



**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**  
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## **SACCARAPPA PARK DESIGN CHARRETTE #2 & ABCA PUBLIC MEETING**

**Summary | Meeting #2 | May 21, 2025**

### **Agenda:**

#### **1. Project Overview**

- A. Team Introductions (5 minutes)
- B. City Welcome and Statement Of "Development Goals" (5 minutes)
- C. Brownfields Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives Summary (5 minutes)
- D. Presentation Of Site, "Context & Constraints"(5 minutes)

#### **2. Review Of Themes & Trends From The Public Input Questionnaire & Charette #1 (5-10 minutes)**

#### **3. Presentation Of Design Concepts (5-10 minutes)**

#### **4. Moderated Small Group Discussions & Work Session (60 minutes)**

#### **5. Small Group Reports – "Top 10" Priorities/Concerns (20 minutes)**

#### **6. Closing Remarks By City (5 minutes)**

**Total Allotted Time = 115 to 125 minutes**

### **Attendance:**

- See Sign in Sheet

### **Presentations**

- See Attached

#### **• Team Introductions**

Robyn Saunders, City Project Manager, welcomed all and asked for introductions from everyone.

#### **• City Welcome**

Angela Holmes, Assistant City Manager, provided an overview of the City's overall goals and objectives for the project.

#### **• Brownfields Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives Summary**

Rip Patten of Credere provided an overview of the industrial history of the site, the previous environmental investigation results, the remedial alternatives considered for the site, and the recommended alternative (Alternative #2 – Selective removal of PAH, TPH, and metal contaminated soil, installation of an engineered barrier, and institutional controls). Questions

from the public centered around understanding how the proposed remedial measures will impact the proposed design of the Park.

- **Presentation Of Site, "Context & Constraints"**

Steven Hoffman and Ryan Kanteres, Simons Architects, and Alex Del Vecchio, Acorn, presented the overall context of the Saccarappa Park site in relation to various other surrounding aspects including its relationship to other parks in town, pedestrian walkways and transit connections, traffic circulation and parking, setbacks and easements, climate and vegetation, structural scale, and general park elements.

- **Review Of Themes & Trends From The Public Input Questionnaire & Charette #1**

Ryan Kanteres, Simons Architects, presented themes and trends from the questionnaire and Charette #1. He indicated over 90% of respondents supported redeveloping the site, with strong interest in extending the River Walk and offering year-round public activities. Popular park features included public markets, festivals, live entertainment, and food areas, with most visitors planning to walk or drive, and over 60% indicating they would bring children—highlighting the need for thoughtful design around activities, safety, and cleanliness. Respondents prioritized walking paths, seating, seasonal gardens, shade trees, and informal play areas, favoring a flexible, family-friendly park that isn't a traditional playground. There was strong support for public art, native landscaping, sustainable features like energy efficiency and carbon neutrality, and most respondents were local residents who frequently visit downtown and use the Riverwalk.

- **Presentation Of Design Concepts**

Steven Hoffman and Ryan Kanteres, Simons Architects, and Alex Del Vecchio, Acorn, presented three (3) conceptual designs for Saccarappa Park project. Each design focused on three themes confluence, transition, and threshold:

- Confluence – Community feedback on connectivity guided the development of this design approach. The interplay of connections and pathways was inspired by the confluence of multiple streams, merging as the river flows over the falls. This concept informed the park's organization, creating a series of distinct spaces at varying scales that reflect the natural convergence of water and landscape.
- Transition – This design strategy was shaped by community feedback, emphasizing the desire for a landscape that gradually transitions the public experience from the urban environment along Main Street to a more natural, serene experience along the riverfront. The design aims to create a seamless connection between the two spaces, enhancing the experience for visitors.
- Threshold – In response to community discussions about the contrasting characters of the urban edge and the riverfront, this design approach seeks to clearly define the meeting of these two environments. The goal is to establish a gateway to the park, acting as a "front porch" for the city, where the urban experience transitions into the park's natural setting.

- **Moderated Small Group Discussions & Work Session & Small Group Reports**

Meeting participants broke into three small groups, representing each of the above design concepts. Each group was moderated by design team members (Credere, Simons, and Acorn) and municipal representatives. Groups had 15 to 20 minutes timeframe within each group. Participants provided input and ideas on general feedback for the park, and feedback on each of the specific concepts. A summary of themes, topics and ideas for each design concept are as follows:

#### **Most Frequently Mentioned Terms & Themes (by Category)**

##### **Pathways & Circulation**

- **Desired path / “cow path”** – strongly supported as a key route from the Crosswalk for the Riverwalk along Bridge Street to Main Street (nearest the Armory Apartment building)
- **Curved/intersecting paths** preferred over straight lines
- **Riverwalk/bike access** – multiple mentions, including bike racks and bike paths
- **Accessibility** – ADA parking, pedestrian bridge improvements, flashing crosswalks

##### **Structures & Programming**

- **Structure** – mixed opinions: some want none; others favor a small or split structure, pergola, or flexible covering
- **Concerts / music** – frequently mentioned; noise from the falls and acoustics are a concern
- **Markets / events** – farmers market, winter market, movie nights
- **Shade structures / cozy nooks** – request for smaller shaded areas distributed across the park
- **Restrooms** – mentioned often, including references to park-style toilets

##### **Landscape & Vegetation**

- **Native / low-maintenance plants** – consistent support for sustainable and native landscaping that are low maintenance for City upkeep
- **Grass vs. clover / ornamental grasses** – desire to avoid traditional lawn for pollinator health
- **Arboretum / labeled plantings** – educational aspect and species variety appreciated
- **No berms** – some opposition to raised topography blocking views

##### **Furnishings & Amenities**

- **Seating** – benches, movable café/bistro tables, fixed stone seats
- **Water fountains** – for dogs, bottle-filling, near bike racks
- **Trash cans, bike racks, soft lighting (dark sky compliant)**
- **Game tables** – chess, dominoes, bocce
- **Storage** – small structure for maintenance/storage needs

#### Cultural & Educational Elements

- **Acknowledging Native history / Chief Poulin tribute**
- **Interpretive signage / plant ID plaques**
- **Public art and storytelling** elements appreciated

#### Maintenance & Materials

- **Low-maintenance preference** – concern over upkeep, especially near the river
- **Permeable materials** – preference for surfaces that differ from typical city paving
- **Concern about boardwalk durability and snow removal**
- **Solar lighting / solar panels**

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#### Key Takeaways / Summary

- **The community values nature, accessibility, and flexible, inclusive uses.** There is strong support for **preserving natural paths** (like the “cow path”), using **native plants**, and having **bike- and pedestrian-friendly circulation**.
- Feedback around the **structure is mixed**—some prefer none, others want it to be small, split, or flexible (e.g., pergola). **Concerts and events** are generally supported, but noise and parking are concerns.
- People want the park to be **low-maintenance, cost-effective**, and **environmentally sensitive** - favoring **clover lawns, permeable paths**, and **solar solutions**.
- Interest in **community-oriented uses** is high: chess tables, family-friendly restrooms, **shade nooks**, markets, and **educational features** like labeled trees or history plaques.
- **Equity and access**—from **ADA parking to affordable business space ideas**—emerged as a thoughtful undercurrent throughout.

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Here's a breakdown of the **most frequently mentioned terms and themes** from all the feedback you shared for **Sac Park Charrette #2**, organized by **category** with an approximate count of mentions and brief context:

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### Site Features & Infrastructure

Term/Theme	Count	Notes
<b>Structure (general)</b>	30+	Comments range from support (e.g. shade, markets) to concern (e.g. size, noise)
<b>Restrooms</b>	10+	Repeated call for accessible facilities like at state parks or Deering Oaks
<b>Boardwalk</b>	10+	Mixed feelings—liked for access/sitting, disliked for maintenance, snow removal issues
<b>Path / Cow Path</b>	15+	Strong support to preserve the existing diagonal footpath ("desire line")
<b>Bike Amenities</b>	10+	Racks, connection to bike network, interest in commuting infrastructure
<b>Tables (games/food)</b>	10+	Desire for chess, dominoes, and lunch seating (especially moveable or stone)
<b>Lighting</b>	6+	Dark sky-compliant, pathway downlighting emphasized
<b>Trash Cans</b>	3+	Maintenance & cleanliness concern
<b>Drinking Fountain / Sink</b>	3+	Hand-wash and bottle-filling features requested

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### Landscape & Environment

Term/Theme	Count	Notes
<b>Trees / Tree Type</b>	15+	Preference for variety (arboretum), short trees near river, avoid blocking views
<b>Native / Low Maintenance Planting</b>	15+	Strong preference for pollinator-friendly, perennial, non-turf species
<b>Grass / Lawn</b>	8+	Preference against traditional turf; interest in clover or reduced-lawn schemes
<b>Permeable Surfaces</b>	6+	Interest in stormwater-sensitive paving, stone dust, or pavers, need to consider sensitivity of permeable surface along the river for erosion concerns
<b>Topo Variation / Berms</b>	8+	Interest in gentle grade changes for seclusion/play—but with preserved views
<b>Maze / Labyrinth</b>	4+	Desired as playful and contemplative space
<b>Arboretum / Plant ID</b>	4+	Suggested for educational and seasonal interest
<b>Eagle Nesting Tree</b>	1	Noted as important for preservation

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### Program & Events

Term/Theme	Count Notes
<b>Concerts / Bandstand</b>	10+ Some excitement, some concern (noise from the river, location)
<b>Farmers Market</b>	7+ Seen as desirable but with parking concerns, potential for winter markets
<b>Winter Programming</b>	5+ Fire pits, synthetic ice, sculpture, markets—all popular
<b>Shade Structures / Pergolas</b>	6+ Preference for multiple small shade spots vs. one large building
<b>Educational / Cultural Features</b>	6+ Desire for native history, plant plaques, public art
<b>Movie Nights</b>	2+ Suggested as low-cost community events

### Access, Mobility, & Safety

Term/Theme	Count Notes
<b>Parking / ADA</b>	5+ More parking wanted, ADA spots emphasized for public use, make clean connectivity to parking garage
<b>Crosswalk Safety</b>	3+ Poor visibility noted—need flashing signs or raised crosswalk
<b>Safety / Sight Lines</b>	4+ Visual openness desired for safety and river views
<b>Scooter Concerns</b>	2+ Kids on scooters + event safety = design tension

### Design Philosophy & Materiality

Term/Theme	Count Notes
<b>Low Cost / Low Upkeep</b>	10+ Emphasis on durability, easy repair, low-maintenance plants and infrastructure
<b>Durable / Non-Slippery Materials</b>	5+ Especially for winter and aging populations
<b>Transparent / Light Structures</b>	3+ Pergolas or broken-up roof structures preferred visually
<b>Solar Panels / Lighting</b>	3+ Sustainability interest for roof and site lighting

### Miscellaneous

Term/Theme	Count Notes
<b>Community Identity / History</b>	6+ Interest in honoring indigenous history, naming, salmon, river use, making structure a locally themed focus element
<b>Public Art / Sculpture</b>	3+ Artistic identity markers like Chief Poulin statue or seasonal ice art

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Term/Theme	Count Notes
<b>Feedback from Maintenance Staff</b>	2+ Suggested for next steps before finalizing designs

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**Top Repeated Overall Themes**

- 1. Balance between openness and cozy gathering pockets** (e.g. shade, rest, views)
- 2. Desire path preservation and natural circulation**
- 3. Nature-focused, native and educational planting**
- 4. Multi-season, low-maintenance programming**
- 5. Diverse opinions about size and use of the central structure**

## **Attachment A: List of Attendees**

## **Attachment B: Presentations**

# Westbrook Saccarappa Park Brownfields Charrette #2 – May 21, 2025

**ATTEND THE COMMUNITY MEETING!  
APRIL 15TH & MAY 21ST**



**SACCARAPPA PARK REDEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**  
VISIT ONLINE @ [www.bit.ly/saccarappapark](http://www.bit.ly/saccarappapark) OR SNAP THE QR CODE & COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE

JOIN US AT IN-PERSON MEETINGS TO REVIEW RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE & MAKE YOUR MARK  
**COMMUNITY MEETINGS | APRIL 15th + MAY 21st | 6PM - 8PM**  
WESTBROOK PUBLIC SERVICES | 371 Saco Street, Westbrook



# COMMUNITY CHARETTE #2 AGENDA

- 1) Saccarappa Park Brownfields Redevelopment Project Overview**
  - a) Team Introductions (City) (5 min)
  - b) City Welcome & Statement of “Redevelopment Goals” (City) (5 min)
  - c) Sac Park Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives Summary (Credere) (5 minutes)
  - d) Presentation of Site, “Context & Constraints” (Simons/Acorn) (5 minutes)
- 2) Review of Themes & Trends from the Public Input Questionnaire & Charrette #1 (Simons/Acorn) (10 minutes)**
- 3) Presentation of Design Concepts (Simons/Acorn) (10 minutes)**



# COMMUNITY CHARETTE #1 AGENDA

- 4. Moderated Small Group Discussions & Work Session (60 minutes)**
  - a) Green Space
  - b) Riverwalk, Community & Cultural Representation
  - c) Activities / Programming / Structure(s)
- 5. Small Group Reports – “Top 10” priorities/concerns (20 minutes)**
- 6. Final Thoughts (City) (5 minutes)**



# 1) Project Overview

- a) TEAM INTRODUCTIONS
- b) CITY STATEMENT OF REDEVELOPMENT GOALS



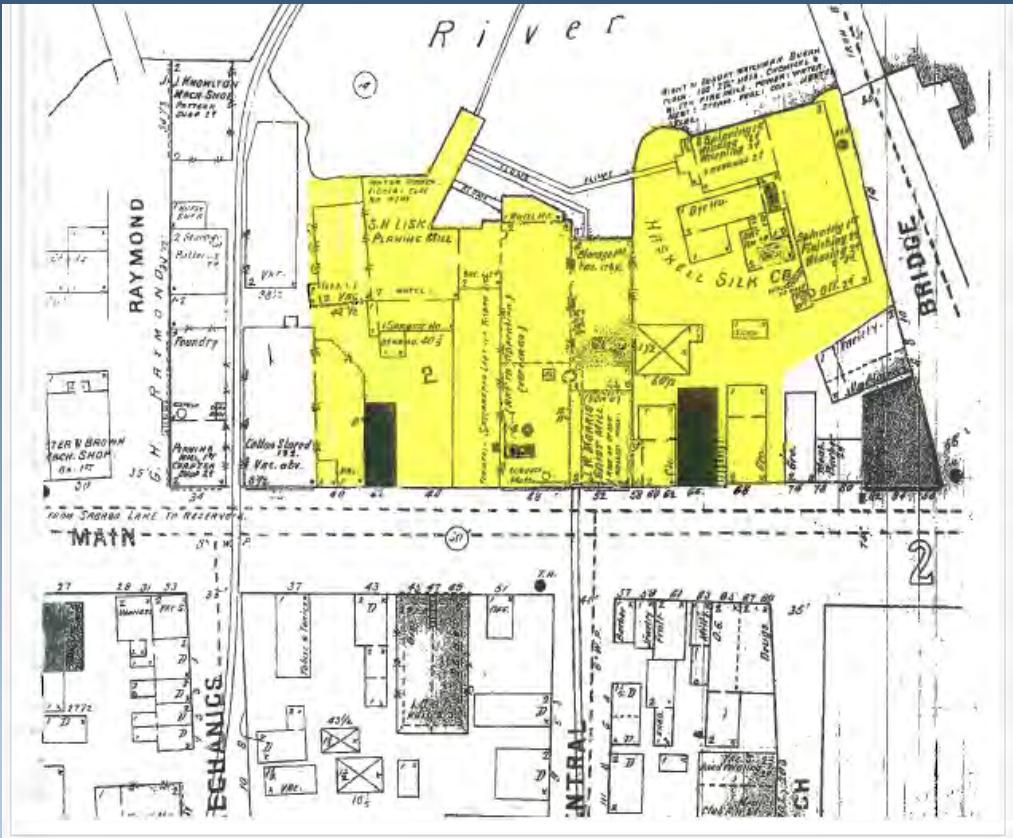
# 1) Project Overview – c) History & Existing Environmental Conditions



1879



## 1) Project Overview – c) History



1879



# 1) Project Overview – c) History



1922



## 1) Project Overview – c) History



1930



Westbrook, Maine



# 1) Project Overview – c) History



1930s??



# 1) Project Overview – c) History



1950s



# 1) Project Overview – c) History



1950s



## 1) Project Overview – c) History



1962?



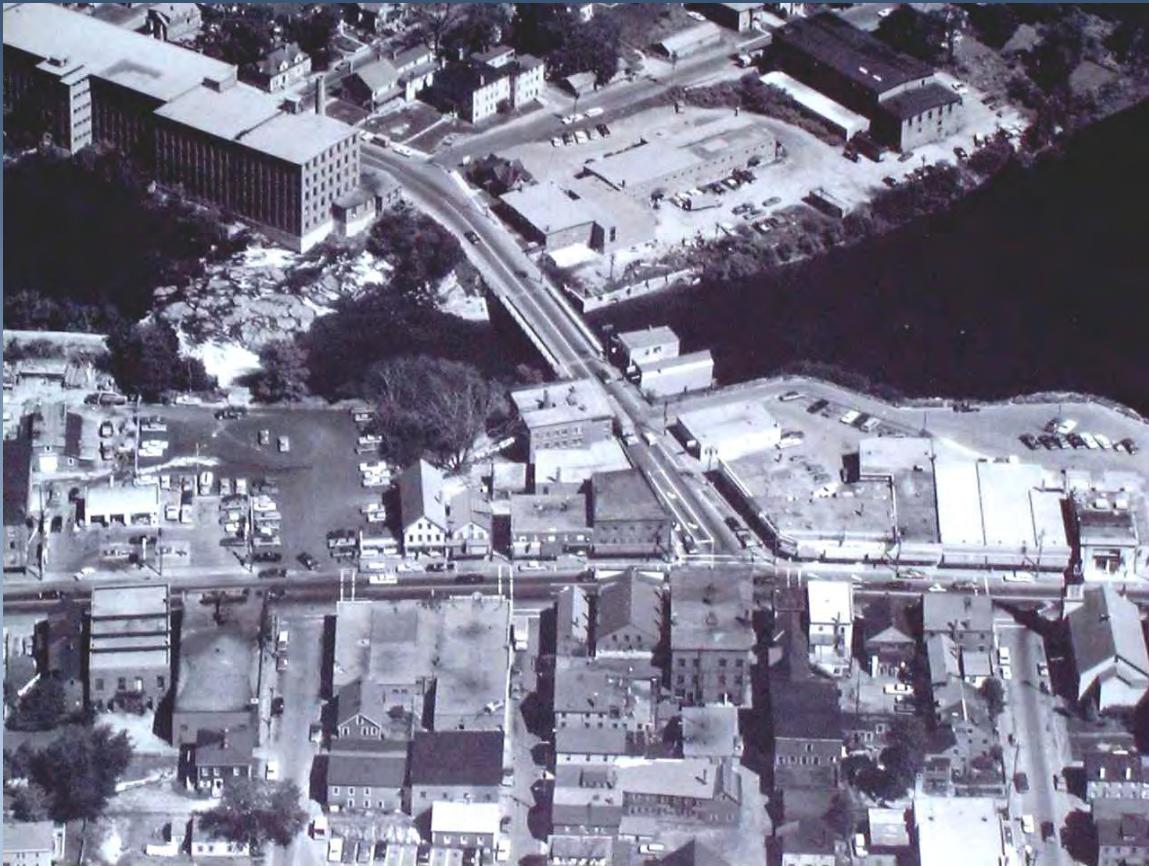
# 1) Project Overview – c) History



1960s



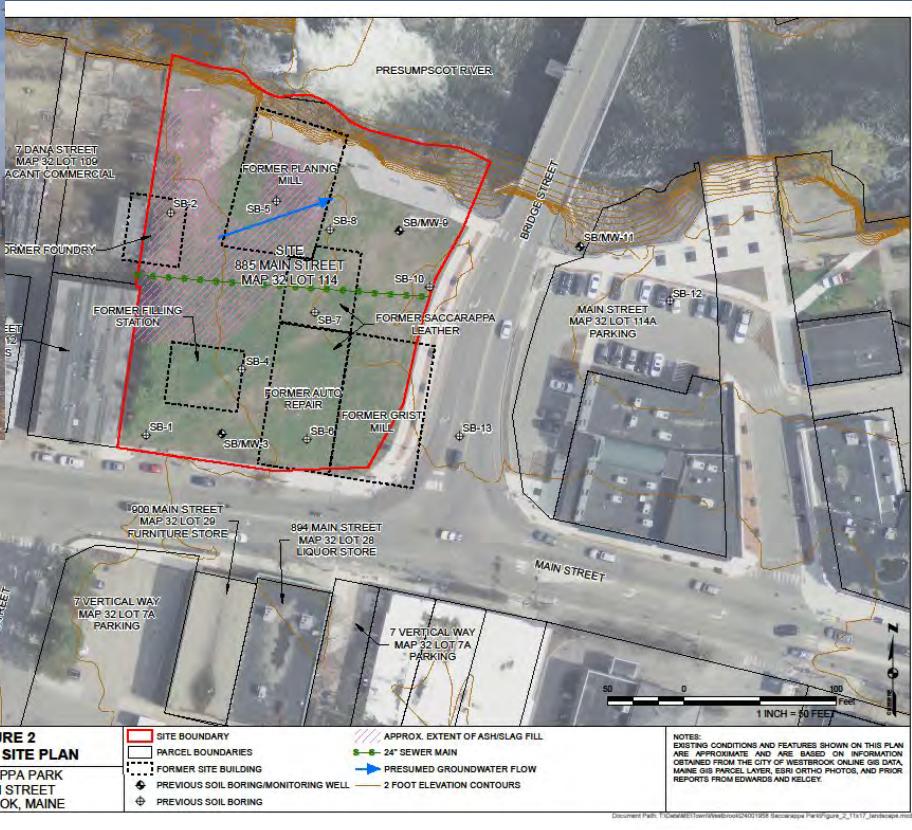
# 1) Project Overview – c) History



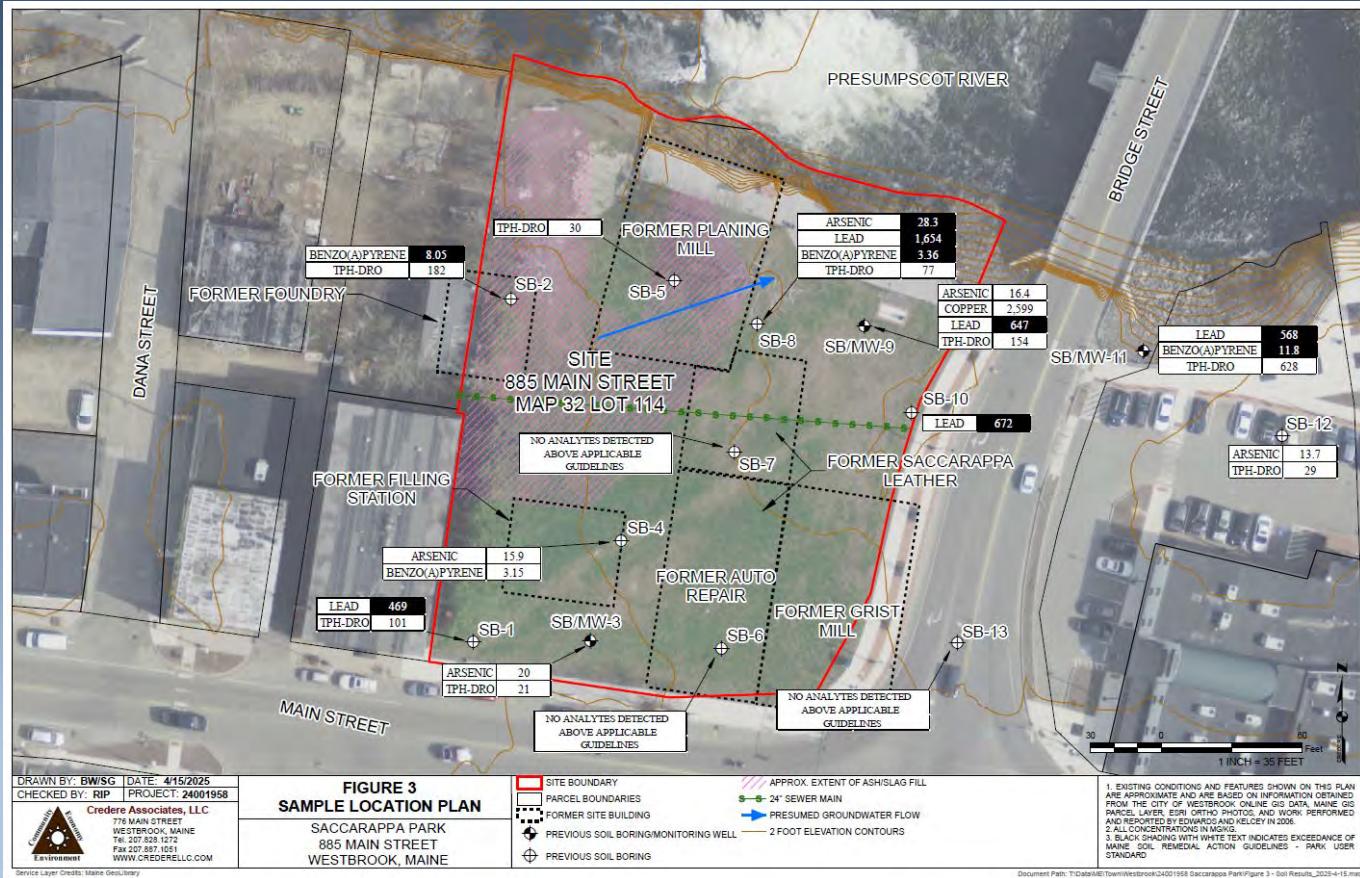
1970s



# 1) Project Overview – c) ABCA Summary



# 1) Project Overview – c) ABCA Summary



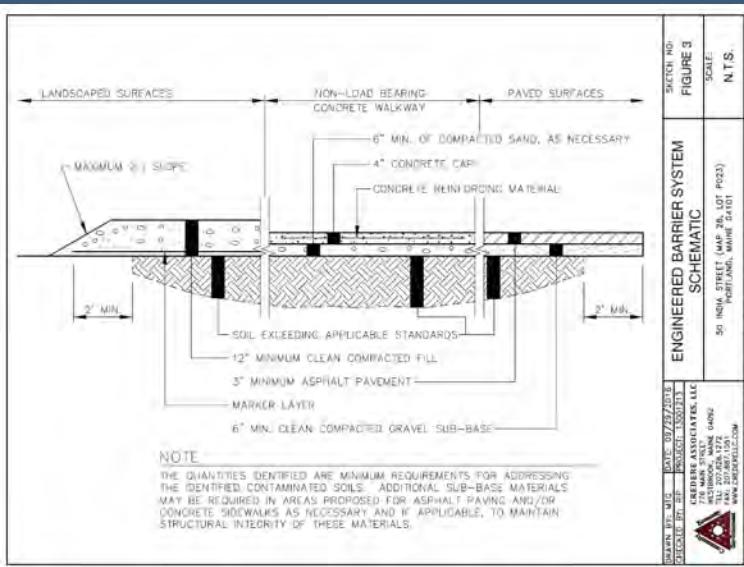
# 1) Project Overview – c) ABCA Summary

## Remedial Alternatives Evaluated:

1. No Action
2. Selective Removal of PAH, TPH, and Metals Contaminated Soil, Installation of an Engineered Barrier, and Institutional Controls
3. Complete Removal and Proper Disposal of PAH, TPH, and Metals Contaminated Soil and Institutional Controls



# 1) Project Overview – c) ABCA Summary



[see Simons Presentation]



# 5. Small Group Reports



1. Present common themes from Group Discussions



# 6. City Closing / Final Thoughts

**ATTEND THE COMMUNITY MEETING!**

**APRIL 15TH & MAY 21ST**



*Make your mark on the park!*

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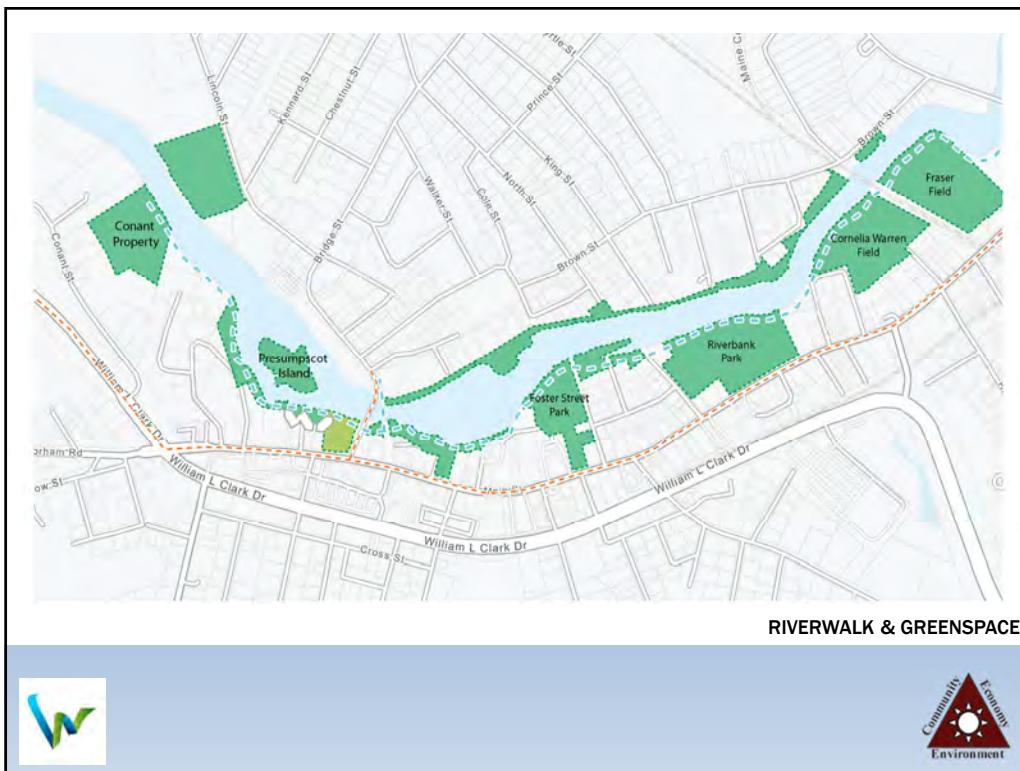
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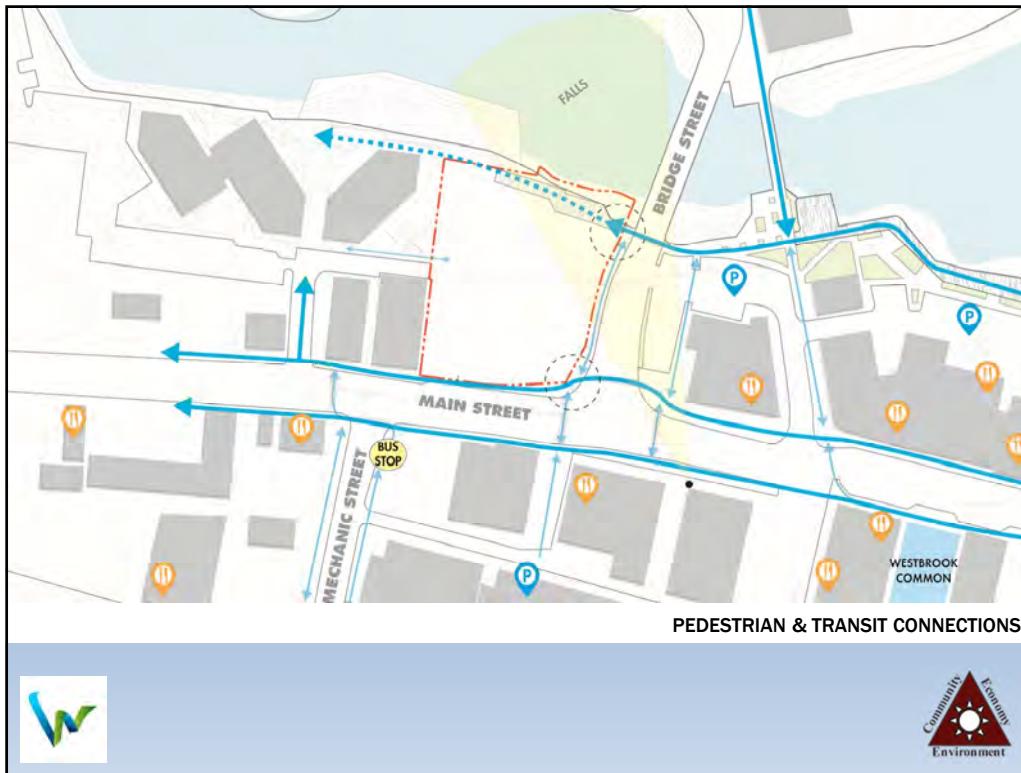




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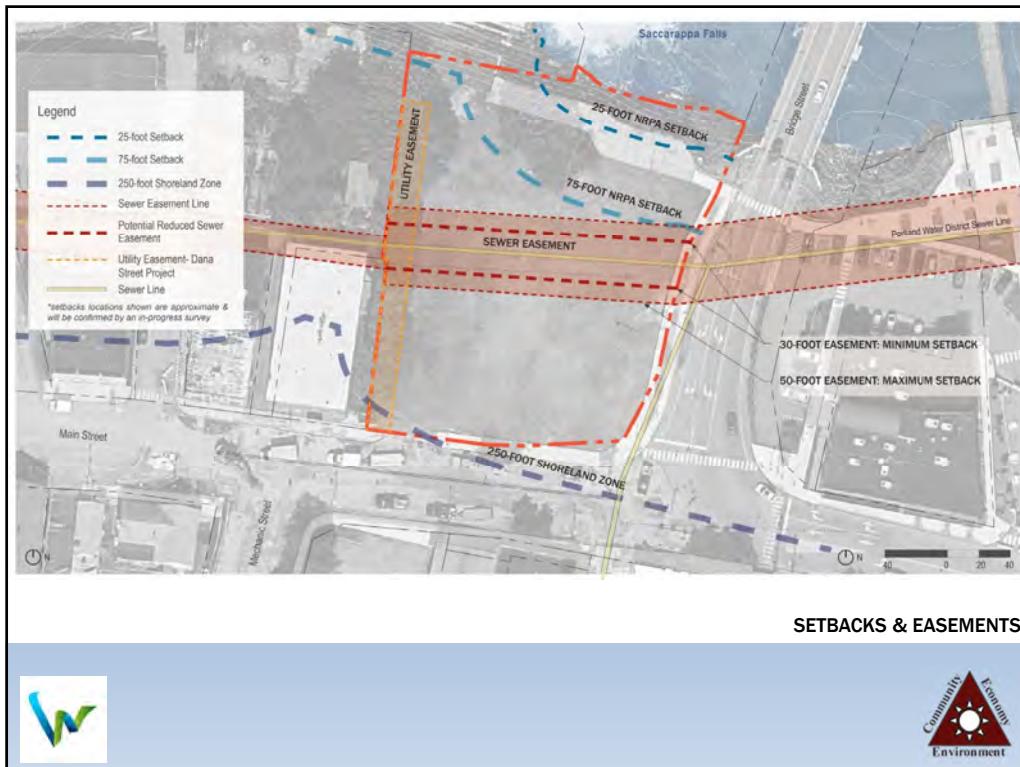
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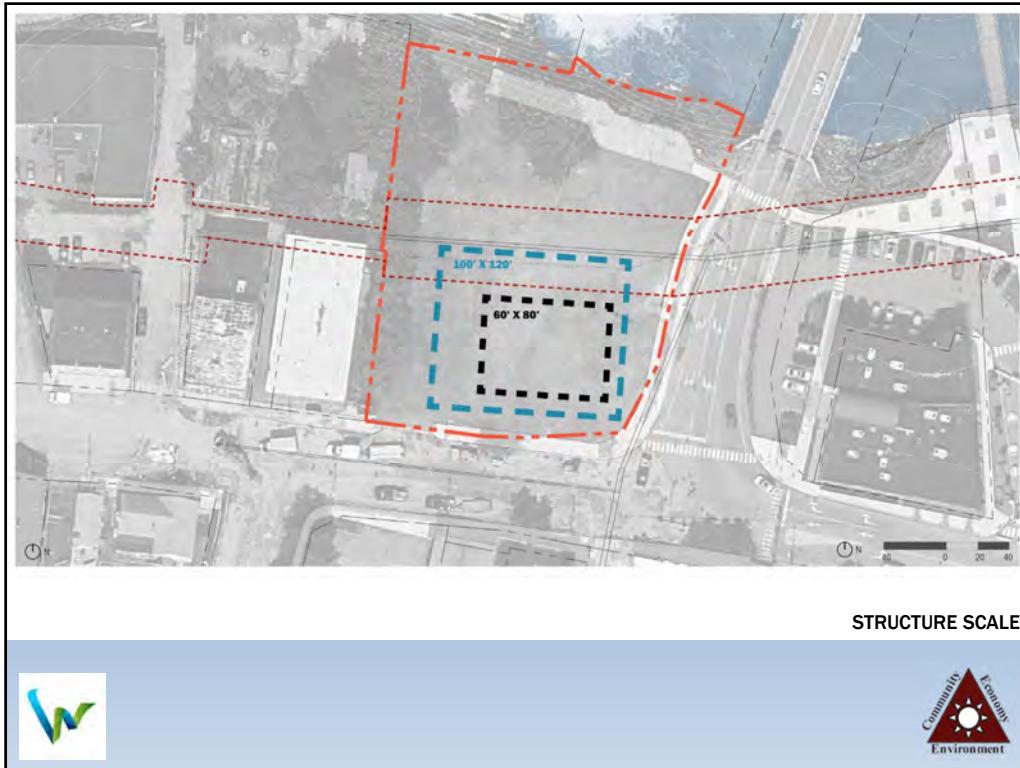
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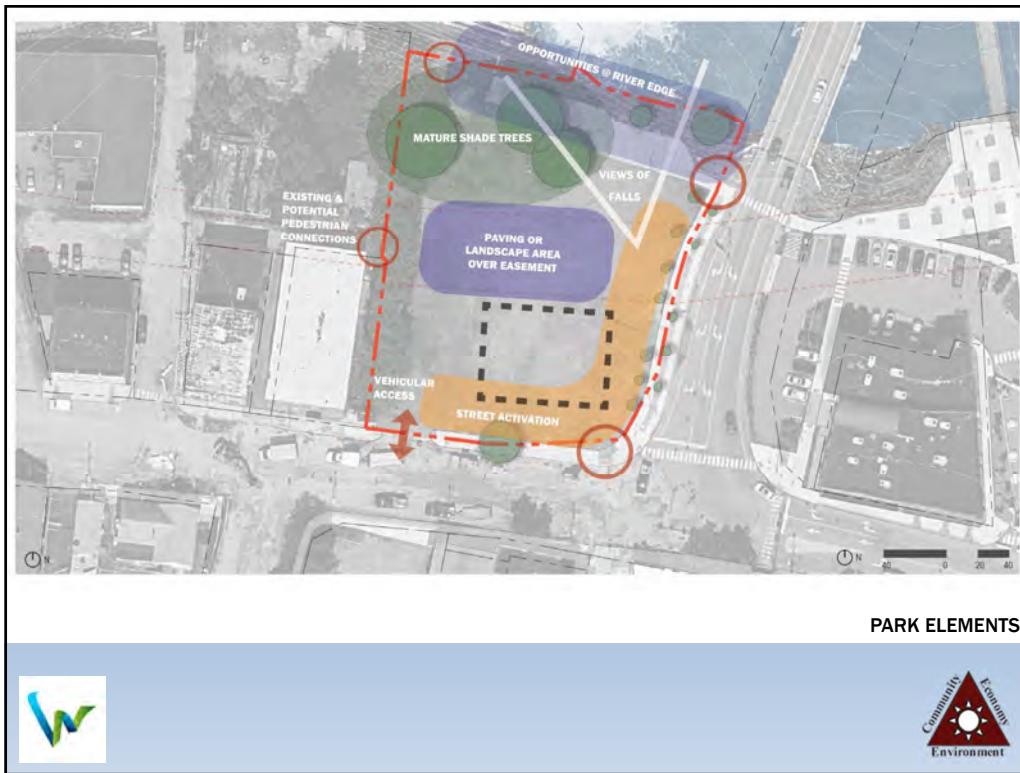
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## Community Questionnaire - Themes and Highlights

3/10/25 to 4/10/25, 233 Participants

### Themes

1. Over 90% of respondents were in favor of redeveloping the site
2. Extending the River Walk upstream and providing 4-season public uses had broad support
3. The majority of respondents ranked public markets, community events/festivals, live entertainment, and food uses/picnicking as the activities that would bring them to the Park
4. Most visitors would either walk or drive to the Park
5. Designs should consider activities, security and cleanliness
6. Over 60% of respondents would bring children to the Park



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## Community Questionnaire - Themes and Highlights

3/10/25 to 4/10/25, 233 Participants

### Highlights

1. Walking Paths, outdoor tables/benches, seasonal gardens, shade trees, water fountains and informal play areas all ranked as high priorities for features of the Park.
2. A flexible, family-friendly park without being a playground was desired
3. The majority of respondents supported having public art, cultural/historical references, native pollinator gardens and open lawn areas.
4. Respondents ranked natural Maine-sourced materials, native plantings, energy efficiency, water conservation and being carbon-neutral as high priority sustainability features for the Park.
5. The majority of respondents lived and worked in Westbrook, visit downtown several times a week, and use the Riverwalk at least once a month.



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## COMMUNITY CHARRETTE #1 TAKEAWAYS



### Memories Of Public Space

- play
- meaningful moments, e.g. pictures at prom
- rest, safety, commune with nature
- iconic element that signifies an identity of a place
- watching the change of seasons; e.g. the "ice tree"

### Safety

- buffer traffic; safer conditions at Bridge Street, especially at the foot of the bridge
- keep open view of all areas in the park
- make it well-lit at night & keep it clean



### Activities

- large group events like markets or summer concert series
- space where meaningful community events could take place near the river/falls
  - e.g. "Feast Of the Falls" community dinner
- multipurpose; make sure the space is active throughout the year in a variety of ways
- welcoming for kids & adults alike, not just a playground
- "day-to-day" place both for groups to gather, e.g. picnic; and/ or to be solo



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### Greenspace

- connection to riverwalk down river, extend to further up river
- preservation of green/open space, contrast to new urban development
- space to be near the falls; have a different view/experience of the falls
- viewing/being near the river in a quiet/private moment, away from the bustle of Main Street
- native plantings that support local ecology, e.g. pollinators
- plantings that mark the change of seasons
- trees for shade

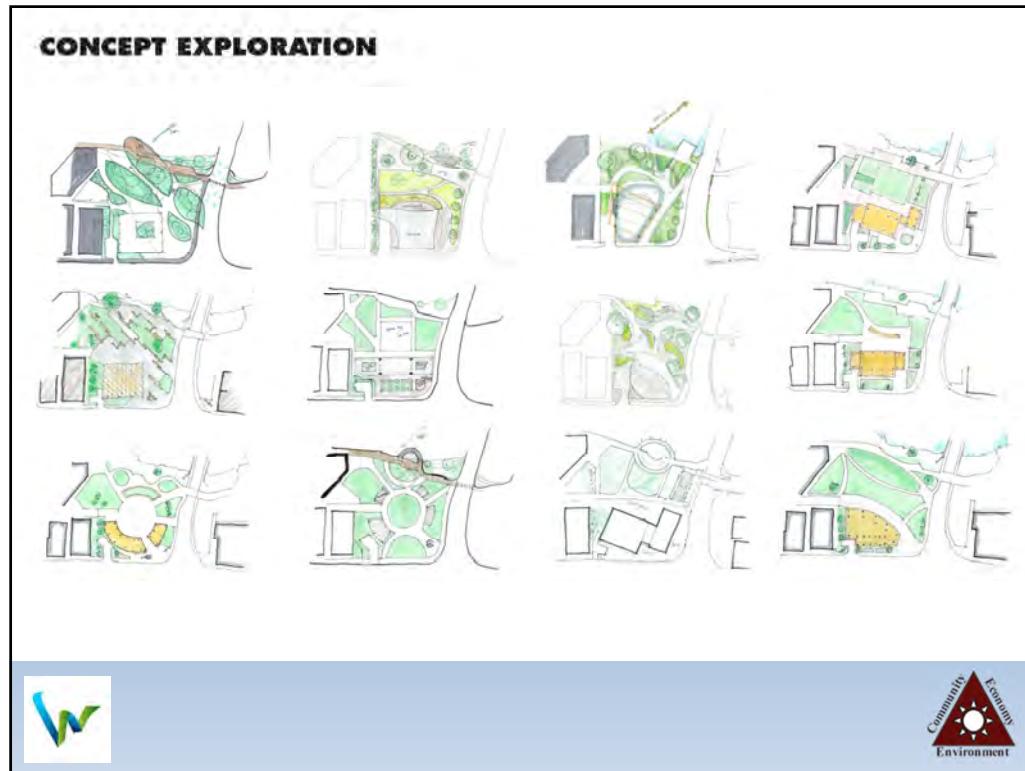


### General

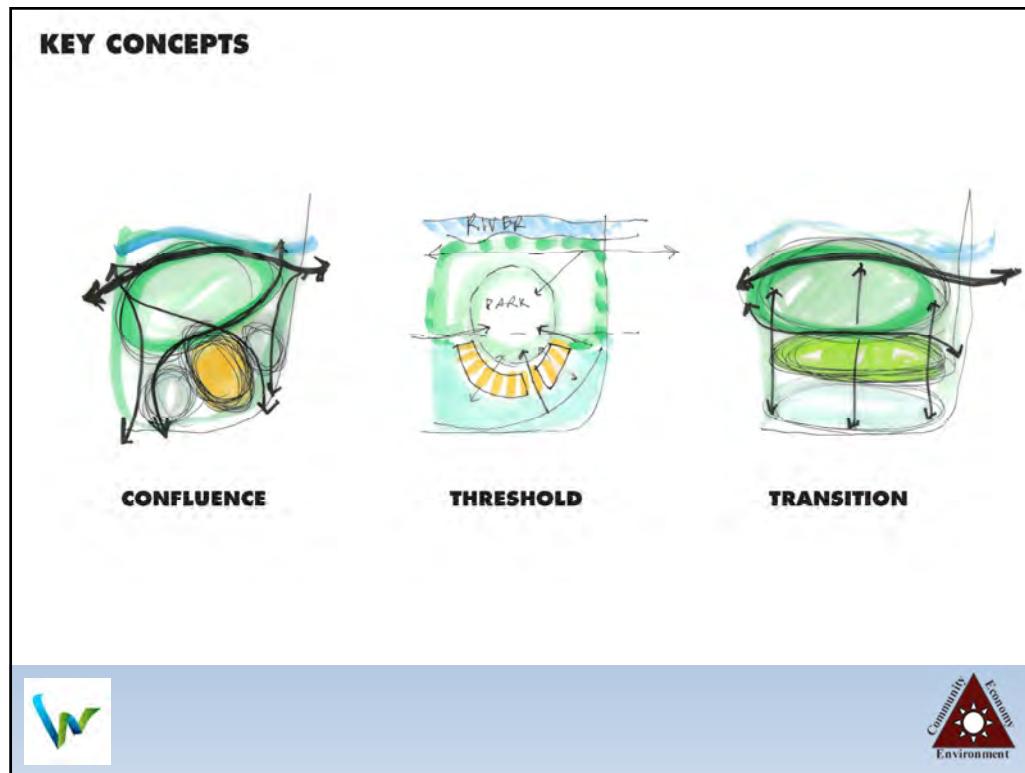
- enhance the experience of and view of the mills, river & falls;
   
(there is currently not a good place to view the falls from down river)
- use natural materials, more like "stone dust" than concrete; naturalist aspect to landscaping
- support for incorporating elements that reflect the local history & culture:
  - art or informational/educational
- think about buffering noise from events to the nearby neighborhoods



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19



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## DESIGN CHARETTE

LEAVE COMMENTS ON BOARDS WITH "POST-IT" NOTES

### SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Moderated with design team members  
60 minutes: Workshop on 1 concept at each table  
- Option to switch tables at 20 minute intervals

Each Table will report back to entire group with Developments & Conclusions

