



Chapter 6

INTERPRETIVE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This section provides a framework and recommendations for interpretation along the Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail (MPRT or Trail), anticipating future development and phased implementation. The interpretive media and themes have evolved during the broader master planning process, and respond to input from community members and the project team. Interpretation can be developed by many organizations and agencies, based on compatible missions and funding availability. The key is that anyone who develops and implements an interpretive planning, programming, and/or exhibit project within MPRT does so within the interpretive framework provided here and a comprehensive interpretive plan. This shared vision and strategy will help partners to preserve, manage, and interpret the site consistently and effectively.



Graphics that wrap around site furnishings have a low profile while adding layers of meaning to the site experience. (Gecko Group)

DEFINING INTERPRETATION

Interpretation forges emotional and intellectual connections between visitors and a place, story, or resource. It is an experience more than a sign or program. A story more than a series of facts or data points. It links audience interests with the inherent meaning and relevance of a resource or place. Interpretation answers the questions: “So what?” and “Why should I care?”

In *Interpreting Our Heritage*, Freeman Tilden, one of the early luminaries of the interpretation profession, describes interpretation as “an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information.” The National Association for Interpretation (NAI) defines interpretation as “a mission-based communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource.”

Minnehaha Parkway attracts many people to its scenic beauty, natural and historic resources, recreational opportunities, and the chance to relax and gather with friends. Interpretation along the Trail will add depth to an already enjoyable experience by providing context: a way to understand the history of the Trail and an encouragement to explore further. Different types of interpretive media connect people to this regional trail and each other in a variety of ways. Trail users can discover stories hidden in plain view, or in the flowing creek as it rises and falls with the season and rain events. An engaging, meaningful, and personal trail experience allows people to answer for themselves why they care and what resources or experiences they want to steward for future generations.

For the Trail and community, interpretation is an integral part of fostering stewardship—from awareness to action. Interpretation creates opportunities for resource awareness, encourages interest, develops understanding, and finally, provides a call to action. Interpretation encourages positive experiences and can discourage negative ones. It forges connections and provides opportunities for visitors to learn about the world around them. Interpretation may not be the initial draw, but it can encourage people to return again and again.



Interpretation can inform landscape and structural elements, adding layers to the visitor experience. (106 Group)



Interpretive signage can encourage park visitors to pause, to engage their senses, or to protect park resources. (106 Group)

INTERPRETIVE PRINCIPLES AND GOALS

The MPRT master planning process considered the place-specific historical, cultural, and natural resources to be interpreted and the demographics of the people who use the site to develop relevant interpretive messages. Interpretation is built on the MPRB mission and vision. From there, principles and goals for interpretation define what will be achieved and guide how the vision will be brought to life.

INTERPRETIVE PRINCIPLES - define a set of basic, fundamental assumptions to guide the development of interpretation. The principles have been developed based on input from the project team, and stakeholder and community engagement.

The Principles for Interpretation along the MPRT:

- » Convey factual information and authentic stories
- » Encourage stewardship of the trail and its resources
- » Foster preservation and restoration of natural and historic resources
- » Complement other interpretation and visitor experiences in the MPRB park system
- » Be accessible to the greatest number of people possible
- » Encourage active and passive recreation along the trail

INTERPRETIVE GOALS - are essential for reaching a desired endpoint. Goals establish a target and are used to measure progress toward achievement.

The Interpretation Goals along MPRT are:

- » Build awareness of the history of the path that is now the Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail, and its resources
- » Strengthen the Trail identity as part of the MPRB system
- » Create a cohesive visitor experience linked to the interpretive theme and subthemes
- » Engage visitors with experiences that are relevant to their lives
- » Provide opportunities for visitors to engage in stewardship
- » Ensure the interpretive experience is not intrusive on the natural environment

ORGANIZING THE INTERPRETIVE EXPERIENCE

The interpretive theme and supporting subthemes help organize the visitor experience. They have been developed from researching the cultural and historical resources found along the MPRT, listening to input from community members and other stakeholders, and consulting with the project team.

Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail and Minnehaha Creek contribute to ecological and community networks. These land and water resources provide habitat, resiliency, and recreational opportunities, and comprise cultural resources that connect people with the city's past. The Trail, part of the Grand Rounds, connects lakes, parks, and people along Minnehaha Creek in Minneapolis. Minnehaha Creek, part of a larger watershed, has transported people from Lake Minnetonka and its environs to the Mississippi River for thousands of years.



Tactile elements can inspire hands-on learners to connect with the stories of the Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail. (106 Group)

INTERPRETIVE THEME

A theme is the unifying message of all interpretation at a site or, in this case, along a trail. It may or may not appear in writing, exhibits, and programming, but all interpretive efforts should fall within the scope of the interpretive theme. A theme provides organizational structure and is the main message that visitors encounter along the trail. After their experience, visitors should be able to summarize the main point of interpretation in one sentence—this is the interpretive theme. A theme is different from a topic in that it expresses a complete idea or message. A topic is a broad general category, such as recreation, natural resources, or history. A theme should answer the question, “So what?” It should tell visitors why a specific topic is important.

A theme should:

- » Be stated as a short, simple, complete sentence
- » Contain only one main idea, if possible
- » Reveal the overall purpose of the site
- » Be specific
- » Connect tangible resources to universally understood concepts

The interpretive theme for Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail is:

Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail brings you to the intersection of nature and city, recreation and culture.

SUBTHEMES

Subthemes support and develop the theme. For MPRT, subthemes help organize the stories told, the resources revealed, and the experiences that trail users will have when the master plan is developed. Interpretation along the trail could inform the design of landscape, structures, and other features.

SUBTHEME	INTERPRETIVE MESSAGE	POTENTIAL TOPICS AND/OR QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE THROUGH THIS SUBTHEME:
<div> NATURAL RESOURCES:</div> <p>This should be a wetland. Creek-side wetlands, flood storage, and other enhancements help with flood mitigation, promote resiliency, create and preserve habitat, and encourage stewardship.</p>	<p>The interpretive messaging developed for this subtheme focuses on natural resources from the evolution of the creek to BMPs and stormwater management to wildlife that people could encounter. Interpretation can also be used to answer questions, such as, “What am I looking at?” “Who made those paw prints in the mud?” and “What bird made that thrilling sound?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minnehaha Creek: explain natural functions of creeks, describe the evolution of the creek form. <i>Why does the creek meander change?</i>• Wetlands: explain how residential development over 1930-1950s filled former wetlands. <i>How did development impact wetlands?</i>• Climate Change: explain how precipitation patterns have changed over time. <i>How has climate change impacted the function of the creek?</i>• BMPs: describe Best Management Practices (BMPs) for flood mitigation, stormwater management.• Wildlife: highlight pollinator plantings and describe wetlands as habitat. <i>Why are pollinators important? What can visitors do to support pollinators?</i> <i>What animals live in the wetlands?</i>• Stewardship: connect people with water resources through the idea that everyone has waterfront property through the storm sewer pipes. <i>What are you doing to protect this water resource?</i>• Cooperation: describe how agencies (MPRB, MCWD, and City of Minneapolis) work together to mitigate flooding, promote resiliency, preserve and establish wildlife habitat, and to encourage stewardship of natural resources.
<div> CULTURAL RESOURCES:</div> <p>This is a designed landscape. Before Europeans arrived, Minnehaha Creek was a place for work, daily life, and play for Dakota people. Then, European settlers harnessed the creek to power several mills. The creek became a key feature in the development of the Minneapolis park system today, the mill structures are gone, but contemporary and historic walls guide the creek meander, and bridges cross the creek.</p>	<p>The interpretive messaging developed for this subtheme focuses on cultural resources from Indigenous heritage to mills, bridges, and WPA structures to the Grand Rounds. Interpretation can also be used to answer questions, such as, “What am I looking at?” “Who built that?” and “Why should I care about it?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indigenous heritage: convey that Minnesota is part of Dakota homeland and Dakota people have strong connections to this land and water.• Designed Landscape: explain that this is the most recent of several layers of design for this landscape that includes neighborhood development as well as red-lining and restrictive covenants. <i>How did red-lining and restrictive covenants influence the neighborhoods near Minnehaha Creek and Parkway?</i>• Mills: describe the history of mills along the creek in the mid-1800s, including flour, saw, and grist mills. <i>How did the creek power the mills?</i> <i>How many mills were powered by the creek and where were they located?</i>• Works Progress Administration (WPA): explain that many of the stone walls, as well as some bridges, were built by the WPA. <i>What was the WPA and why did they build walls and bridges?</i>• Bridges: describe the variety of historic and contemporary, pedestrian and vehicular bridges that cross Minnehaha Creek.• Grand Rounds: explain that Minnehaha Parkway from Godfrey Parkway to Lake Harriet Parkway are part of the Minnehaha segment of the Grand Rounds Historic District, which is also eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. <i>What are the “Grand Rounds”?</i> <i>Who are some of the people who envisioned the parkway and creek as a distinctive part of the South Minneapolis landscape?</i>• Cooperation: describe that agencies (MPRB, MCWD, and the City of Minneapolis) work together to encourage stewardship of cultural resources and to recognize different cultures with a connection with Minnehaha Creek.

Table 6.1 Interpretive Themes, Subthemes, and Topics



Interpretive signs come in many shapes and sizes. They can integrate art, sensory experiences, and layer messages. (2GHO)



Interactives can be a fun and engaging way to share interpretive messages—creating a game, question-answer, or scavenger hunt. (New Hanover County)



SUBTHEME	INTERPRETIVE MESSAGE	POTENTIAL TOPICS AND/OR QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE THROUGH THIS SUBTHEME:
 PLACE NAMES: What's in a Name? The names of the creek, lakes, streets, and neighborhoods are derived from people, poems, and pragmatism, with many street names assigned to follow the alphabet.	The interpretive messaging developed for this subtheme focuses on why the places and infrastructure adjacent to the MPRT were named as they were. Interpretation can also be used to answer questions, such as, "What does Minnehaha mean?" "Why do neighborhoods have those names?" and "How are streets named?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Neighborhoods: Lynnhurst, Tangletown (Washburn), Field, Page, Northrop, Hale, Ericsson, Keewaydin, Hiawatha, Minnehaha, Nokomis, Armatage, Kenny, Windom <i>How did the neighborhoods get their names?</i> <i>Why do neighborhoods have names?</i>• Creek and Lakes: explain the name origins for Minnehaha Creek, Lake Nokomis, Lake Hiawatha• Street Names: explain the organization of street names, such as alphabetical (e.g., Aldrich, Bryant, Colfax)• Ojibwe/Dakota and Indigenous-derived names: explain that some of the names, such as Nokomis, Hiawatha, and Minnehaha are from Longfellow's poem, The Song of Hiawatha, but they have roots in indigenous languages (Ojibwe, Onondaga, and Dakota respectively). Minnehaha (Mníḥaḥa in Dakota) means "waterfall" and Nokomis (nookomis in Ojibwe) means "my grandmother." Minnesota (Mnisota in Dakota) means "land where the water is so clear it reflects the sky." <i>Should place name reflect the historic or contemporary landscape?</i> <i>When and why should place names change?</i>
 RECREATION: Amble along the meander. Whether picnicking or paddling, or cycling, there are recreational opportunities on the creek and along the Trail year-round.	The interpretive messaging developed for this subtheme focuses on recreation, past and present, water- and land-based. Interpretation can also be used to answer questions, such as, "Can I fish in the creek?" and "How do I paddle a canoe and a kayak?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water-based recreation: describe the activities, such as paddling, fishing, ice-skating, and playing in the water, that people can do here. <i>What are the social and health benefits of these activities?</i>• Land-based recreation: describe the activities, such as walking, cycling, dog-walking, birdwatching, playgrounds, that people can do here. <i>What are the social and health benefits of these activities?</i>• Loop trails: provide condition, character, and safety information about the trails. <i>How long will it take me to walk/bike/paddle this loop?</i> <i>How difficult is the trail?</i> <i>Will this trail meet my personal accessibility needs?</i>• Corridor: explain that this linear corridor connects trail users with other recreational opportunities.• Cooperation: describe that agencies (MPRB, MCWD, and the City of Minneapolis) work together to promote recreation in Minnehaha Creek and along Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail.

Table 6.2 Interpretive Themes, Subthemes, and Topics (continued from previous page)

INTERPRETIVE MEDIA

Let the story and audience guide the media selection. Certain stories want to be told in certain ways and different audiences have different needs. Interpretation, whether a sign, tactile object, or audio tour, should enrich the visitor experience and guide people to answer for themselves why they care about this place and its resource.

GUIDED INTERPRETATION

Interpretive Programs are regularly scheduled activities such as classes, talks, tours, or workshops. They are led by a trained interpreter and developed with specific themes, goals, objectives, and outcomes in mind. Interpretive programs can be presented in a variety of formats with the goal being visitor inspiration rather than education.

Special Events are typically activities that are scheduled on an annual or one-time basis.



On-site programming and events enliven interpretive messaging and create a personal connection with the site. (Ontario Parks)

SELF-GUIDED INTERPRETATION

Interpretive Signs are place-specific signs that briefly and simply “caption the landscape.” They describe what people are seeing and why they should care about it. Interpretive signs use compelling images and clear, evocative language to appeal to a wide range of visitors.

Interactive Signs are interpretive signs with a moveable element, such as a lift, slide, spin, or flip, to encourage visitors to engage with the story. Flipbooks can mimic bird books for identification, a lift can reveal the answer to a question, and spinners can be a playful way to present interpretive messages.

Story Walks are a series of signs that feature a story, with words and images developed to encourage literacy and physical activity. In addition to walking from one sign to the next to read the story, the signs can prompt movement between signs to enhance the physical component.

Audio Posts provide on-site interpretive and accessibility-related auditory experiences. With the touch of a button or turn of a crank, visitors can hear sounds of nature, audio descriptions, alternative languages, or other place-specific stories.

Tactile Elements add a rich layer to the interpretive experience, attracting tactile learners and promoting accessibility for people with no or low vision. Tactile maps can show a historic landscape, leaf outlines can help with plant identification, foot and paw prints can show what animals live nearby.

Integrated Landscape Elements promote a holistic park experience and provide surprises in the landscape that support interpretive messaging. Dance steps in a sidewalk can encourage movement, an oversized frame can direct people to a unique view, bas relief sculpture in structures or furniture can reinforce a special feature, stylized bases can add an interpretive layer to signs.

Mobile Apps can include interactive and static features designed to promote further exploration of the park. An annual fee for hosting the app is typical for providers.



Tactile maps can help trail users understand the broader landscape. (106 Group)



Audio posts can bring accessibility through multiple languages and audio descriptions, as well as interpretation to enhance the trail experience. (Aivaf)

INTERPRETIVE RECOMMENDATIONS BY SEGMENT

Recommendations for interpretation aim to enhance the visitor experience and achieve goals for interpretation along the MPRT. Successful and sustainable interpretation requires an ongoing process of planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Each segment has a primary subtheme with the other subthemes expressed as a secondary focus, when applicable. Throughout, the MPRB could consider presenting interpretation in multiple languages either on site, or through a mobile app or website, and should provide audio description of interpretive experiences and elements for accessibility.

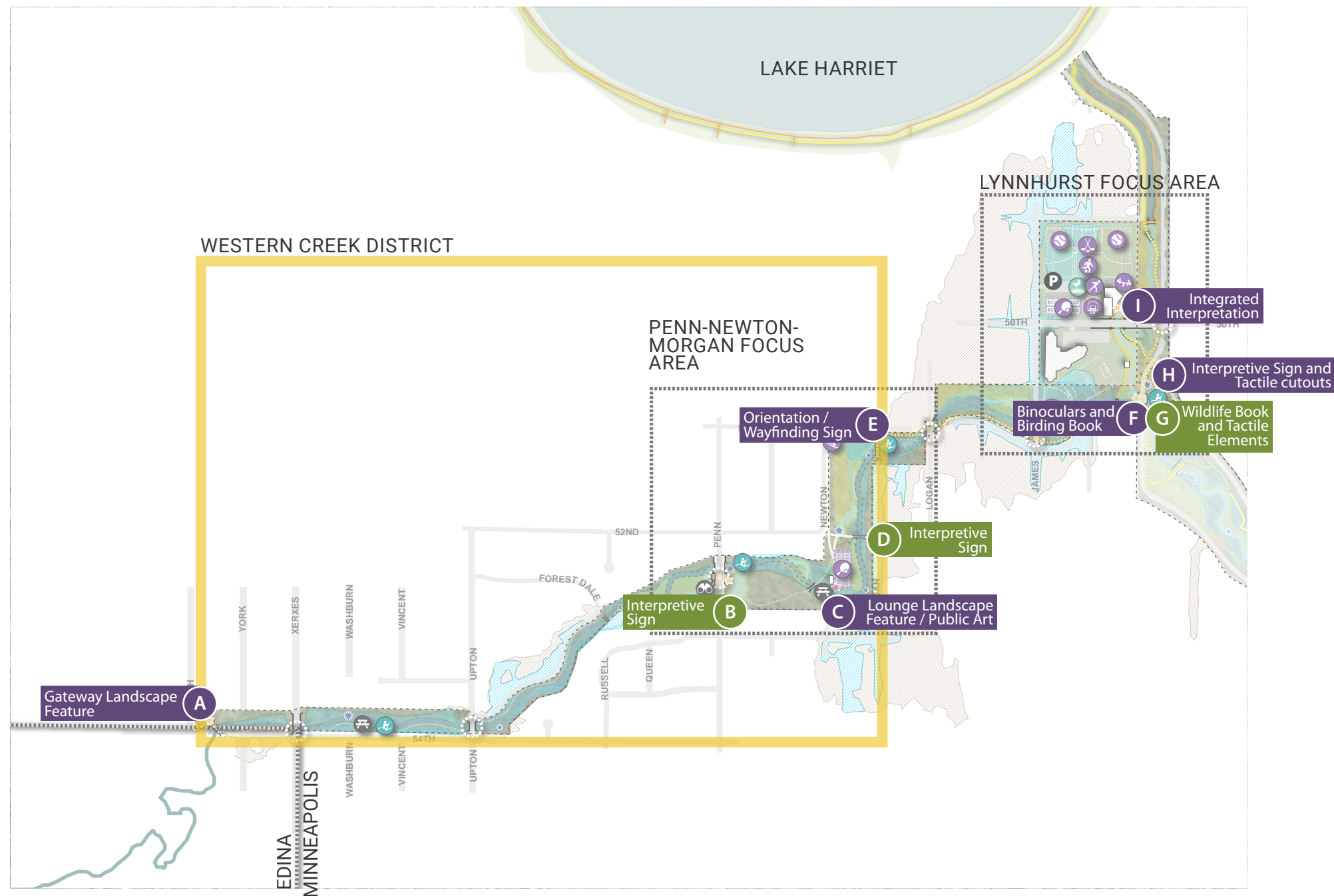


The gateway feature provides a sense of arrival while also expressing interpretive messages about the trail and its resources. (Bing Dawe)

SEGMENT 1 | Subtheme Focus: Recreation

ICON	STORYLINE/SUBTHEME				DESCRIPTION	GUIDED (PROGRAMS OR EVENTS)	SELF-GUIDED (GRAPHIC PANELS, ELEMENTS, LANDSCAPE, AND STRUCTURE DESIGN)
	RECREATION	NATURAL RESOURCES	PLACE NAMES	CULTURAL RESOURCES			
A	Overview of recreational opportunities				A gateway feature made of weathering steel or comparable material uses light and shadow to highlight land- and water-based recreational activities available along the trail. Cut-outs could feature activities such as: walking, cycling, dog-walking, birdwatching, paddling, fishing, and ice-skating. The gateway is styled as a single column, which would visually connect with the verticality of trees on the landscape, or open arch, which provides a conceptual opening to the future evolution of the creek and Trail.		Gateway Landscape Feature
B		BMP for stormwater management			An interpretive sign overlooking the treatment area describes the stormwater management techniques that people can see. The interpretive message links visitors to the landscape with a call to action for water resources stewardship.		Interpretive Sign
C	Overview of corridor recreational opportunities				An art feature made of weathering steel or comparable material complements the gateway feature and highlights recreational opportunities that people can access from the MPRT corridor.		Lounge Landscape Feature / Public Art
D		BMP for flume removal / treatment train			An interpretive sign overlooking the treatment area describes the treatment train techniques that people can see. The interpretive message links visitors to the landscape with a call to action for water resources stewardship.		Interpretive Sign
E	Safety				An upright orientation sign identifies the end of the paved trail and the pedestrian/bike combined trail. The message conveys trail safety and etiquette.		Orientation / Wayfinding Sign
F	Birdwatching				An interpretive sign with a multi-page, outdoor flipbook features birds that people could see along the creek. The interpretive message will encourage birdwatching and an appreciation for wildlife that live along the creek. The flipbook identifies some of the birds that people might see (consult with an MPRB naturalist to identify the birds to feature). Add a dual base, ADA binoculars at the overlook. Consider adding audio to help identify bird songs.		Binoculars and Birding Book
G		Wildlife habitats			A multi-page, outdoor flipbook features some of the animals that live in the wetlands and floodplain forest that people can see from this overlook. The interpretive message will encourage an appreciation for wildlife that live along the creek. The flipbook identifies some of the mammals and reptiles that people might see (consult with an MPRB naturalist to identify the animals to feature). Tactile paw prints and other marks left by resident wildlife are integrated into the overlook railing.		Wildlife Book and Tactile Elements
H	Fishing				An interpretive sign features some of the fish that live in the creek. The interpretive message will encourage an appreciation for fish, other aquatic animals, and the creek as habitat (consult with an MPRB naturalist to identify the fish to feature). The sign will include fishing safety information as well as rules and regulations.		Interpretive Sign and Tactile cutouts
I	Recreation and Natural Resources				The community center and outdoor plaza are an interpretive hub for the intersection of recreation and natural resources. Interpretive elements could be featured in the building, on the plaza, or integrated into the design of both. The interpretive messages would express the cooperation needed to establish and maintain good health—both for people and the environment. The messaging would also describe how agencies (MPRB, MCWD, and City of Minneapolis) work together to mitigate flooding, promote resiliency, preserve and establish wildlife habitat, and to encourage stewardship of natural resources, and to promote recreation in Minnehaha Creek and along the MPRT. The daylighting of the creek exemplifies the interpretive messages here.		Integrated Interpretation

Table 6.3 Segment 1: Subtheme Focus of Recreation



Interpretive panels with outdoor flipbooks encourage engagement with the story. (106 Group)



Small wayfinding or interpretive signs can blend into the landscape while providing relevant information to connect trail users to the resource. (communita atelier)

Figure 6.1 Segment 1 Interpretation Plan

SEGMENT 2 | Subtheme Focus: Cultural Resources

ICON	STORYLINE/SUBTHEME				DESCRIPTION	GUIDED (PROGRAMS OR EVENTS)	SELF-GUIDED (GRAPHIC PANELS, ELEMENTS, LANDSCAPE, AND STRUCTURE DESIGN)
	RECREATION	NATURAL RESOURCES	PLACE NAMES	CULTURAL RESOURCES			
A		BMP for flood storage and habitat			A small, rail-mounted interpretive sign overlooking the treatment area describes the flood storage technique that includes wet meadow and native species habitat. The interpretive message links visitors to the landscape with a call to action for water resources and native species stewardship.		Interpretive Sign
B				Bridge restoration	A small, rail-mounted interpretive sign describes the bridge restoration within the context of the designed landscape. The interpretive message links visitors to the designed landscape and provokes them to think about what the landscape might look like in the future.		Interpretive Sign
C C		Braided channel	Alternative Subtheme: Alphabetical street names		A rail-mounted interpretive sign describes the braided channel that people can see here and expresses its function for creek stability. The interpretive message links visitors to the designed landscape and provokes them to think about what the creek might look like in the future. A small interpretive sign identifies that Aldrich, Brant, and Colfax begin one of seven alphabetical sets on street names in Minneapolis. The interpretive message links visitors to the historic landscape.		Interpretive Sign
D				WPA	A small interpretive sign identifies one of the WPA walls along the creek and explains the significance of the WPA (1939-1943) to both infrastructure development and employment during the Great Depression. The interpretive message links visitors to the historic landscape.		Interpretive Sign
E				Dakota homeland	A combination of interpretive elements convey that this site, city, and state are part of the Dakota Homeland. Interpretive signs show the extent of the Dakota landscape and share that many place names are Dakota words, such as Minnesota (Mnisota in Dakota), which means “land where the water is so clear it reflects the sky.” An audio post shares interpretive information in Dakota and English and public art expresses the connections Dakota people have to this land and water. All interpretation about Dakota culture, language, and homeland should be developed in consultation with the tribes.		Interpretive Sign, Audio Post, and Public Art
F				Grand Rounds	A small interpretive sign identifies the Grand Rounds as one of the country’s longest continuous systems of public urban parkways and notes trail realignment. The interpretive message links visitors to the historic landscape and the significance of the Grand Rounds as a distinctive feature of Minneapolis.		Interpretive Sign
G		BMP for creek restoration, stormwater management, and wetlands			A small interpretive sign overlooking the treatment area describes the creek restoration and stormwater management techniques that include wetlands habitat. The interpretive message links visitors to the landscape with a call to action for water resources and native species stewardship.		Interpretive Sign
H				Cultural Resources	Cultural resources interpretation informs the design of this activity node and gathering place, specifically in the details of the recreational features and site furnishings. The messaging would express different cultures with a connection with Minnehaha Creek and how agencies (MPRB and MCWD) work together to encourage stewardship of cultural resources.		Integrated Interpretation
I				Dakota homeland Alternative Subtheme: Designed landscape	Public art expresses the ongoing connection of Dakota people with this land, water, and the natural resources native to this place. All interpretation about Dakota culture, language, and homeland should be developed in consultation with the tribes. Public art expresses the history of the designed landscape along the creek from mills that used the creek to power industry, to Grand Rounds and WPA, and the current work being undertaken to foster a sustainable landscape that promotes resiliency in the face of climate change.		Public Art

Table 6.4 Segment 2: Subtheme Focus on Cultural Resources



Figure 6.2 Segment 2 Interpretation Plan

Sabal & Saw
These palms both have long, narrow, blade-like fronds that radiate from a center point, but differ in their stem connection. Sabal palms have a defined center midrib, and the saw palms have sharp, saw-toothed leaf stems.

Sabal y Sereoa
Aunque ambos de palmeras tienen hojas largas, estrechas y dentadas que irradian desde un punto central. Sólo se diferencian en la forma en que se conectan al tallo. Las Sabal poseen una médula central definida y las Sereoa tienen tallos dentados y hojas serradas.

Rail-mounted signs can be an unobtrusive way to add meaning to a view. (106 Group)

Touchable elements engage tactile learners and enhance written interpretation. (Sun River Metalworks)

SEGMENT 3 | Subtheme Focus: Natural Resources

ICON	STORYLINE/SUBTHEME				DESCRIPTION	GUIDED (PROGRAMS OR EVENTS)	SELF-GUIDED (GRAPHIC PANELS, ELEMENTS, LANDSCAPE, AND STRUCTURE DESIGN)
	RECREATION	NATURAL RESOURCES	PLACE NAMES	CULTURAL RESOURCES			
A				WPA	A small interpretive sign identifies one of the WPA walls along the creek and explains the significance of the WPA (1939-1943) to both infrastructure development and employment during the Great Depression. The interpretive message links visitors to the historic landscape and encourages them to “read the landscape” to find other WPA walls along the creek.		Interpretive Sign
B		Braided channel and BMP for scouring			A rail-mounted interpretive sign expresses the power of water to scour the creek channel and erode its banks, describing the braided channel that people can see here and the armor that was put in place to support the creek channel. The interpretive message links visitors to the designed landscape and provokes them to think about how they can be stewards of the natural resources.		Interpretive Sign
C		Historic meander			A small interpretive sign describes the evolution of the creek meander, notably here where the remeander closely aligns with the historic meander. The interpretive message links visitors to the landscape and encourages them to think about how the creek responds to and influences its environment.		Interpretive Sign
D D		Natural Resources			Natural resources interpretation informs the design of this activity area, specifically in the details of the recreational features and site furnishings. The messaging would highlight the plants and animals that live in the MPRT corridor and link visitors to natural processes and stewardship through connections with their activities and the character of the environment. Messaging could also share how agencies (MPRB and MCWD) work together to mitigate flooding, promote resiliency, preserve and establish wildlife habitat, and to encourage stewardship of natural resources: We all have a role to play. Finally, messaging can include discussion on sustainable trail design and trail stewardship opportunities.		Integrated Interpretation
E		Pollinators			Interpretive signs die-cut into native flower shapes highlight the pollinator planting area and the importance of healthy pollinators and pollinator habitats. The interpretive message will encourage sensory exploration (look, listen, and smell) and an appreciation for the important role pollinators play in the environment. Tactile elements show some of Minnesota’s busiest pollinators (consult with an MPRB naturalist to identify the pollinators to feature). The interpretive message links visitors to the landscape with a call to action for healthy pollinator habitats. Consider adding an audio post with a brief message from a naturalist about native flowering plants and pollinators.		Interpretive Signs and Tactile Elements
F		BMP overview			An interpretive sign overlooking the treatment area describes the wetland here as part of a series of BMPs. The BMP techniques work independently and together to support and promote a healthy creek from bank to bank. The interpretive message will describe the BMPs used in the MPRT corridor and encourage people to notice these techniques as they move along the corridor. The interpretive message links visitors to the landscape with a call to action for water resources stewardship. Another topic to address in messaging includes pointing out that restored wetlands align with the 1850’s surveyed wetland footprint.		Interpretive Sign

Table 6.5 Segment 3: Subtheme Focus on Natural Resources



Figure 6.3 Segment 3 Interpretation Plan



StoryWalks engage people with a story and encourage movement. (Herald-Advocate)

SEGMENT 4 | Subtheme Focus: Place Names

ICON	STORYLINE/SUBTHEME				DESCRIPTION	GUIDED (PROGRAMS OR EVENTS)	SELF-GUIDED (GRAPHIC PANELS, ELEMENTS, LANDSCAPE, AND STRUCTURE DESIGN)
	RECREATION	NATURAL RESOURCES	PLACE NAMES	CULTURAL RESOURCES			
A				Dakota homeland	A StoryWalk and public art express the historic and ongoing connection of Dakota people with this land, water, and the natural resources native to this place. The StoryWalk could feature plants traditionally used for food and medicine. All interpretation about Dakota culture, language, and homeland should be developed in consultation with the tribes.		StoryWalk and Public Art
B		Pollinators			A small interpretive sign highlights the pollinator planting area and the importance of healthy pollinators and pollinator habitats. The interpretive message will encourage sensory exploration (look, listen, and smell) and an appreciation for the important role pollinators play in the environment. The interpretive message links visitors to the landscape with a call to action for healthy pollinator habitats.		Interpretive Sign
C	Birdwatching				An interpretive sign with a multi-page, outdoor flipbook features birds that people could see along the creek. The interpretive message will encourage birdwatching and an appreciation for wildlife that live along the creek. The flipbook identifies some of the birds that people might see (consult with an MPRB naturalist to identify the birds to feature). Consider adding a dual base, ADA binoculars at the overlook, and/or an audio post to help identify bird songs.		Birding Book
D		BMP—creek restoration and wetland			A small interpretive sign overlooking the treatment area describes the creek restoration and wetlands habitat as part of a larger program of ecological creek health. The interpretive message links visitors to the landscape with a call to action for water resources stewardship.		Interpretive Sign
E E		Plants and animals	Overview of place names along the MPRT		An interpretive sign in the kiosk provides an overview of the place names along the MPRT. The interpretive message will provoke thought about how places are named, who names them, and why names might change over time. The interpretive message links visitors to the trail and encourages them to consider “what’s in a name.” Consider adding a gateway landscape feature that pairs with the one at the other end of the MPRT and, similarly, is made of weathering steel or comparable material with cutouts that use light and shadow to highlight plants and animals.		Interpretive Sign and optional Gateway Feature

Table 6.6 Segment 4: Subtheme Focus on Place Names



Figure 6.4 Segment 4 Interpretation Plan

