# SAMUEL H. MORGAN REGIONAL TRAIL CORRIDOR:



# RENOVATION PLAN

MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT TO

EAST BANK MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL TRAIL CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN



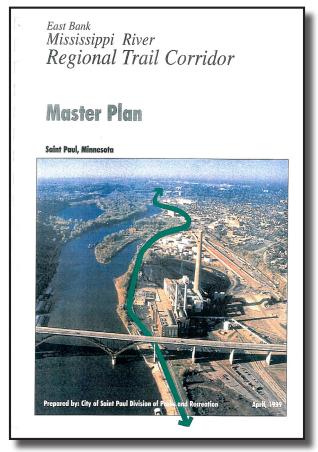




Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail Plaque. Upper Landing by District Energy

#### **Amendment Notes**

In 2001, The Saint Paul City Council changed the name of the trail from the East Bank Mississippi River to the **Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail** through a council resolution. (Appendix A) This was a request from the Friends of Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County to honor of Mr. Morgan's numerous contributions to the system of parks and trails in Saint Paul, the Metropolitan Area, and the State of Minnesota. He was well known for his leadership in protecting and promoting parks and trails and was instrumental in the creation of the Metropolitan Area's Regional Parks and Open Space system.



Cover of East Bank Mississippi River Regional Trail Corridor Master Plan.1992

## **Acknowledgments**

The contributions and support of the following individuals and organizations were instrumental in the creation of this plan, and are gratefully acknowledged:

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Muhubo Malin

Zahmur Hassan

Saido Ahmend

Joan Mielzarpk

Black Dog Cafe

Midwest Skateboarding Alliance

Capitol River Council

Mississippi Parks Connection

Lower Phalen Creek Project

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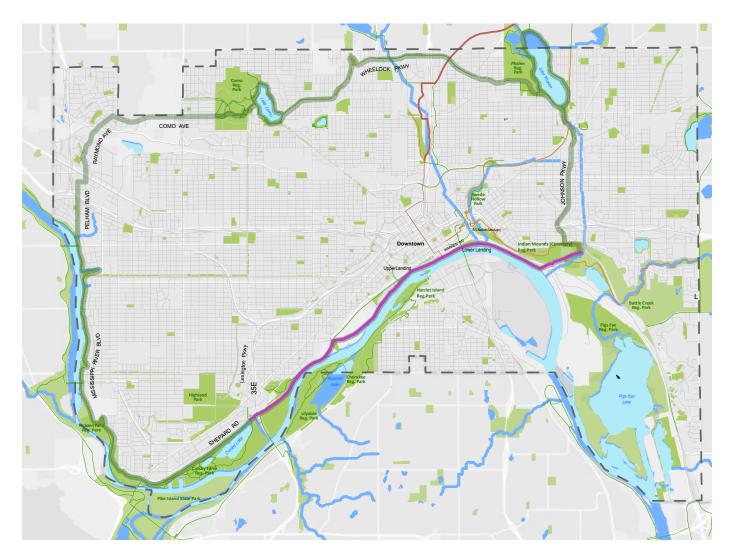










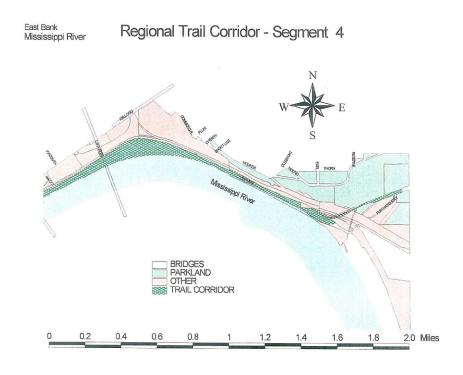


### Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail

The Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail (SMRT) was established in Saint Paul in 1995 by the Metropolitan Council and originally called East Bank Mississippi River Regional Trail. A Trail Corridor Master Plan was created and adopted in 1999 to guide the development for the missing segments of the trail.

Now completed, the 5.9-mile-long trail corridor provides a continuous connection between Hidden Falls-Crosby Farm Regional Park up to the end of Warner Road East, where the trail links to Indian Mounds Regional trail, the Saint Paul Grand Round, and Battle Creek Regional Park. The trail runs through a variety of amenities along the river including overlooks, plazas, and parks. It connects natural landscapes with urban settings offering a variety of user experiences. Its alignment runs through land along the Mississippi River that is significant to the history and spirituality of the Dakota people.

The current Master Plan Amendment addresses the portion of the trail corridor identified as segment 4 in the approved 1999 Master Plan. The amendments are the result of a planning process performed in 2018 to renovate a portion of the corridor known as Lower Landing Park. This document has been updated with the Policy Plan 2040.



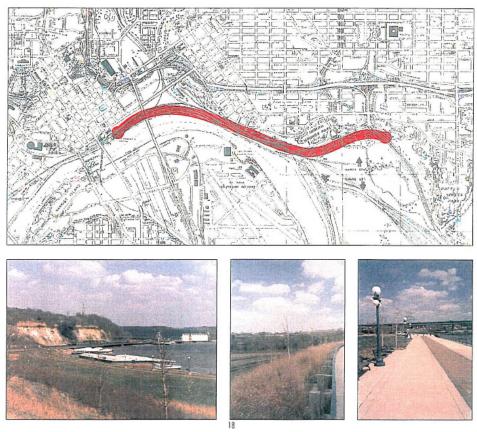


Figure 1.1 1999 East Bank Mississippi River Regional Trail Corridor Master Plan. Segment 4.

## 1 Introduction

This document revisits a portion of the trail corridor identified as segment 4 in the original Master Plan. (See Fig. 1.1) This segment portion features a large crescent-shaped green area named Lower Landing Park. The segment starts at the intersection of Sibley Street and Warner Road. Segment 4 ends near Hwy 61 and Warner Road pedestrian bridge.

Lower Landing Park is located southeast of Lowertown and sits where the Mississippi River bends, an important location to the history of what is now Saint Paul. The park is in Ward 2 shares two District Councils: from LafayetteBridge to Downtown, District 17, the Capitol River Council and from the bridge to the east end of the park, District Council 4, Dayton's Bluff.

Available funds originating from the Lafayette Bridge construction project were assigned for park improvements. The City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation recognized this as an opportunity to take a fresh look at the area and to develop a comprehensive renovation plan to enhance the trail corridor experience and improve access and awareness of the trail to adjacent communities.

The following document is a description of the planning process and recommendations for a renovation plan for Lower Landing Park. Since this plan proposes new uses for the enhancements of the regional trail corridor, the renovation plan includes an amended segment 4 of the previous Regional Corridor Master Plan, following the strategies and guidelines of Chapter 7 of the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan including secondary recreational uses or support activities that complements the primary trail use. Finally, the secondary recreational opportunities are intended to strengthen equitable use of the park and trail by local and regional residents.



Figure 1.2 Sam. Morgan Regional Trail at Lower Landing Park. View of Downtown Skyline

# 2 Background

#### 2.1 MISSISSIPPI RIVERFRONT AND URBAN CONTEXT

In 1992, a long-standing goal of recapturing the Mississippi riverfront in Saint Paul was achieved when Warner Road was realigned away from the riverbank. The Samuel Morgan Regional Trail was built leaving a large swath of open public riverfront and a framework for future development of the park. In the intervening years, important growth in the areas surrounding the park continued with these developments:

- Restoration of Union Depot, an important urban transportation hub.
- Completion of the Green Line light rail system.
- · Construction of CHS field, home of the Saint Paul Saints Baseball team.
- Construction of the Lower Phalen Creek Trail, connecting Lowertown to the Bruce Vento Regional Trail and the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary.
- Reconstruction of the Lafayette Bridge.
- Opening of several Lowertown residential developments.
- Creation of the Great River Passage (GRP), the City's master planning effort to improve the urban riverfront parks and public spaces.

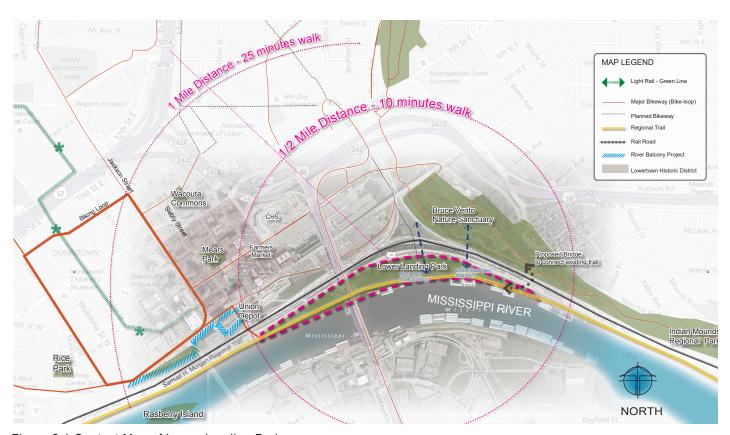


Figure 2.1 Context Map of Lower Landing Park.





















Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail Corridor: Lower Landing Renovation Plan

#### 2.2 UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MASTER PLAN

The renovation strategy for Lower Landing Park addresses conflicts and opportunities described in the previous Master Plan and other plans focused on the area.

The original Master Plan identified 5 opportunities and conflicts in this area. The following is a revision and an update of the conflicts that have been resolved or how they are being addressed in the current Master Plan Amendment. Text in blue and italics are from the East Bank Mississippi River Regional Trail Master Plan from 1999. These updates were revised by the stakeholders, a project advisory committee, and community participants during the development of the Lower Landing Plan Renovation Plan.

2.2.1 The Connections to Sibley Street, Lowertown, and Phalen Creek Trail. Sibley and Jackson Street will provide trail users with access into and out of Downtown and Lowertown via railroad underpasses. Improvements to infrastructure would enhance the appearance of this gateway. Since the trail will significantly increase the opportunity for individuals to commute to work, especially by bicycle, additional locations for commuter bike storage should be provided near the entryways into Downtown or in convenient locations Downtown.

#### Updates:

Connections to Downtown and LRT. Sibley and Jackson Street are still the main access points from Downtown and the LRT to the trail. The railroad underpass is still an eyesore. It is generally viewed as an abandoned and unsafe space. There have been different public efforts to improve the area with public art. More needs to be done to enhance the appearance and functionality of the gateway. Some ideas, like bike lockers, could be creatively designed to store bikes for commuters using public transit. This area is not under City's jurisdiction. Conversation and partnership with the Union Depot and transit organizations could help advance this effort.

Warner Road Crossing. There is concern in the Downtown community about safely crossing Warner Road, despite the presence of stop lights and pedestrian crossing signals. Grade separated improvements over Warner Road would reduce pedestrian/vehicle conflicts and increase the overall safety of the intersection. The River Balcony Master Plan suggests a path over the rail and Warner Road: As the eastern-most connection from the River Balcony to the river, the curving, 14-foot wide elevated boardwalk will slope at 5% to provide access to the river, Lower Landing Park and the Sam Morgan Regional Trail. (River Balcony Master Plan) (Fig 2.4)

2.2.2 Childs Road. While there is limited space in which to widen the trail as it approaches Childs Road, Saint Paul Public Works has the funding to do so and is currently working on a design. Much of the vehicular traffic at this location are semitrucks accessing the industrial area on Childs Road. Even with a wider trail, adequate signage and warning will need to be in place to alert trail users and drivers about the crossing to ensure that it is safe.

#### Updates:

**Trail Bridge.** A new trail bridge was built to eliminate the existing at-grade pedestrian crossings at the on and off ramps for Childs Road. (Fig. 2.2)



Figure 2.2 SMRT Waner Road Bridge. (Photo: TKDA)

2.2.3 Railroad Crossing The main conflict in making a trail connection with the Phalen Creek Trail is the need to cross railroad tracks to get to the existing trail along Warner Road. The cost of a bridge is prohibitive so an at-grade crossing, if any, is the likely solution. However, such improvement would not be made for several years. In the meantime, an on-street trail connection between the Phalen Creek Trail and the Mississippi River Trail will be available via a striped rout following Fourth Street to Jackson Street to Shepard Road.

#### Updates:

Railroad Crossing. Despite efforts to connect the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail with the Phalen Creek segment of the BN Regional Trail that brought the design of a pedestrian/bike trail over the railroad, the City of Saint Paul was not able to secure the necessary non-federal funds to execute this project in its selected program year. A project of this scale is complicated and requires multiple funding sources to come together to complete its budget. Costs escalated due to the multiple design challenges: spanning multiple rail lines, providing clearance for a potential future elevated high-speed rail line, and designing low enough to be in compliance with Metropolitan Airports Commission aviation guidelines. While a design solution was achieved, construction was financially unachievable. (Fig. 2.3)



Figure 2.3 Rendered image of the proposed Bruce Vento Bridge over the railroad and Warner Road

2.2.4 Lower Landing. The Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation is exploring the possibility of establishing a river garden at Lower Landing. The placement of this facility would likely impact the existing trail system along Warner Road. The report, commissioned by the Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation, identifies five alternative concepts for the river garden, each of varying size and number of amenities.. In addition, the Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation is exploring the possibility of creating a marina at Lower Landing. Depending upon the size of the marina and the number of slips, it could impact the alignment and width of the existing trail system.

#### Updates:

Lower Landing. The former Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation worked with the City of Saint Paul and developed the Greater Lowertown Master Plan. In that document they proposed a different vision for the Lower Landing Park and an active riverfront park that follows the programming of the Great River Passage Plan. Their vison does not include the previous proposed Marina, and the river gardens were conceptualized as native gardens. The current Trail Corridor Master Plan amendment aligns with this small area plan vision as well as the Great River Passage vision.

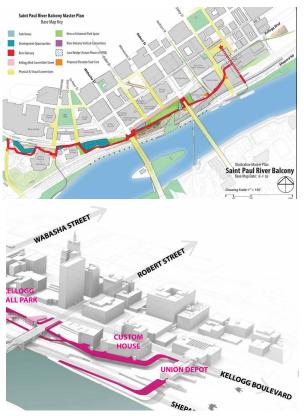


Figure 2.4 River Balcony Master Plan. Proposed connection from Union to Lower Landing.

## 2.3 GREAT RIVER PASSAGE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Trail Corridor Master Plan Amendment used the Great River Passage Master Plan and other previous plan recommendations as a starting point. Using previous plans advances the 2040 Thrive MSP Principle of Collaboration, by identifying shared planning efforts to advance our region toward shared outcomes.

#### GRP recommendations for Lower Landing:

- Developed a master plan for Lower Landing Park that is consistent with the GRP Plan
- Program the Park to support the changing needs of Lowertown
- Develop interpretive programs that focus on the "working river"
- Implement a pedestrian/bicycle trail connection from Lafayette Bridge to the river front trail
- Provide a new parking area that supports Lower Landing with access from Warner Road

- Improve the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail by separating bicycle and pedestrian paths where possible
- Add Park trail loops to support park design and activities
- Provide a Park trail connection from Union Depot to Trout Brook along the north side of the Railroad line
- Extend Regional trail connection over signature bridge from Lower Landing Park to Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary.
- Implement signage and wayfinding systems
- Provide a new restroom building to support picnic and playground areas
- Provide a scenic overlook to the river from landforms in the park
- Add a dog park and playground that support Downtown and Lowertown neighborhoods
- Create sculpted landforms with vibrant and colorful natural gardens with native plants
- Redesign river shoreline where possible to allow re-vegetation and provide "touch the water" access
- Provide and enhance storm-water treatment areas in the park landscape (1)

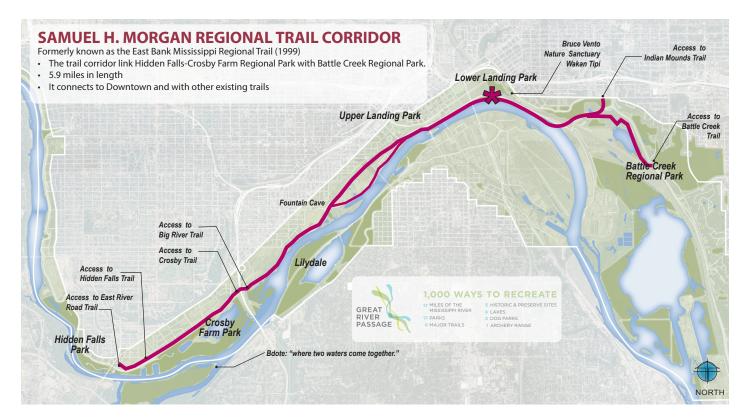


Figure 2.5 Gret River Passage Map and SMRT Corridor

#### 2.4 PREVIOUS PLANS RECOMMENDATIONS

#### CITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - PARKS & REC CHAPTER (2010)



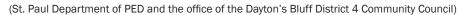
- · Promote Active Lifestyles
- Ensure convenient and equitable access to parks and recreation facilities
- · Complete the trail and bikeway system
- · Provide functional, accessible and secure bike racks at all parks and recreation centers
- · Provide programming and education on biking and walking
- · Provide better public information on getting to parks and recreation facilities on foot and bike
- · Safe and secure access to and use of parks and trails
- · Improve public safety in parks
- Apply Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles and design review for Parks and Recreation projects.
- · Improve communications on public safety issues
- Explore increasing the use of proven technologies in Parks and Recreation facilities to improve public safety and prevent crime.

#### **SYSTEM PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS (2010)**



- Trails: Trout Brook Regional Trail from Lower Landing Park to Lake McCarrons County Park in Roseville
- Downtown Parks: The largest Park in downtown at 21 acres is the Lower Landing Park created by the relocation of Warner Road just east of Jackson Street. The park currently has a multi-use paved trail, river overlook, and numerous picnic tables and benches.
- Create an inviting trail connection from downtown to Bruce Vento Regional Park and Swede Hollow Park
- Add off leash dog park areas and children's play areas and public art for increased livability and to attract future residents to the downtown area.
- Add amenities such as outdoor exercise stations, shaded seating areas, and other elements that appeal to a burgeoning senior population

### TROUT BROOK REGIONAL TRAIL (2009) COMMUNITY VISION FOR LOWER PHALEN CREEK





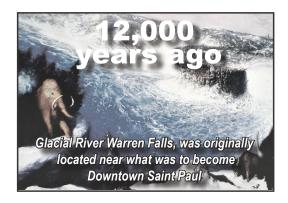
- Reclaim former rail-yards in the Trout Brook Corridor and the Lower Phalen Creek area and restore habitat and ecological health of the corridor and floodplain.
- Restore a portion of Trout Brook and wetland in the greenway corridor and the Lower Phalen Creek site. Create trail and natural community connections from McCarrons Lake to the Mississippi River.
- Provide a natural amenity to adjacent neighborhoods and Lowertown.
- Connect to the Mississippi River with trail under Kellogg Bridge and along an existing gravel road toward Warner Road.
- Cross Warner Road and railroad tracks with a pedestrian bridge.
- Create a link between University Avenue and Warner Road that will provide the critical trail link to the Mississippi River and Sam Morgan Regional Trail.

#### **GREATER LOWERTOWN MASTER PLAN (2012)**

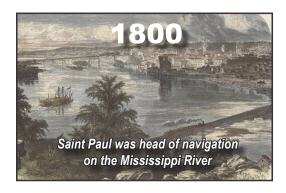


- Growth in the neighborhood will require better connections to existing parks and open spaces.
- Recreational connections are incomplete; they can be completed east of the Lafayette Bridge.
- Connect Lowertown to Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary that offers unique access to nearby wilderness
- The Lowertown population will grow in numbers and diversity; the neighborhood's open spaces should adapt to these changes.
- There is a lack of recreational opportunities. Strategies Proposed:
- Locate additional recreation space east of the Lafavette Bridge.
- Activate the Riverfront with a promenade, Lower Landing Park and programming per the Great River Passage Plan Incrementally improve sidewalks to become part of the neighborhood's valued open space system.
- Create roof top gardens as part of the open space system.
- Connect the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, Swede Hollow Park, and other East Side recreational destinations.

#### 2.5 SITE HISTORICAL TRANSFORMATION









**Geological History** Glacial River Warren Falls was originally located near what was to become downtown Saint Paul. The huge rush of water coming down the channel eroded out the glacial debris that filled the valley and began undermining the limestone cap rock of the riverbed. Huge boulders of limestone caprock, no longer supported by the soft, easily eroded St. Peter's sandstone that supported it, broke off, moving the lip of the waterfall upstream. The waterfall moved incrementally upstream, sometimes by several feet each year. (2)

**Land of the Dakota.** Minnesota is the homeland of the Dakota. Bdote, the area surrounding the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers, is significant to the Dakota people as a place of origination. (3)

With the 1837 US-Dakota Treaty, Americans pushed Dakota peoples away from this part of their traditional homeland. The United States took possession of the lands to the east of the river, but the Dakota continued to return to the camp on the west bank until the signing of the 1851 US-Dakota Treaty, which transferred millions of acres of land from the Dakota to the United States. In the decade after the signing of the treaty, over 100,000 European immigrants moved to Minnesota to live on the land that the Dakota had been coerced to cede. Through colonization and genocide the land was transformed. Railroads, breweries, and businesses were introduced to the landscape. The area east of the bluffs (White Cliffs) came to be known as Dayton's Bluff, and today it is home to many new immigrant families and thrives as a culturally diverse neighborhood. (3)

Imnížaska, the "White Cliffs" is a place of connection between earth, sky, and water. The Mississippi River makes a sharp bend in this location, while the White Cliffs rise dramatically above the river. This is the highest point along the river corridor. For centuries, the cliffs served as a landmark for the First Nations. Dakota members camped along the river, in the floodplain below the mounds, and from the high point they mapped out the stars. Scholars indicate this calculated knowledge informed deliberate placement of the mounds on the landscape. At the base of the cliffs, in the floodplain, is Táku Wakháŋ Thípi, a cave and significant Dakota site that is a source of fresh water that flows to the river. (note)

**1680** The encounter between the Dakota and the French marked a new epoch in the history of the Upper Mississippi and in the history of what is now the Twin Cities metropolitan area. For 10,000 years Native Americans had the river to themselves. From March 1680 forward, Europeans and then Americans would increasingly define human interaction and the river's physical and ecological character. The Dakota and their predecessors left many historically important places. Europeans and Americans would begin adding their own places.

Transformed though it is, the area below Dayton's Bluff where Hennepin, Accault and Auguelle landed is the first of these places and deeply historic. (4)

**1800** Saint Paul was the head of navigation on the Mississippi River. Lower Landing provided entry for most of the people and goods coming north. Like many early groups to the region, African Americans settled near the riverbanks to ensure steady work and food. The river was also a route along the Underground Railroad, providing passage to slaves escaping to Canada. (5)

**1880** The site was the arrival point for first immigrants entering Minnesota. The landing was located at a natural break in the Mississippi River's 80-foot-high bluffs. The Landings near the cliffs joined with the rapids and falls farther upstream and made St. Paul the end of the line for Mississippi River steamboat traffic.(6)

**1937** Lambert's Landing was constructed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) as part of the revival of St. Paul's riverfront. It was named after Colonel George Lambert, who "modernized" Upper Mississippi river navigation. (6)

**1950** The Landing was removed for the construction of Warner Road.

**1992** Warner Road was re-located, creating public riverfront Park land as part of the regional trail corridor. Section 4 of the Mississippi Riverbank (aka Samuel Morgan Regional Trail) is completed. This newly opened green space included a scenic overlook, picnic tables, a riverboat landing and stormwater wetlands. Artists moved to Lowertown, attracted by low rents and malleable spaces. Lowertown was designated a Historic District. The Saint Paul Farmers Market moved to Saint Paul.

**Present.** Lambert's Landing is marked by a plaque located in the section of St. Paul commonly known as Lowertown. Mississippi barges and fleets are assembled here before they are delivered to their down river destination.









- (5) Saintpaulhistorical.org
- (6) NPS. gov. Lambert's Landing

<sup>(1)</sup> Great River Passage Master Plan.

<sup>(2)</sup> NPS.gov Rver Warren Falls. Places To Go

<sup>(3)</sup> IMRP Cultural Landscape Study and Messaging Plan Report.

<sup>(4)</sup> NPS.gov/miss/learn/historyculture/preface-river-of-history

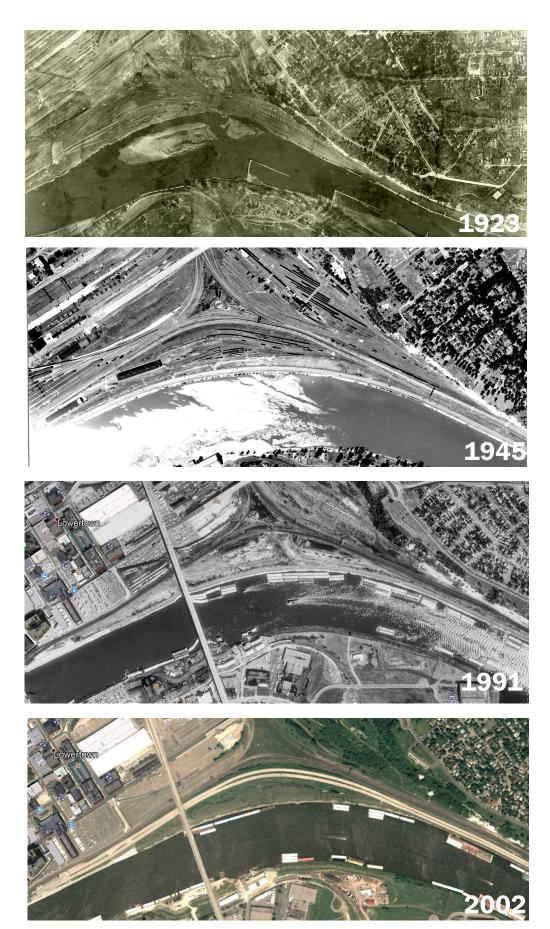


Figure 2.6 Hitorical Aerial Images of the Lower Landing Site





#### 2.6 SITE INVESTIGATIONS

The area where Lower Landing Park sits has been historically disturbed and filled with material dredged from the river. The previous land use was railroad yard. In 1992 Warner Road, which used to border the river, was realigned to its current location and the continuation of the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail replaced the road alignment. The green area resulted from the swap between warner Road and the new trail, it is today Lower Landing Park.

There were 2 different archeological investigations conducted that are relevant to this area:

In 2004, an archeological survey and evaluation were completed for the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary construction project, adjacent to Lower Landing Park. The investigation revealed that nearly a century of industrial use of the area created surface geology of approximately 20 ft., of urban

fill. This fill is deeper near the river and becomes shallower near the base of the bluff. Underlying these deposits are approximately 100 ft. of alluvial sediments deposited by the Mississippi River. (Report) The results suggested a high potential of archeological resources near the bluff and northeastern side of Bruce Vento Sanctuary, the areas that avoided the heaviest railway activity but not in the former railroad yard location by Lower Landing Park

In 2008, geomorphological and archeological testing was completed for the Lafayette Bridge Replacement Project. Based on this study and the previous impacts on the area, it was determined that this area does not contain intact, significant archeological deposits. Mn/DOT CRU and SHPO concurred that no further archaeological investigation in the area was needed for that project.

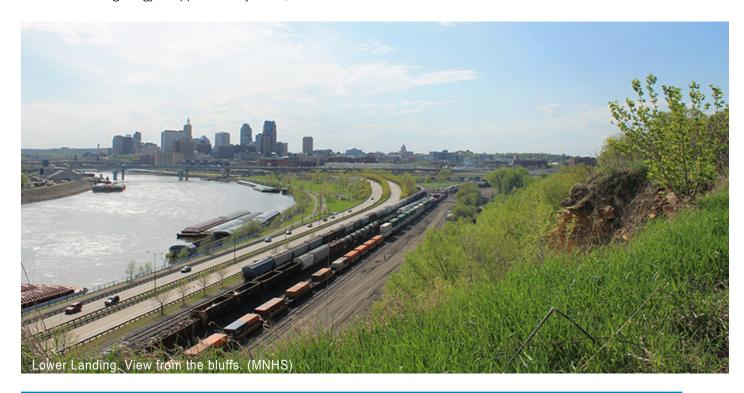




Figure 2.7.Lower Landing Park. View of the bluff and Indian Mounds Regional Park (Indigenous Burial Site)

# **3** Boundaries and Acquisition

After the realignment of Warner/Shepard Road, the trail was redeveloped. The total park size is 21.4 acres.

Since all the land within the trail corridor is already in public ownership, no acquisition costs are anticipated, and no land acquisition is necessary. The City of Saint Paul is responsible for maintaining the trail corridor. The natural resources along the trail that are part of the floodplain area are regulated and managed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.



Figure 3.1 Parks Parcel Analysis



Figure 3.2 Lower Landing Park Overlook. View to the bluffs. 2018

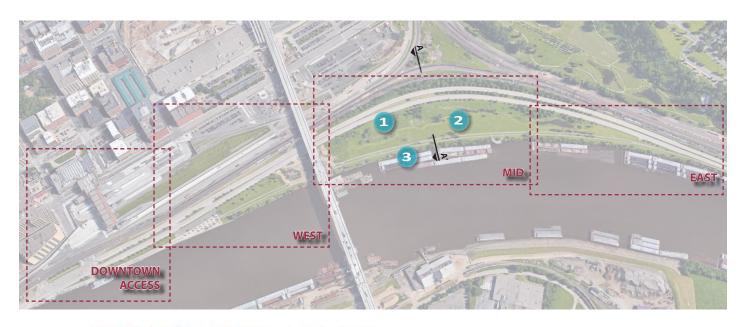


Figure 3.3 SMRT at Lower Landing Park. 2018

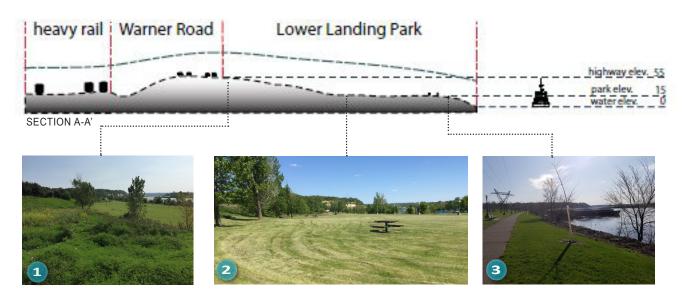
# 4 Existing Conditions

The Lower Landing Park site is 21.4-acres, mostly open green space. The Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail runs through the park along the edge of the river, which is a heavily used barge fleeting area. Access for pedestrians and bicyclists is via the Sam Morgan Regional Trail at both ends of the park.

From the parking lot to the vehicular entrance at the other end of the park is about 0.6 miles. The closest vehicular access is at the west parking lot. At the east end, there is a gated entrance for maintenance vehicles. Two built wetlands are within the park, which are part of the Warner Road construction's stormwater treatment plan.



structure height restriction (proximity to airport)



#### **LOWER LANDING DOWNTOWN ACCESS**









SIBLEY STREET AND WARNER ROAD



SMRT ACCESS ON SIBLEY

#### **LOWER LANDING PARK WEST**



#### PRESERVE AND IMPROVE

- Plaza with tree grove. Improve tree planting
- Open views and access to the river.
- Improve railing and repair the sections that are broken
- Preserve picnic area but improve picnic tables

#### **ADD**

- More informational signs about the trail
- Study opportunities to expand existing parking lot
- Improve railing and repair the sections that are broken

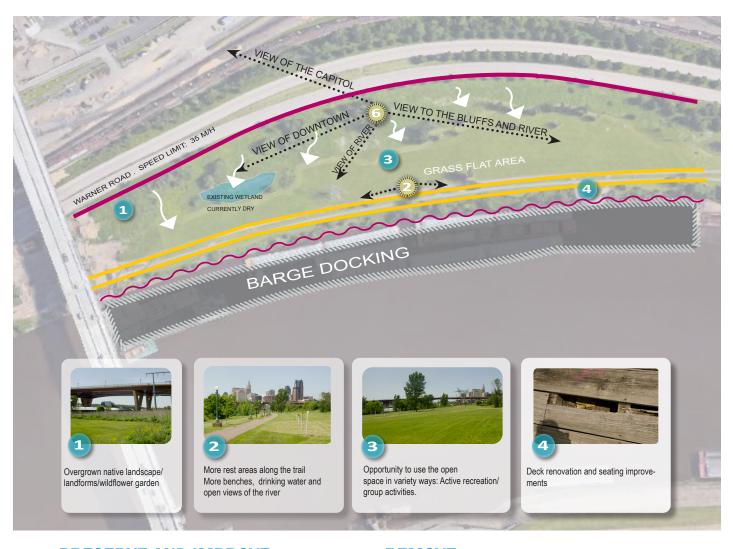
#### **REMOVE**

- Overgrown vegetation from riverfront
- Study opportunities to expand existing parking lot
- Improve railing and repair the sections that are broken

#### **KEEP IN MIND**

- There is no physical barrier between the road and the green lawn
- It is pretty noisy under Lafayette Bridge

#### **LOWER LANDING PARK MIDDLE**



#### **PRESERVE AND IMPROVE**

- Look into a designed landscape/landforms/ wildflower garden
- Existing Overlook
- Lighting
- Open areas
- Restore ponds vegetation
- Open views of the river and bluffs

#### **ADD**

- More informational signs about the trail
- · More resting areas along the trail
- Resting points where there are views
- Stormwater collection feature

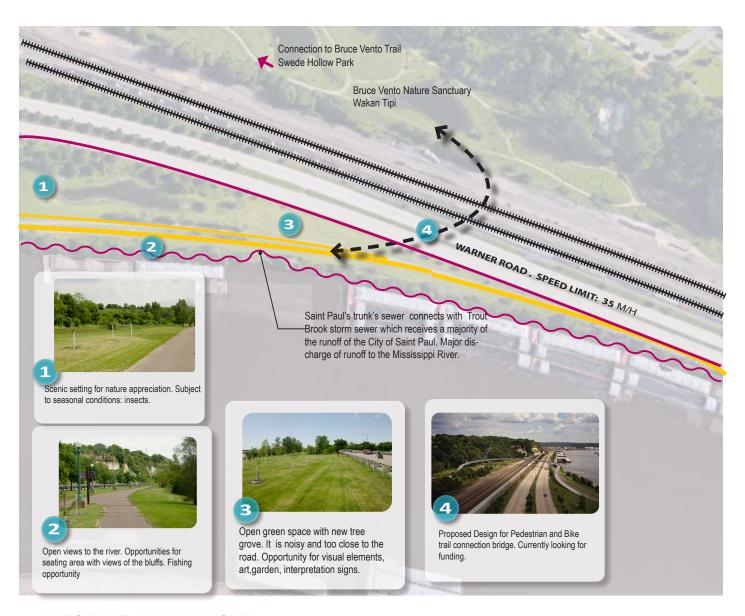
#### **REMOVE**

- Overgrown vegetation from riverfront
- Overgrown vegetation from overlook

#### **KEEP IN MIND**

- Power lines structures
- Unsheltered camps
- Views
- Keeping some trees from the Friendship Forest art project

#### **LOWER LANDING PARK EAST**



#### PRESERVE AND IMPROVE

- Restore existing pond and native vegetation
- View of the Bluff from the trail.
- Trees from "Friendship Forest" project
- Maintenance access

#### **ADD**

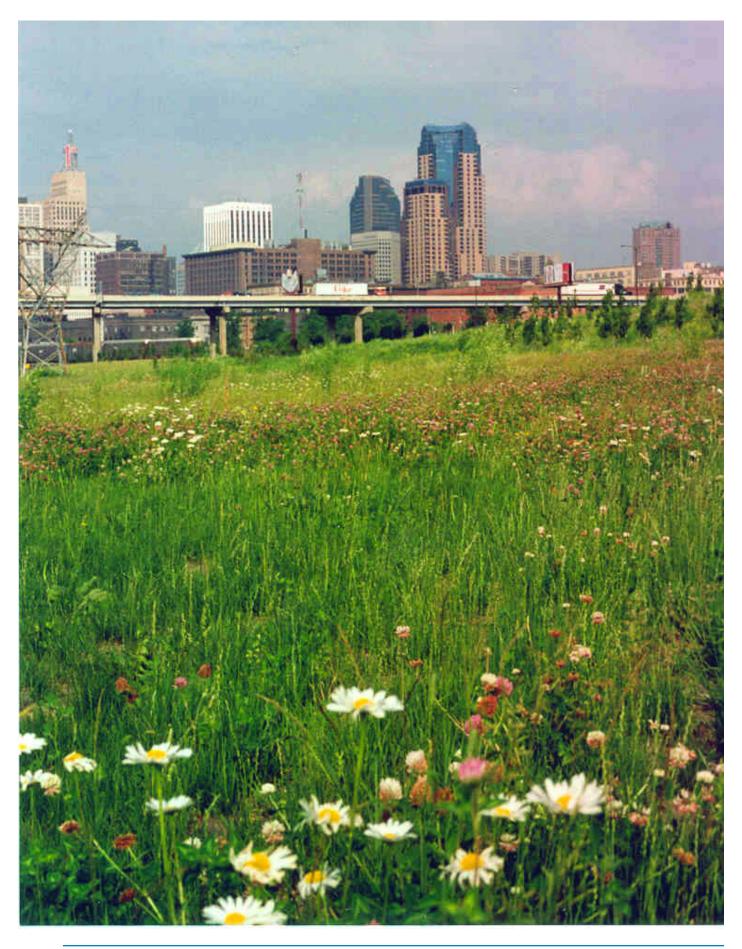
- Directional signs
- Informational signs about Bruce Vento Sanctuary and Wakan Tipi
- · Emergency kiosk or stand, drinking water

#### **REMOVE**

Overgrown vegetation from riverfront

#### **KEEP IN MIND**

- There is a plan to connect SMRT with Bruce Vento Sanctuary over the road and rail road.
- There is no pedestrian crossing on Warner Road
- · Smell of sewer



## **5** Natural Resources

Lower Landing Park is in the Flood Fringe Zone AE based of the Flood Insurace Rate Map (FIRM). The flood fringe is an area where structures and impervious areas are allowed, but still subject to regulations. Some of the existing elevations appear higher than Base Flood Elevation (BFE) levels. It would be advisable for the Parks & Rec department to go through a LOMA process to clarify areas that may have been inadvertently mapped as being in the floodplain, but are actually on natural high ground above the base flood elevation.

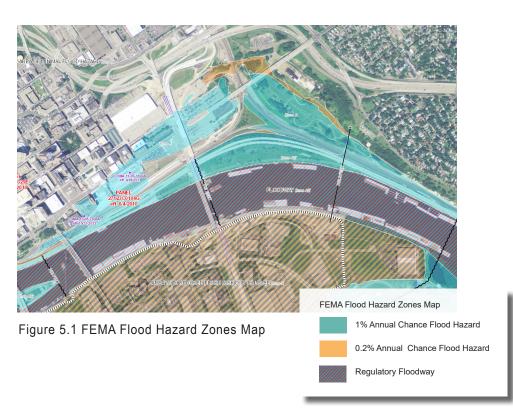
Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA) vegetative surveys completed in 2012 list Lower Landing as a Developed Area or Open Space with Herbaceous and Woody Vegetation. This is not considered a significant plant community type.

The original vegetation interpreted by Frances J.Marschner from Public Land Survey Records is harwood forest. The site has been historically disturbed and filled with material dredged from

the river to expanding rail lines to meet increasing industrial demands. In the process, creeks were deploit underground and the bluffs were cut back.

The existing plant live that was stablish with the realigment of Warner Road and the construction of th Sam Morgan Regional Trail, has been overtaken by invasive species. There is overgrown herbaceous vegetation in the wetlands, along the back hill, and the shoreline mainly due to lack of maintenance and the poor conditions. Most of the park is occupied by a large unnused turf area.

The following natural resources managent is guided by the evaluation criteria developed for the Great River Passage Master Plan and the recomendations from the City of Saint Paul Natural Resources Division.







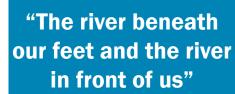


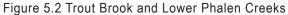












ME 124

DAYLIGHTED TROUT BROOK CREEK

#### RIVER EDGE AT LOWER LANDING PARK

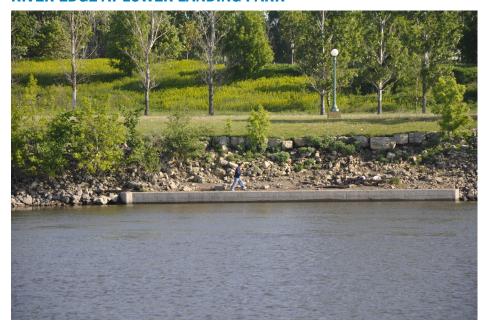






Figure 5.3 Mississippi River edge at Lower Landing Park

#### **5.1 RIVER, STREAMS AND PONDS**

The site has two constructed stormwater ponds. The wetland on the west side is mostly dry and it is classified as PEM1A: palustrine system, dominated by tree shrubs, temporarily flooded with persisnt emergents. The wetland on the east side of the park is classified as PABHx: palustrine system, class aquatic bed that includes deeper habitats dominated by plants that grow principally on or bellow the surface of the water for most of the growing season in most years.





In the Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) there are two major creeks that run underground into a century old storm sewer system. The natural course of the streams would end at Lower Landing Park into the Mississippir River:

**TROUT BROOK STORM SEWER,** was originally built between the 1880s and 1950s, served as a combined sanitary and storm sewer. In 1988, the combined system was separated and the Trout Brook Storm Sewer Interceptor (TBI) remained. CRWD

replaced the Metropolitan Council as owner and operator in 2006. Today, TBI carries rainwater and snowmelt from city streets, parking lots and other hard surfaces to the Mississippi River, just downstream of Lower Landing's Park. It is a "trunk conveyor" that receives runoff from the Cities of Saint Paul, Roseville, Falcon Heights and Maplewood as well as Ramsey County and Minnesota Department of Transportation. (1)

LOWER PHALEN CREEK historically flowed out of Lake Phalen, meandering for about four miles through what is now the East Side of St. Paul, emptying into the Mississippi River on the far side of Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary. This creek served as a corridor for the Dakota people who lived here, as they made their way up the chain of lakes by canoe to White Bear Lake - one of many areas where they gathered wild rice. Later, the creek also served as the home site of one of Saint Paul's first European colonists, Edward Phalen, who resided on the banks of the creek in 1838. As one of Saint Paul's first white settlers, the creek, and eventually the lake from which it came, took on his name. By the 1930's, the creek was sent entirely underground in a large storm pipe to make way for housing and other development.

Lower Phalen Creek Project is advocating to bring the creek back above ground, a process called "daylighting.", and it is currently partnering with Capitol Region Watershed District to conduct a detailed feasibility study and design recommendations. Lower Landing would be last reach of the creek, discharging water int he Mississippi River. (2)

<sup>(1)</sup> Capitol River Watershed District

<sup>(2)</sup> Lower Phalen Creek Project. https://www.lowerphalencreek.org/

#### **5.2 LAND COVER**

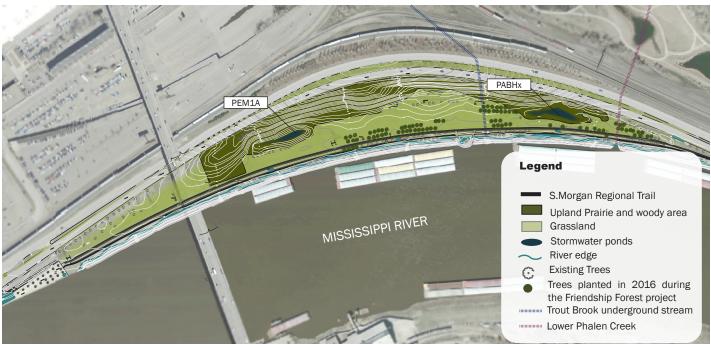


Figure 5.2 Existing Land Cover



















#### 5.3 NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Maintain and/or restore landscape heterogeneity and capture environmental gradients (Pattern-oriented)
- Ecological Considerations: Maintain patches of native communities with a variety of sizes and shapes, and degrees of isolation
- Protect stormwater ponds and "wild" areas of adjoining neighborhood parks
- 2. Maintain key species interactions and functional diversity (Process- and species-oriented)
- Ecological Considerations: Include keystone species, as well as threatened andendangered species in restoration and protection plans
- Provide protection for amphibians in wetland setting;
- Provide protection for birds and reptiles in prairie and woodland setting
- 3. Apply or maintain appropriate disturbance regimes (Process- and speciesoriented)
- Ecological Considerations: Restore historical disturbance patterns when maintaining and restoring sites
- Reintroduce fire to prairie and savanna ecosystems
- 4. Control aggressive, overabundant, and invasive species (Process- and speciesoriented)
- Ecological Considerations: Restoration and management plans should
- address species that lead to the loss of other species
- Remove buckthorn with replacement of the native shrub layer (3)
- 5. Provide small wildlife refuge along Mississippi River Corridor adjacent to a neighborhood park and nearby natural areas.
- 6. Provide songbird and pollinator habitat.
- Beneficial trees and shrubs on site: willow, staghorn sumac, maple, cottonwood, elderberry, boxelder, planted trees (landscape and "friendship forest")
- A diverse mix of native shrubs beneficial to songbirds and pollinators – should be installed.
- Stormwater basins are dominated by cattails.
   Stormwater pond transitional zone can be enhanced with wetland species, but cattail control is unlikely.
- Riverfront: Turf section between the riverside

- pedestrian trail and the rip-rap edge along the Mississippi River could be converted to non-native pollinator turf.
- 7. If upland prairie areas are easily accessible, preferably bounded by trails and free of trees and shrubs, prescribed burning may be utilized to return fire to the landscape to maintain native prairie on site.
- 8. Control non-native and noxious weeds and replant with native species.
- Non-native, diseased tree and shrub species should be removed for example: buckthorn, green ash,siberian elm, diseased american elm, and black locust.
- Upland herbaceous layer is dominated by nonnative invasive species and noxious weeds.
   Recommendation is a full restoration of the herbaceous layer to aggressive, native, mesic prairie species – with a goal of outcompeting non-native species.
- Target reed canary grass patches for eradication and enhancement with native wetland species.
- Start mowing invasive, upland herbaceous species on a regular basis to reduce seed production and to begin to deplete the seed bank prior to full restoration. One exception: Canada goldenrod patches are currently outcompeting non-native species and could be left in place until full restoration takes place.
- Riverfront: Continue focus on removing nondesirable woody species to maintain river views and to control non-native species
- Herbaceous plant maintenance within rip-rap is too labor intensive, but the leading edge should be mown to the edge of the existing rip-rap.
   Most tall herbaceous weeds are growing in a 2' wide unmown section between the riverside pedestrian trail and the rip-rap edge.

<sup>(3)</sup> Great River Passage Master Plan

## **6** Demand Forecast

Based on the Metropolitan Council Annual Use Estimate of the Metropolitan Regional Park System for 2016, Samuel Morgan Regional Trail received over 539,500 visits and an additional 89,000 visitors for special events.

Lower Landing Park primarily serves Downtown residents and Samuel Morgan Regional Trail users. The park program is expected to improve the trail users experience by adding new recreational amenities. The park program will encourage the use of the trail to access the proposed amenities and decrease the need to access the park site by car.

Based on community input from the families living in Upper East Downtown Saint Paul (10 minutes' walk from the Park), there is a high demand for active recreation facilities near the parks. Downtown parks are categorized as passive urban parks and do not provide the appropriate amenities to meet the recreational demand of younger and under represented residents. (See 7.1 Public Engagement Summary for opportunities to encourage park use. residents.)

It is anticipated that younger residents will seek additional activities while walking, biking, or running through the trail and will use the proposed park amenities. Visitor origin data from the Council's 2008 Regional Parks and Trails Survey indicate that regional trails in the metropolitan area are used most by people who live nearby or can reach the trail via a short bicycle trip or drive.

Park improvements will also enhance accessibility for people of all abilities and seniors in conformance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Census data show that Dayton's Bluff has a higher percent of residents under 18 (31%), whereas Downtown has a higher percent of residents over 65 (13%)

#### THE LANDING

The landing is located by the trail corridor next to Lower Landing Park. The landing, historically named Lambert's

landing, is the entry point for excursion cruises bringing regional visitors to the city. It provides temporary mooring for visiting vessels and towboats. The use of this facility is expected to increase with the upcoming Viking Cruses in 2022. A renovated Lower Landing Park would complement this service offering a gateway for regional visitors, and a destination for residents. The City of Saint Paul works in conjunction with Saint Paul Port Authority to manage the potential conflicts and opportunities that the seasonal use of this facility.



Figure 6.1 Lambert's Landing-Lower Landing



Figure 6.2 Viking River Cruises. Mississippi River Vessel



## 7 Engagement & Participation

The project manager and team followed the Design and Construction Division's Community Engagement Strategy and developed a plan to reach out the Community. The process assured that the current park and trail users and potential future users were informed of and involved in the park planning.

Lower Landing Park is in Ward 2 but within two District Councils: Dayton's Bluff and Capitol River Council. The spatial relationship with the residential community of Dayton's Bluff is blocked by the railroad and the bluffs. This limitation has been a barrier to community engagement due to a lack of physical connection with the site.

Most residents and users are not currently aware of the park because of a lack of information or because of social barriers. To reach a greater swath of the community, the engagement plan included a variety of informal pop-up events.

Parallel to these events, a Design Advisory Committee was assembled to help guide the design process for the Renovation Plan for Lower Landing Park. The Committee was comprised of downtown residents and park users. The group met 6 times in 2018.

#### **Public Participation Events Timeline:**

- Thursday, January 23, 2020. Community Open House for Nature Trail and Off-leash dog area Planning
- Thursday, February 8, 2018: Saint Paul Parks Commission Meeting
- Tuesday, February 6, 2018: Design Advisory Committee Meeting
- Friday, February 2, 2018: Open House
- Thursday, November 2, 2017: Open House
- Friday, October 20, 2017: Meeting with Sibley Parks Apartment Residents
- Wednesday, September 6, 2017: Meeting with Design Advisory Committee
- Thursday, June 15, 2017: Meeting with Design Advisory Committee and Lowertown residents
- Saturday, May 20, 2017: Park Awareness Walk.
- Saturday, May 6, 2017: Pop-Up Engagement Informational Stand
- March 27, 2017: Capitol River Council Meeting









Figure 7.1 Flyers, posters to communicate events. Translate into Somali, Hmong and Spanish.

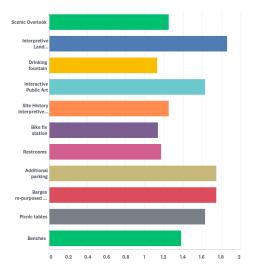


Figure 7.3 Pop Up meeting at Mears Park



Figure 7.4 Meeting at Sibley Apartments Building

Q4 What features would you like to see added to the park?





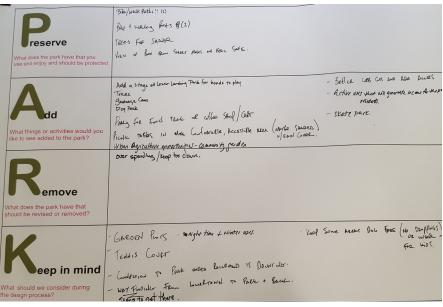
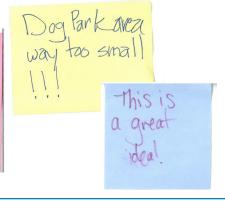


Figure 7.5 Input boards



love the idea of the cottonwood forest! Hope the bordge connection to Bruke can happen.



Skate board Soller Wacouta Commons Size soller Lovered Overlock

#### 7.1 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

The program for Lower Landing was developed based on the suggestions, input, and revisions made by the community. For example, as a result of the pop-events, it became clear that most of the households with children live in Upper East Downtown, 10 minutes' walk from the entrance of the park. A large community of Somali families live in downtown and do not currently visit Lower Landing but could easily do so. Engagement with these families revealed that programmed activities and enhanced safety (e.g. keeping young children away from the riverbank and road) are two design opportunities that could encourage park use. Community members also requested the addition of trails and sitting areas to appreciate the views of the river and nature while kids are using the area for active recreation. Other organizations like

Blackhawks Soccer Club and Midwest Skateboard Alliance also reach out to weigh in on requested recreational activities. There were discussions on partnering with these community organizations to potentially allow programmed activities to bring organized groups of kids and youth for game, practices, and demonstrations. Providing adequate space for these activities and organized programs would bring more people to the park and therefore would improve the perception of a safer space. This would address the barrier that many underrepresented families described as an impediment to using the park during the community engagement process.

#### **CONCERNS**

ACCESS
PARKS FEELS ISOLATED
NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION
ABOUT PARK OR TRAIL
SAFE SPACES FOR KIDS

#### **DEMANDS**

MORE RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES
DOG PARK
LOOPING TRAIL
KEEP LARGE AREAS OPEN
MORE SHADE

#### **VISIONS**

HISTORIC PARK ACTIVE PARK PUBLIC ART PARK



Figure 7.6 Meeting at Sibley Apartments Building's Lobby

#### 7.2 PARTNERS ENGAGEMENT

The following organizations were involved in the development of the Renovation Plan for Lower Landing Park/Samuel Morgan Regional Trail Corridor. The Design and Construction project team connected with them during the development of the planning process and will reach out to them again when funds become available to implement the program and for strategies featured in the plan.

Capitol River Council; River Connection/Mississippi National Park; Mississippi River National Park Service was part of the Project Advisory Committee. The feedback received on the project is shown in the appendix of this Master Plan Amendment. There were not major concerns or opposition to the development of this plan. The partners valued the need to develop this underutilized green area by the river.

Lower Phalen Creek Project, an east side Saint Paul organization, whose mission is to engage people in honoring and caring for natural places and sacred cultural sites. Lower Phalen Creek has been partnering with the City of Saint Paul for day lighting a section of the Lower Phalen Creek in Swede Hollow Park. The original natural flow of the creek would end at the Mississippi River at the current Lower Landing Park location, by the Sam Morgan Regional Trail. The organization and the design team discussed including environmental educational opportunities at the site near the location where the current 100 year -old stormwater sewer discharges water to the Mississippi River. Another topic of discussion was the prospect of using the east side of the park as a natural transitional space to the sacred Wakan Tipi site and the Indian Mounds Burial site. This part of the park, through the use of signage describing the history of the site, would be designed to acknowledge the significance of the area to the Dakota people.

Capitol River Watershed District has been involved in the planning process and the City will reach out to them as project enter construction.

## **8** Equity Analysis

#### **8.1 DEMOGRAPHICS OVERVIEW AND PARK USERS**

The existing Sam Morgan Regional Trail benefits the different communities it connects along the trail route. This linking trail is used for recreational purposes such as walking, biking, and running and to access different urban destinations and regional parks in St. Paul. The eastern part of the trail is currently being use mostly by Downtown and Lowertown residents and people who work in the area. The demographics of Downtown are shown in fig.8.1 Even though this area is physically considered part of the Dayton's Bluff District and it is close to a neighborhood with more family households according to the census, access to the Trail from these neighborhoods is difficult. The trail corridor at Lower Landing Park is surrounded by the bluffs, railroad, Warner Road and the river. People from Dayton's Bluff would benefit from this section of the corridor once a connection from Bruce Vento Sanctuary to the trail is built. In the meantime, access from the other side of the bluff is achieved through the trail connection with Indian Mounds Regional Trail, and through Downtown. Residents see this as a barrier for those who are unable or uncomfortable biking or running long distances.

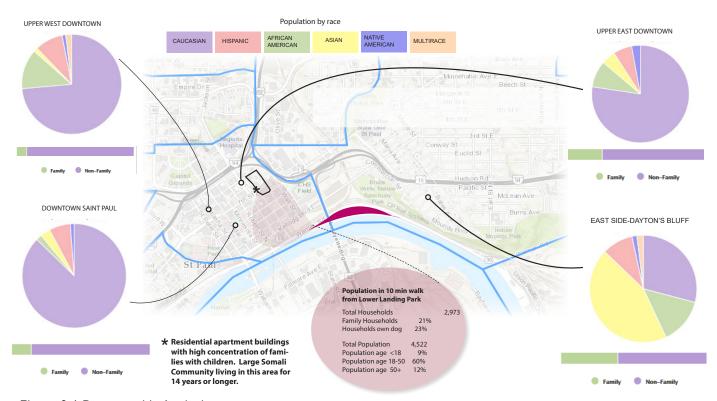


Figure 8.1 Demographic Analysis

#### **8.2 ANALYSIS**

## Who benefits from the proposed trail corridor amendment and the renovation of lower landing park?

In order to complete an analysis of the current and potential users of the space, it is necessary to look beyond census data and maps. Based on on-site observations, context and the community engagement process, it was clear that there are other groups of people that live in the area that have not used the Trail or park due to either a lack of awareness or safety concerns. Parks project planning team identified the following groups that could potentially benefit from this area and what prevents them from use the regional trail corridor. It then engaged them in constructing a vision for the site that better serves and meets their expectations.

**Downtown Residents.** There are many households with families in north-east Downtown. Most of these residents are of East African, and principally Somali, background. All the parks in Downtown are considered passive parks. While residents have adapted those nearby parks for forms of active recreation like soccer or basketball, there is the demand of more active recreation to serve the needs of the youth and children who live in the area.

Adjacent Neighborhoods. Another sector that would benefit from improvements to the park and rail is the area of University Avenue: Rondo and Frogtown. These nearby sectors are primarily populated by low income families with low mobility and limited recreational options. With close access to the Union Depot LRT station and multiple bus stops, people can access the park via public transit. Improving the park at the proposed location would serve a population that does not have direct access to the River or a waterfront. Lower Landing Park would be the only green area with access to the river that is quickly accessible via public transportation.

**Regional Users.** On a regional level, the addition of active recreation features to this corridor would complement other recreational opportunities the network of regional parks around Saint Paul has

to offer. Communities in the urban core would become familiar with the regional network when coming to the park for recreation, while people from outside of the urban center would have the opportunity to experience Downtown St. Paul. The location by the river and its connectivity with other linking trails would make it easier for communities to experience the benefits of the regional system.

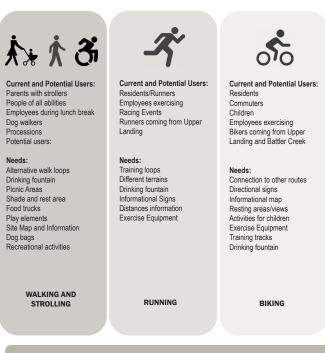
Partnerships. As mentioned at the introduction of this document, the confluence of the Minnesota River and the Mississippi River was Dakota land and it is important to the Dakota people. The City of Saint Paul has improved its outreach and work with the Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, Minnesota Indian Affairs Council and the indigenous community residents in Saint Paul. During the development of the renovation plan for Lower Landing Park, the Parks and Rec Department hired a cultural landscape specialist to lead a Cultural Landscape Study with the tribal nations for what is today called Indian Mounds Regional Park, a site visible from Lower Landing. The Cultural Landscape Study's consultation with the Tribes helped us understand the significance of the area to the Dakota people and to learn the importance of including those groups in any decisions made about the land. The renovation plan for Lower Landing Park provides spaces for interpretation of the land and indigenous history. Maintaining open communication with the indigenous community by including them in the development of the implementation projects for this park is strongly recommended.

#### **8.3 DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION FRAMEWORK**

To develop a park program, the needs identified by the community were framed in a multicultural and multigenerational approach. Each proposed activity to be included in the park shall meet the Exchange-Cooperation-Celebration (ECC) Framework. Activities framed in this context that promote exchanges (information, food, knowledge, skills, etc.), cooperation and that allow for celebration or commemoration are more likely to help break social barriers and make people feel comfortable and safe sharing public spaces. This proposal aims to strengthen equitable use of the trail and trail corridor by all communities nearby and in the region.

#### **CULTURAL DIVERSITY APPROACH**

#### TRAIL USERS ORIENTED ACTIVITIES AND NEEDS



#### ENCOURAGE THE USE OF TRAIL AS PRIMARY ACCESS INSTEAD OF DRIV-ING TO PREVENT THE ADDITION OF TRAFFIC IN THE AREA PROGRAM IS ORIENTED FOR DOWNTOWN AND DAYTON'S BLUFF'S RESIDENTS AND PEOPLE VISITING THE SITE WHILE USING THE CONNECTIONS OF THE

Figure 8.2 Cultural Diversity Approach - ECC Framework

#### **ACTIVITIES AND PLACES THAT:**



ACTIVITIES MEETING THESE GOALS BREAK SOCIAL BARRIERS AND PRO-MOTE INCLUSIVE PLACES WHERE PEOPLE FEEL COMFORTABLE SHARING PUBLIC SCAPES AMONG DIVERSE GROUPS

## **9** Concept Development

#### 9.1 VISION

Renovating Lower Landing Park will enhance the functionality of the park and encourage more activity in an unprogrammed area of downtown Saint Paul's riverfront.

Based on the result of community input and the assessment of site conditions, opportunities, and constraints, three main goals that align with the Great River Passage goals where identified to guide site organization and programming:

- Integrate the Trail with the adjacent context, spatially and socially, to improve and provide connections to the adjacent culturally and age diverse communities.
- Activate the Park Trail Corridor through the addition of trailoriented activities while respecting and keeping the existing tranquil natural settings along the river corridor.
- Reveal the inherent history of the area by taking advantage of the location of the trail alignment and its connection to relevant historic sites and the river.

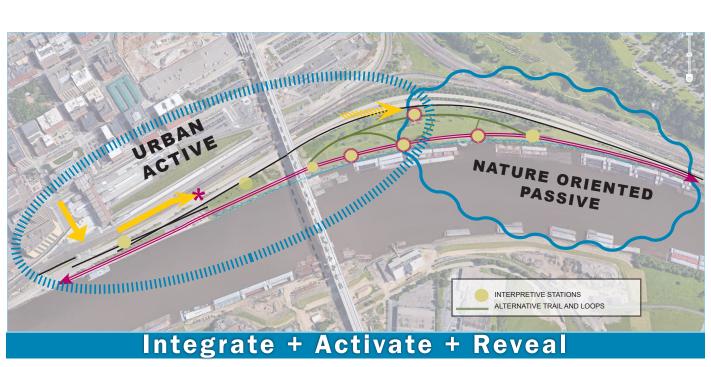
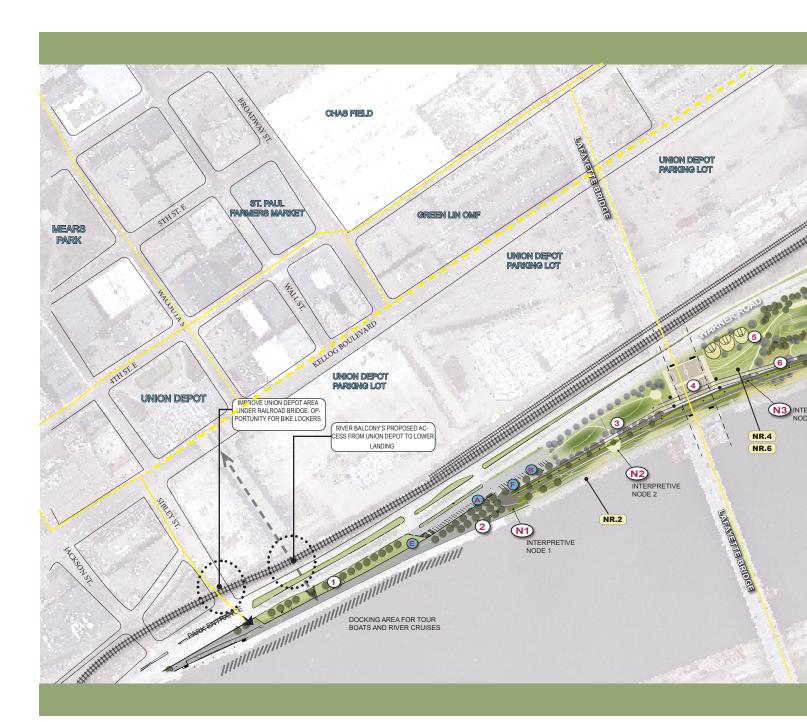


Figure 9.1 Cultural Diversity Approach - ECC Framework

#### **9.2 IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS**

Priority Level	Project Title	Key	Description	Cost Estimate	Potential Programming Partner	
CONSTRU	CTION: Rrecreational Facilities	es				
Medium	Pick-up game: outdoor futsal court	4	Add 1futsal court with fence and required equipment	\$200,000	Black Hawks, Sibley Apartment building residents	
Medium	Pick-up game:half basketball courts	5	Add 3 half basketball courts	\$150,000		
Medium	Pump track: bike/skate skils	8	Build a pump track course that can be used by bikes and skates. Explore different type of structures or material that best fit the location and it is suitable in the flood fringe	\$350,000	Midwest Skateboard Allience	
Medium	Children's play features	7	Add non traditional play structures and elements that goes with with the landscape	\$250,000	-	
Medium-high	Open multiuse lawns	8,11	Improve and provide the the open lawns for potential uses: disc golf; native lacrosse, large events	\$200,000	American Indian Magnet School, Golf frisbee lub	
High	Off-leash dog Area	3	Add a fenced area divided for small and large dogs and seating area with a shelter	\$120,000	-	
Medium-high	Natural surface trail loop	13	Add a natural surface trail along the park to loop with the SMRT. Seating and landscaping.	\$100,000	-	
Low	Main Overlook structure	10	Add an overlook structure to beintegrated with the landscape and connected to the nature trail. Potential access from Warner Road.	\$800,000	-	
Low	Interpretive resting nodes	N	Add various resting nodes with seating and landscaping and shade	\$800,000	THPOS, Science Museum,MNHS	
Low	Fitness trail course	8		\$120,000	YMCA	
CONSTRUC	TION: Services					
Medium-high	Parking lot expansion	В	Expand the parking space to the east of the existing parking lot and utilizing the existing exit to prevent traffic conflict.	\$1'000,000	-	
Medium	Restroom facility /Portable Potty shelter	D	Study the feseability to provide a restroom facilty or portable potty sheler	\$500,000	-	
Medium-High	Drinking fountains, misters and plumbing	-	Provide additional drinking fountain and or mister along the trail	\$80,000	-	
Medium	Relocation of Power Towers	F	Relocate power tower to Warner Road median to remove one tower in the middle of the park	\$1'500,000	Xcel	
Medium	Drop-off access and provisional parking	С	Potential access from Warner Road to function as drop-off for visitors accessing the center of the park/trail corridor	\$1'000,00	MNDot	
CONSTRUCTION: Natural Resouces and Landscaping						
Medium-High	Wetlands restoration	NR.1	Enhance with wetland species and remove invasive	\$200,000	DNR, Great River Greening, CRWD, FMR	
Medium-High	River edge restoration/ rip-rap	NR.2	Restore rip-rap alomg the river edge	\$500,000	DNR	
Medium	Prairie planting between trail and hillside	NR.3	see page 43	\$200,000		
Medium	Healing forest, tree planting	NR.4	Relocate exiinsting trees and add new trees like cottonwood trees	\$60,000		
Medium	Removal and control of invasive species	NR.5	see page 43			
Low	Stormwater and creeks educational features	NR.6	Add education environmental features in the landscape	\$80,000	CRWD, Lower Phalen Creek Project.FMR	
CONSTRUCTION: Trail Improvments and Accessibility						
High	Trail resurface with bituminous	-	Resurface existing trail from parking lot to the east side entrance of the park	\$500,000	-	
High	Replace lighting along the trail	-	Replace lighting along the trail	\$800,000	-	
Medium	Add wayfinding signage, informational kiosks	Е	See wayfinding plan \$		-	
Medium-High	Add interpretive features along the trail to increase awarness of the trail, ecology and river.	N	Add signage and interpretive artistic features to the nodes along the trail	\$100,000	-	

#### 9.3 LOWER LANDING PARK RENOVATION PLAN



#### RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

- 1 LANDING IMPROVEMENTS: INTERPRETIVE ARTISTIC EXHIBITS
- 2 ENTRYWAY PLAZA IMPROVEMENTS
- 3 OFF-LEASH DOG AREA
- 4 FUTSAL COURTS
- 5 HALF BASKETBALL COURTS
- 6 PUMP TRACK: BIKE/SKATE SKILLS COURSE
- (7) CHILDREN AND TEENS PLAY FEATURES
- (8) FITNESS TRAIL COURSE
- 9 OPEN LAWN 1: SPACE FOR EVENTS / FRISBEE
- (10) LAND & RIVER INTERPRETIVE OVERLOOK
- (11) OPEN LAWN 2: INTERPRETIVE NATIVE LACROSSE
- **12** HEALING GROVE
- (13) NATRURAL SURFACE TRAIL LOOP

#### **SERVICES**

- (A) EXISTING PARKING
- B PARKING EXPANSION FOOD TRUCKS
- O DROP-OFF ACCESS
- RESTROOM FACILITY/ PORTABLE POTTY SHELTER
- **E** INFORMATION KIOSK /BIKE FIX STATION
- POWER TOWER TO BE RELOCATED



#### **INTERPRETIVE RESTING NODES**

N1-2 EACH NODE WILL SERVE AS A RESTING STATION ALONG THE TRAIL. IT WOULD INCLUDE INTERPRETIVE PUBLIC ART AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE LAND AND THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER. THEY WOULD BE FURNISHED WITH BENCHES, DRINKING WATER, TRASH CANS AND SHADE AND COULD BE ORGANIZED CHRONOLOGICALLY.

#### RECOMMENDED WINTER ACTIVITIES

CROSS COUNTRY SKI / SNOW SHOEING SLEDDING HILL

#### NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

NR.1 WETLAND RESTORATION

NR.2 RIVER EDGE RESTORATION

NR.3 PRAIRIE PLANTING

NR.4 PHYTOREMEDIATION PLANTING

NR.5 TREE PLANTING

NR.6 REMOVAL AND CONTROL OF INVASIVE SPECIES

NR.7 STORMWATER FEATURES/EDUCATIONAL

#### 9.4 PRIORITY PROJECTS

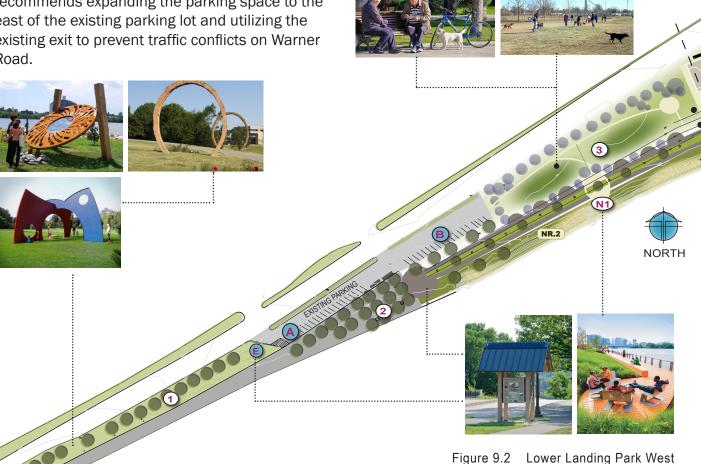
Four projects were identified as priority projects to start activating the park and making it more welcoming and accessible.

ACCESS AND PARK ENTRYWAY PLAZA IMPROVEMENT: Lambert's Landing and Lower Landing Park are connected through an entryway plaza picnic table. The plaza has ash trees which will eventually be removed to prevent the spread of the emerald ash borer. The master plan proposal recommends redesigning the plaza to make it more inviting and welcoming to people using the trail. The entryway should be enhanced as a resting point or meeting location with informational signs, benches, and water fountains.

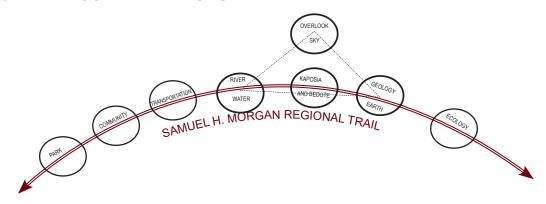
Plan identifies the potential need for additional parking space once the park becomes more active and people start using the park as entry point to connect with the Trail. The Master Plan recommends expanding the parking space to the east of the existing parking lot and utilizing the existing exit to prevent traffic conflicts on Warner Road.

NATURAL SURFACE TRAIL: The trail currently runs through the park bordering on the edge of the river. A gravel trail/path it recommended to expand the users experience in the park. The alternate trail will run to the top of the slope and through the existing ponds providing spots for bird watching and nature walks. The trail would offer the option to loop back to the entryway of the park.

3 OFF -LEASH DOG AREA: Dog parks are good park activators that bring neighbors together. Lowertown residents have high dog ownership compared to the rest of the City. The community is interested in a large space that should be divided in areas for small and large dogs. The plan proposed a near 1-acre fenced area for off-leash dogs. This area should feature shade structures with benches and drinking fountains for both people and dogs.



#### 9.5 PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS





#### **INTERPRETIVE RESTING NODES**

#### **Community Input:**

- Trail feels too long and isolated in the park.
- · Lack of information about the trail.
- More resting points.

**Site Opportunities:** Different landscape views from the trail.

**Recommendations:** Set a series of interpretive resting nodes that will tell the history of the location and communities that used it. The resting nodes will break the trail into 7 different resting points. The nodes would be equipped with interpretive features such as public art, signage and seating.

The location of the park and the way the trail bends allows the user to experience different views while using the trail. The White Cliffs (Dakota word), the barges docking by the shore, the river bending to a different landscape, downtown skyline, and the train passing by. Having all this variety in one place gives the opportunity for interpretation and education about the history of that land.

We heard from the trail users that not seeing where the trail goes gives them the perception that the walk is be too long. This proposal intends to divide the portion of the trail that frames the crescent shape of the park into various interpretive stations that will double as resting points. This will organize the space into a sequence of interpretive nodes along the river shore. Each node could serve as resting point with benches, shade, and interpretive opportunities in the form of signage or public art. It is recommended that all the interpretive stations are developed based on one unifying concept and

that they are related to each other. The interpretive themes suggested by the public are: Bdote (history of the region as told from an indigenous perspective), Working River, Land -Geologic History, History of Immigration, transportation, Water-Land-Sky.







Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail Corridor: Lower Landing Renovation Plan

## 4 5 PICKUP GAME COURTS: HALF BASKETBALL COURTS, FUTSAL COURTS

#### **Community Input:**

- Need for active parks in Downtown
- · Access to facilities by foot or bike
- Lack of activities and appropriate space for young people in Downtown
- Activate the park with more people to make it feel safer

#### **Site Opportunities:**

- High demand for active recreation in Saint Paul, particularly for young people. It will foster use of the trail.
- Proximity to the downtown urban core and LRT.
- No issues with noise disturbance from people playing and gathering for games.

**Recommendations:** Pick-up game courts fulfill the need for sport facilities that integrate with the trail corridor system. Soccer and basketball were the two most popular activities that we currently see young people seeking to play in passive parks without adequate facilities. Soccer and basketball are inclusive social activities for all genders and races. The plan proposes these informal activities that complement the trail use. To assure these facilities are used for pickup games, the plan suggests developing half basketball courts with 3 different hoops sizes for people with different heights and abilities. It also proposes a futsal court, which is a low maintenance field alternate to provide a recreational activity that it is more aligned to the regional corridor features.

As we heard the need for more active recreation, there is also the need for more activities along the trail.



#### **PLAY FEATURES**

#### **Community Input:**

- Add activities for kids all ages
- Consider protection for kids from the edge of the river
- Non-traditional play equipment that goes with the character of the park

#### **Site Opportunities:**

- Space accessible from the trail
- · Open space to run around

**Recommendations:** Integrate different active recreation elements in one zone of the park. Provide play structures that complement the other activities suggested in the play zone. As an example, a large multiuse play element like a climbing boulder that is visible from different parts of the park with some natural vegetation barriers to contain younger children in the play zone.



#### **PUMP TRACK/ SKATE COURSE**

#### **Community Input:**

- Bike skills course
- Space for a skate park/course
- Easy acces from SMRT

#### **Site Opportunities:**

- Proximity to Battle Creek Regional Park where people mountain bike
- Pump tracks are increasing in popularity across the state

Recommendations: Bike skill course for trails users accessing the park with bikes and skates. The course could be an independent structure mounted on the ground, or it could be designed with dirt or concrete. Adding a concrete surface would expand the use of the course for skaters. The design should be integrated with the existing landscape, close access to the trail for a safe transition of bikes and skates to the course. Take into consideration the floodplain design requirements.

### 10 11

#### (11) OPEN MULTIPURPOSE LAWNS

#### **Community Input:**

- Keep the existing open space for large gatherings
- Disc golf course
- Additional space to support racing events on the trail
- Music concerts

#### **Site Opportunities:**

- Existing open space
- Isolated from housing, no risk of noise disturbance

**Recommendations:** Open lawns for multipurpose activities.

Open lawn 1: Open space to support community events like marathons and other large gathering events along the trail. Open Lawn 2: Partner with indigenous community from Dayton's Bluff District Council to develop an interpretive/educational

area within the park to learn about and participate in Native Lacrosse and related indigenous ceremonies.

Partner with local disc golf players to set up a disc golf course within the park area. Disc golf is an activity that is compatible with others open space activities and is accessible for people of all ages.



#### (10) OVERLOOK

#### **Community Input:**

- Need an additional access to the center of the park
- Place to maximize appreciation for the river and the bluffs

#### **Site Opportunities:**

- High point in the middle of the park to view Downtown, the Bluffs, and the Capitol
- Potential access from Warner Road

**Recommendations:** Overlook in the middle of the crescent shape park as a focal point. Views of the river, trail, downtown skyline, Bluffs and park. The overlook structure will be integrated with the landscape and connected to the nature trail. Potential access from Warner Road to function as drop-off for visitors accessing the center of the park/trail corridor.



#### **HEALING GROVE - BIRD WATCHING**

#### **Community Input:**

- Add more trees for shape
- Wish to keep a calming space
- A place to appreciate nature

#### **Site Opportunities:**

- Re purpose the Friendship Forest initiative done in 2016
- Proximity to Wakan Tipi and Indigenous Burial Site

Recommendations: The area on the west side of the park could become the transition to the sacred sites Wakan Tipi and Indian Mounds Park. This transition focuses on creating a relaxing landscape that as you enter a sacred space between the river and the bluff. Places to read and learn native legends are posted around the Cottonwood trees. medicinal plants, and Dogwood trees.

This proposal is also an opportunity to re purpose the Friendship Forest Initiative completed in 2016. The project will take time but provides a unique opportunity to engage the community. The tree canopies will help remove existing air pollution. The contrast of a wooded area in the surrounding urban setting will provide the trail users with a different visual experience. The landscape changes over time will be an interesting, organically developing feature for the commuters using the trail. Frequent users will experience both the aging the wooded area and the oasis effect of grove of trees in the middle of the industrial and urban landscape.

#### 9.6 TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

#### INTERPRETATION AND WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

- Add more information about the trail and destinations it connects
- Add information about the trail in other locations (Union Depot LRT station, Grand Round, etc.) and display other trail connections
- Information about park amenities
- Add information about historical places nearby
- Environmental educational features related to the river and water. Signage near stormwater sewer as opportunity to add information about Trout Brook Stormsewer and Lower Phalen Creek.

#### TRAIL RESURFACING AND LIGHTING

The Segment 4 of the trail that runs along the park, has not been upgraded since its construction in 1992. It requires additional maintenance and needs to be resurfaced.

The lighting along the trail needs to be upgraded or replaced.

This is an area that gets very hot in the summer. It is recommended to add shade either with a tree grove along the trail or shelters that provide shade.





Figure 9.4 Lower Landing Park East

## PROPOSED NON TRADITIONAL RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE TRAIL CORRIDOR

#### **SOCCER - FUTSAL COURTS**

#### **Community Benefits:**

"With existing soccer fields beaten down from constant use and a lack of green space in urban neighborhoods to build more, SOCCER-FUTSAL has rolled into parks across the nation to meet the growing demand of soccer-loving millennials."

- Soccer experts say that children improve at soccer more quickly if they play futsal
- Community Health
- Create sense of Community
- Culturally inclusive
- Responds to the Community Engagement Process
- Recreational Activities for all genders and ages.

#### **Potential Partnerships:**

- Saint paul blackhawks soccer club
- Street soccer usa
- Future stars soccer association
- Joy of the People
- The sanneh foundations
- Minnesota United



#### **PUMP TRACK**

#### **Community Benefits:**

- Community gets a valuable asset a low cost
- Provides an active recreation component for trail users
- All ages and skill levels can learn in the same location
- Pump tracks create a fun an positive atmosphere
- Many people can use pump tracks without disturbing neighbors
- Valuable asset without emitting pollution

#### **Potential Partnerships:**

Local biking clubs and organizations





#### **NATIVE-LACROSSE - TAKAPSICAPI**

#### **Community Benefits:**

- Appreciation of Native Lacrosse
- Healing Sport for the Native Community
- Healthy community
- Create sense of Community
- Acknowledge the spirituality of Dakota people along the Mississippi River
- Cooperative sport that promotes mental strength and collaboration
- Cultural revitalization
- Sense of community

#### **Potential Partnerships:**

- Twin Cities Native Lacrosse
- Indigenous Lax Homegrown Lacrosse





Figure 9.5 Proposed Non-Traditional recrational activities for park program

#### 9.7 ACCESSIBILITY

The park is 5 minutes' walk from the LRT Green Line Station. It is the only park by the Mississippi River in Saint Paul that has closet access to the LRT. The communities that benefit from this connectivity are from neighborhoods along University Avenue like Frogtown, Midway and Rondo.

The community highlighted the conflict stemming from access to the park. While this portion of the trail corridor offers myriad opportunities to appreciate and interact with the riverfront, it also has numerous hard borders that limit access. With Warner Road and the railroad on one side and the Mississippi on the other side, the trail has limited access points. Exacerbating the issue, access coming from downtown feels unsafe because of the Warner Road crossing and the unlit and heavily obscured walk under the railroad bridge. The underbelly of the railroad facility has been abandoned for years and the community indicated that entrance to the park felt unsafe. As mentioned on page 4 of this document, more needs to be done, to enhance the appearance and functionality of the gateway. Some ideas, like bike lockers, could be creatively designed to store bikes for commuters using public transit. This area is not under City's jurisdiction. Conversation and partnership with the Union Depot and transit organizations could help advance this effort.

All park facilities will be developed in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Other guidelines, such as the MnDNR's Trail planning, design and development will be used when implementing the proposed recreational amenities recommended in this plan.

#### 9.8 PUBLIC SERVICES

Utility services are currently provided to the park by the City of Saint Paul for sewer and water and Xcel Energy for electricity. Sewer and water utilities may need to be expanded into the park for the location of a new restroom building at the top of the hill by the new overlook. Rehabilitation of some existing utilities may also be required.

There are currently 4 large power towers in the park. Besides being an eye sore, they occupy considerable park space. In coordination with Xcel energy, the City of Saint Paul would consider relocating 3 quad base towers to the median and North Side of Warner Road on a new single base tower. The relocation of the 3 towers would allow for the elimination of one quad base tower in the middle of the park.





#### 9.9 CONFLICTS

The Park lays on the Mississippi Flood Fringe. Development is normally allowed in the flood fringe provided that residential buildings are placed on fill so that the lowest floor is above the flood protection elevation.

Future development will require regular base maintenance. Flyover limitations from the Metropolitan Airport Commission exist due to the park's proximity to the St. Paul Airport. Finally, the site may be subject to potential Critical Area Regulations put forth by the DNR because of its location along the Mississippi River.

The easement under Lafayette Bridge could become another conflict for the plan's proposed uses. Consideration must be given to the need for access and maintenance to the bridge. This could influence the design of the proposed program near the bridge.



## 11 STEWARDSHIP PLAN

#### **11.2 OPERATIONS**

The City of Saint Paul operates and maintains Samuel Morgan Regional Trail and Lower Landing Park. The extinting maintenance of the park consist of:

- Plowing snow (Nov- April)
- Salt/sand for ice
- Portable toilet rental
- Mow grass (May-Oct)
- · Minor tree maintenance
- Storm damage clean up
- Flodding damage clean up
- · Trash pick up

Adding the recommended amenities in this plan to the park will increase the operations and maintenance of this park considerably.

The Natural Resources program manages all natural areas accross the City. The recommendations stated in the natural resource manage plan on page 33 would require additional funds in the anual buget for park maintenance.

Additional budget would be also needed to provide the option for recycling and compost facilities to give visitors the ability to responsibly handle waste generated in the parks. Patrolling of the facilities is provided by the Saint Paul Police Department.

#### 11.2 POTENTIAL PARTNERS

#### Natural Resources

Lower Phalen Creek Project Friends of Mississippi River Great River Greening Science Museum

#### **Cultural Resources**

Tribal Preservation Offices
Minnesota Historical Society

#### Park Programming

Saint Paul Farmers Market Public Art Saint Paul Union Depot Clues (senior programs)

Saint Paul Libraris for educational programs
See page 43 and 52 for community organizations and other potential partners.





## **12 PUBLIC AWARENESS**

One of the priority projects is to develop a signage network to inform the public about access to park and the Trail. The directional signs will be installed on the trail, streets with pedestrian access, nearby public transportation stations, and neighboring parks.

Activating Lower Landing Park will improve public awareness of Samuel Morgan Regional Trail. There are other groups that are interested in expanding their programs and could see opportunities to promote educational, historical markers or add volunteer events to encourage the preservation of the natural environment. The Department of Natural Resources and Forestry is already planning volunteer events with the community and could potentially partner with Friends of Mississippi River and the partners mention on page 54. These events would bring people to the site and promote the use of the trail and its linking destinations.

The City of Saint Paul Park and Recreation Department will look for the support of the Regional Parks System Ambassador Program to strategize awareness events at Lower Landing Park to promote the use of the regional trail and proposed amenities.



# **Appendix A:**City Council Resolution Trail Renaming

	RIGINAL Council File # <u>02-5</u> 8					
•••	Green Sheet # _\\009\					
	RESOLUTION CITY OF SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA					
	Presented By					
	Referred to Committee: Date					
1 2 3	WHEREAS, Samuel H. Morgan was well known for his leadership in protecting, promoting and establishing parks and trails for over 60 years; and					
4	WHEREAS, Mr. Morgan lived most of his life in the city of Saint Paul on St. Clair Avenue; and					
6 7 8	WHEREAS, Mr. Morgan worked to conserve and enhance the Minnesota State Park system, the Metropolitan Area Regional Park System, and the parks and trails in Saint Paul and Ramsey County; and					
9 10	WHEREAS, Mr. Morgan had the vision, leadership and legal skills needed to acquire and protect many parks and trails in Minnesota; and					
11 12	WHEREAS, Mr. Morgan was instrumental in the creation of the Metropolitan Area's Regional Parks and Open Space system, as enacted by the State Legislature in 1974; and					
13 14	WHEREAS, in 1985 Mr. Morgan was appointed a charter member of the St. Paul Riverfront Commission established by Mayor George Latimer; and					
15 16	WHEREAS, in 1990 Mr. Morgan led the development of the "no net loss" of park lands concept which became part of the Saint Paul City Charter; and					
17 18	WHEREAS, Mr. Morgan played a key role in establishing and supporting the Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County; and					
19 20 21 22 23	proposed naming the East Bank Mississippi River Regional Trail from Highway 5 to Chestnut Street as the "Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail", in honor of Mr. Morgan's numerous					
24 25 26 27 28 29	WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission adopted Resolution #01-14 on December 12, 2001, which endorsed the proposal to name the East Bank Mississippi River Regional Trail from Highway 5 to Chestnut Street as the "Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail", and further, urged the Council of the City of Saint Paul to name the East Bank Mississippi River Regional Trail from Highway 5 to Chestnut Street as the "Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail"; now, therefore,					
30 31	BE IT RESOLVED, that the East Bank Mississippi River Regional Trail from Highway 5 to Chestnut Street shall henceforth be known as the "Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail."					
	Benanav Blakey Bostrom Coleman Harris Lantry Reiter Department of Public Norks By:  Adopted by Council: Date an 23 2002  Form Approved by Cty Attributey					
	Adoption Certified by Council Secretary By: 4/reguse ) Joseph					

## **Appendix B:**City of Saint Paul Parks Commission Resolution



### RESOLUTION # 18-03 Como Lakeside Pavilion Management Contract

WHEREAS,; and WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission ("Commission") is an appointed body established to advise the Mayor and City Council on long-range and City-wide matters related to the Department of Parks and Recreation; and

WHEREAS, the City is the owner of public park land commonly known as Como Regional Park, which contains the Como Lakeside Pavilion and surrounding areas; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Parks and Recreation initiated a Request for Proposals for the management of the Como Lakeside Pavilion, after soliciting, and receiving citizen input through community meetings to determine what the community wanted in the way of activities, community access to the facility, entertainment and food and beverage offerings; and

WHEREAS, an evaluation committee comprised of largely community members and a city staff selected the highest scored proposal, which was submitted by O'Reilly Custom 3, LLC, which will do business as Spring Cafe as the management partner; and

WHEREAS, the Management Agreement calls for an initial term beginning April 1, 2018 and continuing through December 31, 2023, with renewal terms based upon a full city review of performance metrics; and

WHEREAS, the proposed contract guarantees minimum annual revenue commissions and capital investment into facility; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission recommends that the City Council of the City of Saint Paul authorize the appropriate City officials to enter into the attached Management Agreement.

Adopted by the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission on February 8, 2018:

Approved:

Yeas

5

Nays Absent: 0

Resolution #18-03

Attested to by:

Staff to the Parks and Recreation Commission



An Affirmative Action Equal Opportunity Employer



# **Appendix C:**Transportation Committee Staff Report

Transportation Committee Staff Report for Plans and Policies						
Committee date: 9/24/18						
Plan Name/Policy Name: Lower Landing Park Master Plan						
Contact: Bianca Paz, bianca.paz@ci.stpaul.mn.us						
<b>Plan/Policy Webpage:</b> https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-recreation/design-construction/current-projects/lower-landing-park-renovation						
<b>Description:</b> Available funds from the Lafayette Bridge construction project were assigned for Lower Landing Park improvements after using the park for construction staging. The City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation recognized this as an opportunity to take a fresh look at this area and develop a comprehensive renovation plan in order to enhance the trail corridor experience and improve access and awareness of the trail and to activate the park to serve the adjacent communities.						
General Timeline: Renovation Master Plan Complete						
Public Hearing Date & Location: Parks Commission: 01/06/2018						
<u>Transportation Committee Role</u> :						
☐ Inform scope & approach	☐ Review draft					
Explanation						
Staff recommendation	Approval					
Action item requested of		portation elements of the Lower				

Staff recommendation	Approval		
Action item requested of	Recommend approval of transportation elements of the Lower		
the Committee	Landing Master Plan to the City Council		
Committee	Approval		
recommendation			
Committee vote	8-0		

## Appendix D: City of Saint Paul City Council Resolution





