



# Bridge Square

Northfield Heritage Preservation  
Commission Meeting

December 4, 2024 | 6:00pm

# Agenda



- Introductions
- HPC Review Purview
- Bridge Square
  - Background
  - 90% Plans Design Review
  - SHPO Response

# Purpose



- “...the preservation, protection, perpetuation and use of areas, places, buildings, structures, and other objects having special historical interest of value is.. in the interest of the health, safety, welfare and prosperity of the people.”
  - “... preserving sites and structures which reflect elements of the city’s cultural, social, economic, political, visual, or architectural history;”
  - “Protect and enhance the city’s appeal to residents, visitors, and tourists and serve as a support and stimulus to business and industry.”
  - “Foster civic pride in the beauty and notable accomplishments of the past; and,”

# COA - Applicability



- Major Work

- Demolition in whole or in part,
- Moving of historic buildings, structures or objects.
- Remodeling, exterior alteration or rehabilitation that will change the exterior appearance including but not limited to painting, lighting, landscaping, and awnings.

# Exemptions



- (4) A COA is not required for any physical improvements within public rights-of-way and immediately adjacent property affected by such work, including but not limited to: curb and gutter, street, utility reconstruction; routine maintenance, repair, or emergency work such as street patching; street overlays; driveway installations; boulevard tree planting; accessibility ramp improvements; utility repairs; or sidewalk repair or replacement.
- (i) For public street improvement projects exceeding an estimated cost of one million dollars as determined by the city engineer and located within the H-O District, the heritage preservation commission may, prior to the city council public improvement hearing on the project, provide written comments to the city council on the historic aspects of the project. Failure of the heritage preservation commission to timely provide written comments on or before the scheduled public improvement hearing on the project shall be deemed to have satisfied this provision.

# Criteria



- (Required) For all applications, the proposed action fully complies with all applicable requirements of this LDC;
- harmony with the purpose of the H-O district;
- complement other structures within the H-O district;
- consistent with the Downtown Preservation Design Guidelines and consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties;
- the amount and quality of original material and design remaining in the building or structure when applying criteria, guidelines and standards;
- For new construction, the building or addition should be compatible with:
  - scale, texture, materials, and other visual qualities of the surrounding buildings and neighborhoods;
  - the height, width, depth, massing and setback of the surrounding buildings; and

# Criteria cont.



- For demolition:

- that the structure could not be rehabilitated and used for a conforming purpose with reasonable efforts or whether the structure is without substantial historic or architectural significance;
- the significance or architectural merit of the building itself
- the present structural integrity of the building
- the demolition is necessary to facilitate a defined public purpose

# Northfield Commercial Historic District

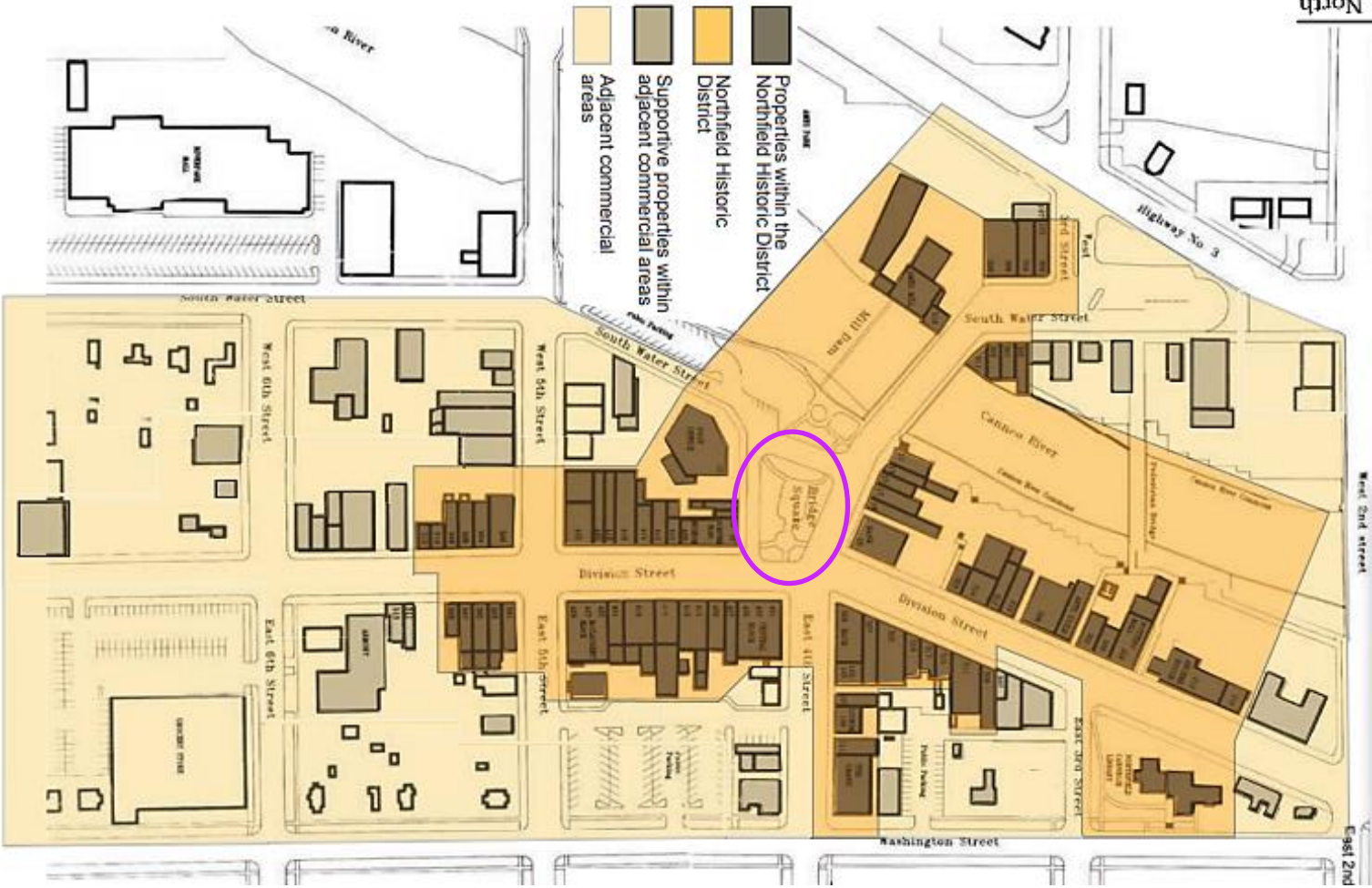


- Criterion A, in the areas of Settlement, Industry, and Commerce
- Criterion C, in the area of Architecture
- Period of Significance: 1856-1966
- SHPO Review required in accordance with the Minnesota Historic Sites Act and Minnesota Field Archaeology Act





# Northfield Commercial Historic District



# Bridge Square

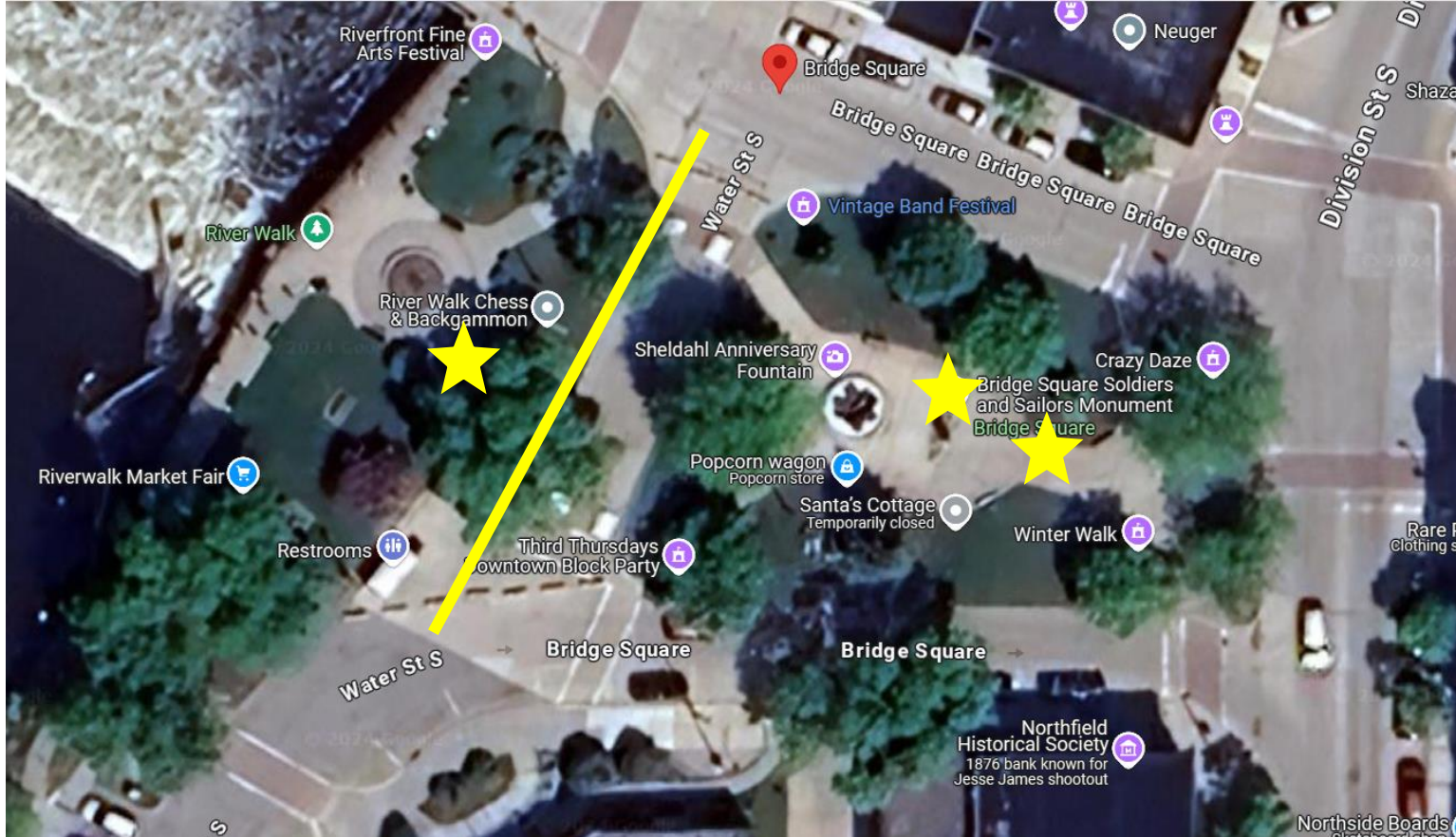


- Contributing property with four individual resources:
  - Bridge Square (a contributing site);
  - Riverside Park (a contributing site);
  - the Civil War Monument (a contributing structure);
  - and the stone sculpture (a non-contributing structure)

# Character-Defining Features



- Not explicitly defined in existing inventory forms or reports
- Bridge Square
- Riverside Park
- Civil War Monument
- Stone sculpture
- Extant Water Street corridor between Bridge Square and Riverside Park
- Features to consider: two large concrete planters, existing treescapes and vegetation, and topography and viewsheds



Bridge  
Square

# SHPO Review: 60% Plans

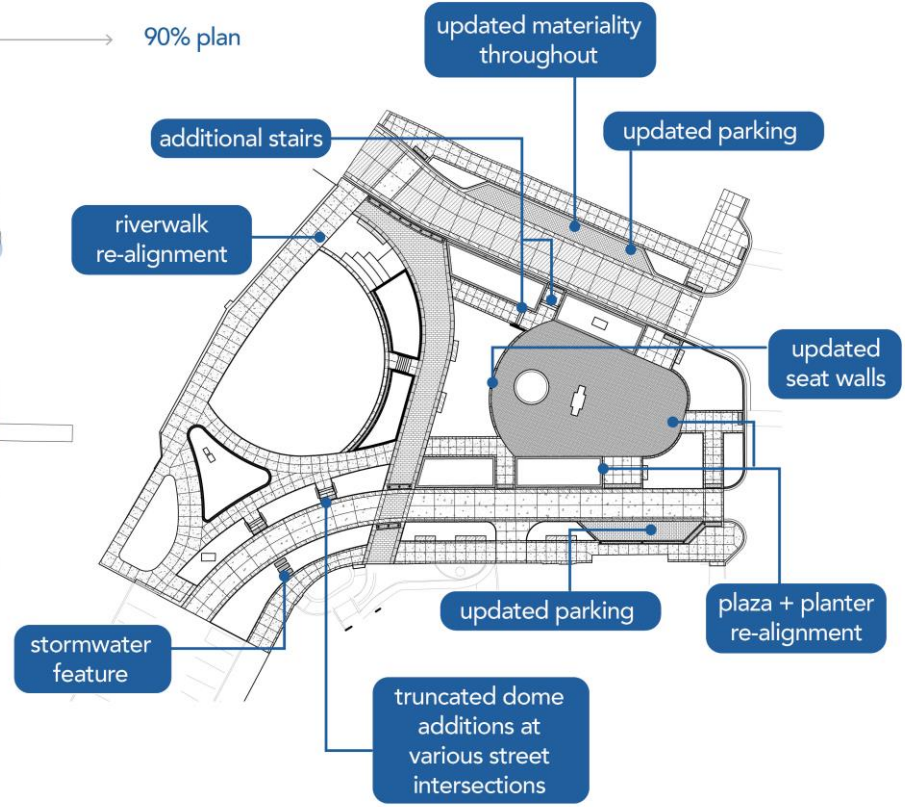
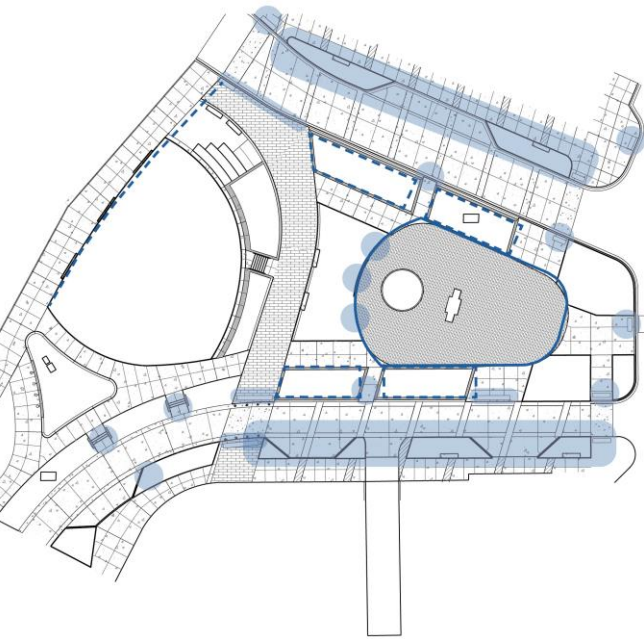


Based on our review of the submitted documentation, we are pleased to see that the **design has been refined in response to comments received from our office, the Northfield Heritage Preservation Commission, and Northfield community members.**

In our opinion, the current design is much more compatible with the forms of both Riverside Park and Bridge Square, and we have determined that **the project, as currently proposed in the 60% construction documents, has been designed in accordance with the SOI Standards.** We look forward to reviewing the 90% construction documents when

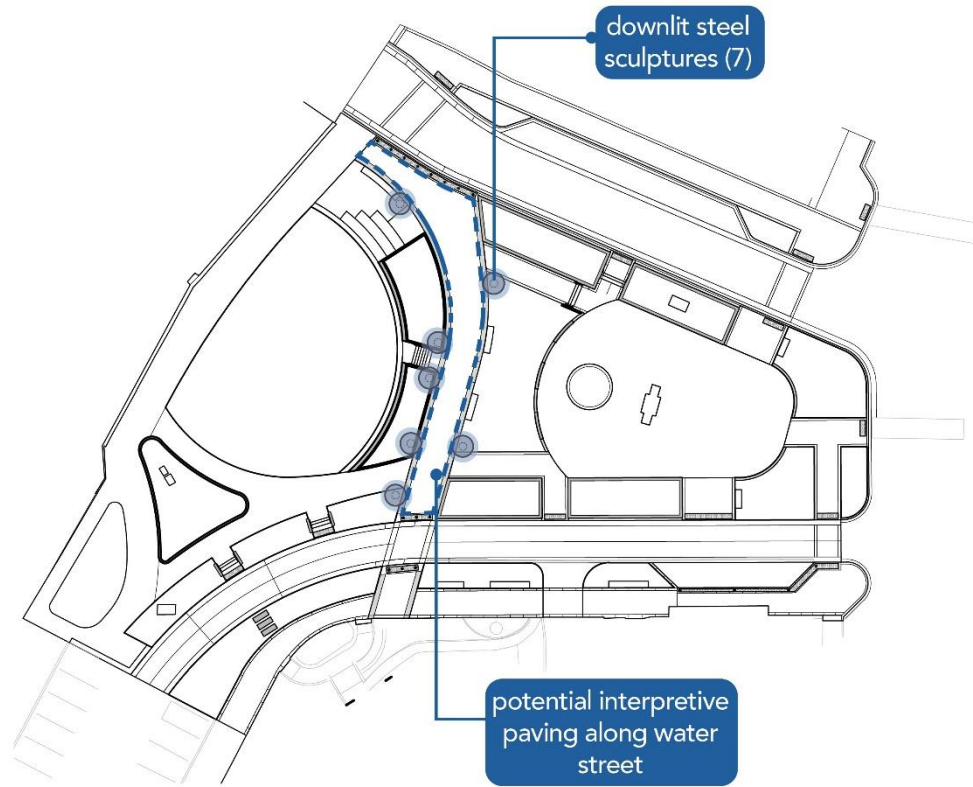
% plan

90% plan



60%  
Plans  
and 90%  
plans

proposed public art



90%  
Plans

# SOI Standards for Rehabilitation



The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property should be avoided.



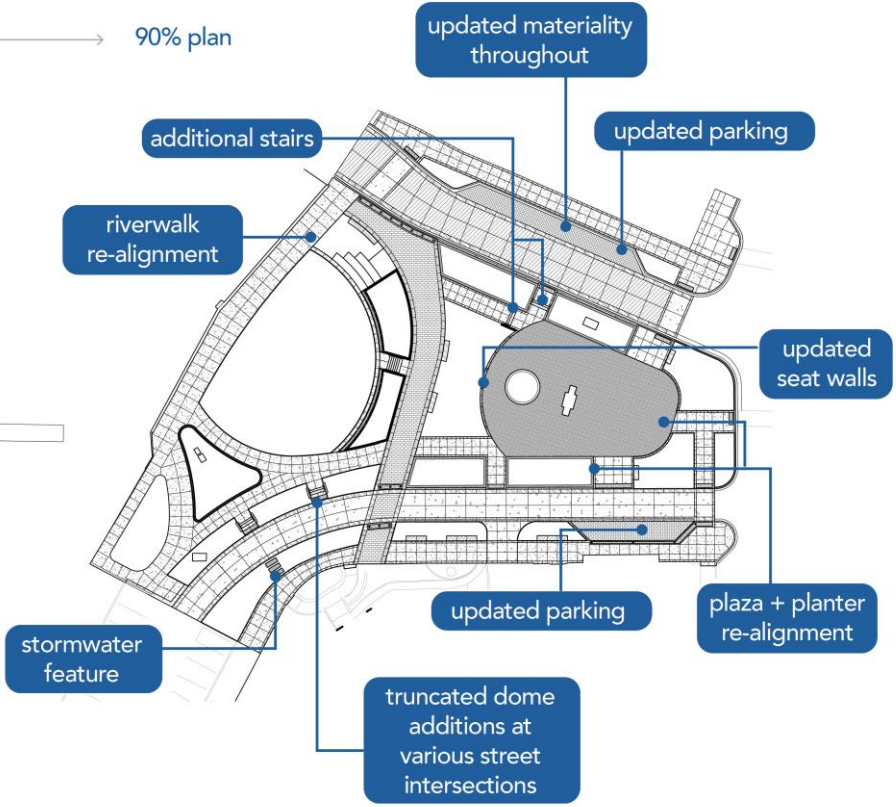
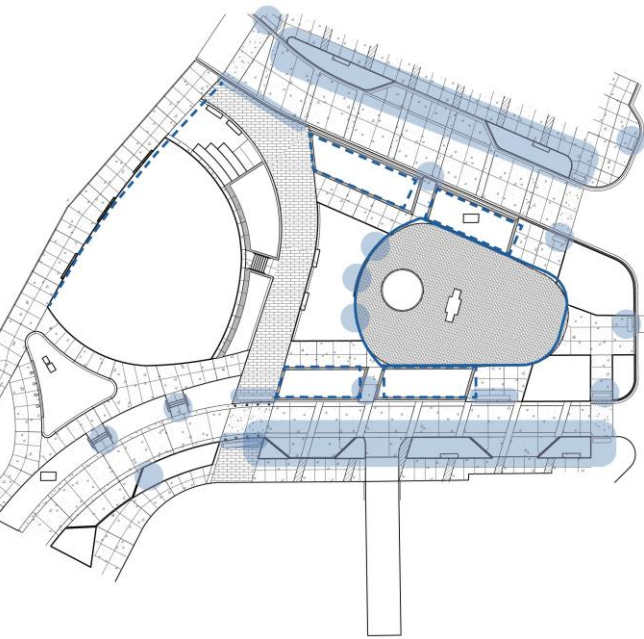
# 90% Plans: Architectural History



Nothing in the 90% plans requires the removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize Bridge Square

% plan

90% plan



60%  
Plans  
to 90%  
Plans

# 90% Plans: Architectural History



## Retained and Preserved

- Water Street corridor
- Spatial relationship between Bridge Square and Riverside Park.
- Evolved teardrop shape of Bridge Square that began in 1916 and underwent alterations circa 1975
- Civil War monument
- The circulation system in the proposed design closely echoes the extant, circa 1975 circulation system and the mix of lawn, planting beds with low masses of plants.
- Softened contours of Riverside Park echo historic boundaries of that portion of the park.
- Both retained and newly planted trees proposed in the design will echo the historic mix of vegetation present throughout the evolution of Bridge

# SOI Standards for Rehabilitation



New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its

# 90% Plans: Architectural History



## **90% Plan**

- Retains historic materials, features, and spatial relationships
- Historic integrity of these features will not be diminished by new construction
- Minimal grading of some areas of the park, including the permanent tiered seating area of riverside park, which is intended to retain the overall grade of the park and keep open areas of the park relatively flat.

# 90% Plans: Architectural History



## 90% Plan

- Retains the characteristic slope of the site and existing viewshed from the district to the river.
- Proposed paving material will be stone or concrete pavers, in a color similar to the extant concrete
  - Echo surfacing materials used historically at the site but will be clearly differentiated from historic surfaces.
  - complimenting surrounding materials in the district but differentiated as modern materials.







# 90% Plans: Architectural History



- Slight change in shape of the planting beds at the southwest edge of Bridge Square Plaza will not destroy existing materials, features, or spatial relationships.
- Additionally, the planting beds are designed, so that, per SOI Standards, if removed in the future “the essential form and integrity of the history property and its environment would be unimpaired.”

**Bridge Square -  
Riverside Park Renovation  
Phase I Archaeological  
Investigation**

Northfield, Rice County, Minnesota

-  Study Area
-  Newly Identified Site
-  Positive Shovel Test
-  Negative Shovel Test
-  Excavation Unit
-  Estimated Location of the 1856 Grist Mill Footprint



Phase I Field Survey Results

Source: 106 Group

**Confidential Cultural Resources – Do Not Release**

Service Layer Credits: MapGeo Imagery Service

Map Produced by 106 Group 10/24/2023

**Figure 4**



# Bridge Square - Riverside Park Renovation Phase I Archaeological Investigation

Northfield, Rice County, Minnesota

-  Study Area
-  Newly Identified Site
-  Construction Monitoring Recommended
-  No Further Archaeological Work Recommended



Recommendations

Figure 7

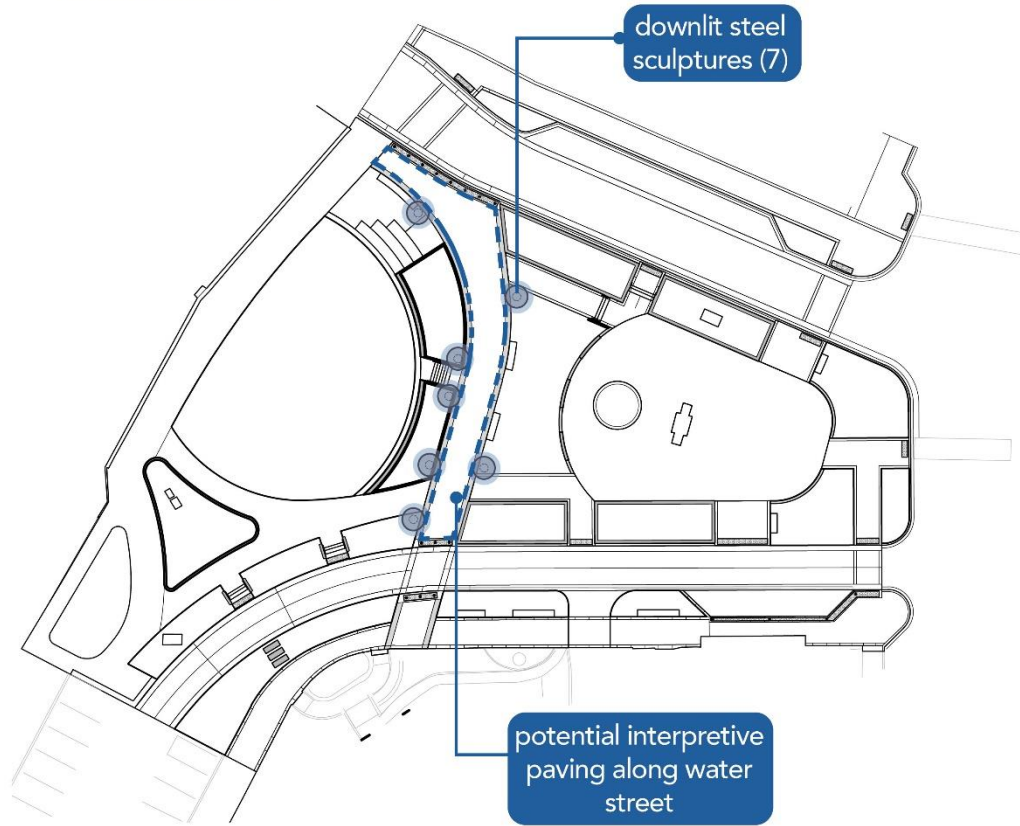
# 90% Plans: Archaeology



## Archaeological Monitoring and Unanticipated Discoveries Plan

- Potential mitigation measures for any unanticipated discovery that occurs during construction of the current park designs and/or the installation of the proposed public art.
- For the purposes of the Archaeological Monitoring and Unanticipated Discoveries Plan, archaeological site 21RC0076 (historical surface of the 1856 Mill Square) will be considered both a contributing resource to the Northfield Commercial Historic District and a potential individually

proposed public art



90%  
Plans

# 90% Plans: Public Art



- Per SOI for rehabilitation: primary focus is on viewsheds, materials, and installation
- Sculptures
  - Not nearly as tall as the existing trees located within the same area of the park in which they are proposed to be installed.
  - Lit in similar fashion to the lighting plan for the entire park, all of which is in accordance with the City of Northfield's Land Development Code Outdoor Lighting Standards, which follow Minnesota Statute 16B.328, the state law regulating light pollution.
  - May require the installation of footings four feet in depth
  - Locations at the south are within the site boundaries of 21RC0076
    - Could potentially disturb resources if the footing is reaching a depth of more than four feet below the surface.
    - Monitoring Plan in place for the entire site.

# 90% Plans: Public Art



- Per SOI for rehabilitation: primary focus is on viewsheds, materials, and installation
- Pavers
  - Will not adversely affect the existing landscape slope of the park or the existing, historic viewshed of the Cannon River from Bridge Square.
  - Will not disrupt the landscape slope or viewshed, nor remove or alter existing materials.

# Project Review Submission to SHPO



- Design Review Memo
- Site Plan
- 90% Construction Documents
  - Hardscape plan
  - Tree plan
  - Understory plantings
  - Construction plan
  - Lighting plan (layout and fixture specifications)
- Public Art renderings and specification

# SHPO Response

10/3/2024: Background



As stated in the correspondence, the City of Northfield is proposing improvements to Bridge Square and Riverside Park, which are contributing resources within the Northfield Commercial Historic District, a historic property which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

Accordingly, in order for our office to determine that the project will not adversely affect the historic property, the proposed work must be designed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (SOT Standards).

SHPO Response

10/3/2024:

Architectural History



Based on our review of the submitted documentation we agree that **the project**, as currently proposed in the 90% construction documents, **has been designed in accordance with the SOI Standards** and **will have no adverse effect on the historic property.**



# SHPO Response

10/3/2024:

## Archaeology



One archaeological site, site 21RC0076, has been identified within the project area. We consider this site to be a contributing resource to the Northfield Commercial Historic District. The site may also have individual significance. We agree that **archaeological monitoring** should be conducted during project construction, as well as during installation of the proposed public art. We understand that the 106 Group will draft an **Archaeological Monitoring and Unanticipated Discoveries Plan** (Plan) that will include potential mitigation measures for any unanticipated discovery that occurs. We look forward to reviewing the

SHPO Response

10/3/2024: Public Art



Regarding the public art, we understand that the **Northfield Arts and Culture Commission approved** the public art elements in early July. Although the proposed structures are relatively tall, **we agree that their general scale and location within the park along Water Street should not adversely affect the historic landscape/viewsheds.** We also agree that the proposed **etched granite pavers will not adversely affect the historic property.**

# Questions?

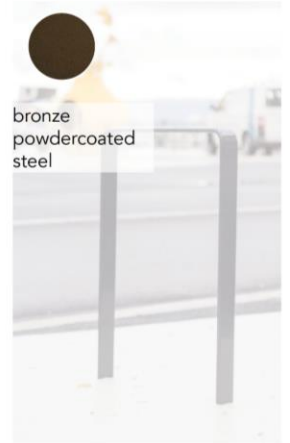
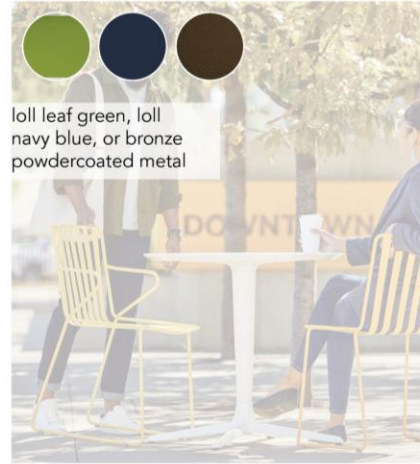
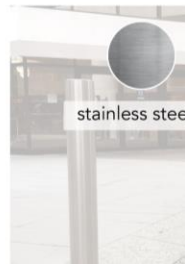
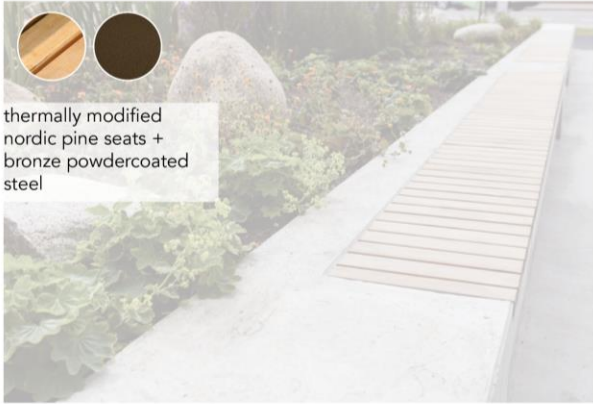


Thank you!

proposed site furnishing



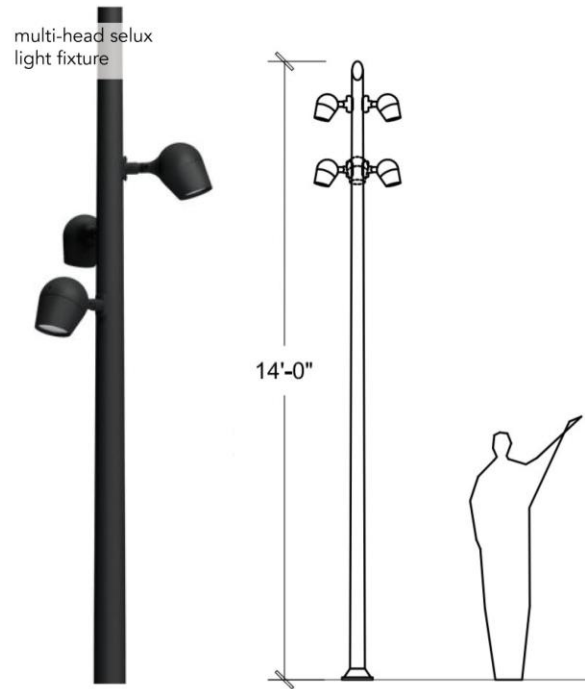
## proposed site furnishing finishes



## existing site lighting



## proposed site lighting



# proposed paving materials

**concrete, standard gray, broom finish**  
4th St, sidewalk connections to Division St

**concrete, decorative topcast surface retarder, level 03**  
pedestrian sidewalks, woonerf

**concrete, decorative banding sandblast, level 25**  
bands around sidewalks + historic Water St

**paver A 6" x 24" granite pavers**  
historic Water St

**paver B 4" x 8" granite pavers**  
plaza area

**paver C concrete pavers**  
parallel parking bays

key plan:

