



Turn to the River

PUBLIC DESIGN CHARRETTE



The Turn to the River Public Design Charrette

The Turn to the River Public Design Charrette was held at the Hilton Garden Inn in downtown Terre Haute, Indiana, from March 30-April 1, 2015. Hosted by Art Spaces - Wabash Valley Outdoor Sculpture Collection, Inc., the charrette followed the July 2014 completion of the Turn to the River Plan, funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts. The project will reconnect the city's downtown with the Wabash River through public art and design.

Several professional artists participated in the planning process, including Stacy Levy who returned to Terre Haute to lead the charrette. John Jackson, Principal with RATIO Architects in Indianapolis, Indiana, co-facilitated the charrette with assistance from Luke Waltz, a senior landscape architecture major from Ball State University in Muncie.

The charrette generated ideas from participating stakeholders and members of the community. These ideas informed a vision for connecting downtown Terre Haute with the City-County Government Center and the Wabash River.

An aerial photograph of a river flowing through a developed area. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. Several text annotations in white are present. A hand-drawn white arrow points from a large parking lot on the right side of the river towards the riverbank. The text annotations highlight urban planning issues related to the river's accessibility and visibility.

**roads and bridges do
not provide views of
the river**

**massive parking
lot challenging for
human activity**

**no gathering
spaces near river**

few chances to see or sense the river

**no continuum
of greenspace**

lack of connectivity between river and city

**high volume
crossing for
pedestrians**

**no downtown public
green space**



Urban Flow

Community Dialogue and Dialogue about Government Campus

Revitalize Central Area of Civic Plaza as Lively Hub

- Central fountain replacement and consideration of where focal point should be
- New central sculpture could relate to Wabash River, e.g. watershed map or flat boat good for seating, or something with ties to history, culture and landscape of Terre Haute
- Sculpture with water feature would need to be appealing even when water off in winter - design could include dual function
- Remove monumental central feature and open up for play and citizen gathering
- Attractive and shaded areas for seating along pathways and in designed spaces
- Low-rise reflecting pool with removable cover that could serve as a stage

- Reflecting pool to “make a wish”
- Pathways reconfigured
- Comfortable spaces to accommodate small and medium groups
- Accommodation for smaller event and pop-up spaces
- Areas designed to appeal to municipal and county employees and visitors to the jail
- Areas/spaces for casual dialogue and interaction with legislators
- Multiple uses for parking lot to be programmed during non-business hours
- Attention to existing historical and cultural features (e.g. County sculptures and Civil War era wall)
- Beautification and increased feelings of safety in surroundings around jail (note: if jail

is moved and building is repurposed then this area could be more extensively studied for design improvements)

Provide Engaging Local Narratives

- Cultural stories in the pavement
- Diversity of population addressed through narratives and art
- Space redesign between City Hall and Ohio Street to feature stories and history of Terre Haute/Vigo County and add color and liveliness there
- First focal point coming east on Ohio Street determined and revitalized
- Educational/Interactive features and art to attract young children, teens, families
- Audible access and appeal

Incorporate Community and Youth Friendly Design

- Interactive and discovery elements for children and families
- Amenities and spaces that encourage civic dialogue and participation
- Artist designed spaces and amenities
- Sites for pop-ups
- Offer shade through trees or giant colorful sails
- Trash cans with devices allowing people to insert information and messages
- Designs sympathetic to symmetry and formal style of time periods of buildings

Enhance Accessibility and Wayfinding that Invites Discovery

- Improvements to crossings for pedestrians coming from the downtown to government campus and on to the river

- Wayfinding and indicators on 3rd street for motorists to know of area and river
- Wayfinding cues throughout downtown leading to the area
- Wayfinding that offers sense of discovery and keeps people interested
- Connecting links between amenities and features within the entire area

Activate the Experience Inside Municipal and County Buildings

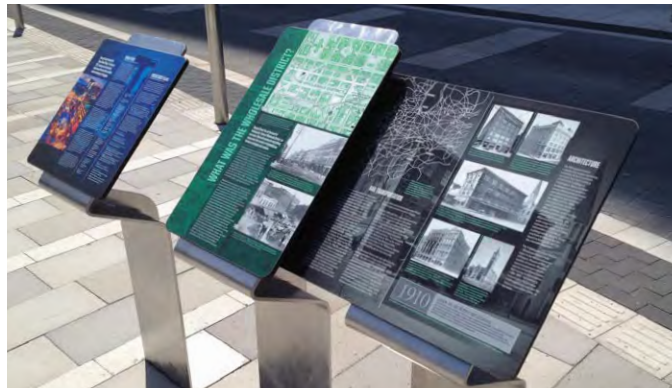
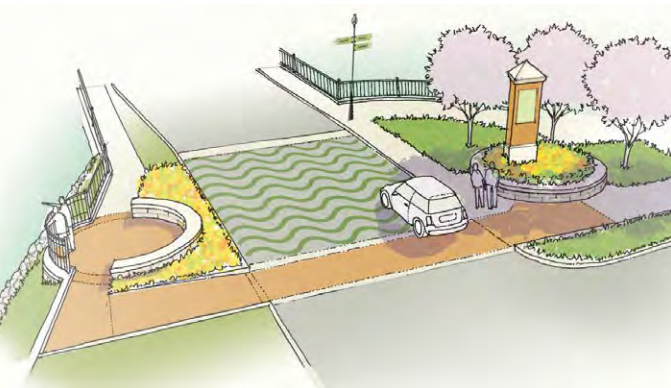
- Visual and textual references indoors to engage with what is going on outside
- Attention paid in outside design and placement to what views will see from inside the building
- Public art and spaces designed to make people comfortable and safe; then they are more likely to stay around and even enter the buildings for non-essential public purposes and events

- Highlight the positive associations people have with the buildings so that they associate them with pleasant and informative experiences

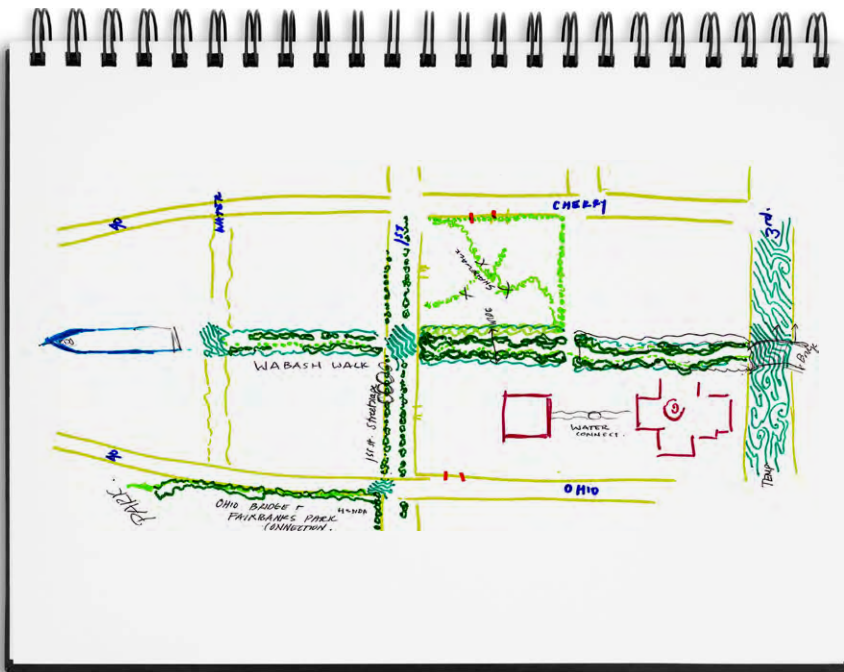
- Features of interest in future ramp access

Provide Environmental Assets and Narratives

- Art thematically linked to the Wabash River
- Art Stones within walkways with unique attributes
- Power stations (including solar powered) for pop-ups, as well as computer and cell phone charging
- Visual echoes of migrating patterns of birds
- Plug-ins for electric cars
- Municipal garden

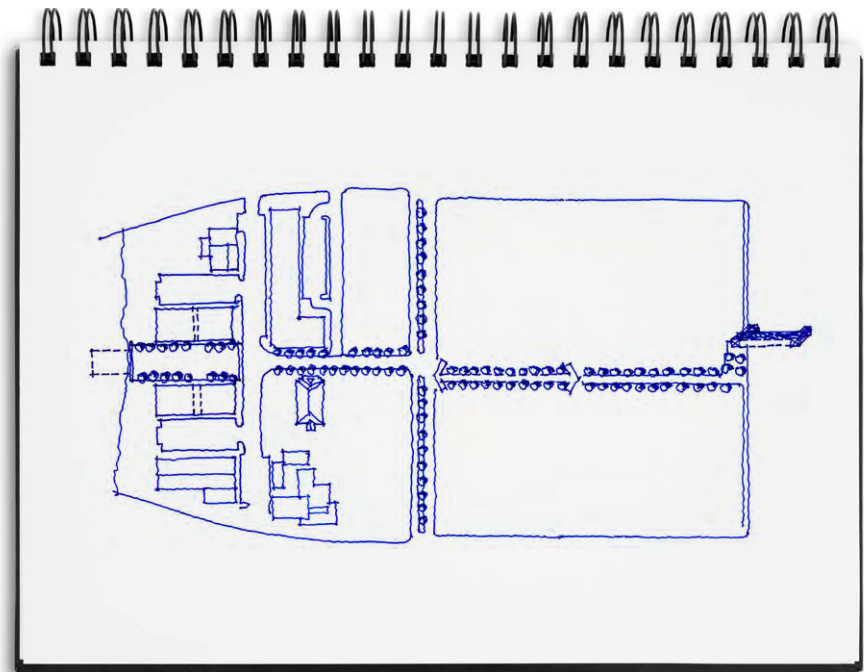


Evolution of Ideas in Charrette and Simple Sketches



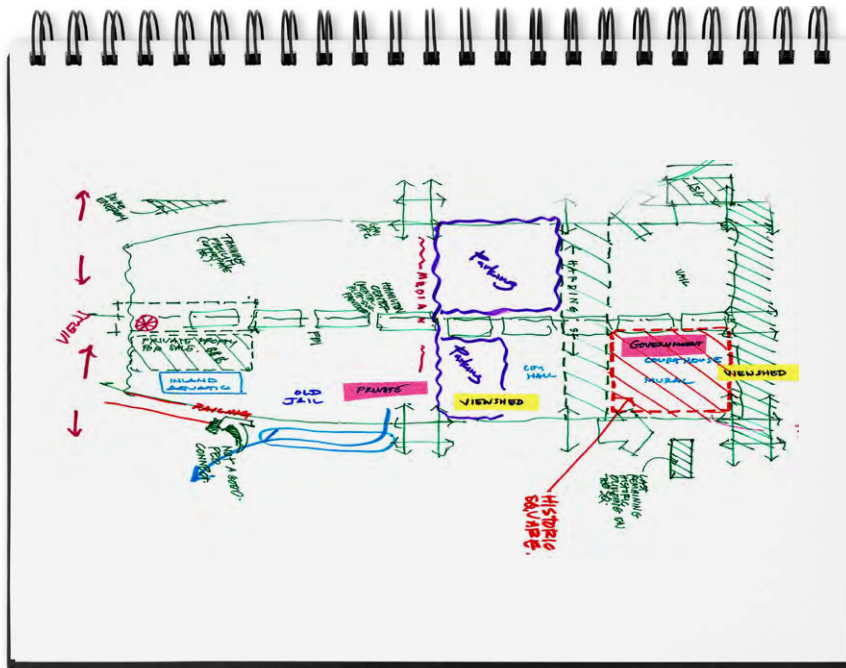
Elements of Passage | 3rd St. to River

In order to reach the river from the heart of Terre Haute's downtown, pedestrians must traverse the city/county government campus, a four-square block area that formed the initial center of the city when it was platted in 1816. Creating a green trajectory through this area, with art elements referencing the river, will lead people safely and clearly to the Wabash.



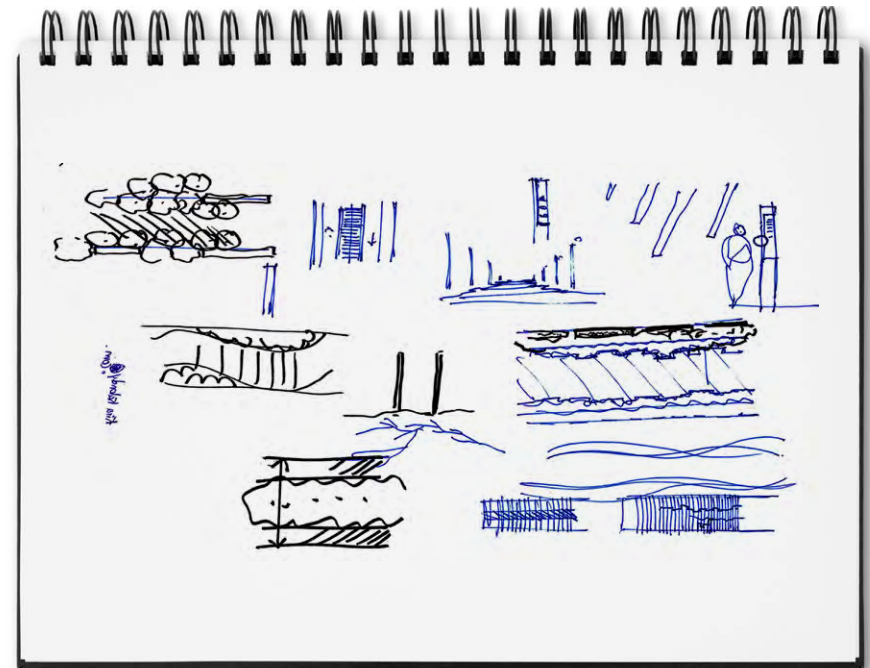
Shade and Vegetation | A shady spine links the city to the river

While maintaining a viewshed of the Vigo County Courthouse (a national registered historic landmark) and Terre Haute City Hall, trees and landscaping will be incorporated to provide visual interest, soften the perimeter of the jail and offer shaded seating, encouraging people to linger. The parking area will capture storm water flow, provide shade and safer passage for pedestrians where the walkway intersects it.



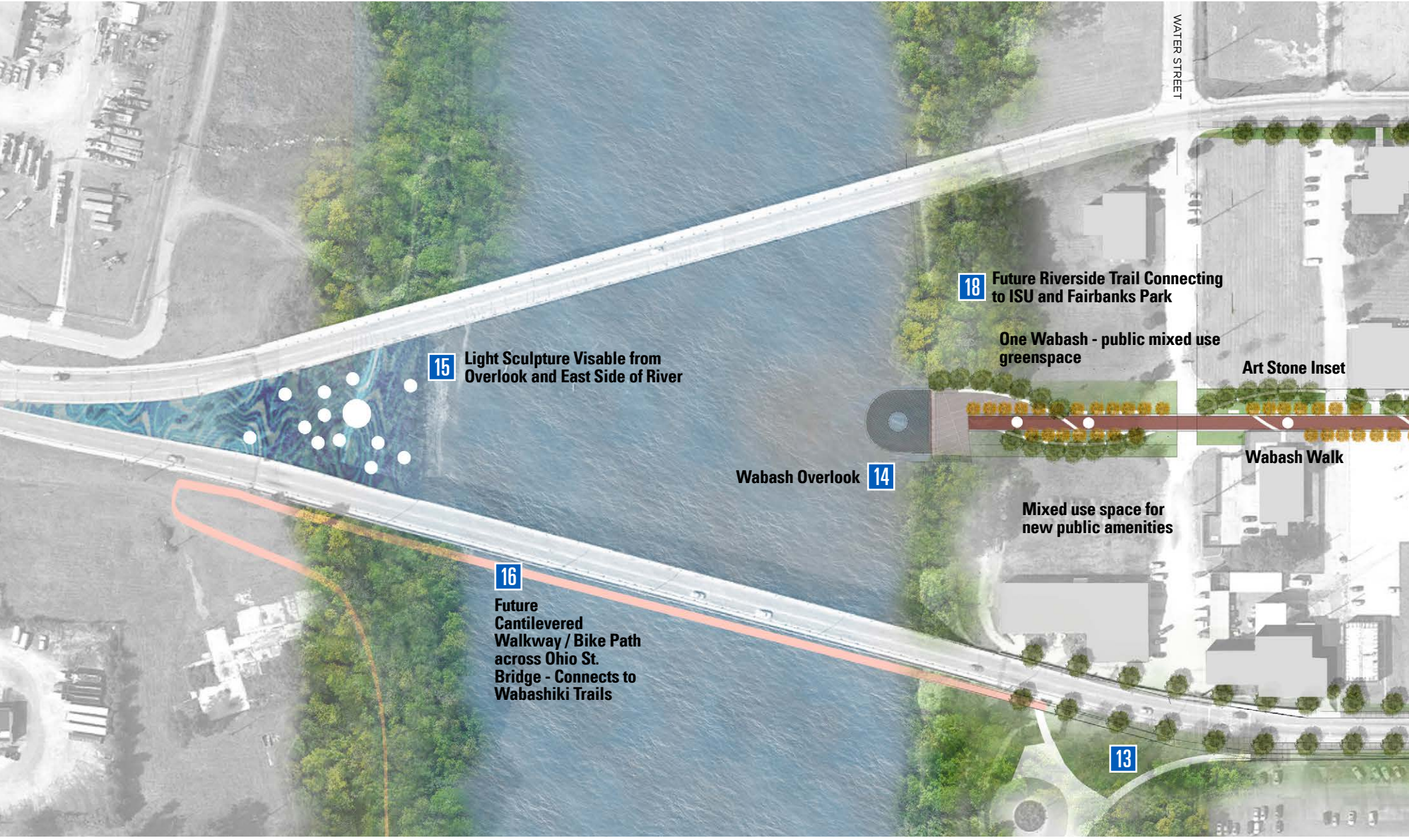
Thinking in Zones | Connecting different parts of the city.

The City/County Government area and One Wabash are pivotal connecting links between the National Road Heritage Trail, the Wabash River, Indiana State University and Terre Haute's downtown. Creating a river zone not only reconnects the city to the river, but, as a unique area with many natural features unavailable downtown, also enhances overall downtown revitalization efforts.



Walking Experience | Path and Landscape possibilities

The existing walking experience through the government campus is ill-defined, unappealing and, through the parking lot, risky. A designed walking promenade with public art, landscaping, seating, shade, and attractive wayfinding will immediately alter the walking experience. By incorporating elements pertaining to the river and the city's cultural history the site becomes a place to revisit and linger.



15 Light Sculpture Visible from Overlook and East Side of River

16 Future Cantilevered Walkway / Bike Path across Ohio St. Bridge - Connects to Wabashiki Trails

Wabash Overlook **14**

18 Future Riverside Trail Connecting to ISU and Fairbanks Park

One Wabash - public mixed use greenspace

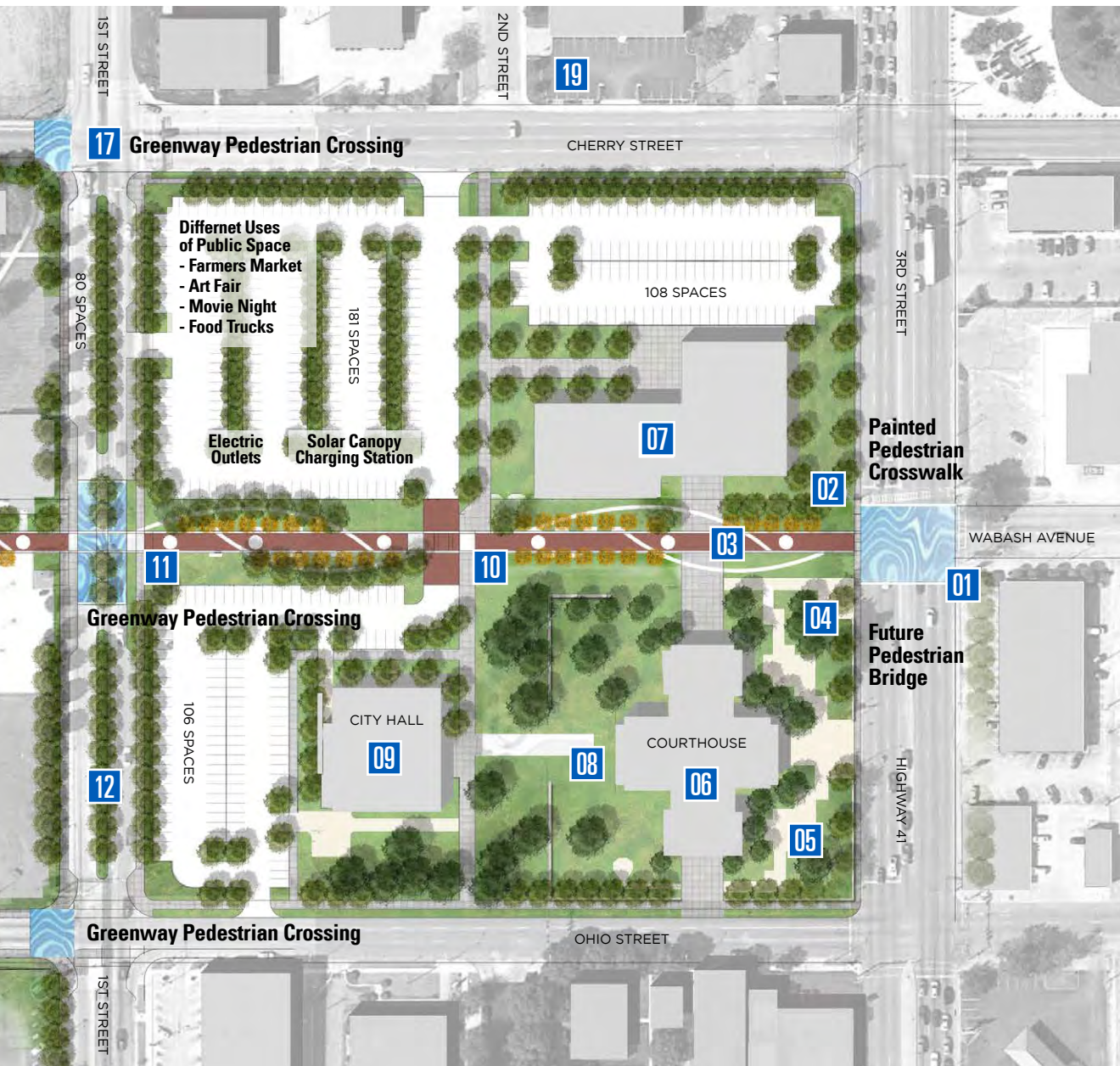
Art Stone Inset

Wabash Walk

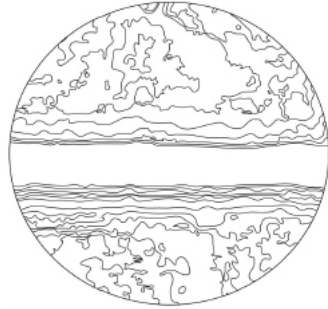
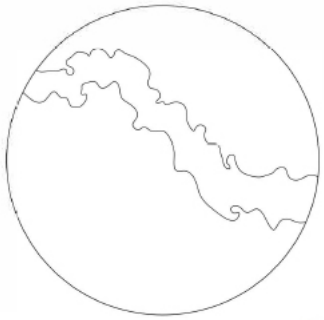
Mixed use space for new public amenities

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WATER STREET



- 01 Highway 41 / 3rd Street crossing
- 02 Pedestrian bridge landing
- 03 "The Wabash Walk"
- 04 Historic memorial sculpture
- 05 Contemporary memorial sculpture
- 06 Vigo County courthouse
- 07 Vigo County jail or future reuse
- 08 Redesigned landscape between City Hall and Courthouse
- 09 City Hall
- 10 Visitor drop-off
- 11 1st Street crossing
- 12 1st Street boulevard
- 13 Connection to Fairbanks Park
- 14 Wabash River Overlook
- 15 Sculptural gateway to city
- 16 Bridge walk to Wabashiki
- 17 Heritage trail crossing
- 18 Future riverside trail connecting to ISU and Fairbanks Park



Wabash Walk

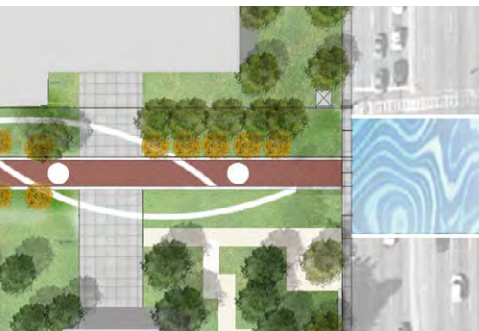
Design Details and Possible Features

The Wabash Walk will replace and widen the existing concrete walkway with attractive materials and art stone inserts (designed elements related to the river and the regional's cultural and natural history). The walkway will be tailored to give pedestrians the sense that they are approaching the river, through its design, public art, and placement of natural features. Including solar powered charging stations, shaded seating, focal points and wayfinding will encourage people to linger.





In order to soften the harsh border of the jail, which many perceive as a barrier to visiting the city hall/courthouse environs, landscaping will be used to soften and brighten the environment, offering a feeling of safety and new points of visual interest.



Redesigned Landscape

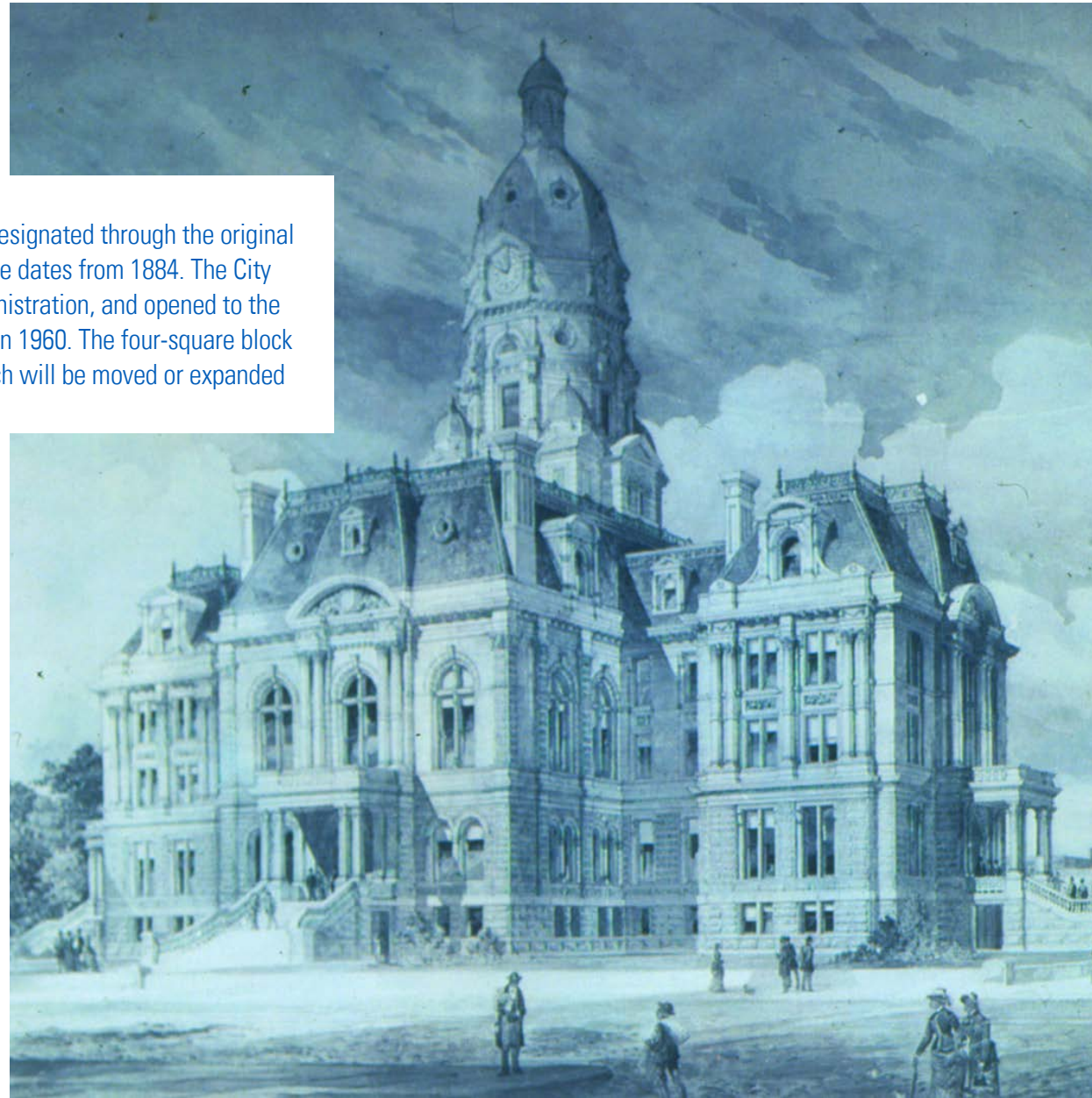
Between City Hall
and Courthouse



This area will be re-designed to serve as an attractive and inviting area for visitors to City Hall and Vigo County Courthouse. Public art, a new water feature, space for small events, shaded seating, coordinated wayfinding and integrated aspects of cultural history will animate the area, and offer an accessible and inclusive governmental plaza to serve the city and county. Designs will interact seamlessly with the walking promenade, the parking lot and existing historical features.

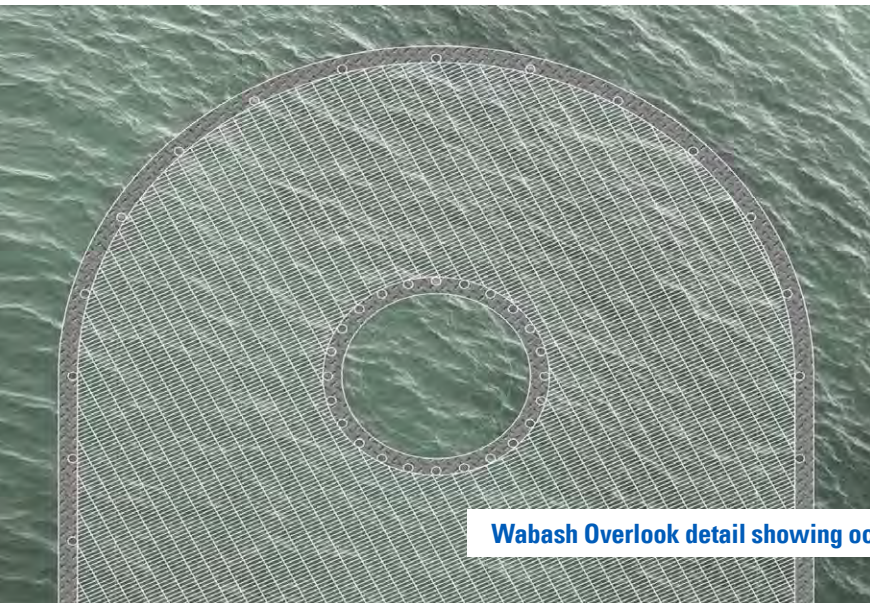


Terre Haute grew around its courthouse square, designated through the original 1816 plat of the city. The current Vigo County Courthouse dates from 1884. The City Hall building was a project of the Works Progress Administration, and opened to the public in 1936. The area was closed to vehicular traffic in 1960. The four-square block area also includes the Vigo County Security Center which will be moved or expanded within the next few years.





Light sculpture visible from Wabash Overlook



Wabash Overlook detail showing ocular river surface viewing window

Overlook

Observation Parapet and Possible Programming

The Wabash River flanks the west side of the city and was a central and celebrated feature throughout Terre Haute's first century. Heavy industry dominated the riverscape during the 20th Century and eventually contamination and new road patterns effectively divided the river from the city. A city owned riverside property, "One Wabash," at the end of Wabash Avenue at the former bridge abutment, offers a prime location that is an easy walk from the current city center.

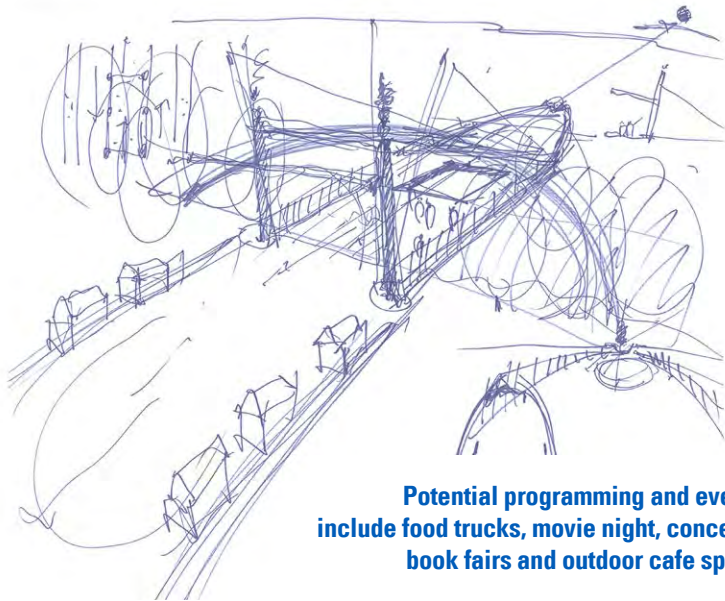
This property is envisioned as a designed mixed-use green space, animated by public art and arts programming. A Wabash overlook will offer a visual experience of the river and a view to the other side, where a new public art work will further animate that view. The project reconnects the city's downtown and the river while recapturing the historical axis of Wabash Avenue, also Historic National Road U.S. 40.



New possibilities for gathering spaces



New views of River across & below



Potential programming and events include food trucks, movie night, concerts, book fairs and outdoor cafe space





suggested phases

1-3 Years:

- Construction of newly designed "Green" Parking Lot
- Design and construction of walking promenade ("Wabash Walk") from 3rd Street to 1st Street.
- Redesign of municipal area between Vigo County Courthouse and City Hall to including public art and cultural stories.
- Design of Wabash Overlook
- River-themed Painted Crosswalks
- Landscaping in parking lot and along Wabash Walk

3-5 Years:

- **Wabash Overlook construction**
- **Construction of Public Mixed Use Green Space ("One Wabash")**
- **Enhanced and shady pedestrian connection from 1st and Ohio Streets to Fairbanks Park**

5-10 Years:

- **Pedestrian Bridge across 3rd Street**
- **1st Street Boulevard**
- **River District with Mixed Use Spaces established**
- **Cantilevered walkway/bike path across Ohio Street Bridge**
- **Development of River Environmental Center and Regional Visitor Center at or near "One Wabash"**
- **Pedestrian/bike path under bridges connecting Indiana State University, One Wabash and Fairbanks Park**



The **Turn to the River Public Design Charrette** was made possible through generous support from the Terre Haute Department of Redevelopment, Indiana State University and the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission.

For more information on Turn to the River: www.wabashvalleyartspaces.com or **812-235-2801**.