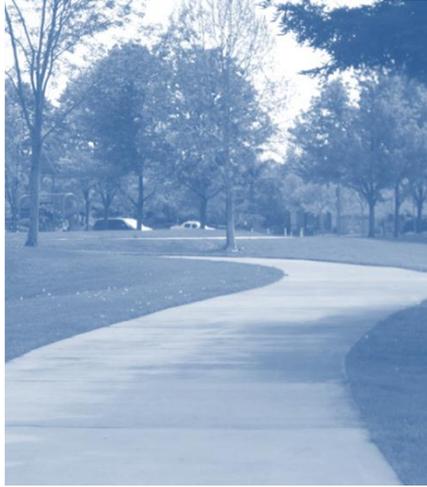


CHAPTER 4

Connectivity



Connectivity

Overview

One of the key concepts in the Minot River Front and Center Plan and the 2012 Minot Comprehensive Plan is connectivity – connections within neighborhoods, between neighborhoods, between Downtown and the neighborhoods, and to key destinations in the City.

Connectivity for automobiles is important and will continue to be part of the transportation system in Minot, but increasingly, pedestrian, bicycle and public transit connections are important as well. Research has shown that people in cities with well-designed sidewalk and trail systems are healthier and that such places enjoy higher overall property values too.

To the extent that Minot can encourage walking and biking, the City will enjoy a higher quality of life.

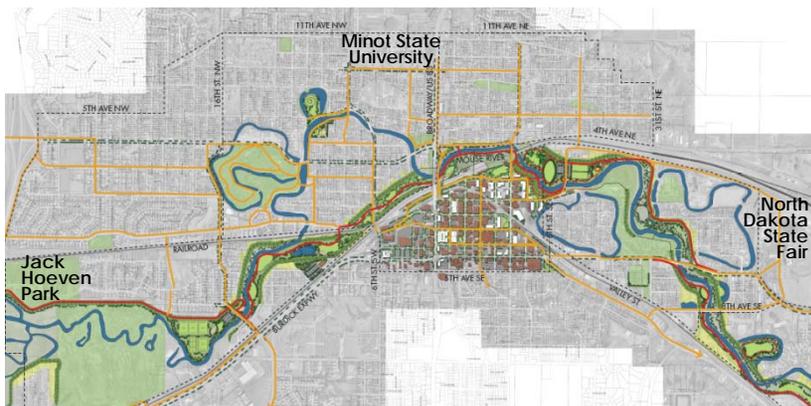
The connectivity envisioned in this Plan owes much of its structure to the future greenway to be established within the planned flood mitigation project – the wide swath of green space designed to handle significant flood events. This greenway will enable connecting parts of Minot in ways that would have been difficult in the past.

Three key features in Minot will be connected with this greenway and supporting connections – Downtown, Oak Park and Roosevelt Park. The two parks, each a half mile from the edge of Downtown, are the largest open spaces in the heart of Minot, and creating connections into and through Downtown with these parks will foster a more active lifestyle for the neighborhoods included in this Plan.



In the larger context of the whole study area, there are connections to other significant Minot destinations beyond these first three:

- Minot State University
- Jack Hoeven Baseball Park
- North Dakota State Fair



Connectivity Elements

There are four elements to the connectivity in this plan:

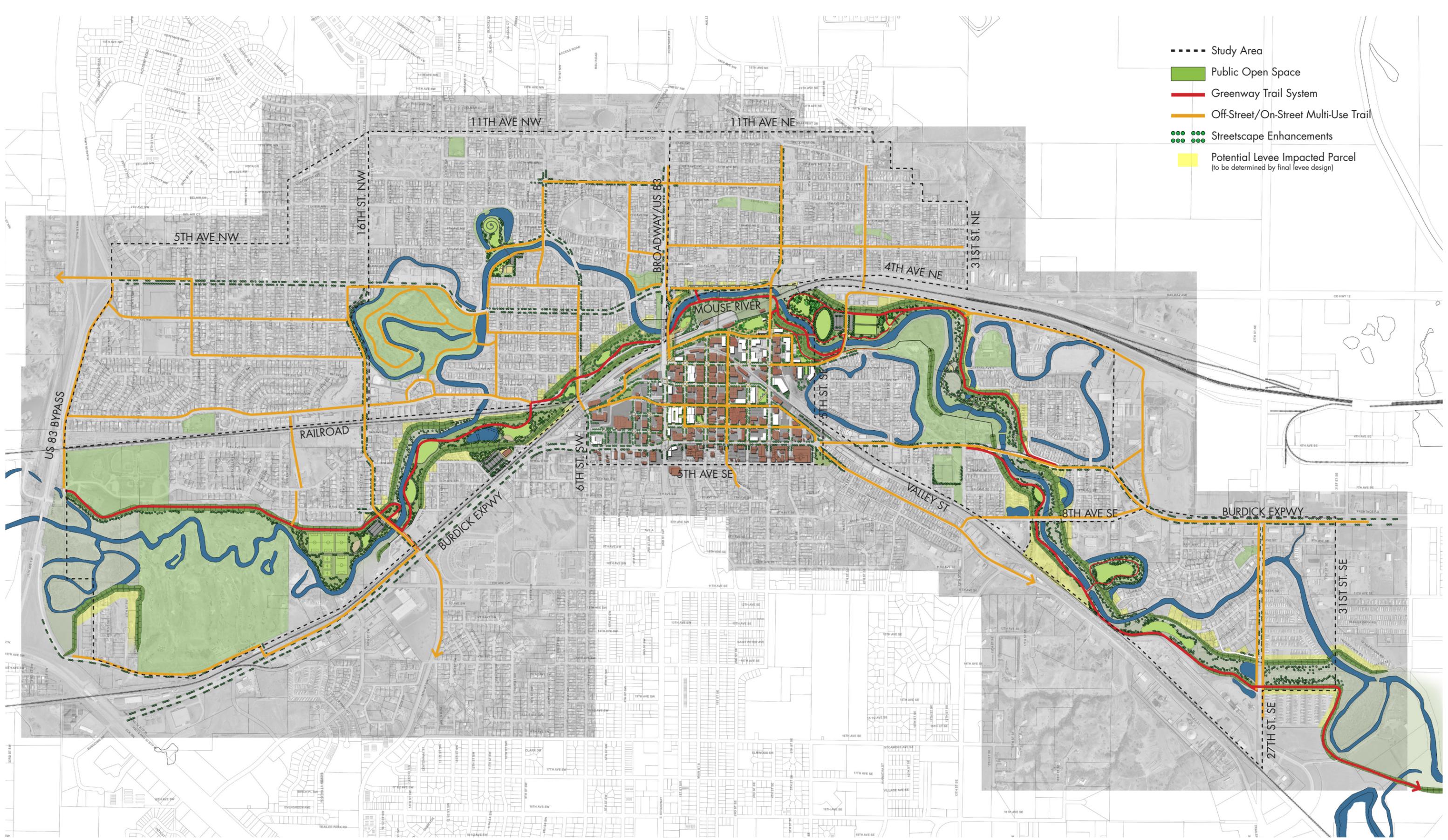
- Public open space
- Greenway (levee) trail system
- Off-street and on-street multi-use trails
- Streetscape enhancements

These are illustrated on the overall Greenway Connections map on the following page, and discussed below.

Public Open Space

The public open space starts with public parks, which currently within the study area include the following:

- Oak Park
- Roosevelt Park
- Riverside Park
- Nubbin Park
- Jack Hoeven Baseball Park
- Dakota Bark Park
- Souris Valley Golf Course
- Wee Links Golf Park
- Moose Park
- 11th and 11th Park
- Leach Park
- Hammond Park
- Roosevelt Rink
- Corbett Field
- Green Valley Park



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Each of these has varying facilities and degrees of access and connectivity to their respective neighborhoods, but they all provide green space and recreation.

There also new public open spaces illustrated within the floodway itself, in concept only, as the final design of the flood mitigation project has not been finalized. But the greenway offers a great opportunity to expand the amount of green space available to residents and visitors to central Minot.



Mouse River on the east side of Oak Park

In addition, there are a number of schools in the study area, which add to the open space and recreational opportunities:

- Perkett Elementary
- Longfellow Elementary
- Roosevelt Elementary
- McKinley Elementary
- Sunnyside Elementary
- Minot High School Central Campus
- Minot State University



Roosevelt Elementary School

Greenway Trail System

A key feature of the Plan is a future greenway trail within and along the floodway and its associated levees, shown in red on the map. This is intended to run the length of the Mouse River greenway, connecting the east and west sides of Minot, sometime on the north side of the river, sometimes on the south. The trail will make use of standard at-grade street intersections, plus above-grade overpasses at busier streets like 16th Street SW and 27th Street SE, and under-street crossings, such as Broadway, 3rd Street NE, and Burdick Expressway.



Future greenway trail connections are planned under the Broadway bridge



Off-Street and On-Street Multi-Use Trails

Connecting to the public open spaces, the greenway and the greenway trial are a series of trail, both off-street and on-street, for pedestrians and bicycles. These are illustrated in orange on the attached map and follow city streets in most instances, connecting the neighborhoods with key destinations and the greenway. These are described in more detail in each neighborhood plan and will need to be explored more fully as to their exact location and design, within the context of an overall system and individual neighborhood planning projects.

Both on-street and off-street trail will complement the major open space system and provide connections within and around neighborhoods. Off-street trails provide more safety and convenience, but require right-of-way, which may or may not be readily available on a given street. On-street bike lanes do not provide the same level of comfort and safety but can often be implemented with careful planning and signage. Proposed links in such a system are detailed in the individual neighborhood plans.

Trail on 4th Avenue NE



Streetscape Enhancements

On a number of existing streets, streetscape enhancements are proposed, especially in the Downtown area, which will make connections easier and more enjoyable. This can include improvements to sidewalks, addition of trees and other landscaping, buffers to traffic, lighting and other features.



Conclusion

Taken together, the various connections will develop over time as specific projects are undertaken. The parks, schools, and other institutions will be connected with Downtown and each other in a seamless network of open spaces, trails, sidewalks and streets, providing people of all ages many opportunities to recreate, exercise, run errands, and connect with one another.

