CONVERSION INFORMATION FORM
CITY OF PEORIA - PROPOSED REPLACEMENT PROPERTY
SPRING STREET PARCELS SITE

1. **9 digit zip code:** 61603-4000

2. **Location map showing this site and the site being converted:** See Exhibit 1 – Site Location Map

3. **Description of sites physical characteristics and resource attributes with numbers and types of resources:**

   The proposed replacement site is immediately adjacent to the LWCF funded Riverfront Park and will serve as the northeast extension of that park (Exhibit 2 – Aerial Map). The site is bounded on two sides by Riverfront Park and on the other two sides by the Illinois River. It is comprised of approximately 8.02 acres (Exhibit 3 – Parcel Map) including approximately 5.56 acres of private property being acquired (the replacement parcels) and 2.46 acres of public property. The private property includes 1.31 acres of property in one parcel (PIN 18-03-451-003) southwest of Spring Street and 4.25 acres of property in three parcels (PINs 18-03-408-001, 18-03-408-002, and a portion of 18-03-408-003) northeast of Spring Street. Within parcel 18-03-408-002, the City is withholding 0.13 acres (6,000 square feet) from the conversion request in order to potentially allow the Peoria Boat Club to retain its clubhouse and grounds. The two private properties combined, minus the land being withheld from conversion, total approximately 5.56 acres.

   While not included in the official calculation for conversion, two other properties are included in the park expansion. First, approximately 0.84 acres of Spring Street bisect the two halves of the replacement properties; it will be vacated as part of this project and incorporated into the park. 1.62 acres of City-owned property surrounds the 1.31 acre parcel southwest of Spring Street and will become part of the park. In total, the private and public property will add 8.02 acres to Riverfront Park.

   The replacement property has a mixed topography. The land southwest of Spring Street is generally flat with some undulation and a ridge along the northwest edge of the property. The southeast edge of the property is bordered by the Illinois River and provides direct access to the water. The site is generally overgrown with non-native species of soft-wood trees and other non-contributing plants. There are no structures on southwest side of Spring Street. The property is zoned R8 – multi-family (Exhibit 4 – Zoning Map).

   The property northeast of Spring Street forms the southern half of Detweiler Marina and provides direct access to the Illinois River in a number of places. The property includes a small beach area, boat launch, access to private boat docks, and a vegetated breakwater peninsula. A majority of the site is currently used as a private boat club and is well kept. It includes grassy areas, a number of substantial, mature trees, and gravel parking and driving areas. The breakwater measures about 825’ long and between 15’ and 35’ wide. It is largely overgrown with soft-wooded trees and other invasive species. There are two structures presently on the property: a small clubhouse of 1,134 sf and a maintenance building of 1,200 sf (Exhibit 5 – Aerial Map of Structures). The clubhouse and surrounding grounds (about 6,000 square feet) may remain leased to the Peoria Boat Club and is not included in the conversion request. The land is zoned I2 –medium industrial (Exhibit 4 – Zoning Map).

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1 Note: The City-owned property and right-of-way is not included in the economic value calculation for conversion-replacement but will be improved and incorporated into the park.

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4. Owner of replacement land and recent history of use/function up to present:

The replacement property is currently owned by two separate owners, one each on either side of Spring Street (Exhibit 3 – Parcel Map). The 1.31 acre site southwest of Spring Street is owned by James and Linda Simantel. The 4.25 acre site northeast of Spring Street is owned by Detweiller Playground, Inc.

The Simantels purchased their property in 2003 from the James Handler Trust. The property had previously been the site of Hawkeye Rubber. The Simantels purchased the property, demolished the structures and began some environmental remediation activities in hopes of developing a 16-unit condominium project. That project stalled due to economic and market conditions and the property has been for sale for a number of years. It has been vacant land since 2003. The City currently has a purchase option on the property.

The northeast property is owned by Detweiller Playground, Inc., a charitable trust established by the last will and testament of Thomas Detweiller. That will transferred assets to the trust, including the subject property, upon Mr. Detweiller’s death in 1947 and the incorporation of the trust in 1948. Detweiller Playground owns the entirety of Detweiller Marina, a 27.5 acre property that generally sits between Spring Street and Hayward St. Their larger holdings include a public marina, operated by the Peoria Park District, that is directly adjacent to the subject property and a recreational area and public playground, also maintained by the Peoria Park District. The 4.25 acre property being acquired by the City has been leased to the Peoria Boat Club for over 70 years, first by Mr. Detweiller and by the trust since 1948. The Peoria Boat Club is a private marina that can have up to 36 members. The Boat Club property is fenced off from the remainder of the Detweiller property. The City currently has a purchase option on the property. The City is partnering with the Peoria Boat Club to potentially allow them to continue use of their docks, clubhouse and a small amount of land between them. These elements are not included in the City’s conversion request.

5. Explanation of how replacement site is of reasonably equivalent usefulness and location as the property being converted:

Combining the privately-owned conversion parcels with the publicly owned property, there is a net increase of 1.61 acres being added as public open recreation in the proposed conversion (8.02 acres of new park minus 6.41 acres of lost park). The additional acreage serves as an extension to Riverfront Park and increases the recreational offerings of the park.

The proposed replacement site is directly adjacent to and northeast of Riverfront Park. The Concept Site Plan (Exhibit 6 - Concept Site Plan) for the replacement site adds approximately 1,200 linear feet of additional shoreline for public access, and puts into public ownership the entire riverfront from Interstate 74 to Detweiller Marina. The concept plan creates a seamless connection between the original Riverfront Park and the extension and offers many of the same amenities, including a bike/walk trail and river access. The entire LWCF project, comprised of both Riverfront Park and
Festival Park,\(^2\) is essentially a linear park that provides an opportunity for citizens and visitors to enjoy the Illinois River.

The 6 acre portion of Riverfront Park being converted and removed as open space is located at the widest section of the park. No access to the river is impeded by the development. The recreational features contained on this site will be relocated or reused in equal or greater amount. Constitution Garden and the sand volleyball courts will be relocated and improved elsewhere in the park; the abandoned railroad turntable may be repurposed within Riverfront Park; and any loss of walking or bike trails will be replaced with more trails closer to the river.

6. **Description of recreation needs that will be met by new park:**

The City of Peoria has one of the largest park systems in Illinois, but is lacking in parkland with direct access to the Illinois River. Riverfront Park is one of the few areas within the City where citizens and visitors can interact directly with the water. The park extension provides an expansion of that opportunity. The clearing and thinning of overgrowth, especially along the shore and on the breakwater peninsula, will drastically improve views of the river from all parts of the park as well as create greater opportunities for individuals to get closer to the water. The large grassy area planned for the southwestern portion of the park will serve as a play area for informal gatherings and sports. Other than Morton Square Park, Peoria’s near northside neighborhoods lack quality open space.

The City’s plan for the park extension was developed through a public outreach process that solicited the input of citizens and various stakeholder groups. The City hosted two public meetings (Nov. 4, 2015 and Nov. 9, 2015) and conducted an on-line survey to determine which elements citizens felt should be included if the conversion approval was granted. A small, volunteer advisory group helped to distill public comments into the Concept Site Plan shown in Exhibit 6. It should be noted that many of the participants and respondents are or may be opposed to the conversion in general; their contribution to park planning activities should not be viewed as endorsement of the overall project.

7. **Population to be served:**

The users of this new park are the same citizens and visitors that utilize the current Riverfront Park. The park will serve the immediately surrounding residential neighborhoods, including Taft Homes, Olde Towne North and Detweiller Marina neighborhoods. In addition, the park would serve the new residents of the River Trail development project. The park will be used by runners, bicyclists and walkers. The small boat launch will be available for non-motorized watercraft such as canoes and kayaks. The park will also provide better access to the adjacent (to the northeast) Detweiller Marina. This will create opportunities for the long-term and transient boaters to better enjoy Riverfront Park. The private boat docks of the Peoria Boat Club will remain moored off the shore of the property, bringing additional visitors to the area. The increased access to the Illinois River, especially along the breakwater, will be attractive to naturalists and hobbyist fishermen.

\(^2\) The LWCF project also includes a 66 acre parcel in West Peoria known as Rocky Glen Park which was created in a previous conversion.
8. Description of recreation opportunities, facilities and resources to be provided:

The proposed Concept Site Plan demonstrates a number of recreational resources in the extended park:

- The existing bike/walk path will be forked near the southwest edge of the replacement site and extended along the Illinois River in a loop that rejoins the main path at the northeast end of the site. In total, approximately 1600 linear feet of bike/walk path is added.
- An unpaved path, approximately 500 feet in length, will branch from the bike/walk path to provide access to the breakwater peninsula. A simple observation area will be created along the breakwater.
- An open multi-use space (approximately 3.5 acres) will allow for picnicking, informal games and organized sports.
- Improved access to the river will increase interaction with the water and create opportunities for fishing and bird watching.
- The preserved boat launch near the northeast edge of the site will provide an opportunity for non-motorized water craft such as kayaks and canoes to enter the marina.
- The preserved mature trees near the marina allow for shaded picnicking.

9. Owner/manager of new park:

The City of Peoria will be the owner of all property within the new park. The City will fund the acquisition of the private parcels and the creation of the new park. The total budget for the park extension project is estimated at $1,021,837. This budget includes $425,000 for property acquisition and $596,882 for the construction of the park improvements. The concept plan addresses the environmental remediation issues on the Simantel property. Within the construction budget are funds allocated for environmental consultation to update a Remedial Action Plan with IEPA, monitor the work, and complete the remediation paperwork.

Funding sources for the project include $445,000 in proceeds generated from the sale of the converted property for development and fund balance in the Northside Business Park Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District. The Detweiller Playground property and Spring Street right-of-way are located within this TIF, which has projected fund balance of $683,732 by the end of 2016. Funds can also be drawn from the adjacent Northside Riverfront TIF, which has a projected 2016 fund balance of $341,409.

The table on the following page is the project’s estimated budget.
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**Replacement Plan Budget**

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<thead>
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<th>Sources</th>
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<td>-- Detweiller Playground</td>
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<td><strong>Total Sources</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total Uses</strong></td>
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The City has had a contract with the Peoria Park District for decades to manage its riverfront properties, including all of the LWCF project. The City’s contract with the Park District would be amended to include maintenance and management of this new asset.

10. **Name of new park:** Riverfront Park

11. **Is the new site an addition to an existing park? If so will the existing park be included in the 6f boundary:**

Yes, the replacement properties are adjacent to the existing Riverfront Park. Riverfront Park is already within the 6f boundary (See Exhibit 7 – 6 (f) Boundary Map).

12. **Timeframe for development of recreational activities**

**Immediately Upon Approval:**
- Close on properties
- Seek non-conforming use to allow Peoria Boat Club to use marina property for fenced boat storage through April 30, 2016 (if necessary)

**Year One Activities:**
- Finalize park design
- Clear, thin and prune trees on all properties and breakwater
- Conduct environmental remediation activities
- Remove fencing from Boat Club property (northeast of Spring Street)
- Grade/fill the Simantel and City properties (southeast of Spring Street)
- Vacate Spring Street and remove pavement

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- Begin grass, savanna and other planting  

**Year Two Activities:**  
- Extend bike/walk path  
- Construct trail on breakwater  
- Construct parking areas  

13. *Date site will be open to the public:*  

The northeast section of the new park would be open within four months of approval. The southwest section would be open as soon as environmental remediation activities are completed, but anticipated within the first year. Sections of the park might need to be closed for construction activities like path construction. The park hours will match those of the adjacent Riverfront Park: year round from sunrise to sunset.  


15. *GPS Coordinates Deg/Min/Sec/Dir – Longitude and Latitude:*  

The Latitude of 40.698844 and Longitude of -89.573025 results in GPS Coordinates of 40° 41' 55.8384' N and 89° 34' 22.8900' W
SITE LOCATION MAP
River Trail Development Site & Spring Street Parcels Site

Source: City of Peoria, Bing Map 12/14/2015
Exhibit 3

SPRING STREET PARCELS SITE - PROPERTY MAP
River Trail Development Project - Replacement Property

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<th>Tax Payer</th>
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<td>Simantel</td>
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</table>

| Replacement Property (black dotted line) | 5.56 |

| ROW - Spring Street | 535 ft x 70 ft | 0.84 |
| City Parcel         | 1803451002     | 1.62 |

Recreation Area (red solid line) 8.02

* Boat Club House on 6000 sf not part of Replacement Property or Recreation Area

Source: City of Peoria, Peoria County GIS Map 4/13/2016
Exhibit - 4
ZONING MAP
River Trail Development & Spring Street Parcels

River Trail Development (Conversion Site)

Spring Street Parcels (Replacement Site)

Source: City of Peoria, Peoria County GIS Map 12/14/2015
Exhibit - 5

Aerial Map of Structures
Spring Street Parcels - Existing Structures - Replacement Site

Source: City of Peoria, Google Map 12/18/2015
Exhibit - 6

PROPERTY SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Spring Street Parcels Site - Replacement Property

RIVERFRONT PARK
CONCEPT SITE PLAN
PEORIA, ILLINOIS | JANUARY 26, 2016
December 15, 2015

City of Peoria, Illinois  
Attn: Mr. Christopher Setti  
Assistant City Manager  
419 Fulton, Suite 207  
Peoria, Illinois

RE: Riverfront Park Narrative

Dear Chris:

Here is a short narrative to go with our Conceptual Site Plan, dated December 15, 2015 for the expansion of Riverfront Park.

Working with the City of Peoria and a small volunteer advisory group, Farnsworth Group prepared a Conceptual Level Plan for the initial development of the park. There may be future phases to the project but this current plan identifies the anticipated 1st Phase of work.

The expansion of Riverfront Park provides a unique opportunity for the public to get closer to and engage the beauty of the Illinois River and its surrounding bluffs. Working with the ideas from the public input sessions, the City of Peoria, and a volunteer advisory group the general conclusion and direction for the development of the park included:

- The space should not be a heavily programmed space, but instead provide a more natural relaxing feeling that allows people to get closer to the water but yet provide some multi-use ability.
- The space should celebrate the history of its use by humans, and provide the opportunity to teach and enjoy the natural beauty of the Illinois River Basin.
- Promote the use of native plant communities as much as possible to help improve and restore the site.
- It should look like a continuation of the existing park and strive to provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to other destinations within the area.
- The space needs to continue to provide support to the boaters that use the marina.
- People's safety should be heavily considered in the overall design.
- Provide a design that could help to encourage cleaning up and redevelopment of the neighborhood.
The design elements include:

**New Trail Loop**
With the current trail moving away from the River's Edge as you enter the space from the south we have added a new pedestrian / bike loop, approximately 1600 lineal feet long, that winds its way along the edge of the river and then reunites with the existing trail at the north end of the property. This would be an IDOT Standard Trail being paved, 10’ wide, with 1’ shoulders on both sides. There will be future opportunities to add historical signage and public art along this trail. This new looped trail provides an excellent opportunity for people to get close to the Illinois River and take in the outstanding views of the river and bluffs. Future additions to the trail could include observation points to the river and site furniture.

**Turntable Arch Restoration**
Within the existing Riverfront Park that will be sold for residential development sits an abandoned railroad turntable. While the entire turntable cannot be saved the arch in the center of the turntable could be reused as a gateway along the existing or proposed trail. A more detailed study will need to be conducted for the arch to ensure it is structurally sound and could be relocated. The final location should be decided once a complete topographic and boundary survey are available.

**Open Multi-Use Space**
Approximately 3.5 Acres is dedicated to an open multi-use space. This space could be used for events, temporary shelters (tents), informal gatherings. Clearing and thinning existing scrub vegetation along the river bank will give this space optimal viewing opportunities to the Illinois River and the bluffs across the river. The space will be planted in a mowable fescue blend of grass that will minimize water and nutrient needs. Future additions to the space could include shelters, public restrooms, and parking for bicycles.

**Breakwater Trail**
The existing breakwater land provides an opportunity to get people even closer to the Illinois River. An unpavec trail could easily be extended to about the midpoint of the breakwater terminating in a small patio / platform for people to sit and enjoy the views. Existing vegetation along this trail would be thinned, pruned and some removed to provide those views. Native prairie grasses and forbs would be planted to protect the breakwater from erosion.

**Connection to the Existing Boat Docks**
The paved trail would provide a physical connection to the existing boat docks belonging to the Peoria Boat Club. This would ensure proper pedestrian access to the docks.

**Expanded Parking**
To provide parking for park visitors, including boaters that use the adjacent Detweiller marina, the existing parking lot could be expanded south and connected to Spring Street. This could provide up to 60 new parking stalls. The parking lot could also serve at the connection to the existing boat launch to the marina. Depending on the demand the parking lot could certainly be built in stages. Phase 1 would include construction of 30 stalls. Ultimately it should be designed and installed to meet the City of Peoria Parking Requirements.
**General Plantings**

Much of the existing plantings that are along the existing trail and the river bank are non-native invasive species of plant material. They actually cause more erosion as they do not allow sunlight to get to the ground level thus killing what would be plant material that protects the soils. Part of the Phase 1 work would be to remove the existing non-native shrubbery and trees within these spaces. Trees that were determined to stay due to location, species, or cost to remove, would be limbed up to a height of 15 – 20’ above the ground level. This would provide a direct view to the river. Ground level areas would be replanted using native plantings which do not exceed 3-4’ in height. It will be important to plant native material that doesn’t get too tall to help with long view lines and safety within the space. The City of Peoria will need to adopt a long range burn plan to help ensure the proper development and survival of the native plant community. Many of the native plants will not be able to regenerate or open seed shells without the heat from a prairie burn.

Great care should be taken in the design and layout of the native plantings in the existing grove of trees along the south edge of the project. The grove has a beautiful stand of older specimen trees. And while they have enjoyed a good life of open space to grow in they most likely have not had heavy pedestrian use under their canopies. Heavy pedestrian use can create compaction to the soils which in turn and constrict roots and stress the trees. With the apartment complex coming to the area and the anticipated increased use with the improvements to the park, some consideration should be given to minimize heavy pedestrian use under these trees. Once design of this area begins careful study of tree locations / tree canopies and then placement of mow able and native grasses should be given. From a design point of view the native grasses help to provide an edge, or creation of space, to the Open Multi-Use Area.

Sincerely,

FARNSWORTH GROUP, INC.

Bruce A. Brown, PLA, CLARB
Landscape Architectural Manager