

# The Erie Harbor Public Enhancements Project

PHASE I

## RIVERFRONT LINKAGES

Design and construction (2011-2012) of three public pedestrian access easements through the Erie Harbor residential development site.

## MT. HOPE STREETScape

Design and construction (2011-2012) of streetscape improvements along Mt. Hope Avenue, including plantings, ornamental fencing and street trees.

## PUBLIC ART

Public art component to be incorporated into the Phase I easement and streetscape improvements. Public art competition process (Request for Proposals ) to be held in Fall 2011. Location(s) to be determined by individual artist proposals, with limits being the Phase I improvements areas.

PHASE II

## GENESEE GATEWAY PARK & RIVER WALK

Phase II will bring refined designs and improvements to the existing park land adjacent to the Erie Harbor residential development. The scope of the current project involves conceptual design and master plan development for these future improvements.

### 151 MT. HOPE AVENUE PARCEL

The parcel located at 151 Mt. Hope Avenue is not currently within the Erie Harbor Enhancements project scope, but it presents an important future opportunity to enhance the Mt. Hope streetscape and adjacent park lands. Any future development should be mixed-use and designed to coexist with the Phase II Erie Harbor Enhancements park improvements - bringing vibrant activity and safety to the adjacent public park lands.

### GENESEE GATEWAY PARK (NORTH)

Phase II master plan includes improvements to this parkland parcel on the north side of the Hamilton Apartments. Anchoring the terminus of Alexander Street and with possible mixed-use developments on the north, the park will become an attractive "urban waterfront" experience for the neighborhood.

### NORTHERN RIVERFRONT LINK

The northernmost pedestrian easement linking the neighborhood to the Genesee River will be located near the Hamilton Street and Mt. Hope Avenue intersection. While secondary to the Central Link, the design and materials will be complementary, reflecting the cultural history of the project site.

### CENTRAL RIVERFRONT LINK

The central pedestrian easement linking the neighborhood to the Genesee River provides broad physical and visual access to the waterfront. Located at the Averill Avenue intersection, this pedestrian corridor will include seating plazas, substantial views, and lush planting. The design will reflect the cultural and industrial history of the site.

### MT. HOPE STREETScape

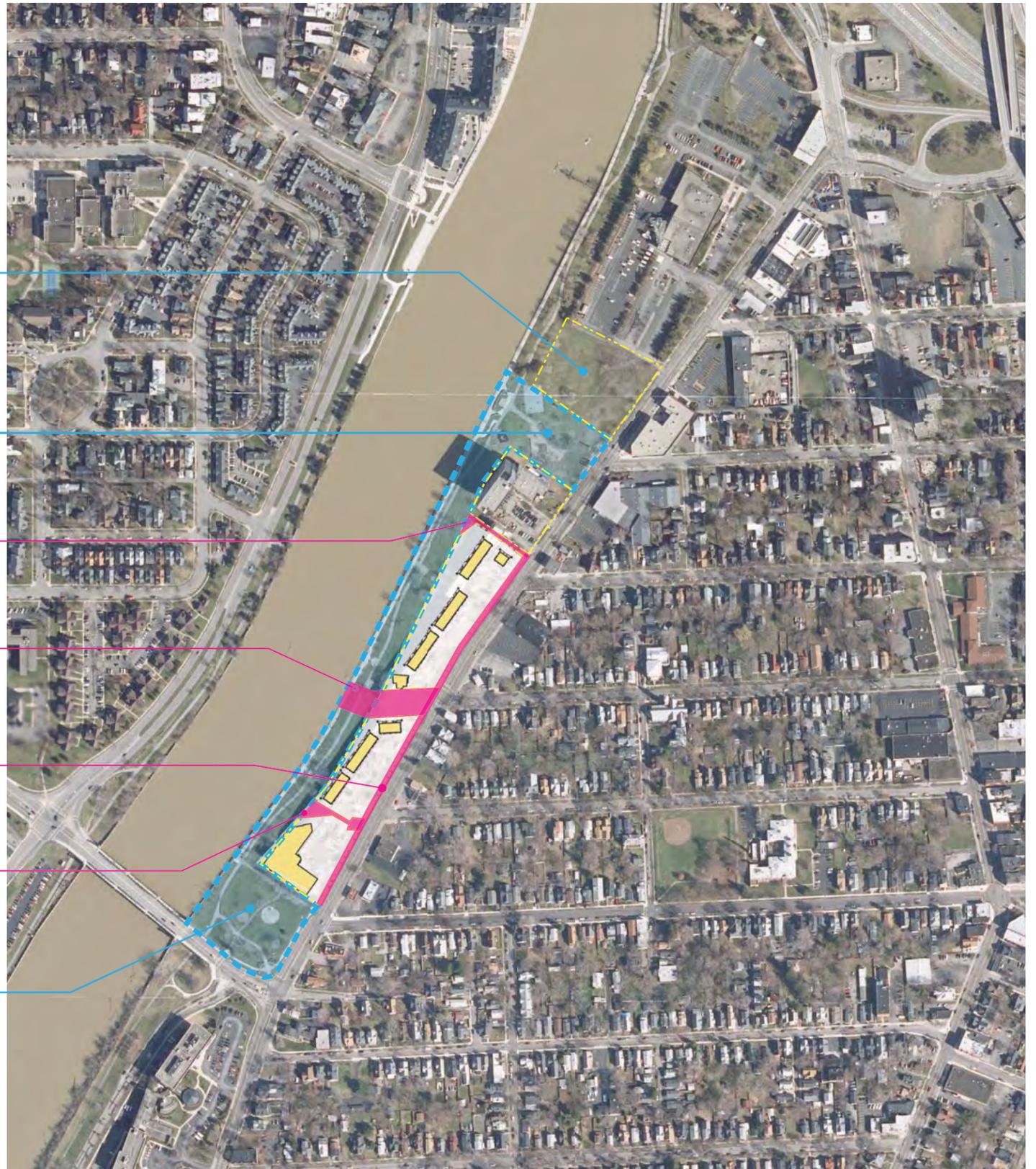
Improvements to the Mt. Hope Avenue streetscape include sitting areas near easement entrances, a linear planting buffer extending 8' back from the sidewalk, street trees, and other improvements.

### SOUTH RIVERFRONT LINK

The south pedestrian easement is located at the terminus of Hickory Street and functions as a prime view corridor through the development site to the river front and Ford Street Bridge. The link provides supplemental pedestrian access to the riverfront park lands.

### GENESEE GATEWAY PARK (SOUTH)

Phase II master plan includes improvements to the southern parkland area adjacent to the Ford Street bridge. Underground fuel storage tanks were recently removed from the site and it is currently undergoing environmental soil remediation. The park functions as the gateway between the University of Rochester and Downtown portions of the River Walk.



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# Natural History



# Cultural and Industrial History

## The Changing River

In urban portions of Rochester we know the **Genesee River** as a channeled and regulated water body. Modern flood control and hydropower dams now normalize its seasonal crests and maintain flow within the channel – minimizing the threat to our built environment. However, in its natural state the Genesee River was a much more varied and volatile force. Variations in discharge volume would fluctuate much more violently and the path of the river itself would shift and turn, both crafting new landscapes and erasing them over decades or even days.

To celebrate the reconnection of the South Wedge to the Genesee River and to show reverence towards the natural hydrological process of the river landscape – the proposed public space designs for the public access easements and overall park master plan will incorporate stylized geometries referencing the “would-be” riparian river edge and oxbow process.



## Materials of Significance



Dolomite

Within Rochester the Genesee River washes over the geologic formation known as **Lockport Dolostone** – a magnesium-rich and erosion resistant sedimentary rock resembling limestone. It's this stone formation that makes up the upper “shelf” of Rochester's High Falls and the exposed outcroppings visible from the Main Street bridge downtown. Locally, it's a commonly used natural resource for large and small scale site engineering projects.

A significant rock formation of this Dolostone group was **once exposed within the Genesee River** just north of where the University of Rochester's Interfaith Chapel is now located, creating a large and often impassable section of rapids. The exposed stone became a common fording point for land travelers during low water – contributing to settlement around Brooks Avenue.

By 1822 the State erected a dam at the rapids and constructed the **Genesee Feeder Canal** – conveying river water to the Erie Canal - which ran through the project site until 1918, when Barge Canal construction had obliterated the rapids by dynamite. (Grasso, 1993)

During excavation for the 2010 Erie Harbor construction, a significant stockpile of **dolomite boulders were found buried in the location of the old Genesee Feeder Canal**. It is thought that these massive stones were used to line the canal. One could imagine that they may be the very exposed stones blasted out of the Genesee River just upstream and reused. These stones have been stored on site and will be reused once again as amenities recalling the natural process of the river and our local geologic conditions.

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## Fueling Rochester

The **Lehigh Valley Railroad** was the last to establish itself in Rochester, reaching western New York in 1892. As with many railroad conglomerates of the day, the LVR owned coal related enterprises, pulling the **highest quality coal (anthracite)** out of Pennsylvania. With lines routing through spectacular scenery, the LVR soon added passenger service and hauled other goods and cargo to Rochester and beyond.

The company continued to make land acquisitions along the Genesee River until approximately 1918 when the State demolished many Victorian-era houses fronting Mt. Hope Avenue – making way for an extensive **LVR rail yard, round house, and coal storage infrastructure**, including related rail-cargo reliant businesses fronting Mt. Hope. The Lehigh Valley Railroad had cornered the market for anthracite – effectively controlling the most valuable energy source for businesses, homes and institutions.

Lehigh Valley Gas-Electric cars #16 and #19 made **twelve round-trips daily** from Rochester to the LVR main line at Rochester Junction, near Honeoye Falls. These LVR workhorses hauled cargo and passenger cars into Rochester until September of 1950, including riders of the famed Black Diamond Express passenger train.



Anthracite Coal



Genesee Feeder Canal



Coal Storage Trestle



## Growing Rochester

Founded in 1840, the **Ellwanger and Barry nursery** (Mount Hope Nursery) once held more than **650 acres of land** along Mt. Hope Avenue for the commercial propagation and cultivation of their vast selection of horticultural products.

At its peak, the nursery was **the largest commercial nursery in the world**, shipping fabulous plant selections across the globe for public parks and private gardens alike.

Both George Ellwanger and Patrick Barry were **advocates of the public park system**, with former nursery land forming the core of the Frederick Law Olmsted-designed Highland Park.

The nursery closed in 1918, somewhat simultaneous to the Lehigh Valley Railroad yard expansions on the banks of the Genesee River in the project site. Much of the nursery land

was converted to housing – forming the land basis for many of the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

The influence of Ellwanger and Barry on the park system, local horticultural traditions, and the development of nearby neighborhoods is worth celebrating with distinctive planting designs – **striking rows of plant species, suggestive of the commercial horticultural process.**



**SCULPTED LANDSCAPE**



Topography of park allows subtle sculpting of the landform to reflect adjacent "pinnacle range" hills and Mt. Hope landforms. Includes bermed viewing area with bridge, water and downtown views.

FORD ST (BRIDGE)

**FUTURE PUBLIC ART**



Future public art location and small "south-end" plaza with specialty paving and seating elements. Acts as the "gateway" to University of Rochester & Genesee Valley Park portion of river trail.

**PATHWAY CONNECTIONS**



Modify or remove steps and piers to create lower river walk access points closer to pedestrian easement junctions and preserve existing tree "groves".

**OVERLOOK PLAZA**



"Overlook" plaza and "river stone" theater seating in sloped lawn will have spectacular views to downtown. Includes accessible connection from view plaza to lower river walk pathway. Selected under performing trees will be relocated or removed to open up views.

**PLAY**



The waterfront park should incorporate play experiences for a wide range of user groups, including children and adults. A modern playground and interactive water feature would provide interest for families and individual users.

**A SPACE FOR FLEXIBLE USE**



Park will provide room for flexible programming and events. Peaceful grass and stone sitting areas provide waterfront relaxation and downtown views, while the broad plaza axis toward river may provide space for programming such as the South Wedge Farmers Market, small concerts, or arts events.

**PASSIVE RECREATION PARK**



Enjoy views and passive recreational activities on the "great lawn." The former brownfield site is currently undergoing soil cleanup / remediation and represents the community's commitment to revitalizing and transforming the Genesee River waterfront.

**GREGORY STREET VIEWS**



Rehabilitated landscape and new trees will maintain views through park of ford street bridge from Gregory Street.

**SOUTH END NEIGHBORHOOD LINK**

"South" pedestrian access easement (Phase 1 construction) provides access to the waterfront and river walk trail at Hickory Street. See Phase I detailed plan "A".

**A**

**MT. HOPE AVE. STREET TREES**

New street trees and plantings along Mt. Hope Avenue will provide shade and enhanced streetscape through the corridor.

MT. HOPE AVENUE

HICKORY STREET

**CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD LINK**

"Middle" pedestrian access easement includes wide physical and visual access to the Genesee River from the "South Wedge" neighborhood at the Averill Avenue and Mt. Hope Avenue intersection. See Phase I detailed plan "B" and supplemental graphics.

**B**

EVERILL AVENUE

**NORTH END NEIGHBORHOOD LINK**

"North" pedestrian access easement provides access to river walk at Hamilton Street. See Phase I detailed plan "C".

**C**

HAMILTON ST.

**PARK RE-USE / RECYCLE**



The waterfront park design proposes to re-use existing elements of the current park, including concrete seat walls and the iconic pillars at the terminus of Alexander Street. Pillars can be rehabilitated / modified into a future community public art experience. The concrete walls will form the backbone of drumlin shaped "sunning berms" within the plaza.

ALEXANDER STREET

**A VIBRANT URBAN PARK AND REDEVELOPMENT**



To support and compliment the active urban waterfront park experience, future development on the parcel at 151 Mt. Hope Avenue should be carefully designed to orient to the street, the river and the park. A mix of uses, including ground floor retail/commercial and upper floor residential and office will form a symbiotic relationship with future park improvements - providing a safe and vibrant urban waterfront experience.



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## South End Neighborhood Link **A**

The southernmost pedestrian link provides secondary access to the Genesee Gateway Park and River Walk near the intersection of Mt. Hope Avenue and Hickory Street. Views from Hickory Street to the Ford Street bridge are preserved.



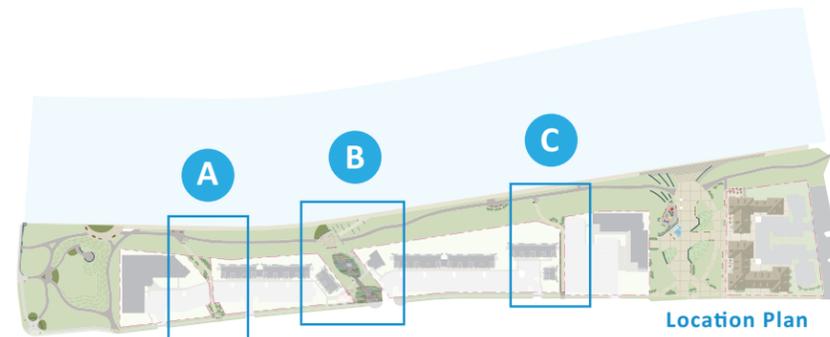
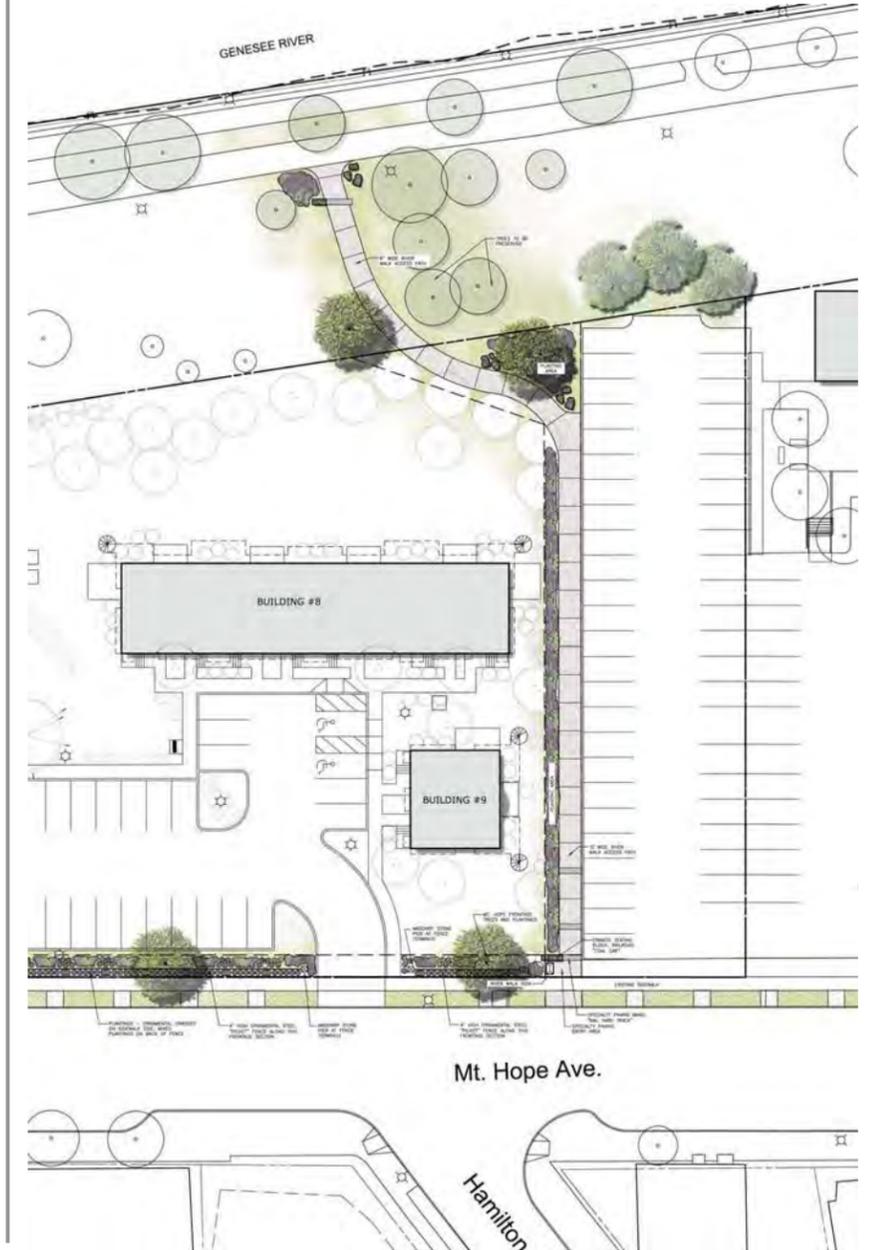
## Central Neighborhood Link **B**

The central pedestrian link provides broad visual and physical access to the Genesee Gateway Park and River Walk from the South Wedge neighborhood. This wide park-like access serves as the primary public thoroughfare across the Erie Harbor development site and terminates the visual axis down Averill Avenue with safe, inviting and artistically designed gathering spaces.



## North End Neighborhood Link **C**

The northern pedestrian link provides secondary access to the Genesee Gateway Park and River Walk at the intersection of Mt. Hope Avenue and Hamilton Street.

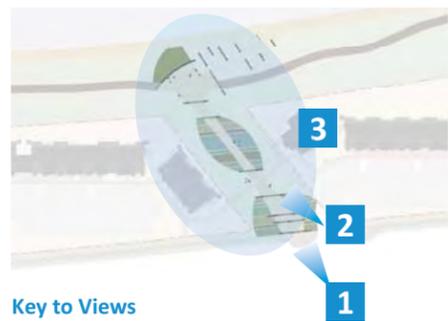


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0' 30' 60' 90'



View of central pedestrian link from the intersection of Mt. Hope Avenue and Averill Avenue, looking west towards the Genesee River and River Walk. The link provides broad visual and physical public access to the waterfront.



Key to Views

Central Link - Aerial View

Overall aerial view of central pedestrian link from Mt. Hope Avenue to Genesee Gateway Park and proposed Overlook Plaza.



2



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Central Link Detail View

View looking west towards River Walk and proposed overlook plaza showing proposed planting and seating treatments.



4

## Overlook Plaza

View from the central pedestrian link Overlook Plaza toward downtown Rochester. The Overlook Plaza serves as the terminus of the Averill Avenue view corridor at the Genesee River and the intersection between the neighborhood pedestrian link and the existing River Walk trail. The plaza also connects the upper multi-use path with the promenade along the river's edge by an accessible ramp. It provides seating and orients viewers towards the spectacular city skyline.



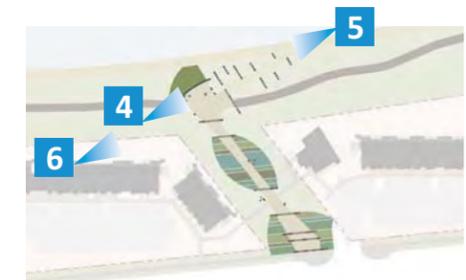
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## Balcony View

Evening view towards downtown Rochester from a second-story balcony on Erie Harbor building #3. Fabulous city skyline, river and park views are framed from private terraces, which also provide safety to park users by keeping "eyes" on the park lands below.



Key to Views

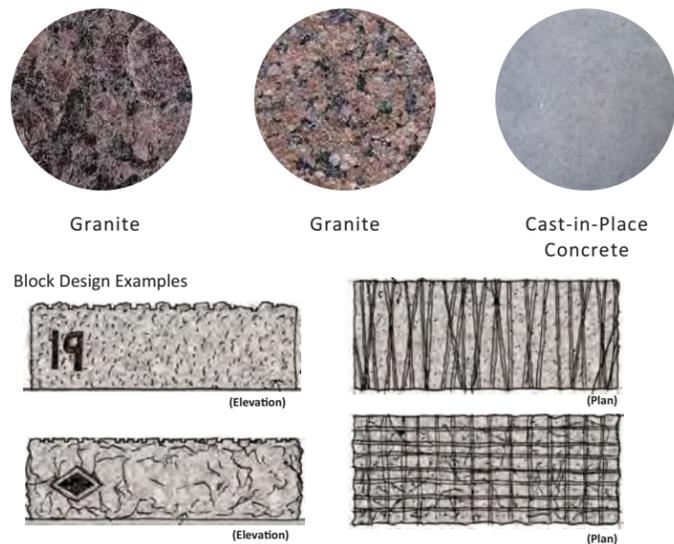
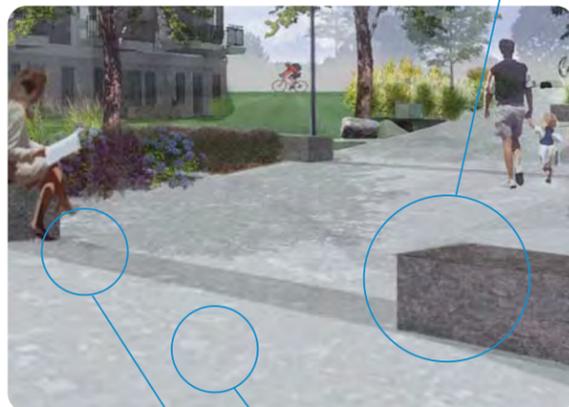
## River Stone Theater

View south from the existing Genesee River Walk promenade up the accessible ramp towards the Overlook Plaza. Referencing the adjacent bedrock and river geology, the River Stone Theater is oriented towards stunning downtown views and steps down from the Overlook Plaza to the riverfront. The space provides seating and impromptu play experiences.

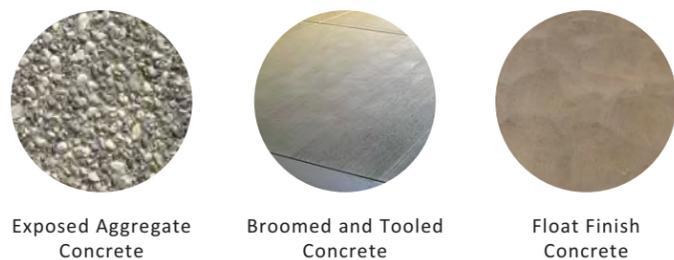
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# Materials

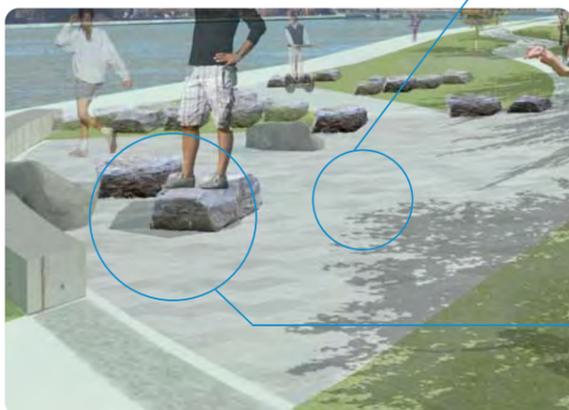
## Seating Blocks + Walls



## Main Walkway Pavements



## Specialized Pavements (Plaza Areas and Banding)



## River Stones (Informal Amphitheater and Accents)



# Plantings

## Plant Development & Growth (average)



**1 YEAR**  
 Shade trees: 15' tall  
 Flowering trees: 10' tall  
 Shrubs/Perennials/Grasses: vary (6" to 3')



**5 YEARS**  
 Shade trees: 20' tall  
 Flowering trees: 15' tall  
 Shrubs/Perennials/Grasses: vary (1' to 4')

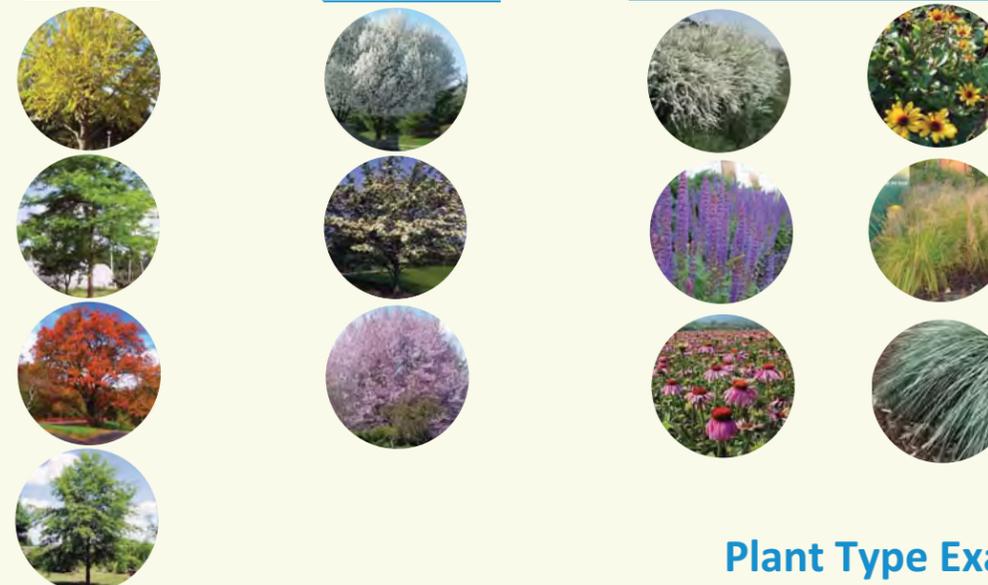


**15 YEARS**  
 Shade trees: 30-35' tall  
 Flowering trees: 20-25' tall  
 Shrubs/Perennials/Grasses: vary (1' to 4')

Shade Trees

Flowering Trees

Shrubs / Perennials / Grasses



## Plant Type Examples