

Viaduct Area Park Planning Task Force

May 20, 2021 Meeting Notes

1. Large Gathering Area
 - Turf and a flat, open area
 - Orient to stage location (stage will not be permanent—temporary stage brought in as needed)
 - There was a mixed discussion on where the stage should be located – the general consensus was to not place the stage under the viaduct.
 - One suggestion was to back the stage up to Viaduct to avoid being a distraction to traffic on the bridge, but there was some concern that the stage should not be too close to the viaduct due to noise concerns.
 - There was agreement that the stage would not be a permanent structure – the stage will be brought in as needed.

2. Picnic Shelter/Restroom Combo
 - Capacity of 50-100 People
 - Mixed support on including an option for an upper/viewing level
 - This facility should match the theme that is ultimately developed for the park—the general consensus was that the architecture should have an historic theme rather than contemporary.

3. Play Area
 - There seemed to be consensus that a large swing or something special or unusual would be desirable.
 - Members were open to a natural theme, but also discussed other themes (historic, railroad, etc.)

4. Public Art/Murals
 - Mural(s) under viaduct were strongly supported.
 - Additional art could be integrated in multiple, appropriate locations throughout the park, including in the flower garden, and some could even be temporary.

5. Benches
 - Large capacity (an example of a “bench” that could seat dozens of people was shown during the meeting)

6. Splash Pad
 - The Task Force is interested in a splash pad, but did not have a strong opinion about the details of a splash pad. However, it appeared that several members did not want a

splash pad that would reflect a water park theme (bright colors and different recreation themes with play equipment). Rather, they saw timed sprays, lighting, music, etc.

- Some members also raised the possibility of the splash pad area being converted to skating in the winter.

7. Flower Garden

- Use taller fence panel(s) for climbing plants—would serve as buffer to the railroad (the decorative fencing that is along the property line/railroad right-of-way line north of 2nd Street NE will be continued to the south).

- Include varying heights

- Include clematis and any other Faribault flowers

- Include other public art and benches in and throughout garden

- Create one or more spots for photo opportunities

8. Skating Rink vs. Skating Loop

- The group seemed to be open to either, probably would like to see one concept as a splash pad converted to ice rink and one concept as a roller skate/skateboard/ice skating loop.

9. Outdoor Workout Equipment

- This should be located under the viaduct bridge (if State will approve).

10. Water Feature

- Viewed to be an accessory, not a main feature.

- The group discussed that the splash pad could be the water feature, and/or a water feature like the Whillock sculpture.

11. Under Viaduct lighting

- Only the north side of the bridge will have lighting (at least initially)

- The full length of the bridge should have lighting, not just the segments in this park (the arches are on the east side of the railroad)

12. Staff should evaluate the removal of the traffic circle at the intersection of 2nd Street NE and Heritage Place (unnecessary, functions poorly, would create some more open area)