



City of Rochester

Aqueduct Reimagined Project

Public Workshop #2

The Blue Cross Arena at the War Memorial, 1 War Mem Sq.

Thursday July 21, 2022

Open House: 1 – 4 PM

Design Workshop: 5:30 – 7:30 PM

ATTACHMENTS

- Sign-in sheets
- PDF of boards
- PDF of presentation

SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP

Open House

The Open House from 1 PM – 4 PM and the first 30 minutes of Public Design Workshop consisted of an open house with 15+ informational and interactive boards for attendees to circulate through at their own pace. Attendees had the opportunity to leave feedback at every station. City representatives and other project team members were also present to answer questions.

Attached - Feedback received on the boards can be found on page 3. A copy of the boards online at:

<https://bit.ly/3biVefT>

Presentation

At 6 PM, the project team gave a presentation about the Aqueduct Reimagined Project. The team discussed the project scope, schedule, key findings from the existing conditions analysis and potential design themes. The design concept priorities identify (provide brief explanation here). They include:

- Cultural Histories
- The Destination
- The Everyday
- Creative Arts
- Connector
- Green River Ecology

Attached – PowerPoint Presentation, also available online at: <https://bit.ly/3Jqp5zE>

Workshop

After the presentation, workshop attendees gathered into seven groups to participate in the group workshop activity which examined the six design concepts in more detail. Attendees were asked to answer a series of questions about each design theme and were also asked to rank the design concepts by



importance, on a scale of from 1-6. Collectively, the design concepts were ranked in order from highest priority to lowest priority as follows:

- 1) Cultural Histories
- 2) Connector
- 3) The Destination
- 4) Creative Arts
- 5) The Everyday
- 6) Green River Ecology.

Attached – Group Worksheet Feedback (page 8)



FEEDBACK RECEIVED BOARDS

Board #3: Cultural Histories

What do you like most about this scenario?

- Protect the lower arches from debris
- Art/History/Mobility/River. Make space into dining area with big screen T.V. specializing in the arts as well as documentary pertaining to artist
- Keep the history and keep it interwoven
- Try to preserve the upper level of arches & integrate them into the new design
- Keep the arches! Highlight the history w/ plaques and festivals
- [Ponte Vecchio, Florence Photo] ← This used to be Rochester's Main Street
- The canal overpass is the most important + earliest touchstone one of Rochester/Genesee Valley history. Keep the visual impact of the canal overpass. Preferable with a full-length water feature.
- Telling the story while providing a meaningful public space for the future
- Lots of benches + shade, lit even at night, people will use it to commute

What activities would you like to see in this scenario?

- Would like to see all layers of history in Aqueduct (minus roadway) retained. Don't want to see any arches removed.
- Need critical mass of attractions – mini history museums.
 - o Kodak / Xerox / Bausch + Lomb
 - o Susan B. Anthony / Frederick Douglass
 - o Flour City / Flower / Parks Olmstead
- Keep the arches + graffiti art
- History Timeline of Rochester
- Highlight ethnic neighborhoods / people
- Flexibility to have changing installations
- Rochester pic invites discussion & questions – and it is restful
- If this will provide a location for "downtowners" to meet and appreciate our city, it is a good idea. But the tendency to tear things down (i.e., the arches) can lead to us losing some of the history and appreciation of the city's growth through the years. If our city is really going to rebound, the proposed changes need to be well thought out and coordinated
- Education programs for kids
- Historic markers + interactive exhibits

Board #4: Green River Ecology

What do you like most about this scenario?

- Rochester lacks the vision to be one of these [example] cities
- Highlight art along the river
- Shady areas to sit and relax
- Make it beautiful with plants + art
- Natural riparian habitat
- The ecosystem is so important for the future of our kids
- Being close to the water in multiple capacities and seasons



- Utilize what's unique about this space; not every city has a river + historic Aqueduct at its heart

What activities would you like to see in this scenario?

- More educational signage on hydroelectric power on Genesee
- Education programs for kids
- Water quality / smell
- Garbage / debris
- White water kayaking
- What is unique to Rochester? Aqueduct / Graffiti / Social justice on river

Board #5: Creative Arts

What do you like most about this scenario?

- Preservation of the arches
- Lighting to highlight the art
- Preserving a unique historic site – including arches!
- Keep the upper arches (x 2)
- Integration with the library, give them control over some of the space for community events
- Keep the arches and graffiti (x 3)
- Preserve art
- Welcome the wide variety of artists who have historically used the space
- Protect the graffiti (x 2)

What activities would you like to see in this scenario?

- Existing street art in the Aqueduct retained + celebrated
- Preserve graffiti art
- New art spaces – visual and performing
- Art!!
- The arts – celebrating our local artist + inviting traveling artists to celebrate the arts our city once supported. It feels as though in the recent years we've moved from the pride in the talented arts + artists locally.

Board #6: Connector

What do you like most about this scenario?

- Ability to travel all up and down the river, on both sides – it's very restricted now
- [????] bike trails
- Safer route for biking
- Need to protect East-to-West traffic options
- North + South connections critical
- Note every example features people walking, not a single car. Good, but out of context with our suburban trip generation & racist segregation
- I would like to see our city more "green" with vegetation
- Running route connecting both sides of river
- Green space on top ad semi-enclosed on lower deck



What activities would you like to see in this scenario?

- Design for e-bikes & scooters (dedicated lane)
- Traffic calming, signage
- Bike route, traffic calming on connecting streets
- The stairs in the proposed plan are bad, there should be ramps [????] for elevation change to maximize accessibility for wheelchairs + bikes
- Needs to connect for bikes, strollers, wheelchairs
- Parades – could end at Civic Center if more went on at Broad
- Designated travel throughway for people on bikes!
- Don't forget the people who actually live here and use the space already
- Running / biking, strollers, x-ski?
- Need to be careful that people don't get "swept up" and feel the need to move across quickly without stopping to enjoy

Board #7: The Everyday

What do you like most about this scenario?

- Lighting!
- Everyday should still be very specific to Rochester and location-based histories
- Places with reasons to stop. Benches are good but do not necessarily mean a place is appealing or convenient to stop at. Rochester doesn't have many parks that have reason to stop and enjoy them
- Green space / Natural riparian habitat
- It's downtown & will bring activity outside of arena events
- Where is "Mercy Statue" on Ex lawyer Coop building?

What activities would you like to see in this scenario?

- Food vending
- People hanging out + relaxing
- Programming (group fitness, kids classes, buskers)
- GRAF
- Love the idea of night-lighting – highlights area + extends use into evening. Plenty of seating!
- Sports showcase? Rugby 7s, hurling, kickball, basketball (x 2)
- Parcel 5? Downtowns Park?

Board #8: The Destination

What do you like most about this scenario?

- Concert venue highlights river
- Downtown has some attractions, but they're far apart. This is a great space to tie it together
- The arches / lower deck as a covered area provides options
- More river walk and possible River transportation like Venice or Other?



- Already an important, celebrated destination for urban arts + urban exploration – don't lose this when planning
- We have lots of destinations that are underutilized. Connecting them is critical

What activities would you like to see in this scenario?

- Programming (group fitness, kids activities, music)
- Food vending
- Max use of waterfront
- Plenty of shade seating
- Concerts / activities
- Food truck rodeo
- Maintain the space for our urban artists + explorers
- Short distance shuttle during events between surrounding events + destinations (Cleveland example)

Board #9: Project Goals & Project Parameters

- Retain some of these walls [arches]
- ETFE / PTFE roof structure covering portion just NE of BCA. Support on selective remaining portions of existing upper arches and center piers to maintain a "tunnel" and provide shelter
- Street level need more wall space for artists
- Preserve subway arches, not just Erie Canal history
- Preserve all arches maybe some of roadway

Board #10: Project Scope & Extents

- The library modification will always be in the sun, not a good thing
- Don't rewater - preserve the graffiti arts

Board #13: Larger Street Network

- Why south Ave 2 way ending at Court St rather than Woodbury & 490?

Board #14: Vision for Aqueduct District Streets

- Not reference Childs Basin in some way? Huge part of our Canal History

Board #16: A New Riverfront Street Network – Prioritizing pedestrian mobility over cars

- [Lighting – first lighting picture] This is one of the nice lights on Main Street that are being removed

What are other streetscape elements that should make up the identity of the Aqueduct Reimagined District?

- North South Bike connections are most important elements
- Safety lighting
- Play elements + bike infrastructure
- Food trucks + lunch seating
- Playful elements for adults + for kids
- Historic markers; interactive elements that tell the story
- Bike accessibility and stands



- Make broad St pedestrian, stroller and bike friendly. Make around bike lanes so criterium can still go over it!
- Let all pavers be quality – smooth. Wheelchair users feel all bumps.
- Move bike lock ups where one might choose to go downtown
- History markers / info
 - o Historical timeline re: canal/subway etc.
- Accommodate downtown Criterion bike race
- Shaded lunch seating
- Traffic calming
- Bike racks
- Trees for shade
- Retain a lane or 2 for emergency vehicles and buses (especially when Main St. is closed for various reasons). RTS won't have a quick detour
- Connect wild areas along the river from UR to Lake Ontario
- Try reverse diagonal parking, even though we must train suburban drivers to use it
- Protected bike lanes (separated if possible) + lots of pedestrian sidewalk space

Summary of Design Workshop Feedback – Group Worksheets

Cultural Histories - <i>The Layered History of Rochester & the River</i>		
1. What design features do you think could make the space feel like it celebrates cultural histories? (for example, visual indicators like placards or images, installations, something more subtle?)	2. Are there certain aspects of history you would be excited to see represented here?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Canal history, old subway history, Genesee History - Something like Canalside in Buffalo - Dynamic integration of history and modern art - Does history get overwritten by the art? - Abolition history – people escaping slavery on canal boats - Subway should be highlighted – bring the last Rochester Subway Car back under the library - Markers highlighting passage of time, how site has changed over time - Art & History are equal - Diversity of history - Frederick Douglass - Erie Canal - Replica of Corinthian Hall at Front & Andrews Street - Make something of the building on Main Street to honor Douglass and The North Star - Flow of Erie Canal - Burned Over District Spiritual - Bridged - Water feature included in aqueduct? - Keep the arches - Represent the different eras and people that have a connection to the aqueduct through the ages. Make sure it's inclusive. - Multiple histories → Layers of history into present - Arches - Canal-Subway road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Streetcar history - Layered history - Cultural OR natural history - Sculptures - Sustainable signage - Linear presentation – story telling - Interpretive features - Experience of river - Keeping as much of the integrity of the structure itself - Sculptures - We could keep as much from a structural & historical standpoint - Simple interpretive, vandal resistant - History shouldn't start with just the aqueduct – precolonial, Native American history - Timelines - Experience - Importance of the Erie Canal, Child's Basin - Not Disneyland! Aqueduct amazing fete - Water – incorporated features + ice skating - Subtle signage - Unpeeling layers - Preserve some of the pre-existing art and architectural hotspots in the Aqueduct - Keep the existing, historical art in the subway - Museum – Western NY Heritage Corridor – the legacy of liberation - Station 6 – Ely Mill; historic equipment; early electricity in USA 		

Creative Arts - A Living Museum	
<p>1. What design features do you think can make this space read as a creative arts hub and draw people to it? (for example, pop up art spaces? Installations? Performance spaces? Outdoor classroom areas?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outdoor Sculpture Garden line in Minneapolis - Preserve elements of graffiti or should it keep constantly changing? Or a mix? - Art & History are equal - Covered space; have options covered / uncovered - Regular events where artists or vendors can set up booths on specific days - Winter? - Greenhouse for gathering, wine tasting + food, music, events - Could this still be a covered space? Not the bridge but some kind of roof? - 3D scanning of current artwork - Kids arts programs – interactive - Graffiti - Welcoming to diverse populations, multicultural programs, more permanent arts/rotating - Existing graffiti - Connect with other arts communities within the city - First Fridays - Walls as canvas, ARE covered, layered, opportunity for new canvases - Don't see it as THE arts destination. - How does it connect with other arts programs in the city? - Workshop/studio space; gallery, enclosed gallery space; elevating graffiti artist to be educators (E.G. Memorial Art Gallery, Bridge divides with traditional institutes, celebrating graffiti artists in their space as opposed to bringing them to traditional galleries - Already have the Eastman theater – don't need performance space at the expense of something else - Keep the walls free for out graffiti + mural artists, showcase our local artists + talent. - Walkways for various performing arts AS LONG as the walls are left along - Allow graffiti to just exist! - Graffiti is meant to be painted over – no need to preserve (act meant to be public) - Stalls / spaces along for display + selling 	<p>2. Are there certain types of creative arts you would be excited to see represented here?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Like Rialto – buildings on each side. Put subway car and tracks back under the Rundel Library as a living museum (the only car is at the Museum of Transportation currently) - Maintain graffiti - Do not gentrify - Tie history with art with installations that highlight the history (Example: metal forged murals mounted) - No matter what happens – make sure that art is DOCUMENTED thoroughly - Continue to be a hub for graffiti murals (+1) - Really love the Leake St, Arches example from London - London example! Graffiti in subway to Nick Tahous - Toronto example – Painting party - Van Gogh experience replicated for graffiti (how do you entice to low income) - Graffiti, murals, architecture (x2) - Reading space + exhibit under library space - Not a formal stage but local rising artist + students to do gigs on the Aqueduct - Small-scale performance, nothing too large, temporary programming (Ex. Quincy Market)



Connector - Connecting People, Neighborhoods and Destinations	
<p>1. What kind of connector would you want this space to be? (for example, slow moving – winding pathways, or faster with moments to slow down - more straight and streamline?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We want this to be a destination not a place people just move through - North-South connection more important - Impact of Constellation Brands – congestion? - Other public spaces like this - Hot 1st priority - Balance of both – a space to move from one side to the other but flexibility to support larger gathering such as festivals (like at Public Market) "Aqueduct Days" - Slow moving. This should be more of a destination space first, create possibility for people to still move through without disturbing or being slowed down by people enjoying the space (not moving) - ½ road ½ open (1 lane) for when Main Street closed - Grades/slopes for all mobility - Linear (for commuters away from other spaces) – Linear easier for those w/ disabilities - North – South Connectivity! (Right now it's a fail – same as Inner Loop) - Places to stop - Both fast / slow combo - Promenade inside the arches - Emergency response - Have bridges to the north + south - Larger connector than Court St - Prioritize a non-car transportation system – It's a bridge + a river crossing for pedestrians / bikes. Would be very useful for people living + working downtown - Smooth, casual walking experiences, viewing spaces + bike / skate paths for efficient travels - Protect bikes and separate lanes for bikes like Union St 	<p>2. What other design features would be necessary to make this a successful connector? (for example, shade, seating, planting etc?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Longer distance destinations -> as a connector, it would need to connect to neighborhoods or locations that are not downtown - Impact of redesigned Main Street? Will that impact traffic when it reopens? - Different levels of moving – slow, medium, fast - "Bike café" (+1) - Shade! Year round covering (maybe via glass tunnel or greenhouse) so it can be used year round - Hard to see this as a priority / main focus - Shade, areas off the path to gather for enjoying the views without interrupting those using the space to travel - A space to walk and connect Convention Center to Blue Cross Arena

Green River Ecology - Aqueduct as River Ecology Park	
<p><i>1. What design elements do you think would make you feel closer to the river and its ecology here? (for example, plants, water feature, river history, canal history etc)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Being able to walk closer to the water level: the water actually looks bluer from this perspective. - The natural cool breeze of the river is its own attraction. - Close access to the river – to get out very close to the water - Tie into High Falls Park, lower river, Corn Hill – part of longer river - If possible, provide closer access to the water - [Drawing of Aqueduct with stairs to the water on either side] - Integrate community gardens, shade, trees - Layers of history - Highlight how cultural history and environmental history intertwine - Right-size design based on population - Educational elements - Fountains, trees - The river is often loud + stinky. If we want to bring people in this area, they need to be addressed - This section of river is loud + not extremely attractive for riverside views/attractions - Get down to the river! - Trees! - Program with water. Winter: skating w/ public, curling. Summer: kayaking, boating Concern about smell and logistics of water 	<p><i>2. What kinds of activities would you like to do related to the river and its ecology?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to the Seymour Johnson Mill Race -> partner with RG&E to let pedestrians on there - Couple to the trail on river on both sides – people who live here will use it - Canal boat? - People want to be close to the water and interact - See how Rhode Island has a bridge festival - This isn't an ideal space to interact with the river - Native plants, ecology → educate kids, add information - Winter programming – snowman, skiing (teach too) etc. - Ant inclines? sledding

The Destination - A Space for Celebration & Gathering	
<p>1. What design features would make this space feel like a destination in itself? (for example, formal moves, installations, scale?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider having destination spots that are underground → will have interest in winter and could be heated - Designation for who? People who live here or visitors? - Perception of city is a bigger issue than this project - Provide spaces for younger city residents – not for suburbanites - It's not a destination, it will sit empty - Family programs; plays; bands (sheet theater performative space) - Public bathrooms - Tunnel system? - Flexibility - Cultural elements (cultural fest / education) - Focused art exhibit or artist as destination - Enclosed with heat - History is the destination - Constant stream of visitors (design for them + Rochesterians): Convention Center → Immediate audience; RG&E, hydropower energy; War Memorial - Under Rundel - Pregame activities – bands, etc. - Wintertime events – Xmas village - Tower280 Food trucks - Connections between Ely Mill; Station 6 Power; Edison Power; Canal - I think a simple way of viewing the already inhabited art space - Viewing local street art + murals - Enough concert spaces, scared to lose an art prioritizing space - The importance of the space comes from the culture of the aqueduct...that's all important, the structure + art - Don't need another large space, already got a lot - Don't over program – let people do what they want with space - Extension at library – library room! 	<p>2. Can you think of any design features from other destinations you are familiar with that could be nice to see here?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complimentary uses – this + Parcel 5 – how do the relate. Come after an event at Parcel 5 – sit by the water + enjoy the breeze - NYC Highline and Chelsea Market - Could host Aqueduct Festival [drawing of Aqueduct with vendor tents] - "Bike Café" - Cover to use in the winter – keep it covered - Solar panels? Glass? - High places – people like to be up high - Native American History - A glass roof on the top level of the bridge providing a view below. The same thing can happen on the subway bed experiencing the water - Clear walkway, stay at street level but allow people to look down into subway (x2)



The Everyday - Downtown's Neighborhood	
<p>1. What design features do you think makes the space feel like an everyday space? (for example, shade, seating of a certain type, views?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shade; seating; sound of river; lighting; lunch, ice cream, quick eats nearby - Keep the top deck! Allow a covered space to exist to accommodate all seasons - Flexibility - Views - Outdoor movies - None of the pictures are in winter - Flower – seasonal - Things that look good in winter → Rose of Sharon, late blooms, pine - Precedents: Boston Commons, Central Park, Riverwalk St, Red Bridge Amsterdam, Providence RI Ped bridge → seating, gathering, bikers, trees - Be able to see water like Browns Race - Low vegetation, save water - [Drawing of bridge] - [Drawing of layered bike lane/promenade] - See Providence bridges - Open passages - Tie to library. Sit / shade / gather, covered areas 	<p>2. What design elements will make this comfortable to use year round?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What about the 3,000" long tunnel? We could create an indoor physical activity environment - Covered spaces protected from the elements (wind, etc.) to provide year around use - Snow activities - Shade - Benches, landscaping, shade trees <p>Make it a space to have lunch, read a book, spend time between events</p>