

MAPLE GROVE MASTER PLAN

BY: THE MAPLEBUGS

Team Name

The Maplebugs

Process and Design evolution

Considered but discounted: zipline to/from Yorath; dogs were discussed, but quickly discounted because of liberties dog owners often take with respect to dog-free areas; boat launches were ultimately discounted because the group felt that a launch here would encourage access to Yorath; playgrounds that included built structures – it was determined that play equipment should be minimal, and the entire site considered a natural play /education space

Contentious items: boat launches; ropes course; yurts because of the required servicing within the flood area; playgrounds; river access points

Discussed items considered a hard no: access to Yorath Island was a hard no immediately; motorized access into the site (cars, ATVs, etc...)

Items most supported: multi-use trails including separation of users; boardwalks and observation towers to create views of (but not access to) Yorath Island; educational opportunities (classrooms, creating spaces for interpretation); pollinator paradise including fully accessible boardwalk

Percentage of site developed vs. naturalized: intense development is limited to the high ground above the flood zone, and to a node of education / outdoor classrooms. Lower impact development includes boardwalks, lookouts, river access points.

High-level design themes

Emphasize education, including education of natural ecology and the benefits of maintaining un-touched landscape

Conservation of existing natural landscape (especially Yorath Island)

Utilize existing infrastructure and site disturbance: all pathways and areas of most intense development are on disturbed areas or existing pathways.

Provide a balance of passive and active recreation opportunities.

Interpretation of First Nations culture, history of the site, ecology.

Program elements and design rationale

Proposed program elements and associated programming:

- Relocated Whitehouse: incorporated into a sustainability model of residential building and yard design; also a potential rental space
- Interpretive Centre: houses bathrooms, potential store/coffee shop, bike rental, skate rental, canoe rental, and potential rental space; administration centre for camping, ropes course, education node.

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Program
elements and
design rationale
continued...

- Event Venue: simple structure (potentially only a seasonal structure with roof, open walls); limited to simple events (not fully serviced / fancy wedding venue);
- Pathway network: strong connection to Meewasin trail system when it extends to the site; separation of users is key; fully accessible (as much as possible); accessible structures including boardwalks
- Education node: series of exterior classroom spaces with range of formal and informal design; connected to an outdoor learning opportunities: natural playground that facilitates interaction with the natural environment (not formal playground)
- Ropes course: high or low ropes course; interaction with slopes and within tree canopies
- Skating: flooded skating area south of the Interpretation Centre; also potential skating opportunities on wild ice
- Tenting / glamping: rustic / remote tenting experience near the City; glamping opportunities with yurts to make camping more accessible for urban dwellers; limited services (because of location within flood zone)
- Lookouts and Boardwalks: provide views of the river, Yorath island, bird watching opportunities, and can be used as outdoor learning spaces; provides education and interpretation opportunities. Also provide accessible routes through the site where connected with paved / crusher dust pathway.
- Pollinator Paradise: augmented natural 'transition' landscape between grasslands/riparian area/aspen forest – a demonstration landscape to highlight the beauty of the native landscape. Potential cultural opportunities, educational opportunities, houses land-based / ecological art, and edible species.
- Naturalized Area: southern third of the site with limited development; multi-use trail network developed on existing trails / firebreaks; potential for land-based / ecological art.
- Donor Recognition: not standard memorial benches or donor trees; rather, recognize donor opportunities of the entire landscape or key components (like the boardwalk, pollinator paradise, education area).

Zones of Development:

1. Intensive development zone (north-most third), including all buildings, parking, ropes course, education node and river-boardwalk
2. Camping zone (middle third)
3. Natural / naturalized area (south-most third)

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Implementation and Operations

Recommended additional background

Meewasin Mandates

- Development: providing infrastructure to make the space and the river more accessible to people.
- Education: emphasis on ecological education of the river and history of the site; encouraging learning through play; intentional link to schools with the education node and outdoor classrooms
- Conservation: interpretation and education opportunities of the importance of the riparian zone, including limiting access to Yorath Island; providing access to the river, but in a way that doesn't disturb the ecological balance of the site.

Reconciliation Context: Not discussed in detail; the team acknowledged the importance of First Nations inclusion in the process as the master plan continues to develop; the team also discussed the archaeological finds nearby, and how these might play a role in Reconciliation.

Relation to larger context and the river: Connected to Meewasin Trail network as it continues to expand south; potential to link to a wider bike rental program for the entire Meewasin Network. Interpretation / education efforts focusing on the natural environment and conservation of the river (especially Yorath island) emphasize the importance of this site within the river valley.

Funding model: The group hopes this site to be revenue generator, or at least revenue neutral. Primary revenue generators include the ropes course, equipment rental (bikes, canoes, skates) and rental opportunities of the Whitehouse, Interpretive Centre, and Event Venue. Additional revenue generators include the coffee shop / gift shop within the Interpretive Centre, camping/glamping.

Operations: Interpretive Centre would house all administration for camping, ropes course, venue rentals, equipment rentals, and education node booking.

Phasing: not discussed.

First Nations consultation is essential during ongoing master plan development to ensure Indigenous context is included in a meaningful and relevant way.

Full biological survey (plants and animals) of Yorath Island to determine current baseline is recommended.

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work and consultations

Additional study of ropes courses and how they impact nesting is recommended to determine feasibility.

Business model investigation and needs assessment are needed to determine feasibility of revenue generating opportunities, and will inform phasing of the project.

Construction cost estimation will help determine funding requirements and phasing strategies.

Review donor recognition opportunities and explore the potential to provide recognition for larger ecological units or larger landscape components.

Explore opportunities for winter festivals or art installations to activate the space for the winter season.

Further investigation is needed into potential partnerships with local groups to explore community-building opportunities, celebrate local culture, and explore reconciliation opportunities:

- Local artist groups
- SCYAP
- Core Neighbourhood Youth Coop

Look into potential partnership with the University / SIAST / Saskatchewan Aboriginal Land Technicians for educational and research opportunities.

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INTERPRETIVE CENTRE & EVENT CENTRE



LOOKOUTS & VIEWING PLATFORMS



PATHWAYS / NATURE TRAILS



POLLINATOR PARADISE



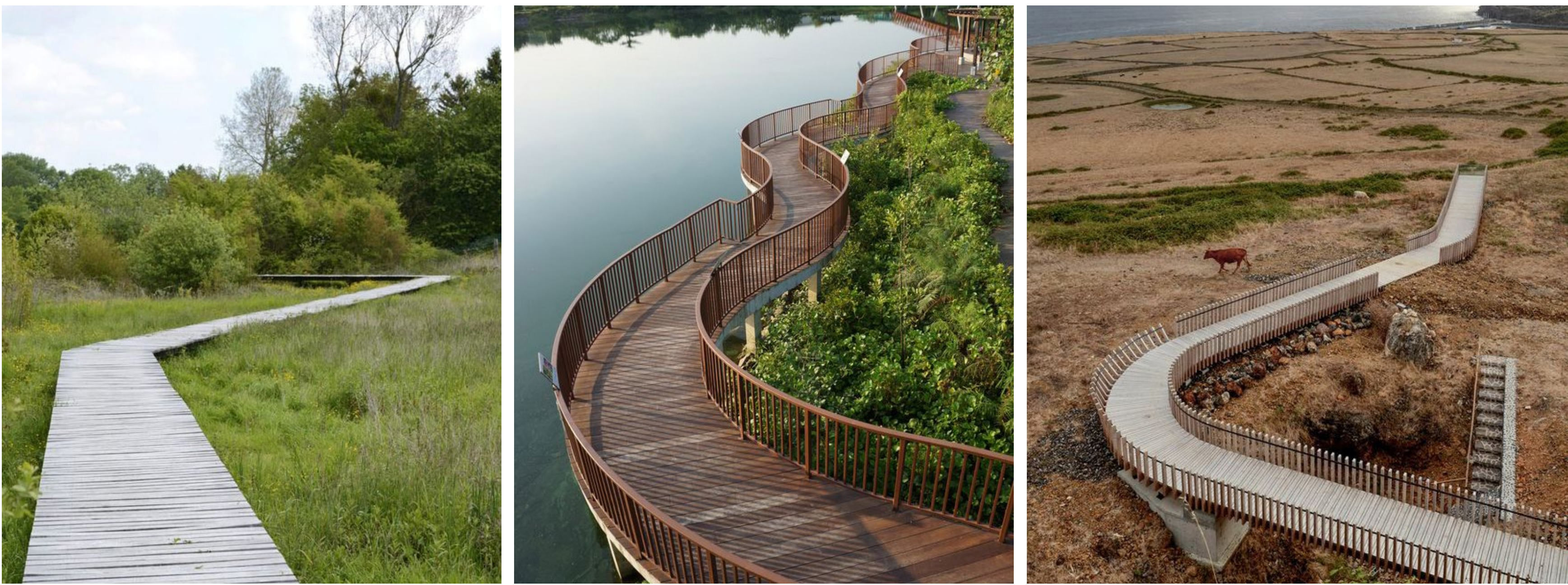
VIEWS OF RIVER



OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS



BOARDWALKS RIVER & GRASSLAND



TENTING / GLAMPING



ROPES COURSE & ZIPLINE



LAND-BASED ART

