

Meeting Notes

Subject: Stakeholder Walking Tour #1

Date and Time: 9:00am, August 13, 2014

Location: Project Site (West Eau Claire)

On August 13, 2014, the West Eau Claire and Public Realm walking tour took place with key community stakeholders to discuss issues, opportunities, and desires for the future. The following summarizes the major discussion topics.

Peace Bridge

The Peace Bridge is a world-class bridge and the design of the adjacent public space should be of a similar and/or complementary stature.

Precedents of world-class cities and their riverfront/waterfront public spaces should be reviewed and incorporated into the design process.

New Development

Various new development projects are occurring around the project site. Projects discussed were:

- Concord Development
- GWL Development (parking lots on Eau Claire Ave between 6th and 4th Street)
- Eau Claire Plaza Redevelopment
- 8th Street corridor and the public space at the end
- Redevelopment of a small residential building at the west end of 2nd Avenue

Users/Usage

Majority of people who use the area do not reside in the adjacent community of Eau Claire. This is a regional pathway and public space that attracts visitors from all over the city, as well as tourists visiting the city.

Garbage receptacles are unsightly and are not of adequate size.

Prince's Island is overwhelmed by amount of users. It is an over-loved space. Festivals occur in the summer approximately every other weekend to allow some downtime to residents and the park from the large amount of people attending the events. The timing of events is a critically important consideration.

Circulation

The interaction of pedestrians and cyclists was discussed at length and is a significant issue that needs to be addressed. The promenade is very heavily used by cyclists and pedestrians. At times it is difficult to walk due to the crowds. Some cyclists move along the promenade too quickly. The community association receives numerous comments regarding pedestrian/cyclist conflicts.

Providing a separation between cyclists and pedestrians was discussed and will be reviewed through the design process.

Heli-Pad

The location of the heli-pad was discussed. It is managed by the Federal Government and will be difficult to remove from the site. HAWCS and STARS use the heli-pad and it sees usage approximately a few times a week. Ways to improve the appearance of area and better integrate it into the public realm should be explored.

Existing Sculptures/Memorials/Public Art

The location of existing sculptures was reviewed. It was noted by Parks that these elements could be relocated if there was a valid reason. Public art should be thought of as something that is integrated within the area, not as a collection of disparate objects.

It was noted that the landmarks on the south side of the river carry a similar theme of peace. These elements are not memorials. The north side of the river is themed toward memorials and remembrance. The south side is future-oriented, focusing on peace and prosperity. This may be a theme to reinforce and build upon, creating a shared, but unique experience, on both sides of the river.

Riparian Areas

Areas located in the floodway are not suited to intensive development. Appropriate development in these areas includes trails and seating. It was noted that many undesirable activities occur in the natural area. Clearing dead brush and formalizing pathways and gathering points should be explored as ways to mitigate safety concerns. Also, making the pathway along the top of the bank more safe and desirable to use could reduce the amount of undesirable activities in the natural area. It is currently very difficult to see beyond the immediate shrub layer directly adjacent to the pathway.

Boat Launch

The boat launch area presents an opportunity for river access. Rafters currently use it as a stopping point. People bring their dogs here for access to the river. Calgary Fire Department uses the launch regularly and will need to be consulted.

Open Spaces

The large open space west of the helipad is used for soccer, Frisbee, and other informal activities. Other open spaces to the east are used in a similar manner. There are spaces that feel like they belong to the adjacent residential buildings that are actually public space. Specifically, an area near Eau Claire Plaza that is separated by a row of trees and shrubs is under-utilized.