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## 5. Father Hennepin Bluffs Park and Hennepin Island

As described in existing conditions portion of Chapter 2, Father Hennepin Bluffs Park lies on the upland portion of the park and Hennepin Island spans the portion of the park down the bluff along the wooded river floor. Because of the topographic change, these two adjacent parks have their own unique character and programming function. This area also encompasses Phillip Pillsbury Park, across from the A Mill, and Lucy Morris Wilder Park between the entrance to the Stone Arch Bridge and the University of Minnesota Power Plant.

### Father Hennepin Bluffs Park

Directives for this area were to improve overall circulation between the upper and lower parts of the park. It is important to let people engage with the edge while also protecting the sensitive bluff. The goal for Father Hennepin Bluffs is to improve circulation and park function while opening up the park edge to the street and surrounding neighborhoods. This upland area would continue to be programmed for medium sized events, concerts, and picnicking.

A key inholding is located at 600 Main on the other side of the park from 6th Avenue SE. This land, if acquired in the future, could provide an extension of the programming of Father Hennepin Bluffs Park and would help frame the park entry experience along 6th Avenue to the Stone Arch Bridge. This parcel is on the terminus for the axial view from the east end of the Stone Arch Bridge.

### Supporting Initiatives (see Figure 36):

- A. Create a permeable park edge along Main Street that promotes connections to the neighborhood

while strengthening the Park's orientation towards the River. This could include the following initiatives:

- Remove berming along the Main Street edge where appropriate.
  - Manage deciduous trees to maintain an over-story canopy, particularly as ash trees are removed over time, in a manner that also frames views to the River.
- B. Realign pedestrian and bicycle trails to meander close to the bluff edge in a manner that does not interfere with the band shell function.
  - C. Build a new band shell away from the sensitive bluff edge in a manner that still maintains the open space of the park.
  - D. Selectively remove degraded and/or invasive vegetation to frame views to the river along the bluff edge.
  - E. Clarify and emphasize pedestrian and bike circulation at the junction of the Stone Arch Bridge and 6th Avenue SE in a manner that reinforces the historic connection to the rail alignment. This could also include the following initiatives:
    - Provide a signature entry experience as outlined in the East Bank interpretive plan.

- Extend 6th Avenue Greenway design and create a programmable convertible street between the 6th Avenue and Main intersection and the Stone Arch Bridge while still allowing University of Minnesota service vehicles and emergency vehicle access.
  - Interpret the historic railroad alignment to promote wayfinding for bicyclists and pedestrians.
  - Eliminate the utilitarian experience of the existing cul-de-sac.
  - Provide a safe, accessible surface for bicyclists and pedestrians while still maintaining the historic cobblestones.
- F. Add a restroom facility and/or visitor orientation center.



Figure 36 : Father Hennepin Bluffs Park Recommendations



Left to Right- Precedent Image of Boardwalk Trail, Views to Pillsbury A Mill from Hennepin Island, Hennepin Island View to Stone Arch Bridge

## Hennepin Island

The goal for Hennepin Island was to preserve the character of the wild river floor while improving accessibility to this unique place. This area would stay programmed for passive recreation, wildlife viewing, and interpretation.

The concept of re-establishing the East Falls has been outlined in multiple planning efforts, including the St. Anthony Falls Historic District Guidelines and the East Bank Interpretive Plan. The addition of the East Falls would bring additional interpretive opportunities and draw more visitors to this area. It is important to the community that the East Falls be re-established in a manner that is not forced or artificial.

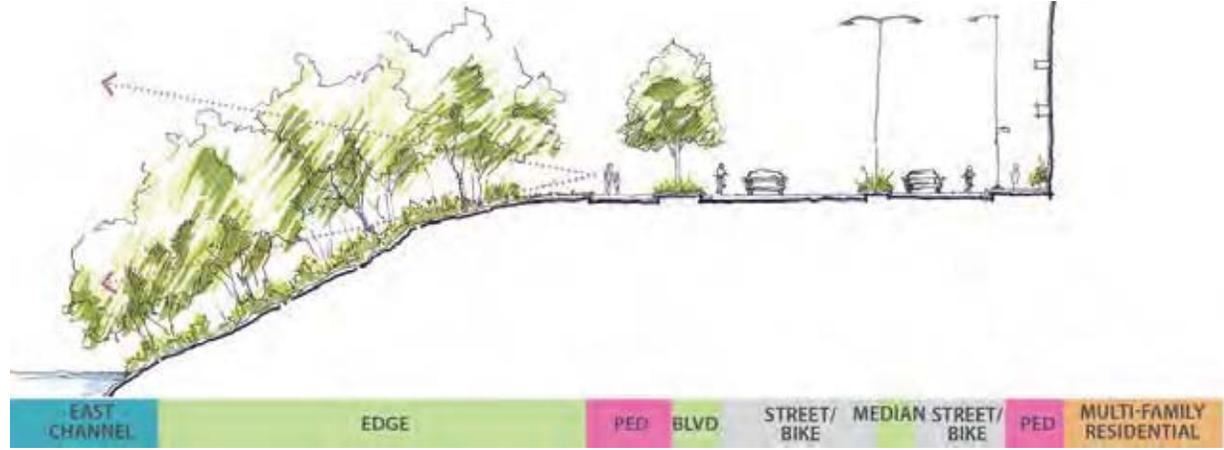
### Supporting Initiatives (see Figure 37):

- G. Stabilize eroded slopes; restore native vegetation on bluff and shorelines to improve wildlife habitat.

- H. Restore water flow to the East Falls in a manner that maintains natural gravity flow.
- I. Improve the trail connection at the “pinch point” along the bluff edge across from the Pillsbury A Mill. Explore options to provide separate pedestrian and bike connections in a manner gives priority to the pedestrian experience versus the vehicular experience. Solutions considered should not impact the historic resources in and along the bluff.
- J. Create a new looped trail connection along the bluff between Hennepin Island and Stone Arch Bridge to replace the existing stairway near Stone Arch Bridge.
- K. Partner with the City and Xcel Energy to promote access to the river.
  - Create ADA access to Hennepin Island using the 3rd Avenue SE extension.
  - Consider lengthening the hours and season of Water Power Park.
- L. Create lower pedestrian trail connections to Water Power Park and to the University of Minnesota portage area.
- M. Acquire and remove ADM substation.
- N. Integrate Xcel Energy Main Street Plant as a visitor amenity.
- O. Support an Interpretive Center at the Pillsbury A-Mill. Partner with Dominion and the Minnesota Historical Society to create a tunnel connection from the Pillsbury A-Mill to Father Hennepin Bluffs Park.



Figure 37 : Hennepin Island Recommendations



Left to Right- Parkway Trail Character, Conceptual Cross-section of Off-Street Trail Between East Hennepin and 1st Avenue NE

## 6. Main Street

During the process of public engagement, this study area of Main Street grew beyond the historic Main in order to provide a vision for the entire Main Street corridor.

Main Street, for this purpose of this document, includes the Marshall Street NE and Main Street corridor from Plymouth Avenue to the north and to 6th Avenue SE to the south. It also includes the segment between 6th Avenue SE to East River Road that is currently outside the existing park boundary.

The key directive for Main Street is to create a continuous parkway experience along Main Street NE and Marshall Street NE and establish a continuous bike and pedestrian trail system on the east side that does not exist today.

A parkway generally includes:

- » Bicycle and pedestrian trails, separated if space allows

- » A motor vehicle road, typically 24' in width, large trucks and buses are usually not permitted
- » Vegetation of varying types

### Main to Marshall (Plymouth Avenue to 1st Avenue NE)

#### Supporting Initiatives (see Figure 38):

- The MPRB will **work** with partner agencies to create a parkway-like experience on Marshall and mitigate the suburban edge to the street.
- Promote the Grand Rounds parkway lighting and signage standard to establish a continuous sense of streetscape along Main Street NE/Marshall Street NE between Plymouth Ave and 1st Avenue NE.
- Establish safe connections and crossings from the neighborhood to the regional park.
  - o 5th Avenue NE bikeway to BF Nelson Park

- o 3rd Avenue NE to BF Nelson Park.

### “The Seam” (1st Avenue NE to E Hennepin Avenue)

#### Supporting Initiatives (see Figure 39):

- Narrow the roadway between East Hennepin and 1st Avenue NE to provide space for an off-street pedestrian and bike trail connection on the river-side of the road.

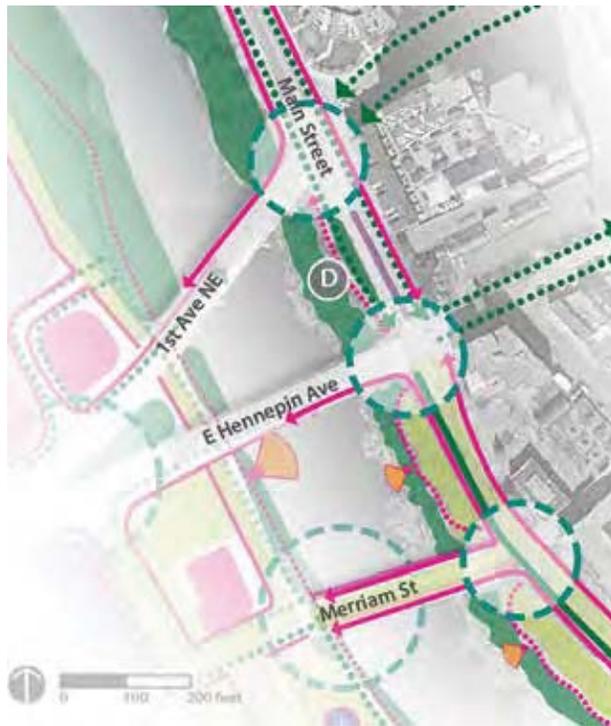


Figure 39: "The Seam" Recommendations



Figure 38: Main to Marshall Recommendations

## Historic Main Street (E Hennepin Avenue to 6th Avenue SE)

### Supporting Initiatives (see Figure 40):

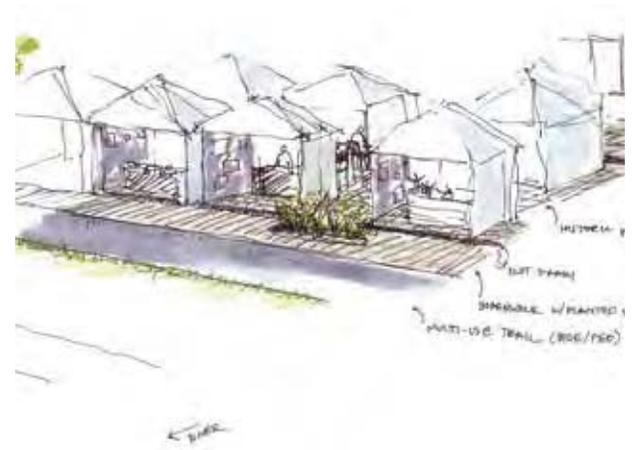
- E. Create more flexible space for everyday activities and events, while maintaining historic features and green space.
- F. Integrate stormwater treatment to define separation between the roadway and trail system.
- G. Create a performance/event space under the 3rd Avenue Bridge by enhancing lighting and the bridge understructure.
- H. Create public gathering areas at the water's edge while promoting shoreline restoration.
- I. Create separate bike and pedestrian trails along historic Main Street SE.



Charrette Concept for 3rd Avenue Bridge Performance Space



Outdoor Seasonal Dining



Charrette Concept for Flexible Street Section for Festivals/Market tents