

# EVANSTON CANOE LAUNCH

## PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE MEETING SUMMARY

November 28, 2023 | Evanston Ecology Center | 6:00 – 8:00 pm

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The purpose of the Public Open House was to present Canoe Launch design concepts to the community and receive feedback. Concept plan materials developed to date were based on preliminary concept design reviews and coordination with City staff and Evanston Environmental Association (EEA).

Prior to the Public Open House, meeting announcements were provided via the following:

1. Announcement issued via the City of Evanston Public Works Agency Project Newsletter
2. Invitations emailed to the EEA for distribution to EEA members
3. Announcement posted to the City of Evanston Canoe Launch project webpage:  
[www.cityofevanston.org/LaddArboretumCanoeLaunch](http://www.cityofevanston.org/LaddArboretumCanoeLaunch)

Approximately 25 people attended the Public Open House Meeting. The following staff and consultant team members were present to assist participants with interpreting the exhibits, to answer questions and to hear feedback.

<b>City of Evanston</b>	Stefanie Levine, Senior Project Manager, Public Works Agency Lara Biggs, Capital Planning and Engineering Bureau Chief Matt Poole, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation Margaret Isaacson, Division Manager, Ecology Center Ethan Johnson, Program Coordinator, Ecology Center
<b>Christopher B Burke Engineering (CBBEL)</b>	Martin Michalowicz, Project Manager, Civil Design Dept
<b>Teska Associates</b>	Jodi Mariano, Principal Landscape Architect

A list of meeting exhibits, and associated input activities, presented at the Public Open House follows below:

EXHIBIT #	TITLE	INPUT ACTIVITIES
1	Existing Conditions Map	Post it notes
2	Existing Conditions Photos	Post it notes
3	Inventory of Quality Trees	Informational
4	Concept Plan	Post it notes
5	Concept Section	Post it notes
6	Concept Products + Materials	Informational
7	Anticipated Schedule + Costs	Informational
8	Open Ended Comments	Informational

A summary of comments received via post-it notes and verbal comments are organized below by topic:

**Parking:**

1. There seems to be limited parking availability at the parking lot today. It was noted that the parking lot is used for other surrounding uses such as the nearby mosque. A request was made to provide priority parking for Ecology Center users.
2. The parking lot was noted as being a tight space for auto access and may be even tighter for those who will be bringing canoes and kayaks.
3. Consider restoring access to parking lot from Bridge Street.
4. Remove invasive plantings (such as Bradford Pear) and incorporate green infrastructure, such as native plantings. See Ryerson Woods as a model example.
5. Add environmentally friendly lighting.

**Ramps, Retaining Walls and Railings:**

1. Does the rail system have an option for slowing / breaking in case someone loses control of the canoe / kayak?
2. Consider a footpath access on both sides of the rail / roller system to ensure good handling.
3. What is the life expectancy of the rollers and what are their maintenance requirements?
4. It was noted that poor soils are present onsite, which may impact retaining walls and foundations.

**Rowing:**

1. Local rowing groups and individuals use the channel at high speeds throughout the year (500 – 600 rowers). Canoeists / Kayakers should be made aware of rowing peak season when the largest, fastest boats travel down the channel. Local rowing groups include ETHS, Northwestern University and others.
2. Rowing Schedules: the following rowing schedules for ETHS and Northwestern were provided for peak rowing season. It was noted that summer camps also row in the channel.
  - a. August – October: 6am – 8am; 3pm – 7pm
  - b. March – June: 6am – 8am; 3pm – 7pm
3. Concerns were raised about docking system protruding into the channel and potential impacts on large rowing boats.
4. The largest boat noted as being used in the channel is an 8. For two 8's to pass safely, 40' width was noted as a requirement in the channel. (an 8 boat is 40' length with 10' length oars and an approximately 3' wide boat body)
5. An individual formerly associated with the Northwestern Rowing Team and currently associated with the ETHS Rowing Team noted the 'no passing' zone beneath the Bridge Street bridge. Due to the narrowed channel width formed by bridge pylons, the rowing teams follow a rule of thumb to not to pass one another when traveling in the same direction beneath the bridge.

**Landscape plantings:**

1. Arboretum stewards have been working on invasive management and native landscape establishment in the Arboretum areas. They would like to be involved with salvaging existing plantings prior to construction, new landscape selections and placements.
2. Trees recommended for bird habitat include: Oak, Elm, Hawthorn, Hickory and Hackberry.
3. The Ladd Arboretum native plant list should be referenced.

**Wildlife:**

1. Invasives should be removed, including the following invasives noted onsite: Tree of Heaven, Buckthorn and Honeysuckle.

2. Wildlife movement along the embankment should be accommodated and should not be blocked by landscaping or other site features. Deer, coyote, beaver, mink, squirrels were noted as being present along the embankment area.
3. Birds migrate through this area and should be accommodated with dense multi-layered landscaping, including a variety of trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants.
4. Install native plantings.
5. Create a management plan to continue monitoring and controlling plantings.
6. The wildlife habitat structures presented were noted as being less important than layered vegetation.
7. Bird species noted in the area include blue herons, woodpeckers and other rare migrating birds.

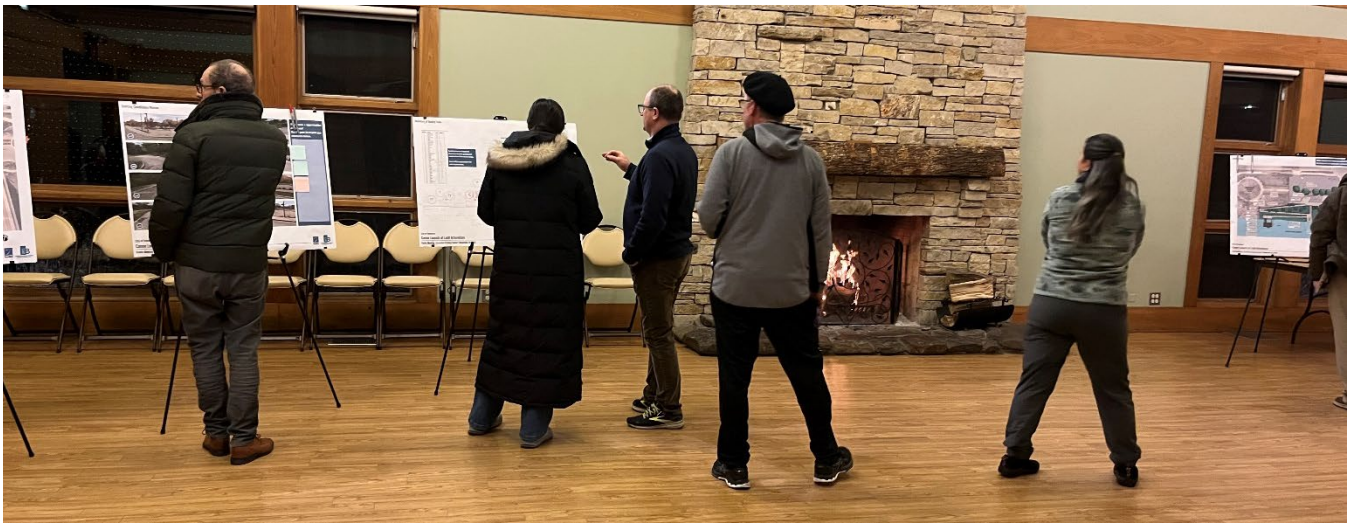
**Budget costs:**

1. A comment was made that this seems like an expensive project for a 'limited audience'. Other comments note that the Ecology Center offered 52 programs last year with more than 1,500 participants. It was noted that more people will use this facility when this is built and that the investment is worth the cost.
2. Consider alternatives to reduce the amount of hardscape.

**Next steps include the following:**

1. The design team will review the inputs provided and incorporate into refined design plans and construction documents.
2. The City and EEA will pursue funding opportunities and grant applications.

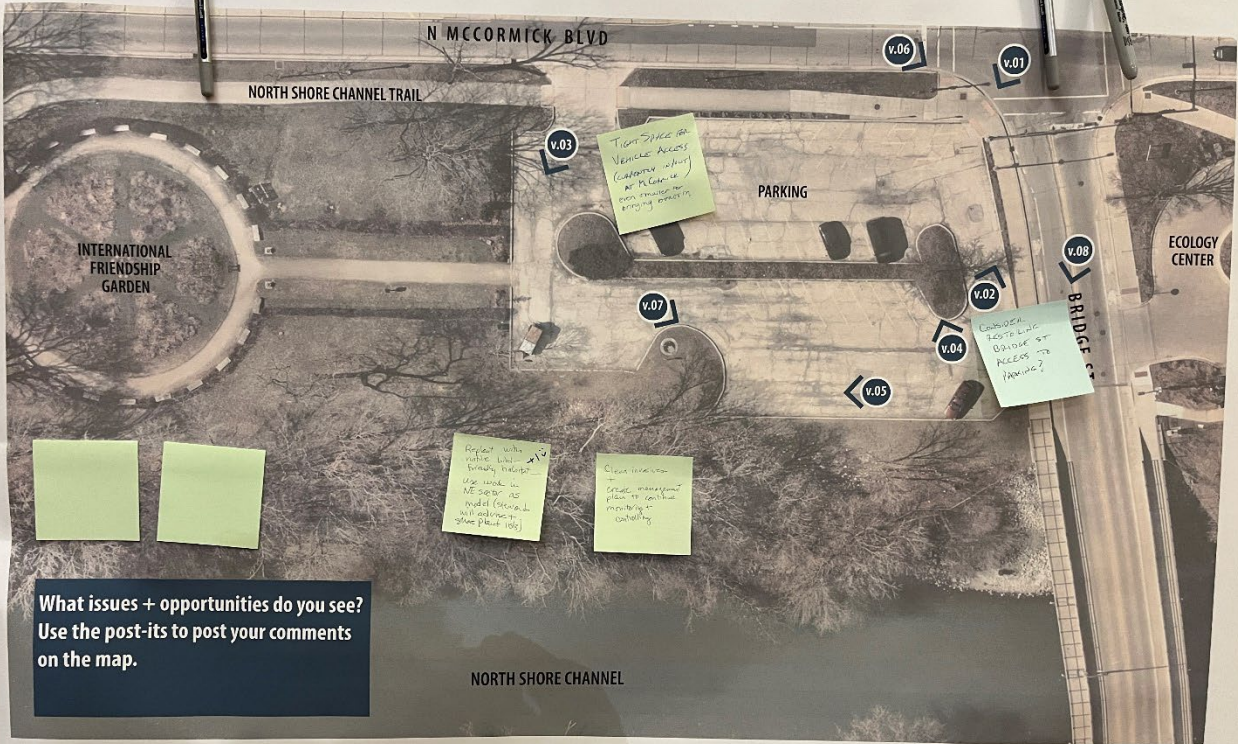
**Meeting Photos**



**Community notations and feedback provided at the meeting:**



Existing Conditions Map

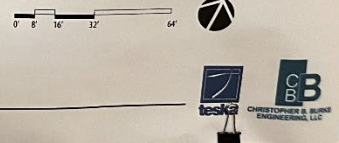


What issues + opportunities do you see?  
Use the post-its to post your comments  
on the map.

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Canoe Launch at Ladd Arboretum

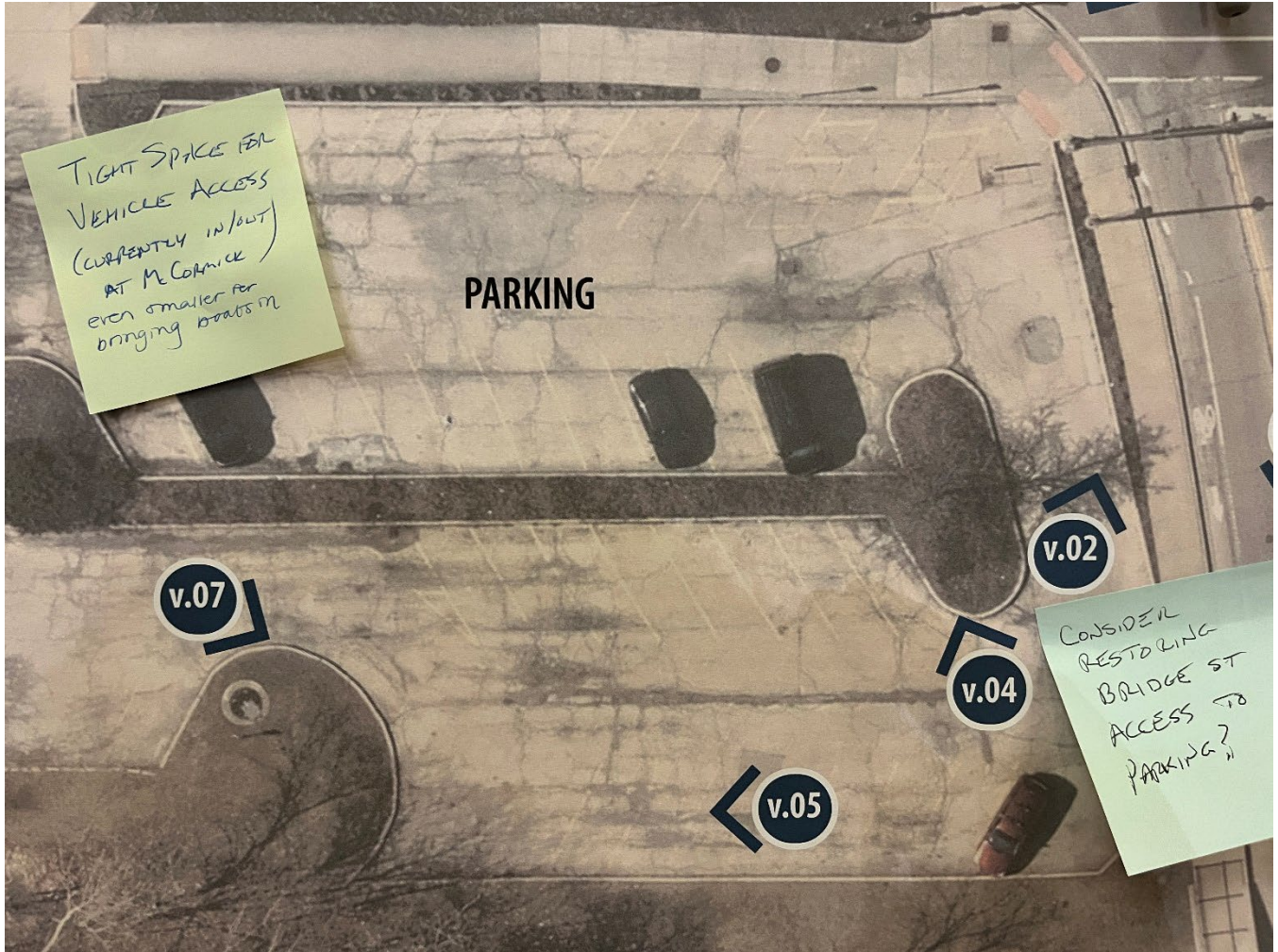
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Replant with  
native bird-friendly habitat — x/i  
Use work in  
NE sector as  
model (steward  
will advise +  
share plant lists)

Clear invasives  
+  
create management  
plan to continue  
monitoring +  
controlling





TIGHT SPACE FOR  
VEHICLE ACCESS  
(CURRENTLY IN/OUT)  
AT McCOMICK  
even smaller for  
bringing boats in

PARKING

v.02

CONSIDER  
RESTORING  
BRIDGE ST  
ACCESS TO  
PARKING?

v.07

v.04

v.05



Existing Conditions Photos



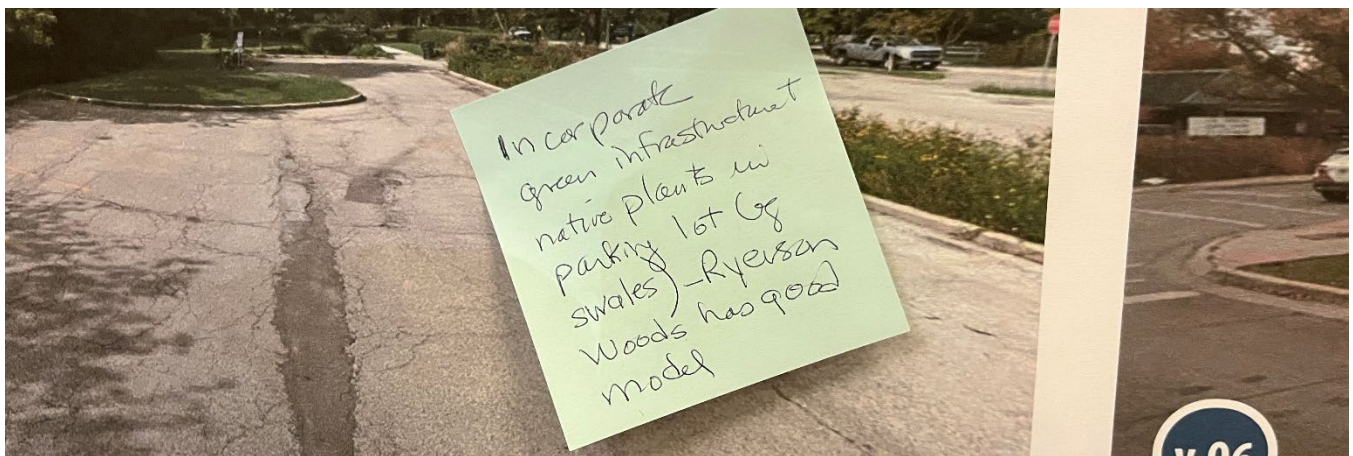
What issues + opportunities do you see?  
Use the post-its to post comments below.

Two sticky notes are visible on the right side of the board: a light green one and an orange one.

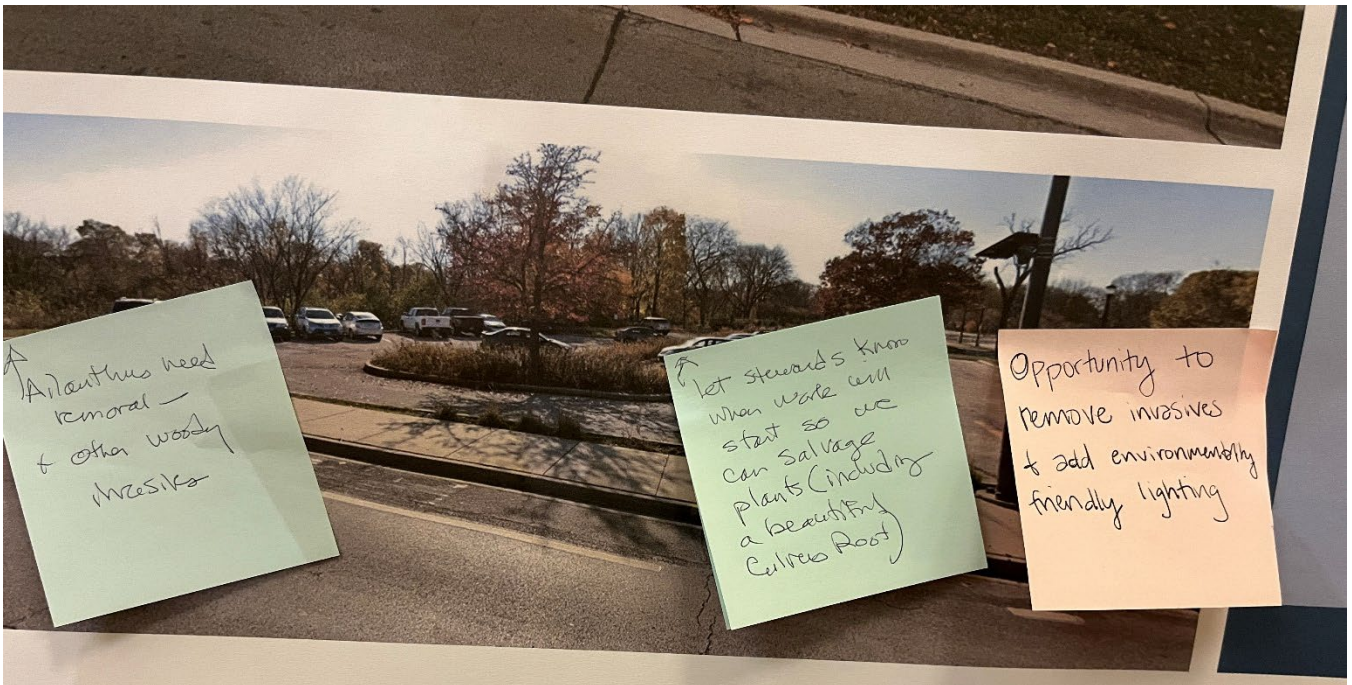
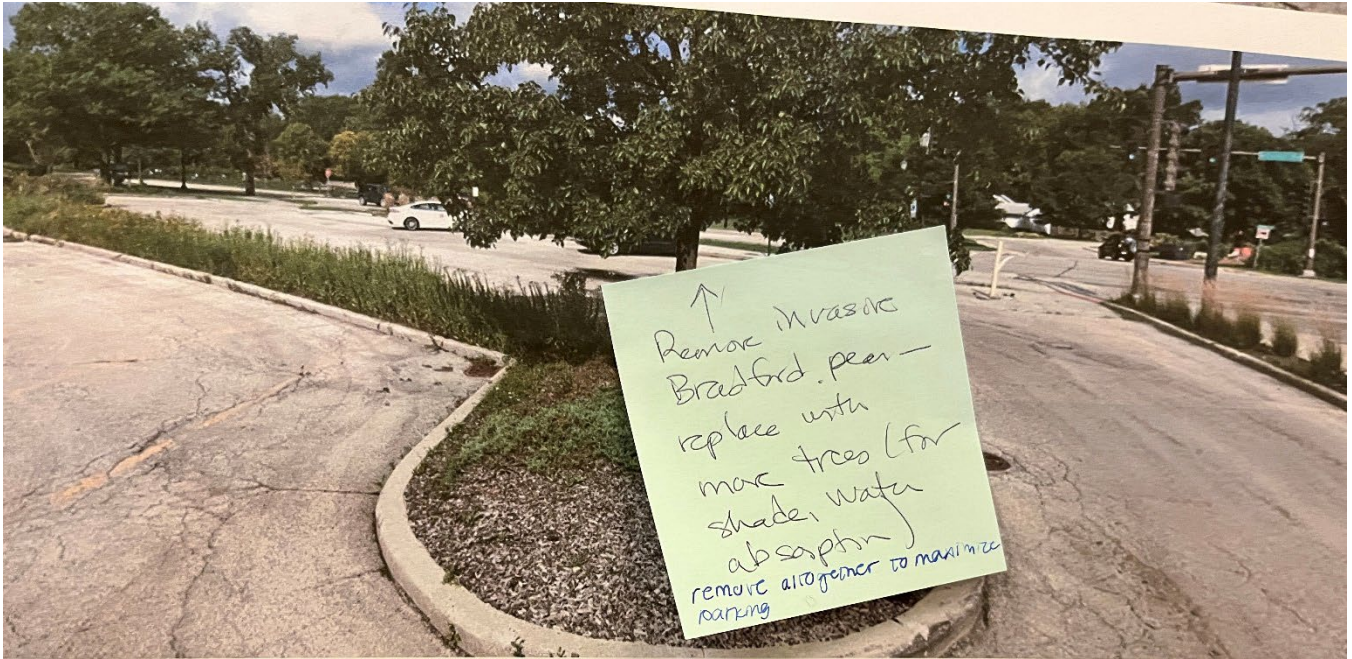
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# Inventory of Quality Trees

Tagged trees on site that were determined to be of good condition

NUMBER	SPECIES	SIZES	REMOVE
1	Cottonwood	12"	
2	Cottonwood	12"	
3	Hickory	24"	
4	Cottonwood	48"	
5	Maple	5"	
6	Maple	6"	
7	Black Cherry	12"	
8	American Elm	18"	X
9	Black Locust	12"	X
10	Yellow Pine	6"	X
11	Elm	24"	X
12	Hickory	24"	X
13	Elm	6"	X
14	Elm	6"	X
15	Elm	6"	X
16	Elm	30"	X
17	Hickory	24"	X
18	Hickory	12"	X
19	Hickory	6"	X
20	Maple	24"	X
21	Maple	28"	X
22	Honeylocust	36"	X
23	Elm	18"	X
24	Elm	18"	X
25	Elm	3"	X
26	Elm	12"	X
27	Maple	12"	X
28	Cherry	42"	X
29	Maple	10"	X
30	Maple	6"	X
31	Norway Maple	6"	X
32	Maple	6"	X
33	Maple	6"	X
34	Elm	6"	X
35	Maple	24"	X
36	Elm	37"	X
37	Maple	37"	X
38	Maple	8"	X
39	Maple	8"	X
40	Honeylocust	10"	X
41	Pear	12"	X

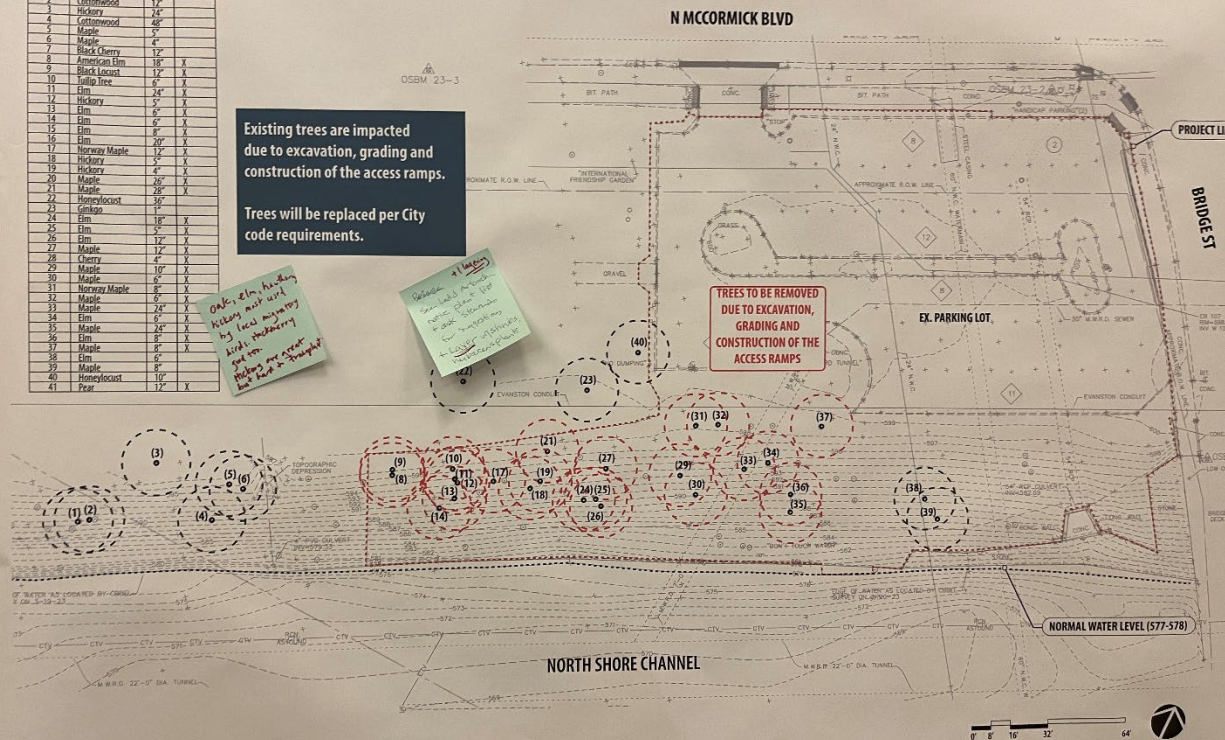
Existing trees are impacted due to excavation, grading and construction of the access ramps.

Trees will be replaced per City code requirements.

Oaks, elm, hawthorn, hickory most used by local migratory birds. Hackberry good too. Hickory are great but hard to transplant.

+ 1 layering

TREES TO BE REMOVED DUE TO EXCAVATION, GRADING AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE ACCESS RAMPS



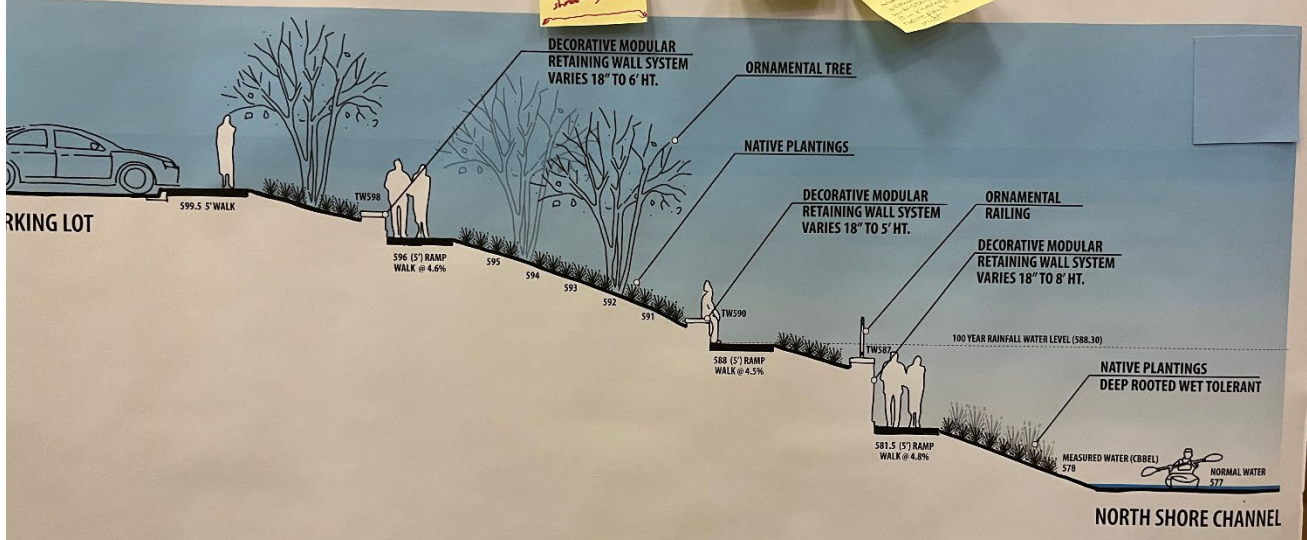
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Oaks, elm, hawthorn, hickory most used by local migratory birds. Hackberry good too. Hickory are great but hard to transplant.

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See Ladd Arboretum native plant list + ask stewards for suggestions + layer w/ shrubs, herbaceous plants



ranston  
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river-edge plants -  
look into Shedd -  
FOUR peddle -  
plants, a grant.  
funded water-edge  
restoration project

Ladd Arb, volume  
have reference  
with plants used  
sited to this site -  
get in touch

Develop a  
management +  
maintenance plan  
assure someone  
understands + follows  
it - Knowledge of plants  
native plants is a  
must

**ORNAMENTAL TREE**

great place for  
layered vegetation  
canopy - understory  
shrub - ground cover

**DECORATIVE**



Concrete + Materials

CANOE PRODUCTS UNDER CONSIDERATION



Boardsafe ADA Canoe / Kayak Launch



Boardsafe Floating Dock / Gangway / Launch / Chute



Railings (left) and keel rollers (right)

Does the rail system have an option for some kind of barrier to keep people from falling in case someone loses control?

CONSIDER A FOOTPATH/ACCESS ON BOTH SIDES OF RAIL/ROLLER SYSTEM TO ENSURE GOOD HANDLING

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SITE FURNISHINGS + PRODUCTS UNDER CONSIDERATION



Limestone Block Benches



Stone Seating Area



Modular Retaining Wall System with Optional Lighting



Wildlife Habitat - Insect House / Bird



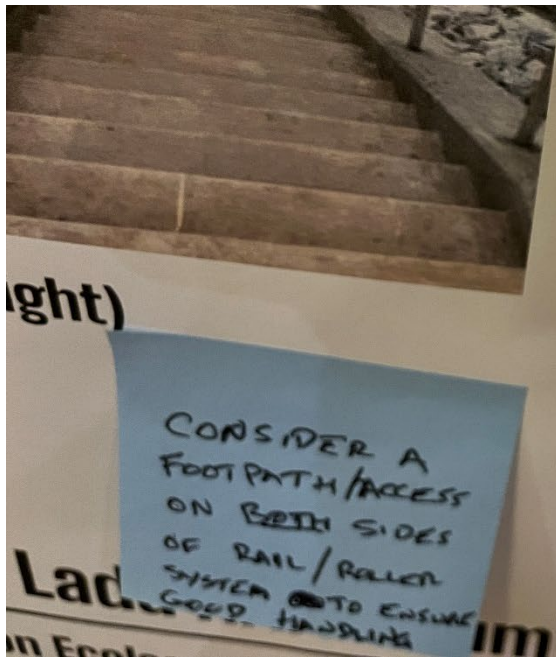
The Canal is very well used by some migrating birds. They need aquatic vegetation not however.

It is also home to several blue herons, every year.

Blue herons hang out in the water.

Handwritten note on yellow sticky paper.

Handwritten note on green sticky paper.



Life expectancy of Rollers? Maintenance Requirements?

CONSIDER A FOOTPATH/ACCESS ON BOTH SIDES OF RAIL/ROLLER SYSTEM TO ENSURE GOOD HANDLING



Cit

DOES THE RAIL SYSTEM HAVE AN OPTION FOR SOME KIND BRAKE/BREAK IN CASE SOMEONE LOSTS CONTROL?

CONSIDER A FOOTPATH/ACCESS ON BOTH SIDES OF RAIL/ROLLER SYSTEM TO ENSURE GOOD HANDLING

# Canoe Launch at Ladd Arboretum



the canal is + very well-used by rare migrating birds. They need layered vegetation not houses.

d +

vegetation is much more important than structures (structures are subject to vandalism, deterioration etc)

It is also home to several blue herons, every year.

Acc eBird hot spot for Ladd Arboretum for more sightings - lots of woodpeckers



Anticipated Schedule + Costs

SCHEDULE		
2023	SPRING/SUMMER	PROJECT KICKOFF + LOCAL SITE TOURS (March - April) TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY + INITIAL GEOTECHNICAL SERVICES (April - June) DESIGN COORDINATION (ADAPTIVE ADVENTURES, BOARDSAFE, MWRD) (Ongoing) CONCEPTUAL DESIGN + COSTS (July - August)
	FALL/WINTER	ADDITIONAL GEOTECHNICAL FIELD WORK (Fall/Winter) REFINED CONCEPT DESIGN + COSTS (Fall) PUBLIC MEETING (Fall) ← WE ARE HERE FUNDRAISING (Fall/Winter)
2024	SPRING/SUMMER	CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENT PRODUCTION + PERMITTING
2025+	TBD, PER FUNDING	BIDDING + CONSTRUCTION

COSTS	
PROJECT SETUP, SURVEY, MOBILIZATION	\$50,000
DEMOLITION, REMOVALS, SILT FENCE, SITE PROTECTION	\$33,600
EARTH MOVING, MASS GRADING, EXCAVATION	\$245,500
SITE WORK, CONCRETE, WALLS, SIDEWALKS, NATURAL STONE, EROSION CONTROL	\$1,098,250
ADA CANOE LAUNCH, RAMPS, GANGWAY, ACCESSORIES	\$187,000
FINE GRADING, SOIL BACKFILL, LANDSCAPE, RESTORATION, SITE FURNISHINGS	\$71,400
PARKING LOT RECONSTRUCTION, LIGHTING, LANDSCAPE	\$371,300
SUBTOTAL: \$2,057,050	
CONTINGENCY (15%): \$ 308,558	
TOTAL: \$2,365,608	

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Audience grows when facilities are available. This is worth it!

Seems like a lot of money for a relatively limited audience...  
...52 programs last year more than 1,500 participants  
18 public canoe opportunities w/ ETHS partnership w/ Adventure Re

Alternatives to reduce amount of hardscape (concrete)?

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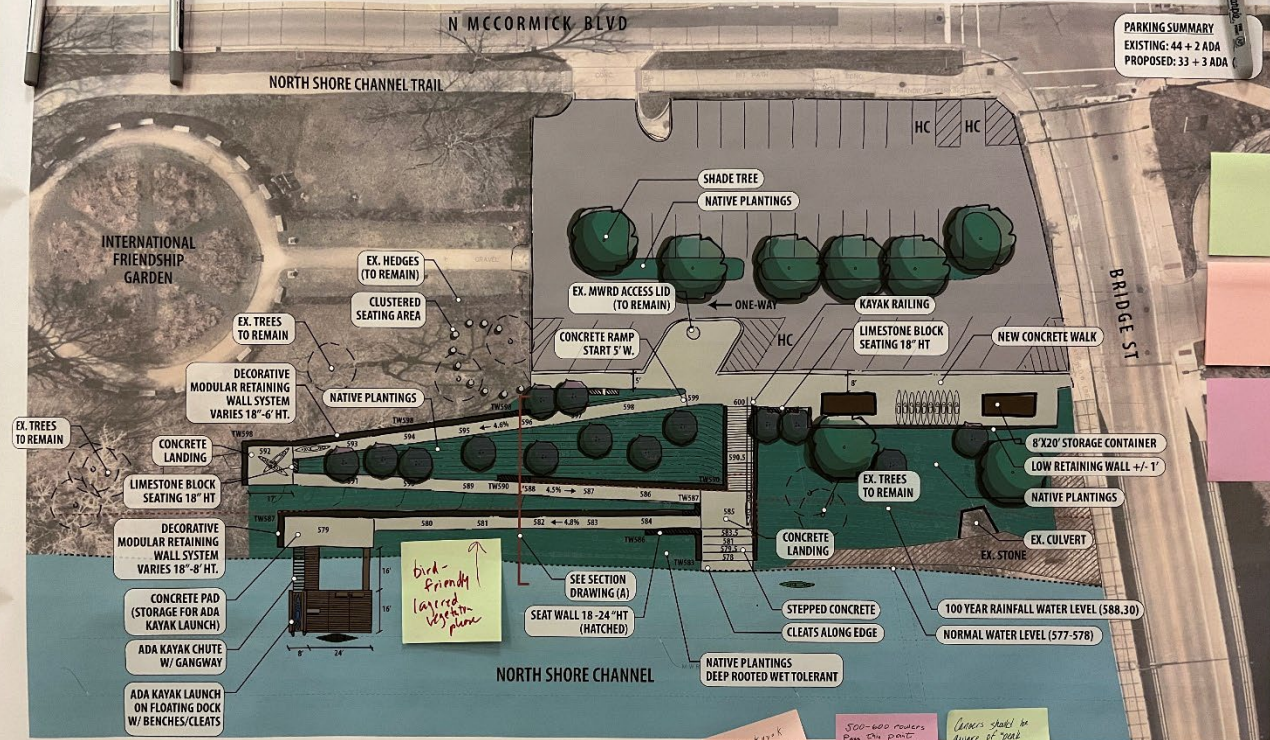
Alternatives to reduce amount of hardscape (concrete)?

- \$50,000
- \$33,600
- \$245,500
- \$1,098,250
- \$187,000



What comments do you have about the concept? Use the post-its to post your comments below.

PARKING SUMMARY  
EXISTING: 44 + 2 ADA  
PROPOSED: 33 + 3 ADA



bird-friendly layered vegetation phase

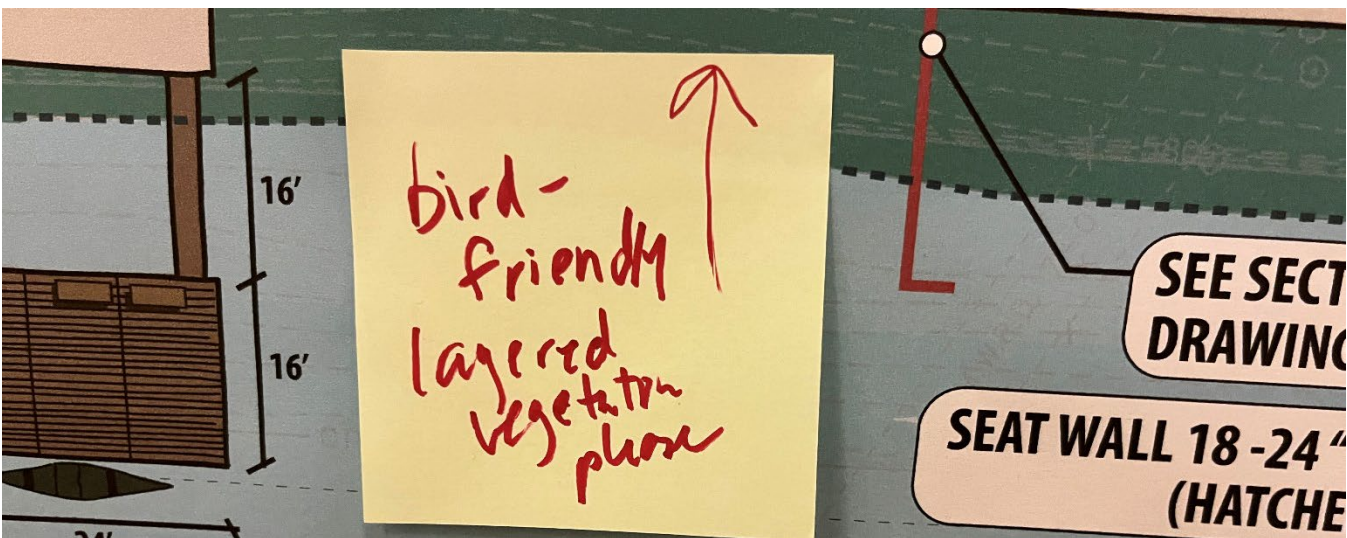
In the bank  
Paving intended  
to be bird-friendly  
Please use standard  
Concrete lot strip

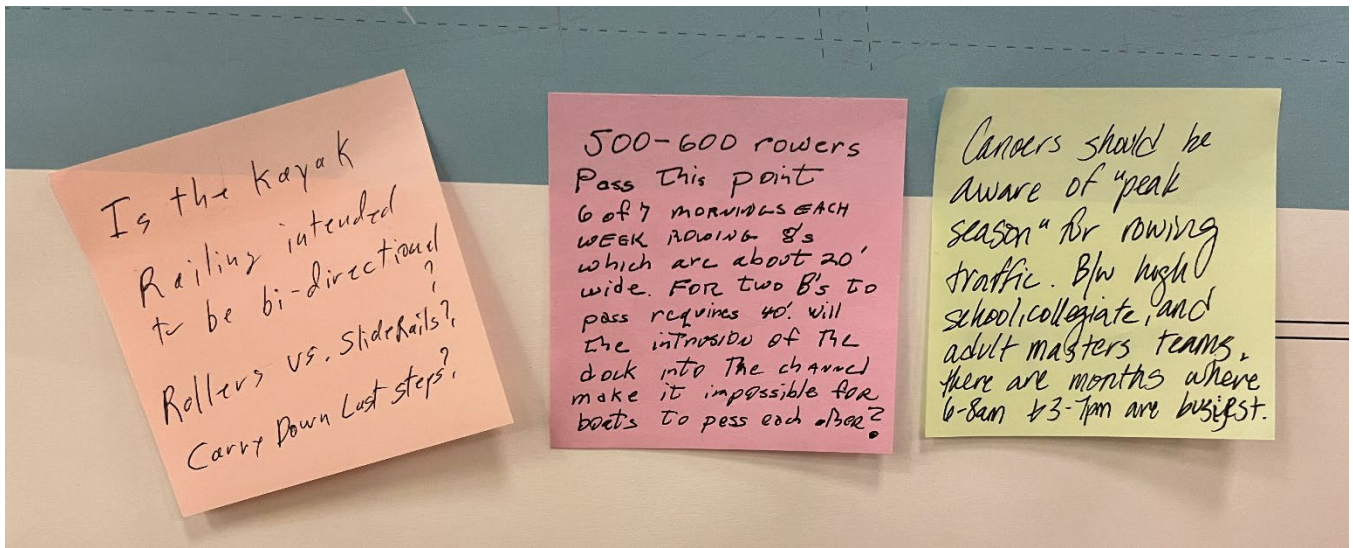
300-400 meters  
Plus this point  
is a 100 year  
water level  
which are about 20'  
with 300-400 ft  
plus signs and  
the intended  
depth of the channel  
will be 20-30'  
to pass out about

Checkers should be  
aware of 100  
year water level  
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Is the kayak  
Railings intended  
to be bi-directional?  
Rollers vs. Slide rails?  
Carry Down last steps?

500-600 rowers  
Pass this point  
6 of 7 mornings EACH  
WEEK ROWING 8's  
which are about 20'  
wide. FOR two 8's to  
pass requires 40' will  
the intrusion of the  
dock into the channel  
make it impossible for  
boats to pass each other?

Canoeists should be  
aware of "peak  
season" for rowing  
traffic. B/w high  
school, collegiate, and  
adult masters teams,  
there are months where  
6-8am & 3-7pm are busiest.

Encl: meeting sign in sheets, comments sheet scans, exhibits