Riverside Park & Environs
The Role of Riverside Park in New London's Future

An exploratory study performed by UConn's Community Research and Design Collaborative
August 4, 2010

CRDC Led by UConn Associate Professor Peter Miniutti
Team: Research Assistant Caroline Carvajal
Graduate Assistant Cynthia Reynolds, Undergraduate Student Allen Reinheart
Please contact Peter with any suggestions or comments regarding this study.
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Riverside Park & Environs

Sustainability, Connections and Riverside Park

"We use a Cartesian mindset and Newtonian scientific method to focus on pieces as we try to understand complexities…

By focusing on the piece, we make it more difficult to understand and apply ecological interrelatedness to the management and design of systems".

John L. Motlock commenting on the lack of holistic thinking and multi-disciplinary approaches to urban design.

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Sustainability, Connections and Riverside Park

Ecology is generally defined as the study of the interactions among organisms and their environment.

Richard T. T. Forman

from, "Landscape Ecology Principles in Landscape Architecture and Land-Use Planning

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Sustainability, Connections and Riverside Park

Ecosystem connectivity and **circuitry** indicates how simple or complex a network is, and provides an overall index of the effectiveness of linkages for species movement.

Generally, the higher degree of connectivity and circuitry, the healthier the ecosystem.

Richard T. T. Forman

from, "Landscape Ecology Principles in Landscape Architecture and Land-Use Planning

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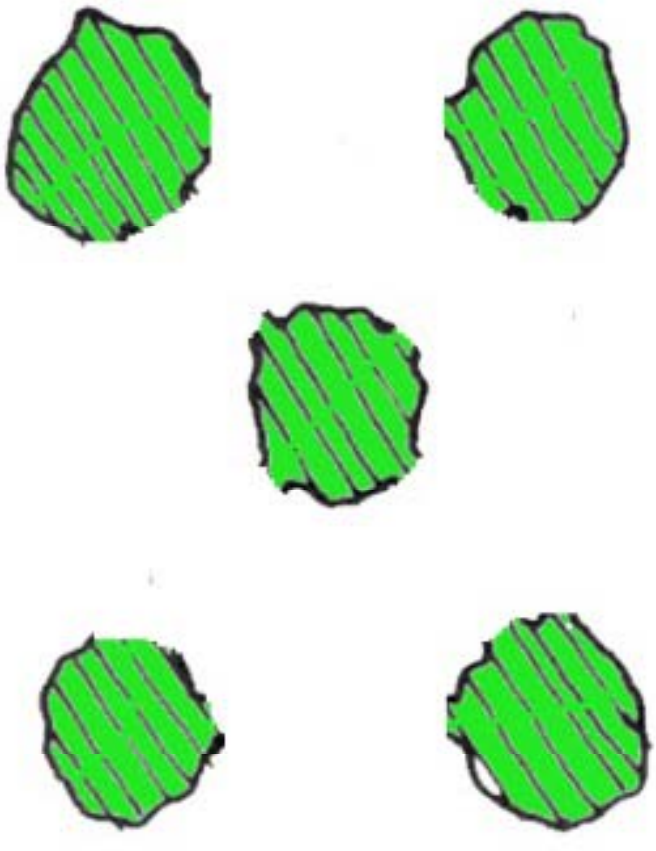
Sustainability, Connections and Riverside Park

Generally, the higher degree of connectivity and circuitry, the healthier the ecosystem.

Note: Each green circle represents an area with living things



No connectivity & no circuitry = Unhealthy ecosystems

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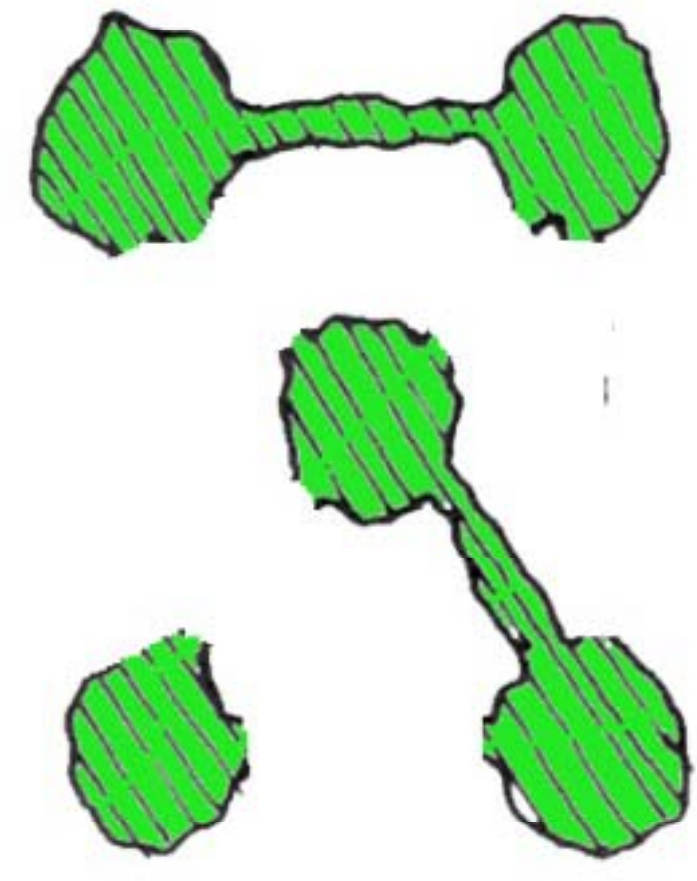

Limited connectivity & no circuitry = Improved, yet still unhealthy

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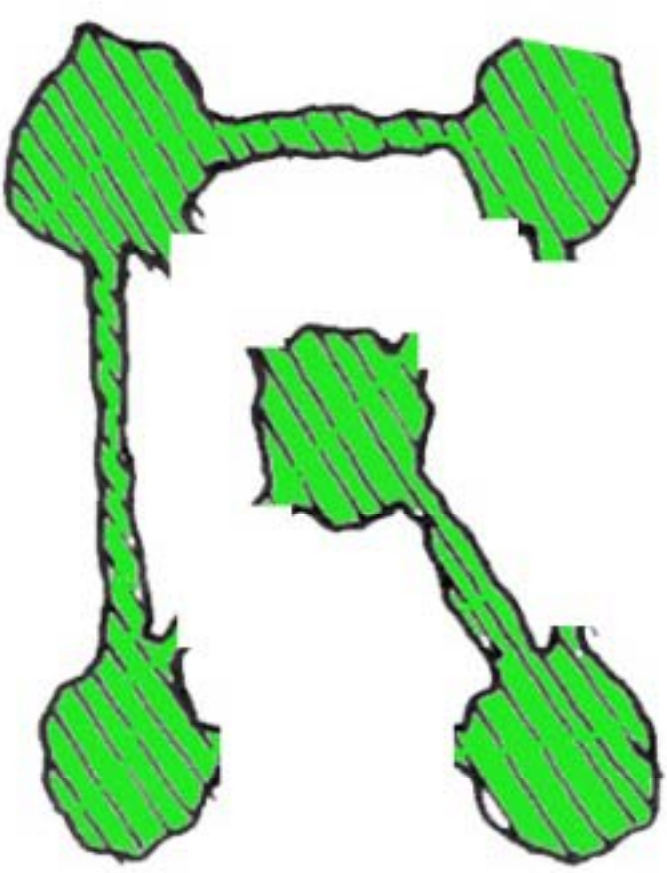

Additional connectivity & limited circuitry = Additional improvement still unhealthy

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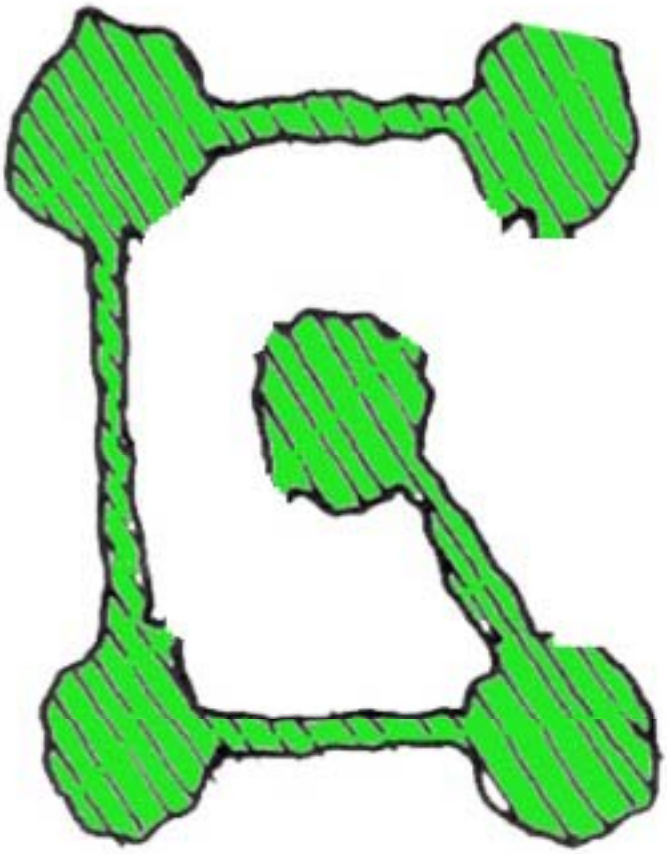

Full connectivity & additional circuitry = Semi-healthy ecosystem

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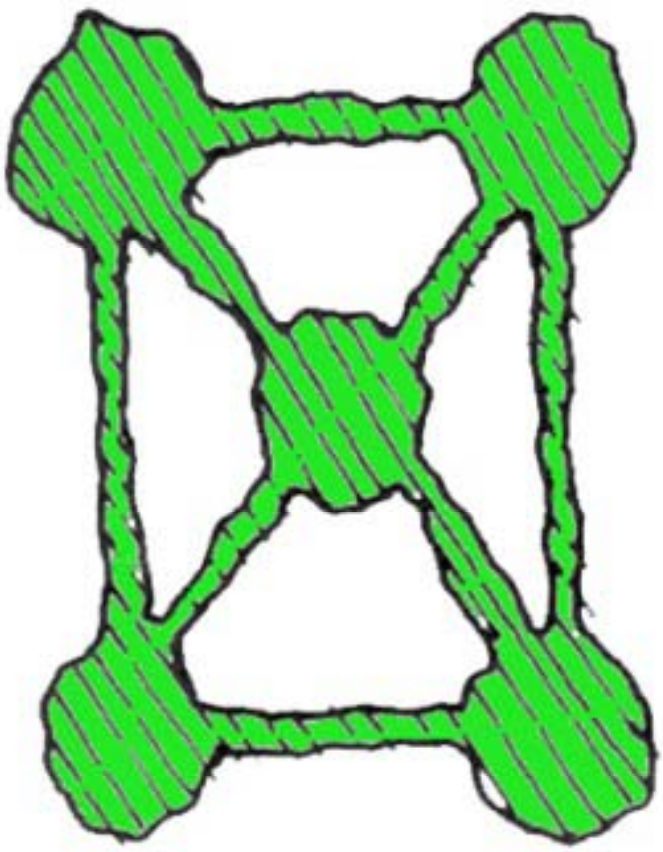

Full connectivity & full circuitry = Healthy ecosystems

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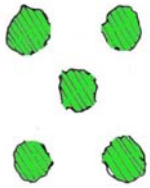
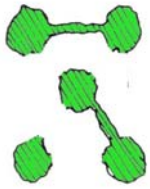
Sustainability, Connections and Riverside Park

Bad



No connectivity
No circuitry

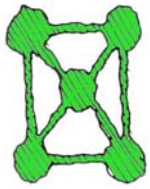


Limited connectivity
No circuitry

Additional connectivity
Limited circuitry

Full connectivity
Additional circuitry

Good



Full connectivity
Full connectivity

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Context

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Riverside Park & Environs

Existing Open Space

Ex. Open Space

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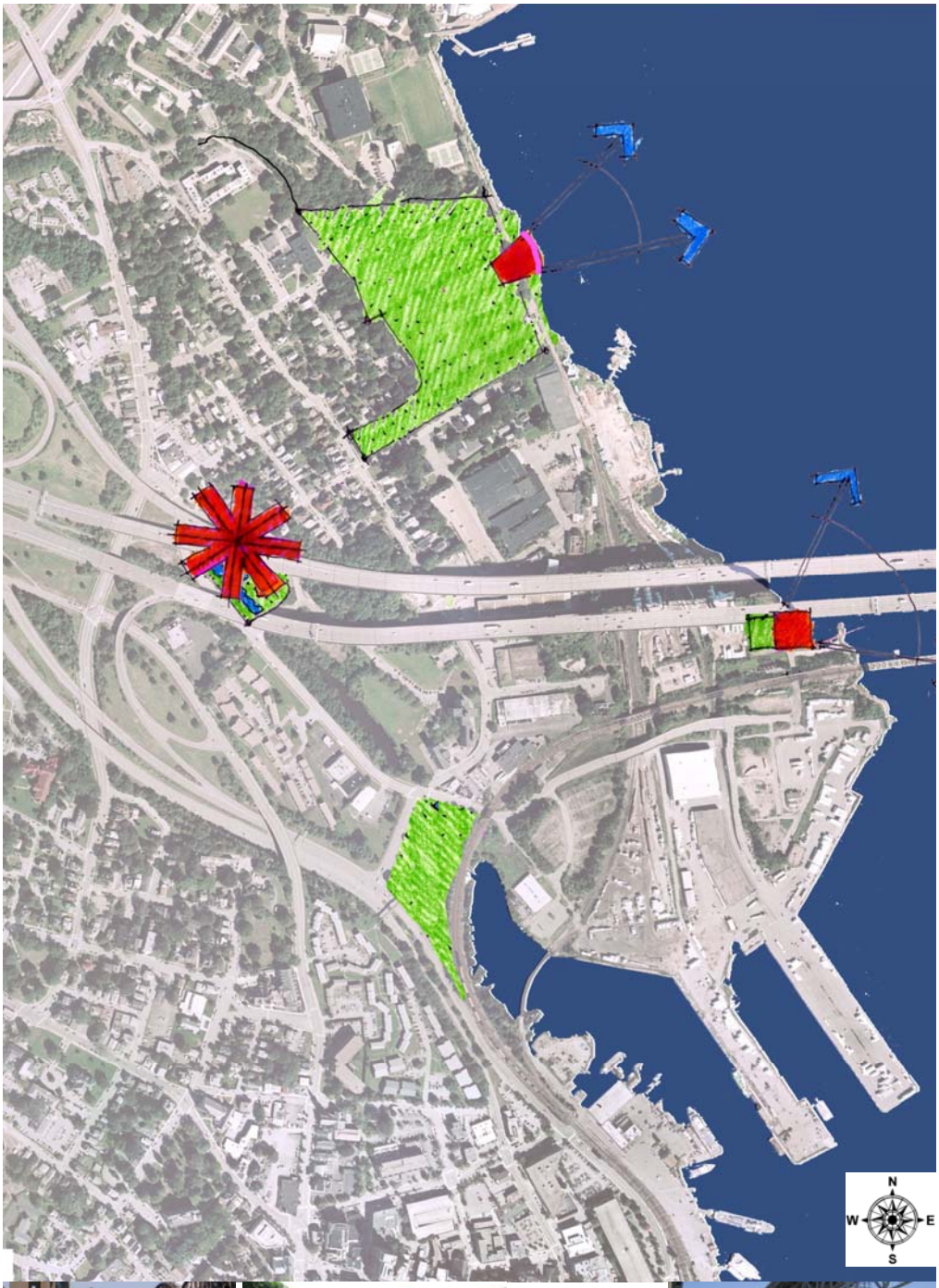
Riverside Park & Environs

Existing Open Space and Associated Events




Ex. Open Space


Ex. Mill Site


Ex. Pedestrian Bridge


Ex. Boat Launch

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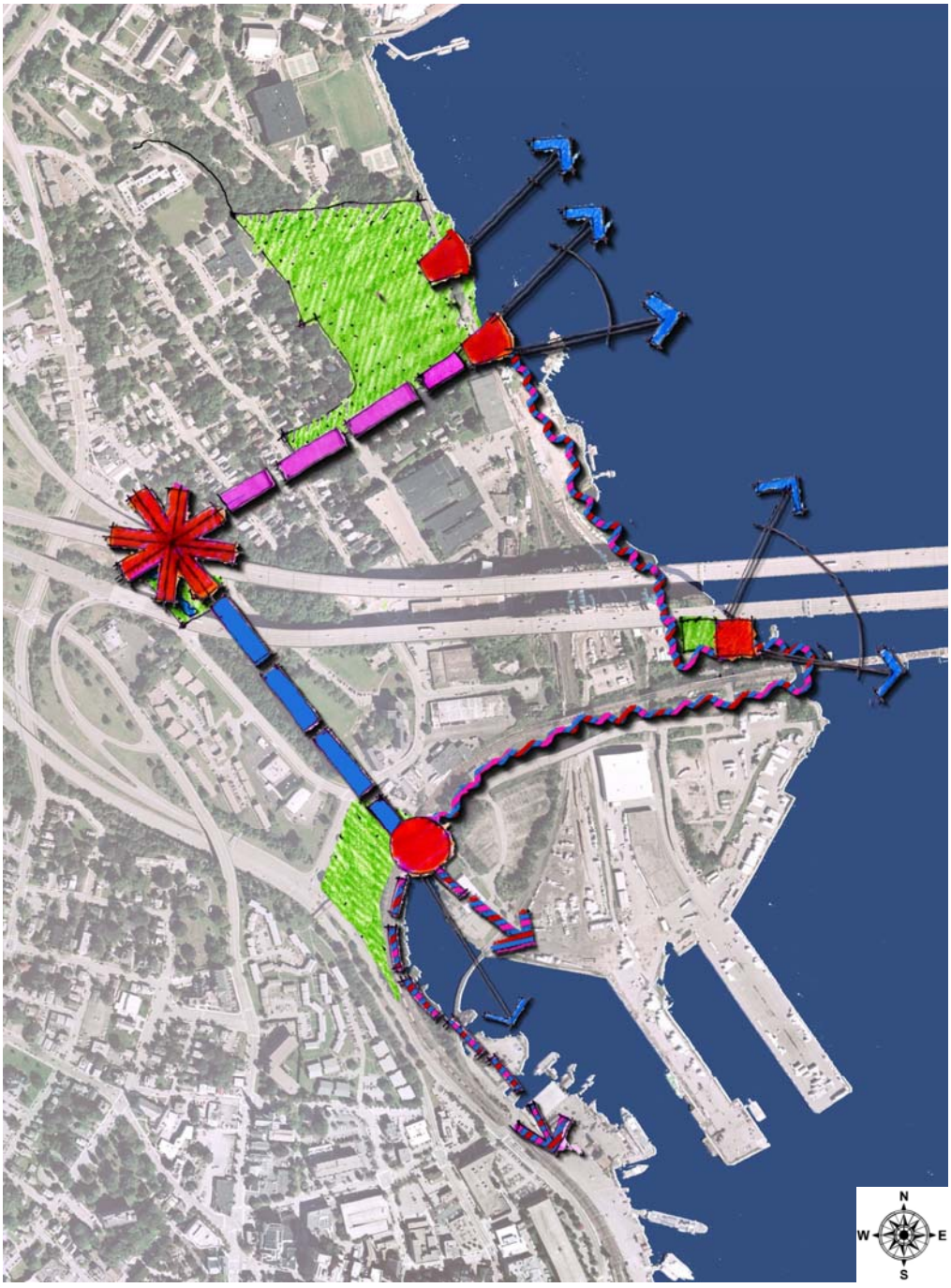
Riverside Park & Environs

Existing Open Space, Events & Opportunities




Ex. Open Space


Ex. Mill Site


Ex. Pedestrian Bridge


Ex. Boat Launch


Street as Primary Connector


Stream as Primary Connector


Path @ River's Edge


Public/Quasi-Public Buildings

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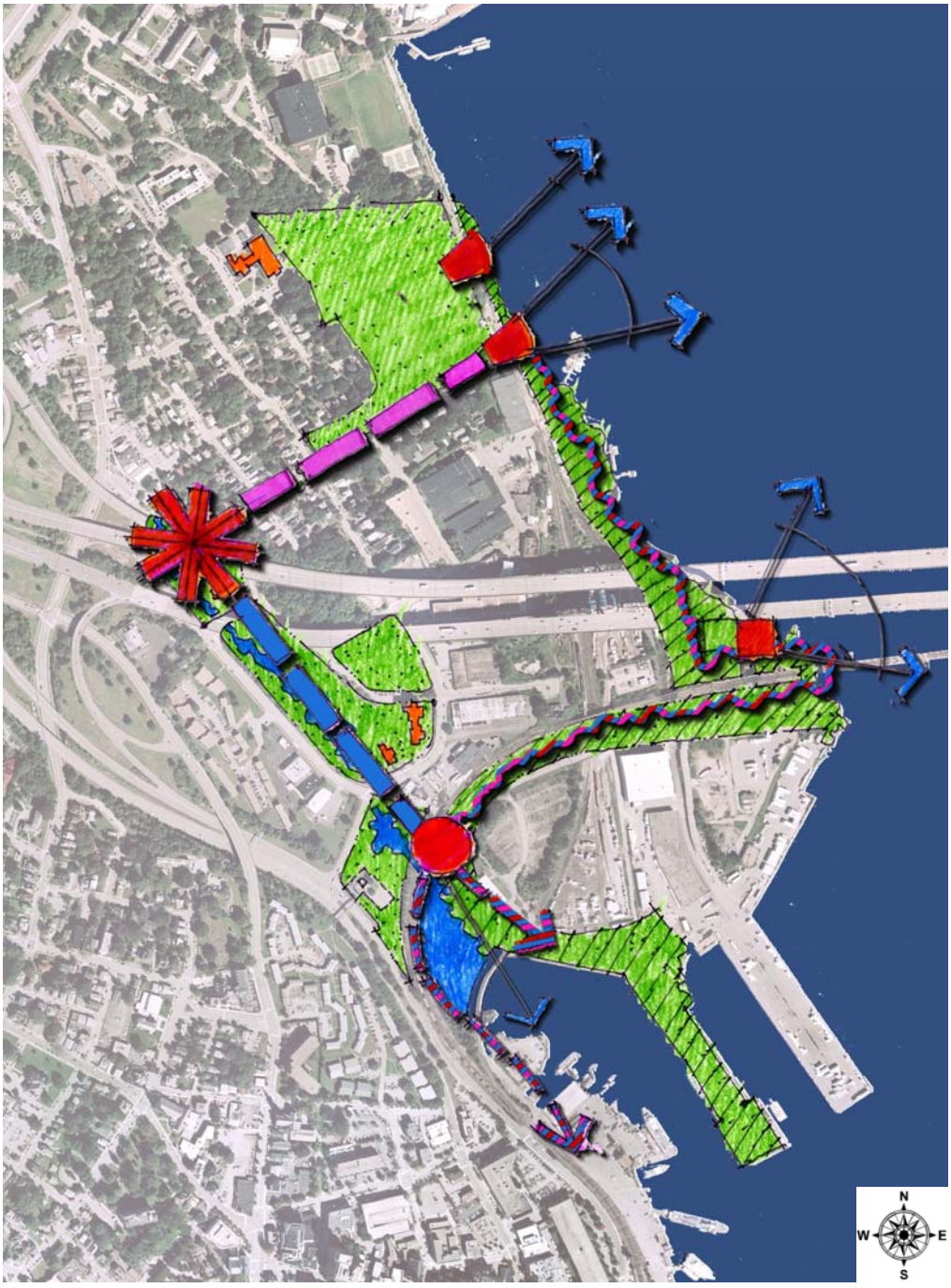
Riverside Park & Environs

Proposed Open Space, Events & Opportunities



Ex. Open Space

Proposed Open Space

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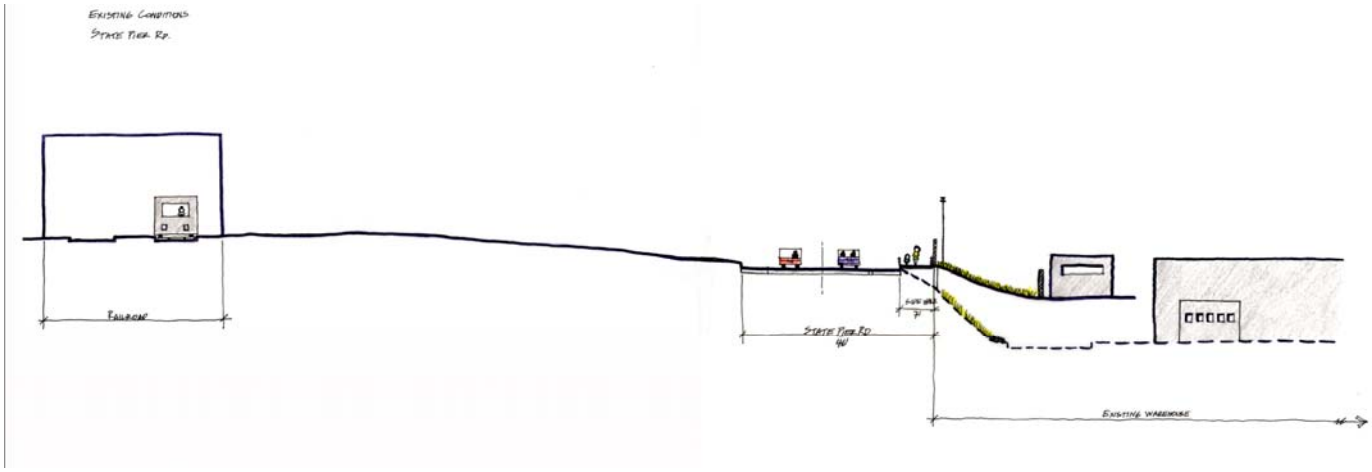
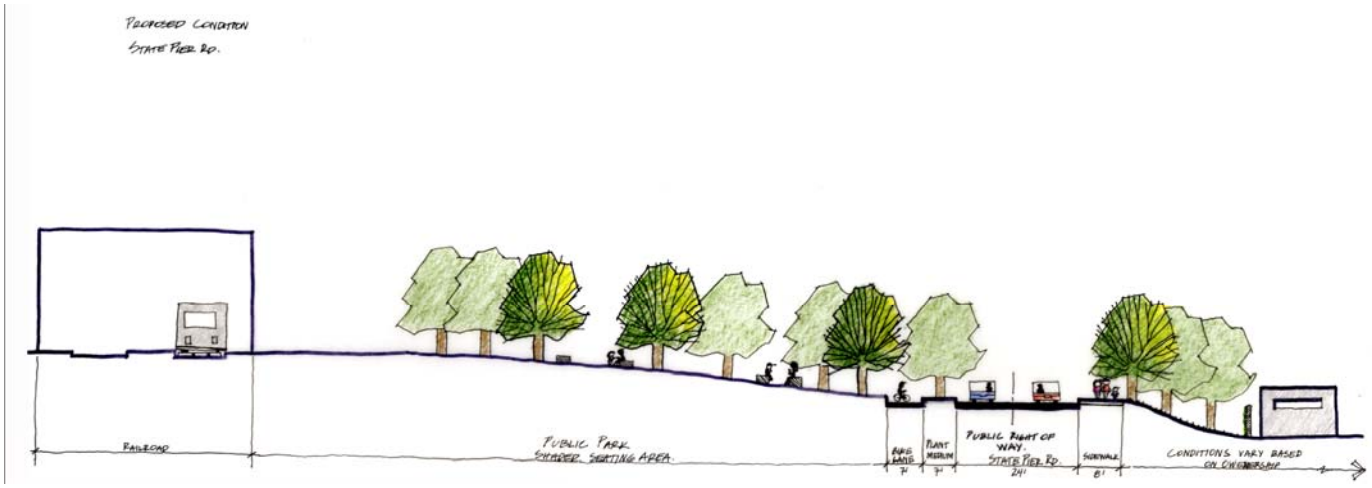
Riverside Park & Environs

Proposed Street Types: Secondary Path State Pier Road





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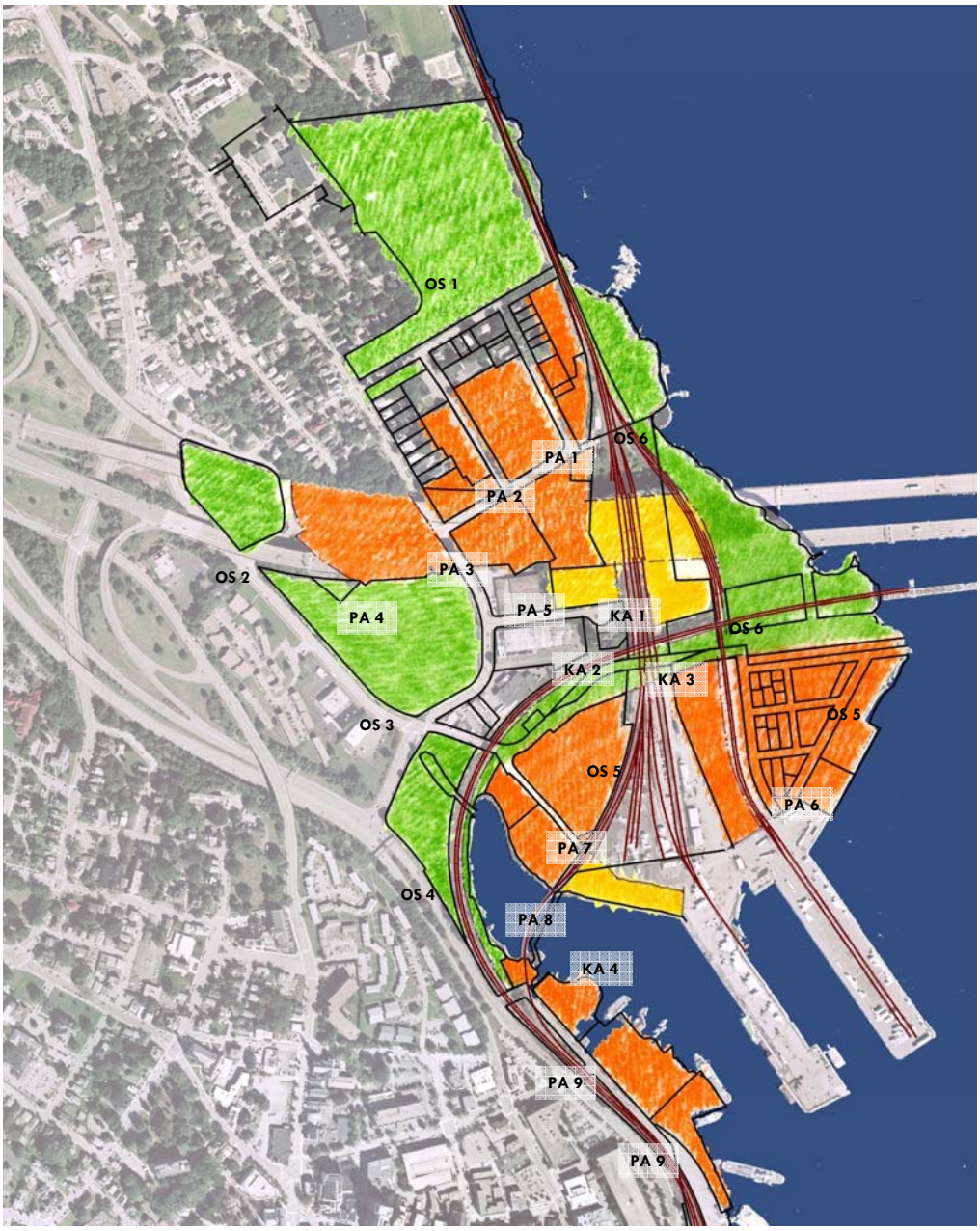
Riverside Park & Environs

Proposed Open Space and Mixed-Use Development Opportunities



Open Space (OS)

Key Re-Development Parcel Areas (PA)

Key Access Issues (KA)

	Acreage	Totals
OS1	14.5	
0S2	3.8	
OS3	9.5	
OS4	3.8	
OS5	3.2	
OS6	10.6	Total OS = 45.4
KA1	1.8	
KA2	0.90	
KA3	0.93	
KA4	1.5	Total KA = 5.13
PA1	1.6	
PA2	2.9	
PA3	1.6	
PA4	3.9	
PA5	3.9	
PA6	11.6	
PA7	3.8	
PA8	16.4	
PA9	4.1	Total PA = 49.8

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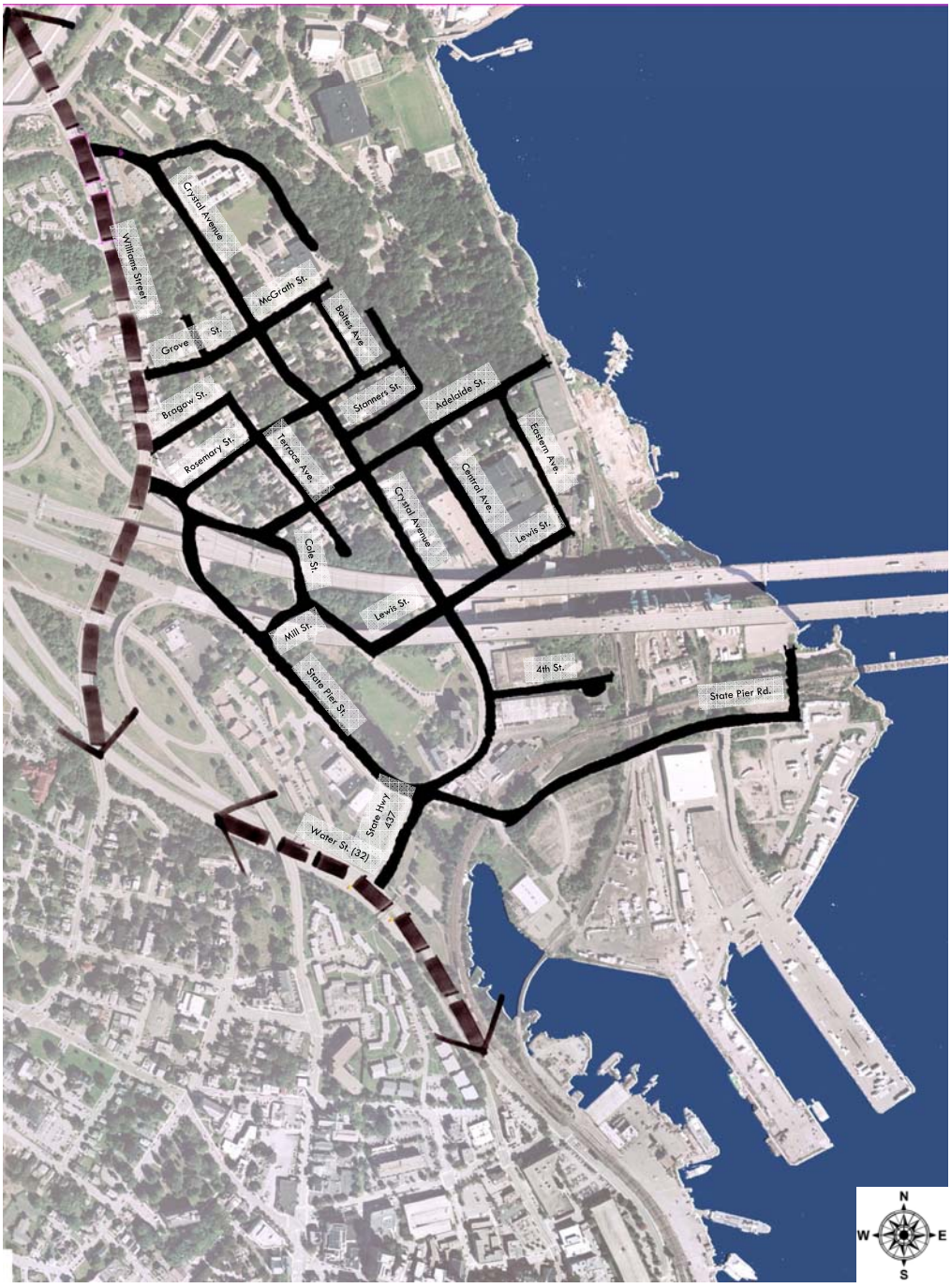
Riverside Park & Environs

Aerial of Street Pattern



Existing Roads

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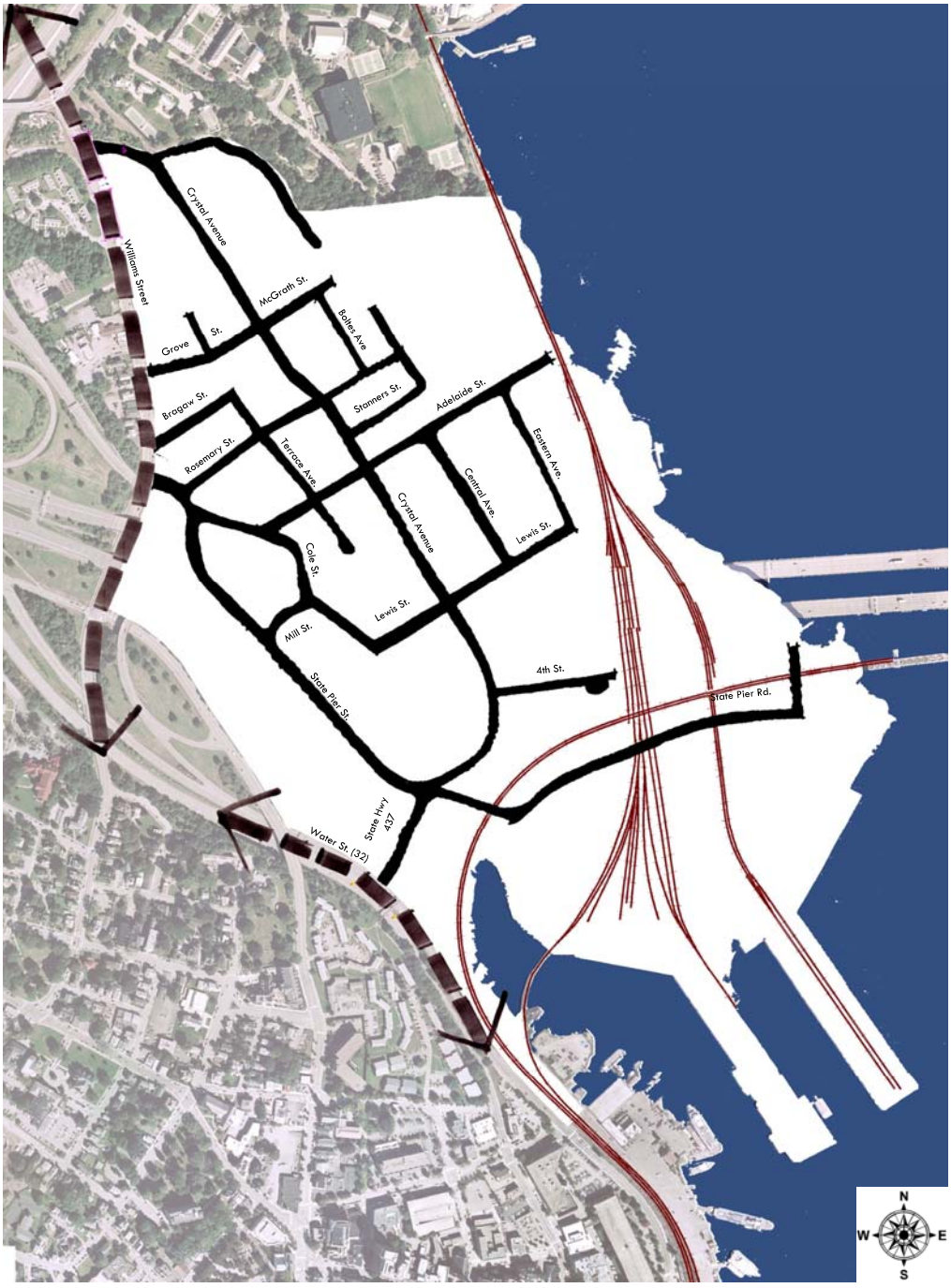
Riverside Park & Environs

Existing Streets



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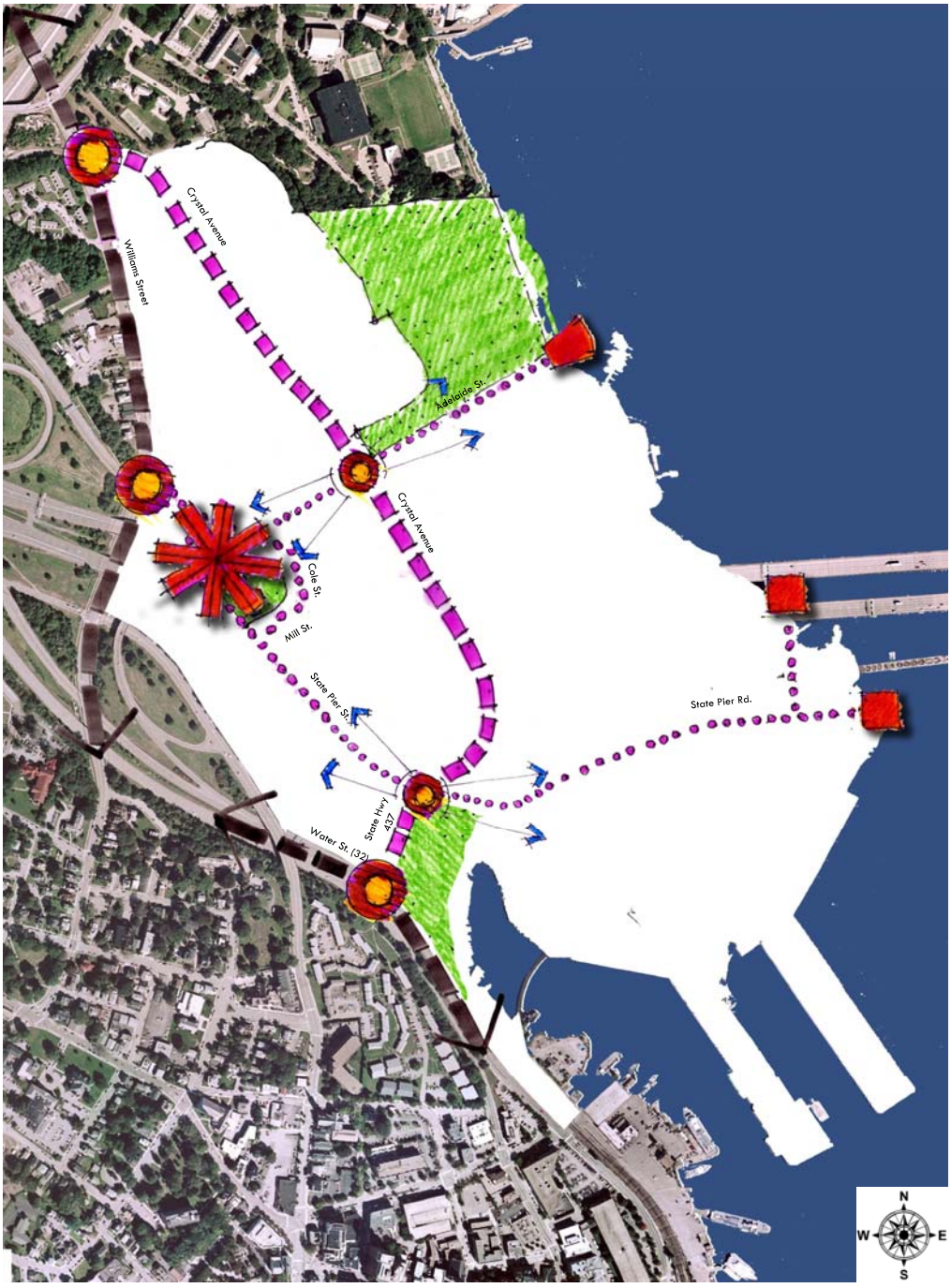
Riverside Park & Environs

Proposed Wayfinding and Street System



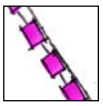

Hodges Square


Elevated Walkway


Riverside Structure


Gateway


Cross Roads


Crystal Avenue


Secondary Roadways

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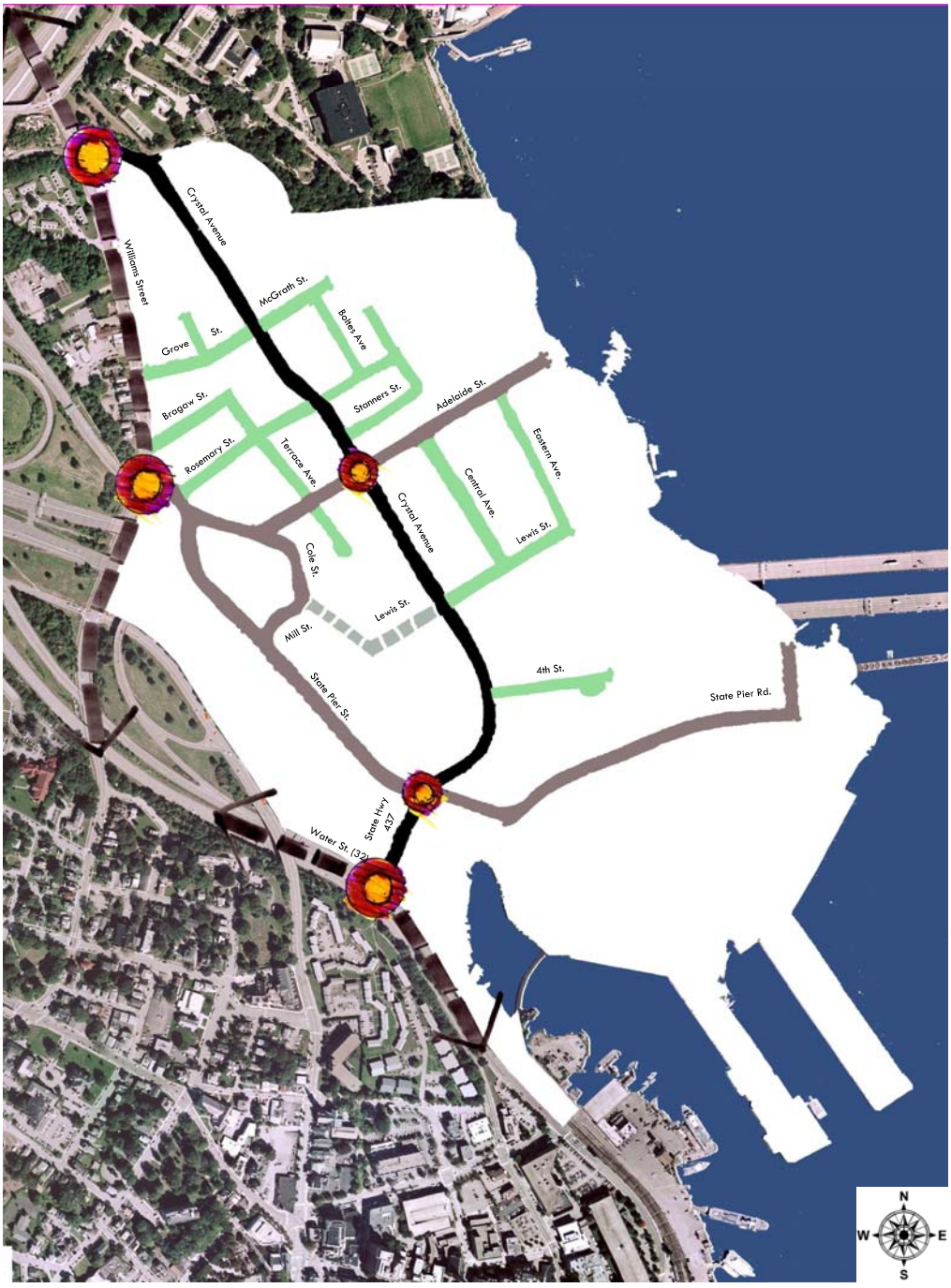
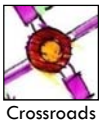
Riverside Park & Environs

Proposed Street Types




Gateway


Crossroads


Crystal Ave Primary


Secondary Roads


Green Roads (residential)


Roads to be removed

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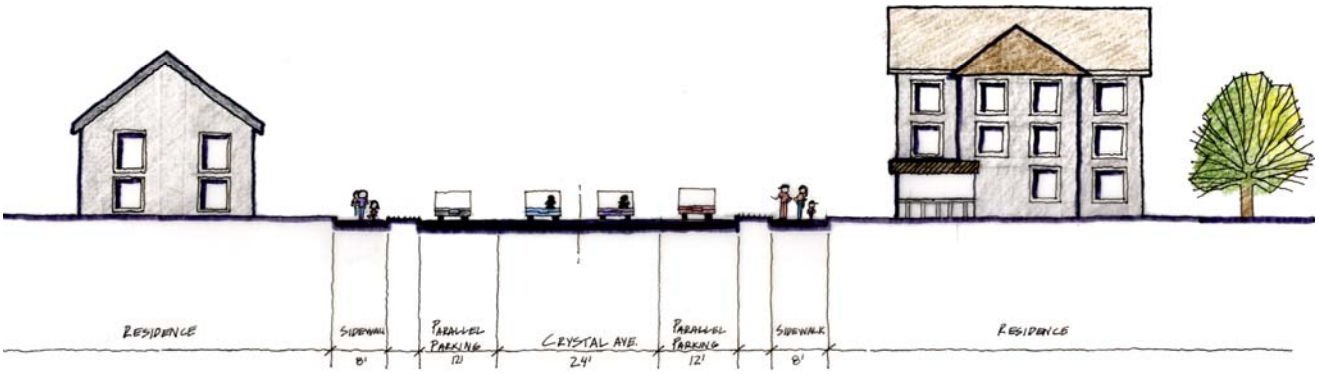
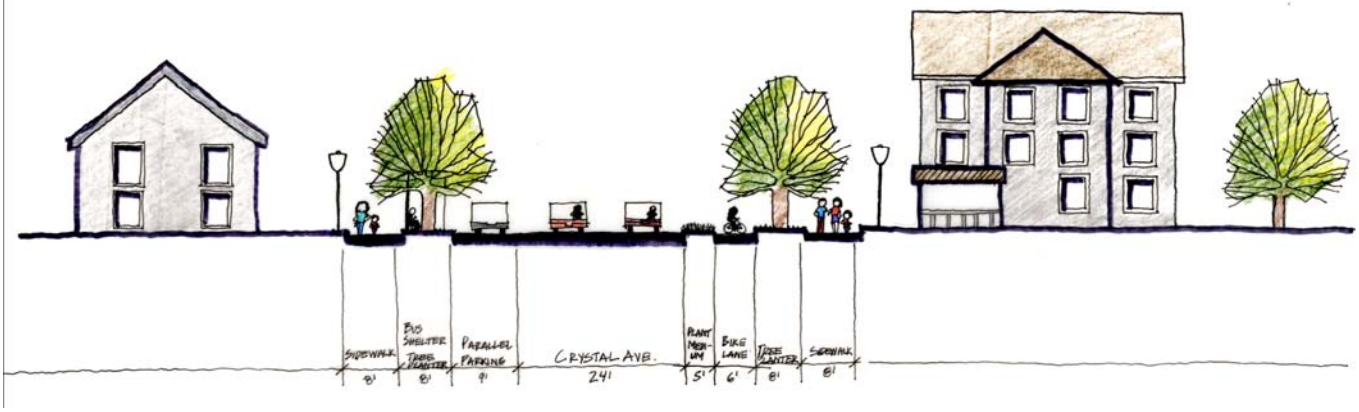
Riverside Park & Environs

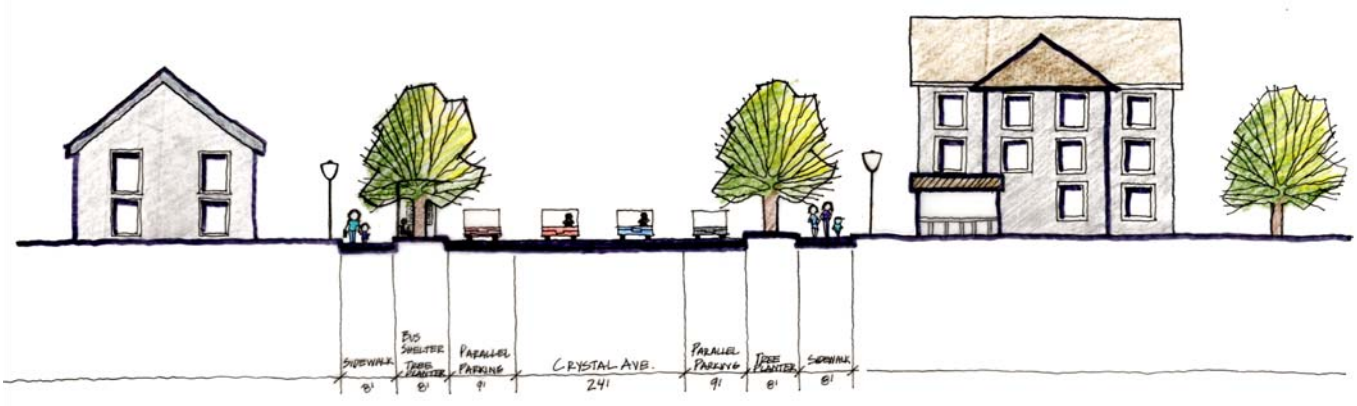
Proposed Street Types: Primary Path Crystal Avenue

EXISTING CONDITIONS
CRYSTAL AVE.



PROPOSED
CRYSTAL AVE.





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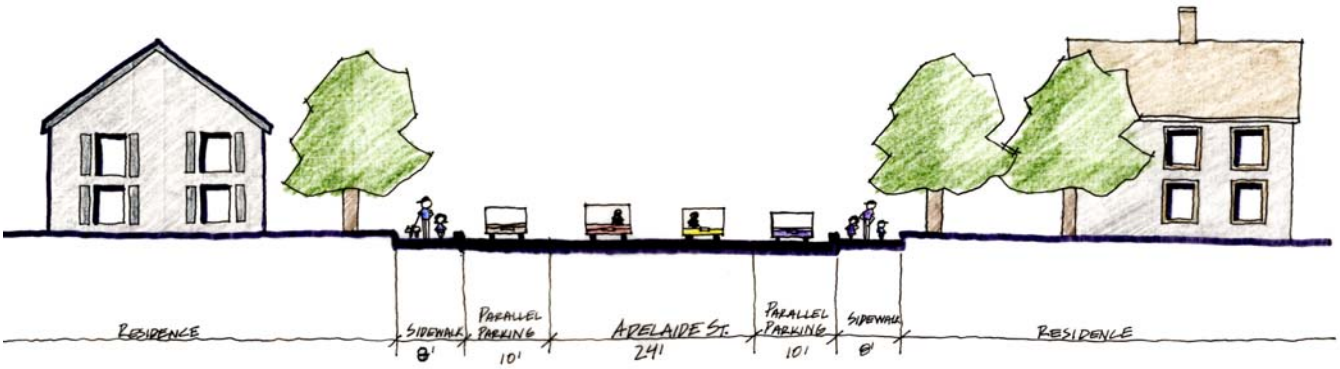
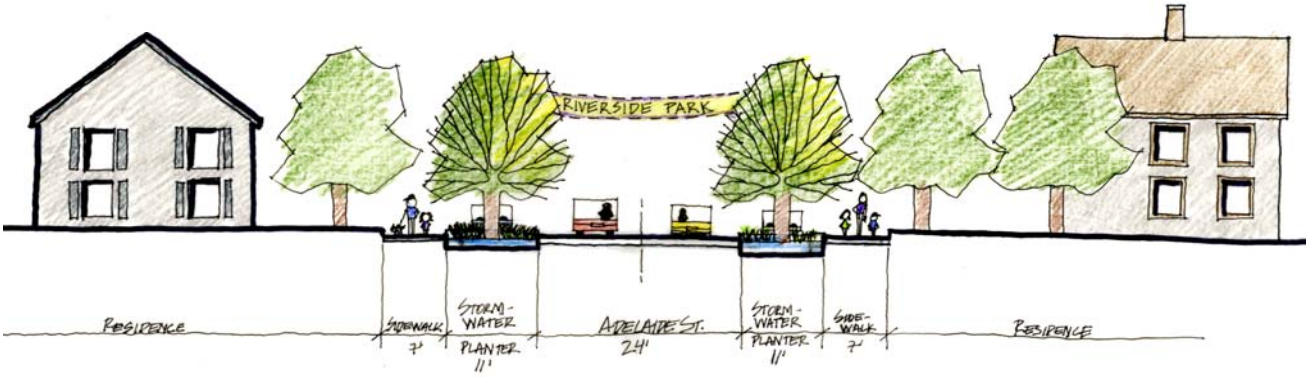
Proposed Street Types: Secondary Path Adelaide Street





PROPOSED
ADELAIDE ST.

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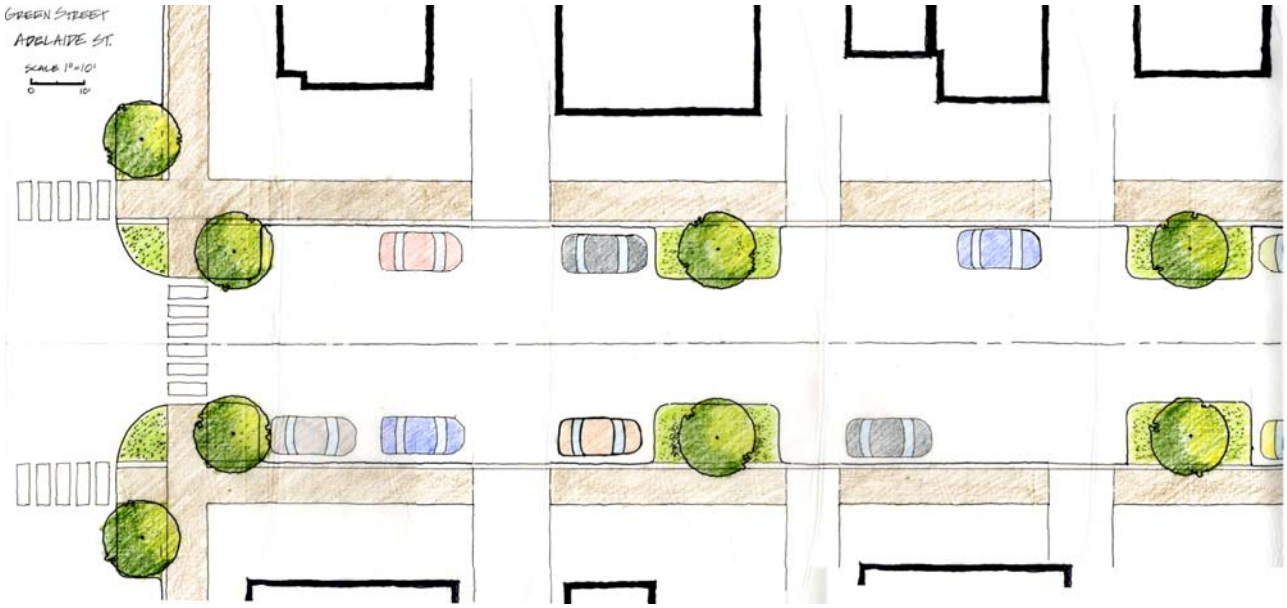
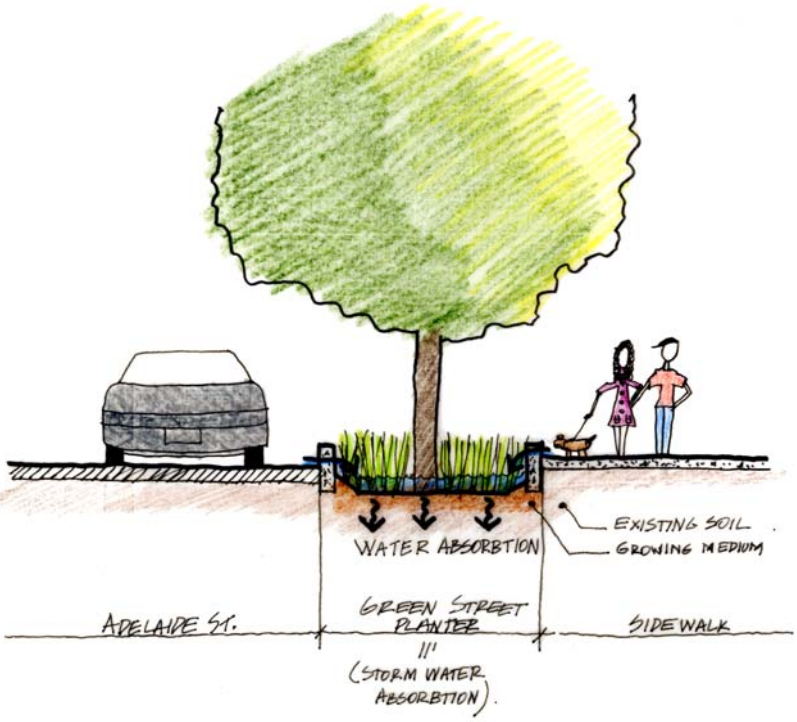


GREEN STREET PLANTER.



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Park: Aerial

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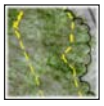
Park: Existing Conditions



Existing Trees

Property Line

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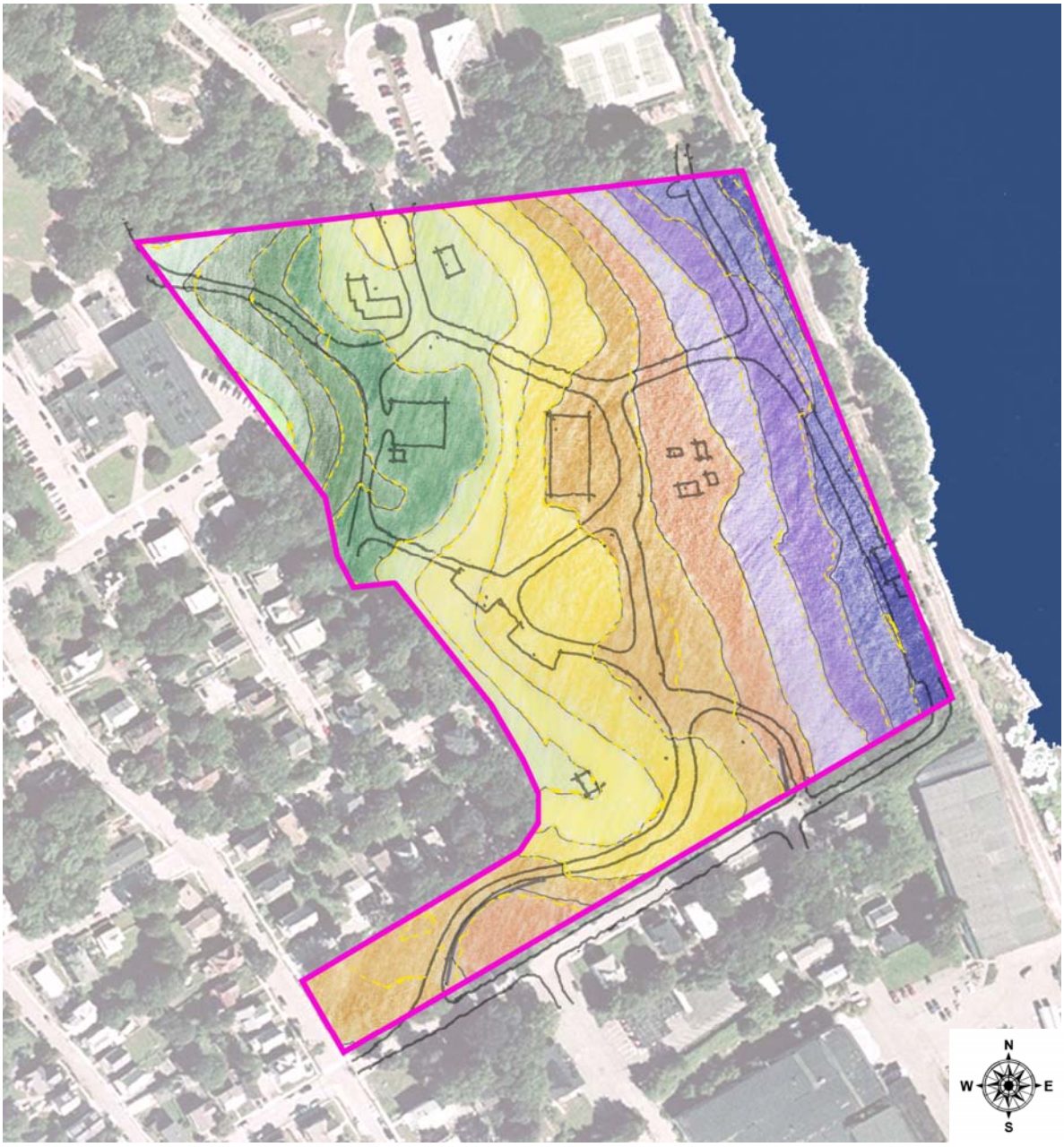
Park: Elevation



140 -100

90 - 50

40 - 0

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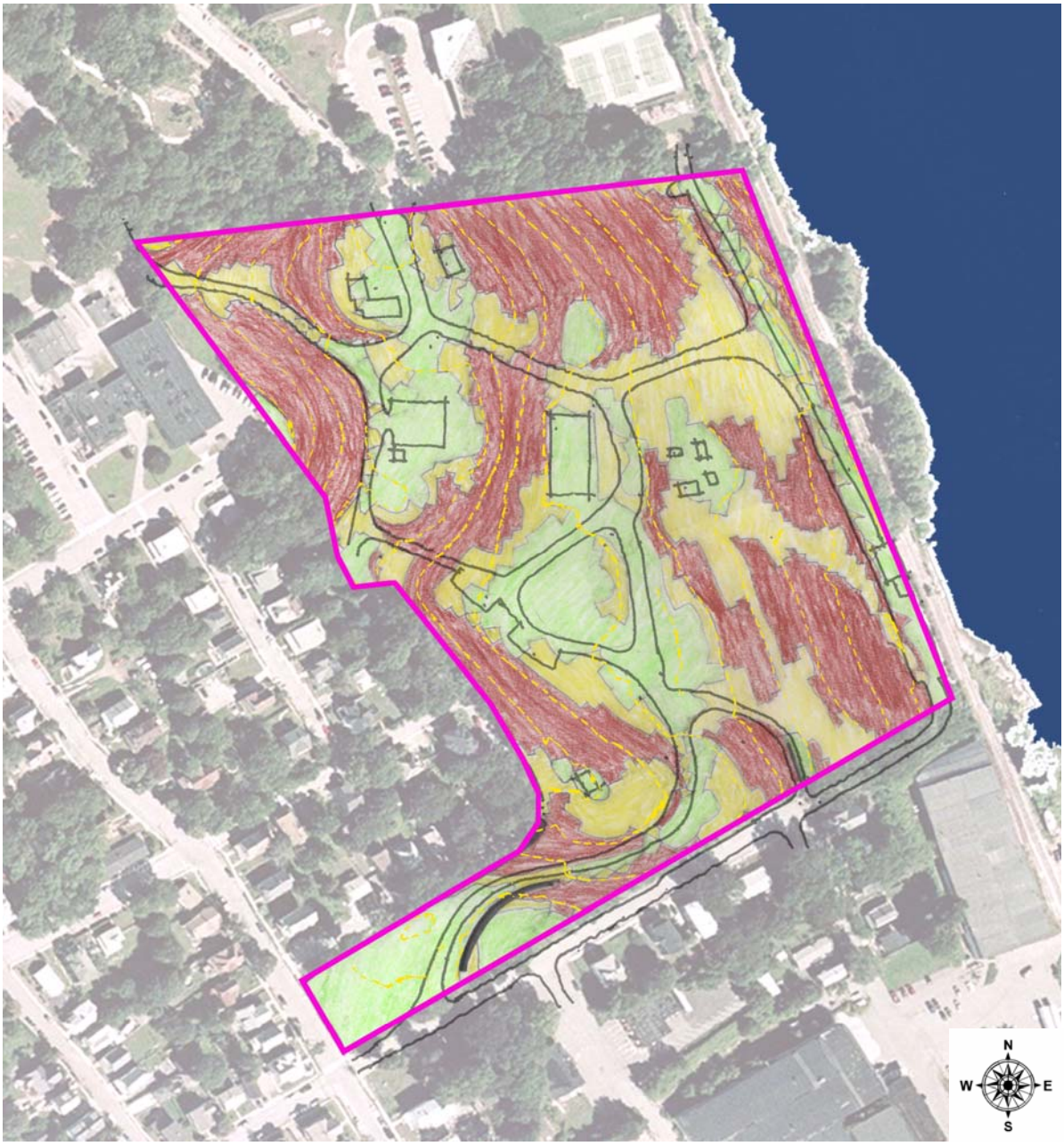
Riverside Park & Environs

Park: Slope



20%

5-10%

5%

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Riverside Park & Environs

Park: Summary Analysis

Location: Good = Magnificent location of river, services residential neighborhood and school
Bad = Isolated

Adjacent Land Uses: Good = West uses create potential for active edge condition. East is the river
Bad = North offers no energy or activity. South offers limited activity.

Roads: Good = Do not need additional roads
Bad = Too many, confusing, dead-ends, disrepair, lack of hierarchy

Vegetation: Good = Plenty of trees and trees are good
Bad = Blocks views to river, limits views within park, denies the creation of "outdoor" rooms

Topography: Good = Sloping toward major resource, varied, interesting
Bad = creates sense of isolation and discontinuity

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Bad = North offers no energy or activity. South offers limited activity.

Roads: Good = Do not need additional roads
Bad = Too many, confusing, dead-ends, disrepair, lack of hierarchy

Vegetation: Good = Plenty of trees and trees are good
Bad = Blocks views to river, limits views within park, denies the creation of "outdoor" rooms

Topography: Good = Sloping toward major resource, varied, interesting
Bad = creates sense of isolation and discontinuity

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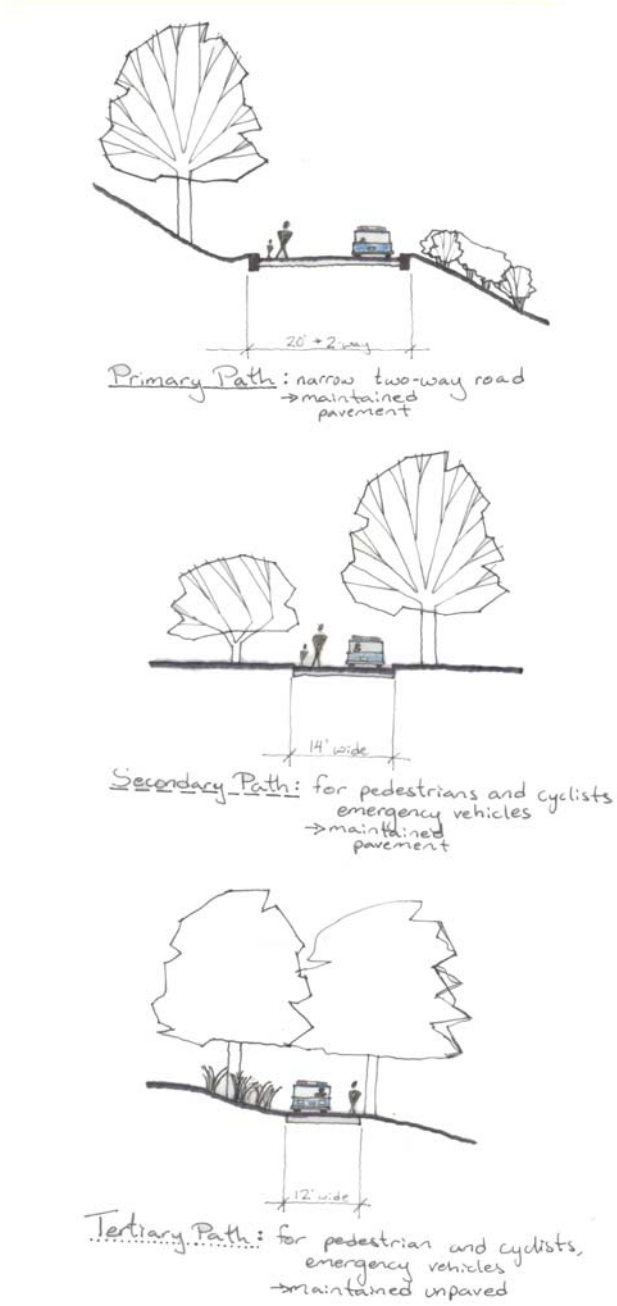
Riverside Park & Environs

Park: Circulation



Objectives:

1. Create “defensible” spaces
2. Compose a series of sequential paths to organize park activities
2. Re-connect the park to the river.
3. Re-connect neighborhood to the park
4. Develop strategy for management of vegetation

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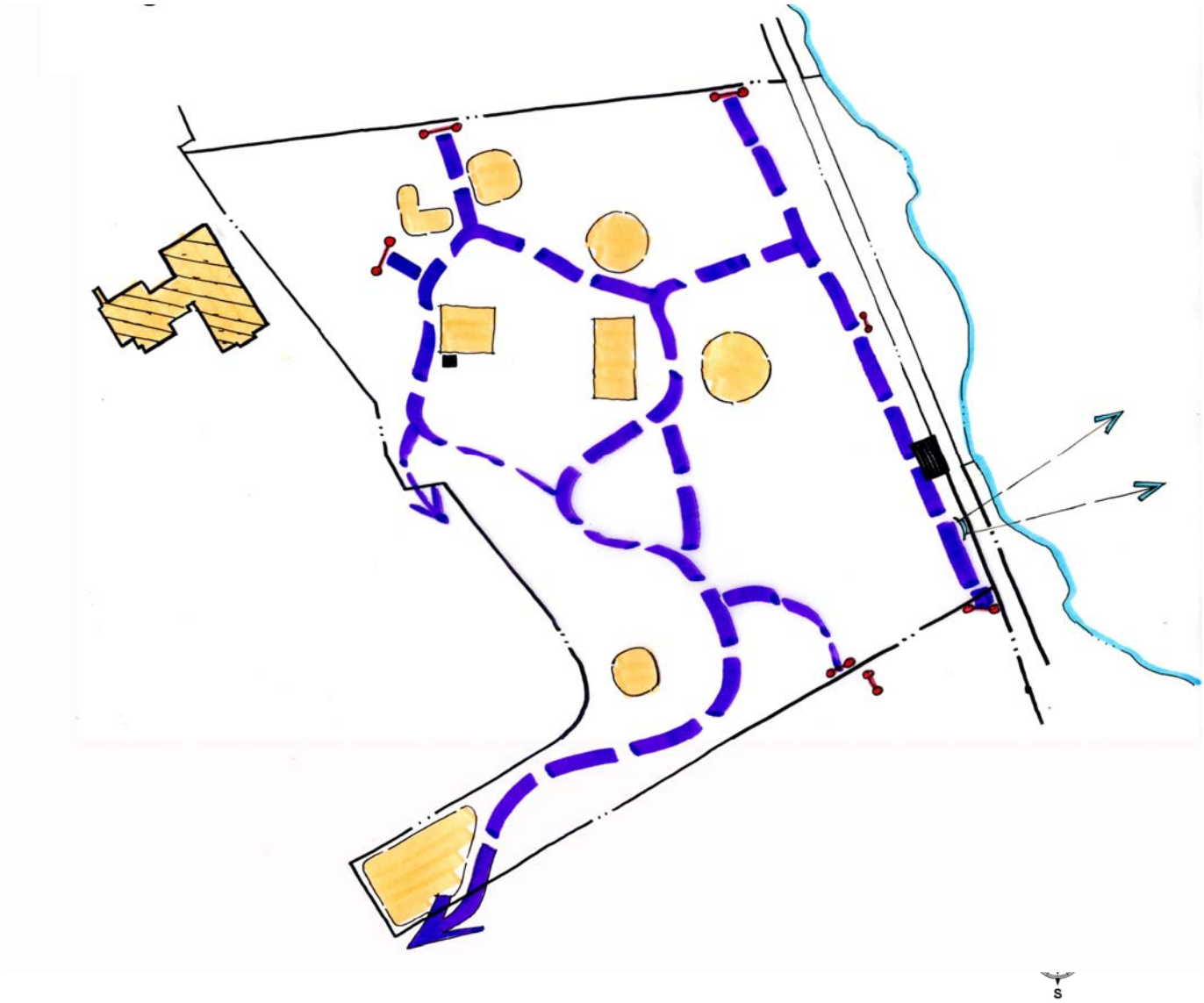
Riverside Park & Environs

Park: Circulation Existing Condition



Open Areas

Short Views

Primary Road

Long Views

Adelaide St.

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Riverside Park & Environs

Park: Circulation Alternative IA “Upper Spine Road”

Objectives:

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Open Areas

Short Views

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Long Views

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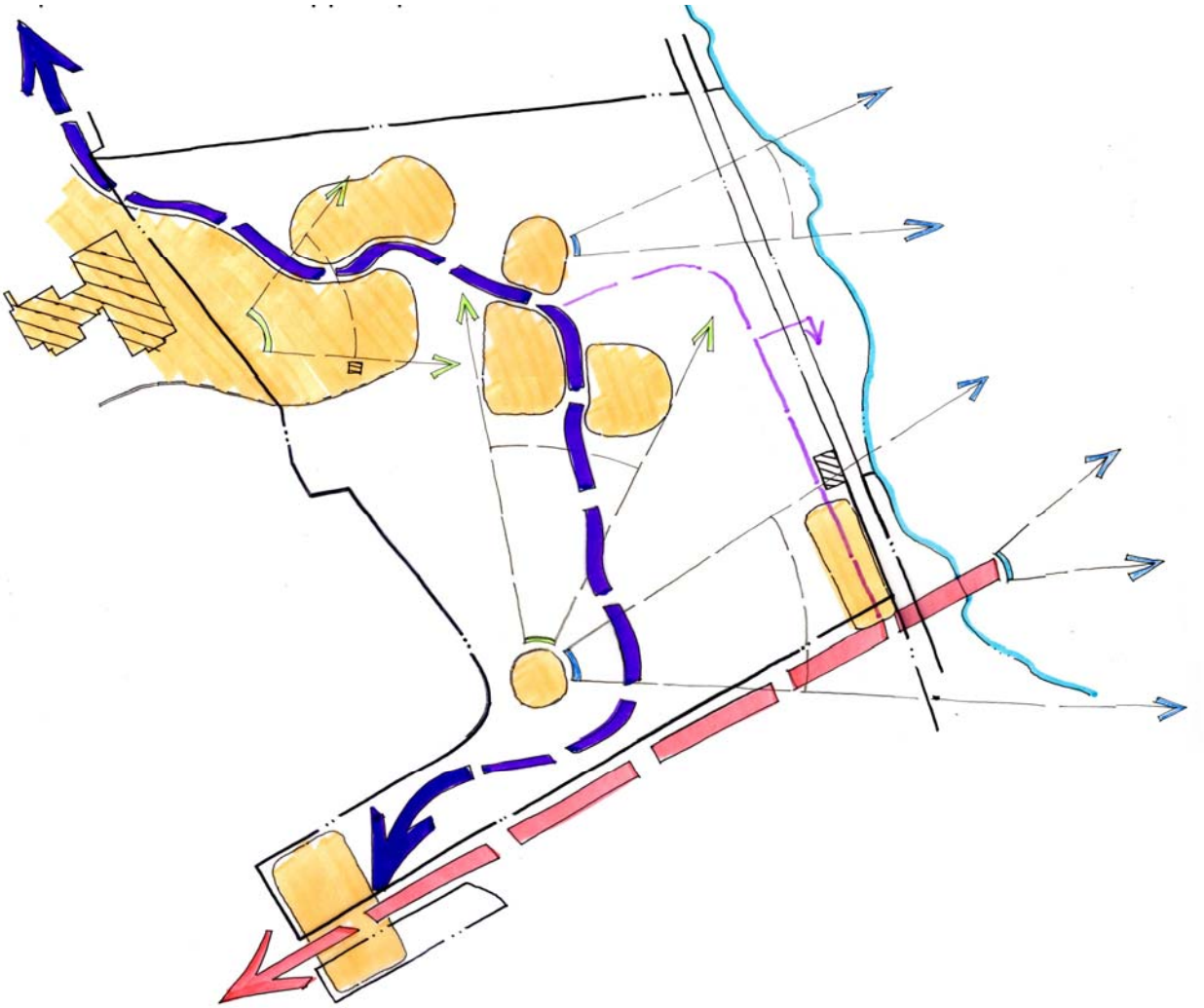

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Open Areas

Short Views

Primary Road

Long Views

Adelaide St.

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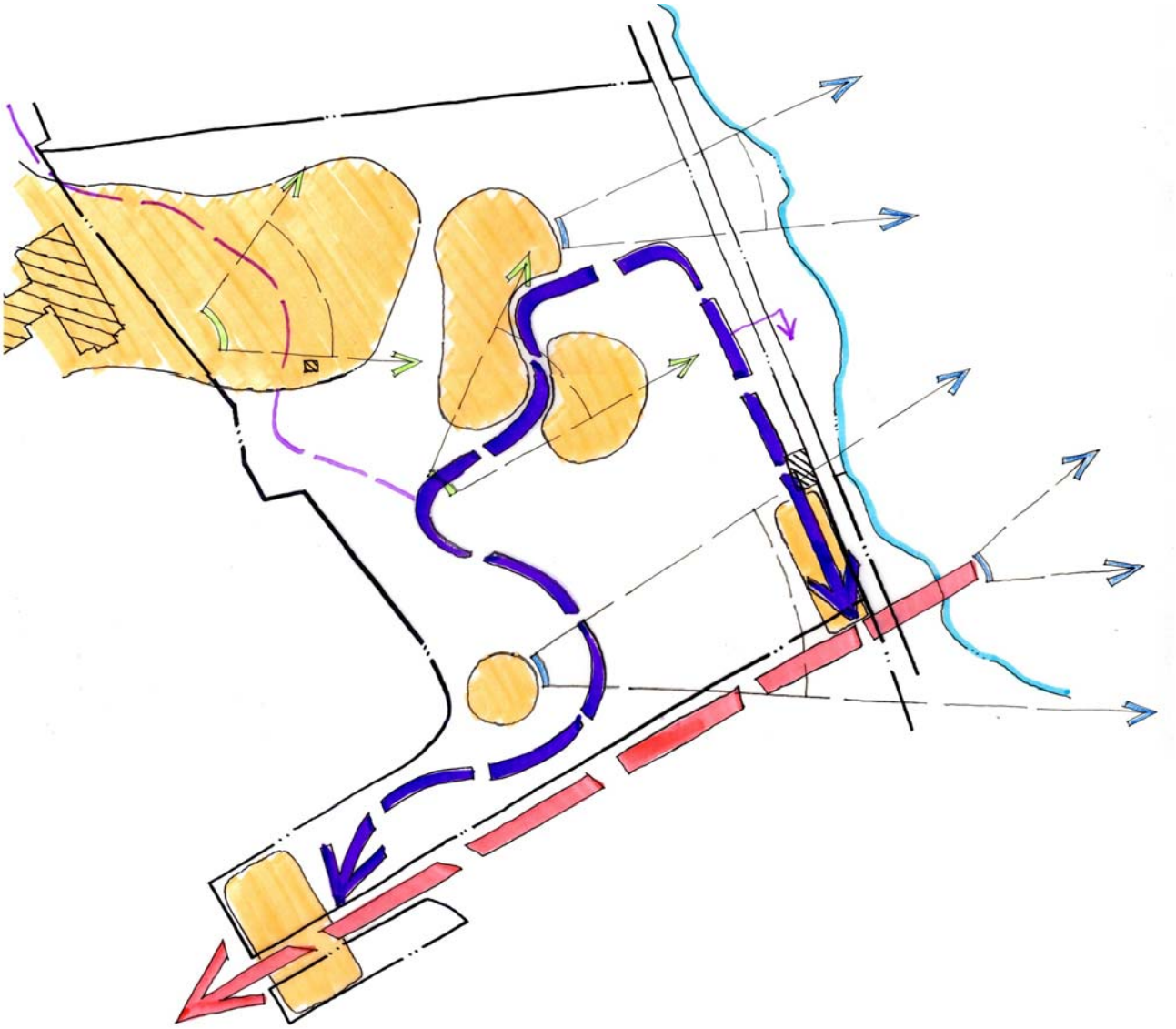
Riverside Park & Environs

Park: Circulation Alternative II “Adelaide” Loop”



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Short Views

Primary Road

Long Views

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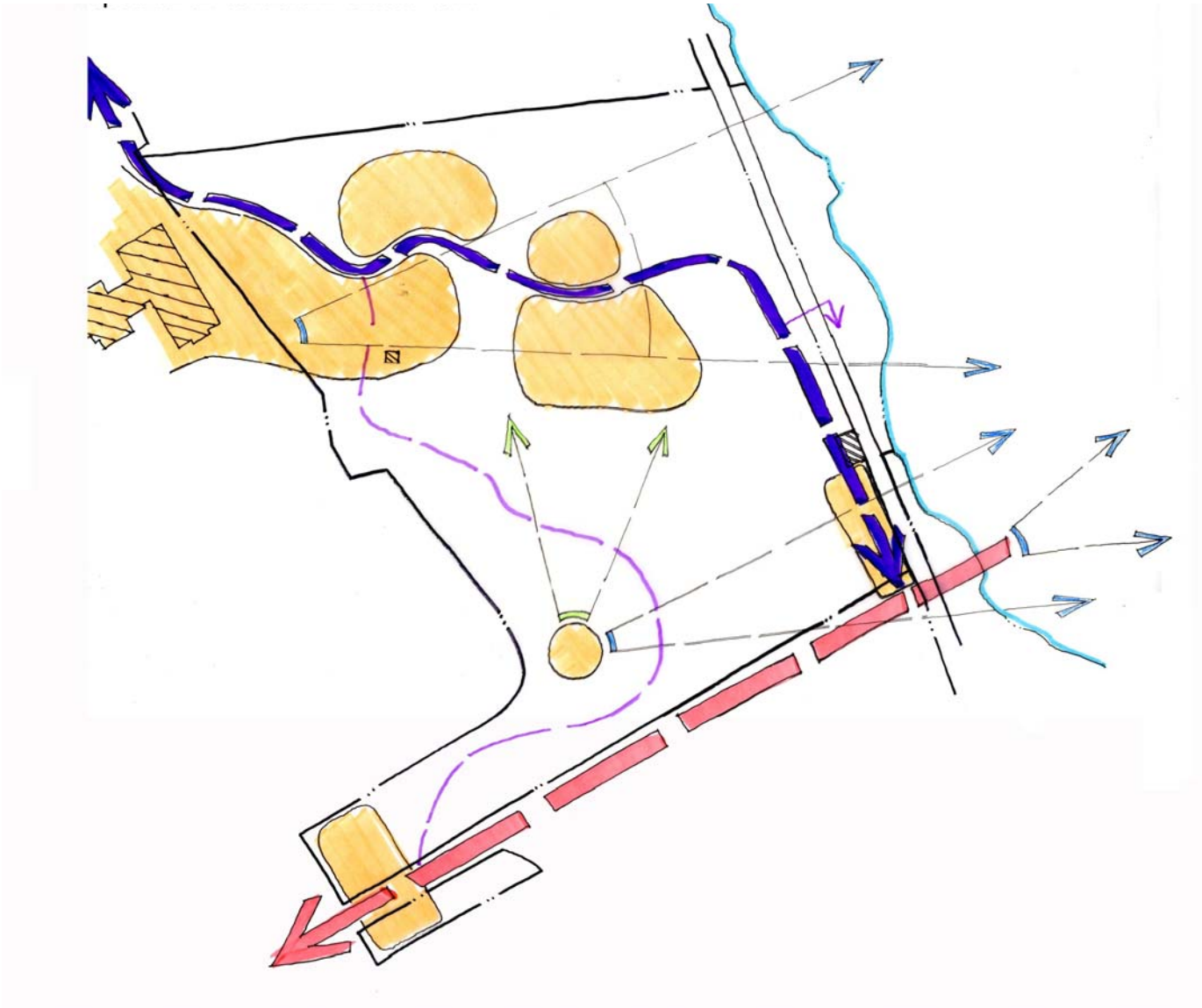
Riverside Park & Environs

Park: Circulation Alternative III “Cross Park” Road



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Riverside Park & Environs

Park: Vegetation Types

Scattered Trees

Main entry to Riverside Park

Open lawn with trees scattered throughout.

Trees in this space act to:
- Frame views
- Provide shade
- House small animals and birds

WILD — MANICURED

Open Wooded Area

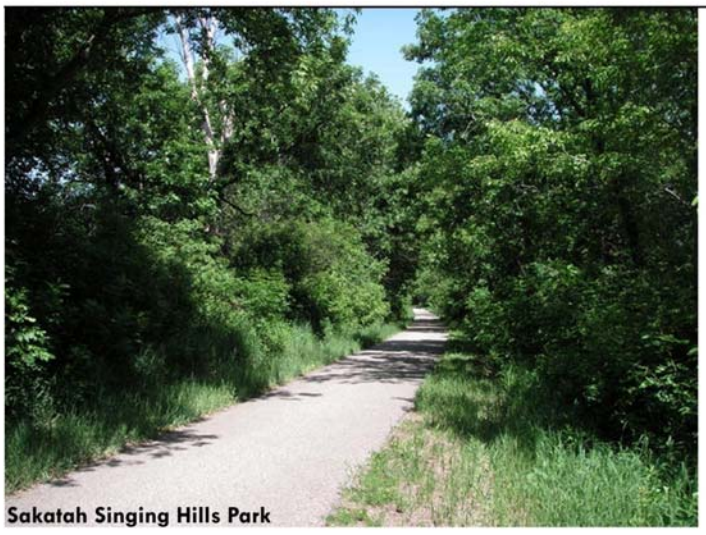

Wooded Park in Plum Creek

Forested areas with undergrowth cleared.

Trees in this space act to:
- Create enclosed spaces without inhibiting sightlines
- Provide shade
- House small animals and birds

WILD — MANICURED

Naturalized Wooded Area


Sakatah Singing Hills Park

Forested areas allowed to go wild.

Trees in this space act to:
- Create vertically defined trails
- Provide pockets of untamed nature
- House small animals and birds

WILD — MANICURED

Riverside Park & Environs

Park: Vegetation Diagram Alt. 1

-Allow forest to take over without inhibiting views for safety

Existing Trees

Removed Trees

Added Trees

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Riverside Park & Environs

Park: Vegetation Diagram Alt. 2

Existing Trees

Removed Trees

Added Trees

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Riverside Park & Environs

Park: Vegetation Diagram Alt. 3

-keep as a wooded park, but with a cohesive open area for views of river as well as diversity of space and plant material

Existing Trees

Removed Trees

Added Trees

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Summary

… a beautiful little park of forty acres or more on the Thames River, and a half-mile strip of ocean beach which, for location, beauty, and usefulness, is not surpassed by any other small American city.

John Nolen Landscape Architect 1913. Author of General Plan of a Park and Playground System for New London, Connecticut

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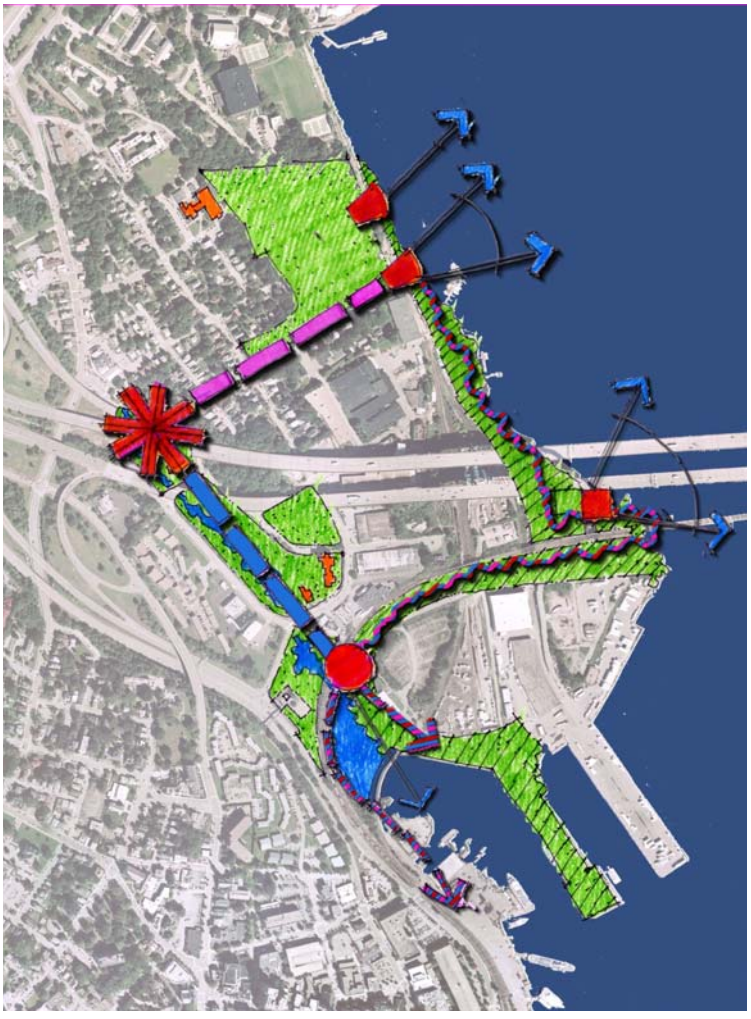
Summary

… destinations should be connected to one another and incorporated into a vision for the waterfront as a whole. A waterfront that is continuously walkable with a variety of activities along the way will successfully like destinations, allowing the appeal of each one to strengthen the place as a whole.

Project for Public Spaces from 9 Steps in Creating Great Waterfronts

Project for Public Spaces (PPS) is a nonprofit planning, design and educational organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities. Our pioneering Placemaking approach helps citizens transform their public spaces into vital places that highlight local assets, spur rejuvenation and serve common needs.



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Summary

This concludes our presentation.

… a beautiful little park of forty acres or more on the Thames River, and a half-mile strip of ocean beach which, for location, beauty, and usefulness, is not surpassed by any other small American city.

… destinations should be connected to one another and incorporated into a vision for the waterfront as a whole. A waterfront that is continuously walkable with a variety of activities along the way will successfully like destinations, allowing the appeal of each one to strengthen the place as a whole.

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