RiverWorks provided design services to restore 4,600 feet of the Little Cuyahoga River as part of the Akron Riverwalk development, an ARRA project in Akron, Ohio. The $2.9 million dollar project was divided into two phases, each with their own set of unique challenges and constraints including sediment contamination, utility crossing and easements, structure demolition, and dam modification. Intensive surveys were conducted to collect and analyze biological, morphological, hydraulic, and sediment transport data as part of the design. RiverWorks addressed the challenges of river restoration in the heavily urbanized area to maximize the functional improvements to river morphology and habitat.

The RiverWorks team’s innovative restoration approach of the Little Cuyahoga River and surrounding floodplain provided substantial cost savings to the developer by decreasing the amount of materials imported. The approach also allowed the project to receive several grants including funds from the Clean Ohio Fund and the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act. Because of the ecological approach to the river relocation, RiverWorks obtained a Nationwide Permit for this activity, and agency approval was granted in a very rapid timeframe for a project of this magnitude. The project was initially conceived as a design-build project with involvement of the entire RiverWorks team, but grant requirements obligated the City of Akron to place both Phases of construction out to bid.