

proposed park with beach at the Scherer Bros. site



SECTION 6

Park Development Concept



PARK VISION

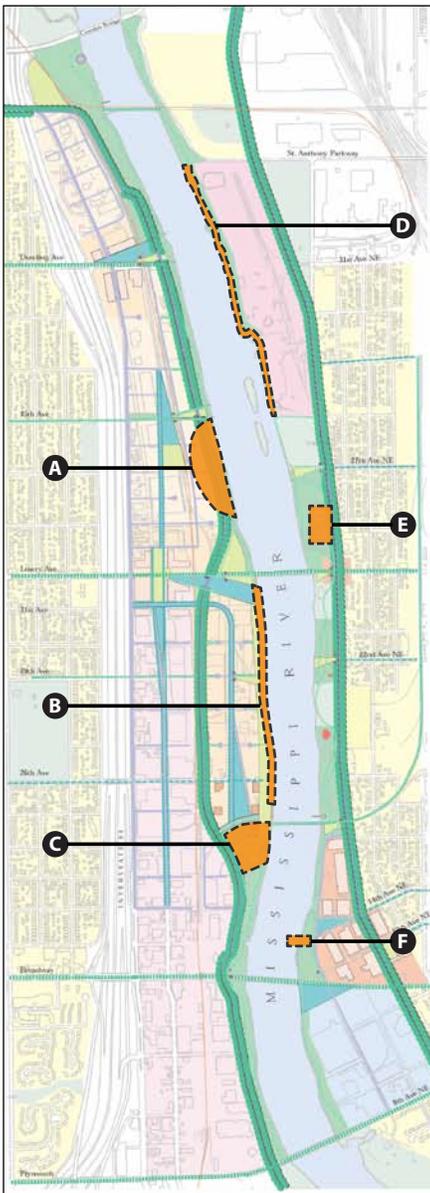
As described in the 2000 ATF Master Plan, Above the Falls Regional Park is envisioned as a continuous parks and trails system along both banks of the Mississippi River, offering recreational amenities within a framework of restored ecological function. The Regional Park is intended to provide public access to the Mississippi River; enhance the habitat, structure and function of the river and its environs; and connect to the Grand Rounds National Scenic Byway. To achieve this a number of actions are needed, including the acquisition of additional park land; development of parks with new recreational and public-water access amenities; continued habitat creation and riverbank restoration; and construction of new parkways and trails.

BASIS IN 2000 ATF MASTER PLAN

While much of the 2000 ATF Plan is retained in this 2019 ATF Park Plan, some changes to the park development concept have been infused from plans adopted more recently by MPRB (ATF Phase I plan, Sheridan Memorial Park plan, and RiverFirst). For example, one important difference centers on the west bank between Lowry Ave. and the BNSF railroad bridge. The 2000 ATF Plan envisioned "The Promenade," a dense neighborhood of new high-rise, mixed-use buildings with a formal, hardened esplanade along the river's edge. West River Parkway was shown as separated from the riverbank parks, inland from this mixed-use district. Implementation of this new district was to come via massive public buyout programs and condemnation through eminent domain, making way for simultaneous public infrastructure investments and large Tax Increment Finance-funded private redevelopment projects.

This 2019 ATF Park Plan recognizes that such sweeping implementation strategies are not viable given the funding and tools now available to MPRB and the City of Minneapolis. Instead, this plan returns to the implementation model championed by H.W.S. Cleveland at the creation of the Minneapolis park system: to secure public access to natural amenities such as lakes and rivers by surrounding them with parks, and to allow private economic development to evolve independent of yet strengthened by public parks.

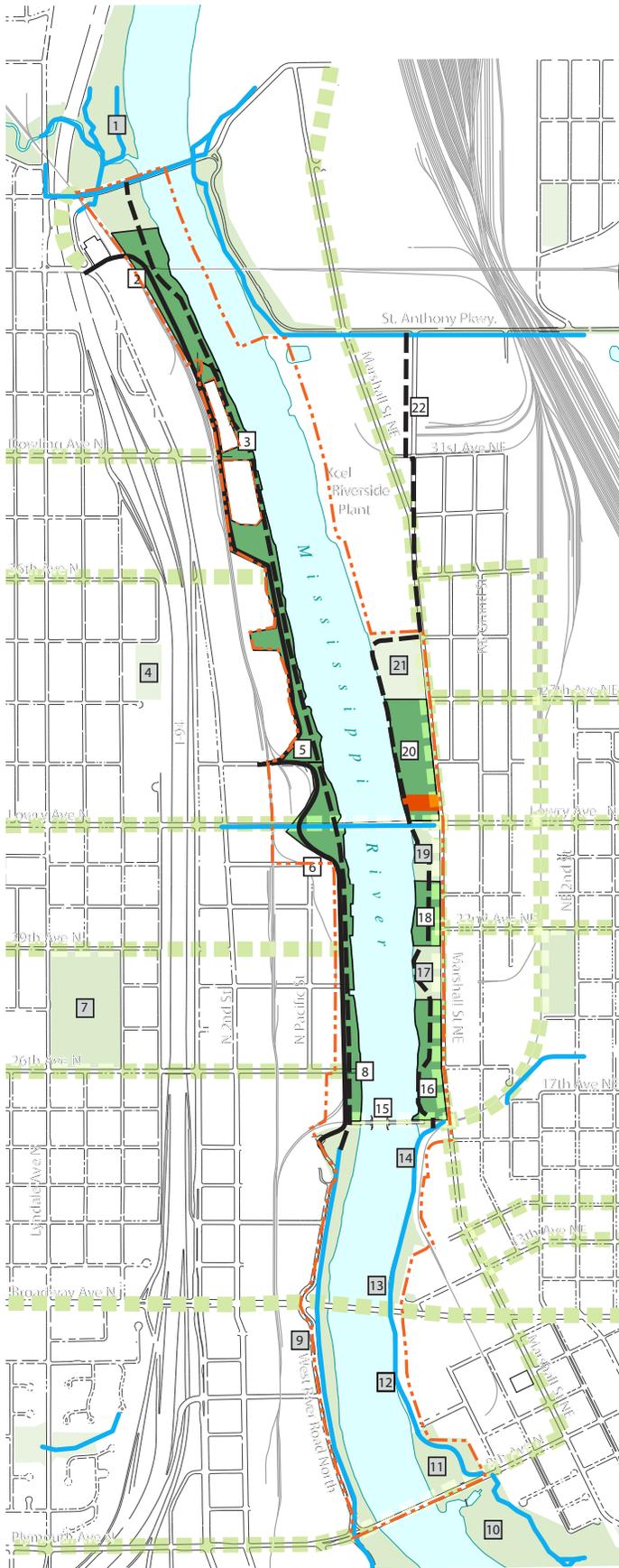
The table below and the map at left summarize those elements from the 2000 ATF Master Plan that have been superseded by subsequent park planning:



Some park elements from the 2000 ATF Master Plan are superseded by concepts in this 2019 ATF Park Plan.

Map	2000 Park Concept	2019 Park Concept
A	Parkway only	Parkway and Northside Wetlands Park ¹
B	The Promenade	Parkway, restored riverbank and 26th Ave N overlook ¹
C	Skyline Amphitheater	"Ole" Olson Park as shown in 2006 ATF Phase I plan ²
D	Riverbank trail at Xcel	trail at Marshall St NE and NE Columbia Ave. ³
E	Botanical Conservatory	restored riverbank/ravine system, trails and overlooks ¹
F	Dock and Boat Rental	Sheridan Park veterans memorial, trail and river overlook ⁴

- Notes:
1. from the RiverFirst vision plan (2012)
 2. from the ATF Phase I plan (2006)
 3. based on outreach with Xcel Energy staff in 2012
 4. from Sheridan Memorial Park plan (2007)



Legend

- Regional Park Boundary
- Riverway Street
- Existing Trails
- Proposed Trail Connections
- Proposed Parkway
- Proposed Parkland (Inholdings)
- Parkland
- Mississippi Watershed Management Organization

0.5 Miles

Future parkland and trails shown here are conceptual, and will depend on land acquisitions. For context, connecting elements outside the Regional Park boundary are shown, such as existing trails and neighborhood parks as well as proposed future "Riverway Streets."

- 1 North Mississippi Regional Park (existing)
- 2 West River Parkway Extension
- 3 Park Trails
- 4 Perkins Hill Park (existing)
- 5 Northside Wetlands Park
- 6 West River Parkway Extension
- 7 Farview Park (existing)
- 8 26th Ave N Overlook and Water Access
- 9 West River Road North (existing)
- 10 Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park (existing)
- 11 Scherer Brothers Park Site (Graco Park)
- 12 East Bank Trail
- 13 Sheridan Memorial Park (existing)
- 14 East Bank Trail
- 15 BNSF Rail Bridge
- 16 Northeast Riverfront Park
- 17 Gluek Park (existing)
- 18 Northeast Riverfront Park
- 19 Edgewater Park (existing)
- 20 Northeast Riverfront Park
- 21 Marshall Terrace Park (existing)
- 22 East Bank Trail (easement required)

Figure 6.1 ATF Regional Park Development Concept



Figure 6.2 River overlook pier at 26th Avenue North
Improved access to the river includes both physical and visual access points.

PARK DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

Current recreational uses within Above the Falls Regional Park include community gathering in parks; trail use by walkers, runners, bicyclists and in-line skaters; and water-related activities such as boating (motorized and paddling) and angling. Continued recreational development within Above the Falls is planned for both sides of the river. Figure 6.1 shows the ATF Regional Park development concept. To place the Regional Park concept in context, Figure 6.1 also shows non-park goals from the greater ATF Master Plan vision that fall outside the Regional Park boundary but that nevertheless will contribute to the vitality of the Regional Park (see “Connected Actions” below).

The park concept proposes new parks as well as continued improvement to existing parks. Community gathering spaces of varying sizes are proposed in several locations. Each will have typical furnishings and amenities including benches, open picnic shelters, drinking fountains, etc. Larger gathering spaces will have public restrooms as funding allows.

On the west bank, a large gathering space is part of the proposed Northside Wetlands Park. A small overlook deck is proposed at the east terminus of 26th Avenue North, to be developed following City of Minneapolis improvements to the road and streetscape. As shown in the 2006 ATF Phase I plan, modest improvements are proposed at “Ole” Olson Park: a river overlook, a small multi-purpose building and a “catwalk” connection to the BNSF railroad bridge when it is converted to trail use. This catwalk concept is echoed in the RiverFirst vision. On the east bank, several gathering areas are available at existing parks. These will be enhanced with a new veteran’s memorial at Sheridan Memorial Park and

The ATF Regional Park concept proposes development of new parkland as well as continued improvement to existing parks.



Figure 6.3 Plan for Orvin “Ole” Olson Park from the 2006 ATF Phase 1 plan
 As proposed in the 2006 ATF Phase I plan, continued improvements are envisioned at “Ole” Olson Park.

at new riverside parks between Broadway and Lowry, and at the Scherer Bros. site with its proposed beach and carry-in boat launch.

Expanding the system of multi-use trail loops that exists in the regional parks adjacent to the north and south is a focus of the 2000 ATF Plan, the 2006 ATF Phase I plan and RiverFirst; this Regional Park plan reflects that priority. Approximately 2 miles of the total 6.3 miles of proposed multi-use trails currently exist. Continuous trail development is the long-term goal on both sides of the river, but this depends on significant land acquisition. In Figure 6.1, parkway and trails shown on future park land are conceptual and for planning purposes only. Ultimately, trails will connect to North Mississippi Regional Park, Victory Memorial Regional Trail, St. Anthony Parkway Regional Trail and the Anoka County Mississippi River Regional Trail on the north. On the south end of the park, trails will connect to the Central Mississippi River Regional Park through Boom Island Park and along West River Road North.

In addition to providing trails along the river, future trail loops must also make river crossings at regular intervals. Existing bicycle lanes connect across the river at the Plymouth, Lowry, and Camden/42nd Ave bridges. The Plymouth Ave. bridge was recently enhanced with amenities for pedestrians and bicyclists. The park development concept proposes that the existing BNSF railroad bridge be converted to a pedestrian/bicycle connector to add an additional crossing. This bridge project will depend on significant partnership with the City of Minneapolis.



Most of the 2006 ATF Phase I plan was implemented, creating trails, river access and riverbank restoration between Plymouth Ave. N. and 22nd Ave. N.



The regional park vision includes park uses throughout the year.

GRACO PARK:

- Restoration of Hall's Island as a habitat zone (complete)
- Creation of gravel-beach cove with carry-in boat access
- Trail connections
- Restored riverbank
- Enhanced stormwater management



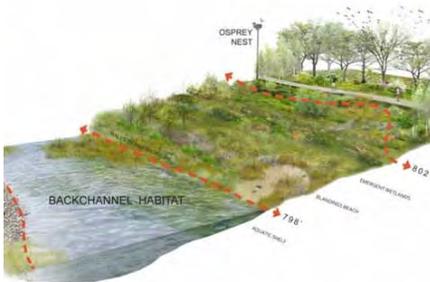
Figure 6.4 RiverFirst vision for a new park on the Scherer Bros. site

PARK PROJECTS

The park projects outlined in this Section represent ongoing efforts and near-term priorities envisioned and vetted with the community through the RiverFirst Initiative. Many of the projects have their roots in the 2000 ATF master plan and since RiverFirst was able to build from progress made in land acquisition and park development since the 2000 plan, it provides both more refinement and updated thinking. The Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan will be updated as land is acquired, parks are developed, and desired recreational experiences evolve.

GRACO PARK

In 2010, the MPRB purchased the former Scherer Lumber Yard, 11.4 acres of riverfront property with a storied history of lumber milling for well over a century. The site is located at the east bank of the river bounded by Plymouth Avenue, Sibley Street NE and Graco Manufacturing. The property was cleared, and soils remediated in 2011. In 2012, the Metropolitan Council approved a revised regional park boundary through the site to establish 7.8 acres as regional parkland with the remainder held out for supportive redevelopment. The park boundary was determined through a conceptual design process conducted with the RiverFirst Initiative. In 2019, the MPRB made an agreement with Graco to exchange a riverfront trail easement on their property and development rights on the non-regional park portion of the Scherer property in exchange for park naming rights and a substantial donation toward park development.



The design for Hall's Island specifies several aquatic and upland habitat zones.

Until the mid-1960s, an island, known as Hall’s Island existed across a narrow channel from the Scherer property. The island was eliminated by filling the channel and extending the mainland into the river to attract industrial barging. Fifty years passed and the vision for making the upper Mississippi River the head of commercial navigation was abandoned. Capitalizing on the interesting history of Hall’s Island, RiverFirst proposed reestablishment of the island as part of a comprehensive park and redevelopment vision for the property. Special legislation was granted in 2013 approving State permits to reestablish the island. In 2018, the island was re-established, and native vegetation planted. The island and adjacent channel were specially engineered and armored to accommodate normal river flows as well as periods of flooding.

The development concept for Graco Park is to establish a primary riverfront recreational destination with a diverse mix of attractions including a pebble beach, park pavilion with refreshments and visitor services, water recreation outfitting, lawn, strolling paths, a regional bike path, and a nature walk across the length of Hall’s Island accessed by pedestrian bridges across the newly-created channel. The park and island are designed to substantially enhance riverfront migratory, nesting, and feeding habitat. Park design improves river flood conditions through substantial regrading (see Figure 5.3).

In addition to everyday use, Graco Park will be a passive-space adjunct to Boom Island Park during crowd events. Pedestrian and bike paths will connect the two park spaces via the shoreline under the Plymouth Avenue Bridge.

SHERIDAN MEMORIAL PARK

Sheridan Memorial Park is a 3.5-acre riverfront site located on the former Grain Belt Brewery campus. The park is designed as an important recreational attraction that serves surrounding neighborhoods as well as regional visitors. Like all park destinations within the ATF Regional Park, Sheridan Memorial Park is interconnected up and down the riverfront with pedestrian and paths and riverfront habitat. The park development concept (Figure 6.7) includes a dramatic public art installation and river overlook plaza memorializing actions of non-violence and peace within conflicts of war, nature-based play, regional bike path, lawn, strolling paths, a play court and shoreline habitat enhancements.

The memorial was the first phase of park development completed in 2014. Some preparatory site work including soil remediation, grading and curbing were completed in late 2018. The next phase of construction in 2019 includes the play area, circulation paths, a shelter, basketball court and lawn. The City of Minneapolis and MPRB continue to coordinate adjustment to adjacent Water Street to best activate the park with future development at its edge.

SHERIDAN MEMORIAL PARK:

- Veteran’s Memorial
- Playground
- Trail
- River overlook



The Veteran’s Memorial at Sheridan Memorial Park was completed in 2014



Figure 6.5 Proposed development plans for Sheridan Memorial Park



Figure 6.6 RiverFirst vision for parks in the Upper Harbor Terminal Area

The RiverFirst vision included a new wetland complex with habitat zones, trails and public water access points (above), and a large public gathering space for festivals (right). Future land uses adjoining the parkland are beyond the scope of this regional park plan.

EAST BANK TRAIL:

Partially complete trail (Phase 1 is finished) connecting St. Anthony Parkway and Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park.



Phase one of the East Bank Trail is complete, and now connects Boom Island Park with the BNSF rail bridge.

EAST BANK TRAIL

The East Bank Trail includes pedestrian and bike connections on the east bank of the Mississippi River through the full length of ATF Regional Park from Plymouth Avenue on the south to the Camden Bridge on the north. Where space allows, pedestrian and bike trails will be separated facilities. The far northern segment of the trail from St. Anthony Parkway to the Camden Bridge has been in place for several decades. Unless land use changes allow for a riverfront trail through the Xcel Energy’s Riverside Power Plant from St. Anthony Parkway south to 28th Street NE, this segment of trail will be directly adjacent to Marshall Street NE. The remainder of the trail, except for short segments around existing development will be located away from Marshall Street and toward the river.

In 2017, the most recent segment of trail was constructed between Plymouth Avenue and the BNSF rail bridge through Graco Park, the Graco easement, Sheridan Memorial Park and former rail and utility easement. The trail was partially funded with a million-dollar grant from the Transportation, Community, and System Preservation Program (TCSP) of the US Federal Highway Administration.

UPPER HARBOR TERMINAL REDEVELOPMENT

The redevelopment of the 48-acre, city-owned Upper Harbor Terminal (UHT) offers a significant opportunity for both the MPRB and the City of Minneapolis. In 2013 when MPRB created the majority of the ATF Plan, the UHT was still an active barging terminal. MPRB defined some recommended adjustments to the 2000 ATF Plan, including additional park area at the southern end of the site. However, the City’s 2013 Above the Falls Master Plan Update defined an alternative boundary based on their assessment of redevelopment options. The two competing plans highlighted the challenge of designing either park land or development in isolation on such a narrow strip of land. In 2015 the City and MPRB embarked on a more collaborative process to examine the full possibilities of the site which is described in Appendix A.

NORTHEAST RIVERFRONT PARKS

The three existing riverfront parks on the east bank form a strong foundation for Above the Falls Regional Park. Over the long-term this plan envisions a continuous public park along the east bank. The MPRB continues to pursue acquisition of identified private parcels when available and, when not available for acquisition, to secure easements to allow the expansion of park uses along the river, especially trails. In the short-term, the focus in existing parks on the east bank will be to maintain what exists and to improve river access. Planned enhancements include public water access points and trail improvements. As new park land is acquired, park development will include separate trail connections for bicyclists and pedestrians, restoration of riverbanks and ravines, access to the riverbank for pedestrians and carry-in boaters, surface water management features and river overlooks (Figure 6.7).

As described in the City’s ATF Master Plan, existing restaurants along Marshall St. NE are seen as a benefit to park users and will be encouraged to remain. MPRB will seek trail easements where opportunities exist to make key connections.

NORTHEAST RIVERFRONT PARKS:

- Expand through acquisitions and easements
- Riverbank restoration
- Public water access



Wetlands Park

UPPER HARBOR TERMINAL PARK LAND:

- Extension of West River Parkway
- Wetland complex with multiple habitat zones and stormwater remediation
- Public gathering space
- Public water access



Figure 6.7 RiverFirst Vision for Northeast Riverfront Parks



Figure 6.8 RiverFirst vision for parks in the Upper Harbor Terminal Area

The RiverFirst vision included a new wetland complex with habitat zones, trails, and public water access (above), and a large public gathering space for festivals. The park plan at the UHT and the adjacent land uses were further planned in the 2015 – 2019 process.



Acquisition and conversion of the rail bridge as a river crossing is a long-term goal shared by the City of Minneapolis.

TRAILS AND RIVER CROSSINGS

An important component of the recreation concept for Above the Falls is the development of multi-use trails. MPRB proposes 6.3 miles of trails within the park. Currently there are 2.1 miles of trails. On the west bank the existing trail extends along West River Road North from Plymouth Avenue North to the BNSF railroad bridge, near 22nd Ave. North. On the east bank, existing trails are located within existing parks and along at Anthony Parkway Regional Trail.

On the west bank, trail development will evolve primarily with the extension of West River Parkway as well as the acquisition of contiguous properties or easements. It is likely that short segments of trail will be constructed and that wayfinding signs will direct users to alternative routes on local streets, as an interim measure. Collaboration with the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County is needed at the Lowry bridge to determine how best to connect the park trails.

As on the west bank, east bank trails will be developed in segments, with potential interim routes on local streets. The East Bank Trail from Plymouth Avenue to Sheridan Memorial Park was granted \$1 million in Federal funding for design and construction, and is now complete. Further upriver, conversation will continue between Hennepin County, the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO), and the MPRB to develop a pedestrian connection along the riverbank and under the recently completed Lowry Bridge. Due to operations and security concerns, any proposed off-street trail must be routed along Marshall St. NE and Columbia Ave. NE. At the Xcel Riverside Plant, the 2000 ATF Master Plan proposed a riverbank trail alignment on the western edge of the power plant's area of active operations. Based on discussion with Xcel staff, this is not feasible due to safety, security and operational concerns. For more information, see Section 7 - Conflicts.

Potential winter uses of trails, including cross-country skiing either on or adjacent to trails, will be guided by MPRB system policies and will depend on available operations and maintenance resources.

Improved river crossings will form trail loops of various sizes in Above the Falls Regional Park. Currently, there are bicycle/pedestrian crossings at the Plymouth, Broadway, Lowry and Camden bridges. An additional bicycle/pedestrian crossing is envisioned as part of the eventual repurposing of the BNSF railroad bridge. This is a long-term goal that will depend on extensive engagement with the railroad. Currently is not possible to place the project on an implementation timeline or within a budget range.

Recent bridge enhancements at Plymouth created temporary protected bicycle lanes, but more improvements are envisioned. River overlook “balconies” could be attached to the bridge structure, and the existing guardrail and roadway lighting could be renovated to create a more inviting place for pedestrians to enjoy river views. The improved bridge would forge a strong link to a new park on the Scherer Bros. site for residents of north Minneapolis. MPRB has engaged City Department of Public Works staff and has confirmed the structural and operational feasibility of these ideas.

NATIONAL WATER TRAIL

The section of the Mississippi River through the ATF Regional Park is within the vast length of the National Water Trail from Lake Itasca to the Gulf of Mexico. Use of the river for non-motorized boating continues to grow as individuals, groups and professional outfitters are recognizing the river as a fascinating recreational attraction. In support of an innovative paddle share program, the National Park Service and MPRB began a partnership in 2016 to locate boat lockers on MPRB property at intervals along the river and, where necessary, portage routes designated. Paddle Share lockers are currently located immediately upstream of the ATF Regional Park in North Mississippi Regional Park and immediately downstream in the Central Riverfront Regional Park.

Several carry-in points (soft access) for canoes and kayaks would be added on both sides of the riverfront. Wayfinding signage along the Mississippi River is also recommended to help users navigate the water trail and portage system.

Priority carry-in points and portage routes will be identified and implemented by the MPRB and stakeholders prior to the closing of the upper St. Anthony Falls lock.



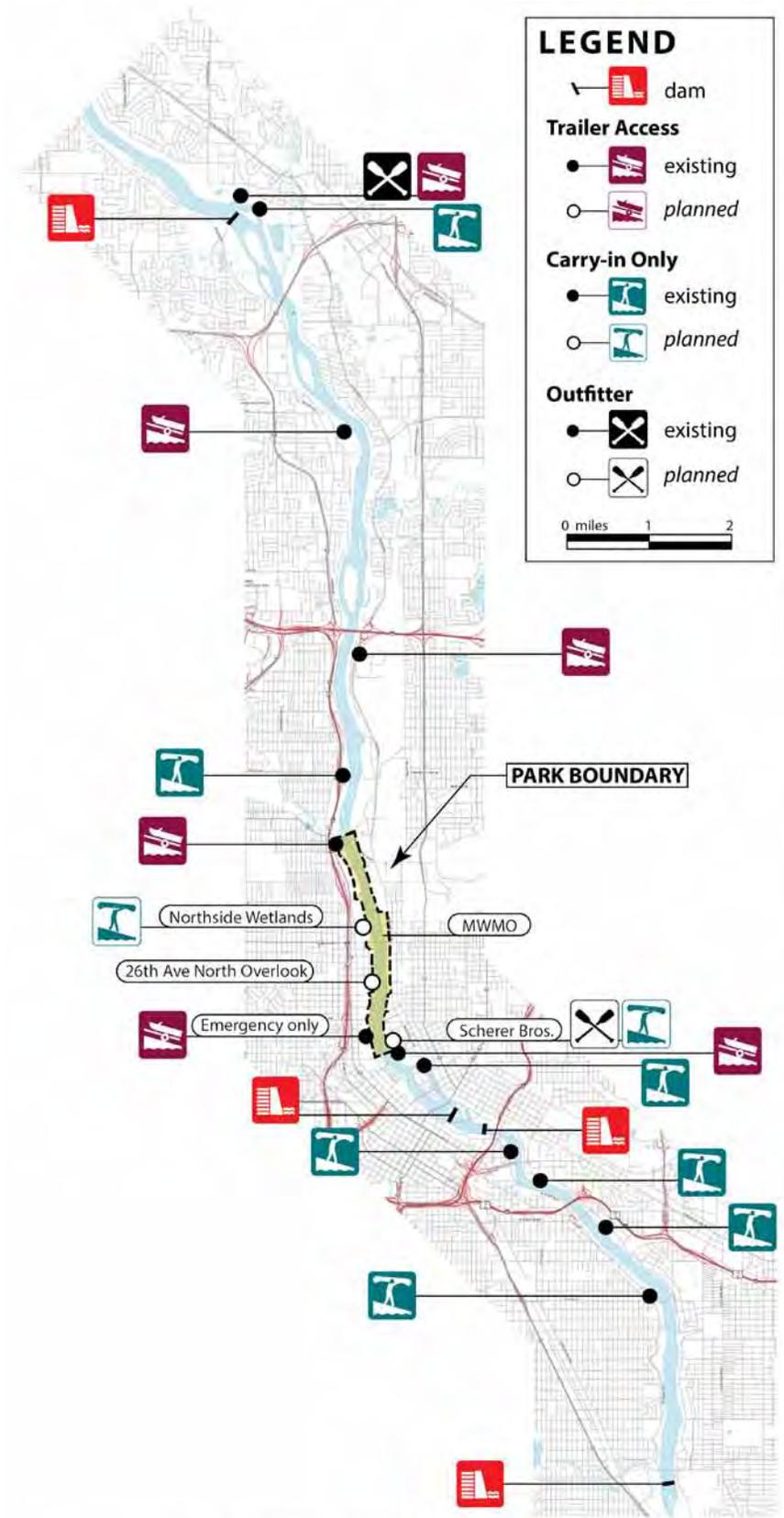


Figure 6.9 Public Water Access Locations, Existing and Proposed

Development of public water access points will depend on funding, property acquisition, existing utilities and regulatory permitting.

PUBLIC WATER ACCESS POINTS

New carry-in public water access points are envisioned on the west side of the river within the proposed Upper Harbor Terminal area. On the east bank, a major new carry-in public water access point is envisioned at the Scherer Bros. site. (Another is planned at the MWMO headquarters, as a separate MWMO initiative.) Currently all potential future public water access points envisioned by MPRB within ATF Regional Park are for carry-in access only and will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. One motorized access point exists in North Mississippi Regional Park, at 42nd Ave North/Soo Avenue; sufficient space for additional motorized access points has not yet been identified within the Regional Park. Public-water access points are shown in Figure 6.9. Design of public water access points must not conflict with existing storm sewer outfalls.

PARKWAY DEVELOPMENT AND PHASING STRATEGY

The extension of West River Parkway, from the current terminus of West River Road North to the Camden Bridge, forms the spine of the park development concept for the west bank. The conceptual alignment shown in this plan allows sufficient space for the construction of separate bicycle and pedestrian trails and the restoration of the riverbank, as well as the parkway road itself. The MPRB will continue to explore alignment options as opportunities arise. As shown in Figure 6.10, an early phasing opportunity exists at City-owned Upper Harbor Terminal. The existing rail crossings at N. Dowling Avenue and N. 33rd Avenue could be key access points.

Unlike City streets, MPRB parkways do not exist within a designated right-of-way. Rather, parkways are located on MPRB-owned land as one of many integrated park improvements. They are considered to be a recreational amenity and park-framing device more than a transportation facility. While the new parkway could accommodate a mix of traffic, possibly including commercial traffic and trucks in some segments, efforts will be made to minimize negative impacts by reducing the frequency of access points, for example, and providing access for adjacent development from side streets and access drives rather than from the parkway itself. This will be determined by MPRB in consultation with its partners at the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County and MN-Dot.

The proposed parkway extension will require significant contiguous land acquisition to be fully realized. Unlike the 2000 ATF Plan, this plan locates the proposed West River Parkway directly adjacent to proposed riverbank parkland, separating the riverbank from future private development. This strategy is similar to the model used throughout the MPRB system and offers much more flexibility over the long-term, allowing for phased, incremental park development independent from but parallel with private redevelopment phases. MPRB will be able to develop parkland independently from partner agencies, if it so chooses.

Construction of the parkway proposed in this Regional Park plan likely will occur in phases timed with land availability and adjacent redevelopment projects. Until a fully-connected parkway is completed, it is likely that parkway users may be routed onto existing streets, such as North 2nd Avenue or Pacific Street, for interim periods.

MPRB parkways are considered to be a recreational amenity and park-framing device more than a transportation facility.

REGIONAL PARK BOUNDARY

- 1. DOWLING PLAZA
- 2. DOWLING AVE GREENING
- 3. BOARDWALK AND POTENTIAL WATER ACCESS
- 4. OUTDOOR MUSIC PERFORMANCE VENUE
- 5. RELICS PARK
- 6. THE HUB
- 7. WATERFRONT PARK
- 8. BEACH
- 9. PARK*
- 10. PARKWAY
- 11. PHASE 1 DEVELOPMENT
- 12. FUTURE PHASE(S) DEVELOPMENT

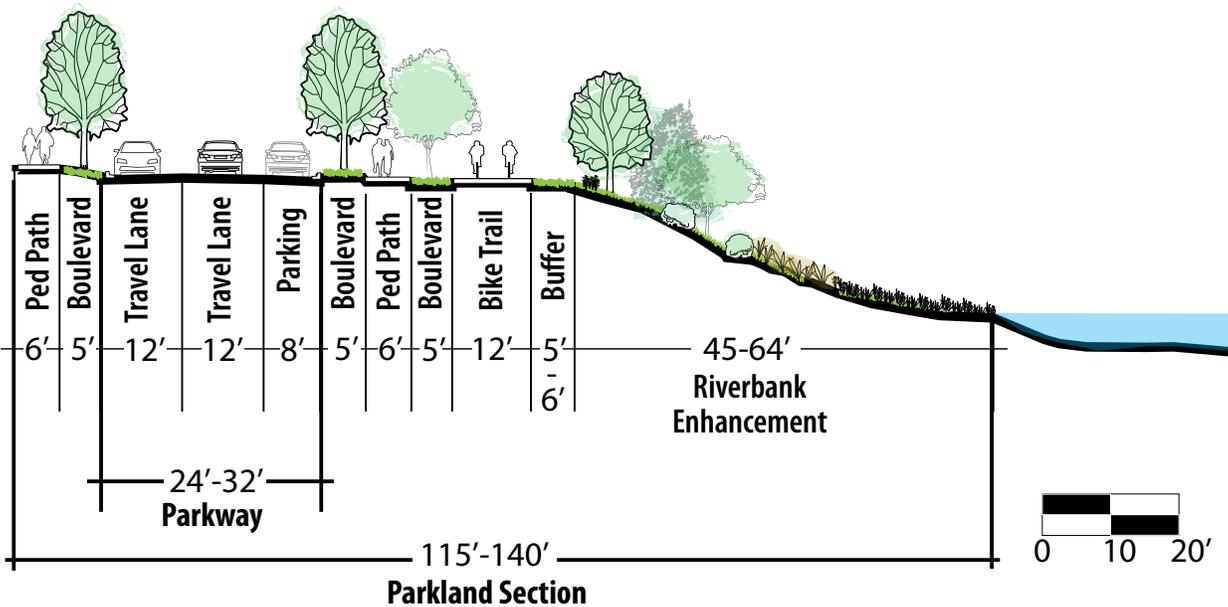
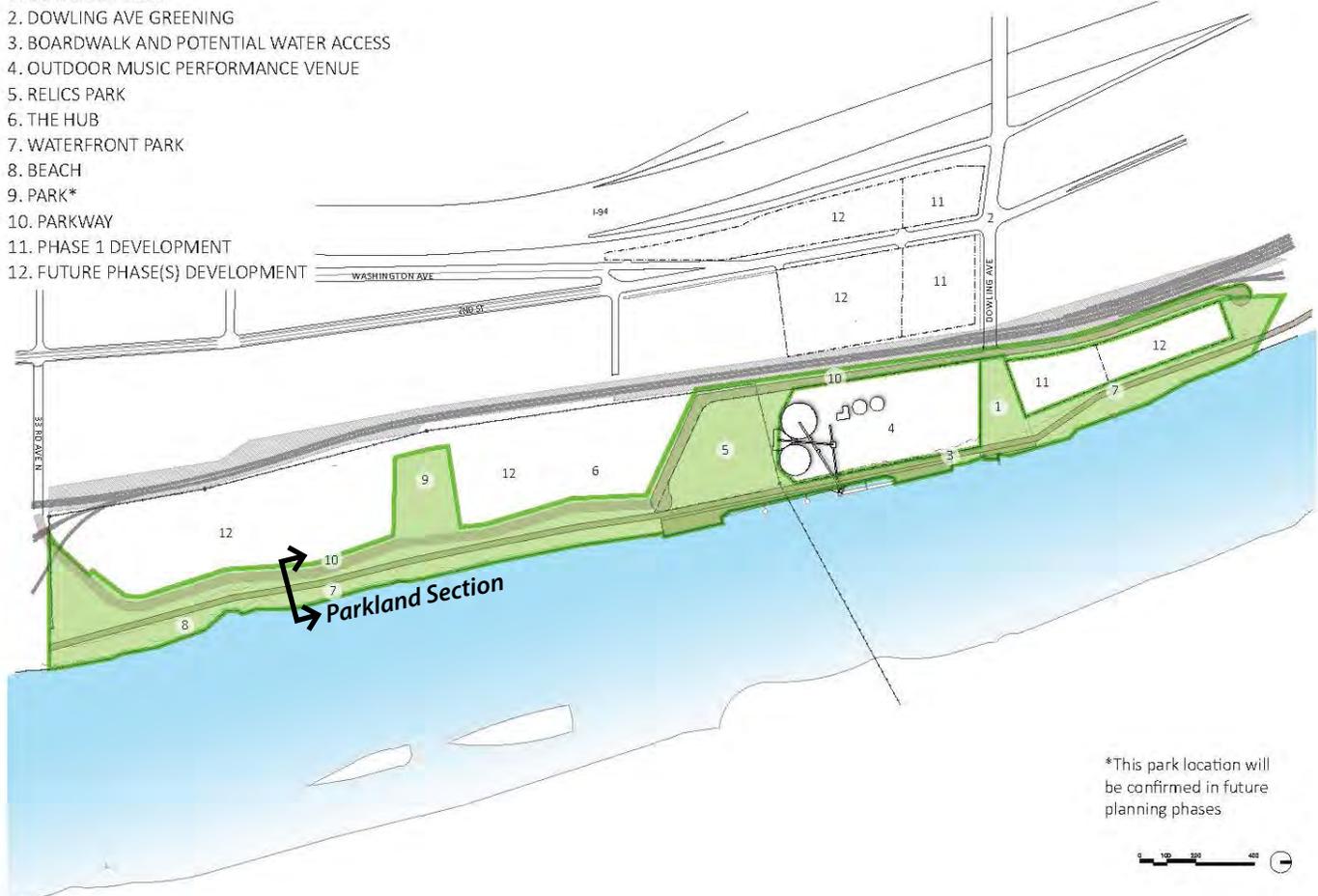


Figure 6.10 Regional Park Boundary and Example Parkland Section at Upper Harbor Terminal
 (Source: 2019 Upper Harbor Terminal Development Concept Plan)

CONNECTED ACTIONS OUTSIDE THE REGIONAL PARK

The community's vision for redevelopment in the greater plan area goes beyond the creation and expansion of Above the Falls Regional Park. The 2000 ATF Master Plan, the City's 2013 ATF Update, and RiverFirst all build on this vision to support redevelopment, urban design, and connectivity in the surrounding area. A number of the recommended implementation steps will have a positive impact on the Regional Park and so are important to identify. These actions are categorized in this regional park master plan as "connected actions" because they are either located outside of the Regional Park boundary or will not be the focus of MPRB initiatives. Many of these connected actions are long-term goals that will require extensive partnerships to plan, design, and implement. Additional information can be found in the City's 2013 Above the Falls Master Plan Update.

MARSHALL STREET ENHANCEMENTS

Marshall Street NE forms the eastern edge of the Above the Falls Regional Park boundary for nearly two-thirds of its length. The road and right-of-way sit fully outside the proposed ATF Regional Park boundary. Marshall is a Hennepin County roadway that is the primary north-south transportation corridor on the east bank of the river. (Historically this very old corridor was known as the Red River Ox Cart Trail.) It is also identified as a long-range bicycle commuter route in the City of Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan. Currently the County has no reconstruction plans for the roadway or sidewalks.

Streetscape enhancements to Marshall were identified as a community goal in the 2000 ATF Plan, and in the County's 2003 "A Design Development Plan for The Marshall/Main Street Corridor" which supports the development of a robust corridor for all modes of transportation. Such enhancements would benefit ATF Regional Park users both in the short-term and long-term. However, the County's 2003 plan also identifies a need to acquire additional right-of-way if the study's recommendations are to be implemented. Given the MPRB's need to continue property acquisition for parks along the east bank, it is possible that trail users could be directed to Marshall St. NE as an interim connection between individual trail segments constructed in Northeast Riverfront Parks. At the north end of ATF Regional Park, Marshall St. NE will be location of the final segment connecting Above the Falls Regional Park to the St. Anthony Regional Trail and the trail connection over the Camden Bridge.

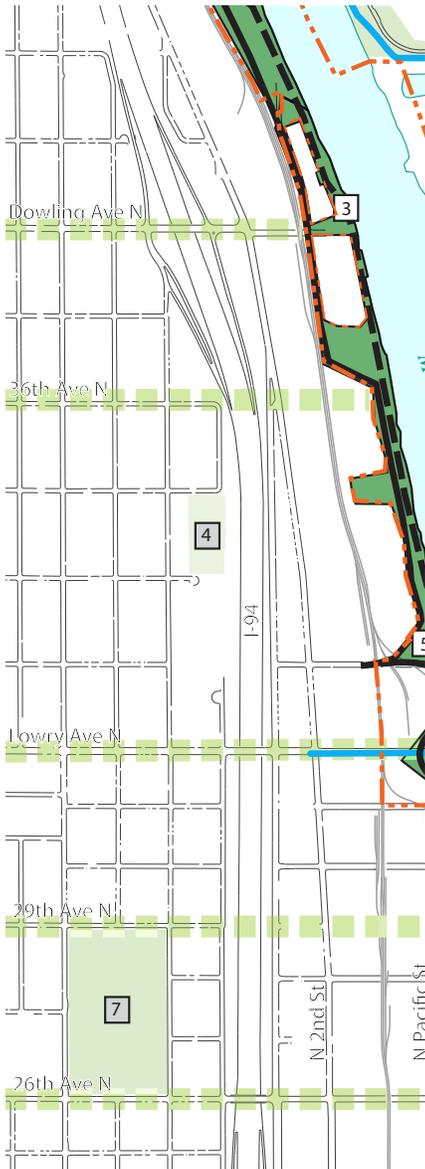
As noted in the 2000 ATF Master Plan, there is limited right-of-way along Marshall Street. Hennepin County has expressed concerns about the ability of the roadway to accommodate not only automobile traffic and parking, but also a trail, bike lane, and enhanced green boulevard on both sides of the street.

Hennepin County would lead any discussions among, stakeholder groups, the City of Minneapolis, and MPRB to determine how best to address the variety of functions for Marshall St. NE.

"Connected actions" are community goals that sit outside the ATF Regional Park but that could have positive impacts on park development and park use.



Marshall Street NE is a prominent North-South connection along the eastern edge of Above the Falls Regional Park



Outside ATF Regional Park, a proposed system of “Riverway Streets” is intended to lead residents and visitors to riverfront parks.

RIVERWAY STREETS

The 2000 ATF Master Plan and RiverFirst both identify the need for improved connections between the river and adjacent neighborhoods. A proposed system of “Riverway Streets” is intended to lead residents and visitors to riverfront parks. This system uses existing major thoroughfares with river crossing bridges, as well as existing local streets that provide the most direct routes across north and northeast Minneapolis. Regional routes on high traffic thoroughfares could receive enhancements oriented to vehicular way-finding, while local routes could receive improved facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists. Employing a common palette of streetscape elements would identify the streets leading to and parallel with the river as a unified system. Especially important is the installation of signage specifically designed to direct people to upper riverfront parks. Some examples of Riverway Street elements would include:

- Directional signs to local parks
- Decorative pedestrian-level lighting
- Bicycle infrastructure
- Enhanced boulevard plantings
- Additional street tree plantings

Implementation of the Riverway Street system would be a City of Minneapolis initiative supported by a wide range of agency partners.

FARVIEW PARK EXTENSION

The Farview Park Extension is intended to reconnect the communities of North Minneapolis with the Mississippi River. The long-term vision in RiverFirst is to cap Interstate 94 with a land bridge featuring urban agriculture and public open space between 26th Ave North and 28th Ave North (Figure 6.13). Ultimately, according to the Park Board’s action in March, 2012, the intent is to cap up to one mile of the highway. Recognizing that the RiverFirst land bridge is a long-term goal that would exist outside the ATF Regional Park boundary, and would require significant public investment as well as extensive inter-agency partnership, this 2013 ATF Park Plan does not include it as a priority. In the near-term RiverFirst focuses on streetscape enhancements to the City’s planned reconstruction of 26th Ave North.

NODE DEVELOPMENT

As an urban infill park, Above the Falls Regional Park will be directly impacted by the character of the development that surrounds it. Of particular concern is the redevelopment that will occur around major street intersections or “nodes” adjacent to ATF Regional Park. On the west bank nodes occur at the Camden Bridge, Dowling Avenue North, Lowry Avenue, and Broadway. On the east bank nodes occur at Lowry Avenue, Broadway, and 8th Avenue NE. At each of these locations, the City’s 2013 ATF Plan Update calls for development that enhances and contributes to the nearby park amenities and programming. Site design guidelines encourage the preservation of river views and the use of private green spaces as visual extensions of public park land.

Land uses and private development at such nodes will be regulated and guided by the City of Minneapolis.

COMPREHENSIVE SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

Signage and wayfinding will meet the standards established in the 1999 Grand Rounds Scenic Byway Interpretive Master Plan. As park and trail development has occurred and future park development does occur in the ATF Regional Park, the MPRB’s signage and wayfinding standards will be applied. This package of standards includes custom signage and sign structures that direct visitors to parks and recreational facilities, mark trails, and provide safety and regulatory information. On-site signage will be linked with digital information using latest technology as segments of the park are built-out. Because trails on the east bank of the river through the park also have federal designation as the Mississippi River Trail, signage will reflect this designation.



Typical park signage per the MPRB’s signage and wayfinding standards



Figure 6.11 RiverFirst’s long-term vision for Farview Park Extension

Outside ATF Regional Park, the RiverFirst vision calls for a green “land-bridge” deck over I-94 with improved street connections to northside neighborhoods and a variety of sustainable uses. This is an ambitious, long-term vision that would require partnership among many agencies to implement. It is not a project that MPRB would initiate as part of ATF Regional Park development.

ESSENTIAL VISITOR SERVICES

For the Central Riverfront and ATF Regional Parks, the MPRB has established the following interval guidelines for essential visitor services as follows:

Restrooms (permanent or portable):

- At 10-minute walk intervals along the trail system
- At gathering spaces, food concessions and play areas

Drinking fountains and bottle filling stations:

- At 20-minute walk intervals along the trail system
- At gathering spaces, food concessions and play areas

Food/nourishment:

- Snacks and refreshments at least every 2 miles along both banks
- Destination food in at least one location on each bank



Sea Salt restaurant at Minnehaha Regional Park is a popular dining destination within the MPRB system