

# JEFFERSON REPORT



## ERIE, PA: RECONNECTING THE BAYFRONT

**2019** MIDWEST URBAN DESIGN CHARRETTE REPORT



Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative  
Kent State University  
College of Architecture and Environmental Design

JEFFERSON  
EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY

# JEFFERSON EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY

Dear Reader,

In many ways, Erie, Pennsylvania continues to be defined by its location on Lake Erie. Key to the City of Erie and the surrounding areas, that often means Erie's Bayfront.

In the following pages, you will find a report authored by the Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative titled "Erie, PA: Reconnecting the Bayfront," which comes as Erie finds itself at another critical junction of Bayfront development.

The Jefferson Educational Society served as the lead partner with the Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative during a three-day planning session in October to help create design options for innovative ways to connect Erie's Bayfront with the downtown and neighborhoods above the bluff. The Jefferson Report presented here is the result of that work.

The Jefferson was able to partner with the CUDC thanks to a grant opportunity to bring urban planning and design graduate students from Kent State University to Erie as the region explores development underway by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

Thanks, too, goes to project leads John Vanco and Michael Fuhrman, who brought this concept to the Jefferson and helped in the drafting of the grant proposal. Locally, this endeavor was supported by the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority and the Erie Community Foundation, without whom this would not have been possible.

The Jefferson, with the encouragement of Mayor Joe Schember, County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper, PennDOT, Erie Insurance, and other interested citizens and groups, had proposed that the Cleveland designers select a study of bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicular traffic by "envisioning an iconic connection to Erie's waterfront." A group of Cleveland officials took an initial tour of Bayfront sites and returned later with their students, who spent three days conducting a "charrette," an intense three-day planning exercise intended to solicit input from a broad cross-section of neighborhood residents and stakeholders. The "charrette" helped to generate ideas for neighborhood connections to the Bayfront, and their work led to this report, which includes short-term and long-term recommendations.

The Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative is the outreach division for the College of Architecture and Environmental Design at Kent State University. Based in downtown Cleveland, the professional staff of the CUDC works with communities on a wide range of urban design and planning projects. More than a dozen students and staff produced a series of analytical drawings, diagrams, renderings, design guidelines, and other planning and urban design graphics to be presented to the community. Some of their recent work includes projects related to the revitalization of Toledo's Junction Neighborhood; the removal and redevelopment of a section of the Akron Innerbelt; and public space and transportation improvements in Downtown Youngstown.

Jefferson publications, such as this one, are produced to spark open, constructive dialogue in the spirit of community progress. We hope readers agree that our publications should be read, not as the last word on any topic, but as the starting point of an important conversation. We welcome your comments, criticisms, suggestions, and support on our latest publication and look forward to seeing you at our Winter Term events, which will include a public presentation of this report.

Yours in friendship,



Ferki Ferati, Ed.D.  
President, Jefferson Educational Society

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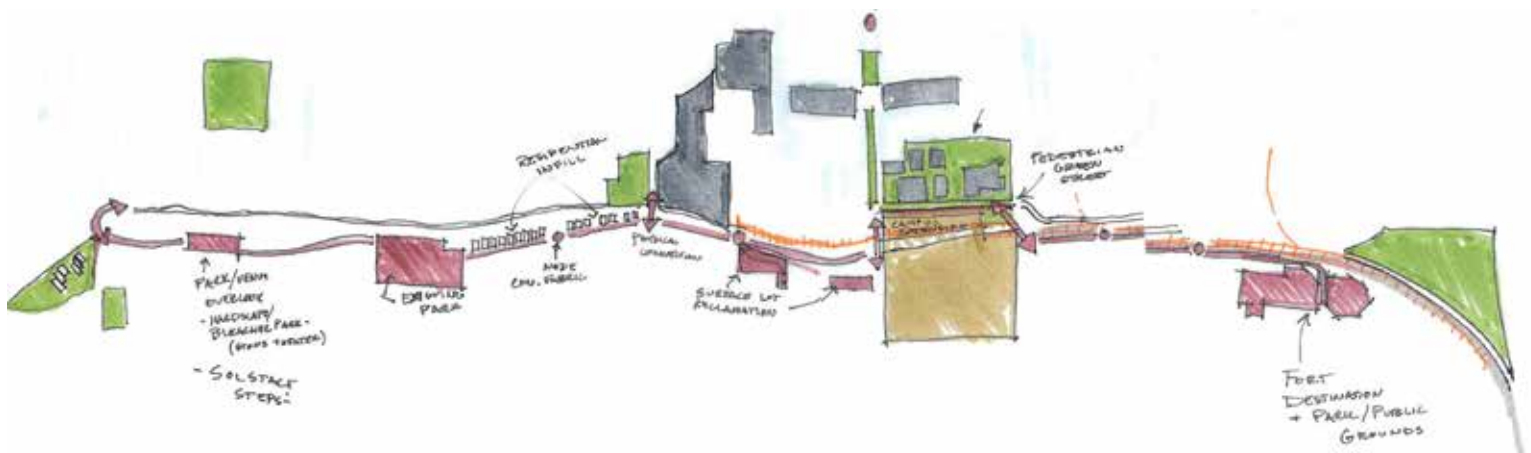
# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**In October of 2019 graduate students from Kent State University's College of Architecture and Environmental Design, along with professional design staff from Kent State's Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative (CUDC), traveled to Erie, PA to study its Bayfront.** The charge from local stakeholders was to examine the existing conditions of the Bayfront area, and connections from Downtown & adjacent neighborhoods, to help envision the shape an "iconic connection" to the Bayfront might take.

Erie has conducted a series of plans in recent years, which the students and design team studied in advance of the charrette weekend. Most recently, the plan from PennDOT to reconfigure the Bayfront Parkway, though still in progress, illustrated the probability that the Parkway would be redesigned with new traffic circles and future pedestrian connections to the Bayfront development areas. Many of these plans recognize the disparate and confusing conditions to a prospective pedestrian: pathways, though technically public, feel cut off and privatized; a wealth of surface parking feels out of place in such important terrain; and adjacent districts, like Downtown, lack visibility, hindering potential wanderings.

Through a rapid charrette process, the students generated a range of design ideas for the Erie community, from small-scale wayfinding & materials to large-scale pedestrian networks. The design team ultimately proposed not a single "iconic connection," but instead a series of pathways and crossings that could take on an iconic character and experiential quality in their own right. This network of pathways - a Waterfront Walk; a Bayfront Bikeway; and a Promenade Path, plus a series of north-south pedestrian bridges - are designed to be clear, inviting, and appealing to a wide range of constituents. Many of these pathways and crossings already exist, but could be redesigned to feel more public, part of a larger holistic network open to all.

This connective network could not only link the Downtown to the Bayfront, but also the East Bayfront and West Bayfront neighborhoods into larger urban and recreational opportunities along the Bayfront. Larger-scale connections to new park spaces, Presque Isle, and elsewhere were examined, as well as ideas for landscaping, wayfinding, programming, four-season activation, public art, and maritime heritage. The final master plan, featured on page 32 and sketched below, synthesizes many of these ideas into one larger vision for reconnecting Erie to its Bayfront.



# II. BACKGROUND

## CONTEXT

In Spring of 2019 Kent State University's Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative (CUDC) solicited proposals from communities facing a unique urban design challenge, in order to bring graduate design students to a weekend charrette. Erie's proposal, submitted and supported by the Jefferson Educational Society, brought the CUDC a timely and important opportunity to co-create a series of design ideas & alternatives for the Bayfront, specifically focusing on connections across the new plans for the Bayfront Parkway.

As the only major Great Lakes city in Pennsylvania, and featuring a spectacular natural harbor protected by

Presque Isle State Park, Erie possesses many unique assets, and its residents are rightly proud of their maritime heritage. However, the Bayfront is currently functionally divided from Downtown and its adjacent neighborhoods by infrastructure (the busy Bayfront Parkway, active rail lines) and topography (steep natural bluffs dropping down to the water's edge). These formidable barriers serve to limit connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists, and other modes of transit. As Erie residents and visitors continue to desire increased connection to and around their Bayfront, these barriers will need to be surmounted.





## HISTORICAL TRACES & OPPORTUNITIES

Erie's Bayfront has always been a place for shipping and industry, and much of this industry does remain today, primarily in the form of the Port, shipbuilding, and the Erie Coke Corporation. Rail lines, particularly adjacent to the East Bayfront neighborhood, continue to create active barriers. However, additional uses - recreation, at Liberty Park; tourism, at the Bayfront Convention Center and Dobbins Landing; and boating, at many marinas across the Bayfront - remain as well. Additional assets include the main public library; the Erie Maritime Museum; the Bicentennial Tower; sites of historical forts; and the transit hub where Greyhound buses pass through.



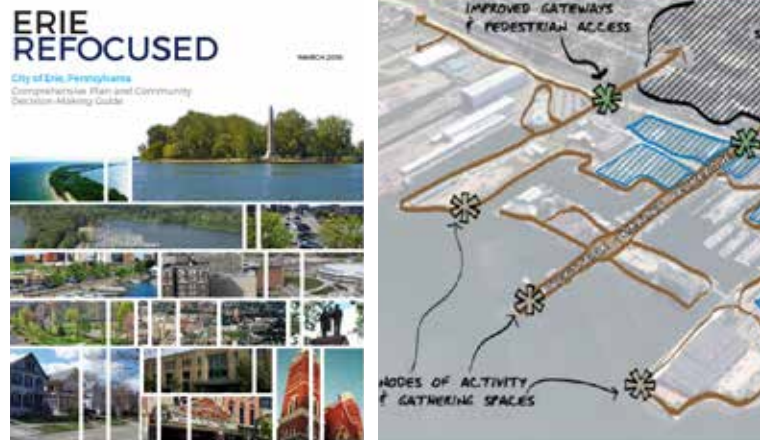
As a result, the Bayfront today is an amalgamation of public and private interests with uneven access, making a truly comprehensive redevelopment of the Bayfront unlikely. Some of these historical traces, though, could be highlighted and linked through strategic connections. Some ideas the design team heard included bringing back the public pool at Waterworks Park; expanding the Lampe Campground; and reconstructing the historic forts near the East Bayfront neighborhood. Additional comments centered the city's Native American heritage and current influx of New Americans.

## EXISTING PLANS

The design team studied many of the recent planning documents in advance of the charrette weekend, particularly those that had some direct impact to the Bayfront. Some key takeaways are summarized below.

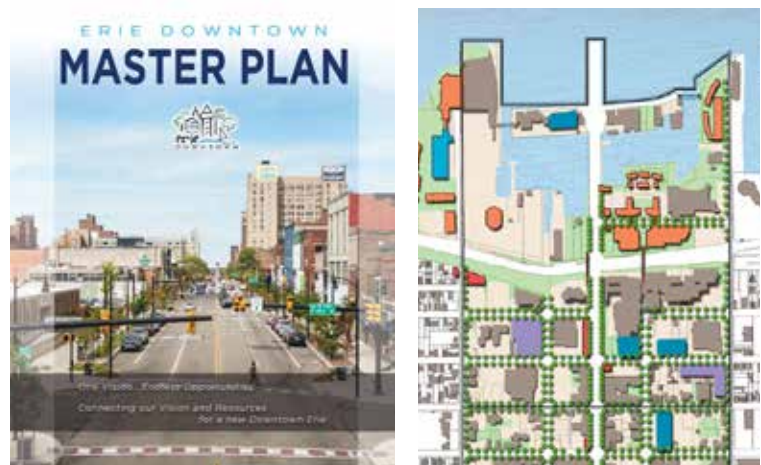
### ERIE REFOCUSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN | 2016

- Calls for an “iconic connecting feature” between Downtown and the Bayfront
- Looks for a waterfront development that “prioritizes pedestrian comfort & mixed-use vitality”
- “Create a public space that contributes both to the Downtown and to the Bayfront”



### ERIE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN 2017

- Identifies a distinct “Bayfront District”
- Recommends a “signature project” to bring people to the Bayfront
- Streetscape along State St is addressed, particularly in gaps around the UPMC Hamot campus



### PORT AUTHORITY MASTER PLAN 2018

- Comprehensive waterfront master development plan
- Larger district connections & access explored, particularly along public waterfront areas
- Balances active industry with new waterfront development opportunities, not all of which are currently on Port Authority land

### Master Development and Facilities Plan

The Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port Authority



April 2018







**PENNDOT PARKWAY PLAN | 2019**

As of August 2019, the Bayfront Parkway Central Corridor Improvements project depicted the above plan as their preferred alternative: roundabouts at Sassafra and Holland Streets, with an elevated north-south crossing at State St and the Parkway traffic continuing below. Details are shown at left.

The primary concern the design team heard about this plan in conversations with stakeholders is that, while the plan seems to address important traffic congestion concerns, it may further divide the Bayfront from its adjacent districts to the south, particularly the East Bayfront and West Bayfront neighborhoods. The roundabouts were of particular concern to community members who felt that new at-grade pedestrian crossings would be even more difficult to navigate than existing traffic signals. The gestural pedestrian bridges, rendered in purple, are also still in flux, as they will not be part of the initial project budget but will be added later.

The design team heard these concerns but also weighed the importance of collaboration with PennDOT with respect to their timeline in the process. Ultimately the team endeavored to generate design ideas that could be deployed no matter the eventual Parkway design.

# CHARRETTE PROCESS

## WHAT IS A CHARRETTE?

The word charrette refers 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 design solutions while integrating ideas from a diverse group of people.

## SCHEDULE

### THURSDAY, OCT. 17, 2019

- 10:00am Arrive in Erie
- 10:30-12:00pm Tour of Bayfront & Parkway
- 12:00-5:30pm Preliminary Site Analysis / Design Work
- 6-7:30pm **INITIAL STAKEHOLDER MEETING**  
*Russian Community Center*
- 8:00-10:00pm Team Work Session / Develop Preliminary Site Concepts

### FRIDAY, OCT. 18, 2019

- 9am-12:30pm Team Work Session
- 12:30pm Lunch
- 1:00-4:00pm Team Work Session
- 4:30-6:00pm **STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK SESSION OF WORK IN PROGRESS**  
*Bostwick Design Partnership*
- 6:30-11:00pm Work Session: Begin Draft Presentation

### SATURDAY, OCT. 19, 2019

- 8am-2:00pm Work Session / Finalize Stakeholder Presentation
- 2:00-3:00pm Setup for Public Meeting
- 3:00-4:30pm **PUBLIC MEETING TO PRESENT DRAFT URBAN DESIGN PROPOSAL**  
*Jefferson Educational Society*
- 5:00pm Pack up presentation materials and leave Erie

### THURSDAY, JAN. 30 2020

- 6:30-8:00pm **FINAL PUBLIC PRESENTATION OF URBAN DESIGN PROPOSAL**  
*Jefferson Educational Society*



Midpoint pin-up: incorporating community feedback

### CHECK-IN POINTS

The team scheduled daily check-in sessions with community members, to accommodate participation from a wide range of stakeholders and to enable course corrections. The first day the team had a public presentation & feedback session in the East Bayfront neighborhood; on Day 2 Bostwick Design Partnership hosted a pin-up to steer ideas in progress; and the Saturday afternoon presentation consolidated the final ideas into a slideshow presented at the Jefferson Educational Society. In addition, team leaders interviewed Erie decision makers in advance of the Charrette weekend in order to consolidate points of interest ahead of time.



Kent State students during their weekend in Erie

## CHARRETTE GOALS:

**Building on robust recent planning efforts, the primary goal of the charrette is to identify opportunities for connecting the Bayfront with its adjacent neighborhoods & Downtown.**

Erie's evolving waterfront faces challenges: a series of isolated destinations are functionally divided from Downtown by a rail line & busy highway. Recent plans all call for an "iconic connection" to bring pedestrians & cyclists to the Bayfront. What shape can this "iconic connection" take, and how can the Bayfront be comprehensively rethought as functional urban fabric in its own right?

## KEY ISSUES:

**EQUITY & ACCESS:** The neighborhoods east & west of Downtown are cut off physically from the Bayfront by the Parkway & rail lines. How can any new investment in the Bayfront create equitable access for all Erie citizens, not just those Downtown?

**ALTERNATE MODES:** How can pedestrian and bicycle traffic from Downtown & the larger urban region be not only accommodated, but elevated?

**TOPOGRAPHY:** Steep natural bluffs further divide the Bayfront and its Parkway from the adjacent high ground. How can any connections navigate and capitalize on this natural grade change?

**STATE STREET:** Surface parking and deep building setbacks create an unfriendly environment. The Downtown Master Plan includes streetscape recommendations, but how else can the public space of State Street be rethought to create a more contiguous line of movement?

**BEYOND A "DESTINATION":** How can the waterfront be retrofitted to graft connective urban fabric back into the local area, providing essential amenities for visitors and residents alike?



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK:

### What does an “iconic connection” mean to you?

- Something that you remember
- Easy to get to - inviting
- Cross a threshold into a special place
- A unique experience
- The Bay is already iconic - just link to it
- Draws you back
- Not necessarily one singular thing - a system/network that’s exciting

### What additional amenities would be of use to you on the Bayfront?

- Multi-use public building (market, etc)
- Winter recreation
- Food - not just expensive food! Pizza place, fish stand, etc
- Smaller-scale boating
- Equipment rental
- Local flavor - support small/local businesses
- Attract boaters from the Bay/Lake

### How do you currently use the Bayfront?

- Boating
- Fishing
- Hotels/restaurants
- Walk around the public pathways
- Watch sunset
- Library & Maritime Museum visits
- Bird watching

### What is most important to you about a reconfigured Parkway?

- Park-like, natural
- A place for people - not a barrier
- Seamless connections from East/West neighborhoods to Bayfront
- Comfortable for walking, biking
- Invites views to the Bay



PROJECT GOAL #1:

# Create a public-centered Bayfront

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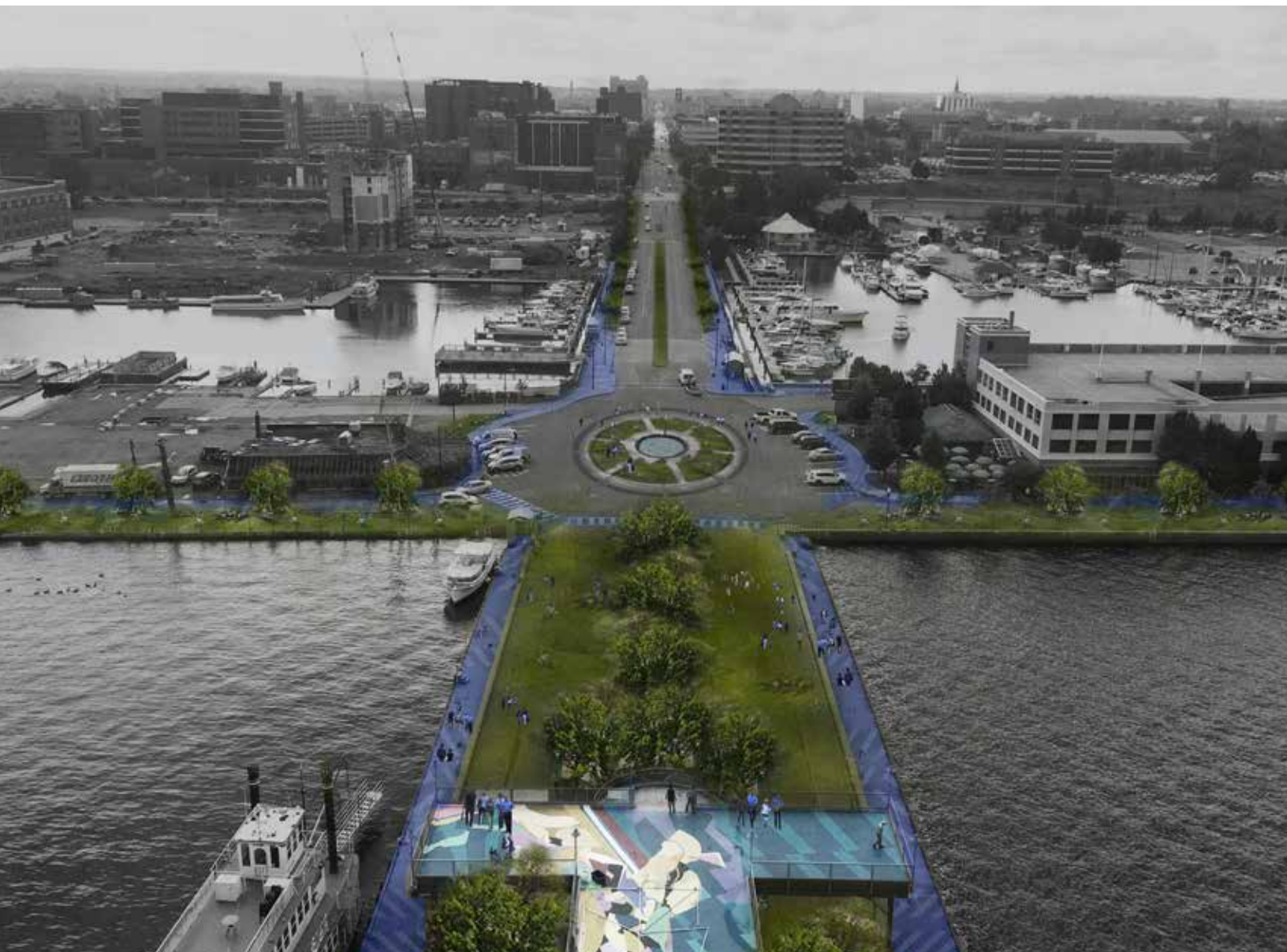
## **ORGANIZING IDEAS:**

1. Create a gathering space at or near Dobbins Landing
  2. Explore short-term and seasonal activities
  3. Emphasize the waterfront walk
  4. Consolidate surface parking
  5. Ensure accessibility for all
-

## CREATE A GATHERING SPACE

Dobbins Landing is already a central location on the Bayfront, but existing conditions should be emphasized to complement uses and strengthen the physical public presence of the pier. Though much of the waterfront is technically public, there is still a perception that there is a lack of significant larger-scale gathering places for the public on the Bayfront.

Some feedback suggested perhaps turning the parking below the Observation Deck into an open air market; others liked the idea of adding more landscaping and art to emphasize the existing public access already on site. Whatever the specific design strategy, as the formal “welcome mat” into the City from the Bay, Dobbins Landing should be made even more inviting.





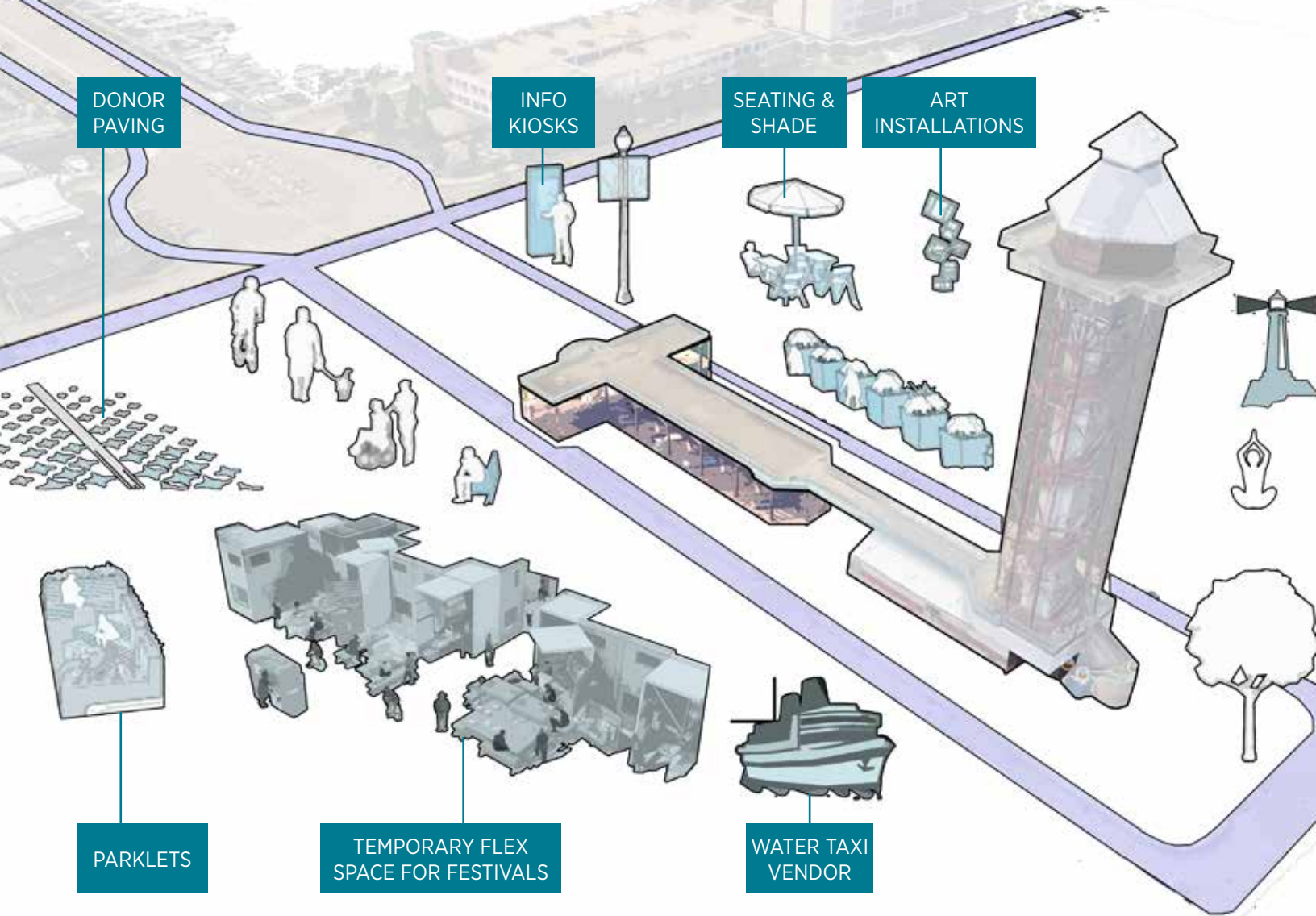
### BRING PRESQUE ISLE TO THE BAYFRONT

The above rendering, as well as the one on the previous page, illustrate the concept of bringing the greenery and open space of Presque Isle to the Bayfront by adding large-scale plantings to Dobbins Landing. The Waterfront Walk is called out in blue to highlight the public edge already in place. Dobbins Landing would also be an ideal location for a water taxi to Presque Isle, with a few additional stops along the Bayfront.

**RIGHT:** The central turnaround just south of the Observation Deck could be redesigned as a piazza with a central fountain or other human-scaled element.







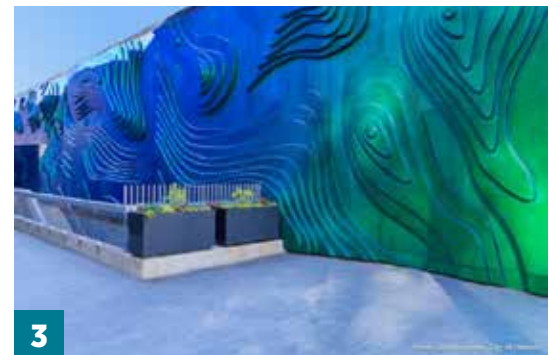
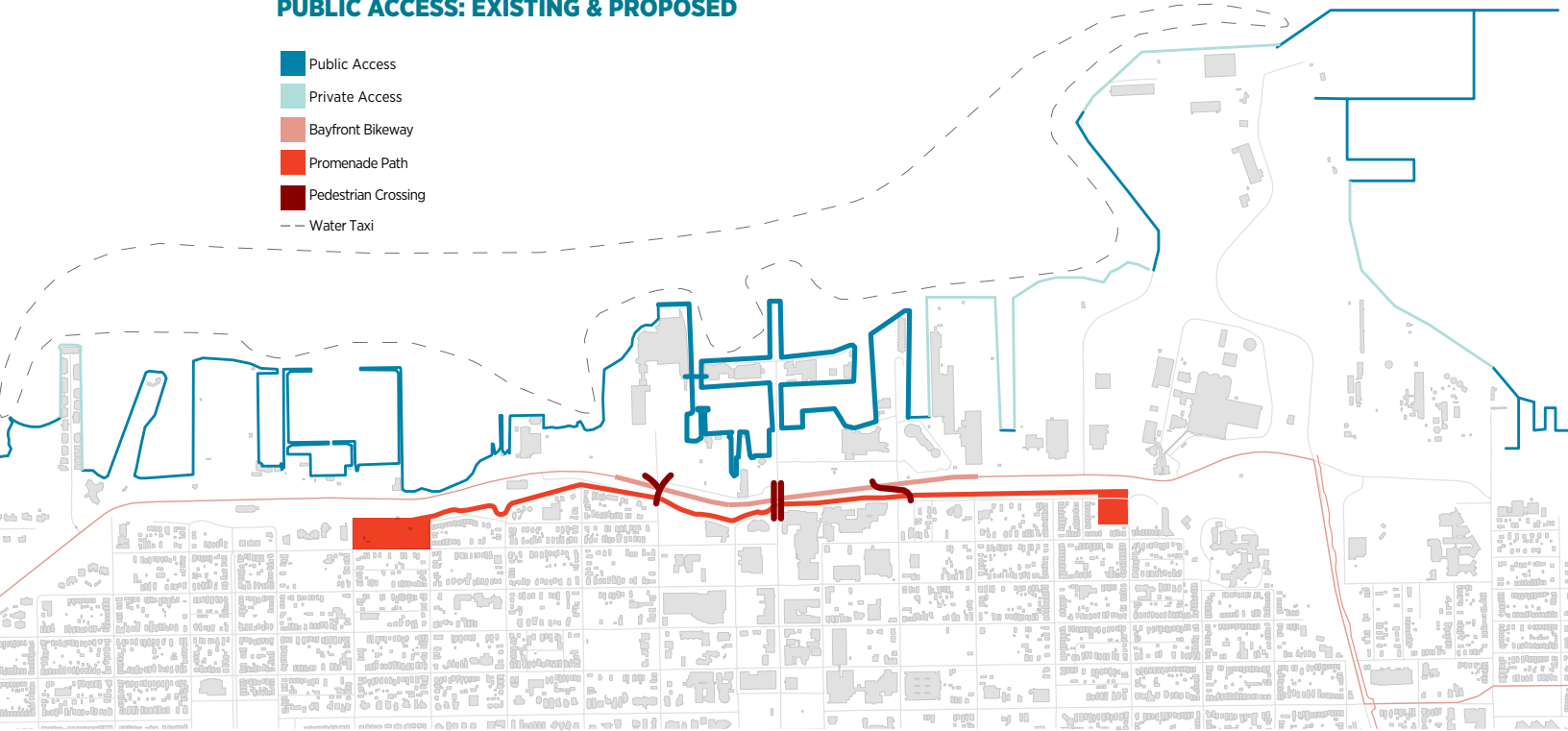
**SHORT-TERM AND SEASONAL USE**

In the short term, existing development at Dobbins Landing can be complemented with flexible, temporary infrastructure like banners, planters, lighting, parklets, kiosks, and furnishings. Programming the Pier could include fitness classes, festivals, art events, and a station for a water taxi to Presque Isle.

Additionally, the pier could become a true four-season destination with more emphasis on winter activities, particularly ideas like ice fishing, skating, curling, holiday markets (1), and bonfires. Longer-term, winter installations like larger-scale skating rinks (2) can be integrated into public space at the Bayfront for winter tourism.

## PUBLIC ACCESS: EXISTING & PROPOSED

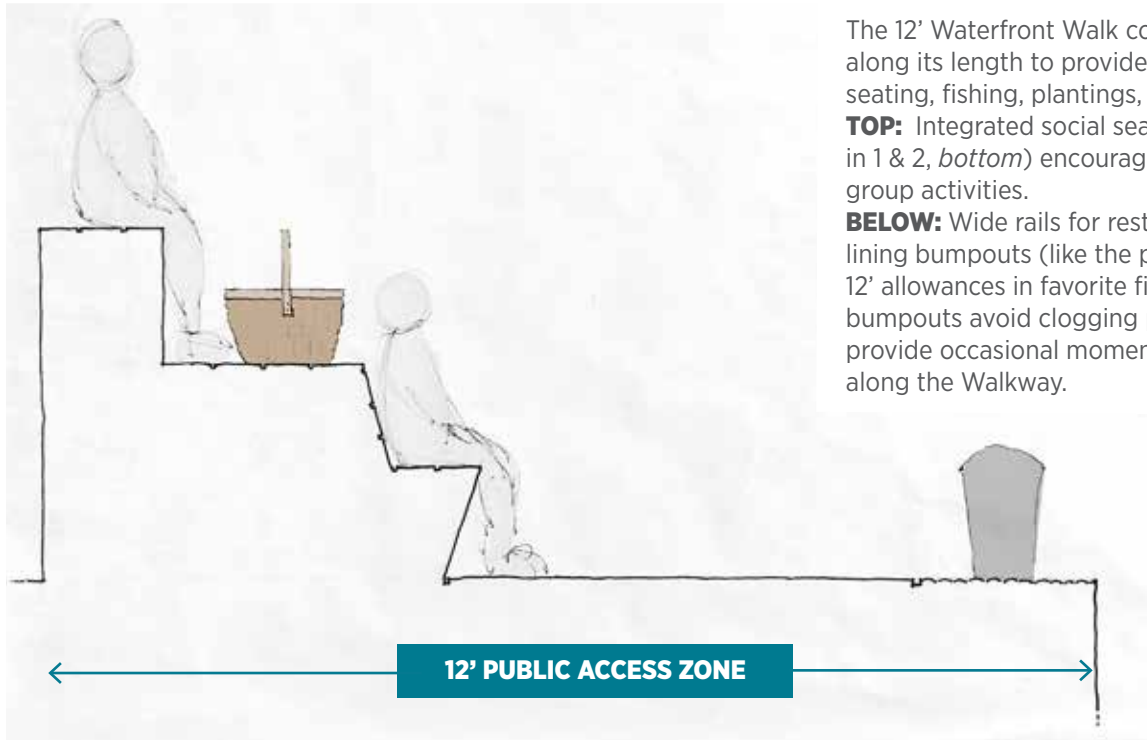
- Public Access
- Private Access
- Bayfront Bikeway
- Promenade Path
- Pedestrian Crossing
- Water Taxi



### EMPHASIZE THE WATERFRONT WALK

One of the most exciting discoveries the student team made during their initial site visit was the extent of public access already available along the waterfront edge. The 12' public right of way exists along almost all of the primary Bayfront waterfront, but often feels privatized and hidden, especially near development and existing parking.

By using consistent color, texture, material, and wayfinding strategies, this 12' public walkway could be redesigned to be more obviously public and inviting. Threads of bright blue could highlight public pathways (1); be integrated into landscaping and furnishings (2); and even be used for Parkway retaining walls (3).



The 12' Waterfront Walk could be subtly redesigned along its length to provide additional spaces for seating, fishing, plantings, and discovery.

**TOP:** Integrated social seating (like the examples in 1 & 2, *bottom*) encourages gathering and support group activities.

**BELOW:** Wide rails for resting fishing poles, lining bumpouts (like the pier in 3) beyond the 12' allowances in favorite fishing spots. These bumpouts avoid clogging public circulation & also provide occasional moments of discovery and pause along the Walkway.



PROJECT GOAL #2:

# Deploy a range of connection types

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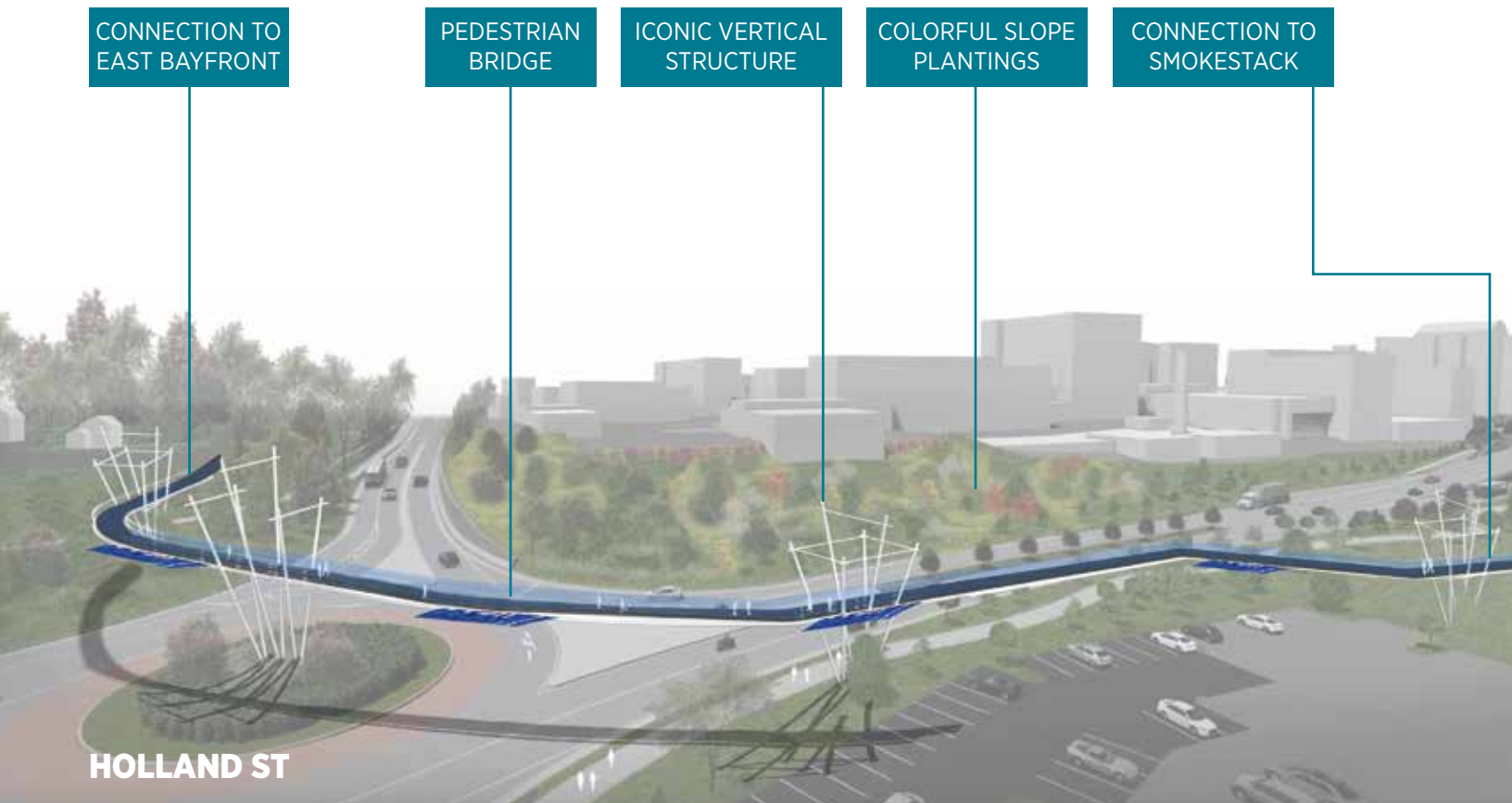
## ORGANIZING IDEAS:

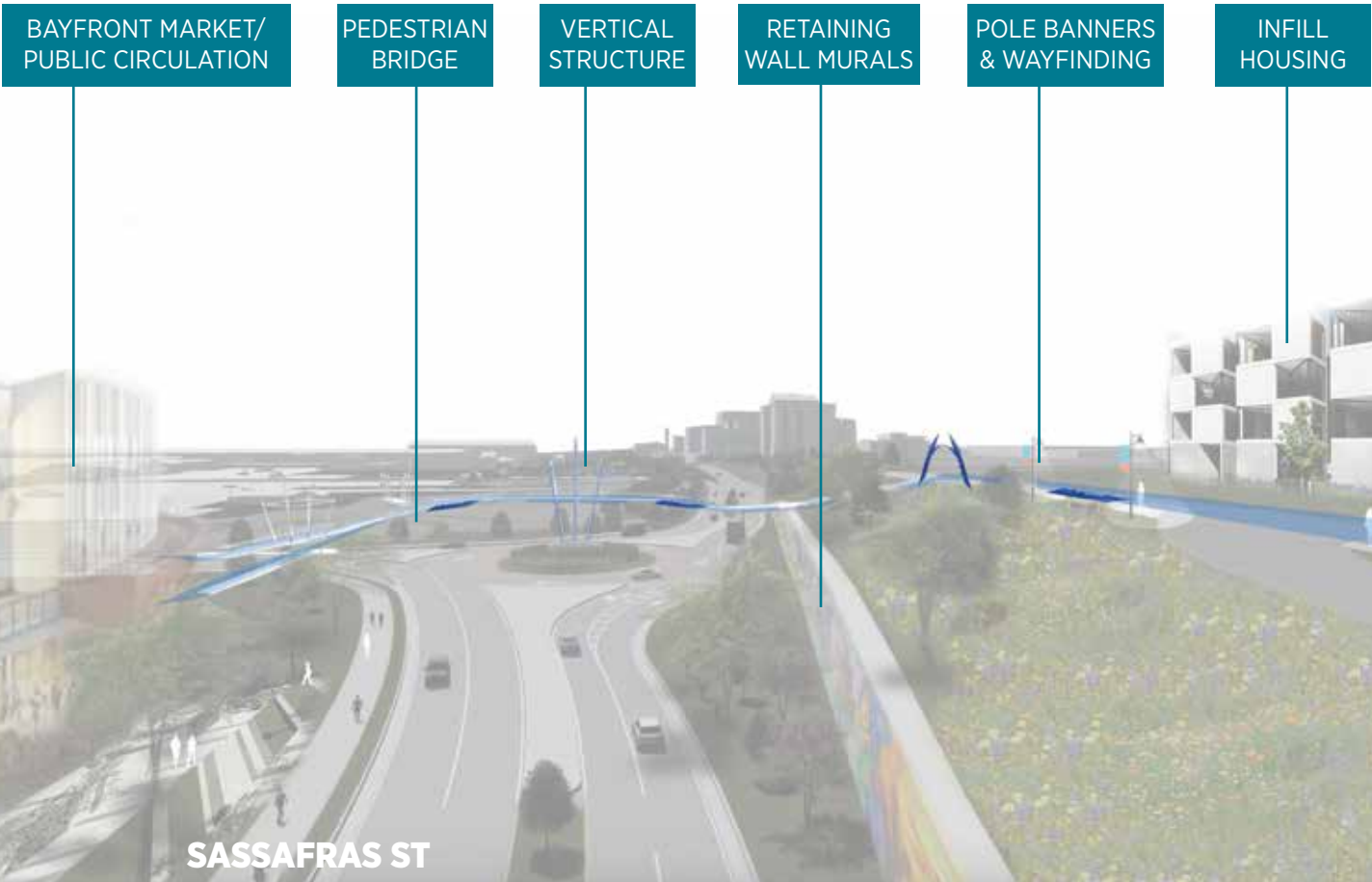
1. Bridge the Parkway
  2. Explore alternative parkway types
  3. Connect along & down the Bluffs
  4. Emphasize visual connections
  5. Bridge the UPMC Hamot gap
  6. Connect the east side to Presque Isle
-

### BRIDGING THE PARKWAY

Whether or not the PennDOT Preferred Alternative plan, featuring roundabouts at Holland and Sassafras Streets, is implemented as currently designed, significant pedestrian crossings will be required to bridge the Parkway for at least three areas: from Downtown (State St); from the East Bayfront neighborhood (Holland St); and from the West Bayfront neighborhood (Sassafras). The drop in topography down the Bluffs from Downtown to the Bayfront will necessitate accessible ramps and other vertical circulation.

The Charrette team focused less on specific structural strategies and more on larger connectivity and iconography. The below rendering shows a possible connection sloping down from the East Bayfront, east of Holland St, across the Roundabout to the Bayfront near the library. Vertical structures anchor the ramping bridge in a callback to maritime tall ships. Color from the wayfinding guidelines (p. 30) and plantings along the Bluffs (p. 31) are integrated to ensure visual continuity.





**BRIDGING THE PARKWAY**

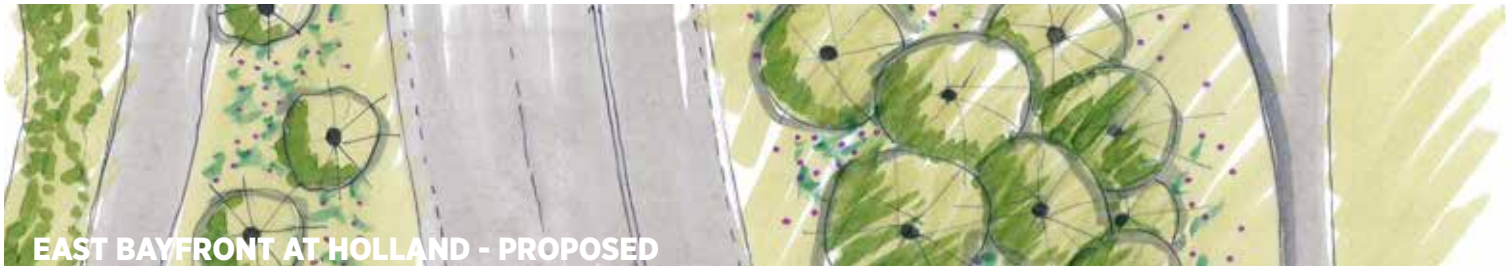
Though the above rendering takes some structural liberties, the general idea holds: to integrate a pedestrian crossing with the existing Promenade & new Bayfront development, in order to ensure these networks of movement are fully linked and seamless across the entire Bayfront area. Wayfinding, art, landscaping, color, signage, and structural elements can all communicate a coherent whole to pedestrians and cyclists. Meanwhile, infill housing along the Promenade strengthens that east-west connection.

Precedents for bridging the Parkway and activating roundabouts are shown at right. The land bridge (1), an example from Columbus, OH, may be an appropriate precedent for crossing at State St, with some development lining the vehicular and pedestrian route and buffering the through traffic below. A less developed land bridge (2) could integrate landscaping into the infrastructure itself. Finally, the roundabout (3) could inspire similar landscaping, public space, and gathering places for Holland and Sassafra Streets.





EAST BAYFRONT AT HOLLAND - EXISTING



EAST BAYFRONT AT HOLLAND - PROPOSED



BIKEWAY

TREE BUFFER

PARKWAY

TREE/POLLINATOR BUFFER

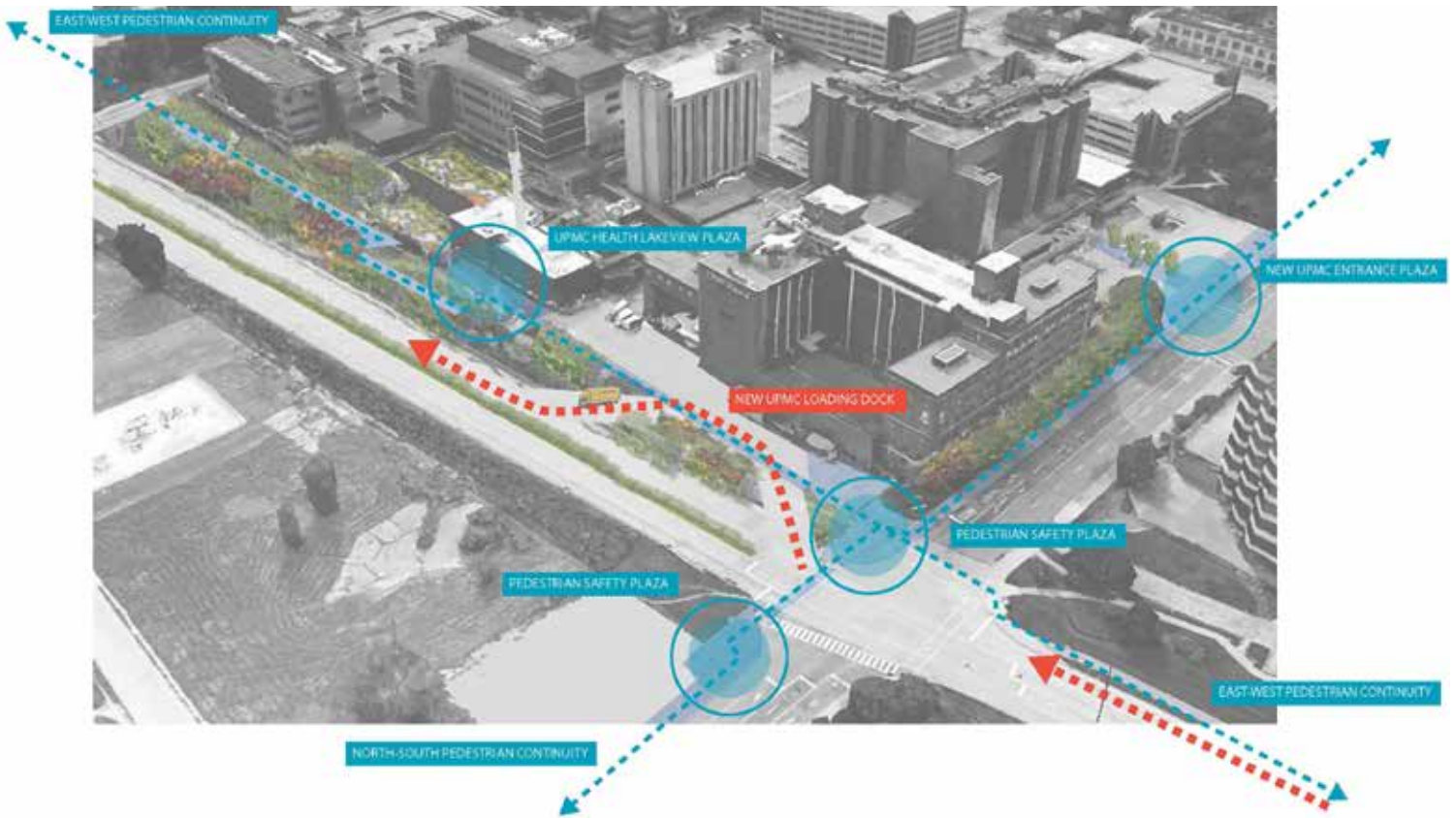
RAIL



**EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE PARKWAY TYPES**

Though the current Bayfront Parkway plan was fairly well developed by the time of the Charrette, the design team took the opportunity to study alternative configurations, particularly those that emphasize the “park” aspect of a parkway. Careful attention should be paid to the landscaping, wayfinding signage, buffered pedestrian/bike pathways, regular street trees, lighting, and other elements that slow traffic and indicate that vehicular use is not paramount to the area. However, trees and landscaping should be placed strategically so as not to block views to the Bayfront, the primary existing asset of the Parkway.





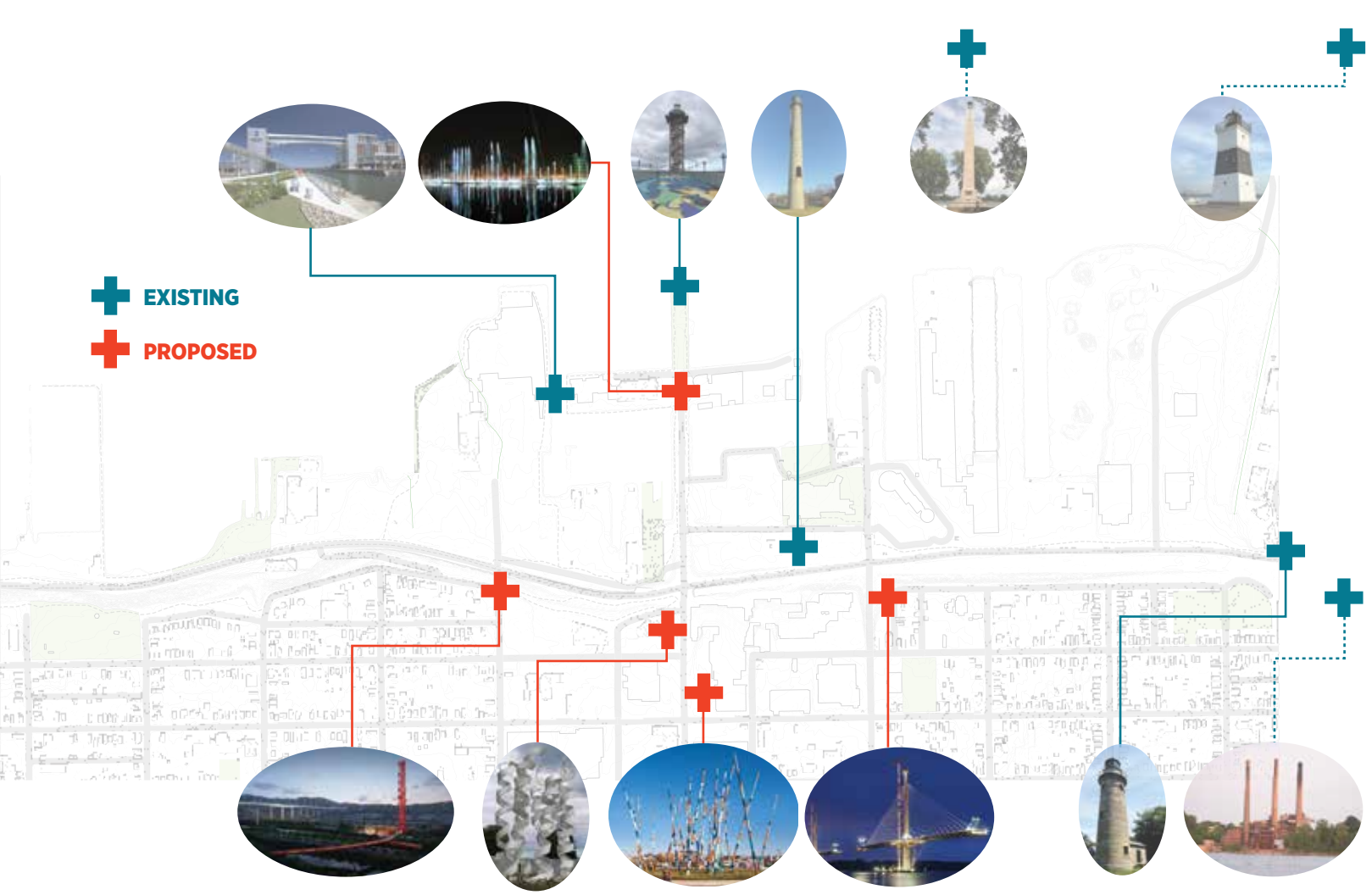
**BRIDGE THE UPMC GAP**

One of the most significant gaps in the existing pedestrian network along the Bayfront Bluffs is between the UPMC Hamot campus and the Bayfront Parkway, just east of State St. Unfortunately, the required loading dock access at that corner reroutes the multiuse path to the North side of the Parkway, which further divides the East Bayfront neighborhood from the Downtown and the Bayfront. If the loading dock could be relocated to allow for a more seamless route along the Bluffs (ABOVE), the Promenade would become much more legible and continuity would be vastly increased throughout the network. UPMC Hamot and PennDOT should commit to collaborating to find a solution to this “gap” in the Promenade network.

Additionally, the streetscape along State St is fairly unwelcoming heading south from the Parkway uphill to Downtown (UPPER RIGHT), further discouraging wandering between the two districts. The landscaping, wayfinding signage, lighting, and other improvements illustrated (LOWER RIGHT) could help visually connect visitors to the Bayfront and Downtown, encouraging discovery.







**ABOVE: EMPHASIZE VISUAL CONNECTIONS**

To complement the physical connections of pedestrian crossings, vertical elements create increased visibility and orientation along the Bayfront. Existing vertical elements like the Bicentennial Tower, the Smokestack, and the lighthouses suggest adding similar monumental nodes like sculptures, fountains, and enhanced vertical structures at bridges.

**BELOW: CONNECT TO PRESQUE ISLE**

In addition to a water taxi connection, the design team explored a range of minimal bridge types that balance important eastside connections to Presque Isle with access for shipping. Examples like this inflatable bridge (1) could be deployed for summer festivals or events, and removed as needed; meanwhile, this example of a submersible bridge (2) allows for access from land or sea.



1



2

PROJECT GOAL #3:

# Tie in the East & West side neighborhoods

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## ORGANIZING IDEAS:

1. Strengthen the Promenade presence
  2. Concentrate infill housing along the Promenade
  3. Create “local-friendly” amenities along Bayfront
  4. Provide open space access for the East side
-

## STRENGTHEN THE PROMENADE

The existing bikeway & Promenade on both the West and East side bluffs, south of the Bayfront Parkway, already serve as a pedestrian link from the adjacent neighborhoods down to the Bayfront. However, several key linkages are missing, and existing pathways are often overlooked. One key tenet of the Charrette Plan is to enhance the existing lines of access already in place, rather than inventing new pathways. The Promenade

is a perfect example of an existing path that could use some emphasis to highlight its presence for the public. (1) and (BOTTOM) illustrate the potential to activate the Promenade with lighting, color, plantings, wayfinding, & activities. (2) shows a precedent overlook from Milwaukee, emphasizing visual connections and creating points of pause along the Promenade path.





### “LOCAL-FRIENDLY” AMENITIES

Much of the feedback the team received from stakeholders during the Charrette weekend called for diversifying the audience of the Bayfront to welcome local neighborhood residents too, not just tourists. Though there are already some important public assets on the Bayfront, any new development should prioritize amenities that specifically benefit locals.

Parks and open spaces were particularly desired, with intentional pockets of recreational zones like kayak launches and beach volleyball (ABOVE). An existing & proposed amenities diagram (RIGHT) shows how existing Arts, Park, and Historic cores can be grown into larger zones that intersect directly at the central Bayfront. This zoning approach could become a guiding framework for planning new complementary amenities.

**“We have to take a people-first approach.”**

*- public comment, 10/19/19*



# EAST SIDE PARK PROPOSAL



## OPEN SPACE FOR THE EAST SIDE

Many East Bayfront residents noted the lack of meaningful open space to mirror Liberty Park on the West side. However, the presence of the Port and Erie Coke, plus existing train lines, create significant barriers to developing open space adjacent to the east side.

With the possibility of Erie Coke shuttering sometime in the future, this may become an opportunity to grow existing assets like the Lampe Marina and Campground into a larger park space with recreational and wildlife amenities, effectively bringing Presque Isle south (ABOVE).

Even if the area requires significant remediation, some public elements like boardwalks and overlooks could be integrated, as seen in this example from the 2014 Toledo Dredge Competition (1). Meanwhile, the intersection at the Bayfront Parkway should be given equal infrastructural attention to prioritize bike and pedestrian access, like this example of an elevated roundabout (2).

PROJECT GOAL #4:

# Highlight Erie's unique heritage

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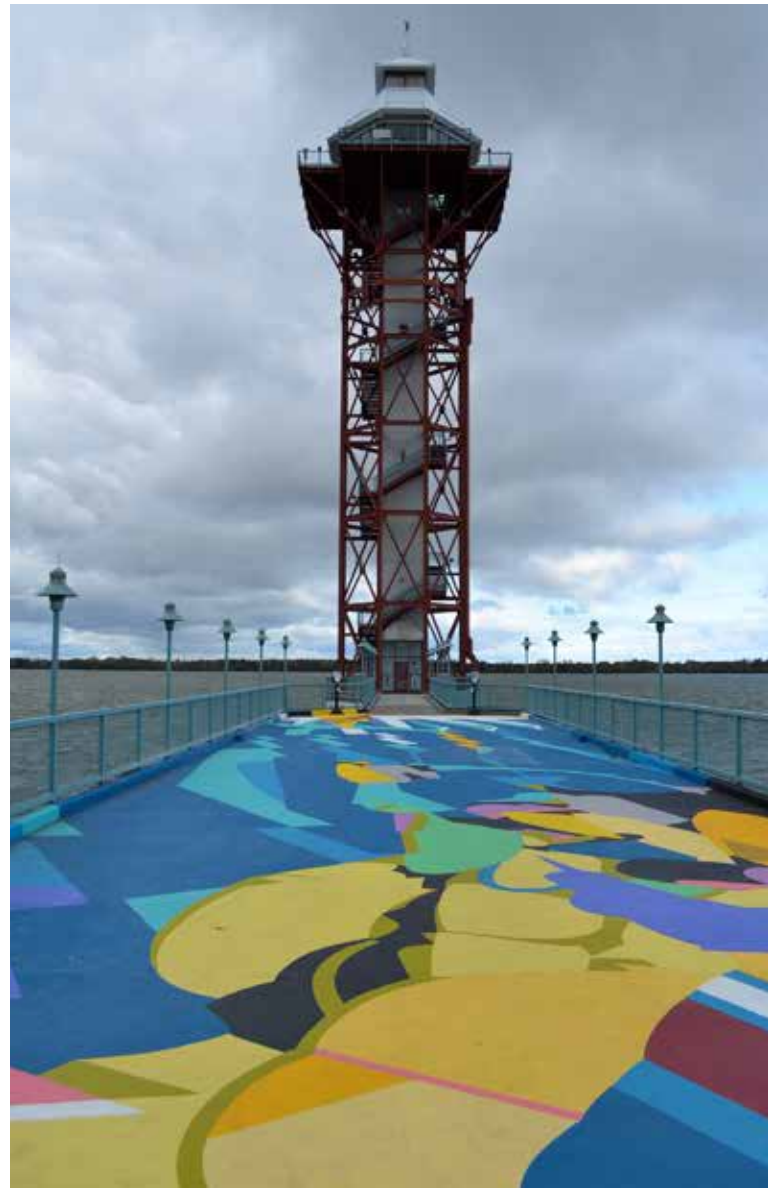
## ORGANIZING IDEAS:

1. Use Public Art to tie together the Bayfront
  2. Integrate a network-wide wayfinding strategy
  3. Incorporate existing historic sites
  4. Use local landscape/ecology as a unifying thread
-

## HERITAGE & PUBLIC ART

Much of the community feedback during the Charrette weekend highlighted Erie's unique heritage as a Great Lakes city with a natural bay, and that maritime history remains central to the region's identity. Erie Arts & Culture is already facilitating public art collaborations in Downtown Erie & the Bayfront area, like the mural on the deck at Dobbins Landing (RIGHT). Additionally, the students discovered some creative traces at the Bayfront

and along the Promenade that served as inspiration for additional art proposals (LEFT). Existing historic sites along the Bayfront Promenade like Fort Presque Isle could be further highlighted and tied together with a consistent public art campaign along the proposed connective networks, acting as additional draws to the Bayfront and its adjacent neighborhoods. Some specific ideas are illustrated on the following spread.



### DAZZLE PAINT

Large-scale buildings along the Port could be blank canvases for any number of art installations. In this case, the maritime history of “dazzle paint,” as depicted below, serves as playful inspiration for a full building wrap like this Donjon Shipbuilding & Repair illustration (RIGHT).



### MARITIME FLAGS

Students were intrigued by the history and symbolism of maritime flags, as seen in the poster example below, and interested in ways to integrate them abstractly into existing elements like the Smokestack (RIGHT). These flags could also be deployed along the Bluffs like the wind sculptures on the opposite page.







### **PRESQUE ISLE SPECTACLES**

Large-scale spectacle events at Presque Isle could easily be brought to the parks along the Bayfront; one example is the large inflatable figures shown below. Sharing festivals and events from Presque Isle back to the Bayfront seems like a relatively simple way to ensure accessibility of art to all Erie residents.



### **WIND SCULPTURES**

The Lake Erie winds along the Bayfront & its bluffs can get quite intense, but rather than a detriment, the design team saw this as an opportunity to collaborate with artists producing wind sculptures like the example below. These wind-activated artworks could be installed for a summer season, inviting new ideas every year and drawing attention to the bluffs (LEFT).



## COLOR PALETTE & WAYFINDING

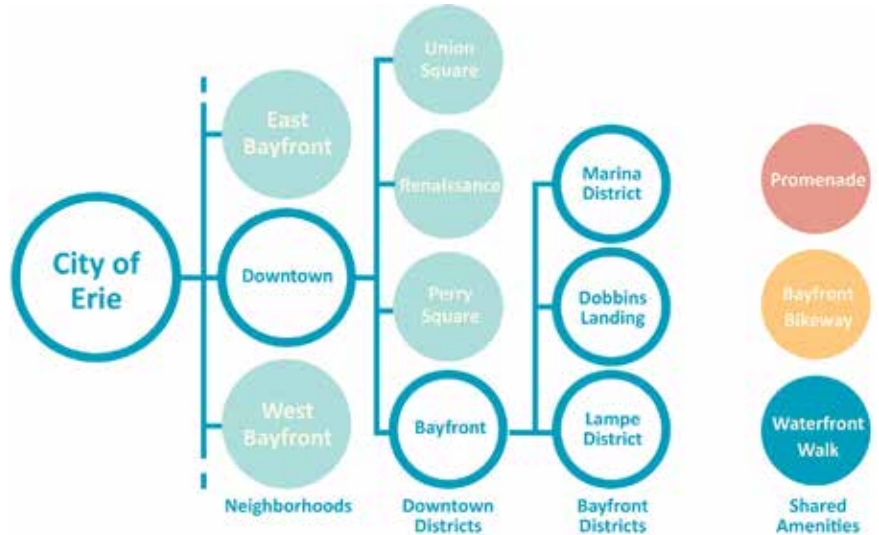


## TEXTURAL & LIGHTING STRATEGIES



## NETWORK-WIDE GUIDELINES

The design team noticed that each of the existing plans for Erie and the Bayfront seemed to use different branding & identity standards (RIGHT); establishing a clear, consistent hierarchy in districts & adopting an identity for each is essential for visitors & residents to navigate the Bayfront. Guidelines for the three pedestrian paths (Promenade, Bikeway, and Waterfront Walk) could all have distinct but complementary colors & aesthetics in order to unify districts across the Bayfront & synthesize into a clear whole (TOP). Additionally, the team integrated community feedback to add textural indicators like ground surface changes and braille on railings/poles, in order to ensure accessibility and orientation for all of Erie's residents above and beyond color & lighting (ABOVE).



**SALT-TOLERANT SLOPE STABILIZATION GRASSES**



**Lanceleaf Tickseed**



**Side Oats**



**Little Bluestem**



**New Jersey Tea**

**NATIVE VEGETATION FOR DRY, SUNNY AREAS**



**Arrow Wood Viburnum**



**Northern Red Oak (autumn)**



**Northern Red Oak (summer)**



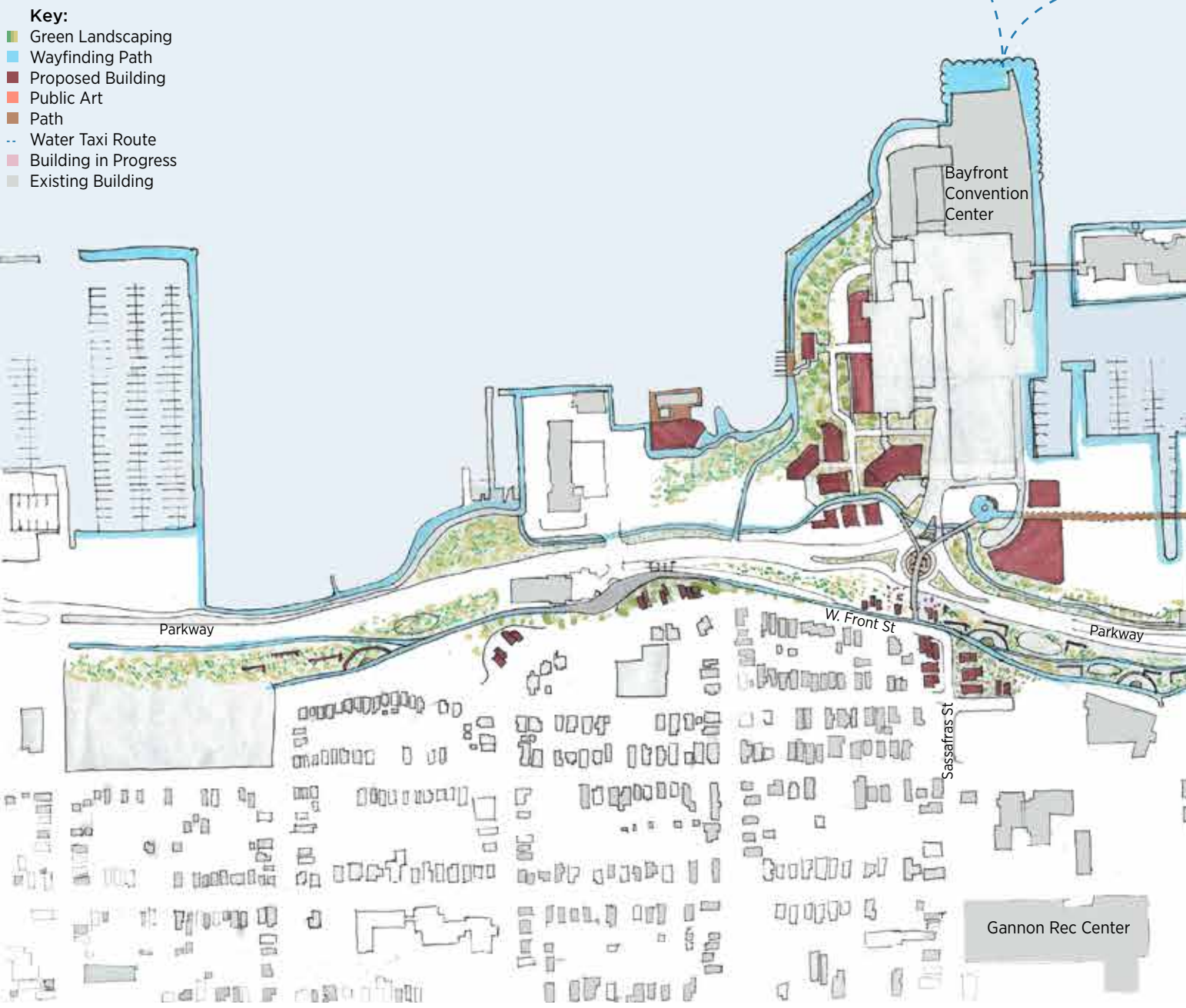
**LANDSCAPE & GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

Complementary to the proposed East Bayfront Park Plan on page 25, smaller-scale landscape and green infrastructure should be integrated throughout the entire Bayfront plan, and can also help tie together the districts visually and texturally.

The bluffs lining the Parkway in particular could serve as a canvas for colorful plantings, both low grasses for slope stabilization (TOP) and larger trees/shrubs that can take on color throughout the growing season (ABOVE). Native Northwest Pennsylvania plantings should be prioritized to withstand harsh Lake Erie winds and snows.

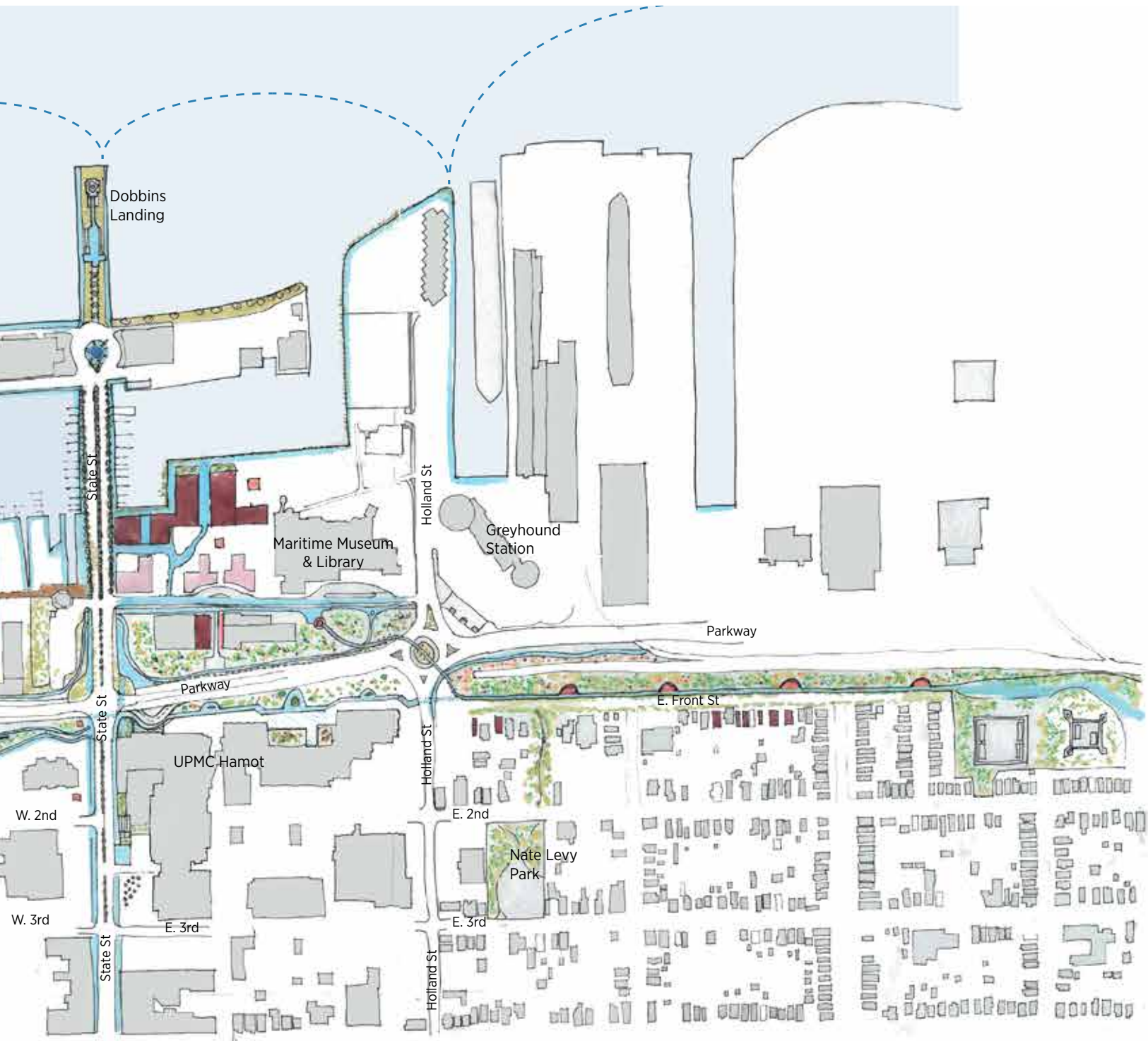
Integrating these planting choices with green infrastructure and public spaces, particularly along the Bluffs, could resemble this illustration by Bjarke Ingles Group (BIG) from a similar slope along the Brooklyn Queens Expressway (LEFT).

# Final Master Plan



The consolidated Master Plan for the Bayfront integrates the PennDOT Preferred Alternative but bridges the new Parkway with a series of pedestrian crossings, and strengthens east-west connections with three systems of movement: the Promenade; the Bikeway; and the Waterfront Walk. Emphasis is placed on small-scale interventions and landscape strategies, to complement development activity and infrastructural improvements.

The plan illustrated below is one suggestion for synthesizing the range of work in this report; as with most master plans, these component pieces may be implemented independently as funding allows. However, particular focus should be placed on making these essential linkages, in order to create a truly iconic network to navigate the Bayfront for Erie residents & visitors alike.



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