



Waterfront Innovations DESIGN CHARRETTE

The Harbor District Initiative brings together local, state, and federal government, private sector interests, and community enthusiasm to achieve a world-class revitalization of the Harbor District for the benefit of the City of Milwaukee and the region. The Initiative's goal is to set a new standard for how waterfronts "work" environmentally, economically, and socially.

In early 2015 Harbor District Inc. (HDI) was formed as a nonprofit organization to lead revitalization efforts. HDI is working in partnership with the City of Milwaukee to develop a plan for the future of the area.

As we began our planning process, many stakeholders emphasized the important opportunity presented by the significant—and often underutilized—waterfront. We decided to host a design charrette* to elicit ideas from the wider design community about maximizing the use of our water's edge. The challenge for the charrette would be to envision how a waterfront long dedicated to heavy industrial use could accommodate additional uses such as public access, restored natural habitat, or mixed-use urban development alongside port activities.

Four teams were selected through a competitive process to participate in the Waterfront Innovations Design Charrette. Over two days in October 2015, the teams developed concepts while stakeholders from the Milwaukee community provided ideas and feedback. On the final afternoon, the teams presented their concepts to an audience of more than 100 guests.

Some of the major themes and ideas proposed by the teams are presented here. For a full report on the charrette and the complete drawings and reports submitted by the participating teams, visit harbordistrict.org.

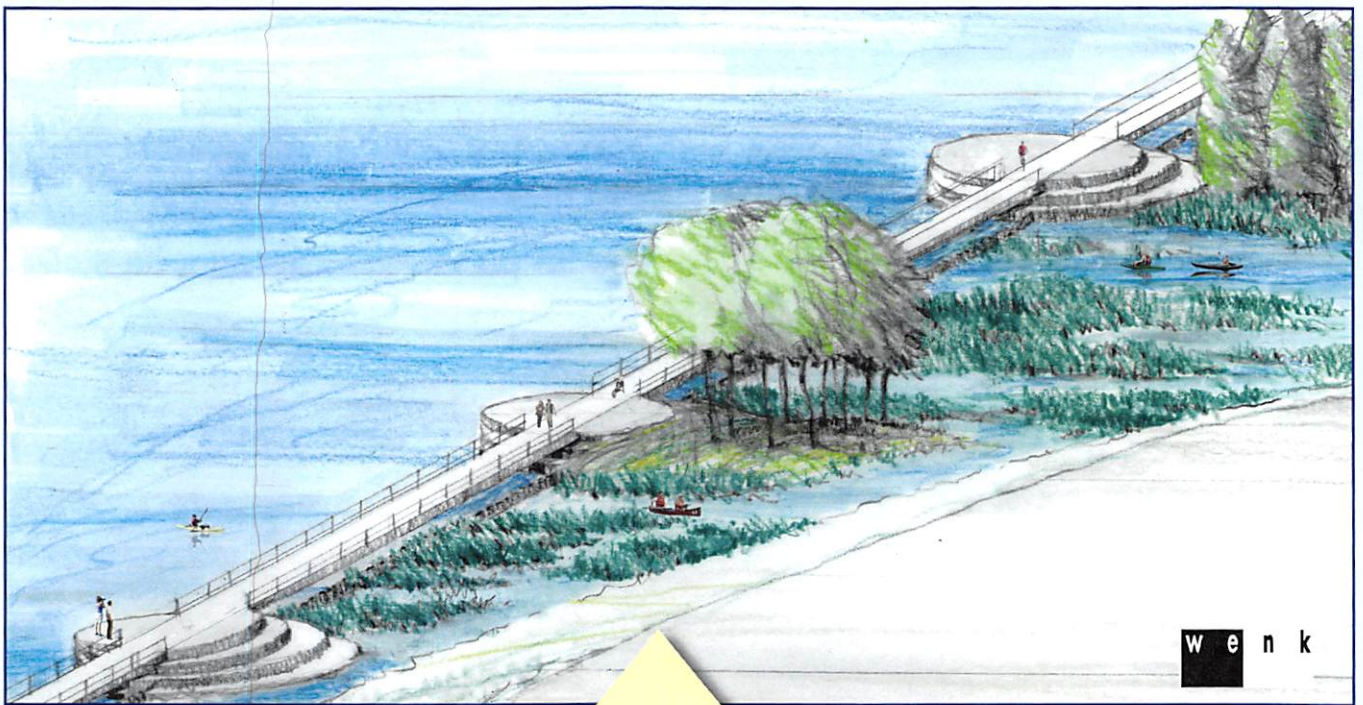
An aerial rendering of a waterfront development plan. The image shows a city skyline on the left, a body of water in the center, and a large industrial area on the right. A blue and green architectural model is overlaid on the image, showing a proposed development with various buildings, green spaces, and a waterfront promenade. The model includes a large blue building, a green park area, and a waterfront promenade with a bridge. The background shows a city skyline and a body of water with ships.

STUDIO/
GANG
/ARCHITECTS

*char-rette

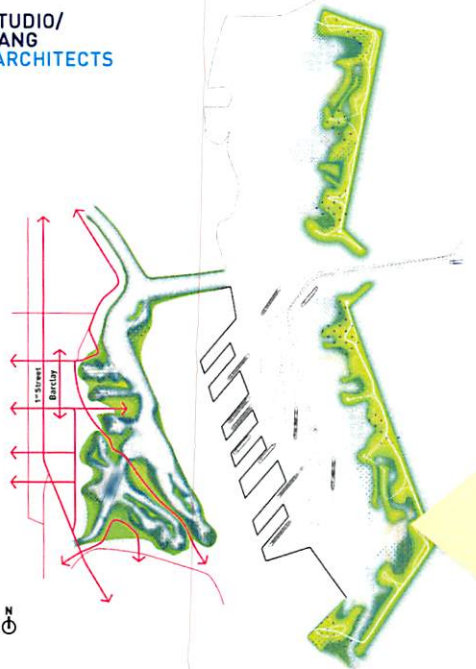
/SH 'ret/

noun: a meeting during which all stakeholders in a project work to resolve conflicts and map solutions



w e n k

STUDIO/
GANG
/ARCHITECTS

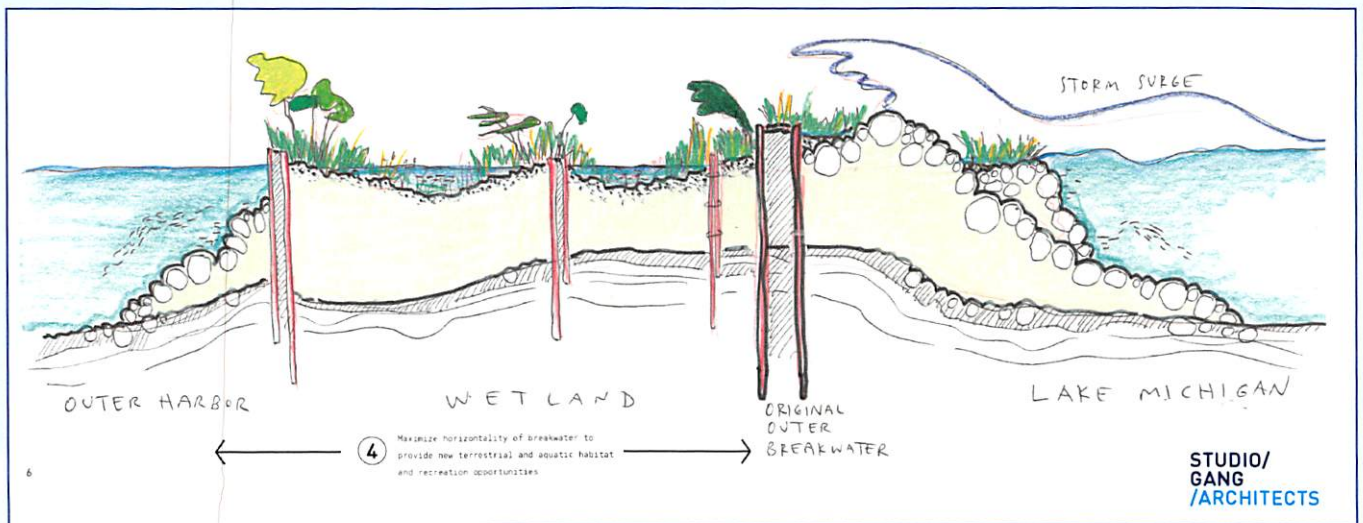


Water's Edge

Several designs demonstrated how our current water's edge could be modified to enhance public access and/or ecological function. Numerous concepts for breaching the existing sheet metal dockwall were proposed to enable the creation of wetland environments on the land side of the wall. The example above demonstrates a series of constructed cells connected by a public walkway and interspersed with a porous dockwall, allowing for docking of large ships and wetlands behind the dockwall.

Ecological Restoration

The designers took a variety of approaches to restore the ecology of the Harbor District, from green fingers to multi-acre wetland restorations. The drawings below and to the left show an idea to create an ecological breakwater to create natural habitat and protect the outer harbor.

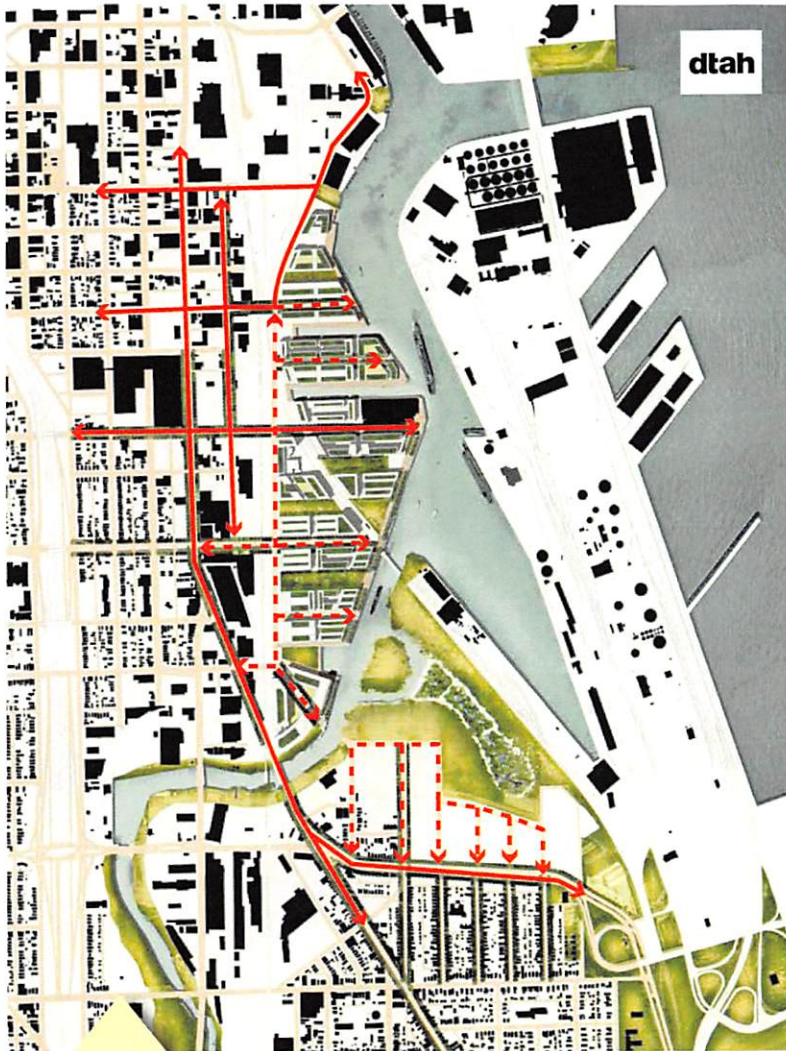


STUDIO/
GANG
/ARCHITECTS

Public Space and Access

Teams provided public space and waterfront access in the form of trails and walkways, boat launches, swimming barges, park spaces and plazas, and accessible natural areas.

The example to the right shows a harborwalk (in red) along with several waterfront parks and restored wetland areas. The example below includes a series of public green spaces running between blocks and connecting to the waterfront along with accessible natural areas that also serve to manage stormwater.



Connecting the Street Grid

Reintroducing the street grid into the Harbor District is a key strategy to connect surrounding neighborhoods to the waterfront and potential new developments in the District. The drawings on this page show different options for how the Harbor District could connect to the surrounding area (red dashed lines above are proposed street connections).

Port and Heavy Industry

All of the teams proposed greater separation than currently exists between heavy industry and other land uses. Several teams proposed consolidating heavy industrial and port activities on Jones Island, making the more accessible areas of the Harbor District available for higher-intensity urban uses.

A Mix of Uses

One of the goals of the charrette was to demonstrate how a variety of uses could coexist at or near the water's edge. The concept pictured here converts the Wagon Works (coal pile) site at the end of Greenfield Avenue into an experimental landscape to test the viability of plants and technologies that could be used upstream to improve water quality and habitat. The design includes a public plaza, riverwalk, and buildings that could be adapted for a variety of uses all while maintaining deep water docking access.

The image on the front of the brochure also demonstrates a variety of uses in the Harbor District with new connections, restored natural landscapes, public waterfront access, and expanded port operations on Jones Island.

The long-term goal of Harbor District, Inc. is to achieve a world-class revitalization of Milwaukee's harbor that sets the standard for how waterfronts work—environmentally, economically, and socially—for the next century.

Thank you to our Funders



The Waterfront Innovations Design Charrette was made possible by grants from the US Environmental Protection Agency and the Fund for Lake Michigan. Additional support was provided by Tri City National Bank, the City of Milwaukee Office of Environmental Sustainability, the UWM School of Freshwater Sciences, Whole Foods Market, and Colectivo Coffee.



Harbor District, Inc.
600 E. Greenfield Avenue
Room 124
Milwaukee, WI 53204

info@harbordistrict.org
harbordistrict.org

The Waterfront Innovations Design Charrette Planning Committee

Dan Adams
Harbor District Inc.

Carolyn Esswein
UW-Milwaukee School of
Architecture and Urban Planning

Lilith Fowler
Harbor District Inc.

Janet Grau
City of Milwaukee
Department of City Development

Elizabeth Hittman
City of Milwaukee
Office of Environmental Sustainability

Stacy Hron
Wisconsin Department of
Natural Resources

Samuel Leightling
City of Milwaukee
Department of City Development

Peter McAvoy
UW-Milwaukee
School of Freshwater Sciences

David Misky
Redevelopment Authority of the
City of Milwaukee

Ethan Taxman
UW-Milwaukee
School of Freshwater Sciences /
Harbor District Inc.

James Wasley
UW-Milwaukee School of
Architecture and Urban Planning