

## Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River



Prepared by

Groundwork Milwaukee

National Park Service Rivers & Trails Program

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# Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River

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*The trailhead design process was funded in part by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources River Protection Planning Grant and We Energies through the Wisconsin Energy Corporation Foundation.*

# **Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River**

## **The Kinnickinnic River Trail**

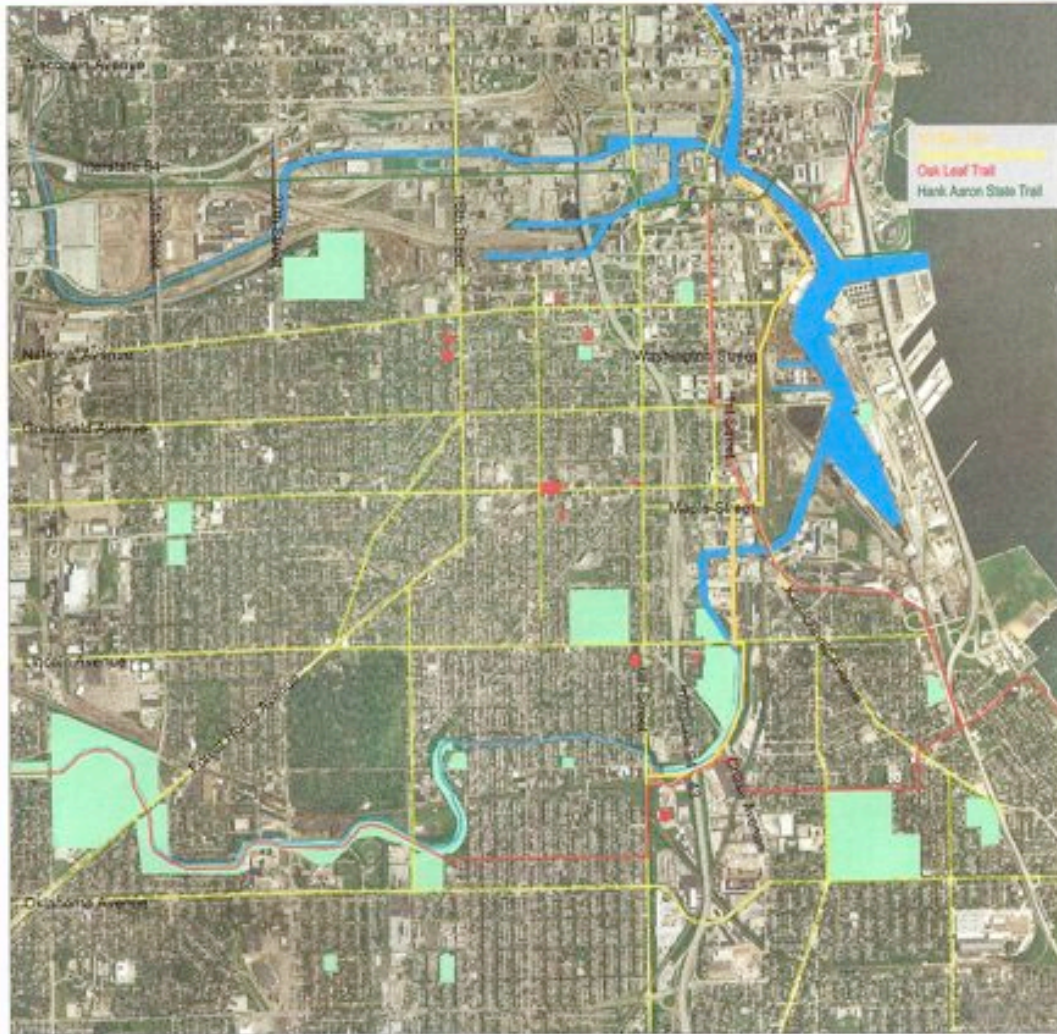
The Kinnickinnic River Trail (KKRT) in 2010 will be an off-road connector for most of its length between the Historic Third Ward, Bay View, and Lincoln Village. It will link primary bicycle commuter routes from the south shore into downtown Milwaukee. From a little-known purchase by the City of an abandoned railroad right-of-way to a valuable asset much anticipated by the public, the concept of the KKRT has blossomed and rallied a constituency eager for construction and enhancement.

The KKRT had its origins in 1999 when the City of Milwaukee applied for and received Federal Highway Congestion, Mitigation, and Air Quality funds and purchased the abandoned railroad right-of-way. In 2006, the Sixteenth Community Health Center, National Park Service's Rivers and Trails Program, and Groundwork Milwaukee collaborated with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and the City to hold well-attended design charrettes. A report describes the outcomes from the charrette, including visions for neighborhood connections, green space preservation, artwork and other trailside amenities. In 2008, Groundwork Milwaukee and NPS's Rivers and Trails Program spearheaded planning for a series of focused workshops that were held in early to mid-2009. These workshops were targeted specifically at gaining public opinion regarding concept plan development, followed by construction plans and estimates, for each of the trailheads at Kinnickinnic Avenue and Maple Street, First Street and Lincoln Avenue, and Sixth Street and Rosedale Avenue.

The enthusiasm for this trail is palpable from comments (see end of report) made at these last series of workshops and from continual queries regarding construction status. Nationwide and in midwestern cities such as Madison and the Twin Cities, the public has embraced networks of off-road urban trails because they enhance safety, local economies, the public health, and general quality of life. While Milwaukee's Oak Leaf Trail provides some off-road trails in a loop around our the City and the Hank Aaron provides an east-west corridor through the Menomonee Valley, the City of Milwaukee lacks the same off-road connections between downtown and points south. The proposed trailhead enhancements that follow in this report will, once installed, build excitement and attract a public eager to use the KKRT.

# Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River

## IMPORTANT COMMUNITY PLACES



Regional Map

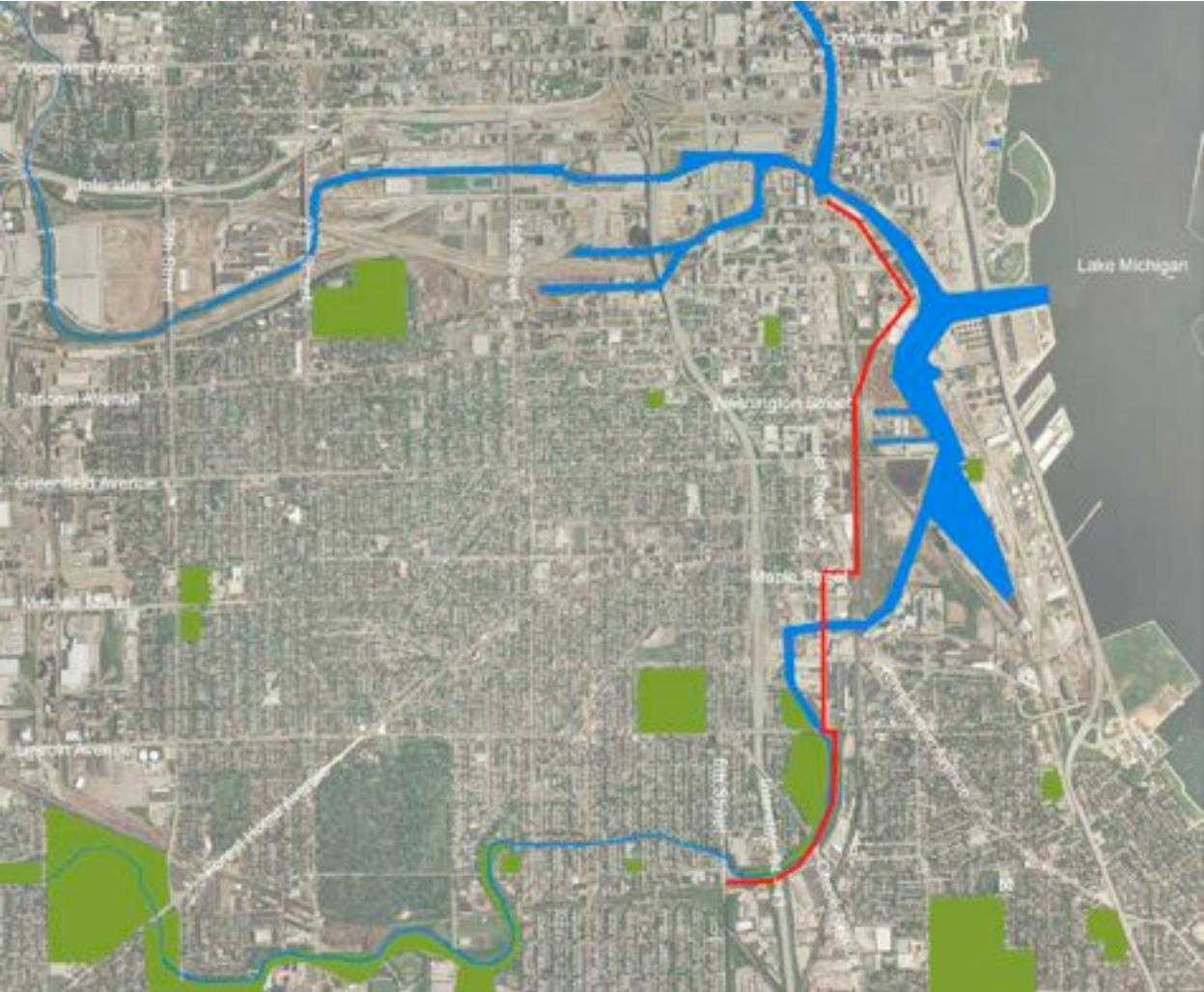
## KK River Trail

### Regional Context

The 2.25-mile trail, which lies adjacent to an active railroad and then the Kinnickinnic River, will connect the Fifth Ward with communities such as Bay View and Lincoln Village. The trail head amenities will serve multiple purposes including making the trail more visible from the street to help increase awareness about its existence, increase interest in and use of the trail, and help interpret the area's resources.

# Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River

## Trail Corridor



## Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River

### BIKE TRAIL CORRIDOR

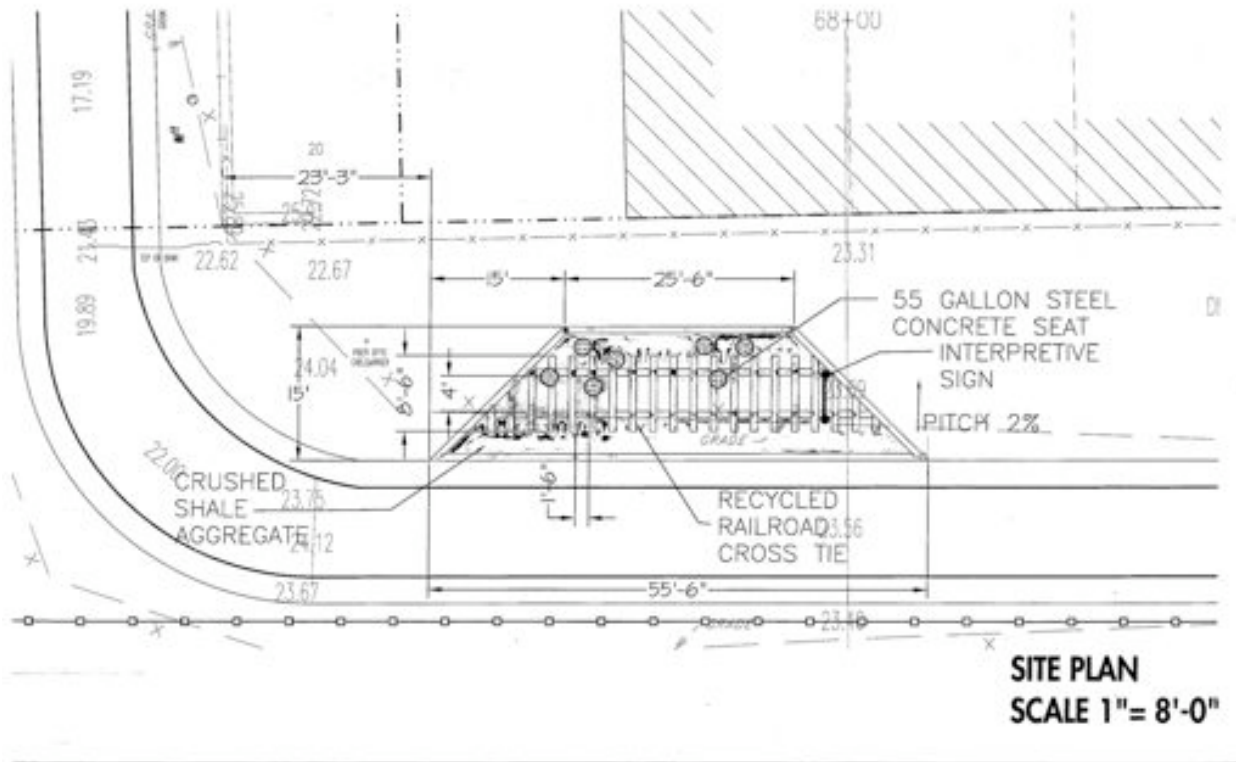


### Maple Street Trailhead

The northern part of this section of trail travels on the elevated rail corridor next to an active Amtrak line. The elevation provides sweeping views of downtown, the KK River and the open port landscape.

At Maple Street, the trail transitions down to street level where it crosses a busy Kinnickinnic Avenue. After crossing KK Avenue on Maple St, the trail turns south onto First Street and continues south along this busy street.

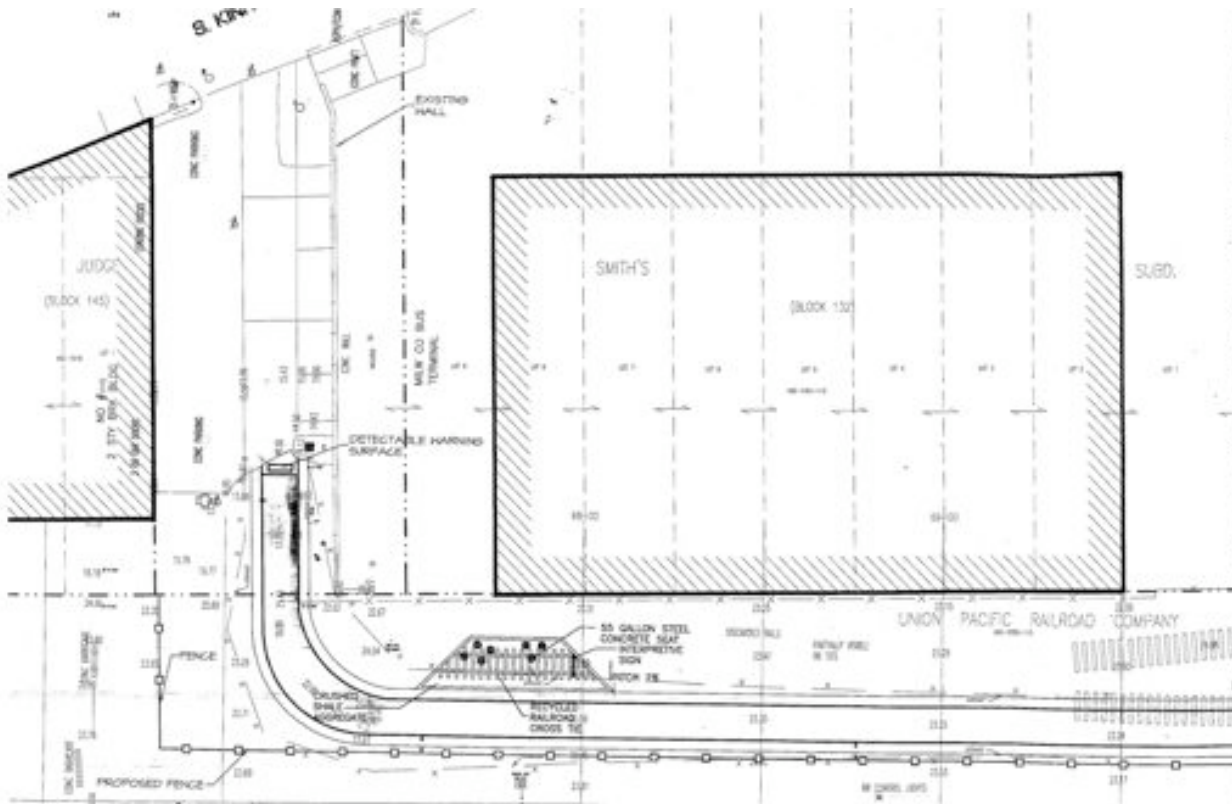
## Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River



### Kinnickinnic and Maple Trail Head Concept Design

The proposal for the trailhead at S. KK Ave and E. Maple St. is inspired by the railroad the trail will run along as well as the industrial heritage and shipping of the area. Materials include recycled railroad cross ties for a platform, with concrete seats formed in 55 gallon steel drums. A small prairie restoration with swamp oaks would provide a natural respite within a very industrialized area.

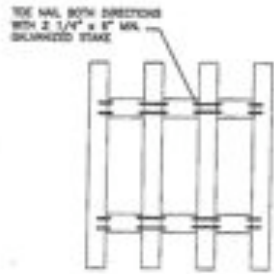
# Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River



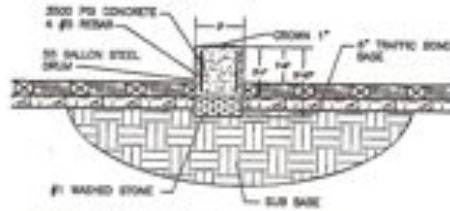
## Maple Street Location Plan

Located to the east of Kinnickinnic Avenue, the seating will face east toward the nearby harbor and offer excellent views of downtown Milwaukee

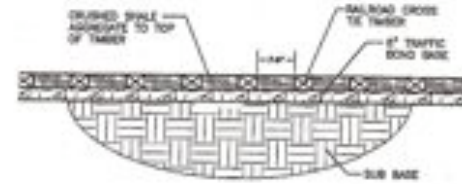
# Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River



**CROSS TIE TOE NAIL DETAIL**  
SCALE 1"= 4'-0"

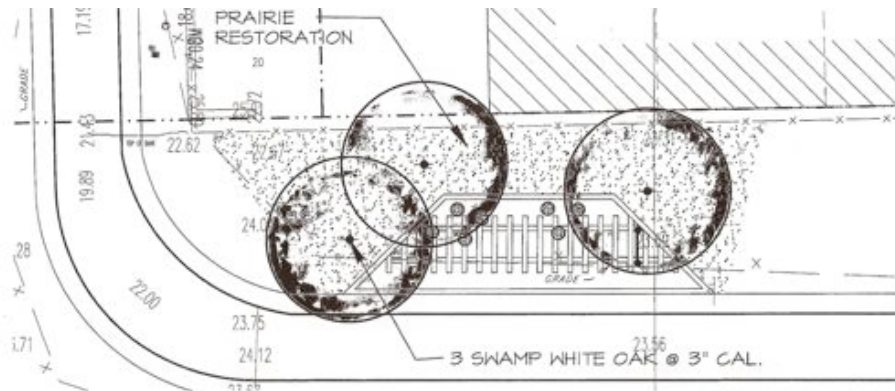


**CONCRETE SEAT DETAIL**  
SCALE 1"= 4'-0"



**TIMBER SECTION DETAIL**  
SCALE 1"= 4'-0"

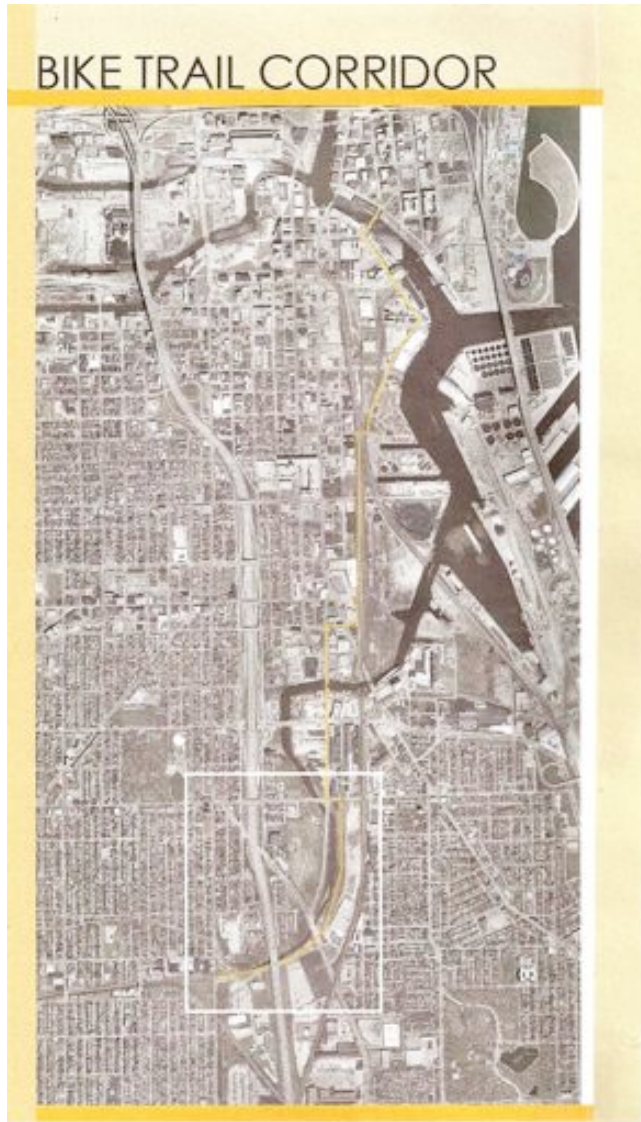
**Details of Maple Street Trailhead amenities** (above)



**PLANTING PLAN**  
SCALE 1"= 10'-0"

**Maple Street Planting Plan** (at left)

## Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River



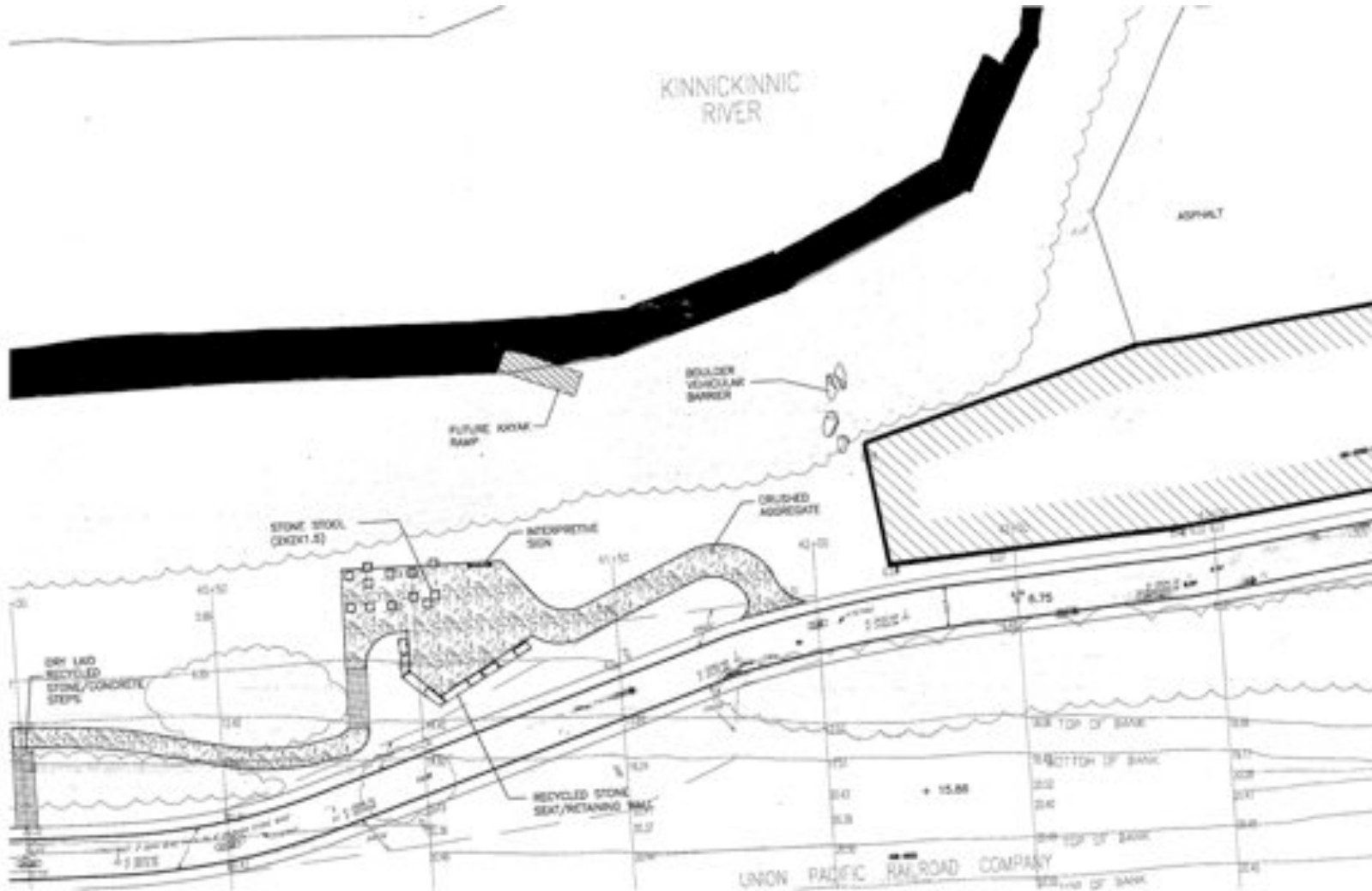
### Lincoln Street Trailhead

Traveling south along First Street into this area, the trail reaches Lincoln Avenue, a busy cross street that connects Bay View and Lincoln Village. To the west is Baran Park.

The trail turns east onto Lincoln Avenue and then south and transitions onto an elevated abandoned rail corridor.

Moving south the trail passes through a naturalized river corridor, and the experience is of being separated from the urban environment.

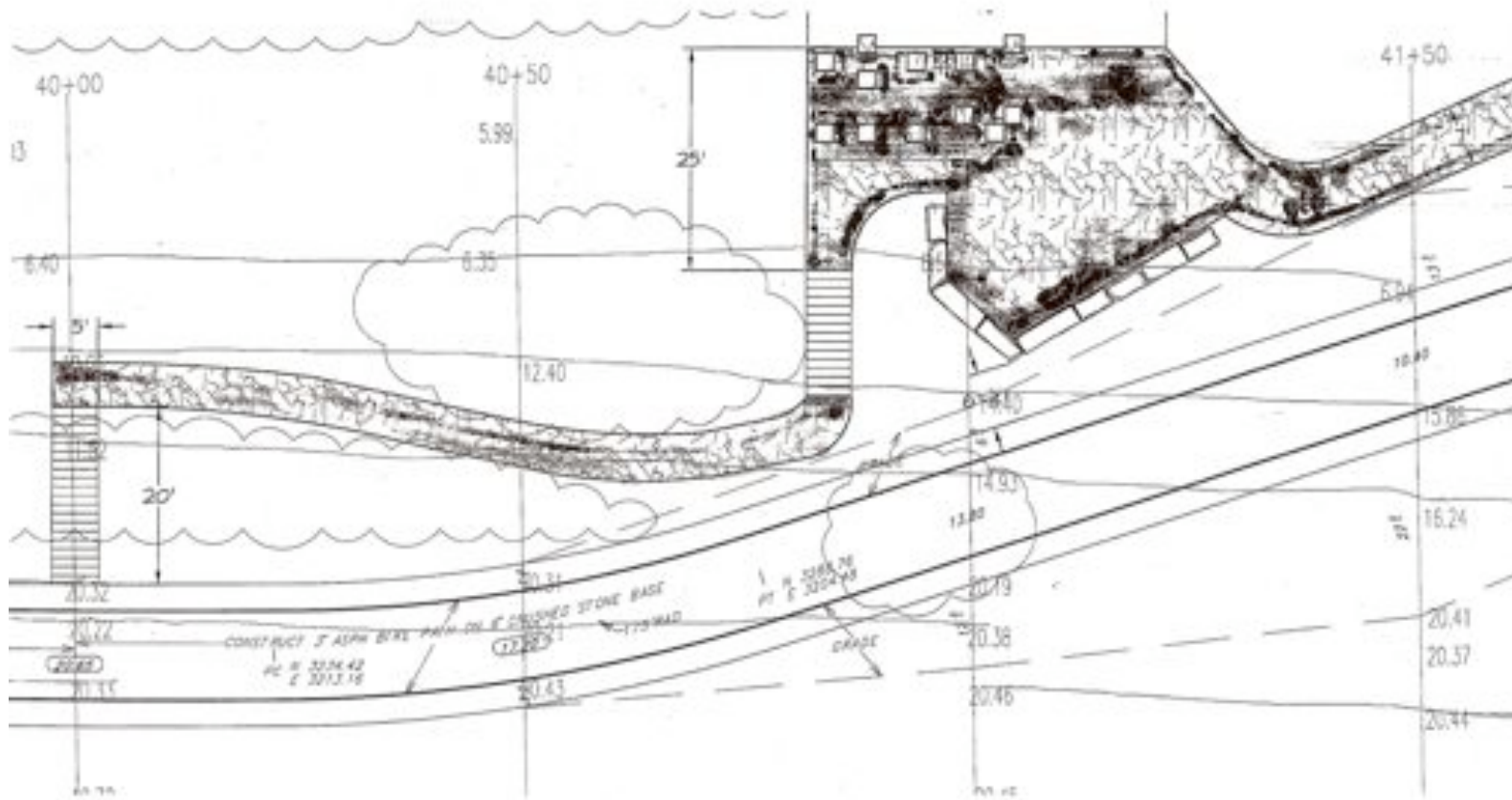
## Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River



### Lincoln Avenue Trailhead Location Plan

The KK River Tail Head at S. First St. and E. Lincoln Avenue provides the easiest access to its namesake river, and will include a larger gathering space for bringing students to the river for environmental education opportunities.

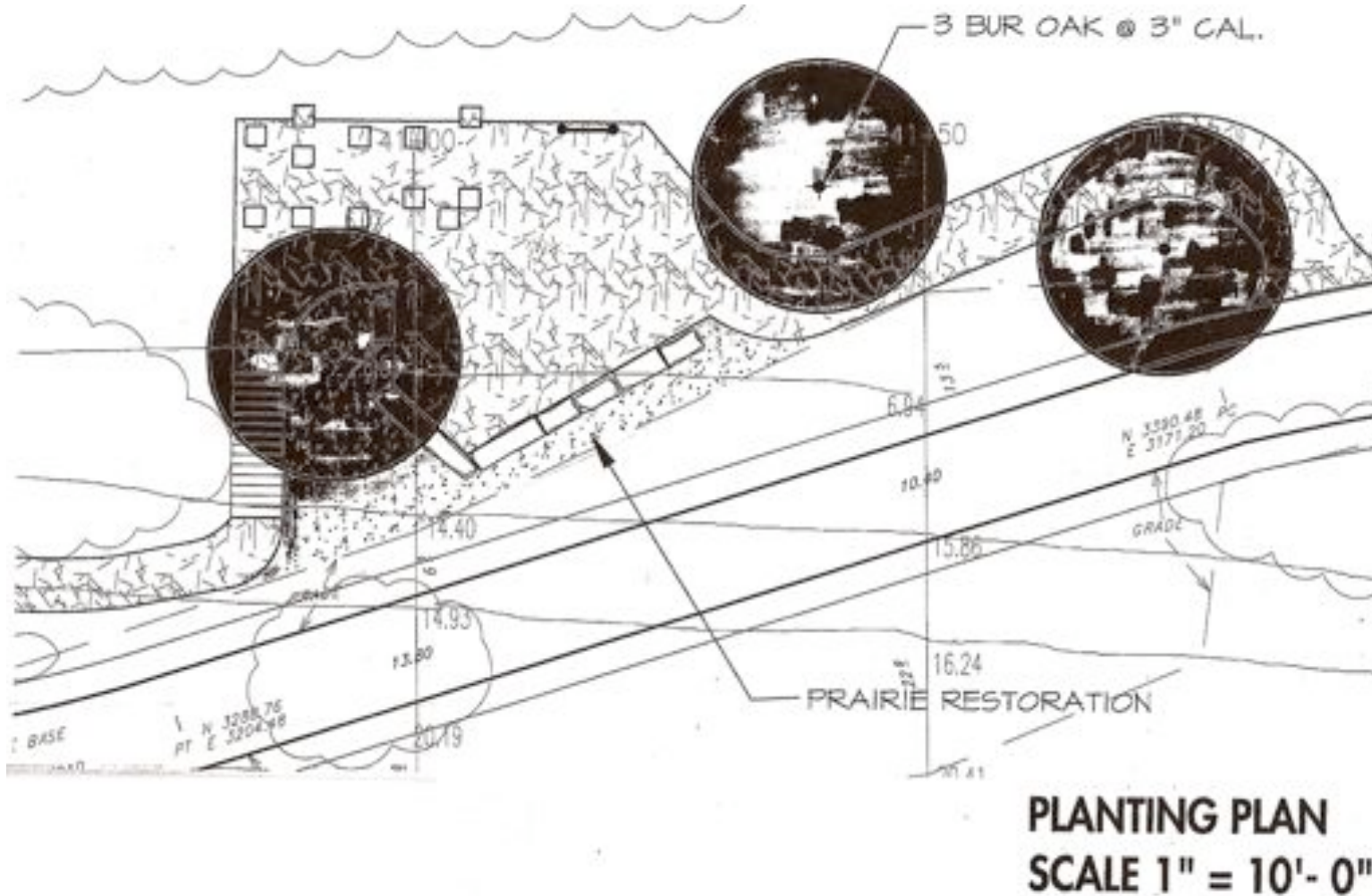
## Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River



### Lincoln Avenue Trailhead Site Plan

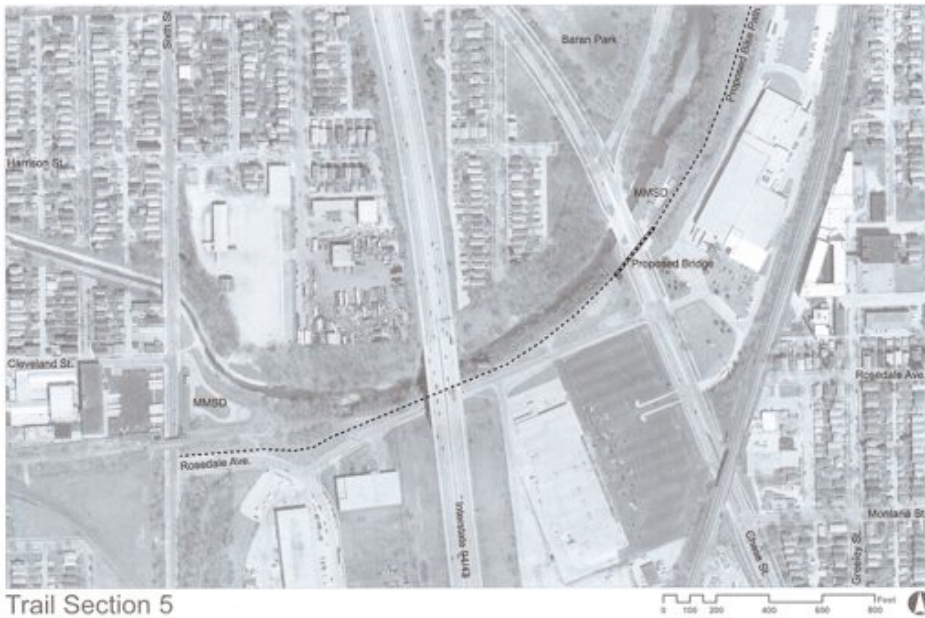
Recycled stone and concrete would be used for a larger circle of seats that would accommodate groups and also serve as a retaining wall for the ramp connecting to an elevated portion of the trail. Recycled stone and concrete would be used to build stairs in an area where a "desire" trail has created erosion on a steep bank. These plans also call for a kayak ramp in close proximity to the gathering space.

## Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River



Lincoln Avenue Trail Head Planting Plan

## Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River



### River Bend and Rosedale Trailhead

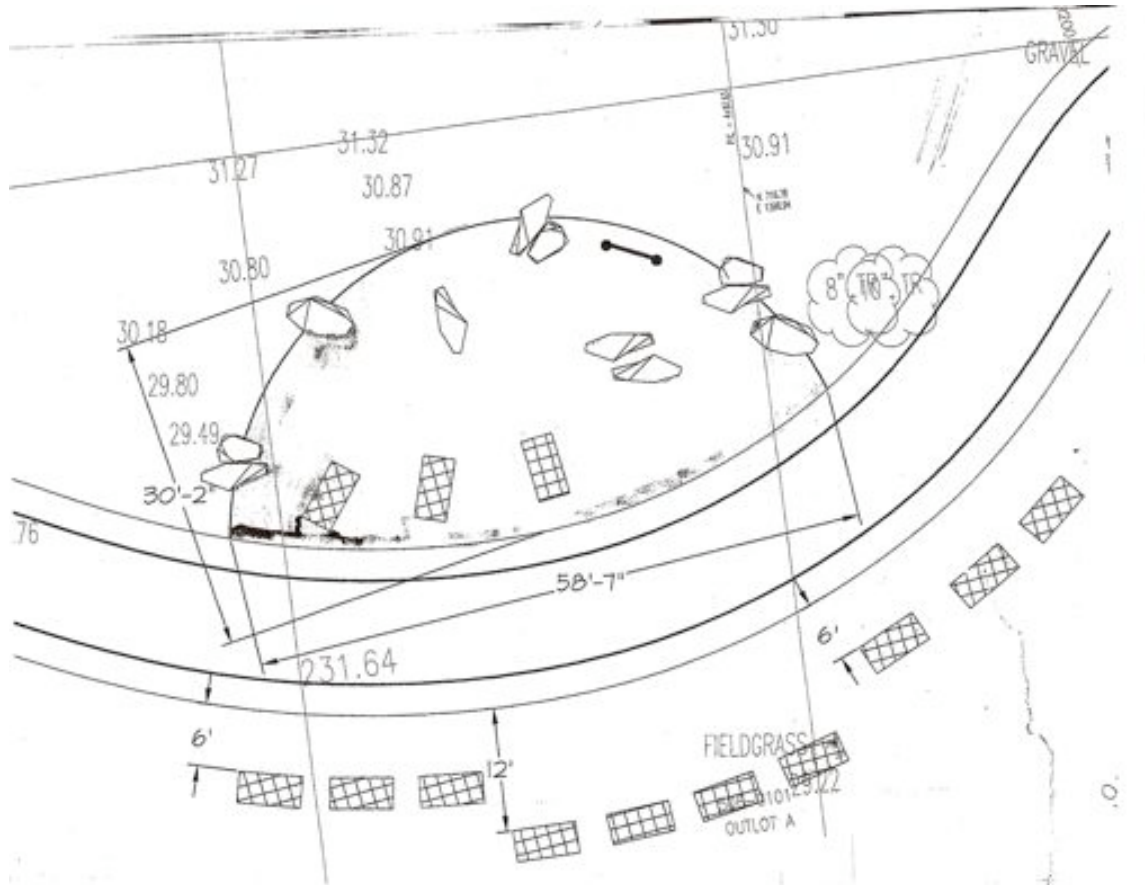
This section of the trail will cross Chase St on a new bridge. The trail bends to the west of Chase Avenue and the greenway narrows with the KK River directly to the north.

Passing under the freeway, the trail comes to an end along side an MMSD deep tunnel station at Sixth Street.

The new Sixth Street Bridge, which will be constructed in 2010, will include a concrete “bench” paralleling the river under the bridge. The bench will be wide enough to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians, and provide a safe crossing of S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street. It will link the 2.25 mile section the City is building this year to a proposed extension west of S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street that will be available once the river is restored after the River’s concrete channel is removed.



## Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River



### Rosedale and S. Sixth St Trail Head Concept Design

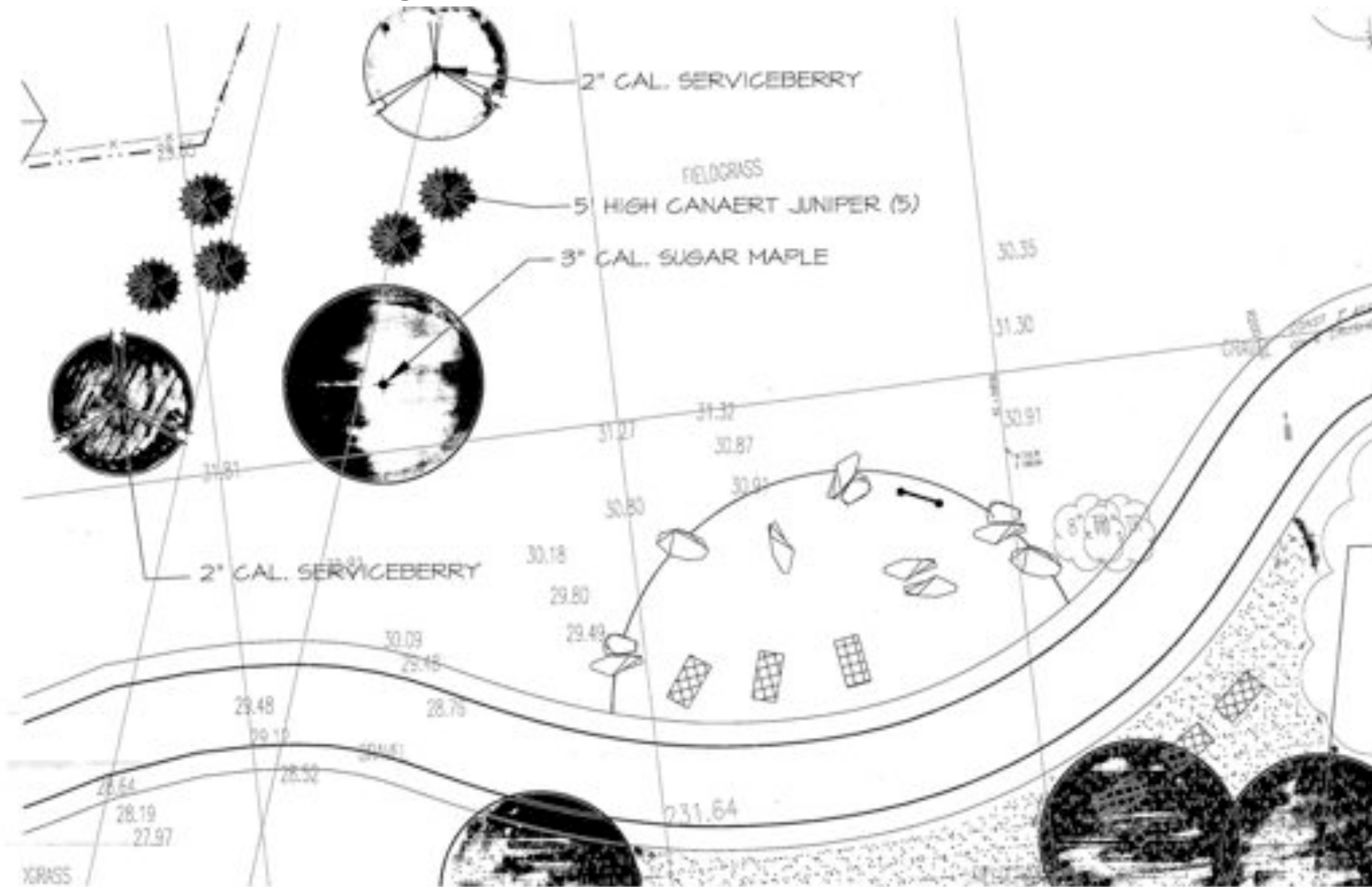
The concept for the W. Rosedale and S. Sixth St. trailhead draws on the restoration work that the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District will soon be undertake in the adjacent area of the KK River. Under a canopy of Bur Oaks, gabion baskets filled with indigenous rocks act as benches in a seating area—and serve as barriers to prevent cars from entering the area to dump refuse. Gabion baskets – which are similar to metal cages - are used almost exclusively for stream stabilization.

## Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River



An example of a bench with supports made of gabion baskets – similar to those used in the concept design for the Rosedale Trailhead.

## Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River



**Rosedale Trailhead Planting Plan**

# Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River



LOGO DETAIL  
SCALE 1" = 2'-0"

## Proposed Trail Logo

The proposed trail logo includes a schematized bicycle, along with a black schematic of the Kinnickinnic and Menomonee Rivers meeting in the Milwaukee Harbor with land represented in white.

# Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River

## Preliminary Cost Estimates

### Maple Street Trailhead

Recycled Railroad Timbers	\$ 1,500
Shale Aggregate	\$ 1,600
Crushed Stone Base	\$ 1,200
Steel concrete seats	\$ 1,200
Landscape	\$ 1,500
Interpretive signage	\$ 3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>

### Lincoln Street Trailhead

Crushed stone aggregate	\$ 3,300
Recycled stone wall	\$ 5,000
Stone benches / stools	\$ 2,000
Edging	\$ 2,000
Landscape	\$ 1,500
Interpretive signage	\$ 3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$16,800</b>

### Rosedale Street Trailhead

Crushed stone aggregate	\$ 2,600
Rock Outcroppings	\$ 4,400
Edging	\$ 600
Gabion Benches	\$ 5,700
Landscape	\$ 4,700
Interpretive signage	\$ 3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$21,000</b>

# Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River

## Public perceptions of the Kinnickinnic River gathered during KKRT Trailhead Design Process

- Working river- treated like a street to move stuff around
- Has a rich history
  - Used year-round (horse races in winter)
  - Turtling on the river provided food
  - Native Americans used and named the river
- “Ugly Duckling” of Milwaukee’s rivers
- Not good- especially in the water- water quality and trash
- Gateway into Bay View- underused potential
- “My river”
  - Beautiful valley that needs to be sustained
  - Deserves to become the jewel that it is
- People don’t know about it and, therefore, don’t take advantage of it
- No good access- cannot walk, bike, etc. along it to enjoy it
- Infinitely retrievable
- No presence- invisible river- never hear about it or see it
- Sordid history
- Hard to navigate by kayak/canoe
- Abused river
- Dangerous
- Full of shopping carts
- Not locally accessible
- A great opportunity for the community

### Hopes for the Kinnickinnic River

- A natural, yet accessible place to visit in my neighborhood
- An outdoor classroom space

# Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River

## KK River Trail Trailhead Designs – Open House – Public Comments

### Overall Comments

- Wonderful!!! Please make sure this trail is wheelchair accessible and meets code for slope, etc. Also please research surface materials for best access.
- Nice vision overall. Trailhead landscaping is creative and cost effective (recycled). Looking forward to making this grossly under-used/appreciated real estate. Any way to make 2<sup>nd</sup> St route more bike-friendly - would help unify route. Otherwise it may be perceived as two unfinished, unrelated paths. Thanks for putting the needed energy & vision into a much needed and long neglected project! -Brian
- Cheers to a great project!
- My husband and I often bike from South Milwaukee to the lakefront downtown and also many places on the south side. I am all for alternate (off-road) trails because the streets are too dangerous. We totally support these efforts. -Pam Uhrig
- Just one question. When can I have it? And give it to me now!!
- Wonderful idea. I was riding my bike down KK going North just past the intersection of Bay St and KK the morning the fireman was killed by the bulk cement carrier. The painted on (street) bike lanes only give the illusion of safety and obviously can be quite deadly. Just being in a bike lane can't compare with a dedicated trail. -Dave Uhrig, South Milwaukee
- Neighborhood sign markers – “Walkers Point,” “ Bay View,” “Lincoln Village,” etc – that treat the trail like a transit corridor (similar to way finding signs on the highway)

### Maple and KK Trailhead Comments

- Not sure this is the place for it but what about interactive, simple built elements for skateboarders on the trail?
- The trail section between Washington & Maple should have a branch that goes up from Water and Washington to the east side of the rail line to allow transit to move directly to the Great Lakes Water Institute. South of Maple St, a branch should extend south of standard roofing and down to KK avoiding the Maple/KK intersection. No fencing at Maple would allow riders to do so informally. Extension further south over the abandoned rail bridge would allow riders to avoid KK entirely as they travel to First Street. A public area overlooking the river would enhance trail amenities. -Greg Bird
- Bus conflict! Possible fixes:
  - Planting or pedestrian “island” at end of wall

## **Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River**

- Bus driver education to stop before entering street or slowing before entering garage lot (we witnessed a bus drive full speed from south of Maple through intersection and into lot without touching brakes)
- Stop lights and cyclist/pedestrian traffic controls similar to what is used in Europe (Amsterdam) – the Bike Fed of WI can provide examples.
- Love the recycling. Very creative - fits Bay View's attitude.

### **1<sup>st</sup> and Lincoln Trailhead Comments**

- Minimal plant removal south of Lincoln so that the riparian zone east of river is essential. Greg Bird

### **6<sup>th</sup> and Rosedale Trailhead Comments**

- I like the design with gabion benches and prairie plants.
- Incorporate seating on top of steepest section of 6<sup>th</sup> and Rosedale trailhead section to take advantage of view and uniqueness.

### **Logo Comments**

- Very blah looking. Too utilitarian. Needs some drama. My husband, Jim Toth, is an artist and I will ask him what he thinks. Personally, I feel it should have some nature (plants, birds, etc) Thank you! -Karen Johnson

### **Comments for City**

- Need to have a safe way to cross KK Ave safely – lights with pedestrian /bike walk button.
- Please consider multiple lanes for walkers and bikers safety.
- Will the trail be wide enough for multiple uses and will it be strong enough for vehicular traffic (emergency & police vehicles)?
- First St needs lots of work! Young St bridge area needs room for cyclists. S. Water St needs to be resurfaced and the RR crossings either need to be removed or upgraded.

## Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River

- Need bike / pedestrian activated stoplight to get across KK. Also, make the sidewalk on the east side of KK from Maple across (under) the bridge a south way bike access to take traffic to Bay View (turning left onto Bay St).
- Traffic light at 1<sup>st</sup> and Maple intersection would be necessary for encouraging access. Could be metered (flashing yellow) until crosswalk is activated. There is poor visibility to cross without stopping traffic due to high traffic counts, railroad tracks to the south, and existing build out.
- Asphalt paving of bike lanes independent of road way paving. S 1<sup>st</sup> St and Lincoln Ave are of poor road quality. Can bike lanes be paved in advance of the street re-paving schedule?
- S 1<sup>st</sup> St at KK River needs to be repaved- extremely rough.
- Please build this soon! S 1<sup>st</sup> St is difficult to bike on. (Bad road, high traffic, just plain ugly!)
- Please make sure someone at City/DOT does a “gap” analysis at KK and 1<sup>st</sup> St to get a traffic count. This intersection is extremely difficult to get across. Need a traffic light of some sort DESPERATELY.
- Please repave Bay Street!
- An alternative/additional trail may be considered for the east edge of Baran Park going up the bluff to good overlook –looks at the top, then crossing Chase such that the trail runs along eroding bluff north of river between Chase and 6<sup>th</sup> St so that trail more directly connects with improvements along KK River between 6<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> St. –  
Greg Bird

## **Building Connections to the Kinnickinnic River**

Thank you to our Workshop and Open House participants:

Mary Kay Bahrke  
Greg Bird  
Ruth Boulet  
Jessica Brumm  
Todd Burton  
Barbara Chudnow  
John Donat  
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Patrick Elliott  
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Dave Hoffman  
Karen Johnson  
Dana Jones  
Chris Krochalk  
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Bill Little  
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Connie Manke  
Christa Marlowe  
Dan McAuliffe

Evan McDoniels  
Mary McQuiggin  
Mary Osmundsen  
Courtney Reijo  
Pamela Rice  
Jack Russert  
Dave Schlabowske  
Dawn Schmidt  
Harold Schmidt  
Peter Schwartz  
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