

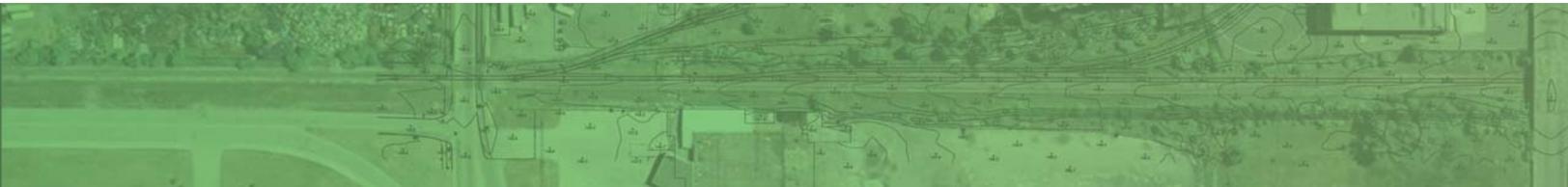
Dequindre Cut Greenway Phase II North Strategic Plan

Executive Summary



Report prepared for:
Economic Development Corporation of the City of Detroit

Report funded by:
Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan



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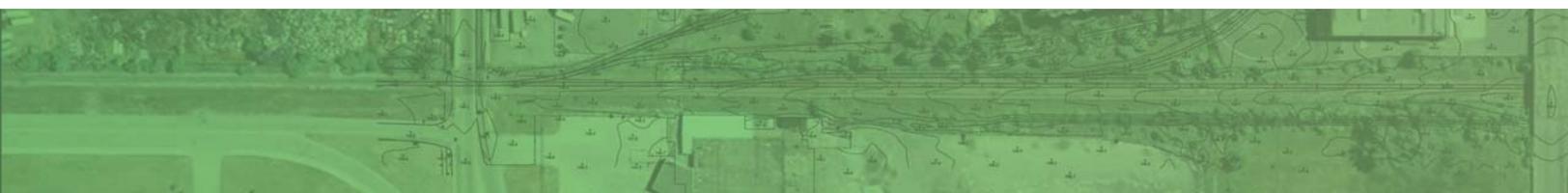
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INTRODUCTION

The Dequindre Cut Greenway is a non-motorized trail planned to extend from the Detroit River northward, with the future potential to connect to the Ferndale-Birmingham greenway in Oakland County. The Detroit portion of the Greenway presents a unique opportunity to encourage reinvestment in adjacent properties by re-activating an abandoned rail corridor as a recreational amenity that links the downtown area and the Detroit River, with its parks and RiverWalk, to the Eastern Market District, the University Cultural Center Area, the Midtown Loop, and a number of residential neighborhoods.

Construction of Phase I of the Dequindre Cut Greenway, extending from the River one mile north to Gratiot Avenue, is almost complete. Funded by MDOT's Transportation Enhancement Program and the Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan, this portion of the Greenway sets the template for future phases and includes a 20-foot bituminous path; access ramps for bicyclists, pedestrians and emergency vehicles; landscaping; lighting; signage and security cameras. A portion of the corridor, adjacent to the non-motorized trail, has also been reserved for future public transit. This \$3 million Phase I investment will be managed and operated by the Detroit RiverFront Conservancy.

The Dequindre Cut Greenway Phase II – North project begins at the northern terminus of the Phase I at Gratiot Avenue and continues for over one-half mile to Mack Avenue. The Strategic Plan for Phase II provides a design approach and project budget that builds on the lessons learned in Phase I construction. The Strategic Plan goals and priorities, design alternatives, preferred options and implementation strategy were developed with the participation of a Working Committee (see page 1). The Committee included representatives from the Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan (CFSEM), the Detroit RiverFront Conservancy (DRFC), Department of Public Works (DPW), Economic Development Corporation (EDC), Eastern Market Corporation (EMC), City of Detroit Department representatives, state agencies including the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and other stakeholders.



Looking North from the Wilkins Street bridge. The Detroit Edison Public School Academy is located in the right foreground.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Dequindre Cut Greenway Phase II - North Strategic Plan was developed to prepare a strategy for the planned extension of the Dequindre Cut Greenway. A Working Committee was created to guide the development process of this plan. The first step in the development of the Strategic Plan included a review and analysis of the existing conditions of the project area. The analysis identified the challenges and opportunities that currently exist on the site, including the identification of access points, land ownership, condition of adjacent properties, utilities, etc.

Utilizing the information gained from the analysis and guided by a series of design goals and opportunities developed by the Working Committee, two alternatives for the greenway were designed. The alternatives were developed to provide two distinct designs to explore the potential design opportunities. The continuation of the 20 foot wide non-motorized trail established in Phase I was shown extending the length of the project. Potential access points were explored at Mack Avenue, Wilkins Street, Division Street, and Adelaide Street. In conjunction with the access points, a series of respite locations / plazas were proposed in various locations to accommodate the needs of the visitors to the greenway. The need to retain and/or repair the vehicular bridges was explored. Both of the alternatives provided ADA and universal design compatibility. The type, location, and design of site amenities and site furnishings (light fixtures, security cameras, benches, trash receptacles, etc.) were located along the trail and were consistent in style and layout to those proposed in Phase I; however were also adjusted to reflect the needs and lessons learned from Phase I.

The Working Committee helped synthesize the design elements proposed in both alternatives into the Strategic Plan. The 20 foot wide non-motorized trail is located on the east side of the Dequindre Cut with an easement for a future transit corridor on the west side. Pedestrian and non-motorized access to the greenway is provided at four locations, Mack Avenue, Wilkins Street (2), and Division Street. Emergency and service vehicles have access to the greenway at Mack Avenue and Wilkins Street. A series of plaza / respite spaces are provided, each representing an opportunity to activate the recreational corridor. All four bridges are maintained within the Strategic Plan, but a strategy to fund repair and/or replacement of the bridges must be identified. Site amenities such as benches, trash receptacles, site lighting, etc. are proposed similar to those in the first phase; additional site amenities such as drinking fountains, bicycle racks, etc. have been proposed for the Phase II segment of the greenway. Informational and wayfinding kiosks / signage, trailhead signs, and trail markers will be located along the greenway.

A project budget was developed to define the approximate level of funding that will be required to develop the Phase II Greenway extension as defined by the Strategic Plan. The budget is divided into eleven subcategories, encompassing the progression of the project from site preparation and demolition to finished construction. The project budget is estimated with a range of \$3.5 million to \$4.7 million, and will ultimately be determined by the extent of utility and bridge repair work found necessary during a detailed engineering review and by the extent of such work that might be able to be funded outside the project.



DESIGN GOALS

The Working Committee developed a series of design goals to be incorporated into the proposed design of the greenway.

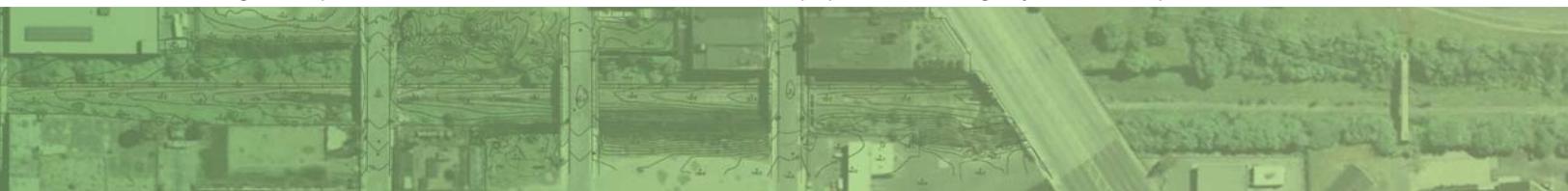
- ▶ **Connectivity**
 - ▷ The primary goals of the Greenway are to provide for non-motorized pedestrian and bicycle transportation and to connect downtown Detroit and the Detroit River to city neighborhoods and adjacent communities.
- ▶ **Economic Redevelopment**
 - ▷ The development of the Greenway should encourage reinvestment in adjacent properties and coordination with and between private property owners.
- ▶ **Design Continuity**
 - ▷ The Phase II portion of the Greenway should continue the design approach and vocabulary established in Phase I.
- ▶ **Future Transit**
 - ▷ An easement will be preserved along the length of the Greenway for future light rail transit.
- ▶ **Sustainability Opportunities and Green Strategies**
 - ▷ Sustainable “green” strategies should be incorporated in the Greenway design (native landscaping; micro-habitat) and through the selection of materials/amenities, wherever possible.
- ▶ **Universal Design (Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA))**
 - ▷ The Greenway should be designed to meet and exceed ADA and universal design requirements and guidelines to maximize accessibility and use.



Looking North toward Mack Avenue. The silos to be demolished are located far right in the photo.



The development of the greenway could spur redevelopment of existing properties and buildings adjacent to the Dequindre Cut.



- ▶ Safety
 - ▷ The proposed Greenway is located within a depressed rail corridor in an urban environment. Safety concerns must be addressed to make the Greenway a comfortable space to use.
- ▶ Partnerships
 - ▷ Partnerships with existing and potential new groups should be established to assist in the financing, development, operations, and maintenance of the Greenway.
 - ▷ These partnerships may include the Detroit RiverFront Conservancy (DRFC), Eastern Market Corporation (EMC), Greening of Detroit, Detroit Edison Public School Academy (DEPSA), Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), and others.
- ▶ Programmed Space
 - ▷ Plaza spaces, respite spots, concessions, and other programming should be incorporated.
- ▶ Parking
 - ▷ Accommodations for parking adjacent to the Greenway should be provided to encourage its use by a wide range of patrons.
 - ▷ Opportunities to share existing parking lots with adjacent property owners, including Eastern Market and DEPSA, should be explored to provide this amenity.
- ▶ Interpretive Signage Program
 - ▷ Interpretive signage to highlight the cultural and historical aspects of the area should be included in the design.
- ▶ Public Art
 - ▷ The Dequindre Cut has a long history of graffiti artists creating murals and images on the bridge abutments and retaining walls. Phase II design should continue to allow for this form of public art in designated areas to add to the unique cultural character of the Greenway.



Looking south toward Gratiot Avenue. This segment of the Dequindre Cut Greenway will connect to the recently completed Phase I segment south of the Gratiot Avenue overpass.



Non-offensive graffiti provides a unique platform for public art in the Dequindre Cut



Context Aerial



- Legend**
- Private Property
 - City Owned Property
 - Civic Use
 - Utility
 - Gratiot Ave. Pedestrian Connection to Eastern Market
 - Existing Railroad Tracks
 - Storm Sewer
 - Potential Dequindre Cut Pedestrian Access Point
 - Retaining Wall

Phase II North: Site Analysis April 15, 2008

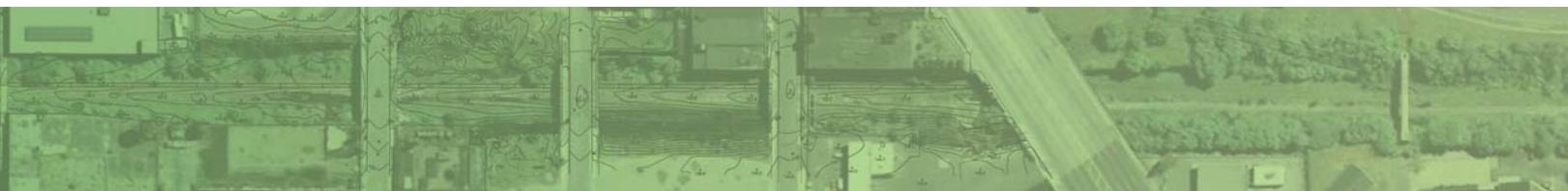
STRATEGIC PLAN

The Working Committee helped synthesize the design elements presented in both alternatives into one strategic plan. The common elements of both alternatives are included:

- ▶ A 20 foot wide non-motorized trail is located on east side of the Dequindre Cut with an easement for a future transit corridor on west. The design of the asphalt trail includes the same materials and lane designations as Phase I of the Greenway.
- ▶ Site amenities (light fixtures and security cameras / emergency phones) located along the trail are consistent in style and layout to those proposed in Phase I.
- ▶ DEPSA expansion onto adjacent properties to the north, and the Greening of Detroit's proposed Detroit Market Garden, are included.
- ▶ Graffiti art is showcased at bridge overpasses.

Other key design elements include the following:

- ▶ Access to the Greenway is provided at four locations within the Phase II section:
 - ▷ An at grade access (pedestrian and vehicular / emergency) at the Mack Avenue terminus.
 - ▷ ADA compliant ramps on both the east and west sides of the Greenway from street level at Wilkins Street extending north to meet the grade of the Dequindre Cut. The ramp layout on the east side at DEPSA is a pedestrian only ramp. The ramp on the west side at the Detroit Market Garden will accommodate both pedestrians and emergency vehicles and will be coordinated with the zone provided for the future transit corridor.
 - ▷ An ADA compliant switchback pedestrian-only ramp from street level at Division Street to the Dequindre Cut. The ramp is proposed on property owned by the City of Detroit on the east side of the Dequindre Cut.
 - ▷ A pedestrian stair connection from Adelaide Street to a plaza space within the Dequindre Cut on the east side of the Dequindre Cut.
- ▶ Specific high visibility areas, primarily at access points, are designated for enhanced landscape treatments.
- ▶ Two plaza / respite spaces are provided in the Phase II Greenway segment:
 - ▷ At the lower levels of the building overhangs / loading bays near Adelaide Street on the east side.
 - ▷ Between the DEPSA property and the Greening of Detroit - Detroit Market Garden on the east side of the recreational trail.
- ▶ A plaza is also located at the Mack Avenue trail terminus.



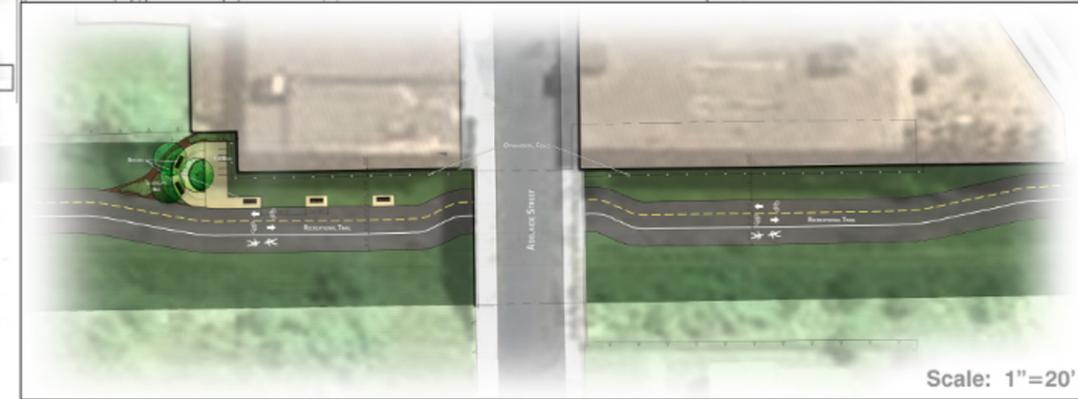
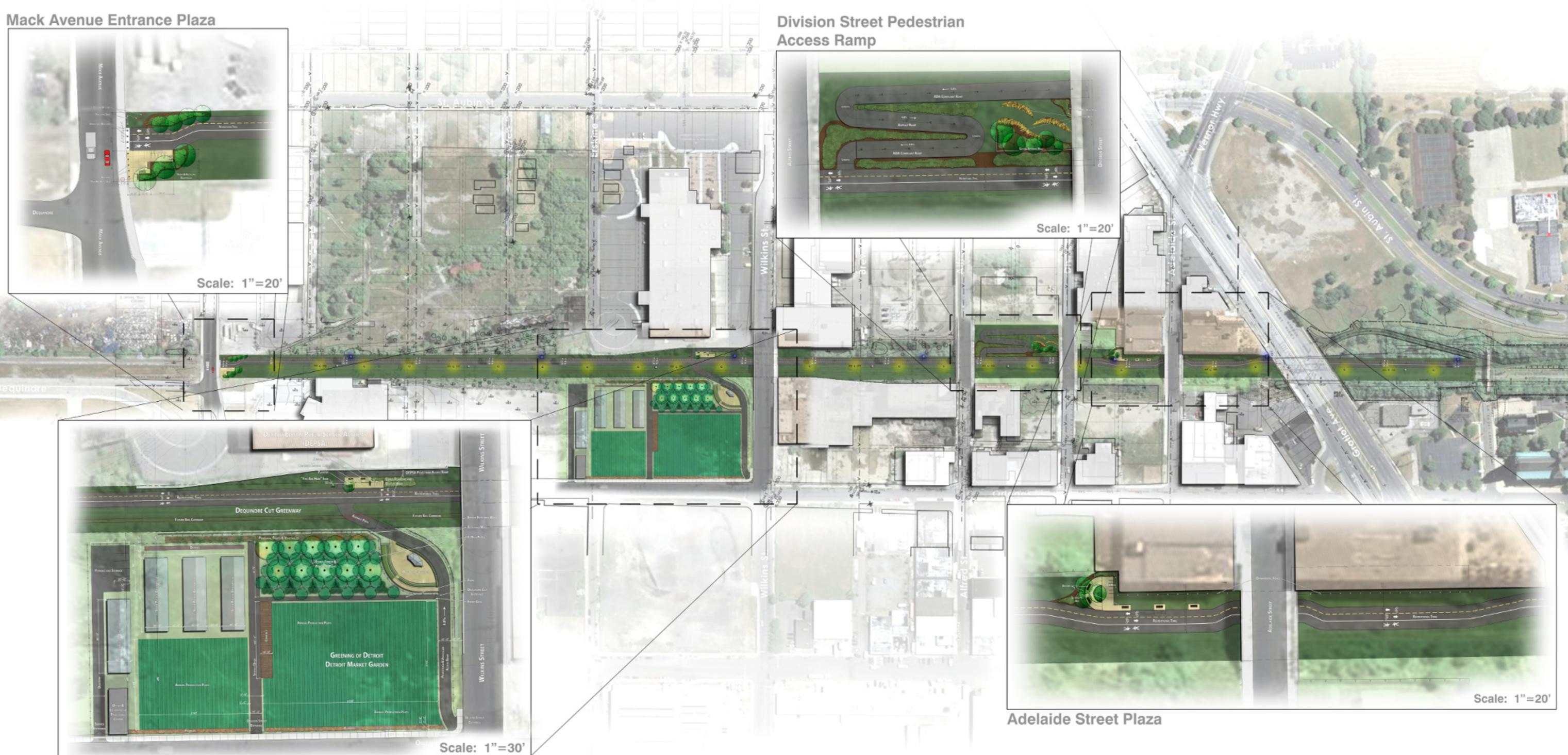
- ▶ All four bridges are maintained. A strategy to fund repair and/or replacement must be identified. (The Alfred Street bridge is identified in the project budget to be demolished due to its current poor condition. Funding for replacement of this bridge has not been identified. The bridge could be replaced in the future.)
- ▶ Site amenities, such as benches, trash receptacles, etc. are proposed for both Phases I and II. Opportunities for additional site amenities, such as drinking fountains and bicycle racks, that were not part of the Phase I development are, also identified.
- ▶ Informational and wayfinding kiosks / signage will also be located within the Greenway. In addition, locations for trailhead and trail markers will be identified.



Mack Avenue Entrance Plaza



Division Street Pedestrian Access Ramp



Wilkins Street Access Ramps

Adelaide Street Plaza

Dequindre Cut Greenway Strategic Plan

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