



Ashland, **Inspired** A **Waterfront** Development Plan

A plan for development, placemaking, &
community access on the shore of Lake Superior

Ashland, Wisconsin | 2019 Update

Adopted December 3, 2019

Acknowledgments

City of Ashland Staff

Megan McBride, Director of Planning & Development
Sara Hudson, Director of Parks & Recreation
John Butler, Public Works Director

City of Ashland Planning Commission

Mayor Debra Lewis	John Beirl
Ella Seyverson	David Mettill
Laurie Gregor	Katie Gellatly
Matt Mackenzie	

GRAEF Planning + Urban Design

Tanya Fonseca, AICP
Kristan Sanchez, AICP, Assoc. AIA
Pat Skalecki, P.E., LEED AP
Danya Littlefield
Ben Block

Hey & Associates, Inc.

Vince Mosca

**A special thanks for the support
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Members in Ashland**

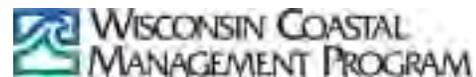


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Ashland



Intro & Context

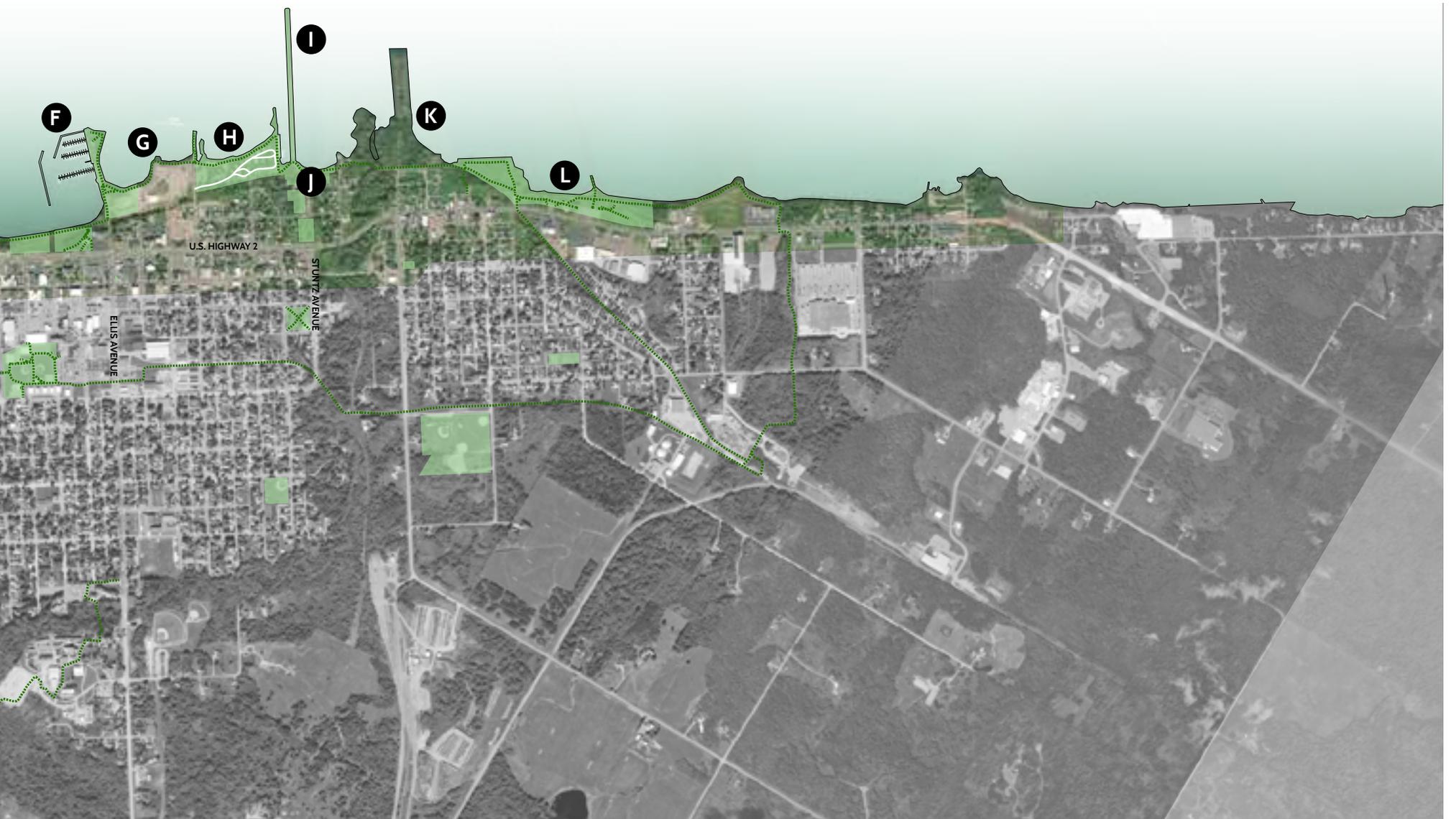
Ashland is a community with a strong sense of place. A city situated along the shore of Lake Superior in northern Wisconsin, it is both unique and part of a system of Great Lakes communities across the U.S. and Canada. Ashlanders are connected to their environment, and particularly their waterfront, in a very meaningful way – and the way residents speak about their waterfront's future brings this into sharp focus.

Ashland's residents emphasized public access and views to the lake as their biggest priorities, but had some different opinions on how this could be accomplished. Some specified that waterfront land should all be open or recreational, some suggested that commercial development with public access could be a possibility. Residents spoke about more boat launches, more trees, more restaurants, and a need for public gathering spaces and the ability to see the sky.

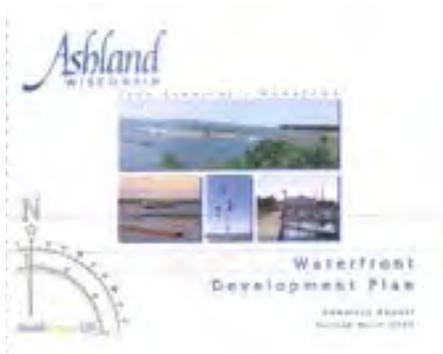
For the purposes of this planning process, we have defined Ashland's waterfront as not just the shoreline itself, but all of the land along U.S. Highway 2 to the South, as well as all of the land from U.S. Highway 2 to the lake. This allows us to not only address the land that directly touches Lake Superior, but the other land and development that impacts the way Ashlanders interact with the Lake, their views of the shoreline, and safe connections to the lakefront.



- ▲ A historic map of Ashland's waterfront from 1886 illustrates a working waterfront with many ore docks and piers than are still in existence today. *Image source: City of Ashland.*

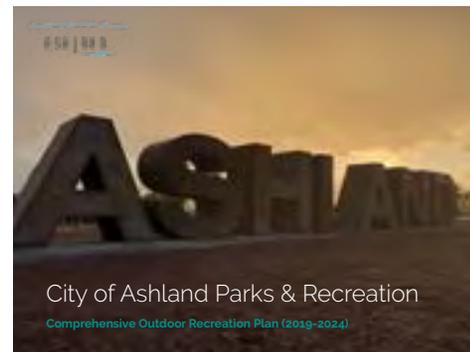


Existing Plans



Waterfront Development Plan, 2002

The first Waterfront Development Plan was adopted in 1994, revised once the former wastewater treatment plant site was tested for contaminants (that site is referred to in this plan as “the Superfund Site”), and updated again in 2002. The 2002 update focused on site development concepts for four primary areas along the central part of Ashland’s waterfront. Since the development of the 2002 plan, progress has been made both in developing the ideas for the future uses on the waterfront, as well as physical improvements to the waterfront itself. This plan update seeks to take a wider look at the waterfront, providing direction and goals for ongoing and future projects. Progress made since the last plan is noted on page XX.



Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2019-24

Ashland’s Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) update was developed simultaneously with this Waterfront Development Plan update. 11 of Ashland’s 20 parks and about 84% of the park land and open space is within the Lake Superior waterfront area of the City, so many of the goals and recommendations for waterfront parks and open space found in the CORP are relevant to the Waterfront Development Plan.

Action Plan: Making Ashland More Bike & Pedestrian Friendly

In 2017, the City of Ashland published a bike and pedestrian plan designed to prioritize facility enhancements and identify best practices.



Ashland Oredock Concept Design Report, 2016

One unique feature of Ashland’s waterfront is the historic Soo Line Oredock, running 1900 feet long and 60 feet wide into the Lake. Prior planning efforts for the waterfront and parks system assumed that the 80-foot tall superstructure that ran the length of the dock would be found structurally stable, and suggested that a robust interpretive center would be developed on the site. Since then the superstructure has been removed, and a new concept design that emphasizes the Oredock as a multi-functional amenity with an emphasis on public access has been developed with community input, as outlined in the 2016 Concept Design Report.



Authentic Ashland Comprehensive Plan, 2017

Ashland’s 2017 Comprehensive Plan update provided a broad look at the community’s goals for the future based on a robust community engagement process. The resulting plan includes several goals and vision statements that impact Ashland’s waterfront. Notably, the plan strongly states that Ashland will not permit development that physically disconnects the shoreline from downtown. Instead, the plan recommends protecting and connecting the lake to the City and linking the waterfront trail to the other trail systems in the city as a way of knitting Ashland’s urban fabric together. This waterfront development plan update seeks to stay true to those goals.

Community Voices

As with many robust planning processes, the vision, goals, and recommendations presented in this plan began with the Ashland community. Some of the ideas, goals, recommendations, and plans presented through this document have been discussed and formulated for many years by many different people; some ideas are newer, based on the needs and creativity of young Ashlanders looking to make a difference in their City.

This Waterfront Development Plan Update was created in concert with an update of Ashland's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. Several community engagement events were held as part of these planning processes, including two public open houses in February and July. The City of Ashland Planning and Parks staff also hosted two additional public open house events in April at local bars and restaurants the Alley and HPL. City staff also conducted outreach activities with local youth at the Bretting Center and with the North Wisconsin Rod and Gun Club. In addition, an online survey about Ashland's parks and waterfront was posted on the City of Ashland's website during the planning process. Social media platforms and local newspapers were utilized to market the meetings and process to a wide array of Ashland residents and visitors. Local media also attended and reported from the community meetings.



288

comments from
community
meetings



337

survey
respondents



35

ideas from
Ashland youth



A public workshop was held in February, 2019 to garner feedback about the waterfronts and parks system in Ashland. Participants discussed the future of the waterfront together and wrote comments about challenges and future possibilities on maps of the City and shoreline.
Photos: GRAEF



What we heard...

Ashlanders love the waterfront, and have many different ideas about what the future of the waterfront should look like. Some want more housing options in the area around the waterfront, but many think there should be no new housing buildings along the waterfront at all. Some Ashland residents would like more camping opportunities at the waterfront, including an expanded RV park or tent camping – others specified that the RV and camping areas should not be expanded. Some boating enthusiasts would like more boat storage on the waterfront, others disagree.

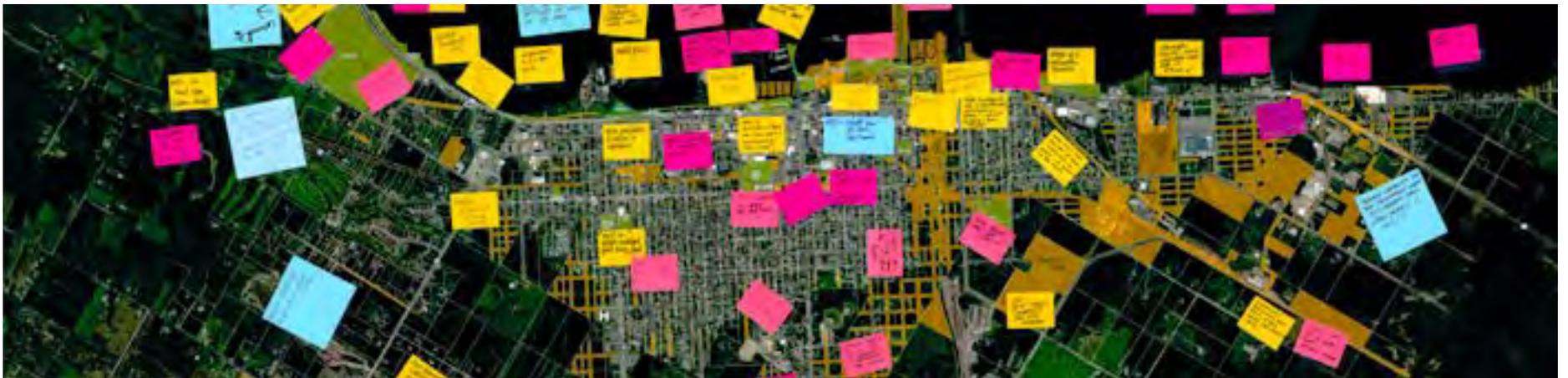
In general, most Ashlanders believe that the waterfront is a huge asset to their community, and should remain accessible and open to residents as much as possible. Further detail about community feedback is included in the sub-sections of this plan, including survey results from the online survey and the many suggestions and ideas that the Ashland community offered throughout the planning process.

Strengths & Opportunities

- » Strong community vision for the waterfront
- » Development centered around recreation is feasible given the regional context and local preferences
- » Partnership opportunities with local institutions
- » Resiliency planning is needed and supported by residents

Challenges & Weaknesses

- » Cost to purchase and maintain new open space and parks along the waterfront is significant, likely surpassing the City's resources
- » Aging housing stock with few options for different housing types
- » Many streets are in poor condition
- » Difficult to attract businesses that might create economic opportunity



What type of development would you like to see near the waterfront?

76% **Recreational Activities**

Community Gathering Spaces 67%

45% **Restaurants**

Housing
(either low or medium-density multifamily) 11%

Percentages based on 319 survey responses.
Respondents could select up to three categories of preferred development.

“Scenic natural plantings”

“Acquire additional coal docks”
| Acquire waterfront parcels or easements for trail expansion”

“Research Center” | “Science Center”

“Businesses with outdoor seating/dining”
| “Waterfront restaurants” | “Float-through restaurant” | “restaurant/bar on lakefront downtown! (w/ a view)”

“Prioritize lake views and public access over private development on lakeshore!”

“Low-level lighting, we all want to see the sky”



Vision for the Waterfront

Through analysis of prior planning processes related to the waterfront as well as community engagement throughout 2019, guiding principles have been developed to help plan for Ashland's future waterfront and evaluate development and program proposals as they are put forward. This plan offers the following vision:

Our vision is for a waterfront area that connects Ashlanders to the Lake Superior shoreline both visually and physically, provides opportunities for recreation and a diversity of experiences, and allows the environment and economy in Ashland to thrive.



The Future Waterfront

In order to create a waterfront in Ashland that achieves the vision set forth by the community, this plan includes a toolkit of recommendations, both at the scale of the entire waterfront and within each of five waterfront zones and specific focus areas. The recommendations are designed to fulfill Ashland's vision for the waterfront by moving towards the following five goals.





Accessible & Visible to residents & visitors



Sustainable landscape & development



Activated & Exciting with options for all



Community-centered development & programming



Safe for recreation on land and in the water

Redevelopment & Reinvestment

City-owned land

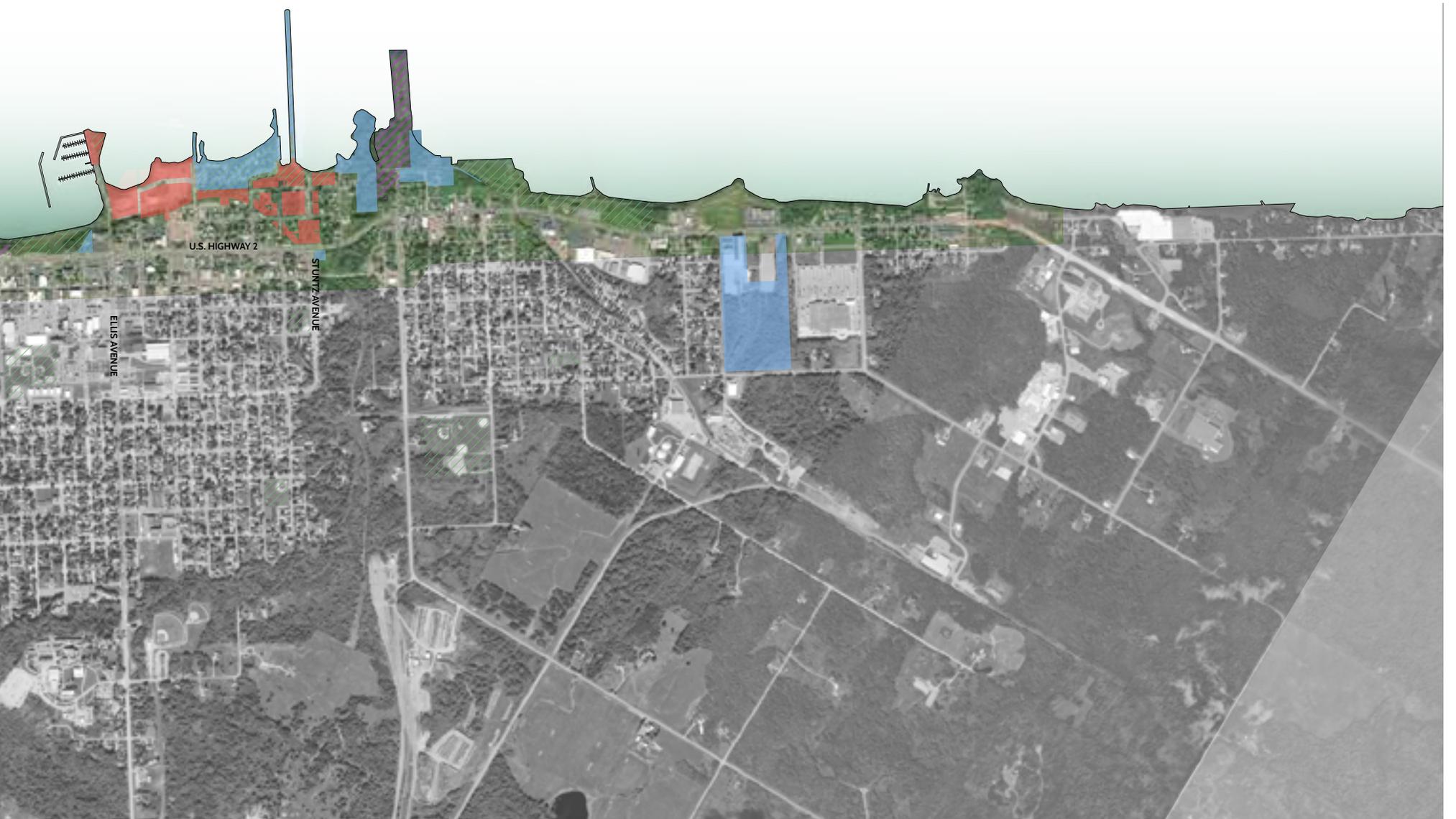
City-owned land in Ashland's waterfront area has been assessed for its needs: Continued reinvestment and improvement, or whether the parcel should be redeveloped entirely. In most cases, discussions of redevelopment are already well underway, including planning for redevelopment of the Superfund Site and the Oredock Upland Area (see pages 30 and 36, respectively).

Additional significant opportunity sites along the waterfront include the Reiss Coal Dock and the Clarkson Dock. Both of these docks represent key features of Ashland's waterfront, though they are privately owned. Specific suggestions for these opportunity sites are highlighted on pages 48 – 51.

Key

-  Redevelopment - City-owned land
-  Continued Investment - City-owned land
-  Opportunity Sites - Privately-owned land
-  City park land





Crossings & Connections to the Waterfront

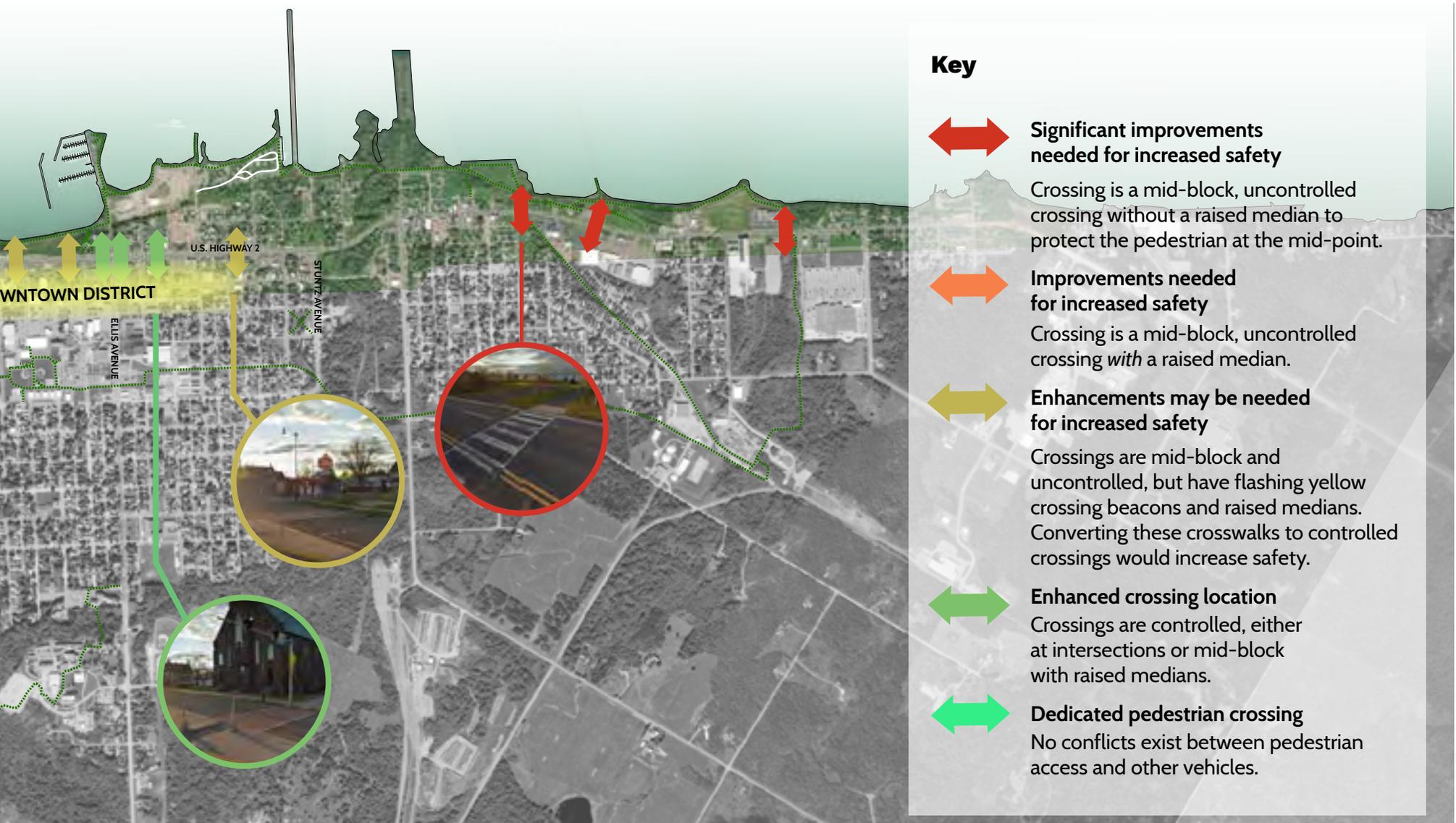
Issues & Priorities

Pedestrian safety and comfort when crossing (Lake Shore Drive West) is a key component of Ashlanders' connection to their waterfront neighborhoods and recreational areas. In particular, pedestrian connection between Ashland's Downtown District and the waterfront is important. Bolstering the walkability within and between the waterfront and downtown will contribute to a more vibrant and livable city, and will help businesses (including restaurants) succeed throughout the city.

The evaluative diagram at right shows all of the formalized pedestrian crossing from Ashland's downtown and neighborhoods to the waterfront zones. As of the writing of this plan, some of these crossings are in need of significant improvements to increase safety for pedestrians crossing to the waterfront. **Uncontrolled crossings** refers to the lack of any traffic control, such as a traffic light or stop sign, at a location where a pedestrian pathway intersects a roadway. On the diagram, green arrows represent controlled crossings. In many locations, Ashland has worked to convert crossing locations to controlled crossings even if the crossing occurs mid-block and not at an intersection.

Gold, orange, and red crossings represent crossings that are uncontrolled, with varying levels of other safety features. Ashlanders should consider their needs for crossing to the waterfront's amenities when planning for strategic improvements to crossing locations.





Trail Activation & Wayfinding

Existing & Future

The trail along Ashland's waterfront is an incredible community amenity and provides recreational opportunities for both residents and visitors. The trail has the capacity to serve both as connectivity between the various attractions in the waterfront zones and as an attraction in and of itself, providing a beautiful and visually interesting experience for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The map at right showcases some of the amenities located along Ashland's waterfront trail, adding excitement and visual interest for trail users. Ashland's waterfront has a mixture of both active and passive recreation activities that help to activate the trail system, and this balance should be preserved. However, adding strategic amenities to the trail can also help encourage biking and walking in the waterfront area and encourage trail users to venture further instead of driving between key waterfront amenities.

- ▶ *Image sources from left to right: Bicycle Station, American Planning Association; Interpretive Signage, Ryan Kurtz; Exercise equipment, Burlington, VT Parks, Recreation, & Waterfront; Splash pad, Visit Knoxville TN; Tent camping, National Parks Service; Possible Folk School location, GRAEF.*



Bike Rental Station



Bike rental stations could be positioned at either end of Ashland's waterfront as well as in the Central Zone, allowing multiple pick-up and drop-off points for recreational trail users who wish to explore and use the trail.

Interpretative Signage

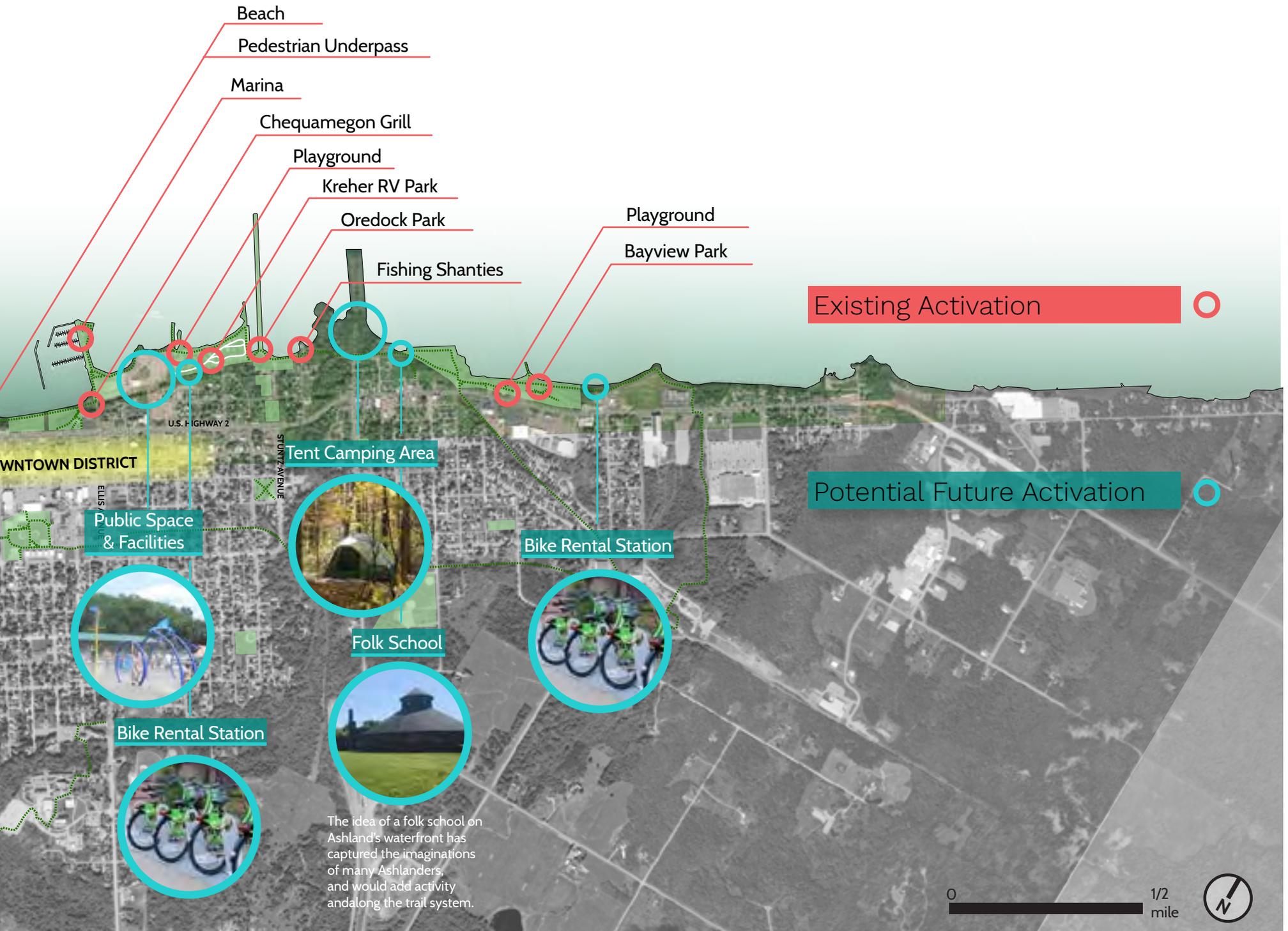


New, engaging interpretive signage could expand on existing topics and be focused on resiliency strategies, the history of the waterfront, and the history of the Native American populations in Ashland.

Exercise Course



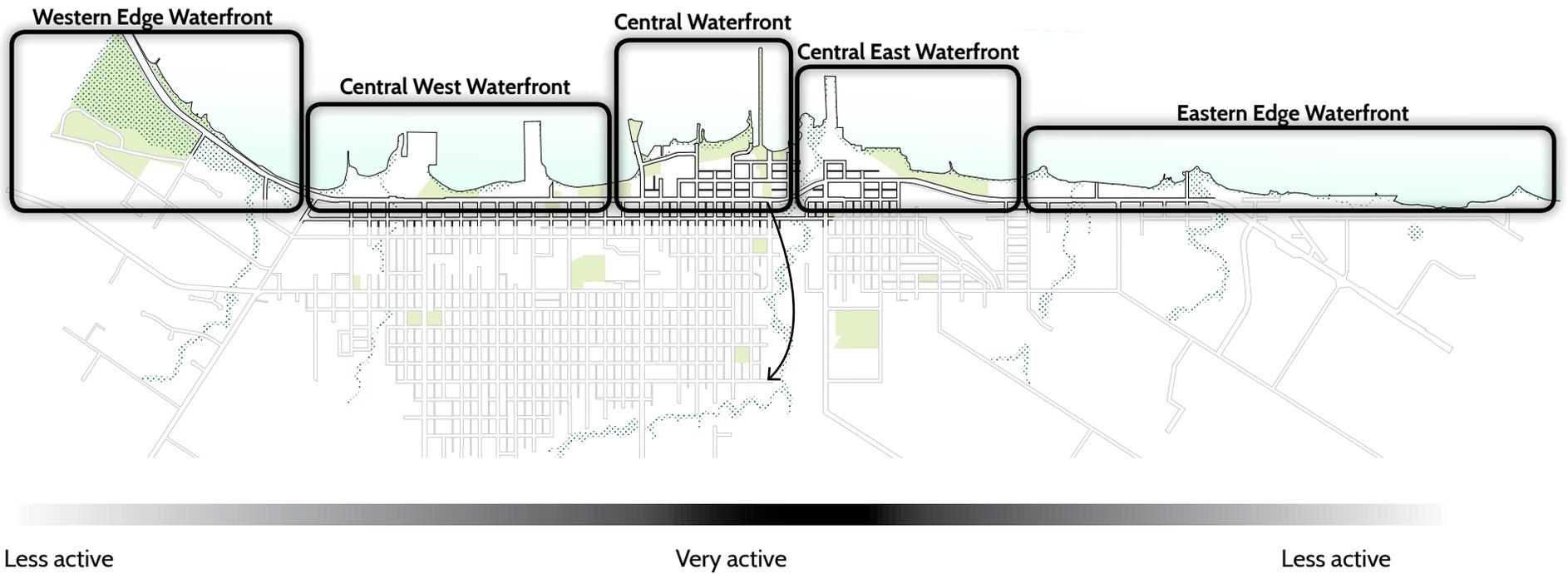
An exercise course with stations is a popular trail activity in many communities, adding variety to walking, running, or biking workouts.



Waterfront Zones

In this Plan, Ashland's waterfront is divided into five different zones in order to better understand the different activities and characters of each part of Ashland's shoreline. This approach allows us to respond to site-specific conditions with more detailed recommendations for future change and development.

In general, the central waterfront zones currently contain the most active recreational uses, including the Ashland Oredock, the Marina, and the future public space at the Superfund Site, while the Western Edge and Eastern Edge zones contain both recreational and park uses as well as some private commercial and residential development. The analysis and recommendations in this plan are focused first on the Central Waterfront zones, including special sections for Ashland's Oredock, the Oredock Upland Area, and the waterfront neighborhoods surrounding the Oredock Upland area. The plan then shifts focus to the Central West and Central East waterfront zones, and then examines the Western Edge and Eastern Edge of the waterfront.



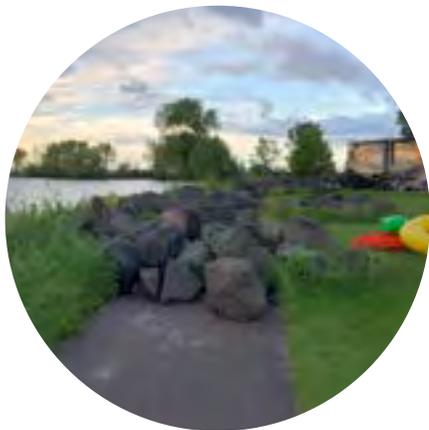
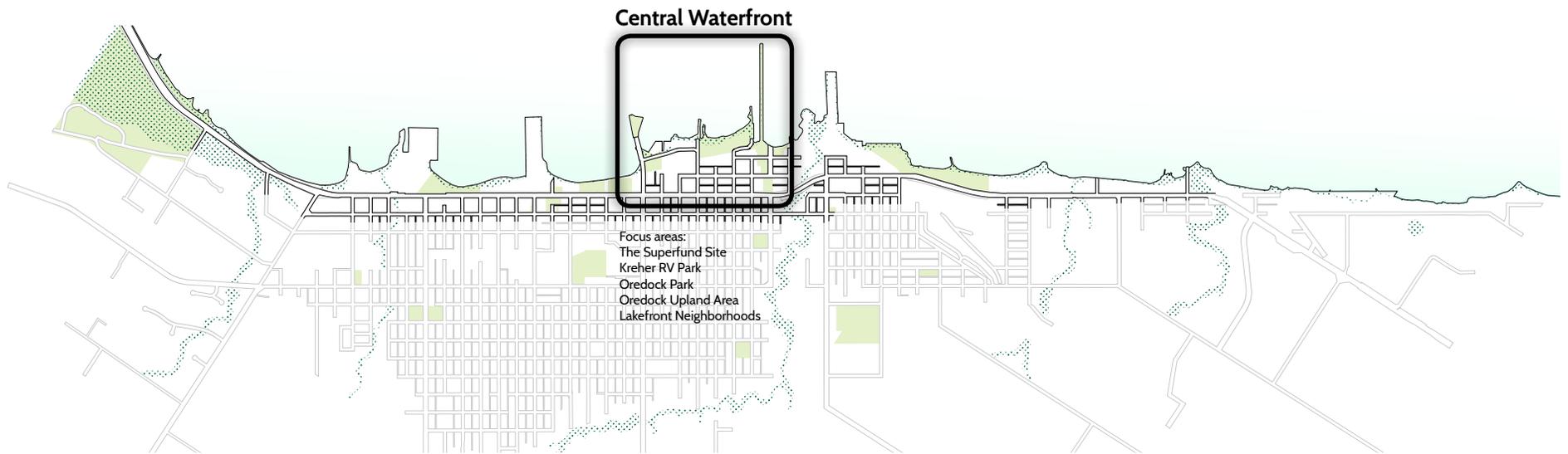
The Central Waterfront

The central waterfront zone is undoubtedly the most active part of the waterfront. The most central zone consists of several interconnected sites, including the Marina to the West, the Superfund Site, the Kreher RV Park, and Oredock Park. This zone is envisioned as Ashland's active community waterfront, providing opportunities for boating, walking, and biking, a world-class, contemporary linear park, and RV camping. Future uses could include event space and concerts, more boat launch opportunities, a splash pad, and a seasonal sledding hill.

Along U.S. Highway 2, this zone is also one of the most active areas along the highway in Ashland. The intersection with Ellis Avenue and U.S. Highway 2 is one of the most important in the

waterfront area, representing connection to both the Marina and the Superfund Site. Hotel Chequamegon sits on the northwestern corner of the intersection, and the northeast corner of the site is currently undergoing redevelopment. Further east along U.S. Highway 2 sits Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church and School, as well as additional community businesses and residences.

The Central Waterfront Zone is also a neighborhood, and there are many homes that are situated between U.S. Highway 2 and the water's edge in this area. As this plan details in the pages that follow, development in the Central Waterfront Zone should always keep these residents in mind, ensuring that the development is completed in a way that will benefit community members and minimize negative impacts of the development for those who live close by.



1. Add youth-focused play areas to the central waterfront zone, such as a splash pad or playground.

There are only two existing playgrounds in Ashland's Central Waterfront zone: one at Kreher RV Park, and one at Bayview Park. In order to ensure that Ashland's central waterfront area meets the needs of all Ashlanders and operates as a prominent regional destination for visitors, Ashland should focus on developing additional family friendly areas with youth-focused play areas adjacent to other public uses in the central zone. Many residents noted that a splash pad would be a benefit to the Ashland community.

2. Partner with businesses – current and future – to create more public points of access to the waterfront through easements and cost sharing.

Ashlanders care about being able to access the waterfront, even if land adjacent to the waterfront area is privately owned. Publicly accessible stairs and pathways to the public spaces in the waterfront area could be created through easements, and potentially maintained through public/private partnership. This can be explored with existing property owners, and future ones along U.S. Highway 2 and other points adjacent to the waterfront.

3. Support existing and recruit additional waterfront-specific businesses.

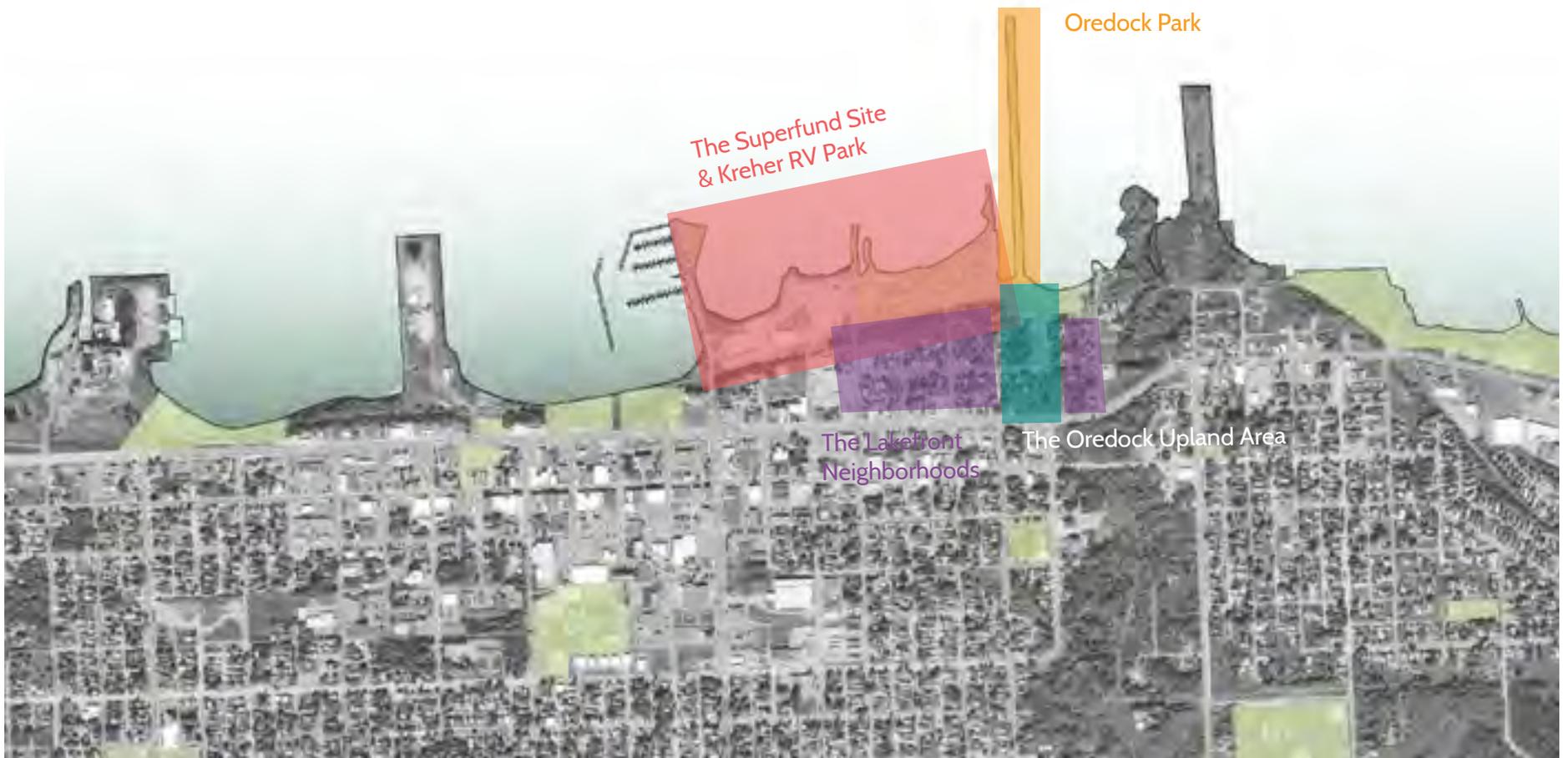
Such businesses could include additional recreational equipment rental or a local fish market, to locate in the central waterfront district. Equipment rentals could include bicycles, scooters, in addition to the current winter rentals available (confirm). Focus new developments on uses that will enhance the character and use of the waterfront zone.

4. Explore the idea of restaurants with a lake view in the Central Waterfront Zone.

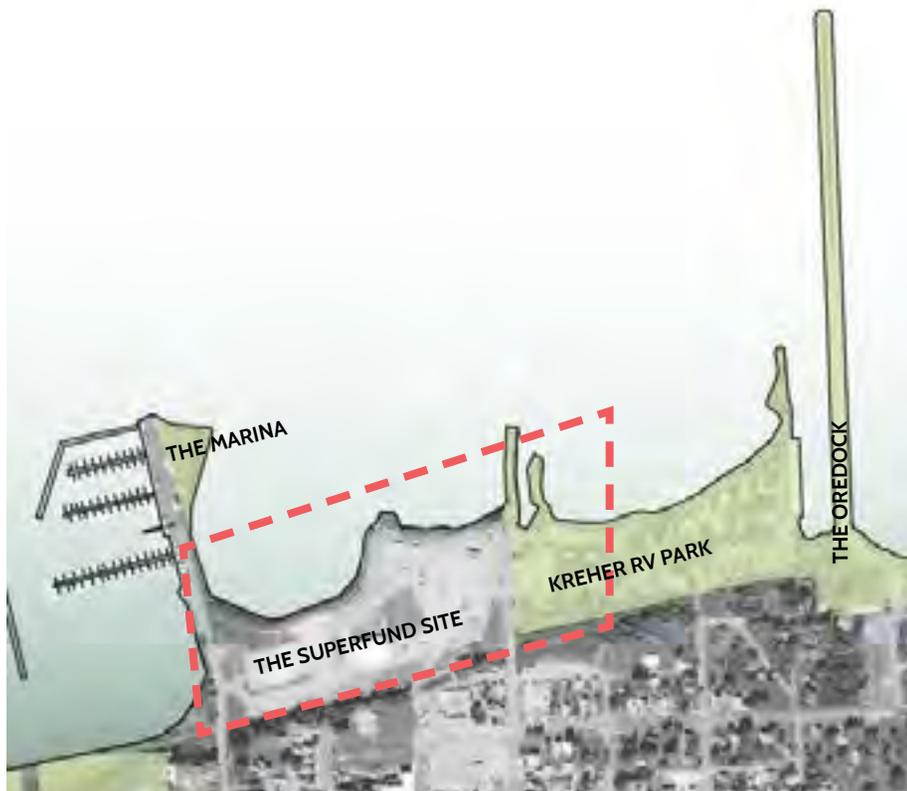
Either at the Oredock Park, the Oredock Upland Area, or elsewhere close to central park areas. Many Ashland residents would like more options for dining with a view of the lake - there are currently two options at this time. Targeting specific areas for potential waterfront restaurants and marketing these areas to potential restaurant entrepreneurs are potential next steps.



Focus Areas
within the Central Waterfront Zone



The Superfund Site, Marina & Kreher RV Park



The area of the Ashland waterfront commonly referred to as “the Superfund site” among community members was formerly the location of the City’s waste water treatment plant and a manufactured gas facility. In 1989, the site was found to have contaminated soil and groundwater. Investigation and cleanup of the site was led by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for many years before the site was petitioned for inclusion on the National Priorities List and cleanup by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), also known as Superfund. The site was formally added to the program in 2002.

With the clean-up largely complete, the focus of the community has shifted towards the next steps of redevelopment of the site for recreational use that will complement the adjacent Marina and Kreher RV Park.

In 2016 the City Council approved a site redevelopment concept plan based on input from the Parks & Recreation Commission, Harbor Commission, and Public Works Committee. That concept plan shows a boat storage building and space for open-air boat storage on the area of the site closest to the marina, a parking lot, a boat launch, a fish cleaning station, a park building with restrooms, open space, and suggested trail and pathway systems. A new soft boat launch is also planned adjacent to Kreher Park. Other ideas that community members have supported for the site include event or performance space, a pavilion for large group gatherings, and a splash pad or playground. Ashland community members have also expressed interest in incorporating a sledding hill with a warming hut somewhere in the central waterfront area.

In 2019, a thoroughfare and an aggregate parking lot was installed on the site. In 2020, the City plans to install the soft boat launch and a pedestrian trail along the southern part of the site. As the final design for the site comes into focus, Ashland community members must prioritize their ideas together and plan for a new waterfront park that provides amenities, options, and access for a wide range of Ashland residents.



1. Create a new identity and name for the Superfund Site.

As the Superfund site enters its next stage clean-up and is prepared for redevelopment and reuse, it is important that Ashlanders rename the space to reflect its use and importance on the waterfront as it is reclaimed as a public space.

2. Consider a boat repair shop in the Superfund Site area,

to support the needs of marina users, revenue potential for the City, and provide employment opportunities for residents. The possible addition of a boat repair shop could be studied as part of a feasibility study for marina expansion.

The aesthetics of future buildings and structures in the central waterfront area of Ashland are particularly important. Designing a boat repair shop that fits into the visual character of the waterfront, perhaps a timber frame building, will help ensure that the future waterfront park is an enjoyable place for Ashlanders to spend time for years to come.

3. Enhance trail (bike and pedestrian) connection across the Superfund Site and Kreher Park.

By building and strengthening the trail connection between the Marina, the Superfund site, the RV Park, and the Oredock Park at the base of the bluff, Ashland can ensure that pedestrians and bicyclists can easily access all public spaces in the Central Waterfront Zone with minimal boat or vehicle conflict.

4. Conduct a feasibility study and consider adding some boat storage at the Superfund site, but also prioritize development of boat storage away from the waterfront

so that the waterfront land can be accessible to all for multiple recreational uses. Some Ashlanders feel that boat storage on the waterfront is one of their top priorities, but others would prefer other waterfront uses in the Superfund site. The site should be designed in a way that accommodates many people and activities in this important public space. If boat storage is included, it is recommended that this boat storage on-site be only for large boats that cannot be easily moved off-site. Storage for smaller boats that can be transported off-site should be stored on less valuable land that can be used for a wider range of community uses that align with enhancing this central waterfront zone as a local and regional destination for residents and visitors.

5. Ensure that view corridors from the lake-adjacent neighborhoods and homes are considered and maintained

when planning for boat storage facilities and other structures within the redeveloped Superfund Site.

6. Focus on developing public recreational space on the Superfund site, including event and concert space.

Consider the other creative ideas generated through this planning process for inclusion in the final Superfund site design. Ideas include a splash pad at this site, a concert pavilion, community pavilion for community and private use, concessions, or even a boat repair shop that

could be revenue generating for the City and make boat refurbishment more accessible to the community and something that community members can be part of watching unfold.

7. Continue the development of additional RV sites within the City-owned land to the southeast of the current sites at Kreher Park.

RV campsites are a revenue generator for the City, providing much needed funds to support City operations and spending. Expanding this use given the demand and potential for additional tourism in Ashland is seen as a highly positive use of this section of the waterfront. These RV sites can be sited within the bluff within the existing RV park, and also be considered for use on the Clarkson Dock.

8. Enhance the pedestrian connection to the Marina, Kreher Park, and the Superfund Site from downtown and U.S. Highway 2 along Ellis Avenue.

As of the writing of this plan there is no sidewalk that connects pedestrians from U.S. Highway 2 to the Marina and Superfund Site area. Consider adding a sidewalk facility on one side of the road, or a painted pedestrian zone in the road if there is not enough room for a sidewalk. Additional enhancements and wayfinding are recommended to strengthen this connection and brand the area as a prominent community gathering space for small visits, or larger community events.

Conceptual Site Diagram



Ashland's Oredock Park

Ashland's Oredock – formerly the Soo Line Ore Dock – has been an iconic feature of Ashland's waterfront since its construction in the early 1900s. Stretching nearly 2,000 feet long by 66 feet wide with its base at Stuntz Avenue near Water Street, the dock originally had a tall superstructure along its entire length, used for loading ore from rail cars above to ships berthed alongside.

Despite community efforts to preserve the superstructure, it was dismantled in 2013 for safety reasons – the Oredock had largely been unmaintained for many years and was deteriorating. The remaining base of the Oredock has created a new opportunity to re-imagine the dock as a flexible, contemporary public space. The City of Ashland is currently investing in public access, recreational, and environmental improvements to the Oredock, to create a recreational destination that celebrates the history of the site and Lake Superior.

Currently, the first 800 feet of the base of the Oredock are open to the public – about half of its entire length. Signage, sculpture, and a few seating areas are sprinkled across the public space. There is a plan underway to allow access to the entire length of the dock, along the area known as “The Diamonds,” as the next step in the development process. This phase is considered the most important next step based on community feedback.

Other plans included in the vision for the site include historic information panels, an outlook point at the end of the dock, a garden, and a warming shelter. In the area where the Oredock meets the land, the vision calls for green space, an amphitheater, and a viewing platform. There is low-lying wetland area on this part of the waterfront that would be retained and restored as any future development of the park site. The Oredock site will be an evolving project, completed in stages as fundraising allows.



For more information about the planning and vision for Ashland's Oredock, and to read the Concept Design Report, visit: www.coawi.org/169/Ashland-Ore-Dock-Redevelopment

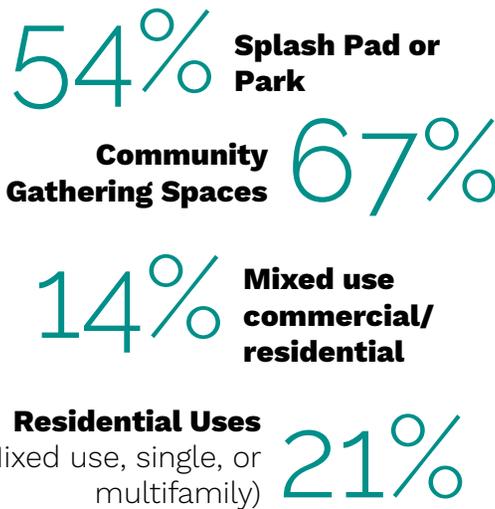


The Oredock Upland Area



What we heard...

What would you like to see developed in the Oredock Upland area?



As plans for the Oredock Park have been developed and the first phases of construction have gotten underway, the City of Ashland has turned its attention to the area to the south east of the Oredock – the land that was once part of the Soo Line rail corridor. Much of the land in this area, known as the Oredock Upland because of the elevation change from this land to the waterfront, is owned by the City of Ashland – and most of the parcels are currently vacant. This area presents a key development opportunity for the City of Ashland as it seeks to address several community goals.

As part of this planning process, community outreach and engagement was conducted about the Oredock Upland Area, both in the community survey and at community open house events. Many Ashland residents are excited about the possibility of new development in the Upland Area that complements the unfolding Oredock Park and surrounding existing neighborhood to create a new micro-district in the waterfront zone. It is a clear priority to include additional community gathering spaces and activities as part of this plan, to strengthen the area as a local and regional destination for residents and visitors.

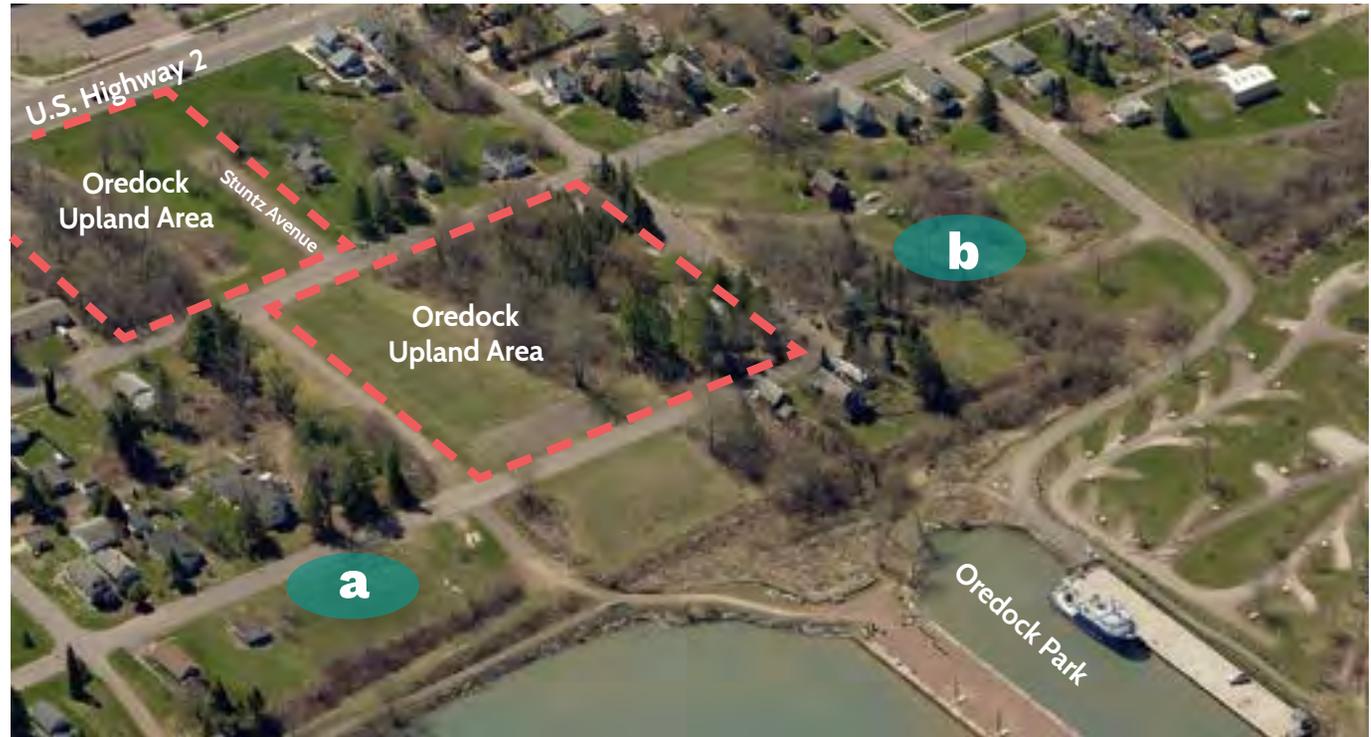
◀ Percentages based on 324 survey responses. Respondents could select up to three categories of preferred development or write in their own ideas.



Oredock Upland Area

Restaurant Uses

One of the most-discussed and desired new development in the central waterfront zone is restaurant and dining options, especially with a view of the lake. Option **a** in the diagram at right shows a possible location for a major restaurant use with outdoor seating. Option **b** shows a potential location for a smaller restaurant, concession, or deli-style restaurant.



- 1. Work with area developers, area neighbors, and the Plan Commission to develop a desired development plan for the Oredock Upland area, including mixed use and housing options.**

The formation of a Ad Hoc Committee for the Upland Area should be considered to identify the core principles, needs, and desires of the development of the Upland Area, create a request for qualifications or proposals (RFQ or RFP) process, and release this publicly to developers to begin the next steps of the redevelopment of this area. Recommended principles are integration with the existing neighborhood, while strengthening the access and identify of the area as a significant Lake Superior destination.

- 2. Complete the feasibility study for a potential research center located in the Oredock Upland Area with institutional partners.**

There continues to be interest in a research center in the Upland Area that would support Great Lakes research. Further considerations for this should include the potential for a mixed use facility that can be integrated into the concept of the Oredock as a destination – additional amenities in such a facility could include a restaurant, public educational center or changing exhibit, multi-family housing on upper stories, or even community maker spaces. Any development should include a strong component of placemaking and providing community amenities.

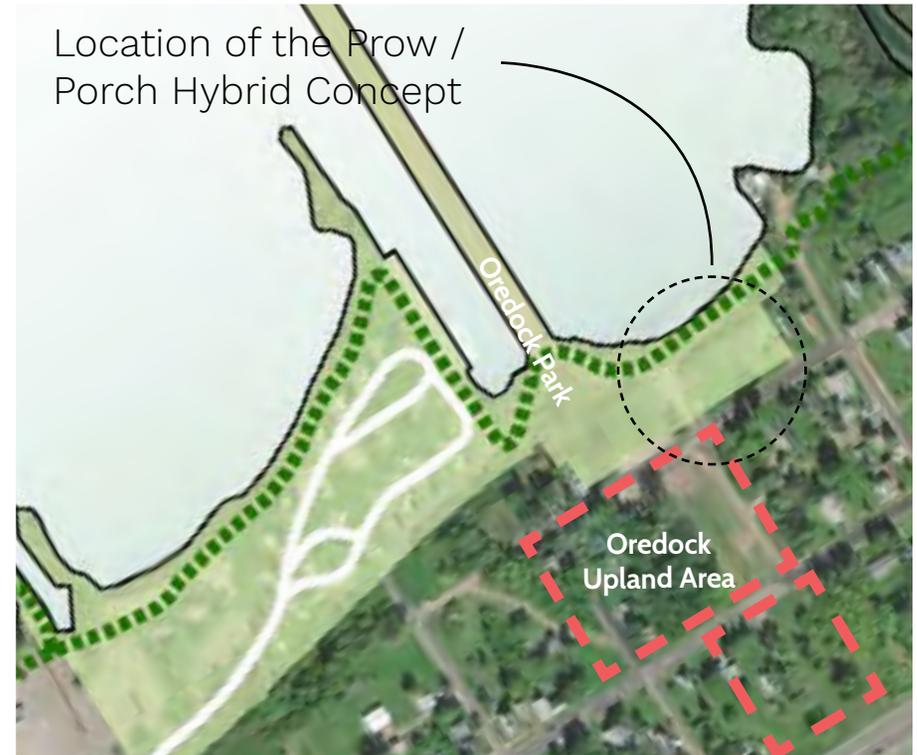
- 3. Consider recruiting a brick-and-mortar restaurant, vending kiosk (concession stand) and/or food truck park near to the Oredock Park to help activate the space.**

The community yearns for additional gathering and destination points on the waterfront. This could include a privately owned restaurant, a concession stand or kiosk through a public/private partnership, or shared use of a park or parking lot area for a food truck court or park. These amenities bring food traffic and can serve locals and visitors. Some can be flexibly operated on a seasonal basis.

Prow / Porch Hybrid Concept



Location of the Prow / Porch Hybrid Concept



4. Consider connecting Stuntz Avenue to U.S. Highway 2 in consultation with WisDOT, providing a more direct entrance to the Oredock Upland Area.

While Stuntz Avenue could potentially connect directly to U.S. Highway 2, there are many considerations that must be factored, including roadway safety on U.S. Highway 2, speed changes, the addition of an intersection, and a variety of roadway alignments for Stuntz Avenue. The following pages include potential roadway alignments, should Stuntz be connected. Another option is including a pedestrian connection only, and allowing Stuntz Avenue to end in a community feature.

5. Plan for a safe and ADA-accessible parking lot close to the Oredock Park for visitors and residents, and include enhanced on-street parking options close to the Oredock,

ensuring that all parking areas are well-marked with signage. Parking is a big deal to Ashlanders and visitors alike. As the Oredock Park continues to develop, Ashland should ensure that everyone is able to access the space, regardless of age or physical abilities.

The City of Ashland has taken steps towards accomplishing this recommendation through their work with SmithGroup, as shown in the Prow / Porch hybrid concept shown in the drawings above at the base of the Oredock park. Construction could begin as soon as 2020.

6. Consider shared parking lots for new residential or mixed-use development and recreational uses in the Oredock Park.

As new development enters into the Oredock Upland area, there is the potential to create parking areas that can be shared between institutional, commercial, or residential uses in the Upland Area and can also be used by visitors to the Oredock Park. Land in Ashland's waterfront is valuable to the community, and creating shared spaces as a way to accommodate more people in the waterfront zone should be a top priority.

Stuntz Avenue Connection

One element of planning for the future Oredock Upland Area site is the possible ways to connect Stuntz Avenue through the site to U.S. Highway 2. Currently, Stuntz Avenue does not connect between St. Claire Street and U.S. Highway 2. Ashland leadership strongly supports the development of this direct connection as planning and development of the site continues. A direct connection into the site would expand the types of development that might be successful in this area, and would also allow a direct connection by car to the Ashland Oredock Park, providing greater access to this key amenity for all Ashlanders.

However, the exact formation that this connection may take is undecided as of the writing of this plan. Three options that are under consideration by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation in consultation with the city are shown at right.

The final form that the future Stuntz connection takes is important because it will determine how the Ashland Upland Area site is divided, and how large or small potential development parcels in this area will be. This will impact the types of development that are possible on the site. The final formation of this connection is also important because the future Stuntz Avenue will act as a gateway connection to the Oredock Upland Area from downtown and to the Central Waterfront and downtown from U.S. Highway 2, acting as point of welcome to Ashland residents and visitors alike.

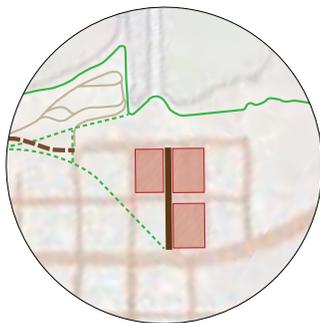
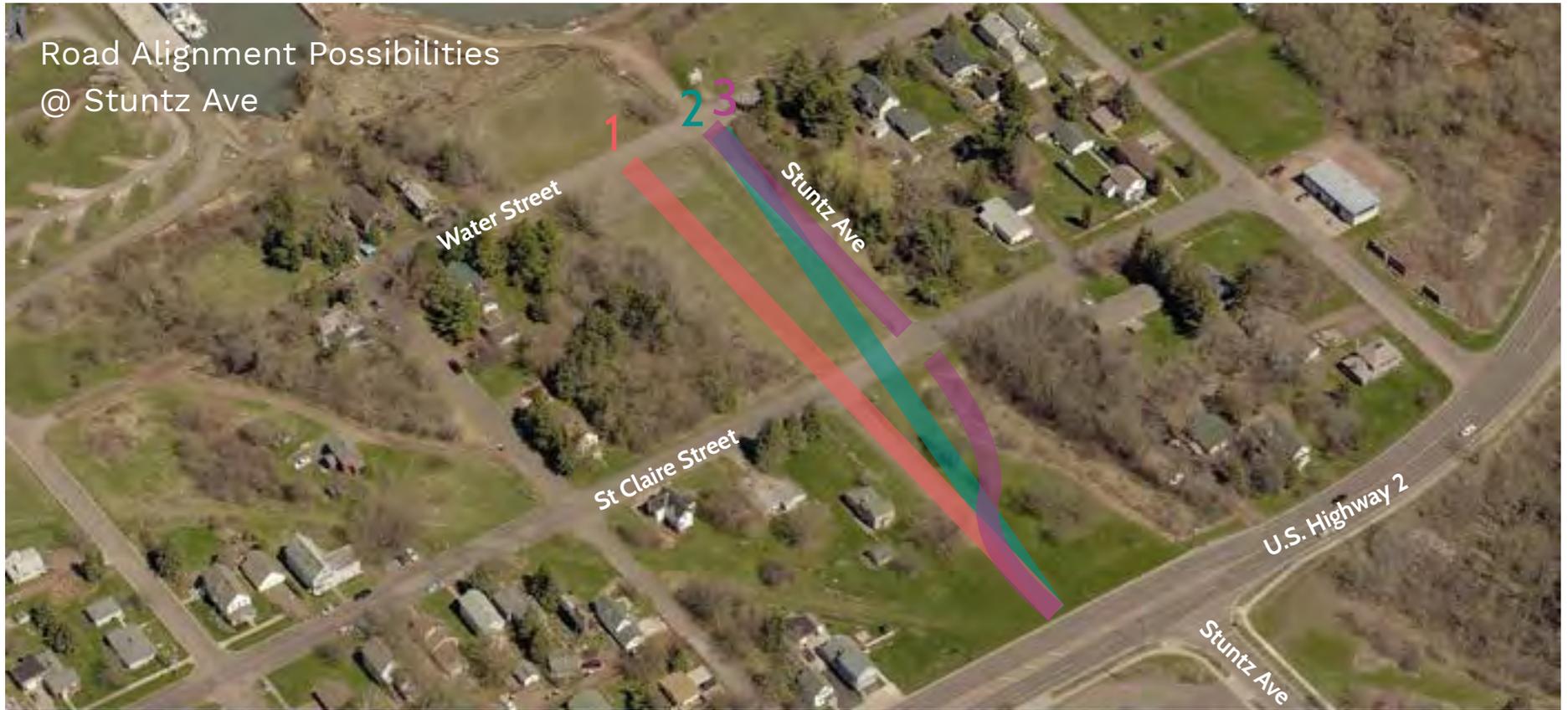
Next Steps & Considerations

As WisDOT examines the potential connection of Stuntz Avenue through the Oredock Upland Site, safety for vehicles and pedestrians will be of the utmost importance. Some important considerations will be the speed of traffic and sightlines to the new intersection from coming from the east along U.S. Highway 2. Allowing the connection of Stuntz Avenue through a right-in and right-out only traffic pattern has also been considered, though this traffic pattern is not recommended because it would limit accessibility of the connection to those who are coming from the west, including most current Ashland residents.

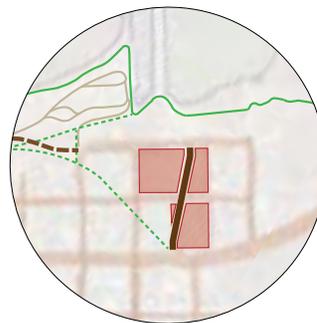
As of the writing of this plan, it is predicted that U.S. Highway 2 will be redone in 2026/27, including a potential road diet along the route in the City of Ashland. Decreasing the number of travel lanes in Ashland would open up the possibility of safe crossing and connections into and across the highway.

- » If a Stuntz Avenue connection can be made safely for both vehicles and pedestrians, then it is important that the connection is made as soon as possible to increase the accessibility of Ashland's waterfront for all.
- » If it is not possible to connect Stuntz Avenue right away, then the possibility of connecting at later date should be considered .
- » If Stuntz cannot be connected to the Oredock Park, then a robust signage and wayfinding strategy will be needed to ensure that residents and visitors know the best way to access their lakefront public space via other neighborhood roads.

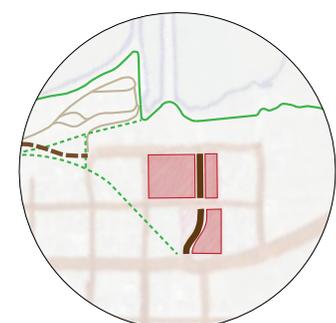
Road Alignment Possibilities
@ Stuntz Ave



Road Alignment 1: Stuntz Avenue becomes a new road running parallel to the current street grid, offset to the West from the original alignment.



Road Alignment 2: Stuntz Avenue angles southwest from Water Street to intersect with U.S. Highway 2.



Road Alignment 3: Stuntz Avenue remains in its current position close to the lake, but connects to U.S. Highway 2 in an "S" curve formation from St. Claire St.

Development Concepts & Process

Seven conceptual development scenarios were created with three different potential road alignments for Stuntz Avenue. Each development concept included potential office or research center space in various configurations and a few different options for housing development: duplex town homes, five-plex row houses, and small single-family units. The development concepts were created to emphasize public realm and enhanced connection to the lakefront and Oredock Park site from U.S. Highway 2 and Main Street, and show ways that different housing types could be incorporated into the existing waterfront neighborhood.

Development Process

As development planning takes place, the City and development partners should consider the different tax value potential for the different development options.

As the City moves forward with redevelopment of the Oredock Upland Area, the development process should be carefully orchestrated to weigh options and the following considerations to ensure that development is compatible with the community vision and plans – compatibility with the plans for the Oredock, development potential, social benefits, access, economic value, catalytic potential, commercial viability, and other factors that can be carefully weighed in a thorough and fair design and development process.

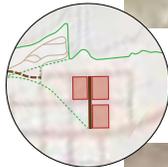
For the development process itself, the City should follow the process of section 478.06. This section outlines land acquisitions and dispositions of City-owned parcels. The ordinance outlines types of properties (essential with conditions, and non-essential properties). The Oredock Upland Area is an “Essential Property with Conditions” that will be kept in City ownership until a proposal for redevelopment is approved or available in whole or in part when certain conditions are met, as determined by the City and other groups, such as the Plan Commission, and/or an Ad Hoc Committee created to guide the redevelopment of this catalytic area.

The planning and implementation of development in the Oredock Upland Area will incorporate input from the community, developers, and other stakeholders. Any development will incorporate the base zoning of the land, in addition to a Planned Unit Development (PUD) Overlay District (Section 4.55 of the Unified Development Ordinance) to allow for greater customization of the development of this land. This is common for larger land tracts that are seen as high value economically and socially.

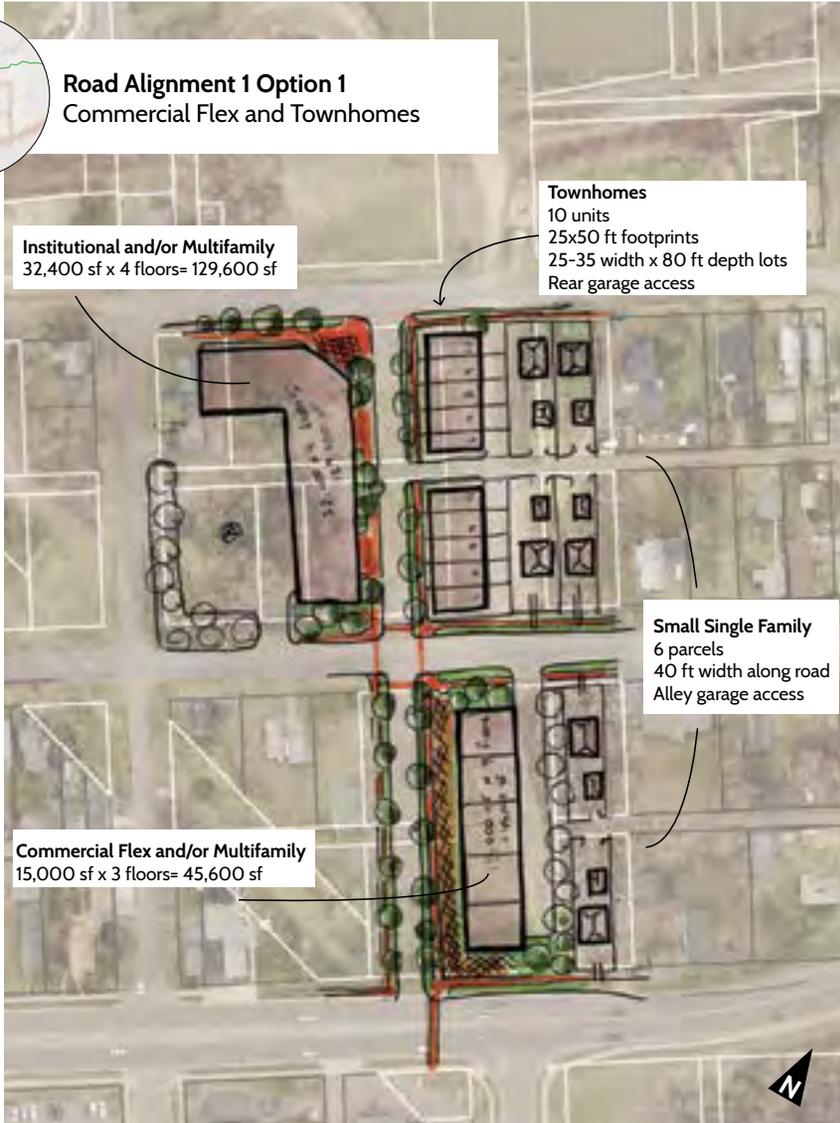
The property is considered a “Essential Property with Conditions” given that there is special interest in the development of this land – the site is the largest concentration of land the City owns and has close proximity to the lake and Oredock. Although this property will ultimately be developed privately, the area has a strong public purpose as a critical development site in the City given its proximity to Lake Superior, the opportunity to do a unique and catalytic development, and as a critical gateway to the Oredock.

The City and an Ad Hoc Committee should work together to develop a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) or Request for Proposals (RFP) process. Section 478.06(a) outlines the procedure for the RFP process for City-initiated land sales. It is recommended that the City pursue a RFP process for the development of this site to guide the development more closely. This allows the City and other guiding committee members to consider a number of proposals and weigh options for the development potential and compatibility for community vision.

Listing the property with a broker and informal sales procedure, as outlined in sections 478.06(b) and (c) are not recommended for the Oredock Upland Area, given its development potential, economic and social value for the community. With the City and partners guiding development, it is highly more likely that a unique and catalytic development will take place on this critical area of land.



Road Alignment 1 Option 1
Commercial Flex and Townhomes

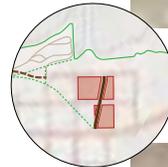


Institutional and/or Multifamily
32,400 sf x 4 floors= 129,600 sf

Townhomes
10 units
25x50 ft footprints
25-35 width x 80 ft depth lots
Rear garage access

Small Single Family
6 parcels
40 ft width along road
Alley garage access

Commercial Flex and/or Multifamily
15,000 sf x 3 floors= 45,600 sf



Road Alignment 2 Option 1
Institutional Flex and Small Single Family



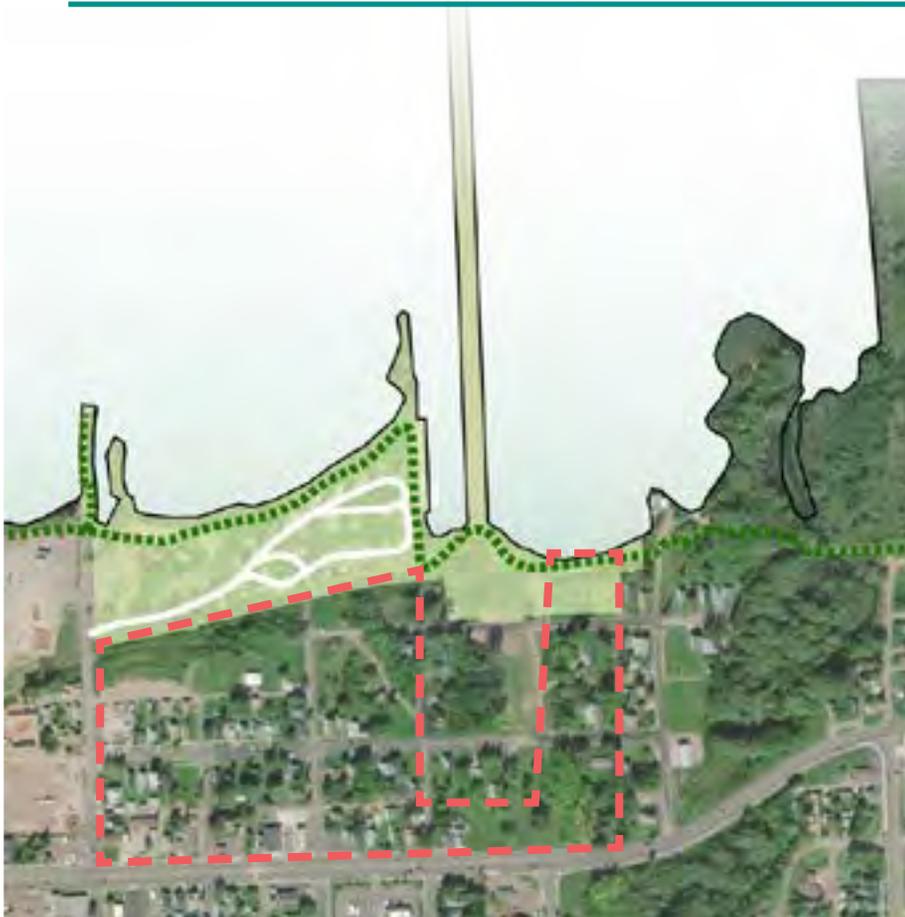
Institutional and/or Multifamily
38,400 sf x 3 floors= 115,200 sf

Small Single Family
12-13 parcels
40-50 ft width along road
Alley garage access

Green Space
(not able to fit parcels)



The Neighborhood Around the Oredock Upland



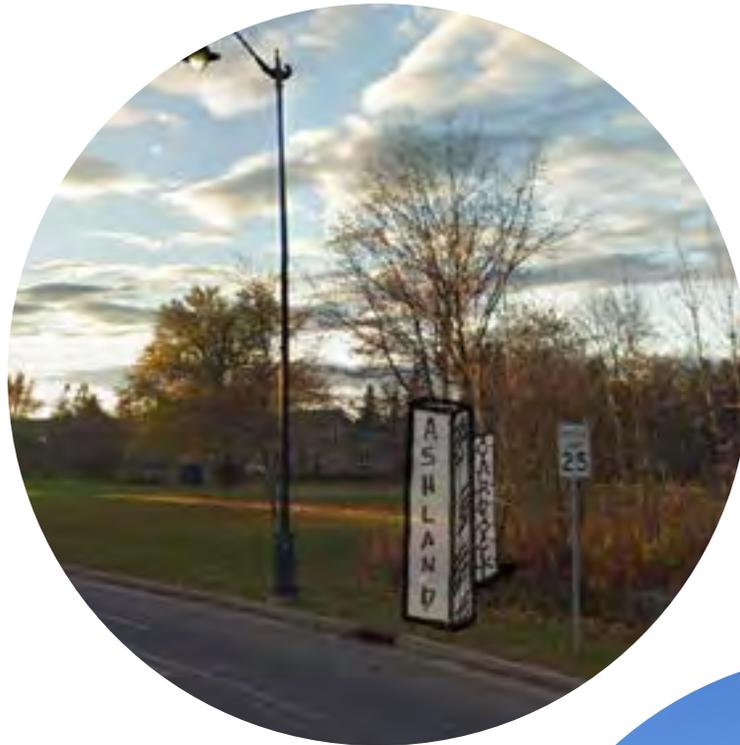
As the development of Oredock Park continues to unfold and the Oredock Upland area undergoes redevelopment, the surrounding waterfront neighborhoods will certainly be impacted. Planning for thoughtful integration and connection to these neighborhoods is critical as the waterfront continues to be restored and enhanced. The Oredock is envisioned as a community amenity, open and accessible to all. The Upland Area shows significant potential for increasing housing diversity in Ashland, as well as foot traffic to the waterfront – the neighborhood as a gateway to the Oredock and Ashland’s waterfront for those coming from the east or to the Oredock from downtown. This additional traffic can make more amenities that require frequency to be economically plausible.

This Plan as well as its predecessors emphasize that new development should preserve public connection to the waterfront, and improvements to the existing neighborhoods in the Oredock area can play a significant role in connecting those who live in the neighborhoods to both the waterfront and downtown Ashland.

For example, the waterfront neighborhoods in this area do not have dedicated sidewalk areas, nor do they have street lighting. While it may not make sense to install street lighting and sidewalks along every street in this neighborhood, strategic improvements that emphasize pedestrian experience can help include these neighborhoods in the development of the Oredock Park and Upland Area and provide community benefits.

- 1.** Develop a priority pedestrian route through the Oredock Upland neighborhood to the Marina area and downtown Ashland, and install sidewalks along the route.
- 2.** Enhance lighting throughout the Oredock Upland neighborhood, especially along the established pedestrian route to Downtown and the Marina.
- 3.** Install neighborhood-scale wayfinding elements throughout the Oredock Upland neighborhood.
- 4.** Locate an Ashland entrance marker to correspond with the new Oredock Park and new development in the Oredock Upland Area.

As Ashland's pedestrian infrastructure varies block to block, there are opportunities to improve connectivity and identity through strategic investments in street lighting, sidewalks, monument signage, and wayfinding signage in the Upland neighborhood. While part of this neighborhood has some of this infrastructure, much of this infrastructure ends at 6th Avenue East. This infrastructure should be planned along St. Claire Street and Water Street. Some consideration should be given to enhancing 6th Avenue East and/or 7th Avenue East, in addition to Stuntz Avenue for pedestrian use and connectivity in, within, and out of the neighborhood.



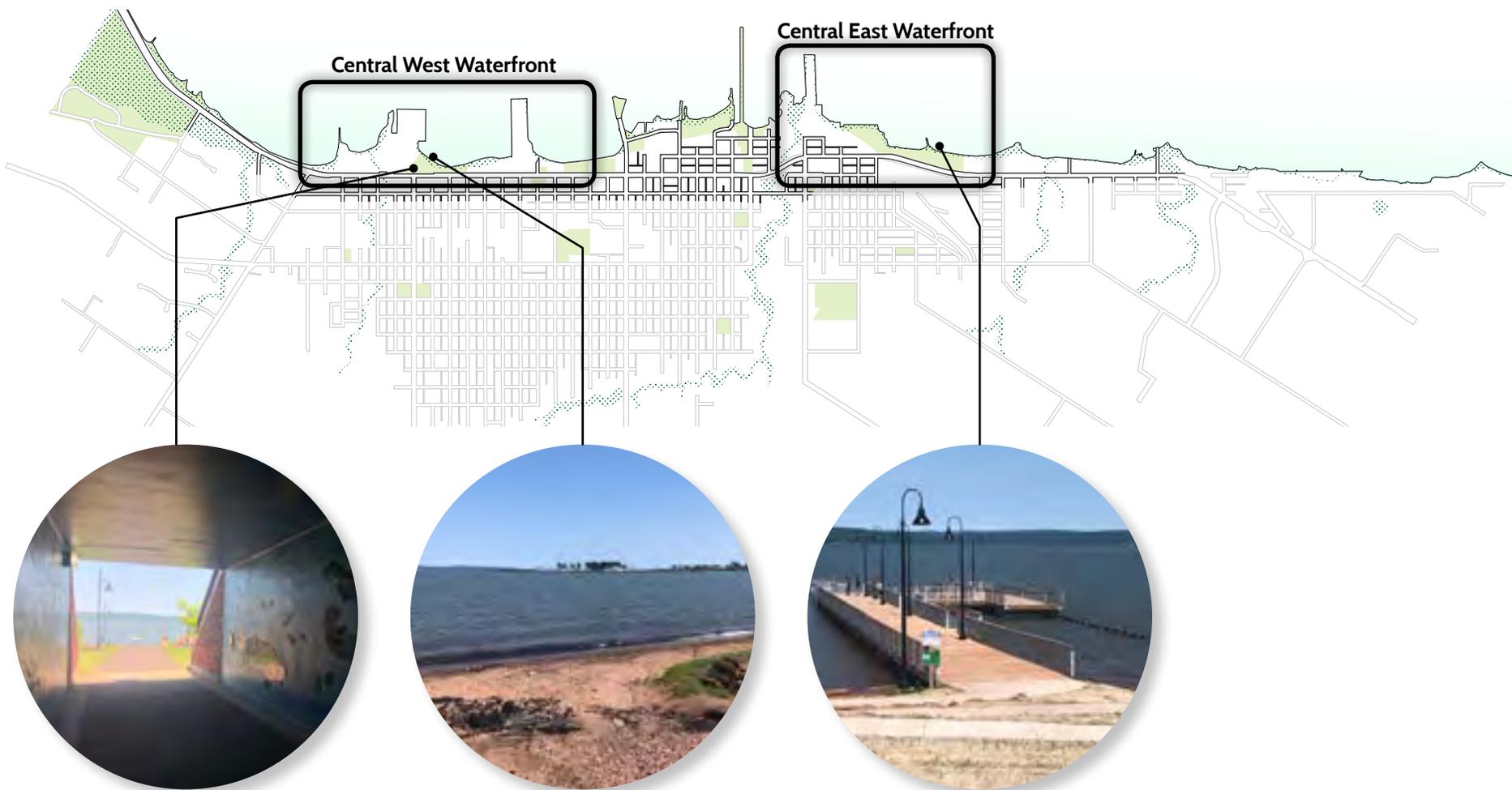
West & East Central Waterfront

On either side of the Central Waterfront Zone are the Central West and the Central East Waterfronts. These areas are less active than the Central Waterfront Zone, but still include recreational uses: Bayview Park in the East Central zone features a recently redeveloped popular pier, playground, and bike service area, as well as beautiful trails and open space. The space has the spatial and locational potential to host a larger festival-type event, though it is not adjacent to downtown and is therefore less bike- and pedestrian-friendly. Its location away from residential areas and other potential land use conflicts could lend itself to this.

Many Ashlanders have envisioned further changes in this zone, including tent camping on the Clarkson Dock and a Folk School, maker spaces, or retreat center on the former water treatment site on 12th Avenue East and Water Street. Such developments could include the existing round

building adjacent to Bayview Park. Development along U.S. Highway 2 in this area is neighborhood-commercial in nature, with some single-family homes mixed in to form a small pocket of waterfront neighborhood.

The Central West Waterfront includes the Excel Energy Plant, the Hot Pond and beach, and the Reiss Coal Dock. This area also includes the safest and most enhanced pedestrian connection to downtown: Ashland's pedestrian underpass, which connects the waterfront to the rest of the city from Howard Pearson Plaza, which can be accessed directly from Main Street West northeast of 6th Avenue West. Development along U.S. Highway 2 includes some highway commercial type development, much of which is built on lots that are constrained by the natural topography of the site as the land slopes steeply down to the lake.



West Central



ACTIVATION AREA: INFORMATIONAL SIGNAGE ABOUT THE EXCEL ENERGY PLANT

to the Central Waterfront Zone

1. Consider purchasing the Reiss Coal Dock in the long-term for development into a private community-focused use with development partners, or for demolition if redevelopment is not feasible.

In the short term, the City should work with the current owner of the Reiss Coal Dock to ensure that the dock is safe and access is appropriately restricted. The City should work in partnership with the current owner or potential future owner(s) of the dock to assess the area for redevelopment, or demolition if redevelopment is not feasible. This may require outside funding to restore this area of the lake without the dock.

2. Add trail activation and visual interest to the trail by installing trail-side activities and informational signage.

In the West Central Waterfront zone, the trail and waterfront is less activated by public spaces and amenities than it is in the Central Waterfront zone. One way to draw trail users to this part of the waterfront is to provide lower-impact trail amenities, such as an exercise course and informational signage about the Excel Energy Plant and the Hot Pond. This would provide activities for visitors along the trail, and increase more regular utilization of the trail and waterfront by locals with more activities to participate in. This can also increase time spent by visitors along the waterfront, and in Ashland in general.

3. Work with business and property owners of U.S. Highway 2 businesses that overlook the water to provide more access and views to the waterfront.

There are several properties on the waterfront-side of U.S. Highway 2 that do not embrace the waterfront in their design, nor do they encourage public access or views of the lake. These properties are situated on relatively shallow lots that run to the edge of a steep bluff down to the waterfront trail, which may limit the types of development that these lots could accommodate. With this in mind, there is great opportunity for the City to work with property owners in this area to transition those properties to community-focused uses over time, and design the sites to allow for public access and views as much as possible. In the long term, some of this land could become public park or open space, only if no suitable use is identified given the shallow lot size. Although embracing the waterfront is utmost priority, these spaces lend themselves to highway business uses, given the adjacency to U.S. Highway 2. If this is the future strategy, design guidelines could reinforce public access/views of the lake from such uses.



4. Work with Clarkson Dock owners to establish official public easement rights to the dock, and work to purchase the dock in the longer term.

While the Clarkson Dock was formerly in use for commerce and will require clean-up for future use, the dock appears to be in a condition that could potentially be used for recreational use after some investment.

5. Evaluate and restore the Clarkson dock before establishing City-managed tent camping sites at the Clarkson Dock.

There is not currently waterfront tent camping in Ashland. Tent camping in addition to the RV camping at Kehrer Park would be a unique amenity in Ashland that could assist in being an attraction – and all that much more attractive to visitors to be able to camp on Lake Superior with urban amenities nearby and a fully accessible waterfront to take in.

6. Consider developing a small boat launch near the Clarkson Dock or in Bayview Park.

A boat launch in the vicinity of Clarkson Dock or Bayview Park would be highly attractive to visitors. A soft launch could be easily integrated into future remediation and redevelopment of Clarkson Dock. A more formalized small boat launch in Bayview Park would be more accessible and used more readily given the visibility, traffic patterns, and parking lot capacity at the park.

7. Reach out to neighboring communities with Folk Schools to determine the feasibility of opening a Folk School branch or satellite in Ashland at the former water treatment site.

The location of the former water treatment plant at Water Street and 12th Avenue East is an ideal site for creative reuse. Some of the historic structures could be integrated into the use. Given the adjacency to the Tri-County Corridor trail, the Clarkson Dock, and Bayview Park, could lead to it being an ideal site for a potential Folk School, maker spaces, or community retreat center. This would provide the community with a unique benefit with public good, and draw more visitors to Ashland and the region.



8. Work with WisDOT to improve crossings to Bayview Park across U.S. Highway 2, ensuring that crossings are controlled and safe to allow for maximum use by pedestrians and bicyclists.

While U.S. Highway 2 is a community transportation amenity, it comes with some challenges. One primary challenge is the crossing of the 5-lane highway. Ashland has robust crossing infrastructure throughout the commercial corridor, however some continued improvements are necessary. The primary point for such improvements is for visitors to Bayview Park to safely cross U.S. Highway 2. As previously highlighted on page 21, the three crossings on the east end of U.S. Highway 2 leave the most desired for the community. An enhanced crossing at 15th Avenue East or at the entrance to Bayview Park should be prioritized. Enhancements should follow what has been integrated mid-block between 2nd Avenue East and 3rd Avenue East on U.S. Highway 2 at Our Lady of the Lake Church. This includes a HAWK beacon traffic control device to allow pedestrians to cross safely.



East Central

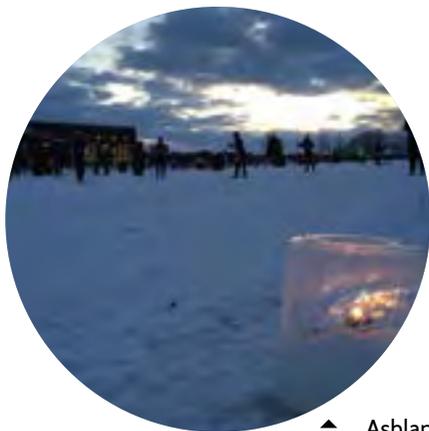


The Waterfront Edges

Ashland's waterfront edges, while the least "active" waterfront zones, are vitally important to Ashland's lakefront identity. The Western Edge is defined by the parkland that makes up the majority of the uses in this zone, including Prentice Park and Maslowski Park. A few waterfront businesses are also located in this zone. As the western edge zone transitions to the central waterfront zones and the downtown district, the development changes to more light industrial uses.

On the Eastern Edge, the waterfront is lined with single family homes, the only area of the water's edge in Ashland's waterfront zones that is developed with residential uses. Moving towards downtown from the Eastern Edge, development changes to become focused on more regional commercial uses and hotels before transitioning to the central waterfront zones.

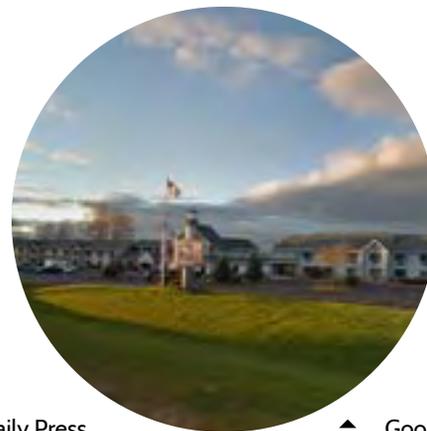
Perhaps most importantly, both districts serve as entrances to Ashland's central waterfront zones and the downtown district along State Highway 2. Development, signage, and markers that can be used to further enhance these areas as areas of welcoming and wayfinding should be prioritized whenever possible.



▲ Ashland Daily Press



▲ Ashland Daily Press



▲ Google Street View

Western Edge



1. Add a soft launch and a place to tie up boats to the beach at Maslowski Park.

Expanding access beyond the waterfront, into the lake is a significant opportunity. Continued improvements for smaller scale boating, including kayaks and canoes should continue, including to Maslowski Park's beach. This park is a primary beach destination in Ashland, and features many amenities that could be attractive to boaters exploring the shore.

2. Create an entrance marker to the Ashland lakefront district on the western side of the City.

Furthering the branding of Ashland and the expansive public access to the waterfront is a major opportunity. Highlighting this access, the destinations, and activities will be critical to further the branding and tourist potential for the city. The City is currently working on an easement for the corner southeast corner of Lake Shore Drive West and Sandborn Avenue at the Kwik Trip.

3. Preserve open park land and passive recreation on the Western edge of Ashland, including Prentice Park and Maslowski Park.

Continued preservation and restoration of the land on the western edge of Ashland is important for environmental reasons, but also to set the tone for a visitor's experience in Ashland. This work should include green infrastructure and other mechanisms to restore and maintain beach and wetland quality.

4. Continue the design and installation of green infrastructure at Maslowski Beach.

Efforts to include installation of bioswale, future consideration given to the reduction of impervious surface, and other potential strategies to improve water quality at the beach by reducing bacteria and other contaminants.

Eastern Edge



5. Investigate potential stormwater management efforts between 25th Avenue East and 26th Avenue East.

Efforts can be cooperative between existing and future property owners and the City of Ashland to manage stormwater strategically in an innovative manner.

6. Transition the former Timeless Timber site at 2200 U.S. Highway 2.

Planning efforts will continue to support a commercial development along U.S. Highway 2, residential land use on the south side of the site. This can build on the desire to continue commercial development along U.S. Highway 2 while finding opportunities to create new housing types within the community.



Resiliency Considerations

As the lake levels of Lake Superior are hitting record levels and storm surges due to climate impacts, resiliency considerations should continue to be integrated into plans for Ashland, in collaboration with neighboring communities and partners. Predictable and safe access to the lake is a problem during those certain events. And any near lake development should be considered with a resiliency lens to ensure that it is protected when the lake misbehaves from the potential destruction of increasing water levels and fierce storms.

Overall recommendations, priorities, and actions to consider for the waterfront:

- 1. The City recognizes the critical importance of continuing to address and fix its infrastructure deficits which are a threat to water quality.**
- 2. Guide prudent lakeshore development to minimize potential future infrastructure impacts due to wave action and storm surge.**
- 3. The City should collaborate with partners to ensure upstream projects will not harm water quality.**
- 4. Prioritize habitat restoration above the normal water level of the lake due to uncertainty of lake levels and energy. Promote natural processes and recruitment.**
- 5. Work cooperatively with natural resource agencies to promote and enhance local fisheries.**
- 6. Promote land acquisition of lakeshore and nearshore open space (e.g. the docks) that is not suitable for desirable development.**
- 7. Integrate green infrastructure into waterfront projects and throughout the city to improve water quality and quantity concerns.**



Green Infrastructure Opportunities

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, green infrastructure is a cost-effective, resilient approach to managing wet weather impacts that provides many community benefits. While single-purpose gray stormwater infrastructure – conventional piped drainage and water treatment systems – is designed to move urban stormwater from the built environment, green infrastructure reduces and treats stormwater at its source while delivering environmental, social, and economic benefits.

Green infrastructure manages water where it falls by slowing it down, retaining it, filtering it, and allowing it to infiltrate into the ground instead of entering the sewer system – mimicking nature and natural absorption of stormwater.

Though green infrastructure strategies can be investment to implement and require ongoing maintenance like all other forms of infrastructure, they can be a cost effective alternative to building ever larger sewers while also providing critical triple bottom line benefits of sustainability: environmental, economic, and social. Maintenance and monitoring of green infrastructure varies by the type of green infrastructure. Included in this section is a guide to these types of strategies and where they can be implemented in the community.

The City is committed to utilizing green infrastructure to improve water quality and add resiliency for stormwater management. The City currently has two AmeriCorps volunteers that are focusing on improving water quality in Ashland through green infrastructure implementation. Current efforts include Maslowski Beach and other areas that can benefit most from water quality and stormwater improvements.

A guide to green infrastructure types and site opportunities is provided in the following section.



Rain Gardens

Rain gardens (also known as bioretention or biofiltration cells) are shallow, basins with native vegetation that collect and absorb runoff from rooftops, sidewalks, and streets. Rain gardens mimic natural hydrology by infiltrating and evapotranspiring runoff. Rain gardens are versatile features that can be installed in almost any unpaved space. Once native plants are established, maintenance is minimal.

Areas to consider for implementation:

- » Grass areas that are not utilized for recreation. Much of our grass today could be native plants.



Stormwater Trees

Trees manage stormwater in a variety of ways. They soak up stormwater through their roots and provide surface area for water to evaporate directly from leaves and branches. Home and business owners can help reach this goal and manage stormwater by planting and maintaining trees throughout Ashland.

Areas to consider for implementation:

- » Streets, parking lots, yards, landscaping areas with ample space for the roots and water absorption.



Soil Amendments

Soil amendments are materials added to improve overall soil quality, enhance re-vegetation and habitat, and bolster the soil's ability to infiltrate and absorb water. For instance, the addition of lime can make soil less acidic. Strategic plant choice can also be used to amend soil composition in a process called phytoremediation.

Areas to consider for implementation:

- » Any soil to improve its quality and ability to infiltrate stormwater.



Bioswales

Bioswales are vegetated, mulched, or xeriscaped channels that provide water treatment and retention as they move stormwater from one place to another. Vegetated swales slow, infiltrate, and filter stormwater. They are particularly suitable along streets and parking lots due to their linear shape, but will require maintenance to remove weeds and litter that accumulate there to ensure proper drainage.

Areas to consider for implementation:

- » Maslowski Beach to improve water quality at the beach. Consideration can be given to using fungi as part of the wood chips in the bioswales to reduce the bacteria levels.
- » Carefully planned street terrace spaces can ideal for bioswales, and provide great educational opportunities with signage about stormwater management and native plants.



Regenerative Stormwater Conveyance

Regenerative stormwater conveyance (RSC) involves a series of pools and riffles designed to convey and treat stormwater runoff. RSC is a low impact development alternative to bioswales, pipes, and retention/detention structures. RSC uses native plants to slow stormwater and control erosion as water travels down sloped land, reducing or eliminating the need for downstream detention.

Areas to consider for implementation:

- » Areas with slopes are ideal for RSCs. These can be instrumental in improving water quality along Lake Superior and should be considered in areas that have been priorities for pollution reduction.



Native Landscaping

Native plants are adapted to the local climate and can tolerate drought and flooding cycles. Incorporating native landscaping into Ashland's waterfront and urban areas, especially in conjunction with other green infrastructure strategies, provides a way to enhance water infiltration and absorption into the landscape while also improving aquatic and urban habitat for wildlife and beautifying neighborhood spaces. Choosing native landscaping can help maintain healthy ecosystems in the existing parks and gardens. The City can integrate this into lands they own and manage, and encourage private property owners to consider these for this landscaping. Once plants are established, maintenance is minimal.

Areas to consider for implementation:

- » Grass areas that are not utilized for recreation. Much of our grass today could be native plants.
- » Any areas with plantings. Native perennial plants once established can reduce stormwater and maintenance efforts (and are beautiful).



Depaving

Depaving is the practice of removing excess impervious surfaces and replacing it with absorbent landscaping. Depaving is often done preceding the installation of permeable pavement, native landscaping, or absorbent turf. This practice can mitigate stormwater runoff, allow for natural infiltration, and increase aesthetic appeal.

Areas to consider for implementation:

- » Any excess paved surfaces. Replacing them with absorbent soil and landscaping is critical for maximum benefit. Some depaved land is so compacted that it sometimes mimics paving.



Permeable Pavement

Permeable pavement is any paved surfaces that infiltrates, treats, and/or stores rainwater where it falls, such as pervious concrete, porous asphalt, permeable interlocking pavers, and several other materials. These pavements are particularly cost-effective where land is highly developed with little or no space for stormwater detention and where flooding or icing is a problem.

Areas to consider for implementation:

- » Any existing or new asphalt or concrete surface. Permeable pavements can be strategically placed in low points of alleys, parking lots, and other paved areas to collect stormwater. Covering an entire parking lot with permeable pavement is not necessary for the full benefit.



Greenways & Land Conservation

Greenways are strips of land that store and drain stormwater runoff into the ground naturally. Greenways are often implemented along rivers and tributaries as a buffer to prevent bank erosion and filter pollutants before they enter our waterways. Protecting open spaces and sensitive natural areas within and adjacent to cities can mitigate flooding impacts of urban stormwater and improve water quality while providing recreational opportunities for city residents. Natural areas that are particularly important in addressing water quality and flooding include riparian areas, wetlands, and steep hillsides.

Areas to consider for implementation:

- » Preservation, maintenance, and restoration of greenways can make significant positive impacts for water quality.



Green Roofs

Green roofs are partially or completely planted with vegetation, thus enabling rainfall infiltration and evapotranspiration of stored rainwater. Green roofs are particularly cost-effective on large industrial or office buildings where stormwater management costs may be high or land availability for other methods is low. They provide additional benefits such as natural habitat, aesthetic appeal, and reduced energy costs by acting as an additional layer of insulation, keeping the building cooler on hot days.

Areas to consider for implementation:

- » A demonstration of a green roof could be considered in the Oredock Upland Area for any semi-public use. Consideration could be given to the integration of one that is publicly-accessible on any potential research facility or other publicly accessible building, such as a restaurant. This could also provide a viewing platform of the lakefront, the trail, and the growing string of waterfront amenities.



Blue Roofs

Blue roofs are non-vegetated systems that are designed to passively or actively collect stormwater through control devices. A blue roof system detains rainwater directly on a rooftop and slowly releases that water to the sewer system, allowing for some evaporation. The collected water can be used for irrigation or rain gardens, or it can be slowly discharged into the sewer system. Blue roofs are most effective when installed on relatively flat surfaces, such as industrial buildings.

Areas to consider for implementation:

- » Any new roof, or existing roof (that is structurally sound).



Rain Barrels & Cisterns

Rainwater harvesting systems like rain barrels or cisterns collect and store rainfall for later use. A typical rain barrel will store 50 gallons of water, often used by homeowners to water their gardens during a period when no rain is falling. When they are full, most systems will need to be drained to allow space for more rainfall. A cistern, on the other hand, can range in size from tens to thousands of gallons. Many rely on pumps to reuse the harvested water.

Areas to consider for implementation:

- » Any building or structure with external drainage (downspouts).

UDO Recommendations

Ashland's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) outlines the City's zoning regulations that inform the development patterns in Ashland. As this Plan seeks to guide preferred development patterns in the waterfront zones, it is important that Ashland's zoning regulations are updated to allow the types of development that Ashlanders are looking for along Lake Superior, and limit ones that are undesirable. The City's Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan Update should also be considered to ensure consistency with the land use and development goals for the city.

With that in mind, what follows are recommendations for edits that should be made to Ashland's UDO in order to maintain consistency with this Plan and vision.

1. Revise the W-C Waterfront Commercial District.

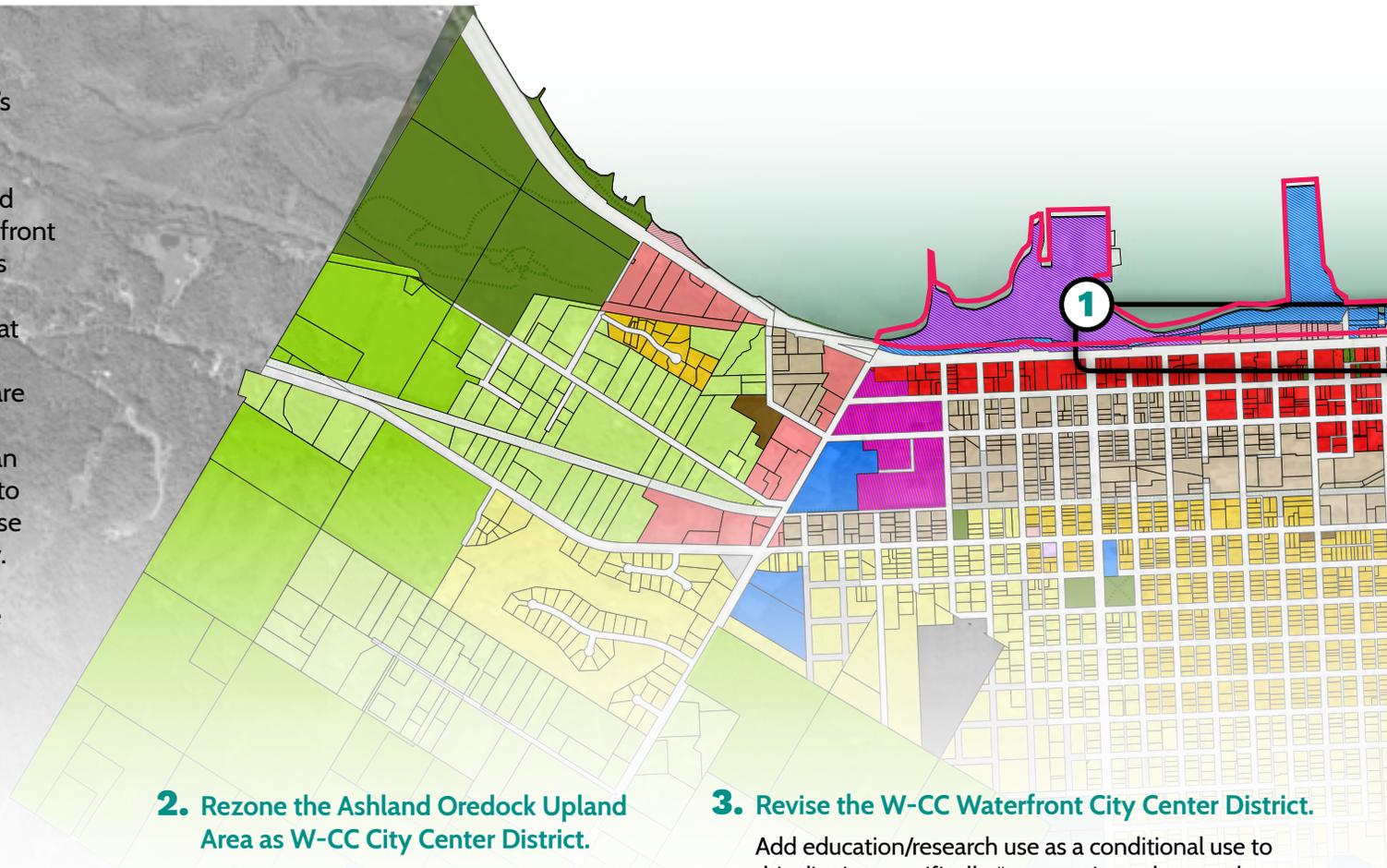
Consider editing the conditional uses that are allowed in the UDO to more clearly align with the intent of the district. Also consider adding residential uses as a conditional use in this district, and removing parking as a principal use.

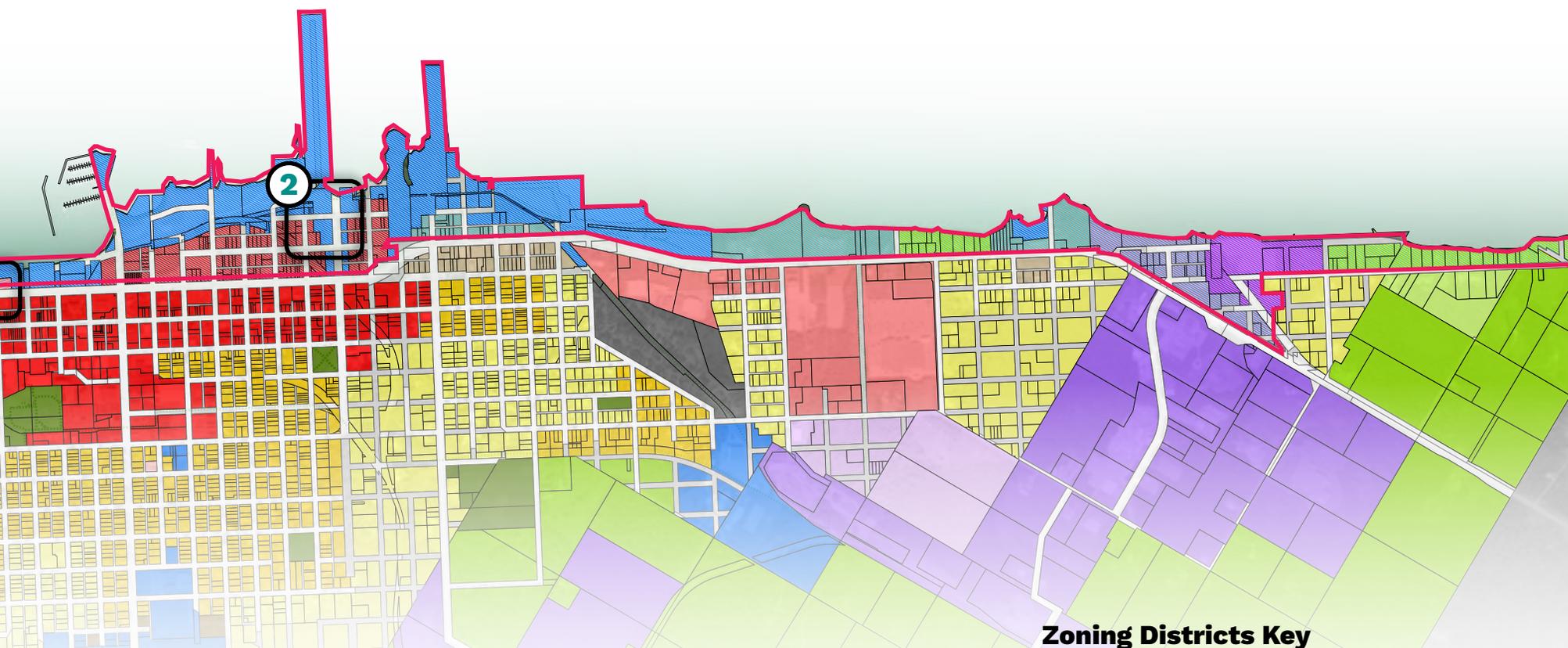
2. Rezone the Ashland Oredock Upland Area as W-CC City Center District.

Utilize the Planned Unit Development (PUD) Overlay in addition to the rezoned base zoning for further customization of the development in this area.

3. Revise the W-CC Waterfront City Center District.

Add education/research use as a conditional use to this district, specifically "water-oriented research facilities." Add additional types of dwellings to this zone as a conditional use, including multifamily buildings, single family attached buildings, two family or duplex buildings, and mixed use residential buildings combined with a ground for commercial use.





4. Revise the W-I Public/Institutional District.

Add food kiosks, food trucks, and seasonal restaurants as a conditional use.

5. Revise the Waterfront Overlay Zone.

The location of parking lots is restricted in the entire waterfront zone. Ensure that proposed development adheres to these guidelines, or more clearly outline where parking should be prioritized in the waterfront areas.

Zoning Districts Key

- R-E, Residential Estate
- R-1, Single Family Residential
- R-2, Single & Two-Family Residential
- R-4, High Density Residential
- MHC, Manufactured Home Community
- MRC, Mixed Residential/Commercial
- PRI, Planned Residential/Institutional
- NC, Neighborhood Commercial
- RC, Regional Commercial
- CC, City Center
- Waterfront Overlay District
- MCI, Mixed Commercial/Industrial
- LI, Light Industrial
- HI, Heavy Industrial
- W-SFR, Waterfront Single Family Residential
- W-MRC, Waterfront Mixed Residential/Commercial
- W-CRM, Waterfront Conference Residential Mix
- W-C, Waterfront Commercial
- W-CC, Waterfront City Center
- W-I, Waterfront Industrial
- W-PI, Waterfront Public/Institutional
- PI, Public/Institutional
- PP, Public Park
- AIR, Airport
- FD, Future Development

Strategic Action Plan

	Where	Goal	Recommendation	When	Who	Investment
Central Waterfront Zone	Throughout	 1. Add youth-focused play areas to the central waterfront zone, such as a splash pad or playground.		M	City Parks & Rec	\$\$
		 2. Partner with businesses – current and future – to create more public points of access to the waterfront through easements and cost sharing.		M, L	City Planning & Dev't, Parks & Rec	\$\$
		 3. Support existing and recruit additional waterfront-specific businesses.		O	City Planning & Dev't, Parks & Rec	\$\$
		 4. Explore the idea of restaurants with a lake view in the Central Waterfront Zone.		S, M	City Planning & Dev't	\$\$\$
	The Superfund Site, the Marina, and Kreher Park	 1. Create a new identity and name for the Superfund Site.		S	Community	\$
		 2. Consider a boat repair shop in the Superfund Site area.		S	City Parks & Rec	\$\$
		 3. Enhance trail (bike and pedestrian) connection across the Superfund Site and Kreher Park.		S	City Parks & Rec	\$\$
		 4. Conduct a feasibility study and consider adding some boat storage at the Superfund site, but also prioritize development of boat storage away from the waterfront.		S, M	City Parks & Rec, Planning & Dev't	\$\$
		 5. Ensure that view corridors from the lake-adjacent neighborhoods and homes are considered and maintained.		O	City Planning & Dev't, Parks & Rec	\$
		 6. Focus on developing public recreational space on the Superfund site, including event and concert space.		S, M	City Parks & Rec	\$\$\$
		 7. Continue the development of additional RV sites within the City-owned land to the southeast of the current sites at Kreher Park.		S, M	City Parks & Rec	\$\$
 8. Enhance the pedestrian connection to the Marina, Kreher Park, and the Superfund Site from downtown and U.S. Highway 2 along Ellis Avenue.			M	City Parks & Rec	\$	

Using this Plan

This strategic action tool provides a look at the recommendations in the plan through four lenses: the goals that they help to accomplish, preferred timeline, lead implementors and partners, and the amount of investment that will likely be required to accomplish each recommendation established through this planning process.

Waterfront Goals

-  Accessible & Visible
-  Sustainable
-  Activated & Exciting
-  Community-centered
-  Safe

When

- S** Short Term (1 year)
- M** Medium Term (1-4 years)
- L** Long Term (>5 years)
- O** Ongoing effort

Investment

- \$\$\$** Large Investment (purchasing land, providing developer incentives, extensive landscape and public facilities development)
- \$\$** Medium Investment (developing smaller facilities, implementing programs)
- \$** Lower Investment (<\$100k projects, programs, or staff time)

Where	Goal	Recommendation	When	Who	Investment
Central Waterfront Zone The Superfund Site, the Marina, and Kreher Park		1. Work with area developers, area neighbors, and the Plan Commission to develop a desired development plan for the Oredock Upland area, including mixed-use and housing options.	S, M	City Planning & Dev't, Parks & Rec, Public Works	\$
		2. Complete the feasibility study for a potential research center located in the Oredock Upland Area with institutional partners.	S	Research center group	\$
		3. Consider recruiting a brick-and-mortar restaurant, vending kiosk (concession stand) and/or food truck park near to the Oredock Park to help activate the space.	S, M	City Planning & Dev't	\$\$
		4. Consider connecting Stuntz Avenue to U.S. Highway 2 in consultation with WisDOT, providing a more direct entrance to the Oredock Upland Area.	S	City Planning & Dev't, Parks & Rec, Public Works	\$\$\$
		5. Plan for a safe and ADA-accessible parking lot close to the Oredock Park for visitors and residents, and include enhanced on-street parking options close to the Oredock.	S	City Planning & Dev't, Parks & Rec, Public Works	\$\$
		6. Consider shared parking lots for new residential or mixed-use development and recreational uses in the Oredock Park.	S, M	City Planning & Dev't, Parks & Rec, Public Works	\$\$

Strategic Action Plan

	Where	Goal	Recommendation	When	Who (Lead)	Investment
Central Waterfront The Oredock Upland Neighborhood		 	1. Develop a priority pedestrian route through the Oredock Upland neighborhood to the Marina area and downtown Ashland, and install sidewalks along the route.	M	City Planning & Dev't, Public Works	\$\$
		 	2. Enhance lighting throughout the Oredock Upland neighborhood, especially along the established pedestrian route to Downtown and the Marina.	M	City Planning & Dev't, Public Works	\$\$
		 	3. Install neighborhood-scale wayfinding elements throughout the Oredock Upland neighborhood.	S	City Planning & Dev't, Public Works	\$
		 	4. Locate an Ashland entrance marker to correspond with the new Oredock Park and new development in the Oredock Upland Area.	M	City Planning & Dev't, Parks & Rec, Public Works	\$

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West & East Central Waterfront

Where	Goal	Recommendation	When	Who (Lead)	Investment
West Central		1. Consider purchasing the Reiss Coal Dock in the long-term for development into a private community-focused use with development partners, or for demolition if redevelopment is not feasible.	L	City Planning & Dev't, Parks & Rec, Public Works	\$\$\$
		2. Add trail activation and visual interest to the trail by installing trail-side activities and informational signage.	M	City Parks & Rec	\$\$
		3. Work with business and property owners of U.S. Highway 2 businesses that overlook the water to provide more access and views to the waterfront.	O	City Planning & Dev't, Parks & Rec	\$
East Central		1. Work with Clarkson Dock owners to establish official public easement rights to the dock, and work to purchase the dock in the longer term.	M	City Planning & Dev't, Parks & Rec, Public Works	\$\$\$
		2. Evaluate and restore the Clarkson dock before establishing City-managed tent camping sites at the Clarkson Dock.	M, L	City Planning & Dev't, Parks & Rec, Public Works	\$\$
		3. Consider developing a small boat launch near the Clarkson Dock or in Bayview Park.	M	City Parks & Rec	\$\$
		4. Reach out to neighboring communities with Folk Schools to determine the feasibility of opening a Folk School branch or satellite in Ashland at the former water treatment site.	S, M	City Planning & Dev't	\$
		5. Work with WisDOT to improve crossings to Bayview Park across U.S. Highway 2, ensuring that crossings are controlled and safe to allow for maximum use by pedestrians and bicyclists.	S, M	City Planning & Dev't, Parks & Rec, Public Works	\$\$

Strategic Action Plan

	Where	Goal	Recommendation	When	Who (Lead)	Investment
Waterfront Edges	Western Edge		1. Add a soft launch and a place to tie up boats to the beach at Maslowski Park.	S	City Planning & Dev't, Parks & Rec, Public Works	\$
			2. Create an entrance marker to the Ashland lakefront district on the western side of the City.	S	City Planning & Dev't, Public Works	\$
		 	3. Preserve open park land and passive recreation on the Western edge of Ashland, including Prentice Park and Maslowski Park.	S	City Parks & Rec, Planning & Dev't	\$
			4. Continue the design and installation of green infrastructure at Maslowski Beach.	S	City Parks & Rec, Public Works	\$\$
	Eastern Edge		1. Investigate potential stormwater management efforts between 25th Avenue East and 26th Avenue East.	M	City Public Works	\$\$
			2. Transition the former Timeless Timber site at 2200 U.S. Highway 2.	M	City Planning & Dev't, Public Works	\$\$\$

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	Where	Goal	Recommendation	When	Who (Lead)	Investment
Resiliency Considerations	Throughout		1. The City recognizes the critical importance of continuing to address and fix its infrastructure deficits which are a threat to water quality.	O	City Planning & Dev't, Public Works	\$\$\$
			2. Guide prudent lakeshore development to minimize potential future infrastructure impacts due to wave action and storm surge.	O	City Planning & Dev't, Public Works	\$
			3. The City should collaborate with partners to ensure upstream projects will not harm water quality.	O	City Planning & Dev't, Public Works	\$
			4. Prioritize habitat restoration above the normal water level of the lake due to uncertainty of lake levels and energy. Promote natural processes and recruitment.	O	City Planning & Dev't, Public Works	\$\$
			5. Work cooperatively with natural resource agencies to promote and enhance local fisheries.	O	City Planning & Dev't, Public Works	\$
			6. Promote land acquisition of lakeshore and nearshore open space (e.g. the docks) that is not suitable for desirable development.	O	City Planning & Dev't, Public Works	\$\$\$
			7. Integrate green infrastructure into waterfront projects and throughout the city to improve water quality and quantity concerns.	O	City Planning & Dev't, Parks & Rec, Public Works	\$\$\$
UDO	Throughout		1. Revise the W-C Waterfront Commercial District.	S	City Planning & Dev't	\$
			2. Rezone the Ashland Oredock Upland Area as W-CC City Center District.	S	City Planning & Dev't	\$
			3. Revise the W-CC Waterfront City Center District.	S	City Planning & Dev't	\$
			4. Revise the W-I Public/Institutional District.	S	City Planning & Dev't	\$
			5. Revise the Waterfront Overlay Zone.	S	City Planning & Dev't	\$

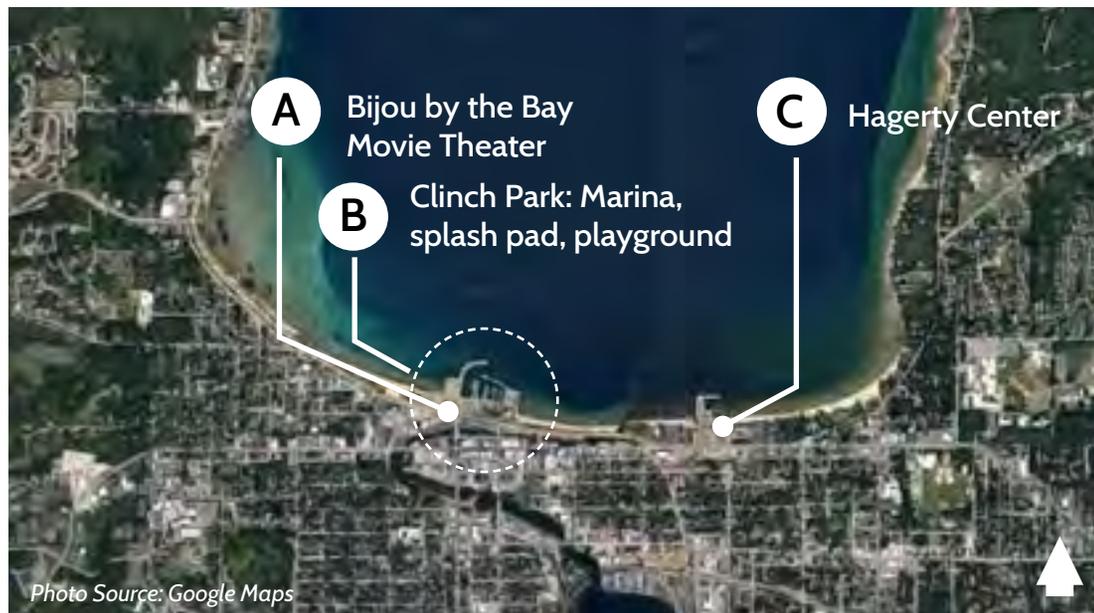


Case Studies

The case studies on the following pages were chosen based on both their similarities with Ashland's waterfront, but also based on their differences. The communities highlighted are certainly different from Ashland in terms of their scale, population, demographics, income, and economics, but each community shares a focus on their waterfront as a key community asset. Each community is also located in an area with four seasons and relatively short periods of hot summer weather.

These profiles are included to encourage Ashland to dream big when it comes to new development on the waterfront, find ideas that resonate with Ashlanders, come up with unique waterfront uses, and use the waterfront as a way to continue to define Ashland's identity. Ashland's motto, "find yourself next to the water," can take on new resonance in this next phase of waterfront development, as Ashland seeks to create a waterfront that is accessible, sustainable, and full of excitement for all.

Traverse City, Michigan | Population 14,674 | Summer High, July 80°



Similarities to Ashland's Waterfront: Waterfront trail, marina, open space

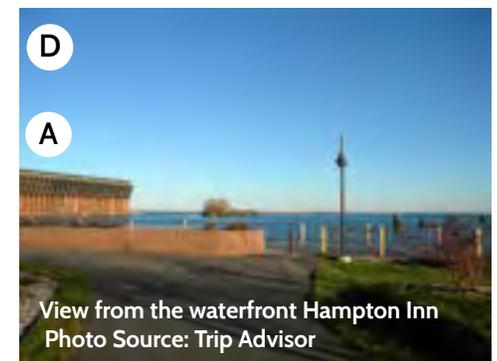
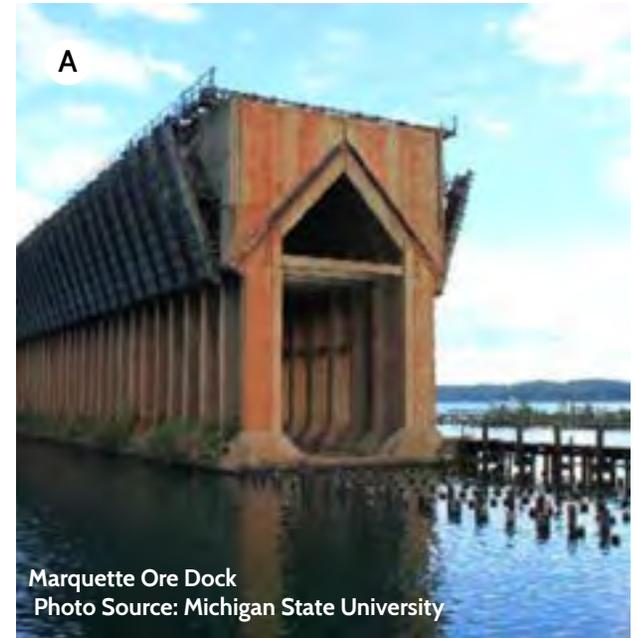
Land Uses and Development on the Waterfront:

Convention center (Hagerty Center at Northwestern Michigan College), marina, splash pad, playground, movie theater, senior center, public parks, resorts, single family homes

Traverse City is in an area of Michigan that supplies the largest amount of tart cherries in the nation. The National Cherry Festival, drawing 500,000 attendees from the region and country, is a week-long

celebration that is the centerpiece of tourism for the city. The highlight of their waterfront is Clinch Park, featuring a marina, playground, splash pad, soft launch for small boats, and a renovated movie theater. Across the street from the waterfront there is additional parking, a covered farmer's market area, and connection to the downtown. The Hagerty Center at Northwestern Michigan College contains a maritime academy, a water studies institute, and a culinary institute as well a convention center and event space overlooking the lake. The marina does not include covered boat storage on the waterfront.

Marquette, Michigan | Population 21,355 | Summer High, July 81°

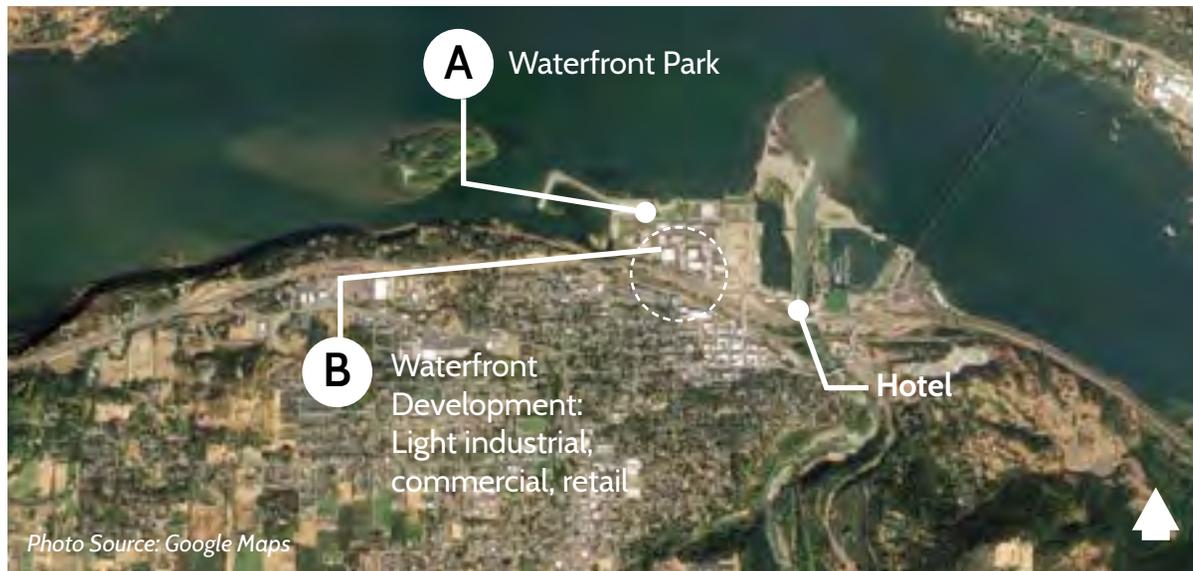


Similarities to Ashland's Waterfront: Open space, hotel, ore dock, marina, trail system

Land Uses and Development on the Waterfront:
Town homes, park space, working ore dock, hotel and venue, marina

Marquette, Michigan has some striking similarities to Ashland - notably, there are two ore docks on the waterfront that dominate views of the water. Marquette has several examples of waterfront condo development with views of the lake, most of which are across the street from large open spaces along the waterfront itself. There is also a large hotel with event space along the waterfront. The marina space does not include covered boat storage on the waterfront.

Hood River, Oregon | Population 7,167 | Summer High, August 82°



Similarities to Ashland's Waterfront: Waterfront trail, marina, open space

Land Uses and Development on the Waterfront:

New commercial/industrial/retail/warehouse park facing the waterfront park, waterfront trail system, kayak launch, marina, shopping center, hotels and spa, undeveloped land with railroad right-of-way

Hood River, Oregon has recently developed a contemporary mixed-use industrial/commercial waterfront district in conjunction with their

Waterfront Park. New development faces Waterfront Park with large windows and pedestrian connections that allow for flow of visitors from the open space to a coffee shop, brewery, or co-working space. The new waterfront development features contemporary design to complement the contemporary outdoor recreation spaces. Further down the shore there are public beaches and a marina launch. The marina does not include covered boat storage on the waterfront.



