

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.

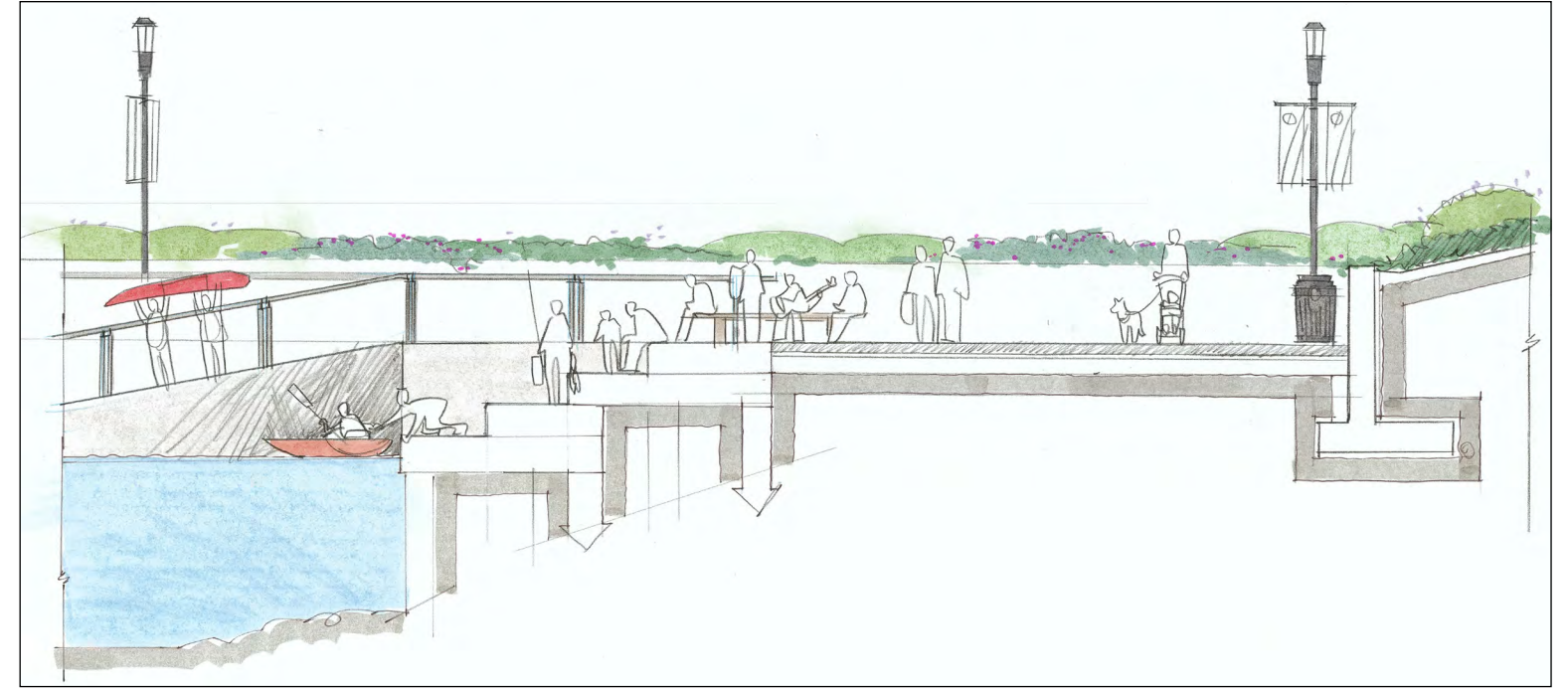
6. Fish Ladder — The existing fish ladder provides important research and data collection for the IDNR. It is suggested that interpretive opportunities be integrated with this facility so that visitors can understand how it is serving its purpose.

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.

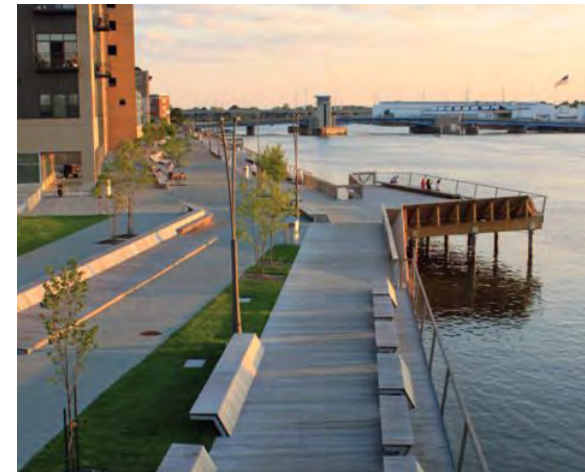
8. East Race Path — It is recommended to widen the path and improve seating opportunities along the west side of the East Race. This can be accomplished by removing some of the grading and existing concrete structure and adding new steps to improve the exhibition potential in this area. This includes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