



The Most Livable  
City in America

# West Side Flats

## MASTER PLAN & DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES *UPDATE*

DRAFT OCTOBER 23, 2013

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# 1 PREFACE

## THE OPPORTUNITY

The West Side Flats provide a unique opportunity for revitalizing a large and unique urban riverfront area on the Mississippi River in Saint Paul. The West Side Flats are located in a natural floodplain that was once a large river sand bar; on the “west side” of the river and in the West Side neighborhood just across the river from downtown Saint Paul. While the West Side Flats encompasses the entire floodplain area between the river’s edge and the river’s terraces and bluffs, the West Side Flats area in this Master Plan encompasses approximately 120 acres of urban land between Wabasha Street, Plato Boulevard, Lafayette Road/Highway 52, and the Mississippi River. While this area has suffered from disinvestment over the last several decades and is currently the location of several acres of vacant land, the Flats hold great promise to be transformed in a way that will complement the greater West Side community and reconnect it to the Mississippi River. A mix of residential, commercial, entertainment and recreational uses will fill this “hole in the urban fabric” and revitalize this long-neglected section of the Mississippi riverfront.

The West Side Flats Master Plan & Development Guidelines are rooted in strong, deeply-held visions shared by the larger West Side community and the City of Saint Paul as a whole. Building upon these existing river- and neighborhood-related visions, this Master Plan refines the overarching vision of Saint Paul as a city on both sides of the Mississippi River, where the river connects, rather than separates, neighborhoods. The West Side community is envisioned as a series of linked urban villages where people live, work and play.

## PLAN PURPOSE

The purpose of the West Side Flats Master Plan & Development Guidelines is to guide future private development and public infrastructure projects in the West Side Flats area. This document is an update of the 2001 West Side Flats Master Plan & Development Guidelines. City staff and community use of the Master Plan over the past 12 years has shown the need to update the Master Plan to address issues relating to land uses, urban design, and stormwater management.

## LAND USE & URBAN DESIGN

Based on experience with the 2001 Master Plan, it was felt that a more flexible master plan is needed to provide more meaningful direction to developers in a time of market volatility and limited public







funding capacity. Previous plan guidance on land uses, lot coverage, building heights, and parking were found to be too prescriptive in a volatile real estate market. While the fundamental urban design goals and principles of the 2001 Master Plan (including those relating to height and density gradients, street and block pattern, and the proposed open space network) have stood the test of time, it was deemed desirable to take a fresh look at some of the land use and development assumptions, and explore a more flexible planning and regulatory approach to guide future development in the West Side Flats urban village.

In addition, the planning area for this updated plan was expanded to include the area east of Robert Street to Lafayette Road/Highway 52. Much of the riverfront land in this area was the subject of a major development proposal in 2004, and there was neighborhood and City staff frustration that a small area plan was not in place to better react to that development proposal as well as proactively guide new development. This area is likely to undergo development pressure in the next 5-10 years, especially at the river's edge, as the overall market improves and development interest gains momentum on the West Side.

## STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

On the West Side Flats, stormwater conveyance is complex, given its location adjacent to the Mississippi River and behind a levee, as well as the floodplain's high water table. The 2001 Master Plan did not explore stormwater management in any great detail, requiring the issue to be addressed on a project-by-project basis rather than as a system. This updated Master Plan looks at stormwater management in more detail, incorporating Best Management Practices (BMPs) and better integrating stormwater into considerations of land use, density and urban form.

## HISTORY OF WEST SIDE FLATS

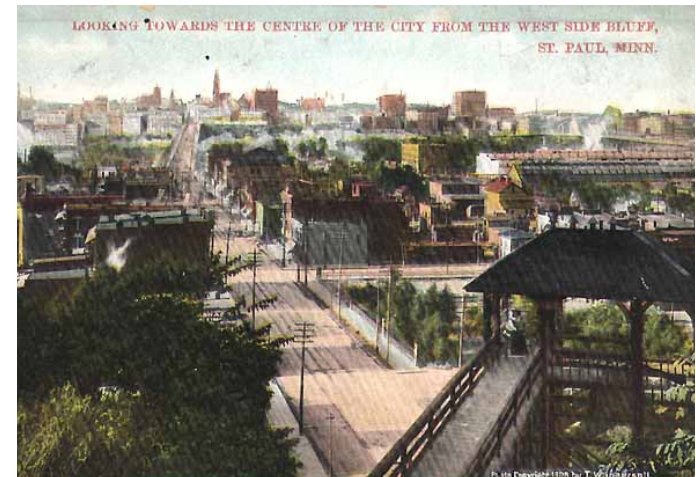
The West Side Flats has a long history of attracting immigrant residents, businesses, and flooding. As a large sand bar lying between the Mississippi River valley's bluffs, the West Side Flats, became home to businesses and market places in the late 1800s due to its river and railroad connections; as well as a riverfront neighborhood for the growing city of Saint Paul. Immigrants that originally settled in the Flats, as well as those who followed them, eventually expanded the West Side neighborhood to the terraces and bluffs above the river's floodplain.

For several decades, businesses and housing grew side by side in the West Side Flats. The West Side Flats was flood-prone and the frequent flooding of the river resulted in significant deterioration of the buildings and landscape. Municipal sewer and water services had not been extended to much of the neighborhood yet. The City had ongoing concerns about the deteriorating physical conditions of the West Side Flats throughout the first half of the 20th century.

In the 1920s, the City built both the municipal airport and municipal barge terminal in the West Side Flats. Following the 1952 flood, the worst in history, planning began for a new levee and redevelopment



*West Side Flats, 1953*



*View from West Side Bluff, 1900*



of the Flats to an industrial park. In the late 1950s, a new levee and floodwall was built. In the 1960s, residents and businesses were relocated, most buildings in the West Side Flats were removed and Riverview Industrial Park was developed, which resulted in separating the West Side community from the river.

In recent years, freight and passenger travel has shifted from the river and railroads to highways and airways. As a result, the West Side Flats has become less valuable as a regional hub for industrial activity. While the area has suffered from disinvestment in recent decades, the Flats hold great promise to be transformed once again in a way that will complement the larger West Side community and reconnect it to the Mississippi River.

## PLANNING FOUNDATIONS

Over the last two decades, Saint Paul has pursued riverfront revitalization planning to reconnect the City's neighborhoods to the river. As a result, the West Side Flats urban village has been the subject of significant planning attention. Beginning with the Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework (completed in 1997), the City has recognized its changing relationship with the Mississippi River, and the need to plan for adjacent land uses that take best advantage of a river that is now an environmental, economic, cultural, historic, natural and recreational resource.

### SAINT PAUL ON THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The Framework first introduced the concept of the greater West Side as a series of linked urban villages where people live, work and play. Each village, of which the West Side Flats is one, was seen as having a clearly-identified focus, high-quality architecture, well-designed public spaces, diverse housing opportunities and a vibrant local economy, with the Mississippi River an integral part of each neighborhood. The overall goal of development on the Flats is to extend and reconnect the greater West Side to the river. Key concepts in the Framework include:

- *natural stormwater management*
- *protection of key river valley views*
- *a “green armature” that forms a network of connected green spaces*
- *small business incubator, industrial and live/work uses east of Robert Street*
- *a mix of uses between Robert and Wabasha streets*
- *residential and commercial uses at the river’s edge that interact with the esplanade*
- *a fine-grained street and block network*
- *balanced modes of movement*



The Framework also includes 10 principles to promote a more holistic approach to city-building. These principles underpin the updated West Side Flats Master Plan and Development Guidelines:

**1) Evoke a sense of place.**

Use the West Side Flats' key physical qualities to create a unique urban village on the Mississippi River.

**2) Restore and establish the unique urban ecology.**

Degraded natural systems can be restored by re-establishing a balance between built and natural systems.

**3) Invest in the public realm.**

Deliberately design streets, sidewalks, trails, parks and the river's edge as a connected network, which will create a vibrant public realm, a sense of security, and attract private investment.

**4) Broaden the mix of uses.**

A greater mix of uses creates a more vibrant urban village by encouraging people to live, work and walk in their neighborhood and by fostering synergy between activities.

**5) Improve connectivity.**

The impact and role of individual built and natural elements could be greatly enhanced if they were connected to and part of a larger network. There is an opportunity to identify and provide the critical linking elements that navigate barriers to movement, such as changes in topography, rail lines, and poorly-connected street networks, and improve both physical and visual connections.

**6) Ensure that buildings support broader city-building goals.**

Rigorously identify and promote elements of building design that contribute to building a vibrant streetscape and city.

**7) Build on existing strengths.**

The positive impact of West Side Flats success stories can be increased by strategically extending them and replicating their positive attributes.

**8) Preserve and enhance heritage resources.**

Recognize the diverse range of historic resources - buildings, landscapes, monuments, geological and topographic features - within the West Side Flats, preserve them, and where possible, creatively adapt them for new uses and expanded significance.

9) Provide a balanced network for movement.

Employ a diversity of strategies to create a more balanced system of movement for automobiles, public transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

10) Foster public safety.

The sense of safety is greatest when there is a vibrant urban village - when streets, parks and public spaces are active for longer hours of the day, when there is a continuous urban fabric, and when active uses provide an informal means of surveillance.



## WEST SIDE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

### PRINCIPLES FOR RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

The West Side Community Organization (WSCO) uses four principles to guide revitalization of the West Side Flats:

#### ACCESSIBILITY

- » *Riverfront development shall be consistent with a community vision of pedestrian corridors buffered from traffic that invite residents to enjoy affordable activities on the riverfront in all seasons.*

#### CONNECTEDNESS

- » *Riverfront development shall incorporate the character and culture of the West Side. Projects must provide a clear and definite connection with the aesthetics and spirit of the existing neighborhood. In addition, development should enhance transportation and relational linkages between the West Side and other riverfront communities.*

#### OPPORTUNITY

- » *Riverfront development shall provide job and business opportunities for West Side residents and community development opportunities for the neighborhood as a whole through such projects as business incubators, youth development and educational activities, and the establishment of a community trust fund.*

#### QUALITY

- » *Riverfront development shall respect that the West Side is first and foremost a place where people live, thereby protecting the residents' ability to peacefully enjoy their homes and neighborhood.*



## WEST SIDE FLATS MASTER PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

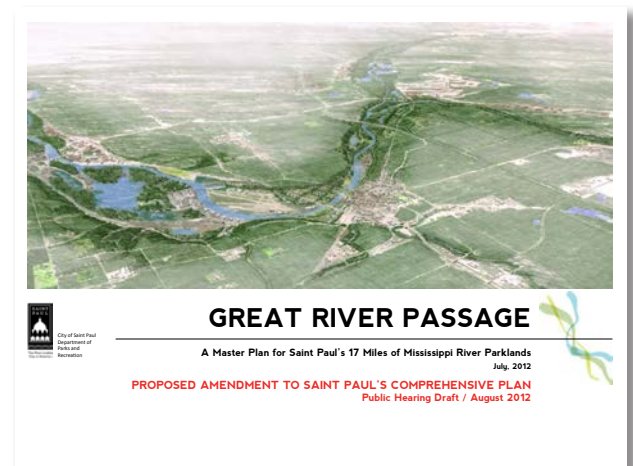
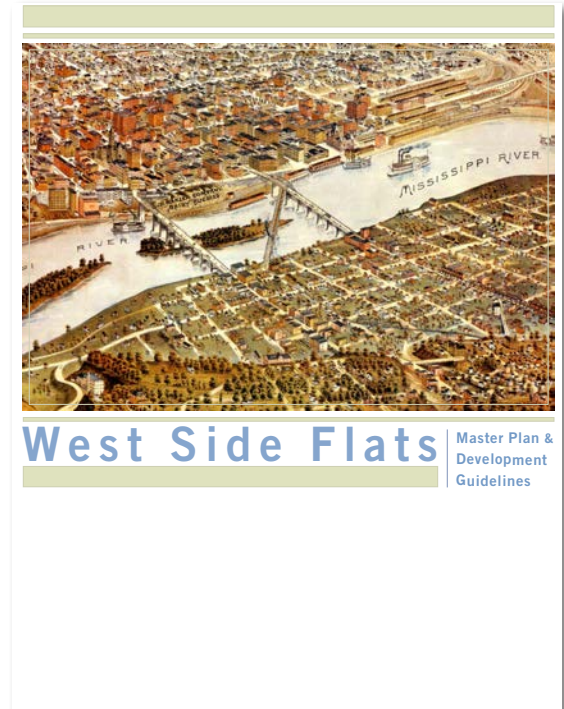
The original West Side Flats Master Plan and Development Guidelines was adopted in 2001 to guide the development of a mixed-use urban village in the 40-acre area bounded by Wabasha Street, Plato Boulevard, Robert Street and the Mississippi River. A collaboration of WSCO, Neighborhood Development Alliance, Riverview Economic Development Association, Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation, Saint Paul on the Mississippi Design Center and City of Saint Paul, the Plan contains a thoroughfare plan, regulating plan, building typology plan, parking plan, stormwater management plan, public realm plan, urban standards, architectural standards and landscape standards. The key urban design and land use principles in the 2001 document include:

- *mix of uses*
- *connected grid of public, multi-purpose streets*
- *urban-scaled blocks*
- *mix of housing types, prices and sizes*
- *prominent public realm of riverfront esplanade, green streets, parks and open spaces*
- *sustainable design*
- *natural stormwater management*
- *connections between the river's edge, West Side Flats Urban Village and greater West Side*
- *protection of important views and view corridors*

## GREAT RIVER PASSAGE MASTER PLAN

The Great River Passage Comprehensive Plan Addendum was adopted by the City Council in 2013. The Master Plan identifies transformative recreation and leisure opportunities along the river and balances them with protection and restoration of natural resources, adding value to adjacent land uses while respecting community and neighborhood desires for better access to the river. Based on the riverfront development principles of more natural, more urban and more connected, the Master Plan has four strategies related to the West Side Flats study area:

- 1) Improve the river's edge to connect new development
- 2) Create neighborhoods that connect to the river
- 3) Establish green connections to the river
- 4) Explore the intensification and diversification of land uses in the Riverview Industrial Park









# 2

# VISION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES



## VISION STATEMENT

### A 21ST CENTURY RIVERFRONT URBAN VILLAGE

The West Side Flats will emerge as a thriving riverfront urban village that connects the larger West Side community to the Mississippi River and downtown Saint Paul. With its unique location in the Mississippi River floodplain, the presence and movement of water will be reflected in land use patterns, street design, building massing, stormwater features, and public realm design. The West Side Flats will have strong physical and visual connections to the river's edge and bluffs, walk/bike-friendly streets, a well-designed network of public spaces, restored natural systems, urban neighborhood design, a complementary mix of high-quality and human-scaled buildings, a variety of housing types and public art. The West Side Flats will recapture its identity as a place that welcomes and integrates a broad mix of people, cultures and destinations into a vibrant mixed-use community. By restoring a more balanced mix of neighborhood, business and natural systems, it will be a model for economic, environmental and social sustainability. The employment-oriented district will continue to provide high-paying commercial/industrial job opportunities for the region and local residents, as it evolves into a more diverse, higher-intensity, and visually attractive business district over time.





# Guiding Principles

1) **Integrate a broad mix of complementary land uses** throughout the neighborhood that offer people opportunities for living, working, commerce, entertainment and recreation.

2) **Promote a diverse mix of housing types** that welcome residents of all ages, incomes, household types and cultural backgrounds.

3) **Re-establish an urban neighborhood block and street pattern** that provides urban-scale development parcels, a robust network of attractive public streetscapes, and increased connectivity for all transportation modes.

4) **Create a prominent public realm that links the riverfront esplanade**, bluffs, parks, open spaces and streets into a green space framework; provides opportunities for community gathering and public art; and connects to the regional system of trails, parks and open spaces.

5) **Sensitively integrate stormwater runoff into the neighborhood's green infrastructure** system of streets, public open spaces and private yards as a valuable natural resource, visual asset and unique neighborhood identity element.

6) **Provide a balanced, convenient, safe and comfortable network for movement** within, to and from the neighborhood, including walking, biking, vertical circulation (e.g. bluffs to flats, levee to water), driving and transit.

7) **Encourage a variety of building heights and massing**, while preserving important views and creating new views of the river, bluffs and community landmarks.

8) **Create an urban ecology that balances sustainable urban and natural systems**, including tree canopy, green streets, native vegetation, and cleanup of contaminated soils.

9) **Improve the business functionality, land use diversity and visual character of the commercial/industrial employment district** east of Robert Street to provide high-paying job opportunities (especially for West Side residents) and complement the larger West Side Flats neighborhood.

10) **Support community cultural development opportunities** that reflect and respond to the larger West Side neighborhood's past, present and future, engaging artists and creative communities in all phases of West Side Flats redevelopment.

11) **Create a unique and welcoming public edge along the riverfront** that invites walking, cycling and gathering places for all in all seasons.

12) **Engage all members of the West Side community** in on-going plan implementation.









# EXISTING CONDITIONS



This section of the Master Plan briefly describes the West Side Flats study area existing conditions, including the following categories:

- Land Use
- Zoning
- Buildings
- Street System
- Transit System
- Pedestrian and Bike Circulation
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Stormwater System
- River Floodplain
- River Views

# Existing Land Uses

The West Side Flats study area is comprised of the following existing land uses:

- Between Wabasha and Robert streets - commercial along Robert, commercial and industrial along Wabasha, significant vacant land
- East of Robert & north of Fillmore - commercial west of State Street, industrial east of State Street
- East of Robert & south of Fillmore - primarily industrial with some commercial along major streets

The existing commercial and industrial land uses are characterized by large surface parking lots and low lot coverages.

The first residential land use is under construction at Wabasha and Fillmore.

The Saint Paul Port Authority (SPPA) designates the area as the Riverview (east of Robert) and Riverview West (west of Robert) business centers. Approximately 140 industrial and commercial businesses and 4,800 jobs exist within these two business centers today.

## Zoning

Existing zoning in the West Side Flats study area consists of:

### T3M – TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD WITH MASTER PLAN

Area between Wabasha and Robert streets from the riverfront to Plato Blvd.

### T3 – TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Area east of Robert Street and north of Fillmore Avenue, along the riverfront, including the site currently occupied by the Comcast building.

### R4 – ONE-FAMILY

A very small area located near the Wabasha Bridge and the riverfront.

### I1 – LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

Area bounded by Robert (west), Plato (south), Lafayette/Hwy 52 (east), and Fillmore (north); extends up to Alabama Street between State Street and Hwy 52.

### I2 – GENERAL INDUSTRIAL

Area just west of the Lafayette Bridge/Hwy 52 and north of Fillmore Avenue.

Figure xx. Existing Land Use Map (Saint Paul 2030 Comprehensive Plan)

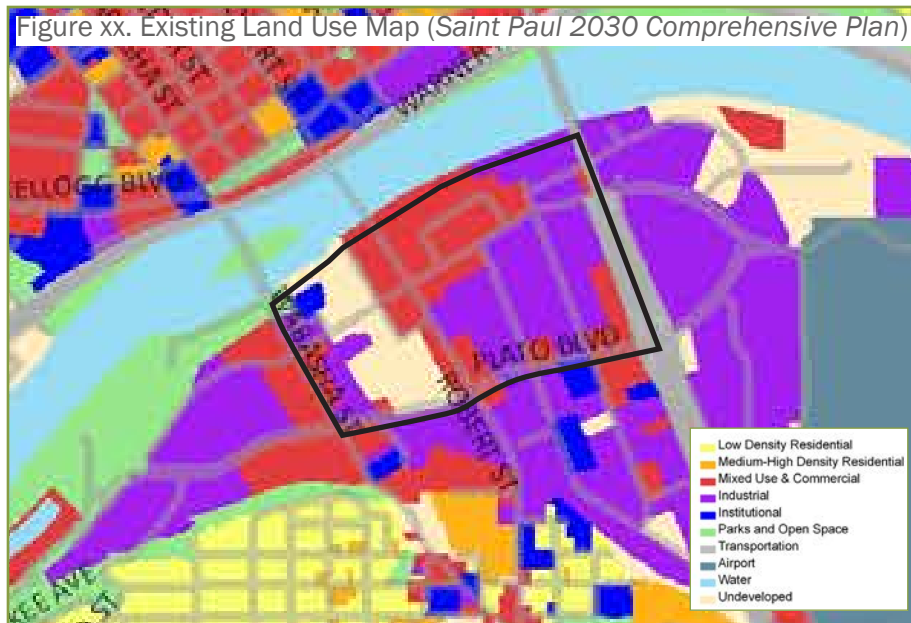
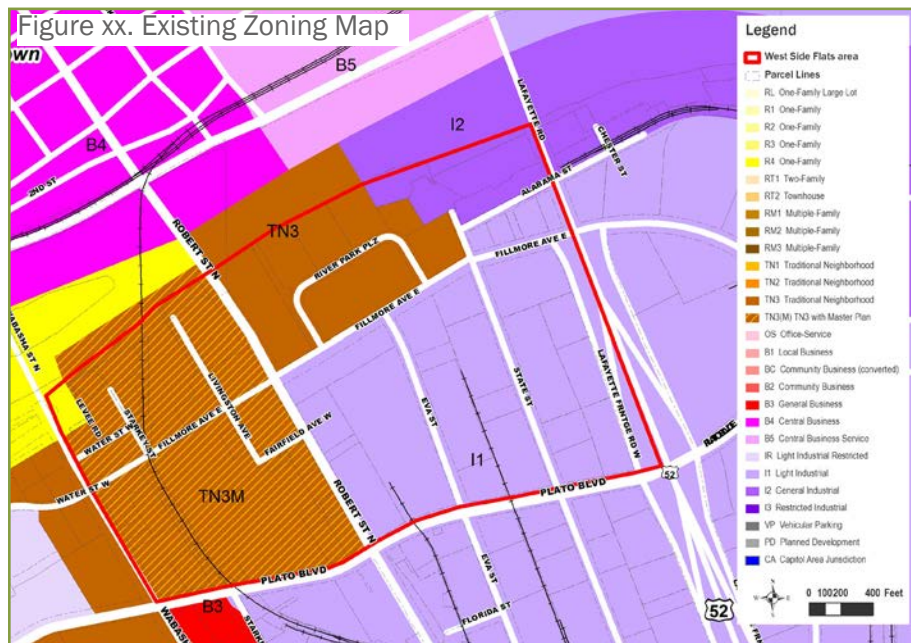


Figure xx. Existing Zoning Map



# Buildings

Existing development in the West Side Flats is generally characterized by large blocks, large low-rise industrial and commercial buildings, low lot coverage, and large surface parking areas. Most of the buildings in the area are set back from the street and do not frame the street as an attractive, public place. Large vacant parcels lie between buildings, creating discontinuity along the streetscape.

Many of the industrial and commercial buildings are older and have not been adapted to keep up with contemporary industrial business needs. The exterior building design and materials of many of these buildings contributes little to a neighborhood identity. Newer buildings (U.S. Bank and West Side Flats Apartments) have been designed to address the street better, and have been built with materials and façade treatments that contribute to a more positive neighborhood identity.

# Street System

The existing street network serving the West Side Flats includes the following major streets:

- Lafayette Road/US Hwy 52 (Principal Arterial)
- Robert Street/MN Hwy 952 (A-Minor Arterial)
- Wabasha Street (B-Minor Arterial)
- Plato Boulevard/CSAH 40 (B-Minor Arterial)

These streets provide access to and from the West Side Flats from the West Side community, downtown Saint Paul, and the region. The Wabasha, Robert and Lafayette bridges provide crossings of the Mississippi River.

U.S. Highway 52 is a major commuter route between downtown Saint Paul areas south of the city. Wabasha and Robert are major commercial/industrial corridors, connecting north-south to District del Sol and downtown. Plato is a commercial/industrial, divided boulevard connecting east-west to Harriett Island Regional Park and Holman Field/Downtown Airport. Hwy 52, Robert, Plato, Fillmore (east of Robert), and Wabasha are designated truck routes.

The local street network is comprised of large blocks, few streets and few sidewalks, creating major challenges for pedestrian movement in the area. Many of the streets east of Robert Street are sized for ease of truck movement.

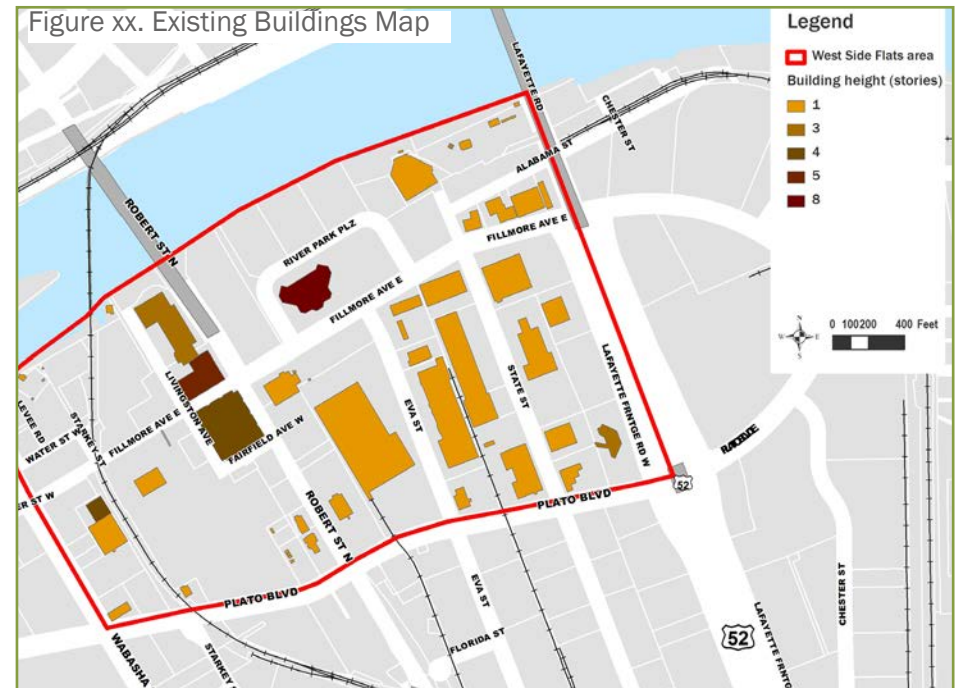




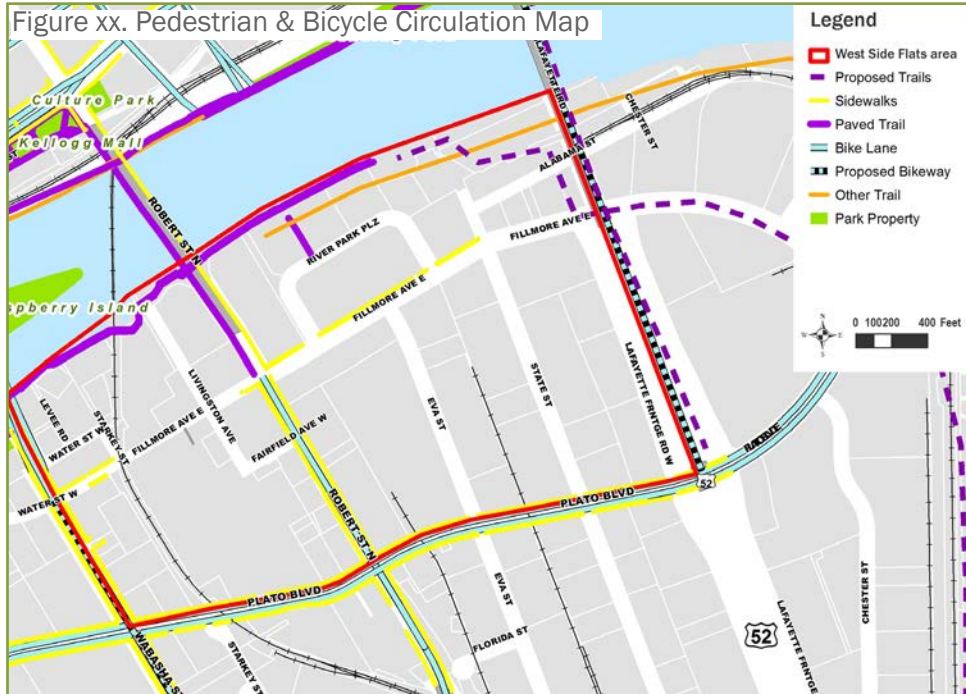
Figure xx. Existing & Planned Transit Map



## Transit System

Existing transit service in the West Side Flats includes local and express bus routes served by Metro Transit, including routes 67, 68, 71, 75, 94 and 452. Bus stops and associated bus facilities (shelters, seating and signage) exist along Wabasha and Robert streets, Plato Boulevard, Fillmore Avenue and River Park Plaza. The busiest stops are those located along Wabasha and Robert streets. Current transit studies are looking at adding bus rapid transit (BRT) to Lafayette Road/Hwy 52 and Robert Street. The City has also identified Robert Street as a candidate for streetcar service.

Figure xx. Pedestrian & Bicycle Circulation Map



## Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

Existing pedestrian facilities in the West Side Flats is limited to major streets (Robert and Wabasha streets, Plato Boulevard), River Park Plaza, portions of Fillmore and Livingston, and along the riverfront esplanade. The pedestrian system today is discontinuous. Many of the streets east of Robert Street lack sidewalks.

Bikeways are limited. On-street bike lanes exist on portions of Wabasha Street. Bikeways will be added to Lafayette Road/Hwy 52 as part of its reconstruction. A multi-use trail is planned for Plato Boulevard.

The riverfront esplanade is well-designed and includes attractive and durable features – stone walls, seating, lighting. The esplanade connects with Harriett Island Regional Park to the west, but terminates abruptly near the barge terminal at its eastern end.

Vertical circulation exists at the south end of the Wabasha Street Bridge, connecting pedestrians and bicyclists to the esplanade and downtown.



# Parks and Open Spaces

There are currently no designated park and open spaces within the West Side Flats study area, with the exception of the riverfront esplanade. There are, however, several City parks located in the vicinity, including Harriet and Raspberry Island Regional Park, Kellogg Mall, Cultural Park, Chestnut Plaza, Lower Landing Park, El Rio Vista Park, Parque Castillo, Prospect Terrace Park and Kidd Park. Each of these parks plays a unique role in the park system, attracting people from the neighborhood, city and from the region for special events.

Relevant plans for the West Side Flats area direct new parks and open spaces, including:

## SAINT PAUL ON THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

- *Village greens, squares and plazas*
- *Riverfront greenway/park*

## 2001 WEST SIDE FLATS MASTER PLAN

- *Linear greenway*
- *Stormwater ponds*
- *Neighborhood park*
- *Enhanced riverfront esplanade*

## HARRIETT ISLAND/DISTRICT DEL SOL CONCEPT PLAN

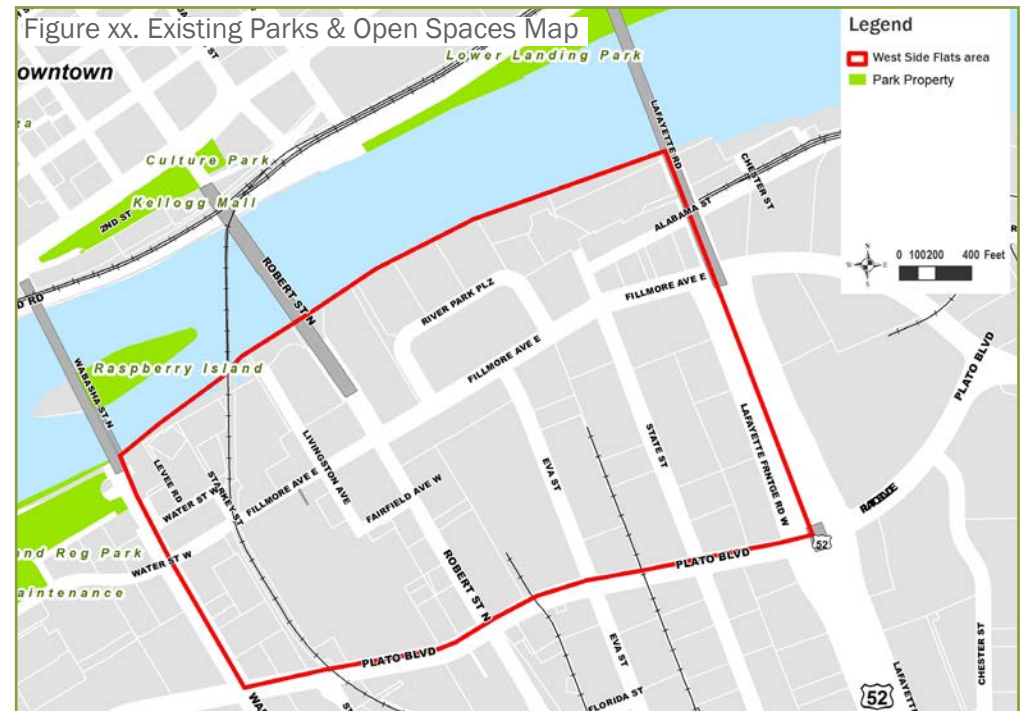
- *Neighborhood parks*
- *Green connections to Harriet Island Park and the riverfront*

## THE GREAT RIVER PASSAGE MASTER PLAN

- *“Green fingers” – greenways intended to connect the West Side community to the riverfront*
- *Enhanced riverfront, including places for people to touch the water and a barge swimming pool*
- *Harriet Island Park amenities – splash pad, skate park*

## WEST SIDE COMMUNITY PLAN

- *Community gardens*
- *Neighborhood parks and play areas*





- *High water table (15'-18' down) with likely fluctuations to even higher levels based on different river stages*
- *Varied fill (8'-10') over sandy deposits (ancient river deposits) with clayey layers*
- *Contamination from previous land uses*
- *Lift stations needed for stormwater at high river stages*

The area's existing physical conditions (soils, water table, and contamination) are based on some limited boring information. These physical constraints must also be considered in planning and designing future stormwater management techniques and infrastructure.

The stormwater system is a key factor in future planning for the West Side Flats for several reasons. The WSF is located adjacent to the regionally and nationally significant, Mississippi River, which is also the destination of the area's stormwater runoff. The area is protected from river flooding by a levee system. Past land uses reflected the working nature of the river rather than protecting its water quality for environmental and recreational purposes. However, future land uses will likely emphasize strong connections to the river as a unique natural asset for those living, recreating, and working in the West Side Flats. Rather than the stormwater system being entirely underground as it is today, contemporary stormwater techniques offer great potential for reducing stormwater runoff, improving the river's water quality, and creating attractive above-ground stormwater amenities that are integrated into the community.

## Stormwater System

The current stormwater system consists of a network of underground pipes that discharge stormwater directly into the river without treatment. A major stormwater pipe (84" and 90") runs along the east side of the rail line. When the river is at high flood stage, the WSF area is also served by two stormwater lift stations that are used to lift stormwater runoff over the levee. Located just inside the levee, the Custer St. lift station is one block west of Robert St. and the Chester St. lift station is just east of Highway 52. The age and quality of the existing stormwater system is largely unknown. Further investigations, such as videotaping of the pipe system, will be necessary to fully understand the system's condition.

The WSF's physical environment has several unique features related to stormwater management, many of which are directly or indirectly related to the site's location in a floodplain along the Mississippi River:

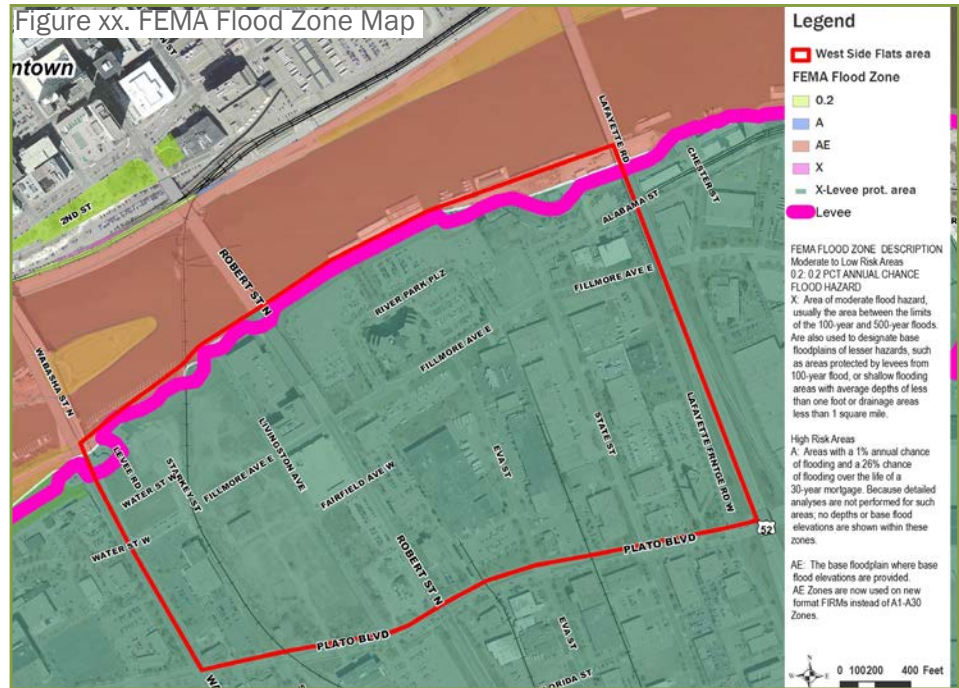
- *Planned development area is protected by a levee*
- *Levee system has setbacks/maintenance requirements*



# River Floodplain

The West Side Flats is located in an area that was once plagued with frequent flooding. In the 1950s, after decades of flooding problems in the West Side Flats, the Saint Paul Port Authority and Housing and Redevelopment Authority assembled land to remove residential uses from the area, and develop the area for industrial use. The construction of a new levee was critical to future redevelopment in the area. The area is now protected by the Upper Levee, which limits flood activity to events greater than the 100-year flood.

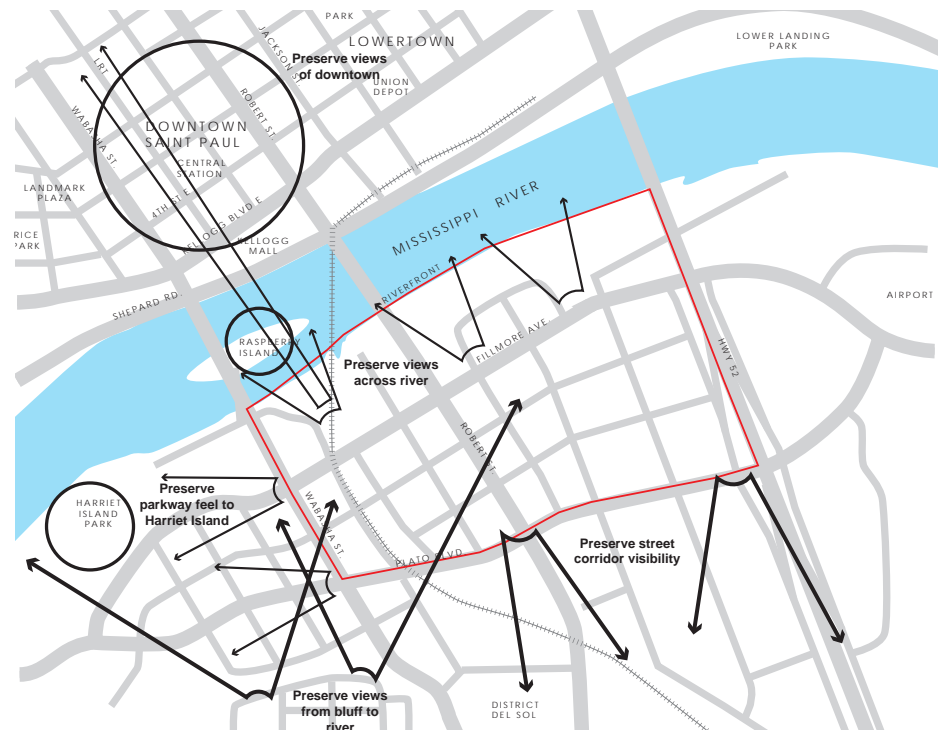
Groundwater levels still remain an issue, however, particularly for higher-density development that requires structured parking. Soil tests reveal the groundwater table is roughly 15 feet below ground level. Other development impacts in the area include levee setbacks, which require development to occur outside the levee easement, or fifteen feet back from the toe of the levee, whichever is greater.



# River Views

The West Side Flats' location within the floodplain of the Mississippi River valley affords great views of the river valley. Key views that are valued by the West Side community include the bluffs on both sides of the river, river channel and edge, bridges, downtown skyline, and the State Capitol. From the West Side, key viewing points are the riverfront esplanade, Harriet and Raspberry Island Regional park, the bridgeheads (Wabasha and Robert), Prospect Terrace Park, and major street corridors. Views of the West Side Flats are also important, particularly from the West Side bluffs and downtown Saint Paul.

As development occurs in the West Side Flats, existing views will necessarily change. Planning and designing new development will need to consider impacts on key views from and of the area.









# 4

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT



The West Side Flats' location along a river much beloved by the larger Saint Paul community, on ground with ties to generations of West Siders, and just across the river from downtown Saint Paul, demands that community input be a vital element of this long-term master plan for the area. Establishing community support to create and implement a long-term master plan effectively begins with meaningful involvement of the community throughout the planning process. As a result of listening to community members, the master plan is intended to reflect the community's interests and values. The choices made in this master plan will have a lasting impact on the health and vitality of the West Side community, the Mississippi River, downtown Saint Paul, and the city in general.

Given the master plan's potential to produce highly local benefits, as well as more geographically dispersed benefits, and its importance to the local community as well as the city as a whole, it was vital that the master plan's community engagement strategy recognize and respond to these two scales in approach. A process that offers appropriate methods and materials to address both of these scales and that provided timely and relevant information, encouraged participation, and laid a foundation for continuing civic engagement will result in successful project outcomes.

Strategies for community participation were built around two fundamental components: outreach and community involvement. **Outreach** involved reaching out to the community with project information, updates, key findings, recommendations and most importantly, invitations to participate in the planning process. **Community engagement** involved active participation of the public and project stakeholders in helping shape plan outcomes. There were several community engagement strategies in the planning process that accomplished either outreach or involvement and many that accomplished both.

**Outreach:** The West Side Flats master planning effort was organized to reach out to the full spectrum of Saint Paul residents; however, the majority of effort expended in outreach was targeted to key and impacted West Side constituencies, including communities underserved by mainstream media.

**Community engagement:** The master planning approach was devised as an iterative process that combined the project team's incremental development of the plan with ongoing feedback loops with the community. A series of community task force meetings, public open houses, stakeholder meetings, and on-line tools allowed the community and key stakeholders to help establish the fundamental principles that formed the basis of plan initiatives, while at the same time offering stakeholders the opportunity to react to ideas as they evolved.

The master plan's outreach and community engagement techniques included the following:

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM (PMT)

The PMT consisted of City Staff members representing the planning, economic development, transportation, utilities, and parks/recreation departments, as well as the consultant team, and the Saint Paul Design Center. The role of the PMT was to provide multi-departmental background data, information and knowledge, direction for the master plan's vision, and feedback on proposed master plan elements, strategies and development guidelines. The PMT was co-facilitated by Lucy Thompson, WSF Master Plan project manager, and HKGi consultants.

## COMMUNITY TASK FORCE (CTF)

The CTF consisted of representatives from the community, including residents, business owners, property owners and advocacy groups. The CTF generally met monthly with the project planning team throughout the planning process. While its' primary role was community involvement (providing direct project feedback to the project planning team), the CTF was also expected to provide project updates to a broad base of constituencies and bring back any feedback to the CTF. The CTF was co-chaired by Betsy Reveal (Planning Commissioner) and Lucy Thompson (PED Planner and Project Manager).

## STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

The project team facilitated four (4) focused stakeholder meetings during February and March 2013. The four "key stakeholder" groups were:

- Community-Based Organizations - participants included WSCO, NeDA, Hispanic Tiempo, and the Saint Paul City Artist-in-Residence.
- River/Environmental Organizations - participants included the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Lower Mississippi River Water Management Organization (LMRWMO), Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (Mn DNR), National Park Service/Minnesota National River & Recreation Area, and Audubon Minnesota).
- Business Owners - participants included Brown & Bigelow, Upper River Services, Great River Office Products, El Burrito Mercado, Wellington Management, Paramount Real Estate, Welsh Companies/Colliers Int'l, and the Saint Paul Port Authority (SPPA).
- Transportation - participants included the City, Metro Transit, MN DOT Highways, and MN DOT Aeronautics.

These key stakeholder meetings were conducted to determine perspectives and insights regarding the West Side Flats development strategies, business improvement needs, access and connection needs, physical improvements, views, business mix, business opportunities, residential concerns, retail issues, public art and public space needs, environmental concerns, infrastructure needs, etc. Findings from these meetings were summarized and informed the development of the WSF Master Plan and Development Guidelines.

## DESIGN WORKSHOP

A two-day design workshop involving members from the CTF, PMT, and project consultant team was conducted on May 1-2, 2013. The workshop was organized as an on-site, focused, interactive process at the Holman Field Airport Terminal. The workshop was used to accelerate the site design process by enabling the project's team members to intensively explore the plan area's issues, opportunities, and big ideas fundamental to the planning process. It also provided a valuable opportunity to achieve early consensus on the most worthy approaches for updating the WSF Master Plan.

At the end of the workshop, the project planning team conducted a pin-up review of concepts developed during the workshop. The pin-up review was open to a broader audience than the workshop participants in order to provide an opportunity for feedback on concepts generated during the workshop.



## **DEVELOPER ROUNDTABLES**

Two Developer Roundtables were conducted during the project, where development professionals/experts were brought together to learn about, discuss, and provide input relating to the West Side Flats Master Plan. The developer roundtables included developers from the residential (market, affordable, artist), commercial, office, and mixed-use sectors.

The first Developer Roundtable was held in April 2013 to identify issues with the current (2001) WSF plan, discuss development market forces that might influence redevelopment decisions, and advise on how to create an effective master plan and development guidelines.

The second Developer Roundtable was held in November 2013 to review the draft master plan with the same developers to gain their perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed master plan elements, strategies, and development guidelines.

## **LISTENING SESSIONS**

The project team reached out to underrepresented groups in the West Side community that may not be comfortable or have the ability to attend more traditional planning input forums. The purpose of the listening sessions was to provide opportunities to share the project's progress with participants and receive their reactions to the ideas being proposed, including what they might suggest as improvements. Listening sessions were conducted with two interested groups at Torre De San Miguel and Bluff Park Homes.

## **COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSES**

Two community open houses were conducted during the WSF master planning process. The first open house was held in April 2013 to initiate the planning process and seek input regarding needs and aspirations for the future of the West Side Flats. The second open house was held in November 2013 near the end of the planning process to gain community feedback on the proposed master plan's directions and the development guidelines. The two community open houses were conducted as public events that both presented project information and invited community feedback.

## **WSCO MEETINGS**

The West Side Community Organization (WSCO) is the organization that represents the interests of District 3 (where the project area is located) to the City of Saint Paul through its district council framework. City staff met regularly with the WSCO Riverfront, Development and Land Use (RDLU) Committee throughout the planning process. The purpose of these meetings was to provide general updates on the planning process and bring concerns, issues, etc. back to the project planning team. The planning team met with the WSCO Board two (2) times during the planning process to gain important input on the West Side community's vision, goals, values, objectives and desired plan outcomes, and to receive feedback on plan progress and proposed recommendations. WSCO was also an important project partner in reaching out to West Side residents and businesses throughout the project.

## **CITY'S WEBSITE**

A website was set up to provide project information and solicit community input. From an outreach standpoint, the website was routinely updated to contain a broad range project information including background, interim and final products, community feedback summaries, project contacts and information about community participation opportunities. From a community engagement standpoint, the website allowed visitor comments about the project, utilizing Open Saint Paul to conduct on-line questionnaires to solicit input.





# 5 MASTER PLAN

## Overview

The West Side Flats Master Plan is intended to guide redevelopment and public infrastructure projects that will transform vacant and underutilized land in the West Side Flats into an urban village neighborhood and employment center connected to the river.

This master plan consists of the following elements:

- Land Use
- Urban Design
- Street System
- Transit System
- Pedestrian and Bike Circulation
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Green Infrastructure
- Public Art

Each element of the master plan consists of a descriptive plan, visual plan diagram, and strategies. These elements are inextricably connected, so coordination between them is critical to achieving the vision and guiding principles of the master plan.



# Land Use

Since the time that the West Side Flats was redeveloped into an industrial park 50 years ago, its land uses have been primarily industrial with some interspersed commercial. The exclusively industrial land uses and development forms of the Riverview and Riverview West industrial parks, east and west of Robert Street, respectively, have served to disconnect the West Side community from the river. As the West Side Flats evolves from an industrial park to a 21st Century urban village and employment center, it is envisioned as a place that weaves together a balanced mix of land uses. The land use element of the master plan provides guidance for a mix of future land uses that complement each other, including residential, commercial, industrial, office, civic/institutional, and park/open space. The mix of land uses will need to balance a healthy residential, cultural, and economic environment.

Attracting people to live in the West Side Flats will demand that the mix and pattern of future land uses create a truly livable and vibrant neighborhood. This new neighborhood should also serve to reconnect the West Side community above the bluff to the river. As a new urban neighborhood, land uses and development forms need to meet 21st century demographic and lifestyle trends. Homes, stores, services, restaurants, jobs, institutions and recreation need to be located in convenient proximity to each other. Land use patterns and densities should be oriented to walking, bicycling, transit, as well as automobile travel.

In order to create an economically sustainable city and West Side community, it will be important to retain and grow industrial/commercial businesses, jobs, and the tax base in the West Side Flats. Today, there are approximately 140 existing industrial and commercial businesses and 4,800 jobs in the West Side Flats, including both the Riverview and Riverview West industrial parks. Riverview West today includes primarily commercial land uses, some industrial, and a significant amount of undeveloped land. Riverview is a mix of industrial and commercial land uses. Existing development in Riverview and Riverview West is characterized by large blocks, large single-story buildings, low lot coverage, and large surface parking areas. The vision for the West Side Flats encompasses a broader mix of land uses, retention and growth of jobs, higher development densities, and appropriate transitions between neighborhood and employment land uses.

## Land Use Character Areas

In order to create a more balanced community in the West Side Flats that supports a healthy living economic environment, the master plan establishes four land use character areas:

- Mixed-Use Corridor
- Mixed Residential
- Employment Center
- Major Parks & Open Spaces

### MIXED-USE CORRIDORS

Mixed-Use Corridors will be located along the primary activity thoroughfares in the West Side Flats, including:

- Robert Street
- Wabasha Street
- Riverfront Esplanade

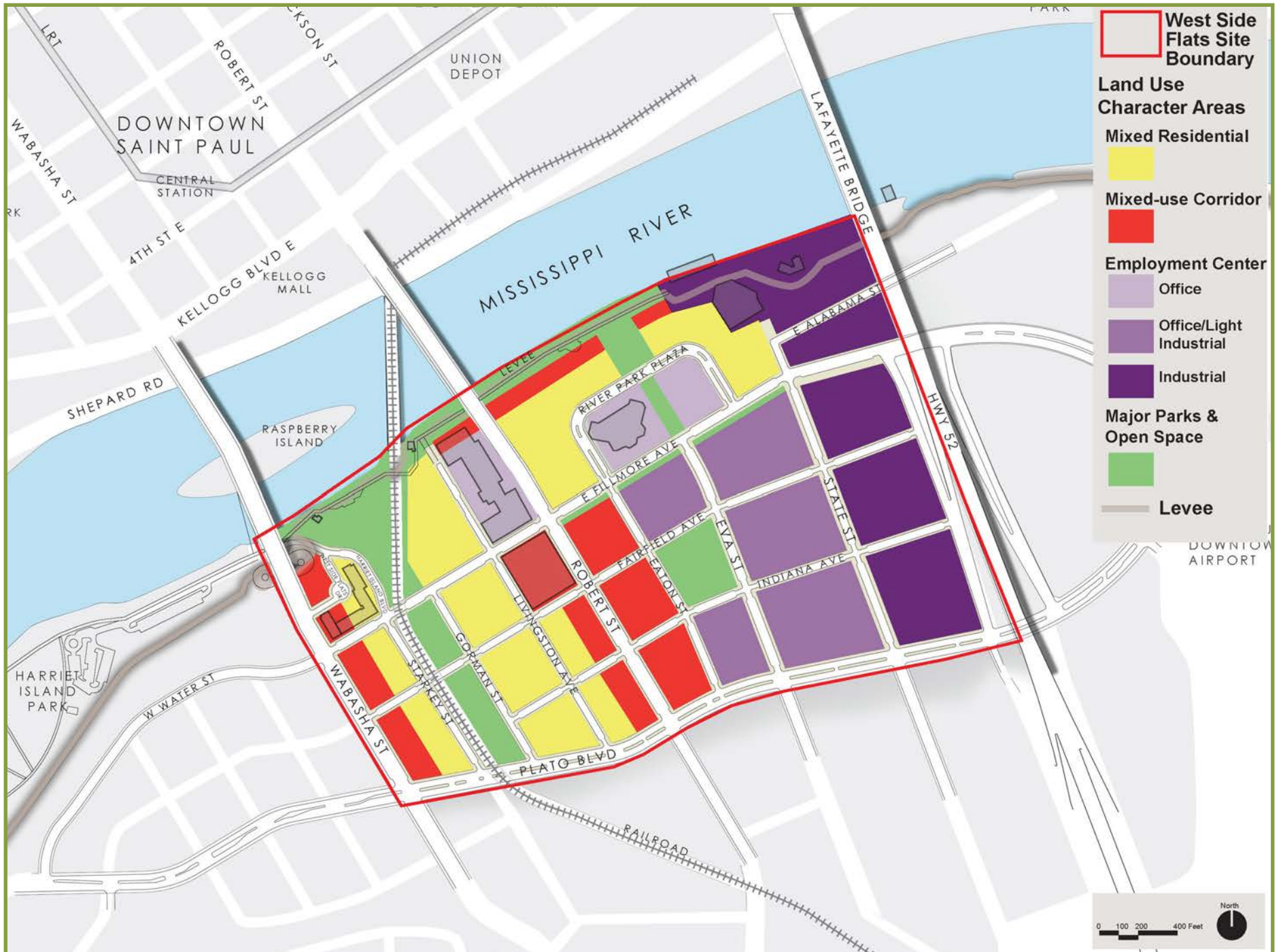
Mixed-use corridors can have a broad mix of land uses, such as residential, retail, restaurants, office, civic/institutional. Residential land uses will encompass a range of housing types. Street-level uses should be predominantly non-residential, preferably a mix of retail and restaurant businesses that serve the needs of local residents and employees, and contribute to a vibrant environment on the street/esplanade. Above street level, Wabasha Street is anticipated to be predominantly residential uses, while Robert Street is anticipated to be predominantly residential on the west side and office on the east side. Land uses fronting onto the riverfront esplanade are also anticipated to be predominantly residential above street level. Both residential and non-residential land uses should be at development densities that support transit use, as well as a convenient walking/biking environment.

Along the riverfront esplanade, including Harriet Island Regional Park, there is a subset of riverfront districts envisioned that complement each other and create a vibrant urban riverfront. From west to east, the riverfront districts are:

- Harriet Island Regional Park - Recreational
- Wabasha Street to Livingston Street - Residential
- Livingston Street to State Street - Mixed Use
- East of State Street - Working River



Figure xx. Land Use Plan



## MIXED RESIDENTIAL

Mixed Residential areas are envisioned along the linear greenway, between Wabasha Street and Robert Street, and the riverfront:

- West Side Flats Greenway (along Livingston, Gorman, and Starkey)
- West Side Flats Riverfront (north of Fillmore Avenue)

Land uses within the Mixed Residential areas should be primarily residential, including a range of housing types, densities, and price points. The range of housing types should address the needs and desires of people of different ages, family sizes, cultures, and incomes. Residential land uses should be at development densities that support transit use, as well as a convenient walking/biking environment. Residential land uses should also complement, capitalize on, and orient to the desirable riverfront and greenway open space amenities.

## EMPLOYMENT CENTER

The existing Riverview Business Center, east of Robert Street, can evolve into a more diverse jobs-rich West Side Flats Employment Center organized around reconfigured blocks and streets. The master plan reconfigures the current industrial area of superblocks and a limited street network to a more connected street network and relatively smaller blocks, which is more conducive to a mix of contemporary industrial, office and commercial uses. The existing streets (Plato, Fillmore, State and Eva) are supplemented with new streets, including Eaton Street (north-south), Fairfield Ave, and Indiana Ave (east-west). This area has significant growth potential for existing and new businesses on underutilized sites, including large surface parking lots. Reinvigorating the West Side's economy could include supporting commercial/industrial start-ups, expansion of existing businesses, and attracting innovative companies that will value the proximity to an emerging urban village and the river corridor's natural amenities. Design of green infrastructure in the Employment Center can also function as buffers between industrial uses, residential uses, and the public realm, such as the planned green space along Fillmore Ave, the park east of Robert St, green finger connection along Eva Street, and green street design in general.

## MAJOR PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Major Parks and Open Spaces are planned as a network of green spaces connecting neighborhood and employment center uses to the riverfront, as well as connecting the greater West Side community to the riverfront with linear greenways across the flats. The network consists of three major components:

- Riverfront esplanade
- West Side Flats greenway (west of Robert St)
- Eva Street greenway and park (east of Robert St)

The West Side Flats greenway concept was a key element of the previous WSF Master Plan, whereas, the Eva Street greenway/park is a new concept of this master plan. While the riverfront esplanade is largely in place, the two greenways are concepts that will need to be explored further to address issues and opportunities, such as relationship to active rail line, park/recreational needs of employment center, property acquisition, and the integration of stormwater features.











## LAND USE STRATEGIES

- 1) **Plan and design development projects to be compatible with a variety of adjacent land uses.** As properties redevelop over time, planning and designing a complementary mix of residential, office, industrial, retail, restaurant, services, civic/institutional, and recreation uses to serve the needs of residents, employees, and visitors of the neighborhood is desired. Some uses are appropriate to be mixed within a building, others within a block, or across the street.
- 2) **Promote active commercial, civic, and institutional land uses at street level within buildings facing mixed-use corridors, including the riverfront esplanade.** In order to create active and interesting environments for people on the community's main streets, street level uses should be non-residential uses that are open for business throughout the day and evening as much as possible.
- 3) **Attract a broad range of housing types, densities, and developers.** Since residential land uses have been absent from the West Side Flats for the past 50 years, it presents a significant opportunity to create a new neighborhood with a broad range of housing options.
- 4) **Manage the neighborhood's overall density to support strong transit, pedestrian, and biking environments.** The neighborhood's overall residential and non-residential development should occur at sufficient densities to attract and maintain convenient urban amenities, such as a healthy mix of retail, services and restaurants, high-frequency transit, and parks.
- 5) **Cultivate stronger relationships between industrial/office businesses, new residents and employees on the West Side Flats, and the greater West Side community.** Efforts are already underway in the neighborhood to better match residents with jobs; these efforts should be strengthened.
- 6) **Enhance the environmental sustainability of industrial/office development in the area.** Sustainable elements include:
  - *Stormwater retention practices on private property and within the public realm.*
  - *Access by means other than the single-occupant vehicle through such actions as helping individual businesses develop Transportation Demand Management plans; and provide incentives for employees to carpool, use transit, walk, and/or bicycle.*
  - *New sidewalks for better access to transit, adjacent neighborhoods and services along commercial streets.*
  - *Improved energy efficiency within existing buildings.*





- *Reuse of selected older industrial and office building(s) that no longer meet the needs of contemporary businesses. Selected buildings may be adaptable for market niches that promote smaller, artisanal, creative enterprises; and to nurture the area as a fertile laboratory of entrepreneurship, business incubation, artistic endeavor and eclectic urban design. Careful adaptation of such buildings will be job-retaining and job-producing, and help create a “buzz” for the industrial/office area.*

- 7) Improve the physical environment of the West Side Flats employment center.** Landscaping, streetscape improvements, utility and infrastructure investments, aesthetic upgrades to building exteriors and public art will enhance the appearance and functioning of existing uses, and attract future private investment in the employment district.
- 8) Promote development/redevelopment of vacant and low-intensity industrial/office sites such that they benefit the existing businesses; promote new, intensive job-creating businesses; and explore new models for urban industrial/office development.** Development/redevelopment should maximize both economic development and neighborhood revitalization goals. Some of the new uses may be of a residential or live/work nature.

- 9) Increase land use diversity, densities and lot coverage in the employment center, while retaining the industrial/office job base.** Many parcels have large surface parking lots that are no longer needed and could be put to a more productive use. Converting them to active uses will strengthen the district’s character, and add to the city’s employment and revenue base.
- 10) Improve the design of new industrial buildings and sites.** Improving industrial site appearance is vital to enhancing the value of the property, better integrating it into the urban fabric of the West Side Flats, and attracting new development and new investments.

# Urban Design

Even though the West Side Flats sits in a dramatically urban location along the downtown portion of the Mississippi river corridor, its current environment is generally industrial and suburban in character. Redevelopment of the West Side Flats as the Riverview Industrial Park, which began in the 1950s, set its current development character. The West Side Flats' current development pattern stands in stark contrast to its original development character, which was that of a truly mixed-use neighborhood with a traditional street grid.

This master plan seeks to create a more urban neighborhood and employment center built around the following urban elements:

- an urban riverfront esplanade with attractive gathering places, incredible views of the river valley and downtown Saint Paul, and connections to regional parks, trails and open spaces;
- urban parks and open spaces, including the West Side Flats greenway, Eva Street greenway and park, and urban plazas;
- urban street grid with “complete streets” that are multi-functional in terms of balancing a variety of travel modes, creating vibrant streetscapes, and integrating natural features;
- part of the West Side community, an urban neighborhood in close proximity to downtown Saint Paul.

The urban design character of the West Side Flats is patterned after many of Saint Paul's great traditional neighborhoods along with contemporary thinking about what makes a great neighborhood. A mix of land uses and building types create a more interesting and vibrant place to live, work, shop, and play. The traditional urban grid of streets and blocks provides a canvas for placing and designing buildings that have an interactive relationship with the public realm of streets, parks, and natural open spaces. The public realm creates the framework for buildings and buildings frame the public realm. A variety of building heights, massings, placements, forms and facades that also complement each other creates a more urban environment. Managing parking is a critical element in achieving buildings and a public realm that is urban, attractive, comfortable, and convenient.

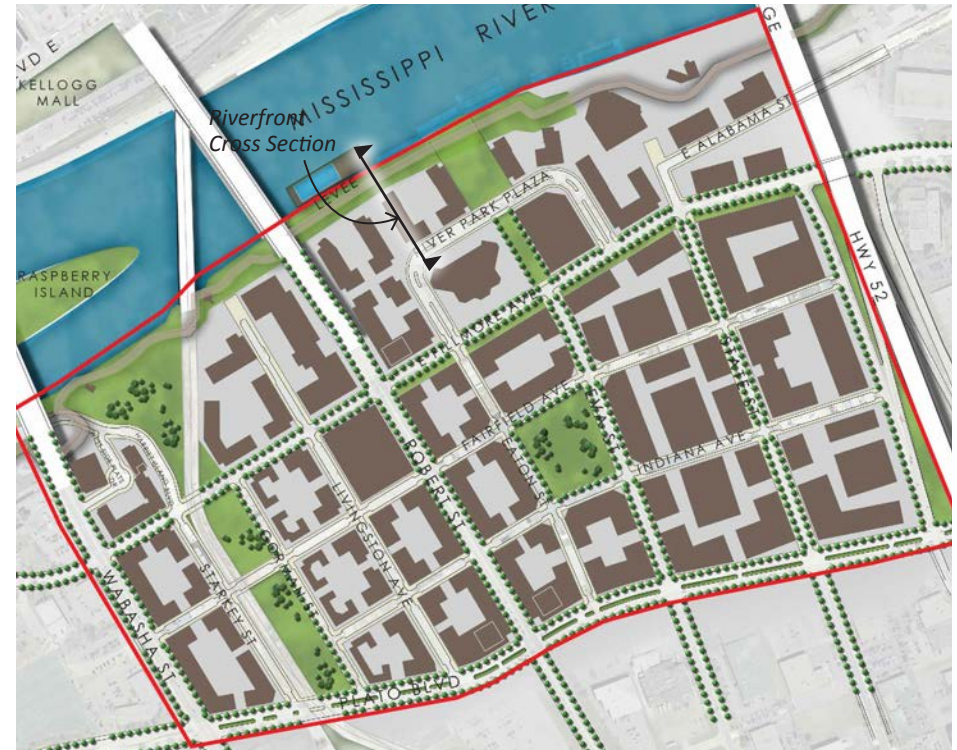
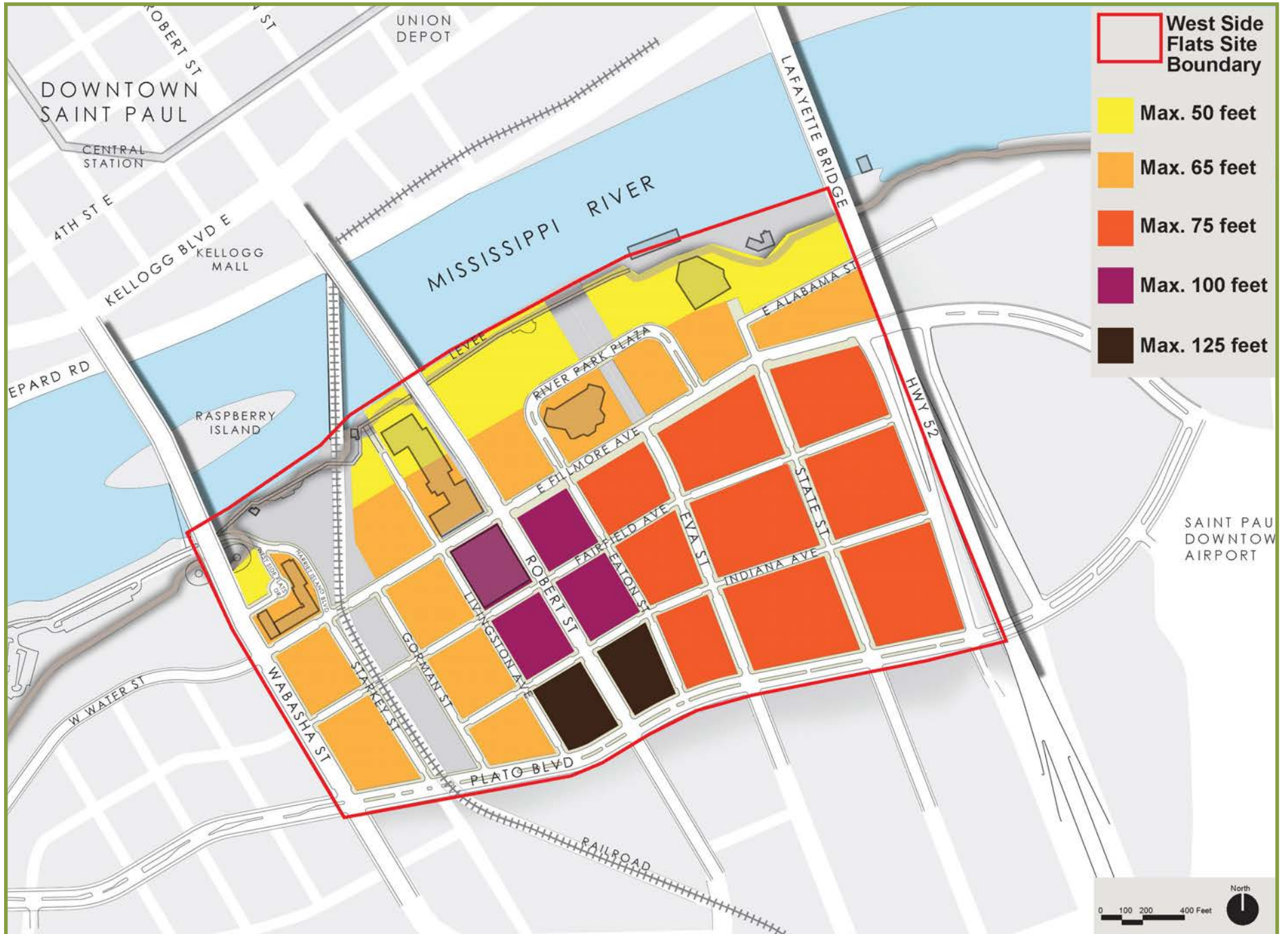


Figure xx. Riverfront Cross Section





Figure xx. Preferred Maximum Buildings Heights





## URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

- 1) **Design sites and buildings that fit the overall scale and diverse form of an urban riverfront neighborhood.** New development should consist of a range of building types and sizes that is appropriate to the particular context and character of each district within the West Side Flats, as well as the broader West Side community. Building height and character should vary to create more interest in the built form of the neighborhood. There should be appropriate transitions of scale between new and existing buildings. Building design should also be sensitive to natural features in the river valley, including the riverfront and the bluffs.
- 2) **Place and design buildings to create an urban streetscape and open space environment.** Buildings shape the streets and open spaces in the city. These are the primary elements of the public realm. The buildings relationship to the street and open spaces is vitally important to creating pedestrian-friendly, attractive and safe streets and parks in the West Side Flats. Continuous facades contribute to a strong and understandable streetscape. They also put “eyes on the street” which helps to keep streets and parks safer and well-used.
- 3) **Provide community gathering places.** A well-designed system of community gathering places will enhance livability, foster community,

promote healthy lifestyle choices and provide green spaces for managing stormwater in the West Side Flats neighborhood. They also lend structure and organization to the urban fabric. The Plan includes a comprehensive system of public spaces including linear greenways, a neighborhood park, a rivers edge park and the riverfront esplanade, and planted boulevards.

- 4) **Create a vibrant, urban and public riverfront esplanade that is connected to the neighborhood.** The riverfront is an important city, community and neighborhood asset. Public access to the riverfront should be maintained and enhanced. The “Esplanade” represents a significant public investment and provides public access to the riverfront. The Plan promotes building uses and forms along the Esplanade that will create a memorable and vibrant public promenade. Restaurants, shops and services that generate foot traffic and provide places for people to gather and socialize along the riverfront are encouraged.
- 5) **Manage and design parking solutions that enhance the urban environment.** The West Side Flats can be characterized by vacant and underutilized lots, including a large number of surface parking lots. As redevelopment and infill occurs, parking should be accommodated in parking structures, located behind, within or under the primary buildings they serve. Free-standing parking structures that abut the street should be wrapped with active ground level uses that





contribute to a vibrant streetscape or screened to soften the visual appearance of the structure or integrate it with surrounding buildings. Parking should be shared between various uses and on-street parking should be provided and utilized to meet parking requirements.

**6) Integrate sustainable practices into site and building development.** The Master Plan promotes a holistic approach to sustainable redevelopment of the West Side Flats. The future neighborhood should be an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable place for people to live, work, shop and play. The plan promotes best practices in sustainability in the following ways:

#### **ECONOMIC**

- Promote job creation by incorporating higher density employment uses
- Provide a mix of housing choices – types, sizes and costs
- Provide a mix of land uses – residential, office, industrial, retail, civic, and institutional
- Encourage compact development patterns
- Encourage greater densities of development

#### **SOCIAL**

- Provide affordable housing choices
- Extend existing West Side neighborhood patterns and design to the river
- Provide public gathering spaces – parks, plazas and open spaces

- Support public art opportunities
- Enhance mobility - esplanade, sidewalks, trails and bikeways
- Provide civic and institutional land uses
- Provide community gardens
- Embrace diversity

#### **ENVIRONMENT**

- Promote the redevelopment/infill of brownfield sites
- Encourage compact, mixed-use development patterns
- Provide multi-modal transportation facilities for vehicles, transit, bicycles and pedestrians
- Build green infrastructure facilities to manage stormwater runoff
- Encourage water conservation – water use, reuse, stormwater management
- Encourage energy conservation – building materials, design and orientation, site features and furnishings
- Promote or provide recycling and reuse programs
- Provide community gardens/permaculture
- Integrate the urban forest into public and private development
- Promote healthy lifestyle choices
- Develop a system of parks and open spaces

# Street System

Generations ago, urban streets were more multi-functional, serving not only as transportation routes but as the front yards and public squares of neighborhoods and cities. People on foot, bicycles and streetcars shared the street with pushcart vendors, outdoor markets, children playing, and neighbors socializing. As vibrant as those traditional urban streets were, their heavy use created a variety of problems for safety, sanitation and mobility. As the automobile emerged as the dominant travel mode, street design shifted its focus primarily toward automobile movement. The focus on automobiles resulted in unsustainable development patterns, fewer transportation choices, increased noise and air pollution, and creation of greenhouse gases, as well as a decline in social and economic activity on the street.

Best practices over the last ten years have emphasized a more balanced approach to street design, giving equal weight to transportation, community, and environmental goals. Communities have also learned that investment in high-quality streets can yield benefits well beyond mobility: community identity, public health, environmental, and economic.

Building upon the street system plan of the 2001 West Side Flats Master Plan, this updated master plan restores a more traditional street grid within the West Side Flats both west and east of Robert Street. A “complete streets” network is envisioned with Robert Street as a mixed-use “seam” street that weaves together the predominantly neighborhood land uses west of Robert St with the predominantly employment center uses east of Robert St. The future street system is based on a hierarchy of street types, consisting of:

- Mixed-use corridors
- Green boulevards
- Residential streets
- Commercial/industrial streets

Key north-south streets are Robert and Wabasha, which pass through the West Side Flats connecting the greater West Side community to the riverfront and downtown Saint Paul. Key east-west streets are Fillmore Avenue and Plato Boulevard, which connect to Harriet Island Regional Park, Holman Field Airport, and the commercial/industrial employment center in the West Side Flats.

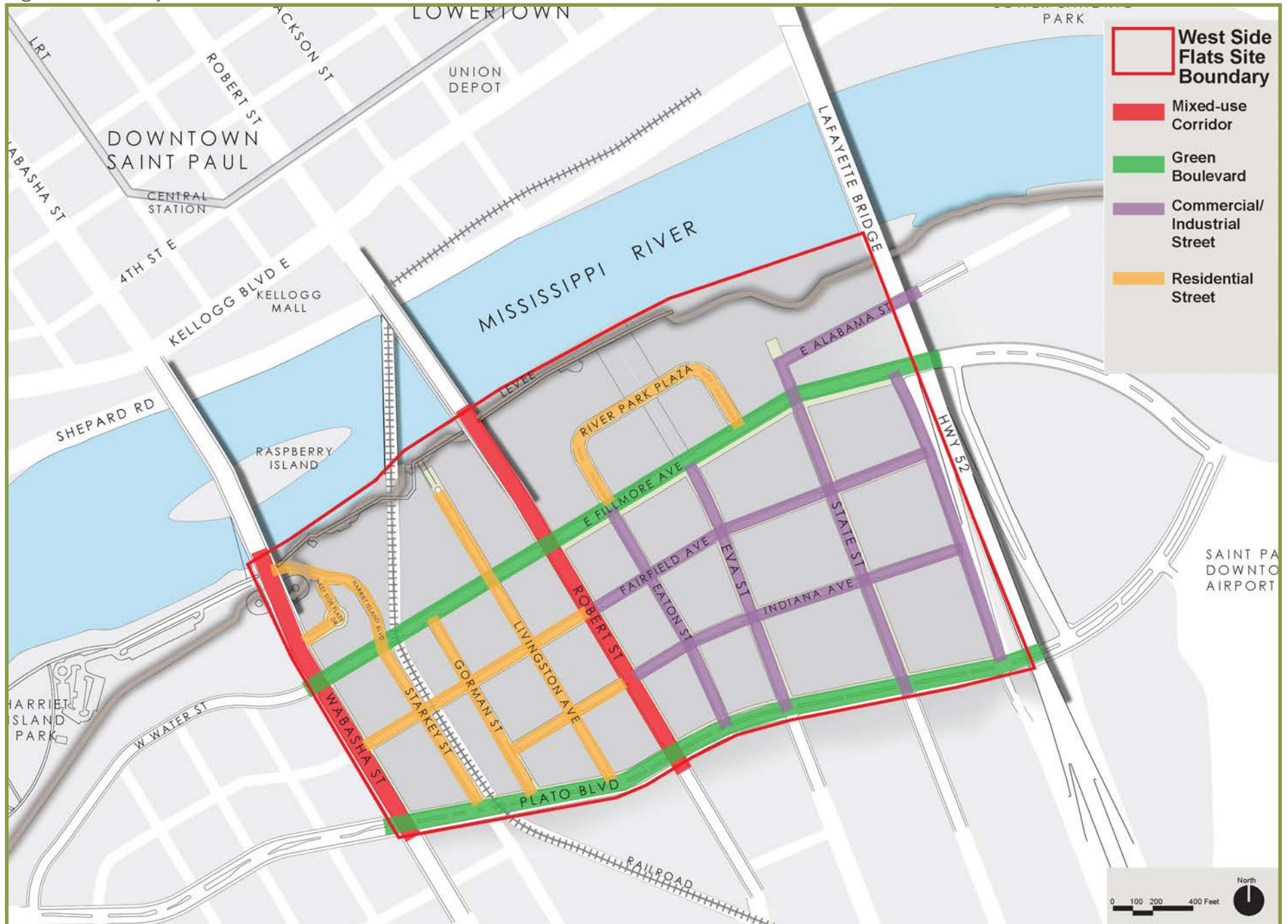
The master plan also recommends a series of street improvements, aimed at

providing a complete and connected street system to enhance mobility and connectivity in the area, create new development opportunities, promote more compact development patterns, and improve environmental conditions. In general, “complete streets” design in the West Side Flats encompasses the following elements:

- *Frame the street with building faces*
- *Incorporate active ground level uses at the Wabasha and Robert Street intersections*
- *Provide a setback between the public sidewalk and residential buildings*
- *Design the streets for multi-modal transportation options, including facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, bus transit riders, and motorists.*
- *Design gateways at intersections with Wabasha and Robert Streets to create a sense of arrival into the neighborhood*
- *Plan for and design transit hubs at intersections with Wabasha and Robert Streets*
- *Clearly articulate pedestrian and bicycle zones – include on-street bike lanes*
- *Incorporate green infrastructure strategies within the public right of way*
- *Include raingarden planting areas in medians and tree-lawn areas*
- *Incorporate public art at gateways – Wabasha and Robert Streets*
- *Provide attractive and durable street furnishings and lighting*
- *Provide a regional trail along Plato Boulevard, consistent with the City’s current trail planning effort*
- *Provide on-street parking along Fillmore Avenue*
- *Design safe and convenient pedestrian crossings, including bumpouts at intersections*
- *Limit curb-cuts to maintain continuity along the block face and avoid interrupting pedestrian flows*



Figure xx. Street System Plan







## STREET SYSTEM STRATEGIES

**1) Plan for new street connections in conjunction with redevelopment planning.** The Street System Plan shown in figure \_\_\_\_, illustrates the addition of new streets with reconstruction of existing streets to create a finer grained street network. This traditional urban street pattern is guided by the historic street grid that once existed in the West Side Flats. The street pattern planned for the West Side Flats will enhance livability in the area by providing the following benefits:

- *Smaller block sizes and compact development patterns*
- *Pedestrian-friendly, walkable neighborhood*
- *Connections to major destinations, such as the riverfront, bluffs, District del Sol and Harriet Island Regional Park*
- *Traffic calming*
- *Dispersed traffic*
- *New development opportunities*
- *Connections to the regional street network*

**2) Establish and design a hierarchy of street types.** The proposed street system includes a variety of street types and characteristics,

including a regional highway, mixed-use corridors, green boulevards, residential streets, and commercial/industrial streets. Different street types serve different roles in the neighborhood and the community. The following describes the hierarchy, role and characteristics of these and other streets proposed in the Master Plan:

### MIXED-USE CORRIDORS (WABASHA ST., ROBERT ST.)

Wabasha and Robert streets are vital links to the West Side community, downtown Saint Paul and the region. Their role in the West Side Flats street network is significant - they connect people to the riverfront and carry a mixture of land uses with active street fronts into the West Side Flats. They are important gateway streets, so it is important that there is a vibrant interaction created between the street and buildings.

### GREEN BOULEVARDS (PLATO BLVD., FILLMORE AVE.)

Plato Boulevard and Fillmore Avenue (east of Robert Street) connect Harriet Island Regional Park to the west and the Riverview Business Center, Holman Field Airport and SH52/Lafayette to the east. They are broad, tree-lined and landscaped boulevards that transect different sub-districts within the West Side Flats. They are important





corridors for multiple modes of transportation and play a key role in managing stormwater runoff in the area.

**COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL STREETS (EVA ST., STATE ST., INDIANA AVE., FAIRFIELD AVE., E. ALABAMA ST.)**

The local streets east of Robert Street and south of Fillmore Avenue will primarily provide access to commercial businesses – retail, office and light industrial. These are low-traffic streets with slower speeds. While it is important that they be designed to accommodate truck traffic, they should also be designed for pedestrians and bicycles. They should also include tree plantings and landscaping, and be designed to infiltrate stormwater runoff. Eva and State streets are planned to be “green fingers” providing north-south connections for the greater West Side community to the river.

**RESIDENTIAL STREETS (RIVER PARK PL., STARKEY ST., GORMAN ST., LIVINGSTON ST.)**

The local streets between Robert and Wabasha streets will primarily provide access to residences. These are low-traffic streets with slower speeds. They should be designed with the pedestrian in mind, but also provide bike and auto movement. They should

include tree plantings and landscaping, and be designed to infiltrate stormwater runoff.

**3) Design and build “complete streets”.** “Complete street” networks are designed to be safer for pedestrians, slow traffic, and improve air and water quality. They are designed with all users in mind – including bicyclists, public transportation vehicles and riders, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities. The streets of the West Side Flats are an important part of the livability of the neighborhood. They ought to be for everyone, whether young or old, motorist or bicyclist, walker or wheelchair user, bus rider or shopkeeper. They should be green with trees and plantings and help absorb and filter stormwater runoff.

**4) Incorporate public art opportunities into streetscape design.** The West Side community’s ties to arts and culture can be seen and experienced in the streets today, particularly in District del Sol, where distinct site furnishings and public art are evident. Redevelopment of the West Side Flats should continue that tradition and incorporate public art opportunities into street design, such as poetry in sidewalks, artist-designed fixtures, signage, seating, bus shelters, etc. Pop-up storefronts, street art, musicians, vendors, and food trucks can also bring life and identity to the streets.

# Transit System

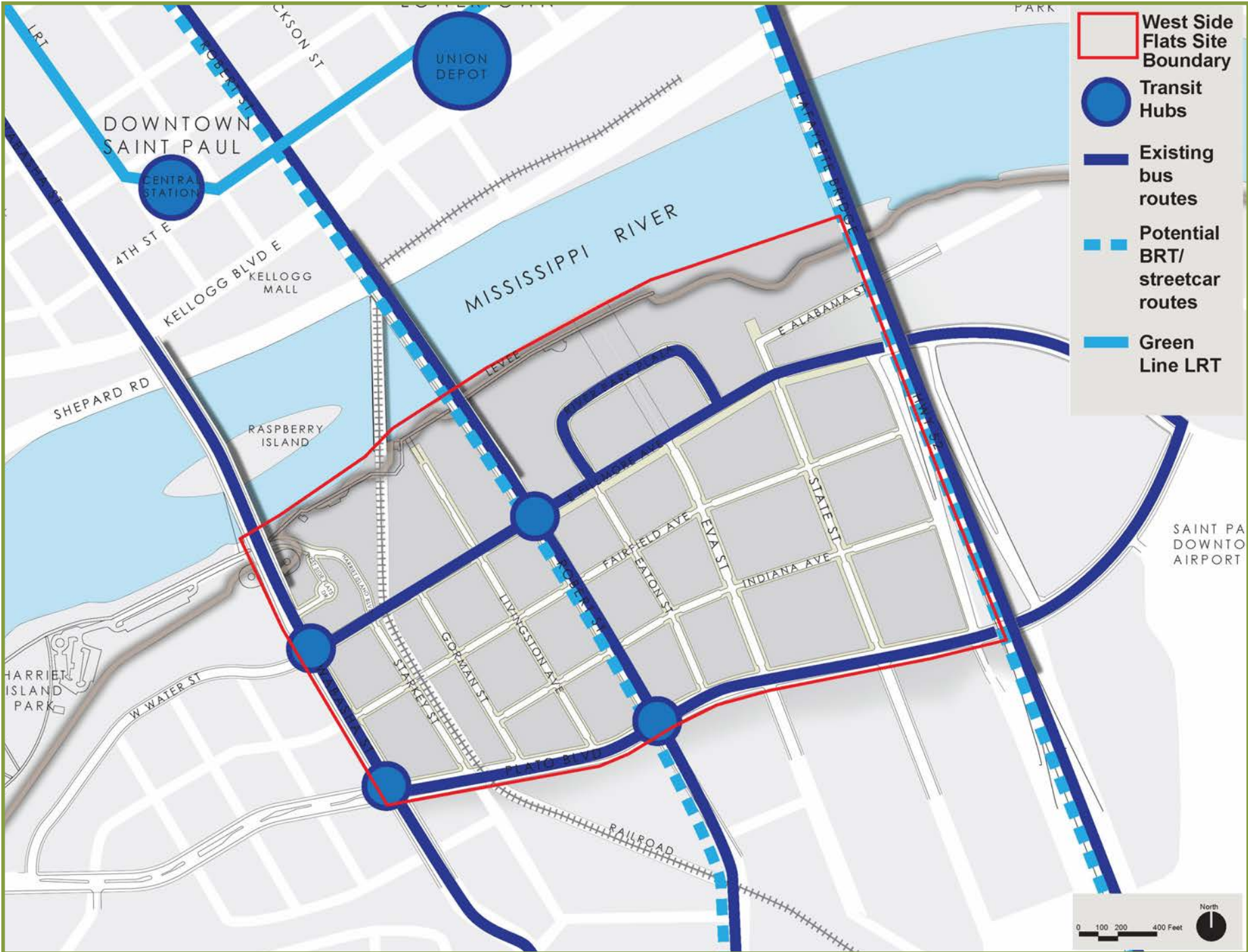
Travel by public transit should be accessible, attractive, safe and comfortable for everyone. Future transit improvements are currently being explored in the West Side Flats that will enhance land values and the livability of the neighborhood. Robert Street and SH52/Lafayette are potential candidates for bus rapid transit (BRT) service, with Robert Street also being looked at as a candidate for streetcar transit service. These transit investments have the potential to catalyze development interest in the West Side Flats.

Existing bus routes serving the West Side Flats include stops along Wabasha and Robert Streets at Plato Boulevard and Fillmore Street. These bus station areas should be enhanced and developed as multi-modal transit hubs, where multiple modes of transportation interchange, including bus and streetcar service, pedestrian, bicycle and automobile travel. Access for all modes of transportation should be served to each transit hub and facilities should be included to make them safe, comfortable, attractive and convenient. Specific strategies for enhancing transit service to the West Side Flats include the following:





Figure xx. Transit Plan







## TRANSIT STRATEGIES

- 1) **Provide public transit service on all major routes through the West Side Flats.** Bus routes should continue to run on Robert and Wabasha Streets, Fillmore, Plato Boulevard, and SH 52/Lafayette. Transit facilities along these routes should be added and/or improved to encourage more transit ridership.
- 2) **Continue to explore potential for bus rapid transit and/or streetcar transit.** Bus rapid transit (BRT) and, in particular, streetcar service along Robert Street would be a valuable catalyst for new private investment along the corridor. The City and the West Side community should continue to pursue the potential for improved transit service along Robert Street that can connect north to the new Green Line LRT in downtown and south along the SH 52 and Robert Street corridors.
- 3) **Develop transit hubs.** Existing transit stops are located along Wabasha Street and Robert streets at Plato Boulevard and Fillmore Street. These transit stops should be planned for and designed to serve as transit hubs, where various forms of transportation interchange. The transit hubs will be located within a 5-minute walk for everyone living and working in the West Side Flats and include amenities to enhance the

transit experience.

- 4) **Enhance mobility to the transit hubs.** Improve the transit experience and increase ridership by ensuring that all modes of transportation have safe, comfortable and convenient access to the transit hubs. Provide sidewalk, trail, bikeway and roadway access to each transit hub. Design the routes with lighting, seating and shelter. Enhance intersection crossings and provide wayfinding for orientation.
- 5) **Provide transit supportive facilities at the transit hubs.** Each transit hub should be well-designed and include transit-supportive facilities to enhance the experience and safety of the transit users. The transit hubs should be designed to include the following elements:
  - Plaza space/paving
  - Shelter (with climate control)
  - Signage/wayfinding/information kiosk
  - Lighting
  - Seating
  - Bike facilities (parking, lockers, pump stations and bikeshare)
  - Communications (emergency phone)
  - Surveillance cameras
  - Public art





- 6) Encourage transit supportive uses along Wabasha and Robert streets.** Higher density, compact and mixed-uses will ensure greater transit ridership and, in turn, will benefit from the investment in new and improved transit service. Development should include high-density housing and employment uses with active, ground level uses. Buildings adjacent to the transit hubs should be designed to support an active public realm.

# Pedestrian and Bike Circulation

The livability of the West Side Flats will have a direct relationship with making the neighborhood more pedestrian and bike-friendly. Developments that emphasize mixed land use, high density, street connectivity, and pedestrian environments have a positive effect on walking and biking as travel choices. People who live in areas that contain a tight grid of streets and a mixture of land uses walk more, use transit more, and take fewer trips with their automobiles, leading to environmental and health benefits.

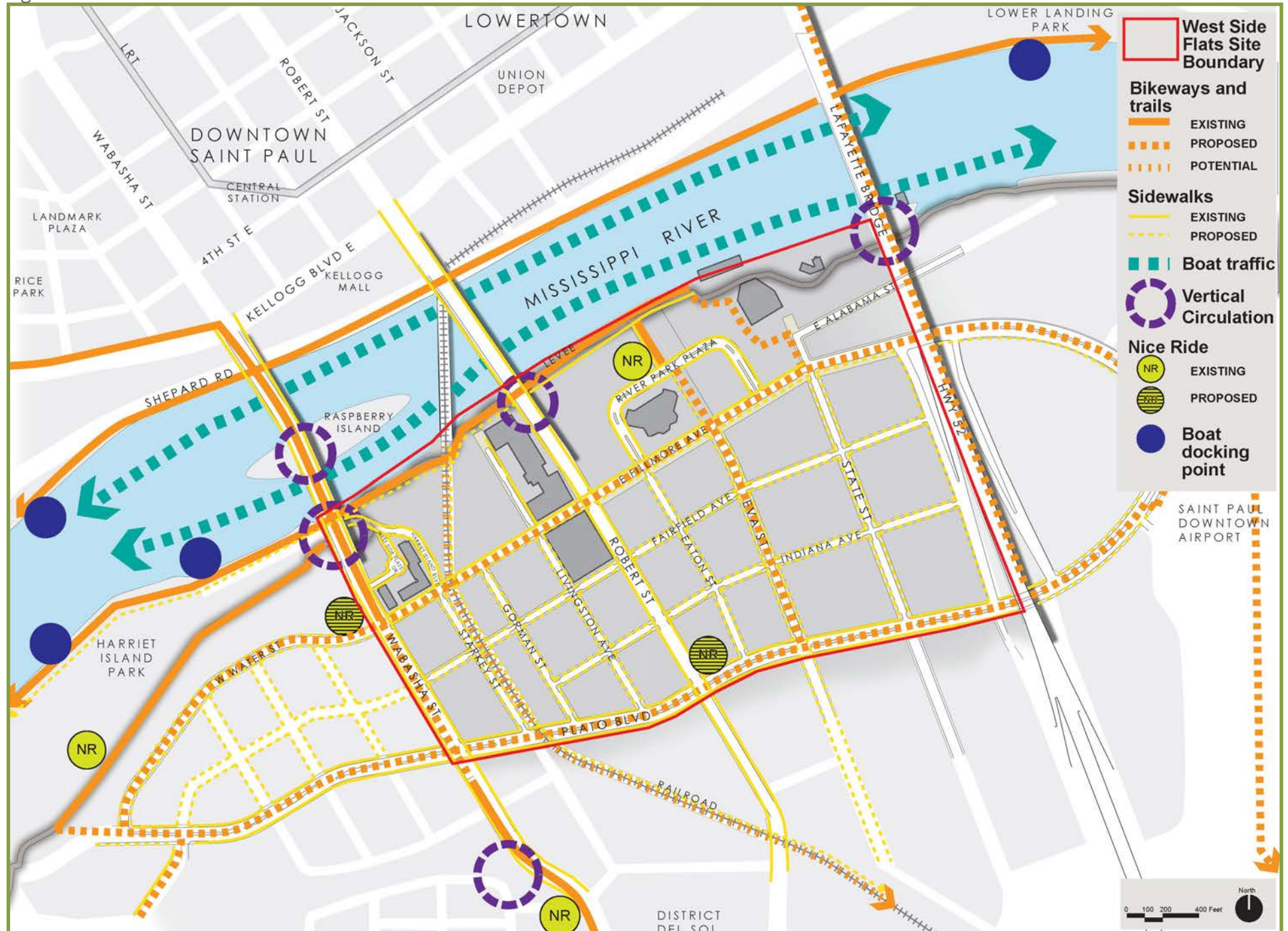
Redeveloping the West Side Flats into a new urban neighborhood will require public improvements necessary to serve new development. These infrastructure improvements will provide the opportunity to create a walkable and bike-friendly neighborhood. The new road system should be designed to serve a variety of needs: move people; encourage compact development patterns; and serve pedestrians, bikes, transit and cars. Parks and open spaces should be designed to include sidewalks and trails that connect with the street sidewalks and the Esplanade to complete the pedestrian and bicycle movement network.

The Pedestrian and Bike Circulation Plan (Figure \_\_\_\_ ) illustrates a comprehensive and connected system of sidewalks, trails, and bikeways for the West Side Flats.





Figure XX. Pedestrian and Bike Circulation Plan







## PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE STRATEGIES

- 1) **Design and build a complete and connected system of sidewalks, trails and bikeways in conjunction with street and redevelopment planning.** Development of a new street grid in the West Side Flats provides the opportunity to build new sidewalks, trails and bikeways. The connected street pattern will provide multiple choices for pedestrian and bike movement. All new streets should include sidewalks designed to provide a safe and comfortable pedestrian environment and access to homes and businesses. Trails and bikeways will complement the sidewalk system and connect to the regional systems.
- 2) **Connect pedestrian and bike facilities to the regional recreational system.** The pedestrian and bike system should connect to the regional system of trails and bikeways, particularly the connections along the riverfront, Plato Boulevard, Robert and Wabasha Streets. The Pedestrian and Bike Circulation Plan identifies a connected system of pedestrian and bike routes and where they connect with regional routes.

### 3) Design the streets to be pedestrian- and bike-friendly.

Developments that emphasize mixed land use, high density, street connectivity, and pedestrian environments have a positive effect on walking and biking as travel choices. Compact development patterns with active ground level uses are encouraged. Streetscapes should be designed to be safe, comfortable and attractive for pedestrians and bicyclists, including the following elements:

- *Well-designed and continuous sidewalks and trails*
- *Clearly articulated bikeway facilities (bike lanes, cycle tracks, bike boxes, markings, signage, parking, lockers and pump stations)*
- *Safe, well-marked and signaled pedestrian crossings*
- *Intersection bumpouts – to shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians*
- *On-street parking – calms traffic and provides a barrier between cars and pedestrians*
- *Two-way traffic – traffic calming*
- *Seating, shelter and lighting*
- *Trees and plantings – human comfort, environmental and aesthetic benefits*





#### 4) Enhance pedestrian and bike connections to the riverfront.

The plan identifies several opportunities to connect people to the riverfront. Pedestrians and bicyclists should be able to connect to the riverfront at Wabasha Street Bridge, Robert Street Bridge, SH52/Lafayette Bridge, at the proposed greenways and at the north end of Livingston Ave. Explore the possibility of including vertical circulation at the Robert Street and Lafayette Bridges.

5) **Provide bike facilities at the transit hubs.** The Transit Plan identifies proposed transit hubs along existing bus routes on Wabasha and Robert Streets, at Plato Boulevard and Fillmore Street. Each transit hub should be designed to include bike-friendly amenities, such as:

- *Bicycle parking and locker/storage bin*
- *Bikeshare (i.e. Nice Ride)*
- *Pumping station*
- *Signage/wayfinding/information*
- *Drinking fountain*
- *Seating and shelter*
- *Lighting*

6) **Explore the potential for vertical connections at the bridges and the bluffs.** Maximizing connections to the river, the bluffs and the greater West Side community is greatly enhanced by incorporating vertical circulation at each bridgehead and along the bluffs, south of the project area. New connections at the Robert Street and Lafayette Bridges would enhance access to the riverfront and create interlinked loop trails with downtown Saint Paul.



# Parks and Open Spaces

Parks and open spaces are necessities for creating and sustaining a quality, livable community. Many of Saint Paul's great neighborhoods are planned around public squares, parkways and parks, or along the Mississippi River. The **Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework** called for redevelopment along the riverfront to be a series of "urban villages organized around green squares or small parks connected by a network of "green" streets, pathways and natural corridors". The Parks and Open Spaces Plan builds on these ideas and others promoted in earlier planning studies, including the **2001 West Side Flats Master Plan**, the **Harriet Island/District del Sol Concept Plan**, the **Great River Passage Master Plan** and the **West Side Community Plan**.

The Parks and Open Space Plan diagram shown in Figure \_\_\_\_, illustrates the key parks and open space concepts for the West Side Flats. The key elements of this plan are:

- Embracing the riverfront esplanade as a prominent neighborhood and city gathering place on the river
- Reconnecting the West Side community to the river by creating the West Side Flats linear greenway adjacent to the existing rail line
- Creating the Eva Street linear greenway and park to provide a connection to the river through the employment center

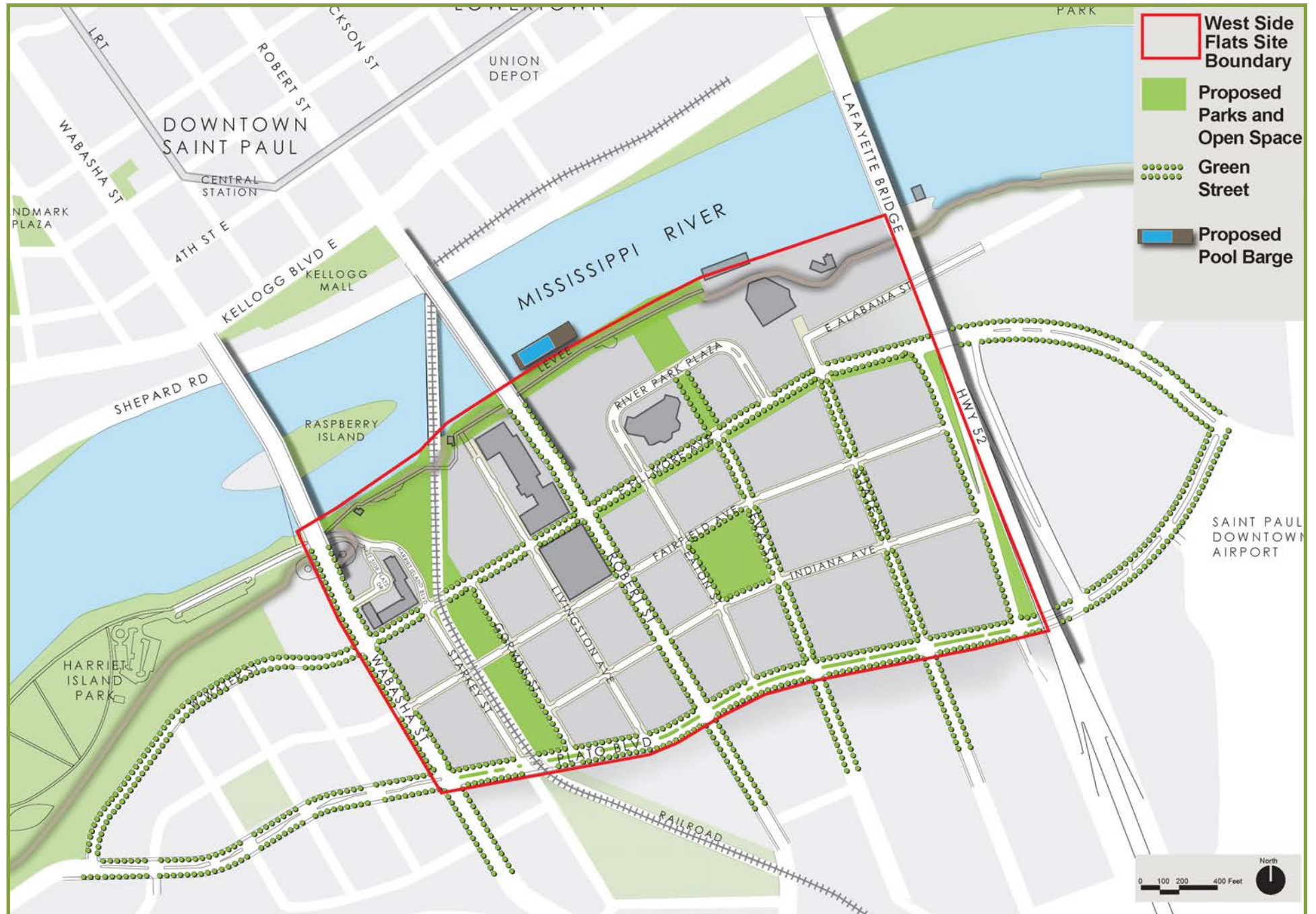
The parks and open spaces system is vital to the successful redevelopment and future livability of the West Side Flats. A well-planned and designed park system and open space system will:

- Provide a physical framework for the neighborhood
- Enhance connections to the river, the bluffs, Harriet and Raspberry Island Regional Park, District del Sol, and downtown Saint Paul
- Provide places for people to gather and recreate
- Create amenities to attract new development and stimulate private investment in the area
- Promote healthy lifestyles
- Improve air, soil and water quality
- Reduce heat island effect





Figure xx. Parks and Open Spaces Plan







## PARKS AND OPEN SPACES STRATEGIES

- 1) **Enhance connections to the river.** The Master Plan includes “green fingers” (greenways, parks, boulevards, and landscape easements) to enhance physical and visual connections to the river. West of Robert Street, the plan includes a broad greenway along the existing freight rail line, connecting the river to Plato Boulevard. East of Robert Street, the plan includes a greenway, a village green, and green streets to connect the river to Plato Boulevard (along Eva Street). The green fingers include sidewalks, trails and landscaped areas designed to provide safe, attractive and continuous public access between the riverfront and Plato Boulevard (and south to District del Sol).
- 2) **Strengthen the riverfront esplanade.** The existing public esplanade along the river levee represents a significant public investment along the riverfront. Access to the esplanade can be made at the Wabasha bridgehead, at the north end of Livingston Avenue and from private property just north of the Comcast building. Future greenways will enhance public access to the esplanade and create new park spaces that can serve to activate the riverfront. Vertical connections to the river from the Robert Street Bridge would enhance access to the riverfront and support a loop connection to downtown open spaces. Development

that activates the riverfront, providing places for gathering and dining, is highly encouraged.

- 3) **Provide well-designed public gathering spaces.** The plan includes several places within convenient walking distance for every member of the community to gather, including greenways, a neighborhood park and the riverfront esplanade. The broad greenways not only enhance access to the river, they provide the neighborhood with park spaces where residents, workers and visitors can gather and play. Public spaces should be designed and programmed to foster community gathering, including places for people to sit, shelter from the sun and rain, play areas, and flexible green spaces. The esplanade offers a tremendous opportunity for new development to embrace the riverfront and provide places for people to gather along its edge.
- 4) **Integrate park design with stormwater management needs.** The public realm, including greenways, parks and streetscapes, should be designed and implemented to assist with the management of stormwater. Parks, open spaces and streetscapes can be designed to infiltrate, hold and reuse stormwater, resulting in reduced infrastructure needs, water conservation and improved water quality.
- 5) **Incorporate public art.** Parks and open spaces provide a great





opportunity to incorporate public art and cultural event spaces. They should be programmed and designed to include opportunities for outdoor sculpture, water features, event spaces, artist-designed gateways, landscapes, shelters, plazas, fixtures, signage, and seating. Programming should include performances and events, such as arts and craft markets, concerts, open-mike events, plays and film screenings. Performers, street artists, magicians, jugglers, food trucks and vendor carts should be encouraged to participate.

**6) Incorporate community gardens.** Park and open space planning and design should explore opportunities to include temporary and permanent locations for community gardens. Community gardens are good for the environment, they bring people together, and they encourage healthy lifestyles. Community gardens could be developed as an interim use on vacant sites (until development occurs) and they could be programmed and designed into the parks and greenways as permanent features.

**7) Program and maintain parks and open spaces.** The parks and open spaces should be programmed and maintained to serve the needs of the community and complement the broader park and open space system (Harriet Island/Raspberry Island Regional Park, Kellogg Mall, Lower Landing Park, and Chestnut Park). The following are key

park program and park elements for the West Side Flats park and open spaces:

- *Plazas and gathering spaces – special paving, shelters, seating*
- *Event spaces – outdoor amphitheater*
- *Stormwater features - rain gardens, permeable pavement, structural soils,..*
- *Community gardens – designated areas with storage sheds and water source*
- *Public art – Art Park, gateway art, outdoor sculpture, play structures, landscape art, seating, furnishings, signage, etc.*
- *Seating – benches and picnic seating*
- *Shelter – from rain and sun*
- *Tree plantings and landscaping*
- *Flexible lawn areas*
- *Sidewalks and trails*
- *Wayfinding – information kiosks, interpretive signage, etc.*
- *Lighting – pathways and gathering spaces*

Programming of parks and open spaces should consider the long-term maintenance needs. Maintenance of parks and open spaces is critical to long term sustainability of the investment in the park system and a well-maintained park system will be healthy, attractive, safe and well-used.



# Green Infrastructure

In the stakeholder visioning process, the West Side Flats' location along the Mississippi River was identified as a key feature and that "water" should be integrated into the design ethic and landscape of the West Side Flats urban village. This vision reflects a more common, new approach toward stormwater management nationally, often called "green infrastructure." The previous approach of moving water away from the site underground and "out-of-site" as quickly as possible to the river is no longer the goal. In order to protect the river and treat the water, the new approach is to view water as a resource and use processes to naturally filter the runoff near the source. When properly managed, water quality will be improved, groundwater protected, and additional amenities added to the site.

In addition to the regulatory changes underway and the evolving science on managing stormwater, there is a strong ethic and identity for the West Side Flats to incorporate creative and innovative practices for stormwater in combination with urban ecological enhancements.





Figure xx. Stormwater Routing/ Flows

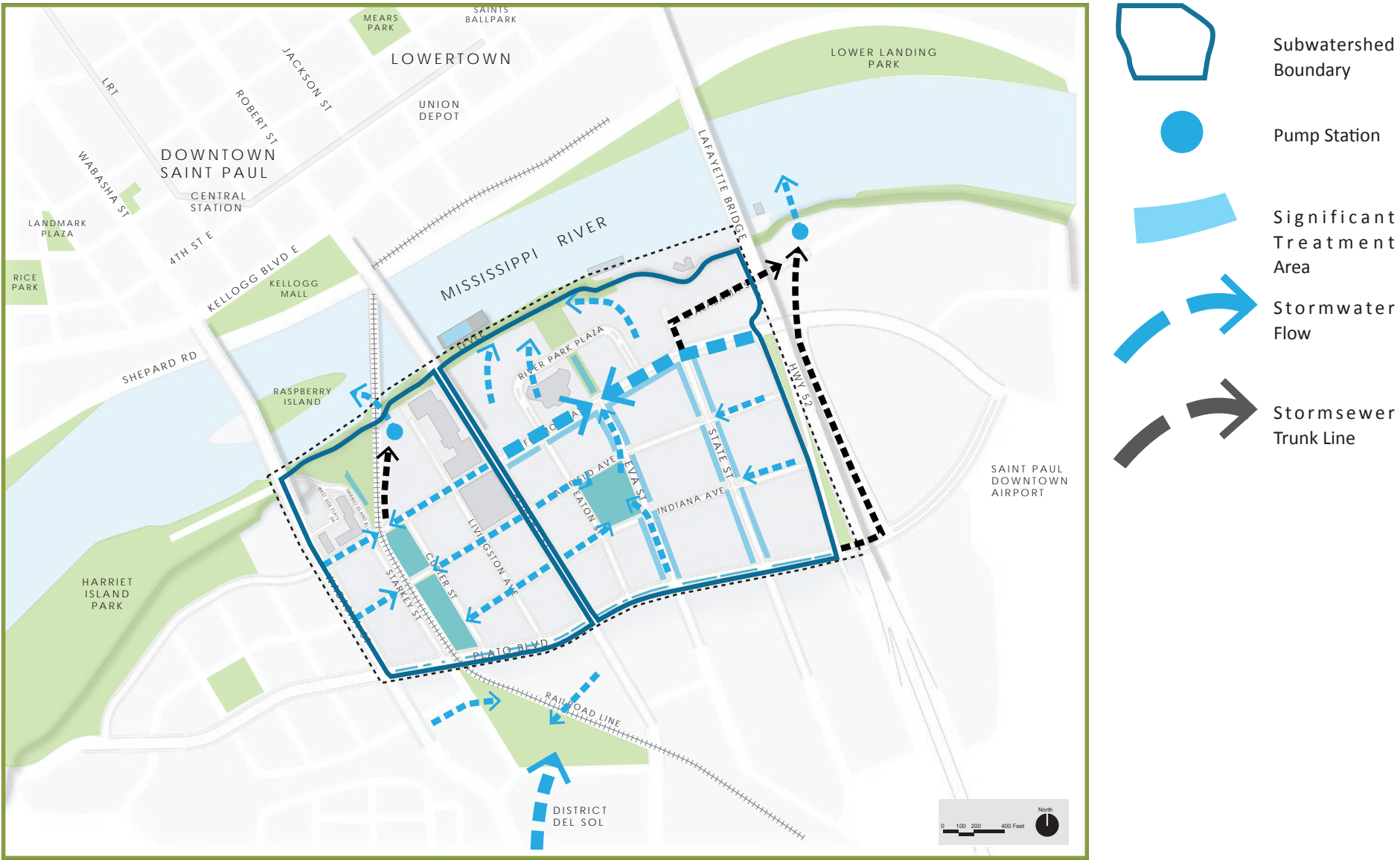


Figure xx. Green Boulevards



Filmore Street Section



Plato Blvd Street Section



Figure xx. Green Fingers

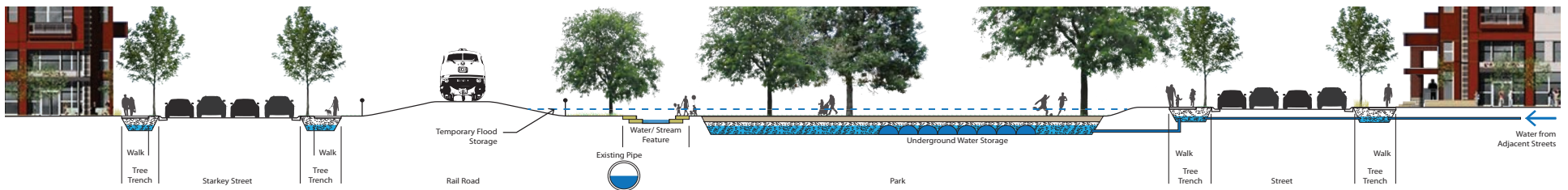
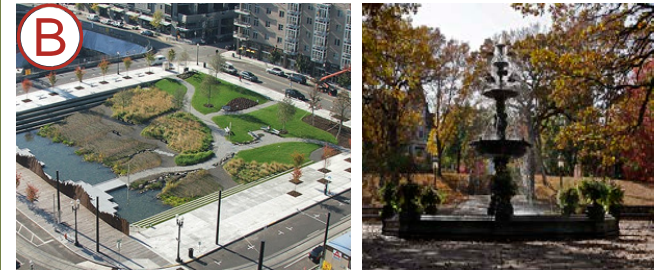
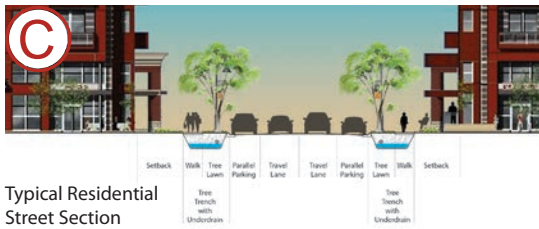
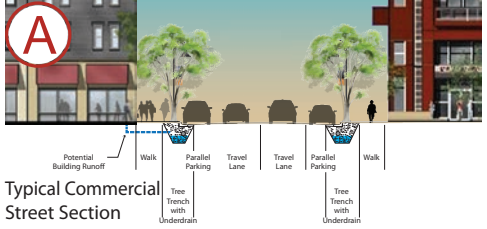


Figure xx. Green Streets









## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES

**1) Incorporate stormwater into the urban landscape.** Several aspects of green infrastructure and multiple uses of urban spaces, or “stacked infrastructure”, provide opportunities in the West Side Flats to incorporate new stormwater approaches. These approaches should provide multiple benefits and can often be more cost effective than traditional approaches. The many ways to integrate stormwater into the West Side Flats include:

- *Street rights-of-way*
- *Public parks/open spaces*
- *Multi-value facilities/landscapes using green/vegetative stormwater practices*
- *Great River Passage green connections*
- *Meeting standards on-site by development or when practical with funding, combining into a regionalized system*

## 2) Establish a comprehensive stormwater management system.

A comprehensive approach for stormwater management should be integrated into the street network, park systems planning, public art opportunities, bike/pedestrian connectivity, and green connections of the region (“green fingers”) using a three-tiered hierarchy:

- **Green Fingers/Corridors** – *Regional park/corridor connections - Recreation, multi-modal transportation, and ecological connections*
  - » *Linear Parks*
  - » *Block Parks*
  - » *Major North-South Roads*
- **Parkways** – *Local connections - Internal and regional (riverfront and Plato Ave.) trail loops, intercepting runoff flow paths*
  - » *River Esplanade*
  - » *Fillmore Avenue*
  - » *Plato Boulevard*
- **Green Streets** – *Woven into internal street network*
  - » *Collector/Commercial Streets*
  - » *Secondary Streets*
  - » *Internal/Service Streets*

Site-by-site improvements under current regulations could be implemented to





complement this framework in terms of locations and methods of treatment. In cases where there is alignment of public and private goals and needs, the facilities could be designed together as a system to maximize benefits (e.g., urban green space amenities), maximize highest and best use of the land, and realize economies of scale for cost savings.

One example of how shared facilities can accommodate stormwater needs, while providing amenities, would be the green fingers and regional connection idea as applied to the linear park along the existing rail corridor shown in the Plan. The location along the railroad already represents a place where stormwater is concentrated via a large stormwater system. This provides two advantages: 1) there are existing easements in the area reducing land acquisition needs; 2) for larger, flood flows, excess flow that may disturb the park setting can be routed to the existing storm sewer nearby.

The linear park could include features that provide a maximum of benefits for infrastructure, protection of the river, and amenities for the community. The system in the park should be used to treat runoff from a larger area. Features of the system could include:

- Irrigation system using stormwater of green spaces and turf – highly maintained green space, reduced irrigation costs, treating runoff to meet/exceed standards.

- Urban stream as focal point/amenity – using seeps and springs of the bluff area, plus augmentation with treated stormwater for low cost water source and treatment.
- Urban water park features - using seeps and springs of the bluff area, plus augmentation with treated stormwater for low cost water source and treatment.
- Greenscape stormwater features such as raingardens, tree trenches, and wetlands.

# Public Art

The West Side Flats is like no other site in the region. It can achieve an attractive, unique identity through thoughtful and strategic integration of art and artists. From an artist's perspective, this is a unique opportunity to create a new kind of place in an area rich with history, situated in one of the most scenic settings in Minnesota and surrounded by one of the nation's hottest cultural destinations: the Twin Cities. The West Side community has a long history tied to arts and culture. Redevelopment of the Flats offers the opportunity to connect the future neighborhood with its past through public art. The Master Plan offers a comprehensive plan for integrating public art into the design and identity of the neighborhood.

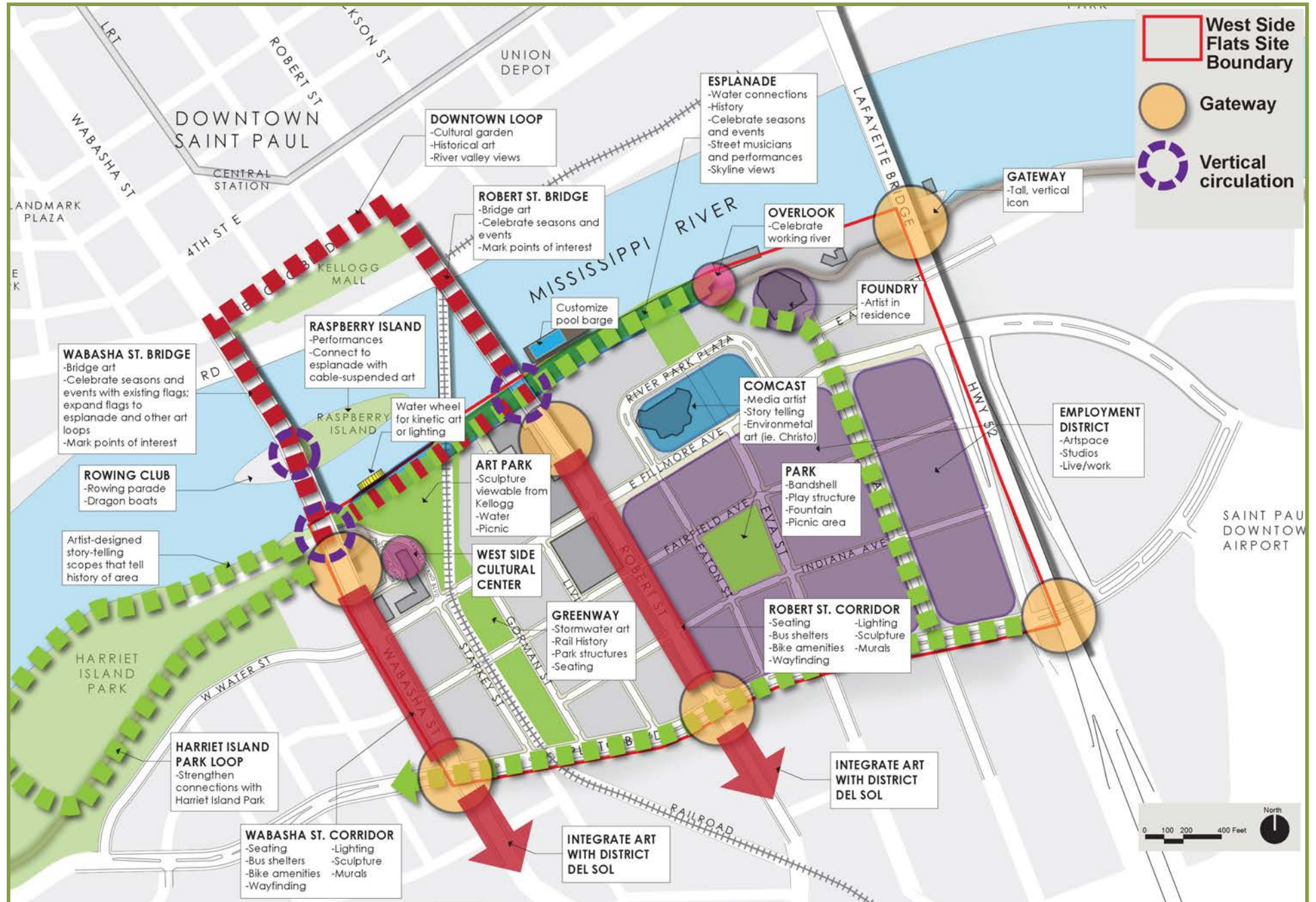
In addition to the Guiding Principles and the overarching Vision established for the West Side Flats, the potential for developing specific strategies per parcel is critical to consider at this important pre-development stage. Seeking the highest and best use of each parcel is important, as is the coordinated effort to connect all the parcels into a perfect mix, a blending of experiences, attractions, offerings and opportunities for the targeted audiences most desired by the collective West Side Flats community of today and tomorrow.

Public artists are pioneers. They excel at collaborating, experimenting and creating new experiences for audiences and communities. The West Side Flats—currently a collection of underutilized parking lots and industrial buildings—offers an abundance of raw materials from which to create a unique, sustainable and exciting place, with a vibe all its own. To realize the goal of an arts-infused West Side Flats, it is critical to involve artists and arts organizations during the early phases of redevelopment and throughout subsequent phases, building vested interest and insuring long-term commitment.





Figure xx. Public Art Plan







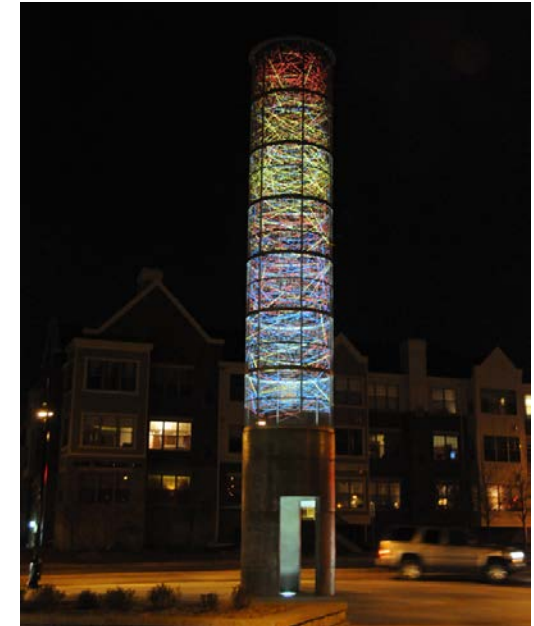
Will Natzell, *Night Blooms*, Mill Ruins Park, Northern Spark, 2012. Photo: Patrick Kelley



## PUBLIC ART STRATEGIES

- 1) **Build on existing public art initiatives in the surrounding area.** From downtown's Kellogg Mall to Raspberry Island to the District del Sol on the West Side, a tremendous amount of thinking and planning, investment and engagement over the past 20 years have resulted in a diverse collection of public art projects that respect or respond to their given context. Future efforts should be informed by these efforts and set new ambitions specific to the West Side Flats environment.
- 2) **Follow the City's public art policies.** Within the past two years, the City of Saint Paul adopted an innovative and forward-thinking public art ordinance. It has established guidelines for involving artists at earliest stages of planning as well as throughout design and implementation. Inviting artists to the table early on—and throughout the process—is essential to take full advantage of the opportunities inherent in all private developments and public improvement projects in the area.
- 3) **Tell stories and preserve memories of the West Side's rich history.** The West Side is rich with history. Art projects — including visual, literary, performance and media arts — should tap into historical references, beyond informative signs or plaques. It is critical to recognize American Indian settlers, former residents and businesses, special events and more. Historical references should be manifested in a multitude of ways; interactive elements can enhance the experience. The stories of the West Side should also address its ecology, its artifacts and environmental history.
- 4) **Embrace and celebrate the river.** In addition to providing physical access to the water's edge, the river should be engaged and embraced in creative ways to heighten the visibility of — and attract audiences to — the West Side Flats. The river offers an abundance of opportunities to host artworks, arts events and artist-designed amenities. The river can also be used to generate electrical power for kinetic sculptures, lighting projects, and fountains that are visible from downtown.
- 5) **Provide incentives for artists to live, work and present in area.** The West Side Flats offers opportunities to attract artists of all disciplines to utilize vacant or underutilized buildings and industrial spaces. Bringing artists in early on is recognized as a stimulus for other types of developments, such as cafes, brewpubs, coffeehouses and arts venues. Recognizing growing interest nationally in participatory culture trends, it is vital to plan spaces for social activities. This could include temporary festivals, street painting events, concerts, pageants, flea





markets, etc.

- 6) **Incorporate artist-designed functional elements.** To help create the West Side Flats' unique character, its amenities and functional elements, such as benches, bike racks and tree grates, should be custom-designed and -fabricated using local artists and local facilities. Custom fixtures can reference local history, culture and add whimsy to the streetscape. Artists-in-residence—both short- and long-term—can work with local industries to address a variety of objectives outlined in this plan, as well as add a creative vibe to the neighborhood.
- 7) **Inspire pedestrian movement and exploration.** To spur economic development, public art and artist-led activities can stimulate the movement of people throughout the West Side Flats. Creative, pedestrian-friendly wayfinding can encourage exploration and discovery. The city's popular Sidewalk Poetry program should be extended to the West Side Flats. Temporary displays of sequentially-sited, photogenic street-side art installations can attract families and cultural tourists.
- 8) **Stimulate public/private partnerships.** The key to establishing sustainable cultural development in the West Side Flats is finding common ground among arts and cultural stakeholders. There are more than 30 arts and cultural organizations in the region that have

ties to the West Side; corporations, foundations, local government and neighborhood groups should be invited to join in the effort. A good starting point is establishing an arts and cultural “hub,” including an art center with a multipurpose, outdoor art park. An arts and culture plan should be developed, incorporating the proposed West Side Art Center as a catalyst for growing arts in the neighborhood.

- 9) **Employ best practices for creative placemaking, green thinking and community engagement.** Public art, as a product and a process, contributes to good placemaking. Artists and program planners should consider the context of the area, address cultural and environmental issues, and bring stakeholders together to co-create this new neighborhood. Artists can bring innovative solutions to beautifying facades and storm water treatment areas. They can enliven in-fill sites and connect community members in meaningful ways. To help initiate creative placemaking in the West Side Flats, local resources and expertise should be used.



Figure xx. Illustrative Plan

The Illustrative Plan, Figure \_\_\_\_, illustrates the concepts described in the previous master plan sections, including the location of various land uses, street and development patterns, parks and open spaces, building and parking orientation, and riverfront connections. This plan is not intended to represent a specific development proposal.





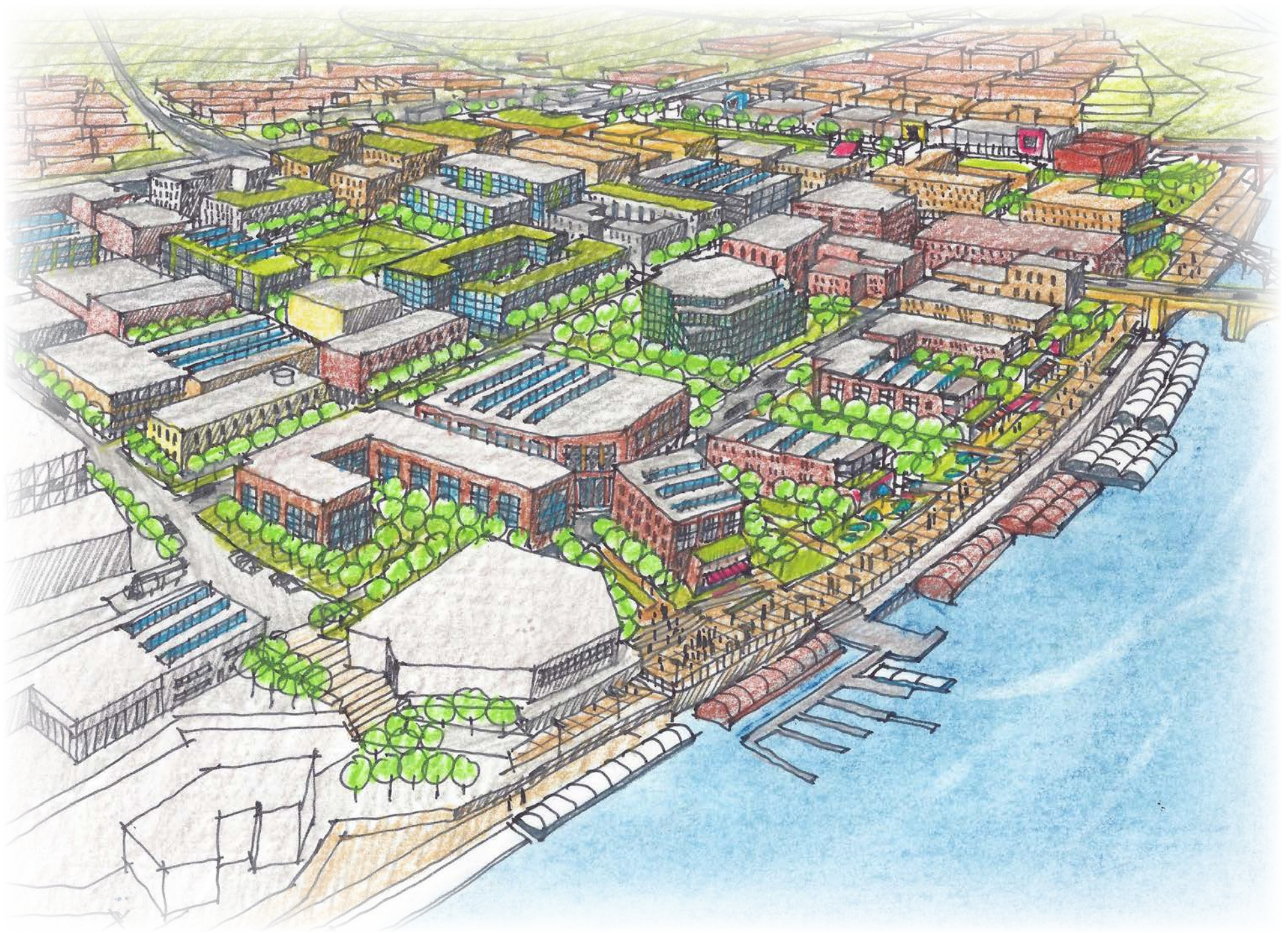
Figure xx. Riverfront Elevation



Figure xx. Greenway Park Elevation









# 6

# DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

## Purpose and Intent

Text to be added.

## Definitions

Text to be added.

## Guidelines

- Streets
- Site Development
- Buildings
- Parking
- Stormwater
- Public Art

## Streets

Text to be added.



## ROBERT STREET (EXISTING 80' R.O.W.)

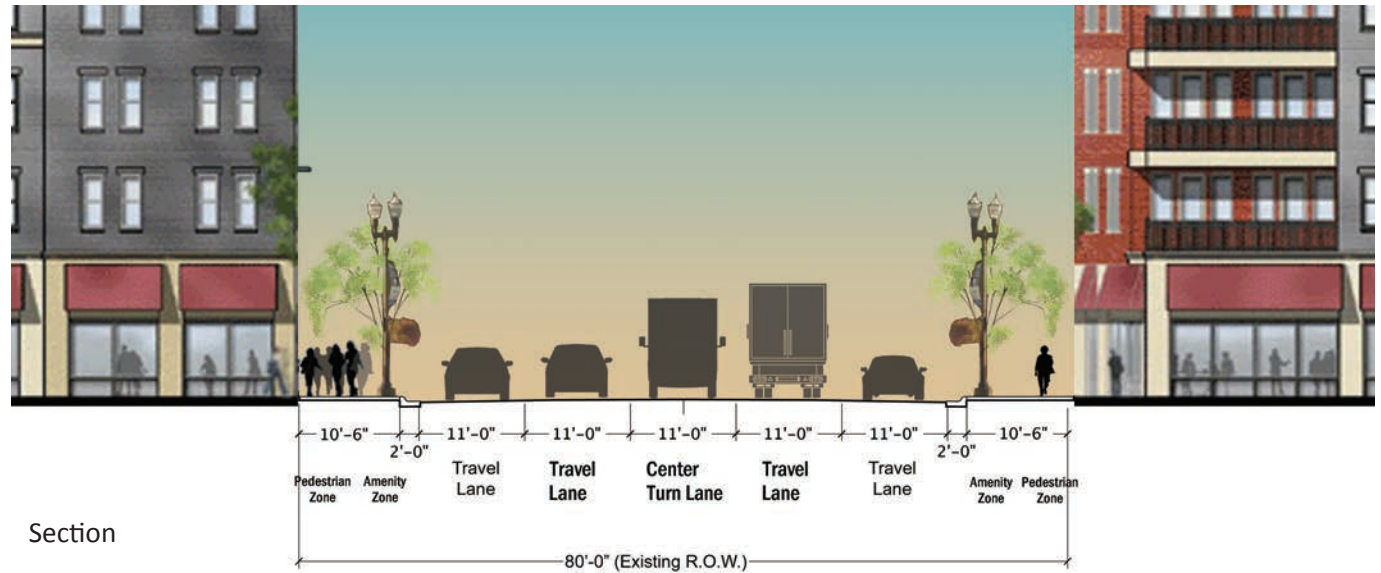


### DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA

- ▶ 80 feet Right-of-Way Width
- ▶ 55 feet Pavement Width (2-way)
- ▶ 20'-30' o/c Street Tree Spacing
- ▶ 10'-6" Sidewalk Width (both sides)

### DESIGN FEATURES

- ▶ Sidewalks
- ▶ Street Trees/Plantings/Raingardens
- ▶ Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks)
- ▶ Signage/Wayfinding
- ▶ Transit Hubs (bicycle facilities, shelters, seating, signage, lighting)
- ▶ Street and Pedestrian Lighting
- ▶ Public Art
- ▶ Pedestrian-Friendly Crossings (markings, special paving, countdown traffic signals, ADA features)





## ROBERT STREET (PROPOSED 95' R.O.W.)

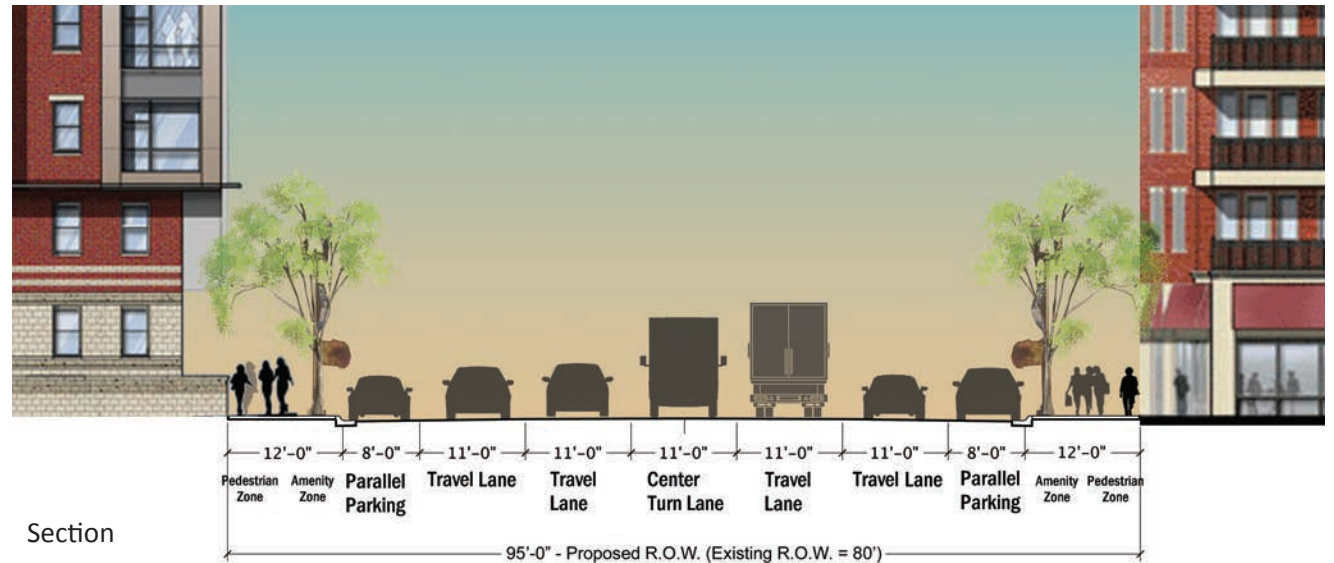


### DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA

- ▶ 95 feet Right-of-Way Width
- ▶ 71 feet Pavement Width (2-way)
- ▶ 20'-30' o/c Street Tree Spacing
- ▶ 12'-0" Sidewalk Width (both sides)

### DESIGN FEATURES

- ▶ Sidewalks
- ▶ On-Street Parallel Parking
- ▶ Intersection Bumpouts
- ▶ Street Trees/Plantings/Raingardens
- ▶ Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks)
- ▶ Signage/Wayfinding
- ▶ Transit Hubs (bicycle facilities, shelters, seating, signage, lighting)
- ▶ Street and Pedestrian Lighting
- ▶ Public Art
- ▶ Pedestrian-Friendly Crossings (markings, special paving, countdown traffic signals, ADA features)





## ROBERT STREET (PROPOSED 95' R.O.W. WITH PUBLIC TRANSIT)

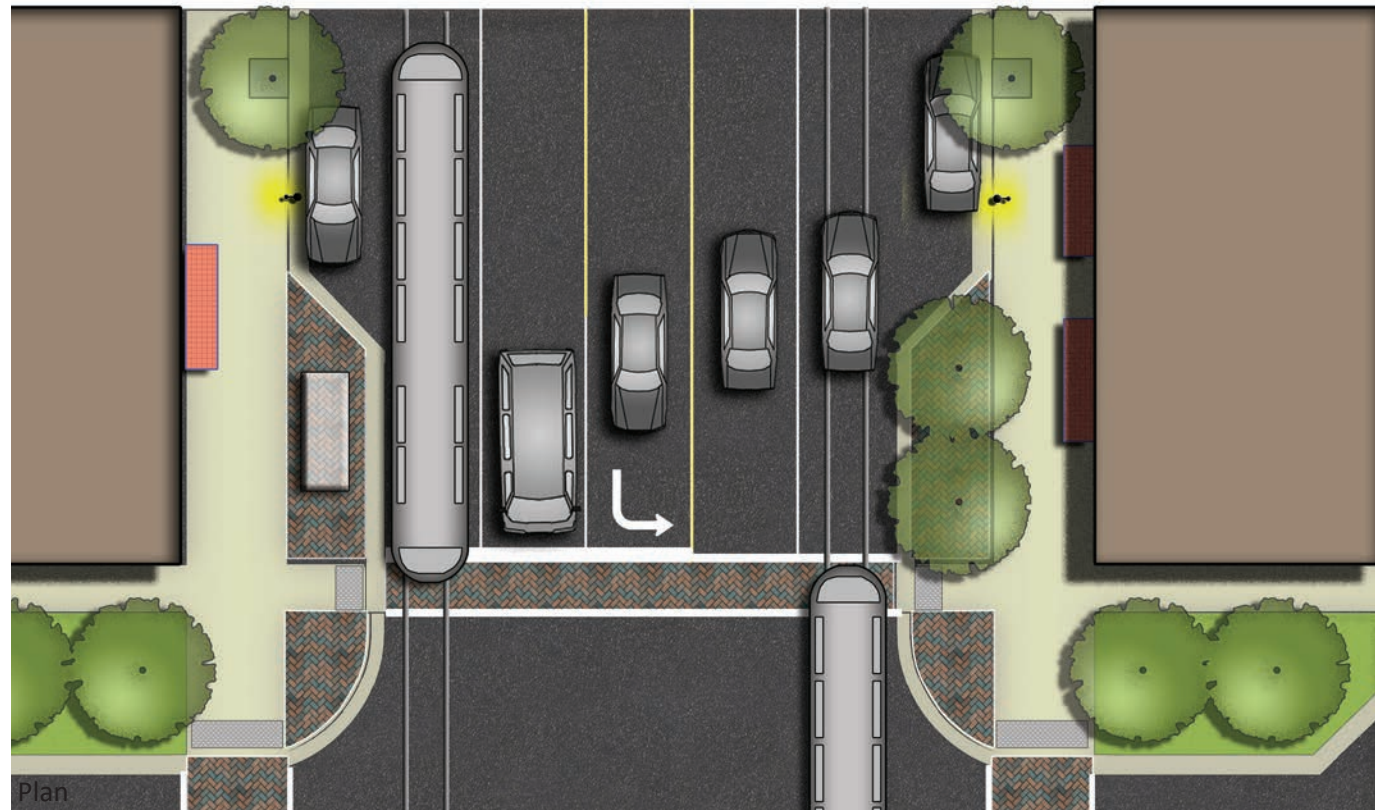
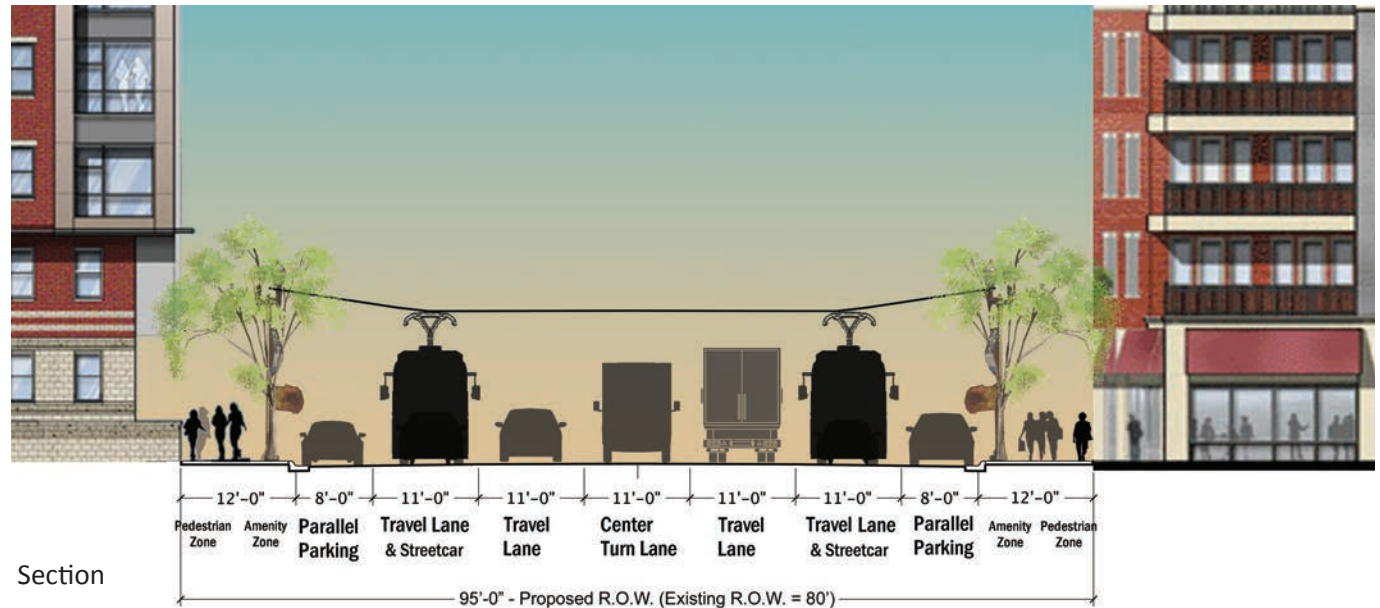


### DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA

- ▶ 95 feet Right-of-Way Width
- ▶ 71 feet Pavement Width (2-way)
- ▶ 20'-30' o/c Street Tree Spacing
- ▶ 12'-0" Sidewalk Width (both sides)

### DESIGN FEATURES

- ▶ Sidewalks
- ▶ Streetcar or Bus Rapid Transit Lanes, Facilities and Stations
- ▶ On-Street Parallel Parking
- ▶ Intersection Bumpouts
- ▶ Street Trees/Plantings/Raingardens
- ▶ Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks)
- ▶ Signage/Wayfinding
- ▶ Transit Hubs (bicycle facilities, shelters, seating, signage, lighting)
- ▶ Street and Pedestrian Lighting
- ▶ Public Art
- ▶ Pedestrian-Friendly Crossings (markings, special paving, countdown traffic signals, ADA features)





**WABASHA STREET (EXISTING 100'  
R.O.W. WITH CENTERLINE MOVED TO  
CENTER OF R.O.W.)**

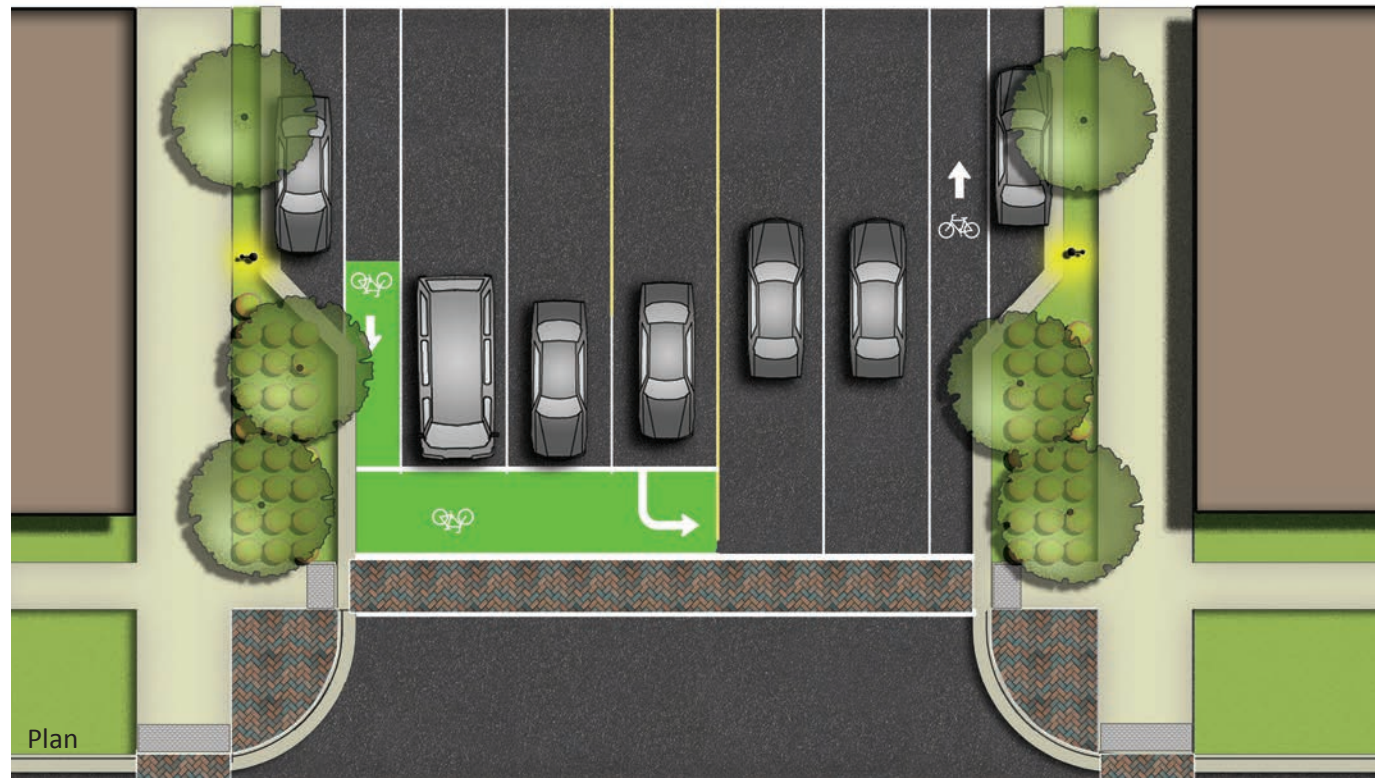
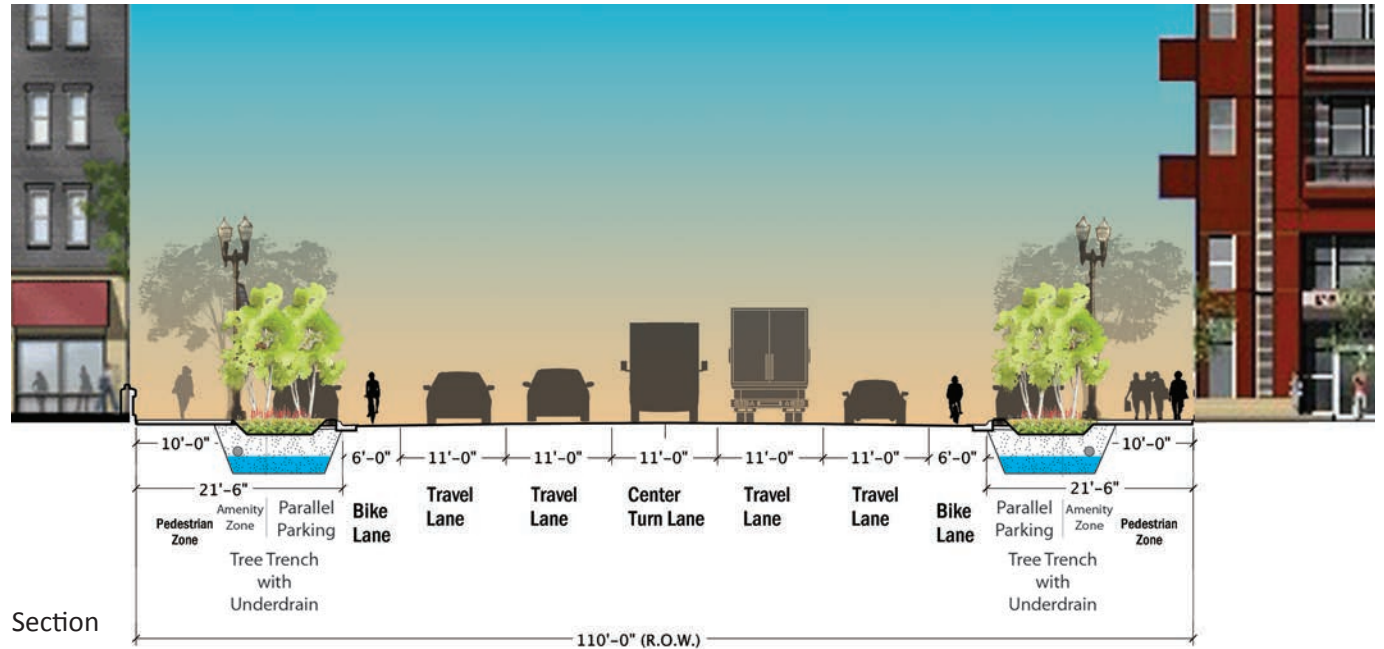


**DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA**

- ▶ 100 feet Right-of-Way Width
- ▶ 80 feet Pavement Width (2-way)
- ▶ 20'-30' o/c Street Tree Spacing
- ▶ 10'-0" Sidewalk Width (both sides)

**DESIGN FEATURES**

- ▶ Sidewalks
- ▶ On-Street Parallel Parking
- ▶ Bicycle Lanes
- ▶ Intersection Bumpouts
- ▶ Street Trees/Plantings/Raingardens
- ▶ Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks)
- ▶ Signage/Wayfinding
- ▶ Transit Hubs (bicycle facilities, shelters, seating, signage, lighting)
- ▶ Street and Pedestrian Lighting
- ▶ Public Art
- ▶ Pedestrian-Friendly Crossings (markings, special paving, countdown traffic signals, ADA features)



## FILLMORE AVENUE (WEST OF ROBERT STREET WITH PROPOSED 70' R.O.W.)

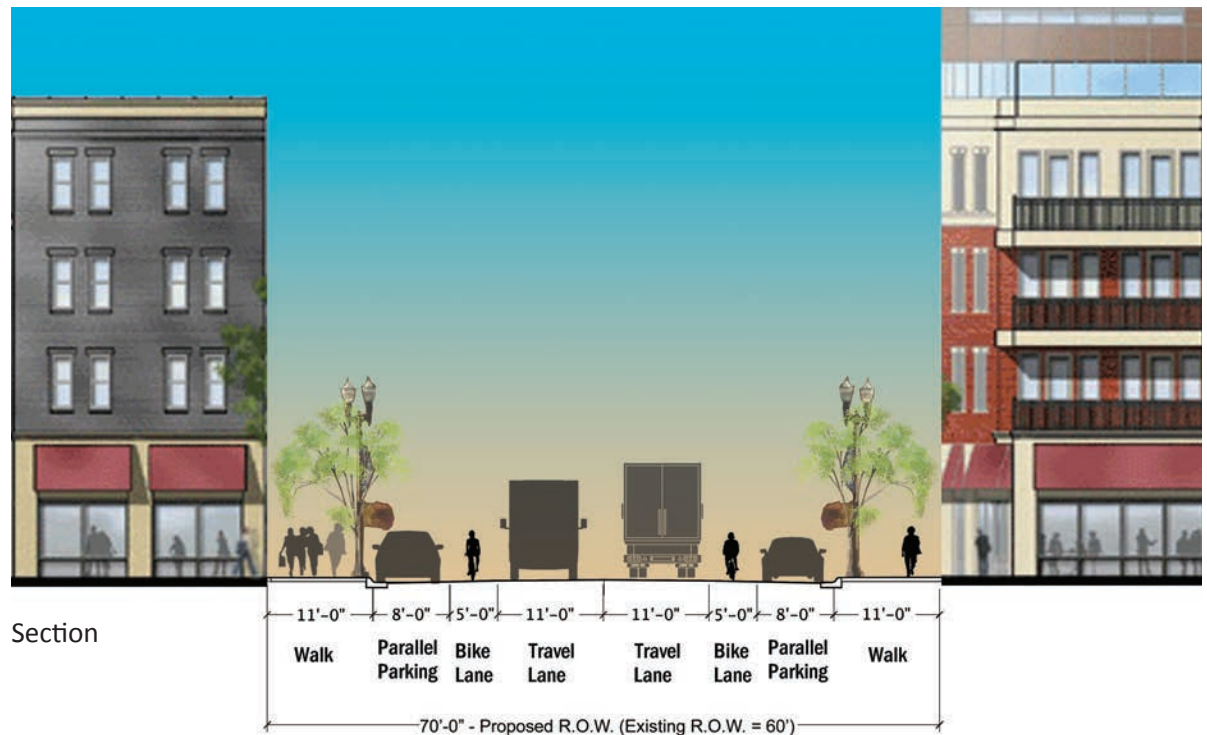


### DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA

- ▶ 70 feet Right-of-Way Width
- ▶ 48 feet Pavement Width (2-way)
- ▶ 20'-30' o/c Street Tree Spacing
- ▶ 11'-0" Sidewalk Width (both sides)

### DESIGN FEATURES

- ▶ Sidewalks
- ▶ On-Street Parallel Parking
- ▶ Bicycle Lanes
- ▶ Intersection Bumpouts
- ▶ Street Trees/Plantings/Raingardens
- ▶ Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks)
- ▶ Signage/Wayfinding
- ▶ Transit Hubs (bicycle facilities, shelters, seating, signage, lighting)
- ▶ Street and Pedestrian Lighting
- ▶ Public Art
- ▶ Pedestrian-Friendly Crossings (markings, special paving, countdown traffic signals, ADA features)





## FILLMORE AVENUE (EAST OF ROBERT STREET WITH EXISTING 100' R.O.W.)

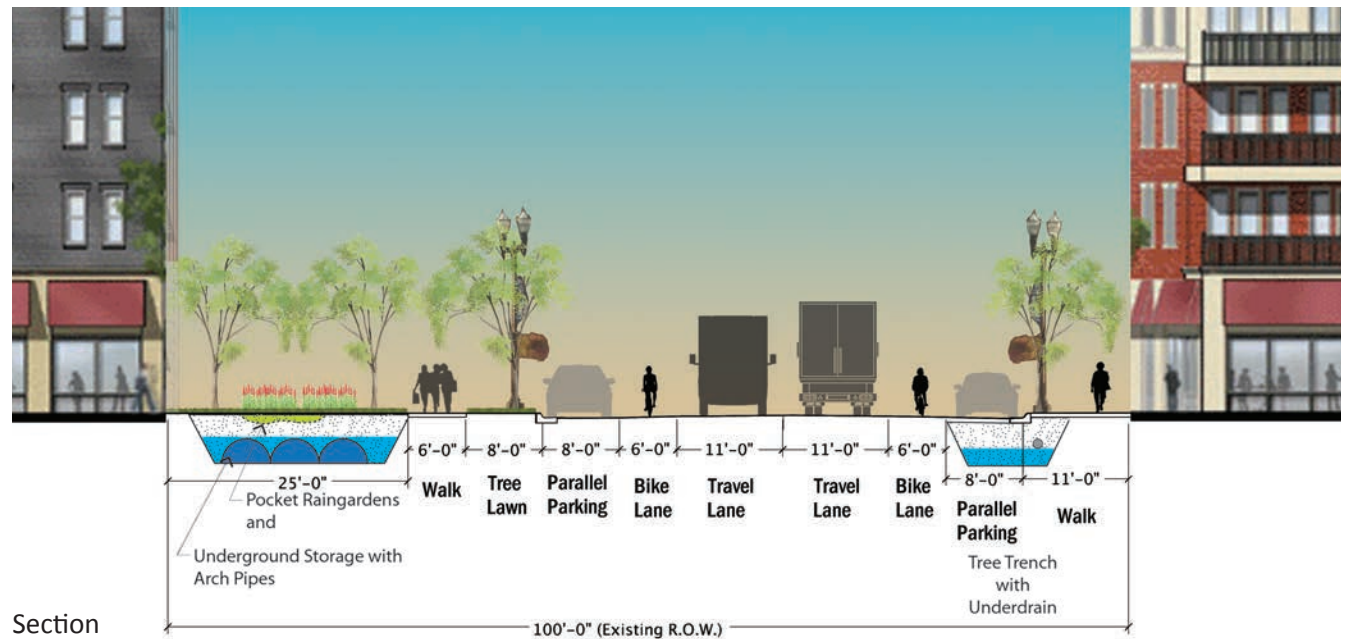


### DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA

- ▶ 100 feet Right-of-Way Width
- ▶ 50 feet Pavement Width (2-way)
- ▶ 20'-30' o/c Street Tree Spacing
- ▶ 11'-0" Sidewalk Width (North side of street)
- ▶ 6'-0" Sidewalk Width (South side of street)

### DESIGN FEATURES

- ▶ Sidewalks
- ▶ On-Street Parallel Parking
- ▶ Bicycle Lanes
- ▶ Intersection Bumpouts
- ▶ Street Trees/Plantings/Raingardens
- ▶ Underground Stormwater Storage
- ▶ Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks)
- ▶ Signage/Wayfinding
- ▶ Transit Hubs (bicycle facilities, shelters, seating, signage, lighting)
- ▶ Street and Pedestrian Lighting
- ▶ Public Art
- ▶ Pedestrian-Friendly Crossings (markings, special paving, countdown traffic signals, ADA features)



## PLATO BOULEVARD WITH CYCLE TRACK OPTION (EXISTING 110' R.O.W.)

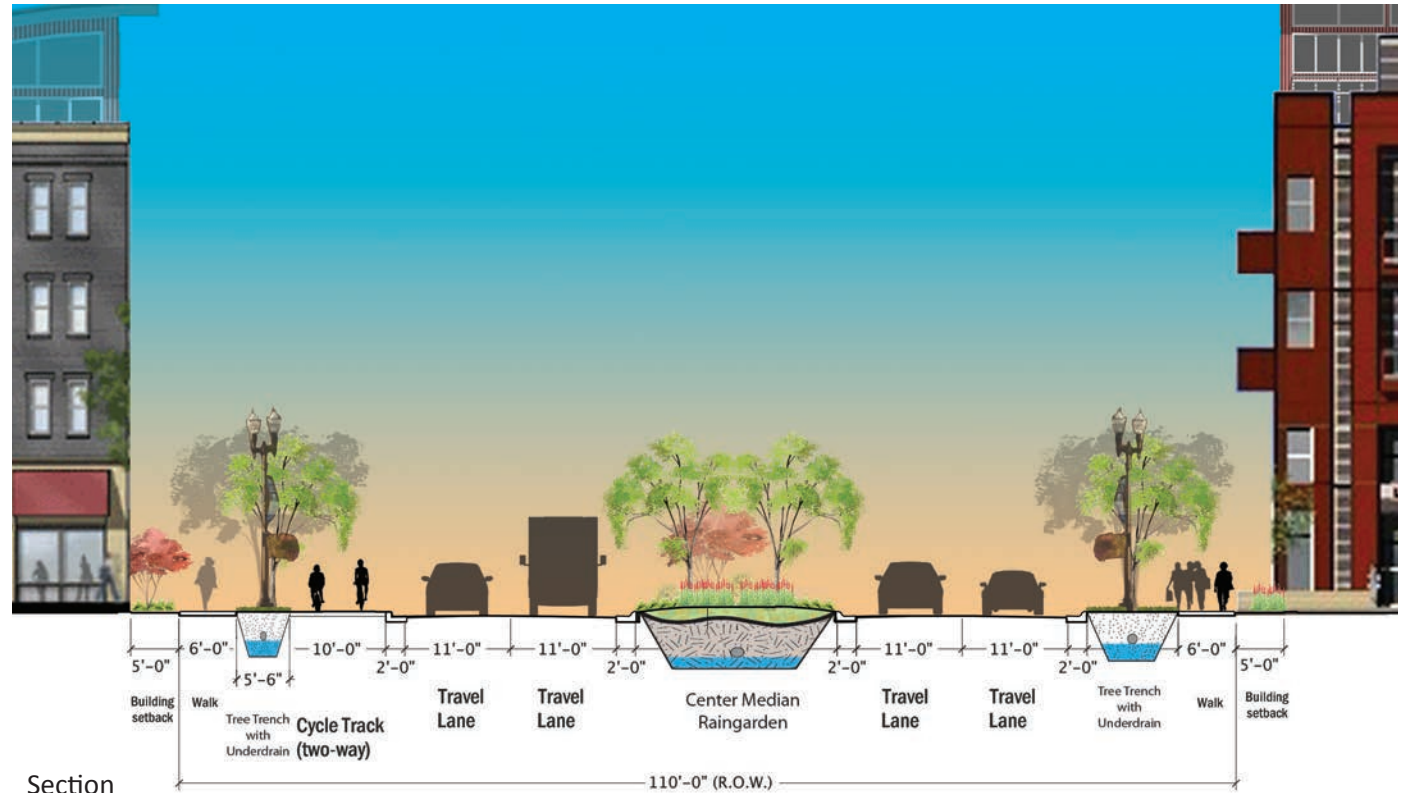


### DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA

- ▶ 110 feet Right-of-Way Width
- ▶ 44 feet Pavement Width (2-way)
- ▶ 20'-30' o/c Street Tree Spacing
- ▶ 6'-0" Sidewalk Width (both sides of street)
- ▶ 10'-0" Cycle Track
- ▶ 21'-0" Planted Median

### DESIGN FEATURES

- ▶ Sidewalks
- ▶ Cycle Track (two-way)
- ▶ Planted Median
- ▶ Street Trees/Plantings/Raingardens
- ▶ Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks)
- ▶ Signage/Wayfinding
- ▶ Transit Hubs (bicycle facilities, shelters, seating, signage, lighting)
- ▶ Street and Pedestrian Lighting
- ▶ Public Art
- ▶ Pedestrian-Friendly Crossings (markings, special paving, countdown traffic signals, ADA features)





## PLATO BOULEVARD WITH MULTI-USE TRAIL OPTION (EXISTING 110' R.O.W.)

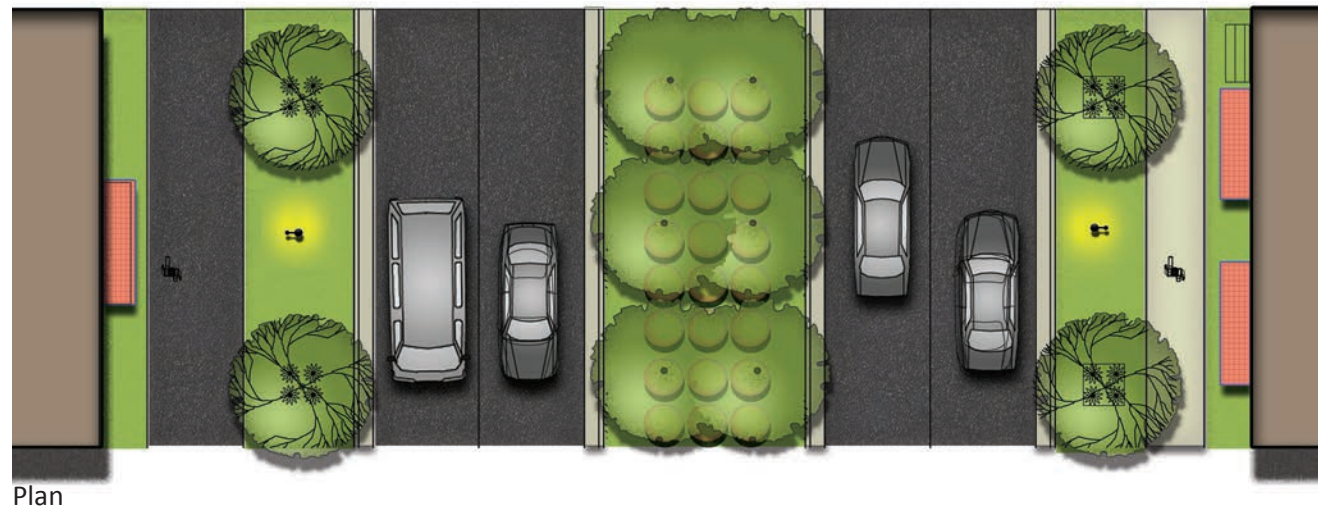
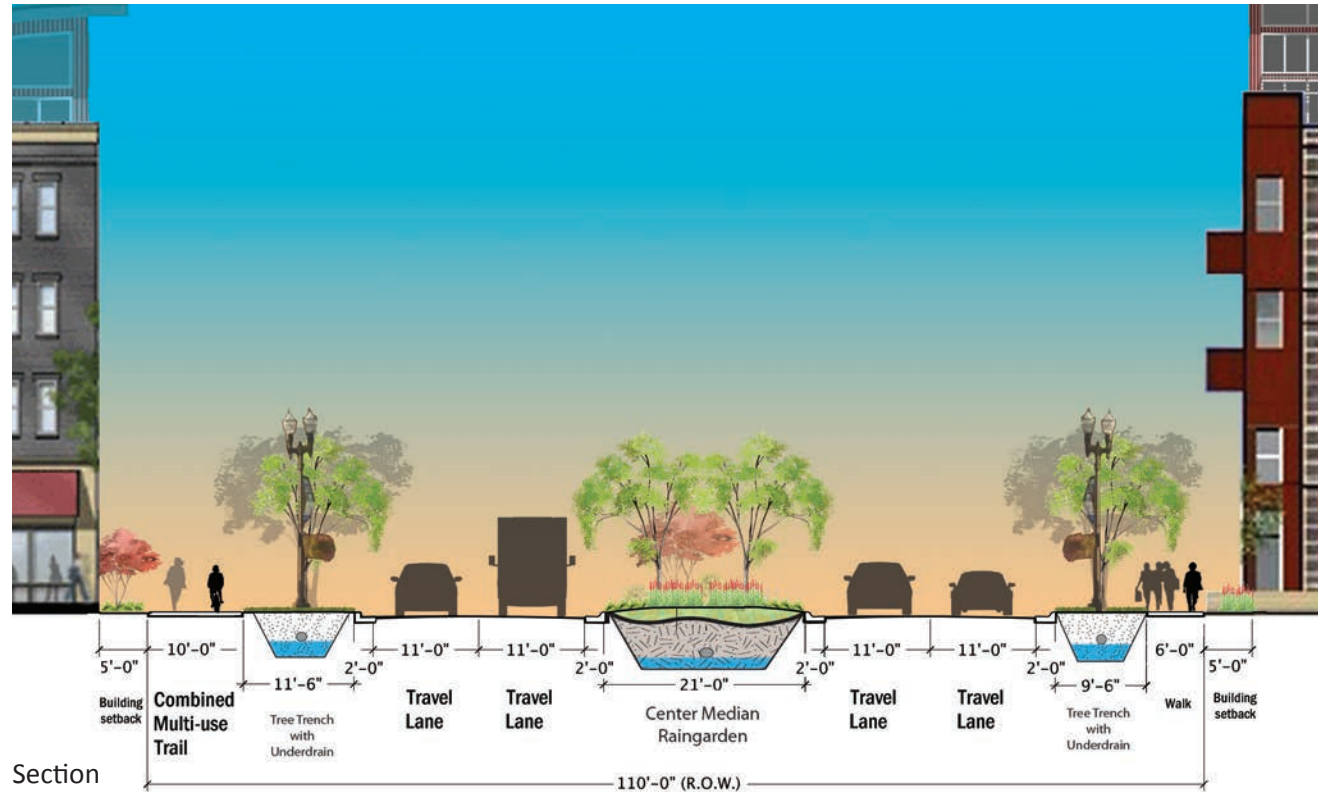


### DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA

- ▶ 110 feet Right-of-Way Width
- ▶ 44 feet Pavement Width (2-way)
- ▶ 20'-30' o/c Street Tree Spacing
- ▶ 6'-0" Sidewalk Width (South side of street)
- ▶ 10'-0" Combined Multi-Use Trail (two-way)
- ▶ 21'-0" Planted Median

### DESIGN FEATURES

- ▶ Sidewalks
- ▶ Combined Multi-Use Trail (two-way)
- ▶ Planted Median
- ▶ Street Trees/Plantings/Raingardens
- ▶ Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks)
- ▶ Signage/Wayfinding
- ▶ Transit Hubs (bicycle facilities, shelters, seating, signage, lighting)
- ▶ Street and Pedestrian Lighting
- ▶ Public Art
- ▶ Pedestrian-Friendly Crossings (markings, special paving, countdown traffic signals,



## STATE STREET (EXISTING 80' R.O.W.)

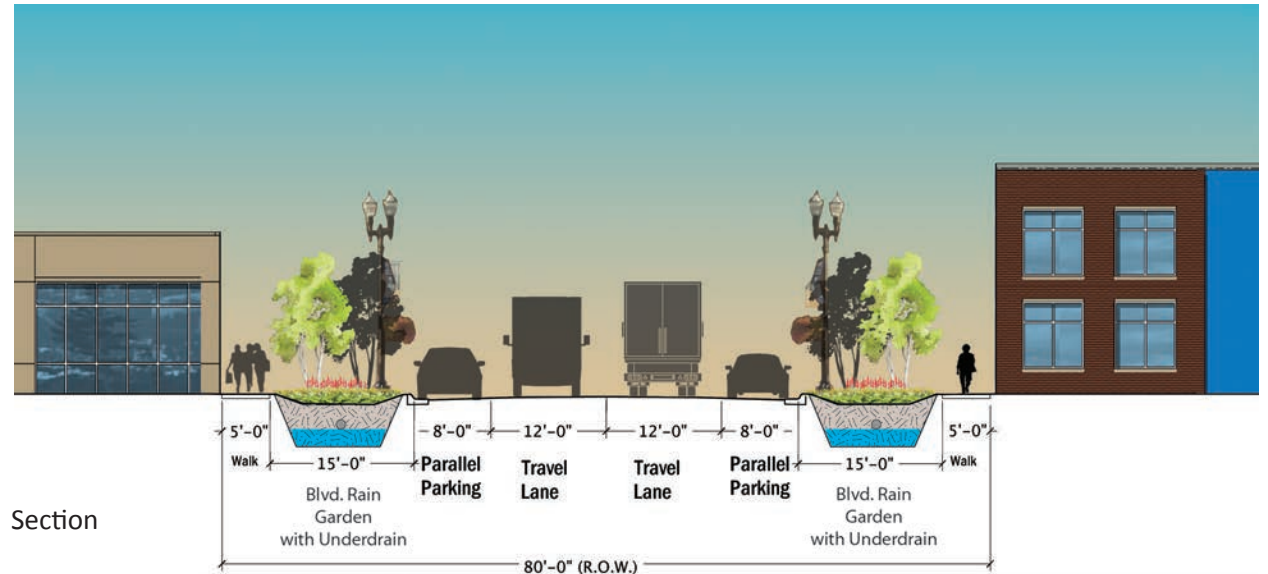


### DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA

- ▶ 80 feet Right-of-Way Width
- ▶ 40 feet Pavement Width (2-way)
- ▶ 20'-30' o/c Street Tree Spacing
- ▶ 5'-0" Sidewalk Width (both sides of street)

### DESIGN FEATURES

- ▶ Sidewalks
- ▶ On-Street Parking
- ▶ Intersection Bumpouts
- ▶ Street Trees/Plantings/Raingardens
- ▶ Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks)
- ▶ Signage/Wayfinding
- ▶ Street and Pedestrian Lighting
- ▶ Public Art
- ▶ Pedestrian-Friendly Crossings (markings, special paving, countdown traffic signals, ADA features)





## EVA STREET (EXISTING 80' R.O.W.)

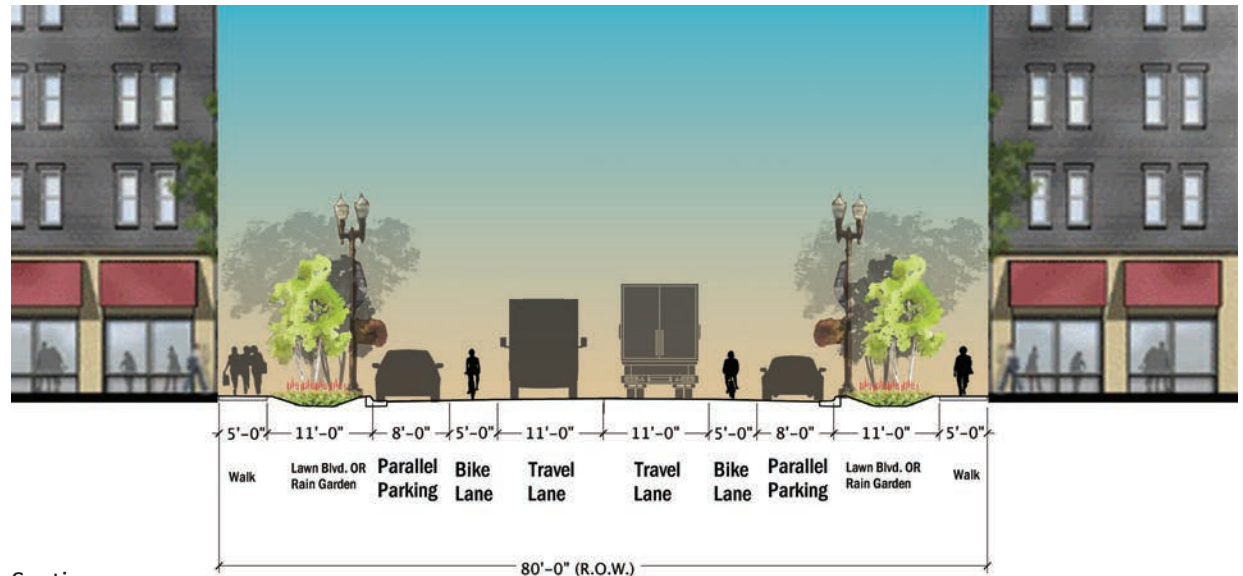


### DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA

- ▶ 80 feet Right-of-Way Width
- ▶ 48 feet Pavement Width (2-way)
- ▶ 20'-30' o/c Street Tree Spacing
- ▶ 5'-0" Sidewalk Width (both sides of street)

### DESIGN FEATURES

- ▶ Sidewalks
- ▶ On-Street Parking
- ▶ Bicycle Lanes
- ▶ Intersection Bumpouts
- ▶ Street Trees/Plantings/Raingardens
- ▶ Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks)
- ▶ Signage/Wayfinding
- ▶ Street and Pedestrian Lighting
- ▶ Public Art
- ▶ Pedestrian-Friendly Crossings (markings, special paving, countdown traffic signals, ADA features)



Section



Plan

## TYPICAL COMMERCIAL STREET (PROPOSED 60' R.O.W.)



### DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA

- ▶ 60 feet Right-of-Way Width
- ▶ 38 feet Pavement Width (2-way)
- ▶ 20'-30' o/c Street Tree Spacing
- ▶ 11'-0" Sidewalk Width (both sides of street)

### DESIGN FEATURES

- ▶ Sidewalks
- ▶ On-Street Parking
- ▶ Intersection Bumpouts
- ▶ Street Trees/Plantings/Raingardens
- ▶ Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks)
- ▶ Signage
- ▶ Street and Pedestrian Lighting
- ▶ Pedestrian-Friendly Crossings (markings, special paving, countdown traffic signals, ADA features)





## TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL STREET (PROPOSED 60' R.O.W.)

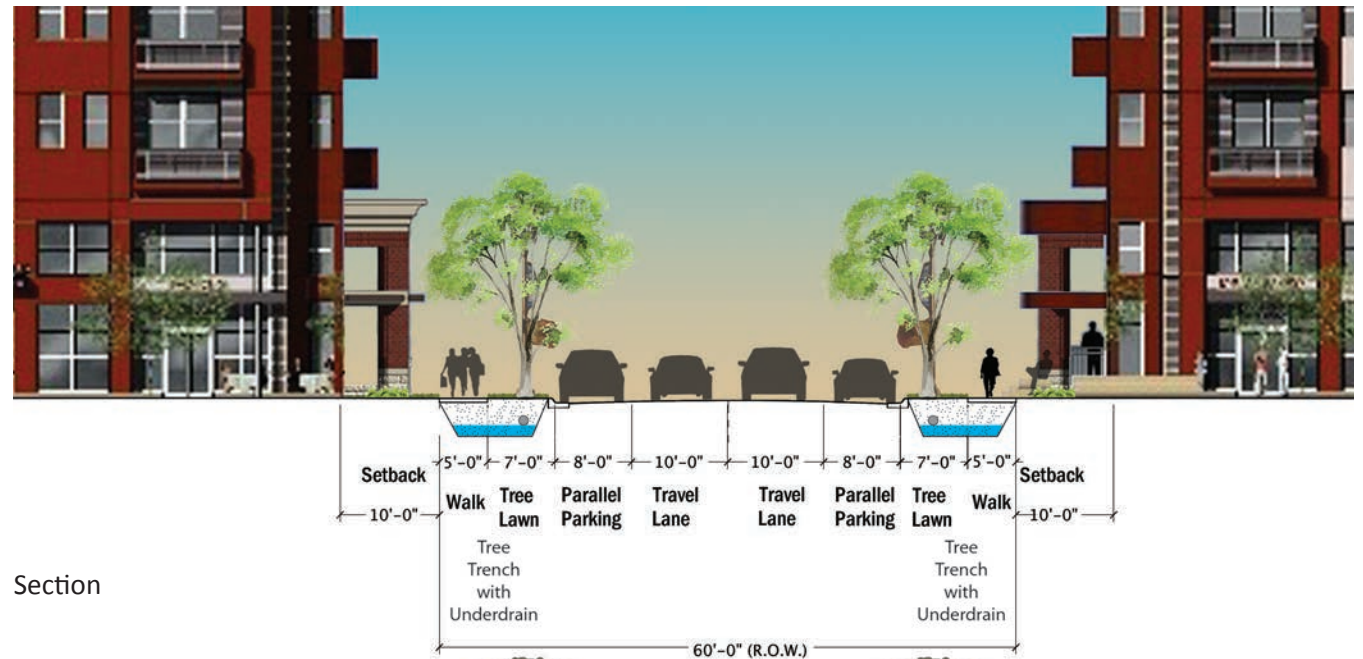


### DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA

- ▶ 60 feet Right-of-Way Width
- ▶ 36 feet Pavement Width (2-way)
- ▶ 20'-30' o/c Street Tree Spacing
- ▶ 5'-0" Sidewalk Width (both sides of street)

### DESIGN FEATURES

- ▶ Sidewalks
- ▶ On-Street Parking
- ▶ Intersection Bumpouts
- ▶ Street Trees/Plantings/Raingardens
- ▶ Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks)
- ▶ Signage
- ▶ Street and Pedestrian Lighting
- ▶ Pedestrian-Friendly Crossings (markings, special paving, countdown traffic signals, ADA features)





## Pedestrian Facilities

- 1) On blocks in mixed-use corridors and along the riverfront esplanade, the pedestrian zone should be expanded to accommodate anticipated pedestrian traffic levels and allow for street furnishings, lighting, landscaping and outdoor restaurant seating.
- 2) The number of curb cuts should be minimized to preserve flat sidewalk surfaces and reduce pedestrian-vehicle movement conflicts.
- 3) Frequent pedestrian connections to the riverfront esplanade and the linear greenway should be provided as part of the pedestrian system.
- 4) The community's pedestrian system should have connections to the regional park, open space and trail system.
- 5) Curb bump-outs should be added at street intersections, wherever feasible, to shorten crosswalk distances, calm traffic, provide areas for street furnishings/landscaping, and delineate limits of on-street parking.
- 6) Walk/bike crossings should be clearly marked at arterial and collector street intersections with reflective paint, special paving materials, light signal and/or signage alerting motorists to the walk/bike crossing.
- 7) High quality pedestrian crossing signals should be added at key signalized intersections, including pedestrian countdown signals that are automated, have non-visual formats (e.g. audible and/or vibrating surfaces), and sequence timing of pedestrian crossing signal ahead of vehicle signals (e.g. right turn and left turn arrows).

## Bike Facilities

- 1) The potential for adding marked bike boxes, to provide space for bicyclists to stop and make left turns, should be explored for signalized intersections.
- 2) Frequent bike connections to the riverfront esplanade and the linear greenway should be provided as part of the bike system.
- 3) Bike parking/storage facilities at or near public facilities (including civic buildings, parks, transit shelters/stops) should be provided along mixed-use corridors and at other major destinations.
- 4) The provision of free bike maintenance stations that provide amenities, such as a tire pump, tire air gauge, tire levers, tools, etc., should be considered along major bike routes and at transit hubs.
- 5) Promote expansion of bike sharing (e.g. Nice Ride) facilities at key destinations as redevelopment occurs.



## Transit Facilities

- 1) Transit shelters and stops should be sited and designed as integral elements of the streetscape with design features (e.g. materials, patterns and colors) that communicate the character of the West Side Flats.
- 2) A heated shelter, seating, lighting and bike parking should be provided at major transit stops.
- 3) The City's public art initiative should be incorporated into the design of transit shelters and stops.

## Landscaping

- 1) Street trees should be planted at regular intervals that are appropriate to the root structure and canopy of the tree species chosen.
- 2) A minimum of two tree species should be planted per block face.
- 3) A similar mix of street tree species and spacing should be installed on both sides of the street along a given block.
- 4) Native tree and plant species should be used, whenever possible, to protect and restore the unique character and environmental qualities of the Mississippi River Valley, reduce maintenance, reduce carbon emissions, and reduce the urban heat island effect.
- 5) Low-maintenance/drought-tolerant plants and trees should be planted to reduce irrigation needs; consider allowing exceptions for higher-maintenance materials in areas with high pedestrian traffic and community gathering spaces.
- 6) The use of turf grass should be minimized for planted areas directly adjacent to public streets.
- 7) Artificial plant materials should not be used as part of landscaping.
- 8) Structural soils should be used where street trees are planted within paved areas (e.g. sidewalks, plazas, and parking lots) to support deep tree root growth beneath the paved area and prevent heaving of sidewalks, plazas, curbs, and gutters.
- 9) Flowering plants in hanging baskets or planters should be installed along mixed-use corridors and commercial streets to create a welcoming pedestrian environment and contribute to the unique identity of the West Side Flats.
- 10) On mixed-use corridors and commercial streets, plant materials should be selected that minimize visual obstruction of businesses facing the street.
- 11) Plant materials, fencing, or landscape improvements should not encroach into the sight lines of any street intersection or driveway.





## Furnishings/Lighting

- 1) Street furnishings (benches and seating, trash/recycling receptacles, bollards, bike racks, kiosks, etc.) should be provided at transit stops, building entry areas, parks, plazas, the riverfront esplanade, and along mixed-use and commercial streets.
- 2) A consistent design palette (style, materials and color) of street furnishings should be used to make them visually interesting, reinforce the character of the riverfront esplanade, West Side, and Saint Paul, and to create a strong sense of community identity.
- 3) Street furnishings should be provided to enhance the comfort, accessibility, safety, and functionality of the streetscape.
- 4) Street furnishings that are made of durable materials, recycled materials when possible, easily maintained/repared, and locally available should be used whenever feasible.
- 5) Street light poles that accommodate banners, flower baskets, and holiday decorations should be installed to improve the visual character and identity of the street.
- 6) A complementary mix of pedestrian-scale street light fixtures should be provided to enhance the unique character of the riverfront esplanade, West Side mixed-use/commercial streets, and Saint Paul residential neighborhoods.
- 7) Lighting fixtures should be designed to minimize visibility of light bulbs by pedestrians and light pollution in general.
- 8) A system of wayfinding features should be incorporated into the public realm, e.g. wayfinding signs at major transit stops, along mixed-use corridors, parks, plazas, and open spaces.



# Site Development

## General

- 1) Allow for and encourage a variety of complementary land uses as part of new development that integrates a mix of housing, shops, and services with employment center uses, thereby reducing travel distances and number of vehicular trips, increasing non-vehicular travel (walking, biking and transit), and improving air quality.
- 2) Design sites, blocks and streets to encourage use of non-vehicular transportation alternatives, including walking, biking, bikesharing, transit, carpooling, carsharing, and electric vehicles; for example, bike racks/storage and electric vehicle charging stations should be considered for parking areas.
- 3) Encourage new development to use locally available building materials to reduce carbon emissions produced by the transport of the materials.
- 4) Encourage site development and building construction to minimize the amount of materials used on a given project. Development projects should seek to minimize waste to landfills and explore options to discard excess materials for local reuse. New development should utilize durable building materials with longer life spans.
- 5) Individual business operations should be planned and/or modified to ensure waste materials are sorted for recycling and reuse. Coordinate with the local waste management hauler to ensure facilities and resources are adequate to accommodate the recyclable materials generated from the business and residential uses.
- 6) Landscaping material and organic waste should be composted or reused. Explore options to provide composting on individual project sites, a central district facility, or collected by the local waste management hauler.



## Landscaping

- 1) The ratio of planted surfaces to non-planted surfaces should be maximized to reduce unnecessary hard surface cover wherever possible, in order to enhance the river flyway, restore the urban forest, reduce the urban heat island effect, and improve water quality.
- 2) Encourage landscaped plazas, courtyards and gardens.
- 3) Native plant and tree species are encouraged as part of new development to protect and restore the unique character and environmental qualities of the Mississippi River Valley, reduce maintenance, reduce carbon emissions, and reduce the urban heat island effect.
- 4) Encourage landscaping along exterior building walls to provide shade and cooling.



## Service, Delivery and Storage Areas

- 1) Locate service, delivery and storage areas so that views of them from adjacent properties, streets, open spaces and pathways are minimized.
- 2) Where feasible, utilize landscape and architectural screening to minimize visual impacts of service, delivery and storage areas.
- 3) Use signage to clearly identify service entrances to discourage the use of main building entries for service and delivery areas.

## Water Conservation

- 1) Encourage the collection of rain water for irrigation and toilet flushing purposes. Consider the design and construction of harvesting facilities for recreation and other public areas.
- 2) Design site irrigation facilities with water efficient systems.



## Lighting

- 1) Use building lighting only for safe illumination of building entries, service areas, and pedestrian/vehicle movement areas.
- 2) Lighting at building entries, service areas and pedestrian/vehicle movement areas should be limited to low wattage downcast or low cut-off fixtures that may remain on throughout the night.
- 3) Service area lighting should be confined within the service area boundaries and enclosure walls. No spill-over lighting should occur outside of the service or storage area. Lighting sources should not be visible from the street.
- 4) Accent lighting should be limited to indirect lighting of specific signage, architectural and landscape features only; lighting should not exhibit or advertise the buildings itself. Unshielded bulbs or exposed neon lighting should not be used to accentuate building signage, architectural and landscape features.



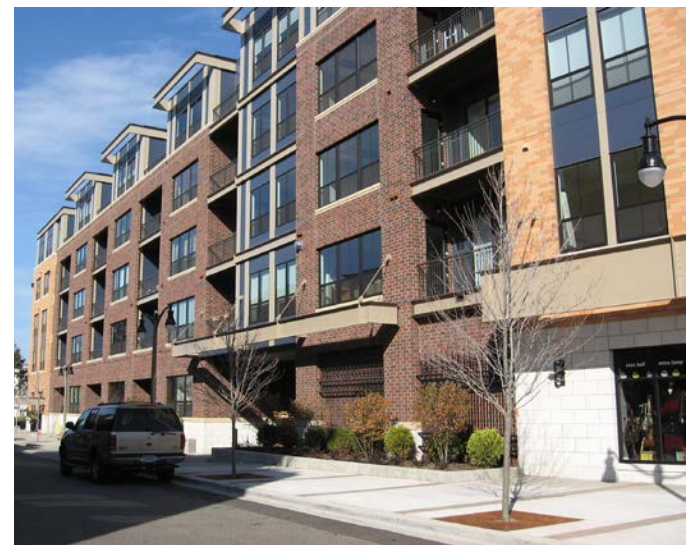
# Buildings

## Building Placement & Setbacks/Frontages

- 1) Riverfront buildings should face and be built up to the riverfront esplanade edge.
- 2) Residential buildings should incorporate a transition zone between private space and the public sidewalk/riverfront esplanade. Possible transition techniques include a change in grade, stoop, stairway, porch, deck, or landscaping.
- 3) Recessed building frontages for front door entries, outdoor seating, plazas and public art are encouraged along mixed-use corridors and the riverfront esplanade.
- 4) Buildings located on corner lots of the riverfront esplanade and connecting streets/pathways should be oriented to both public rights-of-way.
- 5) Buildings adjacent to transit stations/stops should be placed to shape outdoor spaces/plazas.
- 6) Buildings located at key street intersections and viewsheds should have the appropriate scale and placement to create attractive and identifiable gateways.
- 7) Consistent setbacks should be maintained for all buildings on a block face in order to reinforce the scale and character of the street and to facilitate the ease of pedestrian circulation between uses.

## Building Heights & Massing

- 1) Design buildings with the appropriate scale to frame and enclose the street, which is achieved by a building height that is proportionate to the width of the adjoining street. A ratio of building height to street width of one-to-two creates a strong “room-like” street, while a one- to-three ratio provides good street definition and proportion. Shorter buildings of one story facing broad streets will not achieve the desired relationship.
- 2) Buildings should generally be lower in height along the riverfront and increase in height as they approach Fillmore Avenue.
- 3) Along mixed-use corridors including the riverfront, buildings should be designed with stepbacks for upper stories in order to present a pedestrian-scale base at street level and the riverfront esplanade level.
- 4) Building heights along Plato Boulevard should be varied to prevent the creation of a wall of taller buildings along the street that does not provide an appropriate transition to the lower scale development scale south of Plato Boulevard and the District del Sol.





- 5) Building heights and roof treatments should vary from block-to-block in order to achieve a rich mix of building heights and diversify the visual character of the area.
- 6) Building massing should reinforce the character and importance of the adjacent street or open space.
- 7) Building massing should create an overall appearance of multiple structures, building fronts, and tenants along a block face. A single, large, dominant building mass should be avoided. Where large structures are required, mass should be broken up through the use of street level setbacks, projecting and recessed elements, upper level setbacks, and similar design techniques. Changes in mass shall be related to entrances, the integral structure, and/or the organization of interior spaces and activities and not merely for cosmetic effect.
- 8) Buildings should generally be designed with a perpendicular orientation toward the riverfront and bluff face, in order to preserve views through the West Side Flats to and from the riverfront and bluff face; multiple buildings with narrower and/or articulated facades facing the river are preferred over longer and flatter building facades that may generally block views from the public realm and other buildings.
- 9) Individual buildings should be designed with a scale that maximizes views of the river valley for the greater community (e.g. views from a variety of distances, the public realm, and other buildings are considered).
- 10) Riverfront buildings are encouraged to incorporate courtyards facing the riverfront in order to prevent creation of a “wall” along the riverfront. These semi-public courtyards should be designed as active spaces, with windows overlooking them, well-defined building entrances, multiple entries, and sunlight penetration, to the extent possible.
- 11) Multi-tenant buildings should be designed with breaks in the building mass to allow pedestrian access between the front (street) and rear (parking) side of the building.

## Building Form & Façade

- 1) A building’s form and facade features should reflect contemporary architectural design and construction technologies or contemporary interpretations of traditional architectural styles, as opposed to nostalgic imitations of past architectural styles.
- 2) Each building should have one or more clearly visible and identifiable “front doors” that address all public streets, sidewalks, public open spaces, and semi-public courtyards (where relevant). Buildings along the riverfront esplanade should have “front doors” oriented to both the riverfront esplanade and adjacent public streets.
- 3) Ground floor residences that adjoin a public street or open space should provide direct resident access to the public street or open space.



- 4) Major building entries should be connected to the sidewalk/riverfront esplanade by the most direct route practical.
- 5) Emphasize building entries through projecting or recessed forms, display windows, architectural detail, awnings, color, materials, lighting, and signage as appropriate.
- 6) Building design should emphasize a human scale at ground level, at entryways, and along street frontages through the creative use of windows, doors, columns, canopies, and awnings or other architectural elements.
- 7) Building facades should include multiple changes in building materials, parapet heights, fenestration, and other elements which create variety in the building façade.
- 8) Encourage the incorporation of functional balconies in buildings along streets and open spaces to create interest and variety of the building façade as well as put more “eyes on the street”.
- 9) Buildings should be designed to enhance the overall pedestrian character of the street, such as providing edges or enclosure to the street and open spaces along it, creating linkages and gateways, reinforcing pedestrian connections as well as framing or terminating views.
- 10) Variations in a building’s facade treatment may be continued through the structure, including its roof line and front and rear facades to reduce the perceived size of the building.
- 11) Blank exterior walls should be avoided. Where this is not possible, these walls should incorporate decorative features, such as architectural detailing, variations in building materials, art panels, murals, and plantings.
- 12) Building facades should incorporate bird-friendly architectural techniques (e.g. minimize reflectivity and transparency) to minimize the potential for bird collisions with glass facades.
- 13) Roofscapes should be designed as important elements of new buildings, given the proximity of bluff-top neighborhoods (West Side and Downtown) that will be “looking down” on the West Side Flats.
- 14) Mechanical equipment should be installed, whenever feasible, on the building’s roof so that it is not visible and audible at the pedestrian level and from public rights-of-way. Rooftop mechanical systems, and head houses for elevators and stairs, should be enclosed and concealed from view.





## Building Energy Efficiency

- 1) Wherever possible, buildings should be sited, oriented, and designed to capitalize on solar exposure to lessen energy demands.
- 2) Buildings should be sited to minimize east and west exposures, where feasible, and incorporate overhangs and appropriate shading components to help minimize unwanted solar gains.
- 3) Buildings should be designed to incorporate and support passive heating, cooling and ventilation strategies in their design.
- 4) Explore opportunities to incorporate renewable energy sources, including solar, biomass, geothermal and wind, to off-set energy consumption and reduce carbon emissions. Explore opportunities to use solar and wind harvesting devices in public areas (i.e. along rights-of-way, within parks, and atop public buildings). Alternatively, consider creating an area within the employment center dedicated to use by neighborhood scale biomass or other renewable energy sources.
- 5) Buildings should be constructed with water efficient utilities (e.g. toilets, sinks, showers).
- 6) For improving energy performance, attempt to control the percentage of the facade devoted to windows, taking into account other aesthetic and livability criteria.
- 7) If higher window-to-wall area ratios are desired, incorporate high performance windows or a double facade and optimize shading.
- 8) Use an air-tight envelope to minimize uncontrolled infiltration.
- 9) Use heat-recovery ventilation during heating season only, and design for natural ventilation and cooling by natural ventilation throughout the rest of the year.
- 10) Use clear glass with good insulating value (low U-value with low-e coating) for windows and doors. Mitigate unwanted solar gains with external shading and allow for passive cooling by natural ventilation.
- 11) Remove internal heat gains with other passive elements (e.g., natural ventilation).
- 12) Incorporate overhangs providing shading for south-facing windows.
- 13) Incorporate operable external shading on east-, south- and west-facing windows.
- 14) Use thermal mass that is exposed to the conditioned space and combine it with other passive elements to achieve its full energy-savings and comfort potential.
- 15) Incorporate buffer spaces on all exposures whenever possible to optimize comfort and reduce both peak load and overall heating and cooling energy requirements.



- 16) Design for cooling by natural ventilation in all building types.
- 17) Optimize the effects of passive heating and cooling strategies by strategically combining passive elements. Incorporate as many passive design elements as possible to optimize comfort and minimize overall energy use.
- 18) Optimize building placement and configuration to achieve maximum energy performance.
- 19) Existing industrial buildings should be retrofitted for improved energy efficiency as part of reusing and reinvesting in them for contemporary commercial/industrial uses.
- 20) Design new buildings for long-term adaptability.



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# Parking

- 1) Building massing should create an overall appearance of multiple structures, building fronts, and tenants along a block face. A single, large, dominant building mass should be avoided. Where large structures are required, mass should be broken up through the use of street level setbacks, projecting and recessed elements, upper level stepbacks, and similar design techniques. Changes in mass shall be related to entrances, the integral structure, and/or the organization of interior spaces and activities and not merely for cosmetic effect. Parking for new buildings should be provided in parking structures where possible, with a minimal amount of surface parking for visitors.
- 2) The shared use of parking spaces is encouraged.
- 3) Single-use parking structures are discouraged.
- 4) Public parking facilities should be easily accessible and identifiable. District signage should be utilized to identify public parking facilities.
- 5) Entrances to private parking facilities should generally be located on secondary streets in order to maintain building continuity along mixed-use street corridors.
- 6) The presence of structured parking entrances should be minimized so that they do not dominate the street frontage of a building. Possible techniques include recessing the entry; extending portions of the structure over the entrance; using screening and landscaping; using the smallest curb cut possible; and subordinating the parking entrance to the pedestrian entrance in terms of prominence on the streetscape.
- 7) Above-grade parking structures should fit with the character of surrounding buildings through the use of complementary exterior wall materials, treatments, forms, articulation, fenestration, patterns, and colors. Even though these buildings store automobiles, they should appear to be part of a collection of neighborhood buildings along the street.
- 8) Above-grade parking structures should contain commercial/retail uses at street level.
- 9) If above-grade parking structures do not contain active uses at street level, landscaping and other screening devices are encouraged to buffer parking structures from pedestrian view.
- 10) Design parking facilities to minimize impacts of vehicle headlights on residential units.
- 11) Existing parking above-grade parking structures should be retrofitted for improved energy efficiency.



# Stormwater/Water Quality

- 1) State of the art techniques should be considered for collecting, filtering and treating stormwater runoff, whenever feasible.
- 1) Design treatment of stormwater from public infrastructure (streets, sidewalks, parks, etc.) to meet new state and federal stormwater volume control standards.
- 2) Filter and treat stormwater runoff sufficiently to ensure that the resulting water runoff into the Mississippi River is of the highest possible quality to improve the river's water quality and people's experience of the riverfront esplanade.
- 3) Integrate the stormwater management system with the public streets and open spaces systems to provide unique public and private amenities and maximize use of valuable urban land for development.
- 4) Integrate regional stormwater treatment opportunities into park and open space areas, including the "green fingers", which complement recreational, multi-modal transportation, and ecological connections between the neighborhood and the river's edge.
- 5) Incorporate attractive rain garden and bio-retention systems to collect and filter stormwater in public spaces, including streetscapes, plazas, parks and parking lot islands.
- 6) Install non-traditional swales with natural meanders and stone check dams to slow stormwater runoff and create natural visual amenities for the neighborhood.
- 7) Install tree trenches as part of new and reconstructed streets with planted boulevards to improve stormwater management.
- 8) Incorporate porous pavers into hard surface areas to increase stormwater infiltration.
- 9) Plant stormwater pond edges with native plantings to discourage clustering of geese on sodded areas and contribute to restoration of the area's natural landscape.
- 10) Encourage the use of green roofs in new building construction to reduce the amount of stormwater runoff.
- 11) Promote the harvesting and reuse of stormwater for irrigation and toilet flushing purposes.
- 12) Design construction sites during the various phases of redevelopment to minimize impacts on water quality in stormwater drainage areas adjacent to the construction sites.





## Utilities

- 1) As streets are reconstructed, existing above-ground utilities should be relocated below ground within the public street rights-of-way whenever feasible.
- 2) Enhance the visual aesthetics of any above-ground utility structures with landscaping, fencing or other approved screening devices.
- 3) Design any new visible utility structures, particularly water-related, with interpretive features that enable citizens to better recognize and understand the functions of public infrastructure and reinforce the West Side Flats' unique sense of place.
- 4) Locate and screen above-ground utility structures away from major pedestrian and gathering areas, building entrances, windows and stormwater drainage areas where feasible.
- 5) Consider extending recycled water service lines to the West Side Flats area and providing incentives to encourage new development to connect to recycled water lines for irrigation and other uses when feasible.

## Public Art

- 1) Identify existing and create new spaces, such as parking lots, plazas, parks and temporary street closings that allow artists and audiences to interact in a participatory, temporary and somewhat unstructured manner. Public art events could include temporary festivals, street painting events, concerts, pageants, flea markets, etc.
- 2) Encourage use of undeveloped, underutilized and vacant spaces during the various phases of redevelopment in the West Side Flats for alternative and temporary art spaces. Involve artists in planning, design, construction, marketing, and maximizing these temporary public art spaces.
- 3) Engage artists to create a West Side Flats vibe by activating social spaces and visually enhancing areas that lack visual interest.
- 4) Collaborate with artists to identify innovative, unique and green approaches for the various phases of redevelopment in the West Side Flats.
- 5) Promote artists-in-residence as a strategy for establishing, integrating and maintaining a strong public art presence in the West Side Flats.
- 6) Promote the creation of signature public art works at gateway sites and other major destinations to create visible landmarks that draw attention from near and far, including



from across the river and from the surrounding bluffs.

- 7) Embrace the river in public art works and programming as a way to increase visibility of and interest in the West Side Flats as a unique place.
- 8) Create pedestrian-friendly wayfinding as an integral component of the public art plan to encourage audiences to move from one area to another within the West Side Flats.
- 9) Involve artists in creating unique, customized public realm furnishings, such as seating, bike racks, tree grates, light fixtures, etc.
- 10) Use public art to tap into the West Side Flats' unique social and environmental history. Historical references can be manifested in a multitude of ways, from well-designed and informative signs or plaques to sculpted figures reenacting an historic scene to motion-activated speakers that offer a poetic narration.
- 11) Encourage demonstration projects that attract attention to what's going on in the West Side Flats, such as temporary visual and performance art events.
- 12) Use the City's public art policies and guidelines as tools for maximizing the potential of art projects in the public realm and the design of public infrastructure, such as parks, trails, stormwater management, and transit facilities.
- 13) Leverage public-private partnerships for creating public art that enhances public infrastructure and open spaces to maximize synergy with other developers, both public and private.
- 14) Attract innovative funding sources from both the public and private sector to augment public art resources, such as partnerships with nonprofits and crowd-funding events.
- 15) Attract media coverage for the West Side Flats through innovative, colorful, or community-engaged public art projects.
- 16) Embrace new technology, such as Quick Response (QR) codes and geo-locational applications, that allows audiences to access information about public art and other events going on in the West Side Flats.







# 7 IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation is an essential component of the West Side Flats Master Plan in order for the plan to be actionable and achievable. This chapter of the plan identifies the recommended actions for implementing the vision, guiding principles and strategies of the master plan. The Implementation chapter is organized around the following topics:

- City policies & regulations
- Recommended implementation actions
- Partnership & financial considerations
- Phasing approach

## City Policies & Regulations

Implementation of the West Side Flats Master Plan will require updates to the City's policies and regulations, including the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

- 1) Amend Zoning Map and Text to be consistent with & supportive of West Side Flats Master Plan.
- 2) Establish an Official Map for planned streets in the West Side Flats.
- 3) Update the Parks and Recreation System Plan to reflect West Side Flats park and recreation needs.

## Proposed Zoning District Changes

- Rezone area east of Robert Street and north of Fillmore Ave from T3 to T3M;
- Rezone blocks along both sides of Robert Street, between Fillmore Ave and Plato Blvd, to T4M;
- Rezone blocks between Eaton Street (proposed new street east of Robert Street), Plato Blvd, Lafayette Road/Hwy 52, and Fillmore Ave/Alabama Ave to IT.

**T4M (Traditional Neighborhood District)**—Robert Street is being planned for future high-frequency transit improvements, either BRT or streetcar, and is the West Side community's primary north-south



*West Side levee riverwalk vision, Great River Passage Master Plan, 2012*

thoroughfare. The T4M zoning district is intended for the city's transit corridors. Since the West Side Flats Master Plan envisions the Robert Street corridor to have the highest intensity redevelopment in the future, applying the T4M zoning district will enable future development to be higher-density mixed-use, transit- supportive, and pedestrian-friendly. Allows for a variety of heights and taller buildings where they will have the least impact on views to and from the river valley.

**IT (Transitional Industrial)** - The revitalization of the area east of Robert Street as a jobs-rich employment center that is more integrated into the surrounding West Side community and contributes to reconnecting the neighborhood to the river demands that the area be rezoned to a more compatible zoning district. The intent of the IT district is to provide areas for a mix of business types, including light industrial, office, and commercial that are compatible with nearby residential and traditional neighborhood districts, parks, and parkways. The IT zoning district will enable a broader mix of businesses in the area and regulate future business development to be more compatible with the future urban village along the riverfront and to the west.







# Recommended Implementation Actions

These implementation actions essentially serve as the community's "to do list" for pursuing reinvestment and redevelopment in the West Side Flats over the next several years. Some of these actions will be clearly defined improvement projects that have a start and an end point. Other actions will be ongoing or recurring initiatives that will bring more incremental improvements to the West Side Flats. These recommended implementation actions encompass short-range (1-2 years), mid-range (3-5 years), and long-range (5 or more years) improvements.

- Land Use & Development
- Street System
- Pedestrian and Bike Facilities
- Transit
- Parks & Open Spaces
- Stormwater
- Public Art



## Land Use & Development

- 1) Collaborate with property owners to promote redevelopment of vacant, underutilized, and contaminated land.
- 2) Develop a marketing program for the West Side Flats that creates compelling identity and “brand” to attract investment and redevelopment.
- 3) Conduct a parking study for existing industrial and commercial uses in the Riverview business center to identify potential opportunities for improving parking management and infill development sites.
- 4) Promote the creation of a variety of public and semi-public gathering spaces throughout the West Side Flats.
- 5) Support the development of affordable housing units as part of providing a broad range of housing options in the West Side Flats.

## Street System

- 1) Collaborate with property owners on strategies to achieve the recommended expansion of the street network and improvement of existing streets.
- 2) Design, acquire right-of-way, and construct recommended new streets.
- 3) Redesign and reconstruct existing streets in conjunction with phasing of redevelopment and infill development projects.
- 4) Plan for acquisition of additional right-of-way along Robert Street.





## Pedestrian & Bike Facilities

- 1) Increase trail connections to the riverfront esplanade, including potential vertical connections at bridgeheads.
- 2) Construct the regional trail connection planned for Plato Boulevard to improve the WSF's connection to the regional trail system.
- 3) Study the potential for adding vertical connections between the WSF and the bluff top.
- 4) Redesign existing streets to accommodate sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes.
- 5) Design new streets with pedestrian and bike facilities that provide a complete and connected network throughout the WSF.



## Transit System

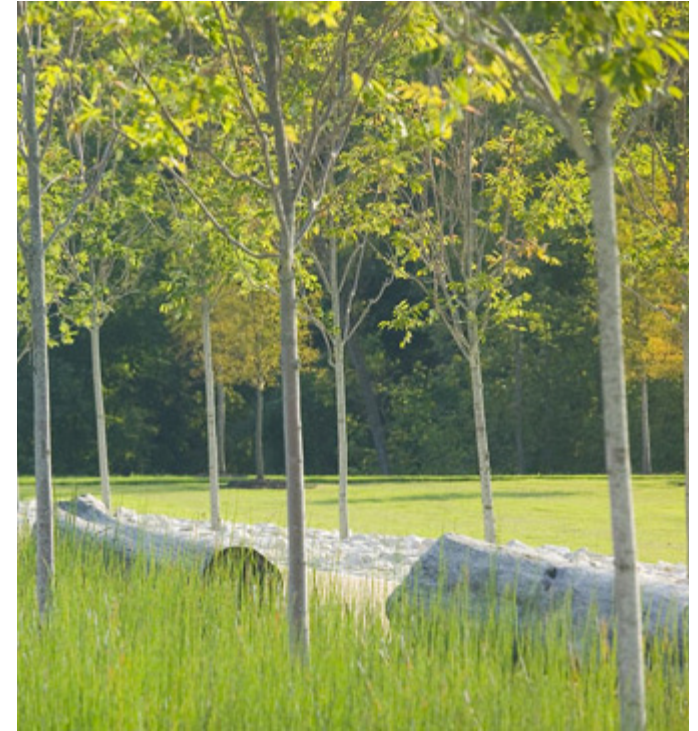
- 1) Continue to plan for Robert Street to become a future streetcar or bus rapid transit (BRT) corridor.
- 2) Work with Metro Transit to improve bus services, including connections to the Green Line LRT stations and transit shelters at key intersections.



## Park & Open Space

- 1) Plan and design the western greenway adjacent to the rail line.
- 2) Build a partnership with the Union Pacific Railroad Company to coordinate planning and design of the western greenway.
- 3) Construct the portion of the western greenway north of Fillmore Ave on land currently owned by the Saint Paul Housing & Redevelopment Authority.
- 4) Acquire land and construct the portion of the western greenway south of Fillmore Ave.
- 5) Plan, design, and construct the recommended park in the employment center east of Robert Street.
- 6) Plan, design, and construct the Eva Street eastern greenway.

## Stormwater



## Public Art



Aniccha Arts, In Habit: Living Patterns, Central Avenue bridge underpass, Northern Spark, 2012. Photo: Patrick Kelley.



# Partnership & Financing Considerations

## Partnerships

Although the City of Saint Paul will play a major role in implementing the West Side Flats Master Plan, the ultimate success of the plan will depend upon the City's partnerships and collaboration with key public and private stakeholders.

### Key public sector partners include:

- *Saint Paul Port Authority – Riverview Business Center, redevelopment*
- *Saint Paul HRA – land owner, housing development, redevelopment, land assembly*
- *West Side Community Organization (WSCO)*
- *Army Corps of Engineers – levee*
- *Mn DOT - Lafayette Road/Hwy 52, Robert Street/Hwy 952, historic Robert Street Bridge*
- *Ramsey County – Plato Blvd/CSAH 40, government offices*
- *Metropolitan Council – planning, funding*
- *Metro Transit – bus system, connections to Green Line LRT, potential BRT/streetcar*
- *Mn DNR - Mississippi River Critical Area*
- *National Park Service/Minnesota National River & Recreation Area*
- *Lower Mississippi River Water Management Organization (LMRWMO) – stormwater*

### Potential private sector partners include:

- *Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation*
- *Union Pacific Railroad Company*
- *Major businesses, such as U.S. Bank, Comcast, Nasseff Mechanical Contractors, Saint Paul Pioneer Press, Vomela*
- *Major property owners*

### Potential non-governmental organization partners include:

- *NeDA*
- *Friends of the Mississippi River*



- *Audubon Minnesota*
- *Public Art Saint Paul*

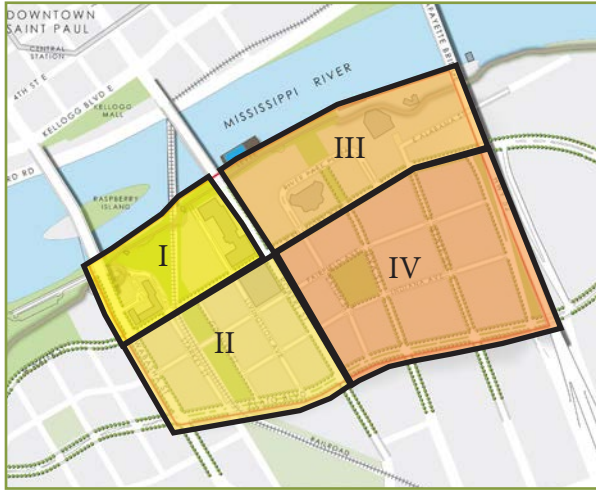
## Financing

One of the keys to successfully implementing the West Side Flats Master Plan is the ability to facilitate and finance the desired public improvements and leverage private reinvestments. There are a variety of financing policies, programs and tools that the City should consider for the West Side Flats:

- *Public ownership of land, e.g. Saint Paul HRA, street rights-of-way*
- *Housing & Redevelopment Authority, e.g. levy authority, site assembly, housing and commercial loans and grants, the issuance of bonds*
- *Capital Improvement Budget (CIB)*
- *Tax increment financing (TIF) – both regular and special legislation*
- *Park dedication*
- *Special assessments for street construction and reconstruction, including public parking facilities*
- *Municipal State Aid (MSA) roadway program*
- *County State Aid Highway (CSAH) program*
- *Mn Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Redevelopment Grant Program and Contamination Cleanup Grant Program*
- *Metropolitan Council's Livable Communities Demonstration Account (LCDA) Grant Program*
- *Metropolitan Council's Tax Base Revitalization Account (TBRA) Grant Program*
- *Metropolitan Council's Local Housing Incentives Account (LHIA) Grant Program*
- *Federal TEA-21 Transportation Enhancements program*
- *Business Improvement District (BID) for parking, streetscape, and wayfinding improvements*
- *Minnesota Housing Finance Agency*
- *Developers' Forums/RFPs*
- *Watershed district funding initiatives*



Figure xx. West Side Flats Phasing Diagram



# Phasing Approach

## Public Improvements Phasing

Figure xx. West Side Flats Phase I Diagram



### PHASE I

- Acquire additional right of way along Fillmore Street required to expand right of way to 70' width
- Acquire land for greenway/park between the Mississippi River and Fillmore Avenue
- Design and construct streetscapes within the Phase I area, including Wabasha Street, Fillmore Avenue, and Livingston Avenue
- Program, design and construct greenway/park land between Mississippi River and Fillmore Avenue



Figure xx. West Side Flats Phase II Diagram



Figure xx. West Side Flats Phase III Diagram

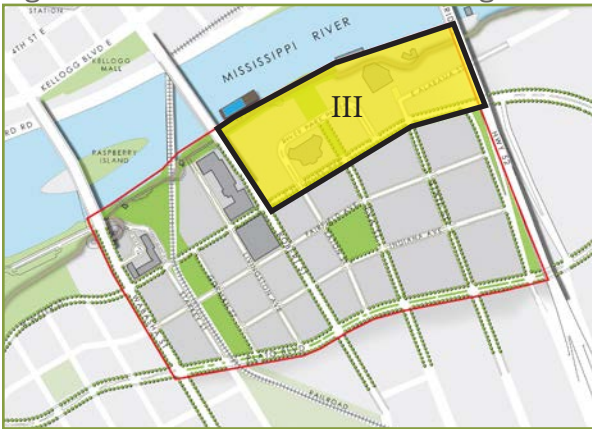
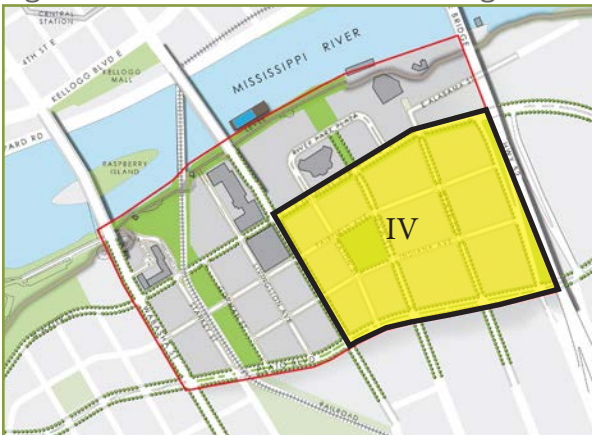


Figure xx. West Side Flats Phase IV Diagram



## PHASE II

- Acquire additional right of way along Robert Street required to expand right of way to 95' width
- Acquire right of way for proposed streets in the Phase II area, including Starkey Street, Gorman Street, Fairfield Avenue and Indiana Avenue
- Acquire land for greenway/park between Fillmore Avenue, Plato Boulevard, Starkey Street and Gorman Street
- Submit railroad crossing application to Union Pacific
- Design and construct streetscapes within the Phase II area, including Wabasha Street, Plato Boulevard, Robert Street, Starkey Street, Gorman Street, Fairfield Avenue and Indiana Avenue
- Program, design and construct the greenway/park between Fillmore Avenue, Plato Boulevard, Starkey Street and Gorman Street

## PHASE III

- Acquire land for greenway/park between the Mississippi River and Fillmore Avenue
- Design and construct streetscapes within the Phase III area, including Fillmore Avenue, River Park Plaza and E. Alabama Street
- Program, design and construct the greenway/park between the Mississippi River and Fillmore Avenue
- Design and construct vertical circulation from the Robert Street Bridge to the riverfront esplanade

## PHASE IV

- Acquire right of way for proposed streets in the Phase IV area, including Fairfield Avenue, Indiana Avenue, and Eaton Street
- Acquire land for park between Fairfield Avenue, Indiana Avenue, Eaton and Eva Streets
- Design and construct streetscapes within the Phase IV area, including Fairfield Avenue, Indiana Avenue, Eaton Street, Eva Street, State Street and Plato Boulevard
- Program, design and construct the park between Fairfield Avenue, Indiana Avenue, Eaton and Eva Streets



# West Side Flats

MASTER PLAN & DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

*UPDATE*

DRAFT OCTOBER 23, 2013