



# ROC THE RIVERWAY

A VISION PLAN FOR THE FUTURE OF ROCHESTER'S GENESSEE RIVERFRONT  
PHASE I – MAY 2018



**Finger Lakes  
Regional Economic  
Development Council**



City of Rochester, NY  
Lovely A. Warren, Mayor  
Rochester City Council

A Joint Initiative of New York State and the City of Rochester





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**SECTION**  
**1**

**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

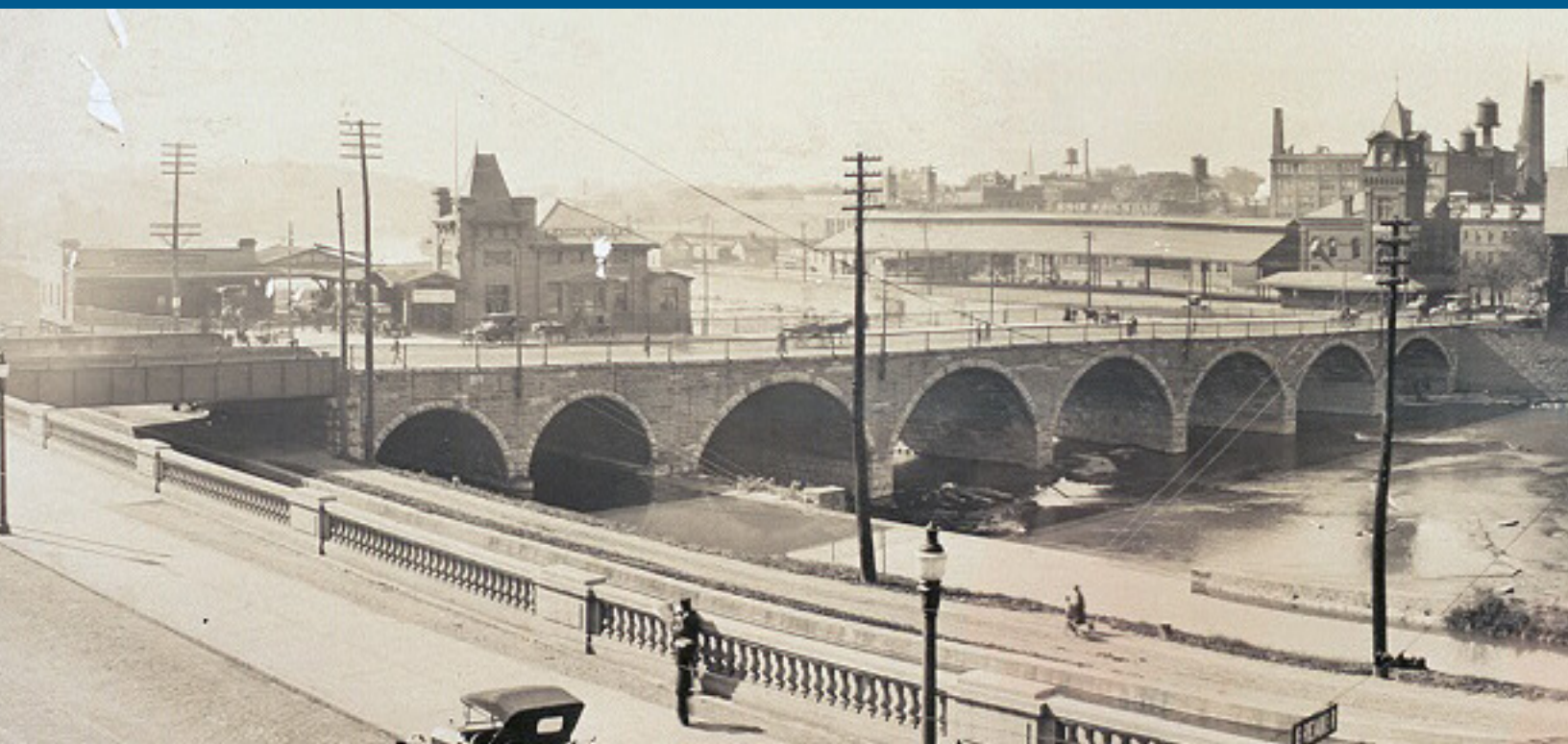


# ORIGINS + PURPOSE

The ROC the Riverway initiative is a bold and progressive plan to revitalize the severely underutilized Genesee Riverfront in the core of Rochester, New York. It represents years of planning and community engagement around a myriad of potential riverfront projects, culminating in a captivating and cohesive vision for revitalizing the city's most significant natural asset. This Vision Plan outlines the characteristics of the plan area, the process for involving the community, and the highest priority projects that will launch this aggressive transformation of the heart of the Rochester region.

The mighty Genesee River flows north through the City of Rochester, connecting the Erie Canal on the city's southern edge to Lake Ontario. It passes through a multitude of diverse neighborhoods and unique geologic and natural settings. The river, canal, and lake played integral roles in defining Rochester's history, its development patterns, and the evolution of social and economic forces in the community. The Genesee River in particular contributed to siting the Flour City's earliest settlements and to supporting its earliest industries. As is the story of most American cities, much of Rochester's relationship with its waterfront was industry-driven and therefore diminished in importance as those businesses faded into the past.

Rochester does not have as much concentrated riverfront industry as similar Rust Belt cities like Buffalo, Cleveland, or Pittsburgh. Nor does it have the heavily concentrated rail and highway infrastructure paralleling the river that plagues so many other cities. Yet Rochester continues to struggle with finding its riverfront identity. In downtown, many buildings are built right up to the water's edge, limiting public access. As well, downtown's economic struggles for much of the past half century have hindered a focused effort on reviving the riverfront. However, in recent years downtown has begun to find its identity and is roaring back to life.





North of downtown lies Rochester's most dramatic natural asset, the Genesee River Gorge and its series of waterfalls. While spectacular in their beauty and power, the steep elevation changes and swaths of industrial complexes limit access and views of the river. South of downtown features the best river access opportunities in the form of the Genesee Riverway Trail (GRT), which stretches from Court Street to the University of Rochester, Genesee Valley Park, and beyond. Yet the beauty of this resource has not reached its full potential, as there are limited boat access points and few waterfront destinations to attract boating activity or trail usage.

Despite these challenges, Rochester has made great strides to revitalize the Genesee Riverfront. Many miles of the GRT have been completed in the last 20 years. In particular, the boardwalk in Turning Point Park is a jewel in the region's trail system. Lower Falls Park has been redeveloped to feature improved access to the river for nearby residents and interactive design features that celebrate the river and falls. Vacant riverfront sites like Corn Hill Landing and Brooks Landing have been developed, attracting residents, dining, and lodging. Plans are in place to replace portions of the crumbling West River Wall, while the river wall on the eastern shore has already been fully replaced with a public promenade and boat landings.

Significant investments have been made at the Port of Rochester. These include the Port Terminal Building – a mixed-use facility now enjoying its highest occupancy rate since it was built – and the new Port of Rochester Marina, often cited as the highest quality facility of its kind on all of Lake Ontario. The High Falls district has weathered some ups and downs but is now settling into its identity as a destination for sustainability demonstration projects, historic office buildings, the large revitalized Genesee Brewery, and stunning views of the only major waterfall in the downtown of an American city.

Much has been accomplished in this new century, yet Rochester continues to struggle to fully engage with the river. For decades the City has intended to reconnect its core to the Genesee but economic challenges, constrained local budgets, and significant physical barriers have continuously limited those efforts. But now, thanks in large part to the commitment to ROC the Riverway by New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo, the community has rallied together to address this untapped potential once and for all. The momentum favors a riverfront resurgence, as several recent developments have converged that illuminate the river's importance.







## LOCAL WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM (LWRP)

In 2017, Rochester completed its Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP). This community-driven plan outlines a vision, set of policies, and list of specific projects to enhance the Erie Canal, Lake Ontario, and Genesee River waterfronts. A concerted effort was made to identify a series of physical improvements that would provide greater access to the water, promote environmental stewardship, and encourage water-oriented development. This list of projects includes several private development sites, infrastructure investments, park enhancements, and all of the necessary steps to fill in the remaining gaps in the GRT.

While fairly comprehensive and reflective of extensive community input, the document stopped short of illustrating how all of these investments relate to one another and leverage each other. Upon adoption of the LWRP, it was clear that a further effort was needed to visualize these projects and inspire the community to support their implementation. A bold, cohesive vision was missing that would maximize our potential to secure funding from external sources. It was also evident that a geographic focus was required in order to maximize the likelihood of leveraging private sector investment and attracting public funding.

## DOWNTOWN RESURGENCE

Downtown Rochester has experienced its strongest resurgence since its heyday in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Long a center for office buildings and shopping, the high vacancies of the 1990s and 2000s have given way to a new wave of development: residential, dining, and entertainment. Downtown's population was 3,250 in 2000. It is now at 7,200, with about 3,000 more people expected when proposed developments are completed – a 42% increase. Rochester Downtown Development Corporation has tracked over \$2.2 billion in public and private investment since 2000. Likewise, the Downtown Innovation Zone now features 172 innovation and creative class enterprises that are attracting young and highly-skilled talent to the area, up from 108 in 2016.

New restaurants are gaining a foothold beyond the typical weekday lunch crowd. The majority of buildings in the downtown section of Main Street, once the most visible evidence of Rochester's decline, are either slated for rehabilitation or have recently been renovated. The downtown festival scene has exploded with the growth of the Rochester International Jazz Festival and the Fringe Festival. A bike share program known as Pace is focused on the heart of the city and has given a major boost to the local bicycling culture, appealing to both bike enthusiasts and new leisure riders. Lastly, Rochester has embarked on two bold and transformative redevelopment projects that have garnered national attention – Midtown Rising and filling in the eastern leg of the Inner Loop expressway.

## ADVANCING A VISION FOR THE RIVER

With all of these recent developments, a critical mass is assembling and community pride is swelling. There is tremendous momentum behind expounding on the LWRP's objectives and capitalizing on this new river focus. The city is now poised to finally address its greatest untapped potential by revitalizing the downtown waterfront. ROC the Riverway expresses this movement and consolidates the community's effort to advance a bold new experience along the Genesee River.

In 2017, a team of planners, architects, landscape architects, and urban designers from the City of Rochester and Bergmann Associates collaborated to assemble a cohesive vision for the core of the Genesee Riverfront. Based on the projects listed in the LWRP, a visually-rich document was developed to illustrate the power and potential of the river in downtown, stretching to areas immediately north and south of the city's center. The original ROC the Riverway document identified 28 transformative projects, along with cost estimates, digital renderings, and anticipated economic impact. Collectively, the projects totaled \$500 million and an estimated \$2.8 billion in leveraged investment.

In February, 2018 Governor Cuomo announced an initial commitment of \$50 million to implement the first phase of this vision. With that award, the Governor charged the City and Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council (FLREDC) with convening a community-based Advisory Board to guide future steps. The Advisory Board was co-chaired by FLREDC co-chairs Bob Duffy (President, Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce) and Dr. Anne Kress (President, Monroe Community College). Within the three months that followed the award, the Advisory Board was responsible for designing a robust but focused community engagement process that would drive prioritization of projects for the first \$50 million.





“Downtown Rochester has experienced a major renaissance in recent years, and with this investment to transform the Genesee River waterfront, we help unlock the untapped potential in this region. Just as we’ve done at Buffalo’s inner and outer harbors, investing in the **revitalization of Rochester’s waterfront will drive tourism, spur economic growth and encourage investment**, helping Rochester to grow and thrive for generations to come.”

- Andrew Cuomo, Governor of New York State



GOVERNOR CUOMO AT ROC THE RIVERWAY PRESS CONFERENCE



# ADVISORY BOARD



## BOARD MEMBERS

### CO-CHAIRS

**Bob Duffy** | Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce

**Anne Kress** | Monroe Community College

### MEMBERS

**Lisa Baron** | Greentopia

**Clement Chung** | ROC City Coalition (Past Chair)

**Veronica Dasher** | Rochester Gas & Electric (AVANGRID)

**Shawn Dunwoody** | DUNWOODĒ Visual Consulting

**Jim Howe** | The Nature Conservancy

**Norman Jones** | City of Rochester Commissioner of Environmental Services

**Nichole Malec** | Constellation Brands (Downtown resident)

**Eugenio Marlin** | Ibero-American Development Corp.

**Mary Beth Popp** | North American Breweries

**Heidi Zimmer-Meyer** | Rochester Downtown Development Corporation

### PROFESSIONAL STAFF TO THE BOARD

Holly Barrett | Assistant City Engineer

Chris Bauer | New York State Department of State

Kamal Crues | City Engineer

Vincent Esposito | Empire State Development, Finger Lakes Regional Director

John Fornof | City Budget Analyst

Tom Hack | City Structural Engineer

Kevin Kelley | City Planner, Project Manager

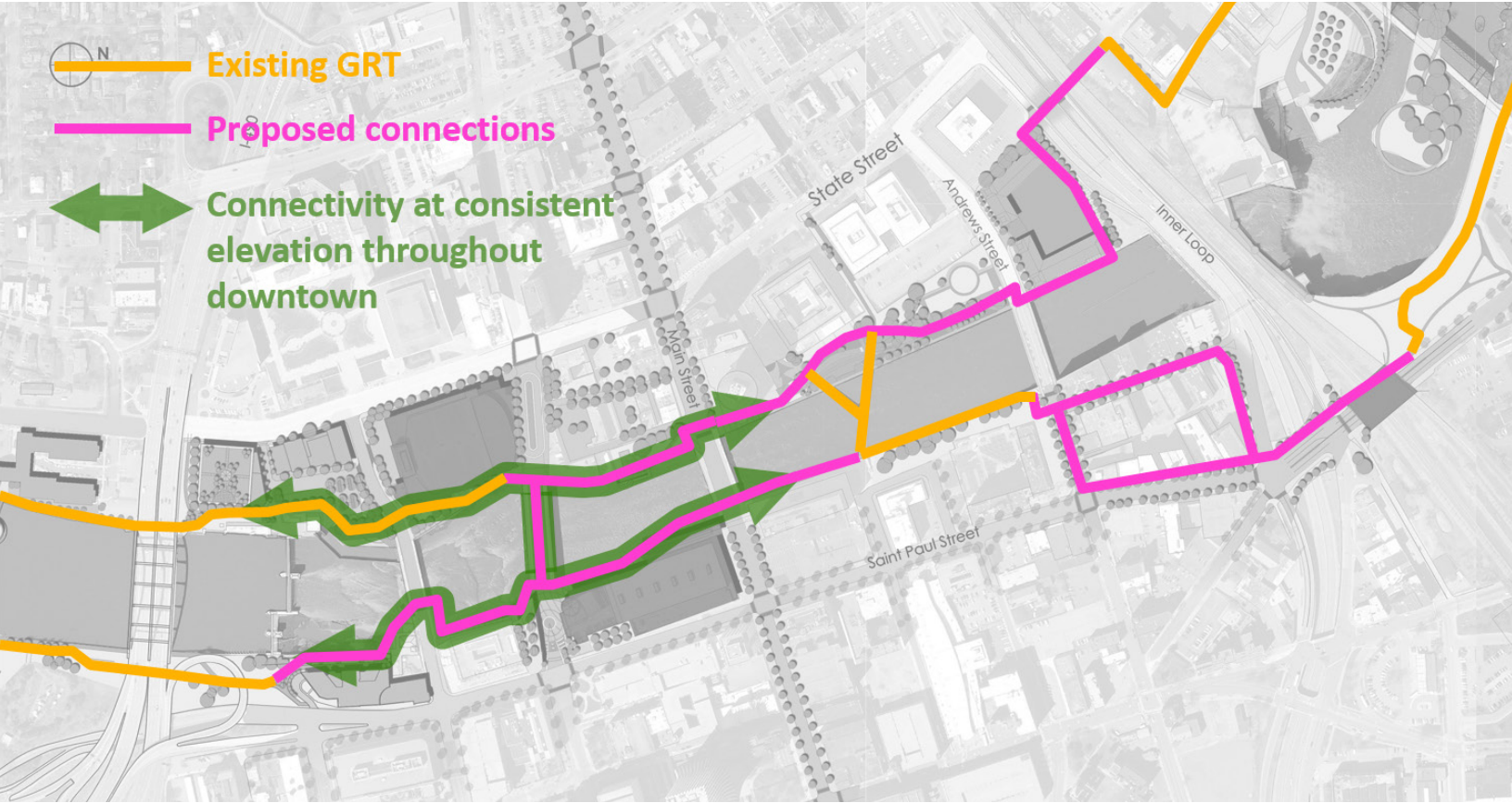
Tamara Mayberry | Director of Government Relations for the Governor's Office

Jeff Mroczek | City Landscape Architect

Alex Yudelson | Chief of Staff, City of Rochester

## BOARD CHARGE

On February 27, 2018, Governor Cuomo and Mayor Warren announced the formation of an Advisory Board to conduct a public process to review and prioritize plans for public and private investment along the Genesee River corridor; this investment is better known as "ROC the Riverway." After completing a series of stakeholder sessions and a public review process, the Advisory Board shall present to the Governor and Mayor proposed recommendations on how to utilize an initial \$50 million State commitment; this shall be done by May, 2018. The goal of this process is to identify projects to focus investment along the river corridor in order to create dynamic public spaces, spur private development and job growth, repair and maintain critical infrastructure, and conserve and maintain the natural wonder and beauty of the Genesee River corridor.



MAP SHOWING THE IMPORTANCE OF DOWNTOWN TRAIL/PROMENADE CONNECTIVITY, ESPECIALLY ENABLING SEGMENTS TO CONNECT AT THE SAME ELEVATION

# OVERARCHING GOALS

people **CONNECT** culture

**ACTIVATE** art **SUSTAIN**

ecology ownership

**LEVERAGE** **INSPIRE** places

partnership **CELEBRATE**



# PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- Produce seamless and accessible pedestrian and bicycle connections along both sides of the river via the Genesee Riverway Trail and neighborhood linkages to the trail
- Create dynamic public spaces, including multi-use gathering spaces as the centerpiece of downtown
- Provide a massive boost to downtown's ongoing resurgence, spurring private development, public-private partnerships, and job creation
- Repair and maintain critical infrastructure
- Provide stewardship for the appropriate transformation of sites blighted by past environmental neglect
- Establish a framework for active, sustained programming of public spaces and first floor uses that span all four seasons
- Continue to fill riverfront spaces with safe, positive activity for all four seasons

## SUB-AREA OBJECTIVES

- South River: focus on waterfront access, amenities, and programming that brings people to the river and increases boating activity
- Downtown: strengthen the urban core through the proliferation of public spaces, riverfront promenades, public facilities, and transformational private investment
- High Falls: develop a world-class destination that celebrates Rochester's unique blend of dramatic natural features and rich history, showcasing what a 21<sup>st</sup> century sustainable urban environment could look like



ROC THE RIVERWAY ADVISORY BOARD TOURS THE BROAD STREET BRIDGE AND AQUEDUCT

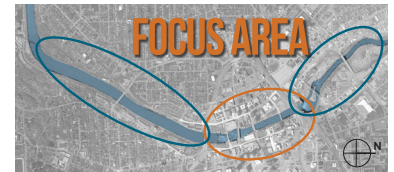


# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Promote the health and vitality of the river, surrounding natural assets, downtown, neighborhoods, and Rochester residents, focusing first on public spaces and facilities that serve area residents
- Maintain a geographic focus to secure a critical mass of investment and activity, building upon past consensus-driven plans and studies and with a commitment to steady implementation and catalyzing further investment
- Improve connectivity to, from, along and across the river via multi-use trails, complete streets, and signature bridges, orienting public space design to pedestrians, bicyclists, boaters, recreational enthusiasts, and urban explorers
- Re-orient first floor uses and external building designs to the water and adjacent public spaces
- Create numerous opportunities for public art, historic interpretation, education, whimsical installations, innovative design, and environmental stewardship – all united to create a sense of urban ‘play’ and celebration of the river
- Ensure inclusive engagement in order to ensure a rich diversity of design aesthetics and activities
- Protect and enhance environmental, cultural, and historic and natural resources, while building upon distinctive assets and anchors and enhancing views of the urban and natural environment
- Develop flexible spaces in order to let usage ideas grow organically
- Balance implementation of resource-intensive projects with “lighter, cheaper, quicker” design concepts and programming, while applying ROC the Riverway funds to opportunities and projects where other funding sources are limited



# FOCUS AREA



ROC the Riverway is comprised of three sub-areas that reflect the diverse characteristics of the Genesee River as it flows through the heart of the city. Each sub-area features a unique setting with a collection of proposed projects, yet the entire corridor shares a common set of goals, objectives, and principles and will be physically linked by a completed Genesee Riverway Trail (GRT).

## SOUTH RIVER

This sub-area stretches from the Erie Lackawanna Pedestrian Bridge near the University of Rochester in the south to the Frederick Douglass – Susan B. Anthony Bridge (I-490) in the north. The river is straight, wide, shallow and slow-moving in the South River with a continuous trail on both sides. The trail is generally located within a wide swath of park-like land paralleling the river, resulting in very few buildings being located right next to the shore. The South River is technically part of the New York State Canal system, as the river forms an unusual four-way intersection with the Erie Canal in Genesee Valley Park south of this sub-area. Canal boaters can travel up the river towards downtown, with docking for motorized boats available at Brooks Landing, Genesee Gateway Park, and Corn Hill Landing. The river is not navigable beyond that point because of the nearby Court Street Dam.

This segment is regarded as some of the best “flatwater” in the country, ideal for kayaking, canoeing, and competitive rowing. Yet it is not used to its full potential because of limited boat access points. Prominent land uses and landmarks in the area include Mt. Hope Cemetery, Erie Harbor Apartments, Spectrum (formerly Time Warner Cable), the Vacuum Oil Brownfield Opportunity Area (VOBOA), and Corn Hill Landing. The South Wedge, Plymouth-Exchange (PLEX), and Corn Hill neighborhoods are adjacent to this segment.

New investment south of downtown will capitalize on the energy of public and private investment in the core. Primary objectives in the South River include:

- Increase boating activity through additional access points and boat-oriented destinations on riverfront sites;
- Provide additional linkages into adjacent neighborhoods;
- Bolster the GRT experience through improved pathways, park enhancements, provision of amenities, and development of adjacent destinations;
- Address brownfield sites and attract private development to these sites that is oriented to the river;
- Reconstruct the shoreline to create more natural and appealing access and public spaces along the river; and
- Create stronger linkages, physically and programmatically, between boating, biking, tourism, and educational opportunities in the corridor.



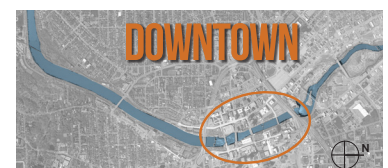
## DOWNTOWN

The Downtown sub-area is bounded by the Frederick Douglass – Susan B. Anthony Bridge to the south and the Inner Loop and CSX railroad bridges to the north. The river is heavily channelized in downtown with high walls and several buildings located on the edges of those walls, limiting access to the water. Due to the presence of the Court Street Dam and a flood control facility at the Inner Loop Bridge, the flow of the river fluctuates between deep, swift currents and shallow, almost stagnant water. When shallow, several small rapids and rock outcroppings are visible near Court Street. The river in this sub-area is traversed by seven bridges, including one pedestrian bridge and four vehicular bridges of historic significance and design.

Of the six downtown “blocks” of the river, the GRT is present in only one block on both sides and in three blocks on one side. In addition to limiting access to the river in the densest part of the city, these gaps are regarded as among the most significant in the regional trail system. Notable riverfront landmarks include the Blue Cross Arena, Thomson Reuters office building, Aqueduct Park (privately owned, publicly accessible), First Federal Plaza office tower, Charles Carroll Plaza, Rundel Memorial Library, Riverside Convention Center, Rochester Riverside Hotel, and Andrews Terrace Apartments.

Downtown is the centerpiece of the ROC the Riverway initiative. Improvements made in this sub-area have the potential to bring people to the river, create new and dramatic public gathering spaces, and enhance opportunities for more convention business, tourism, and downtown development. Primary objectives in Downtown include:

- Increase fully accessible north-south connectivity along the river as well as east-west access across the river by removing/redesigning physical barriers and establishing linkages;
- Create a centerpiece project – a public space design solution for the Historic Broad Street Aqueduct – including feasible and desirable connections to a riverfront promenade (GRT) on both sides of the river;
- Connect the river to and from primary “centers of gravity” including the Midtown/Sibley block on Main Street, City/County government cluster, RTS Transit Center, St. Paul Quarter, and The Strong Museum;
- Re-orient buildings to the river through riverfront promenades, creative lighting of the river side of buildings, and first floor uses that activate adjacent streets and public spaces;
- Create new opportunities for riverside retail, restaurants, and entertainment establishments, including pop-up/temporary/movable storefronts, as well as residential development; and
- Encourage redevelopment of vacant/underutilized sites through riverfront infrastructure investment.



## HIGH FALLS

The High Falls sub-area stretches from the Inner Loop and CSX railroad bridges in the south to the Running Track Bridge railroad trestle in the north. The dominant feature is the 96-foot high waterfall and resulting steep gorge that defines the next six miles of the river. The Pont de Rennes pedestrian bridge is a historic structure that offers sweeping views of the falls and gorge. The Genesee is swift and dramatic in this sub-area as it cuts through primarily industrial uses (active and vacant) on adjacent land. The non-profit organization, Greentopia, has spearheaded the creation of an eco-district in this area, a conceptual framework which emphasizes economic, social, and environmental equity.

Immediately north of the CSX rail line is High Falls Terrace Park, formerly known as Falls Field and one of the city's oldest public parks. The Genesee Brewery, owned by North American Breweries, is the primary use on the eastern side, followed by several acres of flat, vacant land owned by Rochester Gas & Electric (RG&E) and Bausch & Lomb north of the Smith Street Bridge. The west side features the mixed-use High Falls district, whose river's edge mainly consists of RG&E's current and former operations. The recently demolished Beebee Station site is currently undergoing substantial environmental remediation. North of the Smith Street Bridge on the west side are several small former commercial and industrial properties adjacent to the gorge rim. Neighborhoods adjacent to this segment include High Falls, Brown's Square, and Edgerton on the west side and Upper Falls and El Camino on the east side.

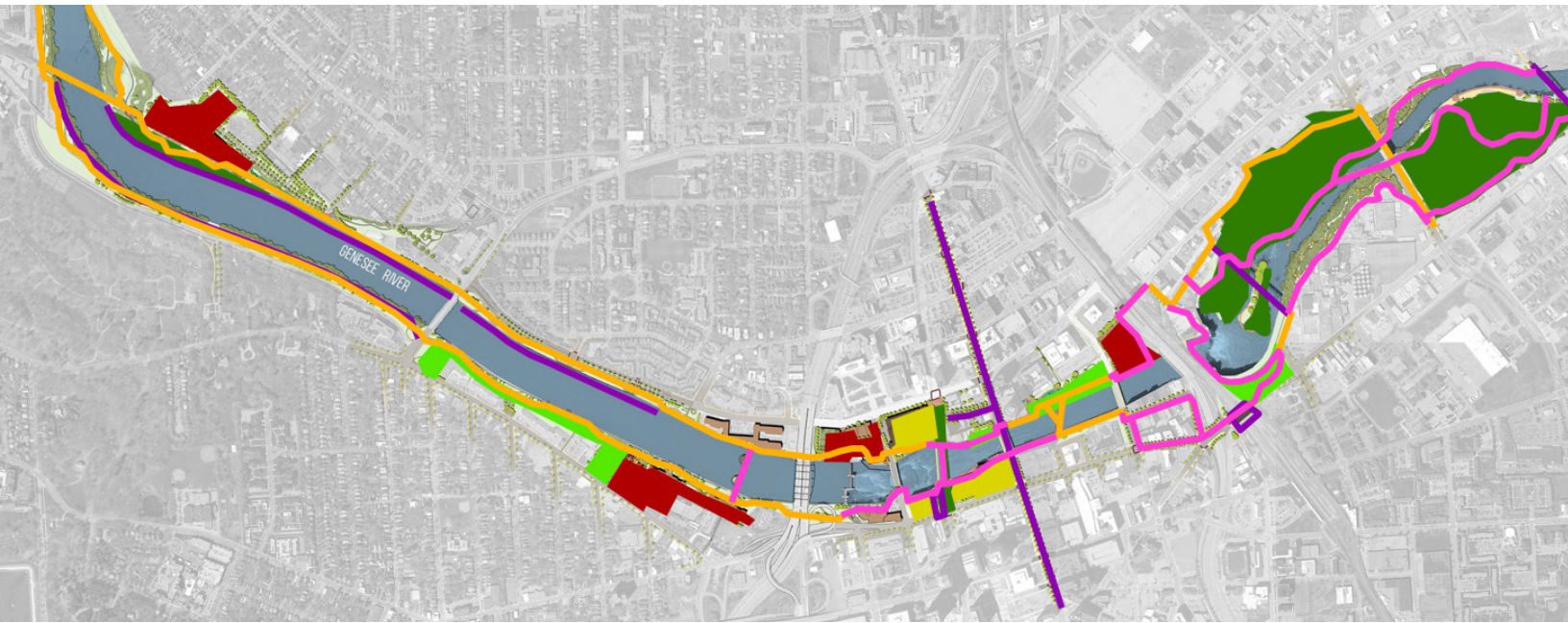
High Falls is one of Rochester's most unique and precious assets. There are vast opportunities in this sub-area for new park lands and mixed-use development, both at the higher and lower elevations, yet connectivity and brownfield cleanup remain the biggest obstacles. Primary objectives in High Falls include:

- Create a recreation and outdoor adventure destination that capitalizes on views of the dramatic waterfall and gorge;
- Enhance connectivity of the GRT from downtown to neighborhoods to the north as well as across the gorge with multiple pedestrian bridges;
- Continue to spur private development on vacant and underutilized lands near the gorge;
- Pursue opportunities for clean/green energy demonstration projects; and
- Address brownfield sites and establish private development and/or new park land on these sites.





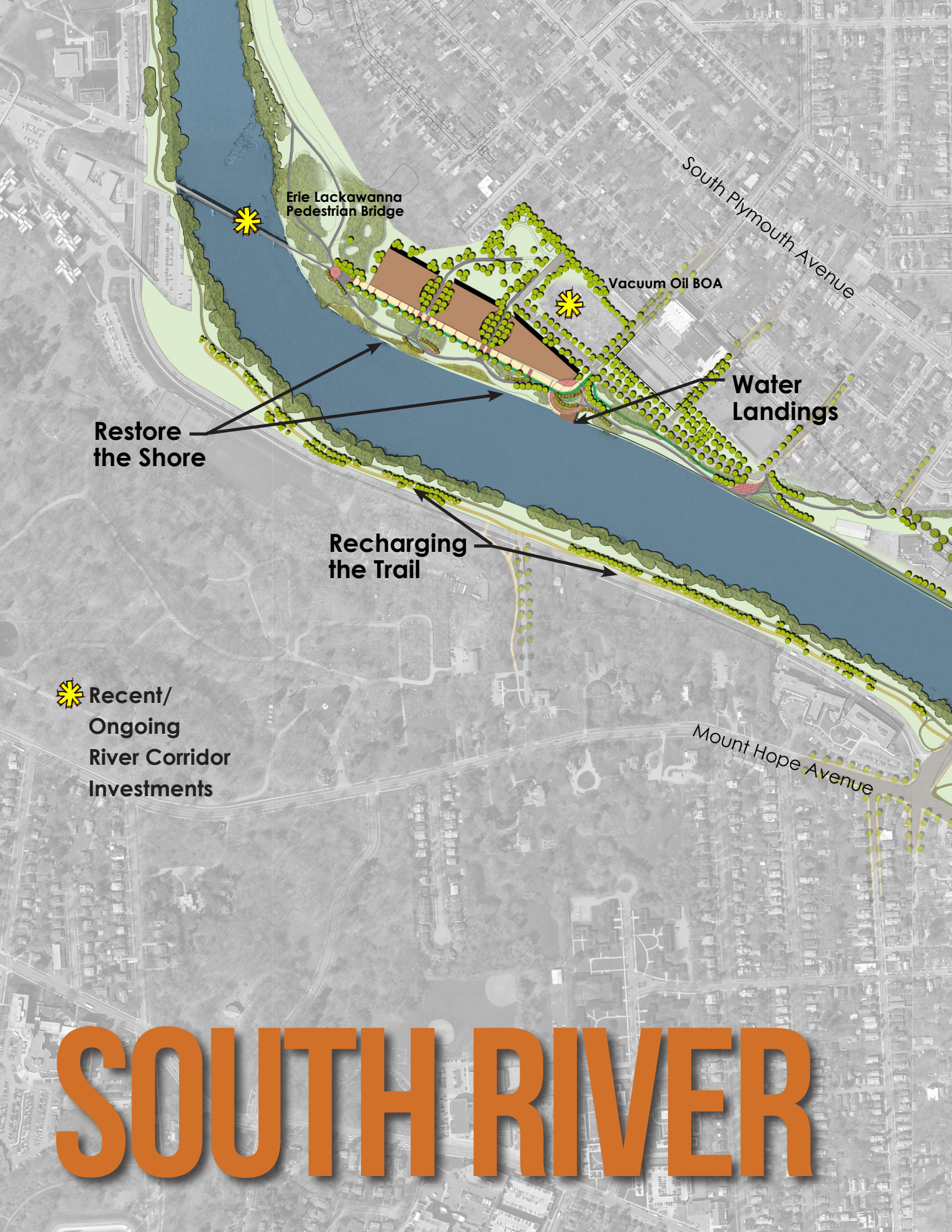
## PROJECT CATEGORIES



The proposed projects in the original ROC the Riverway proposal can be broken down into the following categories:

- **Park improvements** – Focused primarily on Genesee Gateway Park, Charles Carroll Plaza, and High Falls Terrace Park, these facilities are in need of modernization and additional amenities to support the broader vision of the corridor.
- **New Parks / Public Spaces** – New outdoor gathering spaces, including the Aqueduct Terrace and future parklands in the High Falls Gorge, will draw more people to the river and provide more space for downtown events.
- **Trail Upgrades** – Long stretches of the Genesee Riverway Trail need repair and widening. As well, bicycle and pedestrian traffic should be separated whenever possible.
- **New Trail Connections** – A primary objective of this initiative, missing trail segments will be filled in with multi-use trails and riverfront promenades, creating seamless and scenic mobility along the Genesee.
- **Infrastructure Improvements** – This category includes upgrading and re-naturalizing the West River Wall, shoring up key pedestrian bridges, and creating an exciting streetscape experience along Main Street as it bisects the river.
- **Public Facility Upgrades** – The Blue Cross Arena, Riverside Convention Center, and Rundel Memorial Library are all in need of modernization and a refreshed approach to engaging the river, physically and visually.
- **Private Development Sites** – Multiple sites in the Focus Area have the opportunity to be privately developed with mixed-use buildings that enhance the riverfront experience and draw residents, tenants, and customers to these prime real estate sites.





Erie Lackawanna  
Pedestrian Bridge


South Plymouth Avenue

Vacuum Oil BOA

Water  
Landings

Restore  
the Shore

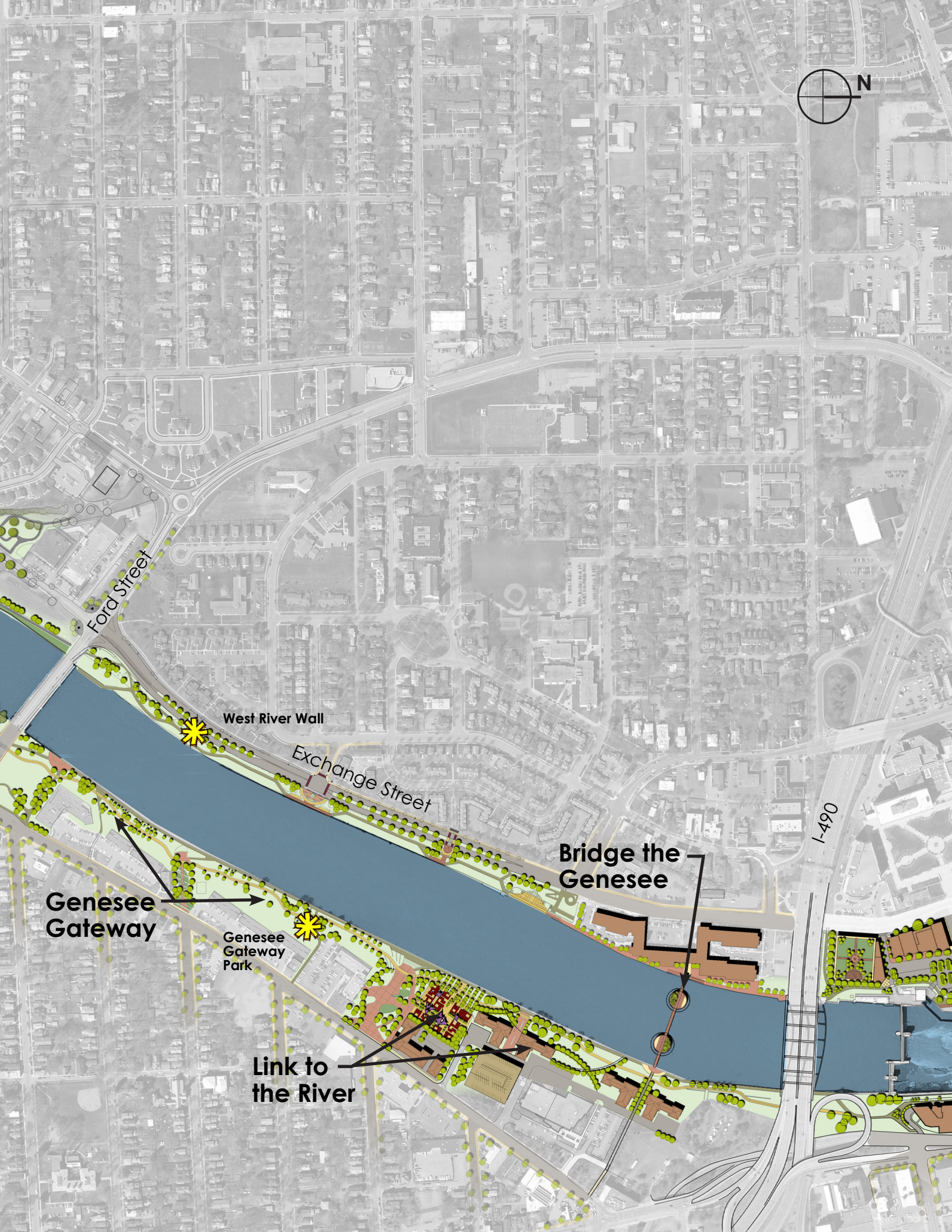
Recharging  
the Trail

 Recent/  
Ongoing  
River Corridor  
Investments

Mount Hope Avenue

# SOUTH RIVER





Forda Street

West River Wall

Exchange Street

I-490

Bridge the Genesee

Genesee Gateway

Genesee Gateway Park

Link to the River





I-490

Main Street Resurgence

Childs Basin

Riverside Development & Arena on the River

Blue Cross Arena

Main Street

Riverway Broad to Main

Promenade at Erie Harbor

Riverside Convention Center

Rundel Library Terrace Improvements

Hyatt Regency

Hilton Garden Inn

Court Street Apartments

ROC Convention Expansion

Alliance Building

Aqueduct Re-imagined & Library North Terrace

Legacy Tower

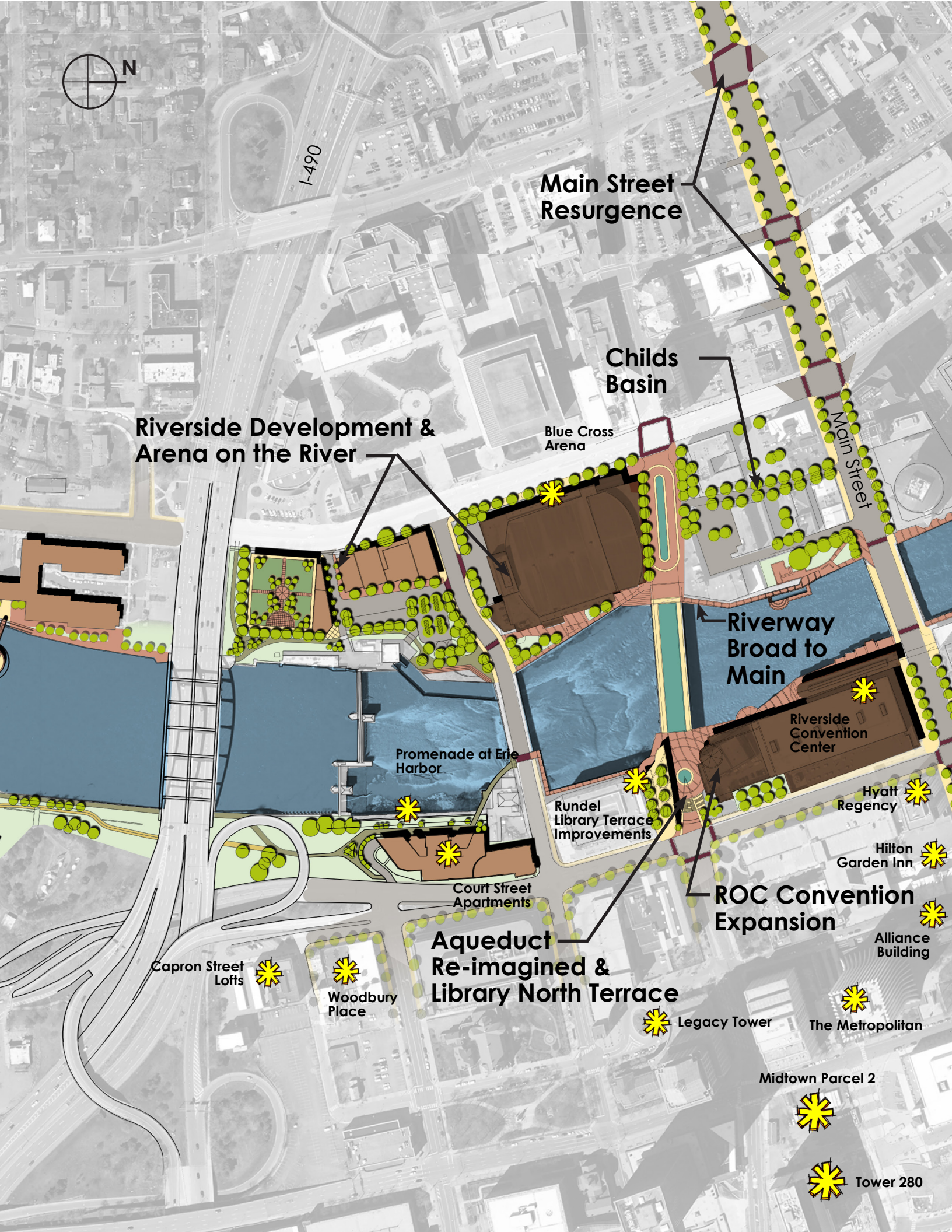
The Metropolitan

Capron Street Lofts

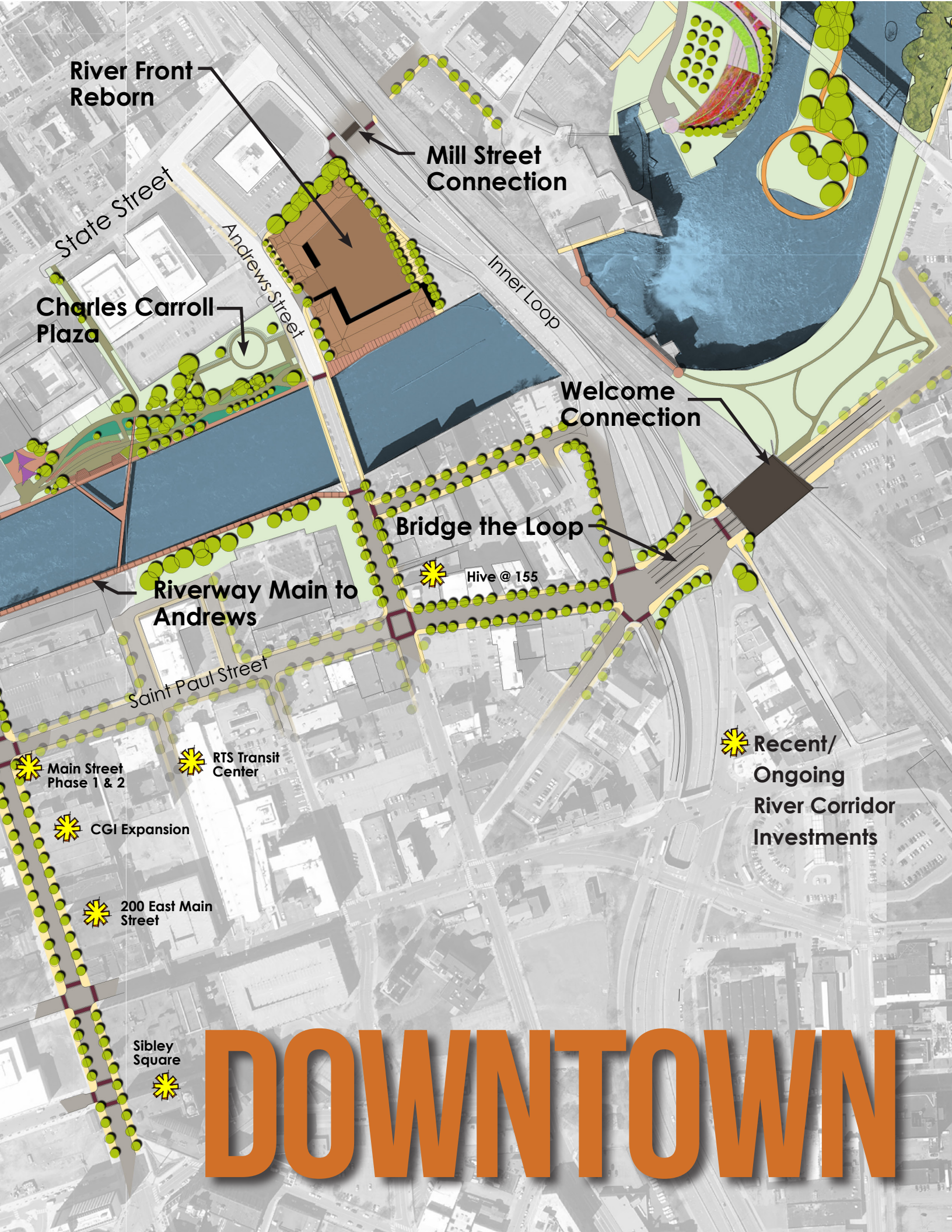
Woodbury Place

Midtown Parcel 2

Tower 280







River Front Reborn

Mill Street Connection

Charles Carroll Plaza

Welcome Connection

Bridge the Loop

Riverway Main to Andrews

Hive @ 155

Recent/Ongoing River Corridor Investments

Main Street Phase 1 & 2

RTS Transit Center

CGI Expansion

200 East Main Street

Sibley Square

# DOWNTOWN





**Connect the Gorge**

Lake Avenue

MCC Downtown

**Bee Bee Flats**

**Tree Top Trail**

Genesee Brewery

**Preserving Pont de Rennes**

**Over the Falls Bridge**

Inner-Loop







Running Track  
Bridge

High Falls Adventure

Smith Street

Saint Paul Street

El Camino Trail



 Recent/  
Ongoing  
River Corridor  
Investments

# HIGH FALLS





### KEY

-  Recent/Ongoing River Corridor Investments
-  ROC the Riverway Proposed Projects

## South River

New investment south of downtown will capitalize off the energy of public and private investment in the core. Investment will focus on **waterfront access, amenities and programming** to bring people to the river.

# ROC THE RIVERWAY

Projects from the original ROC the Riverway proposal (December 2017)

## SOUTH RIVER

1. Recharging the Trail
2. Restore the Shore
3. Water Landings
4. Genesee Gateway
5. Link to the River
6. Bridge the Genesee

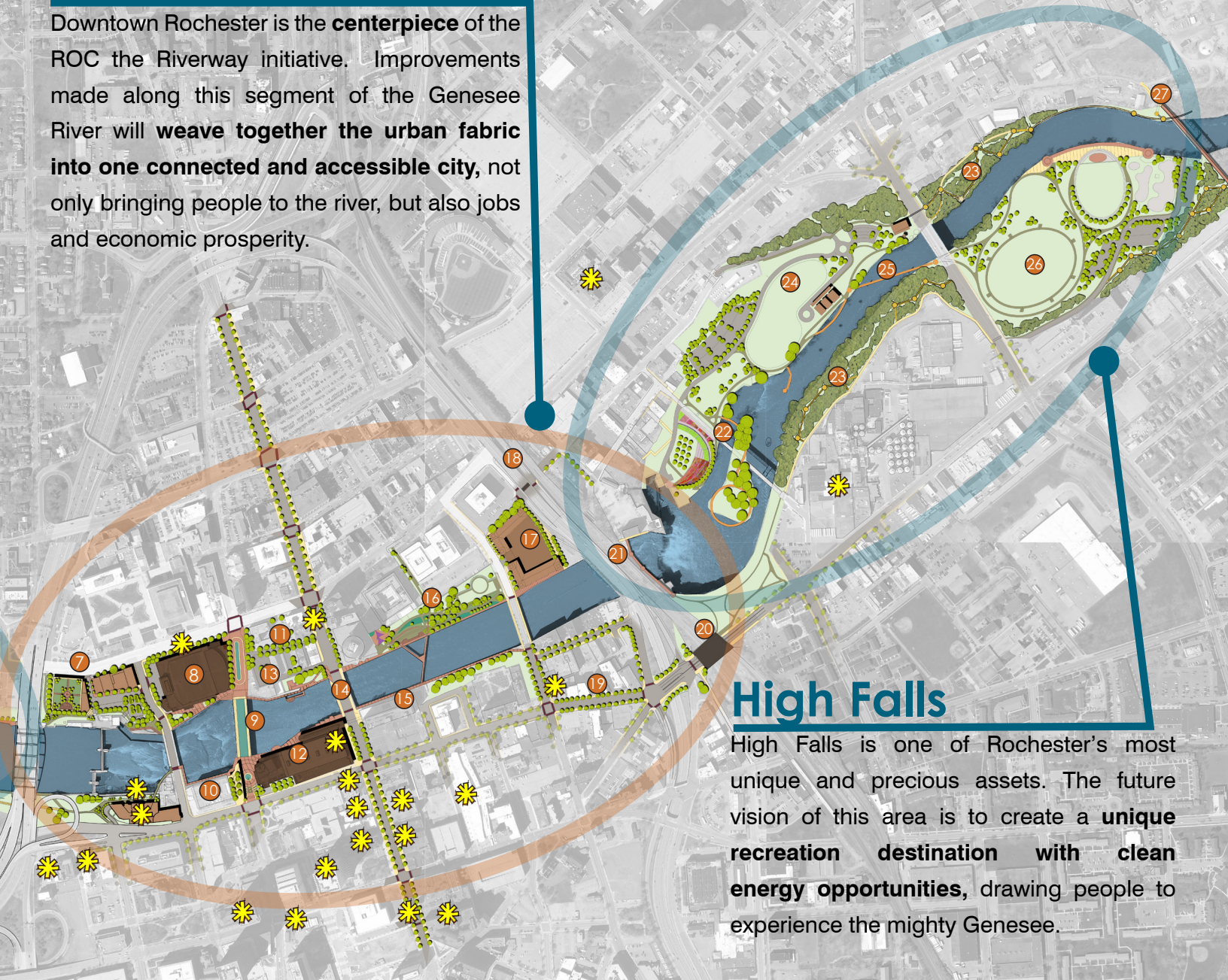
## DOWNTOWN

- |                              |                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 7. Riverside Development     | 14. Main Street Resurgence   |
| 8. Arena on the River        | 15. Riverway Main to Andrews |
| 9. Aqueduct Re-imagined      | 16. Charles Carroll Plaza    |
| 10. Library North Terrace    | 17. Riverfront Reborn        |
| 11. Childs Basin             | 18. Mill Street Connection   |
| 12. ROC Convention Expansion | 19. Bridge the Loop          |
| 13. Riverway Broad to Main   | 20. Welcome Connection       |



# Downtown

Downtown Rochester is the **centerpiece** of the ROC the Riverway initiative. Improvements made along this segment of the Genesee River will **weave together the urban fabric into one connected and accessible city**, not only bringing people to the river, but also jobs and economic prosperity.



# High Falls

High Falls is one of Rochester's most unique and precious assets. The future vision of this area is to create a **unique recreation destination with clean energy opportunities**, drawing people to experience the mighty Genesee.

## HIGH FALLS

- 21. Over the Falls Bridge
- 22. Preserving Pont de Rennes
- 23. Tree Top Trail
- 24. Bee Bee Flats
- 25. Connect the Gorge
- 26. High Falls Adventure
- 27. Running Track Bridge
- 28. Downtown / Riverfront Management Entity  
(Not on Map)





# COST ESTIMATES + PROJECTED ECONOMIC IMPACT

Project Name	Cost Estimate (in millions)*	Map #
Recharging the Trail	\$5	1
Restore the Shore	\$15	2
Water Landings	\$3	3
Genesee Gateway	\$3	4
Link to the River	\$8	5
Bridge the Genesee	\$16	6
Riverside Development	\$8	7
Arena on the River	\$37	8
Aqueduct Re-imagined	\$35	9
Library North Terrace	\$8	10
Childs Basin	\$5	11
ROC Convention Expansion	\$125	12
Riverway Broad to Main	\$10	13
Main Street Resurgence	\$9	14
Riverway Main to Andrews	\$5	15
Charles Carroll Plaza	\$25	16
Riverfront Reborn	\$10	17
Mill Street Connection	\$3	18
Bridge the Loop	\$16	19
Welcome Connection	\$40	20
Over the Falls Bridge	\$28	21
Preserving Pont de Rennes	\$9	22
Tree Top Trail	\$8	23
Bee Bee Flats	\$17	24
Connect the Gorge	\$7	25
High Falls Adventure	\$30	26
Running Track Bridge	\$5	27
Downtown/Riverfront Mang. Entity	\$10	28
<b>TOTAL FOR ALL PROJECTS</b>	<b>\$500</b>	

\* All costs include soft costs and development costs

The ROC the Riverway initiative will establish the Genesee River as the “centerpiece” of Downtown Rochester, creating exciting opportunities for residents, visitors, businesses and investors. The leveraging of public dollars has the potential to encourage private investment, boost Rochester’s economy, and create jobs.

To fulfill the vision, \$500M in public investment was requested from the State of New York. The 28 projects at left are shown as listed in the initial ROC the Riverway proposal from December 2017. The recommended projects, as listed in Section 3 of this Vision Plan, include some new projects and others that have been combined and renamed. The projects at left total \$500M in estimated costs, which has the potential to create \$2.8B (1:5.6 return on investment ratio) in economic impacts and to create approximately 2,100 construction jobs through the projects envisioned in this plan.

This return on investment was projected based on industry standards and on the previous economic impact analysis done for the Broad Street Master Plan and the Convention Center Expansion.

More attractions, entertainment, and recreation will result in an active urban downtown, increasing the demand for hotels, unique housing opportunities, restaurants, and retail establishments.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Further state support of our projects will allow Rochester to achieve its vision and create exciting opportunities for residents, visitors, businesses, and investors.

**\$500 M** 

TOTAL REQUESTED PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN ROC THE RIVERWAY

**\$2.8B** Potential Economic Impacts

**5,430** Potential Construction Jobs Created Through Redevelopment

“Thanks to the vision of Governor Andrew Cuomo, whose initial \$50 million investment through Empire State Development’s Finger Lakes Forward initiative set the Roc the Riverway project in motion, our city will finally realize the full job-creating, community-building potential of the Genesee River. I also want to thank the Roc the Riverway Advisory Board and the hundreds of engaged citizens who participated in our community input process for all their great work to produce this Vision Plan. This is an exciting time for Rochester, as **we are about to witness an unprecedented level of investment and activity along our riverfront**, which will help us transform our city and create more jobs, safer and more vibrant neighborhoods and better educational opportunities for our citizens.”

- Lovely Warren, Mayor  
City of Rochester

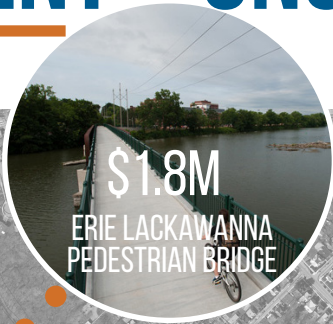


MAYOR LOVELY WARREN SPEAKS AT ROC THE RIVERWAY PUBLIC MEETING



# RECENT + ONGOING INVESTMENTS

## SAMPLING OF PROJECTS



Walking along the riverway, you can feel the energy in the City of Rochester. With significant investments coming from a variety of resources, both public and private, we are showcasing our ability to partner and leverage innovative opportunities. While Rochestarians are enthusiastic and motivated by our progress, our full potential remains untapped. Further state support of our projects will allow Rochester to achieve its vision and create exciting opportunities for residents, visitors, businesses, and investors.





**\$8M**  
MAIN STREET  
STREETSCAPE

**\$78M**  
MCC DOWNTOWN

**\$5M**  
HOLIDAY INN  
RENOVATIONS

**\$59M**  
GENESEE  
BREWERY

**\$8M**  
HIVE @ 155

**\$30M**  
TRAIN STATION

**\$30M**  
THE METROPOLITAN

**\$16M**  
HILTON GARDEN  
INN

**\$50M**  
RTS TRANSIT  
CENTER



## RECENTLY COMPLETED + ONGOING PROJECTS

ROC the Riverway is a vision that is already taking shape. Over the last several years, New York State has partnered with the City of Rochester and private developers on several projects that have begun to revitalize the Genesee Riverfront and embody the principles established in this Vision Plan. Since Governor Cuomo came into office in 2011, New York State has already committed nearly \$21 million, leveraging over \$106 million of total investment on some key projects that are recently completed or currently underway. A sampling of these projects listed below demonstrates the potential of our waterfront and how we have primed the pump for the momentum and opportunity of the ROC the Riverway vision.

Sub-Area	Project Name	Phase/Description	Total Project Cost (est)	NYS Committed	City Committed	Other Funding
South River	West River Wall	Re-naturalize river's edge from Corn Hill to Ford St Bridge	\$6,716,000	\$4,722,000	\$1,994,000	
South River	Erie Harbor Promenade & 103 Court St	River promenade from Court St to Erie Harbor & mixed-use development	\$33,670,000	\$1,440,000	\$4,430,000	\$27,800,000
South River	Vacuum Oil BOA	Brownfield Opportunity Area planning	\$800,000	\$500,000	\$300,000	
South River	Erie Lackawanna Bridge	New pedestrian bridge from U of R to PLEX neighborhood	\$1,782,000	\$600,000	\$1,182,000	
South River	Capron Lofts	Mixed-used redevelopment on South Ave	\$4,500,000	\$1,150,000		\$3,350,000
Downtown	Inner Loop North	Study to remove/fill portion of Inner Loop North segment	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000		
Downtown	Main Street Resurgence	Phase 1: South Ave to Liberty Pole	\$5,770,000	\$2,000,000	\$1,846,000	\$1,923,000
Downtown	Main Street Resurgence	Phase 2: South Ave to Exchange St	\$3,098,000		\$1,194,000	\$1,904,000
High Falls	Genesee Brewery	Brewery modernization and Brew House expansion	\$49,000,000	\$9,500,000		\$39,500,000
<b>TOTALS:</b>			<b>\$106,336,000</b>	<b>\$20,912,000</b>	<b>\$10,946,000</b>	<b>\$74,477,000</b>







**SECTION 2**

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**



# OVERVIEW, PAST PLANS + STUDIES

The Advisory Board (“Board”) engaged in an aggressive community engagement strategy and timeline to gather ideas and feedback from neighborhood leaders, business leaders, young professionals, and other interested members of the public at large to ensure that this Vision Plan reflects community desires and needs. The vast majority of the projects and ideas offered in ROC the Riverway had been the subject of past plans and studies dating back as long as 30 years. Each of those past plans included a community engagement element. The 28 projects of the initial ROC the Riverway proposal have been collectively identified more than 90 times in past plans and studies.

Of significance is the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP), completed in 2017. This New York State Department of State sponsored plan identified a myriad of policies, strategies, and projects designed to improve Rochester’s presence on the Genesee River, Erie Canal, and Lake Ontario. All of the 28 ROC the Riverway projects were identified in the LWRP, with some projects having more specificity than others.

Over the course of 2013 and 2014, the LWRP was developed through meetings with:

- a Waterfront Advisory Committee made up of community/stakeholder representatives that met throughout the process;
- several focus groups and waterfront stakeholders (i.e. major landowners); and
- neighborhood associations along the waterfront.

There were also two open houses, three public hearings, an online survey and an interactive online map for submitting comments and ideas. See Appendix A for a summary of how past plans and studies relate to the ROC the Riverway proposed projects.





# ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

While much engagement preceded this initiative, the Board recognized that our community has evolved and it is important to receive an updated and diverse array of feedback to ensure that this initiative benefits all of Rochester. The Board devised an elaborate process to meet with interested residents and stakeholders while also providing an online feedback mechanism. Moving forward, selected projects will have an additional level of community engagement to further refine ideas. A summary of key themes discovered through resident and stakeholder meetings is included in Appendix B.

## PUBLIC SESSIONS

The Board held three public sessions between March and June of 2018. The first two sessions were fully interactive, with Board members engaging with attendees to learn what they liked and did not like in the plan, and to hear new ideas not identified in the plan. The first session's input was organized geographically, including specific thoughts about projects, concepts, and ideas in each of the three sub-areas of the plan, with a separate section for general comments. The second session was organized according to a set of guiding principles, with the public giving their project-specific and general feedback around those principles. The third session was designed to present the final recommendations of the process.

## STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

The Board held four roundtable meetings for specific stakeholder groups with an interest in the river. The first meeting, held on April 12, was with neighborhood association leaders and community/environmental groups at the Maplewood YMCA. The second meeting, held on April 18, was with young professionals and students from across our region, held at the University of Rochester. The third meeting, held on April 30, was with business leaders and developers from the Rochester area. The fourth meeting, held on May 23, was with elected officials and members of the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council (FLREDC). Each of the stakeholder groups had different and important perspectives on how to best shape this Vision Plan and utilize the first \$50 million of investment.





“Our **Local Waterfront Revitalization Program** lays out an exciting collection of projects aimed at continuing our riverfront’s transformation. ROC the Riverway showcases and visualizes the most important of those strategies for the river as it approaches and passes through Downtown Rochester. With these investments, we can realize the Genesee’s incredible potential for recreation and economic development. Its power and beauty will be the centerpiece of our City’s future.”

**Bayé Muhammad, Commissioner  
City of Rochester Department of  
Neighborhood and Business Development**









## NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION + OTHER COMMUNITY GROUP MEETINGS

Board members were also given the charge to receive community input organically and from their respective networks. In three months, Board members held or attended over 30 community meetings/events with neighborhood associations and other community groups.

A selection of those groups is included below:

- February 27: Meeting with Genesee River Alliance
- March 8: Public Session #1
- March 15: Meeting with Genesee Land Trust
- March 22: Meeting with Rochester Urbanists Facebook Group
- March 24: Genesee RiverWatch Annual Summit
- March 26: Tour of Canalside
- March 28: Chamber of Commerce Policy Matters Event
- March 28: Community Design Center Reshaping Rochester Community Leaders Workshop
- March 30: Meeting with Corn Hill Navigation
- April 9: Meeting with Assistant Dean of Students at U of R
- April 9: Meeting with Center for Teen Empowerment
- April 12: Meeting with Neighborhood and Community Leaders
- April 12: Meeting with Thomson Reuters Staff
- April 14: Walking Tour of Genesee River
- April 18: Meeting with Young Professionals, Students, and RocCity Coalition
- April 20: Meeting with CloudCheckr employees
- April 24: Meeting with Growing Downtown Rochester (arts and cultural organizations)
- April 25: Community Design Center Reshaping Rochester Community Leaders Workshop
- April 26: Meeting with Brandmint Digital Marketing
- April 27: Meeting with Northeast Rochester Quadrant Leaders
- April 27: Meeting with Center for Disability Rights
- April 30: Meeting with Business and Development Leaders
- May 1: Public Session #2
- May 2: Meeting with Federation of Monroe County Environmentalists
- May 8: Meeting with Plymouth-Exchange (PLEX) Neighborhood Association
- May 9: Meeting with Center for Disability Rights
- May 10: Meeting with Edgerton Neighborhood Association
- May 15: Meeting with El Camino Neighborhood Committee
- May 21: Meeting with Corn Hill Neighborhood Association
- May 23: Meeting with Elected Officials and Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council
- May 31: Public Session #3



## TOUR OF CANALSIDE, BUFFALO

On March 26, the Board traveled to Buffalo to visit the Canalside development and better understand the history of the city's recent waterfront revitalization. The Board was welcomed by Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul, followed by a bus and walking tour and presentation led by staff of the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation, a local development corporation of Empire State Development that oversees the programming and maintenance of Canalside and the Inner and Outer Harbor. The Board learned the degree to which some form of management entity will be critical to the successful operation and programming of downtown and the Genesee River. In addition, the Board heard from representatives from North American Breweries and Pegula Sports and Entertainment, two organizations that have been integral to the development of Canalside and also have a presence in Rochester.



**ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS TOURING CANALSIDE, BUFFALO**



## WALKING TOUR OF THE GENESEE RIVER

On April 14, Board members took a walking and bus tour of the Genesee River with City staff to gain a further appreciation for and knowledge of the projects that are proposed in ROC the Riverway. By walking and riding along the river, the importance of connectivity and accessibility – both of the Genesee Riverway Trail and between neighborhoods – became even more apparent. The Board was also able to further understand proposed concepts that are difficult to visualize in renderings alone, such as sight lines, aesthetics, and deeper context.



**TOM HACK, CITY STRUCTURAL ENGINEER, GUIDES  
ADVISORY BOARD ON A RIVER TOUR**





**SECTION 3**

**PHASE I  
RECOMMENDED PROJECTS**





# OVERVIEW + FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SELECTIONS

Upon the Advisory Board's completion of the three-month process of engaging the community, the Advisory Board prioritized projects for the first \$50M of the ROC the Riverway initiative. In no particular order, the factors influencing their decisions included, but were not limited to:

- alignment with overarching goals, primary objectives, and design principles (see Section 1);
- community support;
- potential community impact and contribution to the initiative's momentum;
- project costs, including those in greatest need for funds, and leveraged sources of funds;
- likely timeline to completion;
- dependence on and relationship to other projects; and
- potential to leverage nearby private investment.

The Advisory Board had a particular focus on the optimal strategy for completing the Genesee Riverway Trail (as a riverfront promenade) through downtown on both sides of the river. This central objective was emphatically supported by the community throughout the process and is consistent with the need to have a geographic focus in order to maximize the potential of investment.

The following pages present the final selection of projects for ROC the Riverway's Phase I investment of \$50 million. In total, that initial NY State investment is matched by \$31.9M in other City, State, and private sources. Each project listed contains a description of the proposed improvements, justification for it being part of the initial investment, opportunities for leveraging other investment, funding breakdown, and future phases, if any.

Note that some project names differ slightly from the original list presented in Section 1. Two new projects have been added based on substantial community support and strong alignment with the initiative's goals and objectives. Other projects were combined and renamed, i.e. Riverway Main to Andrews, to reflect a more optimal approach to funding strategies. It should also be reiterated that each project will have its own opportunity for additional community engagement to further refine designs during Phase I implementation. The map on the following pages shows the location of each of the Phase I projects.










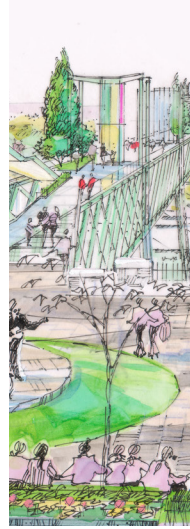


## RECOMMENDED PROJECTS FOR NYS \$50 MILLION INITIAL PHASE

The list below shows the funding breakdown for the 13 projects recommended for the initial \$50 million commitment from New York State.

	<b>AQUEDUCT RE-IMAGINED + RIVERFRONT PROMENADE</b> 	<b>RUNDEL LIBRARY NORTH TERRACE</b> 	<b>BLUE CROSS ARENA</b> 	<b>RIVERSIDE CONVENTION CENTER</b> 	<b>RIVERWAY MAIN TO ANDREWS</b> <small>CHARLES CARROLL PLAZA SISTER CITIES BRIDGE CROSSROADS PARK</small> 	<b>FRONT STREET PROMENADE</b> 	<b>ROC CITY SKATE PARK</b> 
	original RTR map #9	original RTR map #10	original RTR map #8	original RTR map #12	original RTR map #15/16	original RTR map #17	new project
TOTAL PROJECT COST ESTIMATE	\$60,000,000	\$8,100,000	\$37,000,000	\$25,000,000	\$27,650,000	\$1,250,000	\$2,000,000
PHASE I COST ESTIMATE	\$6,000,000	\$8,100,000	\$15,079,000	\$14,740,000	\$27,650,000	\$1,250,000	\$1,500,000
<b>ROC THE RIVERWAY REQUEST</b>	<b>\$4,500,000</b>	<b>\$1,500,000</b>	<b>\$6,000,000</b>	<b>\$5,000,000</b>	<b>\$20,000,000</b>	<b>\$1,250,000</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>
NYS COMMITTED		\$2,000,000	\$3,775,000	\$3,300,000	\$400,000		
CITY COMMITTED		\$3,700,000	\$1,804,000	\$6,440,000	\$3,250,000		\$225,000
ADDITIONAL NEED / COMMIT	\$1,500,000	\$900,000	\$3,500,000		\$4,000,000		\$275,000

### DOWNTOWN



GENESEE GATEWAY PARK	CORN HILL NAVIGATION	HIGH FALLS TERRACE PARK <small>BREWERY LINE TRAIL SOUTH PARK + UNDERPASS ENHANCEMENTS HIGH FALLS OVERLOOK STUDY</small>	PONT DE RENNES BRIDGE	RUNNING TRACK BRIDGE	DOWNTOWN / RIVERFRONT MANAGEMENT ENTITY	
						
original RTR map #4	new project	original RTR map #20/21	original RTR map #22	original RTR map #27	original RTR map #28	
\$3,900,000	\$500,000	\$1,575,000	\$9,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$10,000,000	\$190,975,000
\$3,900,000	\$500,000	\$1,575,000	\$8,475,000	\$500,000	\$3,000,000	\$92,269,000
<b>\$2,000,000</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>	<b>\$4,000,000</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>	<b>\$3,000,000</b>	<b>\$50,000,000</b>
\$950,000		\$275,000				\$10,700,000
\$950,000		\$300,000	\$4,475,000			\$21,144,000
	\$250,000		\$525,000			\$10,950,000

TOTALS

INITIAL COMMITMENT FROM NYS

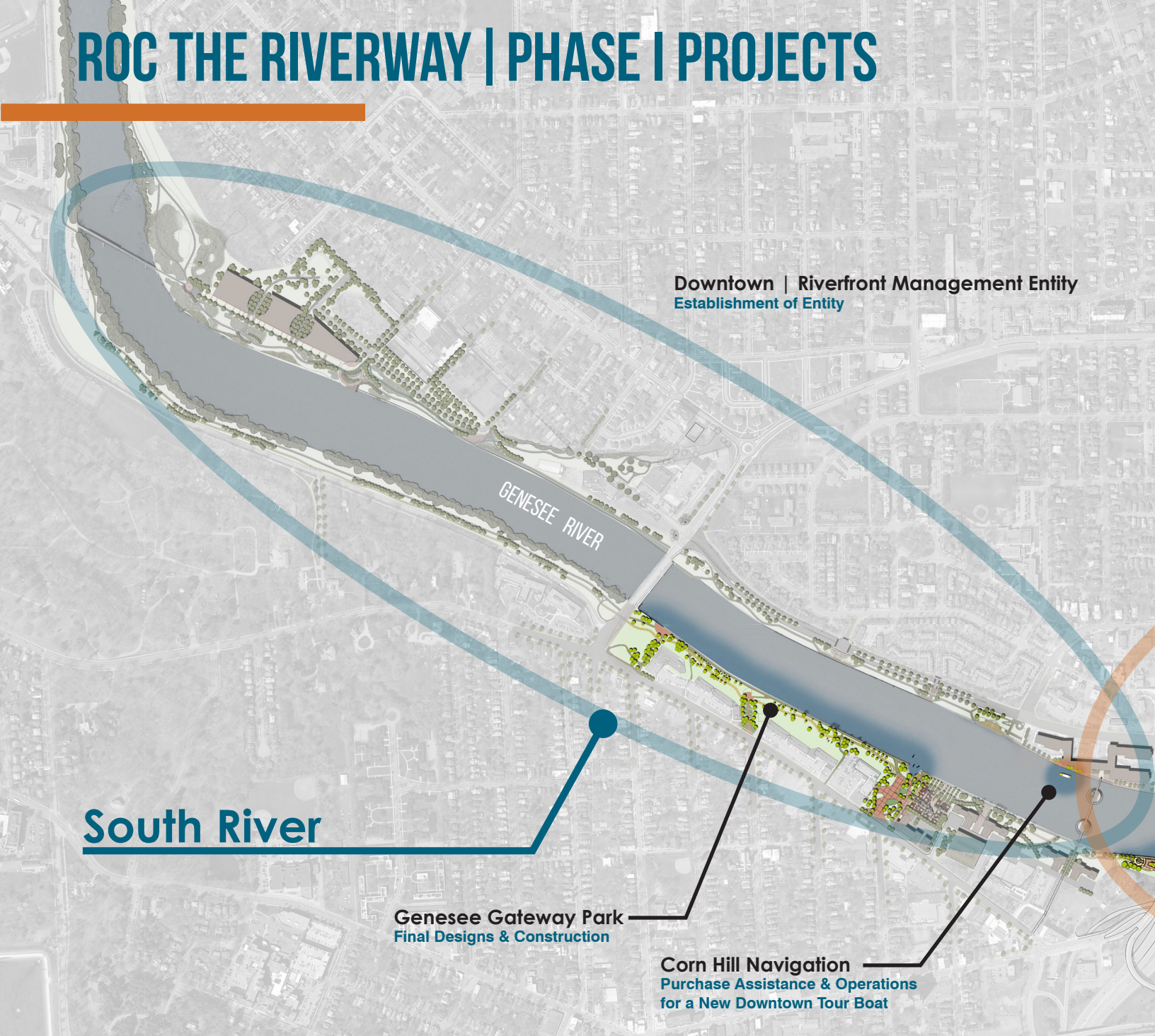
SOUTH RIVER

HIGH FALLS

ALL AREAS



# ROC THE RIVERWAY | PHASE I PROJECTS



Downtown | Riverfront Management Entity  
Establishment of Entity

South River

Genesee Gateway Park  
Final Designs & Construction

Corn Hill Navigation  
Purchase Assistance & Operations  
for a New Downtown Tour Boat

total projects: 13

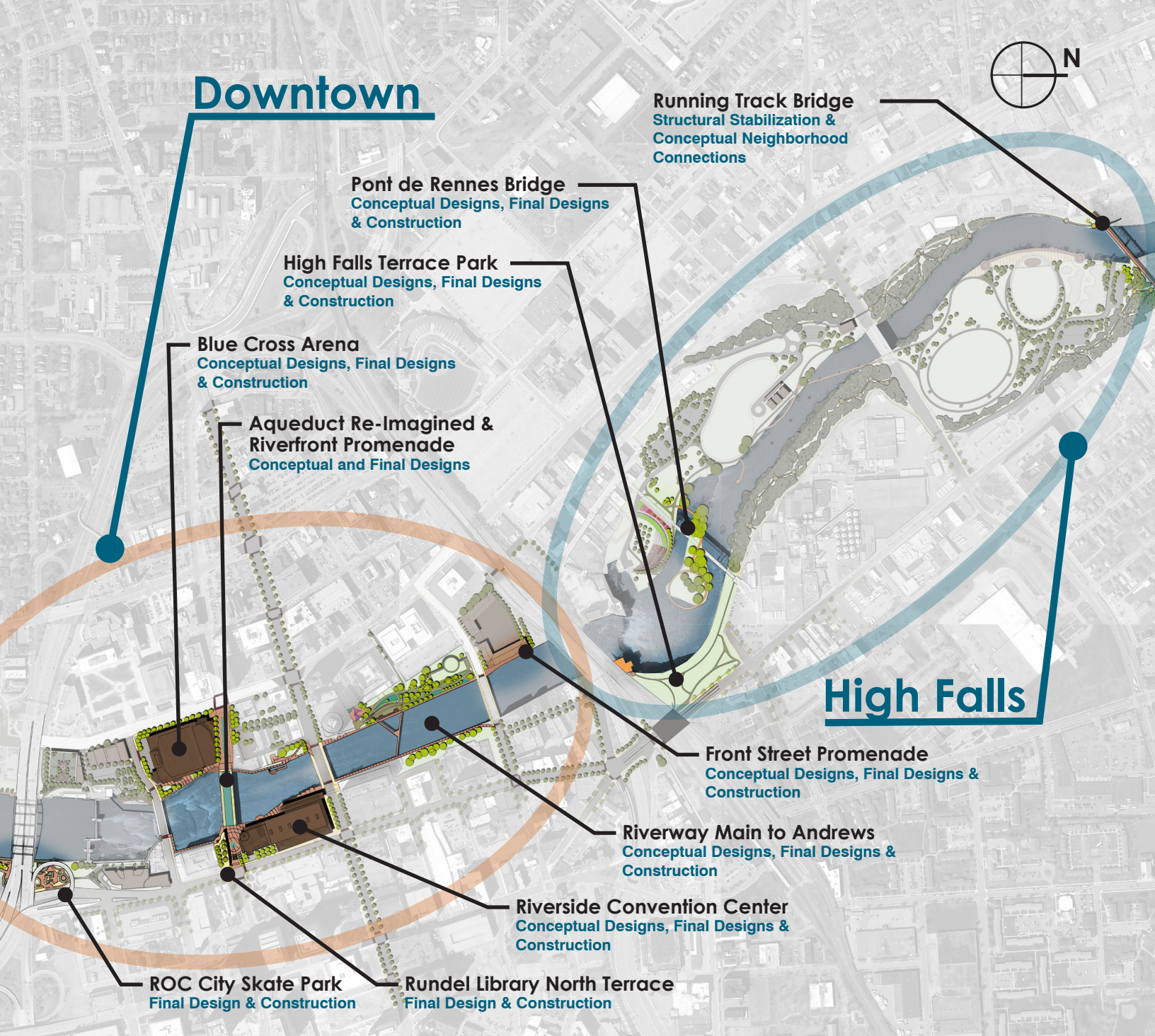
total cost of projects: \$191M

ROC the Riverway Request: \$50M

leveraged funds from City, State,  
and other sources: \$31.9M

anticipated construction jobs: 2,100





# Downtown



Running Track Bridge  
Structural Stabilization &  
Conceptual Neighborhood  
Connections

Pont de Rennes Bridge  
Conceptual Designs, Final Designs  
& Construction

High Falls Terrace Park  
Conceptual Designs, Final Designs  
& Construction

Blue Cross Arena  
Conceptual Designs, Final Designs  
& Construction

Aqueduct Re-Imagined &  
Riverfront Promenade  
Conceptual and Final Designs

# High Falls

Front Street Promenade  
Conceptual Designs, Final Designs &  
Construction

Riverway Main to Andrews  
Conceptual Designs, Final Designs &  
Construction

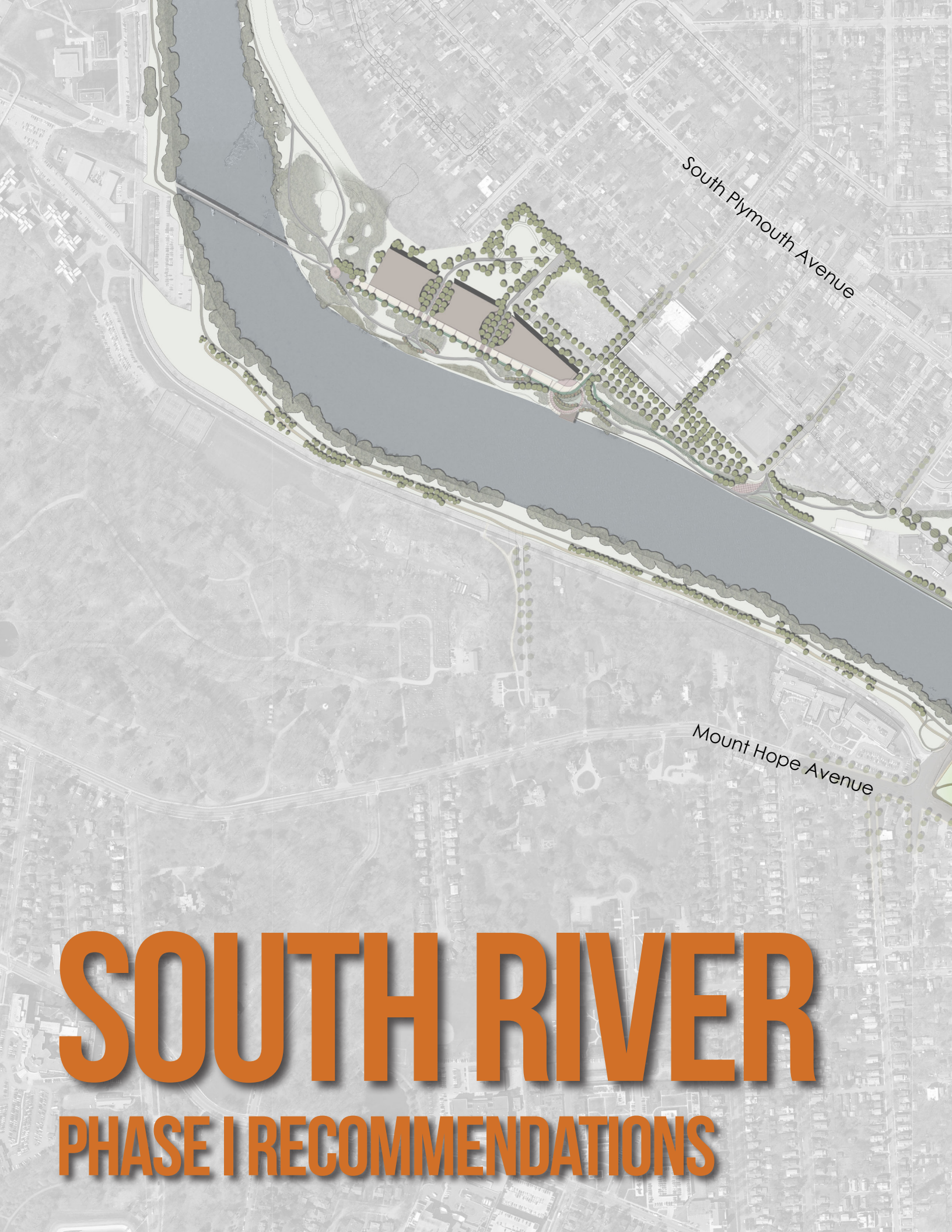
Riverside Convention Center  
Conceptual Designs, Final Designs &  
Construction

ROC City Skate Park  
Final Design & Construction

Rundel Library North Terrace  
Final Design & Construction

new river trails and promenades: 1.1 miles  
enhanced river trails: 1.2 miles  
enhanced parks and public spaces: 20 acres





South Plymouth Avenue

Mount Hope Avenue

# SOUTH RIVER

## PHASE I RECOMMENDATIONS





Ford Street

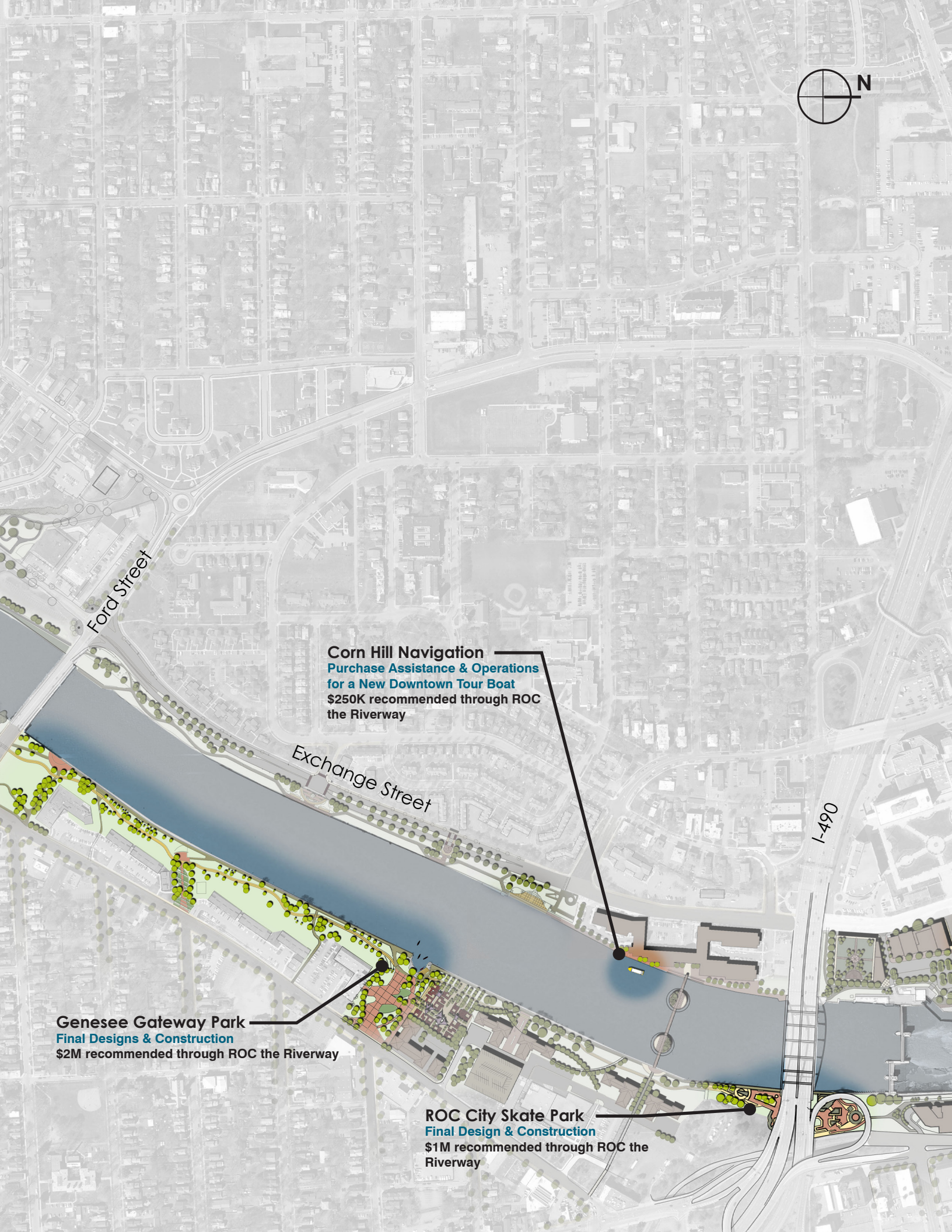
Exchange Street

I-490

**Corn Hill Navigation**  
Purchase Assistance & Operations  
for a New Downtown Tour Boat  
\$250K recommended through ROC  
the Riverway

**Genesee Gateway Park**  
Final Designs & Construction  
\$2M recommended through ROC  
the Riverway

**ROC City Skate Park**  
Final Design & Construction  
\$1M recommended through ROC  
the Riverway







I-490

**Aqueduct Re-Imagined & Riverfront Promenade**  
Conceptual and Final Designs  
\$4.5M recommended through ROC the Riverway

**Blue Cross Arena**  
Conceptual Designs, Final Designs & Construction for Riverfront Enhancements  
\$6M recommended through ROC the Riverway

Main Street



**ROC City Skate Park**  
Final Design & Construction  
\$1M recommended through ROC the Riverway

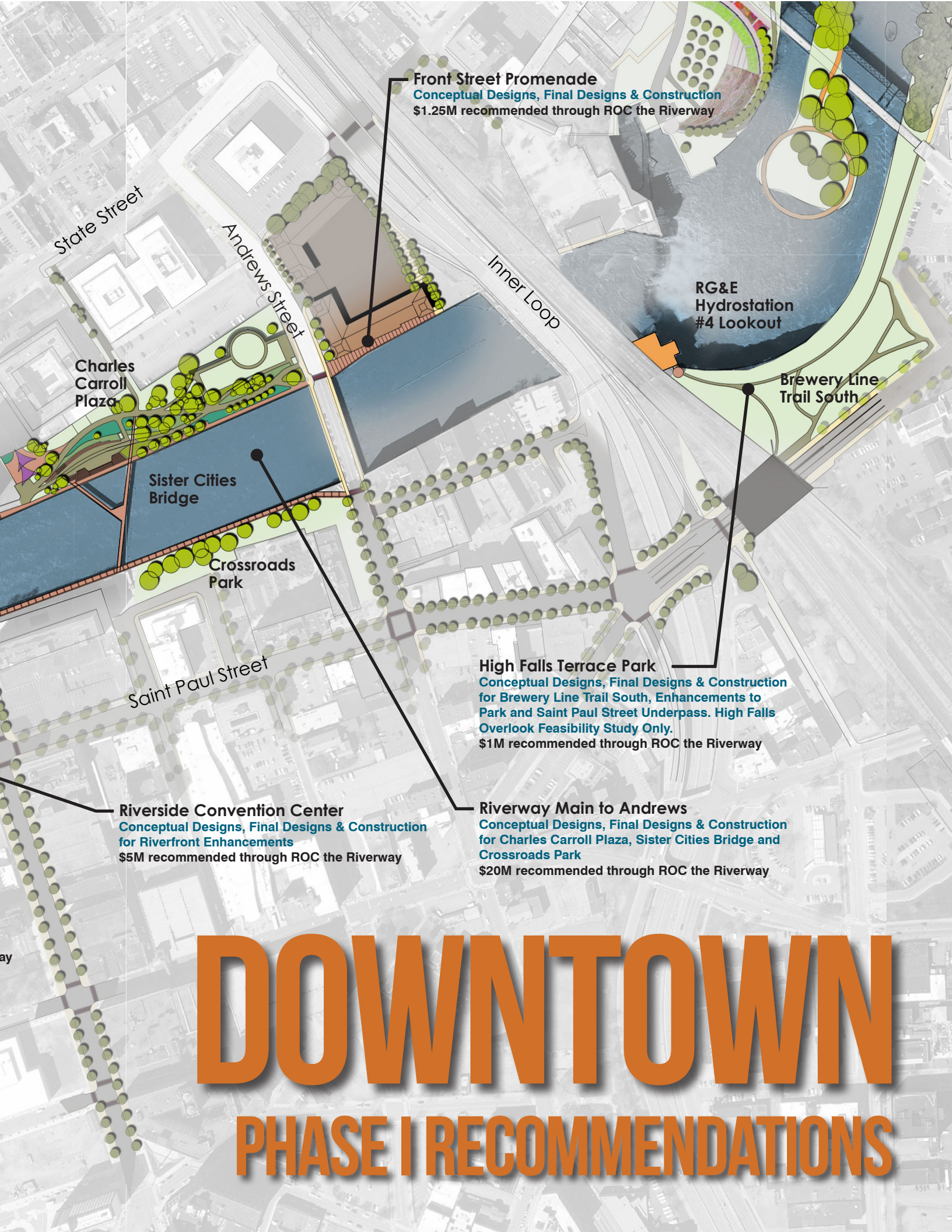
**Rundel Library North Terrace**  
Final Design & Construction  
\$1.5M recommended through ROC the Riverway

**Downtown | Riverfront Management Entity**  
Establishment of Entity  
\$3M recommended through ROC the Riverway

Court Street

Broad Street





**Front Street Promenade**  
Conceptual Designs, Final Designs & Construction  
\$1.25M recommended through ROC the Riverway

**RG&E Hydrostation #4 Lookout**

**Brewery Line Trail South**

**Charles Carroll Plaza**

**Sister Cities Bridge**

**Crossroads Park**

**High Falls Terrace Park**  
Conceptual Designs, Final Designs & Construction for Brewery Line Trail South, Enhancements to Park and Saint Paul Street Underpass. High Falls Overlook Feasibility Study Only.  
\$1M recommended through ROC the Riverway

**Riverside Convention Center**  
Conceptual Designs, Final Designs & Construction for Riverfront Enhancements  
\$5M recommended through ROC the Riverway

**Riverway Main to Andrews**  
Conceptual Designs, Final Designs & Construction for Charles Carroll Plaza, Sister Cities Bridge and Crossroads Park  
\$20M recommended through ROC the Riverway

# DOWNTOWN

## PHASE I RECOMMENDATIONS





Lake Avenue

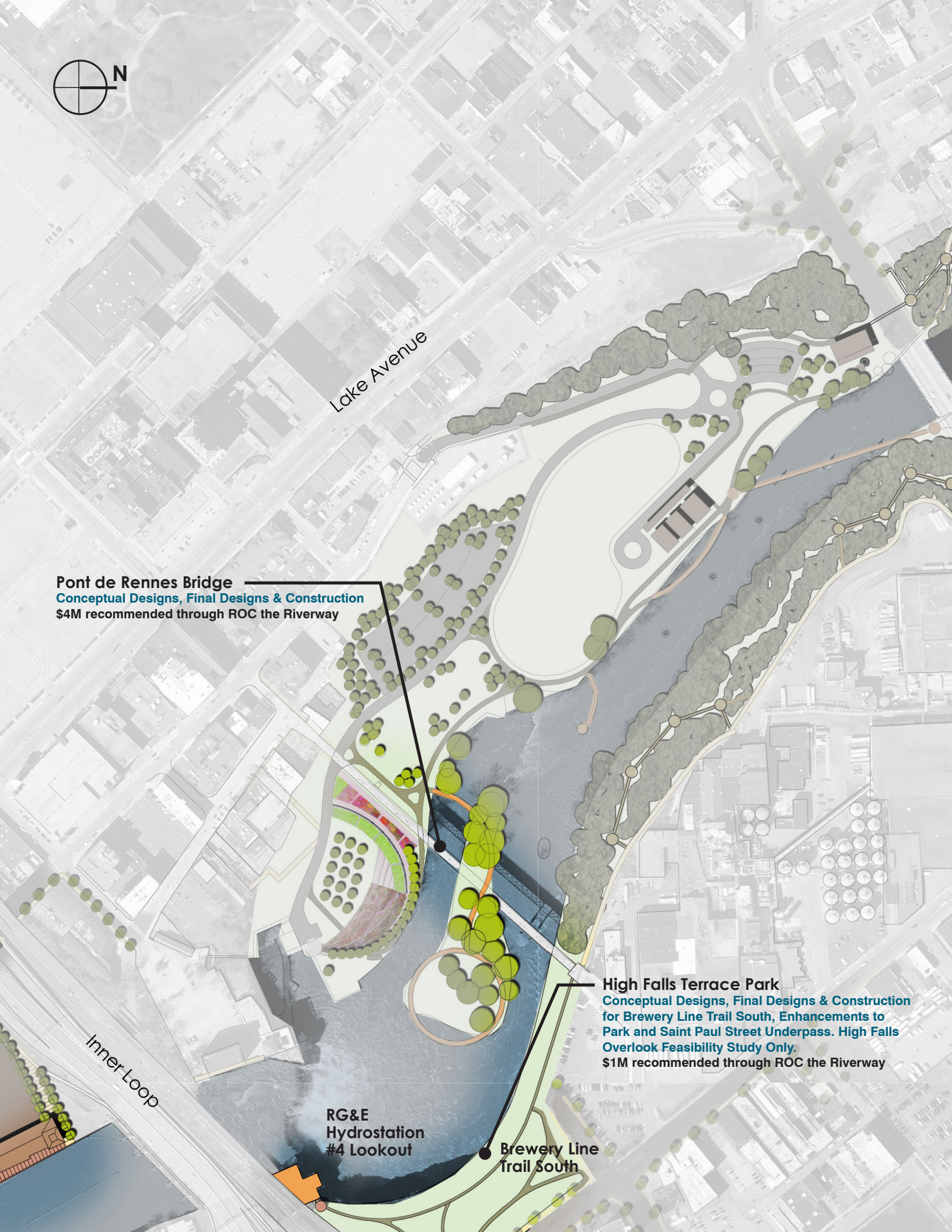
**Pont de Rennes Bridge**  
Conceptual Designs, Final Designs & Construction  
\$4M recommended through ROC the Riverway

**High Falls Terrace Park**  
Conceptual Designs, Final Designs & Construction  
for Brewery Line Trail South, Enhancements to  
Park and Saint Paul Street Underpass. High Falls  
Overlook Feasibility Study Only.  
\$1M recommended through ROC the Riverway

Inner-Loop

RG&E  
Hydrostation  
#4 Lookout

Brewery Line  
Trail South







**Running Track Bridge**  
Structural Stabilization &  
Conceptual Neighborhood  
Connections  
\$500K recommended through ROC  
the Riverway

El Camino Trail

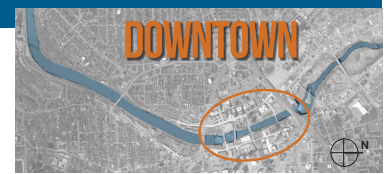
Smith Street

Saint Paul Street

# HIGH FALLS

## PHASE I RECOMMENDATIONS





# AQUEDUCT RE-IMAGINED & RIVERFRONT PROMENADE

## Description | Background

The re-imagined aqueduct will be the centerpiece of downtown transformation – a place for public gatherings and community events, an opportunity for informal and formal programming, and the vital component in achieving the overall goal of the ROC the Riverway campaign – bringing people to the water.

Removing the Broad Street vehicular deck sets the stage for the creation of the most dynamic and unique public space in the city and well beyond. The new Aqueduct Terrace will consist of either a fully re-watered replica of the Erie Canal or will be turned into a multi-faceted, flexible greenspace, creating year-round activities for residents and visitors. The greenspace option could include a partial segment of the canal, smaller water features, designs reflecting the subway history, or various other creative solutions.

The Aqueduct Terrace will connect seamlessly to a new riverfront promenade on both sides of the bridge. It will be fully integrated with other ROC the Riverway projects at the Rundel Memorial Library (North Terrace and promenade), Floreano Riverside Convention Center, riverway from Broad to Main, and the Blue Cross Arena. With this initial funding, the community will commit to discovering the optimal public space design solution that will ignite downtown along the river. It would be possible to hold an international design competition to maximize the potential of the space while engaging the community in an exciting forum. An analysis of downtown traffic circulation would be conducted, along with potential mitigation measures for all modes of transportation.

## Justification

Removal of the upper deck and subsequent redesign of the aqueduct level will allow for the creation of a grand public space as the centerpiece

of downtown and the riverfront. Aqueduct Terrace and the riverfront promenade will connect and enhance three major anchoring institutions, offer a dramatic gathering place to bring the whole community together for events and activities, and create a new asset that attracts residents, visitors, and conventions.

In addition to the exciting new gathering spaces created, removal of the vehicular deck presents other significant benefits. Most importantly, it provides the most feasible and desirable solution to connecting the Genesee Riverway Trail through downtown as a riverfront promenade on both sides of the river by bringing those linkages to the same elevation as the Aqueduct Terrace. That connectivity issue was the most dominant point of public feedback in the entire community engagement process.

Establishing a public space within the current subway tunnel was not identified as a feasible alternative, nor was it deemed nearly as desirable as an open air, outdoor public space. The geometric and structural constraints are such that there is not sufficient vertical clearance to allow for riverfront promenade linkages with the vehicular deck in place. And even if the promenade were somehow routed through the double-decker structure – despite the NY State historic preservation regulations – it would preclude sufficient vertical clearance to allow access to the tunnel as a public space as well as access by service vehicles needed to repair and maintain the bridge structure.

Removing the upper portion of the bridge will also open up dramatic new viewsheds throughout downtown that have not been visible for nearly a century. The current double decker bridge is also a major impediment to accessibility for the disabled community. Equally important, it removes any future need for maintenance and repair of the upper deck of the bridge and accompanying roadway, which averages about \$6 to \$7 million every decade.



### Leverage Opportunities

The project is expected to spur significant economic investment in the area while contributing to a bold new identity for Rochester, impacting the economy well beyond downtown. It will enable the creation of a seamless riverfront promenade while activating the outdoor spaces of multiple nearby public facilities and mixed-use buildings.

### Funding Breakdown

Total project costs: \$60M (\$6M for Phase I)

Conceptual and final designs funded by:

**\$4.5M recommended from NY State through ROC the Riverway Phase I**

### Future Phases

\$50-\$60M for Broad Street deck removal, construction of Aqueduct Terrace and adjacent public spaces, and construction of four adjacent segments of the riverfront promenade as part of the Genesee Riverway Trail. Potential inclusion of a design competition. Completing conceptual and final designs in Phase I will significantly enhance the City's ability to secure construction funds in Phase II.

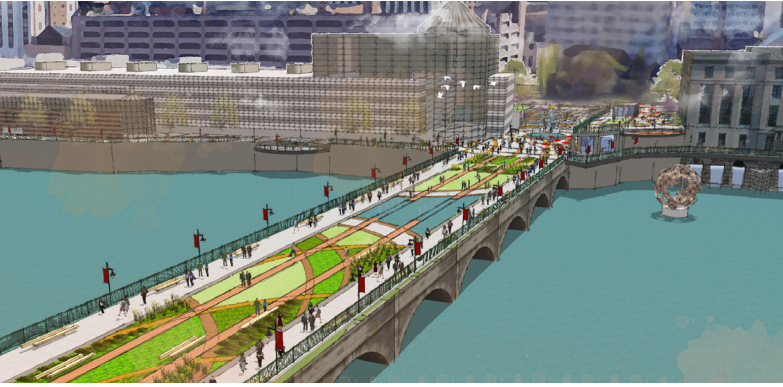


AQUEDUCT RE-IMAGINED & RIVERFRONT PROMENADE | LOOKING SOUTHEAST

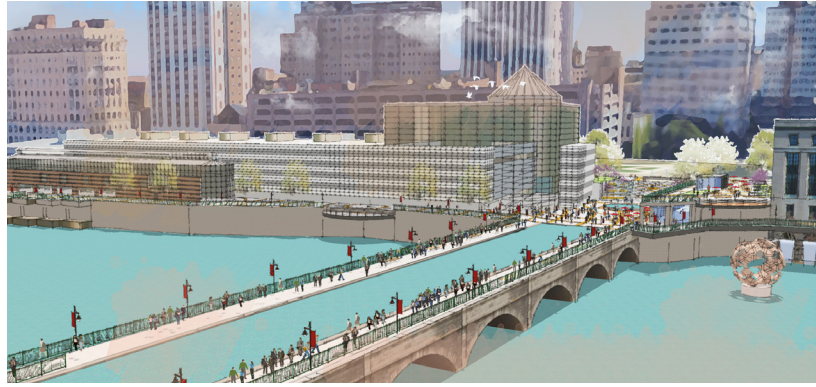


AQUEDUCT RE-IMAGINED IN WINTER | LOOKING EAST





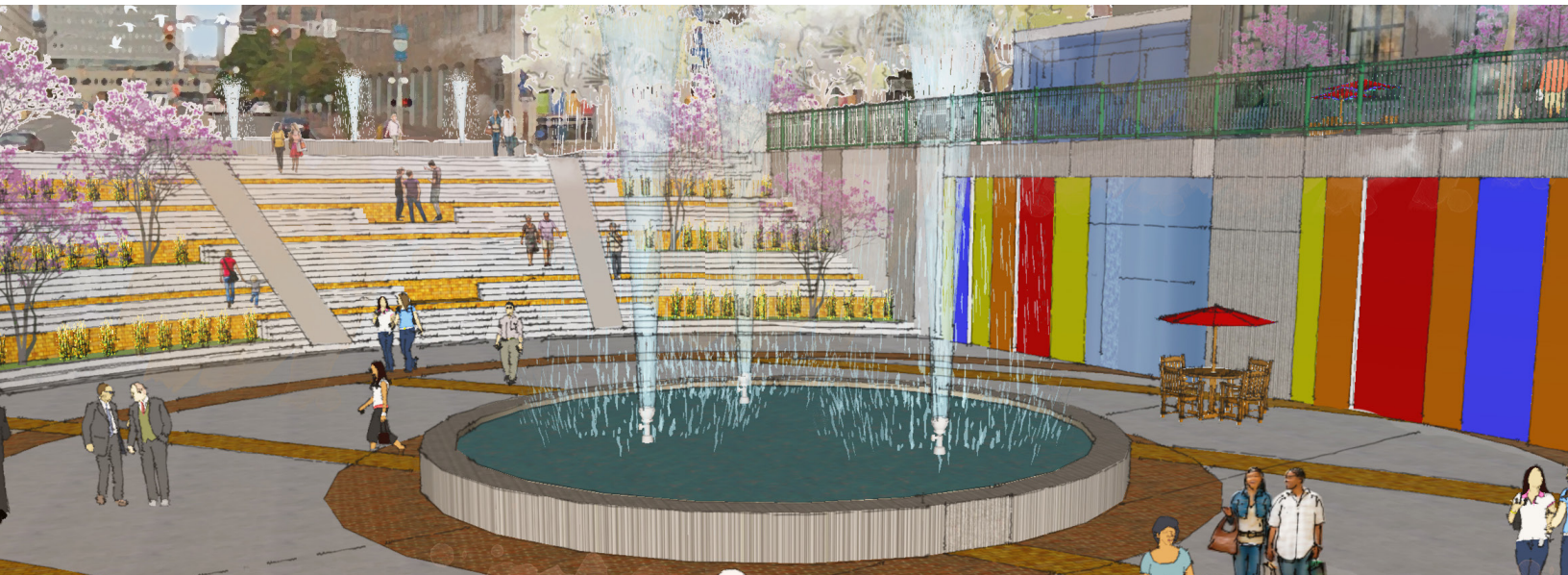
AQUEDUCT RE-IMAGINED GREEN OPTION | LOOKING NORTHEAST



AQUEDUCT RE-IMAGINED WATER OPTION | LOOKING NORTHEAST



AQUEDUCT RE-IMAGINED GREEN OPTION | LOOKING SOUTHEAST



AQUEDUCT RE-IMAGINED TERRACE | LOOKING SOUTHEAST

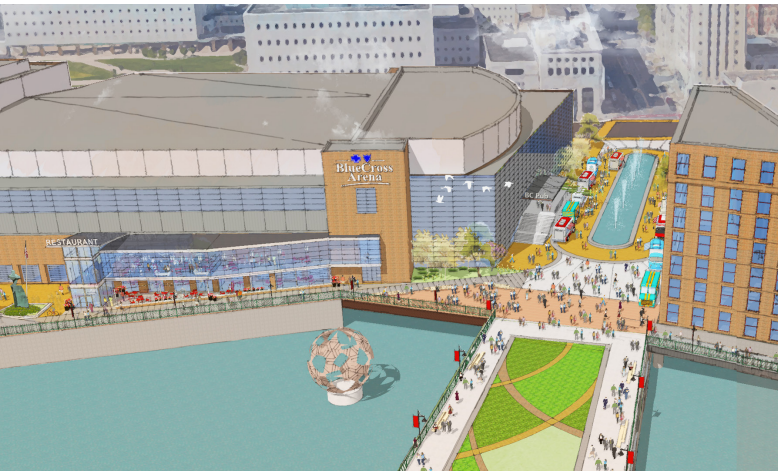




AQUEDUCT RE-IMAGINED GREEN OPTION | LOOKING SOUTHEAST



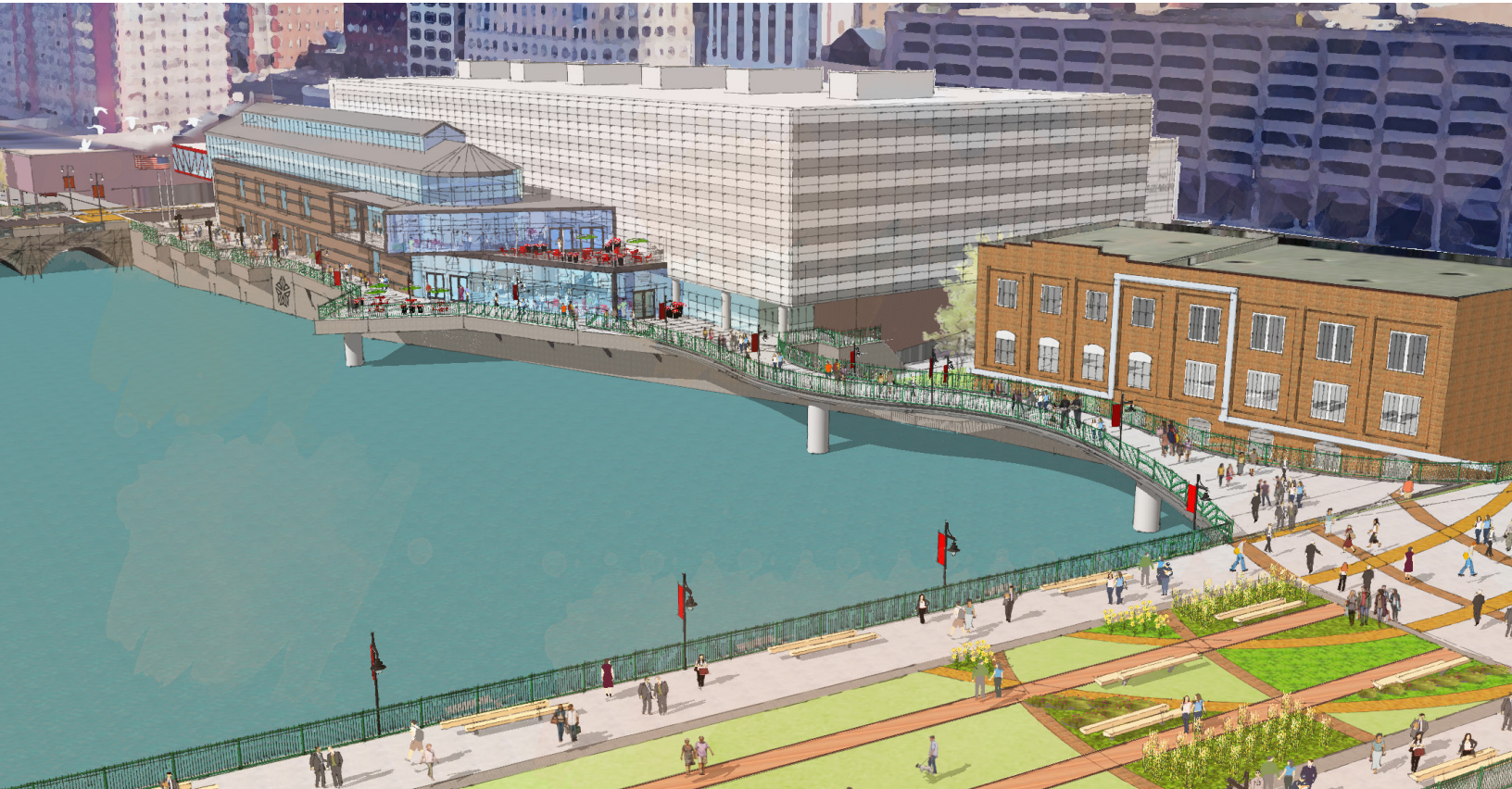
AQUEDUCT RE-IMAGINED WATER OPTION | LOOKING SOUTHEAST



RIVERFRONT PROMENADE ALONG BLUE CROSS ARENA  
LOOKING SOUTHWEST

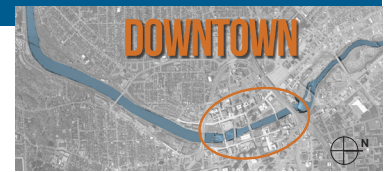


RIVERFRONT PROMENADE ALONG THOMSON REUTERS  
LOOKING SOUTHWEST



RIVERFRONT PROMENADE ALONG CONVENTION CENTER | LOOKING NORTHEAST





# RUNDEL LIBRARY NORTH TERRACE

## Description | Background

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The North Terrace of the Rundel Library has been closed recently due to structural issues. The terrace, along with the adjacent library and Broad Street, are built on top of structural supports that raise them about 20 feet above the historic elevation of these sites. The supports are in dire need of repair and replacement, which provides an opportunity to transform the public space on the top side.

Work on the North Terrace in conjunction with the Aqueduct Re-Imagined project creates the opportunity for inclusion of outdoor library rooms, cafe spaces, and enhanced programming opportunities. It will be designed to seamlessly integrate with any design solution for the Aqueduct Terrace while connecting to the new riverfront promenade spaces. The design will open up dramatic new views of the river and rapids south of Court Street.

## Justification

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Structural stabilization of the Library North Terrace is an immediate need for public safety and for usability of the space. The project will bolster one of the most historic and critical institutions in the city – the Central Library. Lastly, since much of this project's conceptual design was completed prior to ROC the Riverway, it is closer to being 'shovel-ready' than many other projects.

## Leverage Opportunities

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The North Terrace will provide a unique complement to the Aqueduct Re-Imagined and riverfront promenade projects, building upon their expected success.

## Funding Breakdown

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Total project costs: \$8.1M

Final designs and construction funded by:

**\$1.5M recommended from NY State through ROC the Riverway**

\$2M from NY State through DASNY (Assemblyman Gantt)

\$900K from NY State through NYSED (Senator Robach)

\$3.7M from City of Rochester

## Future Phases

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Development of the space underneath the North Terrace, in conjunction with the Aqueduct Re-Imagined project (cost estimates TBD).





RUNDEL LIBRARY NORTH TERRACE | LOOKING SOUTH



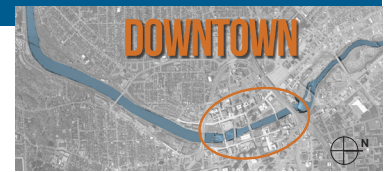
RUNDEL LIBRARY NORTH TERRACE | LOOKING WEST



RUNDEL LIBRARY NORTH TERRACE | LOOKING NORTH

NOTE: THE NORTH TERRACE WILL BE DESIGNED TO FUNCTION SEAMLESSLY WITH OR WITHOUT THE BROAD STREET BRIDGE IN PLACE.





# BLUE CROSS ARENA

## Description | Background

For many years, the Blue Cross Arena – a key Downtown asset and driver of jobs, tourism, and vibrancy – has not fully engaged with the river. ROC the Riverway funds would create river-facing spaces to activate the building on days without events and enhance connectivity along the Genesee Riverway Trail. This project will build off of past City and State investment to enhance the riverfront promenade, improve facility access, and set the stage for the establishment of a riverside restaurant or bar to provide a unique waterfront dining experience for residents and visitors alike.

The expansion will also include enlarged concession areas on the second level to showcase the incredible river view and to improve the fan experience. The river terrace will be redefined and enhanced to create an open and dynamic riverfront interface with activities in and around the arena and the adjacent Broad and Court Street connections. In conjunction with the Aqueduct Re-Imagined and Riverfront Promenade project, the Blue Cross Arena improvements will dramatically open up views and public spaces that will complement activity at the arena. This includes providing a more visible public presence to the War Memorial Flame at the river level of the building.

## Justification

The Blue Cross Arena as it is currently built has minimal engagement with the river. The proposed changes to the arena would activate the building on days without events and enhance connectivity along the Genesee Riverway Trail.

## Leverage Opportunities

Thanks to Rochester’s State Legislators, this project is leveraged by both public and private investment. ROC the Riverway enhancements, focused on the river-facing side of the building, will be a tremendous complement to investments happening throughout the arena targeted at technology modernization, fan experience, and team facility improvements. It will build upon planned upgrades to the nearby Convention Center and Rundel Library North Terrace.

## Funding Breakdown

Total project costs: \$37M (\$15.1M for Phase I)

Conceptual designs, final designs, and construction funded by:

### **\$6M recommended from NY State through ROC the Riverway Phase I**

\$3.5M from NY State Assembly

\$1.8M from City of Rochester

\$275K from NY State through NYPA

Potential private investment will also be explored with partners such as Pegula Sports and Entertainment, owner of the building’s primary tenant.

## Future Phases

Phase II and III of the Blue Cross Arena’s plans call for \$22M in additional investment to enhance the fan experience and make the arena competitive to attract big-name events and acts.



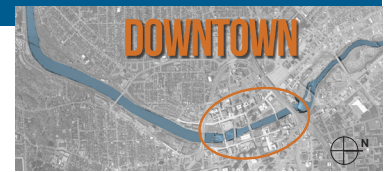


BLUE CROSS ARENA | EXCHANGE BLVD SIDE



BLUE CROSS ARENA | RIVER SIDE





# RIVERSIDE CONVENTION CENTER

## Description | Background

The Joseph A. Floreano Rochester Riverside Convention Center (“Convention Center”) opened in August 1985 as a gift to the citizens of Rochester from the State of New York under the theme “A Gift to a City with a Future.” The Convention Center enhancement and expansion project includes modernization of existing facilities (internal and external), a partial expansion of the river side of the building, and a full expansion of the building to Broad Street. The full expansion, which is not recommended for Phase I but should be considered for future phases, entails a new 130,000 square foot expansion with column-free exhibit space and meeting space. Each phase and element of the project contributes to the vision for the building being the centerpiece facility in a larger “convention district” that would go beyond the main building to include a variety of lodging, meeting spaces, restaurants, multi-modal transportation options, and recreation opportunities – all connected by dynamic public spaces and vibrant streets.

Funding from Phase I focuses on modernization and partial expansion. It will expand the southwest face of the Convention Center along the river to create a large dynamic venue space that directly engages with the downtown waterfront. The current terrace, which is closed to the public at its Main Street entrance and has minimal design features, would be opened to the public as part of a larger riverfront promenade system, eventually becoming part of the Genesee Riverway Trail. The project would also include widening the south end of the terrace and creating a cantilevered viewing and gathering space for use by the Convention Center and residents alike. The widened terrace would be designed to work in unison with all possibilities of a promenade and trail link in front of RG&E Station 6, connecting south to the Broad Street Aqueduct. Public spaces would be energized by new opportunities for public art, creative lighting, and even pop-up retail.

## Justification

The Convention Center is a key driver of jobs and economic activity in our city, with the potential for over 700 full-time jobs created throughout the “convention district” and related hospitality businesses. In addition to its economic importance, the Convention Center is situated at a key junction of the river – work on the exterior and terrace will transform and connect the Genesee Riverway Trail through Downtown Rochester. In addition to drawing hundreds of thousands of tourists every year, the facility hosts numerous events enjoyed by Rochesterians including galas, trade shows, holiday parties, and expos. Expanding the local and visitor experience to include views and connectivity along the river will further enhance the potential of the Convention Center.

## Leverage Opportunities

The full Convention Center expansion has the potential to spin off more than 700 full-time jobs and over \$2.3B in economic benefits over 20 years. It will build upon investments in other segments of the riverfront promenade as well as renovations to nearby hotels (completed and proposed).

## Funding Breakdown

Total project costs: \$25M for modernization (\$14.74M for Phase I – river terrace improvements)

Conceptual designs, final designs, and construction funded by:

**\$5M recommended from NY State through ROC the Riverway Phase I**

\$6.44M from City of Rochester

\$3.3M from NY State through ESD/FLREDC

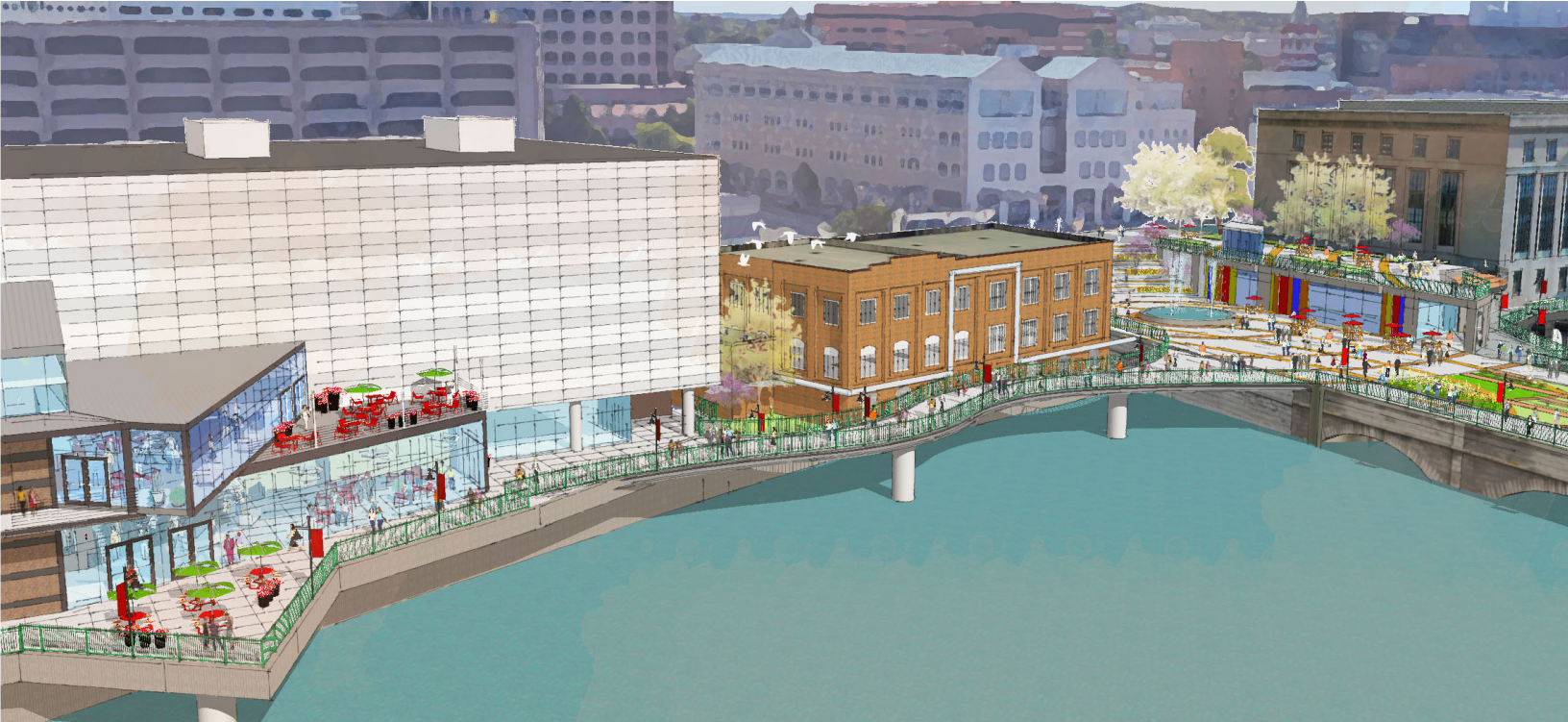


**Future Phases**

The Convention Center will continue to pursue its full \$125M expansion plan. Additionally, in conjunction with the Aqueduct Re-Imagined and Riverfront Promenade project, the riverside terrace will eventually be extended to connect to the Aqueduct Terrace.

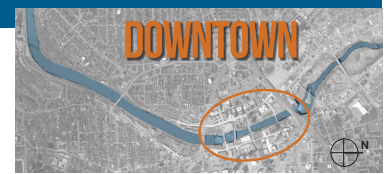


*RIVERSIDE CONVENTION CENTER LOOKING NORTHEAST, SHOWING TERRACE IMPROVEMENTS AND PARTIAL EXPANSION*



*RIVERSIDE CONVENTION CENTER LOOKING SOUTHEAST, SHOWING RIVERFRONT PROMENADE CONNECTION TO AQUEDUCT TERRACE*





# RIVERWAY MAIN TO ANDREWS

## Description | Background

Charles Carroll Plaza is an underutilized public park in the heart of the city. Named for one of Rochester's founding fathers, the 3.4-acre park is situated on top of the Crossroads Parking Garage and connected to Crossroads Park on the east side of the river by the Sister Cities Bridge. The Genesee Riverway Trail comprises the lower tier of the park on both sides of the river, connecting Main Street to Andrews Street, including a portion of trail that runs in front of the Rochester Riverside Hotel. Despite being located at one of the most significant intersections in the region – where Main Street crosses the Genesee – it has fallen into disrepair and enjoys only a fraction of the foot traffic from when it was first developed. It is also a key crossroads for pedestrian traffic, with the Sister Cities Bridge connecting the Transit Center and the heart of downtown to the cluster of government and office buildings on the west side.

The Charles Carroll Plaza project will reinvigorate the public spaces by improving access, safety, connectivity, and programming opportunities. Improvements will include enhanced lighting, greenspaces, and views of the river. It will create ADA accessible connections between Main, Andrews, State, and St. Paul Streets as well as the Sister Cities Bridge. Numerous walls that block views and create the perception of unsafe spaces will be removed. It will be a key site for various programming activities put on by the proposed Downtown/Riverfront Management Entity, as well as an every-day riverfront park for downtown residents, especially those in the adjacent Andrews Terrace.

## Justification

Renovating the park will significantly enhance north-south and east-west connectivity for non-motorized forms of transportation. The plaza is currently

a public safety hazard, as the roof of the parking garage is deteriorating and causing the slabs on top of the park to separate. This project will re-engage downtown Rochester's most underutilized public space, make critical trail segments accessible, stabilize the parking garage for future use, and bolster ongoing private investment in the surrounding area. It will also become an asset for the many residents that live nearby the park.

## Leverage Opportunities

This project is situated near the First Federal Plaza, Rochester Riverside Hotel, Holiday Inn, and other private institutions that are growing and working to attract businesses. It will entice those buildings to engage the river and public spaces through event programming, direct riverfront promenade access, and outdoor seating for restaurants.

## Funding Breakdown

Total project costs: \$27.65M

Conceptual designs, final designs, and construction funded by:

**\$20M recommended from NY State through ROC the Riverway** (\$16M for Charles Carroll Plaza, \$4M for Crossroads Park)

\$400K from NY State through DOS LWRP

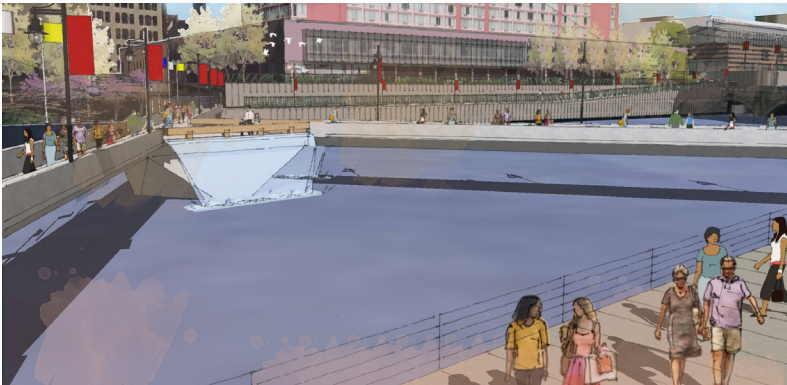
\$3.7M from City of Rochester

\$4M from City/Private TBD





CHARLES CARROLL PLAZA | LOOKING SOUTHEAST



SISTER CITIES BRIDGE WITH FOUNTAIN | LOOKING SOUTHEAST

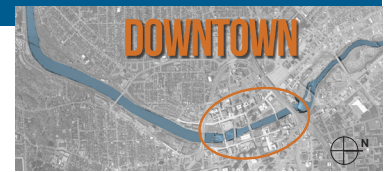


BIRDSEYE VIEW OF CHARLES CARROLL PLAZA | LOOKING NORTHWEST



MAIN TO ANDREWS PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION AT ROCHESTER RIVERSIDE HOTEL | LOOKING SOUTH





# FRONT STREET PROMENADE

## Description | Background

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The RG&E-owned site at 84 Andrews Street is a brownfield site at a key location along the downtown riverfront. Environmental remediation, as required by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), was recently completed for this site. RG&E is working with the NYSDEC regarding a final site management plan for the property. Together with the RG&E-owned parking lot at 46-52 Andrews Street, these sites represent a tremendous redevelopment opportunity. The City and RG&E continue conversations about the potential future use of this site, including any necessary approvals from the New York State Public Service Commission.

Public investments along the water's edge, including a formal pedestrian promenade, will allow future development to take advantage of this unique position along the Genesee, with direct connections to the Genesee Riverway Trail to the south. The potential build-out of these sites could yield over 500,000 square feet of unique mixed-use development downtown. An attractive pedestrian connection along the water will extend west along the north end of the site, connecting to the Mill Street tunnel under the Inner Loop. Signage, plantings, and surface improvements along these edges of the site will be designed to attract private development.

## Justification

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This site is among the only remaining vacant downtown riverfront sites. Its proximity to Charles Carroll Plaza and the planned investments there are critical, as the park's success is partially dependent on the vibrancy of uses surrounding it. Establishing a riverfront promenade will further bolster the potential for private investment to activate this part of the river and Andrews Street. It is also part of the remaining gap in the Genesee Riverway Trail system downtown.

## Leverage Opportunities

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A mixed-use development at the Front Street site will add significant levels of foot traffic to Charles Carroll Plaza, as well as the proposed downtown riverfront promenade. It will build upon recent and proposed investments along Water Street, State Street, and at the Rochester Riverside Hotel.

## Funding Breakdown

---

Total project costs: \$1.25M

Conceptual designs, final designs, and construction funded by:

**\$1.25M recommended from NY State through ROC the Riverway**

## Future Phases

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The City of Rochester will continue to work with RG&E to determine the best future use for the site.





BIRDSEYE VIEW OF FRONT STREET PROMENADE WITH FUTURE DEVELOPMENT | LOOKING NORTHWEST



FRONT STREET PROMENADE WITH FUTURE DEVELOPMENT | LOOKING NORTH FROM ANDREWS STREET





# ROC CITY SKATE PARK

## Description | Background

Rochester is one of the only cities in the country of its size or larger that does not have an outdoor skate park. The concept has been explored for many years, with advocacy led by Friends of the Roc City Skate Park. Funding constraints and shifting location ideas have hindered progress, but the ROC the Riverway initiative has provided another spark to the movement. The City and Friends of the Roc City Skate Park have reached consensus on a location under the Frederick Douglass – Susan B. Anthony Bridge (I-490) along the eastern banks of the Genesee River. It is an ideal alignment, physically and in principle, with the ROC the Riverway initiative.

The skate park will boast multiple features such as a main skate promenade, mini-ramps and ledges, and competition bowls. It will also have opportunities for public art, music performances, and spectator seating. Located alongside the existing Genesee Riverway Trail and with easy access from South Avenue, the skate park will attract droves of wheeled enthusiasts and spectators. It will capitalize on land that is otherwise unbuildable, situated under an interstate bridge and associated off ramps. This benefits skate park users as there will be elements that enjoy shade and shelter while other elements will be open air.

The skate park will provide a much needed boost of activity on the edge of downtown and in the South River Corridor. As was pointed out repeatedly during the ROC the Riverway public process, skateboarding has an emerging reputation of breaking down racial and socio-economic barriers in a way unlike any other sport. Gone are the days of maligning and ostracizing “skater” culture – the City enthusiastically welcomes this scene to make downtown a more dynamic experience for a multitude of residents and visitors.

## Justification

ROC the Riverway seeks to bring a broad range of activities and diverse visitors to enjoy the riverfront. This skate park will provide a unique destination that serves locals while attracting people from throughout the region and even the country. It represents the culmination of many years of planning and advocacy around a project that promotes active lifestyles, artistic expression, and community. It may prove to be one of the biggest draws of all the proposed projects.

## Leverage Opportunities

The skate park will build upon proposed park and trail enhancements to the south as well as new paddle boating opportunities, further solidifying this corridor as a center for outdoor recreation and adventure sports.

## Funding Breakdown

Total project costs: \$2M (\$1.5M and \$1M versions of the project exist)

Final designs and construction funded by:

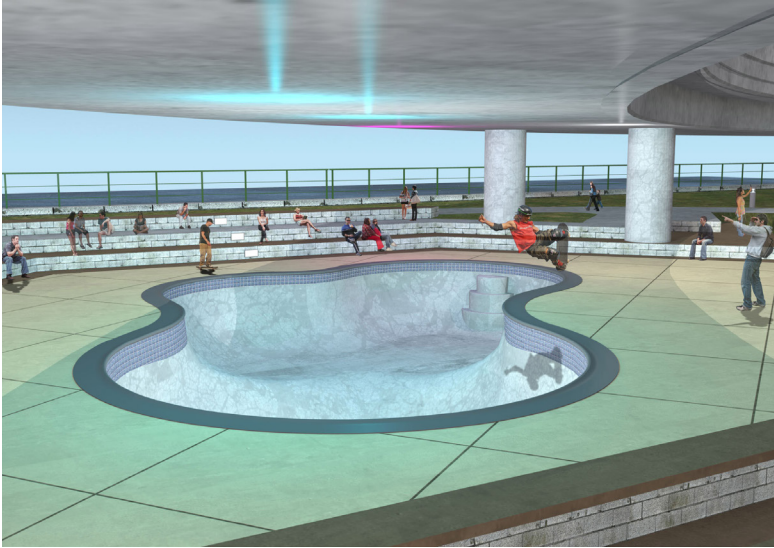
### **\$1M recommended from NY State through ROC the Riverway**

Up to \$1M through other private/foundation sources (\$250K raised to date)

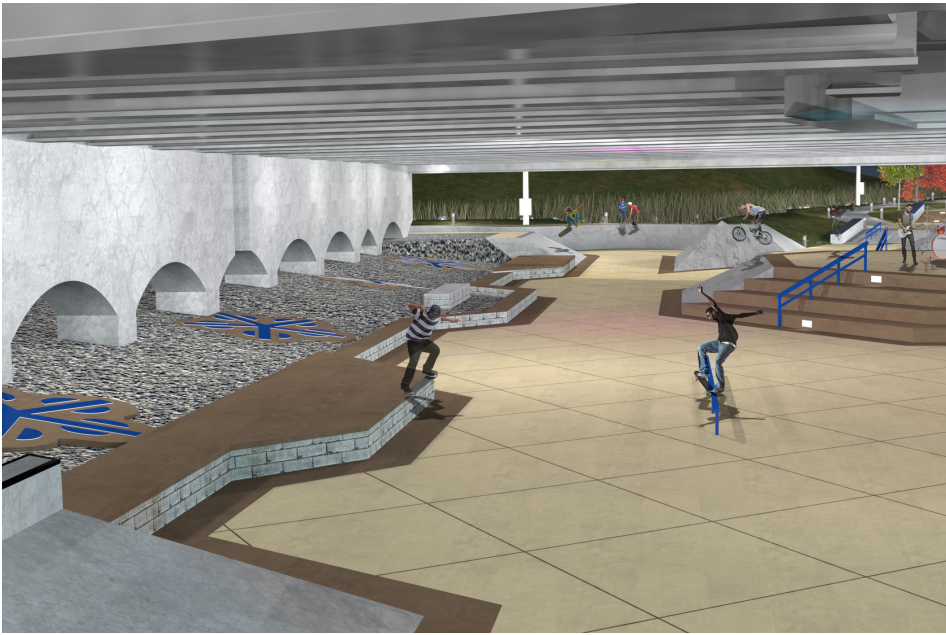




BIRDSYE OF ROC CITY SKATE PARK | LOOKING NORTHEAST



ROC CITY SKATE PARK | LOOKING WEST



ROC CITY SKATE PARK | LOOKING NORTH



ROC CITY SKATE PARK MEETING





# GENESEE GATEWAY PARK

## Description | Background

Genesee Gateway Park, also known as Erie Harbor, is a linear park situated between Ford Street and the Frederick Douglass – Susan B. Anthony Bridge on the east side of the Genesee River. It features a narrow swath of land alongside The Hamilton Apartments and Erie Harbor Apartments. The northern and southern extents of the park are wider and connect the river to Mt. Hope Avenue. The primary feature of the park is the Genesee Riverway Trail, which traverses the entire park and is paralleled by a riverfront promenade. Views of downtown and Corn Hill Landing are striking, making this a popular location for viewing Fourth of July Fireworks. The northern end also features a basketball court, small playground, and the site of the weekly South Wedge Farmers Market.

Currently, the Genesee Gateway Park is underutilized and underdeveloped, providing the perfect opportunity to create a vibrant, playful, urban waterfront experience. The re-imagined park will create a space which visually and physically connects the river to the surrounding neighborhoods. Areas for respite, flexible uses, and everyday play will ensure this is a riverfront park that offers something for all age ranges. The redeveloped park will also provide critical access to the river for non-motorized watercraft, as the next closest location to put in paddle boats is 2.2 miles upriver at the Genesee Waterways Center.

## Justification

Being immediately adjacent to downtown, the park is a critical greenspace for the heart of the city yet its potential remains untapped. Similarly, this segment of the river is known as some of the best flatwater in the country, yet boat access is limited as are activities and destinations that would attract boaters.

The park also serves as an important greenspace for the adjacent apartment buildings and the entire South Wedge neighborhood, yet the lack of physical amenities and programming limit the use of the park beyond trail usage.

## Leverage Opportunities

The park is currently in the conceptual design stage; providing the necessary funding for detailed design and construction will leverage the investment by the State, City, and local community to re-envision this riverfront greenspace. It will build upon various small development projects along Mt. Hope Avenue and the growing strength of the South Wedge neighborhood.

## Funding Breakdown

Total project costs: \$3.9M

Final designs and construction funded by:

**\$2M recommended from NY State through ROC the Riverway**

\$950K from City of Rochester

\$950K from NY State through DOS LWRP





GENESEE GATEWAY PARK PLAN VIEW



GENESEE GATEWAY PARK | LOOKING SOUTH



GENESEE GATEWAY PARK | LOOKING WEST



GENESEE GATEWAY PARK | LOOKING NORTH





# CORN HILL NAVIGATION

## Description | Background

Corn Hill Navigation (CHN) operates a tour boat on the Fairport/Pittsford/Brighton sections of the Erie Canal, and occasionally the Genesee River, called the Sam Patch. They offer leisure cruises along these local waterways as well as educational programming for local students. CHN used to operate a second boat, the Mary Jemison, which docked at Corn Hill Landing and toured the Genesee River. That boat was retired in 2013 and the organization has been trying to reestablish a service downtown ever since. CHN is currently engaged in a capital campaign to fund the purchase and operations of a downtown boat. ROC the Riverway funding would go directly to that campaign, recognizing the critical value of this educational and tourism asset in the South River corridor.

In addition, CHN, the City of Rochester, and other local institutions are in preliminary discussions about creating a more dynamic education-based presence along the Genesee River. The new CHN boat could play a key role in that effort as it is developed. Similarly, opportunities exist for CHN to provide more intimate transportation options in the South River corridor such as a water taxi service. This would likely be in conjunction with the establishment of a Downtown/Riverfront Management Entity. Future considerations should be given to partnering with the University of Rochester, Genesee Waterways Center, and other key river stakeholders to explore this possibility. The City and State investments in more water landings at Genesee Gateway Park and the West River Wall will provide some of the needed infrastructure for that initiative.

## Justification

The re-establishment of an education and leisure-based tour boat immediately south of downtown

will be a significant complement to other nearby investments. The boat is of particular value to the Rochester City School District, as an education curriculum has been developed to introduce students to the river's history, ecology, and opportunities for environmental stewardship. The boat would contribute to greater activity in the water in this sub-area with the potential to play a more dynamic role in the future.

## Leverage Opportunities

A new CHN boat will build upon the momentum of downtown development in recent years. As more residents and businesses locate downtown, and as Corn Hill and the South Wedge continue to strengthen, this boat service will further enhance the vitality of the area. It will also bolster business at Corn Hill Landing, which has seen some establishments turn over as of late.

## Funding Breakdown

Total project costs: \$500K

Purchase assistance and operations for a new downtown tour boat funded by:

**\$250K recommended from NY State through ROC the Riverway**

\$250K from other private sources





POTENTIAL BOAT STOP ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE GENESSEE RIVER | LOOKING WEST



CORN HILL NAVIGATION'S BOAT SAM PATCH AT CORN HILL LANDING | LOOKING NORTH





# HIGH FALLS TERRACE PARK

## Description | Background

High Falls Terrace Park is perched on the eastern rim of the gorge just north of the Genesee's most dramatic cascade. It is believed to be one of the City's oldest public parks, if not the first in Rochester, originally called Falls Field. It features walking paths that lead from St. Paul Street to the Genesee Brew House and Pont de Rennes pedestrian bridge, as well as a viewing platform of the falls. Despite its historic significance and prominent setting, the park, trails, and platform are underutilized and in notable disrepair.

Building upon the 2015 High Falls Pedestrian Access Improvement Study and the efforts of Greentopia in the area, this ROC the Riverway project is designed to address multiple needs in and near the park. For starters, the trail along the gorge is narrow and fenced off, limiting access. A wider trail, known as the Brewery Line Trail South and part of the Genesee Riverway Trail system, will be relocated along a recently acquired railroad right-of-way that traverses the park, removing the need for the fence. Selective vegetation clearing will open up better views of the falls. A more welcoming connection to downtown will be established through better signage, lighting, and cosmetic improvements to the St. Paul Street underpass of the CSX railroad bridge. Various park amenities such as picnic tables and grills will be installed. Lastly, a study will be conducted to examine the feasibility of creating public access to the roof of the former RG&E Hydrostation #4 at the eastern edge of the falls, a high-priority project within Greentopia's vision to transform the district.

## Justification

High Falls and the Genesee River Gorge are among the most important natural assets in the city. While many enjoy the views and strolls in the area, it has not reached its full potential as a key pedestrian crossroads or a tourist destination. Upgrading the park and trail will benefit immediate neighborhood residents, attract downtown and other residents to view the dramatic vistas of the High Falls Gorge, and amplify the visitor attraction of the Genesee Brew House.

## Leverage Opportunities

This project takes advantage of the substantial recent and ongoing investments being made by North American Breweries in the area. In addition to improving brewing operations and the successful Genesee Brew House, the company has made a concerted effort to engage the nearby community in workforce development and neighborhood revitalization. An improved park and trail would serve that area and beyond and would leverage the proposed investments on Pont de Rennes.

## Funding Breakdown

Total project costs: \$1.575M for Phase I (estimates for future phases TBD)

Conceptual designs, final designs, and construction funded by:

**\$1M recommended from NY State through ROC the Riverway Phase I** (\$500K for Brewery Line Trail South, \$150K for High Falls Overlook Feasibility Study, \$350K for St. Paul Street Underpass Improvements)

\$275K from NY State through DASNY for Brewery Line Trail South (Senator Robach)

\$300K from City of Rochester



**Future Phases**

Depending on the results of the High Falls Overlook Feasibility Study, additional funds will be needed to secure the historic building and construct the platform and access structure.

Additional work in the area includes restoring the High Falls illumination mechanism under the viewing platform, improvements to Cataract Street, and extending the Brewery Line Trail north of Pont de Rennes along the former railroad trestle.



VIEW OF FORMER RG&E HYDROSTATION #4 | LOOKING SOUTH



VIEW FROM HIGH FALLS TERRACE PARK | LOOKING NORTH



VIEW FROM HIGH FALLS TERRACE PARK | LOOKING SOUTH





# PONT DE RENNES BRIDGE

## Description | Background

Pont de Rennes is an 1898-vintage wrought iron bridge spanning the Genesee River Gorge. Once carrying vehicles as the Platt Street Bridge, it was converted to a pedestrian bridge in 1982 and named for Rochester's Sister City, Rennes, France. It is recognized as one of the best places in the city to view the falls and river gorge, hovering 100 feet over the Genesee River. In order to protect this asset for generations to come, significant structural repairs are needed to ensure the safety and viability of this historic infrastructure.

In addition to City and State investment in the structural repairs, ROC the Riverway funds will be used to create a more dynamic public space along the bridge with creative lighting, public art, plantings, and trail connections to enhance the visitor experience. The project will build off of proposed investments to High Falls Terrace Park, the Brewery Line Trail, and the continued expansion of North American Breweries (Genesee Brewery). The potential exists to hold an international design competition to maximize the potential of the space while engaging the community in an exciting forum.

## Justification

This major pedestrian connection between High Falls and the eastern banks of the river provides breathtaking views and connectivity between critical community institutions such as MCC's Downtown Campus, Kodak headquarters, and the Genesee Brewery. It is also an important connection between neighborhoods on both sides of the river immediately north of downtown. While bridge usage is growing with the popularity of the Genesee Brew House, public space enhancements have the potential to make this a world-class destination, capitalizing on

dramatic views of the only downtown waterfall in any major American city. Investment will ensure its long-term viability, with City funds focused on structural repairs and State funds focused on enhancements to the top of the bridge that will draw visitors, create unique event spaces, and enhance a major river crossing for trail users.

## Leverage Opportunities

This project builds off of the great planning, investment, and partnerships with North American Breweries, Greentopia, and other High Falls stakeholders and neighbors. Work by the City of Rochester on surrounding trail/park improvements is set to begin in the summer of 2018.

## Funding Breakdown

Total project costs: \$8.475M

Conceptual designs, final designs, and construction funded by:

### **\$4M recommended from NY State through ROC the Riverway**

\$4.475M from City of Rochester





PONT DE RENNES BRIDGE CONCEPT SKETCHES | LOOKING EAST FROM BROWN'S RACE



GREENTOPIA'S "DINNER ON THE BRIDGE" EVENT





# RUNNING TRACK BRIDGE

## Description | Background

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The Running Track Bridge is a former rail bridge that once exemplified the City's industrial prowess. Today, the bridge sits abandoned but continues to highlight the importance of connections across the Genesee River, linking neighborhoods like El Camino, Edgerton, and High Falls as well as destinations on either side. Rehabilitating the bridge as a pedestrian amenity will highlight the historic value of the structure and reuse of this resource will allow the City to meet today's needs and ensure complementary and cohesive connections to other ROC the Riverway projects.

Phase I of this project will stabilize the existing infrastructure so that a more permanent pedestrian bridge can be placed atop the trestle bridge in a future phase. The City will also develop a vision and conceptual linkages for the east and west side of the river so that the future pedestrian bridge can be fully utilized and effective.

## Justification

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This adaptive reuse of existing infrastructure would provide continuous, ADA compliant pedestrian access across the river along with a direct pedestrian connection to the El Camino Trail, serving as an important connection for northwest and northeast neighborhoods. It would also provide dramatic views of the gorge, serving as a destination in and of itself.

## Leverage Opportunities

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The Running Track Bridge will provide a unique perspective and destination for neighbors and serve to further invigorate and connect Rochester's northern neighborhoods. It will build upon the significant grass roots investment in the El Camino area as well as the construction of the El Camino Trail.

## Funding Breakdown

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Total project costs: \$5M (\$500K for Phase I)

Structure stabilization and conceptual neighborhood connections funded by:

**\$500K recommended from NY State through ROC the Riverway Phase I**

## Future Phases

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The City will continue to pursue construction funding for the pedestrian bridge, which totals \$4.5M.





RUNNING TRACK BRIDGE | LOOKING EAST





# DOWNTOWN / RIVERFRONT MANAGEMENT ENTITY

## Description | Background

In order to achieve a more vibrant, dynamic riverfront experience, a Downtown / Riverfront Management Entity must be created that will program and maintain the existing and newly created public spaces. The City of Rochester and ROC the Riverway Advisory Board have explored management entity models across the nation, including Buffalo, Chattanooga, Baltimore, and Grand Rapids. While the sustainable funding model, scope, and other details of Rochester's management entity are still to be determined, there has been strong community support for pursuing additional programming and management opportunities for these spaces.

Management entities around the country have a variety of responsibilities, including but not limited to: community visioning and engagement; coordinating private development activities; overseeing public infrastructure investments; receiving state and philanthropic funding; developing and implementing programs and events; engaging in marketing and branding efforts; maintenance and upkeep of public spaces; proliferating public art; and recruiting businesses. Such an entity will be critical to connecting people to the water and activating the great public spaces being created through ROC the Riverway. The Advisory Board traveled to Buffalo to learn more about the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation that operates Canalside. Key lessons learned from their staff include:

- maintain a geographic focus so as to not dilute activity and resources;
- start simple and small with lots of activities programmed before large infrastructure projects begin;

- look for a wide range of programming from large concert events to fitness classes and lawn games to simple, low-cost solutions that activate spaces;
- identify and collaborate with key local partners;
- identify a variety of winter activities to make it a year-round destination; and
- involve the community to develop public space designs, public art, activities, and events.

In some communities, the management entity takes the form of a Business Improvement District (BID). Others use a Local Development Corporation (LDC) model or some combination of a BID and LDC. Regardless of the specifics of the organizational structure, it is abundantly clear that other cities maximize the potential of their downtown/ waterfront public spaces through a non-municipal entity that is nimble and enjoys greater flexibility in decision making and implementation.

## Justification

One of the most common themes at ROC the Riverway community meetings was the importance of programming options – large and small – along the riverfront. As well, the City's limited capacity to maintain, operate, and program parks, trails, and other public spaces must be considered. A management entity will be critical to the execution of the ROC the Riverway initiative in order to ensure that these spaces are sustained in a way that creates vibrancy and pride in Rochester. In particular, having a management entity built up over the next few years will ensure that the centerpiece project – the Aqueduct Re-Imagined and Riverfront Promenade – will reach its full potential once constructed with future funds from the ROC the Riverway initiative.



### Leverage Opportunities

There are a number of potential public and private partnerships that could be created to form a downtown/riverfront management entity. Consideration should be given to sustainable funding models to ensure that the management entity can grow as future phases of ROC the Riverway are implemented. The organization would drive the effort to activate Phase II of the ROC the Riverway Vision Plan, as well as advocating for the funding required to move individual projects forward.

### Funding Breakdown

Total project costs: \$10M (dependent on identification of an organizational structure, evolving operational costs, and long-term funding strategy)

Establishment of an entity funded by:

**\$3M recommended from NY State through ROC the Riverway Phase I**

Other funds from City, private, and non-profit/foundation entities TBD

### Future Phases

Depending on the organizational structure implemented, additional funds will be needed for operational funds and long-term sustainability.



KINGSTON | ONTARIO, CANADA



CANALSIDE | BUFFALO, NEW YORK



RENDERING OF AQUEDUCT RE-IMAGINED





KINGSTON | ONTARIO, CANADA



KINGSTON | ONTARIO, CANADA



CANALSIDE | BUFFALO, NEW YORK



CANALSIDE | BUFFALO, NEW YORK





**SECTION**  
**4**

**ADDITIONAL PROJECTS**

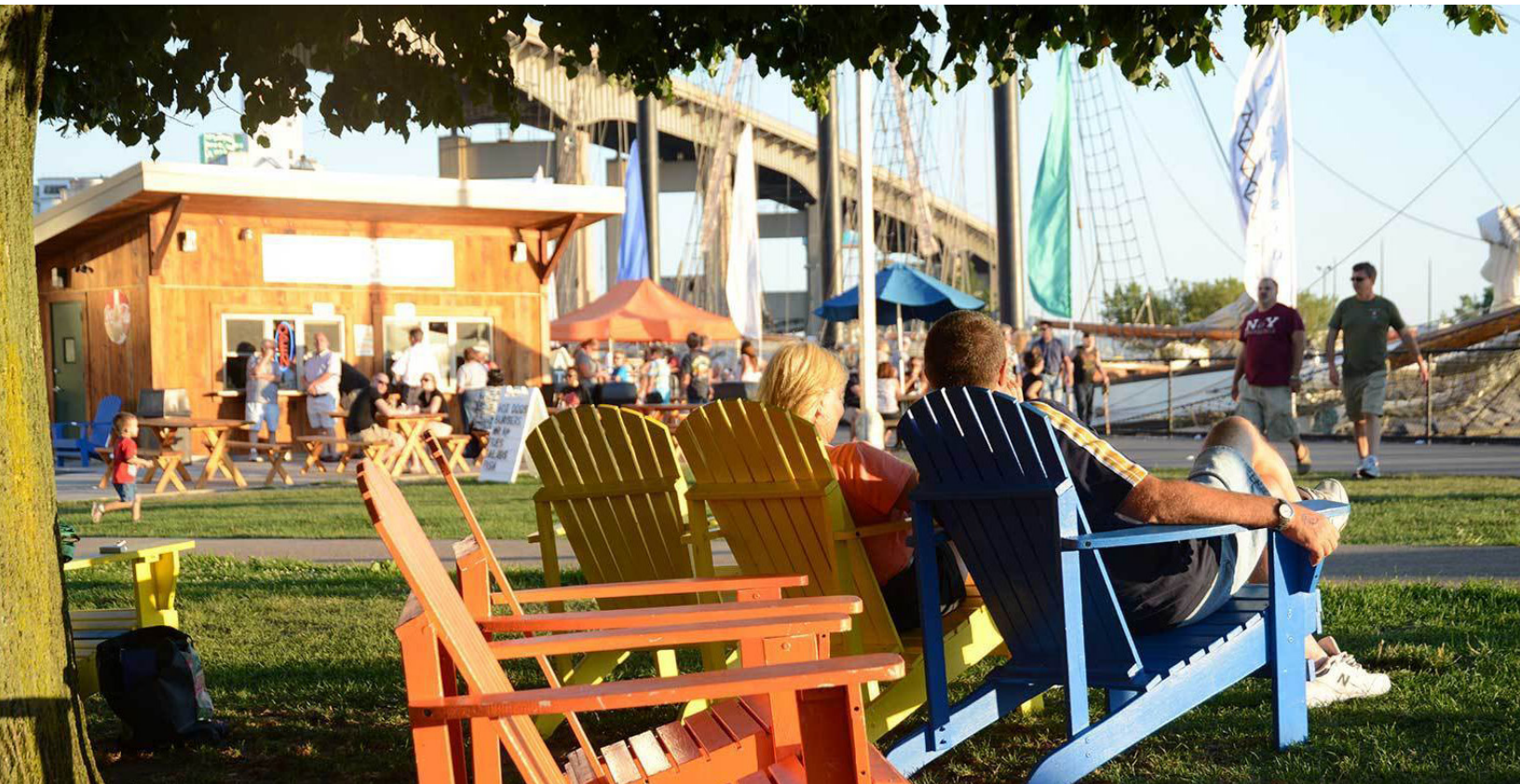


# SUPPORTIVE NEAR-TERM PROJECTS

Phase I of ROC the Riverway includes several projects that can enter construction within a year of receiving funding from NY State. These include improvements to the Blue Cross Arena, the Floreano Riverside Convention Center, and High Falls Terrace Park. Other projects require more time due to the need for more detailed designs to be developed or other activities taking place behind the scenes. While this mix makes for a manageable workload over the course of five years, it will be critical for the community to see multiple exciting things happening each year.

In order to accomplish this, the City of Rochester and its partners must identify a myriad of low cost supportive projects and initiatives in the first few years of implementation that can take place with or without the influx of State funds. There are some opportunities for relatively easy to achieve physical changes that should be pursued as well as ways to program existing public spaces. Representatives from Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation (ECHDC), operators of Canalside in Buffalo, shared two of these simple yet highly effective examples with the Advisory Board:

- ECHDC staff purchased dozens of Adirondack chairs, painted them a variety of bright colors, then placed them on the newly finished "Great Lawn," a large yard which otherwise had no other amenities or physical features. People began to show up to the space just to sit in the chairs and enjoy the views of the water. They quickly grew in popularity and became known as the "Buffalo Sunset Chairs," now one of the more signature elements of the Canalside experience.



BUFFALO SUNSET CHAIRS | CANALSIDE BUFFALO



- A local business donated several truckloads of sand to Canalside. ECHDC constructed a makeshift giant sandbox to see how the community would respond and use the space. It became a surprise hit, with adults bringing the Buffalo Sunset Chairs into the sandbox to simulate a beach experience while children played with classic sandbox toys. Soon beach umbrellas were added to enhance the theme, the edge of the box was formalized with large climbing boulders, and a replica wooden tugboat was placed in the middle for children to play in.

These developments illustrate some key lessons learned from Canalside regarding programming and amenities for public spaces. These 'quick wins' are low cost and can bring people to underutilized spaces. The simplicity, surprise, and whimsical nature of these efforts encourages people of all ages to engage their imaginations and creativity; spaces can sometimes start to self-organize when flexibility is part of the design. As well, it gives a sense that more is coming, fostering anticipation so that community members 'stay tuned' to the evolution of spaces. Lastly, ECHDC was successful in attracting families with young children in the early stages – a highly visible sign that a space is transitioning from forgotten and even unsafe to attractive and secure.



SANDBOX | CANALSIDE BUFFALO



Below is a list of near-term supportive projects that can be achieved as early as summer 2018. These were identified through the community engagement process, numerous Advisory Board meetings, and City staff sessions. Some are fun and engaging like the Canalside examples, some are promotional in nature, while others are key strategic steps that will lead to future projects. All are targeted at activating the waterfront to continue the momentum of the ROC the Riverway initiative. They will also help the community begin to imagine a more thriving waterfront, as drawings and renderings of future projects are limited in their ability to help envision change. Many of these ideas should be spearheaded by community partners, with support as needed from the City.

## SOLICITING IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY TO ACTIVATE SPACES

When ECHDC needed to find ideas for events and programming, they turned to the community. They worked with Arts Services Initiatives of Western New York, an advocacy group that promotes local arts as an economic driver to devise a process for soliciting ideas. They released a request for proposals (RFP) to local artists, businesses, and organizations to propose events, classes, and other programs that could activate the newly-created public spaces at Canalside. Winners were selected and provided funds to implement their proposals.

Not only did this serve to bring thousands of people to Canalside to experience a wide variety of programming, it engaged the community in an inclusive, organic manner to foster a sense of ownership throughout Buffalo. ECHDC representatives noted that this effort was critical in developing the strong sentiment that Canalside belonged to everyone in the community.

Such an operation would be best suited to the proposed Downtown/Riverfront Management Entity. However, until that organization is well-established, a simpler, smaller-scale initiative could be spearheaded by the City's Office of Special Events in partnership with other downtown stakeholders.

## PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES

Beginning in summer 2018, the City and various partners should begin an aggressive promotional campaign for the ROC the Riverway initiative. Key locations should be identified where promotional displays and other materials are highly visible to downtown residents, workers, and visitors. Whether it be library patrons, guests at a local hotel, convention goers, sports fans at the arena, or residents passing through the lobby of their apartment building, people should have regular reminders of the exciting changes coming to Rochester's riverfront. These physical reminders should be complemented by a robust online presence that allows the community to track progress and receive updates.



## WINTERTIME ACTIVITIES

Use of the river corridor during Rochester's cold and snowy winters came up repeatedly during the community engagement process. Some people questioned the wisdom of creating more public spaces that may be unused several months of the year. Others recognized the incredible wintertime activity taking place in other northern cities like Ottawa, Buffalo, and Saranac Lake, noting that the same can be accomplished in Rochester with a little creativity and gumption. Ideas included:

- Allow for ice skating on the potential new Aqueduct Terrace water feature. While the City operates a downtown outdoor rink at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, the popularity of skating at Canalside suggests that there is latent demand in the community, especially if the setting is unique like skating across a bridge over a river.
- Plow the Genesee Riverway Trail, especially south of downtown. This corridor is increasingly used for more than recreational cycling or jogging. It is an important linkage running along the spine of the city that is used by households without cars and bicycle commuters. It is a direct connection between the region's two largest employment clusters – downtown and the University of Rochester / Strong Hospital. While usage is of course lower in the winter months, it is unnecessarily lowered because of the lack of trail maintenance.
- Groom a path next to the Genesee Riverway Trail for use by cross country skiers and snowshoers. The trail is continuous for several miles without any street crossings and features dramatic views of downtown to the north and connections to the University of Rochester and Genesee Valley Park to the south. Between Court Street and Ford Street, there is a separate, parallel path along the river that could be the designated route for grooming snow.
- Use lighting and fire to bring warmth to winter spaces. Lighted walkways and building facades can help offset gray winter days and serve as gathering places, attractions, or beacons to guide residents and visitors. Fire pits can also bring warmth and light to a space. Providence, Rhode Island, has used a series of natural gas-fired fire sculptures to brighten its downtown riverfront and make the city more accommodating to people in all seasons.





### FLOREANO RIVERSIDE CONVENTION CENTER TERRACE REPAIRS



## ACTIVATE THE RIVER SIDE OF RIVERSIDE CONVENTION CENTER

The City of Rochester, which owns the Floreano Riverside Convention Center, has plans for relatively low-cost improvements to the building's river terrace. In the summer of 2018, direct public access from the Main Street sidewalk to the terrace will be created, rather than restricting its use to those attending convention events. This will provide greater access to enjoy river views, but will also make it easier for visitors to imagine how that terrace will one day be extended to the south to connect to the Broad Street Aqueduct. In addition to the terrace improvements, high-profile lighting elements will be installed to illuminate the facility much like has been done on other prominent buildings in Rochester's skyline.

## EDUCATION, ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

Several area institutions have been collaborating recently around the potential to establish an "urban ecology center," to be located somewhere along the Genesee River. The center would be a place for these institutions to gather with students, community members, businesses, and other organizations to study and explore the urban and natural environment.

The institutions exploring the concept include many area colleges/universities as well as the Seneca Park Zoo, Rochester Museum and Science Center, Rochester City School District, and Genesee RiverWatch. See the subsequent section ("Future Considerations") for a more detailed description of the potential for this community facility. In the meantime, that informal consortium of institutions, prompted by the Advisory Board's call for community ideas, has identified some 'quick wins' that could be implemented in the near future, prior to any facility being established. These efforts have value in and of themselves, but may prove to be critical in solidifying long-term partnerships and community support for a permanent urban ecology center. The table on the next page, submitted by the informal consortium, presents ideas under consideration by these institutions.



<b>Summer/Fall 2018</b>	<b>Intended Audience</b>	<b>Possible Partners</b>
Paddling Excursions	Everyone	SJFC, RIT, BOCES, Genesee RiverWatch, Genesee Waterways Center
Urban Ecologist study site	RCSD students	Seneca Park Zoo Society
Genesee Pop-up Riverfest	All of Rochester	South Wedge Planning Committee, Corn Hill Neighbors Association, Plymouth - Exchange Neighborhood Association
Teacher Professional Development workshops	Greater Rochester teachers	Rochester City School District, Monroe - BOCES
<b>Near Future</b>	<b>Intended Audience</b>	<b>Possible Partners</b>
Genesee River Paddle/Bike/Run Triathlon	Regional outdoor recreation enthusiasts	Genesee RiverWatch, Genesee Waterways Center, Reconnect Rochester
College-level Genesee River Course	College students, general public	SJFC, RIT
K-12 Genesee River Science and Social Studies Field Study	Elementary, middle and high school students	SJFC, RIT, BOCES, Genesee RiverWatch, Genesee Waterways Center
Urban Agriculture Programs	Neighbors, Neighborhood Associations	Foodlink, Headwater Food Hub

In addition to the strategies listed above, the following ideas were identified for consideration:

- Incorporate ROC the Riverway into October's "River Romance" event, highlighting the Phase I Vision Plan with project information and other supportive materials. The City should consider making ROC the Riverway progress a key highlight of the event year after year. This would provide the community a regular, predictable cycle of showcasing annual progress.
- Release a Request for Proposals for 151 Mt. Hope Ave, soliciting projects that are designed to activate the Mt. Hope Ave corridor, waterfront, trails, and nearby park space. Consideration should be given to including a boat rental operation, parkside restaurant, and even the possibility of co-locating with the aforementioned urban ecology center.
- The City of Rochester should continue to work with RG&E on the potential redevelopment of 84 Andrews St (Front St Site), with consideration of including the RG&E-owned parking lot on 46-52 Andrews St.
- Establish a pop-up restaurant event on the terrace at Blue Cross Arena, inspiring the community to imagine the proposed permanent restaurant in that space.
- Roc City Skatepark should consider hosting a celebration and fundraiser event under the bridge to raise awareness of the park's promising future along with its funding needs.
- Establish a paddleboat event in the South River, utilizing the docks at Corn Hill Landing and the facilities at Genesee Gateway Park.
- Establish a ROC the Riverway social bike ride, similar to the popular Seersucker Ride and Tweed Ride, highlighting ongoing projects and changing the route each year that progress is made in filling in the trail gaps.
- Create Corn Hill Navigation tours oriented to re-imagining the riverfront and highlighting progress.
- Establish more events on Pont de Rennes, with Greentopia and North American Breweries as potential organizers.
- Continue to support the formation of a Genesee River Alliance, an education, environment, and river preservation advocacy group being spearheaded by the Genesee Land Trust.



# ONGOING PROJECTS

In addition to the Phase I projects in Section 3 and other future considerations listed in this section, there are several significant public investments underway aimed at transforming the Genesee Riverfront and nearby portions of downtown. These investments have already generated momentum around a river focus that will feed into the implementation of ROC the Riverway projects.

## WEST RIVER WALL

This project will address the aging concrete river wall and adjacent trail and greenspaces from Corn Hill Landing south to the Erie Lackawanna Pedestrian Bridge. Aimed at restoring and re-naturalizing the shore, this is one of the more ambitious and transformative river projects the City has undertaken in decades. Phase I (\$6.7 million, fully funded from Corn Hill Landing to Ford St) will be designed by the end of 2018, with construction scheduled to be completed in Spring of 2020. It will include a flood protection alternative to the concrete wall using earthen berms and reconstructed walls that coincide with two new pedestrian plazas. Those plazas will feature gathering spaces, overlooks, and boat landings. In between those plazas, the shore of the river will consist of a restored natural edge in front of the berm. The Genesee Riverway Trail through this corridor will be relocated to the top of the berm, enhancing views of the river. Phase II (Ford St to the pedestrian bridge) has been conceptually designed but no funding has been secured for final designs or construction.





## ERIE HARBOR PROMENADE

This pedestrian walkway, currently under construction, will connect the former northern terminus of the Genesee Riverway Trail on the east side of the Genesee River to Court Street. The 20-foot wide, 200-foot long walkway will extend out over the reconstructed Johnson-Seymour Millrace near the entrance to the former subway tunnel, then out over the river on piers, connecting to the Court Street sidewalk next to the Dinosaur BBQ Restaurant. The overall project cost \$5.1 million and is expected to be fully completed by summer 2019, although a portion of the promenade will open to the public in summer 2018.

## VACUUM OIL BROWNFIELD OPPORTUNITY AREA

The Vacuum Oil Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) planning process began in 2015 and will be completed in 2018. The plan has included a robust community engagement process yielding a multitude of ideas and strategies for revitalization. It seeks to help to stimulate investment in the PLEX neighborhood, assist in bringing in new businesses, residents and employment, and improve access to the Genesee River waterfront. Specifically related to the waterfront, the Vacuum Oil BOA Vision Plan recommends implementation measures that will improve over eight acres of open space, parks, trails, shoreline access, and scenic resources.

## MAIN STREET STREETScape AND WAYFINDING

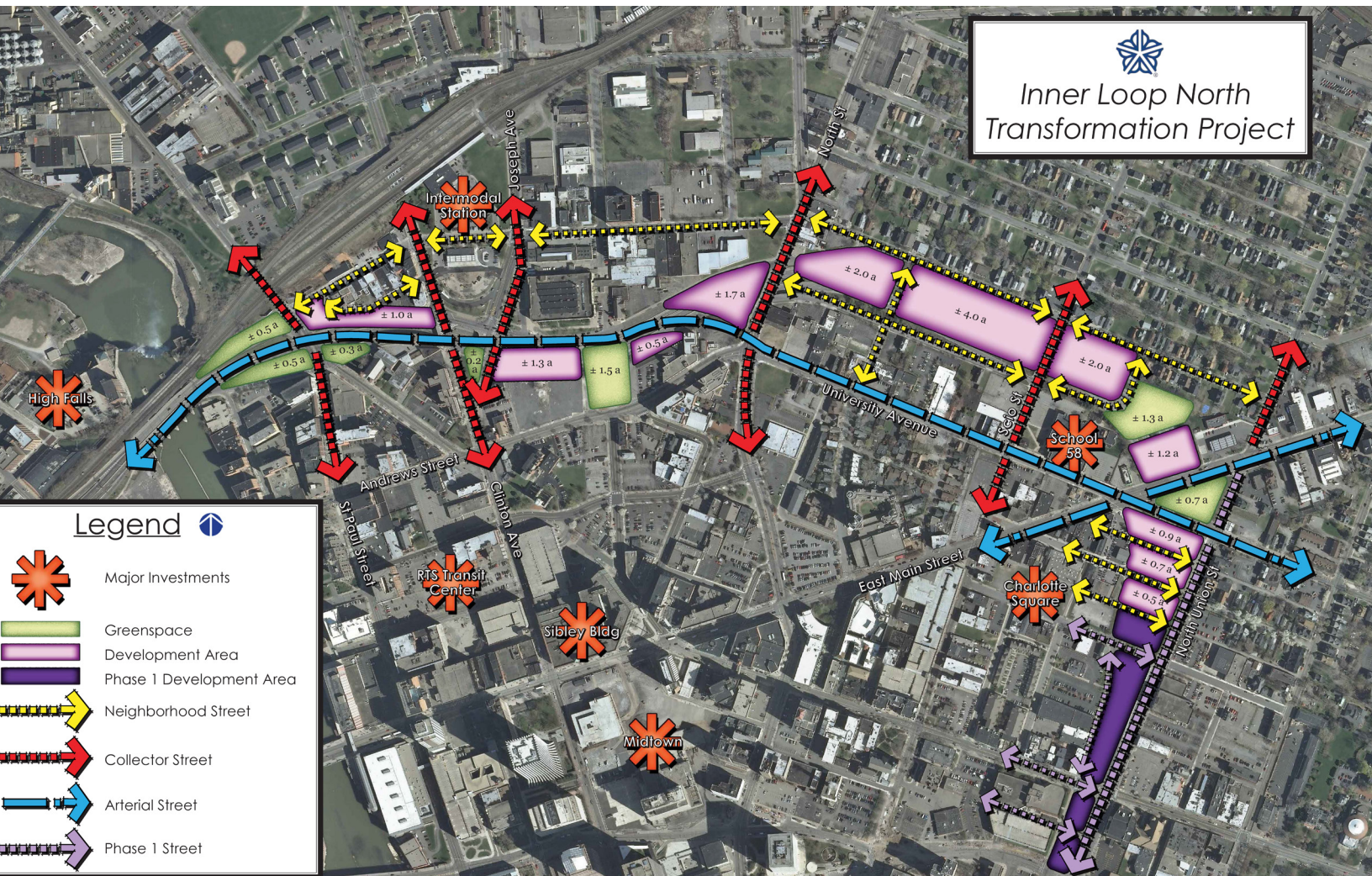
Currently, Main Street in Downtown Rochester is experiencing a surge of investment with a number of high profile redevelopment efforts underway. These projects together will bring considerable new commercial opportunities to downtown, along with new residents, workers, dozens of new hotel rooms, and scores of new visitors. Concurrently, the RTS Transit Center recently opened two blocks north of Main Street. The Transit Center has centralized transit transfer functions thereby eliminating all of the bus stops which used to line Main Street. This project seeks to re-imagine Main Street, providing the physical infrastructure, amenities, and aesthetic presence reflective of the region's cultural and economic heart.

Phase I, from East Avenue to St. Paul St (\$5.7 million) will be completed in 2018. Phase II, covers the portion of Main Street between St. Paul St and State St (\$2.6 million). Phase III, which includes the remaining unimproved sections of Main Street between West Broad St and University Ave (\$9 million), is not currently funded. The new streetscape will be designed to improve the conditions for pedestrians, enhance the aesthetic nature of the corridor, support economic development, and encourage multi-modal transportation. The design will consider pedestrian wayfinding, sidewalks, street trees, lighting, green infrastructure, accessibility, multi-modal transportation and bicycle parking, vehicular parking, and amenities.



## INNER LOOP NORTH TRANSFORMATION

In 2018-2019, the City will assess the feasibility for highway removal within the Inner Loop North corridor, from east of the Genesee River to North Union Street. This project seeks to build on the success of the Inner Loop East project in order to reconnect neighborhoods with the downtown area, create developable land and green space, generate investment and economic growth, and enhance the city's livability and competitiveness. Phase I, a Scoping and Alternatives Analysis (\$1 million funded by DASNY, thanks to Assemblyman Gantt) will evaluate alternatives for removing the expressway and/or minimizing its negative impact on the surrounding area. The result will be a Project Scoping Report with preferred alternatives, detailed cost estimates, and a thorough Benefit-Cost Analysis. Completion of Phase I will lead to a project or series of projects that can be advanced to eventual design and construction.





# PHASE II PRIORITIES

With the completion of this Vision Plan, the substantial community engagement that came before and during the plan, and the hundreds of millions of private and public dollars already invested into the area, Rochester is well positioned to continue the momentum of revitalizing its riverfront. There were several projects identified in the original ROC the Riverway document that were not selected for Phase I funding, yet definitely have merit should additional funding become available. The City of Rochester, in partnership with Empire State Development and other partners, intends to pursue future phases to complete the overall vision. Below are the highest priority projects and strategies identified if and when a subsequent round of funding is made available.

## COMPLETION OF RUNNING TRACK BRIDGE

While Phase I of ROC the Riverway will provide funds to stabilize the structure of Running Track Bridge and allow the City to explore nearby neighborhood connections, completing the bridge by constructing a pedestrian pathway on top of the existing trestle is a critical component of connecting neighborhoods on the northeast and northwest sides of the City. This adaptive reuse of infrastructure will facilitate access by foot or bicycle to and from El Camino Trail, to the Seneca Park Zoo, to major sports facilities, as well as easy access to Monroe Community College's Downtown Campus and enjoyment of the river.

## CONSTRUCTION OF AQUEDUCT TERRACE AND RIVERFRONT PROMENADE

Phase I of ROC the Riverway will allow the City to develop concept plans followed by final designs for the most critical – and difficult to design – segments of the Genesee Riverway Trail, passing through downtown between Court Street and Main Street on both sides of the river. Future phases of ROC the Riverway should include funding to construct these segments, along with allowing for the removal of the Broad Street vehicular deck and construction of a new public space at the original Erie Canal Aqueduct elevation.

## SUSTAINABLE FUNDING MODEL FOR MANAGEMENT ENTITY

Phase I of ROC the Riverway provides seed money for the establishment of a management entity to program and maintain the existing and newly-created public spaces along the Genesee River. However, a sustainable funding model must be established to ensure the long-term viability of the entity. Management entities around the country execute a number of responsibilities, included but not limited to: community visioning and engagement; coordinating private development activities; overseeing public infrastructure investments; receiving state and philanthropic funding; developing and implementing programs and events; engaging in marking and branding efforts; and recruiting businesses. The scope and nature of this entity must be established in order to determine the appropriate levels and sources of funding for it to continue long-term.



## BREWERY LINE TRAIL NORTH

In decades past, the railroad system extended north along the east side of the river past High Falls, in front of what is now the Genesee Brewery. While the trestle is still intact, pedestrian access to this trail is not possible without building a pedestrian connection on top of the existing trestle. This connection would complement North American Breweries' recent expansion and ongoing Genesee Brew House expansion, while further connecting the Genesee Riverway Trail and providing a new perspective into the beauty of the High Falls River Gorge. This trestle connection could also serve as the beginning of a future Tree Top Trail, as identified in the original ROC the Riverway document.

## HIGH FALLS OVERLOOK

Phase I recommends funds for studying the feasibility of a viewing platform on top of RG&E Hydrostation #4, as well as a bridge structure connecting High Falls Terrace Park to the overlook. Depending on the feasibility of the project, the City should pursue funding for implementing the preferred alternative design after the study is completed.

## CORN HILL / SOUTH WEDGE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

A pedestrian connection between the South Wedge and Corn Hill neighborhoods is a needed project that would connect neighborhoods for bicyclists and pedestrians, expand access to the river, and perhaps become an iconic destination in and of itself. Currently, the nearest pedestrian connections are Court Street and Ford Street. The proposed east-west river connection would further complement the South River's trail system and allow residents easy access to neighboring businesses and institutions. In addition, an opportunity exists to design the pedestrian bridge in a way that collects the large logs that frequent the river and filters out other debris, remedying the situation where these logs stop at existing downtown bridges and collect unsightly quantities of debris. This would allow for the City to more frequently and efficiently remove the logs, freeing up medium sized and small debris to either be filtered out or continue downstream without getting caught at the downtown bridges.





# FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Phase I of ROC the Riverway will include thirteen large scale projects, as well as several near-term supportive projects to establish momentum and diversify progress. In subsequent years, when additional funding is pursued, several additional projects should be considered. These include the Phase II ROC the Riverway projects noted above and the following ideas that emerged during the community engagement process in March to May of 2018.

## PUBLIC ART

Public art ideas and principles were emphatically supported throughout the ROC the Riverway community engagement process. While funding for Phase I is primarily dedicated to 'bricks and mortar' investments, each of the projects has the potential to showcase public art. A coordinated approach to public art in the ROC the Riverway focus area could yield an experience greater than the sum of its parts. Rochester's core waterfront presence, with its myriad of parks, trails, public spaces, and public facilities, could be unified by a continuous expectation that public art will be encountered frequently and in surprising ways.

During the ROC the Riverway process, representatives from the arts community noted a few key principles to consider when planning for public art opportunities:

- allow for a mix of local, national, and international artists, following WALL/THERAPY's successful model;
- create multiple opportunities for temporary or changeable art installations to encourage the community to continuously revisit sites, including pop-up art in unexpected places;
- work with area residents, especially young people and those that would not consider themselves artists, to engage in the creative process; and
- ensure private development along the river includes public art installations, both outside the building and in community spaces in the building.

Stakeholders and institutions in Rochester's thriving arts scene will need to collaborate to explore and implement these ideas. In other cities, a management entity similar to what is proposed in this Vision Plan is responsible for coordinating public art installations and programming.

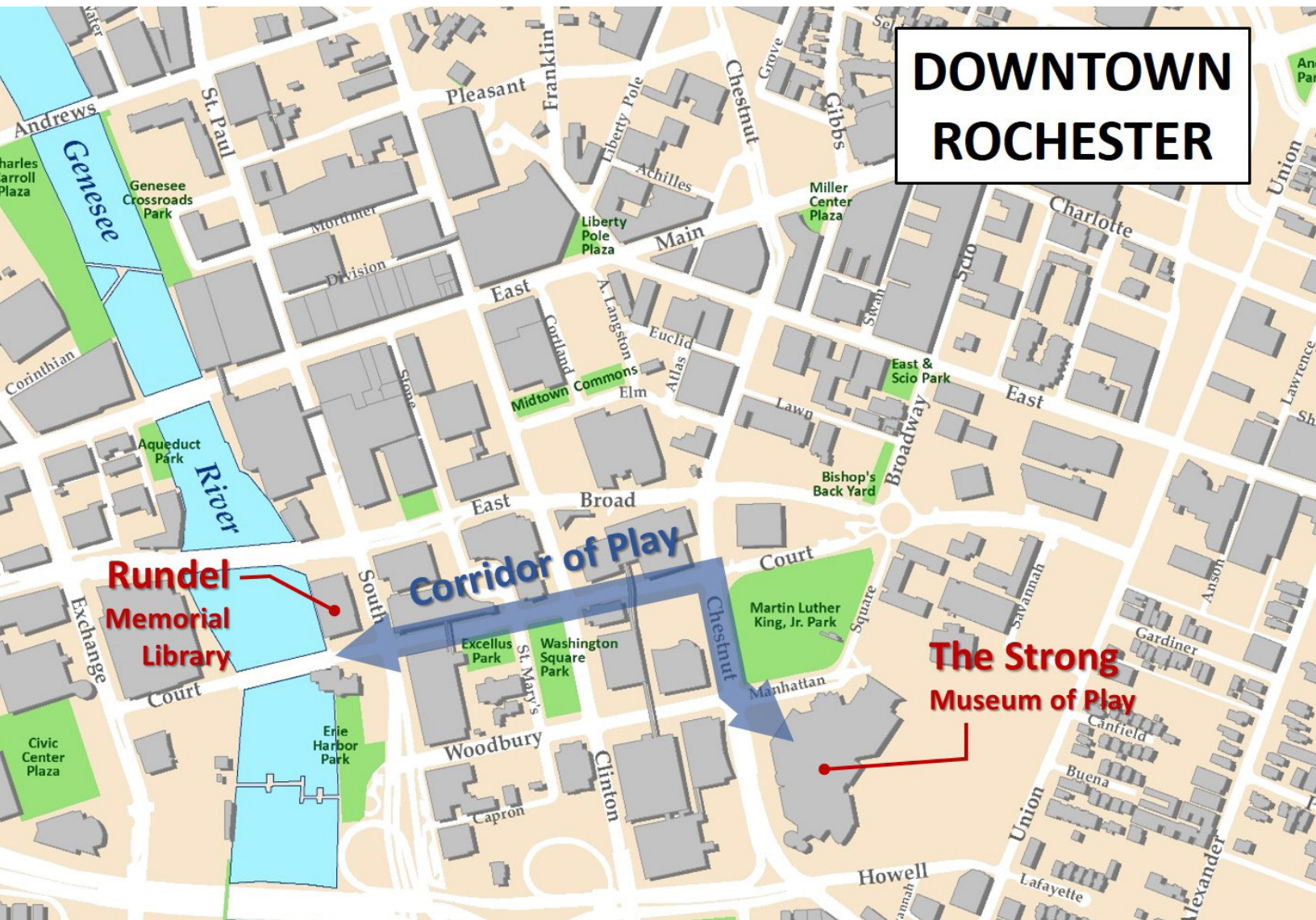
There is enormous potential to unify the corridor through a robust combination of public art, educational opportunities, historic interpretation, celebration of the local natural environment, and 'urban play' elements.



## CORRIDOR OF PLAY

One of the most unique opportunities for activating the core of Rochester’s riverfront is through a connection, physically and programmatically, to The Strong National Museum of Play. Unmatched by any children’s museum in the country, The Strong attracts thousands each year to downtown. The Strong is in the process of a significant expansion to the museum as well as development of adjacent mixed-use buildings to solidify a high-density, playful district around Chestnut and South Union Streets. This expansion is targeting multi-day trip visitors, which opens opportunities for families to explore and experience Rochester beyond the museum. While not typically associated with its proximity to the Genesee River, The Strong is only three blocks from the waterfront, with its nearest public access to the river at the Rundel Memorial Library

The City of Rochester, The Strong, Rochester Public Library, and other nearby stakeholders should identify opportunities to connect these destinations through a “Corridor of Play.” Creative installations installed along the sidewalk and adjacent public spaces can be designed to lead people back and forth between these destinations through a sense of curiosity, whimsy, and anticipation. Common Ground Health’s “Healthi Kids” initiative is the area’s leading advocate for outdoor play spaces and would be a natural partner in advancing this concept.

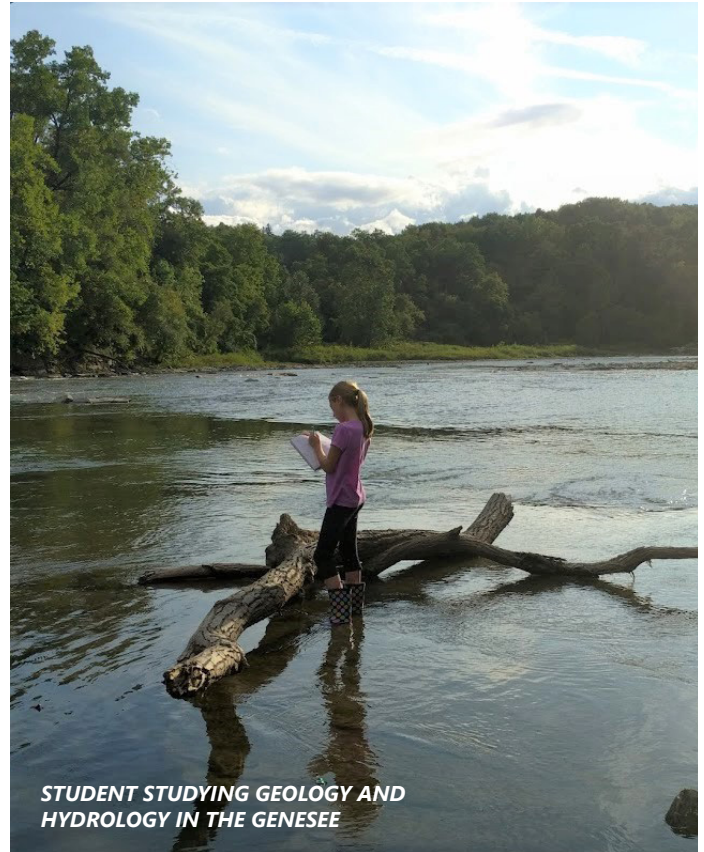




## URBAN ECOLOGY CENTER

As mentioned above in Ongoing Projects, an informal consortium of area institutions is exploring the potential establishment of an “urban ecology center” somewhere along the Genesee River. This center could be a complement to ideas related to environmental and/or education-based facilities proposed for the High Falls area and the Port of Charlotte. This informal consortium includes representatives from:

- St. John Fisher College
- University of Rochester
- Rochester Institute of Technology
- Rochester City School District
- Rochester Museum and Science Center
- Genesee RiverWatch
- Seneca Park Zoo Society
- Corn Hill Navigation
- The Nature Conservancy



**STUDENT STUDYING GEOLOGY AND  
HYDROLOGY IN THE GENESSEE**

The group has begun meeting regularly to explore the possibilities. They describe the project as follows, tentatively called the “Genesee Gateway Center:”

*“Our community is in need of institutions designed to build relationships, improve the built, social and natural environment, and create a new urban value. The Genesee Gateway Center will be a signature education, community engagement, and event space that will create value for Rochester by connecting people with each other and their environment.*

*Within the building, it will include classroom and teaching laboratory space, work and office space for nonprofits and institutions of higher education, exhibit space, event space, and amenities like a cafe and gift shop. Outside the building, it will include small boating programs for K-12 students, equipment rentals, sustainability focused exhibits and features, nature-play spaces, and enhanced access to the river to facilitate connection and recreation.*

*Creation of such a center is an opportunity to harness the growing energy around urban pride, environmental concern, and social justice to create a place and programs that will promote learning, creativity, and problem solving with an ecological mindset. Connections will be made through education, dialogue, science, experience, and art. It will bring together sustainability focused non-profits, the institutions of higher education, K-12 educators, neighborhood groups, and business and corporate stakeholders to serve the public through educational and community engagement. Doing so will leverage our city and region’s diversity to create an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable Rochester.”*

The City of Rochester’s ROC the Riverway staff have met with this group to identify possible connections to the riverfront revitalization initiative. Preliminary discussions have identified 151 Mt. Hope Avenue, a City-owned development site, as a potential location for consideration. The site features easy access to navigable water, a strong connection to nearby neighborhoods, close proximity and central location relative to partner institutions, and possible integration with private development.



## GENESEE BOTANICAL GARDENS

For any and all parks and public spaces developed through the Genesee River corridor, there exists an opportunity to develop a unifying landscape design aesthetic that could yield a corridor-long living outdoor museum. It would be designed to celebrate the region's natural history and foster meaningful connections among people, plants, and nature through horticulture, education and conservation programming.

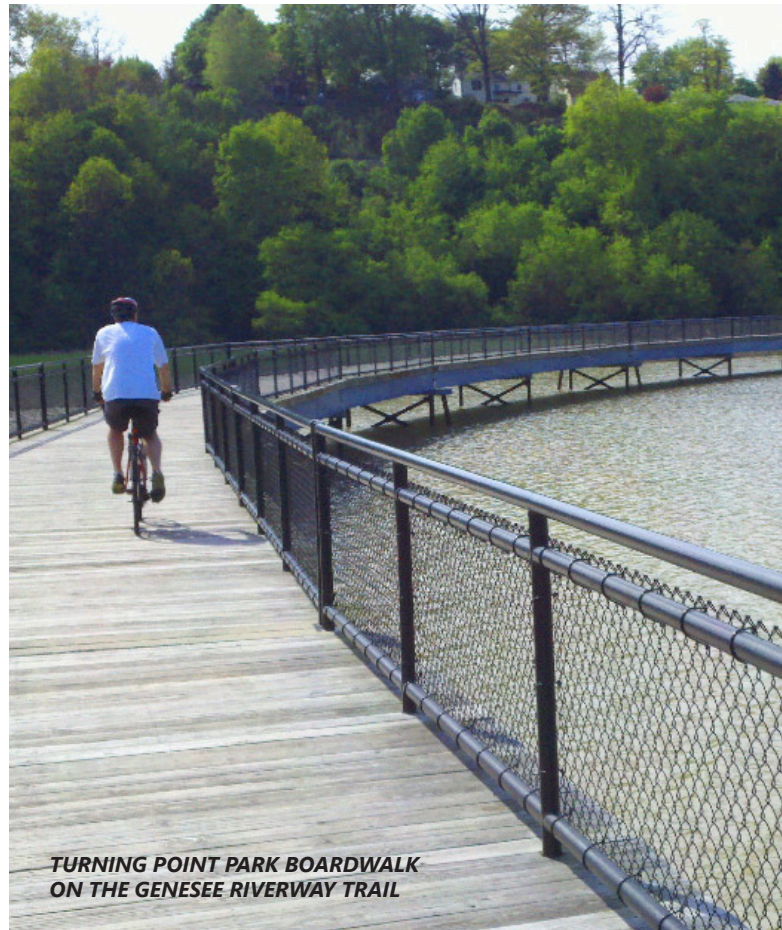
The Genesee Botanical Garden would add a layer of programming to the ROC the Riverway corridor. Unified landscape design across individual projects would create a holistic destination over the core of Rochester's riverfront – or a more concentrated set of sites – where nature enthusiasts, gardeners, educators and other members of the general public can learn about and enjoy regional native plantings, Rochester's unique horticultural history, and sustainable landscape design.

A unified destination creates a funding and patron draw greater than the individual components would on their own. The river corridor is uniquely suited to a robust botanical garden and a vehicle for endangered species protection due to the river's extremely diverse habitats and ecosystems. Similar projects can be found in other cities, including Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center (Austin, TX), Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens (Boothbay, ME), The National Garden (Washington, D.C.), and the Chicago Botanical Garden. There are various nature-based organizations throughout the region that could partner to implement this idea. As individual projects are advanced in the river corridor, consideration should be given to how they could contribute to the concept.

## INNER LOOP AND CSX RAILROAD BRIDGE CONNECTIONS

As noted in Ongoing Projects above, the Inner Loop North project will examine the potential to remove or redesign this divisive expressway as it traverses the northern edge of downtown. With two large bridge structures (highway and rail) crossing the river at the same location, it remains the single greatest manmade barrier to a continuous Genesee Riverway Trail along the water. Currently, on-street connections serve as the link between downtown and High Falls, but are less-than-desirable for trail users and basic mobility needs in the area.

During the Inner Loop North's Scoping and Alternatives Analysis project, the City should again explore ways to create access along the river on both sides. It is highly unlikely that the CSX Railroad tracks will ever be relocated or their elevation ever modified to accommodate a trail connection. Thus there will always be a significant barrier at this location. However, redesign of the Inner Loop corridor at the river could create opportunities to strengthen north-south connections for pedestrians and bicyclists.



**TURNING POINT PARK BOARDWALK  
ON THE GENESEE RIVERWAY TRAIL**

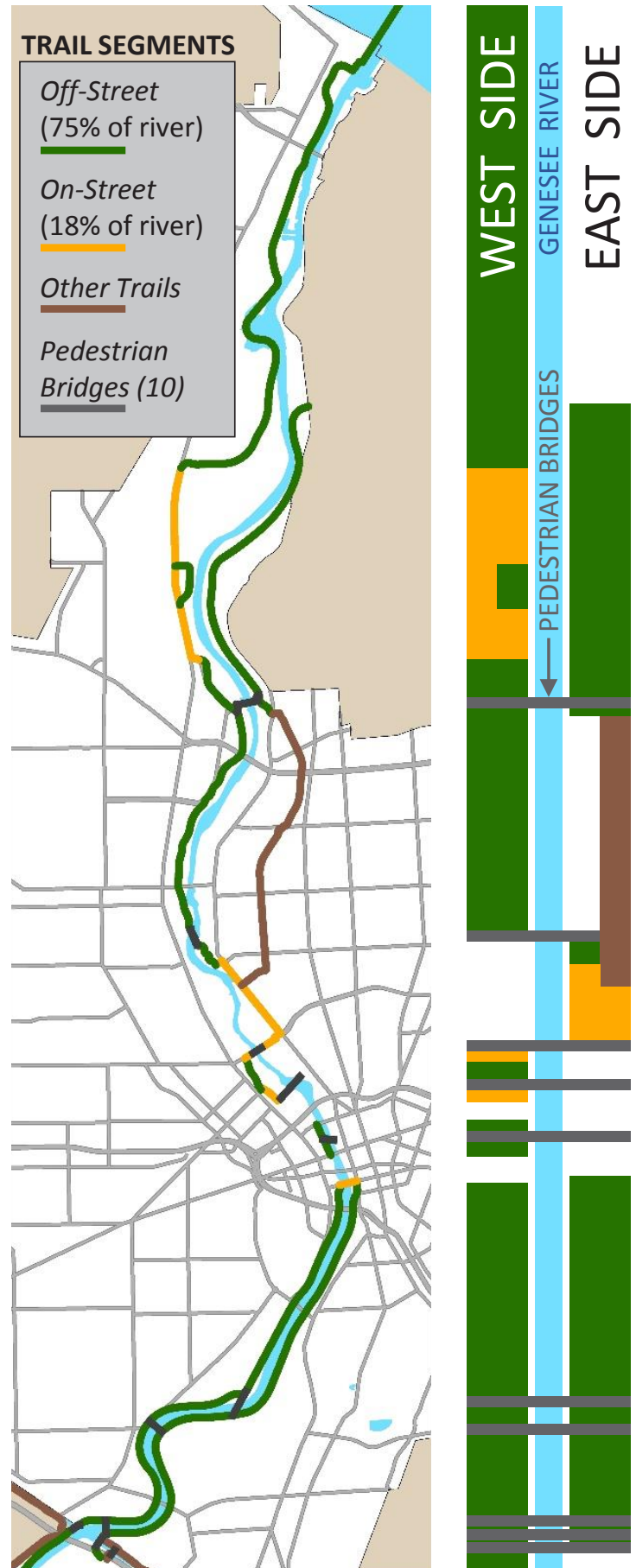


## OLD ROCHESTERVILLE PROMENADE

A riverfront promenade link could be established in Old Rochester ville between Andrews Street and the Inner Loop on the east side of the river. The buildings in this segment of the river are built on top of the river wall, leaving no space for a Genesee Riverway Trail connection. However, as with other downtown segments to the south, a cantilevered promenade or walkway built on piers in the river adjacent to the buildings could establish this link. It would connect to the Inner Loop off-ramp / Cumberland Street sidewalk at the north end, bringing users to the St. Paul Street Bridge over the Inner Loop. It would also connect to the small, City-owned pocket park on Water Street. Depending on the future redesign of the Inner Loop North segment, this promenade could potentially lead to a riverside connection under the CSX Railroad Bridge, leading to the proposed viewing platform atop RG&E Hydrostation #4 and High Falls Terrace Park.

## GENESEE RIVERWAY TRAIL NORTHERN CONNECTIONS

The City should continue efforts to complete the Genesee Riverway Trail from the ROC the Riverway focus area north to Lake Ontario, on both sides of the river wherever possible. Most of this segment of the river exists as a steep gorge, making off-street connections highly challenging and costly. Nevertheless, they are important transportation linkages between the northern neighborhoods and downtown. As well, they would provide access to the striking beauty of the gorge. With the completion of proposed trails in this initiative, there will be only 0.3 miles left to establish a continuous riverfront linkage on one side of the river (alternating east and west sides) between the Erie Canal and Lake Ontario. In addition, approximately 1.3 miles of trail exist along Lake Avenue; a more desirable trail location along the gorge edge has been identified and is seeking funding. This also does not account for the desire to have access to the river's edge at the bottom of the gorge, even if a trail exists along the gorge edge. See adjacent map for existing trail links and gaps.





## EXCHANGE STREET PLAYGROUND

The City should identify ways to revitalize the Exchange Street Playground in the PLEX neighborhood. While not on the river, it is an important community space near the river that is in need of restoration and new amenities. There also exists an opportunity to connect the park to the Genesee Riverway Trail via a City-owned former canal and railroad right-of-way. A concept for park improvements was submitted by the City for NYS Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) award in 2015 but was not awarded. The City should continue to work with the PLEX neighborhood and State partners to identify ways to upgrade this facility, including the potential for re-applying for a CFA award.

## ADDITIONAL FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to the potential projects listed above, the following ideas were identified as future considerations:

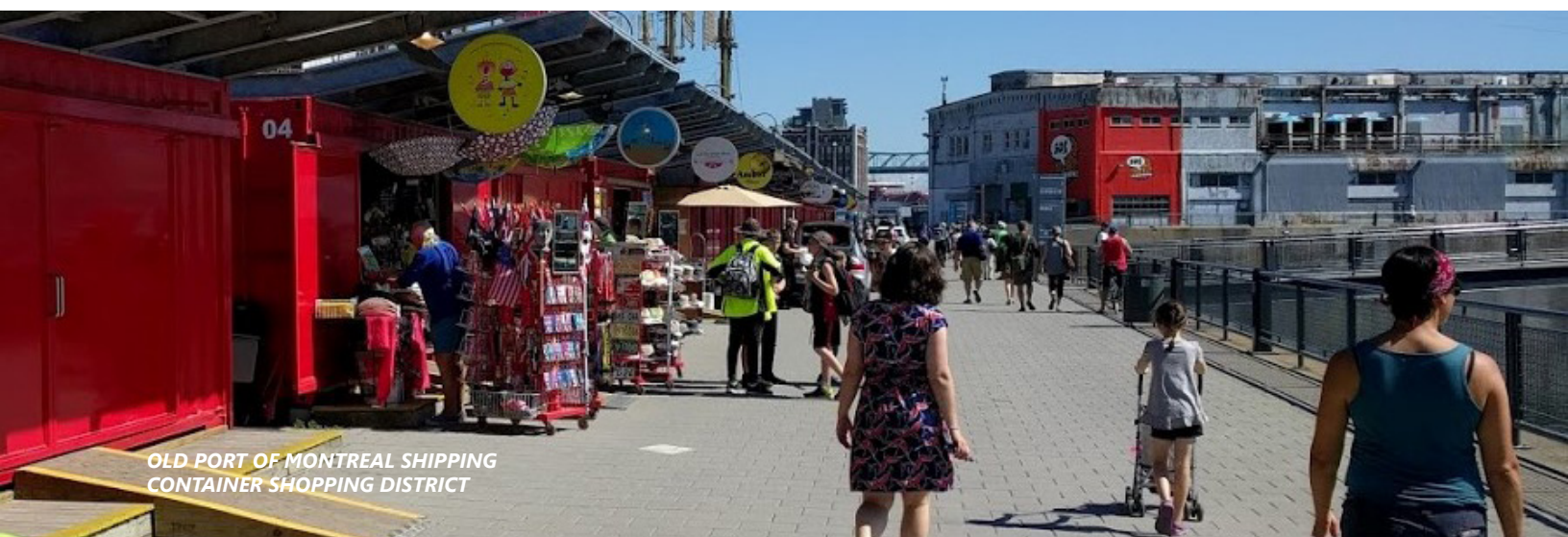
- Continue to explore the possibility of a state park in or around the High Falls gorge as a way to enhance public access while ensuring preservation of this premier natural asset.
- Establish a public facility in High Falls, potentially an education/environmental center with restrooms to accommodate current visitors and the anticipated influx of people coming to explore the district's ongoing revitalization. This concept was identified by Greentopia, as summarized in "Nothing ROCs a River Like a Waterfall" document. Their concept would take the form of an "Environmental Education and Visitor Center" at the former High Falls Visitors Center building on Brown's Race.
- Also identified by Greentopia, Granite Mills Park at the western end of Pont de Rennes could be redeveloped with a permanent performance area featuring better plantings, seating, and amplification. The hardscape surface is in disrepair with many uneven stones, inhibiting users from actively using the space during the concert series that takes place in the summer.
- Identify locations in the South River for future water landings to accommodate tour boats, water taxis, and/or other motorized craft. Potential locations include Genesee Gateway Park, Genesee Waterways Center, University of Rochester, Genesee Valley Park East, and at or near the Vacuum Oil site in PLEX. As well, identify additional locations for personal watercraft (canoe/kayak) launches with adjacent parking/access accommodations and potential rental facilities.



PORT OF ROCHESTER MARINA IN CHARLOTTE



- Identify a location to establish a full service marina in the South River, building upon the success of the City's new marina at the Port of Rochester. Enlivening the South River with additional boating activity is a significant challenge, as the nearest boat launch for motorized craft is where Black Creek meets the Genesee River, 5.8 miles south of Corn Hill Landing. Even still, most of the limited boat traffic in the South River originates from the Erie Canal, whose marinas and boat launch facilities are even farther away. A new marina would provide more boating activity in this waterway that is technically part of the Erie Canal system. It would draw significantly more canal traffic north into Rochester, helping drive additional economic development in the area.
- Work closely with the Rochester Fire Department (RFD), police department, and other emergency response agencies to bolster support in the corridor. With an anticipated increase in activity in and along the water, especially in the South River and High Falls areas, it will be critical to coordinate with these agencies on improving access points and emergency response strategies. In particular, RFD has noted the need for a boat launch for motorized craft in the South River corridor. They also identified the need for more than one vehicular access point to any public spaces developed below High Falls, as a single ingress/egress point is highly problematic for emergency response during large events. These agencies should be engaged early and often during the development of individual projects along the river.
- Partner with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO) to identify potential sites in the corridor for outdoor performances. Ideally, the site would have sufficient space for the full orchestra, a band shell structure, and large crowds. In addition, explore the possibility of hosting RPO performances on a river barge in the South River corridor, a popular event from years past.
- Continue to pursue funds for dredging in the South River corridor to further attract tour boats and motorized craft.
- Identify possible locations for food and retail-based businesses to operate in pop-up, temporary, or low-cost structures such as re-purposed shipping containers. The City has experience with these structures with recent installations at the Rochester Public Market. A cluster of these operations could enable local entrepreneurs to launch their product and brand with much lower cost and business risk than traditional storefront commercial spaces. It would also provide a unique attraction along the water that is unlike traditional downtown shopping/dining and features rotating vendors. Successful models include the Fatherland District in Nashville, the Old Port of Montreal, and the Boxyard in Tulsa. A Downtown/Riverfront Management Entity would be well-positioned to develop and manage this concept.



OLD PORT OF MONTREAL SHIPPING  
CONTAINER SHOPPING DISTRICT





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SECTION **5**

**IMPLEMENTATION**



# IMPLEMENTATION

ROC the Riverway is a joint initiative of New York State and the City of Rochester to articulate a vision for revitalizing Rochester's Genesee River waterfront. Projects recommended in this Vision Plan – whether they be Phase I priorities or additional opportunities identified – are not guaranteed funding. Rather, the projects in this document are being submitted to New York State for approval and inclusion within the \$50 million commitment made by Governor Andrew Cuomo. Upon that approval, each project must successfully complete the various application and design processes administered by the State or City, as appropriate for that project and its relevant funding programs.

## UPSTATE REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE

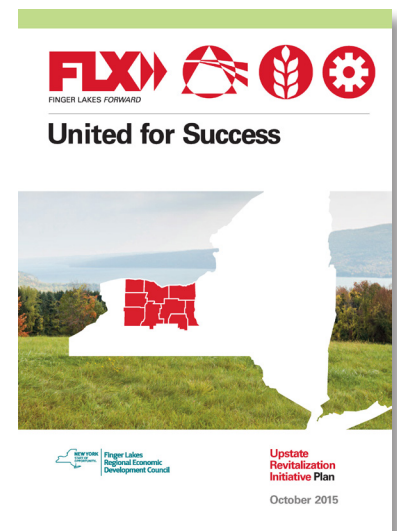
The \$50 million committed by Governor Cuomo from New York State towards Phase I of the ROC the Riverway will be funded from the Upstate Revitalization Initiative (URI). The URI is a State program that awarded the Finger Lakes region in 2015 for a total allocation of \$500 million over five years to implement the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council's (FLREDC) strategic plan, known as Finger Lakes Forward. URI funds are administered by the State's economic development agency, Empire State Development (ESD), with the FLREDC as the primary advisory body.

Part of the Finger Lakes Forward plan envisioned the reinvention of the core of Rochester as a Downtown Innovation Zone that would attract high-tech and creative class companies, and especially the younger workers and residents that are attracted to those companies and a modern, urban lifestyle. ROC the Riverway embodies a key aspect of the strategy to reimagine downtown Rochester – that placemaking matters greatly and activating waterways is essential to establishing a sense of place to facilitate vibrancy and growth.

Once a recommended project is approved by New York State, the appropriate sponsor organization for that project will be invited to submit a URI application to the FLREDC and ESD using the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) online portal. From there, each project application will be reviewed by the FLREDC and recommended to ESD for final review and approval. The amounts and terms of any URI incentive funding will be negotiated directly between the applicant and ESD before a written offer is made and the project can move forward.

In some situations, projects may be eligible for other State funding programs, including but not limited to the Department of State Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) or the many programs within the annual REDC/CFA process. In each case, ESD will work with partner state agencies to determine the most appropriate source(s) of funding.

All questions on this process can be directed to the ESD Finger Lakes Regional Office at 585-399-7050 or [NYS-FingerLakes@esd.ny.gov](mailto:NYS-FingerLakes@esd.ny.gov).





## Overview of City of Rochester's Project Development Process

Completion of a project requires a multi-phase process of project development. The first phase of the project is known as the **Conceptual Design Phase**, sometimes referred to as **Preliminary Design Phase**. It typically includes project scoping – intergovernmental agreements, consultant procurement and contracting, and project accounting, as well as establishing the overall scope of the project. It also includes a number of studies and analyses, including environmental assessments, surveys, geotechnical studies, traffic studies, etc., resulting in a conceptual design or series of concept alternatives. The local community and key stakeholders work with the City and design consultant to develop these concepts. The Conceptual Design / Preliminary Design Phase typically has a duration of one to two years.

Upon completion of Conceptual Design, the project enters the **Detailed Design Phase**, also known as the **Final Design Phase**. This is where final design plans are developed to the point of construction documents and all environmental, engineering, real estate, and other requirements are completed. The Detailed Design phase generally takes six months to two years and includes additional community engagement to refine the project. Detailed Design is complete when the project's Plans, Specifications, & Estimates (PS&E) are accepted.

After PS&E, the project proceeds to **Bid & Award**, which involves the advertising of the construction contract and the selection of a qualified contractor. The Bid & Award phase generally has a three-month duration. Once the project has been awarded to the successful contractor, and all contracts are executed, the project may proceed to **Construction**. As a general rule of thumb, all of the phases that lead up to construction amount to 20% or more of construction costs. In summary, although it ranges widely depending on the size and complexity of a project, the project development process generally takes around 2 to 3 years prior to construction. Some large projects, like the Inner Loop East or Midtown Rising projects, can take longer.





## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with the community has been an integral component to develop this ROC the Riverway Vision Plan. It will continue to be an integral part over the many years of implementation. As each individual project advances through the application and development processes described above, there will be multiple opportunities for public comment and engagement. It is the goal of the ROC the Riverway Advisory Board to develop on-going engagement with all stakeholders in our community that care about our city and our riverfront. While much of that engagement will be coordinated by the City of Rochester as the sponsor of many of the recommended projects, it is also an important charge for the Downtown/Riverfront Management Entity to be created and responsible for bringing these enhanced public spaces to life.







**APPENDIX  
A**

**PROJECTS LISTED IN LWRP AND  
OTHER PREVIOUS PLANS AND STUDIES**



**Projects Listed in LWRP and Other Previous Plans & Studies**

Map #	RTR Project Name	Cost Estimate (in millions)	LWRP Project #	Vacuum Oil Brownfield Opportunity Area ('17)	High Falls Pedestrian Access Improvement Study ('17)	GTC Long Range Transportation Plan ('16)
1	Recharging the Trail	\$5	41			
2	Restore the Shore	\$15	48	X		
3	Water Landings	\$3	44, 50			
4	Genesee Gateway	\$3	45			
5	Link to the River	\$8	44			
6	Bridge the Genesee	\$16	40			
7	Riverside Development	\$8	38			
8	Arena on the River	\$37	37			X
9	Aqueduct Re-imagined	\$35	32			
10	Library North Terrace	\$8	36			
11	Childs Basin	\$5	31			
12	ROC Convention Expansion	\$125	35			X
13	Riverway Broad to Main	\$10	33			X
14	Main Street Resurgence	\$9	28, 29			
15	Riverway Main to Andrews	\$5	33			X
16	Charles Carroll Plaza	\$25	26			X
17	Riverfront Reborn	\$10	25			X
18	Mill Street Connection	\$3	33		X	X
19	Bridge the Loop	\$16	33		X	X
20	Welcome Connection	\$40	33		X	X
21	Over the Falls Bridge	\$28	24		X	
22	Preserving Pont de Rennes	\$9	23			
23	Tree Top Trail	\$8	22		X	X
24	Bee Bee Flats	\$17	20		X	X
25	Connect the Gorge	\$7	20		X	
26	High Falls Adventure	\$30	20			X
27	Running Track Bridge	\$5	19		X	X
28	Downtown/Riverfront Management Entity	\$10	30			

Projects specifically listed in LWRP	\$441	88% of total
Projects potentially resulting from LWRP follow-on studies	\$59	12% of total

**TOTAL \$500**

Note: LWRP Project #27 - Downtown Waterfront Programing - includes elements covered by various ROC the Riverway projects

The City of Rochester is committed to long-range planning, with a robust community engagement element, dedicated to the city's ongoing revitalization. The table above illustrates the numerous plans and studies that relate to the original 28 projects proposed for the ROC the Riverway initiative. Collectively, these projects reflect a substantial amount of community engagement and input that has led to the recommendations of this Vision Plan. Altogether, the 28 projects have been examined and/or recommended more than 100 times in past plans and studies. In addition, as each project advances, it will include an additional level of outreach to residents and stakeholders to refine the objectives and design details.

**Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan ('17)** – The LWRP is the official statement of land use and development policy for the city's waterfront areas. The plan identifies waterfront policies and recommendations that will serve as a guide for future development and infrastructure improvements and will help leverage potential funding opportunities.

**Vacuum Oil Brownfield Opportunity Area ('17)** – As part of NYS Department of State's Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Program, this project involves detailed planning, predevelopment studies, and an implementation plan for 148 acres of land along the Genesee River. The plan includes an analysis of existing conditions, a vision for redevelopment of contaminated sites, and conceptual designs.

**High Falls Pedestrian Access Improvement Study ('17)** – This study was designed to outline potential public access improvements into and through the High Falls District and Genesee River Gorge, in order to improve accessibility in the area. This includes evaluating the GardenAerial concept, evaluating options to improve access between High Falls and downtown, and evaluating options for gorge access.

**Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) Long Range Transportation Plan ('16)** – The L RTP for the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region 2035 sets the direction for transportation infrastructure and services over the next nearly 25 years and provides the framework for future federally-funded planning and investments.

**Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) Regional Trails Initiative ('16)** – The RTI addresses the system of multi-use trails in the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region, identifying trail gaps and new trail opportunities as well as prioritizing their implementation.

**Rose Fellowship ('15)** – Through the fellowship, City staff collaborated with and traveled to cities across the country to study urban development challenges. A panel of experts in urban design, economic development, and city planning visited Rochester and advised the community on strategies to activate Main Street, the Genesee Riverfront, and the Broad Street Aqueduct.



OTHER PREVIOUS PLANS & STUDIES							
Rose Fellowship ('15)	Center City Master Plan ('15)	LYLAKS Brownfield Opportunity Area ('15)	Historic Erie Canal Aqueduct & Broad Street Corridor Master Plan ('09)	Downtown Rochester Vision Plan ('08)	GRT Feasibility Study - Downtown to Lower Falls Park ('06)	Center City Master Plan ('03)	Rochester 2010 - The Renaissance Plan ('99)
	X					X	
							X
							X
				X			X
	X		X			X	
	X		X				
X	X		X	X		X	
			X	X			
						X	
X	X						
X	X			X	X		
X	X			X		X	X
X							X
	X			X		X	
	X						X
	X						
		X					X
		X					
X	X			X			X

**Center City Master Plan ('15)** – The CCMP is a strategic plan that identifies policies and priorities for furthering the resurgence of Downtown Rochester. Recommended City actions address streets, parks, trails, and developable land. Several regulatory, planning, and policy changes are also put forth, all aimed at fulfilling the fundamental vision for lively streets.

**LYLAKS Brownfield Opportunity Area ('15)** – The LYLAKS Revitalization Strategy was prepared with funds provided through the State's Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program. The study seeks to establish a vision for a transforming area of the City and to identify a strategy for implementing a series of projects and programs that will result in improved business opportunities and an enhanced visitor experience and quality of life.

**Historic Erie Canal Aqueduct & Broad Street Corridor Master Plan ('09)** – This plan explores the feasibility of the concept of "re-watering the canal" downtown along Broad Street. Based on extensive community engagement, it outlines a vision for the future of the district through rediscovering its past and its essence: the Genesee River and the Erie Canal.

**Downtown Rochester Vision Plan ('08)** – This document, created by the Community Design Center of Rochester, is based on the 2007 Downtown Charrette. It documents the recommendations from the charrette along with accompanying drawings intended to serve as a basis for strategic planning and a coordinated approach to development in the downtown.

**GRT Feasibility Study - Downtown to Lower Falls Park ('06)** – The study presents a short-term recommended multi-use trail alignment that will connect to existing portions of the Genesee Riverway Trail to the north and the south. It also illustrates long-term options that will enhance the riverfront connectivity for the portions of the trail that are not directly on the riverfront.

**Center City Master Plan ('03)** – This plan is the previous version of the 2015 plan listed above.

**Rochester 2010 - The Renaissance Plan ('99)** – Through Rochester's most recently completed comprehensive plan, a variety of topics were explored to identify goals, policies, and strategies that make up a blueprint for the community's growth and improvement. The plan will be replaced in 2019 by the next comprehensive plan, Rochester 2034.





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APPENDIX **B**

**KEY THEMES FROM COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS**



In addition to three public input sessions, the Advisory Board held four roundtable meetings targeted to specific stakeholders in the community including: neighborhood and community leaders; students and young professionals; business leaders and developers; and elected officials and Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council members. These meetings were designed to present the ROC the Riverway initiative and to help better understand the priorities of these key groups. Board members and City and State staff also attended neighborhood association events and hosted meetings with a variety of parties interested in ROC the Riverway. In addition to these meetings, there were hundreds of comments and ideas submitted online through the project website.

The public capitalized on these feedback opportunities by identifying improvements they would like to see on the riverfront, expressing any concerns, and noting values that should guide decision making. For example, students spoke of the amenities they would like to see in their college communities, particularly more festivals and events they could walk or bike to. Business leaders would like the City to activate more parks and expand existing resources like the Convention Center and Blue Cross Arena to drive more business downtown. Overall comments are summarized below based on various categories for improvement.

## RIVERWAY CONNECTIVITY

**Bicycle/pedestrian linkages to, from, along, and across the river that connect neighborhoods, parks, and destinations with clear paths and wayfinding signage.**

Overall, the public considered connectivity between neighborhoods, especially along the riverfront, very important. There was a desire for connectivity specifically for bicyclists from Charlotte to the South River and from the riverfront to the South Wedge and University of Rochester. There were likewise many comments about improving the linkages from downtown to High Falls. There is strong support for having the El Camino Trail connect to the Running Track Bridge and surrounding neighborhoods, as well as structural and public space improvements to the Pont de Rennes Bridge.





## RECREATION & HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

**Walking, biking, jogging, boating, skateboarding, adventure sports, etc.**

Many stakeholders liked the idea of the tree top trail, zipline and/or climbing wall, but some worried about the potential liability. There were also many requests for a Skate Park under the east side of the Frederick Douglass-Susan B. Anthony Bridge, as well as more kayaking and canoeing opportunities in the South River area. Many would like to see a direct, walkable, bikeable and safe path between the Inner Loop and the railroad tracks between downtown and northern parts of the city.



## A BOOST FOR DOWNTOWN & THE REGION

**Tourism, convention business, vibrancy, safety, and overall identity.**

An often-present suggestion was to redevelop Charles Carroll Park as a more usable public space. In recent years, Charles Carroll has not been actively used as a park, and the community would like the City to update the park or repurpose it for other uses. Specifically, many suggested an amphitheater and/or concert venue along the riverfront. Others were interested in expanding retail and dining opportunities on the river. Specifically noted was that the Blue Cross Arena is a crucial asset that could see more improvement, including riverfront dining options.





## PROGRAMMING & PUBLIC SPACE MANAGEMENT

### **Events, marketing, public art, play spaces and programming, historic interpretation, clean and green efforts, tours, 4-season programming, etc.**

There was overall support for arts, visitor, wildlife and education centers; many were interested in providing students of all ages with a hands-on way to learn about the river and Rochester's history. This could be in the form of an interpretive center and/or an educational facility. Many in the community want to see more public art, which could include light shows and projections at High Falls and the Aqueduct. Others would like to use the existing space at Corn Hill Landing for concerts and other outdoor activities. A performing arts venue or other use at the current Vacuum Oil site was identified as a possibility. With these suggestions, the community saw the need for additional public restroom facilities for event participants, trail users and boaters, especially in the South River and High Falls.

There was strong support throughout the public sessions for some kind of management entity to facilitate these kinds of activities and provide maintenance throughout the riverfront corridor. This maintenance could also include basic operations like snow removal along the river and tree/bush trimming. Some stakeholders specifically asked for the creation of an advisory board for the management entity that includes representation from the community, including environmental groups.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### **Stabilized/sustainable bridges, walls, trails, parks, lighting (safety & aesthetic), bike/boat rentals, restrooms, signage, water features, outdoor furniture, 4-season design, etc.**

There was tremendous community interest in a variety of different infrastructure improvements along the water. Overall, comments included the desire for:

- more overall walkability along the river;
- more car and bike sharing;
- increased separation between car and bike/walking traffic; and
- working more with the Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RTS) to leverage public transportation resources.

There were also many ideas explored for re-use of the former aqueduct / subway tunnel. While some advocated for converting the existing structure to an underground public facility, there was strong support for removing the Broad Street deck in the interest of an open air public space and enabling the full connectivity of the Genesee Riverway Trail.

There was also support for ensuring the project represented a 21<sup>st</sup> Century vision through sustainable energy practices and technology connectivity.



## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Participants expressed the desire for the ROC the Riverway initiative and subsequent plans to be highly inclusive. For example, designs and processes should always be mindful of persons with disabilities, people not typically represented at public forums, and people for whom English is a second language. There were also many requests to include affordable housing and services and job opportunities for lower income residents and to ensure that the City's work relating to poverty reduction is incorporated into riverfront investments.



## ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

**Ecological resiliency, water quality strategies, intentional landscaping/plantings, etc.**

Many environmental groups expressed concerns about the impact that construction and activity will have on wildlife in the gorge. Likewise, brownfield remediation and a clean river are important to the community, as some suggested that the plan reflect the City's Climate Action Plan. There was strong support for educational programs that highlight the importance of the river's health to students of all ages.





## IMAGE CREDITS

- III-55: Labella Associates and Bayer Associates
- III-61: T.Y. Lin International Group and OLIN (top left and center renderings)
- III-65: Stantec
- III-67: Stantec
- III-73: Keith Crawford Architects
- IV-84: Stantec
- All other photosimulations and renderings: Bergmann







