



HIGH FALLS STATE PARK DESIGN WORKSHOP

FINAL REPORT 08/26/24

Produced by the Community Design Center of Rochester in collaboration with Greentopia





Acknowledgements

We are delighted to present this report on the High Falls State Park Leadership Breakfast and Design Workshop, events that highlight the deep commitment of individuals past and present who are dedicated to fostering stewardship within our community. All participants and stakeholders take great pride in promoting environmental sustainability, embracing diversity, and ensuring accessibility to the natural resources nestled along the Genesee River.

This document is a testament to the collective effort of many who generously donated their time and talent to these inaugural public engagement events. Inside, you will find valuable ideas, concepts, and standards that will serve as a guide for current and future planners of High Falls State Park and the immediately surrounding neighborhoods.

The preparation for this document provided us with an opportunity to reflect on the aspirations of our community members—especially the dream of creating a space where disadvantaged communities can connect with a natural wonder in the heart of our city. As you read this report, we hope you will see the dedication and vision that continues to shape the future of High Falls State Park.

Together, we are building a community that honors its history, cherishes its natural beauty, and looks forward to an inclusive and sustainable future.

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are gathered on traditional territory of the Onöndowa'ga' or "the people of the Great Hill." In English, they are known as Seneca people, "the keeper of the western door." They are one of the six nations that make up the sovereign Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We strive to honor as well as respect the diverse Indigenous peoples connected to these lands with gratitude for the land itself and the peoples who have stewarded it throughout the generations.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements, Land Acknowledgement	2
Introduction	3
Leadership Breakfast	3
High Falls State Park Design Workshop	6
Overall Study Area + Focus Areas	7
Individual Focus Area Maps	8
Guiding Principles	8
Workshop Facilitators	10
Workshop Recommendations	10
Focus Area 1	11
Focus Area 2 (Group A)	13
Focus Area 2 (Group B)	15
Focus Area 3	17
Focus Area 4	19
Focus Area 5	21
Focus Area 6	23
Focus Area 7	25
Findings and Next Steps	27
Credits	28
Appendix A (Leadership Breakfast Figures)	29
Appendix B (Design Workshop Figures)	41

Introduction

Governor Hochul announced the creation of High Falls State Park in 2022, along with a funding commitment of planning and design consultant services. The project stalled until late 2023 due to issues related to environmental remediation and property ownership. By late 2023, the project was ready to recommence under the direction of NY Empire State Development (ESD) and NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYS OPRHP). The request for proposals (RFP) was re-issued for planning and design services, and the initial public engagement strategy was planned. Greentopia, led by Lisa Baron and her team, were charged with preparing the engagement strategy and host events concurrent with the state led consultant selection process, which began in January 2024.

Lisa Baron reached out to the Community Design Center of Rochester (CDCR) to collaborate on the program and management of the first public engagement event. Greentopia and CDCR planned two individual events held in early May of 2024:

- **Leadership Breakfast – May 2, 2024**
- **Design Workshop – May 4, 2024**



Leadership Breakfast

The audience for the leadership breakfast included local and regional elected officials, agencies, and individuals associated with education, social services, economic development, sustainability and promoting Rochester and the Finger Lakes Region. A complete list of those who attended the breakfast is presented in *Figure A1*.

The format of the breakfast was a panel discussion with representatives who will have long-term responsibilities for planning, executing and managing High Falls State Park and the surrounding neighborhoods. Panelists were:

- Dr. Calvin Gantt (Monroe Community College) – Education
- Joseph Stefko (Roc 2025) – Economic Development
- Donald Jeffries (Visit Rochester) – Culture and Tourism
- Christopher Widmaier (Rochester Ecology Partners) – Environmental Sustainability
- Tamara Mayberry (City of Rochester) – Placemaking
- Vincent Esposito (New York Empire State Development) – NYS Administration
- Arthur Briley (New York State Office Parks, Recreations and Historic Preservation) – NYS Parks

A series of questions were prepared and distributed to the panelists prior to the breakfast program (*Figure A2*). These questions, along with the goals of the breakfast, were discussed with each panelist ahead of time. In addition, Greentopia and the CDCR prepared a list of three questions for all attendees to answer. The questions, written on index cards, were collected at the end of the breakfast. A complete list of responses are presented in *Figure A3*.



Summary of Findings

The following is a summary of the points presented by the panelists invited to speak at the High Falls State Park Leadership Breakfast held on May 2nd, 2024. A full transcript of the event (including introductions, the panel discussion, and participant questions and answers) is presented in *Figure A4*.

Vincent Esposito (NYS ESD)

Purpose of an Urban State Park: Not just a park, but a significant historical and geographical landmark; a crucial part of Rochester's existence and history.

Why a State Park: State resources are needed due to the scale and significance of the project; city parks are already heavily managed.

Origin of Idea and Driving Force: Idea cultivated through Roc the Riverway; Lisa is pivotal in driving the initiative forward.

Governor's Commitment: NY Governor Kathy Hochul enthusiastically supported the project, recognizing its potential for transformation.

Behind the Scenes Efforts: Extensive work on regulatory and land ownership issues to pave the way for state involvement and resources.

Recent Developments: Hiring of a design professional team to advance from conceptual to detailed park designs, based on extensive community engagement.

Current Status: Despite delays, progress is underway, marked by upcoming community forums and workshops to involve stakeholders.

Arthur Briley (NYS OPRHP)

Establishment of Urban State Park: Rare occurrence within state park systems; emphasis on thorough planning and community engagement.

Comparison with Rural State Parks: Urban parks like Rochester's differ in scale and accessibility compared to expansive rural parks like Letchworth.

Urban Park Value: Urban parks like High Falls in Rochester have higher intrinsic value per acre due to their location and accessibility in city centers.

Community Access and Diversity: Addressing transportation barriers to increase access for diverse communities, potentially serving as an introduction to state park system.

Historical Reclamation: Similarities with rural

parks in reclaiming industrialized land for public use, emphasizing historical and environmental restoration.

Long Term Operations and Management: Future operations may involve a hybrid model, integrating state park management with partnerships involving local organizations like Friends of High Falls

Design Consultant Role: Consultant must consider operational aspects during park design, ensuring alignment with community needs and long-term management strategies.

Dr. Calvin Gantt (MCC)

Accessibility Partnership: MCC sees itself as a crucial partner in ensuring accessibility during High Falls' renovation and integration with their Downtown campus.

Transportation Access: Addressing barriers beyond immediate vicinity to ensure safe access for all, especially those without personal transportation options.

Safety Consideration: Emphasizing safety in walking

routes to the park, particularly for those traveling from greater distances

Infrastructure Planning: Incorporating elevators and other accessible features to facilitate movement within the park, promoting inclusivity

Community Engagement: Engaging closely with the differently abled communities to ensure park features meet current accessibility standards and cater to local needs.

Tamara Mayberry (City of Rochester)

Ownership and Engagement: Fostering community ownership by making the park a space where all residents can see themselves reflected and involved.

Role in Roc the Riverway: High Falls Phase 2 integrates with the broader Roc the Riverway initiative, fulfilling the vision set forth in the original plan.

Connection to Rochester 2034 Plan: Aligns with placemaking goals outlined in the Rochester 2034 Plan, focusing on activating urban spaces and ensuring safety and vibrancy.

City's Perspective: Tammy bridges perspectives from both Empire State Development and the City, emphasizing the importance of safety and community engagement.

Activation Strategy: Focus on activating surrounding areas with festivals, restaurants, and shops to create a cohesive ecosystem that enhances community perception and vibrancy.

Perception and Reality: Emphasizes the importance of community perception of safety in creating a welcoming environment for all residents and visitors.

Dr. Gantt and Christopher Widmaier (Rochester Environmental Partners)

Educational Opportunities: High Falls State Park offers extensive educational potential across various disciplines.

Environmental Learning: Like experiences at Maplewood Park, High Falls could host geology lessons and environmental studies focused on the river and gorge.

Community Integration: Opportunity for diverse schools like School 3, Lakeshore Elementary, Patty Hill, and South Seneca to engage in joint educational programs and summits.

Inclusivity and Programming: Focus on inclusive programming and ranger-led activities to ensure safety and community engagement, avoiding excessive security measures.

Year-Round Accessibility: Emphasis on making the park accessible throughout the year, addressing safety concerns and educational center integration on the St. Paul side.

Career Readiness and Higher Education: Potential for local colleges' environmental science, geology, and sustainability programs to utilize the park for practical learning experiences.

Regional Impact: Creating an educational ecosystem to retain young talent and promote sustainable practices within the region, leveraging existing academic programs and community interests.

Joseph Stefko (ROC2025)

Historical Significance of High Falls: Central to Rochester's establishment and industrial history, initially powered industry and influenced by Erie Canal development.

Placemaking and Economic Development: Investment in High Falls as a placemaking strategy crucial for economic growth, distinguishing Rochester through unique experiences

Impact on Tourism and Commercial Activity: Expected to boost tourism and stimulate commercial activities in adjacent neighborhoods, improving overall perception.

Community Connection and Disinvestment: Opportunity to bridge divides and revitalize economically distressed areas, addressing high poverty rates and low property values.

Specific Economic Opportunities: Focus on intentional programming and year-round activation



Leadership Breakfast (Continued)

to sustain economic vitality and community engagement

Redevelopment of Inner Loop North: Integration with Inner Loop North redevelopment enhances economic potential, reconnects neighborhoods, and transforms downtown landscape.

Donald Jeffries (Visit Rochester)

Economic Potential: High Falls project seen as a significant economic driver for the community.

Tourism Attraction: Expected to draw visitors nationwide, leveraging attractions like fishing highlighted by Art and Chris.

Cultural and Community Events: Envisioned as a hub for arts, culture, music, sporting events, and festivals, enhancing Rochester's identity as a festival community.

Cultural Committee Formation: Proposal to establish a cultural committee involving local institutions like Strong Museum, Rochester Philharmonic and RMSC to shape programming and events. Emphasis on engaging all cultural institutions in year-round programming at High Falls.

Convention and Meeting Destination: Positioned as a compelling attraction / destination for the 225 annual meetings and conventions in Rochester.

Sports and Entertainment District: Potential to develop High Falls into a sports and entertainment district, leveraging nearby facilities like Innovation Field and the soccer stadium.

Desired Amenities: Advocacy for a gathering space and versatile venue capable of hosting events throughout the year, echoing the success of events like the RPO concert during the eclipse.

Final Thoughts by Panelists

Consulting Team Preparation: Vinnie acknowledges the comprehensive input gathered over the years and emphasizes the forthcoming extensive workload for the consulting team.

Inclusivity and Progressiveness: Highlighted by Art, the aim is to establish High Falls State Park as the most inclusive and progressive within the system.

Lessons from Past Projects: Bill reflects on past projects at High Falls and stresses the importance of early planning for management, maintenance and operations to ensure sustainability.

Challenges Addressed: Vinnie acknowledges the challenge of balancing design aspirations with long-term sustainability and economic viability.

City's Economic Vision: Tammy discusses Mayor Evans' vision to uplift Rochester's local economy and address economic challenges within the city.

Design Workshop Attendee Engagement: Chris suggests starting with questions about attendees' motivations and existing connections to the place, emphasizing the importance of understanding perspectives from those most directly affected.

Benefits of the State Park: Attendees should be asked about their expectations regarding the benefits of the state park for themselves and their neighborhoods, focusing on inclusivity and community impact.

Ensuring Authentic Input: It's crucial to ensure that public engagement reflects genuine voices and perspectives, ensuring that stakeholders are speaking for themselves.

Specific Projects: Chris references the skate park redevelopment as an example of a specific project that could engage the community in similar discussions about the state park.



High Falls State Park Design Workshop

The High Falls State Park will draw visitors from adjacent neighborhoods, the Finger Lakes region and well beyond. Seeking input from park users beyond Rochester will be a future engagement task. The focus of this initial design workshop was to engage residents, neighborhood and business organizations, property owners, and services agencies from the neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the proposed park.

Greentopia wanted to ensure that all area agencies representing our differently abled citizens were fully engaged in the design workshop. The High Falls State Park Design Workshop scheduled on May 4, 2024 was promoted through Eventbrite, emails, websites and social media of multiple peer organizations including:

- Community Design Center Rochester
- Greentopia
- Genesee Land Trust / River Alliance
- AIA Rochester
- ROC Growth

CDCR staff walked door to door in all neighborhoods on the East and West side of the Genesee River, speaking directly with business owners and resident about the park and upcoming design workshop.

Lisa Baron and Bill Price were guests of WXXI's radio show "Connections with Evan Dawson" on April 17, 2024 discussing the park features and promoting the free public design workshop event on May 4, 2024.

For the design workshop, the geographic study area was broken up into seven focus areas. The location and size of focus area were based on a manageable area for groups to tour by walking, discussing observations of existing conditions and potential improvements as the High Falls State Park district transitions from industry and energy production to a publically accessible natural ecosystem.

One focus group remained inside working on Focus Area 7 – stadiums and parking lots. This group worked through connections of the High Falls State Park to the Rochester baseball and soccer stadiums to the west. This group also discussed the issue of surface parking. With Kodak, MCC Downtown Campus, High Falls garage and Innovative Field there is ample surface parking for future visitors. However, is it in the right place? This question will be a big part of the early planning efforts. The workshop agenda is presented in *Figure B1*, and the presentation shared with workshop attendees is presented in *Figure B2*.



Summary of Events

The High Falls State Park Design Workshop, organized by Greentopia and Community Design Center Rochester (CDCR), brought together a diverse group of stakeholders and residents to collaborate on the future design and integration of the proposed High Falls State Park. The daylong event, on Saturday, May 4, 2024 and held at MCC Downtown Campus, featured presentations, focus group activities, and interactive discussions, all aimed at generating ideas and strategies to connect the park with the surrounding neighborhoods. The morning began at 8:30am with a light breakfast during welcoming remarks and speaker introductions. Lisa Baron began introductions and a video presentation about the history of Greentopia.

Mariam Yaqub, President of the Community Design Center of Rochester (CDCR), introduced the CDCR's history and mission along with a presentation of outlining activities and participant expectations.

Kyra McCracken, a University of Rochester student, discussed the historical use of water-power in High Falls for electricity production. Her presentation on an interactive Water Wheel display including a concept using a bicycle to power water flow into flower gardens throughout the High Falls Preservation District.

Kamal Crues, PE, City of Rochester presented current and upcoming public improvement projects in and adjacent to High Falls, including Austin Stewart Park (formerly Charles Carol Park), State Street improvements, and the Inner Loop North immediately south of the High Falls.

Dawn Noto of the CDCR introduced the facilitators, the day's agenda, and descriptions of individual focus areas. Participants were given a packet of information, base maps, and a Kodak disposable camera to



capture images they considered valuable. A set of guiding principles were reviewed to use as "Food for Thought" while documenting observations while walking each focus area in groups.

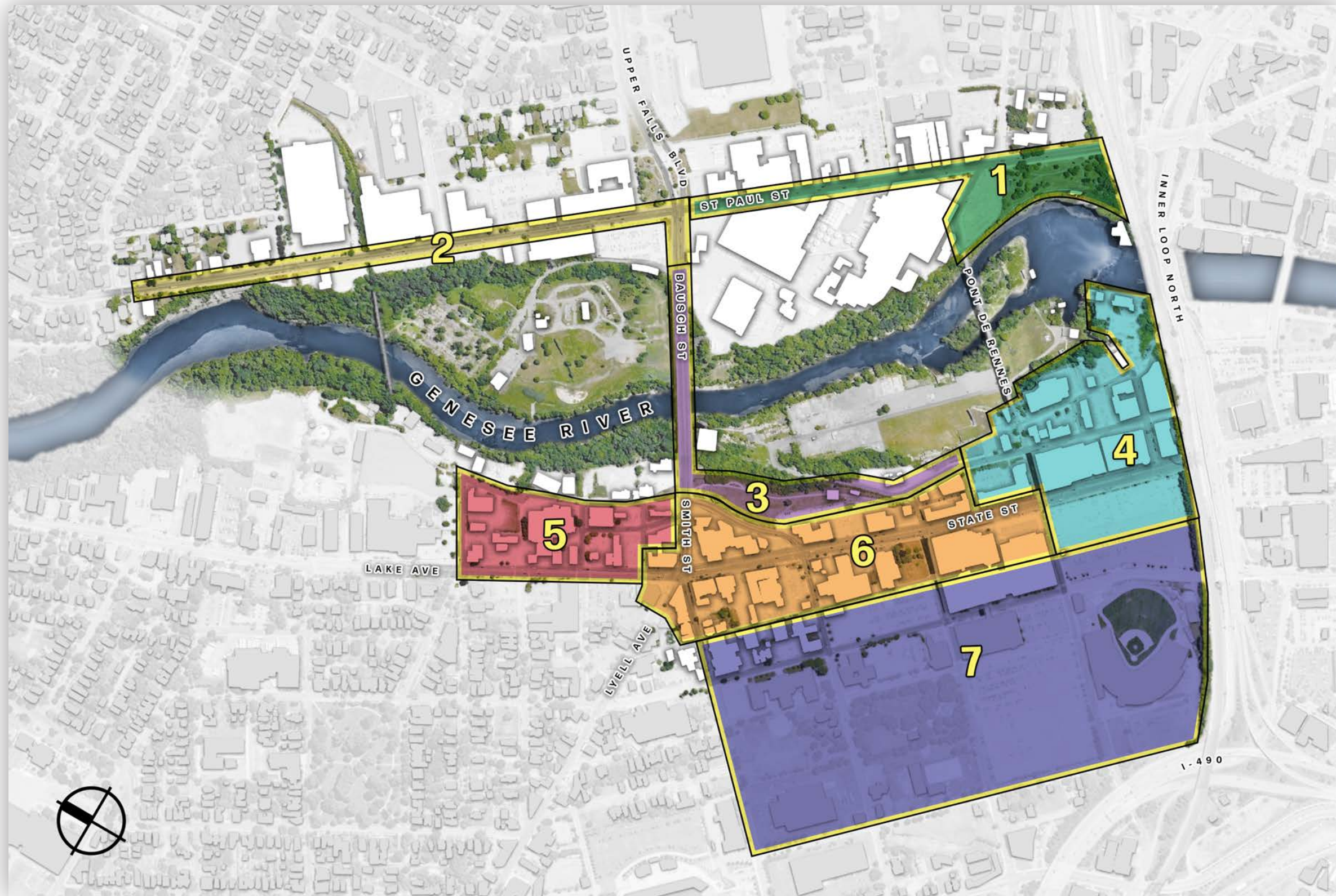
Focus groups departed the MCC Campus by 10:30am and explored their focus areas by foot. Each group had a scribe, photographer and timekeeper. Participants documented current conditions and their ideas for opportunities to connect the state park with nearby neighborhoods.

Lunch was served upon return to MCC. All focus groups sat together documenting their findings and ideas on base maps and note pads. Facilitators guided the hour-long engagement period to consolidate observations. To conclude, each focus group presented their ideas and findings for their respective areas.

Following the presentations, the CDCR had the workshop materials for each group scanned and transcribed. These recommendations are outlined in the following sections.

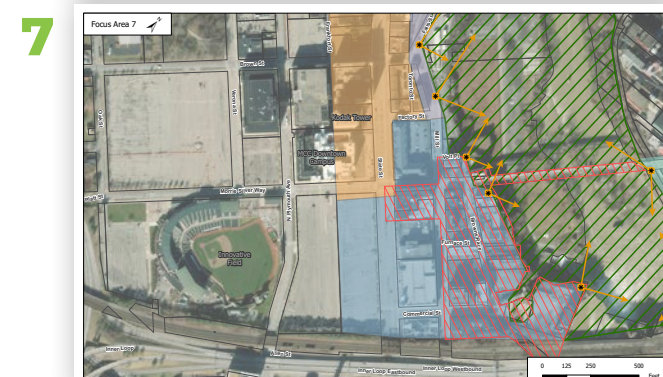
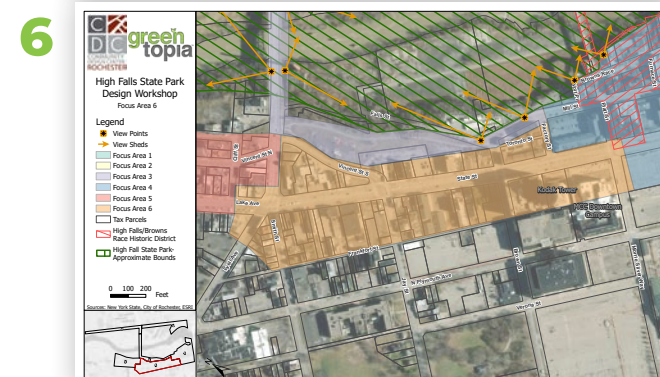
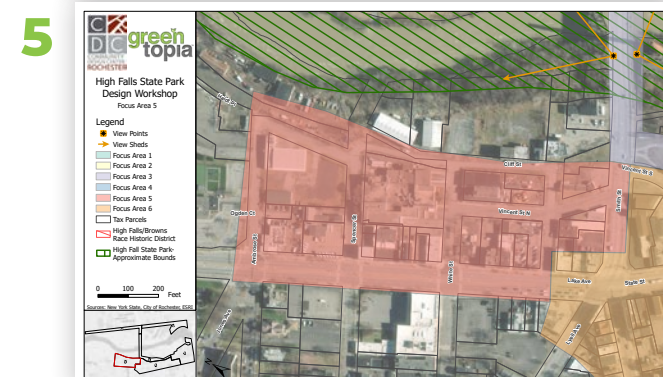
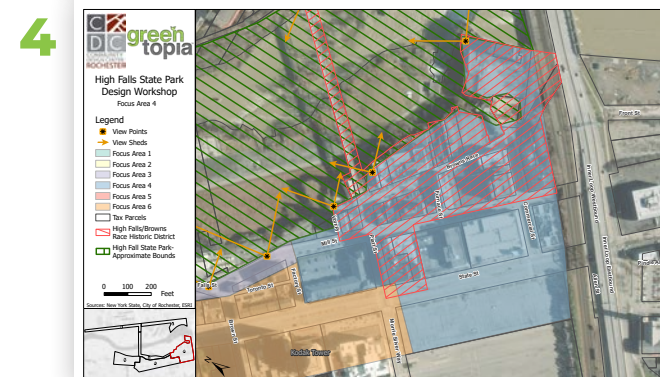
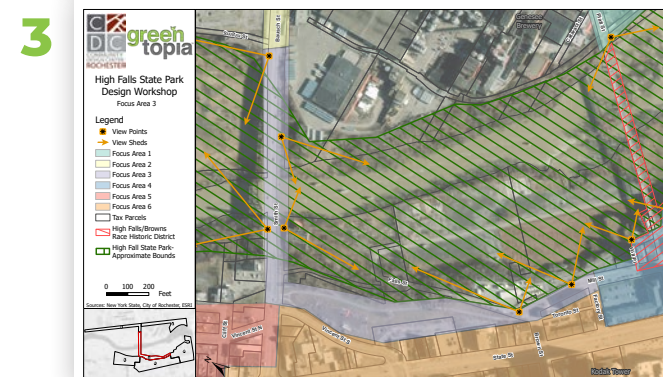
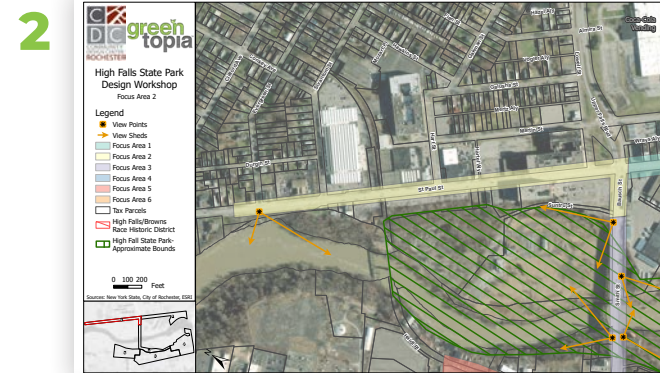
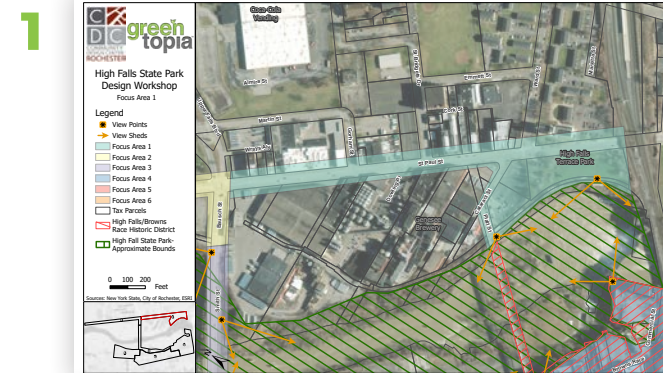
This summary captures the essences of the workshop and sets the stage for further discussions and actions in the development of the High Falls State Park. The focus on collaboration, community input, and integration with nearby public improvement projects highlights the importance of a comprehensive and inclusive approach to urban park planning.

Overall Study Area + Focus Areas



Individual Focus Area Maps

Guiding Principles



Guiding Principles

High Falls State Park and surrounding neighborhoods

- 1) **Equity**, inclusion and sustained collaboration with Indigenous people whose land this is.
- 2) **Restoration of the natural environment (Celebrate Assets)**
 - a. Water, land, vegetation, habitat
- 3) **Equitable Access**
 - a. Physical, emotional, visual and economic
- 4) **Connectivity**
 - a. Local neighborhoods / Rochester / Monroe County / Finger Lakes Region
 - b. Journey to the park
 - i. Travel routes
 - ii. Signage, wayfinding, landmarks
- 5) **User Experience / Placemaking (Create Beautiful Spaces & Healthy Living)**
 - a. Condition of the public realm (Design at the Pedestrian Scale)
 - i. Street and sidewalk maintenance (trash & debris)
 - ii. Safety, security for all modes of travel (Strengthen Multi-modal Travel)
 - iii. Creation of district identity
 1. Lighting, Signage, Street trees, Street furniture
- 6) **Land Use and Community Character**
 - a. Preservation of historic structures
 - b. Building and property condition
 - i. Welcoming or restricted access (locked doors, fences, gates)
 - ii. Vacant and underutilized buildings / parcels
 - c. Diversity of land uses (Focus Growth)
 - i. Infill development opportunities
 - ii. Housing opportunities (Provide Diverse Housing Options)
 - iii. What land uses are missing? (Create Beautiful Spaces)
 - d. Parking strategies
 - i. Too much asphalt? No new asphalt?
 - ii. Ownership / Management
 - iii. On-street parking and curb management
- 7) **Regulatory Consistency**
 - a. Rochester 2034 (Master Action Plan)
 - b. Zoning Alignment Project (ZAP)
 - c. Related Studies
 - i. Lyell – Lake – State Street Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Plan

Item **highlighted** are identified in Rochester 2034 Comp Plan



Workshop Facilitators

Adam Bonosky (CDCR Board, SWBR)
David Kruse (Passero Associates)
Howard Decker (CDCR Board)
Lisa Baron (Greentopia)
Mariam Yaqub (CDCR Board Chair, CJS Architects)
Nathan Herzog (Passero Associates)
Stacey Waxton (CDCR Board, SWBR)
Stephanie Annunziata (CDCR Board)
Zina Lagonegro (Passero Associates)
Sarah Costich (Costich Engineering)
Craig Jensen (CJS Architects)
Roger Brown (CDCR)
Ben Blades (SWBR)
Dwight Harrienger (Stantec)
Shirah Kasongo Cahill (SWBR)

Workshop Recommendations

High Falls was the birthplace of Rochester's industrial heritage. The Genesee River with the vertical drop of the falls and the gorge offered the ideal location to harness its hydropower. Since the city's founding, milling and manufacturing have lined both sides of the river. The transportation systems (roads and rail) were established to support the extensive employment and commerce of manufacturing and energy production. With the closure of RG&E's energy production and downsizing of Eastman Kodak, the adjacent neighborhoods have experienced the impacts caused by reduced employment and disinvestment.

High Falls State Park represents the opportunity to restore the Genesee River gorge to a natural ecosystem offering residents and visitors an experience below the falls and at river level never before publicly available. The recreational, cultural and educational opportunities embodied in the state park are vast and transformational and its significance to our region's economic development cannot be overstated. It is critical that the social, economic, and environmental benefits extend directly to the neighborhoods that abut the park. These neighborhoods can support future park visitors and enhance their experience.

The following pages present the ideas and recommendations developed by each focus group. These are depicted graphically by focus area and include the observations and written notes of the workshop participants.

Focus Area One: St. Paul Street Corridor between Inner Loop and Upper Falls Blvd

Transcribed Focus Group Notes

Connectivity and Access

- To, Through
- Pedestrians, bikes
- Neighbors

Street Redesign (St. Paul/Smith)

- Street trees
- District branding
- This way to green
- Facade improvements
- Amenities for locals and park visitors
- Corridor of vertical gardens
- Murals
- The circus came to town!
- Stakeholders/property owners in the vicinity
- Track record of environmental/green stakeholders
- Celebrate the Railroad
- Vegetation:
 - Need St. Paul St. trees
 - Manage initiatives @ the Gorge and open views
- Maintenance concerns for long term

Connectivity

- A second ped bridge over falls (near RR bridge) may be an inner loop project...
- Get under RR embankment to inner loop - Connect to station 4 via easement controlled by Greentopia
- Connect bikeways – car/6 av. in Genesee River Trail
- Connection to Amtrak/multi-modal station >>> create welcome to and from the RR station
- Feature the High Falls State Park as tourism destination via the RR stations
- Parking off site w/ shuttle would minimize parking on site
- St Paul is bad for pedestrians!
 - Soften, slow, plant, park presence
 - Murals/artwork on brewery
- What is the projected attendance at the new HFSP?
- How many parking spaces are needed?

St. Paul Street

- Corridor of vertical gardens or blank building faces. Hops!
- St. Paul underpass – illuminate with LED light strips and program w/ events
 - Paint w/ murals
- The parking area near the brewery
 - Many people have poor perception of safety at this lot. Used for unsavory purposes often
- Graffiti/murals on large buildings
- Lane diet/ Mad redesign of St. Paul (SEE FIGURE 1.1)
 - 60' row (probably)
 - (2) x 11' lanes
 - Pedestrians and bikes
 - Trees
 - Art and murals

Community Gathering Place

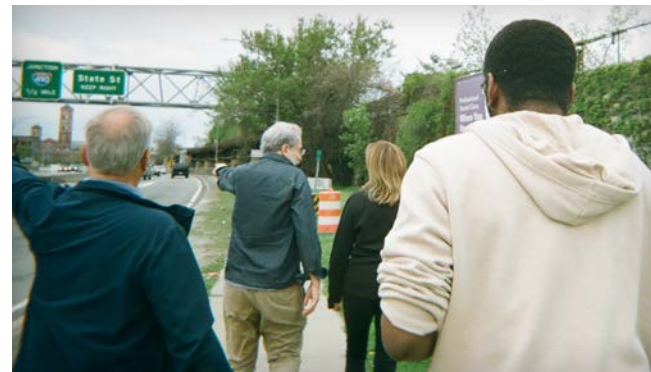
- Programming
- Stimulate economy
- For locals



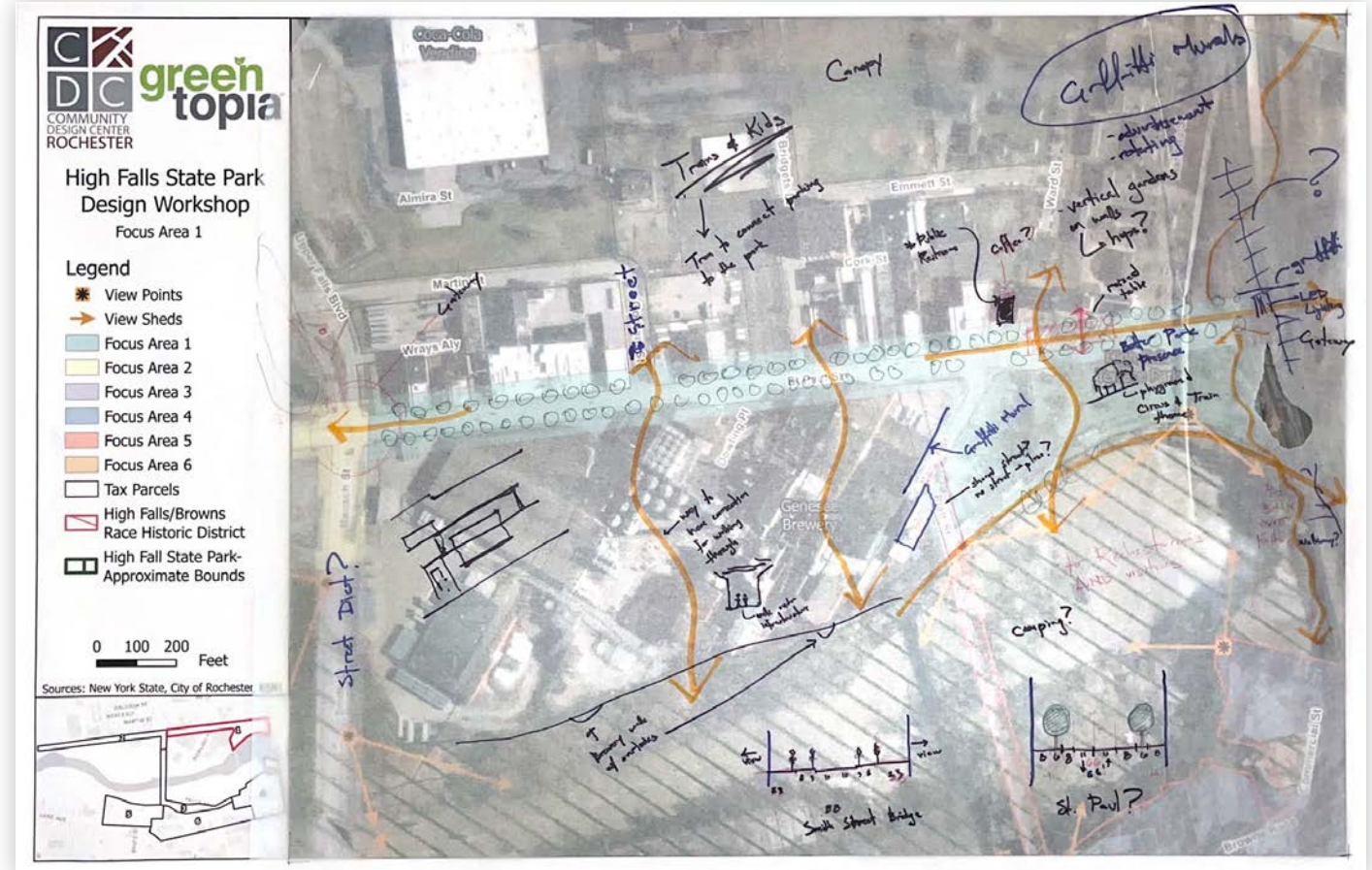
High Falls and Rochester skyline from Terrace Park



Pedestrian experience of St. Paul Street RR underpass (see 1.6)



Focus Group 1 walking between Inner Loop North and High Falls



- Improve connectivity is essential – should be pedestrian and bike destination
- Reach into adjacent neighborhoods with street initiations

- Grants for facades/murals
- Branding for HFSP district on adjacent streets

Redesign of St. Paul Street – Road diet!

- Use saved space for wide linear park on each side
- El Camino is major connection to St. Paul Street and beyond
- St. Simon's terrace – crossing couple be an easy fix here – straight connection across
- Trail along the RR on north side of embankment
- NY State should buy the High Falls parking garage!
 - Shuttle from garage to park
- Focus on Smith St./St. Paul/Upper Falls Blvd intersection – entry and gateway into park
- Brewery line and access through the brewery
- Urban camping in gorge (park programming)
- Architecture and street wall
 - Add windows!
 - Redevelop parking lots
 - Other uses for buildings?
 - Other businesses – ice cream?
 - Visitor's Center
 - Public restrooms
 - More attractive facades/improvements

High Falls Terrace Park

- Train-spotting platform
- Circus theme/elephants?
- Connection to Museum of Play
- Amenity for neighbors
- HF Park branding and welcome monument

Playgrounds and Accessibility

- Street trees/overhead greenery as climate change mitigation and pedestrian comfort
 - Sustainability concerns
- Extend identity of HF Park and River Gorge out into neighborhoods as welcome
 - "This way to green"
- Parks are full of playgrounds – don't need to be extravagant
- Big park in HFSP should program/coordinate with Strong Museum
- Accessible playgrounds
- Form new programming – coordinate city, county, state agencies – HF, Maplewood, Seneca Park, Lake. Support each other

FOCUS AREA 1 RECOMMENDATIONS

LEGEND

- EXISTING BUILDING OUTSIDE FOCUS AREA
- EXISTING BUILDING WITHIN FOCUS AREA
- EXISTING BUILDING W/ PROPOSED CHANGES
- PROPOSED NEW CONSTRUCTION/INFILL
- AREA OF INTEREST
- MISCELLANEOUS PROPOSED FEATURE
- PROPOSED PATH
- EXISTING RAILROAD
- PROPOSED CROSSWALK
- PROPOSED TREE
- HIGH FALLS STATE PARK BOUNDARY

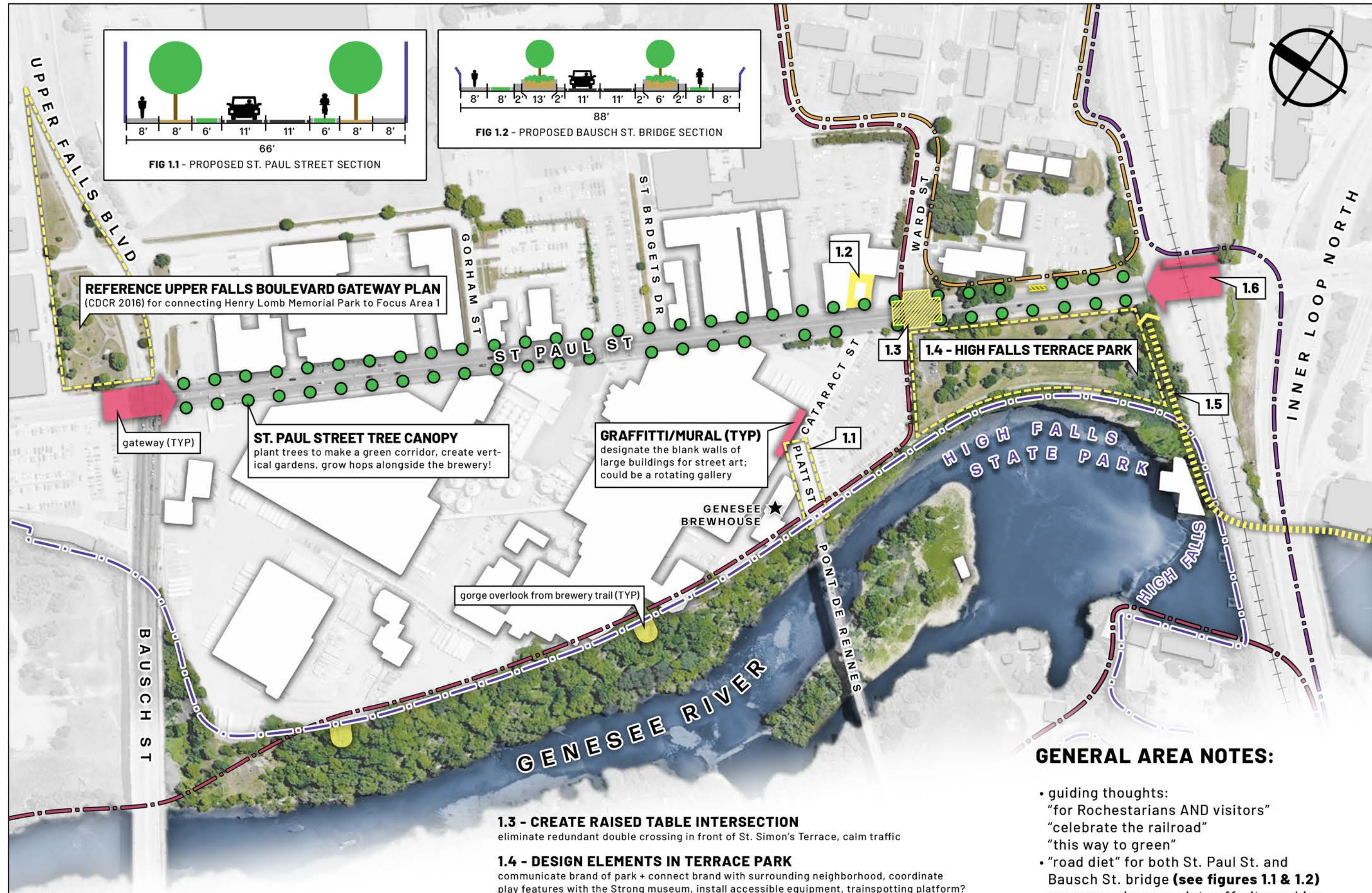
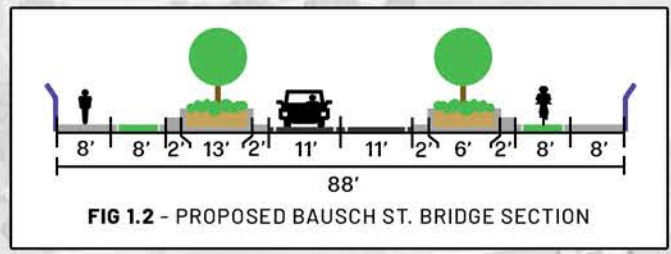
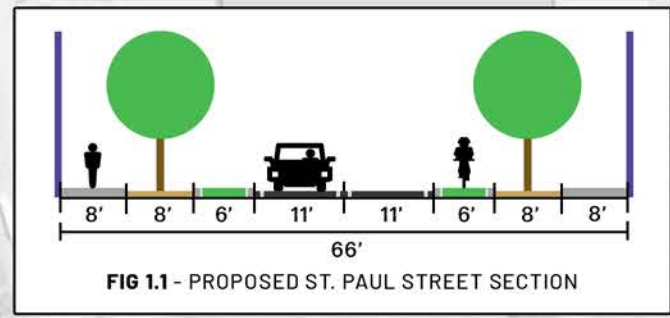
CITY OF ROCHESTER 2034 PLACEMAKING PLAN BOUNDARIES:

- FLEXIBLE MIXED-USE
- HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE

SCALE

100 ft 200 ft

FOCUS AREA CONTEXT



REFERENCE UPPER FALLS BOULEVARD GATEWAY PLAN
(CDCR 2016) for connecting Henry Lomb Memorial Park to Focus Area 1

ST. PAUL STREET TREE CANOPY
plant trees to make a green corridor, create vertical gardens, grow hops alongside the brewery!

GRAFFITI/MURAL (TYP)
designate the blank walls of large buildings for street art; could be a rotating gallery

gorge overlook from brewery trail (TYP)

1.1 - CONVERT PLATT STREET
redevelop street to be shared with pedestrians, or convert to a plaza

1.2 - COMMUNITY GATHERING PLACE
convert corner property into coffee shop, visitor's center, public restrooms, etc.

1.3 - CREATE RAISED TABLE INTERSECTION
eliminate redundant double crossing in front of St. Simon's Terrace, calm traffic

1.4 - DESIGN ELEMENTS IN TERRACE PARK
communicate brand of park + connect brand with surrounding neighborhood, coordinate play features with the Strong museum, install accessible equipment, trainspotting platform?

1.5 - EXTEND EXISTING RIVERWAY TRAIL
extend under the RR overpass, past Station 4, and along north RR embankment

1.6 - ENHANCE ST. PAUL RAILROAD UNDERPASS
illuminate with LEDs, program with events, connect to railroad station as a gateway to High Falls

GENERAL AREA NOTES:

- guiding thoughts:
"for Rochestarians AND visitors"
"celebrate the railroad"
"this way to green"
- "road diet" for both St. Paul St. and Bausch St. bridge (see figures 1.1 & 1.2)
- encourage/accommodate off-site parking with connecting shuttles
- strengthen connection with Amtrak Station (promote HFSP as a tourism destination)
- programming idea: urban camping in gorge

2

Focus Area Two (Group A): St. Paul Street Corridor between Upper Falls Blvd and Brewer Street



Focus Group 2A presenting their recommendations

Transcribed Focus Group Notes

Placemaking

- Historical preservation
- Waterpole 1920
- Exposed RR tracks
- Bausch and Lomb original building remnants

Activities

- Water sports such as fishing, kayaking, and paddleboarding
- Arts in amphitheater
- Local commissioning of arts for public places

Safety & Access

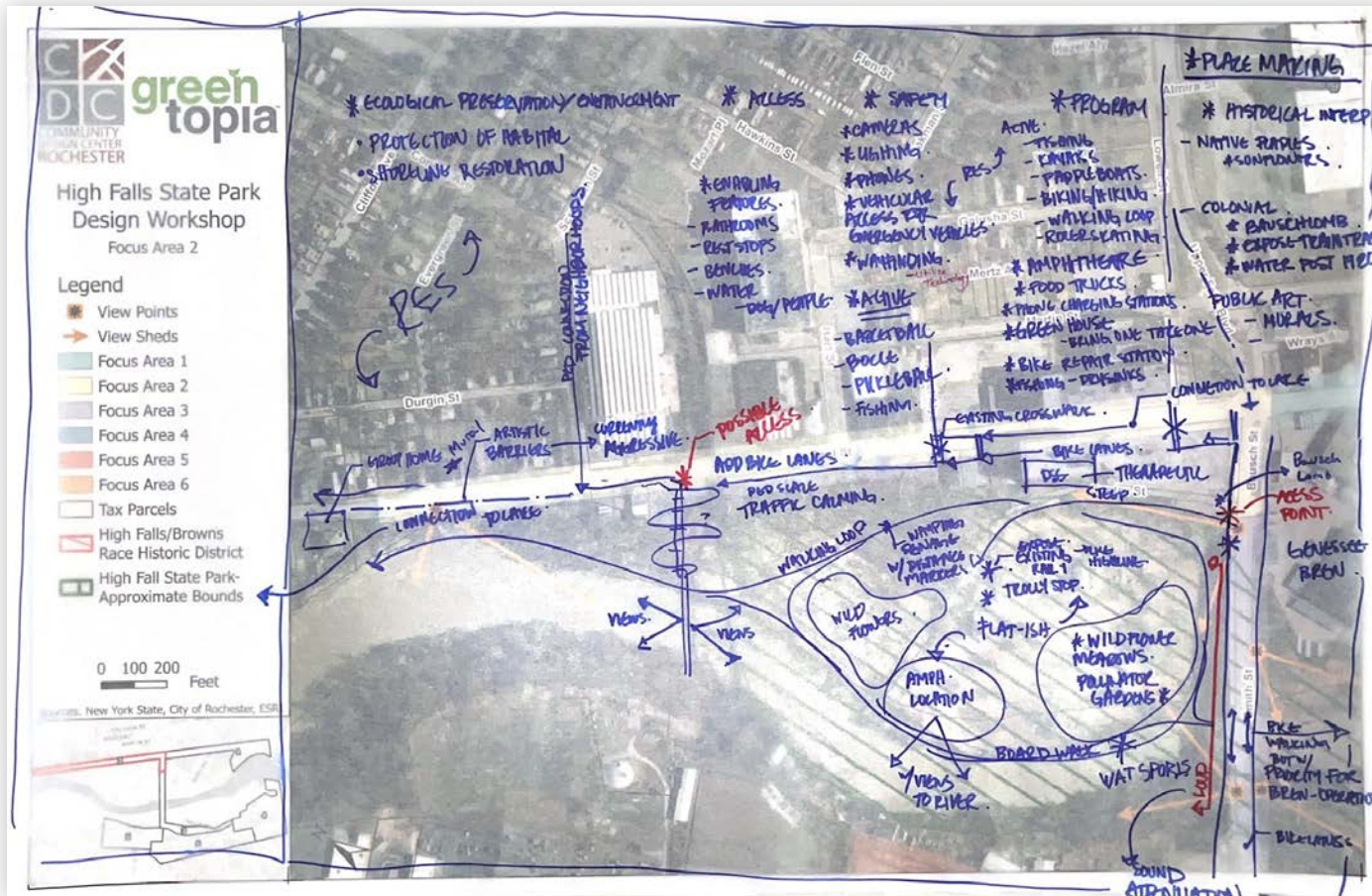
- Cameras, lighting, phone booths
- Wayfinding including signage
- Utilizing technology such as phone apps
- Access for emergency vehicles
- Restrooms, benches, changing stations, water fountains and dogs

Other Topics

- Preservation of nature, wildflowers, gardens, and pollinators



Workshop Facilitator Shirah Kasongo Cahill collaborating with Focus Group 2A



View of historic Bausch & Lomb building from Bausch Street

FOCUS AREA 2A RECOMMENDATIONS

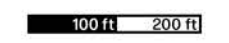
LEGEND

-  EXISTING BUILDING OUTSIDE FOCUS AREA
-  EXISTING BUILDING WITHIN FOCUS AREA
-  PROPOSED NEW CONSTRUCTION/INFILL
-  PROPOSED GREEN SPACE
-  MISCELLANEOUS PROPOSED FEATURE
-  AREA OF INTEREST
-  PROPOSED PATH
-  PROPOSED BIKE LANE
-  PROPOSED CROSSWALK
-  STATE PARK ACCESS POINT
-  HIGH FALLS STATE PARK BOUNDARY

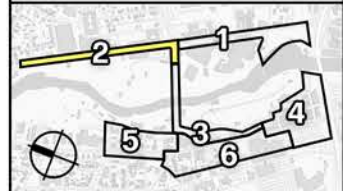
CITY OF ROCHESTER 2034 PLACEMAKING PLAN BOUNDARIES:

-  FLEXIBLE MIXED-USE
-  MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

SCALE



FOCUS AREA CONTEXT



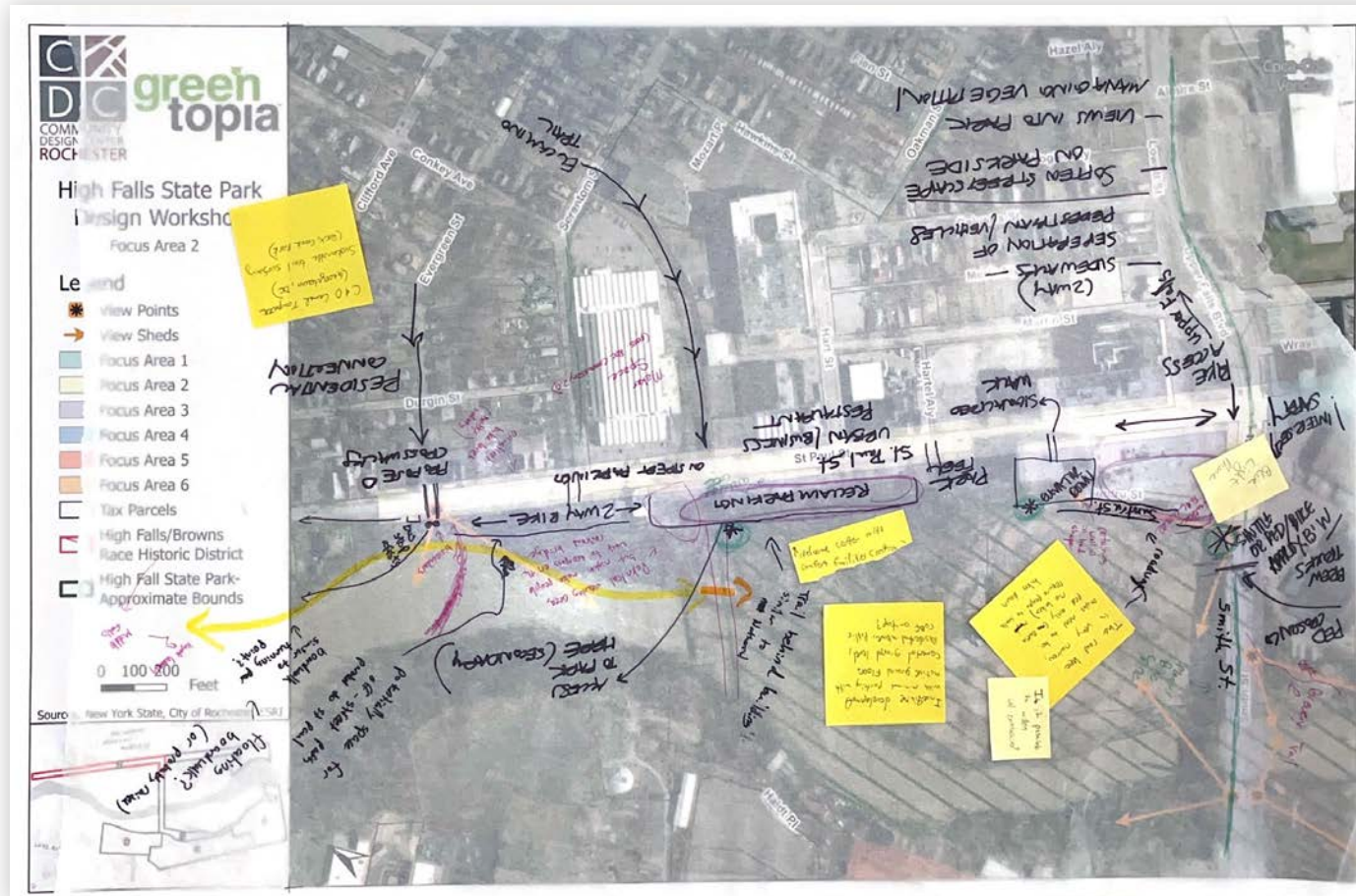
GENERAL AREA NOTES:

- Program ideas
 - amphitheatre
 - food trucks
 - phone charging stations
 - green house (bring one take one)
 - bike repair station
 - fishing
 - kayaks/paddleboats
 - biking/hiking
 - walking loop
 - rollerskating
- Safety ideas
 - traffic calming
 - cameras + lighting
 - phones
 - vehicular access for emergency vehicles
 - wayfinding
- Activity ideas
 - basketball
 - bocce ball
 - pickleball
- Access ideas
 - enabling features
 - bathrooms + changing stations
 - reststops (benches)
 - water fountains
 - dog/people
- Placemaking
 - historical interpretation
 - native peoples
 - architecture/infrastructure
 - public art (murals)

2A.1 - WALKING LOOP
pedestrian/biking path for circumnavigating the park; turns into boardwalk along the Genesee River; connects northbound to Ontario Lake and southbound as a brewery trail; includes wayfinding signage with distance markers

2A.2 - CONVERT HISTORIC RUNNING TRACK BRIDGE TO PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
per existing plans from the City of Rochester; take advantage of views of the gorge

Focus Area Two (Group B): St. Paul Street Corridor between Upper Falls Blvd and Brewer Street



View of St. Paul Street corridor looking north, with old Bausch & Lomb building to right and Monroe County Social Services to left

Transcribed Focus Group Notes

NO CARS

- 1 way Suntrou Street
- 1 sidewalk – no cars
- Parking spots
- Bury RG&E
- River floods – gravel?
- DSS 2nd elevator site (County)
- Respect nature-DND

Traffic/Connectivity

- Upper Falls part of ATP bike spine, should have bike lane
- Concrete pedestrian island when possible, cars move far too fast
- Talk to Genesee Brewing, make sure they are not hindered
- Maybe a traffic circle could accommodate cars and lower speeds but worse for ped. Traffic
- Sidewalk far too narrow for peds and bikes, could expand for more peds
- Maybe benches, potential overlook from bridge to park
 - Traffic noise extremely loud, needs traffic calming or noise blocks
- Maybe indigenous plantings on hill if not present anymore
- Upgrade bridge – paint both sides!!
- (Smith St. Bridge) Traffic calm – bike lanes on south side
 - Signals work with bike lanes, stop light
- Maintenance of curb cuts – mobility issues
- Pedestrian island
 - St Paul Street rebuilt – bike lanes connect
- Connections to Public Market
 - Housing on St. Paul in lots

- Bausch and Lomb memorial – lit up at night
- Traffic data for St. Paul / Upper Falls
- No Left turns into MC DSS (MONROE COUNTY DEPT. SOCIAL SERVICES)
- Bertina Forde crossing >>> needs parking lot on St. Paul

Mood/Features

- Depressing
- Activating business and workers' engagement
- El Camino Trail – connect the rest to the Park
- Barbed wire fencing (pedestrian bridge)
- Viewing deck
- Scranton St elevator?
- Lilacs – trim trees for views from overlook area
- Kids, family friendly, people friendly

Views

- Middle Falls viewpoint
- Binoculars at city viewpoint
- Roc Riverway trails – leave some nature to beautify area down Middle Falls view
- Lots of garbage on wall and Middle Falls
- Bathrooms access (out-of-state/Toronto & Mexico visitors)
- Places to sit
- Mark fishing spots
- Mark when bridge is closed
- Street trees on St. Paul
- Maker's space underused





Overlook of Suntrou Street below, with MCDSS building visible



Focus Group 2B entering the Genesee Riverway Trail from Brewer Street

FOCUS AREA 2B RECOMMENDATIONS

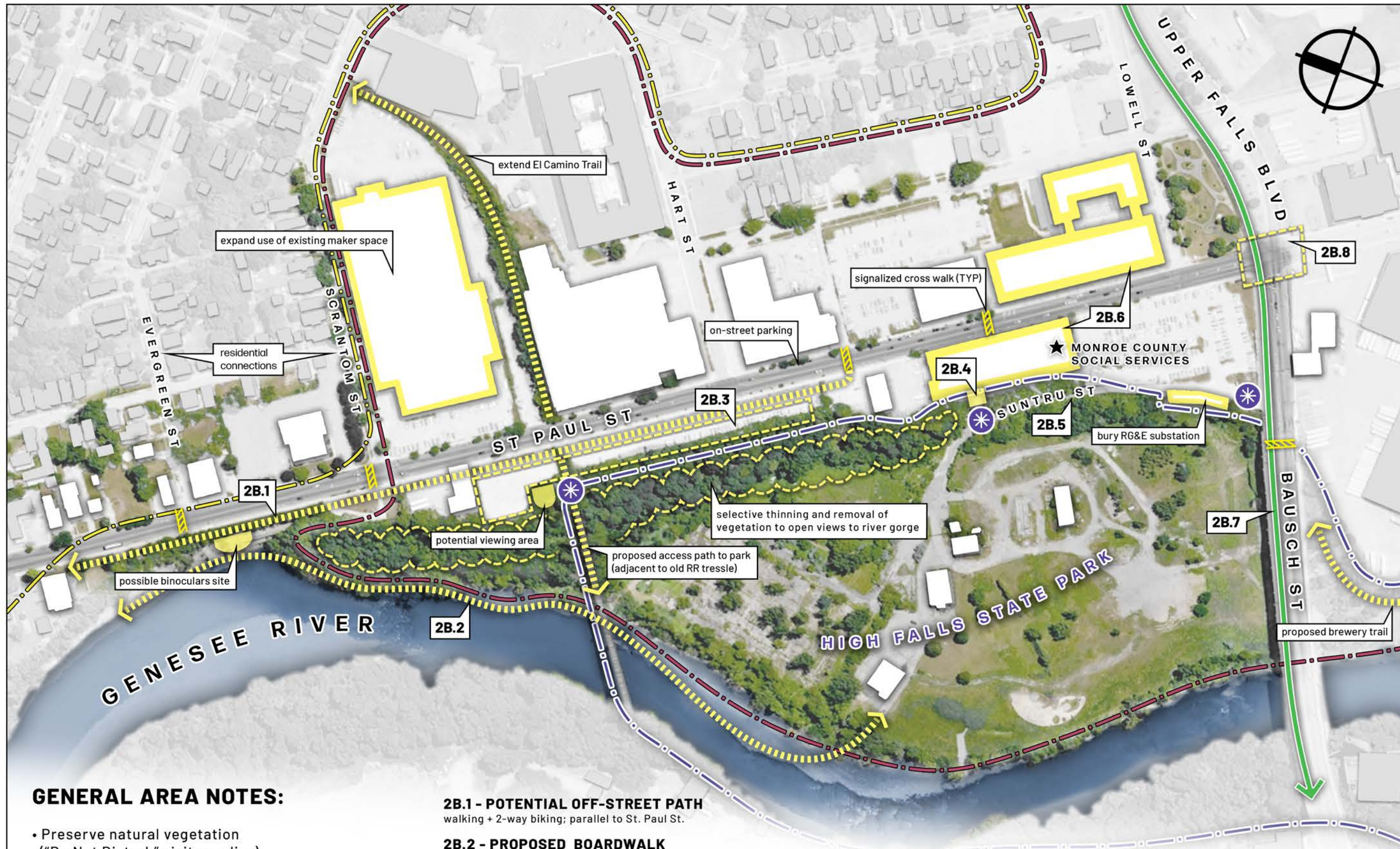
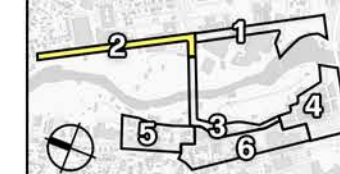
LEGEND

-  EXISTING BUILDING OUTSIDE FOCUS AREA
-  EXISTING BUILDING WITHIN FOCUS AREA
-  EXISTING BUILDING W/ PROPOSED CHANGES
-  PROPOSED NEW CONSTRUCTION/INFILL
-  AREA OF INTEREST
-  PROPOSED PATH
-  PROPOSED BIKE LANE
-  PROPOSED CROSSWALK
-  STATE PARK ACCESS POINT
-  HIGH FALLS STATE PARK BOUNDARY
- CITY OF ROCHESTER 2034 PLACEMAKING PLAN BOUNDARIES:**
-  FLEXIBLE MIXED-USE
-  MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

SCALE

100 ft 200 ft

FOCUS AREA CONTEXT



GENERAL AREA NOTES:

- Preserve natural vegetation ("Do Not Disturb" visitor policy)
- Introduce traffic calming measures & noise blocks
- Connect El Camino trail to High Falls State Park
- Separate pedestrian/bike traffic from vehicle traffic
- Provide seating areas + mark fishing spots
- Create a family-friendly atmosphere
- On the park side of St. Paul St:
 - "Soften" the streetscape
 - Trim trees to maintain views

2B.1 - POTENTIAL OFF-STREET PATH

walking + 2-way biking; parallel to St. Paul St.

2B.2 - PROPOSED BOARDWALK

(floating/raised) model after the boardwalk in Turning Point Park

2B.3 - RECLAIM PARKING LOT

redevelop for public purposes and improve public realm

2B.4 - CREATE ELEVATOR ACCESS TO STATE PARK

connected to existing shaft of Monroe County Social Services Department building

2B.5 - EXISTING ROADWAY IS NARROW

consider making pedestrian only, and bikes must be walked; reinforce/rebuild deteriorating retaining wall, and investigate widening the path

2B.6 - CONSIDER RELOCATING SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

possible new location: old Bausch & Lomb building across the street? Then repurpose current MCSSD building for mixed-use (capitalizing on State Park adjacency for business/housing) and redeveloping adjacent parking lot into pedestrian-oriented gateway

2B.7 - CONNECTION TO PLANNED BIKE SPINE

integrate bike lanes along Bausch St. per Rochester's Active Transportation Plan (ATP)

2B.8 - INTERSECTION SAFETY!

add pedestrian islands, a blue light phone, crossing lights for bikers, expand sidewalks

3

Focus Area Three: Vincent Street South to Mill Street and Smith Street Bridge

Transcribed Focus Group Notes

Events

- Water based events – e.g.: Fire & Water festival, kayaking, tubing, light show
- History museum
- Utilize artifacts
- Lack of street trees
- Interpretive signage
- Murals on blank walls
- Infill development facing the park
- Fishing spots

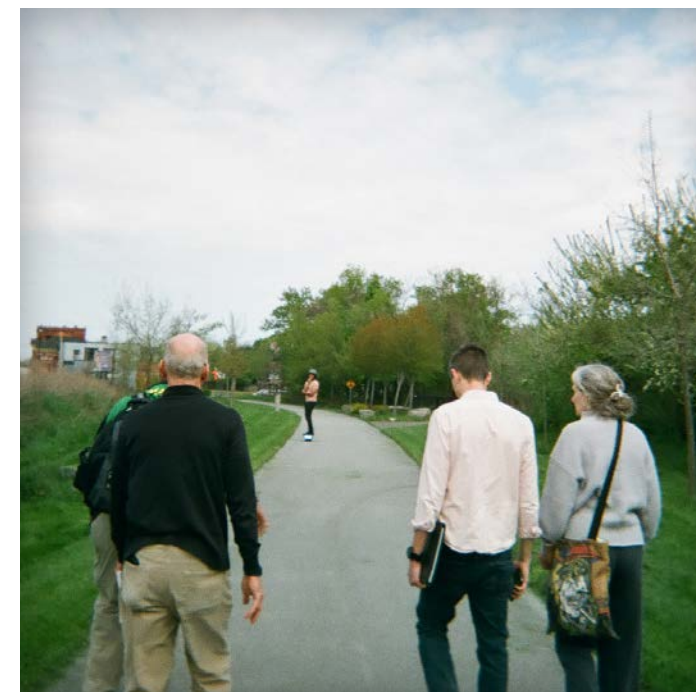
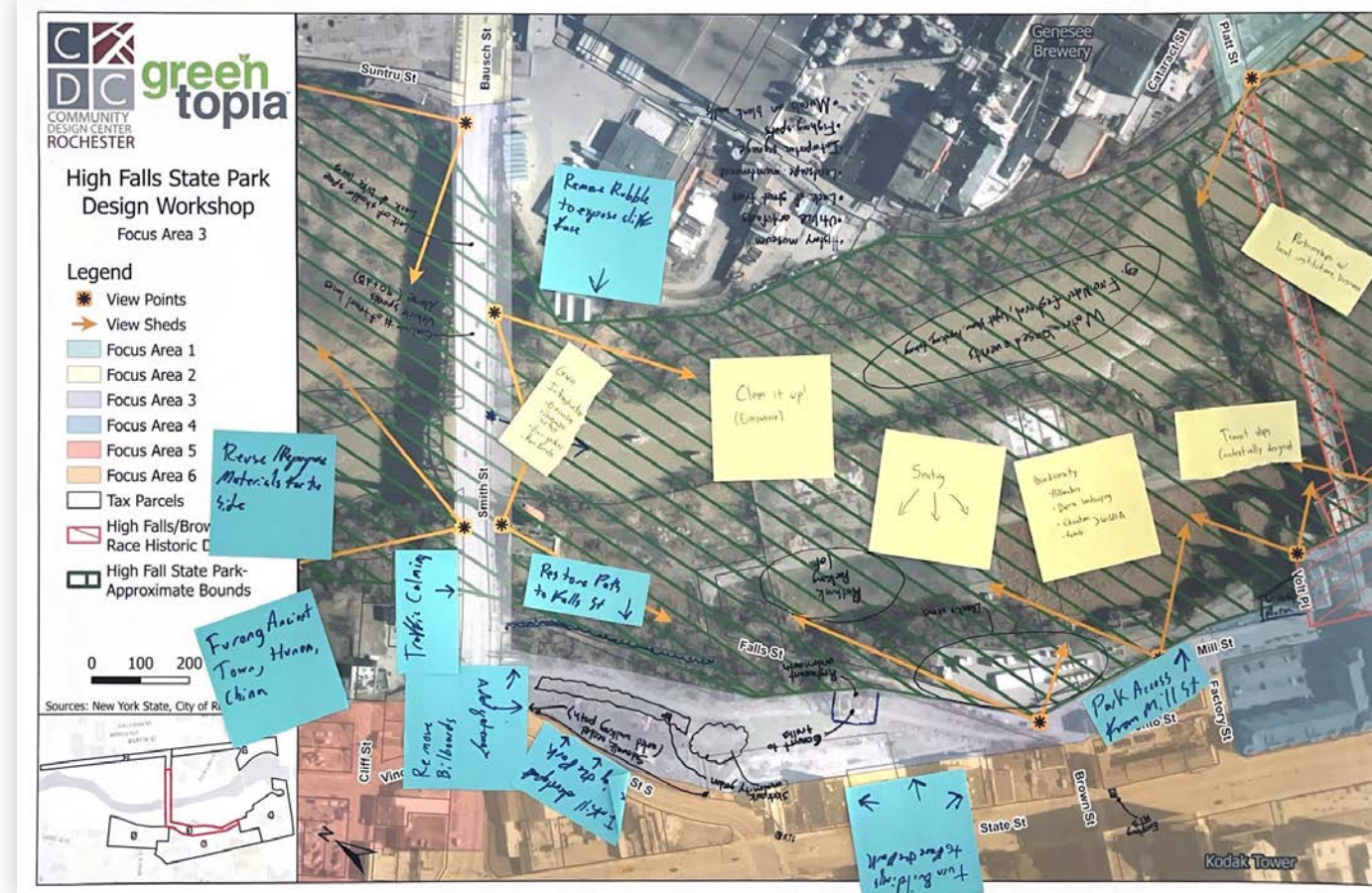
Infrastructure

- Remove rubble to expose cliff face
- Clean it up everywhere!
- Green infrastructure – Bioswales / Permeable surface / Rain gardens and barrels
- Seating along sidewalks
- Biodiversity – pollinators, diverse landscaping, wildlife education and rehab

- Transit stops – contextually designed
- Park access from Mill St.
- Turn buildings on State St. to face park
- Infill development facing the park
- Remove billboards/Add gateway marker
- RTS bus stop – sidewalks needed. Path convert to trails on Vincent St – restaurant underneath coal trestle
- Skate park and community gardens
- Bridge – lack of shoulder space – lack of bike lanes
- Elevate # of travel lanes – vehicle speeds and noise on bridge over 90db.
- Traffic calming measures needed
- Reuse/repurpose materials for the site – see Furong, ancient town in Hunan China



Focus Group 3



Focus Group 3 walks the Genesee Riverway Trail



View of the old cooling tower

GENERAL AREA NOTES:

- create green infrastructure:
 - bioswales
 - permeable surfaces
 - rain gardens + rain barrels
- reuse/repurpose materials for the site
- design for biodiversity
 - accommodate pollinators
 - no monoculture landscaping
 - wildlife education + habitat reclamation
- overall ideas
 - utilize existing artifacts
 - plant street trees
 - mark fishing spots
 - add murals on blank walls

3.1 - SMITH ST. BRIDGE LACKS ROAD SHOULDER AND BIKE LANES

additionally: introduce traffic calming/road diet to reduce noise pollution and enhance walkability

3.2 - WATER-BASED EVENTS IN THE GENESEE RIVER

"firewater festival," light show, kayaking, tubing, etc.

3.3 - CONVERT OLD COALING TOWER TO GARDEN TRELLIS

+ create a restaurant underneath?

3.4 - INFILL DEVELOPMENT

facing the park

LEGEND

- EXISTING BUILDING OUTSIDE FOCUS AREA
- EXISTING BUILDING WITHIN FOCUS AREA
- EXISTING BUILDING W/ PROPOSED CHANGES
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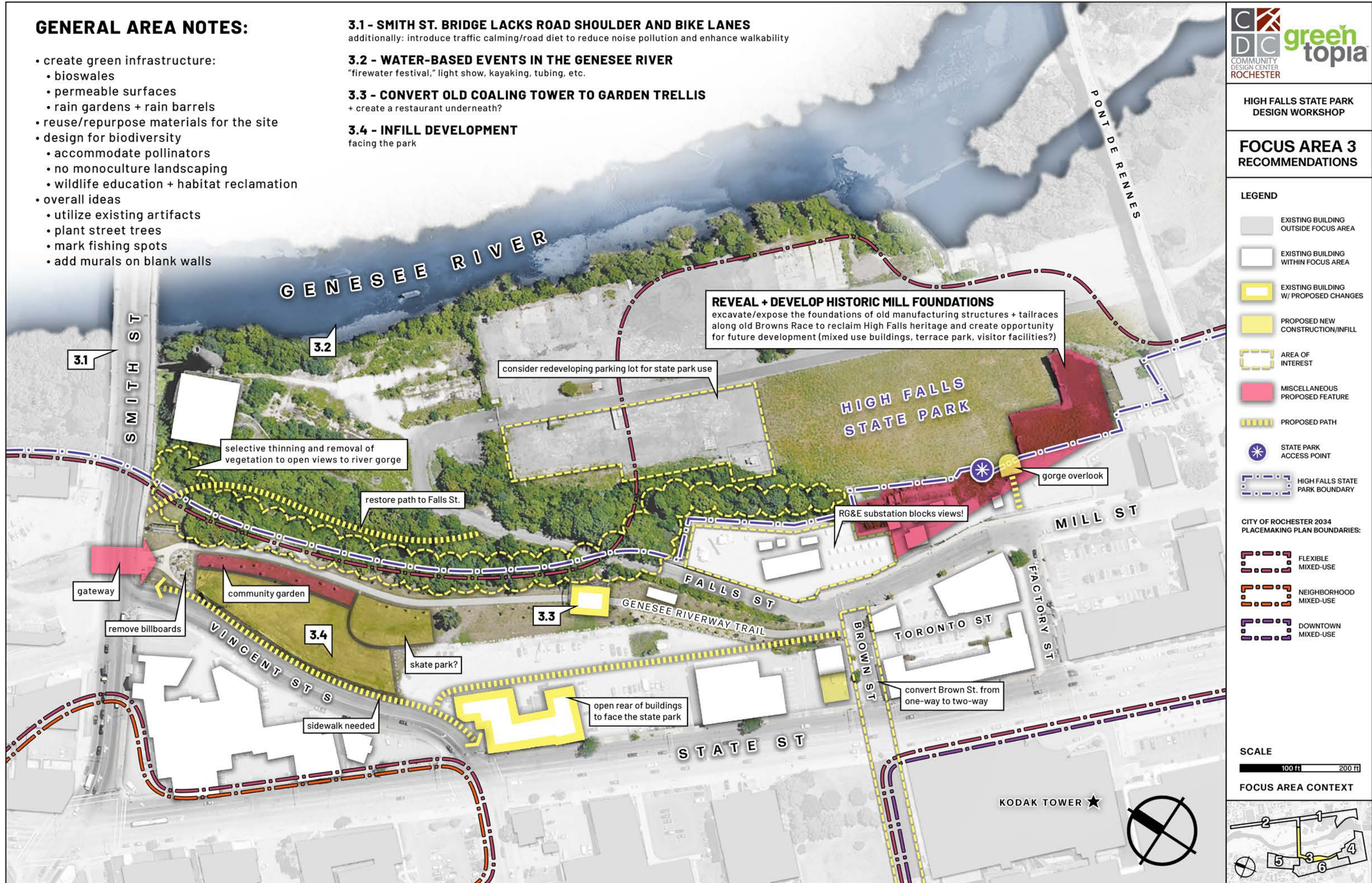
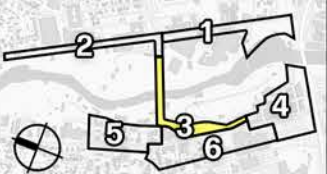
CITY OF ROCHESTER 2034 PLACEMAKING PLAN BOUNDARIES:

- FLEXIBLE MIXED-USE
- NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED-USE
- DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE

SCALE

100 ft 200 ft

FOCUS AREA CONTEXT



REVEAL + DEVELOP HISTORIC MILL FOUNDATIONS
excavate/expose the foundations of old manufacturing structures + tailraces along old Browns Race to reclaim High Falls heritage and create opportunity for future development (mixed use buildings, terrace park, visitor facilities?)

consider redeveloping parking lot for state park use

selective thinning and removal of vegetation to open views to river gorge

restore path to Falls St.

RG&E substation blocks views!

gorge overlook

gateway

community garden

remove billboards

skate park?

sidewalk needed

open rear of buildings to face the state park

convert Brown St. from one-way to two-way

KODAK TOWER

4

Focus Area Four: High Falls Historic District

Transcribed Focus Group Notes

Programming Considerations

- Nature: animals, birds, amphibians
- Birding
- Winter: snowshoe, XC skiing, skating?
- Lookout view points, terraces
- Parking should be limited
- Multiple points of river access
- Fishing, kayaks, canoes?
- Laser show, performance space
- Signage, wayfinding, geology

Landscaping Considerations

- Mini-bike issue ?
- Pedestrian/Bicycle interaction: Dismount zones
- Trail surfaces hard (asphalt, concrete) vs. soft (wood chips, stone dust)
- Accessibility
- Native species: regional
- Habitat enhancement for plants/animals
- Enhance Gorsline plaza

Safety and Security

- Lighting (dark sky compliant)
- Mounted police, horse barn
- Mini-bike issue
- Vandalism/tagging
- Close Brown's Race street to cars
- Drug abuse issues in area
- Panhandling concerns

Architectural Considerations

- Universal accessibility slopes (1:20 vs 1:12)
- Washrooms/restrooms
- Accessibility to river: elevator, cable car, elevator big enough for bicycles/wheelchairs
- Work with different abled constituents: seeing, hearing, ambulatory, etc.

Other

- Reinstall gates @ dumpster station on Mill St

Historic/Cultural Considerations

- More plaques for information
- First Nations tribute
- Old time maps
- Restoration of water wheel

Engineering Considerations

- River could flood in spring
- Traffic calming: speed bumps, etc
- Washrooms/restrooms
- Accessibility
- Stabilize east cliffs

1. **Removing the 5-7 lanes and barrier of 490 will be a large positive for connections and visibility from the south.**
 - The train bridge to remain has wide underpasses and are not as large "barriers" as 490 is



Brown's Race looking south



Triphammer Forge water wheel



Focus Group 4 surveying historic turbine shaft of the Gorsline Building



Focus Group 4 gathering on Brown's Race

2. **Gateway must have an easy vehicular traffic flow into and out of High Falls District and entry to the park**
 - "Make it easy to get in and out of"
 - Easy/direct flow of traffic on and off of the 490 highway that will remain
3. **Build along State St.**
 - Strengthen the neighborhoods to the west and north — more homeownership, viable housing and amenities [MORE HOUSING]
 - Parking options, ease for out of town visitors to find and access, and then wayfinding to the park, and park vistas
4. **Elevators with access from exterior for bikes and wheelchairs, etc to get to HFSP**
5. **Re water: the race @ the Trolley Barn south of Brown's Race**
 - Gorsline building
 - Finding the right balance between safety and scenery

General Public Feedback

How is everyone included as we move the programming and design process forward?

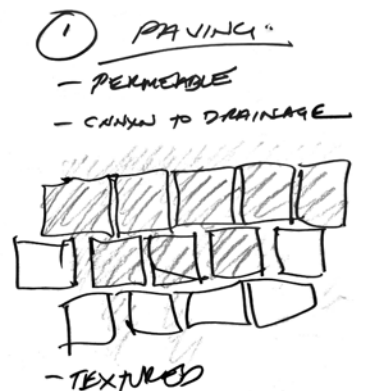
- Very inclusive. Workshop is doing very well.
- Appropriately scheduled public meetings
- Multiple modes of transportation loops, wheelchair accessible elevators, staircase with rest landings down to river bank, adequate parking for out of town visitors
- We were all allowed to speak and were listened to

What features would you like to see in the park?

- Preservation of wildlife
- Safety
- Mounted police housed in the park
- A lot: hiking, picnics, historic interpretations
- Trees, shrubs, and other plantings that are regionally native to our area, and a mix of host plants and food.
- Accessible to all, inclusive of all.
- Forests where animals can live in peace, where people don't go. The meadow should include butterfly/caterpillar host plants such as milkweed.

What challenges need to be addressed in the programming and design process?

- Funding
- Practical implementation of design
- Accessibility for all
- Pedestrian/bike conflicts, trail sharing is problematic
- Photographers, bird watchers, and people the deaf and blind population are concerns in managing ped vs. bike interactions
- Prioritization
- Accessibility and some surfaces should be material surface trails



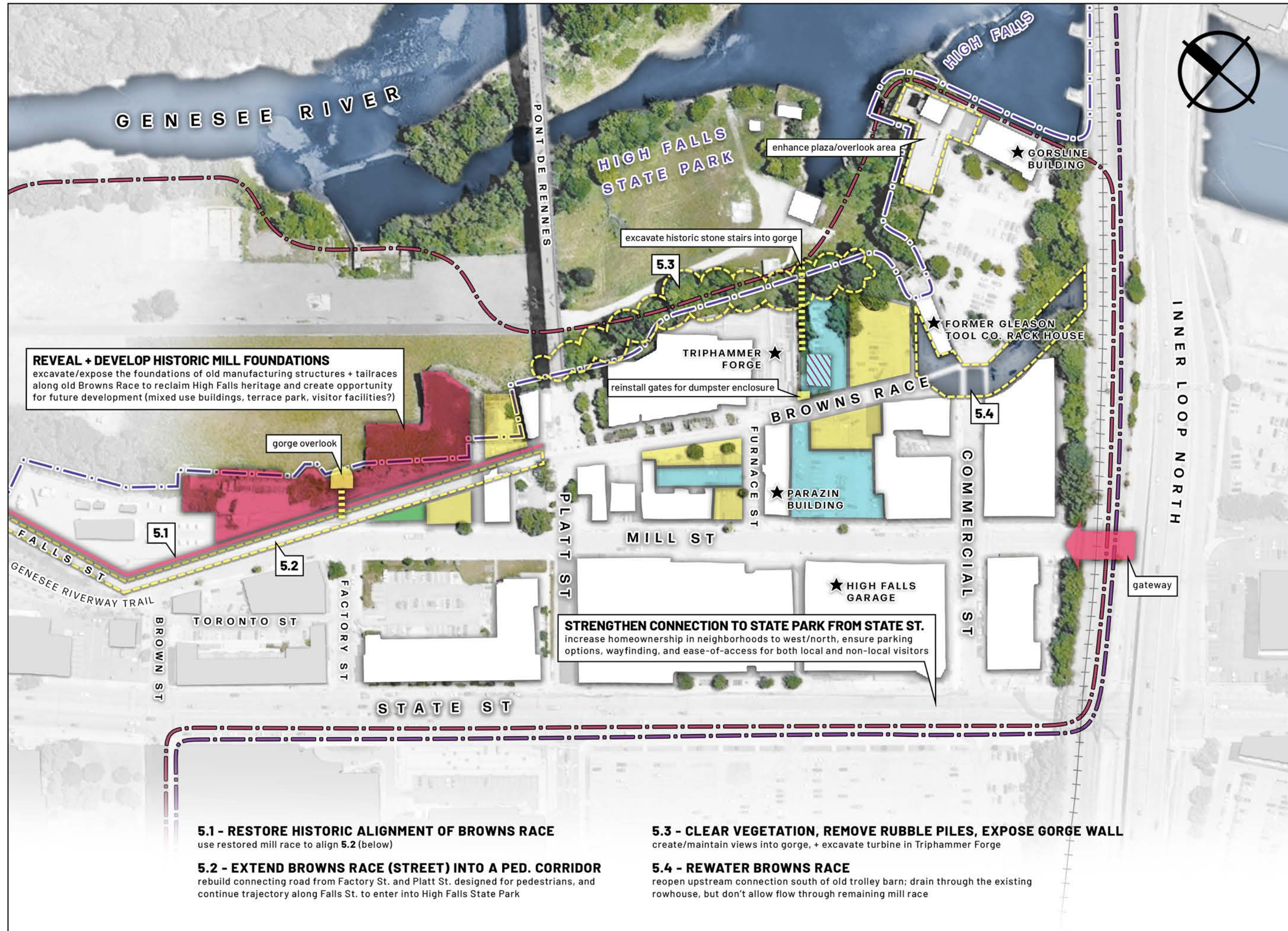
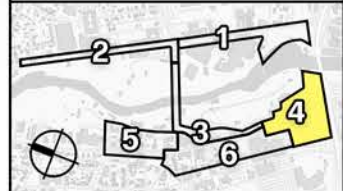
FOCUS AREA 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

LEGEND

- EXISTING BUILDING OUTSIDE FOCUS AREA
 - EXISTING BUILDING WITHIN FOCUS AREA
 - PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDING
 - PROPOSED NEW CONSTRUCTION/INFILL
 - PROPOSED PARKING LOT
 - PROPOSED GREEN SPACE
 - AREA OF INTEREST
 - MISCELLANEOUS PROPOSED FEATURE
 - PROPOSED PATH
 - EXISTING RAILROAD
 - HIGH FALLS STATE PARK BOUNDARY
- CITY OF ROCHESTER 2034 PLACEMAKING PLAN BOUNDARIES:
- FLEXIBLE MIXED-USE
 - DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE

SCALE
100 ft 200 ft

FOCUS AREA CONTEXT



REVEAL + DEVELOP HISTORIC MILL FOUNDATIONS
excavate/expose the foundations of old manufacturing structures + tailraces along old Browns Race to reclaim High Falls heritage and create opportunity for future development (mixed use buildings, terrace park, visitor facilities?)

5.1
RESTORE HISTORIC ALIGNMENT OF BROWNS RACE
use restored mill race to align 5.2 (below)

5.2 - EXTEND BROWNS RACE (STREET) INTO A PED. CORRIDOR
rebuild connecting road from Factory St. and Platt St. designed for pedestrians, and continue trajectory along Falls St. to enter into High Falls State Park

5.3
CLEAR VEGETATION, REMOVE RUBBLE PILES, EXPOSE GORGE WALL
create/maintain views into gorge, + excavate turbine in Triphammer Forge

5.4 - REWATER BROWNS RACE
reopen upstream connection south of old trolley barn; drain through the existing rowhouse, but don't allow flow through remaining mill race

STRENGTHEN CONNECTION TO STATE PARK FROM STATE ST.
increase homeownership in neighborhoods to west/north, ensure parking options, wayfinding, and ease-of-access for both local and non-local visitors

gateway

INNER LOOP NORTH

COMMERCIAL ST

BROWNS RACE

MILL ST

PLATT ST

FACTORY ST

TORONTO ST

BROWN ST

STATE ST

FURNACE ST

PONT DE RENNES

HIGH FALLS STATE PARK

GENESEE RIVER

HIGH FALLS

GORSLINE BUILDING

FORMER GLEASON TOOL CO. RACK HOUSE

TRIPHAMMER FORGE

PARAZIN BUILDING

HIGH FALLS GARAGE



5

Focus Area Five: Cliff Street Overlook, State Street → Smith Street → Cliff Street

Transcribed Focus Group Notes

Trolley/people mover along park for views and transport
Pickleball/Basketball/Recreation area along gorge

- Keep close to river and untouched
- Lets naturalize
- Gorge views/higher area could be rec area, restaurants, B&Bs
 - Close ups provided by viewers
 - Plaques about history

Vincent St. and Smith St. >>> cars going very fast

- Expand observation area
- Connect Lower Falls Park to existing trail and Smith/Vincent
- Get rid of billboards
- New Signage for trail/historic info

What to do about existing businesses?

- Approach individually (will you meet codes in 3 yrs? If not, buy property from them)
- State leases property at reasonable price to encourage development
- Rent control to keep local/small around

White St., Spencer St., Ambrose St entrances

- Improve pedestrian and bike crossing across Lake Ave.
- Design inviting entrances into the park that are visible from west side of Lake Ave.
- Flora on Lake Ave crossings to give preview of park as people approach it
- Slow down Lake Ave traffic



Historic railroad tracks along Cliff St, with Kodak Tower visible

Ambrose St to Spencer St.

- Create entrance into park
- Acquire properties to redevelop
- Cars overlooking the falls
- Lease to private company to generate park revenue
- Great view of Kodak building/tower

Other

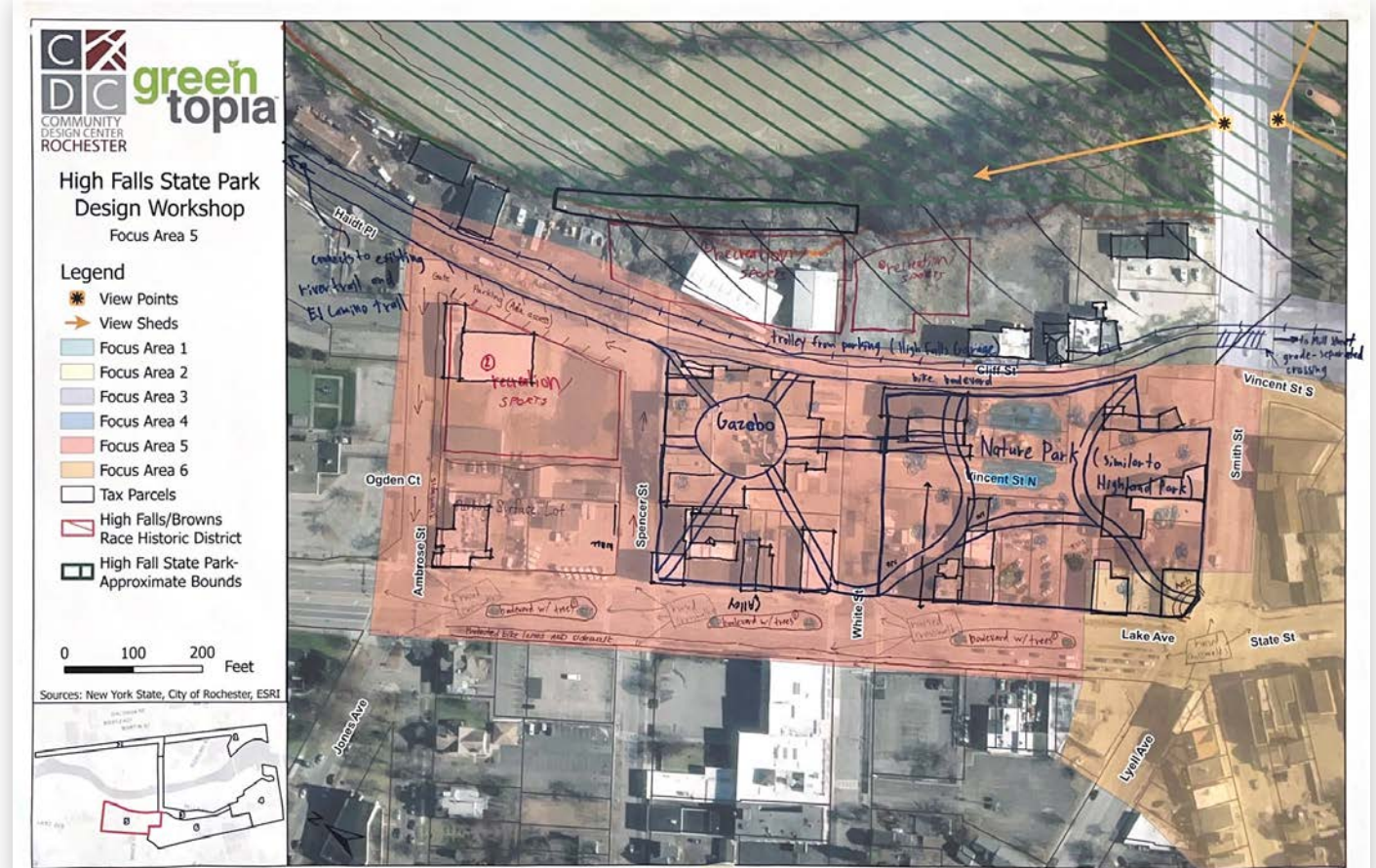
- Hydropower bikes
- Sunflower Seneca Tribe Six Nations
- Exhibitions?
- Connection to other trail
- Genesee River Trail 26 miles
- El Camino Trail
- Education opportunities
- Laser light show
- Fill in the north Inner Loop?
- Pedestrian crossing light times adjusted
- Should have outdoor showers in place for kids in swimsuits

Notes from the Community Design Center of Rochester

In design workshops, facilitators and participants are encouraged to think big and imagine the ideal neighborhood and public realm. The members of the Focus Group 5 did just that. Focus Area 5 is bounded by Lake Avenue, Smith Street, Ambrose Street and the Genesee River. The area includes a mix of buildings both recent and historic, several public streets and vacant or underutilized properties that were once occupied by railroad tracks. One of the main rail lines extended along Cliff Street northward then crosses the river on the Running Track bridge. This same line traverses through the city's northeast quadrant as the El Camino Trail, part of the Genesee Riverway Trail system.

Group 5 proposed a people mover system to be placed along the rail path taking visitors to both the east side of High Falls State Park and south into the High Falls Historic District. With significant impacts created by the existing traffic corridors of Lake Avenue / State Street and Lyell Avenue / Smith Street bordering the focus area and the goal of bringing neighbors closer to the new state park, the group proposed a bold and creative vision to develop a public park that covers essentially the entire focus area and would serve as a gateway to the High Falls State Park and provide passive and active recreation activities for the residents of the Lyle Otis and Edgerton neighborhoods.

Focus Group 5 acknowledged the challenges to implementing this vision including property acquisition, business relocation and cost. The recommendations of Focus Group 5 should be considered as the long term vision for this area adjacent to the future state park. The CDCR has prepared an alternative, interim plan which looks to maintain some businesses and existing structures while integrating the green space and recreation activities recommended. This interim plan represents a 'step' along the path to implementation of the long term vision.



Lake Avenue, looking north

LEGEND

- EXISTING BUILDING OUTSIDE FOCUS AREA
- EXISTING BUILDING WITHIN FOCUS AREA
- PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDING
- PROPOSED NEW CONSTRUCTION/INFILL
- PROPOSED PARKING LOT
- PROPOSED GREEN SPACE
- AREA OF INTEREST
- MISCELLANEOUS PROPOSED FEATURE
- PROPOSED PATH
- PROPOSED CROSSWALK (RAISED)
- PROPOSED TROLLEY RAIL
- HIGH FALLS STATE PARK BOUNDARY

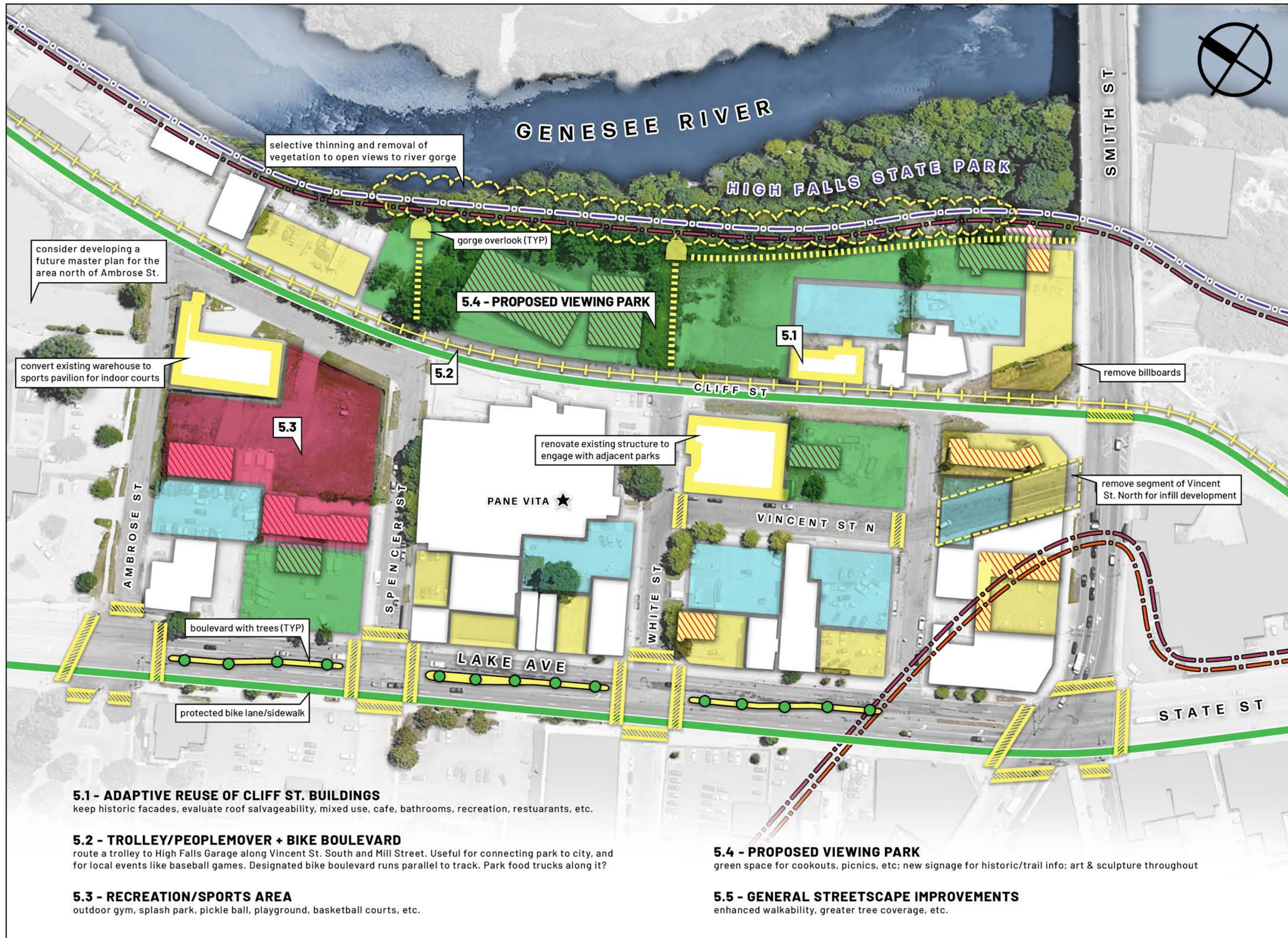
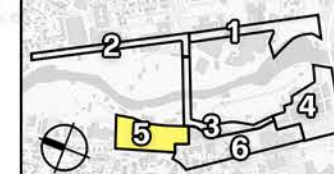
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- FLEXIBLE MIXED-USE
- NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED-USE

SCALE

50 ft 100 ft

FOCUS AREA CONTEXT



selective thinning and removal of vegetation to open views to river gorge

gorge overlook (TYP)

5.4 - PROPOSED VIEWING PARK

consider developing a future master plan for the area north of Ambrose St.

convert existing warehouse to sports pavilion for indoor courts

5.3

renovate existing structure to engage with adjacent parks

PANE VITA ★

remove billboards

remove segment of Vincent St. North for infill development

boulevard with trees (TYP)

protected bike lane/sidewalk

5.1 - ADAPTIVE REUSE OF CLIFF ST. BUILDINGS

keep historic facades, evaluate roof salvageability, mixed use, cafe, bathrooms, recreation, restaurants, etc.

5.2 - TROLLEY/PEOPLEMOVER + BIKE BOULEVARD

route a trolley to High Falls Garage along Vincent St. South and Mill Street. Useful for connecting park to city, and for local events like baseball games. Designated bike boulevard runs parallel to track. Park food trucks along it?

5.3 - RECREATION/SPORTS AREA

outdoor gym, splash park, pickle ball, playground, basketball courts, etc.

5.4 - PROPOSED VIEWING PARK

green space for cookouts, picnics, etc; new signage for historic/trail info; art & sculpture throughout

5.5 - GENERAL STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS

enhanced walkability, greater tree coverage, etc.



Old coaling tower



Smith Street looking southwest



Historic buildings along State Street, opposite of Kodak headquarters



Old incinerator smokestack

Transcribed Focus Group Notes

Traffic calming measures

- Raised intersection
- Reduced lanes
- Trees on median

Bike and pedestrian path connections

- Commercial and residential development
- International food market?
- Frankfort Alley restaurant district proposed
- Raised gardens?
- Density development for underutilized areas
- Info booth?

Greenspace expansion - State St./Brown St./Vincent St./Kodak

Improve/Add Park Areas

- State St/Brown St
- Vincent St area
- Kodak Tower (raised parking switch to park?)

Development Strategies

- Frankfort Alley, restaurant district
- International food market

Underutilized Assets

- Add housing
- Vacant parcels, Frankfort Alley, State St, Morrie Silver Way

How is everyone included as we move the programming and design process forward?

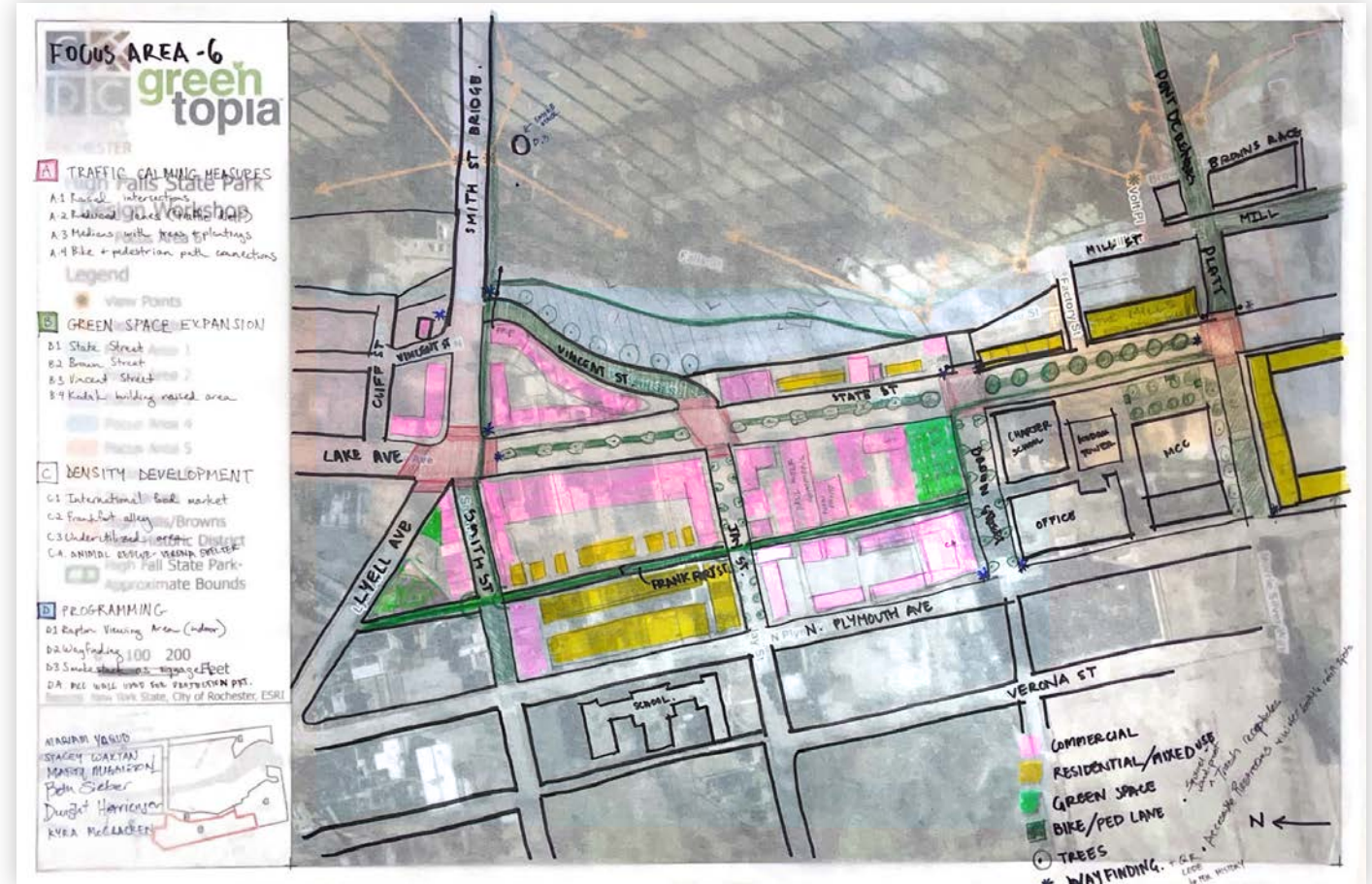
- Suggest working session with stakeholders and the design firm throughout the process
- Continue advertising broadly – churches, barbershops, nail salons, go to where people are! Utilize city communications and all elected officials to get the word out

What features would you like to see in the park?

- Incorporate Edison Bi-Polar Generator into the visitor's center
- Nature, historical preservation, No laser show, no parking in gorge, no displacement in surrounding neighborhoods, accessibility not just for wheelchairs but also elders with walkers and toddlers

What challenges need to be addressed in the programming and design process?

- Coordination with the two environmental remediation projects, choose the final land surface early so the remediation contract can place it at the correct level
- Connections between NYS planning for the park, city planning and resident input to all – the more local the better!



Focus Group 6 poses for a selfie in front of Kodak Tower and MCC

FOCUS AREA 6 RECOMMENDATIONS

LEGEND

-  EXISTING BUILDING OUTSIDE FOCUS AREA
-  EXISTING BUILDING WITHIN FOCUS AREA
-  PROPOSED NEW CONSTRUCTION/INFILL
-  PROPOSED COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT AREA
-  PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AREA
-  PROPOSED GREEN SPACE
-  AREA OF INTEREST
-  MISCELLANEOUS PROPOSED FEATURE
-  PROPOSED PATH
-  PROPOSED CROSSWALK
-  PROPOSED TREE
-  HIGH FALLS STATE PARK BOUNDARY

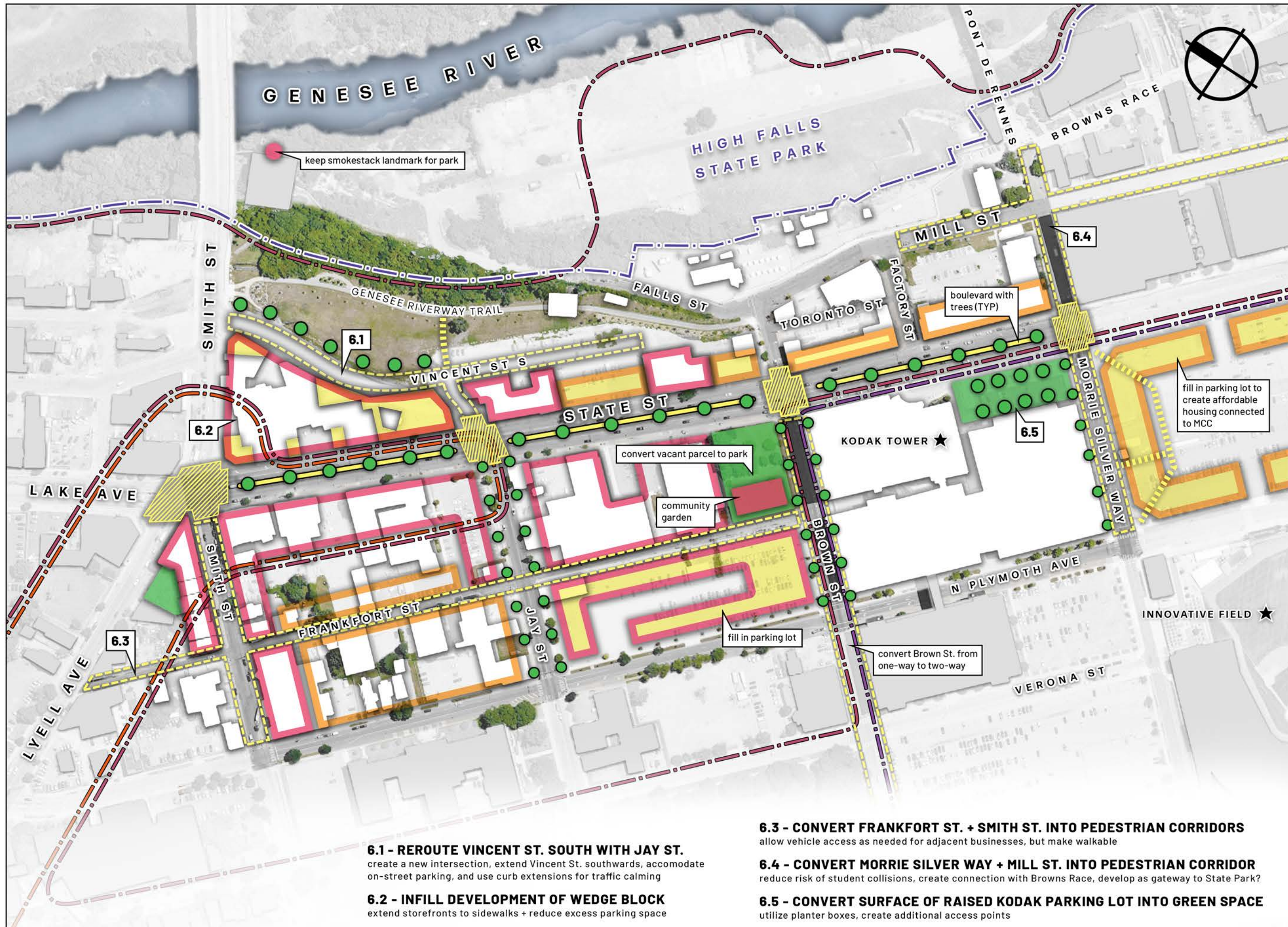
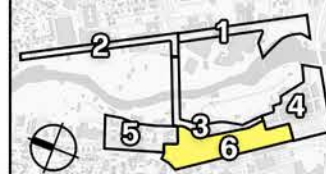
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-  FLEXIBLE MIXED-USE
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-  DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE

SCALE

100 ft 200 ft

FOCUS AREA CONTEXT



6.1 - REROUTE VINCENT ST. SOUTH WITH JAY ST.
create a new intersection, extend Vincent St. southwards, accommodate on-street parking, and use curb extensions for traffic calming

6.2 - INFILL DEVELOPMENT OF WEDGE BLOCK
extend storefronts to sidewalks + reduce excess parking space

6.3 - CONVERT FRANKFORT ST. + SMITH ST. INTO PEDESTRIAN CORRIDORS
allow vehicle access as needed for adjacent businesses, but make walkable

6.4 - CONVERT MORRIE SILVER WAY + MILL ST. INTO PEDESTRIAN CORRIDOR
reduce risk of student collisions, create connection with Browns Race, develop as gateway to State Park?

6.5 - CONVERT SURFACE OF RAISED KODAK PARKING LOT INTO GREEN SPACE
utilize planter boxes, create additional access points

keep smokestack landmark for park

boulevard with trees (TYP)

convert vacant parcel to park

community garden

fill in parking lot

convert Brown St. from one-way to two-way

fill in parking lot to create affordable housing connected to MCC

7

Focus Area Seven: Underutilized Buildings and Sites, Traffic Circulation, Stadiums

Transcribed Focus Group Notes

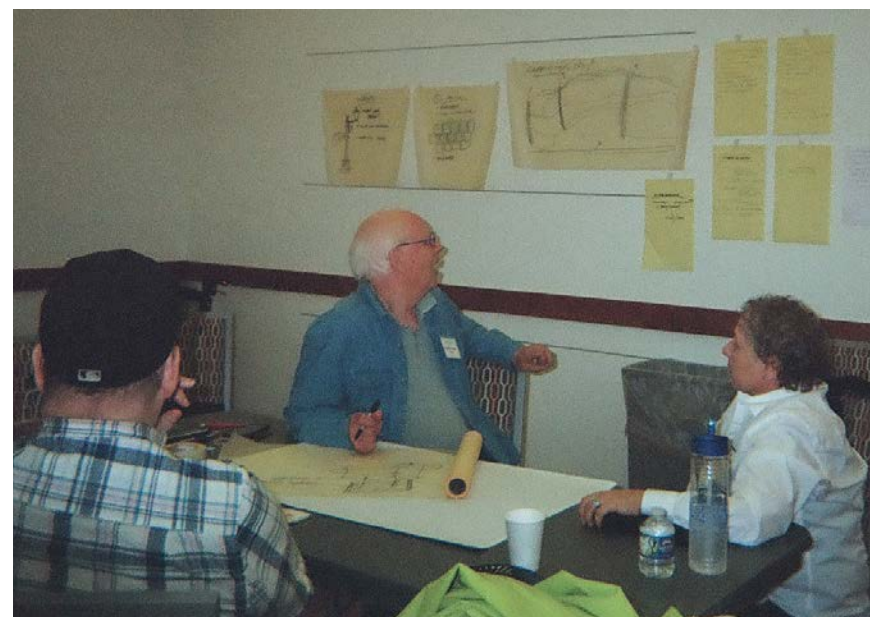
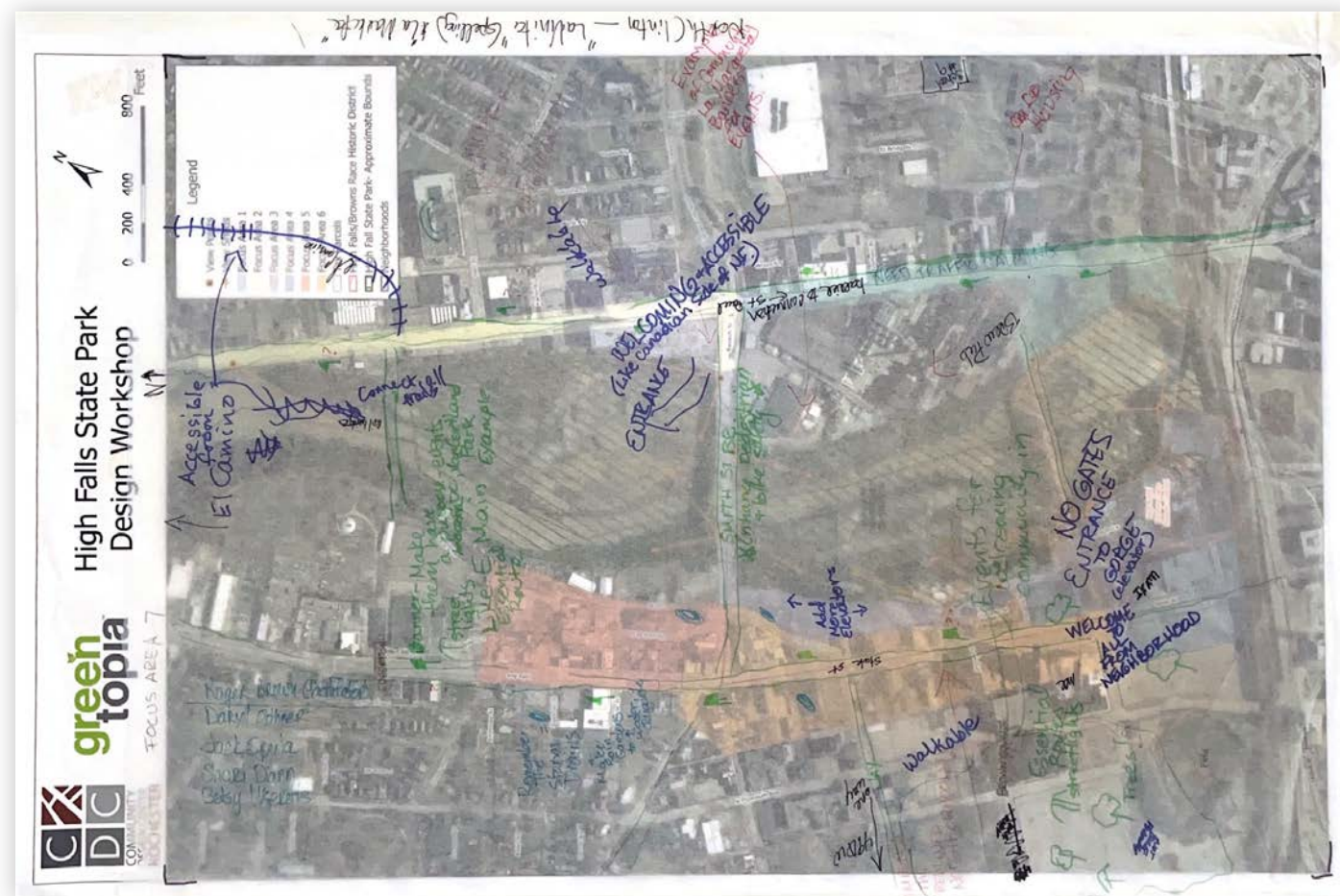
Trees are essential for vibrant, healthy urban areas

- Bike, ped safety, especially on State St. and St Paul St.
- Lighting >>> bird friendly too!
- Green infrastructure for streets to help water quality
- Banners to "ID" area (unless too disruptive for local communities to feel welcome)
- CANNOT dissuade or disconnect from historically disadvantaged communities (especially redlined communities)
- No gates, open boundaries
 - Look @ Niagara Falls State Park with walking into park
 - Stairs and elevators into Gorge
 - *Accessibility* 2-3 elevators, or at least 1 at North side and 1 at South side (El Camino Trail put elevator!)
- How many stairs access from how many look overs?
- Streets >>> Green but include community garden
- La Avenita and La Marqueta >>> cultural events to connect community to park
- State and St. Paul is huge barrier to connection
- Understanding 1964 uprising
- School #9 MLK? >>> formerly garden program and Coca Cola vending but no longer
 - Side streets need to be welcoming
- State St. and St. Paul St >>> both cannot allow connections to park as they currently exist
 - Traffic calming needed with safe street parking
 - Create big bike circle with El Camino
- Parking definitely needs to be addressed
- Nature bus shuttle (like Solar Eclipse Event and Lilac Festival) to avoid parking issues
- Free bus system in X locations
 - But funding, # of buses, # of drivers becomes question
 - Enhanced and upgraded bus system?
- Has there been connection/talk with First Nations?
 - Seneca or Tuscarora (Peter Jemison is on Art project in downtown Roc)
 - Focus on native perspective
- Innovation Stadium and Soccer stadium — off beaten path, not great public buses or transit :(BUT there is parking
 - What about mix use parking to coordinate with events AND old Kodak lots
 - Tied with better bussing and scooter/bike rental
- Also missing: Date night, food and family food places and stores, bodega on street edge
 - Family fun options
- Food truck options – but needs safe parking and areas for sitting
- Boat rental??
 - Kayak, canoe, Corn Hill (Mid Falls)
- Fees: walk in = \$0, park = fee based
 - Niagara Falls, walk-in
 - Chisholm, free
 - Sojourn, free
- Smith St. Bridge: enhance bike and ped safety and maintenance (gravel)
- Winter aspects of this park?
- Make sure park is funded equally and staffed
- How does this Park connect with Roc the Riverway so it is not isolated

- The north side with RR bridge and be careful of crap bridge
- "Pee" tunnel under the Inner Loop needs to be improved for bikes
- Facilities along park maintained

Summary Points

- Streets
 - Trees and greening (native species only)
 - Lighting (bird friendly too!)
 - Green infrastructure to increase water quality
 - St. Paul and State St. >>> big barriers to connect
 - Side streets also need safety and improvements
 - Traffic calming
 - Bike and ped safety
- Open boundaries/no gates/no fees
- Connect local communities
 - Esp. historically redlined, and make sure they feel connected!
 - Connection through cultural events and welcoming to park >>> look at La Avenita and La Marqueta & Friends of Anocastia (DC park) for inspiration (Albany CDTA, Buffalo Transit, etc.)
- Bussing (Like a nature bus shuttle)
 - Enhanced and upgraded bus system
- Don't isolate park – make sure connection with Roc the Riverway, El Camino Trail, and South Trails
- Boat Navigation (hand only?)
- Need food, store, bodega options along State and St. Paul for date night and family
- Accessibility: Elevators needed
- Food truck and safety options
- Funded park – equally and fully included and staffed
- Mixed parking use with Kodak and Stadium lots
- History connections and current connections: Underground RR,



Focus Group 7 sketching ideas

- Haudenosaunee/Seneca and Tusc., 1964 Uprising
- Edges and boundaries
- Corridors
- Adjacent activities
- Green and/or urbanity ?
- 24hr visibility
- Parking and paving (shuttles?)
- Entries and gateways

Design Language

- Maps/Streetscape
 - Lighting
 - Paving
 - Street furniture
 - Signage
- Smith
- Platt/Pont du Rennes
- RR Bridge
- Cataract
- Plan(s)
- Zones
- Access points?

- Elements of nature and grey infrastructure balanced

North to South
RR bridge to Inner Loop North?
East to West
St. Paul St. to Cliff/State St

Corridors

- Paving
 - Streets
 - Sidewalks
 - Open spaces
- Lighting
 - What was there?
- Street furniture
 - Benches
 - Garbage cans
 - Planters
- Statues
 - w/ nods to local history
- Maps and signage
- Parking status indicators

- History Nodes
 - Morse Lumber
 - Carthages
 - Kelsey's Landing
 - Kodak
 - Cathedral
 - Sam Patch
 - Yawman & Gabe?
 - St. Bridget's
- Attendance
 - Annual goal: 1,000,000 visitors???
 - 85k a month (12,000 a day)

FOCUS AREA 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

LEGEND

- EXISTING BUILDING OUTSIDE FOCUS AREA
- EXISTING BUILDING WITHIN FOCUS AREA
- PROPOSED NEW CONSTRUCTION/INFILL
- MISCELLANEOUS PROPOSED FEATURE
- AREA OF INTEREST
- EXISTING RAILROAD
- PROPOSED TREE
- STATE PARK ACCESS POINT
- HIGH FALLS STATE PARK BOUNDARY

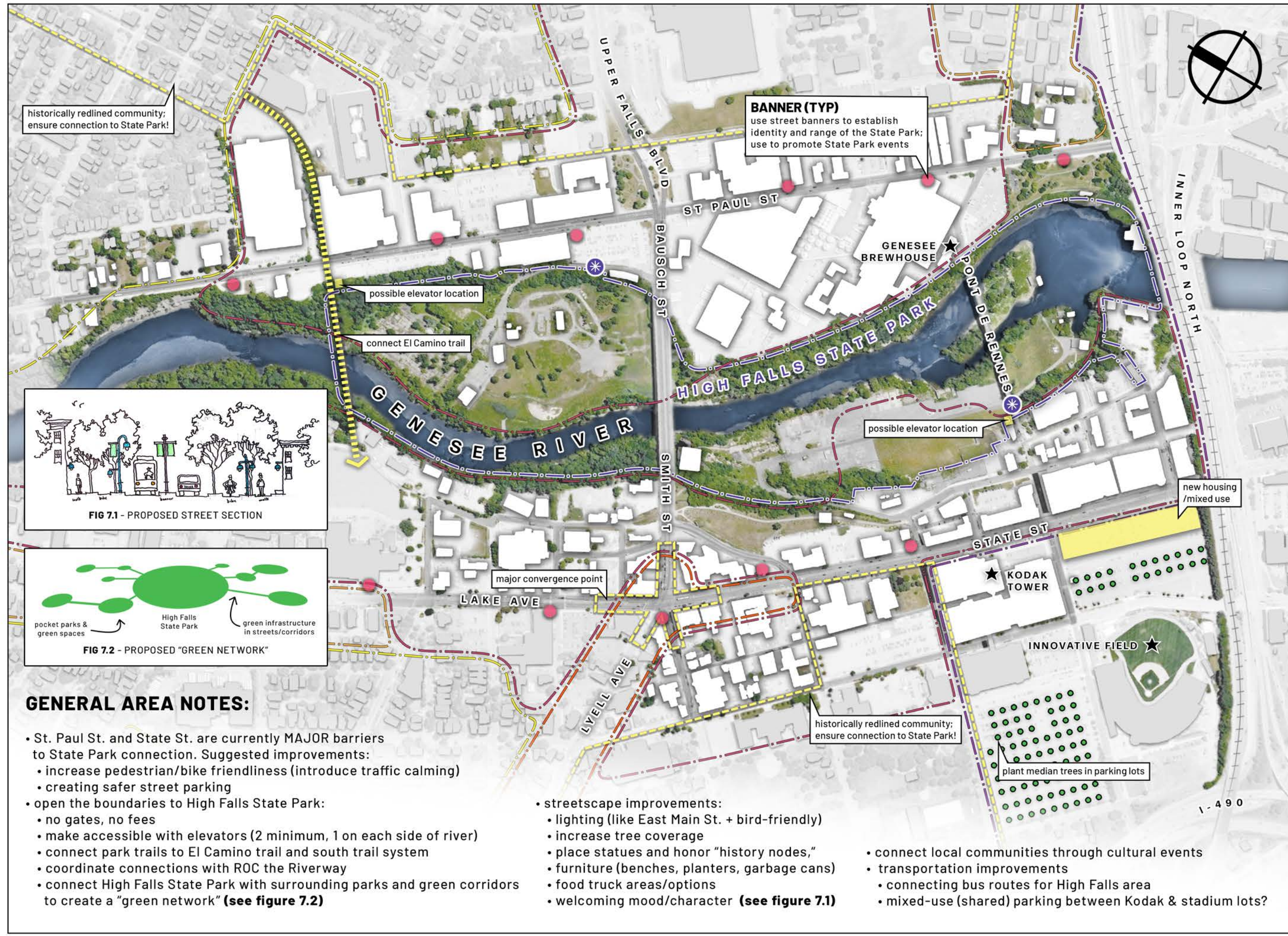
CITY OF ROCHESTER 2034 PLACEMAKING PLAN BOUNDARIES:

- FLEXIBLE MIXED-USE
- MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED-USE
- DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE

SCALE

200 ft 400 ft

FOCUS AREA CONTEXT



historically redlined community; ensure connection to State Park!

BANNER (TYP)
use street banners to establish identity and range of the State Park; use to promote State Park events

possible elevator location

connect El Camino trail

possible elevator location

new housing/mixed use

major convergence point

historically redlined community; ensure connection to State Park!

plant median trees in parking lots



FIG 7.1 - PROPOSED STREET SECTION

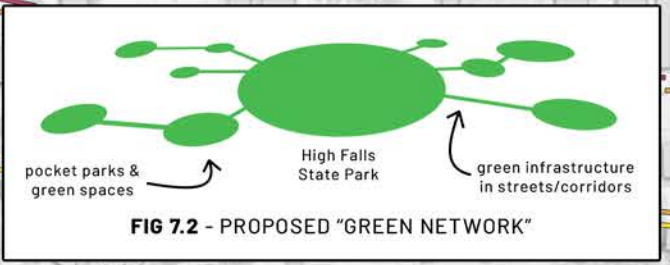


FIG 7.2 - PROPOSED "GREEN NETWORK"

GENERAL AREA NOTES:

- St. Paul St. and State St. are currently MAJOR barriers to State Park connection. Suggested improvements:
 - increase pedestrian/bike friendliness (introduce traffic calming)
 - creating safer street parking
- open the boundaries to High Falls State Park:
 - no gates, no fees
 - make accessible with elevators (2 minimum, 1 on each side of river)
 - connect park trails to El Camino trail and south trail system
 - coordinate connections with ROC the Riverway
 - connect High Falls State Park with surrounding parks and green corridors to create a "green network" (see figure 7.2)

- streetscape improvements:
 - lighting (like East Main St. + bird-friendly)
 - increase tree coverage
 - place statues and honor "history nodes,"
 - furniture (benches, planters, garbage cans)
 - food truck areas/options
 - welcoming mood/character (see figure 7.1)

- connect local communities through cultural events
- transportation improvements
 - connecting bus routes for High Falls area
 - mixed-use (shared) parking between Kodak & stadium lots?

Findings and Next Steps

This section offers findings and next steps for public engagement to state and city officials, the consultant team, and local stakeholders as the High Falls State Park progresses to the programming and design phases of development. These findings and next steps represent a summary of ideas from all who attended the leadership breakfast and design workshop and include the following topics:

- Community Engagement
- Stakeholder Roles
- Publicity and Branding
- Neighborhood Integration
- Local and State Collaboration

Community Engagement

As the planning and design process moves forward for the development of High Falls State Park in downtown Rochester, continued community engagement is more important than ever.

The park will be a multi-phase, multi-year process, with near term tasks (2024-2025) focused on environmental remediation, property acquisition and keeping the public informed, particularly in the adjacent neighborhoods. A consistent campaign to promote upcoming park features and progress will help sustain public interest. Early actions, such as clearing debris and invasive vegetation from the rim of the gorge to allow for views down into the park, can build positive momentum and visibly demonstrate progress. It is also a way of integrating adjacent residents and business owners as they can get a preview of what is to come when the park is completed. A comprehensive review of public engagement in sought for concurrent projects such as the Inner Loop North, ROC the Riverway, Urban Forest Master Plan and Zoning Alignment Program (ZAP) can offer insights and best practices for the HFSP project. Sustained public involvement will ensure the park not only meets community needs



but fosters a sense of communal ownership among residents and visitors alike. Engagement efforts should include an emphasis on park operations, management, and maintenance from the inception (initial programming) to help maintain the park's user experience, public perception, and functionality over time.

Publicity and Branding

The park's success depends not only on the planning, design, and construction, but on its marketability and branding as an urban state park. Effective branding, publicity, and promotion will raise general public awareness about the project and generate enthusiasm. As park progress continues, a comprehensive promotional campaign that combines engagement with marketing will incite public curiosity and excitement. With a strong publicity of the park during the development process, we can stay ahead

of potential negative perceptions that may come with a large project in the center of an urban area. The right campaign and visible improvement in the neighborhoods will positively highlight the public investment in the area.

Stakeholder Roles

Establishing a strong governance structure for park development is crucial to liaise between stakeholders effectively. Forming an advisory committee, similar to the ROC the Riverway initiative, can provide valuable oversight and genuine guidance from community leaders with a key stake in the project. It's essential to outline the roles and responsibilities of each agency, including the Empire State Development (ESD) and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP) and establish a clear NYS Parks presence in the improved High Falls Visitor's Center. The roles of non-profits, as well as

the design consultant team need to be clearly defined, particularly regarding their contributions to public engagement, whether as leaders or technical support.

Neighborhood Integration

It's important to determine whether all investments should go directly into the park, or some be directed towards benefiting the surrounding neighborhoods. As part of the planning process, consideration should be given to investment into the High Falls Historic District, El Camino, Upper Falls and Edgerton neighborhoods, as their infrastructure reflects on the park as well. This approach can create a symbiotic relationship where the park's success contributes to neighborhood vitality and vice versa. Initial priorities should focus on elements that have immediate positive impacts, fostering a sense of progress and community pride. Separating the success of the park from the success of the neighborhoods may not be feasible; both must thrive together. Establishing initial priorities and understanding that long-term success requires ongoing investment in capital improvements, operations, and maintenance will lay a strong foundation for future enhancements to the park. It is also important to consider the return on investment long-term for the park, based on the initial implementation strategies to integrate neighborhoods with the natural landscape.

Local and State Collaborations

Next steps in engagement should include holding local meetings with key stakeholders such as St. Paul corridor businesses, Central Avenue businesses, the Urban League, and various neighborhood associations like St. Simon's Terrace, CONEA, and the Lyell-Otis Neighborhood Association. Not only is this an optimal way to reach city residents themselves, but the neighborhoods' proximity to the park means they will be affected by the upcoming construction and remediation efforts. Engaging specific institutions that

can share perspectives on accessibility and equity, such as the School of the Deaf and the Monroe County Department of Health & Social Services, will also be essential. In addition, collaboration with business improvement districts, residential facilities, and organizations like the Rochester Red Wings can provide diverse perspectives and support.

In conclusion, the findings underscore the need for comprehensive community engagement, clear governance, strategic long-term planning which includes park management and operations, effective branding and publicity, and neighborhood integration. By addressing these areas, state and city representatives, stakeholders and the design consultant team can ensure the successful development of an urban state park that serves as a cherished community asset in Rochester.



Future Community Partners

The following is a bullet list of stakeholders to involve throughout the engagement process. The leadership breakfast recommended several roundtable or summit discussions that should focus on specific disciplines that will add value to the programming, development and long term operations of the park and user experience.

Local neighborhood meetings

- St. Paul corridor businesses (Inner Loop to Upper Falls)
 - Central Avenue businesses
 - Urban League of Rochester
 - St. Simon's Terrace residents
- St. Paul corridor businesses (Upper Falls to Falls Street)
 - School of the Deaf
 - Monroe County Department of Health & Social Services
- Coalition of North East Associations (CONEA)
- El Camino Neighbors
- Lyell Otis Neighborhood Association
- Lyell Avenue Business Association
- High Falls Business Improvement District
- Rochester Red Wings
- State Street corridor business (Platt Street to Lyell / Smith Street)

Organization meetings

- Friends of NYS Parks
- NYS Recreation & Parks Association (NYS RPA)
- Genesee Valley Recreation & Parks Assoc. (Chapter of NYS RPA)

Roundtable Meetings / Summits

- Education (K-12, Higher Education, Workforce training)
- Safety and Security
- Transportation Infrastructure
- Economic Development
 - ESD / ROC 2025 / GRE / MC Econ Dev & Planning / CofR Neighborhood Dev.
- Cultural Programs & Institutions (Visit Rochester)
- Disability Advocates & Agencies
 - Universal design
 - Signage / wayfinding for hearing and seeing challenged
- Environment & Sustainability
- Native American History and Cultural Preservation

Writing/Editing: Lisa Baron, Bill Price, Dawn Noto, Casey Sheils

Layout/Design: Troa Vimahi



Appendix A

Leadership Breakfast Figures (A1-A4)

Leadership Breakfast Attendees	
Art Briley	Kathryn D'Amanda
Dr. Calvin Gantt	John D'Amanda
Tammy Mayberry	Joe Klein
Vinnie Esposito	Kathryn Murano
Andy Germanow	Sarah Clark
Chris Widmaier	Patrick Gooch
Lisa Baron	Hilda Escher
Bill Price	Amanda Santacroce
C. Mitchell Rowe	Kathry Walker
Demond Meeks	Josie T McClary
Mariam Valdar-Copa	Michele Ashby
Don Jeffries	Rachel Laber Pulvino
Mariam Yaqub	Megan Meyer
Mike Boller	Lou Anne Darin
Mike Gilbert	Gay Mills
Patricia Kelly Leo	
Ricky Frazier	
Annette Jimenez Gleason	
Senator Samra Brouk	
Stephanie Annunziata	
Dawn Noto	
Joe Stefko	
Zena Shuber	
Bridget Monroe	
Rachel Laber	
Deborah Hughes	
Stacey Waxton	
Galin Brooks	
Todd Waite	
Michael Zimmerman	
Marcus Bliss	
Mary Beth Popp	
Pamela Reed Sanchez	
Mitch Gruber	



May 1, 2024

High Falls State Park Design Workshop
Leadership Breakfast
 Thursday, May 2nd
 Oak Hill Country Club Ballroom
 Panel Discussion Questions

Panelists:

Vincent Esposito – NYS ESD	Arthur Briley – NYS OPRHP
Joseph Stefko – ROC 2025	Dr. Calvin Gantt – MCC
Tamara Mayberry – City of Rochester	Donald Jeffries – Visit Rochester
Christopher Widmaier – Rochester Ecology Partners	

Upon completion of response, each panelist will be asked what they want to see included in the state park or an issue to be addressed.

Vincent Esposito

Why an urban state park? Where did the idea come from? Who has been involved to date to advance the concept? What was required for NYS to adopt and promote development of the park?

Arthur Briley

When planning for a new state park what are the fundamental differences between an ‘urban park’ and those in more rural or natural areas?

What are the operations and management factors that NYSOPRHP will consider during planning and programming?

What are potential management models; state run, 3rd party concession agreement, hybrid model, a ‘Friends of High Falls’ entity?

Dr. Calvin Gantt

We would all agree that this state park should be accessible to all. With as many as 30% of city residents identifying as disabled, what are the best practices to ensure that the park is accessible and open to everyone?

Tamara Mayberry

How does the concept of a High Falls State Park align with and complement the other ROC the Riverway projects and the Rochester 2034 comprehensive plan?

Christopher Widmaier / Dr. Gantt

This 40-acre (+/-) site is one giant outdoor classroom providing a vast range of educational opportunities. What do you see as the range of learning topics that will be possible and currently aren’t once people have access to the gorge at river level? (Natural environment, cultural and industrial heritage, sustainability, etc.)

What are some of the local career readiness or higher education programs that could benefit from and contribute to a new state park?

Joseph Stefko

High Falls was the birthplace of industry in Rochester. As High Falls moves away from industry and power generation, what are the opportunities for economic development from the immediate neighborhoods to our broader Finger Lakes region?

Do specific things have to happen to realize the full economic potential?

Donald Jeffries

What is the range of opportunities that you can imagine for events and programming of a state park?

Rochester has many significant cultural institutions (museums, music and theater, education, sports, arts, etc.). How can these institutions contribute to the long-term success of the park?

Vincent Esposito / Panel

As we think about the next steps of planning, programming, design, and implementation, what are the shared areas of interest?

How do we envision collaboration to address the long-term management and operations of the park?

Vincent / Panel

Who will be the public face of High Falls State Park?

Can the public engagement and communications from ROC the Riverway provide a model for High Falls? Who do you believe should be represented on an advisory committee?

If there is time.

Can an urban park be self-sustaining and off the grid? Energy, recycling, maintenance.

Figure A3 - Questions Prepared for Attendees + Responses

Leadership breakfast index card answers - 05/02/24

How is everyone included as we move the programming and design process forward?	What features would you like to see in the park?	What challenges need to be addressed in the programming and design process?
Are indigenous people involved?	Mediation space/ Yoga	Land contamination / chemicals
Public Hearings		
Love the idea to include a cohort of arts and cultural organizations planning partners.	Rentals to activate water spaces w/ low impact recreational activities - kayaks, fishing poles	
Cast a wide net, use media partners + social media to invite all to provide input	Walking, biking, visitors, events, activation spaces	Engagement with Inner Loop North, connection to ongoing revitalization and strong community vision
Continue collaborations with community based organizations representing adjacent neighborhoods	Accessibility in terms of cost, liabilities and transportation	Ensure community voice at every stage
	Ecology center and keeping the area as natural as possible	Ways to keep the residents directly surrounding the park involved & prevent gentrification and displacement.
Over market and over - advertise- be present at all community spaces, events, festivals - ensure accessibility : have translations in languages common in Rochester, have forms printed, online and via phones	Murals, Native plants, sculptures, seating, grassy spaces, shady trees, athletic fields for rec leagues, bike paths, road for food trucks, mobile vendors. Awnings for shade /rain - Zip line!	Ensuring the community doesn't allow the perceived "dangers" to create hostile architecture, a hostile overly policed environment - Budget
Involve colleges and universities		Environmental stewards and protection.
Talk to Buffalo AKG - they had a tremendous public involvement in their redesign and what the people wanted from the needed Museum	Ecological history, natural history, people history - Haudenosaunee, Underground Railroad, Nature, play	Safety, parking
Email updates, small task forces (i.e.: historical markers/ education panels), virtual & physical meetings hosted around town.	Local historical information about the city up until present possibly including related objects like the High Falls Bipolar generator	ENSURING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCESSIBILITY - IE: mobility, pay wall, safety, language, etc..
Remember who to work "with" not for. Take as many opportunities to reach out into organizations and communities frequently.	Mostly natural " facilities" on the rim.	see above - Roc the River method
Input open to the public	Hiking trails thru woods on dirt rails, Biking, walking trails on pathed trails for wheel chairs and strollers too.	Include native plants
Underrepresented community members at the table, voicing their opinions. Including sports leagues to accommodate their needs	Re-routing pubic transportation to allow fast and efficient access to the park. Food restrooms, concessions, activities, yoga	Accessibility. Public transportation. Winter Use-ice rink, sledding, Food, restaurant on the river, activities - yoga
Multiple points of access, Information/ Virtual Surveys / Advertise progress	Places for youth, schools to hold class outdoors, University /Collage use for horticulture study, Cornell Coop presence	Keeping the park green! Nature Trails, Family friendly, Easy senior access, Safety
Reaching out to the different communities.	Place for festival, concerts and children's area	Safety
	Hiking, walking, exercise stations	Being inclusive in signage with language including braille, signing etc..

Some workshops in neighborhood libraries for opportunities for input	Classroom/meeting space for classes, neighbor meetings workshops in a collaborative space, neighborhood meetings, women's groups	Love the concept of planning for 8 to 80yrs old to enjoy
	City free trolley to take people to the park and all our cultural institutions - like Chicago	
Gatherings in neighborhood and with small groups	Some kind of public transportation between zoo, HF Park, Susan B House, Maplewood Rose, Convention Center, Stadiums'	Accessibility and safety for seniors
Outreach to area schools, E.g.. World of Inquiry Students, offer presentation of project followed by field trip then student input. Contact SUNY ESF, RCSD programs, Genesee CC	Urban Food Forest, downtown garden. Edible fruit trees, bushes etc... using permaculture design, compost and recycling receptacles, all electric buildings, bike racks	Given the park is below street level consider blue light emergency button phones like on college campus.
	Walking, biking, interpretive signage, picnic area if able to keep clean, arboretum so trees and shrubs tagged. Botanical aspects like Cornel's Amphitheater Sculptures	
Keep people informed of the progress and opportunities to give input with more lead time.	Space to enable youth to overnight in the natural space - get city youth to camp!	Maybe there needs to be a physical space designated as part of NYS Parks that can be a physical point for community input. This would jumpstart a development if NYS Parks leadership rot he project.
You are doing it already. Now you need to communicate which entities are doing what and provide status of each entity/progress on a broader level.	The access to disable persons must be a priority so financing elevators is mandatory. Remove the safety issues using park rangers vs. police.	Put an entity "in charge" of creating the workforce development /apprenticeship program with city resident's to improve poverty levels in Rochester and create the unique "weather" + "History" + "flavors" of Rochester via diverse retails, grounds keeping and maintenance services, industry employees and entrepreneurial businesses (MSS ? SJF) and City of Rochester Schools.
Bringing local schools into the design process - sustainability of local ecosystems not just learning about ecology.	Restoration of natural habitat for biodiversity learning and connecting to New York's flora. NYS Parks have done this., Gonandagan, look into other NYS Parks systems.	Access and safety. Parking for those not living in the city.
Look at Brooklyn Bridge Park	Former museum visitor center by the race - Activate! Elevator, all things listed on board, programming is key. Regular concerts and events-need event space, festivals - natural playground area for children.	Megan Meyer/ Healthy Yards Monroe County/ Color Penfield Green
Hooray for the State Park!!		
Regular input meetings at grassroots level. Like Greentopia has been doing - ask the people who will be using it - all demographics		Accessibility - elevator needed. How do you get to lower level? How will people know how to get there? Where to park?
I have no answer but feel is critical. Tammy's comment about people seeing Parcel 5 not for them is important. City and CBO's get the critical input of local residents? What do neighbors want? Who will go to the park?	Green space!! If there are entertainment and education venues created let them be in the spaces at High Falls and not in the gorge.	Safety - people are hesitant to go to a lower area and feel unsafe. Will need to work against with excellent lifting, programming, management.
	Net zero energy - features solar powered implements- sustainability - climate smart solutions and examples. Eco district - Needs examples of Green Infrastructure.	Connections - to all the other paths in the city create one continuum if possible.
Trails, road should be pervious and heated with electric to be snow and ice fee in winter. Solar power produced for cabin areas.		Maintenance - cleanliness, keeping it well maintained and safe
Eco district could build on Climate Green Solutions on top and spend less on cleanup, \$ and time.		Balancing loud voices and important but quiet voices. Chris's point about people speaking for them is as important. How park is maintained. Funding for operations?
		Cleaning sites is underway, what would be placed on top> this area is available for sustainable green solutions.



HIGH FALLS STATE PARK DESIGN WORKSHOP Leadership Breakfast



May 2nd, 2024 Transcript

Introductions

Bill Price: Welcome to the High Falls State Park Leadership Breakfast. A very exciting initiative that's taken a while to get to this point. A lot of work has been done. In addition to this breakfast, we are going to have a community conversation tomorrow afternoon at the Community Design Center's gallery. We do that each month on First Fridays. Rochester has First Fridays with a lot of different organizations.

We're in the Hungerford Building on East Main Street full of artist's lofts. And they all open their studios on First Fridays, so we open our doors and meet people who are coming to visit the artists and come in and chat with us. And tomorrow it's going to be about High Falls. On Saturday we will be having our design workshop. This is a full-day, public engagement event. This is kind of the kickoff event for High Falls and that will be set. So, why don't we get started and do some introductions and welcome. And then we're going to have a panel discussion. We've formulated some questions for our panelists, and we would like that to just lead to more conversations about the park and all the ingredients that go into sustaining a public park. I'm going to ask Lisa to come up and go through your mission and everything you've been doing.

Lisa Baron: First, welcome, and I'm so glad you all could make it. Thank you to our panelists for participating. I'm going to start with a quote. So, the father of American landscape architecture Frederick Law Olmsted said of urban parks, "It is one great purpose of the park to supply to the hundreds of thousands of tired workers who have no opportunity to spend their summers in the country a specimen of God's handiwork that shall be to them inexpensively, but a month or two in the White Mountains or the Adirondacks is to great cost to those in easier circumstances." Olmsted understood the relevance of urban parks to all city residents, especially those who may not be able to access the more distant parklands like the Adirondacks or Letchworth. Progressive cities across America are recognizing the importance that parks, open space, historic preservation, and protected natural areas have in elevating economic vitality, public health, recreational benefits, educational experiences, and sense of place.

In places where public spaces are scarce, people are reimagining underutilized spaces for new and creative uses. For example, in New York City, the Highline in the 1930s elevated freight train lines, was preserved and reimagined into an elevated green oasis in the middle of the Meatpacking District. This served as inspiration for Greentopia to push for the creation of a redesigned Pont de Rennes Bridge and access to our own incredible natural resources at the bottom of the gorge. The goal in planning this park

is to offer Rochesterians' a sense of place, an escape from concrete, a recognition that everyone's history is important, a restored, accessible waterfront, and a threshold experience to the great outdoors.

So those are my goals, right? And I hope at the end of this meeting we express other goals, other visions, and other dreams for this park. Greentopia's mission has been to create urban green space that leads to positive change in people's lives. You're familiar with the Green Visions program, of course, it's highly successful. We farm over 2 acres of vacant lots in downtown Rochester, we employ neighborhood youth to grow commercial-grade flowers, and change neighborhoods with wonderful, beautiful green space at the same time.

And of course, the big project is the park, where we are advocating, raising money, and creating a vision for High Falls and now for our state park. So, the road has been long and arduous to the park, right? It had lots of twists and turns, and so this is a condensed timeline. Greentopia started in 2012, and one of the first things we thought about and got money for was an Eco-district. NYSERDA funded the plan to create this Eco-district. The Eco-district is a self-defined area that is committed to ambitious sustainability goals that are measurable. The district was centered in High Falls because it contained a unique urban ecosystem that included incredible natural assets and an authentic story about the power of renewable energy in changing an urban landscape. We got money for the plan but no money for the implementation. But this process started a real, deep conversation about the story of this place, how to create vibrancy and livability, how to bring health, wellbeing, biodiversity to downtown, and how to create access to our waterfront.

In 2016, the Beebe station (RG&E Power Plant) was removed, and so people walking across the Pont de Rennes Bridge could see the potential for a park. In 2017, Greentopia is a small, spunky organization so we applied for the \$50 million URI Grant to build an urban state park. We didn't get it, but the City did for Roc the Riverway, which had a vision that did include a park in High Falls. The Roc the Riverway Advisory Committee was formed, we picked the projects to get the \$50 million, and two of those projects were near and dear to my heart—the Pont de Rennes Bridge, and the High Falls Terrace Park received funding. In 2019, the City was going to close the High Falls Visitor Center. There had been a 25-year agreement with the State to keep a visitor's center open, but the City just didn't have the resources to do it. They had a change of heart when they received a \$2.5 million grant to renovate the Center, which is in process. This High Falls Visitor's Center is, of course, another potential gateway and introduction to the High Falls State Park. 2021, yes, so Greentopia has skin in the game. We owned Hydro Station #4 and ¾ of the land underneath the falls. So, money went into looking at this building that was the original power station that ran the electric lights in the subway in Rochester to see if anything could be easily put on top of it to serve as an observation deck. So, when you stand on top of that building, you feel the spray. It's a very Niagara Falls experience. Unfortunately, the building just didn't come up to snuff, it couldn't do it easily. But we have it in our back pocket, right? To maybe be able to create that experience for Rochester.

And of course, one of the main things that Greentopia does to bring and raise awareness to High Falls is Dinner on the Bridge. I hope you all can come to that and experience that. We started back on the Bridge in 2021, and we won't be back on the Bridge until 2025. The Governor announced we're getting a state park in 2022. That picture was taken (reference photo screen) when we had tours (RG&E) of the lower

part of the gorge. Again, everyone's taking pictures because we've been sealed off from access from this gorge for over 100 years, so it was a unique experience to be able to go down there. 2023, work begins on the Pont de Rennes Bridge and cleaning up the Beebee Station site. So, my office is in High Falls, I look at this every day. I had the opportunity to talk to the Pont du Rennes crew while they were on break this week. They said they're right on schedule, it should be done by the end of the year, and I must share this with you. So, I explained who I was and why I was curious, and one of the crewmembers said, "I was in the Green Visions Program, and here I am working on the Ponte de Rennes Bridge." And I just thought that was so cool!

You know, from 2022 to 2023 to now, Greentopia, Genesee Land Trust, and my friend Ken Peralsky from Tour Blend were a little bit worried because the park kind of went dark, so we really were excited about this project and we wanted Rochester to be excited too, to express and voice what they wanted in their urban state park. Urban state parks are a brand-new thing, the State is excellent at creating parks, but urban state parks are brand new, and people aren't as familiar with them. What should be in my urban state park? So we created a survey and a video that we're going to see in a minute, to explain to people where this park would be, and get out of them what they would want in their park. And so, we went to La Marketa, we went to the Rochester Public Market, we banged on doors, we partnered with Ibero-American League and Poder Radio Station to get the message out, to get people to take this survey. We had 1400 responses to our survey, and we're going to see a video that we created, and that'll tell you about what the results were.

Video Presentation

High Falls...from areas that have not been open to the public for more than a century. For example, boardwalks near the Falls may lead to a viewing deck in the center of the river. From here, you'll have a spectacular, close-up view from the very bottom of the waterfall. This unique urban park will include about 40 acres of land to the bottom of the gorge. Starting in High Falls, it will extend to almost ¾ mile north along both sides of the riverbed. The park may showcase the industrial history of the area, for example, interpretative features may demonstrate how water, diverted into Browns Race above the Falls, turned water wheels that powered mills and factories. The park will be adjacent to this modern RG&E hydroelectric facility, which provides Rochester with 8 megawatts of clean electricity.

The west bank may include a fun children's play area, with safe, controlled access to the riverbank. Imagine, an elevator at the High Falls Visitor's Center along Brown's Race; it could provide easy access to the bottom of the gorge along with a bus loop and bike path. The park will highlight the ecology of the Genesee River and the gorge and may include an urban ecology center to host nature-based programs for the local community as well as visitors. At the bottom of the gorge, a new pedestrian bridge may cross over the river beneath the Smith Street Bridge. Along the bridge would be a large lawn for recreational activities on the east side of the river. This portion of the park might also include a restored meadow and amphitheater and pavilion near the riverbank. Access to this area may include a bus loop and a nature trail leading to the top of the gorge near St. Paul Street. The new park will be adjacent to the Genesee Riverway Trail, a multi-use trail, which stretches from Lake Ontario to the Erie Canal. At the north end of the park, plans include converting an abandoned railroad trestle into a multi-use trail crossing the river. This would make the new park more accessible to the nearby El Camino and Edgerton neighborhoods. To

create the park, some of the land must first be cleaned to eliminate remnants of past industrial uses. RG&E has plans underway to begin cleaning the west bank of the river near High Falls, starting in 2023. It will take several years to complete. This new urban park will make the base of High Falls and the downstream riverbed accessible to the public. It will be an amazing green space in the heart of Rochester. The park will provide health and wellness benefits to both neighbors and other visitors. It should increase tourism, provide new jobs, and help bring our community together. What would you like to see and do in this new park? We really appreciate hearing your views and ideas. Please, take a few minutes to complete our survey.

Lisa: Alright, so, there you have it. These were renditions that were done by the State when the Governor made the announcement. But they're not written in stone. All your ideas, all of our ideas, are on the table. So, I'm going to turn this over to Vinnie Esposito to bring you up to speed on where we're at with our state park.

Vinnie Esposito: Thank you, Lisa, please give her a nice round of applause. She's been a driving force behind this for a very long time, and it's a pleasure to be back here with you, Bill, CDCR, and so many friends who have been helping make this dream a reality for a very long time. I'd also like to recognize my partners in state government who are here, Assembly members Sarah Clark and Demond Meeks, Senator Samra Brouk, and I also see City Councilman Mitch Gruber, Bridget Monroe, and County Legislator Rickie Frazier so thank you for joining us.

So, I don't want to repeat what Lisa said because that was a terrific lead-up and context for this discussion, and that's what we want this to be is a discussion, but I can assure you one thing; the park hasn't gone dark, we've just been in a quiet place, in large part because this was always going to be a multi-year, multi-phase effort, in large part because getting the parklands cleaned is a pretty big deal. And the benefit of that process taking a long time is we can do a lot of this, we can do a lot of planning and ensuring that the park is well thought out, it's inclusive, and it has everything we want it to be. Because this park has the potential to be as transformational as any physical project we've done in the city of Rochester in generations. And it's my hope that because of the dreaming and the planning that the people in this room have been doing, we will do this right, and it will have that effect. So, I'm not sure what you put on here Bill as the results of the survey, but I keyed up a couple of points that we can discuss in the panel. But there are some obvious real challenges with putting this together, not the least of which is the environmental remediation of the property because of its past uses, assembling the parcels in terms of state ownership, and then of course constructing what we want the amenities to be within the park.

So, these are all the things that we've been working on in this quiet phase, just about 2 years since Governor Hochul publicly announced the State's intentions to make this a park. We've been working very closely with the Parks Department and my colleagues, NYSDEC, Dept of Public Service, RG&E, Bausch and Lomb, the City, and many of you, the key stakeholders in this project, over the last couple of years to get this all right. Okay, I mean I just want to say thank you for being here, I want to let this get going and dive right into it, obviously I've been very involved. This originated with the Roc the Riverway, and many of you were on that advisory committee. ESD and the regional council really led the partnership with that with

the City to create the vision plan, and this is really the continuation of the vision that was articulated in that plan and it's exciting to work on it. I'm happy to be here, happy to continue to work on this for years to come, and excited to see what this will mean for our city and for the whole region for a very long time.

Bill: Thank you. (Referencing graphic) This is the results of Lisa's survey, with Genesee Land Trust. These features are items that people want and some of their concerns. All of you have a card in front of you on the table and at some point, after you've had some conversation or thought about this, seen the presentations or heard some answers, you may have some new ideas. But please take the time to fill those out, it's just part of the process we'd like to include in our overall public engagement. But like I said, on Saturday we're going to have that design workshop. The Community Design Center has been doing these for over 24 years or so, dating back to the late 1990s. You may have heard of the charrettes in the past, we are changing that name to design workshops, just so that it's a little more understandable by the public. This one is going to be at MCC Downtown Campus on Saturday May 4th. I think every event known to man is happening on Saturday the 4th, including Clean Sweep, and a lot of different things we have, so just about 100 people registered to spend the day with us, so we're very pleased about that.

The important thing about the High Falls Design Workshop is that we are going to talk about the programming and the features people would like to see in the park. These kinds of features, these kinds of activities, but we also want to make sure that we're talking about the adjacent neighborhoods. When we ask the question "Who are we doing this for?" or "Why are we doing this?" you must answer the question and if you say we're doing it for everybody, then we really have dig in and what does that mean 'for everybody.' So, the adjacent neighborhoods, with Kodak having dramatically down-sized, I think you look at all the streets surrounding it were built as semi-highways, State Street, even St. Paul, has very high-speed traffic, and you don't necessarily feel like walking there. You have businesses that are some manufacturing, some storage, but we'd like to see what this project can do to help the immediate neighborhoods, and how can the immediate neighborhoods provide services that are needed for the park. So, it'd be a two-way interface on that.

So, these are the kinds of things that we will be talking about. The attendees will be split up in groups and go out in focus areas east and west of the river, including the Bausch or the Smith Street Bridge, and look in and see down there. A lot of people still, in this town, have not seen where this park is going to be, or even High Falls, which is amazing to me. So, everyone comes back, they sit around tables, draw, sketch, throw out ideas on note pads, and then at the end, they present those ideas to each other and hopefully come up with more ideas. Then we take all that information, we distill it and scan it, and then we boil it all down, and we hope to be giving Vinnie and Art and any of the folks working on the design or planning, the results of the workshop. Then they would hand it off to their consultant team, as they move forward in public engagement and programming. So that would be the first, and part of this conversation is how do we keep public engagement vibrant and active throughout this design phase when you're not going to see much more than cleanup going on.

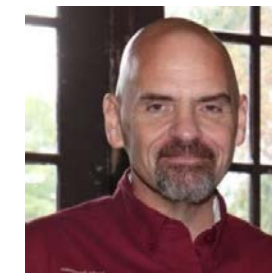
Panel Discussion



Vinnie Esposito



Tammy Mayberry



Art Briley



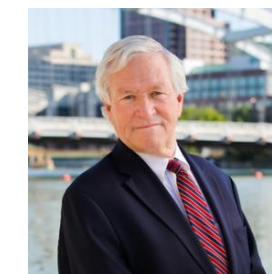
Dr. Calvin Gantt



Chris Widmaier



Joe Stefko



Don Jeffries

So let me introduce our panel here today, **Joe Stefko** of ROC2025, **Art Briley** of NYS Parks out of Letchworth, **Tammy Mayberry** of City of Rochester, welcome Vinnie, **Don Jeffries** of Visit Rochester, **Dr. Calvin Gant** of MCC, and **Chris Widmaier** of Rochester Ecology Partners. So, I'd like to ask each of them a series of questions, just to get the ball rolling and let the conversation start. If we can get through all these questions, great, and if we can't, we've talked about a lot of things. And for each of the panelists, I don't know that you've got these cards in front of you, but at the end of your response, I'd like to hear what each of you would like to see in the park, as you're going to be the citizens that go, same as all of us. Let's start with Vinnie, we kind of already addressed it with Lisa, but why an urban state park? Why a state park versus a city or a county park? In addition to that, we know where the idea came from, there's a few other people in the world that might lay claim to this, but Lisa's really the driving force behind all that. You did mention a little bit about what's happening behind the scenes, but what's been happening behind the scenes to date that got the Governor to commit the resources that the State asked?

Vinnie: Sure, this is much more than just an urban park, first and foremost. The quote from Olmsted was pretty inspiring, but this is a pretty spectacular piece of just the world. It's not just a park for parks-sake, it's really the reason Rochester exists where it exists. And a special place that has been prevented from people visiting it for a very long time. So, the opportunity to create a state park really came from the work that people have been doing to identify this idea for a long time, kind of cultivated through the Roc the Riverway process, and to her credit, when we presented it to Governor Kathy Hochul shortly after she became Governor, she was all in. I think a state park makes sense in a lot of ways, mostly for resources. It's just a little bit beyond what the City can take on, given all the other parks the City manages within its borders. I think we can make it even more special with the State's expertise, even though urban parks are

not their traditional baileywick, they have done a lot, and Art can talk about that recently. And when you have a Governor committed to something and sees the potential for it to become truly transformational, I think that's what brought this to the forefront, and we also have the expertise to bring together all the partners to make it happen. It was also a complex puzzle, it's not just as simple as the City saying "yeah let's make this a park." The regulatory aspects related simply to the current land ownership is significant.

It's so exciting to see it happening, even though it is slow forming. One thing I didn't mention in my remarks, but I want everyone to know, because of the status, is we have just now completed the process for hiring a design professional team to come on board to support this effort. We'd hoped to have the firm selected to be here today, we're a couple weeks behind on that, but by mid-May we're going to identify a team that will be really catapulting this process, engaging with all of you in the community, to take the conceptual plans you know and have seen in the past couple of years into actual design. And that's happening as we speak, and so that's why this forum today and the workshop on Saturday are perfect timing.

Bill: Thank you. Alright, Art, you're next. When you're defining a new state park, what are the fundamental differences between an urban state park and say, Letchworth State Park, or a state park in a rural area or a natural setting?

Art Briley: I'd to start by saying this is exciting to begin with. We don't establish new state parks on a regular basis. I mean, it's just not something that we do. We've got a few new facilities throughout the agency, but it's not something we get to do every day. And we get to do it right. Vinnie talked about the remediation that we've got going on, that's going to allow us the time to do these kinds of outreaches, make sure we're hearing back from the public and it's not decisions being made in a bubble. When it comes to urban state parks vs. rural, we're not exactly new to doing state parks, it's new to this area, we haven't yet done it in the city of Rochester. But whether it be Long Island, New York City, we've got Roberto Clemente Waterfront State Park, fairly new park Shirley Chisholm State Park, which was reclaiming contaminated land. Closer to home we've got Niagara Falls, and in the city of Buffalo we've got Buffalo Harbor, which is a little over a decade old, so we went through a very similar process with those. What we do recognize is the value of land, so 40 acres at Letchworth State Park, amongst the 40,000 acres, is kind of a drop in the bucket. But 40 acres in the heart of Rochester has a whole different value to it, and not something we come across every day, so we recognize every precious square foot that's there needs to be preserved, needs to be available for the public to enjoy.

One of the other things that we talk about is barriers to enjoying our state parks. You know, we've got 180 in our system, but transportation is a major barrier. We want people to come enjoy Letchworth, and Hamlin Beach, but they can't always get there. There's a transportation barrier. Our hope is, with this being right in the heart of Rochester, it's going to open that door to a lot more people. A whole diverse community, different backgrounds, different cultures, who may not have been exposed to parks before. This will be an opportunity not just for people to enjoy a park in their backyard right in the city, but maybe their first introduction to state parks in general, and that will prompt them to want to visit the Letchworth, Hamlin, and Shirley Chisholm and see everything we've got to offer. So, we realize that there's a difference between the rural and the urban, but they all tie together. At the beginning of us

getting here today, I was telling a story about Letchworth, it has a very similar parallel history to where the park was industrialized, and it was reclaimed to establish that park. So that's got that historical component, and we're doing it all over again here at High Falls, which our plans will be the greenest, the most inclusive, and the most progressive park in our system. So, there's differences but there's a lot of parallels between the two.

Bill: Art, one more question, we've got some of the features or activities up here that people are thinking about what they would like, but fast forward to long-term operations and maintenance or operations and management of the park. What are some of the models of long-term operations that you use in state parks? State parks running it, hiring their own staff, maybe a third-party concession agreement, I don't know, maybe this would be in addition to the Friends of High Falls situation, that may be an ancillary organization that partners with whoever operates. As we move forward and we have a design consultant on, what do they have to know about operations and maintenance or management as we're designing?

Art: Yeah, so there's some basics in state parks that we know, keep up the grounds, keep things clean, but a lot of that is going to be worked out as we work through design. As we hear back from the public, and you know we already have some things that we know, providing that green open space for people that wouldn't normally have that, but as we go through the design process and the components that'll be added to the park, that will start to develop some of those questions and answers, so we want to make sure the design consultant is cognizant of all that. But I think it goes without saying that this isn't going to be operated or managed in a bubble, it's not just state parks by itself. Just like the process to develop it, it's going to take multiple stakeholders, collaboration with the City, with the ESD, non-for-profits, with Greentopia, with a lot of people who are already here in this room. So, I think it's going to be a hybrid model, but the key components will start to come to life as we work through the design and we know what we're going to do at the end of the day.

Bill: Alright, I'll ask you what would you like to see in the park?

Art: I'll be honest with you; it's identified right there. What a gem it is to have natural open space where those opportunities don't normally exist. I mean, people need that. COVID highlighted that more than ever, how important having nature in your life really is. And now we're going to be able to have that right in the heart of Rochester. That's what I want to see.

Bill: Dr. Gant, I have a question for you. Art mentioned transportation as a barrier to accessing the park or parks. I think we would all agree we want this park to be accessible to everyone. We noted, Lisa told me about this, that 30% of City residents identify themselves as disabled, what are the best practices in ensuring that the park is accessible and open to everyone?

Dr. Calvin Gant: So first, thank you for the opportunity to be a part of the panel. I mean, if you can imagine, MCC is truly going to have to be a partner and is looking forward to being a partner in this process especially as we renovate High Falls with the Downtown campus and wanting to make sure we're a great partner through that work. But yes, as you stated, certainly the ability to be able to get to the park is just one major factor. And to make sure we're thinking not just within a block or two of the park, but if

people want to come from further distances but don't have transportation, what is the safety concern about walking from wherever they want to come from to the park so that they can enjoy the park themselves or with their families? So again, making sure that we're thinking about the eco-structure around where the park is in fact going to be located is just as important, so that when people want to come to the park, they don't see the exterior aspect of getting there to be a major barrier. Let alone talking about going from an upper level to a lower level, and I was happy to see there was conversation about elevators and things of that nature, and again, letting folks understand and see that there was conscious effort and thought to making sure that we were creating a space and an opportunity for everyone who wants to come to the park and appreciate the park. I think that that's an important aspect of it. So again, making sure that as we're having these conversations, we're in communication with those areas that are working more closely with disability communities and things of that nature to ensure the things that maybe we're thinking about putting in are the latest standard, are going to be able to accommodate the population of folks that we have right here in the Rochester area. So, all of that is important, and I think again, once you create that, then you'll have more people vested in calling it their park. So, it won't just be the state park, it'll become our park. So, the more that we can do that and eliminate those barriers and create those opportunities for people to see themselves in the space, will be to our benefit.

Bill: Thank you. What would you like to see in the park?

Dr. Gantt: I have a list. But it's a short list, really! One of the things just for me personally, is how do we use the park to help elevate what makes Rochester a special place to live? I mean we have, I think, some of the richest history in Upstate New York. Social justice, history, art, theater, we have a broad diversity, so how do we figure out a way to ensure that we don't lose the steam of all those things that are right around us? We have such amazing festivals; how do we incorporate those festivals into that space so that we expand it beyond East Ave. and people see themselves coming further downtown is important as well.

Bill: Alright thank you. Tammy, I'd like to ask you, High Falls has turned into Phase 2 of Roc the Riverway. So, I'd like to get a sense of how you feel this park fits in with the other components of Roc the Riverway, and we know that you've also completed the Rochester 2034 Plan, which talks a lot about placemaking in the city and now the Zoning Alignment Program (ZAP) is in process of making sure your vision is aligned with that placemaking. So, you've got to be busy about how all of this is going to work together.

Tammy Mayberry: So, thanks again for having me here. I think I have a cool role in all of this. Not only am I with the City now, but I was also with ESD (Empire State Development) when the Roc the Riverway Vision Plan was put together. So, I can see it from both the State side and the City side, so that's a really cool perspective. As you mentioned, to Roc the Riverway, it was part of the original vision plan. If you go back in the vision plan, which I did yesterday, it says specifically, in the future we are looking at a state park at High Falls. So, it's literally coming true. Part of the city's role, in addition to being a partner, is that to Dr. Gantt's point, is that we want people to feel safe. We want them to be able to walk around High Falls and in the surrounding areas and feel safe. And that goes to the placemaking of Rochester 2034. Like we're doing with Downtown, it's all about people. We want to be able to get all these areas activated, and we want to be able to say "Hey! We're having festivals in the park, but we're also having restaurants

and shops and everything nearby. It's all part of an ecosystem, we want it all to work together. And when you have people on the street, boots on the ground, people will feel safe. So, it's a lot of perception, as opposed to reality.

Bill: And what would you like to see in the park?

Tammy: So, it's not as much as what I'd like to see in the park, but I would like to see it accessible to all. From what I've heard at the State and now with the City, even though we have so many different parcels and pieces of land in the City, people feel like it's not accessible to them. For example, Parcel 5 which is right in the middle of the city, but we hear anecdotally, people don't feel like it's for them. I hope that this park will make people feel like it's for them and for everyone.

Bill: Chris and Dr. Gantt, both of you feel free, but Chris, this is 40 acres in Downtown, and that stands to be one gigantic classroom. It will provide a vast range of educational opportunities. What do you and Dr. Gant as well, see as the range of learning topics that are possible once people have access to the river and the lower level of the Gorge?

Chris Widmaier: Yeah, that's a great question, and thank you for inviting me here to share my thoughts on that. So, we already have one incredible opportunity at Maplewood Park and the Lower Falls. In April, we took seven 4th grade classes there, from the City School District science curriculum to go see all of the rock layers and look for fossils and look above the Falls at Maplewood Park and it's an absolutely incredible place to go learn about natural geology for one, but then Seth Green Drive is one of the most popular fishing places in the city of Rochester, and brings people from across the country. You will see people that live on St. Paul standing shoulder-to-shoulder with people that came in from Pennsylvania or around the world to fish there. So, I think it provides a good opportunity for us to think about a lot of those same things that will be possible in the High Falls area once it's developed. One of the new opportunities that will come as far as being a state park, and also being in the middle of the river, so it's neither east or west side, so some of those things where there's a class from Fairport where a teacher wouldn't bring their class to Maplewood because it's a city park, they may be now willing to bring their class to High Falls because it's a state park. For me, the exciting opportunity would be there are students from School 5, which is over near the High Falls area, students from School 5, students from Lakeshore Elementary, students from Patty Hill, students from South Seneca, all in the park together learning together through some sort of summit or something like that, and just being there, seeing each other, and being in close proximity to each other. I think the opportunity for learning will be to have people understand and have ways to educate about all the thought and intention that went into making this an inclusive place. To answer that question of 'Who did we build this park for?' and 'How did we come to something where everyone feels welcome?' and that's both the built environment, and the social environment. Where we are now today is a great place to reflect on the role of the social environment and whether people feel excluded or included, and whether they feel welcome and unwelcome. I think a lot of the opportunity lies in making something that has the programming, that is, when we talk about safety, how are we going to focus on making sure there are lots of park rangers and programming going on that makes it safe rather than a lot of police and guard gates and things like that. So, I see those as the opportunities that will be unlocked as part of this.

Bill: What would you like to see in the park?

Chris: I would like to see, other than the things that have already been mentioned, I would like to see a lot of consideration about making it a 12-month park. So, a lot of these renderings are nice for the summer, it's great, but if you go down near the river in March, there's no teacher, no parent, that is going to let their child anywhere near the river. So how do we make sure that it is accessible throughout the year? The other thing I'd really like to see is if there is some sort of educational center, that is built on the St. Paul side of the park, and that there are a lot of things done to make that as welcoming as possible on the St. Paul side.

Bill: Thank you. Dr. Gantt, as part of that, what are some of the local career readiness or workforce development in higher education programs that could benefit from and contribute to the state park?

Dr. Gantt: Well, again, if we're not aware, this generation of folks that we have coming in through college right now, are very, very much into the environment and sustainability. That's a part of their DNA, so if we're not aware of that, we need to be clued in that that is a huge part of who they are. We have programs right here in the area; I looked up every school in the area that either has an environmental science or geology or sustainability program. Most of our institutions or colleges around us have something. The question becomes 'Where do they actually get to go to practice any of the stuff that they're learning in the classroom?' That's where we probably have the deficit in our environment. If they want to learn, actively learn, they must leave the region. Maplewood is close enough, but everyone can't go to Maplewood all at the same time. So how do we take what is already an interest for those that are already in college and create an opportunity not only for them to learn about the history of Rochester and what they are studying. But also, we are trying to retain young talent in our area, so if we create another ecosystem for them to see that this is a place not only for them to get educated, but this is a place that is vested in things that are important for them. For those who have raised families here, it's a great place to raise a family, so again, how do we create the ecosystem that we want to have long term effects to be able to help not just the park but everything in our region continue to grow? So, most of the schools have those programs already, so we wouldn't be looking to create something that already exists, but we would be already able to tap into an environment and a community of students that probably otherwise would have to go elsewhere to get that experience.

Bill: Thank you. Joe, I wanted to talk to you about Rochester and High Falls, which really served as the place where Rochester was established. Because of the power of High Falls, this is where industry started, eventually the Erie Canal is built only a couple blocks away, but as High Falls moves away from an industrial and power generation location, what are the opportunities for economic development both in the immediate neighborhoods adjacent to it, as well as the city and region a little broader?

Joe Stefko: Alright, so I appreciate the question. Look, this is a textbook placemaking investment, right? And placemaking has never been more important to economic development than it is today. We're seeing that here in Rochester with the **Roc the Riverway** investment broadly. But communities across the country are investing in similar placemaking opportunities because they are differentiators. Unique assets

drive unique experiences. So, there is cookie cutter economic development, and then there is investing in economic development opportunities that create experiences that you can only have here in Rochester, or only have in another community. So, where we have those unique assets, and High Falls obviously, and our riverway is certainly one of those, we have to capitalize on those. As you said, High Falls, that area is so fundamental, so vital, to Rochester's economic history, industrial history, to our story overall. So, placemaking investments can really have profound impacts on tourism, on commercial activity in surrounding neighborhoods, on perception, which is one of the things that has been mentioned already. I do want to highlight though, and I appreciate you raising this a few minutes ago, but investments like this and sites like this, can help connect disconnected parts of our community and bridge some of those divides. So, this is not just an investment in place and in a unique asset, but its investment in a place where we've seen disinvestment. And we see that in some of the economic data from the surrounding neighborhoods. I think the adjacent census tracts 92 on the east and 22 or 24 on the west. Those two census tracts combined have an average poverty rate of about 55-56%. In Census tract 92, it's over 62%. Within the catchment area, home values are about half of what we see in the rest of the Rochester metro area. Median household incomes are around one quarter, 24/25% of what we see in the metro. So, there is a huge opportunity here but a real economic argument, alongside an ecological and educational argument for investing.

Bill: We've heard a lot of things mentioned, and I think they all contribute to this question, but are there specific things that will help for this region or for these neighborhoods to reach their full economic potential?

Joe: Yeah, I mean absolutely. I think first and foremost, we can't just expect to build it and they will come, I think you saw this in the Roc the Riverway planning process, you saw this with the commitment to manage an entity, to bring real intentionality around programming and activating. I love the point about this being a 12-month, 365 day-a-year active site and just being thoughtful and intentional about that. Another point I'll mention, and I don't think it's been raised yet, is the opportunity to redevelop the Inner Loop North, and how that will help us realize in concert with the other parcels the full economic potential of this effort. Reclaiming that land, reconnecting neighborhoods, literally remaking the face of that side of downtown in concert with that park is just a huge opportunity for us to transform not just that site but the surrounding neighborhoods.

Bill: On Saturday, we've invited the City to come and just present the projects that are going on adjacent to High Falls, so everyone does get a sense of how this is all working together. Inner Loop North is critical to that connection to the downtown, which is quite a barrier right now between the railroad and the Inner Loop. Don, there you are. Good morning. What are the range of opportunities that you and **Visit Rochester** can imagine for the way of events programming for this park?

Don Jeffries: Yeah, this thing could be an economic engine for the community. This will attract visitors, like Art said and Chris said about the fishing. This can attract people from all over the country to come. It's another thing we can promote to attract visitors. Arts, culture, music, sporting events, community gatherings, we're a festival community, and can you imagine the number of festivals, how cool that would be to be right at High Falls? This is a very exciting project. Rachel Laber Pulvino is here from our office,

she's our VP of Communications. She meets regularly with all our cultural institutions, and I would say as an offshoot of this, Lisa, we would form a cultural committee to get all their input on this, and I think it would be great to see what their vision is for this. Rochester attracts about 225 meetings and conventions a year in the Rochester area, this would be such a fun place. They're always looking for a fun thing to do here, so High Falls would be a great destination. We're very excited about this.

Bill: So you mentioned some of our cultural institutions in town, Strong Museum, RMSC, theater, arts, even our sports, are long running institutions in town; how do we get all of them engaged in this programming, 365 days, in this space?

Don: Yeah, I think bringing all those cultural institutions together to get their input would be key. One of the things that's not talked about a lot at High Falls is Innovation Field is right there, the soccer stadium is right there, and think about it, you could have a sports and entertainment district right in High Falls. There's a lot of opportunity there.

Bill: We are going to be at the workshop looking specifically at the connectivity of Innovation Field (baseball) and the soccer stadium. There's a lot of actual activities that go on at the soccer stadium that I think a lot of people don't know about, including a gym you can go to and be a part of. So everything from up Lyell, over towards Brown and Broad streets should be included in the conversation. Thank you, Don. What would you like to see?

Don: I'd like to see gathering space. The RPO had a great concert with the eclipse, it was sold out, so there's no reason we can't do that kind of thing down there. There should be some kind of venue for people to go to gather, and to Chris's point, somewhere all year long that we can use.

Bill: This is really for anybody, I'm going to direct it to Vinnie, is as we start thinking about, you're going to be hiring a consulting team to help with the programming and the planning, but what do you see here is the shared interest in this room and some of the partners you've been working with to date that are going to help inform your consultant team as they start to pick up and run with this?

Vinnie: Well, even though we're going to be paying them a lot of money, I kind of feel bad for our consultant team, because we are going to dump so much stuff on them the first day they start. We have a lot of input we've gathered just in the last two years, along with all the other time leading up to it. So, I'm excited to start digging into this. I think the conceptual plans are great, but I know they can be improved and particularly with the perspective that others are bringing here. You asked me why I thought a state park would be good for here and it wasn't just resources, I should elaborate. State parks also have a very great brand of being very inclusive and being everyone's place to go, and that's something that we want to take on. I'm excited to hear people like Art say this is going to be the most inclusive, the most progressive state park in the system. This is a cool opportunity and a real canvas to create something unique and very special. So, I encourage everyone here, and the people you talk to, to stay engaged in this process as it starts to get more detail.

Bill: I was fortunate enough back in the late 80s, early 90s to be on the then Mayor Ryan's team to develop High Falls and the Urban Cultural Park Program. At the time, these were lessons learned years later. Looking back at it, I think there was a lot of design that was done, including exhibits in the visitor's center. But I'm not sure we did enough at the time to define who was going to maintain and operate the facilities. The Visitors Center with a museum got built, 60 Browns Race was built as a entertainment venue; repurposed from an old RG&E maintenance building. I think in the end we might've gotten done with the design and then figured out how to operate it. We've kind of seen that with High Falls over the years, that we don't have enough money, or the right entity isn't necessarily operating this. I see that as a challenge up front.

Vinnie: It is, and I would say two things to that point; first, that's been one of the first things we've asked the design teams as we've gone through the research and developing process, because that can't happen. You know, designing all the shiny objects we want to put in the park is the easy part. Prioritizing them is a different issue when it comes to building. It's how we ensure that this has a sustainable future. The other thing to that point in sustainability when it comes to economics and finance is also something we focused a lot on. An urban park offers a lot of opportunity to benefit the park and its surrounding area in ways that we need to make sure we're being intentional and planning for, to help both long-term. So that we don't have unintended consequences that are either to the detriment of the park or the neighborhood. Those are both things that are at the forefront of this, to your lessons learned point.

Tammy: I was just going to say, that's also where the City comes in. Mayor Evans vision is to make Rochester—you know, everyone is talking about poverty, everyone is talking about economic hardship—but he wants to lift people up, and part of that is trying to figure out how in the city we can lift the local economy up, to individuals in the local economy, not just surrounding, but in the entire city.

Bill: Right. Well, and since you have the mic, as we talk about how continuing the interesting part here, this event right now, and Saturday's event, although they are not necessarily the first conversations that have been going on, let's say this is really kicking off public engagement. With Roc the Riverway, did you see some successes in that model, that could help with our engagement and continuous communication with the community?

Tammy: It's kind of funny, because, we all know it, I'm going to say it out loud—when you go into an engagement, everyone has a preconceived idea of what we want to see and we move our ideas to that preconceived notion. I think the best part of Roc the Riverway is that we all went in thinking that, but by the time we came out, we had ideas that we never thought of. The skatepark, for example. The skatepark had never really been part of the conversation before the community engagement. It was thrown around here and there, but it was never really part of the conversation. And it was something that rose to the surface as something that the community really wanted to see. So I am hoping that this process will mirror that, that there will be something that none of us in this room or none of us in this community had thought of, and just one of those ideas that rises to the surface and makes it that much cooler.

Bill: Maybe this is for Art and Vinnie, who do you see as the face of this project? As we go forward, who does the community identify as the steward or the guiding light for this overall project?

Tammy: I'm going to answer that before I turn it over, it's going to be the Mayor. Even though this is a state park, they're going to say 'Oh, it's a city project', they're always going to look to the Mayor, and I'm always going to look to these two (gestures).

Vinnie: I will say this, it will be a state park. It will be branded as such. You'll get all the points. But when I talk about state parks having a great brand, it really is a great brand. It's not identified in any one person, not any one governor. It is a timeless brand that recognizes this is a place for people to go, it's independent of who the face is with creating it. And that's what we want to get to. We need to get to that so everyone can feel like it's their place to go. But it is, and will continue to be, a team effort to get this happening. It is very unusual that ESD is involved as we have been in forming a state park. That's not something that we've ever really experienced. It's because of the unique tie-in to the Roc the Riverway, it's because of the way the funding is coming forward to design it and ultimately to build some of it. But this needs to be, and really has been, a community-driven process. You know, the Governor really deserves a lot of credit for saying yes, in bringing it forward, but this was years of folks talking about this and laying a framework to make it possible, and the City deserves credit for that, the current property owners deserve credit for that, RG&E and Bausch and Lomb have been very willing partners in all this. As have all of you who have been envisioning this for a long time.

Bill: I just have one more question. Chris I just thought of you with this. On Saturday, if we have 100 people sitting down and talking about this, what questions would you say that we should put in front of the attendees, you know, we'll give them some guiding principles, and just ask for opinions, but what are some of the questions we should be asking them?

Chris: I think a good starting point is what their motivation is and what their connection to the place already is for being there. Genesee Land Trust and Ibero (Ibero American Development Corporation) were doing public outreach work around the state park, and it was bringing in people from the neighborhood that was most directly connected to the state park. So, when we talk about who has been involved in the conversations, it's important to recognize where those people are coming from and whether they are the people most connected to the place, and really acknowledging that. Beyond that, I think these questions of 'What do you think the benefits of the state park will be to you, to your neighborhood?' is that will really get at it at whether or not people are coming with a perspective of, when we talk about making it welcoming and inclusive, how are we going to know that the perspective that we're hearing from people is coming from them? That when organizing key public engagement is that people are speaking for themselves. So, those are the kinds of questions that should be asked at these kinds of things. When you speak for yourself, the skatepark is a great example, I think that the redevelopment of the park, that's on the St. Paul side along the river, High Falls Terrace, those are projects that were not thought of originally, but people were in the room that were already deeply invested in those places, and they had the roots and connections to say 'Look, this what we really want here in our neighborhood' and so I think that's a really important piece of getting public engagement in how you frame your questions.

Attendee Questions and Answers

Bill: Thank you. You know, I don't want to keep everybody too long, we appreciate everybody coming out, are there any questions or comments from all of you? I'm going to start back here.

Participant: Okay, so I wear many hats, and one of the hats I wear is working for the school district. One of the things of inclusivity and of healing and bringing our community together, I would like to see a model classroom where school districts across the region could meet there, in that same space that we use for community groups, so that it's community involved 24/7.

Participant: What is the timeline for completion of this?

Vinnie: There's not one answer to that question. There is no doubt that the park's creation will be phased in overtime, it will be multiple years. It will probably be not until the late 2020s, where this will be fully completed. But we are very focused, and in addition to operating and maintenance with the design team, how do we activate spaces as early as possible? There will be opportunities where cleanup has been completed to activate some things earlier, and then as the cleanup occurs, there is kind of a natural phase to where the cleanup is going, we will get people into the clean areas sooner. But I don't think anyone will be down in the gorge in any activities in the park until at least 2026, probably not 2027.



Kate (participant): Thank you. You spoke about all the work that is being done and you just referenced the cleanup, I think it would be disservice to the community if we aren't fully talking about the 30,000 cubic metric tons of coal tar that is being removed in that area, and it's an opportunity to teach children about what has happened and how we don't want to make those mistakes again, so it's really an opportunity to build on all of the work that's been done in this state on environmental justice, and telling the true story, prioritizing economic development and sustainability, and to bring kids down there safely to learn that. So I just want to make sure that's part of the story, because a lot of people that will be coming down, as Chris referenced, wouldn't necessarily be knowing these things and we should be learning from that opportunity.

Vinnie: Yeah, I didn't get to answer what I want in the park, because I've also offered a lot towards the conceptual plan, but one of the things is just some way to celebrate all the history of that area, good and bad. I think that's a great point, Kate.

Participant: So, first question, and then I will say what I would also like to see in the park, like you have, but will there be cleanup areas that are going to require State investment or is it all being done by people who previously owned the land?

Vinnie: Good question. So, RG&E is on the hook to clean up both of its major parcels, which are the two biggest. Bausch and Lomb is on the hook to clean up theirs. The State is going to help the City clean up their portion. We're going to be announcing a \$2 million grant soon, specifically for the city's Fall St. parcel, which will be, in essence, a 50/50 split between the State and the City to clean up that parcel.

Participant: My second question, which is also asking for more money, but as we've done Roc the Riverway, Phase I, Phase II, as someone who lives in Maplewood and goes all the way up, and is potentially looking at Phase III that continues the river all the way up, in ensuring accessibility, I want to make sure that the pathways out of this park, the path from the beach down isn't complete, and we'd really like to see that be complete all the way up the river to Lake Ontario. But then also looking at potentially Phase III of Roc the Riverway that starts to incorporate Maplewood Park and all that's happening there and ensuring that the resources continue to push that the entire river is connected.

Vinnie: Amen. A lot has been said about Inner Loop North and the obvious connection that the park is going to have to that, but there are a lot of studies going on, GTC (Genesee Transport Council) is doing a mobility study, the River Alliance is doing a Genesee Riverway Trail, you know, getting everybody from Lake Ontario to the city is the goal. The big theme in the Roc the Riverway Vision Plan was well beyond High Falls State Park, it was all about connections. It was about connections north and south along the river and into the city. So, I'm glad that it's still on your mind because that is the long-term goal.

Participant: So, you mentioned 1,400 people were in the survey, what is the status and demographics of the group that participated in the survey?

Lisa: Yeah, so, Genesee Land Trust collected all that data. When you click on a QR code you take a survey. It's still at Genesee Land Trust, and they need some help going through it, because a lot of the survey had hand-written notes. One of the next slides has the top concerns from the people who took the survey. It was pretty evident that there is a safety issue, that of crossing Downtown and getting down into the gorge.

Mitch Gruber: Thanks, so there's a lot of questions and comments so I want to distill it to one of each. Comment, just to go off someone's point about the classroom, I think what people are not fully aware of is how much the city has invested in the Maplewood Nature Center, which is not all that far away, and is going to have a lot of environmental education, programming, and space there. So, I just want to make sure that we're trying to build connectivity and not recreate. The question is, maybe for Tammy, is the City already has significant challenges in maintaining the parks that we have, in keeping them as clean as we want to. It's a staffing issue, it's a square mileage issue in how many people we must clean up for, who is responsible for the cleaning of this park?

Tammy: This is when I say this is a state park. (Group laughter)

Vinnie: It will be a state responsibility. We are working with the City on joint models to help fund operations and maintenance in a way to ensure that the park is well-resourced from an operational point

of view going forward. But it is a state park. There may be agreements with RPD for some security measures, although I take Chris's point very well that this is not supposed to be a fortress, this is supposed to be an oasis.

Participant: One of the things that seems to me that is going to be critical is where are edges of the park, the edge that connects the park to the city is critical. We talk about the Inner Loop North and the RR and that's a whole kind of question. The edges at the northern end, as it leads possibly to Maplewood Park and other things that the city is doing, for example, and the edges of St. Paul and otherwise. I think that it's not clear to me yet what the edges of the park are, and how the edges are going to be defined. Maybe it's still moveable and changeable but I think we all need to be very conscious of the physical, economic, and social consequences of establishing the edges of the state park.

Vinnie: Yeah, that's a great question. We have talked about it a lot. I wouldn't say it's written in stone, to use a pun, but there are certain key markers that identify the framework right now. Obviously, the gorge is a big factor that sets an edge very clearly. The only part that is not down in the gorge that is anticipated to be part of the park at this point is High Falls Terrace Park, which will become sort of an entry point that will be part of the state park. And then the other question at the northern edge, it's really identifying where the river cuts off the parcel that Bausch and Lomb owns and is cleaning up as the current boundary. Long term, I would like to see this all connected, whether it's a combination between city and state parks, or other green space, from the Maplewood area to the other Falls, but we sort of identified that area as the starting point for the park. So that's what we're working off of right now. That could change, that could be input as the design team comes in and takes the concept plan into a real design.

Participant: So, the question of where the leadership is, what is the contact point for any of these things moving forward, and this idea of 2027, or when we can get down into the park. I'm just wondering, is there any inspiration in trying to establish some sort of state park presence in the city prior to us finally opening the park? You know, some place that people could go, from the neighborhood, and walk to communicate their ideas, activate that place's energy, that right now we can just kind of look over the edge and imagine.

Vinnie: Yeah, that's a perfect question. What we've already talked about is no matter what we do, we know it's going to take multiple partners to make sure this is sustainable. It's not just a parks venture, we're the face of it, but it's going to take a big collaboration. So, we've already started to identify the need for a park director that we would bring on sooner than later in the process. We've been talking with HR and civil service in trying to identify that position so that we really would start to have that senior management team. A primary role that we know that they're going to have as the director of that facility is to connect all the voices, all the different groups in that collaboration, and answer some of those questions. It's going to be a very dynamic process, and a park to operate in the future. So, we've already started trying to identify what that parks management team would look like, myself, and a few others, but who is going to be the day-to-day point of contact, that's already going to be critical for the future.

Participant: Can I add to that? So, one of the things that we found when the Midtown site was redeveloped, Parcel 5 is the ultimate example. There were thousands of people that participated in the

original charrettes, it was never anyone’s idea, or collective idea, to have that stay as a parcel and not be developed. They all had great ideas to improve it, but as it started to develop, people started to say ‘Oh, never mind’. We really want to keep this the way it is, we like it to be flexible,’ and to that point; people may have ideas about the state park now, but once you start to get down into areas, once you can access it differently and see it differently, there may be some evolving of ideas. So, keeping it, as you said, dynamic, that’s great, but because it’s going to be a multi-year project, and as people see it differently, as we get more access over these years, there may be changes in terms of how people envision or want space to be used.

Vinnie: I think that’s a great point. That’s a terrific suggestion, and up to this point, Greentopia has kind of been the de-facto place to go, and that’s a burden on them. Lisa is great at it and all of you have been good, but I think it should be a physical location that is sooner than later. We talk to the city a lot about how we use that Waterworks building, and will it be a formal part of the park, and will it be some kind of entry point or even office, so that’s a good point. We haven’t had real discussions about it but we should. Thank you.

Participant: I’m going to just talk quickly but I have written down a comment to summarize my feelings today that ‘Dreams do come true’. Because 10 years ago in Greentopia, we were talking about this stuff, and I can see 10 years from now, 2030 is a great milestone for carbon capture, all the environmental things, this is the project that can define Rochester. So, I’m so happy to be here, and happy that funding from the State and the people in this room do make things happen in Rochester, NY. Thank you very much.

Dawn: I think it’s so exciting the conversion of things, like the Fulton Revitalization Project, the investment into the Susan B. Anthony neighborhood, and this project. It is that sense of commitment and energy from people for dozens of years is powerful. I hope that we’ll address, of the things that happen with those in the 19th Ward, I know we’re on that side, is that the parking lots around there are like the Inner Loop. Susan B. Anthony took her out of state visitors out to the Falls and so we’re almost repeating history here.



Bill: Alright, thank you. It is 10 o’clock. This is the time we had budgeted. You’re all welcome to stick around. The panelists will be available for another 5 or 10 minutes. Thank you and please check out cdcrochester.org and greentopia.org and leave your cards with Dawn at the back table.

Appendix B

Design Workshop Figures (B1, B2)



High Falls State Park Design Workshop

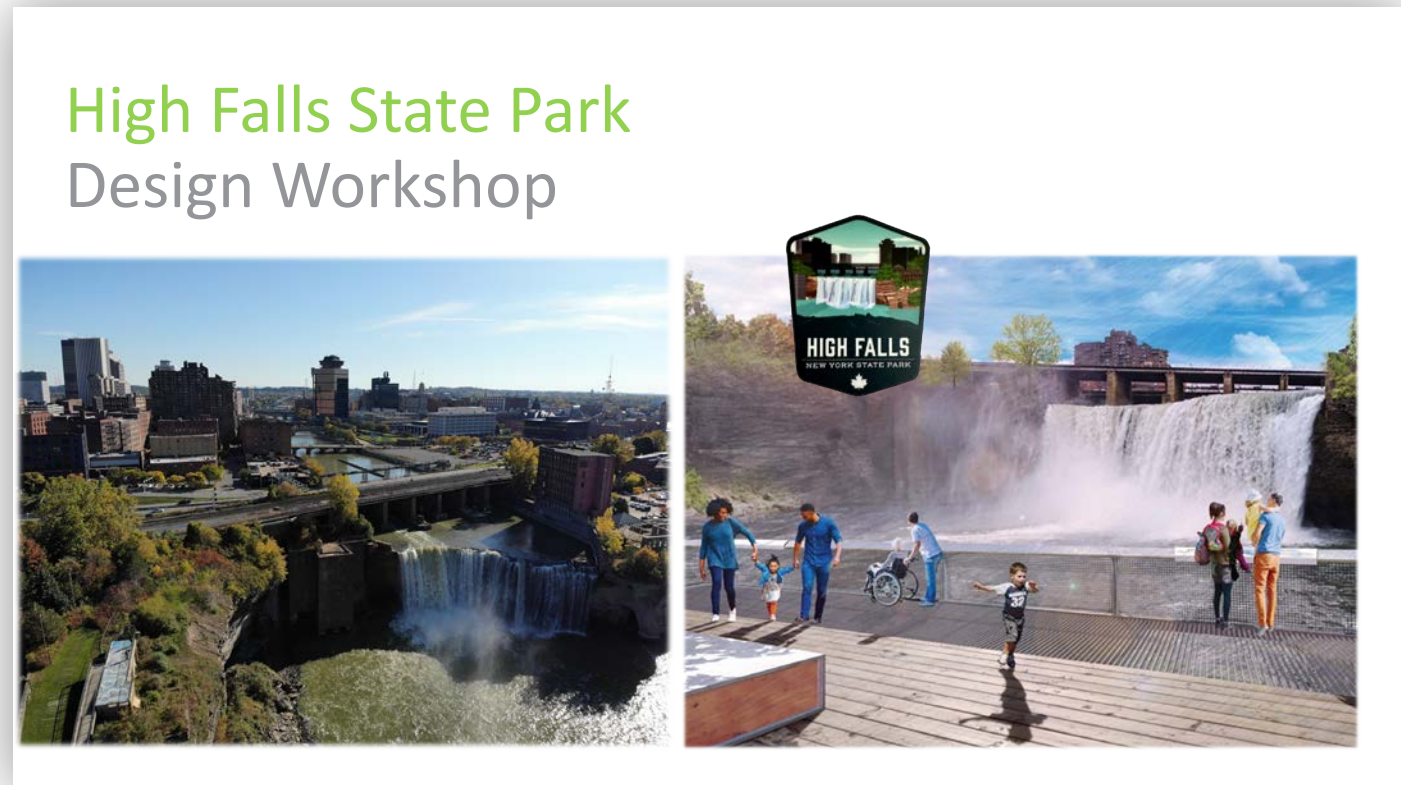
Saturday May 4th

MCC Downtown Campus, High Falls Room

Agenda

- 8:30am Registration & Mingle
- 9:00am Welcome & Introductions
- 9:25am UofR Engineers without Borders - High Falls Energy
- 9:35am City of Rochester – Kamal Crues, PE
- 9:50am Community Design Center of Rochester
 - Design Workshop Process / Agenda for the Day
- 10:05am Food for Thought (Guiding Principles)
- 10:15am Focus Group Assignments / Travel to Focus Area in Groups
- 10:30am Walk Focus Areas (Take Photos and Notes)
- 12:00pm Travel Back to MCC
- 12:15pm Focus Group Working Lunch
- 1:00pm Focus Group Visioning
- 2:00pm Break Point – Gather Materials for Presentations
- 2:30pm Present and Discuss Focus Group Ideas
- 4:00pm Wrap up Workshop – Next Steps
 - Design Workshop Findings
 - Establishment of Advisory Committee
 - Project Schedule
 - Public Engagement Process / Opportunities
 - How to Stay Engaged / How Can You Help

The following slide order proceeds by **columns**, NOT by rows.



Land Acknowledgement

Greentopia and the Community Design Center Rochester acknowledge that we are gathered here today on the traditional territory of the Onöndowa’ga’ or “the people of the Great Hill”. In English, they are known as the Seneca people, “the keeper of the western door.” They are one of the Six Nations that make up the sovereign Haudenosaunee Confederacy; also including the Mohawk, Cayuga, Oneida, Seneca and Tuscarora.

We strive to honor and respect the diverse Indigenous peoples connected to these lands with gratitude for the land itself and the peoples who have stewarded it throughout the generations.



AIA Rochester is a Registered Provider with The American Institute of Architects Continuing Education Systems. Credit earned on completion of this program will be reported to CES Records for AIA members. Certificates of Completion for non-AIA members are available on request.

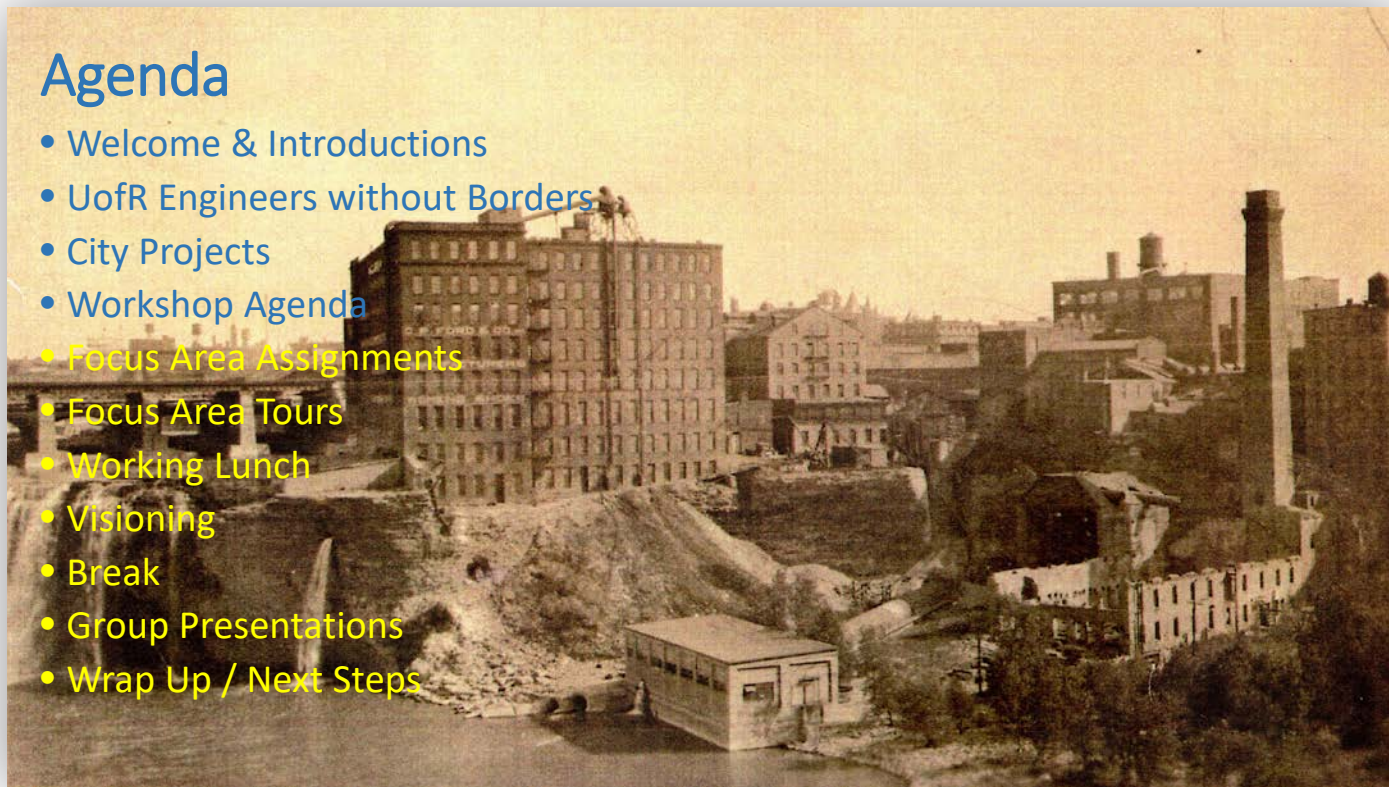
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VIDEO PLACEHOLDER

Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- UofR Engineers without Borders
- City Projects
- Workshop Agenda
- Focus Area Assignments
- Focus Area Tours
- Working Lunch
- Visioning
- Break
- Group Presentations
- Wrap Up / Next Steps

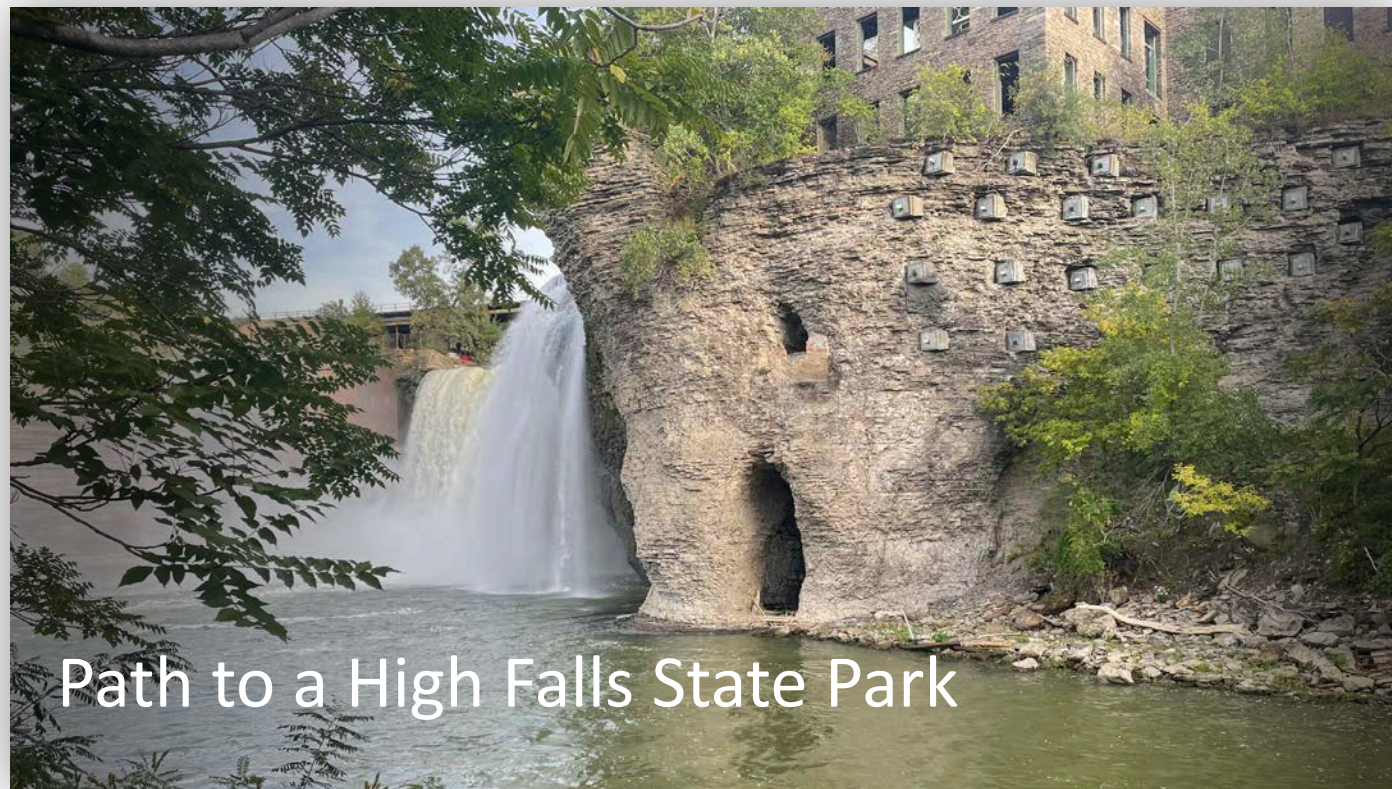


Greentopia's Mission

We create urban green space to inspire positive change in people's lives.

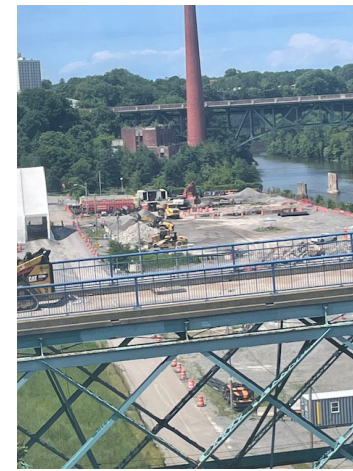
- **Green Visions** - We provide green job training and work experience to at risk youth.
- **High Falls** - We drive capital funding, awareness and creative planning for Rochester's State Park at High Falls.



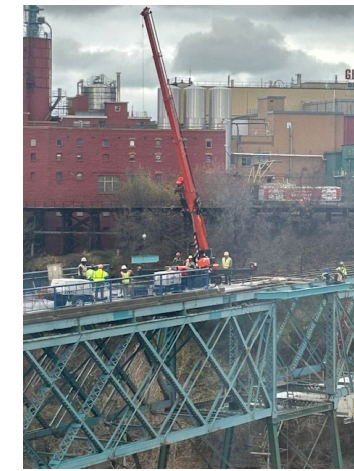


Path to a High Falls State Park

Timeline 2023 - 2024



RG&E begins environmental cleanup



Pont de Rennes bridge renovation begins



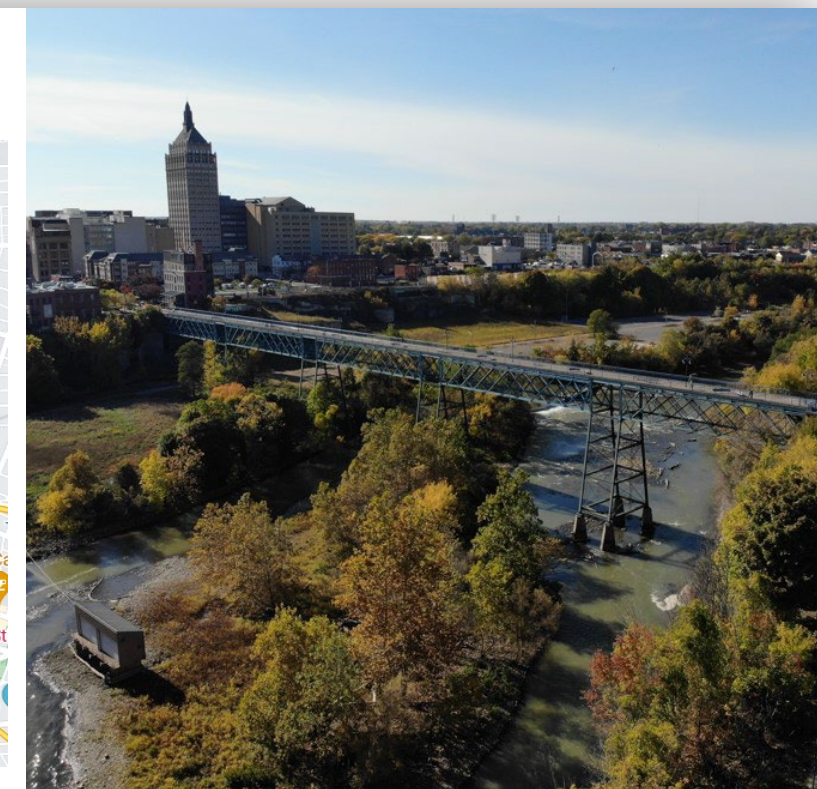
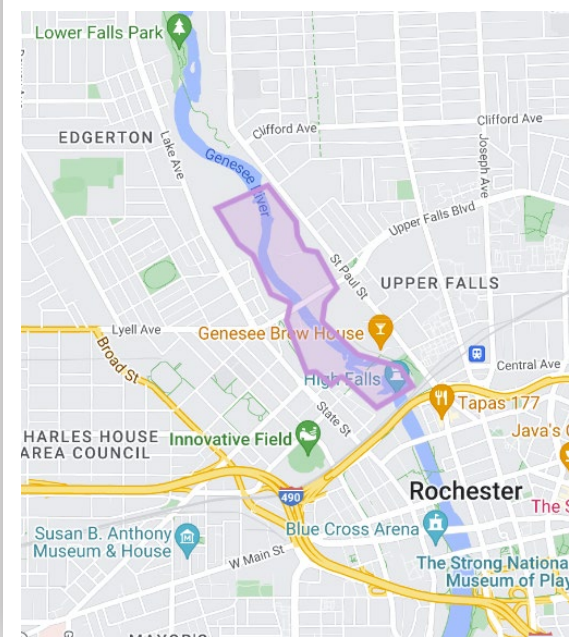
High Falls State Park community survey, video, and web page

Timeline 2016 - 2022

- Eco District plan created
- BeeBee Station razed
- URI application for Urban State Park in High Falls.
- ROC the Riverway Advisory Committee
- Pont de Rennes Bridge & Park Funding Awarded
- White Paper for a River Alliance
- High Falls Visitor's Center saved from closure.
- \$2.5M renovate the Visitors Center.
- Dinner on the Bridge Resumed
- Governor announces High Falls State Park and \$6M for planning.
- Plans finalized for Pont de Rennes Bridge.



State Park Location





Community Survey Top Activities:

- Walking/hiking (92%)
- Relaxing (70%)
- Reading signs & historical markers (68%)
- Attending special events & festivals (66%)
- Picnicking (66%)
- Photography (59%)
- Biking (50%)



Community Survey Top Concerns

- Safety (75%)
- Cleanliness (70%)
- Cost to enter (48%)

High Falls State Park Design Workshop

University of Rochester
Engineers Without Borders
Local Project

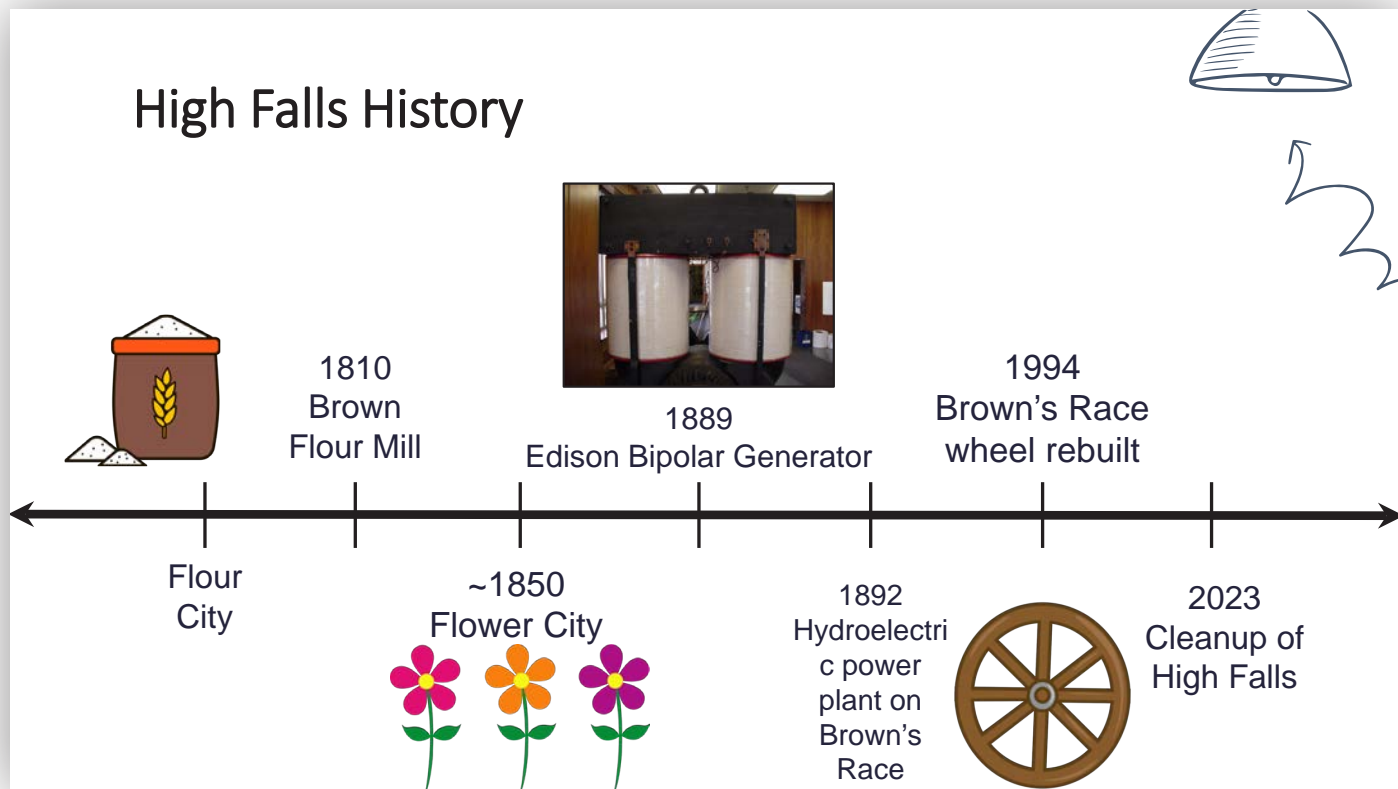


Introduction

- EWB is student run organization that helps engineering students solve real world problems in other countries + the local Rochester community
- We are working on projects in the Dominican Republic, Tanzania, and in Rochester with Climate Solutions Accelerator



High Falls History



MATERIALS

A GENERAL TOOLS

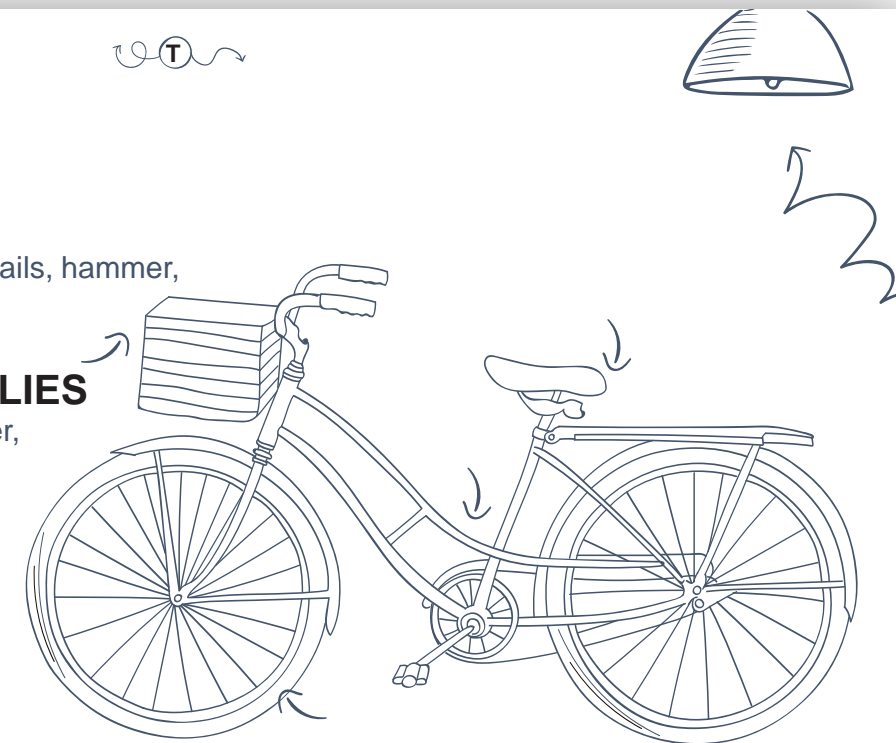
Wrench, saw, wood screws/nails, hammer, screwdriver, tape measure

B ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES

Diode, wires, battery, inverter, 12V(+) motor

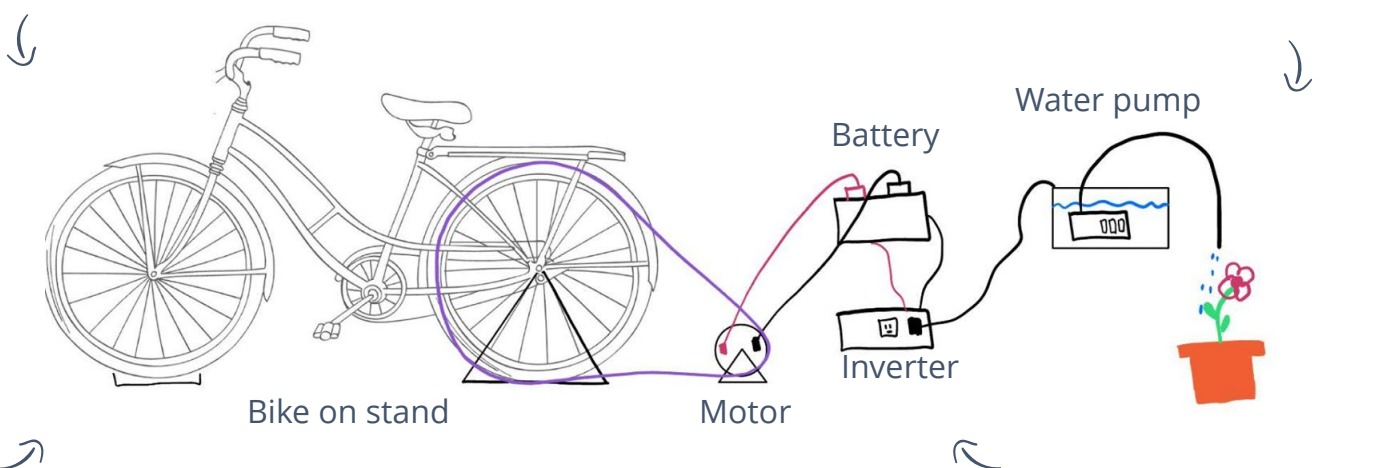
C MISCELLANEOUS

2" x 4" wood, v belt



IDEAS

We want to display hydropower in a fun and interactive way at High Falls!



HOW TO BUILD

1. Remove the back tire of a bicycle.
2. Using the tools and the wood, build a stand to elevate the bicycle 5-7 inches off the ground.
3. Attach the drive belt along the back rim.
4. Attach the DC motor to the stand so that the belt and motor shaft spin concurrently.
5. Place a diode in series with the motor and battery. The cathode should point to the positive terminal of the battery. The negative lead from the motor should attach to the negative terminal of the battery, and the positive lead from the motor should attach to the diode. Connect the battery leads to the inverter and secure them with tape.
6. Plug the light into the inverter and turn the wheel to power it.



Ideas + Feedback



- Connect multiple bicycles that generate power to spin the Triphammer waterwheel
 - Water from the the section of the race from the river to Commercial Street and the RG&E rack house could be used to power something - lightbulb, pump, sound system?

Potential suggestions and/or feedback?

REFERENCES

University of Rochester Engineers Without Borders

Local Project Group (<https://www.ewb-ur.org/>)

atrzipis@u.rochester.edu (908) 268-0173

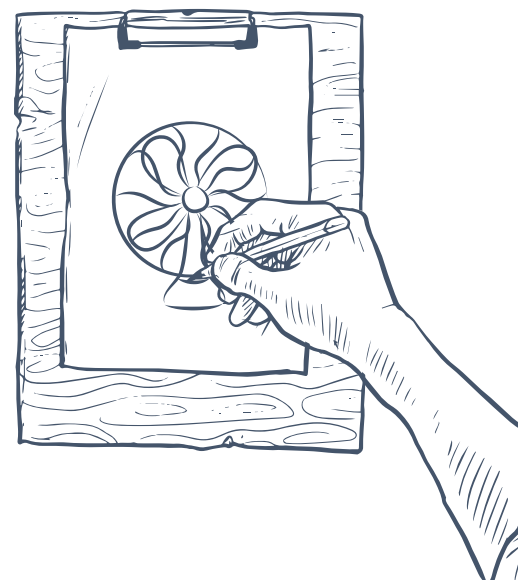
kmccrac5@u.rochester.edu (978) 467-5974

- "Waterwheel Design and the Different Types of Waterwheel." *Alternative Energy Tutorials*, www.alternative-energy-tutorials.com/hydro-energy/waterwheel-design.html
- "Design Calculations for Overshot Waterwheels." *Backwoods Home Magazine*, 7 June 2019, www.backwoodshome.com/design-calculations-for-overshot-waterwheels.
- "How to Build a Bicycle Generator." *Instructables*, 21 Sept. 2022, www.instructables.com/How-To-Build-A-Bicycle-Generator.



NATIVE AMERICANS

- We want to acknowledge the history of the Seneca tribe in Rochester
- Native Americans used High Falls before it became industrialized
 - Fishing, hunting and gathering
 - Falls were a sacred place
- Including a water pump to water plants/focusing on preservation/sustainability can connect the area with its initial purpose



High Falls "Urban" State Park

Art Briley,
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation

- Programming, Planning and Design
- Operations & Management Model
- Near Term Tasks
- Anticipated Project Schedule



We'll see you out there



City of Rochester

Kamal Crues, P.E.



PLACEMAKING



Restoration of Natural Environment



Agenda

- Focus Area Assignments
- Focus Area Tours (10:15 – 12:00 noon)
- Working Lunch (12:00 – 1:00 pm)
- Group Visioning (1:00 – 2:15 pm)
- Break (2:15 – 2:30 pm)
- Group Presentations (2:30 – 3:45 pm)
- Wrap Up / Next Steps (3:45 – 4:00 pm)

PLACEMAKING



Preservation of Historic Resource & Adaptive Reuse



Infill Development

PLACEMAKING



Complete Streets



Comfort for all modes of travel

PLACEMAKING – Unique Features



Walkway over the Hudson Elevator



“River of Light” High Falls Laser & Light Show

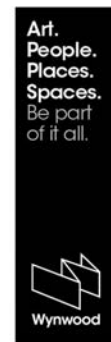
PLACEMAKING



Gathering Spaces



District Identity



PLACEMAKING



Rethink Parking



Screen Parking

Focus Areas



CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN

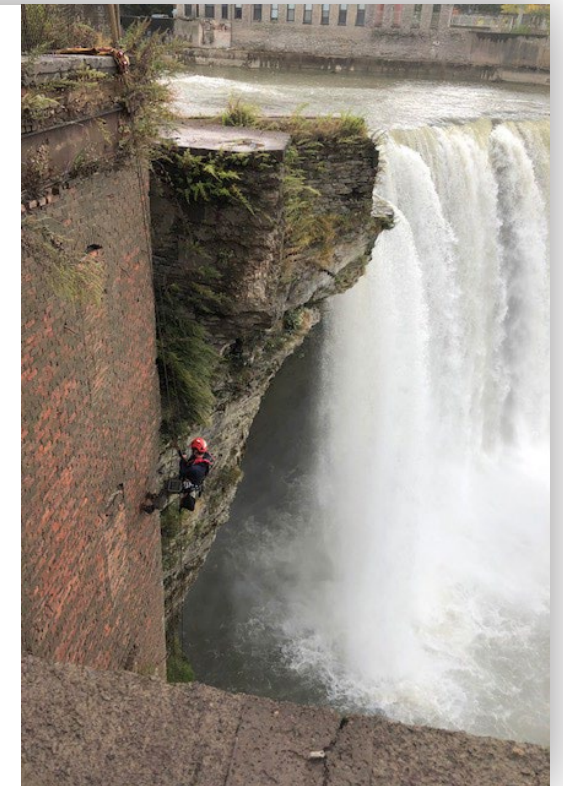


Typical Focus Area



Next Steps

- Share Findings of Design Workshop
- Consultant Selection
- Planning & Design Schedule
- Advisory Committee
- Public Engagement Plan
- RG&E Clean up





Special Thank You

- AIA Rochester
- Allison Martin, GIS
- APA New York
- CJS Architects
- Costich Engineering
- Kamal Crues, PE
- Hunt EAS
- Passero Associates
- Stantec
- SWBR
- Howard Decker
- Roger Brown
- John Osowski



End of Document



Keep In Touch

- Greentopia.org
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