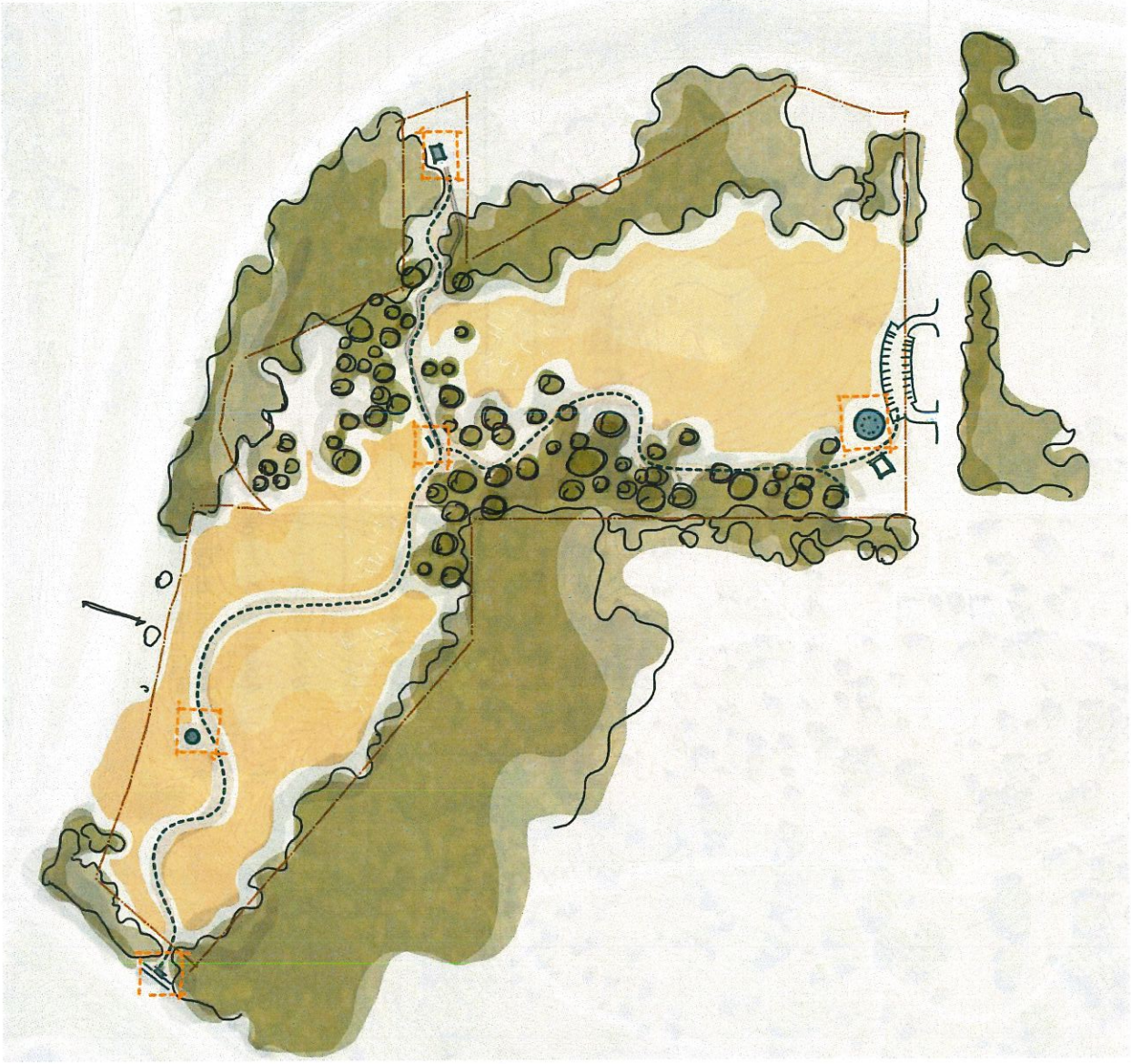
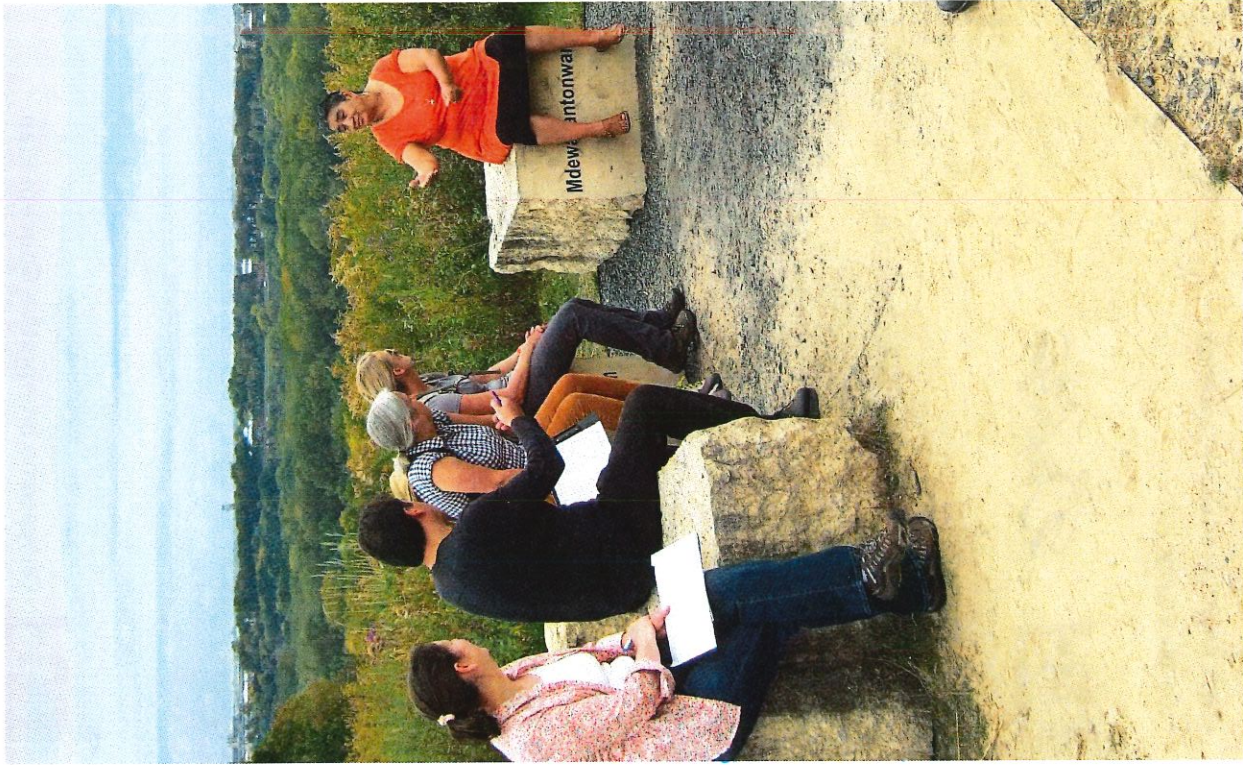




Oheyawahi Interpretive Concept Plan

April 30, 2024

Acknowledgements

Full Circle Indigenous Planning and Design, the City of Mendota Heights, Dakota County, and the Pilot Knob Preservation Association gratefully acknowledge the community contributions to the content of the Oheyawahi/Pilot Knob Interpretation Concepts Plan.

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- City of Mendota Heights
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- Dakota County



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A Dakota Advisory Group of elders, teachers, and leaders who have provided insight and guidance



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....3

Interpretive Framework.....7

Design Guidelines10

Site Experience13

Nodes.....17

Website, Brochure, and Programming35

Appendix A: Implementation Schedule.....37

Appendix B: Oheyawahi: A Sacred Dakota Place Interpretive Plan (2022).....47

PROJECT UNDERSTANDING

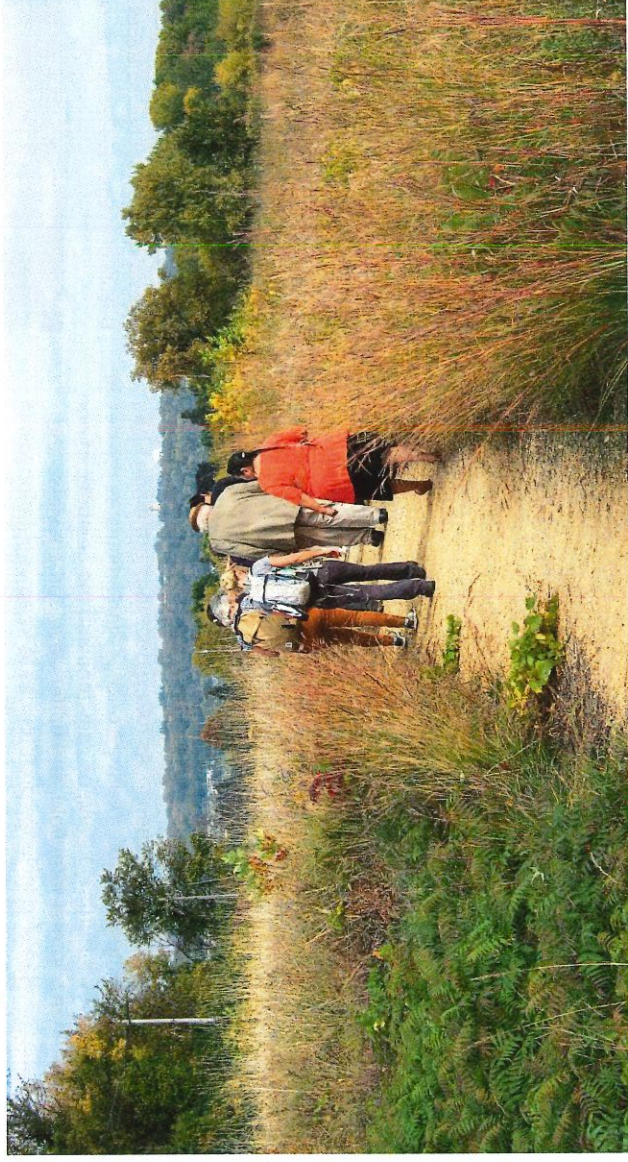
Oheyawahi, also known as Oheyawahe, is a sacred place in Dakota homeland and part of a constellation of culturally significant sites in the Bdote area—where the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers come together. For millennia Dakota people have buried relatives here and continue to find connection even as the site has been deeply impacted. Dakota place names are descriptive and Dakota language is embedded in this place. For consistency, because there are different names for this sacred site, this plan will use "Oheyawahi" throughout.

Oheyawahi means "I have come here to pray"

Oheyawahe means "the hill much visited" and "a place where people go for burial practices"

This site has also become a place for non-Dakota people to learn about the relationship between Dakota people and their homeland and Oheyawahi and its connections to the larger Bdote landscape. Oheyawahi is a special place of power and it is important that all visitors understand how to engage with the land respectfully. Oheyawahi is not a park or a recreational area, but a place of deep meaning where the relationship between people and ancestors is memorialized.

This Interpretive Concept Plan seeks to continue meaningful engagement with Dakota people and build on previous work to help shape the experience of this place. The concepts are intended to guide the ways that people respectfully engage, learn, and listen to all that the land has to say.

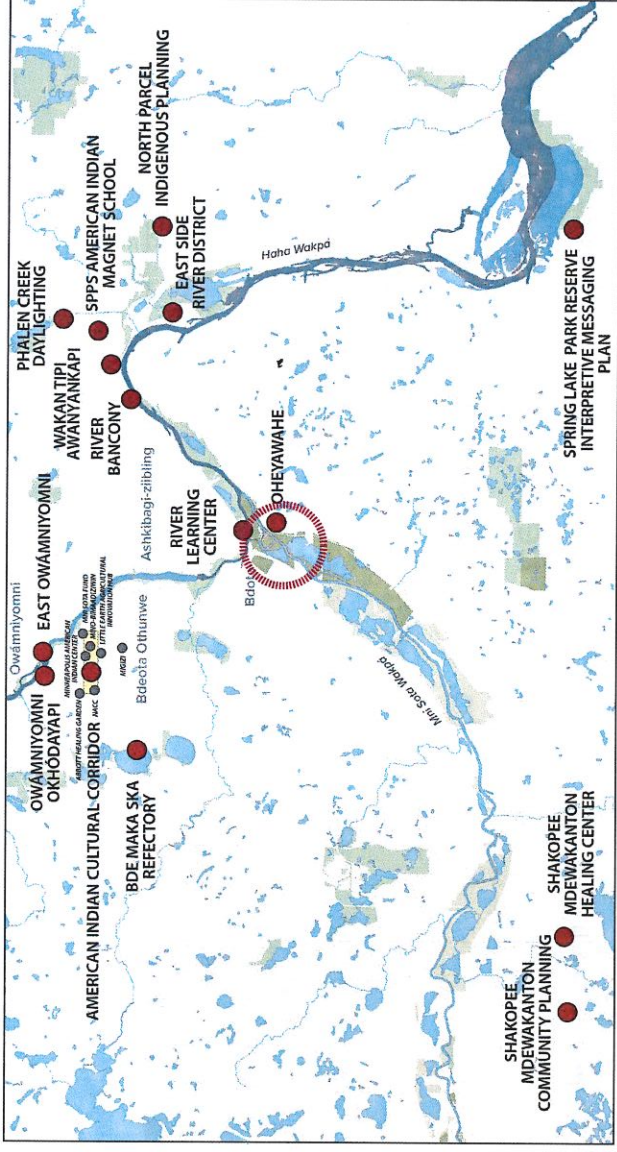


Oheyawahi is a place of deep meaning. People's experience should be about seeing, listening to, and experiencing the land. Any physical structures added to the site, whether for visitor comfort or information, should be minimal and light on the land.

Regional Context and Long-Range Conceptual Planning for the Site

Care for a place is never complete and the interpretive work, while distinct, is part of a larger and ongoing effort. Work done with previous plans informs this Interpretive Concept Plan but is also revisited and modified as needed. As efforts to make Oheyawahi known and protected continue, the changing context and new experiences will lead to new conversations, needs, and understanding. With all future planning, it may be helpful to review the detailed notes and discussions from the Concept design effort. Ways in which this Interpretive Concept may interact with future plans include:

- **Future Site and Interpretive Design at Oheyawahi** – If possible, a joint or simultaneous process for more detailed site and interpretive design will help ensure that these processes are in alignment. This Concept Plan document contains general and node specific site design guidance such as grading, planting, and pathway recommendations. Being “light on the land” has been a throughline message from the Interpretive Plan through this Concept Plan effort.
- **Oheyawahi land management** – As future decisions are made about land management, the Interpretive Concept Plan articulates the desire to open views, nurture a living oak savanna and the aesthetic of one, rather than a former farm field, and buffer development views and noise. The plan also includes preferences to keep vegetation low in areas to help people feel safe.
- **Valencour Circle** – The continued engagement work provides information as to how the existing property at Valencour might support Dakota connection with Oheyawahi, both temporarily and with longer term plans for the garage building and site. An indoor shelter for ceremony, a place to hold programming and management equipment are two potential ways that this site entry point could develop into a functional space.
- **Bdote and other cultural sites** – Dakota leaders raised the idea of growing connections between Oheyawahi and other culturally important sites many times throughout this and previous processes. Interpretation at the constellation of sites in the Bdote area could help bridge physical barriers between the sites and encourage learners who visit Bdote to make the journey to Oheyawahi, and vice versa.
- **Acacia Park Cemetery** – Any opportunity to manage the wooded area will help to soften the transition from woods to prairie, open views, and support the goals defined in this Interpretive Concept Plan.



Dakota sites throughout the Bdote area are engaged in a variety of planning efforts. Some are Dakota or Indigenous-led and all include engagement with Tribal community members.



Project Site Boundary National Register of Historic Places Site Boundary

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Previous Efforts

This site comprises both public and private land. A 112-acre site at Oheyawahi/Pilot Knob was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 2017. The City of Mendota Heights (City) owns a 28-acre area known as "Historic Pilot Knob," which is open for public visitation. This smaller site, which is the focus of this and previous planning efforts, currently includes a gravel parking lot and soft-surface trails that meander through a partially restored oak savanna and forested landscape. Current visitors include adults participating in sacred site tours, student groups (from elementary through college/university), and the general public. As more people visit, the minimal on-site interpretation isn't adequately preparing non-Indigenous people especially to behave appropriately at this sacred site. This plan builds on previous planning efforts: the Historic Landscape Plan (developed and submitted to the City in 2018, but not adopted) and the Interpretive Plan (2022).

Site Evolution

Oheyawahi is part of a much larger story across a broader area. It is important to learn more of this story, which is vast and complex and often painful. There are a breadth of materials and teachers, and Oheyawahi has become a frequently visited site for this learning process. While the information contained in this Concept Plan is only a part of the larger whole, this summary focuses on the evolution of the site itself and key milestones in its history.

Oheyawahi has been a place of great cultural importance overlooking the Bdote for millennia. Until 200 years ago the landscape was oak savanna with prairie plants and scattered oak groves.

1700s & 1800s

1700s: The first European traders and missionaries entered the area.

1805: A treaty is negotiated to transfer land and by the early 1800s plans were underway for a military fort. Fort Snelling was built in 1819-25.

1851: Oheyawahi (Pilot Knob) was the site of an important treaty where the US government took most of southern Minnesota from the Dakota.

1862-1863: Dakota people were held for the winter in a concentration camp below Fort Snelling. Many did not survive and some were buried at Oheyawahi. Later the US government forcibly removed most Dakota people from Minnesota.

1900s

1927: The top 20 feet of the knob was removed to develop the current Acacia Park Cemetery, which began as 35 acres and eventually covered 79 acres.

1900s: Much of Oheyawahi was used for homes, agriculture, and storage structures.



1970s and 1980s: The lower bluff of the site included a gas station and motel.

2000s

2002: The threat of housing development on the site prompted a reaction from Indigenous leaders and community members as well as many others who wished to preserve the site as a sacred area.

2003: Community members formed the Pilot Knob Preservation Association to advocate for the protection of Oheyawahi as a cultural resource.

2006: The City of Mendota Heights purchased approximately 8 acres of the site.

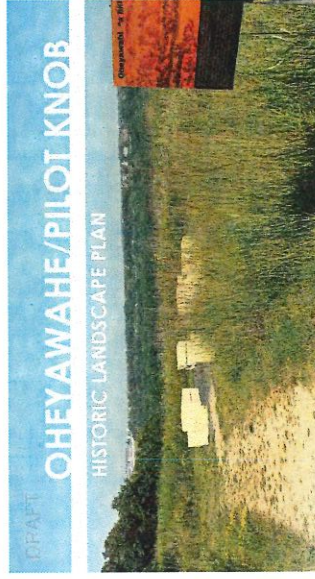
2007: The City of Mendota Heights and Dakota County hired Great River Greening to develop a natural resource management plan to restore the open space and develop the site for public access. Volunteers reseeded the land and planted oaks and other native plants.

2008: Acacia Park Cemetery sold 17 acres of the site to the City, resulting in the current 28-acre public space.

2015: With an easement from MnDOT on Highway 55, volunteers restored land within the right-of-way. The City supported the removal of buildings and buried utility lines and volunteers continue to care for the land to the present day.

2017: Oheyawahi/Pilot Knob is listed on the National Register of Historic Places due to the efforts of community members and agency support.

2018: The Draft Historic Landscape Plan summarized much of the site activity.



2022: The Oheyawahi Interpretive Plan built on previous research and continued Indigenous engagement to guide site development.

2023-Present: Work and learning continue at Oheyawahi with the initiation of the Interpretive Concept Plan, continued Indigenous engagement, and many people and tour groups experiencing the site.

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process for this Interpretive Concept Plan continues a collaborative approach between the Dakota Advisory Group, Pilot Knob Preservation Association, City of Mendota Heights, Dakota County, and the consultant team. As with the previous planning effort, the project partners formed a Task Force to guide project progress, and site planning and development. The Task Force met with the consultant team monthly to advance the site design and on-site visitor experience. Early concepts were used to guide conversations with a range of Dakota people who had previous experience at the site and have been involved in previous planning; many had also been involved at other Dakota sites in the Bdote area, which provided a broader consideration of the messaging and site experience here as related to other nearby sites.

August-October 2023

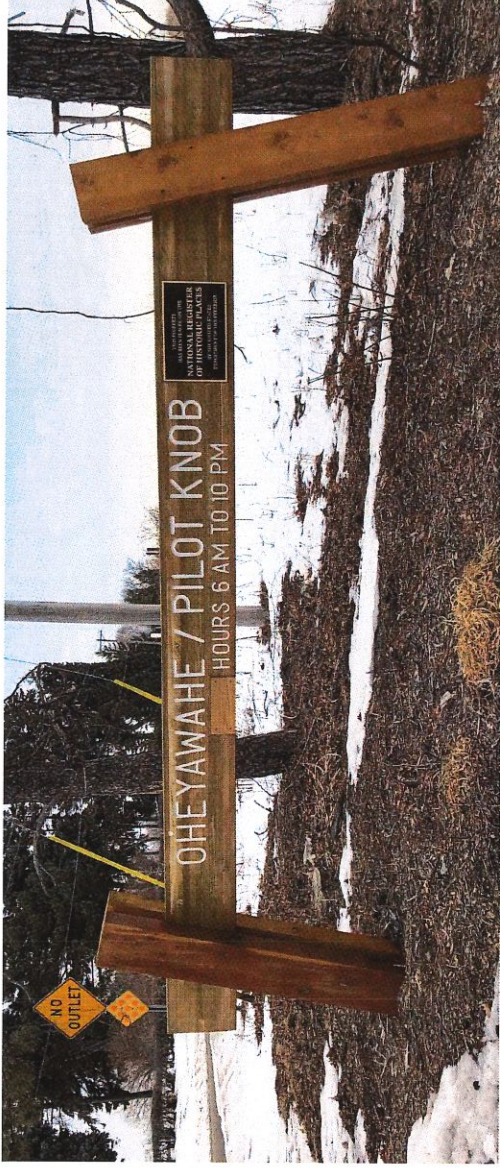
Three on-site meetings brought the project team up to speed by reviewing previous plans, discussing the site experience, revisiting Dakota values that guide the development of the site, and reviewing the types of audiences that visit the site.

November 2023-January 2024

The consultant team developed multiple concepts for six previously identified site locations: three entry locations and three interior locations. The Task Force, supported by the consultant team, led additional outreach to Dakota people beyond the Advisory Group through virtual meetings. This outreach helped to refine the site experience, materials selection, and interpretive messaging. Task Force meetings were held virtually and digital materials provided for further review and consideration.

February-March 2024

The consultant team refined the concepts in response to feedback and prepared the plan document. Task Force meetings were held virtually and digital materials provided for further review and consideration.



Early signage and interpretive features identified Oheyawahi and provided touchpoints of learning and discussion. Many of these initial features are physically deteriorating and the current Concept process explored whether refurbishment or removal was appropriate.

The interpretive framework developed in the previous interpretive planning effort was reviewed and confirmed by project participants, noting refinement to the idea of "gathering."

Although people have gathered at Oheyawahi from time immemorial, it is important to understand that this is not a place for recreational gathering, but of coming together to honor relatives and ancestors. Additionally, engagement with Dakota people has guided the reduction of physical structures on the land, therefore, many of the messages will be delivered through digital and comparable media that does not have a significant presence on the landscape.

The following was originally included in the Interpretive Plan (2022) and is included here for easy reference. The full plan is included in Appendix B.

MISSION AND VISION

Mission

What does Oheyawahi do? What is its purpose? (practical, focused; present and ongoing)

Oheyawahi is a sacred place. Here people greet each other as relatives, connecting with plants, animals, land, air, sky, and each other. This place is Dakota Homeland. People of many cultures come here now. Dakota people, the City of Mendota Heights, Pilot Knob Preservation Association (PKPA), and Dakota County care for this sacred land, guided by Indigenous knowledge and values, and mindful of its importance in cultural identity, history, and education.

Vision

What do we aspire to bring into being? (aspirational, expansive, and future-oriented)

Oheyawahi is a culturally meaningful Dakota place—one among a constellation of Dakota sites around Bdote. People come together here to care for the land, share perspectives and authentic stories, and learn from the land and one another.

GOALS FOR INTERPRETATION

What will visitors to the site sense and understand as a result of their experience at Ohewawahi?
All visitors will...

- feel rejuvenated and connected with the land and landscape;
- understand and appreciate that this is a historically rich, sacred Dakota place;
- learn from the land and through sensory experience;
- have opportunities to participate in stewardship activities; and
- want to return to and share memorable experiences of Ohewawahi.

PRINCIPLES

Principles define a set of basic, foundational assumptions that guide interpretation at Ohewawahi. These principles are the foundation upon which the Interpretive Plan is built and should inform future interpretive development at the site. These principles also guide programming, exhibits, and other interpretive media at the site.

Interpretation at Ohewawahi will...

- share the authentic history of the site centering Indigenous voices;
- foster learning and contemplation;
- convey factual information;
- link tangible resources, such as plants and animals, to intangible concepts, such as family, joy/suffering, and birth/death;
- be accessible physically, cognitively, and culturally, to the greatest extent feasible;
- accommodate multiple learning styles and present information in easy-to-understand terms; and
- nurture restoration of historical, cultural, and natural resources.

Site development will...

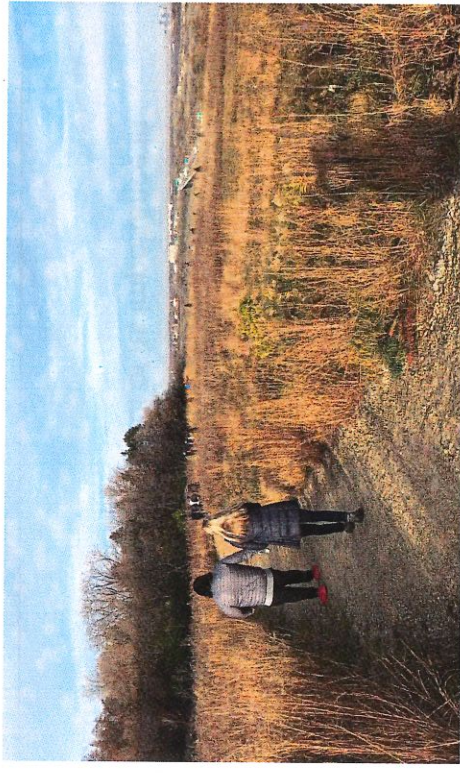
- concentrate development in entrance areas in order to minimize impacts on the land and preserve the historic character of the land and views;
- be environmentally friendly and consistent with the Natural Resources Management Plan; and
- place elements carefully so that burials are not disrupted.

AUDIENCES

Generally, all audience groups need accessible, well-maintained trails and basic site amenities such as public restrooms and drinking water.

The primary audiences to consider for interpretation and interpretive programs are:

- Dakota people from communities throughout their traditional lands, which include Minnesota and places that extend beyond the borders established for Minnesota, such as Crow Creek, Santee, Sisseton, and Spirit Lake
- Ojibwe, Ho-Chunk, and other regional Indigenous people
- Local and regional residents and visitors
- Educational groups (elementary, middle school, high school, college/university)
- Groups of adults (teachers, religious groups) on sacred site visits
- Historians, birders, nature enthusiasts, artists, photographers
- Big Rivers Regional Trail users
- Environmental professionals, students, and managers



INTERPRETIVE MESSAGING

Interpretation is storytelling. More specifically, interpretation at Oheyawahi means conveying the authentic nature of the place to the people who go there. It is about setting context and connecting people emotionally and intellectually to this place, its stories, and each other.

The main message is the core concept that visitors should take away from their experience at Oheyawahi. Themes provide organizational structure and clarity to the messages that visitors encounter when they visit a site. A theme is different from a topic in that it expresses a complete idea or message. A theme should answer the question, "So what?" It should tell visitors why a specific topic is important.

Main Message

This is a sacred Dakota place where people, especially young people, have the opportunity to learn on their own, to experience the land as their teacher, and to connect with the land.

Themes

Gather & Honor

This Dakota place has many names that describe Oheyawahi as a place to gather as relatives, and to honor ancestors, plant and animal relatives, and the stars.

Connect & Belong

At this sacred place, we connect with everything living in a full circle that includes the land, water, and sky, people, plant and animal relatives, and the past and future.

Listen & Respect

Here, the land is the teacher of her story. Listen to what the land is saying and do what is good for the land.

Learn & Reflect

Ancient sea deposits formed the bedrock foundation of Oheyawahi, and glaciers carved the landscape, creating a unique topography that contributed to the site's importance in Dakota culture and in Minnesota state history.

DESIGN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Sense of Arrival

Providing a sense of arrival that lets visitors know Oheyawahi is a highly important place for Dakota and Indigenous people. Consideration should be given to how visitors arrive, what visually welcomes them, and where they land for orientation and transition.

Dakota Identity

Providing a clear sense of Dakota identity and conveying that this is a sacred site to be cared for and respected. This communication can be done through signage, plantings, or other cultural elements and use.

Culturally Informed Site Planning

Organizing the site to provide for multiple experiences. Individual and community gatherings for Dakota, Indigenous, and non-Indigenous visitors to each learn and experience Oheyawahi or participate in cultural activities privately or as a group. Areas are established for human use and most areas are reserved primarily for plants and animals.

Cultural Authenticity, Equity, and Inclusion

As an important cultural place for the Dakota and other Indigenous people, this can be a place that is designed by the Indigenous community, where art and cultural elements are authentic and created by Dakota community members, and where Dakota community members can lead ongoing care and maintenance.

Regenerative and Restorative Site Design

Build only what is needed, and design to heal and restore the landscape.

Inclusive Design

Provide adequate site amenities (water, shade, restroom facilities, and accessible trails) so that visitors of all ages and all physical abilities can safely and comfortably experience that site.

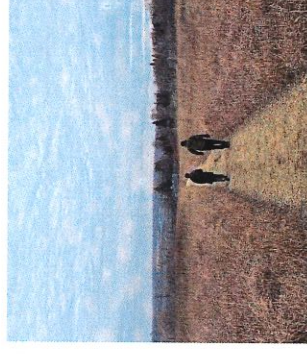
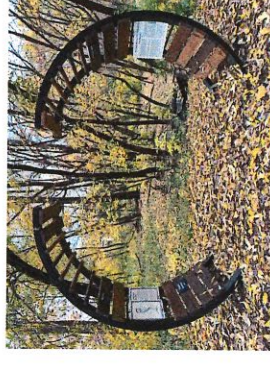
High Quality and Beautiful Design

The historic and cultural importance of this place calls for thoughtful, high-quality, and beautiful design with continued Indigenous community involvement and leadership. This can be an authentic and beautiful expression of Dakota culture and values and a demonstration of a commitment to restorative practices that convey our overall community's commitment to healing broken connections to landscape, to culture, and to each other.

DESIGN STYLE INSPIRATION



Backyard Reflections



COLOR PALETTE & TYPOGRAPHY

Paired with language and voice and physical form, color plays an important role in communicating the appropriate tone and message.

The color experiment to the right demonstrates where a palette for Oheyawahi interpretation could go. It supports the light on the land approach, with main soft earth tones paired sparingly with three saturated, vibrant tones, common in Dakota artwork.

Typography can have the same effect on tone and message. In the case of this site, Dakota language is at its heart. Therefore, a type family supportive of its orthography is necessary. Noto Sans and Noto Serif are often go-tos. Created by Google, they are the most universally compatible with the largest glyph and special character set available. They are geometric, legible, and approachable.

LANGUAGE AND VOICE

The Oheyawahi interpretation will speak with Dakota voices about Dakota people's connection to and care of this culturally significant place. Written and auditory messages will convey the sacredness of the site and the interrelationship of human, plant, and animal relatives here.

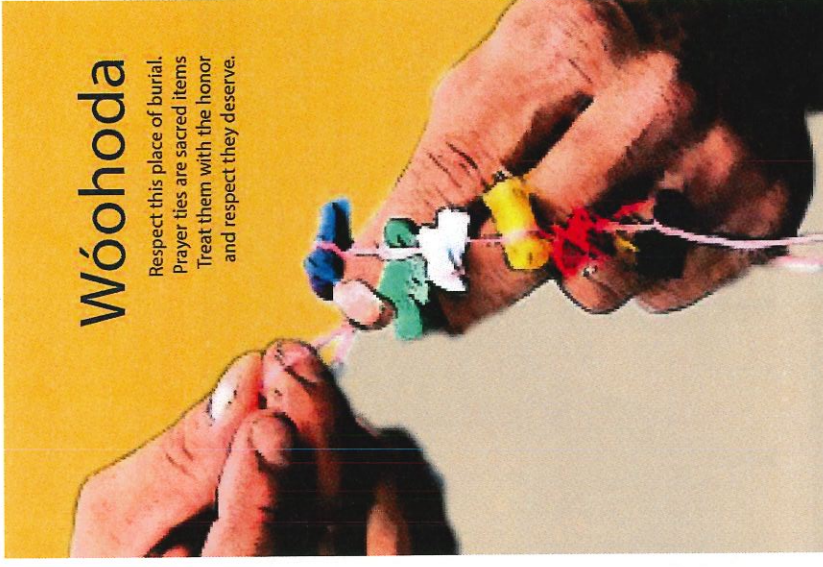
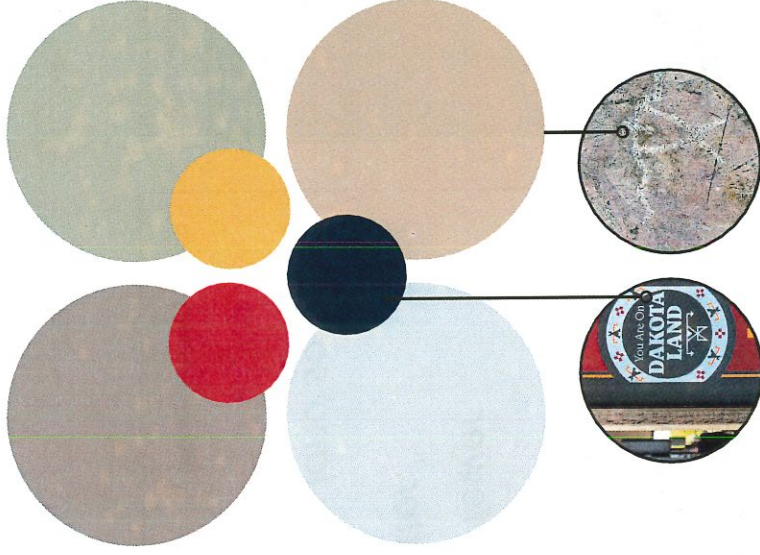
Overall, the interpretive elements communicate through form, material, color, and images more than through text. Some elements will have minimal text, while others have none at all. A few elements, specifically the "information stands," will lean on text to convey important information. There are also audio elements that help communicate messages and tell the story of Dakota relationships to this place.

All text is bilingual in Dakota and English. The Indigenous Advisory Committee will determine the Dakota dialect and orthography. One example is the Santee dialect and Minnesota orthography.

UNIFYING MOTIF

Any unifying motif would be developed in deep consultation with the Dakota Advisory Committee, which is comprised of knowledge keepers, elders, and other community members, in the next project design stage.

A unifying motif, such as a logo or site-specific, meaningful form, could be woven into site elements, interpretive media, and other communications. Providing a recognizable design element can provide a powerful visual message and reinforce connection and meaning throughout the site. The motif could be reflected in the site design, structures, and graphic design.



Wóohoda

Respect this place of burial.
Prayer ties are sacred items
Treat them with the honor
and respect they deserve.

Above is a graphic typical, which explores how text, imagery, and 2D design can come together to communicate a message. It is an example showing potential content, such as Dakota artwork and an etiquette message, **not actual text or graphics**.

SITE DESIGN AND MATERIALS

Specific guidance from Dakota Advisory Group and community members informs the Interpretive Concept Plan and applies to the future site design process.

- The land speaks at Oheyawahi and the site should be designed in a way that allows people to hear it. Signage should be minimal and as unobtrusive as possible; messages that involve more extensive description can be moved to digital or audio platforms. Signage, furnishings, and other elements should be low where they can blend with the prairie plants or be looked over easily.
- Oheyawahi is a place to relearn gentleness and reflect the quiet of the land. All development should generally be as light on the land as possible. Changes should be focused in a few areas with existing development, and use natural materials and light and simple structures. Changes should also seek to minimize or reduce the impact of structures outside of the site boundaries. Whenever possible, site development should avoid digging into the ground and should nurture vibrant Oak Savanna plantings rather than a manicured aesthetic.
- Oheyawahi should show what care for the land means. All initiatives should regenerate the land, connect disjointed habitat, reduce erosion and development impacts, and support a thriving ecosystem. To show respect, the site should also look healthy and well cared for and design decisions and management needs should be carefully coordinated. When selecting materials, consider impacts to the land and people through the lifecycle with an emphasis on local sourcing, reuse of adaptable materials, and materials that give back to the earth when their current purpose is complete.
- Oheyawahi should be a supportive place with places to rest, shade, restrooms, easy walking surfaces, and shelter. Community members noted that this support is what Dakota people do for each other and for all relatives. When people find their needs are met at the site, it makes it easier to listen and hear all that the site and people have to offer.

"Oheyawahi is a hidden gem, fewer additions to the site are better."

"What we do should be light on the land so we can hear the land speak."

Dakota Advisory Group



The precedent photos above show how projects in other locations have integrated messaging into the shapes and forms of natural materials.

SITE EXPERIENCE



Big Rivers Regional Trail Entry (Gather & Honor)

Purpose: To provide a transition area from the regional trail to the sacred site.

Seven Council Fires Overlook (Listen & Respect)

Purpose: To explain the meaning of the Seven Council Fires stones and to let people know that it's acceptable to sit on the stones.

Valencour Circle Entry (Connect & Belong)

Purpose: Welcome Indigenous, especially Dakota, people and provide a place to rebuild cultural presence at this site through education and potentially through ceremony.

Central Gathering Overlook (Listen & Respect)

Purpose: To provide a place to rest and reflect, and experience solitude and quiet, while also acknowledging that this area will be used occasionally for groups to gather.

Acacia & Valencour Corner (TBD)

Acacia Boulevard Entry

(Gather & Honor · Connect & Belong · Learn & Reflect)

Purpose: Landing and launching: This area has a sense of arrival and leaving the city behind. This is a place for school groups and tours to assemble.

The experience of Oheyawahi begins with discovering the site and the journey to arrive.

Through engagement, it became apparent that seeing the larger Bdote area and other prominent sites from Oheyawahi and seeing Oheyawahi from other places was important. Understanding these connections, not through a monument or sign, but through deeper, personal explorations or learning, is a key part of the overall site experience.

The arrival at Oheyawahi will vary, but for many people it involves navigating a complicated road and exit system that defines the current entry experience. To fully prepare to enter Oheyawahi, there should be a way for people to decompress by crafting a slower and gentler experience on Acacia Boulevard and all routes leading to the site. This place of transition should begin at each of the entrances, and future efforts can spread beyond the site property boundaries to the roads and bridges leading in.

Once at the edge of the property, each entrance to Oheyawahi should be identified as a place to walk in and not walk by. Many will discover Oheyawahi accidentally and their invitation, explored deeper in the following section, should encourage them to discover and learn respectfully.

The views from Oheyawahi show the vast corridors of the river valley and waterways. While the highways and bridges are also apparent, the goal of the interpretive work is to help people see beyond the development and colonization of the landscape.

The sounds of traffic, airplanes, and cemetery bells at times can disrupt an otherwise tranquil experience at Oheyawahi, but on windy days the power of the rushing air dramatically reduces much of the noise. Finding ways to minimize the sounds of development, particularly by buffering traffic noise, will help the voice of the land be heard.



Oheyawahi has multiple entry points and views into and out of the site.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE NARRATIVE

The visitor experience goes beyond encountering interpretive content. It encompasses orientation, safety, sensory experiences, and etiquette. It is important to consider multiple stages of people's visit to the site.

ARRIVAL

Visitors will arrive at Oheyawahi primarily by car or bicycle, with some arriving on foot. There are three entry points:

- From the Big Rivers Regional Trail
- Along Acacia Boulevard from Pilot Knob Road or Hwy 13
- Down Valencour Circle from Acacia Boulevard

When they arrive, visitors should feel safe, welcomed, and comfortable beginning their experience. They should also learn, if they don't know already, that this is a sacred Dakota site—a place where prayer and reflection are welcome. Orientation or wayfinding signage should let them know they have arrived at a sacred site, guide them into the site, and clarify what is appropriate behavior here. Visitors will need parking for bikes, scooters, motorcycles, and cars as well as bus parking and turnaround space for school and tour groups, noting that additional parking is available along Acacia Boulevard.



Acacia Boulevard Entry

Acacia Boulevard Entry

Visitors enter the site at its highest point here. The view is expansive. Beyond the site's tall grasses and wildflowers, shrubs and interspersed oak trees, an international airport, humming highway, and tall buildings remind visitors that this site is surrounded by concrete infrastructure. This place is a respite from that. At this entry point, drinking water and restroom facilities are available, and a small gathering area provides a meeting place and opportunity to pause, learn about the site, and then continue to the interior.

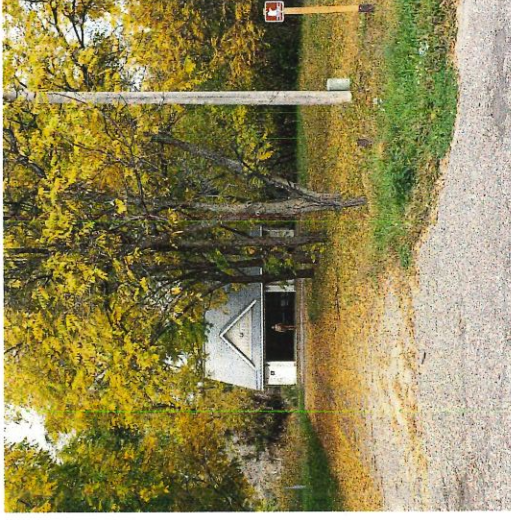
Most people will enter the site from Acacia Boulevard. The most immediate observation by many will be the noticeable difference between the open and naturalized landscape of Oheyawahi and the monuments and manicured landscape of Acacia Park Cemetery. Both are places of burial, but the physical and cultural differences are remarkable.

Valencour Circle Entry

Visitors enter the site at its most private point here. Surrounded by trees, this entry point feels sheltered and separate. This is a place to gather before walking through the small forest of trees that border the site and buffer it from adjacent highways.

Big Rivers Regional Trail Entry

Visitors enter the site at its lowest point here and the view is up. Tall grasses and wildflowers cover the hillside, which is bordered by trees that buffer the site from busy highways. Once bicycles are stowed, the climb is meandering and steep in places. The first plateau or clear stopping point is the Seven Council Fires Overlook. The trail, surrounded by restored prairie, continues at a gradual incline to the center of the site.



Valencour Circle Entry



Big Rivers Regional Trail Entry

ON-SITE

The on-site experience at Oheyawahi has several options. Some visitors will engage with only part of the site, while others will experience the whole site in one visit or will experience various parts of the site across multiple visits.

The on-site possibilities include:

- Engaging with the natural world
- Experiencing the sacred
- Experiencing the site in solitude
- Connecting with other people
- Connecting with plants and animals
- Learning about the site
- Participating in a program or activity

Another essential dimension of the Oheyawahi experience, especially for Dakota and other Indigenous people, will be traditional lifeway practices.

This Plan does not make any recommendations regarding ceremony, but site leadership could develop plans for these practices in consultation with spiritual leaders and cultural knowledge keepers.

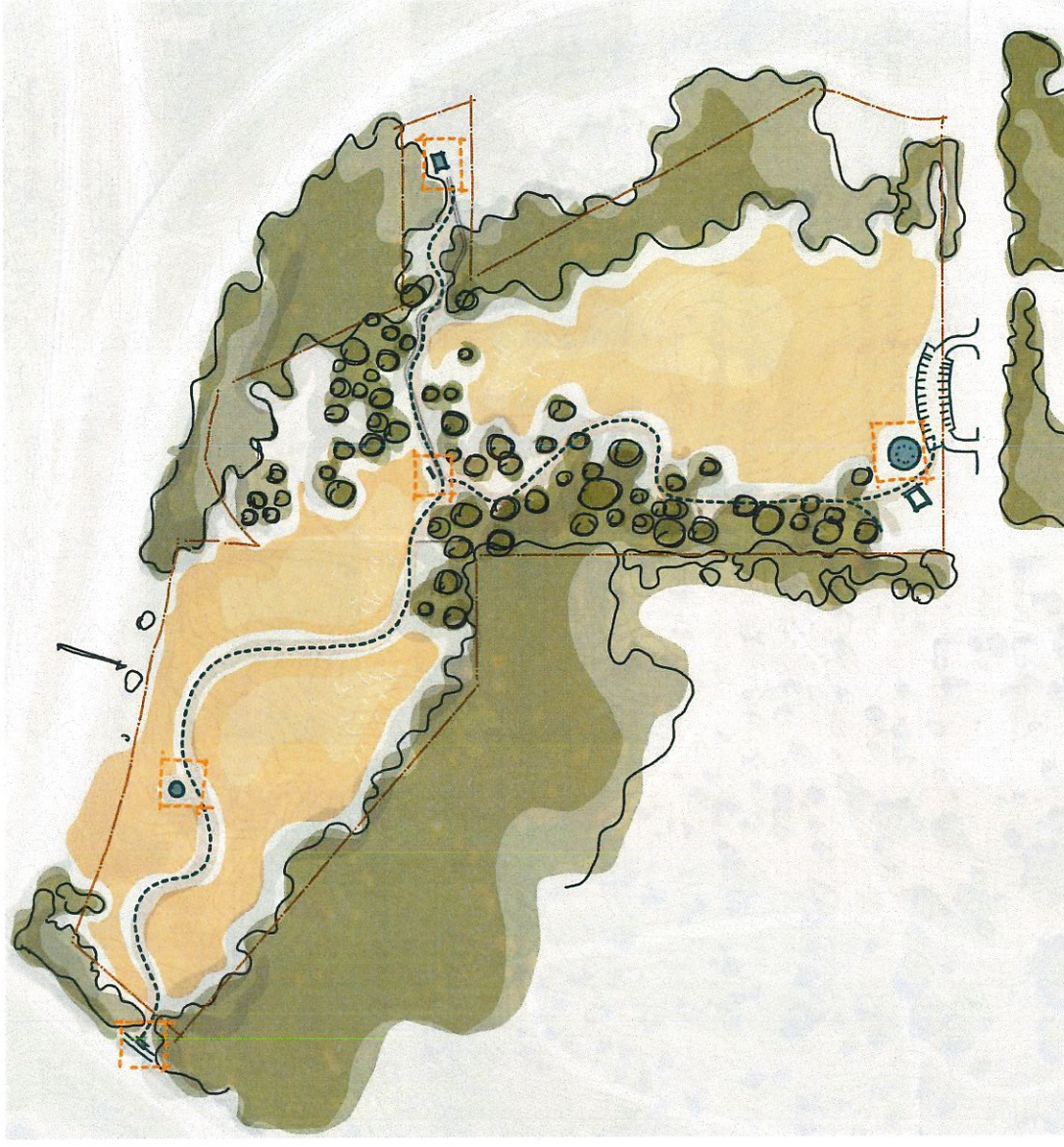
From whichever entry point, visitors will learn that this is a sacred Dakota site and understand that respectful behavior is appropriate. Moving into the site, trails weave through the landscape. Casual resting spots, mixed prairie and oak savanna landscapes, and dynamic views welcome reflection. The site changes seasonally, with plant and animal relatives moving through and responding to shifts in sunlight and temperature. Minimal signage and structures foster a direct connection with nature, letting the land speak for herself.



Seven Council Fires Overlook

Nodes are areas where visitors will “arrive” or “land” during their visit to Oheyawahi. At entry points, nodes provide site orientation and guidance about site etiquette. Nodes in the interior of the site provide logical places to pause and reflect.

With each subsequent planning process and ongoing engagement with Dakota community members, “light on the land” and “less is more” have repeatedly been the guidance especially related to signage and physical structures on the site. The interpretive messages at each node have been simplified to provide essential information to visitors specifically related to care and healing of the land. Other interpretive messages should be delivered digitally or through light-touch methods such as audio, programming, or a website. Throughout, the interpretation seeks to elevate Dakota- and Indigenous-created materials, including digital media, teaching curricula, and text and graphic content.



Softening the edge of the woods and adding scattered stands of oaks will reshape the proposed views and spaces at Oheyawahi over time.



Interpretive Themes

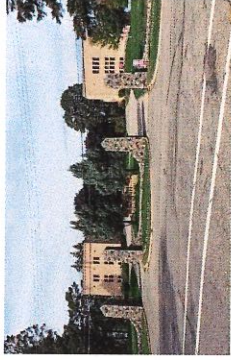
Gather & Honor
Connect & Belong
Learn & Reflect

Purpose

Landing and launching: This area has a sense of arrival and leaving the city behind. This is a place for school groups and tours to assemble.

Notes & Questions

- Structure can be part of storytelling.
- Manage stormwater with bioretention areas that enrich the sites habitat and work with the topography of the land.
- Not a picnic area or a dog park.



The view along Acacia Boulevard toward Acacia Park Cemetery.



The crosswalk from the dog park may give the impression that Ohewawahi can be used as an off-leash area for dogs; the entry messaging should clarify the pet/leash policy.



Dakota people expressed a desire for views into the openness of the Ohewawahi landscape to show that lack of structure is its own monumental message.

Elements

1. "Information Stand" with orientation and etiquette guidance for visitors

Description:

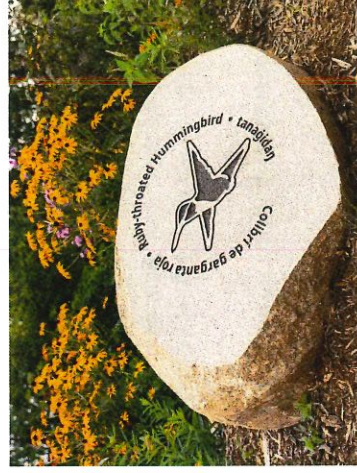
- Size and materials: TBD

Content Points & Interpretive Messages:

- Site description: This is not a "park." Oheyawahi is one of a constellation of sites near Bdote, the meeting of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers.
- Site orientation: Site/Trail Map
- Site Etiquette: Be a good relative and be a good guest. Oheyawahi is a Dakota sacred burial site, be respectful of our ancestors.
- Site Information: hours, policies (dogs, bikes, fires), site management information (e.g., site under surveillance, emergency contact information)
- Designation: Describe the role of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for site preservation.

Potential Graphics:

- Site map
- New art by Dakota artist, historic images (e.g., Eastman painting)
- Contemporary images



These precedent photos show how projects in other locations have used artistic signs to tell people about the site.

Site Design

Site design at the Acacia Blvd entrance should prepare people and groups to enter Oheyawahi and support the desired interpretive experience:

- Provide visitor support such as parking, restrooms, and seating before the visitor enters deep into the site. Do not use the restrooms for interpretation and locate on a spur off of the main trail. Provide frequent places to sit and rest, though not full benches, at convenient intervals along the trails.
- Provide a gathering area large enough for approximately 20 people, with seating for 10 in the shade. The gathering area should be located off of the main pathway to avoid disruption to discussions.
- Reduce the impact of development where possible by burying powerlines, and minimizing pavement and intrusion into the site. Manage stormwater with bioretention and other healing practices.
- Use curved and flowing lines for parking and pathways that help the developed areas disappear into the landscape. Meander and minimize the width of Pilot Knob Road where it extends beyond Acacia Blvd.
- Provide plantings along the road and cemetery edge to buffer adjacent land uses and focus views toward Oheyawahi. Vegetation should be low or scattered enough to avoid restricting views into the site or reducing a sense of safety and openness. Trees can be added that shade some visitor areas and still allow views to cars and trails.
- Interpretive elements can be integrated into paving, seating, and structures with minimal use of traditional signage.
- Provide small etiquette markers along the trails.

Elements (continued)

2. Map of the Bdote area with Dakota sacred sites identified (extent to be determined).

Description:

- Size and materials: TBD
- Could be created as a graphic background for interpretive signage

Content Points & Interpretive Messages:

- Potential map location labels (spelling and orthography to be determined): Oheyawahi, Wita Tanka, M/Bdote, Mniowe Sni, Owamniyomni, Wita Wanagi, Imnizaska, Wakan Tipi, In-Yan Sha, Taku Wakan Tipi

Potential Graphics:

- Dakota sites map

3. Small trailside etiquette reminders

Description:

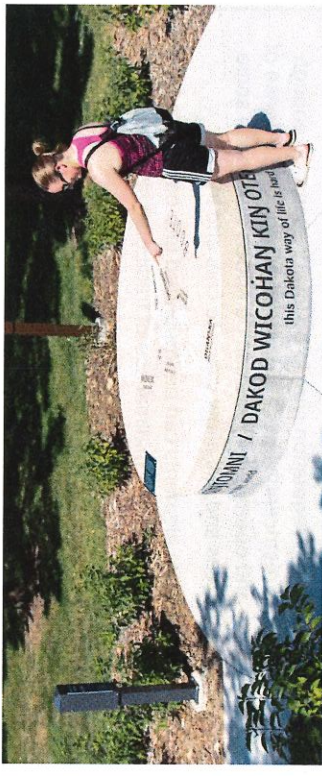
- Size and materials: TBD

Content Points & Interpretive Messages:

- Etiquette: "Woohoda" Respect this place of burial. Prayer ties are sacred items - treat them with the honor and respect they deserve.

Potential Graphics:

- New art by Dakota artist (for example, four sacred plants or prayer ties)

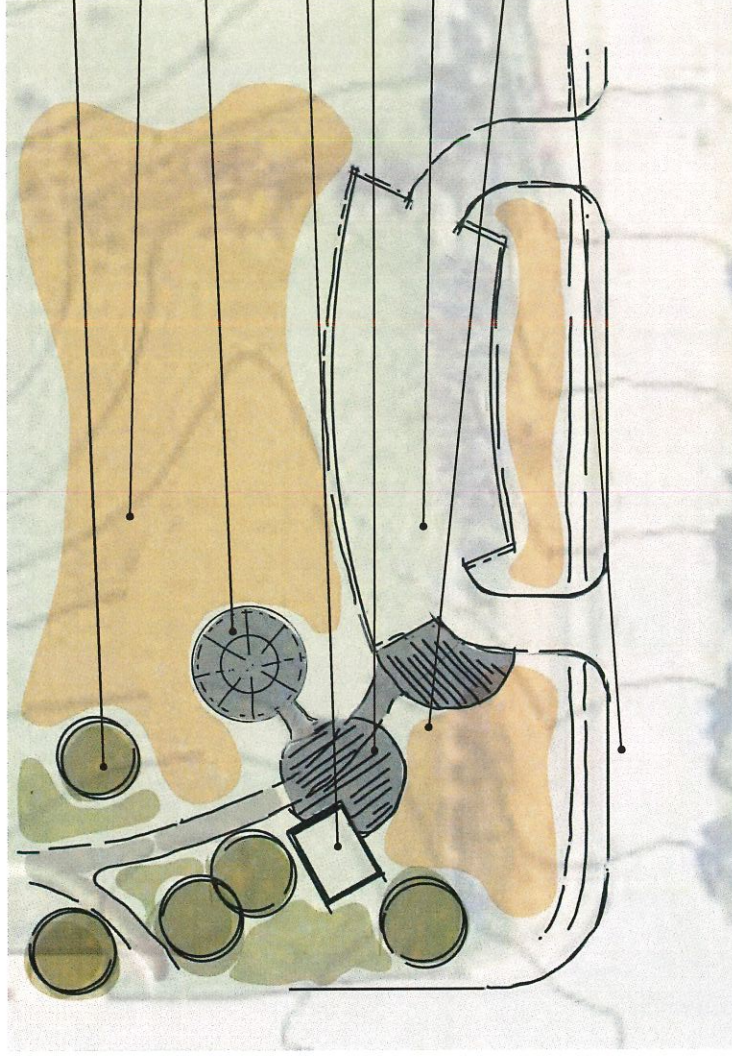


The precedent photo above shows how a project in another location showed the Bdote area with Dakota language. A comparable map could be a graphic image rather than a large, physical form.



These precedent photos show how projects in other locations have used small signs to tell people about the site, etiquette, and appropriate behavior.

01: ACACIA BLVD ENTRY



Native tree plantings to shape views

Open views of Oheyawahi

Gathering area to accommodate 20 -25 people and a minimum 10 people seated (appx 26' diameter shown seats 20-25 in two rows)

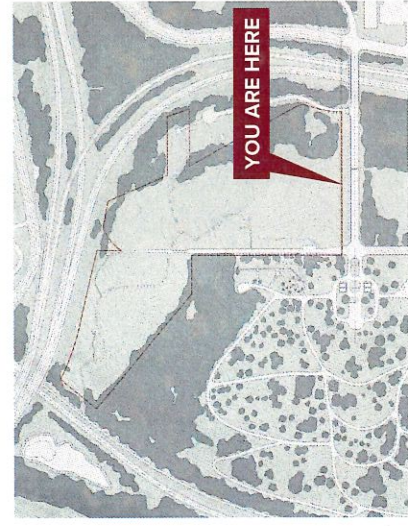
Restroom and visitor support area

Etiquette messaging location at trail intersection

Parking lot with two accessible stalls

Bioretention landscape with native plants

Bus loading area





Interpretive Themes

Connect & Belonging

Purpose

Welcome Indigenous, especially Dakota, people and provide a place to rebuild cultural presence at this site through education and potentially through ceremony.

Notes & Questions

- Developing the garage as a classroom space could provide additional interpretive opportunities related to cultural connections, reclaiming memories, and Indigenous care for the land.
- Developing a place for ceremony could foster connections to this site for Indigenous people.
- Consider refining the site information conveyed at this location, which is more private and specific to Indigenous people visiting the site.



The transition from the existing garage area to the woods is an important and secluded entrance to Oheyawahi.



The existing garage defines the entrance to the site from Valencour Circle. Although the current site still has a residential character, there is opportunity to create a distinct entrance on the property.



The eastern portion of the site has woods and mature trees. Although management would likely reduce the density of the undergrowth, there is an opportunity for interpretation to support seeing and hearing different life within the woods.

Elements

1. "Information Stand" with welcome messaging as well as orientation and site information

Description:

- Size and materials: TBD

Content Points & Interpretive Messages:

Welcome

- This is a place where Dakota people can have a sense of home—this is where Dakota people came from and where they belong.
- At this sacred place, we connect with everything living in a full circle that includes the land, water, and sky, people, plant and animal relatives, and the past and future.

Orientation and Site Information

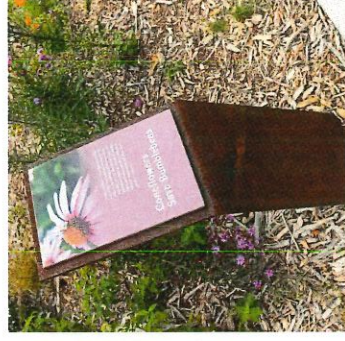
- Site description: This is not a "park." Oheyawahi is one of a constellation of sites near Bdote, the meeting of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers.
- Site orientation: Site/Trail Map
- Site Information: hours, policies (dogs, bikes, fires), site management information (site under surveillance, emergency contact information)

Potential Graphics:

- Site map
- New art by Dakota artist
- Contemporary images



These precedent photos show how projects in other locations have used artistic signs to tell people about the site.

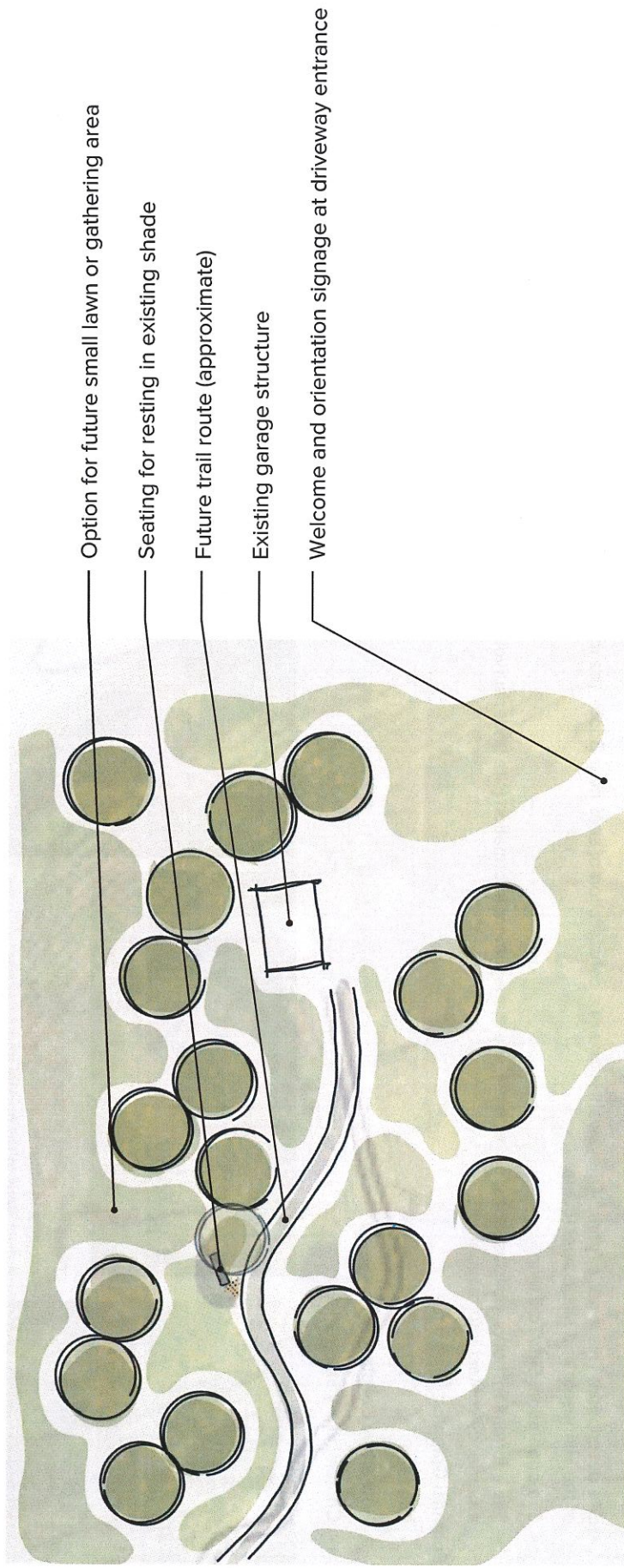


Site Design

Site design at the Valencour Circle Entrance involves minimal work as the entire area may change with property acquisitions and as long-term plans for the building and indoor space evolve.

- Provide limited seating in the woods to rest and reflect. Interpretive messaging should prepare people to respectfully enter the site.
- Consider that indoor space that is sheltered from noise may be used for ceremony at Oheyawahi. With future design, consider how visitors may respectfully interact with this space.
- Consider that an outdoor area may be used to recover cultural practices and explore the need and appropriate location with future design work.

02: VALENCOUR CIRCLE ENTRY



Interpretive Themes

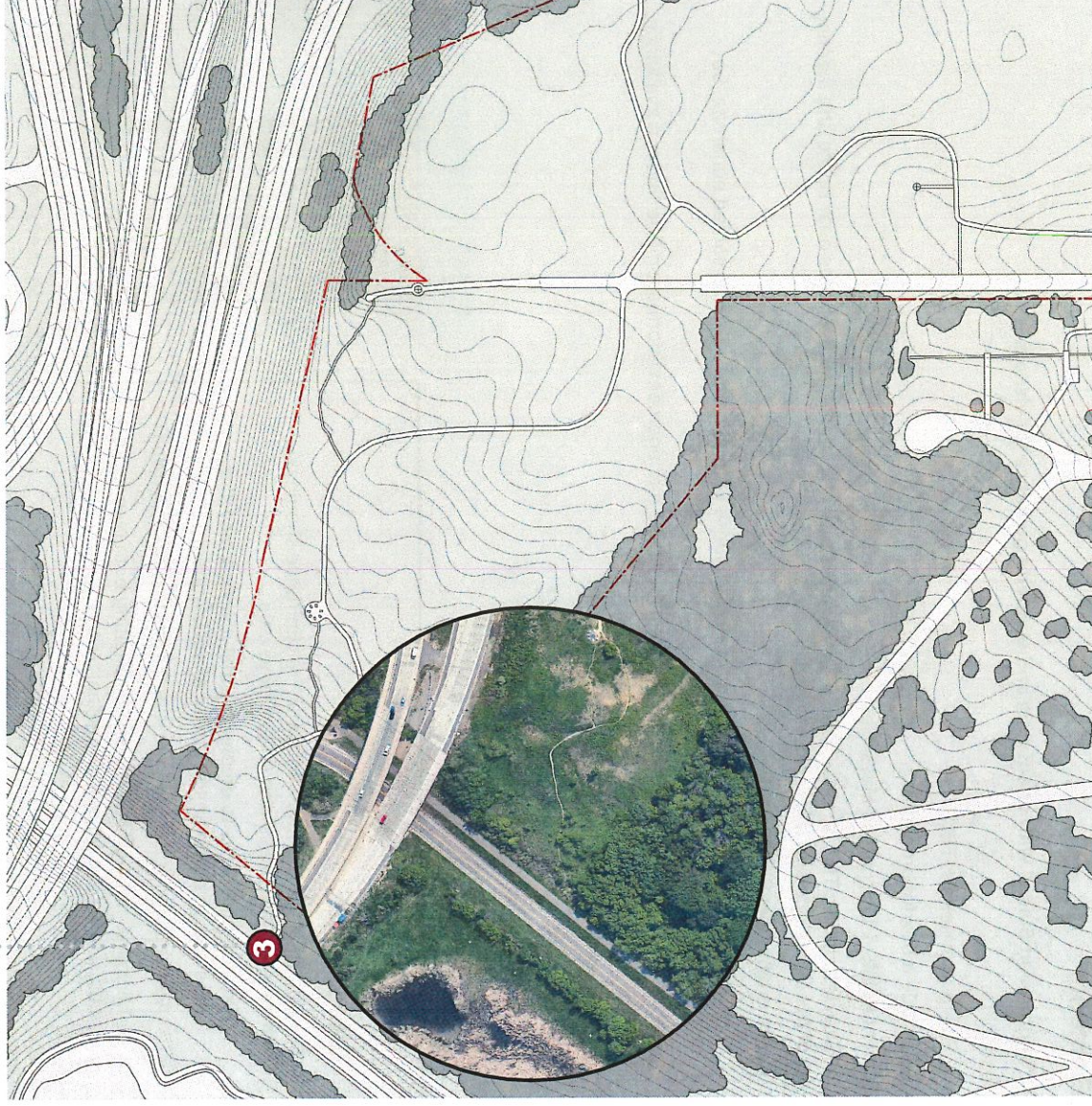
Gather & Honor

Purpose

To provide a transition area from the regional trail to the sacred site.

Notes & Questions

- Opportunity for teaching about the site. This location used to have a brochure box and 10 times more brochure were taken from this location compared to the Acacia Blvd. location.
- City is looking into whether a bridge to span the wetland/swale area is needed.



The existing connection at the Big River Regional Trail helps people find Oheyawahi, and light interpretation at this entrance can nurture respectful exploration.

Elements

1. "Information Stand" with orientation and etiquette guidance for visitors

Description:

- Size and materials: TBD
- Include a box for brochures

Content Points & Interpretive Messages:

- Site description: This is not a "park." Oheyawahi is one of a constellation of sites near Bdote, the meeting of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers.
- Site orientation: Site/Trail Map
- Site Etiquette: Be a good relative and be a good guest. Oheyawahi is a Dakota sacred burial site, be respectful of our ancestors.
- Site Information: hours, policies (dogs, bikes, fires), site management information (site under surveillance, emergency contact information)

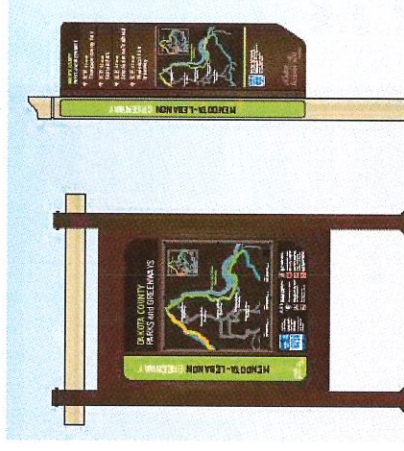
Potential Graphics:

- Site map
- New art by Dakota artist
- Contemporary images

Site Design

Site design at the Big River Regional Trail Entrance should cue pathway users to pause and enter Oheyawahi.

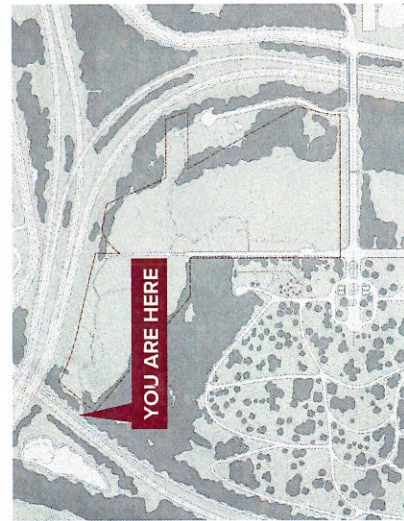
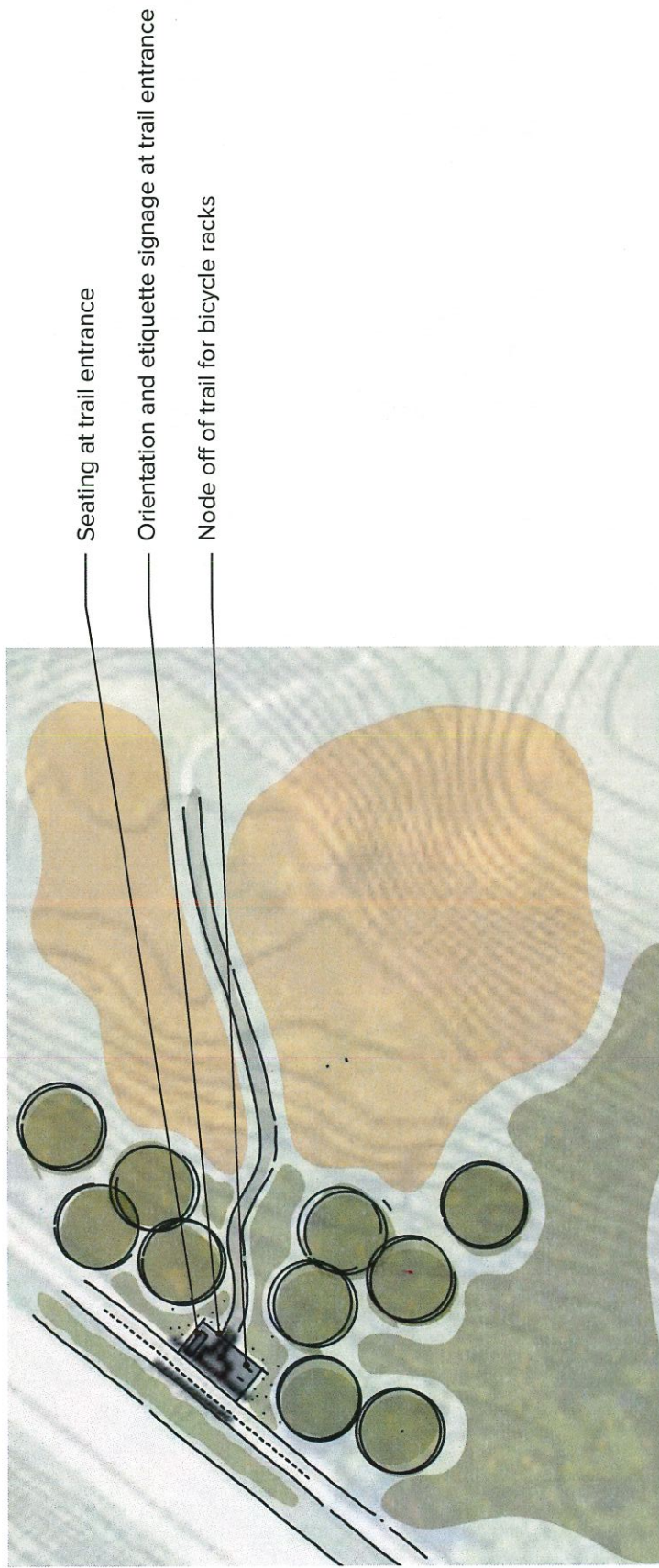
- Provide bike racks to emphasize that it's not a bicycling area and give people the option to secure them.
- Add seating for a place to rest and transition to Oheyawahi.
- Minimize intrusion into the site by locating both bike racks and seating just off of the regional trail.



These precedent photos show how Dakota County uses signs for orientation and safety information.

These precedent photos show how projects in other locations have used signs for orientation, safety information, and to tell people about the site.

03: BIG RIVERS REGIONAL TRAIL ENTRY





Interpretive Themes

Listen & Respect

Purpose

To provide a place to rest and reflect, and experience solitude and quiet, while also acknowledging that this area will be used occasionally for classroom groups to gather.

Notes & Questions

- N/A



The straight line and width of the existing roadway impacts the experience at this interior location.



At this node, people have traveled into the interior of Oheyawahi; the vastness of the landscape and views are found here.

Elements

1. Audio (solar-powered post or incorporated into the shade structure), messaging in Dakota and English.

Description:

- Size and materials: TBD

Content Points & Interpretive Messages:

- Here, the land is the teacher of her story. Listen to what the land is saying and do what is good for the land. Adaptive natural resource management practiced here listens to the land, respects past land use by Dakota people, and incorporates Dakota values.
- Plants and animals are relatives, not resources to be exploited.
- This is a Dakota place where Dakota people continue to care for the land and where the land management incorporates Dakota perspectives.

Potential Graphics:

- N/A

2. Shade structure incorporates interpretive messaging through design details and/or wrapped graphics

Description:

- Size and materials: TBD

Content Points & Interpretive Messages:

- Restoring the soils and vegetation to prairie and oak savanna provides healthy habitats for a diversity of native plants and animals. Since prairie restoration efforts began, the endangered rusty-patched bumble bee has returned
- Ohewawahi is an Important Bird Area in the Mississippi Flyway used by migrating birds for millennia.

Potential Graphics:

- Contemporary photos of birds, plant restoration, animals and insects

Site Design

Site design at the Central Gathering Overlook and trail intersection should allow people to stop, rest, sit, and contemplate comfortably while they look and listen to Ohewawahi.

- Connect the woods to the east and west with scattered oak and chokecherry plantings. These trees will connect habitat areas, reshape the views, and provide shade for the seating at this node.
- Provide some seating that is easy to access from the trail.
- Remove any utility infrastructure, if possible.
- Provide a small shade structure that could be removed when the surrounding trees mature and provide adequate shade for visitors at the seating area.

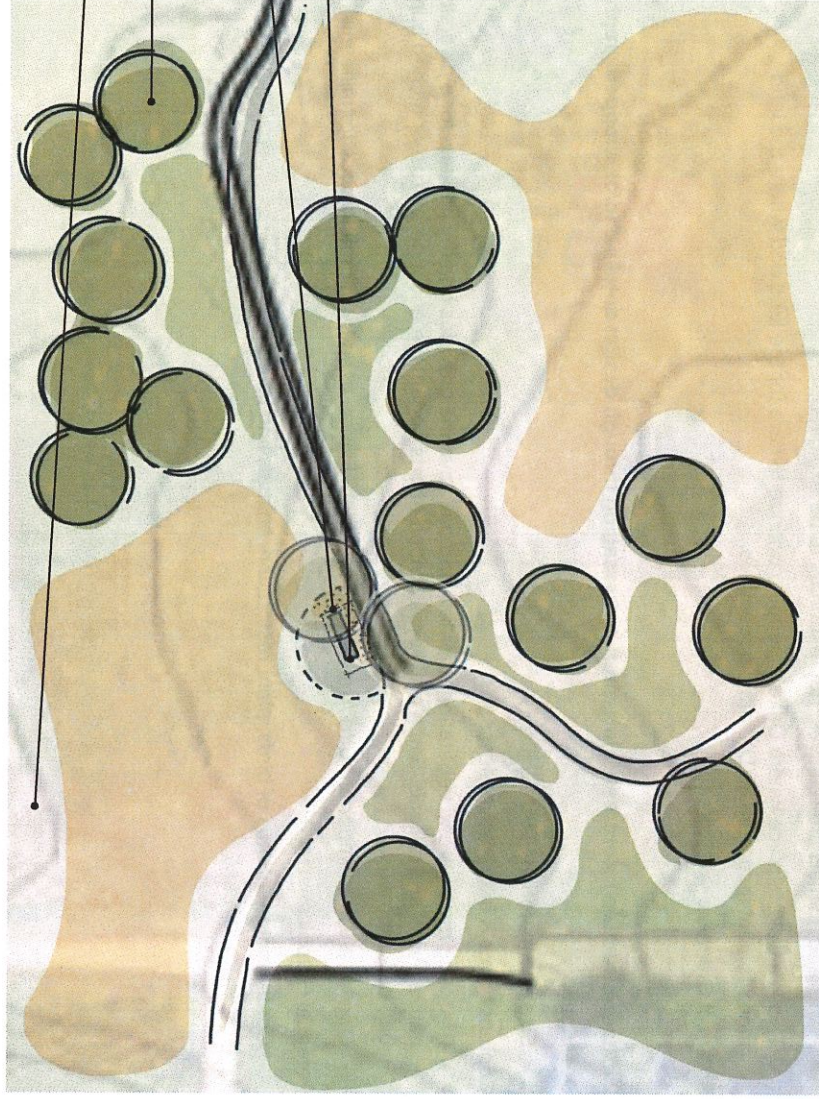


This precedent photo shows how a project in another location wrapped a graphic with site information around a structure support.



This precedent photo shows how a project in another location used audio to share information with visitors.

04: CENTRAL GATHERING OVERLOOK

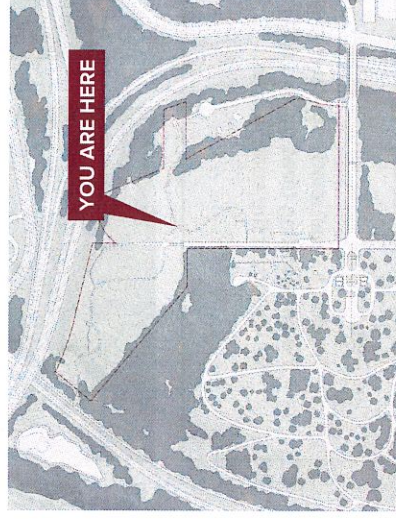


Open views maintained

Scattered oak stands with chokecherries or other native trees to connect habitat

Seating node off of trail intersection

Small shade structure with interpretation





Interpretive Themes

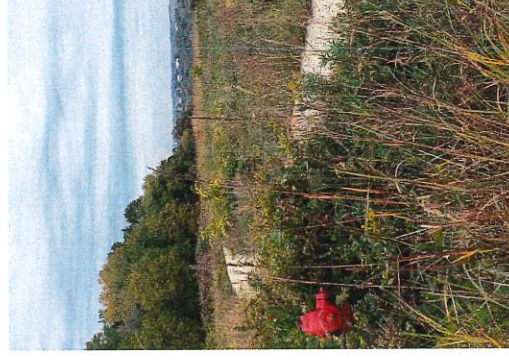
Listen & Respect (primary)

Purpose

To explain the meaning of the Seven Council Fires stones and to let people know that it's acceptable to sit on the stones.

Notes & Questions

- Order of the stones is an ongoing conversation (see graphic with the order and orientation below)



The intimate and meandering pathway nearly disappears in the prairie and allows viewers to see the valley below



The existing circle is in an open and sunny location, which allows for open viewing but visitors may also feel the heat and sun.

Elements

1. Audio (solar-powered post) or small sign with messaging in Dakota and English.

Description:

- Size and materials: TBD

Content Points & Interpretive Messages:

- The landscape is a relative with memory, providing ancient contexts and indicators to cultural understanding.
- This sculpture honors the Seven Council Fires of The Great Dakota Nation, which is comprised of three groups: Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota.
- Visitors are welcome to sit on the stones and reflect on what they see and hear and what they have learned at the site.

Potential Graphics:

- N/A



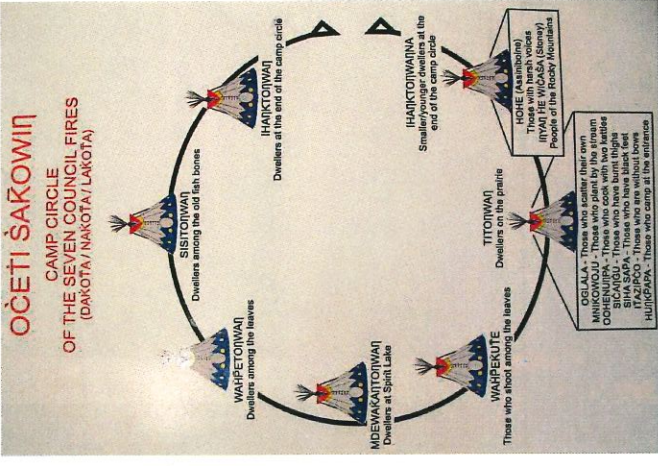
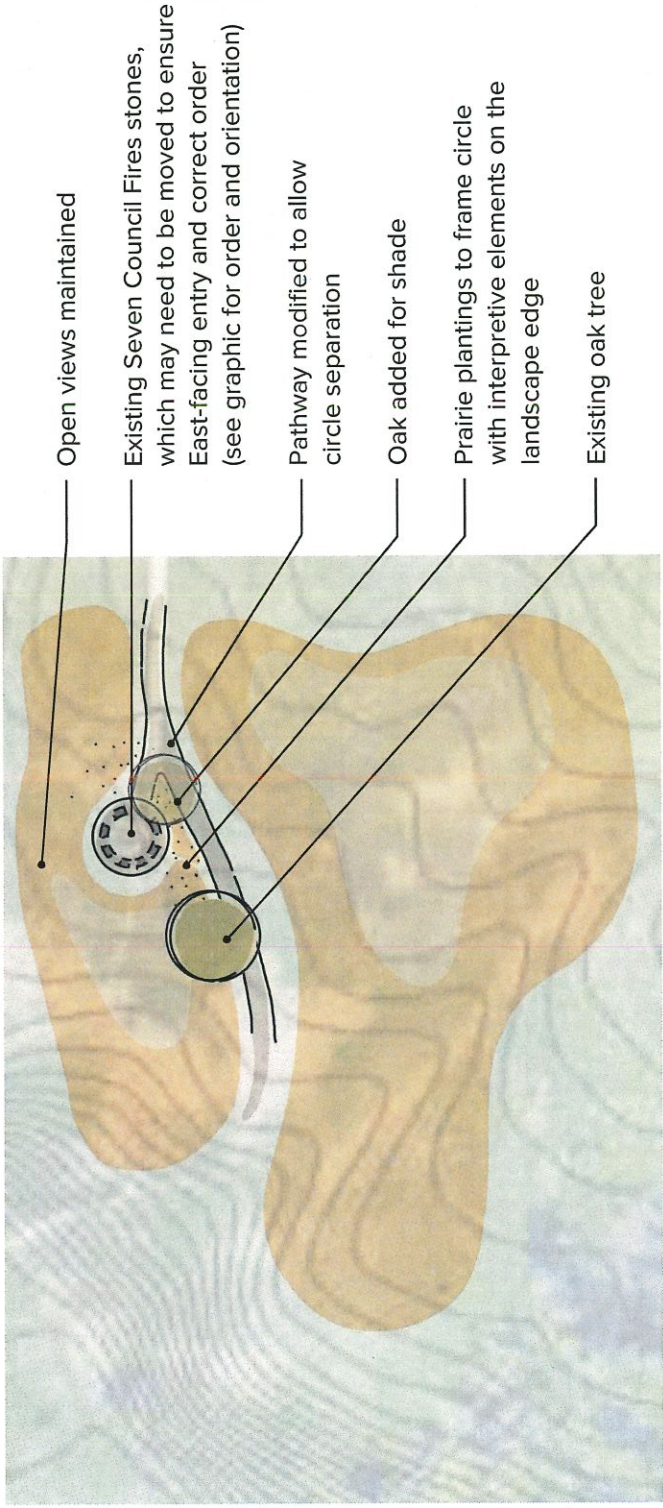
This precedent photos show how a project in another location used audio to share information with visitors.

Site Design

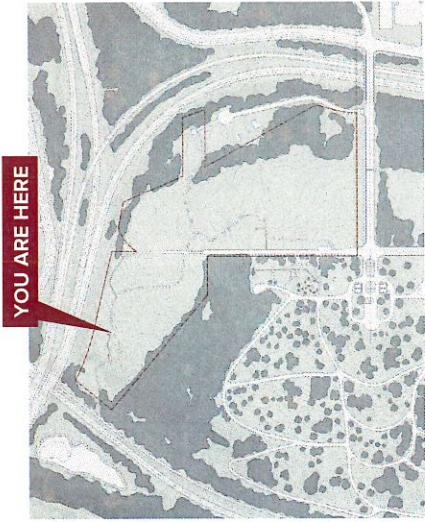
Site design at the Seven Council Fires should be minimal and allow people to openly view the river valley with little disturbance.

- Work with Dakota knowledge keepers for the correct order of the stones (see graphic on the next page).
- Adjust the trail away slightly to separate the existing circle.
- Enhance prairie plants around the circle so people are as close to the landscape as possible.
- Add one or more oak trees for shade while people are at the circle.
- Add chokecherries transitioning into the prairie from nearby woods.
- Ensure that visitors see the stones before seeing an unobtrusive audiopost or sign that explains the meaning of the Seven Council Fires stones and etiquette around the stones.

05: SEVEN COUNCIL FIRES OVERLOOK



The above shows the order and orientation of the stones.



Interpretive Themes

TBD

Purpose

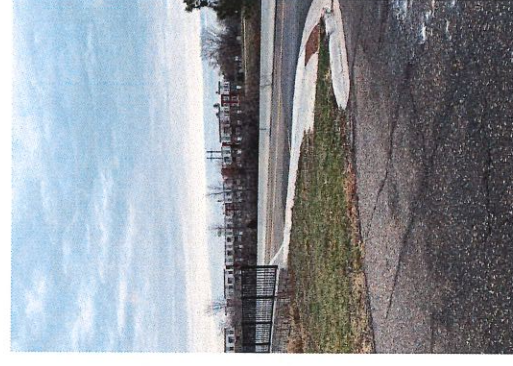
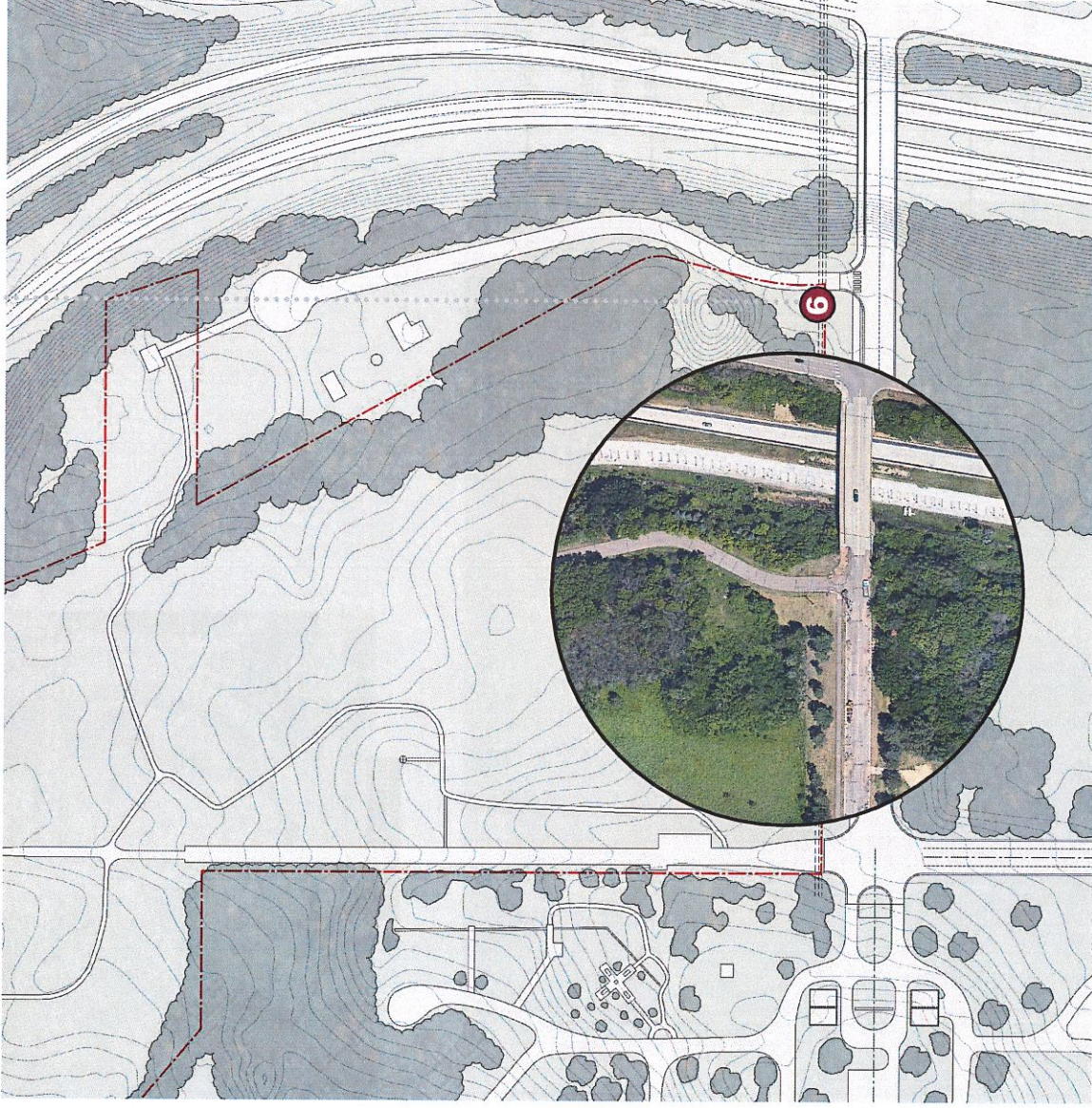
TBD

Notes & Questions

- TBD

Site Design

Site design is not proposed at the Acacia Blvd and Valencour Circle corner as this area may evolve with future acquisitions and plans for the building at the Valencour Circle entrance.



Interpretive Messaging

Over the course of the project, ongoing engagement and assessment of the types and quantity of physical interpretive elements on the site revealed the need for digital interpretation and other, less site intensive ways of conveying key messages to visitors. A website, accessed directly or potentially through QR codes, was determined to be a "light on the land" approach to convey all of the themes and messages established in the previous Interpretive Plan phase and confirmed through this project process.

The critical messages to be conveyed onsite were determined through engagement with Dakota tribal members, including elders and cultural knowledge keepers. Along with safety and orientation information, it is important for people to understand that this is a sacred site and respectful behavior is expected. Beyond that, onsite messages seek to put healing of the land and listening to the land as the core messages to visitors.

The project team is also assessing programming, educational curriculum, and the pocket brochure as additional ways of sharing the site stories. Subsequent project phases will address the distribution of themes and key messages through these additional approaches.

Website

A website will provide more in depth interpretation for all site themes and stories. Future projects will develop website organization and content development.

Considerations:

- Organize the website by theme or topic area
- Develop content in Dakota and English
- Include audio, video, and text content

1. Distribution of themes and storylines

Big Idea:	Message	On-site	Website
Theme	Gather & Honor	Acacia Entry, BRRT Entry	x
	This Dakota place has many names that describe Oheyawahi as a place to gather as relatives, and to honor ancestors, plant and animal relatives, and the stars.		x
	Honor Dakota ancestors and welcome future generations.		x
	Tie stories together, reclaim memories, be a good relative, and be a good guest.	Acacia Entry, BRRT Entry	x
	Dakota people are still here and come to Oheyawahi, which is a sacred site and a place of power.		x
	People of many cultures gather here now.		x
	This is not a "park." It is a sacred site and Dakota burial place. (Explore the meaning of a sacred site through questions, such as: What does a sacred site mean to non-Indigenous people? What is the difference between a "cemetery" and "burial site"?)	Acacia Entry, BRRT Entry	x
	From a Dakota perspective, plants, animals, and stars are relatives, not resources to be exploited.	Central Gathering	x
	Honor different ways of knowing and learning.		x
	There are various names for this place and different spellings for Oheyawahi. Share the multiple names for the site, discuss why there are various names and different spellings. Describe that Dakota place names are descriptive and that Dakota language is embedded in this place.		x
	Dakota names for Oheyawahi:		x
	Oheyawahi: "I have come here to say something (to pray)" (name and meaning provided by Glenn Wasicuna, Dakota elder, first language speaker, and Dakota language and cultural instructor).		x
	Oheyawahe: "A hill much visited," "a place where people go for burial practices" (name provided by Cantemaza Neil McKay, Senior Dakota language instructor, University of Minnesota, Dawi Cofer and resources Riggs and Durand cited in Appendix A).		x
	Wótakuye Paha: "In a pipe ceremony (Chris) Leith led with Chief Arvol Looking Horse on the north slope of the hill in March 2004, the hill was given a new name: Wótakuye Paha, "the hill of all the relatives." (p. 187, Mint Sota Makoce: The Land of the Dakota).		x
	Paha Opa "top of the hill" was another name that Chris Leith (1936-2011), a Dakota elder from the Prairie Island Indian Community, called the site.		x
	European settler names:		x
	Pilot Knob (a reference point for riverboat pilots)		x
	La Butte des Morts (Knoll of the Dead)		x

WEBSITE, BROCHURE, AND PROGRAMMING

Big Idea:	Message	On-site	Website
	This is a Dakota place of gathering where people, especially young people, have the opportunity to learn on their own, to experience the land as their teacher, and to connect with the land.	x	x
Theme	Connect & Belong	Acacia Entry, Valencour Entry	
	At this sacred place, we connect with everything living in a full circle that includes the land, water, and sky, people, plant and animal relatives, and the past and future.	Valencour Entry	x
	Ohewawahi is one of a constellation of Dakota sites near Bdote, the meeting of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers.	Acacia Entry, Valencour Entry	x
	Connect to the land through sensory experiences and stewardship activities.		x
Topics/Storylines	This is a place where Dakota people can have a sense of home – this is where Dakota people came from and where they belong.	Valencour Entry	
	Share a more complete history of the site, from different perspectives: Dakota, Ojibwe, and European settler history.		x
	Recognize the importance of this place to different people, including Dakota, non-Dakota, neighbors, historians, birders, artists, students, and teachers.		x
	Explain the Mississippi River Flyway and Lower Minnesota Valley Important Bird Area.		x
	The views to and from Ohewawahi have changed over time and can be used to tell the stories of Indigenous life and western settlement/colonization.		x
		Acacia Entry	
Theme	Learn & Reflect		x
	Ancient sea deposits formed the bedrock foundation of Ohewawahi, and glaciers carved the landscape, creating a unique topography that contributed to the site's importance in Dakota culture and in Minnesota state history.		
	The geological history of Ohewawahi can be read in its layers of bedrock.		x
	Glacial processes, such as the flow of the Glacial River Warren, carved the landscape we see today.		x
Topics/Storylines	Ohewawahi overlooks the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers and is part of Bdote, considered by many Dakota people as a sacred place of creation.		x
	The confluence of the great rivers was important in early state history.		x
	The Treaty of Mendota in 1851 was signed at Ohewawahi, forcing Dakota people from their homelands and opening much of Minnesota for European settlers.		x
	Describe the role of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for site preservation, explain why Ohewawahi qualified for listing, and identify other NRHP sites in the area.	Acacia Entry	x

Big Idea:	Message	On-site	Website
	This is a Dakota place of gathering where people, especially young people, have the opportunity to learn on their own, to experience the land as their teacher, and to connect with the land.	x	x
Theme	Listen & Respect	Central Gathering, 7 Council Fires	
	Here, the land is the teacher of her story. Listen to what the land is saying and do what is good for the land.	Central Gathering	x
	This is a place where the land is the teacher of the story. When we are here, we listen to what the land is saying and do what is good for the land.	Central Gathering	x
Topics/Storylines	This is a Dakota place where Dakota people continue to care for the land and where land management incorporates Dakota perspectives.	Central Gathering	x
	Adaptive land management listens to the land and uses techniques that respond to past and current conditions of the land, plants, and animals.	Central Gathering	
	Soils degraded by prior development, pesticides, fertilizers, and harmful airborne particulates can be restored to a healthy ecosystem.		
	Restoring the vegetation to a mosaic of prairie and oak savanna will provide healthy habitats for a diversity of native plants and animals, including birds using the Mississippi Flyway and the endangered rusty-patch bumble bee.	Central Gathering	x
	Indigenous and non-Indigenous land use and values have changed over time, including acknowledging the value of natural areas and spending time in nature.		x
	The site has been preserved as public land for public use. Explain what it means for Ohewawahi to be protected public land.		x
ADDED	When the land of Ohewawahi changed from private to public ownership, the views from the site were again available for all to experience. The preservation of this natural area as public land ensures its protection and accessibility for generations to come.		x
	Explain the meaning of the Seven Council Fires, and let visitors know they can sit on the stones.	7 Council Fires	x



Appendix A

Implementation Schedule

PHASING

Interpretive Concept Plan Priorities		Near-term 2025-2027	Long-term 2028-2030	Notes and Site Considerations
Website		x		
Pocket Brochure		x		Existing brochure may be updated independently of other interpretive
Program / Curriculum		x		Curriculum may be revised after initial site and interpretive improvements
General Site				
Etiquette reminders		x		Include resting points throughout the site as trails are developed and finalized Coordinate etiquette reminders with resting points Long term it may be possible to remove some or all of the etiquette reminders. The future design process should consider ease of moving or removal.
Acacia Blvd Entry				
Welcome and Orientation Information stand		x		Signage location must be coordinated with site design layout of trails, parking, and structures
Etiquette messaging		x		Shade and seating must be coordinated with site design, actual structures and
Gathering area w/ seating and shade structure		x		interpretive messages may be implemented with either interpretive or site project
Valencour Circle Entry				
Welcome and Orientation Information stand		x		Seating must be coordinated with trail layout, furnishing and interpretive messages may be implemented with interpretive or site project
Etiquette messaging		x		Landscape plans should be coordinated with interpretive messaging
Seating		x		
Interpretive updates with potential development of the space			x	
Big Rivers Regional Trail Entry				
Welcome and Orientation Information stand		x		Signage location may be implemented at current trail intersection but should be coordinated with site design of trail modifications, seating, and bike parking area
Etiquette messaging		x		
Seating		x		
Central Gathering Overlook				
Seating		x		Seating and shade should be coordinated with trail layout, interpretive messages may be implemented with interpretive or site project.
Small shade structure		x		It may be desirable to remove the shade structure once the trees offer shade. Determine appropriate longevity to design to or removal options with future design work.
Audio post or small sign		x		Audio post or sign placement should be coordinated with trail modifications and
Seven Council Fires				
Audio post or small sign		x		Audio post or sign placement should be coordinated with trail modifications and landscape
Acacia & Valencour Corner				
TBD				

PHASING

Interpretation Phases

Near-term improvements should be implemented as quickly as possible with an upcoming interpretation project
Long-term improvements need more discussion to determine the preferred development

Interpretive Phasing Priorities

Help visitors understand they are entering a sacred place as they arrive at Oheyawahe and ask them to respect the place and the people in it
Help visitors find more information about Oheyawahe and other culturally important places in the area
Help visitors immerse themselves at Oheyawahe, listen to the land, and experience this place

Site Improvements have been funded and a separate project is anticipated in 2024 - 2027. Several proposed improvements may be accomplished through either a further development of the interpretive work or the site design project. Close coordination between the two projects will be important for assuring that they work together cohesively.



POTENTIAL COST RANGES

The potential cost ranges provide insight into how general direction taken during the design process may impact both design and fabrication costs. Actual cost estimates must be developed with more detailed design and, given the potentially custom and unique nature of the interpretive elements, may vary widely.

Acacia Blvd Entry						
Item	Description	Quantity	Cost ranges and considerations			
			High Cost	Medium Cost	Low Cost	
Information Stand	Content development (Dakota and English text, graphics; schematic through final design)	1	\$6,000	\$5,000	\$4,000	
	Sign hardware (e.g., base structure, graphic panel) *Installation is additional	1	\$5,000	\$3,000	\$1,500	
	New, custom, Dakota-created artwork	1	\$4,000	\$2,000	\$500	
	Shade structure	1	\$125,000	\$75,000	\$20,000	
Seating	Located in gathering area	1	\$50,000	\$30,000	\$15,000	
Bdote Area Map	Content development; new, custom, Dakota-created artwork *a physical structure and installation are additional	1	\$5,000	\$4,000	\$2,000	
Etiquette Reminders	Content development (Dakota and English text, graphics; schematic through final design)	1	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,000	
	Sign hardware (e.g., base structure, graphic panel) *Installation is additional	5	\$1,000	\$500	\$250	
	New, custom, Dakota-created artwork	1	\$500	\$400	\$200	
Valencour Circle Entry						
Item	Description	Quantity	Cost ranges and considerations			
			High Cost	Medium Cost	Low Cost	
Information Stand	Content development (Dakota and English text, graphics; schematic through final design)	1	\$6,000	\$5,000	\$4,000	
	Sign hardware (e.g., base structure, graphic panel) *Installation is additional	1	\$5,000	\$3,000	\$1,500	
	New, custom, Dakota-created artwork	1	\$4,000	\$2,000	\$500	
	Seating for 2 - 6	1	\$6,500	\$4,000	\$3,000	



POTENTIAL COST RANGES

Big River Regional Trail Entry					
Item	Description	Quantity	Cost ranges and considerations		
			High Cost	Medium Cost	Low Cost
Information Stand	Content development (Dakota and English text, graphics; schematic through final design)	1	\$6,000	\$5,000	\$4,000
	Sign hardware (e.g., base structure, graphic panel) *installation is additional	1	\$5,000	\$3,000	\$1,500
	New, custom, Dakota-created artwork	1	\$4,000	\$2,000	\$500
Etiquette Reminders	Content development (Dakota and English text, graphics; schematic through final design)	1	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,000
	Sign hardware (e.g., base structure, graphic panel) *installation is additional	1	\$1,000	\$500	\$250
	New, custom, Dakota-created artwork	1	\$500	\$400	\$200
Seating	Seating for 2 - 6 people	1	\$6,500	\$4,000	\$3,000

Central Gathering Area					
Item	Description	Quantity	Cost ranges and considerations		
			High Cost	Medium Cost	Low Cost
Audio post	Content development (Dakota and English script, audio recording)	1	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$4,000
	Hardware *installation is additional	1	\$3,000	\$1,500	\$1,500
Small Sign	Content development (Dakota and English text, graphics; schematic through final design)	1	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,000
	Sign hardware N/A (attached to shade structure)	1	\$0	\$0	\$0
	New, custom, Dakota-created artwork	1	\$500	\$400	\$200
Shade Structure	Small shade structure to cover bench size seating area	1	\$25,000	\$15,000	\$8,000
Seating	Seating for 2 - 6 people	1	\$6,500	\$4,000	\$3,000

POTENTIAL COST RANGES

Seven Council Fires				
Item	Description	Quantity	Cost ranges and considerations	
			High Cost	Medium Cost
Small Sign or Audio Post	See Audio post or Etiquette reminders above for comparable costs *installation is additional	1	see above	see above
				see above

Cost Range Details

Information Stands	High cost option might include artist-designed graphics and sculptural signage
	Medium cost option might be metal, stone, or long-lasting wood signage
	Low cost option might be engraved wood or other material that involves limited production and is intended for about 10
Seating	High cost option might be artist-designed structure and fabricated from stone or metal
	Medium cost option might be custom-designed structure and fabricated from wood / metal / stone
	Low cost option might be a commercially available product or minimally modified log or stone
Gathering area shade structure	High cost option might be artist-designed structure and fabricated from durable materials such as wood or metal
	Medium cost option might be custom-designed structure and fabricated from standard materials such as wood, metal, or canvas with partial coverage
	Low cost option might be a commercially available product such as a post and tarp structure with partial coverages
Bdote Area map *all options are for a graphic output only, no physical products	High cost option might include extended Dakota outreach for content
	Medium cost option might identify unique site for this map and revise spelling and/or orthography (from Wakan Tipi)
	Low cost option might be comparable to the map designed for Wakan Tipi
Etiquette reminders	High cost option may be durable fabricated markers with custom graphics
	Medium cost option might be fabricated from metal or finished wood
	Low cost option might be a temporary sign product or crafted from available logs
Audio posts	High cost option could include a custom post or audio integrated into a custom interpretive element
	Medium cost option might include additional audio messages in Dakota and English
	Low cost option might include 1 or 2 audio messages in Dakota and English

Assumptions

- 1) All elements in cost table include some level of interpretive messaging such as words or graphics added to the structure
- 2) All estimated ranges include standard design and implementation, but not artist costs. Standard design costs are typically 15 - 20% of construction costs for custom designed elements. Artist design and fabrication costs can vary widely and ultimately must be determined on an individual basis
- 3) Costs per unit may be significantly reduced where multiples copies are fabricated and designed at one time

NEXT STEPS

The most essential next step is to maintain and build on the relationships with Dakota people established through the Indigenous Advisory Group during this and the previous interpretive planning work. Their guidance for design development and content creation will be critical going forward.

In terms of physical changes to the site, the next steps are: adding site amenities, landscape work and restoration, and design development of interpretive elements, including a unifying motif.

Site Amenities

A capital improvements project is anticipated in the near future to add site amenities to the Acacia Blvd Entry area, including a parking lot, drinking water, and restrooms.

Landscape

Trail design and construction and select other landscape efforts are also anticipated related to the capital projects work.

Interpretive Elements

Building on the concepts in this plan, Indigenous-led design development—for text, graphics and artwork, and audio—are essential for the vision of the site to be realized.

A unifying motif, such as a logo or site-specific, meaningful form, could be woven into site elements, interpretive media, and other communications. Providing a recognizable design element can provide a powerful visual message and reinforce connection and meaning throughout the site. The motif could be reflected in the site design, structures, and graphic design.

Any unifying motif would be developed in deep consultation with the Dakota Advisory Committee, which is comprised of knowledge keepers, elders, and other community members, in the next project design stage.

Site Design and Furnishings

The following pages show preliminary design and furnishing ideas generated during this project. These designs respond to the direction to use natural materials and minimize impact to the land, notably through deep footings. These sketches and studies may provide helpful information for the next phase of design development, but they shouldn't impede new designs, especially related to forms or design inspiration based on the yet-to-be-designed unifying motif.

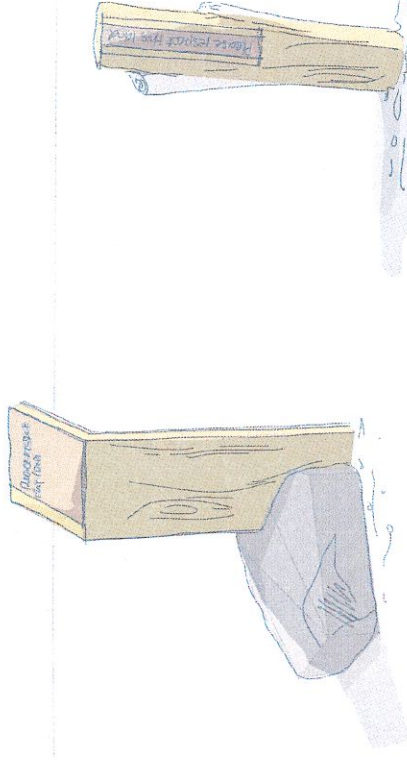
Site Design and Furnishing Sketches

The need and appropriate amount of site furnishings such as signage, seating, and shade structures was discussed during the interpretive design process. Although not strictly a part of the interpretive design, such structures might carry interpretive messages and the form, placement, and materials would have significant impact on the overall site experience. The full design of these elements is best addressed in a future process and considered along with other site design, however some of the ideas discussed and generated are included here for future reference.

Potential Signage

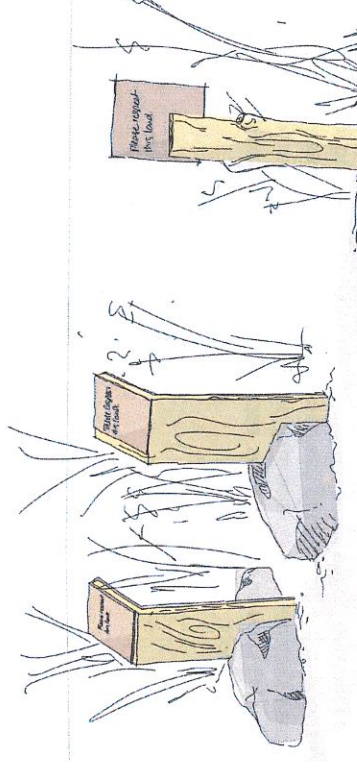
Physical onsite signage recommendations are minimal and most messaging is limited to the entrance. Guiding principles for signage include:

- Low height to avoid impinging on views
- Natural materials and forms
- Large enough to include map and etiquette signage

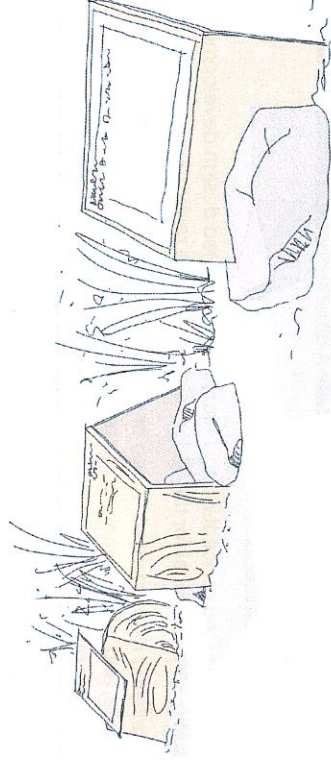


Low signs may be formed around stones as a base to minimize footings (left).

Simple messages, such as etiquette reminders, might be displayed with logs (right).



Smaller signs may be grouped to allow for more complex messaging without a large form.

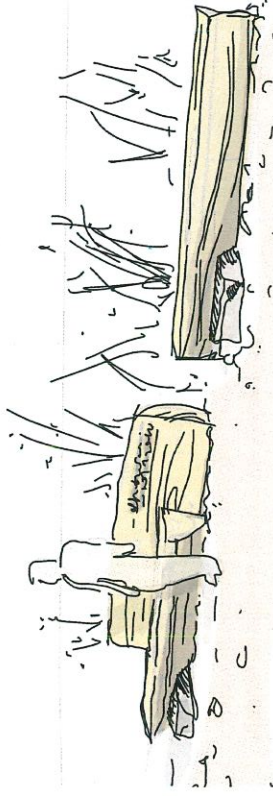


Low signs with a wide base might minimize footing needs and allow space for maps and multiple messages.

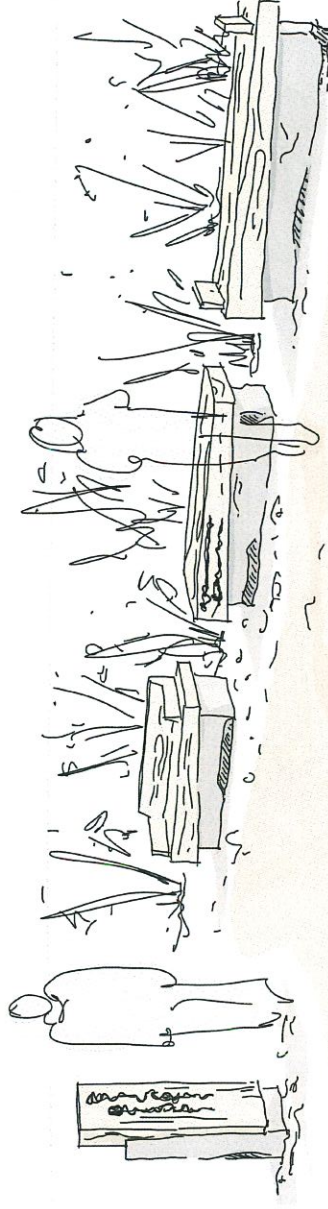
Potential Seating

Seating might vary from simple boulders and logs to designed forms shown in the sketches at right. Guiding principles for seating include:

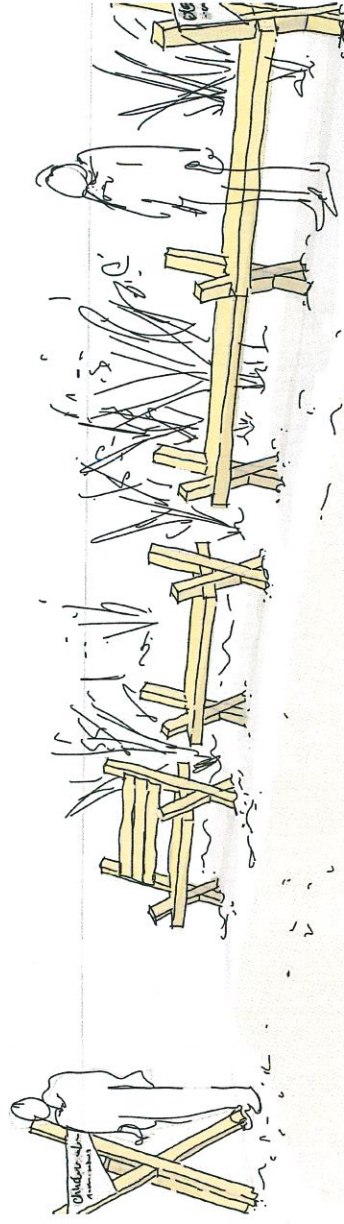
- Low to avoid impinging on views
- Natural materials and forms
- Include options with backs and arms for more supportive seating
- Minimize footings and intrusion into the land
- Opportunity to include interpretive messaging



Forming logs into benches with stones to brace the base pieces can allow for level seating with backs and arms where needed.



Stone bases with wood tops incorporate natural materials from the area and can avoid the use of footings.



Benches could be designed to be more open in character and incorporate various forms and linework that might also be found in the graphic design.

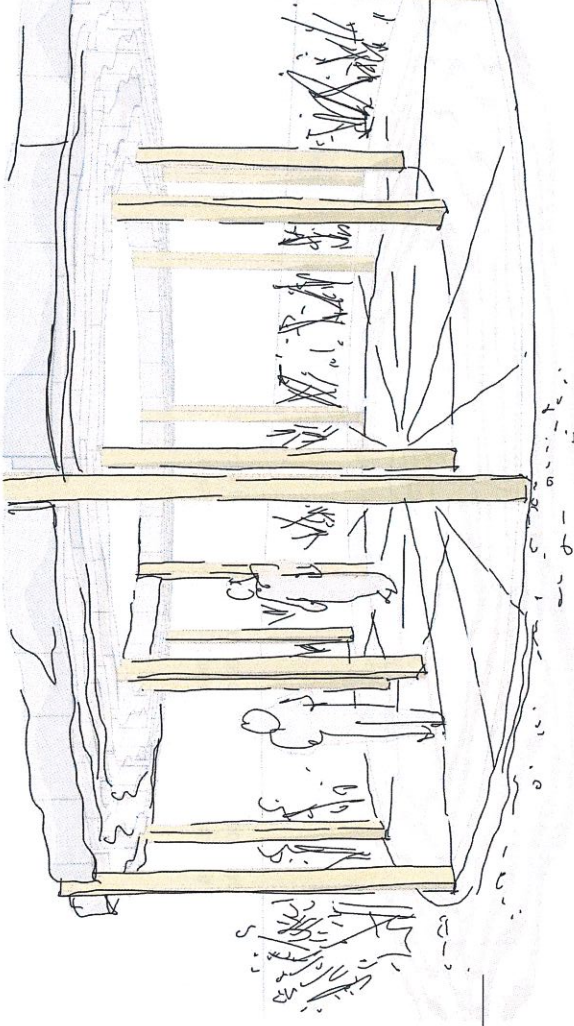
Potential Shade Structures

Shade is an important part of making the site comfortable and allowing people to stay for longer periods of time, especially in the summer months. Across the site, shade structure recommendations vary from shade for group seating to small structures shading a limited seating area. Materials might vary from wood to metal depending on preferences for appearance and durability. The sizing shown based on a 40' diameter gathering circle which may be larger than necessary to provide seating and shade for visiting groups. Guiding principles for shade structures include:

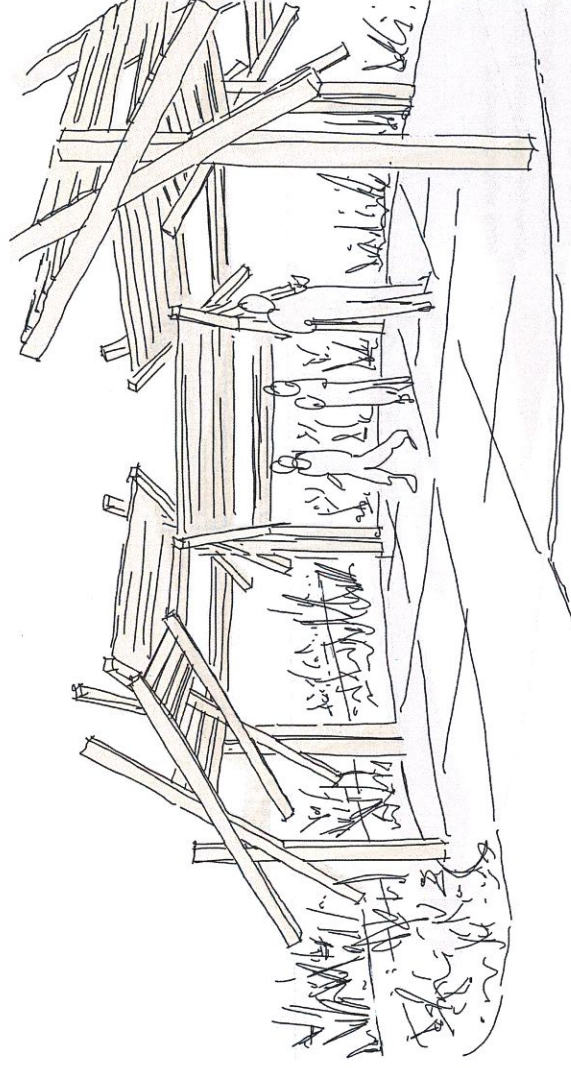
- Natural materials and forms
- Lightest visual presence possible
- Encourage views out to the land with limited structure on the sides
- Provide comfortable area to stay at the site longer
- Minimize footings and intrusion into the land
- Opportunity to include interpretive messaging

Questions to explore:

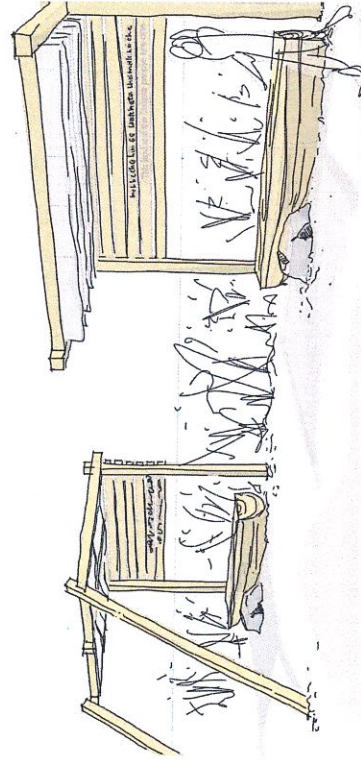
- The idea of a structure based on a tipi or kapemni form might be further explored with a Dakota artist and the Indigenous Advisory Group.



Shade structure might include a canvas top that allows for movement and wind to be seen.



Modular structures can provide shade for gathering areas with open sides to allow views into the landscape, and semi-open overhead coverage.



Smaller structures might provide shade for a single bench.