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DATE: February 21, 2019

TO: Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee

FROM: Lucy Thompson, Principal City Planner

SUBJECT: Draft Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Chapter of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan

BACKGROUND

The Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA) chapter of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan guides land use and development along the 17 miles of Mississippi riverfront and 26 miles of shoreline within Saint Paul city limits. While other plans have been adopted as part of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan that address the city's relationship to the Mississippi River (e.g. the *Great River Passage Master Plan*), the Critical Area chapter uniquely responds to the requirements of Minnesota Rules, Chapter 6106, which lay out a regulatory framework to protect the MRCCA's resources; and manage the balance between natural systems, urban development, recreation and commerce.

The current *Mississippi River Corridor Plan* was adopted as part of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan in 2002. The new draft is technically an update of the existing chapter, but because of the recent adoption of new rules by the State Legislature, the content and format are quite different.

The new MRCCA chapter is due to the Metropolitan Council at the same time as the other chapters the Committee has already advised staff on: June 30, 2019.

THE MRCCA CHAPTER

The content of the MRCCA is fairly tightly regulated by the Rules, so the format of the chapter is a bit different than the other city-wide chapters. For example, there are goals to guide the chapter's policies, but the policies are not listed by goal (akin to the Land Use chapter, where policies are organized by land use, rather than goal). The policy categories are dictated by the Rules:

- Districts
- Primary Conservation Areas (defined as shore impact zones; wetlands, floodplains and areas of confluence with key tributaries; natural drainage routes; bluff impact zones; native plant communities and significant existing vegetative stands; cultural and historic properties; gorges; and unstable soils and bedrock)
- Public River Corridor Views
- Restoration Priorities
- Surface Water Uses
- Water-Oriented Uses
- Open Space and Recreational Facilities
- Transportation and Public Utilities

In addition, the maps you see in the draft are required by the Rules. A few of the required maps (e.g. open space and recreational facilities, cultural and historic properties, transportation) are included in the appropriate city-wide chapter rather than the MRCCA chapter, with the MRCCA boundary being added to the base.

PLAN PREPARATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Minnesota Rules overseeing the MRCCA chapter were adopted in December 2016, after three years of extensive and intensive city, agency, stakeholder and community engagement throughout the Critical Area (encompassing 72 miles of river and 54,000 acres of surrounding land in 30 jurisdictions). Because of these previous efforts, we prepared the draft chapter in-house, without a working group or open houses. We are in the process, however, of meeting with four key stakeholders prior to the Planning Commission releasing the document for official public review: MN Department of Natural Resources, National Park Service, Friends of the Mississippi River, and Friends of the Parks and Trails of Saint Paul and Ramsey County. In addition, we will send the document to adjacent and affected jurisdictions, as required by the Metropolitan Council.

REVIEW AND ADOPTION PROCESS AND SCHEDULE

At the February 27, 2019 Committee meeting, staff will brief the Committee on the MRCCA chapter, and update you on any feedback we've received to-date from our meetings with key stakeholders. The schedule is as follows:

February 27	Informational briefing to CNPC
March 20	CNPC reviews final draft, recommends PC release for public hearing and set public hearing
April 5	PC releases draft MRCCA chapter for public review, sets public hearing for May 3
May 3	PC holds public hearing
May 15	CNPC reviews public comments, recommends final changes to PC
May 31	PC approves MRCCA, forwards it to Mayor and City Council, along with the 6 city-wide chapters

Attachment:

- Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Plan - Draft for Preliminary Review, February 20, 2019



DRAFT FOR PRELIMINARY REVIEW

February 20, 2019

MISSISSIPPI RIVER CORRIDOR CRITICAL AREA



Introduction

The Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA) Chapter guides land use and development along the Mississippi River. Saint Paul contains 17 miles of river and 26 miles of shoreline within its city limits, the longest of any municipality within the Critical Area. While other plans have been adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan that address the city's relationship to the Mississippi (e.g. the Great River Passage Master Plan), the Critical Area chapter uniquely responds to the requirements of Minnesota Rules, Chapter 6106, which lays out a regulatory framework to protect the MRCCA's resources and manage the balance between natural systems, urban development, recreation, and commerce.

Designated by Governor's Executive Order in the 1970s, the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area is a land corridor along the Mississippi River in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area governed by special land planning requirements and land development regulations. These regulations, which are implemented through local MRCCA plans and ordinances, protect and preserve the natural, scenic, recreational, and transportation resources of this section of the Mississippi River. The MRCCA comprises 72 miles of river and 54,000 acres of surrounding land in 30 local jurisdictions. Saint Paul's portion of the Critical Area is shown on Figure 1.

The following goals guide the MRCCA chapter:

1. Recognition, celebration and protection of the defining feature of Saint Paul for the benefit of the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the city, state, region and nation.
2. Protection and enhancement of the unique urban ecology of the river corridor and valley
3. An economically-viable working river
4. High-quality and sustainable development that enhances the natural environment
5. Equitable public access/strong connections to the Mississippi River
6. The river as the backbone of a community-building network that extends beyond the shoreline and into the fabric of the surrounding neighborhoods
7. Balance between all of the ways the river is a resource to Saint Paul - environmental, natural, economic, cultural, social, physical, recreational, historic, spiritual

Districts

Six districts are defined in the MRCCA rules, based on the natural and built character of different areas of the river corridor. In addition to the state-mandated districts, the City of Saint Paul has identified four reaches to guide future land use and development within its river corridor.

Policy CA-1. Guide land use and development activities consistent with the management purpose of each of the MRCCA districts.

The River Reaches

The *Great River Passage Master Plan* provides the long-term vision for orienting the city toward the river, and connecting parks and natural areas along the river to one another and adjacent neighborhoods. The plan divides the Saint Paul riverfront into four “reaches:”

Gorge Reach

The Gorge is a deep river valley located west of downtown that is defined by steep limestone cliffs and heavily wooded slopes that come right to the river’s edge. The Gorge Reach extends from the Minneapolis city limits at the upstream end near the historic Meeker Dam, to Fort Road (7th Street West) to the south. With the exception of the Ford Lock and Dam #1, and the occasional bridge crossing high above, river travelers are completely separated from the city that comes right to the top of the bluffs above them. This is a place of great scenic beauty, ecological richness and diversity.

Valley Reach

The vertical bluffs of the Gorge give way to the steeply wooded slopes of the Valley at the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers. The Valley Reach extends from the Fort Road Bridge to Downtown. The Valley is a broad floodplain of expansive swamp forests, wetlands, ponds, and lakes. Its features were formed by dynamic natural processes and frequent flood events that inundate much of the area. The Valley is a place of constant change, and most areas within this reach are undeveloped, except for widely scattered high points at the valley’s edges.

Downtown Reach

The more natural landscapes of the Gorge and the Valley give way to dramatic urban forms of Downtown on the bluffs and the structured river edges on the east bank. On the west side, the geometric lines and engineered flood control levees, along with marinas and smaller-scale commercial buildings bisected by bridges, presents a very different urban river edge character.

Floodplain Reach

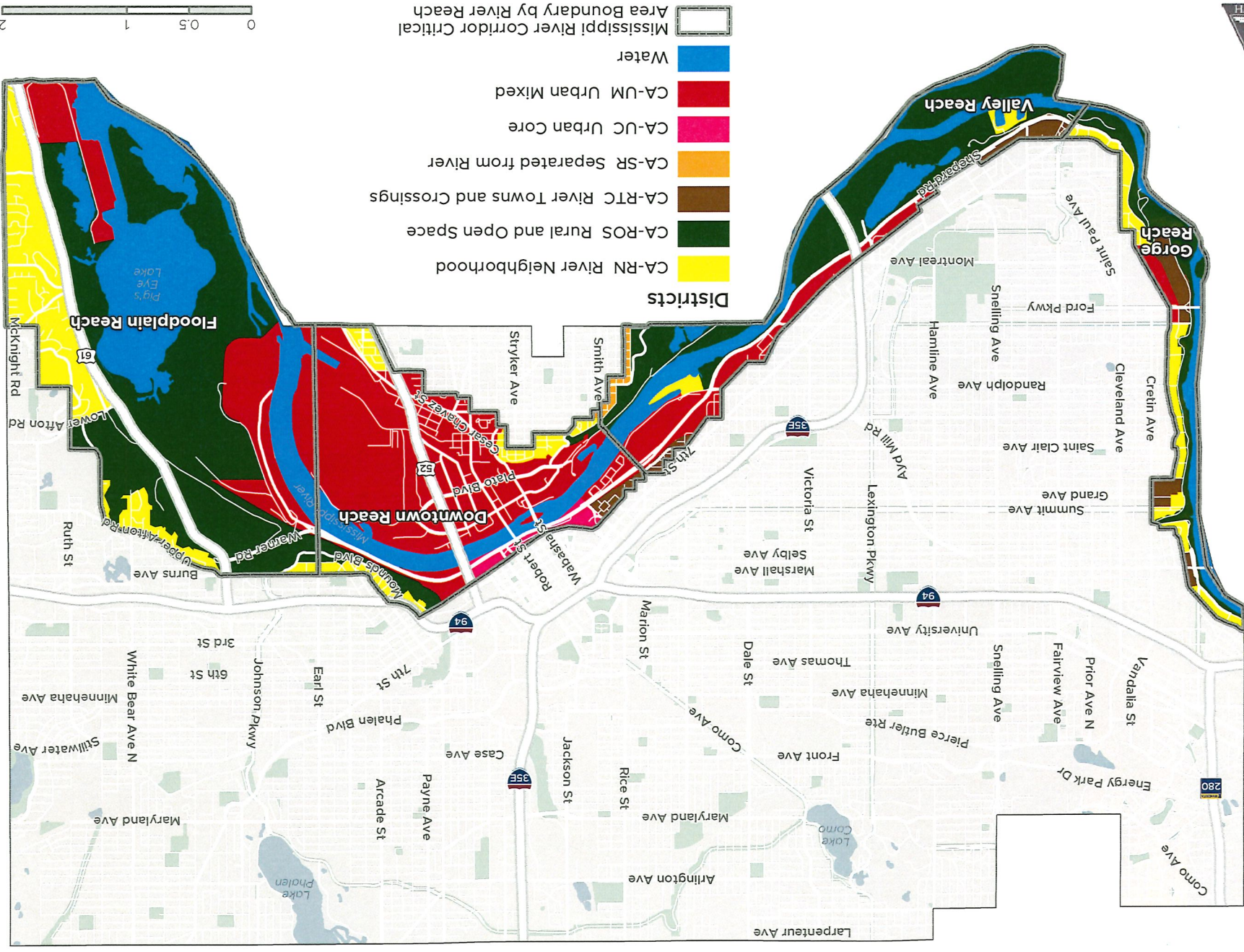
The Floodplain Reach is a landscape of contrasts. The vast open spaces of lakes, wetlands, and floodplain forests of the Pig’s Eye area are a counterpoint to the heavily wooded and steeply sloping Highwood bluffs that define the eastern edge of the valley. Heavy industrial uses at both ends of the reach are connected by a high-speed highway and heavily used rail lines, which form a major barrier between the bluffs and floodplain landscapes. The industrial uses and major transportation infrastructure contrast with the less densely developed and heavily wooded neighborhoods to the east.

MRCCA Districts

The six MRCCA districts located within the City of Saint Paul are described below and illustrated on the proceeding page:

- **Rural and Open Space District (CA-ROS)**
The rural and open space district is characterized by rural and low-density development patterns and land uses and includes land that is riparian or visible from the river, as well as large, undeveloped tracts of high ecological and scenic value, floodplain, and undeveloped islands. Many primary conservation areas exist in the district. The district must be managed to sustain and restore the rural and natural character of the corridor and to protect and enhance habitat, parks and open space, public river corridor views, and scenic, natural, and historic areas.
- **River Neighborhood District (CA-RN)**
The river neighborhood district is characterized by primarily residential neighborhoods that are riparian or readily visible from the river or that abut riparian parkland. The district includes parks and open space, limited commercial development, marinas, and related land uses. The CA-RN district must be managed to maintain the character of the river corridor within the context of existing residential and related neighborhood development, and to protect and enhance habitat, parks and open space, public river corridor views, and scenic, natural, and historic areas. Minimizing erosion and the flow of untreated storm water into the river and enhancing habitat and shoreline vegetation are priorities in the district.
- **River Towns and Crossings District (CA-RTC)**
The river towns and crossings district is characterized by historic downtown areas and limited nodes of intense development at specific river crossings, as well as institutional campuses that predate designation of the Mississippi River and that include taller buildings. The CA-RTC district must be managed in a manner that allows continued growth and redevelopment in historic downtowns and more intensive redevelopment in limited areas at river crossings to accommodate compact walkable development patterns and connections to the river. Minimizing erosion and the flow of untreated storm water into the river, providing public access to and public views of the river, and restoring natural vegetation in riparian areas and tree canopy are priorities in the district.
- **Separated from River District (CA-SR)**
The separated from river district is characterized by its physical and visual distance from the Mississippi River. The district includes land separated from the river by distance, topography, development, or a transportation corridor. The land in this district is not readily visible from the Mississippi River. The CA-SR district provides flexibility in managing development without negatively affecting the key resources and features of the river corridor. Minimizing negative impacts to primary conservation areas and minimizing erosion and flow of untreated storm water into the Mississippi River are priorities in the district.
- **Urban Mixed District (CA-UM)**
The urban mixed district includes large areas of highly urbanized mixed use that are a part of the urban fabric of the river corridor, including institutional, commercial, industrial, and residential areas and parks and open space. The CA-UM district must be managed in a manner that allows for future growth and potential transition of intensely developed areas that does not negatively affect public river corridor views and that protects bluffs and floodplains. Restoring and enhancing bluff and shoreline habitat, minimizing erosion and flow of untreated storm water into the river, and providing public access to and public views of the river are priorities in the district.
- **Urban Core District (CA-U)**
The urban core district includes the urban cores of Minneapolis and Saint Paul. The CA-UC district must be managed with the greatest flexibility to protect commercial, industrial, and other high-intensity urban uses, while minimizing negative impacts to primary conservation areas and minimizing erosion and flow of untreated storm water into the river. Providing public access to and public views of the river are priorities in the district.

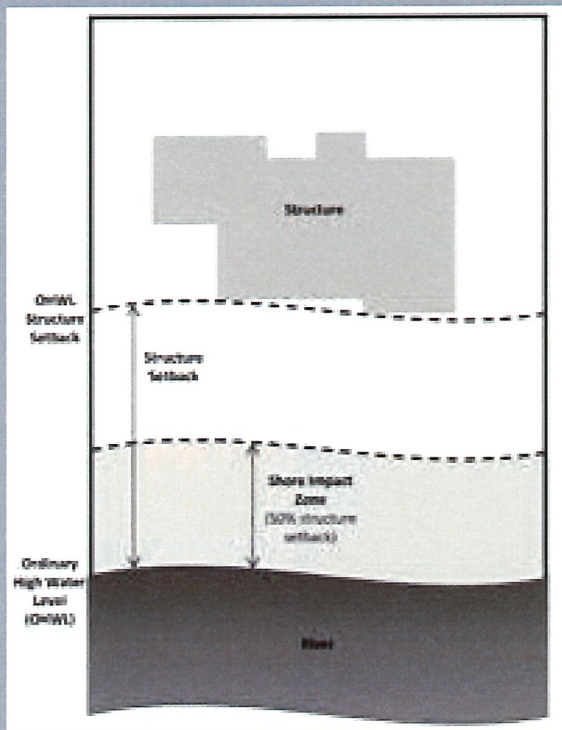
Figure 1: MRCA Districts in Saint Paul



Source: City of Saint Paul; Minnesota DNR

Shore Impact Zones

Shore Impact Zones (SIZs) are lands located between the ordinary highway water level of public waters and a line parallel to it at a setback of 50 percent of the requirement MRCCA district structure. SIZs apply to the Mississippi, all of its backwaters, and its four key tributaries (i.e., the Crow, Rum, Minnesota, and Vermillion Rivers). The locations of the SIZs are provided on Map CA-2.



Primary Conservation Areas

Primary conservation areas (PCAs) define key natural and cultural resources and features that are addressed by the MRCCA rules. These resources include shore impact zones, wetlands, floodplains, confluences with major tributaries, bluff impact zones, native plant communities, and significant existing vegetative stands. Key features and resources have been defined as PCAs throughout the MRCCA districts to ensure that they are given priority consideration for protection. Map CA-2 through Map CA-8 identify locations of PCAs within the MRCCA boundary.

Policy CA-2. Protect Primary Conservation Areas through planning, land use and land alteration regulations, and other tools.

Policy CA-3. Minimize impacts to PCAs from public and private development and land use activities.

Policy CA-4. Regulate development in the floodplain consistent with the requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the FEMA Flood Insurance Program (FIP).

Policy CA-5. Manage vegetation and conduct vegetation restoration consistent with park master plans and MRCCA requirements.

Policy CA-6. Promote the preservation and re-establishment of natural vegetation on privately-owned property.

Policy CA-7. Consider alternative design standards related to subdivision and development of land within the MRCCA, such as conservation design or transfer of development rights, in order to protect or restore PCAs.

Public River Corridor Views

A primary objective of the Critical Area Act is to protect views to and from the Mississippi River. The Public River Corridor Views (PRCVs), defined in Appendix C, are the highly-valued views within the river corridor, including views toward the river from public parkland, historic properties and public overlooks, as well as views towards bluffs from the opposite shore. The wide variety of terrain and topographical features that lie within the MRCCA boundary have blessed the city with some of the best public views in the region. See Appendix C for an overview of Public River Corridor Views and details on each view.

Policy CA-8. Regulate building height, placement and design consistent with the intent of the MRCCA rules to protect, enhance and minimize impacts to Public River Corridor Views.

Policy CA-9. Protect and minimize impacts to PRCVs from public development activities.

Policy CA-10. Consider designated Public River Corridor Views from other communities in developing dimensional standards, view impact evaluation procedures, and mitigation identification procedures.

Policy CA-11. Support shorter buildings closer to the river's edge and taller buildings as distance from the river increases in order to maximize views of and from the river, and preserve visual access to the river as a public good (rather than privatized right).

Restoration Priorities

Restoration of natural vegetation and plant growth within the MRCCA has many benefits, including the stabilization of soils, retention and filtration of runoff, provision of habitat and recharging of groundwater. The City of Saint Paul supports the restoration of natural vegetation throughout the MRCCA and will support efforts of its local government partners to do so. The DNR native plant communities and significant vegetative stands are mapped in Map CA-6.

Policy CA-12. Support re-establishment on both publicly- and privately-owned property of native plants and/or natural vegetative communities to provide wildlife habitat, soil stabilization, and runoff filtration.

Policy CA-13. Minimize loss of native and existing vegetation due to public or private development.

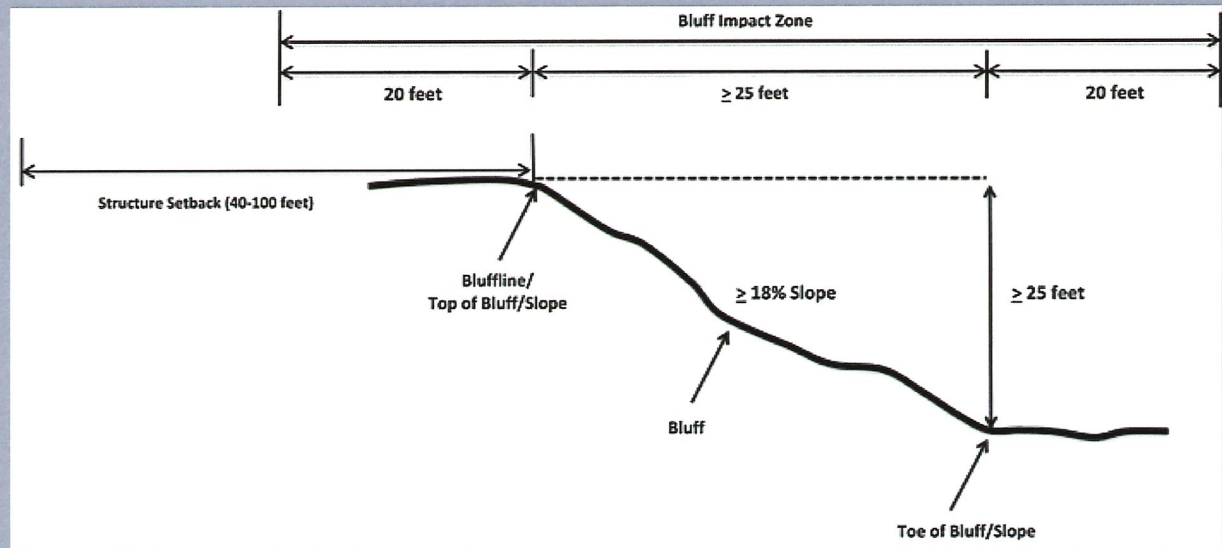
Policy CA-14. Sustain and enhance ecological functions (habitat value) during vegetation restoration.

Bluff Impact Zones

The MRCCA rules define the Bluff Impact Zone as the bluff and land within 20 feet of the bluff (top of bluff and toe of bluff), as shown below. A “bluff” is defined within Minnesota Rule Section 6106.0050 Subp. 8 as a natural topographic feature having:

1. A slope that rises at least 25 feet and the grade of the slope averages 18 percent or greater measure over a horizontal distance of 25 feet, as follows:
 - a. Where the slope begins above the ordinary high water level, from the toe of the slope to the top of the slope; or
 - b. Where the slope begins below the ordinary high water level, from the ordinary high water level to the top of the slope; or

2. A natural escarpment or cliff with a slope that rises at least ten feet above the ordinary high water level or toe of the slope, whichever is applicable, to the top of the slope, with a slope of 75 degrees or greater.



Native Plant Communities and Significant Existing Vegetative Stands

Native plant communities are defined within the MRCCA rules as a plant community that has been identified as part of the Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS) or biological survey issued or adopted by a local, state or federal agency. The MBS further identifies a Native Plant Community as a group of native plants that interact with each other and the surrounding environment in ways not greatly altered by humans or by introduced plant or animal species. These groups of native plant form recognizable units, such as an oak forest, a prairie, or a marsh, that tend to repeat across the landscape over time. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) describes the importance of native plant communities as:

Native plant communities provide a range of ecological functions that are increasingly recognized as valuable for the quality of life in Minnesota and even for human health and safety. Among these functions are water filtration, flood moderation, carbon storage, moderation of water-table level, local temperature moderation, erosion control, and development and enrichment of soil. Large tracts of native plant communities provide opportunities for sustainable resource use, such as logging systems that mimic natural cycles in forests and help to perpetuate all the beneficial functions that plant communities provide while also supplying commercial products.

Significant vegetative stands depict those considered significant by the National Park Service and Minnesota DNR because they are largely intact and connective to native communities. Significant Vegetative Stands are described by the Metropolitan Council as follows:

This vegetation provides high ecological value in addition to the water quality and scenic values of “natural vegetation.” Ecologically, this vegetation provides species diversity, habitat for endangered and threatened plants (supporting 19 state-listed rare plant species and 15 state-listed rare animal species in the MRCCA), and a continuous corridor where plants and animals can naturally spread and disperse. This latter characteristic is especially important as habitat becomes more fragmented, climate change accelerates, and invasive species increase. In addition, these vegetation areas serve as living remnants of the original native communities that existed in the corridor, even though they do not meet the size and quality criteria to be classified as a Native Plant Community by the MBS.

Native Plant Communities and Significant Existing Vegetative Stands in Saint Paul are identified in Map CA-6.

Surface Water Uses

In Saint Paul, surface water uses vary from barge operations between the High Bridge and Wabasha Street Bridge to recreational marinas at Hidden Falls Regional Park and the Minnesota Boat Club. The shipping industry is of crucial importance to Saint Paul, greater Minnesota, and the Upper Midwest. Located 1,800 miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico the Saint Paul Port is a hub in the intermodal freight transportation system, where barge, rail, and truck traffic intersect. Agricultural products and other bulk materials are brought by rail and truck from throughout the Upper Midwest, and transferred to barges that travel to downstream river ports. Surface Water Uses are illustrated in Map CA-7.

Policy CA-15. Recognize the Mississippi River as a “working river” that is important to the economies of Saint Paul, the Twin Cities metropolitan area and the Upper Midwest.

Policy CA-16. Balance commercial, industrial and recreational surface water uses.

Water-Oriented Uses

Industry and commerce are an important function of the river. The City recognizes that commercial and industrial uses of river corridor land will continue. Given the continued mix of land uses in the river corridor, careful planning for the use of land along the river's edge is warranted. The City recognizes that the use of land in the floodplain or within 300 feet of the ordinary high water mark has the potential for serious adverse effects on the river if not properly managed. All development must comply with existing regulations governing the floodplain and river corridor. Existing water-oriented uses within the city are identified in Map CA-7.

Policy CA-17. Prioritize protection of natural resources, nature-based recreation and public access to the Mississippi River in the Gorge Reach.

Policy CA-18. Prioritize protection of natural resources, nature-based recreation and public access to the Mississippi River in the Valley Reach.

Policy CA-19. Prioritize urban development, activation of the riverfront, public access and green connections to the Mississippi River in the Downtown Reach.

Policy CA-20. Prioritize a balance between urban development and natural resources protection, and public access to the Mississippi River in the Floodplain Reach.

Policy CA-21. Limit commercial and industrial land uses along the river to those having an economic or operational need for a river location, provided that they do not:

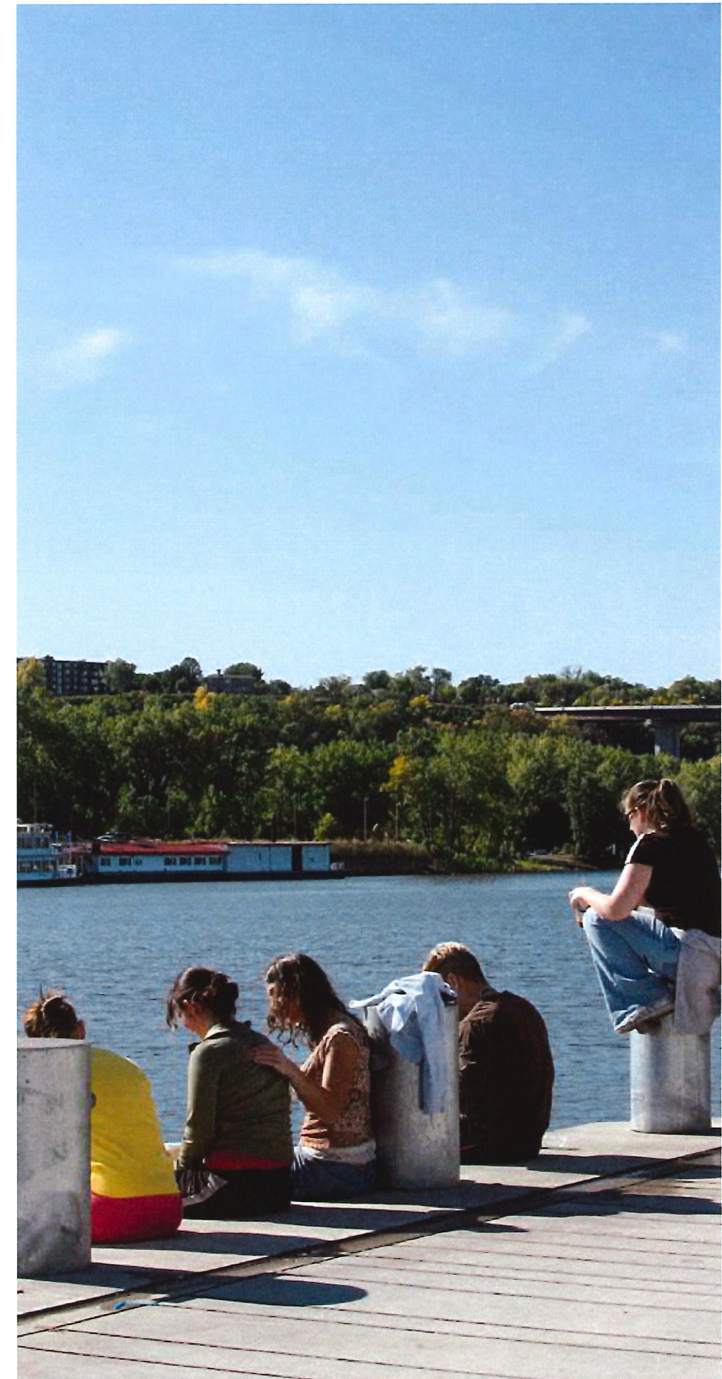
1. have a significant adverse impact on water or air quality in the river corridor; or
2. substantially impair the visual character of the corridor from adjacent neighborhoods or the river itself.

Policy CA-22. Support the replacement, as leases expire, of non-river-related businesses with river-related businesses at Barge Terminal #1, Barge Terminal #2, Red Rock and Southport.

Policy CA-23. Minimize the visual and physical impacts of river-related commercial and industrial land uses through native vegetation and landscaping.

Policy CA-24. Support the redevelopment of vacant and underutilized industrial sites as mixed-use urban villages that reconnect the city to the river.

Policy CA-25. Design new public and private development to embrace the river and turn its face to it, so that the river's edge becomes the city's shared "front yard."



Historical and cultural sites found within the MRCCA boundary as listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The City of Saint Paul is rich in history and deeply connected to its past. The Mississippi River plays a large role in this connection to the past. Those who have lived on the lands that now make up the City of Saint Paul have understood the importance of the Mississippi for thousands of years as a source of life and spirituality. The following list of the historical and cultural sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places within the MRCCA boundary

1. Lock and Dam No. 2
2. Edward Sr. and Markell Brooks House
3. Giesen-Hauser House
4. Indian Mounds Park Site
5. Carvers Cave
6. West Summit Avenue Historic District
7. Highland Ford Parkway Bridge (intercity Bridge)
8. Mendota Bridge
9. Saint Paul Municipal Grain Terminal (City House)
10. Harriet Island Pavilion
11. Anthony Yoerg Sr. House
12. Riverview Branch Library
13. Saint Matthew School
14. Colorado St. Bridge (Bridge No. L8803)
15. Holman Field Administration Building
16. Riverside Hanger Complex (Holman Field)
17. Minnesota Boat Club Boathouse (on Raspberry Island)
18. Chapel of Saint Paul Site
19. Robert Street Bridge (Bridge No. 9036)
20. Lowertown Historic District
21. U.S. Post Office and Custom House
22. Irvine Park Historic District

Open Space & Recreational Facilities

Open spaces and recreational features provide an opportunity for the public to engage with the river. Saint Paul will continue to support the connection between the public and the river through the planning, development and maintenance of open spaces and recreational features. Several regional bike trails connect and carry people through MRCCA; the City of Saint Paul currently owns seven parks within it. Open space and recreational facilities are identified in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Chapter on Map PR-1.

Policy CA-26. Maintain and expand public access to the river's edge.

Policy CA-27. Maintain and expand open space and recreational facilities along the river, connect them with one another as part of the Great River Passage, and connect them to adjacent neighborhoods.

Policy CA-28. Prioritize the use of park dedication funds for public river access on sites immediately adjacent to the river's edge.

Transportation & Public Utilities

The Mississippi River corridor has been and continues to be a critical transportation corridor for movement of goods and people. For the purposes of this chapter, public transportation facilities include transportation facilities provided by federal, state, county or local government and dedicated to public use, such as roadways, transit facilities, railroads and bike/pedestrian trails. Public utilities include electric power facilities, essential services and transmission facilities.

Maps T-10, T-16, and T-18 in the Transportation Chapter show existing, planned and potential transitways and streets within the MRCCA. Policies regarding public utilities within the MRCCA boundaries are similar to those city-wide.

Policy CA-29. Ensure multi-modal access to the river and connections to the broader transportation system.

Policy CA-30. Minimize impacts to PCAs and PCRVs from solar and wind generation facilities, public transportation facilities and public utilities.

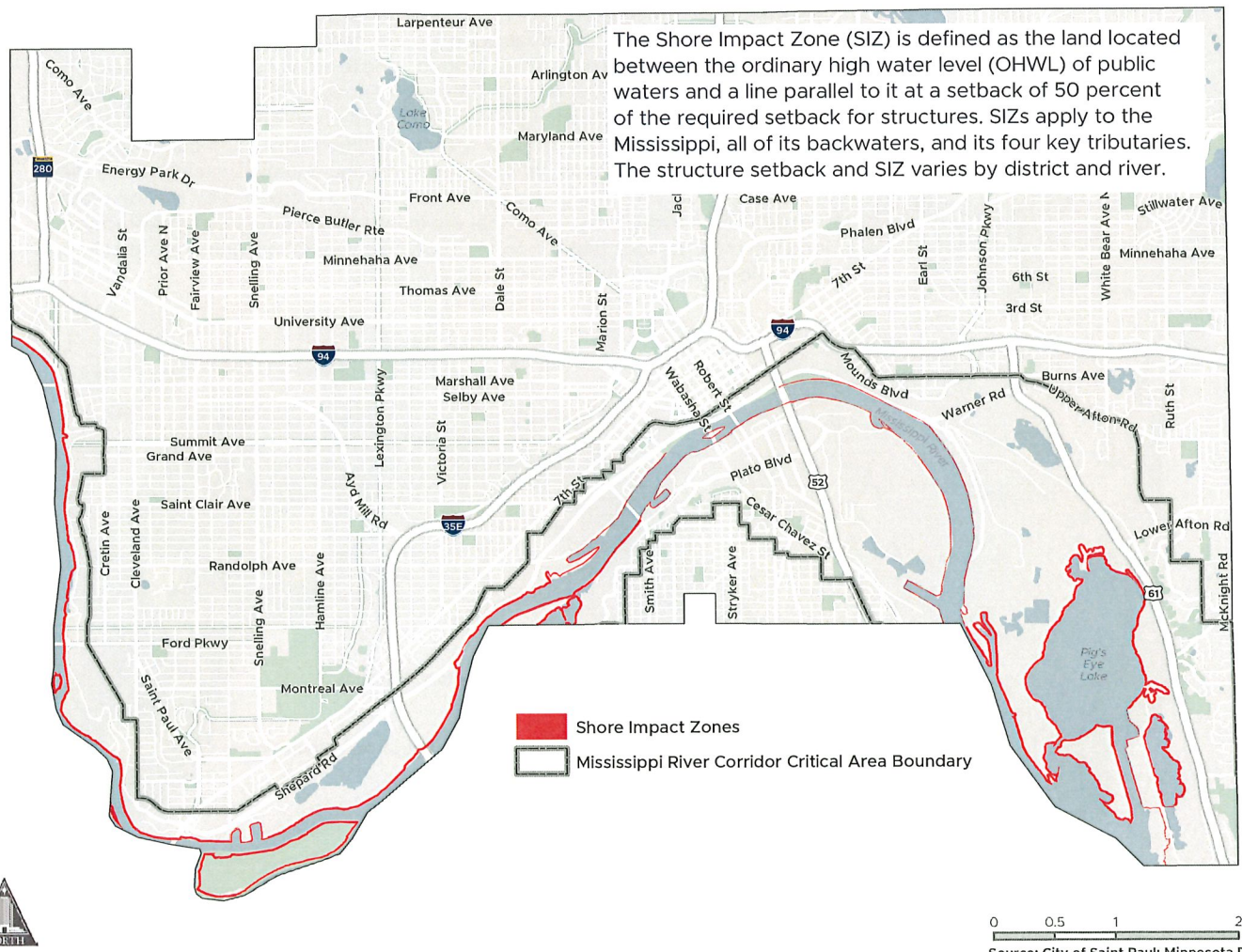
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Appendix A

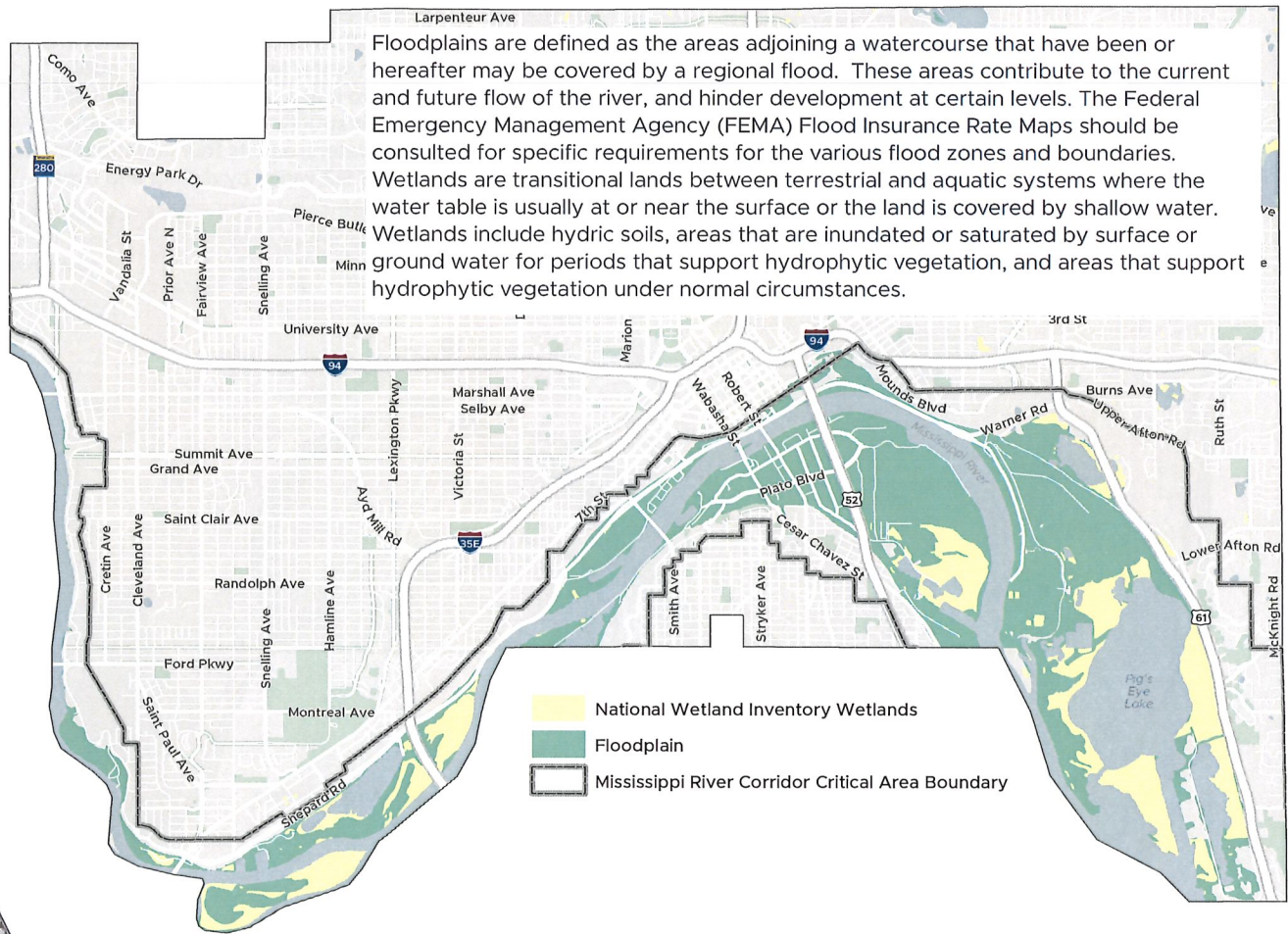
Maps of MRCCA

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Map CA-2: Shore Impact Zones

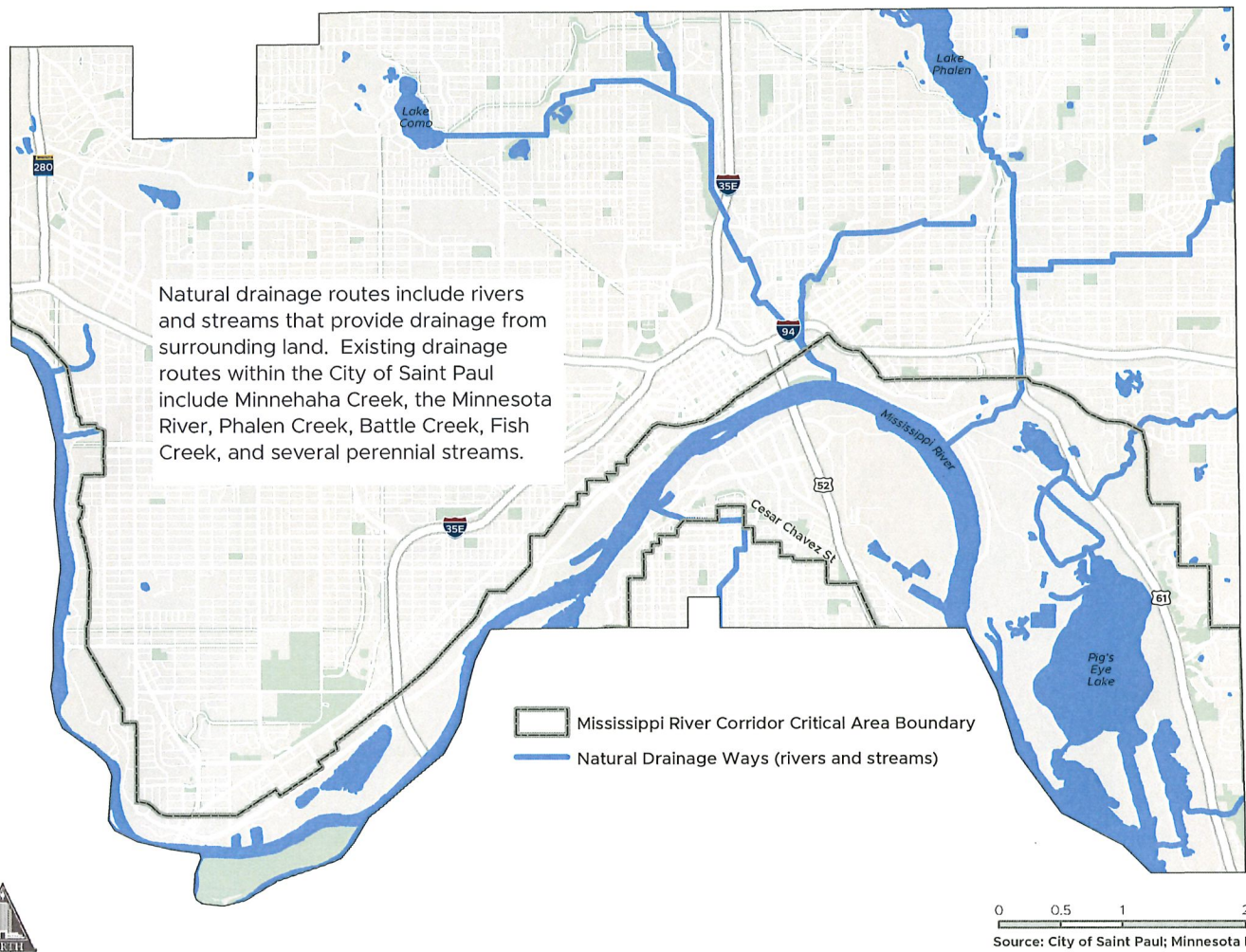


Map CA-3: Floodplain and Wetlands

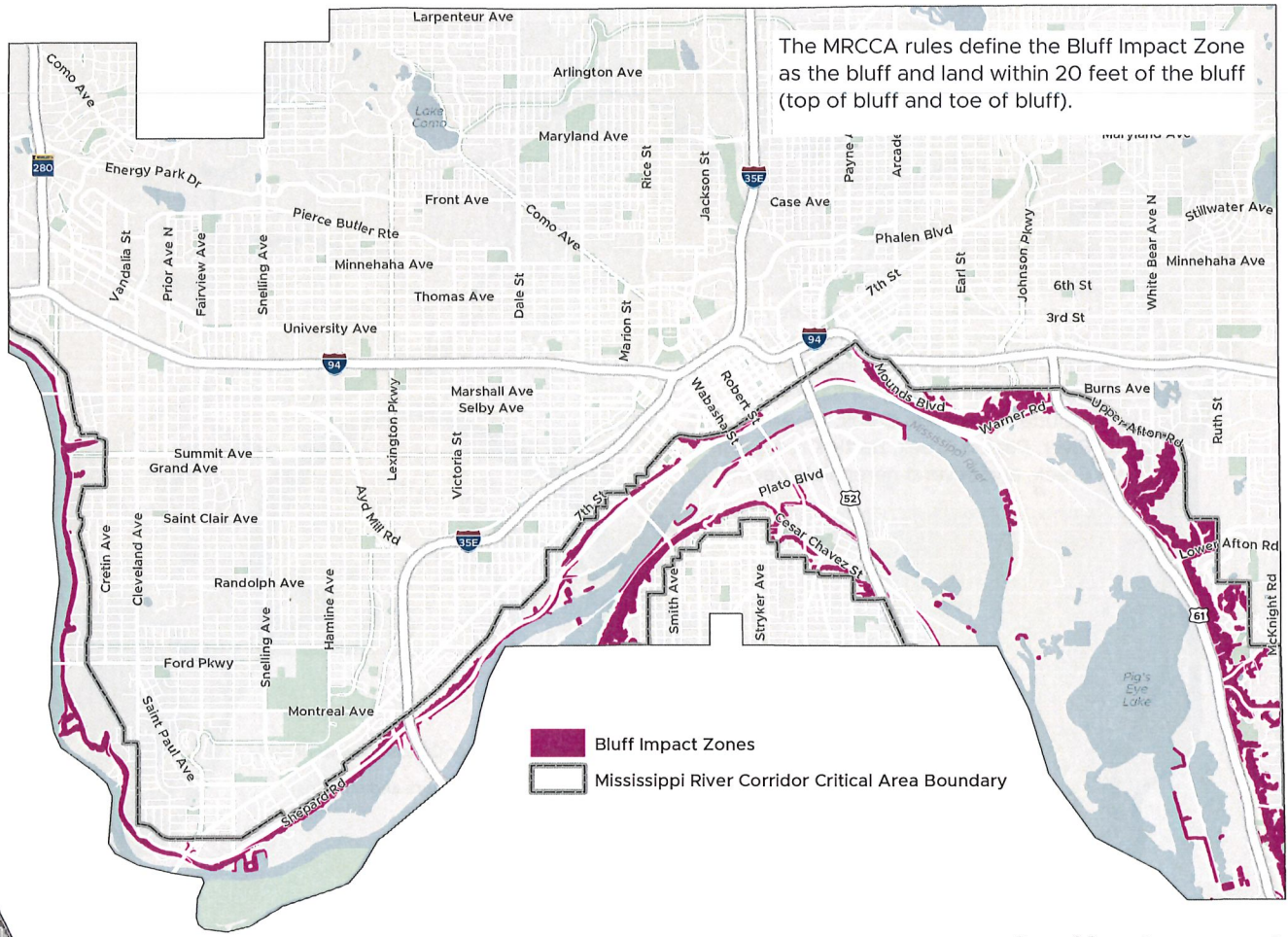


0 0.5 1 2 Miles
Source: City of Saint Paul; Minnesota DNR

Map CA-4: Natural Drainage Ways



Map CA-5: Bluffs and Bluff Impact Zones



Map CA-6: Native Plant Communities and Significant Existing Vegetative Stands

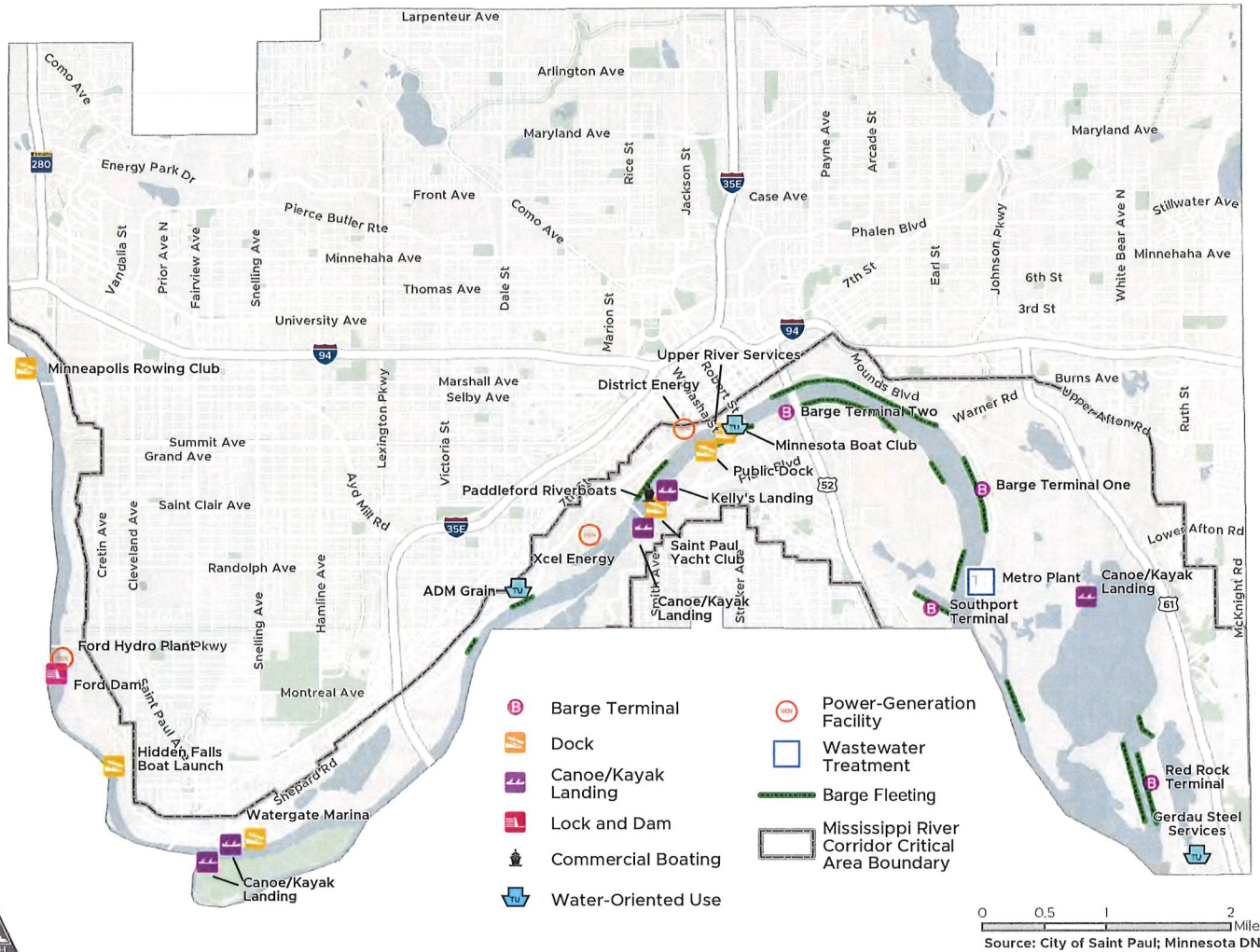


- Native Plant Communities
- Significant Existing Vegetative Stands
- Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Boundary

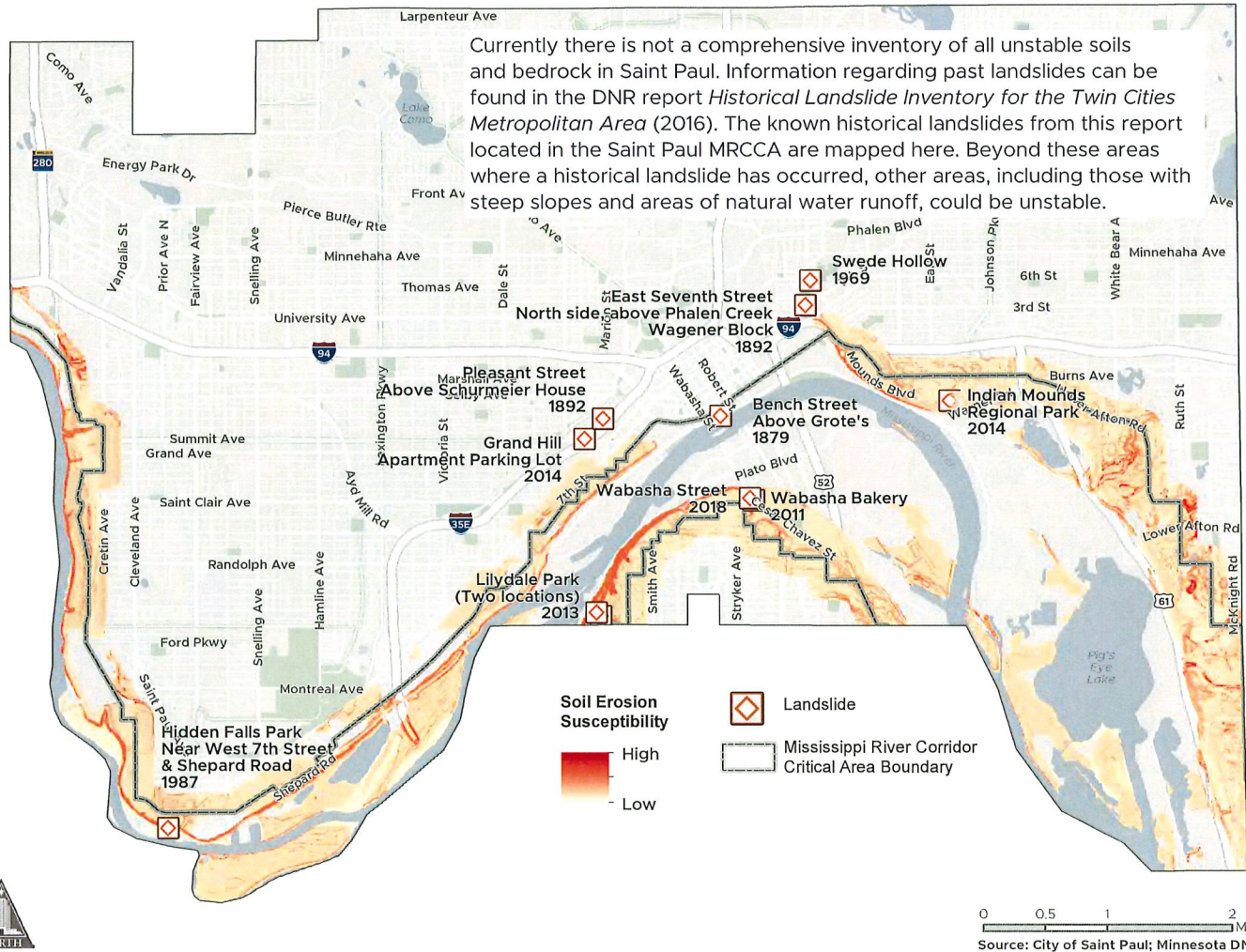
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 Source: City of Saint Paul; Minnesota DNR



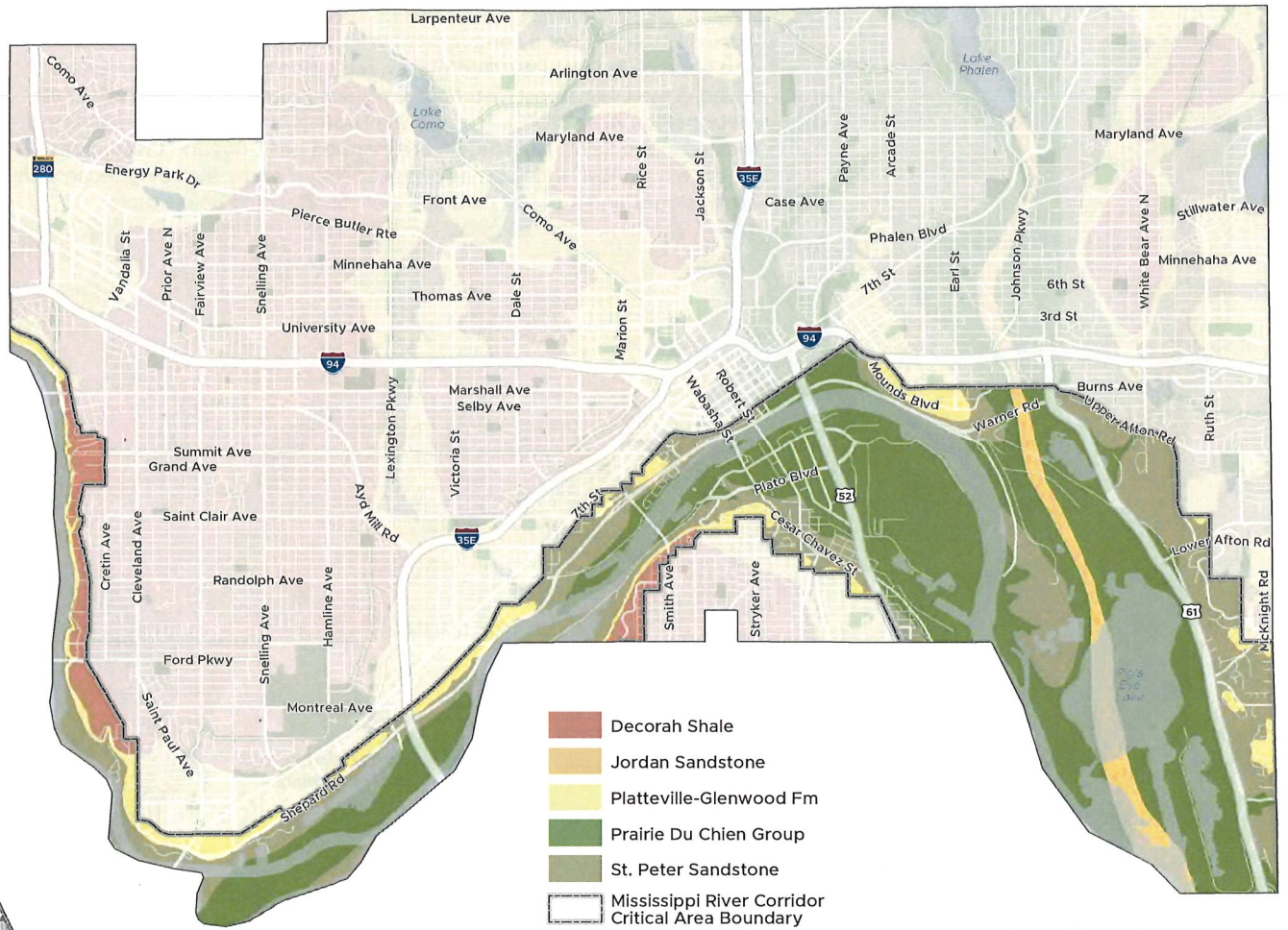
Map CA-7: Utilities, Water-Oriented Uses and Surface-Water Uses



Map CA-8: Unstable Soils



Map CA-9: Bedrock



0 0.5 1 2 Miles
Source: City of Saint Paul; Minnesota DNR

Appendix B

Dimensional Standards within the MRCCA

Structure Height	
The height of structures, including accessory structures, is determined by local ordinance, provided that it is no taller than the heights defined for each of the MRCCA districts as defined in Minnesota Rules Section 6106.0120. The height established for each district may also be modified through the Conditional Use Permit process, provided that the specific criteria are met. The defined structure height within each district is as follows:	
District	Height
CA-ROS	35 feet
CA-RN	35 feet
CA-RTC	48 feet, provided that tiering of structures away from the Mississippi River and from blufflines is given priority, with lower structure heights closer to the river and blufflines, and that structure design and placement minimizes interference with public river corridor views.
CA-SR	Height is determined by the local government's underlying zoning requirements, provided the structure height in the underlying zoning is generally consistent with the height of the mature treeline, where present, and existing surrounding development, as viewed from the ordinary high water level of the opposing shore.
CA-UM	65 feet, provided tiering of structures away from the Mississippi River and from blufflines is given priority, with lower structure heights closer to the river and blufflines, and that structure design and placement minimize interference with public river corridor views.
CA-UC	Height is determined by the local government's underlying zoning requirements, provided tiering of structures away from the Mississippi River and blufflines is given priority, with lower structure heights closer to the river and blufflines, and structure design and placement minimize interference with public river corridor views.

Source: Minnesota Rule Section 6106.0120 Subp. 2.

Location of Structures and Impervious Surface Setbacks

Proposed structures and impervious surfaces must be located outside of the shore impact zone (see Map CA-2) and must meet the setback requirements defined within each of the districts. Additionally, structures and impervious surfaces cannot be located within the bluff impact zone (see Map CA-5) and must meet setback requirements.

District	Height	Bluff Setback
CA-ROS	200 feet	100 feet
CA-RN	100 feet	40 feet
CA-RTC	75 feet	40 feet
CA-SR	Not defined for Mississippi River	40 feet
CA-UM	Not defined for Mississippi River	40 feet
CA-UC	As specified in underlying zoning	40 feet

Source: Minnesota Rule Section 6106.0120 Subp. 2. and Section 6106.0180

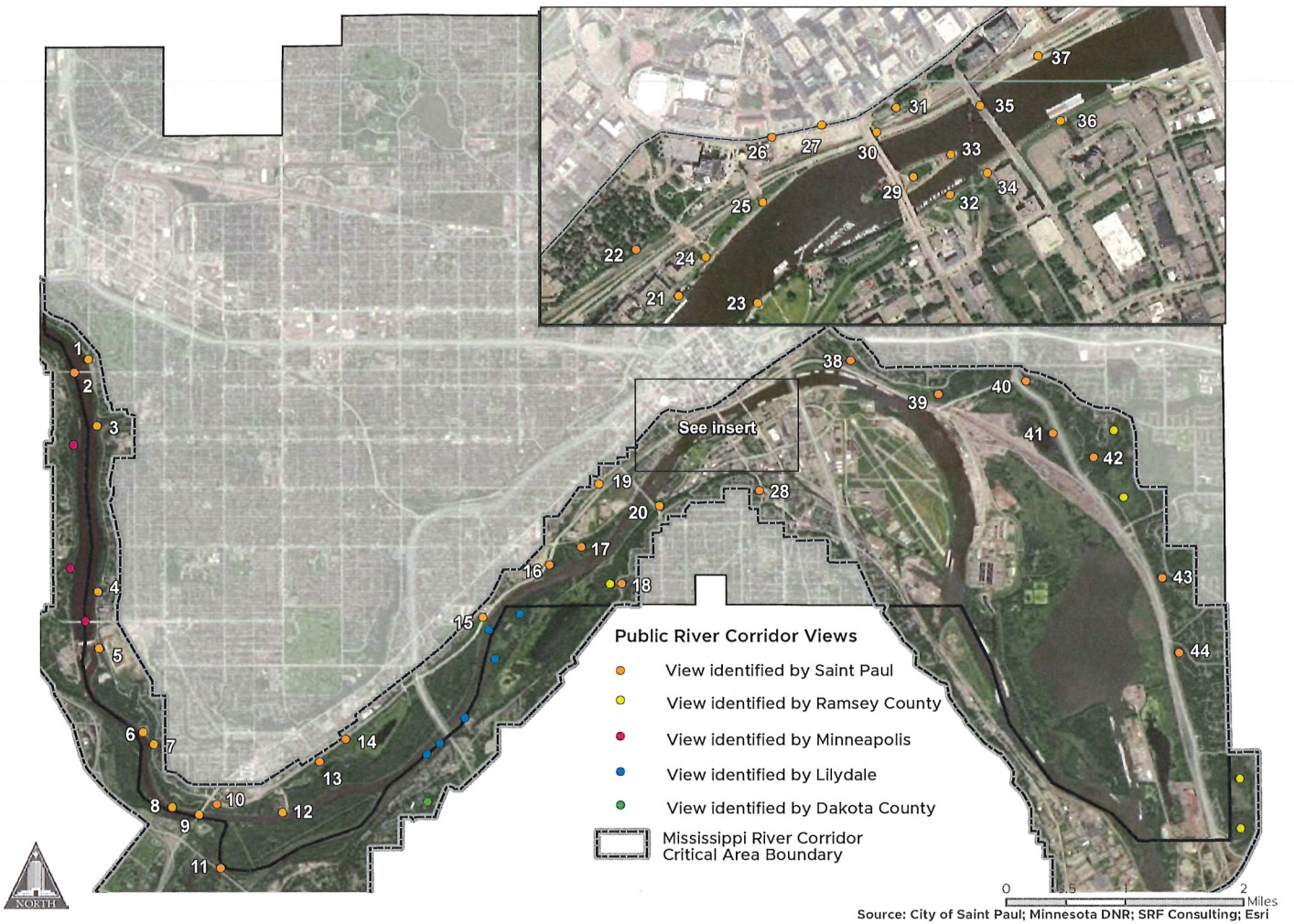
Appendix C

Public River Corridor Views

The Public River Corridor Views in this plan originate on public property, including parks and trails, historic properties and bridge overlooks. In addition, views toward bluffs from the opposite side of the shore are noted.

The City of Saint Paul has identified 44 PRCVs within the city limits or from the opposite side of the shore. The City recognizes that other jurisdictions may identify PRCVs. To ensure that these views are preserved, the City will continue to work with all public and private partners to preserve and protect PRCVs.

Map CA-10: Public River Corridor Views

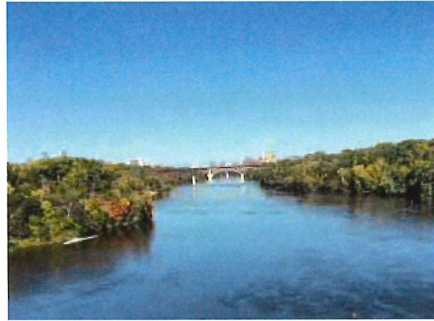


**View 1: Mississippi River Boulevard
North of Marshall Avenue**



The overlook at the Mississippi Gorge Trail, north of the Marshall Ave Bridge, provides a scenic view of the river's west and east banks. Upstream, there is a view of the Franklin Avenue bridge and the University of Minnesota. Across the river, there is a view of the Minneapolis Rowing Club and traces of the commercial district along Lake Street in Minneapolis. In the summer months, this view may become impeded by overgrown foliage and shrubbery.

View 2: Marshall Avenue Bridge



The overlook on the Marshall Avenue Bridge provides a wonderfully long and straight view of the steep bluffs on each bank of the river. The downstream view is minimally impeded and provides a great view of the water, shoreline and forested areas. This view is perfect for residents to enjoy the dazzling colors of the trees as they change during the fall months.

View 3: Shadow Falls Overlook



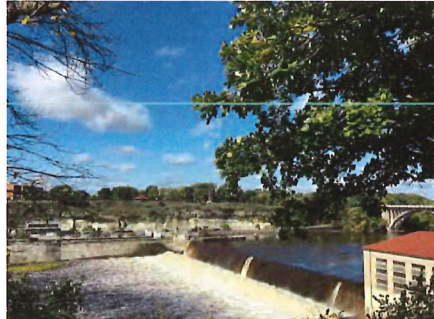
The overlook at the Mississippi Gorge Trail, near Shadow Falls Park just west of Summit Avenue, is a high outcrop that provides two views: one looking upriver towards the Marshall Avenue Bridge, and the other looking directly across the river to Longfellow Beach. This overlook gives the public an opportunity to stop and marvel at the natural beauty of the Mississippi River corridor.

View 4: Hartford Avenue Overlook



The overlook at the Mississippi Gorge Trail, near South Woodlawn Avenue and the Temple of Aaron Congregation, provides a scenic vista with four views. Upriver are views of the forested west bank of the river. Downriver are views of the Ford Bridge. There are no buildings that impede the views at this location, providing an excellent and tranquil location to enjoy nature and the views of the forests that run the length of the Gorge Reach.

View 5: Ford Dam Overlook



The Ford Dam Overlook provides unobstructed views of the historic Lock and Dam No. 1. Upriver are views of the Ford Bridge and historic structures adjacent to the dam. Across the river are views of the steep bluff and bedrock present all along this stretch of the river. This area of whitewater provides contrast to the calmer portions of the river both upriver and downriver of this point. The overlook provides some of the most "up-close and personal" views of historic structures in the entire MRCCA area within Saint Paul city limits.

View 6: Hidden Falls Park North



This viewing spot within Hidden Falls Regional Park provides the public with direct access to the river. Looking upriver provides unobstructed views of the west bank of the river and the many trees lining the shore. People can walk along the small beach or fish and kayakers and canoers can make a quick stop as they continue downstream.

View 7: Mississippi River Boulevard by Elsie Lane



Along Mississippi River Boulevard there are several outcroppings that provide unique perspectives of the river corridor. This upriver view, taken near the intersection of Mississippi River Boulevard and Elsie Lane, provides views of the river and several buildings in south Minneapolis.

View 8: Hidden Falls South



The small beaches and water access points to the south of the Hidden Falls parking lot provide views of the west bank of the river and the opposite shoreline. This location, along the water and across from the bluffs on the west bank, provides quality downriver views of the buildings at Historic Fort Snelling. This view can be accessed on foot or by bicycle, as it lies just off a trail. The location also serves as an area for fishing and picnicking.

View 9: Highway 5 Bridge



The Highway 5 Bridge provides an excellent opportunity to view the river just as one leaves the Gorge Reach and enters the Valley Reach. Upriver views show the river as it turns north towards Minneapolis. This view is easily accessible for pedestrians and cyclists who are visiting the area, or who would like to have a great view of the river on their day trip to Historic Fort Snelling.

View 10: Gannon Road Overlook



This overlook, located along Shepard Road just south of Highway 5, provides views of the west bank of the river, the opposite shoreline and the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers at Fort Snelling. The open terrain and rolling hills behind the Fort are clearly seen.

View 11: Highway 55 Bridge



In the long view from the Highway 55 Bridge, the downtown skylines of Saint Paul and Minneapolis are visible at the same time. With the river in the foreground, this view shows how the Mississippi River connects the two largest cities at the heart of the region, the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area and the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area.

View 12: Westgate Marina



Westgate Marina provides several unique vantage points of the river corridor. From the banks, thick forest can be seen covering the west bank of the river. During warmer months, views from the banks may be impeded by overgrown vegetation. From the docks, downriver and upriver views consist of the riverbanks and dock infrastructure at the marina. This view is easily accessible by bicycle due to the many trails that pass by the marina.

View 13: Sam Morgan West

PHOTO
FORTHCOMING

This is one of several new overlooks proposed in the Great River Passage Interpretive Plan. Located where Alton Street meets the bluff, on the river side of Shepard Road. This upper bluff spot features views of the river gorge and Lilydale Regional Park. The Interpretive Plan recommends intersection improvements, seating, a drinking fountain and bike racks at this new overlook.

View 14: Sam Morgan East

PHOTO
FORTHCOMING

This is one of several new overlooks proposed in the Great River Passage Interpretive Plan. Located where Rankin Street meets the bluff, on the river side of Shepard Road. This upper bluff spot features views of the river gorge and Lilydale Regional Park. The Interpretive Plan recommends seating, a drinking fountain and bike racks at this new overlook.

View 15: Victoria Park Overlook



This overlook is part of the emerging Victoria Park, the centerpiece of the Victoria Park Urban Village. The view across the river from this point is of a mostly natural bluff edge, including Lilydale Regional Park.

View 16: Fountain Cave



The Fountain Cave Overlook is proposed in the Great River Passage Interpretive Plan. Located on the river side of the Sam Morgan Trail along Shepard Road, the overlook is planned for seating, a drinking fountain and bike racks. There is currently a plaque along the trail referencing the historic location of the cave. Views of the river corridor are mostly obscured by trees.

View 17: Island Station

PHOTO
FORTHCOMING

The historic Island Station site is planned for redevelopment. A critical component of the development plans will be maintenance of public access through the site from Randolph Avenue and the Sam Morgan Trail to the river's edge. In addition, the Great River Passage Interpretive Plan identifies Island Station as a location for a new overlook with spaces for gathering, performance and interpretation. The view from the river's edge is of a mostly natural landscape. This is a site where views of the site from the river are also very important. Building height, scale, configuration and materials must be sensitive to the site's location in the Valley Reach.

View 18: Cherokee Regional Park



This spot is in the midst of a regional park, overlooking Lilydale Regional Park and above the fossil beds. The Great River Passage Interpretive Plan recommends an overlook designed for performances and gatherings, with a public art project that frames the view. Selective clearing would open views to the river and opposite shoreline.

View 19: Cliff Street Overlook



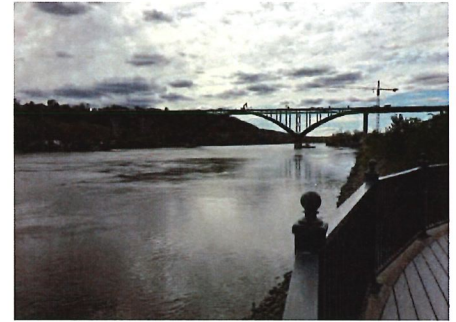
The Cliff Street Overlook sits on top of the bluffs on the east riverbank parallel to Cliff Street. This overlook is unique because it is set back much further from the river than other overlooks. The landscape provides downriver views of the historic Island Station site (now an Opportunity Site), a business park, industrial uses, roadways, the Xcel Energy natural gas plant, and the High Bridge. Similar to other overlooks in the corridor, the viewer will see bluffs and shoreline upriver along the west bank.

View 20: High Bridge Overlook



Looking downriver, the long view from this vantage point highlights both the natural/ recreational and urban characteristics of the Saint Paul waterfront. With the Saint Paul Yacht Club Marina in the foreground, the view extends to include the housing at Upper Landing, Upper Landing Park and Chestnut Plaza, and the downtown skyline. The Great River Passage Interpretive Plan recommends improving this overlook with different railings to open views, native plantings, new pavement and a slightly elevated seating platform.

View 21: Washington Street Overlook



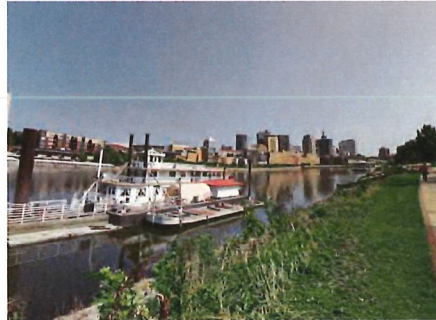
This view along the Sam Morgan Regional Trail provides close views of the Mississippi River, as the overlook is located just over the water level. Views of the High Bridge and Harriet Island Regional Park are prominent from this location.

View 22: Walnut Street Overlook



This view point is at the southern terminus of Walnut Street at the bluff. It sits on top of a partially- exposed bluff above railroad tracks and overlooking Shepard Road. While not an official overlook, the spot is an important location from which to view the Upper Landing Urban Village, City House and Harriet Island Regional Park. The street and block pattern, building configuration and heights, and street alignments in Upper Landing were sited to maintain views to the river and from the river back to the bluff.

View 23: Harriet Island Steps



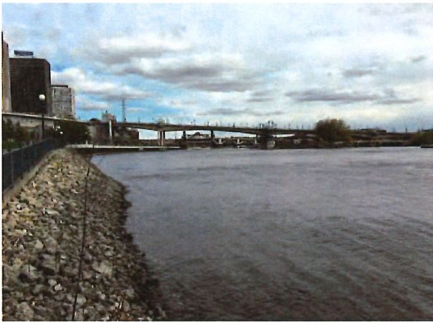
Standing on the steps that disappear into the water, one can experience what it feels like to be on the water. The view is primarily of the downtown skyline, with Upper Landing housing and City House in the foreground.

View 24: Chestnut Plaza



This location, along the Sam Morgan Regional Trail at Chestnut Plaza in Upper Landing Park, provides downriver views of an increasingly urban landscape. This landscape includes a paved promenade along the river, the Wabasha Street Bridge, as well as Harriet Island Regional Park and its public dock. Unlike previous views of the west bank, the steep bluffs are no longer in view, as a flatter and more urban landscape has taken its place.

View 25: Sam Morgan Overlook



This overlook along the Sam Morgan Regional Trail is located just above the water level along the trail. Views of the river and opposing shoreline can be experienced from this location.

View 26: Market Street



The origin of this view is where Market Street comes out of downtown and terminates at the bluff. The upriver view is of the District Energy Co-generation Plant, Science Museum of Minnesota, Upper Landing housing and park space, and Harriet Island Regional Park. The downriver view is the wide floodplain, with the downtown skyline on the ascending bank and the West Side Flats on the descending bank. Preservation/framing of this view corridor along an extended Market Street right-of-way will be critical in the siting, scale, design and height of new development on the Ramsey West site (along Kellogg Boulevard between Wabasha and Market streets).

View 27: St. Peter Street



The origin of this view is where St. Peter Street comes out of downtown and terminates at the bluff. Currently, the view is wide open, revealing the wide floodplain and curve in the river's course downriver, and Harriet Island Regional Park and Upper Landing development upriver. Preservation/framing of this view corridor along an extended St. Peter Street right-of-way will be critical in the siting, scale, design and height of new development on the Ramsey West site (along Kellogg Boulevard between Wabasha and Market streets).

View 28: West Side



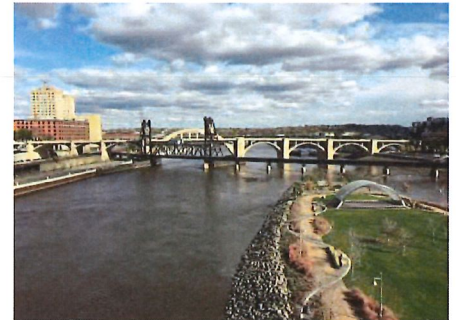
The view immediately below this viewing spot is of low-density industrial land and Harriet Island Regional Park. The longer view is of the Upper Landing housing and the downtown skyline. As the area behind Harriet Island redevelops over time, a building height gradient of lower towards the river and taller closer to the bluffs must be maintained. However, buildings immediately below the bluff should not obscure the views across the river. The Great River Passage Interpretive Plan recommends an overlook at the historic location of the Green Stairs that features seating, interpretation and a drinking fountain.

View 29: Raspberry Island North Side



There are multiple locations throughout Raspberry Island that provide views to the Mississippi River and both shorelines. This location is at water level, providing a unique feel for one's place in the river corridor. The downtown skyline, as well as the emerging West Side Flats neighborhood, are visible from this location.

View 30: Wabasha Street Bridge Overlook



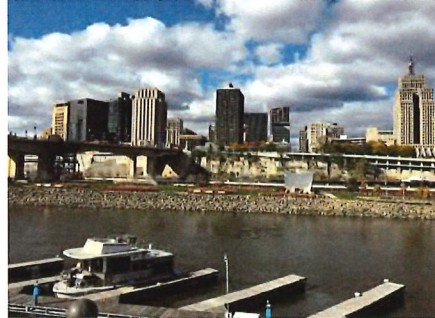
This overlook provides a view of the river and surrounding area from a higher elevation, opening the expanse of the view. Raspberry Island and Harriet Island Regional Park are viewed from this location.

View 31: Kellogg Mall Overlook



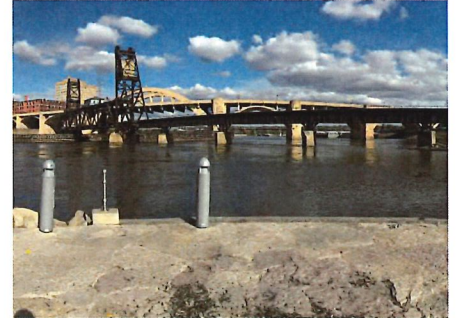
The overlook at Kellogg Mall Park provides an elevated view of the Mississippi River, Raspberry Island, and the West Side Flats. This location is elevated above the railroad tracks.

View 32: West Side Flats Overlook



This viewing point, located on top of the Mississippi River levee, offers excellent views of the downtown skyline and Raspberry Island.

View 33: Raspberry Island Overlook



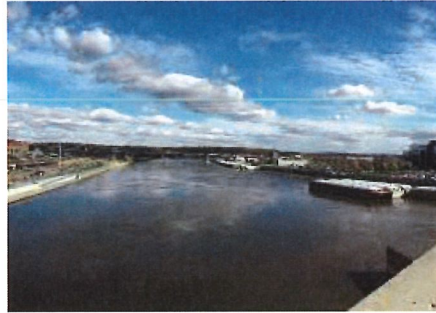
Located on the downriver tip of Harriet Island, the view origin is at water level, with the Robert Street Bridge immediately above the viewer. The lone remaining portion of natural bluff in the Downtown Reach is visible just east of the Wabasha Bridge, as is Kellogg Mall Park and the downtown skyline. The emerging West Side Flats urban village is taking shape on the descending bank.

View 34: Livingston Avenue Overlook



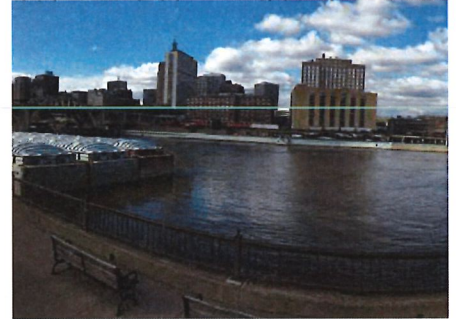
The view point is the overlook along the esplanade on top of the river levee. Directly across the river is one of the most beautiful views of downtown Saint Paul, both the high-density core and Lowertown. Downriver, Lower Landing Park, the boat landing itself, and the long view of Indian Mounds Park are visible.

View 35: Robert Street Bridge



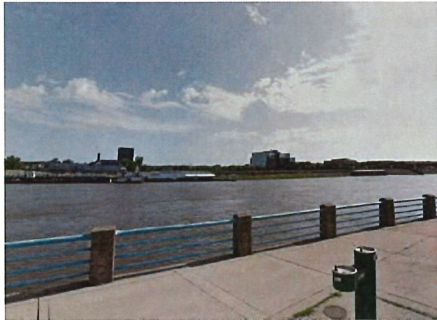
The Robert Street Bridge provides a 360-degree view of the surrounding area including the vestiges of the industrial waterfront.

View 36: River Park Plaza Overlook



Located on the Mississippi River levee, this overlook provides views of Lowertown and Lower Landing. The bluffs of Indian Mounds Park are visible in the long view downriver.

View 37: Lower Landing



This view is from the Sam Morgan Regional Trail at the Lower Landing, a popular boat landing for the Delta Queen, American Queen, tugboats and other large boats plying the Mississippi River. Looking out from this point, the industrial character of the river is most prominent, with Barge Terminal #2, Upper River Services and the Riverview Industrial Area directly across the river. The Lafayette Bridge is directly in front of the viewer. The Lower Landing is where the river curves and opens to the Floodplain Reach. The Great River Passage Interpretive Plan recommends a landform overlook at this location that features seating, interpretation and a drinking fountain.

View 38: Mounds Boulevard Overlook



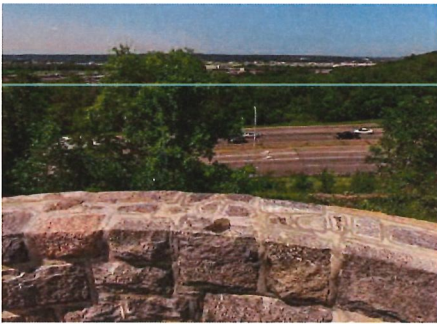
With the height of this view on top of the East Side bluff, all of the downtown skyline is visible, as is the industrial waterfront (including the Downtown Airport at Holman Field) on the descending bank. The Floodplain Reach is fully visible here.

View 39: Indian Mounds Park Overlook



The Indian Mounds are the most notable sacred site along this stretch of the Mississippi River. One of the most stunning views of the entire urban riverfront is from Indian Mounds Park. Everything about Saint Paul's relationship to the Mississippi River is visible here – its urban beginnings between the Upper and Lower Landings, the waves of transportation systems that have followed the river (railroads, barges, roads, airports), its evolving land uses from housing to industry to recreation, and the natural remnants of bluffs and caves. This is the postcard view of Saint Paul on the Mississippi. The Great River Passage Interpretive Plan recommends improving the two existing overlooks at the geologic marker and Carver's Cave. The geologic marker overlook should be a gathering place, while the Carver's Cave overlook should be a vista overlook.

View 40: Burns Avenue Scenic Overlook



This is an existing overlook just east of Highway 61. The view is of the industrial riverfront, including Holman Field, and the broad Floodplain Reach.

View 41: Little Pigs Eye Lake



This spot has spectacular views from the river bluff of downtown and Pig's Eye Lake, home to a large heron rookery. The Great River Passage Interpretive Plan recommends a new overlook with seating, interpretation and a drinking fountain.

View 42: Highwood Bluffs North

PHOTO
FORTHCOMING

The most significant views from all three of these overlooks are of Pig's Eye Lake and the heron rookery. This is the heart of the natural landscape of the Floodplain Reach, where the river corridor reaches its greatest width. The Great River Passage Interpretive Plan recommends three new overlooks along the Highwood Bluff Trail with seating, interpretation, a drinking fountain, wayside and one bike maintenance station.

View 43: Highwood Bluffs Middle

PHOTO
FORTHCOMING

The most significant views from all three of these overlooks are of Pig's Eye Lake and the heron rookery. This is the heart of the natural landscape of the Floodplain Reach, where the river corridor reaches its greatest width. The Great River Passage Interpretive Plan recommends three new overlooks along the Highwood Bluff Trail with seating, interpretation, a drinking fountain, wayside and one bike maintenance station.

View 44: Highwood Bluffs South

PHOTO
FORTHCOMING

The most significant views from all three of these overlooks are of Pig's Eye Lake and the heron rookery. This is the heart of the natural landscape of the Floodplain Reach, where the river corridor reaches its greatest width. The Great River Passage Interpretive Plan recommends three new overlooks along the Highwood Bluff Trail with seating, interpretation, a drinking fountain, wayside and one bike maintenance station.

Figure I-7: Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Chapter Implementation

The Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA) Chapter guides land use and development along the Mississippi River.

	Item	Timeline	Funding Sources	
Critical Area	1	Adopt zoning regulations consistent with MRCCA rules to protect environmentally sensitive areas, including shoreland impact zones, natural drainage routes, gorges, bluffs and bluff impact zones.	Short-Term	• TBD
	2	Adopt zoning and performance standards and/or permitting processes to protect native plant communities and significant vegetative stands, areas of unstable soil or bedrock, and sites of cultural or historical significance.	Short-Term	
	3	Adopt zoning consistent with MRCCA rules to require mitigation for impacts to Primary Conservation Areas when issuing discretionary zoning approvals.	Short-Term	
	4	Adopt zoning, including permit requirements, restricting clear-cutting in certain Primary Conservation Areas consistent with MRCCA rules.	Short-Term	
	5	Adopt vegetation management practices for park lands and, where feasible, promote vegetation management for screening views of buildings and other urban development from public viewing areas.	Short-Term	
	6	Amend the City's existing MRCCA ordinance to comply with the goals and policies of this plan, as well as with Minnesota Rules, part 6106.0070, Subp. 5 – Content of Ordinances.	Short-Term	
	7	Update the zoning map to reflect new MRCCA districts.	Short-Term	
	8	Work with the Saint Paul Port Authority and other partners to eliminate any negative environmental effects of industry through regulation, enforcement and financing agreements.	Short-Term	
	9	Work with the Saint Paul Port Authority to maintain barge fleet and other commercial navigation operations.	Short-Term	

General Timeline Guidelines:
 Short-Term (0-5 years)
 Medium-Term (5-10 years)
 Long-Term (10+ years)