WEST BANK PARK

CITY OF GREAT FALLS • MONTANA

MASTER PLAN 2011

acknowledgements

City of Great Falls

We would like to acknowledge the support of this project by Park and Recreation staff and the City of Great Falls, particularly Marty Basta, Director, and Patty Rearden, Deputy Director.

We also thank the steering committee members who committed time and energy to development of the Master Plan, and the organizations which they represent.

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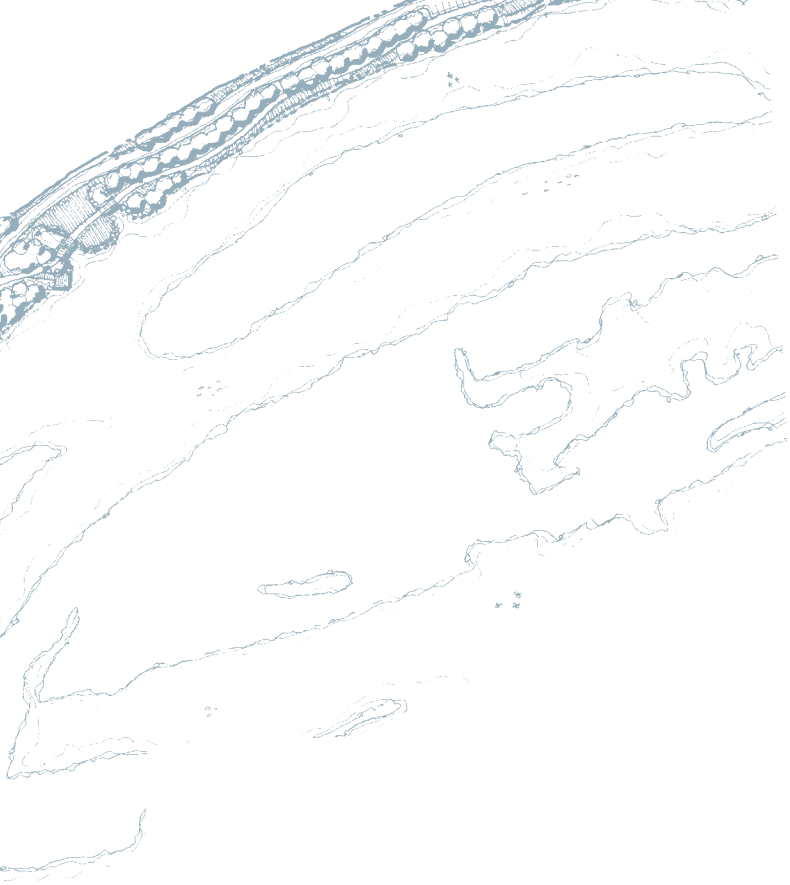

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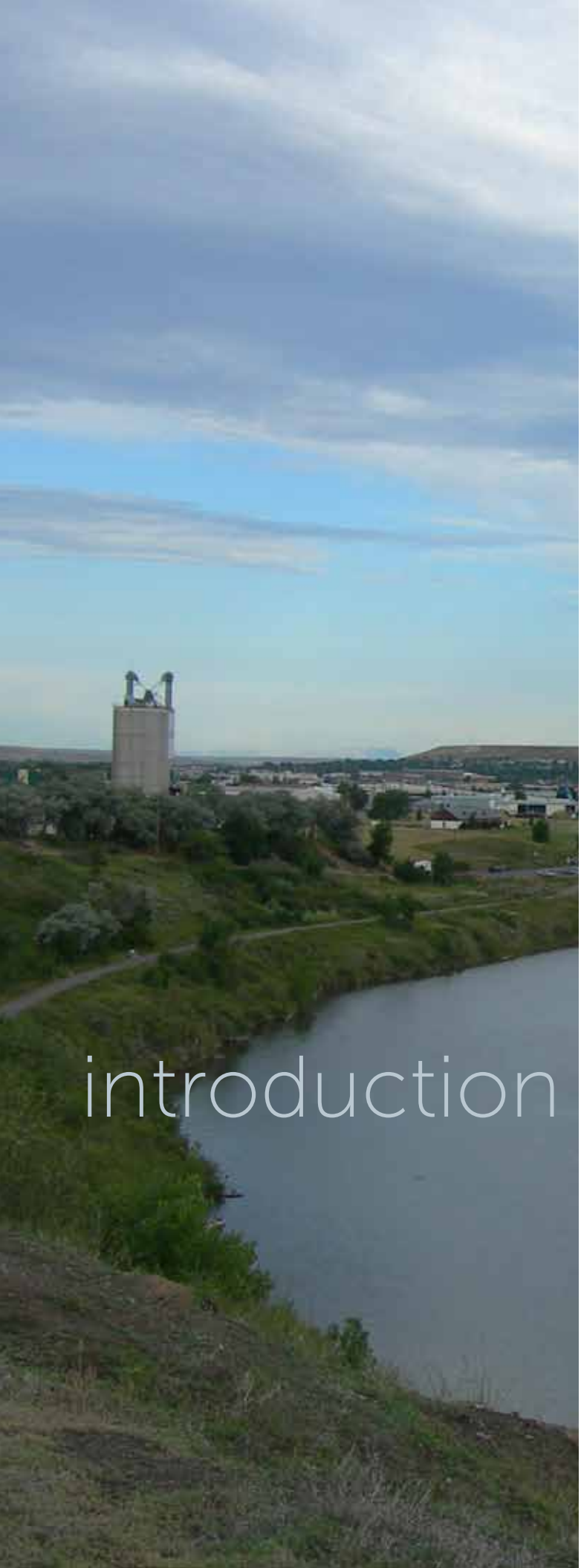


introduction

"To create great parks and great cities, we have to be willing to develop a new vision for parks, - as economic incubators, as environmental centers, as places to teach ecology and to learn about social interaction. Parks can be places where residents can share a common heritage and learn about each other or can simply be places where people can go and take a stroll, or a break, where a community's public life can be renewed and enhanced. Through vision, community interaction, good design, and leadership, we can create parks that belong to their communities, and work for their communities."

- Kathy Madden
  Senior Vice President for Project for Public Spaces

1.0 Introduction to the Master Plan

West Bank Park holds a particular place in the heart of many residents in the City of Great Falls, and especially residents living near the park. West Bank Park is a combination of many elements, and means different things to different people. It is a place to enjoy views across the water to downtown Great Falls while interacting with nature in the middle of the city. It is a place to get away from the hustle and bustle of traffic, while being just a few steps away from major roadways. It provides a mixture of rustic amenities and qualities unique to the Great Falls Park and Recreation System. This sense of place is valued by residents and visitors alike.

It is with this understanding in mind that the Park and Recreation Department identified a need to create a Master Plan for West Bank Park that balanced existing values with a desire to increase opportunities for the public to interact with planned improvements. The goal of this Master Plan is to create a roadmap for redevelopment of the park as a component of an overall redevelopment plan in the area. West Bank Park is an existing, under-utilized park on the West Bank of the Missouri River, just across from downtown Great Falls. The linear park is 36 acres in size, and the existing uses are predominantly passive, including the River's Edge Trail and several rustic site amenities.

This Master Plan seeks to discover a balance between maintaining a sense of place and seclusion while promoting compatible uses for increasing the value of the park within the overall park system. The Plan emphasizes connectivity to adjacent residential neighborhoods while capitalizing on redeveloped commercial uses, creating a destination park. Some of the elements recommended in the Master Plan include a new amphitheatre, improved trails, improved site amenities, a natural playground for children, and a beach volleyball court for young adults.

public involvement

2.0 Public Involvement

The planning process for the West Bank Park Master Plan was developed with a strong sense of the importance of public involvement. The process has been guided by a steering committee, and has included a site visit with the committee, a Town Hall Meeting, a two-day Design Charrette, an extensive on-line survey, and various other opportunities for public comment. In addition to the steering committee, several community members were identified as stakeholders to the development of the West Bank Park Master Plan and were invited to comment on the park at various stages of the planning process. The public meetings included extensive coverage by both the local newspaper and TV stations.

The following is a summary of the schedule and public meetings held throughout the development of the Master Plan (2010):

June 3
Neighborhood Council 3

June 9
Neighborhood Council 2

June 10
Steering Committee Site Visit

June 30
Town Hall Meeting

July 21 and 22
Community Design Charrette

August 9
Master Plan Work Session with Park and Recreation Board

September 13 - Monday
Draft Master Plan Presentation

January 18 - Tuesday, 6:00 pm
Presentation of Final Master Plan

2.1 Steering Committee

An integral part of the planning process was the development of a steering committee comprised of representatives of a broad spectrum of the community. The role of the Steering Committee was to provide local knowledge of the park from divergent perspectives. The Steering Committee provided support for the planning process and project related guidance in development of the Master Plan.

Members of the steering committee participated in each of the public meetings, informing the development of the Master Plan. In addition to the public meetings, the steering committee participated in a half-day field investigation of West Bank Park on June 10th. The steering committee consistently reinforced many of the existing characteristics of West Bank Park, and cautioned against over development of the park. The Steering Committee actively participated in the final development of the recommended program for West Bank Park.

2.2 Neighborhood Councils

The consultant team met with Neighborhood Councils 2 and 3 on June 3rd and June 9th. The City of Great Falls is unique among many communities throughout Montana for its continuous involvement of neighborhood councils. These councils participate directly in the decision making process of the City by meeting regularly and transmitting policy and program recommendations to the city Commission.

Amongst the neighborhood council, general concern was expressed that commercial development of West Bank Park not be permitted. Concern was raised over vandalism at the park, and it was recommended that considering vandalism proof facilities in the Master Plan. Some preference was expressed for a couple of parking lots, removing continuous parking along the northern portion of the park, creating a more walkable park with less focus on automobile usage. There was a general preference for additional park amenities, including barbecue grills, trees, and other landscaping.

Other recommendations were to keep fireworks at thepark and to create some type of venue for music, family reunions and weddings. There was a question regarding funding of this project, and long-term funding of improvements. The councils discussed the Tax Increment Finance (TIF) district, and how support of the TIF district from the neighborhood councils was partly due to the future funding opportunities TIF would create for improvements to West Bank Park.

Overall, the value of keeping the park for the people was a key value expressed by council members. A preference was expressed for maintaining the park in a pristine condition, and preventing development commercially or industrially.

2.3 Town Hall Meeting

A Town Hall Meeting was organized on June 30th to gather initial comments on what is valued within the Park, and what could use improvement. The purpose of the Town Hall Meeting was to gather the needs and concerns of the general public regarding park and trail infrastructure. Each participant was asked to respond to a short survey that was provided at the meeting (see appendix). Responses to the survey and an open dialogue with attendees informed the final Master Plan.

2.4 Design Charrette

The Design Charrette spanned two days, July 21st and 22nd. The purpose of a design charrette was to provide the public an opportunity to work directly with designers in the design of the Park. A design charrette is a brief but intense design workshop consisting of stakeholders and citizens working directly with an interdisciplinary team of Park Planners.

The first day of the design charrette included an introduction to the project, a review of the draft survey, review of site analysis from site visit with steering committee, a visual preference survey, and group break-out for hands on design work

The second day of the design charrette provided an opportunity for the public to see a synthesis of design ideas explored on the first day, and the beginnings of a Master Plan for West Bank Park.

2.5 Park and Recreation Board

In addition to the steering committee, the Park and Recreation Board played in important role in the development of the Master Plan for West Bank Park. Two workshops were held with the Park and Recreation Board during the development of the plan. The first workshop was held on August 9th, and the second workshop was held on September 13th.

The purpose of the workshops was to provide an opportunity for Park and Recreation Board to comment on conceptual designs. The consultant team provided two draft versions of the Master Plan and facilitated a discussion on opportunities and constraints presented in each of the plans at the first workshops. A discussion regarding phasing, cost estimates for improvements, and funding opportunities was discussed at the second workshop.

2.6 Survey

An on-line survey was developed to further gather input from the public, and received over 300 responses. The survey was intended to determine the community's preferences on topics such as design elements and funding alternatives for the Park. The public was able to access the survey through a link on the City of Great Fall's web site and by obtaining hard copies at City Hall, the Library and the Park & Recreation Offices.

The survey results helped the steering committee to assess community priorities for developing the park and provided vital data for securing future funding. The City urged the entire community to help with this effort by participating in the survey. Results from the survey are available in the appendix. (See Appendix for results)

2.7 Final Master Plan Presentation

Final Master Plan Presentation before the City Commission to be added to Plan.

3.0 Review of Existing Planning Documents

A number of planning documents were reviewed with respect to informing the West Bank Park Master Plan. The following key documents were reviewed, and a summary of the documents can be found in Appendix B, as was presented to the Park and Recreation Board.

Parks Master Plan – 1995

Growth Policy – 2002

Missouri River Corridor Plan – 2004

Land and Water Assessment Master Plan – 2004

West Bank Urban Renewal Plan – 2007

Great Falls Transportation Plan – 2009

Great Falls Zoning – current

review of existing planning documents

The above planning documents promote a transition away from industrial uses to a mix of commercial and residential uses in the area adjacent to West Bank Park. West Bank Park will be a central component of providing additional amenities as adjacent uses transition.

A number of specific initiatives worth referencing have been undertaken and are summarized through the various planning documents. In the 1980s, a site master plan included developing a portion of the park as an outdoor amphitheater. The plan included a floating stage in the river with seating on the berm facing the river and downtown skyline. The berm and a small segment of the extensive proposed path system were completed before support and funding for the project languished.

Another Master Plan was developed for West Bank Park in 2003, but much of the efforts of implementing that plan were shifted to the Skate Park on the East Bank of the Missouri River. It is the intent of this Master Plan to move the project forward by capitalizing on public involvement and support and by identifying funding opportunities while taking advantage of the West Bank TIF District. These documents represent continuous support for providing additional amenities within West Bank Park.

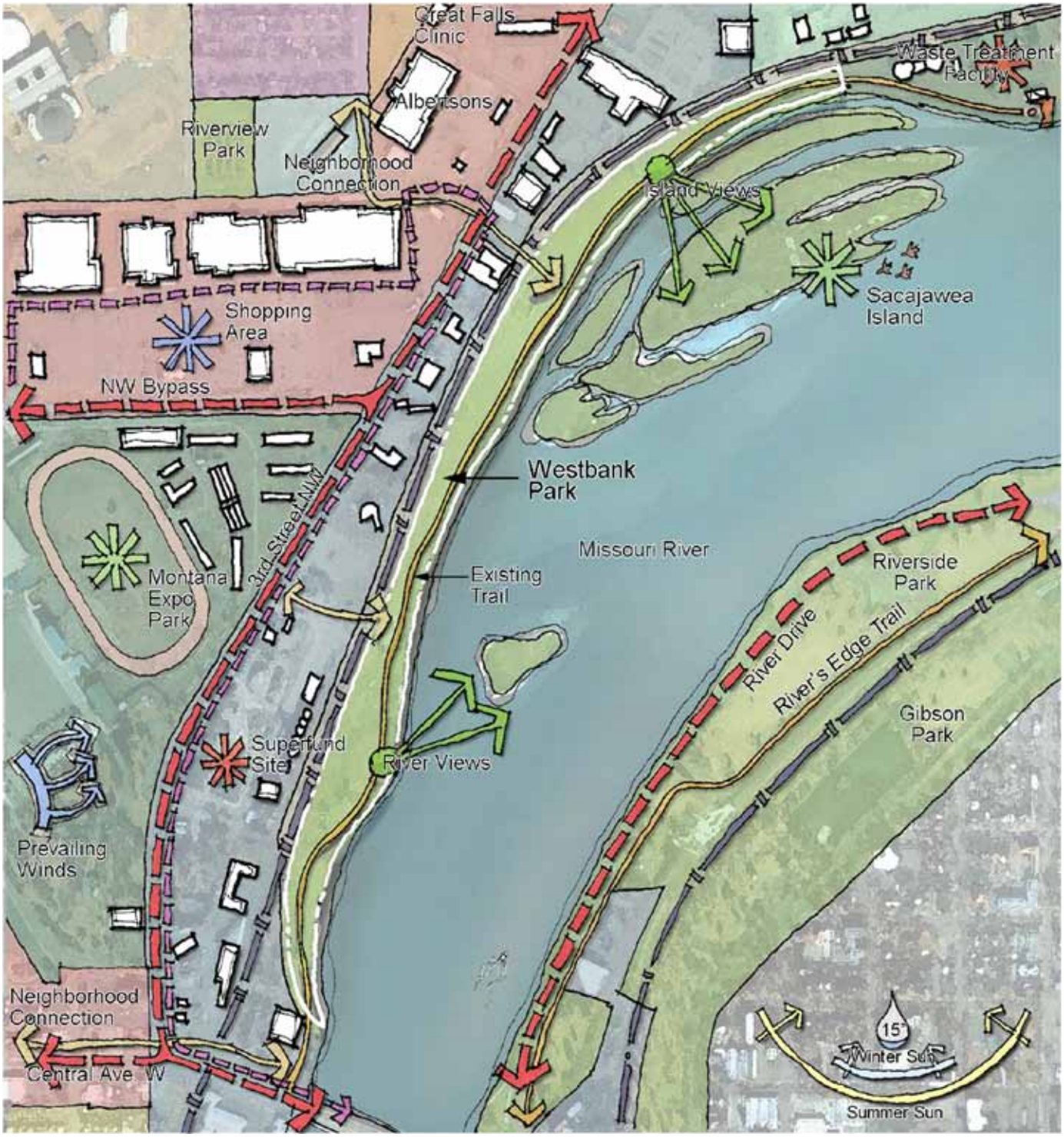
site analysis

4.0 Site Analysis

West Bank Park is an existing, underutilized public park on the West Bank of the Missouri River in Great Falls, Montana. Historically, this area was characterized by industrial uses and has a number of industrial remnants from the past. Private and public investment is occurring adjacent to West Bank Park, particularly on the southern end of the park. The West Bank Urban Renewal District was enacted in order to stimulate private investment as well as leveraging that investment with public funds within the district boundaries, which include West Bank Park.

Historically, the west side of the Missouri River in Great Falls was the home of Montana's largest gasoline refinery, built by the Great Falls Sunburst Oil and Refinery Company. The refinery began operations in early 1923 along the 300 and 400 blocks of 3rd Street Northwest and was subsequently purchased by the California Eastern Oil Company in 1927. Cascade County took possession of the property in 1936 after California Eastern failed to pay gasoline license taxes and associated delinquent fees. By 1938, Cascade County had constructed its road and bridge department shops at the site. The West Bank District also included the site of the former Montana Brewing Company complex, built in 1893-94, just north of Central Avenue West, along the Missouri River. In 1933, it became the malt plant for the Great Falls Breweries, Inc., which closed in 1968. The last remnants of the site were removed in July, 2006 to make way for a new 54,000 square foot Federal Courthouse.

"The best communities have the best parks..."



The West Bank area continues to be characterized by industrial and warehouse uses. Contamination from industrial uses adjacent to West Bank Park has created challenges in the redevelopment of the area, but also poses some opportunities for increased parking on adjacent sites where redevelopment might be cost prohibitive. This area is included within the Third Street Northwest Groundwater Site, which includes the County Shops, Montana Specialty Mills, portions of the BNSF Railway spur and West Bank Park. The Site is listed on the State of Montana's "Mini- Superfund Sites" because of petrochemical related contamination.

Access is limited to West Bank Park. Of the roads that do exist, some require paving, while others might benefit from re-alignment. Overall the interior of the area lacks sidewalks, curbs and gutters, landscaping and adequate lighting. Existing parking in West Bank Park is used during the week and on the weekend, but typical demand does not call for overflow parking. Recent investment has occurred adjacent to the park, namely the construction of Staybridge Suites and the Federal Courthouse. An agreement should be pursued to accommodate overflow parking from future events related to the proposed amphitheatre on adjacent commercial properties through a shared parking agreement.

In addition to adjacent commercial developments, the City should work with Cascade County to develop some additional parking on County-owned land scheduled for abandonment. A parking facility would be a low-cost alternative for utilizing contaminated County property. Over time, if additional parking is needed, the County property may provide an opportunity for structured parking.

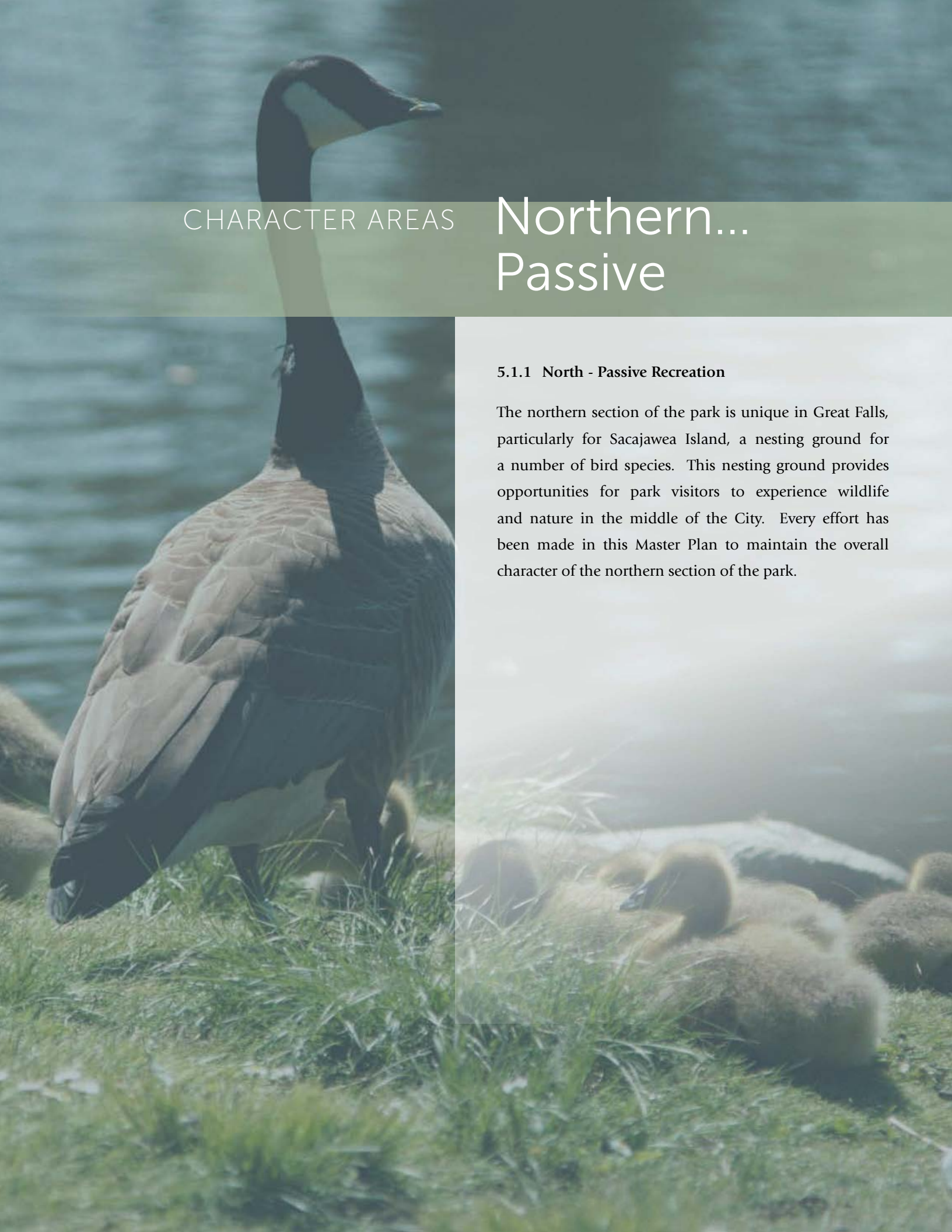
master plan

5.0 Master Plan

The overall intent of the West Bank Park Master Plan is to provide a framework for the future development of the park in phases and according to the following general character areas and program elements.

5.1 Character Areas

The general character of the park should be defined by three distinct areas. These areas have inherent qualities distinct from each other. These qualities should be maintained and further enhanced as the park is developed.



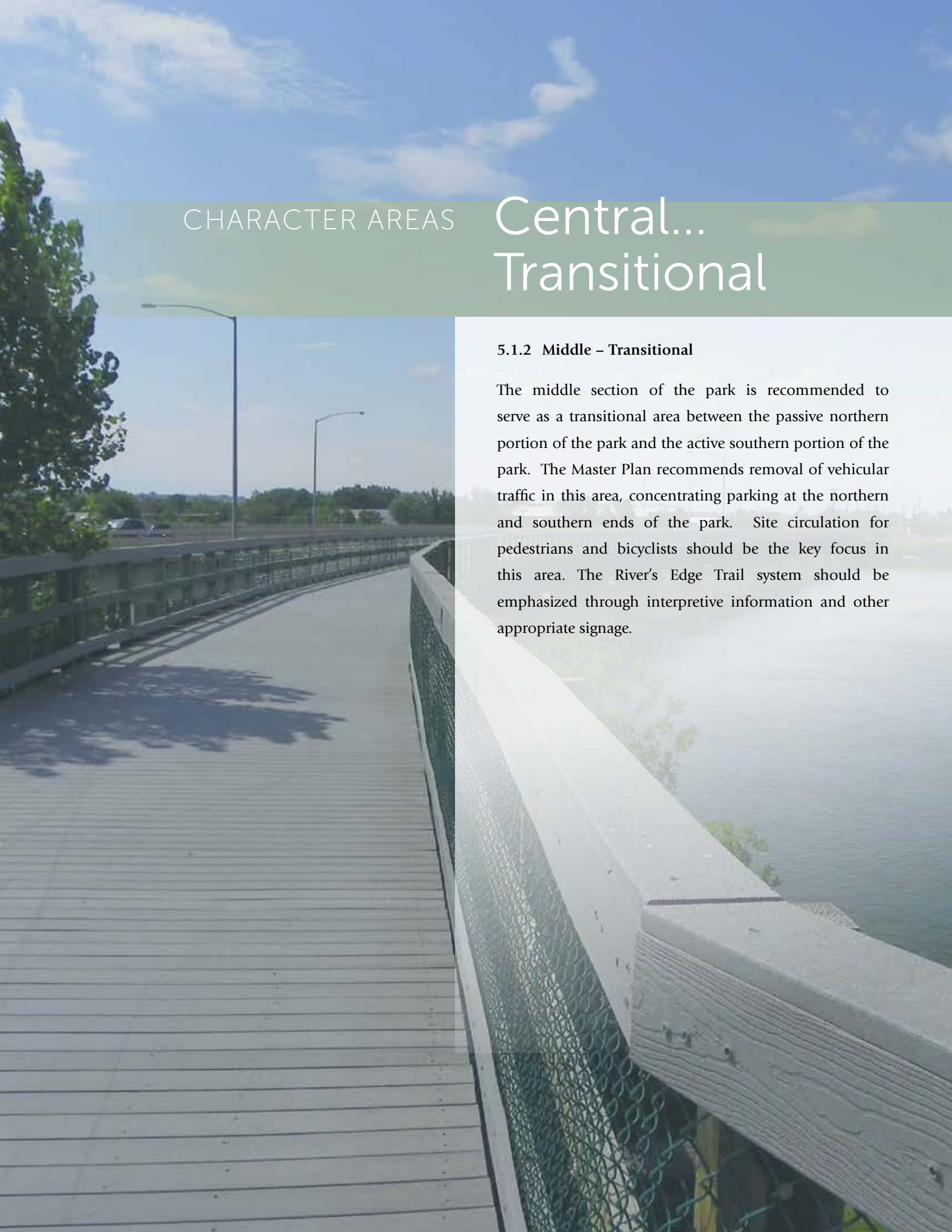
CHARACTER AREAS

Northern... Passive

5.1.1 North - Passive Recreation

The northern section of the park is unique in Great Falls, particularly for Sacajawea Island, a nesting ground for a number of bird species. This nesting ground provides opportunities for park visitors to experience wildlife and nature in the middle of the City. Every effort has been made in this Master Plan to maintain the overall character of the northern section of the park.


17th Ave. NE
Connection to Waste Water Treatment Plant
Parking
Restroom
Pavilion
Sand Volleyball
SACAJAWEA ISLAND
MISSOURI RIVER



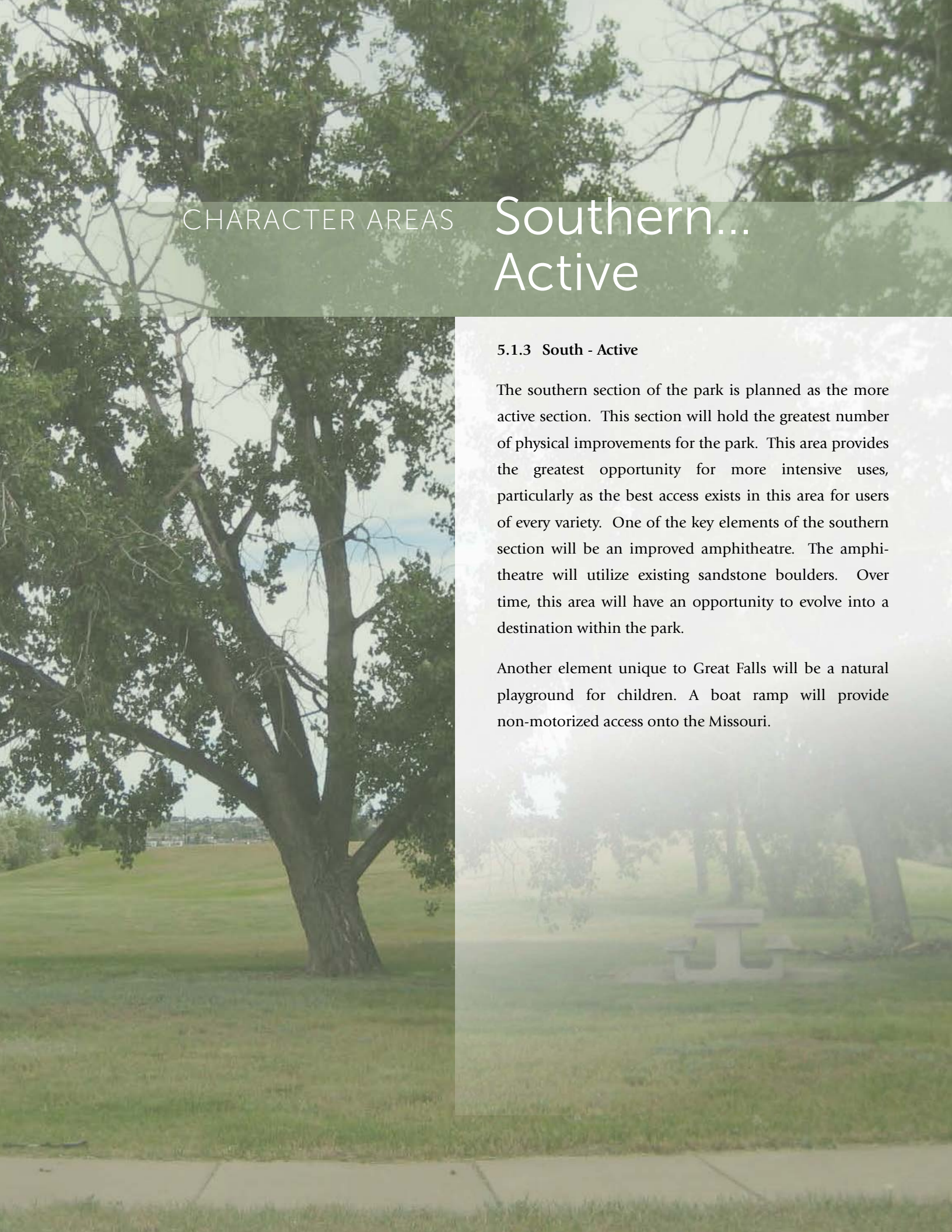
CHARACTER AREAS

Central... Transitional

5.1.2 Middle – Transitional

The middle section of the park is recommended to serve as a transitional area between the passive northern portion of the park and the active southern portion of the park. The Master Plan recommends removal of vehicular traffic in this area, concentrating parking at the northern and southern ends of the park. Site circulation for pedestrians and bicyclists should be the key focus in this area. The River's Edge Trail system should be emphasized through interpretive information and other appropriate signage.


Parking
Restroom
Pavilion
Sand Volleyball
SACAJAW
ISLAND
MISSOURI
RIVER
Play Mounds
Restroom
Stage Area with
Tension Fabric Canopy
Amphitheater
Parking
Pavilion
Flag Plaza



CHARACTER AREAS

Southern... Active

5.1.3 South - Active

The southern section of the park is planned as the more active section. This section will hold the greatest number of physical improvements for the park. This area provides the greatest opportunity for more intensive uses, particularly as the best access exists in this area for users of every variety. One of the key elements of the southern section will be an improved amphitheatre. The amphitheatre will utilize existing sandstone boulders. Over time, this area will have an opportunity to evolve into a destination within the park.

Another element unique to Great Falls will be a natural playground for children. A boat ramp will provide non-motorized access onto the Missouri.

MISSOU
RIVER

5.2 Program Elements

In addition to the general areas outlined above, a number of program elements are planned for various areas in the park. The following are key program elements that have guided the development of the Master Plan:

- *Connectivity*
- *Gazebo and Outdoor Shelters*
- *Amphitheatre*
- *Access – additional overpass or underpass*
- *Parking*
- *Restrooms*
- *River's Edge Trail*
- *Greater interaction with waterfront*
- *Site Furnishings*
- *Art, Sculptures, Interpretation*
- *Signage/Wayfinding*
- *Landscaping – additional tree plantings*
- *Screening of railroad/industrial uses*
- *Water Recreation/Boat Launch*
- *Lighting*
- *Irrigation*
- *Utilities*
- *Adjoining land use*
- *Street crossings and pedestrian access*
- *Maintenance plan*
- *Use restrictions or special rules*
- *Fundraising/Grantwriting*
- *Building Partnerships*

The following provides additional description for elements that have been included in the design of the Master Plan.

Connectivity – emphasis is placed on connecting with adjacent neighborhoods. Design of pedestrian crossings will place safety as first priority.

Parking – parking has been separated between activity areas in order to offset any congestion during multiple events held in the park.

Site Furnishings – furnishings should be selected based on longevity of the product as well as maintenance.

Signage/Way-finding – Signage/Way-finding to be positioned at key points of transition and gathering. Such locations should include: entry, community park building and key pedestrian nodes along trails/pathways.

Landscape – Landscaping in passive recreation and open areas to be based on climate/microclimate conditions. Landscaping should strive to screen less desirable views and provide protection from wind.

Irrigation – Irrigation will be provided across the entire park. Emphasis will be placed on appropriate use of water in the passive/ open recreation areas through conservation techniques where appropriate.

Lighting – ASA regulation lighting will be included with all softball complexes. Additional pedestrian lighting related to parking, trails and pathways as well as the other sports courts will also be included.

Utilities – Access to existing utilities and the capacity of these utilities is key in the development of this park. Sewer, Water, Gas, connections have all been considered for the current site configuration.

phasing

6.0 Phasing

6.1 Phasing Plan

Based on design and program refinement with the steering committee the phasing for the project has been summarized into an initial 5-year plan for major development items desired by the public and steering committee and future developments. The initial redevelopment budget for West Bank Park is approximately $2 Million. Program elements for the parks first phase include:

Road/Parking Improvements..... $198,000
To include a 24-stall parking area on the southern end of the park associated with the more active zone surrounding the amphitheatre development area. Roadway access improvement begins at the railroad crossing into the park and will include a refinement of the parking area. The roadways on the southern end are conceptually designed as 24′ wide asphalt surfaced drives. The asphalt road and parking area will be 4″ thick asphalt on 12″ of rock base. The roadways will not have curb and gutter except for the cul de sac area.

A separate parking area for the non-motorized boat launch offers parking for three trailered boats and doubles as parking for trucks bringing equipment to the amphitheatre. A cul de sac turn around near the amphitheatre provides a drop-off zone in the amphitheatre area. The concrete sidewalk bordering the cul de sac is 4″ concrete and has integral curb forming a barrier for cars to drop off patrons for events to the amphitheatre.

The parking area will also not have curbs but will instead utilize recycled plastic parking blocks centered within 9′ x 19′ striped parking stalls.

The northern access area is similar to its existing shape and includes a gravel road and small parking areas for access to the park trail system. The plan defines a 2″ gravel overlay over most of the existing road surfaces. There are small sections where the gravel drive will be laid over previously ungraded areas. These small sections will have 6″ of ¾″ minus rock as surface course over a section of woven geotextile fabric.

The parking at the terminus of the northern drive is larger supporting the existing pavilion and includes a turn around. This turn around will be clearly defined by integral paved concrete similar to the cul de sac on the southern end. Instead of asphalt surfacing of the road and cul de sac the roadway profile will be gravel surfaced.

Three small gravel parking areas will be defined on the northern end similar to what currently exists. Each parking stall will be defined by a parking block. A larger parking area accompanies the cul de sac and serves as parking for the pavilion and restroom area.

Earthwork $30,000
Simple grading for the park is associated with the southern active zone. Costs are projected to include necessary grading for the amphitheatre and the associated walkways, ramps and earth berms. Most of the grading is limited to creating a clear definition of the amphitheatre area and to ensure handicapped accessible walkways from the parking area to the amphitheatre and trail system.

Based on the analysis of existing grades it is anticipated that roughly 1,200 cubic yards of soil will need to be brought on site. In addition there will need to be manipulation of roughly 5,000 yards of soil around the amphitheatre to shape the feature as designed. The existing park is relatively flat and programmed activities other than the access drive and trail and of course the amphitheatre do not require substantial earthwork but rather incidental grading relative to trails and design features. These grading costs are included within the confines of each programmed feature unless outlined herein.

Trails & associated Amenities $292,000
The master plan defines a through-trail in the park that is largely located in similar location of the existing trail where appropriate. The entire park from south to north has a 10′ wide trail system wether existing asphalt or new 10′ wide concrete. In sections such as around the amphitheatre a hierarchy of secondary walks provide access to various features in addition to the 10′ primary trail. The final master plan has utilized the existing trail and walkway system where practical. From a cost estimate perspective 32,500 square feet of new trail development has been programmed at $7 per square feet. The master planning process defines approximately 27,600 square feet of new concrete pavement in and around the amphitheatre and connecting to various other amenities in sections of 10′, 8′ and 6′ concrete walks and trails. Additionally approximately 5,900 square feet of pavement around the north cul de sac and replacing damaged section of concrete within areas to remain is necessary.

The concrete trail system is programmed as 6″ concrete slab utilizing welded wire fabric as reinforcing poured on a 4″ base of compacted rock. The thick pavement is deemed necessary as emergency and maintenance vehicles will possibly drive on the trail.

Amphitheatre..... $430,000

The proposed amphitheatre is located in the similar location as the existing large earth berm originally installed as an amphitheatre. The new amphitheatre will add and reshape the existing mound as a larger more defined amenity. The amphitheatre will face the east toward the river and large boulders will define the lower stepped areas and serve as fixed seating transitioning into grass seating near the top.

Three hundred sandstone boulders are programmed for placement in the amphitheatre. An assumption is that approximately 250 of these boulders either exist on-site or will be available at no additional cost. The remaining 50 boulders will be acquired and placed on-site. Each boulder will receive some shaping to allow for a flat surface for comfortable seating.

The amphitheatre stage area will include approximately 2,000 square feet of decorative pavement covered with a small Teflon impregnated tension fabric shade structure. The stage area is circular and much larger than the canopy structure for flexibility of event planning. The conceptual design is two sail canopies on separate planes to block sun and rain yet exposed on the sides of the staging area. The amphitheatre will include lighting on the stairwells, uplighting for the stage area and access lighting to guide pedestrians to and from the amphitheatre area. A sound system accessed from a vault area behind the stage will be designed to provide audio and overhead interactive lighting will be mounted from the superstructure of the canopy system.

Access to upper reaches of the amphitheatre will be via concrete and stone stairs and a pathway from the side to the top of the amphitheatre. Stainless steel handrails follow each riser section of the amphitheatre stairs and feature imbedded LED lighting in the rails.

Trail/walks are proposed on both east and west sides of the amphitheatre and serve to define the amphitheatre area spatially. All walkways in the amphitheatre area are new 10′ wide concrete walks. Existing walks/trails in this area must be demolished and removed.

Also associated with the amphitheatre area is fixed restroom facilities with core ten metal roofs similar to the new shelter and a mixture of concrete and stone clad siding. The restroom facility will have two urinals and one toilet in the men's room and three toilets in the woman's room. Each will have two lavatories. The restrooms are divided by a 60″ wide plumbing chase that also serves as an on location storage area. All fixtures and design features are intended to be vandal resistant. Since the existing grade is lower than the adjacent city infrastructure a 4″ schedule 40 PVC gravity drain will feed to the south entry and enter a manhole where a 3″ HDPE force main will direct effluent to the west to a manhole on 3rd street.

As mentioned in the earthwork discussion, it is anticipated that approximately 1,200 cubic yards of soil will be brought-in from off site to backfill behind the boulders after the existing earth mound has been reshaped.

Shelter..... $37,000

A premanufactuered shelter is programmed near the southern cul de sac in between the parking lot and amphitheatre area. The shelter envisioned is to have steel beams and covering a base of a 24′ x 30′ rectangle. A 4″ thick concrete slab will serve as pavement under the shelter. The roof is designed as weathered core ten steel with a 6/12 pitch. The amphitheatre shelter will cover four moveable picnic tables.

Park Lighting..... $63,000

Lighting for the park is only anticipated sporadically. One of the major positive elements of the park is the night sky. The master plan envisions only 10 pedestrian level light fixtures in the park associated with the parking lot areas and a few along the trail. The metal halide pedestrian-scale lighting will be mounted on 12′ tall black anodized aluminum poles. The park is programmed for dawn to dusk use but for safety reasons lighting is necessary periodically along the main trail following the river edge and near each cul de sac and shelter.

All power and electrical supply will be in schedule 80 underground conduit. Power supply will be centrally distributed from the amphitheatre main power supply and travel north to 500′ north of the cul de sac area on the opposite end.

Non-motorized Boat Ramp $113,000

Near the southern boundary of the park a natural area exists that is ideal for the construction of a non motorized boat ramp. The boat ramp is intended as a put-in and take-out for water craft including canoes, kayaks, wind surfing and small sail boats. The boat ramp will be constructed of post tensioned reinforced precast concrete slabs placed on a base of rock and heavy geotextile fabric. The slabs will be linked together with large chain. The ramp will be designed on a 16% incline and extend approximately 3' below normal pool elevation of the river. The ramp is designed to be 15' wide and approximately 30' long.

The existing bank will be feathered away on the downstream side of the ramp. Irregular boulders shall be stacked in place to define a short wall on the upstream side of the river.

In addition to the ramp a small removable floating dock is designed to be accessible just downstream of the ramp to tie up boats and canoes. The dock will be constructed of encapsulated PVC floats using 5' wide recycled plastic decking.

River Edge..... $37,000

The existing river edge ranges from boulders to eroded natural areas. The master plan programs a clean-up effort to define the edge of the river and to add additional boulders in the southern section of the park. Most of the bank of the river is irregular shaped and some areas are particularly unattractive. On the southern boundary where the river trail runs close to the edge of the river periodic use of boulders to define eroded edging will be used. These areas will be undefined seating and fishing areas for park users.

Most of the river edge will be simply cleaned of debris and eroded areas planted with lower growing reeds and sedges native to Montana. The overall image of the river edge as viewed from the park is envisioned to be a clean but irregular native edge. The proposed future river trail into the river being the only hard edge taken to the physical edge of the river and beyond.

Landscape/Irrigation..... $744,000

More than 300 trees are programmed to be installed throughout the park in the first phase of construction. Most of these will be indigenous cottonwoods and other deciduous trees native to the region and known to grow in riparian corridors. All trees will be irrigated by separate drip irrigation zones to provide perpetual water to the trees root zones.

The entire park is to be reseeded with predominately turf grass and the park will have a new irrigation system throughout. Prior to seeding the park areas all existing lawn areas will be killed with herbicide and let stand for two weeks then disked and graded then fine graded. This has a two-fold opportunity to remove habitat for gophers while removing existing damage done by the pests and to completely remove weed species and existing poorly established turf. The work should be done in manageable sections where irrigation zones can be installed immediately prior to seeding of the lawn areas.

A predominate mixture of bluegrass and turf type fescue should be utilized to create an image of attractive lawn areas. During development of construction documents for the irrigation system a summary analysis of usage and annualized costs should be made to determine the use of potable water vs. a series of 35 GPM wells and/or more high gallonage wells that may substitute for smaller wells. Utilizing and converting city owned water rights obtained from the Missouri River should be analyzed during this process. For purpose of the master plan it has been assumed that potable water will be brought to the site from each end and a loop system will be created on the main irrigation line. The potable water will be metered on each end of the system.

A comprehensive irrigation system is programmed for installation using Schedule 40 PVC main lines and Class 200 zone irrigation lines. The irrigation costs factor in use of a satellite irrigation controller system that can be adjusted and operated remotely using telephone technology. The irrigation system will feature pop-up spray heads with head to head spacing.

Minor decorative landscape berms are designed around the amphitheatre. The park has minimal landscaping outside of the proposed trees in order to convey a sense of grand scale as well as to minimize excessive grounds maintenance responsibilities.

Signage Program $32,000

West Bank Park is a hidden treasure. Many people are unaware it exists. The master plan defines two entry signs one each at the north and south. The design and style of the signs are in keeping with the use of stone and boulders within the park. Large boulders will be stacked 5′ high and frame metal lettering indicating West Bank Park will identify the park at either end. A simple plan for amenities and directions shall be post mounted on 3′ tall metal bollards for major elements and directions. Naming rights, donations and memorial contributions shall emulate the same style of the directional signage in a subdued manner.

Sand Volleyball..... $12,000

One of the few active play features in the master plan is a sand volleyball court near the existing shelter on the north end of the park. The sand volleyball court shall be constructed by excavating 12″ of earth from the ground to define a basin. A network of 6″ wide slit drains shall be laid flat in the bottom of the trench and combined to create an outlet to a 4″ schedule 40 PVC line to daylight at the river bank. 12″ of sand should be placed on top of a geogrid filter fabric.

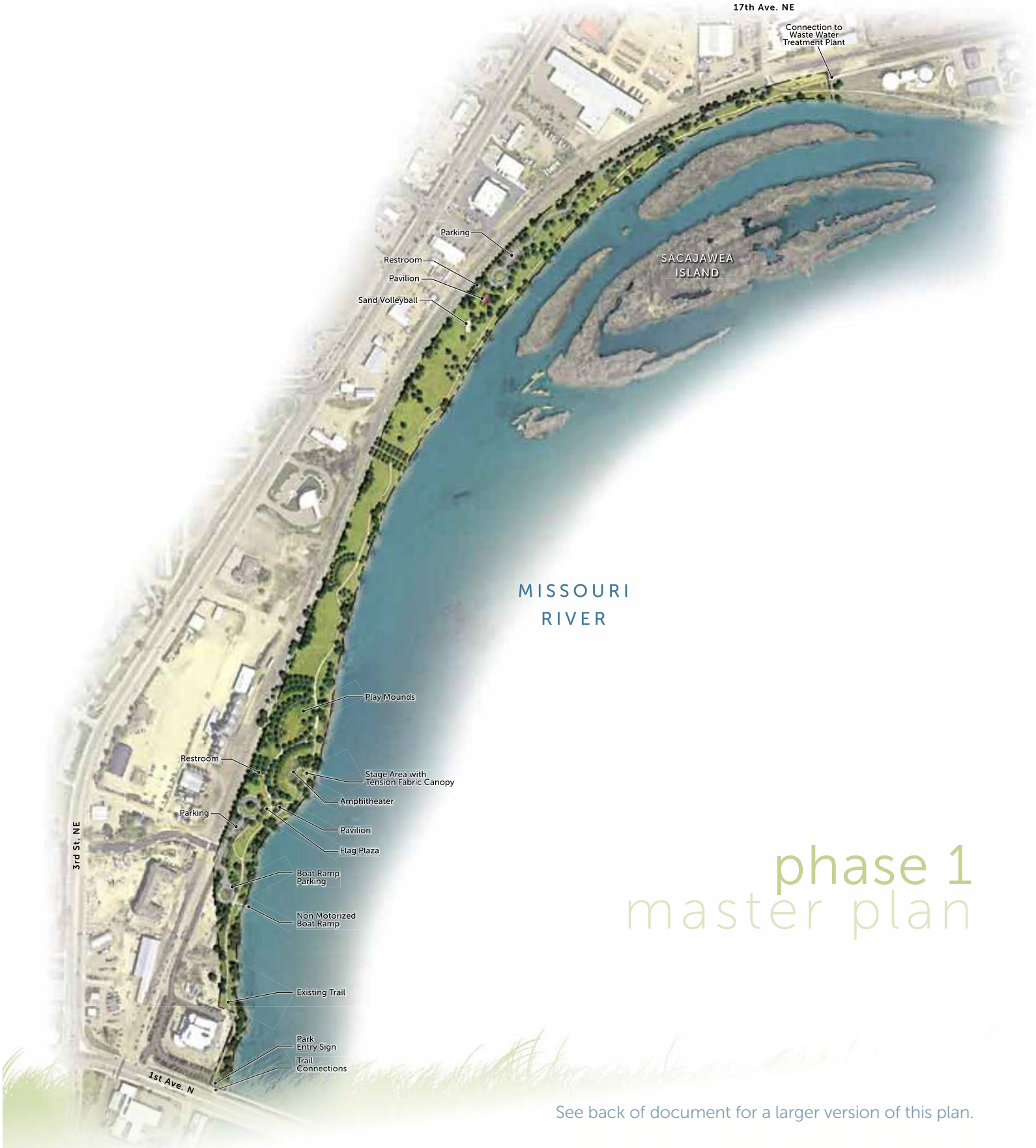
The sand Volleyball court shall be 60′ x 100′ to allow for excess boundary area for court users. The volleyball court is to be located on the northern end adjacent to the existing shelter. The court should be oriented in a due north/south direction.

Total $1,988,000

All costs are shown in 2011 dollars. A more detailed cost estimate for each design element follows:

West Bank Park Phase 1

Road/Parking (South Asphalt)	3470	SY	@	$35	=	$121,450
Road/Parking (North)	5900	SY	@	$5	=	$29,500
Concrete Curb	300	LF	@	$25	=	$7,500
Earthwork	4000	CY	@	$6	=	$24,000
Sand Volleyball	1	LS	@	$10,000	=	$10,000
Art/Sculpture (Donation)	1	LS	@	$0	=	$0
Walks/Trails	32500	SF	@	$7	=	$227,500
Seating/Benches	8	EA	@	$800	=	$6,400
Amphitheatre						
Promenade Paving/Base	2000	SF	@	$15	=	$30,000
Earthwork	1200	CY	@	$6	=	$7,200
Restrooms	1	LS	@	$80,000	=	$80,000
Shelter	1	EA	@	$30,000	=	$30,000
Canopy	500	SF	@	$90	=	$45,000
Stairs	800	LFN	@	$35	=	$28,000
Lighting/Audio/Electrical	1	LS	@	$90,000	=	$90,000
Boulders	300	EA	@	$80	=	$24,000
Restrooms Vault Type	1	LS	@	$40,000	=	$40,000
Lighting	10	EA	@	$5,000	=	$50,000
Non-motorized Boat Ramp	1	LS	@	$90,000	=	$90,000
Clean River Edge	1500	LF	@	$20	=	$30,000
Landscaping						
Trees	320	EA	@	$250	=	$80,000
Turf Grass	25	AC	@	$3,400	=	$85,000
Irrigation	25	AC	@	$17,000	=	$425,000
Landscaping	1	LS	@	$5,000	=	$5,000
Signage Plan-Internal	1	LS	@	$5,000	=	$5,000
Entry Signs	2	EA	@	$10,000	=	$20,000
					Subtotal	**$1,590,550**
	Engineering		@	10%	=	$159,055
	Contingency		@	15%	=	$238,583
					Total	**$1,988,188**



phase 1 master plan

See back of document for a larger version of this plan.

6.2 Future Phases

Future design elements defined in the master plan to be considered for installation including costs shown in 2011 dollars include:

Natural Playground Area $100,000

Proposed on the north end of the amphitheatre area is a playground that focuses on natural features such as logs, boulder play and other unconventional play structures custom designed and built for the park. Play elements such as a maze for small children, an earthen mound with built-in slide and swing sets make up a play world of natural features and imaginary play spaces. The master planning process strongly supported a less conventional play area for children rather than a very structured play feature.

Trail Plaza Development..... $150,000

Located near the existing federal building adjacent to the river trail is a proposed plaza for pedestrians and bicyclists along the trail.

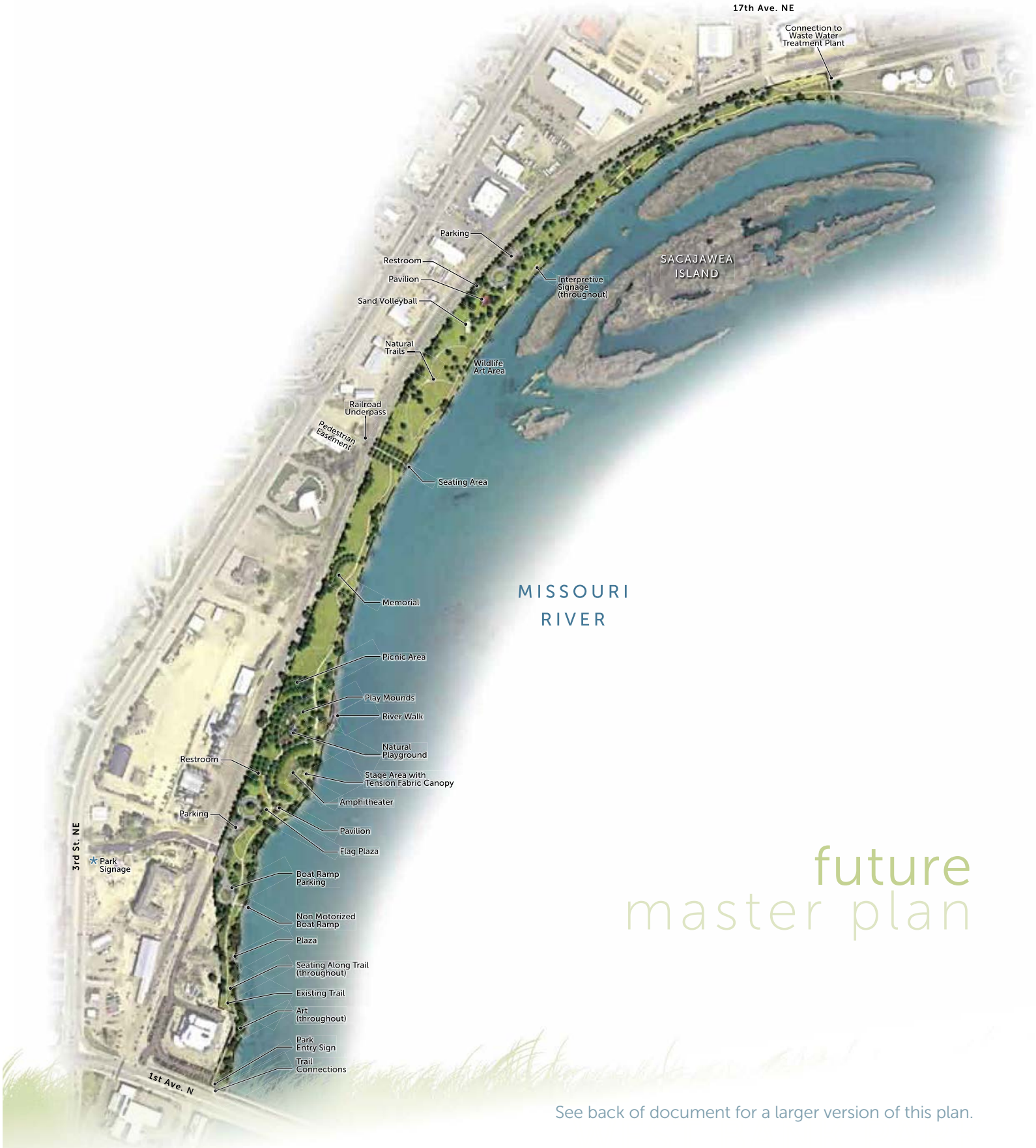
Trail Extension into River $160,000

A trail extension has been designed to extend into the river approximately 40′ and loop back to the existing trail. This trail is proposed to be constructed on gabion baskets and boulders. The trail shall be 10′ wide and near the surface of the normal pool elevation of the water. A seating area is designed with heavy stone boulders on the trail extension.

Railroad Underpass Connection..... $375,000

As the last proposed upgrade to the existing park, a pedestrian access under the railroad line is considered midway through the park. Right of way agreements and permitting with the railroad will be necessary for this connection. The Under pass would be constructed of corrugated metal pipe arch with a 10′ clear space.

Total $785,000



future master plan

See back of document for a larger version of this plan.

funding opportunities

7.0 Funding Opportunities

Overview

Financing improvements to West Bank Park will likely require a combination of resources. Key to accessing funding resources will be to link to a broad range of objectives addressing issues such as environmental concerns, public health, sustainable design and livability principles. Another key will be to form partnerships with other governmental, business and civic organizations to accomplish the goals of the Master Plan. Respondents to the survey ranked grants, volunteers, fundraising and state/federal funding sources as the most popular methods to finance improvements to the park. Following is an overview of various funding mechanisms to implement the West Bank Park Master Plan.

7.1 Tax Increment Financing

The West Bank Urban Renewal Plan anticipates that Tax Increment Financing (TIF) will be a major resource to implement various features of the plan. The City established a TIF district following adoption of the Urban Renewal Plan and TIF revenues were used to fund the master plan for West Bank Park. Tax increment financing directs new property tax dollars resulting from increases in the market value of real property to the area where the real property is located. The base property tax (before any improvements to real property) continues to be distributed to the local governments and school districts. However, tax dollars that accrue from increases in property values (from rehabilitation, new construction, etc.) are available for urban renewal projects as defined by the Montana Urban Renewal Law. Costs which may be paid using TIF dollars are included in 7-15-4288, MCA.

7.2 General Funds

A significant portion of the overall park project could be built through the use of General funds. A good way to look at this type of recreation development is to set a goal that up to 50% of the project may have to be built from local funding sources. The General fund along with TIF funding should provide this 50% match to other sources. Grants and private funding sources, including those from foundations, look for a sizeable commitment from the community or park foundation before they will commit precious dollars towards a community based project. They simply want to see local buy-in. The best way to show this is through some commitment from the general fund in the form of capital.

7.3 Partnerships

Establishing partnerships with other government agencies, civic organizations, non-profit groups and private businesses will be an important strategy to accomplish the goals of the plan. Some types of partnerships that are typical in developing recreational amenities include:

Public–Private Partnerships – These often include partnerships with other government agencies or private organizations to develop new facilities. Financing arrangements, maintenance responsibilities, and other roles and responsibilities are set forth in a contract or memorandum of agreement.

Foundations - In some jurisdictions, citizens have formed non-profit foundations to raise funds for park projects. Foundations that are formed as a 501(c)(3) organization can accept donations, apply for certain grants, and conduct fundraising activities. In most cases outlined as potential funding sources, the Great Falls Park and Recreation Foundation organization is an acceptable body to solicit funding.

Intergovernmental Coordination – Cascade County, Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, Montana Dept. of Natural Resources, and EPA all have programs that can be used to improve West Bank Park. Montana Department of Transportation administers the CTEP program. Coordinating with these agencies to identify common issues and goals can suggest ways to work together to implement the Plan.

7.4 Volunteers/In-Kind Donation

Many of the tasks involving on-going maintenance along the river banks can be done with organized volunteer labor. Removing debris from the shoreline and shallow water can be done by civic clubs, groups, scout troops, community service workers and individuals. Weed pulling and monitoring, and planting of many trees, shrubs and grasses can also be accomplished with in-kind volunteer labor. Businesses could sponsor weeks of Montana Conservation Corps crew time to accomplish a number of cleanup and replanting tasks. Great Falls Transition Center Community Service crews could assist in these efforts. Some shelters, fishing access improvements, and planting projects could be done as Eagle Scout projects. CTA has extensive experience in organizing and managing these types of community install projects.

The use of Americorps staff should be looked at early-on for many types of labor intensive projects. Americorps is a tremendous source of unskilled labor for weeks at a time and are generally free or inexpensive. Workers arrive in teams and stay on site for a period of time until project is completed.

Benefits of using volunteers include contribution of in-kind services to perform tasks not within the city's budget and boosting the number and types of various programs that can be offered. Additionally volunteerism engages community members, helps build support for programs and can foster leadership skills in young adults. Adult volunteers often bring specialized skills to a project.

7.5 Fundraising/Donations

Memorial donations to fund a foot or more of shoreline repairs, a grove of trees, or individual benches, tables, piers, group use pavilions, water fountains and interpretive panels can be sought. Fund-raising events can be developed, promoted and produced to raise public awareness of riverfront issues and provide money that can assist in improvements. Businesses wishing to develop properties adjacent to the park should be encouraged to provide enhanced aesthetics and public access through their developments. Individual businesses could be asked to sponsor the restoration of a portion of riverbank, a wheelchair accessible fishing deck, small group use pavilion or other riverside improvement or amenity.

7.6 Grant Resources

Grants are available from Federal and State agencies as well as non-profit foundations. Grants can be linked to economic development benefits, wellness benefits, environmental benefits and other strategic planning goals. There are also numerous sports organizations that will fund recreational programs and local foundations that often contribute to civic improvement projects in parks. Researching grants, grant writing and grant administration can be a time consuming endeavor and it will be necessary to determine what resources are available to pursue these specific grant programs. Many grants will require a match. Cash, in-kind labor and land are possible ways to provide a match.

conclusion

8.0 Conclusion

The master planning process for West Bank Park evolved over an eight month period of time. It included several separate methods of public involvement, a review of existing planning documents, several site analysis sessions and a culmination of programming, design, phasing and estimate of probable costs.

The West Bank Park Master Plan is intended to improve a park that offers a green band along the west side of the Missouri River in Great Falls, Montana. Tremendous discussion and support surrounded the need for irrigating the entire 36-acre park. Consensus was made that the park would evolve as an active zone on the southern portion and a more passive zone on the northern zone with a transition zone between the two. A ribbon of trail will connect all three zones and link other existing trail efforts within the city.

Major Design Elements to be implemented over the course of the next five years include:

- *Road/Parking Improvements*
- *Earthwork and Grading*
- *Trails and Associated Amenities such as Pedestrian Benches and Trash Receptacles*
- *Amphitheatre*
- *Shelter*
- *Park Lighting*
- *Non Motorized Boat Ramp*
- *River Edge Treatments*
- *Landscaping and Irrigation*
- *Sand Volleyball*
- *Signage Program*

The anticipated cost to complete the first phase of construction is $2 Million.

Future design elements to be implemented in the park include:

- **Natural Playground Area**
- **Trail Plaza Development**
- **Trail Extension into River**
- **Railroad Underpass Connection**

Finally a method to fund the project was identified. The project is a beneficiary of the existing tax increment financing district. The plan has a goal to receive 50% of the funding for the initial phase of construction through the TIF District and General fund. This will be matched through creative funding efforts through grants identified in the funding opportunity section which range from public to private funding sources.

appendix a

Potential Grant Resources

1. State & Federal Grants

A. **Community Transportation Enhancement Funds (CTEP)**

CTEP provides federal funds to improve or enhance a community's roadways. Eligible projects include:

1. Facilities for pedestrians and bicycles;
2. Safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists;
3. Acquisition of scenic easements and historic or scenic sites;
4. Scenic or historic highway programs, including tourist and welcome center facilities;
5. Landscaping and other scenic beautification;
6. Historic preservation;
7. Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals);
8. Preservation of abandoned railway corridors including the conversion and use thereof for pedestrian or bicycle trails;
9. Control and removal of outdoor advertising;
10. Archaeological planning and research;
11. Environmental mitigation of water pollution due to highway runoff, or reduction of vehicle-caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity;
12. Establishment of transportation museums;

This funding opportunity is available to government agencies or non-profit organizations working to develop projects that fit at least one of the twelve eligible project categories and that meet other restrictions.

As of October 2010, Congress has not passed a new Federal transportation act that would continue funding of CTEP. The following provides a link to the website:

http://www.mdt.mt.gov/business/ctep/

B. Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP)

TIIP funds are to be used for "brick and mortar" projects. They cannot be used for marketing or ongoing operating expenses. Types of usage that would be allowed include, but are not limited to, project construction costs associated with building new and/or remodeling or preserving existing tourism and recreation attractions, historical sites and arti facts; costs associated with purchasing new and/or existing tourism and recreation attractions, historical sites and artifacts; and equipment purchased for specific tourism project operation.

The grants can range from the minimum of $20,000 to the maximum amount available for the TIIP grants in any given year. The required match is 2:1. For every two dollars of grant money being requested, the sponsor must provide one dollar. The match must be in "hard" dollars. In-kind services will not be considered as part of the required match amount. The following provides a link to the website:

http://travelmontana.mt.gov/forms/

C. Land & Water Conservation Fund

In 1965, the United States Congress passed legislation that was to become one of our nation's most important conservation initiatives: The Land & Water Conservation Fund (L&WCF) Act. The Act clearly outlined a course of action to, 1) meet the need for increased outdoor recreation opportunities in the nation, 2) share in a federal-state-local responsibility to finance land acquisition/ development projects, and 3) emphasize the need to provide for these needs in and around areas close to home.

The L&WCF is administered by the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks in the state of Montana. The primary purpose of the program is to acquire and/ or develop and then preserve outstanding property in perpetuity for outdoor recreation. This program source can fund many of the project elements with the exception of buildings. The following provides a link to the website:

http://fwpiis.mt.gov/content/getItem.aspx?id=35503

http://fwp.mt.gov/recreation/grants/lwcf/

D. Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)

Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) programs provided more than $5 billion annually in recent years to fund water quality protection projects for wastewater treatment, nonpoint source pollution control, and watershed and estuary management. Program includes low cost loans and grants to projects that will help protect water resources, and could be used for open space development and riparian projects that might benefit water quality. The following provides a link to the website:

http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/cwf/cwsrf_index.cfm

E. US Fish and Wildlife Service – Grant Programs for Local Governments

North American Wetlands Conservation Act - To provide funding assistance to promote conservation of wetlands and associated habitats for migratory birds and other wildlife. Preference given to projects that have grantee or partners that have never participated in a NAWCA supported program. Small Grants Program- grants may not exceed $50,000; 50% Match.

This program is a cooperative conservation initiative targeted to restore natural resources and establish or expand wildlife habitat. This grant could be used to support trail development with a direct relationship to improving habitat. The following provides a link to the website:

http://www.fws.gov/grants/local.html

F. EPA Brownfield Programs

The EPA's Brownfields Program provides direct funding for brownfields assessment, cleanup, revolving loans, and environmental job training. To facilitate the leveraging of public resources, EPA's Brownfields Program collaborates with other EPA programs, other federal partners, and state agencies to identify and make available resources that can be used for brownfields activities. In addition to direct brownfields funding, EPA also provides technical information on brownfields financing matters. This program could be utilized for a variety of improvements, but specifically trail development. The following provides a link to the website:

http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/grant_info/index.htm

G. Green Infrastructure:

Green infrastructure is an approach to wet weather management that is cost effective, sustainable, and environmentally friendly. Green infrastructure management approaches and technologies infiltrate, evapotranspire, capture, and reuse stormwater to maintain or restore natural hydrology. Many of these approaches, including green roofs, rain gardens, green streets, and other innovative stormwater management techniques, can also make neighborhoods safer, healthier, and more attractive. EPA has compiled a list of funding resources to help communities fund green infrastructure projects. These funding sources can support development of irrigation systems and stormwater management. The following provides a link to the website:

http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/greeninfrastructure/fundingopportunities.cfm

2. Foundation Grants

A. General Mills

At locations where General Mills operates manufacturing facilities, including Great Falls, employees serve on Community Action Councils that work with the Foundation to make grants to nonprofits in their communities. Focus is on grant-making in these communities and their surrounding areas (up to 50 miles from the General Mills facility in each community) in the areas of youth nutrition and fitness, social services, education, and arts and culture. These grants range from $2,500 to $10,000, and are reviewed on a quarterly basis. This funding source could be utilized for a variety of improvements identified in the plan. The following provides a link to the website:

http://www.generalmills.com/en/Responsibility Community_Engagement/Grants.aspx

B. National Fish and Wildlife Foundation: Five-Star Restoration Matching Grants Program

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation provides funding on a competitive basis to projects that sustain, restore and enhance the Nation's fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats through our Keystone Initiative Grants and other Special Grant Programs. This funding source could be used to improve riparian conditions. The following provides a link to the website:

http://www.nfwf.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Grants

C. Home Depot Foundation

The Home Depot Foundation makes grants to 501(c)(3) tax exempt public charities in the United States and Canada. Grants typically range from $5,000 to $25,000. While focused on building affordable homes, The Home Depot Foundation is committed to improving the overall health of our communities. Taking a long-term, comprehensive approach to building healthy, stable communities where families can thrive, the Foundation invests in the planting and restoration of trees along streets, in parks and in schoolyards; the building and refurbishment of community play spaces; and the revitalization of school facilities. This program should be targeted to support additional tree plantings. The following provides a link to the website:

http://www.homedepotfoundation.org/grants/faqs.html

D. Wal-Mart

The Wal-Mart Foundation strives to provide opportunities that improve the lives of individuals in communities where they are located. Through financial contributions, in-kind donations and volunteerism, the Wal-Mart Foundation supports initiatives focused on enhancing opportunities in our four main focus areas:

- Education
- Workforce Development / Economic Opportunity
- Environmental Sustainability
- Health and Wellness

Many of the program elements in the park plan could be supported by funding from this source. The following provides a link to the website:

http://walmartstores.com/CommunityGiving/203.aspx

E. BNSF Foundation

The Foundation supports projects in the communities serve by the rail line and in communities where employees live, work, and volunteer. Generally, they consider requests for funding that clearly fall within one or more funding areas including civic projects. Civic services including organizations which are concerned with the environment, as well as local community issues such as crime prevention, parks and recreation, diversity and community development. Many of the program elements in the park plan could be supported by funding from this source. The following provides a link to the website:

http://www.bnsffoundation.org/giving.html

F. Gannett Foundation

The Gannett Foundation supports local organizations in communities served by Gannett Co., Inc. Their community action grant priorities include education and neighborhood improvement, economic development, youth development, community problem-solving, assistance to disadvantaged people, environmental conservation and cultural enrichment. The average grant amount is in the $1,000 to $5,000 range. Many of the program elements in the park plan could be supported by funding from this source.
The following provides a link to the website:

http://www.gannettfoundation.org/GUIDELINES.htm

G. Wells Fargo

Invest in communities where they have operations. One of their target areas is the environment including conservation of water resources. Program elements targeted at improving the environment in the park plan could be supported by funding from this source. The following provides a link to the website:

http://www.wellsfargo.com/about/community index.jhtml

H. Bullitt Foundation

The mission of The Bullitt Foundation is to safeguard the natural environment by promoting responsible human activities and sustainable communities in the Pacific Northwest. The Foundation invites inquiries from nonprofit organizations that serve Washington, Oregon, Idaho, British Columbia, western Montana (including the Rocky Mountain range), and coastal Alaska from Cook Inlet to the Canadian border.

Where once the Foundation endeavored to cover the full range of environmental issues in the Pacific Northwest, it now concentrates on urban issues, business and technology, ecosystem services and planning, and civic engagement. Funding amounts range from $20,000 to $200,000.

The Foundation currently focuses most of its grants on strategies that encourage strong, effective partnerships between grantees and local groups in the private, public, and tribal sectors to achieve broad consensus on issues of general public interest.

Many of the program elements in the park plan could be supported by funding from this source. This foundation leans very much toward the environmental spectrum. The most likely direction for funding would be to focus on funding to develop the park in sustainable ways including creative reuse of water as well as utilization of solar energy options for community center and solar lights establishing a precedent for sustainable building options for the parks department. The following provides a link to the website:

http://bullitt.org/grantmaking/inquire

I. M.J. Murdock Trust

The Trust's mission is to enrich the quality of life in the Pacific Northwest by providing grants and enrichment programs to organizations seeking to strengthen the region's educational, spiritual, and cultural base in creative and sustainable ways.

The Trust makes grants in three general areas of interest including education, arts and culture, and Health and Human services. Performance and visual arts projects are of great interest to the trust, and the ampitheatre and other visual arts including sculptures in West Bank Park could be opportunities for funding through the Trust. The Trust does provide grants for capital projects.

In applying to the Trust, describe project as a method to bring pride, community gathering, community interaction and improve heath of community members on the west side through development of a central community park for use by all city residents. West Bank Park project meets all three major categories in the General Grant section. The following provides a link to the website:

http://www.murdock-trust.org

Other Federal Recreation Grants

There are 32 recreation federal grants, government grants and loans listed on federal grants wire. For detailed information on a Recreation federal grant including eligibility requirements or financial information, the following provides a link to the website:

http://www.federalgrantswire.com/recreation-community-development-federal-grants.html

3. Business Support

Local businesses are potential supporters of matching funds for projects within West Bank Park. The following is a sample of businesses that should be contacted regarding individual projects within the park:

First Interstate Bank, Montana Rail Link, Northwestern Energy, Community Medical Center, First Security Bank, Bank of Montana, Community Bank, Farmers State Bank, Allegiance Benefit Plan Management, Inc., Les Schwab, Vanns, JCCS, Blackfoot Telecommunications Group, Karl Tyler Chevrolet, DeMarois Buick GMC Truck Mercedes, and Knife River Corporation.

4. Additional Funding Sources from National Foundations

The following is a list of foundations operating nationally for which the consultant team believes the West Bank Park Master Plan improvements will fit into their giving criteria. These grant sources are considered secondary importance and should be approached after other grant sources have been solicited. Analysis of their giving history and stated mission/goals indicate that these foundations will give to park and open space, environmental or health related issues, including the West Bank Park project.

Alcoa Foundation
http://www.alcoa.com/global/en/community/foundation/info_page/about_overview.asp

Boeing Fund
http://www.boeing.com/companyoffices/aboutus community/

Bridgestone Firestone Trust
http://www.bridgestone-firestone.com/trustfund.asp

Cargill Corporate Fund
http://www.cargill.com/corporate-responsibility/community-engagement/index.jsp

Carolyn Foundation
http://www.carolynfoundation.org/

Caterpiller Foundation:
http://www.cat.com/foundation

Cedar Tree Foundation
http://www.cedartreefound.org/apply.html

Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
http://www.mott.org/

Conoco Phillips Foundation
http://www.conocophillips.com/EN/susdev/communities/community_investment/Pages/index.aspx

Cottonwood Foundation
http://www.cottonwoodfdn.org/

Cracker Barrel Foundation
http://www.crackerbarrel.com/about.cfm?doc_id=1239#Cracker_Barrel_Foundation

David & Lucille Packard Foundation
http://www.packard.org/

Dew Foundation
http://www.dewfoundation.org/

Dupont Investment Fund
http://www2.dupont.com/Social_Commitment/en_US/outreach/index.html

Edison Foundation
http://www.edison.com/community/default.asp

Ford Fund
http://www.ford.com/our-values/environment/corporate-sustainability

George Gund Foundation
http://www.gundfdn.org/

Georgia Pacific Foundation
http://www.gp.com/gpfoundation/index.html

IBM Foundation
http://www.ibm.com/ibm/ibmgives/

International Paper Foundation
http://www.internationalpaper.com/US/EN/Company/IPGiving/IPFoundation.html

Kresge Foundation
http://www.kresge.org/

Laird Norton Foundation
(Stewardship, Sustainable Communities)
http://www.lairdnorton.org/

Ronald McDonald House
http://rmhc.org/what-we-do/grants/how-to-apply/

appendix b

Park and Recreation Board Presentation

City of Great Falls
Park and Recreation

WEST BANK PARK MASTER PLAN

Park and Recreation Board
CTA & Applied Communications

August 9, 2010

Where are we in the process?

- Steering Committee Site Visit: June 10, 2010
- Town Hall Meeting: June 30, 2010
- Community Design Charrette:
  Evening of July 21 and Follow-up Morning of July 22, 2010
- Master Plan Work Session with Park and Recreation Board:
  3 p.m. Monday, August 9, 2010
- Draft Master Plan Presentation:
  3 p.m. Monday, September 13, 2010
- Presentation of Final Master Plan:
  6:00 p.m. Tuesday, January 18, 2011

WEST BANK PARK
CITY OF GREAT FALLS MONTANA

CTA

Steering Committee Members – Site Visit

Matt Marcinek
Beth Hill
Doug Wicks
Phyllis Hemstad
Jim Rearden
Giles Salyer
Susan Conell
Jane Weber
Rodney Caldwell
Brant Birkeland
Lori Fay

WEST BANK PARK
CITY OF GREAT FALLS MONTANA

Town Hall Meeting

WEST BANK PARK
CITY OF GREAT FALLS MONTANA

Charrette

WEST BANK PARK

CITY OF GREAT FALLS MONTANA

CTA


SHADE STRUCTURE
NATURAL BANK REST.
BOARDWALK
PASSIVE TRAILS
E PLANTINGS
TRIAN XING
(MAIN)


PATH INTO RIVER
NATURAL PLAYGROUND
GAZEBO
AMPHITHEATRE
PERFORMANCE PLATFORM
RESTROOM
PARKING
ACTIVE ZONE

Parks Master Plan - 1995

- Lower use & less visible
- Lower level of service than east bank parks
- Do not pave access roads or paving areas
- Major trailhead with minimum improvements

WEST BANK PARK
CITY OF GREAT FALLS MONTANA

Missouri River Corridor Plan

Community Open Space

- Keep the waterfront open to the Public.
- Provide sufficient building and parking setbacks to protect water quality and keep open space functional.
- Provide continuous pedestrian circulation along waterfront.
- Extend green connections from the river's edge to neighboring communities.
- Incorporate small community parks and open space amenities.
- Create activity nodes and gathering places along pedestrian paths.

WEST BANK PARK
CITY OF GREAT FALLS MONTANA

West Bank Urban Renewal Plan 2007

Work with adjacent property owners and developers to address Park access, visual integration with adjoining development uses and maintenance.

WEST BANK PARK
CITY OF GREAT FALLS MONTANA

Growth Policy - 2002

Public Facilities

- The City shall continue to provide quality recreational programs and facilities to meet the needs of area residents.
- Historical, geological, cultural, archaeological, and other information should be integrated as exhibits or displays in City parks and other community facilities.

Environment

- To preserve open spaces of significant scenic, interpretive, recreational or educational value.
- To preserve high-quality habitat for wildlife.
- Water Quality - The City should protect and expand public access to the Missouri River and prevent further intrusion into the river corridor by incompatible land uses that have the potential to restrict access or degrade water quality.
- The City should promote development options that preserve open space and water quality.

WEST BANK PARK
CITY OF GREAT FALLS MONTANA

Land & Water - Assessment - 2004

Rich natural environment – with native species

Boat – kayak – canoe access

Gravel beach – fishing access

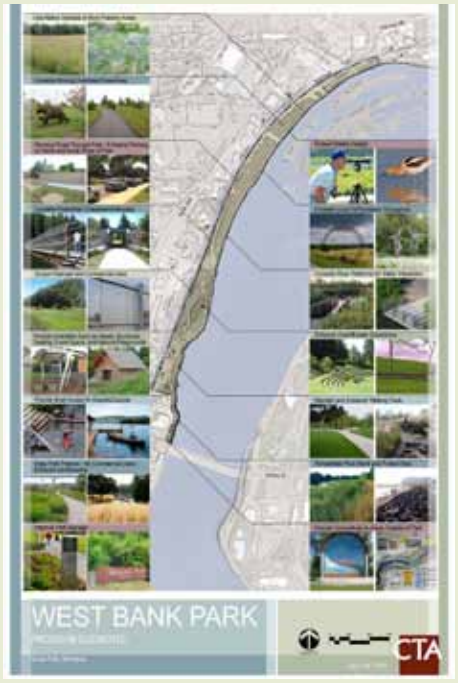
Wildlife viewing areas

Nature Center – Water quality theme

Shoreline Restoration

WEST BANK PARK
CITY OF GREAT FALLS MONTANA

Site Analysis



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Survey

- Press Release
- City Web Site Link & River's Edge Trail Web Site
- Project List-Serve
- Hard Copies (Civic Center, Library, Park & Rec Offices, ...)
- Other List-Serves
  (Chamber, Neighborhood Councils, River's Edge Trail,
  Bike Club, Lewis & Clark Interpretive Assoc., ...)
- Draft Results

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North – Keep it Natural

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Native Landscaping

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South - Manicured/Formal

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South - Mature Trees

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Connection Under Central Avenue Bridge

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Events

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Gazebo and Outdoor Shelter

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Amphitheatre

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Natural Play Areas

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Access

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Parking

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Restrooms

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Trails

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Waterfront

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Site Furnishings

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Art, Sculptures, and Interpretation

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Art, Sculptures, and Interpretation

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Signage

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Landscaping

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Water Recreation – Not Practical

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Long Term Maintenance

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Funding

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appendix c

Survey Summary

A. Methodology

From the last week in July, 2010 through mid-August, the planning team conducted an on-line survey to provide residents an opportunity to have input on the West Bank Park Master Plan. The survey was publicized through the press releases, a list-serve compiled from individuals who had attended public meetings on the master plan and a number of civic groups that sent notices to their list-serves. Additionally, hard-copies of the surveys were available at the civic center, library and other park facilities. A total of 367 surveys were completed.

B. Survey Responses Summary

1. Top Five Most Popular Activities:

Walking (80.1%)
Bicycling (51.9%)
Nature Walks (49.6%)
Picnics (40.4%)
Dog Walking (40.1%)

2. Top Ranked Most Important Park Functions:

- Enjoy outdoors
- Health/Wellness/Fitness
- Family Activities
- General Leisure (Sitting, eating lunch, ….)

3. **Top Ranked Features to Preserve**

- Scenic Views
- Natural areas
- Wildlife areas

4. **Landscaping Preferences**

- Landscaping should be designed for low maintenance. (86.3%)
- Park should emphasize natural vegetation. (83.6%)
- Landscaping designs should include xeriscaping (low watering) principles. (72.4%)

5. **Designs Features**

Highest Ranked:
- Accessibility for people with disabilities
- Benches
- Paved trails

Lowest Ranked:
- Viewing Binoculars
- Road access through park
- Amphitheater

6. **Top Issues in Park**

- Vandalism
- Litter
- Weed Control
- Maintenance
- Disruption of Wildlife Areas

7. **Top Ranked Planning Principles**

- Restoring and protecting shoreline
- Protect Water Quality
- Clean-up contamination on nearby propertie
- Sustainable development principles
- Establishing a sense of place

8. **Preferred Funding Sources**

- Grants
- Fundraising
- Volunteers – In-kind contributions
- State/Federal Funding
- Partnerships

plans

phase 1 master plan

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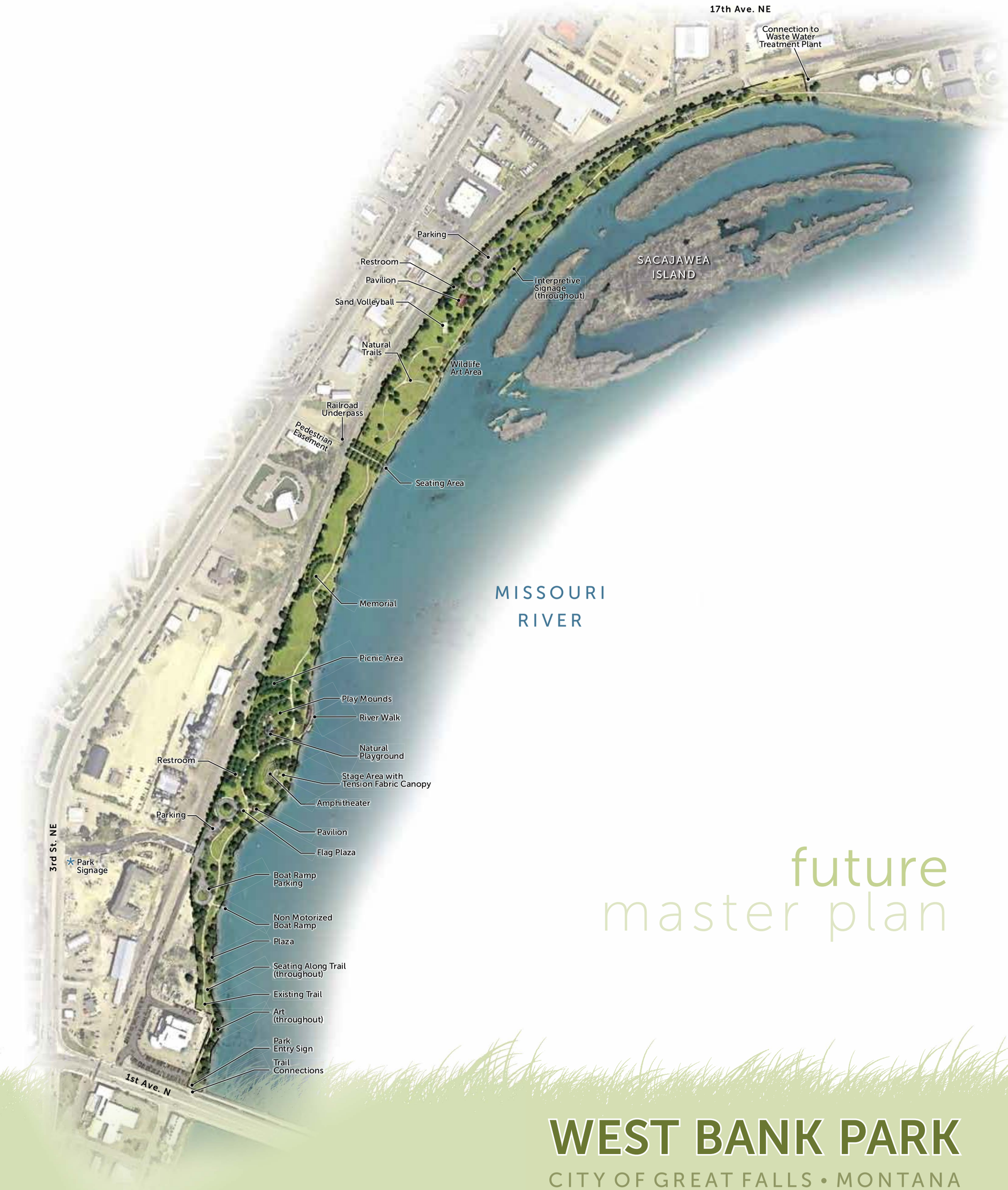

future
master plan

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