

# **ONE** Riverfront CHATTANOOGA

## **Riverfront District Plan**

Chattanooga, TN

January 2022



**MKSK**



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As the ONE Riverfront Planning Process was a multiyear project, we thank former River City Company staff members for their guidance and support of this project including Kim White, Amy Donahue, Megan Shinn and Julia Bursch.

## Project Sponsors

**BENWOOD**



## Consultant Team

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# ONE Riverfront

It is my pleasure to present to you the ONE Riverfront Chattanooga plan that outlines the next phase in the evolution of the Riverfront District. Working together with the community we have defined the four aspirations and eight strategies that will create a place for all Chattanoogaans to enjoy.

This vision would not be possible without the forward-thinking individuals who helped to make the Riverfront District a destination and model for cities across the country. In the mid-1980's, the Moccasin Bend Task Force was formed and released the Tennessee Riverpark Master Plan in 1985. In that plan, it states: "By reconnecting with this great river, the city can make over its image, find new sources of pride for its citizens, and fuel the engine of central economic development."

Out of this plan, the first implementation phase began, which included the first 13 miles of the Tennessee Riverwalk, and with support of the Chattanooga Design Studio, the Tennessee Aquarium opened in 1992. Over the decade of the 1990's, other iconic areas in the riverfront were also developed or improved, including the reopening of the Walnut Street Bridge, the Hunter Museum, the Creative Discovery Museum, the IMAX Theatre, and AT&T Field.

Following those efforts, that momentum continued, including when River City Company, under the leadership of Ken Hays, partnered with the Mayor Corker and the City of Chattanooga to create the 21st Century Waterfront Master Plan. By 2006, redevelopment of 129 acres along the river was complete, which created 83 acres of open space and infrastructure and 46 acres of new mixed-use development—providing opportunities for residents to enjoy Chattanooga's waterfront.

For the past 15 years, the Riverfront District has been home to numerous major events and has contributed billions of dollars to our economy through tourism. However, today, the Riverfront District grapples with the challenges of aging infrastructure and amenities, single-mode roadway design, and an imbalance of tourist and visitor activity compared to local use. River City Company, with the support from our incredible partners at the Lyndhurst Foundation, Benwood Foundation, and the City of Chattanooga believe that the time is now to envision the evolution of the riverfront for today, tomorrow, and those generations that will come after us.

**Emily Mack**

President & CEO, River City Company



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

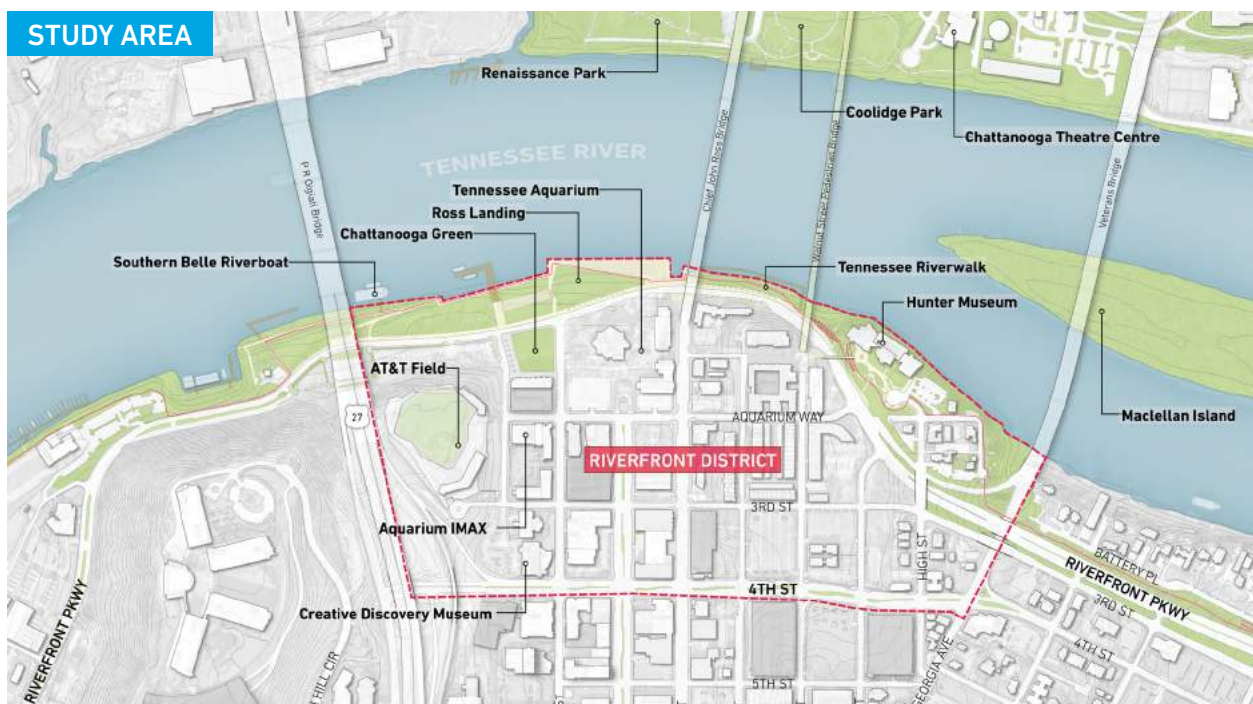
## Purpose

The renaissance of Chattanooga, which spanned the last decades of the 20th century and saw significant investment in the riverfront in the early 2000's, was punctuated with many landmark projects in the Riverfront District: the Tennessee Riverwalk, AT&T Field, the Tennessee Aquarium, and the 21st Century Waterfront Park to name a few. These investments have anchored the tourism and hospitality industry, spurred signature annual events, and have become fixtures of the popular image of Chattanooga. Though Chattanooga has made significant strides reinvigorating its riverfront and Downtown core, the Riverfront District is seen today as more of a tourist destination than a community gathering place. The Riverfront District also shares, along with the Greater Chattanooga community, the tremendously important civic responsibility to improve social and economic equity. This plan strives to address these contemporary challenges, build on the successes of the past 30 years to re-energize the District and create **ONE Riverfront for all Chattanoogaans**.

## Engagement

Throughout the ONE Riverfront Chattanooga Riverfront District Plan planning process, more than 2,000 Chattanooga residents have shared their hopes, dreams, and desires for the next iteration of the District. The plan was also expertly guided by the Outreach and Steering committees, two groups of community members and stakeholders that were engaged throughout this work.

To ensure broad community outreach, the planning team utilized numerous engagement formats and platforms. Beginning in the winter of 2020, this included stakeholder roundtables, online surveys, individual resident meetings, and in-person and digital community workshops. In the fall of 2020, River City Company staff also held Open Streets events on Broad Street and Riverfront Parkway along with a District-wide scavenger hunt to test activation ideas and get additional feedback from visitors and residents. Over 22 months, the community has been instrumental in creating this plan.





## Outcomes

Through engagement with the Chattanooga community, four aspirations were affirmed as the pillars for developing a vision for the future of the Riverfront District:

- Create a Place for All Chattanoogaans
- Strengthen Connectivity to the Riverfront
- Develop a Greater Sense of Place
- Activate the Riverfront

To bring these aspirations to life, Eight Strategies were crafted to illustrate the physical improvements, public realm investment, and policy initiatives that will be necessary to move the Riverfront District forward. Taken together, the implementation of these Eight Strategies will bring Chattanoogaans together to experience a more comfortable, welcoming, active, and inclusive Riverfront District.



# **EXISTING CONDITIONS & ASSESSMENT**

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# EXISTING CONDITIONS & ASSESSMENT

Through an examination of current plans and projects, physical conditions and urban form, and market and economic trends, the existing conditions assessment creates a baseline understanding of the Riverfront District. When combined with the input and feedback from community members and stakeholders (see page 32), this provides a platform for the development of plan recommendations, concepts, and implementation priorities. This section reviews:

- Previous Plans
- Recent and Proposed Investment
- Destinations and Activity
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Streets and Street Frontage
- Transit and Bike Infrastructure
- Parking
- Land Use and Ownership
- Market and Economic Trends

Data and information in this section was gathered in mid-2020. COVID-19 has likely impacted some of these data points, but the larger District and Downtown-wide trends still hold as the regional and tourist economy recovered above 2019's numbers. In certain areas, such as parking, the planning team was able to utilize information gathered prior to the pandemic to inform recommendations. Key takeaways are shown at right and explained in greater detail in the following pages.

## Key Takeaways

- Previous plans for the Riverfront District have a track record of implementation
- Investment in the Riverfront District has continued, even in the face of the pandemic
- Attractions and events drive activity in the District
- The District is tourist-focused and needs to do more to encourage local, day-to-day activity that brings all Chattanoogaans to the Riverfront
- The District's streets (especially Riverfront Parkway, Broad Street and 4th Street) are not perceived as friendly to pedestrians and bicyclists
- Improvements are being considered for transit operations that should inform future streetscape planning and investment
- Despite having a surplus of parking in the District, there are specific blocks where there is parking pressure that will need to be considered as surface parking lots are redeveloped
- More residential and office uses will be necessary in the Riverfront District to enable an increase in retail, restaurant, and entertainment activity
- Downtown and the Riverfront District play a vital role in the health of the local and regional economy

## Previous Plans

Numerous previous planning efforts helped to inform ONE Riverfront Chattanooga. From the 21st Century Chattanooga Waterfront plan in 2002 to The Ramble Chattanooga Art Promenade Master Plan in 2016, previous planning and design work has resulted in transformational improvements to public spaces throughout the Riverfront District. Likewise, private development has been shaped by these plans, as infill development envisioned by the 3rd and 4th Street Corridor Plan is also coming to fruition. However, not all plan recommendations have been fulfilled. Plans have called for additional landscape improvements to Riverfront Parkway, infill development on the surface parking lots along the Riverfront Parkway and adjacent to the Tennessee Aquarium, and enhancements to park spaces like Chattanooga Green to make it more usable for daily activities.

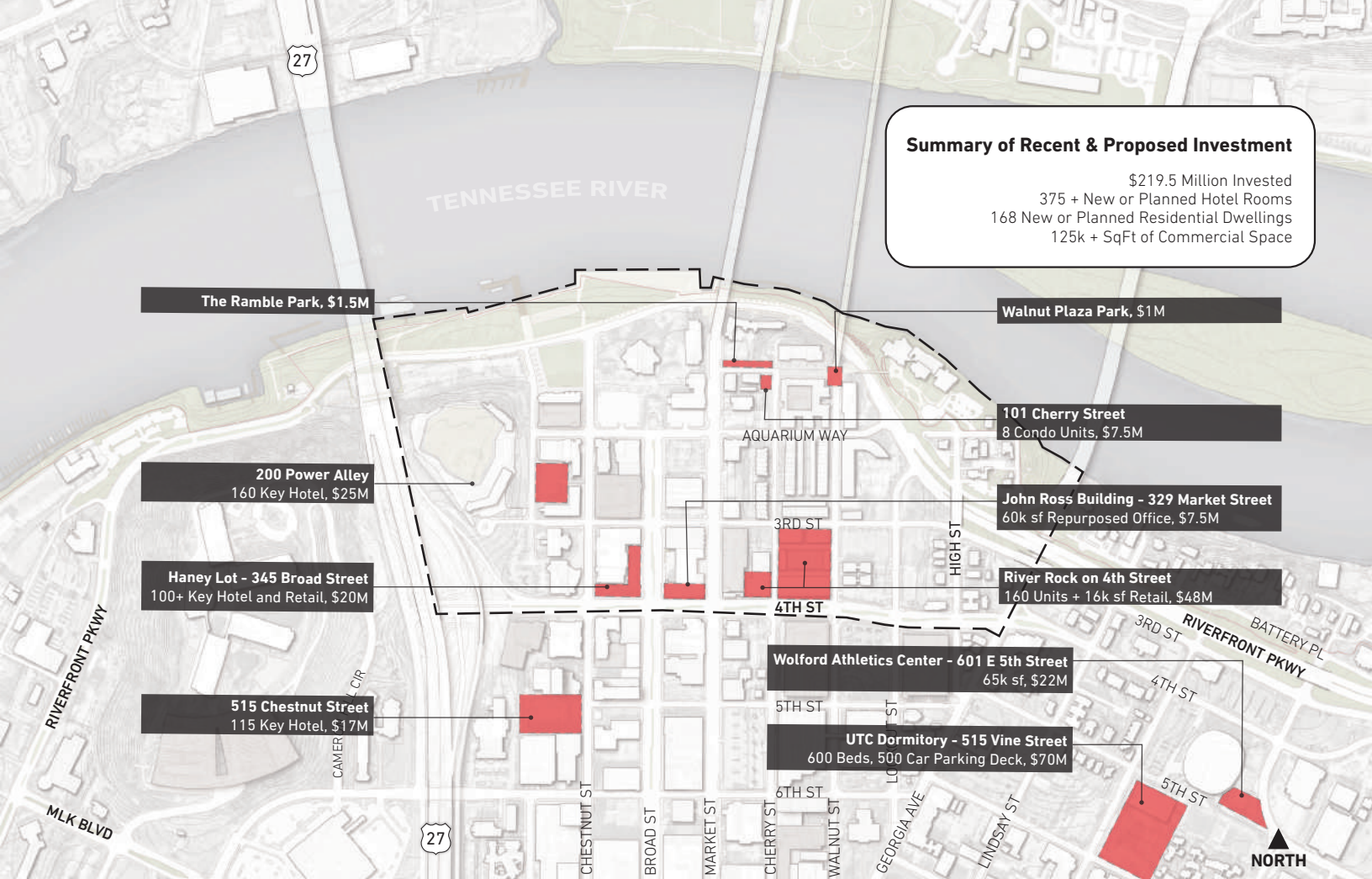
Aligning plan recommendations with current community priorities helped the planning team start to establish the goals for the next iteration of riverfront planning. The following, plans adopted by the River City Company, the city, regional agencies and private entities were reviewed:

### Plans Reviewed:

- 21st Century Chattanooga Waterfront (2002)
- Ross's Landing Park Improvements Report (2012)
- City Center Plan (2013)
- Downtown Chattanooga Market Analysis (2015)
- The Ramble Chattanooga Art Promenade Master Plan (2016)
- 3rd & 4th Street Corridor Plan (2016)
- Downtown Chattanooga Survey Results (2017)
- Tax Revenue in Hamilton County Analysis (2018)
- Downtown Chattanooga Parking Study (2018)
- Envision West End Design Concepts (2019)
- Chattanooga Recommended Transit Network (2020)
- River City Company Annual Reports







## Recent & Proposed Investment

The Riverfront District continues to implement improvements based on previous planning studies, with nearly \$220 million of recent and proposed investment. This mix of public and private sector investment includes public spaces, residential, hotels, and educational facilities.

### Park and Plaza Spaces

As part of the Ramble Plan, two new park and plaza spaces have been completed in 2021. The Scramble replaces the former First Street funicular with a new pedestrian connection between Market Street and Walnut Street. Featuring public art and seating, this linear park climbs the hill to Walnut Street and terminates at a new plaza and gathering space at the foot of the Walnut Street Bridge.

### Residential

Two new residential projects are also underway in the Riverfront District, the

largest of which is the 160-unit River Rock mixed use apartment development. Located on 4th Street and Walnut Street, this project replaces surface parking lots and brings much needed vitality to the southeastern edge of the Riverfront District.

### Hospitality

While delayed due to COVID-19, there are three potential hotel projects that could add more than 375 new hotel rooms to the Riverfront District. Located on-site between Broad Street and Chestnut Street, these new investments would further solidify the major hospitality role that the District plays in Downtown Chattanooga and the region.

### Education

Adjacent to the Riverfront District, the University of Tennessee Chattanooga continues to invest in its campus with a new dormitory, parking deck, and athletics center.

## Destinations and Activity

Activity in the Riverfront District is driven by the attractions, events and accommodations, which together draw nearly 1.6 million people a year. This concentration of uses makes the Riverfront District the cultural, entertainment and hospitality hub of the region.

### Attractions

Many of the region's largest cultural and recreational attractions are concentrated in the Riverfront District, including the Tennessee Aquarium, Creative Discovery Museum, Hunter Museum, High Point Climbing, Southern Belle, and AT&T Field, home to the Chattanooga Lookouts. Together, they log more than 1.6 million annual visits from a mix of out-of-town tourists as well as city and county residents.

### Accommodations

The Riverfront District and adjacent area includes eight hotels with approximately 965 rooms, representing approximately 20% of the city's hotel inventory. All hotels in the Riverfront District are considered upscale. They range in type from chains such as the Courtyard Marriott (128 rooms), to the recently delivered boutique Edwin Hotel (90 rooms), to the independent Bluff View Inn (16 rooms). Bookings are driven by proximity to the region's largest attractions, such as the Tennessee Aquarium, and the Central Business District.



*Hunter Museum of American Art*



*The Block*

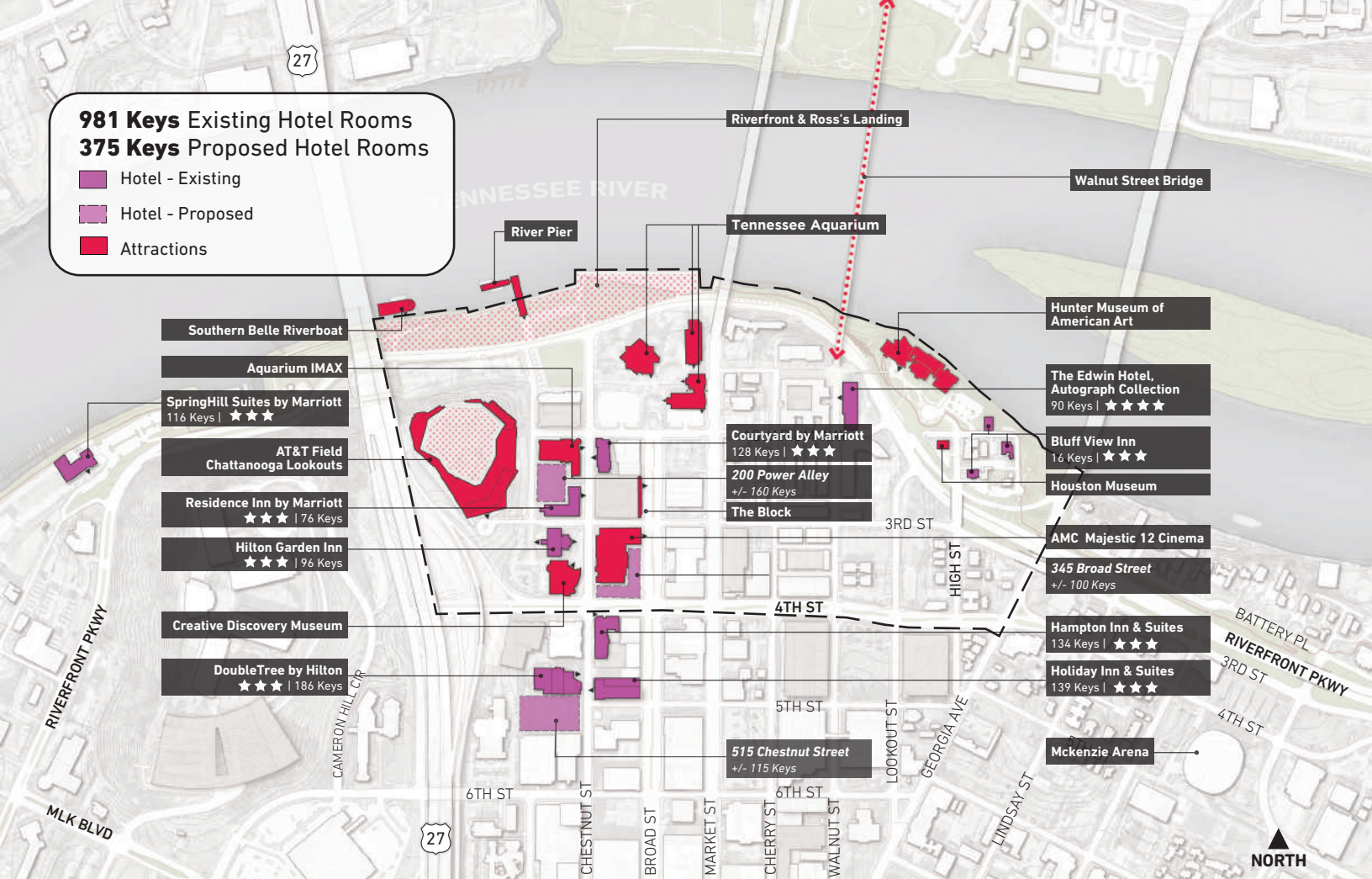


*Tennessee Aquarium*



*AT&T Field*







## **Events and Programming**

Dozens of major events take place in the Riverfront District every year. From music festivals like Riverbend, to recreational events like IRONMAN and Head of the Hooch, the Riverfront District draws more than 1.6 million people annually. The riverfront parks, parking lots and river access provide ample space and flexibility for events.

While these large festivals and events are important to the success of the Riverfront District and the City of Chattanooga, there is a lack of consistent programming that could make the District welcoming on a daily basis. The fact that the Riverfront District is so event-driven further reinforces the community perception that the District is more for tourists than for residents. To bring more locals to the District on a consistent basis, more small-scale programming and activation that is provided on a regular basis is needed. Ensuring that both special events and daily programming reflects the diversity of community interests is critical in creating a District that equitably serves the City of Chattanooga.

## **District Branding**

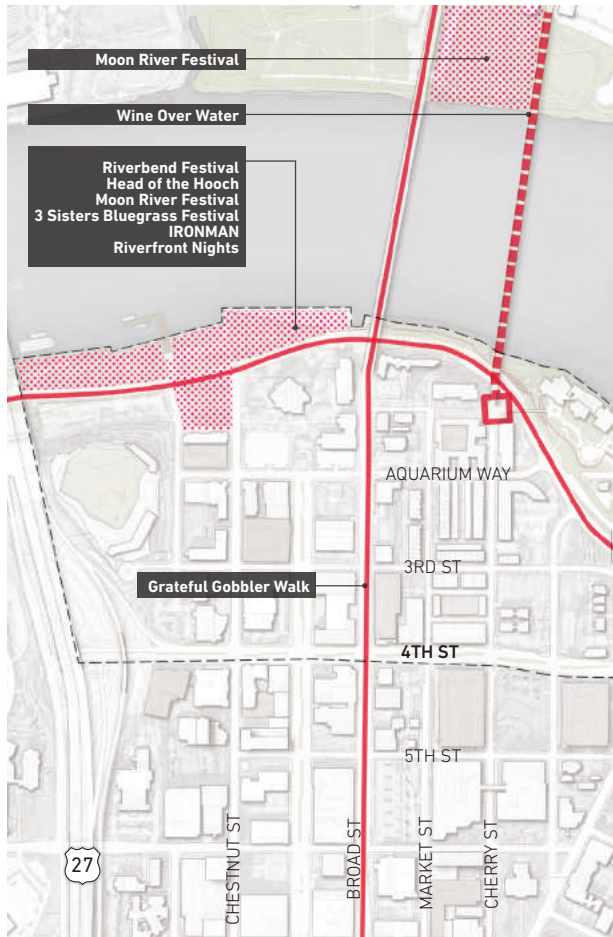
Given the destination and event focus of the Riverfront District, the District brand emphasizes those assets and spaces. District specific signage, banners and color scheme create a visual language that generally connects visitors to these destinations. However, it is not clearly communicated that you have arrived in the Riverfront District as opposed to your specific destination. Wayfinding throughout the District is often confusing, especially at the edges of the District along the Tennessee Riverwalk. There is a lack of signage and wayfinding that directs people into the District or offers a sense of the other District amenities that exist beyond the destination that a visitor already has in mind.

This makes some of the District's more interesting spaces either hard to find or unwelcoming.

The Riverfront District brand could have better defined boundaries. All visitors, neighbors, tenants, and tourists should feel that they are in the Riverfront District, and nowhere else. In addition to shining a light on the cultural institutions, businesses, restaurants and other attractions in the District, the brand should also highlight the spaces, places, and activities that could be enjoyed on a daily basis. The brand should also invite greater participation in the City of Chattanooga. As the "front porch" of Chattanooga, the Riverfront District should welcome visitors and lead them to understand where they are within Chattanooga, what assets are in the District, and what attractions are adjacent to it.



*District Brand and Wayfinding*



Event	Attendance	Month
Riverbend Festival	20,000	Jun
Head of the Hooch	20,000	Nov
Lighted Boat Parade	10,000	Nov
Chattanooga Pride Festival	6,000	Oct
3 Sisters Bluegrass Festival	5,000	Oct
TN Valley Heart Walk	5,000	Oct
IRONMAN 70.3	3,500	May
IRONMAN	3,500	Sep
Grateful Gobbler Walk	3,500	Nov
Wine Over Water	3,000	Oct
Seven Bridges Marathon	3,000	Oct
Chattanooga Marathon	2,000	Mar
Chattajack	2,000	Oct
Riverbend Run	1,500	Jun
Hungry Turkey Half Marathon /5K	1,200	Nov
Juvenile Diabetes Walk (JDRF) One Walk	1,000	Apr
Riverfront Nights Concert Series	1,000	Jul-Aug
Autism Awareness Walk	1,000	Nov

Source: River City Company



The Riverfront District hosts numerous events and festivals.

## Parks and Public Spaces

The Riverfront District has numerous parks and public space assets. The 22-mile Riverwalk connects the district to the east and west, offering views of the Tennessee River and access to cultural destinations. The Aquarium Plaza provides space for the River Market that brings local vendors, artists, food trucks and music together on a weekly basis. The Passage Waterwalk offers free water play during the hot summer months and provides a connection—albeit circuitous—to the riverfront. At the base of the Bluff Arts District, the pedestrian-only Walnut Street Bridge connects the Riverfront District to the North Shore and is a constant source of activity. Ross's Landing provides water access, boat docks and commanding views of the Tennessee River. New investment in the Scramble and the Walnut Street Bridge Plaza demonstrates the community's continued commitment to quality parks and public spaces in the Riverfront District.

While the District's park assets create a strong foundation for public benefit, their orientation to large-scale events currently conflicts with opportunities for greater daily use. Much of the 15.5 acres of public space in the district are open lawn spaces and amphitheater seating, which, combined with large surface parking lots help to support staging for events. While offering the best views of the Tennessee River in the city, the parks lack human-scaled, smaller intimate spaces that invite people to spend time in the Riverfront District. The lack of trees and shade, comfortable seating, consistent daily activity, and nearby retail, food and beverage options limits the potential of the waterfront to attract and sustain a high level of daily public use and enjoyment.

These observations are confirmed by capturing imagery of the district on non-event days. As you can see in the images at right, there are few people using the park spaces along Riverfront Parkway. Excluding events and through-trail users, there are approximately 220 visitors per day to the riverfront parks—far below what you typically see in contemporary urban parks.

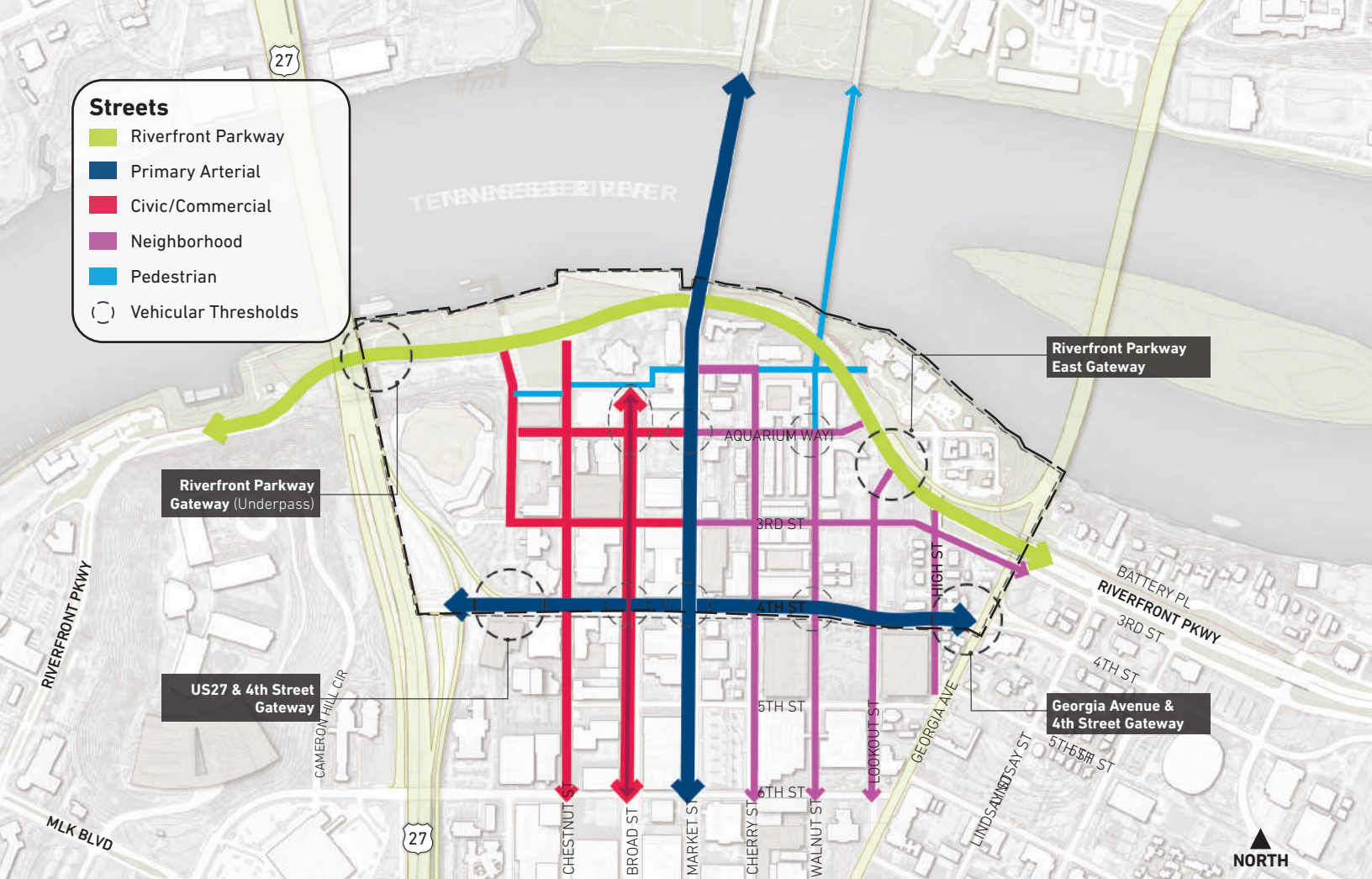
In addition to activation, other park spaces in the Riverfront District are in need of reinvestment. Even with a recently completed mural, the amphitheater below the Walnut Street Bridge is unsafe and poorly lit, the Riverfront Playground located on the western edge of the park is not easily accessible, and wayfinding to and from the Riverwalk is unclear.





*Riverfront park spaces lack shade, seating, and daily activity, but work well for events and festivals*





## Streets and Connections

Connections between Downtown and the riverfront have long been challenging in Chattanooga. Numerous previous plans have noted this division, caused largely by high peak traffic condition of 4th Street, the width of Broad Street, and the primary traffic arterial characteristics of Market Street. While certainly improved from past conditions, even Riverfront Parkway remains a barrier between the riverfront park spaces and the Tennessee Aquarium as it continues to carry truck traffic through the District. All of these conditions hamper walkability in what is otherwise a very walkable District.

While Market Street and 4th Street could benefit from streetscape and intersection crosswalk improvements, they both provide needed through connections and access to bridges and highways. Broad Street, however, is a certain candidate for a road diet as it currently carries around 8,000 cars per day, but has enough lanes to serve upward of 30,000 cars per day. Elsewhere in the District, there are smaller streets, and pedestrian paths that serve civic, commercial and neighborhood uses and are appropriately scaled and designed.





## **Transit and Pedestrian and Bike Infrastructure**

### ***Transit***

The Riverfront District and Downtown Chattanooga are served by direct bus service to the whole city. Broad Street and Market Street are the primary transit corridors in the District. Currently the District is also served by two shuttle services that operate between Shuttle Park North and Downtown and the North Shore. This fare-free, electric bus service provides convenient access to both the Riverfront District and other Downtown destinations.

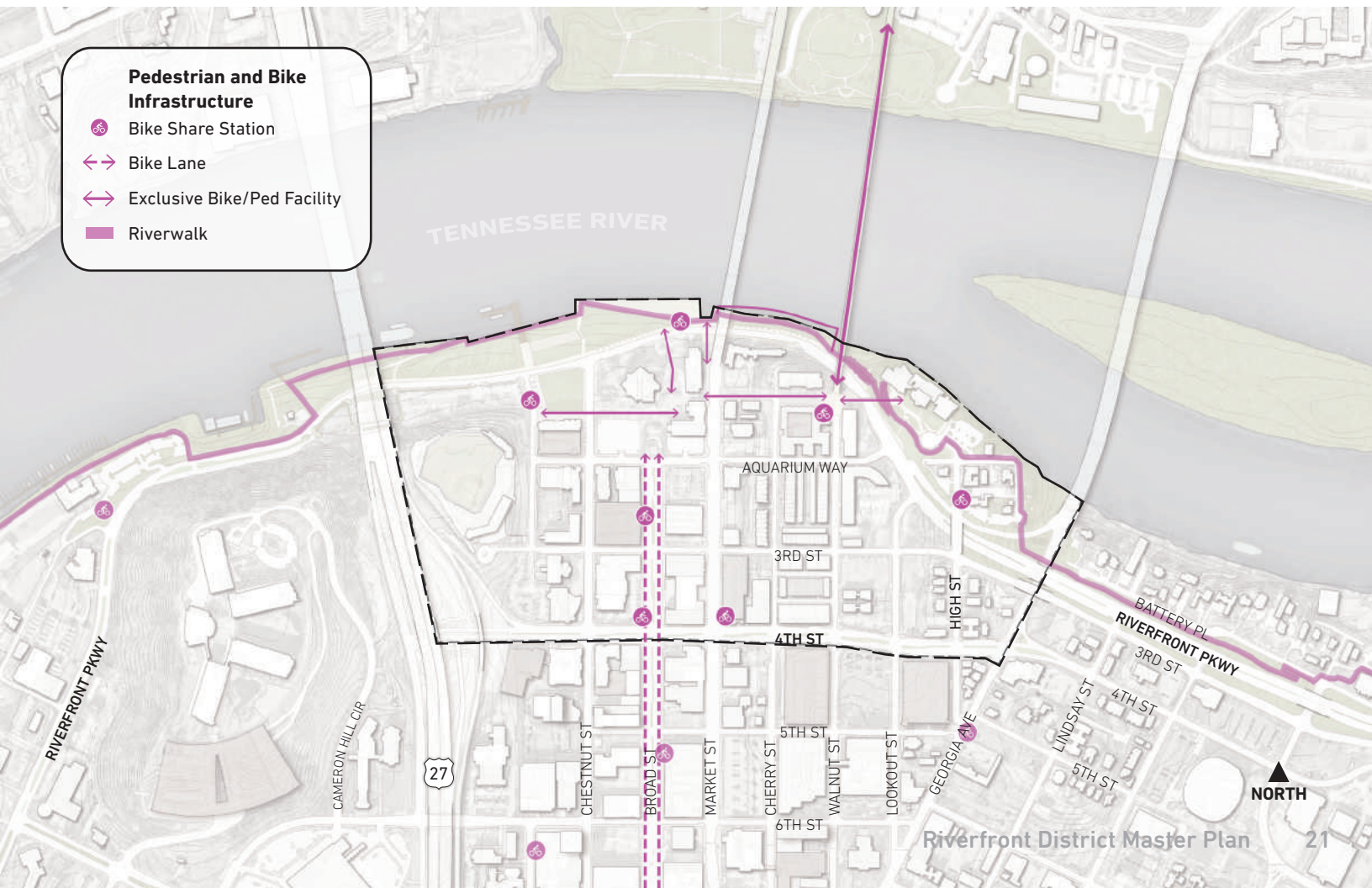
Due to the lack of replacement parts or similar new equipment, the Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority is considering a network redesign that would eliminate these shuttles. Instead, Downtown and the Riverfront District would be served by regular bus lines to eliminate the duplication of service and allow for greater efficiency. To retain the attractive features of the shuttle system, these routes would offer frequent service (every 10 minutes), use electric buses, and offer free fares within Downtown.

Another proposed service change would be the introduction of a “pulse” system of timed transfers that would enable riders to more easily transfer from one line to another. A central location to serve this pulse system will be required to serve all of the routes converging simultaneously. All of this has implications for the Riverfront District especially along Broad Street and the area around Shuttle Park North.

### ***Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure***

Broad Street also serves as the primary north-south bike route in the Riverfront District. The bike lanes run adjacent to the curb on both sides of Broad Street. While this is a protected facility, isolated from moving traffic by curb-style barriers and on-street parking, this design solution has not been well-received by all users. The curbing is a tripping hazard for pedestrians and the bike lane occupies a former on-street parking lane that has curb extensions that require the lane alignment to vary, especially at intersections. A better curb to curb design solution is required for Broad Street.

The other major bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure investment in the Riverfront District is the Tennessee Riverwalk that provides a regional connection. The Riverwalk is complemented by a pedestrian walkway that connects the Tennessee Aquarium to Chattanooga Green on the west and the Walnut Street Bridge and the Bluff Arts District on the east. Access through the Aquarium Plaza to the riverfront is provided by a set of stairs between the River Journey and Ocean Journey buildings and by the Passage Waterwalk, but both are circuitous and difficult to navigate.



## Parking

A parking study was conducted for Downtown Chattanooga in 2018 that provides useful analysis and direction for the Riverfront District (Downtown Chattanooga Parking Study). There are 4,378 spaces in the Riverfront District (576 on-street parking spaces and 3,802 off-street spaces). Nearly 60 percent of these spaces are open to the public. Peak parking utilization on weekdays occurs around 7pm at 55%, with weekends reaching 65% between 5pm and 7pm. Industry standards consider a parking facility at functional capacity at 85% utilization.

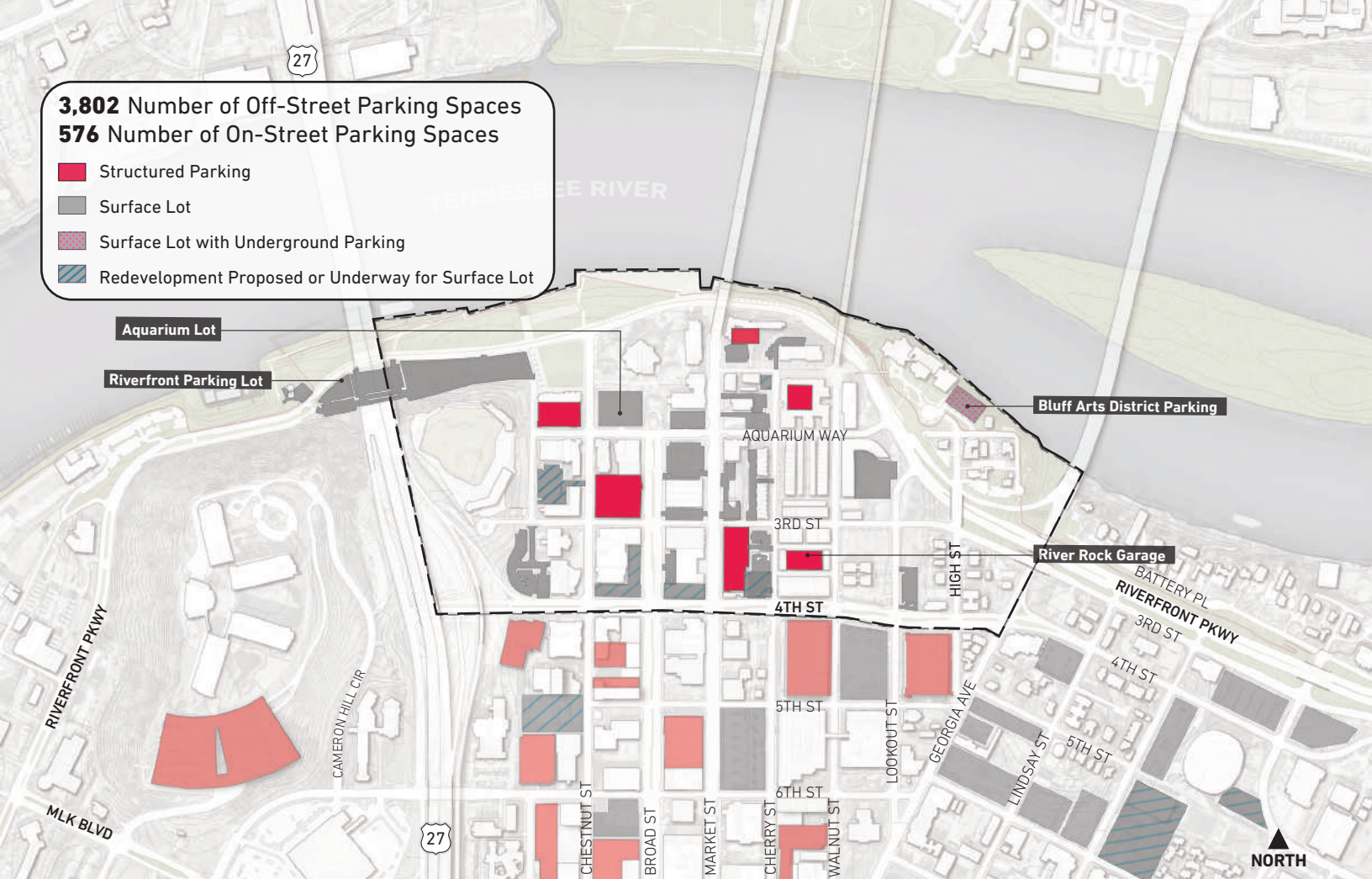
While there are many lots and garages that are not fully utilized, the surface parking lots surrounding the Tennessee Aquarium are at or near capacity in the evening hours on both weekends and weekdays. The Riverfront Parking Lot is less than 30% utilized on weekdays, but between 90 and 100% utilized at its weekend peak. Another key area of high utilization are the parking areas in the Bluff Arts District that have limited ability to expand. Notably, even at peak times on both weekends and weekdays, most the lots and garages east of Market Street are below 30% utilization. Street parking in Riverfront District is also heavily used, with the end of enforcement time (6pm) occurring well before demand for parking in the District declines, encouraging parking users to park on-street for long periods and leading to perceptions of little available parking.

Given the overall supply of parking, the study found that new development could be absorbed in the Riverfront District, especially east of Market Street. However, as any new development is considered on surface parking lots, it will be key to continue to have a focus on the number of publicly accessible and available spaces and/or provide enough on-site parking as part of development to make up for the loss of surface parking. For example, the River Rock mixed-use community on 4th Street includes a 300 space parking structure to replace the 412 surface parking spaces that were redeveloped.

Other key recommendations from the Downtown Chattanooga Parking Study:

- Adjust pricing of on-street parking to match demand.
- Extend on-street enforcement timespan (to 9pm) to better respond to demand patterns that peak in the evenings.
- Encourage shared parking to increase the supply of publicly available parking spaces.
- Coordinate with organizations that plan large events and attract out-of-town visitors (Lookouts, Aquarium, Creative Discovery Museum, etc.) to streamline event parking.
- Unbundle parking from admission prices at key attractions with off-street facilities like the Hunter and Aquarium to allow people to choose where to park and to better utilize parking throughout the District.





*Parking occupies 23% of the developable land in the Riverfront District.*



## Land Use and Ownership

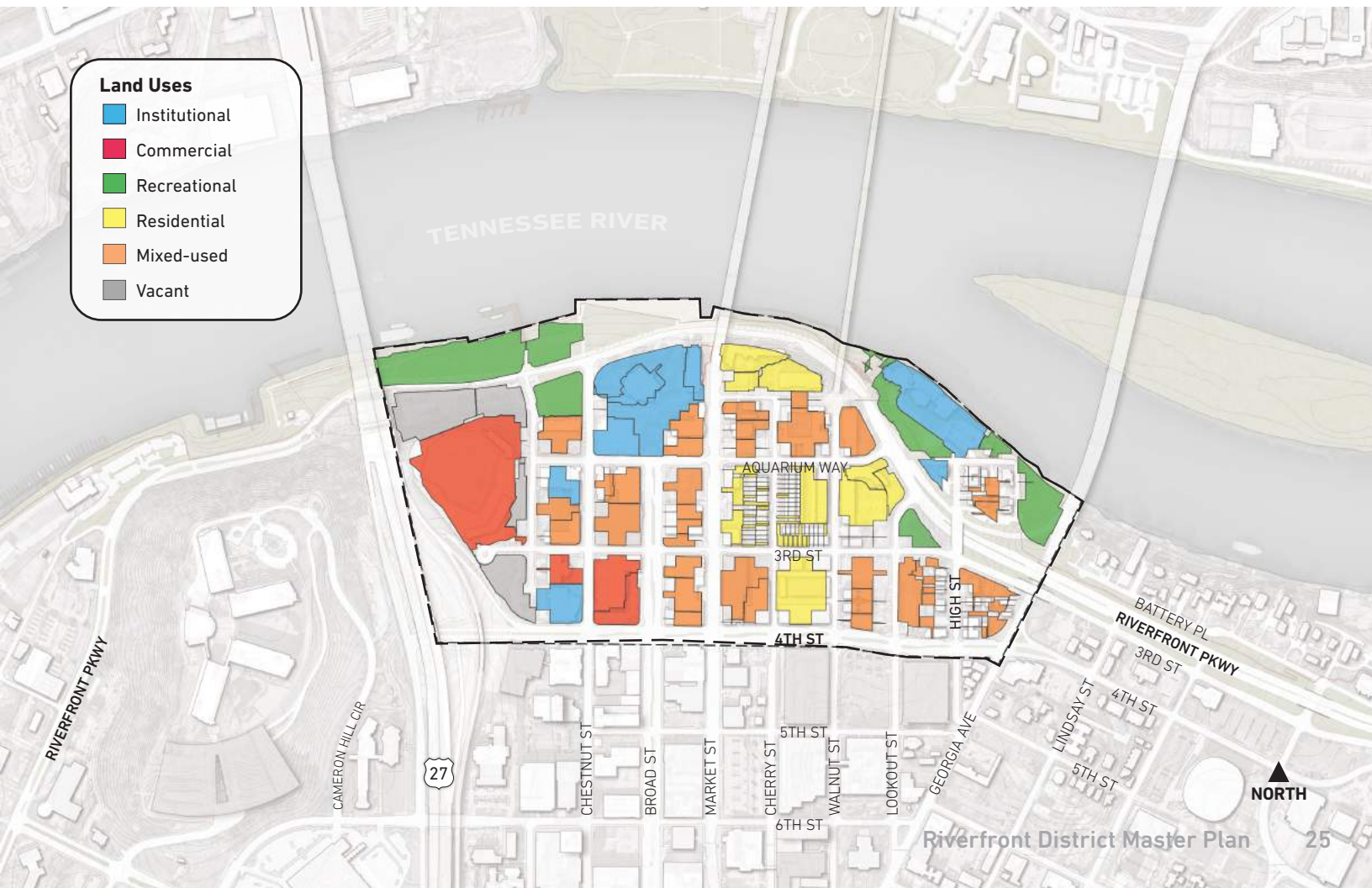
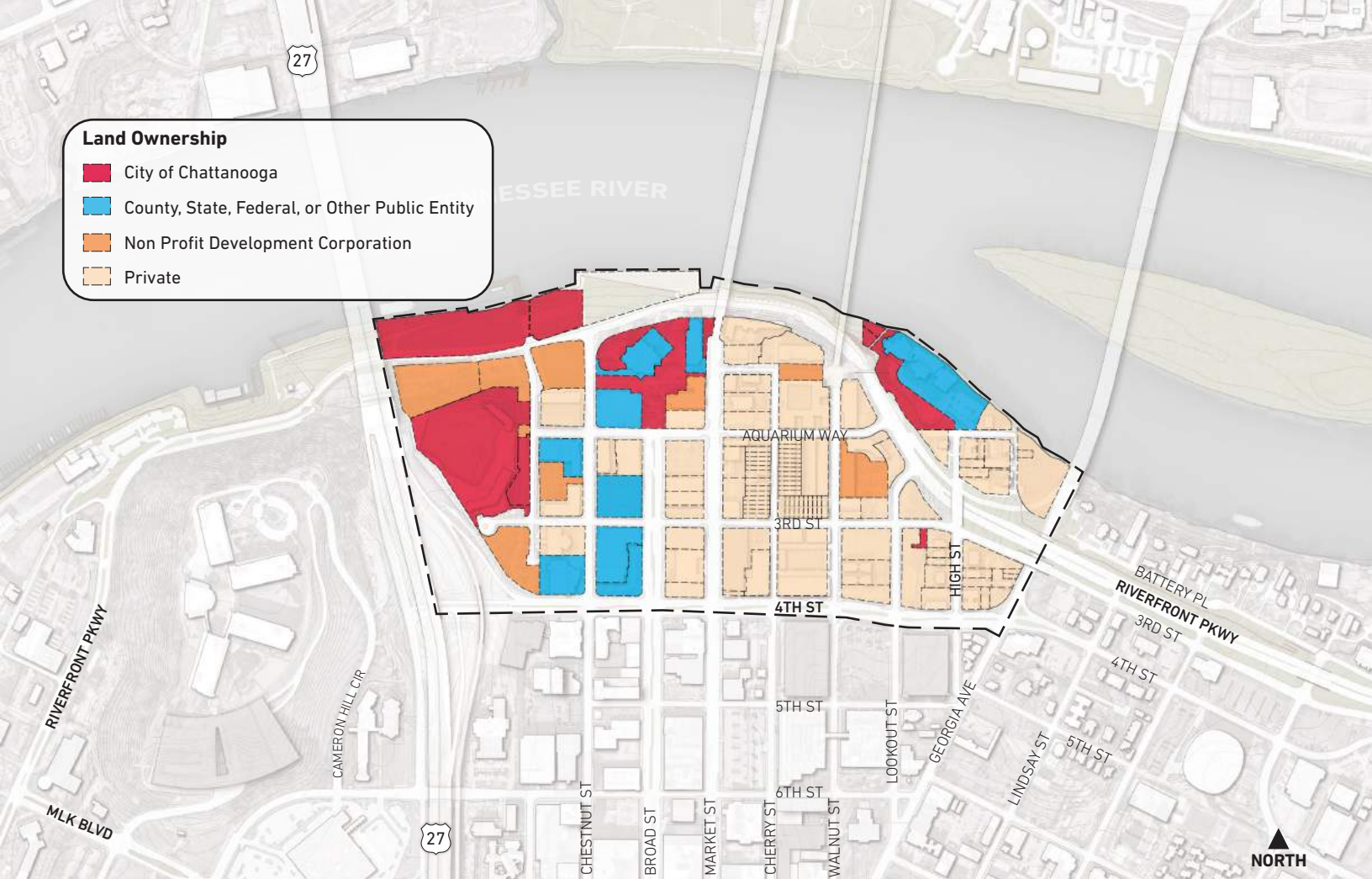
Land use in the Riverfront District is generally mixed in use, but given the number of cultural destinations within the District there is a high proportion of institutional uses. Commercial uses that are comprised mostly of hospitality, retail, restaurant and entertainment are clustered around these museums and attractions along Chestnut and Broad Street and at the foot of the Walnut Street Bridge. There is a greater mix of uses west of Market Street, with the area east of Market Street being primarily residential and neighborhood-scale uses predominating.

From an ownership perspective, the Riverfront District has a high percentage of land within the control of public or development corporation ownership. This includes the cultural destinations and attractions, but it also includes surface parking lots and public spaces. While some of these surface parking lots are highly utilized today, they also represent the opportunity for redevelopment. This provides an opportunity to reconsider parking uses in favor of development that could support a high and better use, as well as create a more walkable, urban district. Having these parcels under public and development corporation control should also help to facilitate development that meets a variety of residential price points and supports local entrepreneurs in ground floor commercial space (see page 56).



*There is a mix of residential, commercial, hospitality, and institutional uses in the Riverfront District.*







## Market Summary

To inform and support planning initiatives, recommendations, and development in the Riverfront District, the planning team examined demographic, economic, and real estate market trends within Greater Downtown, Chattanooga, and Hamilton County, as well as the Riverfront District specifically. The city-wide and regional benefit to continued public and private investment in the Greater Downtown area was also quantified to guide the recommendations of ONE Riverfront Chattanooga.

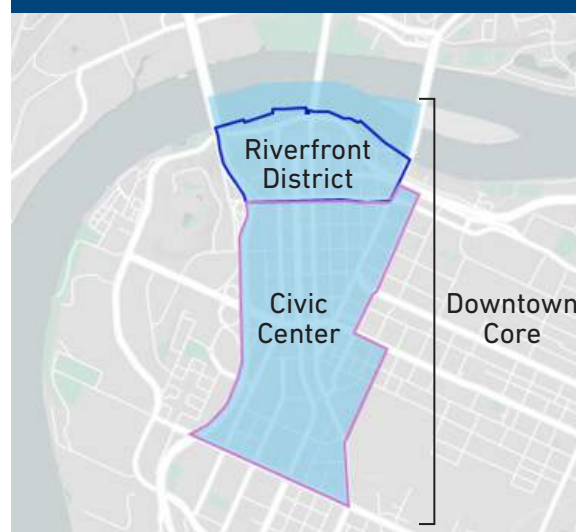
### ***Residential***

Greater Downtown's population has grown at twice the rate of Chattanooga overall since 2010. The most dramatic growth has taken place in Southside and Westside, but the Downtown Core and North Shore have also outpaced the city's growth.

Growing demand for downtown living has supported the addition of nearly 1,800 new multifamily units in the last decade, growing the local housing market by more than 140%. Significant rental housing has come online over the last five years, and nearly 1,000 units are in the pipeline, including in the Riverfront District. Based on projections of population growth, this pipeline will likely satisfy rental housing demand in the Greater Downtown through 2025. Over the subsequent decade, the Greater Downtown will demand an additional 1,180 to 2,100 units assuming the continued appeal of downtown living consistent with recent trends. The Riverfront District's capture of new units will depend on its competitiveness relative to adjacent neighborhoods.

New Downtown residents have high incomes relative to prior residents. Consistent with this trend, recently built rental and condo units have higher rents than elsewhere in the city, and the Riverfront District has some of the highest price points in the market. Most new rental units have attracted young professionals, with the 25- to 34-year-old segment leading new resident growth Downtown.

### **Primary Study Area: Downtown Core**



### **Secondary Study Area: Greater Downtown**



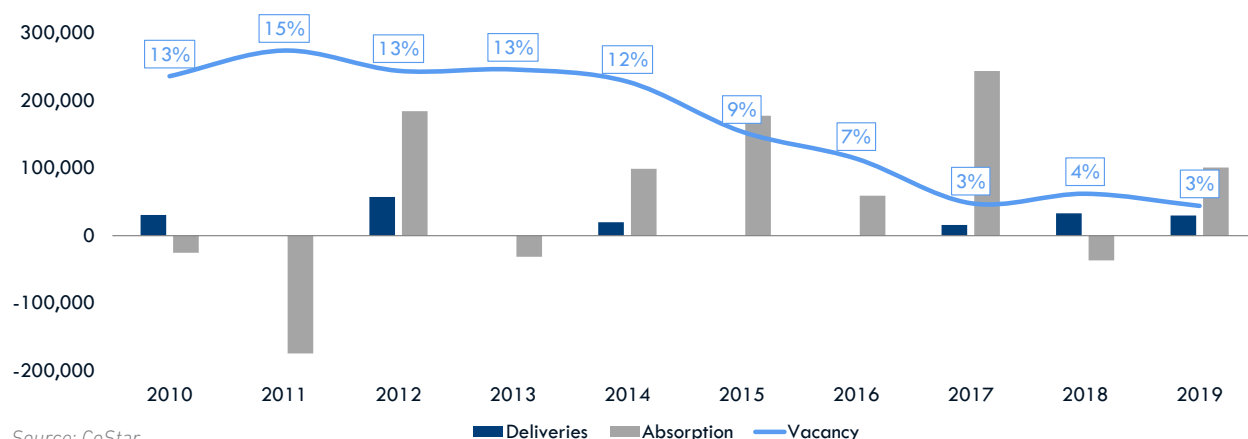
Creating a District that feels inclusive and that accommodates a broader mix of households, including families, will require more varied housing typologies and price points than exists today.

### Office

Downtown remains a major base of employment for Chattanooga, with 38,000 workers on site every day, more than 20% of the city's total. The Riverfront has limited office space but is home to several significant cultural anchors and within a short walk or drive from the City Center. The Downtown office market has historically low vacancy after more than a decade with no major office development. Yet average rents have remained flat, limiting the potential for new office development or significant rehabs. Given the challenges of financing new office construction, focusing on rehabilitation of vacant space for office use could help re-purpose underused buildings while growing the Riverfront's daytime population.

Tech startups and other innovation-related companies are driving demand for more modern, collaborative office space, such as that offered at the Edney Innovation Center. As emerging sectors grow, there is demand for unique, historic space, rather than the more traditional office product dominant in the City Center. Based on projected job growth in office-demanding industries, and with no new projects in development, the Greater Downtown will demand 130,000 to 300,000 square feet of new office space through 2025. Over the subsequent decade, it will demand 265,000 to 600,000 additional square feet, depending on economic growth trends. Riverfront's capture of this demand will depend on its competitiveness relative to adjacent neighborhoods.

**Greater Downtown Office Market Activity (2010 - 2019)**



The office market has seen healthy absorption, with an average of 60,000 square feet of net lease-up per year. With no major office deliveries in the past decade despite steady job growth, vacancies have declined to historic lows. Vacancy trends suggest full occupancy was reached in 2017 and there is likely unmet demand for new product today.



## Market Summary

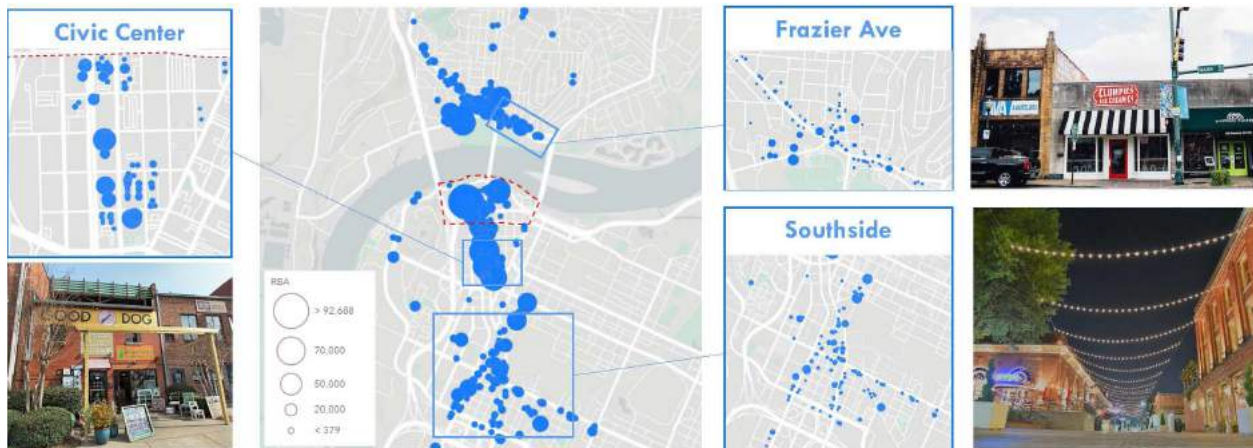
### Retail & Hotel

Riverfront has more than 400,000 square feet of retail, entertainment, and dining space largely catering to visitors of nearby attractions and overnight guests. High visitation to the Riverfront District provides an important base for retail spending but more consistent year-round activity is required to expand the range of existing businesses. In contrast to other successful retail corridors in Chattanooga such as Frazier Avenue in North Shore or Main and Station Streets in Southside, Riverfront retail is spread out across the District with no clear focal point or consistent street activity. Focusing investment and leasing activity on a central corridor such as Broad Street could fill in a market gap and create a more cohesive shopping and dining destination to retain visitors and residents for longer stays. As the Riverfront matures into a mixed-use neighborhood, a broader mix of retailers will be needed to serve varying tastes, including grocery and drug stores, convenience retail, and local-serving cafes and restaurants.

At present, we estimate approximately 65,000 square feet of unmet retail demand, mainly for dining and boutique retail uses. New residents, visitors, and workers in the District would support additional demand.

The Riverfront is the cultural hub of the city, home to regional attractions that draw locals and tourists Downtown, with more than 1.5 million visits in 2019. As a result, tourism has been the single largest economic driver for the Riverfront District. Greater Downtown is a hotel hub, representing 40% of all hotels citywide. The Riverfront has delivered 330 rooms to the Greater Downtown since 2000, or one-quarter of all new keys. To achieve destination appeal, existing hotel assets such as lobbies and bars could be improved and programmed with unique events so that locals are drawn to these spaces as well as guests. With a substantial pipeline (600+ rooms), the market is expecting limited demand for new hotels Downtown in the near term. But future products will likely follow the pattern of offering a unique and curated environment.

### Competing Retail Centers in Greater Downtown



Source: CoStar

## Takeaways

### **Residential:**

- A growing population of young professionals and increased preference for downtown living has supported multi-family housing growth to date. Moving forward, the Riverfront District may need to provide additional public amenities and retail options in order to appeal to a broader range of household types and ages.
- New development that remains inclusive and diverse will require a broader mix of price points than exists today.
- The Riverfront's capture of future demand will rely on its competitiveness and appeal compared to adjacent neighborhoods.

### **Office:**

- The growing tourism and innovation sectors provide a new base for the Greater Downtown workforce, that offers accessible jobs across a range of skill levels.
- While there is no office development in the pipeline, there will be future demand over the next five to 10 years that the Riverfront could position future developments to capture.
- The Riverfront's proximity to the City Center and major Downtown employers presents an opportunity to cater to these workers with activations in the Riverfront District after work hours.

### **Retail:**

- Tourism drives today's retail market in the Riverfront District.
- As more housing and office workers move into the Riverfront, they will require a broader mix of retailers to serve a 24-hour population of residents – rather than just tourists.
- Future retail will hinge on a broader Riverfront activation strategy that brings tourists, workers, and residents to the District.

### **Hotel:**

- Cultural institutions attract a high volume of locals and tourists to the Riverfront District. In 2019, there were over 1.5 million visitors to Riverfront attractions. The Greater Downtown is the hotel hub for the rest of the city.
- Recent and pipeline hotels are trending away from chain operators and moving toward a more "local" character and boutique appeal.
- Given the current supply and pipeline, there is limited demand for new hotels. Future demand will likely come from unique products that add to the area's destination appeal.

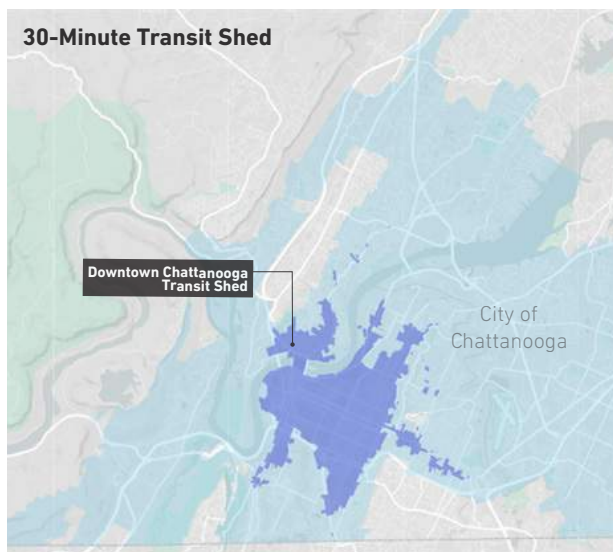


## Downtown's Economic Importance

Since 2000, the City of Chattanooga, philanthropic partners, and the private sector have made strategic investments in Downtown Chattanooga to revitalize the core of the city, grow the economy, and create a world-class destination for Chattanoogaans and visitors alike. Public investment in Downtown reversed years of job decline and private disinvestment and helped Downtown emerge from the Great Recession with a more diversified industry mix that has set up the region for long-term job growth. Between 2000 and 2008, the public sector invested more than \$140 million Downtown, including through the 21st Century Waterfront, upgrades to the Riverwalk, Coolidge Park, and the Market Street Bridge, and the Chattanooga Hotel & Conference Center.

Today, Downtown is home to more than 38,000 jobs – surpassing the prior peak in 2000 – with growing concentrations in tech and innovation, health care and education, and tourism-related industries, all key growth sectors that have accounted for nearly 40% of new jobs in the city since 2009.

Downtown jobs provide economic opportunity to a broad cross-section of Chattanoogaans. Overall, 3 in 5 jobs in Downtown Chattanooga do not require a bachelor's degree, and 1 in 6 do not require a high school degree. Many of these jobs, especially in the tourism sector, pay higher wages Downtown than elsewhere in the city. These jobs are also physically accessible. Downtown is served by all 17 bus lines in the regional transit network, linking to dozens of neighborhoods across the city. Approximately 44,600 Chattanoogaans live within a 30-minute transit travel time of Downtown, representing 25% of the city's population. These residents make up a more diverse cross-section of the city and a higher percentage of low-income households than residents living near other major job centers outside Downtown. Downtown investment has supported the continued success of local cultural and recreational destinations. Unique regional attractions have been the centerpiece of the Downtown for the last 15 years, generating significant local spending, tax revenues, and amenities for local and regional residents.



**Downtown Transit Shed vs. City Demographics**

	<b>Downtown Transit Shed</b> (30 mins. from Downtown)	<b>City</b>
<b>Population</b>	44,600	177,000
<b>Share of Citywide Population</b>	25%	100%
<b>Race</b>		
<b>White</b>	42%	59%
<b>Black</b>	48%	32%
<b>Hispanic</b>	11%	7%
<b>Income</b>	\$27,800	\$42,300
<b>Median Age</b>	33	39

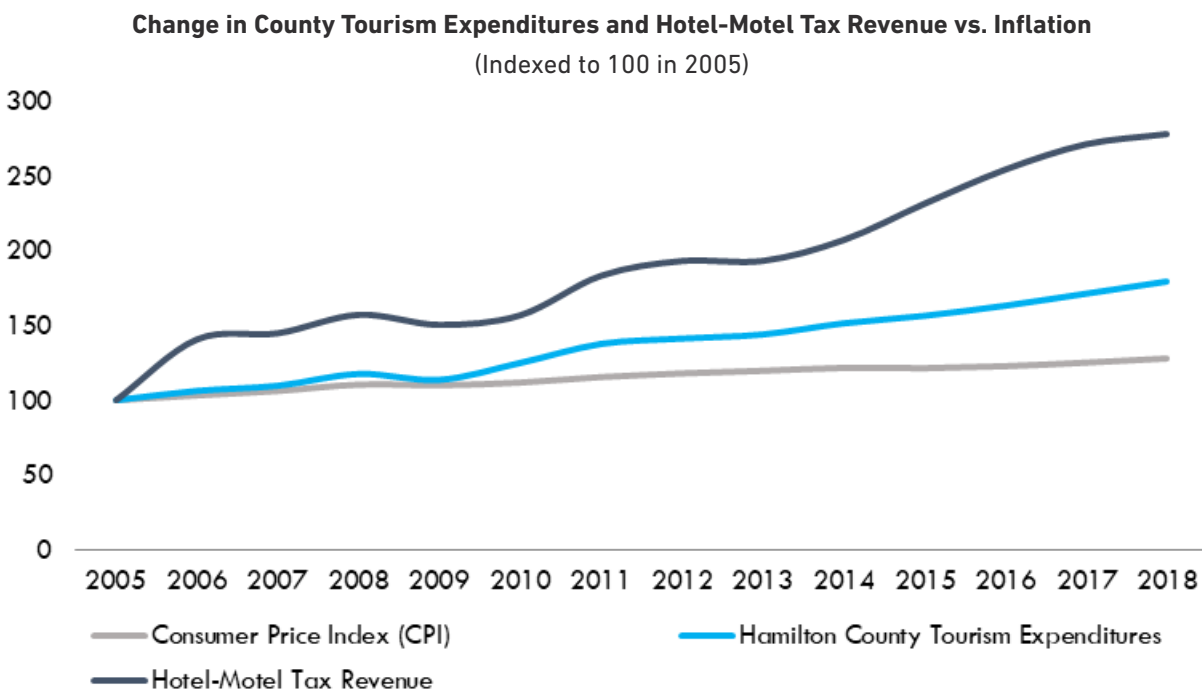
Source: Census Bureau

Supported by Downtown attractions such as the Tennessee Aquarium, Creative Discovery Museum, Hunter Museum of American Art, and Chattanooga Lookouts, the tourism industry has grown substantially in Hamilton County since 2000. Direct tourism expenditures have grown by 80% from \$647 million in 2005 to \$1.2 billion in 2018. An estimated 35% of all visits, and more than half of youth visits, are by locals.

Downtown generates an outsize share of local tax revenue, supporting public expenditures in all neighborhoods. Downtown Chattanooga contributed an estimated \$74 million in tax revenue to the City, County, and County Schools last year, accounting for 13% of the City's general fund, 6% of the County's general fund, and 6% of the Hamilton County Schools' budget – despite making up just 4% of city land area and 1% of county land area.

Between 2008 and 2018, the Downtown property tax base grew twice as fast as all other areas of the city. Property tax revenue generated by the Downtown grew by 80% over this time, compared with 35% for all other areas of the City.

As a result, the Downtown generated an additional \$13 million in property tax revenue for the City and County in 2019 than would have been achieved had the Downtown grown at the same rate as the rest of the city. This additional tax revenue has allowed the City and County to expand services across Chattanooga.





# COMMUNITY & RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

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# COMMUNITY & RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

The 22-month ONE Riverfront Chattanooga process was led by a working group comprised of key River City Company staff and guided by Steering and Outreach Committees of community members. The process included robust community outreach and engagement that invited all Chattanooga residents, employees, and stakeholders to help shape the future of the Riverfront District. More than **2,000 community members** participated throughout the process, which included a variety of formats for engagement—from stakeholder roundtables to one-on-one outreach meetings to online surveys and even a scavenger hunt. The engagement approach to the right summarizes the different ways in which community members were involved in the process. A portion of the community engagement was conducted in a digital format due to the COVID-19 pandemic that began in the winter of 2020.

## ENGAGEMENT APPROACH



### Working Group

A team consisting of key River City Company staff that served as a direct day-to-day contact point for the planning team.



### Steering Committee

A group formed to guide and advise the planning team throughout the process.



### Outreach Committee

A group formed to guide and advise the planning team to ensure broad, equitable community outreach.



### Community Workshops

Three public workshops were held across the arc of the process to share the work process to-date and gather community feedback.



### Stakeholder Roundtables

A series of small group discussions with community members based around specific topic areas.



### Project Website & Social Media

A project website and social media were used to maximize the project's community outreach.



### Neighborhood Focus Groups & Resident Engagement

This important component engaged surrounding neighborhoods, community influencers, and groups that ordinarily are not represented in traditional planning activities.



30

Steering Committee Members



1,038

Online Survey Responses



185

Stakeholders Interviewed



520+

Community Workshop Attendees



176

Scavenger Hunt + Open Street Participants



98

Neighborhood Focus Group & Resident Participants

The planning process included multiple touchpoints with the community to understand the Riverfront District's challenges and opportunities, gather ideas, and review the plan recommendations.

## Stakeholder Roundtables

In mid-January 2020, the planning team met with **185 stakeholders** representing many key partners in the Riverfront District, the city, and the region. The stakeholders were organized into the following topic groups:

- Businesses
- City Mayor and Mayor's Office
- Mayor
- Hotels and Restaurants
- City Planning, Economic Development, Parks, Public Art Departments
- Real Estate Brokers
- Regional Planning Agency
- Marketing & Communication Professionals
- Young Professionals
- Office/Employers
- Cultural Institutions
- Foundations & Philanthropy Organizations
- Artists & Musicians
- Outreach Committee
- Event Producers
- Commercial Brokers
- Residents
- County Mayor's Office
- Chattanooga Visitors Bureau
- Innovation/Start Up Organizations
- Transportation & Parking Organizations
- River City Company
- Chattanooga Design Studio

Based on initial conversations with the Steering Committee and stakeholders, the planning team created the following emerging themes to summarize the feedback, which would help to guide the rest of the planning process.

## Challenges + Opportunities:

- The community can no longer articulate the identity of the Riverfront District, it is just a tourist place now.
- Riverfront is a venue, not a park...it is time to reimagine the park entirely.
- The whole idea was to bring the community back to the river, we haven't finished the job.
- The Riverfront District must feel welcome and relatable; right now there is not much that is culturally relevant.
- There are people in the community that have never seen the riverfront or know there is a riverfront in their city.
- The Riverfront District has key assets that embrace family, but if you cannot afford these assets, there's not much to do .
- The Riverfront should be a cultural center for all.

## Riverfront:

- Find ways to extend the length of stay in the Riverfront District
- The riverfront needs more comfort (seating, shade, restrooms, etc.)
- The riverfront needs more things to do (restaurants/bars with views of the water, playground, consistent programming, retail, etc.)
- Chattanooga Green is not welcoming and feels exposed
- Riverfront Parkway is still a barrier to the river
- Cultural institutions need to be better connected to each other and the riverfront



### **Community Events + Activation:**

- We need the right programming and activities; current events lack diversity (types of artists, types of music, types of festivals/events)
- Need events that cater to all ages (families, teens, 25-40)
- Need to commit to local artists and involve them
- Programming needs to happen more consistently, more needs to be done Monday through Thursday
- Endow a programming budget
- Consider the needs of big events to determine options for creative staging and logistics
- Allow for more “pop up” retail, food and beverage options, and “drinking zones” along the riverfront

### **Connections + Access:**

- Improve the safety of the pedestrian environment (Riverfront Parkway, 4th Street, Market Street, Broad Street)
- Riverwalk wayfinding and connectivity is challenging between the riverfront and Bluff View
- Better bike lane connectivity needed between Downtown to Riverfront to North Shore
- Need to educate people about transportation alternatives and parking
- Parking is not a quantity issue—it is about the desire for close, free parking
- Need better access to the river for recreation
- Recognition that transit improvements are needed, but concerns over bus queuing

### **Development:**

- Of live, work, and play, “play” is the driving activity in the Riverfront District
- Empty surface lots hamper walkability
- Surface lots were always meant for redevelopment
- Need for mixed use development on parking lot sites
- There needs to be a cluster of activity; more residential and restaurants

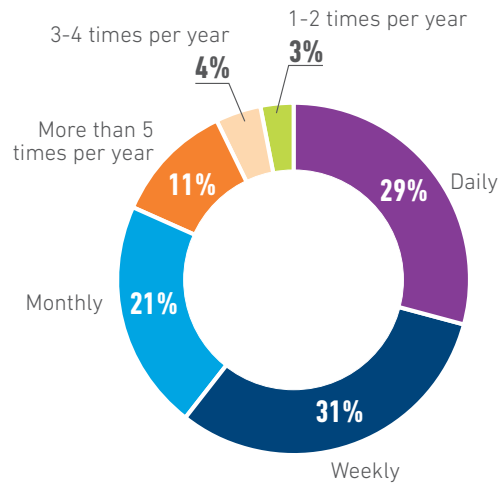


## Community Workshop #1

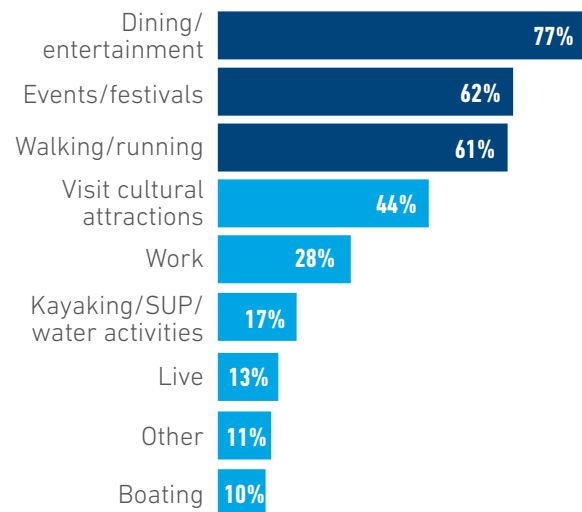
The first community workshop was held on January 29, 2020 at the Tennessee Aquarium. The goals of this workshop were to solicit ideas from community members, understand current perceptions of the Riverfront District, and to build excitement. More than **200 people** participated in the event, which included a short presentation followed by several activity stations.

After the in-person event, an online survey was posted to the project website to provide the opportunity for community members who could not attend the event to provide feedback. While the survey was open most of 2020, there were 252 respondents. The following charts and graphs summarize the results from the in-person workshop and follow-up online survey.

**Which of the following best describes how often you spend time in the Riverfront District?** (n=644)

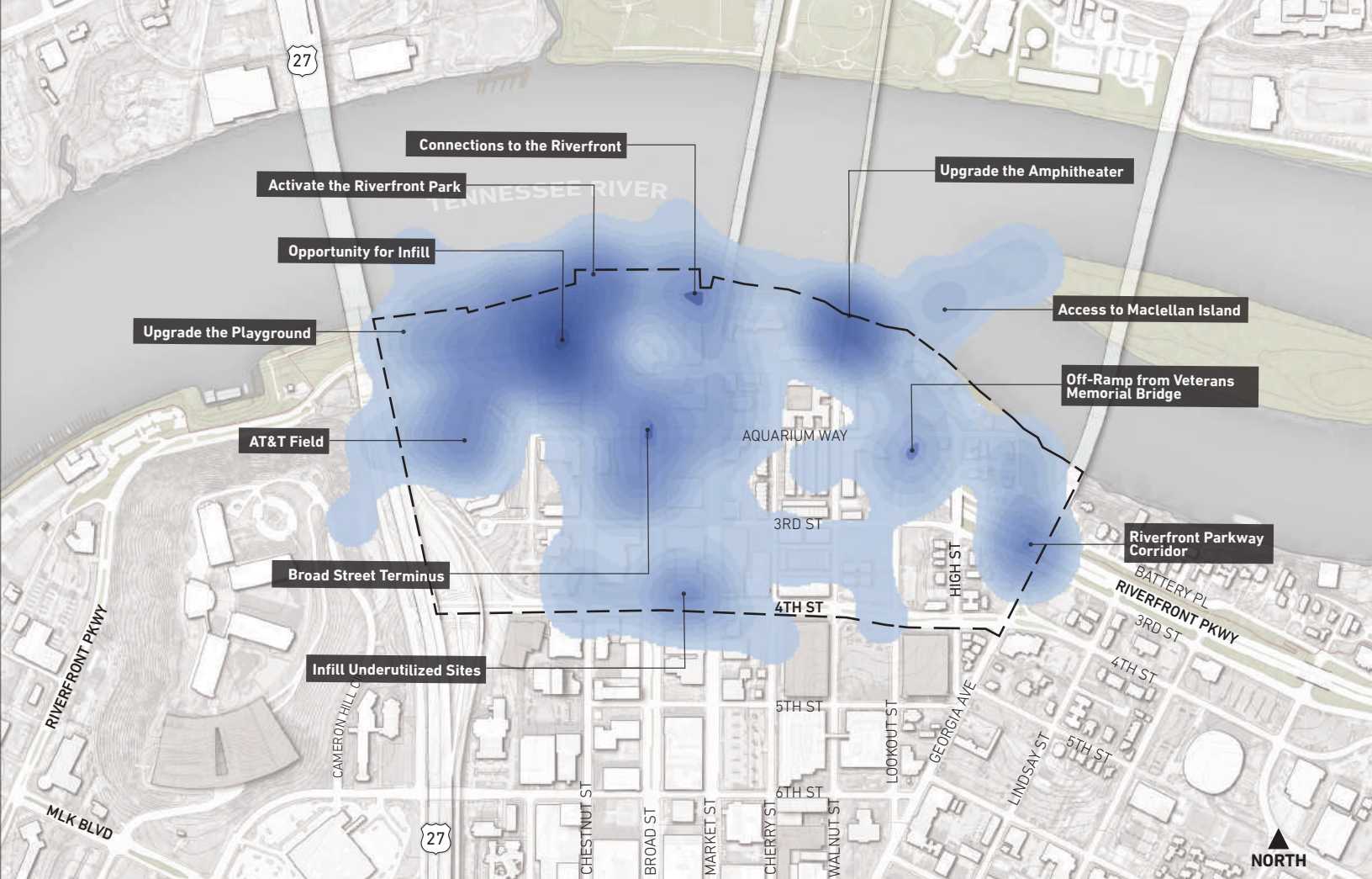


**Which best describes how you spend your time in the Riverfront District? Select all that apply.** (n=666)



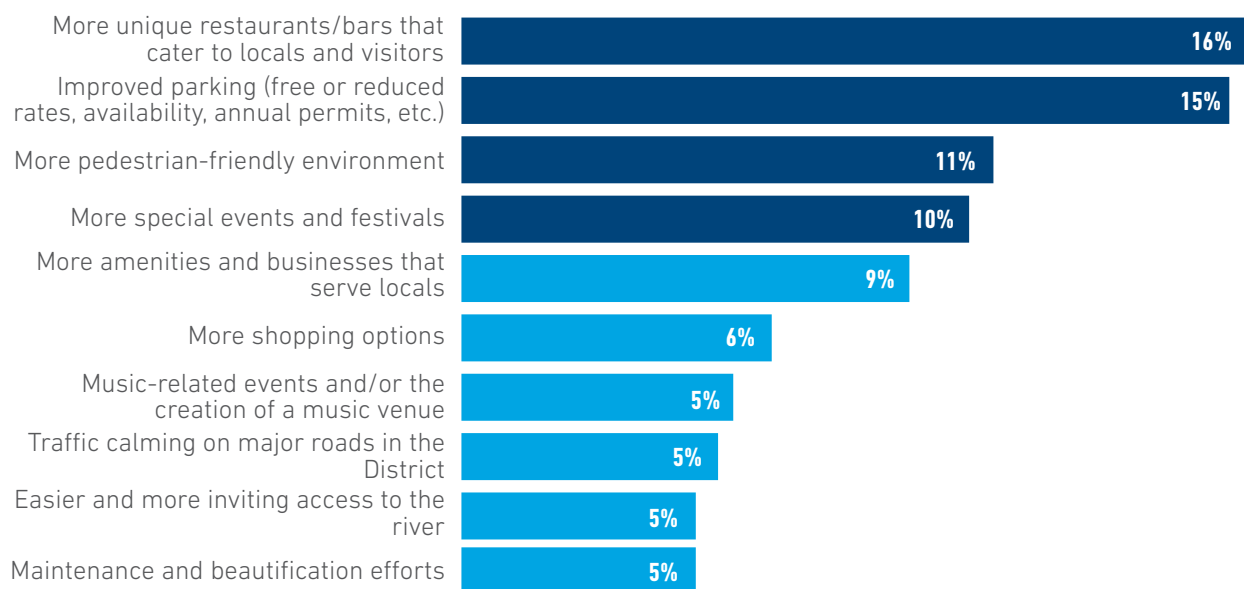
**Share what parts of the Riverfront District you think are priorities and/or have potential. This can be a street or intersection, a place, a building, an activity, or an event.** (n=763)





Community priorities for where the ONE Riverfront plan should focus planning and design improvements.

**What is one thing you'd like to see happen in the Riverfront District between 4th Street and the Tennessee River? (n=763)**





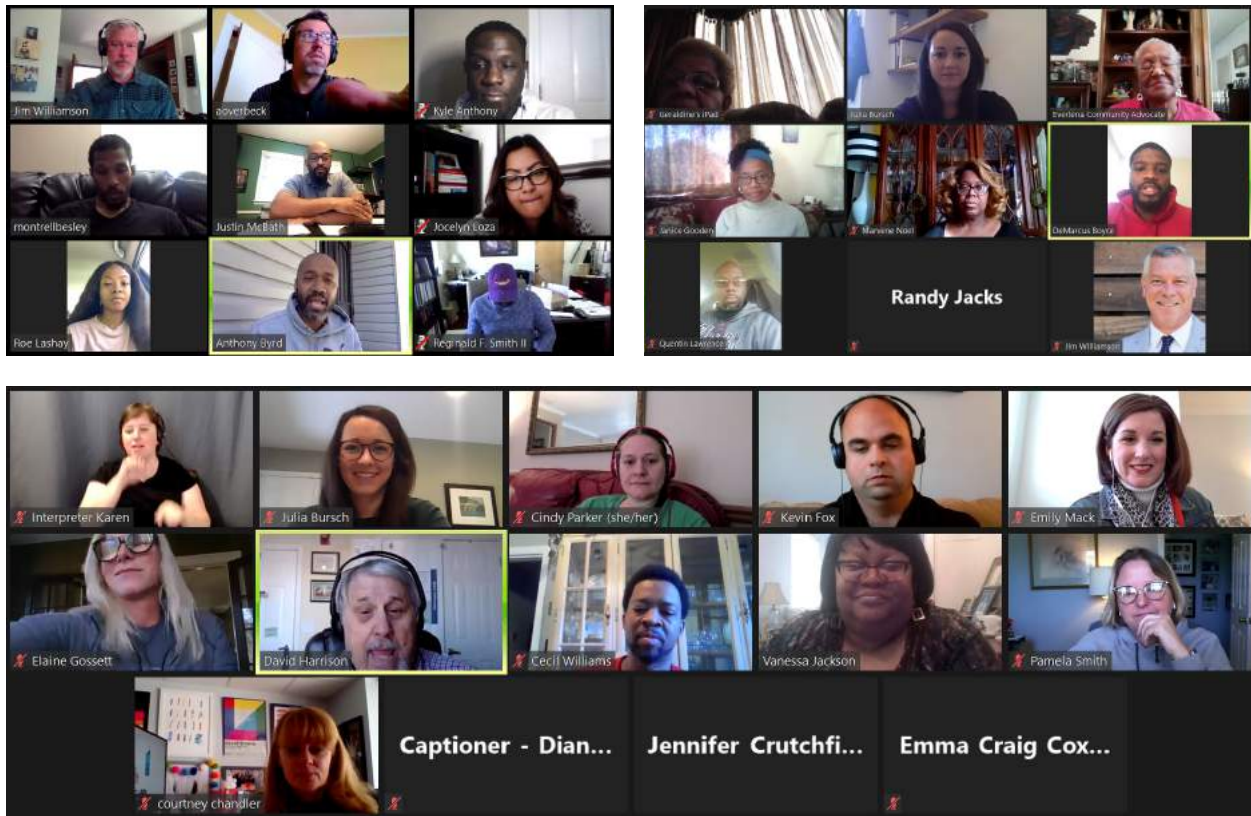
## Neighborhood Focus Groups and Resident Engagement

Starting in February 2020, the team shifted focus to conduct targeted outreach to community groups and neighborhoods across the city. More than two dozen outreach meetings took place with 98 stakeholders and neighborhood leaders via Zoom, phone call, and other digital platforms. Stakeholders and community members from various organizations and neighborhoods were involved in these outreach meetings, representing the following neighborhoods, groups, and organizations:

- Alton Park Neighborhood
- Bridge CHA
- Eastdale Neighborhood
- Fortwood Neighborhood Association
- Glass House Collective
- Glenwood Neighborhood
- Highland Park Neighborhood
- Hixson Kiwanis
- Hunter Museum
- Latina Professionals of Chattanooga
- Local Artists & Creatives
- Local Businesses
- Mayor's Council on Aging & Livability
- Mayor's Council on Disabilities
- Noir Nooga
- Orchard Knob Neighborhood & Schools
- Urban League
- UTC

The following is a summary of the conversations River City Company and the planning team had with these neighborhood leaders:

- There is a need for diversity and cultural awareness in the District to create a place where all people feel welcome and where activities and attractions suit a variety of interests.
- Policing and surveillance in the District is a deterrent for some folks who have had negative past experiences with law enforcement; people of color especially feel unwelcome there.
- The desire for events and programming in the Riverfront District that cater to more diverse audiences and music tastes.
- The high cost of living in the Riverfront District is keeping some prospective residents away and living in other neighborhoods.
- Prospective business owners and event organizers in the District lack the resources and contacts in the District to successfully open their business or host their event there.
- There is a need for more attention to accessibility and accommodations in the District for people with disabilities and mobility challenges.
- There is a strong need for a unified communication strategy to promote activities, events, and programming in the Riverfront District.
- Parking continues to be a major topic of conversation.



Neighborhood Focus Groups and Resident Engagement

*"I would love to see my local friends having a space to showcase their talents."*

- Chattanooga Resident

*"I do not use the Riverfront. I had a bad experience with my friends and I when we were skateboarding down there and we felt unwelcomed by the law enforcement."*

- Chattanooga Resident

*"It feels uncomfortable and policed all the time as if we are there to cause problems."*

- Chattanooga Resident

*"More diversity options with food and activities would make me travel to the area more and often!"*

- Chattanooga Resident

*"There should be activities happening year-round throughout the entire district. We have the artists and creatives in the city to do just that."*

- Chattanooga Resident

## Riverfront Activation Events

### *Open Streets*

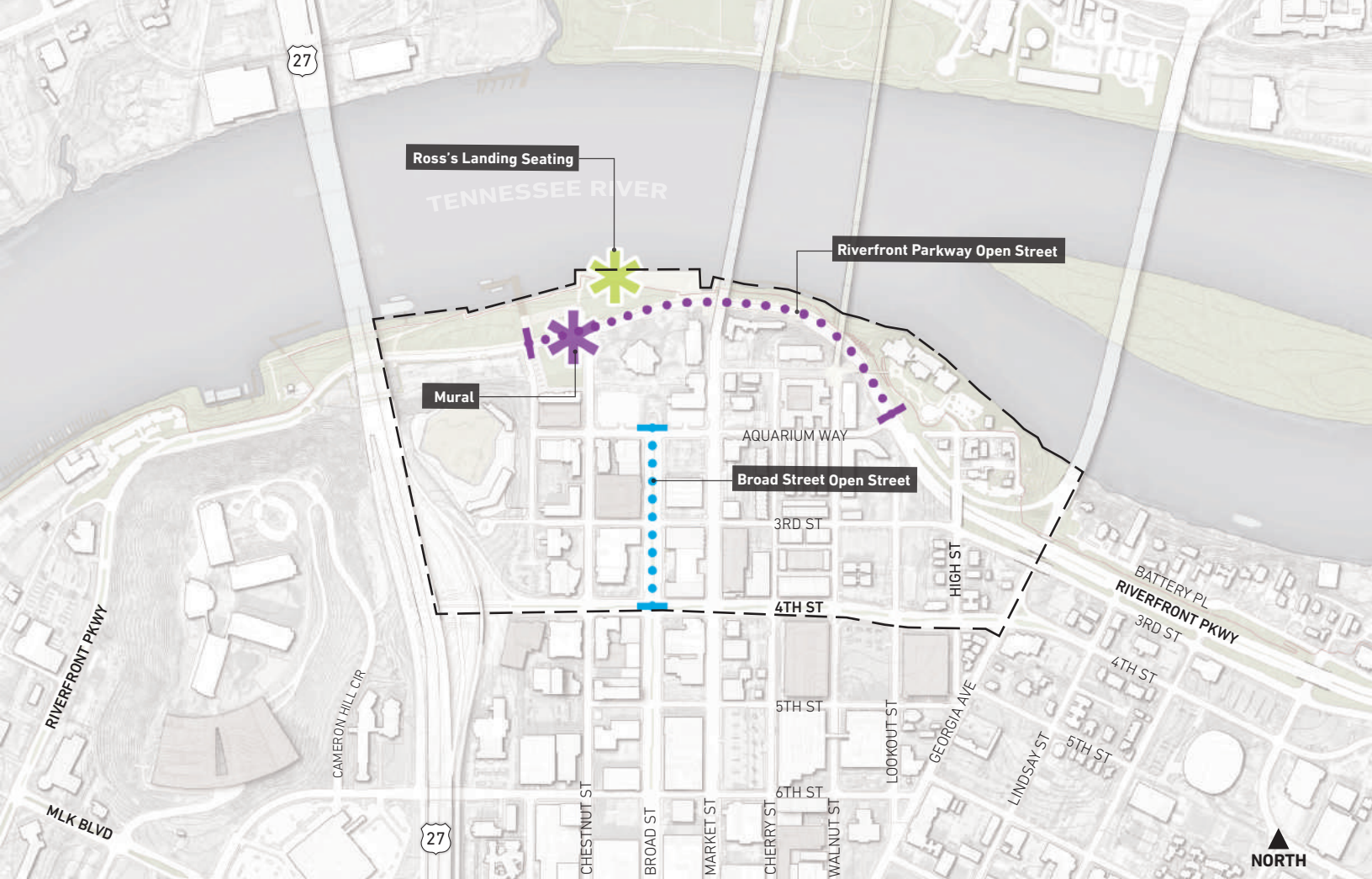
River City Company sponsored multiple Open Street events, which took place in fall 2020 to test ideas for the improvement of the District with the community and to safely activate the Riverfront District during the COVID-19 pandemic. The events were held on Broad Street and Riverfront Parkway, which were temporarily closed to vehicular traffic to prioritize pedestrians and cyclists. The Broad Street Open Street event included outdoor dining and street vendors, while the Riverfront Parkway Open Street event included live painting of a street mural, games, and unique temporary seating at Ross's Landing. In addition to activation, these events also presented an opportunity to engage people in the ONE Riverfront Chattanooga planning process through an intercept survey.

### *Scavenger Hunt*

River City Company also hosted a ONE Riverfront Scavenger Hunt around the same time in fall 2020. The outdoor scavenger hunt created a way for people to explore and discover local shops, businesses, and open spaces around the Riverfront District in a fun, non-contact way. The scavenger hunt included nine locations throughout the District. Participants were able to explore nine locations filled with fun facts, challenges, and activities for all ages. At each location, participants were asked to also complete a survey question related to the ONE Riverfront planning process to reveal the clue for the next location. In total, **176 people** took a survey during the Open Streets events or participated in the Scavenger Hunt during the activation of the Riverfront.







Map of Riverfront Activation Events

*"I would like to see more shade options and things to do in green spaces"*

- Chattanooga Resident

*"It was nice to not worry about traffic and crossing the street safely; I enjoyed the quieter space without traffic; I would like to see closure happen regularly."*

- Chattanooga Resident

*"Loved the access it gave to the Riverfront and it felt inviting. Liked the yellow seats."*

- Chattanooga Resident

*"Riverfront Parkway itself is still somewhat bare. We need things to draw us down to the river."*

- Chattanooga Resident

*"My vision for the Riverfront District is...a desirable, pedestrian and bike friendly destination for both visitors and residents, with a diverse mix of housing and businesses"*

- Chattanooga Resident

## Community Workshop #2

The second round of workshops, called Community Roundtables, were held in March 2021 via Zoom Webinar. Between the two dates, **149 people** participated in a roundtable, which included a presentation followed by Q&A. The presentation included the summary of community input findings to-date and how they align with the draft Riverfront District goals. The following themes and aspirations for the Riverfront District were reviewed:

### ***Community Engagement Themes:***

- The District hosts the region's signature events, but **lacks a diversity of offerings for local, daily use.**
- The Riverfront District touches many of the neighborhoods and districts of metro Chattanooga, but is **poorly connected to the community fabric.**
- The District has many visitor destinations, but **no reason to stay.**
- The Riverfront District is the geographic and historic heart of the community, but **not the heart of activity.**

### ***Riverfront District Aspirations:***

- Create a **Place for All Chattanooga**
- **Strengthen Connectivity** to the Riverfront
- Develop a **Greater Sense of Place**
- **Activate** the Riverfront

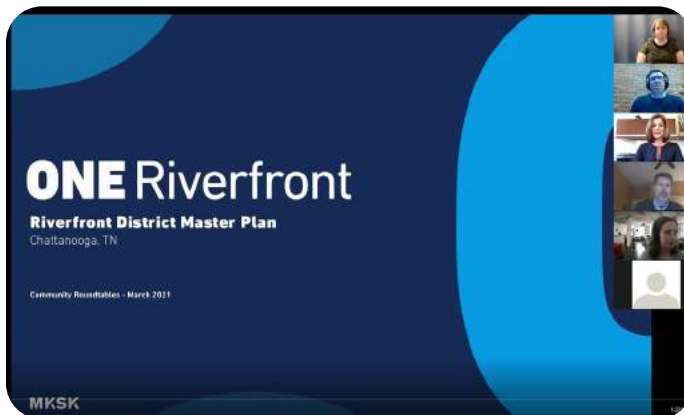
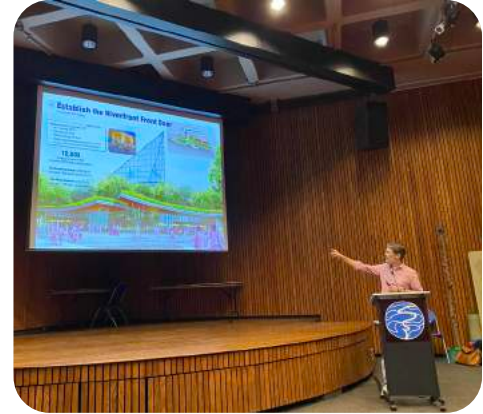
After the Zoom Webinars, a recording of the presentation was uploaded to the project website along with an online survey with the same questions asked of webinar participants. **227 people** completed the online survey, which was offered in both English and Spanish. The following summarizes the combined responses from both the webinar attendees and the online survey respondents:

- 81% of respondents agreed that the summary of input from the community engagement process accurately reflects community sentiments.
- 88% of respondents agreed that the draft strategies will help to achieve the community's goals.
- Respondents were asked to select the Riverfront District aspiration that resonated with them the most, with the following results:
  - » Activate the Riverfront – 29%
  - » Create a Place for All Chattanooga – 27%
  - » Other Idea Presented – 23%
  - » Develop a Greater Sense of Place – 20%
  - » Strengthen Connectivity to the Riverfront – 19%

## Community Workshop #3

The third workshop was a reveal event for the final plan, held at the Tennessee Aquarium in July 2021 across two sessions. More than **175 people** attended across these in-person presentations to view the plans and provide input.





*"I would echo the input regarding the underutilized sites through out the area. Empty buildings and unused spaces have a negative impact on the area. Even converting these to green space would be an enhancement."*

- Chattanooga Resident

*"Enhancing the green spaces along the river should be a priority. Some of the spaces feel dated and need an update."*

- Chattanooga Resident





# **ACTION PLAN**

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# INTRODUCTION

Building on the key findings from the community and resident engagement, and existing conditions and assessment the planning team to reach consensus around Four Aspirations for the next iteration of the Riverfront District. These **Four Aspirations** not only represent the desires of the community, but they also represent a promise to future generations of Chattanooga. To follow through on this promise, **Eight Strategies** were developed to further define and illustrate the physical improvements, public realm investments, and policy initiatives that will move the Riverfront District forward.

The resulting **Action Plan** addresses each of the Eight Strategies in more detail, both setting forth a vision and providing concrete implementation steps.

While these investments in public spaces and places will be undoubtedly transformative, the community partnerships and collaboration that will occur throughout implementation are perhaps just as important. It is the intent of this Action Plan to bring River City Company, the City of Chattanooga, Hamilton County, foundations, and institutions together with community members, artists, business owners, and other stakeholders to collaboratively implement this important work. Only then can we truly create **ONE Riverfront for All Chattanooga**.



# 1 Strategy

# HUMANIZE THE PARKS

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The investment in the 21st Century Waterfront improvements that were completed in 2005 represented the culmination of a decades-long effort to reclaim the Chattanooga Riverfront for greater community use and benefit. The improvement of over 100 acres along the waterfront provided a variety of public spaces that have supported major community events and made the riverfront a regional and national destination.

Through the ONE Riverfront Chattanooga process, the Chattanooga community affirmed the value of this investment in public space and also identified the need to explore opportunities for how the waterfront parks can continue to evolve to best meet the needs of the community.

One of the primary strategies of the ONE Riverfront Plan is to respond to the community desire for waterfront parks that better serve daily local use. While successfully designed to accommodate signature community events that draw visitors and investment to the District, the waterfront park spaces lack the comfort, amenities, and activities that support local day-to-day use.

*"I would like to see more shade and things to do in the green spaces."*

- Chattanooga Resident

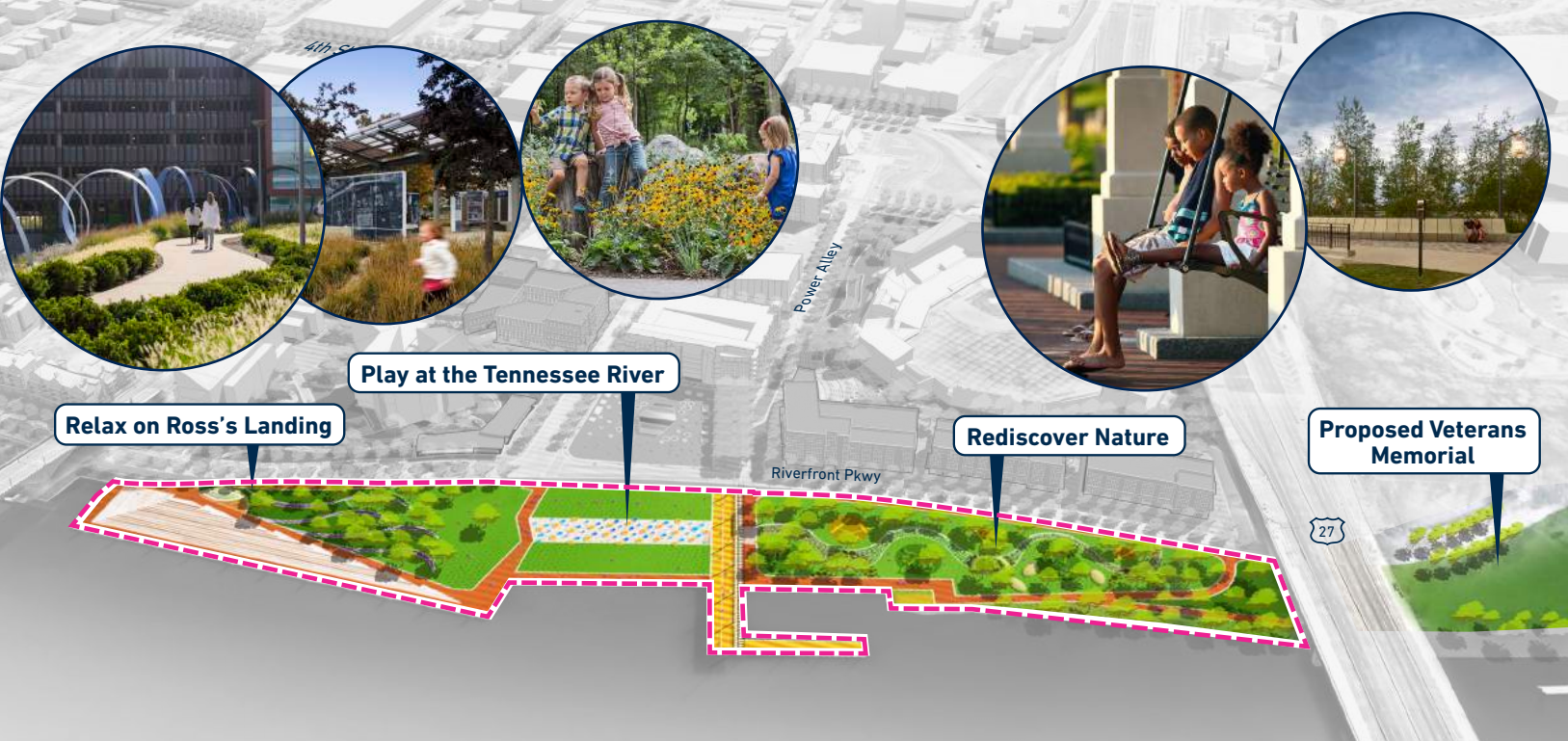
*"Enhancing the green spaces along the river should be a priority. Some of the spaces feel dated and need an update."*

- Chattanooga Resident

The improvements envisioned in this plan for the waterfront parks build on previous investment by sensitively integrating additional shade, seating options, art, enhanced river access, and the public amenities that support park users of all ages and abilities. These improvements have been conceptually developed in coordination with community event organizers and in recognition of the need to continue to have the waterfront host major annual events.

This approach to refreshing the waterfront parks with improvements and amenities that support daily use will create a more livable urban environment in the Riverfront District. This will enable new passive and programmed park uses geared toward attracting a steady flow of local visitors to the parks, extending the length of visit to the District, and creating the positive spillover effect of foot traffic and vibrancy for adjacent businesses, institutions and attractions. In response to the current conditions of the waterfront parks and trails and in anticipation of future community needs, the public park spaces on the following page have been highlighted for tailored improvements.





**Relax on Ross's Landing:** New seating and landscape features built into the sloped lawn at Ross's Landing offer unparalleled views of the Tennessee River and capitalize on the existing grade change from street level to river level. This area is less conducive to staged events due to the sloped landscape but provides a unique opportunity for individual and small group gathering in a landscape enhanced with sculptural benches, deciduous shade trees, and native plantings to improve stormwater infiltration and wildlife habitat.

**Play at the Tennessee River:** Building on the Riverfront Parkway Open Streets event, the concrete terraces below Chattanooga Green have been activated with sculptural seating, colorful vessels for seasonal planting, and shade structures that provide thermal comfort in the warm summer months. These planned improvements require minimal changes to the existing amphitheater while enhancing the comfort and usability of the space for trail users and park visitors.

**Rediscover Nature:** The current playground area to the west of Chattanooga Green has been expanded to create a natural play experience that welcomes all ages and abilities to explore the river's edge. This portion of river frontage is envisioned to include environmental art, natural play elements, comfortable seating options, and the opportunity for a restored shoreline that improves river health while providing soft launch access for personal watercraft.

**Veterans Memorial Plaza:** Sparked by the need to relocate the World War II Monument from Patten Parkway, a Veterans Committee identified three potential sites that could serve not only for the WWII Memorial, but to consolidate the multitude of monuments spread throughout the county into a dignified civic space that honors all military veterans in our community. Through a public engagement process, the site just west of the Olgiati Bridge was identified as the preferred location for a future, new Veterans Memorial Plaza within the 21st Century Waterfront and owned by the City of Chattanooga. The City is in support of their effort and continues to work with the Veterans to accomplish their goal.



1

# HUMANIZE THE PARKS

## Rediscover Nature

The current playground area to the west of Chattanooga Green has been expanded to welcome all ages to rediscover nature at the river's edge. This dynamic landscape features meandering landforms. Diverse native plant species, unique adventure play elements, and restored river's edge designed to improve riparian functions of habitat creation and water quality improvement.



Earth Slide



Public Art



Log Play





1. Earth slide
2. Public art
3. Embankment (slope from street level to river level)
4. Log play
5. Stone climbers
6. Kayak soft launch





1

# HUMANIZE THE PARKS

## Play at the Tennessee River

To enable daily usage and gathering along the Tennessee River, comfortable seating will invite leaning, sitting, or lounging and are movable so that they can be rearranged to accommodate gatherings large and small. They provide a pop of color and a human-scale to the heart of the Tennessee riverfront park network. All proposed furnishings are movable to accommodate riverfront events.





## Play at the Tennessee River

1. Movable Seating, Umbrellas and Planters
2. Existing Pathway
3. Existing Public Pier



## 2 Strategy

# COME TOGETHER AT THE RIVER

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The Riverfront District has the opportunity to once again be the premier gathering place for the Chattanooga community. In addition to large events and concerts, the Riverfront District should be home to a diversity of weekly programming that serves local community interests and audiences. This strategy aims to welcome Chattanoogaans to the riverfront and create a nucleus of energy that serves the social and cultural needs of the community and spurs locally owned business and entrepreneurship. This can be accomplished in three ways:

- Install a 12-36 month **temporary activation of Chattanooga Green** to attract foot traffic while new development, business start-up, and programming in the District are getting underway. This will provide multi-generational and culturally relevant activities and experiences that attract local Chattanoogaans to the riverfront, support local businesses, and complement existing attractions (see the activation tools to the right).

*"Honestly, I don't know what the intent is for the Riverfront District is besides looking off into the water. I'm going to say that it's dull."*

- Chattanooga Resident

*"I would definitely come to the Riverfront District if there were more culturally appropriate events that interest me."*

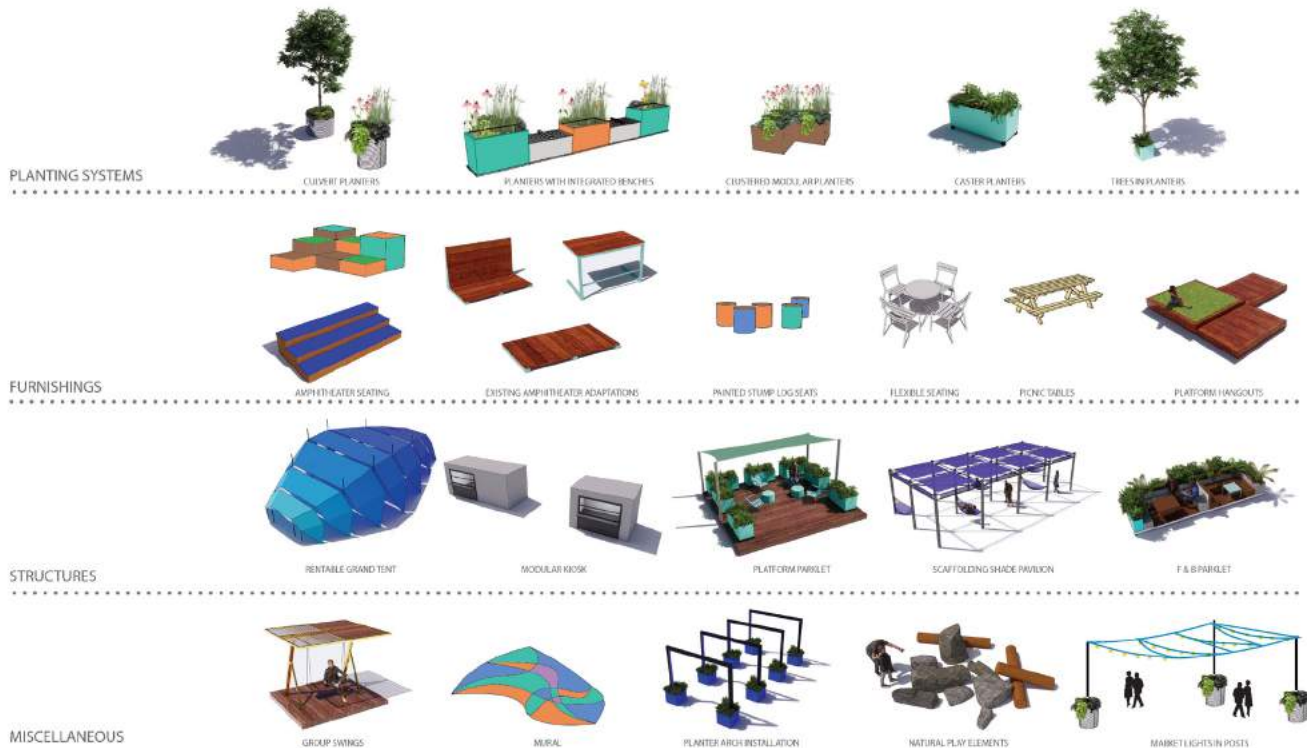
- Chattanooga Resident

*"We need more informal cultural programming, like artists markets, art and cultural activities, pop-up shops, etc."*

- Chattanooga Resident



# Temporary Activation Toolbox



Examples of Temporary Activation

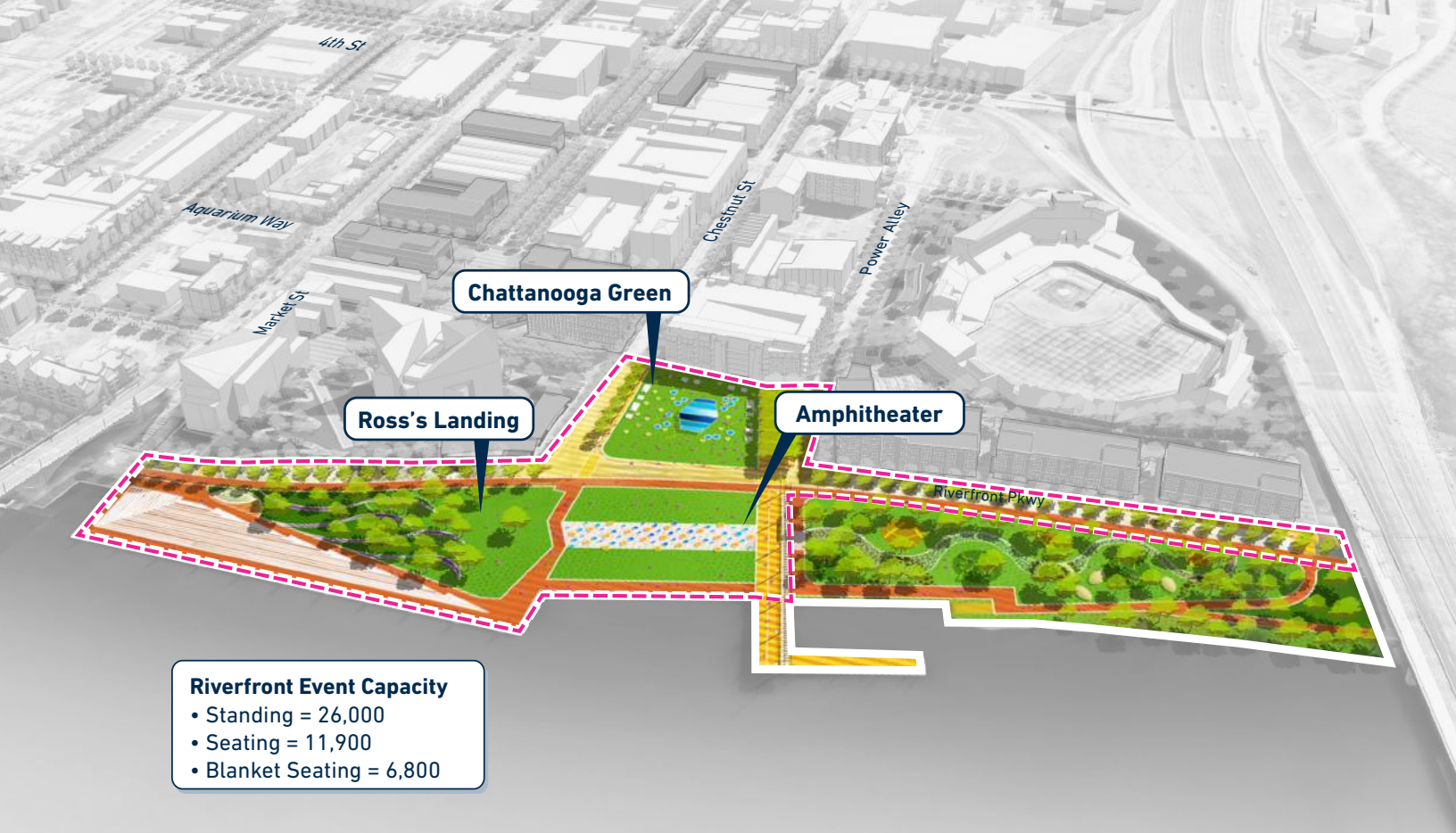
## COME TOGETHER AT THE RIVER

- Implement **weekly programming** at the Chattanooga Green and Aquarium Plaza to support local business and build community social life. By building on conversations through the ONE Riverfront planning process and involving local organizations and artists in these events, River City Company is already starting to implement this effort to bring more day-to-day activity to the Riverfront District.
- Develop a community-based process for curating **major riverfront events** to ensure that the signature annual events in the District showcase local talent, provide a welcoming venue, and elevate opportunities for existing retailers, restaurants, galleries, and institutions. These events must be creatively staged around key park spaces and redevelopment sites to allow for comfortable daily use of the District public spaces and to unlock the redevelopment potential of valuable District real estate.

RCC used community input from the ONE Chattanooga Riverfront process to identify a need for a **greater diversity of events along the Riverfront**. RCC is working with partners to host 80+ activations this year, with more in the works! Additional potential events include...

- **City Sweat**
- **Kite Flying**
- **Community Skate Night**
- **Under The Bridge Dance Parties**
- **Gospel or Jazz on the Riverfront**
- **Indigenous People Performances**
- **History Tours**
- **Theatre in the Park**





Examples of Existing Community Events & Programming



### 3

## Strategy

# BUILD INCLUSIVELY

*"It should be a place for the entire city and those who live here and not just a few. With businesses and opportunities that are a true picture of the city's diversity"*

- Chattanooga Resident

*"Growing up I used to come downtown all the time but in the early 2000s the area stopped feeling as welcoming."*

- Chattanooga Resident

While improving park spaces, inviting more daily usage and providing more diverse and relevant programming will bring more people to the Riverfront District, there is more to be done to make sure all Chattanooga residents feel at home in the District and that the District's transformation has broad benefits.

Without River City Company and the City playing an active role, development within the Riverfront District will not necessarily serve all Chattanooga residents. As noted in the Market Summary (see pg. 26) housing recently developed in the District is among the most expensive in the whole city, and as a result, median incomes in the neighborhood increased by 80% from 2010 to 2018 as higher-earning households moved in. Commercial rents are also above the citywide average.

As the development of surface parking lots and other opportunity sites takes place, there should be a commitment to building housing that is affordable at a range of income levels. Likewise, as temporary retail pop-ups and markets and new and existing storefronts are activated, local and minority-owned businesses should be a priority.

Parcels owned by River City Company, the City, and civic institutions represent the best opportunity to test new models for inclusive development and to program uses that welcome the public to the riverfront. This could benefit the Chattanooga community in the following ways:

- **Expand Living Opportunities:** Commit to affordable and market rate housing as part of the redevelopment of River City Company - and publicly-owned parcels.
- **Enable Business Opportunities:** Commit to providing low-cost commercial space to enable local and minority-owned businesses to locate in the Riverfront District.
- **Establish New Cultural Hubs:** Encourage new development to include cultural spaces, incubators, and other convening spaces that welcome the public.



## Establish the Equitable & Inclusive Development Toolbox

Numerous tools are available to promote inclusive development on public and private sites and District-wide:

- **Contributed land:** Free or discounted land or deferred land payments to incentivize specific types of development (on River City Company - or City-owned sites).
- **Financial incentives:** Low-cost financing, grants, and tax abatements including through Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and federal programs, in exchange for benefits.
- **Business support:** Business incubator and assistance programs, startup grants, and low-cost space to grow and support local and minority-owned businesses.
- **Workforce development:** Job training programs for newly created jobs and preferences for tenants that commit to local hiring.

Many of these tools could be used in Riverfront District and provide a model for inclusive development citywide.

See Implementation Section for more detail (pg. 100)

## 4

## Strategy

# ESTABLISH THE RIVERFRONT FRONT DOOR

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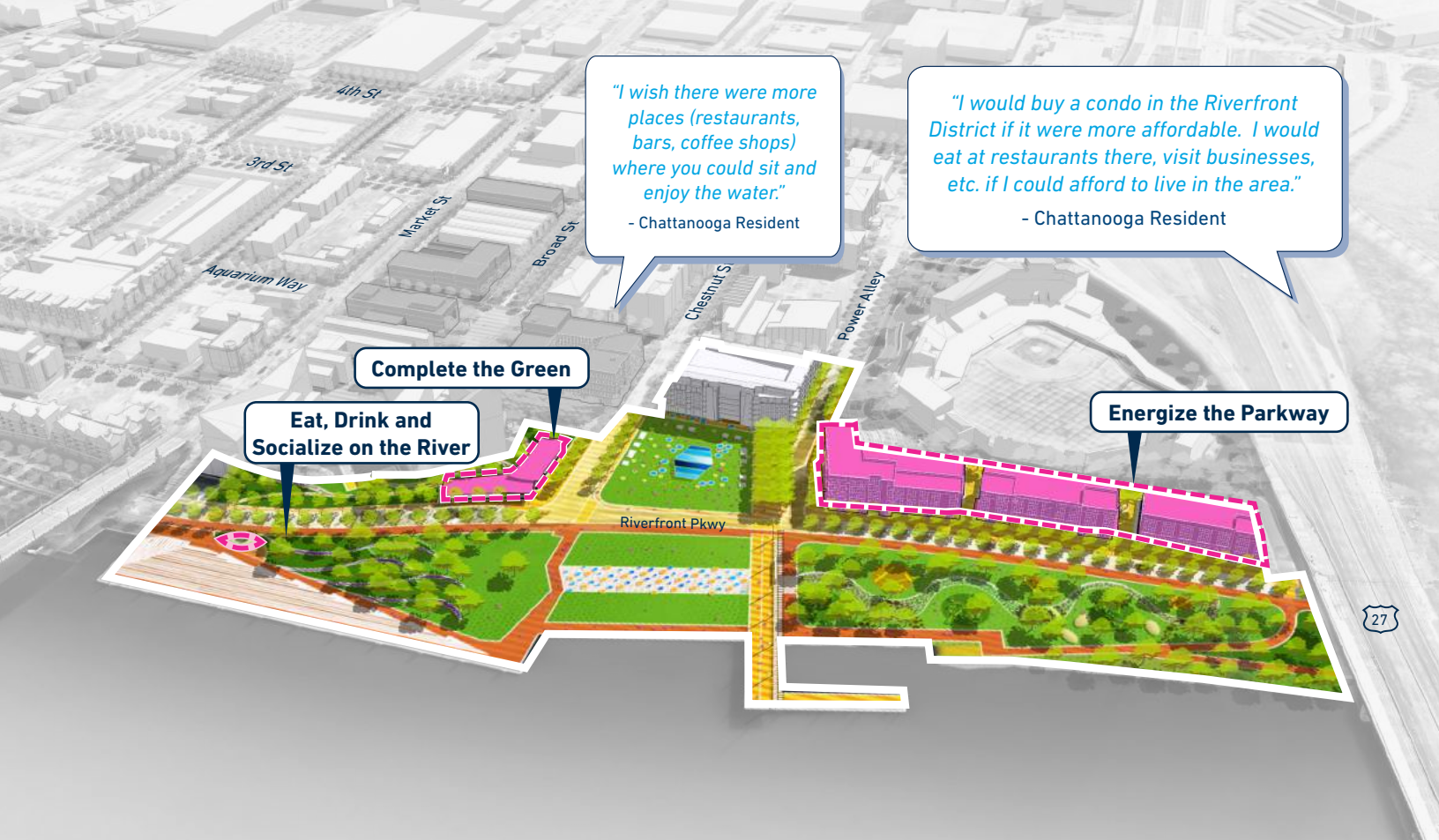
To complement the planned improvements to the waterfront parks (Strategy 1), there is an opportunity to establish a Riverfront Front Door that energizes the Riverfront Parkway with a critical mass of active storefronts and businesses. This active, built edge can provide the uses, activities, and services that builds on the pedestrian energy in the adjacent waterfront parks and maximizes the positive spillover effects (foot traffic) of park users.

To maximize synergy between the refreshed waterfront parks and the adjacent, growing urban neighborhood of the Riverfront District, the interface between public space and the built street edge along Riverfront Parkway must be safe, walkable, fine-grained, and pedestrian-oriented. These urban design qualities, along with a development program that prioritizes active, public-facing businesses, will help calm traffic on the Riverfront Parkway, provide high-visibility space for local businesses, and allow users to extend and stack visits between public amenities, local retailers, and cultural attractions.

The property ownership dynamics along Riverfront Parkway lend themselves to the development of the Riverfront Front Door. With key parcels owned by the City of Chattanooga and the River City Company, the Parkway can be developed more creatively and compactly on under-utilized urban real estate and the development program for these sites can be geared to meet the community's goals for inclusive growth and equitable development.

The ONE Riverfront Chattanooga Plan focuses on the Riverfront Front Door sites that will drive value for both the community and economy over the long-term and on the sites that will have the strongest and most beneficial spillover effect for the entire the District. These sites include: Eat, Drink and Socialize on the River, Complete the Green and Energize the Parkway. Taken together, these sites serve to activate Riverfront Parkway and give people another reason to visit and spend time on the riverfront.





### **Eat, Drink and Socialize on the River:**

Located at the top of Ross's Landing, this pavilion offers a unique experience on the Chattanooga urban riverfront. With panoramic views of the Tennessee River and a high-visibility location on the Riverfront Parkway, this structure could successfully accommodate a commercial food and beverage operation or community event facility. In either case, this structure should also provide public comfort facilities (restrooms, water refill) for park and trail users.

**Complete the Green:** Framing the northwest corner of Chattanooga Green, this site provides an opportunity for a restaurant and retail experience on Riverfront Parkway that benefits from frontage on both the Chattanooga Green and the riverfront. With an architectural approach that enlivens the street while allowing views to the iconic Aquarium building, these structures can maximize the use of under-utilized City-owned property to serve visitors of both the parks and the Tennessee Aquarium.

**Energize the Parkway:** On what is today a City- and River City Company-owned surface parking lot, this prime Downtown riverfront corner should be developed with public-serving uses on the ground floor to energize the Riverfront Front Door. A City- and River City Company-supported leasing strategy that includes attainable rents and flexible lease terms can be employed to serve the needs of local entrepreneurs, small businesses, and minority-owned businesses. Alternately, this high-value site may be developed for market rate users with revenue streams directed in support of equitable development opportunities of greatest impact.



## ESTABLISH THE RIVERFRONT FRONT DOOR

### Energize the Parkway

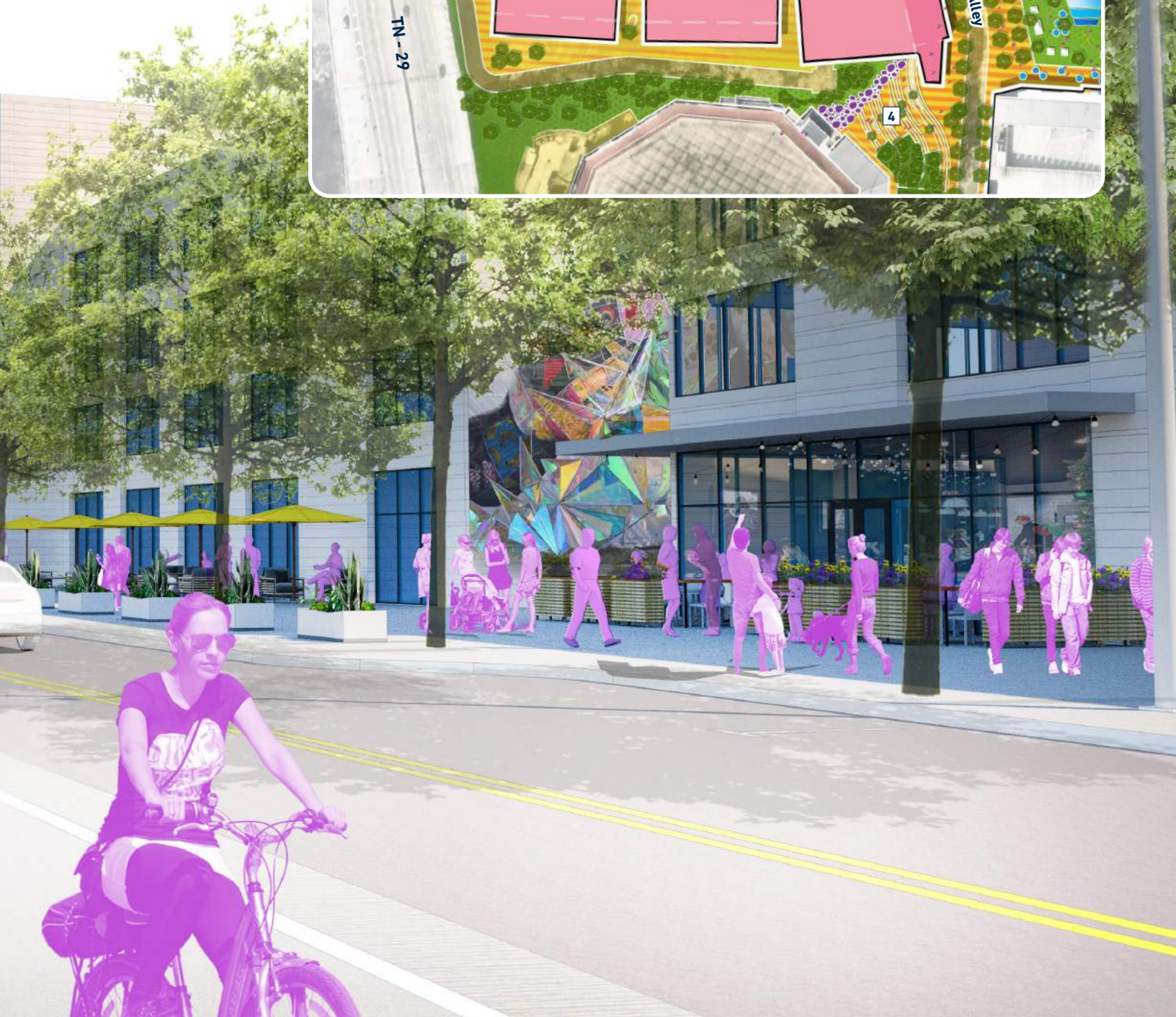
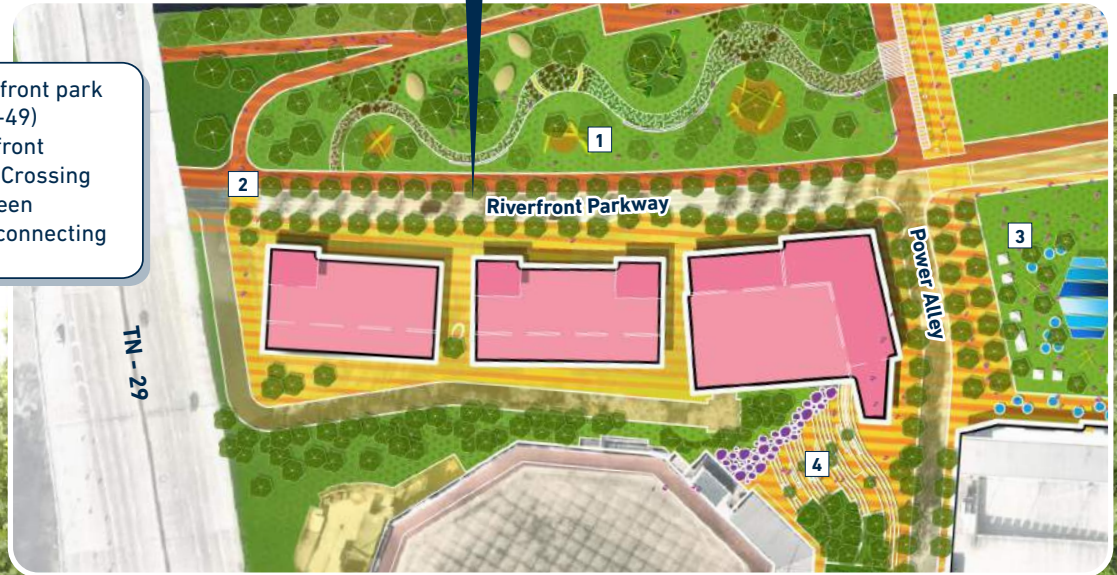
Currently a surface parking lot, the southwest corner of Power Alley and Riverfront Parkway is the prime development opportunity in the Riverfront District. Framing the west side of Chattanooga Green, terminating the west end of The Ramble Corridor leading to the Bluff View Arts District, and providing views of the Tennessee River, this new building will feature public-serving uses. With active ground-floor retail and restaurant uses that prioritize local and minority-owned business, it will complement the civic activity of Chattanooga Green and Ross's Landing. Mixed-income residential on the upper floors will increase density and housing diversity and provide residents with access to the refreshed riverfront park space and the Tennessee Riverwalk.





## Energize the Parkway

1. Renovated riverfront park space (see p.48-49)
2. Proposed Riverfront Parkway Street Crossing
3. Chattanooga Green
4. Terraced plaza connecting to stadium site





## 4

# ESTABLISH THE RIVERFRONT FRONT DOOR

## Complete the Green

Framing the northwest corner of Chattanooga Green, this new cafe has views of both Chattanooga Green and the riverfront. Activating this under-used, high-value site strengthens the connection between the riverfront parks and Tennessee Aquarium while providing a new venue to experience each. A new, unified paving palette spills across Riverfront Parkway to facilitate safe pedestrian crossings and signal to motorists this is a people-first environment. Existing monuments in the vicinity of the cafe or other planned riverfront improvements will be protected and situated to ensure their significance in the history of the Chattanooga riverfront is preserved.





## Complete the Green

1. Cafe
2. Outdoor dining
3. Green roof



**Interior Dining Area - 4,200 square feet**  
**Outdoor Dining Area - 3,938 square feet**  
**Green Roof Area - 5,687 square feet**



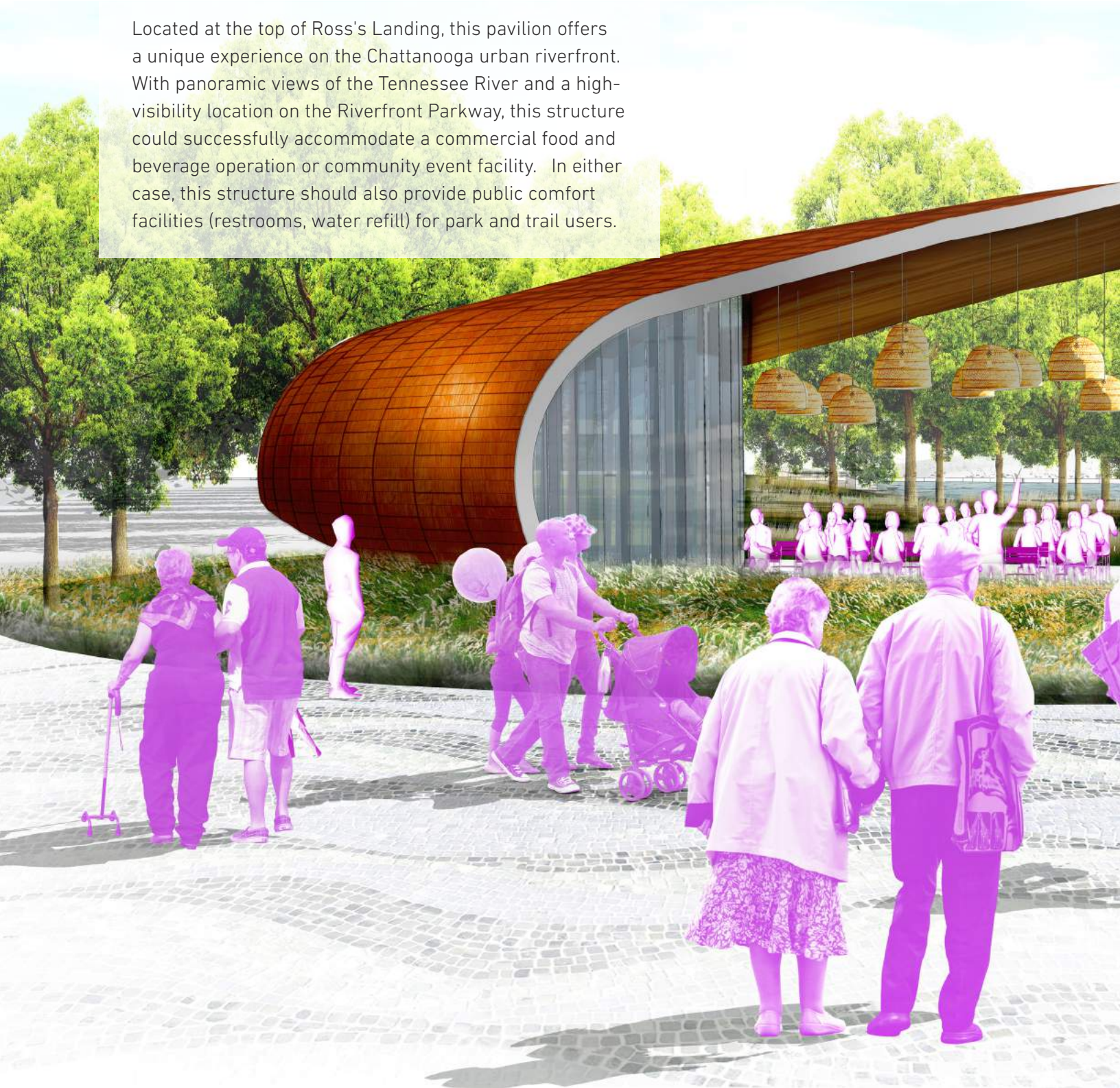


## 4

## ESTABLISH THE RIVERFRONT FRONT DOOR

### Eat, Drink, and Socialize on the River

Located at the top of Ross's Landing, this pavilion offers a unique experience on the Chattanooga urban riverfront. With panoramic views of the Tennessee River and a high-visibility location on the Riverfront Parkway, this structure could successfully accommodate a commercial food and beverage operation or community event facility. In either case, this structure should also provide public comfort facilities (restrooms, water refill) for park and trail users.





## Eat, Drink, and Socialize on the River

1. Pavilion
2. Sculptural benches, deciduous shade trees, and native plantings



**Interior Dining Area - 870 square feet**  
**Outdoor Dining Area - 1,613 square feet**  
**Public Restroom Area - 70 square feet**



## 5 Strategy

# CREATE A CIVIC COMMONS

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The Tennessee Aquarium and surrounding campus is at the intersection of key corridors that connect Downtown, the Bluff View Arts District, the riverfront, and critical redevelopment sites. This block must serve as both a destination and connective tissue. Moreover, the block encompassing the Tennessee Aquarium buildings has the opportunity to be repositioned as a civic commons that is multi-purpose, multi-generational, flexible, and inviting; a public square that is alive with activity 18 hours a day, 7 days a week.

This repositioning of the area around the Tennessee Aquarium acknowledges the significance of the original planning process for the Aquarium and Ross's Landing Plaza and the various components that were developed to enrich the spaces that surround the Aquarium. This plan attempts to delineate and envision ways in which the broader experience of the Riverfront District might be enhanced for the benefit of the citizens of Chattanooga, particularly with respect to the way that the Riverfront District connects to and around the Aquarium to the riverfront, the Tennessee Riverpark, and to the river itself.

Emphasis is placed on improving the connectivity between the Riverfront District and its urban grid and the river's edge so that the Riverpark is not isolated from the activity of the city on the southerly side of the Aquarium, bringing together the river and the city grid for a more coherent civic and cultural experience for the broader District.

It is not the position of this plan that the plaza need be entirely renovated nor that it remain exactly as is but rather that the final design consider decisions related to the original plaza and its surrounds in the effort to achieve the goals that have been identified by the Chattanooga community and embedded in this plan.

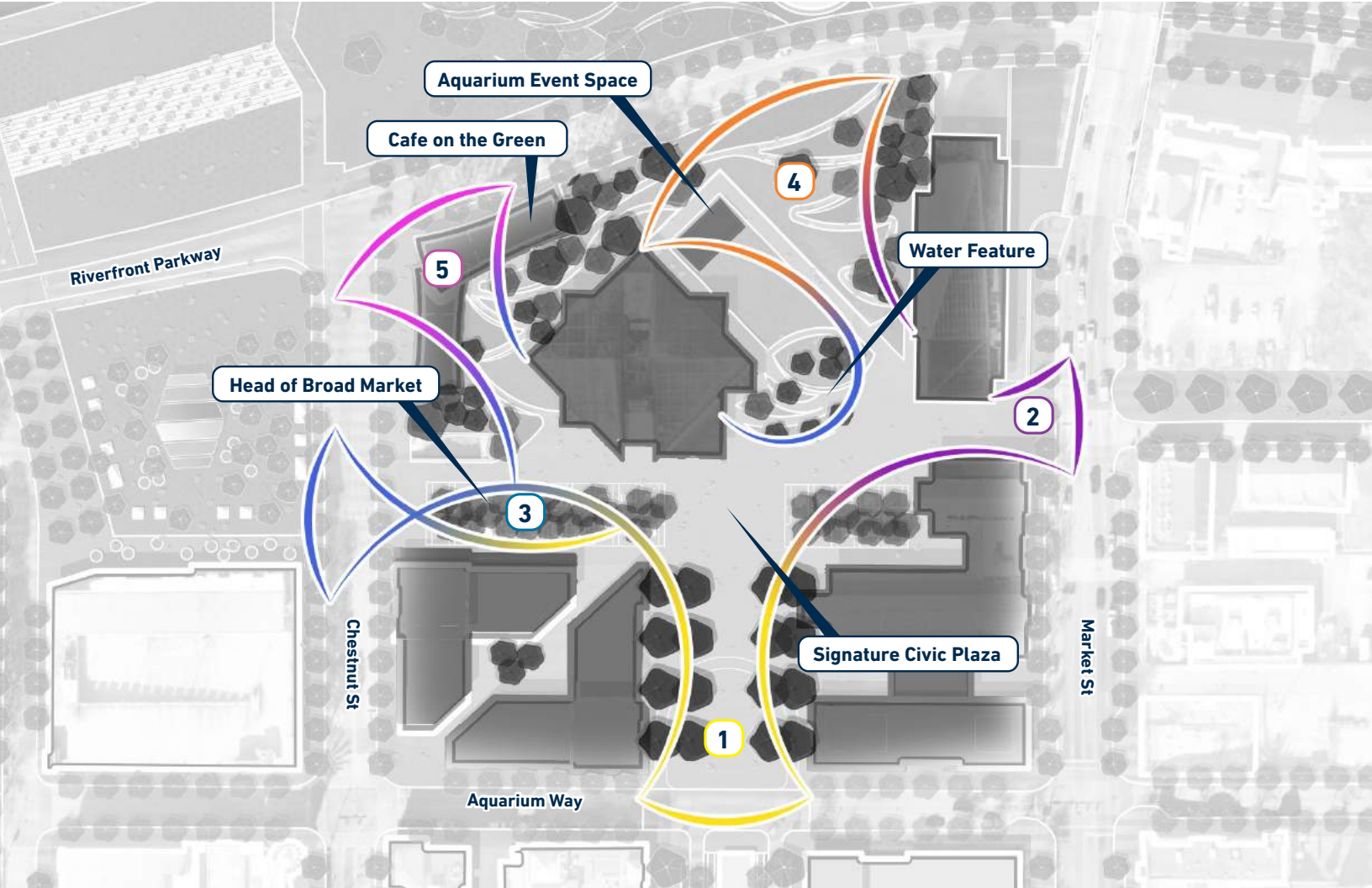
*"The riverfront behind the aquarium needs something there that offers daily activity."*

- Chattanooga Resident

*"The area feels crowded, inconsistent and driven by tourism. The one thing I'd like to see is more of a local identity for that area. It should feel more like a neighborhood."*

- Chattanooga Resident





## Connectivity, Movement, Views

**1** - Open plaza for events with shaded seating and circulation at edges that aligns with Broad Street pedestrian walking paths. Axial views from the Broad Street corridor to the iconic architecture of the Tennessee Aquarium are preserved.

**2** - Open circulation and views to the First Street Scramble and The Passage are maintained at the Market Street interface.

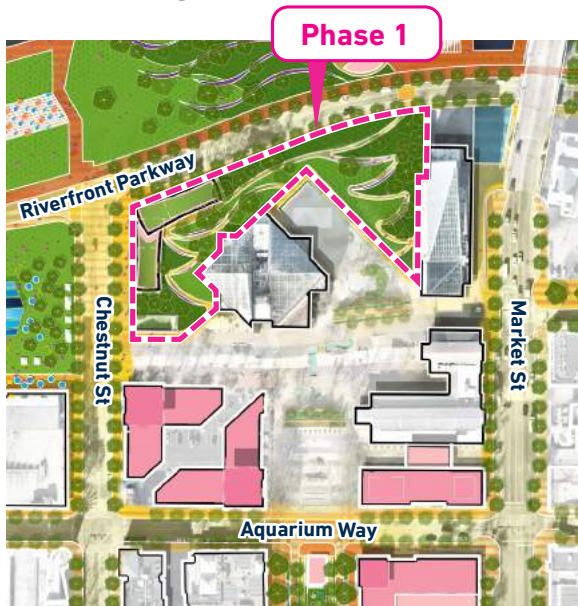
**3** - Generous circulation paths bordering the Head of Broad Market and pedestrian pavement at Chestnut Street provide a strong east-west connection to the Chattanooga Green

**4** - Open views to Ross's Landing and the river valley are prioritized and framed by the shaded water feature and naturalized vegetation along the edge of the Ocean Journey building. An arcing, accessible pathway accented by monumental curved benches and set in a naturalized setting of meadow grasses is carried through from the plaza down to Ross's Landing and the rivers edge, providing a continuous landscape gesture that strengthens connectivity to the river and riverfront parks.

**5** - Open views to the river valley are prioritized and created through selective thinning of existing tree masses. The green roofs of the Cafe on the Green buildings disappear into the landscape from the raised vantage point on the plaza. An arcing, accessible pathway accented by monumental curved benches and set in a naturalized setting of meadow grasses is carried through from the plaza down through the opening between the Cafe on the Green buildings, providing strong connectivity to the riverfront, parks, and Chattanooga Green.

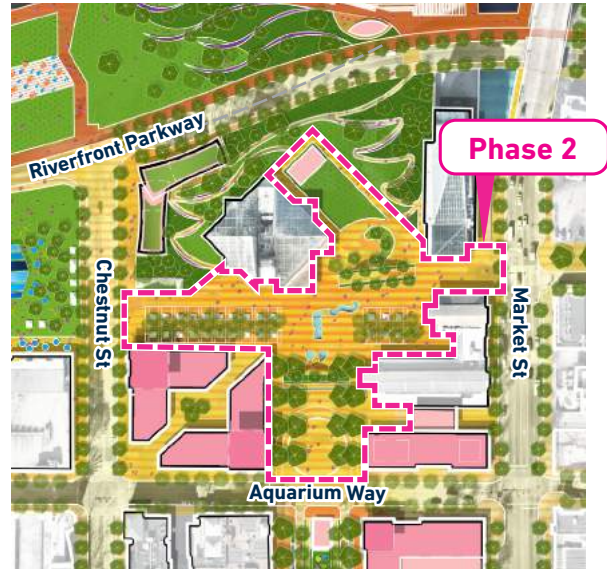
# 5 CREATE A CIVIC COMMONS

## Phasing



### Phase 1

Strengthen views and connectivity to the river with improvement to the sloped spaces between the TN Aquarium buildings and along the Riverfront Parkway/Chestnut Street frontage.



### Phase 2

Preserve major cultural and thematic elements of the original Ross's Landing Park and Plaza while selectively improving deteriorated plaza paving and incorporating the Head of Broad Market and bosque of trees.

## Major Civic Spaces

### Signature Civic Plaza

Create an extension of the Broad Street public realm into the Civic Commons, linking the vibrant street life of the City's premier urban corridor with the riverfront environment.

### Head of Broad Market

Build on the momentum of the existing Farmer's Market venue by creating the infrastructure for seasonal market stalls within a shaded tree grove that provides seating for daily use and comfortable pre-function space for Aquarium visitors.

### Cafe on the Green

Build-out and activate the northeast corner of Chattanooga Green, providing an experience that serves park, Aquarium and District users, and provides return on under-used, high-value real estate.

### Aquarium Event Space

Create space for community and Tennessee Aquarium events, providing non-peak hour activity and an additional revenue stream to support the Aquarium mission.

### Water Feature

Integrate education, local history, and the magic of water play in a safe and dynamic environment for children and families by day, and the calming romance of water by night.

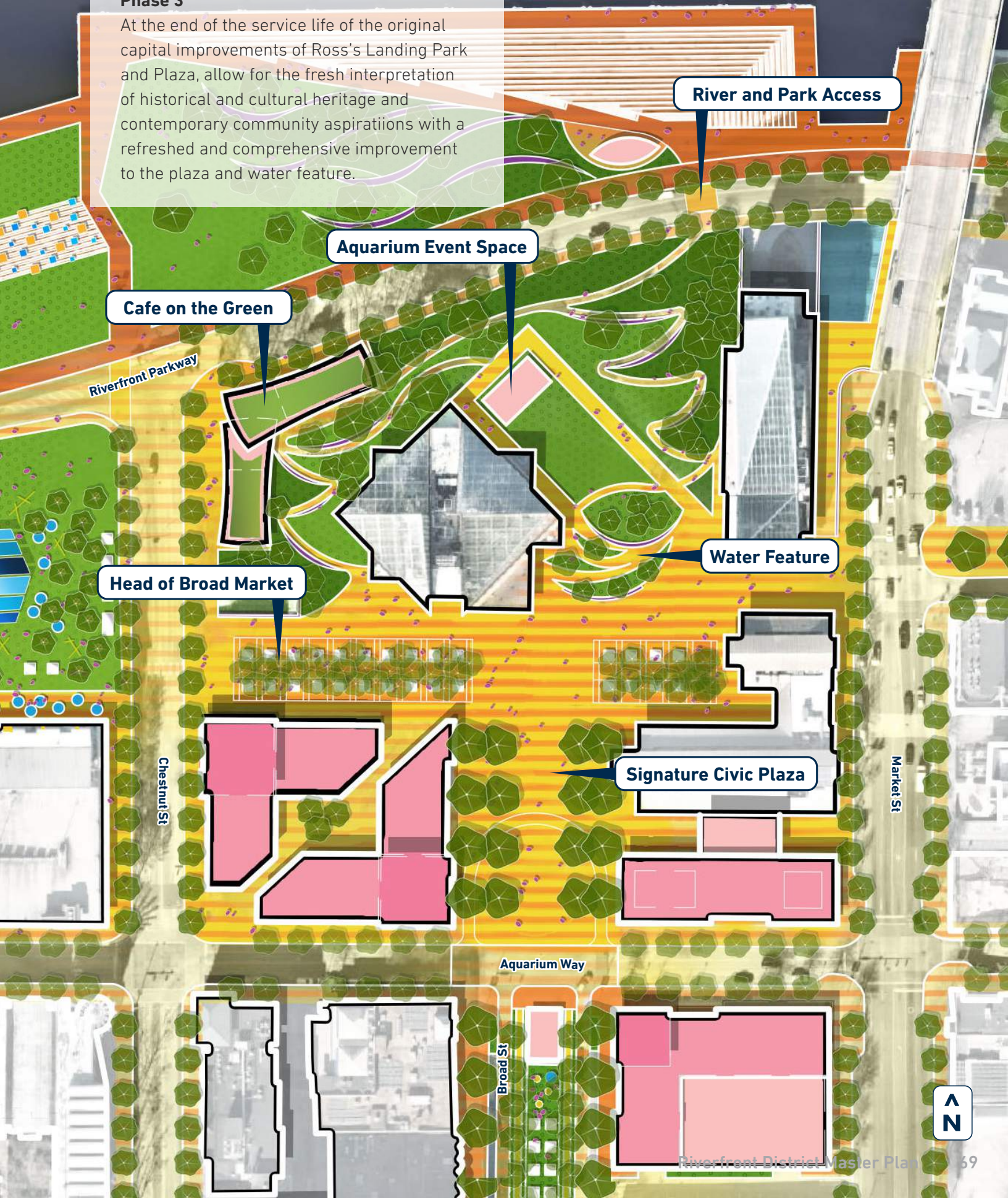
### River and Park Access

Provide an accessible connection and a powerful landscape statement that links the Riverwalk and Ross's Landing with the Aquarium and surrounding District.



### Phase 3

At the end of the service life of the original capital improvements of Ross's Landing Park and Plaza, allow for the fresh interpretation of historical and cultural heritage and contemporary community aspirations with a refreshed and comprehensive improvement to the plaza and water feature.



River and Park Access

Aquarium Event Space

Cafe on the Green

Riverfront Parkway

Head of Broad Market

Water Feature

Signature Civic Plaza

Chestnut St

Market St

Aquarium Way

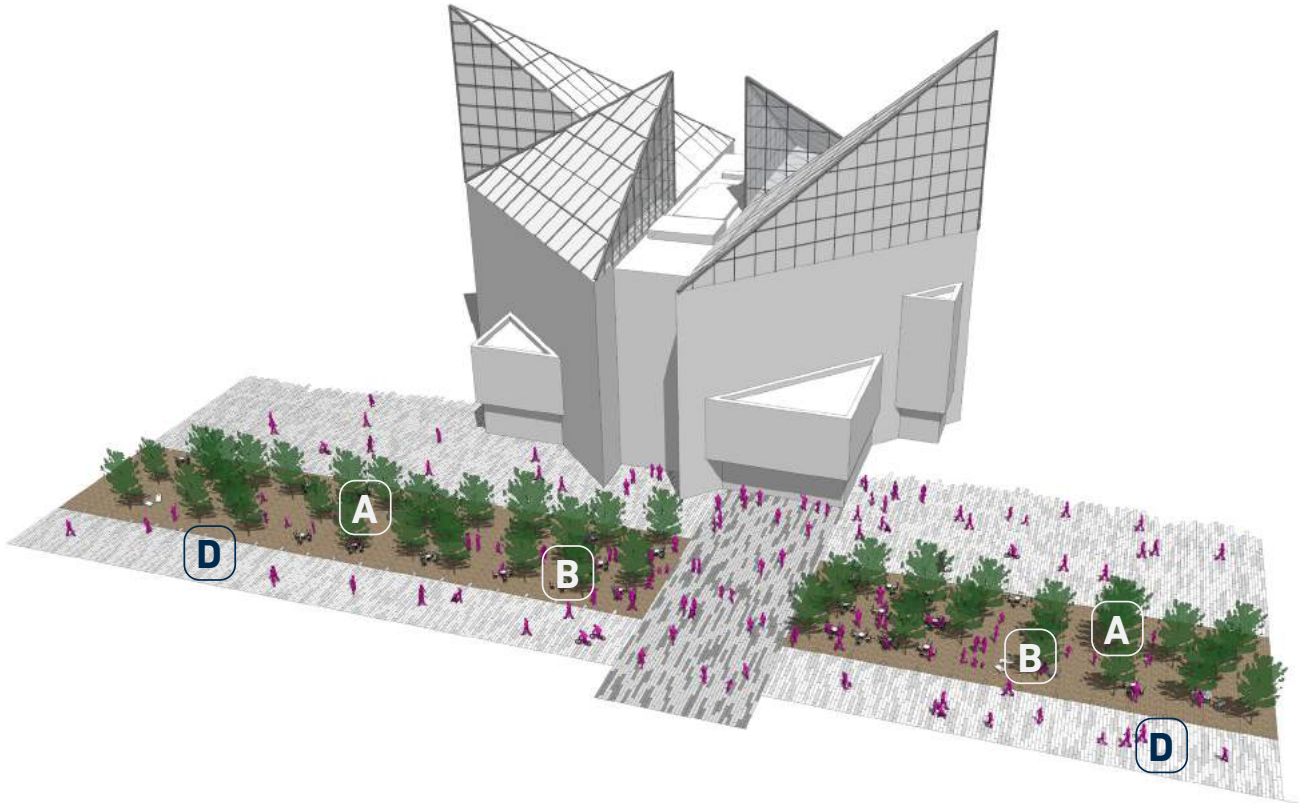
Broad St





# 5 CREATE A CIVIC COMMONS

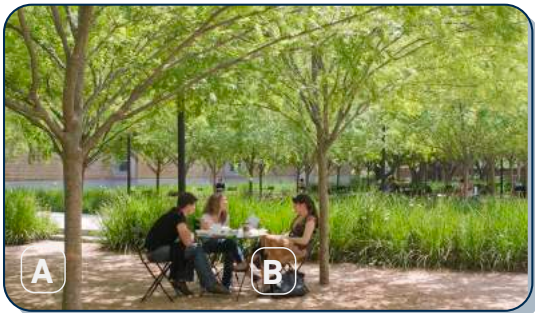
## Head of Broad Market



**A Tree Bosque** in crushed stone (accessible surface)

**B Movable Tables and Chairs** for informal daily use and programming flexibility

**C Market Tents** (temporary, removable) with power supply for Farmer's Market events



**D Hardscape pavement** for pedestrian circulation and event staging/emergency vehicles



Expanding on the existing Farmer's Market, a new Head of Broad Market creates the infrastructure for seasonal market stalls that enable small, local merchants to activate the Aquarium Plaza. Set within a central bosque of trees, this flexible space provides comfort for both events and daily use.





# 5 CREATE A CIVIC COMMONS

## Water Feature

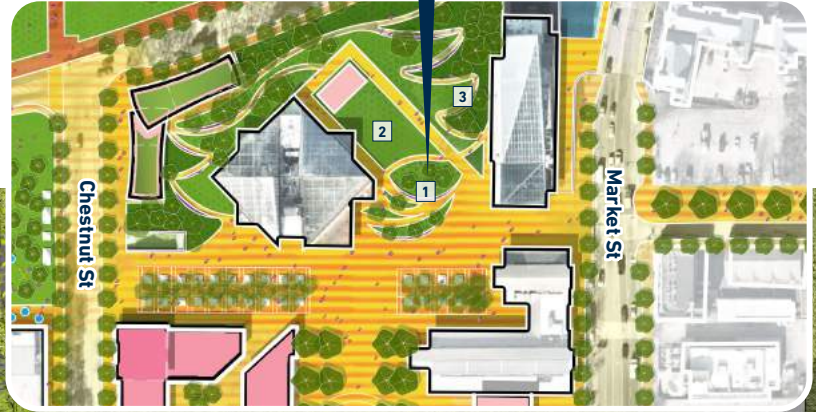
Complementing the water feature at the terminus of Broad Street, is a smaller sweeping splash pad knit into a garden-esque space between the Ocean Journey & River Journey buildings. This dynamic splash pad is designed with younger visitors in mind and features lighting effects which activate the space as night falls.





## Water Feature

1. Splash pad
2. Event lawn
3. Pedestrian connection to riverfront





# 6

## Strategy

# BOLDLY CONNECT DOWNTOWN

*"Broad Street is an enormous opportunity for a public space to add economic opportunity and re-balance the street life."*

- Chattanooga Resident

*"I cannot emphasize enough the importance of pedestrian/ bike space and pedestrian (sidewalk) connections between all parts of the city."*

- Chattanooga Resident

Broad Street is the civic spine and commercial core of the Riverfront District and the premier public street in the City. Anchored by a vibrant Downtown District to the south and the Tennessee River to the north, Broad Street offers the opportunity to re-connect these two community assets via a safe, walkable, and active urban corridor.

Broad Street carries about 8,000 cars per day, far less than it's capacity is capable of with two lanes in each direction and a turn lane. It is time to rethink how Broad Street is used and to better serve businesses, pedestrians, cyclists, transit and vehicles, setting the stage for future private investment, civic events, and active street life.

The ONE Riverfront Plan focuses on the blocks of Broad Street between Aquarium Way and Fourth Street, inclusive of the Fourth Street intersection and its importance in facilitating movement between Downtown and the Riverfront District.

The improvement of these blocks will support safe pedestrian movement, provide streetscape amenities to encourage pedestrian activity, and provide the infrastructure and environment to support existing businesses and stimulate the (re)development of underused parcels. Collectively, these public realm enhancements will support a nucleus of street life and business activity that will anchor the visitor experience and serve the needs of local residents.

The provision of public transportation that connects Chattanooga neighborhoods to Downtown and the Riverfront District is critical for economic health, economic opportunity, and community life. The ongoing planning for Short-Term Network improvements to CARTA service anticipates a Downtown Transit Station that allows for appealing, convenient transfers where Downtown routes converge. This convergence is most efficient within proximity to the intersection of Market Street and Fourth Street and involves consideration of Broad Street as part of the improved transit service.





*Illustration of proposed intersection of Broad Street and Fourth Street, looking northwest.*

In order to support existing businesses, future private investment, and the qualities of public space needed to maximize the value of the Broad Street corridor as a civic spine linking Downtown to the riverfront, the ONE Riverfront Plan recommends that Market Street remain the primary transit corridor with Broad Street serving a supporting role in facilitating timely connections and first mile/last mile connectivity solutions.



*Broad Street is unnecessarily wide.*

### Broad Street R/W Allocation

120ft R/W Total

**25%**

R/W Required  
for Vehicular  
Operation\*  
(+/- 32 ft)

**75%**

R/W Available for Signature  
Urban Street & Civic Commons\*  
(+/- 88 ft)

\*at less than <10,000 vehicles per day



# 6 BOLDLY CONNECT DOWNTOWN

## Broad Street Public Realm Improvements



Proposed Re-allocation of Broad Street R/W - Option 1

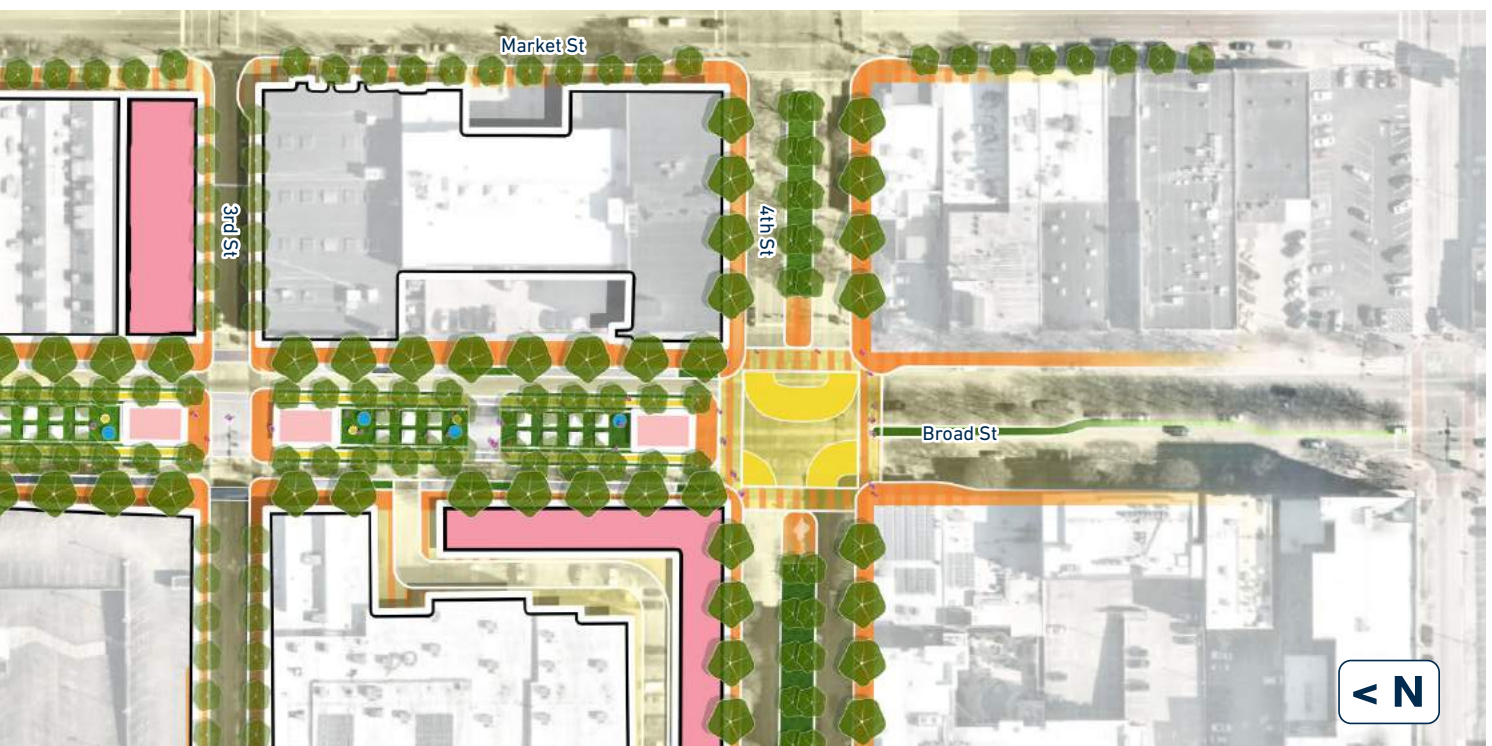


Illustrative Plan - Proposed Re-allocation of Broad Street R/W - Option 2





**Proposed Re-allocation of Broad Street R/W - Option 2**



## 6

# BOLDLY CONNECT DOWNTOWN

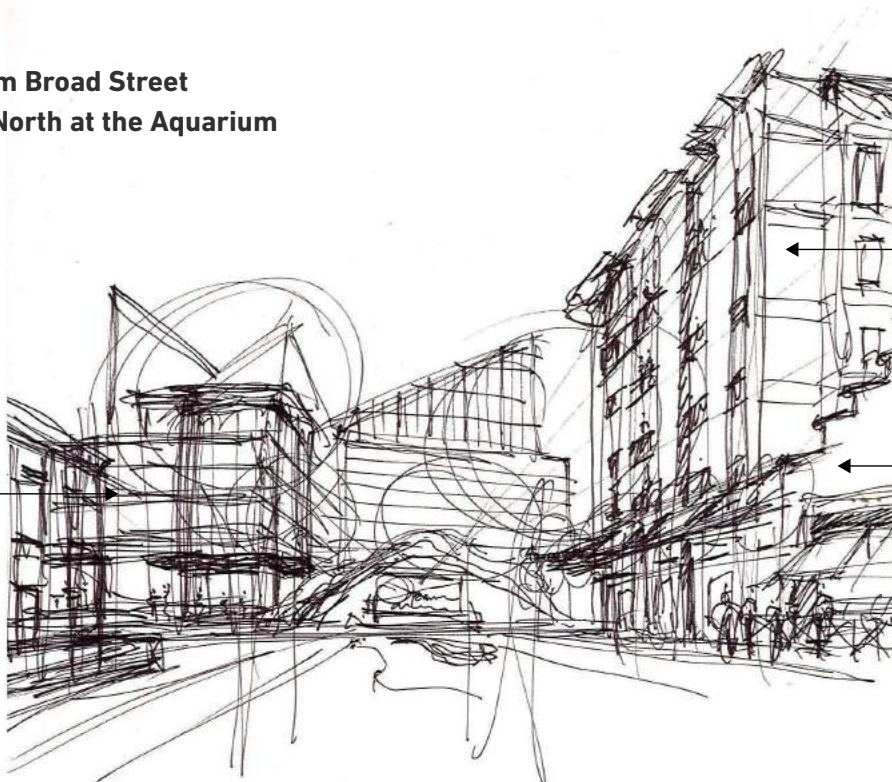
## Broad Street Infill

Building on the public realm enhancements outlined above, the Broad Street corridor from Aquarium Way to Fourth Street includes ample opportunity for real estate investment and high-quality urban development. Today, there are numerous surface parking lots and underutilized parcels along Broad, Market, and Chestnut Streets that limit street life and take up valuable space that could accommodate more active ground-floor uses such as retail, restaurants, arts and entertainment entities. Consistent year-round street activity and local and independent retailers are key for attracting local residents and visitors, and will help spur investment in residential, office, and hospitality development that will further populate and activate the District.

This focus on Broad Street will require a phased approach. Near-term strategies should focus on streetscape enhancements and activation and programming in the public realm, which can support food and beverage and retail uses, support recovery, and improve public perception. Over time, as opportunity sites are unlocked, new housing can create a critical mass of activity that supports retail viability, along with the targeted identification of key sites for office and hospitality uses. By focusing investment, programming, and leasing strategies along Broad Street, a nucleus of business activity and street life can be developed that sustains market momentum, serves the daily shopping needs of local residents, and supports the tourism and hospitality industry.

### View From Broad Street Looking North at the Aquarium

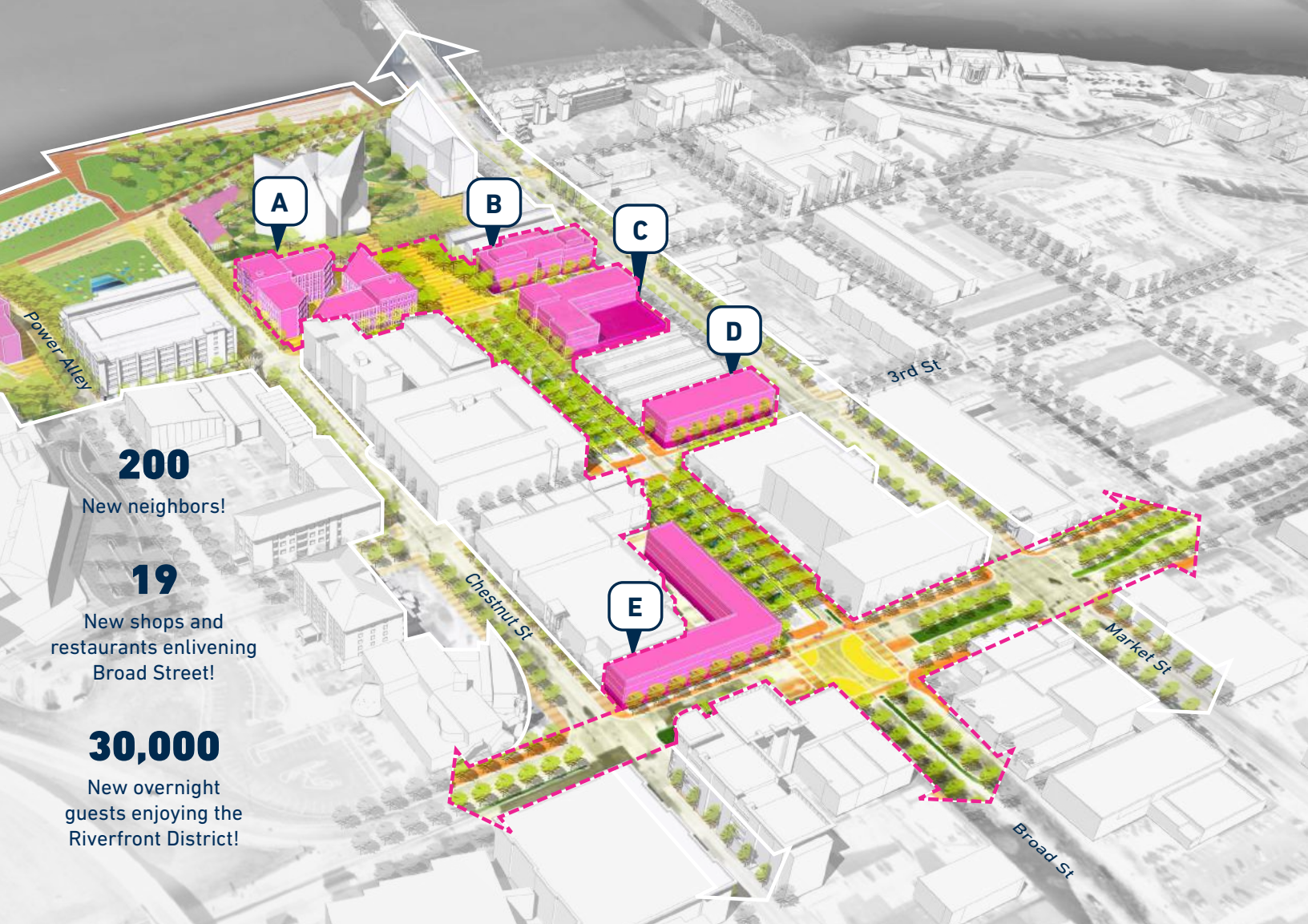
New Mixed use 5 and 6 story Buildings with Office above Retail/Restaurant. Corner Element at Broad and Aquarium Way.



New 6 story Residential building with retail/restaurant at grade

Existing Big River Grill in the old Trolley Barns.





#### **Infill Building A:**

Mixed-Use Development site  
Ground Floor Retail: 20,000  
Residential: 70 Total DU

#### **Infill Building B:**

Aquarium program expansion space  
11,200 SF/FI - 5 FI - 56,000 Total SF

#### **Infill Building C:**

Mixed-use development site with three primary frontage opportunities (Broad St, Market St, Aquarium Way)  
Ground-Floor Retail: 26,000 SF  
Residential: 60 Total DU

#### **Infill Building D:**

Surface lot infill with ground floor retail  
Ground-Floor Retail: 11,300 SF  
Residential: 40 Total DU

#### **Infill Building E:**

Limited Service Hotel wrapping the northwest corner of the Broad Street and 4th Street intersection.  
180 Rooms - 6 floors - Rooftop Bar

# 7

## Strategy

# REFRESH THE RIVERWALK

*"Riverwalk wayfinding and connectivity is challenging between the riverfront and Bluff View."*

- Chattanooga Resident

*"The whole area needs to become more pedestrian friendly."*

- Chattanooga Resident

From the Chickamauga Dam to the Tennessee Aquarium and across to the North Shore, the Tennessee Riverwalk is a regional greenway that connects riverfront destinations and provides a valuable leisure and transportation corridor for the Chattanooga community. As the Riverwalk has matured, the focus has grown from regional connectivity to improved local connectivity: providing access to the neighborhoods, districts, and campuses within walking or biking distance of the trail and river.

To create a Riverfront District that is welcoming and accessible for all Chattanooga residents, the Riverwalk is one of the key assets for connecting local neighborhoods to the waterfront by foot and by bike. For points east of the District (i.e., UTC, Riverside), the Riverwalk largely parallels Riverside Drive and enters over Georgia Avenue into the Bluff View Art District. At this point the Riverwalk loses legibility, confusing trail users and hampering connectivity to District destinations.

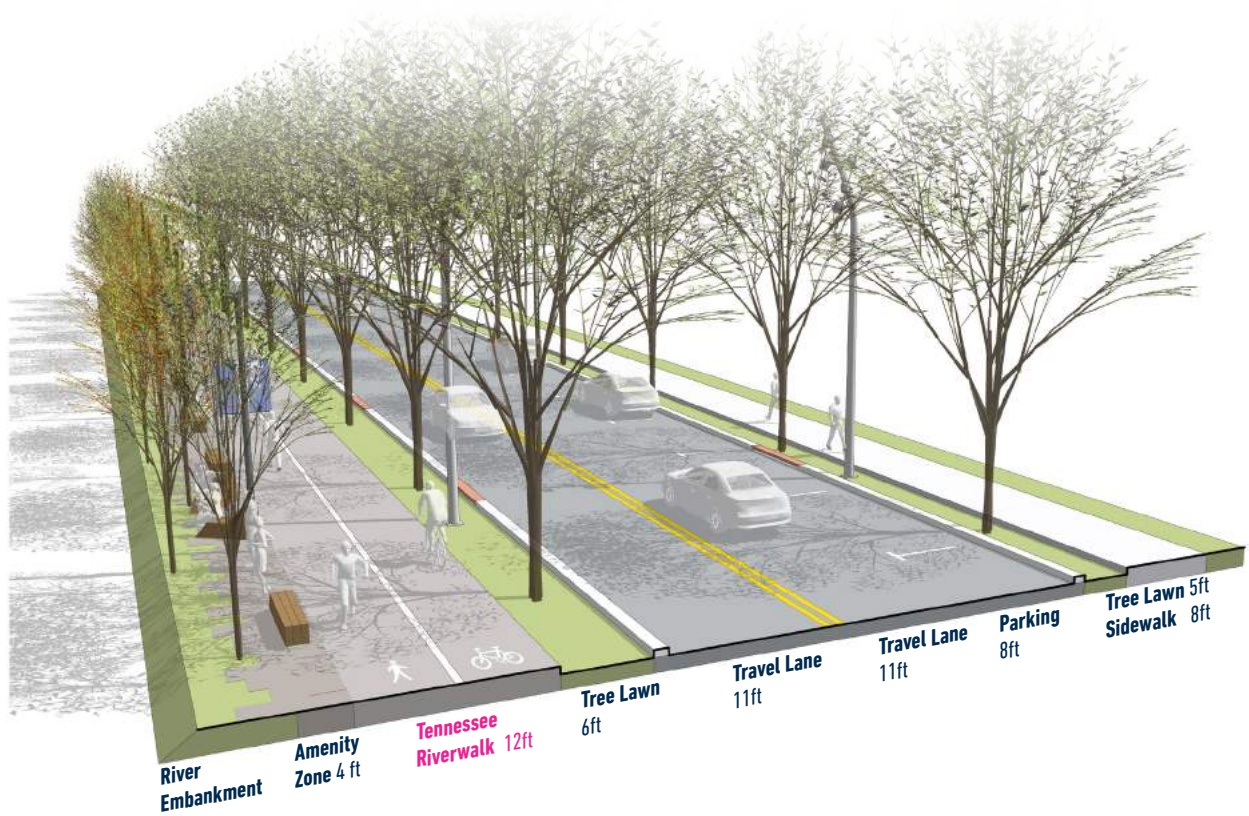
To improve this condition, The ONE Riverfront Chattanooga Plan envisions a Complete Street approach to Riverfront Parkway from the Georgia Avenue off-ramp to Market Street that will calm downhill traffic entering the District and provide a direct, separated multiuse path for the Riverwalk. This approach preserves views of the river and access to Bluff View destinations while providing greater legibility and more desirable geometrics for the Riverwalk.

Combined with a new approach to Riverfront District branding and strengthened Riverwalk trail wayfinding, the improved routing of the Tennessee Riverwalk will better connect neighborhoods to the District, the urban riverfront, and local businesses and cultural destinations.

*"We need easier and safer access to the River Walk from UTC's campus. Right now it is sketchy."*

- Chattanooga Resident





# 7 REFRESH THE RIVERWALK

## Riverfront District Branding Vision

ONE Riverfront Chattanooga sets the stage for a new Riverfront District brand that makes Chattanooga feel welcome, safe, enlivened, and inspired.

In thinking about the branding vision for the Riverfront District, the following goals are important to highlight:

### 01 Celebrate Assets

The brand and communications must shine a light on all of the great cultural institutions, business, restaurants and other attractions.

### 02 Invite Participation

The brand has the opportunity to show real Chattanoogaans enjoying the heart of their city, participating in activities that reflect their cultural heritage and interests.

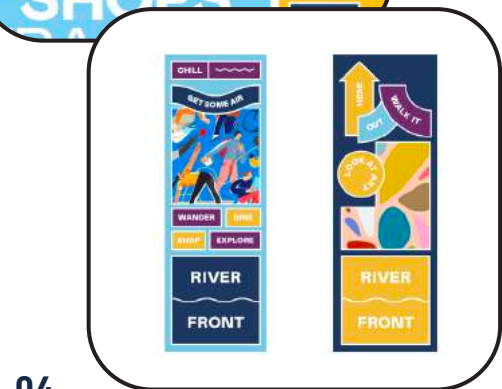
### 03 Facilitate Macro & Micro Moments

The brand should be able to highlight activities, and micro-events that can be just as fun as the big-ticket destinations. For example, grabbing a popsicle and walking across the bridge can be a new tradition for residents and visitors alike.

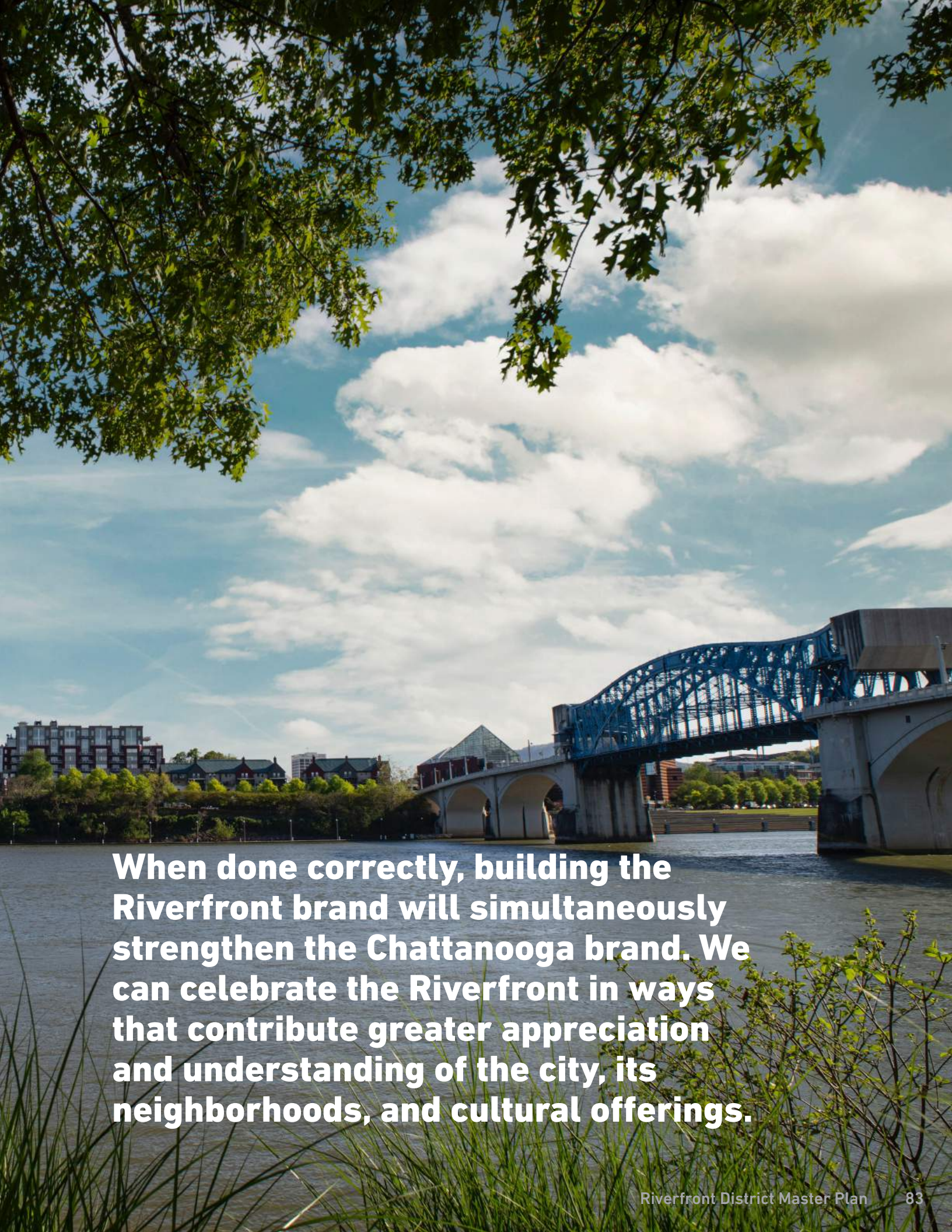
### 04 Highlight Local Talent

Chattanooga, and the Riverfront District, specifically, has so many businesses and cultural assets that the branding should highlight. The following high-level brand strategy allows for the inclusion of local art, attractions and placemakers.

### Examples of Rebranding







**When done correctly, building the Riverfront brand will simultaneously strengthen the Chattanooga brand. We can celebrate the Riverfront in ways that contribute greater appreciation and understanding of the city, its neighborhoods, and cultural offerings.**



## 8

## Strategy

# GET YOUR FEET WET

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The Tennessee River has historically been one of the primary assets of the Chattanooga community, from industry and commerce through the mid-20th century to tourism and recreation today. The river is both an economic driver – supporting large scale events, anchoring cultural attractions, driving tourism – and a quality of life driver – greenway recreation on the Tennessee Riverwalk, blueway recreation, natural beauty.

To fully realize the value of the Tennessee River for today's residents and future generations, river health must be a priority. The strategies outlined in the ONE Riverfront Plan are geared towards a shift in landscape strategies that improve the performance of waterfront park spaces and adjacent landscapes for habitat and water quality performance, as well as highlighting opportunities for environmental education. The Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute and other conservation partners are well-suited to play a role in this shift and help prioritize the health of the river for the sake of its intrinsic value as well as the benefits it confers on the Chattanooga community.

Throughout the planning process, residents and stakeholders affirmed the importance of the river and a desire for increased access to and interaction with the water. This strategy builds on that community sentiment and creates a variety of opportunities for leisure, socialization, recreation and education at the river.

*"Greater accessibility to the water itself! Paddlers/kayak/SUP, updates to make the area safer for those on the water."*

- Chattanooga Resident

*"To have more boating/river experiences. To introduce the water with tourist and the community."*

- Chattanooga Resident



### Kayak Access & Storage

1. Canoe/kayak soft launch
2. Kayak storage (under pier)
3. Stair access





# GET YOUR FEET WET

## Water Taxi & Maclellan Island

**Maclellan Island:** A true oasis of urban wilderness in the urban reach of the Tennessee River, Maclellan Island offers a primitive nature experience that is distinct from the surrounding city life. Building on the stewardship and planned improvements of the Chattanooga Audubon Society, the island can evolve its programs and offerings to include nature-based education, environmental art, and wildlife observation platforms/tower while providing inclusive access via water route only.







**Water Taxi:** To better connect neighborhoods and businesses on both shores of the Tennessee River and to link cultural attractions, employment clusters, emerging neighborhoods, and visitor destinations along the river, the re-establishment of a water taxi service would provide a fun alternative to overland travel and provide a unique perspective of the city.

# GET YOUR FEET WET

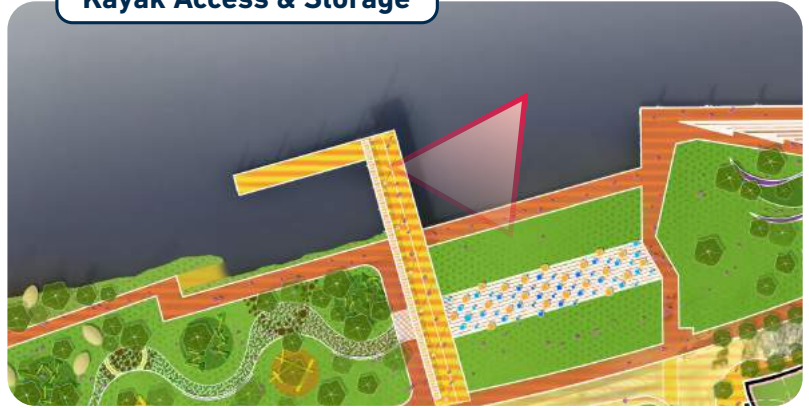
## Kayak Access & Storage

The South Shore of the Tennessee River provides docking facilities and utility connections for motorized craft but has limited options for low-stress, soft launch options for kayaks, canoes and SUP boards. The stretch of riverfront between the amphitheater and US 27 is envisioned as a nature-based adventure area with a green, restored shoreline and the opportunity for watercraft soft launch. Additionally, the underside of the pier provides opportunity for watercraft storage and/or vending to serve the needs of local and visiting river users. This plan ties in with the Tennessee RiverLine vision for a continuous, multimodal system of trail experiences along the Tennessee River and would create a more seamless experience for individuals and those participating in events like the Head of the Hooch.



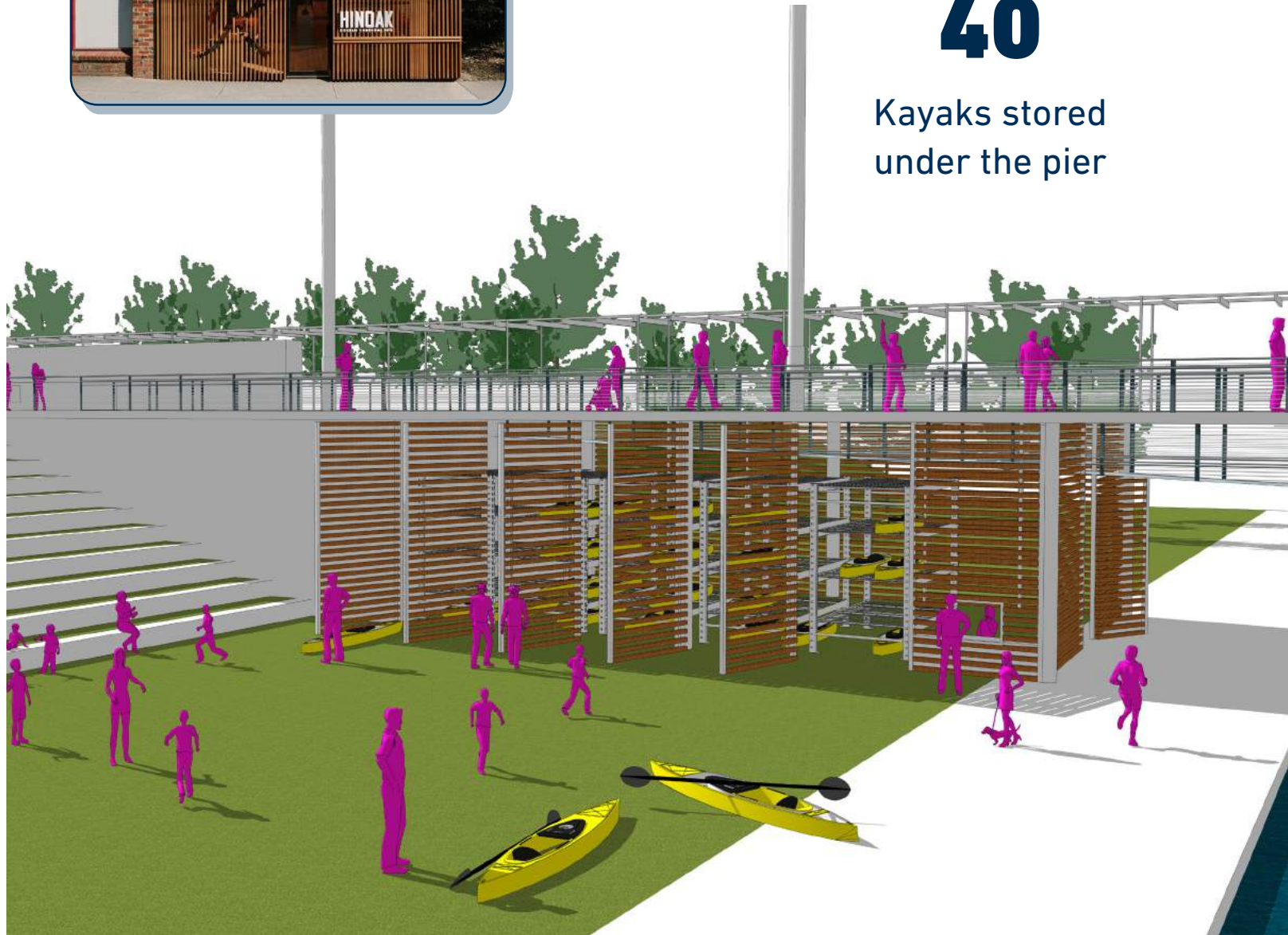


## Kayak Access & Storage



**40**

Kayaks stored  
under the pier

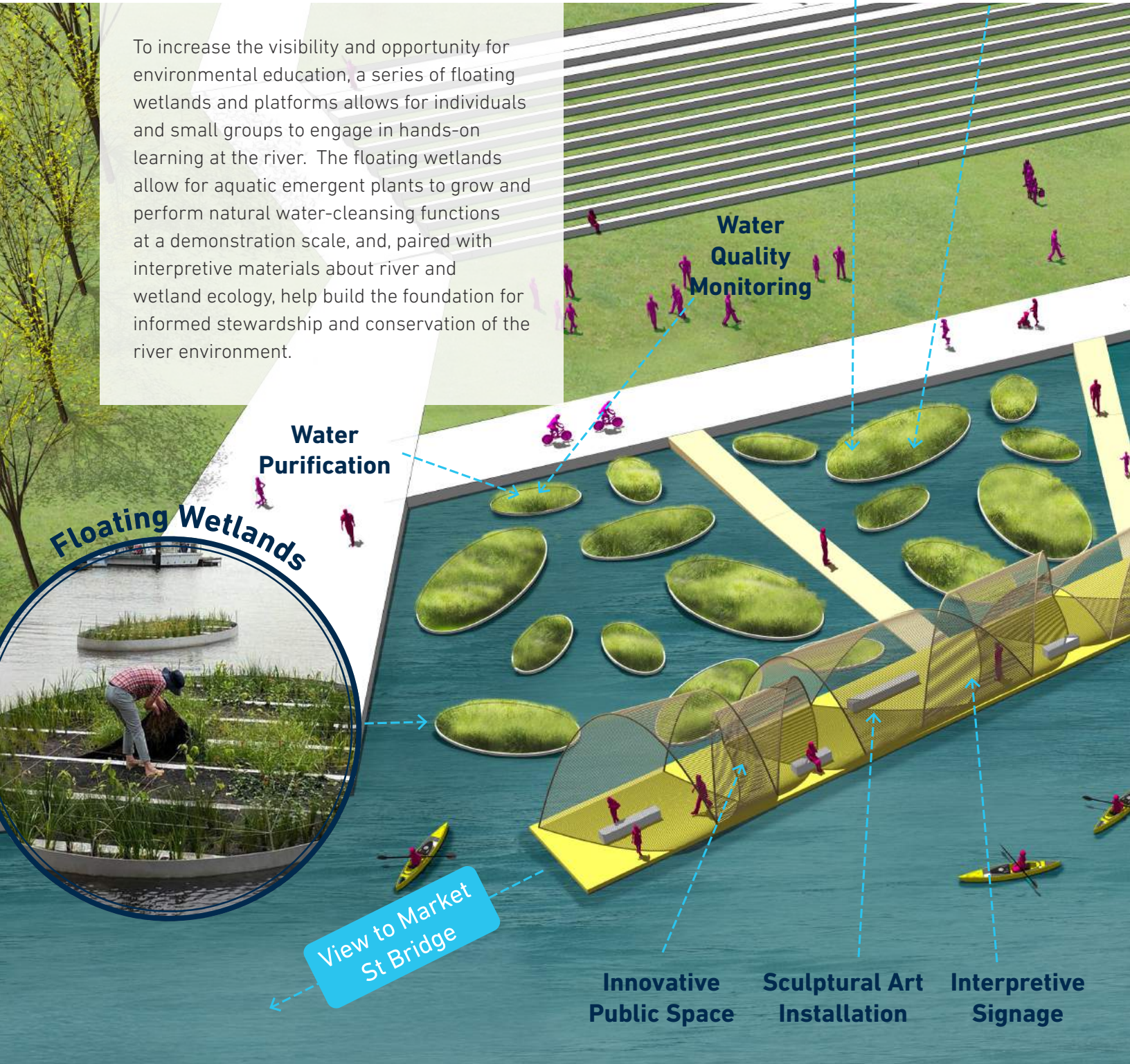




# GET YOUR FEET WET

## Floating Features

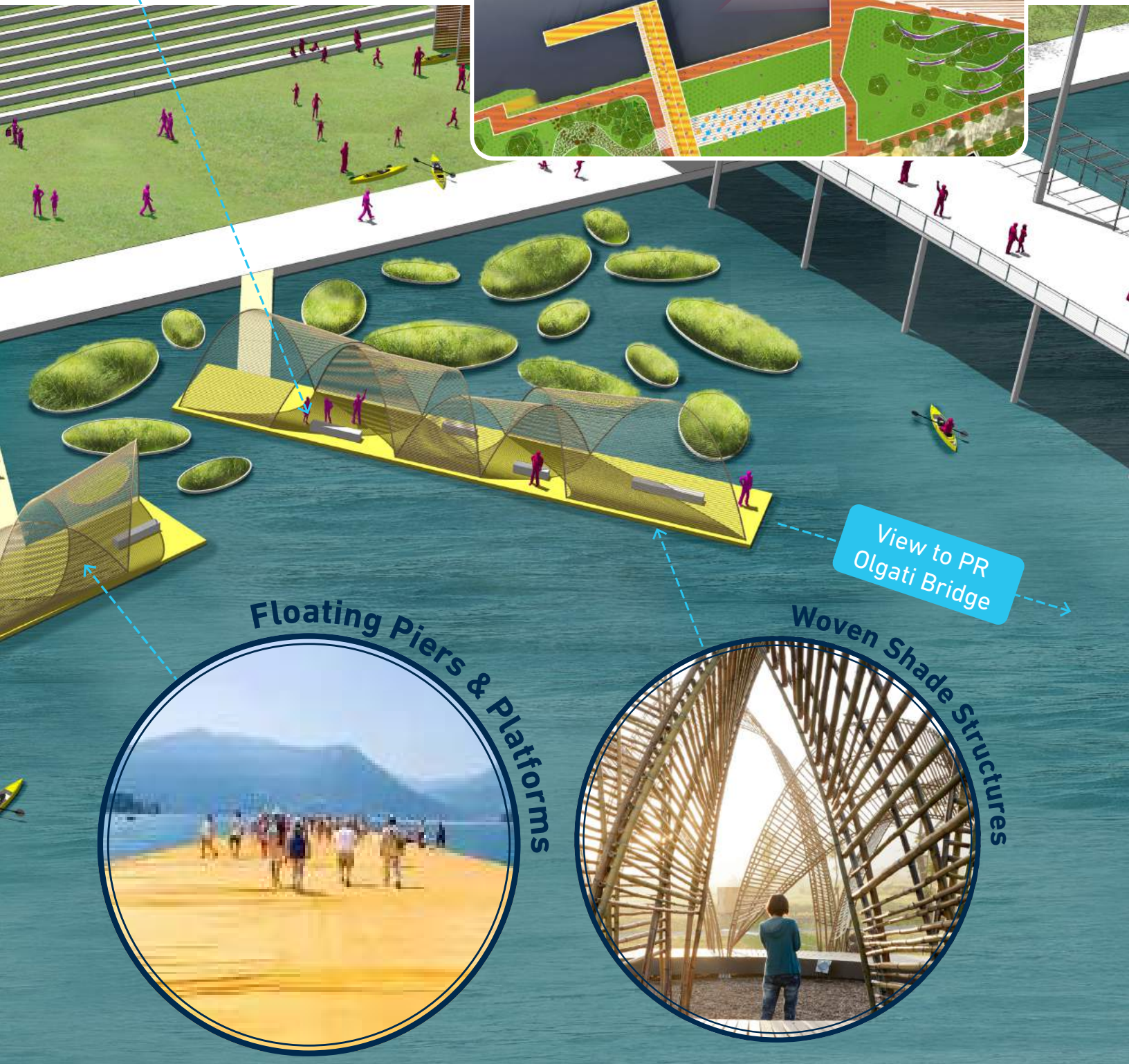
To increase the visibility and opportunity for environmental education, a series of floating wetlands and platforms allows for individuals and small groups to engage in hands-on learning at the river. The floating wetlands allow for aquatic emergent plants to grow and perform natural water-cleansing functions at a demonstration scale, and, paired with interpretive materials about river and wetland ecology, help build the foundation for informed stewardship and conservation of the river environment.





Floating Features Area

Seating



Floating Piers & Platforms

Woven Shade Structures

View to PR Olgati Bridge

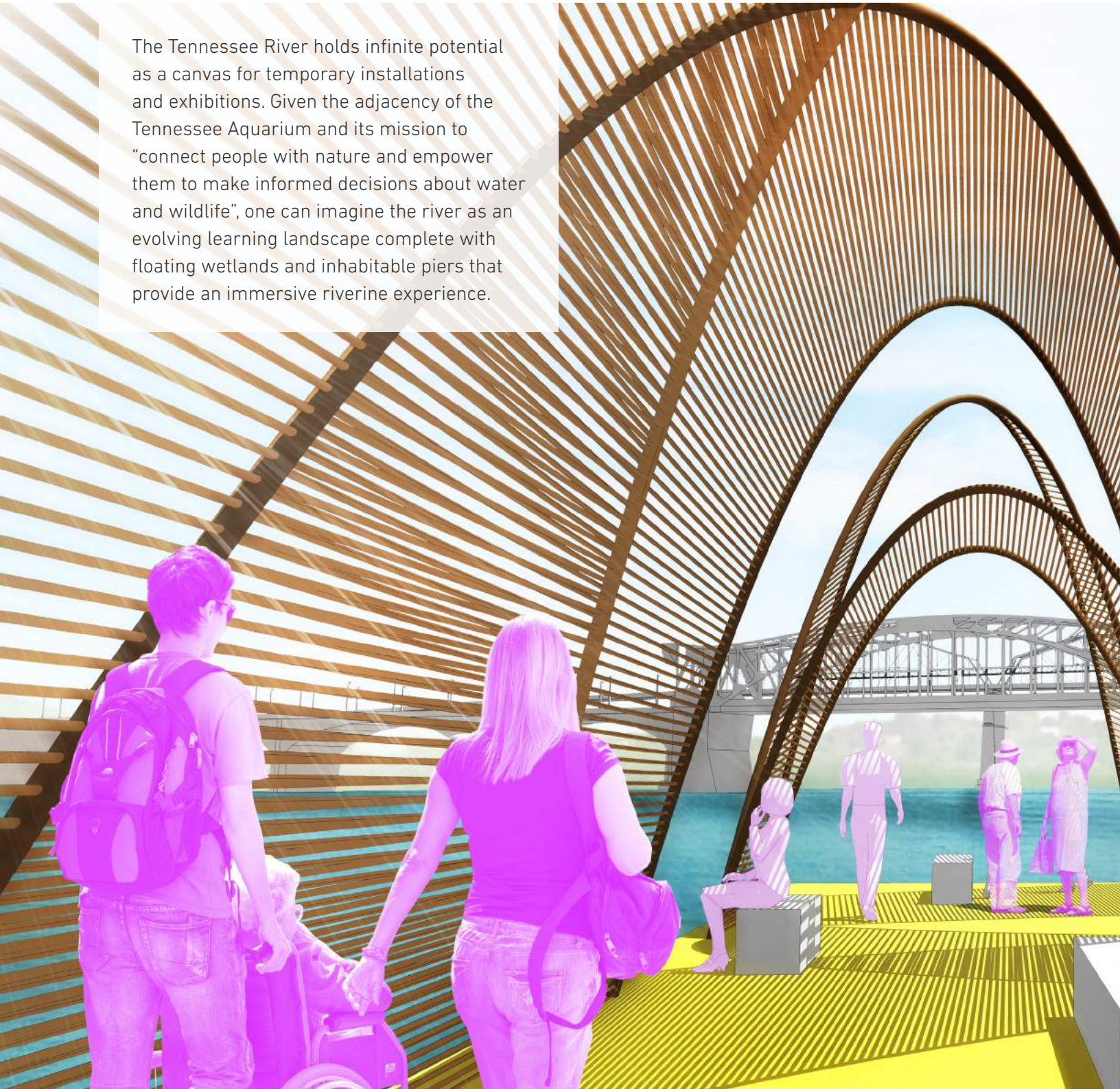


## 8

# GET YOUR FEET WET

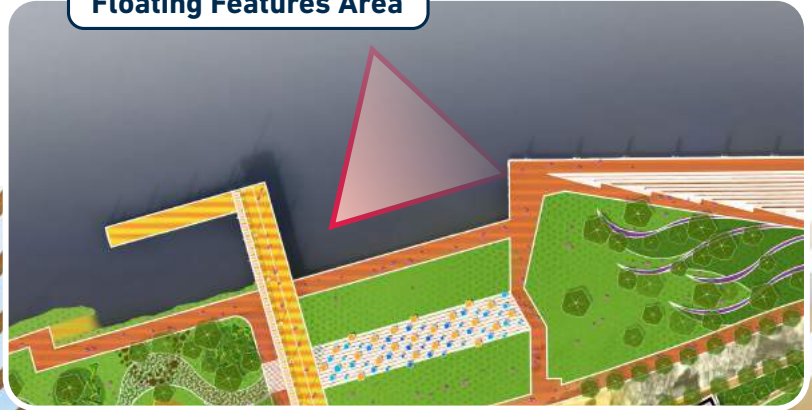
## Floating Features

The Tennessee River holds infinite potential as a canvas for temporary installations and exhibitions. Given the adjacency of the Tennessee Aquarium and its mission to “connect people with nature and empower them to make informed decisions about water and wildlife”, one can imagine the river as an evolving learning landscape complete with floating wetlands and inhabitable piers that provide an immersive riverine experience.





Floating Features Area





# GET YOUR FEET WET

## Barge Socials

Centrally-located at the foot of the amphitheater, a series of interconnected barges allows for the extension of community events and programs to include eating, drinking, and socializing on the water.

Distinctive Food & Beverage

Outdoor Dining  
Interpretive Signage

Public Art

Nighttime Activation



## Barge Socials

Shade

Native  
Landscape

Seating

Innovative  
Public Space

Floating Barges





# FOUR

## Aspirations

Activate the Riverfront

Create a Place for All  
Chattanoogans

Develop a Greater Sense of  
Place

Strengthen Connectivity to the  
Riverfront

# EIGHT

## Strategies

Humanize the Parks

Come Together at the River

Build Inclusively

Establish the Riverfront Front  
Door

Create a Civic Campus

Boldly Connect Downtown

Refresh the Riverwalk

Get Your Feet Wet





»»» **ONE**

**Riverfront for all Chattanoogaans**

# IMPLEMENTATION

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# IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX & PHASING

To guide the implementation of ONE Riverfront Chattanooga, the planning team has created the following matrix and phasing plan:

## Implementation Matrix

The matrix catalogs all of the recommended strategies, projects, programs, and policies from the plan. To the right of each recommendation is the expected phasing timeframe and potential partners for each item. The phasing timeframe is labeled as near-term if it is a recommendation that can be implemented over the next three years or less. These near-term recommendations may also be necessary for early implementation in order to enable other projects. The phase is labeled as mid-term if a recommendation will be implemented in 4 - 6 years. The phase is labeled long-term if it will take 7 - 9 years to implement.










## Implementation Phasing

To complement this matrix, a more detailed phasing plan has also been developed. The phasing timeframe on the matrix corresponds to the physical areas for each recommendation. Directly following this Implementation Phasing diagram are more detailed descriptions of each recommendation, along with an estimated budget range, and additional implementation and design notes.

Taken together, the Implementation Matrix and Phasing plan will shape priorities and provide a tool for accountability as the River City Company engages other community partners in implementing plan recommendations over the short- and long-term.

## KEY

### Phase

-    Near-term (1 - 3 years)
-    Mid-term (4 - 6 years)
-    Long-term (7 - 9 years)

## IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

RECOMMENDATION		PHASE	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
<b>1 Humanize the Parks</b>			
1.1	Rediscover Nature		RCC, City, Foundations
1.2	Play at the Tennessee		RCC, City, Foundations
1.3	Relax on Ross's Landing		RCC, City, Foundations
<b>2 Come Together at the River</b>			
2.1	Throw a Launch Event at the Chattanooga Green and Amphitheater		RCC, City, Local Businesses and Artists, Cultural Institutions, Foundations
<b>3 Build Inclusively</b>			
3.1	Establish the Equitable and Inclusive Development Toolbox		RCC, City, County, Local Businesses, Development Community, Foundations
<b>4 Establish the Riverfront Front Door</b>			
4.1	Energize the Parkway		RCC, City, Development Community, Foundations
4.2	Complete the Green		RCC, City, Local Businesses, Tennessee Aquarium
4.3	Eat, Drink, and Socialize on the River		RCC, City, Local Businesses, Tennessee Aquarium
<b>5 Create a Civic Commons</b>			
5.1	Head of Broad Market		RCC, City, Local Businesses and Artists, Tennessee Aquarium
5.2	Signature Civic Plaza		RCC, City, Tennessee Aquarium
5.3	Water Feature		RCC, City, Tennessee Aquarium
5.4	Aquarium Event Space		RCC, City, Tennessee Aquarium
5.5	River and Park Access		RCC, City, Tennessee Aquarium
5.6	Create a Festival Street		RCC, City
<b>6 Boldly Connect Downtown</b>			
6.1	Broad Street Public Realm Improvements		RCC, City, CARTA, Local Businesses, Development Community, Tennessee Aquarium, Foundations
6.2	Broad Street Infill		RCC, City, Local Businesses, Development Community, Tennessee Aquarium, Property Owners
<b>7 Refresh the Riverwalk</b>			
7.1	Refresh the Riverwalk		RCC, City
<b>8 Get Your Feet Wet</b>			
8.1	Kayak Access & Storage		RCC, City
8.2a	Floating Features		RCC, City, Tennessee Aquarium
8.2b	Barge Socials		RCC, City, Tennessee Aquarium



IMPLEMENTATION PHASING





