



Neighbors Of Belnap Lookout

Mission: To advocate for and enhance the quality of life in the Belnap community.

Vision: To be a vibrant, diverse and desirable place to live in Grand Rapids.

The themes we have chosen to focus on for 2018-2021 include creating **social and physical connections**, **being physically and civically active** in the neighborhood, and **being heard** in local government. These areas are illustrated by recent activities, below:



Park Clean Ups



Community Space at 704 Clancy



Garden at 762 North



Attending City Commission



National Night Out



Knitting Group

Renovation of major public spaces is handled by larger entities like the City of Grand Rapids and DGRI. We can participate through advocacy, engagement, and fundraising to make Belnap Lookout more physically connected and an even better place to live!

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FIG 5.13: View of the proposed Switchback Park



FIG 5.14: View of the proposed Ionis Street Linear Park.

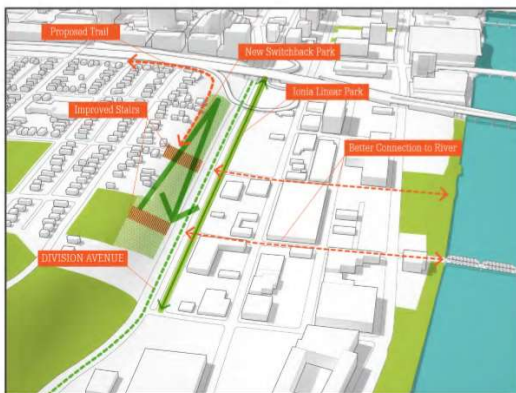


FIG 5.12: Aerial diagram of proposed Switchback Park

The slopes of Belknap Hill represent an opportunity to provide new park space within Downtown that will also help connect the neighborhood with Monroe North. Many have noted that while there are currently two sets of stairs at Newberry Street and Fairbanks Street, they are both in disrepair and require significant improvements. A new set of stairs for Newberry as well as a better pedestrian crossing at Division Avenue can help to create a stronger connection from the 6th Street Bridge, through Monroe North, and up to Look-out Park.

A more aggressive opportunity is to capitalize on the expansive views of the River and Downtown, expand Look-Out Park and create a new "Switchback Park" on the slopes of the hill. This is an extension of a proposal included in the Michigan Street Corridor Plan that identifies an opportunity to create a trail north of I-196 that wraps around Belknap and connects to the existing stairs. From this point, the opportunity is to extend this trail further down the slope, consistent with Division 3. This will provide greater accessibility both for those with disabilities but also for those on bicycles. Further, the design provides an opportunity to secure grants that would also repair the existing stairs which has been difficult due to ADA requirements. This gently winding path will offer pedestrians a trail connection to Monroe North and along the potential numerous overlooks along the trail will provide a whole new experience and view of Downtown and the River.

The proposed two-way cycle track for Ionia Downtown will provide a dedicated and safe space for north-south bicycling. North of 196, this facility can become a true linear park with landscaping, seating and bicycle paths offering a direct link from Belknap, Monroe North and Creston straight to Downtown. In this area, Ionia Street serves as a spillover parking and carries extremely limited traffic.

DGRI will install a trial bike lane on Division this June & design the hill in their FY2020 (starts July 2019).

Priority #2: Hastings Connector/Linear Park was included in the GVSU Master Plan below. It is a priority for the City, which is seeking supplemental funding. The rest of Hastings will be repaved, too. Construction can tentatively be expected to take place in 2019 and 2020. More info this fall!



Priority #3: Longer term, we want to work with the City to **improve access to Michigan Street and the Creston Business district**. The former was covered in MOBL NOBL & some improvements are complete!

