

SAINT PAUL RIVER BALCONY

MASTER PLAN



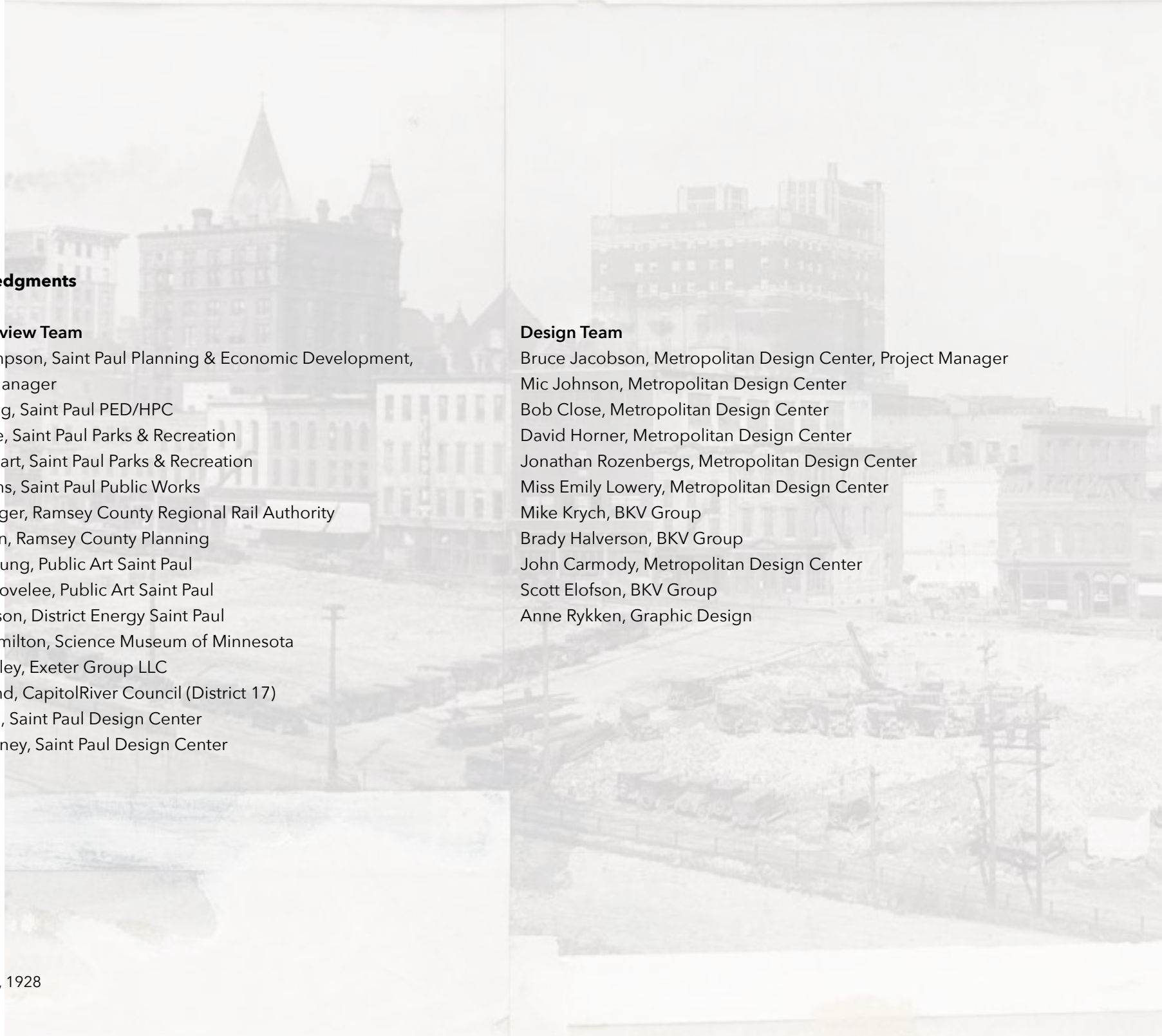
Acknowledgments

Project Review Team

Lucy Thompson, Saint Paul Planning & Economic Development,
Project Manager
Amy Spong, Saint Paul PED/HPC
Don Ganje, Saint Paul Parks & Recreation
Ellen Stewart, Saint Paul Parks & Recreation
Eriks Ludins, Saint Paul Public Works
Jean Krueger, Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority
Josh Olson, Ramsey County Planning
Marcus Young, Public Art Saint Paul
Amanda Lovelee, Public Art Saint Paul
Nina Axelson, District Energy Saint Paul
Patrick Hamilton, Science Museum of Minnesota
Herb Tousley, Exeter Group LLC
Bill Englund, CapitolRiver Council (District 17)
Tim Griffin, Saint Paul Design Center
Tracey Kinney, Saint Paul Design Center

Design Team

Bruce Jacobson, Metropolitan Design Center, Project Manager
Mic Johnson, Metropolitan Design Center
Bob Close, Metropolitan Design Center
David Horner, Metropolitan Design Center
Jonathan Rozenbergs, Metropolitan Design Center
Miss Emily Lowery, Metropolitan Design Center
Mike Krych, BKV Group
Brady Halverson, BKV Group
John Carmody, Metropolitan Design Center
Scott Elofson, BKV Group
Anne Rykken, Graphic Design





CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Mayor Christopher B. Coleman

390 City Hall
15 West Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

Telephone: 651-266-8510
Facsimile: 651-228-8521

February 2016,

Welcome to the River Balcony – one of the most exciting ideas to come out of Saint Paul’s vision for reconnecting to the Mississippi River in the 21st century, the *Great River Passage Master Plan*.

One of Saint Paul’s greatest assets is the Mississippi River, and the River Balcony will play an important role in creating vibrant places that connect our downtown community to this wonderful natural landmark. The Great River Passage encompasses 26 miles of Mississippi riverfront within the city’s boundaries and, along with Minneapolis, comprises the most urban section of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. It is a precious environmental, recreational, cultural, historic and economic resource for Saint Paul and the region, and it is that legacy we celebrate with the River Balcony.

The 1.5-mile elevated pedestrian pathway on the downtown river bluff will provide new visual and physical connections between downtown and the Mississippi River, creating vibrant outdoor spaces that will extend from the Science Museum of Minnesota to Union Depot. Not only will it provide a jaw-dropping panoramic view of the great river valley, but it will also allow people to access the river’s edge as they engage in some of their favorite activities. Personally, I’m looking forward to crossing another item off my mayoral bucket list: having a beer along the river in downtown Saint Paul.

Embracing the Mississippi River as downtown Saint Paul’s front yard has been a priority of mine and this city’s for decades. I am pleased to present the *River Balcony Master Plan* as the next step in realizing our community’s vision for the Great River Passage. I look forward to partnering with all of you on its implementation.

Sincerely,

Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor



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SAINT PAUL'S RIVER BALCONY:

A LAND USE HISTORY AND REVIEW OF HISTORIC RESOURCES



1 The Great River Passage Master Plan

Foundation for Detailed Study

Reconnecting to the Mississippi River has been a City of Saint Paul and community priority since completion of the *Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework* in 1997. Like so many American river cities, Saint Paul turned its back on the Mississippi River for decades. But, in the last 20 years, the City and its partners have worked tirelessly to embrace the river and recognize it as a natural, historic, cultural, recreational and ecological amenity.

The Great River Passage Master Plan, adopted by the City Council in April 2013 as an addendum to the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan, is the City's most recent affirmation of the power of the Mississippi River to define Saint Paul's sense of place. It contains three guiding principles for all public and private development in the Great River Passage. These principles are foundational to the River Balcony.

More Natural

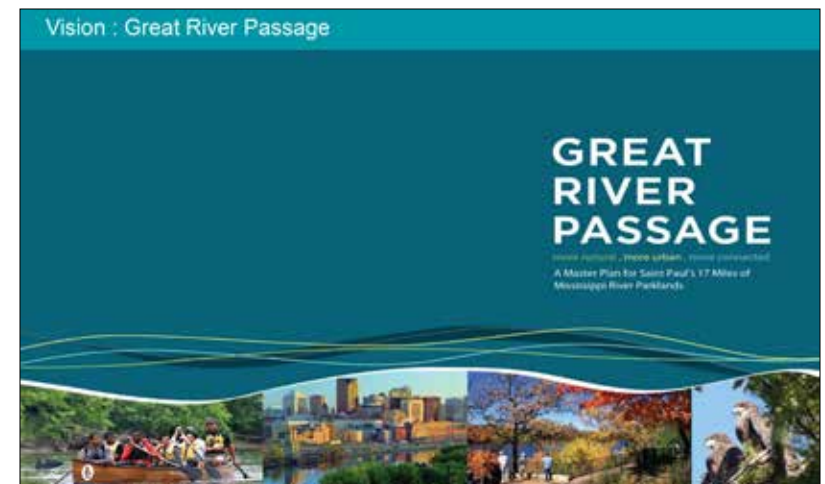
The Great River Passage is first and foremost a place of great natural beauty and value. Every action should respect, protect and enhance the ecology of the river corridor and valley.

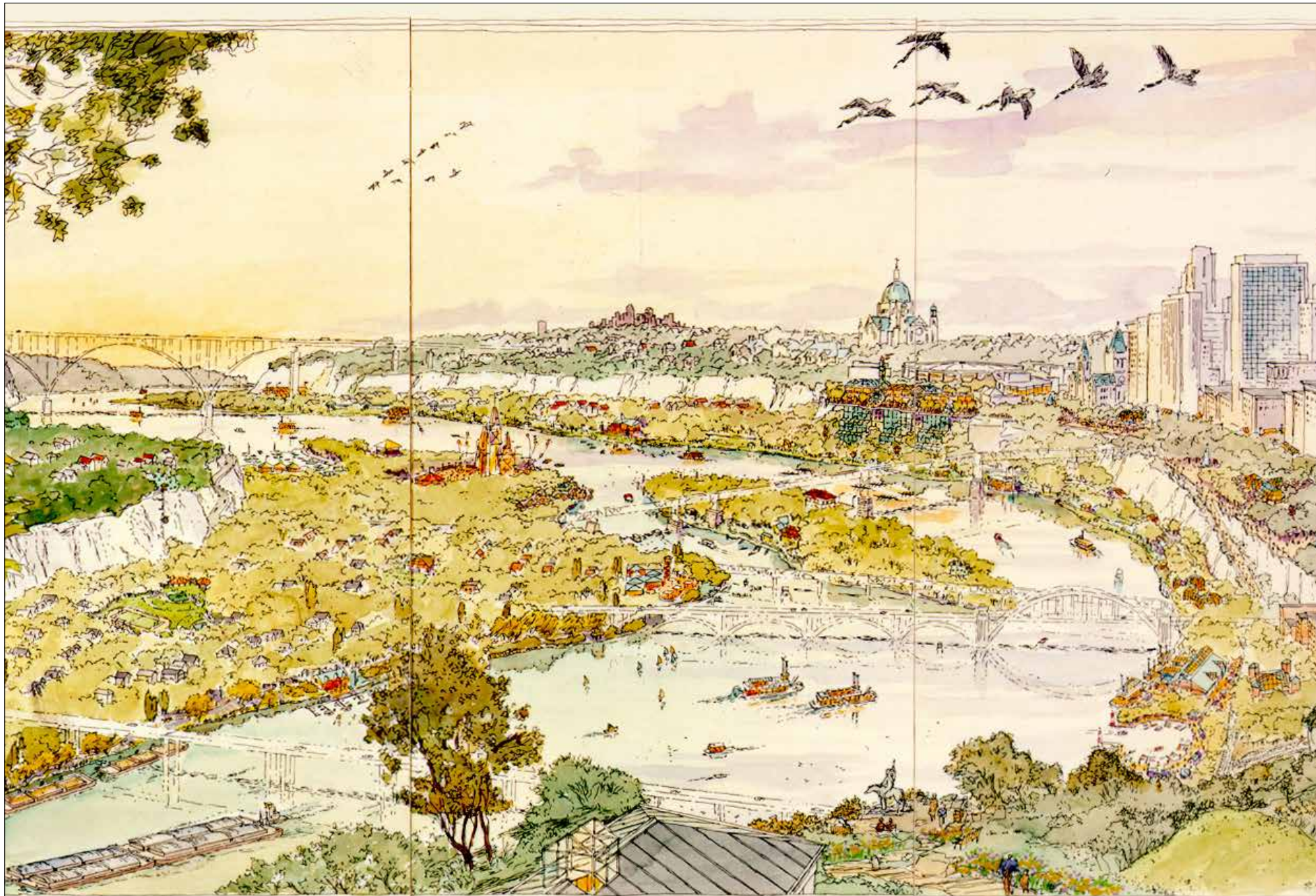
More Urban

With such high "place value," the Great River Passage is an area of great economic real estate value. New urban development in the Passage should be high-quality, sustainable and strategically located to enhance the natural environment.

More Connected

Being connected to the Mississippi River and making the river a part of everyday life are fundamental values in Saint Paul. More physical and visual connections should be created to bring more people to the river, respecting the need to balance increased public access with environmental preservation.





THE GREAT RIVER PARK
SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA

Vision

The River Balcony is envisioned as a publicly-accessible pathway connecting public spaces and bluff-side redevelopment sites from the Science Museum to Union Depot. It will be designed to accommodate walking, outdoor seating, gathering and related public activities; and to be a catalyst for economic development.

Goals

The River Balcony will:

- reconnect downtown to the river visually and physically;
- provide a public linear path, along the downtown river bluff with occasional vertical connections to the river's edge;
- activate private development on the Ramsey County West/Adult Detention Center, Ramsey County East and Custom House sites; and
- connect public spaces and private development sites along the river's edge in downtown.



Art and culture



Health and wellness



Small gatherings and large events

Gray Buildings © 2008 Sanborn

General Design Principles

1. The River Balcony is a **public space, accessible to all**, at all times of the day and during all seasons.
2. The main purpose of the River Balcony is to provide **visual and physical connections** between downtown and the Mississippi River.
3. The River Balcony is an **integral part of a larger public realm network** comprising the Capital City Bikeway, City and regional parks and trails, streets, plazas and skyways.
4. The River Balcony is **both a horizontal** (linear) **and vertical** (from upper bluff to river's edge) system of movement.
5. The River Balcony will be a **fundamental feature of new development** on private property along the bluff, including Custom House and the Ramsey County riverfront properties.
6. As such, the River Balcony will be designed to **add value** to adjacent private development.
7. The River Balcony will be **built with high-quality, durable materials**.
8. The River Balcony will be designed as **a coherent series of public spaces**, with overall continuity of design but allowing for site- or district-specific expressions of place.
9. The River Balcony will be designed to **be a "light touch"** on the bluff landscape.
10. The River Balcony will incorporate **natural features** as much as possible, recognizing that some areas will be more predominantly hard-surfaced.



2 Land Use History + Cultural Resources

In order to best reflect downtown's unique relationship to the Mississippi River, the location and design of the River Balcony, as well as economic development opportunities along it, need to be informed by an understanding of historic and cultural resources in the study area. Note: please find the complete historic and cultural resources study in the Appendix.

Study Area Description

The location of downtown Saint Paul was determined by the geology and location of the Mississippi River and its bluffs. Downtown lies between the Lower and Upper landings, the original two breaks in the bluffs. The bluff itself was the focus of the earliest permanent white settlement, and the staging area for early river and rail transportation.

The downtown river bluff rises about 100 feet above the river at Wabasha Street. The bluff face is exposed between the Wabasha and Robert Street bridges, but is otherwise generally covered over with building, bridge and other construction. Beyond the River Balcony itself, the adjacent approximately 25 blocks of the city's early street grid were developed during the late 19th century as an industrial, commercial and residential quarter; buildings constructed primarily after 1900 now occupy this area. While the steamboat hub at the Lower Landing (at Jackson Street) remains, the broad rail corridor at the base of the bluff, Union Depot and the adjacent Lowertown warehouse district are the most vivid evidence of the nationally-significant railroad center that grew here.

Little evidence remains of the mid-19th-century alignment of the original street system on the lower bluff, although Eagle, Hill and Ontario retain their early names. Shepard and Warner roads, largely built on fill during the 1960s, traced over the historic river levee. On top of the bluff, E. 3rd Street was lined with the city's important early financial and commercial businesses. Beginning in the 1920s, it was replaced with Kellogg Boulevard, and nearly all of the 19th and early 20th century buildings were removed.



Figure 4. St. Paul Panorama, 1873 (G. Hageboeck).

Previous Evaluations

The proposed alignment of the River Balcony touches several historic sites and districts that were evaluated prior to the adoption of the Great River Passage Master Plan, including:

- St. Paul Public Library/James J. Hill Reference Library – listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.
- Lowertown National Register Historic District – listed in 1983.
- Lowertown Heritage Preservation District (local) – listed in 1984.
- Rice Park and the surrounding historic district – determined eligible for the National Register in 1983; evaluated for local designation in 2001.
- Kellogg Boulevard (Eagle Street to Lafayette Bridge) – evaluated for National Register eligibility in 1999; found not eligible due to loss of historical integrity. May warrant re-evaluation based on engineering significance.
- Archeological investigations related to Shepard/Warner/East CBD Bypass Project (1994) and Science Museum construction (1997).
- Union Depot restoration project – elevated rail yard listed on the National Register in 2007.
- St. Paul Urban Renewal Historic District – determined eligible for the National Register in 2008 as part of the Central Corridor light rail transit project.



Figure 9. River Panorama (Ellsbury and Green, 1874).

Land Use History and Subcontexts

Five historic subcontexts were developed to provide a foundation for River Balcony planning and design. These subcontexts, as well as broader contexts, were useful in compiling a land use history for the downtown river bluff. They were also helpful in identifying important influences on existing conditions along the River Balcony alignment, and opportunities for interpretation/celebration. The landscape feature comprising the downtown bluff does not appear to retain enough historic integrity to be considered an historic property, so it was not evaluated.

1. The River Gateway to St. Paul: Geology, Prehistory, and the Landscape Architect and Artist
2. The Bluff and St. Paul's Pioneer Period: 1837-1862
3. The Railroad Hub: 1862-1972
4. Third Street Becomes Kellogg Boulevard: 1900-1940
5. Tearing Down Downtown: Urban Renewal: 1955-1978



Figure 7. Fred Resler, 1920.

Application of Historic and Cultural Resource Investigations to River Balcony Design

All elements of River Balcony design, construction, siting and associated development – including choice of materials, landscape design, wayfinding and signage, lighting, street furniture, bicycle and transit facilities, and public art – may directly or indirectly impact historic properties along the Balcony alignment, as well as the overall historic character of the area. The design guidelines in Chapter 5 provide direction for design of the River Balcony and related public spaces, as well as adjacent development and infrastructure; they were prepared with these potential impacts in mind. In addition, future project planning should anticipate the possible use of federal funds for River Balcony design and construction, which may require Section 106 review.

In addition to the design guidelines, the following general planning strategies are recommended to guide more in-depth study of the River Balcony study area as the project progresses.

- Consult with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) to determine an Area of Potential Effect for use in evaluating indirect and direct effects to cultural resources.
- In consultation with SHPO and prior to completion of final design proposals, evaluate the need for a Section 106-level study of the entire River Balcony project area to address cultural resource issues with locally-designated and National-Register-eligible properties.
- In consultation with SHPO and the HPC, determine if re-evaluation of the National Register eligibility of Kellogg Boulevard may be required. The re-evaluation should focus on engineering and urban planning (City Beautiful and WPA-era) areas of significance.

- Complete inventory forms and, as appropriate for properties more than 50 years old, prepare Phase I evaluations for properties currently noted as “not evaluated” in Table 1 of the full report.
- Consult with SHPO on proposed construction adjacent to the National-Register-eligible railroad corridor.
- Evaluate archeological potential when building demolition, new construction or other bluff activities are proposed.
- Interpret bluff geology and history in future public programming of the River Balcony.



Figure 36. Kellogg Boulevard and Second (Bench) Street, 1937. (United States Farm Security Administration and Office of War Information (FSA-OWI), John Vachon, photographer).



3 Precedent Projects: Inspiration + Expression

Successful Models from Around the World

Overview

Precedent research was compiled to inspire and inform the River Balcony master planning process. The precedents are case studies of exemplary waterfront places from near the Twin Cities and across the globe. The precedents are a combination of innovative approaches to:

- natural resources;
- parks, trails and open space;
- economic development;
- sustainability;
- access and connectivity; and
- art, history and culture.

They are applicable to the entire stretch of the River Balcony, or particular sections.

Intent

The precedents contain a wide range of innovative approaches to the look, feel and programming of the River Balcony. They can also serve as a framework for the design and integration of private development.



CHATTANOOGA 21ST CENTURY WATERFRONT PARK, CHATTANOOGA, TN

Hargreaves Associates



The development recaptures the site of the original founding of Chattanooga and reconnects the city to its waterfront, incorporating 83 acres of open space and infrastructure and 46 acres of new mixed-use development. Launched by the non-profit River City Company, the project was part of a 20 year plan intended to transform the city center and its connection to the river, and

redefine the riverfront and downtown as vibrant destinations and communities designed to incorporate cultural amenities, iconic open spaces, and urban housing. Redevelopment of this site alone spurred more than \$500 million in new development over 15 years. Recurring seasonal activities are a highlight for visitors. The river edge was designed to bring water into the city.



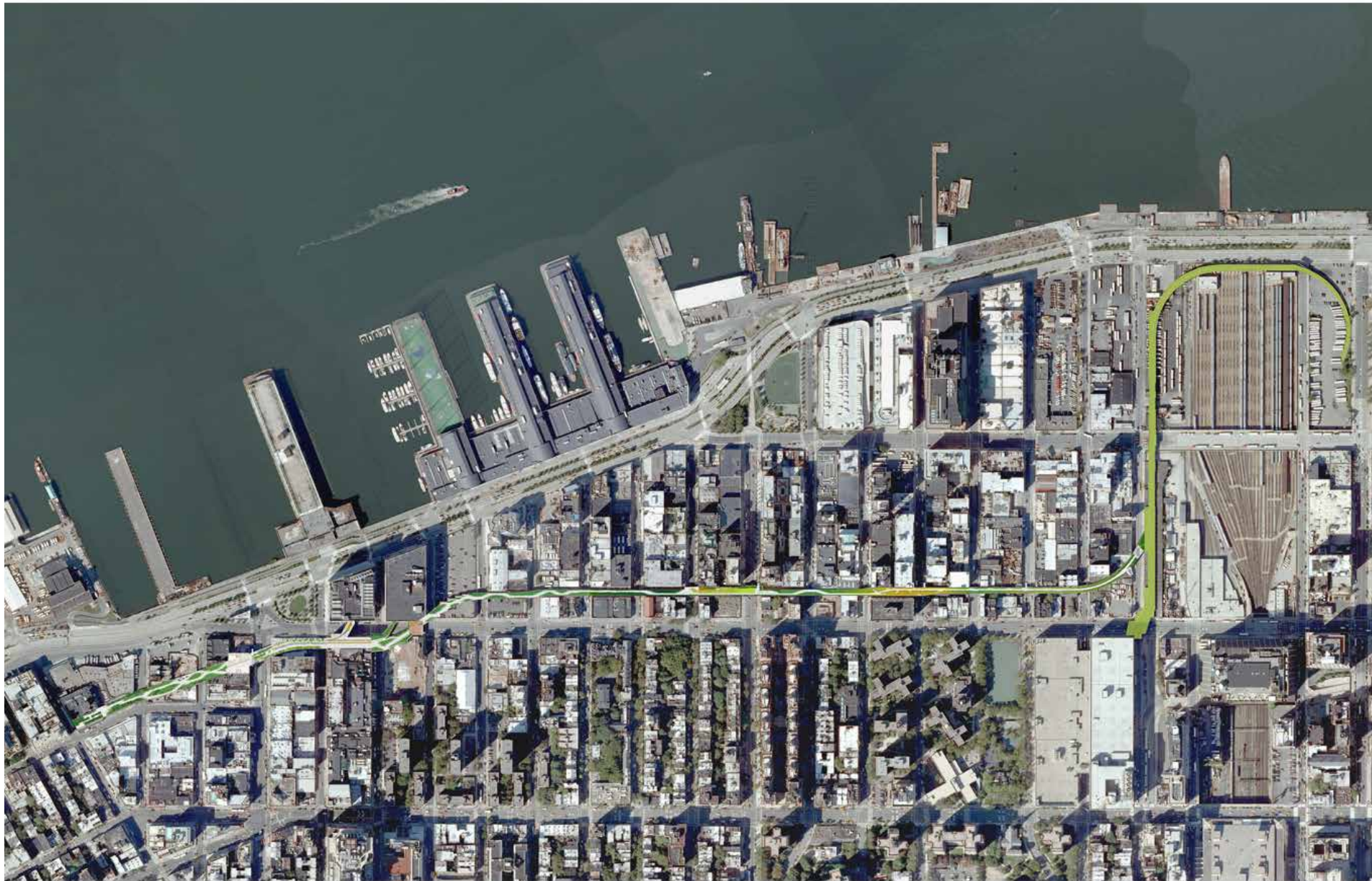
- 1 Aquarium Plaza
- 2 Ross's Landing
- 3 Tennessee Riverwalk



Budget: \$120 million, \$61 million for parks
Date: 2002-2005

HIGH LINE, NEW YORK, NY

James Corner Field Operations



The High Line is a 1.45-mile-long linear park built on an elevated section of a disused New York Central Railroad spur. There are over a dozen access points to the elevated park, and all entrances were designed to immerse the visitor in the environment and attract users to spend time and explore the complete park.

The High Line has initiated more than 30 new projects in the nearby neighborhood. Housing prices grew by 10% within a 1/3rd of a mile of the High Line, and by 2011 it had already contributed to more than \$2 billion in economic development.

- 1 Wooden stadium seating area
- 2 Spots for lingering in shade
- 3 Unique overlooks of the city below
- 4 Atmospheric lighting
- 5 Plantings that provide beauty and interest in all seasons



WAVERTON PENINSULA RESERVE, BP PARK, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

McGregor and Coxall



Located on the Waverton Peninsula, the 2.5 hectare former BP site has emerged from its polluted past to become a contemporary post industrial recreational and environmental park. In its' former state, 31 oil storage tanks and ancillary facilities stood on massive concrete platforms carved from the sandstone bedrock. As a

consequence of remediation to remove contamination, many industrial structures were demolished leaving behind dislocated historic fragments. Viewing decks and walking platforms float over the dramatic sandstone cliff cutting's whilst concrete and steel stairs wrap over and around the topography.

- 1 Bluff Walkway
- 2 Elevated Bluff Overlook
- 3 Bluff Walkway Street Access
- 4 Bluff Landing



Budget: \$2.63 million
Date: 2005

HARBOUR GREEN PARK/VANCOUVER WATERFRONT, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

PWL Partnership



Harbour Green is a 6.5 acre park that presents both the natural and man-made history of the city of Vancouver. The illustrative elements range from a granite and concrete escarpment wall to mark the natural grade change between downtown core and English Bay, and a series of earth mounds which represent the

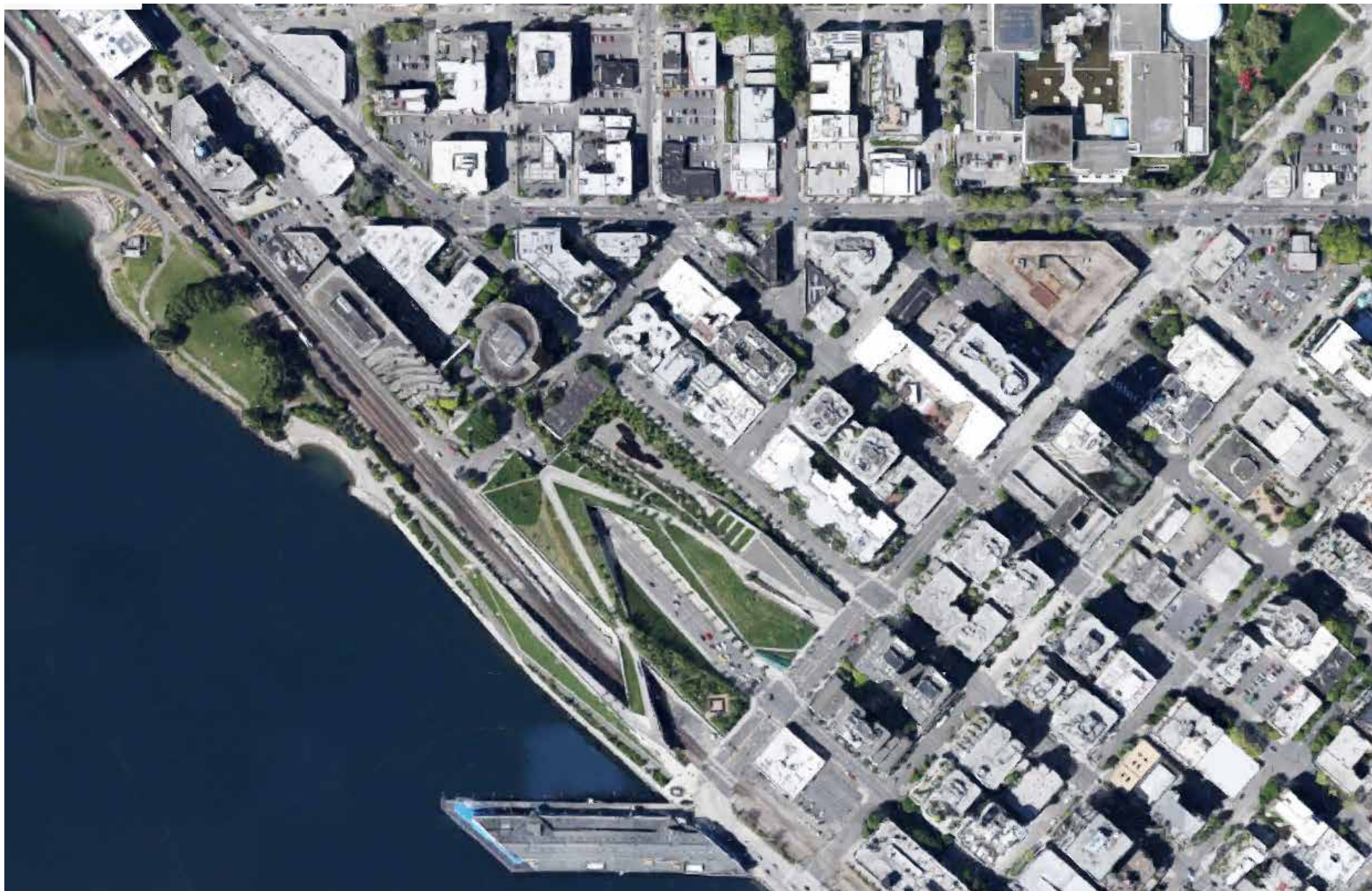
ocean and the edge of harbour prior to development. Amenities include a parterre, plaza, café, and a recreational spray pool, all connected by a multi-purpose seawall.

- 1 Aerial of Riverfront Development
- 2 Urban Integration into Waterfront Open Space
- 3 Street Access to Waterfront



OLYMPIC PARK, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Weiss/Manfredi



The park consists of a 9-acre outdoor sculpture museum and beach. Envisioned as a new urban model for sculpture parks, this project is located on Seattle's last undeveloped waterfront property - an industrial brownfield site sliced by train tracks and an arterial road. The design connects

three separate sites with an uninterrupted Z-shaped "green" platform, descending forty feet from the city to the water, capitalizing on views of the skyline and Elliott Bay, and rising over existing infrastructure to reconnect the urban core to the revitalized waterfront.

- 1 Moseley Path Entrance
- 2 The Valley
- 3 Gates Amphitheater
- 4 Mimi Gardner Gates Bridge



Budget: \$85 million
Date: 2007

THE CITYDECK, GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN

STOSS



The site is a 2-acre strip of land measuring 50 to 60 feet wide, running along the edge of the Fox River in downtown Green Bay. It is about one-quarter-mile in length and situated between two bridges that cross the river. At the project's start, the surrounding area generally turned its back on the river. Adjacent parcels were empty or in use as parking lots; nearby downtown

parcels were also empty or only utilized during business hours. The goal of the project was to activate the riverfront, connect the city to the river, increase opportunities for social life, create a flexible space for civic gatherings, and frame opportunities for new mixed-use development that would infuse downtown with new life, 24/7.

- 1 Shopko Landing Extending toward Walnut Street
- 2 CityDeck Riverfront Boardwalk
- 3 Open Programming Runs Consistently Throughout the Site



Budget: \$14 million
Date: 2012

Saint Paul River Balcony Master Plan



Promenade des Gouverneurs runs along the Citadel and leads to Battlefields Park, also known as the Plains of Abraham. The Governor's Walk extends along the cliff-edge of Quebec, leading pedestrians to numerous destinations, including: the Chateau Frontenac, the city-center, and the riverfront. The site's steep elevational changes

are met with creative solutions that allow access from the top of the cliff to the bottom. Terracing stairways, funiculars, and small, pedestrian-only streetscapes allow visitors to easily navigate between the activity on the bluff and the views from the riverfront.

- 1 Boardwalk Promenade
- 2 Bluff Edge Stair Access to Waterfront
- 3 Funicular Connection Between Top and Bottom of Bluff
- 4 Pedestrian-Scale, Mixed-Use Connections to Waterfront



BUFFALO BAYOU PROMENADE, HOUSTON, TEXAS

SWA Group



The Buffalo Bayou Promenade added over 20 acres of park space to Houston's inner city. The 1.2 mile long Buffalo Bayou Promenade was a critical missing link, tying the pastoral Park to the west with the Theater District and Houston's downtown to the east. The site ran through nearly two miles of some of the most challenging urban conditions: overhead freeways and utilities, steep slopes, limited access and critical flood water elevations. The project extends

along many of Houston's historic and present day landmarks. Integrated within the wayfinding system, interpretive signage has been designed to highlight the history of the waterway and the city of Houston. Continuous pedestrian and bike trails create direct connections to and from downtown, public art is exhibited throughout, and destination features add regionally unique programming.

- 1 Bikeways and Trails Weave Underneath Freeways
- 2 Bridges Create Direct Downtown Connections
- 3 Access Paths Leading to Destination Features Address Challenging Elevation



LES BERGE DU RHONE, LYON, FRANCE

IN SITU Architectes Paysagistes



Before designing and landscaping the “Berges du Rhône”, many parking lots took up all river bank space, and parked cars prevented pedestrians from walking along the Rhône River. Lyon completely redesigned 3 miles of river banks. Where parking lots and highways once lay is now a public park, divided into eight sections. The park includes designated paths for pedestrians

and cyclists, picnic sites, playgrounds volleyball and boccie courts, fitness areas, a skatepark, and wading pools. There is now plenty of room made for bicycle parking, as well as stations for Vélo’V, Lyon’s bike share program. Grassy lawns, dog runs, lounge chairs, a botanical garden, and areas where trees and grasses grow freely are picturesque additions to the park as well.

- 1 Les Berge du Rhone Before 2007 - Parking
- 2 Multiple, Flex Open Programming
- 3 Riverfront Playful Water Feature
- 4 Illuminated Promenade
- 5 Terraced Direct - Access from Downtown to Riverfront
- 6 Open Greenspace Extends on Either End of Central Riverfront



Budget: \$50 million
Date: 2007

TABIAT BRIDGE, TEHRAN, IRAN

Diba Tensile Architecture

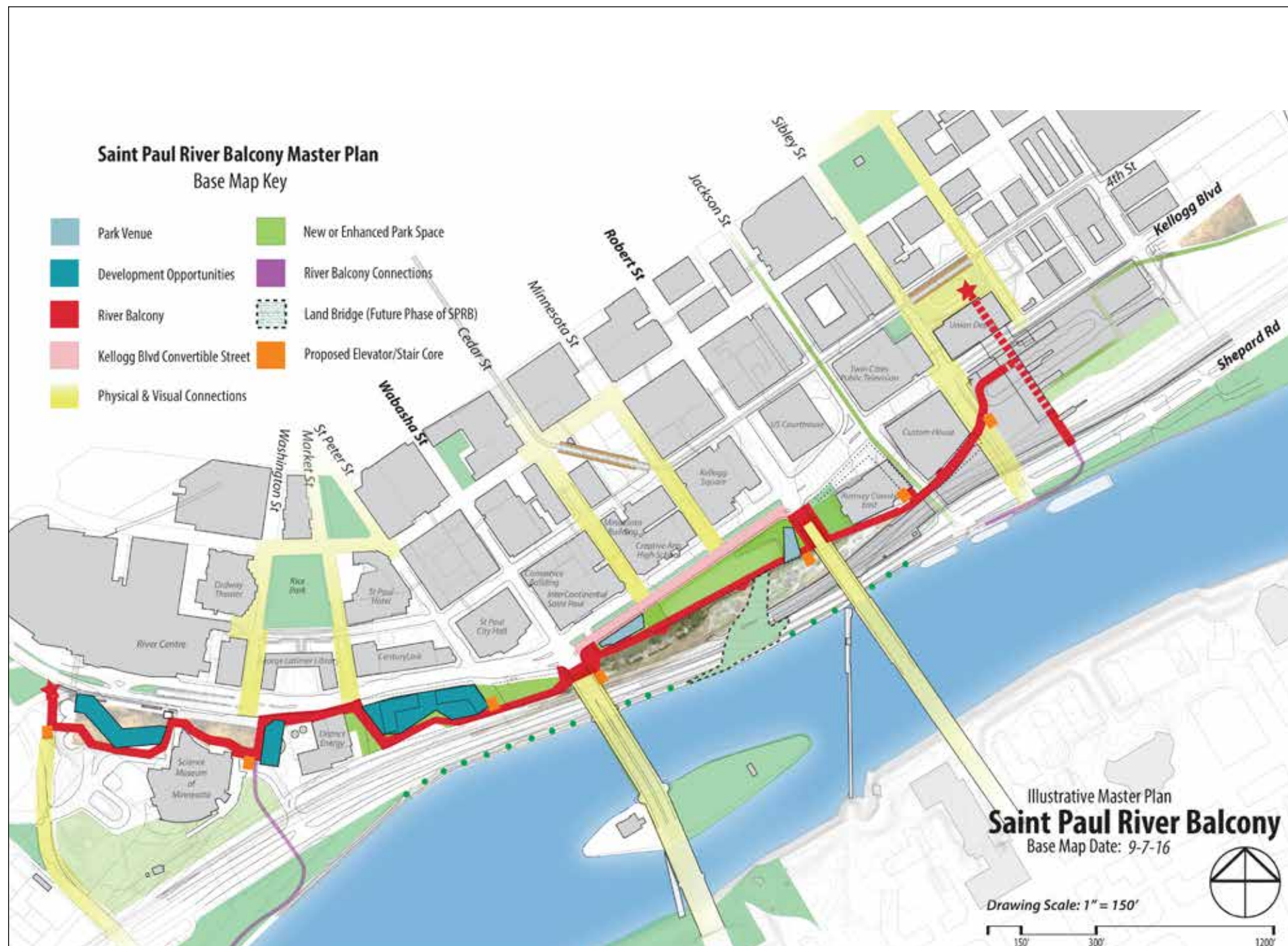


Tabiat Bridge was built in 2014 to span over a major highway and connect two public parks. At each end, the structure widens into a plaza, integrating seamlessly into the parks. Along the bridge's 270 meter length, two continuous levels are supported by three-dimensional trusses and three tree canopy-inspired columns. Above the columns, additional platforms form a third lookout level.

The levels connect by way of multiple stairs and ramps, creating numerous potential paths of travel and distinct experiences. Curvilinear geometries offer constantly changing views. The bridge is meant to be a place not only to pass over, but also to linger. A café/gallery and restaurant are built into the lower level, as well as benches and seating areas throughout. Tabiat means "nature" in Farsi.

- 1 Bridge incorporates multiple stairway typologies
- 2 Interesting spaces are created through layering
- 3 Support structure resembles tree canopies





4 The River Balcony Master Plan

Putting All the Pieces Together

The Evolution of an Idea

Over the past two decades, City leaders have been energized by the idea of bringing people to the edge of the city, and re-engaging them with the natural beauty of the Mississippi River and the dynamic valley that contains it. Like so many river cities, Saint Paul has worked diligently to transform a “back door” into a “front door.” Comparing the riverfront today with its function and appearance a mere twenty years ago, it is truly remarkable to see how far Saint Paul has come.

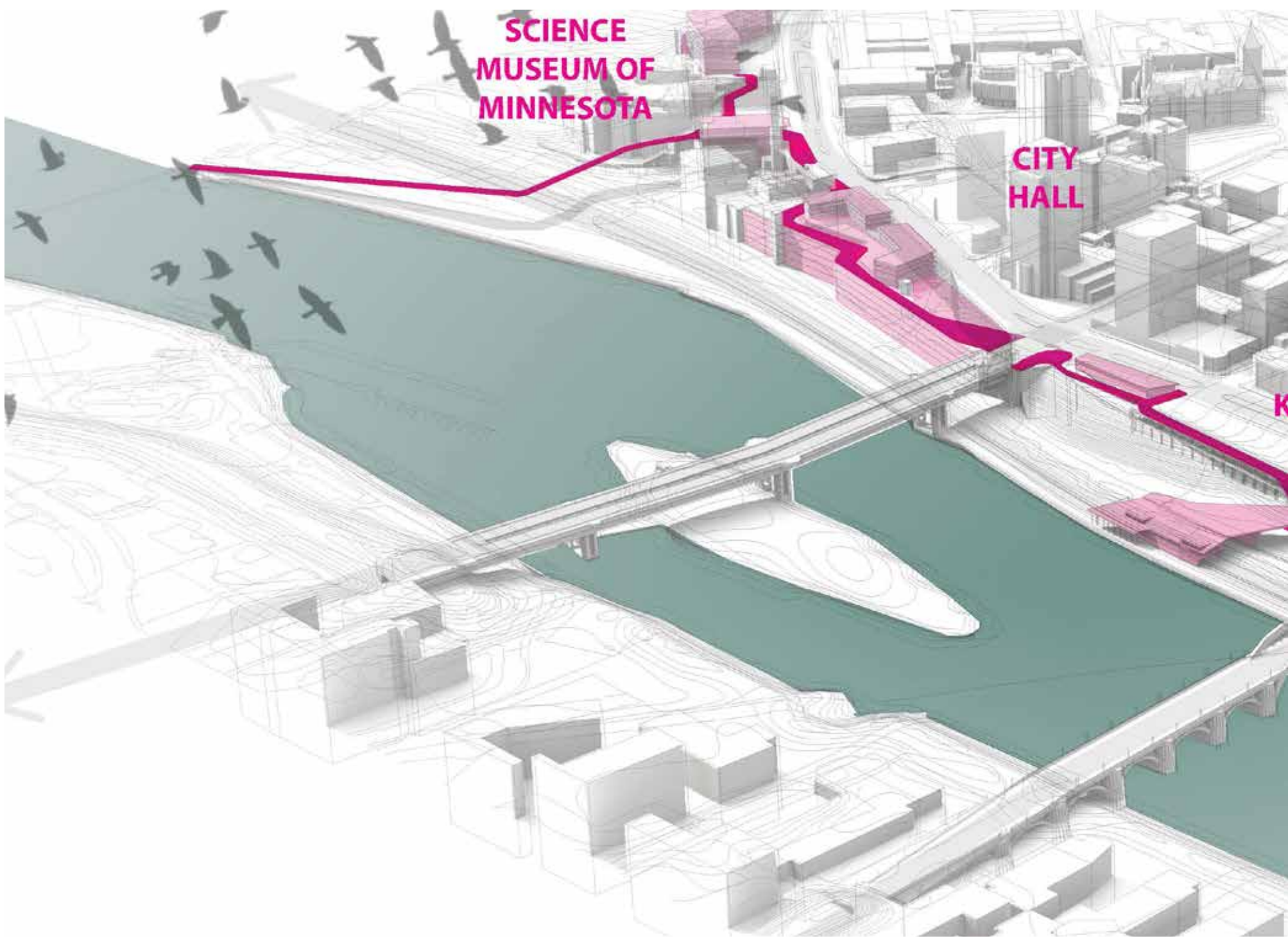
The idea of reconnecting with the valley edge has matured over time: what was first conceived as a simple bluff-top promenade has evolved into an urban balcony that can assume a variety of personalities, ranging from a free-standing, airborne walkway to one that is integrated into a building or, in one instance, to a segment that is located alongside Kellogg Boulevard. That the River Balcony also becomes a continuous connector from one end of the city to the other further enhances its role in the overall experience of being in Saint Paul.

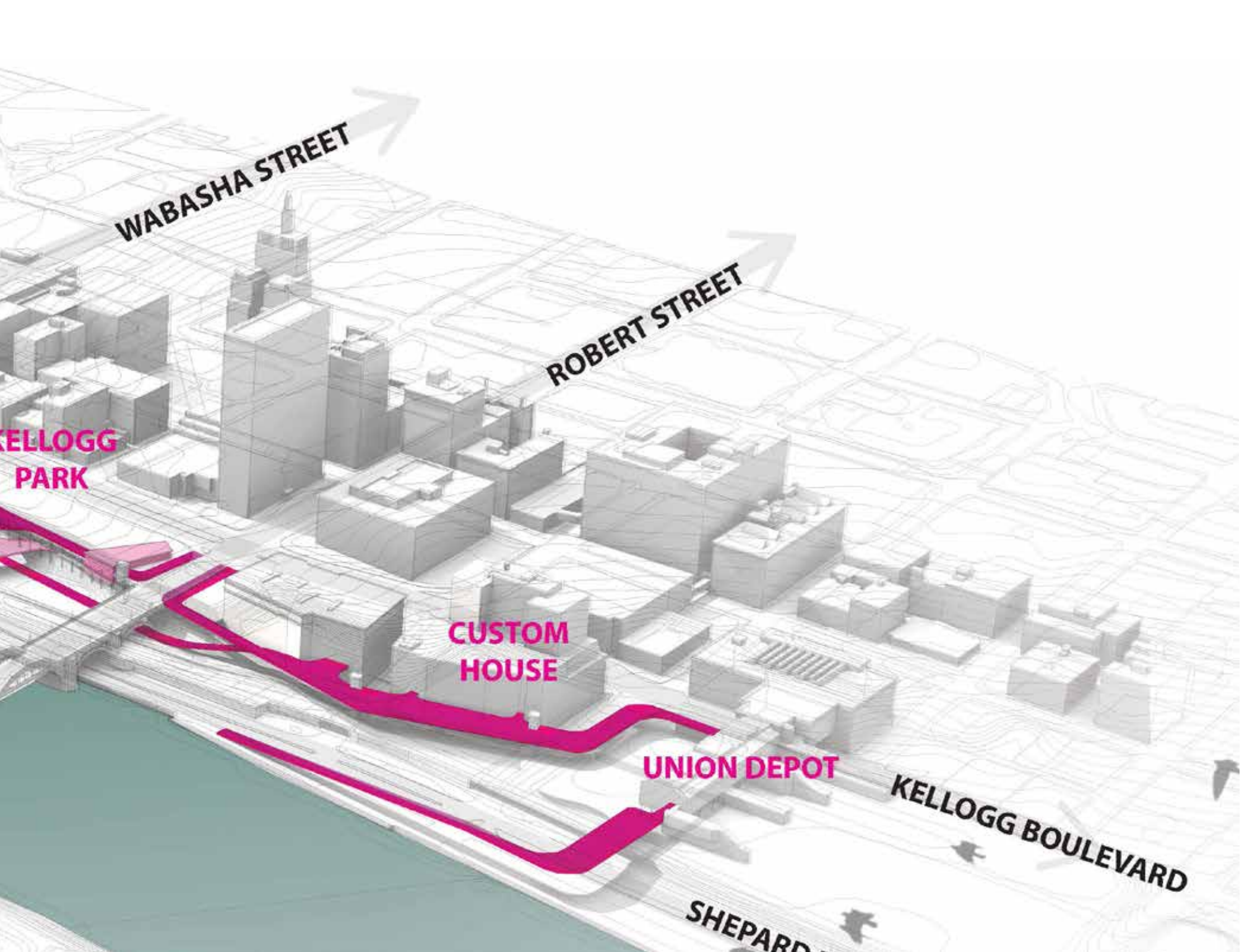


Saint Paul Riverfront - Past



Saint Paul Riverfront - Present



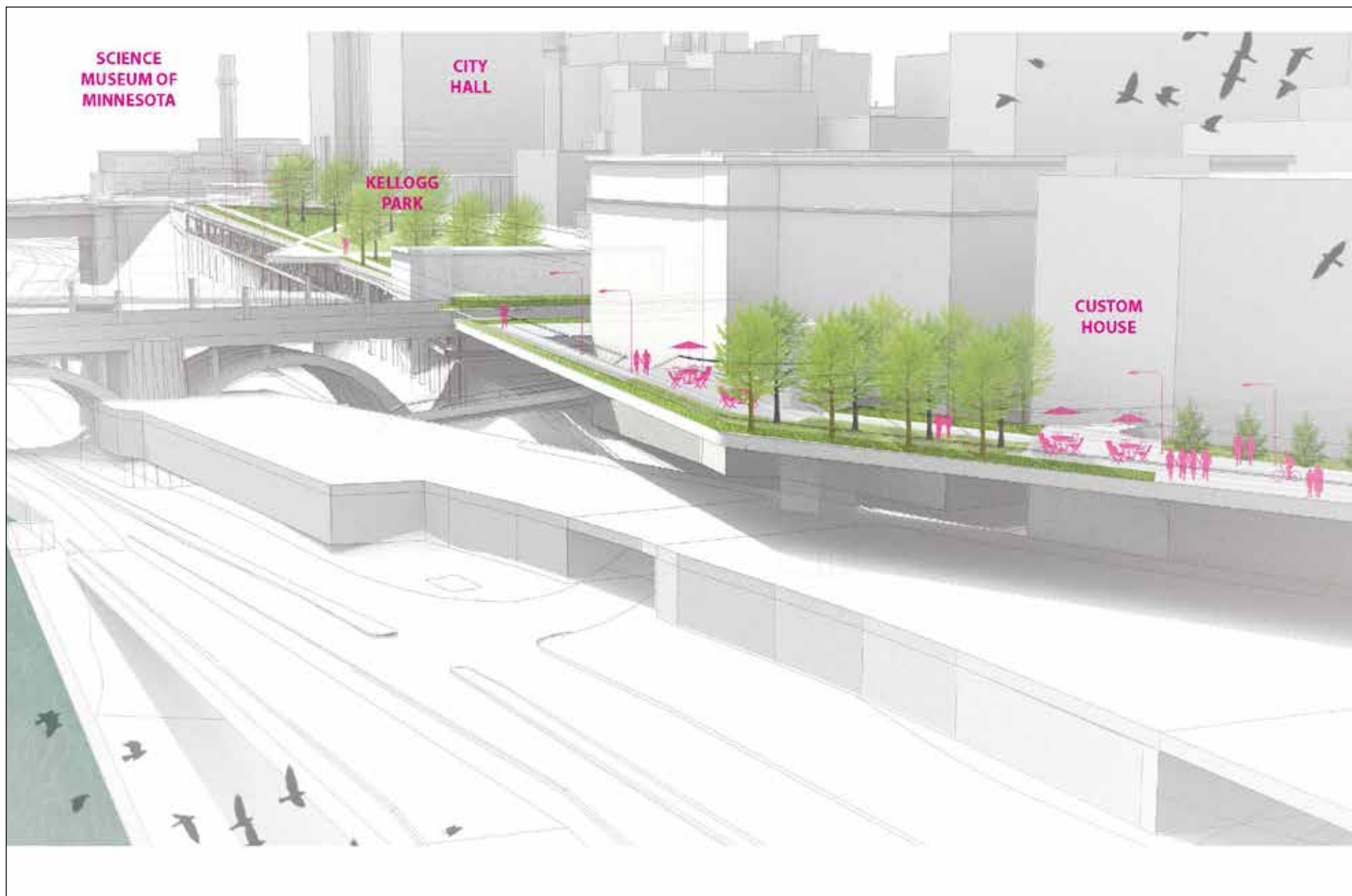


East District

The River Balcony links three diverse parts of downtown Saint Paul along its bluff-top path. The **East District** – the Lowertown neighborhood – is home to an active artist community, the Saint Paul Farmer’s Market, CHS Field, Union Depot, a variety of entrepreneurial businesses, housing and an emerging bar and restaurant scene. The Balcony begins at Union Depot, a beautifully restored multi-modal transit facility and heads west across Sibley Street past Custom House (the former U.S. Post Office that is being renovated into apartments and a hotel), past the Ramsey County East building and the adjoining Culture Park, terminating at Robert Street.

The Balcony is airborne along this stretch, designed to preserve historic facades of the three buildings in this district. It touches buildings minimally to provide access, but keeps it physically separated along most of the facades. A sinuous spur of the balcony emerges from the south face of Union Depot and crosses the tracks and Shepard Road, curving eastward and touching down by the Sam Morgan Regional Trail in Lower Landing Park.





East District

1. Balcony at Custom House: As the first section of the River Balcony to be built, the design has the dual responsibility to establish the overall character of the Balcony going forward, as well as its response to the Mississippi River and the context of this historic part of the city. At Custom House, the design and programming of the Balcony will play a critical role in activating commercial space on the second floor of the Custom House annex. Connection from the Balcony into Custom House is important to activating the Balcony.

2. Balcony at Union Depot: Union Depot is the east portal into the Balcony experience. The Balcony will bring people and activity to the 25,000 SF of available retail in Union Depot.

3. The curved path over rail and Warner Road: As the eastern-most connection from the river to the Balcony, the curving, 14-foot wide elevated boardwalk will slope at 5% to provide access to the river, Lower Landing Park and the Sam Morgan Trail.

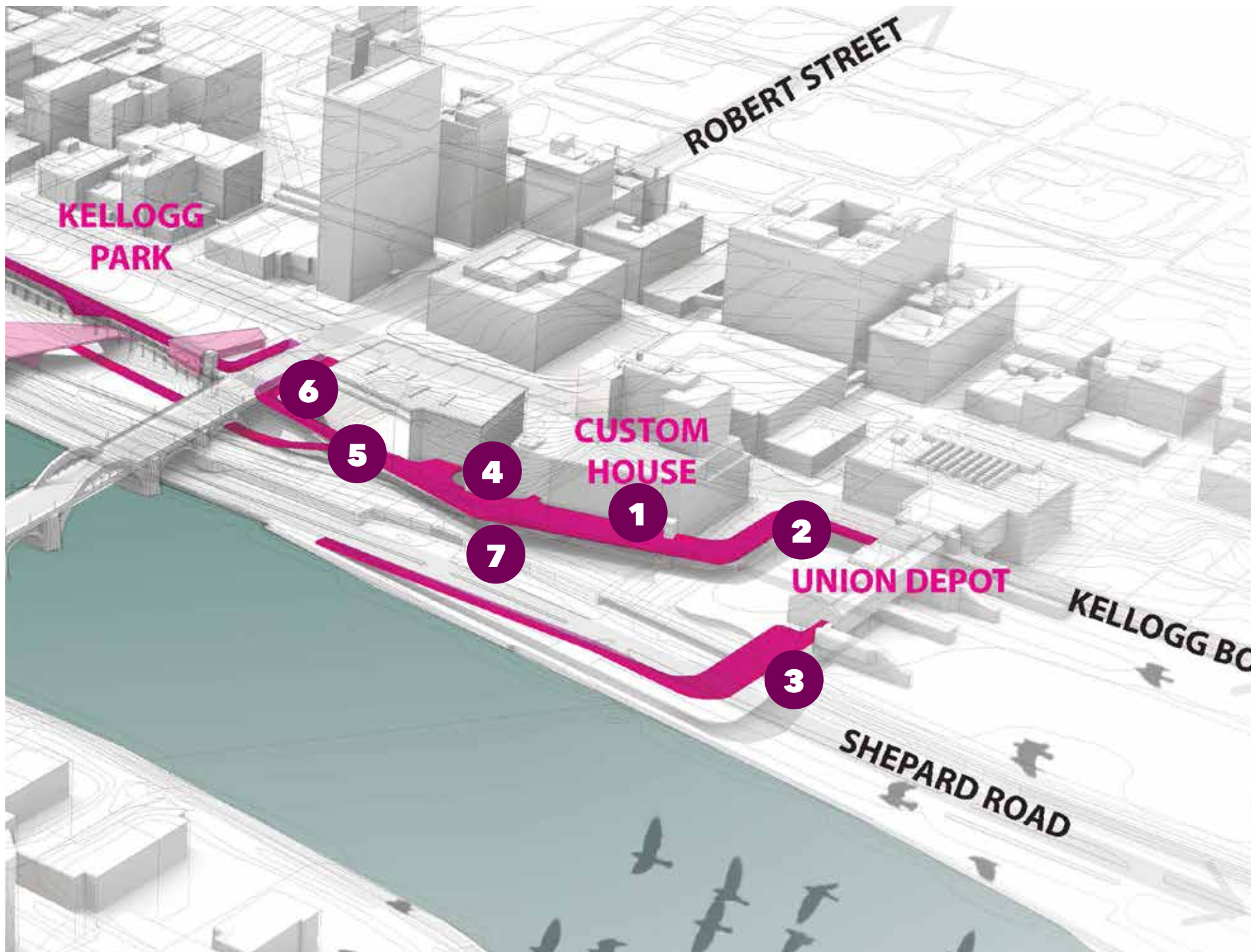
4. Balcony Bridge at Sibley and Jackson Street: Where the Balcony connects over Sibley and Jackson Streets, it is important to recognize the characteristic of “bridge” as both an historic form to be translated into a modern design response and a connection to the river.

5. Balcony at Ramsey County East and ramp down to 2nd Street:

The Balcony already exists along this building. Adaptive reuse of the building will allow for design and programming interplay between it and the Balcony. The Balcony can also extend to the parking lot on the north side of the building, which is an appropriate space for redevelopment once the building has a new use.

6. Balcony at Culture Park: Culture Park offers welcome respite and a unique open space along the Balcony route. The park is a logical point to establish a vertical connection to 2nd Street and future reclaimed park space below (current Ramsey County parking lot). Pedestrian access across Robert Street Bridge further connects the balcony to the West Side Flats. Reconstructing the Balcony railing with much greater transparency provides greater continuity and enhances visual access to the river from the park.

7. Balcony Vertical Connection: Strategic stair and elevator connections between the River Balcony, 2nd Street, future park space below Culture Park and Lower Kellogg Park will provide accessible vertical connections between levels.

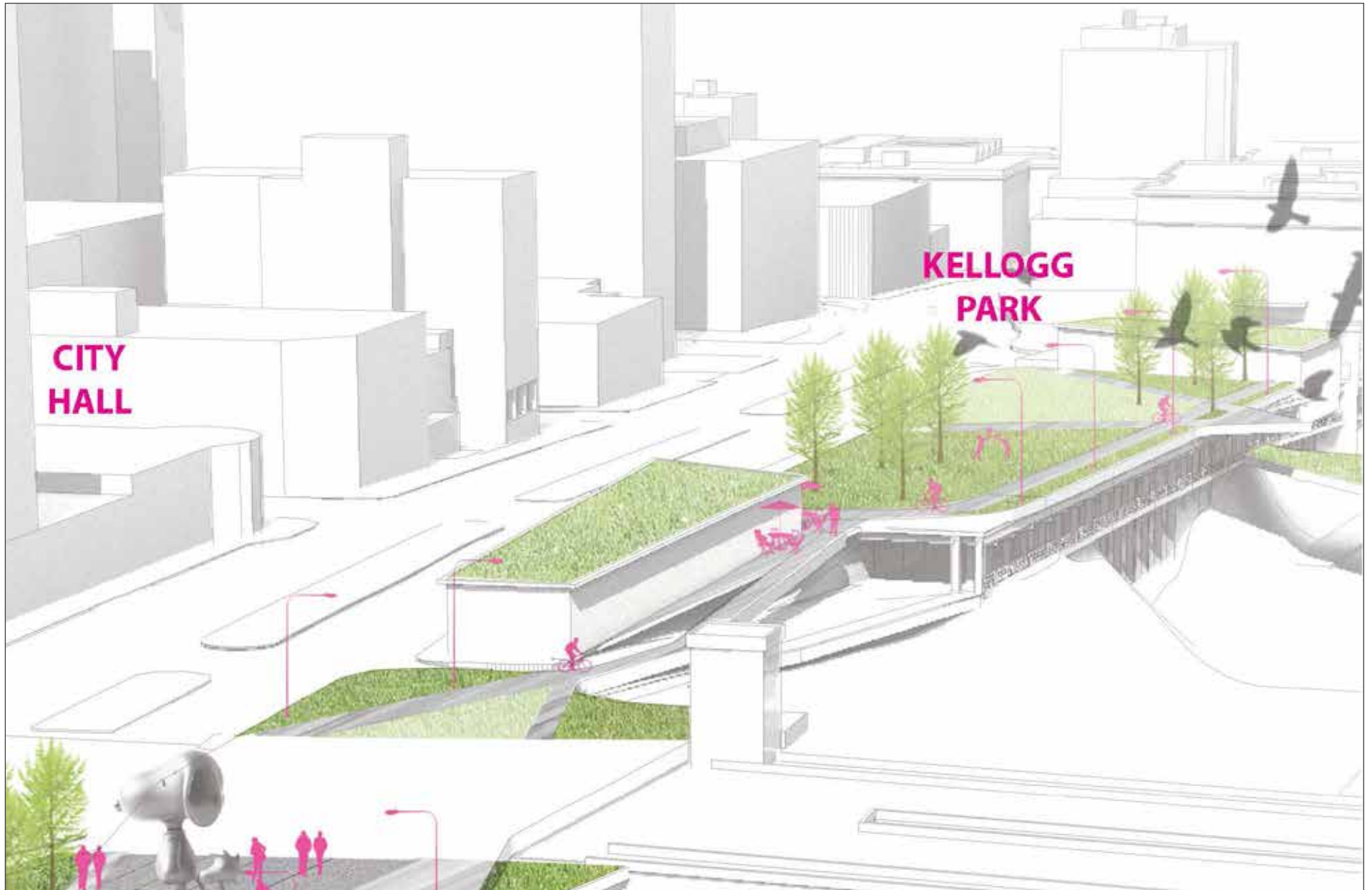


Central District

The **Central District** is primarily Kellogg Mall Park, the three-block public park between the Robert Street and Wacouta Street bridgeheads. Kellogg Mall Park is the major open space abutting Saint Paul's core business district. The River Balcony will follow the existing path along the south edge of the park, providing spectacular views of the river and valley. The long-range plan calls for Kellogg Mall Park to become a signature public space along the Balcony route. A "land bridge" is proposed to seamlessly extend Kellogg Park to south, covering the tracks and Warner Road, and providing another important physical connection to the waterfront. The land bridge will have a landscaped green roof and could contain a restaurant or cafe overlooking the river.

Within the park itself, two new buildings are proposed. One, near the Wabasha Street bridgehead, is proposed be a beer garden/brew pub, harkening back to Tivoli Gardens (Grote's Tivoli) that occupied that same site until 1904. A second, green-roofed, glass building would occupy a site near the Robert Street bridgehead; this building would serve civic purposes, such as an interpretive center or community gathering space.





Central District

1. Balcony at Kellogg Boulevard and Robert Street: Continuity of the Balcony walking surface on both sides of Robert Street from the bridgehead to the crosswalk on the south side of the intersection is important for visual continuity and pedestrian safety.

Owner, Minnesota Department of Transportation

2. Balcony along south edge of Kellogg Mall Park: Kellogg Mall Park will become the center focus for city-wide events and neighborhood activities along the Balcony. To recapture the Mississippi River as an important aspect of the overall experience of Kellogg Mall Park, the Balcony railing will be transparent with extended platforms to allow walkers to move beyond the existing bluff and look back to the last remaining segment of natural face of the bluff.

Owner, City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation

3. A and B Development Pads: Pad A was once the location of the Tivoli Beer Garden. A modern one-story version with an accessible green roof terrace would both activate the western end of Kellogg Park and provide revenue from the land lease to help sustain the park. In addition to the food and beverage activities at Pad A, Pad B would be located at the east end of the park, nestled into the grove of existing trees, creating a venue that could serve as meeting center, park activity center and river interpretive center. This would enhance the diversity of attractions, range of ages and cultural backgrounds of people using the park. Owner, City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation

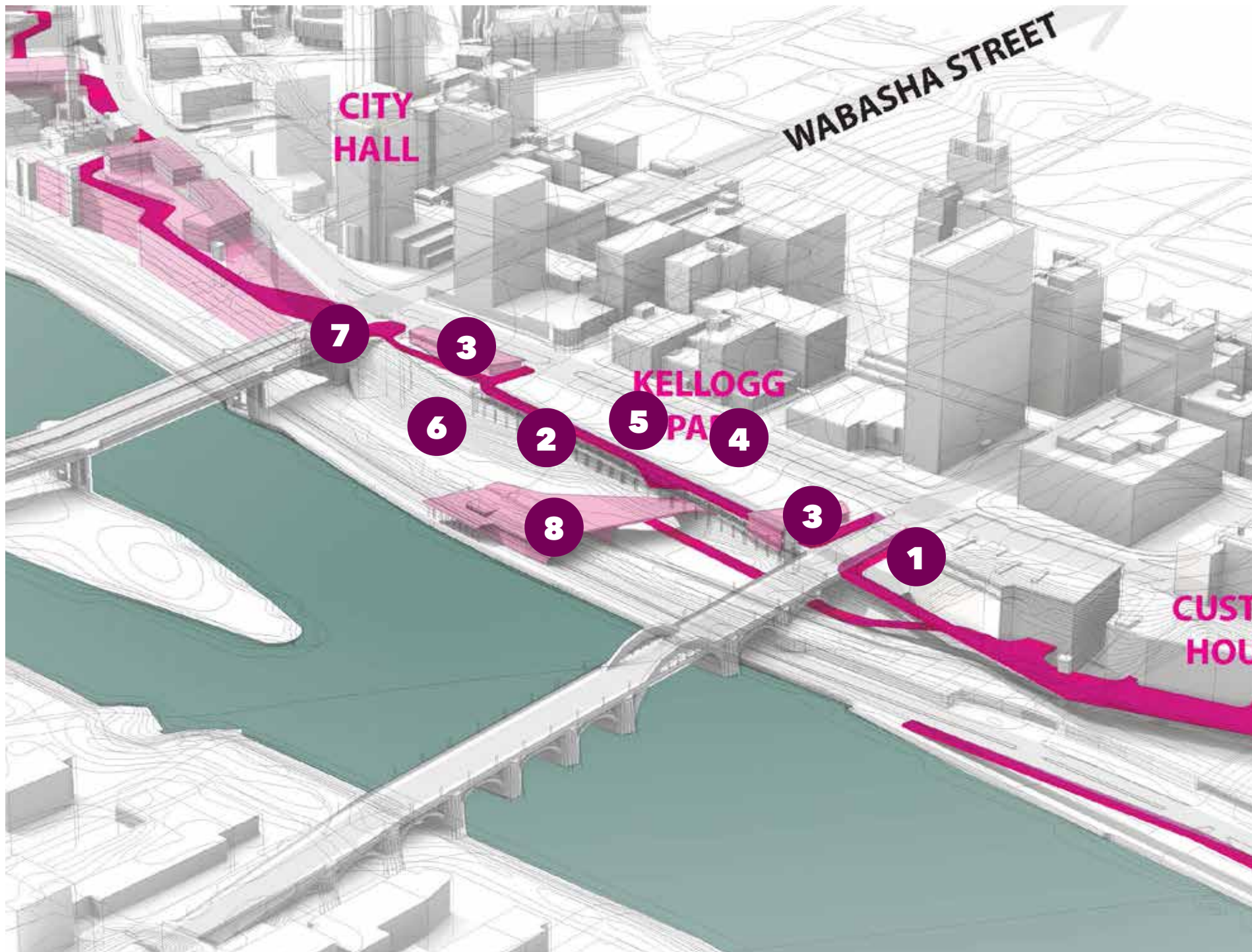
4. Convertible Street at Kellogg: For larger weekend and evening events such as Saturday Market, Music in the Park and seasonal festivals, additional hard surface space will be needed for the park. The east-bound lanes of Kellogg Boulevard would be redesigned to be a “convertible” street, able to be closed for extended park/event use. The west-bound lanes would remain open for vehicular traffic moving in both directions during events.

5. Kellogg Mall Park Upgrades: As part of the Balcony improvements package, additional upgrades are recommended for Kellogg Mall Park, including permeable paving surfaces, “dark-sky” LED site lighting, wayfinding kiosks, locally sourced or sustainably harvested materials and furnishings, and use of native plant materials and low-maintenance grasses. Owner, City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation

6. Lower Kellogg Park: Because of its location within easy walking distance of Lowertown, the lower park is ideal for additional recreation space for the community. It is also an opportunity to restore the edges of the recreation area back to a natural pre-development landscape, which could be an additional Mississippi River interpretive area along the River Balcony. Vertical connections are proposed at either end of the lower park. Owner, City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation

7. Wabasha Bridgehead, Vertical Connection: The Wabasha bridgehead is a key crossroads along the Balcony route, providing north-south and east-west connections as well as a proposed new vertical link to Lower Kellogg Park. The Balcony materials palette will clearly identify the intersection with a wayfinding kiosk, lighting, furnishings and landscape. Owner, City of Saint Paul

8. Land Bridge: Connected to 2nd Street at grade and Kellogg Mall Park by stair, the land bridge spans Lower Kellogg Park, the rail corridor and Shepard Road. Ramps at the south end of the land bridge connect the experience to the river edge. Extending the green of Kellogg Mall Park, the lid over the lower park encourages activities that face and connect directly to the river. The south end of the land bridge could accommodate event and interpretative spaces that will create a river experience unlike anything else along the 1000-mile stretch of the Mississippi River. Owner, To be determined.



West District

The **West District** will witness the most new development, as the Ramsey County West site, a new building on the east edge of the Science Museum Plaza and a new building atop the RiverCentre parking ramp are all anticipated within the next 10 years. The River Balcony will move from downtown-facing spaces, such as the Science Museum Plaza and along Kellogg Boulevard by District Energy, to exterior perches on the river side of the new RiverCentre ramp and the redeveloped Ramsey County West site. The Balcony will continue on the river-side of the small park on top of former jail site.

A second sinuous spur of the primary balcony departs from Science Museum Plaza and floats above the railroad tracks and Shepard Road, curving west and landing in Upper Landing Park.

Drawing on the strengths of the three segments through which it passes, the River Balcony is adaptable and responsive to the unique conditions of each district. Still, as a linear connector spanning the entire edge of downtown, the Balcony is designed with a continuous palette of materials, from paving to landscaping, lighting, sustainability strategies, and furnishings. The River Balcony will help celebrate the different spaces





**SCIENCE
MUSEUM OF
MINNESOTA**

West District

1. Park at Wabasha Bridgehead: City height restrictions in front of City Hall limit building on this parcel, so this Master Plan recommends that it be used as a park at the Kellogg Boulevard elevation. The River Balcony would be designed to follow the bluff line. The park space would provide an entry for new uses to the west.

Owner, To be determined.

2. Balcony at Ramsey County West: This site is critical both for the development of downtown Saint Paul and the continuity of the River Balcony. It is the expectation that the Balcony will be incorporated into the design of new building(s) at this location, and will be located along the river side of the site. This is an important opportunity to guide the programming of the new building to activate the Balcony, and encourage uninterrupted pedestrian movement and views of the Mississippi River. Additionally, special attention should be paid to how the new building(s) address Kellogg Boulevard.

Owner, Developer to be determined.

3. Balcony at District Energy: At this location, the Balcony comes back to Kellogg Boulevard. It should be incorporated into the existing interpretive displays, and enhanced to inform and celebrate the innovations of the Eco-District.

Owner, Ever-Green Energy

4. The Elevated Boardwalk over Rail and Shepard Road: As the western connection from the river to the Balcony, the curving 14-foot wide 5% slope connection will link the upper bluff of downtown to the Sam Morgan Regional Trail and Upper Landing Park at the river's edge.

Owner, City of Saint Paul and Science Museum of Minnesota (SMM).

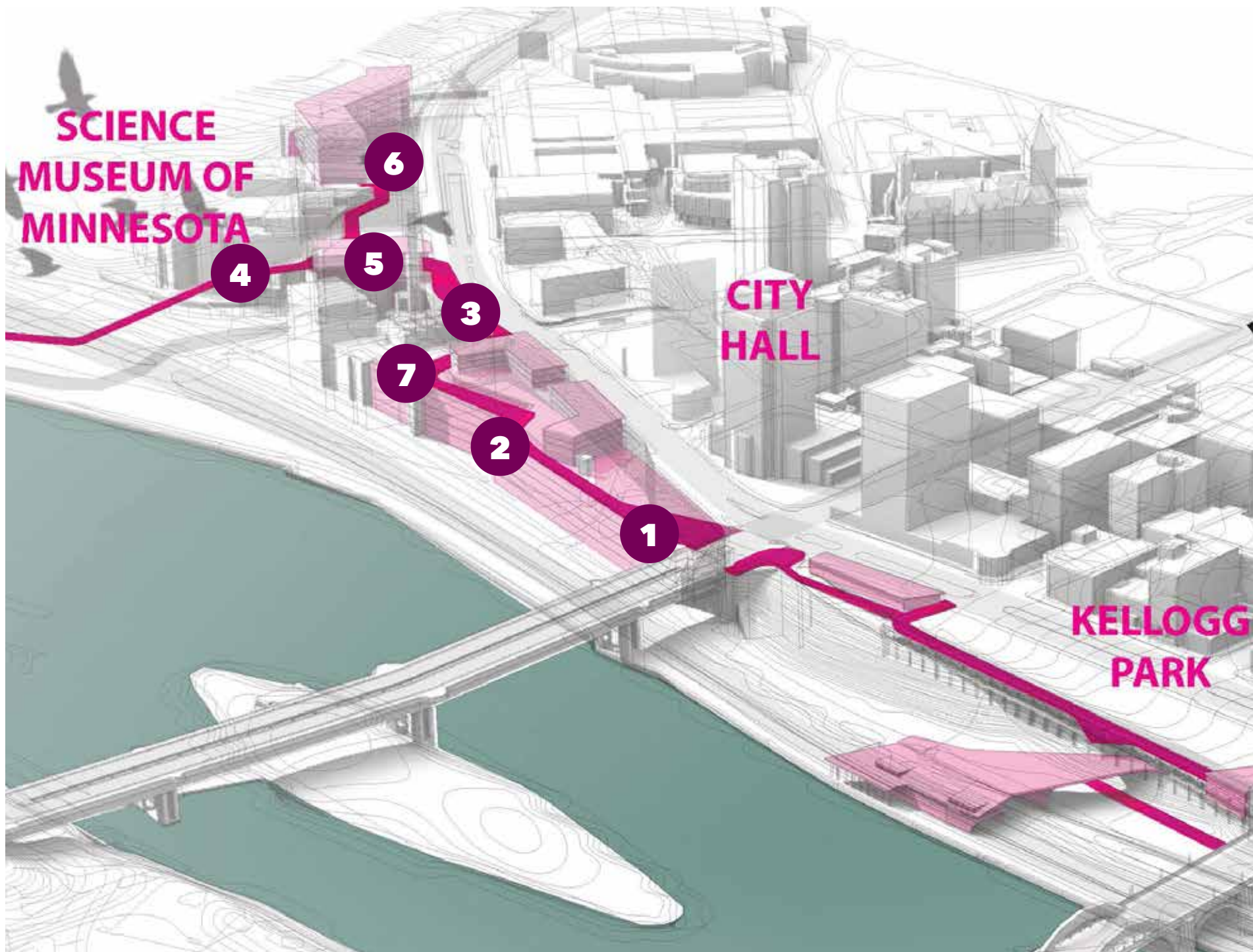
5. Balcony at the Science Museum of Minnesota: The Science Museum of Minnesota Plaza is an important part of the urban fabric and public realm of St Paul. As the River Balcony passes through the large plaza it important that material continuity be clear to provide a sense of the river's presence to connect the whole experience of the balcony.

Owner, Science Museum of Minnesota

6. Balcony at RiverCentre Ramp: Similar to the Ramsey West Redevelopment Site, the RiverCentre Parking Site should have development over the parking. It is important to keep in mind the location of the River Balcony walkway and the Design Standards to insure overall continuity of Balcony experience as a city wide resource.

Owner, RiverCentre

7. Shepard Road, Vertical Connection: A transparent, enclosed stair and elevator connection provides immediate access to Mississippi River while the elevated walkway continues west to the Upper Landing. Owner, City of St. Paul.



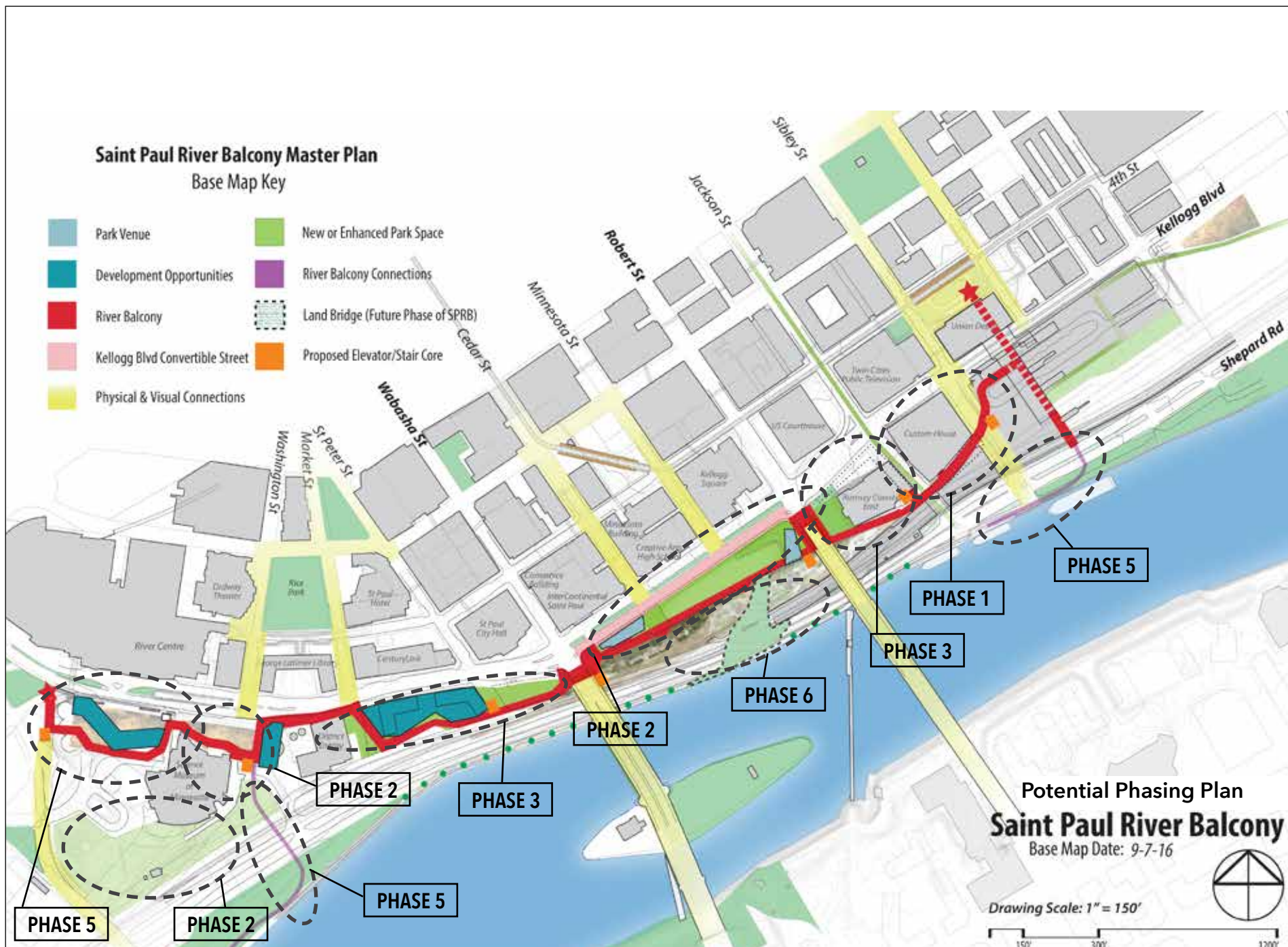
Priority Projects and Phasing

The overall form of the River Balcony and individual works of architecture that engage it will establish new connections into the city of Saint Paul and out to the Mississippi River. The careful attention to detail of architectural facades, and continuity of scale and proportion along the Balcony at the pedestrian level is an essential part of those relationships. The urban artifacts of Saint Paul's past, along with new emerging urban patterns, will need to be reviewed, understood and incorporated into the implementation projects as outlined in the diagrams on the adjacent page.

The design of each project must adhere to the master plan document as a baseline but also respond to the emerging urban environment by connecting to the street, public realm, new and proposed buildings, and the overall urban form of the city.

The overall success of the River Balcony Implementation is dependent on open communication between all stakeholders and recognition of the larger benefits of design continuity.







5 Saint Paul River Balcony Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

Overview

The Saint Paul River Balcony project consists of a series of publicly accessible open spaces and pedestrian pathways that connect Kellogg Plaza in front of the Science Museum to Kellogg Mall Park between Wabasha and Robert and the Custom House and Union Depot in Lowertown. The River Balcony provides views overlooking the Mississippi River and connects the downtown street grid at the level of Kellogg Boulevard to the river below in key places. Previous chapters of this document have described the principles and specific elements of the Saint Paul River Balcony Master Plan. This chapter provides design guidelines for the River Balcony project area.

These guidelines are complementary to other relevant planning studies, guidelines and standards developed by the City of Saint Paul and others listed below. These documents were reviewed and used to establish general principles as well as specific details, such as height and setback restrictions, and dimensions for streets, bikeways and pedestrian walkways.

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide direction for the design of the River Balcony and related spaces in the public realm as well as adjacent development and infrastructure. The intended audiences for the guidelines are the developers and their design teams for these projects as well as City officials and others that review them. The guidelines are organized into three sections—(1) general guidelines for the public realm, (2) general guidelines for development on adjacent sites, and (3) guidelines for each design component of the River Balcony.



GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE PUBLIC REALM

The public realm comprises the spaces and places between buildings – parks, plazas, streets and sidewalks – where people come together, socialize, intermingle and experience the city. In many ways it is the “community commons,” shared places that are accessible to everyone.

The quality of the public realm reflects on the city within which it is located. A well-designed and well-maintained public realm may become an iconic destination and source of pride for the host community. Examples abound in the beautiful public spaces and streets that characterize many European cities.

Today, there is a resurgence of interest in the public realm closer to home, which can be seen in major investments by American cities such as New York City’s High Line, Chicago’s Millennium Park and Green Bay’s new waterfront development. These amenities are not necessarily woven into the daily life of the city, but have become destinations that have a positive impact on adjacent real estate values and showcase the beauty of the cities in new and exciting ways.

The Saint Paul River Balcony is envisioned as such an amenity.

The identity and sense of place of an area of a city is determined in part by a set of consistent design elements that provide a continuity of experience. These may include signage, materials, landscaping, street furniture and lighting. Determining identity for the River Balcony as a whole requires understanding that it is part of the larger riverine context. For example, the Great River Passage Master Plan refers to an overall identity for the river corridor. At the same time, various studies and plans refer to distinct neighborhoods and districts along the river.



Overall Identity

The River Balcony area should have a consistent identity with uniform design elements for paving, signage, materials, landscaping, street furniture and lighting. Specific areas or spaces within the overall public realm may still have their distinct design elements and identity within a larger whole. For example, the Science Museum Plaza in the EcoDistrict may have its own distinct design vocabulary, but the River Balcony will maintain its design elements as it passes along the edge of the Plaza.

The River Balcony should consider, and where appropriate, incorporate elements from the Great River Passage identity system. These may include certain types of signage and information related to the river corridor as a whole.

Connected Pedestrian Amenities

On all streets in the River Balcony study area, the pedestrian zone should be expanded to accommodate higher pedestrian traffic levels and allow sufficient space for street furnishings, lighting, landscaping, and outdoor dining.

The River Balcony should interface with other Saint Paul pedestrian and open space networks.

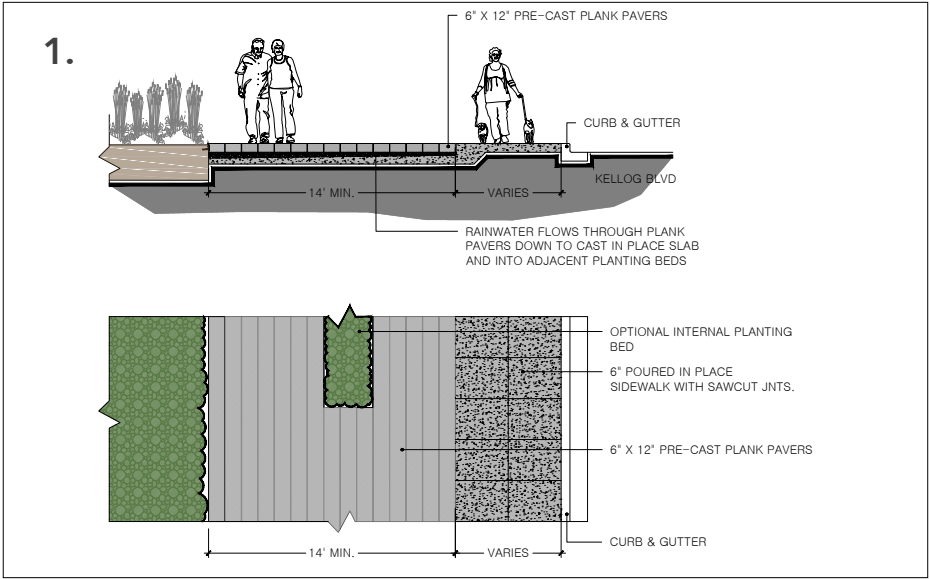
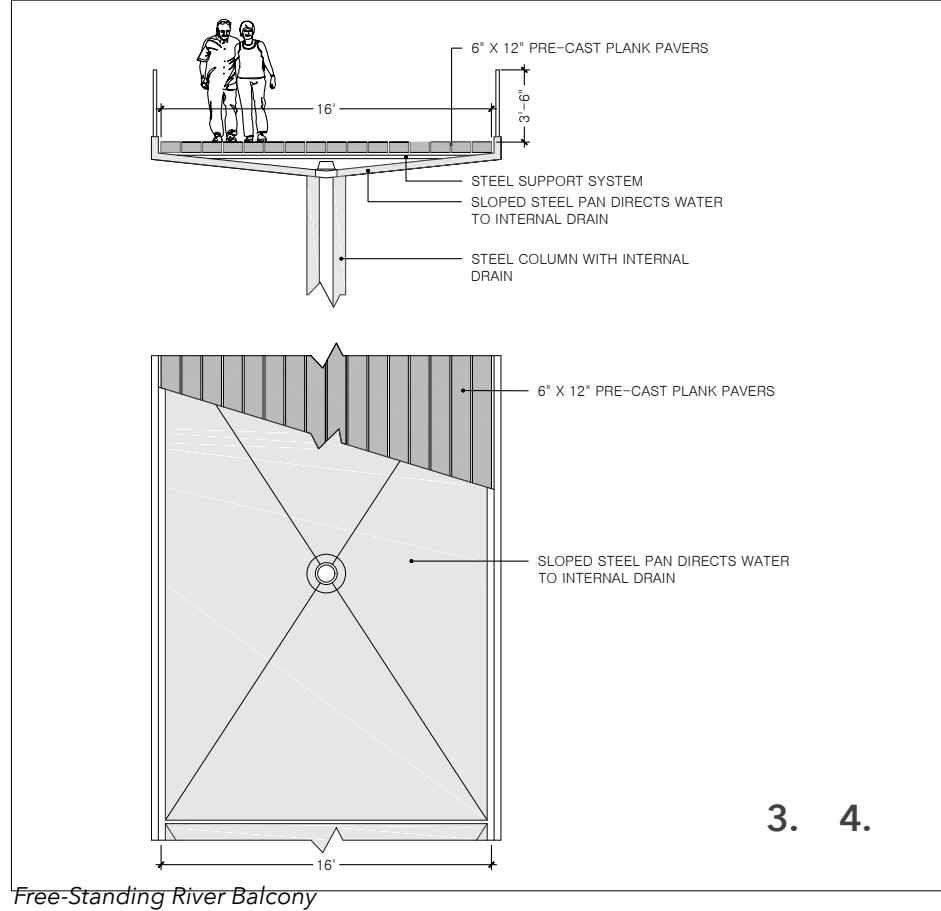
The River Balcony should interface with the Capital City Bikeway. Where bicycle lanes run parallel to pedestrian walkways, the minimum width for a bicycle lane should be 5 feet. No slope should exceed 5 percent.



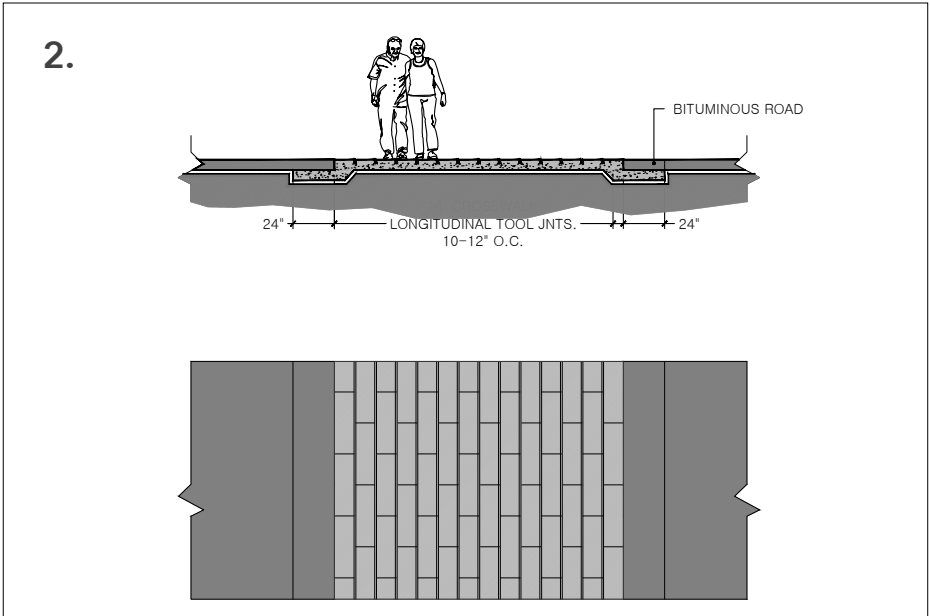
Balcony Character by Location

There are four distinct conditions that characterize the River Balcony along its course: on-grade at sidewalks and plazas; on-grade at street crossings; free-standing where the main Balcony becomes airborne and free-standing where the elevated walkways descend from the top of the bluff to the river below.

- 1. Balcony on-grade at sidewalks and plazas
- 2. Balcony on-grade at street crosswalks (Wabasha and Robert streets)
- 3. Free-standing Balcony (where Balcony bridges over something or is separated from adjacent buildings)
- 4. Balcony Connections to the River



River Balcony at Sidewalk or Plaza



River Balcony at Crosswalk

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ADJACENT PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT SITES

Introduction

The River Balcony will be connected to downtown Saint Paul in myriad ways. It will be a literal extension of the community's urban infrastructure, but can also become a powerful engine for economic development along its entire course. Combined with its potential to tie into existing, innovative district systems and highlight the "story" of Saint Paul's natural and cultural history, this single addition can transform the way the city views itself and is seen by others. Further, the River Balcony will highlight Saint Paul's most important natural assets – the south-facing bluff edge where the city plateau plunges to the river valley below and the Mississippi River itself. Straddling this dramatic edge, the Balcony will enhance new building sites, enrich adaptive re-use of existing structures and celebrate historic buildings. Perhaps most importantly, in several places, the Balcony will bridge existing barriers to connect to the river's edge.

There are public and private initiatives already underway along the proposed route for the River Balcony. In a remarkably symbiotic way, the Balcony will allow visitors to experience the city in entirely new ways while adding value to the buildings and park spaces that face the river.

The public realm and the River Balcony that runs through it are shaped by adjacent development. Buildings contribute to the character and vitality of streets and other public spaces. This section consists of overall design guidelines for all sites adjacent to the River Balcony.

Sustainability and District Systems

- All new development in the River Balcony study area should connect to Saint Paul District Energy, as well as district stormwater and other district systems.
- All new developments in the River Balcony study area should meet the Saint Paul Green Building standard which includes specific requirements for energy, water, stormwater, indoor environment, materials and waste (<http://sustainablebuildingpolicy.umn.edu/saintpaul/>)

Site Development

- The River Balcony will connect to a variety of spaces and structures along its route through downtown. To the extent possible, there should be a seamless relationship between the Balcony and adjacent development and redevelopment sites, i.e. the Balcony should not feel like an afterthought, but integral to adjacent development.
- The River Balcony should maintain its own identity from end-to-end, but adjacent development or redevelopment sites may have distinctive elements that reinforce the buildings and/or sites.

Building Form and Facade

- New and renovated buildings should optimize visual connections to the Balcony to the extent possible by providing active uses and plentiful fenestration at the Balcony elevation.
- New buildings should be sensitive to the presence and scale of the Balcony, providing high-quality materials and detailing at Balcony elevation and avoiding high, unarticulated facades that overpower users. Stepping new buildings back after four stories is encouraged. Overhead canopies may also help define a comfortable human scale against larger facades.

Historic Preservation

- The Balcony should be physically separated from historic building facades, with minimal physical connections between the two and allowing excellent views of the buildings from the Balcony.
- Historically-designated buildings should connect to the Balcony at appropriate and limited locations.
- No features of any historic façade shall be altered by Balcony construction, except as permitted following applicable Saint Paul Preservation Commission (HPC) and State Historic Preservation Office review and in compliance with Saint Paul HPC and Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

GUIDELINES FOR BALCONY COMPONENTS

Introduction

Visions for the River Balcony described in master plan diagrams, character sketches and other graphic illustrations provide the context and foundation for the overall balcony concept. In this section, guidelines for each balcony component brings additional focus to the individual parts and pieces.

Discussion and decisions related to guideline intent and level of detail, defined by the master plan process, suggests a less prescriptive approach, but instead offers a catalog of images and ideas to guide ongoing detailed design work for each component. Previous guidelines for Public Realm and Adjacent Development Sites suggest a level of consistency and continuity of balcony design elements. But at the same time, as emerging detailed design will demonstrate, there are many opportunities for variety and individual expression in each of the following components.

Balcony Structure

- Simple, perhaps more of a 'form-follows-function' design drawing inspiration from similar structural elements found along the existing Saint Paul riverfront;
- The mast/cable stay concept suggesting a more contemporary, at times almost invisible structural system, the balcony 'hangs/floats' along the bluff edge;
- And solutions that provide a more sculptural or interpretive design, such as the Tree Concept, in this case drawing inspiration from natural elements found within the river landscape.



Mast Cable Stay Concept



Existing Rhythms Concept



Tree Concept

- The master plan includes River Balcony connections via towers with stair
- Vertical Circulation Towers**

- The function of the towers is to provide vertical circulation. They will serve as a unifying design element and predictable location for moving between levels.
- The elevated towers should be light and transparent. Lighting should provide a striking nighttime image.



Paving

Text

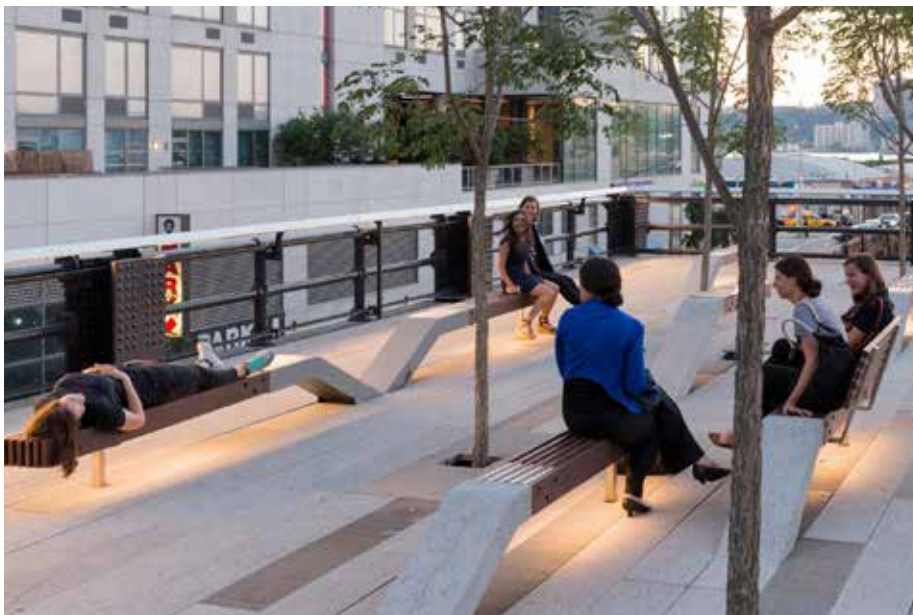


Railings



Furnishings

- The balcony will have a “family” of site furnishings. Adjacent development may vary from this palette, but private furnishings should be located to not conflict with balcony furnishings.
- Furnishings on private development or redevelopment sites shall be high quality, durable and easily maintained to insure that the entire ensemble of furnishings in the balcony corridor continue to be visually appealing.



Lighting

- Lighting on the Balcony should be low (walkway/step lighting or bollards). Building lighting should also be subtle and understated, avoiding harsh and overpowering light conditions. Views of the valley and sky at night are very important.
- Lighting should be used to highlight the special qualities of historic buildings, such as using a gentle wash of the facade to highlight its beauty.
- Subtle lighting may also be used to highlight the bluff itself. Lighting of new or renovated buildings should not compete with the bluff's natural beauty.



Landscape

- Landscaping along the entire length of the River Balcony should draw from a native palette of attractive and low-maintenance plants. Adjacent sites may introduce additional plants, but they should be compatible with the Balcony palette at the seam between the two.
- Landscape design on private development sites should reinforce and frame dramatic views to the valley and connections to the Balcony, not obscure them. Open views of the valley at all street termini should be maintained.
- Plant selection should take into consideration views to and from spaces and buildings. For example, evergreens should not be used where they will conceal an historic facade.



District Systems

Energy

- Explore the use of district energy (or other waste heat) as a heat source for snow melting and enhancing outdoor spaces along the River Balcony to make them more comfortable during colder weather.
- Incorporate Saint Paul District Energy and the Ecodistrict as a whole into the program and activities that occur along the River Balcony. Possibilities exist for the Science Museum Plaza (Kellogg Plaza) and the space between the Science Museum and District Energy buildings to become a major component of the public realm in this area focused on environmental education. Additional educational facilities associated with District Energy could be placed on the eastern edge of this space.

Stormwater

- Reduce or eliminate rate and quantity of direct runoff of stormwater into the river.
- Explore the use of shared (district) stormwater systems to improve environmental and economic outcomes.
- Design stormwater management systems to be part of green infrastructure that serves multiple functions including recreation and habitat restoration.
- Naturalize the water's edge where appropriate and possible



Historic and Cultural Resource Planning and Design Guideline Recommendations

(Note: Excerpted from the Historic and Cultural Resources Study)

The following historic and cultural resource planning and design guideline recommendations may be incorporated into the Saint Paul River Balcony Master Plan Design Guidelines or consulted separately. The design guidelines provide direction for the design of the River Balcony and related spaces in the public realm as well as adjacent development and infrastructure. They also provide criteria for evaluating designs that emerge in both the public and private realms. The guidelines below offer additional information about planning for the area's important historic properties.

Where there is a potential effect on locally designated and/or NRHP-eligible properties, design proposals and any questions about review should be coordinated with the St. Paul HPC and/or SHPO. Future project planning should anticipate possible use of federal funds that might require Section 106 review, including walkway and balcony construction.

General Planning Recommendations

- Consult with SHPO and the St. Paul HPC on determination of an Area of Potential Effect (APE) for use in evaluating indirect and direct effects to cultural resources.
- With SHPO consultation and prior to completion of final design proposals, evaluate the need for a Section 106-level study of the entire River Balcony project area to avoid or mitigate cultural resource issues on all locally designated and NRHP-eligible properties.

- In consultation with SHPO and HPC, determine if reevaluation of Kellogg Boulevard NRHP eligibility may be required. This reevaluation should focus on engineering and urban planning (City Beautiful and WPA-era) areas of significance.

- Complete inventory forms and, as appropriate for properties more than 50 years old, prepare Phase I evaluations for properties currently noted as "not evaluated" in Table 1.

- Consult with SHPO on proposed construction adjacent to the NRHP-eligible historic railroad corridor.

4.5.1.6 Evaluate archaeological potential when building demolition, new construction, or other bluff-area activities are proposed.

- Interpret bluff geology and history in future public programming.

Landscape Character Guidelines

- Avoid blocking views of the exposed bluff from all riverfront vantage points. From the bluff and downtown St. Paul, retain and enhance existing views and create opportunities to create new views of the river and river valley.
- Conserve existing sections of exposed bluff. Investigate sources of erosion and other potential threats to deterioration. Where building demolition exposes long-covered segments, evaluate “daylighting” wherever possible. Consider bluff character and appearance in the design of buttresses or other stabilization efforts.
- Incorporate the bluff feature into proposals for public art and interpretation.

Balcony Design and Building Connections

- The elevated walkway and related features including hardscape, lighting, and street furnishings should incorporate simple materials and design motifs that have a low impact on surrounding historic buildings and spaces.
- Separate the balcony from historic buildings to minimize obstruction of views to and from the structure, and also to avoid or minimize physical connections.
- No features of any historic façade should be altered by balcony construction, except as permitted by applicable St. Paul HPC and/or SHPO review and following St. Paul HPC and the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.

Putting All the Pieces Together . . .

Physical Model of the Proposed Saint Paul River Balcony





Appendix

