

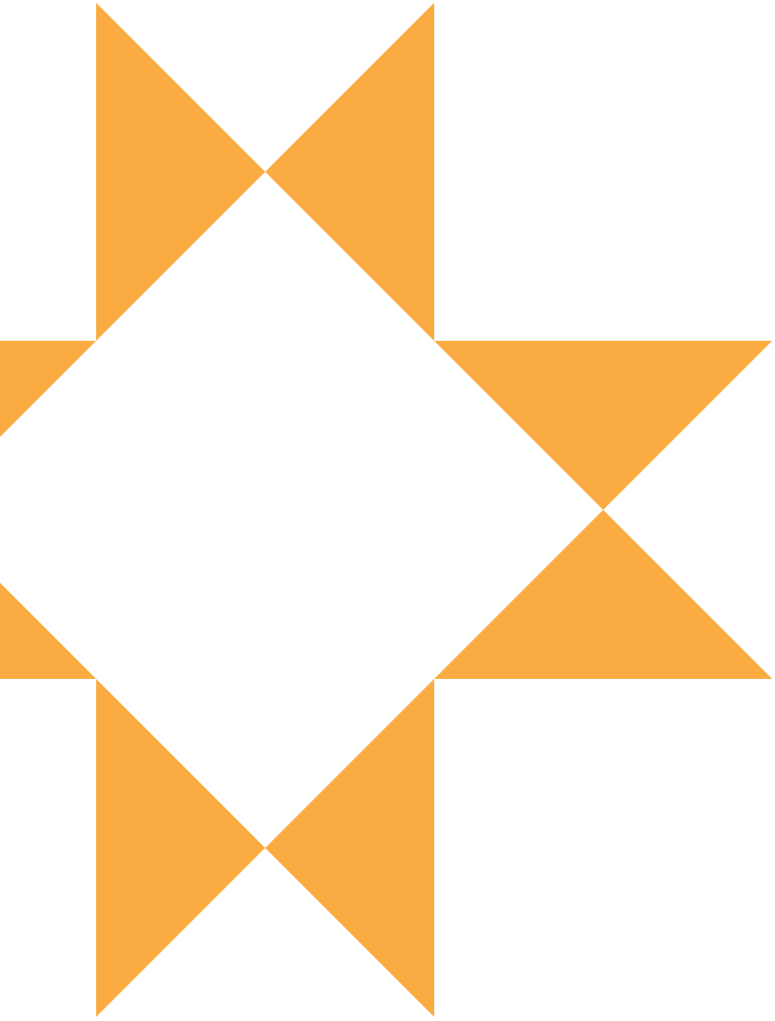


ELKINS
WEST VIRGINIA



**ELKINS RIVERFRONT
PLAN**





ELKINS RIVERFRONT PLAN

PREPARED FOR



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Participants

The City of Elkins would like to thank all the stakeholders involved with the development of the Elkins Riverfront Plan. A special thank you to the continued partnerships with Woodlands Development Group, The Hub West Virginia Community Development Hub, and all those who participated in our public meetings.

This document was stewarded internally by the City of Elkins, focusing on creating a clear path for the future of the Tygart Valley River trail development.

This plan was developed by the City of Elkins in collaboration with the Community Solutions Group of GAI Consultants. All maps and graphics were created by the consultant team unless otherwise noted.





gai consultants

**COMMUNITY
SOLUTIONS
GROUP**

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

PLAN / CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

This Plan provides a detailed look at the future development improvements proposed along the Elkins Riverfront Trail. Improvements to connectivity, recreation, natural resources, and interpretation are explored through a corridor-wide lens and then the plan zooms into three distinct areas providing a complete picture of future trail development.

Figure 1.1 identifies the project area boundary, tax parcels, city and authority owned land.

VISION

THE VISION FOR THE ELKINS RIVERFRONT TRAIL WAS CREATED THROUGH INPUT RECEIVED FROM STAKEHOLDERS AND COMMUNITY FEEDBACK GATHERED THROUGH PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES.

- Seeks to restore the ecological function of the river for improved wildlife habitat, flood resilience, and water quality
- Provides safe routes and access to the surrounding communities
- Thoughtfully incorporates recreational opportunities that complement nearby parks and provide increased interaction with the Tygart Valley River
- Enhances the river's function as a natural resource and wildlife habitat
- Supports local users of all ages, abilities, incomes, national origins, and racial/cultural/ethnic backgrounds
- Acknowledges the river's history to Elkins while celebrating its unifying ability through interpretation, art, and programming
- Promotes continued agency collaboration, particularly with water management





INTRODUCTION

FLOODPLAINS

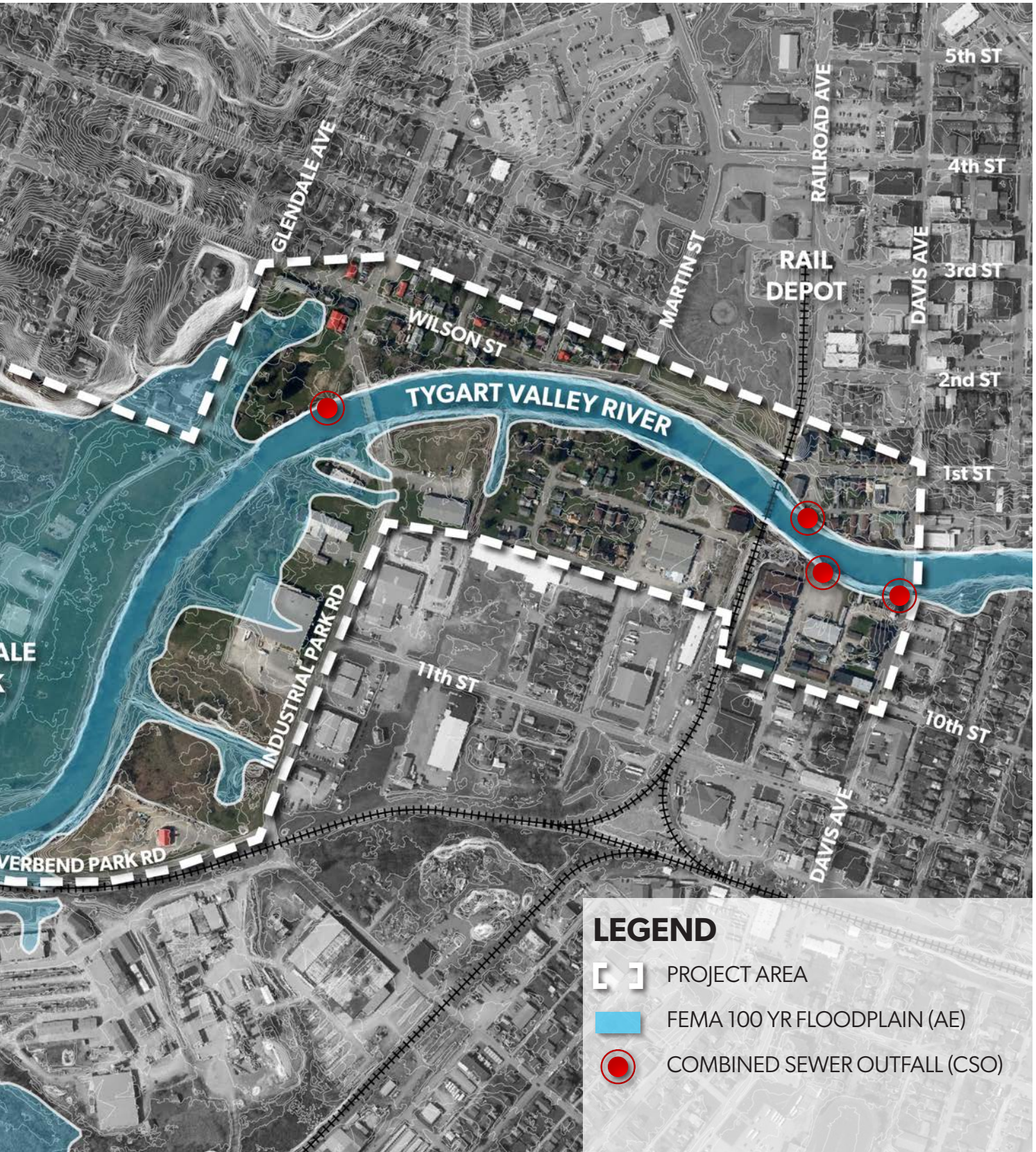
The Tygart Valley River is the dominant hydrological feature in the City of Elkins. Within the study area, the river is part of a flood control system which is separated from the flowing portion of the river by a large levee. However, the river accepts a large amount of stormwater from the surrounding city and is susceptible to flooding. The majority of the study area falls within a FEMA 100 Year floodplain. As the city moves forward with development, careful consideration will need to be given to the possibility of flooding and new development may be subject to various permitting requirements. Additionally, development near or within the floodplain should be done in a resilient manner which would reduce the likelihood of damage to park amenities should flood waters rise.

Figure 1.2 identifies the project area boundary, FEMA floodplains, and CSO locations.

COMBINED SEWER OUTFALLS (CSO)

Like many cities throughout the United States, the City of Elkins has portions of sanitary sewer pipe which is combined with stormwater drainage. During heavy rainfall events, the wastewater treatment plant can become overwhelmed and the resulting backup in system pressure can result in “overflow events”, or times when wastewater flows into the Tygart Valley River. The resulting event reduces water quality and requires individuals to not come into contact with the water after heavy rain. The City of Elkins has undertaken multiple projects to separate sanitary sewer and stormwater drainage and future projects are also planned. However, until the sanitary sewer system is fully separated from the stormwater system, consideration will need to be made to mitigate the risks of individuals coming into contact with potentially contaminated water.









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MASTER PLAN

CONNECTIVITY

CONNECTIVITY-RELATED GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Create bike and pedestrian trails wherever it is spatially possible to do so along the river.
- Provide a continuous, consistent, and predictable trail experience.
- Create new trail routes while utilizing existing sidewalk infrastructure when alternative connections are not able to be made.
- Avoid at-grade roadway crossings when possible by utilizing trail underpasses or other means of separation wherever topography and water table allows.
- Provide an immersive nature trail experience for both pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Utilize city and authority owned land along and adjacent to the river to provide neighborhood connectivity.
- Provide safe and accessible pedestrian crossings over the river through the means of existing bridges and new.



Utilize existing sidewalk where necessary and provide cultural significance.



Existing bike route along Martin Street can be extended further south towards the river to connect the route to the nearby parks.



Existing rail trestle bridge crossing the Tygart Valley River near the rail depot to be considered for pedestrian connection over the river towards downtown utilizing a cantilevered trail extension.



Glendale Park perimeter trail can be incorporated into the proposed river trail system.



Existing vehicular bridge at Industrial Park Road provides a safe pedestrian crossing.

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ACCESSIBILITY

The number of people who have a disability is constantly in flux, for it's the one population segment that someone can join at any time. But accessibility is not just about meeting the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A person born with a condition that impairs their mobility, someone with arthritis, a woman 8-months pregnant, a dog walker, a double-stroller wielding parent, and a septuagenarian all have different needs when using parks and trails. Considering only a traditionally fit and able person when designing the regional trail is very limiting. For this reason, it is important to provide ADA accessible routes, amenities, and features that allow all people to feel welcome, safe, and comfortable accessing and using the Elkins Riverfront Trail.

TRAIL STANDARDS

The Elkins Riverfront Plan provides an ADA-accessible trail throughout the length of this Plan. ADA-accessible paved trails are proposed in along the south side of the river between Dowell Street and River Bend Park, where they do not currently exist. At Industrial Park Road, a proposed connection to the bridge is recommended to allow for pedestrian connection to the north of the river. As this is an area of challenging grade, this connection would need further review to create an acceptable ADA path. These, and other facets of the master plan illustrate the following recommendations related to accessibility and trail standards:

- Provide alternative ways to experience the river in areas where only natural surface trails exist or where trails cannot be made universally accessible.
- Employ design cues to clearly mark all transitions to non-accessible trails.
- Include information on trail maps and signage about trail slope and surface, as well as alternate accessible routes, loops, entrances, and exits.
- As intersections get safety upgrades, adjust crossings to be more accommodating of all users through proper alignment of curb ramps, adequate landing areas, and truncated domes for wheelchair users and the visually impaired.



A desired path has developed on either side of the Industrial Park Rd. bridge highlighting the need for better connections to these areas.

- Locate pedestrian signal buttons so that they are reachable by wheelchair users, no higher than 42" from the ground.

SEATING INTERVALS

Providing well-designed seating at predictable intervals can encourage people of any age or ability level to feel comfortable getting out on the trails.

- As individual projects get underway, assess seating and provide additional benches to fill in gaps in availability.
- Locate seating near activity areas, at overlooks and vistas, and at no greater than 1/4-mile intervals.
- Ensure that benches have back support and armrests to help users rise from a seated position.

DRINKING WATER

Drinking fountains are an amenity greatly appreciated by runners and cyclists; both groups are avid users of existing trail within River Bend and Glendale Park. New drinking fountains are proposed at within the existing parks, as well as the new riverfront park located along Wilson Street near the Rail Depot.

- As master plan projects enter the design phase, assess the possibility of additional hookups for drinking fountains.

ADA-ACCESSIBLE RIVER ACCESS RECOMMENDATIONS

Today, water access to the Tygart Valley River is limited, and none of its recreational connections are ADA-accessible. Figure 2.4 shows areas along Elkins Riverfront Trail that have been identified as future river access points, with the intention of creating more places to safely access the river for kayaking and interacting with the water.

ADA-ACCESSIBLE LAUNCHES

ADA-accessible launches are proposed within River Bend Park, near the Industrial Park Road bridge, and on the southern side of the river from Big Timer Brewing.

- Site launches designated for ADA-accessibility in areas where other activities and amenities are available, including nearby parking and accessible trails.
- Provide kayak gangway launches at river access points with appropriate ADA grab bars and launch assists.



ADA friendly kayak launch site used for easy river access.

RIVER ACCESS POINTS

Three points of access are distributed along the river for this phase of development for the Elkins Riverfront Trail. Future phases should utilize these points of access and allow for a range in distances for trips to be customizable based on available time and ability. River access points should be designed to suit the topography and expected audience utilizing the launch areas.

- Amenities at launches should include paved trail access, wayfinding signage, a trash receptacle, and occasional benches or picnic tables.
- Consider siting micro-mobility options such as bike parking areas nearby to facilitate return trips.

ROAD NETWORK CONNECTIONS

INTERSECTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Figure 2.1 highlights the Master Plan and identifies many intersections that would benefit from improvements to increase safety for all modes moving through the trail as it ties to local streets and sidewalks where necessary.

- Improve safety at intersections, especially where the trails cross roadways, through the use of innovative and proven facility upgrades, such as:
 - High visibility, mode-separated striping at crosswalks
 - Forward stop bars at all stop signs
 - Curb extensions
 - Signage alerting drivers of trail crossings
 - Speed tables/raised intersections
 - Limited or prohibited right turns for vehicles
 - Pedestrian/bicycle signal timing adjustments
- At roadway crossings of the trail, widen curb ramps and expand waiting areas to accommodate increased queuing at intersections.
- Visibility of trail users from roadways at intersections is a priority. Avoid siting new elements that obstruct drivers' vision of trail users, and ensure vegetation is trimmed to maintain views.

MASTER PLAN



Figure 2.1 Elkins Riverfront Trail intersection areas of interest for accessibility and safety improvements.

WAYFINDING

WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE RECOMMENDATIONS

Implementation of a more robust wayfinding system can have a major impact on how comfortable visitors feel while traveling the trail system, how they interact with downtown, and can attract new visitors by making them aware of destinations along the system. New wayfinding will be especially important in this phase of master planning, where the proposed Elkins Riverfront Trail aims to better connect people with the river, park system, and works to overcome the local stigma of the Tygart Valley River as a recreational asset.

In addition to the existing City of Elkins branding and wayfinding project, the river trail system should expand its wayfinding to better serve its mix of neighborhood and users, who may not be familiar with local destinations, recreation offerings, or resources related to safe use of the river.

- Develop a wayfinding and signage master plan to help design, site, and implement new signs.
 - Placement of wayfinding signs are shown on the master plan, and can benefited by a full signage master plan.

- Evaluate the existing wayfinding network to ensure that signage directs users to the proposed access points.
- Note nearby neighborhood business nodes, civic destinations, libraries, and parks on signage at access points, in order to connect trail users to the broader city.
- Show loop options with distances, accessibility, and difficulty levels on trail maps so that trail users can cater routes to ability.
- For kayakers and paddlers, provide information on distances, destinations, safety protocols, and river flow rate both on-line and on-site at each of the launches.
- To minimize streambank erosion and disturbance, clearly delineate access points so that they are clear and understandable to visitors.
- Provide information on stewardship at river access points and other vulnerable areas to help inform users of ways that they can help maintain Tygart Valley River's natural resources, while still enjoying the trails.
- Ensure that signage is low profile and efficiently sited to avoid visual disturbance of the natural corridor.
- Expand upon the existing information graphics of Glendale Park along the corridor to create educational experiences along the full system.



Figure 2.2 Proposed wayfinding signage for the City of Elkins.
Source: City of Elkins and Elkins Main Street

MASTER PLAN

TRAILS

TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Elkins has an abundance of local and regional trails the Elkins Riverfront Trail can connect to, ultimately creating a larger trail network within the region. The Allegheny Highlands Trail is situated in close proximity to the proposed Elkins Riverfront Trail. This connection allow for instant regional trail expansion and provided users an extended stay in Elkins as they utilize the trail facilities.

Through our public participation and stakeholder meetings, a desired future trail would go beyond the flood control levee follow the Tygart west, where individual expressed a desire to reach points such as the “Homecoming” moment along Route 33 near Norton. As opportunities such as this present themselves, the City of Elkins should work to expand the growing trail system within the city and region.

- Minimum recommended trail widths include 10’ for bike trails and 8’ for pedestrian trails.
- Where trails must be combined, clearly delineate bike and pedestrian lanes with signage and pavement markings, and maintain a minimum width of 12’, with 14’ being preferred.

- Locate and design trails such that they do not degrade or threaten the integrity of adjacent natural resources, and relocate existing trails where they adversely impact the ecological functions.
- In areas that are prone to flooding, endeavor to create alternative bike and pedestrian trails of similar quality at higher elevations. Trail users may be directed to use combined trails, sidewalks, or to bike along the roadways during flood conditions if alternate trails do not exist.
- Maintain vegetation to provide clear views of oncoming traffic, especially where trails converge.
- In areas where private property reaches the river banks, allow the trail to transition into a boardwalk with fishing opportunities along the water.
- Integrate public art throughout the trail to enhance the overall experience and allow priority to local/ regional artist for primary installations.



“Homecoming” moment along Route 33 near Norman.
Source: [elkinsrandolphwv Instagram](#)



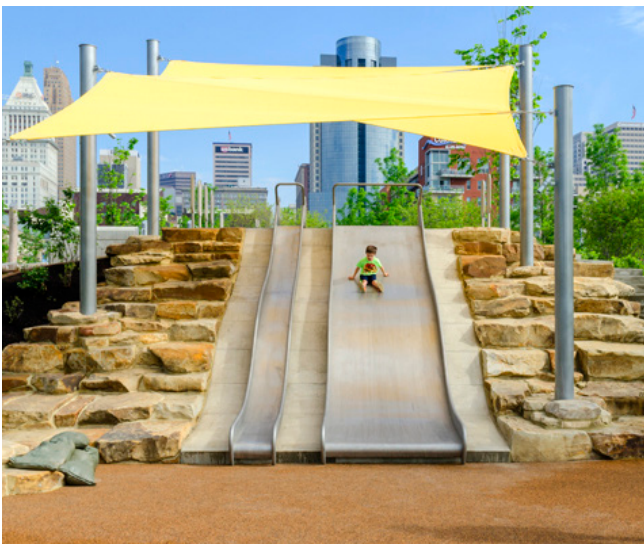
Pedestrian bridge between River Bend and Glendale Parks provided a connection over the river that can be replicated in other areas of the trail system.

RECREATION

RECREATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Because the Elkins Riverfront Trail offers an unparalleled natural setting for an urban and park trail, the recreational activities that it supports are meant to complement the landscape. This master plan moves toward activities that are flexible, benefit from the corridor's unique setting, and accomplish multiple functions, like providing flood storage or pollinator benefits.

- Recommended activities include (but are not limited to):
 - Trail use (walking, running, biking, skating, etc.)
 - Sledding and cross country skiing
 - Kayaking and paddling the Tygart River
 - Fishing
 - Field sports in multi-use field spaces at River Bend Park
 - Tennis at River Bend Park
 - Birding and wildlife watching
 - Nature play and adventure play
 - Bouldering and other nature-based active recreation
 - Hammocking
 - Picnicking
 - Skateboarding at Glendale Park



Utilize the existing topography to create active recreation along the trail at specific nodes.

ACTIVITY NODE RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to maintain a majority of the corridor for passive recreational usage, habitat preservation, and flood control, most active recreational features are grouped together into activity nodes. This strategy ensures that the natural scenery of the Elkins Riverfront Trail is largely preserved, and that active areas have convenient access to a range of complementary amenities.

- Ensure that new activity nodes embrace, highlight, and provide connection to the ecological function of the Tygart River.
- Site activity areas so that they are accessible via multiple modes of transportation.
- Provide essential visitor services and comfort amenities such as restrooms, drinking water, seating, waste receptacles, wayfinding, lighting, and shade or shelter at all activity nodes.
- Site new or redesigned recreational features outside the projected 100-year floodplain, or design and select them to be flood-compatible and flood-resilient.
- Provide new trail recreational exercise zones within River Bend Park.



Provide various types of seating along the trail to highlight vistas and provide comfortable break points.

MASTER PLAN

SAFETY

SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

Safety of park and trail users is a major priority. Recommendations related to safety along parkway roads, trails, and at intersections are covered in those respective sections; however, there are some additional safety-related considerations that support park access and recreation as a whole.

LIGHTING

As a trail to be used by pedestrians, bicyclists, and have specific areas where they come into conflict with vehicles, the Elkins Riverfront Trail must be lit to provide safe passage for those using the facilities. Paths follow the river and are sheltered from view by thickly wooded slopes and dip beneath bridges carrying traffic above. While these areas may feel sublime and immersive



Blue-rich white light (over 3000K) obscures the stars and is dangerous at night for migration and nesting birds, plants, wildlife, and humans alike.

during the day, at night, without proper lighting they can feel unsettling. Lighting underpasses and ensuring that access points, wayfinding, and trail markings are visible improves safety for users and encourages a more positive perception of these areas that promotes continued trail use at dawn and dusk and at times of the year when daylight hours are reduced.

- Provide lighting in accordance with AASHTO guidelines, including at the following locations:
 - Trailheads
 - Bridge entrances and exits
 - Activity nodes
 - Along roads
 - Crosswalks
 - Where paths intersect
 - Key signage
- In areas that are deemed difficult to reach electrical connections, consider light sources that can be powered through solar arrays.
- All light sources provided along the trail should be Dark-Sky approved and have the ability to be directed in the instance of trail lighting near a residence.
- Lights along the trail should stay at or below 3000K color temperature for optimal user experience and to protect wildlife.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Preserve and enhance the ecological function of Tygart Valley River by providing habitat complexity for native species, and improving flood resiliency throughout the system.
- Identify existing trees during BMP and protect trees during construction in order to minimize tree loss, especially of very large trees.
- Continue with the City of Elkins efforts to mitigate sewer outflow and review infrastructure repairs, BMP projects, river access points, and recreation improvements along the trail and identify opportunities where work can be aligned.

HABITAT

Natural resource management focuses on preserving and enhancing wildlife habitat. Consider the recreation of a Ecological System Plan including pertinent recommendations on topics like biodiversity, habitat connectivity, invasive species control, urban forest

management, and many others, and should be consulted for reference.

- In order to maintain canopy cover and a multi-aged forest structure, preserve healthy native tree species unless removal is necessary for other natural resource activities.
- Continue to maintain an up-to-date inventory of existing trees.
- Replace traditional turf lawns with bee lawns or other native landscape types where identified to support pollinators and increase wildlife habitat quality throughout the corridor.

WILDLIFE

The Tygart Valley River is a vital connection in a habitat corridor that runs from throughout the City of Elkins—with various species of wildlife considering the river valley home or resting area. The diversity of the habitat within the river valley is recognized and celebrated by those who participated in our public meetings. Balancing the needs of park and trail users with those of the corridor’s flora and fauna is key to maintaining ecological function and a quality experience. The Elkins Riverfront Trail provides the unique experience of urban and natural trail environments. While the urban setting requires certain elements in order to provide a safe, accessible, inviting, and comfortable experience for human users with things like lighting, trails, seating, signage, art, and interpretation provide valuable services to humans, wildlife doesn’t always see the same benefit.

Artificial light at night can have unintended consequences for wildlife by confusing their circadian rhythms; interfering with breeding, migration, and hunting; reducing areas for safe cover; and discouraging passage. Where possible, lighting design should endeavor to minimize impacts to the natural habitat with those we share the river valley. The International Dark-Sky Association recommends that lighting only be on when necessary, only light areas that need it, is no brighter than necessary, minimizes blue light emissions, and is fully shielded in order to minimize impacts to wildlife.

Natural Resources | d. Mitigate harmful disruptions to the ecosystem by ensuring new and renovated lighting adheres to the following principles:

- Make sure that light fixtures are fully shielded and down-facing
- Mount lighting as low as is practical
- In sensitive areas, consider Certified Wildlife Lighting like Low Pressure Sodium (LPS) or narrow-spectrum amber LEDs with a wavelength longer than 560 nm
- Where LED lighting is necessary, choose warm-white or filtered LEDs with a correlated color temperature (CCT) of 3,000K or less
- Implement adaptive controls such as automatic timers, dimmers, and sensor-activated lighting throughout the corridor
- Consider dimming or turning off non-essential light fixtures between 11 p.m. and 5 am
- Utilize reflective striping on trails and reflective markers in other areas to supplement existing light sources without requiring additional ones

SURFACE WATER AND GROUNDWATER MONITORING

The City of Elkins, and other public agencies will continue to study surface water, groundwater, and their interactions with each other, across the city and the broader watershed. Every day more water data is available, and that data will continue to be used to inform future studies, inform future project designs, and understand future water quantity scenarios.

- Continue to study and monitor surface water and groundwater interactions and use that research to inform project designs and project construction.

INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS STORMWATER

The City of Elkins will continue to coordinate on sewer and stormwater separation infrastructure and review opportunities to implement BMPs. While this Plan cannot identify a BMP concept for all stormwater outfalls, the City of Elkins is committed to continue to review if such an opportunity exists as outfalls are identified for repair.

Additionally, the City of Elkins’ Public Works Department has planned current and future phases of sanitary and storm water separation. While this plan cannot identify investments outside of the project

MASTER PLAN

area, BMPs, green infrastructure, and low-impact development (LID) upstream in the watershed tend to be more efficient than implementing solutions at or near the outfall to the river.

- Examine existing outfalls and schedule repair and replacement. Utilize BMPs suited to the existing conditions, water volume, and location. The City of Elkins is the leader in this effort.

WATER AND SEWER

- When repairs to existing infrastructure are planned, or new projects designed, assess the feasibility of water and sewer extensions to provide additional drinking fountains and/or restroom facilities to the Elkins Riverfront Trail.

OTHER UTILITIES

- Limit views of electrical transformer boxes and other utility infrastructure via considerate site selection, burying, camouflaging, or otherwise screening from view, in order to maintain a natural aesthetic along the corridor.

BRIDGES

- Design new pedestrian bridges and/or cantilevered segments to existing bridge in order to cross over the river and minimize debris build up within the river to maintain safe passage beneath for kayakers and trail users.

PUBLIC ART

To create a unique experience while using the Elkins Riverfront Trail and to provide a more welcoming pedestrian environment, the City of Elkins aims to incorporate public art when possible. Low maintenance and graffiti-resistant materials are preferred. Wall murals, sculptures, and temporary installations can incorporate color and vibrancy within the trail system and are recommended to enhance the character of the natural area and Elkins historical context. The following images are examples of public art that could be incorporated into the Elkins Riverfront Trail system.



Public engagement led to the concept of “Meeting with Senator Elkins”. A potential art installation of Senator Elkins at a table where residents and visitors can sit down and meet with the city’s namesake.



Allowing the uses of the trail to become artistic moments creating landmarks and resting areas.



Art can also be interactive and provide spaces for play, by introducing creative play structures into the trail.



MASTER PLAN

KEY

- STUDY AREA
- BUILDINGS
- TYGART VALLEY RIVER
- EXISTING PARK TRAIL
- PROPOSED TRAIL
- PROPOSED BOARDWALK TRAIL
- PROPOSED NATURAL SURFACE TRAIL
- PRESERVED NATURE AREA
- TRAIL ACTIVITY AREAS
- POLLINATOR LAWN



Figure 2.3 Elkins Riverfront Trail overall Master Plan

- BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE AREAS
- AMENITY ICONS
- WAYFINDING SIGNAGE
- PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITIES
- EXISTING CSOs
- EXISTING 100-YEAR FLOODPLAIN
- RECORDED WETLANDS
- ENHANCED INTERSECTION TREATMENTS FOR BIKE/PED CROSSINGS







FOCUS AREA PLANS

ELKINS, WEST VIRGINIA | ELKINS RIVERFRONT PLAN

FOCUS AREA 1

GLENDALE PARK WETLAND TRAIL / RIVER BEND PARK

Including portions of Glendale and River Bend Parks, Focus Area 1 highlights the development of new trails, improvements to existing trails, and improvements to water access along the Tygart Valley River. This area contains numerous natural and man-made assets which can be drawn upon to create a more enjoyable experience for park users.

EXISTING VEGETATION ENHANCEMENTS AND MANAGEMENT

Focus Area 1, in particular within a wooded and wetland area of Glendale Park and along the shore of River Bend Park, contains quality examples of riparian vegetation areas. Care should be taken to enhance this area by working to remove or manage non-native and invasive species of plants. In bare areas, native species of trees and shrubs should be added to fill gaps as necessary, in particular along the edge of the water, as shade can help cool the water and create a better habitat for aquatic species. Non-chemical vegetation management should be considered to further enhance the space.



An existing resting point within River Bend Park offers a scenic view of the Tygart Valley River.

EXISTING TRAIL ENHANCEMENT

The existing trail system within River Bend Park wonderful asset to the community. To further enhance this trail, the addition of activity and play areas has been proposed. These areas could contain additional exercise stations similar to ones already in use along the trail, or play areas for children and families. Additionally, new resting points could be created to allow for relaxation.

NEW TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

Riparian areas, such as those in Focus Area 1, are home to numerous species of birds and other animals, creating an opportunity to allow visitors to come within a safe distance to view such animals. To maximize such opportunities, a new trail is proposed within Glendale Park. This trail, which would be an approximately 1/4 mile loop, would take park users through a wooded and wetland area. Through the wetland area, the trail should be elevated to minimize environmental impact. Viewing areas should be created by adding wide spots within the trail that could have benches and viewfinders. The trail surface would likely be a combination of wooden decking, gravel pathways, and mulch pathways, depending upon the surrounding area of a given segment of trail.

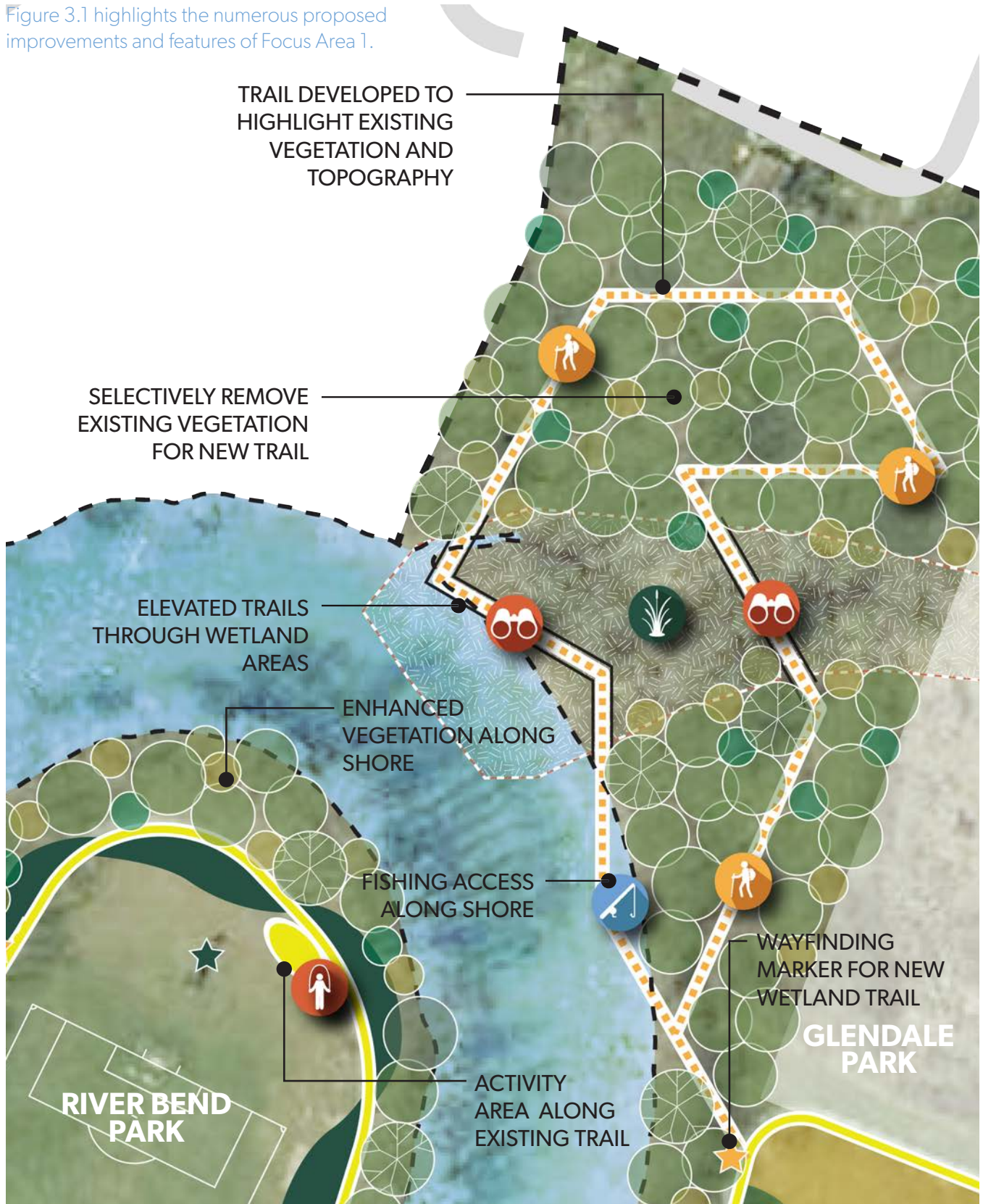
FISHING ACCESS

Another benefit to the addition of a new trail in Glendale Park is the opportunity to create more fishing access along the Tygart Valley River. The bend in the river creates an excellent point for fishing, as it is in a relatively secluded and quiet area with existing vegetation cover. A trail could be made along the edge of the water at the ordinary high water mark, or an elevated boardwalk trail could be utilized.

WAYFINDING

Wayfinding signage should be used in accordance with the guidelines highlighted in Chapter 2 as a means to safely guide visitors through the space.

Figure 3.1 highlights the numerous proposed improvements and features of Focus Area 1.



FOCUS AREA 2

GLENDALE PARK CONNECTION

As a valuable asset to the community, connecting the riverfront trail system to Glendale Park is one of the primary goals of this plan highlighted within Focus Area 2. The existing trails and amenities within Glendale Park provide expansive recreation opportunities which can be amplified by being better connected to surrounding neighborhoods and Downtown Elkins.

NEW TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

Various new trail segments are proposed within Focus Area 2 to better connect numerous areas of the city. The proposed trails utilize existing portions of city-owned property, Randolph County Development Authority-owned property, right-of-ways, as well as portions of the Tygart Valley River. New trails would consist of a mix of surfaces, such as concrete sidewalk along roadways, gravel pathways in more naturalized areas, and a boardwalk system along the waterway.

INDUSTRIAL PARK BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS

The existing Industrial Park Road Bridge has a sidewalk which terminates into narrow makeshift gravel pathway at either end. Connecting this sidewalk to a larger trail system is vital to improving pedestrian access and safety throughout the City of Elkins. At the North end of the bridge, the walkway could be continued to access Wilson Street. At the South end of the bridge, the walkway would utilize a switchback to get pedestrians to a new trail system which would run under the bridge.

WATER ACCESS

An existing right-of-way off of Industrial Park Road provides an excellent opportunity for access to the Tygart Valley River. The slope to the water could be enhanced to allow for kayak launching, as well as for launching of emergency boats during flooding events. A boardwalk trail is proposed to run from Glendale Park eastward to the Downtown area, with locations along the way for fishing and scenic views.

Figure 3.2 highlights the numerous proposed improvements and features of Focus Area 2.





FOCUS AREA 3

RAIL DEPOT / RIVER CONNECTION

NEW TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

With connection to downtown being a key element of this project, several new trails have been proposed. The most dominate portion of the new trail system will be along the Northern side of the Tygart Valley River going along Wilson Street as well as a boardwalk trail system at the edge of the water. To the South of the river, an existing right-of-way will be utilized along Chestnut Street for a new trail.

RAILROAD BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS

To better connect neighborhoods south of the Tygart Valley River to Downtown, a cantilever pedestrian trail has been proposed to be incorporated into the existing railroad bridge structure. This element would be subject to coordination and approval with the West Virginia State Rail Authority as they are the owner of the bridge. If possible, this would provide both vital access to make up for the loss of the former pedestrian suspension bridge and a unique vantage point for railroad and waterway views.

WATER ACCESS

Within Focus Area 3, water access is proposed with trail segments leading to and following the edges of the Tygart Valley River. As the North side of the river is already a popular fishing location, a formalized fishing access point has been proposed near the railroad bridge. Additionally, more fishing access would be available along the boardwalk trail system.

PUBLIC ART

With close proximity to Downtown and ample foot traffic, Focus Area 3 provides a great area to display various pieces of public art. The proposed "Meeting with Senator Elkins" sculpture should take center place along Wilson Street. Additionally, the tower components of the former pedestrian bridge could be incorporated into an art display.

Figure 3.3 highlights the numerous proposed improvements and features of Focus Area 3.









4 PHASING AND COST

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PHASING AND COST

KEY

STUDY AREA
BUILDINGS

TYGART VALLEY RIVER
EXISTING PARK TRAIL

PROPOSED TRAIL
PROPOSED BOARDWALK TRAIL

PROPOSED NATURAL SURFACE TRAIL
PRESERVED NATURE AREA

TRAIL ACTIVITY AREAS
POLLINATOR LAWN



Figure 4.1 Tygart Valley River Trail phasing plan

- BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE AREAS
- AMENITY ICONS
- WAYFINDING SIGNAGE
- PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITIES
- EXISTING CSOs
- EXISTING 100-YEAR FLOODPLAIN
- RECORDED WETLANDS
- ENHANCED INTERSECTION TREATMENTS FOR BIKE/PED CROSSINGS



PHASE ONE: Tygart Valley River - South (Davis Ave. Bridge to River Bend)

PHASE TWO: Trail Signage and Wayfinding

PHASE THREE: Trail Loops, Launch, Amenities, & Sidewalk Connections

PHASING AND COST

PHASE ONE: Tygart Valley River - South (Davis Ave. Bridge to River Bend)

- Boardwalk connection along the Tygart beginning at Davis Avenue and connection to the trestle bridge. - Fishing Access included
- New sidewalk along Chestnut Street and intersection treatment.
- Trail development through right-of-way and along rivers edge under Industrial Park Road bridge.
- Small footbridge crossing stream at mid-point within Randolph County Development Authority property.
- Trail connection to River Bend Park.

CONCEPTUAL RANGE OF COST: \$550K - \$660K

PHASE TWO: Trail Signage and Wayfinding

- Development of a trail wayfinding and signage master plan to help design, site, and implement new signs.
 - Utilize trail master plan as a guide for signage placement.
- Install a wayfinding and signage system for trail.
- Install informational signage along trail for eco and bio diversity.
- Place signage along river with details of overflow events in the instance of heavy storm occurrences.

CONCEPTUAL RANGE OF COST: \$40K - \$60K

PHASE THREE: Trail Loops, Launch, Amenities, & Sidewalk Connections

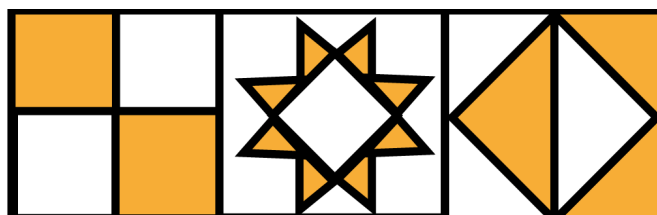
- Sidewalk and intersection enhancements beginning at Davis Avenue Bridge on the northern side of the Tygart Valley River.
- Development of a riverfront park and trail connection along Wilson Street adjacent to the Rail Depot.
 - Pollinator fields
 - Trail break points
 - Public art installations
 - Active trail off-shoots
 - Repairs to existing trails within both parks
- Boardwalk system on the north side of the Tygart connecting to Big Timber Brewing.
- Sidewalk enhancements along Wilson Street.
- Boat and kayak launch sites.
- Parking enhancements near Industrial Park Road bridge.
- Neighborhood connections along the right-of-way from Glendale Park.
- Additional trail amenities within Glendale and River Bend Parks.
 - Pedestrian bridge crossing on the western side of River Bend Park.

CONCEPTUAL RANGE OF COST: \$1.8M - \$2.55M

COST ESTIMATE DISCLAIMER

Preliminary cost estimates for the projects enumerated above have a 20% swing to account for contingencies in final design. It should be noted that these are cost estimates only and that more detailed estimates would be derived once the plans are advanced beyond conceptual design.

FULL PROJECT ESTIMATED TOTAL: \$2.4M - \$3.3M





WHAT'S A GAME CHANGER?

What would you like to have along the Tygart River?

- specific trash cans for your pets w/ lil baggies along trail
- Water bottle over water fountains (sanitary)
- Safety lights/recycle; trash
- Bike + walk/run trail separation



WHAT'S A GAME CHANGER?

What would you like to have along the Tygart River?

• little amphitheatre on water for live music etc...



WHAT'S A GAME CHANGER?

What would you like to have along the Tygart River?

Nature statues along trail/river
(great blue heron, turtle, bald eagle, squirrels)
- I spy



WHAT'S A GAME CHANGER?

What would you like to have along the Tygart River?

system



WHAT'S A GAME CHANGER?

What would you like to have along the Tygart River?

water



WHAT'S A GAME CHANGER?

What would you like to have along the Tygart River?

Lighting under the water
- enhance the asset at night
- not as "scary"

WHAT'S A GAME CHANGER?

What would you like to have along the Tygart River?

Dog Friendliness w/water
Stations incorporate dog bowls
or a fenced in dog run/
park.

WHAT'S A GAME CHANGER?

What would you like to have along the Tygart River?

"Gates" w/in the river
to navigate through. Hanging
above like whitewater
events/competitions.

WHAT'S A GAME CHANGER?

What would you like to have along the Tygart River?

Space for outdoor
concerts

WHAT'S A GAME CHANGER?

What would you like to have along the Tygart River?

Highlight "Native Bathing" experience
for mental health - 5 spots for 5
senses as you leave the water -
What do you see, hear, touch,
smell, taste

WHAT'S A GAME CHANGER?

What would you like to have along the Tygart River?

A Fun Fairy/Princess trail where
kids (or adults) can make fairy houses
out of natural materials. Would be
good for a wooded/secluded/"wild"
portion of the trail and definitely
a fun moment-maker! +!

• Birding • Native Plants
• Wetland boardwalk • Pollinator
Habitat
• Monarchs Station
• Good Water Quality

/trees
le, woodpeckers

f,
& viewing,

APPENDIX



APPENDIX

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT SUMMARY

As part of the master planning process, input from the community was sought by the consultant team through stakeholder meetings as well as a public workshop. Stakeholder meetings engaged various community members including business owners, politicians, and representatives from local groups which utilize the riverfront. The public workshop was held to inform community members of the master planning process and to engage with these individuals to gather concerns, needs, and desires for the future of the riverfront. Information and ideas gathered during all meetings were taken into consideration when developing the final master plan.

During both the stakeholder and public meetings, participants were divided into smaller groups to discuss two key components of the riverfront improvements; trails and water access. Additionally, at their own pace, participants were asked to take time to write out their big ideas to be placed on a wall at the meeting. A synopsis of feedback gained from all aspects of the meetings begins on the following pages.



Project consultant James Yost takes notes while speaking with participants during the stakeholder meetings

GROUP ACTIVITY - TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Senator Elkins statue (city namesake)
 - Recommended sitting at a table or bench (have a meeting with Senator Elkins)
- Suggested near the rail yard
- Wayfinding from and to downtown and riverfront
- Need a good trail surface for running
 - Hard surface (asphalt) to help with wheels and strollers
 - Mixed surface when for nature trails and running/biking trails
- Additional materials: crushed stone, wood decking (boardwalk), and concrete
- Lighting needed, but avoid light pollution (dark sky lights)
- Use of ground plane activities
 - Hopscotch, wild life trail imprints, 4 square
- Make sure everything is ADA
- Connection to regional trails
 - Homecoming Moments - Along 33 near Norton
- Neighborhood connections through existing right of ways
- Designated Mon Forest Town
- Need local buy-in to make trail happen
- Biodiversity - pay tribute to the natural features of the trail
 - Blue Heron
 - Monarch butterfly...
- Consider the heritage connections of Elkins
 - Farming and brick layers
 - Indigenous and modern settlers
- Geo-caching opportunity
- Protect parts of the swinging bridge
 - Bring back pedestrian bridge over the Tygart
- CCC Camp - Stuart Park tie in
- Site furnishings are important - trash receptacles
- Need for wide river access for city to use
- Consider fruit trees, such as apple trees along trail
- Break points or possible performance spaces
- Have nature trail break-offs in Glendale Park

GROUP ACTIVITY - WATER ACCESS
RECOMMENDATIONS

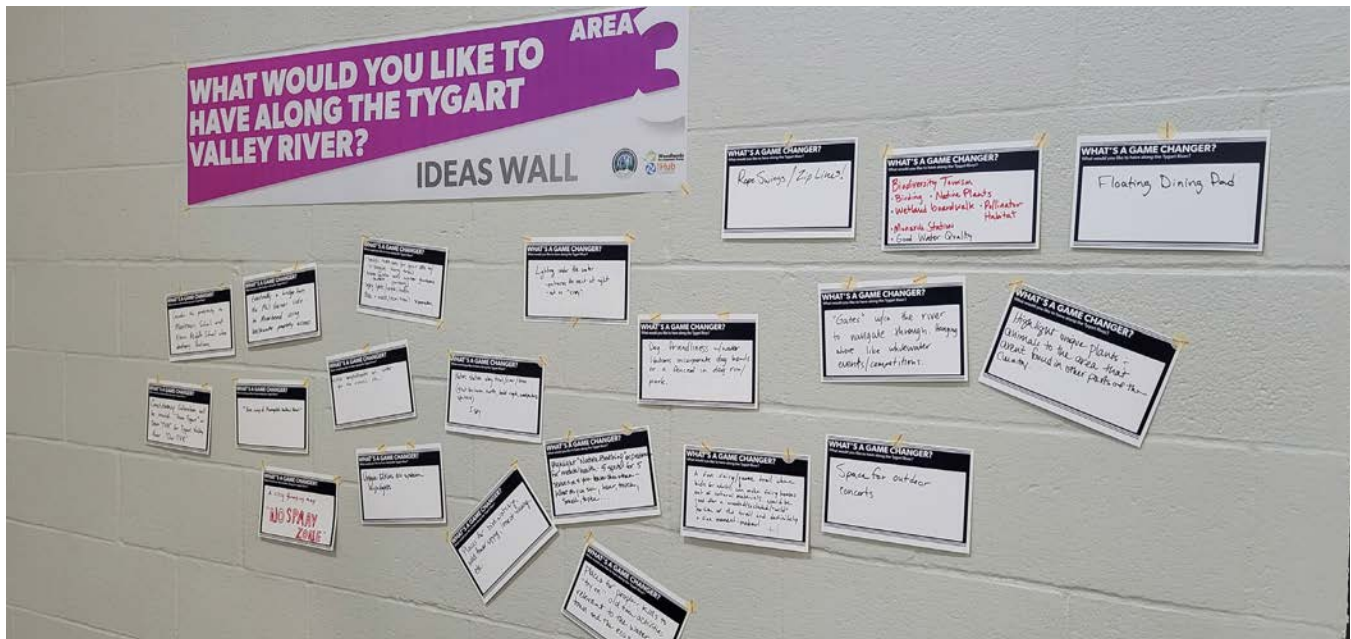
- Primary focus of the waterway is flood control
- Water is also pulled from the river for the treatment plant
- Recreation is the third use of the waterway
- Access to the river for emergency rescue crews is important
- Having more launch points that allows a rescue boat into the water could save lives
- Community wants to change the perception of the river from a drainage area to a recreational asset
- Adequate number of trash receptacles will improve space
- Consider other ways to prevent trash from entering the water
- Keeping and enhancing as much vegetation as possible will improve the site biologically and for visitors
- Low water levels during summertime are a concern
- Waterway health is a concern, especially with CSOs
- Events and activities on the waterway will engage the community and create a sense of ownership and stewardship towards improvement of the river
- Close parking and restrooms near river access points would be beneficial for families
- Sediment deposit in the river is a concern
- Many people fish the river, need improved access for fishing
- Multiple access and takeout points could allow multi-generational use of the waterway
- Find ways to celebrate heritage as it relates to the river to tell the human story
 - Indigenous knowledge, industrial heritage, modern day use of the river
 - Use historical photos or sketches to show how the city has changed
- Celebrate the unique ecosystem of the river and region
- Protecting and improving the environment



Community members share ideas during the water access portion of the stakeholder meetings
GROUP ACTIVITY - BIG IDEAS FOR THE TYGART VALLEY RIVER

- Consider the proximity to Montessori School and Elkins Middle School when developing features.
- Eventually a bridge from the Phil Gainer side to River Bend using wastewater property access.
- Specific trash cans for your pets with little baggies along trail.
- Water bottle over water fountains (sanitary)
- Safety lights / recycle trash.
- Bike and walk / run trail separation.
- Little amphitheater on water for live music, etc.
- A city foraging map, NO SPRAY ZONE.
- Nature status along trail / river / trees (great blue heron, turtle, bald eagle, wood peckers, squirrels). I spy.
- Lighting under the water
- Enhance the asset at night
- Not as scary
- Unique Elkins eco system highlights.

APPENDIX

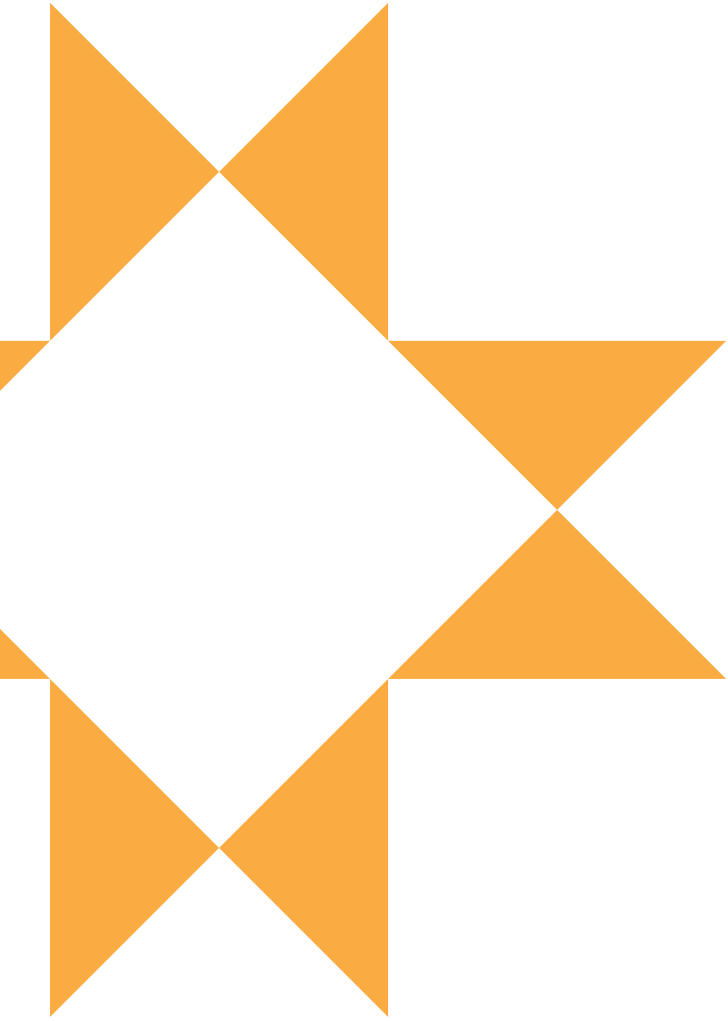


The Ideas Wall as seen during stakeholder and public workshops

- Places for bird watching, flower spying, Insect viewing, etc.
- Highlight “nature bathing” experience for mental health. Five spots for five senses as you leave downtown. What do you see, hear, touch, smell, taste, etc.
- Dog friendliness with water stations, incorporate dog bowls or a fenced in dog run / park.
- A fun fairy / gnome trail where kids or adults can make fairy houses out of natural materials. Would be good for a wooded / secluded / wild portion of the trail and definitely a fun moment maker.
- “Gates” within the river to navigate through. Hanging above like whitewater events / competitions.
- Rope swings / zip lines!
- Floating dining pad.
- Highlight unique plans and animals to the area that aren’t found in other parts of the country.
- Space for outdoor concerts.
- Places for people and kids to “try on” old time activities relevant to the water, the town, and the eco system.
- Base camp of Monongahela National Forest
- Constituency cultivation will be crucial. “Team Tygart” or Team “TVR” for Tygart Valley River. “Our TVR”.
- Biodiversity tourism.
- Birding
- Native plants.
- Wetland boardwalk.
- Pollinator habitat.
- Monarch station.
- Good water quality.

LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1.1 Identifies the project area boundary, tax parcels, city and authority owned land
- Figure 1.2 Identifies the project area boundary, FEMA floodplains, and CSO locations
- Figure 2.1 Elkins Riverfront Trail intersection areas of interest for accessibility and safety improvements
- Figure 2.2 Proposed wayfinding signage for the City of Elkins
- Figure 2.3 Elkins Riverfront Trail overall Master Plan
- Figure 3.1 Highlights the numerous proposed improvements and features of Focus Area 1
- Figure 3.2 Highlights the numerous proposed improvements and features of Focus Area 2
- Figure 3.3 Highlights the numerous proposed improvements and features of Focus Area 3
- Figure 4.1 Elkins Riverfront Trail phasing plan



ELKINS RIVERFRONT PLAN