

# BALDWIN RIVERFRONT PARK MASTER PLAN JANUARY 2022





**friends**  
OF THE RIVERFRONT

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# INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

## INTRODUCTION

For this report the property will be referred to as Baldwin Riverfront Park, this name is not the official name but a temporary name until the community completes the naming process and determines a permanent name for the park.

Baldwin Riverfront Park is a narrow strip of land along the Monongahela River in Baldwin Borough, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. The property is just north of East Carson Street and west of the Keystone Iron and Metal Company. The Three Rivers Heritage Trail which hosts the Greater Allegheny Passage trail, runs along the edge of the property adjacent to railroad tracks. The property does not have vehicular access; primary access to the area is from the trail.



The property is owned by the Friends of the Riverfront organization, which works to develop and steward the Three Rivers Heritage Trail system. The parcel, though narrow, has some beautiful natural areas, and is a little pocket of nature along the urban trail system. The most enticing feature of the location is that the property is excellent for birdwatching, specifically the Bald Eagle pair that nests in the slopes just across Carson Street. This project developed through recognition that the property is a unique feature and could become, through additional planning, a more prominent asset along the trail system.

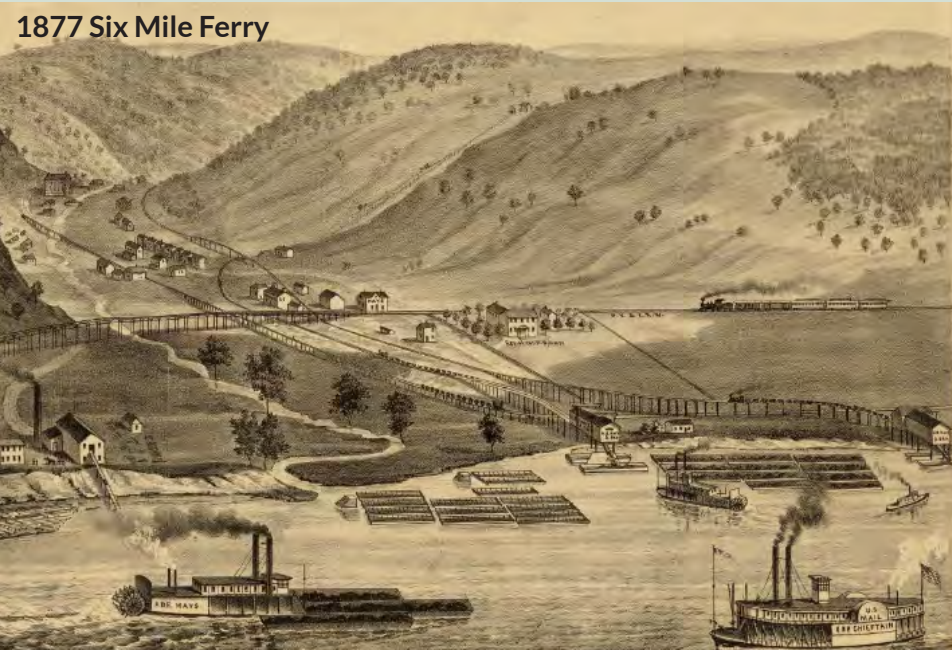
## HISTORY

Many of properties in the Pittsburgh region have a long and diverse industrial history, the park property is no different. Though sections of the park parcel are steeply sloped, they were still affected by the adjacent industrial activity.

In the 1800s the property was under the ownership of James H. Hays. James H. Hays and the Hays family were early pioneers in multiple industries in the Pittsburgh area, primarily coal mining. The Six Mile mine was located just up the valley that Glass Run Road presently occupies. A ferry and other coal processing facilities lined the Monongahela River north of the valley. The location along the river provided transportation access through river ferries and multiple rail lines.



1877 Six Mile Ferry



**James Harden Hays**

- Pioneer of bituminous coal mining in Western Pennsylvania
- First coal mine opened in 1929 at Streets Run on the Monongahela River

**Hays Family**

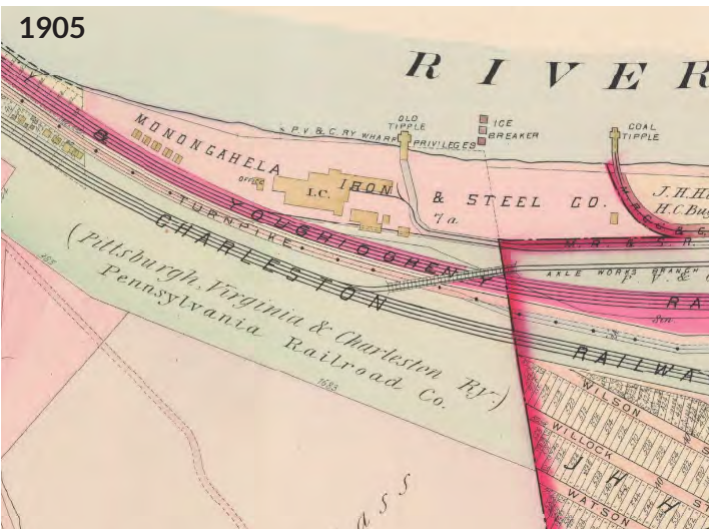
- Abraham Hays and Frances Hays moved to what is now Munhall from Maryland in 1767
- Hays family became friends with the local Harden family (two of their children married)
- Jacob Hays (son of Abraham and Frances) married Jane Harden
- Their son was James Harden Hays
- James Harden Hays started one of the first coal mining operations in the area

**H.B. Hays & Brothers Coal Railroad**

- Named after Henry Blake Hays, son of James Harden Hays
- Narrow gauge rail line, with two inclines that carried coal from the Hays mines along Becks Run and Streets Run

By the 1900s the region's primary industry shifted from coal mining to iron and steel processing. At that time the property was owned by the Monongahela Iron and Steel Company, which had facilities on the parcels that are currently owned by the Keystone Iron and Metal Company. The Monongahela Iron and Steel Company was one of many steel producers along the river system, and was a part of the Carnegie Steel Company network (later U.S. Steel). After the Monongahela Iron and Steel Company closed, the property became an Amoco Oil facility, housing large tanks.

1905



1920 Amoco Oil Tanks



The parcel where the park is located was owned by the adjacent railroad company prior to the Friends of the Riverfront's acquisition. Most of the historic activity on the site was affected by the adjacent coal, metal, and rail industry functions, but due to the steep slopes and narrow space, no significant structures were ever built.

# INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

### OVERVIEW

The park property is located along the Monongahela River. The 3.8-acre property is long and narrow, with slopes going down to the river. The narrowest parts of the property are steeply sloped, over 25%, with the only flat area dedicated to the trail. The wider sections of the property have more level space. The existing main park area is where the property is widest, and there is a large flat space adjacent to the trail. This space currently has some lawn, a picnic table, a trash can, borough sign, and a couple of interpretive signs. Beyond this flat area the land slopes quickly down to the river edge. One section in the middle of the park is almost terraced, with slopes, then a flat area, and then more slopes down to the river. The majority of the slopes on the site are 15% or higher.



Even though the site has significant slopes and grade change, the entire site is within the Monongahela floodplain. The floodplain rises up to the existing CSX track just beyond the park boundaries, and in some areas even up to East Carson Street. The soils on the site are classified as urban land; these soils are poorly draining. The site is also below a large steep hillside, meaning water that falls along the slopes above the park will pass through the site on its way to the river. The site also has a few stormwater outlets coming from the edge of East Carson Street and draining out to the park property before reaching the river.

The site is well forested, with less tree coverage only in the more level areas of the property. The forested areas are predominately Maple and Sycamore trees. The level areas further into the site have more variety of wetland and understory plant communities. The largest flat area is the current park area and is mostly mowed lawn. Throughout the site, especially on the slopes along the river, there are dense areas of Japanese Knotweed, an invasive plant. The area adjacent to the Monongahela navigation beacon is frequently trimmed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to keep the beacon clear. This area has more shrub and vine growth than other areas of the site. Many of these plants are invasive or aggressive.



## PENNSYLVANIA NATURAL DIVERSITY INVENTORY

A Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) report was generated for the park parcel. The PNDI takes the location data and screens it for potential impacts to species and resources in the area that are under conservation. The report also includes recommendations if a potential impact is found. The report for Baldwin Riverfront Park noted one impact only: the potential impact to a known Bald Eagle nesting area. The PNDI recommended completing and following the guidelines outlined by the Pennsylvania Fish and Wildlife Services (FWS) Bald Eagle project screening form.

The FWS form provides information on activities that could potentially disturb Bald Eagles, especially their nesting, and avoidance measures that might need to be taken for projects located near Bald Eagles. The form has five different activity categories, and potential improvements at Baldwin Riverfront Park would fall into three: construction and development, maintenance and restoration, and recreational activities. The existing activities such as the train, scrap yard, roadway, and trail are similar to the proposed activities of the park improvement, which would mean that avoidance measures may not be required for the site, but these measures should still be considered to further ensure the continued nesting of the Bald Eagles at this location.

Fish and Wildlife Services Bald Eagle Screening Form:

[https://www.fws.gov/northeast/pafo/pdf/NE\\_Bald-Eagle\\_Project-Screening-Form\\_rev20200416.pdf](https://www.fws.gov/northeast/pafo/pdf/NE_Bald-Eagle_Project-Screening-Form_rev20200416.pdf)

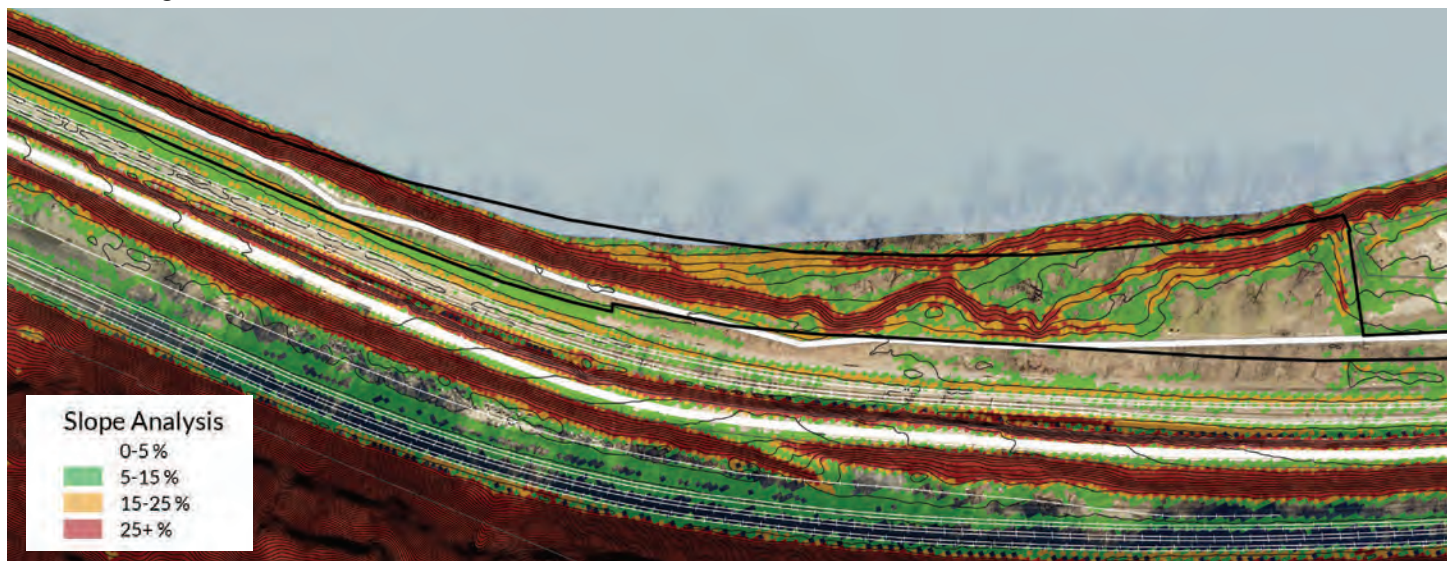
National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines:

<https://www.fws.gov/midwest/eagle/pdf/NationalBaldEagleManagementGuidelines.pdf>

## SITE ANALYSIS

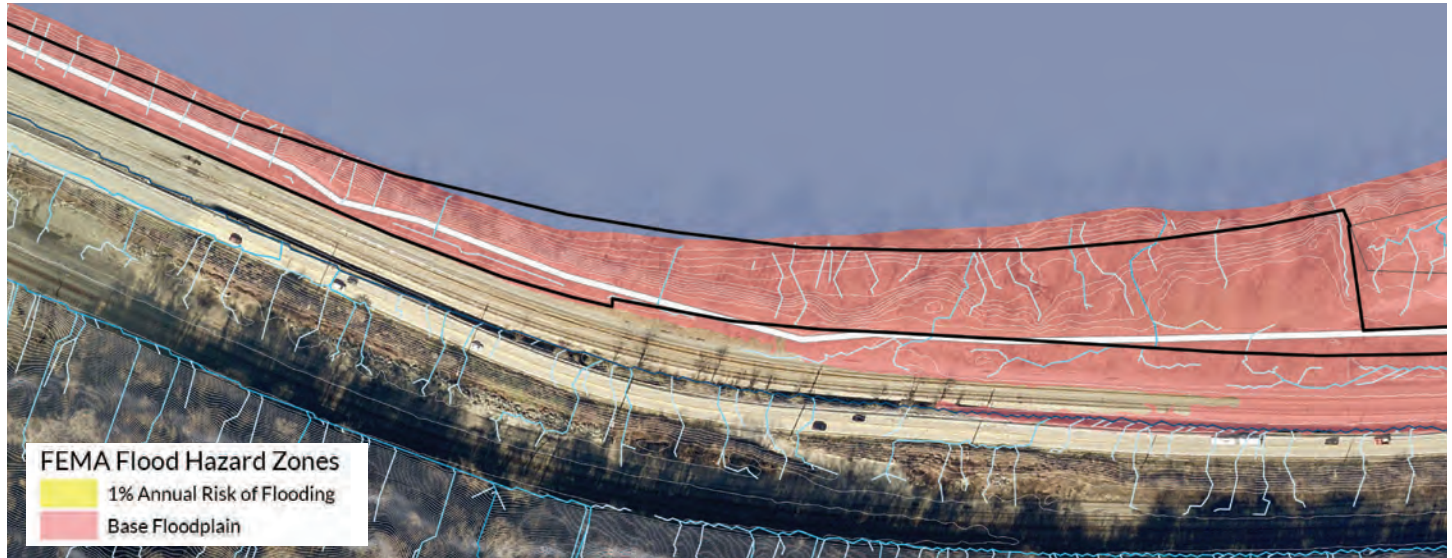
### SLOPES

Since most of the property has slopes of 15% or greater, there are few areas that are suitable for recreation development. The high slope areas are only suitable for single track trails. The main park area that is currently being used is the best location for new features, and, there are also two small knolls off the main trail that could be used for smaller features. The lower flat areas on the site, though level, are not suitable for development due to potential for flooding, especially since the areas show signs of flood debris.



## FLOODPLAIN

A major challenge to the site is that the entire park property is located within the annual floodplain. This limits the features and structures that can be installed on the site. The lower portions of the site all show signs of regular flooding, with debris scattered throughout. Even though the upper park area does not have visual signs of flooding, it is still within the floodplain. This indicates that anything that is installed in this area should be able to withstand occasional flooding since there is a high potential for it to flood.



## VEGETATION

The site has some invasive plant species, the most prominent being Japanese Knotweed. The knotweed runs all along the riverbanks and up the slopes in some areas of the site. Japanese Knotweed is a tall, herbaceous perennial that spreads easily through seeds and an aggressive rhizome system. The Knotweed population will pose more of a maintenance issue than be a deterrent to development.

## ACCESS

The property location and lack of vehicular access limits both the use and maintenance of the park. The trail is the primary means for visitors to access the park, which limits the type, duration, and level of visitor activity the site would experience. The park is likely to only host small groups that are stopping while using the trail, these include groups riding bikes or walking the trail system.

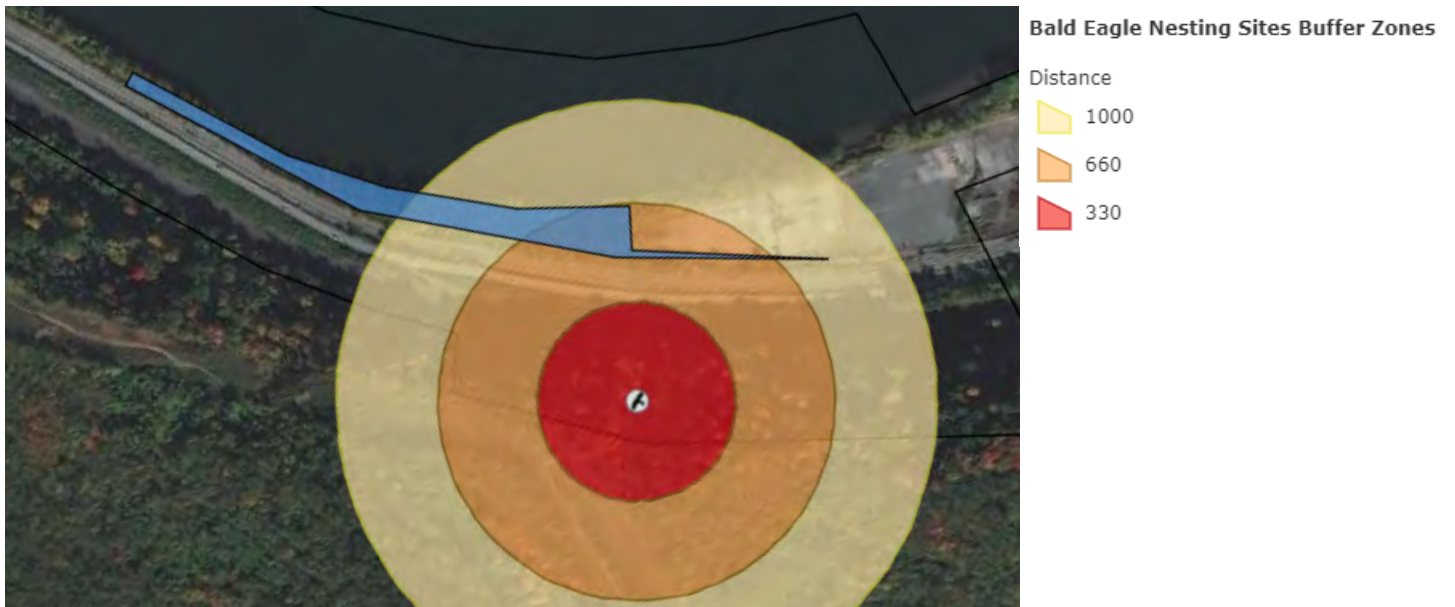
To reach the property to conduct maintenance, Baldwin Borough has to drive a pickup truck along the trail. This limits the frequency and capacity of maintenance activities. With access to the park an issue, the master plan carefully takes into consideration the maintenance activity requirements of proposed features.





## EAGLES

A unique limitation of the park property is the fact that it is located so close to a known Bald Eagle nest. In general, for projects taking place near a nesting site, a landscape buffer of 330-660 feet is recommended, depending on vegetation and visibility of the nest from the project location. Many recommendations indicate that if the activity is loud and not similar to any of the existing activities within a mile of the nest, the project should be completed outside of nesting season, which is from January to August in Pennsylvania. Even with similar activities within the mile radius, the Fish and Wildlife Services recommends a minimum 330-foot buffer from the nesting site. Since the current nesting eagles have been tolerant of the activities of the roadway, trains, trail, and scrap yards all within a mile of the nest, and since the park location is beyond the minimum 330-foot buffer, it is not required for additional measures to be taken for park development. Nonetheless, consideration should still be given to adhering to the nesting season guidelines due to public concern for the eagles near the site as well as the knowledge that the eagles use trees along the site for fishing purposes.



## PREVIOUS STUDIES

### BALDWIN BOROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Baldwin Borough completed a comprehensive plan for the Borough in 2015. The plan marks open space as an asset to the community, that would include the Baldwin Riverfront Park area. As a part of the comprehensive plan the Borough prepared a vision, which was divided into five categories: outreach and cooperation, land use and housing, resource management, economic development, and infrastructure, transportation, and energy. Some of these categories include strategies and visioning that directly relate to the Baldwin Riverfront Park area.

One, in the outreach and cooperation section, a major goal is to encourage residents and visitors to stay active. To support this, the plan includes designing and maintaining spaces that promote both passive and active recreation. Baldwin Riverfront Park already provides active recreation via the bike trail, so the master plan will look to include more passive recreational features to the park.

Two, in the land use and housing section, the river corridor of the Borough is specifically discussed. The plan identifies the river as one of the most important “front doors” to the community, especially with the bike trail running through the area. The plan encourages the community to find ways to make the most of the borough’s riverfront lands, building off the river corridor and the bike trail.

Last, the resource management section specifically talks about “sustaining and enhancing natural, scenic, and cultural resources.” When identifying some of the natural resources of the Borough, the comprehensive plan discusses both the Bald Eagle’s nest and the riverfront area. One of the suggestions of the plan includes locating a formal eagle viewing station with interpretive signage along the Three Rivers Heritage Trail. This desire to educate about the eagle’s nest at the park proper, as well as acquired funding, is part of what spurred the desire to prepare a master plan for the park property.

## PUBLIC INPUT

### STUDY COMMITTEE

The master planning project for Baldwin Riverfront Park included a study committee put together by the Friends of the Riverfront. The intention of the committee was to guide the planning process and provide feedback to determine the final goals and vision for the project.

**Courtney Mahronich Vita** (Friends of the Riverfront)

**Robert Firek** (Baldwin Borough)

**Kelsey Ripper** (Friends of the Riverfront)

**Randy Lubin** (Baldwin Borough)

**Bryan Perry** (Great Allegheny Passageway Conservancy)

**Lynn Gurrentz** (Local Advocate)

## PUBLIC SURVEY

The first method of collecting input from public users of the site was via a questionnaire. The questionnaire asked park users some general questions about how they currently use the site and how they would like to use the site in the future. The surveys were available online, and paper copies were available at the park for users to fill out while on site. The survey was available for users to complete for four weeks during summer 2021. Top responses are summarized below.

### SURVEY SUMMARY (Top Responses)

#### How often do you use this section of TRHT/GAP?

- Every now and then (3+ times a year)
- Often (weekly)

#### How often do you visit the park?

- Every now and then (3+ times a year)
- Rarely (less than 3 times a year)
- Often (weekly)

#### How do you use the trail?

- Biking
- Walk/run
- Birdwatching

#### What is your primary trail use?

- Recreation – short trips
- Health and wellness
- Birdwatching

#### What do you do when you visit the park?

- Nature
- Rest
- Birdwatching
- Eating

#### What new features?

- Restrooms
- River access
- Seating
- Shelter
- Trails
- Bike station/rack
- Viewing scope
- Nature play

#### Other ideas?

- Concern for eagles
- Keep natural
- Don't develop / leave as is

#### What community do you live in?

- Baldwin
- South Side
- Pittsburgh
- Squirrel Hill
- Carrick
- Whitehall
- Brentwood
- Munhall

## CONCEPT PLANS

The initial conceptual plans for the park were developed based on the feedback the public survey provided and guided by the study committee members. The concepts present multiple ideas on how the park can be developed to meet some of the requests of users. The Nest in Nature concept takes a simplified approach, adding only a few new amenities, while the Observing Water & Wings concept includes more elements to make the most of the features of the site.



## OPEN HOUSE

After the initial master plan concepts were completed Pashek + MTR and Friends of the Riverfront hosted an open house at the park for users to stop and provide reactions to the conceptual plans. This open house allowed the public to have an open discussion about what features the concept plans were presenting and any concerns they may have for the project. The open house occurred on Saturday, August 14th, and had great attendance by many trail users and a large group of eagle watchers. Since development of the park elicited a lot of concern for the nesting eagle pair Pashek + MTR reviewed the concept plans with local Audubon Society experts.

### OPEN HOUSE FEEDBACK

#### LIKE

- Bike repair station
- Activity in upper areas
- Observation deck
- Enhancing habitat
- Native plantings
- Shelter to get out of rain
- Eagle nest
- Portable restroom
- Bird blinds
- Terraced boulder overlook
- Most popular: Observing Water & Wings

#### CONCERNS

- Vandalism
- Maintenance
- Existing trees are used by eagles
- Contacting Audubon, FWS, and Game Commission
- Don't want to encourage too much noise
- Need signage for eagle etiquette and sharing the trail
- Signage for history
- Keep natural
- Bank reinforcement

### AUDUBON NOTES

- Not worried about trails along the river. The occasional person might startle an eagle from a perch but this should not negatively impact the eagles.
- Concern about trash
  - Rat bait is dangerous to animals
  - Overflowing trash can pose danger
  - More concentrated development will help limit trash
- Big concern about fishing lines, dangerous to all wildlife
- Bird blinds above the wetland would work well
- May not need as many trails, reducing trails reduce the potential disturbances
- Recommend removing remaining railroad ties, tend to leach toxic chemicals

## FINAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT

After the open house, Pashek + MTR and the study committee reviewed all the data collected from the public to determine the priorities for the master plan development. The final plan strives to balance the project vision, project goals, and the public input provided.

A few things that were popular requests for the site are not included in the final plan: portable restrooms and a water fountain. Ultimately, these features were eliminated from the design program due to the limited access. A water fountain would require a water line to be brought into the site because the parcel is not currently served by utilities. This would be a costly investment. There are also limitations related to extending a potable water line into a floodplain. A portable restroom was a very popular request but the committee expressed concerns about accessing the restroom for regular servicing and maintenance. There is also concern about the potential for the portable restroom to be disturbed by flooding. The committee discussed the potential to place an additional portable restroom at the trail intersection by the Sandcastle parking lot.

# MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

## VISION

TO DEVELOP THE PARK AS A RESTING SPOT FOR THREE RIVERS HERITAGE TRAIL USERS TO TAKE A BREAK AND ENJOY A BIT OF NATURE WHILE USING THE TRAIL SYSTEM.

## MASTER PLAN

The master plan features a main park area with space for users to get off the trail and rest. The area has seating, an overlook, and educational features for visitors to enjoy as they take a break from the trail. The park has a nature trail that winds down to the river and meets up with the main Three Rivers Heritage Trail. The nature trail crosses over a wetland area, which can also be viewed from a seating area on one of the knolls above. The smallest knoll has a space for an art installation. Along the river there is bank reinforcement, a boulder fishing platform, and access to an existing small beach. The last area of the site is near the river beacon, where terraced seating provides places to relax and view the river. The park can be broken into five distinct areas, the main park area, the wetlands area, the knolls, the riverfront, and the beacon overlook.

## GOALS

- Provide seating areas for two or three small groups at one time.
- Provide a nature trail to bring users into the site and offer access to the river.
- Supply bike amenities, such as bike racks and a repair station.
- Present educational opportunities for users, especially about the nearby Bald Eagles.
- Give access to nature for the urban trail users.





MONONGAHELA RIVER

Terraced Boulder Seating

Natural Surface Trail, 3' wide

Existing Beach with Kayak/Canoe Pull Off Sign

Boulder Fishing Platform with Fishing Line Receptacle and River Trash Interpretive Sign

Observation Deck with "It's Easy to Help the Hays Bald Eagles Thrive" Interpretive Sign, Seating, and Binoculars

Wetland with Bird Houses

Stepping Stone Crossings

Accessible Trail, 5' wide

Bank Reinforcement

THREE RIVERS HERITAGE TRAIL

Future Art Feature

Accessible Path, 5' wide

Bird Blinds

Birding and Wetlands Interpretive Sign

Benches

Eagle Nest with Seating and "Bald Eagles Return" Interpretive Sign

Picnic Table

Trash Receptacles

Welcome Kiosk and "Bald Eagles: From Abundance to Absence" Interpretive Sign

Bike Racks

Meadows

Covered Picnic Table

Asphalt Path, 10' wide

Bike Repair Station

Park Sign

EAST CARSON STREET



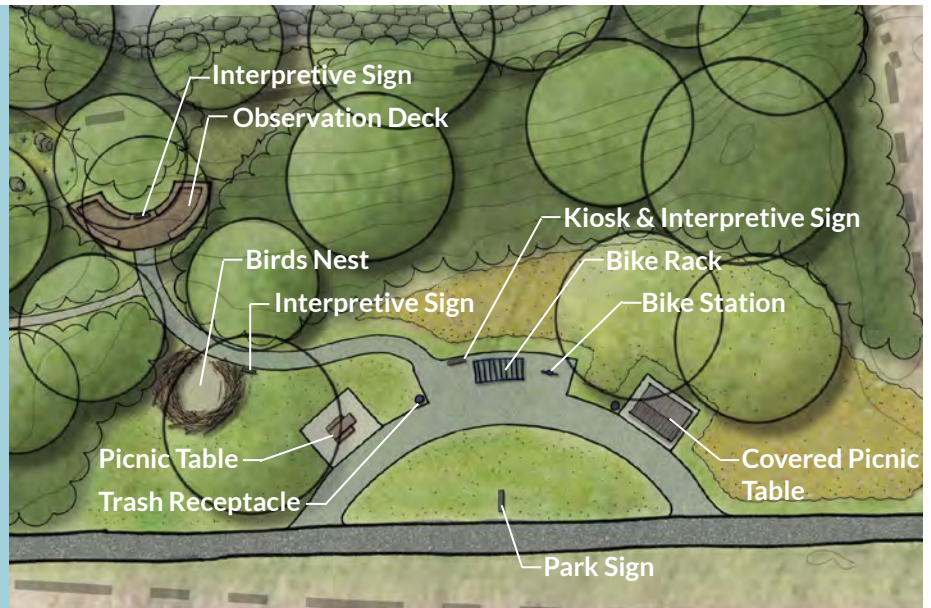


## MAIN PARK AREA

In the main park area trail users can exit the Three Rivers Heritage Trail and enter the park using the semicircle pathway that connects to all the main park features. To the east side of the semicircle path is a covered picnic table, and on the west side of the path is another picnic table without a shelter. Both picnic areas are accessible and sized to allow for wheelchair companion seating.

### FEATURES:

- Entrance Plaza
- Covered Picnic Table
- Picnic Table
- Bike Rack
- Bike Station
- Park Sign
- Welcome Kiosk
- Trash Receptacles
- Interpretive signs
- Birds Nest Seating
- Observation Deck
- Binocular Viewers
- Accessible Trail



In the center of the semicircle path is a park sign to welcome visitors. Along the middle of the semicircle path is a welcome kiosk, bike racks, and a bike repair station. To the left of the kiosk a paved accessible trail leads to the nest feature and the observation deck. The nest feature is a large educational installation shaped to look like a bird's nest and includes seating and an interpretive sign.

Further along the accessible trail is the observation deck. The deck is designed to wrap around an existing grouping of Silver Maples. The deck includes seating, an interpretive sign, and binocular viewers for bird watching.

The main park area provides multiple places for park visitors to take a break from the main trail, whether it is for bike repairs, a bite to eat, or to relax and enjoy the natural area.



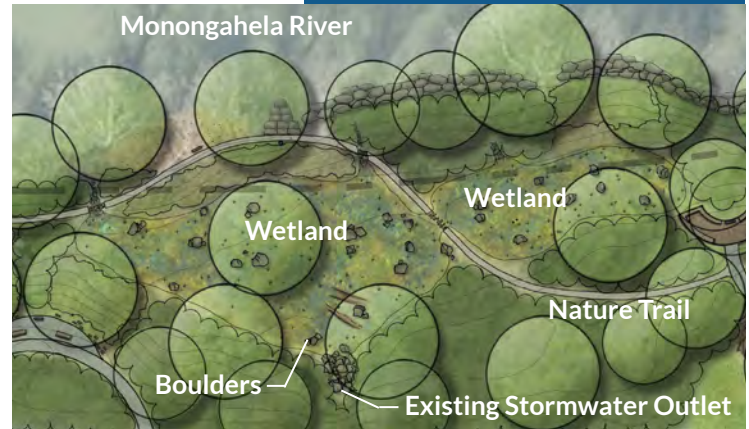
## WETLANDS

Past the observation deck the park features a nature trail that is a single-track natural surface trail. This trail winds down through a constructed wetland, connects to the fishing boulders and beach, and then wraps back up to the Three Rivers Heritage Trail. The wetland area is in the two lower plateaus of the park. These two areas already show signs of wetland vegetation and flooding debris. Since the areas also are not as densely wooded, it is proposed that they be converted into a permanent wetland feature. The area, with some grading modifications, will quickly naturalize into a wetland habitat. Plantings of native wetland plants and incorporation of boulders will make this a good area for birding and ecological education.



### FEATURES:

- Nature Trail
- Wetland Plantings
- Boulders
- Access to River



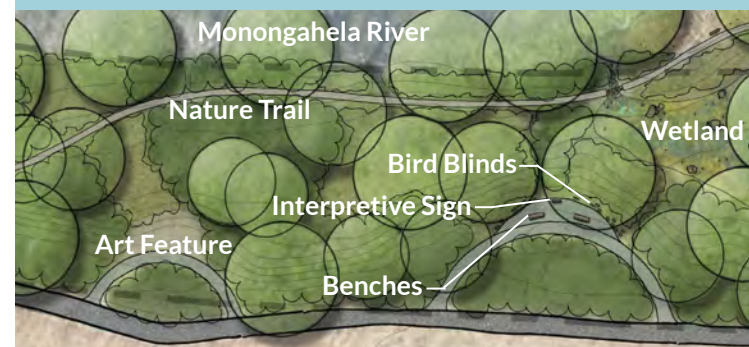
## KNOLLS

There are two knolls on the site just off of the Three Rivers Heritage trail. For the larger knoll the master plan recommends creating a bird watching area overlooking the enhanced wetlands. The area would include an accessible path, benches, and bird blinds from which to view birds. The knoll would also include an interpretive sign on birding and wetland habitats.

The smaller knoll further to the west features a space for some sort of art installation and seating. The art installation could be inspired by the industrial or ecological history of the site. This area is just a small, quiet area to get off the main trail and relax.

### FEATURES:

- Benches
- Accessible Paths
- Bird blinds
- Art Feature



## FEATURES:

- Bank Reinforcement
- Boulder Fishing Platform
- Fishing Line Receptacle
- Beach
- Signage

## RIVERFRONT

Along the riverbanks it is recommended to reinforce areas of the bank that are quickly and severely eroding. These areas are mostly along the eastern portions of the site, where the river bends and the currents as well as debris are causing the rapid erosion of the shores. Reinforcement of the bank can be accomplished in many ways, including the use of large rocks or boulders. For the bank reinforcement the property should coordinate with the Army Corps of Engineers to determine the best method and process to reinforce the banks.

Further along the riverfront the plans recommend a boulder installation on the shore that could create a natural platform for fishing. In this location there would be a receptacle for disposing of fishing lines as well as a sign about the accumulation of river trash. Just west of the fishing area is the existing beach, which would simply be cleaned up and feature a sign letting kayakers and canoers know that they can pull off on the beach to visit the park.

## BEACON OVERLOOK

The park feature to the furthest west on the property is at the location where there is an existing navigation beacon (a large triangular sign) for the river. This area already features some of the best river views on the site because the vegetation is maintained at a lower height to allow for the beacon to be visible from the river.

The master plan proposes to install terraced boulders along the slope. These boulders would serve multiple purposes, including seating for trail users as well as reducing the amount of maintenance needed to keep the beacon visually clear. Since this area is on the bend of the river it offers expansive views in both directions of the river, including a nice view of the Glenwood Bridge.



## SIGNAGE

### PARK SIGN

This park sign should include the name of the park once it is determined. It should also note that the park is located in the Baldwin Borough and could also feature logos from partners and funding organizations.

### KIOSK

The kiosk welcomes users to the park and provides general information about the park facilities. This information could include the park name, map of the park and facilities, rules, hours, warnings and emergency information. Additionally, the kiosk could serve as a community bulletin board, with notices specific to the site and surroundings, such as volunteer days, events, or special reminders. For the Baldwin Riverfront Park, the two existing interpretive signs, one on the Three Rivers Heritage Trail and one on “Pittsburgh’s Lost Cyclist,” can also be incorporated into the welcome kiosk.

The kiosk should provide a modest roof to eliminate glare and protect posted information from direct exposure to the elements. Maps and signs should be manufactured from weatherproof materials, designed for the intended use. Material used should fit the character of the landscape and meet the expectations of the user groups.

### INTERPRETIVE

The master plan for the Baldwin Riverfront Park includes locations for five interpretive signs. Three of the five signs indicated are in the process of being designed. These include the “Bald Eagles: From Abundance to Absence” in the main park area near the welcome kiosk, the “Bald Eagles Return” at the nest seating area, and the “It’s Easy to Help the Hays Bald Eagles Thrive” at the observation deck. The two additional interpretive signs include one at the birdwatching knoll and one at the fishing boulder. The one for the birdwatching area should include information on birdwatching and wetland ecology. The sign located by the fishing area would discuss how trash and debris build up on the shoreline, and what visitors can do to help. These signs will provide information to visitors on topics unique to the Baldwin Riverfront Park property.

### REGULATORY

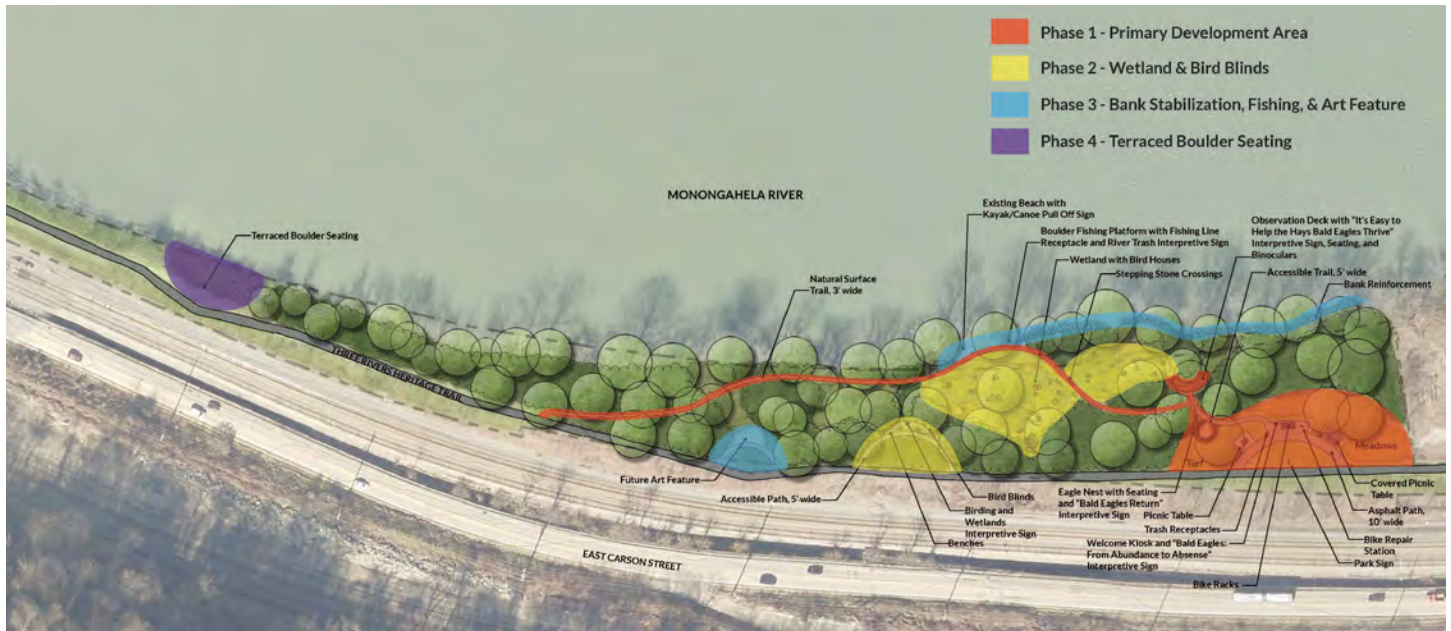
Regulatory signs are simple signs that provide information and guidance on specific functions or uses. This would include the sign at the beach area to indicate to kayakers and canoers that they can pull their boats out of the river at the beach. It also would include a sign on disposing of fishing lines, which are dangerous to birds and other animals. These sorts of signs are usually only placed where a specific action is warranted.



# PHASING PLAN

As with any project it would be ideal if it could be constructed in one phase, with everything completed at once, but few organizations can afford to proceed that way, and most find it more appropriate to construct improvements over a period of time.

The master plan recommendations dividing the project into four logical phases. Depending on financial situations and the success of grant writing efforts, this phasing plan may be expedited or lengthened to best suite the funds available. Details on what each phase includes are listed below.



- ### PHASE 1: PRIMARY DEVELOPMENT AREA
- Entrance Plaza
  - Covered Picnic Table
  - Picnic Table
  - Bike Rack
  - Bike Station
  - Park Sign
  - Welcome Kiosk
  - Trash Receptacles
  - Interpretive signs
  - Birds Nest Seating
  - Observation Deck
  - Binocular Viewers
  - Accessible Trail

- ### PHASE 2: WETLAND AND BIRD BLIND
- Wetlands Grading
  - Wetland Plantings
  - Boulders
  - Stepping Stone Crossing
  - Benches
  - Bird Blinds
  - Interpretive Sign
  - Accessible Path

- ### PHASE 3: BANKS, FISHING, AND ART
- Bank Reinforcement
  - Boulder Fishing Platform
  - Fishing Line Receptacle
  - Beach Clean up
  - Signage
  - Accessible Path
  - Art Feature
  - Benches

- ### PHASE 4: TERRACED BOULDER SEATING
- Boulder Installation
  - Cut Back Vegetation
  - Native Plantings

## COST ESTIMATE

Planning level opinions of probable costs were developed for the proposed improvements to the Baldwin Riverfront Park. The costs of the four phases of improvements are arranged according to the phasing plan described earlier, with the projected costs for each corresponding phase detailed in the spreadsheets on subsequent pages. Due to increases in construction costs over time, the projected costs should be escalated to account for schedule and market conditions. It is recommended that a 4% escalation per year be incurred for each additional year after 2022 the project phase is completed.

Item Description	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Item Cost
<b>Phase 1 - Primary Development Area</b>				
<i>Removals &amp; Site Preparation</i>				
Clearing, grubbing, and removals	1	LS	\$1,000	\$ 1,000
Earthwork	200	CY	\$15	\$ 3,000
ESC controls	1	LS	\$3,500	\$ 3,500
<i>Removals &amp; Site Preparation</i>				\$7,500
<i>Main Gathering Space</i>				
Asphalt path - 10' wide	140	SY	\$55	\$ 7,700
Accessible picnic tables	2	EA	\$2,600	\$ 5,200
Picnic table shelter - 12x16	1	EA	\$10,000	\$ 10,000
Picnic table seating areas - 18'x14' each (concrete)	70	SY	\$110	\$ 7,700
Bike racks	5	EA	\$1,500	\$ 7,500
Welcome kiosk	1	LS	\$7,500	\$ 7,500
New Park Sign (acknowledging Baldwin Borough)	1	LS	\$2,500	\$ 2,500
Bike repair station	1	EA	\$2,500	\$ 2,500
Bike plaza - 40'x10' (asphalt)	45	SY	\$55	\$ 2,475
Accessible trail - 5' wide to Observation Deck	60	SY	\$55	\$ 3,300
Natural Surface Trail (volunteer built)	720	LF	\$0	\$ -
Eagle nest with seating - 20' diameter	1	LS	\$5,000	\$ 5,000
Interpretive signs	3	EA	\$2,500	\$ 7,500
Observation deck with seating - 40'x10'	1	LS	\$40,000	\$ 40,000
Binocular viewers	1	LS	\$4,000	\$ 4,000
<i>Main Gathering Space</i>				\$112,875
<i>Plantings</i>				
Topsoil	1	LS	\$1,500	\$ 1,500
Meadow (let current lawn area turn fallow)	400	SY	\$0.00	\$ -
Seeding - Turf	450	SY	\$2.25	\$ 1,013
<i>Plantings</i>				\$2,513
<i>Site Improvements Subtotal</i>				\$122,888
			15%	\$18,433
<i>Bonds and Insurance and stakeout and mobilization</i>			15%	\$21,198
<i>Contingency (subtotal + Bonds, Stakeout, etc)</i>				
<b>SUBTOTAL PHASE 1</b>				<b>\$162,519</b>
<i>Survey, Design, Permitting</i>			20%	\$32,504
<b>TOTAL PHASE 1</b>				<b>\$195,022</b>
<b>Phase 2 - Wetland and Bird Blinds</b>				
<i>Removals &amp; Site Preparation</i>				
Clearing, grubbing, and removals	1	LS	\$1,500	\$ 1,500
Earthwork	2175	CY	\$15	\$ 32,625
ESC controls	1	LS	\$1,500	\$ 1,500
<i>Removals &amp; Site Preparation</i>				\$35,625
<i>Bird Blind Node</i>				
Accessible trail - 5' wide - trail surface aggregate	75	SY	\$25	\$ 1,875
Benches	2	EA	\$2,600	\$ 5,200
Interpretive signs	1	EA	\$2,500	\$ 2,500
Timber bird blinds	1	LS	\$15,000	\$ 15,000
Bird blind seating area - 30'x10' - trail surface aggregate	35	SY	\$25	\$ 875
Bird blind Trail Identification Markers	2	EA	\$1,500	\$ 3,000
<i>Bike Trail Nodes</i>				\$28,450
<i>Wetlands</i>				
Stepping stone crossings	1	LS	\$2,000	\$ 2,000
Boulders and stones in wetland area	1	LS	\$7,500	\$ 7,500
Bird and wildlife houses	10	EA	\$200	\$ 2,000
<i>Wetlands &amp; Nature Trail</i>				\$11,500

<b>Plantings</b>				
Understory Planting	100	EA	\$100	\$ 10,000
Seeding - Wetland restoration	1,200	SY	\$7.00	\$ 8,400
			<i>Plantings</i>	\$8,400
			<i>Site Improvements Subtotal</i>	\$83,975
<i>Bonds and Insurance and stakeout and mobilization</i>			15%	\$12,596
<i>Contingency (subtotal + Bonds, Stakeout, etc)</i>			15%	\$14,486
			<b>SUBTOTAL PHASE 2</b>	<b>\$111,057</b>
<i>Survey, Design, Engineering, Permitting</i>			25%	\$27,764
			<b>TOTAL PHASE 2</b>	<b>\$138,821</b>
<b>Phase 3 - Bank Stabilization, Fishing, and Art Feature</b>				
<i>Removals &amp; Site Preparation</i>				
Clearing, grubbing, and removals	1	LS	\$2,500	\$ 2,500
Earthwork	200	CY	\$15	\$ 3,000
ESC controls	1	LS	\$2,500	\$ 2,500
			<i>Removals &amp; Site Preparation</i>	\$8,000
<i>Bank Stabilization, Fishing Platform, and Art Feature</i>				
Benches	1	EA	\$2,600	\$ 2,600
Art feature	1	LS	\$20,000	\$ 20,000
Art feature seating area - 10'x10' - trail surface aggregate	12	SY	\$25	\$ 300
Signage	2	EA	\$1,500	\$ 3,000
Interpretive signs	1	EA	\$2,500	\$ 2,500
Bank Stabilization	410	LF	\$90	\$ 36,900
Boulder fishing platform	1	LS	\$5,000	\$ 5,000
			<i>Wetlands &amp; Nature Trail</i>	\$41,900
<i>Plantings</i>				
Seeding and Planting Restoration	1	LS	\$15,000	\$ 15,000
			<i>Plantings</i>	\$15,000
			<i>Site Improvements Subtotal</i>	\$64,900
<i>Bonds and Insurance and stakeout and mobilization</i>			15%	\$9,735
<i>Contingency (subtotal + Bonds, Stakeout, etc)</i>			15%	\$11,195
			<b>SUBTOTAL PHASE 3</b>	<b>\$85,830</b>
<i>Survey, Design, Engineering, Permitting</i>			25%	\$21,458
			<b>TOTAL PHASE 3</b>	<b>\$107,288</b>
<b>Phase 4 - Terraced Boulder Seating</b>				
<i>Removals &amp; Site Preparation</i>				
Clearing, grubbing, and removals	1	LS	\$5,000	\$ 5,000
Earthwork	300	CY	\$25	\$ 7,500
ESC controls	1	LS	\$2,500	\$ 2,500
			<i>Removals &amp; Site Preparation</i>	\$15,000
<i>Boulder Terrace &amp; Bank Stabilization</i>				
Terraced boulders	725	SF	\$125	\$ 90,625
			<i>Boulder Terrace &amp; Bank Stabilization</i>	\$90,625
<i>Plantings</i>				
Seeding	500	SY	\$5.00	\$ 2,500
			<i>Plantings</i>	\$2,500
			<i>Site Improvements Subtotal</i>	\$108,125
<i>Bonds and Insurance and stakeout and mobilization</i>			15%	\$16,219
<i>Contingency (subtotal + Bonds, Stakeout, etc)</i>			15%	\$18,652
			<b>SUBTOTAL PHASE 3</b>	<b>\$142,995</b>
<i>Survey, Design, Engineering, Permitting</i>			25%	\$35,749
			<b>TOTAL PHASE 3</b>	<b>\$178,744</b>
			<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$619,876</b>

Opinion of Probable Construction Costs is made based on the experience and qualifications of Pashek + MTR, Ltd and represents reasonable judgment based on familiarity with the industry. Pashek + MTR, Ltd. has no control over the cost, or availability of labor, materials or equipment, or over market conditions or the provider's method of pricing. Pashek + MTR, Ltd cannot and does not guarantee that the opinion of probable cost provided the Owner will not vary from the actual cost experienced by the Owner.

## PARK MAINTENANCE

The following includes specific maintenance tasks related to the proposed plan.

### BOROUGH MAINTENANCE:

- Mow lawn area once a month. This maintains the current mowing schedule by the Borough. The proposed plan reduces the area of required mowing from the current condition, thereby reducing time spent on site.
- Mow meadow area once a year or once every other year in late winter or early spring (end of March or first week of April). This will maintain this area as a meadow as opposed to letting shrubs and trees grow.
- Remove trash once or twice a month. Two trash receptacles help reduce the trips necessary to empty them.

### VOLUNTEERS:

- Trail clearing two times a year. This involves removing debris and obstacles along the trail route such as cutting back vegetation.
- Birds Nest replenishing once every two or three years or as needed. This involves adding more sticks to the nest as it decays over time.
- Tree planting for potential ongoing understory restoration.

### INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Japanese Knotweed is the most disruptive invasive species on the property within the proposed development area. Japanese knotweed spreads rapidly, forming dense thickets that crowd and shade out native vegetation. This reduces species diversity, alters natural ecosystems, and negatively impacts wildlife habitat. Since the site is within the floodplain along the river, broken fragments of knotweed rhizomes will continuously spread on site, making complete removal almost certainly impossible. Therefore, it is recommended that a denser native understory and shade tolerant trees are planted to help outcompete the knotweed while also helping prevent erosion. Sycamore native floodplain species are listed on this page.

## PERMITS REQUIRED

Based on the master plan and the fact that the site is within the flood zone, there will be required permits. We recommend that a wetland determination be completed for the proposed wetland area. If it is an existing wetland, it should be delineated. We also recommend that the client meet with DEP to determine which permits they would require considering that we anticipate less than an acre disturbance, no fill within the flood zone, excavation for enhancing the wetland, and streambank stabilization. They might require a small projects permit JPA or GP3 permit for bank stabilization.

## Sycamore Floodplain Forest

### Trees

- American Sycamore – *Platanus occidentalis*
- Boxelder – *Acer negundo*
- Silver Maple – *Acer saccharinum*
- Green Ash – *Fraxinus pennsylvanica*
- Black Willow – *Salix nigra*
- Black Maple – *Acer nigrum*
- Red Maple – *Acer rubrum*
- American Elm – *Ulmus americana*
- Slippery Elm – *Ulmus rubra*

### Shrubs

- Silky Dogwood – *Cornus amomum*
- Gray Dogwood – *Cornus racemose*
- Common Ninebark – *Physocarpus opulifolius*
- Northern Spicebush – *Lindera benzoin*
- Common Elderberry – *Sambucus nigra canadensis*
- Southern Arrowwood – *Viburnum dentatum lucidum*

### Herbaceous Plants

- Jewelweed – *Impatiens spp.*
- Canadian Clearweed – *Pilea pumila*
- Smallspike False Nettle – *Boehmeria cylindrica*
- Canadian Woodnettle – *Laportea canadensis*
- Ostrich Fern – *Matteuccia struthiopteris*
- Canadian Germander – *Teucrium canadense*
- Jumpseed – *Polygonum virginianum*
- Jack in the Pulpit – *Arisaema triphyllum*
- Green Dragon – *Arisaema dracontium*
- Goldenrods – *Solidago spp.*
- Wingstem – *Verbesina alternifolia*
- Riverbank Wildrye – *Elymus riparius*





# APPENDICES

- MEETING MINUTES
- PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY
- OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY
- AUDUBON NOTES
- PNDI RESULTS



## Eagle Park Plan

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May 24, 2021 at 11:00am on site

### Attendees

Kelsey Ripper, Friends of the Riverfront  
Courtney Mahronich Vita, Friends of the Riverfront  
Bryan Perry, Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy  
Robert Firek, Baldwin Borough  
Randy Lubin, Baldwin Borough  
Lynn Gurrentz, Advocate  
Sara Thompson, Pashek + MTR, Ltd.  
Keely McDonald, Pashek + MTR, Ltd.

### Meeting Minutes

#### Discussion Items

1. After introductions Sara discussed initial site observations including the following:
  - a. The site is within the floodplain making it, especially lower elevations, susceptible to flooding and related debris. Durable materials will need to be considered to reduce maintenance.
  - b. The site is on the outside of the river bend making it the river edge more susceptible to faster flows and erosion.
  - c. Invasive species on the site include Japanese Knotweed, garlic mustard, and various vines. The vines are choking out some trees and the knotweed will make it harder to preserve views of the river during the summer and keep it from overgrowing newly constructed features.
  - d. The site's topography allows for easy access to the river and creates several different unique terraces and other nooks, providing a variety of opportunities for potential outdoor "rooms".
  - e. There are a lot of nice native floodplain species growing on site as well as a lot of birds that visit the site.
  - f. The trains go by about every 20 minutes and are very noisy.
  - g. Access will be an issue for construction. Courtney will send Sara a contact for the adjacent property owner after some drainage issues are remedied with them.
2. Sara then asked the group their vision for the park and what types of amenities should be considered. The group listed the following:
  - a. The park is one of the first stopping points between the city and the waterfront area. At least one or two others are using the site as a rest area on the weekends.
  - b. Need more picnic tables and/or seating areas.
  - c. Include a meandering trail.
  - d. One of the struggles with the location is the lack of emergency, and policing access.

- e. Like the idea of having a bike station if it doesn't get vandalized.
  - f. Keep the native trees
  - g. Incorporate something for kids and families, perhaps inspired by the nature of the site or the eagle nest.
  - h. Something related to the eagles should be incorporated into the park as they are an important part of this part of the trail.
  - i. Incorporate views and access to the river.
  - j. Potential for boats like kayaks to stop at the park. Or space for people to stop and fish.
  - k. A dock would be nice if it will withstand ice flows and fluctuations in the River.
  - l. Portable restrooms: even though there are restrooms a couple miles up the trail in either direction it might be nice to have, especially families with younger children.
  - m. As many amenities and park features should be made accessible as possible.
  - n. Bike racks, or a place to lock a bike if a visitor wants to go down to the water or walk along the waterside trail.
  - o. A place for kayakers, or other small boats to pull out of the water and access the park.
  - p. Shade is important.
  - q. Seating for 2-3 groups.
  - r. Educational signage and activities.
    - i. Fun interactive ways for kids to learn while stopped at the park.
  - s. The group expressed the desire to have something unique/unexpected at the park to draw people to visit. This could be something with the educational features, or incorporating art, or some other feature of the site.
  - t. Bob mentioned that there is a really nice example of a trail along the edge of a river on the B&O Canal Towpath near Antietam.
3. During the site visit Pashek + MTR took notes on some of the plant species on the site including: Silver Maples, Sycamores, Boxelders, Sumac, Tulip Poplar, Black Cherry, Mulberry, Willow, Ninebark, Honeysuckle, Knotweed, Grape vines, Bittersweet, and Garlic Mustard.
- 4. Next Steps**
- a. Sara closed out the meeting by discussing the next steps in the project.
    - i. Pashek + MTR will put together a public survey to be set up online and at the park for the community and visitors to provide initial input on the project. We will also send precedent examples of survey boxes to the Borough so that they can construct one for the site.
    - ii. Pashek + MTR will put together some conceptual plans for the park after receiving results from the public survey.
    - iii. After the concepts are developed the committee will meet again to review the ideas
    - iv. Pashek + MTR will then set up a public open house booth on site to get feedback on the conceptual plans.

The information contained in these minutes was recorded by Pashek + MTR and represents our interpretation and understanding of the discussions that occurred during the meeting. Please

## Baldwin Riverfront Park

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July 26, 2021 at 1:00pm via Zoom

### Attendees

Kelsey Ripper, Friends of the Riverfront  
Courtney Mahronich Vita, Friends of the Riverfront  
Bryan Perry, Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy  
Robert Firek, Baldwin Borough  
Lynn Gurrentz, Advocate  
Sara Thompson, Pashek + MTR, Ltd.  
Keely McDonald, Pashek + MTR, Ltd.

## Meeting Minutes

### Discussion Items

1. Sara kicked off the meeting by discussing the community survey results with the committee.
  - a. The group reviewed the results from the 52 paper surveys and the 187 online surveys.
  - b. Most of the results were similar between the two formats, though just based on the answers provided it looks like more bikers took the paper survey and more of the eagle watchers took the online survey.
    - i. Lynn expressed that some of the concern for the eagles may be due to some people thinking the park development would be in the wooded area across the track/road where there have been problems with people approaching the nesting tree. Lynn also expressed agreement that the type of development we are proposing for the park is not likely to adversely affect the eagle due to all the adjacent industrial activities.
    - ii. Courtney mentioned that Friends of the Riverfront is doing outreach to calm the concerns, and clarify the project, for the people who are concerned about the eagles.
2. Sara then moved on to reviewing the concept plans with the group.
  - a. Bryan inquired about the paving material for the site. Since this has not been determined yet Sara discussed some of the possible paving options for the accessible areas including asphalt, concrete, and trail surface aggregate.
3. Sara then quickly went through some precedent images with the group to give some more ideas of what the features of the park would look like
  - a. Bob inquired if there would be any safety concerns with stepping stones becoming slippery. Sara explained that we have not had the problem in the past when stones have been used, and that though this site is in the flood zone, when not flooded most of the areas for the stones would not have much for water, just

drainage and wetland.

4. After reviewing the plans and images Sara asked the group for their feedback.
  - a. Bob indicated that his biggest concern with furniture/feature selection is vandalism, so making sure what is installed is sturdy, and can be permanently mounted.
  - b. The group mentioned lighting, and though bringing any utilities to the site would be cost prohibitive there was some interest in having some solar lights in the main entrance plaza area.
  - c. The group turned to discussing the idea of a portable restroom on the site.
    - i. Currently there is a portable restroom located at the scrap yard road crossing by the Sandcastle parking.
      1. Kelsey mentioned that they have been considering adding another portable unit to that area since the current one is so well used.
    - ii. Lynn liked the idea of having restroom access in the park space. It accommodates people that want to linger in the park, or families with children where the existing portable restroom may be too far away.
    - iii. Bryan expressed that the existing restrooms are close enough to the site for most users and would prefer not to see one directly on the site. He also brought up that there is funding, maintenance, logistical, and liability issues to consider if a portable restroom is installed on the site.
    - iv. Many of the group members discussed that simply accessing the portable restroom facilities regularly to maintain them may be difficult.
      1. May have to access from South Side, which means driving on the trail, or get permission to access from adjacent property owners.
      2. Biggest limiting factor
      3. Friends of the Riverfront will take some time to look at the feasibility and let PMTR know before the open house if a restroom should be included in the drawings.
  - d. Courtney mentioned that she likes the look of the more rustic furnishings, but that they would need to be secured for potential flooding events.
    - i. Sara discussed the different ways that the furniture could be secured using footers or fastening to concrete pads.
  - e. Lynn really liked the idea of the terraced boulders as a feature for the site, not only for views but could be a good spot to stop and sit or have lunch.
  - f. Bryan liked the deck, bird blinds, and nest. He would prefer that the bike racks be set further back from the trail, like in concept 2, to allow for more space to get on and off.
  - g. The group discussed the interpretive sign locations in the plans, with one being grouped and the other spread throughout the site.
    - i. Courtney liked them spread out and thought that there could be opportunities to include additional interpretive signs later at the wetlands

- or deck or other interesting areas of the site.
- h. Sara led the group in a discussion about a dock, and what the desire for fishing/boating access is for the site.
    - i. Many of the group members reflected that a dock may not be the best option for the site, with there being other optional solutions to offer areas for fishing, and the beach being preferred for the small boats to access the site.
  - i. Kelsey brought up the need to have some sort of kiosk to post information on at the park.
  - j. Kelsey also brought up the concern with vandalism and considering furnishings that could potentially be painted over if vandalized, which the more rustic precedent images wouldn't allow.
  - k. The group emphasized the need to make sure that there are accessible benches up close to the trail for people to use. Maybe more artistic/rustic features would be incorporated further in the site off the trail.
  - l. Kelsey asked about phasing, and Sara briefly described how we determine phasing, but that we would not come up with phasing until after a final plan is developed.
  - m. Sara also briefly discussed sustainable trails and using volunteers to blaze the trails.
  - n. Sara asked the group about reducing the turf space in the plans and if there is a preference. Kelsey mentioned that it is nice to have some lawn space to accommodate larger group events, especially for the Friends of the Riverfront.
5. The meeting closed with discussing the upcoming open house event.
- a. The group also discussed the potential to put the plans and contact information up on the Friends of the Riverfront website to allow people who could not attend the event in person to be able to ask questions and provide feedback.
- 6. Next Steps**
- a. Pashek + MTR will prepare a flyer to distribute for the August 14<sup>th</sup> open house event.
  - b. Pashek + MTR will update the concept plans based on the feedback provided by the committee.
  - c. Friends of the Riverfront will look at the feasibility of including a portable restroom on the site and provide a decision to Pashek + MTR before the August 14<sup>th</sup> open house so that the drawing can reflect the decision.
  - d. After receiving community feedback at the open house Pashek + MTR will develop a draft master plan for the site.

The information contained in these minutes was recorded by Pashek + MTR and represents our interpretation and understanding of the discussions that occurred during the meeting. Please notify Pashek + MTR within one week of distribution for any changes. Otherwise, minutes will be distributed as final, and assumed accurate as written.

## **Baldwin Riverfront Park**

*September 16, 2021 at 9:00am via Zoom*

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### **Attendees**

Kelsey Ripper, Friends of the Riverfront  
Courtney Mahronich Vita, Friends of the Riverfront  
Bryan Perry, Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy  
Robert Firek, Baldwin Borough  
Lynn Gurrentz, Advocate  
Sara Thompson, Pashek + MTR, Ltd.  
Keely McDonald, Pashek + MTR, Ltd.

### **Meeting Minutes**

#### **Discussion Items**

1. Sara kicked off the meeting by discussing the outcomes from the open house hosted at the park in August.
  - a. The group that watches the bald eagles came over, in general their largest concerns are the activities along the river disrupting the fishing patterns of the eagles.
    - i. Sara discussed this with the local Audubon Society, they were less concerned about the activity along the river and more concerned about trash and fishing lines.
    - ii. The Audubon likes the potential to enhance a wetland area, this would foster more bird species.
  - b. In general, the bikers and runners using the trail like the plans, some did express concern with vandalism, especially to the bike station
  - c. On the topic of a portable restroom, responses were mixed. Some wanted them and expressed concern that people would just use the woods, while others find that the existing facilities are adequate.
  
2. Sara discussed that the next step is the committee deciding on the direction to take the plan based on the public input that was collected.
  - a. Lynn was glad the eagle watchers came over and provided input. She discussed that the concern about trash could be addressed with signage to educate users and animal-proof receptacles. She doesn't want to reduce the extent of the park plan and likes the idea of a second nest or feature like that in the main area. Lynn likes the idea of the restrooms for convenience for park users but understands the limitations of the site location.
  - b. Brendan likes the idea of doing a second feature, maybe not another nest but something else that corresponds to the site. He agreed that it makes sense to reduce the number of trails on the site since it is not a large property. He loves the



idea of the wetlands and observation deck. Brendan also like having the interpretive signs spread out in the site.

- c. Kelsey likes the fewer trails, like concept 1. She also said she likes the idea of spreading out the elements but thinks that concentrating them in one area might be better for visitor experience, vandalism, and maintenance. Think that signage for trash clean up and using one of the fishing line receptacles may be a good idea. Kelsey was conflicted about the portable restroom since she understands the desire for one, but also the limitations of access so really it comes down to if Baldwin could maintain it.
  - d. Bob commented that the reality is that a portable restroom at the site would just not be practical to service. He mentioned that most of the trail is carry in carry out with trash and that we should try to promote that for the site since maintaining the trash receptacle is not easy just due to access. Seeing how the trash demands change with more development might just be a wait and see approach.
  - e. Courtney is okay with cutting back on the number of trails but is concerned about people creating their own trails. The group discussed this and considered just doing a loop along the river and up to the bike trail.
    - i. Kelsey suggested that maybe they can address some of the concern about the river trail through phasing.
    - ii. Sara mentioned that it seems that clustered activity areas are more desirable in concern with the eagles since it is easier for them to adapt to the activity in the one area.
  - f. Kelsey likes the nest in the main area, and maybe a secondary feature on the knoll further down the trail. Having the nest in the main area makes it easier for families to gather at a picnic table and enjoy the nest.
  - g. Some other things discussed include the use of art on the site, where the signage could go, and the possibility that the second feature item could draw from the industrial history of the site.
  - h. The group agreed that the accessible trail just needs to go to the observation deck and the remaining trail loop can be a natural surface trail.
  - i. Lastly, the group discussed what to propose in the area down by the Coast Guard marker. Everyone seems to like the terraced boulder idea, only concerns would be permitting, and actual access to place the boulders.
3. Talking about the river bank reinforcement, there was concern that it could effect some fish habitat along the shore. Sara mentioned that depending on how the reinforcement is done it can create habitat, so that should be something that is considered when that work is completed.

#### 4. Next Steps

- a. Pashek + MTR revise and prepare a draft master plan based on the committee decisions.
- b. Pashek + MTR will prepare a draft cost estimate based on the draft master plan, phasing for the cost estimate will be based on the potential funding increments.
- c. Brendan, Judy, and the Pashek + MTR group will start to come up with some park name idea. Potentially the park name can be chosen by the public from a pool of names approved by the committee.

## **Baldwin Riverfront Park**

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*December 1, 2021 at 1:00pm via Zoom*

### **Attendees**

Kelsey Ripper, Friends of the Riverfront  
Courtney Mahronich Vita, Friends of the Riverfront  
Katie Craig, Friends of the Riverfront  
Bryan Perry, Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy  
Robert Firek, Baldwin Borough  
Lynn Gurrentz, Advocate  
Brendan Wiant, Wiant Design Works  
Sara Thompson, Pashek + MTR, Ltd.  
Keely McDonald, Pashek + MTR, Ltd.

### **Meeting Minutes**

#### **Discussion Items**

1. Sara kicked off the meeting by reviewing the updates to the plan based off the last meeting's feedback.
  - a. Sara briefly went through each area of the site and the features in those areas.
    - i. Bob asked if the accessible paths are concrete or asphalt, Sara confirmed that we are suggesting asphalt, with the only concrete being the pads for the picnic tables.
    - ii. Lynn likes the idea of having a sign at the beach area for boaters and a sign at the fishing area along with the fishing line receptacle.
      1. Courtney mentioned that Friends is doing work on some water trail signage and that this may be a good location for one of their signs as an informal resting point.
    - iii. The group also discussed what to do with the existing signage.
      1. The existing interpretive sign and map could be incorporated into the main kiosk. Or could be located adjacent to the kiosk in the main plaza area
      2. The plans show the relocation of the existing Borough sign.
        - a. After discussion it was agreed that the Borough sign should be changed to a sign with the park name and acknowledge that is it a part of Baldwin Borough.
        - b. Sara mentioned that in the final report there will be more details on what information the recommended signs may include, like safety information, etc.

2. Sara proceeded to review the phasing plan and cost estimate with the group.
  - a. Sara described the four recommended phases of the project and what they would include.
    - i. Lynn inquired if there would be trouble accessing the river banks for the stabilization if the other phases are built first.
      1. Sara and the group discussed variable options for access to complete the bank stabilization work with the other phases completed first.
      2. Courtney also mentioned that just because it is listed as phase 3 it could be done first depending on funding and other circumstances.
  - b. Sara briefly reviewed the cost estimate and some of the general assumptions made.
    - i. Sara also discussed ways to account for escalation as the years progress and the project is completed at later dates.
  - c. Bryan inquired about ways to scale/cut back if need be for costs, specifically looking at the terraced boulder area.
    - i. Sara confirmed that the area is purely for resting and views and is not necessary for bank stabilization. It could essentially be cut in half to reduce costs.
    - ii. Courtney brought up the potential to combine permitting as another method to reduce some costs.
    - iii. Sara also suggested that completing the design for more than one phase at a time could also reduce costs and could make sure that the entire project is cohesive. This could include completing construction documents (CDs) for the main area and design development documents (DDs) for the remaining areas all at the same time.
3. Sara discussed maintenance of the new park space.
  - a. Currently the park is mowed about once a month, trash is picked up at the same time.
  - b. The intention is that the new park could be maintained with these once-a-month visits.
  - c. Sara suggests that the materials used on the site should be something that will hold up long term with minimal care, such as fiberglass decking, to minimize maintenance demands.
    - i. Sara discussed options that could be maintained by volunteers, such as the trail, tree planting, the nest, etc.
4. The group then moved on to discussing park naming and signage.
  - a. Friends will be at the 12/14 Baldwin Council meeting and the naming is a topic of discussion. Suggestions: Eagle Park, Baldwin Riverfront Park, Franklin's Grove, Eagle Rest Park.
  - b. Brendan discussed the "easter egg" signs for the site and Sara asked if he could share what they have already developed for the signage. The Master Plan will be revised to include the locations of these signs.

## 5. Next Steps

- a. Pashek + MTR will finalize the plans with changes indicated during the meeting, and signage location after reviewing the signage information from Brendan.
- b. Pashek + MTR will prepare a draft report for the master plan with more detailed

recommendations. This draft will be distributed to the committee for review after the new year.

- c. Bob will share the contact information for the Borough engineer, Jason Stanton, so that Pashek + MTR can reach out to him to discuss permitting.

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Prepared by: Keely McDonald

Date Prepared: 2021/12/02

Distributed to: Study Committee

# PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

**Baldwin Riverfront Park**  
Three Rivers Heritage Trail/GAP

2022-01-11

239 responses total

<b>Q1: How often do you use this section of the TRHT/GAP between the South Side of Pittsburgh and the Waterfront?</b>	
Every now and then (between three times a year and monthly)	88
Often (weekly)	78
Very often (daily)	28
Rarely (less than three times a year)	26
I have never been there	19
<b>Q2: How often do you visit Eagle Park?</b>	
Every now and then (between three times a year and monthly)	88
Rarely (less than three times a year)	54
Often (weekly)	47
I have never been here	35
Very often (daily)	12
<b>Q3: How do you normally use the trail? Check all that apply.</b>	
Biking	150
Walking/running	115
Other: Eagle/Bird watching	17
Roller-skating/blading	4
Other: Photography	3
Other: Dog walking	2
Cross country skiing	1
Other: Wildlife	1
<b>Q4: What is your primary use of the trail? Check all that apply.</b>	
Recreation: Short day trips	153
Health and Wellness	137
Other: Eagle/Bird watching	18
Recreation: Long multi-day trips	17
Transportation/Commuting to Work	15
Other: Ecology	3
Other: Visit Swissvale	1
Other: Fun	1
Other: Trail monitor	1
Other: Quiet	1
Other: Leisure	1
<b>Q5: What do you do when you visit the park? Check all that apply.</b>	
Views/enjoy nature	133
Rest	125
Bird watching	85
Eating/picnic	47
I haven't visited the park	39
Fish	14
I haven't visited the park	39
Other: meditate/quiet	2
Other: Running	2
Other: bicycling	1
Other: fill out surveys:)	1
Other: meet and greet	1
Other: fix flat tires	1
Other: play fetch	1
Other: Play with kids	1

<b>Q6: What new features would you like to see in the park? Check all that apply.</b>	
Restrooms	146
Access to river	129
Benches/seating	110
Picnic tables	99
Shelter	92
Walking trails	76
Bike repair station	65
Bike racks	59
Viewing scope	58
Natural play	55
Docks	50
Public art	39
Interpretive signage	27
Other: no development	14
Other: concern for eagles	11
Other: fresh water source/water fountain	10
Other: Native plantings	2
Other: Trail drainage	2
Other: fitness	2
Other: keep the grass cut	1
Other: history info	1
Other: help call box/heart and health box	1
Other: Access at Becks Run	1
Other: Observation deck	1
Other: Dog park	1
<b>Q7: Please list other ideas you may have for Eagle Park.</b>	
Concern for eagles	18
Keep natural	14
Don't build	11
Like as is	5
Water fountain	4
Connection with other neighborhoods	3
Trail drainage issues	3
Play for kids	3
Rest areas	3
Widen eagle area	3
Parking	2
Interpretive signs	2
Trail sharing sign (for both cyclists and watchers)	2
Gift shop	1
Winter trail maintenance	1
Fishing areas	1
Trails	1
Improved maintenance	1
Trash cans	1
Restroom	1
Map sign	1
Access to river	1
Fitness equipment	1
Dog park	1
Birdhouses	1
<b>Q8: What neighborhood or community do you live in?</b>	
Baldwin	87
South Side	12
Other: Pittsburgh	8

Other: Squirrel Hill	7
Other: Carrick	7
Other: Whitehall	7
Other: Brentwood	6
Munhall	5
Other: Highland Park	4
Other: Forest Hills	4
Other: Monroeville	4
Hays	3
Hazelwood	3
Other: Bethal Park	3
Other: Swissvale	3
Other: Oakland	3
Other: Greenfield	3
Homestead	2
West Homestead	2
New Homestead	2
Other: McCandless	2
Other: Brookline	2
Other: Lincoln Place	2
Other: Glenshaw	2
Other: O'Hara Township	2
Other: Mt. Washington	2
Other: North Hills	2
Other: South Park	2
Other: West Mifflin	2
Other: Dormont	2
Other: Washington County	2
Other: Moon Township	2
Other: Chelmsford, MA	1
Other: Colorado	1
Other: Georgia	1
Other: Duquesne Heights	1
Other: North Braddock	1
Other: Mt. Oliver	1
Other: Overbrook	1
Other: Williamsburg	1
Other: Friendship	1
Other: Deutschtown	1
Other: Polish Hill	1
Other: Indiana Township	1
Other: Scott Township	1
Other: Mt. Lebanon	1
Other: Lawrenceville	1
Other: Point Breeze	1
Other: Etna	1
Other: Wilkinsburg	1
Other: Pleasant Hills	1
Other: Shaler	1
Other: Fox Chapel	1
Other: Murrysville	1
Other: Ben Avon	1
Other: Bloomfield	1
Other: Crafton	1
Other: Penn Hills	1
Other: Churchill	1
Other: Midland	1
Other: Regent Square	1
Other: Clinton	1

Q9: How old are you?	
56 to 69	70
41 to 55	65
29 to 40	62
70 and over	21
18 to 28	10
Under 18	4

Q10: Have you taken kids to the Three Rivers Heritage Trails?	
No	134
Yes	96

Q11: If yes, what age group? Check all that apply.	
6-12	63
13-18	44
0-5	33

Q12: What is the approximate total income of your household?	
\$40,000-\$74,000	68
\$75,000-\$149,000	57
\$150,000-\$249,000	34
\$20,000-\$39,000	23
Over \$250,000	10
Under \$20,000	8

Q13: What is your race/ethnicity?	
White	191
African American or Black	3
Asian	3
Hispanic or Latino	3
Other: Native American	5



## Baldwin Riverfront Park Open House

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August 14, 2021 at 11:00 am on site

### Summary of Comments

Approximately 20-30 people stopped over the few hours of the open house.

- Bikers had mixed opinions on the bike repair station. All liked the idea, but many expressed concerns about maintenance and vandalism of the station because they have seen that elsewhere.
- One person mentioned an Osprey pole, but another person mentioned that they would likely not use it because it is too close to the eagle's territory.
- Many of the eagle watchers mentioned that the trees along the river are active fishing trees for the eagles. This raised concern about activity near the trees that could potentially disturb the birds. They were generally opposed to trails along the river.
- Several people asked if the trails could be closed during breeding/nesting season, citing that North Park will close their trails near the eagles there. The problem would be that the trails would then be closed all spring/summer, which would be the most active time for use.
- A couple people mentioned also talking to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, on top of the local Audubon and FWS about the eagles.
- Several people expressed keeping any trails or features to the existing mowed area and adjacent to the Three Rivers Trail, and not putting anything in the lower areas near the river to reduce disturbance of the eagles.
- Many people liked the idea of the observation deck, one person even suggested covering the deck.
- Several people liked the idea of enhancing habitat and native understory planting. One suggested installing snags for the eagles to perch in for hunting. A tree could be "planted" upside down for this purpose.
- A runner commented on having some covered tables or areas so they can get out of the elements.
- Suggested to not include anything that would encourage noise, which led to concern about the bench swing.
- Many people liked the idea of the eagles' nest for educational purposes and some even suggested that it should be in the main park space and not just tucked away.
- Portable restroom was liked by a few of the visitors, with a couple leaving comments on the plans. Even though restrooms are located close by, this space tends to be a rest stop in which people naturally wonder back into the woods to do their "business". This may also disturb the eagles.
- Including signage about eagle etiquette, and signs about sharing the trail (from both bikers and eagle watchers).
- Some commented that they would like to see interpretive signs about the local history of

- the site.
- One person expressed that they felt the bank reinforcement was a futile effort due to the constant flooding of the area. Another person asked if the Army Corp of Engineers would be involved.
- Many people expressed that they liked the idea of keeping things more natural with wood furnishings, native plants, no smoking, etc.
- Almost everyone expressed the desire to preserve the nature of the site and protect the animals that already use the site.
- A couple people commented that they like the idea of the bird blinds.
- A few visitors commented on liking the terraced boulder idea down by the river marker to give a unique overlook experience.
- One person commented that it would be nice to have a view of the river from at least one of the picnic tables.
- In general, it seemed that most people gravitated to the Nesting in Nature, more developed, concept plan for the site.
- **Next Steps**
  - a. Pashek + MTR will prepare a spreadsheet with the sign in information collected at the open house.
  - b. Pashek + MTR will discuss the plans with the Audubon Society of Western PA to ensure that proposed improvements will not disturb the Eagles.
  - c. Friends of the Riverfront will post the concepts and a quick questionnaire on their website to allow people who were unable to attend the open house to provide input.
  - d. The committee will meet again in early September to discuss the outcomes of the open house and online input on the concepts and make decisions on how to proceed with the final plan.

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Prepared by: Keely McDonald  
 Date Prepared: 2021/08/20  
 Distributed to: Study Committee

## Conversation with Audubon

9/2/2021 via Zoom  
Sara Thompson  
Brian Shema  
Jim Bonner  
Rachel Handel

- Sara reviewed the concept plans and relayed the eagle watchers concerns.
- Don't think the trails would cause extensive harm to the eagles. The occasional person might flush out an eagle but that happens all over here. They also are getting used to people like other raptors who will perch in a tree while someone parks a car under it.
- Trash could impact the eagles.
  - If rats come in because of excess trash, rat bait can kill the eagles and other birds.
  - Put a trash can there but make sure to service it frequently. If it builds up people put trash next to it and then it presents a problem if birds or rats get into it.
  - Would rather see development more concentrated to reduce trash.
- Concerned about fishing and left behind fishing line. Can be very hazardous to the eagles and other birds and wildlife.
- Don't need a bird blind except if you create a quality wetland habitat. The wetland would be very nice to increase bird habitat
- Might not need as many trails as we show.
- Remove railroad ties due to toxic chemicals leaching into river during flooding.

# PNDI RESULTS

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
PNDI Receipt: project\_receipt\_baldwin\_riverfront\_park\_735781\_DRAFT\_1.pdf

Project Search ID: PNDI-735781

## 1. PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name: Baldwin Riverfront Park  
Date of Review: 6/7/2021 08:03:02 AM  
Project Category: Recreation, Trails & Trailheads (parking, etc.)  
Project Area: 5.36 acres  
County(s): Allegheny  
Township/Municipality(s): BALDWIN  
ZIP Code:  
Quadrangle Name(s): PITTSBURGH EAST  
Watersheds HUC 8: Lower Monongahela  
Watersheds HUC 12: Streets Run-Monongahela River  
Decimal Degrees: 40.396537, -79.944505  
Degrees Minutes Seconds: 40° 23' 47.5346" N, 79° 56' 40.2181" W

This is a draft receipt for information only. It has not been submitted to jurisdictional agencies for review.

## 2. SEARCH RESULTS

Agency	Results	Response
PA Game Commission	No Known Impact	No Further Review Required
PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources	No Known Impact	No Further Review Required
PA Fish and Boat Commission	No Known Impact	No Further Review Required
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Potential Impact	MORE INFORMATION REQUIRED, See Agency Response

As summarized above, Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) records indicate there may be potential impacts to threatened and endangered and/or special concern species and resources within the project area. If the response above indicates "No Further Review Required" no additional communication with the respective agency is required. If the response is "Further Review Required" or "See Agency Response," refer to the appropriate agency comments below. Please see the DEP Information Section of this receipt if a PA Department of Environmental Protection Permit is required.

### Baldwin Riverfront Park

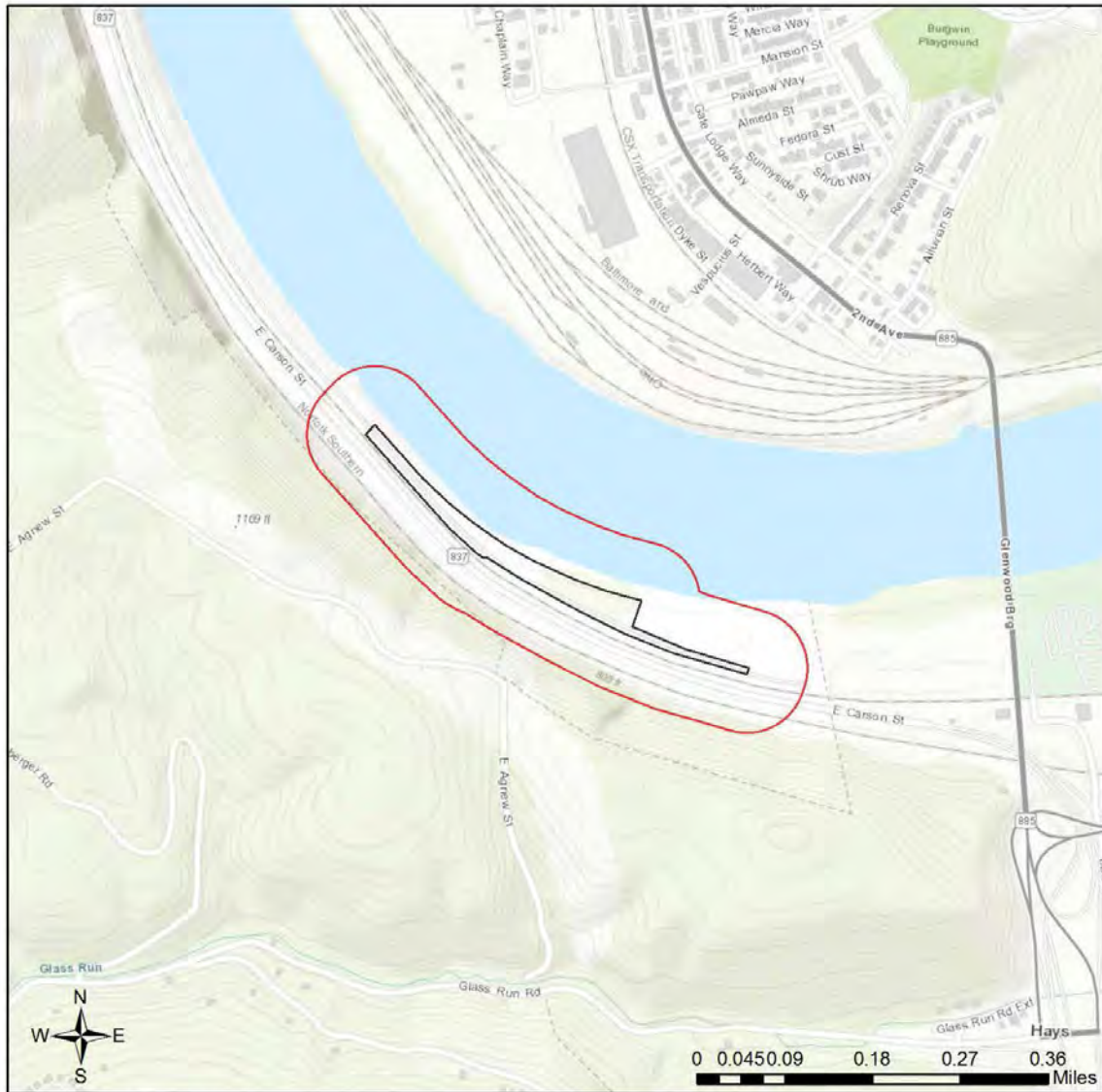


- Project Boundary
- Buffered Project Boundary

Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, Maxar, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community  
Esri, HERE, Garmin, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community  
Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China



### Baldwin Riverfront Park



- Project Boundary
- Buffered Project Boundary

Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



### 3. AGENCY COMMENTS

Regardless of whether a DEP permit is necessary for this proposed project, any potential impacts to threatened and endangered species and/or special concern species and resources must be resolved with the appropriate jurisdictional agency. In some cases, a permit or authorization from the jurisdictional agency may be needed if adverse impacts to these species and habitats cannot be avoided.

These agency determinations and responses are valid for two years (from the date of the review), and are based on the project information that was provided, including the exact project location; the project type, description, and features; and any responses to questions that were generated during this search. If any of the following change: 1) project location, 2) project size or configuration, 3) project type, or 4) responses to the questions that were asked during the online review, the results of this review are not valid, and the review must be searched again via the PNDI Environmental Review Tool and resubmitted to the jurisdictional agencies. The PNDI tool is a primary screening tool, and a desktop review may reveal more or fewer impacts than what is listed on this PNDI receipt. The jurisdictional agencies strongly advise against conducting surveys for the species listed on the receipt prior to consultation with the agencies.

#### PA Game Commission

##### RESPONSE:

No Impact is anticipated to threatened and endangered species and/or special concern species and resources.

#### PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

##### RESPONSE:

No Impact is anticipated to threatened and endangered species and/or special concern species and resources.

#### PA Fish and Boat Commission

##### RESPONSE:

No Impact is anticipated to threatened and endangered species and/or special concern species and resources.

#### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

##### RESPONSE:

Information Request: Due to the proximity of this project to a bald eagle nest, it is possible that project activities may disturb bald eagles, which is a form of "take" under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and may require a permit. The Service has prepared a project screening form to help you determine which specific measures may be necessary to avoid disturbing bald eagles and their nests, based on the type and scope of your proposed project or activity, and its distance from a bald eagle nest. Complete the "Bald Eagle Project Screening Form" (see [https://www.fws.gov/northeast/ecologicalservices/pdf/eagle/NE\\_Bald-Eagle\\_Project-Screening-Form\\_rev20200416.pdf](https://www.fws.gov/northeast/ecologicalservices/pdf/eagle/NE_Bald-Eagle_Project-Screening-Form_rev20200416.pdf)) and implement the measures identified on that form. Submit a copy of the completed Screening Form to the appropriate federal or state permitting agencies (e.g., PA DEP).

## WHAT TO SEND TO JURISDICTIONAL AGENCIES

If project information was requested by one or more of the agencies above, upload\* or email the following information to the agency(s) (see AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION). Instructions for uploading project materials can be found [here](#). This option provides the applicant with the convenience of sending project materials to a single location accessible to all three state agencies (but not USFWS).

\*If information was requested by USFWS, applicants must email, or mail, project information to [IR1\\_ESPenn@fws.gov](mailto:IR1_ESPenn@fws.gov) to initiate a review. USFWS will not accept uploaded project materials.

Check-list of Minimum Materials to be submitted:

\_\_\_ Project narrative with a description of the overall project, the work to be performed, current physical characteristics of the site and acreage to be impacted.

\_\_\_ A map with the project boundary and/or a basic site plan (particularly showing the relationship of the project to the physical features such as wetlands, streams, ponds, rock outcrops, etc.)

In addition to the materials listed above, USFWS REQUIRES the following

\_\_\_ SIGNED copy of a Final Project Environmental Review Receipt

The inclusion of the following information may expedite the review process.

\_\_\_ Color photos keyed to the basic site plan (i.e. showing on the site plan where and in what direction each photo was taken and the date of the photos)

\_\_\_ Information about the presence and location of wetlands in the project area, and how this was determined (e.g., by a qualified wetlands biologist), if wetlands are present in the project area, provide project plans showing the location of all project features, as well as wetlands and streams.

## 4. DEP INFORMATION

The Pa Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) requires that a signed copy of this receipt, along with any required documentation from jurisdictional agencies concerning resolution of potential impacts, be submitted with applications for permits requiring PNDI review. Two review options are available to permit applicants for handling PNDI coordination in conjunction with DEP's permit review process involving either T&E Species or species of special concern. Under sequential review, the permit applicant performs a PNDI screening and completes all coordination with the appropriate jurisdictional agencies prior to submitting the permit application. The applicant will include with its application, both a PNDI receipt and/or a clearance letter from the jurisdictional agency if the PNDI Receipt shows a Potential Impact to a species or the applicant chooses to obtain letters directly from the jurisdictional agencies. Under concurrent review, DEP, where feasible, will allow technical review of the permit to occur concurrently with the T&E species consultation with the jurisdictional agency. The applicant must still supply a copy of the PNDI Receipt with its permit application. The PNDI Receipt should also be submitted to the appropriate agency according to directions on the PNDI Receipt. The applicant and the jurisdictional agency will work together to resolve the potential impact(s). See the DEP PNDI policy at <https://conservationexplorer.dcnr.pa.gov/content/resources>.



## 5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The PNDI environmental review website is a preliminary screening tool. There are often delays in updating species status classifications. Because the proposed status represents the best available information regarding the conservation status of the species, state jurisdictional agency staff give the proposed statuses at least the same consideration as the current legal status. If surveys or further information reveal that a threatened and endangered and/or special concern species and resources exist in your project area, contact the appropriate jurisdictional agency/agencies immediately to identify and resolve any impacts.

For a list of species known to occur in the county where your project is located, please see the species lists by county found on the PA Natural Heritage Program (PNHP) home page ([www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us](http://www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us)). Also note that the PNDI Environmental Review Tool only contains information about species occurrences that have actually been reported to the PNHP.



