

PIQUA OHIO PLACEMAKING INITIATIVE



A HANDBOOK

to understanding the Placemaking Initiative
for Piqua, Ohio

June 15 2016



GAMBLE ASSOCIATES
urban design

BOOKER DESIGN COLLABORATIVE
landscape architecture

CITYVISIONS ASSOCIATES
economic development

GS&P ENGINEERING
transportation planning

prepared for



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urban design

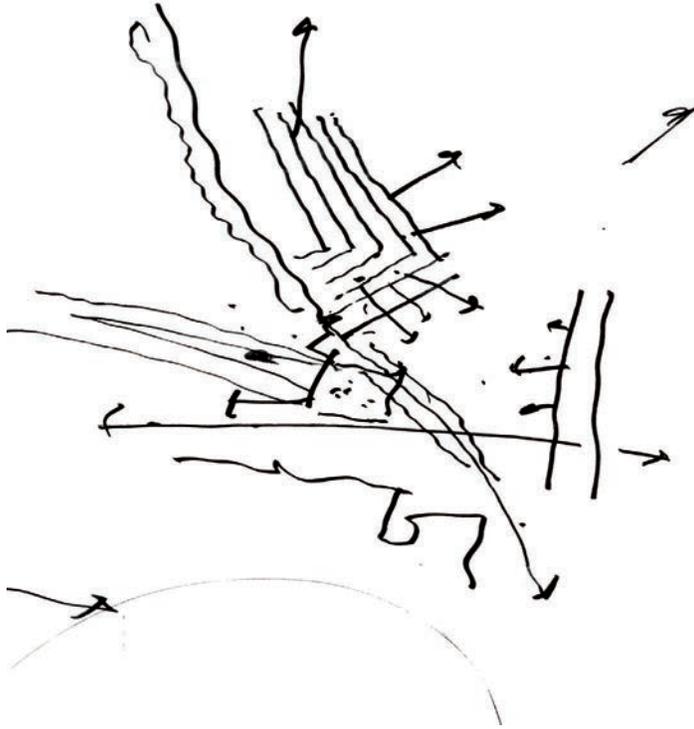
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The aim of this project is to redesign downtown public spaces to celebrate and enhance the spatial relationships between destinations; to create public spaces that offer an inviting public realm that contributes positively to the surrounding built environment and promotes high quality of place and quality of life experiences.

Concept sketch for connecting Lock Nine Park to the river



The Great Miami River and River Trail



INTRODUCTION

This Placemaking Initiative represents an implementation component of the Riverfront District Development Strategy (CityVisions Associates, 2013) and the Historic East Piqua Plan (MKSK, June 2015). The infrastructure and public space improvements directly relate to the goals of the community. The project advances a series of urban design interventions that catalyze private investment and should not be viewed merely as an open space beautification plan.

The design of the spaces within the public realm downtown – the former Miami and Erie canal corridor, recreational trail area, Lock Nine Park and mid-block connections – support the economic vitality of the city and fit within an overall development strategy that keeps existing businesses, attracts new activity and forges a stronger sense of place.

The initiative focuses on connectivity and seamless transitions between destinations. The connection to the river needs to be enhanced in order to connect downtown to the local and regional trail system and provide non-trail users attractive new gathering points to view the river and the activities on it. **The redesign effort re-establishes the link between downtown and the river by overcoming the physical characteristics of Lock Nine Park so that it may serve as the central, celebratory space that fully integrates the Great Miami River and its trail system with the downtown business district.** Modifications to the levee wall in the form of widening and terracing are required to accomplish this while still maintaining the line of protection for flood control.

The connection between the downtown riverfront and Historic East Piqua is enhanced through the trail system, a street extension and riverway improvements. The canal corridor increases activity between Spring and

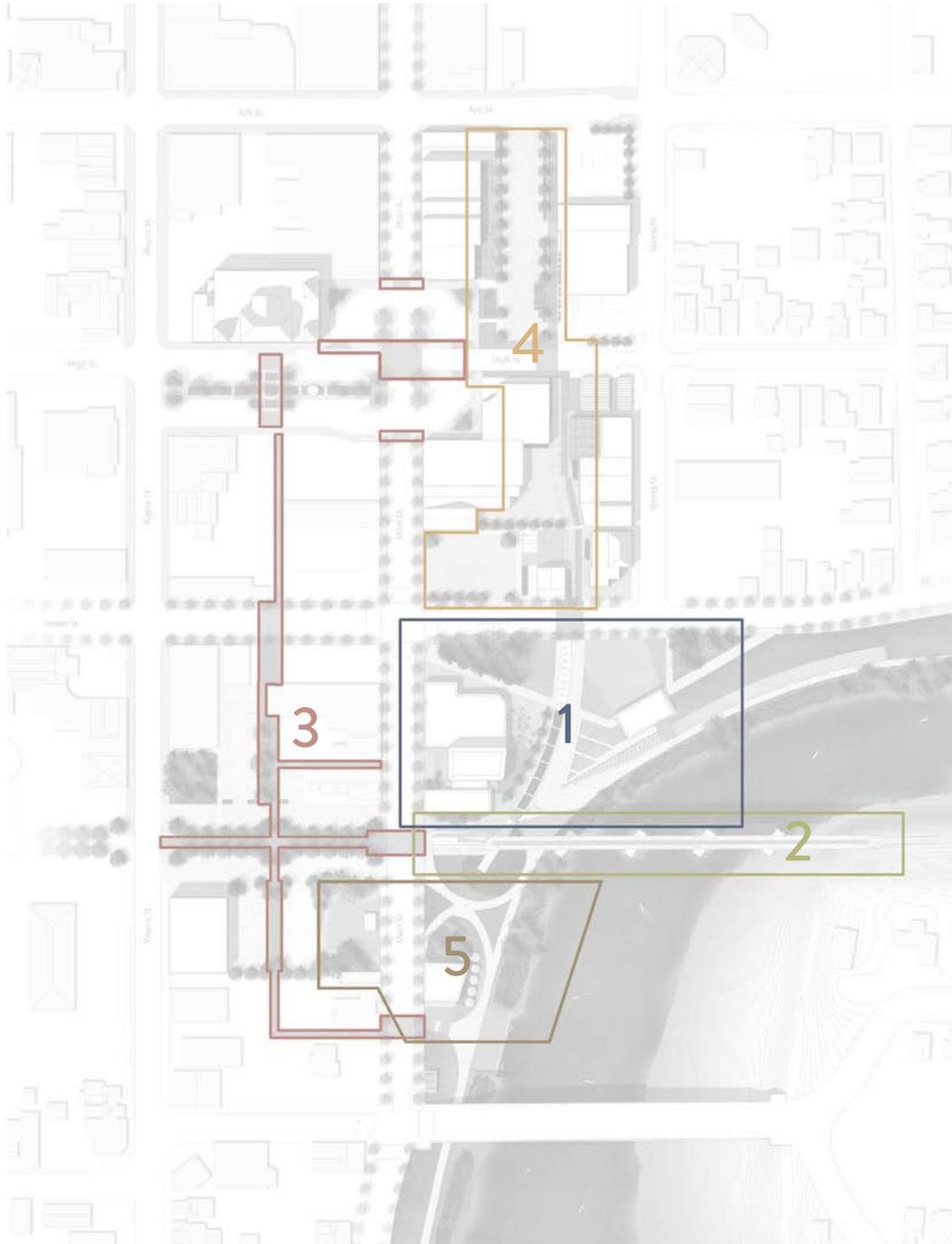
Ash Streets and the riverfront, recalling the vitality that once sliced through the city along the Miami and Erie Canal. This historical connection to the heritage of the city has been lost and the improvements reconnect the city to the canal by celebrating the interface. The project allows for immersive experiences and provides hands-on connections to the past.

The project's signature open space is Lock Nine Park. It is the trailhead to the local system and the 300 mile regional trail network. It offers exquisite views upstream and downstream, provides for adjacent commercial activity right atop the levee (a condition rare along the entire length of the Great Miami River) and incorporates historical artifacts of the actual (mostly buried) lock infrastructure. Through comprehensive design and infrastructure improvements such as lighting, water, landscaping treatments and public art, the pedestrian experience through downtown is amplified and celebrates Piqua's unique role as a recreational riverfront destination.

FIVE FOCUS AREAS

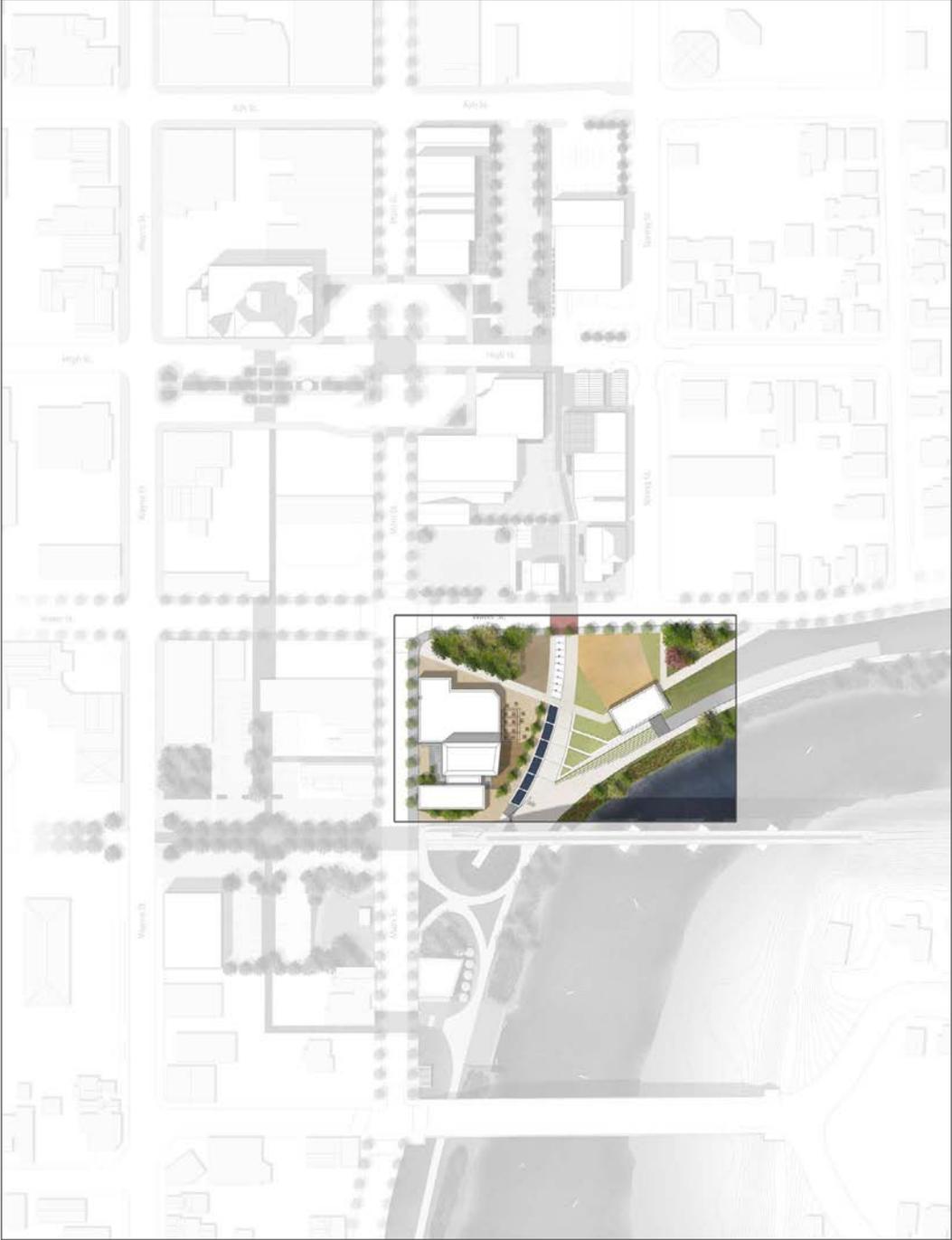
- 1 Lock Nine Park
- 2 Railroad Bridge
- 3 Mid-Block Connections
- 4 Canal Corridor
- 5 Mo's Lounge

Map of downtown Piqua, Ohio and five focus areas under study in this initiative



01

LOCK 9 PARK



The revitalized Lock Nine Park includes terraced seating, a performance pavilion, spray park, and open lawn. Two tree groves anchor the open space which is designed to allow for a high degree of flexibility. When large scale events are planned for the performance area, controlled access points and greeter tents line the perimeter of the open space. Underground infrastructure enables lighting, sound systems and hook-ups for food vendors. A children's play area with water jets continues the former Miami and Erie Canal alignment north towards the Artisan Alley. Food, beverage and entertainment areas occupy spaces in the ground floors of the adjacent historic buildings that spill out onto outdoor terraces. **While the existing levee wall is a barrier to a riverfront connection, with modifications it can be transformed into an asset with places to sit and view the Great Miami River.**

View of rehabilitated Lock Nine Park and former Miami and Erie canal alignment



DESIGN COMPONENTS LOCK NINE PARK

Open lawn

- Large gathering space for events
- Seasonal ice-skating in cold weather months
- Performance pavilion with stage and integral lighting and sound capabilities

Terraced seating

- Planted / landscaped steps leading from the stage to the lower bike trail
- Reconfigured levee wall and regional flood protection armoring

Water feature

- Terraced fountain along historic Miami and Erie Canal alignment
- Kids spray jets and artistic lighting
- Reuse of limestone from existing lock
- Interpretative signage and educational components

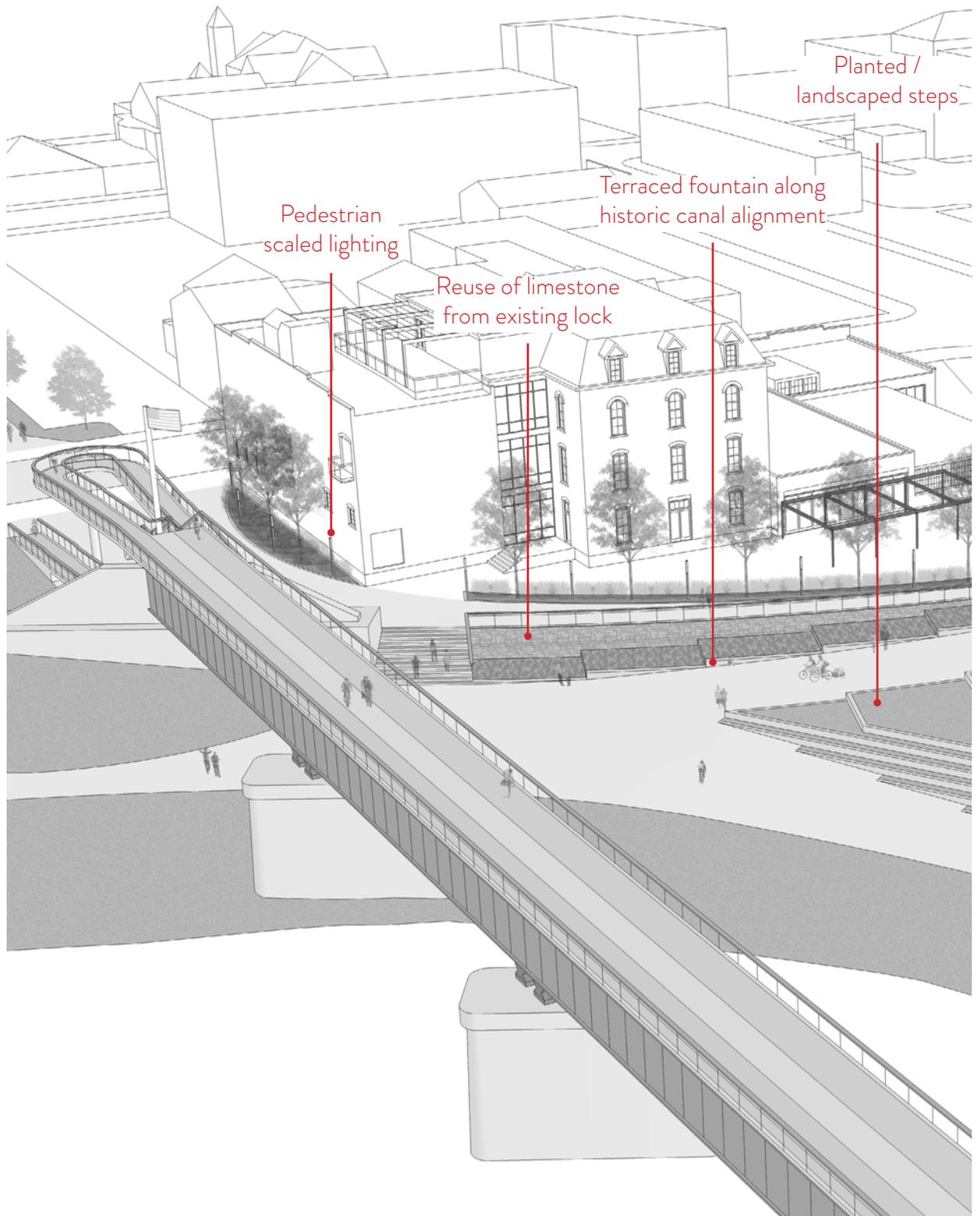
Picnic areas

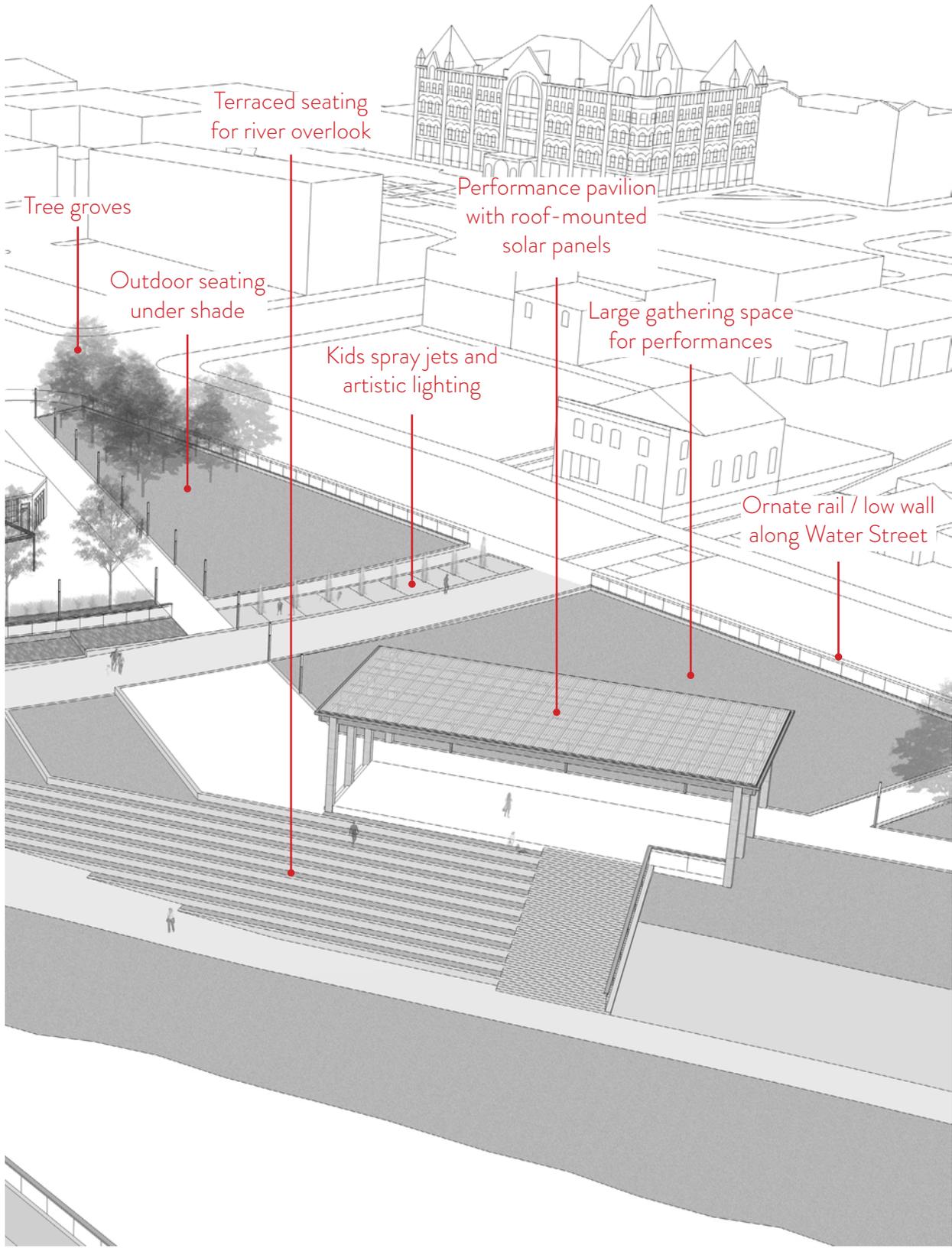
- Tree groves that define the Lawn with outdoor seating
- Terraces for entertainment and commercial activities

Additional amenities

- Ornate rail/low wall along Water Street
- Pedestrian scaled lighting
- Electrical hook-ups for special event vendors

Arial view of rehabilitated Lock Nine Park and major activity zones





Terraced seating
for river overlook

Tree groves

Outdoor seating
under shade

Performance pavilion
with roof-mounted
solar panels

Kids spray jets and
artistic lighting

Large gathering space
for performances

Ornate rail / low wall
along Water Street

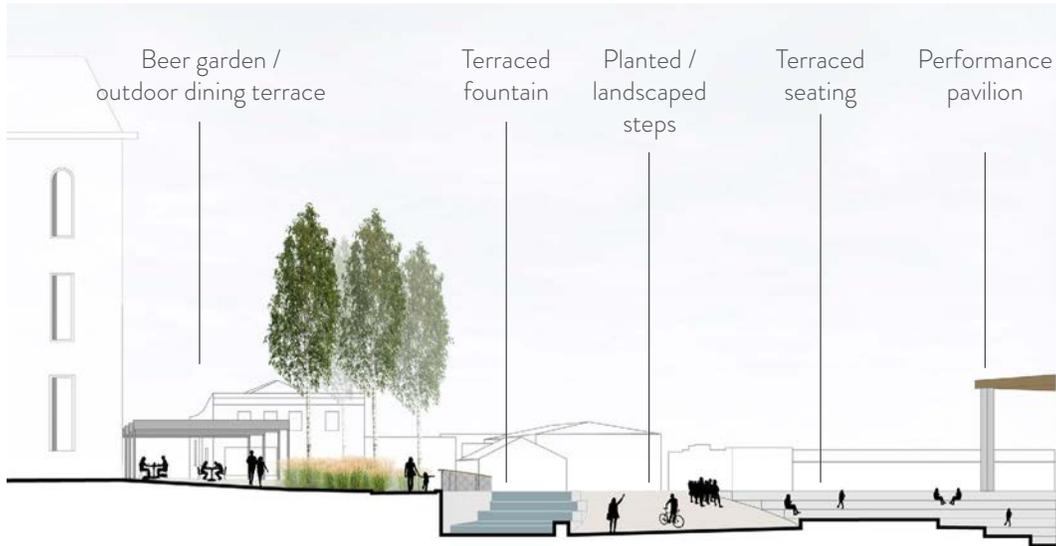
Park uses anticipating large-scale events



Enlargement area of Lock Nine Park during a live concert performance



Cross section of Lock Nine Park



Winter view of rehabilitated Piqua Granite and Piqua Mill buildings



02

LINEAR PARK BRIDGE



Ohio's Miami Valley benefits from a remarkable network of trails and bikeways and Ohio boasts over 800 river miles on 14 watercourses throughout the state. **These placemaking enhancements make it easier for people walking, biking or running to negotiate the change in elevation between the downtown and the riverfront through a series of new trails, terraces, ramps and steps.** Terraced steps connects the top of the levee to the lower bike path along the river and provides opportunities to enjoy the natural habitat and aquatic life. A new ramp terminates the repurposed railroad-era bridge and makes the path accessible for individuals of all abilities. New bike infrastructure and recreational amenities along the trail network grow and enhance the connectedness of the river and trails with the community and the downtown core.

View towards the linear park bridge and bike trail



LINEAR PARK BRIDGE

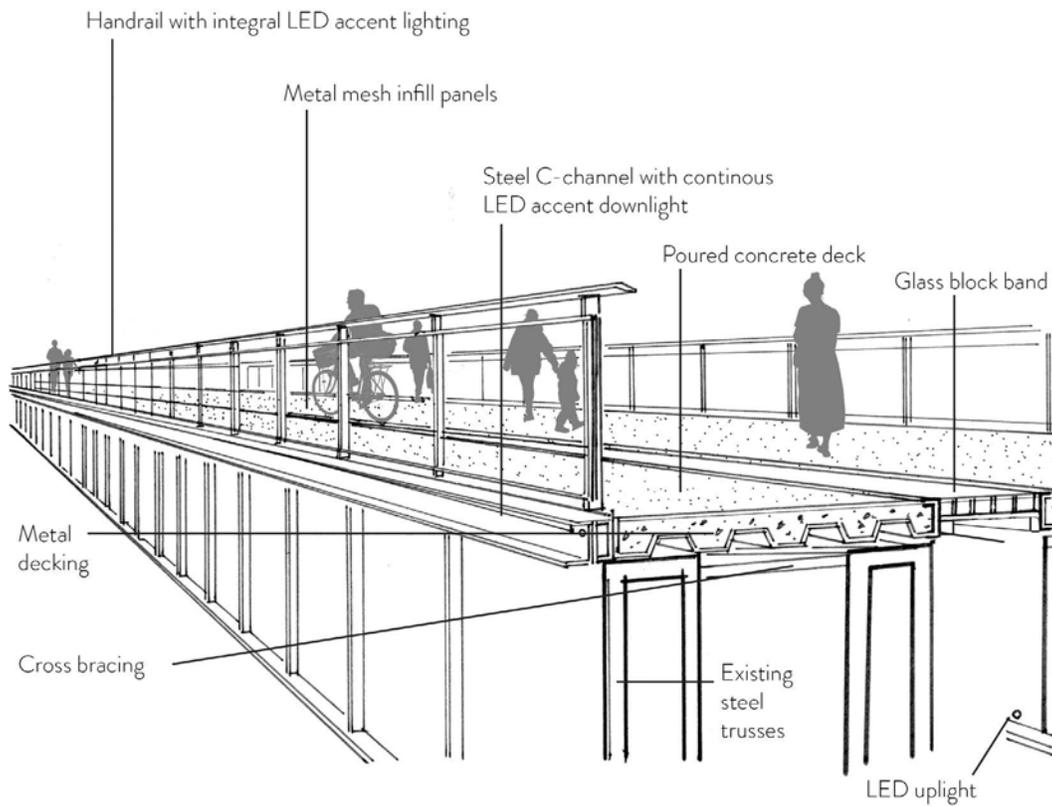
Design components

- Removal of bridge wood decking and substructure
- Removal of existing railing
- New metal subdecking and poured-in-place concrete deck
- Glass block band along center span between existing trusses
- New steel and metal handrail with mesh infill panels
- Accent lighting and artistic lighting treatments
- Signage and wayfinding
- New handicapped-accessible ramp at terminus of bridge
- Maintenance and repairs of concrete abutments
- Vertical light tower as visual marker for trail and bridge

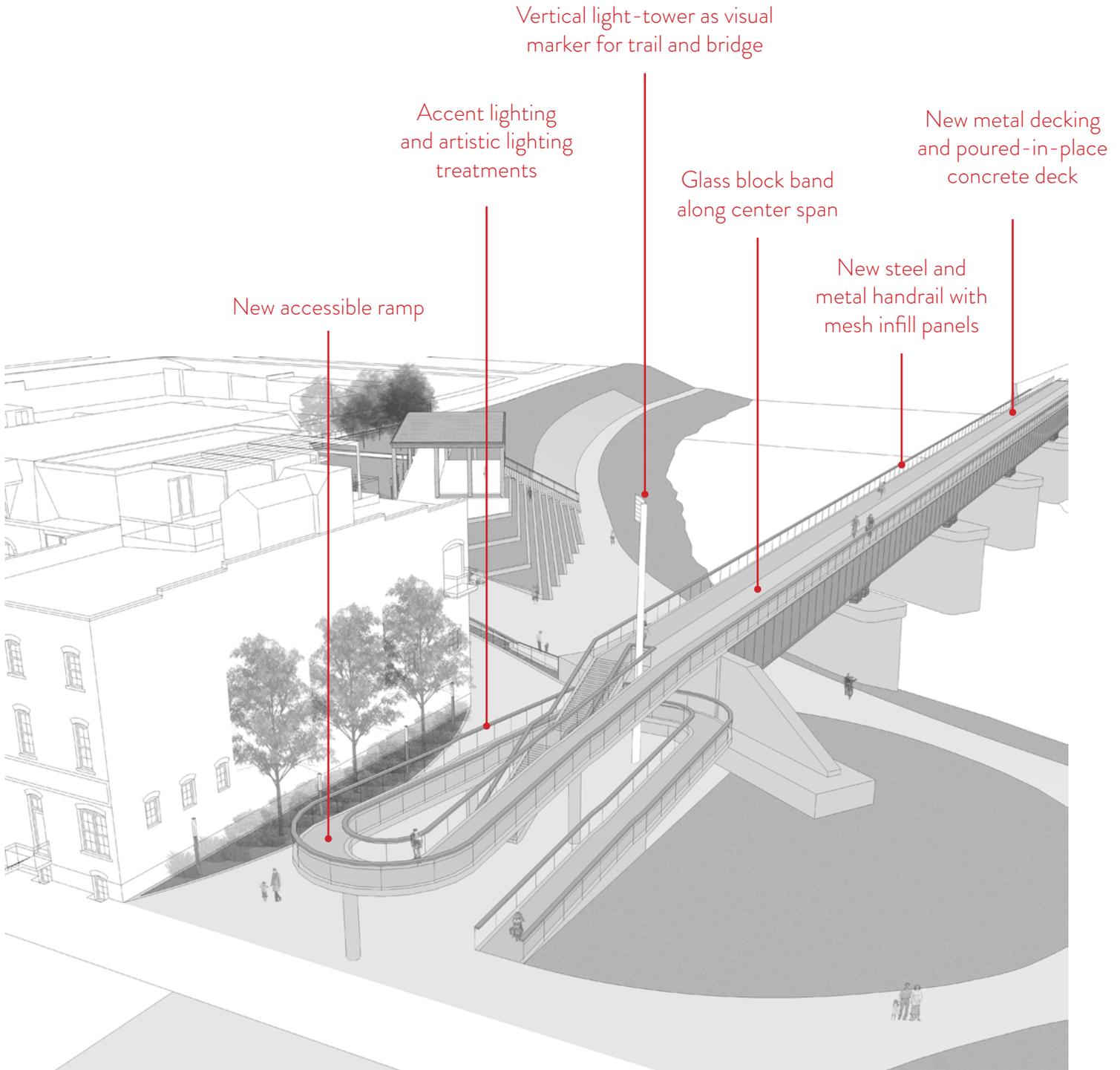
Current condition of Linear Park Bridge



Conceptual design of Linear Park Bridge

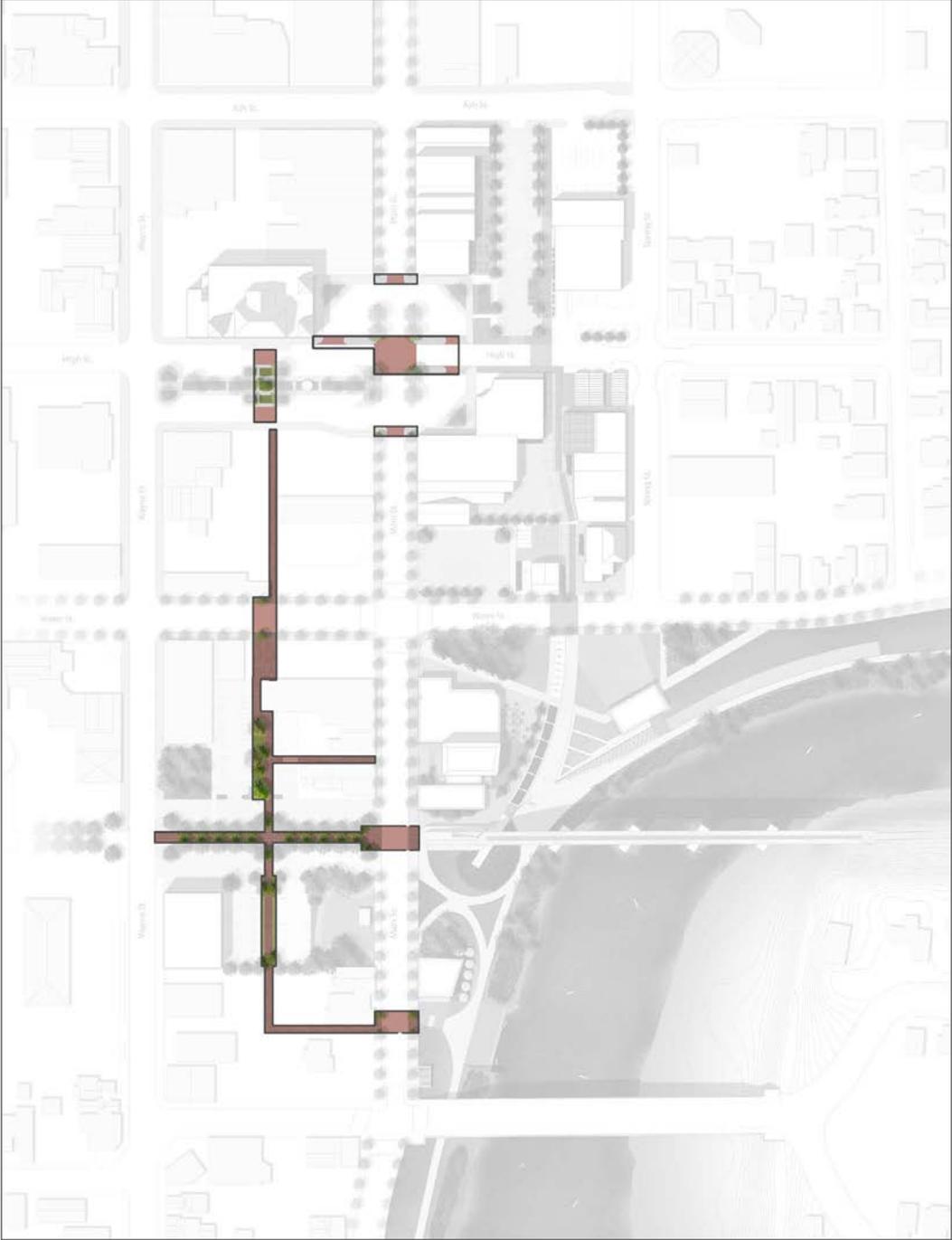


Arial view of accessibility ramp at terminus of linear park bridge



03

MID-BLOCK CONNECTIONS



Through-block connections foster pedestrian activity between downtown destinations. They augment travel along Piqua's sidewalks rather than taking activity away by providing an alternate route to travel between destinations. **The canal corridor, once the center of economic life in the city, is poised to be transformed again in the form of a shared street that allows pedestrians, cyclists and cars to share space.** A variety of paving surfaces form a consistent pattern upon which pedestrian-scaled lighting and consistent signage forge a new identity for the pathways. Historic buildings, such as the Piqua Edison Electric Illuminating Company is already experiencing a rebirth. Paved surfaces are complimented with raingardens and bioswales that filter water collected off of nearby rooftops.

View south towards rehabilitated Edison Building and proposed market place.



MID-BLOCK CONNECTIONS

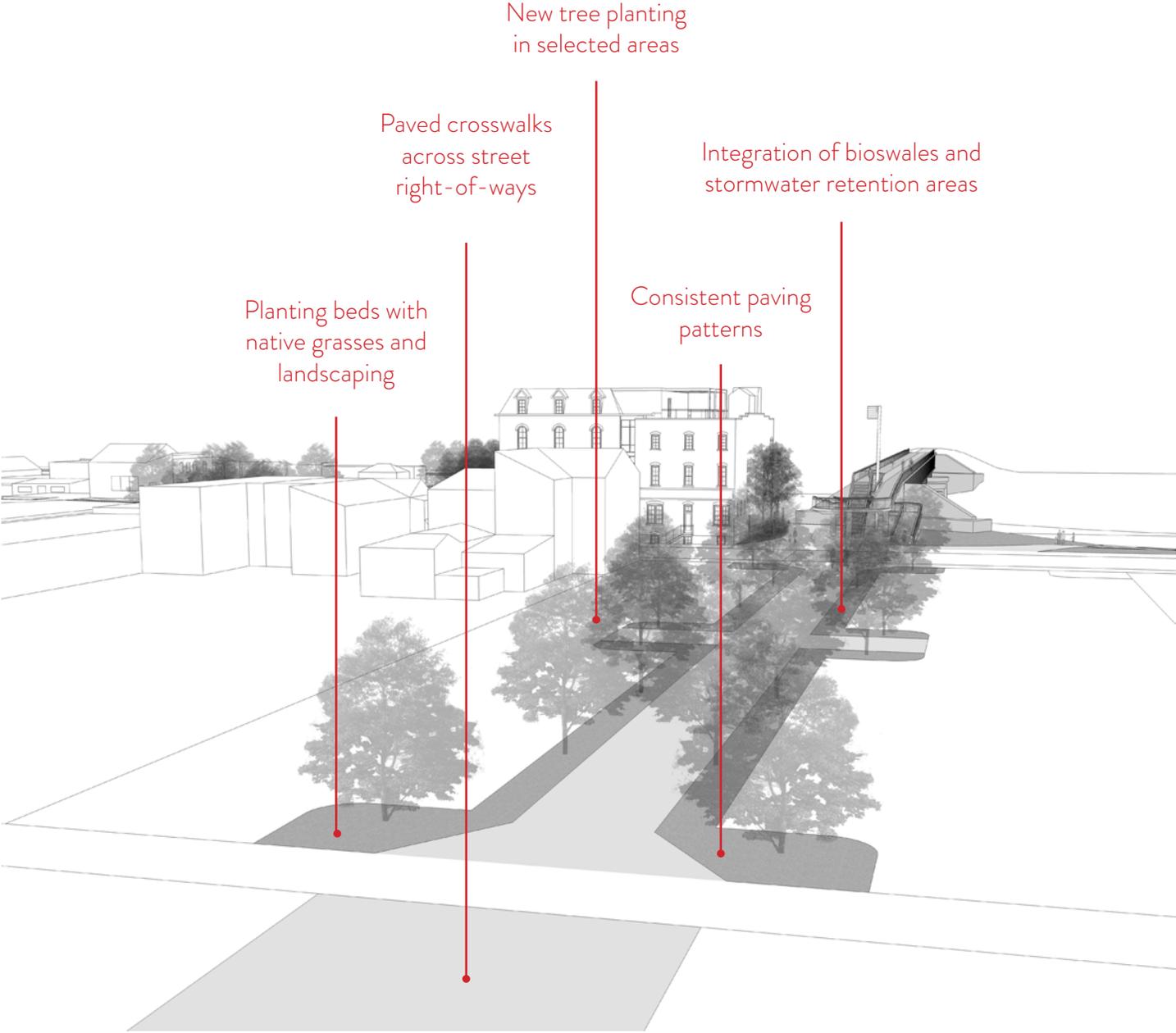
Design components

- Integration of bioswales and stormwater retention areas
- New tree planting in selected areas
- Planting beds with native grasses and landscaping
- Buffer zones to surface parking
- Signage and wayfinding
- Consistent paving patterns
- Pedestrian-scaled lighting
- Light bollards
- Paved crosswalks across street right-of-ways

Proposed paving pattern



Arial view of enhanced mid-block connection



Communities across the country are eager to showcase and celebrate aspects of their authenticity and uniqueness. **The former Miami and Erie Canal alignment that contributed to the growth and prosperity of the community will be transformed into an inviting public space that integrates with adjoining buildings along the corridor.** What were once the rear of buildings will be re-oriented to become funky front doors for artisanal studios, indoor shops and organic food markets. The canal corridor will be a shared street that allows access for service vehicles but includes a bike path to forge a stronger connection between the downtown businesses and the Great Miami River Trail. Consistent signage and wayfinding assists in repositioning the modestly-scaled buildings into active new uses.

View north along former Miami and Erie canal alignment and future artisanal alley



CANAL CORRIDOR

Design components

- Relocation of existing utilities and overhead power lines
- Integration of bioswales and stormwater retention areas
- New tree planting in selected areas
- Planting beds with native grasses and landscaping
- Accent lighting and artistic lighting treatments
- Signage and wayfinding
- Consistent paving patterns
- Pedestrian-scaled lighting
- Light bollards
- Paved crosswalks across street right-of-ways
- Pervious pavements

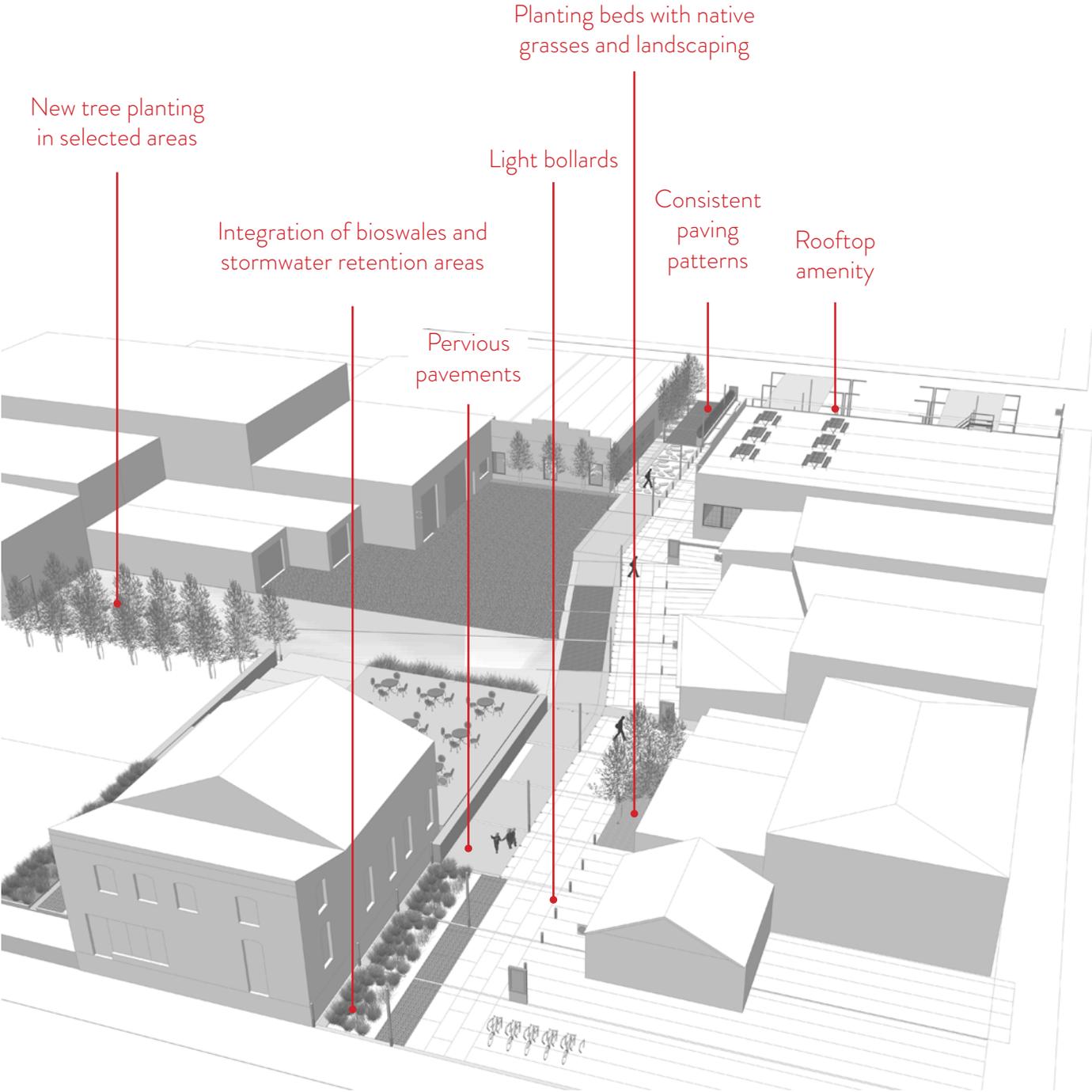
Relocation of existing overhead utilities



Cross section former Miami and Erie canal corridor



Arial view of canal corridor



05

MO'S LOUNGE



The Piqua Place-Making initiative supports, complements and enhances the overall Downtown and Riverfront District Development Strategy. The strategy prioritized the redesign and redevelopment of Lock Nine Park and identified a number of catalytic development projects downtown and along the river that would be ideal candidates for renewal. **Piqua is one of a very few locations with existing buildings on the levee itself, providing services, amenities, and magnificent river views directly on the trail system.** One such building is the former Mo's restaurant. The front of the building faces Main Street and the rear of the building faces the trail. It is vitally important that the design for this building be fully integrated with the public spaces that surround it. Outdoor seating areas enliven the area on the Main Street Level. Lower level amenities like a bike repair shop or canoe put-in serve the trail.

View of rehabilitated Mo's building on Main Street and enhanced access to the river

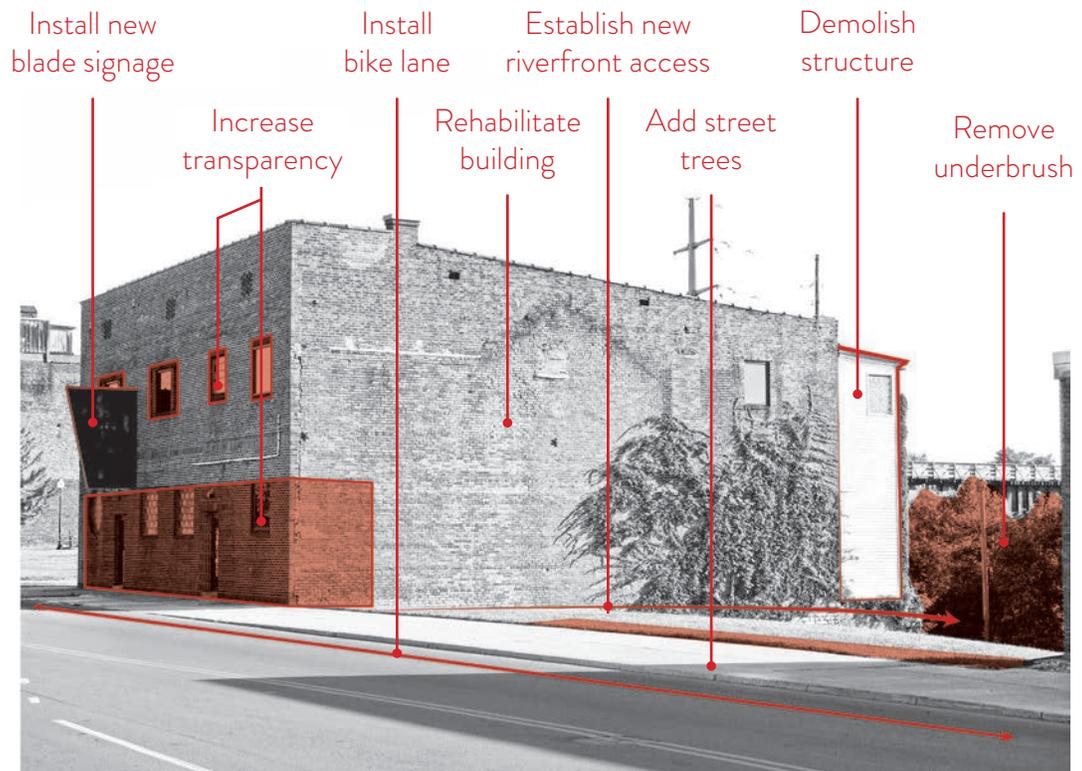


MO'S LOUNGE

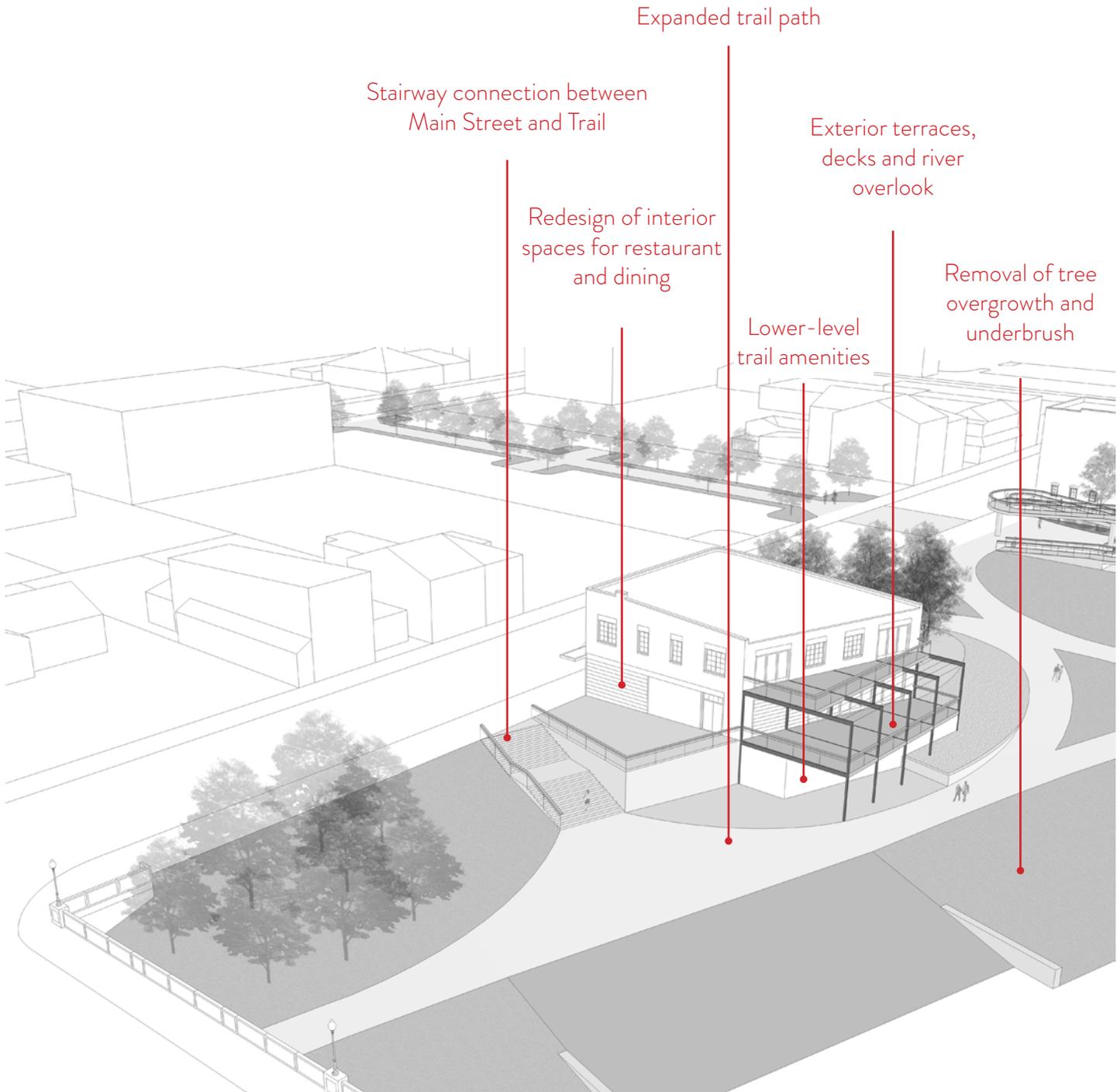
Design components

- Demolition of rear/east addition
- Removal of tree overgrowth and underbrush
- Redesign of interior spaces for restaurant and dining
- Exterior terraces, decks and river overlook
- Main Street façade improvements
- Lower-level trail amenities
- Expanded trail path
- Signage and wayfinding
- Stairway connection between Main Street and Trail

View of former Mo's lounge on Main Street



Arial view of rehabilitated Mo's building and enhanced access to the river

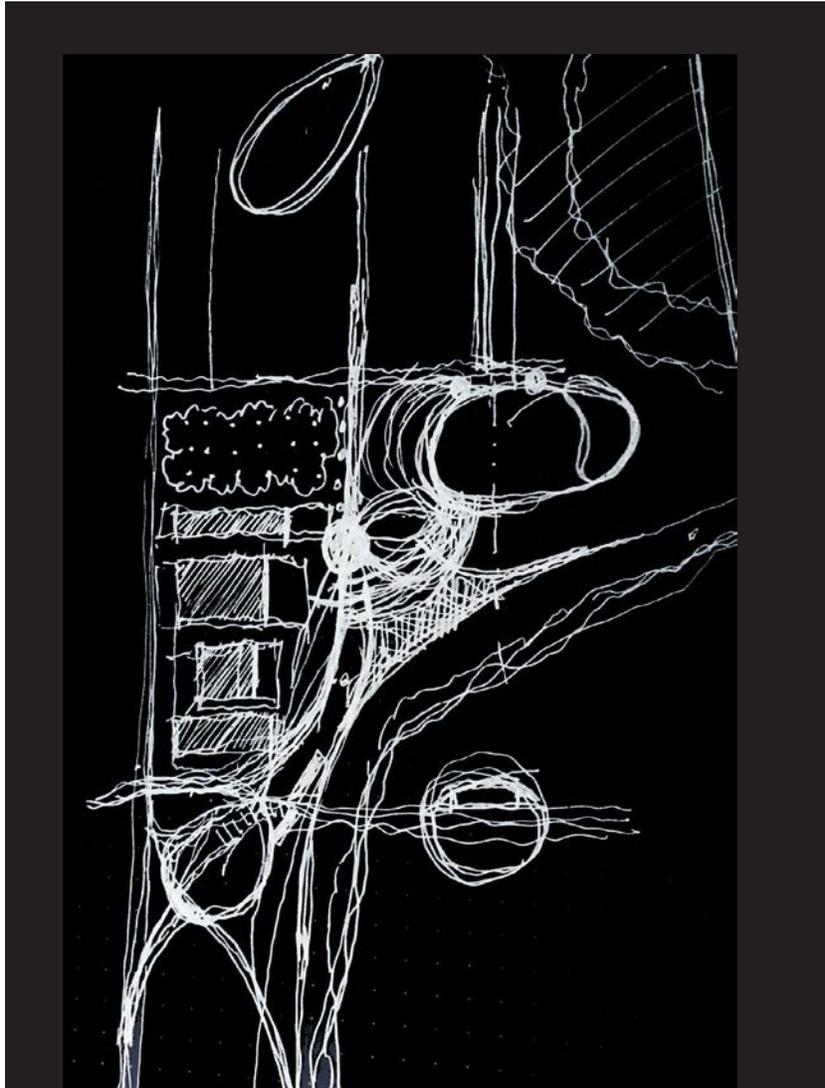


NEXT STEPS FOR PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

1. Initiate Construction Documents for Riverfront Park / Lock Nine Park
2. Initiate Design Work for the former Miami and Erie Canal Corridor – Downtown Ped / Bike Connector
 - Phase I: Water to High (including Farmers Market Public Parking Lot at Main and Water and High Street streetscape from Main to Spring including treatments at Main and High and the public square area)
 - Phase II: High to Greene
3. Riverwalk and Watercraft Access (including all of the existing and proposed park space from Bike Bridge south to East Main Street Bridge, and GMR to Main Street – including areas between Piqua Milling and Mo’s and area between Mo’s and E. Main Street bridge)
4. ADA Ramp and Bridge Improvements
5. Zollinger Commons (including midblock pedestrian way north to Fort Piqua Plaza)

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*The Piqua Placemaking Initiative forges stronger connections
between downtown and the Great Miami River*

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Please refer to side sleeve
for project pocket guide ▶