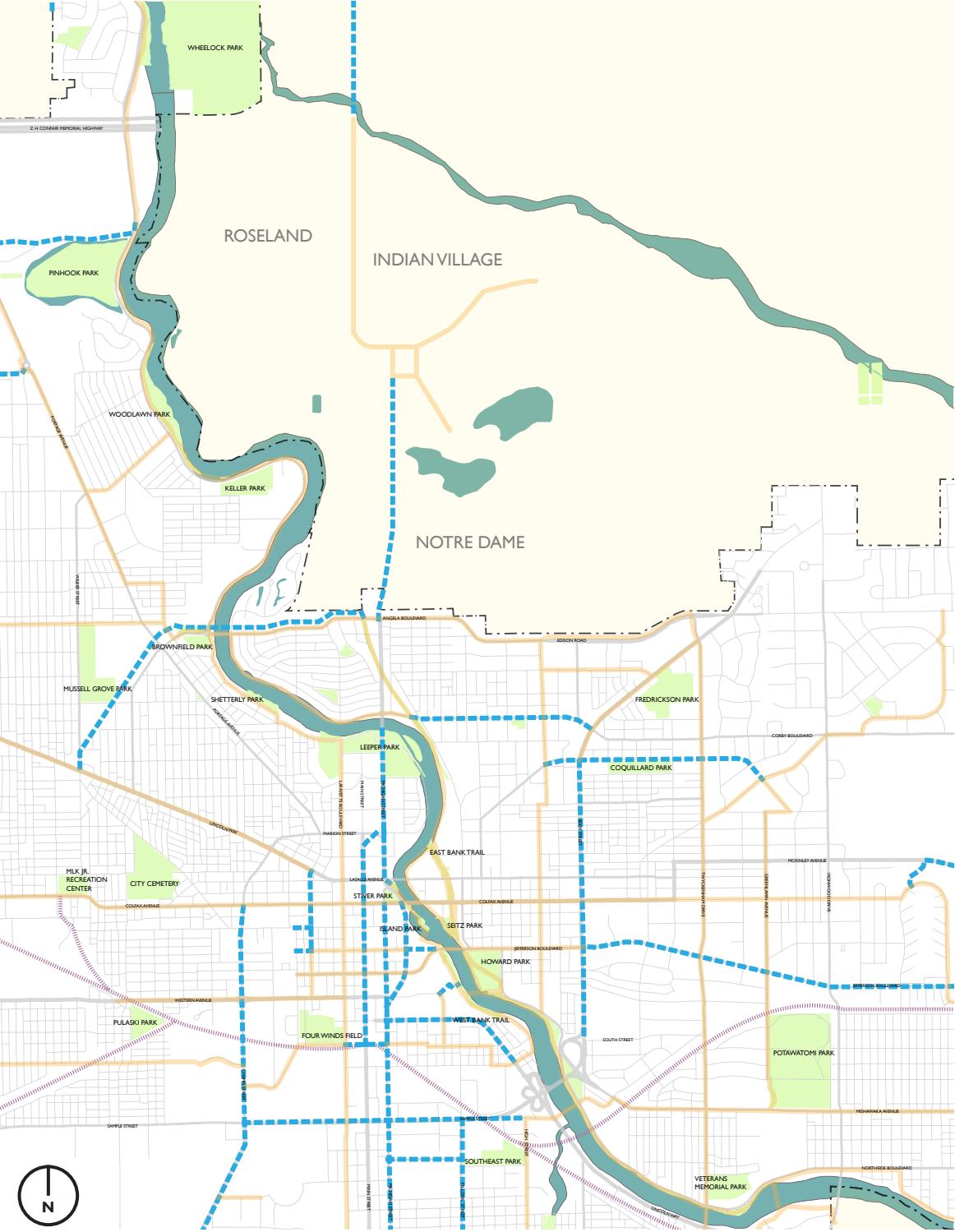
PLANNED NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS

The City of South Bend has a plan in place to implement more trails and bike paths to expand the current system. These paths are designed to create stronger links into the South Bend neighborhoods and to serve various destinations. These proposed trails and connections will be predominately on-road bike lanes with some off-road facilities.

South Bend has already begun the development of these new trails and bike paths through their Smart Streets Initiative, which has created two-way traffic patterns, reduced lane widths and establishes multi-modal complete streets.



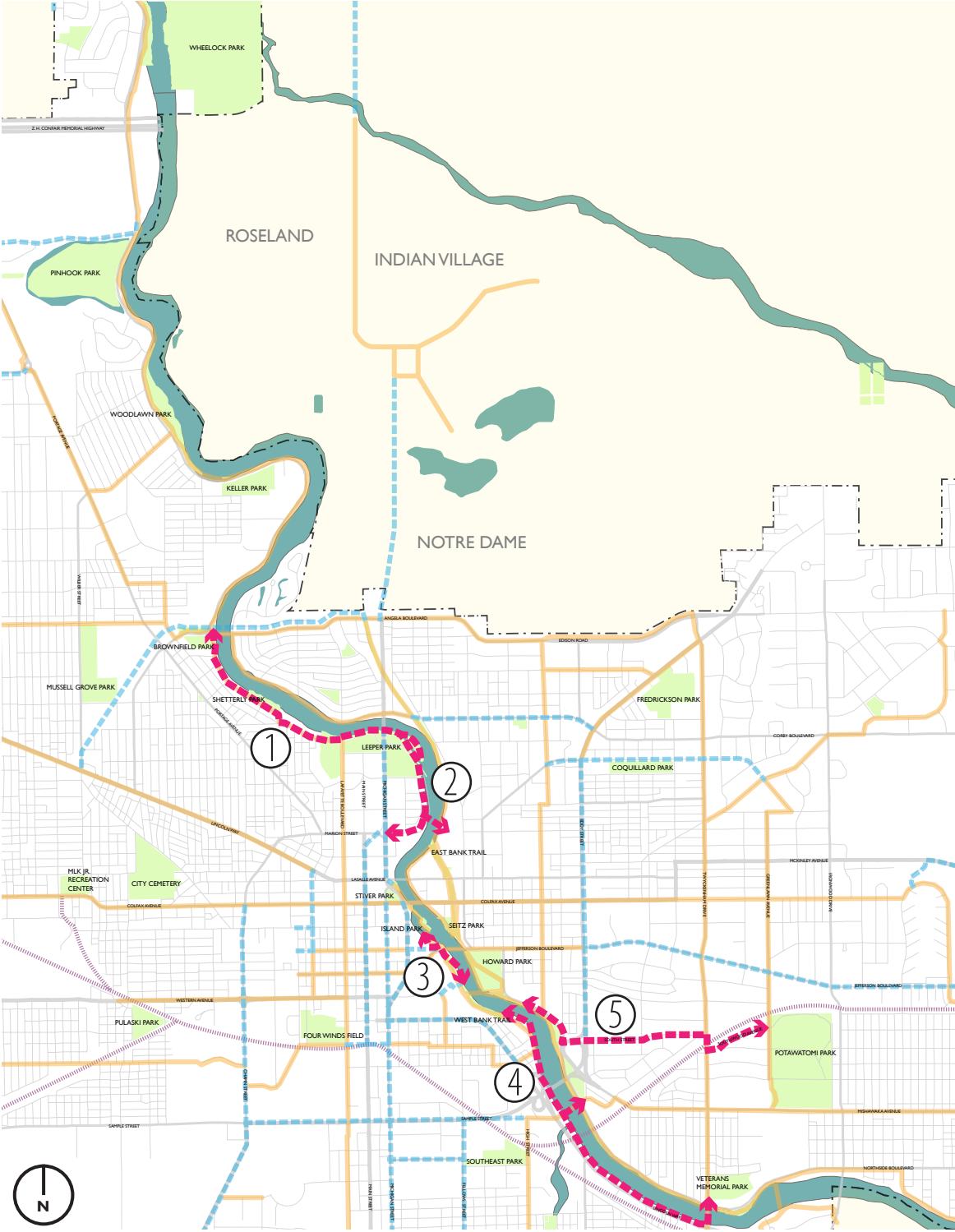
Rendering of a proposed Smart Street at the Century Center



GAP ANALYSIS - RECOMMENDED NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS

A gap analysis was completed to assess where there were missing links in the City's non-motorized riverfront trail system. To compliment the trail network, this report offers additional recommendations for non-motorized trails that focus on the system's connectivity along the riverfront. Specifically, these recommendations include:

1. Connect Riverside Trail to Leeper Park by including a boardwalk under Michigan Street.
2. Connect Leeper Park to the East Bank Trail through a pedestrian bridge across the river.
3. Improve the West Bank Trail from Island Park to Jefferson Boulevard with a boardwalk along the river.
4. Extend the West Bank Trail through the Edgewater neighborhood and on the east side of Lincoln Way to create links with the Farmer's Market across Sample Street and Veteran's Park across Twyckenham Drive.
5. Connect Potawatomi Park to the river.



LOOP SYSTEMS

Completing these connections allows the City of South Bend to create a special experience. With adequate connectivity, the South Bend trails can connect, not just as linear paths, but also as looped routes. With these improvements, there can be at least 7 looped trails along or adjacent to the riverfront of varying distances. This offers measurable paths that can be used by a variety of users for training, exercise, or recreation, as well as city-sponsored runs, and marathons.

With these recommendations, the system can achieve loops with the following distances:

1. 1.7 Miles, from Brownfield Park to Leeper Park
2. 1.3 Miles, from Leeper Park to an East Bank Trail Connection
3. 1 Mile, from an East Bank Trail Connection to Stiver Park
4. .6 Miles, from Stiver Park to Howard Park
5. .5 Miles, from Howard Park to the West Bank Trail
6. 1.5 Miles from Howard Park to the Farmer's Market
7. 2 Miles, from the Farmers Marker to the Veteran's Memorial Park



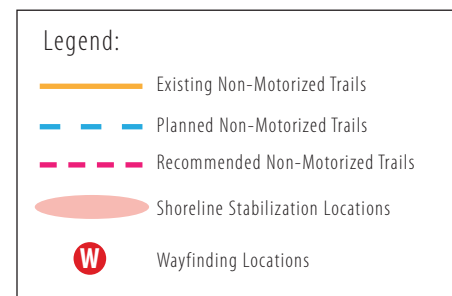
TRAIL STANDARDS

To maintain consistency, all proposed trails should adhere to a unified standard that considers width, material, and basic amenities. Where possible, older trails should be upgraded to match the developed standard to remain consistent with the rest of the network of trails.

RECOMMENDED TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

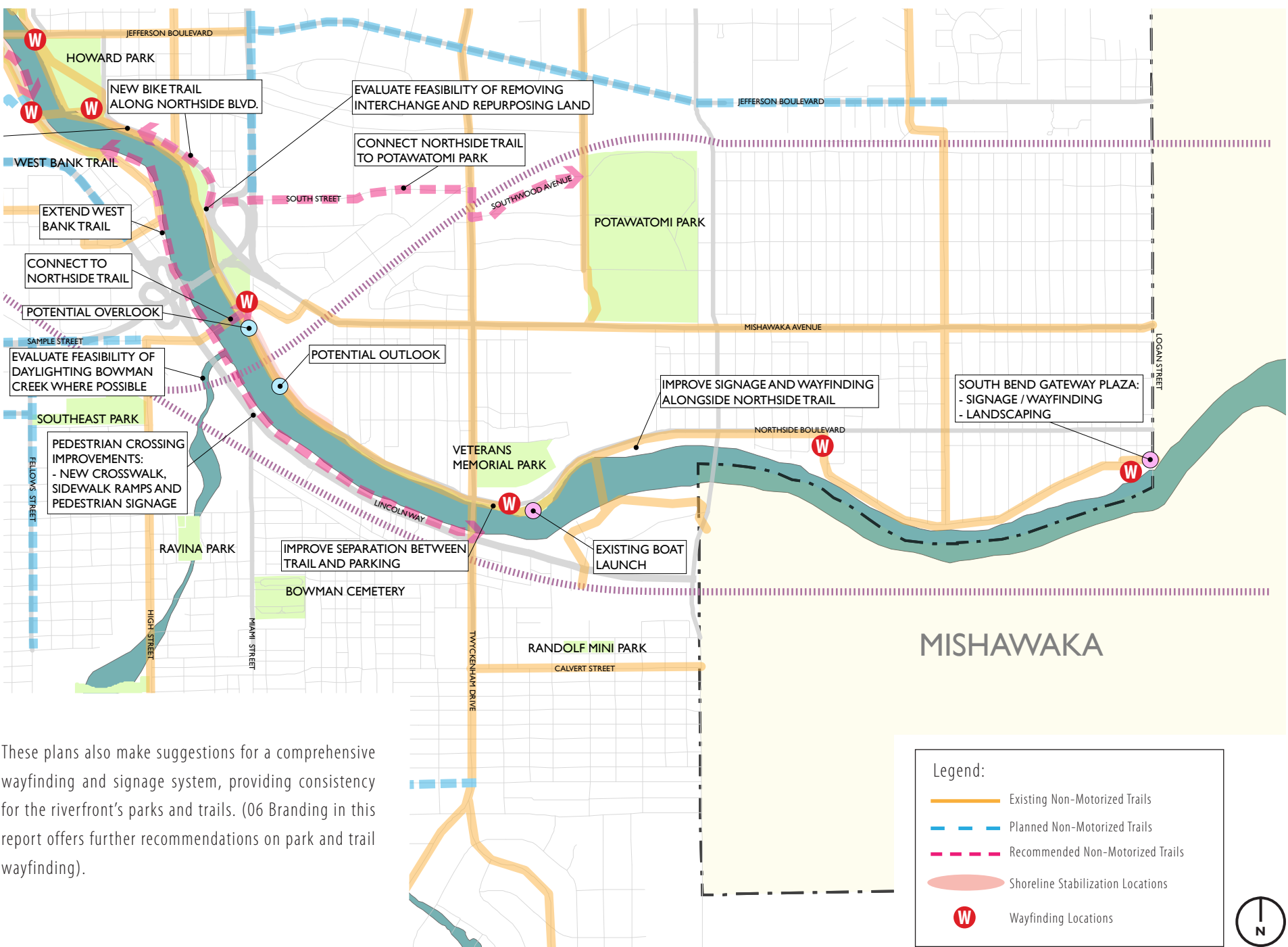
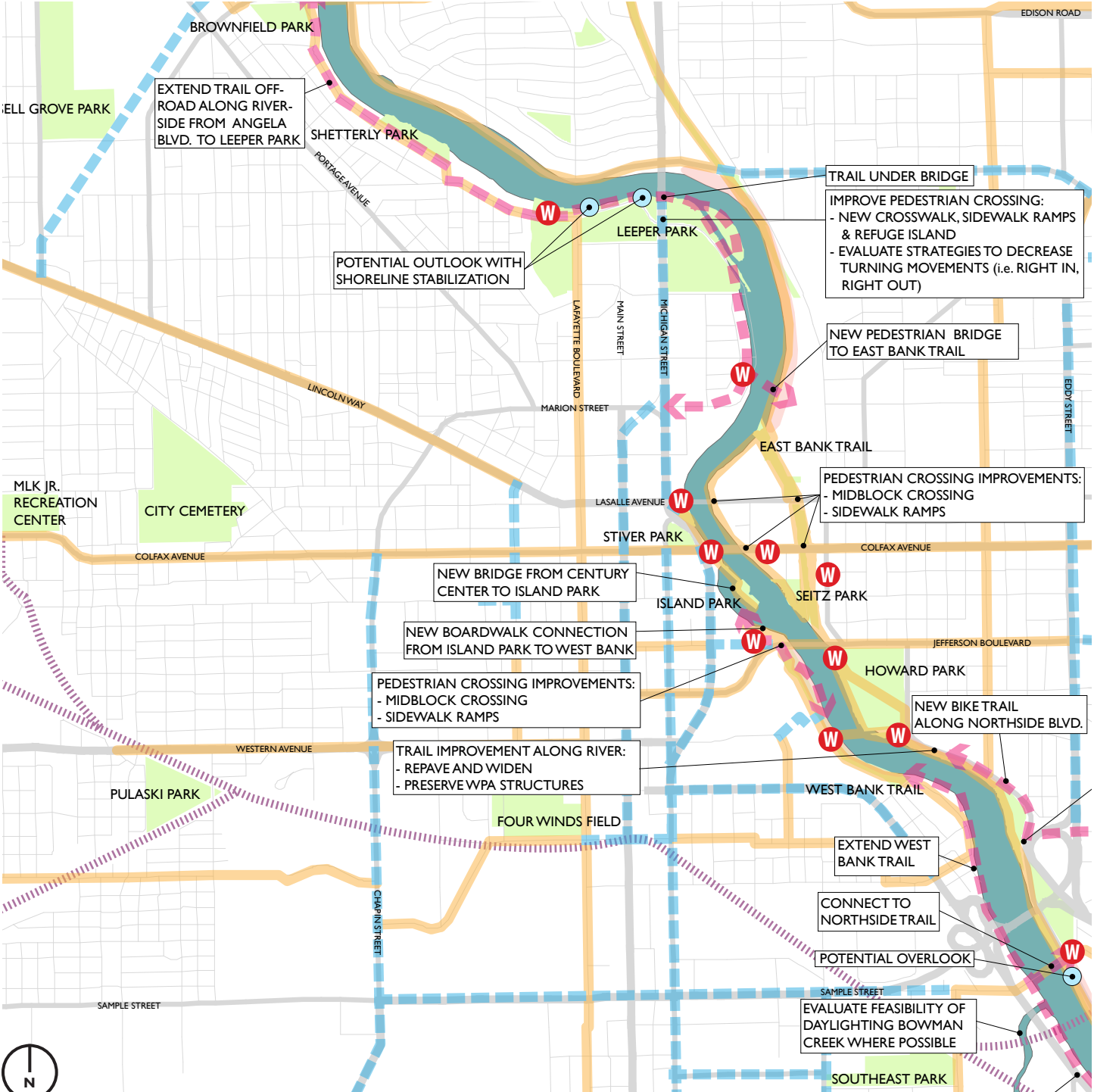
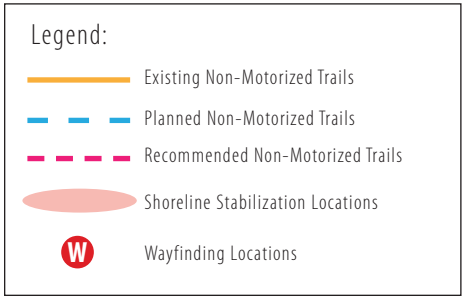
The Connectivity Plan also shows areas for trail and park improvement that will enhance the user experience along the South Bend's riverfront park and trail system. These plans suggest locations for:

- overlooks
- boat launches
- trail extensions
- shoreline stabilization

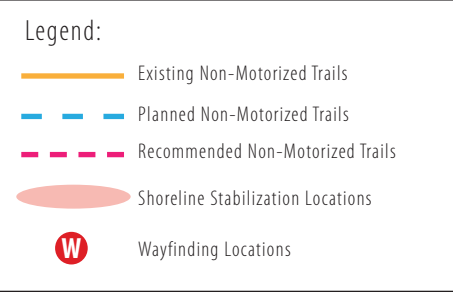


These plans also highlight details improvements to both the trails and the streets to create seamless connections between the two. Some identified areas are suggested for:

- improved midblock crossings
- improved sidewalk ramps
- Pedestrian refuge islands
- Preservation of WPA structures



These plans also make suggestions for a comprehensive wayfinding and signage system, providing consistency for the riverfront's parks and trails. (06 Branding in this report offers further recommendations on park and trail wayfinding).



06 BRANDING STRATEGY

One of the key elements to this report is improving the connectivity between the parks and trails within South Bend. That goal also transpires toward building continuity for those parks and trails in terms of design standards and common aesthetic. Building a strong brand for the The Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework strengthens the identity of the system, and brings all its individual parts into one cohesive language. This section outlines recommendations for signage and wayfinding, and common elements and materials that should be considered throughout the riverfront parks and trail system.



SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING

The Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework proposes a comprehensive and unified signage and wayfinding strategy that offers varying levels of information and establishes a well-defined brand associated with the Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework. A hierarchy of sign elements incorporating the Riverfront Parks & Trails logo and colors is recommended providing several levels of information:

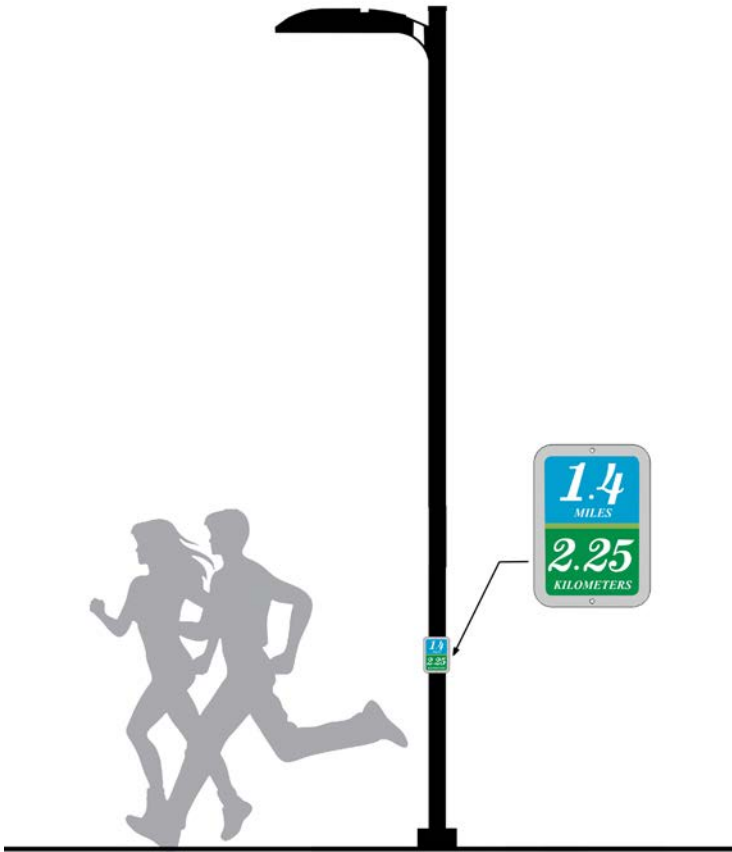
- A large scale park & trailhead marker that identifies major destinations,
- A large-scale system map that allows visitors to orient themselves and discover other park destinations,
- Large-scale wayfinding signs that provide information on and directions to numerous destinations and could include flexible messaging providing updates on park events,
- Small-scale wayfinding signs that provide localized information within specific parks,
- Mile marker signs that provide distance information for biker, runners and walkers, and
- Interchange banners that can reinforce the brand and provide notice for specific events .



Park & Trail Head Marker



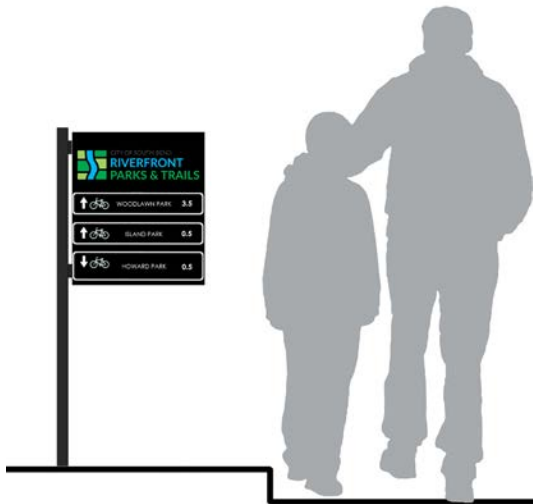
You Are Here Trail Head Marker



Mile Marker Signage



Large Wayfinding Sign, for Major Points



Small Wayfinding Sign, for Minor Points



Banners

SITE LIGHTING

Lighting is a critical element of the public realm. The purpose of lighting is 1) to improve the legibility of critical nodes, circulation and activity zones in the landscape and 2) facilitate the safe movement of pedestrians and vehicles, promoting a more secure environment and minimizing the potential for personal harm and damage to property.

Lighting also provides atmosphere and a means to delineate specific use areas. With respect to the Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework, pedestrian, landscape and festival/seasonal lighting should all be carefully considered with the assumption that traditional roadway lighting would certainly be in place.

- Pedestrian lighting is typically mounted lower than roadway lighting at a height ranging from 12'-16' above the sidewalk. There are a wide range of light fixture styles available. One should be selected for use throughout the park system that is contemporary in style to reinforce the character and image of the park system.
- Landscape lighting refers to the use of outdoor illumination of public spaces for the enhancement of safety, nighttime aesthetics, accessibility, security and social and event uses. While pedestrian lighting is typically pole mounted, landscape lighting can be installed in a variety of ways including bollards, and recessed wall mounts.
- Festival/seasonal lighting is more temporal in nature than the other types described and includes applications like catenary twinkle lights strung across a festival street or plaza or lights strung in a tree for seasonal effect.



Images of Site Lighting



SEATING AND BENCHES

Street furnishings include benches, chairs, seatwalls and other fixed structures that provide places for pedestrians to sit and rest. These make the parks more accessible for all users and especially those with mobility challenges by providing places to stop and rest. A contemporary style of aluminum or aluminum/wood should be selected for use throughout the system with an emphasis on durability. Historically, street furnishings have been secured to the hardscape to prevent vandalism. There are current trends to incorporate movable furnishings in some locations.



Images of Seating and Benches



SITE AMENITIES

In addition to benches, numerous other site amenities are an important element in the park system. They serve an aesthetic, as well as a utilitarian function and can enliven and provide variety to outdoor spaces. This includes refuse and recycling receptacles, including dog waste receptacles, and drinking fountains. Proper selection, design and placement of these amenities will reinforce a unified district theme.

Durability of materials and ease of maintenance after installation are critical considerations. Provisions to accommodate persons with disabilities shall be incorporated into the design and siting of furnishings. This includes provision for space adjacent to walkways for wheelchair and/or stroller parking.

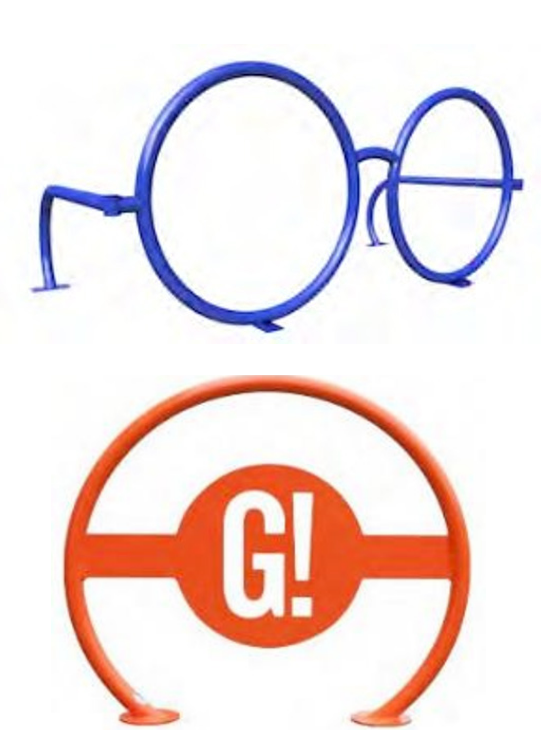


Images of Site Amenities



BICYCLE ELEMENTS

Among the necessary supports for bicycle transportation, bicycle parking stands out as both vital and easy. Consideration of short-term and long-term installations are important. Traditional bike hoops are typical but contemporary or even logo-style hops may be appropriate in certain locations. A bicycle repair stop provides a location for individuals to make minor repairs to their bicycle. These stops include all the tools necessary to perform basic bicycle repair and maintenance, from changing a flat tire to adjusting brakes and derailleurs. The tools and air pump are securely attached and a hanger arm allows the pedals and wheels to spin freely while making adjustments.

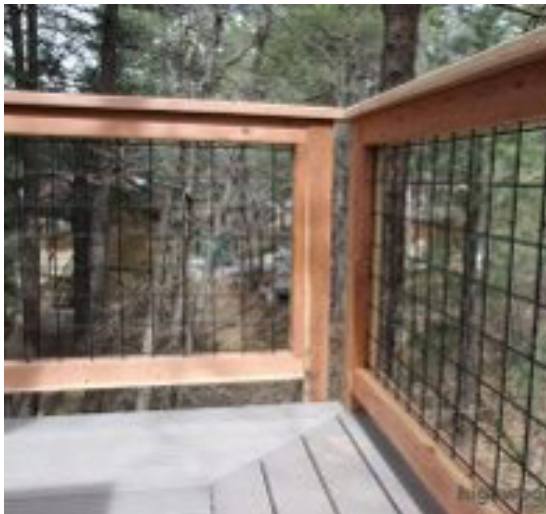


Images of Bicycle Elements



FENCES AND RAILINGS

The Riverfront Park & Trail Conceptual Framework has a need for a variety of fences and railings throughout. Generally, standard metal tube is appropriate. However, metal tube with a panel insert or wood with a mesh insert adds character in certain applications. Site specific “custom” railings may also be appropriate in certain locations, such as Seitz Park, where a more concentrated aesthetic is suitable.



Images of Fences and Railings

PUBLIC ART

Public art in the park system can create more vibrancy and interest for visitors. Public art can assume many different forms, from murals on the sides of buildings, to fixed sculptures, projected images, artistic crosswalks, to temporary exhibits and installations. Incorporating public art into other street elements, such as light post banners, the sides of waste receptacles, and signal boxes, can transform common street elements into unique features. Public art helps activate less intensely used areas and fosters care and investment in the community.

Permanent art installations include elements in a variety of media planned and executed with the intention of usually being staged outside and accessible to all. Temporary installations offer artists an opportunity to engage the public without being concerned about building a permanent installation. Temporary art is frequently created using unusual media or installed in unexpected locations. They may benefit a particular cause, stimulate public awareness of an important or timely issue or simply add momentary beauty to a site.



Images of Public Art



SURPRISE AND DELIGHT

Surprise and delight is the concept of introducing experiences in the park settings that slide the dial from “mundane” to “awesome”, that make people feel like they are part of a unique setting or discovering something in unexpected places. Like public art, this can take many forms in items like adult swings and hammocks, sound producing elements or interactive installations. The intent is to create a sense within people that they have found or have become a part of something special. This will result in them sharing stories with friends and returning over and over to recreate the experience.



Images of Surprise and Delight Elements

07 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The 2017 The Riverfront Parks & Trails Conceptual Framework represents a vision that focuses on unifying the existing riverfront parks and trails system within the City of South Bend. This report presents a framework to guide implementation of the improvements realizing that each of the various elements may evolve in shape and form as they move into design and engineering. It is anticipated that public engagement will continue as projects are advanced and the community voice will be an important part of that shaping process.

At this point, the primary emphasis of the framework plan has been focused on Seitz Park and Howard Park. Funding is in place to initiate the design and engineering of a portion of Howard Park and that is moving forward toward 2018 implementation. The University of Notre Dame’s hydroelectric project at Seitz Park is anticipated to start this fall and the City is working with Notre Dame to coordinate required underground infrastructure that will facilitate park improvements upon completion.

Reimagining elements of the framework plan will be considered as funding sources are identified. In addition, some of the recommendations require an analysis to determine feasibility, such as re-establishing a hydraulic connection with the river at Pinhook Park. It is suggested that some of the gaps in the riverfront trail system be evaluated for implementation sooner than later. The segment on Lincoln Way between Sample Street and Twychenham Drive would be a good candidate to explore in the near future. A trail in this location would improve riverfront connectivity with the neighborhoods south and east of Downtown. Selective clearing along this segment would provide wonderful views to the river.

