



OBERLIN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD CENTER SITE PLAN

2014



OBERLIN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD CENTER IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

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BIG PLANS UNDERWAY FOR THE OURC

Working together with Landscape Architect, Jim McKnight of McKnight & Associates, Architect Jodi Vanderwiel of Moody-Nolan created a beautiful and innovative site plan for the Oberlin Underground Railroad Center and Park & Ride Facility. In creating the designs, Jodi said she tried to make visual connections between the Gasholder Building, train depot-style structural elements, and African culture and art. Utilizing the rhythm and texture of radial shapes seen in African baskets, bike wheels, and the Gasholder Building ceiling structure, along with the structural rhythm of railroad ties as inspiration, Jodi created an impressive site plan for the project (see opposite side).

The site includes a bike path along Edison Street with a ceremonial walkway leading from the bike path to the Gasholder Building that will potentially include decorative pavers and LED lighting. A structure containing restroom facilities, a bike shelter, and a picnic shelter will be built along the bike path, with the center bike shelter area being an open structure creating sight lines to the Gasholder Building. The foliage throughout the site will consist of flowering trees, ornamental grasses, and cedar evergreens native to Ohio, while maintaining as many significant existing trees as possible.

The Oberlin Rotary Club will potentially fund an eternal flame/water feature structure on the OURC site as well. The feature will be located across from the proposed amphitheater and will be a point of reflection on the site. Many ideas have been proposed for the components of the feature, including a potential mosaic seating area, and a large lantern structure reminiscent of those used during the time of the Underground Railroad. There are still many details to work out with the eternal flame/water feature, but we are very excited to be moving forward with such an important and creative aspect of the site.

With the site plan approved by City Council and the Planning & Zoning Commissions, the OURC and Park & Ride Facility is one step closer to coming to fruition. The OURC Implementation Team has been diligently working toward bringing this important piece of Oberlin's history to life and is eager to see the project completed in the coming years. With the continued support of the community, the Team is confident that the OURC will become an historical, educational, and inspirational highlight of the City of Oberlin and the entire country.



Fountain/Lantern Rendering & Inspiration Imagery

