Water Works: Downtown Minneapolis’ Riverfront Destination

• Previous conceptual design process for Water Works began in 2012 along with the Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan Update
• 2015 Water Works concept
Water Works: A Visionary Reset

• Preliminary design explorations in 2012
• Conceptual design & community engagement in 2013/2014
  – Part of Central Riverfront Regional Park master plan update
• Concept design approved by Park Board in September 2015
A Park Program for the Next Generation

A place for all weather, all seasons, and all times of day

A well cared-for place that accommodates basic visitor needs

A place that is financially self-supportive

A place to ARRIVE and BE on the downtown riverfront

A place for diverse interests, extended stays, and regular visits

A place of surprise and wonder where history is revealed

Audience
- Enthusiasts (river, history, culture, arts)
- Walking-distance residents and office dwellers
- Visitors with access needs
- Tourists
- Urban explorers
- Linear athletes
- Parents with kids in tow
- Teens
- Event-goers
Phasing Strategy

- **Mezzanine Phase**
  - Construction: 2017
  - Opening: 2019

- **Riverside Phase**
  - Construction: 2021
  - Opening: 2023
What Has Happened in the Past 12 Months

- Design / cultural resource team selected (DF, HGA, 106 Group, MacDonald & Mack, others)
- Deep historic / archeological analysis conducted
- Park and pavilion program analysis completed
- Precedents analyzed
- Former Fuji Ya building documented and deconstruction plans prepared
- Interviews with community leaders and elders and interpretive planning
- Rainwater reuse strategy completed and $900,000 granted by MWMO to implement it
- $12.3m of $15m philanthropic goal achieved
What Has Been Learned

• Water Works is even more complex than already understood
• The structural remnants of Bassett and Columbia Mills are rich and engaging
• There are countless untold stories that could be expressed
• Water Works holds the opportunity to be
  – A venue for storytelling and more importantly,
  – A venue for people and peoples to tell their own stories

As a result...an evolved concept
What Will Happen Over the Next 12 Months

Apr-June  Community reengaged around evolved concept
May 1&2   Public Open Houses
June 7    MPRB Planning Committee considers evolved concept
          6:30 public hearing
June 28   MPRB full Board approval, 5:00 PM
June      Historic agency permits for Fuji Ya selective demo and stabilization
July-Aug  Work on former Fuji Ya building begins
July-Mar  Schematic design and construction docs
2017      Food vendor RFI released
December  Finish out fundraising campaign
2018      Archaeological excavation and park construction
Water Works
Cultural Resources
Historic Mill Structures

- Within the Mezzanine Phase of work include the foundations of the Bassett Mill, Columbia Mill, and Occidental Mill
Interpretive Planning

- Began in 2016
- The cultural resources team is seeking to understand some of the lesser known history of marginalized communities around the site
- Team is currently conducting a second round of interviews with Native American elders and African American elders

Read the Interpretive Planning Research and Implications
Cultural Resources

- Dakota camp at the site of Bridge Square just northeast of Water Works, 1852.
- Painting of Saint Anthony Falls by Henry Lewis, circa 1847.
- Bassett’s Second Sawmill, the Columbia Flour Mill, and the Occidental Feed Mill in 1899.
- View of the flour mills on the West Bank of the Mississippi, and the train that transported the flour, in 1890.
- Bird’s eye view of the Water Works site in 1891.

WATER WORKS HISTORIC RESOURCES MAP
Water Works is on the west bank of downtown Minneapolis just north of where the Stone Arch Bridge reaches the west bank and south of where the Third Avenue Bridge reaches the west bank of the river. This area referred to as the Mill District includes the Mill City Museum (1.5 blocks to the south), Gold Medal Park (3.5 blocks to the south), The Commons and US Bank Stadium further west, Cancer Survivors Park and the Gateway District along Hennepin Avenue to the north, and Nicollet Island and Hennepin Island and Water Power Park in the river to the east. West River Parkway extends through this entire area along the river.
SITE PLAN

Project is bound by First Street on west, Third Avenue Bridge on north, West River Parkway on east, and Fifth Avenue on south. Adjacent buildings include the Crown Roller Mill (city offices), Riverwest (residential tower), Engine House (offices) and Mill Place (offices). West River Parkway divides the current project site from the river. The second phase of the project (Riverside Phase) will address the shoreline and area to the south and east of the parkway. At the south end of the project, the proposed pavilion forms a retaining wall between First Street and the lower park level. A plaza in front of the pavilion provides outdoor seating and flexible park space. The one story pavilion also has a usable rooftop deck that is generally at the elevation of First Street. North of the pavilion are the city steps that terrace from First Street down to the lower park level and can be used as informal social seating and gathering for performances. Adjacent to, and north of, the city steps, the hillside provides a natural area and children’s place space overlooking the park below. In front of the city steps and hillside, a lawn area allows for flexible park uses.
West River Parkway and the adjacent bicycle and pedestrian pathway along the river are heavily traveled. At the southern end, the Stone Arch Bridge brings visitors to the park. The current bridge trail ends near a parking lot. A future connection will bring visitors directly to the existing river trail. The First Street and Fifth Avenue intersection is about 20 feet higher than West River Parkway. An accessible ramp at the southern corner of the project will bring pedestrians down to the lower park and parkway level where the main building entrance is. The northern end of the pavilion rooftop is accessible from the First Street sidewalk. Adjacent to the pavilion, the city steps also provide access from First Street to the lower level of the park. At the northern end of the site, the First Street and Third Avenue Bridge intersection is about 33 feet higher than West River Parkway. From the woonerf, pedestrians have accessible routes down to the lower park level (plaza, parkway, and building entrance), or up to the First Street and rooftop level. Bicyclists have a route from the woonerf to the parkway trails at the northern perimeter of the site.
CULTURAL RESOURCES

Several historic structures exist on site and will be integrated into the plan. The small plaza at the south end of the site incorporates unidentified structural ruins. There are mill walls and mechanics underground, but the exact configuration is still unknown. Early archaeological digging will help the team design around the remnants. The pavilion will reuse the walls of the Bassett and Columbia Mills. The city steps will use the back wall of the Occidental feed mill and will work with the front wall if it exists. The historic railroad right-of-way extends straight off of the Stone Arch Bridge and swings west into the plaza and lawn area. An existing scale pit is directly between the historic rail path and the Columbia Mill. The historic rail right of way will be interpreted on site.
Pavilion and city steps are at the far south end of the park. Along the east edge, First Street is generally level with the pavilion roof. West River Parkway forms the west edge of the project site; the narrow strip of land between the parkway and the river is included in the future second phase. Just east of West River Parkway, linear lawn space approximately 25 feet wide allows for small and large group use. The lawn is slightly above the parkway elevation at the northern half of the park. Accessible pathways from the woonerf provide access to the upper and lower levels of the park.
The southern area of the park is defined by the Crown Roller Mill, Riverwest, the new pavilion building, and West River Parkway which curves to form a triangular plaza south of the pavilion. An accessible route is provided through the triangular plaza from First Street to the lower level. The plaza in front of the pavilion opens directly onto the new parkway crossing that leads to the Stone Arch Bridge.
The pavilion acts as a retaining wall between the upper level on First Street and the lower level near West River Parkway. The building roof is slightly above First Street. Because the street slopes, the building roof elevation is even with the sidewalk on the north end, allowing for rooftop access. The building floor is even with the lower park level and the plaza is generally level with West River Parkway. Beyond the parkway, land slopes down to the river.
The pavilion entrance is centrally located between historic mill walls and an outdoor plaza will be generally at the same level as the parkway and building entrance. West River Parkway will have new crossings and the team will examine strategies for crossings that prioritize pedestrians and methods for calming traffic.
CAFÉ INTERIOR CONCEPT

The public seating area inside the building cafe is a long, linear space with glass walls and likely will include doors leading directly to the outdoor seating plaza. The glass wall is just inside of the historic mill foundation wall that remains.
CONCEPT VIEW | GREENROOF AND PLAZA

On the roof a walkway around the edge and railing provide an overlook area. A small green roof area could be used for lawn games and flexible picnic area. To the right (east) of the pavilion is the edge of the plaza in front of the building. Further north is the mezzanine lawn with a walkway along the east side and the city steps and hillside shaping the space on the west.
The north end of the park is defined by the one story Engine House and the larger Riverwest and Mill Place buildings to the west. West River Parkway generally parallels First Street and forms a rectangular park area. An accessible route is provided from the upper First Street level to the lower woonerf level and then from the woonerf down to the parkway level. The city steps and hillside transition from the upper First Street level to the lower lawn level. A play area is incorporated into the hillside and lawn area. A future pedestrian connection will be provided from the Third Avenue/First Street intersection down to the park level. The woonerf is the primary bicycle route through the site down to the Stone Arch Bridge and riverfront trails. The bicycle route will eventually continue north under the Third Avenue bridge on the west side of West River Parkway and to the river trails on the east side.
CONCEPT VIEW | EVENT LAWN AND CITY STEPS

Mezzanine lawn is about 25 feet wide and is open for flexible use. To the right of the lawn in this view, a walkway provides a connection from the north end of the project to the plaza at the south end. The lawn stays fairly level and the walkway slopes down toward the plaza. Seating facing the river is provided where lawn and walkway meet. To the left of the lawn the city steps provide seating overlooking the lawn and river. The steps provide a transition for people to move between First Street at the upper level and the lawn and main park area below.
The city steps provide seating terraces down from the First Street level to the lower mezzanine lawn, which is several feet above West River Parkway. First Street is approximately one story higher than the lawn and parkway at this area.
SECTION | PLAY AND MEZZANINE LAWN

The hillside transitions down from the First Street level to the lower mezzanine lawn. An accessible walkway runs from First Street down the hillside to the woonerf. Children's play is incorporated into the hillside and northern end of the park.
CONCEPT VIEW | PLAY AREA AND MEZZANINE PROMENADE

Winter scene shows that sledding may be possible on the lower part of the hillside. Lights, luminaries, ice sculptures and other winter attractions may be a part of winter programming on the lawn.
SECTION | WOONERF PLAZA

The woonerf enters the site under First Street and the existing bridge abutment wall may be an opportunity for public art, etc. From the woonerf, an accessible route leads north to First Street or south down to the mezzanine lawn, walkway, and West River Parkway. The site in this area spans approximately three stories with the Third Avenue and First Street intersection at the top, the woonerf in the middle, and West River Parkway below.
Pavilion and city steps are at the far south end of the park. Along the east edge, First Street is generally level with the pavilion roof. West River Parkway forms the west edge of the project site; the narrow strip of land between the parkway and the river is included in the future second phase. Just east of West River Parkway, linear lawn space approximately 25 feet wide allows for small and large group use. The lawn is slightly above the parkway elevation at the northern half of the park. Accessible pathways from the woonerf provide access to the upper and lower levels of the park.
Your Experience at Water Works
Creating Community Life After the Ribbon Cutting

Activities, Amenities, and Experiences to:

• Ensure the design realizes its fullest potential
• Celebrate the wonderful cultural diversity of the site and our city in the park
• Enable the life of the park to evolve to meet the ever-changing needs and opportunities of our community

Our Output

• Crafting list of priority experience, uses and activities for user groups
• Developing the activities and events plan for the site
Fostering a Continuum of Experiences
Ensuring Public Enjoyment Across Times and Seasons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Every Day Experiences</th>
<th>Weekly Routines</th>
<th>Seasonal Traditions</th>
<th>Signature Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Places to sit</td>
<td>Markets</td>
<td>Community festivals</td>
<td>Northern Spark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games to play</td>
<td>Small performances</td>
<td>Installations</td>
<td>Large concerts, performances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food to eat</td>
<td>Picnics</td>
<td>Field trips</td>
<td>Stone Arch Bridge Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking your dog</td>
<td>Buskers</td>
<td>Weddings</td>
<td>Opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water to drink</td>
<td>Family gatherings</td>
<td>Outdoor movies</td>
<td>Fitness events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercising</td>
<td>Art making</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>Cultural and historical classes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biking</td>
<td>Community meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nap in the grass</td>
<td>Walking tours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo ops</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What We’ve Heard Thus Far: 2013-2015
What We’ve Heard Thus Far

- Access to water and natural habitat
- Winter activities
- Programs, activities and amenities that are relevant to the diversity of cultures and traditions of the site
- Spaces for all ages
- Food to buy and eat onsite
- Comfortable venues to people watch
- Enhance the walking, running, and biking experience
- Clean and safe public restrooms
## Water Works: The User Experience

What do you want to be able to **do** at this space?

Activities – Uses – Events – Rituals – Routines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>NIGHT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Everyday</td>
<td>Special event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SPRING &amp; SUMMER</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FALL &amp; WINTER</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Water Works: The User Experience

Imagine yourself visiting Water Works Park alone or with others in 5 years.

What is the one thing you notice, feel, experience most?
Water Works: The User Experience

How can food be central to the Water Works experience?