

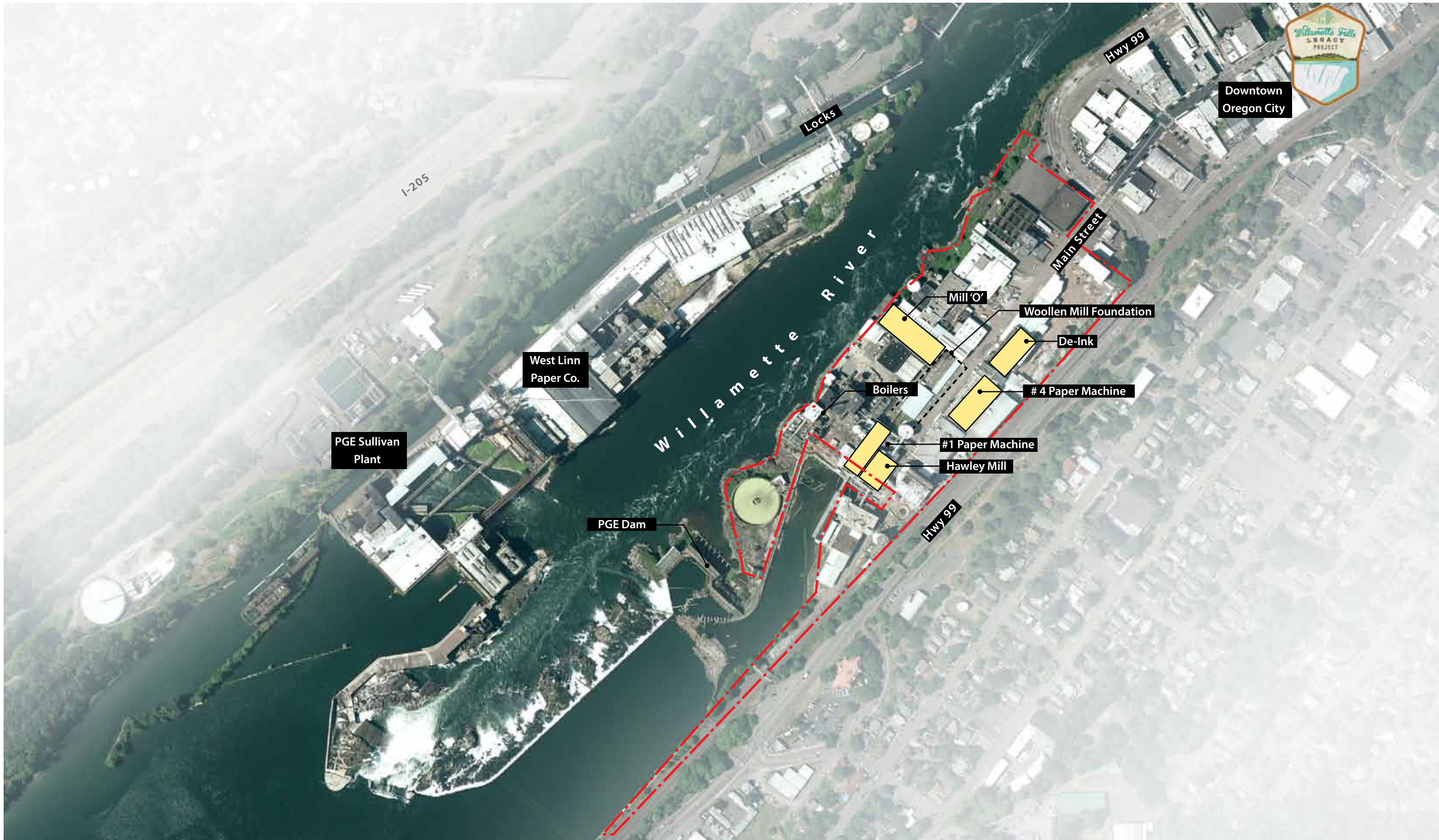
EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT





contents

- introduction I
- history + culture II
- site character III
- existing conditions IV
- opportunities + constraints V
- precedents VI
- sources VII







WILLAMETTE FALLS

LEGACY PROJECT

Introduction

The Willamette Falls Legacy Project is an opportunity for Oregonians to rediscover a cultural and scenic treasure. A public vision and master plan are taking shape, with the goal of transforming a 23-acre industrial site nestled along the Willamette Falls in historic Oregon City.

Whatever develops on the landscape will be shaped by Willamette Falls, roaring in the Willamette River below. The largest waterfall in the Pacific Northwest, it was long an important cultural and gathering place for Native American tribes. The Oregon Trail ended here. And throughout the 1800s, the Falls made history by generating energy for Oregon's early industries and cities and fueling the nation's first long-distance electrical power transmission. These are the essential features of this place that will inform and inspire the project team in the next year.

This document represents a summary of the Walker Macy team's work to understand and distill the extensive background information that has been prepared to date by others, for a variety of purposes. This document is not an exhaustive catalog of that information. Much of the detail is better understood and formatted within original documents. The following pages are seen as the most important elements to be collected and simplified for the use of the team and for the public's understanding.

This document is also useful for the purposes of understanding the basis for a set of Opportunities and Constraints diagrams, also included here. The final pages include some imagery of precedent projects that inspire the team and which may provide important lessons for our work at the Blue Heron site.

history & culture



1847 Painting of Oregon City, Paul Kane



1870 Looking northwest to Woolen Mill and end of Main St.



1874 Looking north from Woolen Mill Tower along Main Street



Oregon City
Flour Mill

Woolen Mill

Tailrace

Tailrace

Tailrace

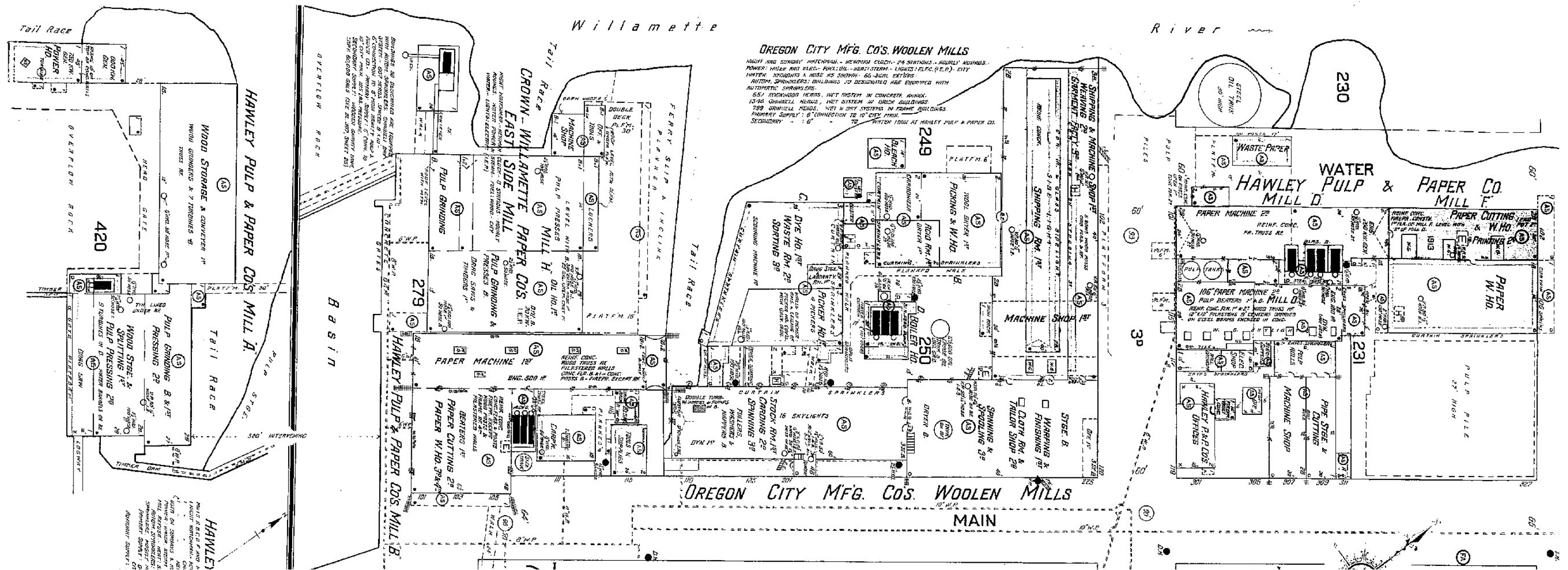
Imperial Mill

Saw Mill



1867 view of site

history & culture



1929 Sanborn Map of the site

Hum of Industry*

Oregon City's strategic location made it a natural site for industrial development. The Willamette River offered relatively cheap and efficient transportation, abundant fresh water, and the power generated by the drop over the falls. The calculus of these energies drove industrialization.

From the initial investment of the 1830s, Oregon City became known for production of forest products: dimensional lumber, beams, molding and trim, and box material. It was also a logical point for grinding grains to produce flour and meal for human and animal consumption. Its industrial base started with sawmills and flouring mills and diversified over time.

In 1862 the Oregon City Woolen Manufacturing Company purchased lots on Main Street and water rights from the McLoughlin family and for a second mill race from the Abernethy Island Company. The woolen company completed its four-story brick structure in 1864 and doubled it the following year to become the largest industrial plant on the West Coast. The factory had ten sets of carding machinery for weaving products from wool purchased in the nearby valley. The mill burned in 1872 at an estimated capital loss of \$250,000, was immediately rebuilt, and was back in operation by the summer of 1873. Its 100 workers produced flannels, blankets, tweeds, yarns, and cassimeres for decades.

In the twentieth century the Oregon City woolen mill marketed its products under the slogan "Woven Where the Wool is Grown." It added garment lines for both men's and women's clothing as well as new types of fabrics at several of its retail stores across the United States. The Jacobs family owned and operated the mills from the Civil War to the Great Depression. In 1954 the heirs sold the woolen mill to Publisher's Paper.

In 1866 the Pioneer Paper Manufacturing Company began manufacturing paper. It used two Loeffel wheels and water power to transform rags and straw into paper. The firm failed in 1867. In 1889 the Willamette Falls Pulp and Paper Company began production of twenty tons of pulp per day and shipped its product to California. It commenced paper production in 1890, the same year that a disastrous flood devastated major parts of the Crown mill on the west bank. Within a few years, however, both mills were running to capacity.

** This is an excerpt from a complete history prepared by Stephen Dow Beckham*

In 1908 Willard P. Hawley left Crown Paper and turned to the east bank of the river. He purchased property along the south end of Main Street where he established Hawley Pulp and Paper. He leased Station A, the electrical plant at the falls, acquired the old flour mill and its water rights, and by 1909 used the sulphite process to manufacture paper. To develop the site he gave the McLoughlin House to a non-profit organization which moved it in 1909 to the second terrace in the city. The program was Oregon's first historic preservation program. In 1941 Congress designated the house a National Historic Site and in 2003 it became part of the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site.

Hawley Pulp and Paper Company defined the east bank of the river at the falls for the twentieth century. Labor disputes arose during World War I and disrupted production on both sides of the river. The tensions erupted into street fighting on June 22, 1918. Management broke the unions. The hundreds of workers did not reorganize until 1937. The Hawley heirs sold the plant in 1948. The Times-Mirror Corporation eventually bought out the multiple interests by 1950 to create Publishers Paper, a wholly-owned subsidiary. The mill concentrated on production of newsprint for its parent company and the Los Angeles Times which grew by the 1960s to have more than one million subscribers.

The sulphite process used for pulping led to chemical discharges into the Willamette River. Journalist Tom McCall, later dynamic governor of Oregon, saw the problem and documented it in "Pollution in Paradise," an exposé of environmental problems throughout Oregon. In 1972 the mill won a well-earned "Cleaning Up Pollution" award from Governor McCall.

Jefferson Smurfit Corporation purchased the mill in 1986 and sold it to its workers in 2000. They and investors created Blue Heron Paper Company. Because of commitments to the environment and shortages in wood fiber, Blue Heron concentrated on processing waste paper. It produced newsprint, bags, towels, high brights, and specialty papers. The company faced stiff competition from China for used paper and also shortages of wood fiber. Blue Heron filed for Chapter 11 in 2009 and closed on February 23, 2011, ending 125 years of continuous paper mill use of the site.

"There cannot be a better situation for a factory village than on the east side of the river, a dry, wide-spread level extends some distance, and the shores form natural wharves for shipping."

Samuel Parker, June 14, 1837



Site in 1928



Aerial view of site c. 1970



roar
spray
power
volume
roughness
flow

site character



Relics of an industrial past



Changing light and reflectivity of the river



The power of the Falls



Towering scale of mill buildings



A tangled bank



Original basalt bedrock ("the site is still there")



Stillness of the lagoon



CONCRETE REMNANTS



LAGOON REFLECTIONS



WALLS



BASALT



RUST

BRACING



INDUSTRIAL WINDOW FORMS



INDUSTRIAL FORMS



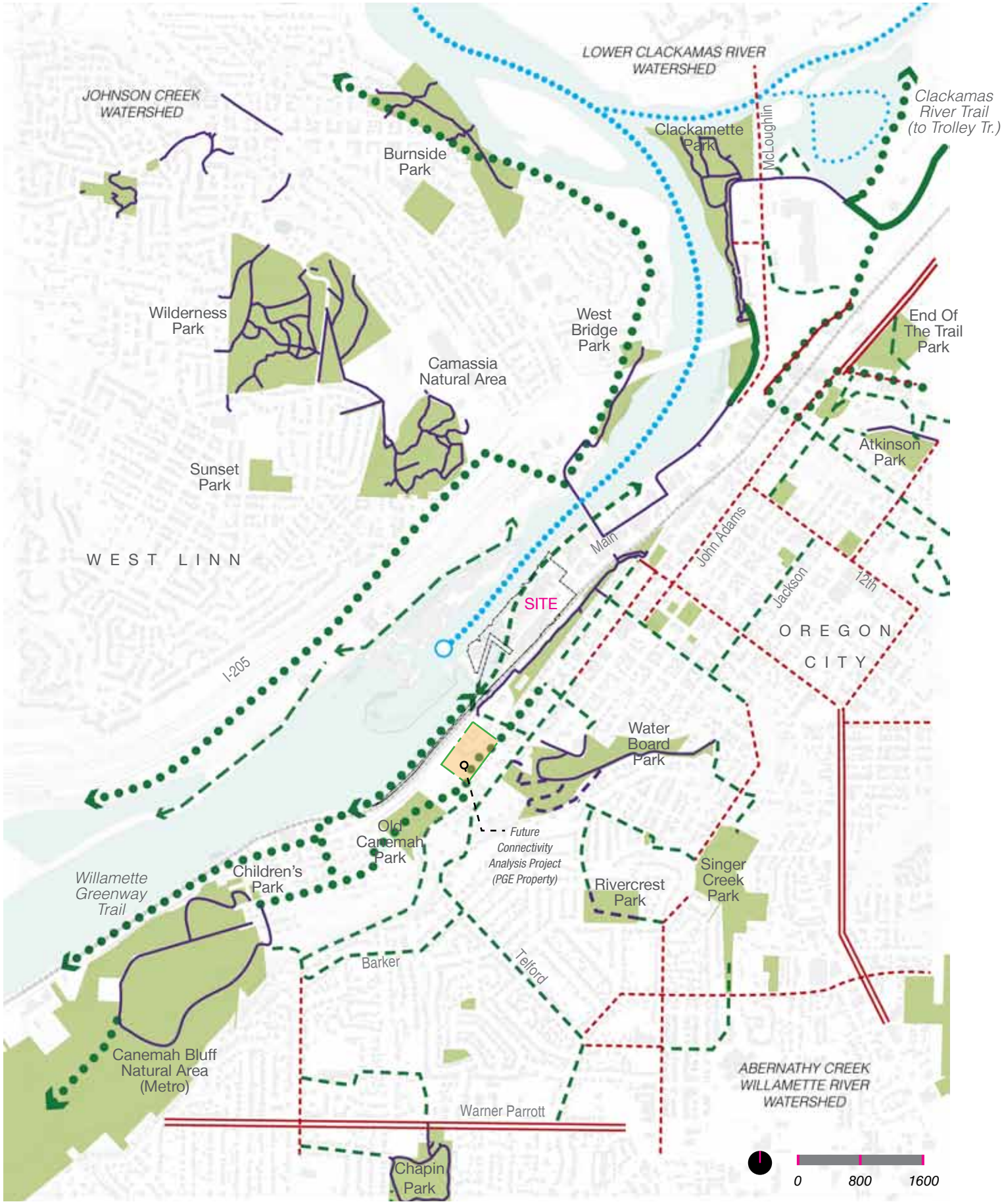
CONCRETE STRUCTURES



MULTIPLE LEVELS



open space context



McLoughlin Promenade



Canemah Natural Area

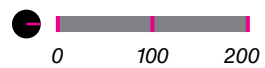
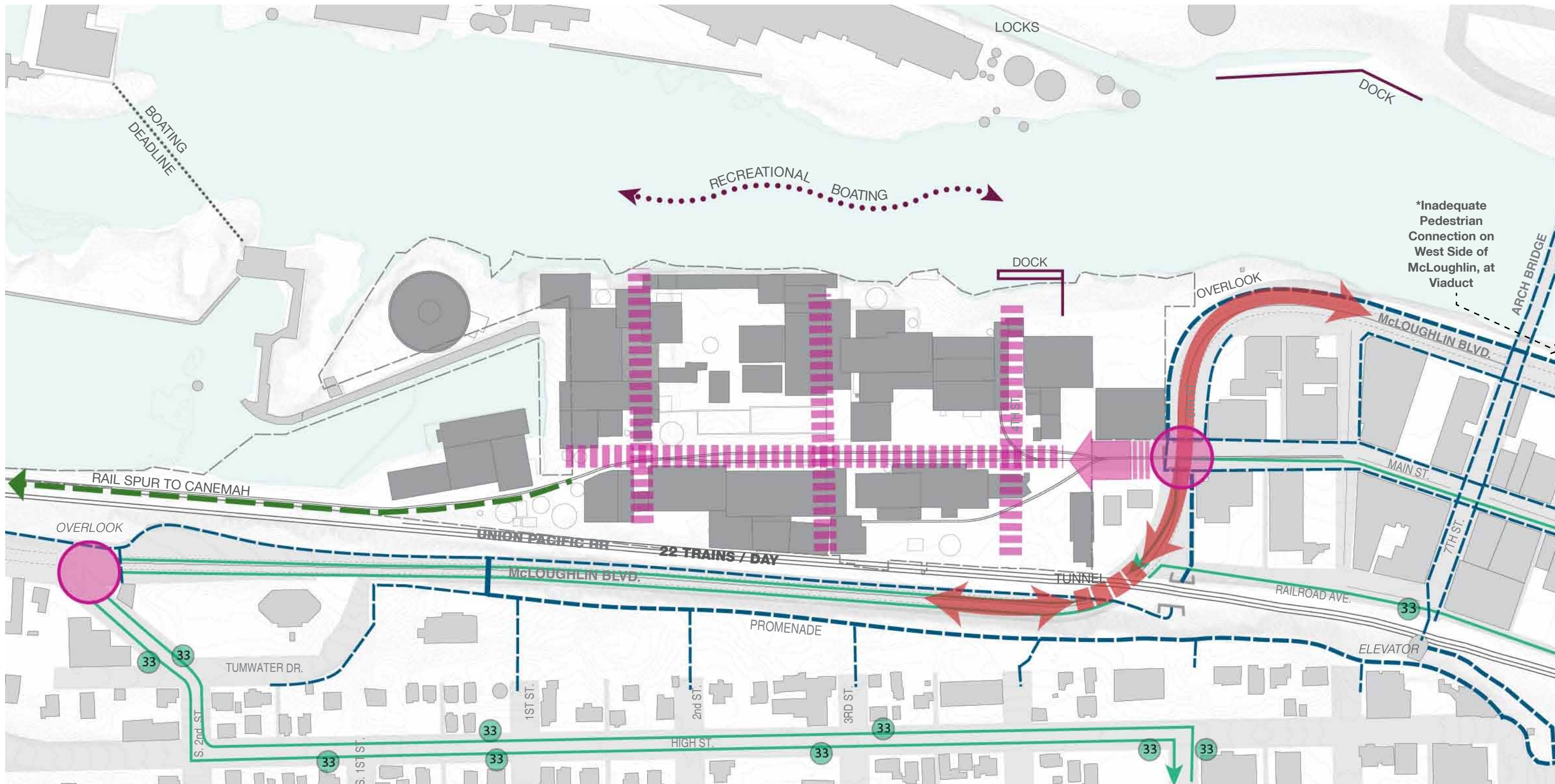


Rail Spur to Canemah






- LEGEND**
- Existing trails
 - Metro Regional trail
 - Proposed Metro Regional trail
 - - - Planned local trails
 - Community trails/bike lanes
 - - - Proposed Community trails/bike lanes
 - Conceptual water trails
 - Parks & Open Space

public access





LEGEND

-  Bus line and stop
-  Sidewalks
-  Major Trails/Walks
-  Intersections
-  Potential Grid

public access



Main Street once extended into the site



Hwy 99E forms a barrier to access on east edge



Existing dock could become public river access



Intersection of Main and 99E is sole existing vehicular access point into the site

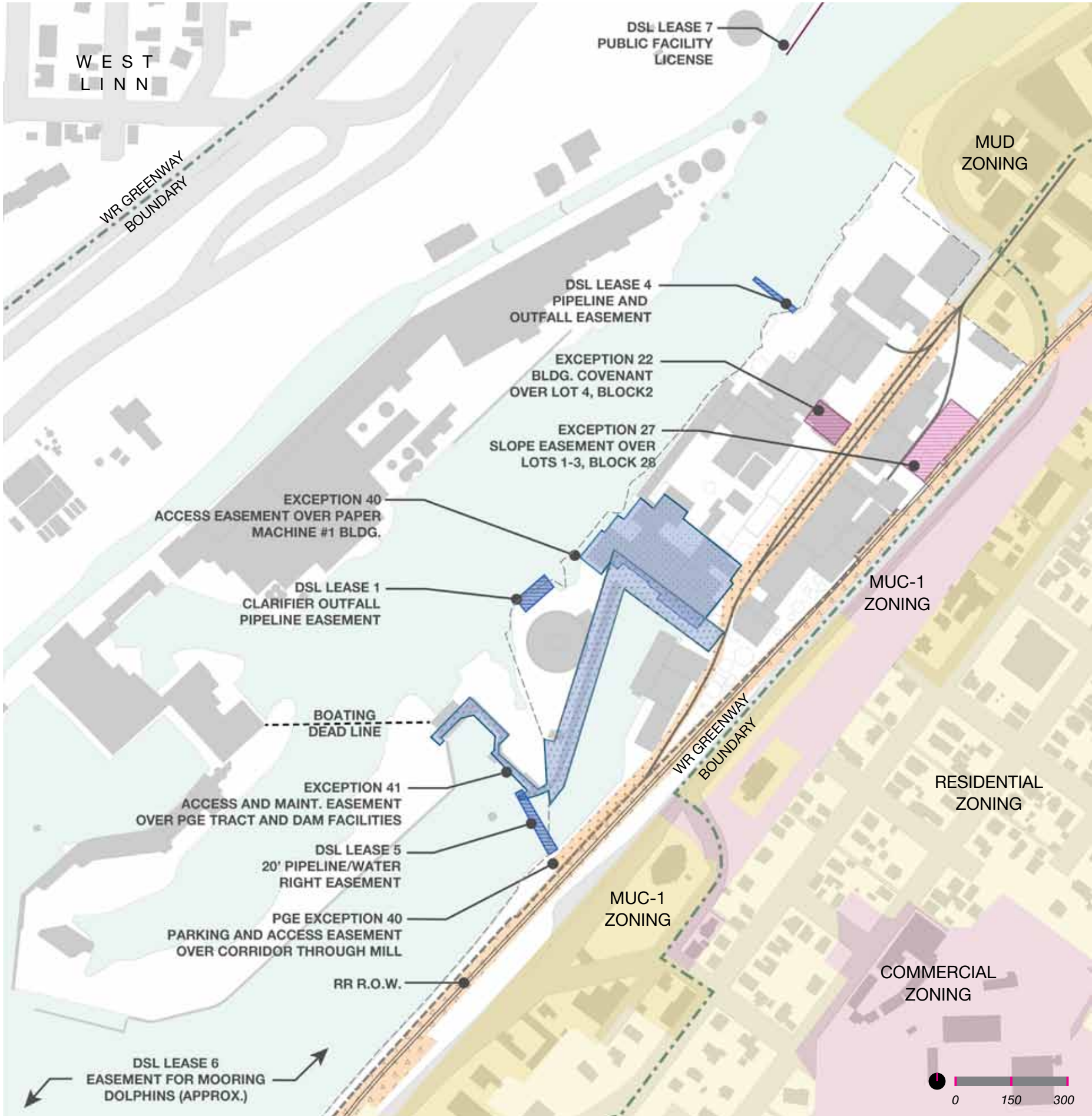


Rail spur south of site offers potential connection to Canemah and Metro Natural Area



PGE dam walkway offers access to views of Falls

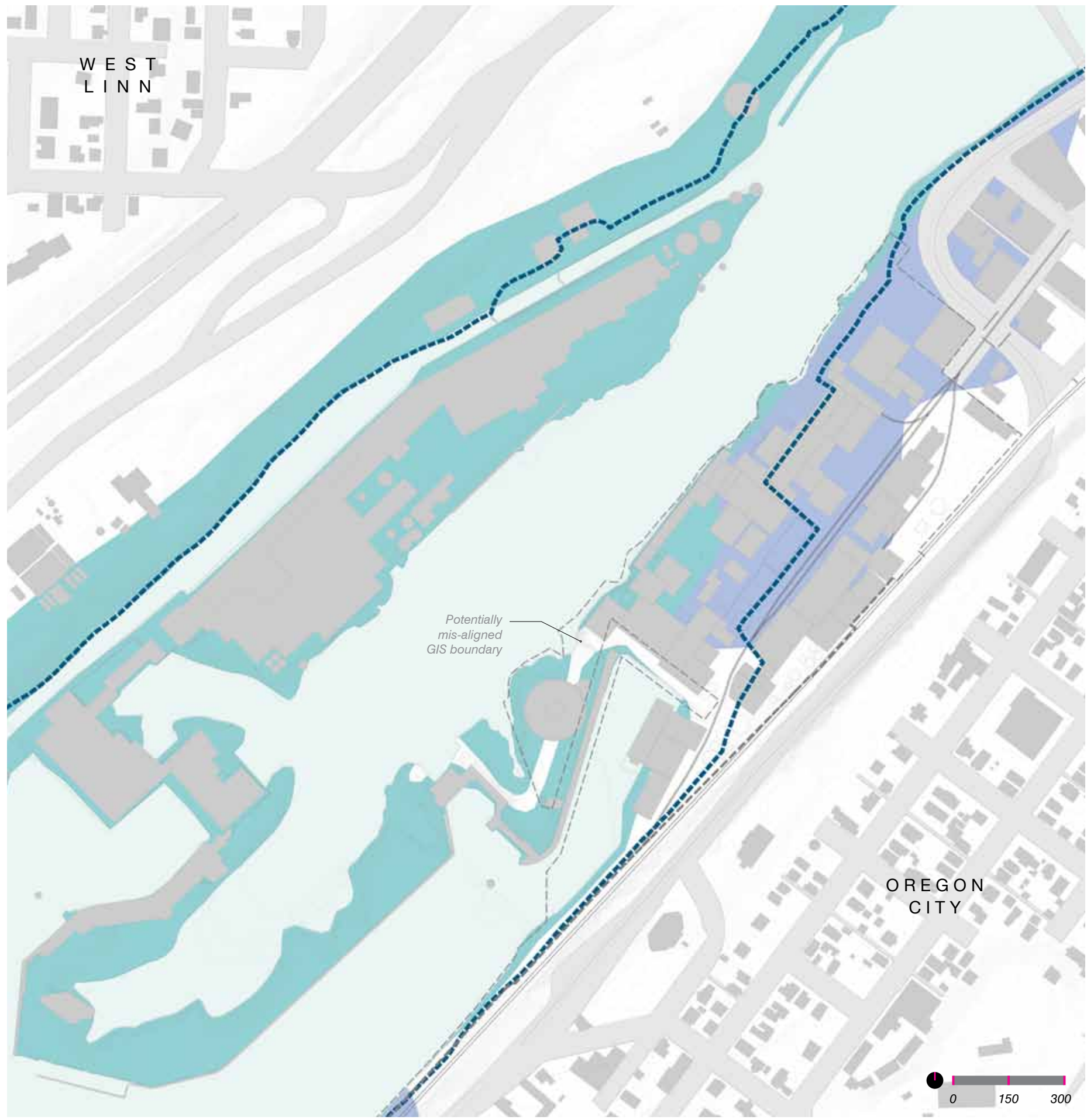
regulatory and legal conditions





floodplain

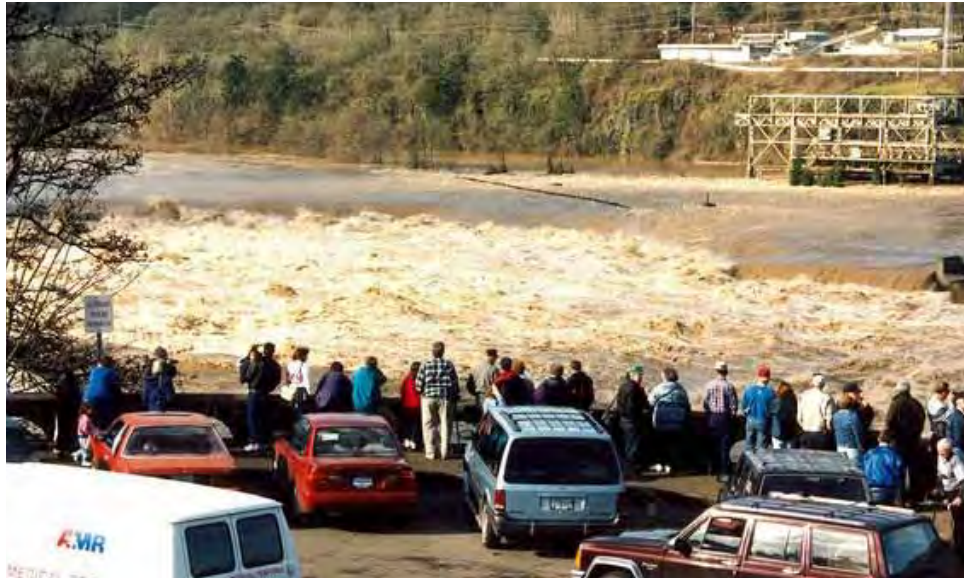
1964 flood



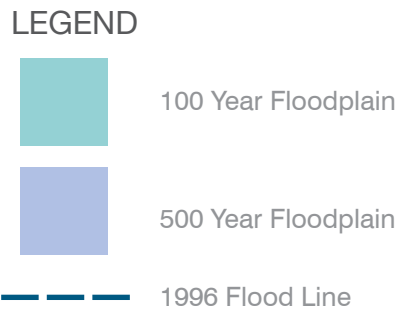
floodplain



1964 Flood

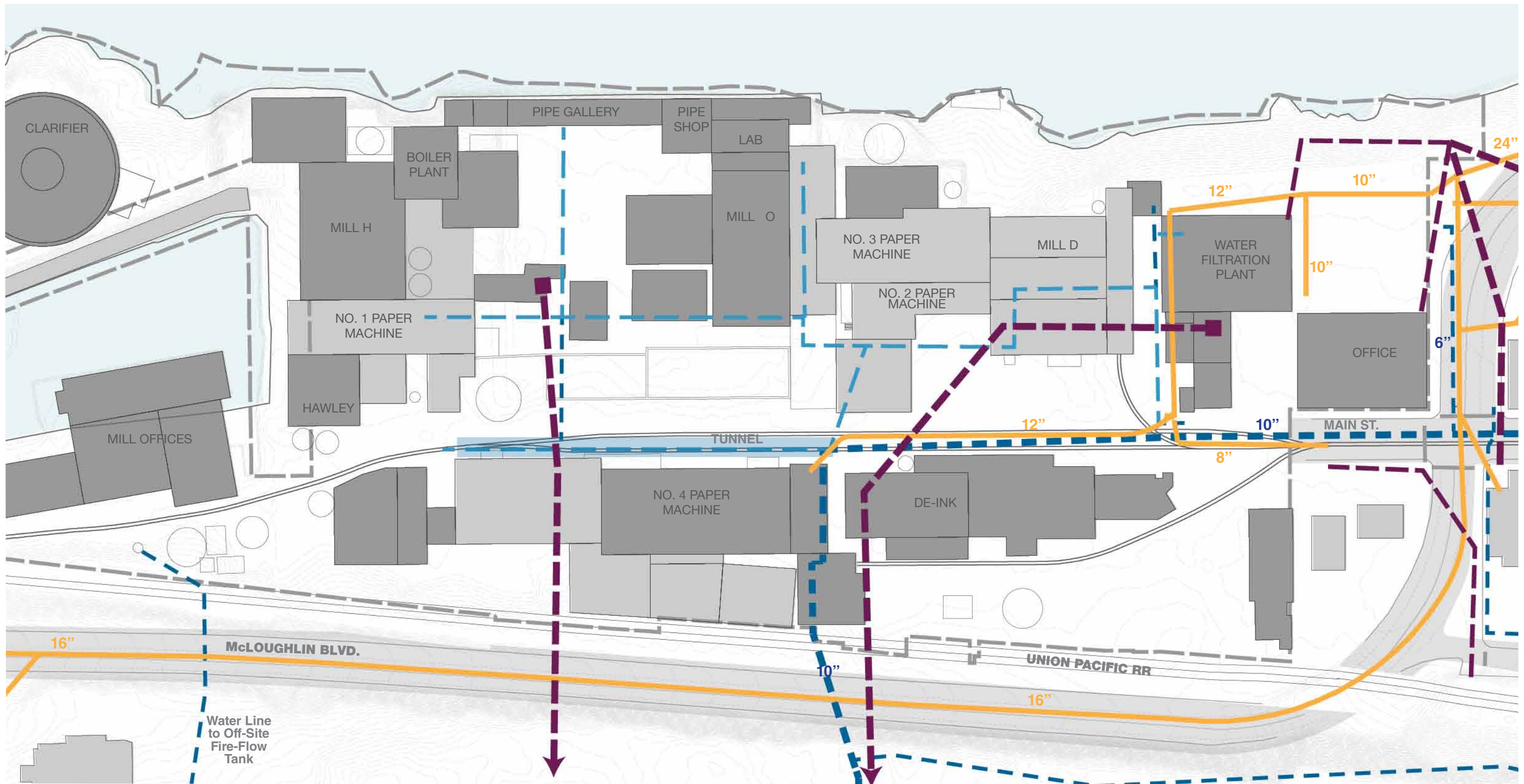


1996 Flood



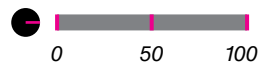


utilities



LEGEND

- Sewer Line
- Water Line **(Assumes that process water lines have been cut/alterd, so not shown)*
- - - Remnant Site Water Line
- - - Power Line

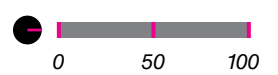
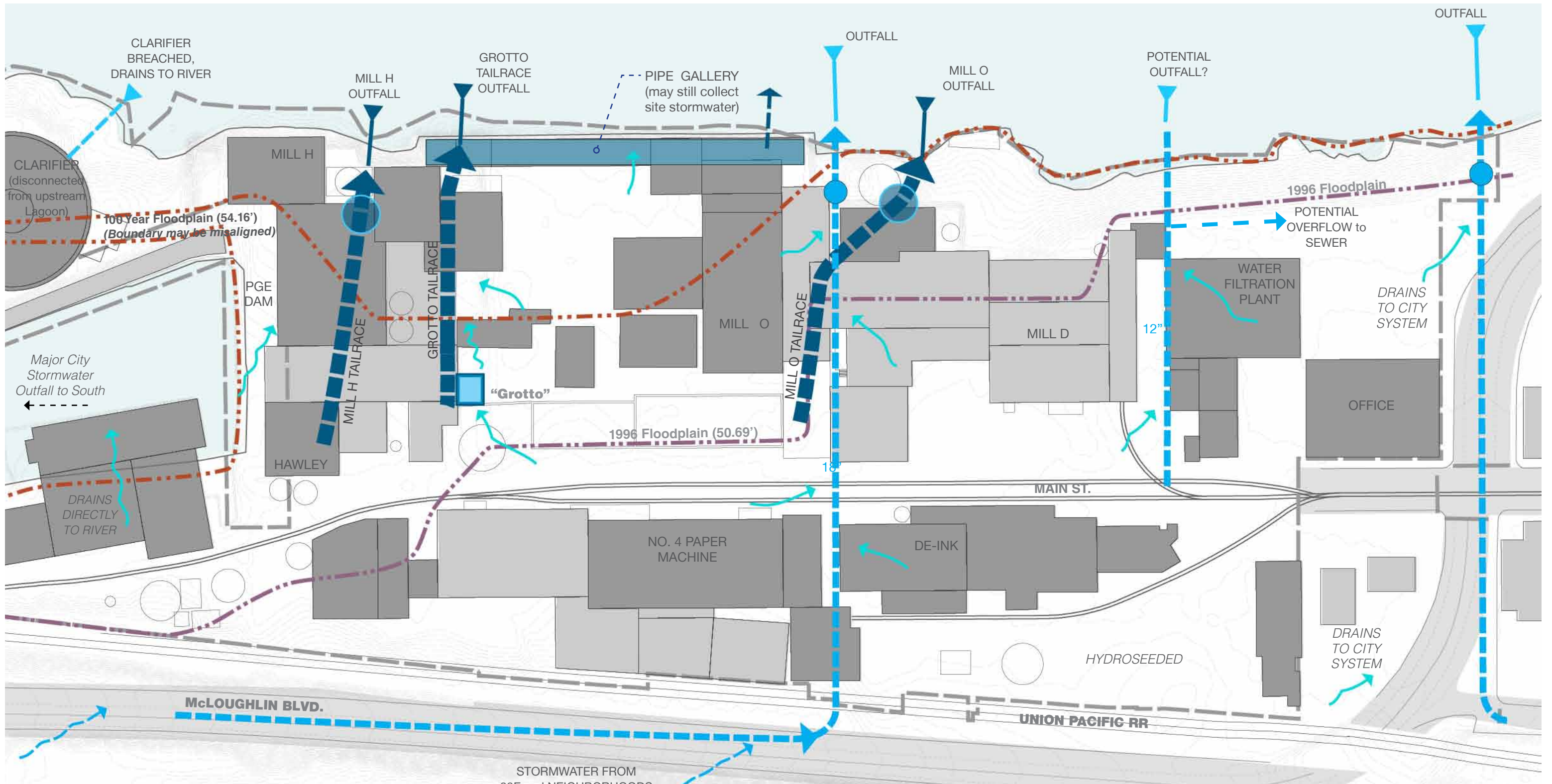


utilities



stormwater

Mill H Tailrace



- LEGEND**
- Stormwater Flow
 - Tailrace
 - Existing City Storm Drain
 - Interim Treatment Facility (Numerous Gullywasher downspout boxes not shown)

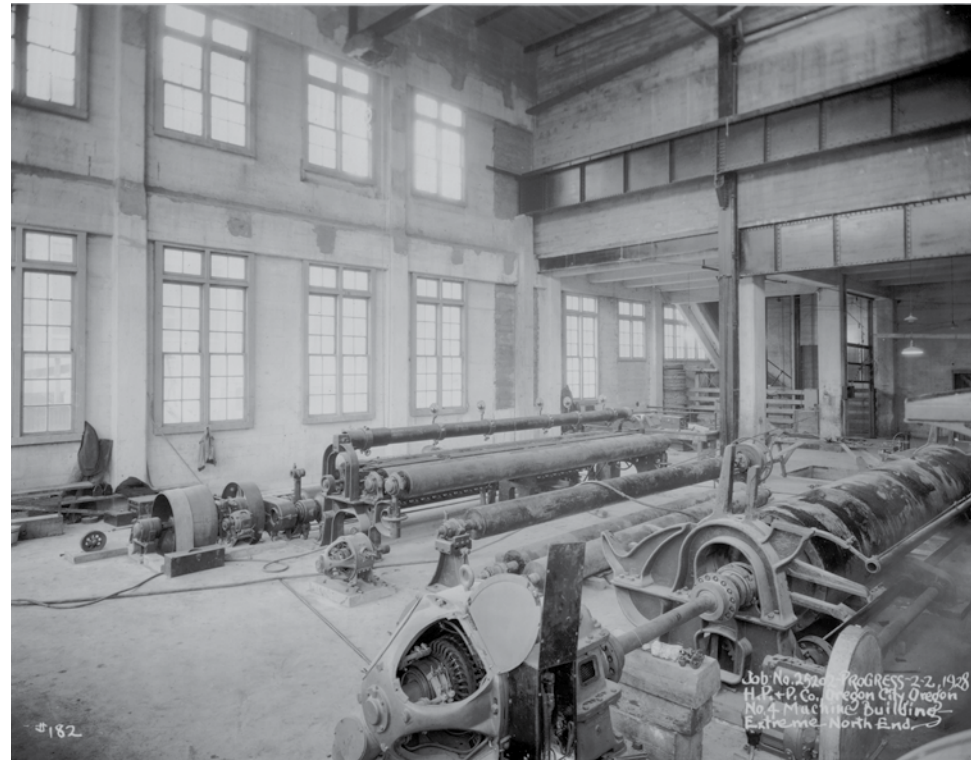
stormwater



structures



No. 4 Machine Building. Many of the buildings were designed with a very pure and rigid geometry that has been lost over a century of additions and renovations.



Some of the mill structures feature massive interior volumes for machinery



View south on Main Street in 1943. Mill and other commercial buildings create a sense of enclosure and a continuous street wall.



Historic photo looking southwest along Main Street. The buildings have a strong street presence and create a well scaled urban street edge.



A variety of building types on the old street grid with the massive basalt cliffs as the natural background.



Hawley/Paper Machine No.1 Building is a significant visual and historic icon and occupies a prominent position on the Lagoon and at the south end of Main St.



Many of the concrete mill structures have massive concrete foundation systems with interesting spatial qualities.



In addition to the massive concrete column and beam mill structures, wood framed buildings exist on site with exposed wood columns, beams, and roof trusses.



Exposed basalt foundations of demolished Woolen Mill.



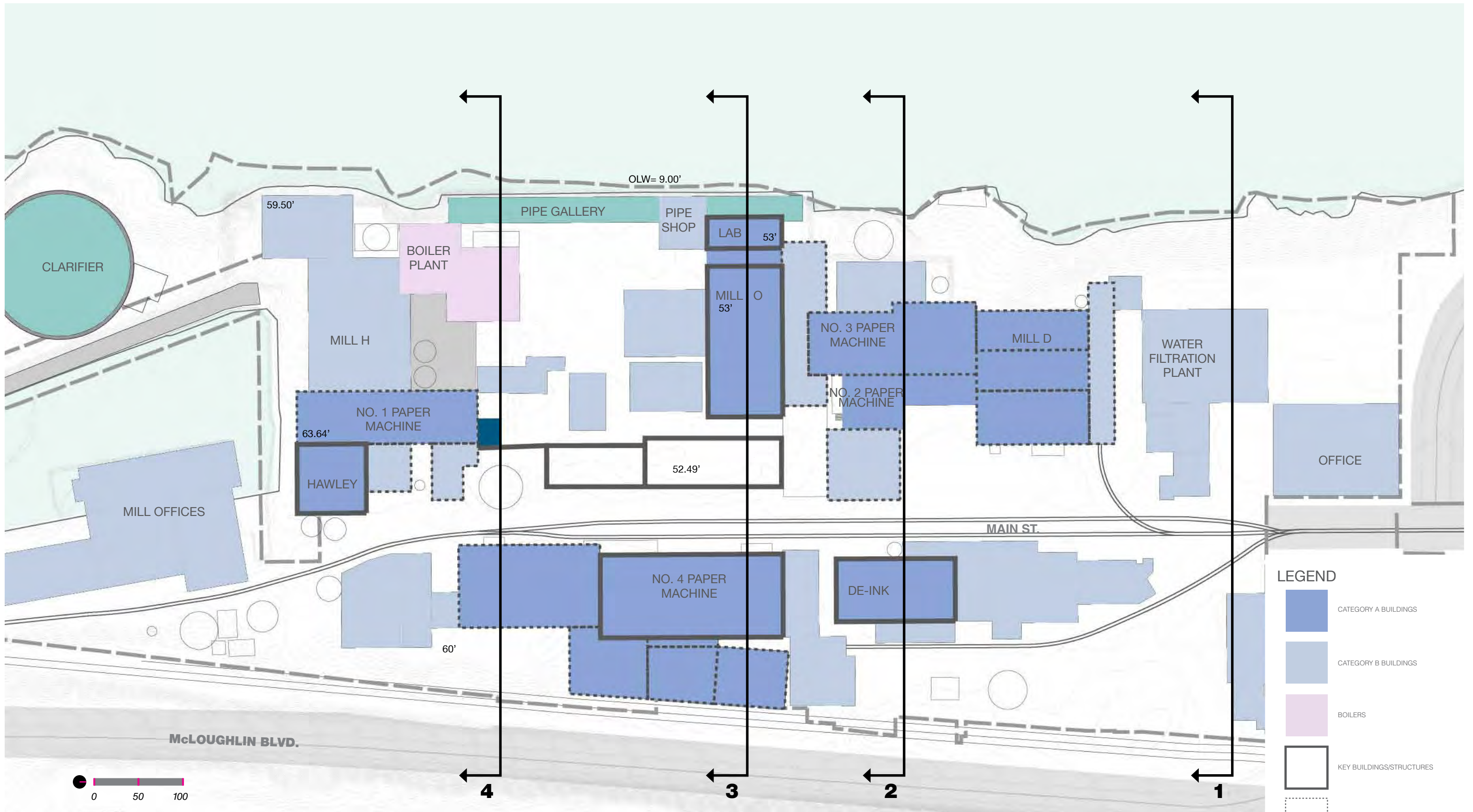
Even after the salvaging of materials, many of the existing mill structures retain an authentic industrial character.



Concrete platforms overlooking the Willamette River. Repurposing options could include viewing decks.



Expansive interior volume within the No. 4 Paper Machine Building.



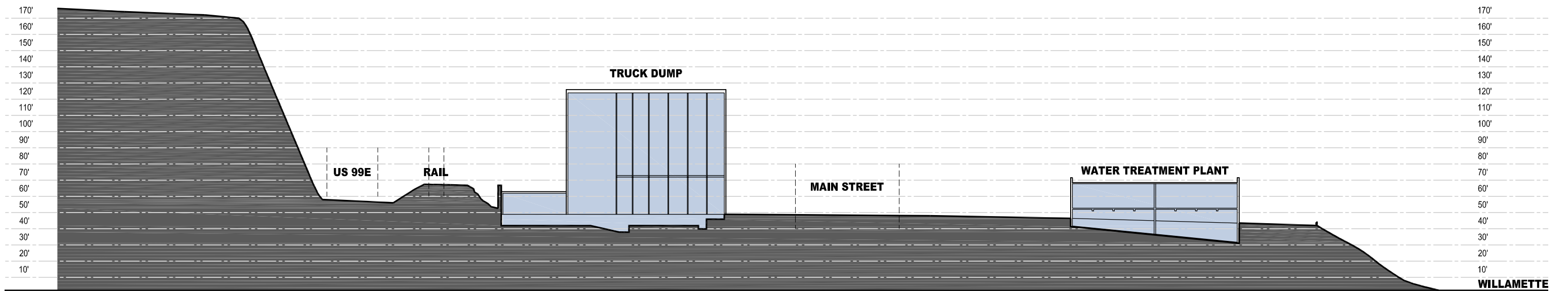
structures

LEGEND

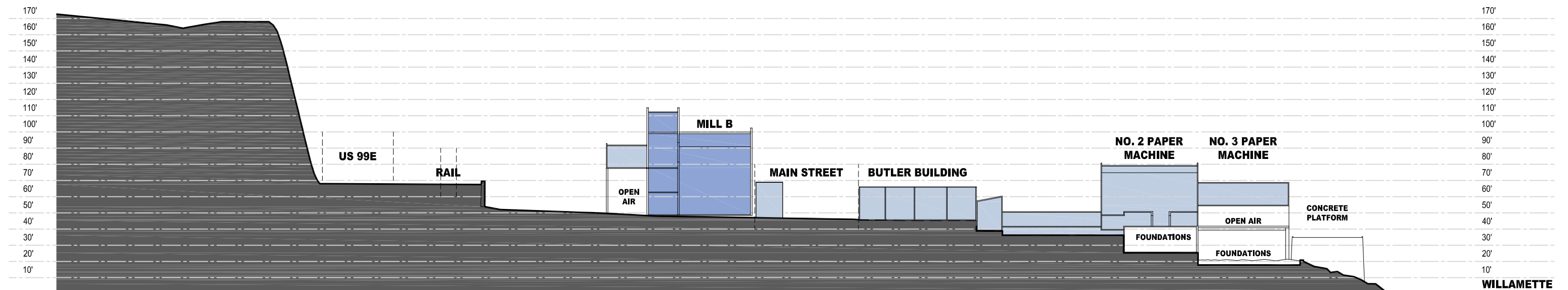
- CATEGORY A BUILDINGS
- CATEGORY B BUILDINGS
- BOILERS
- KEY BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES
- CLUSTER BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES

**Diagram based on 2012 Site Stabilization and Building Assessment Report*

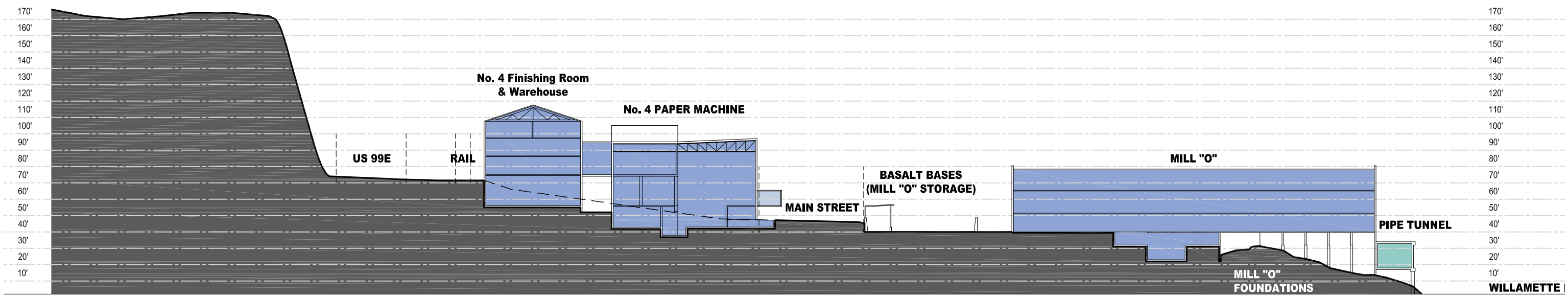
site cross-sections



section 1

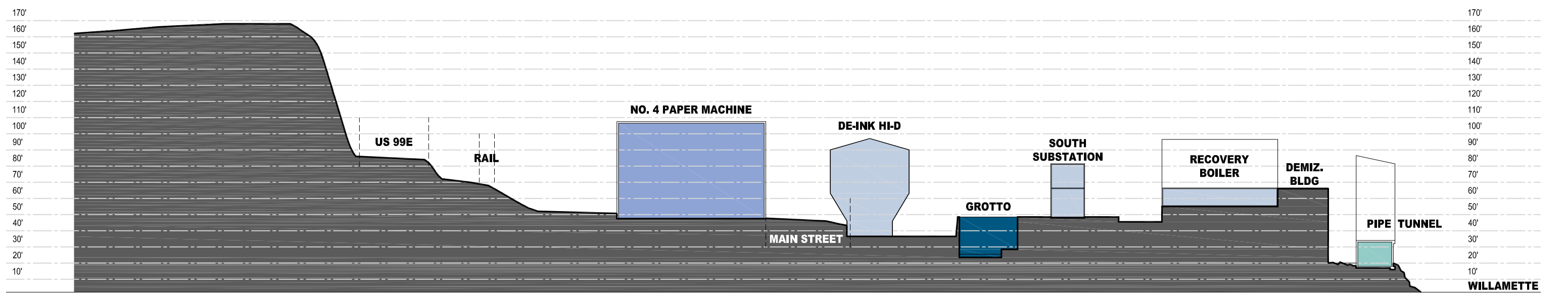


section 2



FOR PURPOSE OF THIS DRAWING, 0' IS LOWEST TOPO ON: Contours - 2ft.DWG

section 3



FOR PURPOSE OF THIS DRAWING, 0' IS LOWEST TOPO ON: Contours - 2ft.DWG

section 4

opportunities +
constraints





Opportunities + Constraints Analysis

The Willamette Falls Legacy Project is an opportunity to establish a vision and framework master plan for the former Blue Heron Mill site in downtown Oregon City. The project is fascinating and complex. The master planning team for the project has spent the past 2 months reviewing previous detailed research on the site prepared by a wide range of consultants and public agencies. The team has also walked the site extensively and toured every building as well as surrounding neighborhoods and open spaces. The goal is a thorough understanding of the site's physical, economic and community context that creates a basis for future planning and design.

This research and site investigation has been summarized in a set of photos, maps and diagrams that constitute the Existing Conditions report. Within this report we have distilled the essential conditions that will most inform subsequent planning work into a series of Opportunities and Constraints diagrams.

These diagrams are organized according to the project's 4 Core Values.

PUBLIC ACCESS: ensure access to the falls and places for people to gather

ECONOMIC REDEVELOPMENT: provide jobs and prosperity

HEALTHY HABITAT: maintain, restore and protect the unique ecosystem of fish, wildlife and plants along the river

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL INTERPRETATION: provide opportunities to connect to heritage and history as well as current cultural practices related to the falls

In this project's context, a Constraint is considered as a characteristic of the site's condition that limits or represents a challenge to the site's rehabilitation and redevelopment. These challenges are not insurmountable, but they will require special attention and creativity to overcome. Opportunities are positive elements that can and should inform and shape subsequent physical planning and placemaking efforts. *(The two categories are not always exclusive, as some may consider a Constraint to be an Opportunity and vice versa.)*


The information presented in these diagrams will serve to inform and direct the vision for the Willamette Falls Legacy Project. Initial scenarios guided by these Opportunities and Constraints will be refined into a series of master plan alternatives which will then be blended into one preferred plan, which will serve as the vision for the site and will influence the drafting of a land use plan and implementation strategy.

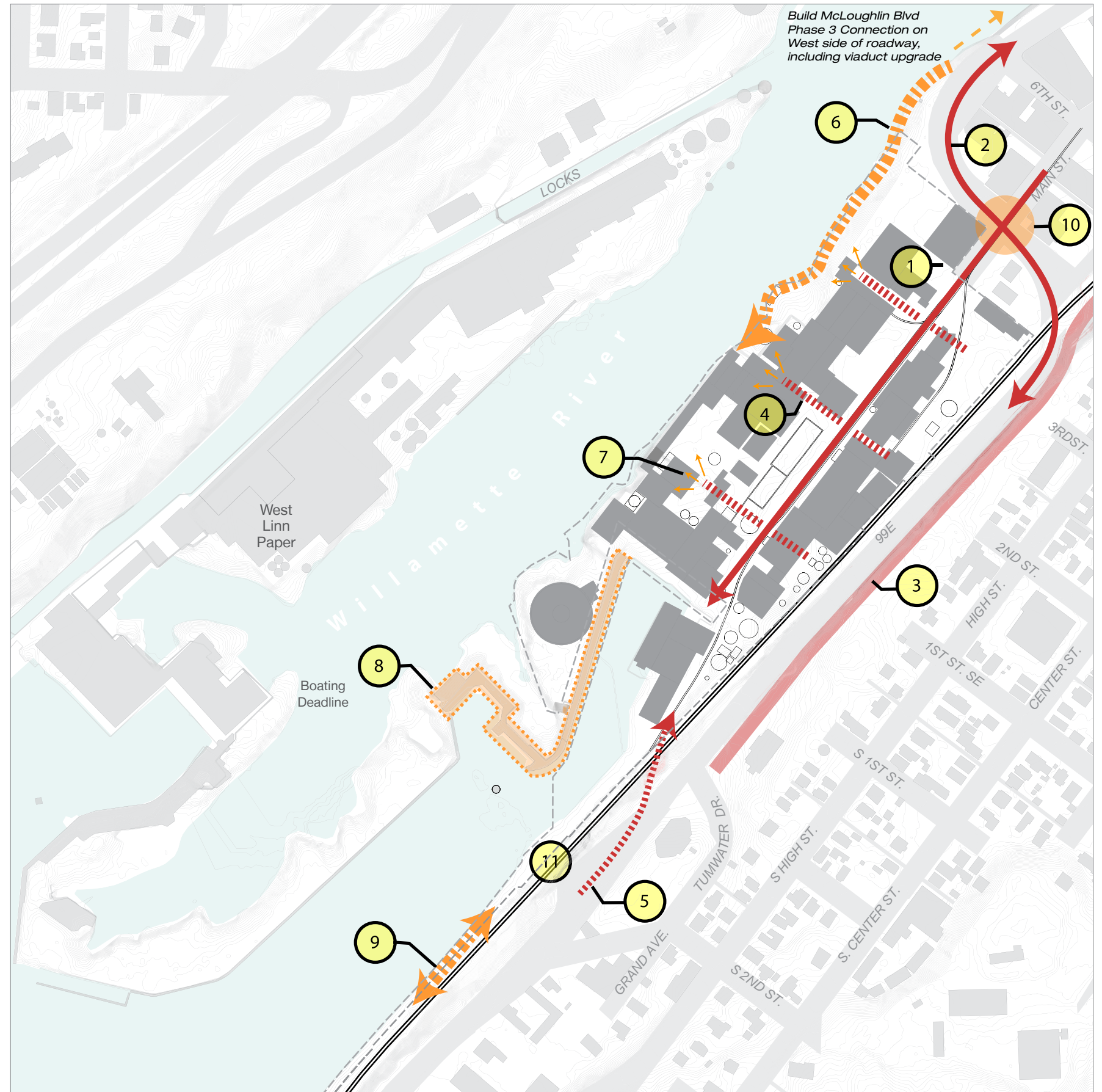
PUBLIC ACCESS: CONSTRAINTS

VEHICULAR CONSTRAINTS

- 1** Single Access Point to Site and Challenging Turns off HWY 99
- 2** Bluff Isolates Site from Adjacent Community and Street Grid
- 3** Mill Development Eliminated Original Street Grid

PEDESTRIAN CONSTRAINTS

- 4** Waterfront Access Challenging with Highly-Modified River's Edge
 - 5** Existing Mill Development Obstructs Views and Connections to Willamette River
 - 6** Dam and Falls Public Access Limited due to Ongoing Management and Maintenance
 - 7** Potential Trail to Canemah must Cross UPRR
 - 8** High Speed Traffic on HWY 99
 - 9** Union Pacific Railroad Physical Barrier to Site
-  Steep Slopes



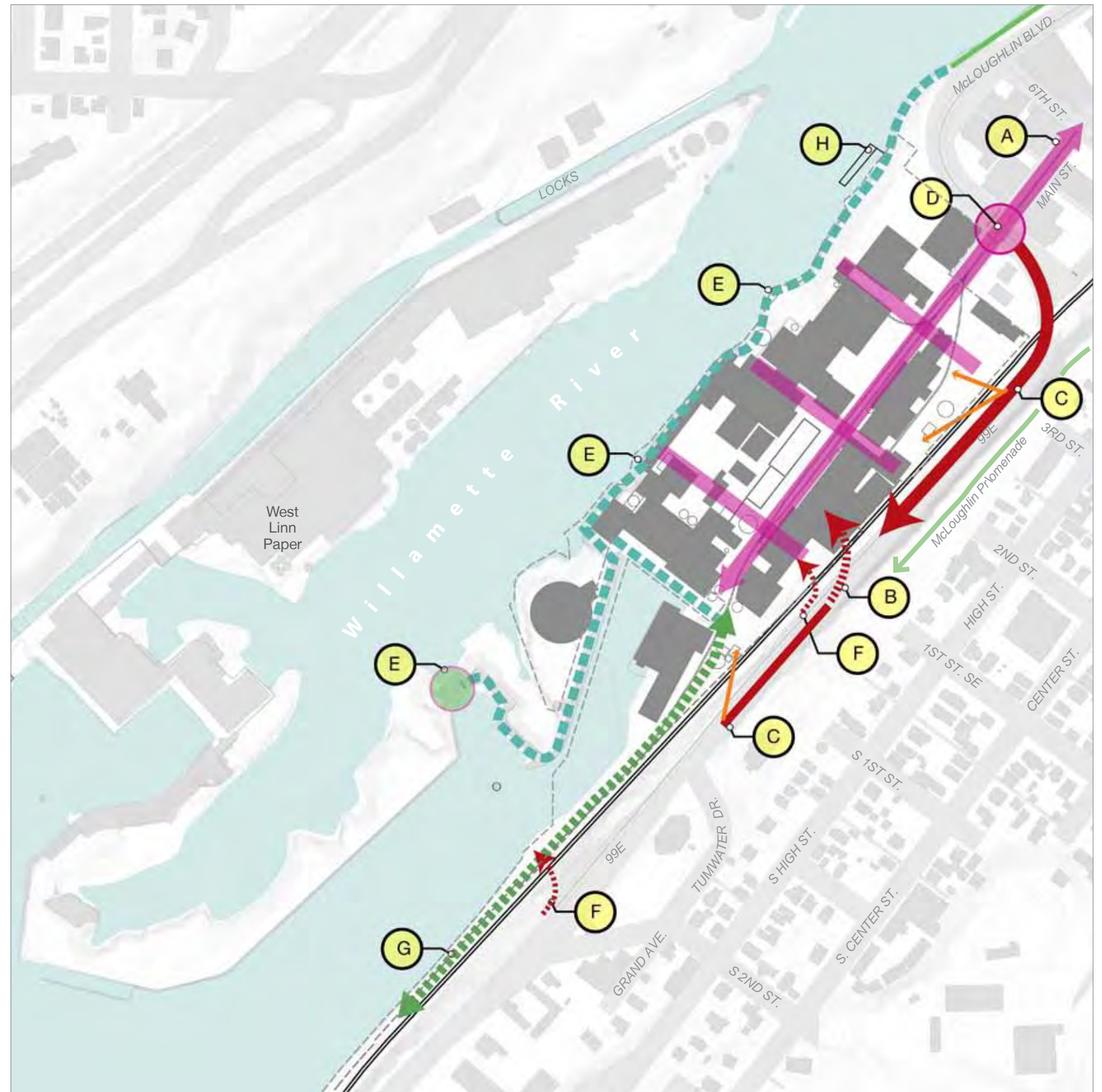
PUBLIC ACCESS: OPPORTUNITIES

VEHICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

- A** Extend Main Street into Site and Re-Establish Original Street Grid
- B** Utilize Grade Change between HWY 99 and Site for Potential Elevated Access
- C** HWY 99 Provides Good Visibility of Site and Future Development
- D** Improve Intersection for Site Access

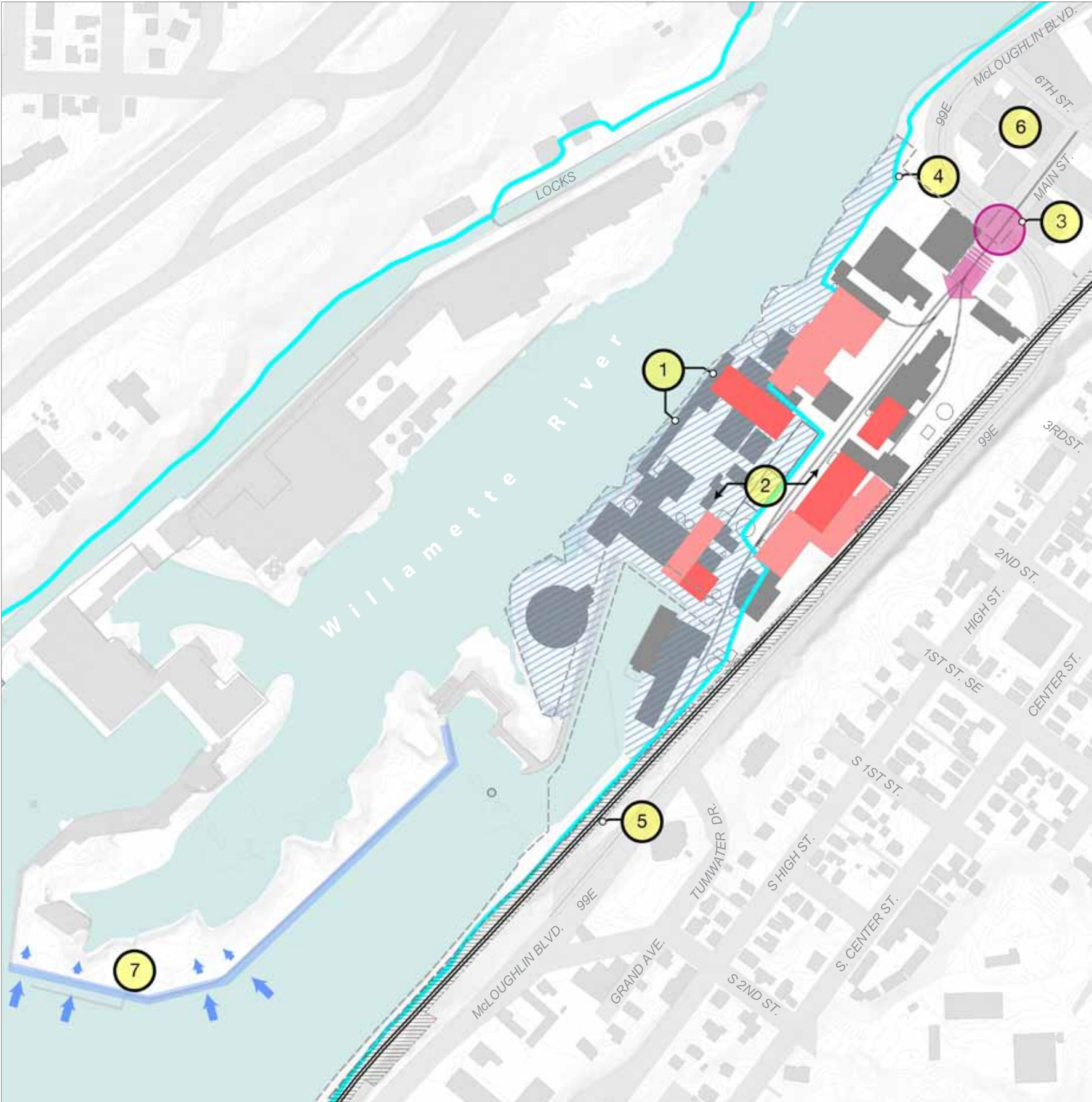
PEDESTRIAN OPPORTUNITIES

- E** River's Edge Offers Exciting Pedestrian Experience
- F** Possible Pedestrian Bridge over Railroad Corridor
- G** Opportunity for Trail to Canemah
- H** Possibility to Reuse Boat Docks at Site






ECONOMIC REDEVELOPMENT: CONSTRAINTS

- 1** Existing Building Foundations & Structure are Complicated and Require Upgrades for Future Use
- 2** Infrastructure Challenges:
 - Bedrock is Difficult to Adjust
 - Site Under-served by Utilities
- 3** Single Point of Access
- 4** +/- 12 Acres in Floodplain
- 5** UPRR: Noise, Vibration, Ownership
- 6** Market Limitations of Oregon City
- 7** In Summer High Tourist Season, Falls at Lowest Flow




ECONOMIC REDEVELOPMENT: OPPORTUNITIES

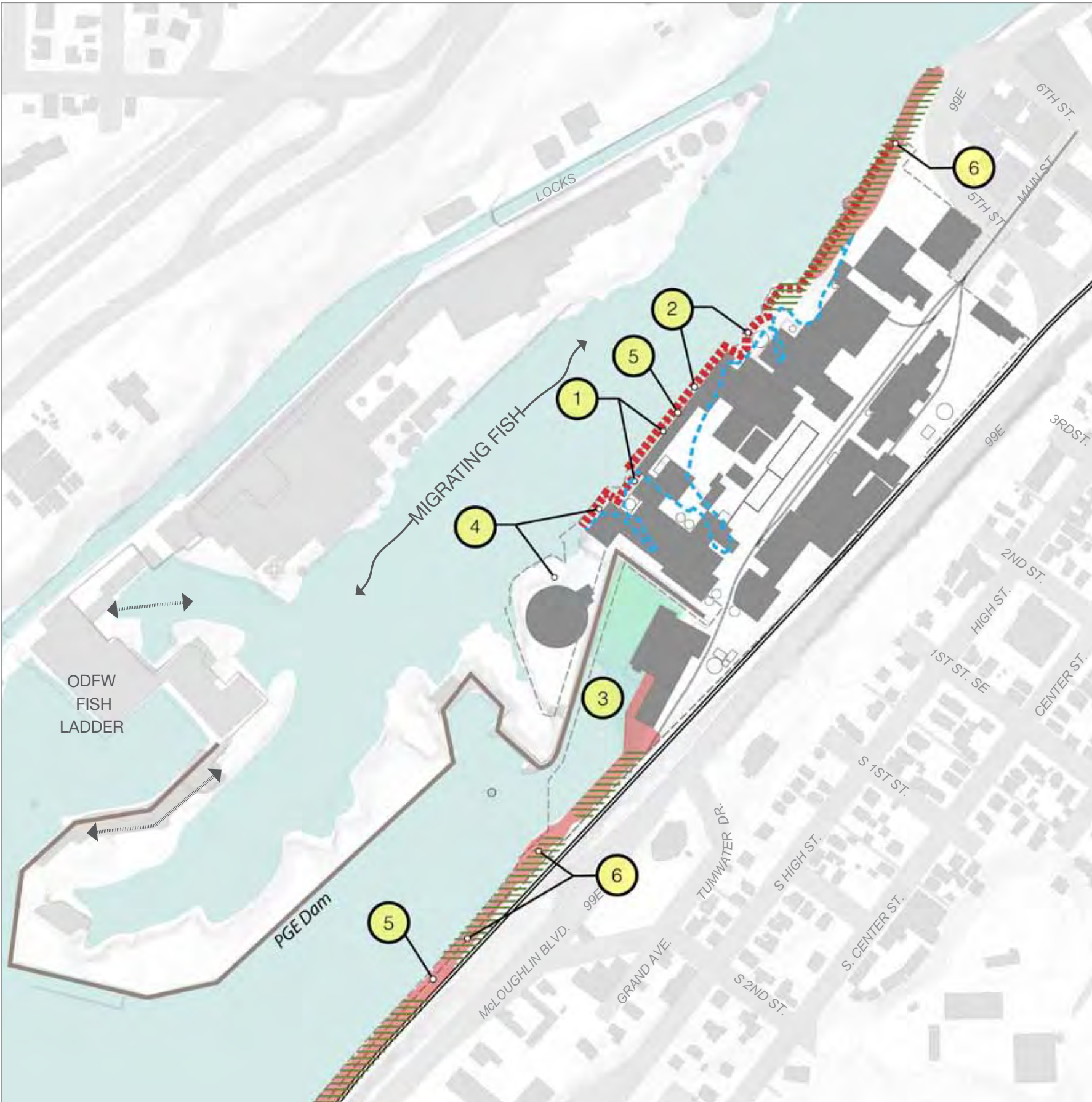
- A** Falls Have a Legacy of Human History and Culture. Potential to become a Significant Tourist Destination
- B** Dramatic Setting can Drive Development Value Beyond Current Market
- C** Complex Shoreline can Provide Dramatic Views and Opportunities to Interact with River
- D** Re-Establish Historic Main Street and Street Grid and Contribute to Oregon City Downtown Vibrancy
- E** Re-Use of Historic Structures can Build Authentic Sense of Place
- F** Adjacent Topography Allows for Site Views. Bluff along HWY 99 Helps Buffer Residential Area from New, Larger Site Buildings
- G** Opportunity for New Employment in this Regional Center
- H** Potential to Develop Innovative, Sustainable Infrastructure and Buildings

-  Existing Historic Buildings with High Potential for Rehabilitation and Reuse
-  Existing Clusters of Buildings with Some Potential for Re-Use
-  Existing Buildings with Limited Value for Re-Use




HEALTHY HABITAT: CONSTRAINTS

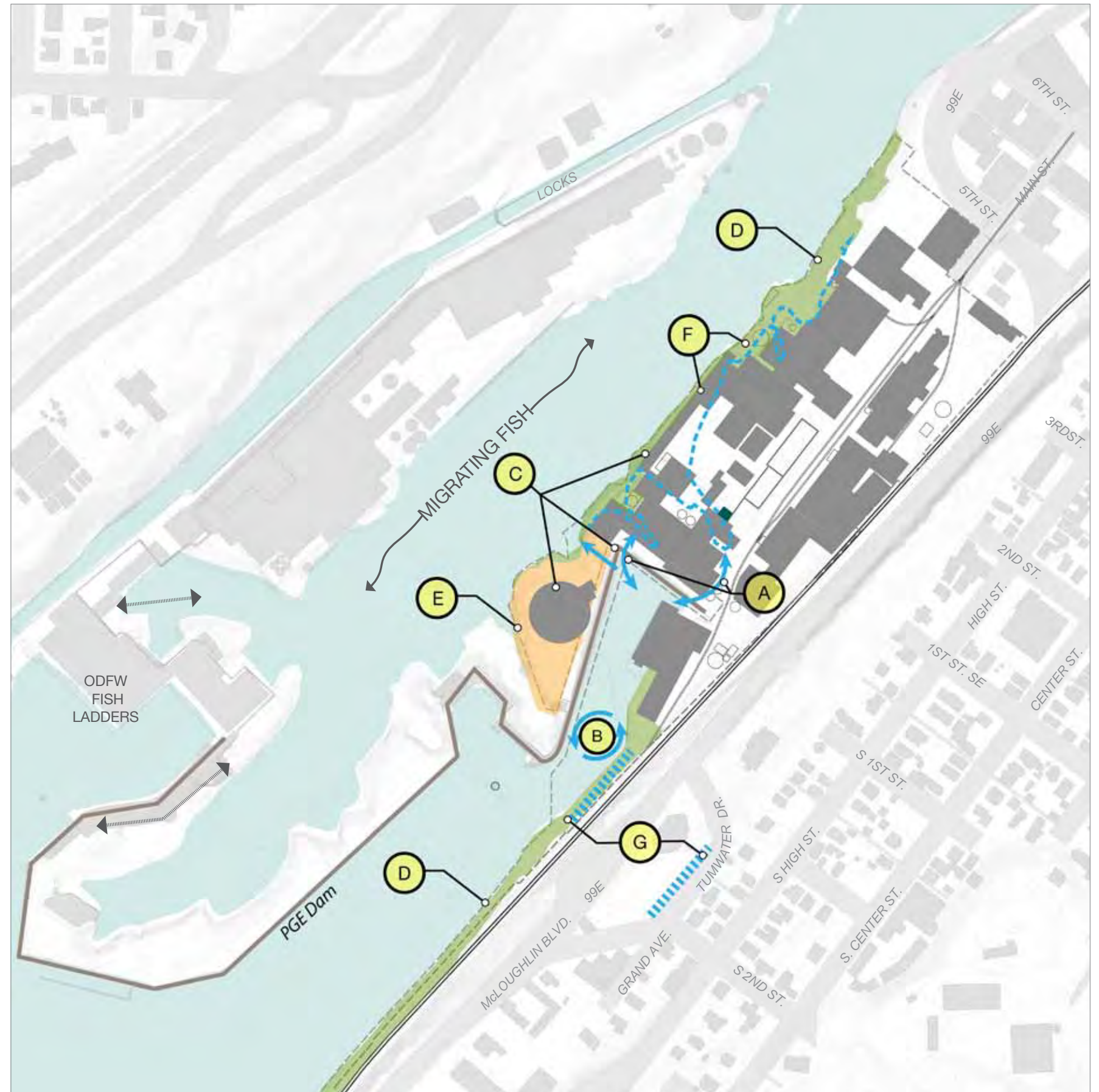
- 1** Minimal Riparian Soil Limits Vegetated Habitat
- 2** Highly Altered River's Edge Caused by Filling and Building over Natural Shoreline
- 3** Lack of Lagoon Water Circulation
- 4** Unique Plant Communities and Basalt Outcroppings Impacted by Encroaching Buildings
- 5** Gaps in Habitat
- 6** Invasive Vegetation
-  Historic Shoreline



HEALTHY HABITAT: OPPORTUNITIES

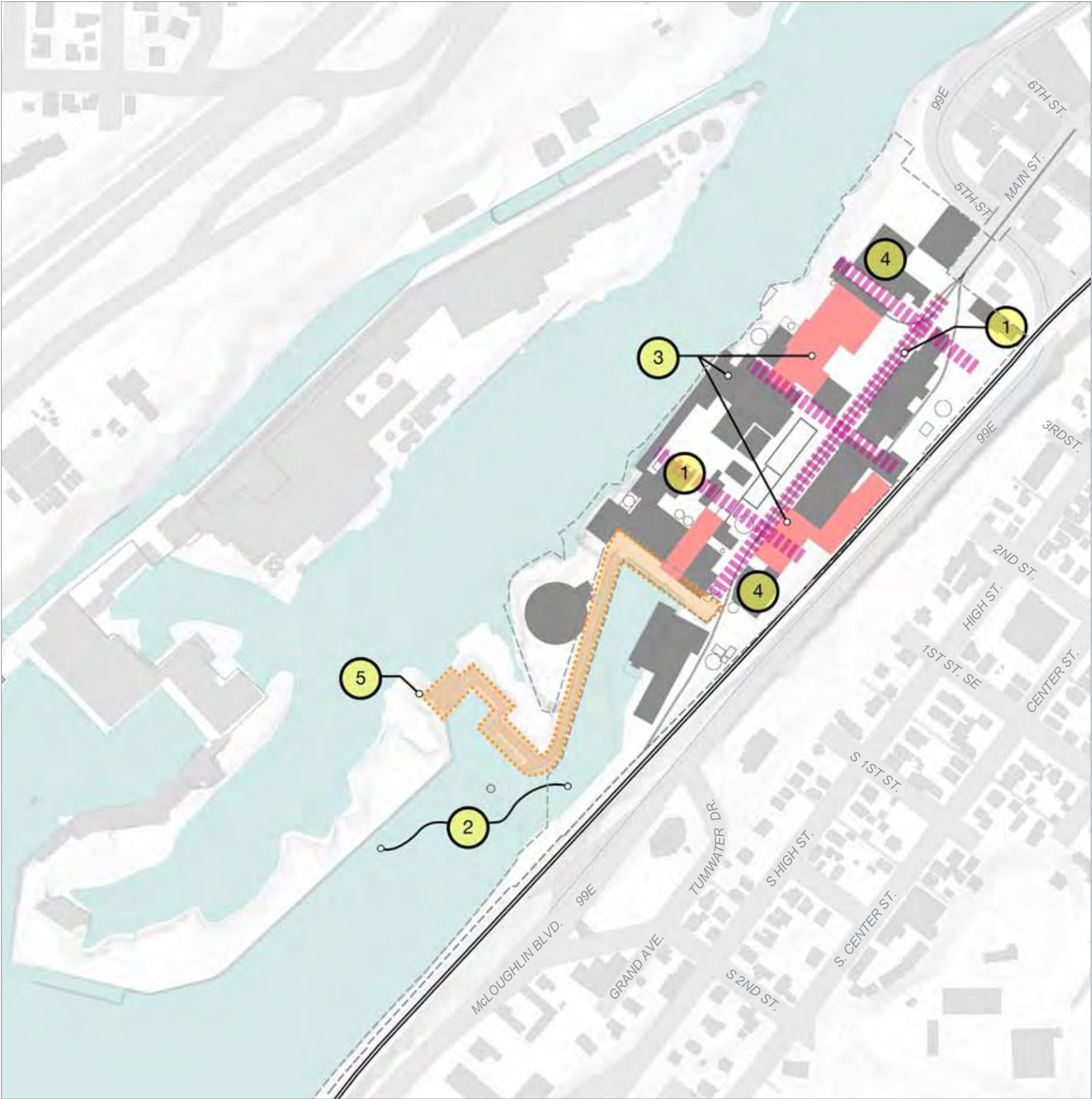
- A** Restore Water Flow to Help Flush Lagoon
- B** Provide Circulation of Lagoon Water to Prevent Overgrowth of Algae and Invasive Vegetation
- C** Remove Some Waterfront Structures for Habitat Restoration
- D** Restore Shoreline Habitat and Plant Native Vegetation. Remove Industrial Debris, Riprap and Invasive Plant Species
- E** Restore Unique Plant Communities and Basalt Rock Outcroppings
- F** Provide Additional Roughness at River's Edge to Create Fish Habitat
- G** Treat Stormwater from Neighborhoods and HWY 99 Prior to Discharge into Willamette River

 Historic Shoreline



HISTORIC & CULTURAL INTERPRETATION: CONSTRAINTS

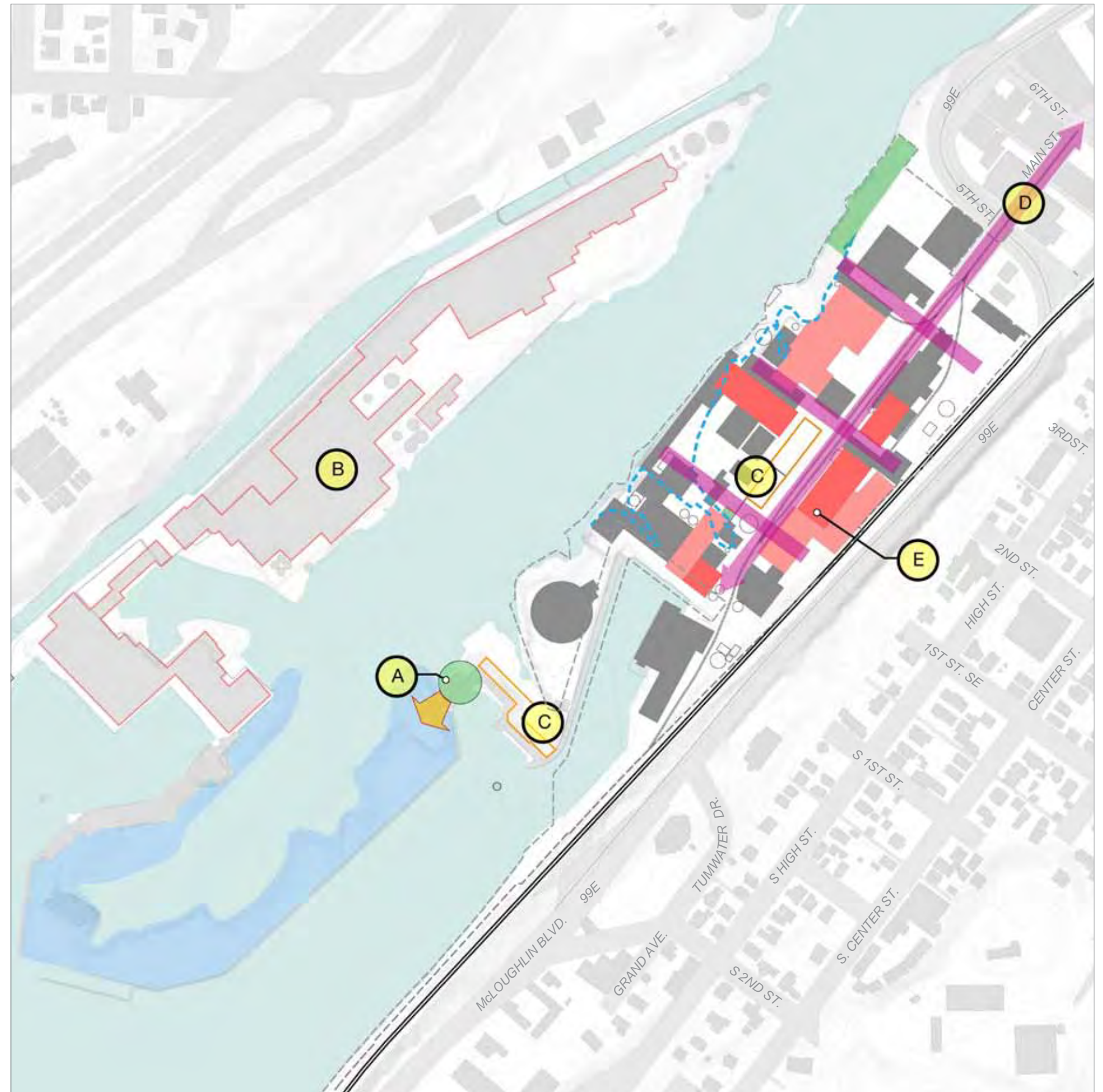
- 1** Development has Eliminated Street Grid, Obstructing River View Corridors
- 2** Dam and Industry Have Changed Historic Hydrology
- 3** Buildings Significantly Altered through Incremental Industrial Development
- 4** Certain Buildings' Functions Make Reuse Difficult
- 5** PGE Ownership and Operation of Dam will Require Public Access Easements and Coordination



HISTORIC & CULTURAL INTERPRETATION: OPPORTUNITIES

- A** Dramatic Visibility of Falls Provides Opportunity for Cultural Interpretation and Education of Native History
- B** West Linn Paper Co Demonstrates Site's Industrial Character
- C** Remnants of Mill Infrastructure Provide Opportunity to Interpret Site's Industrial Legacy
- D** Opportunity to Re-Introduce Historical Street Grid and Energize Main Street through Extension into Site
- E** Selective Restoration of Historic Structures can Directly Link New Development to Site's Industrial History

- Existing Historic Buildings with High Potential for Rehabilitation and Reuse
- Existing Clusters of Buildings with Some Potential for Re-Use
- Existing Buildings with Limited Value for Re-Use



precedent
projects





Project/Site	Location	Description	Acres	Notable aspects
America's River	Dubuque, IA	Riverfront museum, park, aquarium, mixed use on brownfield site	90	\$400 million project. Catalyzed downtown redevelopment in historic area.
Fort Vancouver	Vancouver, WA	National historic site, old Army fort	210	Gets over 1 million visitors per year
Torpedo Factory Art Center	Baltimore, MD	Adaptive reuse of former torpedo factory as artist center		Almost 400,000 visitors per year
Monadnock Mill	Claremont, NH	Riverfront mill buildings reused as tech offices, housing, hotel rooms and restaurants.		Used NMTC, City built infrastructure and 286-space parking garage next door. Tenants include Red River Computing and The Common Man Inn and Restaurant.
McMenamin's Edgefield	Troutdale, OR	Reuse of poor farm property into golf course, hotel, restaurant, and concert venue. Privately owned.	74	Placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990, same year it was purchased from county for \$500,000
Tom McCall Waterfront Park	Portland, OR	Conversion of riverfront highway to linear park in downtown, houses Portland Saturday market and numerous festivals		Property values increased, private development along riverfront (Riverplace, Yards at Union Station) still required public assistance
American Tobacco	Durham, NC	Tobacco factory campus rehabilitated as mixed use center adjacent to stadium, also includes green space and trails		Private developer, 1 million square feet. Nonprofits provided some financing, public provided parking garages for \$30 million.
Confluence Park	Denver, CO	Kayaking waterways and park on waterfront adjacent to REI		\$70 million public investment. REI received \$6.3 million in TIF for \$32 million renovation of historic warehouse.
Riverwalk	Columbus, GA	22-mile riverside trail with space for events. Planned whitewater park on river after dam removal.		Economic impact studies for whitewater park predict large tourism increase and job creation.
Spokane Falls Park	Spokane, WA	Home to 1974 world's fair, features amusement rides, tram over waterfalls, trails, IMAX theater	100	Two restaurants overlook the Falls. Home to many festivals and events.
Mill Ruins Park	Minneapolis, MN	Historic Park with trails and ruins from old steel mill	8	\$54 million for public park. 1.6 million visitors for larger waterfront park
Pike's Place Market	Seattle, WA	Open air produce, fish and craft market, with eateries, along the waterfront. Site of original Starbucks.		10 million visitors per year. Media coverage of fishmongers key to popularity among tourists.
Sculpture Garden	Seattle, WA	Brownfield redevelopment into ecologically restored-waterfront park with sculptures	8.5	\$15 million in public investment, \$70 million private donations. Big-name architect.
Ghirardelli Square	San Francisco, CA	Adaptive reuse of chocolate factory as retail shops and restaurants		No public investment
Lowell National Historic Park	Lowell, MA	Textile Mills repurposed into museums and lofts, national park offers tours, trolley, interpretation		566,000 visitors in 2009 and \$35 million in visitor spending
Cannery Row	Monterey, CA	Former sardine canning area on waterfront now a destination with fishing, aquarium, kayaking, retail, etc		Privately developed, 4 million visitors per year. Sardine Factory is very well-known restaurant. Community opposition stopped mall development on the site.
Concrete Plant Park	Bronx, NY	Public park and marsh restoration with river access on the site of a former concrete plant	9	\$10 million public investment
Historic Mill District	Bend, OR	Open space, trails, and retail center on former lumber mill along Deschutes River	270	private developer purchased site, no public role.
Carrie Furnace	Pittsburgh, PA	Former steel furnace along the River planned to house steel museum, mixed use development, regional trails	168	County purchased site for \$5.75 million and performed remediation and installed infrastructure with help from grants. Plan to sell the site to private developer.

*Other precedents include **Granville Island**, Vancouver, BC, Canada and **Sloss Furnaces**, Birmingham, AL. (Above information not known for these projects.)



Mill Ruins Park

Minneapolis, Minnesota





Urban Outfitters Headquarters

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



Distillery District

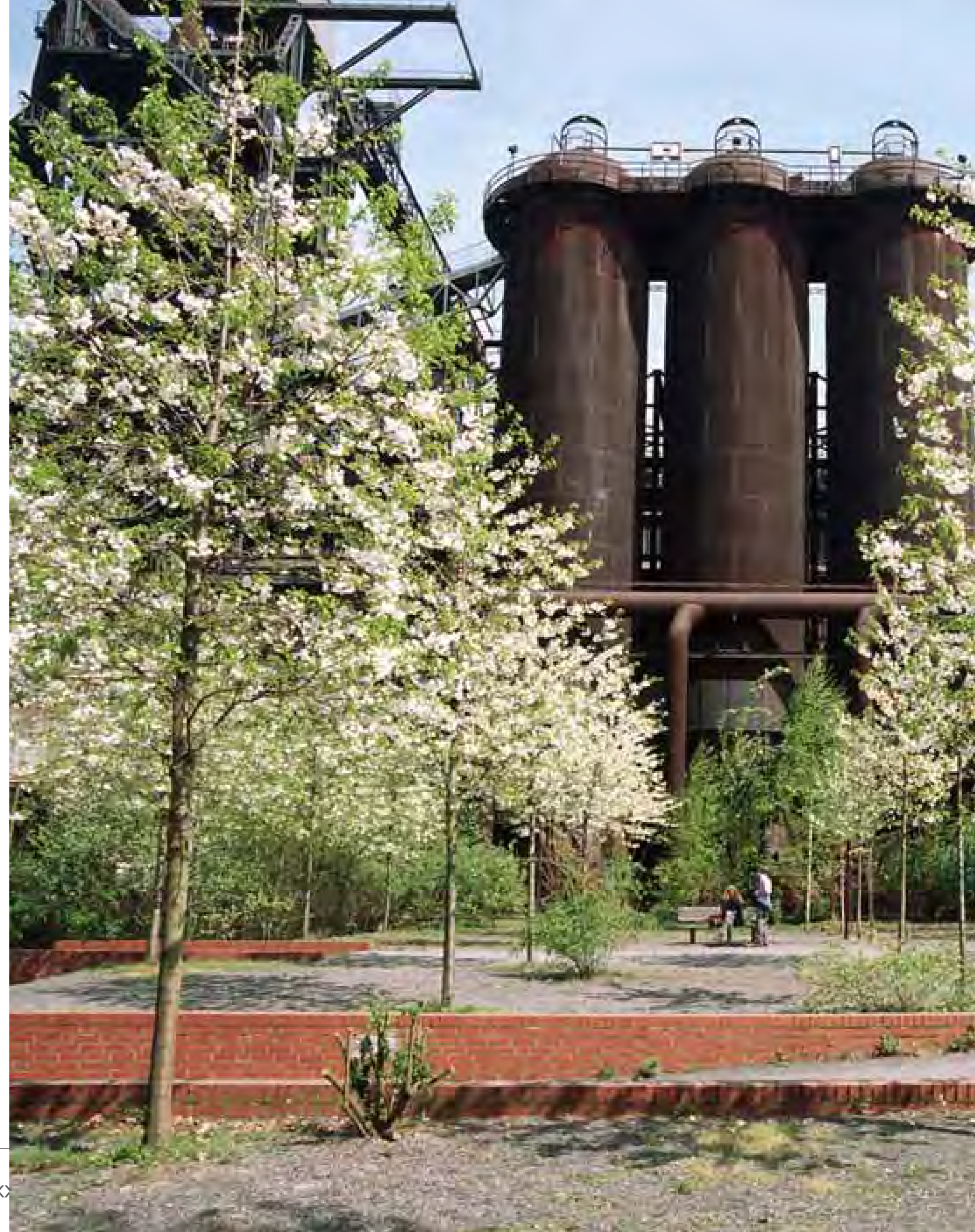
Toronto, Canada



Foundries Garden

Nantes, France





Landschaftspark Duisburg

Duisburg-Nord, Germany



sources

History Summary (untitled), Stephen Dow Beckham, January 2013

Willamette Falls Legacy Project Site Stabilization and Building Assessment Report

Willamette Falls Legacy Project Habitat and Water Resources Opportunities

Phase II Environmental Site Assessment Results

2002 Willamette Falls Industrial Area Request For Determination Of Eligibility

September 2012 updated Determination of Eligibility Letter

Willamette Falls Heritage Area Coalition Application for Federal Heritage Area

Sample photos from Blue Heron Photo Collection: Clackamas County Historical Society

Catalytic Value of the Willamette Falls Project: Report on the impact of transformation of Oregon City's former Blue Heron Mill site (Metro)

Willamette Falls Funding Strategy: Overview of opportunities and action steps to finance transformative re-development in Oregon City (Metro)