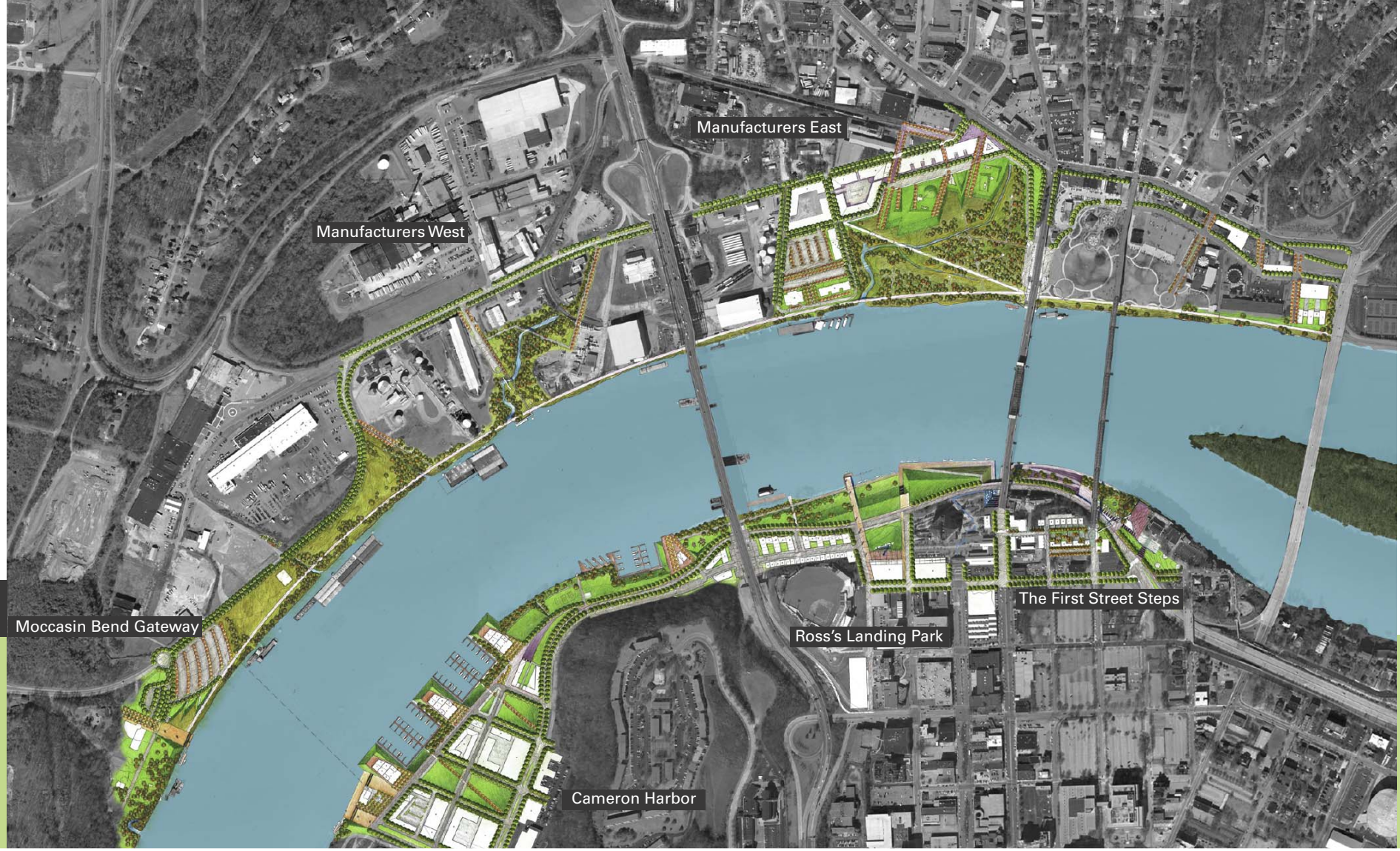
# The 21st Century Waterfront

Executive Summary

## Chattanooga, Tennessee

May 28, 2002

Hargreaves Associates
Schwartz Silver /Moffatt Nichol /
Arcadis G&M



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### Introduction

Twenty years ago, Chattanooga took a bold step into the future by taking a bold step back toward its riverfront. In making the commitment to reconnect with their river, Chattanoogans set the stage for the development of the Tennessee Aquarium, the Riverpark, the Walnut Street Bridge and Coolidge Park. In the past decade alone, hundreds of millions of dollars have been invested in the riverfront and downtown Chattanooga. The resulting revitalization has won international recognition for the city and its commitment to planning and implementation.

The 21st Century Waterfront Plan will complete Chattanooga's return to the river. A sweeping, multi-million dollar vision, the plan transforms the downtown riverfront with a careful combination of development, preservation and enhancement. The plan honors the history and beauty of the area as it primes the pump of the metropolitan economy.

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## The Planning Process



The 21st Century Waterfront Plan evolved out of a public process that has become second nature for Chattanoogans. Guided by waterfront planning consultant team lead by Hargreaves & Associates and Chattanooga's Urban Design Studio, hundreds of Chattanoogans participated in a series of meetings that culminated in a three day planning charrette.

Recurrent themes emerged from the meetings: fully connect the community to and along the river; provide a unique and authentic Chattanooga experience; create a 24-hour riverfront; get the key projects started right away.

In May 2002, the design team unveiled an ambitious and exciting plan that reflected these community priorities.

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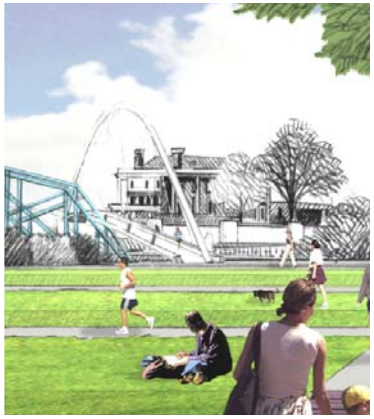
First Street Plan



Hunter Bridge

Hunter Museum

First Street Steps

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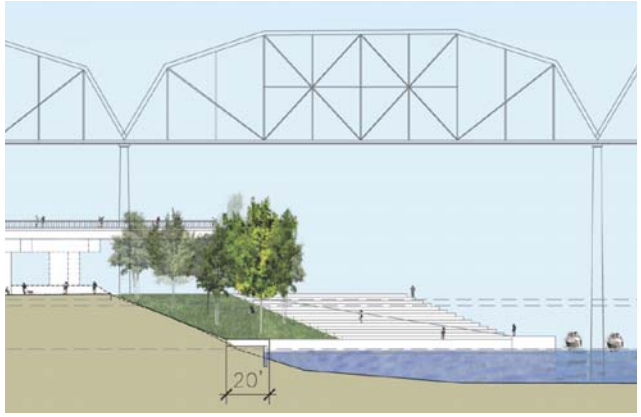
**Plan Summary**

The 21st Century Waterfront Plan comprises 129 acres on both sides of the river stretching from the Veteran's Bridge on the east to Moccasin Bend and M.L. King Boulevard on the west. The plan area is divided into six distinct districts based on their natural features and development characteristics. Half of the districts – the First Street Steps, Ross's Landing Park, and Manufacturers' East – offer immediate development potential. Three others – Manufacturers West, Cameron Harbor and the Moccasin Bend Gateway will develop over a longer period.

The **First Street Steps** connect Market Street and the Aquarium with the Walnut Street Bridge, the Bluff View Art District, and the Hunter Museum of American Art. A new public plaza is created between Cherry and Walnut Streets. First Street itself is transformed into a mixed-use neighborhood of residences, shops, cafés and galleries with a funicular to ease the trip up and down the hill. Pedestrian connections at Second Street and a proposed bridge from the Walnut Street Circle across Riverfront Parkway complement the Hunter's plans to reconnect the museum to the city.




Walnut Street Section

Trail of Tears at Ross's Landing

The Chattanooga Green at Ross's Landing

The revitalization of **Ross's Landing Park** is a cornerstone of the plan. Here at the birthplace of the city, the vision includes a reconfigured Riverfront Parkway allowing for an enlarged and enhanced riverside park. This expansive area encompasses the Chattanooga Green and the Tennessee River Terraces and will be a fabulous and functional setting for riverside festivals. The trailhead of the Trail of Tears is honored, and much-needed docking facilities accommodate transient boaters. An expanded marina, water taxis, riverfront cafés, residential units and commercial development bring a fitting vitality to the area known as the "front porch" of the city. The crown jewel is the expansion of the Tennessee Aquarium, solidifying its position as the finest freshwater aquarium in the world.

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Manufacturers East Plan

Tennessee Wetland Section

Tennessee Wetland and River Walk

Adventure Playground



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**Manufacturers East** comprises the area near the intersection of Manufacturers Road, Cherokee Boulevard and Market Street. The plan calls for a new mixed-use neighborhood of residential and commercial development that mark the beginning of a connection between downtown and Moccasin Bend. The highlight of this district is the Tennessee Wetland Park, preserving the wetlands west of the Market Street Bridge as a nature reserve with an interpretive riverside boardwalk. The Adventure Playground and a segment of the Trail of Tears bring recreation and history to the district, and the collective components of the district provide a perfect complement to Coolidge Park

Downriver Aerial View

Cameron Harbor Section

Highlights of the remaining segments include: **Cameron Harbor** – anchoring the west end of M. L. King Boulevard with a marina, housing and offices, restaurants and shops, green space and a river taxi linking to the developments upriver and down; **Manufacturers West** – celebrating the industrial character of the river's north shore, but tempering it with riparian habitats, riverwalk segments and a canoe launch; **Moccasin Bend Gateway** – providing a interpretive center, water taxi access and celebratory gateway into the Moccasin Bend National Park, pending the declaration of park status.

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Upriver Aerial View



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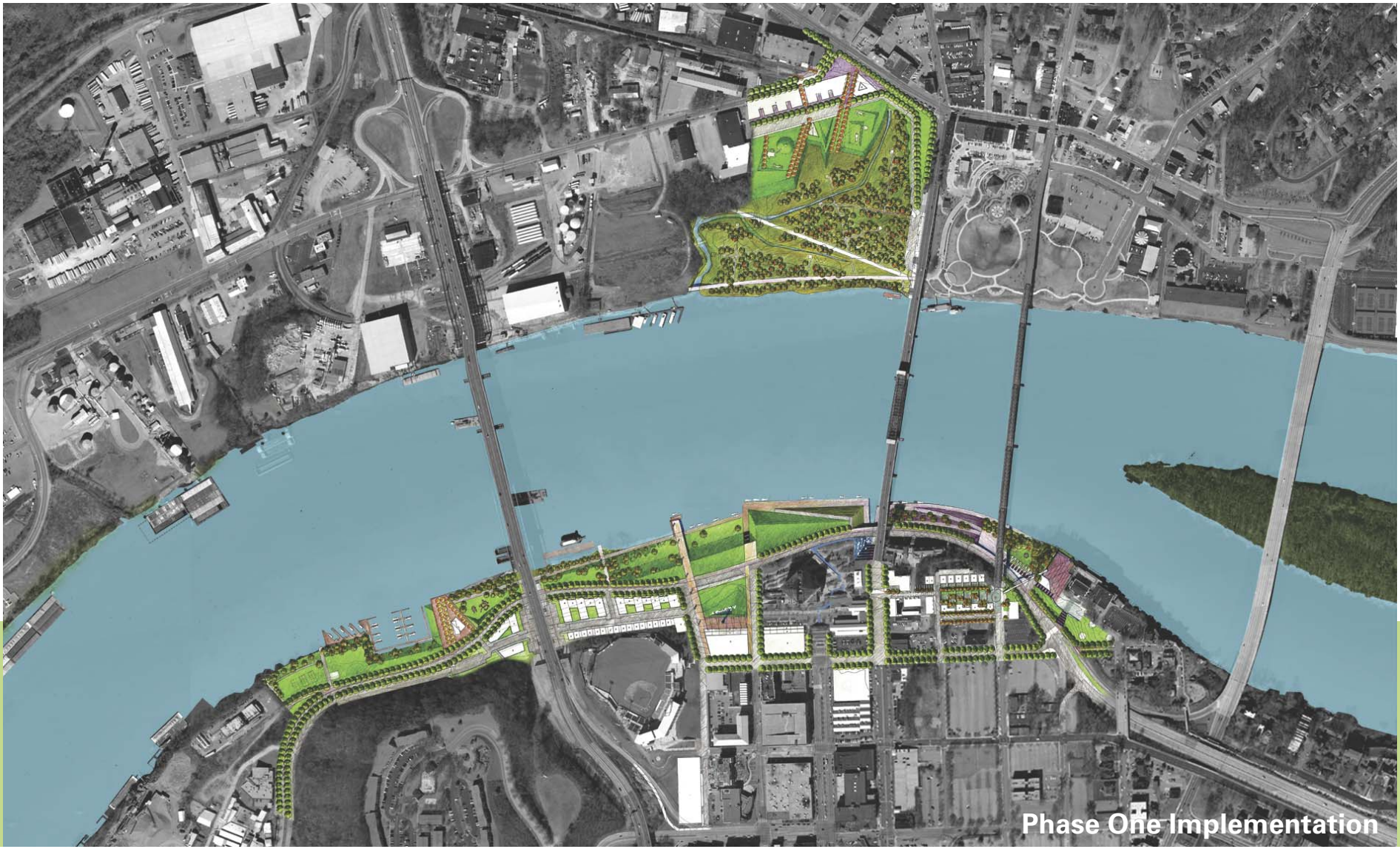

# Phase One Implementation



The 21st Century Waterfront Plan represents the unfinished business that was begun with the Tennessee Riverpark Master Plan and stands as another testament to Chattanoogans' ability to forge bold visions punctuated by aggressive implementation. It is the blueprint for a riverfront without rival – a place for Chattanoogans and their guests to recreate, to contemplate and to celebrate.

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