

REIMAGINING THE DL&W CORRIDOR

An International Design Ideas Competition

A Multi-Use Urban Nature Trail and Greenway

Buffalo, New York

Photo source: Abby Songin



WESTERN NEW YORK
LAND CONSERVANCY

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DESIGN IDEAS COMPETITION SPONSORED BY

Western New York Land Conservancy

☎ (716) 687-1225

✉ info@wnylc.org

🌐 www.wnyc.org

✉ P.O. Box 471, East Aurora, NY 14052

MADE POSSIBLE BY

We would like to thank the generous project supporters
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Photo source: Calvin Nemec

1 INVITATION TO SUBMIT DESIGN IDEAS

The Western New York Land Conservancy invites designers, architects, landscape architects, urban planners, and artists to submit visionary concepts to a juried competition laying the groundwork to transform the abandoned, 1.5-mile DL&W rail corridor into an iconic, innovative, and inspiring multi-use urban nature trail and greenway. The elevated DL&W rail corridor connects Buffalo's downtown with its waterfront through three distinct and historic neighborhoods. The proposed trail and greenway will be transformational for these Buffalo neighborhoods and post-industrial waterfront, and will contribute to the region's incredible ongoing renaissance. The Land Conservancy has already raised more than half a million dollars for this project. The goal of the competition is to develop creative ideas and practical solutions that will be showcased to the public through high-profile exhibitions, through the media, and online to generate additional ideas, support, and enthusiasm for the future of the DL&W rail corridor.

Submission Details

All submissions are due by: February 15, 2019

Submission should be digital, submitted here: wnylc.org/dlw-design/

For further submission guidelines and requirements, see Competition Details later in this document.

All questions are due by January 11, 2019, and will be answered and posted in writing to the Supporting Materials and Data site.

There will be an optional site visit for applicants on January 4, 2019. To attend, you must register at least one week in advance by emailing info@wnylc.org.



Photo source: Paula Sciuk

PROJECT TEAM AND JURORS

The Western New York Land Conservancy is a regional, not-for-profit land trust. Our mission is to permanently protect land with significant conservation value in Western New York, for the benefit of future generations. Our region is home to two of North America's Great Lakes, the breathtaking Niagara Falls, and the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. Vast networks of streams, forests and farms cover the landscape, and we are witness to incredible migrations of wildlife. Over more than a quarter century we have saved spectacular farms, forests, gorges, rivers, and streams throughout our region. Now, with this project, we would like to bring nature to people – and people to nature – right in the heart of the city of Buffalo.

Our Jurors include:

CHARLES DAVIS II

Assistant professor of architectural history and criticism at the University at Buffalo, his academic research examines the integrations of race and style theory in modern architectural debates. Charles is co-editor of the cultural reader *Diversity and Design: Understanding Hidden Consequences* and the forthcoming *Race and Modern Architecture*, and author of the forthcoming work *Building Character: The Racial Politics of Modern Architectural Style*.

KEN GREENBERG

Principal of Greenberg Consultants. Author of *Walking Home – the life and lessons of a city builder*. Ken helped launch and design the Bentway project in Toronto. He previously served as the Director of Urban Design and Architecture for the City of Toronto.

SARA HEIDINGER

President of the Old First Ward Community Association. Sara is a photographer and co-owner of Undergrounds Coffee House & Roastery.

CHRIS REED

Founding Director of Stoss Landscape Urbanism, and both Professor in Practice of Landscape Architecture and Co-Director of the Master of Landscape Architecture in Urban Design Program at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design.

ROBERT SHIBLEY

Professor and Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning, University at Buffalo (UB), State University of New York. Bob is the UB Campus Architect and a Senior Fellow at the UB Regional Institute.

JANNE SIRÉN

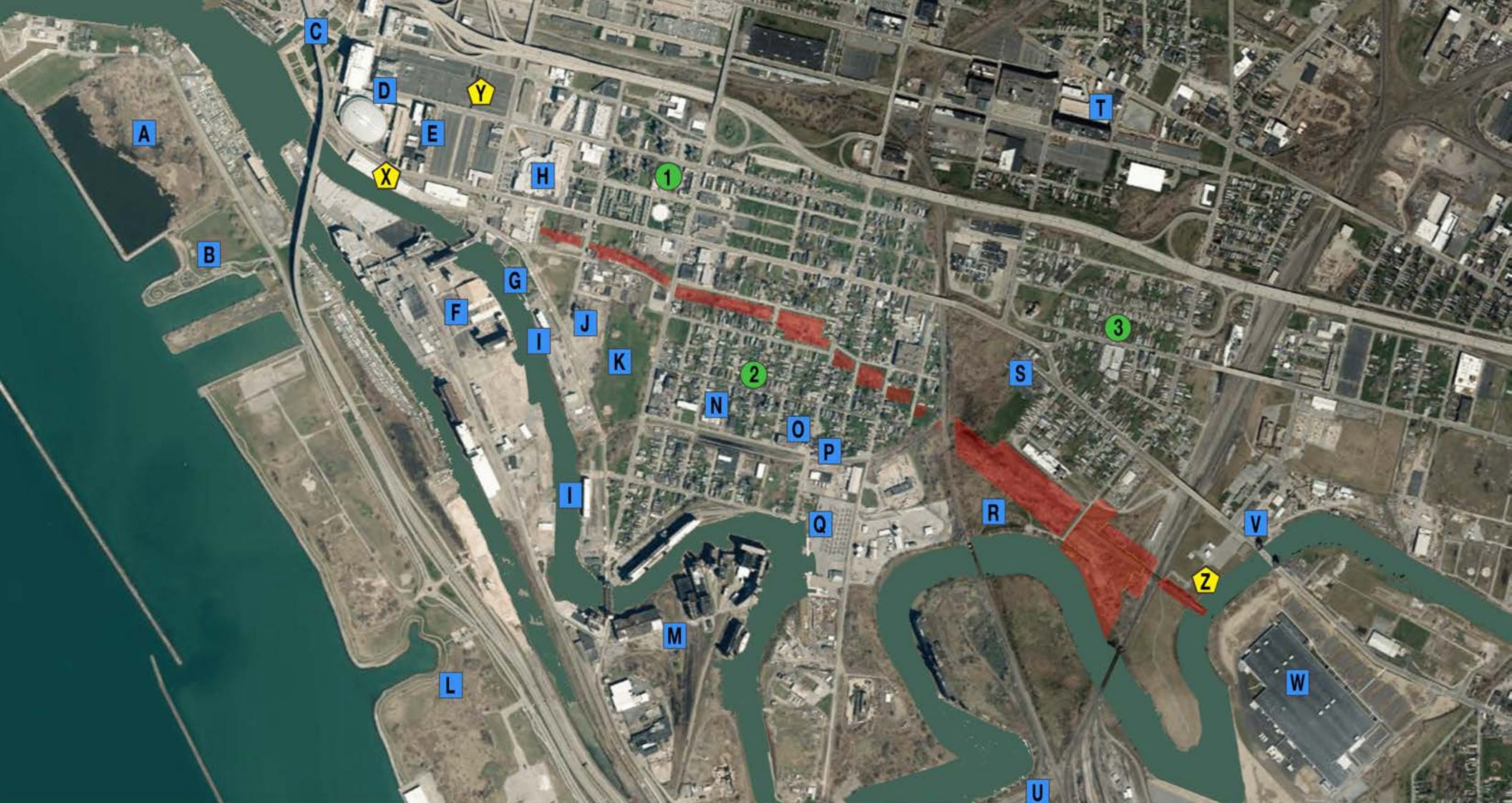
Director of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery. Dr. Sirén began his appointment at the Albright-Knox in 2013. Prior to this, he served as Director of Finland's Helsinki Art Museum—one of the largest cultural institutions in the Nordic region—overseeing an active exhibitions, acquisitions, and museum development program.

ANA TRAVERSO-KREJCAREK

Manager of the High Line Network, at Friends of the High Line, in New York City. Ana is a Bolivian-American sociologist and urban planner with a passion for community development. She has a portfolio of projects for government and non-profit sectors in Bolivia and Brazil, with published work in urban studies and public policy. At the High Line Network Ana works with infrastructure reuse organizations and projects creating a new generation of public spaces.

Our Design Ideas Competition Adviser is **Kishore Varanasi, AICP**. Kishore is a Boston based urban designer, strategist, innovator, teacher and a principal at cbt. Kishore's contributions to cities stem from his ability to create viable and sustainable mixed-use neighborhoods, converging the interests of residents, government entities, and developers by inspiring creative collaborations and fresh approaches to community building. His work embraces emerging societal forces such as climate change, environmental consciousness, social equity, the sharing economy, and innovation culture to create an unparalleled quality of urban life.

Our Community Engagement Consultant and Project Manager is **Anthony Armstrong**. Anthony provides vision and strategic planning, technical assistance and strategy formulation for non-profits, foundations, governments and coalitions on issues related to equitable development and community revitalization policy, projects and programs both locally and nationally. A core member of several socially focused start up organizations, and co-founder and partner at Make Communities, Anthony combines evidence-based research and meaningful stakeholder engagement with hands-on experience in physical, economic and organizational development.



- NFTA-Owned DL&W Corridor Parcels**
Proposed Project Site
- NEIGHBORHOODS**
- 1 Perry Neighborhood
 - 2 Old First Ward Neighborhood
 - 3 Valley Neighborhood
- ASSETS & AMENITIES**
- A Times Beach Nature Preserve
 - B Wilkeson Pointe
 - C Canalside
 - D Key Bank Center & Harbor Center
 - E Cobblestone Entertainment District
 - F RiverWorks Entertainment Complex
 - G RiverFest Park & Ohio Street Greenway

- H Seneca Buffalo Creek Casino
- I River Front Residential Developments
- J Brewery & Entertainment Development
- K Father Conway Park
- L Outer Harbor Parks
- M Silo City
- N Old First Ward Community Center
- O The Barrel Factory

- P Gene McCarthy's
- Q Mutual Riverfront Park
- R Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park
- S Valley Community Center
- T Larkinville
- U Tift Nature Preserve
- V Heritage Discovery Center
- W Tesla Solar Panel Factory

- DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS**
- X DL&W Terminal Redevelopment
 - Y Potential Convention Center Site
 - Z Blueways Paddlesport Access & Potential Development Site

2 BACKGROUND

SITE DETAILS AND HISTORY

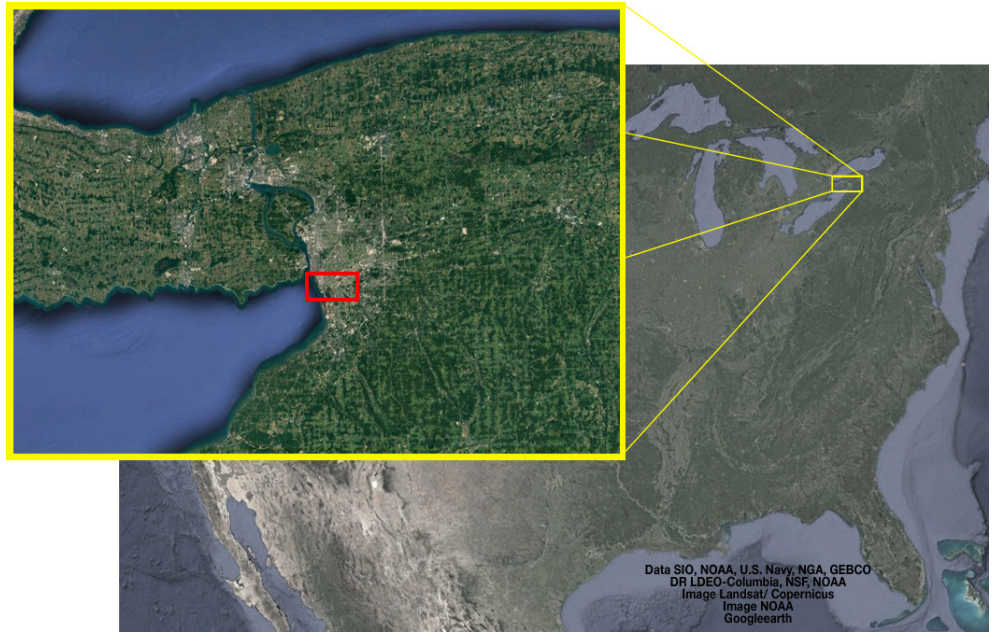
On the edge of downtown Buffalo, wildlife is reclaiming an unused rail corridor. This former rail line runs for a mile and a half on an elevated berm through the center of Buffalo's industrial past, connecting the city's history with the future of the communities along its length.

Called the DL&W rail corridor, it travels from Canalside and the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) train sheds at the DL&W terminal in downtown Buffalo to the Buffalo River across from the new Tesla solar panel manufacturing facility at Riverbend. The corridor runs through the Old First Ward, Perry, and Valley neighborhoods. The entire corridor, except for the streets that cross it, is currently owned by the NFTA. The NFTA-owned parcels total approximately 40 acres.

The DL&W corridor — short for the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western Railroad Company — is known locally as the 'Del'. It connected Buffalo to Hoboken, New Jersey, and transported both freight and passengers between the East Coast and the Great Lakes. It operated from the mid-1800s to the mid-1900s.

The history of the land surrounding the DL&W corridor is long and storied, involving indigenous heritage, waves of immigration, economic innovation, and working class residents of various backgrounds who contributed to the building of Buffalo and the United States.

Long prior to colonization, the Buffalo River was an important part of the Haudenosaunee Native American people's lands. During the DL&W's heyday, the Buffalo River became a hub for shipping and industry. Towering grain elevators — a Buffalo-based invention presaging the Bauhaus movement and the International Style — and factories lined its shores. The working class neighborhoods surrounding the river quickly developed.



Project Site Location

Like many “rust belt” cities, these communities and Buffalo as a whole experienced a decline in the latter half of the 1900s. Shipping routes and methods changed, industry closed, and people left. The Old First Ward and Valley neighborhoods experienced population decline and abandonment. The Perry neighborhood, likewise, faced both substantial physical transformation and disinvestment. The Buffalo River was left polluted and inaccessible.

But, after billions of dollars of public, private, and not-for-profit investment, the communities surrounding the DL&W corridor and much of the city are experiencing an exciting rebound over the last decade. At Riverbend across the Buffalo River from the DL&W corridor, the western hemisphere's largest solar panel manufacturing facility houses Tesla and Panasonic. A massive contaminated sediment cleanup and habitat restoration effort has made six miles of the Buffalo River cleaner than it has been in generations. Thousands of people paddle along the river during the summer, and new bars, restaurants, and housing have popped up along its shores.



Photo source: Abby Songjin

New parks and kayak launches in the Old First Ward and the Valley, including Erie County's Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park, Mutual Riverfront Park, and River Fest Park, connect people to the river. Canalside on the waterfront in downtown and outdoor recreation amenities on the Outer Harbor attract hundreds of thousands of visitors annually. A new bike trail connects Canalside to the Outer Harbor along "the Ohio Street Greenway through the Old First Ward. Nearby attractions at Larkinville, Silo City, Riverworks, the Barrel Factory, Harbor Center, the Cobblestone District, the Heritage Discovery Center, the Pierce Arrow Museum, the Seneca Buffalo Creek Casino and other attractions bring millions more visitors.

And more is planned for these communities to fully activate the potential they hold. The DL&W terminal itself is slated to become a new stop in the region's metro rail system, and will be renovated to include retail. Many new businesses and entertainment venues are in the works in surrounding neighborhoods. Along the Buffalo River, new shoreline habitat restoration projects continue to improve the ecology of the river, new paddlesport launches are already planned and implemented through the Buffalo Blueway Initiative, and a new Waterways Center is envisioned and in the early planning stages. New York State will complete the country's longest statewide bike trail, called the Empire State Trail, which can be connected to the DL&W corridor. The Niagara River Greenway and its trail system also connect to the DL&W corridor.

The DL&W corridor has also changed in recent decades. Abandoned since the 1960s, most of the historic iron and wooden bridges that once crossed city streets have been removed, yet two iconic bridges remain — a double bridge that crosses an active rail line near Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park, and half of a former lift bridge that once crossed the Buffalo River. The corridor offers spectacular views of historic grain elevators, downtown Buffalo, active railroad lines, and the Buffalo River. Nature is reclaiming much of the corridor, and it now serves as a green oasis in the middle of a busy city.

This Design Ideas Competition is the next step in reimagining the DL&W corridor as a transformative multi-use urban nature trail and greenway. It follows the work of community leaders, residents, planners, and advocates who have championed the potential of this site for years. And it also follows on the heels of a year-long community visioning process from 2017 to 2018 that resulted in a published community vision plan that will guide the future of the DL&W corridor. Though questions and challenges remain, there is great and building support from stakeholders and the community. Partner development, programming, fundraising, operating agreements, and project timeline development are proceeding concurrent with this Design Ideas Competition. In 2019 Block Club, an award-winning branding agency and design firm, will help the Land Conservancy develop a naming and branding strategy for this project.

3 DESIGN VISION, REQUIREMENTS & GOALS

The new trail and greenway will be an inspiring community gathering place alive with the history and the voice of the surrounding neighborhoods. More than just a trail, the reimagined rail corridor will be a vibrant, safe, and welcoming space for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds to connect with each other, with nature, and with the waterfront, throughout the year. The trail and greenway will be the focal point of a revitalized community and a restored ecosystem.

FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Entries should consider the project site to be the NFTA-owned parcels, totaling approximately 40 acres, along a 1.5-mile stretch of the DL&W corridor, as well as the street and railroad crossings along that corridor.
- Entries should incorporate a separate walking trail and bicycling trail along the length of the corridor.
- Entries should be conscious of the natural features and ecological functions of the site and surrounding areas, and should create nature-immersive experiences.

DESIGN GOALS

Proposals should:

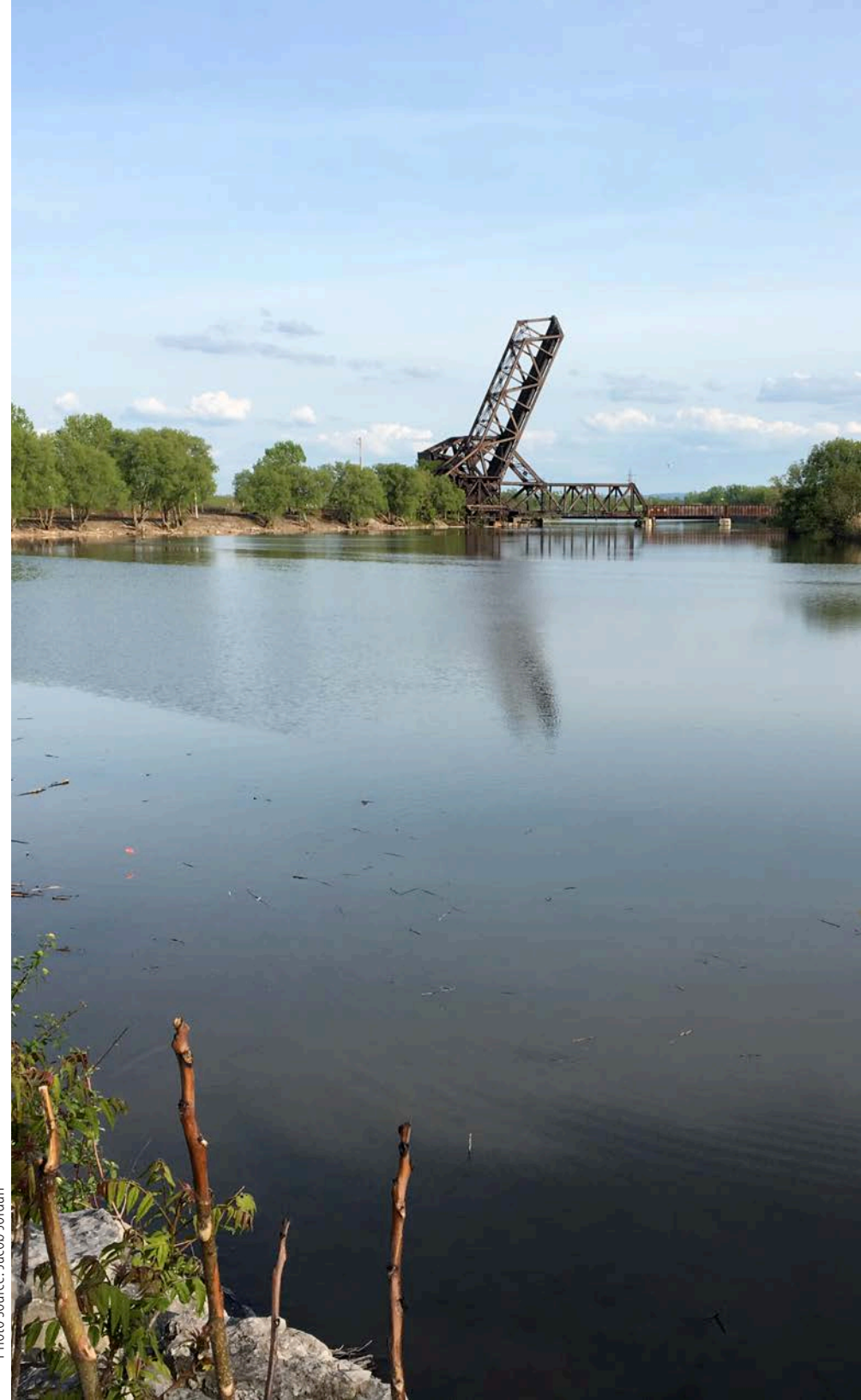
- Align with the 2018 community vision plan's guiding principles and strategies. (available at wnylc.org/dlw and from the Supporting Materials and Data website)
- Incorporate inspirational, innovative and inclusive urban design that is practical and achievable. An initial cost estimate for the construction of the trail and greenway is approximately \$21 million.
- Enhance natural wildlife habitats and use native plants.

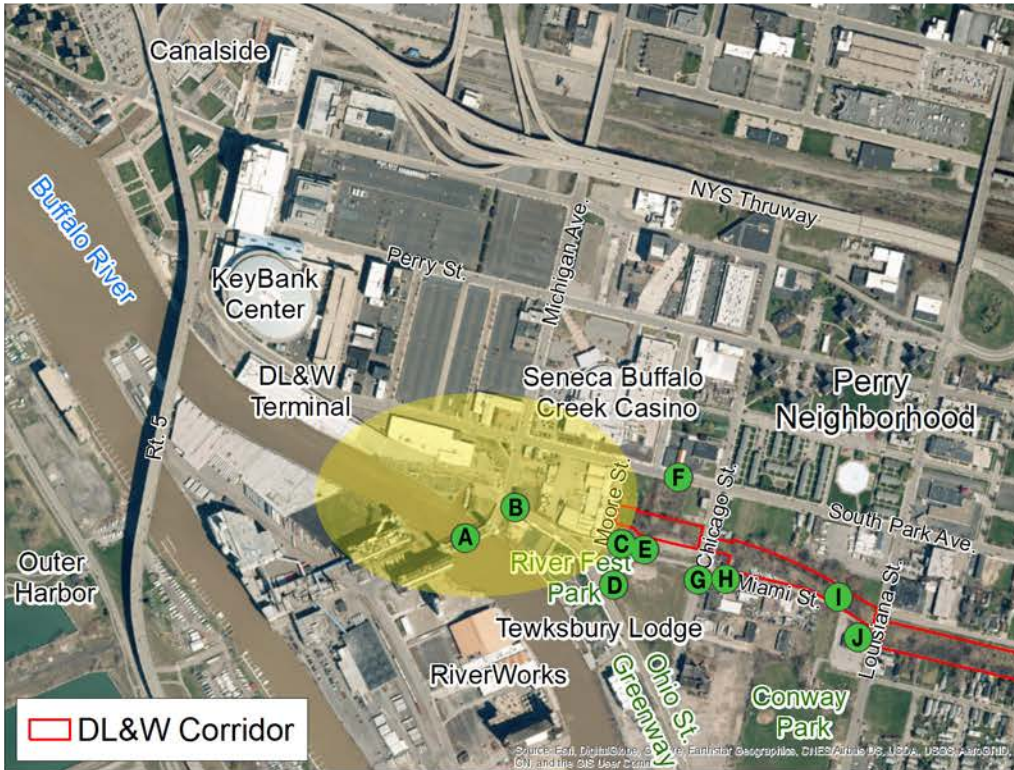


Photo source: Abby Songjin

- Consider connections and amenities:
 - Ensure connections to adjacent parks, trails and the waterfront as well as possible features and amenities within the context of the surrounding geography and land use.
 - Consider locations of trail and greenway entrances and access implications on existing communities and amenities, including both primary and secondary entrances to the corridor.
 - Explore the potential for additional recreational amenities adjacent to the corridor.
 - Incorporate comfort stations and respite areas along the corridor that provide, for example, restrooms and nursing stations.
- Promote access for multiple users and uses:
 - Accommodate the potential for future consideration of light rail along the corridor, with particular attention to the western most section of the corridor between the DL&W terminal and Louisiana Street.
 - Strive for universal access.
 - Consider year-round uses and access, including winter uses in a cold-weather climate.
- Design each area to fit the context of the surrounding neighborhoods and consider several of the key features in the four different sections of the corridor described on the following pages.

Photo source: Jacob Jordan



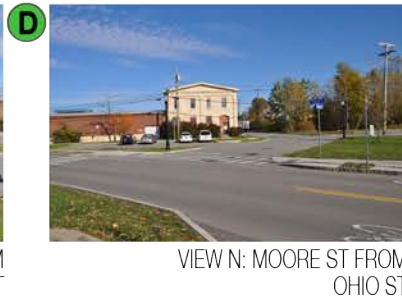


KEY FEATURES A: PERRY AND DOWNTOWN

- The western terminus of the corridor where connections with the Ohio Street Greenway, the DL&W terminal, and Canalside are desirable. Site control and infrastructure challenges currently exist.



PHOTOS: Jajean Rose-Burney





KEY FEATURES B: OLD FIRST WARD

- Designs that ensure privacy and screening for densely populated neighborhoods, especially where homes are adjacent to the corridor.
- Options for connecting separate blocks of the corridor across city streets in the Old First Ward, which could include rebuilding new bridges or using at-grade street crossings. The corridor is elevated approximately 25 feet through some blocks, and is at ground level through other blocks.



PRIVACY CONCERNS



STREET CROSSINGS

PHOTOS: Jajean Rose-Burney



VIEW E: MIAMI ST FROM LOUISIANA ST



VIEW W: ON TOP OF DL&W CORRIDOR



VIEW NE: ON TOP OF DL&W CORRIDOR



VIEW SE: MIAMI ST FROM ALABAMA ST



VIEW E: ON TOP OF DL&W CORRIDOR



VIEW E: DL&W CORRIDOR FROM HAMBURG ST



VIEW NW: HAMBURG ST FROM MACKINAW ST



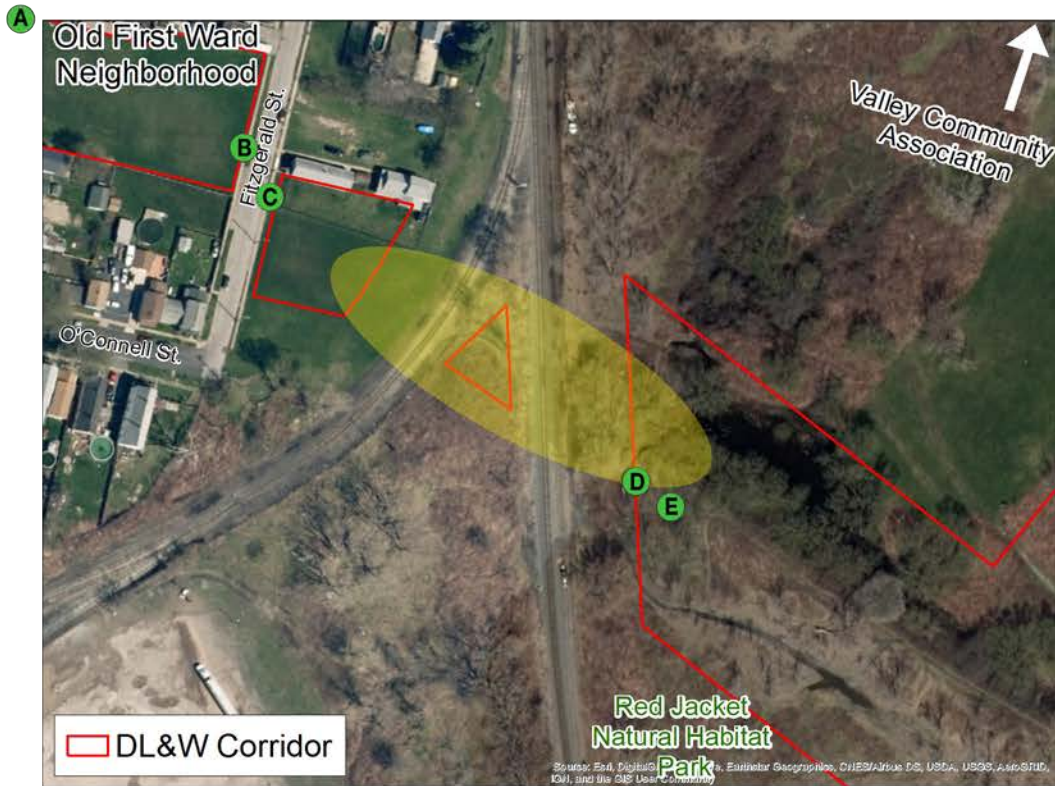
VIEW S: SIDWAY ST FROM MACKINAW ST



VIEW W: MACKINAW ST FROM KATHERINE ST



VIEW S: KATHERINE ST FROM MACKINAW ST



KEY FEATURES C: THE CROSSING

- The connection between the Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park / RiverBend section of the corridor and the Old First Ward section of the corridor which will need to cross an active railroad line. The Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park / RiverBend side of The Crossing is elevated, while the Old First Ward side is at ground level.



RAIL CROSSING AND ELEVATION CHANGE

PHOTOS: Jajean Rose-Burney unless noted



VIEW SE: THE CROSSING FROM KATHERINE ST



VIEW NW: DL&W CORRIDOR FROM FITZGERALD ST



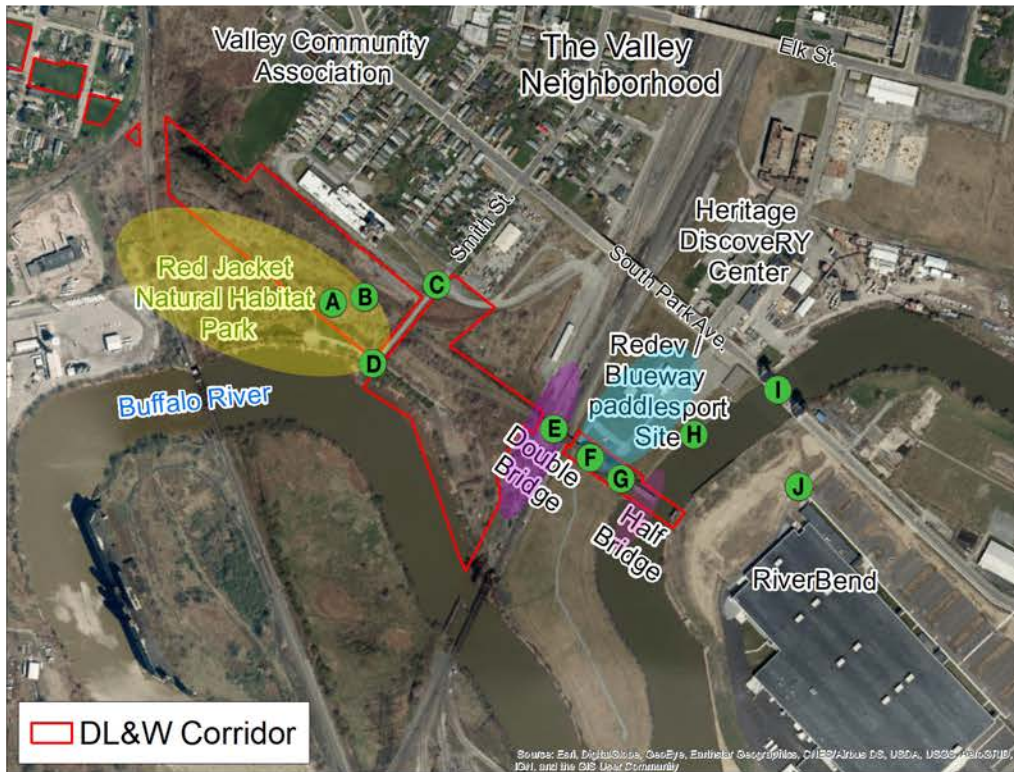
VIEW E: THE CROSSING FROM FITZGERALD ST



VIEW NW: THE CROSSING FROM ON TOP OF DL&W CORRIDOR



VIEW NW: THE CROSSING FROM RED JACKET NATURAL HABITAT PARK



KEY FEATURES D: RED JACKET NATURAL HABITAT PARK / RIVERBEND

- The existing half bridge over the Buffalo River.
- The existing double bridge over an active railroad line.
- Connections to the potential redevelopment site on South Park Avenue - including a proposed Buffalo Blueway paddlesport access site to the Buffalo River, among other proposed improvements.
- Connections with the Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park.



PHOTOS: Jajeen Rose-Burney unless noted



VIEW NW: RED JACKET NATURAL HABITAT PARK



VIEW SE: RED JACKET NATURAL HABITAT PARK



VIEW S: DL&W EMBANKMENTS FROM SMITH ST



VIEW NE: DL&W EMBANKMENTS FROM SMITH ST



VIEW W: THE DOUBLE BRIDGE FROM THE DL&W CORRIDOR



VIEW W: THE DOUBLE BRIDGE FROM THE DL&W CORRIDOR



VIEW E: THE HALF BRIDGE FROM THE DL&W CORRIDOR



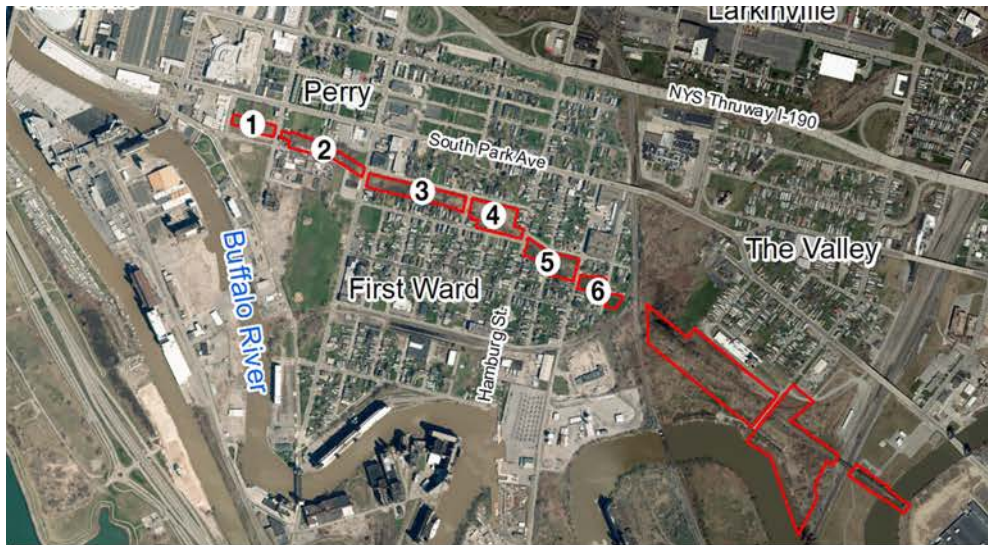
VIEW S: THE HALF BRIDGE FROM BUFFALO RIVER SHORELINE



VIEW SW: REDEVELOPMENT SITE FROM SOUTH PARK AVENUE BRIDGE



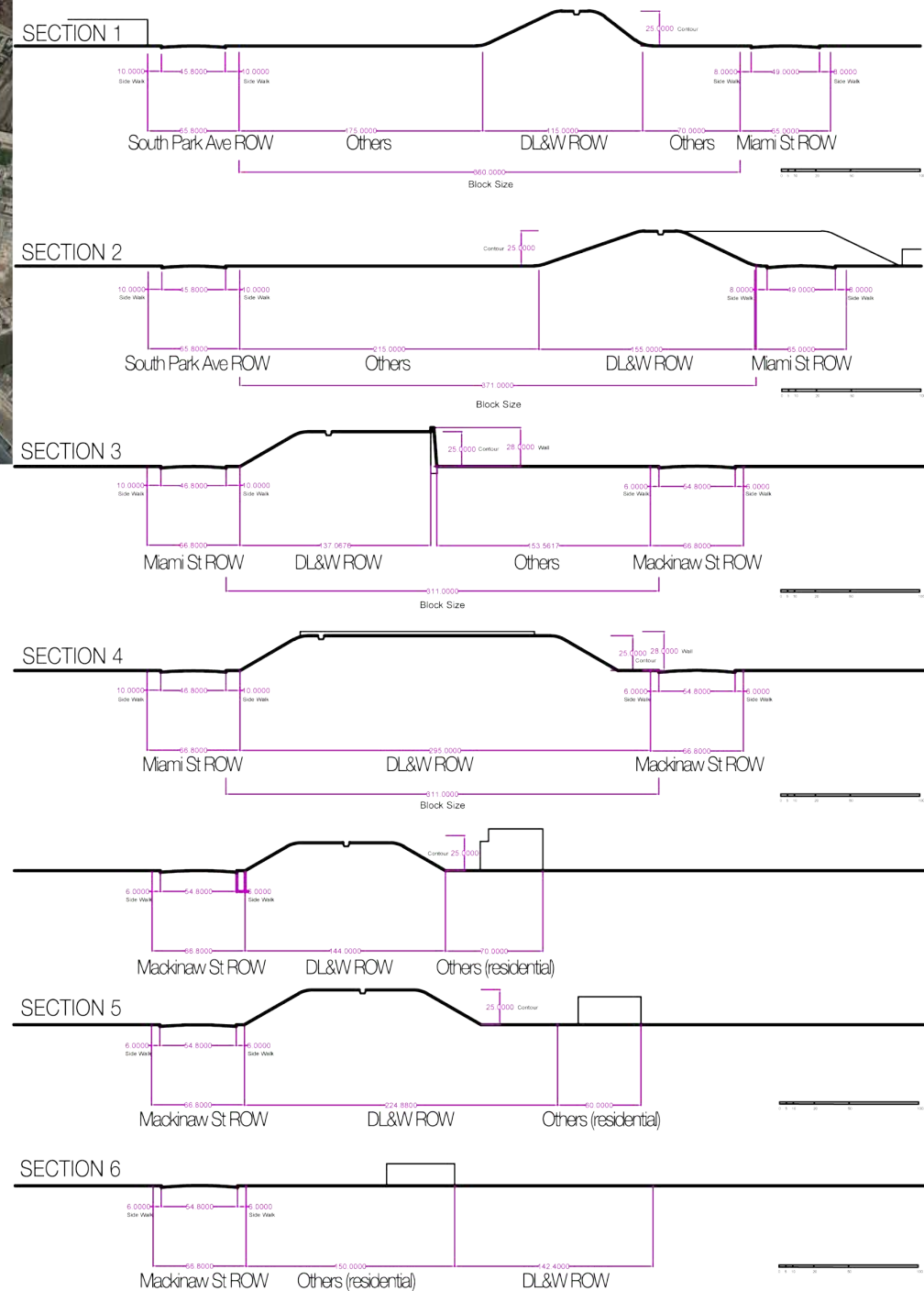
VIEW SW: HALF AND DOUBLE BRIDGES AERIAL



SUPPORTING MATERIALS AND DATA

The following should be downloaded from wnylc.org/dlw-design/ in order to develop your submission:

- The 2018 community vision plan for reimagining the DL&W corridor
- Various maps of historic and existing conditions of the DL&W corridor and its surrounding communities
- Section drawings of the existing DL&W corridor
- A video of an aerial flyover of the entire DL&W corridor
- GIS shapefiles of the NFTA-owned parcels comprising the DL&W corridor, as well as parcels surrounding the corridor
- Neighborhood demographic data
- Press about the project
- Links to other resources including planning documents, a database of plants native to Western New York, a history of the Buffalo River, and more.



4

COMPETITION DETAILS

PRIZES

The competition jury will select the top submissions and award three prizes. The community will also have the opportunity to vote for a “Community Choice” award.

First Place: \$7,500

Second Place: \$3,000

Third Place: \$1,000

Community Choice Award: \$3,000

PUBLICITY

In addition to the prizes described above, select submissions will be:

- Displayed at a public exhibition
- Displayed online
- Submitted to local, national, and international media

ELIGIBILITY

This call for entries is open to individuals or teams comprised of professional and/or student designers, architects, landscape architects, urban planners, and artists. Submissions by multi-disciplinary teams are encouraged.

Photo source: James Hoggard



Photo source: James Hoggard



SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Entrants are asked to login to the competition site at:

Entries must be submitted electronically at the above site as PDF files, not exceeding 100MB each. All PDF files must be submitted with the following title format: DesignTeamName_DocumentTitle.pdf. Entries must contain the following documents, written in English:

- Up to two 36-inch by 48-inch landscape orientation posters at 300 DPI or higher resolution of the design ideas to be displayed at the public exhibition and online. The poster(s) should show:
 - the overall site plan for the trail and greenway
 - ideas for as many key features listed in the Design Goals section of this document as possible
 - other design features as conceived by the entrant
- A narrative of no more than 350 words describing the proposed design ideas.
- A team information document that includes:
 - Name or title of the entry
 - A 100-word or less description of the team
 - Design team member names with brief bios of no more than 100 words for each team member
 - Name of contact person, including contact information (email, phone number, mailing address)

SELECTION PROCESS

The jury will review each submission and will select three winners. The Land Conservancy will select the top proposals to be displayed at the public exhibition and online. Through the public exhibition and online feedback, the community will select a single community choice winner.

Submissions will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

- Demonstrates understanding of the Design Vision and Design Goals
- Meets Functional Requirements
- Meets Submission Requirements
- Ability of design to help establish unique identity for the corridor through innovative solutions



Photo source: Abby Songin

SCHEDULE

- **November 16, 2018:** Design Ideas Competition launch
- **January 4, 2019:** Optional site visit for applicants
- **January 11, 2019:** Deadline for questions from applicants. All questions will be answered and posted in writing to the Supporting Materials and Data site
- **February 15, 2019:** Deadline for submissions (5:00 p.m. EST)
- **March 2019:** Public exhibition and selection of winners



Photo source: James Hoggard

DISCLAIMER: FUTURE USE OF THE PROPOSALS

By taking part in this Design Ideas Competition, entrants authorize the Land Conservancy to make public, exhibit, and disseminate their proposals, while the designer(s) retain authorship of their proprietary designs. The Land Conservancy may edit the content of proposals or use only portions of proposals in order to make the proposals public. The Land Conservancy is not committed to selecting any of the entrants, including the winners of the competition, for future design work or contracts. The Land Conservancy is not committed to develop or implement any of the ideas submitted. The Land Conservancy may base future designs for the project on components of proposals. With respect to the proposals in whole and in any part, each entrant grants to the Land Conservancy a perpetual non-exclusive license with the right to sublicense, to display, reproduce, prepare derivative works, and distribute copies of the proposals, and to create and participate in creation of buildings and other three dimensional structures that are depicted in any architectural designs or architectural works that are included in the proposals. Each entrant hereby confirms they have the full right to grant this license.