



Fall Kill Blueway

Impact Design Methodology

The Impact Design Methodology (IDM) is a process that allows a broad array of stakeholders to develop a common language which can drive the success of an initiative. By identifying a shared mission we can maintain our vision as the project becomes more complex. The IDM is a thought-exercise broken into four parts: mission, method, impact, systemic change. This is a non-linear process and it's ok to go back. In fact, it's designed to provoke a dialogue that results in clarity.





Fall Kill Blueway

IDM SYNTHESIS: MISSION

DRAFT: 7/26/26

Step 1: To create the project mission, decide on and say exactly what you're trying to accomplish with your big idea. This is what everything you do will be designed toward. Try to capture it in eight words or less, and include a verb, a specific target population or setting, and a big outcome that implies something to measure. The mission is about what you're going to do, not how you're going to do it.

CURRENT DRAFT (24 WORDS):

"Restore and reimagine the Fall Kill Blueway as a safe, accessible, and thriving ecosystem for Poughkeepsie residents and visitors."



Fall Kill Blueway

7.21.2026 Workshop

Attendees: Sierra, CK, Heather, Cilva, Corinne

CK:

Mission: Ultimately this project will help change Perception

The Fall Kill Blueway will create an accessible, safe and vibrant community attraction that honors and invites residents and visitors *made for and by*

Methodology: with a memorable scenic interaction with the Hudson River and a natural exploration into the city of Poughkeepsie.

Made for and by

HM

Mission: Create Connection (Care for Creek)

"Restore and reimagine Fall Kill Creek as an accessible, safe, and vibrant public realm that reconnects neighbors with nature, highlighting Poughkeepsie's thriving local ecosystems through community stewardship."

SB

To **restore and reimagine** the Fall Kill Creek as a healthy ecosystem, thriving along a **vibrant**, and safe, public greenway made for and by all Poughkeepsie communities.

From Proposal

To transform an underutilized post-industrial creek that runs through the heart of Poughkeepsie into an asset and armature for a regional climate resilience strategy.

Systems Change:

regional climate resilience strategy

CC



Fall Kill Blueway

To reimagine, restore, and reconnect the Fall Kill Creek as an inclusive and thriving public greenway that connects nature and each other.

System Change: a proud identity for the City of Poughkeepsie

Method: By resisting neglect and embracing community stewardship, the Blueway connects people with nature, ensures safe and walkable access for all generations, and establishes the creek as the proud, unifying identity of Poughkeepsie."

From report to Dyson

Transformation of a channelized post-industrial waterway from a flooding and access liability into a connected system for stormwater management, ecological restoration, recreation, and community gathering.



Fall Kill Blueway

7.15.26 INITIAL CITY FEEDBACK AT BIWEEKLY MEETING

Attendees: Richard and Europa

Mission Statement Drafts:

Option 1: Community & Connection Focused (The Warm Approach)

"The Fall Kill Creek Blueway ~~transforms a historical barrier~~ into an **accessible, safe, and vibrant public realm** that connects Poughkeepsie's North and South sides with nature and each other. By **honoring** our community's affinity for moving water, we co-create a walkable, inclusive landscape where everyone can safely interact with the creek, celebrate our local ecology, and improve neighborhood quality of life."

Option 2: Ecological & Socioeconomic Balance (The Pragmatic Approach)

"Our mission is to shift the paradigm of the Fall Kill Watershed by restoring its ecological health and expanding community access to its scenic waters. Through targeted flood mitigation, environmental education, and enhanced pathways, the Blueway protects our natural habitats while driving socioeconomic vitality and pride across the Northside and the entire City of Poughkeepsie."

Option 3: **Short, Visionary & Powerful (The Action-Oriented Approach)**

"To rethink, restore, and reimagine the Fall Kill Creek as a healthy, thriving ecosystem and an inclusive public greenway. By resisting neglect and **embracing community stewardship**, the Blueway connects people with nature, ensures **safe** and walkable access for all generations, and establishes the creek as the proud, unifying identity of Poughkeepsie."



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MISSION: 51 WORD CLOUD



MISSION: 101 WORD CLOUD





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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

MISSION IDEAS

To **restore** the Fall Kill Creek to its pristine origins

To improve the overall physical, biological, **safety**, scenic and peak performance of the Fall Kill Creek.

Improve local quality of life and **ecosystems**

Improve Fall Kill **access** and increase prosperity through it

Connect Poughkeepsie, New York and the Hudson Valley, increase community engagement, increase fall kill usage

Improve and conserve Fall Kill ecology, and make that ecology and knowledge accessible to the community

Improve socioeconomic function in the northside

Serving a community's natural affinity for moving water and its earthly surroundings

Reimagine and redesign the Fall Kill Watershed to be a healthy ecological environment as well as an accessible public space

Serve as identity for the Northside

Break the barrier between the North and Southside of Poughkeepsie

Rethink the Creek - shift the paradigm

Connect people with nature, spring ephemerals, and fish

Make the creek Poughkeepsie's

Connect converse experiences and learn from them

Expand the study of creek to include uphill

Embraced - know where the creek is, where its taken care of, make it more approachable

Safe pathways

See the water, articulate Fall Kill Blueway, and resist graffiti and shopping carts in the water

Flood mitigation and reduced damage, take the level of beauty at the piano factory and 82 Water Street to the Creek

Experience the Creek

Interact with nature

See scenery

Protect Kids at Creek

Inclusive + Accessible Creek for Everybody

More Walkable

Bring insights at spots

Increase accessibility to creek

Notice rockbed



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More walkable

More biodiversity (native)

Cleanup, no trash

More aquatic life

Reinforce Riparian Zone

"Ecotone" - bikeable

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IDM SYNTHESIS: METHOD

DRAFT: 7/24/26

Step 2: Now that you have a mission statement, we will develop a method. This is your central, distinctive idea about how to accomplish the mission - the idea at the core of all you do. Some might call this your “theory of change.” Create at least two methods to address the mission established in Step 1.

Questions to think about:

Is your target group part of your solution?

What can you do to ensure your approach is human-centered?

Thematically Organized Methods

Theme 1. Community Engagement, Equity & History

Build trust, co-design the vision, and celebrate the Fall Kill's culture.

- **Deep Local Outreach:** Conduct targeted listening sessions with creekside residents, landowners, business owners (e.g., auto shops, recycling centers), and Spanish-speaking communities.
- **Heritage & Storytelling:** Use historical maps (like old mill ponds) and public art (murals, history markers) to reintroduce the creek's legacy to the city.
- **Open Visioning & Surveys:** Launch community-led planning tools (such as a "Take Out the Fence" survey) to gather input on where people want access.

Theme 2. Ecological Restoration & Environmental Health

Clean the water, restore natural habitats, and monitor ecosystem health.

- **Data-Driven Water & Habitat Monitoring:** Establish a regular water-sampling program, map the watershed, and track local species to create a baseline database.
- **Targeted Cleanup & Debris Removal:** Coordinate regular, volunteer-led cleanup days to clear trash and remove pollutants along the bank.



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- **Eco-Friendly Restoration & Land Management:** Plant native trees, shrubs, and pollinator gardens; build birdhouses; and educate landowners on creek-friendly maintenance (e.g., reducing runoff and fertilizer use).
- **Smart Infrastructure Alignment:** Audit urban runoff points (like fire hydrant flush spots) and partner with city experts to upgrade flood resilience and stormwater management.

Theme 3. Physical Access & Trail Integration

Remove barriers so residents can safely touch, hear, and see the creek.

- **Remove Physical Barriers:** Re-evaluate and selectively remove visual/physical fences, replacing them with safe, open views or discreet guardrails where needed.
- **Continuous Trail & Access Points:** Create accessible entry points (ramps, stepping stones, pedestrian bridges, boardwalks) connecting the Fall Kill to existing greenways and city sidewalks.
- **Flood-Resilient Landscaping:** Redesign the banks using dynamic, walkable landscapes that naturally absorb seasonal flooding while keeping pathways usable.

Theme 4. Placemaking, Amenities & Public Safety

Transform the banks into vibrant, safe, and comfortable gathering spaces.

- **Rest & Recreation Zones:** Install essential park amenities—benches, picnic tables, play spaces, grills, trash/recycling receptacles, and free community pantries/libraries.
- **Safety & Infrastructure Enhancements:** Improve pedestrian protection from traffic, add street and string lighting, and implement clear instructional and safety signage.
- **Activation & Recreation:** Space for passive and active uses like yoga, fishing spots, creekside sitting areas, and community event programming.

Theme 5. Partnerships, Policy & Sustainable Funding

Secure the resources, policy backing, and technical expert guidance to keep the project moving forward.



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- **Plan Alignment:** Update and build upon existing frameworks (such as the *2010 Clearwater Fall Kill Plan*) to streamline modern goals.
- **Cross-Sector Collaboration:** Partner directly with Poughkeepsie city officials, federal agencies, ecological designers, and urban architects.
- **Community-Led Fundraising:** Develop buy-in strategies through local business partnerships, grassroots fundraising, and volunteer networks to maintain long-term momentum.

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METHOD: 51 WORD CLOUD



METHOD: 101 WORD CLOUD





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IDEA LIST FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Speak to people who live along the creek / would enjoy traversing it to see what they'd like
Seek input, create goals
Communicate benefits to community and ecosystem
Engage residents in the planning process
Collaboration
Heightened awareness
Buy-in with money or space use for events
Engage experts in ecology, architecture, and design
Work closely with local government + federal guidelines
Devise very strong guidelines
Ensure safety
Restoration
Ecological design
Reclaim/enhance habitat
Clean debris and surrounding areas
Database of current conditions and species
Provide a space of access
Public access point
Walkable landscaping to get to creek
Landscape to flow with flooding
Reevaluate current river access
Where is the public most separated from the Fall Kill?
Where is the creek most visible?
Can we bring the public closer to the river wherever possible?
Architecture and intentional design
Walkable landscaping
Landscape to accommodate flooding
Rethink/Redesign
Having as many physical hands constantly on deck as possible, with everyone working diligently together
Utilize community volunteers to clean the land
Work with individual landowners and city-owned spaces
Create greenway and park spaces that are usable
See the city / landscape as a series / list of watersheds (maps)
Develop a sampling program
Integrate the blueway into greater waterways
Make the creek visible - people can't see it
Upper landing - basketball
Use and update the 2010 clearwater Fall Kill Plan/Guidance
Show off the waterfall
Don't replace the fences - let people hear, smell , touch and feel the Creek!



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Think of how to fertilize and how to maintain the edges of the creek - spread this knowledge to property owners

Get old map of mill ponds - use to promote and share history of the area

Where does the city bleed its fire hydrants? Low spots of the waterway - use as an issue to highlight the need for flood and waterway infrastructure

"Richard D - Help us get intro'd and outreach to:

Industrial properties

Auto Service Owners

Car Washes

Recycling Centers"

Create a "Take Out the Fence" Survey

Clean pathways

Make a nice walking place to sit outside, more connections with spanish speaking community

Community-led visioning, design fundraising with water and infrastructure experts

Ramps

Chairs for/near Water

Street + String Lights

Stepping Stones

Swag Bracelets for the Creek

Teach people about the creek

Filter and clean the water

Sit besides the creek (benches)

Boardwalk

Guardrails

Beachside Creek

Indicator Lights for cleanliness of water at many spots

Walk trail

Speakers

Solar Panels + Wifi (tech)

Bike Rental (Pkbikes)

Picnic area

Pollinators (bugs)

Roof Garden

Zip Lines

Play spaces

Sitting areas

Grills w/ trash cans and recycling bins

Free library

Free pantry

Beach volleyball

Caution Flags for Swimming



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Parklike - community spot
Planting big trees + shrubs
Birding Binoculars
Creekside Banks
Playground
Fountain
Swings
Public Art - famous mural
Pedestrian Bridge
Bench
Trash Cans/recycling bins
Birdhouses for sparrows, bluebirds
Signage - both encouraging and instructional
Lawns
Housing (eco friendly)
Fishing
Pier
Yoga
Protection from cars
Picnic Tables



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IDM SYNTHESIS: IMPACT (METRICS)

DRAFT: 7/24/26

Step 3: Choose a specific outcome or metric through which to measure project success. Identify the single best indicator - an outcome, not a behavior - that would let you know if you're fulfilling the mission. This makes you focus on a more specific, granular and practical outcome. It needs to be at least theoretically observable and measurable, even if perhaps really hard to do in the real world.

Questions to think about:

What about this impact can be measured?

Can this impact be scaled?

Key Performance Indicator Breakdown

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 1. Water Quality & Ecological Health

Tracking the revival of the creek's natural environment.

- **Water & Soil Purity:** Regular testing for pollutants, bacteria, heavy metals, and dissolved oxygen levels to determine overall water safety.
- **Debris & Litter Reduction:** Volume (lbs/tons) or count of trash and debris removed during scheduled cleanups and routine monitoring.
- **Biodiversity Counts:** Population tracking of key species—including fish, turtles, frogs, eels, birds, and native pollinators.
- **Native vs. Invasive Plant Ratio:** Percentage of total bank flora comprised of native species versus invasive growth.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 2. Public Access, Usage & Community Engagement

Measuring how often and how deeply people interact with the Blueway.

- **Foot Traffic & Dwell Time:** Number of visitors daily/weekly and the average time spent lingering along the creek (casual walking, sitting, resting).
- **Community Event Activation:** Total number of organized events (cleanups, workshops, art installations, yoga, tours) held annually and total participant counts.



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- **Activity Diversity:** Range of documented recreational uses (e.g., fishing, birdwatching, walking, picnic use, play).
- **Bilingual & Diverse Reach:** Demographic turnout in surveys and events to ensure broad representation across all Poughkeepsie neighborhoods.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 3. Climate Resilience & Urban Infrastructure

Evaluating physical safety and environmental protection for nearby homes and streets.

- **Flood Impact Reduction:** Frequency and severity of localized flooding incidents, along with the number of homes/buildings experiencing flood damage along the corridor.
- **Microclimate Mitigation:** Temperature readings along the creek corridor during summer months to measure urban heat island reduction.
- **Infrastructure & Policy Adoption:** Incorporation of Fall Kill Blueway guidelines into municipal code, zoning, and city maintenance plans.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 4. Community Perception & Wellbeing

Capturing how the creek impacts local quality of life, safety, and pride.

- **Public Sentiment & Pride:** Survey scores evaluating community perception, feeling of safety, sense of ownership, and overall satisfaction with the Fall Kill.
- **Awareness & Knowledge:** Percentage of residents surveyed who know about the creek's history, public access points, and ecological importance.
- **Perceived Cleanliness & Comfort:** Community ratings on creek aesthetics, shade/cooling benefits, and lack of clutter or odor.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 5. Economic Vibrancy & Long-Term Sustainability

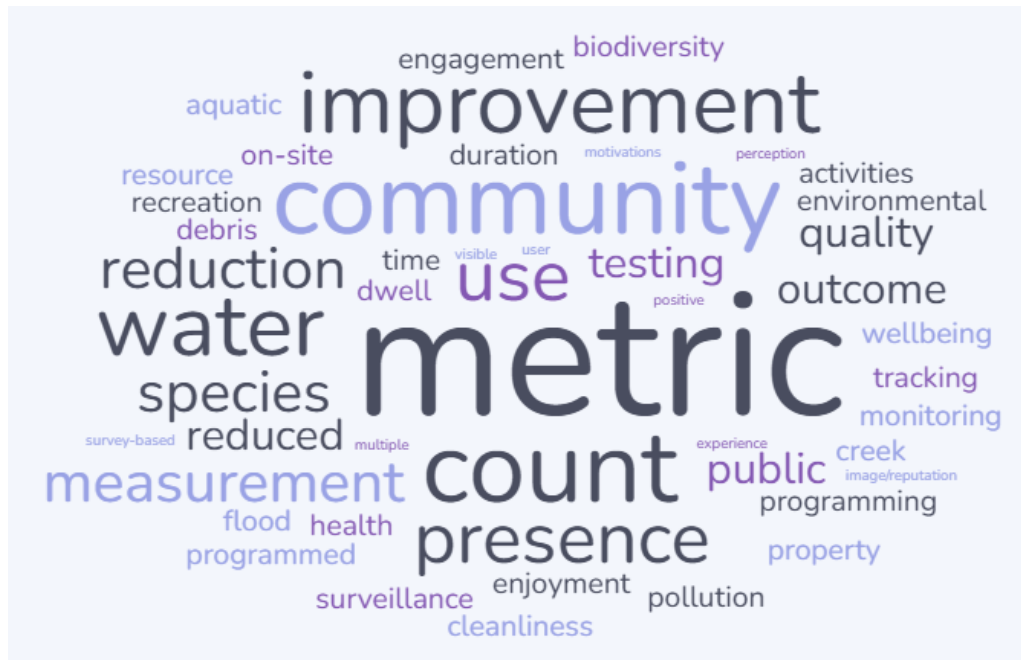
Ensuring the project attracts resources and builds long-term local value.

- **Funding & Grant Capital Unlocked:** Total dollars secured via public grants, private philanthropy, and corporate/local sponsorships for ongoing maintenance and capital improvements.
- **Property & Neighborhood Value:** Neighborhood economic stability and property value trends along the rejuvenated corridor.
- **Volunteer Hours & Maintenance Efficiency:** Total community volunteer hours logged and reduction in city repair/maintenance backlogs along the creek.



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IMPACT/METRICS: 51 WORD CLOUD



IMPACT/METRICS: 101 WORD CLOUD





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IDEA LIST FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Seeing people enjoy it for many reasons
Public perception of the Fall Kill
Time spent @ Fall Kill
Health of community
Measure community use through surveys (events, knowledge, casual use, activities)
Fall Kill related events
Activities held
Guidelines become code
A viable and embraceable plan
Monitoring creek for unwanted debris
Number of species / biodiversity
Increase in biodiversity
Measuring pollution and water metrics
Testing water quality and soil samples
of Fall Kill related events
Time spent @ Fall Kill
Casual use by passersby
Activities held
Cooler summers (urban heat island mitigation)
Less flooding
Improved physical appearance (cleaner, less cluttered, more vibrant)
Testing of the water
Monitoring creek
Cleaning (implied through debris removal & improved appearance)
Funding is unlocked
Health of community

Less maintenance
Make people want to stay
Sense of value in community, actual values of property increase

Less litter
Feel cooler
Less pollution
Less urine
Reduce Fishing
More nature

Number of humming visitors
Number of turtles



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Number of frogs

Number of native vs invasive species

Number of people hanging out

Number of eels

Number of homes/buildings flooded

Cleanliness of water

DRAFT



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IDM SYNTHESIS: GREATER CHANGE

DRAFT: 7/24/26

Step 4: Systemic change occurs when a change pervades all parts of a system. Review your mission-method-impact. Now consider opportunities and limitations for scaling your solution to achieve systemic change.

Questions to think about:

What do you want to change within the system?

Does your change take into account the different parts of the system?

What are the smaller changes you want to make that will directly lead to the impact you're looking for?

CURRENT DRAFT:

Turn the Fall Kill watershed into a thriving climate-resilient corridor that protects residents from extreme weather, restores neighborhood pride, and serves as a replicable blueprint for regional watershed restoration across the Hudson Valley and beyond.

Systemic Levers Breakdown

*To make this operational, here is how those community listening points align across the **four core systems levers**:*

LEVER 1. Shift in Mindset & Culture (Narrative & Public Pride)

- **Current State:** Stigma, hidden natural assets, disconnected public spaces.
- **Systems Shift:** Reclaiming Poughkeepsie's story as a resilient, eco-friendly destination by embedding creek stewardship into local schools, intergenerational recreation, and neighborhood camaraderie.
- **Target Outcome:** A deep culture of pride, heightened ecological awareness, and an active public presence that transforms safety and city reputation from the ground up.



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LEVER 2. Shift in Relationships & Governance (Community Autonomy)

- **Current State:** Top-down planning, isolated cleanup efforts, underutilized community capacity.
- **Systems Shift:** Establishing hyper-local leadership where residents, school districts, and neighborhood groups directly design, lead, and maintain regular creek programming and upkeep.
- **Target Outcome:** Long-term community autonomy, stronger social networks through volunteerism, and enduring public buy-in.

LEVER 3. Shift in Physical Infrastructure & Environment (Safety & Resilience)

- **Current State:** Crumbling infrastructure, trash accumulation, flood hazards, urban heat risks.
- **Systems Shift:** Upgrading infrastructure with flood-resilient designs, safe street/creek crossings, micro-hydro clean energy opportunities, and trash elimination programs.
- **Target Outcome:** Reduced climate vulnerability (lower heat, mitigated flood damage), cleaner waterways, and a safe physical environment that supports both active play and physical/mental well-being.

LEVER 4. Shift in Policy & Local Economy (Equitable Prosperity)

- **Current State:** Displacement pressure, economic stagnation, development unaligned with natural assets.
- **Systems Shift:** Enacting creek-oriented zoning and development policies that mandate public access, support dignified housing, and keep energy/living costs manageable.
- **Target Outcome:** Local economic growth that benefits long-term residents—allowing people to stay, build wealth, and thrive in a healthier Poughkeepsie.



SYSTEM CHANGE: 51 WORD CLOUD



SYSTEM CHANGE: 101 WORD CLOUD





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IDEA LIST FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Pride in neighborhood
Awareness of saving ecological spaces
Instilling love and camaraderie
Community wants to upkeep it
Ecologically aware public
School district participation / engagement
Community leadership and autonomy
Public-led engagement opportunities
Regular programming led by the public
Engagement opportunities
Recreation culture
Ongoing maintainability
Environmentally sound
Elimination of trash (also overlaps with implementation)
Reduce environmental risks (heat, pollution)
Education and understanding of the creek increased
Saving ecological spaces
Renewed natural resource
Create a culture of use and recreation
Improve access to healthy activity
Healthy community space
Crumbling infrastructure (addressing it)
Aesthetically pleasing
Reduce flooding risk through infrastructure
Elimination of trash
Community upkeep/maintenance behavior
Prosperity
Educational attainment increases
Improved mental and physical health
Healthier community (lower heat deaths, less damage)
Make streets + crossings safer (physically and emotionally)
Increase awareness and access to other watersheds - Fishkill, Fall Kill, Wappingers Creek
Have policies put in place for creek-oriented development (public opinion)
Allow people to meet neighbors through cleanups
Make people aware of the natural assets around them
More people in public space
Change the drug usage in the city



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Keep housing costs manageable

Keep energy costs manageable - micro hydroelectric

More dignified senior housing

Eradicate poverty

Feel better about what we are doing and who we are

Ripple effect in Poughkeepsie

Set an example for the country

Attract a better economy

People get to stay in this community

Change the story about Poughkeepsie

Make Poughkeepsie's reputation cleaner

Example of eco friendly, healthy ecosystem

Change perception of PK as a healthy place to visit (visitors, people who live here)

Seeing the creek (and by extension, PK) as clean