



R/UDAT

**RED RIVER VISIONS
FARGO MOORHEAD**

NA9127
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1989
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REGIONAL/URBAN DESIGN ASSISTANCE TEAM

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS



A New Attitude About the River



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The American Institute of Architects.

October 2, 1989

To The Citizens of the Red River Valley:

What a unique and special resource you have in the Red River. The history of this region and its communities is linked inseparably to the river. Yet, in recent years it seems that this history of dependence upon and responsibility for the river has been forgotten. We are encouraged to see this attitude changing. There is evidence of a renewed awareness of the river's value and your responsibility as its stewards.

During the last four days you have shared with us your vision and your enthusiasm. We have enjoyed your hospitality and have sought to develop an understanding of your concerns and values. As outsiders, we can't expect to know your community and your river as well as you do, but we hope our perspective may shed new light on the problems and opportunities of the river.

With this report we offer you some ideas to consider. Rather than a grand plan that redirects your efforts in a new direction, we are suggesting ideas to reinforce the direction in which you are already headed.

We believe this is the right time to initiate a series of actions and programs that will capitalize on the positive potential of the river and result in a renewed sense of pride about your river heritage.

It has been a joy and a privilege to work with you over this weekend. It is our sincere wish that our efforts have been helpful and that you will move forward together in response to the great opportunity that lies ahead.

Sincerely,

Jerome R. Ernst, AIA, AICP
Chairman

James Bock
Ralph B. Grieme, Jr.
Mark Johnson, ASLA
Richard L. Ramsey, ASLA
James H. Thorp, Ph.D.
Leonard Vopnfjord

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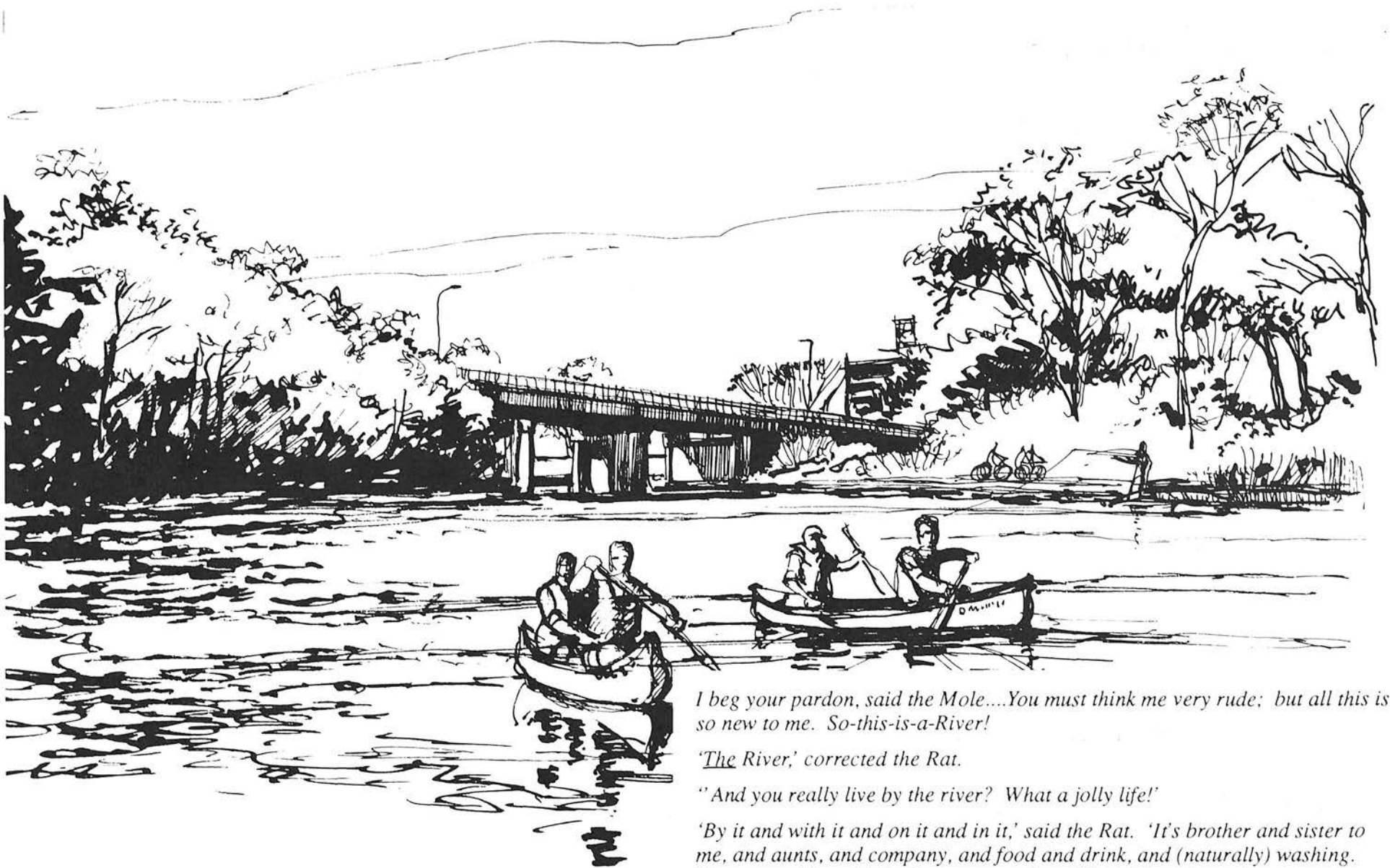
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I beg your pardon, said the Mole....You must think me very rude; but all this is so new to me. So-this-is-a-River!

'The River,' corrected the Rat.

"And you really live by the river? What a jolly life!"

'By it and with it and on it and in it,' said the Rat. 'It's brother and sister to me, and aunts, and company, and food and drink, and (naturally) washing. It's my world, and I don't want any other. What it hasn't got is not worth having, and what it doesn't know is not worth knowing. Lord! the times we've had together! Whether in winter or summer, spring or autumn, it's always got its fun and its excitements.

From The Wind in the Willows, by Kenneth Grahame

A New Attitude about the River

Something has been happening in Fargo-Moorhead. Shh! If you listen, you can hear it. A momentum is building; people are in motion. Where is this leading?

There is an undefined and unrecognized desire growing in the citizens of Fargo-Moorhead to return to the origins of the community, to experience another "homecoming". This journey would not be a return to the "old country," as was the celebrated voyage of the Hjemkomst.

This new homecoming will be a return to a river heritage which has been all but forgotten, even though the river still has a major impact on the lives of the people here.

In the true sense of a proud prairie economic center, the community grew on the land and drew its economic life from the products of the earth. But, if the soil is "Mother", then water is "Father", the indispensable, enriching force which causes the bounty. For Fargo-Moorhead,

water means something more. It is a river, the Red River, "The Red." It is the reason that the community began where, when, and how it did. The Red is truly the Father of the community. The strength, force, and flow of the Red River made it a viable economic link to the rest of the world. The Red allowed the prairie to empty its harvest into two growing nations. The River dominated long before the age of the locomotive so that the roots of Fargo-Moorhead were deeply planted along its banks.

The Red is more than a stream running through Fargo-Moorhead, more than a waterway connecting south to north, and more than a channel carrying water by the cities' doorsteps. The Red threads its way between two communities. It stitches together boundaries, ties together common values, and knits the spirits of young and old into the fabric of history which engulfs them.

As the commercial importance of the river subsided with the advent of rail and highways, the citizens maintained their connection with the Red. It remained the joining element between the communities, the place where the citizens came to recreate, the uniting boundary over which they alternately crossed to thwart the restrictive rules of one state government or the other. It was the backdrop to the outward growth as each community absorbed more new residents.





A New Attitude about the River

The Red is still today the dominant natural feature in the plain of western Minnesota and eastern North Dakota. Consequently, even up to the late 1950's it was a natural magnet drawing the community to its banks for recreation. Swimming, boating, fishing, hunting, sledding, tobogganing, ice skating, hockey each in its season enjoyed wide participation. The River also nurtured the communities' cultural growth providing staging areas for musical concerts, dancing, drama and historical dramas.

It appears that for a time the river's heritage has been forgotten by the majority of its neighbors. The relevance of "origins" and the "historical" context that unifies have slipped away from more recent generations. Perhaps the somewhat overprotective urgings of parents and grandparents to "Stay away from the water!" has generated fear of the river. Perhaps it was the post war attitude that stressed value only in "progress", modernity and newness that caused the river to be abandoned in the minds of the citizens. It was in this same period that the respective cities removed the structural heritage along the river with urban renewal. Perhaps, also the competition from outward growth and alternative cultural and recreational opportunities simply caused nearly everyone to turn away from the river for a time. But "The times, they are a changin'!"

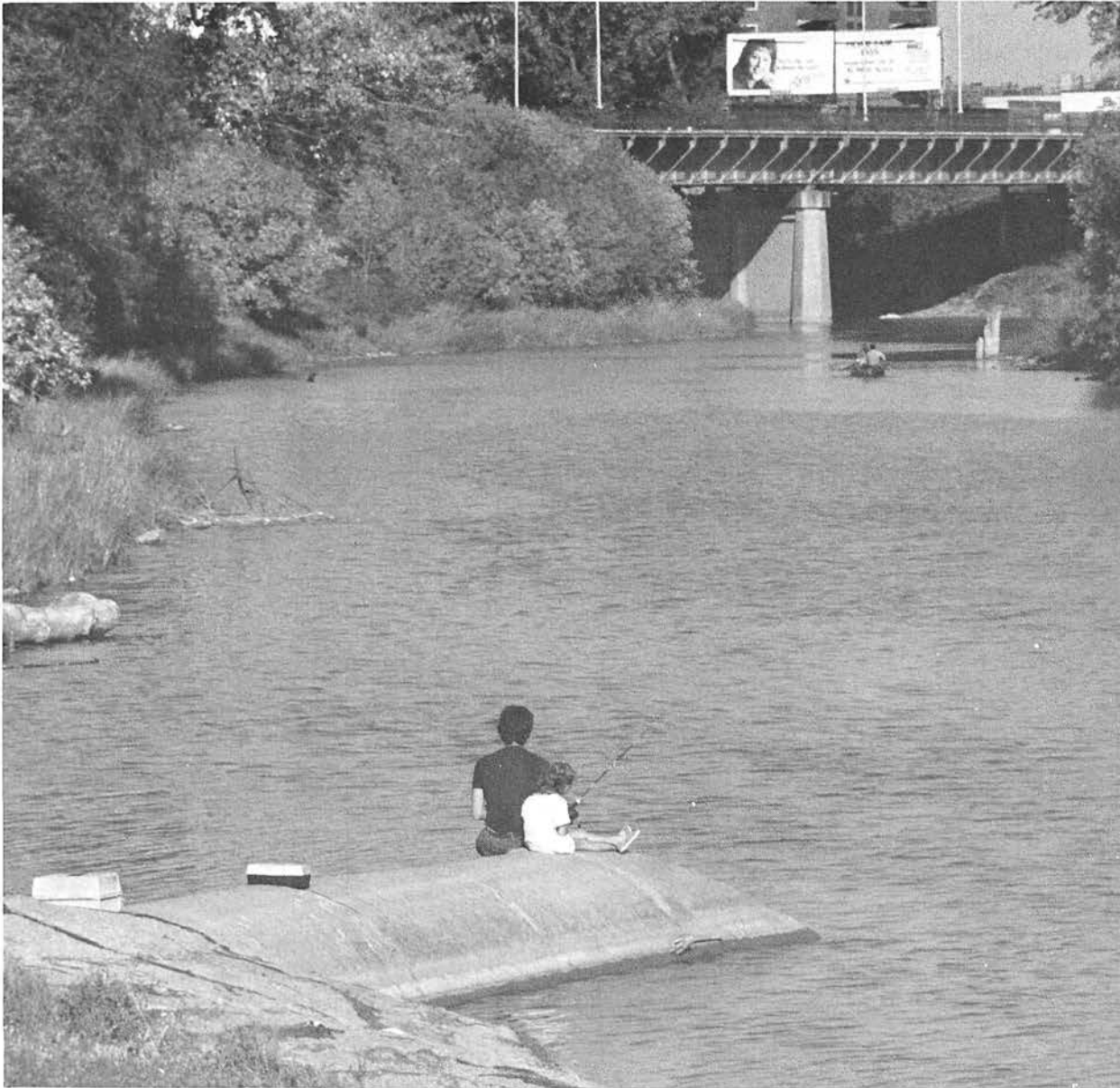
As in other parts of the country, there is a



growing sense of a need to be rejoined with heritage, roots and origins; and a need to understand communities as a unique place that did not happen without purpose. This realization is accompanied by a renewed sense of pride and an ability to appreciate the often simpler and more basic elements of the past. Once begun, the community is then free to regain an appreciation of things lost. This is beginning to happen in Fargo-Moorhead.

The river can be and is being appreciated again as a river, actually as a Living River. In their early years, Fargo and Moorhead clung to the river and built upon the advantages it offered; both commercial and recreational. But its citizens have lost the ability to fully appreciate the nature of a living river. A living river is unpredictable and ever changing. Floods of varying degree occur; over time the banks shift, sometimes suddenly; dry years appear and the life-giving water almost disappears; and, on occasion, carelessness claims a life. It is not surprising that first reactions to these occurrences would breed fear and hostility. The result, quite predictably, might be to move away from the river, both physically and psychologically. People might well, over the generations, sever connections and react suspiciously when it comes to dealing with the river. But, as The Red adjusts, so can the community. There is now a better understanding of the limits within which the river exer-

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cises its power. Built-up areas once ravaged by floods have now been returned to a riverine environment to avoid past mistakes. Water levels are now controlled. Communities can again begin to understand the river and are beginning to develop an appreciation for the opportunities it offers.

The Red does more than play a role in the activity of the city. It acts as a stage for the plays of those who come to know and enjoy it. It provides a basis for common ground, east and west. It causes people to come together, to interact and to move forward on issues of common concern. The Red is indeed the bridge between the communities of Fargo and Moorhead. It is not the River which needs to be bridged; rather, it is the people who come to know it who will bridge the community differences to build a common spirit and a foundation for action.

Today, there may be talk in the community about negativism, divisiveness, non-cooperation and fragmented government which only highlights the understandable differences of opinion and approaches to problems. Much of this talk has focused on the river and how to manage it. In a sense the "forgotten" river has come in the minds of some to represent all that is wrong with the community. But this is a misplaced attitude, because the river is to visitors a much more striking example of what is vibrant and alive and which differentiates

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this community from all others in the vast plains. Outsiders can see its unifying force bringing the community together to discuss their future - they are inescapably tied to each other. It can be heard in discussion about community leadership and unity. It can be seen in the numerous examples of community cooperation such as the Red River Steering Committee, the Visitors and Convention Bureau, and the Council of Governments. The momentum toward unity and cooperation has begun and will continue to grow as a natural and necessary force in the community. The Red will help make it happen as it demands that the community reckon with its might and seize the opportunities it has placed on the doorstep.

REMEMBER THE FUTURE

To see a vibrant future for Fargo-Moorhead, the community only needs to do is look to itself and to its river heritage. This is a river community, perhaps somewhat out of context in a prairie setting, but a full-fledged rivertown just the same. It has all of the inherent pluses and minuses of rivertowns both big and small. Fargo-Moorhead is a beautiful, nearly an ideal community. The Red is a beautiful, largely unspoiled, underutilized and grossly underappreciated natural resource that was, and should again be, the signature identity of Fargo-Moorhead. No matter how easily some have tried to forget it, it won't let itself be forgotten.

Its floods are constant reminders of its presence and its power to affect the life of the community. It, like all beautiful and powerful rivers, deserves the communities' pride, care, nurturing and use. Perhaps most of all, it demands respect. Its existence and history cries out for celebration of all of the good which it has meant to the city and all that it can mean to the future.

Embrace the River! Care for it and nurture it as it has nurtured the community in the past. Respect it by making it safer while still recognizing the nature of rivers is to be beyond total

control and predictability. Use the River by relishing and participating in its natural beauty and the opportunity it brings for enjoyment and wholesome fun. Most of all, celebrate it by acknowledging its history, use it to unify the community and utilize the identity to promote the community.





The pageant of the river bank had marched steadily along, unfolding itself in scene-pictures that succeeded each other in stately procession. Purple loosestrife arrived early, shaking luxuriant tangled locks along the edge of the mirror whence its own face laughed back at it. Willow-herb, tender and wistful like a pink sunset cloud was not slow to follow. Comfrey, the purple hand-in-hand with the white, crept forth to take its place in the line; and at last one morning the diffident and delaying dog-rose stepped delicately on the stage, and one knew, as it string-music had announced it in stately chords that strayed into a gavotte, that June at last was here.

From The Wind in the Willows, by Kenneth Grahame

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AN ECOLOGICAL VIEW OF THE RIVER

People who consider the often crystal clear waters of Minnesota lakes as the only acceptable type of aquatic ecosystem for fishing and water recreation, usually view the Red River as a dirty, polluted, hazardous system that should be avoided at all costs. Parents admonish their children to “stay away from the river”, and many adults visiting the park to commune with the beautiful terrestrial habitat scrupulously avoid the “ugly” river that meanders through the Fargo-Moorhead region.

Is this attitude reasonable? Should the river be an object of scorn rather than a subject of pride? “No, on all counts!” affirms the BR/UDAT committee.

A misleading impression of the Red has resulted from a basic misunderstanding about the disparate nature of rivers and lakes. Northern glacial lakes, such as those in Minnesota, tend to be quite clear and relatively unproductive unless polluted (scientists classify them as oligotrophic or mesoeutrophic systems). In contrast, rivers east of the Rockies are usually turbid streams, regardless of their productivity or pollution levels. Although this natural turbidity leaves the false impression of pollution, midwestern rivers often, unfortunately,

carry some pollutants from agriculture or urban environments. Because we humans as a whole frequently fail to respect our natural heritage, our rivers are rarely pristine. Given that somewhat depressing analysis, the question remains, “For a midwestern stream, is the Red River and its surrounding floodplain, a disreputable aquatic ecosystem which should be avoided at all costs?” Again, the answer is an emphatic, “No!”

The Red River of the middle part of this century was certainly in desperate straits. Severe pollution along its length caused the virtual extinction of all fish and aquatic life. Since that time, however, the river has staged a remarkable recovery, albeit not complete at this time. A 1986 report by the Minnesota Division of Fish and Wildlife recorded over 36 fish species, representing 12 families. Beaver, mink, muskrat, raccoon, red fox, deer, many



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birds and even an occasional moose are denizens of the river according to that report and the sightings of local residents. To have these mammal species in an urban environment is truly remarkable.

Early life on the plains was not easy, and it remains a challenge even today. The river provides the central contrast in this landscape, focusing all of the energy of the environment into one corridor. The city has changed the character of the river landscape. The landscape of the river should be managed in special ways. It is not the same as an interior park, surrounded by developed land; it is instead a continuous corridor which contacts the city in many places. The overall character of the landscape should be neither natural nor domestic. It should be developed in patterns of use and need, creating a diverse tapestry of types.

The R/UDAT Committee believes that the Red River and its floodplain deserves to be treated with respect and should be a source of a growing pride to the community. However, we also strongly caution the Fargo-Moorhead community to continue rigorous efforts to clean the Red River and manage its floodplain. As a means of accomplishing these goals, we offer you some suggestions and guidelines for implementing a program for the management and improvement of the Red River corridor in the vicinity of Fargo-Moorhead.

Approach To Management And Development

After floods, safety concerns and water supply, wildlife were the most common river feature mentioned by the community. Wildlife are important points of contact for young and old. Whether in sighting birds, catching fish, or watching deer, riverine wildlife are a commonly held value in this community.

The river acts as a huge corridor for the movement of wildlife. Each type of wildlife needs the corridor not only to survive, but also to move north and south for migration or forage. Continuity of the wildlife corridor is therefore essential. The map indicates this continuity and highlights areas where improvement is needed. The poorest continuity occurs downtown, where three bridges and maintenance areas create a discontinuous corridor. There is a need here for replanting of riparian species of trees and shrubs. This does not mean a return to the wild, but it does require a higher density of natural cover than now exists. Perhaps schools could undertake a study, as part of an environmental education program, to define what frequency of key wildlife use this corridor today and as it is revegetated.

The R/UDAT committee believes that the general approach to management of river land should be one of stewardship rather than urban

development. Forestry and land management practices already in place in both communities should be continued and expanded with the objective of long-term habitat maintenance and enhancement. Over time, many areas now developed as mowed lawns and formal parks can be converted to wildlife habitat where frequent repetitive maintenance will be unnecessary. At the same time, the portions of the riverfront which support intensive human activity can be more highly developed and maintained in response to the heavier use. Management of the river forest is an important part of this environment. Harvesting and replacement of elms according to a strategic plan is critical. Coordination of reforestation between private owners and the two cities is crucial to redeveloping a healthy forest stand. Division of this area into the river proper and three landscape zones is envisioned.

The River Proper

The river proper should be managed in a way that maximizes the density and diversity of aquatic organisms. This might include retention of some snags within the channel as sites for feeding, breeding and hiding. Consultation with state and federal fish and wildlife authorities and local university scientists should make this task easier. The goal of a diverse river also means that a high water quality and a reasonable flow must be present. The most immediate hazards to the fish seem to be the

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outfalls from industrial and public wastes. We recommend that the only non-commercial vessels allowed on the river should be either non-motorized craft or boats propelled by electric motors. This will reduce both sound and water pollution.

Natural Riparian Edge

Throughout most of the corridor, a supralittoral zone of natural riparian vegetation 50 to 100 feet in width should be maintained as a natural wildlife habitat. Present forest prac-

tices including removal of sick and damaged trees should be continued with caution, and new species should be introduced where appropriate. The objective in these areas should be to develop a natural wildlife habitat and return the river edge to a native condition. Where non-native volunteer species have invaded an area, efforts should be made to return the habitat to its native condition over the long term. The DNR and various forestry agencies at the state level should be consulted for advice on the proper trees to plant and for

information on obtaining low cost nursery stock.

Natural Upland Habitat

In some upland areas, land now dedicated to informal lawns and open ground can be returned to thickets of natural understory vegetation. This should significantly increase bird and mammal diversity in those areas. Care in the development of these areas is necessary to ensure that issues of personal safety and visibility are addressed. Several large sites on oxbows north and south of the metropolitan area, however, have excellent potential for being retained and enhanced as significant areas of upland natural vegetation serving as wildlife incubators. Wildlife incubators are sites which should be managed as places especially for wildlife. The more frequent these are, the more valuable they will be. Some areas, such as the large oxbows to the north and south, should be developed as natural areas, without development for human use. On the north, across from the Seminary, these oxbows should not be managed, but instead should be allowed to flood, without debris removal, mowing or other controls. Paths should not be provided, but a nature guide could be established at the river, identifying plants and wildlife and indicating this area as a place to discover wildlife on its own terms. In the south, at the Harwood property, this oxbow could be developed as a natural area as well,



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but here there could be a self-guided nature trail developed, identifying the key wildlife, plants and processes of the floodplain. Access and parking should be provided, as well as a linkage to the future trail system. The acreage within these wildlife incubators need not be entirely wooded. Indeed, wildflower meadows next to woodlands create greater habitat complexity and can thereby enhance species diversity. Domestic crops planted in small

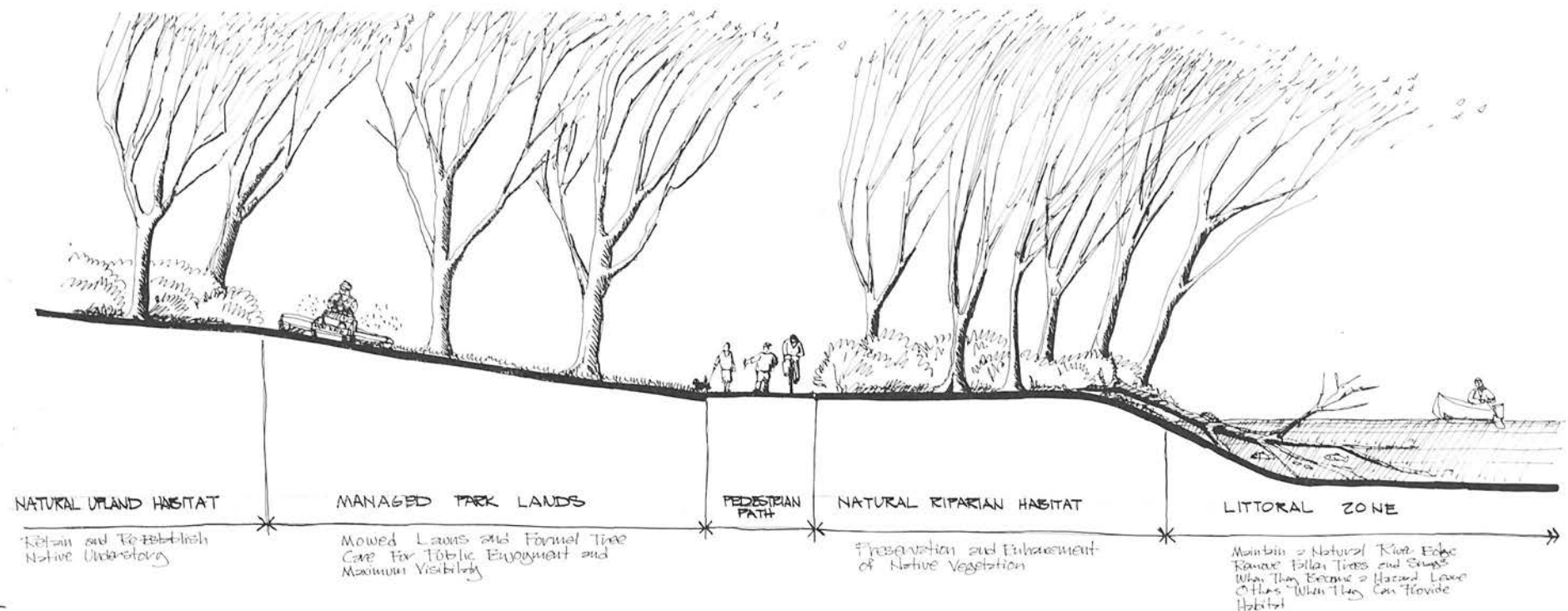
plots could serve as seasonal forage for wildlife. Private residents whose lands abut the river should be encouraged to follow these guidelines for public areas.

Managed Park Lands

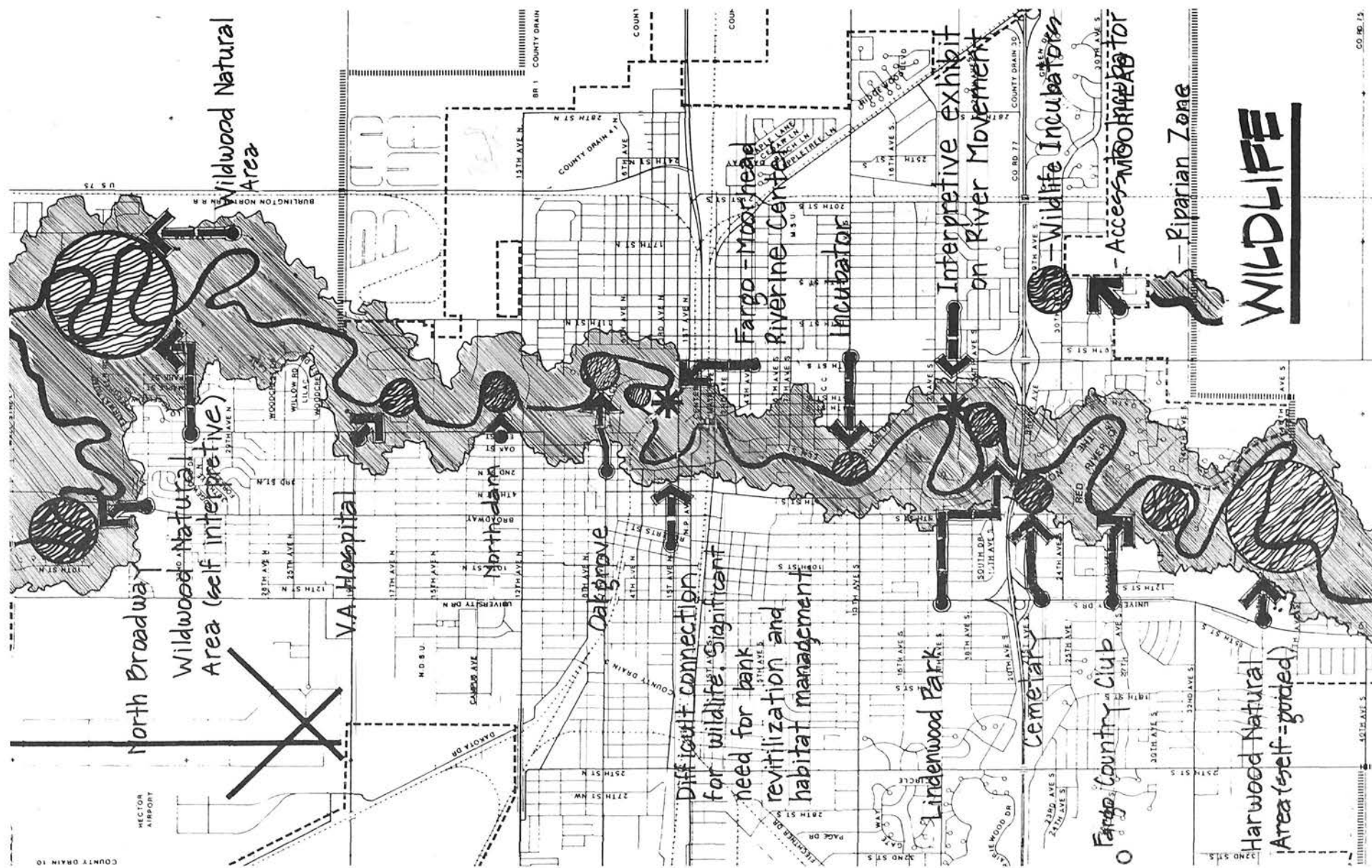
The Urban Parks are areas where active and passive recreation take place, usually surrounded by neighborhoods. Island Park and Gooseberry Park are good examples of appropriate urban park uses along the river. Each is

tightly related to a neighborhood, without denying the river its own character. Manicured lawns, playgrounds, parking areas, toilet facilities and other urban amenities are important to sustaining the use and beauty of these lands. It is critical that such development is confined only to such key sites, because they would detract from the overall river experience is overly developed.

As the total amount of open lawn area is



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reduced, more intensive maintenance and development of the heavily used park lands will be possible. Irrigation, drainage, and enhancement of lawn areas, development of seasonal floral displays, and introduction of special paving, lighting, artworks, and other urban park features can occur. The extensive sports fields provided by the park systems would continue to be an important active recreation resource in both communities.

In general, the landscape treatment of all areas within the floodplain should recognize the influence of the river. Soft forms and use of natural vegetation, informal paths, and removable park facilities seem to be appropriate

responses to the nature of the river. By avoiding large, heavy structures and built facilities in flood areas, substantial cleanup costs and the difficulties of construction on soft, potentially unstable soils can be avoided.

WATER QUANTITY AND QUALITY

Issues of flood water management have been central to the development of the Fargo-Moorhead area throughout its history. Since the 1940's, significant revisions to the river have been made to control flooding and today the communities have reached a state of relative equilibrium with the river. Concern con-

tinues over the nature of watershed management and the increasing likelihood of a significant and damaging flood in the future, but there appears to be a wider recognition of the role the river corridor plays in management of storm waters. Learning to live with the dynamics of a living river seems to be one answer to future flood control. Future fine tuning of the dike system along with development of extensive floodway areas in which no significant development occurs appears to be the way in which the community will come to terms with the river.

Much discussion occurred during the study period concerning sources of drinking water for the community in the future. Based on this discussion, we believe that the governments of Fargo and Moorhead are well aware of their future water demands and are taking appropriate steps to prevent possible future shortages. The possibility of obtaining water indirectly from the Missouri River seems promising but is obviously not a certainty. We suggest that both governments have an action plan for water acquisition that includes firm timetables for shifting from one alternative to another if the preferred water source does not develop at the anticipated rate.

From the data provided us it is apparent that the water quality of the river is acceptable for treatment for drinking water. Bad aspects of the water are seasonal (during low flow condi-



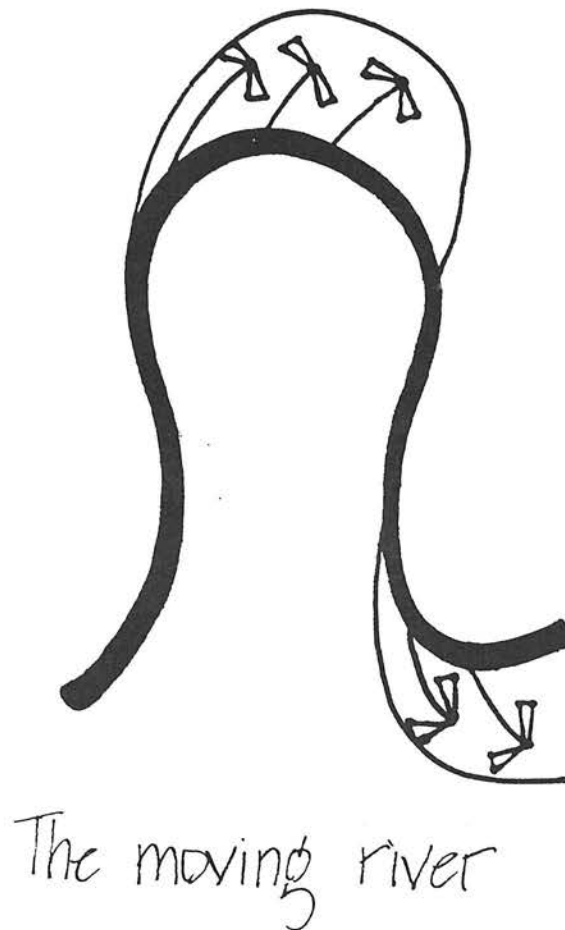
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tions) and can be partially rectified in the future by procurement of additional water from the Missouri River or other sources. Efforts should continue to improve the quality of the presently available water. Attention needs to be directed toward enhancing the efficiency of the Moorhead Waste Treatment Facility and the Crystal Sugar Treatment System. We also suggest that you closely monitor water quality factors upstream and attempt to influence officials in those areas to reduce the inputs of pollutants to the Red River.

The Movement of the River

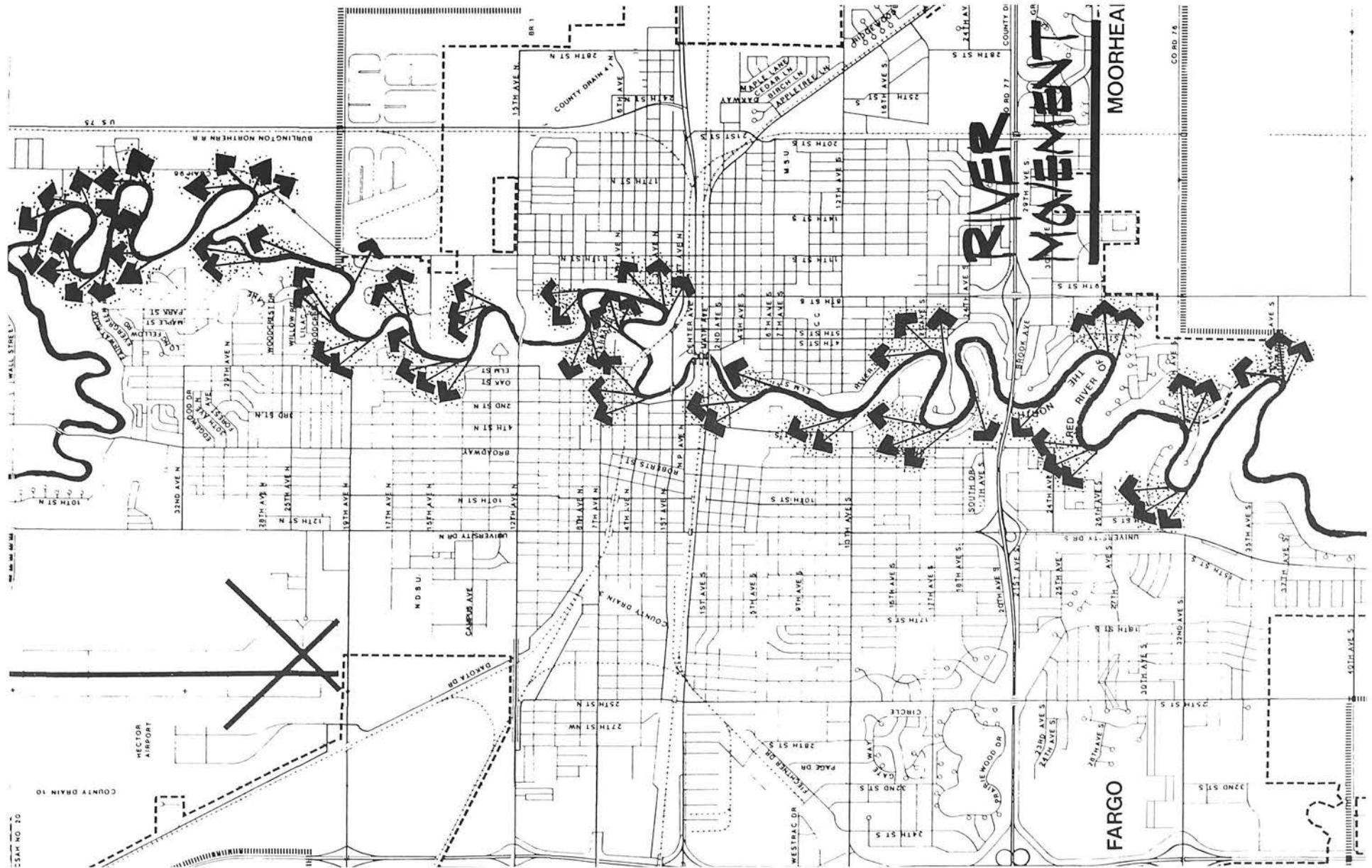
The river is well known for its annual flooding and bank slippage. This has been studied and documented extensively. Maps of soil slides and water damage are well defined. It is not well understood by the public how these processes work, however. The pattern of flooding and slippage follows predictable patterns. Because the surface geology of the area is almost uniformly silty, the river is able to act with impressive force on its banks. This action may not be fast, but over time the river desires to move forward, changing banks and shifting channels.

The river's movement is not random. It applies pressures on the outward sides of the oxbow bends, causing a scouring of the banks and a gradual movement of the river to the



north. Over great periods of time, whole oxbows can move. Someday each will cut through at the narrow points between them, leaving behind oxbow lakes and islands. Several of these are visible in the river today. Island Park and El Zagal are examples of former oxbow peninsulas which have been isolated by the cutting action of the river. These areas may still flood (where not protected), but they are now clear of the erosive force of the river. The neck of Gooseberry Park is an example. This area is experiencing significant slumping today, and within 50 or 100 years, the park may be an island.

In today's time frame this translates into bank erosion and slipping of soils. Slipping is also facilitated by floods, which saturate the riparian silts with water. As the flood recedes, the weight of the water in the soil above the river pushes the soil down, causing a flow of soil to the river. The slippage at Trollwood Park exemplifies this type of action. It is caused not by the water level of the river at low times, as some believe, but by the recession of the floodwaters. If these problems have increased in recent years it is more likely due to the increasing frequency of floods than it is to the increasing frequency of low water. Areas which are most subject to the direct scouring



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forces of the river are highlighted in the map, to illustrate the concept.

Dams: Safety and Pool Size

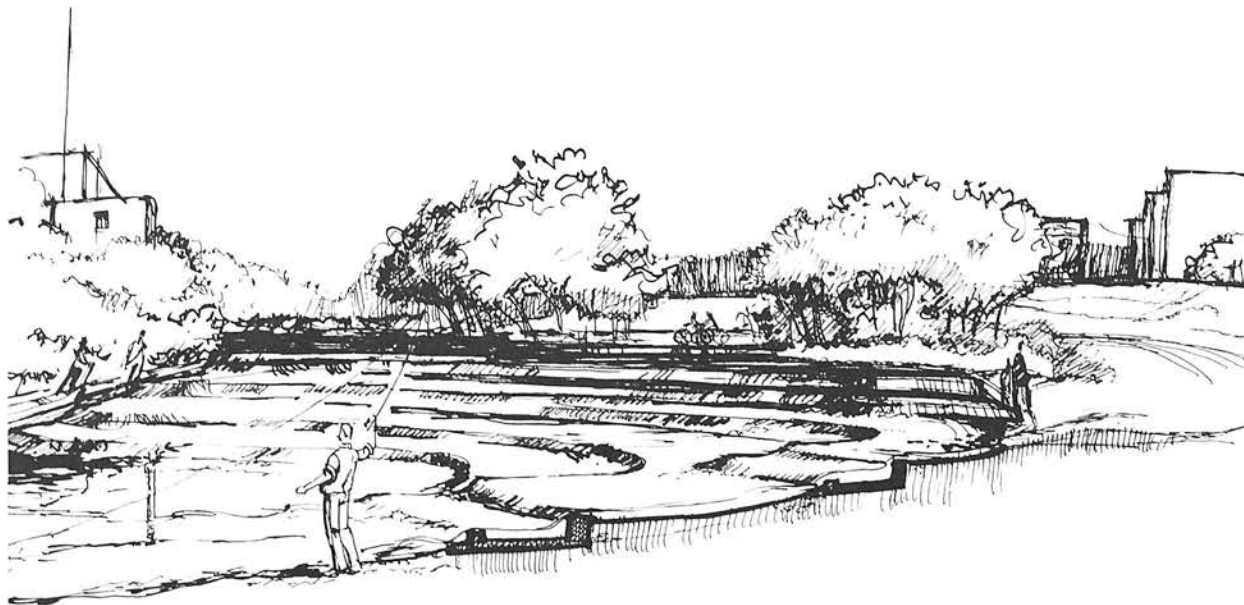
The negative attitudes about the Red River can be attributed to at least three general factors: safety, water quality, and water quantity (flooding and low flow). The R/UDAT committee feels that “safety” is the most pressing issue and the one whose resolution could, incidentally, have the most immediate impact on the public’s perception of the Red for the least amount of money. By safety, we are referring to the turbulence present below the current

Middle and North Dams.

We strongly encourage the modification of the existing Middle Dam as soon as possible and the alteration of the old North Dam in the near future if construction of a new north dam is to be delayed or canceled. The principal modification required is the installation of a steplike platform attached to the downstream side of the present structure. This platform would dissipate the energy produced by falling water without creating dangerous turbulence. One possible technique for building this platform would be to link large concrete blocks with cable into lowhead steps. We also advocate

the placement of warning signs around old and new dams. The present signs are inadequate; and while residents may be well aware of the danger of the dams, visitors to the area may not be cognizant of the problem.

The committee tends to favor construction of a new north dam at Cass 20 but does not feel we were provided sufficient information to make a definitive recommendation. The evidence was not convincing that a new dam would significantly influence bank stability, although that remains a possibility. The increased pool size appears to be the principal justification for building this dam. Its construction along with the removal of the old North Dam would provide a long reach of the river for navigation by recreational vessels. Removal of the old dam would also enhance safety by replacing a hazardous dam with a much safer structure. Arguments that the new dam would be unsafe because of limited access to fire and police vehicles seem invalid because the same argument applies to the old North Dam and because the road used to bring in construction equipment could be paved for permanent access. The most valid objection to the new dam appears to be that the City of Moorhead would have to relocate its existing effluent pipe or build storage lagoons to retain waste water during low flow conditions in the Red.



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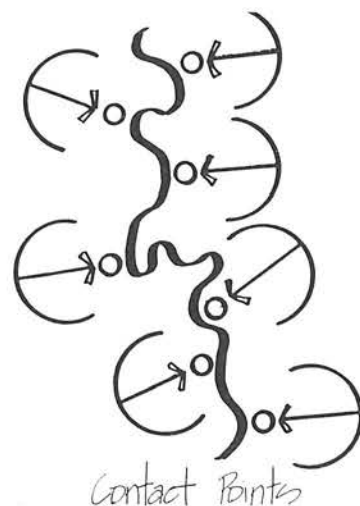
ACTIVITIES ON THE RIVER

'The Red River will become a positive focus for the community when a large share of the population knows, uses, and enjoys being near it. By creating a new image of safety, enhancing personal security, and giving people enjoyment, the Red will begin to grow a new, positive identity in the minds of the community.



Contact Points

One of the most important objectives of the R/UDAT is to bring people into contact with the River. Today, people's involvement is formed around recreation, water supply, and floods. Those who use the river for recreation now almost always do so in personal, individual ways. Recreation has organized components, but much of this activity is focused on organized sports, which occur on the Red more by coincidence more than by intent.



Flooding gives everyone cause to notice the River, as do hazards, crime, and accidents. People remember historic floods, celebrating them in the stories and lore of the past. Many fear the river, concerned that youth will be attracted to its dangers. Some are wary simply

because they do not use the River and cannot understand its workings. But these feelings need not dominate the view of the Red as an active place for people. Old activities must be reestablished, current activities must be reinforced, and new activities must be nurtured for the River to take its place at the heart of Fargo-Moorhead.

New ways of making contact with the River should involve broad groups. These new activities need to be focused on special river places resulting in new supporters and a new image of the Red River should be the result.

Today's use of the River corridor is extensive. For the size of the population, a very large area of parks exists on each side. Access to these parks is easy, parking is usually present (although not always adequate), and they are well utilized. Facilities may be lacking, especially for specific uses, but people generally cope, and many take advantage of the opportunities.

The striking fact is that all of these areas are essentially the same. There is a high percentage of open space along the neighborhoods which adjoin the floodplain, but by and large the areas are not focused. When they are, they are focused on competitive sports, picnicking or open play, activities which are possible in any number of parks around town. They do not emphasize contact with the river. Of course there are exceptions, such as Trollwood Park,

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where the Red is a backdrop for activity.

Contact points are places where special things happen along the River. They may be natural, urban, or almost unnoticeable except during a special event. Many contact points are in place today. People know and use them well. Parks, golf courses and ball fields are all contact points. They are only successful, however, if they involve people with the environment and especially if they involve them with the water. It is not enough to be there; you must be part of the place. For this reason, different kinds of contact points need to be established, maintained, and activated by programming and use.

For example, large areas of today's parks are largely open lawns, large trees, picnic areas, and parking lots. These properties have become parks because of their proximity to the river. Some are excellent parks, vital to a neighborhood. Others, however, are parks because there are few other perceivable uses for the floodplain area. In these cases, the character of the parks should be different. They should be distinct because they are part of the river. Traditional passive parks were designed as relief from the density of the city. Parks along the river need not have the same character.

This study recommends a variety of ways of defining and using contact points. These ideas are not set and the points may not be identified

in their best location. Those are detailed questions which only the community can properly define. The act of creating a contact point should come from the participation of interested groups, facilitated by community staff and leadership. A nature study contact point then, would probably involve birders and naturalists, while a historical contact point might include historical groups and cultural societies. Each interest group shares a responsibility to the river, an obligation to find, nurture, activate, and use the points which suit their interests.

The river is an impressive force in the environment, capable of floods or quietude. Before the community can define what the river should be, it must first listen to it. The Red has much to teach us about land, geology, wildlife, biology, water, engineering, and the human spirit. There is no one way to interact with the river, but there are many ways to communicate its lessons to the public.

The contact points begin with understanding what the Red has to offer.

Wildlife Interpretation

The team noted a strong interest on the part of the public regarding wildlife. Wildlife observation is one frequently mentioned way in which people throughout the community come to know the river. Like wildlife itself, citizen organizations with an interest in native birds





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and animals are not concerned with political boundaries. People with an interest in wild-life, therefore, form a powerful constituency with an interest in the Red.

Habitat enhancement measures mentioned earlier will help ensure vital continuing wild-life population. To broaden the use, enjoyment, and understanding of the Red, educational programs and activities should be promoted. The development of school programs, interpretive trails, community television, and other special programs by the individuals and agencies responsible for the stewardship of the Red as described under "Cooperation" in this report will bring greater numbers to the river and help them understand its role in their lives.



Trails

Trails, pedestrian, and bike paths are today's most visible public uses of the river. There is a surprisingly extensive system of trails in place today. Use can be quite heavy, and the trails are almost always occupied in daylight hours. Like any success story, the demand created only begs for a more extensive, more continuous system.

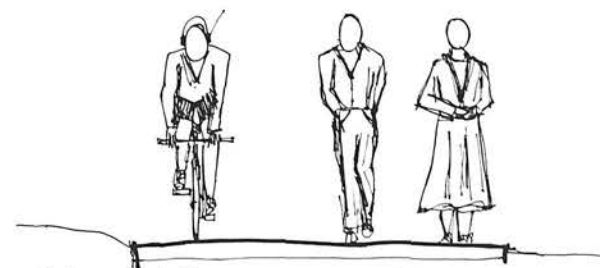


Access for everybody

Extension of the trails has taken place in the center of the community on almost every possible piece of public land. With the existing pedestrian bridges at Gooseberry Park and Oak Grove Park, it is nearly possible to make a bike loop without riding on a street. The few inadequacies in the trail system on current public land should be resolved as soon as practical.

Creating new trail corridors across private land is a topic of ongoing discussion in the community. In some places, negotiations and agreements with current owners will provide new access. Many riverfront property owners have located on the river to take advantage of the secluded setting, and they fear that public access behind their homes will reduce their privacy. This problem is one which may not be resolved initially, but in the long term should eventually be resolved in favor of a public path in the long term.

Rather than place the highest priority on access across private lands today, the emphasis on trail development should be on continuity of trail use. This depends on the establishment of a trail sign system, striping of trails in streets, development of trailheads in existing parks, and formation of new linkages across the river using light weight removable bridges as has been done previously. It is important in



Bikes and People may mix at low volume. Someday separate paths may be needed.

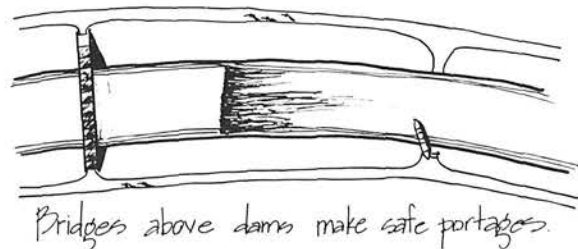
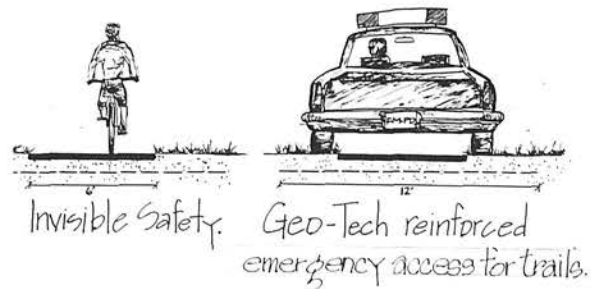
Visions

the short-term to provide access, support, continuity, and direction to the trail user. For future parcels annexed into the city, or for all new river front subdivisions, retention of at least one trail and riverside maintenance easement should be a prerequisite to approval.

The trail map proposes locations for trailheads, trail extensions, and new pedestrian bridges. These should be developed as land becomes available. Within these suggestions, those trails which provide immediate benefit should be developed first. An emphasis should be placed on obtaining trail continuity in the Oak Grove area where the trail today is discontinuous. Options do not include the use of the Second Street underpass, which is too busy and too small for safe passage. A bridge could be developed to the Moorhead side, connecting the central Moorhead cultural area into downtown Fargo. As a second option, a trail could be developed

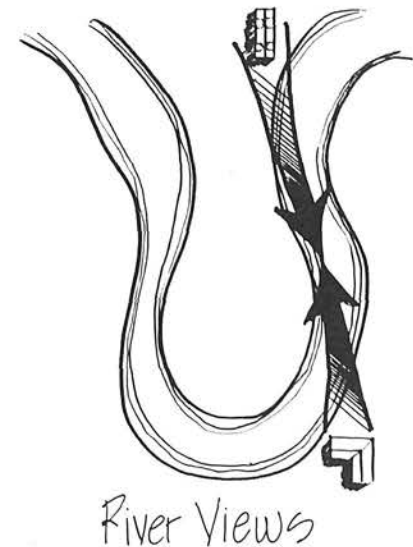
through the snow storage area, leading under the Burlington Northern bridge and then returning westward to pass into Oak Grove on the west side of Shotwell's greenhouses.

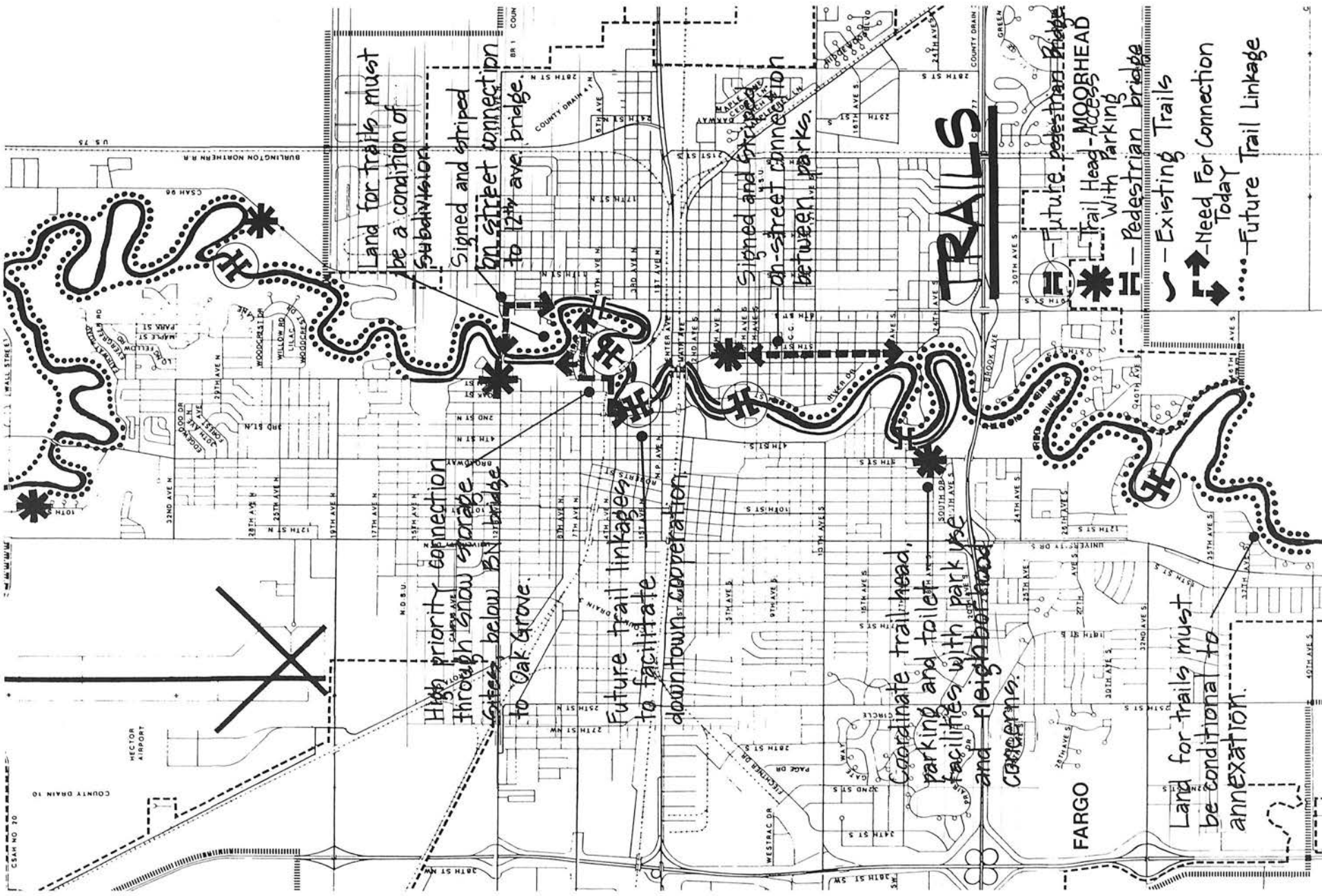
Other suggestions for linkages across the Red are important for planning purposes and for developing options, but may not be essential at this time.



Opportunity Sites

These sites are shown as opportunities for special uses which can take advantage of siting within safe proximity of the river. For example, each of these sites is now open land, high ground out of the floodplain, which is safe from slippage, and with special views down the river corridor. While the ownership of these sites varies, each could be designated according to the nature of surrounding uses to define the most appropriate use. For example, in the downtown, commercial uses such as cultural, office facilities or restaurants could benefit from proximity to the River.





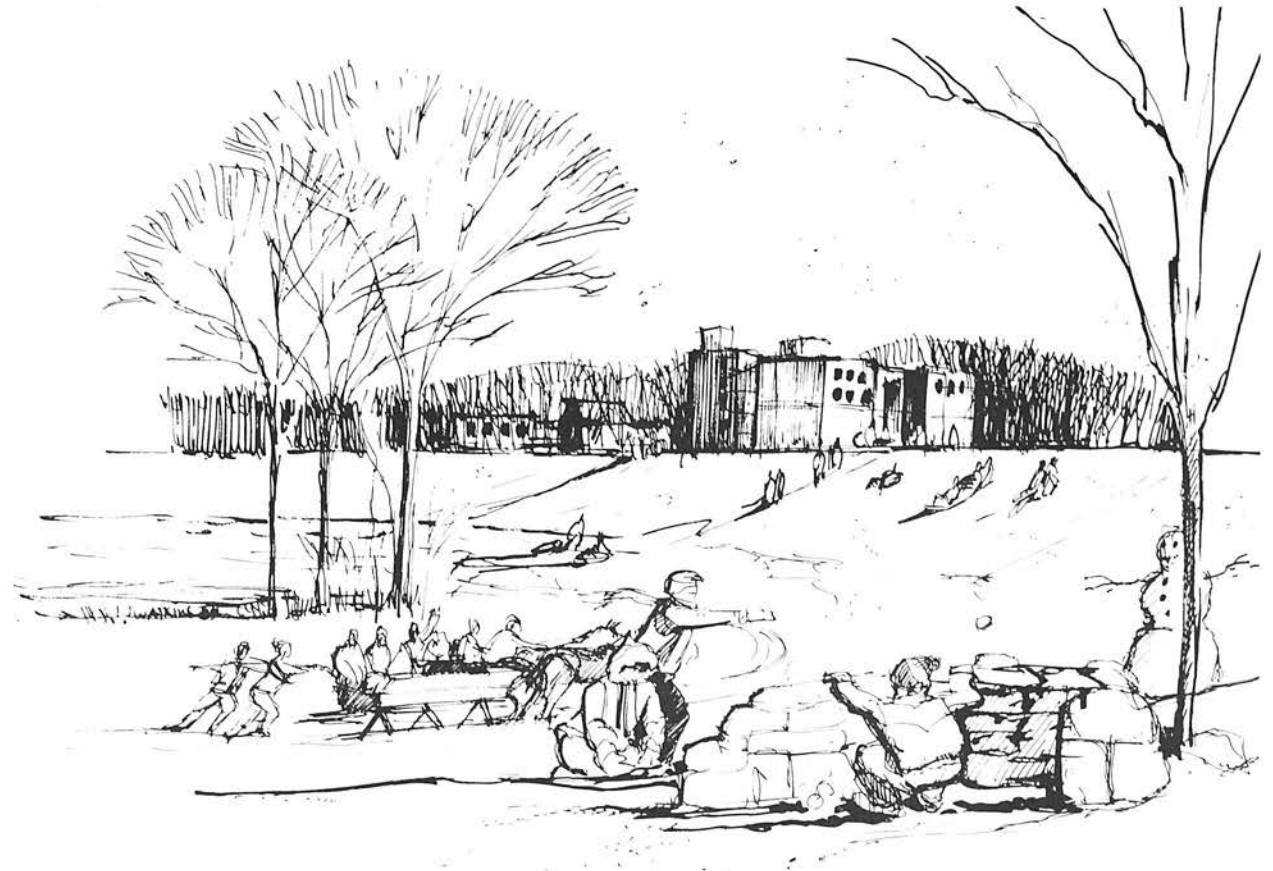
Visions

Seasons

In the morning, when I was fighting my way to school against the wind, I couldn't see anything but the road in front of me; but in the late afternoon, when I was coming home, the town looked bleak and desolate to me. The pale, cold light of winter sunset did not beautify - it was like the light of truth itself. When the smoky clouds hung low in the west and the red sun went down behind them, leaving a pink flush on the snowy roofs and the blue drifts, then the wind sprang up afresh, with a kind of bitter song, as if it said; 'This is reality, whether you like it or not. All those frivolities of summer, the light and shadow, the living mask of green that trembled over everything, they were lies, and this is what was underneath. This is the truth.' It was as if we were being punished for loving the the loveliness of summer.

From My Antonia, by Willa Cather

The seasons have a profound impact on this community. Nowhere is this more evident than along the river. The lush summer environment provides shade and the cooling effect of the water spaces seem closed and separated by the heavy foliage. The harsh winter environment becomes more visible and frozen, but it also becomes more accessible and secure. Vistas open up, providing new orientation and a distinct kind of contact with the environment. Cross-country skiing



is popular, and should be encouraged and supported. A warming house for skating, sledding and skiing could be provided, perhaps in Dike East or similar location where a safe skating pond could be created. Imagine the annual sight of skaters, and a winter festival with sleigh

rides, skiing, performance and competition, ice sculpture and of course, an annual Fargo-Moorhead snowball fight.

Winter trail use is as important as summer use. Linkages, signing and access all should be

Visions

designed with winter use in mind. It would not be necessary to maintain all facilities over the winter, but year-round trailheads, with at least one downtown, one north and one south location should be considered. With adequate shelter, related winter events could be programmed by the schools to maintain a spirit of involvement with the river, even in winter.

The nature center and interpretive trails should also consider winter education.

There is more to the seasonality than just hot and cold. Floods mark the passage of the year, followed by the distinct green-up in the flood zone. Autumn brings color, and new wildlife migrations.

Public Safety, Maintenance and Security

Public safety, maintenance of the trails and riverside, and a sense of security for the public are very important to the public's use and attitude toward the river. First, trails and dikes should be studied to create an emergency access plan to each location. Contingency plans need to be developed, including water access to remote areas. Widening of trails and rites of passage (for emergency purposes) over private land should be coordinated with the overall emergency response planning.

Parks and paths along rivers are places often thought of as dangerous. And in fact that can be the case. Perhaps the danger is statistically no greater than in a shopping mall parking lot or a back alley, but the risk to persons must be minimized. The system of river paths should receive special attention from the Police Departments. During summer months consideration should be given to a patrol officer on a bicycle moving through the parks along the river. If necessary, patrol efforts during night hours could be increased.

The public sector should pursue maintenance access, with prior planning, scheduling, and arrangement with owners, for necessary river maintenance. One important element of this is clearing and harvesting of diseased elms. This is a serious problem which should be ad-



Visions

dressed. For example, the noxious weeds officer of the city has a right of access to property for the purposes of removing noxious weeds. Perhaps this authority should be extended for the special purpose of coordinating owner removal of diseased wood.

Recommendations contained elsewhere in this report address the revisions and redesign of existing dams to improve safety as well as access.

Special Events and Festivals

Special events are one of the most important contact points with the river for the general public. Through seasonal events, competitive events, and festivals, the broader public can be brought to the riverfront in locations appropriate to each event. For example, canoeing could begin in the downtown area, while cultural or neighborhood events could begin in parks along the river, such as already happens at Trollwood Park.

Major winter and summer festivals should take place jointly between Dike East and Woodlawn Park using a floating bridge and performance raft on the water front in downtown Fargo in a similar manner, or at other central locations on the river.

RedFest (Summer River Festival) would involve the following activities in the summer:

- Fargo-Moorhead Fire Dept. tug-of-war over the river

- Dike to dike hike and bike races
- Human-powered boat races
- “Kinetics” race - a race where groups make human-powered vehicles which must race on the street down Broadway (even from as far away as West Acres) to Dike East, then race downstream to Mickelson Field - emphasis on the bizarre, decorated contraptions in a carnival atmosphere (similar to milk carton races in Minneapolis).
- Fishing derbies
- Volkswalk
- “A Taste of the Red” - an event where restaurants offer for-sale food in tent kiosks in a midway atmosphere along the River.
- A major emphasis on anything red

WhiteFest (Winter River Festival) with the following activities:

- FM Annual Snowball fight
- Skating on the Dike East Park - display, food, races
- Costume Skating Ball - major tent and huge bonfire, food, music
- Cross-country ski races
- Hockey
- Toboggan

- Human-powered “dog sled races” along trails on the river
- Ice sculpture
- Igloo contest
- Winter run
- Ice bike race
- Bike slalom down the Dike
- Torchlight ski down Broadway to Dike East, floats on sledges powered by horses or people
- Fireworks on a floating barge

Special Events:

- First, build on existing events
- C.A.R.T. race for Indy cars
- Establish a major footrace timed with another event such as softball tourney, etc.

Visions

A REDISCOVERED RIVERFRONT

"I'll meet you at the River Cafe on the terrace by the water. We'll have a bite and then walk to the concert."

Conversation on a light summer's eve in 1993.

All these are changes: altering streets, opening shops, putting up banners and markers

along new walking routes, and pouring new concrete. All the words and drawings in these pages are for the simple purpose of making places for people to spend their important time, or that occasional 45 minutes of walking, biking or sitting with a friend.

Imagine your walk — the staircase and path, the ox-bow island of trees left totally untouched, wood ducks on the water, runners on the path. Everyone has an individual role to

play in the system of an urban river.

Where the center city is there are people, cars, railroads, parking lots, customers looking for lunch, visitors looking for football tickets, someone seeking a quiet place to think. Cities have intense and busy places, and spots for solitude and strolls. Good rivers are like that.

Cities have mistakes - by passed ground, built things that cause problems as well as solve them, or opportunities missed that linger on. With work, mistakes are corrected, forgotten sites are redeveloped, and over time sins are forgiven.

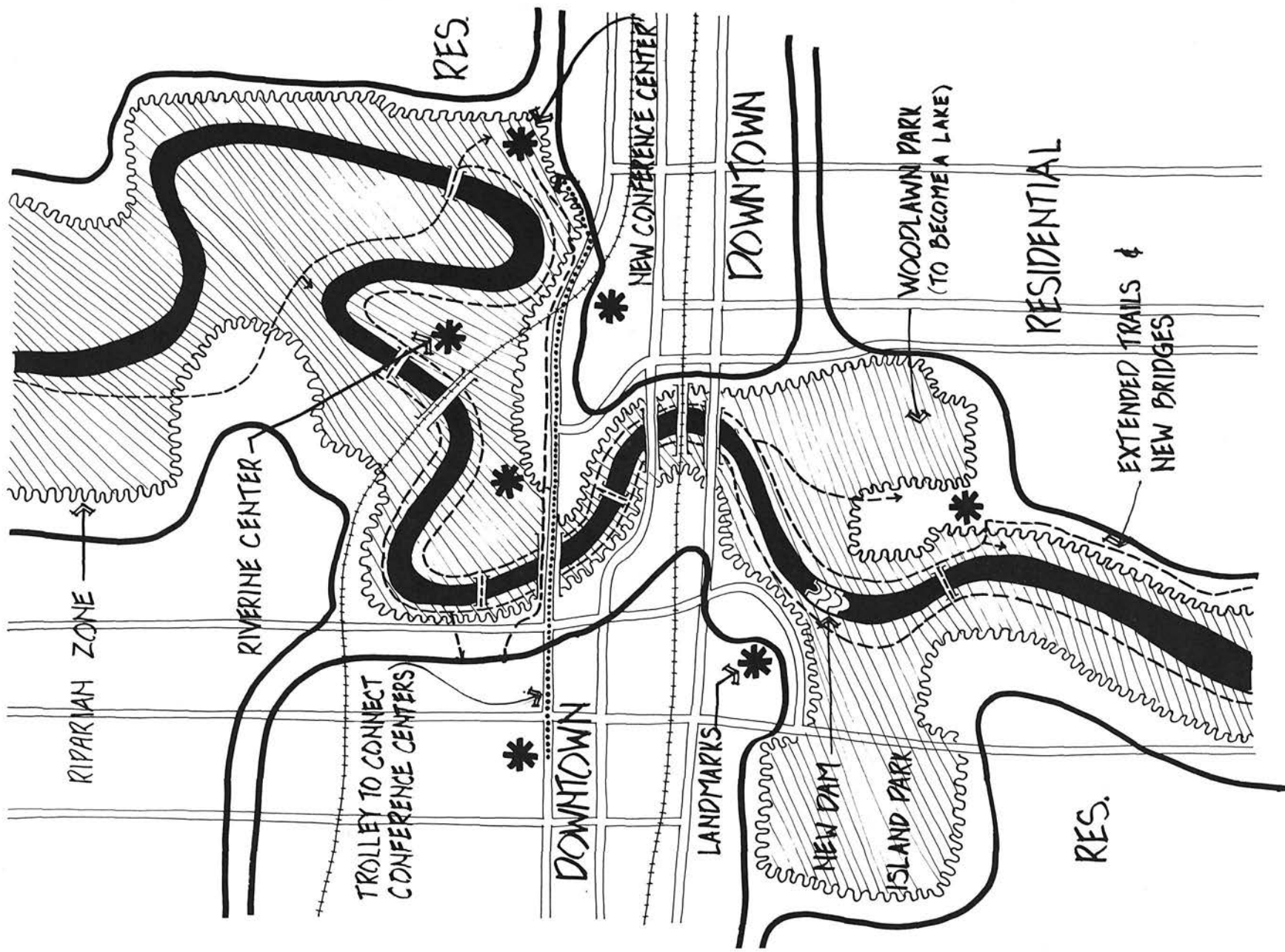
The Red River of Fargo-Moorhead is a fact of urban life. We propose to bring people and the river back together in a number of new settings.

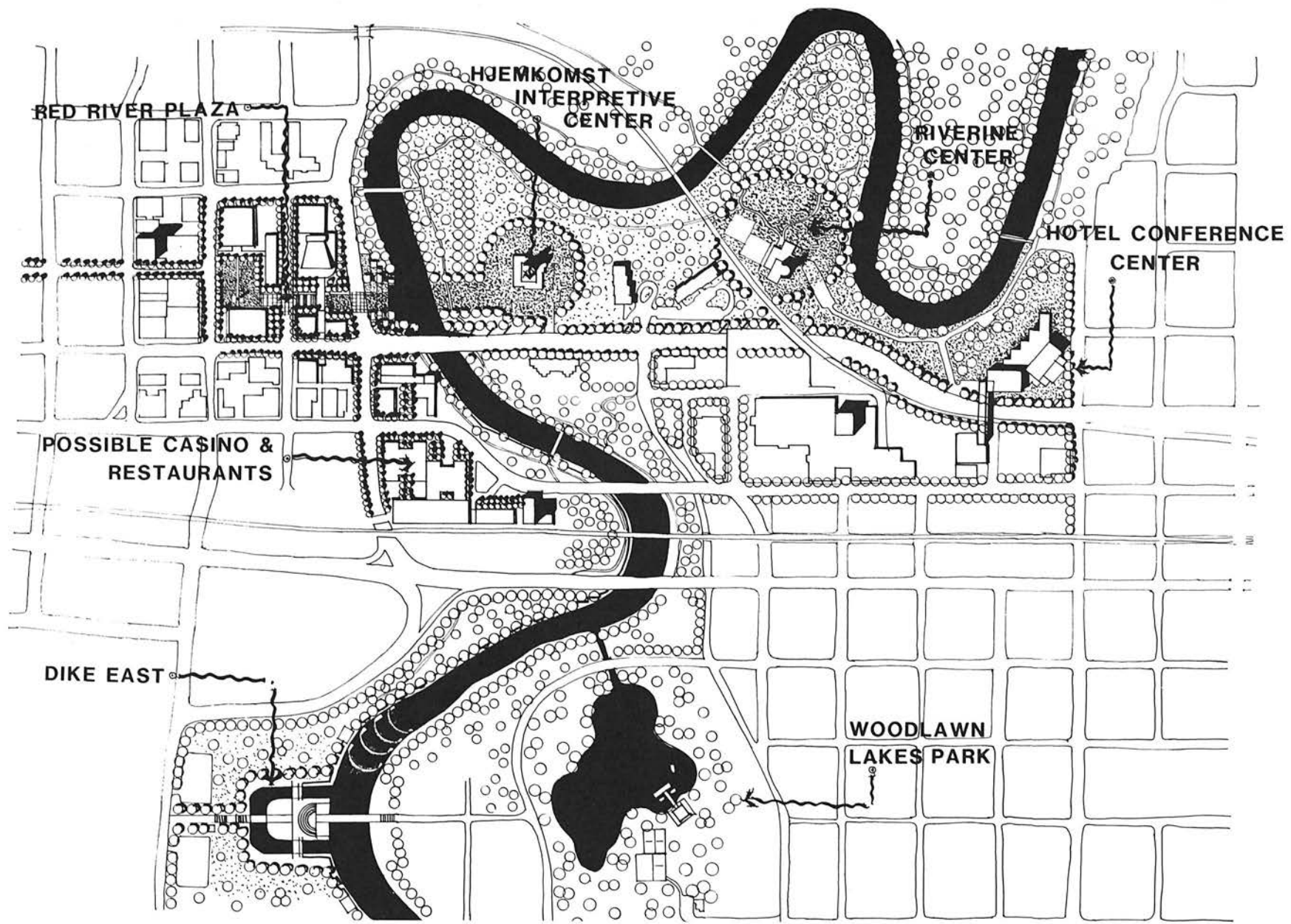
The Outdoor Living Room in Downtown Fargo-Moorhead

The larger southern portion of the site east of the Civic Center could be redeveloped into a landscaped urban riverfront plaza. This would be an active place with seasonal restaurants providing simple meals at outdoor tables on terraces and floating decks on the river, and on a few barges that could cruise the river and offer meals.

The Red River Plaza is created by lowering the grades of existing Second Street and portions of the Civic Center parking lot by about six







Visions

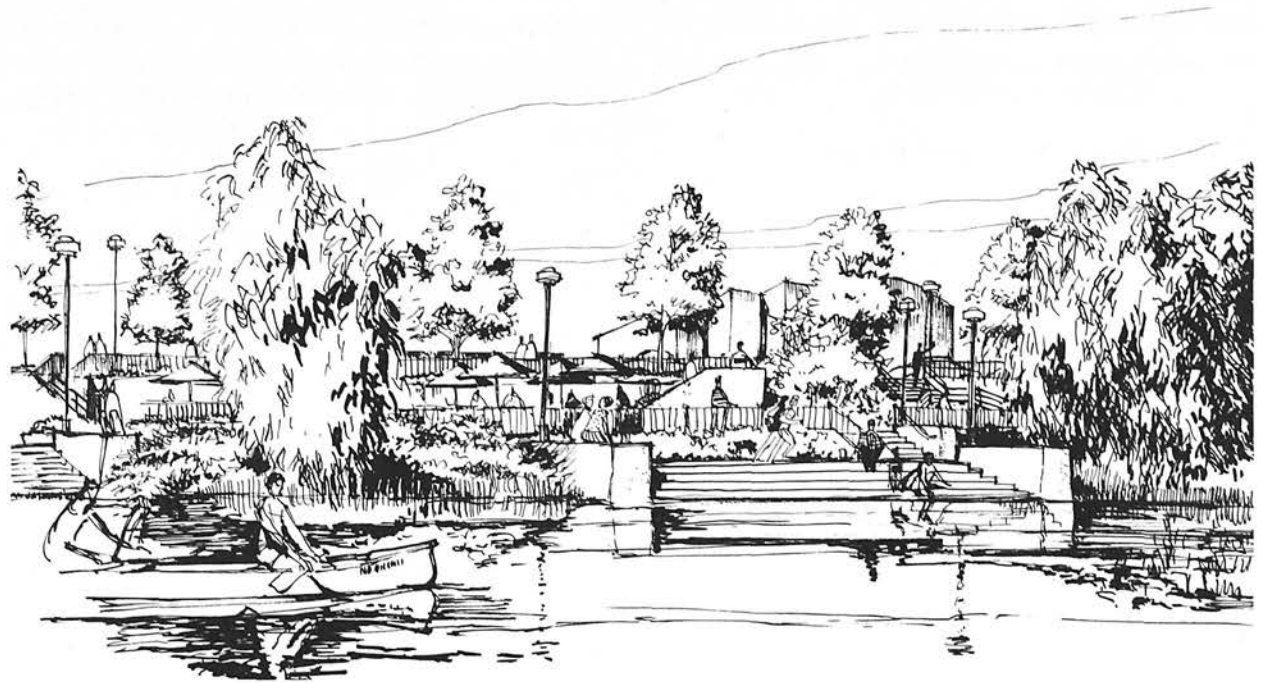
feet. This brings downtown and people closer to the river, both physically and visually. Sight lines would be devised to open the view from the surrounding streets to the water. Pedestrians on the Plaza would see and be led to the water. The great Plaza will be places surrounded by uses intended to generate activity, people to use the Plaza, eating places and tables.

The pavement and planted areas will be devised for easy maintenance. If water from seasonal flooding is allowed to enter the Plaza, the design will allow easy flushing of debris after floodwaters recede.

Restaurants, Party Boats, Etc.

At the beginning of the season, small portable buildings could be located along selected edges of the plaza to house basic food service facilities. While the range of foods may seem limited, microwave heating and modern catering practices allow for a surprising variety of items that could be provided in this setting. Bussing and trash disposal can also be handled through these buildings. At the end of the season, the buildings would be removed.

But the system allows for dining by the water, or even on the water using small party boats (12 feet by 20 feet) that cruise up and down the river carrying groups of 12 to 20 people. In San Antonio, these have proven very popular with convention and tour groups. In addition



to providing an unusual experience, the barges bring life and activity to the river and entertain the shore-bound watchers as well.

Performing Arts Center

For some time a need has been expressed for a building to house the lively arts in staged performances. This structure planned for a 1600 seat auditorium has been proposed to take over the existing green space at the Civic Center. The team feels retention of this green space is useful, and it should not be eliminated.

A better service to the community and the

Red would be performed if this structure could be located where it would help define a new civic space oriented to the River, and help bring activity to the proposed Plaza.

Parking

Automobiles could be relocated into a structure on the north end of the existing parking lot which will also serve as a platform for the proposed Performing Arts Center, which would be located on top of this structure. Additional parking would be created on the block immediately across from the existing parking lot to the south. This would serve the Civic Center

Visions

during the day and be available to support the proposed commercial entertainment area just east on the river bank.

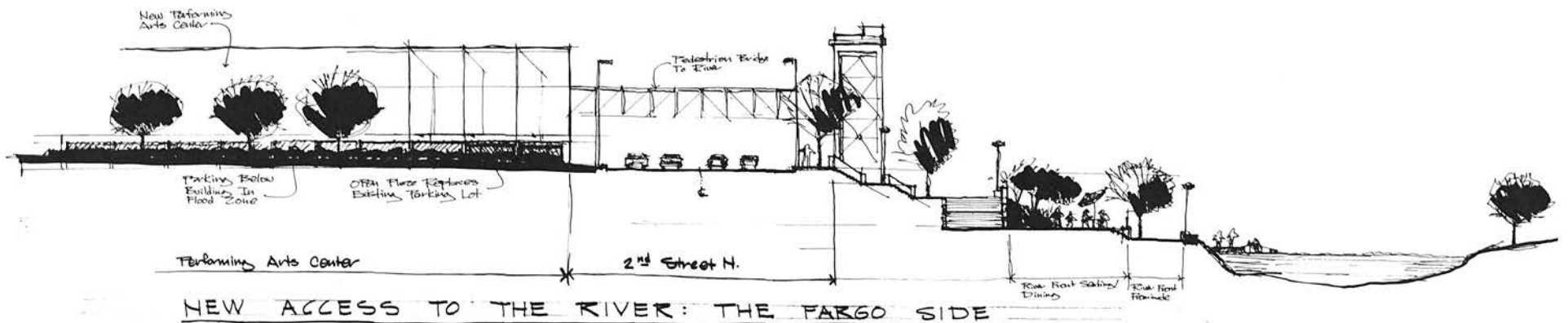
Entertainment on the River

New buildings in this area could house a full-scale casino with entertainment, a dinner theater and another fine restaurant with views overlooking the River. The entertainment district near the water also brings people to the Plaza, day and evening. A large, first-class casino with entertainment could be a potential use for the northern part of the site currently used by the steel fabrications plant. While the noise and vibration of the Burlington-Northern mainline would be intolerable for many adjoining uses, the gaming rooms and general commotion of a casino should be able to toler-

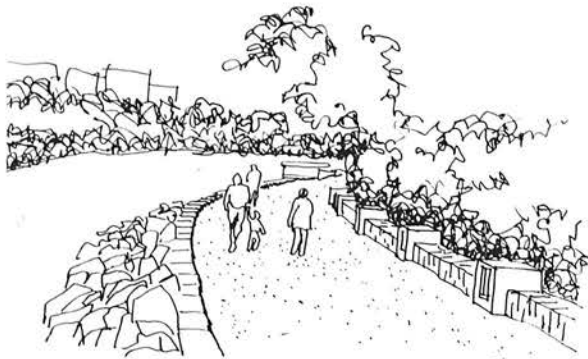
ate the problem, particularly if a multi-story parking structure were used as a noise buffer. The amenities and views of the riverside site should make up for any deficiency.

Pathways

The riverside trail along the water would be preserved on a lower level from the Plaza's terrace allowing bicycles and hikes to continue through unimpeded. The system of paths up and down the river are important, the main Plaza will enhance and strengthen this network and is not intended to disrupt it. South along the river the character of the river's edge will be more cleanly defined. Landscape will be hard-edged and urban from Red River Plaza to Dike East Park.



Visions



Dike East Park Redeveloped

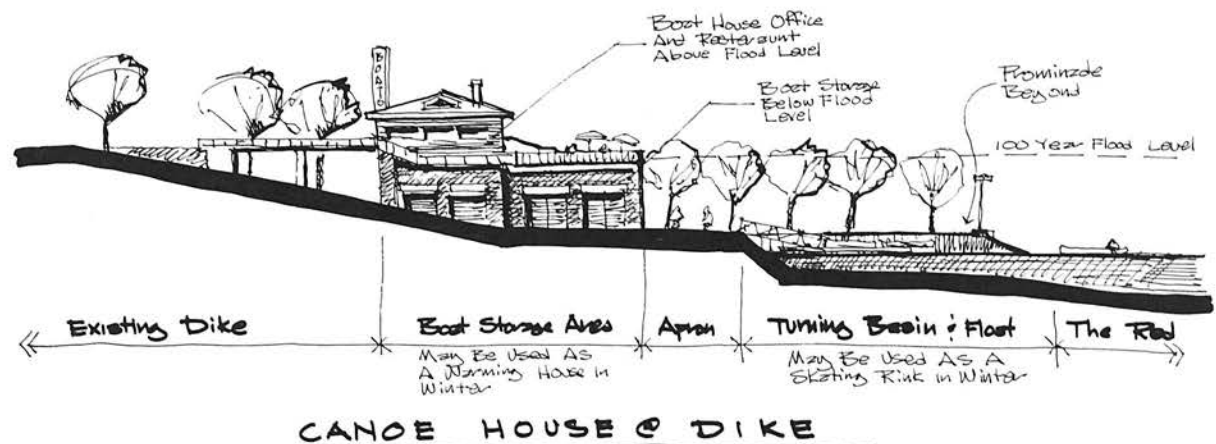
This park will be somewhat developed by adding an opportunity for River use. A canoe concession with its boat house could be located here as well as a collection of small "viking boats". A sunken garden is proposed that would relate to the River and would be available for flooding in the winter for skating. The boat house becomes a warming hut.

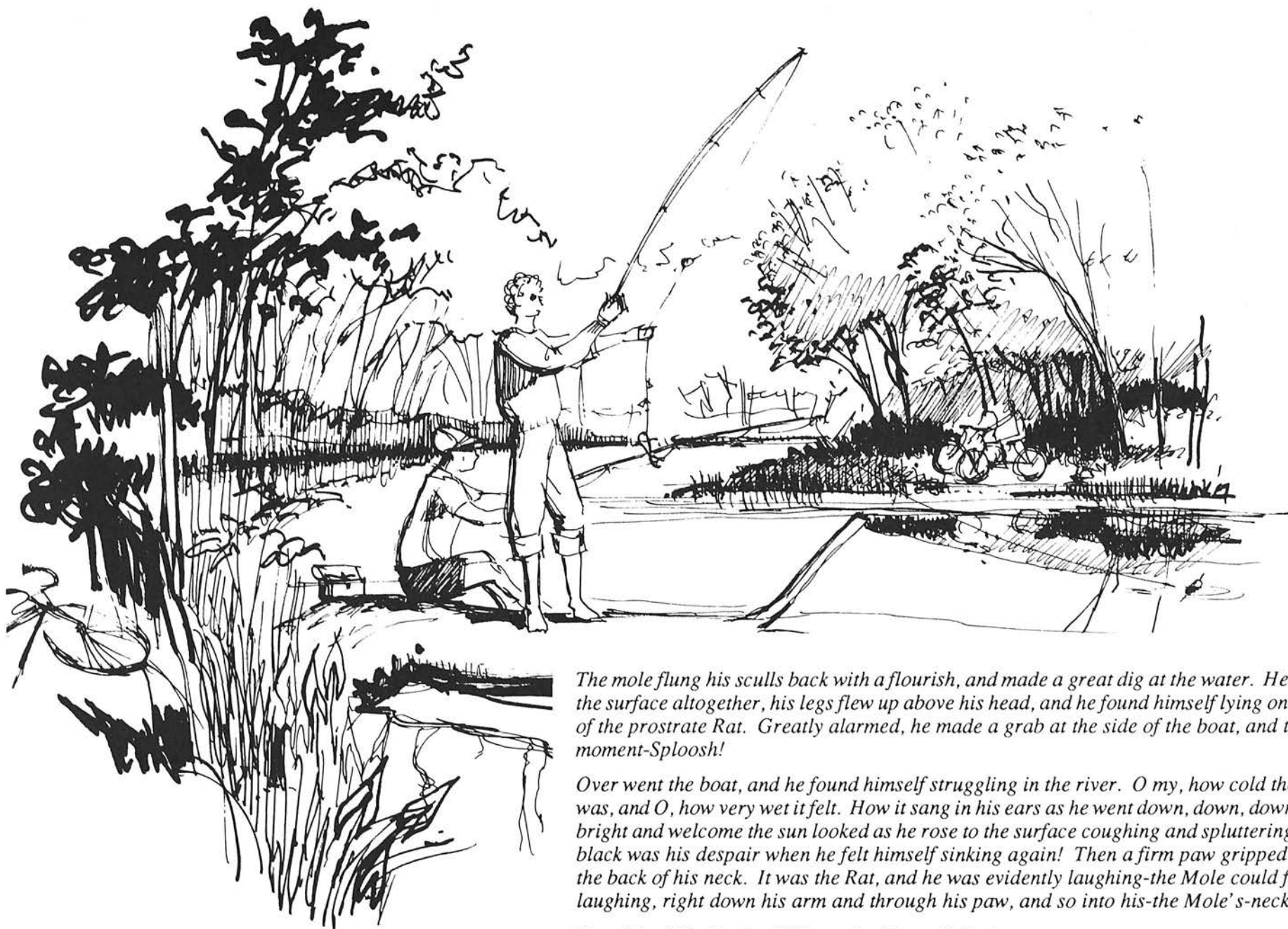
The Farmers Market

This is a colorful and valuable part of Fargo-Moorhead's commercial life. The fact that it is small and is not backed by Fortune 500 com-

panies is not material. In many cities, the Farmer's Market is the genesis for weekend mini-festivals and attracts other small entrepreneurs, restaurants and hundreds of shoppers. Fargo-Moorhead's Farmer's Market deserves a permanent reality.

It should be a seasonal part of the River Plaza. Protect it with a bright, cheerful tent.





The mole flung his sculls back with a flourish, and made a great dig at the water. He missed the surface altogether, his legs flew up above his head, and he found himself lying on the top of the prostrate Rat. Greatly alarmed, he made a grab at the side of the boat, and the next moment-Sploosh!

Over went the boat, and he found himself struggling in the river. O my, how cold the water was, and O, how very wet it felt. How it sang in his ears as he went down, down, down! How bright and welcome the sun looked as he rose to the surface coughing and spluttering! How black was his despair when he felt himself sinking again! Then a firm paw gripped him by the back of his neck. It was the Rat, and he was evidently laughing-the Mole could feel him laughing, right down his arm and through his paw, and so into his-the Mole's-neck.

From The Wind in the Willows, by Kenneth Grahame

Cooperation

RIVER KEEPER

The incessant demands placed upon our rivers for boating, fishing, swimming, transport, drinking water, and waste disposal create a heavy burden threatening the ecosystem's very survival. Who protects the river when it's threatened? Sadly, all too often no one has the responsibility to oversee and coordinate activities on or near the river to ensure its long term health. Instead, diverse public and private groups work on their individual projects without the knowledge or appreciation of the effects of those activities on other components of the river corridor. This is particularly exacerbated by the presence of agencies operating in different cities, counties, or states. As an example close to home, proposals to remove snags from the Red River for esthetic and navigation reasons may be in conflict to a certain degree with the desire to improve fishing in the Red. This overall problem will only become worse as the Fargo/Moorhead community turns its face back toward the river, increasing activities in the corridor.

The R/UDAT committee advocates the creation of a "River Keeper" - a position new to the Red but found within some European countries and river reaches within the United States (such as the upper Mississippi). The exact nature of this position, the responsibilities and authority of the person occupying it, and the

mechanisms for creating and supporting it must be decided upon by you. We offer here some options for your consideration.

The River Keeper should be a person capable of understanding the statutes of multiple government units as they might affect the river. A person who has both knowledge of ecological systems and an appreciation for the needs of the general public, business, and governments would seem absolutely vital.

The office of River Keeper should be "advisory" and have a voice in all economic, recreational, or environmental decisions that could potentially have an impact on the river proper or its floodplain.

We recommend that the River Keeper be responsible to a new or existing board composed of representatives from the two counties and cities in the adjoining states. He or she should be hired for a moderate (e.g., 3-5 years), renewable term in order to have adequate time to

develop this important office. An adequate budget should be provided by participating government units and committed for the term of this person's office.

The River Keeper must report to a bi-state board, but the nature of this board is optional. It might be formed from the existing Red River Steering Committee, operate as a new committee within COG, or be appointed within another public agency or private group. One approach which seems desirable is to establish a "Red River Foundation" with the River Keeper as the Director or employee of the foundation. If a foundation were developed, the government units should still provide minimal funding (at least in the beginning) to support the salary of the River Keeper. As part of a foundation the River Keeper would be seen by the public as independent, and the Keeper would be in a better position to receive outside funding from individuals, other foundations, and federal and state agencies.

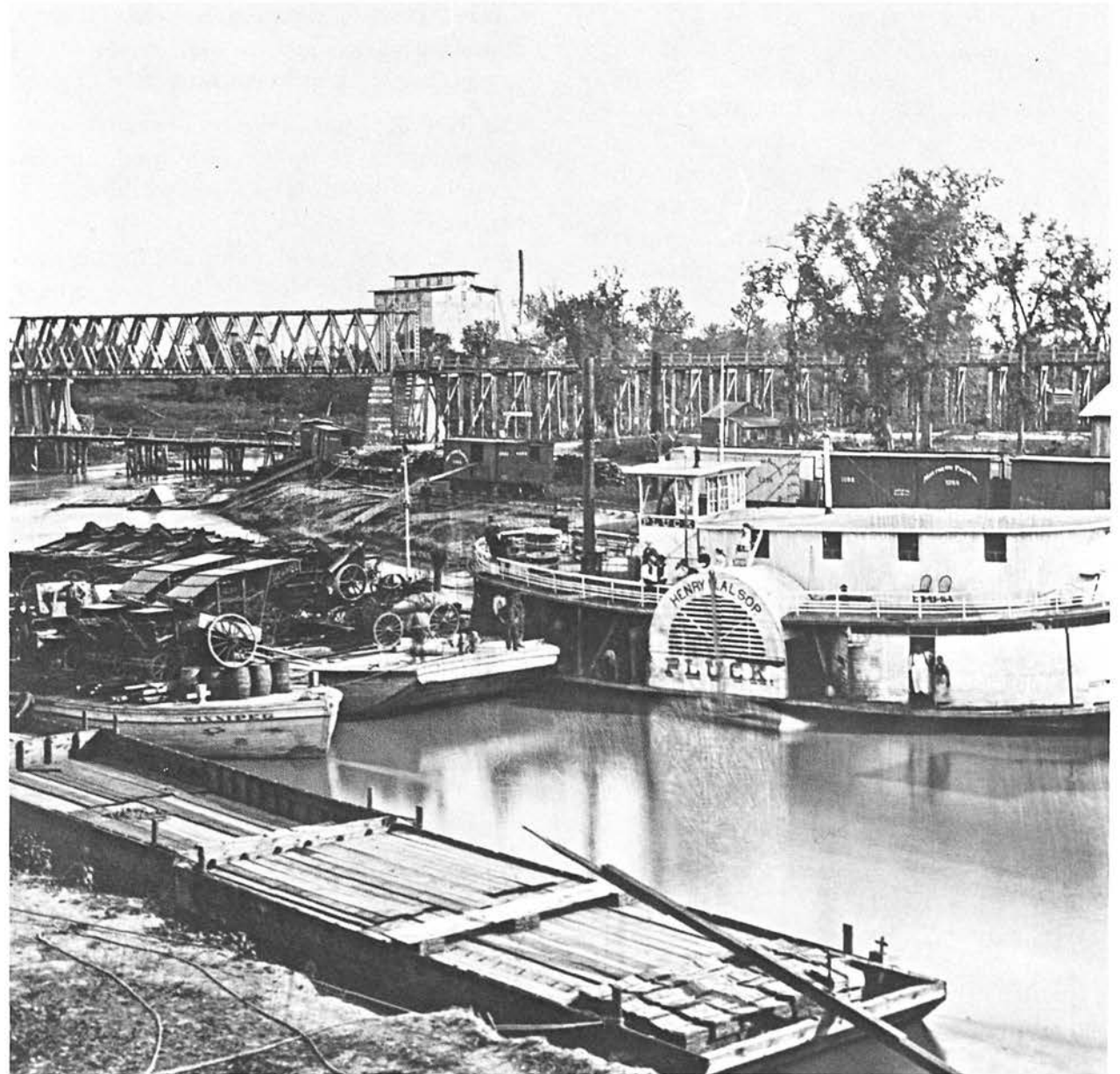


Cooperation

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Traders often thought of the sea in their great prairie crossings. The vast open land looked like the sea, and the sky over it rimmed the world at the horizons without obstruction. "Seas of grass," they said, and "prairie schooner," and "prairie ocean." They found the journey, like a sea voyage, a giver of health, and many a frontier doctor sent a sickling on a prairie "enterprise" and saw him come alive of it. It was an affirmative experience. The voyagers believed in their work, which few others had performed; they had a sense of their worth and need; and they knew health of body and spirit. One said, "The insatiable appetite acquired by travellers is almost incredible, and the quantity of coffee drank is even more so..." Each man did full justice to the rations he was required to bring—fifty pounds each of bacon and flour, twenty pounds of sugar, ten pounds of coffee, and salt, beans and crackers—and to the game he brought down with his rifle or scatter-gun on the way. His job was hard, and the bonneted wagons rarely made more than eleven to fifteen miles a day. He came through Indian alarms and terrifying storms and prairie fires.

From Great River by Paul Hogan



Cooperation

Traders created Fargo-Moorhead. They brought goods, and took out furs and agricultural products. When they came across an oasis like the Red River valley, it was cause for celebration. The tourists and farm to market travelers of today don't have quite as hard a time, but Fargo-Moorhead is still a place to enjoy the end of a journey.

Fargo-Moorhead is still celebrating the North Dakota Centennial. Fargo-Moorhead is a place for celebrations like the events of 1989 - the Centennial Firefighters' State Games, the Great Red River Canoe Race, the Jaycee's Fire Festival, the Civic Memorial Auditorium reopening, Centennial Air Show, Red River Street Fair, Red River Valley Fair, Pioneer Days '89, Big Iron '89, Scandinavian Hjemkomst Festival, the Trollwood Park events, and every Bison's football game. All these events demand team work and cooperation. Their success as events, and their success in attracting visitors show the kinds of cooperation that are possible in Fargo-Moorhead. The process that will turn these ideas into reality demand ongoing, incremental cooperation. But it creates festivals and celebrations not yet thought about. These organized and public celebrations provide a major portion of the economic life that keeps Fargo-Moorhead rolling along.

Fargo-Moorhead's Economic Foundation

But there are the more fundamental celebrations of life beyond the scheduled festivals - beautiful neighborhoods, safe streets, children at play in the parks, walks through autumn trees, indian summer skies, crisp air on ski trails. And more—low unemployment rates, educational institutions that are thriving and fulfilling their missions, a growing visitor industry, a merchant and retail sector supported by a vast trade area.

This is the stuff from which economic development is made. As a commercial center in a great agricultural empire, Fargo-Moorhead has become the "downtown" for much of North Dakota. Families drive for hundreds of miles to shop here, seek medical services and provide higher education for their children. Fargo-Moorhead has the opportunity to take its advantages and resources and build on them.

River & Development

Development is an incremental process—one brick at a time, one project after another, item by item. The Red River, what it is today and the asset it can become, are at the core of the process. Its water processed, of economic opportunities today that were not singled out years ago.

The river is a visual amenity. The record of

similar redevelopment around the word documents the value and attraction of well conceived water and river settings for commercial, office and residential uses.

The technical problems posed by a riverine environment are understood. They must be carefully and competently handled but these are technical problems that can be solved, have been solved elsewhere, and will be solved here.

River Oriented Development

Using the river as the amenity, as a teacher and a partner, new development can celebrate life in downtown next to the water. We suggest these projects:

- Red River Plaza
- Performing Arts Center
- Restaurants
- Casinos
- Dinner Theater
- Parking Structures.

In addition to providing support for existing downtown services, and the total Fargo-Moorhead Community, these are elements that cater to the growing tourist trade. Tourism is an industry that provides broad economic benefits to a community for a relatively small investment. Many weekend visitors come to Fargo-Moorhead to shop at West Acres Center, to see a football or basketball game, to visit family and friends in school, or to receive

Cooperation

medical treatment. They are not “tourists” but they bring money to be spent locally. In 1988, about 1.5 million visitors added \$270,000,000 to the local economy for meals, attractions and lodging. And this does not count general retail sales to visitors. Each adult visitor spends about \$100 to \$125 per day.

The idea that drives this portion of our report is:

THE “STAY AWHILE” STRATEGY

The Plaza, casinos, new restaurants, the pathways, markers, trolleys (perhaps even future skyway extension) will make it much easier for people to walk back and forth from one side of the Fargo-Moorhead urban core to the other. This strengthens the connection to commercial and visitor uses. It builds activity and provides the basis for people to enjoy each other and the river.

Restaurants, chairs and tables near the water, push carts, flower stands, perhaps the Farmer’s Market, are all attractions that bring people; they linger awhile. Their spending in Fargo-Moorhead supports the restaurants, the merchants, the tax base. The financial benefits of extending the visit of the average tourist by one day, or even half a day, are dramatic.

Our goals are to:

- Keep the visitors and tourists a little longer — an extra day, or even half-day.

- Convince the traveler to include his spouse and children who can shop or visit attractions while the convention is in session.

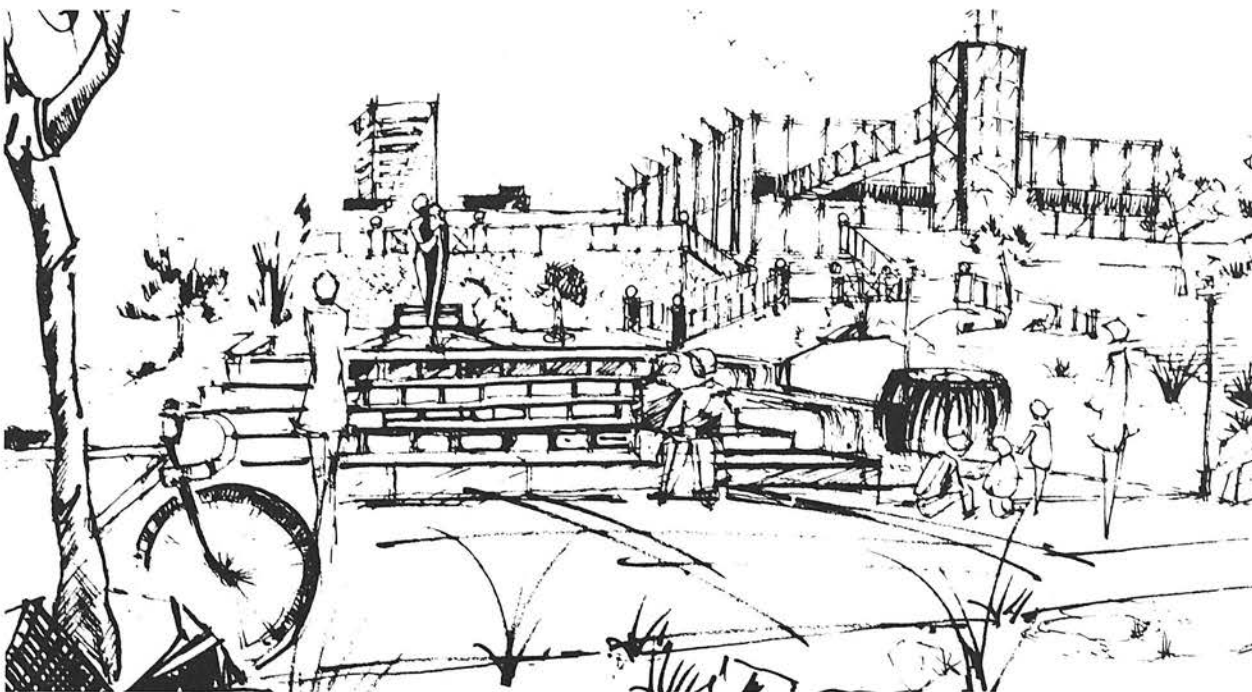
To do this the community must:

- Provide restaurants, attractions, and entertainment to serve visitors.
- Concentrate services and attractions in areas that can become pedestrian oriented districts with a variety of stops, possibilities and pleasant distractions within walking distance of their hotels and convention sites.

- Support tourism with activities, festivals, public events and real celebrations.

These individual projects, built over time, support each other in an incremental, cooperative process. As the cooperation of all of downtown, and of all Fargo-Moorhead from the center out to the suburbs increases, the community builds a better future for itself.

The Red offers a unique opportunity to accomplish all of these things.



Cooperation

Public-Private Partnerships

Private property owners and developers can build facilities and operate the services. Public agencies must modify publicly owned infrastructure, approve permits, and assist by investing in jointly owned facilities, or leasing to private operators. There are many examples of public-private partnerships. Private facilities on public land, publicly financed bonds in support of private sector development, private industry and local government cooperating to attract business and create new jobs. Without both public and private involvement it is impossible to redevelop center city sites. The cooperation between the private and public has become a critical element for success for major urban redevelopment.

In Fargo, an example of a doable project would be the Red River Plaza, and a new public-private partnership could take on much of this task. Additional parking will be required for the Performing Arts Center and Civic Centers operations. This could be coupled with a relocation of the existing parking to an adjacent site to support construction of a downtown connection to the river. The new parking locations will do double duty by putting very valuable downtown land into more productive use. Parking under the proposed Performing Arts building could be used during office hours by City Hall staff, and parking the south of the plaza could be leased to dinner theaters or a

possible potential casino/hotel operator for evening use. This provides the most productive use of the parking system and provides an income source to the city from direct leases and the incremental increases in the gross sales taxes from additional downtown activity and increased property tax values. Other merchants downtown and the general Fargo-Moorhead area would also benefit from the general expansion of the tourism base.



Downtown Trolley

All connections from downtown to downtown are to be strengthened. One possibility is to operate an ongoing street trolley to shuttle visitors back and forth from the convention centers, major hotels, and attractions. If and when daily traffic is sufficient, considerations might be given to a cable car or other more dramatic option.

Festivals

A list of existing events and new proposals was presented earlier. There are, of course, many more possibilities for events. Celebrations, events, festivals, parties, are some of the reasons to use the outdoor places we have created in our cities and enjoy them.

The environment is the setting, the living and doing in the place is the reality. The celebration is the purpose. ENJOY!

Cooperation

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND APPROACHES

For too long education was viewed as the province of the young — you enroll in kindergarten or pre-school and close your books after high school or college. Fortunately, recent years have witnessed an awakening to the need and desires of adults for continuing education.

The Fargo/Moorhead community should grasp the opportunity now to exploit fully the Red River corridor as a physical and intellectual resource to educate people of all ages. For you to accomplish this goal, we recommend three overlapping approaches: (1) an individualized, self-directed exposure to the natural habitat and wildlife using nature trails; (2) enhanced involvement of students at public and private education institutions in the historical, cultural, economic, and ecological aspects of the Red River environment through frequent field trips to the river and expanded instruction on these topics within the traditional classroom setting; and (3) construction of a riverine center emphasizing natural and cultural aspects of the river — this center might include a freshwater aquarium and exhibits on local (present and former) terrestrial wildlife.

Nature Trails

Because the concept of nature trails was discussed previously, it needs only a little elaboration here. Such trails provide both a non-stressful recreational opportunity and a unique educational experience. To enhance their education value and accessibility, the trails should range from benign and extensively regulated



to relatively wild and barely maintained pathways through extensive areas of the riverine corridor. All should be marked (color-coded arrows with maps available at park entrance points are one approach) and contain unobtrusive plaques with succinct information on prominent features of that habitat (including historical aspects where appropriate). For example,

each trail should contain permanent and seasonal signs identifying various resident plants, and some pathways could feature plaques describing ongoing biological activities appropriate to the season as well as information on past and present geological processes (such as river meandering and bank slippage).

Field Trips and Classroom Activities

The more traditional approaches to environmental education — classroom lectures and field trips — require considerable expansion in the local school districts. The enhanced educational horizons afforded to the students will lead to healthier attitudes about the river and a better historical appreciation of the linkage between the people of the Fargo/Moorhead region and the riverine environment. Students should begin taking guided field trips to the Red River at a very young age. Because important aspects of the life cycle of many organisms occur during the colder months, the students should gain an appreciation of winter ecology through field trips, when possible. While the emphasis should be on the natural environment, these students also need to understand the river in a cultural and historical context. We also recommend that faculty at local colleges widen their river-related course offerings and devote more of their research time to topics of local environmental interests.

Cooperation

CITIZEN STEWARDS

The new attitude toward the river is a positive one and the Red's growing popularity will attract many new friends and users-but it will need cooperative stewardship.

The river cannot rely on a single all-encompassing authority to provide for its protection and enhancement. The river's problems are not so great as to warrant the creation of an overall river authority. Where there are problems they are relatively minor and solvable. Multiple jurisdictions will remain and to some extent will blur courses of action. The River Keeper will help provide an avenue to solve problems and to take advantage of the exciting opportunities the Red offers, but the river and

its Keeper will need assistance. Responsibility for river management and development must be shared broadly in the community.

The river should expect to rely on the ongoing care and attention of everyone who uses it; from the kid who borrows its turtles, to the homeowner on its bank, to the entrepreneur.

NOTICE OF DECLARATION:

EACH CITIZEN OF FARGO-MOORHEAD IS HEREBY APPOINTED "STEWARD OF THE RED."

Each steward will:

- TAKE PRIDE
- BE RESPONSIBLE
- BE INVOLVED
- RESPECT THE RIVER
- MAKE AN INVESTMENT
- HAVE FUN

The first duty simply requires getting to know and appreciate the Red. The river makes it easy. The R/UDAT Study Team was singularly impressed with the beauty of the river and its environment and with the extent of public ownership and parklands. Each steward will become familiar and make friends with the Red. The pride attained by familiarity will be spread by each steward.

Each steward is charged with the protection and enhancement of the river. There is no

need, however, to assume an overall responsibility. Take responsibility for those activities or portions of the river that are most important to you. Make sure they are provided or cared for in a manner that best suits your own interests being mindful, however, of the interests of others. The range of interests on the river is wide, and while some may be competing, most will be complementary.

The key duty of a steward is to advance river interests. There are exceptional successes resulting from community involvement such as Trollwood Park and the Heritage-Hjemkomst Interpretive Center. However, it appears that the extensive system of open space and linkages has occurred largely without the benefit of widespread citizen input or awareness.

Each Steward will become involved. Making



Cooperation

the river an active place for people has been identified as the number one objective. Numerous places for active river contact have been identified and opportunity sites have been targeted. The opportunities are legion and will be realized. Interpretive paths will be set out, bicycle and foot paths extended, sensitive wildlife and natural areas protected, and a new downtown river meeting place will be created. Involvement and investment by citizen stewards will ensure it happens properly.

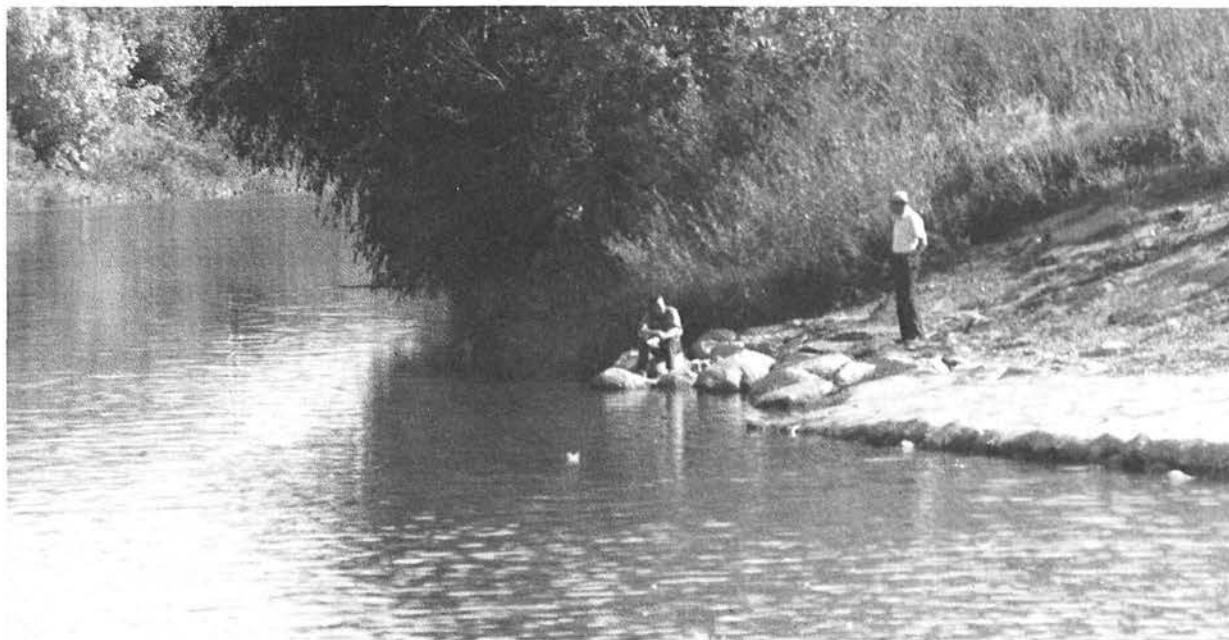
- Every existing organization and association with interests related to the river should actively advance those interests in the larger community. Groups such as the Great Plains Bicycle Club, the Audubon Society and the Oak Grove Neighborhood Association should become familiar voices at City Hall; for example, the Fargo-Moorhead Pacers should come to be known in town as “that group that sponsors those running clinics on the river.”
- Every existing organization and association whose interests are not directly associated with the Red should find a way of fostering river stewardship. The Lions, Kiwanis, Rotary, League of Women’s Voters and the various exchange clubs might appoint river committees charged with undertaking projects to enhance the Red. An umbrella group called “Friends of the Red” might evolve

with representation from a number of such organizations. The message here is “Think Red.”

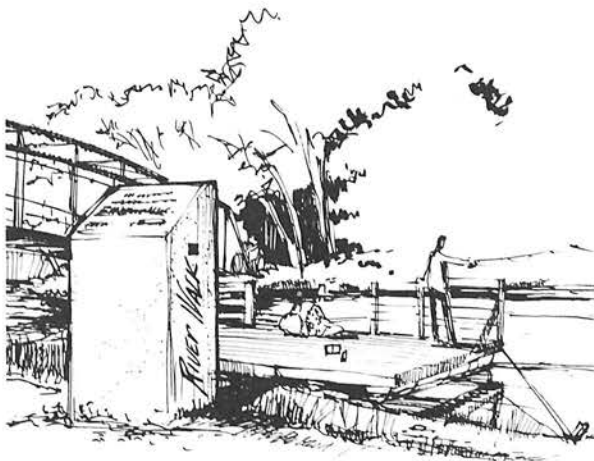
- Associations and special interest groups cannot and should not rely on advocacy alone. Public funds are scarce and there are many competing interests. The many opportunities for creating new facilities will only be realized through fund raising efforts by users. A plaque reading “This fishing dock was made available for your enjoyment by the Fargo-Moorhead Walleye Association” will bring a continuing sense of accomplishment

to its members and provide inspiration to others.

- Every group sponsoring a special event should give consideration to a Red River venue - from church picnics to the Moorhead Valley Fest. There should be an annual “RALLY AT THE RED” river festival with broad community sponsorship.
- There may be aspects of river enhancement that are orphaned. They should be adopted. Reforestation in the wake of Dutch Elm disease could give rise to an “Adopt a Tree” program. One day a year each participant in



Cooperation



an event sponsored by a naturalist group or school will plant a tree on the Red. Other waterfront communities have had great success with their annual clean-up by letting volunteers adopt a specified stretch of shoreline. "See there, between those two trees? That's my part of the river, and it's always clean."

- Some organizations have a special responsibility in river stewardship:
 - The school system through education, especially on the early grades where stewardship begins;
 - The media, through public information the promotion of worthy endeavors and the sponsorship of special events;
 - The Downtown Business Association (whose membership should be expanded to include Moorhead), through shaping and nurturing the vision of the two downtowns joining at the Red.

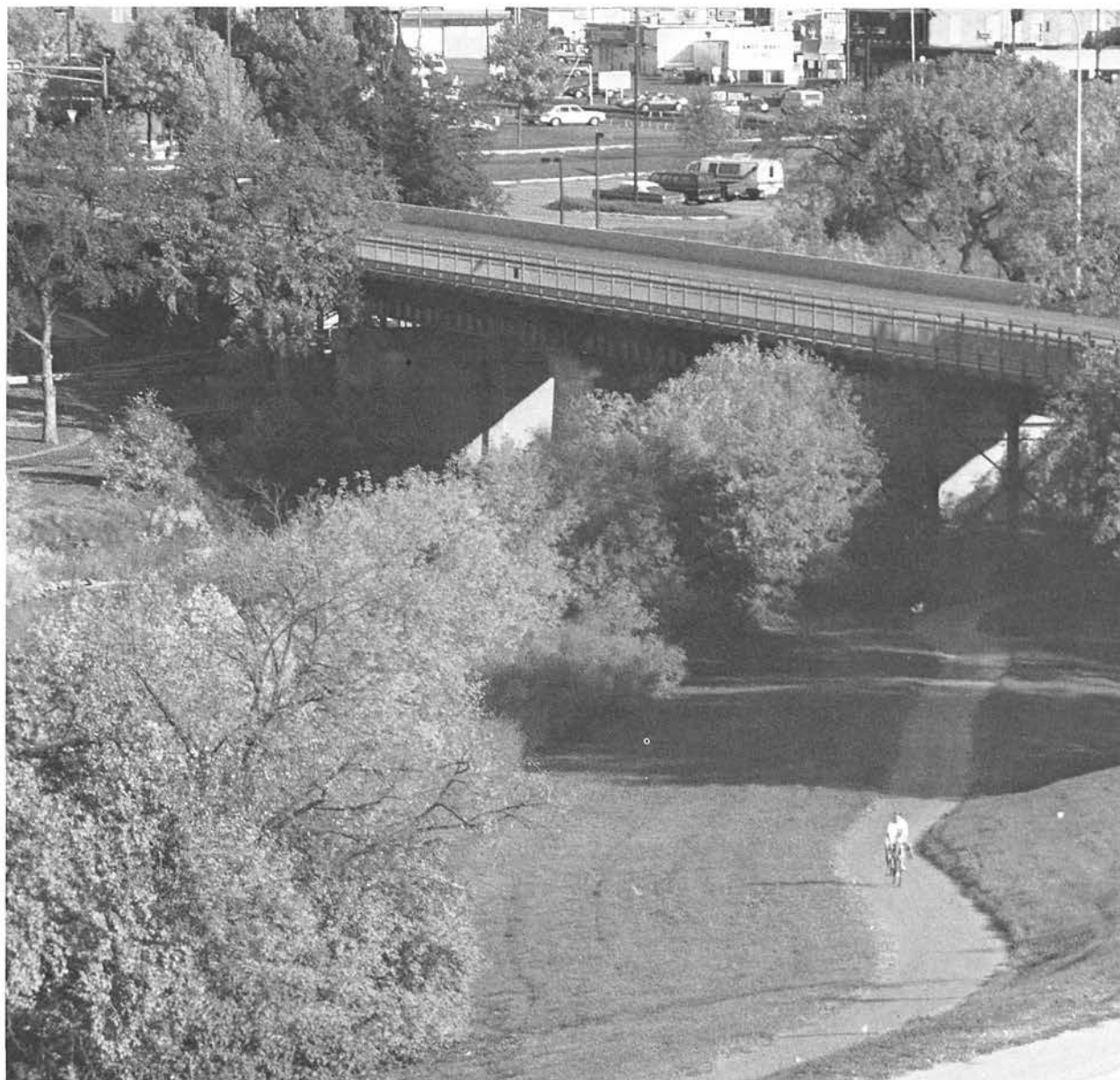
Each citizen is now a "Steward of the Red." Through familiarity will come Pride. Through Pride will come Responsibility. Responsibility will lead to Involvement. Modest Investment over the years will turn Visions of the Red into reality.

Cooperation

HOMELESS ON THE RED

The increasing number of homeless men, women, and families is one issue of singular importance which is as common in Fargo-Moorhead as it is in communities large and small throughout the country. The significance to an analysis of the potential of the River is tied to reported high number of these unfortunate people who chose the banks and bridges of the Red as a sanctuary from the elements. It also relates to the public perception that the river is not a safe place for townfolk to visit because of the presence of these inhabitants.

The solution to the homeless is not on the Red. It involves social, political and societal issues beyond the scope of a report such as this. .



The Beautiful Red



The Beautiful Red



The Beautiful Red



The Beautiful Red



The Beautiful Red



The Beautiful Red



The R/UDAT Team

This report was developed by the Fargo-Moorhead Red River Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT). It is the product of an intensive four-day review and analysis of natural and urban resources along the stretch of the Red River that flows through the cities of Fargo, North Dakota and Moorhead, Minnesota.

The R/UDAT program is a public service of The American Institute of Architects. Since 1962, the Regional and Urban Design Committee of the AIA has sent interdisciplinary R/UDAT teams to over 100 American cities who have requested help.

The purpose of the R/UDAT program is to assist cities in dealing with specific local problems and issues through the participation of citizens, agencies and local interest groups. The objectives of the program are to improve physical design, to stimulate public and private action, and to provide an opportunity for consensus among diverse community groups and individuals.

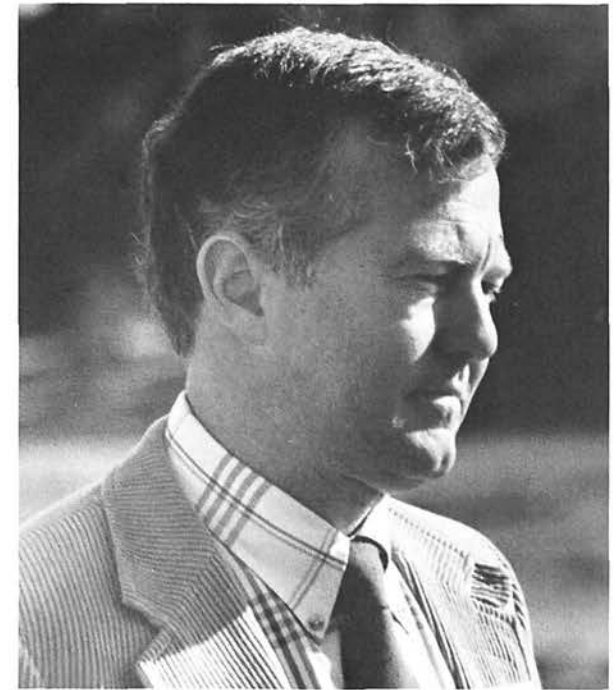
The Fargo-Moorhead Red River R/UDAT resulted from a growing concern about the lack of consensus in the community regarding the river. Neglected as a potential amenity, the Red had become regarded by many as a liability to be avoided. Encouraged by a group of citizens who saw the unappreciated potential of the river, the Fargo-Moorhead Chapter of the AIA took the lead in helping to form a task force that applied for a R/UDAT visit.

The R/UDAT was made possible by funding from local governments through the Fargo-Moorhead

Metropolitan Council of Governments; this financial support was supplemented by generous contributions of services and products from a wide variety of local organizations and businesses. Hundreds of hours of volunteer effort were required to organize the R/UDAT visit.

The team was assembled with an eye to the challenges and opportunities presented by the Red. With its peculiar geology, flat terrain, semi-arid climate and multitude of governmental jurisdictions, this dynamic river in its urban context is truly unique. To respond to these challenges a team was formed that includes expertise in river ecology, urban planning, landscape architecture, development, government, urban design and architecture. Their capabilities have been supplemented by the talents of many dedicated professionals and students from the Fargo-Moorhead area.

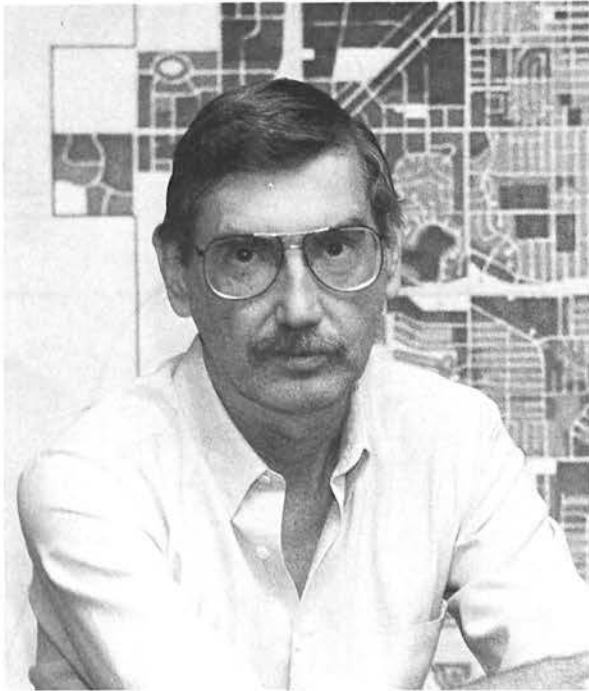
The process has emphasized on-site inventory, review of existing information, substantive and detailed community input, and intensive dialogue to focus recommendations in the most appropriate and relevant areas. It has not been possible within the time available to test extensively the feasibility of the ideas offered. They are based upon the team's understanding of the issues and opportunities presented. The suggestions contained herein are offered as idea generators. If they serve to focus attention and stimulate further analysis and action, they will have served their purpose.



Jerome R. Ernst, AIA, AICP

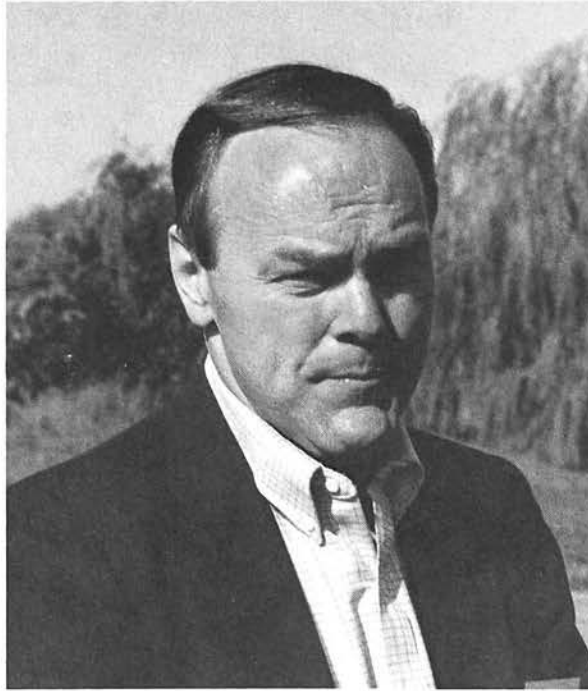
Jerry Ernst is a partner in the firm of TRA in Seattle, Washington. His education in architecture and urban planning is combined with twenty-two years of diversified experience in urban design, community planning, transportation planning, park design, and environmental analysis. Much of his work has involved planning and design of urban waterfront environments. Projects completed under Jerry's direction have received twenty professional awards. A R/UDAT veteran with family roots in the Red River Valley, he is currently Chair of The American Institute of Architects National and Urban Design Committee.

The R/UDAT Team



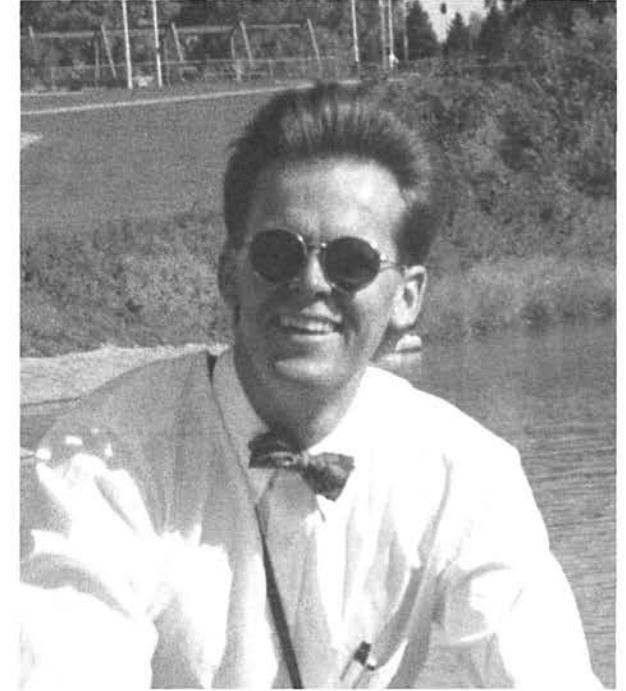
James E. Bock

James Bock founded James E. Bock & Associates, located in Houston, Texas. He has over 16 years of experience in real estate investment and development projects. Bock has organized, directed, and participated in a wide variety of projects for corporate, governmental, and individual clients. His experience includes finance, construction, public policy, land planning, and marketing. Bock was formerly Director of Commercial & Industrial Development for Sugarland Properties, Inc., and a member of the Big Buildings Group and Corporate Marketing Strategy team for Gerald D. Hines Interests, Houston, Texas.



Ralph B. Grieme, Jr.

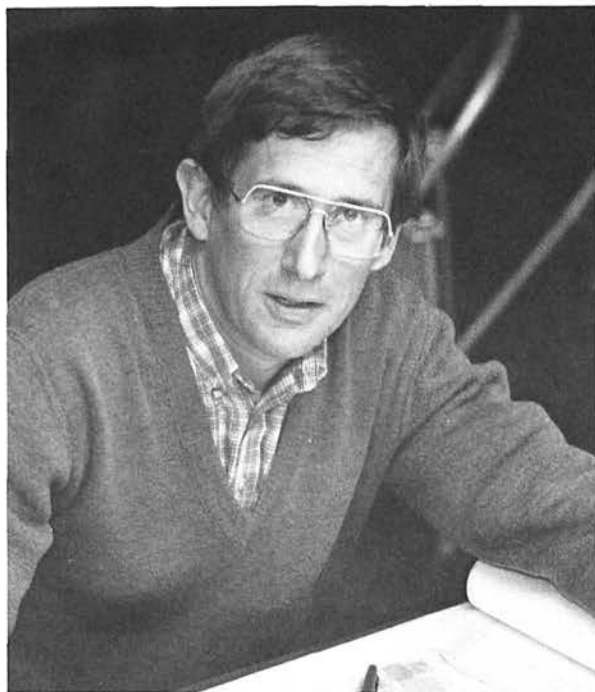
A development consultant and commercial/financial real estate broker, Grieme is president of Development Consultant Incorporated (DCI) and Grieme Development Corporation. He provides a range of general economic development services to private real estate developers and local governments. Grieme was economic development consultant to the City of Cincinnati, Ohio for over 12 years. He has recently been leading a five-year community effort to build a new bridge connecting the downtowns of Cincinnati, Ohio and Covington, Kentucky. Grieme previously served as vice mayor of Covington, Kentucky.



Mark W. Johnson, ASLA

Mark W. Johnson of Denver, Colorado, is an urban designer and landscape architect with an extensive background in the design of major public and private projects. He has been involved in new facilities, redevelopment plans, and river corridor plans in several cities across the United States. Johnson operates Civitas, P.C., an urban design and landscape architecture firm in Denver which recently completed the Boulder Creek Open Space Plan and Downtown Creekfront Project which addresses creating a new urban waterfront for Denver. He has worked extensively on riverine planning and on several rivers in Washington, Minnesota, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico.

The R/UDAT Team



Richard L. Ramsey, ASLA

Richard Ramsey is an associate in the firm of TRA in Seattle, Washington. He has managed the design of over twenty major park and recreation design projects, including eight on hydroelectric reservoirs in the Pacific Northwest, where fluctuating river levels, bank erosion, and severe climate are major design constraints. He currently manages the landscape architectural design group at TRA. Recent projects include a branch campus site selection study for the University of Washington and Confluence Park in Wenatchee, Washington. The 250 acre park contains active recreation areas, a boat ramp, swim beach, and over 100 acres of riparian habitat enhancement.



James Thorp, Ph.D.

As a Professor of Biology and Director of the Water Resources Laboratory at the University of Louisville, Dr. James Thorp has extensive knowledge of the biotic structure and functioning of a large variety of aquatic ecosystems. Thorp's current research focus is the ecology of large rivers; he is also active in riverfront development projects, including a study of the feasibility and design of a large freshwater aquarium for Louisville, Kentucky. Thorp has taught graduate and undergraduate courses in ecology at the University of Louisville, Fordham University, and Cornell University.



Leonard W. Vopnfjord

Leonard W. Vopnfjord is director of planning for the City of Victoria, British Columbia. His principal focus is downtown revitalization and harbour front development. A native of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Vopnfjord was chief planner in the development program division of the Department of Environmental Planning for the City of Winnipeg for almost ten years. In addition, he was city co-coordinator for the Winnipeg Core Area Initiative, tri-governmental program for the physical, social, and economic revitalization of Winnipeg's inner city neighbourhoods and the downtown. Major riverbank enhancement projects on the Red were under his direction.

Special Acknowledgements

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Computerland of Fargo
Downtown Business Association
F-M Convention Visitors Bureau
F-M Metropolitan Council of Governments
FRS Industries
Fargo Chamber of Commerce
Fargo Civic Auditorium
Fargo Park District
Great Plains Software
Kaye's Printing
Liberty Business Systems
Mathison's
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Moorhead Chamber of Commerce
Old Broadway
Radisson Hotel
St. Luke's Merit Care
Salvation Army
Scheel's Hardware
Selland Pontiac GMC
The Photo Lab
Townhouse Motor Inn
Tree Top
US West Communications

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Special thanks to Senator Kent Conrad for
his support and participation.



Laurie Anderson

The R/UDAT team owes particular thanks to Laurie for contributing to the production of this publication. She also participated as an ad hoc member of the team. Laurie was born on a farm near Fargo-Moorhead and has offered insights into the culture of the region. She is director of publications at the American Institute of Architects.

The R/UDAT Team extends a special thanks to Lee Watkins, local architect, who contributed generously of his time and considerable talent in preparing many of the fine sketches that appear throughout this report. Their quality and quantity add immensely to the professionalism of this report.

Notes
