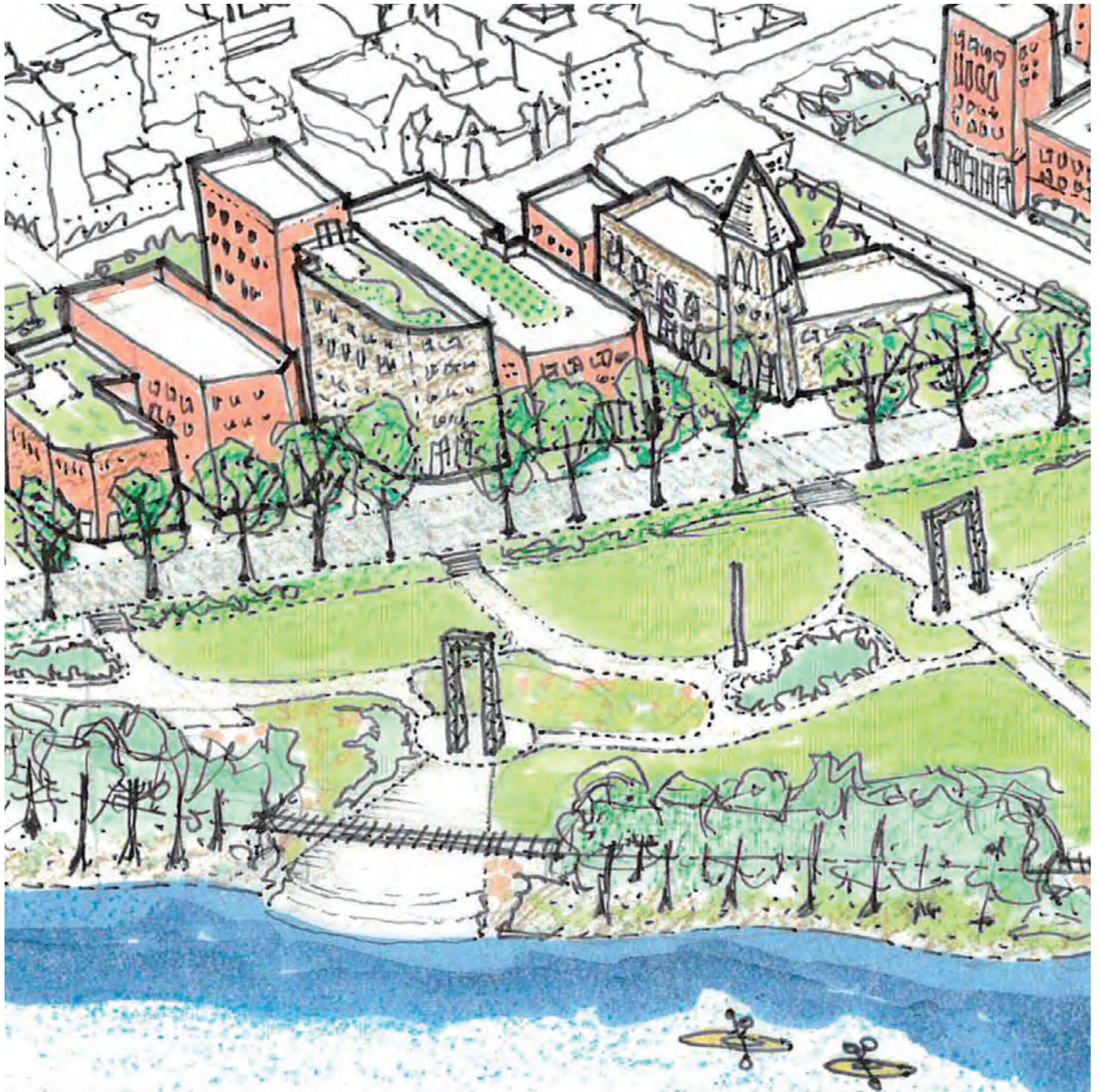


YOUNGSTOWN

FROM THE CAMPUS TO THE DOWNTOWN TO THE RIVER



MIDWEST URBAN DESIGN CHARRETTE 2015

OCTOBER 22-24 2015

KENT STATE UNIVERSITY CLEVELAND URBAN DESIGN COLLABORATIVE

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 05

PROCESS 07

- What is a Charrette?
- Key Issues
- Work Plan
- Charrette Schedule
- Community Feedback

RECOMMENDATIONS

HAZEL & PHELPS 14

WEAN UNITED / COVELLI 24

CONNECTIONS 32

IMPLEMENTATION 48



INTRODUCTION

Since 2012, graduate students in Urban Design at Kent State University's Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative (CUDC); Lawrence Technological University, Detroit, MI; and Ball State University, Indianapolis, IN, have collaborated on a joint urban design charrette. Each year's site provides students with a real-life urban design challenge, partnered with community stakeholders who are invested in implementing the students' ideas. The charrette is a unique and rewarding experience for both students and the neighborhoods served, and an opportunity for students to collaborate intensely with each other and with community members.

For 2015 the CUDC hosted the annual Midwest Urban Design Charrette and brought our partners from LTU and BSU to Youngstown, OH following an RFP process. Youngstown was the site of 2005's CUDC Community Design Charrette. In the decade since our last visit to Youngstown, the city has faced continued challenges of disinvestment and demolition; however, the RFP submission highlighted the optimism of new leadership and exciting opportunities for creative development, particularly in the intersection between Youngstown State University and the Downtown. Additionally, the recent demolition of a major industrial site on the river just south of Downtown opens up potential for large-scale new development, in conjunction with riverfront and recreational connections.

From October 22-24, 2015, 26 students and faculty from the three universities converged in Youngstown to tackle three focus areas:

- 1) Hazel Street and Phelps Street, from Youngstown State University all the way to Front Street;
- 2) The Covelli Center and former Wean United sites south of Front Street to the Mahoning River;
- 3) Larger city and regional connections, especially from the Downtown to Mill Creek Park and to the Crab Creek Corridor.

This report summarizes the results of this intensive design workshop.



PROCESS

● WHAT IS A CHARRETTE?

The word “charrette” may refer to any accelerated collaborative session in which a group of designers drafts a solution to a design problem. Charrettes serve as a way of quickly generating a design solution while integrating the aptitudes and interest of a diverse group of people.

Not all charrettes involve students - many design professionals engage in charrettes as part of their professional services, ranging anywhere from 1 day to several. However, when charrettes are introduced in an academic setting, as in the Youngstown Charrette, the experience allows students accustomed to theoretical design studios the opportunity to expand that audience to the real world. Community members, professionals, and other competing stakeholders bring weight and a responsibility to work through meaningful solutions, all in a severely compressed time-frame.

The primary goal of the 2015 Midwest Urban Design Charrette was developed in conjunction with Youngstown stakeholders:

The Youngstown charrette will focus on developing a vision for the comprehensive integration of YSU to Downtown Youngstown to the Waterfront, focusing particularly on the north/south streets of Hazel and Phelps as important secondary/pedestrian routes but also creating connections to the larger city fabric.

CUDC students spent the weeks leading up to the Charrette conducting background research on Youngstown, including history, geography, demographics, existing planning documents, and case studies of successful design and planning work other cities sharing characteristics with Youngstown. This research ensured that the CUDC students were prepared to jump into design right away, in addition to bringing their Ball State and Lawrence Tech counterparts up to speed.

● KEY ISSUES

The CUDC identified the following as key issues for charrette participants to address through their design ideas:

INFILL OPPORTUNITIES Though Youngstown’s market is not especially strong, there is optimism about possibilities for small business, residential, and co-working spaces downtown. Additionally, there is an overabundance of surface parking lots in and around downtown. What existing sites are best suited for new development, and what specific shape should it take?

NEW MANUFACTURING / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT A manufacturing-specific small business incubator is proving successful in nurturing business innovation downtown, and last year the local art museum held a popular exhibit on possibilities for 3D printing in industry. How can Youngstown build on its industrial manufacturing heritage, while acknowledging new business and economic realities?

INCLUSIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY Under the existing CSX rail bridge, a “tent city” houses a small homeless population. How can new development bring vibrancy downtown and along the riverfront without displacing those with economic and physical challenges?

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE Like many legacy cities, Youngstown faces stormwater runoff and combined sewer overflow issues. Additionally, the transect from YSU to Downtown to the Mahoning River has steep grade changes. Are there opportunities throughout the Downtown for thoughtfully inserted green infrastructure to reduce runoff?

UNIVERSITY/TOWN PARTNERSHIPS Though directly adjacent, the University and the rest of the city feel culturally separated. Are there programmatic and spatial gathering places where the local community and the university can become truly collaborative?



● WORK PLAN

Building on these key issues, each of the three teams were given more specific briefs for their work plan, based on factors relevant to their respective geographies. The teams were free to slightly modify the work brief to accommodate points of interest or opportunity that emerged in the site visit or design process.

HAZEL & PHELPS



This team studied these two north/south streets leading from YSU to the Downtown all the way to the Riverfront site. A change in topography and a sea of parking lots acts as a division between YSU and the Downtown, and both seemingly turn their backs on each other. In addition, downtown businesses often lack frontage onto these two streets, even when businesses are present. This team focused on careful small- and large-scale moves along these two streets, including infill development, street furniture, storefront design, signage ideas, and temporary-use ideas for parking lots, to stitch the three zones into a more cohesive whole.

WEAN UNITED / COVELLI

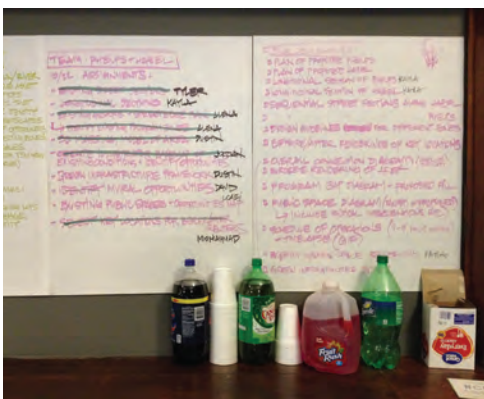
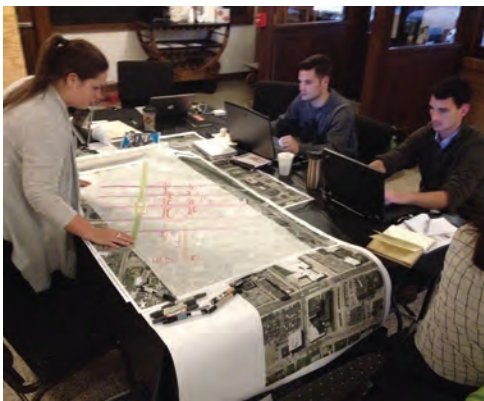


A 33 acre site south of Downtown along the north side of the Mahoning River was recently cleared of its former industrial structures. An active CSX rail line runs to the south side of the site, making direct access from the site to the river difficult. MKSK has recently been hired to structure a program and site plan for the site's redevelopment, but their final recommendations are not yet complete and they are open to alternatives. The team generated ideas for site program and master planning, including park space, an outdoor amphitheater, and mixed use development.

CONNECTIONS



This team examined strategies for strengthening existing and potential connections between YSU, Downtown, and the Riverfront, focusing particularly on opportunities for recreation, bikeability, walkability, and potential transit connections. Larger regional connections were considered, particularly to assets like Mill Creek Park, southwest of Downtown across the Mahoning River.



● CHARRETTE SCHEDULE

Thursday, October 22, 2015

2:30 - 4pm Stakeholder Meeting #1

4 - 5pm Team Tours of Focus Areas

5 - 10pm Work Session

9:30pm Team pin-ups

Friday, October 23, 2015

8am - 10pm Work Session

10am - 12pm Meeting with Economic Action Group

4 - 5pm Feedback Session with Stakeholders

Saturday, October 24, 2015

8am - 1pm Work Session

2 - 3:30pm Stakeholder Meeting #2

Thursday, October 29, 2015

5:30 - 8:30pm Final Community Presentation

● COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

CHALLENGES:

- Overcoming physical and psychological barrier between YSU & Downtown
- Flipping negative perceptions of Downtown and the Mahoning River
- Overabundance of surface parking, especially on edges of Downtown
- Active rail lines along north & south banks of river
- Lack of active public spaces downtown

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Wean site as way to re-frame city, open views, provide entertainment/recreation
- Mill Creek Park - find a way to connect to this as a resource
- Diversity of people living/working downtown, even though it's compact
- America Makes, Oh Wow!, Business Incubator - build on an emerging culture of small-scale manufacturing innovation
- Students could be a huge economic resource for Downtown businesses and activities
- People coming into the area for events could be drawn into Downtown for unique entertainment, business, recreation opportunities
- Very dense, walkable downtown with attractive buildings
- Summer festivals – can we leverage for more economic diversity?

EMERGING MARKETS (ECONOMIC FOCUS GROUP):

- Tech & advanced manufacturing
- Retail
- Housing (YSU students & other)
- Entertainment options
- Open space & recreation
- Public art / performing arts
- Wayfinding – mark a line from north to south, connecting assets

RECOMMENDATIONS:



HAZEL & PHELPS

● GUIDING FRAMEWORK

Though primarily studying Hazel Street and Phelps Street, this team also addressed broader strategies for Downtown Youngstown. The team identified the following as their primary **design goal**:

Envision multiple physical & programmatic connections between YSU/ Downtown/Riverfront along Hazel Street and Phelps Street, creating authentic and compelling Youngstown experiences for a diverse range of community members.

To accomplish this goal, the team followed five urban design strategies:

1. Develop design guidelines for renovations and infill

The redevelopment of the site presents a unique opportunity for Youngstown to connect Downtown to the larger city and the riverfront.

2. Embody a “green street” storyline from campus to river

Locals and visitors alike should find appealing options for recreation, entertainment, natural exploration, and performance, whether solo or in groups, arrayed across the site in order to draw activity.

3. Transform topographic barrier into a delightful asset

The city’s terrain slopes down toward the river. This is an important part of Youngstown’s identity and can be enhanced through design features.

4. Expand options for multi-modal transportation

As a new open space, the site should provide a wide range of formal and informal recreational spaces, not simply for the summertime, but year-round.

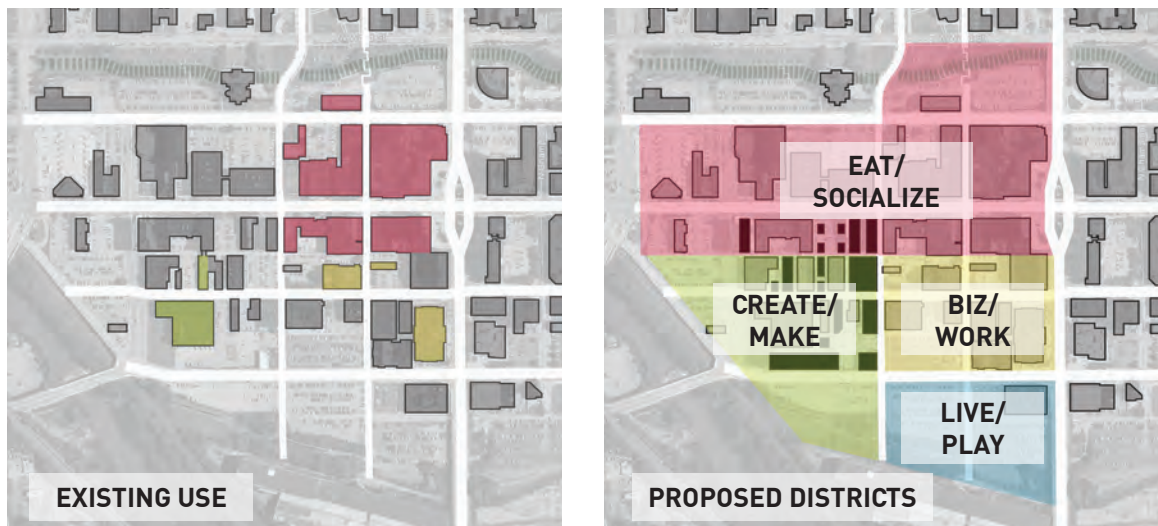
5. Craft multi-scale spaces for a continuous public realm

The site redevelopment could be greatly enhanced by partnering with established Youngstown institutions to create unique site-specific collaborative spaces.

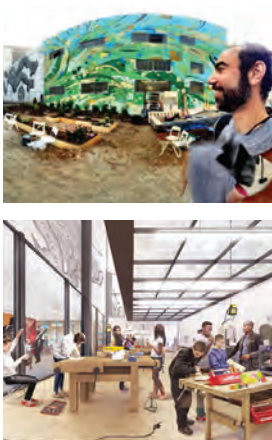
DESIGN GUIDELINES

Youngstown's existing development guidelines are not illustrative, and rarely enforced. Illustrative brochures with clear diagrams and graphic examples of desired outcomes could be produced to easily convey Downtown standards to a wide audience. Applicants for renovation or building permits should be connected with local design and fabrication professionals.

Building on existing uses in the Downtown core, the group outlined four districts that can be used to develop more tailored guidelines: Create/Make; Live/Play; Biz/Work; and Eat/Socialize. Each district's guidelines could specify preferred uses, building materials, and opportunities for public space improvements like street furniture. These public realm improvements, particularly along Hazel and Phelps, will serve as continuous threads to knit the four districts together into a robust and cohesive Downtown.



CREATE/MAKE DISTRICT



Building Use:

- Incubator
- Making with tools and machinery
- Art display

Building Palette:

- Glass
- Brick
- Modern Industrial

Design Standards:

- 3-4 stories

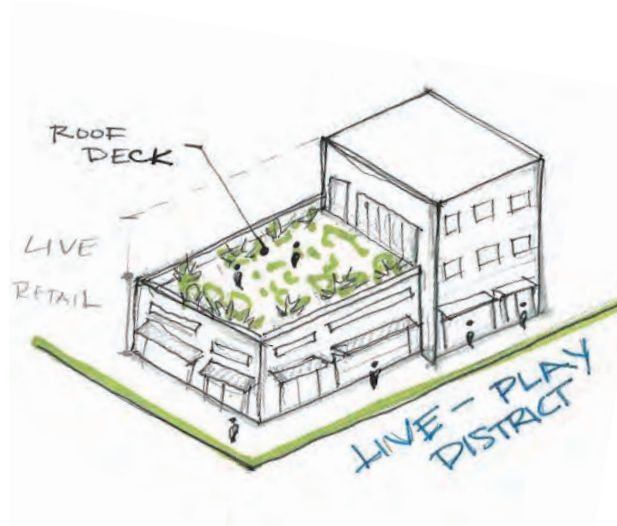
Activities:

- Residential
- Outdoor recreation
- Retail shopping

Urban Fabric:

- Transition from urban to naturalized

LIVE/PLAY DISTRICT



Building Use:

- Residential
- Retail

Building Palette:

- Brick
- Wood
- Fabric

Design Standards:

- 1-3 stories

Activities:

- Domestic life
- Outdoor recreation
- Retail shopping

Urban Fabric:

- Transition from urban to naturalized

BIZ/WORK DISTRICT



Building Palette:

- Glass
- Brick
- Steel

Design Standards:

- 6-8 stories

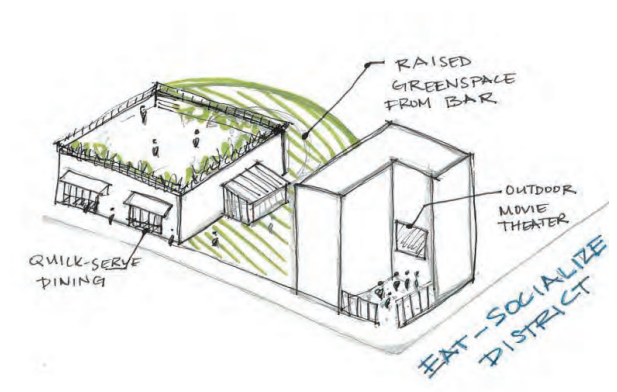
Activities:

- Office work
- Government

Urban Fabric:

- Urban core with plazas

EAT/SOCIALIZE DISTRICT



Building Palette:

- Glass
- Brick
- Steel

Design Standards:

- 1-3 stories

Activities:

- Restaurant/bar patronage
- Public art performance

Attract YSU students & other passersby with an active gateway into Downtown

RIGHT The southeast corner of Hazel and Commerce, previously a music venue, is currently vacant.

BELOW Minimal site clean-up and lighting could provide a framework for regular events like markets, festivals, and movie nights to attract YSU students down the hill into Downtown.



Diversify programming & design of open space



1 | Programming like movie nights require little infrastructure but have big community impact, a good short-term strategy for bringing energy to lesser-known corners of Downtown.

2 | Wider sidewalks allow for cafe seating and temporary vending, prioritizing the pedestrian over the car in Downtown zones.

Transform blank buildings with active facades and signage



NEAR & FAR LEFT
Some existing building facades in Downtown lack significant glazing or signage, resulting in streets which feel alienating and unwelcoming to pedestrians.



MIDDLE AND BOTTOM
Increasing the overall percentage of street-level glazing and adding signage, especially banners and awnings, help create a pleasant streetscape. Storefront renovations should be encouraged and incentivized to transform existing buildings and streets.



GREEN STREETS

Green infrastructure to manage stormwater, especially along the sharp topographic shift from YSU to Downtown, could be woven throughout the Phelps streetscape along a spectrum from formal to informal. Each type of infrastructure would complement distinct districts along the way in order to reinforce a continuous “storyline” of greening from the campus all the way to the riverfront.

NEAR RIGHT Green infrastructure could be incorporated into Phelps Street to connect the campus to the riverfront in a cohesive way.

FAR RIGHT Techniques for managing stormwater through green infrastructure could progress from scuppers at the YSU campus / along the Commerce Street hillside, to bioswales and green walls/roofs in the Downtown, to catch basins at the riverfront.



RIGHT Precedents for weaving green infrastructure through streetscapes.

1 - Green Streetscape Project, Etna, PA

2 - Stormwater street planters, Portland, OR



SCUPPERS



BIOSWALES



GREEN WALLS/ROOFS



CATCH BASINS



CAMPUS
RIVERFRONT

TOPOGRAPHIC CHANGE



EXISTING



FAR LEFT Hazel Street looking north from Commerce St. The relatively steep topographic shift towards YSU could be perceived as a barrier, unless transformed into a delightful asset like a "hillslide".

NEAR LEFT: Precedents exist for such slides, fun for adults and kids alike:

1 - Proposed St. James Park slide in Newcastle, England.

2 - Overvecht Station, Utrecht, Netherlands



LEFT Emphasis on greening the most visible roofs on buildings along Phelps and Hazel, when viewed from the pedestrian steps leading south from the YSU campus, will convey the "green street" story of Phelps even before the pedestrian descends the hill.

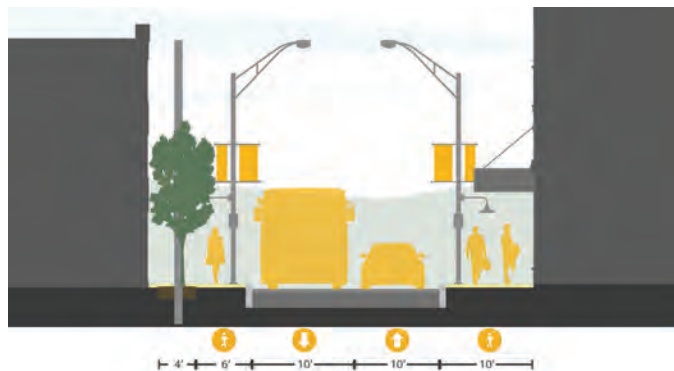
MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION

HAZEL STREET RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Route bus line to complete Hazel connection from Lincoln (north) to Front (south)
- Add pedestrian-level lighting
- Increased signage, especially in areas with lower perceived attention and maintenance
- Remove most street parking to accommodate two-way traffic

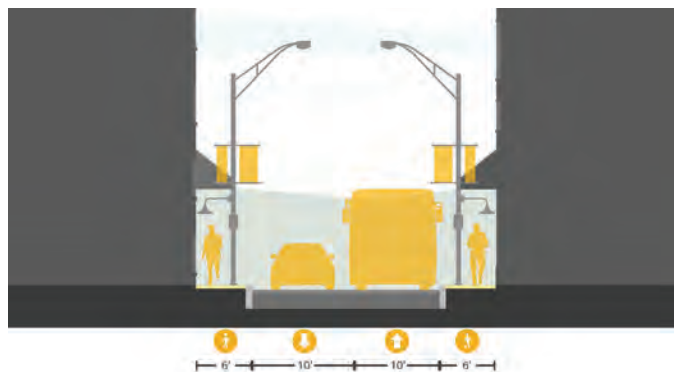
HAZEL STREET between Boardman & Front

- New infill development
- Shade tolerant plants
- Narrow street trees
- Banners/signage



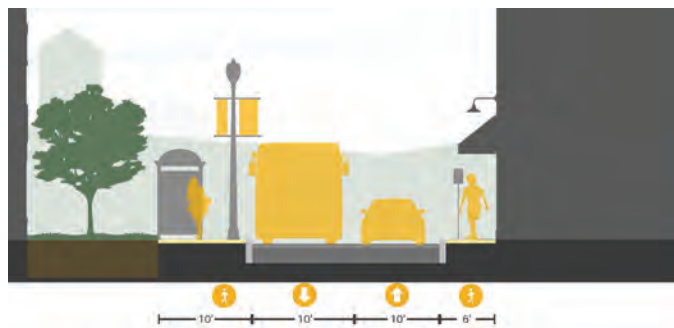
HAZEL STREET between Federal & Boardman

- Pedestrian-scale lighting
- Banners/signage
- Awnings on storefronts



HAZEL STREET between Wood & Commerce

- Banners/signage
- Awnings on storefronts
- Wayfinding kiosks



HAZEL STREET between Rayen & Wood

- Banners/signage



PHELPS STREET RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Maximize pedestrian focus
- Add pedestrian-level lighting
- Increased signage, especially in areas with lower perceived attention and maintenance
- Remove most street parking in favor of green infrastructure, traffic calming (e.g. chicane), and retail amenities (e.g. outdoor seating, market space)



LEFT Phelps Street could be reworked to include banner signage, street trees, and traffic calming.

RIGHT A one-block pedestrian zone between Federal and Commerce allows for cafe seating and events like festivals and markets.



TOP LEFT Existing Phelps streetscape.

TOP RIGHT A chicane is a traffic-calming strategy which narrows and introduces gentle curves in the travel lane, prioritizing widened sidewalk areas for street trees and seating areas.



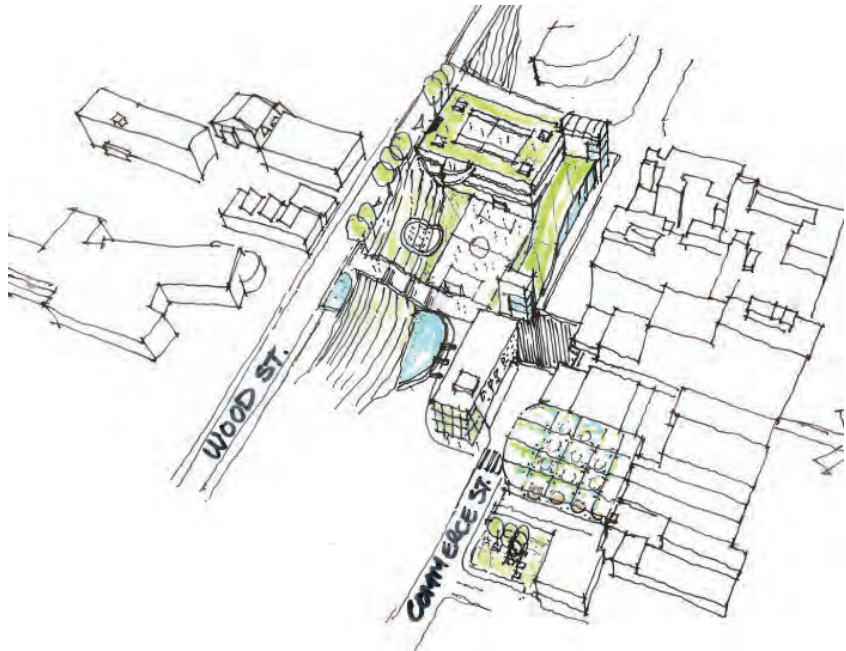
BELOW A redesigned Phelps Street streetscape with a chicane, pedestrian-scale lighting, and green infrastructure.

MULTI-SCALE PUBLIC SPACES

Redevelop surface parking lots as structured parking with integrated green space

BELOW Much of the periphery of Downtown is comprised of surface parking lots, which by some estimates are never more than half full.

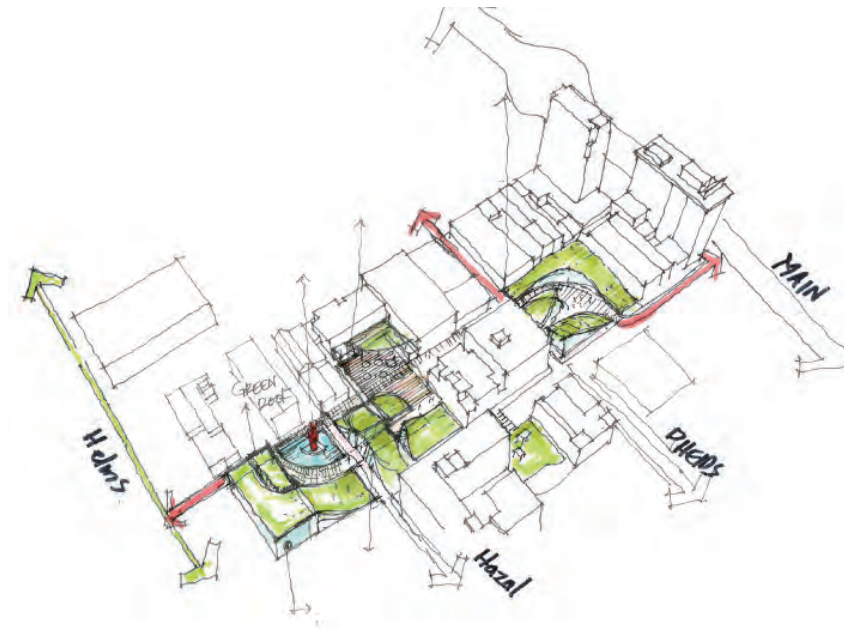
RIGHT Consolidating some of these lots, particularly on the north side of Downtown towards YSU allows for more development sites and also opportunities for integrated green space. The topography change between Wood and Commerce could create opportunities for adjacent green space on structured parking roofs.



Create civic landscape around City Hall, welcoming to all members of the community

BELOW Youngstown's City Hall is tucked away on Phelps, surrounded by surface parking and not very noticeable in the larger Downtown.

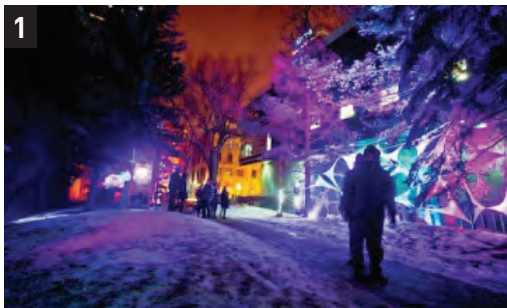
RIGHT Re-purposing the surface parking directly adjacent to City Hall for a civic green space re-frames the building and gives it more public presence without moving or rebuilding it.



Create small-scale public spaces through “parklets”



1 & 2 | Where it's difficult to expand sidewalks, small scale “parklets,” often the size of a single parking space, can provide new opportunities for café seating, landscaping, and sidewalk vending.



1 | Winter-friendly public spaces could involve creative lighting and sculpture.

2 | Urban cross-country skiing in snowy conditions.

3 | Cleveland's Brite Winter festival, celebrating the cold season.



4 & 5 | Maintaining sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use paths throughout the winter allows the population to get out and enjoy recreation all year round.



1 | Urban swings & public “porch” swings encourage social interaction.

2 | Recent “adult play” equipment in the Buckeye neighborhood of Cleveland introduces opportunities for other members of the population to exercise in public, not just children.

RECOMMENDATIONS:



WEAN UNITED

● GUIDING FRAMEWORK

The team studying the Wean United/Covelli riverfront site generated these four urban design goals through the charrette process:

1. Create physical connections to Downtown, the Mahoning River, and the larger Youngstown region

The redevelopment of the site presents a unique opportunity for Youngstown to more cohesively connect Downtown to the larger city and the riverfront.

2. Provide destinations within the site

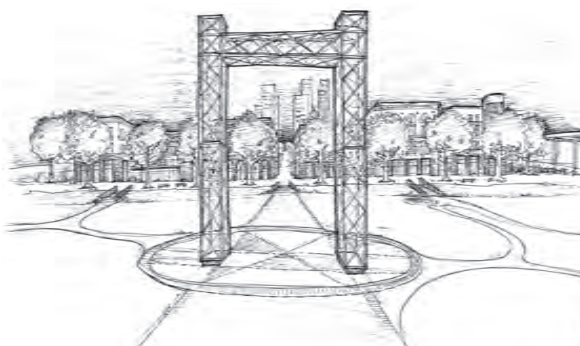
Locals and visitors alike should find appealing options for recreation, entertainment, natural exploration, and performance - whether solo or in groups - arrayed across the site in order to draw activity.

3. Encourage a range of recreational activities

As a new open space, the site should provide as great a range as possible of formal and informal recreational spaces - not simply for the summertime, but year-round.

4. Establish local and regional partnerships

The site redevelopment could be greatly enhanced by partnering with established Youngstown institutions to create unique site-specific collaborative spaces.



FAR LEFT Existing transformer on the former Wean United site, surrounded by overgrowth.

NEAR LEFT New sculptural elements could echo the old infrastructure and frame views towards Downtown and the Riverfront.

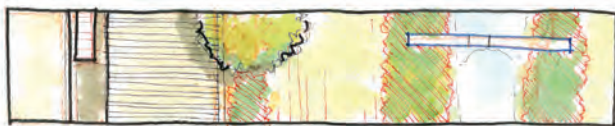
SITE OVERVIEW

RIGHT The proposal for the Wean United / Covelli site acts as a new front door for downtown Youngstown. Visitors access the site through new mixed-use development south of Front Street to a pedestrian boardwalk along the topographic ridge. The lower site is comprised of pathways and recreation and performance spaces designed to feel vibrant with many or few visitors. The underside of the Market Street Bridge becomes a central amphitheater.

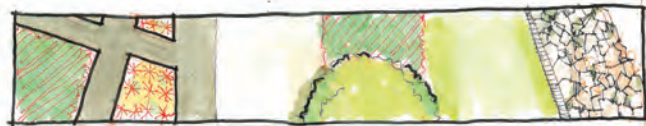


RIGHT Many cities are reinventing their dormant industrial waterfronts and infrastructure into "front-door" parks and recreation spaces.

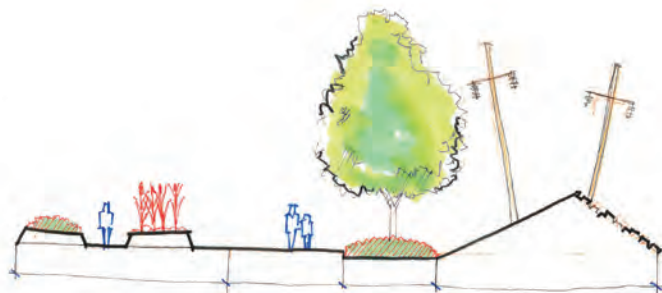
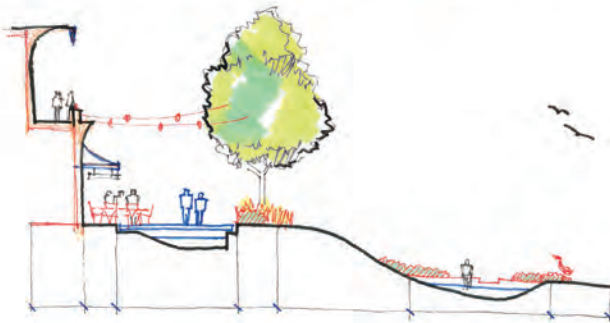
- 1 | Gasworks Park, Seattle, WA
- 2 | Richmond, VA.



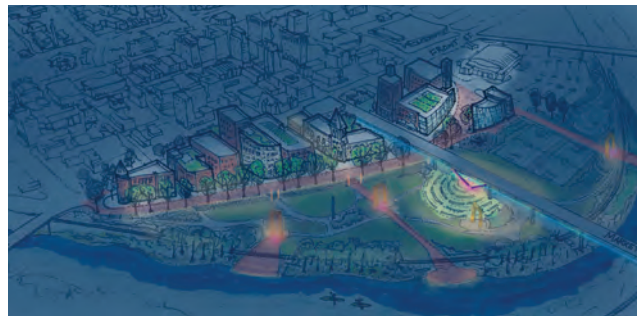
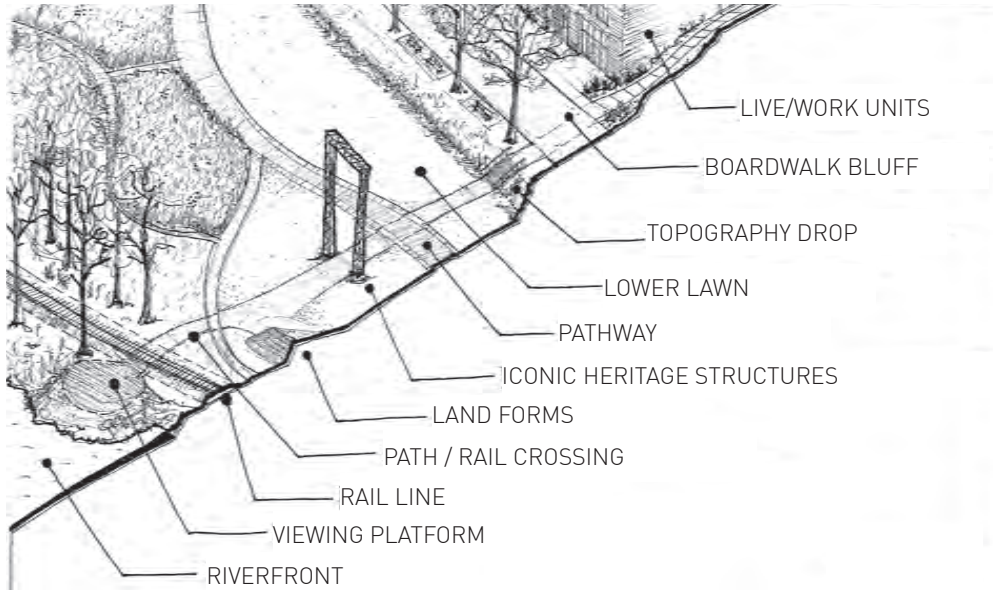
BOARDWALK



PERFORMANCE SPACE



SITE PROCESSION

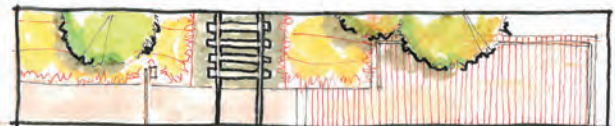


FAR LEFT Phelps Street transitions south of Front Street into a pedestrian pathway with views to the river.

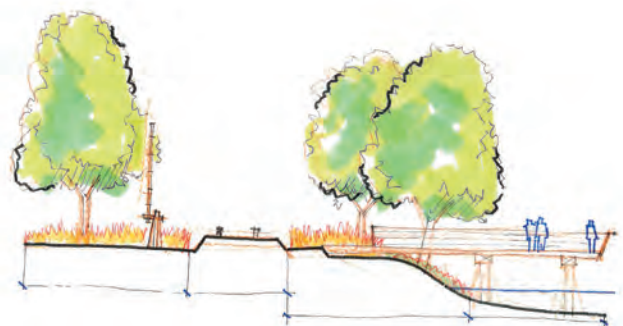
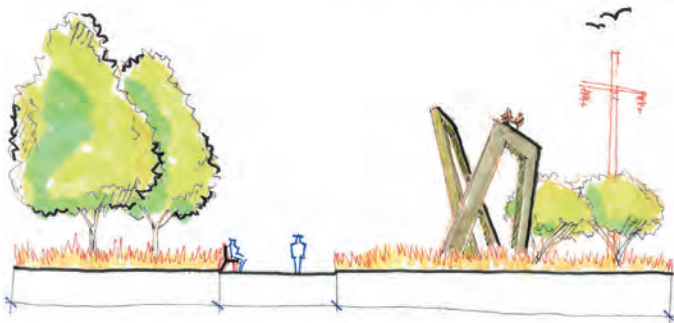
NEAR LEFT The site should be lit and programmed at night and on weekends in order to ensure 24/7 safety and liveliness.



MULTI-USE PATH



RIVERFRONT CONNECTION



LOWER BRIDGE SPACE

The primary focus of the site master plan is the activation of the space beneath the Market Street Bridge into a multi-purpose performance and event space. Rather than constructing a full amphitheater at the termination of Phelps Street, a similar type of event space beneath the bridge acts to draw visitors further down into the Wean United site. The underside of the bridge could be used for large or small events like theater performances, musical events, or even recreational events like road races.



Precedents for the activation of spaces under bridges and other infrastructure:
1 and 2 | Folly for a Flyover - Assemble
3 | Parco Dora - Latz + Partner
4 | Fort York Historical Site - Patkau Architects



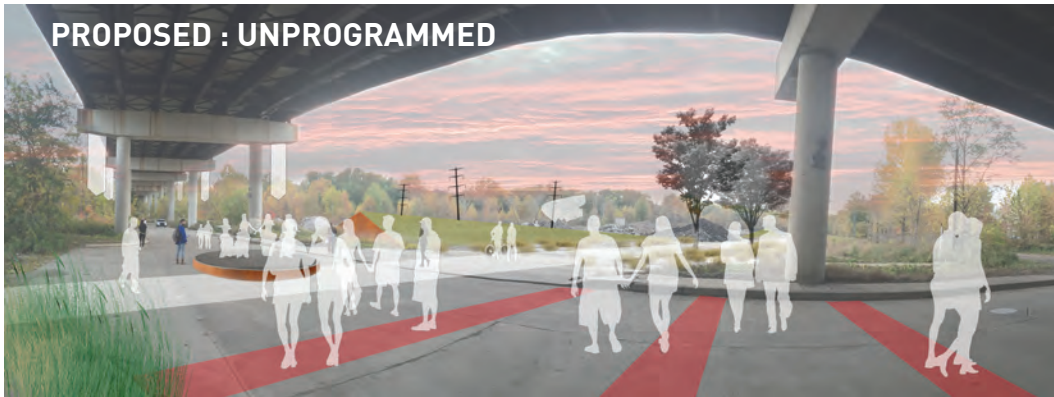
PROGRAMMING



LEFT Lighting and some minimal backdrops could create a performance space under the bridge that could be used both day and night, by small informal groups or as a larger performance venue, to complement and not compete with the larger acts that the Covelli Center attracts.



EXISTING



PROPOSED : UNPROGRAMMED

LEFT The space beneath the Market Street Bridge could be activated with minimal investment - mainly, paint; lighting; a pathway; and an informal central performance space. In addition to arts performances, the space would be a fitting finish line for road races or other recreational events.



PROPOSED : EVENT SPACE

MULTI-SEASON MULTI-USE PATH

RIGHT The central line of movement across the site is a multi-use pathway that could be used in all seasons for accessing the nodes across the site or just for recreational use. It is important when planning any large park space to integrate ideas for how to design and program for 4-season activity - in this case, for transforming into a cross-country ski track.



NEAR RIGHT Community gardens could bring fresh food access to residents of downtown, particularly those in the senior and affordable housing towers.

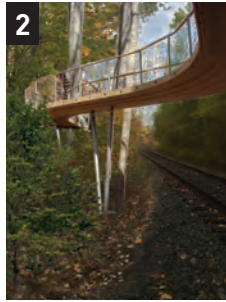
FAR RIGHT: Night-time lighting is essential, both beneath the bridge and also in sculptural forms lighting the path for safety.



NEAR RIGHT AND FAR RIGHT Vegetation and landscape design should integrate plantings that bring vibrancy and color across all seasons, not just summer.



WATERFRONT CONNECTIONS



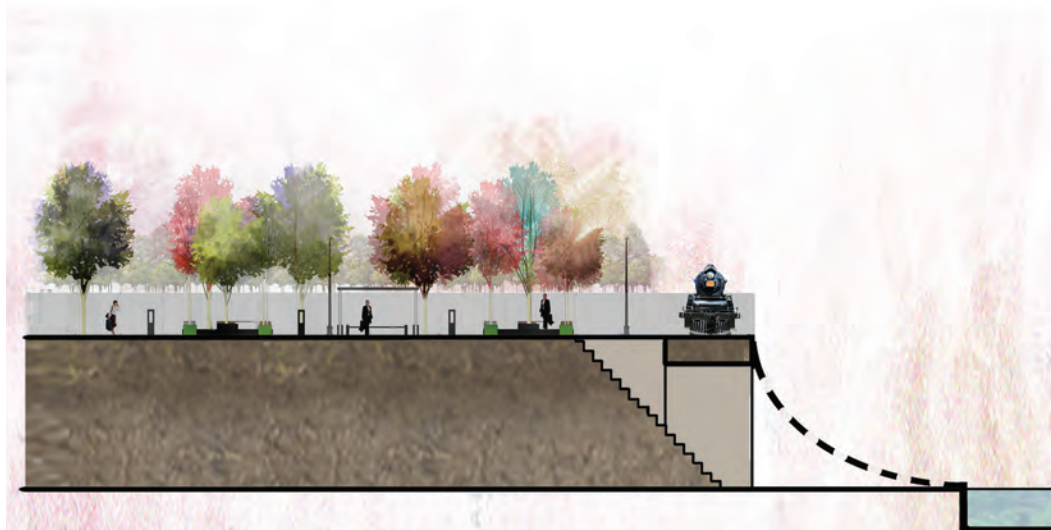
The existing train tracks are a barrier for pedestrian access to the Mahoning Waterfront, but that does not preclude alternative ideas for how to view or traverse the river.

1 - A pedestrian bridge could be hung from the underside of the Market Street Bridge as a way for the communities to the South to get into Downtown.

2 & 5 - Lighter and more sinuous examples of elevated walkways.

3 - If full pedestrian crossing is not needed, a viewing platform could be constructed to visually access the water.

4 - A light pedestrian path crossing the tracks.



LEFT A more ambitious idea for how to access the waterfront—tunneling underneath the train tracks entirely.

RECOMMENDATIONS



CONNECTIONS

● GUIDING FRAMEWORK

The Connections team focused on links between the Mahoning River and downtown destinations, and between the downtown and the broader community. The guiding framework for connectivity has four principles: legibility, mystery, hierarchy, and complexity.

LEGIBILITY:

Moving through the city should be clear and understandable. Wayfinding signage, streetscape elements, lighting, and other design features can point the way to key destinations and make it comfortable for people to walk, bike, drive, or ride transit between different places in the city. The Youngstown State campus is an example of a highly legible part of the city. When you're on campus, you know exactly where you are due to a consistent style of buildings and landscaping, along with prominent university signage and branding elements. Mill Creek is also a legible part of the city where a carefully maintained landscape and park amenities create a clean and safe impression and a strong sense of identity.



MYSTERY:

The City of Youngstown also offers many unique opportunities for exploration. A person can walk along the well-lit streets on campus and into the orderly street grid of downtown, but then find themselves in less predictable circumstances as they approach the river to the south, or pass under the Market Street bridge. The less legible, more mysterious parts of Youngstown are a distinctly beautiful part of the city's character. These areas offer residents and visitors venture into parts of the city that appear off-limits. Rather than cleaning up all of these areas and making them bright and predictable, Youngstown can preserve special places in the city that offer surprises and adventure.



HIERARCHY:

In a city that combines clear and legible areas with complex and mysterious experiences, a sense of hierarchy is important. The Youngstown State campus is at the top of the legibility spectrum. It's important that students and visitors understand where they are on campus, and can find their destinations safely and easily. Moving into downtown, a strong sense of order helps businesses to thrive and visitors to feel comfortable, while still allowing for unexpected and delightful things to happen—like a pop up shop or an impromptu street performance. Moving toward the river, the city begins to give way to the natural conditions of the river and a geography shaped by trees, bridges, railroad tracks, and the water's edge. Outside of the downtown core, there are even more opportunities for exploration and discovery along Crab Creek and in the city's underutilized but startlingly beautiful eastern parks.

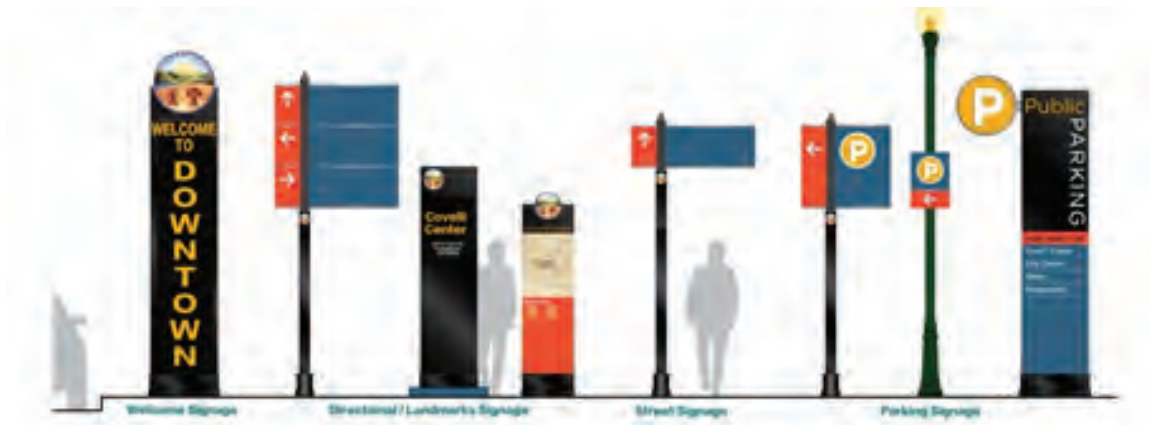
COMPLEXITY:

Well-designed cities offer choices that enable people to decide for themselves whether they want to get to their destination directly or take a more scenic route. A complex network of connections provides safe, efficient links to key destinations and also invites people to explore less predictable alternatives.

These four principles are factored into design strategies for seven points of connectivity in Youngstown, all originating at points along the Mahoning River, a dominant (though long-neglected) natural feature that orients people within the city.

● WAYFINDING

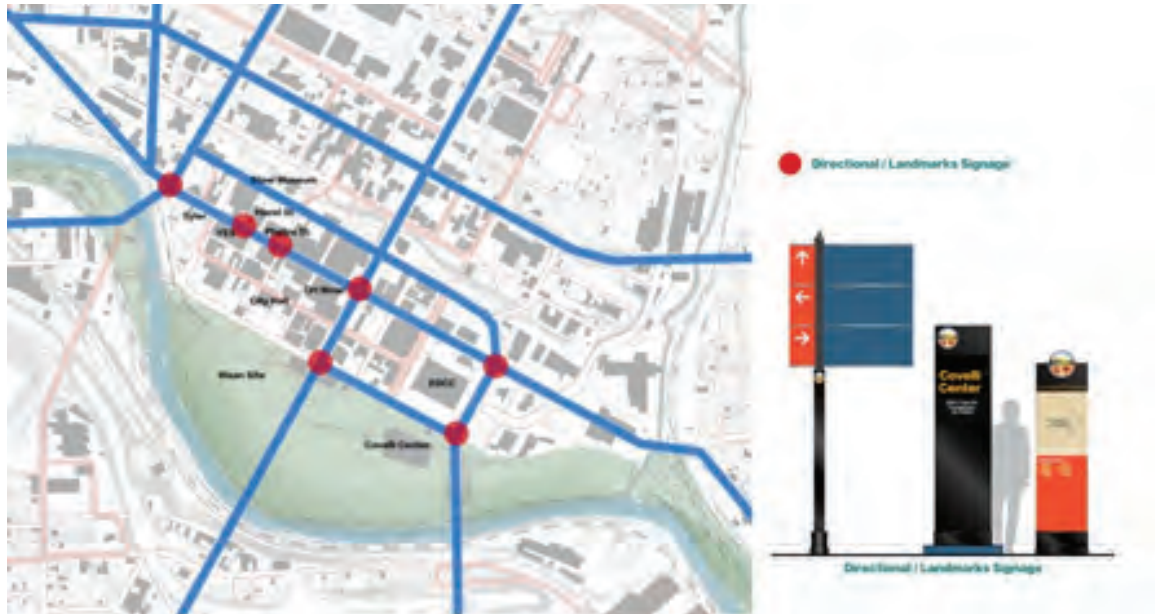
Clear and consistent directional signage will help visitors to better experience all of the assets the city has to offer.



LEFT Welcome signage at main points of entry will help to orient people to the downtown district.

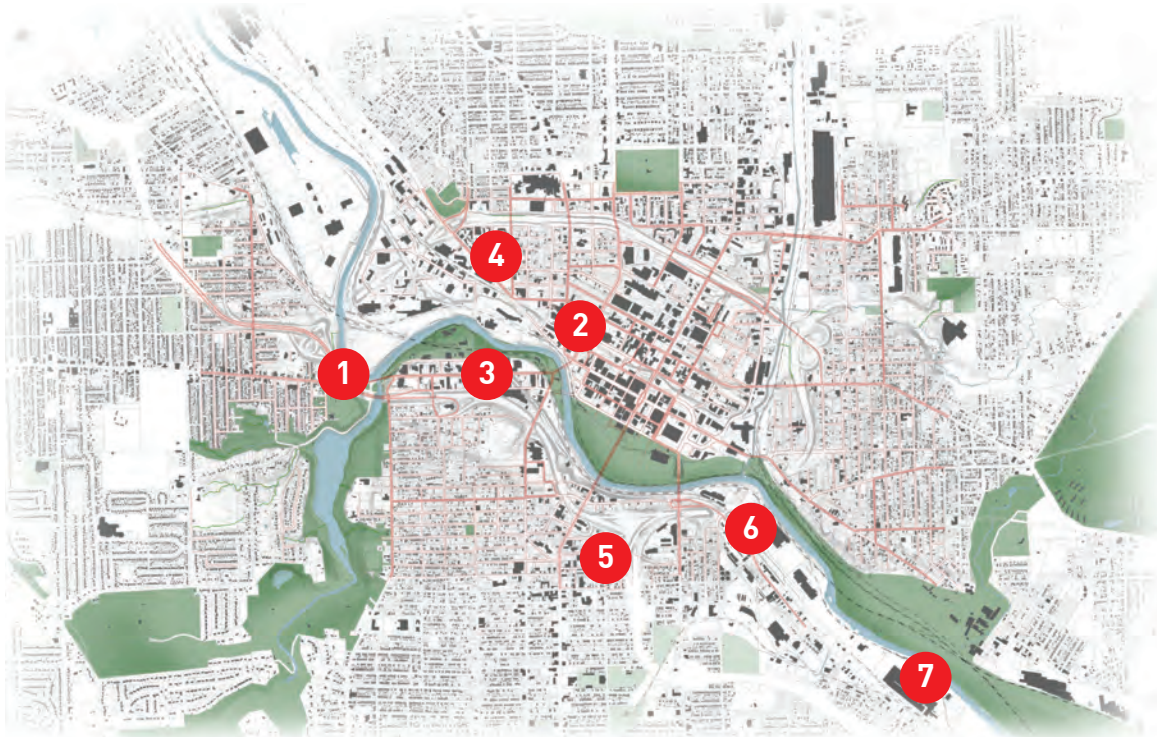


BELOW Directional signage will help point people to local landmarks and primary destinations, while helping tie the city together as an experience rather than a collection of unrelated businesses and attractions.



● PRIMARY POINTS OF CONNECTIVITY:

Within this overall wayfinding framework, we identified seven main points of connection from the river to the city.



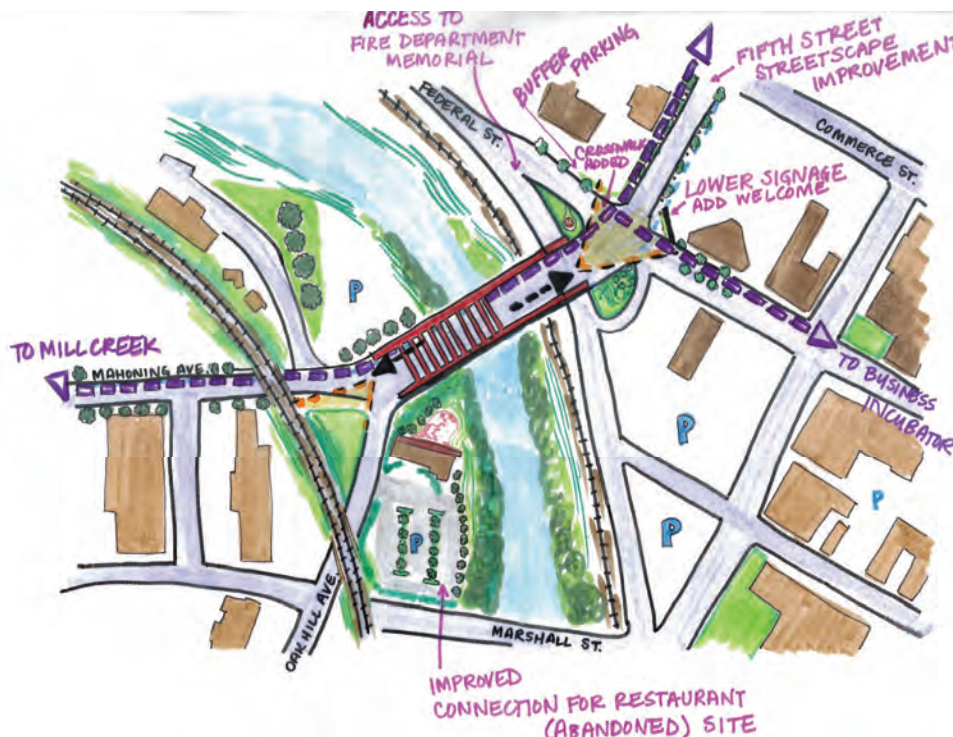
1. CONNECTIONS TO MILL CREEK PARK



LEFT Tod Avenue is a slower and more scenic than Mahoning Avenue as an entry into Mill Creek Park. Adding bike paths and pedestrian scale lighting to Tod Avenue would give residents an appealing option for accessing the park, especially on foot or by bike.

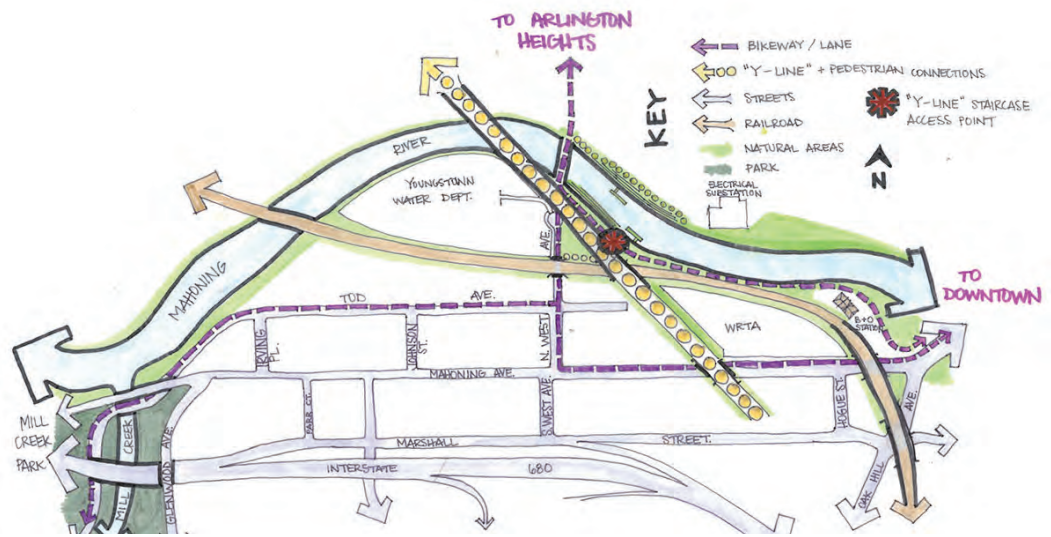
Mill Creek Park is a regional destination and an asset for Youngstown residents. Access to the park could be improved by creating a continuous streetscape for Mahoning Avenue and Fifth Avenue. Fifth Avenue bends into Mahoning Avenue. Adopting consistent lighting, signage, bike lanes, and street trees for both streets would reinforce the connection between Wick Park and Mill Creek Park and create a more appealing entry to both green spaces.

2. SPRING COMMON BRIDGE



LEFT The Spring Common Bridge links Mill Creek Park to the multi-modal transit center and to downtown. Adding crosswalks and landscaped islands at the north end of the bridge would improve pedestrian safety and enhance the appearance of this important connection. More pedestrian-scaled signage for the transit center and a landscaped buffer for the large surface parking lots on Federal Street would also reinforce the idea that pedestrians are welcome here.

3. MAHONING COMMONS AND THE Y-LINE



Mahoning Commons is a spot along the river where kayakers can drop in their boats and people can experience the river up close on a small, but well-sited dock. Adding to the special quality of this area is an abandoned railroad bridge that offers an opportunity to create a very special public amenity, the Y-Line.

RIGHT Expanding an existing dock would improve access to the river from Mahoning Commons.





ABOVE The existing bridge.
LEFT The re-imagined "Y-Line".

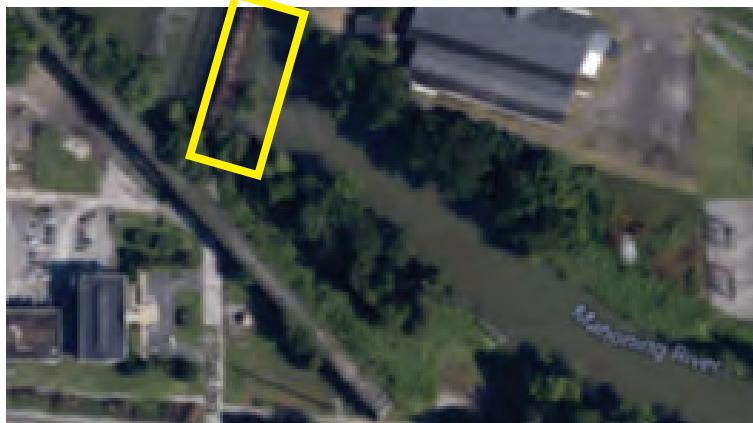
By making some repairs to the bridge deck and railing, adding some subtle lighting, and constructing a public staircase from the bridge down to the river's edge, the abandoned bridge could become the "Y-Line," a valued part of the city's green space network and a sight-seeing destination.



LEFT With important, but relatively modest safety improvements, the Y-line could be opened for public use.

4. ARLINGTON HEIGHTS CONNECTION

A second abandoned bridge on N. West Avenue could be restored and reopened for public use, to connect residents of the Arlington Heights neighborhood to the Mahoning Commons.



5. CONNECTIONS TO WEAN UNITED DEVELOPMENT

The Wean United site will offer a mix of uses that complements the downtown district. Drawing people out of downtown toward the river, the urban landscape will change from an orderly street grid to a more natural and mysterious context. The river's edge is quiet and beautiful. Framing views of the river only at key points will help preserve the mystery but reduce the anxiety and confusion people often feel as they move from a predictable place to an unexpected one.

NEAR RIGHT: The existing Mahoning Riverfront.

FAR RIGHT: A viewing platform could grant visitors visual access to the river.

BELOW Subtle paving treatments and lighting will help draw people toward the water under the canopy of the Market Street bridge.



Landscape Element



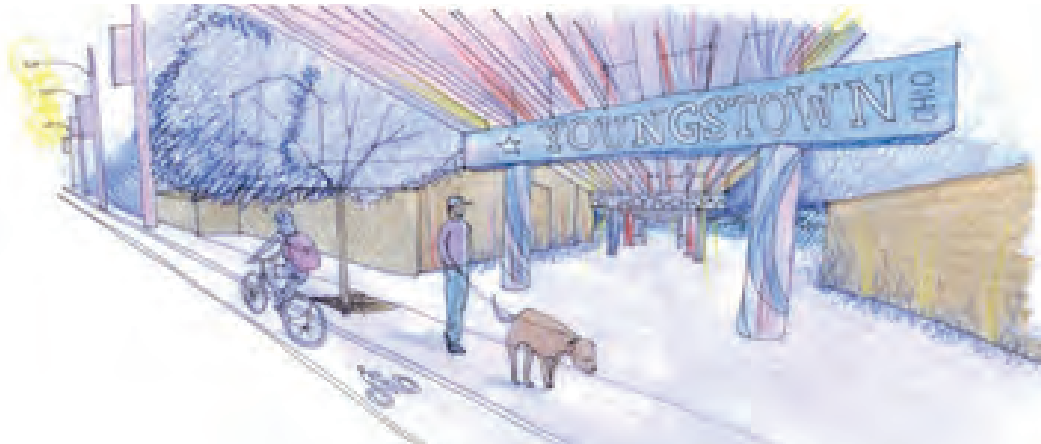
Remaining Structure

6. SMOKEY HOLLOW & CRAB CREEK

An enhanced streetscape for Andrews Avenue, including bike lanes, will help link the downtown area and the Wean United site to future development opportunities in Smokey Hollow and employment opportunities in the Andrews Avenue industrial/tech district.



LEFT Andrews Avenue streetscape redesign.



LEFT Lighting and signage for the Andrews Avenue underpass will make the freeway feel like less of a barrier between downtown and Smokey Hollow.



Future development in Smokey Hollow could include a mixture of institutional uses for Youngstown State, mixed use/residential development, green spaces, and industrial uses, connected to downtown via a proposed greenway along Crab Creek.



The rail line along Crab Creek and the adjacent easement could possibly accommodate a bike trail/multipurpose trail. A traffic engineering analysis would be needed to determine if a “rail with trail” facility could be accommodated here. The benefit of a trail along Crab Creek is that it would link the downtown core and Wean United development to a series of large development sites along Crab Creek that could be used for industrial expansion, recreation, and heritage tourism.

There are numerous development sites along Crab Creek, all in need of some degree of environmental remediation. A Crab Creek greenway would link these sites and connect into a larger greenspace network that includes Wick Park, Crandall Park, and the Mahoning River waterfront (**RIGHT**).

Future development sites for industrial and technology businesses could be oriented along the Crab Greenway trail, creating an appealing, well-connected, and worker-friendly employment and recreation district.

In addition to new industrial development, the Crab Creek greenway could also connect people to Youngstown’s industrial heritage. The Republic Rubber site is an extensive collection of historic buildings and industrial artifacts.

RIGHT Crab Creek is a channelized stream running adjacent to a rail line. An abundant tree canopy creates an experience of being in an area that is both industrial and natural.

BELOW View of potential "rail with trail" along Crab Creek.



Although many of the Republic Rubber buildings have deteriorated into ruins, the complex of buildings and the surrounding post-industrial landscape is a dramatic, mysterious, and compelling place.

The Republic Rubber site is difficult to access today, but it could become a major destination for people interested in industrial heritage of American cities in the 19th and early 20th centuries, if the some of the remaining buildings are stabilized and preserved. The wildness of the site also makes it an interesting area for filmmakers and extreme sports enthusiasts.

The Republic Rubber site needs a historic resources survey, to inventory the remaining buildings and artifacts, assess their structural integrity and historic significance, and make some initial decisions about the long-term preservation of the site. Preserving the Republic Rubber site as a hybrid of historic site and natural/recreation area will take time and money, but the end result would be a distinct and authentically Youngstown place that complements surrounding modern industrial development, serves as an exciting tourist draw, and gives Youngstown residents a place to take pride in the city's industrial roots.



Following a historic resources survey, steps to preserving the Republic Rubber site could include:

- Removal of debris and stabilization of some of the buildings, addressing any major structural issues that would pose a safety hazard.
- Closing off or adding safety rails to limit access to places where the public should not be allowed to go (i.e. elevator shafts and unprotected rooftops).
- Rehabilitation of some of the key historic buildings as a visitor center, public rest rooms, perhaps an event space, catering facility, or other future uses - weddings, festivals, concerts, and live theater. Maybe even a post-industrial camp site.
- Viewing platforms and picnic areas to enable visitors to experience views of the site, the creek, and downtown vistas
- Interpretative signage and a minimal path or paving treatment to guide visitors to the site
- Designated parking areas and a bike parking/repair station
- trailhead/connections to Crab Creek
- Gardens and landscapes to connection elements of the site
- Wi-fi pavilion
- Rugged recreation facilities--for snowboarding, cross country skiing, ATV racing, wall climbing, and urban exploration
- Photo documentation of key buildings and areas of the site that could be marketed through the Cleveland Film Commission for movie-making, or to artists and ad agencies for photo shoots.

The value of the Republic Rubber site involves layers of history, from when the site was an active industrial hub to its current state of decay. In other words, perhaps the city shouldn't clean up the site too much—just enough to make it safe for visitors, while open to exploration. The exciting experience of being in an off-limits place contributes to the appeal of Republic Rubber. Stabilizing or demolishing deteriorated buildings and creating a minimal walkway to guide people through the site, along with some interpretative signage, might be all that's needed to turn Republic Rubber into a regional destination for cultural tourism.



7. LINK TO EASTERN NETWORK OF UNDERUTILIZED PARKS

On the east side of the city, Youngstown's ghost parks speak to the city's earlier years, when growth seemed inevitable and new parks and platted residential streets were created in anticipation of an expanding population. While the city's population began to decline instead, the parks and streets on the east side of the city quietly reflect the optimism of that earlier era.

Parks and green spaces are linked by a network of waterways, including many small creeks and streams and larger bodies of water like McKelvey Lake.



This system of green spaces, water and vacant land is unusual to find within a city—another unexpected discovery that adds to Youngstown's unique character. Since these parks are rather secluded, promoting them for public use could raise concerns about safety. But they are a resource, nonetheless, for residents to rediscover and visitors to experience.

LEFT The natural, wooded beauty and rugged topography of Lincoln Park create an urban wilderness in close proximity to Youngstown residents.



LEFT The little used amphitheater and 1930s era architecture at Nick Johnson Park makes it a photogenic place to discover and explore.





IMPLEMENTATION

The recommendations illustrated in this report will take concerted effort, time, coordination, and funding to implement. In this section each recommendation, organized by geography, is broken into specific actions. Suggested leadership and some possible funding sources are also included to translate the charrette’s larger design ideas into manageable, implementable goals.

- **HAZEL & PHELPS:**

PRIORITY	ACTION	LEAD
	Adjust and add to existing design guidelines to reflect new development priorities & material palette	City of Youngstown
	Create brochures for design guidelines and storefront renovation program with clear diagrams and graphic examples of desired outcomes	YSU REDI
	Create system for connecting applicants to assistance from local design & fabrication professionals (i.e. Youngstown Design Works)	City of Youngstown
	Design and fabricate new district-appropriate street furniture in collaboration with 3d printing industries	YSU, America Makes
	Develop consistent lighting standards for pedestrian zones	City of Youngstown
	Program public spaces for evening & weekend activities in conjunction with events	City of Youngstown
	Activate southeast side of Hazel/Federal intersection with lights, festival, outdoor movies to attract YSU students	City of Youngstown
	Incentivize upgrades to storefronts that lack signage and street-facing windows	City of Youngstown
	Design and implement green infrastructure from YSU to Downtown to the Wean United site along Hazel & Phelps	City of Youngstown
	Incorporate “hillside” public amenity along Hazel Street between Wood & Commerce	City of Youngstown
	Incentivize green roofs on Downtown buildings most visible from higher elevations of YSU	City of Youngstown

SUPPORT	TIMEFRAME	COST	FUNDING SOURCES
YSU REDI, YNDC, CityScape	Immediate	Low	Dedicated staff time
YSU YDW, City of Youngstown	Immediate	Low	Local Foundations, Local Businesses, City of Youngstown
YSU REDI, YDW	Immediate	Low	City of Youngstown
City of Youngstown, YSU REDI	Mid-Term	Moderate to high	NEA Our Town, Other NEA and arts related grants (try to incorporate solar and wastewater into this?)
YSU REDI, Cityscape, YNDC	Mid-Term	High	
CityScape, EAG, YSU Penguin Productions	Immediate	Low to moderate	NEA Artworks, NEA Our Town
CityScape, EAG, YSU penguin productions	Immediate	Low to moderate	NEA Artworks, NEA Our Town
YSU REDI, WRPA, Private funders, Cityscape	Long-Term	High	
YSU REDI, YNDC, WRPA	Long-Term	Moderate to high	TIGER, ODOT, EDA, US DOT, ARC, Eastgate, USDN
YSU REDI, CityScape	Long-Term	Moderate	Private, City, WRPA
YSU REDI, WRPA, Private, Cityscape	Long-Term	High	Private, City, WRPA

PRIORITY	ACTION	LEAD
	Transform one-way section of Hazel Street to a two-way street	City of Youngstown
	Add bus route to complete Hazel connection from Lincoln (north) to Front (south) to make a YSU-Downtown-Riverfront loop	WRTA
	Increase signage & pedestrian-scale lighting along Hazel & Phelps, especially in areas with lower perceived attention/maintenance	City of Youngstown
	Transform Phelps between Commerce and Federal into pedestrian-only entertainment zone	City of Youngstown
	Explore transforming Phelps between Federal and Front into chicane (or install alternative traffic calming)	City of Youngstown
	Consolidate surface parking on north side of Downtown into structured parking with integrated green space	City of Youngstown
	Redevelop surface parking around City Hall for new civic green space	City of Youngstown
	Program & maintain public spaces for year-round use	City of Youngstown
	Identify a location for a pilot "parklet" where expanded sidewalk seating is needed	City of Youngstown
	Install street furniture that encourages physical activity and adult play	City of Youngstown

● WEAN UNITED:

PRIORITY	ACTION	LEAD
	Install east-west boardwalk along natural ridgeline of the site	City of Youngstown
	Focus new mixed-use development between Market and Hazel on south side of Front	City of Youngstown
	Work with local sculptors to install industrial-inspired public art gateway structures	YSU CCAC, REDI
	Install lighting, platform, minimal seating area to create performance space beneath Market Street Bridge	City of Youngstown
	Connect east and west halves of site to Market Street Bridge underpass with a "performance path" - integrate multi-seasonal recreational activity	City of Youngstown
	Collaborate with local fabricators to create & install sculptural lighting along Performance Path	City of Youngstown
	Develop collaborative community garden in conjunction with local urban agriculture advocacy groups	Commonwealth Kitchen Incubator
	Cut back vegetation at key points of access along the Mahoning Riverfront	City of Youngstown
	Install viewing platform(s), minimal path across tracks, kayak put-in facility at Mahoning Riverfront	City of Youngstown

SUPPORT	TIMEFRAME	COST	FUNDING SOURCES
ODOT, local stakeholders	Mid-Term	Low	City, Eastgate
City of Youngstown, YSU REDI	Mid-Term	Moderate	US DOT, ODOT, Eastgate
YSU REDI, Eastgate, Ohio Edison	Mid-Term	Moderate to high	US DOT, ODOT, Eastgate, City of Youngstown, Ohio Edison
Eastgate	Mid-Term	Moderate to high	US DOT, ODOT, Eastgate, City of Youngstown, Ohio Edison
Eastgate	Mid-Term	High	US DOT, ODOT, Eastgate, City of Youngstown
Private, WRPA	Long-Term	High	US DOT, ODOT, WRPA, Private, Eastgate, City of Youngstown
Eastgate, Cityscape	Mid-Term	Moderate to high	Private, City, Eastgate
CityScape	Mid-Term	Moderate	Private, Cityscape, City
YSU REDI, Eastgate, Cityscape	Mid-Term	Moderate	Private, Cityscape, City
CityScape, YSU REDI	Mid-Term	Moderate to high	Private, Cityscape, City

SUPPORT	TIMEFRAME	COST	FUNDING SOURCES
Private	Mid-Term	High	Private, City
Private	Long-Term	High	Private, City
City of Youngstown, Legal Creative	Long-Term	Moderate to high	Private, Cityscape, City, EAG
Local electrical/lighting contractors	Long-Term	Moderate to high	Private, Cityscape, City
	Mid-Term	Moderate to high	Private, City
Legal Creative	Mid-Term		Private, Cityscape, City
CityScape	Mid-Term	Low to moderate	Private, Cityscape, City of Youngstown
YSU GES	Mid-Term	Low to moderate	Private, City of Youngstown
Friends of the Mahoning River	Mid-Term	Moderate	Private, Cityscape, City of Youngstown

● CONNECTIONS:

PRIORITY	ACTION	LEAD
	Expand existing signage/wayfinding strategy to clearly indicate larger connections from Downtown to Mill Creek Park, Crab Creek Corridor, other nearby assets	YSU REDI, EAG
	Reconfigure Mahoning Avenue and Tod Avenue to safely connect pedestrians & cyclists from Downtown to Mill Creek Park: bike paths, pedestrian-scale lighting, signage	City of Youngstown
	Redevelop Spring Avenue Bridge to add crosswalk, signage, lighting, landscape buffers, islands	City of Youngstown
	Expand existing dock at Mahoning Commons, add signage to access point	City of Youngstown
	Repair "Y-Line" railroad bridge deck & railing, add lighting, and add a public staircase from the bridge to the river's edge	City of Youngstown
	Repair N. West Avenue trestle bridge across Mahoning River and reopen for public access from Arlington Heights	City of Youngstown
	Enhance streetscape for Andrews Avenue to accommodate bicycles and add lighting and signage at the Andrews Avenue underpass	City of Youngstown
	Conduct traffic engineering analysis to investigate installing multi-use "rail with trail" greenway along Crab Creek railway easement	City of Youngstown
	Focus remediation and economic development on industrial parcels along Crab Creek corridor	City of Youngstown
	Conduct historic resources survey for Republic Rubber site	Mahoning Valley Historical Society
	Stabilize noteworthy buildings on Republic Rubber site and block off any hazardous zones with safety rails	City of Youngstown
	Install visitor infrastructure for Republic Rubber site: pathway, signage, viewing platforms, parking, trailhead, and recreational facilities	City of Youngstown
	Signage and visitor infrastructure to guide explorers to Lincoln Park, Johnson Park, and other east side parks	City of Youngstown

SUPPORT	TIMEFRAME	COST	FUNDING SOURCES
City of Youngstown	Mid-term	Moderate	US DOT, ODOT, Eastgate, City of Youngstown
Eastgate, YSU REDI	Mid-term	Moderate to high	US DOT, ODOT, Eastgate, City of Youngstown
Eastgate, YSU REDI	Mid-term	Moderate to high	US DOT, ODOT, Eastgate, City of Youngstown
Friends of the Mahoning River	Mid-term	Moderate to high	City of Youngstown, Ohio EPA, ODNR
YSU REDI, Eastgate	Mid-term	High	US DOT, ODOT, Eastgate, City of Youngstown
YSU REDI, Eastgate	Long-term	High	US DOT, ODOT, Eastgate, City of Youngstown
Ohio Edison	Mid-term	Moderate to high	City of Youngstown, Ohio Edison
Eastgate, YSU REDI	Short-term	Moderate to high	City of Youngstown, Eastgate, ODOT
YNDC, YSU REDI	Mid-term	Moderate to high	City of Youngstown, EPA, ODSA
City of Youngstown, YSU REDI	Mid-term	Moderate to high	OHPO, State of Ohio, Mahoning County, City of Youngstown
YSU REDI, PRN	Mid-term	Moderate to high	City of Youngstown, Private, State of Ohio
Private, YSU REDI, MCMP	Mid-term	Moderate to high	City of Youngstown, Private, ODNR
CityScape	Mid-term	Moderate to high	City of Youngstown

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

Mohammad Alabassi
Taylor Firestine
Ellen Forthofer
Austin Roy
Kevin Sweetland
Loaei Thabet
Sara Weber
Justin Ferguson

LAWRENCE TECH UNIVERSITY

Dustin Altschul
Crystal Saleh
Kexin Yan
Rui Yi Liu
Yu Zhu
Joongsub Kim

KENT STATE UNIVERSITY

Jordan Fitzgerald
Heather Flick
Clarisse Gates
Sophanut Jamonnak
Tyler Middendorf
Katelyn Milius
Alena Miller
Sam Friesema
David Jurca
Jeffrey Kruth
Terry Schwarz
Kristen Zeiber



The Mastriana Endowment
4M Company LLC

