

A quorum of the Administration Committee, Board of Public Works, Park Board, and/or Common Council may attend this meeting; (Although it is not expected that any official action of any of those bodies will be taken).

**CITY OF MENASHA
JOINT MEETING
REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY – CITY PLAN COMMISSION
1. Join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.**

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/420270157>

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Audio PIN: When prompted, press #

April 13, 2021

Virtual

4:15 PM

AGENDA

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. City Plan Commission (Mayor Merkes)
2. Redevelopment Authority (Chairperson Vanderhyden)

B. ROLL CALL/EXCUSED ABSENCES

1. City Plan Commission (Community Development Director Schroeder)
2. Redevelopment Authority (Community Development Director Schroeder)

C. PUBLIC HEARING

D. MINUTES TO APPROVE

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ANY MATTER OF CONCERN ON THIS AGENDA
(five (5) minute time limit for each person)

F. DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

1. Lawson Canal Draft Concept Plan
 - a. Plan Commission Resolution R-1-21
 - b. Redevelopment Authority Resolution R-1-21

G. ADJOURNMENT

If you have questions, please call the Community Development Department at
(920) 967-3650 between 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday.



RESOLUTION R-1-21

CITY OF MENAHSa PLAN COMMISSION

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE LAWSON CANAL NATURALIZATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS CONCEPT PLAN, THE APPLICATION OF GRANT FUNDING, THE CONTINUATION OF DESIGN/URBAN RENEWAL, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

Introduced by Alderperson Schmidt.

WHEREAS, the City of Menasha approved the creation of Tax Increment District No. 11 (TID 11) and associated Project Plan on July 16, 2007 to facilitate the continuing redevelopment of Menasha's waterfront, downtown, and near downtown business districts along the Ahnaip Street Corridor; and,

WHEREAS, said TID 11 Project Plan called for the possible acquisition and development of the Lawson Canal estimated at a cost of \$1,400,000.00; and,

WHEREAS, the Lawson Canal Project, naturalizing and providing additional public access, will support and encourage economic redevelopment and urban renewal along the south shore of the Fox River below the Menasha Dam and create a unique public outdoor recreation amenity that will draw visitors to downtown Menasha and create a safe non-motorized boat passage/portage around the dam; and,

WHEREAS, this Project has been identified in the City's Downtown Menasha Vision Plan 2017-2027; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Menasha Common Council on October 1, 2018, motioned to direct staff to analyze the feasibility, purchase options and potential funding sources for the possible acquisition of the Lawson Canal to be brought back to the Common Council for its consideration; and,

WHEREAS, this Project has been identified in the City's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) 2020-2024; and,

WHEREAS, the Common Council reviewed and approved through Resolution R-19-20 on May 18, 2020 authorizing staff to take necessary action to move the Lawson Canal Project forward including: obtaining/executing options to acquire both parcels of land at no/nominal cost including the canal parcel with water rights, continue design development with budgeted funds, and complete grant applications for the Lawson Canal Restoration Project AND to authorize the

Redevelopment Authority to acquire the first parcel for the purpose of carrying out blight elimination and urban renewal projects without the need for adopting redevelopment plan; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Menasha Common Council on April 5, 2021 motioned to approve and enter into the Right to Purchase Real Estate agreement with PJC Group L.L.C for the Lawson Canal Restoration Project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City of Menasha Plan Commission hereby supports the Lawson Canal Naturalization and Public Access Concept Plan as presented supporting the redevelopment and economic growth of the community; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Menasha Plan Commission hereby recommends the City of Menasha Common Council accept the conceptual plan, authorize the Parks Department to submit grant applications including but not limited to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource (DNR) Stewardship Grant, for the continued design and construction of the naturalization and public access of the Lawson Canal, authorize the Mayor to execute all necessary documents required for said applications, and authorize acceptance and use of such funds as it relates to the design, investigation and implementation of the Project.

Passed and approved this 13th day of April, 2021.

Recommended by:

Motion/Second:

Vote:

Pass/Fail:

Requires: Majority Vote

Donald Merkes, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sam Schroeder, Plan Commission Secretary



RESOLUTION R-1-21

THE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MENASHA, WISCONSIN

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE LAWSON CANAL NATURALIZATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS CONCEPT PLAN, THE APPLICATION OF GRANT FUNDING, THE CONTINUATION OF DESIGN/URBAN RENEWAL, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

Introduced by Chairperson Vanderhyden.

WHEREAS, the City of Menasha approved the creation of Tax Increment District No. 11 (TID 11) and associated Project Plan on July 16, 2007 to facilitate the continuing redevelopment of Menasha's waterfront, downtown, and near downtown business districts along the Ahnaip Street Corridor; and,

WHEREAS, said TID 11 Project Plan called for the possible acquisition and development of the Lawson Canal estimated at a cost of \$1,400,000.00; and,

WHEREAS, the Lawson Canal Project, naturalizing and providing additional public access, will support and encourage economic redevelopment and urban renewal along the south shore of the Fox River below the Menasha Dam and create a unique public outdoor recreation amenity that will draw visitors to downtown Menasha and create a safe non-motorized boat passage/portage around the dam; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Menasha Common Council on October 1, 2018, motioned to direct staff to analyze the feasibility, purchase options and potential funding sources for the possible acquisition of the Lawson Canal to be brought back to the Common Council for its consideration; and,

WHEREAS, this Project has been identified in the City's Downtown Menasha Vision Plan 2017-2027; and,

WHEREAS, this Project has been identified in the City's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) 2020-2024; and,

WHEREAS, the Redevelopment Authority motioned on March 3, 2020 to pursue the acquisition of the Lawson Canal and its related water right from the Neenah Menasha Water Power Company and to turn over portions of the canal, at a later date, to the City Parks Department to be used for the Lawson Canal Project, as it supports future development; and,

WHEREAS, the Common Council reviewed and approved through Resolution R-19-20 on May 18, 2020 authorizing staff to take necessary action to move the Lawson Canal Project forward including: obtaining/executing options to acquire both parcels of land at no/nominal cost including the canal parcel with water rights, continue design development with budgeted funds, and complete grant applications for the Lawson Canal Restoration Project AND to authorize the Redevelopment Authority to acquire the first parcel for the purpose of carrying out blight elimination and urban renewal projects without the need for adopting redevelopment plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Redevelopment Authority executed a Land Purchase and Development Agreement on September 15, 2020 to redevelop the former Banta building supporting the urban renewal of the corridor and Project; and,

WHEREAS, the Redevelopment Authority acquired fee simple title of the Canal Property (Parcel 3-00550-00) from Neenah Menasha Water Power Company on January 14, 2021; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Menasha Common Council on April 5, 2021 motioned to approve and enter into the Right to Purchase Real Estate agreement with PJC Group L.L.C for the Lawson Canal Restoration Project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Menasha hereby supports the Lawson Canal Naturalization and Public Access Concept Plan as presented supporting the redevelopment and economic growth of the community; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Menasha hereby recommends the City of Menasha Common Council accept the conceptual plan, authorize the Parks Department to submit grant applications including but not limited to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource (DNR) Stewardship Grant, for the continued design and construction of the naturalization and public access of the Lawson Canal, authorize the Mayor to execute all necessary documents required for said applications, and authorize acceptance and use of such funds as it relates to the design, investigation and implementation of the Project.

Passed and approved this 13th day of April, 2021.

Recommended by:

Philip Vanderhyden, Chairperson

Motion/Second:

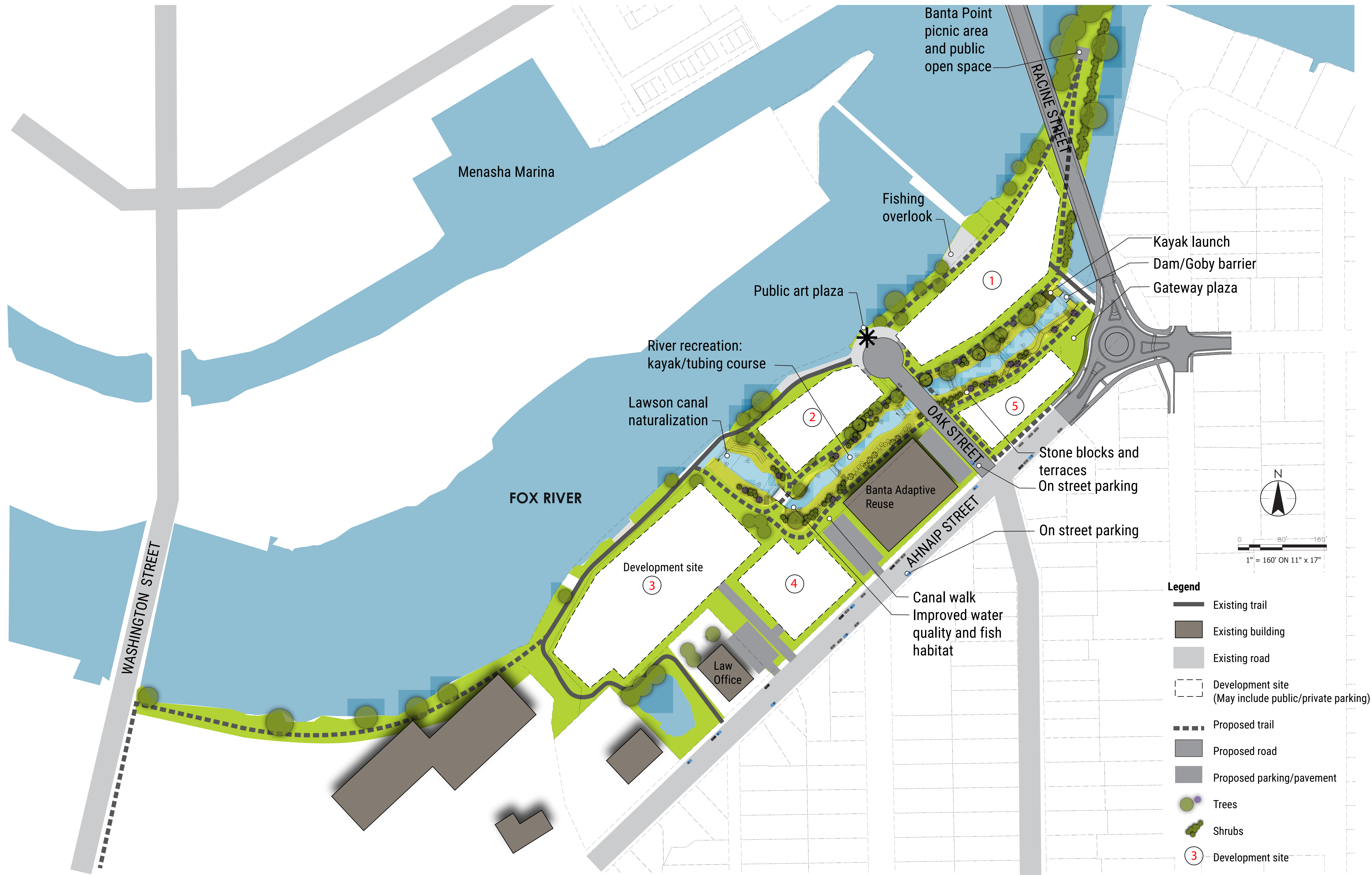
ATTEST:

Vote:

Sam Schroeder, Executive Director

Pass/Fail:

Requires: Majority Vote





MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Merkes
Common Council

From: Parks & Recreation Dept./Community Development Dept./MS and SS

Date: April 1, 2021

RE: Lawson Canal/Banta Corridor Draft Concept Update

Over the last several months, staff has been working with the consultants to create a draft plan that focuses on several key defining elements for this corridor:

- Creating a public waterfront destination with multiple outdoor recreational opportunities
- Connectivity of canal and river
- Connections of private development and public access areas
- Fishing Access
- Bike/Pedestrian Access
- Oak St Right-of-Way
- Development of Banta Point
- Future Access of Development Sites

On March 23, the Common Council, RDA, Plan Commission, Park Board and the general public was invited to a presentation of the draft concept and public input session. Following the workshop, the public was invited to view the presentation and provide feedback in an online survey or stop by City Hall to view the concept plans and submit feedback.

Over 86% of the survey respondents, agreed or strongly agreed that the design of the plan meets the following 3 guiding principles:

- Provide exceptional public access to the waterfront
- Provide a range of activities and opportunities to draw people to the area to recreate, live and work
- Provide sustainable development that balances economic, environment and social needs

As we work towards our goal of applying for a DNR Stewardship grant by May 1, we will be hosting a special meeting on April 13th to review final concept designs with the RDA, Plan Commission and Park Board based on feedback received from the workshop and public input

period and thus recommend support to the Council. On April 20th, staff will seek approval of the concept plan from the Common Council to move forward with the grant application process.

Lawson Canal/Banta Naturalization and Public Access Public Survey Results

April 2021

QUESTION #1

Design of the Lawson Canal area (a sub-area of the 2017 Downtown Vision Plan) is based on three guiding principles; to what extent do you agree with each of the principles listed below?

1) Provide exceptional public access to the waterfront

| | Number of Respondents | Percentage of Respondents |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0% |
| Disagree | 1 | 1% |
| Neutral | 8 | 13% |
| Agree | 13 | 21% |
| Strongly Agree | 40 | 65% |

2) Provide a range of activities and opportunities to draw people to the area to recreate, live, & work

| | Number of Respondents | Percentage of Respondents |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 1% |
| Disagree | 1 | 1% |
| Neutral | 6 | 10% |
| Agree | 13 | 21% |
| Strongly Agree | 42 | 67% |

3) Provide sustainable development that balances economic, environmental, and social needs

| | Number of Respondents | Percentage of Respondents |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 1% |
| Disagree | 1 | 1% |
| Neutral | 5 | 8% |
| Agree | 18 | 29% |
| Strongly Agree | 36 | 57% |

QUESTION #2

What are the top three amenities or uses that would draw you to the Lawson Canal district? (circle up to three)

| | Number of Respondents | Percentage of Respondents |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Fishing Areas | 12 | 7% |
| Kayaking/Tubing Opportunities | 22 | 12% |
| Bike Trails | 19 | 11% |
| Walking Trails | 41 | 21% |
| Nature Observation Areas | 26 | 15% |
| Public Art | 5 | 3% |
| Outdoor Seating | 14 | 8% |
| Broader Range of Housing Options | 7 | 4% |
| Co-working Opportunities | 1 | 1% |
| Eating/Dining Opportunities | 32 | 18% |

QUESTION #3**What three aspects of a trail system are most important to you? (circle up to three)**

| | Number of Respondents | Percentage of Respondents |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Downtown Loop | 18 | 10% |
| Connections to Loop the Lake/Jefferson Park | 37 | 21% |
| Connections to regional trail network | 20 | 11% |
| Separate areas for bike and pedestrians | 9 | 5% |
| Opportunities to be at water's edge | 37 | 21% |
| Opportunities to be overlooking park/water | 25 | 14% |
| Benches/Seating | 16 | 9% |
| Bike Repair Station | 3 | 2% |
| Regional Wayfinding Map/Information | 9 | 5% |

QUESTION #4:**In one word, please tell us what is missing from the draft plan**

| Item Identified | Number of Votes |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Affordable Housing | 1 |
| All Inclusive use of property | 1 |
| Brains | 1 |
| Connection | 1 |
| Consideration | 1 |
| Cost | 4 |
| Dining | 1 |
| Flrepit | 1 |
| Focus | 1 |
| Green Space | 2 |
| Hotel | 1 |
| Maintainable | 3 |
| Music | 2 |
| Natural Area | 2 |
| Neighboring Impact | 2 |
| Not Needed | 1 |
| Nothing | 9 |
| Parking | 8 |
| Pavilion/Gathering Sites/Picnic Areas | 3 |
| Pier | 1 |
| Pickleball | 1 |
| Restrooms | 3 |
| Seating | 1 |
| Sidewalks | 1 |
| Speed/Hydro Power | 3 |
| Timing | 1 |

QUESTION #5:

What additional comments do you have regarding the draft concept plan?

Should provide opportunities to highlight Menasha's industrial heritage

Not sure why we are looking at apartments, wouldn't it make sense to looking into Marriott or Hilton build a Hotel. This would generate money to the city by charging a city sales tax and draw more visitors into our wonderful city. Maybe even my taxes would go down? If you look at the Marriott that is built on the Fox River in Appleton, it is always booked.

Kayak/tubing course is not necessary

Please consider safe street crossings for Ahnaip Street. Many people will be crossing that street to get to the new spaces.

This is SO exciting for the community, thank you! My husband and I along with our two young daughters reside on Riverway. Once things develop, the naysayers will adjust as needed naturally and the others will end of really enjoying it, keep moving!! We attended the initial meeting regarding these plans and have been excited to hear more ever since! You have embodied a perfect balance of recreation, aesthetic appeal and privacy for residents all while taking into consideration environmental factors, thank you! Can't wait to hear more about private funding/ donation options!

Restoring some of the natural habitat is very important.

Downtown Golden Colorado is the epitome of what could be done with the Lawson Canal yet you never mentioned this redevelopment project in your examples. Are you not aware of it? Their Economic Development Dept has \$\$ numbers to show the benefit of this effort. Small group gathering sites - places to meet for a picnic lunch or sit by the water with a cup of coffee were packed with people in Golden when I visited - and this was in late fall. They also had a small concert area that had activities all through the summer. Not hundreds of people but think more like Neenah's lunch hour concert series. People bought refreshments from surrounding businesses and sat on benches and the grass to listen to music, Question - if I paddle into the canal from Lake Winnebago, is there a way to get over the Gobi barrier without getting out of my kayak or will you design an easy to use portage path? Loop paths are much more enjoyable than out and backs. So, I paddle in from Lake Winnebago, go through the Lawson canal, go out to Little Lake Butte does Morts, portage (or go through the lock), paddle back through the boat canal and do another loop. Will this ultimately be possible??

Love the idea so far. Again development areas will be key as two the mix. I think not every site can be the same type of development. Mixed use is key.

"Please make it happen!! It would be thrilling to see a kayak tubing feature in our community.

I think it would help to draw young upwardly mobile people to want to live here."

"I am not in favor of Oak St extending over the canal, this road should end prior to the trail or remain as it currently is with no extension.

I would like to see more space be available for the canal site by including the site currently set for redevelopment that recently had the Banta building torn down on. This will also make this space more opening and welcome to public as the way it is currently planned the canal area will be hidden from most people and if you didn't know it existed then you could easily pass by it. "

More green space and good places to fish

Overall, the concepts are fantastic! I jog along the existing path and will be excited to see the area beautified and complement the channel.

This is SO exciting for the community, thank you! My husband and I along with our two young daughters reside on Riverway. Once things develop, the naysayers will adjust as needed naturally and the others will end of really enjoying

it, keep moving!! We attended the initial meeting regarding these plans and have been excited to hear more ever since! You have embodied a perfect balance of recreation, aesthetic appeal and privacy for residents all while taking into consideration environmental factors, thank you! Can't wait to hear more about private funding/ donation options!

How about an accessible "BANTA" Museum somewhere??

I'm impressed by the public trail access. Will it be a problem for potential residents that they have not private outdoor space?

"Handicap access to the new bridge should be considered. Upscale lighting and walkways with ""resting benches"" will also help improve the desirability of the area.

Overall very nice!

Some of the above could have been doubled together, walking/bike trail, just plain connecting to trails, add a question on what plan you favor more, add a mixed urban/natural option, extend under the bridge. Would like to see it done in two years, monitor cameras, restrooms. I'm afraid with the natural plan it will get overgrown like it did under the bridge and flower beds in round abouts with obnoxious weeds, brush and trees. Add to it later like the parks get new and improvements. Thank you this is finally getting worked on.

Can't wait until it's done.

Round about is not the best option, traffic comes off the racine st bridge to fast and I don't feel that have walking paths right there is safe. I would not spent time there unless I felt safe and to me this doesn't. I feel there is enough water access on the other side by main st at is barely used so why add more. Why not work on building up the downtown area before adding more

Enough parking so it wouldn't always be on street parking

I like all the water access. Might need more parking

We are very concerned that you are not taking into account the privacy of the homes along Riverway. We already have a lot of problems with people on the peninsula. We would ask that you put in place a plan to have privacy shrubs, bushes and trees along the canal side of the peninsula or you will greatly reduce our property values. Additionally, we are concerned about the plan to increase flow in the canal without proper consideration for the safety of our families using the canal.

Adding a sign about history of the Lawson Canal and the paper mills that were around it would be nice to have.

Thank you for your work.

Parking looks like it will be an issue

What impact will this have to the currently quiet, established neighborhood(s) to the east. Seems there will be minimal parking - if drawing people to the area from away, what is done to avoid parking on nearby residential streets/traffic patterns.

The plan creates a unique destination area for Menasha that gives people more reason to live, work and play downtown. It also helps in marketing Menasha as a vibrant, progressive community. Cities all over the country have either created something similar or are planning to do so. I am a resident of the city and support this effort!

No kayak launch in my backyard, please! We love our peaceful neighborhood, please don't ruin that with a tourist destination for all of northeast Wisconsin. I have three small children that I want to raise here, please don't put crowds of people in my backyard! 508 Riverway...

My concern is that this plan is trying to be everything to everybody right now. It's important to focus on a few things with consideration to how they fit into Menasha's overarching goals, and then do those things WELL. I think it's really

important to ask ourselves how this site can compliment downtown businesses and how it could hinder downtown businesses and apply ask those same questions about the neighboring residential areas.

I would love for this area to add value to our homes in the area. Please keep it upscale if possible.

Old News - Forget the Kayak Launch and just fix the shoreline and plant some trees. Too much money spent on trails and developer incentives

I hope you keep the Erdmann memorial picnic area that is already there.

This plan looks SO VERY exciting! As a fellow Doty Islander, I can't wait to have better access to the water (in a rejuvenated and cleaned up space). I would love to see an additional GREEN SPACE (park, trees, area open to the PUBLIC- in addition to trails). Developing the entire space seems short-sided. Open space for a concert venue, outdoor gatherings, etc. In addition, undeveloped land/ green space would support the HUGE amount of bird wildlife down by the current river trail. I hope the large trees (site 1?) get to stay! As a family with young kids, having water access similar to the photos in the pdf, looks so fun (as well as the kayaking/ tubing)...this would really create a unique space in the Fox Valley. Thank you for all your hard work on this, it has been fun to see this space evolve over the years.

I love these plans overall! I'm so excited for this space to become a community outdoor space with options for dining, recreation, or art. Fantastic!

Oklahoma City is a good example of how to update a river walk for a city. There could be some ideas with how they redid their downtown.

Oklahoma City is a good example of how to update a river walk for a city. There could be some ideas with how they redid their downtown.

This looks fantastic. I just hope that we keep environmental stewardship at the forefront of these decisions and planning.

Calendar/timeline. Concerned about foot traffic, boat docking on the Banta peninsula

Don't lower water levels so that dock is unusable.