

WEST RUM RIVER CORRIDOR FRAMEWORK PLAN

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Prepared for the City of Anoka By Kimley-Horn, May, 2018

WEST RUM RIVER CORRIDOR FRAMEWORK PLAN

As the Dakota name implies, “Two sides of the river,” a great deal of Anoka’s history is embodied in the West Rum River Corridor. Traveling north from the Mississippi through the West Rum River Corridor, by land or water, is like taking a trip through time. This corridor is rich with Anoka’s history including its role as sacred Native American land at the confluence of two great rivers, the location of the first fur trading post at Peninsula Point, the once cultural heart of the city at the Eastman Amphitheater, as well as the and onto the renown sawmills and flour mills once located at the Rum River Dam.



Aerial view of the Rum River Corridor at Peninsula Point

Ferry Street as evolved from the original Mississippi River crossing into State Highway 169, an important regional roadway link carrying more than 46,000 vehicles per day between the Mississippi River bridge and Main Street. This arterial is an important connection for motorists bicyclists and pedestrians and serves as a local collector street providing access to Downtown, surrounding businesses, neighborhoods and parks.

The West Rum River Corridor has been the subject of numerous studies through recent years each with a unique emphasis and one overriding mission...” to improve the corridor. ” Common themes that run throughout these studies including: focusing on improving Ferry Street as a gateway to the City; preserving historical assets; improving the natural character and accessibility of the Rum River, as well as enhancing the corridor as a recreational and economic development amenity to attract tourism, residents and businesses.



Natural Character of the lower Rum River



Rum River Dam north of the Main Street Bridge

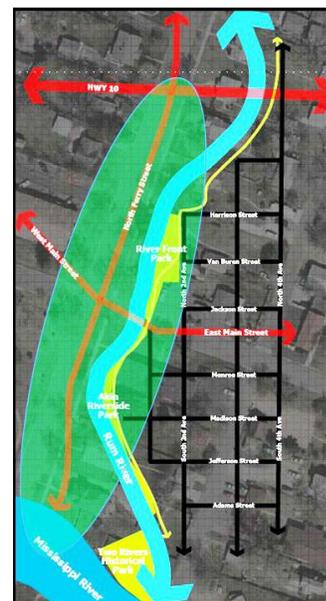
PURPOSE

The Comprehensive Planning process has provided a forum for community participation in the development of this design framework plan for the West Rum River Corridor. The primary purpose of this document is to:

- Provide a summary of the West Rum River Corridor comprehensive planning process, goals, objectives, and design recommendations.
- Consolidate, re-evaluate and synthesize previous planning efforts to create a current flexible framework for decision making and guide to ensure public and private investments in the West Rum River Corridor are consistent with the vision of the community.
- Provide an armature that accommodates layers of change, activity, and corridor evolution. • Contribute to the success of the corridor by creating a catalyst for reinvestment and community support in future projects that leverage improvements to the public realm.
- Define simple and impactful design opportunities and strategies that express community identity character and culture.

Project Area

The project area encompasses the Rum River corridor from Peninsula Point Park to the south at the confluence with the Mississippi River to Calhoun Street at the north end of Downtown Anoka.



West Rum River Corridor Project Area

PROCESS

The West Rum River Corridor Plan is the result of a 6-month collaboration between the community of Anoka, the West Rum River Corridor Task Force, City Staff, and consulting team. The intent of the process was to provide a forum for the stakeholders to share their hopes and concerns, define goals and objectives, as well as a long-term vision for the Corridor. The Task Force was the principle group guiding the process and included representatives of the City Council, Planning Commission, Parks Commission, Historical Preservation Commission, residents, business owners, and City Staff. The primary role of the Task Force was to:

- Represent the Community of Anoka in the long-term planning for the West Rum River Corridor
- Collaborate with the full Task Force to define issues and opportunities and to formulate goals and objectives
- Review background information and comment on design alternatives.
- Provide recommendations to the City Council and Commissions regarding the West Rum River Corridor Comprehensive Plan



On-site review of existing conditions with the Task Force

This framework plan responds to the unique qualities of the West Rum River Corridor and offers a guide that, if followed, will ensure that both private redevelopment and public improvements will be orderly, predictable, and sustainable, as well as, integrated into a mutually supportive vision that will foster a genuine place.



Existing Eastman Amphitheater

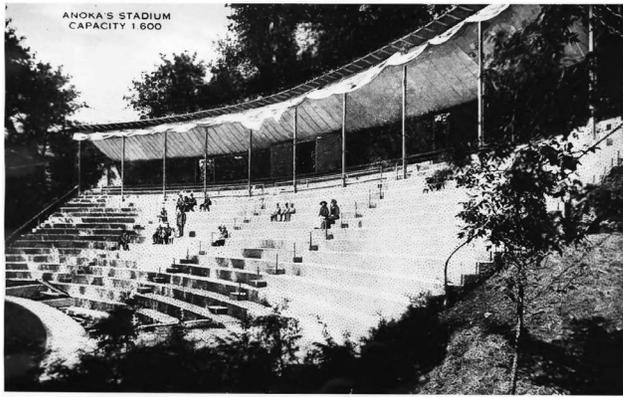
BACKGROUND

Historic Assets

Historic sites include the Stone House, Gidding's Property, Eastman Amphitheater, Woodbury House Viewshed Easement, the Woodbury House, and the Kline Sanitarium and Peninsula Point Park. All properties have rules and regulations regarding future use that will help structure decisions about South Ferry Street.

TIF Districts & HRA

Two TIF districts exist in the study area. They include the South Ferry Council District and the Riverspointe HRA District. With the establishment of these districts, the Housing and Redevelopment Authority can work jointly with the city to acquire property.



Eastman Amphitheater



Source: MHS The Existing Stone House

Past Studies

All previously prepared reports, studies, and other documents having a bearing on the West Rum River Corridor have been assembled and reviewed to gain an understanding of key findings, objectives, and policies that may have a bearing on this current planning effort. The studies include:

a. Plans and documents

- o Peninsular Point Park Plan (1989)
- o Market Study, McComb's, (2005)
- o Rum River Nature Area Conservation Easement and Cultural Resource Survey (2006)
- o Amphitheater Condition Assessment And Future Strategies (2006)
- o Opportunity City Program Report (2011)
- o Study to Add Neighborhood Zoning Districts; (2013)
- o South Ferry Street Plan; (2013-14)
- o Relocation of Riverplace (2016)
- o Anoka Solutions Plan for Highway 10 (2014 – ongoing)

c. Other Agency Documents

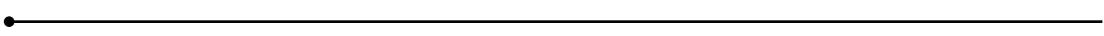
- o LRRWMO Plans
- o Wild and Scenic Boundaries and Regulations
- o Current MNNRA Boundaries and Regulations
- o Critical Area Boundaries and Regulations
- o DNR Jurisdiction and regulations Army Corp. of Engineers Jurisdiction and Regulations
- o 75' river setback
- o 1632 South Ferry Street (Woodbury House) Site Line Easement

City of Anoka Trail Systems Plan

The current City of Anoka trail plan illustrates a continuous system of county, city and state mixed-use trails throughout the West Rum River Corridor. Specifically, the Mississippi River Trail enters the corridor from the West at Benton Street and splits into two trails, one connecting south along Ferry Street to Champlin and the other crossing the existing pedestrian bridge to Aitkin Park on to Coon Rapids along the east side of the Rum and Mississippi Rivers. The trail plan also illustrates a second City trail connecting north to south alternating between the rivers edge and the bluff line along the west side of the Rum River.

To make these connections a reality, the solutions reside in the details and how the dimensions required for trails fit in areas with limited space such as the amphitheater, Woodbury House and Carpenters Hall parking lot.

A summary of the key regulations impacting the corridor are illustrated on the following Existing Conditions and Constraints summary graphic.



Existing Conditions
and Constraints

-  Wild and Scenic boundary
-  MRCCA development limit
-  TIF district
-  Parcel boundary
-  City property
-  S Ferry St. site line easement
-  Trail easement
-  100 year floodplain
-  40' bluff setback
-  Steep slope

Historic Boardwalk

Stone House

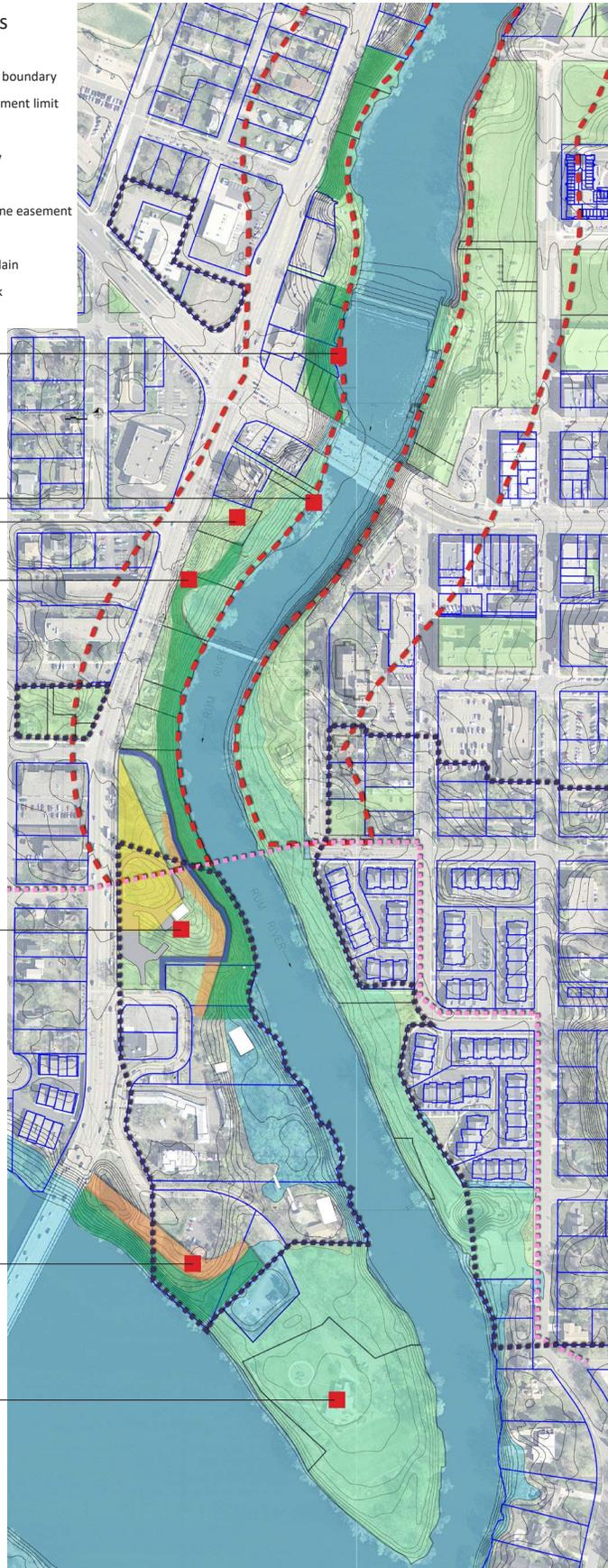
Giddings Gardens

Eastman Amphitheater

Woodbury House

Shiloh House

Peninsula Point



II. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

A primary objective of the process was to discover what are the major issues and opportunities within the West Rum River Corridor. A SWOT exercise was conducted with the Task Force to define Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats for the corridor. The results of this workshop informed the creation of goals and objectives to be addressed in design alternatives for the West Rum River Corridor Framework Plan. Following are the questions asked of the participants and their responses. The responses to the SWOT exercise are listed in order of priority based on the number of responses received.

1. When you think of the West Rum River Corridor what do you believe are the greatest strengths? These are assets or characteristics that should be maintained or enhanced as the community plans for the future.

Strengths

- History...8 Responses
- The Riverfront itself ...5 Responses
- Gateway...4 Responses
- Accessibility...4 Responses
- The Amphitheater...4 Responses
- Proximity to Downtown...3 Responses
- Riverfront and Downtown Vistas...3 Responses
- Attraction...2 Responses

2. What characteristics or aspects of West Rum River Corridor do you believe to be weaknesses? These are things about the corridor that you think should be corrected, improved or eliminated in the future.

Weaknesses

- Proximity to Ferry Street Traffic and Noise...10 Responses
- Poor Walkability...10 Responses
- Undesirable Development...5 Responses
- Lack of Parking in Close Proximity of the Corridor...3 Responses
- Lack of Continuous Public Open Space...3 Responses
- Amphitheater...3 Responses
- Others...3 Responses



Issues and Opportunities Workshop

3. What do you see as opportunities available to West Rum River Corridor in the future?

Opportunities

- Create a Loop Trail along the River...11 Responses
- Highlight Historic Resources...7 Responses
- Create a Destination...5 Responses
- Create a variety of spaces and Experiences ...5 Responses
- Improve the Landscape ...5 Responses
- Improve Gateway to City...5 Responses
- Giddings Garden Area...4 Responses
- Walkway over the dam...3 Responses
- Move the Trail away for Ferry Street...2 Responses
- Provide Convenient Parking...2 Responses

4. What do you perceive as threats to a successful future for the West Rum River Corridor?

Threats

- Costs and Lack of Funding ...8 Responses
- Inaction ...5 Responses
- Multiple Jurisdictions...4 Responses
- Inappropriate Development...4 Responses
- Noise and Safety impacts of Ferry Street...3 Responses
- Lack of Parking...3 Responses
- Lack of Open space and trail continuity...3 Responses
- Crime...3 Responses
- Limited Vision...2 Responses

III. DESIGN PRINCIPLES, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

The following design principles, synthesized from previous plans and current stakeholder participation, serve as a foundation on which the West Rum River Corridor Plan is based and provide common tenets for livable communities that are essential to maintain a viable, community, and memorable place.

- **Invoke a sense of place.**
Establish a physical setting for development that says, “This is Anoka. ”
- **Invest in the public realm.**
Create a network of streets, trails, sidewalks and parks that are safe and vibrant.
- **Amplify the mix of uses.**
Create and restore a downtown that allows people to work, live and play.
- **Ameliorate connectivity.**
Provide people with ways to move between their neighborhoods and downtown that are safe and convenient.
- **Amplify existing strengths.**
As the city rebuilds, cherish what we already treasure – our historic buildings, parks, and the Rum and Mississippi Rivers.
- **Sustain and strengthen heritage resources.**
Preserve historic buildings and public spaces.
- **Promote the use of public spaces.**
Increase the number of people in the public spaces, downtown, along the riverfront, and in our neighborhoods.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The West Rum River Corridor goals and objectives have been derived from previous planning efforts and stakeholder visioning exercises facilitated through the comprehensive planning process. These goals and supportive design objectives define the community vision for the West Rum River Corridor and have guided the creation of the Overall Framework Plan and recommendations.

1. Goal: Improve the Ferry Street Corridor as a Gateway to the City

Objectives

- Insure the scale and quality of future development reinforces the historic, ““Real. Classic” character of Anoka.
- Improve the safety, noise and visual Impacts of Ferry Street by incorporating boulevard trees, landscaping, lighting and public art.
- Separate walkways and bicycle facilities, where possible, from Ferry Street.
- Reinforce visual and open space connections to the River and Downtown.
- Work with MnDOT to define on long term pedestrian and bicycle safety, and streetscape improvements.
- Enforce maintenance requirements on properties fronting the corridor.

2. Goal: Preserve and Maintain Historical Assets

Objectives

- Restore, improve and recognize historic landmarks: Amphitheater, Giddings Gardens, Stone House, Sanitarium, Woodbury House and stone walls and paths.
- Improve the Amphitheater as a space for educational purposes, community events, entertainment and recreation.
- Incorporate interpretive markers system throughout the corridor.

3. Goal: Improve the Natural Character of the River

Objectives

- Maintain the natural calm beauty of the Rum River and the bluffs.
- Improvements and landscaping should complement the natural setting and improve environmental quality.
- Improve the beauty of the river bank by getting rid of trash, brush, concrete rip rap.

4. Goal: Improve Connectivity and Accessibility to the Rum River

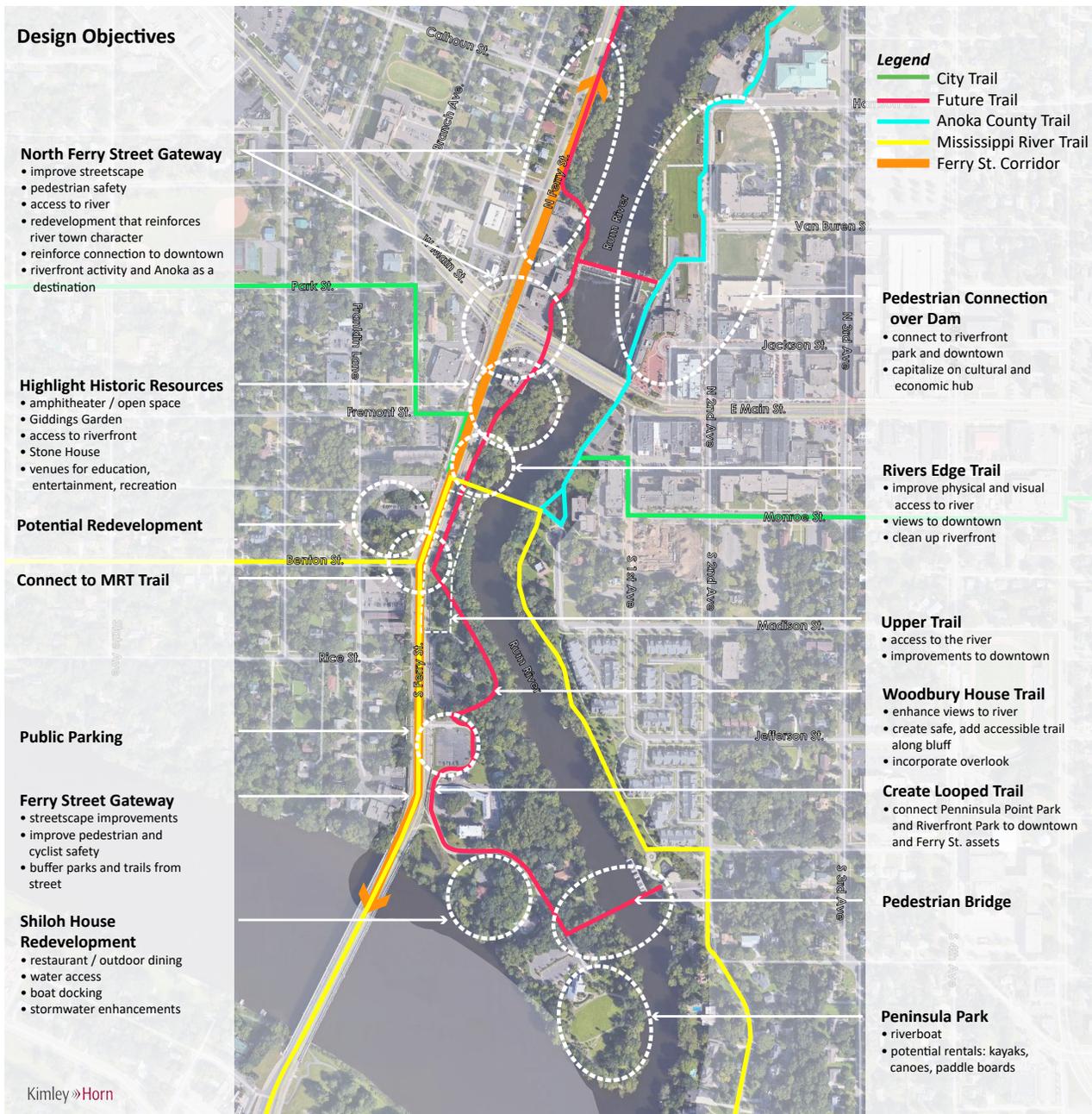
Objectives

- Improve accessibility to the core neighborhoods of Anoka.
- Create a loop trail and open space system between both sides of the river.
- Strive for continuity of public land on both sides of the River.
- Create a pedestrian crossing between Peninsula Point and Akin Boat Launch.
- Improve links to Riverfront Park, the Rum River Regional Trail, the Northstar Commuter Rail, Mississippi Regional Trail and other regional connections.
- Improve pedestrian access across, above and below the dam.
- Park Improvements along steep slopes must consider pedestrian safety and conform to ADA requirements.

5. Goal: Improve the corridor as a recreational and economic development amenity to attract tourism, residents and businesses.

Objectives

- Generate urban vitality, riverfront activity and economic development by incorporating uses such as river boats, canoe, kayak and paddle board rentals; outdoor fitness and education classes; outdoor dining on decks and rooftops patios, event center, and learning center.
- Future development at Main and Ferry Street should shape the gateway to downtown, orient toward the River and reinforce the ““Real. Classic”” character of Anoka.
- Provide kayak and canoe access above and below the dam.
- Incorporate more convenient public parking.
- Provide a variety of spaces for a variety of uses all seasons of the year.



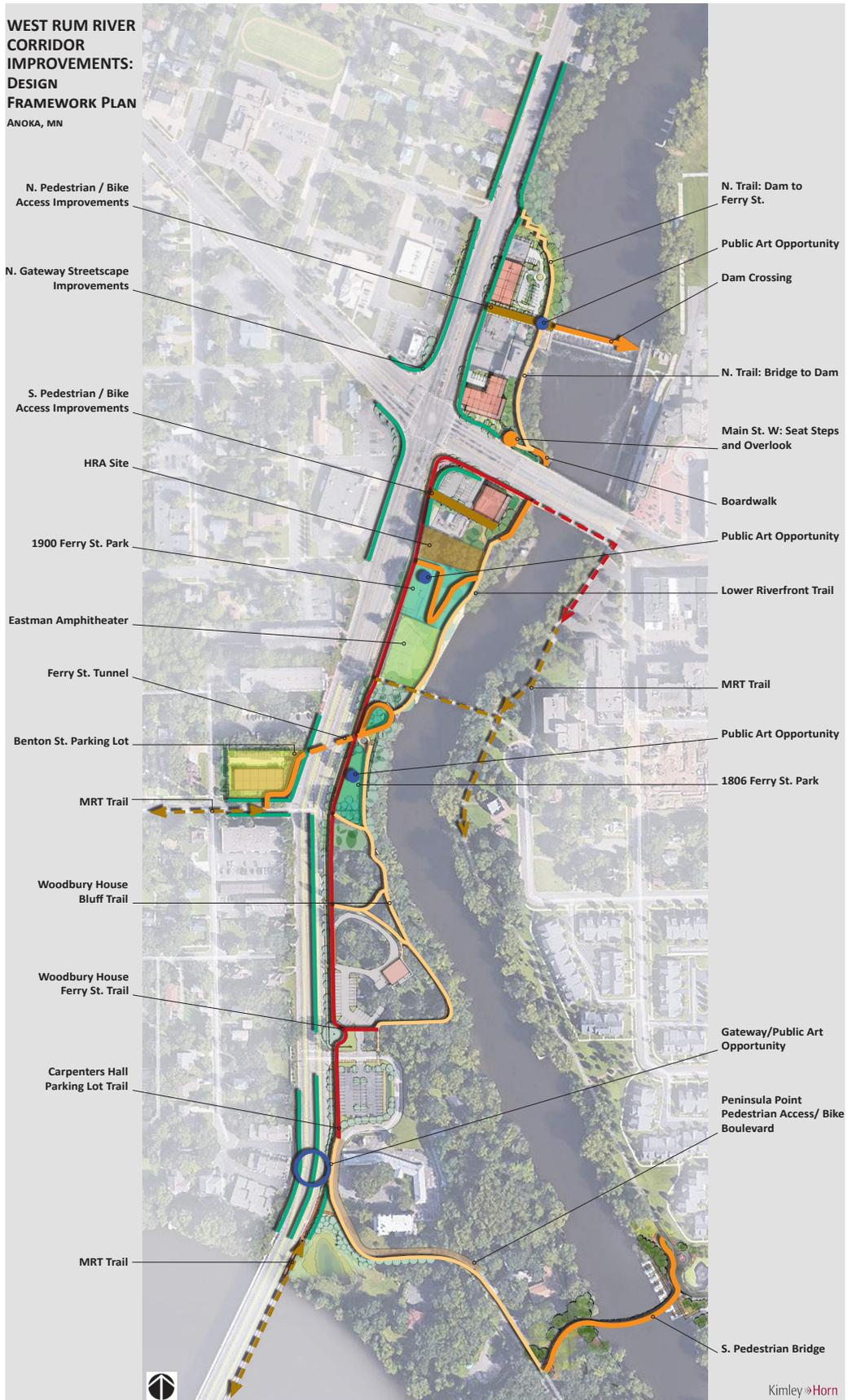
Summary of the West Rum River Corridor Framework Plan Design Objectives

IV. WEST RUM RIVER CORRIDOR FRAMEWORK PLAN

The purpose of this framework plan is to illustrate the intent of the design principles, goals and objectives as well as improvements that are consistent with the long- term vision for the corridor. . The framework plan offers a guide to manage growth within the West Rum River Corridor to foster an open space system that will support a vibrant and attractive city. The plan also provides a design framework from which to guide public and private investments within the West Rum River Corridor.

The recommendations presented with this plan respond to site specific conditions within the corridor and represent a consensus of the Task Force resulting from lengthy reviews and refinement of numerous alternatives. Key reaches within the half mile corridor have been sub-divided into more manageable segments based on the land uses, role, site conditions, and character. The segments are presented from south to north as follows:

- *South Pedestrian Bridge*
- *South gateway from the Pierce Hotel to Peninsula Point Park*
- *Woodbury House Reach from Benton Street to the Pierce Hotel*
- *Amphitheater Reach from the Stone House to Benton Street*
- *Downtown Reach from the Rum River Dam to the Stone House*



A. South Rum River Pedestrian Bridge- A pedestrian bridge, spanning the Rum River and linking Two Rivers Historical Park with the boat landing at Riverspointe, has been proposed in numerous plans dating as far back as the 1990 Redevelopment Plan for Peninsula Point. This bridge is a critical missing link in the proposed looped trail system between the west and east riverfront trails. The primary design objectives of the bridge are to:

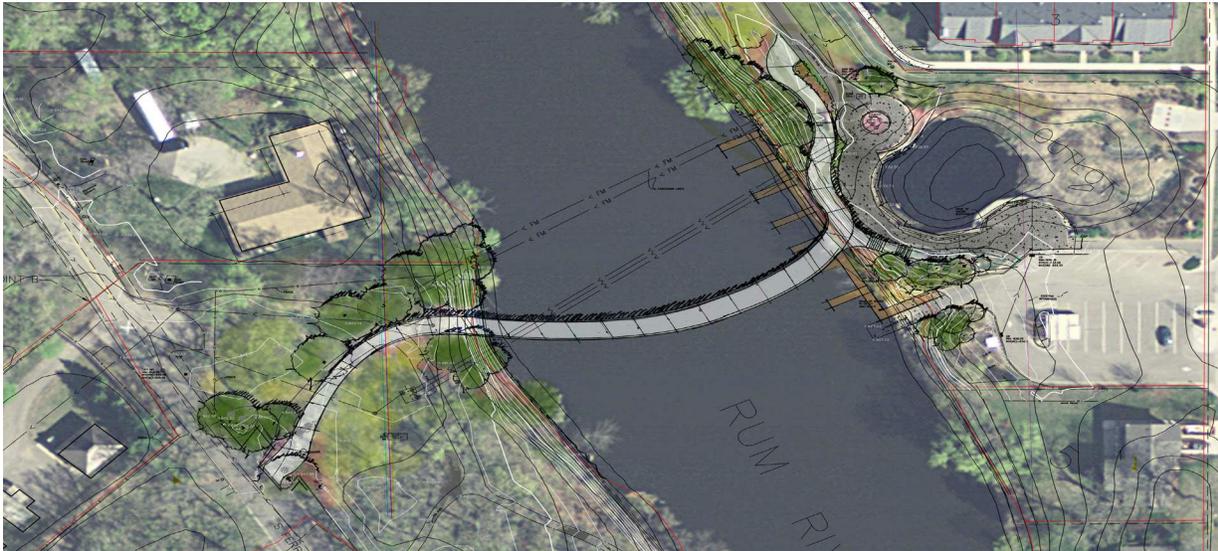
- *Create a distinctive, welcoming, and artful character.*
- *Provide 25 ft. of clearance from the normal pool elevation.*
- *Minimize visual impact to and from the River.*
- *Meet ADA requirements.*
- *Preserve contiguous open space.*
- *Minimize the length of access ramps.*
- *Minimize fill and obstructions in floodplain.*
- *Accommodate maintenance vehicles.*



Proposed pedestrian bridge landing area at East bank docks and boat launch

Recommendations

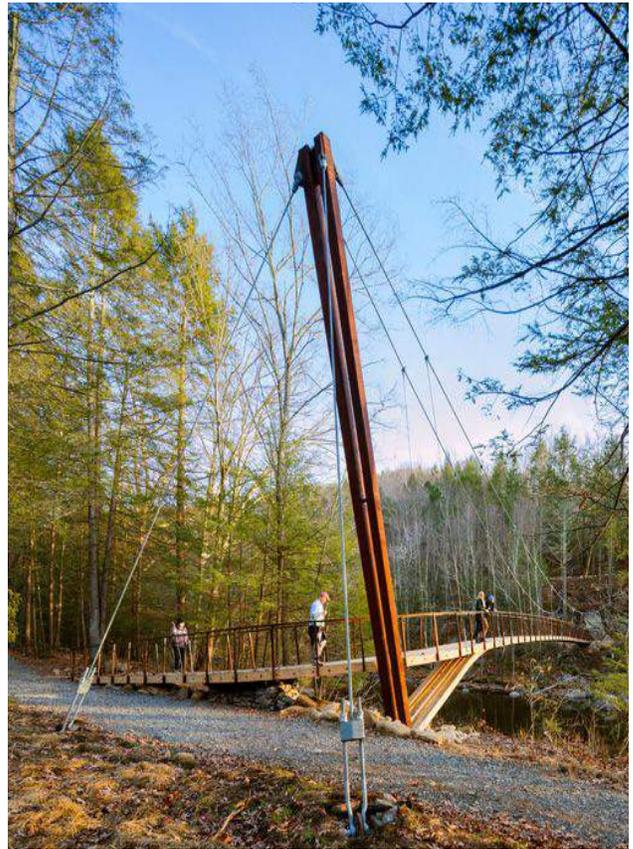
Several concept designs and precedent images of suspension bridges, prefabricated truss bridges and custom bridges were reviewed by the task force to explore the range of possibilities for this bridge. The preferred approach is to move in the direction illustrated in Concepts A and B and any further design and cost analysis should occur in the detailed design stages for the bridge.



Pedestrian Bridge Concept A with curvilinear alignment.



Pedestrian Bridge Concept B with a combination of straight alignment and curvilinear landings.



Pedestrian Bridge precedent images



B. South Gateway from the Pierce Hotel to Peninsula Point Park

Trail Connections

The current City of Anoka Trail Plan illustrates continuous City and State mixed-use trails throughout the West Rum River Corridor. The proposed Mississippi River Trail enters the corridor from the West at Benton Street with one leg heading east to Coon Rapids and a second leg connecting South along Ferry Street to Champlin. This is the trail that most impacts the West Rum River Corridor. The trail plan also illustrates a city trail parallel to the Rum River and alternating between the bluff and lower river front. An objective of this study is to explore solutions for implementing these trails and the details of fitting them into areas with limited right-of-way, and/or extreme topography.

Pierce Motel and Historic Kline Sanitarium: The following statement from the 2012/13 South Ferry Street Plan and still holds true today: “The owners of the Pierce Motel and the historic Kline Sanitarium have indicated that both sites will be under the long- term care and management of their family. The family does not anticipate or desire a change in land use for many years to come. Based on this, no redevelopment of this area is included in the plan.”



Image of the Kline Sanitarium

Shiloh House

The 2013 South Ferry Street Plan illustrates redevelopment of the Shiloh/Transformation House property for mixed use or commercial uses. Potential commercial uses include a restaurant, an event center, and riverboat docking. The plan recommends construction of a new site in the same footprint as the existing structure, reconfigured parking, additional landscaping, docks, and enhancement of the existing MnDOT storm water pond.

The Shiloh House falls within the bluff area of the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area and the following rules affect the development potential of the site:

Expansion of Nonconforming Structures (part 6106. 0080, Subp. 3)

Legal nonconforming structures are structures that were lawfully permitted when they were built. However, when zoning standards change, these lawfully established structures that do not conform to the new standards become legally nonconforming or “grandfathered.” The 2016 rules clarify that local governments may allow the lateral expansion of legally nonconforming principal structures, as long as they do not expand further into required setbacks from the bluff line and from the river.

As of this writing, the owner of the Shiloh House property has indicated that the property is not currently for sale.

Carpenters Hall Parking Lot Reconfiguration

The current aisles within the public parking lot are excessively wide (approx. 70 feet). Decreasing the aisle widths to 60 feet, or as little as 58 feet if car bumpers overhang into green space, will provide space to accommodate a mixed-use trail parallel to Ferry Street and additional green space. This will also result in a more direct, safe and appealing pedestrian and bicycle link along the corridor connecting to Peninsula Point Park and the City of Champlin.



South gateway plan for streetscape, parking lot and trail improvements

Pedestrian and Bike Access to Peninsula Point - Mixed -Use Trail and Bike Boulevard –The service road right- of- way south of the Carpenters Hall parking lot, is limited and the street is just 22 feet wide. Given the limited space and minimal amount of traffic, the mixed- use trail proposed through the Carpenters parking lot would transition to a separated walkway and a bike boulevard to Peninsula Point Park.

Streetscape Improvements

A tree lined boulevard and more pedestrian level lights are proposed along Ferry Street to improve the appearance of this gateway to the city and create a more separated and safer pedestrian realm. Realignment of the proposed trails will provide the spaced to accommodate a boulevard.

Public Art

The streetscape and park treatments recommended for the Ferry Street Corridor will provide continuity throughout the corridor. However, it is the unique components that express community identity that will add the most interest, animation and character to the corridor. Great opportunities for community building can be attained by tapping into local talent to design public art elements that express aspects of Anoka’s history, cultural, ecology and/or spirit of place.

Public Art competitions and urban prototyping events can leverage regional talent and generate community involvement and excitement. This component of placemaking could be utilized to create a layer of unique, flexible, functional, and artfully designed elements. These may be used in gateway areas and park plazas and along trails and include artfull arbors, benches, kiosks, district markers, and bus shelters. These elements could be developed relatively inexpensively and as temporary fixtures that change as the corridor evolves.



Proposed streetscape and and trail improvements at Carpenters Hall Parking Lot

B. Woodbury House Segment

The Woodbury House and surrounding stone walls are the most distinctive architectural components that help shape the character of the Ferry Street gateway. This site also has the potential to offer visual access from Ferry Street to the Rum River and the Downtown. A sight line easement exists over the northern portion of the property for this purpose.

Objectives:

- *Accommodate the proposed MRT and City Trail. These trails could be combined on the same alignment or separated following the bluff or parallel to Ferry Street*
- *Include the proposed City trail along the bluff line*
- *Improve the sense of separation, safety and comfort for pedestrians and bicyclists along Ferry Street.*
- *Preserve and enhance the historic qualities of the stone walls and paths*
- *Open sight lines to the river and Downtown as much as possible*
- *Create passive park improvement with interpretive displays and overlooks in key areas*



MRT/City Trail Options:

Option 1- Shared Trail Along Bluff Line

- Combine the MRT and City Trail to follow an alignment that meanders along the bluff line following the existing stone path and easements all the way around the Mad Hatter patio and circling back to the south entry to the site.
- Include interpretive exhibits, overlooks and benches as illustrated in the plan.

Option 2- Shared Trail East of Stone Wall

- Combine the MRT and City Trail to follow an alignment parallel to Ferry Street along the east side of the existing stone wall.
- A short- term recommendation is to keep the parking lot as is, build the trail in the 7 ft. between the curb and the wall, and place warning signs for cyclists to slow down. Wheel stops could also be added to the parking stalls to keep bumpers from overhanging the trail.
- A long - term Recommendation calls for reconstructing the driveway and parking lot for the Woodbury House to allow for a 8 foot wide trail with 2 foot wide clear zones between the parking lot curb and the stone wall.

Woodbury House plan for streetscape, parking lot, MRT and bluff trail improvements



Existing stone wall at Woodbury House entry



Option 3- Separate Trails

- The MRT Trail would follow an alignment parallel to Ferry Street along the east side of the existing stone wall. The City Trail would follow the bluff line as in Option 2. Consider a third trail along the north edge of the access drive to provide pedestrians a more direct route between the bluff and MRT trails that does not impose on the Mad Hatters patio.

Woodbury House plan for streetscape, parking lot and MRT trail improvements



Proposed boulevard and MRT trail improvements at the Woodbury House

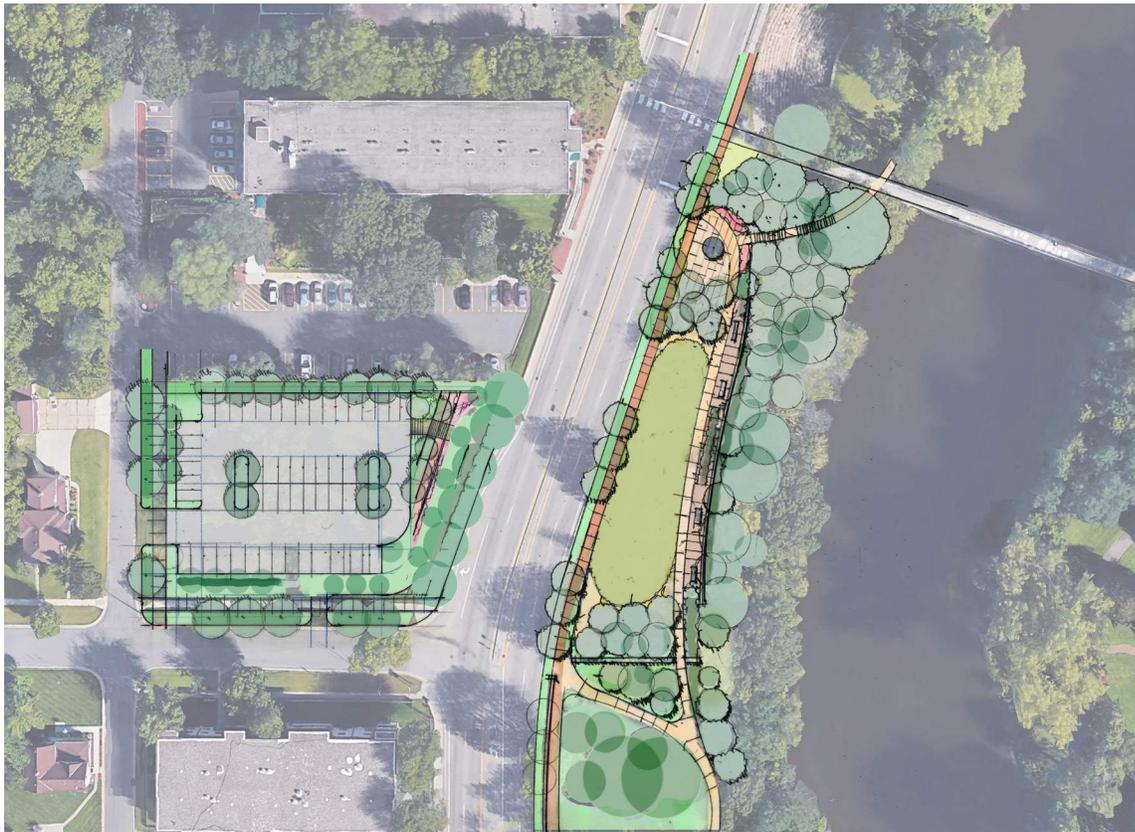
In all options the existing Ferry Street walk would be converted into a tree lined boulevard which will provide greater separation of users from traffic and create a more aesthetically pleasing gateway to the city. The current opening through the stone wall at the northwest corner of the property is only 3ft wide. All concepts will require reconfiguring the stone wall to meet accessible routes standards, mixed- use trail requirements, and connections along the bluff line to the north.



Proposed bluff line trail at the Woodbury House

C. 1806 Ferry Street Site

The base design for 1806 Ferry Street is intended to be a flexible, linear gathering area with an overlook accommodating passive viewing of the river. The design accommodates a tree lined boulevard and mixed-use trail along Ferry Street, seating terraces along the bluff line, public art and a path down to the river edge. The park also includes a trail head and kiosk for the MRT and City trails, as well as interpretive elements of the river corridor. The design recommends continuing to use the iconic field stone walls, similar to those at the Woodbury House, to shape a seating terrace at the edge of the bluff and to provide an element of continuity throughout the corridor.

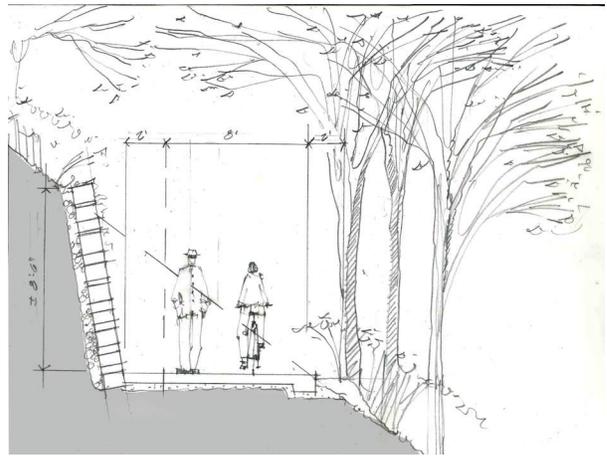
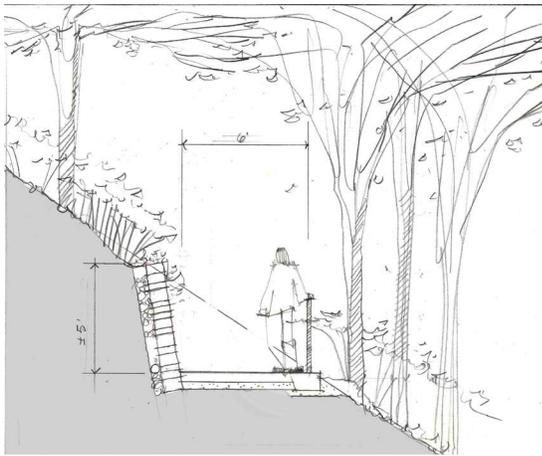


Concept A: Linear Park at 1806 Ferry St. and public parking at Benton Street site.

Bluff to Rivers Edge Trail options were explored that transects approximately 30 feet of vertical change on a 1 to 1.5 (66% slope). The trail would require a maximum slope of 8.3% for 300 feet or more to meet ADA standards. Two cross sections were explored to illustrate the amount of cut that would be required for a 6 feet wide path and an 8 feet mixed-use trail. (See figures on following page). Continuous retaining walls of 5 and 8 foot high respectively, would have to be cut into the slope to accommodate the trails. In addition, numerous trees and slope stabilizing undergrowth would have to be removed.

Both scenarios would violate the slope, cut, and clearing ordinances defined in the Wild and Scenic Recreational District regulations and the Mississippi River Control Corridor/Rum River Protection Ordinance which state in part:

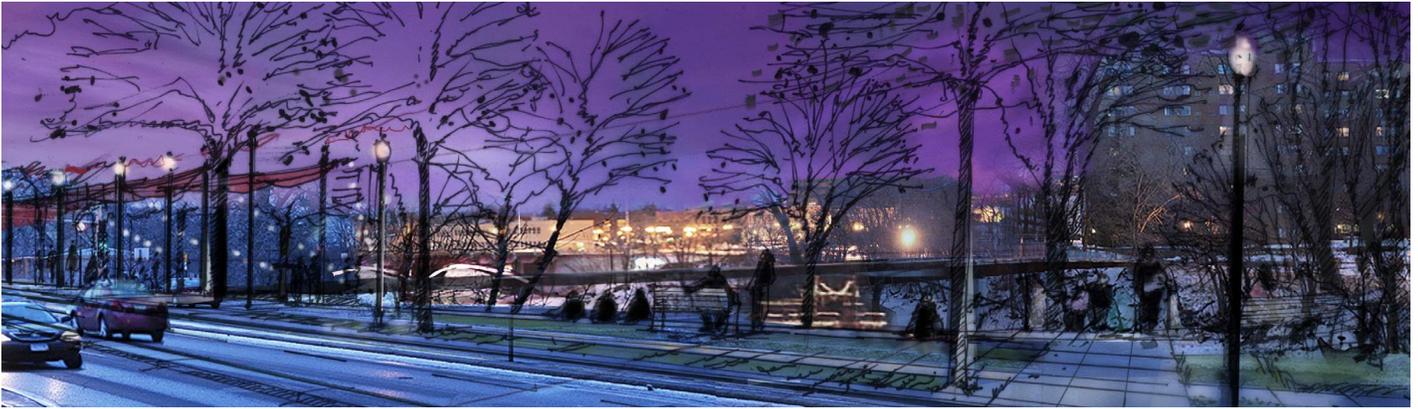
- *No development shall be permitted on land having a slope, before alteration, in excess of 18 percent unless the applicant establishes that the following conditions are met:*
- *All structures other than buildings and roadway surfaces, but including retaining walls, shall meet the following design requirements: Retaining walls or terrace contours shall not exceed five feet in height;*
- *The minimum width of terraces shall be in the ratio of 2:1 to the height.*



Potential excavation and walls required for 6ft. and 8ft. wide trails traversing the river bank.



Potential boulevard walk and park improvements at 1806 Ferry St. and Woodbury House



Potential evening view of downtown from 1806 Ferry St. park.

Benton Street Redevelopment Site

Alternative concepts were created for the Benton Street Redevelopment Site that explore the potential for a parking lot, commercial or residential uses and/or a tunnel to connect the west and east sides of Ferry Street. The base design, illustrated in Concept A includes a public parking lot with sidewalks and landscape buffers. Concept B illustrates a public parking with the addition of a tunnel under Ferry Street connecting to the park proposed at the 1806 Ferry St. site.

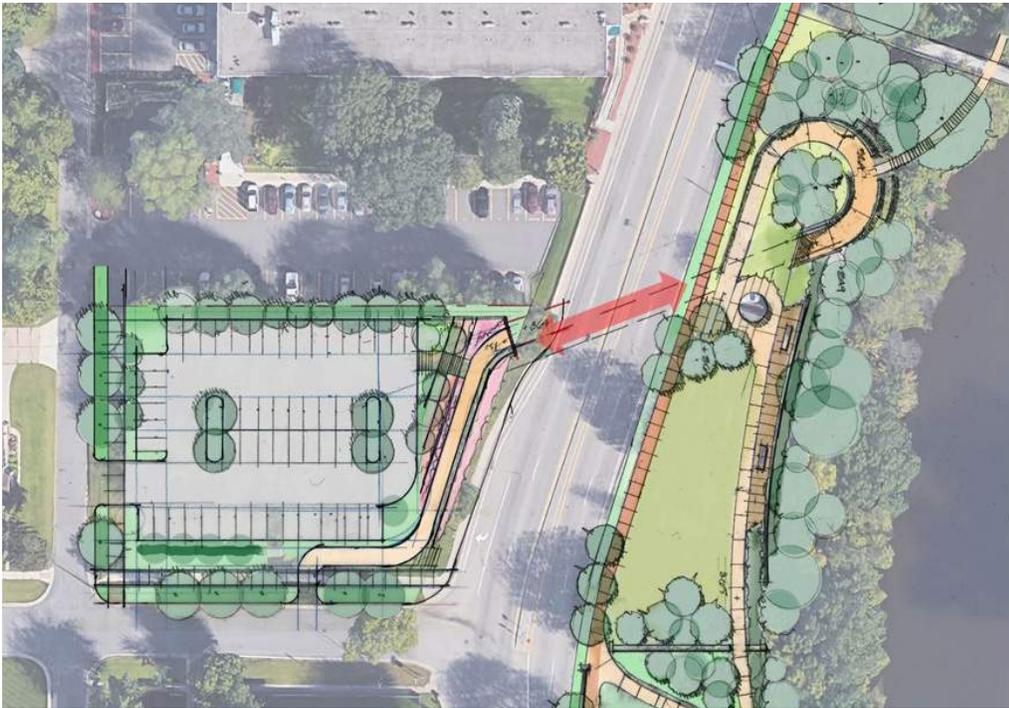
Concept C illustrates a mixed-use building on the Benton Street site. Another potential rendition of this concept would be to include a layer of public parking under private parking with mixed-use or residential development above.

Ferry Street Tunnel

Concepts B and C illustrate a tunnel under Ferry Street connecting the Benton St. and 1806 Ferry Street sites. The preliminary design assumes the tunnel would need to be approximately 15ft deep to accommodate 10ft of clearance for maintenance vehicles and 5ft. of cover for Ferry Street reconstruction. The tunnel would angle under Ferry Street and daylight mid-way down the bluff on the Rum River side. A view of the river and downtown would be framed by the tunnel for users heading east. Both concepts illustrate the approximate length of ramps needed at 8.3% maximum slope to connect to street level. Stairs are also illustrated connecting the tunnel to the lower portion of the amphitheater.

Recommendations

- Pursue less damaging solutions to connect the upper bluff open spaces to the river's edge such as stairs and/or alternative routes.
- Further study will also be needed to determine the feasibility of both concepts. Concept B could be a shorter-term solution until the market conditions are right for redevelopment as illustrated in Concept C.



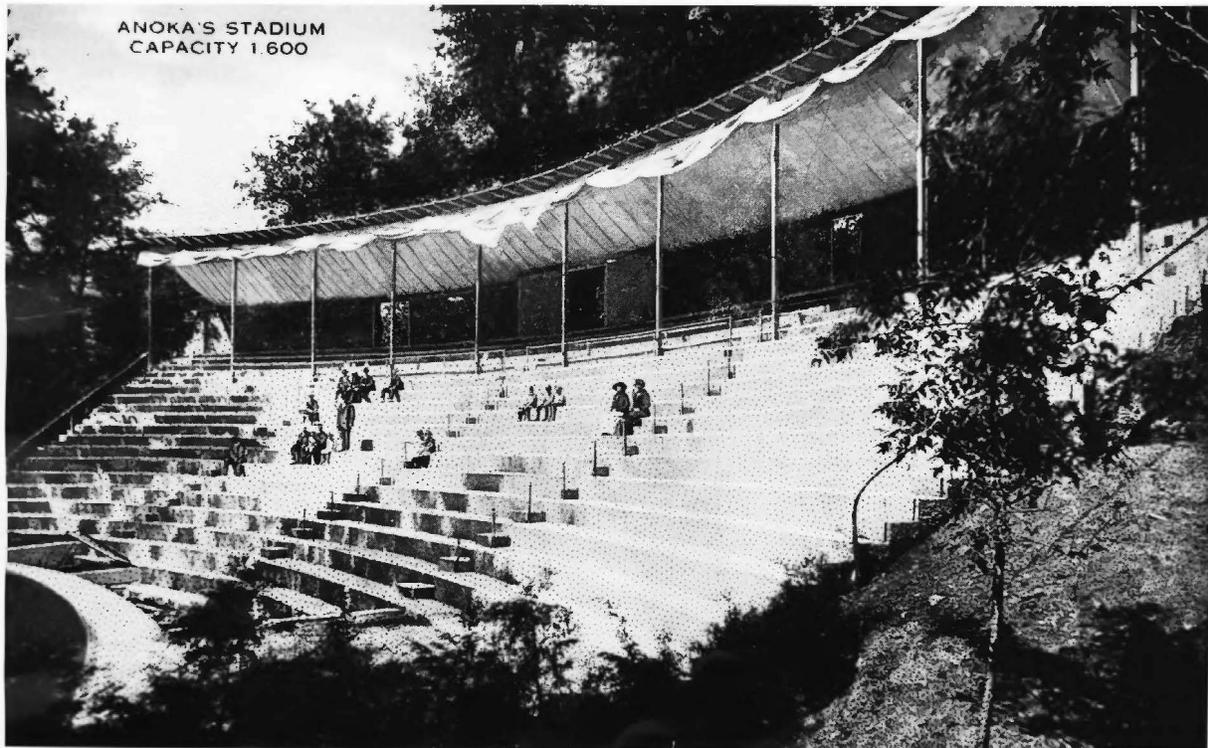
Concept B: Tunnel connecting park at 1806 Ferry St. and public parking at Benton Street site.



Concept C: Tunnel connecting Park at 1806 Ferry St. and public parking at Benton Street site.

F. Eastman Amphitheater

It is clear from community surveys, and the goals established by the West Rum River Corridor Task Force that renovation and reuse of the Amphitheater is a priority. The pertinent goals seek to “*Preserve and maintain historical assets by restoring and improving historic landmarks such as the Amphitheater, Giddings Gardens, Stone House, Sanitarium, Woodbury House and stone walls and paths.*” A specific objective defined by the Task Force is to improve the Amphitheater as a space for educational purposes, community events, entertainment and recreation.



Eastman Amphitheater

Source: MHS

Background:

Outlined below is a brief summary of the amphitheater history, its historical significance and sequence of events that led to where the project is today and to inform where it goes in the future. It is our understanding several additional studies and documents have been produced and may be available from the Windego Park Society.

1914	Amphitheater Opened
1914 to 1939	Amphitheater years of operation
1936	Giddings left for Michigan to organize Interlochen Music College
1936 to 1979	Community interest in the amphitheater waned, and the facility started decaying, An architecture student from the University of Minnesota drafted a plan to restore the amphitheater, and this restored interest in preserving it. Community organizers did some cleanup work and patched the concrete steps. [4]

November 1, 1979	Windego Park Auditorium/Open Air (Historic name) Nominated to National Register of Historic Places
December 7, 1979	City Request to be removed from National Register of Historic Places
January 8, 1980	Placed on National Register of Historic Places
1997	The Windego Park Society was organized.
November 13, 2000	Amphitheater Noise Assessment Study Completed
2006	Amphitheater Assessment Study completed. This study recommends restoring the amphitheater in its current location. This plan modified the upper terraces of the original design to accommodate wheel chair access and ticket booths, and storage areas.
2013	The 2013 Rum River Corridor Plan suggest stabilizing the Amphitheater from further deterioration.

Statement of Significance from the National Register of Historic Places Inventory·· Nomination Form dated November 6, 1979.

“Anoka’s Open Air Theater is significant for historical and architectural reasons. Historically, it is significant as a local example of the last wave of “City Beautiful” projects that spread across the United States after the Chicago Exposition of 1893.

In addition, it was the scene of a number of locally planned, written, and produced plays and pageants, as well as a community meeting place. Architecturally, the theater represents a picturesque and unique design incorporating a man-made theater into a natural setting. The well-documented Purcell and Elmslie design of the theater’s canvas awning system, although largely destroyed, provides an invaluable record for the city’s imminent restoration plan for the theater.

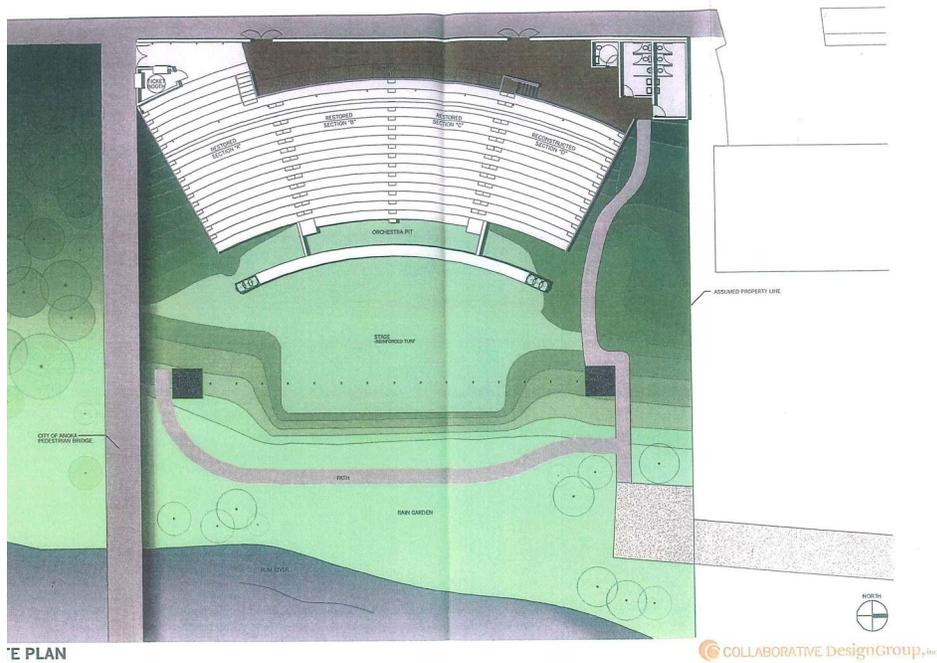
This theater, a rare example of the semi-circular open-air theater in Minnesota, was constructed in 1914. The cost of constructing the theater was advanced by twentyfour Anoka citizens. According to a 1953 “para biography” written by W. G. Purcell, who designed the canvas awning for the theater, “Thaddeus Philander Giddings decided to do something in the way of creative entertainment for his town during the summer, and a Greek theatre of concrete, built into a natural hollow in the bank along the shores of the Rum River was the answer. Most of the work was done by the citizens.”

Giddings later became co-founder and director of the famous National Music Camp of Interlocken, Michigan. When completed, the theater served as a meeting place of citizens for amateur plays, historical pageants, “moving pictures,” operettas, community meetings, and bazaars. Local pride in the theater was enormous. An article in the August 11, 1914 edition of the Anoka Herald summed up this local sentiment. The article stated that “this auditorium is the only one of its kind in the state that we know of and it would be hard to find one in any state that has the advantage of its lovely situation. This auditorium will not only be the best advertisement the town could possibly have but it will be the general meeting and entertainment center of the citizens. There is no end to the number of good things this auditorium should bring to our people. There is a great ‘get together’ wave sweeping over the country. This brings the people together in a common interest, brings out the latent talent, and from the unity of feeling thus engendered, the other community interests are served.”

This theater was extensively used until 1938. Although it has not been used for over forty years, its presence has not been forgotten. The City of Anoka is currently ‘planning the restoration of this theater for a variety of community uses.’”

2006 Amphitheater Assessment Study, produced by the Collaborative Design Group

This plan recommends restoring and rebuilding portions of the amphitheater in its current location. This plan also proposed modifying the upper terraces of the original design to accommodate wheel chair access, ticket booths, and storage areas. It is our understanding this plan was not reviewed and/or approved by the State Historical Society.



Proposed site plan and section of Eastman Amphitheater from 2006 Amphitheater Assessment Study.

Amphitheater Structural Analysis and Cost Estimates

At the time of this writing, 12 years have passed since the 2006 Amphitheater Assessment Study had been prepared and the concrete has deteriorated significantly over that time period. An updated structural analysis of the existing amphitheater was performed in November of 2017 by Kimley-Horn to assess the current feasibility of preserving all or portions of the existing amphitheater. The key findings of the structural analysis are as follows:

Observation and Comments

Section A, every row of seating had moderate to severe concrete spalls and cracks and most of the rows had one or more surface offset from the adjacent surface at a crack or joint.

Section B, every row of seating had severe concrete spalls and cracks, almost all the rows had one or more surface offset from the adjacent surface at a crack or joint, and about half of the rows had moderate to severe outward leaning of the vertical riser of the seating.

Section C, every row of seating had severe concrete spalls and cracks, offset surfaces at cracks and joints, and severe outward leaning of the vertical riser of the seating. Some rows were deteriorated so severely that large pieces of the concrete were missing and the exposed soil was washing out.

Section D, every row of seating was severely cracked, spalled, offset, and leaning, and deteriorated so badly that mature vegetation had taken over almost the entire section.

Professional Opinion

The existing cast-in-place concrete is not structurally capable of performing its intended functions and there are no reasonable or practical repair and maintenance options available that would restore the structural integrity of the amphitheater such that it can be fully used and occupied. The cost of any repair option is considered too high relative to the desired design improvement attained with complete replacement.



Section D existing conditions



Section B existing conditions

Concept Alternatives

As part of this planning process, two concepts were developed for restoring and/or improving the amphitheater.

Concept A: This is the design proposed in the 2006 Amphitheater Assessment Study. As described earlier, this plan recommends restoring and rebuilding portions of the amphitheater in its current location. This plan also proposes modifying the upper terraces of the original design to accommodate wheel chair access, ticket booths, and storage areas. It is our understanding this plan was not reviewed and/or approved by the State Historical Society.

Pros and Cons of Concept A

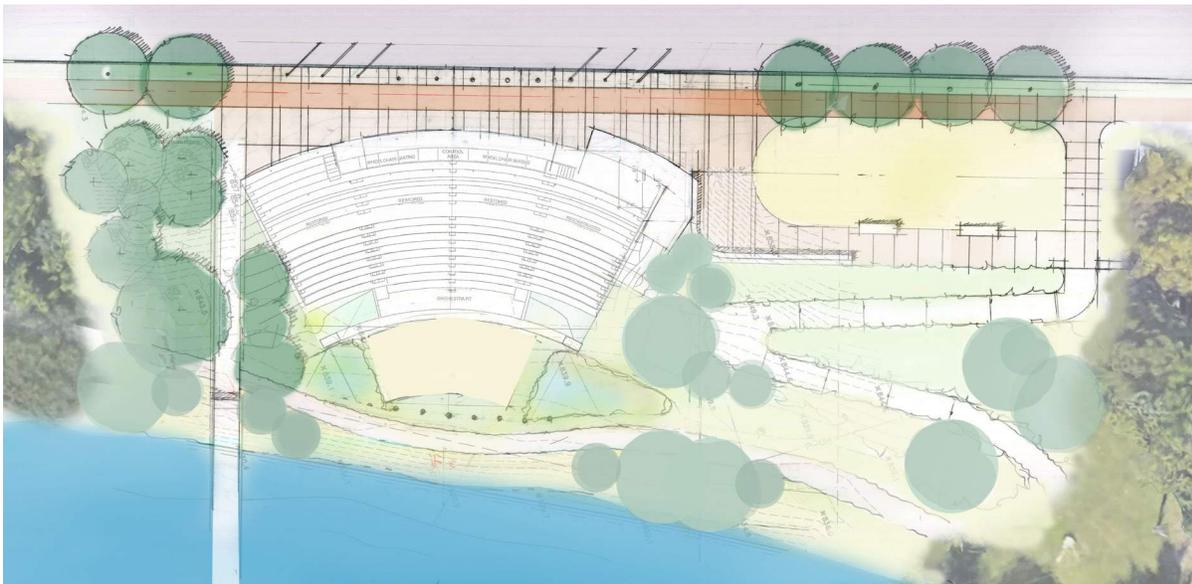
Pros

- *Maintain Historic designation and potential associated funding resources*
- *Artifact of Anoka's Historic Assets*

Cons

- *Built on unstable, deteriorating materials*
- *Costly to maintain*
- *Cannot be used for public gatherings*
- *Insufficient space remains between the Ferry Street curb and the entrance to the Amphitheater to safely accommodate a mixed- trail and pedestrian access to the theater.*

Concept B: This concept illustrates how the amphitheater could be moved approximately 12 feet toward the river and completely rebuilt utilizing the 1914/2006 footprint. The intent of this concept is to preserve the integrity of the design and historical use of the site while providing a wider space along Ferry Street to accommodate a boulevard, mixed- use trail and pedestrian space at the entry to the amphitheater theater.



Concept B Site Plan illustrates the amphitheater reconstructed 12 ft. closer to the river



Concept B Section illustrates the amphitheater reconstructed 12 ft. closer to the river



Concept B Section illustrates reconstruction the amphitheater 12 ft. closer to the river provides more separation from Ferry Street.



Pros and Cons of Concept B:

Pros

- *Provides more trail, sidewalk, boulevard and entry space*
- *Rebuild to meet current safety and building codes*
- *Use current and more durable construction methods*
- *Rebuild entry to Pre-169 dimensions & character*
- *Costs similar to stabilizing*

Cons

- *Potentially loss of historic designation and funding resources*
- *Costly to construct, maintain and operate*
- *Needs supportive infrastructure*
- *Is this the right place for level of investment?*

Amphitheater Estimate of Probable Costs

An estimate of probable cost for moving and rebuilding the amphitheater as illustrated in Concept B was prepared and reviewed by the Task Force. The preliminary costs are estimated at \$6,898,000 dollars and include:

- removal of the existing structure and poor soil,
- incorporating good structural fill,
- moving the amphitheater approximately 12 feet further from the Hwy 169 curb,
- entry plaza
- adding restrooms, storage, dressing rooms, and ticket office
- adding a central wider row for wheel chair access
- adding a masonry sound wall
- rebuilding the steel framework and fabric canopy
- providing theater lighting and sound system
- landscaping
- permitting
- design and engineering

The total costs can vary significantly depending on if the components are phased or built as one project, and if federal funding is included or not.

Recommendations

- As an implementation step, meet with representatives of the State Historical Society to determine what impacts moving and rebuilding the amphitheater will have on meeting the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as define the minimum treatment to maintain historic designation and associated funding resources.
- A more refined strategy to preserve, commemorate, or rebuild the amphitheater will follow when the options are more clearly defined with the State Historical Society.
- Service access and ADA parking should also be considered along the lower riverfront trail.

G. 1830 So. Ferry Street

The recent relocation of the Riverplace business and demolition of the building resulted in a flat, linear open. The remaining slopes are less steep as found to the south and present an opportunity create an accessible route to the lower riverfront.

Recommendations

The upper flat area is proposed as a simple passive green space with views to the riverfront and a gathering space to accommodate special events. The design recommends continuing to use the iconic field stone walls in key areas to provide an element of continuity throughout the corridor and recall historical and indigenous materials. A mixed-use trail with switch backs is suggested to provide access to the trails along the river edge. The concept also proposes an accessible connection off the ramp to the mid- area of the amphitheater. A tree lined boulevard and mixed use trail are also accommodated along Ferry Street.



Proposed streetscape, park, overlook and lower riverfront access at 1830 Ferry Street.



Proposed streetscape, park, overlook and lower riverfront access at 1830 Ferry Street.

H. 1900 So. Ferry Street.

This site is the historic location of the Giddings Gardens. Remnants of the rock walls and garden steps still exist along the slope toward the river. The 2013 Ferry Street Plan proposed using this site for expansion of the Walker Residential Facility including service access and parking. Design alternatives were explored that suggested a public parking lot and reconstruction of a modified version the Giddings Garden.

Recommendation:

The consensus of the Task Force is to use this site completely for open space and to have interpretive references to the Giddings Garden. The tree lined boulevard and mixed use trail will also continue along Ferry Street.

H. Boardwalk, Main Street Stairs, North River Bank Trail, and Dam Crossing

Possibly the most dynamic, accessible, and historically significant, segment of the Rum River is between the Eastman Amphitheater and the Rum River Dam. In addition to the amphitheater, this segment included Giddings Garden, the Stone House and the renown sawmills and flour mills once located at the Rum River Dam.

The primary objectives for this segment include:

- Highlight historic assets including Giddings Gardens, the Stone House, Main Street Bridge, and the Dam.
- Incorporate a trail along the Rivers Edge.
- Improve the natural environment.
- Create a stronger connection to Downtown.
- Creating accessible pedestrian and bicycle connections between the lower and upper riverfronts.
- Provide connections across the river along the Main Street bridge and dam to complete the looped trail system.



Existing Stone House



Existing lower riverfront



Three public access easements provide opportunities to connect the riverfront trail system to Ferry Street on the south and north sides of Main Street. These access points include easements on the north side of the Walker Building and 2040 North Ferry Street west of the dam. An access easement also parallels the river from the Walker building to north of the 2028 North Ferry Street building.

North Riverfront open space and river access network

Recommendation:

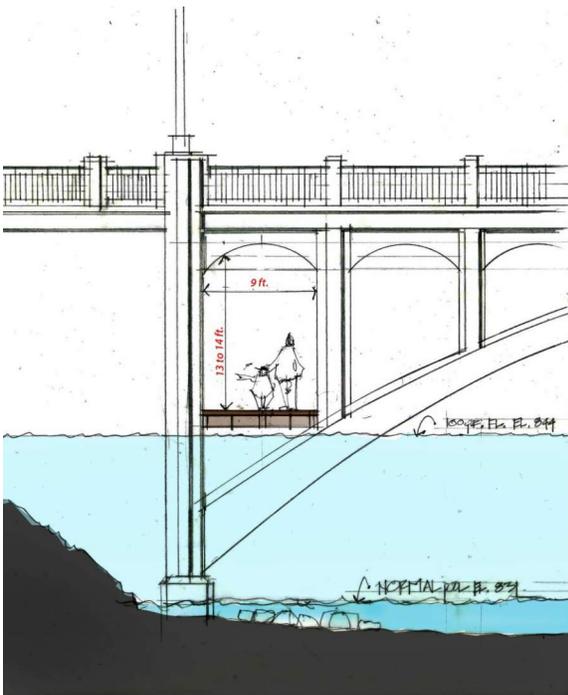
- Create stronger pedestrian and bicycle connections from Ferry Street to the lower riverfront trail by utilizing the existing public easements on the northside of the Walker building and the access drive to the dam. These low traffic volume connections can be designed much like a streetscaped woonerf with bicycle, pedestrian and vehicles intermixing.
- Incorporate a boardwalk to transverse the steep riverbank south of the bridge. The boardwalk should extend through to the northside of the bridge structure. An initial investigation of the bridge drawings indicate that an approximately 9ft. wide x 13ft high opening through the structure may provide enough space to accommodate the proposed boardwalk. The opening is just above the 100yr flood level at elevation 844.
- Provide an access from the west side of the Main Street bridge to the riverfront trail by incorporating stairs and seat steps similar to those at the City Hall. This site also offers a great vantage point overlooking the dam and upper and lower pools. A mall plaza and kiosk should be incorporated off the main Street bridge as an orientation point for visitors and visual cue to the riverfront access.
- Extend the lower riverfront trail north of the dam along the existing easement to stairs connecting up to the upper riverfront trails along North Ferry Street. The trail extension to the north from the existing easement north of the dam to the Bonnell Overlook on Ferry Street is challenging given the existing slopes. There may be potential to partner with the owners of the 2040 N. Ferry Street building to expand the existing stairs, rather than build new separate stairs, on the north side of the building to create a stronger public access and to minimize impacts to the bluff.
- Further investigation should be made into the funding opportunities associated with the dam crossing and its role as the last line of defense against invasive species entering the Rum River Corridor and migrating up to Lake Mille Lacs.



Riverfront under the Main Street Bridge



Proposed boardwalk at the Main Street Bridge



Proposed boardwalk through the Main Street Bridge



Proposed riverfront promenade within an existing easement north of Main Street

I. North Gateway Open Space Network

Design objectives for the North Gateway from Calhoun Street to Main Street include:

- Improve pedestrian safety and the appearance of the entry to the City from the north and west.
- Shape future development to reinforce economic development and public realm objectives

Recommendations include:

- Work with MnDOT and property owners to improve the streetscape along Ferry St. and Main Street east to the bridge by incorporating trees, more lighting, parking buffers, and public art. Also consider removing the pork-chop islands for right turns onto Main Street to create shorter and safer pedestrian and bicycle crossings, narrow lanes and widen walks where possible.
- Work with MnDOT to extend the proposed City trail north along Ferry Street and across Hwy. 10.
- The parcels fronting Main Street should consider a mixture of river oriented restaurants, roof top patios and residential units that take advantage of the setting and add vitality to the River Corridor and Downtown.
- Long term infill development should shape the streetscape and public realm, as well as step up from the River as illustrated in the plan.



North Riverfront potential redevelopment with open space and river access network



Proposed North Riverfront pedestrian and bicycle access at the dam



Existing North Riverfront public access at the dam



Existing public easement north of the Rum River Dam

V. IMPLEMENTATION

Even the best plans are of little value if they are not implemented. Implementation of the opportunities outlined in this document is dependent on proactive leadership of the community and an orchestrated collaboration between City officials and departments, government agencies, property owners, the business community, civic organizations, and developers.

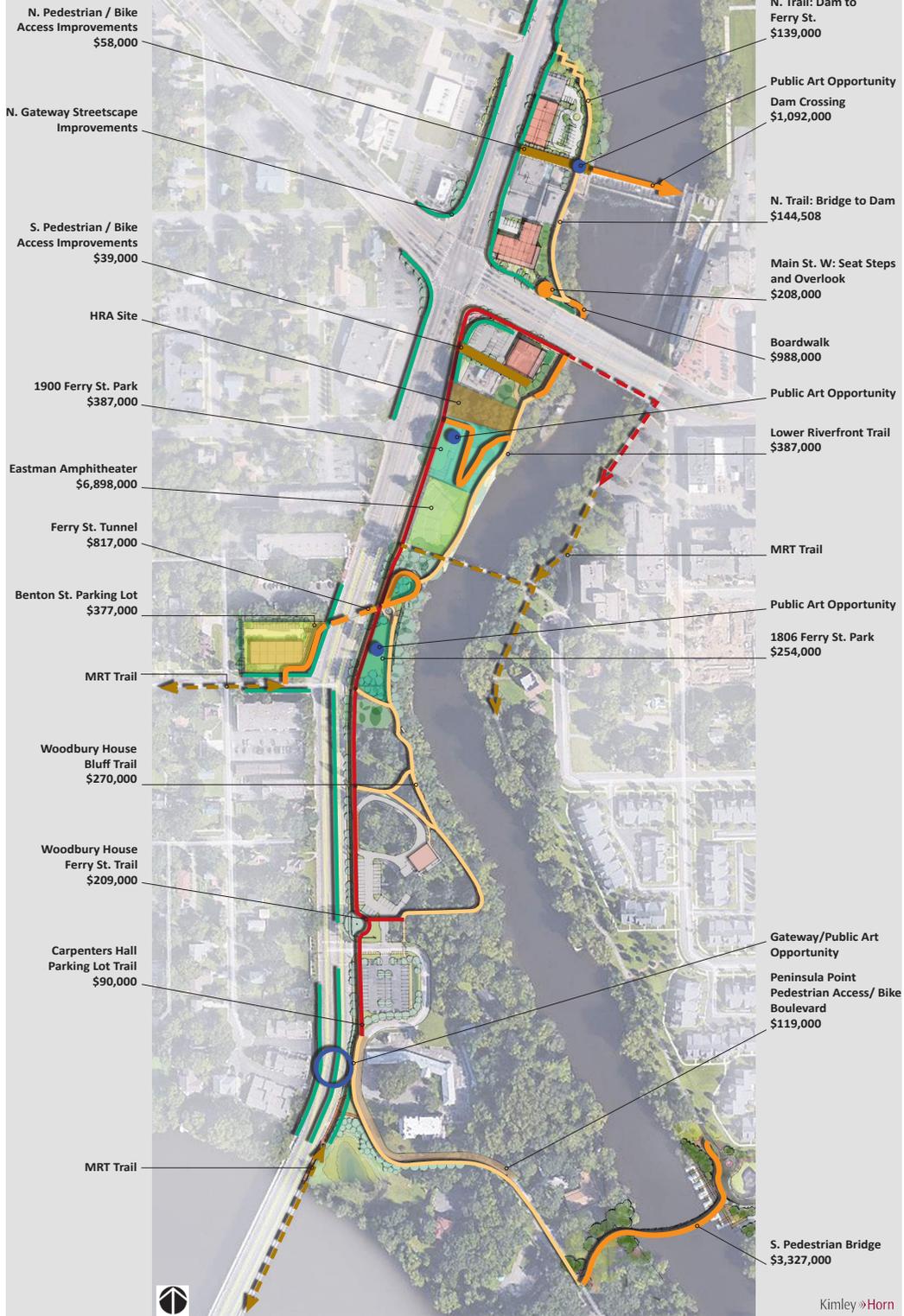
The West Rum River Corridor has been evolving into its current pattern of development for over a century. Even with a strong commitment, it will take a number of years before many of these recommendations take full shape. Although the City's role in this process is an important one, the success of this effort will not be possible without the full support and participation of landowners, citizens and the development community. The public improvements recommended for the West Rum River Corridor will act as a catalyst for reinvestment and a positive step toward ensuring a vital community for generations to come

A concerted effort has been made throughout this project to involve a broad cross-section of the community. Business owners, residents, elected and appointed officials, and community leaders have been invited to provide input and guidance. Their participation has improved the study and their continued support will be critical in sustaining the community's commitment over time.

ESTIMATE OF PROBABLE COSTS FOR CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS

A Preliminary Estimates of Probable costs was prepared for the various public improvements associated with the West Rum River Corridor. The cost estimates were prepared to an appropriate level of detail to assist the stakeholders with making informed decisions regarding priorities, phasing, and budgeting, and funding sources. The costs are broken down into segments and components that could be implemented as stand-alone improvements or combined into larger projects.

**WEST RUM RIVER
CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENTS:
ESTIMATED COST
ANOKA, MN**



Kimley»Horn

Priority Projects

On November 28, 2018 the Task Force members participated in a priority setting exercise to define, from their perspectives, the most important improvements described in the framework plan to implement within the West Rum River Corridor. The list of prioritized improvements defines short, mid, and long term projects to focus funding resources on the most desirable components of the open space system. The results of the exercise are as follows:

1st Priority

South Pedestrian Bridge
Lower Riverfront Trail & Boardwalk
1900 South Ferry Street and Adjacent HRA site

2nd Priority

Eastman Amphitheater

3rd Third Priority

Woodbury House Bluff Trail
Woodbury House Ferry St. Trail

4th Priority

North Trail: Bridge to Dam

5th Priority

Ferry St. Tunnel

6th Priority

Dam Crossing
1806 Ferry Street Park
Carpenters Hall Parking Lot Trail

7th Priority

Peninsula Point Pedestrian Access/ Bike Boulevard
MRT Trail
Benton Street Parking Lot
Main St. West Seat Steps and Overlook
North Trail: Dam to Ferry Street
So. Pedestrian / Bike Access improvements
No. Pedestrian / Bike Access improvements
North Gateway Streetscape improvements

Short Term Action Steps

This section includes action steps that should be considered to integrate the improvements into an ongoing community-building strategy, and to gain the most benefit from open space, transportation and streetscape improvements.

1. Evaluate and Pursue Funding Sources

A range of currently available Federal, State, County and local funding resources are outlined in the appendix. Future implementation steps will identify project components that may align with specific funding grant programs in order to leverage the City's funds with potential grants.

2. Amphitheater

As an implementation step, meet with representatives of the State Historical Society to determine what impacts moving and rebuilding the amphitheater will have on meeting the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as define the minimum treatment to maintain historic designation and associated funding resources. A more refined strategy to preserve, commemorate, or rebuild the amphitheater will follow when the options are more clearly defined with the State Historical Society.

3. Coordinate Objectives with all City Departments and Place Projects in the Capitol Improvement Plans

The planning, engineering, and inspections departments should refer to the guidelines and associated public/private improvements when reviewing individual projects. Each proposed improvement should comply with the guidelines, reinforce the desired character of the West Rum River Corridor, and contribute to creating a cohesive, pedestrian-friendly, memorable, and viable place. City departments should refer to the components in this document to coordinate, design, and budget for capital improvements and to design public/private partnerships to finance and maintain public realm projects.

4. Define a Maintenance Strategy for Each Project: The long-term maintenance and associated costs are a critical consideration for the success of the improvements. A strategy should be created that defines a funding source, and assigns responsibility for maintenance of the various components.

5. Public Art, Events and Installations

Public Art competitions and urban prototyping events can leverage regional talent, generate community involvement and excitement for the project.

The West Rum River Corridor Framework Plan presents the City of Anoka an opportunity to create innovative policies and procedures to integrate art that is informed by contemporary best practices for public art processes. To implement public park projects the City should consider the following:

- Refine the framework plan to include public art at key locations within the gateway areas, Giddings Garden area, and parks.
- Resources for procedures in administering a public arts program are available through private consulting services as well as, the Minnesota State Arts Board. They include how to determine a public art strategy and plan, scope of work for public art projects, produce open or invitational calls for artists, conduct artist selection meetings, develop contracts with artists for design proposals, and commission artwork.
- Setting base-line funding for each project, should take into account the relative importance and scale of the project. Appropriate media and materials, and the expectation for community involvement should be considered in setting schedules, budgets and the creation of the artwork.
- The City may wish to consider establishing a flexible funding model that utilizes city funds to leverage private and foundation funds, in addition to other sources.
- An experienced public art project manager will likely be needed to develop and carry out public art projects on an ongoing basis.

WEST RUM RIVER CORRIDOR FRAMEWORK PLAN

APPENDIX

- A. Members of the Task Force
- B. Summary of SWOT Exercise
- C. West Rum River Corridor Improvements: Preliminary Estimate of Probable Costs
- D. Amphitheater Structural Analysis and Estimate of Probable Costs
- E. Funding Sources

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