



# WAUSAU NORTHEAST RIVERFRONT SUSTAINABLE MASTER PLAN

Reuniting the River and the City

Master plan prepared by Community Design Solutions, University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee



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# INTRODUCTION

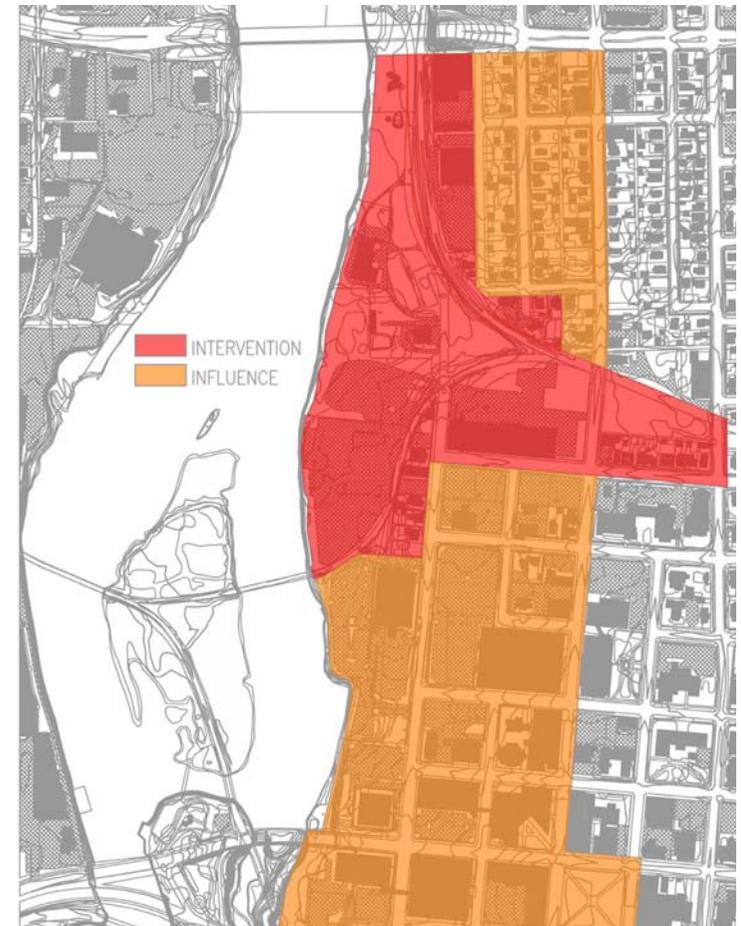
*The purpose of this district is to take full advantage of this outstanding riverfront location and its proximity to Downtown. This district is recommended for redevelopment into a high-quality, riverfront housing district with public gathering spaces and commercial buildings fronting onto N. 1st Street. This district should be seamlessly integrated with the Downtown through connections, landscaping, lighting, trail connections, and similar amenities.*

- Excerpted from 2005 North Downtown Area Master Plan, Wausau, Wisconsin prepared by Schreiber/Anderson Associates, Inc. In association with: BEST Real Estate Group, Inc.

This report presents a vision for the Northeast Riverfront District in the City of Wausau as the next step in a planning process, on-going since the mid 1970's, to revitalize the City's former industrial land along the Wisconsin River. Formation of the River Edge Commission and adoption of the River Edge Master Plan in 1995 helped move along efforts to develop public access to the riverfront. The North Downtown Area Master Plan adopted in 2005 reinforces recommendations for public access to the river, and it provides direction for properties adjacent to, and near the river.

Since 2005, the City completed most of the Master Plan recommendations for the Downtown area. Restoration of the City Center was capped off with the opening of the City square this summer. With its 2011 purchase of 16 acres of the land along the east bank of the Wisconsin River designated in the Master Plan as the Northeast Riverfront District, City officials turned their attention to the recommendations of the 2005 Plan concerning the Northeast Riverfront District - develop a master plan for the area that will link the District to downtown as well as create general design and land use guidelines.

As a first step in this process, UW-Milwaukee's Community Design Solutions (CDS) was hired to take some of the general recommendations from previous plans and, with input from the community and the team's knowledge of modern design principles, develop renderings of how the area might look. The goal of their work was to envision a physical form for the area that would stimulate further public input, planning, and decision-making.



CDS and the City identified the following **specific objectives** that needed to be addressed in the design concept created for this area:

- ◇ Link the project area to the central business district and adjacent residential area.
- ◇ Envision sustainable urban landscape schemes that address the site's design opportunities and challenges such as the flood plain area and habitat restoration.
- ◇ Envision sustainable design principles and architectural concepts for buildings to be constructed or renovated and rehabilitated from existing structures within the plan area.
- ◇ Consider (re)development ideas that are unique and specific to the project site.

## COLLABORATION

CDS is the preliminary design and planning outreach center for UW-Milwaukee and is located in its School of Architecture & Urban Planning (SARUP). Since it was established in 2000, upon request, it has worked with over 150 non-profit and local agencies in Wisconsin on a wide range of design visioning and community education projects that assist groups to understand the depth, breadth and impact of changes to their physical environments. All projects are managed by a graduate student and undertaken by a team of architecture and planning students who work closely with the Client and have access to the faculty and resources of SARUP.

Recent visioning projects have included a five block intersection in the lowest income area in the City of Milwaukee, a community participatory master plan for the Layton Boulevard West Neighborhood on Milwaukee's Southside, and planning with the City of Marshfield and community representatives for a consolidation of their civic and social service functions.

# PROCESS

The process used to create physical change is an essential key to “good design.” Chart A describes the process the CDS team used.

Its major components are:

- A. Understanding the big picture (the nature of the area's people, economics, land use, etc. over time and now)
- B. Understanding the site (history, meaning, physical condition, environmental factors, adjoining community and the river)
- C. Working directly with stakeholders and City officials to brainstorm possibilities and limits. CDS held three charrettes with different groups - downtown businesses and professionals, residents, and a high school student group



- D. Exploring precedents from other communities
- E. Documenting and analyzing the above as individual team members, and, then:
- F. Finding consensus as a professional team with input from faculty advisers as to what design concepts to explore
- G. Developing design options (how best to realize the concepts)
- H. Critiques from team, faculty, stakeholders
- I. Solidification of the vision

PROCESS TIMELINE

Chart A

Continuous Research, Documentation and Brainstorming		Previous Research and Community Input Repeatedly Reviewed. Entire Team Meets Weekly. Close Contact with Client. Attention to Economic and Environmental Impacts of Design to Site and City while Maximizing Appeal to Wide Audience.					
CDS team conducts preliminary research, visits City of Wausau, meets with City officials, documents site and compares individual analysis.	Team creates rough concepts and themes for site. In Wausau receives community input during day of participatory design charettes with diverse groups.	Documents charettes, organizes input, and begins brainstorming conceptual designs. Breaks up into north and south sections for further development.	Synthesizes individual and small team efforts into a single document.	CDS team visits Wausau to present preliminary draft version of master plan to City officials. Feedback received for further project development.	Team works to improve images for complete documentation of CDS's visioning for Wausau's Northeast Riverfront.	Final presentation dates set and editing begins for final report.	Preparation of final summary and visioning report. Presentation to City officials, charette participants, and residents.
MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCT. / NOV.	DECEMBER	JANUARY

2011

2012



# SITE ANALYSIS

## CITY, DOWNTOWN, RIVER

Located in Marathon County in the central part of Wisconsin, Wausau is a very rich city in terms of resources, natural and built, and the Wisconsin River which flows through it. Although throughout much of its history Wausau was a major logging and milling center, the economic development and growth of the City is now heavily dependent on tourism. The Wausau area provides numerous natural and recreational venues for both winter and summer activities. In addition to fishing, boating, snowmobiling, and biking, in the winter, the popular Granite Peak ski resort at Rib Mountain State Park and, in the summer, the world-class Wausau Kayak and Canoe Corporation at Whitewater Park are key attractions. Located along the major central Wisconsin transportation route to Wisconsin's largest urban areas and to the major outdoor recreational areas in northern Wisconsin, Wausau's continued economic development and growth is to a large extent dependent on being viewed as a "destination" city instead of a "drive-thru" city.

Downtown Wausau is a vibrant and pedestrian friendly city center that has maintained a small town feel and the character of an intimate community. The downtown has a mix of older architectures and new developments, along with some well-preserved historic buildings and cobblestone-paved streets. The recently completed City Square, known as the 400 Block, is the major open public plaza at the heart of the Downtown and is only three blocks away from the Wisconsin River. The City Square houses a permanent performing stage that, along with the neighboring Grand Theater on North Fourth Street, offers a focal entertainment venue. The City is also increasing its size through annexation of lands from adjacent towns and villages.





Historical map of the city of Wausau, 1891, (courtesy of Marathon County Historical Society Library)

## THE WISCONSIN RIVER, "OF A THOUSAND ISLES"

*When a man is part of his canoe, he is part of all that canoes have ever known.*

- Sigurd Olsen, *The Singing Wilderness*

### INDUSTRIAL, HISTORIC AND RECREATIONAL HERITAGE

The Wisconsin River is the most significant natural and geographical feature of Wausau, cutting through the entire city and dividing the downtown into the two, east and west sections. This unique natural, recreational, and cultural heritage is the heart and soul of Wausau, spatially tied to its history. The city's cultural and industrial history is inseparable from the Wisconsin River. From its exploration by Native American and, then, European explorers to its early settlement, sawmills and lumber trade, and, more recent paper mills, the River creates the physical bond between the City's past, present, and future.

Wausau has a rich logging history. Before the coming of the railroads, the only way to transport lumber to marketplace was to float it down the River. With the demise of the paper industry, the River has had a rebirth as a fishing and wildlife sanctuary, and, due to the dams installed to reduce flooding in the City, a world class kayaking venue.

## NORTHEAST RIVERFRONT DISTRICT : PROJECT SITE

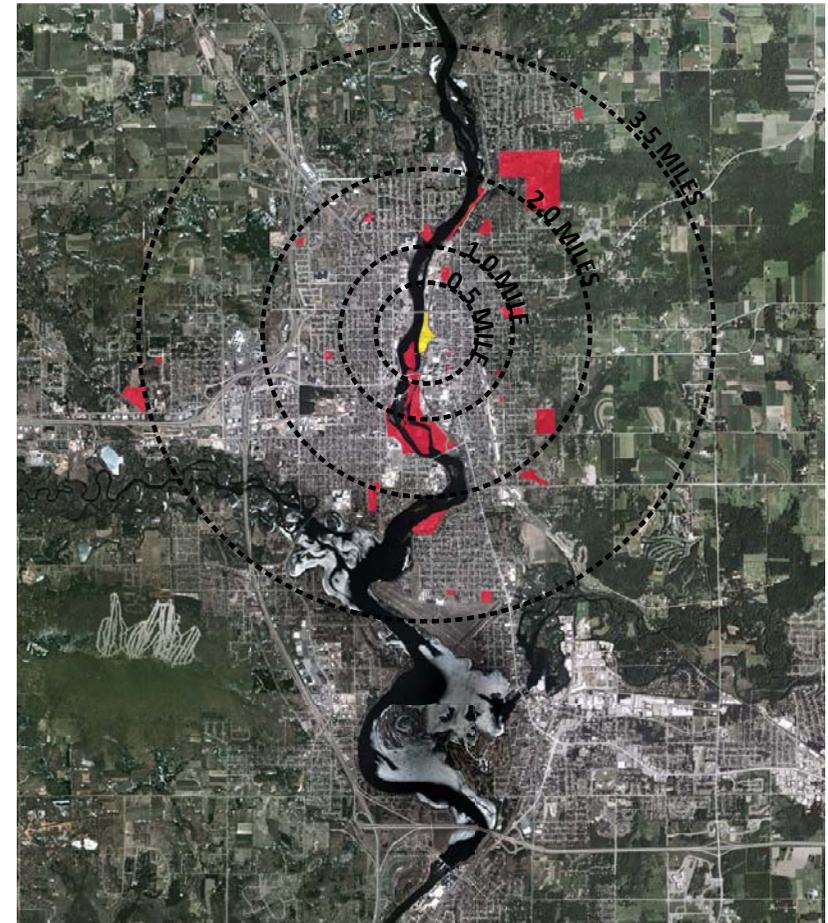
*The steamboats, the lumber rafts, and the rapids are gone forever [and] the water keeps going but the waves remain.*  
- Richard Durbin, The Wisconsin River

Development of a design concept for this District presents both exciting opportunities and challenging constraints.

### LOCATION AND IDENTITY AS A DESTINATION

A tour of the heart of downtown and a study of the layout of the City reveals that because the major roadways bypass Wausau's Downtown, most motorists will drive around it. Therefore, to increase activity in the Downtown, and thus, the economic success of businesses and real estate there, it is necessary to entice people with amenities to make it their destination. The 400 Block central park is becoming a destination and the river site can provide a second, yet unique, connected and vibrant reason for people to head and even live Downtown.

One of the major assets of the site is its ideal location in relationship to the downtown area: the South/South East with its recently renovated streetscapes (such as recently completed 3rd St.); 400 Block central park; shopping and dining areas; and, abundant parking. The sites location on the eastern bank of the Wisconsin River is also ideal for creating a variety of desirable housing, attractive outdoor dining spaces as well as spaces for a variety of entertainment and recreational activities. The existing network of walking paths, parks, recreational areas, and historic sites provide ample opportunities for strong connections to the Northeast Riverfront District, and for the creation of enjoyable and usable outdoor spaces. Barker Stewart Island to the west and Big Bull Falls Park and Whitewater Park to the south are great assets with their natural vegetative growth, walking trails, bridged connections, historic landmarks, kayak courses, and other recreational opportunities. The project site offers the opportunity to add attractive open green spaces to the existing widely used walking, jogging, biking, and fishing areas.



Map showing area parks and their proximity to the project site.

## CONNECTIVITY

However, despite the ideal location of the site, currently it is disconnected from its context. Though its adjacency to Downtown and the rest of the City is apparent as viewed from a map, actually experiencing the site brings a different perspective. Connecting it to the City Center in a manner that adds to the attractiveness of both sites is essential. It should be possible to design inviting links that encourage increased activity throughout the Downtown by building on recently implemented revitalization efforts, i.e., Third Street, which is now seen as the gateway to Downtown; the paved pedestrian and bike path along the river; and, even smaller scale connections such as the concrete path linking Third to Fourth Street.

The site also is disconnected from the adjacent residential neighborhoods. The railroad tracks are still in use and now form a barrier to easy movement between recently built housing units and the riverfront site. The railroad that curves northward to the east of the site is raised in some places as high as 10 ft and carries between 8 and 10 freight trains daily, effectively severing the site from the adjacent neighborhood both visually and physically.

A somewhat significant grade change along 1st St., a few small buildings south of the railroad track crossing as well as the active industrial buildings and large, surface parking lots (Public Water Works, ABC Shingle Co, a Bank, etc...) north and southeast of the site further impede accessibility from the east and a connection to Downtown.

In addition, no street network enters the site from the east, and 1st street (north/south), which is the only street currently cutting through the site, deteriorates into an unmarked, unlit gravel path by the ABC Shingle and Shake Warehouse. Despite the current disconnection, the main access routes across the River and to Downtown, 3rd St. (east) and Bridge St. (north) could be used to increase accessibility.



Existing path connecting 3rd Street to 4th Street (May 24, 2011)



Train tracks and ABC Shingle and Shake Warehouse (May 24, 2011)

## SIZE AND CONDITION OF SITE

The current project site is a large, mainly vacant area that presents diverse environments and the opportunity to create different experiences that require different scales of spaces from large, which might include buildings and open green space, down to smaller and more intimate spaces that entice users to explore or provide a sense of comfort, privacy, and contemplation. These smaller and intimate areas can result from the way the design treats the vegetation clusters along the east river bank. How these miscellaneous spaces connect to each other and to the rest of the City is a crucial factor to the success of the site as a whole.

The redevelopment of this Distt can provide the City of Wausau with green spaces for a variety of activities. In addition to the existing networks of paths and trails, there is also a natural occurring stream that has been buried and converted into a culvert that empties into the Wisconsin just south of the flood plain. This area could potentially provide more natural park space, connect Barker Stewart Island to the west side of the City across the pedestrian bridge and serve as a drainage route for storm water runoff.

Although few structures from its industrial past remain, the foundations of many of those buildings dot the site. The ground contamination under these slabs is a major reason that the site has not been redeveloped. Previous analysis indicates that removing the existing slabs is environmentally and financially untenable but that they can be safely mounded on to create green space. The inability to build on these slabs greatly affects the potential land usage possibilities for the District. However, it also presents an opportunity to identify creative ways to utilize the existing structures and foundations to tell the story of the site and the City. The site also contains a few buildings which may require demolition but whose foundations are not contaminated and may provide opportunities for re-use.



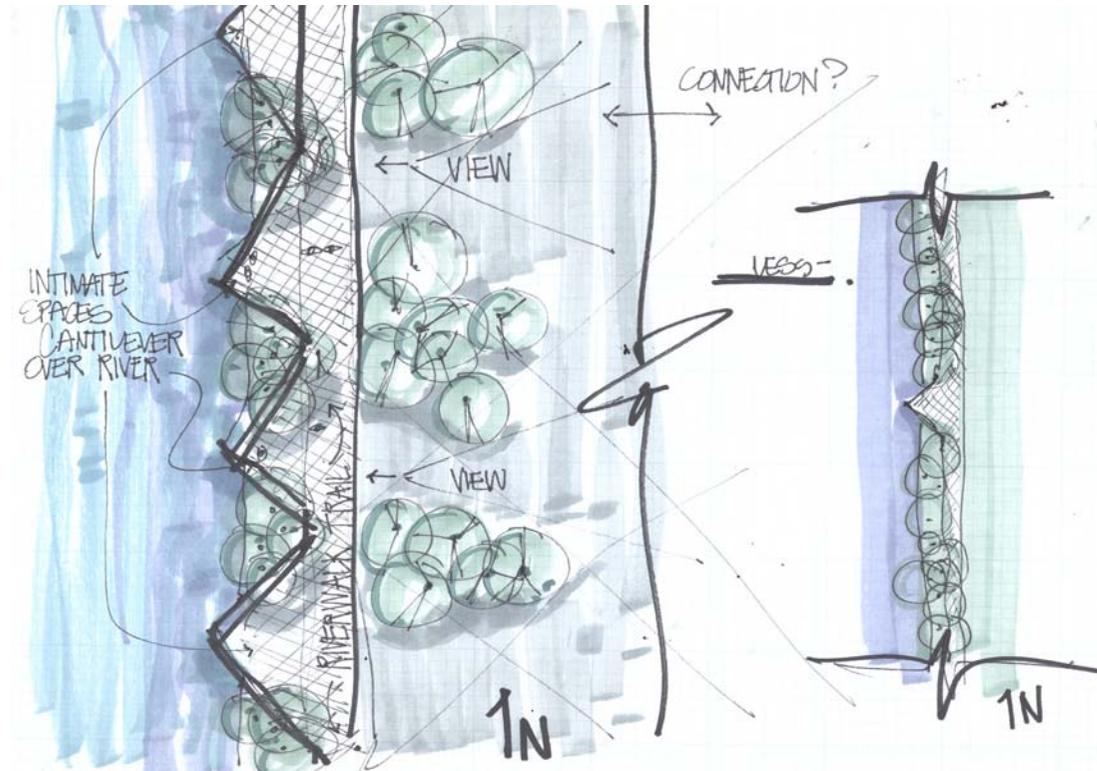
Existing site conditions looking south (May 24, 2011)



Existing site conditions looking north (May 24, 2011)

## RIVERFRONT ACCESSIBILITY

While the Wisconsin River is one of the most beneficial features of the site, the banks of the site are currently overgrown with vegetation to the point that the river is inaccessible both visually and physically. This overgrowth, combined with adjacent electrical lines, effectively screens people on the site from enjoying the beauty of the river. The west bank of the river is in relatively better condition with the recently completed portion of the river walk, vegetative clearings, and viewing areas, yet it still needs further development and connections. Not only can one not reach the river from within the site, but the site is also inaccessible from the river. Despite the recreational potential of this portion of the river, no docks or boat landings exist. Furthermore, there are a series of hydro dams to the immediate south of the site which block kayakers and paddlers from proceeding south.



Sketch showing initial ideas to to connect pedestrian path to the river



Existing site conditions looking east (May 24, 2011)

## RESULTING VISION

Vision that resulted from listening to the current residents of all ages, studying the recent surveys conducted by the City and other materials relevant to the project as well as thoroughly analyzing the site.

- A. A 21st century urban riverfront that is a revitalized network of entwined, natural and built communities in which the past and present are in harmony and whose core elements are visual interconnection, procedural access and walkability.
- B. This “place” will entice younger professionals as well as families to frequent downtown Wausau more often and to move into or closer to downtown.
- C. The two major dynamics within the design concept are the bond created between “natural” and “man-made,” and the harmony of the past and present.
- D. Premier acreage is devoted to preferred land use possibilities and best sustainable practices.

OBJECTIVE	OPTIONS	PRIME CONSIDERATIONS
DIVERSIFYING LAND USE	BUILDINGS (new, renovated, existing) DEVELOPED OPEN SPACE NATURAL HABITAT	PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT PUBLIC DEVELOPMENT MAINTENANCE
CREATING ARRAY OF ACTIVITIES	RECREATION (active and passive) EDUCATION CULTURE ENTERTAINMENT	AUDIENCE AVAILABILITY (when) ACCESSIBILITY (physical, financial)
CONNECTIVITY	WITHIN THE SITE TO DOWNTOWN TO REST OF CITY TO RIVER	PHYSICAL VISUAL ECONOMIC DIGITAL
IMPROVING + SUSTAINING ENVIRONMENT	INTERVENTION PROTECTION MAINTENANCE	METHOD ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OTHER IMPACTS
CREATING IDENTITY	PHYSICAL ELEMENTS ACTIVITIES HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS FUTURE VISION	AUDIENCE

# TOOLS

Many tools and resources were used by CDS during the design process. Ecotect and the LEED ND checklist were the two most prominent.

## LEED ND checklist -

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design is a rating system created by the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) for various levels of construction for new and renovated buildings. They also have a category (LEED ND) specifically designed for neighborhoods and larger urban architecture projects.

### LEED 2009 FOR NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT CHECKLIST

#### Smart Location and Linkage

- Prerequisite 1 Smart Location
- Prerequisite 2 Imperiled Species and Ecological Communities
- Prerequisite 3 Wetland and Water Body Conservation
- Prerequisite 4 Agricultural Land Conservation
- Prerequisite 5 Floodplain Avoidance
- Credit 1 Preferred Locations
- Credit 2 Brownfield Redevelopment
- Credit 3 Locations with Reduced Automobile Dependence
- Credit 4 Bicycle Network and Storage
- Credit 5 Housing and Jobs Proximity
- Credit 6 Steep Slope Protection
- Credit 7 Site Design for Habitat or Wetland and Water Body Conservation
- Credit 8 Restoration of Habitat or Wetlands and Water Bodies
- Credit 9 Long-Term Conservation Management of Habitat or Wetlands and Water Bodies

#### Neighborhood Pattern and Design

- Prerequisite 1 Walkable Streets
- Prerequisite 2 Compact Development
- Prerequisite 3 Connected and Open Community
- Credit 1 Walkable Streets
- Credit 2 Compact Development
- Credit 3 Mixed-Use Neighborhood Centers
- Credit 4 Mixed-Income Diverse Communities
- Credit 5 Reduced Parking Footprint
- Credit 6 Street Network
- Credit 7 Transit Facilities
- Credit 8 Transportation Demand Management
- Credit 9 Access to Civic and Public Spaces
- Credit 10 Access to Recreation Facilities
- Credit 11 Visitability and Universal Design
- Credit 12 Community Outreach and Involvement
- Credit 13 Local Food Production
- Credit 14 Tree-Lined and Shaded Streets
- Credit 15 Neighborhood Schools

#### Green Infrastructure and Buildings

- Prerequisite 1 Certified Green Building
- Prerequisite 2 Minimum Building Energy Efficiency
- Prerequisite 3 Minimum Building Water Efficiency
- Prerequisite 4 Construction Activity Pollution Prevention

#### 27 possible points

- Required  Credit 1 Certified Green Buildings 5
- Required  Credit 2 Building Energy Efficiency 2
- Required  Credit 3 Building Water Efficiency 1
- Required  Credit 4 Water-Efficient Landscaping 1
- Required  Credit 5 Existing Building Reuse 1
- 10  Credit 6 Historic Resource Preservation and Adaptive Use 1
- 2  Credit 7 Minimized Site Disturbance in Design and Construction 1
- 7  Credit 8 Stormwater Management 4
- 1  Credit 9 Heat Island Reduction 1
- 3  Credit 10 Solar Orientation 1
- 1  Credit 11 On-Site Renewable Energy Sources 3
- 1  Credit 12 District Heating and Cooling 2
- 1  Credit 13 Infrastructure Energy Efficiency 1
- 1  Credit 14 Wastewater Management 2
- Required  Credit 15 Recycled Content in Infrastructure 1
- Required  Credit 16 Solid Waste Management Infrastructure 1
- Required  Credit 17 Light Pollution Reduction 1

#### 44 possible points

- Required  Credit 1 Innovation and Exemplary Performance 1-5
- Required  Credit 2 LEED® Accredited Professional 1

#### Innovation and Design Process

- Credit 1 Innovation and Exemplary Performance 1-5
- Credit 2 LEED® Accredited Professional 1

#### Regional Priority Credit

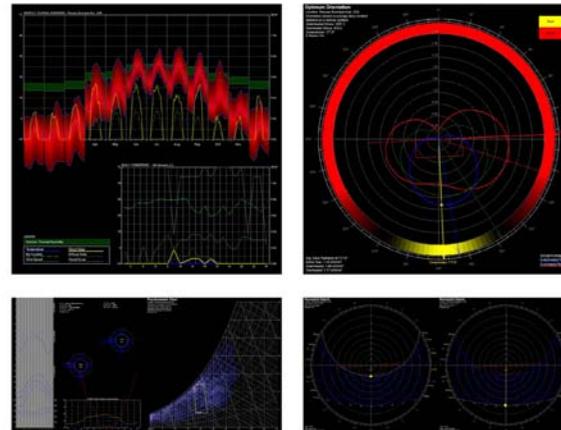
- Credit 1 Regional Priority 1-4

#### LEED 2009 for Neighborhood Development Certification Levels

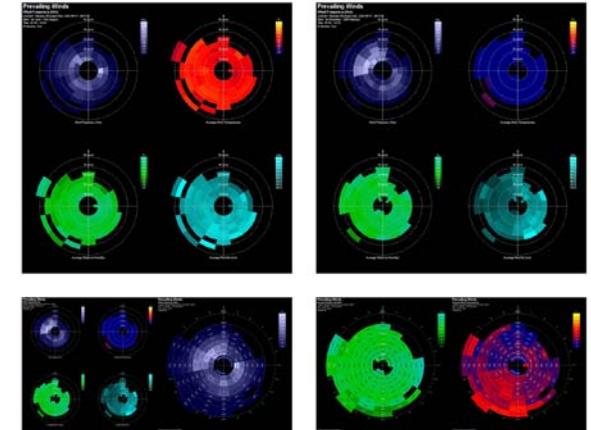
- 100 base points plus 6 possible Innovation and Design Process and 4 possible Regional Priority Credit points
- Certified 40-49 points
- Silver 50-59 points
- Gold 60-79 points
- Platinum 80 points and above

## Ecotect -

Computer software designed to analyze site specific projects and provide various environmental information including whole building energy analysis, thermal performance, water usage and cost evaluation, solar radiation, daylighting, shadows and reflections.



Solar analysis



Wind analysis

# VISION

*“A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.”*

- Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac

This vision, as a major step towards connecting the Wisconsin River and the City of Wausau, reclaims the spatial, ecological, and historic potential of the area to reach the overall goals and objectives.

To effectively illustrate the dimensions of this vision, the images used include maps that portray the integration of the overall plan, spatial diagrams, and diagrams and other images that show focus area plans and renderings developed by the CDS team.

This project provides the ground work to guide future efforts towards a sustainable, 21st century urban riverfront that is a revitalized network of entwined natural and built environments within the present community.



Overall plan of the site. The color coded legend describes land usage and significant access points

## PRIMARY DESIGN CONCEPTS

### Promenade

Cutting through the site from east to west to introduce a multi-use space which will provide a strong visual and physical connection from the downtown area to the Wisconsin River.

### Adaptive Reuse

A cluster of existing buildings in the center of the site can be re-used. Their foundations can remain for new construction, while existing cladding would be recycled throughout the site for constructing benches, planters, lighting and signage.

### Natural Landscape

Maintain as much of the existing tree canopies as possible to avoid interfering with or significantly altering existing habitats. Existing open areas are also important to retain with grass replacing gravel and dirt.

### Creek

The current culvert should be opened up and converted back to the creek which once existed within the site. This will allow the water from the river to penetrate within the site for better accessibility.

### New Construction

Sustainably designed residential and retail buildings would line the promenade. The lineal orientation also promotes connection to the downtown area and adjacent parking.

### Pathways

Various materials for pathways add variety and sustainable options, while allowing visitors to connect closer to the river.



Here the site map is zoomed in to describe the major elements.



## ACCESS MAP

CDS suggestions to improve access and connectivity issues include:

- Connecting in multiple ways with the river to provide different types of experiences throughout the park. All ramps and pathways are proposed to be ADA accessible.
- Paths that cantilever over the river provide intimate interaction with the river, create visual connections to the west river bank and its existing overlooks.
- The site promotes walkability to and from the site as well as within the site itself by creating multiple access points.
- CDS proposes to widen the Bridge Street bridge, creating a bike path, wider sidewalks, as well as optional parking to access the north end of the site. Additional access from underneath the bridge is recommended for public and service uses.
- Additional parking is proposed adjacent to the project site at 1st Street and Mcindoe Street. Photovoltaic sun shades are recommended to utilize the natural resources available.

## STORMWATER MANAGEMENT MAP

Stormwater management strategies are an important consideration in the design of this site because of its adjacency to the River and flood plain and the presence of contaminated soils from its previous industrial use. CDS suggests:

- Bioremediation opportunities in areas where existing buildings are proposed to be eliminated. Bioremediation is the process of introducing microorganisms to contaminated ground in order to naturally remove pollutants.
- Reclaim the open creek from the existing culvert to extend the river's influence within the site.
- Retain the flood plain and its natural vegetation.
- Create a retention pond at the south end of the site to address urban BMP
- Retain much of the existing vegetation along the river bank to manage erosion while creating vista points as indicated in the plan.
- Develop a smart grid for water and energy, which includes methods to supply utilities and waste management strategies.

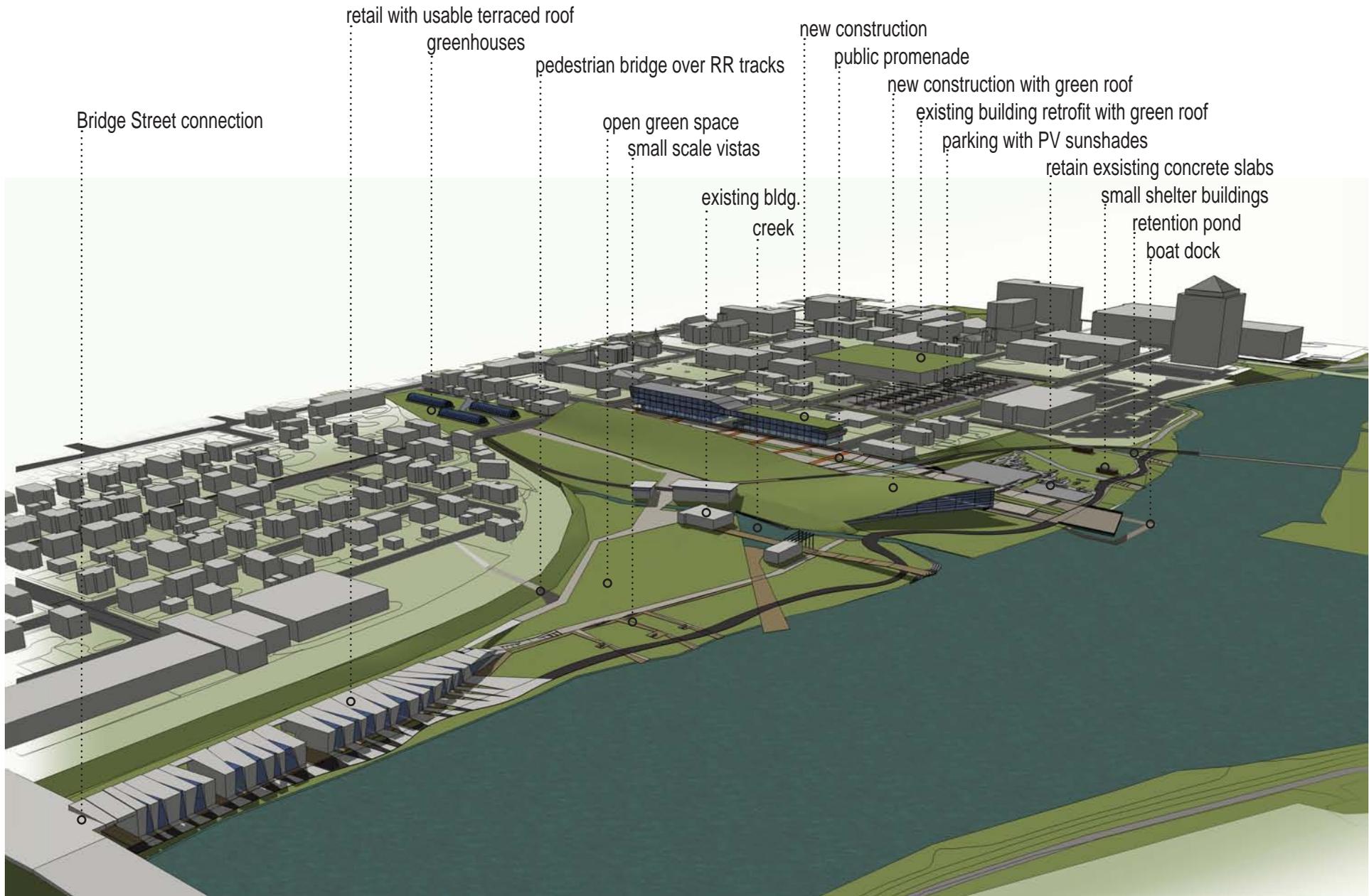




## ACTIVITIES MAP

A variety of activities have been considered through CDS's visioning process to accommodate the active lifestyle of Wausau's residents and visitors. To allow for these activities, the following are proposed:

- Linking the existing bike path on the north and south end of the site.
- Reclaiming the original train track path for use while offering another crucial connection back to the adjacent neighborhoods.
- Focusing the southern end of the site on opportunities for income generating new construction, while the northern end of the site will provide more open green space. This is due to the southern end's closer relationship to downtown and parking.
- Using the existing large concrete slabs on the southern end of the site as general gathering spaces, public art installations, or various other activities that require paved surfaces.



Overall site birdseye perspective looking southeast

## PARKING CONSIDERATIONS



Pending analysis from engineers, CDS proposes at least one level of parking below the new construction in the central portion of the project site. Parking would be accessed from 3rd Street.

## SQUARE FOOTAGE AND OPTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A significant amount of new development has been proposed for the. CDS's vision is for a mixed-use program to fit within these spaces.

The lineal building on the north end of the site is intended for some small retail shops as well as some high end restaurants with optional rooftop terraces over looking the river.

The large buildings along the promenade are intended for mixed-use as well, but primarily retail on the promenade level and residential above. Included on the street level could be educational uses such as a children's museum, aquarium, and art galleries, which would attract young children and promote a sense of place, heritage and history among both residents and visitors. Portions of the buildings could house farmer markets and health food stores to provide local food purchases year-round.

Optional development (if required for economic feasibility) is recommended for the sites in gray on the map. A 3-4 story height is recommended for all structures to ensure proper building proportion within the site context.





Promenade view looking west

The promenade features light tone pavers with bands of red brick, tying to the red brick commonly seen throughout the downtown area as well as visually breaking up the long field towards the river.

A green central spine provides opportunity for taller shade trees to be planted. Public art and benches would also be located here, allowing an area for rest and contemplation. A gentle slope towards the river would be treated with a series of staggered terraces and ramps for ADA compliancy.

Newly constructed sustainable buildings will line the promenade, with a usable gently sloped green roof on the building along the north side.

Photovoltaic powered lights are included in the list of sustainable ideas incorporated into the master plan vision.

## WAUSAU NORTHEAST RIVERFRONT SUSTAINABLE MASTER PLAN



Night scene - Promenade birdseye looking west

Lining the north and south sides of the promenade, the master plan recommends new construction of sustainable, LEED-certified buildings that complement the scale of surrounding buildings within the city.

The green rooftops would be usable year round as well, becoming a unique and dynamic feature within the site. The view seen here shows the space to be used during the summer months, as an ideal site to view fireworks over the Wisconsin River.

Additional uses for the public promenade could be outdoor farmer's market, or public art installations.



Winter scene - Promenade view looking west from new construction

Consideration was given to the project site to be active during all seasons, including Wisconsin winters. The many paths weaved throughout the site, as well as the sloped green roof are perfect for various winter activities as depicted in this perspective.



Promenade and dock birdseye view looking southeast

The promenade opens up as it extends past the new construction and reaches over the river itself. The deck cantilevers over the river, to allow the visitor to have a unique and dynamic experience.

Below the cantilever is a floating dock for small fishing boats, pontoon boats and kayaks to tie up.

Beyond the promenade, views to the existing concrete slabs allow a location for other activities to occur that require a paved surface.



Promenade view looking northeast

As the promenade extends towards the river, the vegetation becomes less landscaped and more natural, providing a calming experience.

The terraced steps range from standard stairs lining the outer edges, switching to deeper steps used for planters and seating, and then ADA compliant ramps for handicap accessibility.

A central water feature is another element bringing the river into the site.



Promenade view looking north

As the promenade extends past the new construction, the bike path becomes integrated with the paving material, reinforcing the importance of the main axis through the site.

Native vegetation and trees are to be the primary plantings throughout the site.



Bridge over reclaimed creek looking west

Another prominent feature within the site is the reclaimed creek. The creek will flow from the river, allowing novice kayakers easier access.

Adaptive reuse of the surrounding buildings can be connected by a series of walking paths which also extend over the creek, rise up over the bike path and cantilever over the river.

Strategic use of stairs to access the creek will also allow another level of experience with the water.



Along path looking north

Various scales were used to design the path system throughout the project site. This allows for different levels of intimacy and relationships with the river and the rest of the site. Here the main path to the north end of the site connects with the stairway that leads to the terraced roof.

The careful use of different paths within the site break up the large expanses of green space to give users a sense of boundary, ownership and identity during their visit to the park.



View looking south from top of north end new construction

Accessibility to the northern building's rooftop is another unique aspect to the overall design concept. It is similar to the larger green roof seen in the distance but because this roof is not a living green roof, the use is intended to be more passive as a walkway to Bridge Street, an overlook area, or even outdoor cafe for potential restaurants below.

The path extending along the left side of the image seen here is intended to accommodate the required maximum ADA ramp slope.



Bridge Street bridge view looking south

The design of the terraced building seen here provides areas of glass located between the segments along the facade that act as skylights. This design element allows maximum natural light to penetrate through the north/south orientation of the building.

The construction material is intended to be concrete, which would create a connection with the Bridge Street bridge, carry through the roof, along the facade, and even extend along the bike path. Consideration was given to visual connections throughout the site as well as physical connections through pathways and materials.



A separate path in front of the retail businesses allows the bike path to remain more active.

# CONCLUSION

The City of Wausau has a rich history and the downtown area, in particular, is a vibrant and walkable city center that has sustained a small town feel and the character of an intimate community. Recent revitalization efforts have successfully blend old architecture with new. CDS has attempted to create a vision that extends those attributes to the Northeast Riverfront District while also providing strong physical, visual and functional connections between the Downtown, Wisconsin River, and the City's west bank.

Inclusion of Wausau residents in the planning process was of great assistance to the CDS team. The community charrettes were an excellent way to introduce community stakeholders to the master planning phase of the East Riverfront District. The input received was very valuable in developing detailed plans for the area. Reactions to and recommendations for improvements from residents to the final report and renderings will also be helpful as planning for the District enters future phases.

Because of the scale of the project, the CDS team divided the site into three sections: The northern end - moderate new development and open green space, the central area including the creek, and the southern end- mainly new construction. CDS suggests that this division also be used to guide planning for project implementation.

This is a brief outline of primary partnerships and resources that the city intends to utilize during the implementation phase:

1. Riverfront Development
  - a. Partners: Planning, Engineering, and Community Development Departments (City of Wausau); Private consultants and developers
  - b. Funding: Tax Increment Financing (TIF); State grants/programs; Private developers
2. Street and trail extensions
  - a. Partners: Engineering and Parks Departments (City of Wausau); Private foundations and developers
  - b. Funding: Community foundations; Private developers; TIF; Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
3. Rezoning to allow mixed-use
  - a. Partners: Planning and Zoning Departments (City of Wausau); Private property owners
4. N. 1st Street redevelopment and relocation
  - a. Partners: Community Development and Planning Departments (City of Wausau); Main Street Wausau
  - b. TIF; CDBG; Private developers

# APPENDIX

## ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS PREPARED BY CDS:

Design Charette Summary Document \_ June 29, 2011

Design Charette Power Point Presentation \_ June 29, 2011

Draft Master Plan Document \_ September 7, 2011

Draft Master Plan Power Point Presentation \_ September 7, 2011

Final Master Plan Power Point Presentation \_ January 16, 2012

Final Master Plan Brochure \_ January 16, 2012

