

# Voices of the Lake: Monona's Waterfront

SASAKI

Lake Monona Waterfront Design Challenge







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# 'Voices of the Lake: Monona's Waterfront'

"Thus beauty and opportunity for health and recreation are wrought into the very structure of the city, the very life of the people; they are not on the surface, merely decorative and occasional—they are organic..." —John Nolen

Madison is a thriving capital city with a history that is inseparable from its lake system. Millennia ago, Madison's system of five lakes was part of a single water body, Lake Yahara. This freshwater lake and the fertile land around it became home to the first human inhabitants of the area, the Ho-Chunk Nation. Our relationship to the lake has evolved since then, along with its very geography; the Lake Monona we know today is largely defined by human usage. We are at an exciting point in the story of Lake Monona. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a waterfront that reflects the 21st century values of Madison. We have the rare chance to reflect the diverse voices of the city—past and present—and plan for future users. The Sasaki Team is thrilled to submit our final deliverable for the Lake Monona Waterfront Design Challenge: **'Voices of the Lake: Monona's Waterfront.'**

"This is not our land, this is grandmother earth." — Traditional Chief Clayton Winneshiek, at Ho-Chunk Ceremony of Blessing and Releasing the Land, UW Lakeshore Preserve Outreach Center

Over the past 14 weeks, our multidisciplinary team of local and national landscape architects, architects, engineers, and ecologists have closely collaborated to create an ambitious and feasible master plan. Through on-site visits, in-depth conversations, analysis of community feedback, and technical due diligence, the Sasaki team has created a lake edge that amplifies all voices.

Our vision for Lake Monona's Waterfront comes from the following themes that emerged from conversations with community members about the city's and lake's future:

- › Water Dialogue: Creating a Living Edge Along Lake Monona's Shoreline
- › Nature Dialogue: Inspiring Generational Stewards
- › City Dialogue: A Place for All to Connect & Be Connected
- › Community Dialogue: Enhancing Equitable Access to Parks
- › Culture Dialogue: Starting with the Sacred Voices
- › Architecture Dialogue: A Balanced Perspective

Our proposal prioritizes the establishment of an ecologically vibrant living edge along Lake Monona's Waterfront. This living edge framework is a restoration strategy that will protect and provide a habitat for amphibious life. Green infrastructure, like raingardens and wetlands, will capture and clean stormwater before it enters Lake Monona. Once we have established the lake's edge, we will overlay pedestrian infrastructure in order to create a stronger connection to the core of downtown and south neighborhoods such as Bay View, Bay Creek and Alliant Energy Center. Improved intersections, widened walking paths, and separated bike lanes will create a new waterfront that is accessible for all people. Destinations at Law Park, S. Hamilton Street, the John Nolen Causeway, and Olin Park bring new programming which will activate Lake Monona's waterfront throughout the whole year. Our 'Voices of the Lake' proposal is woven together by the Story Walk, a wayfinding element and physical representation of each of the guiding principles and dialogues. This unifying ribbon shifts in scale across the site, manifesting now as a graphic on a sidewalk, now as ephemeral carvings in ice, now as quotes on a wall that connect the past, present, and future of the Monona waterfront.

The 1.7-mile long plan will be divided into four distinct zones and potential phases: Law Park Ledge will include a new park over the John Nolen Drive, an outdoor amphitheater, a community boat house, a restaurant, and a restored lake edge; the Lake Lounge showcases the living lake edge, new areas for food trucks, and an iconic connection back to the Capitol; Community Causeway grants bikers, walkers, and runners safe access along the lake while using green infrastructure to clean stormwater runoff from John Nolen Causeway; finally, Olin Overlook creates a park that gives a reprieve from everyday life. There, a new nature center will provide opportunities to learn about the successional forest within the park and offer incredible views back to the city.

The Sasaki team considered current and future construction projects, available funds, and funding opportunities in our proposed phasing strategy. Phase 1, Lake Lounge, meets the top priorities of the community and creates a strong pedestrian connection from downtown Madison to Lake Monona's shoreline. The phase's emphasis on green infrastructure allows for the wetland strategies to be tested while its wide range of open space programming allows the community to explore all Lake Monona has to offer.

It has been an honor to work with the Selection Committee and the Madison community on this project that will shape the city for generations to come. We are excited to continue the conversation with you at the Community Open House on January 26th and implement **'Voices of the Lake: Monona's Waterfront.'**

Thank you,  
Anna Cawrse, Principal-in-Charge, and the entire Sasaki team



# We heard you!

¡Te escuchamos! | Peb hnov koj!

## Engagement Process

After 14 intense weeks, our multidisciplinary team of local and national designers, engineers, and ecologists listened to the public to create a more sustainable, inclusive and safer Lake Monona. Sasaki's Engagement Strategies included:



- Analyzing Open Data
- Summarizing Previous Engagement Data
- Listening to the Quieter Voices
- Online Postings and Updates
- Reach Out for Informal Conversations

## Contributing Voices

We as Ho-Chunk people look at this earth that we walked on. This grandmother earth. It's not ours. There's so much history that I don't think people realize.

Traditional Chief Clayton Winneshiek

Founder of Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra

In Madison, you have the Lakes, the Parks, and Arts & Culture.

**"Waterfront Amphitheater"**

...was the top pick for Law Park Ledge in the Mid-term Event!

Culture

**Over 98 Bird Species**

call Lake Monona home

Based on observations logged in eBird

Nature

This city is so special because you get a population that's excited about nature and interacting with nature.



Miles Tryon-Petith, Graduate Student Researcher at UW-Madison

**Wave Climate, Ice Thickness, Shoreline and Nearshore Habitat**

Are considerations from Nolen Waterfront Technical Advisory Committee, mentioned by Fred Klancnik, UW-Madison

We want to make this a national model for green infrastructure.

Paul Dearlove, Clean Lake Alliance

During the summer of 2019, primarily due to cyanobacteria blooms or both cyanobacteria and high E. coli, Lake Monona beaches were closed

48 times

Clean Lake Alliance

University Ave, all the way to Beltline, and over to Rimrock road... all of the city's runoff, comes into Monona Bay.

Stephan Reinke, Brittingham Boats Manager



Water



Mid-term Event

**"Trails for all speeds"**

was the top pick (32%) across the Lake Monona project area

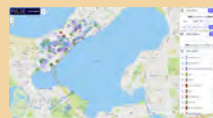
City

We would do Monona, if there was access.

Mary, Uber Driver & Madison resident

Accessibility

was a major topic through ALL of our conversations



Our analysis of google map data showed...

Madison's major destinations can easily be reached from Lake Monona if access is improved.



Analysis of google map results shows

People want more destination attractions and lake access.

Water ski show is a regional draw but we don't really have too much space.

Jacci Meier and Carin Reynen, Water ski team

We live in Milwaukee, actually. We could go anywhere in the State to fish, but we come here.

Fred Henry, Milwaukee resident



Community

Architecture

Tom DeChant, Friends of Olin Turville (FOOT)

Nature Center (that Sasaki proposed) is also an idea FOOT has previously endorsed and encouraged.

With a career premised in embracing social, technical, and other advances, it not likely that Wright would have built a structure he designed 130 years ago; instead, he would have been looking at structure for the next 130 years.



Stuart Graff, Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation

## By the Numbers!

**29** In-depth conversations

**30+** postcards and flyers

**1,085** Mid-term event responses

**12,000+** Google Maps comments and results analyzed

**6,000+** Instagram and website views

### We talked to:

Mad-Ski Team  
Brittingham Boat x2  
City Engineering  
Urban Assets x2  
EQT by Design x2  
Madison Boats  
Bayview Foundation  
UW-Madison, CEE Water Resources Engineering  
UW-Madison.  
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering via email  
Frank Llord Wright's Taliesin  
Friends of Olin Turville via email  
Friends of Nolen Waterfront  
Madison Bikes  
Clean Lake Alliance

Samantha C. Skenandore,  
Ho-Chunk Nation x2  
Chloris A. Lowe, Jr., Ho-Chunk Nation  
Destination District  
Linda Ohern & Coda Worx, Art Lit Lab and Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra  
Fred Henry Milwaukee Resident  
Joe Weaver Milwaukee Resident  
Stuart Graff, Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation  
Kris Madison Resident  
Mary Madison Resident  
Katie Nash & Timothy Bauer Madison Residents

## Voices of the Lake Monona's Waterfront Guiding Principles



Water Dialogue  
**Create a Living Edge along Lake Monona's Shoreline**



Nature Dialogue  
**Inspire Generational Stewards**



City Dialogue  
**A Place for All to Connect & Be Connected**



Community Dialogue  
**Enhance Equitable Access to Parks**



Culture Dialogue  
**Starting with the Sacred Voices**



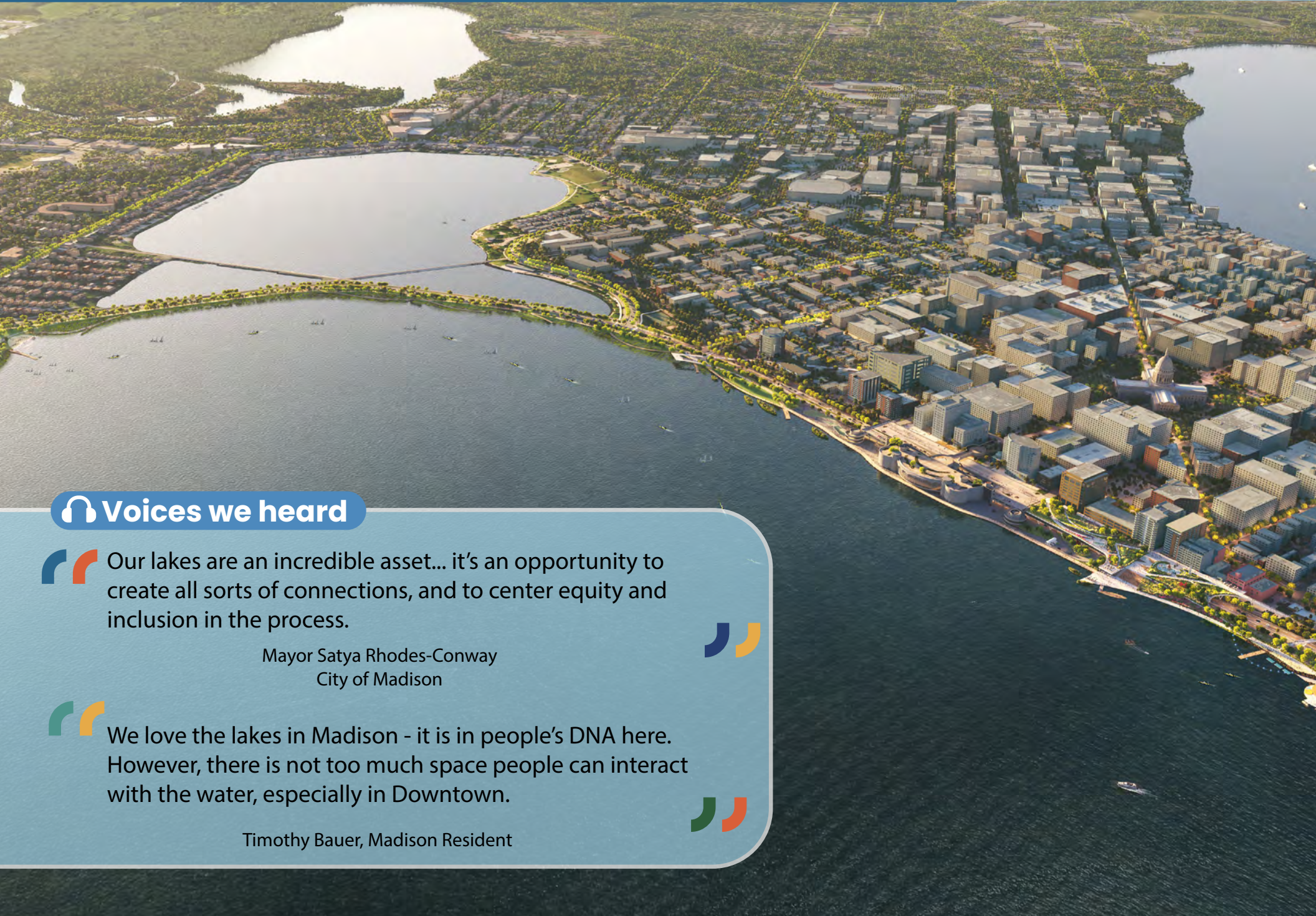
Architecture Dialogue  
**A Balanced Perspective**





# Voices of the Lake: Monona's Waterfront

Voces del lago:  
La Orilla del lago Monona  
.....  
Cov saub nrov ntawm lub  
Pas Dej:  
Ntug Niam Dej Monona'



## Voices we heard

Our lakes are an incredible asset... it's an opportunity to create all sorts of connections, and to center equity and inclusion in the process.

Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway  
City of Madison

We love the lakes in Madison - it is in people's DNA here. However, there is not too much space people can interact with the water, especially in Downtown.

Timothy Bauer, Madison Resident





# Monona's Dialogue: City, Community, and Lake

El diálogo del lago Monona: Ciudad, Comunidad, Lago

Monona Qhov Kev Sib Tham: Nroog, Zej Zos, thiab Pas Dej

## Technical Approaches

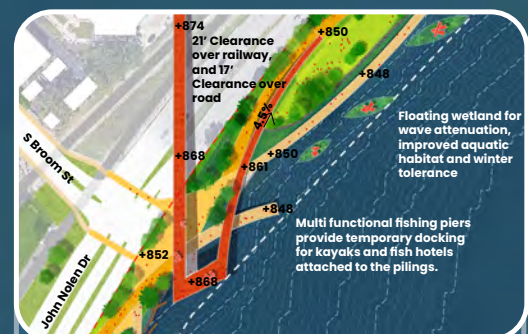
Waves, ice shove, bridge clearances, floating debris...we've discussed with experts and stakeholders about specific challenges of Lake Monona. Our plan is aspirational and actionable!



- Size of the boathouse and boat dock balances of the submerged aquatic habitat protection with water access and operational access for the building.
- Strong wave action collects debris and algae at the shoreline. The upland beach with floating pads and pier will reduce debris, maintain water access, and allow for easy maintenance.



- **Universal ADA Access** All main areas and paths are universally ADA accessible while the elevated park incorporates the required 21' and 17' clearance above railway and highway.
- **Shoreline Protection:** Respectively ecological strategies, including vertical and floating structures, to ensure all edges will reduce wave action and promote aquatic habitat.



- Wetlands provide ecological benefits for aquatic species and migratory birds in all seasons. Protection methods are applied to a variety of wetlands in Lake Monona for ice shove and wave tolerance.
- Stormwater runoff is treated along the road through rain gardens and swales.
- Open and enclosed street trees provide view corridors for vehicles along John Nolen Drive.



- The Nature Center set back on the existing hill to preserve the best view to the downtown
- The dock placement aligns with wave, aquatic habitat, and site visit analysis.
- A proposed forest restoration includes tree protection, minimized site disturbance, invasive removal, and promotion of diverse native tree and understory species.
- New parking and a road utilize past hardscapes and create a better connections to Olin Park.

## Legend

- 1 Monona Boathouse & Community Center
- 2 Trail for All Speeds
- 3 Public Upland Beach with Water Access
- 4 Pier for Water Access
- 5 Hammock Grove
- 6 Rain Garden
- 7 Visitor Center & Entry Plaza
- 8 Elevated Promenade
- 9 E Wilson St Shortcut
- 10 Lake Themed Adventure Playground
- 11 Event Lawn
- 12 Waterfront Amphitheater
- 13 Performance Stage
- 14 Rolling Hill with Earth-covered Cafe
- 15 Winter Garden
- 16 Waterfront Restaurant connection to the Monona Terrace Expansion
- 17 Boat Ramp daily & emergency use
- 18 Monona Terrace Expansion & Proposed Amtrak Station
- 19 Winter Playful Ice Walk
- 20 Lawn & Food Truck
- 21 Floating Wetlands
- 22 Seating Area
- 23 Fishing Pier
- 24 Overlook & Pedestrian Bridge/Connection to the State Capitol
- 25 Fringe Wetland and Boardwalk
- 26 ADA Permeable Parking with Stormwater Treatment  $\geq$  current parking number
- 27 Improved Intersection
- 28 Public Beach (Friends of Olin-Turville to approve final location)
- 29 Sailing Dock
- 30 Nature Center
- 31 Timeless Quiet Spot
- 32 Landscape Berm for Noise Protection
- 33 Canopy Walk
- 34 Immersive Trail
- 35 Non-motorized Boat Dock
- 36 Pop-up Beer Garden
- 37 Parkway to Connect Olin Park and Olin Park Facility
- 38 Active Meadow & Flex-use Spaces
- 39 Architecture Amenity: Bathroom, Bike Repair, Storage, etc.
- 40 Fringe Wetland on Monona Bay Side

Monona Bay

Lake Monona



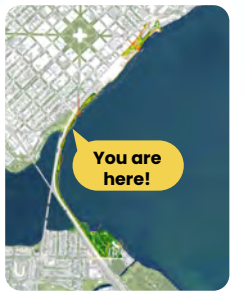




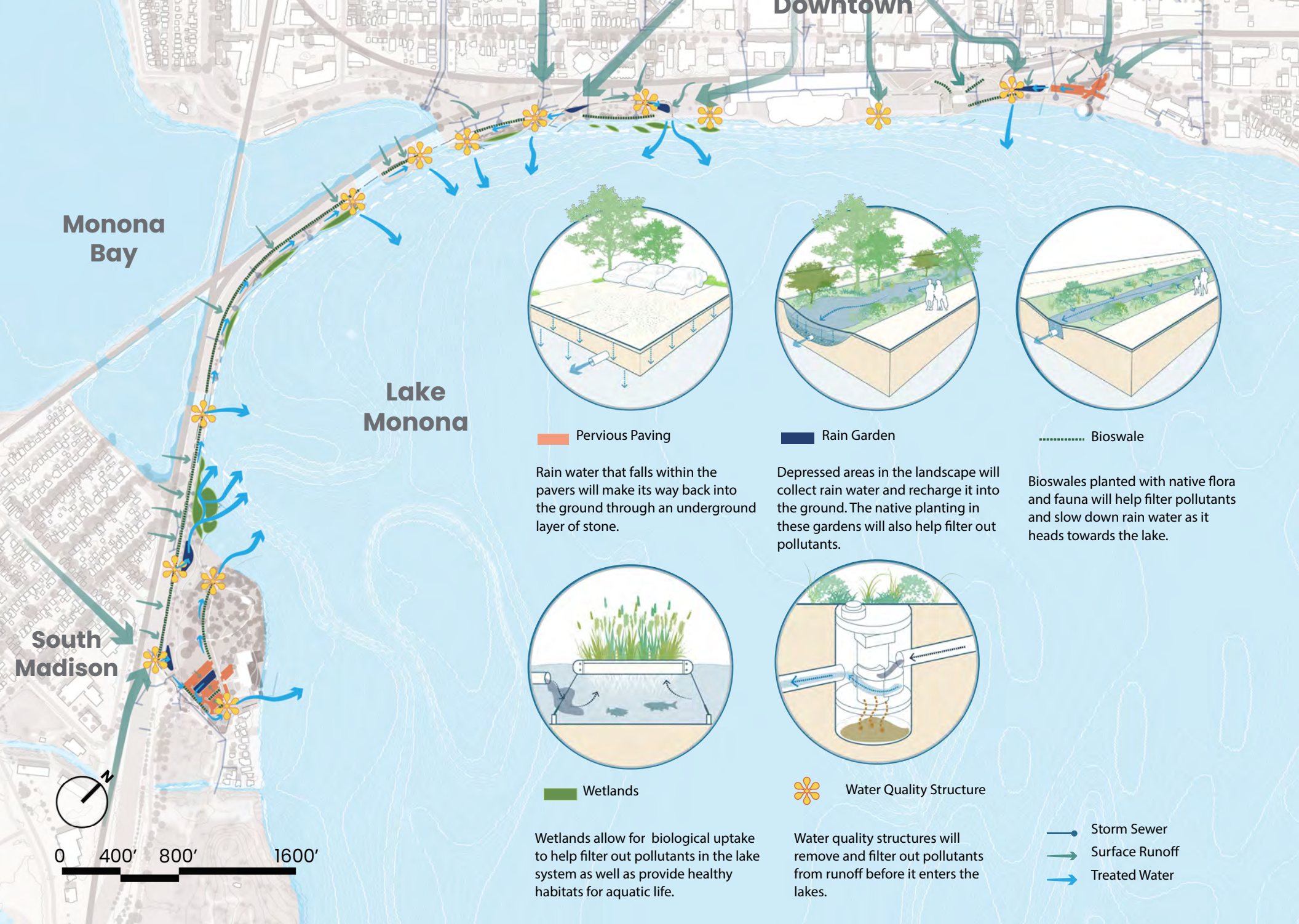
# The Water Dialogue: Create a Living Edge along Lake Monona's Shoreline

Cree un borde vivo a lo largo  
de la costa del lago Monona

Tsim Ua Ib Tus Tes Tuav Tau  
Mus Lawv Raws Lub Pas Dej  
Monona Sab Ntug



## Green Infrastructure Improves Water Quality



0 400' 800' 1600'



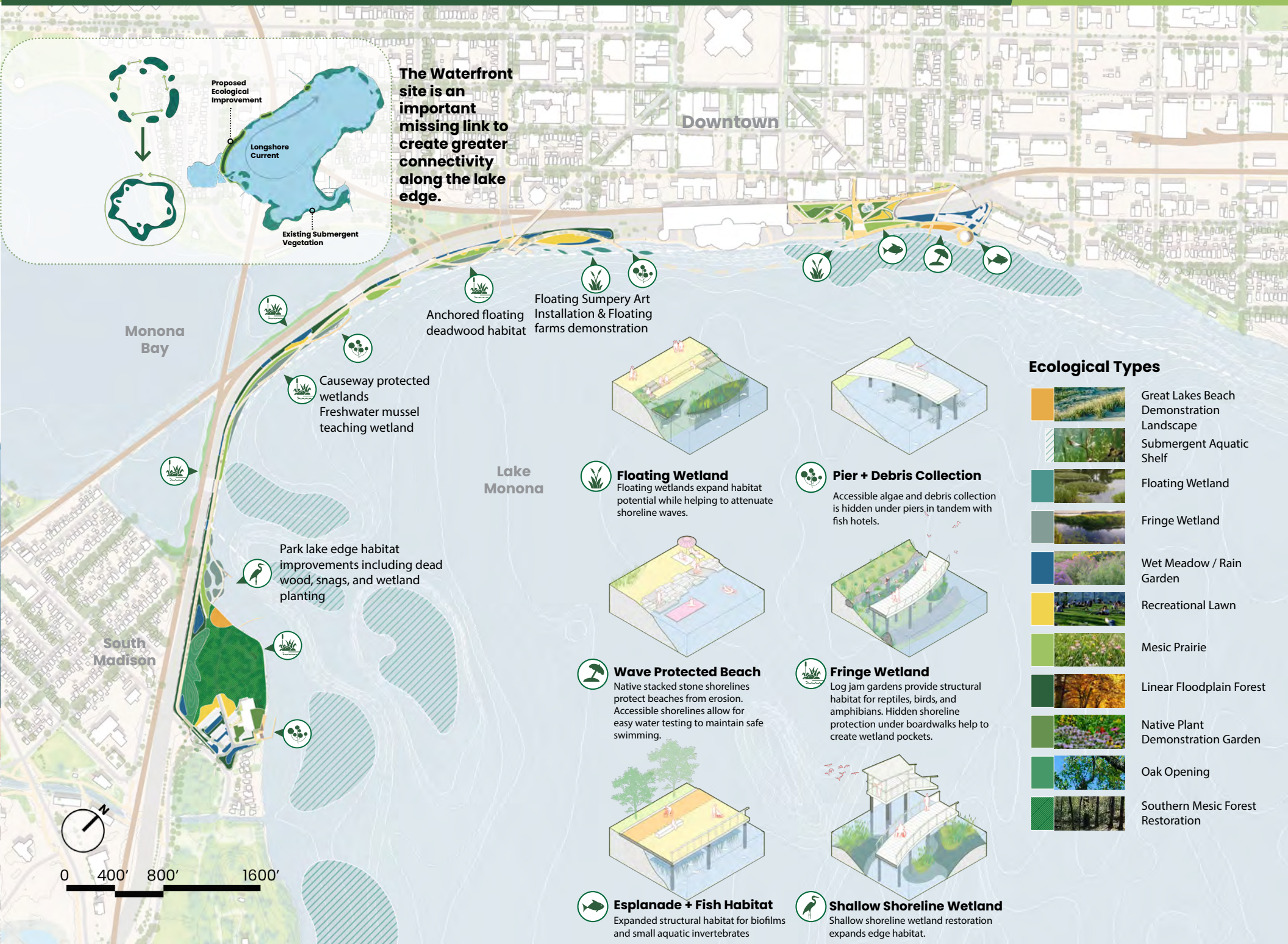




# The Nature Dialogue: Inspire Generational Stewards

Inspirar a múltiples generaciones de embajadores del medio ambiente

Ua Kev Txhawb Siab Rau  
Cov Neeg Kav Tswj Hauj Lwm  
Tiam Tshiab







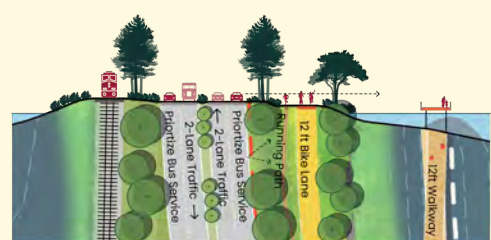
# The City Dialogue: A Place for All to Connect & Be Connected

Un lugar para todos  
conectarse y estar  
conectados  
.....  
Ib Qho Chaw rau Txhua  
tus los mus Sib Txuas thiab  
kom Sib Txuas tau



## Traffic Improvement Turn the Causeway to a Parkway, and Provide Safe Intersections for All.

### John Nolen Drive



Work with City Engineer to reduce traffic speed, release green space and prioritize equitable non-motorized access. Facilitate high-occupancy bus service between downtown and South Madison.

### N. Shore Dr / John Nolen Dr.



Strategy to improve the intersections, including but not limited to: integrate John Nolen Drive into the city grid, reduce unnecessary exclusive turn lanes, narrow vehicular lanes to calm traffic,

### S. Broom St / John Nolen Dr.



comprehensively enhance bike and pedestrian crossings to the lakefront paths, extend medians to provide physical protection for pedestrian crossings, make use of protected bike signals,

### W. Lakeside St / John Nolen Dr.



reduce curb radii to slow traffic and shorten crossings, and limit right-turns on red. Sasaki will work with the City Engineer to evaluate and develop these concepts.



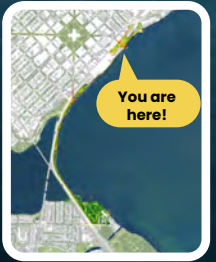




# The Community Dialogue: Enhance Equitable Access to Parks

Mejorar el acceso equitativo a los parques

Txhim Kho Kev Nkag Mus  
Rau Chaw Ua Si



## Activities for All - and All Year Round!



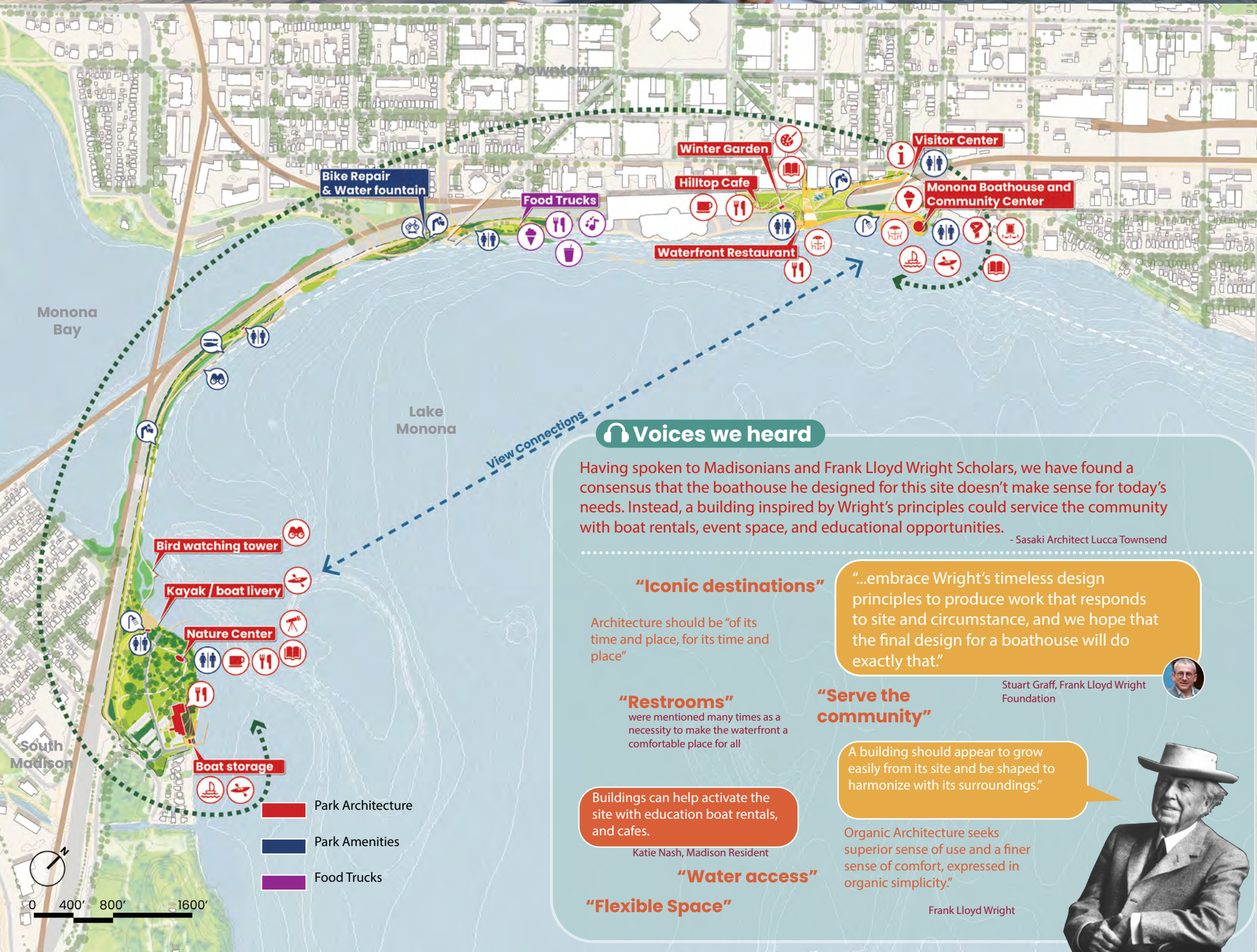
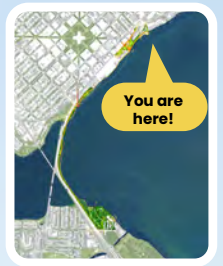




# The Architecture Dialogue: A Balanced Perspective

El diálogo de la arquitectura: Una perspectiva equilibrada

Keve Sib Tham Txog Kev Tsim  
Kho Vaj Tse : Ib Qho Kev Saib  
Sib Npaug



## Voices we heard

Having spoken to Madisonians and Frank Lloyd Wright Scholars, we have found a consensus that the boathouse he designed for this site doesn't make sense for today's needs. Instead, a building inspired by Wright's principles could service the community with boat rentals, event space, and educational opportunities.

- Sasaki Architect Luca Townsend

### "Iconic destinations"

Architecture should be "of its time and place, for its time and place"

"...embrace Wright's timeless design principles to produce work that responds to site and circumstance, and we hope that the final design for a boathouse will do exactly that."

Stuart Graff, Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation

### "Restrooms"

were mentioned many times as a necessity to make the waterfront a comfortable place for all

### "Serve the community"

A building should appear to grow easily from its site and be shaped to harmonize with its surroundings."

Buildings can help activate the site with education boat rentals, and cafes.

Katie Nash, Madison Resident

Organic Architecture seeks superior sense of use and a finer sense of comfort, expressed in organic simplicity."

Frank Lloyd Wright

### "Water access"

### "Flexible Space"







# The Culture Dialogue: Starting with the Sacred Voices

Comenzando con las voces sagradas

.....  
Kev Pib Hais Cov Saub Zoo  
uas Tsis Muaj Qhov Tseeb

● A place for gift, prayer and offering to the water spirits. A quiet and meditative place.

● **Harry Whitehorse** came into this world in a wigwam near the Indian Mission in Black River Falls, Wisconsin, the traditional home of the Ho-Chunk people.

- The life of Harry Whitehorse from his website

## The Story Walk

The Story Walk amplifies all the voices of Madison along Lake Monona's waterfront. Conceived as a ribbon that morphs from a graphic on a sidewalk to ephemeral carvings in ice to quotes on a wall. The walk starts by amplifying the first human voice, the Ho-Chunk nation.

In working with key community members, Samantha C. Skenandore and Chloris Lowe, Jr, we are starting the conversation on how to represent the timeless story of the Ho-Chunk Nation. We will continue to work with the community to find opportunities to showcase the past, present and future voices.

● **Imagine** what that timeless view would look like if the buildings were not there and the mounds remained.

- from an Interview with Samantha C. Skenandore, Tribal Law Attorney

● **If** I have a religion, it must be canoeing...I canoe wherever there's water. It puts me in a totally different state of mind and provides all I need to exist.

- Truman Lowe

## Voices we heard

“ You think back on these four lakes, back in the day. Where are we going with this? Now we talk about pollution, talk about melts and different areas of the world. I always think back is that progress? ”

Traditional Chief Clayton Winneshiek  
Ho Chunk Ceremony of Blessing and Releasing the Land, UW Lakeshore Preserve Outreach Center

“ This project is a touch point to incorporate thoughts on culture and history of people that came before us. ”

Chloris Lowe Jr.  
Ho-Chunk Nation

“ The Nature here is timeless. They were meant to be here forever. They were meant to be heard. ”

Samantha C. Skenandore  
Attorney, Of Counsel  
Ho-Chunk Nation

## 300-1300 Effigy Mound Builders

Native American 'mound builders' occupy isthmus between Lake Mendota and Lake Monona



1877  
Lakeside House resort

1887  
Wisconsin State Capitol

Frank Lloyd Wright Boathouse

## Ho-Chunk Nation

For over three ice ages, Ho-Chunk Nation's cultural ways, songs and stories guide people with values of how to live in balance with nature



## John Nolen's Grand Esplanade

In 1908, John Nolen was hired to do a comprehensive plan for Madison. Implementation of a grand lake-fronting park started in 1930



1920  
Madison City Boathouse



## Monona Terrace

Originally designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center opens doors in 1997

1970s  
Madison's Diverse Communities







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# 'Las voces del Lago: A orillas del Monona.'

"Por lo tanto la belleza y la oportunidad para la salud y la recreación son forjadas dentro de la propia estructura de la ciudad, la propia vida de las personas; ellas no son superficiales, simplemente decorativas y ocasionales -- ellas son orgánicas..." —**John Nolen**

Madison es una ciudad capital próspera con una historia que es inseparable de su sistema de lagos. Hace miles de años, el sistema de los cinco lagos de Madison fue parte de una sola masa de agua, el Lago Yahara. Este lago de aguas frescas y la tierra fértil a su alrededor se convirtieron en el hogar de los primeros humanos que habitaron en estas áreas, la Nación Ho-Chunk. Nuestra relación con el lago ha evolucionado desde ese entonces, junto con su propia geografía; el lago Monona que conocemos hoy en día está definido en gran parte por el uso humano. Nosotros estamos en un punto muy excitante en la historia del Lago Monona. Esta es una oportunidad única en esta generación de crear una zona costera que refleje los valores de Madison del siglo 21. Nosotros valoramos la rara oportunidad de reflejar las voces diversas de la ciudad - del pasado y del presente - y planear para los futuros usuarios. El Equipo Sasaki está encantado de presentar el producto final para el Desafío de Diseño de la Zona Costera del Lago Monona: **'Las voces del Lago: A orillas del Monona.'**

**"Esta no es nuestra tierra, esta es la abuela tierra." - Jefe Tradicional Clayton Winneshiek, en la Ceremonia Ho-Chunk de Bendición y Liberación de la Tierra, en el Centro de Difusión de la Preservación de la Costa del Lago de UW**

Durante las últimas 14 semanas, nuestro equipo multidisciplinario de arquitectos, ingenieros y ecologistas de paisajes locales y nacionales han colaborado estrechamente para crear un plan maestro ambicioso y factible. A través de visitas al sitio, conversaciones a fondo, y análisis de comentarios comunitarios, y debida diligencia técnica, el equipo Sasaki ha creado una orilla del lago que amplifica todas las voces.

Nuestra visión para la Zona Costera del Lago Monona viene de los siguientes temas que surgieron de conversaciones con miembros de la comunidad acerca del futuro de la ciudad y del lago:

- Diálogo del agua: Crear una Orilla Viviente a lo largo del área costera del Lago Monona
- Diálogo de la naturaleza: Para inspirar Representantes de Cada Generación
- Diálogo de la Ciudad: Un lugar para todos para conectarse y estar conectados
- Diálogo de la comunidad: Mejorando el acceso equitativo a los parques
- Diálogo de la cultura: Comenzando con las Voces sagradas
- Diálogo de la arquitectura: Una perspectiva balanceada

Nuestra propuesta da prioridad al establecimiento de una orilla habitable ecológicamente vibrante a lo largo de la zona costera del Lago Monona. Este marco de orilla habitable es una estrategia restaurativa que protegerá y proporcionará un hábitat para la vida anfibia. Una infraestructura verde, como los jardines de lluvia y pantanos, capturarán y limpiarán las aguas lluvias antes que entren al Lago Monona. Una vez hallamos establecido la orilla del lago, recubriremos la infraestructura de peatones para poder crear una conexión más fuerte con el núcleo de los vecindarios del centro y del sur tales como Bay View, Bay Creek y Alliant Energy Center. Las intersecciones mejoradas, los senderos ampliados para caminar, y los senderos para bicicletas separados crearán una nueva zona costera que será accesible para todas las personas. Los destinos en el Parque Law, S. Hamilton Street, la Calzada Elevada de John Nolen, y el Parque Olin traen nueva programación la cual activará la zona costera del Lago Monona a lo largo de todo el año. Nuestra propuesta de 'Las Voces del Lago' está entrelazada por el Story Walk, un elemento de orientación y representación física de cada uno de los principios y diálogos rectores. Este lazo unificador cambia de escala a lo largo del sitio, manifestándose ahora como una gráfica en la acera peatonal, ahora como esculturas efímeras en el hielo, ahora como citas escritas en una pared que conecta al pasado, presente y futuro de la zona costera del Monona.

El plan de 1.7 millas de longitud será dividido en cuatro zonas distintas y fases potenciales La Saliente del Parque Law incluirá un nuevo parque sobre John Nolen Drive, un anfiteatro al aire libre, un cobertizo comunitario para botes, un restaurante y una orilla del lago restaurada; el Salón del Lago muestra la orilla del lago viviente, nuevas áreas para carritos de comidas, y una conexión icónica con el Capitolio; la Calzada Elevada Comunitaria le brinda a los ciclistas, y las personas que corren o caminan, un acceso seguro a lo largo del lago mientras usa una infraestructura verde para limpiar el agua de lluvia que sale de la Calzada Elevada de John Nolen; finalmente, Olin Overlook crea un parque que le proporciona un respiro de la vida rutinaria. Allí, un nuevo centro de la naturaleza proporcionará oportunidades para aprender acerca de bosques sucesorios dentro del parque y ofrecerá vistas increíbles de vuelta a la ciudad.

El equipo Sasaki considera los proyectos de construcción, los fondos disponibles y las oportunidades de financiación actuales y futuras en nuestra estrategia de fases propuesta. Fase 1, el Salón del Lago, cumple con las prioridades principales de la comunidad y crea una fuerte conexión peatonal desde el centro de Madison hasta la orilla del Lago Monona. El énfasis de la fase en la infraestructura verde permite que las estrategias de los pantanos sean probadas mientras que su amplio rango de programación de espacios abiertos permite que la comunidad explore todo lo que el Lago Monona tiene para ofrecer.

Ha sido un honor trabajar con el Comité de Selección y la comunidad de Madison en este proyecto que moldeará a la ciudad por muchas generaciones futuras. Estamos emocionados de continuar la conversación con ustedes en la Jornada Comunitaria de Puertas Abiertas el día 26 de Enero e implementar **'Las voces del Lago: A orillas del Monona.'**

Gracias,  
Anna Cawrse, Directora a Cargo, y todo el equipo Sasaki

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