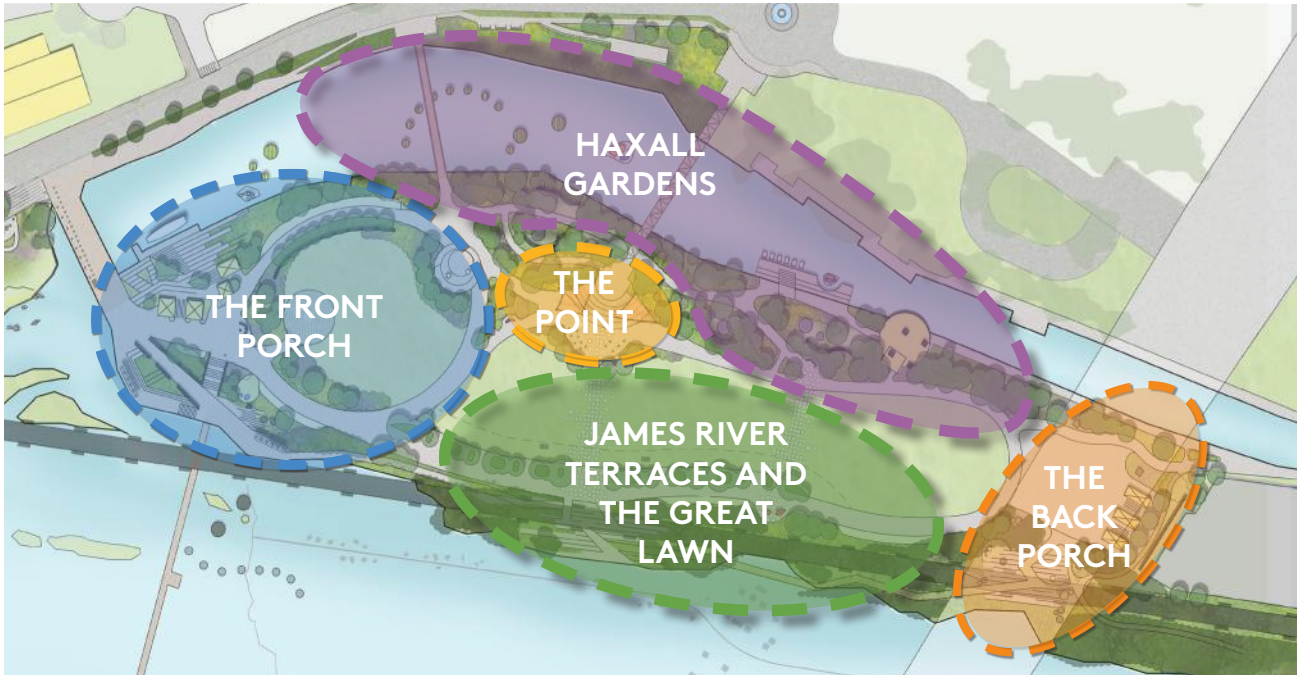




BROWN'S ISLAND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Brown's Island Improvement Plan Projects Profile



Brown's Island, located on the James River, has the potential to be the crown jewel of the downtown Richmond riverfront.

In 2012, City Council adopted the Richmond Riverfront Plan, which made recommendations to transform Brown's Island into a daily destination for recreation, exploration, socializing, and experiencing the beauty of the James River, as well as music and cultural events.

While the 2016 opening of the T. Tyler Potterfield Memorial Bridge has dramatically increased visitation to the island—approximately 500,000 crossings per year—the rest of the island also needs improved amenities to accommodate this increased usage.

The Brown's Island Improvement Plan is a more detailed conceptual plan developed by Venture Richmond and 3North to help move these recommendations forward. Brown's Island should be attractive and comfortable for every Richmond resident and visitor, both as an event venue and as a public park year-round. The Brown's Island Improvement Plan received conceptual approval from the City Planning Commission in December 2019.

Venture Richmond is committed to raising funds for implementation of the plan, which includes river and canal terraces, play spaces for children, more trees and landscaping, more ADA accessibility and other pedestrian improvements, shade, seating, and drinking water and permanent restrooms among other amenities.



THE FRONT PORCH

Brown's Island Improvement Plan Case Statements



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

DURATION
12-18 MONTHS

KEY FEATURES

- Widened Bridge Ramp
- Permanent Restrooms
- Drinking Fountain
- Shaded Riverside Terrace
- Large Canopy Trees
- Unique Furnishings
 - Bleacher Style Seats
 - Hammocks
 - Trellis Swings
 - Moveable Furniture

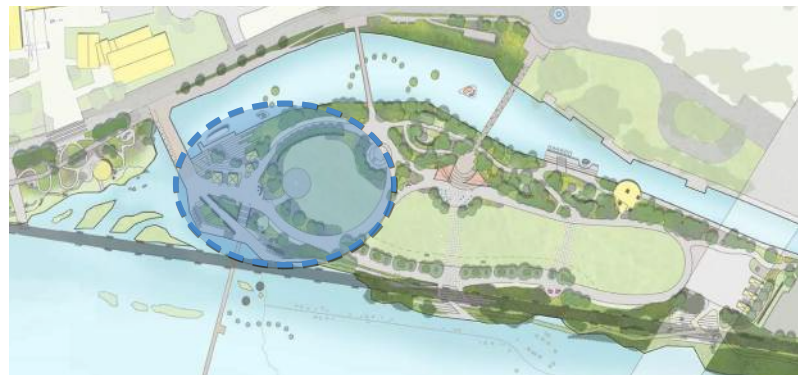
The Front Porch is a combination of flashy and practical improvements. Widening the approach ramp to the T. Tyler Potterfield Memorial Bridge, adding visitor amenities, improving access to the Haxall Canal, and enhancing views of the James River will make this area capable of handling the volume of people coming to—and passing through—the most heavily used corner of Brown's Island.

The Potterfield Bridge sees half a million crossings per year, and yet suffers from a crippling pinch point that puts walkers, strollers, bikers and other users at conflict with one another. Relocation of the old weir will give the Potterfield Bridge signage a more prominent home and allow significant widening of the approach ramp to the bridge. The City of Richmond has already committed \$250,000 in federal grant funds toward this effort.

Creating a welcome plaza will improve the safety and comfort of people of all ages and abilities, regardless of how they are getting around. Installing bleacher-style seatwalls, trellis swings, and sculptural furniture will provide comfortable places for people of all ages to sit and enjoy the river views before or after crossing the Potterfield Bridge, offering a restful stop along their way. Nearby, terraces to the Haxall Canal will offer relaxing places to sit and view the canal, and even to access the canal on special occasions. A permanent restroom building, vendor kiosks, and drinking fountains will also be added, all of which ranked very highly in community engagement surveys.

The grassy area just to the north is called The Clearing because of the re-established grove of trees that is planned to surround it, providing a shaded area for hammocks, picnics, and play. Grading changes and an attractive retaining wall will allow The Clearing to function as its own venue for smaller events such as weddings, graduation parties, and company field days.

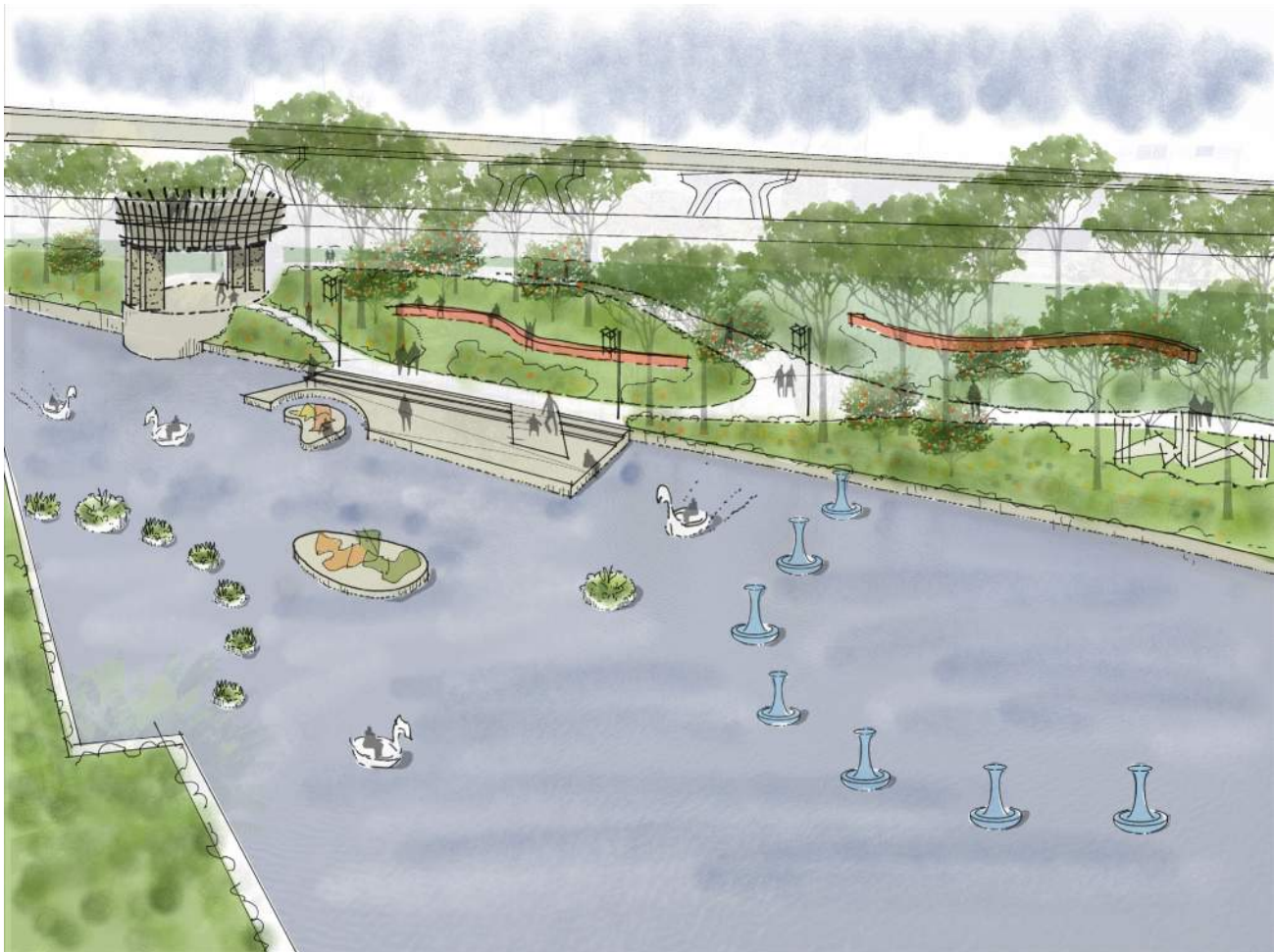






HAXALL GARDENS

Brown's Island Improvement Plan Case Statements



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

DURATION

12-18 MONTHS

KEY FEATURES

Sculptural Seatwalls
Lighting Improvements
The Nest Gathering Space
Canal Boardwalk/Dock
Floating Canal Art
Native Plant Gardens
Accessibility Improvements

The Haxall Gardens area of Brown's Island is about the celebration of art, landscape, and the Haxall Canal. This linear landscape along the canal edge is already a destination for visitors because of its shady and peaceful character.

Improvements to this area would build on that character and bring in more art, colorful seating and lighting, and botanical specimens to what already exists along the canal.

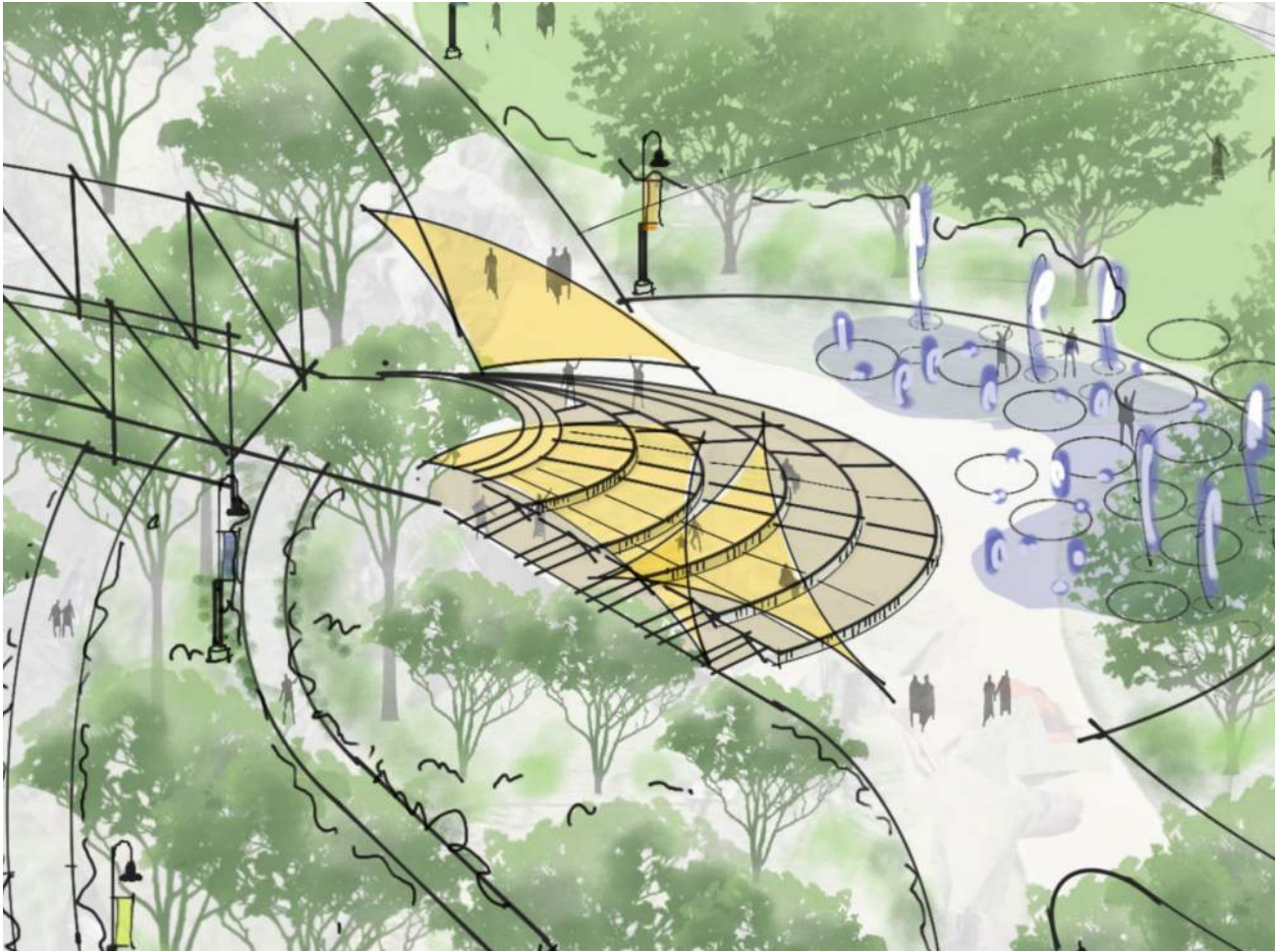
One exciting infrastructure improvement proposed for this area is called "the nest"—an elevated gathering space overlooking Brown's Island that uses the existing bridge pylons that remain on the island as support. Inspired by Osprey nests along the James River, this elevated platform would be used for informal gathering and outdoor classroom instruction. The nest would also offer a VIP view of the main stage during the outdoor concert season.

The Haxall Gardens project would build on the botanical makeover work that Venture Richmond has already begun along other areas of the Canal Walk and provide defining features that capitalize on the uniqueness of the Haxall Canal in our downtown riverfront.



THE POINT

Brown's Island Improvement Plan Case Statements



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

DURATION
12-18 MONTHS

KEY FEATURES
Terraced Deck/Stair
Shade Sails
ADA Pathway Access
Interactive Fountain Plaza
Native Plantings
Lighting Improvements
Lawn Stepping Stones

The Point is flashy and fun. It is a distinct place and is intended to be a central destination and meeting spot when families visit Brown's Island after work or on the weekends.

The Point area takes advantage of the existing elevated stair terrace at the foot of the 7th Street pedestrian bridge. The existing stair will be modified into large deck terraces (wood or composite material) to give it a more uniform and softer appearance, meant for lounging. Large sails will provide shade to the terraces, encouraging people to linger. At the foot of the terraces, an interactive water feature will provide a place for kids to play and cool down on hot summer days while their parents or grandparents relax in the shade. This will be a very popular and prominent place within the larger public space of Brown's Island.

Another important improvement is the creation of an ADA accessible pathway down from where the 7th Street bridge lands down to the main island, which is not currently ADA accessible today. This will ensure that all visitors can easily experience this vantage point of Brown's Island. This central location provides an elevated perspective of the whole island and—with the addition of the proposed riverfront terraces—will provide a glimpse through to the James River.



JAMES RIVER TERRACES AND THE GREAT LAWN



Venture
Richmond



Brown's Island Improvement Plan Case Statements



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

DURATION
24-36 MONTHS

KEY FEATURES

- Riverfront Terraces
- Esplanade Path
- Vendor Infrastructure
- Iconic Art Feature
- Lighting Improvements
- Sculptural Seating
- Improved Drainage and Soil
- Shade Trees

The Great Lawn is probably what people think of when they think of Brown's Island. Many Richmonders have at one time attended a concert or festival on Brown's Island's vast grassy field. However, investment in south edge of the island along the James River has the potential to transform how we experience music, culture, and leisure on the downtown Richmond riverfront.

Improving visibility and access to the James River is the primary goal of this project. Hardscaped seatwall river terraces to the edge of the James would allow visitors to get closer to the river than any other place on the island and provide a new place to sit, visit with people, and experience the majesty of the river.

Just up from the terraces, a widened pedestrian and vendor esplanade would function as a linear park space along the riverfront designed to accommodate vendors during large events. Planters and sculptural seating elements would help define and organize the placement of vendors and provide shade for both workers and customers.

The ability to combine river views and access with music and culture would help redefine what it means to experience an event on Brown's Island and become even more of a draw to the riverfront.





THE BACK PORCH

Brown's Island Improvement Plan Case Statements



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

DURATION

12-18 MONTHS

KEY FEATURES

- Flexible Plaza Space
- Shipping Container Bldg.
 - Event Space
 - Office Space
 - Storage
 - Restrooms
- Screened Service Yard
- Under Bridge Art
- Lighting Improvements

The Back Porch is a workhorse project that is about functionality, organization, and better use of a unique public space. This area of Brown's Island is full of undiscovered potential. The Manchester Bridge directly overhead provides shade when it is sunny and hot, and cover when it is raining. This area also offers Brown's Island visitors with one of the most unique views of the James River. As more condos, apartments, and hotels develop east of here along the Canal Walk, this area is becoming a main access point onto the island and needs to be treated as such.

The existing gravel area will be transformed into a permeable paver plaza that creates a flexible outdoor space under cover of the Manchester Bridge. Storage and operations buildings, created with retrofitted shipping containers, are proposed along the back edge of the plaza. These buildings can house a variety of uses that support both events and daily park programs while allowing back of house activities to be carried out in an organized and neat manner.

During non-event days of the year, temporary and pop-up types of programming such as art installations, food truck rodeos, and creative play activities for children are proposed for the plaza space. The support buildings can provide important amenities for visitors such as permanent restrooms, potable water, and vendors. This configuration would also allow for continued and more efficient use of the area for Venture Richmond's main stage setup during concert season.

