



# Chouteau Island Master Plan

*The Confluence Greenway : A Conservation Heritage and Recreation Corridor*



Completed for  
Chouteau Island Coordination Team (CICT)



and the  
St. Louis District Corps of Engineers



In conjunction with  
Southwestern Illinois Resource  
Conservation & Development, Inc.

*December 2002*

**PARSONS** in association with **The Rivers Studio**



# Acknowledgements

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*The continuing efforts to preserve and enhance Chouteau Island will stand out over time as one of this region's most important conservation and recreation efforts, forever preserving and protecting open space for future generations in the heart of our urban community.*

# Executive Summary



A rare and historic opportunity exists in the Saint Louis metropolitan area to return 5,500 acres of land to the general public for conservation and recreation use. This vision to create one of the largest conservation and recreational areas in southwestern Illinois is now underway and includes a diverse mix of outdoor recreation opportunities and expansive restorations of wetlands, woodlands and prairies. Thanks to the assistance and tremendous support

from the local community as well as the region, the successful preparation of the Chouteau Island Master Plan is now complete and presented herein. This cultural, conservation, recreation and interpretive opportunity has been embraced and guided into reality by numerous stakeholders, citizens and the Chouteau Island Coordination Team (CICT). The CICT is a collaboration of local, state and federal agencies and non-profit organizations, with a common interest in the future of Chouteau Island. Formed in 2000 with a vision to make the Chouteau Island project a reality, the CICT has been dedicated to creating a master plan and implementing the long-term management and operation of Chouteau Island.

The area known as Chouteau Island is actually comprised of three islands, Mosenthen, Gabaret and Chouteau, which totals 5,500 acres of land. Chouteau Island is located within the Island District of The Confluence Greenway, a forty-mile open space network currently under development in the region. The Chouteau Island complex is bounded by the Mississippi River to the west and the Chain of Rocks Canal to the east. The island is directly across the canal from the new Lewis and Clark Center, approximately one mile south of the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, and two miles north of the Saint Louis Arch. Almost five times larger than Forest Park in Saint Louis, the island complex is rich in wildlife such as deer, turkey, coyote, dove, quail, songbirds and various species of duck, herons, egrets and much more. There have been regular sightings and nesting of Peregrine Falcons on Chouteau Island, and of course, the American Bald Eagle is frequently observed in the winter months. Excellent fishing exists in the Mississippi River near the Old Chain of Rocks

Bridge. The 10 miles of Mississippi River that borders the Chouteau Island complex to the west is the only natural stretch of river without barge traffic between St. Paul and New Orleans. The Mississippi River here contains some of the cleanest water in the river system as evidenced by a high quality fish community. The island complex is rich in cultural and historical resources as well. Lewis & Clark camped on the southern tip of Gabaret Island, December 11, 1803, the night before establishing their winter camp at Wood River.

Chouteau Island is accessed from Illinois by the Canal Bridge, a vehicular bridge that crosses the Chain of Rocks Canal. It is accessed from Missouri via the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge, a former vehicular bridge associated with historic U.S. Route 66 that was recently renovated and dedicated for bike and pedestrian use only. Presently, this is the only bridge spanning the Mississippi River and the second largest bridge in the United States dedicated to pedestrian and bike traffic only.

Over 60% of the island complex is in public ownership. Presently, the Army Corps of Engineers owns 1,300 acres, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources now owns 2,200 acres. Soon, the City of Madison, Illinois, will own 780 acres. The last project of comparable size was in 1932, when 8,000 acres were dedicated to the public, establishing Pere Marquette State Park, in Grafton, Illinois.

The Master Plan includes a network of trails consisting of 13 miles of multi-use trails that can be used for horse, bicycle or foot; 20 miles of bike/hike trails that will be used for walking and bicycling; over 19 miles of combined horse trails; and 6 miles of nature trails. Chouteau Island connects the Confluence Bikeway in Illinois and the Riverfront Trail in Missouri and is at the crossroads of The Great River Birding Trail, The American Discovery Trail, The Mississippi River Trail, The Mississippi River Flyway and Historic Route 66.

The Master Plan includes a comprehensive list of recommendations. A green viewshed corridor will parallel the alignment of I-270 through Chouteau Island for the purpose of preserving and enhancing the green views and vistas experienced by passing visitors. Other activities in the

Master Plan include primitive and tent camping, hunting, fishing, a boat ramp, dock landings for visitor excursion boats, canoeing, picnicking, birding and a host of other outdoor educational and recreational activities. A visitor center has been proposed that would be a re-creation of the original toll booth on the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge. The \$2.4 million Toll Booth Visitor Center would be located at the Illinois entrance to the bridge and provide meeting rooms, offices, restrooms, concessions, parking, and serve as a trail head to the network of trails on the island.

The Master Plan for Chouteau Island includes 2,455 acres of proposed ecosystem restoration. The ecosystem restoration improvements consist of 670 acres of native grasslands restoration; the conversion of 880 acres of agricultural fields and open space to woodlands; the reestablishment of 3 miles of Chouteau and Gabaret Sloughs; and approximately 430 acres of restored wetlands. These restoration projects will provide enhanced habitat, additional natural water purification, soil stabilization, increase recreation opportunities, create living classrooms, increase interpretive learning, enhance biodiversity and improve views and vistas. Currently, the COE and IDNR are preparing plans to restore 245 acres on Chouteau Island. The restoration will include the establishment of prairie grass and tree plantings that will create higher quality habitat, stabilize soil conditions and improve visual quality on Chouteau Island. This project may be expanded by as much as 500 acres to include other restoration plans within the Master Plan.

The total implementation cost of the Master Plan recommendations is approximately \$26.1 million. Twelve priority projects have been identified as essential to continue the implementation of the vision for Chouteau Island. The priority projects total approximately \$12.5 million and consist of \$3.2 million for trails and roads; \$5.5 million for environmental restoration; and \$3.8 million for visitor orientation and comfort.

The continuing efforts to preserve and enhance Chouteau Island will stand out over time as one of this region's most important conservation and recreation efforts, forever preserving and protecting open space for future generations in the heart of our urban community.



# CHOUTEAU ISLAND MASTER PLAN

- |   |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <p><b>1 Green Viewshed Corridor Area</b><br/>Green Gateway to The Confluence<br/>Greenway<br/>Preservation of Views &amp; Vistas<br/>Restricted Commercial Development<br/>Reforestation<br/>Perennial Zones</p> <p><b>2 Orientation &amp; Interpretive Area</b><br/>Old Chain of Rocks Bridge<br/>Toll Booth Visitor Center<br/>Connection to North Riverfront Trail<br/>Connection to Chouteau Island<br/>Connection to Confluence Bikeway</p> <p><b>3 Environmental Education Area</b><br/>Interpretive Overlook<br/>Environmental Restoration<br/>Trails &amp; Signage<br/>Outdoor Classrooms</p> | <p><b>4 Green Use Area</b><br/>Preservation of Views &amp; Vistas<br/>Open Space Compatible Uses<br/>Land Fill Compatible Uses<br/>Interpretive Overlook</p> <p><b>5 Equestrian Staging Area</b><br/>Open Space<br/>Access &amp; Staging<br/>Open Structures<br/>Primitive Camping</p> <p><b>6 Slough Restoration Area</b><br/>Chouteau Slough<br/>Gabaret Slough<br/>Water Flow From Canal to Slough<br/>Wetland Restoration<br/>Day Use<br/>Interpretive Overlook<br/>Canal Dock</p> | <p><b>7 Wetland &amp; Prairie Mix Area</b><br/>Mesic / Semi-Moist Prairie<br/>Dry Prairie<br/>Wet Prairie / Marsh<br/>Reforestation<br/>Wetland Restoration<br/>Water Flow From Canal to Slough<br/>Bank Stabilization<br/>Levee Stabilization<br/>Hunting<br/>Hike/Bike Across Canal Connection<br/>Interpretive Overlook</p> <p><b>8 South Reforestation Area</b><br/>Hardy Plantings<br/>Interpretive Overlook<br/>Lewis &amp; Clark Campsite</p> <p><b>9 Mosenthein Island Area</b><br/>Preservation<br/>Hunting<br/>Public Access</p> | <p><b>10 River Access Area</b><br/>Interpretive Overlook<br/>Bank Fishing Access<br/>Small Craft Access<br/>Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration</p> <p><b>11 Recreation Area</b><br/>Picnic Areas<br/>Group Camping<br/>Primitive Camping<br/>Day Camping<br/>Open Space<br/>Fishing Pier (pond)<br/>Small Craft Access (pond)<br/>River Dock<br/>Boat Ramp</p> <p><b>12 Habitat Restoration Area</b><br/>Hardy Plantings<br/>Bank Fishing Access<br/>Preservation of Views &amp; Vistas</p> | <p><b>13 North Reforestation Area</b><br/>Hardy Plantings<br/>Canal Sign<br/>Hunting<br/>Interpretive Overlook</p> <p><b>14 Off-Site Commercial Use Area</b><br/>Chouteau Island Gateway<br/>Compatible Theme Development<br/>Trail Connection to Confluence<br/>Bikeway</p> |
|---|--|--|--|--|

- Other**
- (P) Parking
  - (M) Multi-Use Trail
  - (B) Bike/Hike Trail
  - (E) Equestrian Trail
  - (N) Nature Trail

**Vision Statement**

Chouteau, Gabaret and Mosenthein Islands will provide new opportunities for preservation and outdoor recreation through restoration, facility improvements and interpretation of the Island's resources.

From the founding of Saint Louis, the Chouteau Island complex has been recognized as a great river landmark. Lewis and Clark camped on Gabaret; Route 66 and the fabulous 50s passed through Chouteau Island; river navigation hazards required engineered solutions; and the Great Flood demonstrated nature's superiority.

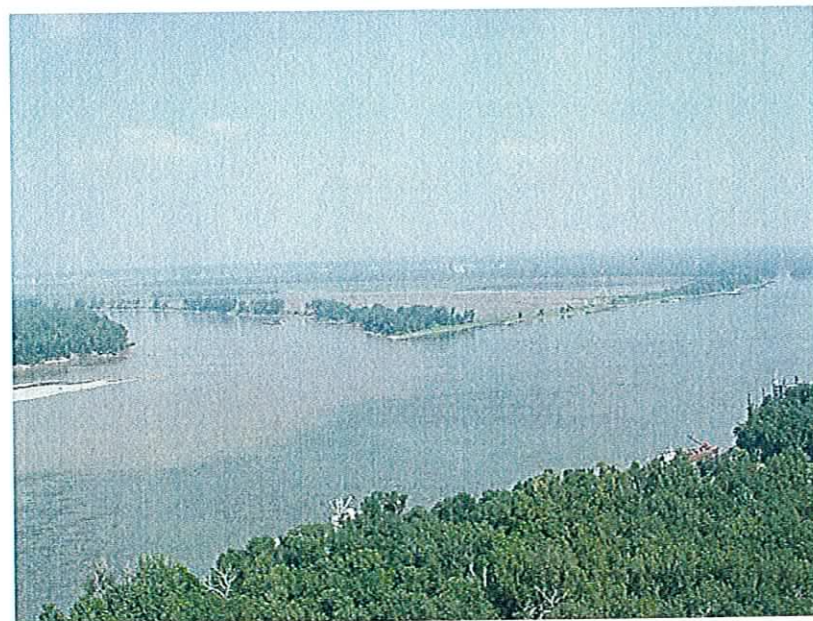
New opportunities for open space preservation, environmental restoration and connecting communities will continue to bring visitors to Chouteau Island. The challenge will be in the coexistence of visitors and wildlife habitat while addressing sustainability and recognizing the cultural and environmental significance of the "place apart" that is Chouteau Island.

## Section I - Introduction

### 1.1 PROJECT CONTEXT

Chouteau Island is located within The Confluence Greenway. The Confluence Greenway is a 200-square mile system of parks, conservation and recreation areas with trails along 40-miles of both banks of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers from Downtown St. Louis/East St. Louis, past Alton to the confluence of the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers and then across to St. Charles. The Confluence Greenway will invite visitors and the community to build a stronger connection with the history and environment of the Great Rivers through multiple interpretive centers and activity zones.

Totalling approximately 5,500 acres, Chouteau Island is within the Island District of The Confluence Greenway Master Plan and because of its location and proximity to Interstate 270, is considered to be a primary gateway to The Confluence Greenway.

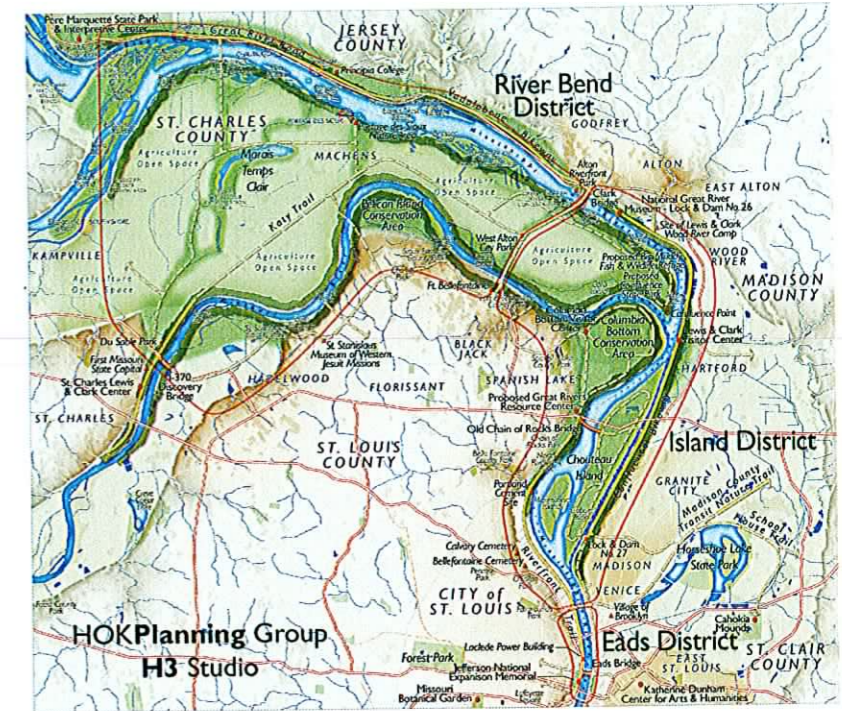


Confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers

### 1.2 MASTER PLAN HISTORY

In the summer of 2000, a local coordination team was formed to help with planning, implementation and governance for a nature and recreation area located on Chouteau Island in Madison, Illinois. This group included the City of Madison, Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), the Trust for Public Land, the National Park Service (the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program), Waste Management, Inc., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Southwestern Illinois Resource Conservation & Development, Inc. (SWIRC&D), American Bottom Ecosystem Partnership, and The Confluence Greenway Project. Many entities of this group formed what later became the Chouteau Island Coordination Team (CICT). They quickly organized and developed a strategy to prepare a plan for Chouteau Island. Initial efforts included numerous site tours, public relations events, public input sessions, a design charrette and identification of revenue sources for the planning process.

In October 2001, the St. Louis District of the Army Corps of Engineers negotiated a professional services contract with Parsons, in association with The Rivers Studio, to continue the planning process for Chouteau Island. The planning process began on December 19, 2001, with a workshop strategy session with the CICT. The planning process concluded with a presentation of the Master Plan to the CICT and the public on October 23, 2002. During the time in-between, an enormous amount of coordination, data collection, and public input went into the formulation of the Master Plan.



The Confluence Greenway

### 1.3 CHOUTEAU ISLAND COORDINATION TEAM

The CICT is a collaboration of state and federal agencies and non-profit organizations, with the common interest in the future of Chouteau Island. The CICT Master Plan participants include:

- Southwestern Illinois Resource Conservation & Development, Inc. (SWIRC&D)
- National Park Service (NPS)
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)
- St. Louis District, US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- The Trust For Public Land (TPL)
- City of Madison, IL
- Confluence Greenway
- Trailnet, Inc.
- Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA)



Three of these organizations, the City of Madison, IDNR and the Corps of Engineers, currently own land on Chouteau Island.

This informal partnership, comprised of the organizational entities listed above, will take on a more formal character after signing a Memorandum of Agreement to provide future planning and management of the island complex.

The purpose of the proposed Memorandum of Agreement reads as follows:

*"This Memorandum of Agreement is made and entered into by the signatories below who represent the Chouteau Island Coordination Team (CICT), for the purpose of establishing a partnership agreement to plan, develop and provide long-term management of the area known as Chouteau Island."*

The members of the CICT have determined that it would be to their mutual benefit to cooperate their efforts, pool their resources and form a partnership team called the Chouteau Island Coordination Team, for the purpose of establishing a plan and developing the area known as Chouteau Island for recreation and conservation for the benefit of public interest.

In an effort to carry out the goals and objectives stated in the agreement, the CICT will support and implement the recommendations, findings and objectives contained in the Master Plan and agree to revise it, as needed, throughout time with available agency funds and technical assistance.

Since their inception in 2000, the CICT's achievements to date include:

Approximately \$5 million raised and committed to the conservation of Chouteau Island

- Two grants from the Grand Victoria Foundation for project manager position
- Corps of Engineers Planning Assistance to States Program, funding for the Master Plan
- IDNR and SWIRC#D matching funds for this Master Plan
- Corps of Engineers initiated a study for Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration on Chouteau Island.
- IDNR, The Trust for Public Land, McKnight Foundation and SWIRC#D funded land acquisition

Over 60% of Chouteau Island in Public Ownership

- IDNR has purchased a total of 2,220 acres of land
- Corps of Engineers owns over 1,300 acres of land

Received official designation from the National Park Service as a certified site of the Lewis & Clark Historic Trail

- Lewis & Clark camped on the southern end of Gabaret Island, December 11, 1803, the night before establishing their winter camp at Wood River, Illinois

Substantial Increase in Public Commitment, Interest and Participation

- 2001 Chouteau Island Clean-Up - 400 people - 164,000 pounds of trash
- 2002 Chouteau Island Clean-Up - 200 people - 3 million pounds of trash (an extended period of time compared to 2001)
- Eagle Days at the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge - 1130 elementary students from Illinois and Missouri attended and 6500 people attended the weekend program



*North Tip of Chouteau Island*



*The CICT will Support and Implement the Plan*



#### 1.4 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Chouteau Island complex is made up of three islands in the Mississippi River, Mosenthein Island, Gabaret Island and Chouteau Island. This area, commonly referred to as Chouteau Island, is located one mile south of the confluence of the Missouri River and approximately two miles north of the St. Louis Arch. The islands are bound by the Mississippi River to the West and the Chain of Rocks Canal to the East. The total land acreage is approximately 5,500 acres which is roughly 4.5 times larger than Forest Park at 1,200 acres.

Mosenthein Island is approximately 1,000 acres and lies in the middle of the Mississippi River. It is undeveloped and accessible only by boat. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources purchased this island in November 2001. It is now all publicly owned.

Gabaret Island is approximately 1,300 acres and lies directly adjacent to Chouteau Island, separated by Gabaret Slough. It is approximately 70% agricultural land and 30% wooded. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources purchased approximately 1,000 acres on Gabaret Island in November 2001. The US Army Corps of Engineers owns approximately 300 acres. Gabaret Island is 100% publicly owned.

Chouteau Island is approximately 3,200 acres. Several private landowners, IDNR, USACE, Waste Management Corporation, Illinois American Water Company and the City of Madison, IL, own land on the island. Property ownership consists of 40% private ownership; 34% state and federal government; 24% City of Madison, Illinois (includes Waste Management); and 2% Illinois American Water Company.

Over 60% of the Chouteau Island complex is currently owned by state and federal agencies.

Several key projects within The Confluence Greenway that directly relate to Chouteau Island are:

- The Great Rivers Resource Center - In addition to an interpretive center of physical, cultural, economic and historical contributions of the two rivers, this center is proposed as a welcome center and information hub to the confluence. Prominently located on I-270, this project would serve as a gathering connection to Columbia Bottom to the north, and North Riverfront Park and Maline Creek trail systems to the south. This center will also serve as the gateway to Chouteau Island, with easy pedestrian access via the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge and vehicular access via I-270 and Chain of Rocks Canal Bridge.
- Trail Loop Development - Extending the Riverfront Trail north from Chouteau Island, connecting to the Katy Trail, Alton and The Confluence Bikeway. Extending the Confluence Bikeway south from Chouteau Island to East St. Louis, to St. Louis, tying back to the North Riverfront Trail, back to Chouteau Island.
- Downtown St. Louis to Chain of Rocks Bridge Water Taxi Connection - This would connect visitors to St. Louis and citizens to the resources offered on Chouteau Island.
- Old Chain of Rocks Bridge - This restored bridge is now one of the longest pedestrian bridges in the U.S., connecting visitors from Missouri to Chouteau Island across the Mississippi River.
- The National Great Rivers Museum at Melvin Price Locks and Dam.
- The Lewis & Clark Visitor Center - open December 2002.



View of Bridge Complex Looking North



View of Locks 27 Looking North



- Chouteau Island is at the crossroads of The American Discovery Trail, The Mississippi River Trail and part of Historic Route 66.
- Chouteau Island will be a part of the Great River Birding Trail - a trail corridor parallel to both sides of the Mississippi River from the headwaters down 1,366 miles to the confluence with the Ohio River.

Chouteau Island is accessible by using the Canal Bridge on the Illinois side and by the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge to the Missouri side. The Old Chain of Rocks Bridge is restricted to pedestrian and bicycle use only.

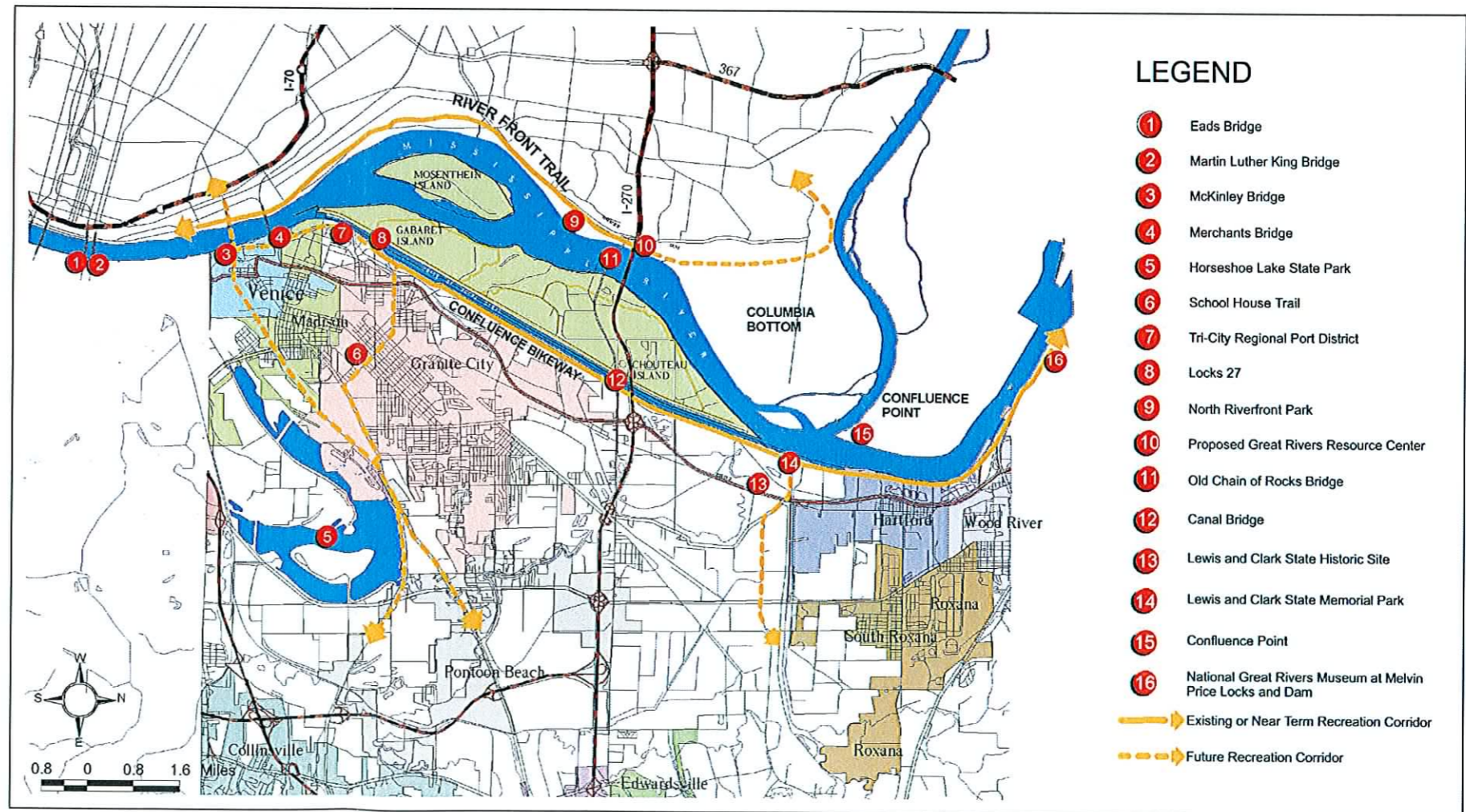
Chouteau and Gabaret Islands' area averages approximately one mile wide, narrowing in width near the ends, and is 7.5 miles long, running the entire length of the Chain of Rocks Canal.

The effort to return nearly 5,500 acres of land to the general public for recreation and conservation is historic in the southwestern Illinois region. This is the largest such effort since the creation of Pere Marquette State Park in 1932.

Appendix A contains additional, detailed information regarding project context collected during the Master Plan process.

### 1.5 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Master Plan is to provide the CICT with a long term vision for the Chouteau Island complex. The Master Plan provides clear direction for the ultimate usage of the project area. With private property ownership continuing in the future, the existing land uses, as well as future land uses of Chouteau Island, may not be consistent with the long term Master Plan vision. Despite the potential for non-compatible land uses, the CICT should continue to promote the vision statement, goals, design principles and design concepts contained in the Master Plan as opportunities arise.



## Section 2 - Planning Framework

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

A key step in the planning process was the development of a vision statement, planning goals and planning principles to guide the planning team's efforts. These important statements were developed through coordination and input from the CICT, as well as through key stakeholders and public input. The CICT discussed the content of these points at various meetings from December 2001, to May 2002. Participants at the March 2002 public meeting commented on the content of the vision statement, planning goals and planning principles in a small group workshop format. Each group shared their compilation of comments with the other groups.

Throughout the planning process, the CICT sought input to the Master Plan formulation. Over twenty one-on-one interviews were conducted with key stakeholders and the CICT sponsored four public input sessions designed to engage the public in the planning process. Each session yielded direction for the CICT in preparing the Master Plan to best serve the interest of the metropolitan area, the region and visitors from all over the world.

Comments from the interviews and public input sessions are included in Appendix B.



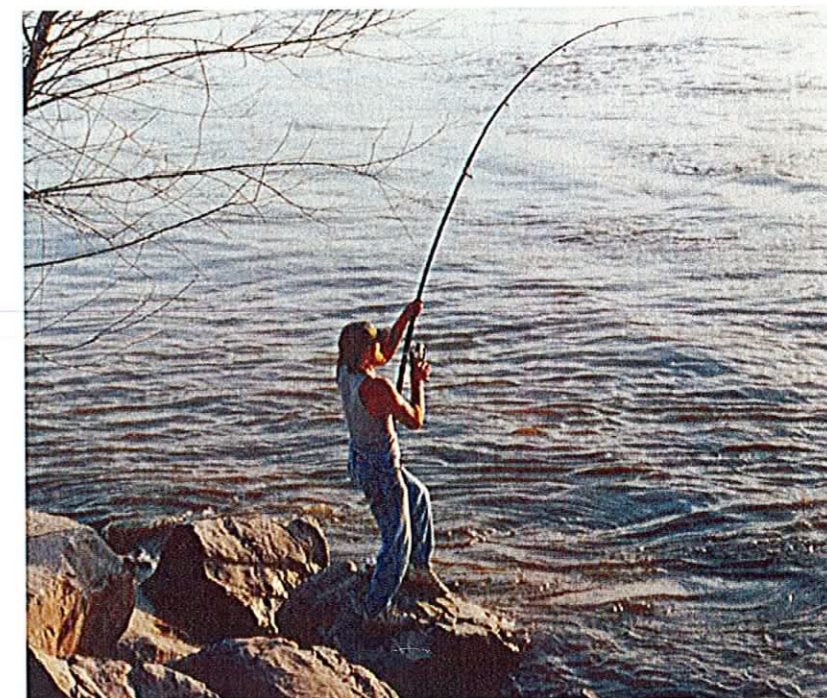
*Public Input was a Key Component of the Planning Process*

### 2.2 VISION STATEMENT

Chouteau, Gabaret and Mosenthein Islands will provide new opportunities for outdoor recreation through preservation, restoration, facility improvements and interpretation of the islands' resources.

Since the founding of Saint Louis, the Chouteau Island complex has been recognized as a great river landmark. Lewis and Clark camped on Gabaret; Route 66 and the fabulous 50s passed through Chouteau Island; river navigation hazards required engineered solutions; and the Great Flood demonstrated nature's superiority.

New opportunities for open space preservation, environmental restoration and connecting communities will continue to bring visitors to Chouteau Island. The challenge will be in the coexistence of visitors and wildlife habitat while addressing sustainability and recognizing the cultural and environmental significance of the "place apart" that is Chouteau Island.



*Outdoor Recreation on Chouteau Island*

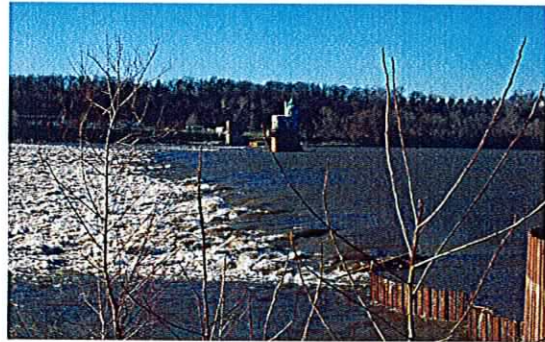


*July 30, 1993 - The Great Flood - Aerial Photo Showing "High Ground"*

## 2.3 PLANNING GOALS

The following goals have guided the planning process and will provide future guidance for policy decisions concerning the implementation of the Master Plan concepts. The goals were established in conjunction with the CICT and refined through a public input process. The planning goals include:

1. Capitalize on Chouteau Island's hydro-geological features, environmental significance, habitat expanse and cultural and historic resources.



2. Provide educational and interpretive opportunities that emphasize the site's current and potential resources.



3. Improve hiking, biking, equestrian, recreational and water-based access to and within Chouteau Island.



4. Protect, restore, improve and expand animal, plant and river habitat to enhance biodiversity.



5. Emphasize passive recreational uses and provide suitable support services, security and infrastructure for site visitors.
6. Ensure synergy with and promote linkages to adjacent park jurisdictions, open spaces, amenities, neighborhoods and communities.
7. Encourage an environment that is beneficial to wildlife, interpretation, education and recreation.

8. Preserve and enhance Chouteau Island's role as a green gateway.



9. Provide for a diversity of uses and users while balancing competing interests and habitat requirements.



10. Preserve and restore the island complex in a manner that is environmentally and economically sustainable.
11. Minimize the impact of uses and users on the site's resources.
12. In pursuit of these project goals, property acquisition on Chouteau Island should occur between willing buyer and seller, minimizing the use of eminent domain.

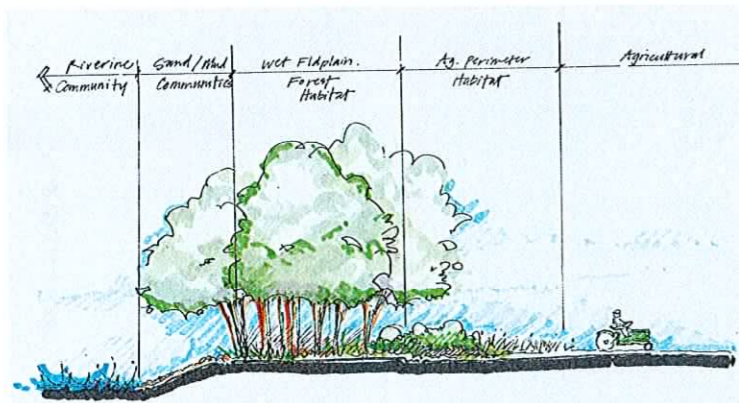
# Chouteau Island

The Confluence Greenway : A Conservation Heritage and Recreation Corridor

## 2.4 PLANNING PRINCIPLES

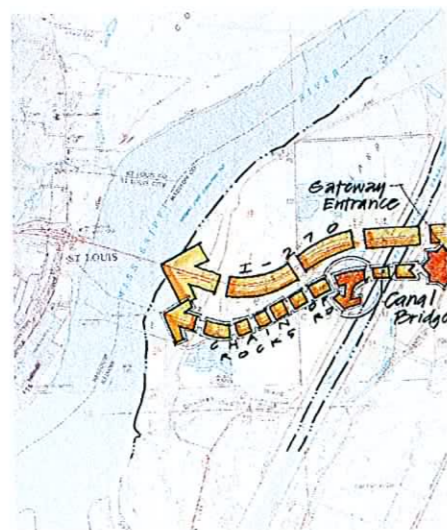
The planning principles represent various themes echoed at workshops, charrettes, public meetings and key stakeholder interviews conducted from September 2000 to March 2002. The planning principles were formulated as tools to guide the planning process and preparation of the master plan.

1. Restore, enhance and expand naturally occurring riverine and terrestrial habitats.



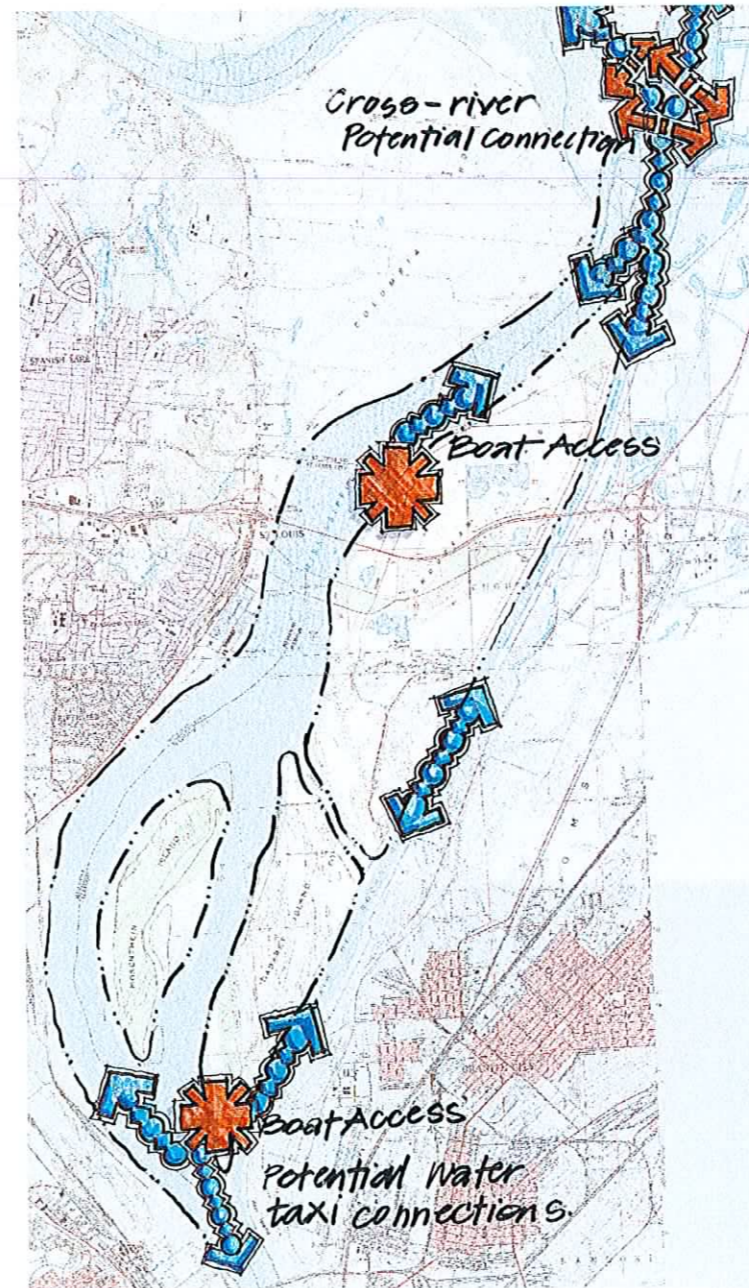
Enhance Habitats

2. Provide vehicular access to Chouteau Island only from the historic "Route 66" Canal Bridge and restrict vehicular access to defined corridors.



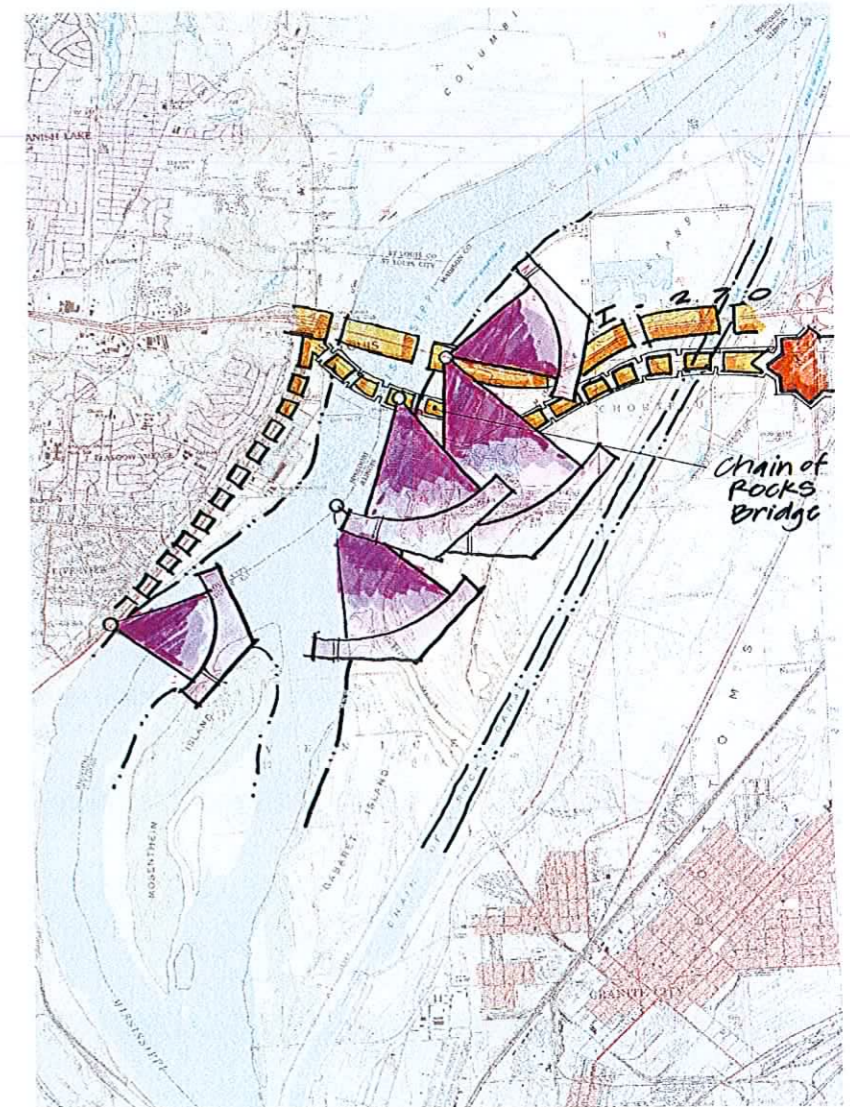
Restricted Access

3. Improve and expand non-vehicular links to and from Chouteau Island.



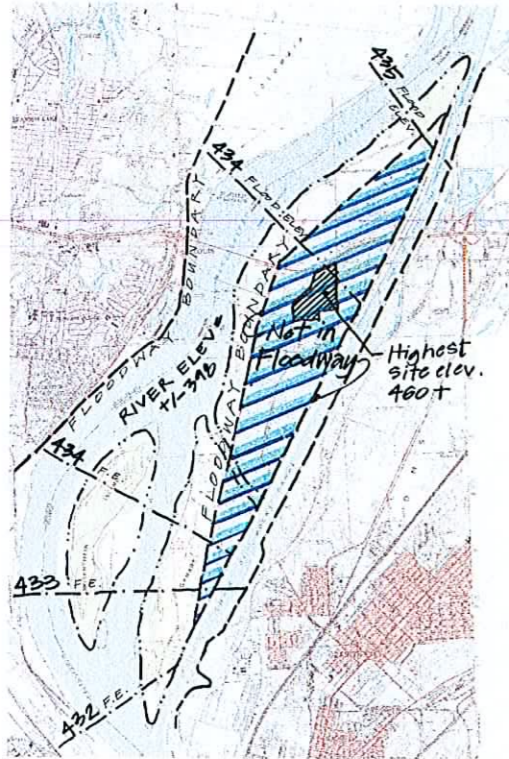
Improve Linkages Potential

4. Retain the green viewshed to Chouteau Island from the Illinois shoreline, St. Louis Riverfront Trail, Old Chain of Rocks Bridge, Mississippi River, and Interstate 270.



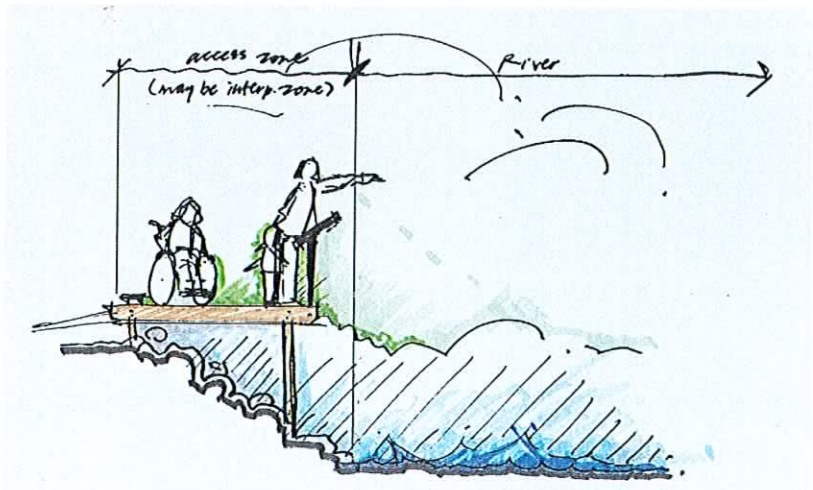
Retain Green Viewsheds

5. Minimize the amount of fill, placement of structures and activities within the entire island complex to practical use and flood plain compatible enhancements.



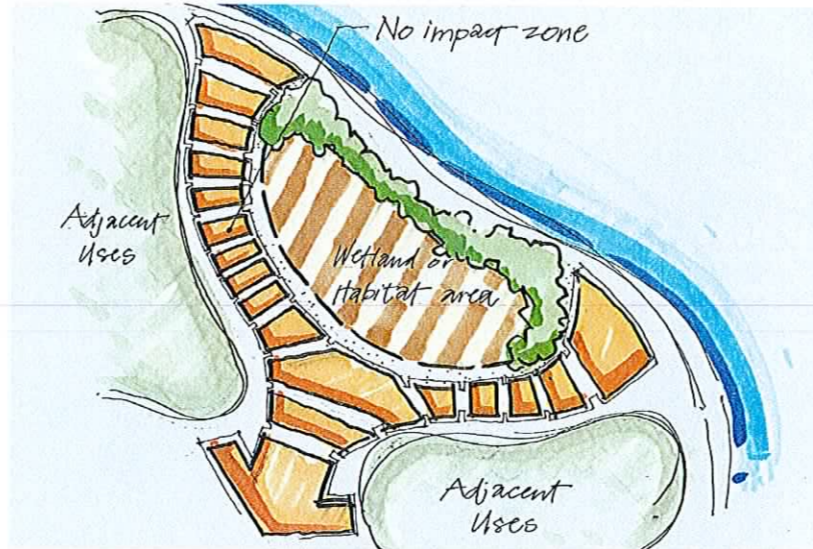
Flood Plain Compatible Uses

6. Improve and expand non-vehicular access to the river's edge.



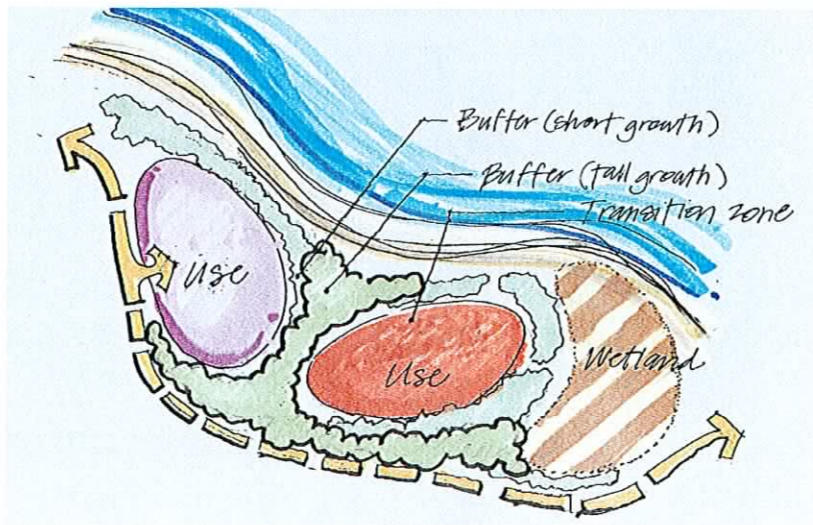
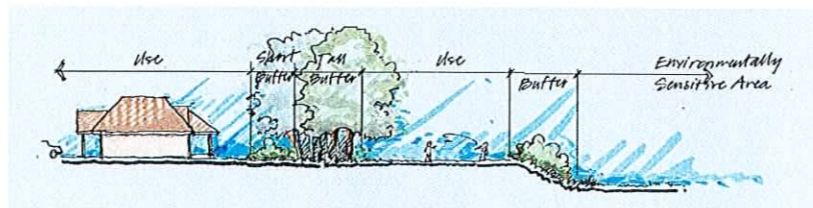
Improved Non-Vehicular Access

7. Avoid habitat impacts.



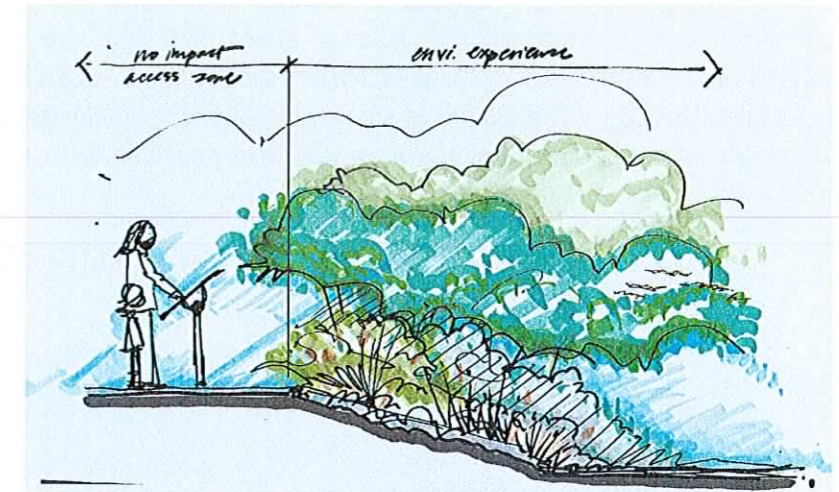
No Impact Zones

8. Buffer differing land uses and environmentally sensitive areas.



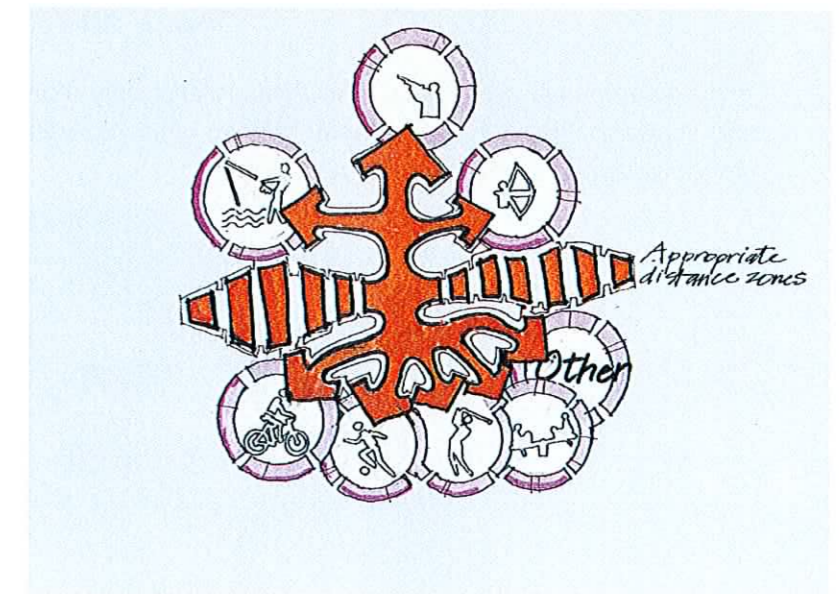
Buffers to Separate Uses

9. Provide environmentally sensitive visitor access to a variety of common and complex natural resource experiences.



Access to Natural Resources

10. Create opportunities for consumptive and non-consumptive recreational uses.



Variety of Uses

## 2.5 RESOURCE EVALUATION

The planning process encompassed an analysis of regional and site studies, the development of a vision statement, planning goals and planning principles, with the input of the CICT, as well as an analysis of the following resource categories:

- Soils and Geology
- Flood Character
- Wetlands
- Plant and Animal Habitat
- Land Ownership
- Zoning
- Land Cover
- Land Use
- Utility Information
- Access and Circulation
- Cultural Resources
- Views and Visual Quality

A more detailed analysis of the implications of each resource category on master plan uses is included in Appendix C.

In addition to these analyses, numerous reviews by stakeholders, including the general public, the project management team and the CICT, were conducted to continue the consensus building process started by the CICT. Using this interaction, as well as the vision statement, goals, planning principles and general data analysis, the planning team developed various program opportunities for use in developing the Master Plan.

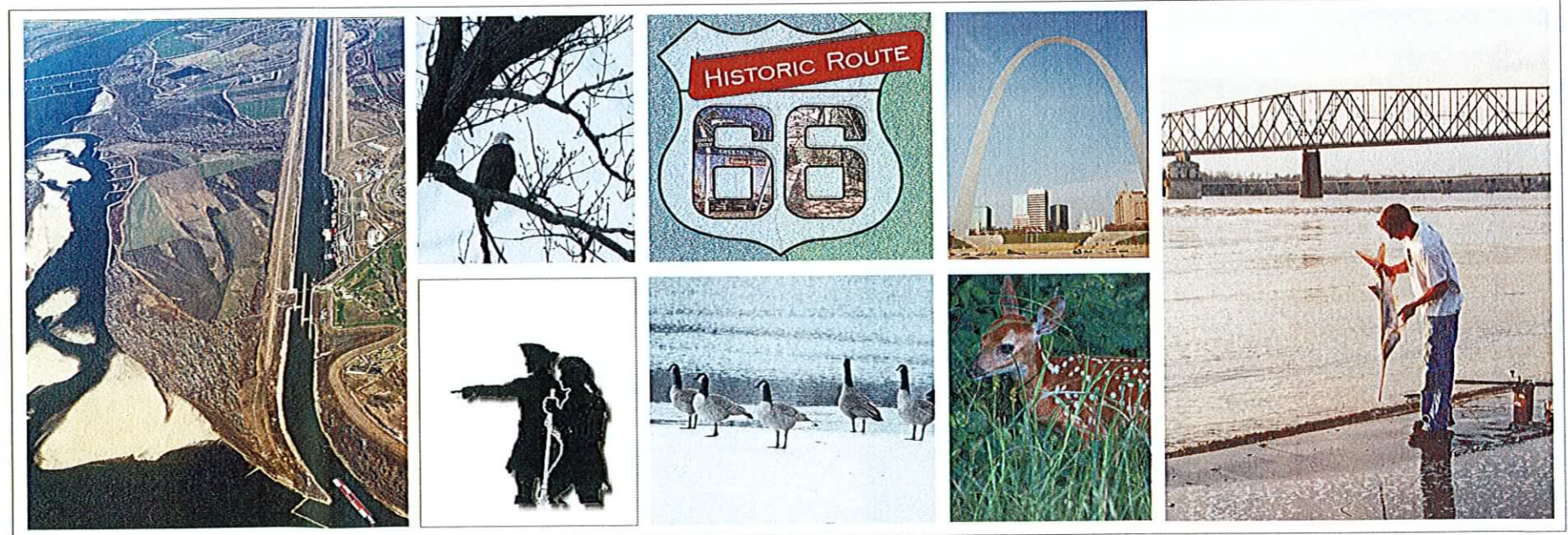
## 2.6 RESOURCE KEY FACTS

In addition to the technical resource data collected during the planning process, a number of key facts emerged that have further promoted the uniqueness of Chouteau Island, confirming its distinction as a place apart. As with other technical data, the planning team utilized the following key facts in preparing the Master Plan:

- Chouteau Island will forever preserve open space in the heart of the urban region for future generations.
- Chouteau Island is located within The Confluence Greenway, a forty-mile open space network currently under implementation in the region.
- A rare and historic opportunity exists at Chouteau Island to return 5,500 acres of land to the general public.
- Over 60% of the island complex is currently in public ownership. The City of Madison, Illinois, owns 780 acres (includes Waste Management property), the COE owns 1,300 acres and IDNR owns 2,220 acres of land on Chouteau Island.
- Over seventy years have passed since a recreation and conservation project of this size has been

undertaken in the southwestern Illinois region. The last project of comparable size was in 1932, when 8,000 acres were dedicated to the public, establishing Pere Marquette State Park, in Grafton, IL.

- Chouteau Island is 4.5 times larger than Forest Park in St. Louis.
- Chouteau Island is directly across the Chain of Rocks Canal from the new Lewis and Clark State Historic Site.
- Chouteau Island is directly across the Mississippi River from the proposed Great Rivers Resource Center.
- Chouteau Island is directly downstream from the National Great Rivers Museum at Melvin Price Locks and Dam.
- Lewis & Clark camped on the southern tip of Gabaret Island, December 11, 1803, the night before establishing their winter camp at Wood River, Illinois.
- The island is approximately one mile south of the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers.
- Chouteau Island is two miles north of the St. Louis Arch.
- Chouteau Island is rich in wildlife.
- There have been regular sightings and nesting of Peregrine Falcons on Chouteau Island.
- There have been regular sightings of the American Bald Eagle during winter months on Chouteau Island.



Resource Key Facts

- Excellent fishing exists in the Mississippi River near the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge.
- The 10 miles of Mississippi River that borders the Chouteau Island Complex to the west, is the only natural stretch of river without barge traffic between St. Paul and New Orleans.
- The Mississippi River at Chouteau Island contains some of the cleanest water in the river system and is a very high quality fish habitat.
- The Chouteau Island complex contains one of the largest sand bars on the Mississippi River.
- Old Chain of Rocks Bridge, a former vehicular bridge with a toll booth, is associated with historic U.S. Route 66.
- Old Chain of Rocks Bridge has been renovated and dedicated for bike and pedestrian use only.
- Old Chain of Rocks Bridge is presently the only bridge spanning the Mississippi River, and the second largest bridge in the United States, that is dedicated to pedestrian and bike traffic only.
- Chouteau Island connects the Confluence Bikeway in Illinois and the Riverfront Trail in Missouri.
- Chouteau Island is at the crossroads of The Great River Birding Trail, The American Discovery Trail, The Mississippi River Trail, The Mississippi River Flyway and historic Route 66.



## 2.7 RESOURCE SUITABILITY

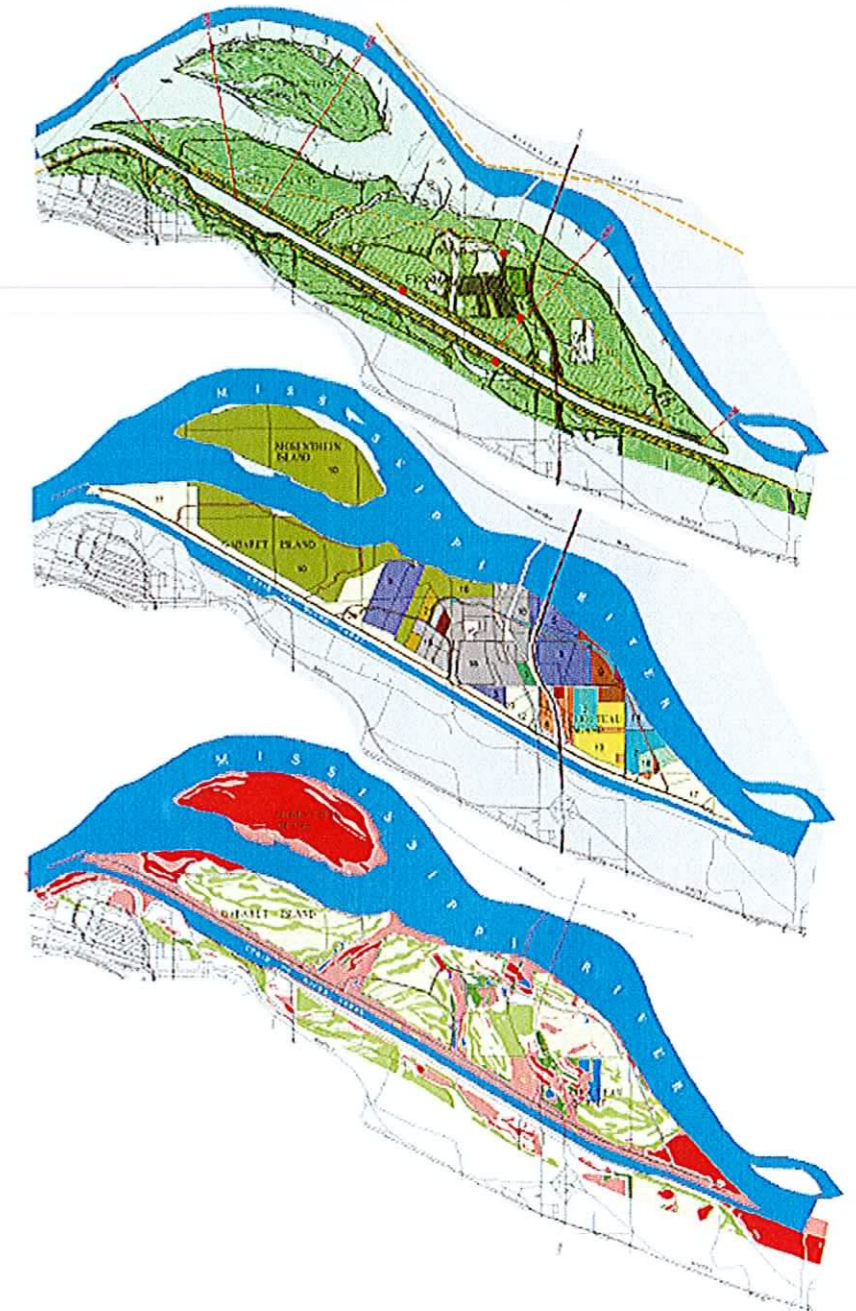
Once program opportunities were established, the suitability process began. Resources were judged as suitable or unsuitable (high and low suitability) for five program opportunities:

- Habitat and Natural Resource Enhancement
- Resource Interpretation
- Passive Recreation (later combined with active recreation)
- Active Recreation (later combined with passive recreation)
- Development

Suitability maps were then “overlaid” on top of one another to reveal composite suitability for each program opportunity. For example, this process tells the planning team what site soils, wetland areas, land cover areas and other resource categories are suitable for a specific program opportunity. A more detailed description of the resource suitability process is included in Appendix D.

The development of a program statement closely followed the resource analysis and resource suitability process. The ultimate goal was to derive more detailed uses (a program statement) based on a consensus of uses within each of the program opportunities. CICT member input led to the final program statement described in Section 3.

Once the resource evaluation and resource suitability tasks were complete and the program statement perfected, the planning team prepared multiple concept diagrams leading to formulation of the Master Plan.



*Graphic Illustration of Resource Evaluation and Suitability Maps*



## Section 3 - Master Plan

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The Master Plan has evolved in the context of a long-term vision for Chouteau Island. Conditions, events or plans beyond the purview of the CICT, or contrary to the vision statement, goals and design principles, need to be considered as existing conditions or proposed improvements that are non-compatible uses. Recommendations, policies and strategies should be formulated by the CICT as to the short-term impacts to the Master Plan and address the long term mitigation of these non-compatible land uses or activities as they develop over time.

The current and future private land holdings represent significant opportunities in achieving the vision, goals and design principles formulated by the CICT, the public and agency representatives. The Master Plan for the Chouteau Island complex addresses the future land use of these private holdings. Similar to other regional planning efforts, public, private and multi-jurisdictional land is often included in the Master Plan.

The Master Plan contains planning recommendations for privately held property so that future efforts by the CICT can be directed toward achieving the long term vision for Chouteau Island.



The Chouteau Island Master Plan

### 3.2 PROGRAM STATEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Stakeholder interaction (interviews, workshops and CICT meetings), vision, goals, planning principles and general knowledge of the site combined to allow the planning team to create several program opportunities:

- Habitat and Natural Resource Enhancement
- Resource Interpretation
- Passive Recreation
- Active Recreation
- Development
- Other Individual Recommendations

Each program opportunity was expanded in definition through the identification of program use elements. Each program

use element represents a potential Master Plan feature evaluated against:

- Responses from stakeholder interviews
- Planning goals and principles
- Public meeting input

In addition, the CICT members evaluated the program use elements and their responses were averaged as high, medium or low support. The results provided from the program use element evaluation formed the basis of the program statement that was included in the concept diagrams and Master Plan.

Appendix E contains the detailed evaluation of the program opportunity options and program use elements.



### 3.3 PROGRAM STATEMENT

The program statement listed below represents a consensus of opinion achieved through an extensive process of stakeholder input, public comment, resource analysis and CICT guidance. The program statement is a narrative listing of uses deemed suitable for potential inclusion in the Master Plan. The program statement was compiled prior to formulation of the Master Plan and is not intended to be updated, or a summary of the Master Plan recommendations. The program statement is not prioritized in order of importance and was used to formulate the land use recommendations contained in each concept plan and the Master Plan.

#### Habitat and Natural Resource Enhancement Program Uses

- Seasonal Wetlands
- Off-Channel Habitat Areas
- Wetland Prairie
- Opportunistic Wetland
- Reforestation Area (Mixed Hardwoods)
- Natural Regeneration Area
- Arboretum
- Bird Sanctuary
- Butterfly Habitat Area
- Support Facilities

#### Resource Interpretation Program Uses

- Signage and Kiosks
- Overlook Structures
- Outdoor Classrooms
- Boardwalk
- Resource Related Trails (Hiking, Bird Watching, Walking)
- Lock and Dam Interpretation
- Demonstration Areas
- Support Facilities

#### Recreation Program Uses

- Golf Course and Support Facilities
- Picnic Area
- Informal Open Field Recreation
- Primitive Camping
- Fishing/Ice Fishing
- Bow Hunting
- Shotgun Hunting
- Trapping
- Facility Related or Active Trails
  - Bicycle
  - Equestrian
  - Walking/Running/Fitness
- Support Facilities

#### Development Program Uses

- Interpretive/Visitors Center
  - Agricultural
  - Plant & Animal Habitat
  - Environmental and Sustainable Systems
  - Culture and History
- Farming Operations
- Native Perennial/Shrub Nursery
- Water Taxi Facilities
- Accessible Fishing Docks/Piers with Parking for Cars (not Trailers)
- Natural/Restored Canalside Promenade
- Bicycle Rental Facility
- Vehicular Site Shuttle System

#### Other Program Uses

- Colorful Native Perennial Flowers at Viewshed Areas
- Small Concession Building with Food Supplies, Restrooms, Etc.
- Off-Site Commercial Development



*Outdoor Classrooms*



*Bird Sanctuary*

### 3.4 PROGRAM STATEMENT DECISIONS

Some elements originally suggested by individuals, interest groups or organizations are not in the program statement and thus do not appear in the Master Plan. Likewise, there may be features identified in the Master Plan that never appeared within the program statement.

The composition of the plan is dictated by the sites' resources. In order to be in the plan, an element has to benefit, support or enhance the sites' resources. Likewise, the sites' resources may dictate the necessity of a particular element to be included within the plan, even if not listed in the program statement.

One program statement use that has been a constant discussion with the CICT is the issue of All Terrain Vehicles (ATV's) on Chouteau Island. The Master Plan does not include provisions, areas or trails for ATV's. The exclusion of this activity on Chouteau Island is based on a number of factors.

The programming process described above combined input from key stakeholder interviews, CICT members' opinions, agencies' policies, and the general public, to arrive at a recommendation that ATV's on Chouteau Island rank low as a program statement use and thus, ATV's were not included in the program statement. During the planning process, based on site data collected, no resource benefits emerged to favorably support ATV use on Chouteau Island.

#### 3.4.1 Available Land Area

Due to the site's resources, property ownership policies (IDNR and USACE), and landfill erosion limitations, a large percentage of the land area of Chouteau Island is not suitable for ATV use under any circumstances. The only areas within the island complex that do not violate the above three parameters are Areas 11 and 12, as identified on the Concept D diagram and subsequent Master Plan.

Even though these areas may be suitable (from the above perspective), there are higher and better land uses for these two areas. Area 11 is best suited for recreation and Area 12 is best suited for habitat restoration. Neither of these areas' proposed uses are compatible with ATV use, even if the ATV use is confined to a remote corner of either site. ATV's will provide continued disruption of passive activity, and will negatively impact the wildlife habitat as well. Locating an ATV area in close proximity to areas designated for recreation, day use, camping and riverfront activities will create use conflicts.

#### 3.4.2 Control/Confinement

If ATV's are allowed on Chouteau Island, even if restricted to a specific site, there is a high level of probability, given past experience, that ATV's will go beyond any pre-established boundaries. This exposure to sensitive riverbank environments, sand bars, wooded areas and aquatic habitat will lead to severe environmental degradation.

#### 3.4.3 Economic Enforcement

The cost in labor and materials to enforce the confinement of ATV's to specific areas will become a negative economic impact to the City of Madison, IDNR and the USACE. Potential economic impact to private property owners from ATV's are erosion, depleted vegetation, water quality reduction and habitat destruction. In addition, potential liability costs created by ATV operations may ultimately be assessed to individuals, agencies or governing entities associated with the management of Chouteau Island.

#### 3.4.4 Environmental Impacts

The additional noise created by ATV's will interrupt wildlife migration and feeding patterns. Human participation in day use activities will be lessened; hunting and fishing activities will also experience a decline in quality.

The visual environment will also decline. Acres of ATV land use will look different than that of an open meadow, woodlands or picnic area. ATV's tend to replace vegetation with exposed soil.

#### 3.4.5 Conclusion

The vision statement, goals, design principles and site resources do not support ATV's on Chouteau Island.

#### 3.4.6 Alternate Site Locations

Efforts will continue by public and private organizations to locate an alternate site(s) with appropriate resources, size characteristics and location (in or near Madison County) for ATV activity.

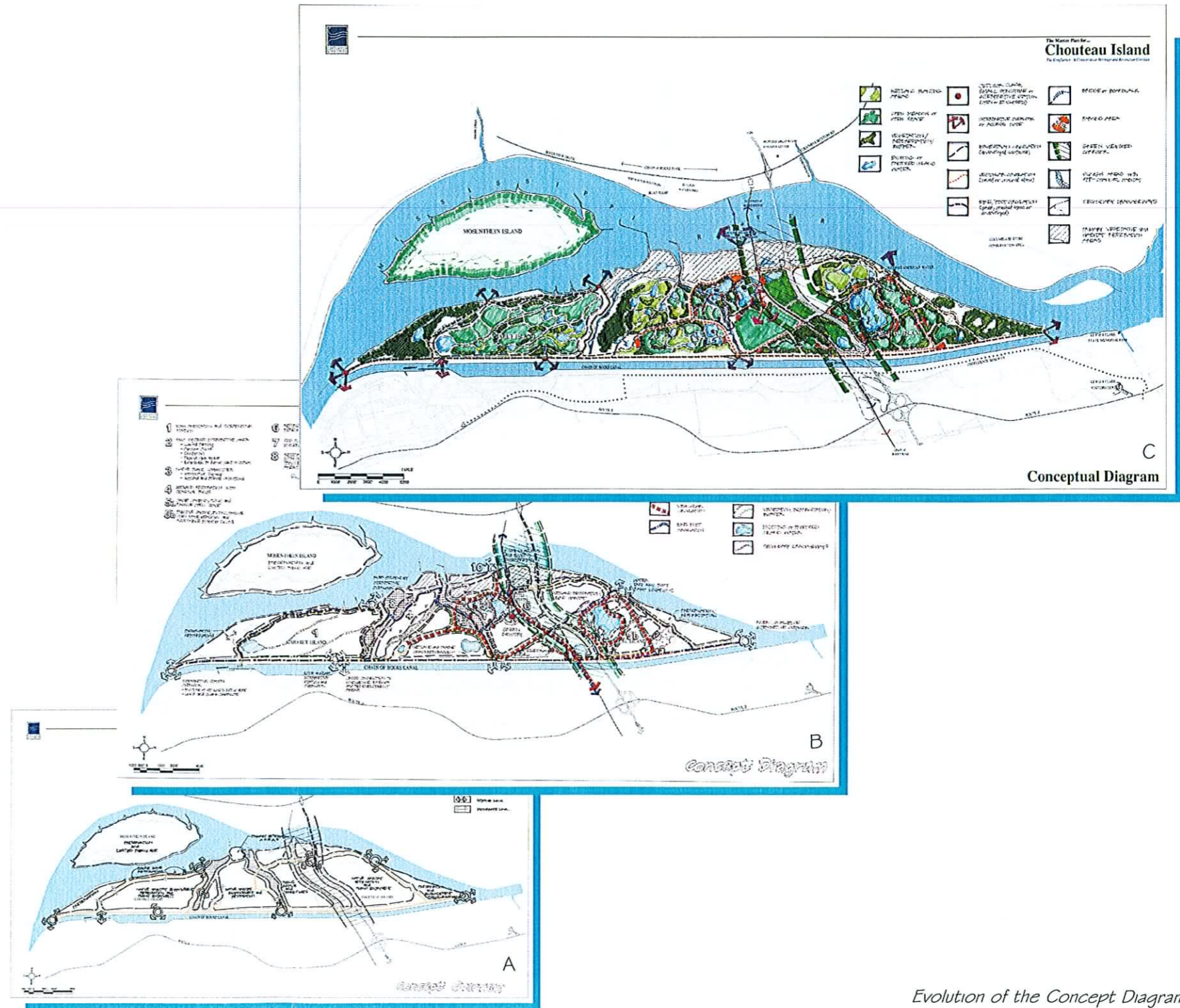
### 3.5 CONCEPT DIAGRAM FORMULATION

After the program statement was reviewed and weighed against interview comments, goals, vision statement and planning principles, the planning team began the conceptual planning process. Aerial photography and topographic base plan information was overlaid with the composite suitability maps to yield areas where program use elements could take place. Two preliminary concepts (Concepts A and B) were sketched utilizing suitable areas. These broad concepts were refined, taking into account comments from the CICT. The result of this refinement was one concept presented to the CICT in a small group workshop format. The comments made by CICT members were tabulated and incorporated into a more detailed concept (Concept C).

Concept Diagram C was presented to CICT members prior to and in preparation for the June 22nd public workshop. Comments from the CICT meeting, such as the importance of integrating the proposed toll booth visitor center and the minimization of the duplication of interpretation taking place elsewhere were taken into account and incorporated into Concept Diagram D. This plan established a simplified basis from which to form a more specific master plan. This concept diagram established multiple use areas of the site, circulation patterns for equestrian, bicycle/pedestrian and vehicles as well as public access and interpretive nodes. The composite suitability process, program statement, existing and future planned land uses and levees define the various use areas.

The planning team completed a detailed draft Master Plan and Final Master Plan, showing circulation routes and land uses based on the elements contained in the concept diagrams and program statement.

Appendix E contains full illustrations of the Concept Diagrams.



Evolution of the Concept Diagram



### 3.6 MASTER PLAN DESCRIPTION

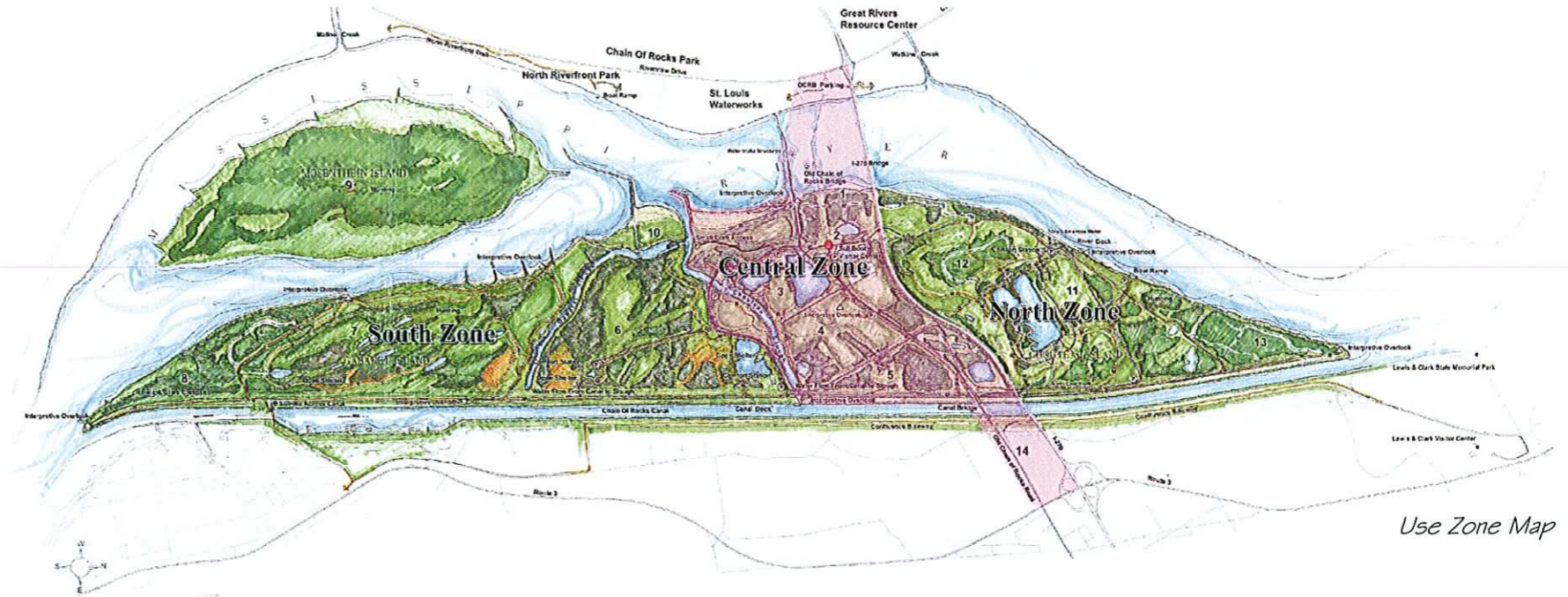
The synthesis of the program statement, stakeholder input, site resource analysis and concept diagram evolution is the basis of the recommendations contained within the Master Plan for Chouteau Island. In order to better describe the size, scale and diversity of the concepts contained in the Master Plan, the plan descriptions are divided into four presentations:

- Use Zones
- Circulation Systems
- Area Descriptions
- Property Ownership

The following illustrations and descriptions of the Master Plan content support the vision statement, goals and principles established for Chouteau Island.

#### 3.6.1 Use Zones

The Master Plan is divided into three use zones: Central, South and North. The definition of each use zone is based on physical features, proposed uses, activity levels, functional relationships and the sites' resources. The Central Zone is the center of Chouteau Island. The zone will provide visitor orientation, comfort features, and educational/interpretive opportunities, and will offer access to a multitude of trails and the Mississippi River's edge. The South Zone will contain restored habitat and visitor access to hunting, as well as spectacular viewing sites of natural and urban scenes, while offering extraordinary and diverse trails for biking/hiking and equestrian use. The North Zone will provide a variety of recreation opportunities, river access, habitat restoration and interconnected biking/hiking and equestrian trails.



*Use Zone Map*

#### The Central Zone

The Central Zone will be the arrival area for visitors coming to Chouteau Island. Many visitors will arrive by car via I-270 to Route 3 and the Chain of Rocks Canal Bridge. Others will choose to cross the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge on foot or on bicycle from the west, connecting to the proposed Great Rivers Resource Center that will overlook Chouteau Island on the west side of the Mississippi River. Bike/hike trail access from the east will be via the Canal Bridge, from the Confluence Bikeway. Other visitors will be able to access the island via the proposed canal dock at the eastern end of Chouteau Slough on the Chain of Rocks Canal.

The Central Zone will be an inviting and educational initial gateway to the island where visitors may rest or begin their visit to other parts of the island on foot, bicycle or vehicle. Primary visitor orientation will occur at the Toll Booth Visitor Center, modeled after the original Old Chain of Rocks Bridge toll booth. The Toll Booth will be located at the eastern

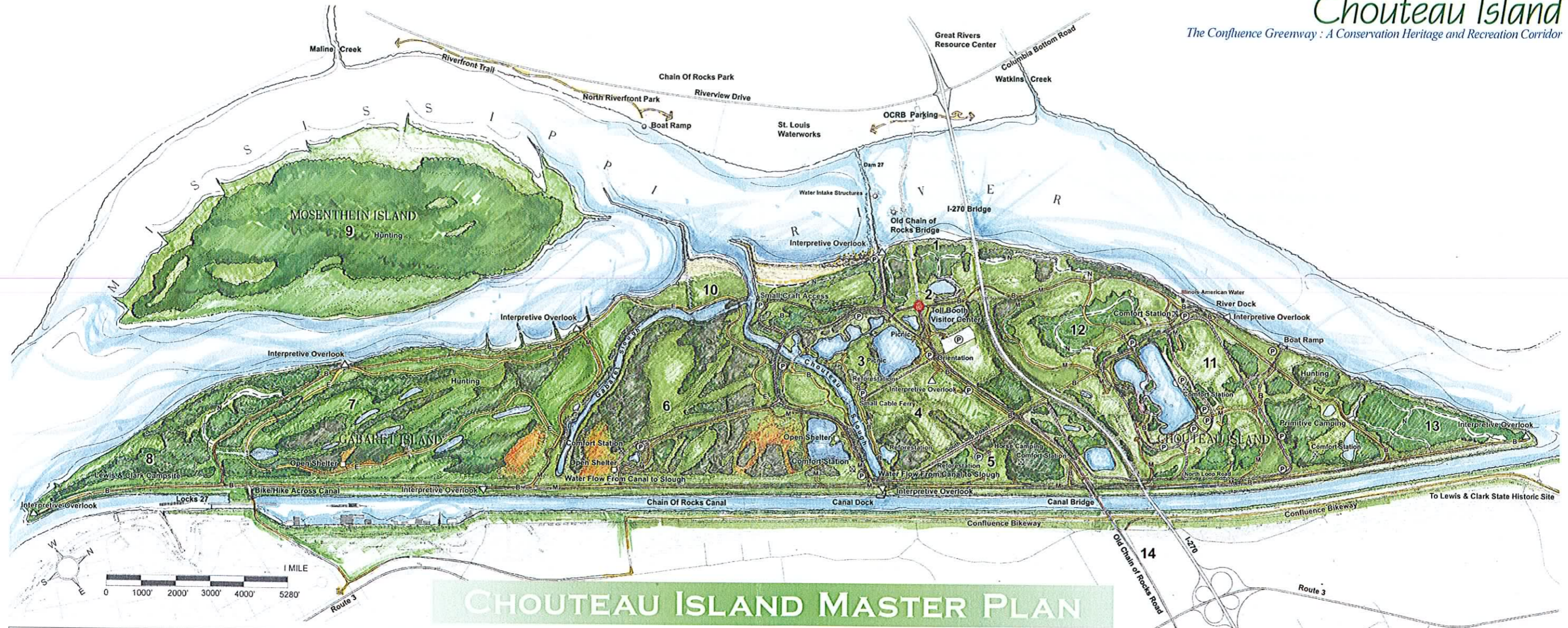
end of the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge and will also offer a comfort station, interpretive center, classrooms, concessions and much more.

Once passenger vehicles are across the Canal Bridge, visitors will be on the proposed South Loop Road, which provides direct access to the Toll Booth Visitor Center.

The Central Zone contains a portion of the Green Viewshed Corridor which is intended to preserve and enhance existing wetlands, forests and open space, thus enhancing the visual character of Chouteau Island to visitors passing through or stopping to explore. The Viewshed Corridor extends beyond the limits of I-270 and Old Chain of Rocks Road in an effort to preserve the existing "green character" and exclude non-compatible uses, such as billboards and commercial development within this highly susceptible corridor.

# Chouteau Island

The Confluence Greenway : A Conservation Heritage and Recreation Corridor



## CHOUTEAU ISLAND MASTER PLAN

<p><b>1 Green Viewshed Corridor Area</b> Green Gateway to The Confluence Greenway Preservation of Views &amp; Vistas Restricted Commercial Development Reforestation Perennial Zones</p>	<p><b>4 Green Use Area</b> Preservation of Views &amp; Vistas Open Space Compatible Uses Land Fill Compatible Uses Interpretive Overlook</p>	<p><b>7 Wetland &amp; Prairie Mix Area</b> Mesic / Semi-Moist Prairie Dry Prairie Wet Prairie / Marsh Reforestation Wetland Restoration Water Flow From Canal to Slough Bank Stabilization Levee Stabilization Hunting Hike/Bike Across Canal Connection Interpretive Overlook</p>	<p><b>10 River Access Area</b> Interpretive Overlook Bank Fishing Access Small Craft Access Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration</p>	<p><b>13 North Reforestation Area</b> Hardy Plantings Canal Sign Hunting Interpretive Overlook</p>	<p><b>Vision Statement</b></p> <p>Chouteau, Gabaret and Mosenthein Islands will provide new opportunities for preservation and outdoor recreation through restoration, facility improvements and interpretation of the Island's resources.</p> <p>From the founding of Saint Louis, the Chouteau Island complex has been recognized as a great river landmark. Lewis and Clark camped on Gabaret; Route 66 and the fabulous 50s passed through Chouteau Island; river navigation hazards required engineered solutions; and the Great Flood demonstrated nature's superiority.</p> <p>New opportunities for open space preservation, environmental restoration and connecting communities will continue to bring visitors to Chouteau Island. The challenge will be in the coexistence of visitors and wildlife habitat while addressing sustainability and recognizing the cultural and environmental significance of the "place apart" that is Chouteau Island.</p>
<p><b>2 Orientation &amp; Interpretive Area</b> Old Chain of Rocks Bridge Toll Booth Visitor Center Connection to North Riverfront Trail Connection to Chouteau Island Connection to Confluence Bikeway</p>	<p><b>5 Equestrian Staging Area</b> Open Space Access &amp; Staging Open Structures Primitive Camping</p>	<p><b>8 South Reforestation Area</b> Hardy Plantings Interpretive Overlook Lewis &amp; Clark Campsite</p>	<p><b>11 Recreation Area</b> Picnic Areas Group Camping Primitive Camping Day Camping Open Space Fishing Pier (pond) Small Craft Access (pond) River Dock Boat Ramp</p>	<p><b>14 Off-Site Commercial Use Area</b> Chouteau Island Gateway Compatible Theme Development Trail Connection to Confluence Bikeway</p>	
<p><b>3 Environmental Education Area</b> Interpretive Overlook Environmental Restoration Trails &amp; Signage Outdoor Classrooms</p>	<p><b>6 Slough Restoration Area</b> Chouteau Slough Gabaret Slough Water Flow From Canal to Slough Wetland Restoration Day Use Interpretive Overlook Canal Dock</p>	<p><b>9 Mosenthein Island Area</b> Preservation Hunting Public Access</p>	<p><b>12 Habitat Restoration Area</b> Hardy Plantings Bank Fishing Access Preservation of Views &amp; Vistas</p>	<p><b>Other</b> P Parking M Multi-Use Trail B Bike/Hike Trail E Equestrian Trail N Nature Trail</p>	



From the Toll Booth Area, visitors may take the proposed South Loop Road to a number of different and varied activity areas (identified by name and number on the Master Plan). The Environmental Education Area (Area 3) contains island-specific interpretive outdoor classrooms. The Green Use Area (Area 4), the newer landfill area, has an interpretive overlook at the site's high point. Land use guidelines have been suggested to encourage development compatible to other uses on Chouteau Island.

Another route from the Toll Booth orientation point will be down to the River Access Area (Area 10). This route will be accessible either by foot via a proposed nature trail or by vehicle from the proposed South Loop Road. At the riverside location, visitors will enjoy fishing, an interpretation station describing the Chain of Rocks Dam, the two water intake structures, or gain access to a riverside nature trail through a habitat restoration area.

Visitors to the islands who want to ride their horses will be directed to the proposed Equestrian Staging Area (Area 5) located immediately off the proposed South Loop Road at the intersection with Old Chain of Rocks Road. At this location, they will be able to park their vehicles and horse trailers and visit the island on one of two main loop trails; one loop through the North Zone and another through the South Zone.

#### The South Zone

This zone will emphasize recreation, preservation and restoration of existing upland, forested, shore, slough and wetland areas. When restored, Chouteau Slough will serve as a transition between the Central and South Zones, offering visitors a variety of expanded outdoor recreation activities, including increased fishing and hunting opportunities with enhancements to woodlands, sloughs, wetlands and grassland areas.

There will be a variety of connections to this zone from the Central Zone. On horseback, riders will be able to traverse the South Zone through a series of equestrian trails. Hunters visiting the island will access hunting locations on Gabaret Island via designated trails and Mosenthein Island by boat access from the existing Missouri boat launch at North Riverfront Park. Those visitors seeking recreation such as bicycling, walking or jogging, will be able to do so on multi-use and bicycle trails.

Educational and interpretive opportunities will also be included within this zone along various trails. Visitors on horse, bicycle or foot may learn about lock operations, the Lewis and Clark campsite, the origins of St. Louis, river shore protection measures or environmental restoration topics. Visitors may simply enjoy the unique beauty offered by views of the Mississippi River, the canal, or downtown St. Louis, at proposed interpretive overlooks.

The South Zone comprises the main proposed wetland and forest habitat restoration areas on the island. Parts of these areas are included in the Corps of Engineer aquatic ecosystem restoration plans currently under study. The proposed restoration of wildlife habitat at Chouteau and Gabaret Sloughs are included in the South Zone.

#### The North Zone

Once across the Canal Bridge, visitors to the island will be able to take the proposed North Loop Road that goes directly to the North Zone. Access for visitors to the North Zone can be achieved by horseback, foot, bicycle or vehicle. Bike/hike trails from the Toll Booth Visitor Center interconnect with trails accessing the North Zone via the Corps levee and under the I-270 Mississippi River Bridge. Vehicular access is by way of the North Loop Road that interconnects the various uses of the zone. Compared to the other two zones, this zone will offer greater public



Canal and I-270 Bridges

access in the form of primitive camping, group camping, day use, open field recreation, picnicking, nature viewing, bird watching, etc., and access to a variety of proposed trails and interpretive overlooks. This zone will offer lake fishing, boating and restoration/education opportunities. Improvement to the North Zone will also include preservation and restoration of existing forested, wetland and open field areas to buffer and support the above-mentioned activities. Hunting will be allowed within the North Reforestation Area (Area 13).

The North Zone will be accessible to visitors by boat via a river dock located near the Recreation Area (Area 11), just up stream of the Illinois American Water facility. Approximately one-half mile up stream, a boat ramp will provide for launching personal watercraft. The proposed interpretive overlooks at the river dock and at the northern tip of the island will be the primary educational opportunities in the North Zone.



### 3.6.2 Circulation

The Master Plan shows various circulation routes, including vehicular routes, as well as recreational trail alignments. The descriptions of each type of alignment follow.

#### Vehicular Circulation

Vehicular access will originate across the Canal Bridge to the South Loop Road. Following the alignment of Old Chain of Rocks Road to the Toll Booth, the proposed South Loop Road will turn south and follow the existing levee across Chouteau Slough, following the alignment of the existing levee back toward the canal levee. At this point, the proposed South Loop Road will turn northward, connecting back to Old Chain of Rocks Road. The proposed South Loop Road provides access to the River Access Area (Area 10) via a two-way spur road. Another proposed spur road off the proposed South Loop Road in Area 6 will provide vehicular access to a parking area near Gabaret Slough.

Opposite the intersection of the South Loop Road and Old Chain of Rocks Road, will be the access to the North Loop Road, which will provide the only vehicular access to the

area of the island north of I-270. The proposed North Loop Road will form a large loop around the Recreation Area (Area 11) and also will provide access to the Habitat Restoration Area (Area 12) and the North Reforestation Area (Area 13). The proposed North Loop Road also provides access to the public boat ramp in Area 11. There is no vehicular access on the canal levee.

#### Trail Classification

The following classifications are used to describe the Master Plan trail components:

- M - Multi-Use Trails are trails that can be used for horse, bicycle or foot. These trails will generally be gravel material.
- B - Bike/Hike Trails are used for walking and bicycling. These trails will be asphalt or gravel material, depending on location.
- E - Equestrian Trails are for equestrian use only. These trails will be gravel material or natural grass.
- N - Nature Trails are for walking through natural areas with environmentally sensitive woodlands/wetland habitat. These trails will be gravel or organic mulch material.

#### South Zone Trail Descriptions (Includes Central Zone)

The south trail system contains approximately 7 miles of proposed Multi-Use Trails (map designation M), primarily located atop the canal levee and the agricultural levees on Gabaret Island. These trails will form several loops and connect and/or split into Bike/Hike Trails and Equestrian Trails.

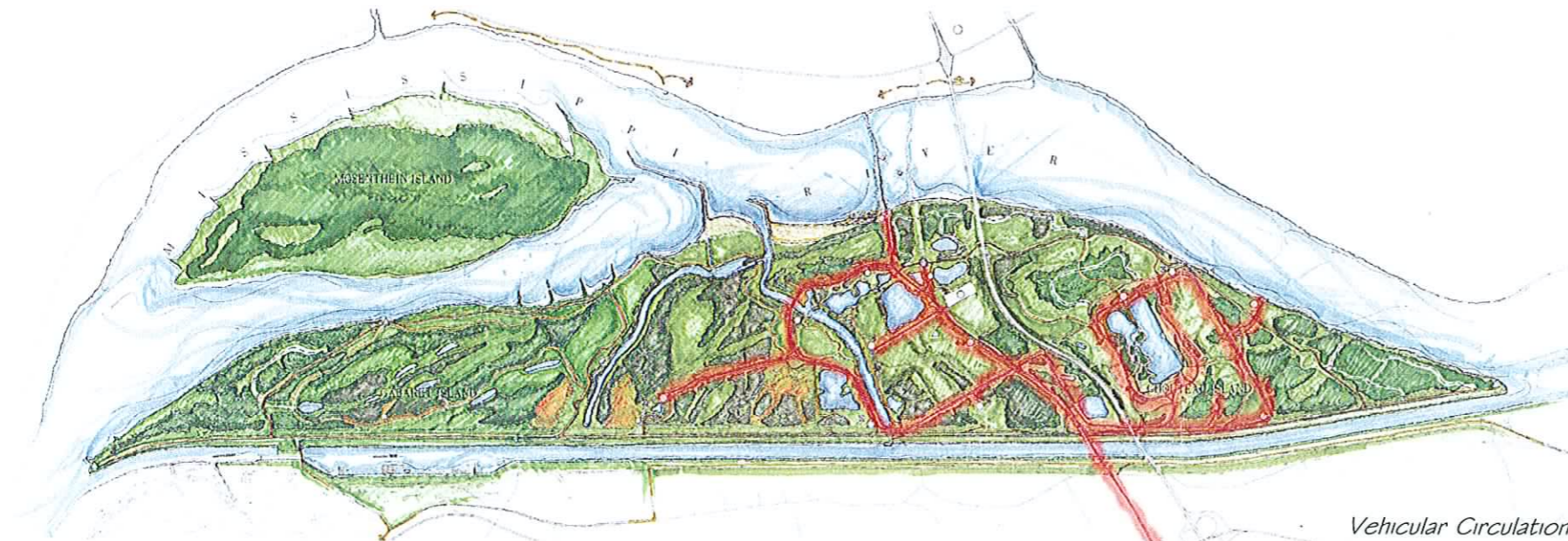
There are approximately 11 miles of proposed Bike/Hike Trails (B) in the south trail system. These trails extend the Multi-Use Trails to access the southern tip of Gabaret Island, the River Loop Trail overlooking Mosenthein Island, and provide access to the proposed Toll Booth. The Bike/Hike Trails will extend across the Canal Bridge connecting to the Confluence Bikeway, and connect to the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge, tying to the North Riverfront Bike Trail. Coupled with the multi-use trails, there is a total of approximately 18 miles of proposed Bike/Hike Trail in the south trail system.

The south trail system contains approximately 6 miles of proposed Equestrian-only Trails (E) that tie into the multi-use trail system. Coupled together, this creates approximately 13 miles of future horse trails within the south trail system.

In the Master Plan there are approximately 4 miles of Nature Trails (N) in the south trail system. These occur in Area 10 between the river's edge and the Toll Booth, south from the river's edge to Chouteau Slough and from the river's edge to Area 12, north of I-270. Area 8, at the island's southern tip, also contains a loop nature trail.

#### North Zone Trail Descriptions

There are approximately 6 miles of proposed Multi-Use Trails (M) in the north trail system. These occur along the canal levee, from the south trail system, under the bridges, providing loop access to Areas 11 and 12.





There will be approximately 9 miles of Bike/Hike Trails in the north trail system. Half of the trails are located atop the existing canal and agricultural levees and provide access to the extreme north tip of Chouteau Island, and access under I-270 near the southwest corner of Area 11, through an existing high water relief tunnel. The Bike/Hike Trail also connects the day use area activities around the existing lake to adjacent day use and camping areas.

There will be no Equestrian-only Trails (E) in the north trail system.

There are approximately 2 miles of Nature Trails (N) within the north trail system. These occur near the north tip of the island and allow good access for fishermen, hunters and hikers.

MASTER PLAN SUMMARY		MILES			
ITEM		South	North	Total	Total By Use
Vehicular Circulation		4.5	4.5	9	-
Multi-Use Trail	(M)	7	6	13	-
Bike/Hike Trail	(B)	11	9	20	33
Equestrian Trail	(E)	6	0	6	19
Nature Trail	(N)	4	2	6	6

### 3.6.3 Ecosystem Restoration

The Master Plan for Chouteau Island includes 2,455 acres of proposed ecosystem restoration, distributed throughout the Island complex. The proposed ecosystem restoration classifications and descriptions include:

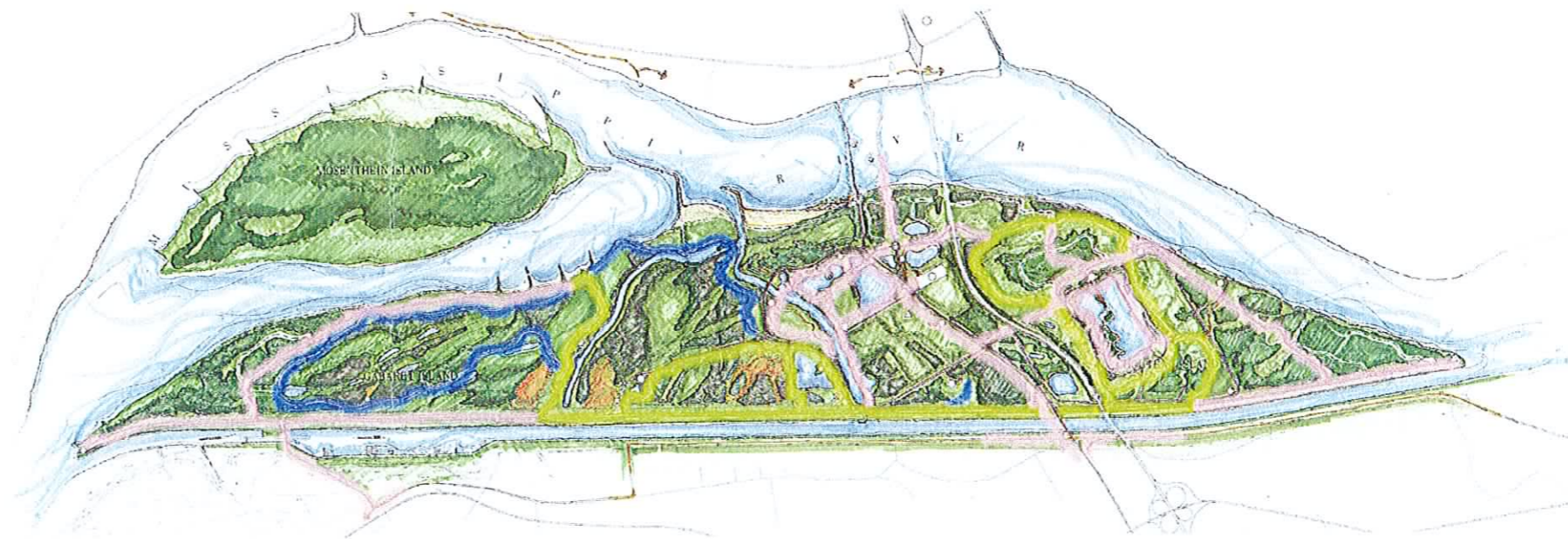
- **Native Grassland Restoration:** will consist of the conversion of agricultural fields and open space to native grasslands for the creation of habitat and for soil stabilization. The Master Plan contains 670 acres of native grasslands restoration.

- **Woodlands Reforestation:** will consist of the conversion of agricultural fields and open space to woodlands for the creation of habitat, spatial definition of outdoor spaces, soil stabilization and aesthetic enhancements. The Master Plan contains 880 acres of converted woodlands reforestation.
- **Slough Restoration:** will consist of the reestablishment of 3 miles of Chouteau and Gabaret Sloughs. Enhancements will include channel excavation, reestablished water flow, plantings, riprap, pipe and water control structures. Slough restoration will create high quality backwater aquatic habitat, enhanced fishing, ecosystem diversity, interpretive and recreation opportunities. The Master Plan contains 100 acres of slough restoration.
- **Pond Restoration:** will include seven existing ponds on Chouteau Island and consist of shoreline grading, reestablished water flow, plantings, riprap, pipes/weirs and water control devices. There will be approximately 130 acres of land and water enhancements that will increase recreation opportunities, create living

classrooms, increase interpretive learning, enhance biodiversity and improve views and vistas on Chouteau Island.

- **Wetland Restoration:** will include the conversion of open space/agricultural fields to wetland environment. Improvements will include grading, addition of soil amendments, controlled water flow and installation of compatible plant material. There will be approximately 430 acres of restored wetlands on Chouteau Island, providing enhanced habitat, additional natural water purification, soil stabilization and expanded educational/interpretive opportunities.

Currently the COE and IDNR are preparing plans to restore 245 acres on Chouteau Island. The restoration will include the establishment of prairie grass and tree plantings that will create higher quality habitat, stabilize soil conditions and improve visual quality on Chouteau Island. This project may be expanded by as much as 500 acres to include other restoration plans mentioned above.



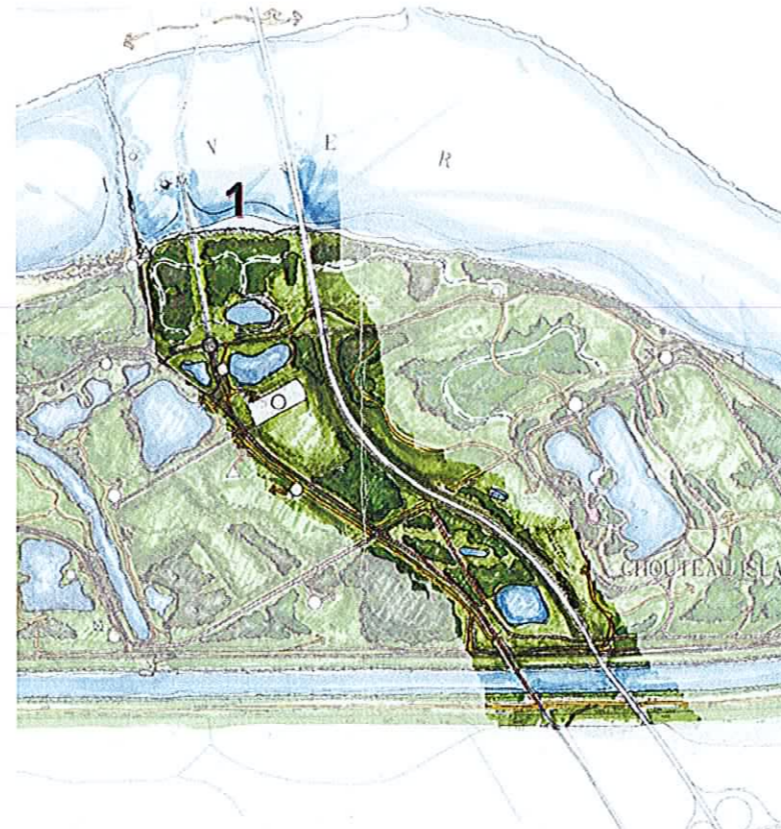
Multi-Use Trails (Horse, Bicycle or Foot) (Yellow), Bike/Hike Trails (Pink) and Equestrian Trails (Blue)

### 3.6.4 Area Plan Descriptions - The Central Zone

#### 1. Green Viewshed Corridor Area

Chouteau Island is a primary green gateway to The Confluence Greenway. The area generally located between Old Chain of Rocks Road and I-270, from the canal to the river, should retain its current green character. The character currently consists of native riparian forest with internal scattered open spaces along the Mississippi, progressing eastward to the green open space of the capped landfill and the wetland forest. The existing, spectacular views and vistas from I-270 onto Chouteau Island project a positive initial image and first impression of the island complex and The Confluence Greenway. This corridor includes property with the greatest pressure for non-compatible development on Chouteau Island.

The Master Plan establishes a distance of approximately 1,000 feet off the edge of each of these roads to define Area 1. The intent is to minimize the potential for adverse development, including commercial development, billboards or other non-compatible developments that do not support



Green Viewshed Corridor Area (Area 1)

the goals and design principles established in the Master Plan.

The area closest to the river, west of the agricultural levee, should be planted with a mixture of native riparian tree species and native ground level perennials. These perennials could be flowering and/or grasses that would form pleasing glimpses from the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge, enhancing the feeling of walking through the treetops.

Visually interesting native perennials and grasses could be established on the old landfill appropriate for this relatively dry, upland habitat. This could take the form of a native wild flower planting and open grass prairies. The Master Plan includes a parking area on top of the old landfill site.

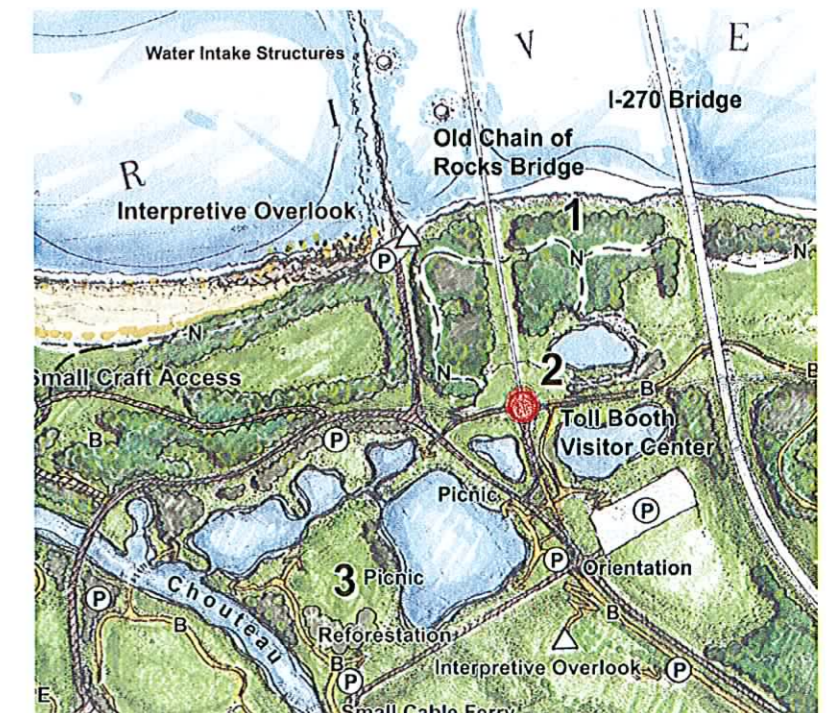


Existing Corridor

This area will serve as the primary parking facility for many activities on Chouteau Island. The adjacent open prairie could also be used for special event parking.

The area within the viewshed directly west of the canal levee should be reforested with native riparian woody perennials similar to the area adjacent to the Mississippi River.

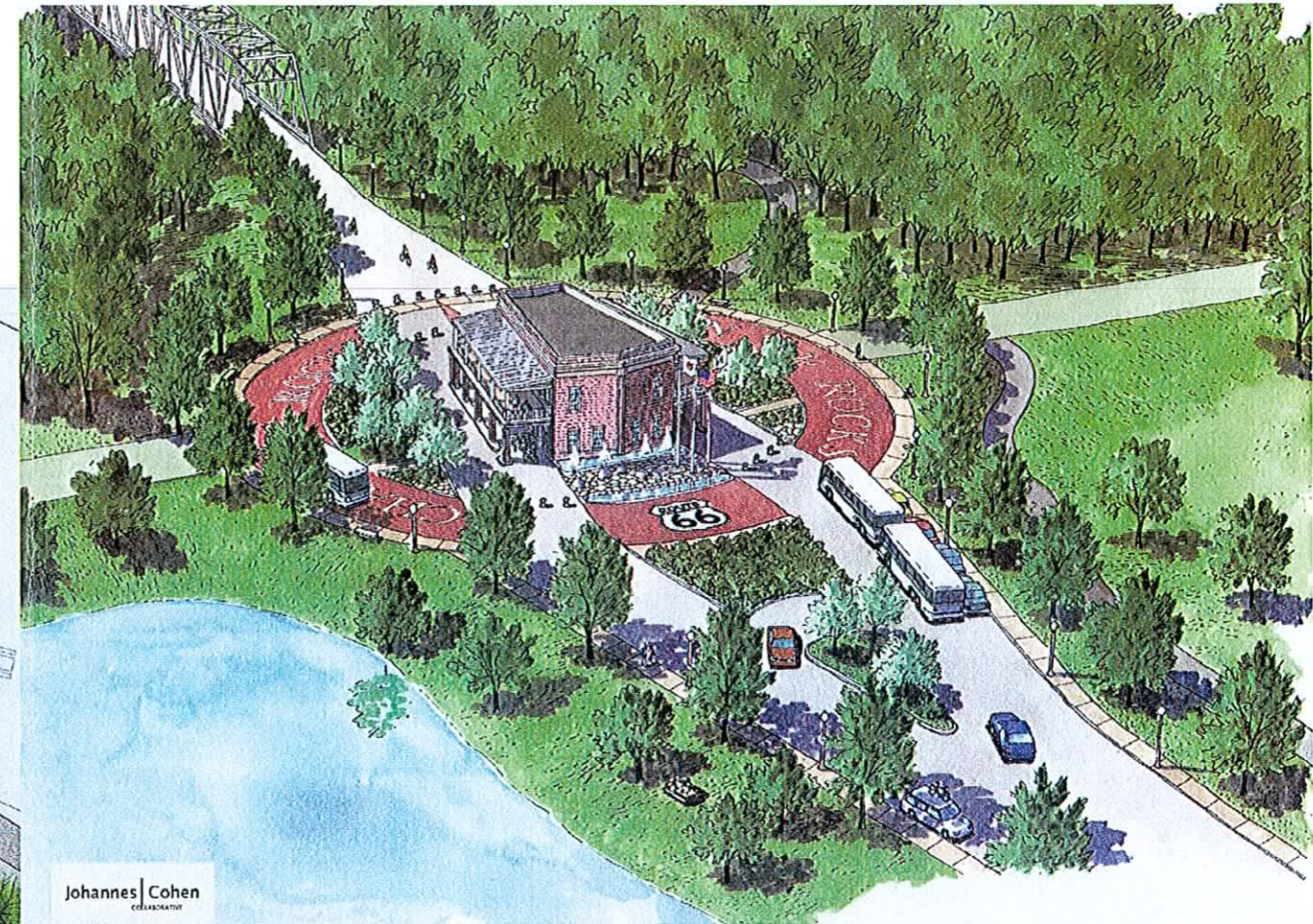
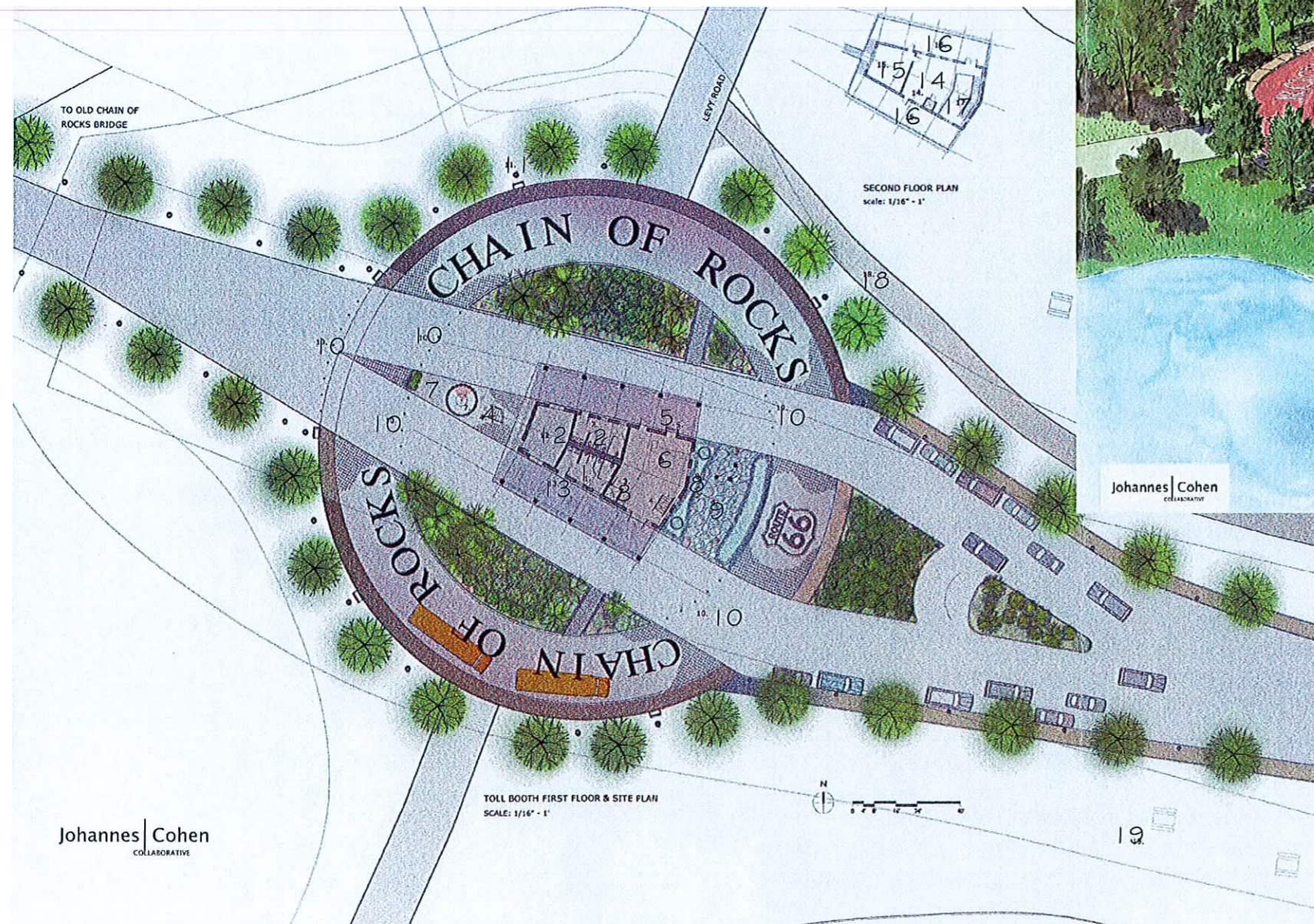
East of the canal, off of Chouteau Island, but of paramount importance to the Green Viewshed Corridor, is the corridor north and south of Old Chain of Rocks Road, from Route 3 to the canal, designated as Area 14 on the Master Plan. Future development for this area should be carefully controlled by local jurisdictions to assure appropriate development that maintains the character established by the Chouteau Island Master Plan. Area 14 serves as the gateway to Chouteau Island, a first impression for all visitors. (See Area 14 description toward the end of this section for more details).



Orientation and Interpretive Area (Area 2)

### Toll Booth Visitor Center Legend

- |                        |                                    |                   |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Men's Room          | 8. Fountain                        | 15. Classroom     |
| 2. Women's Room        | 9. Misty Rocks & Flag Poles        | 16. Terrace       |
| 3. Lift                | 10. Removable Bollards             | 17. Open to Below |
| 4. Stairs              | 11. Street Light / Bench           | 18. Bike Path     |
| 5. Toll Booth          | 12. Concessions                    | 19. Picnic Tables |
| 6. Information         | 13. Removable Bike Racks / Benches |                   |
| 7. Sun Dial / Air Pump | 14. Interpretive Center            |                   |



### 2. Orientation and Interpretive Area

Located within the Green Viewshed Corridor Area at the eastern terminus of the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge, this area contains the primary orientation point for most visitors to the island arriving by car, bus, bike and foot. The nostalgic, two-level building at the circular orientation point will have an art deco design reminiscent of a previous Toll Booth in the area during the heyday of Route 66 travel across the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge. The building will consist of restrooms, an open gathering space, self-guided interpretive displays, visitor information and more as shown on the illustrations.

Proposed Toll Booth Visitor Center

# Chouteau Island

The Confluence Greenway : A Conservation Heritage and Recreation Corridor

A small amount of parallel parking and "drop off" parking will accommodate tour buses, school bus groups and parking for less mobile visitors. Additional parking for visitors will be located atop the old landfill between Old Chain of Rocks Road and I-270.

Visitors arriving at the proposed Toll Booth are within 600 yards of the river's edge. Those choosing to walk to the river may do so via the proposed nature trail shown west of the Toll Booth levee. This walk provides a natural experience, culminating with the wide-open river views, fishing and interpretive information at the river's edge. Those choosing a vehicular mode to the river's edge may do so via the proposed South Loop Road and the existing road. The existing road will be a spur off the new South Loop Road.

To the east of the Toll Booth will be a proposed interpretive overlook, an open air structure connected to the Toll Booth area and a parking area via bike/hike trails. The interpretive overlook may contain signage describing natural, environmental and cultural characteristics common to Chouteau Island. Possible island-specific interpretive categories may include:

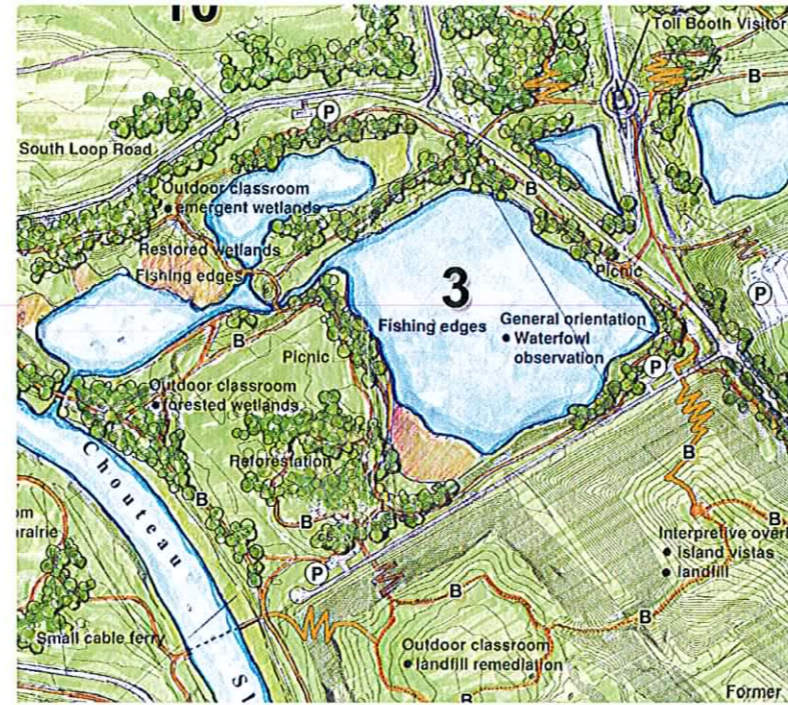
- The Canal and River
- Slough Environment
- Wetland Benefits
- Wildlife
- Historical Data
- Environmental Restoration
- Landfill Reclamation
- Historic Flooding



Hiking

The interpretive overlook will also be connected to the Environmental Education Area (Area 3).

The trail linkage between the proposed Toll Booth Visitor Center and the Canal Bridge to the east is planned as an asphalt trail that will generally follow the Old Chain of Rocks Road. This trail will be one of the primary linkages between the Missouri and Illinois trail systems.



Environmental Education Area (Area 3)

### 3. Environmental Education Area

The Environmental Education Area (Area 3) is located in the center of Chouteau Island, bounded by Old Chain of Rocks Bridge to the north, the agricultural levee to the west and south and by the new landfill to the east. Chouteau Slough runs through a portion of Area 3.

The starting point of this area will be an orientation point in the northeastern corner of the area, connected via bike/hike trail to the Toll Booth Visitor Center. From this point, visitors will take a series of trails around the main ponds to several proposed outdoor class learning areas, picnic areas, reforestation areas and pond fishing areas. Also from this orientation point, visitors will be able to walk eastward to the open-air interpretive overlook. This represents a high



Education and Recreation Opportunities in Area 3



*Outdoor Classrooms*

vantage point at the capped landfill (previously described in Area 2). This location will provide spectacular views to the canal, the Viewshed Corridor, Chouteau Slough and the Environmental Education Area.

The south end of this area is defined by the proposed South Loop Road, which crosses Chouteau Slough and follows the existing levee system back to the east. Within Area 3, the trail system provides access to Chouteau Slough, crossing the slough at the proposed roadway crossing or via a proposed self-propelled cable ferry (a pontoon boat with an overhead cable for crossing), inter-connecting several future outdoor classrooms.

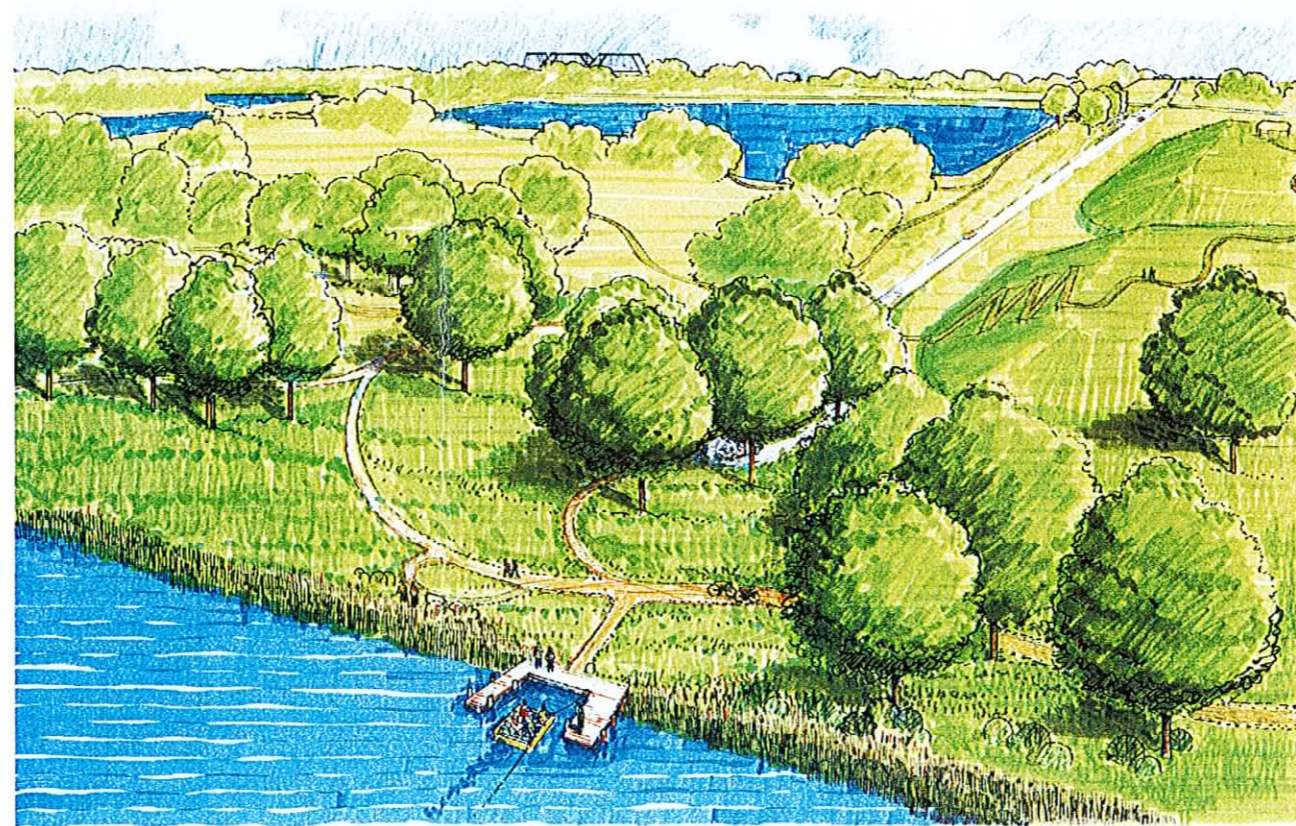
Area 3 also encompasses two major borrow pits adjacent to the current existing communications towers. These borrow pits form the north and west edge of a large proposed grassland surrounding the existing towers. This open grassland, ponds and tree-lined backdrop to the north and west form a buffer from the proposed South Loop Road and creates the proposed outdoor interpretive class area.



*Existing Borrow Pits in Area 3*

#### 4. Green Use Area

The Green Use Area is located on the site of Waste Management's current landfill operation. The site occupies a prominent, central location, a transition area between the Green Viewshed Corridor and Chouteau Slough. It is in close proximity to the Orientation and Interpretive Area (Area 2), Environmental Education Area, and the Equestrian Staging Area (Area 5). The Green Use Area best complements the surrounding Master Plan elements as an interpretive overlook and open space prairie. Bike/hike trails will provide visitor access to the top of the former landfill site. From this point, visitors will have a panoramic view of Chouteau Island. Trails will also connect to an outdoor classroom where natural and man-made features of Chouteau Island can be explained.



*Small Cable Ferry Crossing Chouteau Slough*



*Outdoor Interpretation*

# Chouteau Island

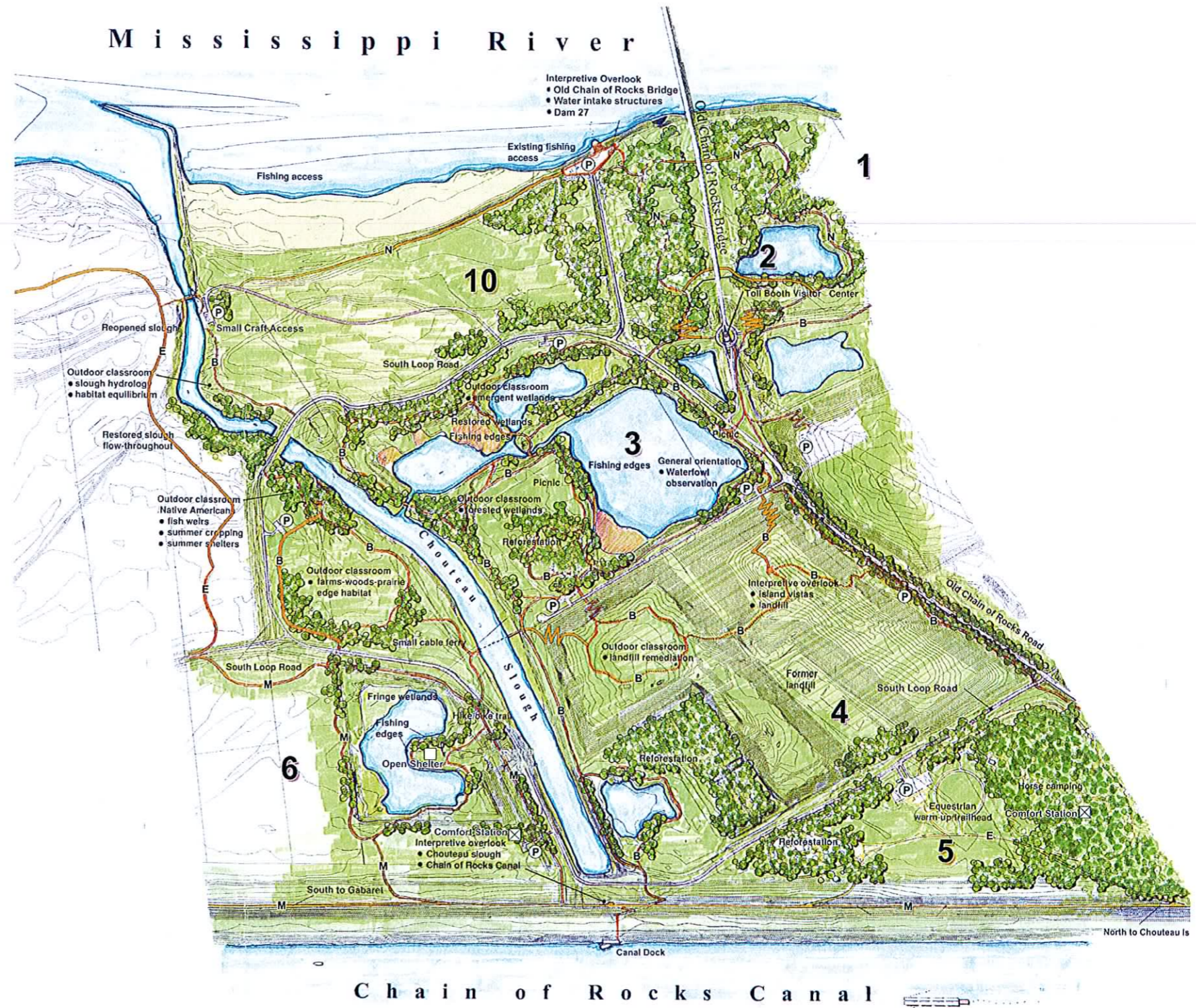
The Confluence Greenway: A Conservation Heritage and Recreation Corridor

With the property ownership transfer from Waste Management to the City of Madison, the City's interest to seek alternative uses for the new landfill site should be guided not only by the goals and design principles, but also by the following guidelines that proposed uses will:

- Preserve the views and vistas that currently exist
- Be open space compatible
- Be landfill compatible
- Preserve the concept of an interpretive overlook atop the landfill

Examples of compatible land use that might meet the above criteria include:

- A perennial nursery that requires limited surface penetration, as a potential means to provide economic benefit.
- A crop demonstration area with limited surface penetration provides economic benefit. An appropriate green use adjacent to the Viewshed Corridor assumes a corporate sponsor for crops such as sunflowers, corn, beans etc.
- Golf may provide economic benefit in the form of greens fees and would promote public access to the island and could be planned in an environmentally sensitive manner with today's EPA endorsed golf course design techniques. The physical features of the site, however, do not appear to be desirable for a quality course layout.
- Open space is the most desirable land use for this site.



The Central Zone

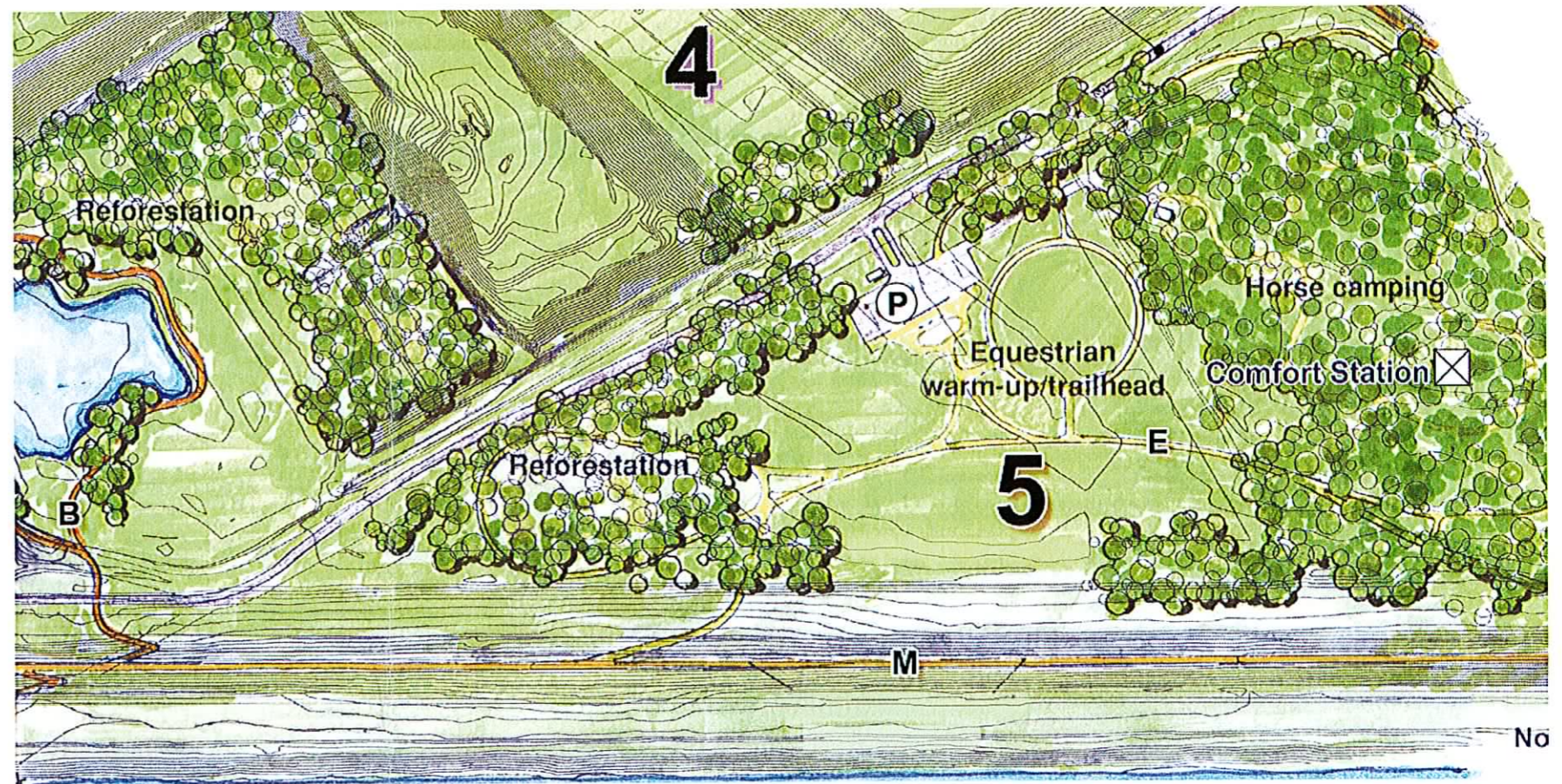
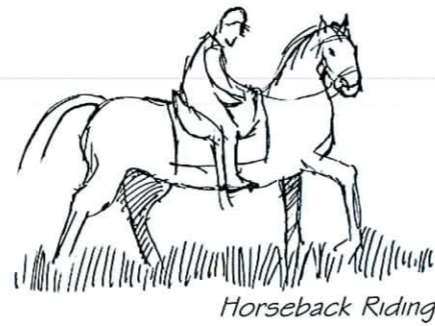
## 5. Equestrian Staging Area

The Equestrian Staging Area is the triangular shaped parcel east of Area 4, bounded on the east by the Canal Levee, on the west by the proposed South Loop Road, and on the north by Old Chain of Rocks Road. Area 5 will be the starting and stopping point for proposed north and south equestrian trail loops. This area will be partially screened from Old Chain of Rocks Road, allowing pleasing views to the open grassland and adjacent woodlands. Visitors to the site will be able to access the area by vehicle from the South Loop Road.

Once at this location, there will be a small equestrian staging zone, including a parking area to accommodate vehicles and trailers. This site will include a proposed warm-up area, a fenced off pasture, and will contain open structures for temporary horse boarding. Users of the area will have the option of a separate, small parking area for short term, primitive camping. The campsites will be cleared zones in a reforested area. The south end of Area 5 will also be reforested with native tree species. The camping area includes a comfort station (vault toilet).



Equestrian Trail



Equestrian Staging Area (Area 5)



### 3.6.5 Area Plan Descriptions - The South Zone

#### 6. Slough Restoration Area

This site is generally defined as the area surrounded by the Chouteau and Gabaret Sloughs and the Canal Levee on the east. Visitors to this area can access Area 6 on a spur road from the South Loop Road. This spur is an improvement to an existing road alignment at the base of an existing levee. At the end of this spur is a parking area, an open shelter and comfort station (vault toilet). The spur continues to the Canal Levee for authorized vehicles only. On the upland side of this road corridor is an existing levee with a proposed multi-use trail. This trail ties into another multi-use trail at the Canal Levee. At the north end of Area 6, the borrow pit will be improved as a day use area with grading, native plantings and an open shelter. A second parking area and comfort station is located east of this borrow pit for access to fishing, picnicking and connecting trails. On the east side of the levee, south of the borrow pit, will be an area of upland (drier) grasses and forbs.

The equestrian trails in this area originate from Area 5 via the multi-use trail on top of the Canal Levee, offering scenic views of the river and portions of Gabaret and Chouteau Sloughs.

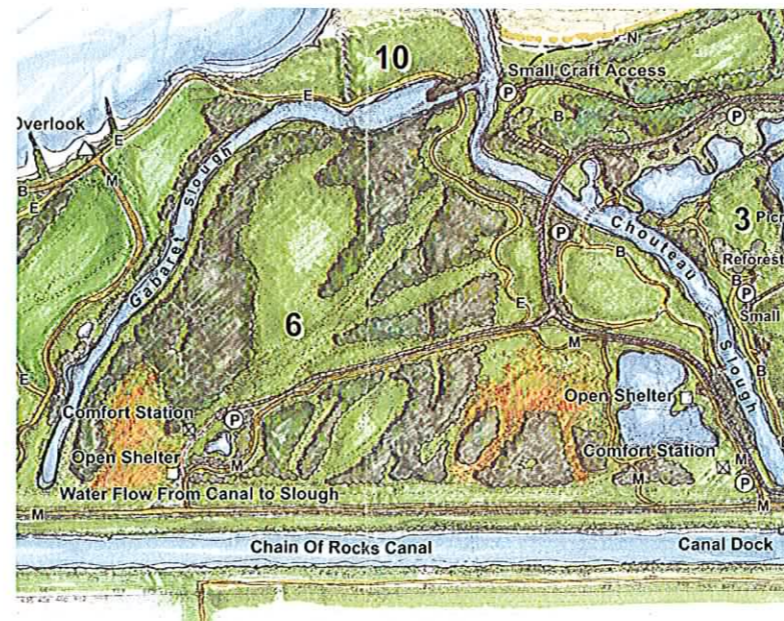
In addition to the trail and day use activities within Area 6, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Corps of Engineers have completed a preliminary aquatic ecosystem restoration plan (Section 206) for over 200 acres in this general vicinity. The essence of the plan includes restoration of prairie grass species, native trees and other native plants to re-establish wildlife habitat. The Corps of Engineers has recommended a more in-depth planning, design and analysis of the area.

The final component of Area 6 comprises major portions of Gabaret and Chouteau Slough. The background information and description of what is proposed for these sloughs is as follows:

#### Slough Restoration

During the construction of the Chain of Rocks Canal, a portion of Chouteau Slough and Gabaret Slough were severed and transformed from free-flowing, meandering side channels of the Mississippi River into stagnant off-channel sloughs. In addition to the excavation of the canal, a large levee was constructed along the eastern and western banks of the canal, which permanently prevented water from flowing through either slough.

Although no water could flow through the Chouteau and Gabaret systems, backwater from the Mississippi River was still allowed to enter and exit through the downstream Mississippi River connections of Chouteau and Gabaret Sloughs. Over time, however, the mouths of the sloughs became plugged with silt, drift, and debris. After a prolonged period, the mouths of the sloughs actually became forested with disturbance-tolerant species, such as black willow, which further inhibited the passage of water in and out of the sloughs. These natural "plugs" allowed the sloughs to pond water even though the Mississippi River water levels were below that of the sloughs.



Slough Restoration Area (Area 6)

After the natural "plugs" closed the sloughs, the Mississippi River only overflowed into the sloughs during flood events. The combination of the silt-laden floodwaters and flood-borne drift and debris has resulted in the continual deposition of material into the sloughs. Since there is no current to move this flood-borne material out of the system, the inevitable cycle of overflow flooding and deposition from Mississippi River floodwaters has resulted in the gradual filling of the off-channel sloughs.

The reduced water depth in the sloughs has greatly reduced the benefits to aquatic species, especially fish. Mississippi River fish that migrate into the sloughs during flood events are routinely trapped as the floodwaters recede. Since the sloughs are generally shallow, the fish are subjected to various forms of stress, including increased predation by wading birds, raccoons, and other species; generally poor water quality, such as low dissolved oxygen and high turbidity; and direct mortality due to the drying of the sloughs during drought periods.

#### Chouteau Slough

Historically, the portion of Chouteau Slough that was severed by the construction of the Chain of Rocks Canal flowed from the northeast to the southwest. In the eastern portion of the slough, the banks are relatively distinct and the historical channel appears to be well defined. In contrast, the western end of the slough has been altered extensively and the historic channel is absent or almost imperceptible. A small drainage ditch provides the current connection between Chouteau Slough and the Mississippi River.

Chouteau Slough could be restored through a three-phase strategy. The following phases would be the preferred strategy to restore the Chouteau Slough: 1) the slough would be excavated to the original pre-Chain of Rocks Canal depth; 2) the slough would be reconnected with the Mississippi River, which would involve excavating a portion of the remnant slough that is currently being farmed and



Canoeing



Enhanced Wildlife Habitat

drained by a small ditch; and 3) flow could be restored through the system by placing a pipe and water control structure through the Chain of Rocks Canal Levee that would allow water to flow through the system from the Chain of Rocks Canal downstream through Chouteau Slough and into the Mississippi River.

In addition to the excavation, reconnection, and restoration of flow, there are several borrow pits/ponds near the existing landfill that may be connected to Chouteau Slough. By linking these areas to the slough, slackwater habitat and potential wetlands can be enhanced. These borrow pits/ponds can be shaped to lengthen and enhance the shorelines, and the bottom depth can be manipulated to provide varying water depths. Following the contouring of these off-channel areas, a portion of the silt that would be excavated from Chouteau Slough could be used to line the borrow pits/ponds. The silt/sediment would provide a fertile substrate and a potential seed source for aquatic macrophytes and emergent vegetation.

The free flowing Chouteau Slough, coupled with the enhanced borrow pits/ponds, would provide a combination of benefits for aquatic and semi-aquatic species, including deep-water off-channel habitat, spawning and brood habitat, and fringe wetlands. The restored slough would create feeding/

foraging habitat for aquatic species, especially fishes. With improved connections with existing borrow pits/ponds, the slough would provide spawning and brood habitat for fishes and invertebrates, and the slackwater areas would provide winter velocity shelters for fishes. The slough, the enhanced borrow pits/ponds, and the fringe wetlands would also attract migratory birds, such as waterfowl, wading birds, and shorebirds.

In addition to the benefits to aquatic species and migratory birds, the restored Chouteau Slough system would provide excellent recreational opportunities for the public, including fishing, hunting, boating, and bird/nature viewing. The restored Chouteau Slough system would provide an excellent example of a restored alluvial tributary to the Mississippi River, the interpretation of which would be an integral part of the Chouteau Island Master Plan.

#### Gabaret Slough

Based upon the current setting of Gabaret Slough, the exact historical configuration of the slough is unclear. Gabaret Slough was most likely a part of the Chouteau Slough system that meandered through the flood plain until it reached the main Mississippi River channel. Gabaret Slough may have been a unique meandering channel that flowed parallel to the Mississippi River, or it may simply have been an old side channel to the main Mississippi River channel. Prior to the construction of the Chain of Rocks Canal, the water flow in Gabaret Slough appeared to be from the northwest flowing toward the southeast through the area that is now part of the Chain of Rocks Canal system. Most of the existing Gabaret Slough channel appears to be well defined with the exception of the extreme northwestern end of the slough. This portion of the slough has become difficult to delineate due to the continual deposition of silt and flood debris and reforestation by tolerant light mast producing species, such as black willow.

In a similar fashion to Chouteau Slough, Gabaret Slough could be restored through a three-phase strategy. The following phases would be the preferred strategy to restore the Gabaret Slough ecosystem: 1) the slough would be excavated to the original pre-Chain of Rocks Canal depth; 2) the slough would be reconnected with the Mississippi River, which would involve excavating a portion of the remnant slough that is currently forested by trees (black willows); and 3) flow could be restored through the system by placing a pipe and water control structure through the Chain of Rocks Canal Levee that would allow water to flow through the system from the Chain of Rocks Canal downstream through Gabaret Slough and into the Mississippi River.

The benefits of this ecosystem restoration project would be similar to those described above for the Chouteau Slough.



Existing Gabaret Slough

## 7. Wetland & Prairie Mix Area

The Wetland & Prairie Mix Area is located within the agricultural levee, south of Gabaret Slough. Currently a mixture of agricultural and grassland cover, this area is comprised of a series of long, linear north-south swales and depressions leading to a culvert through the levee at the south end of Area 7, dispersing into Area 8.

The current topography and flood protection is the basis for restoring this area's matrix of bottomland forest and wet prairie/marsh, thereby increasing the productivity and diversity of the area's biological community. The following excerpt is taken from an IDNR meeting discussing restoration efforts on Gabaret Island:

*There is a strong interest in the creation of a wetland complex on Gabaret Island, south of Gabaret Slough. The majority of this island is contained within a low levee. General guidelines and constraints that biologists from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources recommend would include enhancement to retain or restore to the extent possible the natural hydrologic cycle and natural vegetation. This leads to the following specific recommendations:*

- *No additional enhancement of existing levees*
- *Provide water within the Gabaret unit via natural flood pulse (no pumping)*
- *Restoring adequate river connection to Gabaret Slough, if found to be inadequate*
- *Devise a structure on the north end of the Gabaret unit to allow flooding of the unit from Gabaret Slough*
- *Devise a water control structure on the south end of the Gabaret unit to stop exiting drainage*
- *Enhance, deepen and/or enlarge existing low "pothole" areas*
- *Restore a gradation of vegetation from marsh to wet prairie to forest following natural topographic features*

The dike and shoreline area directly west of the levee protecting Area 7 is characterized by severely eroding shorelines and generally reduced river flow compared to the north shores of the island. In this same general area there is an apparent need of repairs to the levee that has been affected by seasonal flooding. The proposed plan for this area is a reinforced spillway or similar approach at the river's edge that would allow seasonal flooding of Area 7.

The equestrian loop proposed in this area is on upland areas and a portion of existing road. Equestrians will be able to access the two river interpretive overlooks located on the levee adjacent to the Mississippi River. Equestrians may also visit the locks interpretive overlook at the canal levee.



Prairie Restoration



Hiking Trails

A bike/hike trail crossing location over Locks 27 is shown on the Master Plan, linking to the planned Melvin Price housing area and existing golf course, and connecting to the Confluence Bikeway. While the existing structure or Corps of Engineers' operations policies may not support this connection, future planning for upgrades or replacement of Locks 27 should include consideration of this trail connection.

Seasonal hunting will be allowed in this area. Hunting regulations will be typical statewide regulations. While the seasons and uses are an IDNR policy issue, this Master Plan recommends buffering trails from other land uses, and coordination of seasonal trail use to benefit hunters and the safety of non-hunters.

### 8. South Reforestation Area

The Preservation and Reforestation Area is located on the southern tip of Gabaret Island on the Mississippi River side of the agricultural levee. The Master Plan recommends forest enhancement and the establishment of an interpretive overlook at the south tip of the island complex. The interpretive overlook will identify the Lewis and Clark campsite on Gabaret Island, as well as information on the settlement of St. Louis and the role Chouteau Island played in that development.

The alignment of nature trails is planned for minimum disruption to the variety of habitats at this location. While eagles have been observed in this general area, there are no recorded nesting locations. Also characteristic of this area are the Mississippi shore sandbars. Visitors to the island are not provided direct access to these areas, however, they can be viewed from several of the interpretive overlooks previously described.



Gabaret Slough Looking South



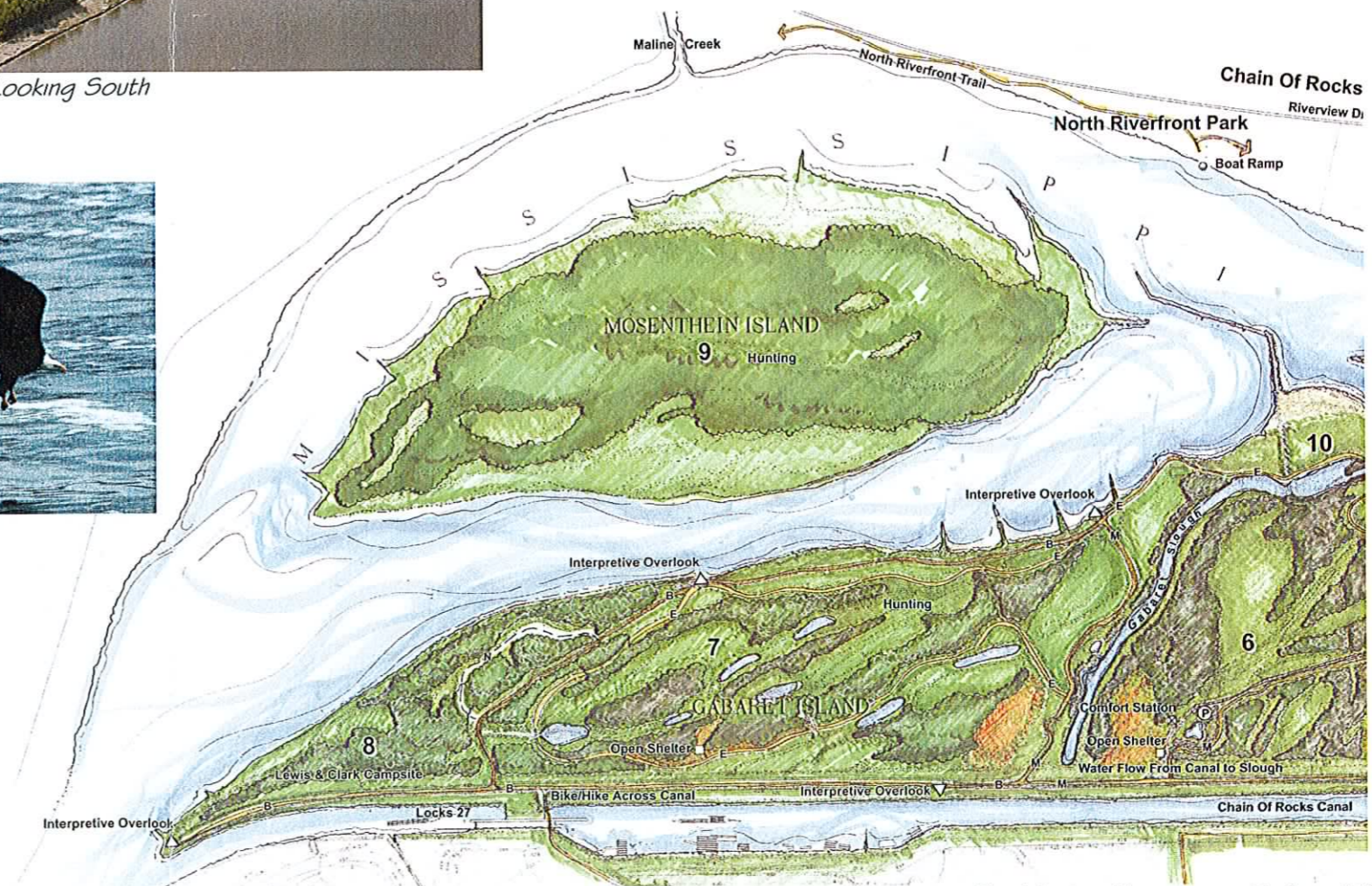
Mosenthein Island Looking South



Bald Eagle

### 9. Mosenthein Island Area

Mosenthein Island is the largest Master Plan description area within the Chouteau Island complex. Every effort should be made to keep Mosenthein from any form of development or enhancements other than to support wildlife habitat. Continued management and periodic monitoring is recommended to manage noxious weeds and overpopulation of certain wildlife species. The Master Plan proposed public access (boat) and hunting to occur on Mosenthein Island. A reforestation budget has been established in the Master Plan to periodically supplement the existing woodlands on the island.



The Master Plan - Areas 7, 8 and 9

# Chouteau Island

The Confluence Greenway : A Conservation Heritage and Recreation Corridor

## 10. River Access Area

The River Access Area is located along the Mississippi River shore south of Old Chain of Rocks Bridge to Chouteau Slough, and north of I-270 to the edge of the Green Viewshed Corridor.

Periodic flooding and general inundation characterize this area. This is evidenced by collections of large limbs and other debris, as well as the presence of deposited soils.

People currently fish north and south of Dam 27. Portions of this area south of the parking lot and access road are currently owned by IDNR and also fall within the Corps of Engineers' Section 206 aquatic restoration plan. It is proposed that this area, known as "the beach," will continue to serve as one of the island's prime fishing areas. The Master Plan also calls for an interpretive overlook in Area 10 that could describe the history of Dam 27, the river dynamics and the historic water intake structures.

The River Access Area includes access trails to bank fishing areas, connecting nature trails to the Toll Booth Visitor Center and trails to the adjacent Environmental Education Area (Area 3). A small craft put-in is located on the north bank of Chouteau Slough. The put-in site is accessible from the proposed South Loop Road to a small parking area near the proposed connection of Chouteau and Gabaret Sloughs. The small craft put-in site will allow water access to the restored sloughs.



Interpretive Overlook at Dam 27



Bank Fishing Below Dam 27



Small Craft Access



River Access Area (Area 10)



3.6.6 Area Plan Descriptions - The North Zone

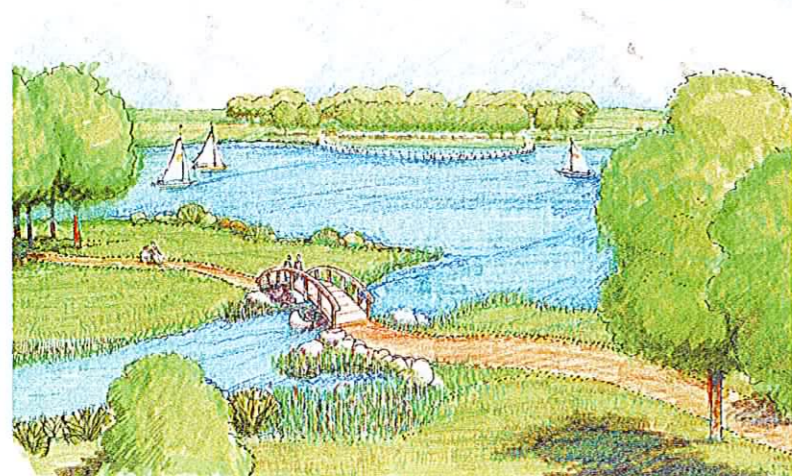
11. Recreation Area

The proposed Recreation Area (Area 11) is north of I-270, bounded on the north and east by existing agricultural levees and on the west by Waterworks Road.

From the intersection with Old Chain of Rocks Road, the proposed North Loop Road provides access to the Recreation Area and its three proposed components: day use, river access and camping. The day use component is centered around the existing "ski club" lake and will provide opportunities for picnicking, pond fishing, biking/hiking and other day use activities. Various proposed marshes, boardwalks and nature trails will provide activity for day visitors to this site.



North Zone - Recreation Area (Area 11)



Day Use Recreation Area



Boardwalk



Fishing



Picnicking



Camping

# Chouteau Island

The Confluence Greenway : A Conservation Heritage and Recreation Corridor



Group Camping Area



Group Camping

The proposed river access component will be located immediately north of the Illinois American Water Company building, adjacent to the day use area. This site will contain a River Dock, providing boat landing and access to Chouteau Island from the river. In the future, visitors landing by boat at Chouteau Island have access to parking (potential shuttle pickup), and the site's trail system. An interpretive overlook will provide orientation information on levee systems, water treatment, forested wetlands and river dynamics.

Immediately upstream from the proposed River Dock will be a public boat ramp and parking area. Access is off the proposed North Loop Road to a spur road that will extend over the levee to the river's edge.

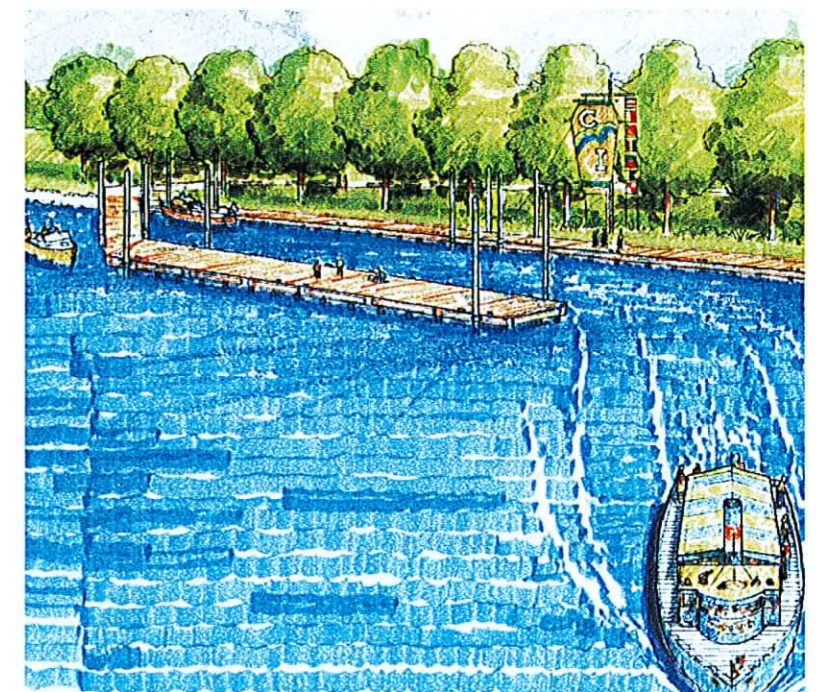
The third component of the Recreation Area is a proposed camping area located near the intersection of the canal levee and the agricultural levee. This area provides adequate space for large group camping, as well as small group and individual camping areas. Support facilities will include comfort stations (vault toilets) and open picnic shelters. Tent camping is proposed between the day use and primitive/group camping areas. Access to the tent camping site is via the proposed North Loop Road.



River Access Area



Proposed River Dock and Boat Ramp Area



River Dock

## 12. Habitat Restoration Area

The Habitat Restoration Area (Area 12) is located immediately west of the Recreation Area, north of I-270 and both sides of the agricultural levee.

This area is currently an agricultural field with minor depressions that have formed over several flooding periods, an agricultural levee and forested riverbank.

This site will offer a diversity of habitat types that will attract abundant watchable wildlife. Butterfly and bird habitat, plantings to enhance the Green Viewshed Corridor, and creation of new wetland areas, will be possible in this area. The proposed landscape will consist of reforestation, prairie, trails and connections to a riverfront nature trail. The site will also connect by trail to the proposed Toll Booth Visitor Center.

The Habitat Restoration Area is in close proximity to the Recreation Area and will provide additional opportunities for day use environmental education opportunities. A small, proposed parking area is provided to accommodate visitors to the site.



Habitat Restoration



Birding

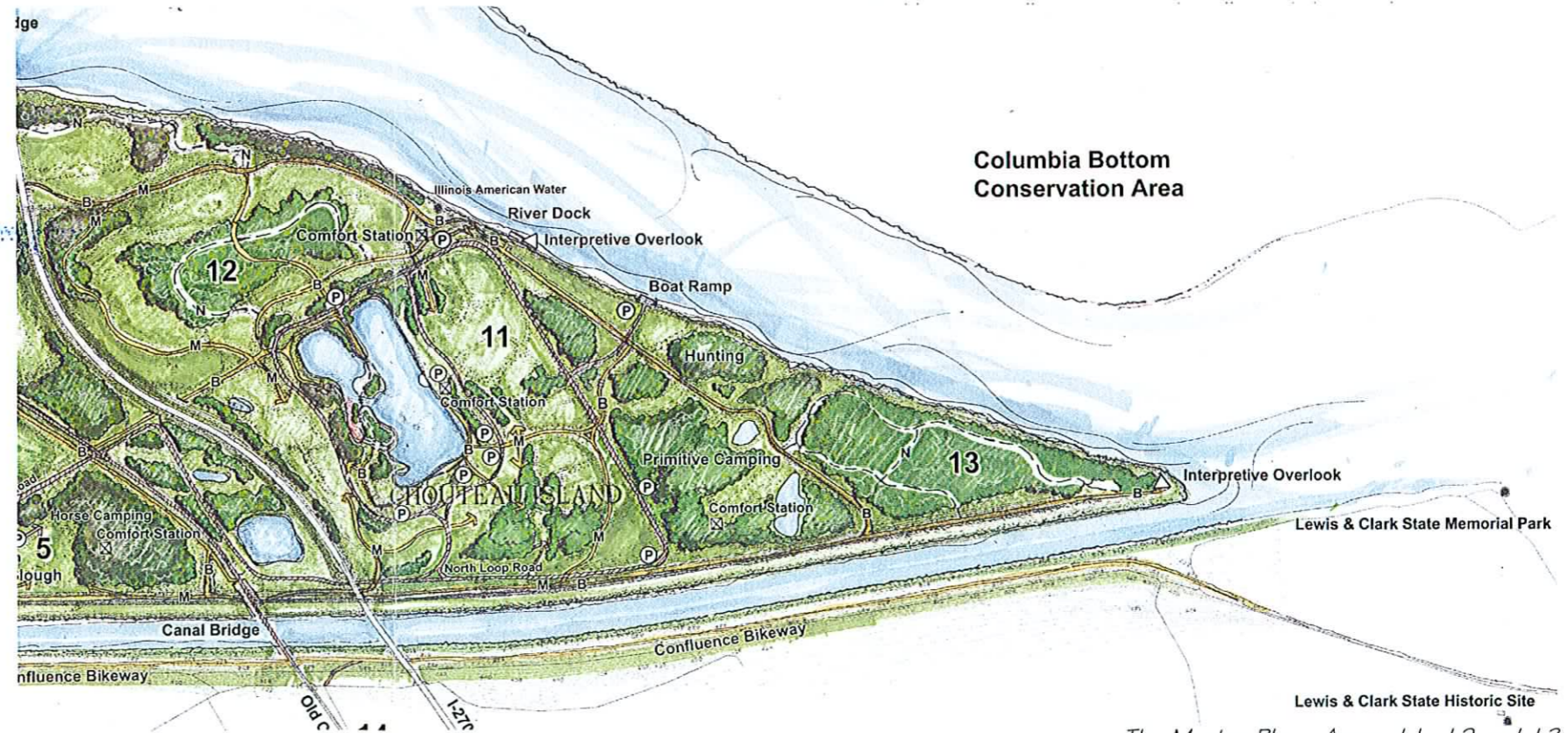


North Tip of Chouteau Island Looking South

## 13. North Reforestation Area

This area is located at the northernmost tip of Chouteau Island and possesses several unique features. From the north tip, the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, the Columbia Bottom Conservation Area and the I-270 Bridge are all visible. The river currents at this site are fast and the channel is deep along the shoreline. The existing forested area is thinning and is littered with debris from previous flood events.

The Master Plan recommends hike/bike access from both the agricultural levee and the canal levee to the very tip of the island. An interpretation overlook will describe the above mentioned unique character of the area, plus describe the history and function of the engineered canal. The existing wooded area will be enhanced with hardy native forest plantings. The forest area will be accessible by nature trail,



The Master Plan - Areas 11, 12 and 13



## 14. Off-Site Commercial Use Area

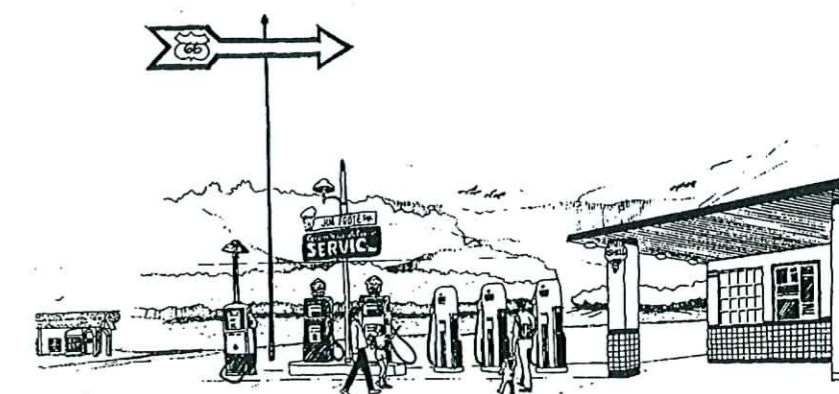
Visitors passing through the area on I-270 will experience Chouteau Island as one of the principal green gateways to The Confluence Greenway. For visitors who stop at Chouteau Island, the corridor from the Route 3/Old Chain of Rocks Road intersection to the Canal Bridge, will become the gateway to Chouteau Island.

The development in this corridor should be comprehensive and coordinated. By way of example, the Route 66, Fabulous 50's theme previously established on the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge and Toll Booth should be considered for application to this corridor. If executed properly, this gateway zone will provide economic and visual benefit to surrounding communities. The CICT should seek input to the planning process for this corridor, including general land use scenarios, specific design guidelines, and economically realistic implementation and phasing strategies.

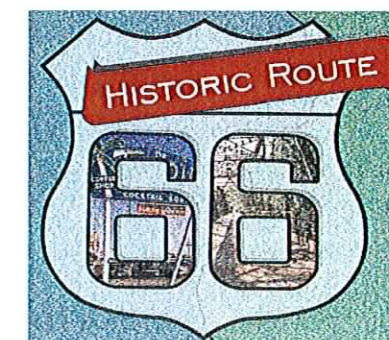
As the attraction to Chouteau Island increases, the development pressure along this corridor will also increase. The CICT should maintain a high level of visibility with local jurisdictions in this corridor so that proposed improvements will be compatible with the vision statement, goals and principles outlined herein.



The Master Plan - Area 14



Proposed Off-Site Development Themes





### 3.6.7 Property Ownership

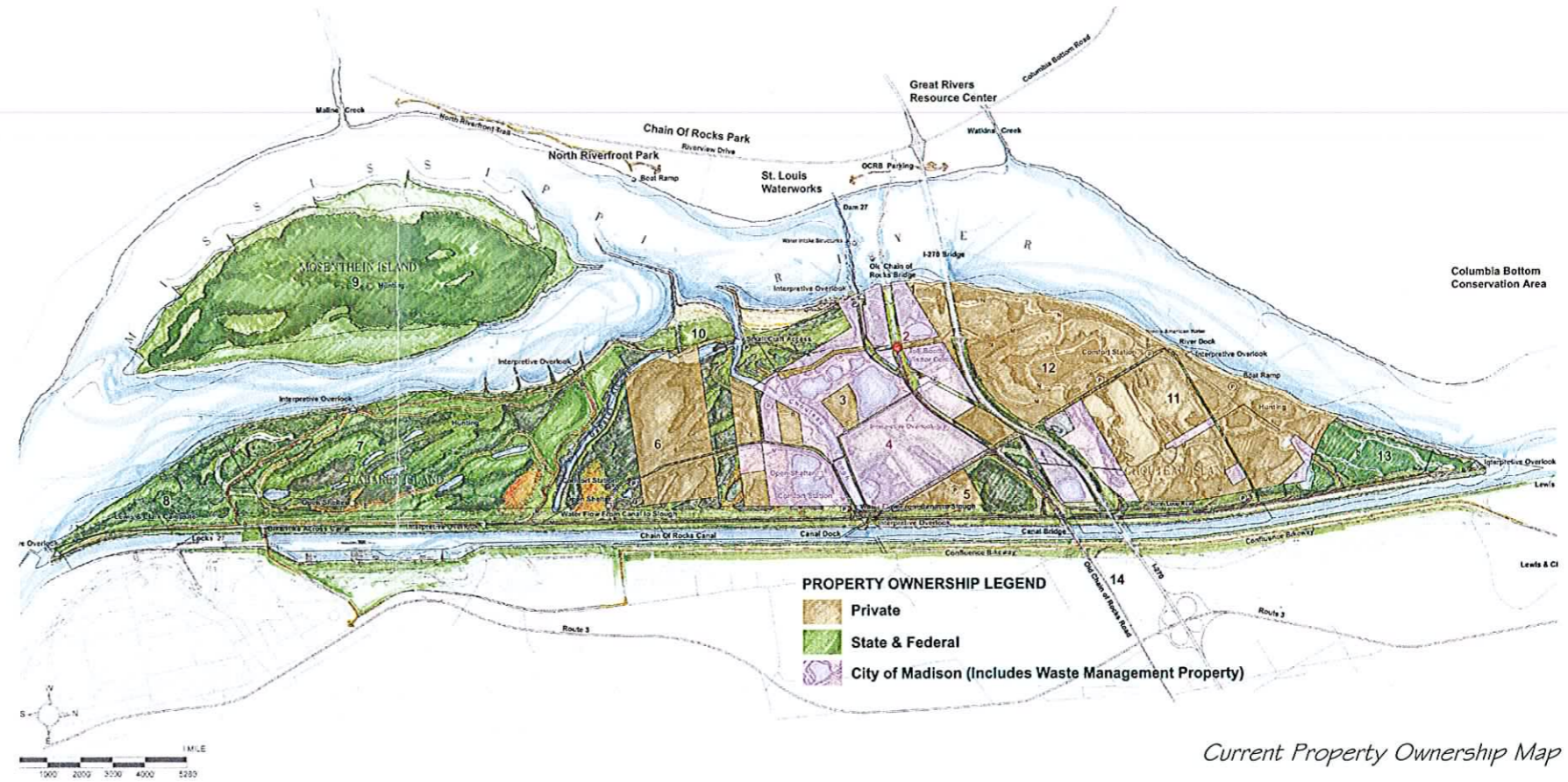
Existing property ownership on Chouteau Island generally falls into one of the following three broad categories:

- Private
- State and Federal Government
- Municipal Government

Privately held land includes individuals, businesses and organizations. State and federal government owners include Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Department of Transportation, and the Corps of Engineers. Municipal government properties include land that is now, or will be in the near future, owned by the City of Madison.

On property that is currently private, it is expected that: (1) current land ownership and use will continue into the future, (2) property owners may choose to implement Master Plan components, and (3) property owners may choose to become willing sellers.

As stated previously, the purpose of the Master Plan is to provide the CICT with a long term vision for the Chouteau Island complex. With private property ownership likely to continue into the future, the existing land uses, as well as future land uses of Chouteau Island, may not be consistent with the long term Master Plan vision.



# Section 4 - Implementation Plan

## 4.1 PRIORITY PROJECTS

### 4.1.1 Introduction

The costs of the recommended improvements contained in the Master Plan for Chouteau Island total approximately \$26.1 million. The cost includes construction of the circulation systems, environmental restoration and facility improvements.

A 35% contingency has been added to all estimated costs to account for miscellaneous items, unknown items, planning plus design fees and construction administration fees. The costs do not include maintenance, operations, acquisition, escalation or administrative costs. The costs are based on mid-year 2002 and on construction carried out by a general contractor selected by competitive bid.

### 4.1.2 Costs Distribution

Approximately seventy-two (72%) or \$18.9 million of the Master Plan's estimated construction cost is allocated to improvements on land currently in public ownership. Publicly held land (COE, IDNR and the City Of Madison) accounts for 76% of the total land area in the Chouteau Island complex.

### 4.1.3 Priority Project Formulation

In addition to determining the overall cost of recommended improvements contained in the Master Plan, a list of priority projects have been identified and formulated on the following criteria:

- Connectivity between Illinois and Missouri trail systems
- Projects implemented on publicly held land
- Visitor orientation and comfort
- Visitor access to public land
- Habitat enhancement

### 4.1.4 Priority Project List

The following priority project list totals \$12.5 million, which represents 48% of the total recommended Master Plan cost. These proposed improvements provide the essential components of trails and roads at a cost of \$3.2 million; environmental restoration at \$5.5 million; and visitor orientation and comfort at \$3.8 million.

The numerical order of this list does not imply priority.

1. Toll Booth Visitor Center \$ 2,412,450  
Development of a Visitor Center fashioned after the original toll booth at the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge. Project includes Phase I parking area (100 spaces) located atop the old landfill. Cost includes an accessible pedestrian ramp linking the parking and the toll booth.
2. Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration \$ 622,350  
The environmental restoration of 245 acres in Areas 6 and 10 sponsored by the COE and IDNR.
3. Gabaret Island Access \$ 202,500  
Road access and gravel parking in Area 6 near Gabaret slough.
4. Canal Bridge Conversion \$ 611,000  
Convert existing bridge to one lane pedestrian/bicycle traffic, other lane to bi-directional roadway traffic.
5. Bike/Hike Trail \$ 460,835  
Asphalt bike/hike trail from the Canal Bridge to the Toll Booth Visitor Center with connection to the Confluence Bikeway.

6. Aesthetic Enhancements \$ 1,350,000  
Aesthetic enhancements including lighting, banners, plantings, public art, signage, etc., to the roadway corridor, from the Canal Bridge to the Toll Booth Visitor Center.
7. South Loop Road \$ 1,537,890  
South Loop Road from Canal Bridge to The Toll Booth Visitor Center to Chouteau Slough vehicle bridge, south of the existing landfill then back to Old Chain of Rocks Road. Includes spur road to Toll Booth Visitor Center and to Dam 27 parking area. Project dependant upon levee right-of-way acquisition.
8. Gabaret Island Multi-Use Trail \$ 370,660  
Gabaret Island levee top, loop trail. Initially this trail will be used as a multi-use trail, sections will be converted to bike/hike trails in the future.
9. Chouteau Slough Restoration \$ 1,377,000
10. Gabaret Slough Restoration \$ 918,000
11. Wetland & Prairie Mix Area Restoration (Area 7) \$ 2,610,900
12. Lewis & Clark Interpretive Marker \$ 67,500  
Designation of the Lewis & Clark Campsite on south Gabaret Island including marker, display, trail and signage.



## 4.2 COST ESTIMATE SUMMARY

The following is a cost summary of the Master Plan recommendation and is organized by Circulation Systems, Area Restoration and Area Improvements. Appendix F contains detailed cost estimates used to formulate the total cost summary.

CIRCULATION SYSTEMS		COST
Bike/Hike Trails		\$ 1,813,952
Multi-Use Trails		\$ 1,039,301
Equestrian Trails		\$ 548,244
Nature Trails		\$ 588,030
Vehicular Circulation (not including parking areas)		\$ 4,274,432
Canal Bridge Improvements		\$ 611,010
Subtotal Circulation Systems		\$ 8,874,970
AREA RESTORATIONS	ACRES RESTORED	
1. Green Viewshed Corridor Area	250	\$ 660,150
2. Orientation and Interpretive Area	40	\$ 178,200
3. Environmental Education Area	115	\$ 476,550
4. Green Use Area	0	\$ -
5. Equestrian Staging Area	20	\$ 45,900
6. Slough Restoration Area	460	\$ 3,743,550
7. Wetland & Prairie Mix Area	620	\$ 2,610,900
8. South Reforestation Area	60	\$ 189,000
9. Mosenthein Island Area	200	\$ 432,000
10. River Access Area	285	\$ 768,150
11. Recreation Area	265	\$ 965,250
12. Habitat Restoration Area	110	\$ 402,300
13. North Reforestation Area	30	\$ 124,200
14. Off-Site Commercial Use Area	0	\$ -
Subtotal Area Restorations	2,455	\$ 10,596,150
AREA IMPROVEMENTS		
1. Green Viewshed Corridor Area		\$ -
2. Orientation and Interpretive Area		\$ 2,479,950
3. Environmental Education Area		\$ 840,780
4. Green Use Area		\$ 145,170
5. Equestrian Staging Area		\$ 273,362
6. Slough Restoration Area		\$ 1,225,422
7. Wetland & Prairie Mix Area		\$ 180,981
8. South Reforestation Area		\$ 67,500
9. Mosenthein Island Area		\$ 1,620
10. River Access Area		\$ 187,920
11. Recreation Area		\$ 1,145,259
12. Habitat Restoration Area		\$ 15,120
13. North Reforestation Area		\$ 49,410
14. Off-Site Commercial Use Area		\$ -
Subtotal Area Improvements		\$ 6,612,493
Total Circulation, Restoration & Improvements		\$ 26,083,613