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**Title:** 90% Design Briefing for 325 Blake Road Restoration and Redevelopment

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**Purpose:**

At the August 11, 2022 Operations and Programs Committee (OPC) meeting, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) staff and design consultants will provide a 90% design briefing on the 325 Blake Road Restoration and Redevelopment project and lead a discussion around the current designs, providing an opportunity for the OPC to offer additional guidance prior to HDR, Inc.'s (HDR) formal 90% submittal in September 2022.

**Background:**

In December 2020, MCWD contracted with HDR to provide Phase I schematic design and engineering services to advance its stormwater and greenway project at 325 Blake Road and adjacent Cottageville Park properties in Hopkins. Phase I work was completed in September 2021 with Board acceptance of schematic designs, and a Phase II scope of work and contract were authorized in November 2021. On February 24, 2022, the Board approved HDR's 60% design submittal and provided guidance for the development of 90% design.

**Summary:**

Design Process

Phase I design included significant foundational technical work as well as broad stakeholder engagement, both of which built off prior work undertaken to characterize the site's water resource and societal potential. Listening sessions, surveys, and open houses in early 2021 helped re-establish and refine the specific goals the community, MCWD, and the City of Hopkins (City) held for the site. In July 2021, a design charrette was held in conjunction with MCWD's and the City's selected developer, Alatus, LLC. Findings from the stakeholder engagement process and preliminary stormwater engineering studies were used to sketch MCWD's stormwater and greenway project and demonstrate how Alatus' transit-oriented development could be merged with that design. Representatives from regional agencies with an interest in the project were invited to provide real time input on the emerging designs.

On February 24, 2022, the Board approved the 60% design package, the first Phase II deliverable. These designs incorporated feedback received on the schematic design from the Board and staff, as well as preferences gathered through several community engagement events. MCWD participated in a neighborhood meeting hosted by Alatus in November 2021 to collect ideas on the schematic design and hosted a 60% design virtual community meeting in January 2022. Both events included preference surveys, which were also made available online in English and Somali after the meetings. Two informational sessions and preference surveys were also conducted with students at Hopkins West Junior High to bring youth perspective to the site, a demographic that was under-represented during other community events.

Since approval of the 60% design set, MCWD staff and the HDR design team have revised and solidified designs based on additional technical study and input from the MCWD Citizen Advisory Committee on March 16, 2022 and the City of Hopkins Park Board on June 27, 2022. Significant collaboration has continued with Alatus and the City to ensure the designs and anticipated construction phasing between the development and the Greenway and stormwater pond are coordinated. MCWD staff also briefed the Board design liaisons on June 1, 2022 and August 2, 2022 and received interim guidance that has shaped the 90% designs that will be presented at the August 11, 2022 OPC meeting. The input received from the OPC will help HDR finalize their formal 90% design submittal in September 2022.

## 90% Design

### *Baseline and Alatus Alternatives*

Two alternatives were produced as part of the schematic design: 1) a Baseline Alternative which built out MCWD's stormwater and greenway project and reserved a portion of the site for a future transit-oriented development (TOD), and 2) an Alatus Alternative which merged MCWD's stormwater and greenway project with Alatus' proposed TOD. Throughout late 2021 and the first half of 2022, Alatus has rapidly advanced the design of its development to secure land use entitlements by the end of 2021 and LIHTC and private funding for Building A in July 2022. This allowed MCWD's 60% and 90% designs to proceed along the Alatus Alternative while maintaining the ability to shift to the baseline alternative if necessary.

### *Project Components*

The major components of the project are broken out below to demonstrate that portions of the project could be prioritized or constructed in phases if necessary. 60% designs for the stormwater pond and associated infrastructure had been fast-tracked to meet critical grant deadlines in June 2022. At the current 90% design stage, all project components have been advanced to the same level of detail. Construction phasing is being refined and staff will recommend an approach to the Board as part of the bid package approval.

### *Stormwater*

At the heart of MCWD's capital project is the regionalization and treatment of 270 acres of stormwater that currently empties untreated into Minnehaha Creek. This stormwater will be brought to the 325 Blake Road site through two diversion pipes (already constructed) and treated in a stormwater pond in the eastern portion of the site. The pond is designed to be functional yet aesthetically pleasing for users of the Minnehaha Creek Greenway trail extension and future residents of the Alatus development. The pond is designed to tie into the Alatus development through a pump and cascade system, which offsets the volume of the pond reduced by the development footprint and provides added water quality benefits.

### *Greenway and Trails*

Another core element of the project is the extension of the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, providing a connection through the site between the Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail and Cottageville Park. The design includes a ten-foot bituminous trail running from the Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail, along Minnehaha Creek and the stormwater pond, across Minnehaha Creek via a pedestrian bridge, and finally to Lake Street to connect to Cottageville Park. The Greenway will be bookended with the Trailhead at the Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail intersection and the Gateway at the Lake Street and Blake Road intersection to welcome and orient users. The Gateway design has been modified since 60% based on design liaison input.

### *Greenway Activity Nodes*

In addition to the Trailhead and Gateway, the design includes two activity nodes along the Greenway trail to provide users with connections to the creek and places to gather, while protecting the integrity of the riparian corridor. The Landing is located adjacent to Minnehaha Creek on the 325 Blake Road parcel and will accommodate non-motorized watercraft users, as well as provide picnic areas and more contemplative spaces. The Nature Play area will be located on the Cottageville parcel immediately downstream of the Lake Street bridge and will be connected to the main 325 Blake Road parcel by a pedestrian bridge across Minnehaha Creek. The Nature Play area has continued to be refined since 60% based on design liaison input.

### *Wayfinding and Interpretation*

The 90% design includes directional and informational signage to help users navigate and engage with the site safely and comfortably, as well as artistic interpretive elements to tell the story of Minnehaha Creek, 325 Blake Road, and the water quality benefits derived from the project. OPC guidance will be sought by staff on these wayfinding and interpretative features.

## 90% Submittal

Based on the feedback received at the August 11, 2022 OPC meeting, HDR will submit a formal 90% design package that includes:

- Drawing Set: Landscape and engineering plans

- Specifications: Construction specifications based on 90% drawings
- Opinion of Probable Cost: Updated cost estimates based on 90% drawings
- Operations, Maintenance, and Monitoring (OMM) Plan: An OMM plan detailing annual and long-term operations and maintenance, including an inspection plan, lifecycle expectations, and maintenance costs
- Updated Design Memorandum: Technical data, studies, modeling, and community engagement supporting the design.

Each of the above documents will be updated with additional detail as design progresses to final design.

#### Next Steps

At the August 11, 2022 Board meeting, staff and design consultants will present the 325 Blake Road Restoration and Redevelopment draft 90% design and lead a discussion to capture the Board's input. Board input will be combined with staff's review and used to produce the formal 90% design submittal and final, bid-ready designs. MCWD staff will also provide a brief general project update, including the status of grants and the Alatus development.

The following is a general timeline of the next steps:

- 90% design submittal – September 2022
- Board approval of final design – October 20, 2022

#### **Supporting documents (list attachments):**

- 90% design renderings



# Overall Site Plan



ALATUS DEVELOPMENT

GREENWAY TRAIL



# Overall View 1



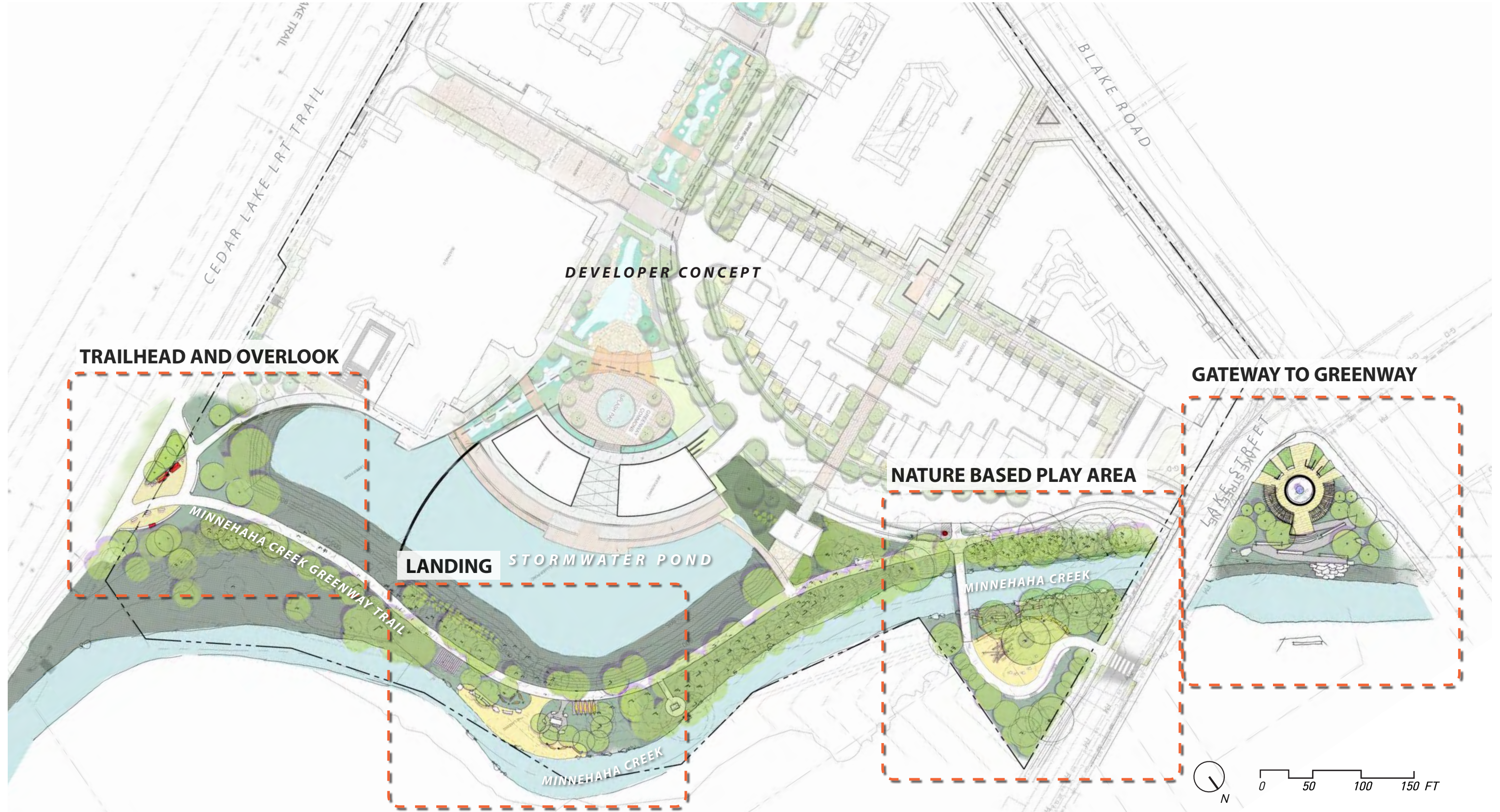


# Overall View 2



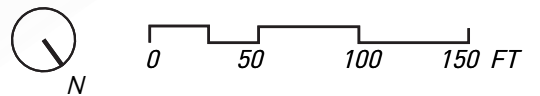
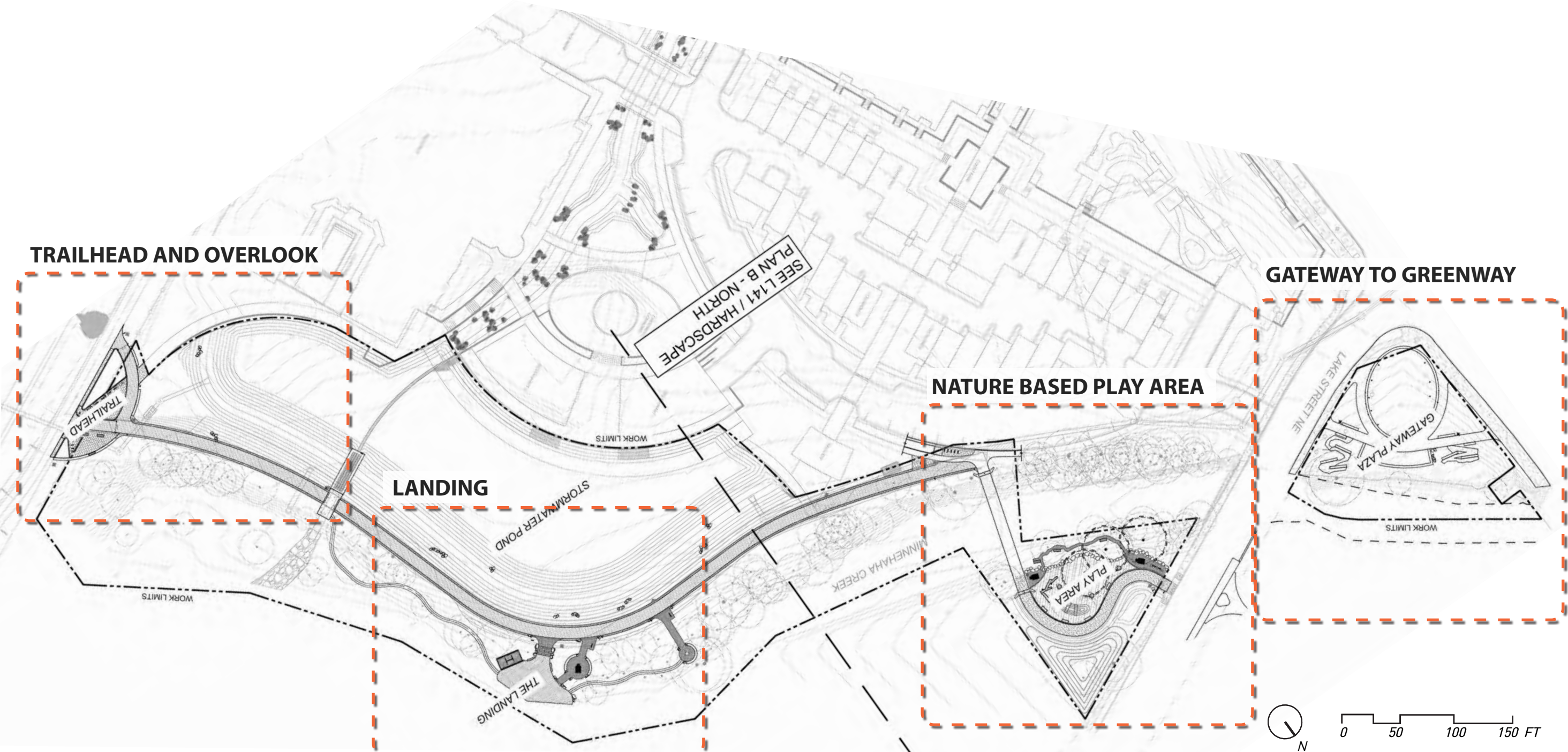


# Overall Site Plan - Greenway Concept





# Overall Site Plan - Greenway Update





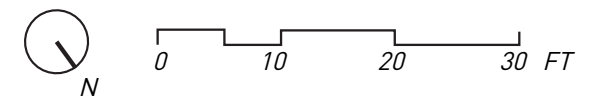
# Trailhead and Overlook Concept



## key

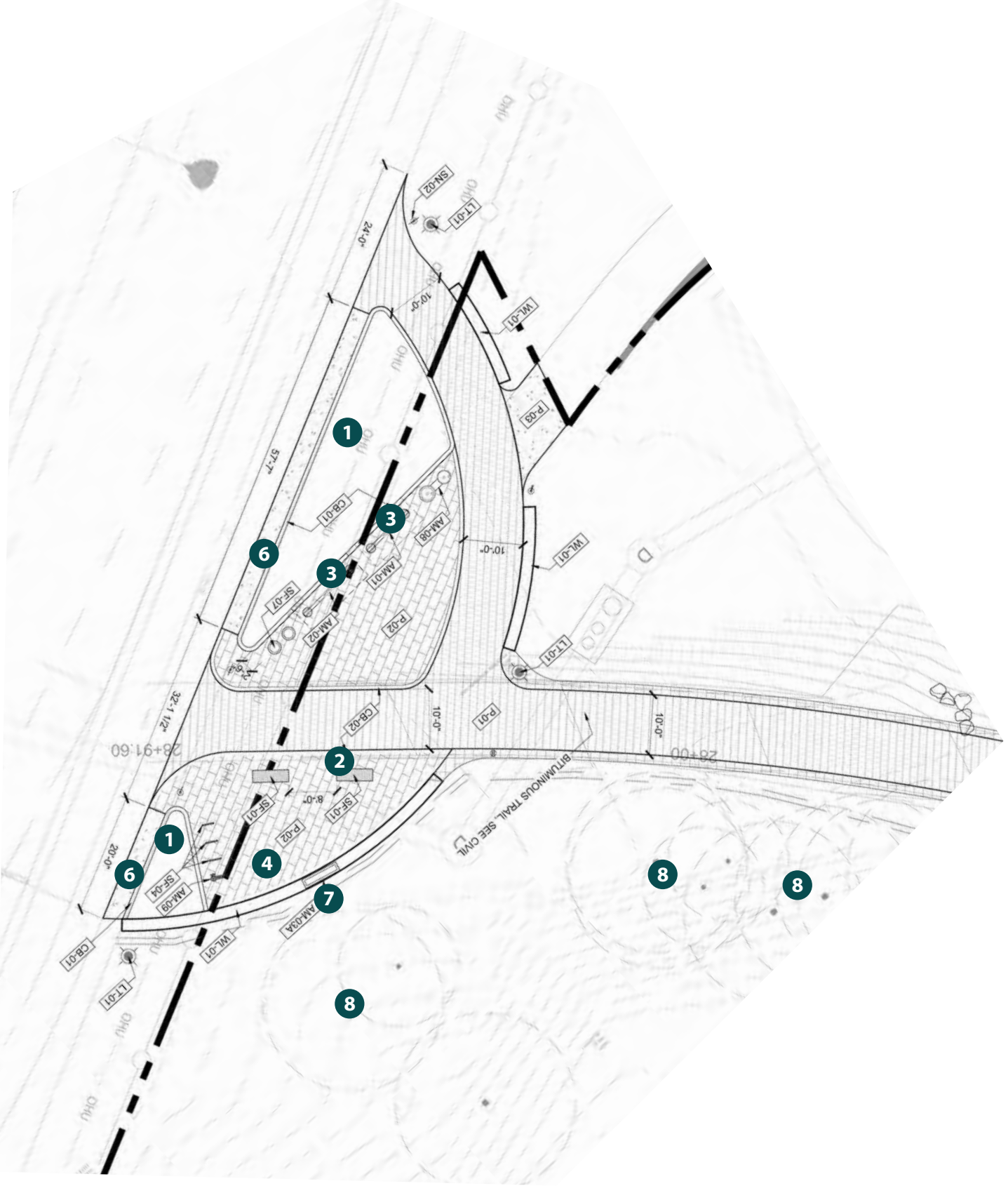
- 1 RAISED PLANTING
- 2 BLOCK SEATING
- 3 TRAILHEAD KIOSK
- 4 PERMEABLE PAVERS
- 5 BLOCK BENCH
- 6 SEATWALL
- 7 CREEK INTERPRETATION (PUBLIC ART)
- 8 PRESERVE EXISTING TREES

## key plan





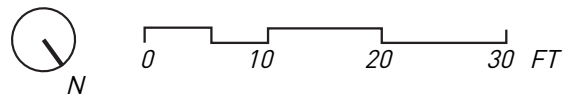
# Trailhead and Overlook Update



## key

- 1 RAISED PLANTING
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- 3 TRAILHEAD KIOSK
- 4 PERMEABLE PAVERS
- 5 BLOCK BENCH
- 6 PLANTER CURB
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- 8 PRESERVE EXISTING TREES

## key plan





# Trailhead and Overlook





# Trailhead and Overlook





# Trailhead and Overlook





# Trailhead and Overlook



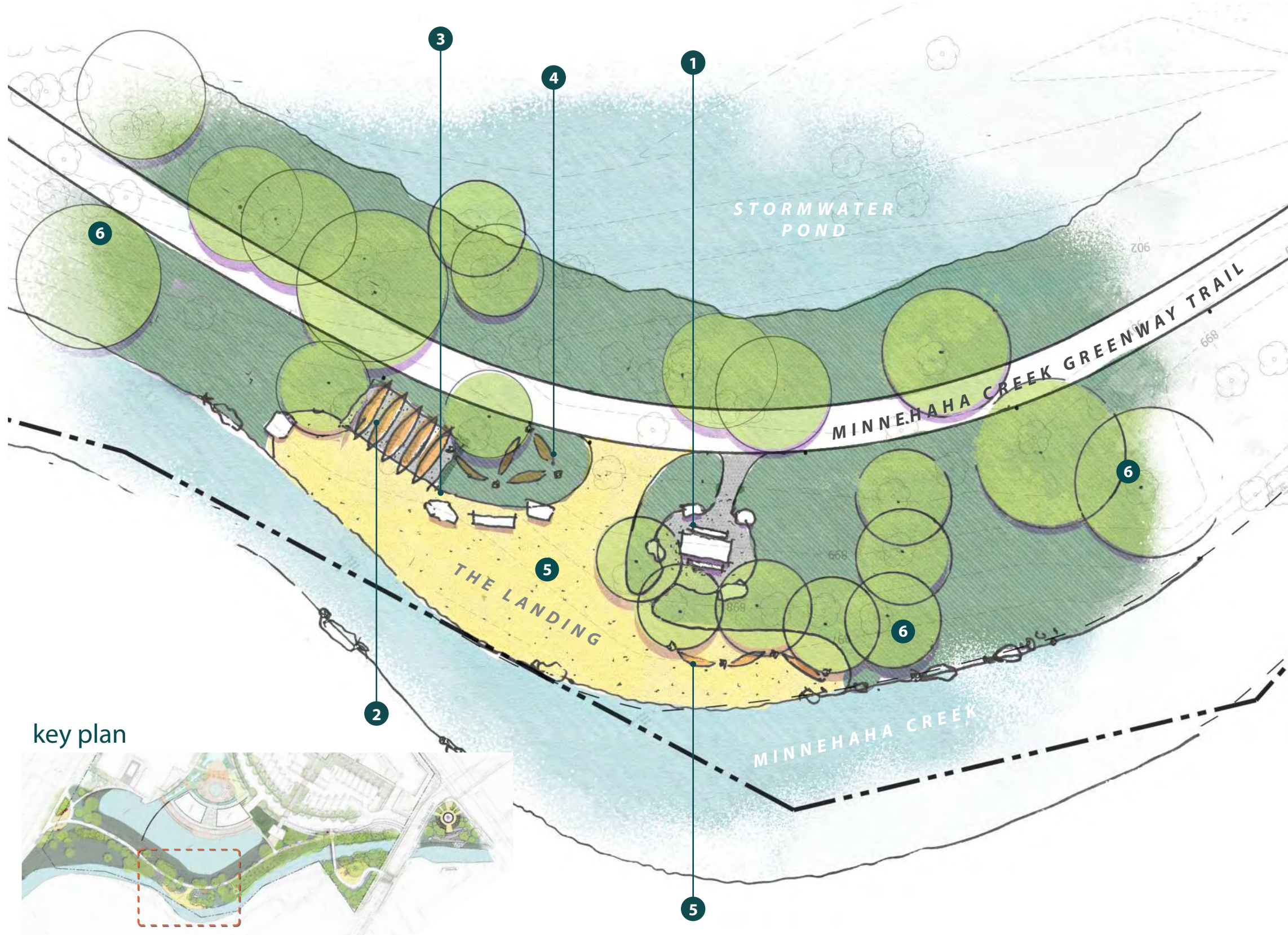


# Trailhead and Overlook





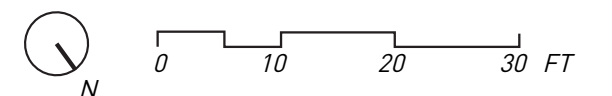
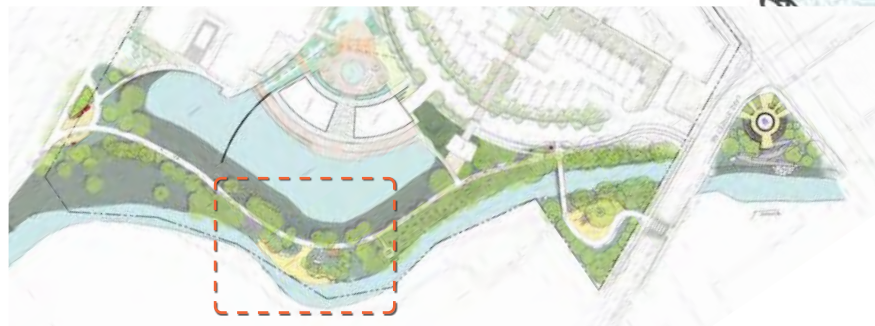
# The Landing Concept



## key

- 1 PICNIC AREA
- 2 SHORT TERM CANOE STORAGE
- 3 INFORMAL SEATING
- 4 HAMMOCK POLES
- 5 CREEK ACCESS
- 6 PRESERVE EXISTING TREES

key plan

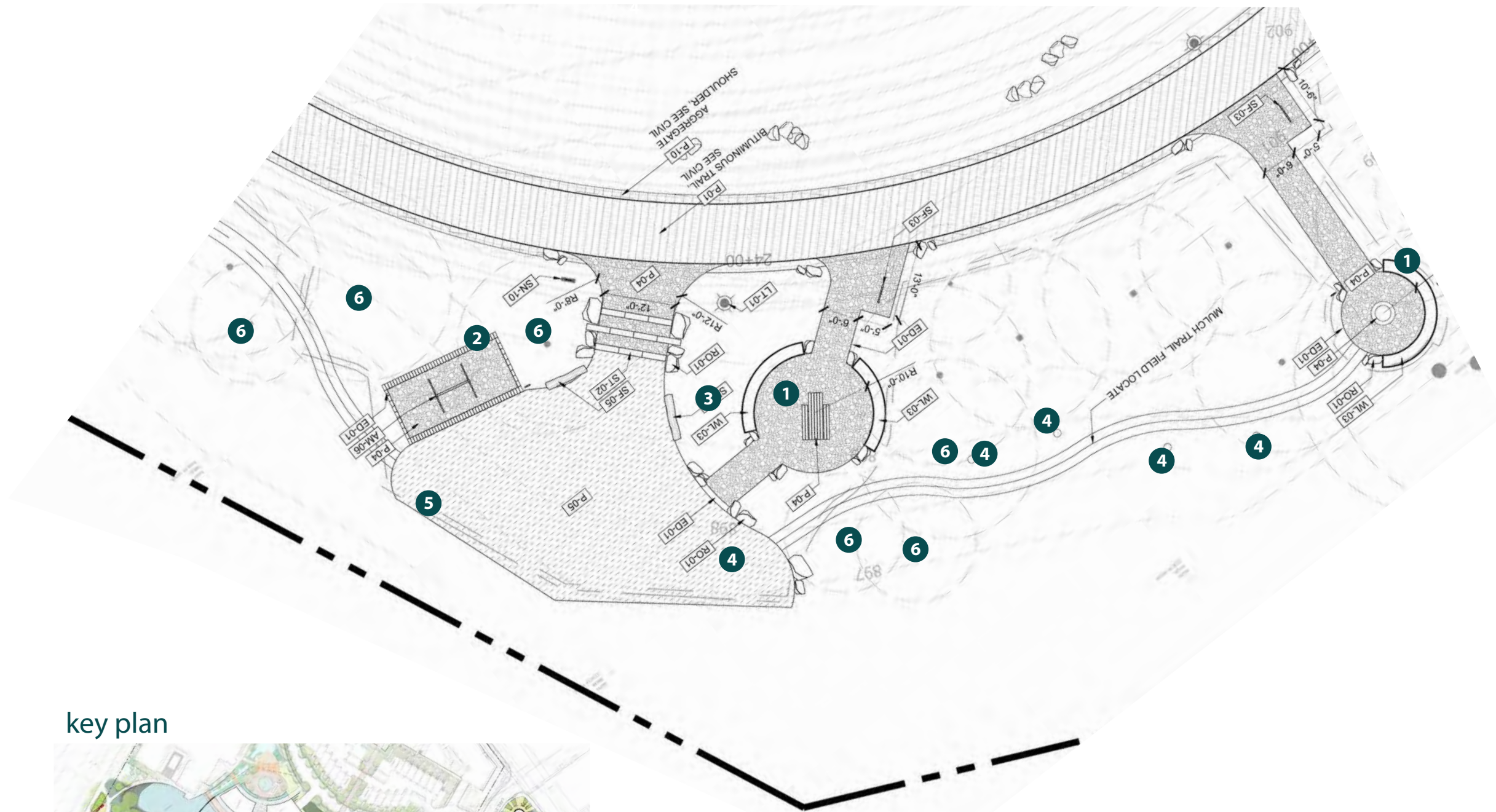




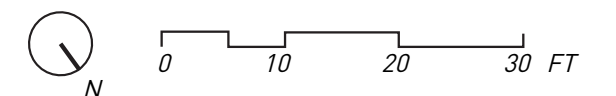
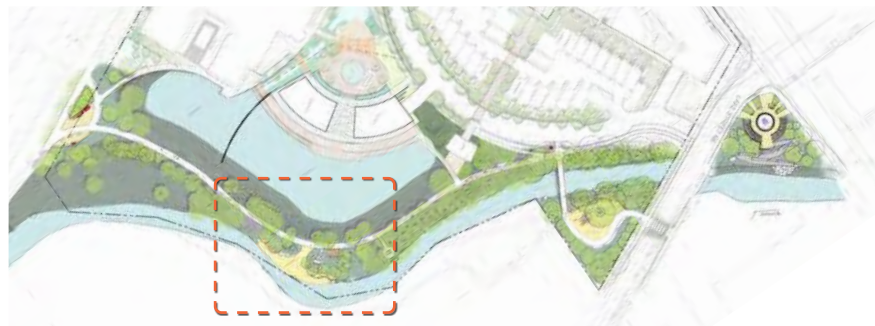
# The Landing Update

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key plan





# The Landing





# The Landing





# The Landing





# Nature-based Play Area Concept

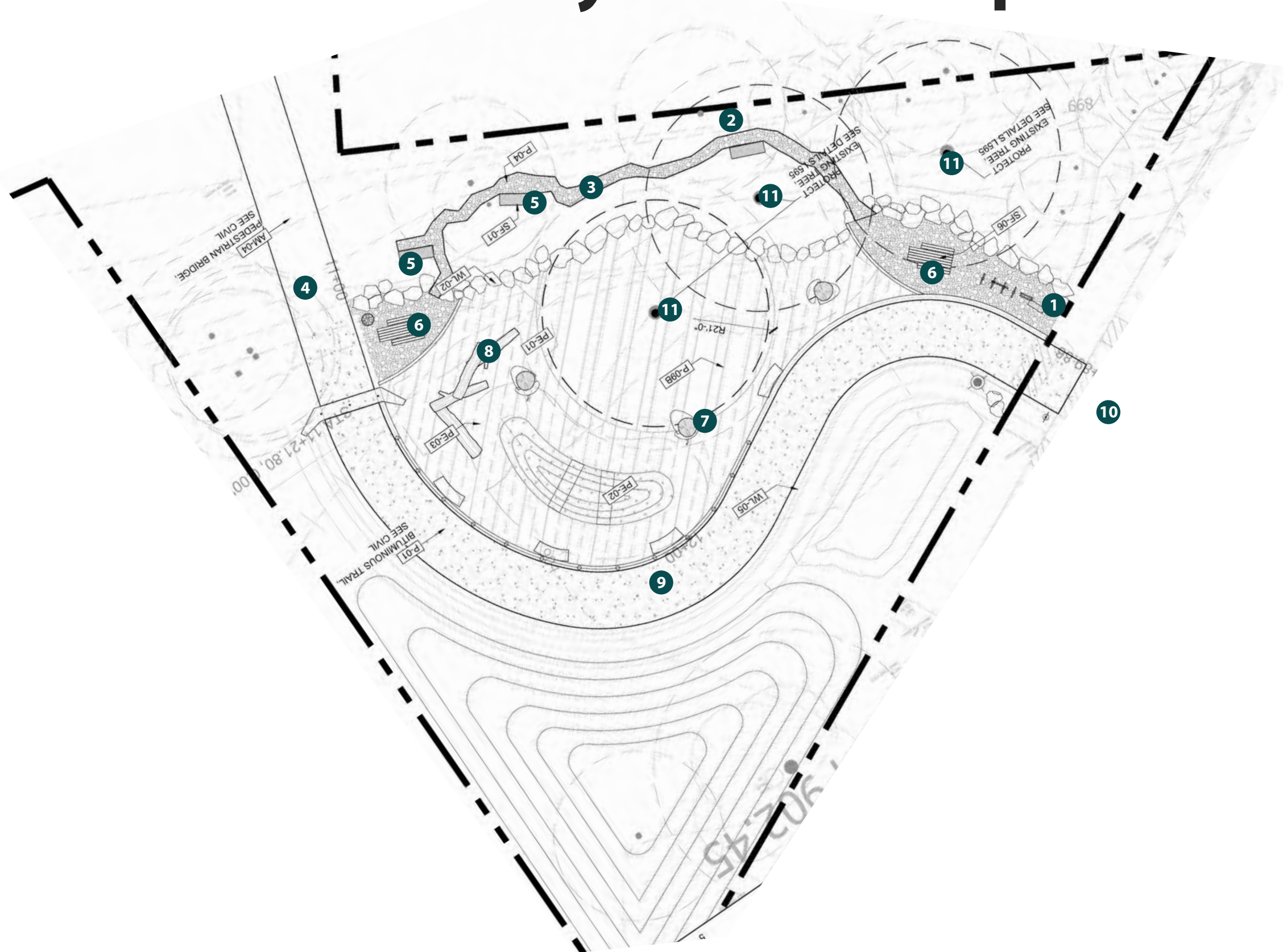


## key

- 1 TRAILHEAD KIOSK
- 2 BENCH/PULL OFF
- 3 CREEK ACCESS
- 4 AGGREGATE PATH
- 5 ADA ACCESSIBLE BRIDGE
- 6 LIMESTONE SEATING
- 7 GATHERING SPACE
- 8 TURF WITH ACORN FEATURES
- 9 NATURE-BASED PLAY
- 10 CIP WALL WITH BENCHES
- 11 ADA WALK
- 12 CROSSWALK
- 13 PRESERVE EXISTING TREES

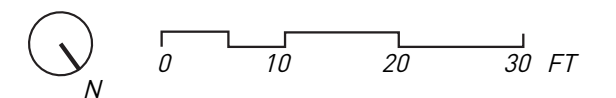


# Nature-based Play Area Concept



## key

- 1 TRAILHEAD KIOSK
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- 3 AGGREGATE PATH
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- 7 ACORN FEATURES
- 8 NATURE-BASED PLAY
- 9 ADA WALK
- 10 CROSSWALK
- 11 PRESERVE EXISTING TREES







PRESERVE EXISTING TREES

NATURE BASED PLAY

AGGREGATE PATH

CREEK ACCESS

ADA ACCESSIBLE BRIDGE













RAINGARDEN



# Gateway to Greenway





# Gateway to Greenway





# Gateway to Greenway





# Gateway to Greenway





# Gateway to Greenway



STEEL PERGOLA WITH  
INTEGRATED SWING  
BENCHES AND LIGHTS

LIMESTONE WALL  
WITH CAP

TIERED CONCRETE WALL

WETLAND FRINGE



# Gateway to Greenway (night view)





# 325 Blake Road | Greenway Trail



DF/ DAMON FARBER LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

**INTERPRETATION CONCEPTS**

HOPKINS, MN  
JULY 5, 2022



# MCWD + Hopkins Guiding Principles

\*Applicable to framework plan

## 1. Creative Design Approach

Recognizing that the size and location of this property make it a unique development opportunity within a fully urbanized area. Pursue a creative approach to design that is thoughtful of the environment, the social relationships between residents and the larger community, and brings something vibrant and new.

## 2. Transit Oriented Development

Embrace elements of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) based on its proximity to the Blake Road LRT Station, the adjacent Green Line Extension, and connections to trail systems. Consider recreational and commercial amenities within the vicinity of the Site. TOD densities, parking ratios and shared parking within the Site are encouraged, as well as other transit-supportive uses such as jobs and neighborhood-serving retail.

## 3. Water-focused Approach

Feature Minnehaha Creek, the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, and storm water management elements as central to the identity and orientation of the Site.

## 4. Sustainability

Incorporate sustainable development components, such as construction materials and techniques, water and energy efficiency, renewable energy, waste management, and sustainability education elements.

## 5. Open Design

Provide open design that establishes inviting views of Minnehaha Creek and allows for public access into the Site so that Minnehaha Creek becomes a community amenity. The design should permit easy access to and throughout the Site by pedestrians and bicyclists, while maintaining safety for all residents and users of the property.

## 6. Connections

Enhance physical and visual connections along and across Blake Road and to the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail, Blake Road LRT Station and Cottageville Park. Buildings should have minimal setbacks from Blake Road and an active first floor to enhance the pedestrian experience. The southwest corner of the Site is a key location due to its proximity to the Blake Road LRT Station, and development should embrace the prominence of this portion of the Site when looking at design and land use.

## 7. Inclusion

The site is located in a very economically and culturally diverse neighborhood with a significant number of naturally-occurring affordable housing units. It is a goal to embrace that diversity and develop the site in a way that is equitable, seeks to honor and preserve the existing community and does not aim to gentrify the neighborhood.

## 8. Housing Mix

Consider a variety of housing types, including ownership and rental for people at a mix of income levels and household sizes. All efforts should be made to mix the affordable units with the market rate units. If financial barriers prevent that, Site design should encourage interaction between buildings via shared common areas and amenity spaces throughout the Site. Because a majority of Hopkins housing units today are rental, the City is very interested in homeownership opportunities, especially for low and moderate income households.



# Themes for Interpretation + Art

# 1

## Local ecology highlighting flora & fauna

- Ecological enhancements
- Signage for plants
- Signage for key animals
- Scavenger hunt



# 2

## Minnehaha Creek history

- Historical path of creek
- Industrial RR corridor
- Presettlement use
- Watershed district story



# 3

## Stormwater management strategies

- Information on pond
- Outlet structure function
- Cascade function within development
- BMPs in development site



# 4

## Water quality and statistics

- Information on pond
- Water quality pre/post project
- Information on watershed
- Impacts of pollutants on environment, salt, sediment, etc.



# 5

## Importance of Creek to Native American culture

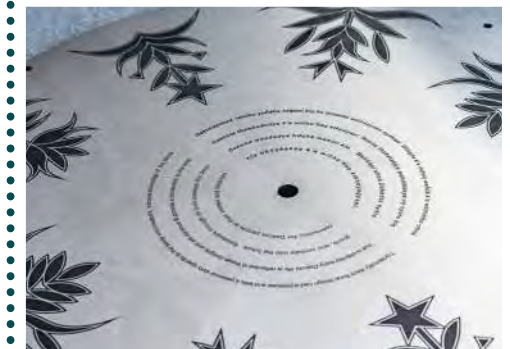
- Dakota language translations
- Collaboration with a dakota artist
- Significance of native species for medicinal and culinary use.



# 6

## Community stories

- Language translations
- Neighborhood history
- Who has lived near or on the site
- Highlight local people of significance (Hopkins historical society input)



POTENTIAL APPLICATIONS

PRECEDENT IMAGRY



# Themes for Interpretation + Art

COMBINED 3 & 4

FOR COLLABORATION WITH CITY OF HOPKINS PUBLIC ARTIST OR FUTURE STUDY

1

## Local ecology highlighting flora & fauna

- Ecological enhancements
- Signage for plants
- Signage for key animals
- Scavenger hunt

2

## Minnehaha Creek history

- Historical path of creek
- Industrial RR corridor
- Presettlement use
- Watershed district story

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## Stormwater management strategies

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## Water quality and statistics

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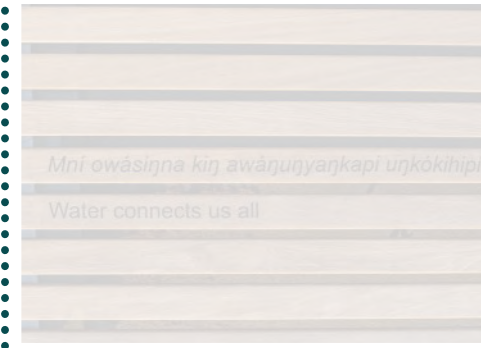
6

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POTENTIAL APPLICATIONS

PRECEDENT IMAGRY





**1**

**Local ecology  
highlighting  
flora & fauna**



# Interpretation + Public Art Opportunities

## Scavenger Hunt



Example Emblems



# Interpretation + Public Art Opportunities

## Scavenger Hunt

### Online Scavenger Checklist Mock-Up





# Interpretation + Public Art Opportunities

## Scavenger Hunt





# Interpretation + Public Art Opportunities

## Scavenger Hunt





# Interpretation + Public Art Opportunities

## Scavenger Hunt





# 2 Minnehaha Creek and Watershed story



# Interpretation + Public Art Opportunities

## Minnehaha creek and Watershed Story





# Interpretation + Public Art Opportunities

## Gateway Plaza





# Interpretation + Public Art Opportunities

## Option - Wood; Side panels



METAL CUTOUTS OF WATERSHED WITH DESCRIPTIVE TEXT



# Interpretation + Public Art Opportunities

## Option - Wood; Side panels





# Interpretation + Public Art Opportunities

## Option - Wood; Side panels





# Interpretation + Public Art Opportunities

## Option - Wood; Side panels





# Interpretation + Public Art Opportunities

## Option - Metal; Sandblasted Design



SAND BLASTED CONCRETE  
WITH WATER BOUNDARIES

LED LIGHT TRACING WATER  
BOUNDARIES



# Interpretation + Public Art Opportunities

## Option - Metal; Sandblasted Design





# Interpretation + Public Art Opportunities

## Option - Metal; Sandblasted Design





# Interpretation + Public Art Opportunities

## Option - Metal; Sandblasted Design





# 325 Blake Road | Greenway Trail



DF/ DAMON FARBER LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

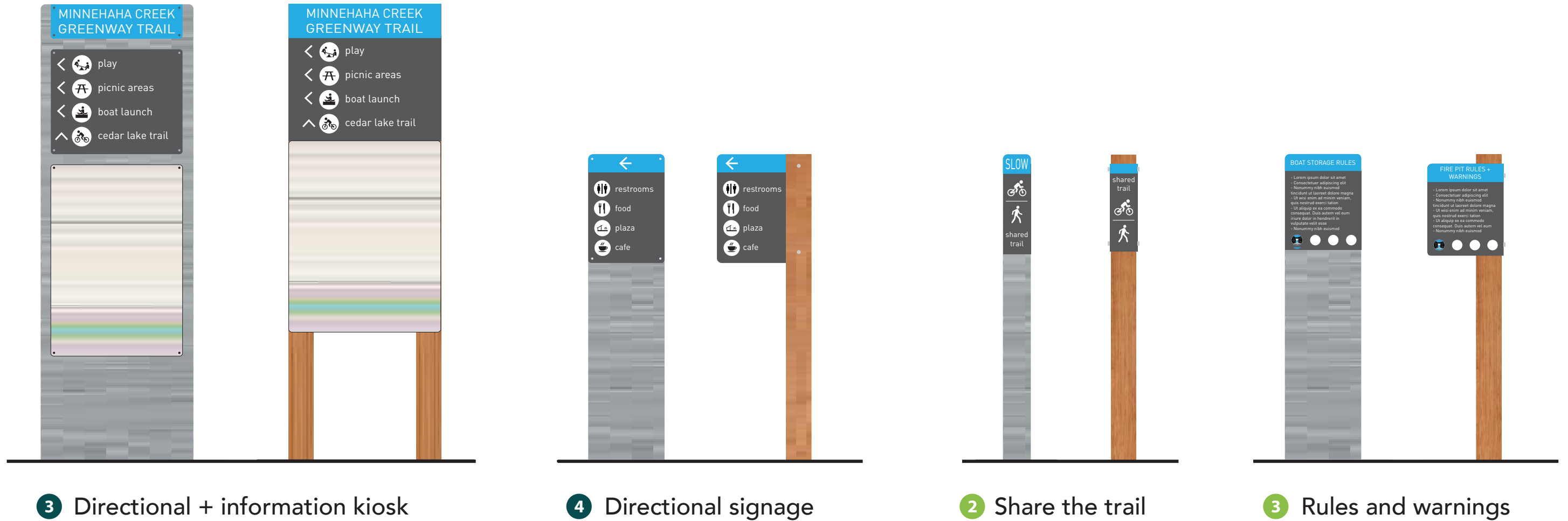
**WAYFINDING + INFORMATIONAL SIGNAGE DEVELOPMENT**

HOPKINS, MN  
JULY 6, 2022

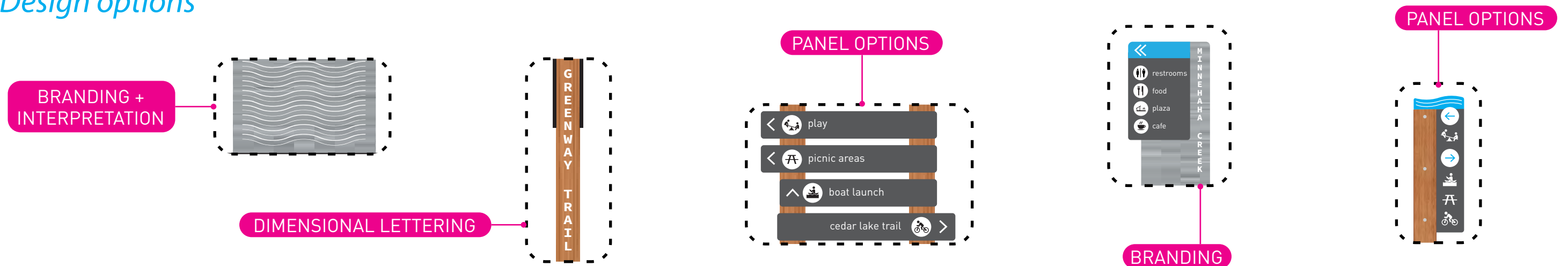


# Wayfinding + Informational Signage Plan

## Assemblies

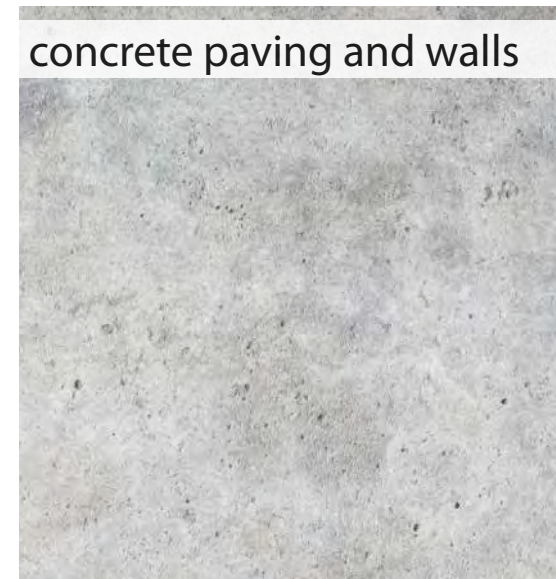
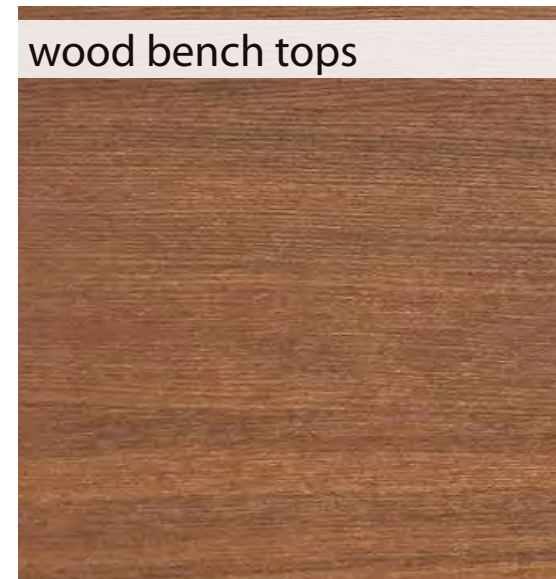
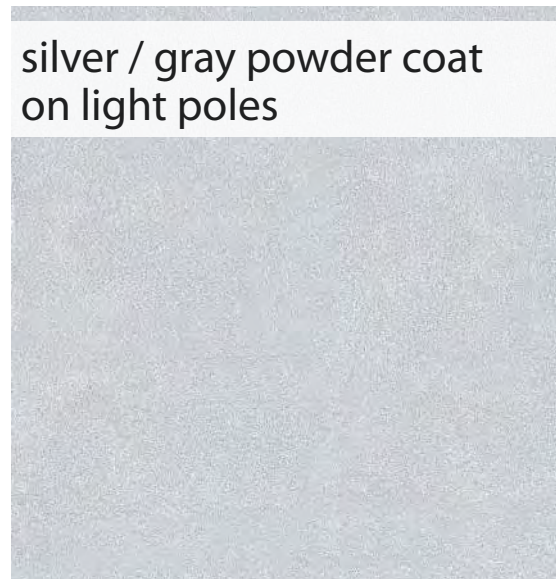
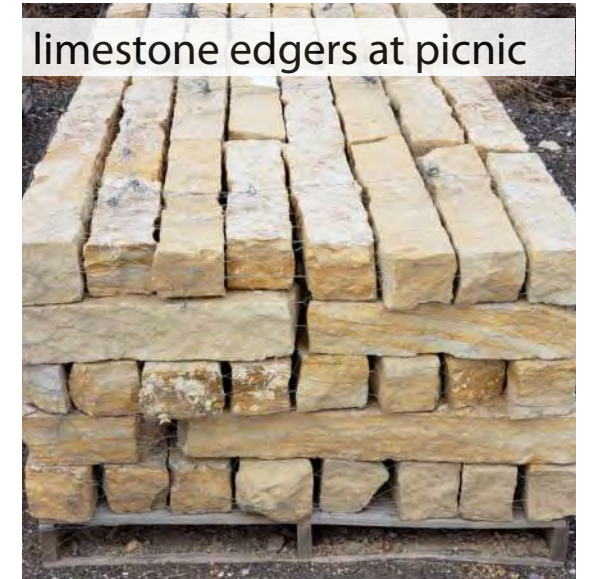
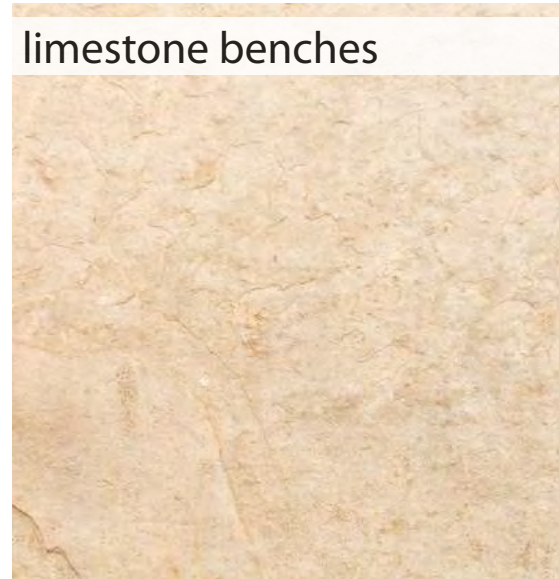
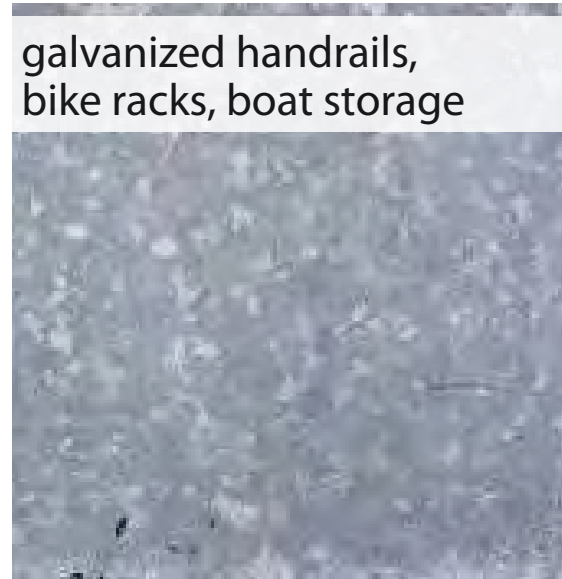


## Design options





# Site Materials





# Assembly Ideas + Methods



graphic panels on slim post



graphic panels on thicker posts



graphic panels wrapping around



plates with applied panels



thin posts with fins



integrated cut out patterns



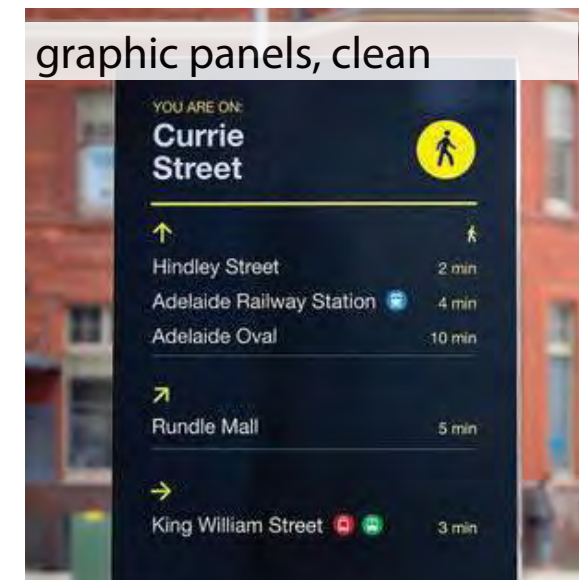
plates hanging off posts



integrated wayfinding



cut out messaging



graphic panels, clean



chemical etching



dimensional lettering



laser bonded lettering



engraved stone



applied vinyl graphics



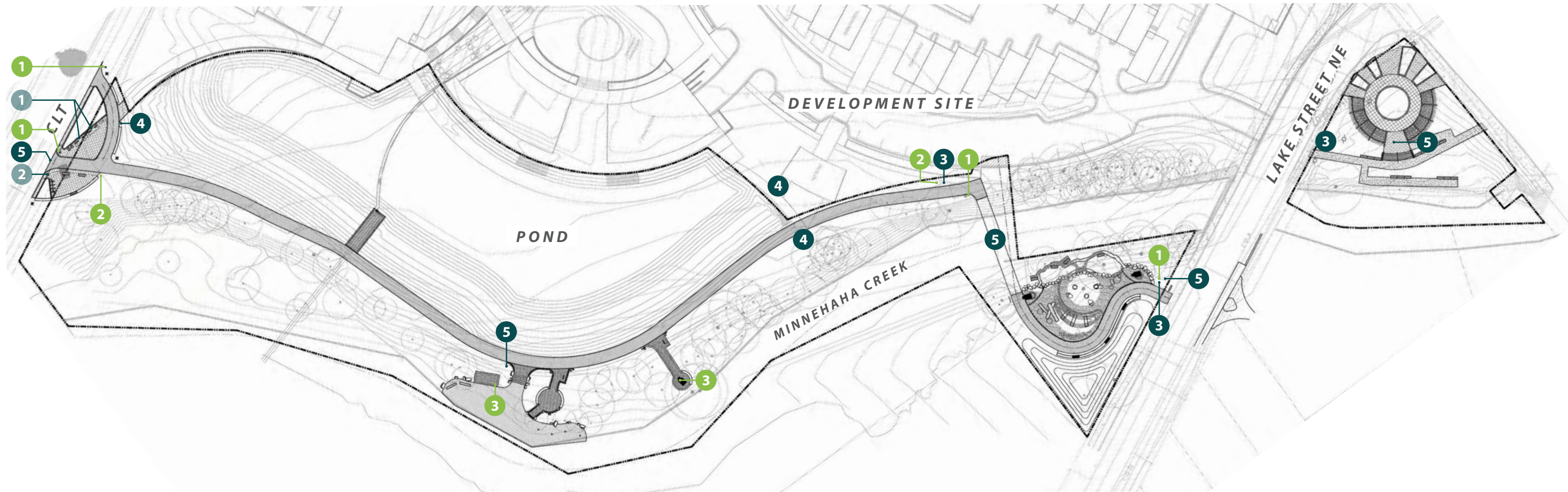
# Wayfinding + Informational Signage Plan

## WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

- 1 Three Rivers trail head kiosk (2)
- 2 Three Rivers directional sign (1)
- 3 Directional + information kiosk (3)
- 4 Directional signage (2 or 3)
- 5 Program area signage (5)

## REGULATORY SIGNAGE

- 1 Stop sign (4)
- 2 Share the trail (2)
- 3 Rules and warnings (2)





# Wayfinding Signage

1 Three Rivers trail head kiosk

2 Three Rivers directional sign

We need information from Three Rivers on what content these elements will include

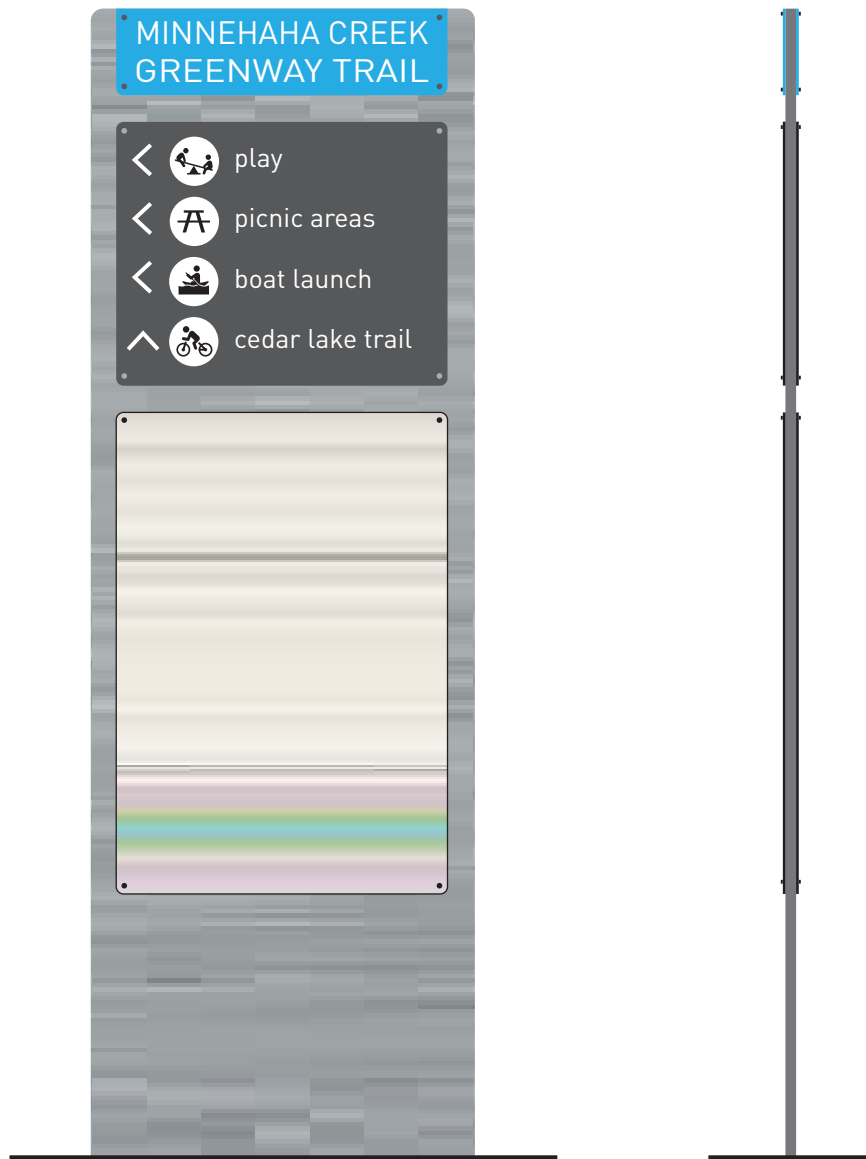




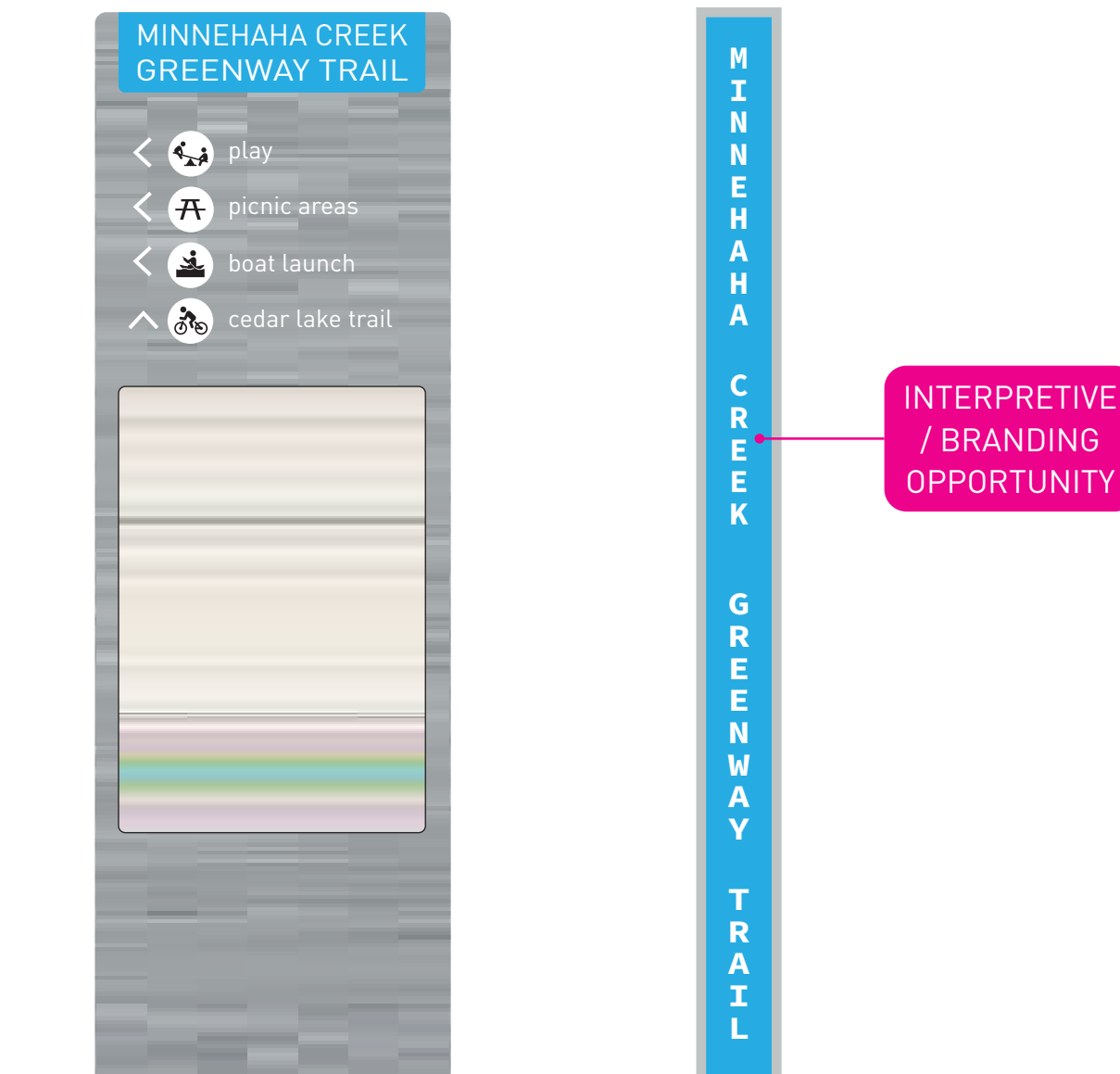
# Wayfinding Signage

## 3 Directional + Information Kiosk (3 total) *Assembly*

Includes wayfinding information, development area map, park rules and regulations, branding element for the Greenway Trail. Signs will be 2-sided, except play area may be 1-sided.



1A STEEL - BLADE W/ GRAPHIC PANELS, THRU-FASTENED  
2-SIDED



1B STEEL - BOX W/ GRAPHIC PANELS & DIMENSIONAL LETTERING  
2-SIDED



# Wayfinding Signage

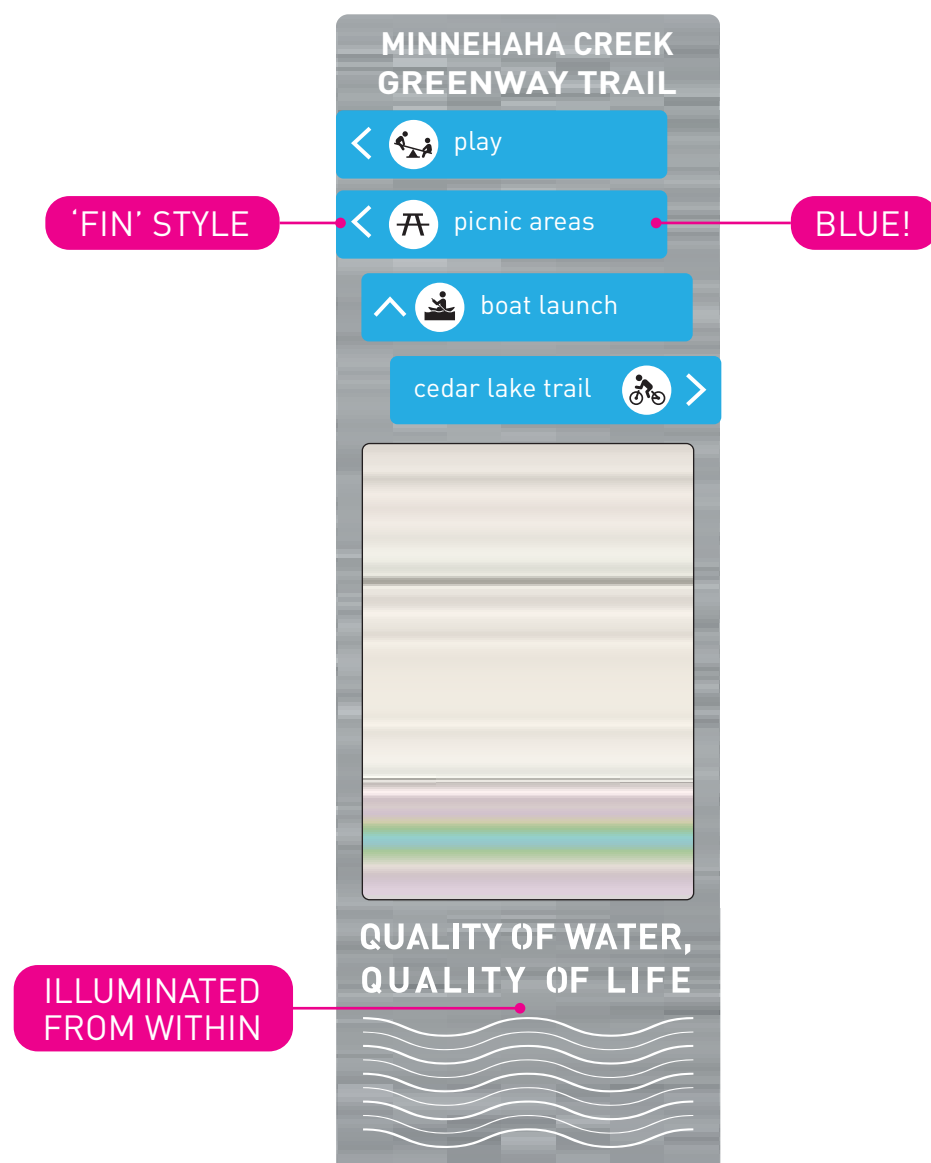
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Includes wayfinding information, development area map, park rules and regulations, branding element for the Greenway Trail. Signs will be 2-sided, except play area may be 1-sided.



CUT-OUTS

1A STEEL - BLADE W/ GRAPHIC PANELS, THRU-FASTENED  
2-SIDED



ILLUMINATED FROM WITHIN

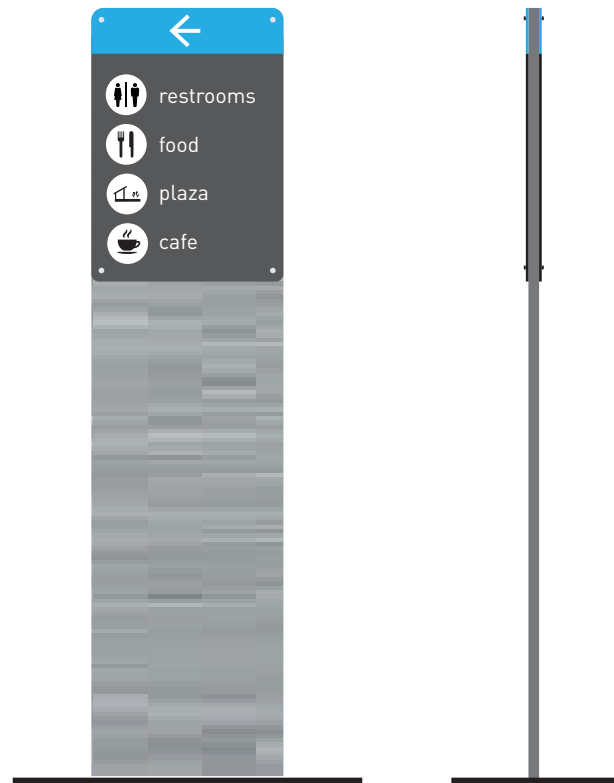
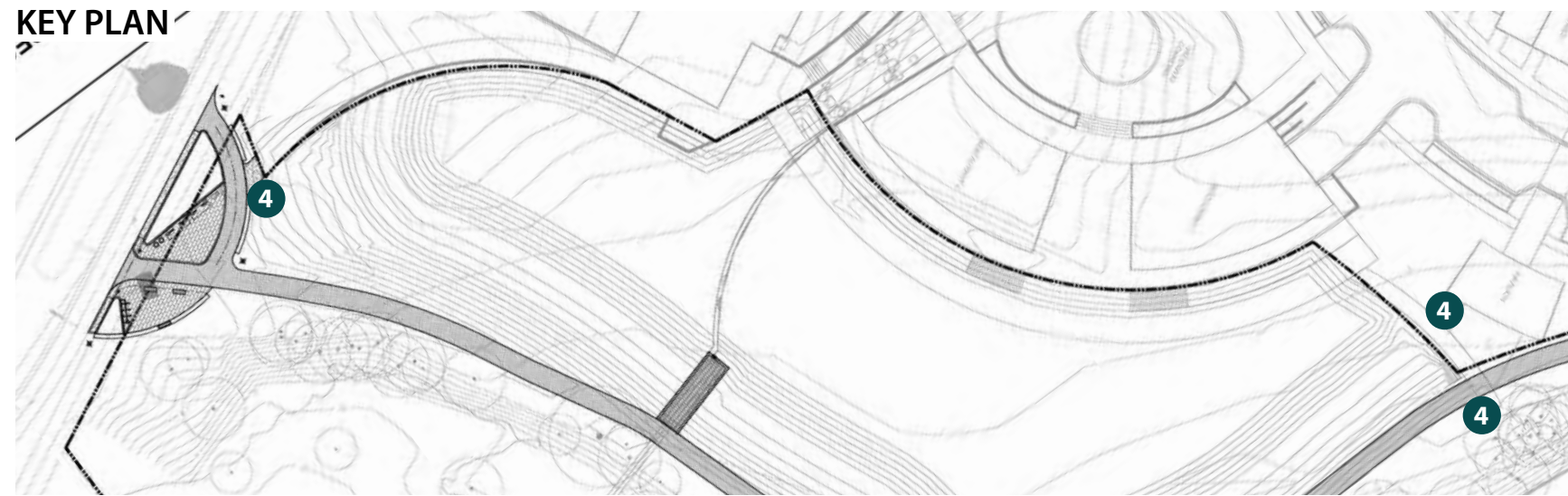
1B STEEL - BOX W/ GRAPHIC PANELS & DIMENSIONAL LETTERING  
2-SIDED



# Wayfinding Signage

## 4 Directional Signage (2 or 3 total) *Assembly*

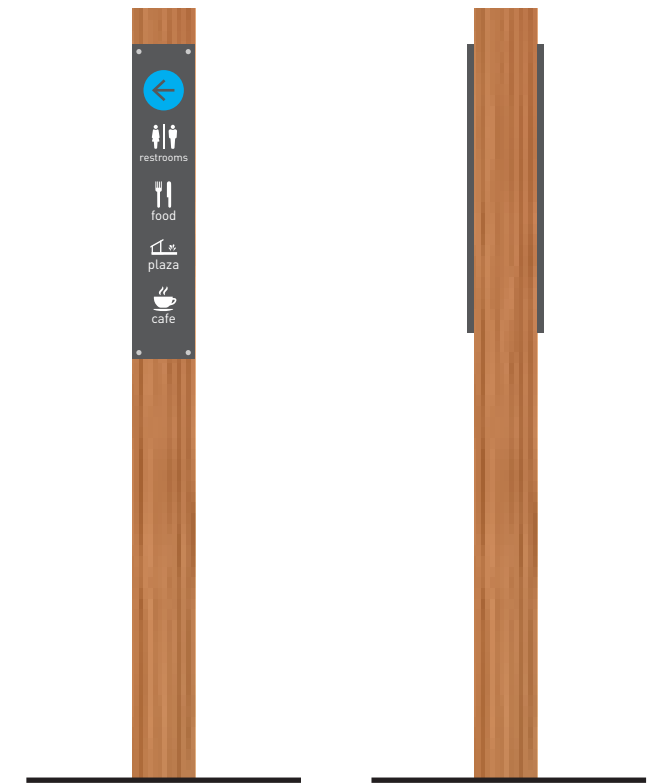
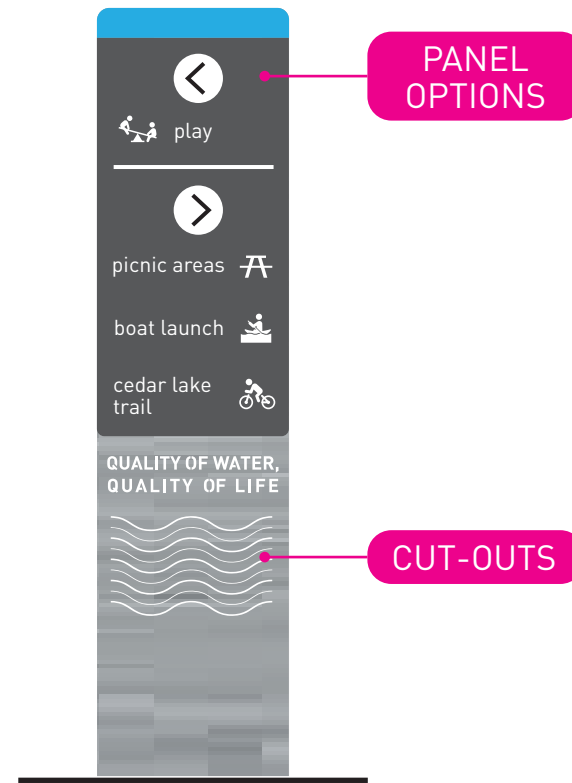
2-sided directional signage to restaurants, plaza, Cedar Lake Trail, LRT, and Greenway Trail.



1 STEEL - BLADE W/ GRAPHIC PANELS, THRU-FASTENED  
2-SIDED



1A STEEL - BLADE W/ GRAPHIC PANELS, THRU-FASTENED  
2-SIDED



3 WOOD POST - GRAPHIC PANEL  
2-SIDED



# Wayfinding Signage

## 5 Program Area Signage (4 total) *Assembly*

Signage for the main program areas, could be integrated into paving, stairs, curbs, or walls.





# Next Steps

- 1) Confirm preferred signage assembly methods + design options
- 2) Design assemblies in 3D for visualization and detailing/documentation
- 3) Develop location-specific content for each feature

