

Project Name: Falls Park: Phase II Master Plan

Project Location: Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Project Purpose: Falls Park is a large, 120-acre, municipal park located in downtown Sioux Falls. Falls Park is named after the raging waters of the Big Sioux River that tumbles over the exposed quartzite bedrock located within the park. This natural wonder makes the park a destination point for area residents and tourists year-round. In the early 2000's, the City of Sioux Falls began a series of significant investments to revitalize its downtown and clean-up of Falls Park. This entailed demolition and remediation of unused industrial sites, street and utility projects throughout the central business district, improvements to the City's downtown river greenway, and multiple streetscape improvements within the City's downtown core.

A resounding theme emerged during our engagement with the Sioux Falls community: **“Please DON’T significantly change the heart of the park – but improve the overall experience and connectivity with the surrounding area.”**

Four key themes were part of the planning process:

- Provide engaging multi-functional spaces within the park
- Provide equitable access to Falls Park from adjacent neighborhoods
- Listen to the community
- Introduce diverse revenue streams to support park operations

Role of the Landscape Architect

The Landscape Architect led a process that created a comprehensive vision for the entirety of Falls Park. The vision addressed current demands and future uses. The successful design fully integrates the diverse features of the existing park into a unified site plan and program that maximizes the potential of this special place and utilizes adjacent property to enhance and expand the address of the park while connecting it to the community.

The plan addressed programmatic considerations and creates an inclusive framework by generating big ideas to meet the growing needs of the region and the community. It also responds to the diverse recreational, ecological, and built history of the site.

The plan recommendations considered improvements at multiple scales, from broad systems to individual sites while also considering long-term development opportunities and flexible solutions that can change and mature over time. The design examined multiple types of movement and connectivity to safely navigate to and through the park, considering connections to all places within the park, the Big Sioux River, Downtown and the surrounding underserved neighborhoods.

Special Factors and Project Significance

The master plan investigates landscapes that are accessible and respond to the changing seasons with a focus on more year-round programming. Recommendations include new and compelling experiences to support a wide range of social and physical activities. The design builds upon the existing features and spaces of the park and surrounding community while incorporating new and innovative amenities, creates opportunities for economic development, and enhances the potential for long-term viability and sustainability of park operations, programs and maintenance.

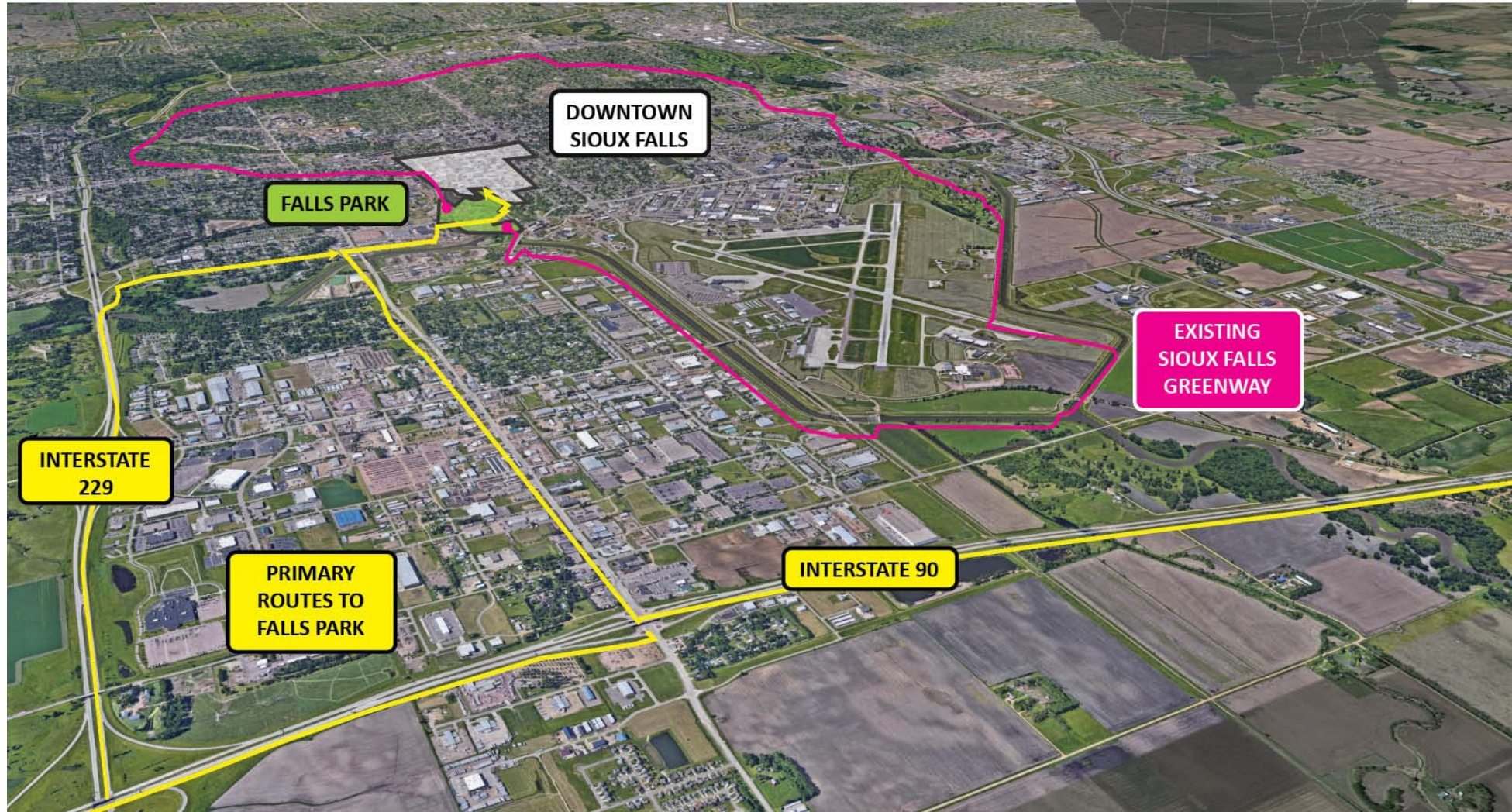
Prioritizing Access and Connectivity to the site led to the transformation of existing entry experiences and site circulation - including both vehicular and pedestrian. These new entry experiences create dynamic viewsheds to park facilities while reducing pedestrian and vehicle conflicts, providing more direct connections to the local neighborhoods. These connections will eliminate unsafe intersections, provide safe railway crossings, and improve pedestrian and bicycle access. Redevelopment of the park edges through land swaps and the realignment of City street connections will help also fund major infrastructure changes and activate the park with adjacent new residences and businesses.

The Landscape Architect also unified park land through creative roadway realignments, the introduction of land bridges, the use of shared parking between park destinations, and prioritizing pedestrian/bicycle movements over vehicular traffic to creating a safer and more connected park trail system. Areas that were previously disconnected from the park by existing rail lines were reconnected through new roadway tunnels and pedestrian bridges spanning the rails and the river to directly connect adjacent residents with the heart of the park. These larger planning and development moves modified the existing edges and boundaries of the park, blurring the lines between public and private properties to better integrate new mixed-use development and housing while also addressing park equity and accessibility.

FALLS PARK CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN

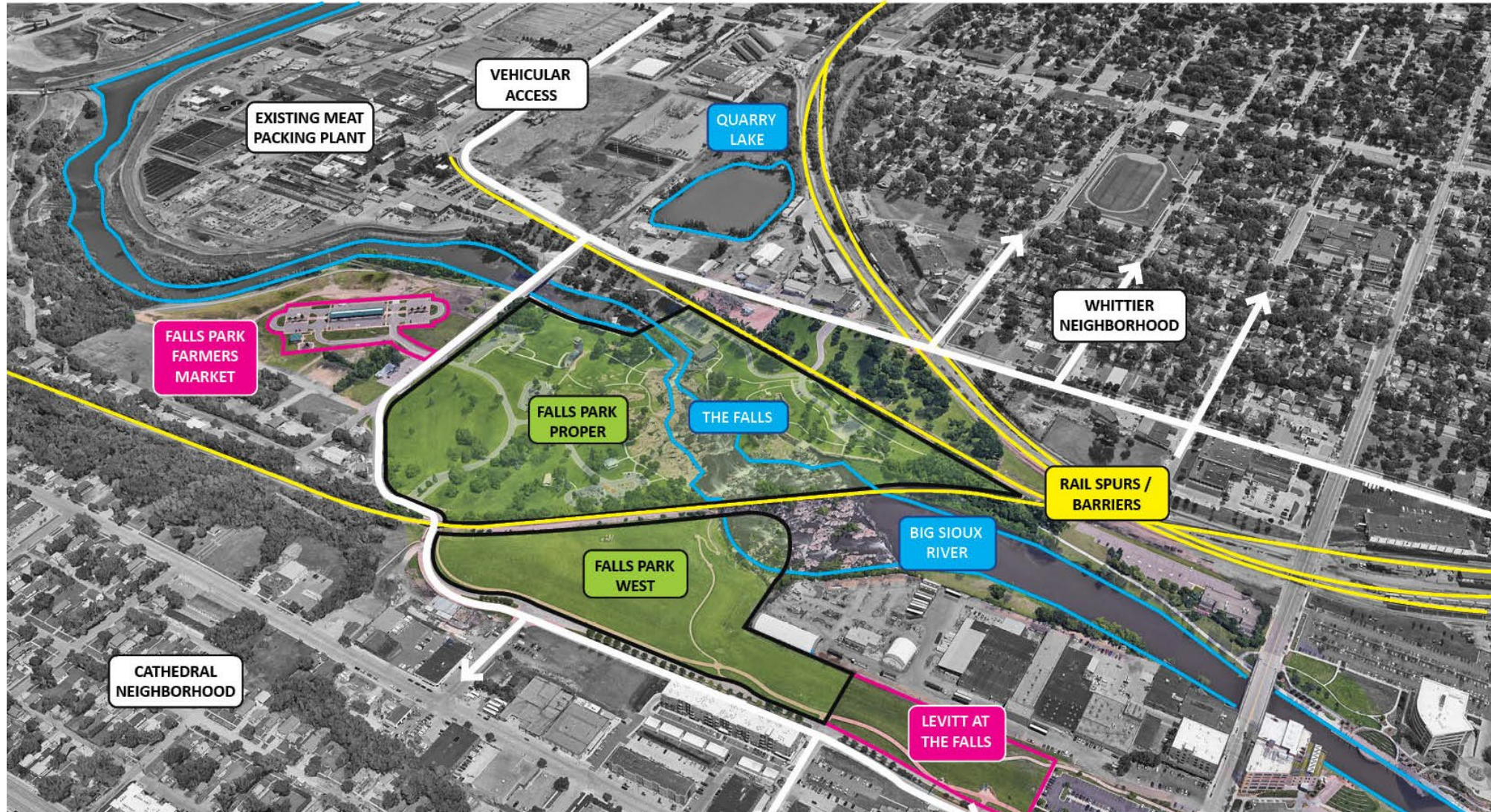
FALLS PARK WAS DISCOVERED IN 1856 AND REMAINS THE HEART OF SIOUX FALLS - SERVING AS A PRIMARY TOURIST DESTINATION SITUATED ON THE NORTH SIDE OF DOWNTOWN.

SIOUX FALLS, SD



FALLS PARK TODAY

FALLS PARK SERVES AS A PRIMARY GATEWAY INTO DOWNTOWN SIOUX FALLS. NUMEROUS RAIL SPURS AND VEHICULAR CONFLICTS LIMIT THE CURRENT ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS - THEY REMAIN UNDERSERVED AND LACK MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS INTO FALLS PARK.



SIoux FALLS PARK

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PROVIDE ENGAGING MULTI-FUNCTIONAL SPACES WITHIN FALLS PARK THAT CAN OPERATE THROUGH ALL SEASONS.

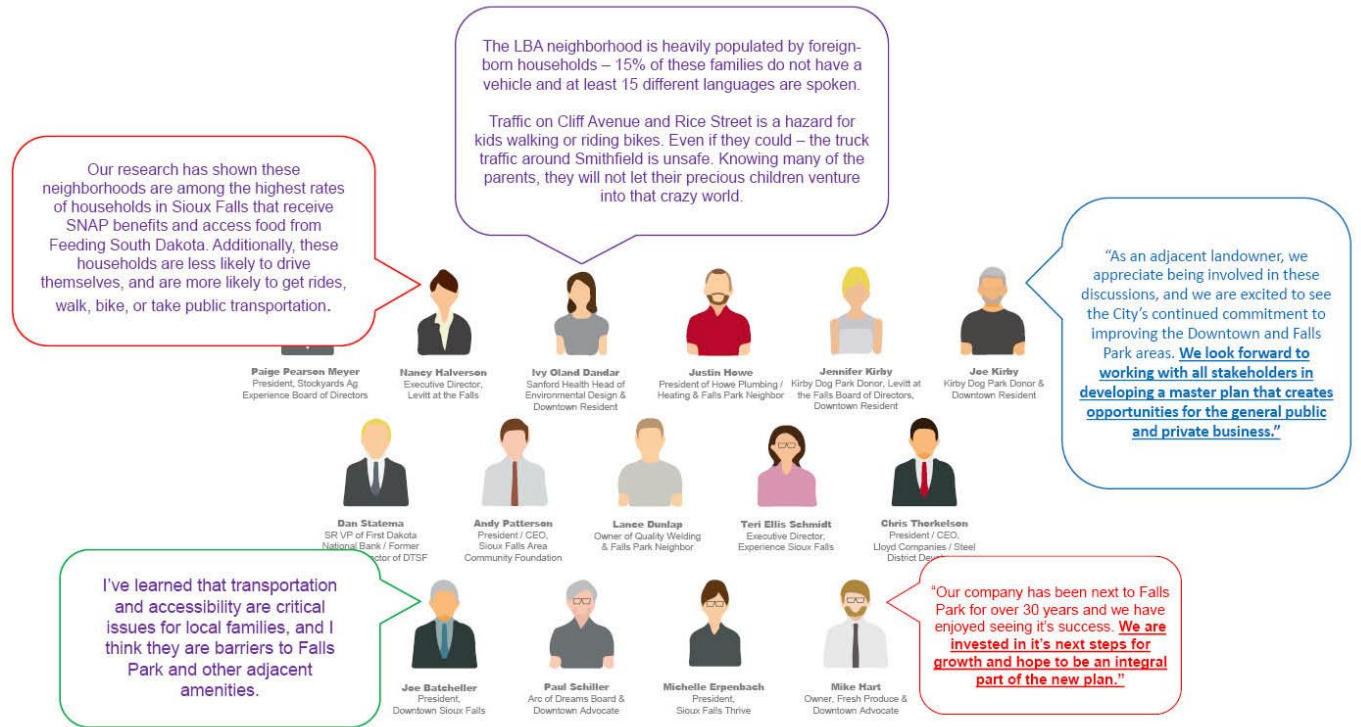
EQUITABLE ACCESS TO FALLS PARK AND ITS FACILITIES FROM ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS AND THE DIVERSE SIOUX FALLS COMMUNITY.

ENGAGE AND EDUCATE THE PUBLIC DURING THE PLANNING OF A NEW FUTURE VISION FOR FALLS PARK AND THE SURROUNDING AREA.

INTRODUCE DIVERSE REVENUE STREAMS TO SUPPORT PARK IMPROVEMENTS + OPERATIONS. A SIGNATURE PARK DOESN'T LOOK LIKE OTHER PARKS, SO IT CAN'T BE MANAGED OR FUNDED LIKE OTHER CITY PARKS.

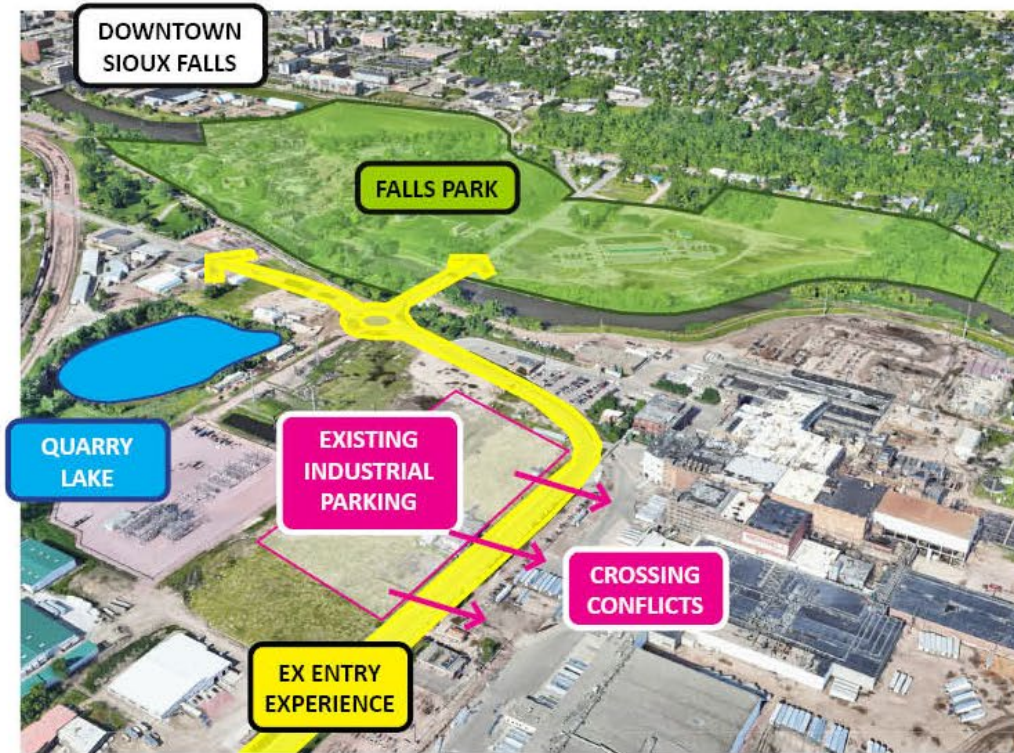
FOCUSED CONVERSATIONS

THIS CONCEPTUAL STUDY AIMS TO LEVERAGE COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS TO PROMOTE A COLLECTIVE VISION GROUNDED IN REALITY AND BUILD MOMENTUM AND EXCITEMENT THAT WILL SUPPORT THE FUTURE OF FALLS PARK. THOROUGH DISCUSSIONS WITH KEY LEADERS AND STAKEHOLDERS HELPED INFORM THE PROCESS.



BIG MOVES = BIG IMPACT

FALLS PARK SERVES AS A GATEWAY INTO DOWNTOWN SIOUX FALLS. THE VISION AIMS TO PRIORITIZE THE ENTRY EXPERIENCE AND LEVERAGE COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS TO EXPAND THE PHYSICAL EXTENTS OF THE PARK TO PROVIDE BETTER ACCESS TO THE ADJACENT UNDERSERVED NEIGHBORHOODS.



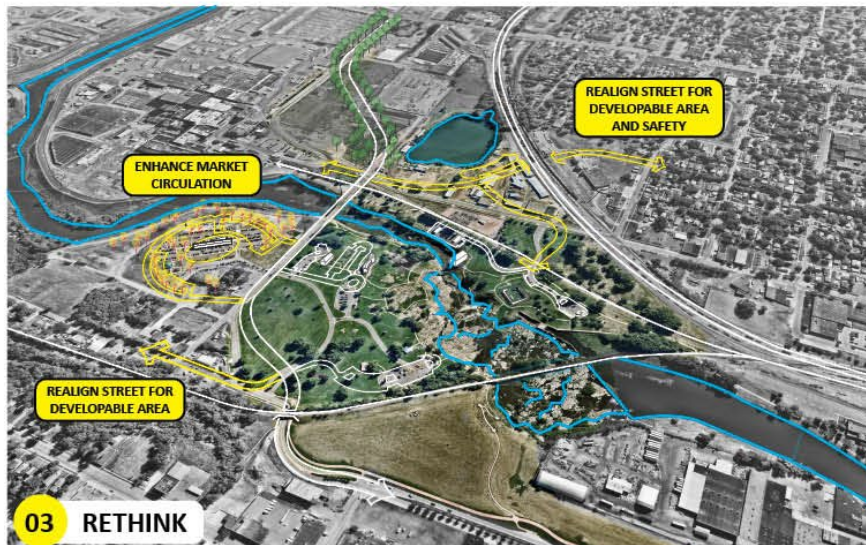
FALLS PARK TODAY



- + REDEFINE AND PRIORITIZE ENTRY EXPERIENCE
- + INCORPORATE UNDERUTILIZED ASSETS
- + PROVIDE SAFER PEDESTRIAN / VEHICULAR INTERACTIONS
- + EXPAND PERCEPTION OF PARK EXTENTS
- + LEVERAGE COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS TO EXPAND PARK

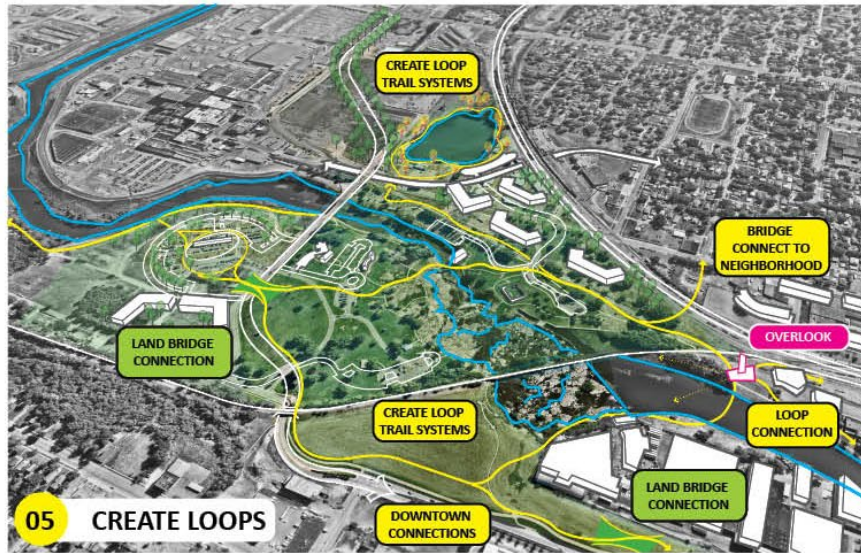
DESIGN PROCESS

GRAPHICALLY CONVEYING THE DESIGN PROCESS WAS CRITICAL IN UNDERSTANDING THE DESIGN IMPACTS THAT WILL BENEFIT THE FUTURE OF FALLS PARK, THE ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS, AND DOWNTOWN.



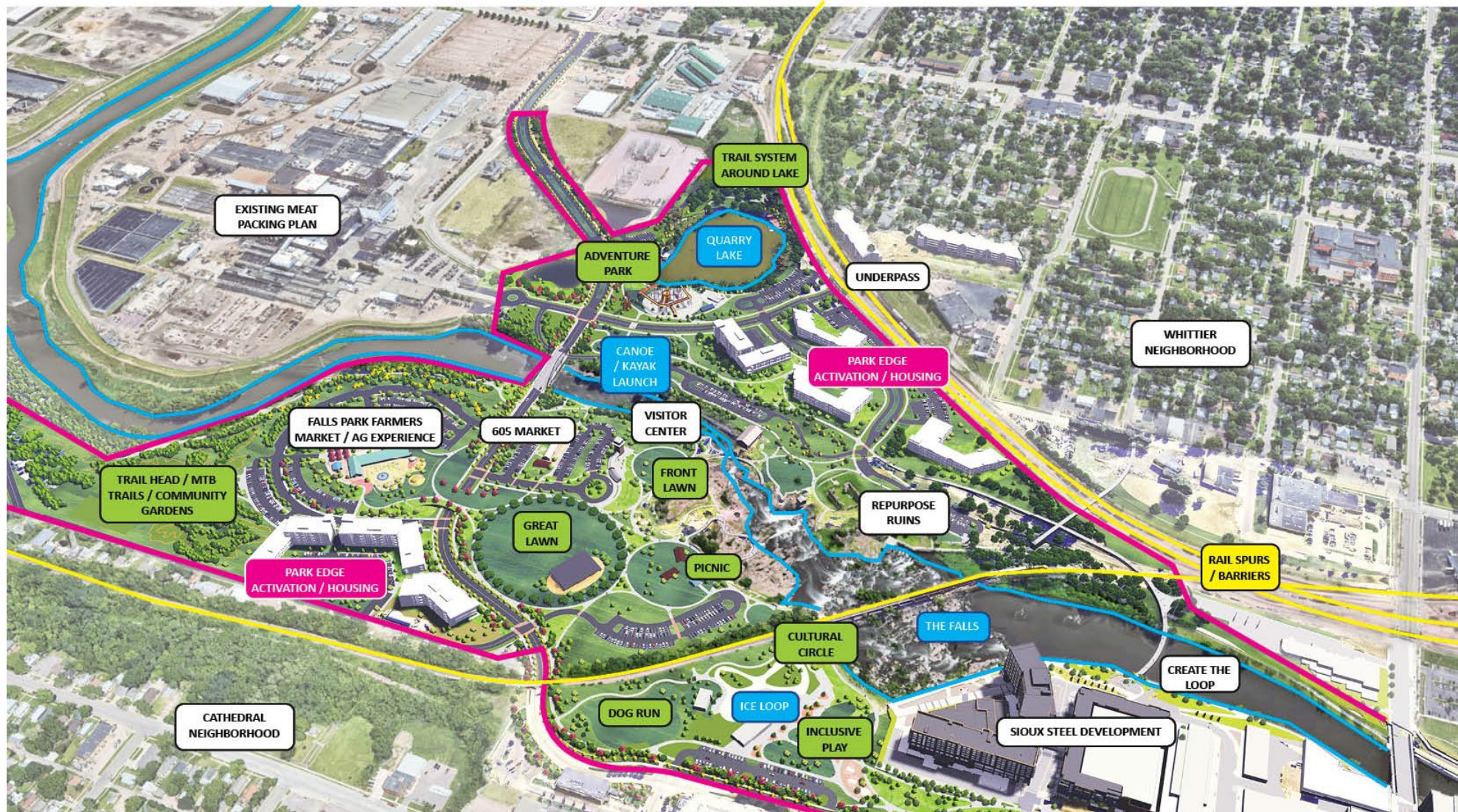
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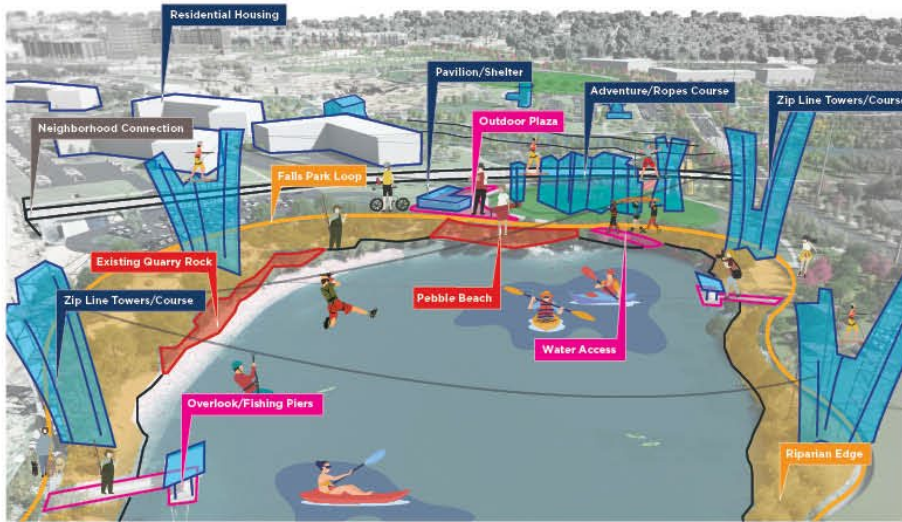
FALLS PARK TOMORROW

AN EXPANDED VISION FOR FALLS PARK PROVIDES BETTER SERVES THE NEIGHBORHOOD NEEDS, PRIORITIZES PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY AND CIRCULATION, AND CREATES MORE ACTIVATION WITHIN THE PARK THROUGH PROGRAMMING AND CRITICAL MASS.

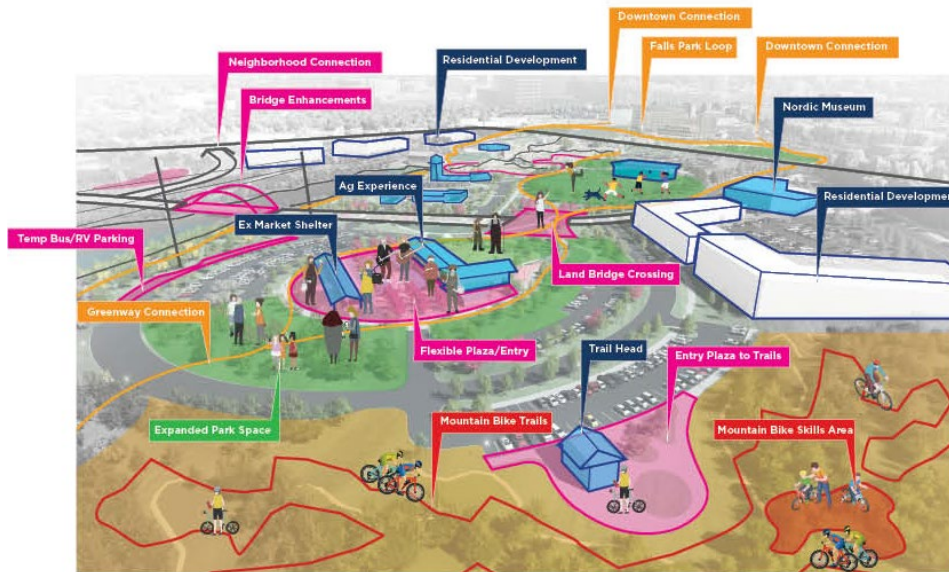


PROGRAMMATIC VIGNETTES

COMMUNICATING WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND THE PUBLIC THROUGH GRAPHICS THAT PORTRAY ACTIVITY AND EASY UNDERSTANDING OF HOW THE VARIOUS PARK ELEMENTS WILL APPEAL TO THE COMMUNITY.



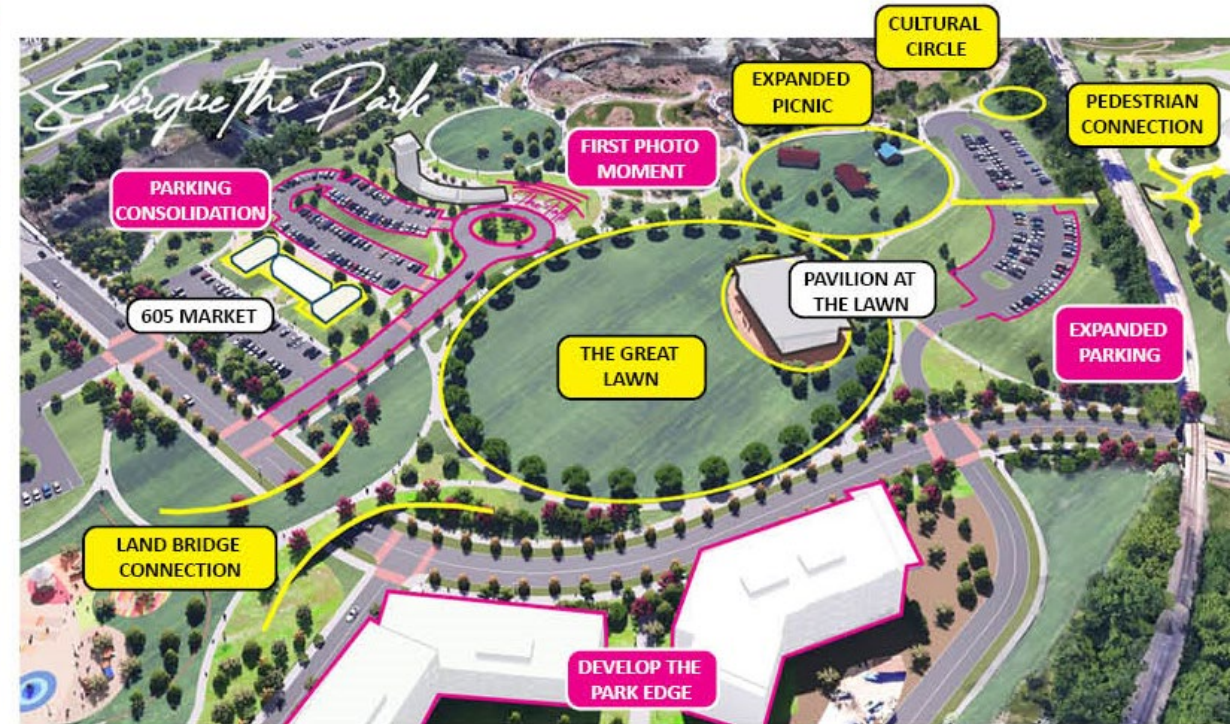
QUARRY LAKE



NORTH FALLS / FARMERS MARKET AREA

FALLS PARK CONCEPTUAL PLAN PROGRAM

GRAPHICS HELP CLARIFY THE VISION AND HIGHLIGHT SOME OF THE KEY ELEMENTS, MOMENTS, AND FUTURE EXPERIENCES THAT FALLS PARK WILL OFFER.



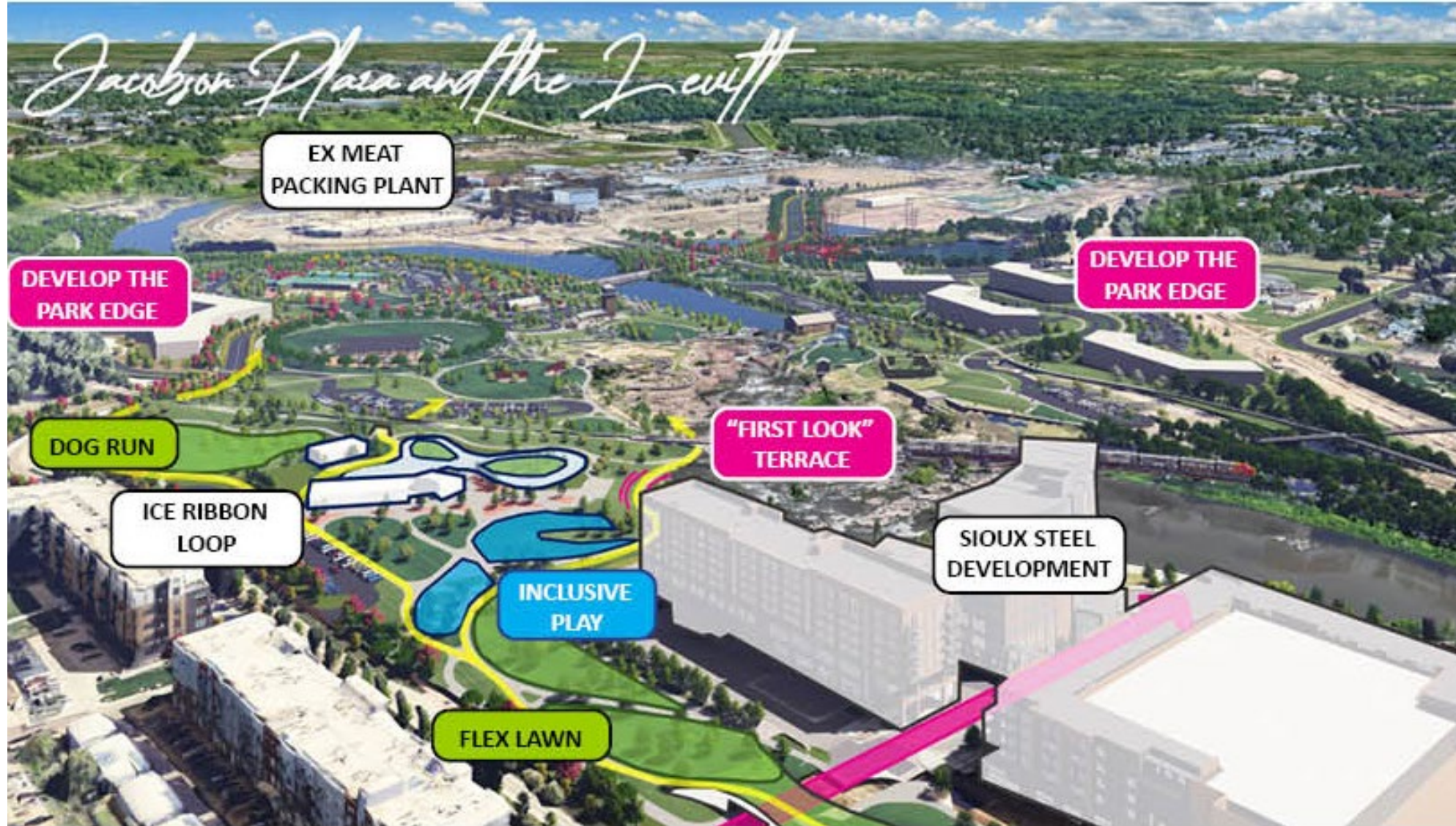
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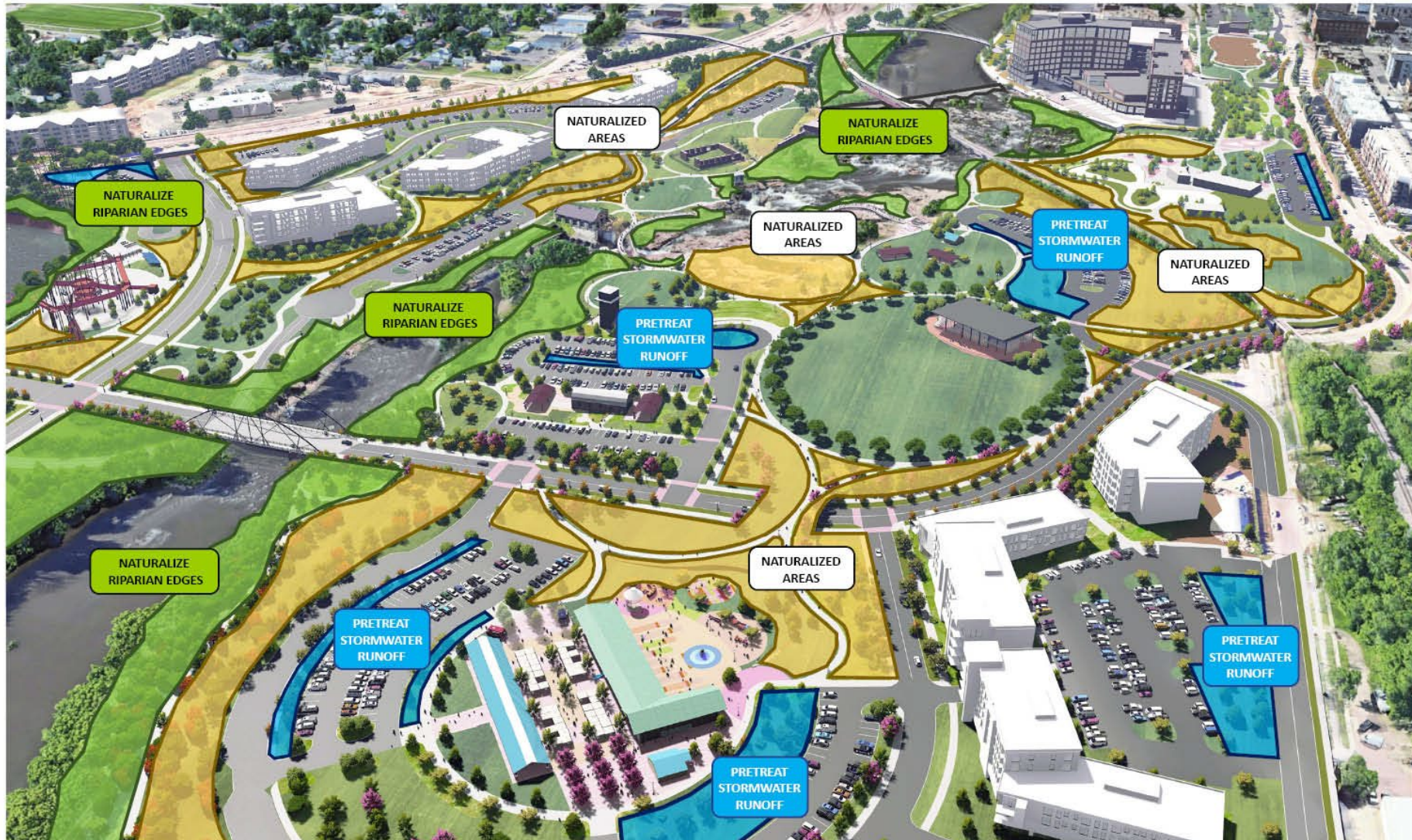
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BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT DEVELOPED OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASED RIVER ACCESS BY FIRST IDENTIFYING ACTIONS TO ENHANCE WATER QUALITY UPSTREAM AND IN THE PARK THROUGH AERATION, INTRODUCTION OF A ROCK DAM, EXPOSING WATER TO SOLAR UV RADIATION, SHORELINE NATURALIZATION, IN PARK STORMWATER TREATMENT, AND PROVIDING SAFE TOUCHPOINTS ALONG THE RIVER'S EDGE.



DAY IN THE LIFE AT FALLS PARK

FALLS PARK WILL BECOME A PLACE THAT SERVES THE NEIGHBORHOOD, VISITORS, AND TOURISTS MORE EFFECTIVELY THROUGH A DIVERSITY OF ACTIVITIES AND USES.

A DAY AT FALLS PARK

MORNING

AFTERNOON

NIGHT



FALLS PARK NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENT



VISITOR TO FALLS PARK



TYPICAL SIOUX FALLS RESIDENT



DAY IN THE LIFE AT FALLS PARK

INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, VISITORS GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE IN A VARIETY OF DAILY AND SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES WITHIN THE FUTURE FALLS PARK.



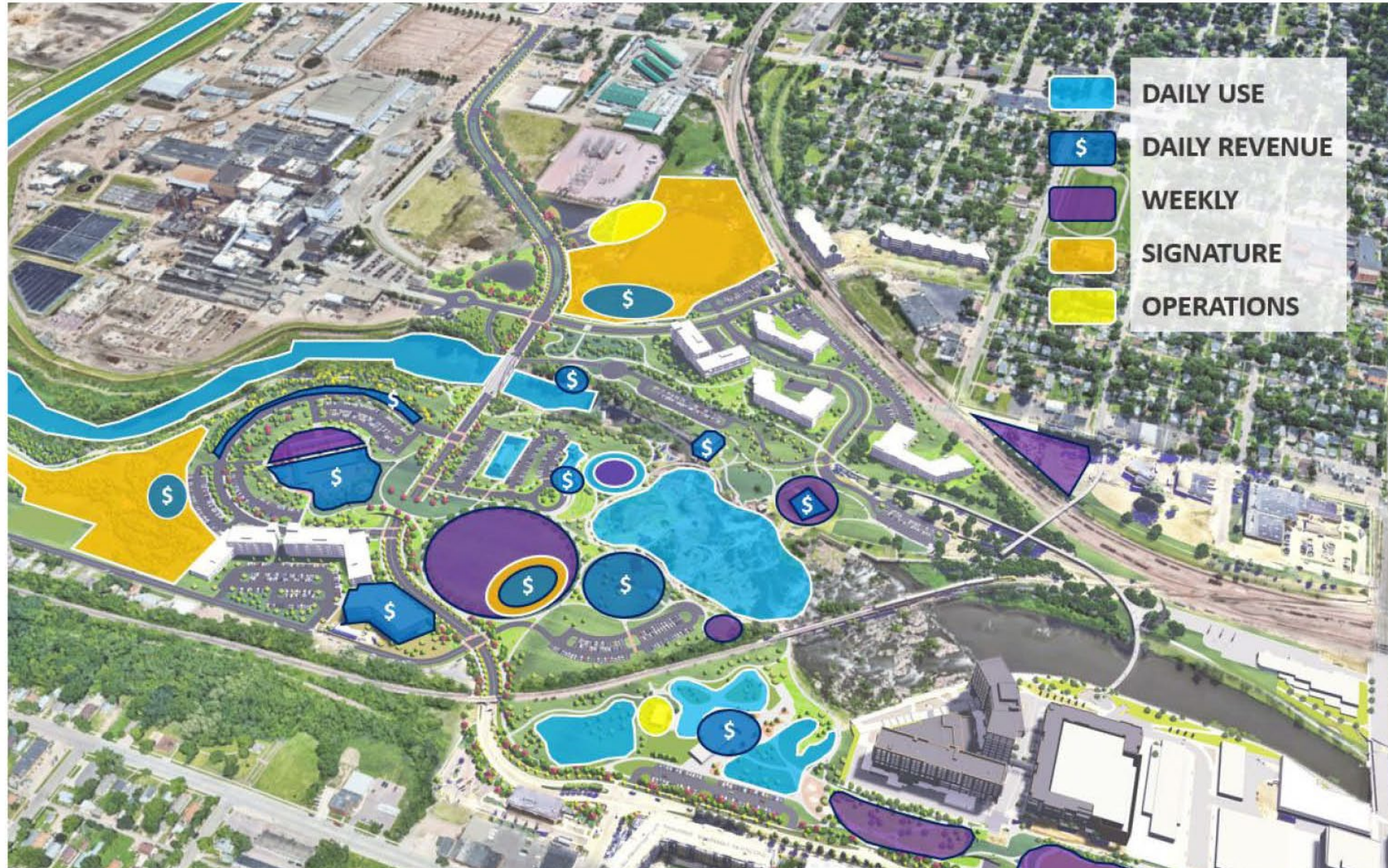
WINTER USE AND ACTIVATION

YEAR ROUND ACTIVATION AND PROVIDING LOCAL DAILY ACTIVITIES ARE CRITICAL TO MAKING FALLS PARK A LOCAL AND REGIONAL DESTINATION.



ACTIVITY FOR ALL

PROGRAMMING WAS DEVELOPED TO ACTIVATE THE PARK YEAR-ROUND FOR DIVERSE AUDIENCES AND DAILY FOR THE COMMUNITY WITH A FOCUS ON FLEXIBILITY. GOVERNANCE, MAINTENANCE, AND OPERATIONS ALONG WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIVERSE SOURCES OF REVENUE AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY WERE ALSO IDENTIFIED.



NAMESAKE OF THE CITY

"FALLS PARK IS THE CITY'S NAMESAKE, THE FLAGSHIP PARK, AND ANCHORS THE NORTH END OF THE CITY'S BOOMING DOWNTOWN," SAID MAYOR PAUL TENHAKEN. "CREATING A COMPREHENSIVE VISION WILL ALLOW US TO DREAM BIG ON HOW WE WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE SIOUX FALLS AN EVEN MORE ATTRACTIVE PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY."

