VALLEY OUTCROPS
Ridges of bedrock outcroppings that undulate from the river bottom define this area north of the Minnesota River. Included in this segment are views of the Cedar Rock landform on the south side of the river. Vegetation in this area contains forest and grasslands. The land rises and falls on the ancient terraces of the Glacial River Warren to provide area views.

RIVER WARREN BOTTOMS
Visual and physical access to the Minnesota River defines this segment because the expansive valley floor is dominant. The valley floor environment contains many parcels of RIM, CREP, and WMA conservation lands. Experientially the bottoms feel completely separate from the surrounding landscape. The land cover is a prairie bedrock outcrop type spotted with invasive cedar growth, marsh areas, and a few small lakes. One can imagine what the land could have looked like long ago, and can start to realize how wide the Glacial River Warren was when it carved this landscape.

BIRCH COULEE
Open sky, the rhythm of large fields of row crops, and county roads characterize this section. Many patches of conservation land planted with prairie provide a contrast to the farm fields. Large tributaries cut through the uplands to create ravines whose steep topography, hardwood vegetation, and moist, cool microclimate provide refuge from the heat and wind of the upland fields.

VALLEY PLAINS
Agricultural fields that limit physical access to the river dominate this river bottom segment. Tall deciduous vegetation growing along the river’s edge blocks visual access to the water. The steep wooded bluff at the plains’ edges is a strong contrast to the open valley plains.
RIVER WARREN VISTAS
On the uplands of this segment one can access the brow of the bluff for miles. The hardwood forest is relatively low on the edge of the brow providing dramatic vistas of the valley created by Glacial River Warren. From this vantage point all components of the Glacial River Warren can be viewed. Light and shadow patterns move across the valley floor, 240 foot high valley walls define the massive space, the ancient river terraces rise above the floodplain, and tributaries, with their dense vegetation, cut deep ravines into the bluffs on their journey to join the meandering Minnesota River.

TRIBUTARY COMMUNITY
This segment provides a Glacial River Warren tributary experience along the Minnesota River Trail. The Redwood River is a remnant of one of the many outwash streams of the glacial river. The community of Redwood Falls is centered on the river. Very steep topography, wooded stone bluffs, dramatic gorge views, and a beautiful falls characterize this tributary landscape. It contrasts both visually and physically to the uplands that dominate much of the landscape. The falls have been an historic and current source of power and energy.

CEDAR MOUNTAIN
The rich culture of the Mdewankaton Dakota, past and present, define this segment. This area once housed the villages of Big Eagle, Little Crow, and Wabasha. Historical structures dot the landscape that date to before the conflict of 1862. This area saw the beginning of the 1862 war and now is the starting point for the Dakota Commemorative March to Fort Snelling and the commemorative horseback ride to Mankato in honor of the 38 Dakota who were executed. This stretch also contains some of the largest rock outcrops along the Minnesota River Valley.
EXPERIENTIAL SEGMENTS

VALLEY OUTCROPS
- UNVEILING VIEWS OF BEDROCK OUTCROPS
- FOREST & GRASSLAND VIEWS

RIVER WARREN BOTTOMS
- VISUAL ACCESS TO RIVER & RIVER BOTTOMS
- PHYSICAL ACCESS TO VALLEY FLOOR ENVIRONMENT
- AN ABUNDANCE OF PROTECTED LANDS ENSURES A NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OVER TIME

BIRCH COULEE
- TRIBUTARY PARK
- AGRICULTURAL PLAINS
- HISTORIC SITES & MONUMENTS

RIVER WARREN VISTAS
- VISTAS OF BLUFFS, RIVER BOTTOMS & VALLEY
- VIEWS ARE TAKEN FROM A VARIETY OF VALLEY LOCATIONS

TRIBUTARY COMMUNITY
- REDWOOD FALLS ACCESS
- VISUAL ACCESS OVER THE REDWOOD RIVER TRIBUTARY

CEDAR MOUNTAIN
- MDEWANKATON DAKOTA HISTORY
- ROCK OUTCROPS

VALLEY PLAINS
- AGRICULTURAL RIVER BOTTOMS
- FOREST & PRAIRIE
- OPEN FLOOR W/ NO VISUAL OR PHYSICAL ACCESS TO RIVER
CONNECTIONS TO EXISTING SYSTEMS

The Scenic Byway follows County Road 21 on the north side of the river and has an alternate route that are not shown on the map that connects to Alexander Ramsey Park in Redwood Falls via Highway 19/71. This area is also part of the Falls Region of the Minnesota River Valley Birding Trail. The Falls Region extends from Upper Sioux Agency State Park to Fort Ridgely State Park. Area snowmobile trails are located in road right-of-ways and cut through farm fields. Because signs and temporary bridges only mark these seasonal trails, private landowners are often more willing to allow them on their property. Many of the trails are found in the floodplain near the Redwood River.

The Lower Sioux Community leads the Commemorative March in the first week in November of even numbered years. This march is held in memory of the Dakota women and children who were forced to march from the area that is now the Lower Sioux Reservation to an internment camp at Fort Snelling in the fall of 1862. Although the exact route is unknown, marchers follow a route similar to the one that the Dakota were forced to take. Dakota March leaders and organizers have expressed interest in using portions of the state trail as they march to Fort Snelling.

The Casey Jones State Trail is presently planned to run from Split Rock Creek State Park near Pipestone to Walnut Grove. The Redwood Falls community is extremely interested in a connection to the Casey Jones State Trail. The state has not yet appropriated funding to extend the Casey Jones Trail to Redwood Falls from Walnut Grove, nor has the exact route been determined. In this design project, it is suggested that the Casey Jones State Trail enter Redwood Falls from the west following the Redwood River.
REGIONAL TRAIL OPTIONS
A system of trail loops provides a wide variety of experiences on both the northern and southern sides of the Minnesota River. Redwood Falls, Morton, Franklin, and the Lower Sioux Community are connected by the trail options. The large number of high quality natural and historical amenities guided the alignment of the trail loop options.
CEDAR ROCK TO NORTH REDWOOD

The **Valley Outcrops Trail** option comes from Skalbakken County Park, Renville County Park 1, from the west and passes the Schwandt Memorial with the option to cross the river at the Gold Mine Bridge at Highway 17.

Continuing on the north side, the trail parallels the scenic byway. The north side of the road has a heavily vegetated bluff, and the south side drops off with steep grades. With these conditions, a terrace for the trail and a guardrail are necessary for the safe trail use. Many farms and residences on the south side of the byway are impacted by this trail alignment.

The trail turns south to cross the river on the Highway 101 Bridge. Although this bridge is quite busy with traffic, this route is desirable because it connects the trail with the public water access and the canoe carry-in point located directly south of the bridge.

The **River Warren Vistas Trail** option on the south connects to the Upper Sioux State Park to the west. Following a minimum maintenance road, the trail is very close to the river and crosses Rice Creek, a location for historic interpretation. Rice Creek was the site of one or two Dakota villages before 1862, but there is no current visual evidence of this history. From Rice Creek the trail has the option of crossing the river at the historic Gold Mine Bridge. There is a high water marker on the bridge from past floods making this a good place to interpret the floodplain and the meandering and changing Minnesota River. This trailhead site is also a good place to interpret the stories of the pioneers and the former gold mine that once was nearby. Proposed amenities include a public water access, a canoe carry-in point, expanded parking, picnic tables, and a rest area.

From the bridge the trail follows Highway 17 passing Cedar Rock Wildlife Management Area and heads to the top of the bluff where there are amazing vistas of the River Warren landscape. If ever possible, a route near or through the Cedar Rock WMA would be ideal because of its scenic beauty and cultural significance. Presently trails through WMAs are prohibited and the land surrounding Cedar Rock is privately owned. Because a trail is not currently feasible through the WMA, the trail follows Highway 17 out of the valley, then turns east on River Road also known as Highway 9, and passes near the Camp Pope site into North Redwood.
REDWOOD FALLS AREA

The **Tributary Community Trail** options focus on providing dramatic vistas over the wooded gorge of the Redwood River while connecting the user to the community and amenities in Redwood Falls.

From the North Redwood Area the trail follows a gravel road to the west that leads into several large patches of RIM and CREP land planted with tall grass prairie species. Several options are provided to reach the town center trailhead overlooking the Redwood River. One alignment moves around the gorge; the other comes right through Alexander Ramsey Park. From the trailhead the Minnesota River Trail joins a community trail along Highway 101 that leads into North Redwood and the River Warren Bottoms trail option. The other eastward options include either following the upland segment and the River Warren bottoms segment or following a potential community trail alongside a drainage ditch to connect to the Cedar Mountain trail.

The **River Warren Bottoms Trail** has two trail options. One follows the scenic byway to the north and connects the Valley Outcrops section with the community of Morton. The other option leaves North Redwood and follows an existing road grade through a concentration of conservation lands to the Tiger Lake WMA. At Tiger Lake the trail skirts the edge of the WMA on the south by using an existing road grade. At the railroad tracks the trail is on railroad land. An easement from the railroad is required to connect to the public water access point near Morton. In order for this trail option to enter Morton, the Highway 19/71 Bridge would need to be retrofitted for the trail or a new pedestrian bridge across the Minnesota River would have to be built.

The **Birch Coulee Loop** turns off of the Valley Outcrops trail or the River Warren Bottoms trail and climbs out of the valley. The loop follows a county road that is part of the birding trail, passes by many farm fields, and then travels down a wooded slope to the entrance of Beaver Falls County Park. Beaver Falls County Park, Renville County Park 4, has 302 acres along the wooded Beaver Creek that include grasslands and riparian habitat. Its existing amenities include trails, camping, a picnic area, and restrooms that make it a desirable resting place along the trail. Coming out of the tributary area, the trail passes the Beaver Falls WMA. This conservation land is planted with native tall grass prairie that provides a sharp contrast to the surrounding landscape of vast farm fields. This area could be used to interpret conservation land efforts in this agricultural landscape. From Beaver Falls WMA, the trail continues on County Road 2 to the Birch Coulee Battlefield Historical Site.
REDWOOD FALLS TO CEDAR MOUNTAIN

The Birch Coulee Loop continues from Beaver Falls WMA to Birch Coulee Battlefield. Birch Coulee Battlefield is the site of a major battle between the United States soldiers and the Dakota people in 1862. It is now an interpretive site planted with native prairie and run by the Minnesota Historical Society. Amenities include parking, interpretive panels, and a rest area.

From this site the trail passes Birch Coulee County Park. This 25-acre park, Renville County Park 5, is heavily wooded and contains Works Progress Administration structures. Contingent on permission from property owners, the trail follows the edge of the Birch Coulee Tributary to the Morton Monuments.

The first monument was built by the legislature in 1893 in honor of the U.S. soldiers who died in the battle of Birch Coulee. In 1899, the Minnesota Historical Society erected another monument to honor the Dakota who helped save the lives of the European settlers during the U.S./Dakota war. This site is now a bur oak grove that overlooks the river valley. The other trail option from the Birch Coulee Battlefield follows County Road 18 into Morton with a spur trail to the monuments.

Whether or not the Cedar Mountain Trail option is allowed to cross the reservation is for the Lower Sioux Community to decide. However, this project researched the potentials in this area and has mapped several trail options. The trail could provide opportunities for the Dakota to share the story of their ancestors, interpret the Dakota perspective of the 1862 war, and showcase their contemporary culture. This area is already a major draw for tourists because of the Jackpot Junction Casino. The casino features a hotel, gallery, and several restaurants. These amenities are compatible with a trailhead. This area could be connected to Redwood Falls with a trail along the county ditch right-of-way or from Morton with a trail alongside Highway 2.

Another trailhead option is the Lower Sioux interpretive site run by the Minnesota Historical Society. There is an existing trail from this site down to the river bottoms where it could follow an old Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) road. Since this trail option is next to the river, it provides a connection to the Minnesota River Canoe Trail.

From the Lower Sioux Community the trail continues to the Cedar Mountain Scientific and Natural Area, a traditional Dakota spiritual site. Recently this land was acquired by the Department of Natural Resources because of its outstanding biodiversity. The DNR contract permits spiritual ceremonies, bow hunting, and a trail. Cedar Mountain, a major landmark, is perhaps the largest known outcrop of Morton Gneiss in the Minnesota River Valley. This site is an ideal location for a low-impact interpretive place/rest area along the trail.

The Valley Plains Trail option follows Highway 19 out of Morton pass the granite “kame” to the confluence of Birch Coulee Creek and the Minnesota River. If property owner approval is given, the trail connects to the Morton Monuments and the Birch Coulee Battlefield. Continuing on Highway 19, the trail passes the Redwood Ferry Historic Site. The Redwood Ferry site is the crossing where the old government road from Fort Ridgely crossed to connect to the Redwood Agency, the present day Lower Sioux Community south of the river. This area became a battleground during the beginning of the 1862 war. (Anderson)

The trail parallels the Minnesota River Scenic Byway on County Road 21. Because of the changes in grade, this trail alignment would require making a terrace that is lower than the road grade in certain areas. Residences on the south side of the road make siting this trail difficult in some areas also. A spur trail connects the community of Franklin with the Minnesota River Trail. The Valley Plains trail segment either continues on towards Fort Ridgely or crosses the river to go south to connect to Cedar Mountain.
REDWOOD FALLS TO CEDAR MOUNTAIN
HISTORY

The City of Redwood Falls is located one mile south of the Minnesota River on the high banks of the Redwood River. Known for its picturesque river bluffs and wooded gorges, Redwood Falls is sometimes referred to as the “Scenic City.” Once the site Shakopee’s village, this area was known to the Dakota as ‘Cansa’yapi’ or where they marked the trees red. (Durand 1994) Redwood Falls is also named after the falls of Ramsey Creek. The first European settlers were drawn to the Redwood Falls area because of this waterpower potential. Early surveyors’ maps show a government sawmill and a gristmill in this area. After the U.S./Dakota War of 1862, the area now known as Redwood Falls ceased being part of the Dakota reservation and was opened up to European settlers. Colonel Sam McPhail had taken notice of the land when he was leading troops in the war. Once the land was open for settlement, he purchased the land that would become Redwood Falls. In 1864 MacPhail returned with a small group to start building a stockade and a cabin. John St. George Honner soon joined MacPhail with his family. He purchased the land north of Redwood Falls that later would become North Redwood.

Redwood Falls soon became a hub for production and transportation. The Minnesota Valley Railroad made its first commercial run in 1878. The Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad came through North Redwood in 1884. The first depot agent for North Redwood was Richard W. Sears, the future founder of the Sears and Roebuck Company.

In 1889 A.C. Burmeister, a German immigrant who had learned the milling trade, came to Redwood Falls. He soon purchased the old mill and installed an electric light system in 1898. In 1903 Lake Redwood was created after Burmeister dammed the Redwood River for more power.

Today Redwood Falls has the opportunity to become a major recreational hub. Lake Redwood and Alexander Ramsey Park are important amenities. The falls are one of the few falls in the Minnesota Valley. Close to this junction of natural resources lies the historic town center.

*paraphrased from “Early History of Redwood Falls”, City of Redwood Falls*
CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Not only will the Minnesota River Trail be an amenity to Redwood Falls, but also Redwood Falls will add much to the trail. Natural and recreational amenities converge in Redwood Falls.

The sway back bridge built by the WPA is in Alexander Ramsey Park, the largest municipal park in the state. It is one of the many WPA structures in the city. There are many opportunities for recreation within the park including scenic hiking trails.

Lake Redwood is a recreational lake created by the dam on the Redwood River.

Many conservation lands including a large number of Wildlife Management Areas surround the city.

The river gorge topography creates some of the most scenic areas and scenic overlooks in the whole Minnesota River Valley.

Because Redwood Falls has been a transportation center surrounded by fertile agricultural land, agricultural related activities such as grain elevators are important parts of the city’s economic base.

The historic downtown with its historic buildings still retains the ambience of a late 19th century, early 20th century rural county seat.
CHARACTER ANALYSIS

W.P.A. Architecture

Recreation

Historic Architecture

Conservation Lands

Tributary Landscape

Historic Downtown

Transportation Hub

Lake Redwood
COMMUNITY ANALYSIS
The city’s cultural and natural assets make it an important part of the Minnesota River Valley. Because Redwood Falls is located on the scenic gorge of the Redwood River, not on the Minnesota River, it is the best example of a community that was sited on a major tributary and a good place to interpret the “tributary community experience.”

Recreational Resources:
The rugged topography of the river gorge lends itself to beautiful views of the scenic valley and the falls. Alexander Ramsey Park includes much of the river gorge and has many recreational facilities. Lake Redwood and Westside Park on its shore are recreational resources.

Land Use:
The main entry into town is a large commercial strip along Highway 19/71. This area is busy with traffic, visitors, hotels, bars, and restaurants. The strip draws activity away from the historic downtown. Recreational parks and civic spaces are located throughout town but are not well connected to each other.

Circulation:
Bridge Street is also Highway 19/71. It is both a busy thoroughfare filled with semi truck traffic and the main commercial strip in town. Highways 19 and 71 join together in downtown Redwood Falls at a very busy intersection where there is a lack of signage and no traffic light. Highway 101 connects Redwood Falls to North Redwood. Bluffs frame the highway as it drops down to the Minnesota River. The trail could be sited on existing bluff terraces. When it is finished, the Casey Jones State Trail will terminate in Redwood Falls, which provides an opportunity to create a regional trail center by linking the two trail systems at a shared trailhead.

Points of Interest:
The majority of cultural and historical areas of interest are concentrated in the downtown or near it and in Alexander Ramsey Park. The park’s main attractions are Ramsey Falls, the historic WPA-built swayback bridge that spans the Redwood River, and its recreational resources. The city’s other points of interest include Sears Park in North Redwood, Westside Park, the Community Center, the Redwood Poor Farm Museum, and Minnesota Inventor’s Museum.
COMMUNITY ANALYSIS: TRAIL CONSTRAINTS

The steep wooded bluffs of the Redwood River gorge create constraints to trail design and to trail connections to Alexander Ramsey Park. The topography of the Minnesota River Valley separates Redwood Falls from North Redwood visually and physically. Because both rivers meander through flat river bottoms, they are prone to flooding.

Highway 19/71 (Bridge Street) with its heavy traffic is a safety hazard and barrier for pedestrians and trail users.
COMMUNITY ANALYSIS: TRAIL OPPORTUNITIES

Cultural, historical, recreational resources are concentrated in the historic downtown center in Redwood Falls creating opportunities for a trailhead location and strengthening connections between the town and the Redwood River Gorge, Lake Redwood, and Alexander Ramsey Park.

The area’s large number of conservation lands provides opportunities for education and interpretation.

The future Casey Jones State Trail terminus in Redwood Falls provides an opportunity for a connection to the Minnesota River State Trail at a shared trailhead in Redwood Falls. Because the exact route has not been determined, options are shown. One option brings the trail into the historic downtown. The second option crosses the Redwood River west of the Lake Redwood and follows the lake into Westside Park.

Currently there is no local trail system that links the neighborhood parks to each other. Linking local parks together in a local system that links to the state trails will greatly expand trail access for locals and visitors.
COMMUNITY TRAIL OPTIONS

While North Redwood is located within the Valley’s river bottoms, the majority of Redwood Falls, including the historic downtown, is centered on the hydrological features of the Redwood River, Ramsey Creek, and Lake Redwood. There are a large percentage of conservation lands in this area that could be interpreted as the trail comes up from the river bottoms. When possible, several alignment options are available for the trail. These range from following the road right-of-way only to crossing private property to provide the greatest flexibility for community access.

The old Redwood County Poor Farm, a proposed trailhead, was built in 1908 and now is the Redwood Poor Farm Museum and Minnesota Inventor’s Museum. Setback from the road, it overlooks Ramsey Creek. The grounds are large enough for the establishment of a campground on this site.

Alexander Ramsey Park, once a state park, at 217 acres is the largest municipal park in the state. Besides its miles of hiking trails, it has campgrounds, picnic areas, a zoo, playgrounds, and scenic overlooks. The best route to highlight the tributary experience of the Minnesota River Trail would be for the trail to come through Ramsey Park past the falls and through the beautiful wooded valley. However, the hiking trails and the pedestrian bridges are very steep; they do not meet state trail accessibility standards. An engineering study is needed to evaluate the feasibility of this very desirable option.

Westside Park or Perk’s Park is a potential trailhead site where the Casey Jones and the Minnesota River Trails could meet. This park includes a baseball field with terraced seating, a band shell, a rest area, and a public water access to Lake Redwood. If Westside Park becomes the trailhead, the public water access should be expanded in a sustainable way that is compatible with the reclamation of Lake Redwood.

The very active Redwood Falls community is in the process of planning and securing funding for community trails. One of the first trails to be built will follow Highway 101 between Redwood Falls and North Redwood. The Minnesota River trail could join this trail going down the bluff into North Redwood to meet the River Warren Bottoms trail segment. Sears Park is located in North Redwood along the railroad tracks across from the grain elevators at the site of the old depot. A trailhead at this site functions as a gateway into the Redwood Falls community. Interpretation of the railroad, industry, and Richard Sears could be part of a new site design for the park. Expanded parking and a new building with rest areas would enhance this area.
TOWN CENTER ANALYSIS & TRAIL OPTIONS

The busy traffic on Bridge Street/Highway 19/Highway 71 provides design challenges for bringing the trail into downtown Redwood Falls. A grade separated trail with expansion to the north could be sited alongside the road. Many curb cuts provide access to the number of commercial and residential properties along this side of the road. Bringing the trail on a route built over the old Highway 19/71 Bridge would solve some of the curb cut/trail conflicts. This bridge now is used for infrastructure. If the trail were to be built over it, the falls of the dam that are otherwise hidden underneath the new Highway 19/71 Bridge would be seen. Revealing these falls through this trail alignment or by making a new viewing promontory that overlooks the falls is desirable.

The Casey Jones State Trail will eventually terminate in Redwood Falls. Since the route has not been determined, options for connecting it to the Minnesota River Trail at a regional trailhead are shown. One option connects to the Casey Jones to the Minnesota River Trail at a trailhead at Westside Park. The other options bring the Casey Jones Trail into downtown either on Minnesota Street or Mill Street. In downtown the trail turns down Third Street, providing a framed view of the Redwood County Courthouse, and turns again on Washington Street to meet the Minnesota River Trail at a shared trailhead.

Currently Redwood Falls has a trailhead that overlooks the Redwood River. It is located north of Bridge Street across from the historic town center. This deck structure is located behind the Lutheran Services building that makes it hard to see by the visiting public. An existing trail from the trailhead goes down the bluff at a steep grade and ends at a gravel road close to the power plant and the bridge entrance to Ramsey Park. With the view to the river, the access into Ramsey Park, and the proximity to the town center there is great potential for trailhead expansion at this location. Another option for a trailhead site is the vacant lot on the corner of Second Street and Washington Street that is adjacent to a large municipal parking lot. This site provides an opportunity to bring trail users closer to downtown stores and could also serve as a space for other civic events such as art and craft fairs, farmers’ market, etc.
PROPOSED TOWN CENTER & TRAIL DESIGN

The proposed Redwood Falls trail network focuses on strengthening the tributary community experience by connecting trails to the town center and siting a trailhead there. Two trail alignment options were chosen for study. One option follows Bridge Street to cross the Redwood River over the old Highway 19/71 Bridge. The second option winds its way through Ramsey Park, crosses an expanded pedestrian bridge near the old mill interpretive site, and follows an improved, terraced trail up the bluff to connect to the new trailhead.

New scenic overlook/promontory sites are proposed for viewing Lake Redwood and the Redwood River dam and falls. Street tree plantings are added to extend the river gorge vegetation into town. The Casey Jones State Trail would be located on new Mill Street bike lanes. This trail turns down Third Street providing the user with a framed view of the Redwood County Courthouse and then turns on Washington Street to meet the Minnesota River Trail at a shared trailhead.

A network of new community trails connects existing community trails to the two state trails. The trails connections occur on Minnesota Street, Broadway, and Second Street.
PROPOSED TOWN CENTER & TRAIL DESIGN
Two trailhead options are provided for Redwood Falls so the community can choose the one that best suits its needs. Both trailhead options focus on connecting to the historic town center and celebrating and interpreting the city’s location on a major tributary. The first option expands the existing trailhead that overlooks the Redwood River to link the river and the town center more closely. The municipal parking lot across the street provides additional parking for the trailhead and could be used for a farmers’ market and art and craft fairs.

The second option utilizes the empty lot on the corner of Washington Street and Second Street to build a trailhead right in the town center. This site is separated from the municipal parking lot by an alley. This contiguous parking space could function as over-flow space for the trailhead. Like in the first option, the parking lot could also be used for markets and fairs.

**Overlook Trailhead Design:**
This design celebrates the Redwood River and its wooded gorge. Terraces and their retaining walls support the structure and the erodable bluff. A visitor information center and potentially the Chamber of Commerce are housed in a new building with public restrooms and perhaps a small coffee shop or café. Terraced viewing decks with tables and chairs extend off the back of the structure. To the west, a grass-terraced amphitheatre provides seating with views of the stage area/viewing platform and the river. This whole space is an extension and enhancement of the existing trailhead. Terracing to prevent erosion and enable the state trail to climb the steep bluff at a safe grade is needed. Plenty of parking, including handicap parking, serves this area as well as the Lutheran Services building. Fifteen-foot wide walkways connect the trail to the pedestrian crosswalks enabling visitors to make their way into the historic town center of Redwood Falls. Extra parking for the trailhead on the south side of Bridge Street provides an additional link between the downtown and the trailhead space. This lot is large enough to host festivals and a farmers’ market. By bringing more trees into this area, a welcoming pedestrian realm is created. The progression of these spaces, vegetation, and walkways connect the Redwood River Gorge to the town center.
TRIBUTARY TRAILHEAD DESIGNS

Town Center Trailhead Design:
This design supports the town center while providing a strengthened connection to the Redwood River Gorge. Located on the corner of Washington Street and 2nd Street, the trailhead also provides a community gathering place/plaza within the town center. The oval-shaped plaza is framed with a seat wall, benches, and plantings. The rounded form of the new trail center references the architecture of the old armory building. This trail center would have the Chamber of Commerce, tourist information, and restrooms. A curved arbor acts as a screen between the plaza and the trail center. Bicycle parking is incorporated into the design. The municipal parking lot would provide parking for trailhead users and is large enough for festivals and a farmers’ market. Overflow parking is located across Bridge Street next to the existing trailhead structure. A 15-foot walkway extends from the trailhead and runs alongside the main trailhead parking lot. At Bridge Street, the 15-foot walkway becomes a 15-foot crosswalk paved with the walkway pavers. The contrast in color and texture from the road surface adds to pedestrian safety and contributes to the visual connection between the town center and the Redwood River scenic overlook. Street tree plantings are added on Bridge Street and Washington Street to bring the vegetation found along the river into the town center. In this design the Minnesota River Trail would be located alongside Bridge Street and the Casey Jones Trail would be located on Washington Street. They would meet at the trailhead.
TOWN CENTER TRAILHEAD DESIGN