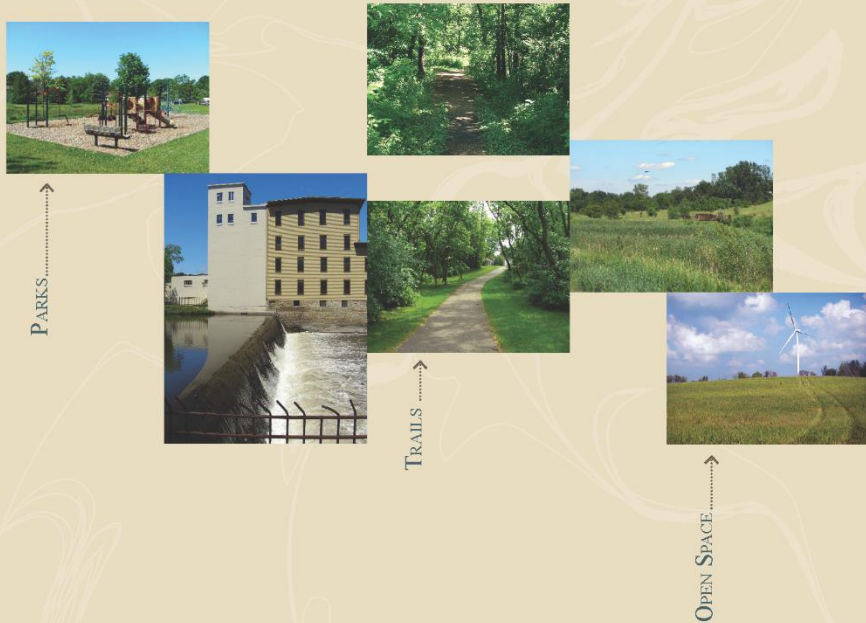


ITEM THREE – RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK + AMES PARK

Proposed Concept Design Work Plan

CITY OF NORTHFIELD MINNESOTA

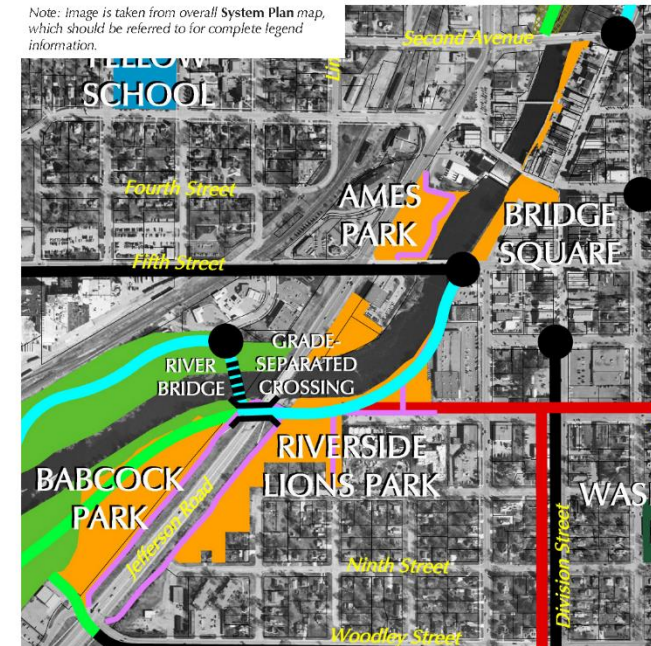
PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND TRAIL SYSTEM PLAN



March 2008

FIGURE 3.1 – INTERRELATIONSHIP OF CORE COMMUNITY PARKS IN DOWNTOWN AREA

Note: image is taken from overall System Plan map, which should be referred to for complete legend information.



Bridge Square Park – provides an urban square in the historic downtown area, along with providing a direct pedestrian connection to and promenade along the riverfront. Continued refinement of the design, aesthetic qualities, and function of this important people space should be the primary master plan focus for this area.

Ames Park – is a currently under-utilized and visually uninteresting gateway into the downtown area. Enhancing the park's aesthetic qualities and streetscape appeal is an important master plan focus, as is providing amenities like overlooks, improved walkways, and architectural features (arbors, etc.) to entice people to use the area. If the site is selected for the skateboard facility (as considered on page 3.28, how that is integrated into the park's design will be critical to its success without unduly compromising the park's other functions and aesthetic appeal.

Riverside Lions Park – remains an important park unit that serves both community and neighborhood functions. Continuing to accommodate the seasonal farmers market and providing space for the annual car show and other events remains viable. On the southern-most end of the park is the well maintained Veterans Memorial, which is a highly visible and compelling architectural feature. Taking full advantage of the scenic values of the river corridor should be a top priority, as is the need to enhance the general aesthetic quality of the park through good design, landscaping, and architectural elements.

Babcock Park – this park is under utilized and lacks a cohesive and visually appealing design. Although the existing uses remain viable and appropriate, a new master plan is needed to better organize the site, make it more visually appealing, and ensure that the right mix of facilities and amenities are provided to meet community needs. As with the other parks, taking full advantage of the scenic values of the river corridor should be a top priority.

Trails Linkages – linking Babcock and Riverside Lions Park (and points beyond) to the downtown area should a major master plan focus. Special attention needs to be given to the missing link between Riverside and Fifth Street, along with providing adequate signage and kiosk information for wayfinding.

In addition to the downtown parks, the successful development of the **Riverside Lions Park characterized as both Community and Neighborhood Park** in this document.

PRAB should also periodically reevaluate neighborhood park amenities, such as those that arise over time, a reevaluation of the master plan would be warranted to make sure that neighborhood-level needs are being fully met.

An important side note to Memorial Park is that the site is considered one of several candidate sites for a new skateboard park, which is discussed on page 3.28. Whether or not that occurs will be determined under a separate planning process, which will include opportunities for public input.

RIVERFRONT ENHANCEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Northfield, Minnesota

Work Plan Framework
2019-2020

Established 2019

Purposes of the Riverfront Enhancement Action Plan [highlights added]

Work to complete a Riverfront Enhancement Action Plan to include the following:

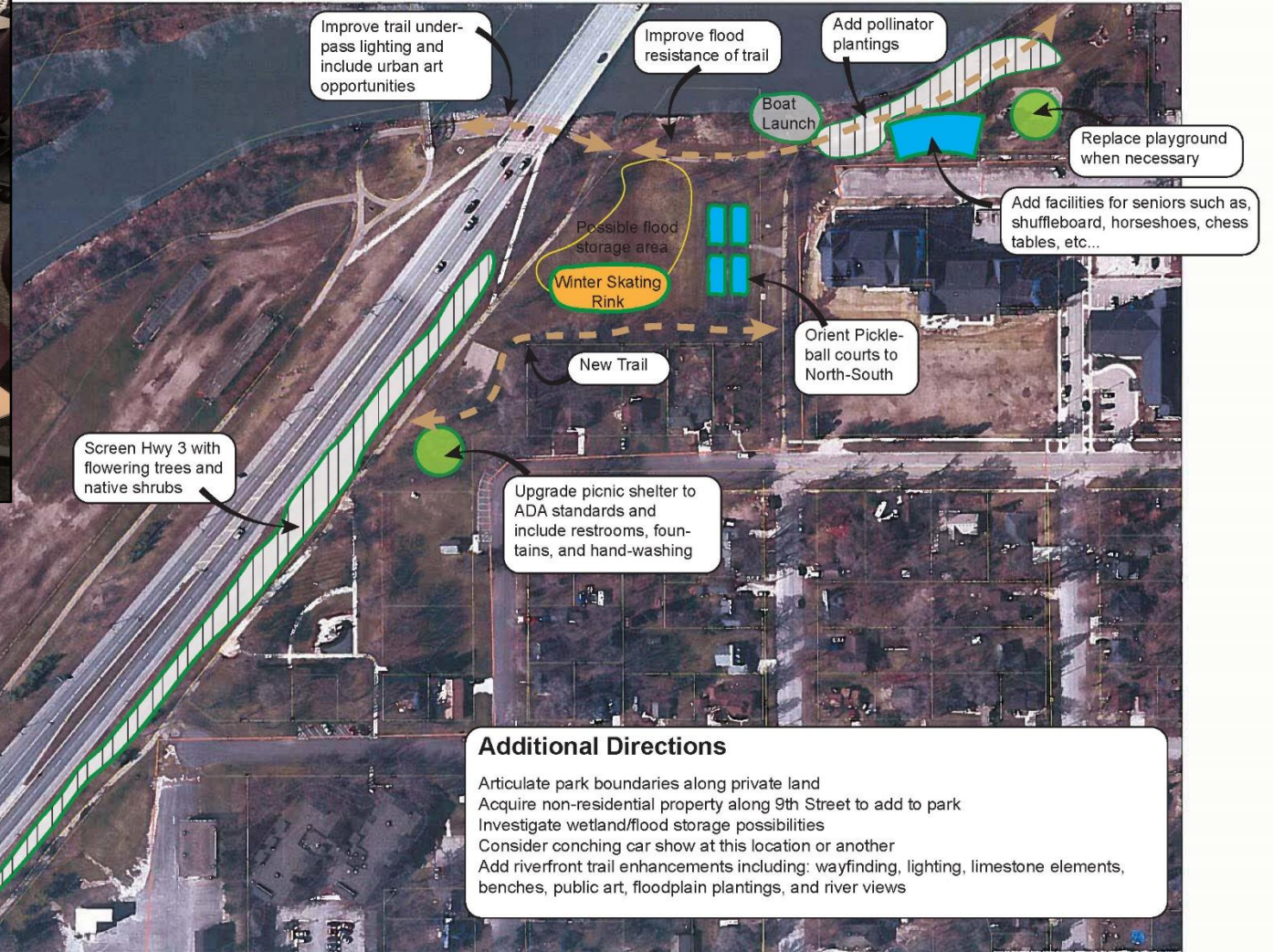
1. Prioritization to align with the strategic plan; and
2. Concept plans for strategic park improvements; and
3. Identified short term and long term projects and funding sources; and
4. Preservation and conservation of the riverfront; and
5. Identification of stormwater management project priorities; and
6. Strategies for increased active use of the riverfront; and
7. Opportunities for business expansion on the corridor.

Guiding Principles (Created by the Committee)

1. Engage & activate the River (ED1)
2. Complement existing businesses (ED1)
3. Look for untapped opportunities
4. Orient downtown buildings toward the river and utilize riversides of buildings on both sides of the Riverwalk between 2nd & 5th (LU2.6 & A/O Exercise)
5. "Better integration" with downtown/businesses (A/O Exercise)
6. Encourage riverside development with river access (PR2.2)
7. Encourage infill/redevelopment to take advantage of viewsheds (LU—Other plan)
8. Promote the Cannon River Water Trail designation in coordination with Dundas (LU6.7; A/O Exercise)
9. Implement a comprehensive promotional campaign about the bicycle/pedestrian system both within and outside of the city (LU—Other plan)
10. Promote opportunities along the river (recreational & economic development) (A/O Exercise)
11. Provide multi-modal trail connectivity (walk, kayak, bike) with a continuous, off street, non-motorized trail on the east and west sides of the Cannon River throughout Northfield, locating the trail in park land along the river as much as possible, with frequent and easy to find access points. (A/O Exercise, Toole)
12. Connect transit to river corridor and encourage multimodal connectivity (A/O Exercise; LU4.2)



'Bubble Diagram' for Riverside Lions Park created from December 2019 workshop



National Park Service Facilitated Workshop December 2019

Ames Park – ‘VILLAGE GREEN ON THE WATER’

Strategically located along Highway 3 and directly across the Cannon River from the heart of downtown, Ames Park has a multiple roles to play in Northfield’s emerging regional park experience. As an iconic landmark greeting travelers, Ames has the space and character to accommodate gatherings, performance and cultural events. But equally compelling is its role in accessing the riverfront itself and establishing places for strolling, viewing and quiet reflection along an exciting new segment of the Downtown Riverwalk. Safe access and parking must be addressed, as should select screening of the highway, but proven economical strategies are available to do so.

Riverside Lions Park – ‘ENGAGING NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITY’

More than any of the other parks, Riverside Lions Park is embedded in the neighborhood context. The nature and strength of neighborhood parks is their attention to meeting the needs of a varied constituency with a variety of smaller venues. Elements such as the existing memorial, new pickle ball courts and shuffleboard courts, potential fitness and art pods, all lend character to the park . A winter skating rink is also proposed to enhance year around use of the park. The regional trail provides two options for traversing the park in the event of high water under the Highway 3 bridge.

Babcock Park – ‘DESTINATION ADVENTURE PARK’

Babcock Park has the potential to become an exciting signature destination that will draw enthusiasts from Northfield and beyond. Envisioned as an active recreational facility, the conceptual diagram envisions a number of challenging bicycle attractions designed for varied ages and skill levels. In addition, a canoe and kayak landing is part of the recreational experience. A rental and maintenance facility with restrooms is also part of the concept, as are a new trailhead and improved connections to the pedestrian bridge over the Cannon River.

Babcock is envisioned as an active place for all ages — families with young kids, athletes honing their competitive skills, water lovers visiting town and wanting to rent a canoe. The riverfront trail passes through the park, making it easily accessible for cyclists and cross-country skiers in winter. Additional parking is located at the southern end of the site.

Sechler Park – ‘HOME FOR SPORTS AND NATURE’

With a focus on organized team sports, Sechler Park has a unique role among Northfield’s riverfront parks. With space to accommodate picnicking and playgrounds as well as numerous game fields and parking, the upper part of Sechler is a well-maintained and appreciated destination for athletes and fans. A proposed bridge across the Cannon will make the park much more accessible for bicycles and pedestrians. The lower, more natural portion of this site offers excellent opportunities for mountain biking and a natural skills trail. Cross country skiing can also be accommodated in winter. Two trailheads link the upper and lower parts of the site together. The multi-use trail that skirts the edge of the park is an important link for the regional trail system on the west side of the river.

Riverside Lions Park

‘ENGAGING NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITY’

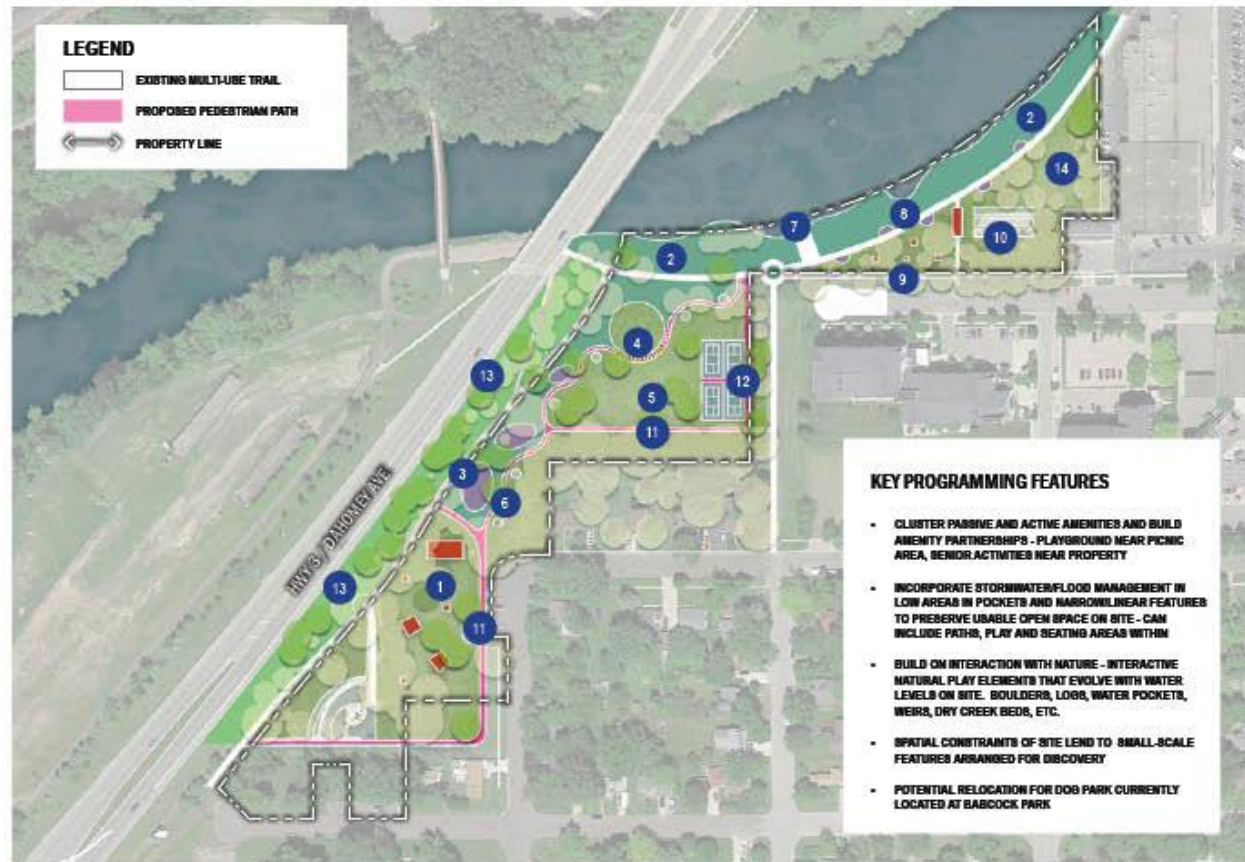
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We wrote this in May 2020 . . . we have always believed that each of the 4 parks is very different in context, geography, program and role within the overall Northfield parks system.

RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK

"ENGAGING NEIGHBORHOOD
AMENITY"

NORTHFIELD'S CANNON RIVER REGIONAL PARK EXPERIENCE



RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK CONCEPT DIAGRAM



As a very preliminary DIAGRAM, it was intended to jump-start more discussion – not to serve as a specific set of recommendations for implementation.



Develop unique, family-friendly winter experiences



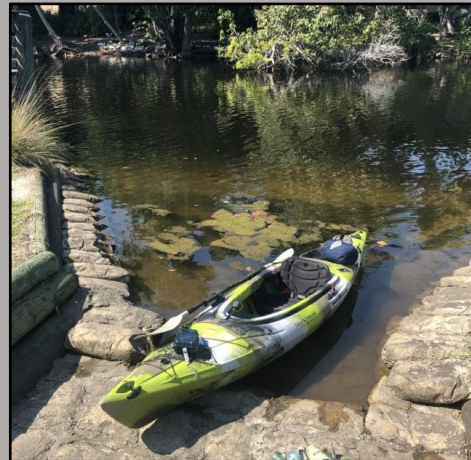
Use native landscapes for stormwater and flood-control gardens



Create unique and whimsical places for play



Construct state-of-the-art, multi-use game courts





ORTHFIELD'S CANNON RIVER REGIONAL PARK EXPERIENCE

AMES MILL DAM RECONSTRUCTION FEASIBILITY STUDY



Ames Mill Dam reconstruction improves riparian habitat and provides a natural area for recreation.

THE 2020 RIVERFRONT ENHANCEMENT ACTION PLAN

There is growing enthusiasm about the possibility that the Ames Mill Dam might play an important role in restoring the health, continuity and variety of the Cannon River State Water Trail. Designated as a wild and scenic river, the Cannon still suffers from environmental degradation and human encroachment. The Ames Mill Dam, seemingly an attractive feature downtown, inhibits the natural processes of the river and limits recreational possibilities. A reconstruction of the existing dam has the potential to be both a restorative feature and significant recreational regional attraction.

A preliminary study of the dam network, the idea that an existing and rare white-water experience could be created with the construction of a smaller, multiple dam and weir and a constructed white-water course. Novasch has begun that outline the potential for transferring the privately held dam to the City of Northfield. More study needs to be completed and discussion with Post Properties should be ongoing to fully evaluate the implications of an eventual transfer model.

AMES MILL DAM STUDY

Exploring a range of options that include preservation, river ecology, recreational focus and/or a combination of these various approaches.



AMES MILL DAM RECONSTRUCTION FEASIBILITY STUDY

exploring a range of options + costs + benefits