

Chapter II. THE FUTURE OF SOUTH REACH

This plan envisions the South Reach of the Willamette River as a habitat for fish, wildlife and native plants and people; a safe place to walk, run, swim, paddle, view wildlife, ride and roll; and a destination for riverfront neighborhoods and visitors alike.

By 2040, this area of the Willamette River will be **one of the most desirable places to live, work and play** in Portland. The natural beauty of the revitalized river and its surrounding banks abound with healthy plants and wildlife as well as recreational opportunities for people of all ages and abilities. Residents and visitors have easy access to, from and around the river via trails and other connections, and native people incorporate elements of their ancestral foods and lifeways.

The **riverfront trails and local streets** attract community members from nearby neighborhoods and beyond, offering a peaceful, scenic place to bike, walk, roll and view wildlife.

Riverfront parks provide opportunities for boating, wading, hiking, picnicking, exercise, concerts, summer camps, and other programming that serve diverse communities. Natural areas offer places for quiet reflection and observing nature. People recreate safely on the river operating a variety of watercraft from numerous riverside locations, and river swimming is a popular sport in the summer.

Parks have a few small **retail spaces** for recreational rentals and refreshments while more river-serving businesses surround the river.

Land use and development are **climate-resilient**. Floodplains are protected and restored to avoid impacts on imperiled species and adjacent development. Residents are safe from floods, wildfires and other climate change-related impacts.

The **habitat** areas are productive. The river and its banks support an abundance of fish and wildlife. Salmon habitat restoration efforts provide cold waters and safe and nurturing shallow water for juvenile fish on their journey out to sea and return home for spawning. The river's water quality is **improved for all**.

Ross Island is **completely restored** and harmful **algal blooms**, once common in the Ross Island Lagoon, are minimized because of innovative approaches by the City of Portland, its community and governmental partners.

Connections between the river and its surrounding natural areas, including Ross Island, Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge, River View Natural Area and Willamette Park, have been strengthened to create upland habitat corridors and increase community appreciation of these natural features.

Neighborhoods on both sides of the river, including South Portland, Brooklyn and Sellwood, have accessible paths to the river. Area residents enjoy an improved greenway trail. Miles Place has retained its character and the houses are safe from flooding. Floating home communities retain a special relationship with the river and all its activities.

The state, county, city and boating community have developed a plan so that paddlers, rowers, sailors, motor boaters, tour boats, water skiers and swimmers can **safely share the river** without impacting habitat.

Finally, many live-aboard boaters and houseless campers in the natural areas have improved their quality of life and have found permanent homes and needed services.

A healthy, accessible, vibrant and resilient river helps make Portland the wonderful place that it is.

RIVER PLAN / SOUTH REACH
DRAFT URBAN DESIGN CONCEPT
 AUGUST 2020

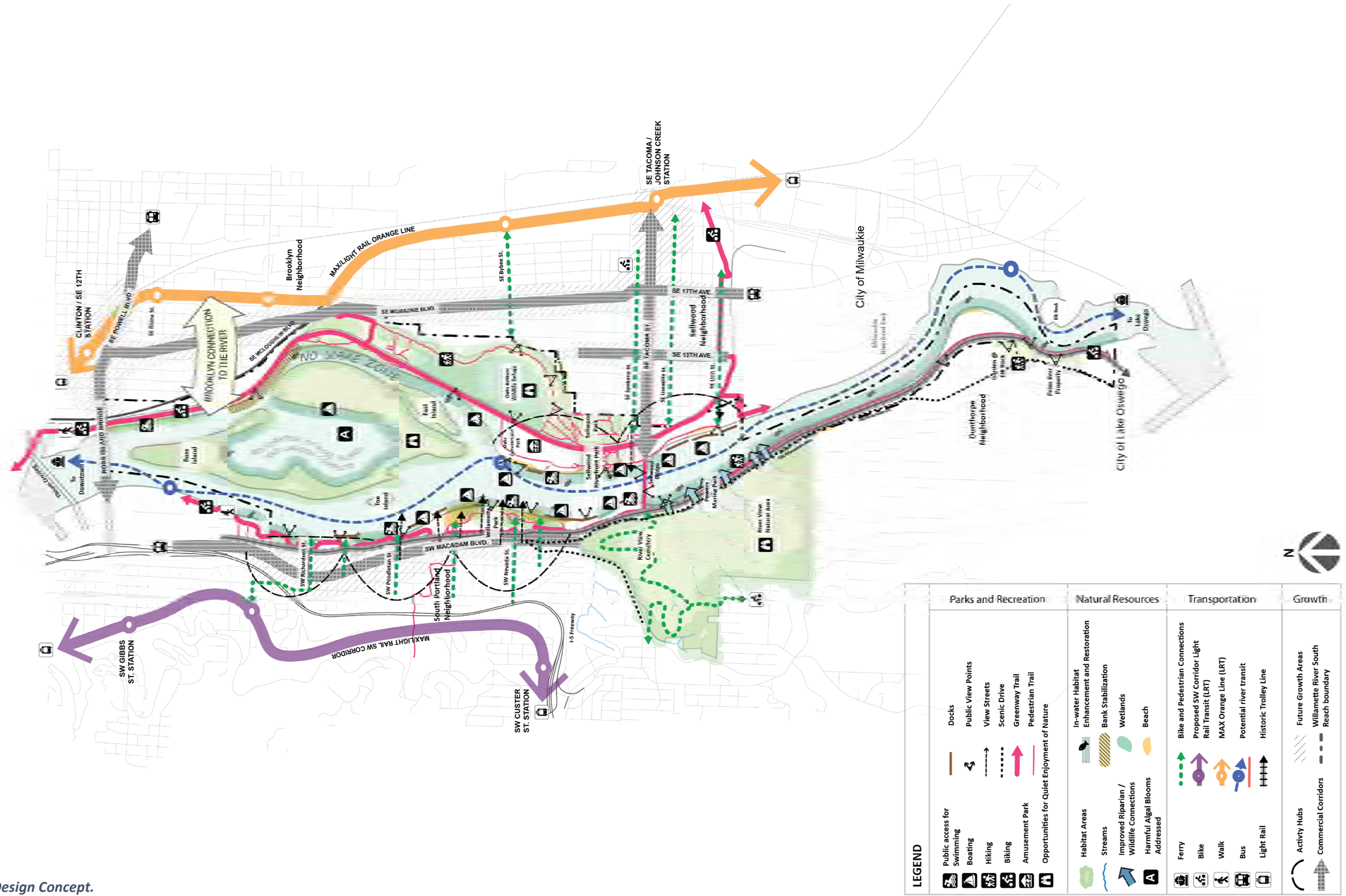


Figure 1. Urban Design Concept.

River Plan/South Reach Urban Design Concept Recreation

CELEBRATE A MIX OF RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ON AND ALONG THE WILLAMETTE RIVER

The South Reach offers many ways to access the river and riverfront for safe, quality recreation. Parks and facilities on both sides of the river are community gathering spaces that offer places to: walk and roll, bicycle, find quiet enjoyment of nature and observe wildlife, picnic, paddle, sail, motor boat and swim; and recreational programming serves all community members. Major public trails parallel the river and connect people to parks and natural areas as does the local street network. Overall, the South Reach is the hub of river recreation in Portland.



Looking north from Sellwood Riverfront Park

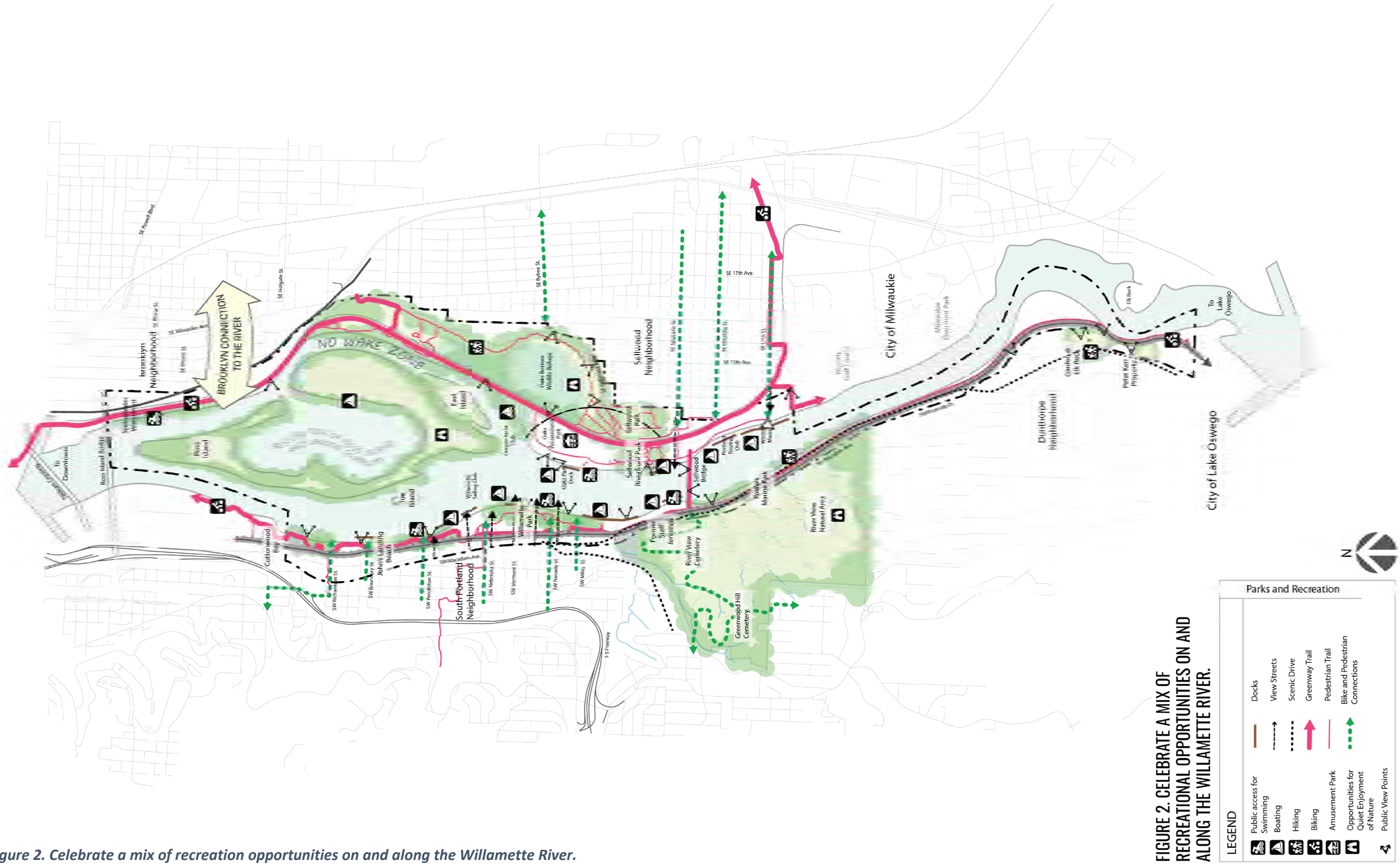
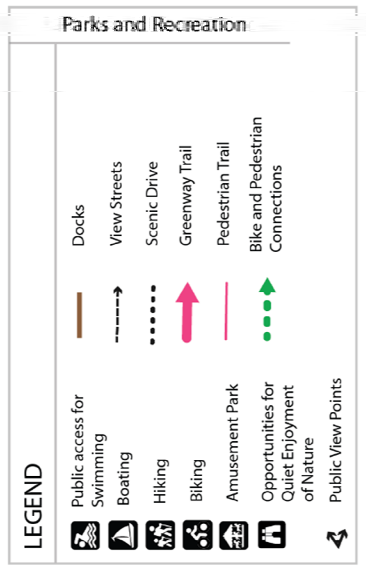


Figure 2. Celebrate a mix of recreation opportunities on and along the Willamette River.

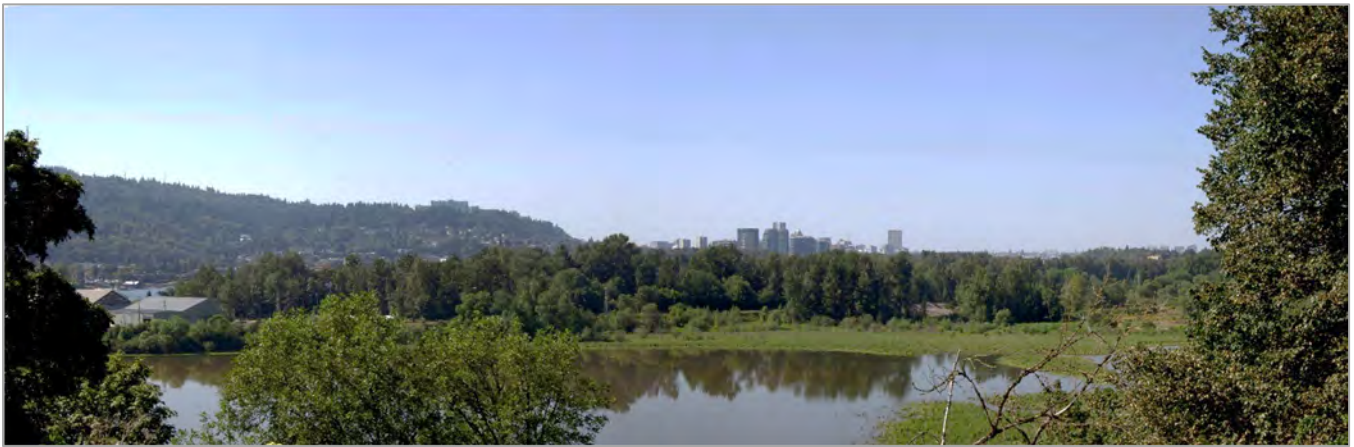
FIGURE 2. CELEBRATE A MIX OF RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ON AND ALONG THE WILLAMETTE RIVER.



**River Plan/South Reach Urban Design Concept
Natural Resources**

PROTECT AND RESTORE WATERSHED HEALTH AND HABITAT IN AND ALONG THE WILLAMETTE RIVER.

In 2040 the South Reach plays a key role in climate resilience and the continued success of fish, wildlife and rare plants in the city and Oregon. Habitat restoration efforts along the banks and uplands of the Willamette River now provide ample shallow water habitat for Willamette River salmon and steelhead and habitat corridors for a diversity of birds and other wildlife. Ross Island Natural Area, Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge and Oaks Crossing Natural Area are managed and function as an interdependent complex that provides a diversity of habitats for South Reach fish and wildlife. Streams emanating from River View Natural Area and further west have been reconnected with the Willamette River to increase cold water inputs into the river. Water quality in the river and its tributaries is improved, benefiting all of the creatures that depend on it. Elk Rock Cliff to the south continues to support a thriving collection of rare species and habitats within the city and region. Partnerships and collaborations with nearby jurisdictions, tribal partners and community organizations have improved water quality and people’s understanding and enjoyment of the thriving ecosystem and natural beauty of the Willamette River corridor. Collectively, the South Reach represents an excellent example of how to sustain a diverse natural environment within a vibrant urban fabric.



View of Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge with the Central City skyline in the background



Figure 3. Protect and Restore Watershed Health and Habitat in and Along the Willamette River.

FIGURE 3. PROTECT AND RESTORE WATERSHED HEALTH AND HABITAT IN AND ALONG THE WILLAMETTE RIVER.