

RootWorks: Revitalizing Racine's Urban River Corridor

Implementation Priorities & Opportunities



In 2012 The City of Racine adopted the *RootWorks: Root River Corridor Redevelopment Plan* to address persistent blight and underutilization of the downtown's 325-acre historic industrial core.

Goals of the RootWorks Plan

Along with private and public sector partners, the City is working to implement the RootWorks Plan which addresses:

- **Physical, environmental, and financial blight affecting the Root River Corridor area and surrounding residential, downtown, lakefront, and business districts**
- **Underutilization of properties and public areas within the Corridor**
- **Lack of public connectivity to the River for recreation**
- **Negative water quality impacts from existing brownfield sites, stormwater runoff, invasive species, bluff and streambank erosion**
- **Negative perceptions/disengagement with the Root River**

Successful implementation will build upon momentum generated since Plan adoption, capitalizing on existing near-term opportunities, and leveraging additional resources. Momentum is building and significant resources have been leveraged to advance the following priority projects in the first three years of implementation.

Implementation Priorities & Opportunities

These priority projects are targeted to catalyze early success:

Machinery Row District and Riverfront Promenade

Ready for a private developer, the Machinery Row redevelopment project could adaptively reuse the historic J.I. Case manufacturing buildings and create a mixed use district. Machinery Row could include rental housing, commercial office and light manufacturing space, alongside community oriented retail and services, and significant public amenities oriented to the river frontage including a riverfront promenade featuring public festival and recreational space.



Needs. The following development hurdles require additional assistance:

- Site remediation and abatement of hazardous materials on site
- The historic building nomination and designation
- Design, engineering, and infrastructure costs for the implementation of public space and connections
- Implementing water quality and energy efficiency site and building improvements with best management practices
- Bridging the financial gap to ensure private sector investment feasibility through tax incremental finance and state and federal tax credit programs

West Bluff Overlook

The West Bluff Overlook project envisions redeveloping the properties along Mound Avenue as a Jens Jensen-inspired, 3.26 acre public park enriched with place-based interactive learning zones. The project includes an off-road bike/pedestrian pathway and marsupial bridge along the Root River pathway and a bicycle boulevard along Mound Avenue. The concept plan and designs for the area have been completed with funding from the Wisconsin Coastal Management Grant Program and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management. A Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant will be submitted May 1st for purchase of the West Bluff Overlook properties.



Needs. In order to realize the entire vision for a West Bluff Overlook public park in the Corridor, additional resources are needed for:

- Site acquisition and park development, including site preparation, potential remediation, and park and bridge infrastructure improvements
- Development of an off-street pathway along this portion of the Root River Pathway
- Further design, engineering and implementation costs for the Overlook, interactive learning zones, outdoor classroom, marsupial bridge, and bicycle boulevard elements

The River Loop

This 2 mile recreation loop around the RootWorks project area is another priority project. The loop will connect residents to the Root River and Lake Michigan Pathways as well as the River itself all along this urban riverfront section.



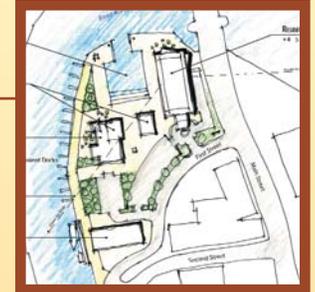
Needs. Successful implementation of the River Loop project will require:

- Public infrastructure funding (including both on and off street development funds) to develop the recreation pathway

- Funds to develop and implement an Arts and Interpretation Plan for the River Loop Area -- developing a strong sense of place by utilizing the area's cultural and historical significance and integrating public art along the Loop

Belle Harbor Redevelopment

Belle Harbor is an approximate 4-acre County-owned marina site along the Root River. With its highly visible location along the River and Main and State Streets, the site offers high potential for infill development related to water recreation, retail, bar/brewery and restaurant use that connects the Harbor visually and physically to the River Loop and nearby downtown area.



Needs. The Belle Harbor redevelopment requires additional resources for:

- Determining ideal Harbor reuse, including potential dredging, and determining harbor infrastructure capacity and needed improvements
- Site preparation, potential remediation, and site infrastructure improvements
- Pathway and public infrastructure development
- Advancing economic development opportunities related to the Fresh Water Research Center, infill housing, and commercial development on the site

For more information:

Please visit www.vandewalle.com/work-1/racine

Or contact:

Mayor John Dickert
City of Racine
730 Washington Avenue, Room 201
Racine, WI 53403
Phone: 262-636-9111
Email: mayor@cityofracine.org



Jolena Presti, Principal Planner/
RootWorks Implementation Manager
Vandewalle & Associates
342 N. Water Street, Suite 400
Milwaukee, WI 53202
Phone: 414-421-2001
Email: jpresti@vandewalle.com

