

STRIP DISTRICT RIVERFRONT

Park Vision Plan

Now is a key moment to work with various land owners to establish public waterfront access that would create a continuous connection from the neighborhoods of Lawrenceville and the Strip to downtown Pittsburgh.

BUILDING ON THE VISION for Pittsburgh’s Three Rivers Park, which is planned to include 13 miles of continuous waterfront parks and trails, Riverlife engaged Sasaki Associates to envision the future of the Strip District riverfront. As development moves ahead quickly on many of the riverfront properties of the Strip District neighborhood, now is a key moment to work with various land owners to establish public waterfront access that would create a continuous connection from the neighborhoods of Lawrenceville and the Strip to downtown Pittsburgh. Sasaki’s plan for the Strip District considers both a network of parks and open spaces connected by trails along the riverfront, and key perpendicular connections, which draw the community to the riverfront that gives the city its identity.

PROCESS The Strip District Riverfront Park Vision builds on several efforts in recent years to support development of the Allegheny Riverfront neighborhoods in their transition from primarily industrial uses to riverfront neighborhoods, including the following:

1. *Allegheny Riverfront Vision Plan*, a broad vision for the Allegheny Riverfront
2. *Allegheny Riverfront Green Boulevard Plan*, a detailed technical study to support economic development, improve public access to the riverfront, and implement transportation improvements

in the riverfront neighborhoods

3. *Three Rivers Park Economic Impact Analysis*, completed in 2015 to demonstrate the economic impact of riverfront improvements in Three Rivers Park going back to 2000, and build the economic development strategy to support public access improvements moving forward for the *Strip District Riverfront Park Vision Plan*

The Strip District Riverfront Park vision process, led by Riverlife, engaged Strip District riverfront property owners to explore areas of shared interest in providing comprehensive public access to create a new riverfront park in the neighborhood. These property owners worked with Riverlife as well as Sasaki and public city partners to create a vision of what could be created between 11th and 27th Streets along the Allegheny.

The Strip District Riverfront Park vision reconnects the riverfront to the urban fabric of the community, maximizing public access for recreation and incenting and enabling the highest and best use of adjacent lands. The Riverfront Park introduces alternatives for open space and amenities, including access points; linear parks and riverwalks; pedestrian parks, walkways, and plazas; public amenities; gathering spaces; recreational trails and facilities; regional trail connections; stormwater and ecological improvements; and waterfront identity.

RIVERFRONT CONTEXT

RIVERFRONT NEIGHBORHOODS



LAWRENCEVILLE

STRIP DISTRICT

NORTH SHORE

CENTRAL
BUSINESS
DISTRICT

SOUTH SIDE

Development is already happening quickly on riverfront properties in the Strip District. Because these riverfront parcels are held by various land owners, public access to the water is not a given — a plan must be put in place now to preserve continuous and consistent waterfront access for the public. Riverlife has been working with individual land owners to develop a strategy to realize this continuous public access in a way that both highlights the importance of the waterfront in the Strip District’s identity, and draws investment to the district that benefits new development.

THE TIME IS
NOW

CREATING A DESTINATION RIVERFRONT

IN THE STRIP DISTRICT, the landscape design for the riverfront between 11th Street and 27th Street envisions a public park, a new waterfront dock with casual dining options, an expanded marina, and a series of riverfront overlooks and fishing piers to draw residents, workers, and visitors down to the water and provide new waterborne activities. A community plaza at 11th Street will offer activities for the neighborhood,

with a flexible gathering space, terraced seating facing a small stage, and views of the Fort Wayne Railroad Bridge. While comfortable streetscaping is planned for all streets in the Strip District, there may be additional opportunities in the design of streets to integrate regenerative stormwater conveyance strategies that are beautiful, functional, and express the sustainability goals of the project.



STRIP DISTRICT RIVERFRONT

FOCAL POINTS

Over time, at the focal points that terminate the key perpendicular connections from the neighborhood, the existing asphalt trail may incorporate more inviting materials. The focal points will be marked by the use of interesting patterns of stone or concrete pavers, as well as wood decking at the overlooks. Site furnishings at these

focal points should be selected to reflect the unique material palette established for the site, and should be clustered to create social seating for the public. Many of these focal points also offer the opportunity to step or ramp down closer to the water's edge, giving users multiple experiences of the riverfront and, in some cases, enabling water access.

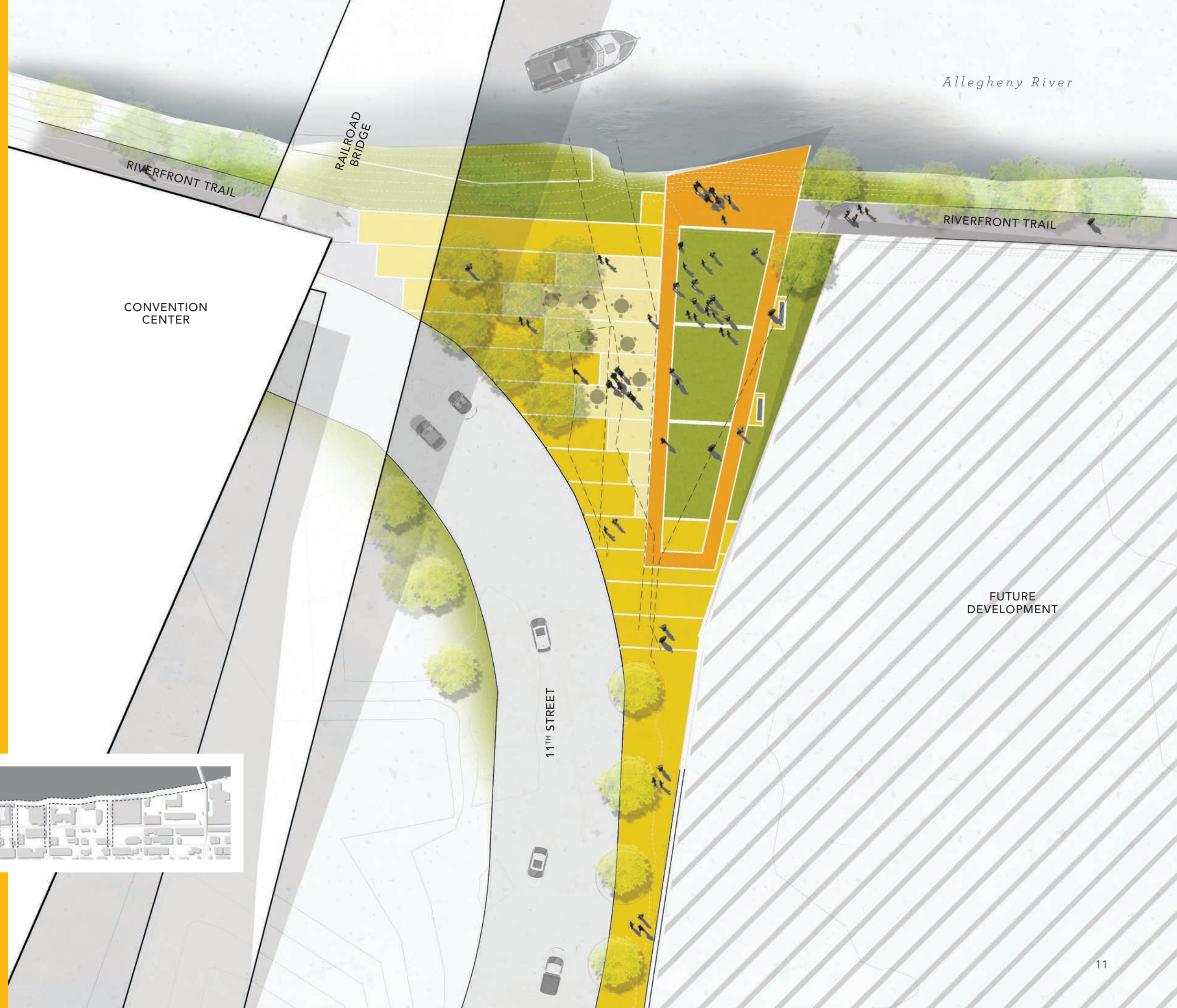
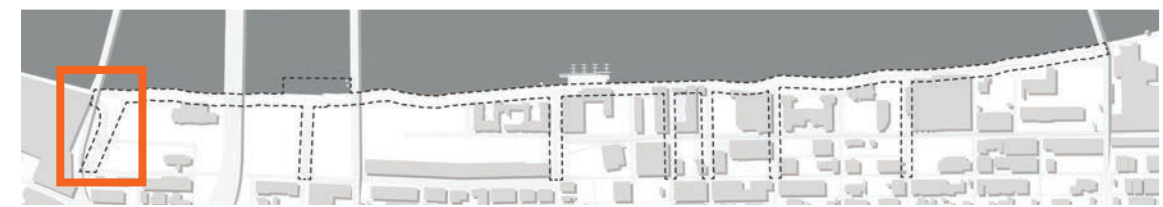
Each of these perpendicular connections correlates with streets that fall under the City of Pittsburgh's Complete Streets executive order. The Complete Streets policy requires planning of public streets, sidewalks, and other critical infrastructure to meet the daily needs of users of all ages, incomes, and abilities, and accommodate a mix of pedestrian and transportation uses.

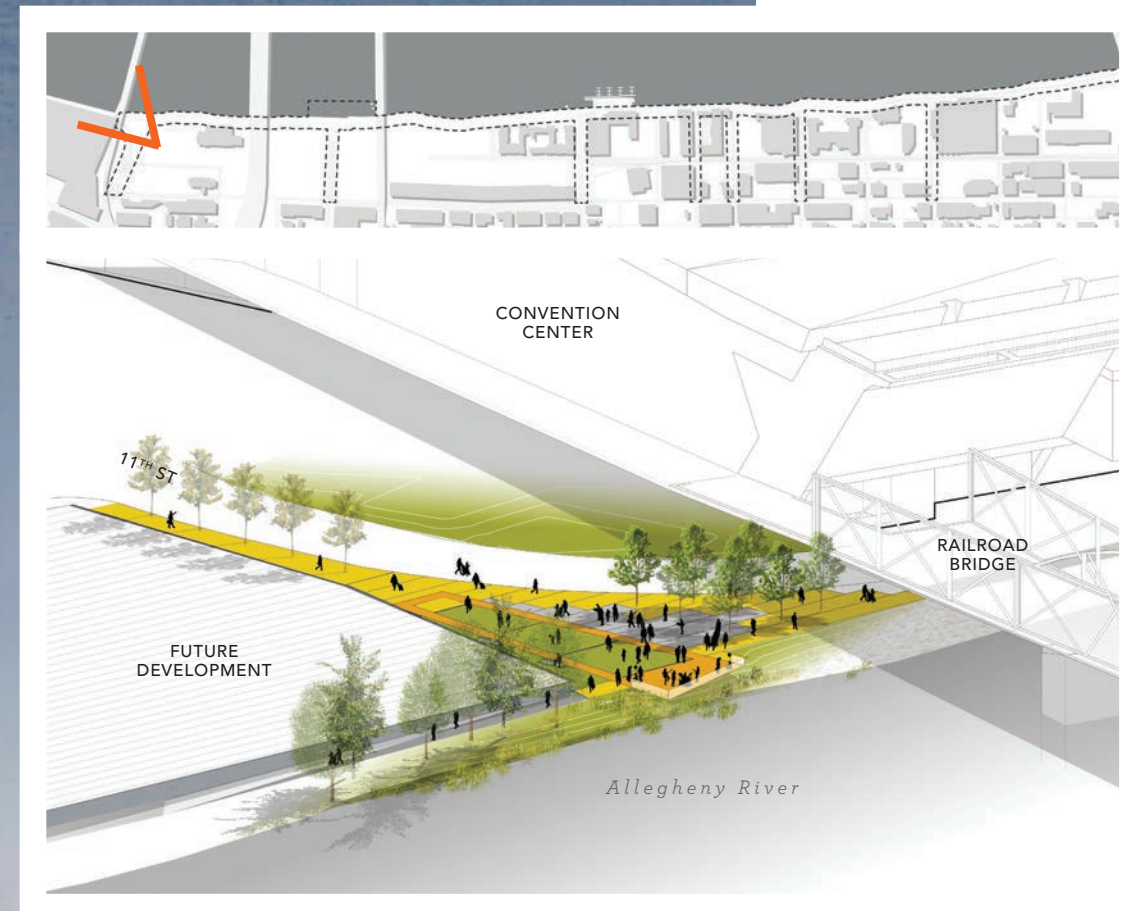
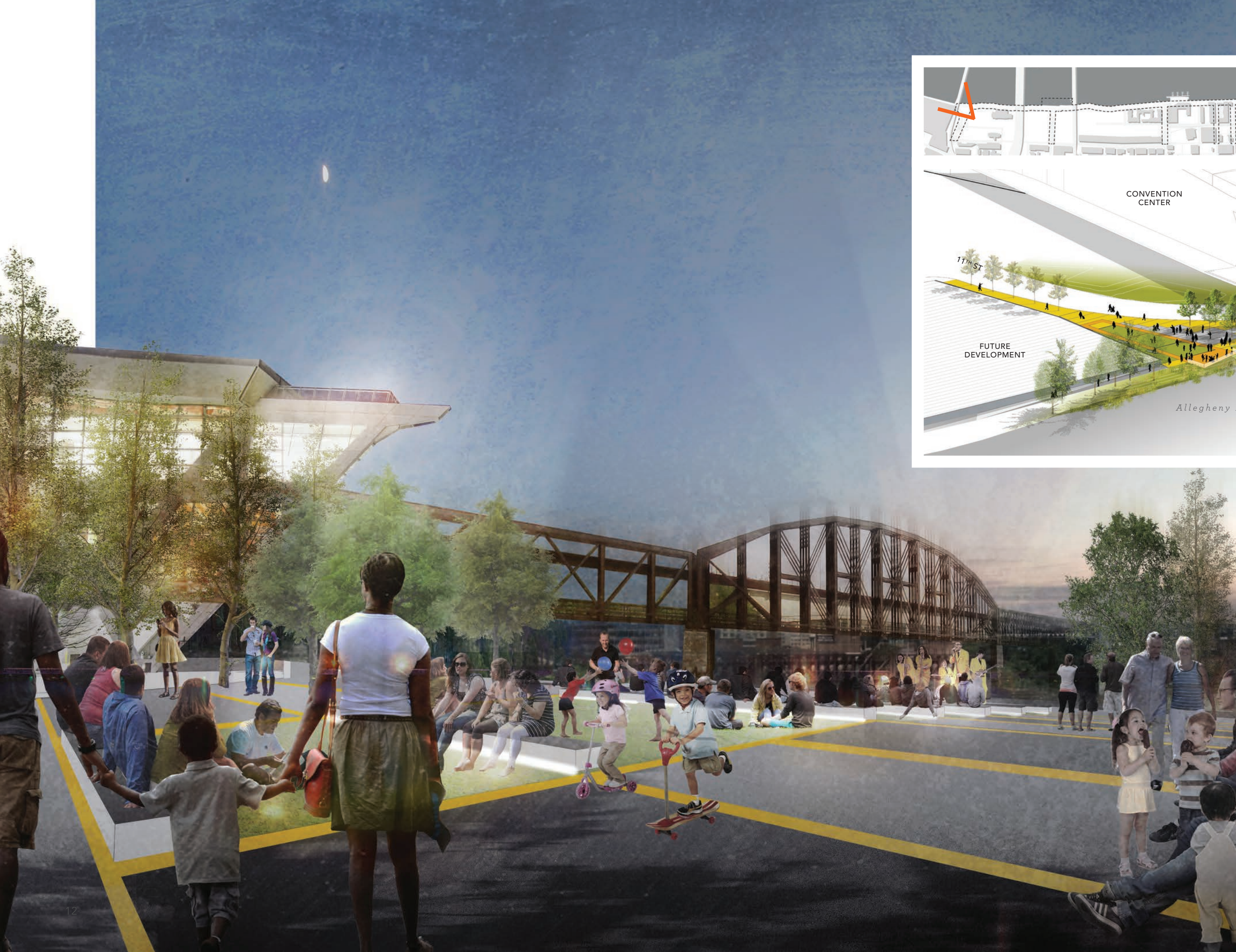
FOCAL POINTS RIVERFRONT TRAIL COMPLETE STREETS



11TH STREET PLAZA

At the terminus of 11th Street, a new public plaza will link the riverfront landscape of the Strip District to the already realized Three Rivers Park and Three Rivers Heritage Trail downtown. With a series of terraces and an overlook that could serve as a stage, the space is designed for flexible use, ranging from informal daily gathering for the neighborhood to performances for the broader community.



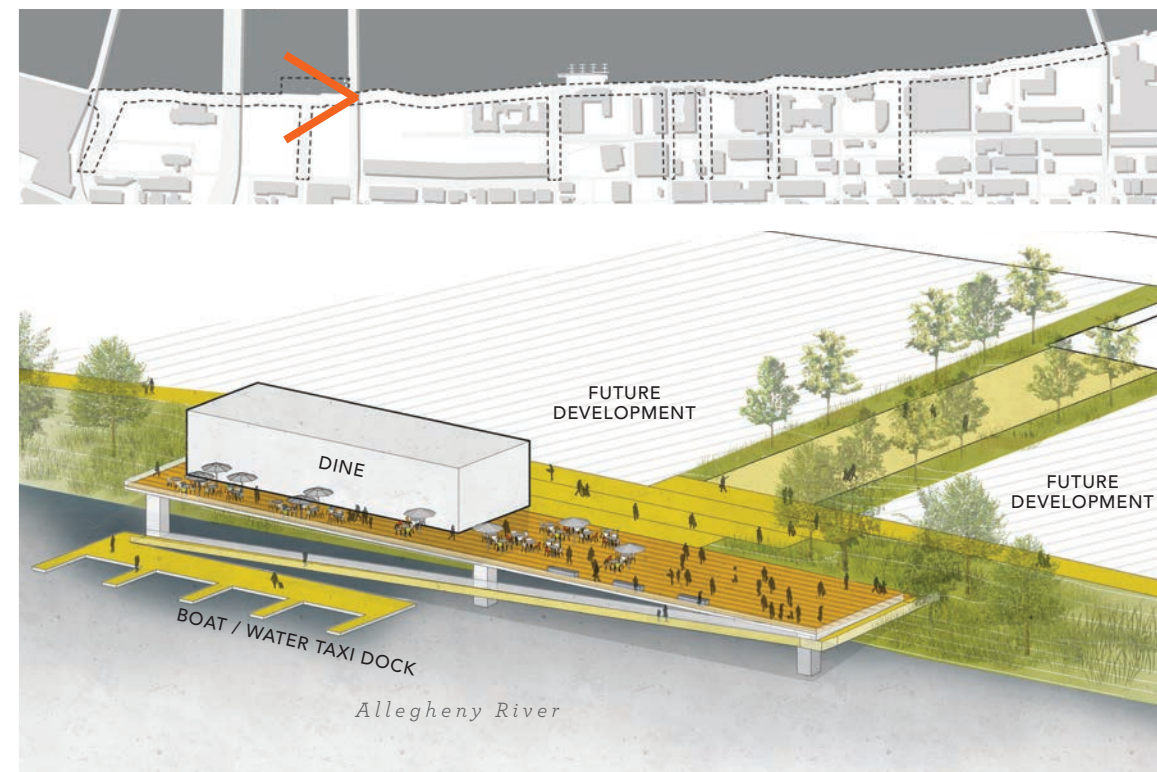




15TH STREET LANDING

At 15th Street, a new riverfront landing is planned overlooking the river. The 15th Street Landing will provide an opportunity for new programming on the river, such as a pop-up café, food vendors, or casual dining. A ramp connecting to several boat slips allows patrons the unique experience of arriving by water for a bite to eat. The Landing will be a new attraction drawing neighbors and visitors to the Strip District's riverfront.

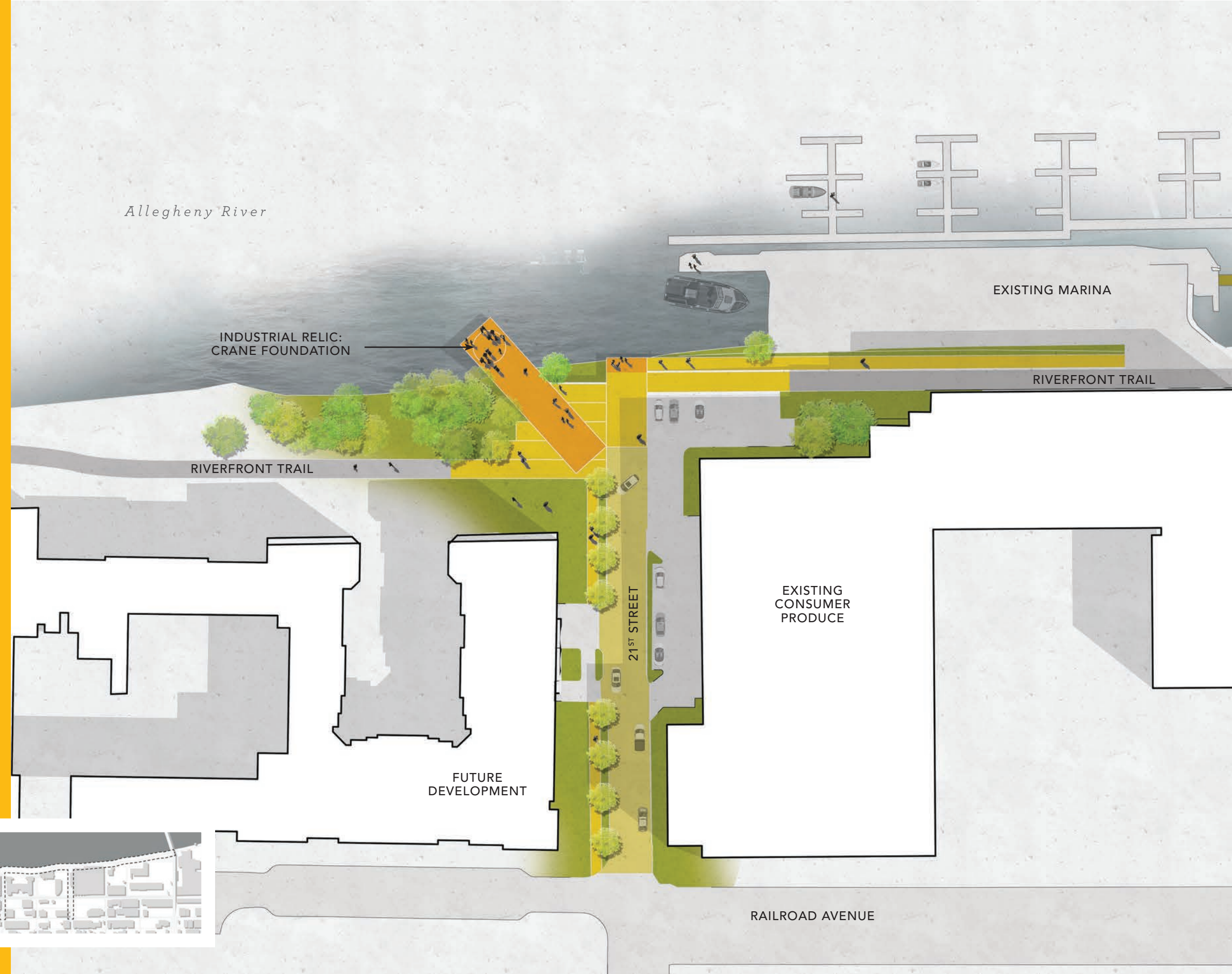




21ST STREET OVERLOOK

A new overlook/fishing pier is planned to reach out from 21st Street toward views downriver. The foundation of the overlook will be a unique onsite relic — a historic crane foundation that sits in the river. The design of the overlook will highlight this special feature. The focal point at 21st Street will also ramp down to connect to the existing marina alongside the site, providing water access as well as a connected riverfront trail at the upper level.

Because of its wide right of way, the redesign of 21st Street offers a unique opportunity to integrate stormwater treatment into the streetscape design. 21st Street has the potential to become a testing ground and a model of stormwater best management practices in the urban context of the Strip District.



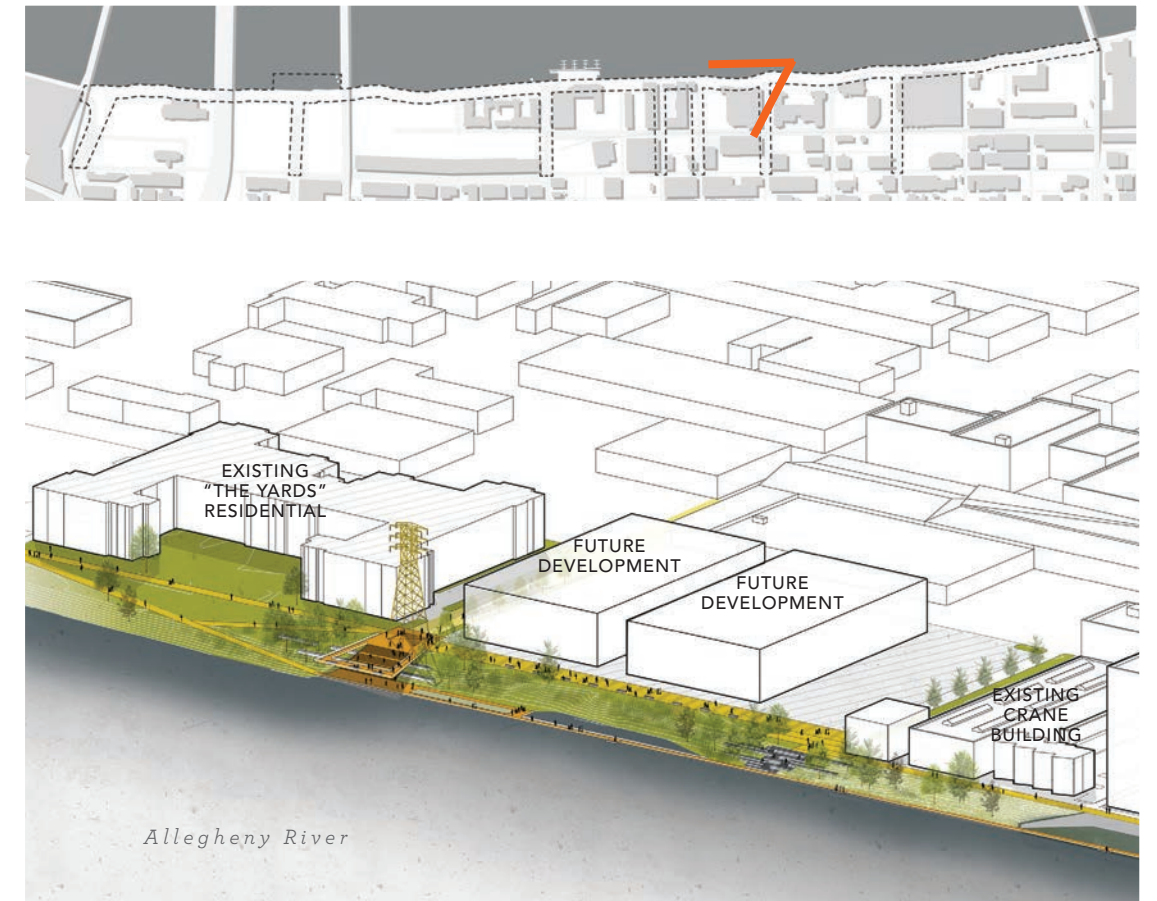




26TH STREET BANKS

The riverfront from 24th Street to 27th Street is an area of reinvestment for the Strip District. The collapsing river bank will need to be rebuilt near 24th Street at the Crane Building, allowing multiple experiences of the river with both upper and lower level pathways. At the terminus of 26th Street, a grand stair will step down to the water, allowing large gatherings or smaller groups to view the river. At the lower elevation, a fishing area in the dock will support waterside recreation. Along this stretch of riverfront, the slopes are laid back to enable a more natural bank ecology and support native habitat.



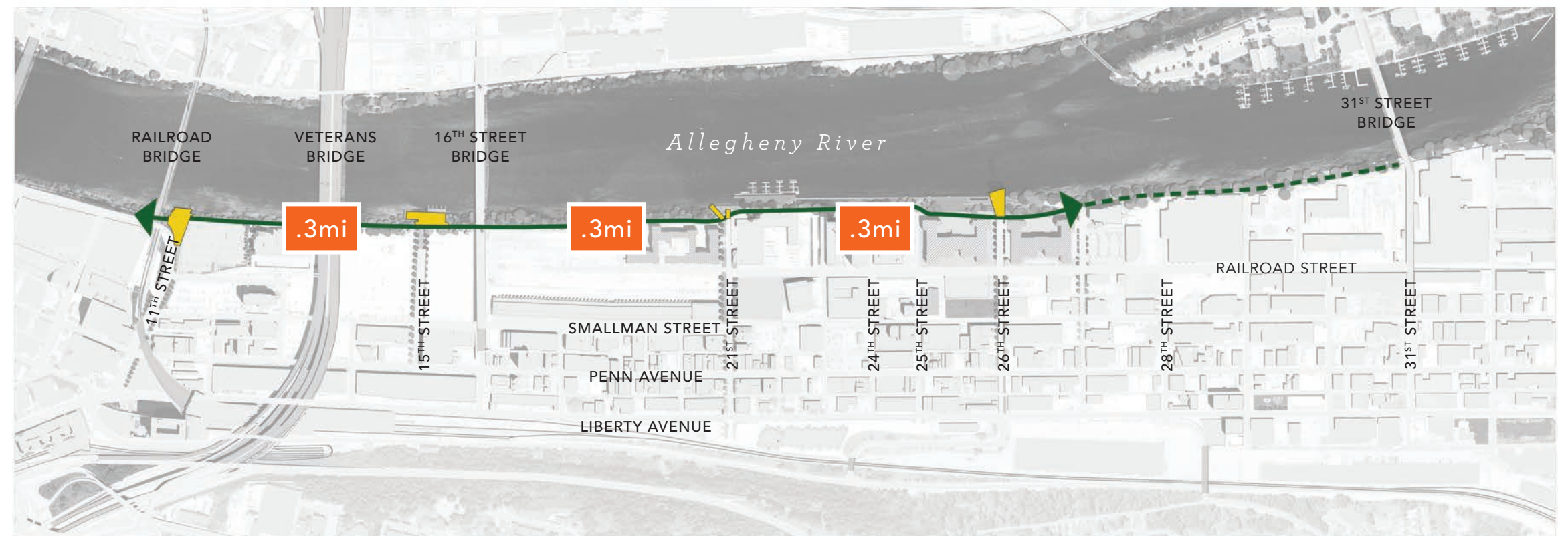


PROGRAMMING AND
DESIGN CHARACTER

PROGRAMMING

Along the river in the Strip District, the design concept establishes a gradient that transitions from urban to wild. Where it ties into the urban, hardscape condition near the Convention Center, there will be more paved plaza and a more developed water's edge. As the trail moves upstream, it will transition to a more naturalistic condition, with a softer, gradually sloped water's edge and native plantings.

The distance between each focal point on the Strip District Riverfront park vision is approximately 0.3 miles, creating a rhythm and flow to the pedestrian experience.



WALKING DISTANCES

FOCAL POINTS RIVERFRONT TRAIL



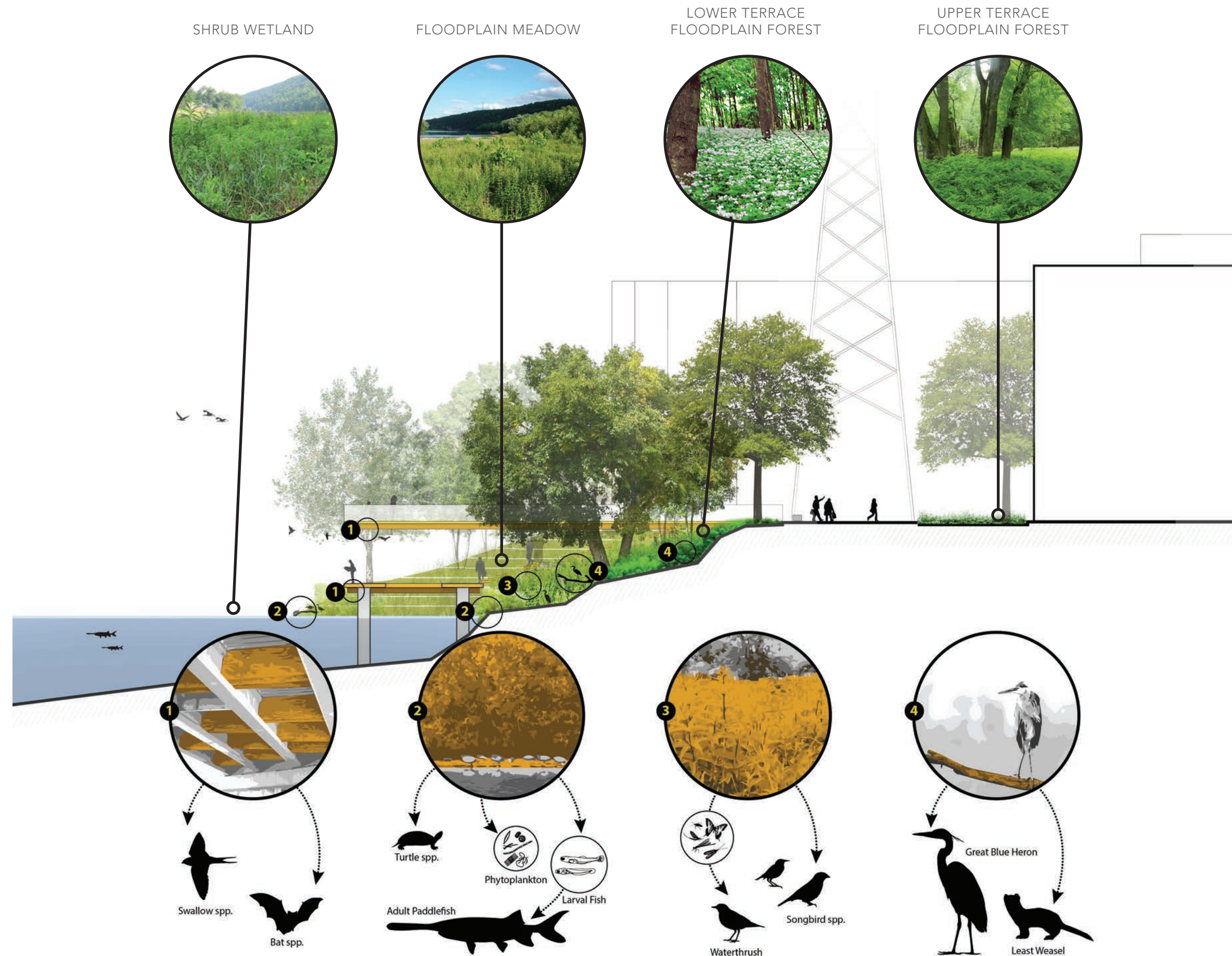
ECOLOGICAL STRATEGY

Whenever possible, the design calls for the regrading of riverside slopes to a more gradual, terraced situation to support the reestablishment of native plantings. These native plant communities and softer edge conditions will in turn support some of the critical and threatened species of fauna along the river, helping to restore the ecological function of the river's edge from its earlier compromised industrial condition.

The 57,000 Pittsburgh residents living within a mile of the Strip District would collectively save up to an estimated \$17.1 million annually in health costs through the use of the riverfront park for exercise.

Within the proposed open space, each tree would remove between 300 and 700 pounds of carbon annually. The proposed open space improvements would add approximately 15 acres of new open space and 1.5 miles of extended trail. The projected ridership along the Allegheny riverfront trail is expected to reach up to 2,105 riders per day, which would reduce up to 300,000 vehicle miles traveled per year and save 112,100 kg eCO₂.

SOURCE: ALLEGHENY RIVERFRONT GREEN BOULEVARD STRATEGIC PLAN, SASAKI ASSOCIATES, 2013.



MATERIAL CHARACTER

Pittsburgh's Strip District has a unique material identity that speaks to its rich and layered industrial history. The design of the riverfront park aims to pull from the rich palette of materials found in the surrounding area, interpreting them in a contemporary and playful way that infuses the riverfront with life, interest, and authenticity. The proposed material palette for the park includes contemporary applications of weathered steel and layered concrete found in the city's industrial landscape, with the iconic Aztec Gold of Pittsburgh's bridges as an accent color for special elements and graphics. It also considers the artistic reinterpretation of industrial relics found on the sites, as well as the introduction of public art and pop-up uses that reflect Pittsburgh's unique character.



TRAIL CHARACTER

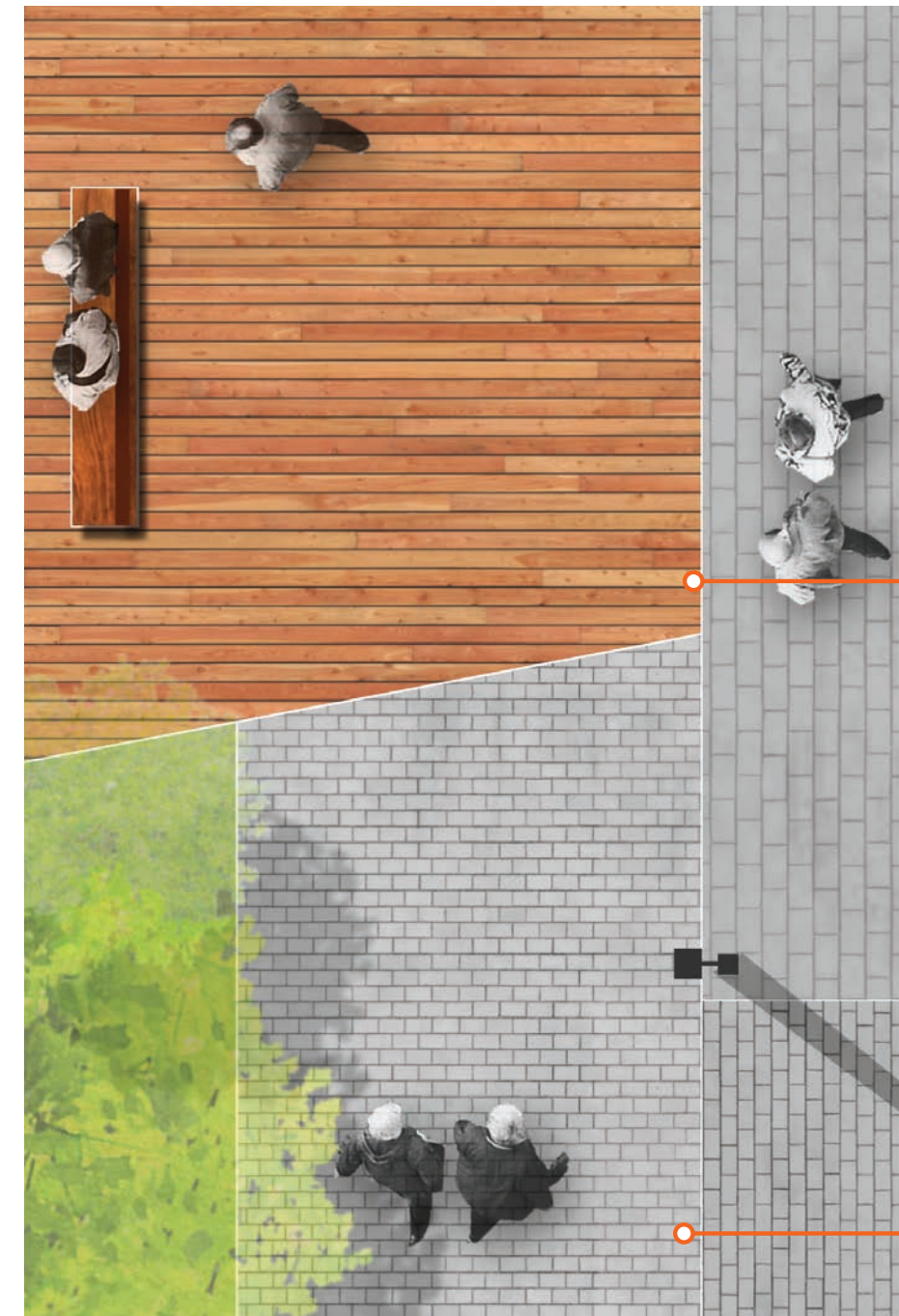
The design for the trail draws from this unique material palette. The multi-use trail is envisioned to be 14 feet wide and constructed of asphalt edged in cobbles. The length of the trail should be lighted to comfortable, consistent, and safe pedestrian levels with contemporary LED fixtures. Site furnishings such as benches, drinking fountains, and trash receptacles should be located at key locations where trail users will want to sit and gather. The incorporation of interpretive signage and supergraphics on the trail, utilizing Pittsburgh's iconic Aztec Gold color, should be considered to mark key distances and historic information.



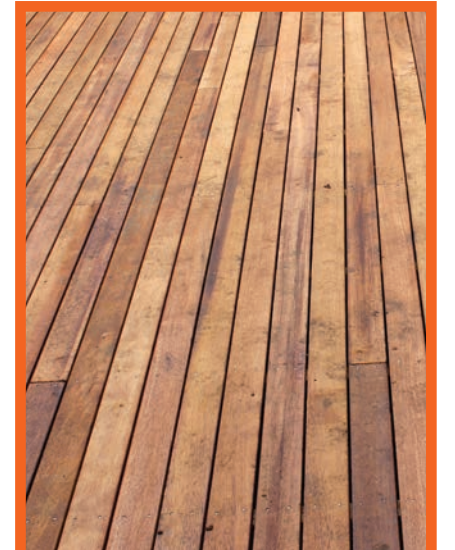
Bold Graphics to Signify Distances and Gateways



Asphalt Path with Cobble Edging



Wood Decking at Overlooks



Stone or Concrete Pavers



IMPLEMENTING A COMMUNITY VISION

Pittsburgh's downtown riverfront transformation has changed the face of the city and its image worldwide and demonstrated an increasing economic and revitalized community impact. Partnering with property owners and community stakeholders in the Strip, Riverlife will continue its work to transform riverfront access and advance implementation for Strip District Riverfront Park and its public amenities.

Next steps include the development of a financing plan for the construction of the new park and a funding strategy to support its long-term maintenance and operation.

VISIT [RIVERLIFEPGH.ORG](https://riverlifepgh.org) FOR PROJECT UPDATES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

GET INVOLVED

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Riverlife gratefully acknowledges the following property owners who generously contributed to the Strip District Riverfront Park Vision Plan and the community stakeholders who provided invaluable public feedback during the planning process.

CONTRIBUTORS:

- THE BUNCHER COMPANY
- OXFORD DEVELOPMENT COMPANY
- PITT OHIO
- RIVERLIFE
- RUGBY REALTY
- URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF PITTSBURGH

PARTNERS:

- BIKE PITTSBURGH
- CITY OF PITTSBURGH DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
- CITY OF PITTSBURGH DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
- FRIENDS OF THE RIVERFRONT
- LAWRENCEVILLE CORPORATION
- STRIP DISTRICT NEIGHBORS
- SPORTS & EXHIBITION AUTHORITY OF PITTSBURGH AND ALLEGHENY COUNTY

We would like to thank the following partners for their contributions to bettering our community.



S A S A K I