COOPER RIVER PARK

VISION PLAN

camden county
NEW JERSEY
Making It Better, Together.

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FOREWARD

From a historical perspective and for many generations, the Cooper River has been the lifeblood for Camden, the Delaware Valley and at various times, the Nation. While still Cooper's Creek, it served as a navigable waterway transporting agriculture products. Under the Works Progress Administration (WPA) it underwent an enormous transformation into what is the modern day Cooper River Park. Considered one of the longest, unbroken straight river courses in the country, it is valued as one of the finest venues for competitive sailing and rowing. Annually, it hosts numerous prestigious regattas which generate millions of dollars in revenue for the area. In addition to the river activities, its picturesque banks offer numerous opportunities for hiking, biking, strolling and picnicking for a wide and diverse group of users.

Moving forward, Cooper River Park will build upon its rich history of providing for residents of Camden County and out-of-town visitors with a visionary plan for the future. This plan will endeavor to refine the park's existing facilities -- striving to create a phased process that results in a flexible and enduring place of international caliber. The ensuing report will underscore and outline the various goals and objectives necessary to achieve this vision.

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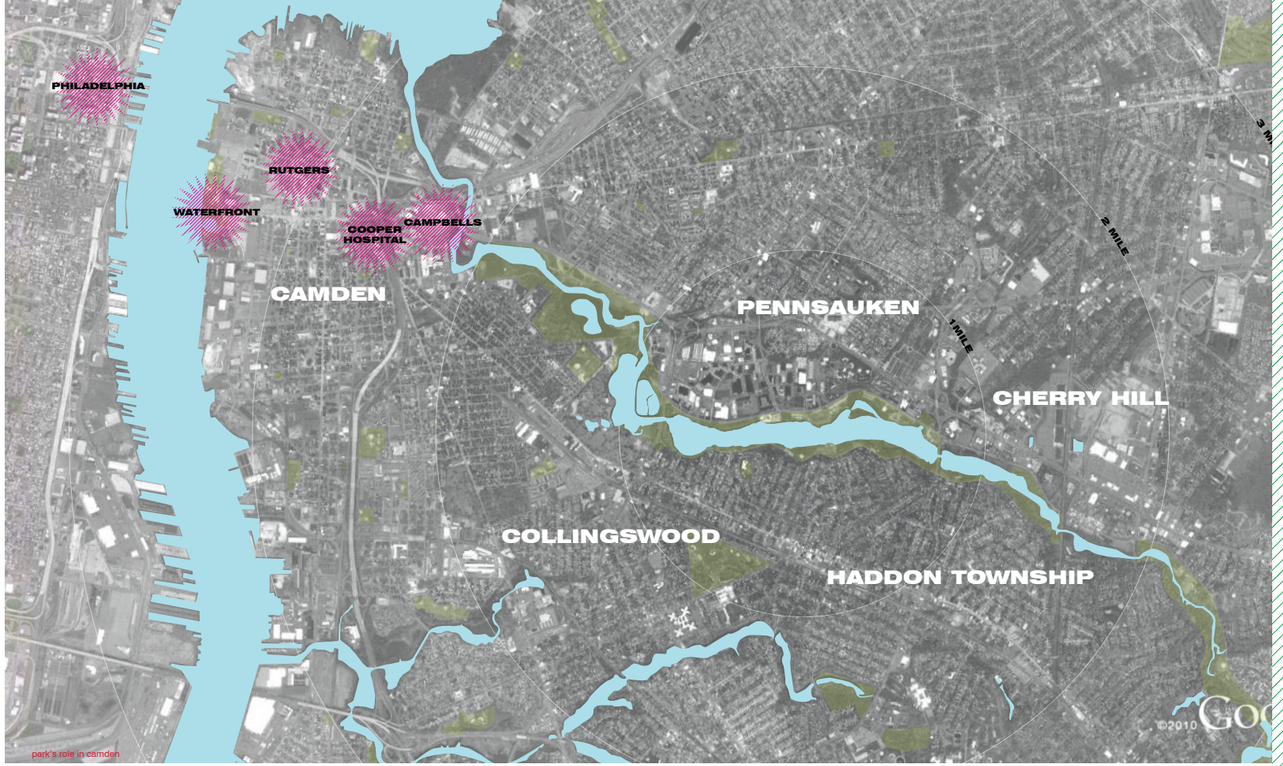
INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

CONTEXT

To position itself as a park of international renown, connections to neighboring towns, cities, institutions as well as other public spaces are crucial to building constituency. Leveraging its proximity and support from institutions and corporations, Cooper River Park can expand its reach far beyond Camden County.

LOCATION AND INFLUENCE



Cooper River Park is highly accessible by automobile. However, access to the park via public transportation for those outside of the area is a challenge. To increase diversity and the amount of its users, a more direct link to public transportation may be considered. Additionally, connecting to train stations within a 1.5 mile radius can be facilitated through pedestrian friendly streets complete with shade trees and conveniently located walkways.

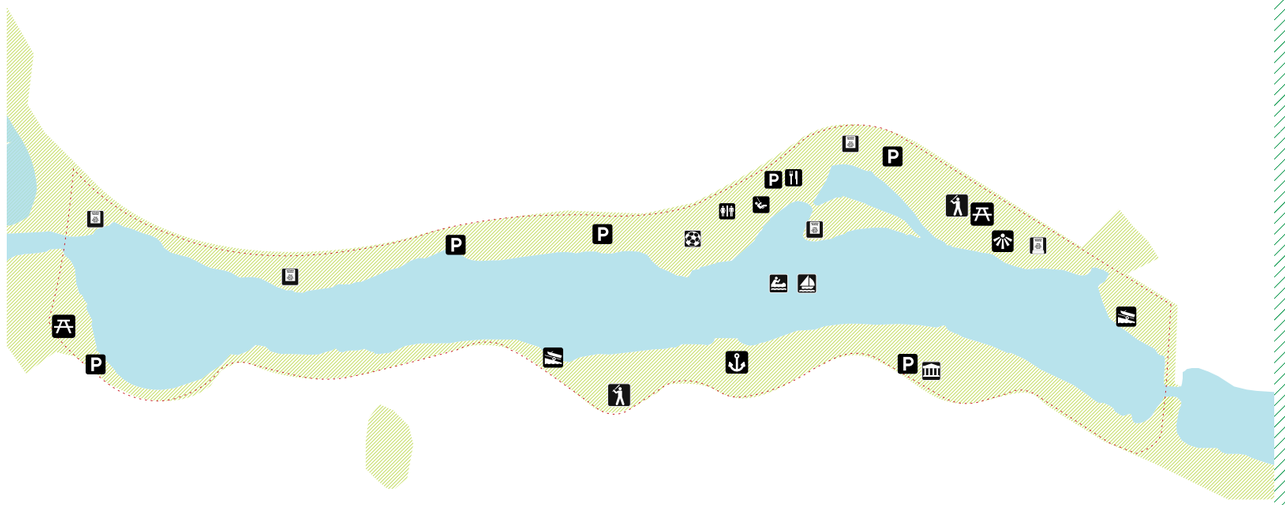
TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

THE PARK

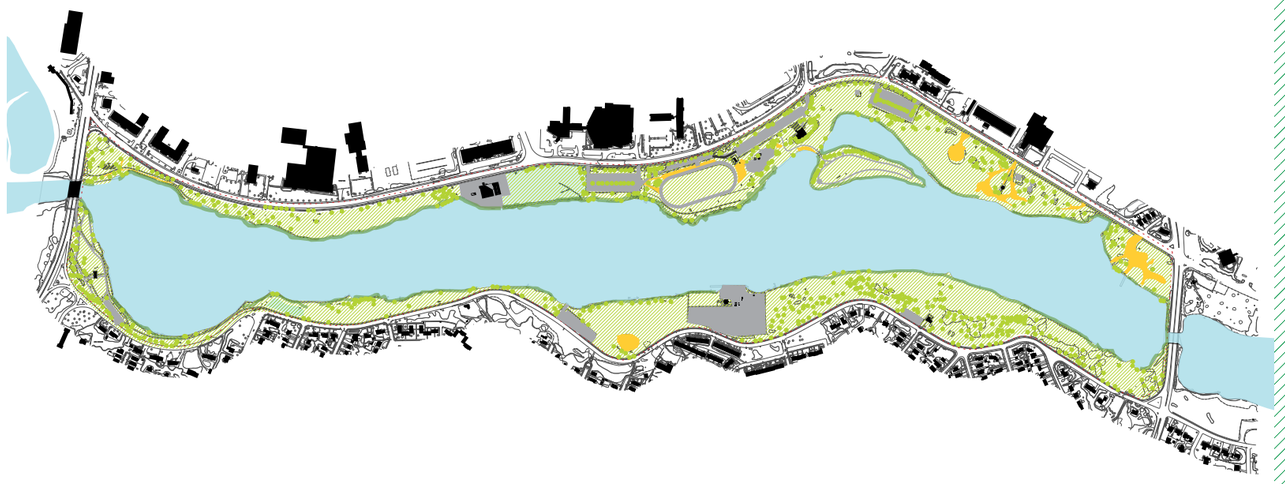
The most significant programmatic component of the park is the river. With a plethora of events surrounding rowing and sailing, the opportunity is ripe to expand upon these water-based activities. Passive programming such as picnicking and walking are the most common activities. Increasing the variety of these programs will attract more visitors. Connecting the areas of these programs will ensure longer, as well as repeat visits.

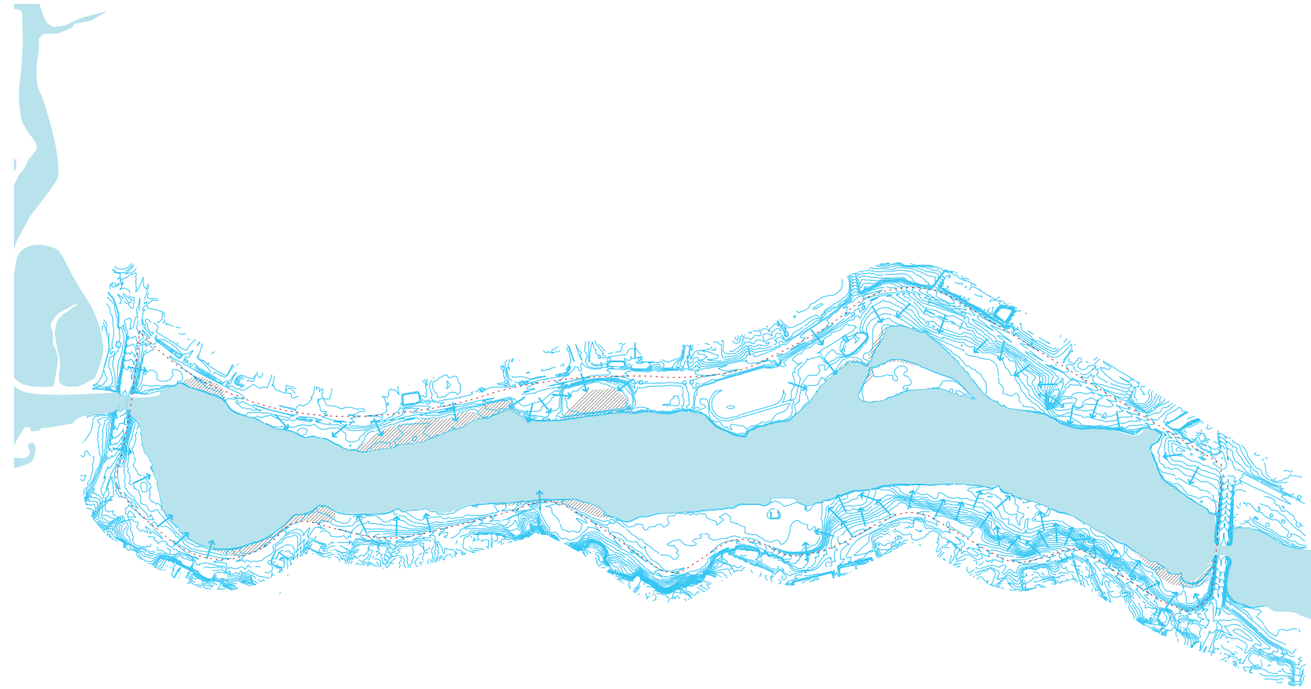
PROGRAM



The majority of the surface cover in the park, with the exception of the river, is turf grass. Existing tree cover is evidenced by the planted shade trees. The existing riparian buffer plantings are thin and consistently obscure views to the river.

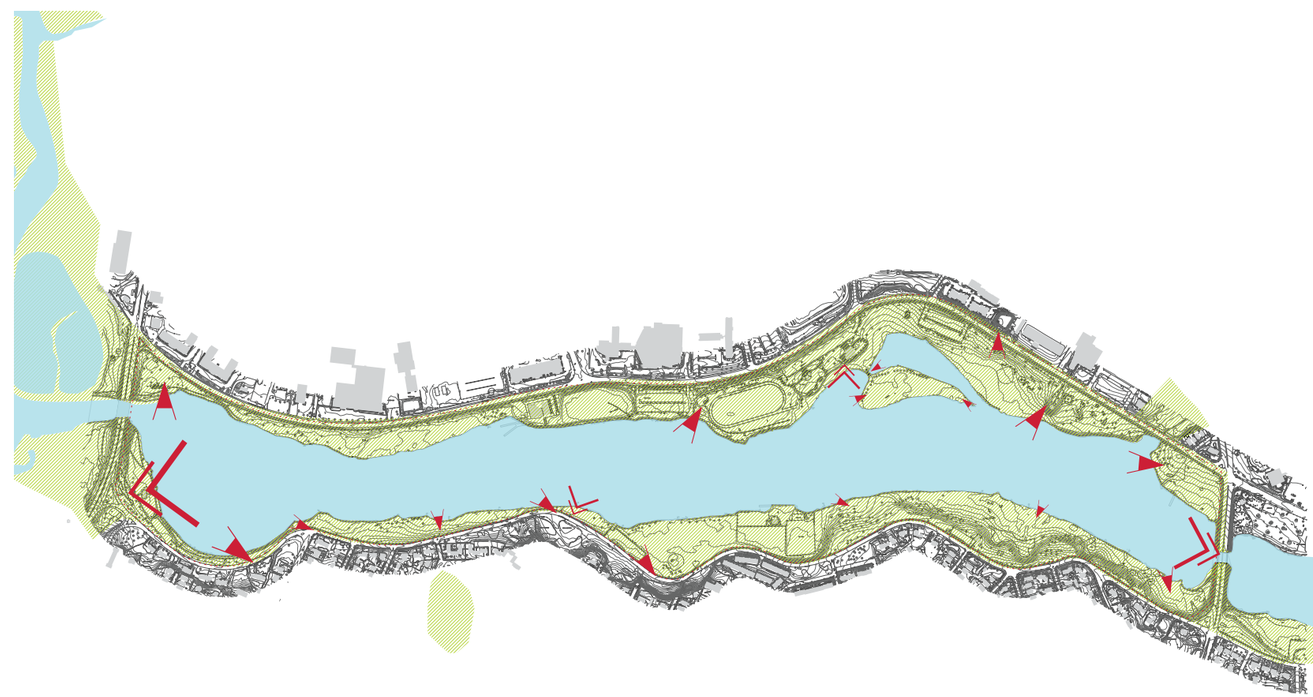
SURFACE COVER





Gray hatches indicated low areas and zones which are most prone to river flooding. Directional surficial flow is indicated by blue arrows.

STORMWATER



This diagram illustrates the variety of views on site. Due to the condition and extent of the existing riparian buffer, most direct views of the river from street level are obscured. In most cases, only direct access to the water's edge allows for the true appreciation of this visual resource.

VIEWS

MISSION STATEMENT & GOALS

Expand and refine the current qualities and attributes of the park so that it may continue to serve a diverse and large volume of users. Improve existing facilities to enable a phased, flexible and sustainable park of international caliber.

MISSION STATEMENT

1. PROTECT THE RIVER/PARK.

-Create an impactful riparian buffer
-Promote environmental awareness by way of interpretive centers, signage and educational tours

2. UNCOVER THE RIVER/PARK.

-Uncover and expand views opening vegetation in meaningful areas
-Provide designated public space at the river's edge
-Orient the park towards the river

3. CREATE A BETTER VERSION OF ITSELF

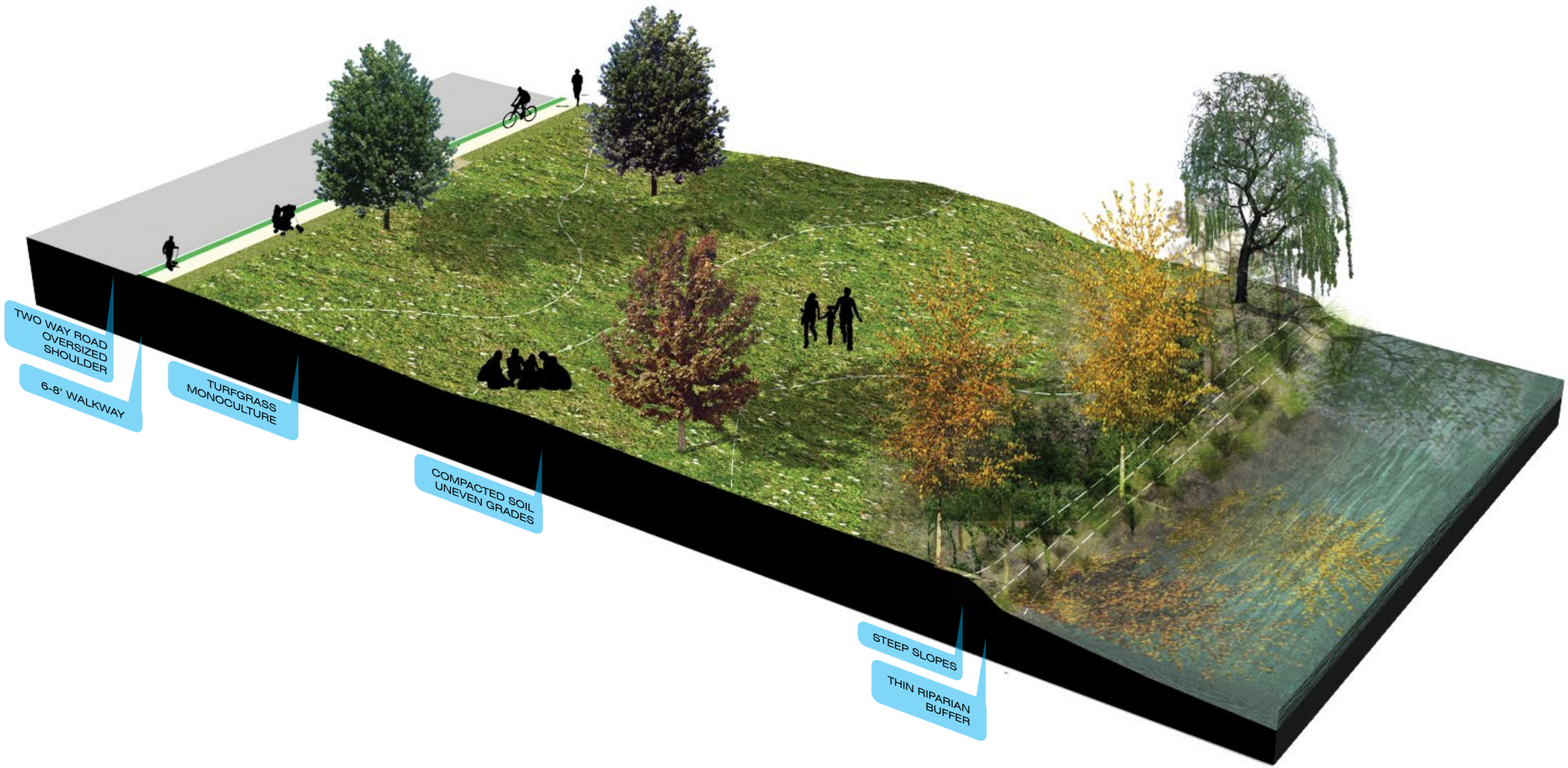
-Work within the park's current spatial framework
-Increase usership and revenue opportunities through new programs and venues that are currently in place
-Create a cohesive and unique design vocabulary

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

DESIGN CONCEPT

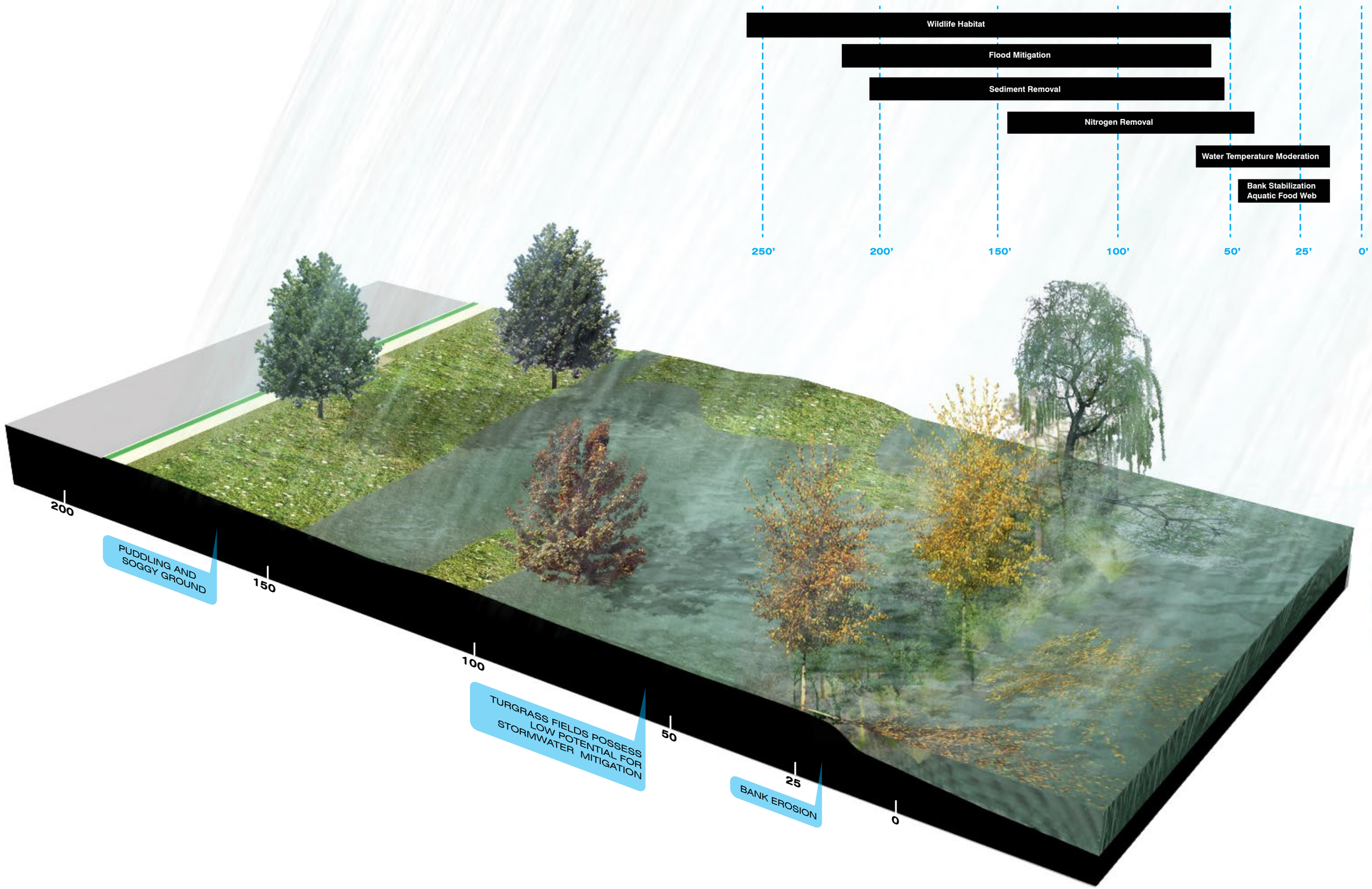
The river and the park are constantly in dialogue. When the river floods, it impacts the park land. Pollutants from the park can adversely impact the quality of the water. The water and the land are precious commodities and must be protected to ensure sustainability.

DESIGN CONCEPT **PROTECT THE RIVER/PARK**



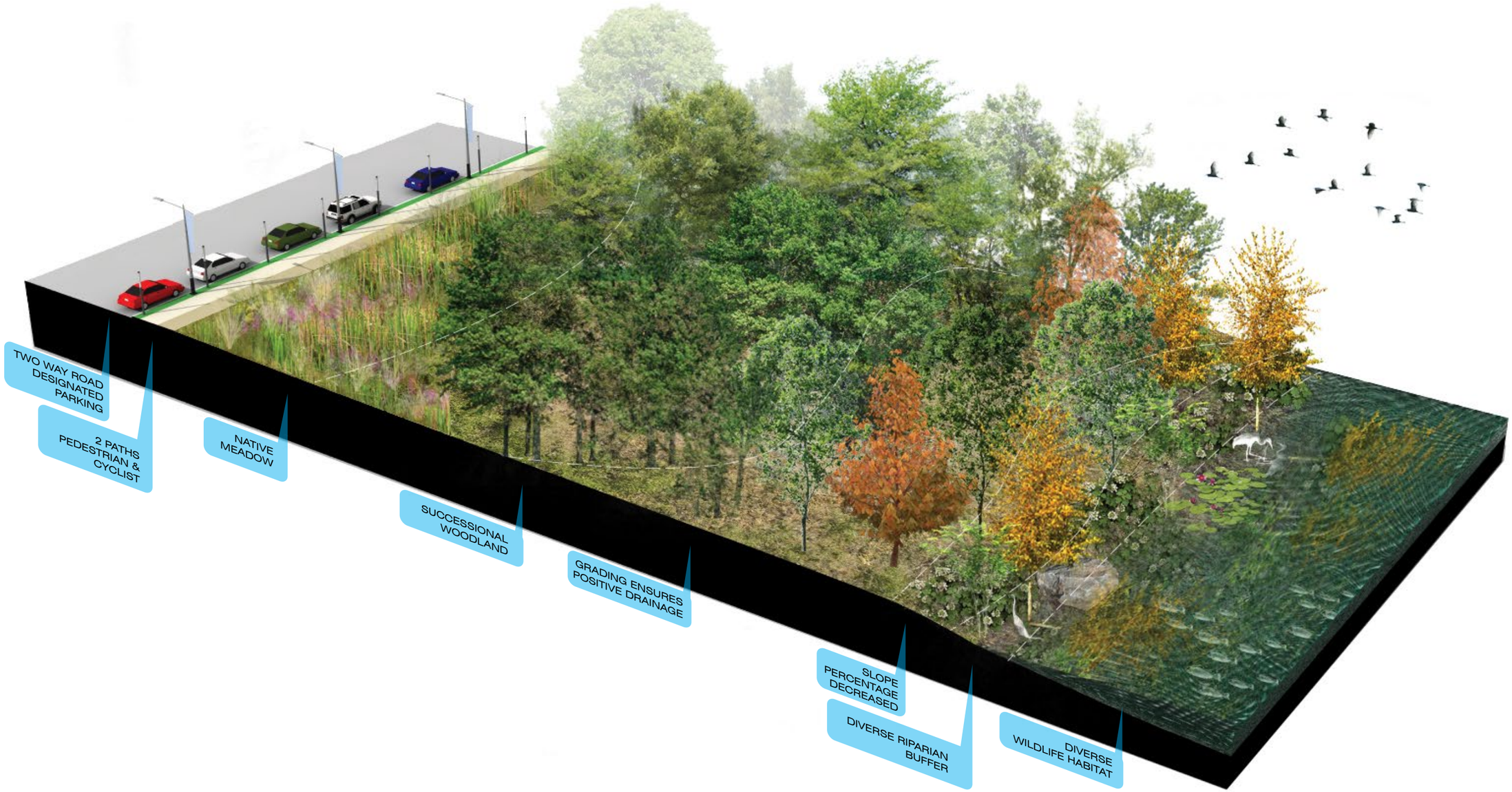
EXISTING CONDITION

STREET-PARK-RIVER INTERACTION EXAMPLE SECTION

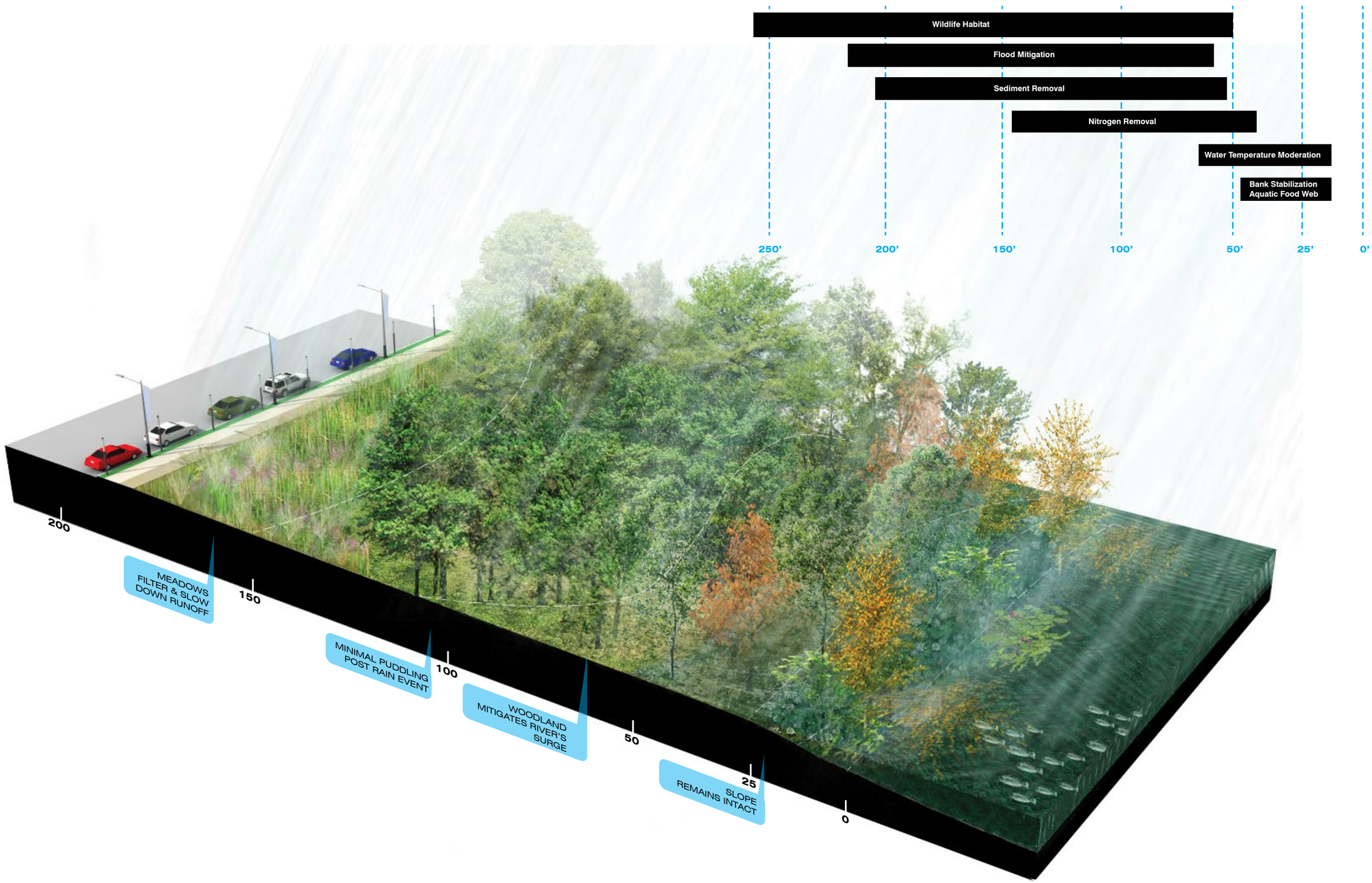


EXISTING CONDITION RAIN EVENT

STREET-PARK-RIVER INTERACTION EXAMPLE SECTION



PROPOSED CONDITION ENHANCED RIPARIAN BUFFER & STREET CONNECTION
STREET-PARK-RIVER INTERACTION EXAMPLE SECTION



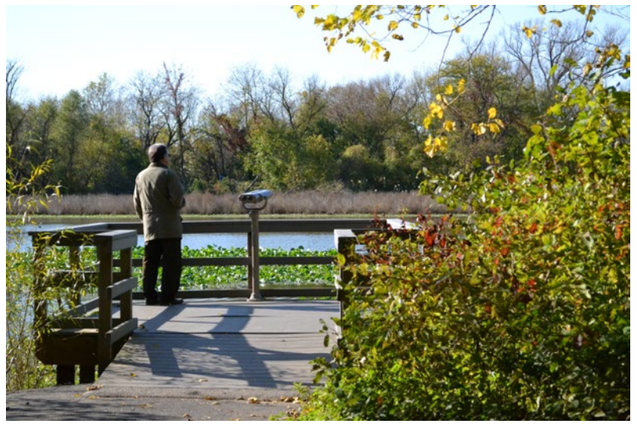
PROPOSED CONDITION ENHANCED RIPARIAN BUFFER RAIN EVENT

STREET-PARK-RIVER INTERACTION EXAMPLE SECTION

The Cooper River Park has served the diverse and unique recreational needs of generations of Delaware Valley residents as well as out of town visitors. Through a successful dialogue between land and water, this facility continues to provide quality recreational opportunities for its users, as well as a pleasant sense of surprise and comfort to first time visitors. In order for the park to build upon its past successes, the creation of meaningful and memorable public space along the water's edge is essential in defining the image of Cooper River Park for future generations. The following exhibits four public space typologies developed for Cooper River Park have been inspired from existing conditions. Other means of building upon the river's existing identity are explored through architectural features.

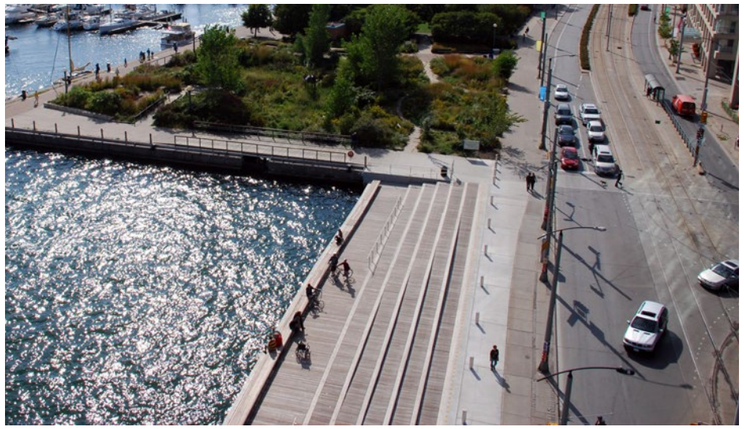
DESIGN CONCEPT UNCOVER THE RIVER/PARK

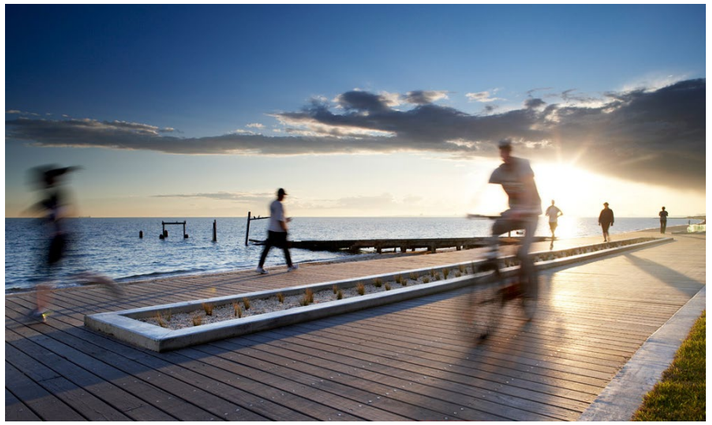
puncture



slot

vista





ribbon

The puncture is a small-scale intervention with a small dock that can accommodate a limited amount of people for more intimate, contemplative gatherings. With no formal access, its presence would be indicated by signage at the nearest walkway.

PROPOSED CONDITION RIVER ACCESS

STREET-PARK-RIVER INTERACTION EXAMPLE SECTION

A slot is a directed view framed by vegetation on either end. In terms of scale, it could accommodate medium-sized gatherings.

slot

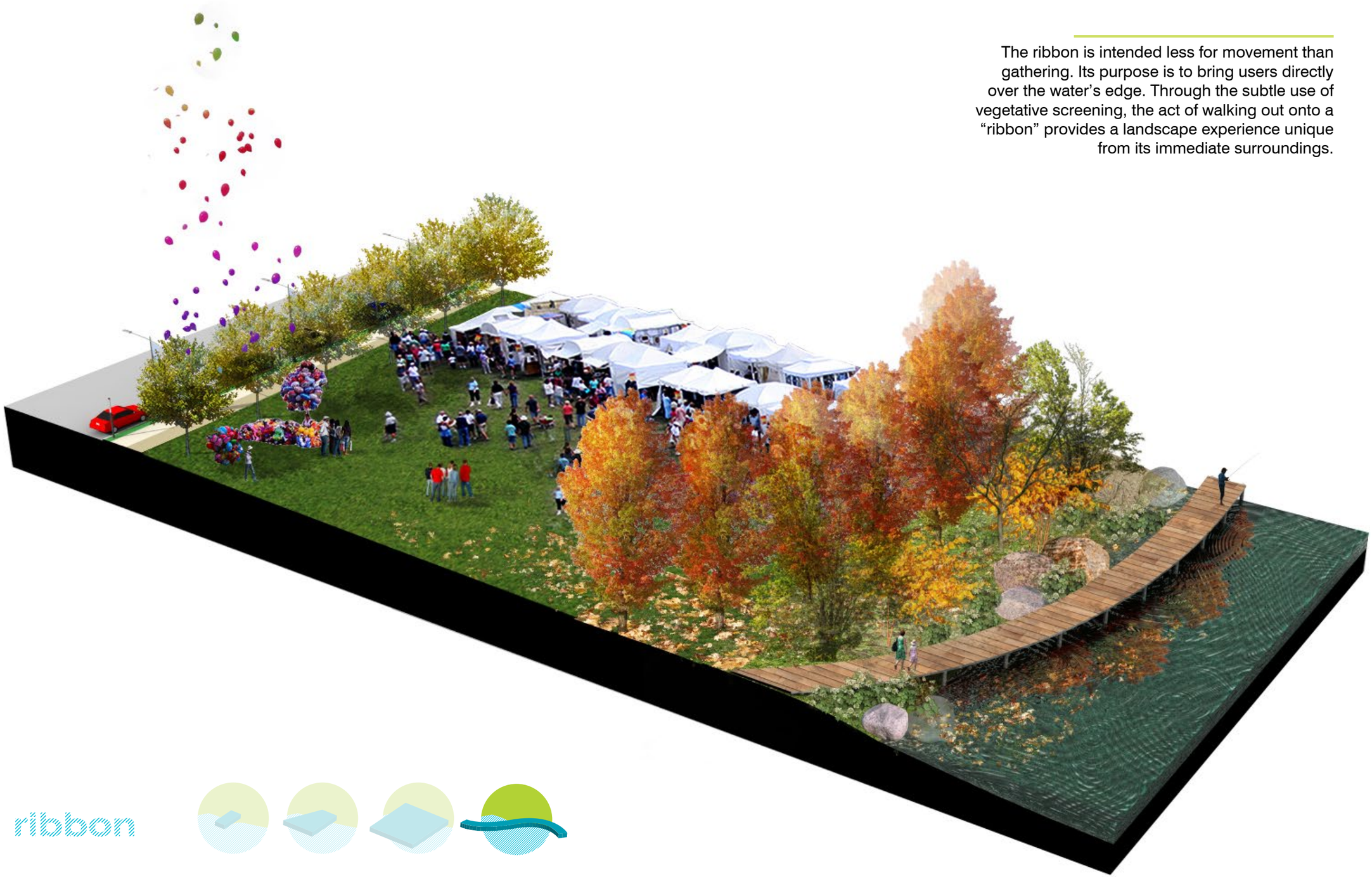
PROPOSED CONDITION RIVER ACCESS
STREET-PARK-RIVER INTERACTION EXAMPLE SECTION

The vista is the largest scale of the spaces, able to accommodate large-scale attractions and viewing of events along the river. Its proportions afford sweeping views of the Cooper River.

vista

PROPOSED CONDITION RIVER ACCESS
STREET-PARK-RIVER INTERACTION EXAMPLE SECTION

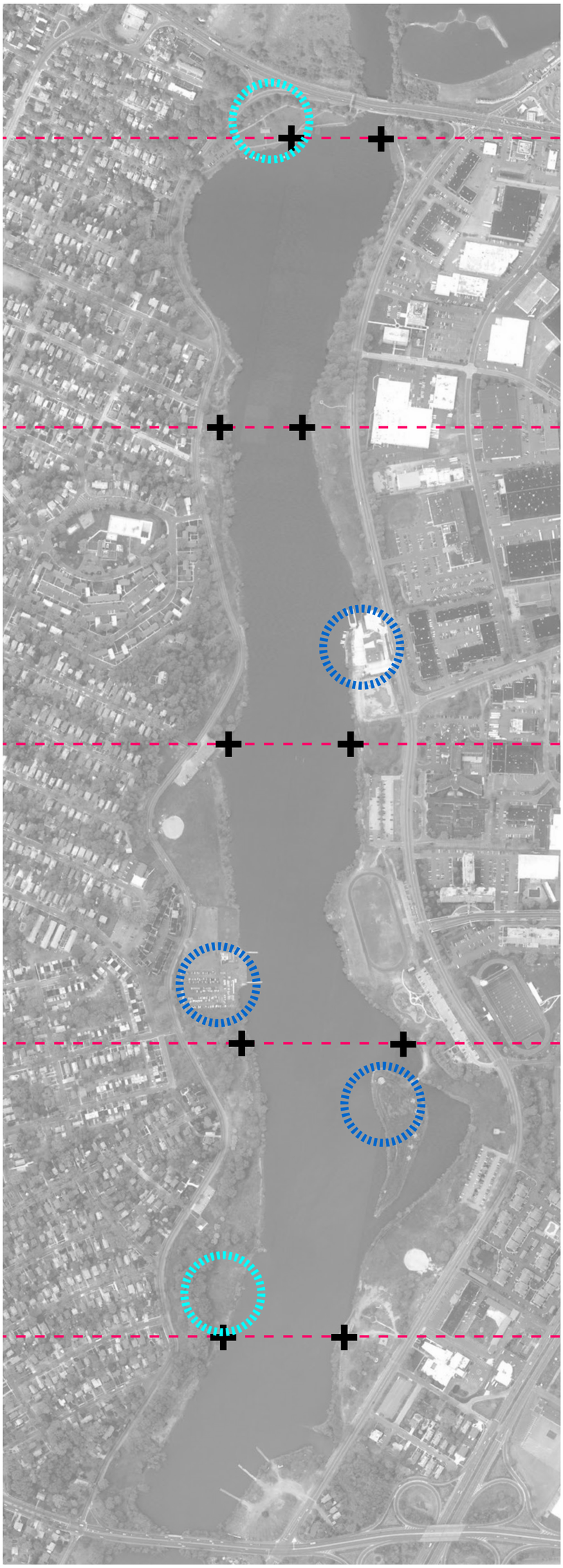
The ribbon is intended less for movement than gathering. Its purpose is to bring users directly over the water's edge. Through the subtle use of vegetative screening, the act of walking out onto a "ribbon" provides a landscape experience unique from its immediate surroundings.



ribbon

PROPOSED CONDITION RIVER ACCESS

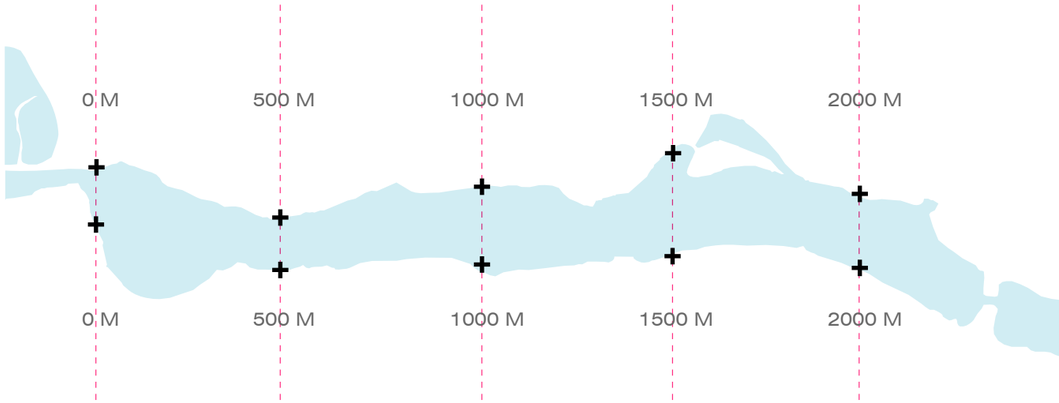
STREET-PARK-RIVER INTERACTION EXAMPLE SECTION



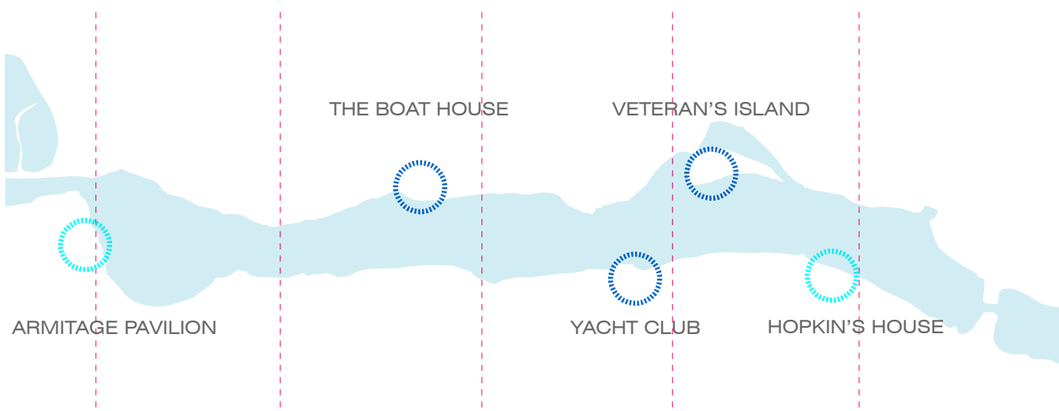
ICONS - EXISTING

ICONS - PROPOSED

METER MARKERS



METER MARKERS



Architectural Icons serve to create a sense of place along the water. These elements currently include the newly built boat house, the masts at the Yacht Club, and flags at Veteran's Island. Future expansions should be a new Armitage Pavilion and large-scale sculptures at Hopkins House.

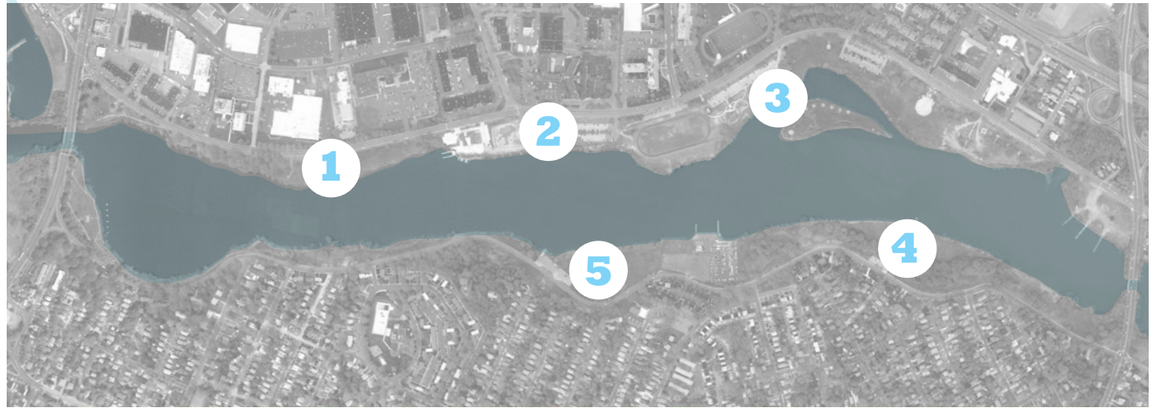
RIVER ICONS

Ultimately, the improvement of Cooper River Park comes not from a complete reworking of the entire system, but adaptation, modification and refinement. Through analysis of the park's current program, new programmatic elements and events can be introduced to increase the success of the park. Visually, the establishment of a unique park-wide design vocabulary will prove essential to its enduring success.

DESIGN CONCEPT A BETTER VERSION

The events on the Cooper River are currently a large source of revenue. Based upon existing uses, this diagram illustrates the potential for varied revenue sources

REVENUE SOURCES



Without dramatically altering the structure or current program of any portion of the park, refinements can be employed which will greatly enhance the quality of the space.

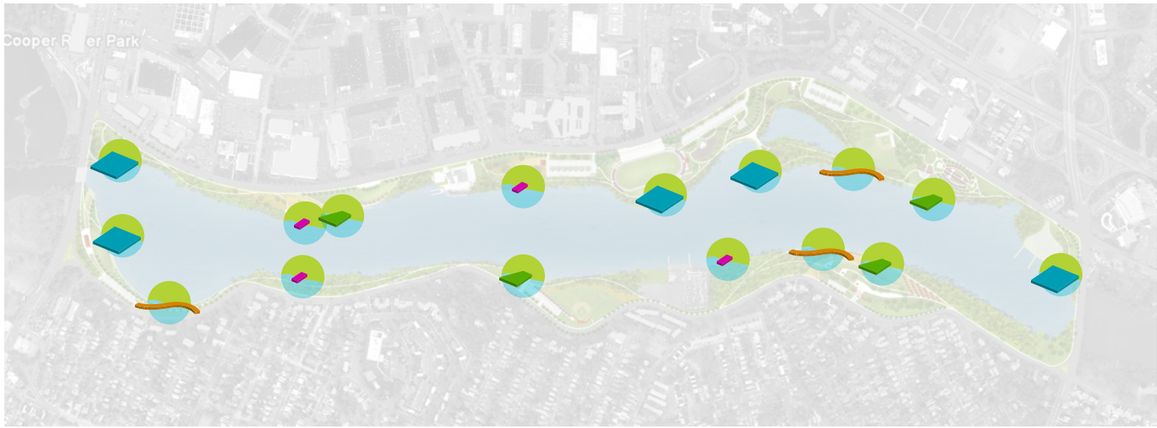
PROGRAM

MASTERPLAN

A. Polish War Memorial
B. Great Lawn
C. Boat House
D. NJ Clean Energy Center
E. Jack Curtis Stadium
F. Veteran's Island
G. Williamson Field
H. Memorial Gardens
I. Cuthbert Boat Launch
J. Armitage Pavilion
K. McCauley Field
L. Yacht Club
M. Hopkins House Sculpture Gardens

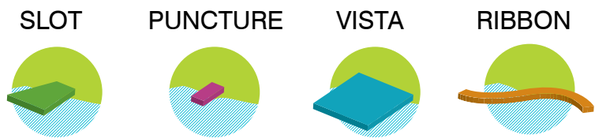
Based upon the three main design concepts, a careful balance has been struck to retain as much of the existing character of the site as possible. The most substantial improvement to the park will be its new direct connection to the river.

MASTER PLAN AND DIAGRAMS



RIVER ACCESS TYPOLOGIES

The distribution of the 4 types of public space along the river. Most of the areas correspond with meter markers.



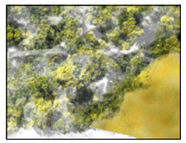
PATH & PLAZAS

The most evident improvement to the path system is the divergence from the existing, singular pathway along the road. New pathways allow users to experience a variety of settings, while serving to reduce pedestrian, stroller and bicycle conflicts.

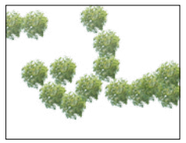
VEGETATION

The majority of the new vegetation, especially riparian buffers, will be introduced in a phased plan. Once established the riparian buffer will require minimal maintenance. New shade trees and ornamental trees will be planted in order to improve the ecological value of selected areas, as well as to increase the aesthetic appeal

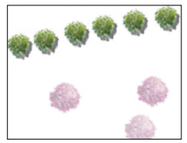
RIPARIAN



EXISTING



SHADE AND ORNAMENTAL



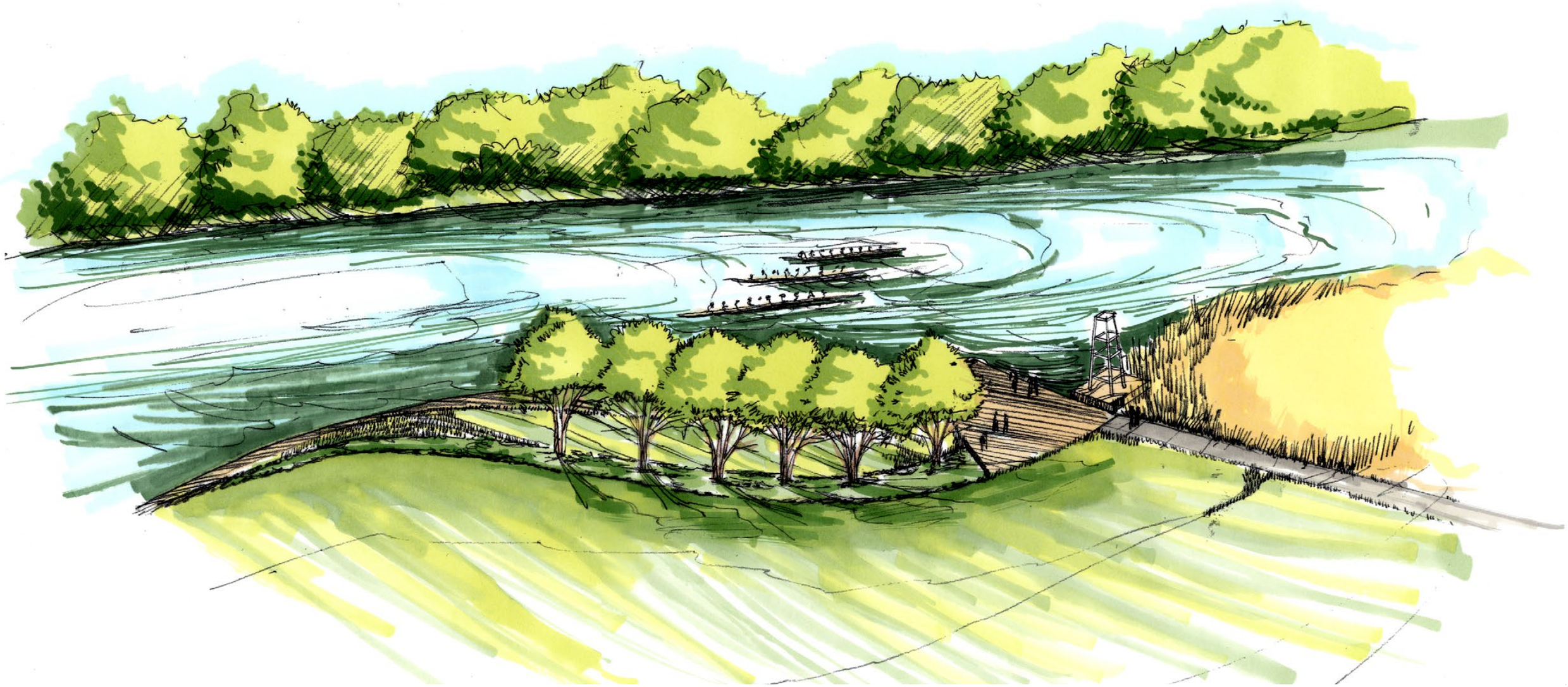
INDIVIDUAL ZONES

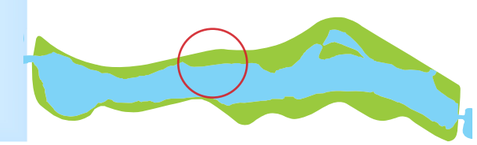
ZONE 1: NORTH PARK DRIVE ENTRY AND POLISH MEMORIAL

In an effort to create a more visually significant impact, a series of garden walls have been located at the corner of Rt. 130 and North Park Drive. These low wall features will be combined with park signage. Their staggered formation allows for the prospect of unique and impactful, landscape-based signage. The Polish American monuments are complimented with a small, paved plaza which will connect to the water's edge vista deck accessing the path system.

ZONES 2 & 3: VICTIMS OF TERRORISM MEMORIAL AND THE GREAT LAWN

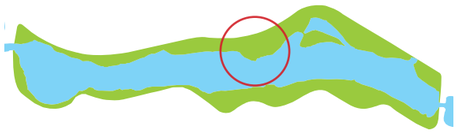
Currently under utilized, this area of the park can be transformed through the creation of a designated great lawn culminating with a slot deck along the river. Additionally, the Victims of Terrorism Memorial could be better defined by setting it into a meadow context to create a more contemplative atmosphere. The great lawn is bound of both edges by a riparian buffer that will contrast with the open, sunny expanse.



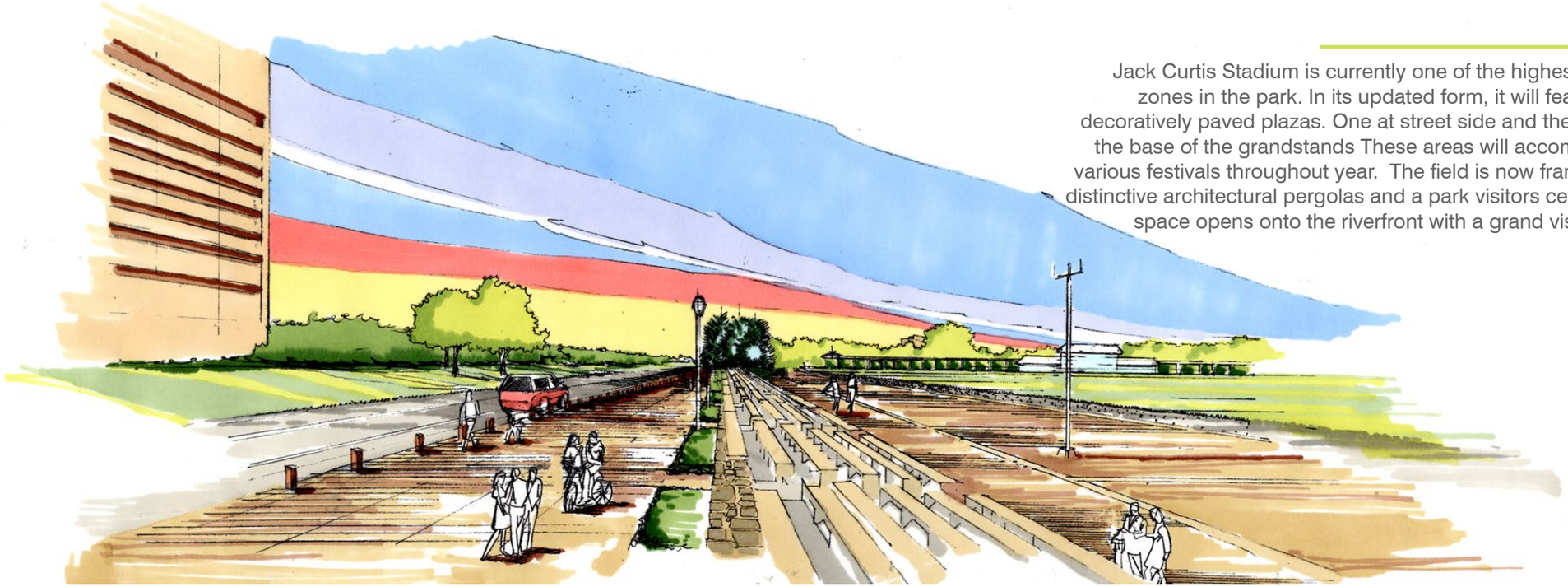


ZONES 4: NJ CENTER FOR CLEAN ENERGY AND ECOZONE

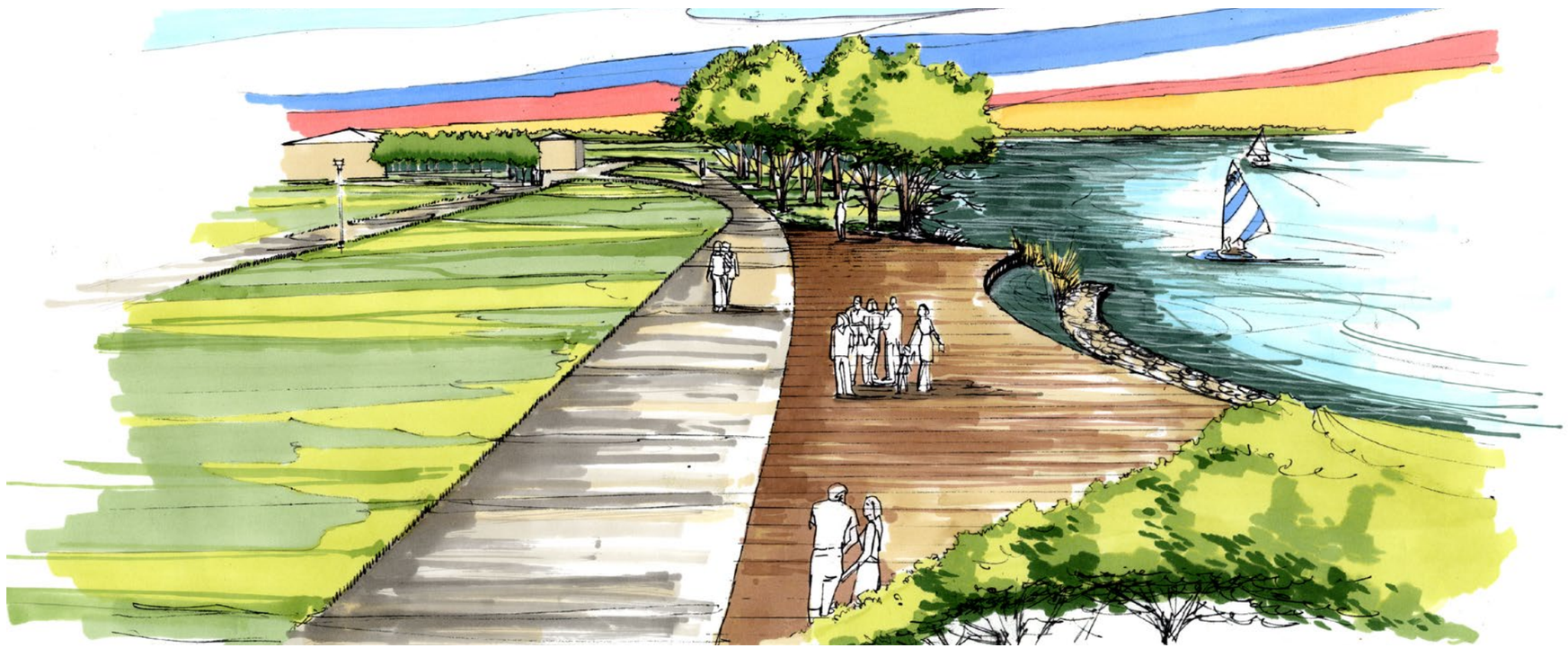
Building upon the clean energy initiatives of the in situ geothermal field and Camden's solar street lighting, the location of a clean energy center will act as an extension of the environmental center. It can also create exposure and opportunities for the park by encouraging the creation of professional relationships with nearby research institutions.

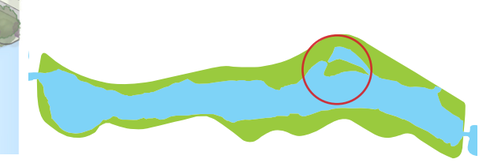


ZONE 5: JACK CURTIS STADIUM



Jack Curtis Stadium is currently one of the highest activity zones in the park. In its updated form, it will feature two decoratively paved plazas. One at street side and the other at the base of the grandstands These areas will accommodate various festivals throughout year. The field is now framed with distinctive architectural pergolas and a park visitors center. The space opens onto the riverfront with a grand vista deck.





ZONE 6: LOBSTER TRAP/VETERAN'S ISLAND/COLUMBUS PLAZA

This zone presents enormous potential for social interaction. By refining and sculpting the existing topography behind the Lobster Trap, an elegant amphiteatre is created which opens onto the water. Waterfront deck terraces continue the visual experience onto to Veteran's Island, where a lawn and vista deck is located. The Christopher Columbus Memorial now becomes part of a experience as its pathways connect to the circulation system and is supported by plantings that blends with the forest backdrop. Potential revenue opportunities at the Lobster Trap with the addition of "To Go" services and a Kayak Rental Service and Tours at Veteran's Island Cove.

ZONE 7: WILLIAMSON FIELD/PICNIC GROVE/MEMORIAL GARDENS

Consistent with the design concept, this zone required adjustments and enhancements while maintaining the basics of the existing configuration. The baseball field is given a more refined and permanent appearance, with stone veneered backstops and grandstands, the picnic grove renovated, and the memorials connected with a formal garden. The centerpiece of this zone is the waterfront deck and awards pavilion.

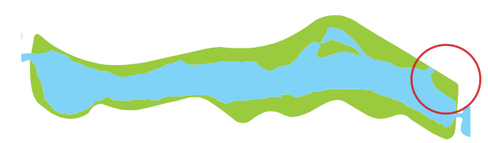
ZONE 7: WILLIAMSON FIELD/PICNIC GROVE/MEMORIAL GARDENS

Opposite Page: The Wallenburg Pavilion with new steps radiating towards the water and the riverfront deck.
This Page: The various memorials are set within a context of formal gardens.

While this zone must maintain a high degree of function as it relates to boat staging and drop-off. By opening up the docks fully to the river, the large steps allow for easier access and greater visibility. Due to its location, a viewing platform is located at the East end of the site to allow for views straight down the river.

VIEWING PLATFORM

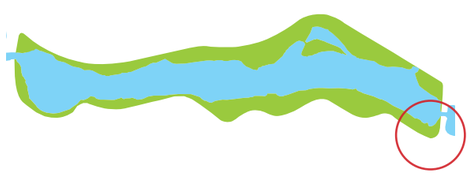
DOCK STEPS



ZONE 8: CUTHBERT BOAT LAUNCH

The existing character of this portion of the park will remain intact, with the only recommended renovation being the incorporation of the current sign into a more significant landscape setting. The design of this element will take its inspiration from the park's newly developed design vocabulary as well as its unique existing features.

SIGNAGE



ZONE 9: **CUTHBERT ENTRANCE**

ZONE 10: HOPKINS HOUSE SCULPTURE GARDENS

The Hopkins House presents an enormous potential for the creation of a riverfront sculpture garden and event venue. Not only will its expansion provide an expanded art component in t he park, but it will also provide opportunities for additional revenue sources through festivals, weddings, and corporate events.

The Yacht Club will receive a more refined edge treatment consistent with t he new design vocabulary consisting of street trees and a formal parking lot entrance.

ZONE 11: THE YACHT CLUB

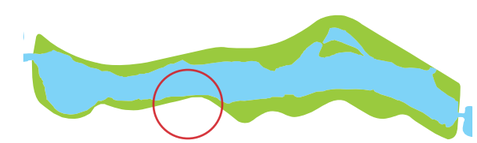
The improvement of the athletic facilities along with an enhanced boat launch and picnic grove will create added opportunities for community interaction.

BOAT LAUNCH

BASEBALL FACILITIES

ZONE 12: MCCAULEY BALL FIELD AND BOAT LAUNCH

Currently an area of high flood risk, an increased riparian buffer is essential as a means of mitigating the impacts of future storm events.



ZONE 13: **SOUTH PARK RIPARIAN BUFFER**

Currently an area of high flood risk, an increased riparian buffer is essential as a means of mitigating the impacts of future storm events. This area also provides the setting for the beginning of the ribbon boardwalk leading into the newly designed Armitage Pavilion.

RIPARIAN BUFFER

ZONE 14: **SOUTH PARK DRIVE RIPARIAN BUFFER**

ZONE 15: ARMITAGE PAVILION

The Armitage Pavilion has been reinvisioned with an architecturally significant structure, decoratively paved plaza, sloped lawn and waterfront boardwalk. The recommendation is that the pavilion be sited higher and farther back on the site in order to avoid anticipated flood damage and allow for the provision of an expansive front lawn.

DETAIL AND MATERIALS CATALOGUE

GABION WALLS

GARDEN WALLS

METER MARKERS

SIGNAGE

PERGOLAS

GATEWAYS

PARKING LOT ENTRY

PAVILIONS

ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

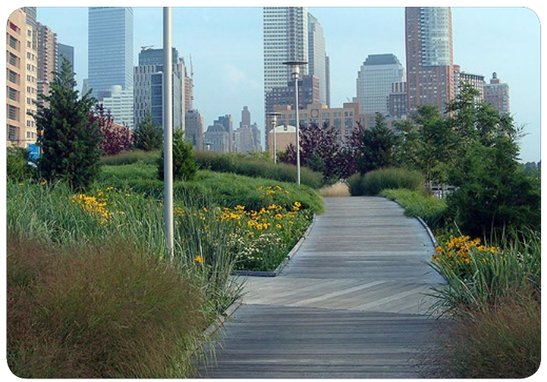
RIPARIAN MEADOW

RIPARIAN FOREST

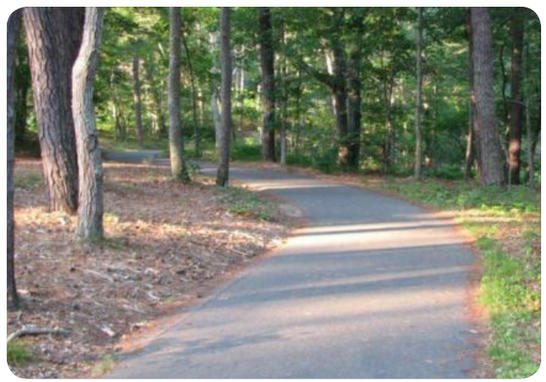
STREET TREES

PINE GROVE

VEGETATION



BOARDWALK



ASPHALT

STAMPED AND STAINED CONCRETE

DECOMPOSED GRANITE

PAVING

BIKE RACKS

BOLLARDS

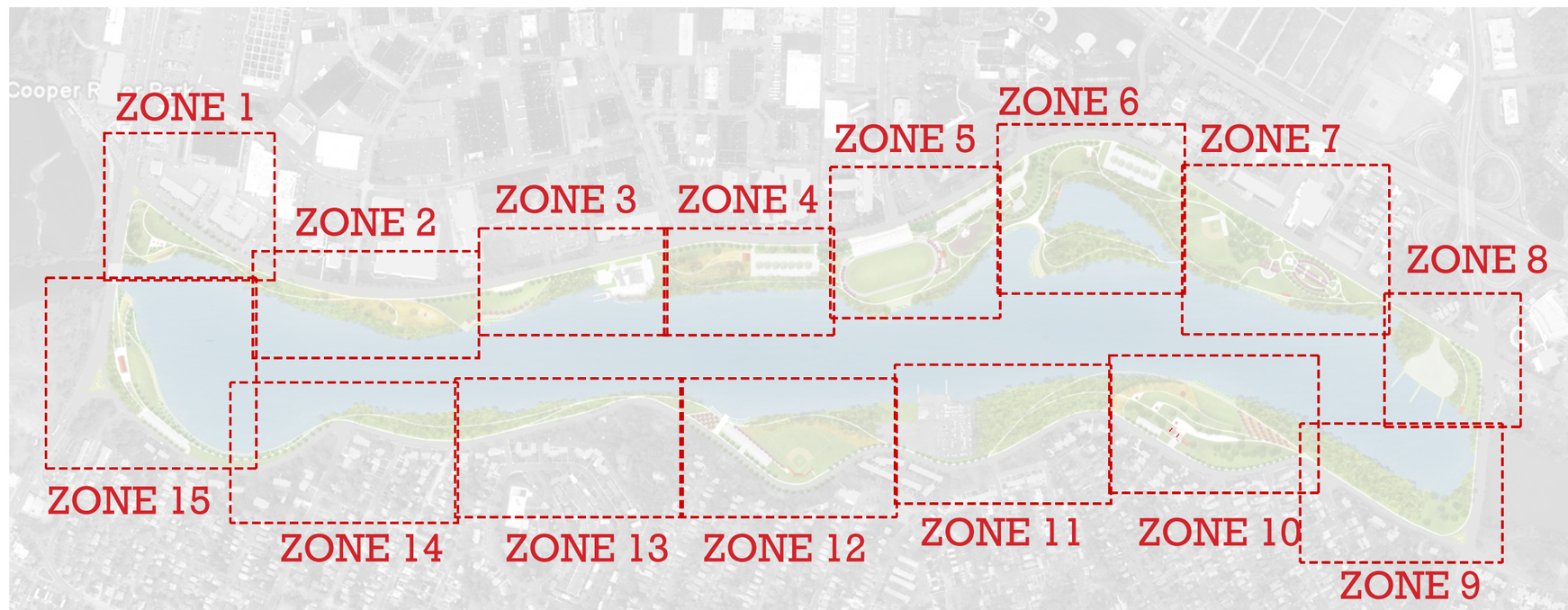
SITE LIGHTING

BENCHES

SITE FURNISHINGS

COST ESTIMATES

Zone No.	Estimate
1	$916,756
2	$491,100
3	$1,526,175
4	$1,352,975
5	$2,750,975
6	$4,788,475
7	$868,600
8	$1,522,435
9	$140,000
10	$3,804,075
11	$907,850
12	$1,644,175
13	$258,106
14	$409,270
15	$1,709,034
Total	$23,090,001



OVERVIEW

ORDER OF MAGNITUDE ESTIMATE

ZONE 1

Proposed Items	Estimated Cost
Paving	$123,750
Walls	$250,000
Landscape	$286,500
Deck	$256,506

Order of Magnitude Cost $916,756

ZONE 2

Proposed Items	Estimated Cost
Paving	$51,500
Landscape	$214,600
Deck	$175,000
Sculpture	$50,000

Order of Magnitude Cost $491,100

ZONE 3

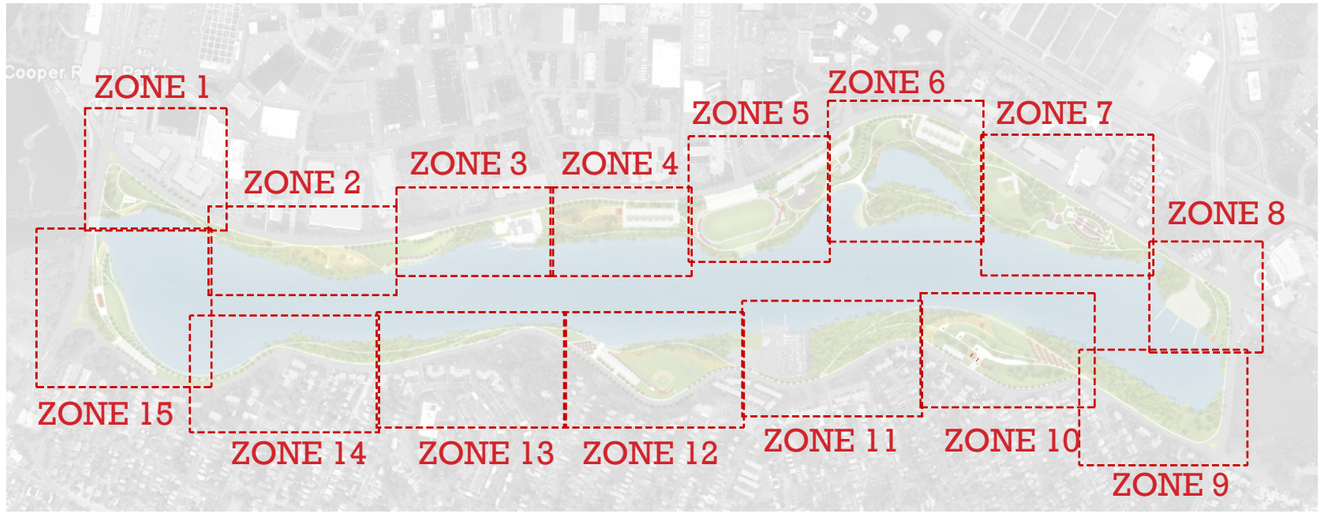
Proposed Items	Estimated Cost
Paving	$77,750
Landscape	$241,300
Deck	$697,125
Gabion Walls	$490,000
Columns	$20,000

Order of Magnitude Cost $1,526,175

ZONE 4

Proposed Items	Estimated Cost
Paving	$95,075
Columns	$20,000
Building	$1,080,000
Landscape	$157,900

Order of Magnitude Cost $1,352,975



ITEMIZED BREAKDOWN

ORDER OF MAGNITUDE ESTIMATE

ZONE 5

Proposed Items	Estimated Cost
Paving	$313,600
Building	$1,005,000
Trellis	$262,500
Deck	$396,000
Gabions	$180,000
Bollards	$37,500
Landscape	$556,375

Order of Magnitude Cost $2,750,975

ZONE 6

Proposed Items	Estimated Cost
Pedestrian Bridge	$500,000
Paving	$325,000
Columns	$20,000
Building	$1,020,000
Deck	$993,850
Gabions	$580,625
Concrete Walls	$732,000
Landscape	$617,000

Order of Magnitude Cost $4,788,475

ZONE 7

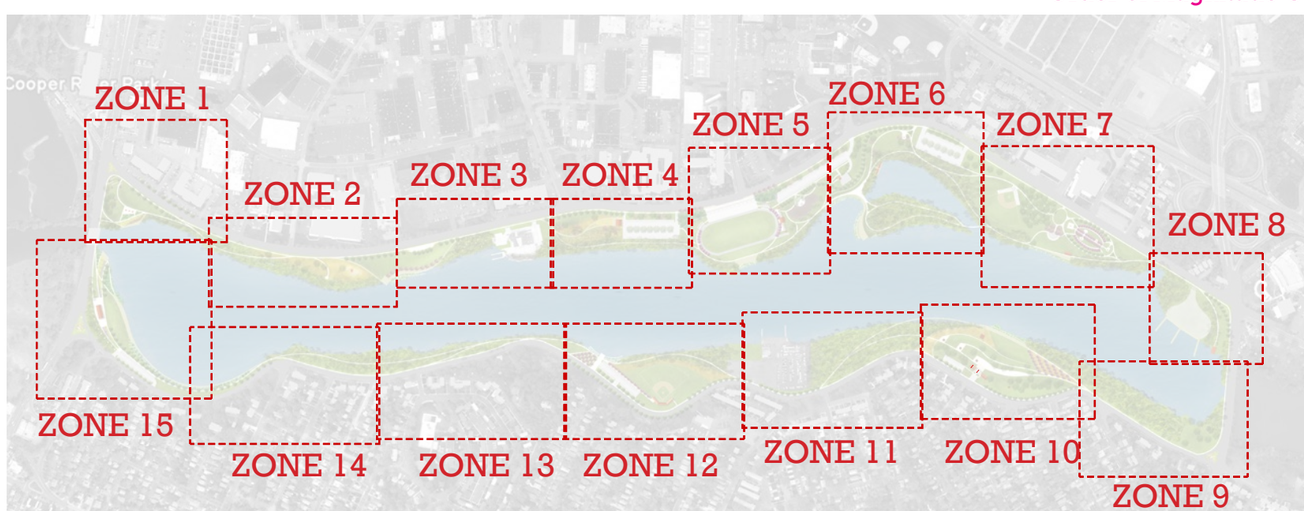
Proposed Items	Estimated Cost
Paving	$219,600
Steps	$120,000
Deck	$100,000
Trellis	$75,000
Landscape	$354,000

Order of Magnitude Cost $868,600

ZONE 8

Proposed Items	Estimated Cost
Paving	$27,500
Columns	$10,000
Deck	$1,000,000
Turf /Gravel Paving	$133,375
Stone Walls	$105,000
Site Furnishings	$12,000
Landscape	$234,560

Order of Magnitude Cost $1,522,435



OVERVIEW

ORDER OF MAGNITUDE ESTIMATE

ZONE 9

Proposed Items	Estimated Cost
Stone Walls	$90,000
Landscape	$50,000

Order of Magnitude Cost $140,000

ZONE 10

Proposed Items	Estimated Cost
Paving	$274,500
Wood Deck	$507,750
Stone Walls	$1,005,000
Gabions	$139,125
Sculpture Pads	$13,000
Building	$1,326,000
Monument Marker	$10,000
Tables	$23,000
Landscape	$505,700

Order of Magnitude Cost $3,804,075

ZONE 11

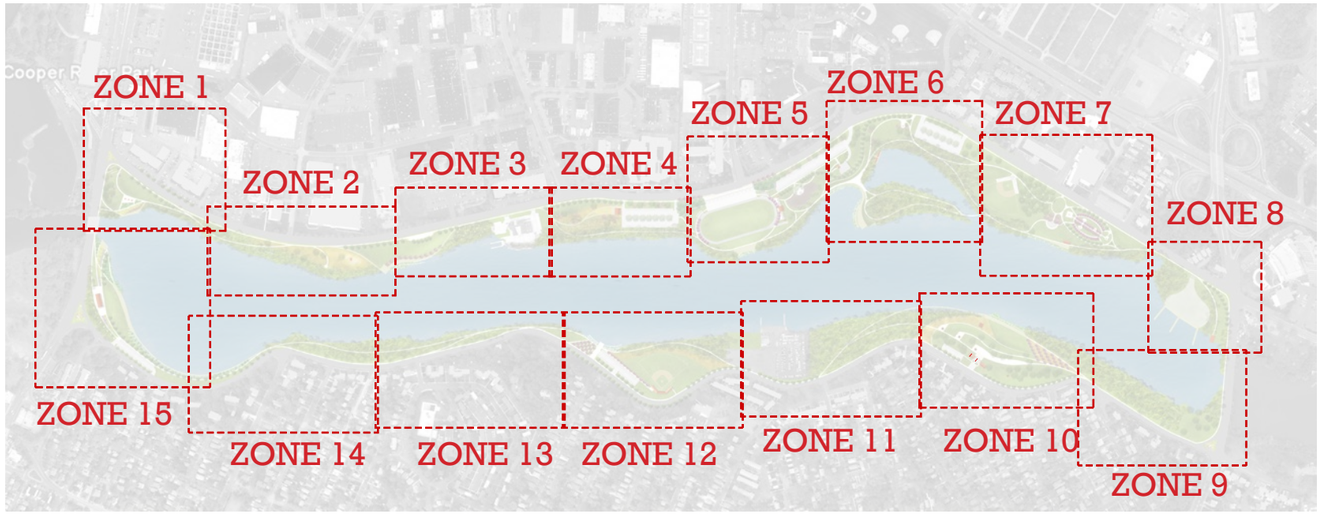
Proposed Items	Estimated Cost
Paving	$44,750
Columns	$10,000
Deck	$41,800
Landscape	$811,300

Order of Magnitude Cost $907,850

ZONE 12

Proposed Items	Estimated Cost
Paving	$134,375
Columns	$10,000
Gabions	$388,750
Bollards	$15,750
Tables	$9,000
Ball Field	$677,000
Landscape	$409,300

Order of Magnitude Cost $1,644,175



ITEMIZED BREAKDOWN

ORDER OF MAGNITUDE ESTIMATE

ZONE 13

Proposed Items	Estimated Cost
Paving	$62,500
Landscape	$195,606

Order of Magnitude Cost $258,106

ZONE 14

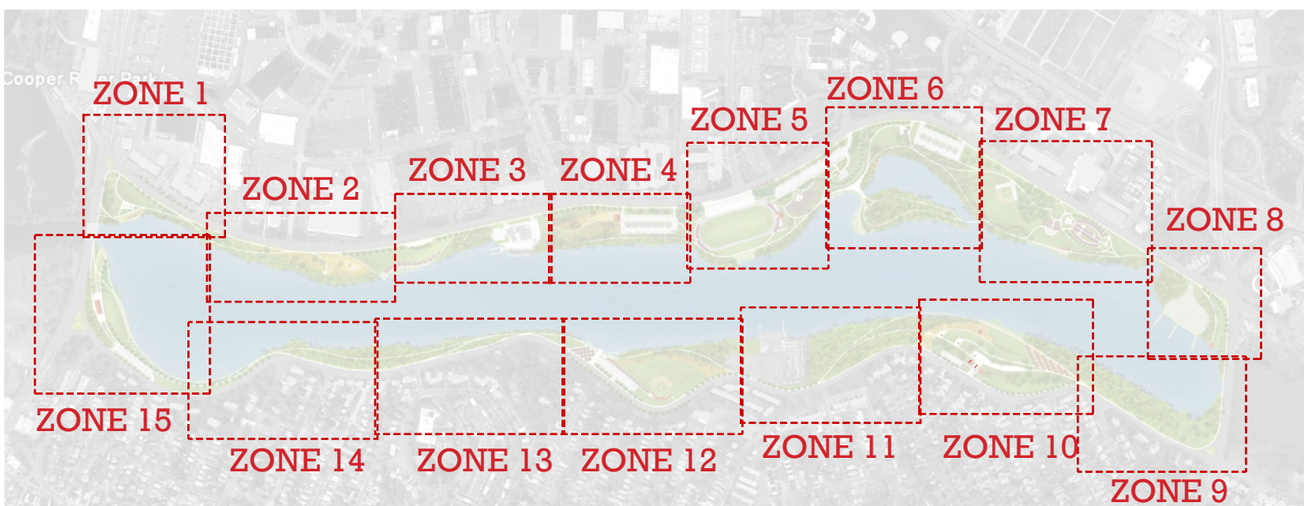
Proposed Items	Estimated Cost
Paving	$50,000
Deck	$144,200
Landscape	$215,070

Order of Magnitude Cost $409,270

ZONE 15

Proposed Items	Estimated Cost
Paving	$23,707
Columns	$20,000
Deck	$1,185,000
Enlarge Parking	$150,000
Tables	$20,000
Landscape	$310,327

Order of Magnitude Cost $1,709,034



OVERVIEW

ORDER OF MAGNITUDE ESTIMATE