MENOMONEE VALLEY RIVERWALK

SITE PLAN REVIEW OVERLAY ZONE

PURPOSE

Overlay zones provide an opportunity to create new development projects that are part of a an integrated trail system, a themed district, a redevelopment project area or master planned neighborhood, which allows these projects to be more compatible and integrated with their neighbors, more pedestrian friendly in design and scale, and more completely integrated in overall urban design.

The City of Milwaukee has placed a great emphasis on achieving the full potential and value to citizens of the Menomonee River Valley, with the Hank Aaron State Trail and Menomonee River as focal points. A continuous system of Riverwalks on both sides of the Menomonee River, connecting with and overlapping the Hank Aaron State Trail will be a great asset and amenity for all citizens of Milwaukee. The overlay zone is for the easterly portion of the Menomonee River extending from the existing Milwaukee Riverwalk Site Plan Review Overlay District westward to Three Bridges Park (S. 27th Street). Within this Menomonee River overlay zone, the City Plan Commission must approve all projects located 50 feet landward of an existing dock wall or ordinary high watermark. For any property located within or partially within the overlay zone, a Riverwalk that complies with the requirements of this overly zone shall be constructed at the time of any new construction or substantial improvement of a principal structure on the property. This requirement shall apply even in cases where the principal structure itself is not located within the zone.

Following are the standards (identified by File Number 170044) that have been approved by the City of Milwaukee Common Council as part of the Menomonee Valley Riverwalk Overlay (File Number 170043).

1. Riverwalks shall be on the land side of the river where feasible.

2. Where a soft river edge still exists along the river, preserve natural river banks.

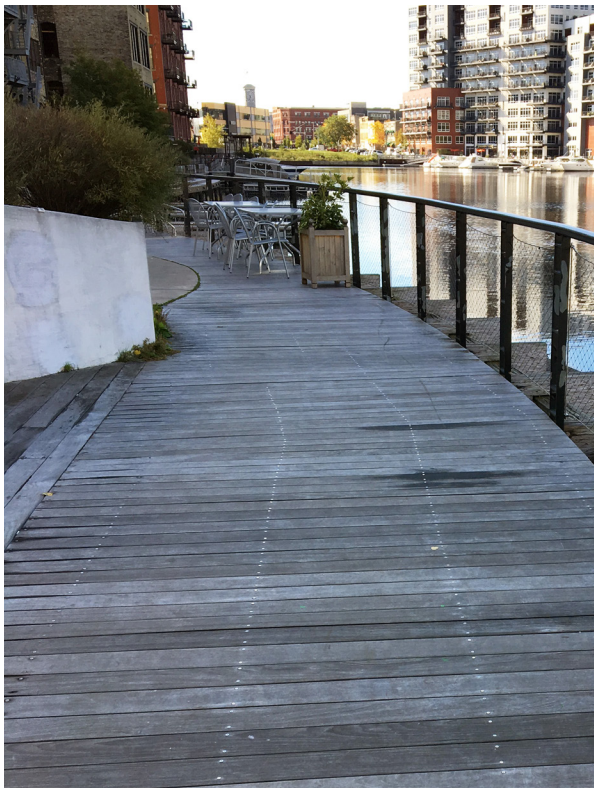
3. All segments of the Riverwalk shall be designed to connect to other portions of the Riverwalk system or to connect to adjacent portions of the Riverwalk system if they already exist.

4. Structures built within 50 feet of bridges must not obstruct bridge maintenance.

5. Finger piers will only be permitted where they will not obstruct navigation or extend more than 40 ft. from the dock line.

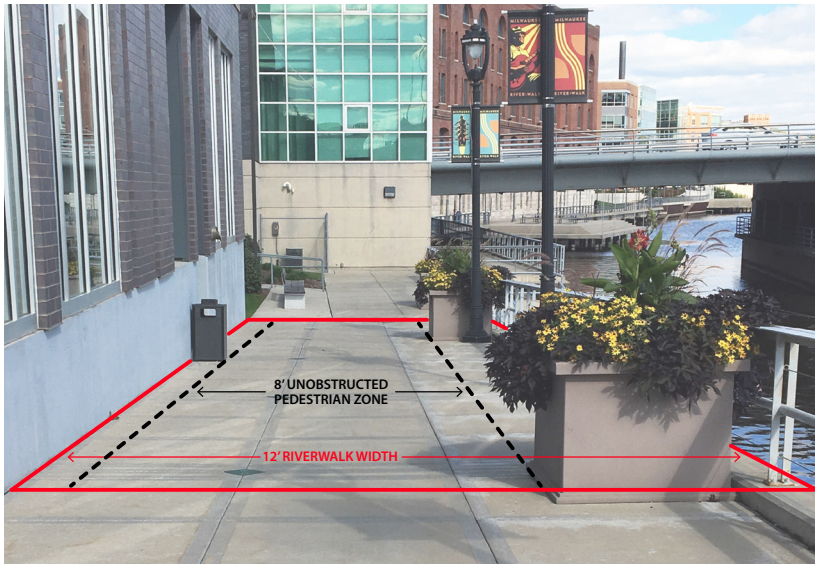
6. Temporary moorings (less than 4 hours) for water taxis and tour boats will be permitted riverward of any amenity/activity area subject to navigation restrictions.

7. Where historic buildings or other historic elements of the built environment exist along the river, preserve those historic buildings and/or elements.



8 PAVEMENT TYPES

Riverwalk walkway construction shall consist of wood plank, concrete, or masonry pavers providing they ensure adequate strength, accessibility, and safety to users, including emergency vehicles. Asphalt, loose gravel or other crushed stone is not acceptable.



9 RIVERWALK WIDTHS

Riverwalks must be passable year round, handicapped accessible, and be open to the general public 24 hours a day at no charge. In order to provide space for amenities such as benches, planters, light poles, trash containers, trees, and railings, Riverwalks should typically be at least 12 feet wide and have no more than a 0 to 5 percent slope in order to be accessible to most people, including those in wheelchairs. If there are objects, e.g. tables and chairs, placed on the Riverwalk, there should be a minimum 8 foot wide unobstructed corridor.

10 **HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBILITY**

All Riverwalk segments are required to be handicapped accessible. ADA ramps shall connect public walkways and points of public access to the Riverwalk and must include railings and lighting.

11 **FLOATING RIVERWALKS**

Floating Riverwalks will be permitted under bridges if there is a minimum 7 ft. clearance and if the connection will not obstruct navigation or bridge operations. Floating Riverwalks require separate DNR approval prior to city approval.

12 **PROJECTING RIVERWALKS**

Projecting or cantilevered Riverwalk segments are used where inadequate width exists between an existing building and the waterway. Projecting Riverwalks require separate DNR approval prior to city approval.

13 **RAILINGS**

Riverwalk railings are optional. Railing types, if used, should comply with ADA standards be of decorative metal steel or aluminum, bollard and chain, or a combination of wooden posts and metal mesh or other framing.

14 **LIGHTING**

For pedestrian comfort and safety, the lighting source shall be glare free, white-light LED with adequate cut-offs in accordance with standards recommended by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IES) and approved by the Commissioner of Public Works. Alternative lighting may be substituted if approved by the Commissioner of Public Works.

15 **BENCHES**
Benches may be used to provide places of rest or comfort. Examples of benches currently in use include decorative metal, wood timbers, or a combination of these materials.

16 **TRASH RECEPTACLES**
Trash collection units may be provided and maintained to help ensure the Riverwalk and its waterway is free of trash and other debris. Trash receptacles can be of various types of design or material that can properly support its function.

17 **RIVER EDGE BUFFER**

Where adequate width between the Riverwalk and the river is available, landscapes soften edges and provide a natural storm water buffer between parking areas the river. Such buffers shall include native plantings, grasses or maintained turf.

18 **RIVER FACING FACADES**

River facing facades must have architectural elements or features that create a pedestrian friendly and visually engaging built environment along the Riverwalk. For industrial buildings, such elements should consist of fenestration with transparent glazing; scored or decorative panels; and articulation of functional elements. Clerestory windows may be used should internal functions not allow for large areas of glazing. Graphic signage and pedestrian lighting may also be added as measures to make a river facing façade more visually engaging.

19 **SCREENING**

Service areas containing loading docks and outdoor storage that face the Riverwalk shall be screened by using wing walls, opaque screening or fencing, and landscaped plantings and trees. At a minimum, garbage dumpsters and recycling receptacles will be screened using opaque fencing (including coated metal chain link with slats or mesh screening) or landscaping if visible from the Riverwalk.

20 **PROPERTY EDGE FENCING**

For security and containment purposes, private property fencing abutting a Riverwalk can be erected along the Riverwalk using decorative metal or wood panel fencing and/or a landscaped buffer. Chain link and barbed wire are not permitted.

21 **PROPERTY EDGE PLANTINGS**

Where private property abuts the riverwalk, plantings can be used to create a pedestrian friendly buffer and amenity to define private property from the Riverwalk. Such edge treatments should include native plantings or grasses, canopy trees or more seasonal or, if maintained, formal plantings. Riverwalk elements such as benches can also be incorporated.

22 **PERVIOUS PAVEMENT AND BIOSWALES**

Storm water run-off shall be contained on-site. Pervious pavement and bioswales for parking or driving areas abutting the Riverwalk are encouraged in order to prevent contaminated storm water runoff from entering the waterway. Pervious pavement can take the form of pervious asphalt, parking fields, or pervious pavers. Bioswales are typically curbside containment areas that use various plantings to filter out contaminants before runoff is released.