



imagine eastbank

A VISION PLAN FOR NASHVILLE'S NEXT GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS



October 6, 2022 MPC



METRO
NASHVILLE
PLANNING
DEPARTMENT

NDOT



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Kayaks on the East Bank of the Cumberland River.

Metro Planning Staff and consultants tour the East Bank by boat at the beginning of the planning process.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“In the heart of our city’s thriving downtown sits an exceptional opportunity to build Nashville’s next great neighborhoods along the East Bank of the Cumberland River.”

Mayor John Cooper

View of Downtown Nashville, from behind the overgrown landscapes on the East Bank.

FOREWORD

Imagine East Bank is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to re-envision 338 acres of underutilized land in the heart of Nashville along the banks of the Cumberland River, and dream of what vibrant neighborhoods could emerge there. Few other projects of this scope and context exist in the United States today.

The urban renewal projects of the mid-twentieth century physically severed this area from its neighbors. The low-density, auto-oriented features that define it today are a result of this legacy. Characterized by asphalt parking lots and private, industrial uses, the East Bank is framed by the interstate and a steep, eroded, and overgrown bank that makes the Cumberland River — one of our city’s most unique features — almost imperceptible from a ground-level pedestrian perspective.

A place of contradictions, the East Bank is centrally located within a thriving city, but is perceived and experienced as an island. It is deeply bound to the interstate system and network of river bridges, yet is simultaneously disconnected. It is adjacent to bustling residential and commercial neighborhoods, but has a population of zero. In short, the East Bank does not live up to its potential by any common measure. The area is ripe with additional possibility and, with the development of the community vision reflected in *Imagine East Bank*, a new future is possible.

The Planning Department, in collaboration with expert consultants, has undertaken extensive technical analysis, urban design inquiry, and robust community outreach to shape this vision. Importantly, the infrastructure needed to support these new neighborhoods will also serve as a catalyst for regional mobility and open space networks. Ultimately, this is a vision to connect people and community.

The East Bank can become a place reclaimed for all Nashvillians to enjoy, with a public greenway along the riverfront for pedestrians and bicyclists, a boulevard providing multimodal access, and neighborhoods for residents. Realizing this vision has just begun in earnest and will take time, collaboration and leadership from all Nashvillians to create the community we desire.

Lucy Alden Kempf

Lucy Alden Kempf
Executive Director,
Metropolitan Government of Nashville and
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PLANNING CONTEXT

Several projects currently under development, in and around the East Bank, will add significant new opportunities in the form of housing, jobs, and dense mixed-use development. Existing policy supports this evolution of an industrial area adjacent to Downtown Nashville into dense urban neighborhoods. However, these proposals, if developed without a coordinated strategy, will strain existing systems such as road networks and stormwater infrastructure.

The *Imagine East Bank* planning study was initiated to outline strategies for coordinated development and to better understand how Nashvillians want the area to evolve with these changes. This approach proactively directs and manages growth, as opposed to defensively or retroactively planning for it at the margins.

While not exhaustive, the following projects under development and neighborhoods experiencing rapid growth, set the context for this vision plan.

large-scale planning catalysts

1 111 NORTH 1ST STREET
In May 2021, a Specific Plan (SP) for property located at 111 North 1st Street — the site of the existing TA Truck Stop — was approved by the Metro Planning Commission. The approved plan proposes a 15-acre, high-density, mixed-use development, with a maximum height of 30 stories and FAR (floor area ratio) of 5.0.

2 CAYCE PLACE
As Nashville grows, so does its need for affordable housing. In 2013-2014, MDHA spearheaded Envision Cayce — a master planning process to update Nashville's largest subsidized housing property, located on 63 acres in East Nashville.

The plan sets a vision for a mixed-income, mixed-use community with 2,390 units. It ensures a one-for-one replacement of existing affordable units. Construction is ongoing, with several of the projects already completed. The project will provide affordable, workforce, and market-rate units near the East Bank.

3 ORACLE
In the summer of 2021, tech company Oracle purchased almost 70 acres in River North, for a new campus that will host 8,500 employees and bring thousands around and through the East Bank daily. Oracle committed to paying \$175 million for Metro infrastructure upgrades — including new greenways and a new pedestrian bridge over the river.

4 TITANS STADIUM
The Tennessee Titans lease the Titans Stadium from the Metro Sports Authority — which owns 90 acres of land on the East Bank. The current lease runs through the 2028 NFL season. The Titans and Metro are currently exploring the cost-benefit scenarios of renovating the existing stadium or constructing a new stadium adjacent to the existing site. As of the release of this plan, a decision has not been made.

River North is a post-industrial neighborhood that is rapidly urbanizing. Many dense mixed-use developments are planned or already under construction. An Urban Design Overlay (UDO) District, adopted by Metro Council in 2018 guides development. While not the focus of this plan, the area is interwoven with the *Imagine East Bank* vision.

Various recreational opportunities are envisioned for the East Bank.

COMMITMENT TO EQUITY

An East Bank for all Nashvillians begins with a goal to promote meaningful and positive change in partnership with the community. Equity is a foundational principle.

To move forward, we must acknowledge that urban planners have historically created and exacerbated barriers in our community. As a profession, we must take responsibility for damage done, learn from it, and promote policies and practices that benefit those previously left out.

The American Planning Association's (APA) equity statement argues, "This reflection must acknowledge the historical trauma of racism and discrimination inflicted on people of color, wrought by the planning profession itself, which led to structural disadvantages in housing, transportation, education and employment that last to this day."

The East Bank and its immediate context reflect the harmful legacy of 20th century urban revitalization projects. During the 1950s-1970s, new federal and state highways severed the neighborhoods of East Nashville from the river and downtown — leaving the East Bank as the concrete desert between them. Urban renewal policies of that same era cleared neighborhoods and displaced residents from their communities.

Today, the legacy of urban renewal persists: in addition to its interstate border, the East Bank is designed for cars rather than people. Its surface lots exacerbate environmental vulnerabilities. It contains no housing units and few human-scaled relationships or points of connection with adjacent neighborhoods.

Planning directors across the nation released a joint public statement, in 2021, to collectively address racial equity goals in their practices and policies, with a commitment to change their work toward the goal of equitable communities in the future. The statement reinforces the importance of addressing historic harms in new planning work. It lays out the principles for addressing the past and key principles that should guide change in cities moving forward.

It is for these reasons that so much of our East Bank work emphasizes the creation of human-scaled open, green space and mobility networks that serve all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, bus riders, and car drivers. Creating building blocks for neighborhoods that provide safe and comfortable access to goods, resources, jobs, and housing is a first step towards reclaiming the East Bank as a public asset and minimizing some of the man-made, super-scaled obstacles imposed on the area.

The planning for a new, multimodal boulevard is guided by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in its earliest phases to ensure that a data-driven approach informs the basis of our decisions, including community and environmental impacts. Therefore, understanding the natural and historical context of the East Bank — not just physically but from a people perspective — will inform decisions around some of the largest proposed investments, including infrastructure — such as the boulevard.

Other guiding principles in our work include, but are not limited to:

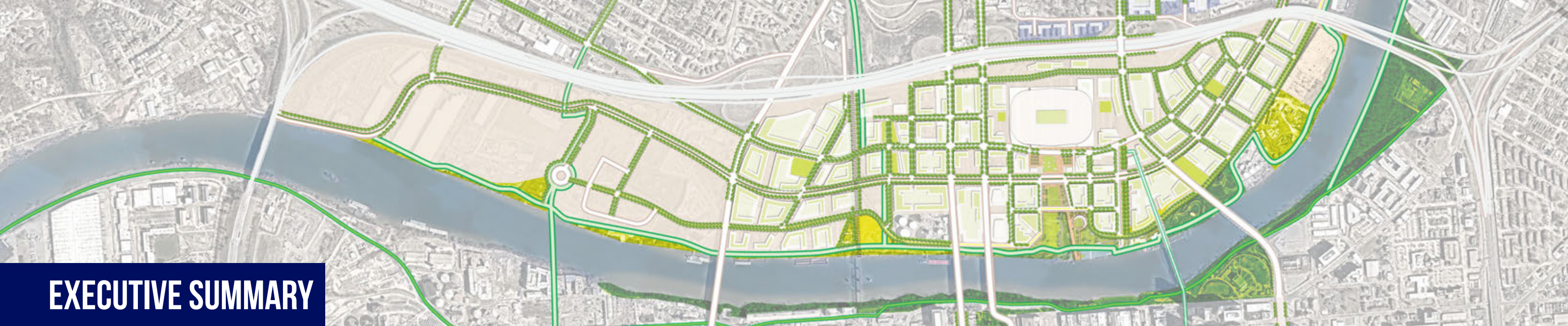
- » Environmental resilience, and with the future redevelopment of any industrial sites, environmental justice considerations.
- » A public open space network for everyone.
- » Land use standards that support multi-family housing and that do not support single family housing on the East Bank.
- » Land use standards that support a diversity of uses including housing, a mix of business types, and educational or cultural uses that benefit communities.

We are committed to building a vision around these guiding principles, but are not limited to them. We are inspired by the Equity Statement within the 2021 [Affordable Housing Task Force Report](#) and used it to identify guiding principles for future housing goals, which subsequent phases of work on the East Bank will follow.

In conclusion, the vision outlined in this document is a first step of many towards a new future for the East Bank — equity is a principle that should be foundational for each subsequent step forward.

Racial inequity permeates Nashville's past and present — and housing is no exception. While existing Fair Housing policies are intended to protect vulnerable communities, many Black and brown Nashvillians still face housing discrimination. Current status-quo practices and policies continue to perpetuate harm, so we must intentionally work to design and implement solutions that are anti-racist both in outcomes and processes.

—Metro Nashville's 2021 Affordable Housing Task Force Report



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This illustrative plan depicts a vision of the East Bank comprised of four urban, mixed-use neighborhoods linked by a robust mobility system and network of riverfront outdoor spaces.

VISIONING GOAL

Craft a dynamic planning process that supports inclusive and meaningful engagement of all stakeholders in the creation of a forward-thinking, information-driven, and community-led vision for the future of the East Bank.

the vision

The East Bank’s emergence as new neighborhoods for Nashvillians requires it to re-establish itself within the city’s fabric, both in physical form and in its social, cultural, and economic aspects. Therefore, the goal of this project is to propose a vision for the building blocks of great neighborhoods, consistent with community guidance.

The vision should also accomplish a higher purpose: the East Bank must take its place in and participate in a larger city compact. That compact is a more accessible community for all Nashvillians — to have an equitable approach to community building where people connect to goods, services, and, ultimately, to one another through human-scaled and well-designed public places.

We believe the proposed vision accomplishes these purposes.

PUBLIC VISIONING PROCESS

Meaningful public engagement is the foundation of any successful planning project. *Imagine East Bank* represents a 21-month effort to meaningfully engage community stakeholders, understand their experiences, and craft a collaborative vision for the future of the East Bank.

These conversations directly shaped the infrastructure and design recommendations presented in this document. We thank the many community members, technical experts, businesses and property owners, and many others for their guidance in the creation of a forward-thinking, information-driven, and community-led vision for the East Bank.

vision concepts

During the engagement process, four concepts emerged that convey the community’s objectives for the East Bank and provide a framework for the future vision. They are, as follows:

1. EQUITABLE & AFFORDABLE EAST BANK

Advance equity, resiliency, and high quality of life for all Nashvillians through the creation of accessible and affordable places to live, work, and play.

Equity and affordability are promoted through a multi-pronged approach that includes housing, multimodal connectivity, economic development, resiliency, and land use. Several strategies and tools for advancing housing diversity on the East Bank are addressed, including dedicating a portion of Metro-owned land.

2. SAFE & SIMPLE MULTIMODAL CONNECTIONS

Provide a robust, multimodal transportation system enabling easy and equal access to and through the East Bank.

The proposed mobility plan prioritizes the experience of transit riders, cyclists, and pedestrians, while improving street connectivity. It identifies placement and sections for these networks. Close coordination with state and other local agencies is critical for successful outcomes.

3. RESPECT FOR THE RIVER

Re-center the river as a vital community amenity and bolster resiliency through enhanced floodplain and stormwater management.

The environmental strategy links flood resiliency and stormwater management with the creation of vibrant park spaces that provide a variety of river-oriented activities.

4. NEIGHBORHOODS FOR NASHVILLIANS

Create vibrant, livable, and authentic neighborhoods that prioritize the everyday needs of Nashvillians.

The East Bank is divided into four neighborhoods with unique contexts and characteristics. Objectives and guidelines are proposed for the development of buildings, streetscapes, and outdoor spaces.

METRO-OWNED LAND IN FOCUS

This chapter explores and illustrates key ideas and opportunities for Metro-owned land on the East Bank. Ideas include the creation of an East Bank Park — and advancing resiliency and outdoor space objectives through it. Furthermore, a potential extension of the John Seigenthaler Pedestrian Bridge, a mobility hub, and a site for cultural resources, among other ideas, are explored.



pressures and opportunities

The possibility of a neighborhood-centric East Bank should include place-based solutions and address relevant city-wide challenges. By investing in the creation of attainable housing, multimodal transportation infrastructure, mixed-use opportunities, and an accessible and active riverfront, we set the stage for East Bank neighborhoods that stand the test of time.

As described in Chapter 2, the unique location and current conditions of the East Bank present opportunities to address the following city goals:

1. Meet the increased demand for housing and other city services
2. Create connections to and through the East Bank, to increase mobility
3. Accept our responsibility to combat climate change and to better understand living with the Cumberland River

coordination with property owners

The East Bank comprises both public and private properties. Each property in the study area is unique, and owners have a variety of objectives for their sites.

Several large properties in and around the East Bank are planning redevelopment — including Cayce Place, Oracle, 111 North 1st Street, and Titans Stadium.

In order to develop a common vision, we collaborated with property owners and tenants, emphasizing the public systems — infrastructure, mobility networks, parks, and river engagement — necessary to support the East Bank’s future. In each case, our goal was to ensure that plans meet the community’s vision and objectives while respecting the rights and interests of private property owners.

This illustrative plan of the Central Waterfront neighborhood depicts Titans Stadium in a new location on the East Bank — directly east of the existing site. This outcome will be referred to as “Option A”, in this plan.



This illustrative plan of the Central Waterfront neighborhood, developed early in the planning process, shows Titans Stadium in its existing location. This outcome will be referred to as “Option B”, in this plan.

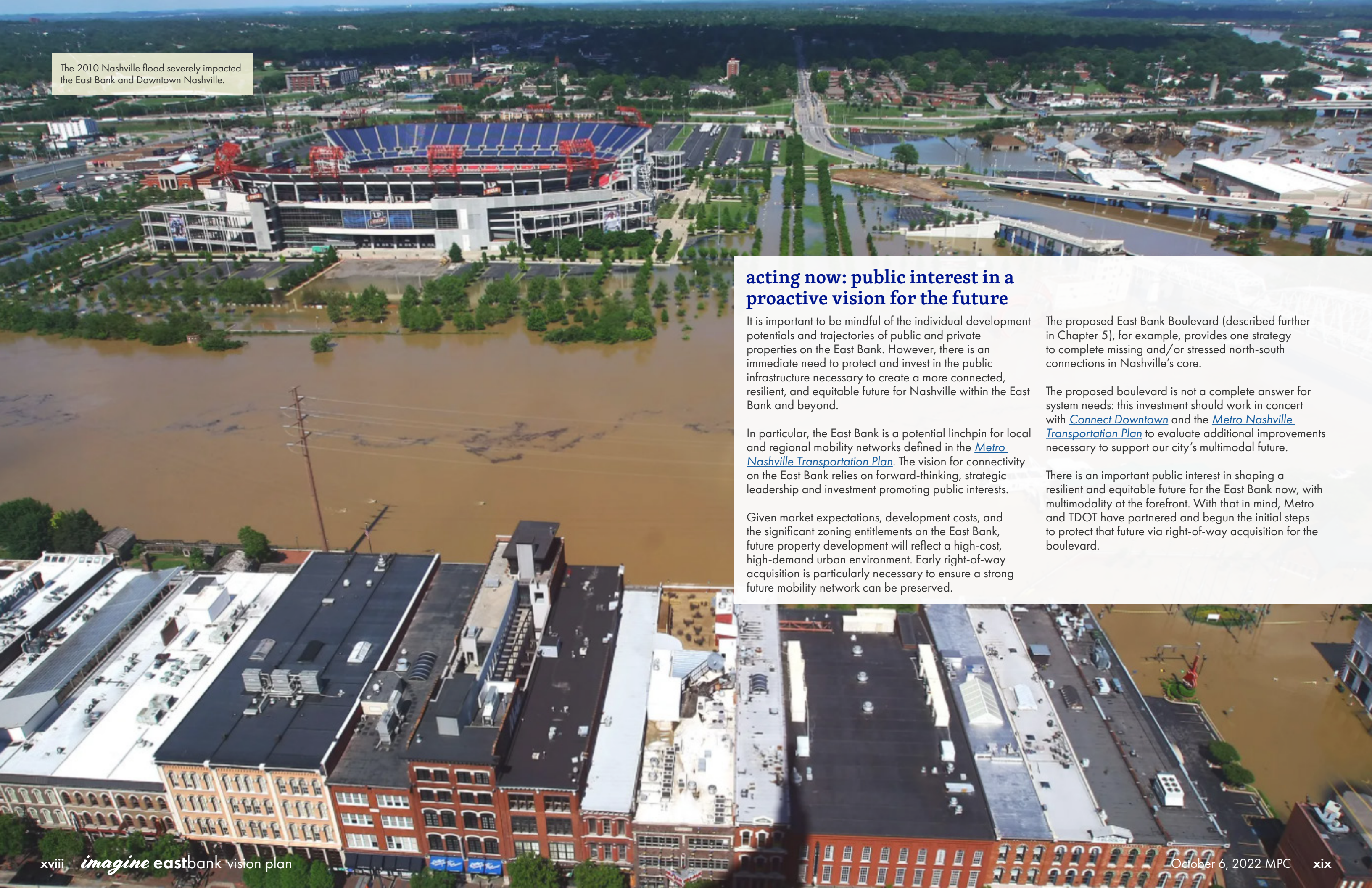
the future of titans stadium

Imagine East Bank evaluates the urban planning and design of the entire 338-acre East Bank study area, including the site of Titans Stadium. At the outset of the project, the planning work considered Titans Stadium as it exists in its current location. A vision for the Central Waterfront neighborhood, incorporating road alignment, development scenarios, infrastructure placement, and allocation of land for park space was developed, based on this premise (above).

However, during the planning process, the Tennessee Titans began evaluating the option of building a new stadium — directly to the east of the current stadium — in lieu of pursuing upgrades to the existing structure. This new scenario necessitated a rethinking and rearranging of the elements of the plan — adjusting for the new location (left).

Many of the maps and drawings in this plan depict potential planning outcomes that result from either option. For example, we would pursue similar street sections under either condition; and, our aspirations for the greenway network could be similar under both scenarios. However, because constructing a new stadium is a new condition, we conducted a deeper analysis of how this alternative would affect certain outcomes, particularly around open space planning, placement of the boulevard, resiliency, and urban design. This analysis yielded a better understanding of environmental impacts, including human health, economic, and social effects of proposed actions.

At the time of publication of this plan, no formal announcements have been made regarding the future of the stadium’s placement. The ultimate decision has many considerations — financial, operational, and strategic — many subject to approval by Metro entities, such as the Metro Sports Authority and Metro Council. The stadium decision is an important one, and will shape planning outcomes within the East Bank.



The 2010 Nashville flood severely impacted the East Bank and Downtown Nashville.

acting now: public interest in a proactive vision for the future

It is important to be mindful of the individual development potentials and trajectories of public and private properties on the East Bank. However, there is an immediate need to protect and invest in the public infrastructure necessary to create a more connected, resilient, and equitable future for Nashville within the East Bank and beyond.

In particular, the East Bank is a potential linchpin for local and regional mobility networks defined in the [Metro Nashville Transportation Plan](#). The vision for connectivity on the East Bank relies on forward-thinking, strategic leadership and investment promoting public interests.

Given market expectations, development costs, and the significant zoning entitlements on the East Bank, future property development will reflect a high-cost, high-demand urban environment. Early right-of-way acquisition is particularly necessary to ensure a strong future mobility network can be preserved.

The proposed East Bank Boulevard (described further in Chapter 5), for example, provides one strategy to complete missing and/or stressed north-south connections in Nashville's core.

The proposed boulevard is not a complete answer for system needs: this investment should work in concert with [Connect Downtown](#) and the [Metro Nashville Transportation Plan](#) to evaluate additional improvements necessary to support our city's multimodal future.

There is an important public interest in shaping a resilient and equitable future for the East Bank now, with multimodality at the forefront. With that in mind, Metro and TDOT have partnered and begun the initial steps to protect that future via right-of-way acquisition for the boulevard.

key plan components and priority action items

Imagine East Bank proposes an ambitious vision that will take years, if not decades, to be fully realized. Many components of the vision are interdependent, requiring careful consideration of priorities, phasing, resources, and other factors like additional feasibility or subsequent planning studies.

The recommendations presented in this document cover a wide range of next steps from small-scale to ambitious capital improvement projects. Four priority recommendations — foundational to the implementation of the vision — are listed below.

1. Develop an East Bank implementation strategy

- » Set forth a clear process for the redevelopment of Metro-owned property on the East Bank, consistent with the vision.
- » Following the adoption of the vision plan by the Metro Planning Commission, new zoning change requests should be evaluated in accordance with the vision.
- » Create design guidelines for Metro-owned property on the East Bank.
- » Establish a design review and approval process — such as a design review committee — to ensure proposed developments meet the intent and standards of the vision.
- » Set aside land on Metro-owned properties for key public resources outlined in the vision, including park(s), greenways, rights-of-way, affordable housing, a mobility hub, and cultural assets.
- » Determine the needs for Metro services, such as fire safety, and plan for appropriate allocation in future development agreements.

- » Acquire, or negotiate through agreements, land for public infrastructure.
- » Explore feasibility of creating a Business Improvement District (BID), to support public services and manage assets on the East Bank.
- » Develop a parking operational plan — that incorporates the needs of the city, mixed-use developments, and the Titans Stadium — that also aligns with the mobility strategy.

2. Advance livability through implementation

- » Utilize the policies and procedures of land development — such as zoning reviews, lease negotiations, and development incentives — to address community needs like housing, fresh food, and childcare.
- » For each phase of development, establish clear housing benchmarks — consistent with the *Imagine East Bank* vision and the city's Unified Housing Strategy — for which Metro is a landowner or a participant in an agreement with private landowners. See pg. 56 for Phae I benchmarks.
- » Engage the Affordable Housing Task Force and the community to assist in establishing affordability goals for each phase of development to include a mix of income ranges, including goals for deep affordability.
- » Explore strategic funding or policy models and partnerships that link development with community objectives for equitable and affordable housing, workforce development, and educational attainment.
- » The city's new Office of Economic Growth and Small Business Development should

deploy strategies that lead to long-term, stable opportunities for small, local and minority-owned businesses on the East Bank.

3. Place multimodal transportation at the forefront

- » Continue feasibility exploration, planning, design, and construction of the East Bank Boulevard.
- » Dedicate lanes for transit service, in accordance with NDOT and WeGo operational standards.
- » Dedicate lanes for bikeways, sidewalks, and streetscape improvements that are consistent with the vision.
- » Prioritize a separated and safe bicycling experience through detailed design and operational standards.
- » Coordinate with NDOT and WeGo to ensure the East Bank Boulevard creates safe, reliable connections to and through the East Bank, and between adjacent neighborhoods and corridors, such as extensions to Dickerson Pike and Murfreesboro Pike.
- » Negotiate and acquire rights-of-way needed to advance the mobility network, including for the East Bank Boulevard and other streets.
- » Develop and approve streetscape design standards to ensure the creation of complete streets on the East Bank.
- » Partner with TDOT to prioritize key improvements, such as renovation or replacement of state bridges, the arrival of Ellington Parkway, and improving the interstate on- and off-ramps.
- » Continue the exploration of a mobility hub on the East Bank, and evaluate opportunities to co-locate housing and other services with the Mobility Hub.

4. Invest in performative and resilient outdoor spaces

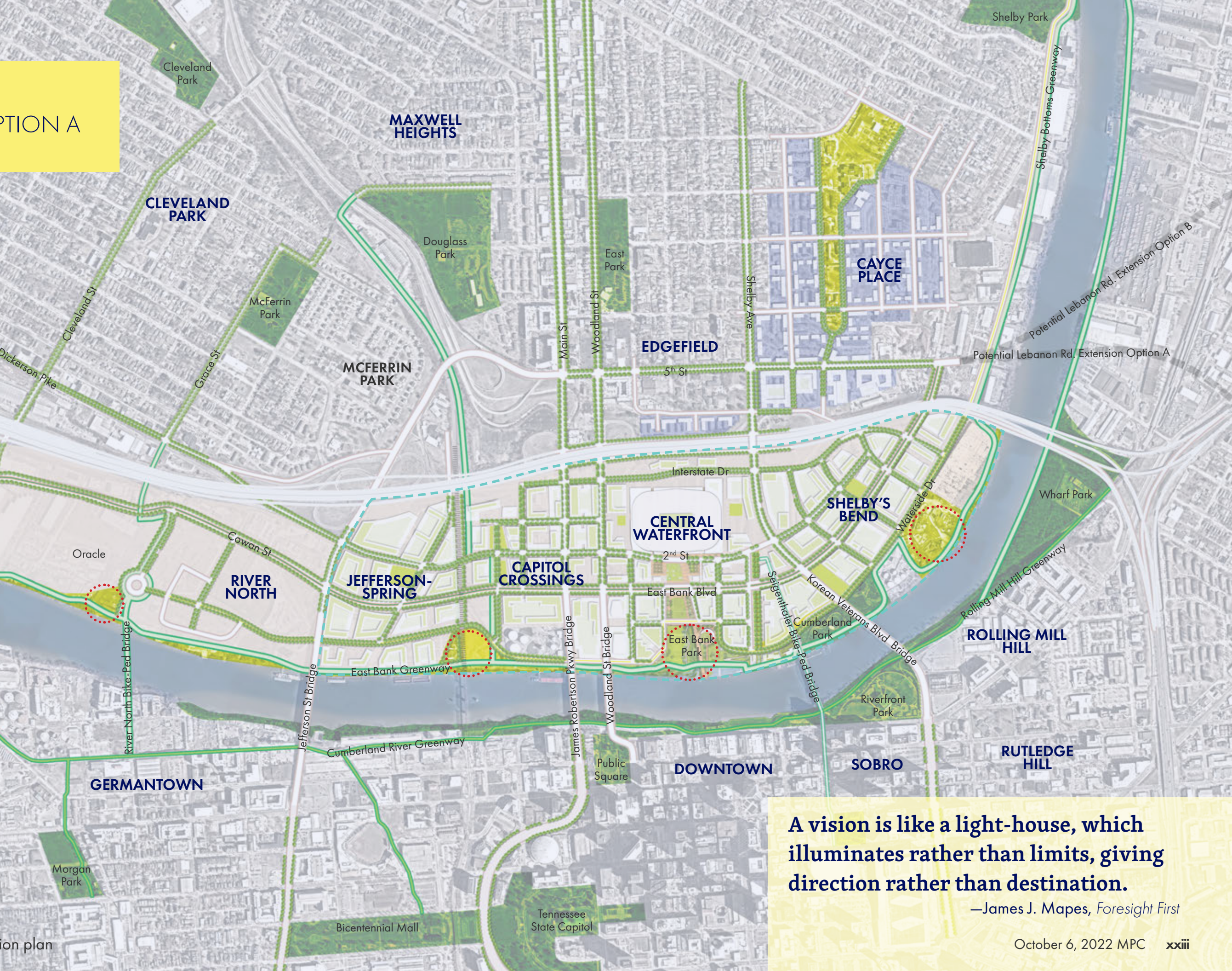
- » Lay-back the Cumberland River bank in various locations on the East Bank and in River North, and provide (on Metro-owned land) or encourage (on privately-owned land) various waterfront programming and amenities as desired by the community, such as open space and/or boating investments.
- » Set aside land for a riverfront park on Metro property that expands access to outdoor recreational amenities, engages the river, and improves resiliency through riparian edge management.
- » Establish a resiliency framework that sets goals and benchmarks for environmental design and performance — such as outdoor space requirements and minimum elevations for development.
- » Collaborate with Metro Parks and Greenways to explore the feasibility of developing an implementation plan for parks and greenways on the East Bank — including financing mechanisms for design, construction, and ongoing operations and maintenance.
- » Develop an implementation plan for district stormwater management for the Central Waterfront neighborhood, in coordination with Metro Water Services.
- » Develop an operational plan, feasibility/market analysis, and capital strategy to coordinate boating investments on the East Bank and its broader river context.

The East Bank will provide opportunities to observe and interact with the natural environment, including the Cumberland River.

THE VISION
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN: OPTION A
accommodates relocated stadium

- legend**
- East Bank
 - River North
 - Cayce Place
 - Existing Parks
 - Planned Parks
 - Potential River Lay-Backs
 - Existing Greenways
 - Proposed Greenways

This illustration reflects a vision of streets, parks, a relocated stadium, and other infrastructure. It does not reflect final or detailed plans.



A vision is like a light-house, which illuminates rather than limits, giving direction rather than destination.

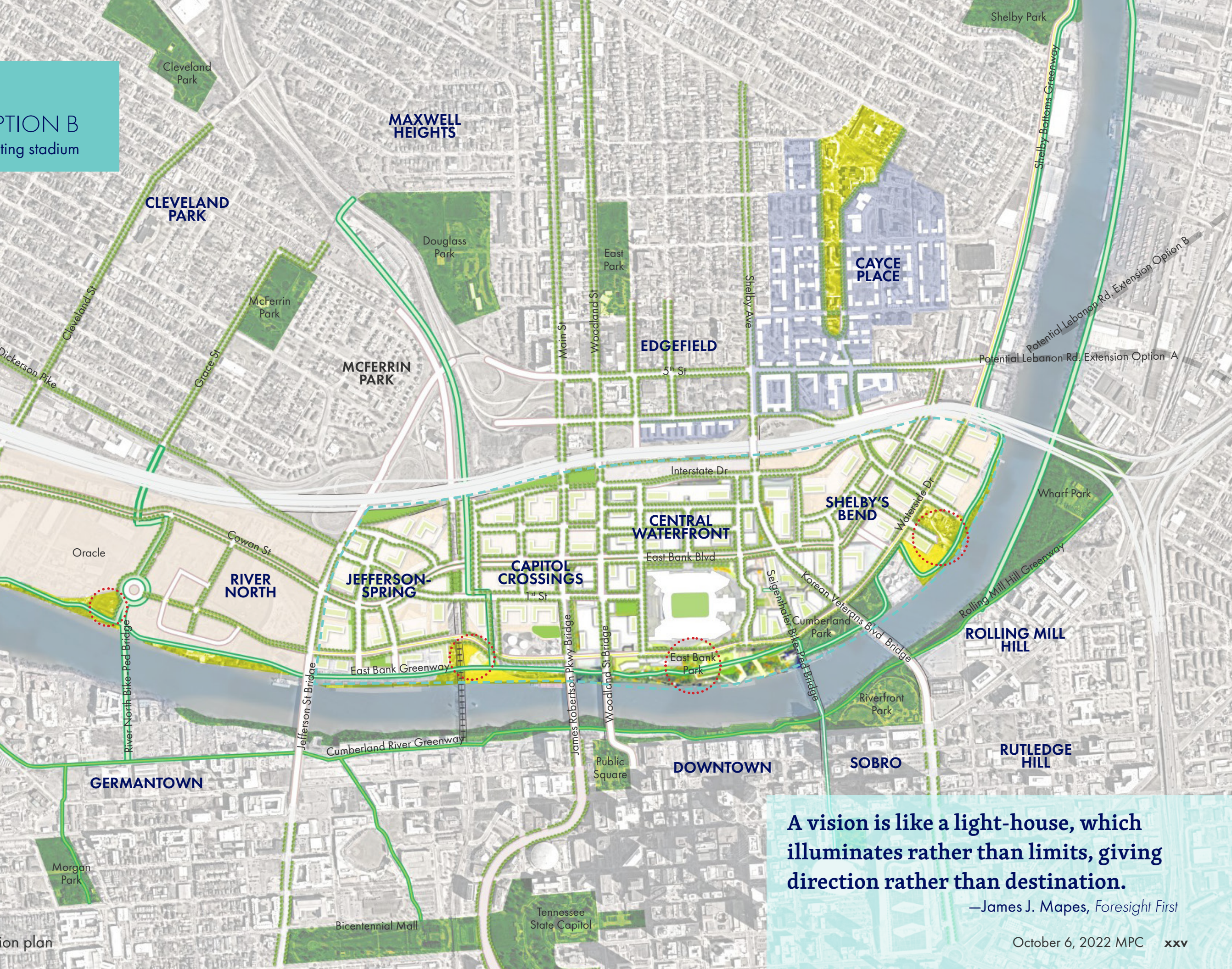
—James J. Mapes, *Foresight First*

THE VISION

ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN: OPTION B
accommodates renovation of existing stadium

- legend**
- East Bank
 - River North
 - Cayce Place
 - Existing Parks
 - Planned Parks
 - Potential River Lay-Backs
 - Existing Greenways
 - Proposed Greenways

This illustration reflects a vision of streets, parks, the existing stadium, and other infrastructure. It does not reflect final or detailed plans.



A vision is like a light-house, which illuminates rather than limits, giving direction rather than destination.

—James J. Mapes, Foresight First



BACKGROUND

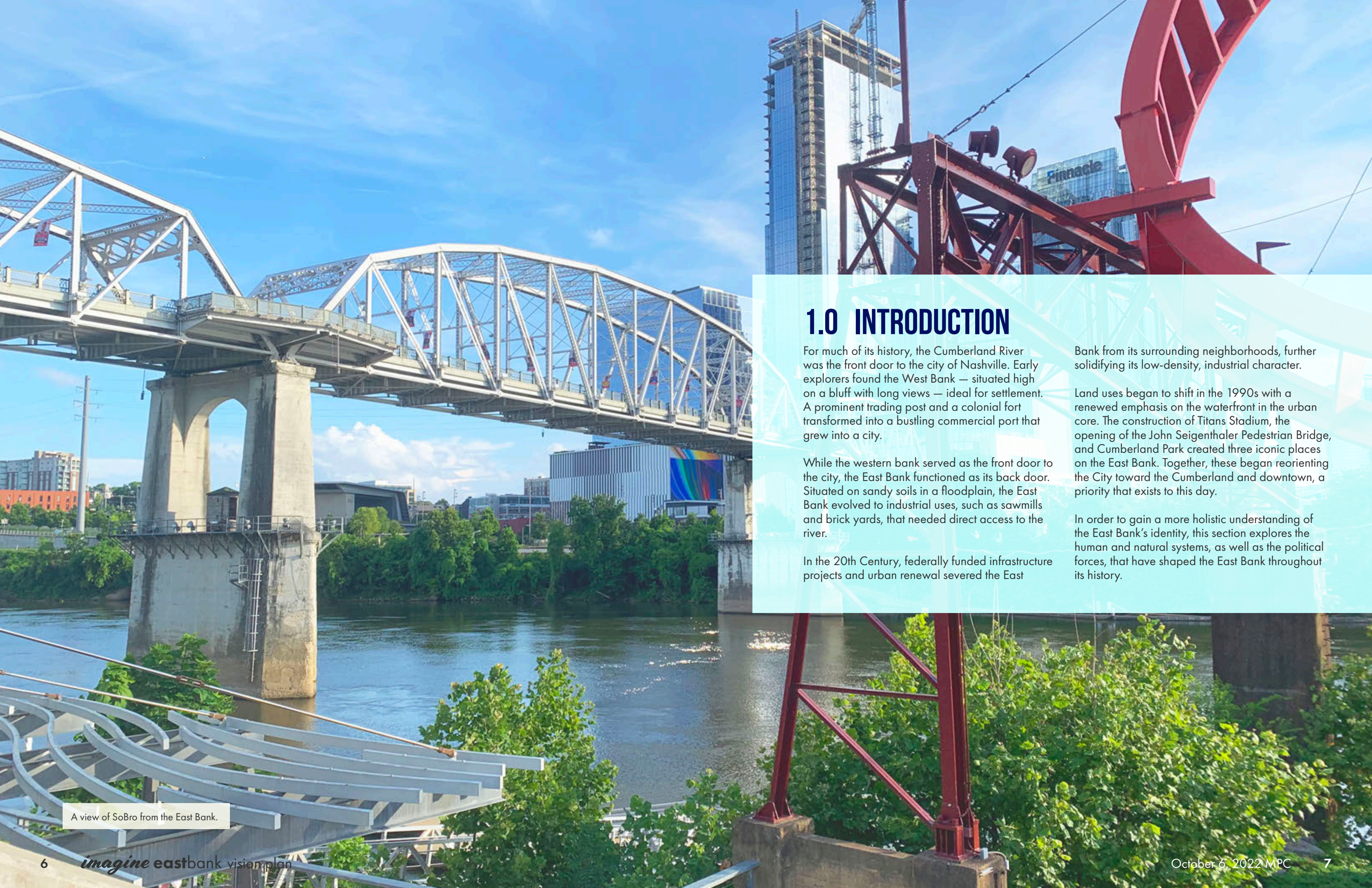


1 THE EAST BANK

THIS SECTION EXPLORES THE HUMAN AND NATURAL SYSTEMS, AS WELL AS THE POLITICAL FORCES, THAT HAVE SHAPED THE EAST BANK THROUGHOUT ITS HISTORY.

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION
- 1.1 PLACE FRAMEWORK
- 1.2 THE EAST BANK TODAY
- 1.3 THE CUMBERLAND RIVER TODAY
- 1.4 POLICY & ZONING FRAMEWORK

1880s birds-eye view of Nashville, with the East Bank in the lower right. Source: TN State Archives



A view of SoBro from the East Bank.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

For much of its history, the Cumberland River was the front door to the city of Nashville. Early explorers found the West Bank — situated high on a bluff with long views — ideal for settlement. A prominent trading post and a colonial fort transformed into a bustling commercial port that grew into a city.

While the western bank served as the front door to the city, the East Bank functioned as its back door. Situated on sandy soils in a floodplain, the East Bank evolved to industrial uses, such as sawmills and brick yards, that needed direct access to the river.

In the 20th Century, federally funded infrastructure projects and urban renewal severed the East

Bank from its surrounding neighborhoods, further solidifying its low-density, industrial character.

Land uses began to shift in the 1990s with a renewed emphasis on the waterfront in the urban core. The construction of Titans Stadium, the opening of the John Seigenthaler Pedestrian Bridge, and Cumberland Park created three iconic places on the East Bank. Together, these began reorienting the City toward the Cumberland and downtown, a priority that exists to this day.

In order to gain a more holistic understanding of the East Bank’s identity, this section explores the human and natural systems, as well as the political forces, that have shaped the East Bank throughout its history.

1.1 PLACE FRAMEWORK

Throughout history, humans have shaped the land and, in turn, the land has informed how humans live — e.g., where and how they settle, what foods can grow, what culture develops. The identity and character of a place like the East Bank can be understood by examining these natural and human forces together. This is known as a place framework.

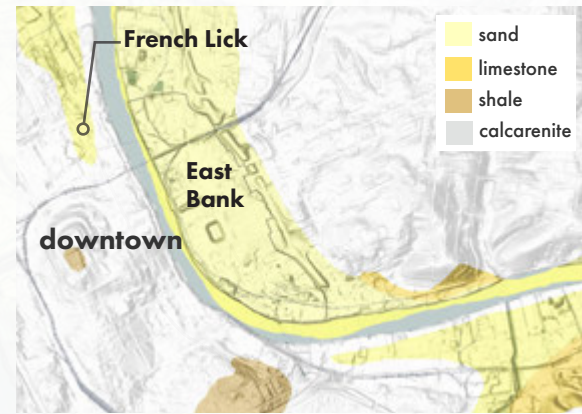
KEY

- natural systems
- human systems
- political history

prehuman history: river and rock formation

- » The channel of the Cumberland River is formed by water flowing from the Appalachian highlands, west and down towards the Mississippi River. As it meanders, the river cuts away at the limestone on its outer banks, forming bluffs, and deposits sand on its inner banks, creating floodplains.

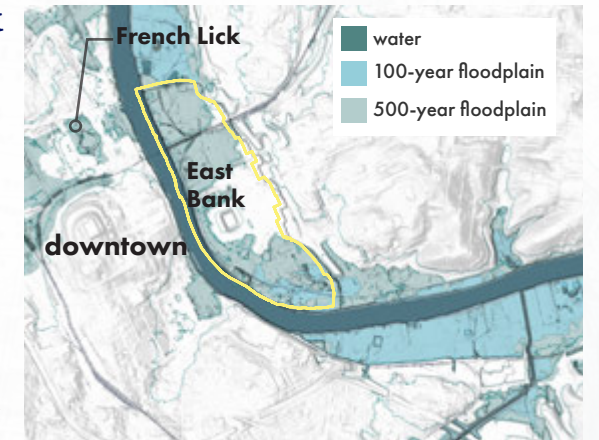
Geologic map depicts the sandy sedimentary soils underlying the East Bank and the calcarenite rock on the western side of the river.



1700s: frontier settlement on the west bank

- » The west bank, with its high bluff, protective views and river proximity make it an ideal location for pioneer settlement.
- » Unsuitable at the time for human habitation, the flood-prone, sandy land on the east side of the river is ideal for industries such as logging that need immediate access to the river.

Hydrology map showing that most of the East Bank sits within the 500-year floodplain.



1300 A.D. Archaeologists estimate the population was around 400,000 in Nashville. By the 1400s, the area was abandoned and used primarily for hunting.

1779, British pioneers, led by James Robertson and John Donelson, established Ft. Nashborough at French Lick.

1832, Congress allocated \$30,000 to remove bars and snags on the Cumberland to improve navigability, enabling year-round barge traffic.

1850, The original Woodland Street suspension bridge was constructed.

1859, Louisville & Nashville Railroad (L&N) expands to Nashville. Its rail bridge was constructed over the Cumberland.

1886, The Woodland Street Bridge reopened.

BEGINNINGS

400-200 Million years ago, fossils deposited into a warm, shallow sea transform into the limestone substrate of today's Cumberland Basin.

1600s, French traders established a trading post in an abandoned Shawnee village at a mineral springs on the western bank of the Cumberland River, near the site of today's Bicentennial Mall, known as French Lick.

1823, The first bridge was built over the river, connecting the east side of the river to Nashville, enabling suburban expansion.

GROWTH ALONG THE CUMBERLAND RIVER

1869, Edgefield was established as an independent city. In 1880, it was incorporated into the city of Nashville.

1862, Confederate troops destroyed the Woodland Street and L&N Railroad bridges in their retreat from the Union Army.

1888, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) established a district office in Nashville and made improvements to navigability with locks and dams along the Cumberland.

pre-European inhabitants

- » Buffalo, birds, and game animals regularly migrate to mineral springs on the western bank of the Cumberland River.
- » The Shawnee establish a village at the springs — known by colonists as French Lick — for hunting and trading.

1700s map highlighting the French Lick and original Nashville settlement on the west bank of the river.



1800s: expansion and infrastructure

- » Federal investment in infrastructure, such as locks and dams, allowed year-round navigation of the Cumberland River and enabled Nashville to grow as a commercial and industrial port.

This 1880s aerial illustrates the industry located in the East Bank at this time (lower) and barge traffic on the Cumberland.



1.1 PLACE FRAMEWORK CONT. mixed legacy of modern planning

The East Bank is a case study of the mixed legacy of 20th Century planning. Social engineering projects like urban renewal and public housing brought poverty-stricken residents out of inhabitable living conditions but also permanently disrupted their communities.

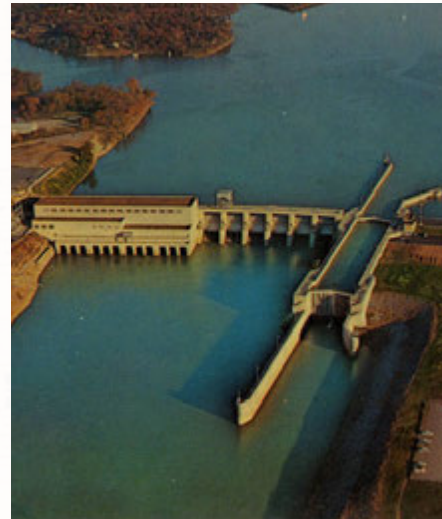
Civil engineering projects, like the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) work on the Cumberland, reduced flood risk and brought electricity to millions in the rural South through the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) but also destroyed ecosystems and displaced communities. On the East Bank, the construction of I-24 permanently divided the residential community of Edgefield from the riverbank, a condition that exists to this day.

KEY

■ natural systems ■ human systems ■ political history

1930-1970: USACE completes Cumberland River Development Plan

- » New locks and dams improved navigability, decreased flooding, and provided hydroelectric power to rural Tennessee.
- » USACE found that prior to the plan, "river heights above flood stage occurred ... once each year on the Cumberland River."
- » Eight dams were constructed on the river by the 1970s.



Old Hickory Lock and Dam, circa 1957. Source: Metro Archives.

1958 East Bank Urban Renewal Plan: "Blueprint for social change"

- » The 1958 *East Bank Urban Renewal Plan*, initiated by the Nashville Housing Authority, was an urban renewal project aimed at rehabilitating Nashville's "slums" and providing new infrastructure in the form of the Ellington Parkway and updated sewer systems.
- » At more than 2,000 acres, it was the largest urban renewal project in the U.S. at the time and resulted in the razing of over 1,000 structures (2,300 dwelling units) in East Nashville.
- » The plan reduced the percentage of substandard housing in East Nashville from 48% to 10%, mitigated urban air pollution caused by coal-burning furnaces, and significantly reduced flooding with updated sewer infrastructure.
- » At the same time, the project permanently disrupted fragile East Nashville communities. Consolidation of disenfranchised residents into large-scale public housing complexes, like Cayce Place, without access to financial and social resources, resulted in concentrated poverty. Construction of I-24 created a physical and cultural barrier to accessing the riverfront and economic opportunities in the downtown core for these residents.



Left and behind: *East Bank Urban Renewal Plan* of 1958 shows proposed placements of I-65 (now I-24) and Ellington Parkway and parcels slated for disposition, including those within the East Bank.

Right and above: Mayor Ben West presents the *East Bank Urban Renewal Plan* to City Council (1958).

20TH CENTURY: SWEEPING CHANGE ON THE EAST BANK

- 1909-1910, Shelby Avenue and Jefferson Street bridges are completed.
- 1916, Fire destroyed over 600 homes in Edgefield.
- 1926, Christmas Day flood takes over a week to recede.
- 1954, Old Hickory Lock and Dam is completed.
- 1964, I-24 /Silliman Evans bridge opened on January 14.
- 1966, A new bridge replaced the 1886 Woodland Street Bridge.
- 1996, the central portion of the East Bank is acquired for an NFL football stadium.
- 1996, The East Bank Redevelopment District is established by MDHA to guide development.
- 1912, Nashville Reservoir ruptured, causing 25 million gallons of water to rush through the city.
- 1941, James Cayce Homes opened.
- 1938, The Flood Control Act led to the construction of dams and reservoirs.
- 1936-1937, 26 days of rain result in one of the worst flood disasters on record for the region. In January, the river crests in Nashville at over 53 ft.
- 1956-1963, I-24 is constructed along the East Bank.
- 1956, The Victory Memorial Bridge opened in May.
- 1994, A new bridge at Jefferson St. opened.
- 1998, Shelby Avenue Bridge is closed to vehicle traffic.
- 1998, An EF2 tornado hits East Nashville causing significant damage.

1930-1960: urban renewal and public housing

- » Following the post-WWII boom, public housing was constructed as a buffer between industrial and urban areas and residential neighborhoods. These developments were racially segregated.

1940 NHA Plan for Boscobel Heights, renamed Cayce Homes and later Cayce Place. Source: Metro Archives.



1960-1970: I-24 construction

- » Interstate-24 is built and divides the East Bank from Edgefield and other East Nashville neighborhoods.

The construction of the I-24/Silliman Evans Bridge in 1961.



1.1 PLACE FRAMEWORK CONT.

KEY

■ natural systems ■ human systems ■ political history

1996: Nashville voters approve partial funding for a multi-purpose stadium on the East Bank

- » First used by the NFL's Tennessee Titans in 1999.
- » Stadium hosts concerts and events like the 2019 NFL Draft and the 2021 Music City Grand Prix.

Stadium under construction in 1998. Source: Jackie Bell, The Tennessean.



2012: Cumberland Park opens

- » The park transformed underutilized industrial riverfront into a 6.5 acre innovative park on the East Bank.
- » The design demonstrated Nashville's commitment to parks, sustainability and resilient landscape strategies.



An event in Cumberland Park (Hargreaves.com).

2022: Connect Downtown Study

- » The ongoing study aims to improve mobility and address traffic congestion in Nashville's downtown core.
- » Projects, programs, and policies will be identified to help better manage downtown's increasing congestion and to make it easier for people to get around by all modes of transportation.
- » Visit connectdowntown.nashville.gov to get involved before the draft plan is released in early 2023.

■ **1999**, Tennessee Titans host first game at Adelphia Coliseum, now Nissan Stadium, defeating the Cincinnati Bengals 36-35.

■ **2005**, Nashville Civic Design Center's *The Plan of Nashville: Avenues to a Great City* is completed.

■ **2012**, Cumberland Park on the East Bank opens.

■ **2013**, MDHA's *Envision Cayce Master Plan* is adopted.

■ **2016**, WeGo's *nMotion Plan* is adopted.

■ **2017**, *WalknBike Plan* is adopted.

■ **2017**, *Metro Parks' Plan to Play* is adopted.

■ **March 3, 2020**, An EF3 tornado hits Nashville — the sixth costliest tornado in US history. Total damage exceeded \$1.6 billion.

■ **December 25, 2020**, Explosion damages dozens of buildings, including historic properties, on 2nd Ave. North. MDHA and Metro Planning launched a recovery effort in response.

■ **2021**, TDOT begins a study to evaluate Nashville's inner-loop.

■ **June 2021**, Metro releases the *Affordable Housing Task Force Report* — the county needs 52,500 affordable units by 2030.

■ **January 2022**, NDOT, along with TDOT, WeGo, and the Nashville Downtown Partnership launched the *Connect Downtown* study.

21ST CENTURY: NEW HORIZONS

■ **May 1-2, 2010**, The Cumberland River crests at more than 12 feet above flood stage downtown.

■ **2007**, *Nashville Riverfront Concept Plan* is completed.

■ **2015**, Metro Planning's *NashvilleNext* is adopted.

■ **2015**, *Downtown Community Plan* is adopted.

■ **2013**, *West Riverfront Master Plan* is adopted.

■ **2017**, *East Bank Supplemental Policy* is adopted.

■ **2017**, *River North Urban Design Overlay (UDO)* is adopted.

TODAY: LOOKING EAST FOR THE FUTURE

■ **December 2020**, Mayor's Office releases the *Metro Nashville Transportation Plan*.

■ **2019-2020**, Nashville MSA's population exceeds 2 million.

■ **2019**, Nashville hosts the NFL draft.

■ **2020**, Metro Parks launched a master planning study for Wharf Park — an undeveloped piece of property directly across from the East Bank.

■ **August 2021**, Inaugural Music City Grand Prix race is held in Nashville, on the East Bank.

■ **June 2021**, Oracle purchases 70 acres, just north of the East Bank for an 8,500 job tech hub.

■ **April 2021**, Metro Planning Department launches the *Imagine East Bank* planning study.

2010 flood: the city rises above tragedy

- » May 1-2, 2010; 13.5 inches of rain falls in 36 hours. 11 Nashvillians lost their lives and over 10,000 residents were displaced. The flooding caused over \$2 billion in private property damage and destroyed nearly 11,000 properties.
- » The Cumberland River crested at 51.86 feet downtown, a level not seen since 1937, before USACE flood control measures.



The Cumberland breaks its banks, taken from the John Seigenthaler Pedestrian Bridge. Source: Nashville Public Library.

2015: Metro Planning's NashvilleNext is adopted to guide Metro's growth for the next 25 years

- » *NashvilleNext* is the general plan for Metro Nashville and Davidson County, intended to guide growth until 2040.
- » Nearly 20,000 community members participated in the creation of the plan over three years.



The *NashvilleNext Growth and Preservation Map* shows how coordinated investments, community character policies, and preservation work together.

1.2 THE EAST BANK TODAY

River bank is eroded and populated with invasive plants.



Existing conditions favor auto and industrial uses, not people.



Over/under conditions inhibit circulation and perception of safety.



River feels hidden and inaccessible.



River is perceived as a barrier to downtown, rather than a connector.



Pedestrian infrastructure is insufficient.

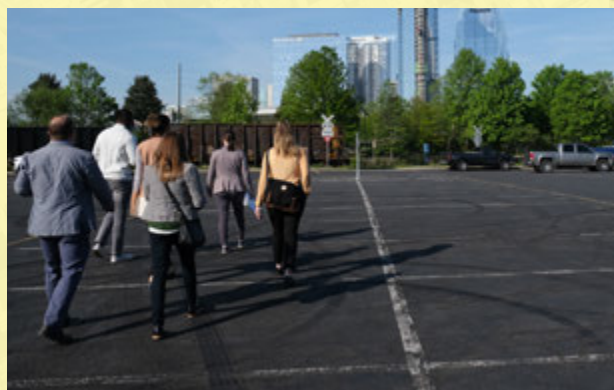


Wayfinding and connectivity are challenging.



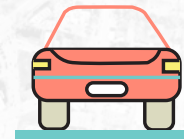
EXISTING CONDITIONS

Today, the East Bank does not live up to its geographic location — adjacent to downtown and East Nashville neighborhoods — or to its potential economic role at the center of one of the fastest growing regions in the country.



what the numbers say

1. ACRES OF ASPHALT HINDER RESILIENCY AND PLACEMAKING.



230 ACRES
of the 338-acre East Bank study area is pavement (68%).

2. THE EAST BANK IS VASTLY UNDERUTILIZED, GIVEN ITS PROXIMITY TO DOWNTOWN AND EAST NASHVILLE.

0 HOUSING UNITS

currently exist on the East Bank, but over 12,000 people live within ½ mile.



3. THE RIVERFRONT IS A VALUABLE PUBLIC AMENITY THAT IS HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT.

The East Bank has only

0.25 MILES

of activated waterfront of its 1.7 miles of riverfront.



4. MOBILITY CHALLENGES EXACERBATE ISOLATION AND DISCONNECTION.

0

continuous north-south connections pass through the East Bank.



1.3 THE CUMBERLAND RIVER TODAY

The Cumberland River is Nashville's greatest natural resource, essential to our communities, economies, and ecologies. Every day, Middle Tennesseans extract over 140 million gallons of water from the Cumberland to support personal consumption, industries, and farms. The river has historically, and continues to be a working river — barge traffic uses it to move goods across the region.

The historic landscape of Middle Tennessee was characterized by a mosaic of plains, rolling hills, Oak-Hickory forests, and wetlands. These native ecosystems provide critical green infrastructure by slowing rainwater and allowing it to gradually infiltrate back into the groundwater, streams, and rivers that drain into the Cumberland.

Today, as our region rapidly urbanizes, impervious surfaces (roads, buildings, and parking lots) and land development negatively affect water quality and quantity. Water rushes off these surfaces, carrying pollutants. This causes aging sewer systems to fail, as they are required to handle flows beyond their designed capacity. The combined result is more frequent, localized flash floods.

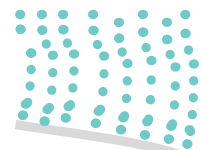
900+

miles of rivers & streams in the Middle Cumberland Basin are currently impaired.



A barge moves goods down the Cumberland River, past the East Bank.

existing flooding framework



1. Uplands

Stormwater moves towards river as runoff, picking up debris and pollution.

2. Midlands

Runoff accumulates at overwhelmed storm sewer inlets, causing localized flooding and debris accumulation at low points.

3. Lowlands

Underground piping is inundated by riverine floods reducing drainage capacity for midlands and uplands. Riverine floodwaters back up through the stormwater system and soils into low points near the existing stadium.

4. Riverfront

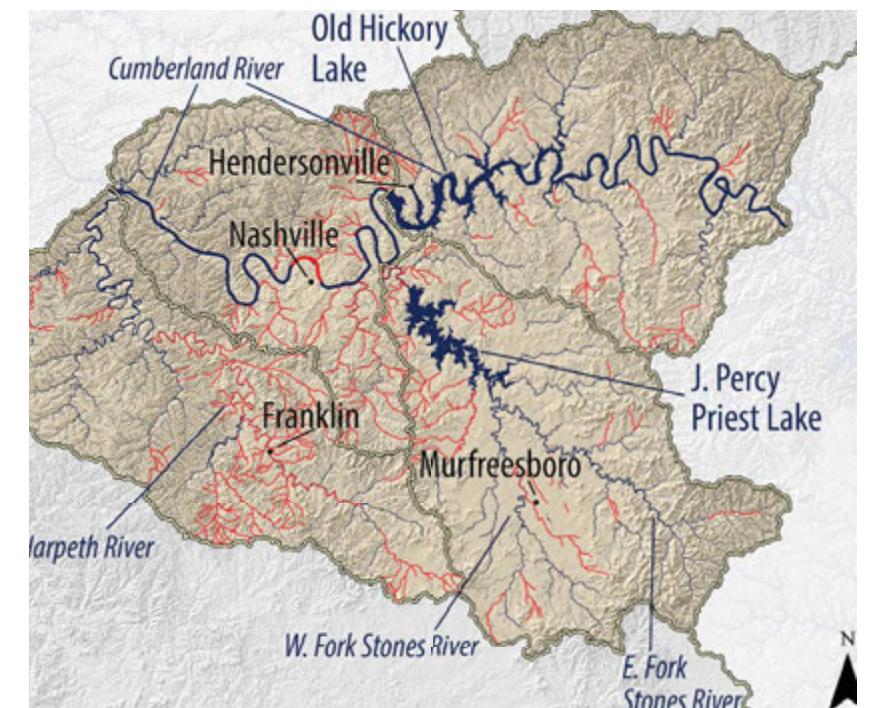
Edges of riverfront are constraining riverine flood flows and increasing velocities and flood elevations. Flows are eroding away steep slopes.

demand for river-related recreation

In addition to localized floods, Nashville is experiencing more frequent large scale, regional floods — such as the floods in 2010 and in 2021 — due to the increase of intense storms resulting from climate change paired with regional urbanization.

The Cumberland River Compact estimates that over 900 miles of rivers and streams in the Middle Cumberland Basin are currently impaired and represent a potential threat to either human health, ecosystems, or both.

And yet, as Nashville's population has boomed, so has the demand for recreational opportunities in and along the river — including boating, paddleboarding, greenways, nature trails, and fishing. Kayak tours, launching from the East Bank, have become a popular fixture of the tourism industry, and river-centered events, such as the annual Dragon Boat Race and Music City Triathlon, draw hundreds into the river at the East Bank every year.



Over 900 miles of streams in the Middle Cumberland watershed are impaired, including the Cumberland River along the East Bank Source: Our Cumberland River Basin part 3, Cumberland River Compact.

1.4 POLICY & ZONING FRAMEWORK

While a place framework helps us understand how an area has developed into what it is today, policy and zoning are tools to understand the appropriate use and character for the future of an area.

NashvilleNext

NashvilleNext is the 2015 general plan for Nashville. Created by Nashvillians, the plan was designed to guide the city through 2040. The plan provides policy direction on the physical structure of Davidson County — the things we build, how and where we build them, and the places we preserve. The plan brought together and updated the *Community Character Manual (CCM)* and Nashville's Community Plans.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER MANUAL (CCM) AND POLICIES

The *Community Character Manual* is a comprehensive document that describes the vision of an area's future growth, development and preservation, as well as its appropriate zoning districts, its various community character policies, and their characteristics. These policies describe the appropriate form and character of development — such as massing, orientation and scale of buildings, setbacks and spacing, and the location of access and parking. The CCM uses a planning tool, called the Transect, to organize the various policies into distinctive categories, based on their geographic context.

SUPPLEMENTAL POLICIES

Alone, the CCM may not provide the level of detail necessary to guide new development that is desired by community stakeholders. In such cases, a supplemental policy can provide an additional level of guidance beyond that provided by the CCM. By addressing the unique features of an area, supplemental policies expand upon the standard guidance of CCM in order to tailor policy to the needs of an area.

NASHVILLE'S COMMUNITY PLANS

The Metro Planning Commission has adopted fourteen unique Community Plans — in cooperation with residents, business owners, property owners, institutions, developers, and elected officials. These future planning documents describe the role each community within Davidson County plays in realizing the overall *NashvilleNext* vision. They also include community character policies for each property that help guide that vision.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY PLAN

The East Bank is located within the *Downtown Community Plan*, which was last amended in 2017. Downtown has long been the seat of state and local government, host to unique cultural, sporting, and entertainment offerings, and the economic center of Middle Tennessee. Downtown has been enhanced in recent years with the addition of new and expanding businesses, investment in new civic facilities and open spaces, and new residential choices. While downtown is the most intense urban setting in the county, it retains several natural attributes that give it shape and add to its character and beauty. These include Capitol Hill, Rolling Mill Hill, and the 500-foot wide Cumberland River which divides downtown into east and west banks.

It is recommended that the existing supplemental policy for the East Bank be replaced with the adoption of **IMAGINE EAST BANK.**

policy guidance for the east bank

The current community character policy for the East Bank is primarily T6-Downtown Neighborhood (T6-DN). A large portion of Civic (CI) exists where the Metro-owned land is.

The *East Bank Supplemental Policy* covers the entire East Bank and describes the area as "one of Downtown's most significant untapped resources with ... close proximity to both East Nashville neighborhoods and the excitement of a growing downtown."

existing policies

- Civic (CI):** Intended is to preserve and enhance existing publicly-owned properties that are used for civic purposes.
- Open Space (OS):** Intended to preserve and enhance existing open space areas.
- T6-Downtown Neighborhood (T6-DN):** Intended to foster vibrant, high intensity mixed-use development with activated ground floors.
- East Bank Supplemental Policy (09-T6-DN-EB-01):** Calls for a design-based zoning tool for the East Bank that supports high-density, mixed-use development, innovative solutions that address the riverfront and floodplain resiliency, improved north-south connectivity, and mobility along and across the river.

Note: "T6" represents the Downtown Transect. The Transect also includes T5 - Center, T4 - Urban, T3 - Suburban, T2 - Rural, and T1-Natural.

1.4 POLICY & ZONING FRAMEWORK CONT.

what is zoning?

Zoning is regulation that lays out which land uses are permitted on a property and the basic bulk standards for buildings — such as setbacks, height, and minimum lot size. The CCM, described previously, outlines which zoning districts are compatible with which community character policies.

DESIGN-BASED ZONING TOOLS

The *Imagine East Bank* vision can be translated into the zoning code through the adoption of an Urban Design Overlay (UDO), or another design-based zoning tool(s). A UDO is a zoning tool that requires specific design standards for development in a designated area. It can be used to create a character above and beyond what is required by the base zoning district. Each UDO is unique and uses different development standards to achieve its goals. These zoning tools may be applied for the entire East Bank, or portions thereof.

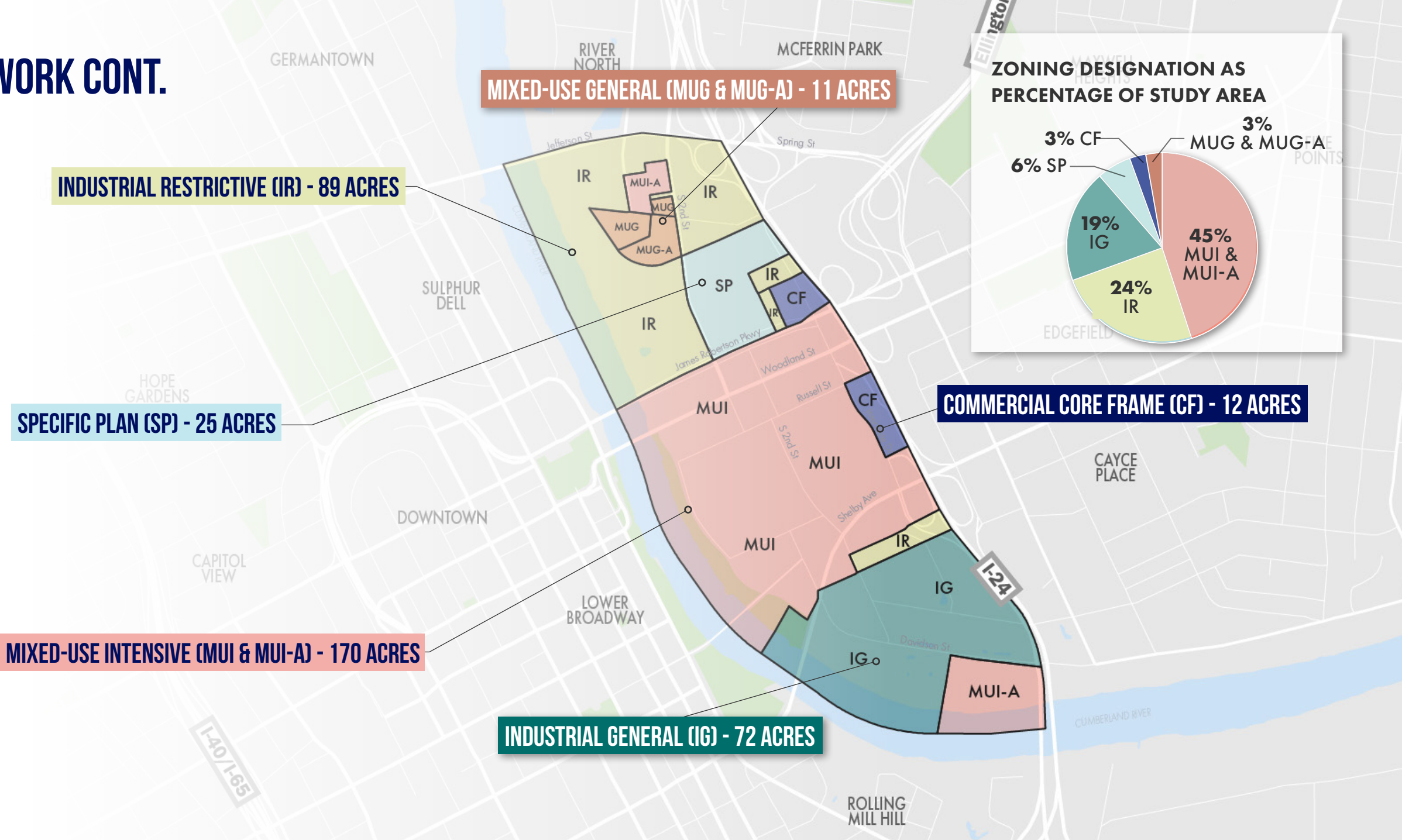
FUTURE REZONINGS

Following the adoption of the *Imagine East Bank* Vision Plan, all proposed zone changes on the East Bank will be evaluated for their compatibility with the vision.

east bank zoning districts

A majority of the East Bank's existing zoning districts are mixed-use (either MUI, MUI-A, MUG, or MUG-A). Each of these classifications yield significant entitlements that will allow for potentially high-density development. It is expected that Nashville's booming real estate market will take advantage of this land and its zoning over the coming years.

The East Bank also has a prominent amount of industrial zoning districts (IR and IG). As the market begins to redevelop the existing mixed-use districts, it can be assumed that the nearby industrial zoning will be ripe for rezoning. The SP-zoned parcels on the East Bank serve as a precedent — having been rezoned from IR to SP in 2021.



existing zoning

- Mixed-Use Intensive (MUI & MUI-A):** Supports a mixture of high-intensity residential, office and compatible commercial uses in areas characterized by the highest levels of accessibility, mass transit and essential support services. The bulk standards for this district permit large scale buildings. It is intended that this district be applied to areas near downtown.
- Mixed-Use General (MUG & MUG-A):** Supports large scale development on or near arterial streets, in the creation of mixed-use, walkable urban neighborhoods. These designations support moderately high intensity mixed-use policies of the general plan.

- Industrial Restrictive (IR):** Supports a wide range of light industrial uses at a small-to-moderate scale. Uses most suitable in this district are those which operate within completely enclosed buildings. Uses within this district should also have a high level of access to the major street network.
- Industrial General (IG):** Supports intensive manufacturing uses essential for the economic viability of the metropolitan area. Industrial uses associated with this district often require large, relatively flat sites with good access to the regional highway system, the Cumberland River or a rail line.

- Specific Plan (SP):** Provides flexibility to create developments that meet the goals and objectives of *NashvilleNext* and are sensitive to the surrounding context. The SP district is not subject to the traditional zoning districts' land use and design standards. Instead, permitted uses and design elements are determined for the specific development.
- Commercial Core Frame (CF):** Supports a diverse variety of business service functions along with retail trade and consumer service establishments and large parking structures.



2 PRESSURES & OPPORTUNITIES

THIS SECTION SUMMARIZES KEY PRESSURES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACING BOTH NASHVILLE AND THE EAST BANK.

- 2.0 INTRODUCTION
- 2.1 RAPID GROWTH & HIGH DEMAND
- 2.2 INADEQUATE MOBILITY
- 2.3 CLIMATE CHANGE & LIVING WITH WATER

Aerial view of the May 2010 flood on the East Bank. Source: Metro Nashville



2.0 INTRODUCTION

As Nashville continues to see pressure from rapid population growth and continued record development, building infrastructure to support such growth is vital. Since 2010, Nashville and its surrounding counties have added 30,000 people per year. It is estimated that over 3 million people will reside in the area by 2045.¹ This massive influx exacerbates regional pressure for housing, strains road networks, and threatens environmental resiliency and quality of life.

Portions of the East Bank are also located in the floodplain of the Cumberland River. Addressing the resiliency will be critical to the success of the East Bank and in creating accessible and desirable public spaces for the community.

The unique location and conditions of the East Bank present opportunities to address each of the following systemic issues:

RAPID GROWTH & HIGH DEMAND

Development and growth across Davidson County have put strains on services, created a lack of attainable housing, congested our roads, and promoted urban sprawl. Impromptu development of the East Bank — that is not guided by a plan nor cohesive infrastructure — will likely exacerbate these issues. This reality is why the *Imagine East Bank* vision emphasizes guiding growth and development in a way that prioritizes people, amid a rapidly growing part of the community. Given its current lack of infrastructure and development, the East Bank presents a rare opportunity to plan for new, mixed-use urban neighborhoods near the downtown core that reflects the *Imagine East Bank* vision and serves the needs of Nashvillians.

INADEQUATE MOBILITY

Current mobility in the Nashville region is hindered by auto-dependency, limited capacity for future growth, heavy congestion with long commute times, outdated infrastructure, and the lack of safe and simple connections. Similar to the opportunity for neighborhood building, the East Bank presents an opportunity to plan an effective, multimodal transportation network that will improve both local and regional connectivity.

CLIMATE CHANGE & LIVING WITH WATER

Historically the East Bank's relationship with the Cumberland River has been commercial and industrial. With over 1.7 miles of riverfront, the East Bank is uniquely situated to reorient the city toward the river in a way Nashville has never prioritized before. By creating accessible public spaces that emphasize the river, Nashville can create a more sustainable relationship with its most valuable and underutilized natural resource. This relationship will be strengthened by a resiliency strategy that thoughtfully and creatively deals with climate changes, such as increased flooding and the urban heat island effect, where urban cores are hotter than the rest of a city.

Developing a neighborhood-centric East Bank provides a transformative opportunity to address the challenges that have plagued the East Bank in the past, and ensure the future viability of neighborhoods for all Nashvillians. By investing in the creation of attainable housing, transportation infrastructure that prioritizes multimodal uses, mixed-use and retail opportunities, and building out an accessible and active riverfront, we can set the stage for East Bank neighborhoods to meet Nashvillians' needs.

¹ *Middle Tennessee Connected: Regional Transportation Plan 2021-2045*. Greater Nashville Regional Council. <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/471741201/>

2.1 RAPID GROWTH & HIGH DEMAND

An economic boom, corporate relocations, and in-migration have generated unprecedented demand for housing, jobs, and development in and near Nashville’s downtown.⁴ New neighborhoods can help meet that demand. The East Bank, situated directly across the river from downtown, is an opportunity to envision and plan new neighborhoods that meet the needs and values of all Nashvillians. Like the rest of Nashville, land prices on the East Bank have been rising. These rising prices increase the cost of housing, a major and growing challenge in Nashville. According to the *Metro Nashville Affordable Housing Task Force Report*, 52,500 new affordable housing units are needed in the city by 2030.

THE EAST BANK HAS NOT KEPT PACE WITH NASHVILLE’S RECENT DEVELOPMENT BOOM.

an underutilized asset

The East Bank has been largely left out of the development boom that has characterized Nashville’s urban core since 2010. Of the 338 acres on the East Bank, zero square feet of office or residential was planned or developed from 2011-2020. However, based on recent proposals we know that pressure is growing for development in and around the East Bank, and the time to create a plan to accommodate uses that address market demand and community needs is now.

DEVELOPMENT SINCE 2010 AND CURRENT PIPELINE



new housing creates new neighborhoods

Nashville’s downtown has a lower population and population density than comparable cities. However, its residential occupancy rate is among the highest, suggesting strong demand. More residential development close to the downtown core is needed to bolster downtown in its role as the economic heart of the city and accommodate the influx of new jobs anticipated.³ The East Bank’s large footprint can accommodate more new housing development than other comparable districts, with a mix of densities and building types.

DOWNTOWN AREA	POPULATION	DENSITY (DWELLING UNITS/ACRE)	RESIDENTIAL OCCUPANCY
Nashville (current)	15,000	13	95%
Nashville (with properties under construction)	21,000	18	94%
Atlanta (Midtown)	19,000	25	95%
Austin	16,000	23	90%
Charlotte	22,000	17	93%
Denver	30,000	18	94%
Seattle	98,627	33	94%

Population density and residential unit occupancy in comparable downtowns³

linking development with community values through strategic planning

Economic analysis suggests that costly infrastructure, strong market demand, and high land values will favor expensive price points and dense development, without public intervention. The current policy and zoning in the East Bank also support high-density, urban neighborhoods. However, an inclusive approach to developing the East Bank can help meet some of Nashville’s large and growing affordable housing needs. Including retail and other amenities that cater to local residents and workers can address community desires for places that feel centered to the local experience, as opposed to tailored for tourists, and could include locally owned restaurants, bars, and shops and public spaces with programming for residents.

¹Planning & Design Principles Public Engagement Summary, 23
²FHFA HPI® Top 100 Metro Area Rankings. Change in purchase from 2020Q4 to 2021Q4.
³ Nashville Downtown Partnership Annual Residential Report, 2021



When community members were asked to describe the East Bank today, the most commonly-used term was:

underutilized.¹

This figure-ground map juxtaposes the high-density development downtown Nashville has experienced (light blue) and the lack of development on the East Bank (yellow), just across the river.

In the Nashville region, house prices have risen

24.8%

from 2020 to 2021.

#11

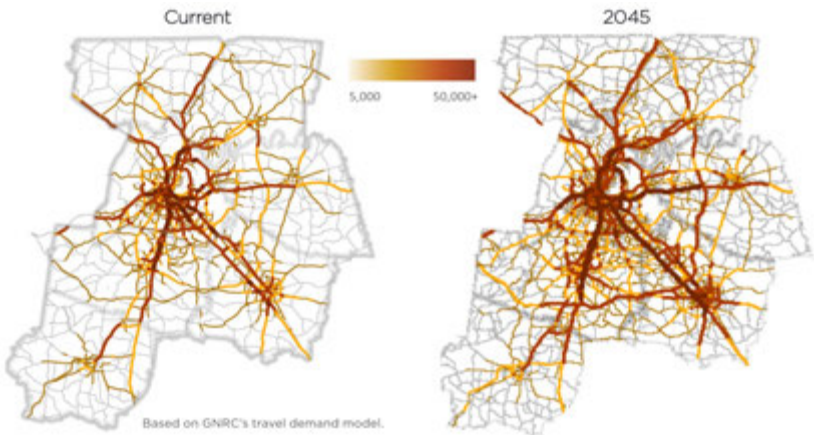
out of the top 100 metro regions in the U.S.²

2.2 INADEQUATE MOBILITY

Mobility in Nashville and the surrounding region is hindered by auto-dependency, heavy congestion with long commute times, outdated infrastructure, and the lack of safe multimodal connections. Additionally, in places like the East Bank, existing infrastructure creates physical barriers between communities.

pressure for regional mobility

As growth continues at a rapid pace, transportation challenges only increase. The Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC) estimates that as the population of the region approaches 3 million people by 2045, regional traffic volumes could increase by 26 percent, resulting in a 14 percent reduction in average travel speeds (*Middle Tennessee Connected*, 8). In congested areas, traffic volume will double(8).



The two maps above, developed by the *Greater Nashville Regional Council*, compare current travel demand with projected demand in 2045 for the Nashville region’s transportation system, including Davidson, Maury, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson, and Wilson Counties. It projects that regional congestion will increase without improvements to regional mobility, such as reimagined corridors, expanded transit, and improved sidewalks, bikeways, and greenways.

RAIL LINES

Industrial rail lines inhibit mobility, reduce safety, and block access to the riverfront in many locations.

RIVERFRONT BOUNDARY
1.7 MILES

The river functions as a boundary and dividing line between the East Bank and downtown and as an object to get over rather than to visit and enjoy.

LACK OF THROUGHWAYS

Limited throughways are bottlenecks to connectivity and add to the sense of isolation on the East Bank.

INCOMPLETE STREET NETWORK

Currently, there is no street grid on the East Bank to meet basic connectivity requirements. It requires five turns to traverse the site from north to south.

LIMITED USES
127 ACRES OF SURFACE PARKING

Expansive parking lots, larger than city blocks, inhibit connections and wayfinding.

obstacles to mobility on the east bank

The East Bank is constrained by both natural and man-made systems. At face value, each of these systems should make getting to and from the East Bank easier. However, due to the contexts in which they exist, each inhibit the ability for people to access the area.

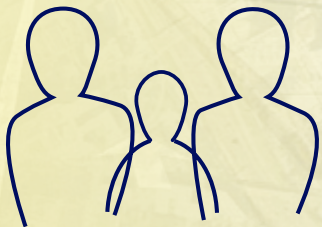
I-24 BOUNDARY
1.4 MILES

I-24 forms the eastern boundary of the study area, separating the East Bank from Edgefield, Maxwell Heights, and other East Nashville neighborhoods.

MOVING AROUND AND THROUGH THE EAST BANK

When asked to describe how they currently move around the East Bank, community members identified lack of north-south connectivity, a disconnected grid, and difficult wayfinding as critical barriers. Four key mobility insights were gleaned from their experiences during the *Summer 2021 workshops*:

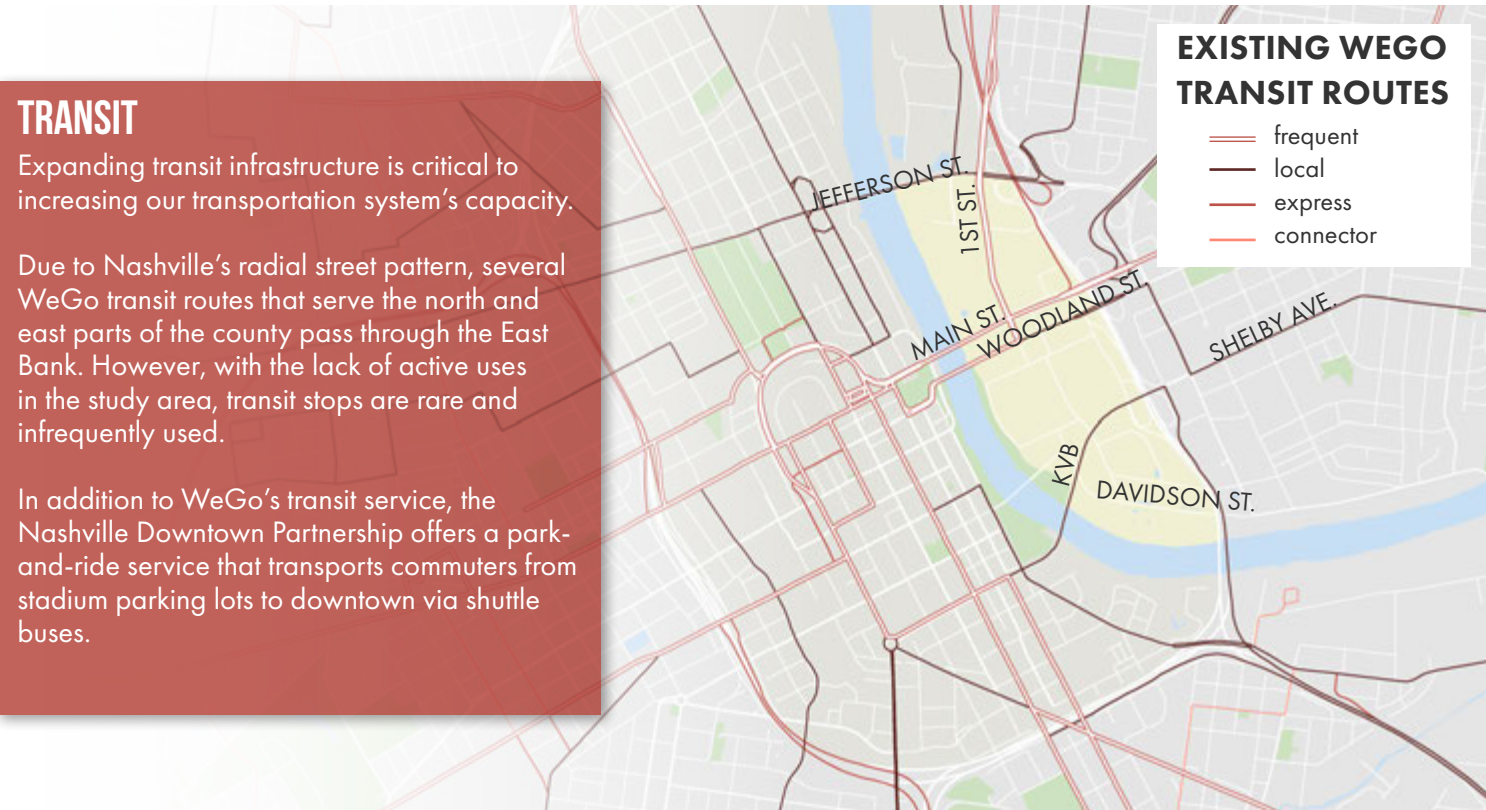
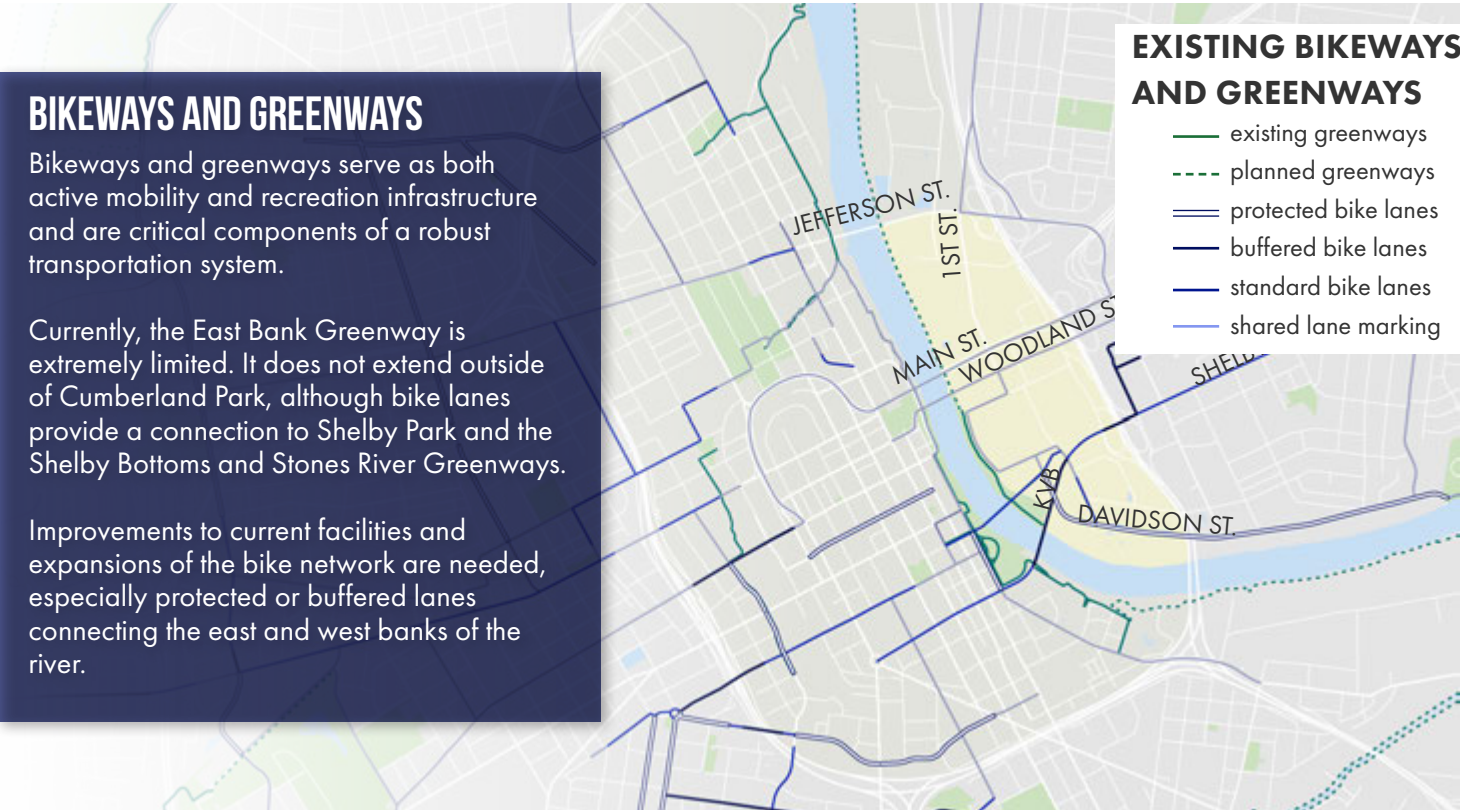
- 1. A lack of a continuous route hinders north-south through connections.
- 2. Overpasses and I-24 create barriers to Downtown and East Nashville.
- 3. A disconnected street grid makes wayfinding difficult.
- 4. Most conflict points are associated with I-24.



2.2 INADEQUATE MOBILITY CONT.

transportation options are lacking

The East Bank’s current conditions do not support any mode of transportation — bicycles, buses, pedestrians, and vehicles. In many instances, safe and appropriate facilities are non-existent. Where facilities do exist, they provided limited connectivity.



82%
of survey respondents
currently feel
UNSAFE
walking or biking in
the East Bank.

PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

There is limited pedestrian connectivity throughout the East Bank due to missing sidewalks or the lack of safe and quality crossings.

The John Seigenthaler Pedestrian Bridge is the hallmark of pedestrian connectivity on the East Bank and a critical connection to downtown. The bridge provides stellar views of the skyline and the river. Plans for pedestrian infrastructure should expand upon the opportunities provided by this beloved landmark.

an opportunity for regional transportation improvements

Given its key location, the East Bank can be a strategic linchpin in improving Nashville’s local and regional mobility, as well as the ways people move around and through the site, if the following improvements are made:

- » Provide a continuous north-south connections within the Inner Loop — reducing reliance on I-24
- » Develop a street grid that connects the East Bank to downtown and drives traffic away from East Nashville neighborhoods
- » Connect to high-capacity BRT planned for Murfreesboro Pike and the airport
- » Connect to transit northward, along Dickerson Pike and Trinity Lane
- » Expand opportunities for active transportation — sidewalks, bikeways, and greenways

These improvements could help reach the goals and connect to projects outlined in the 2020 Metro Nashville Transportation Plan. It envisioned “a multimodal system for all that offers choice and better connects neighborhoods, residents, and businesses to the places that they need and want to go to in a safe manner” (7). It proposes \$1.6 billion in critical projects, including Bus Rapid Transit on Murfreesboro Pike, bus service expansion, neighborhood transit centers, pedestrian safety improvements, and bikeway and greenway investment (7-13).

2.3 CLIMATE CHANGE & LIVING WITH WATER

The Cumberland River — Nashville’s greatest and most underutilized natural resource — has long been the physical backdrop for the city. However, many Nashvillians experience it as a “barrier between downtown and East Nashville” or “something they drive over on their way somewhere else,” rather than an integral or celebrated piece of the urban landscape.¹

the pressure of a changing climate

The catastrophic flood of May 2010 cast the Cumberland River in a very different light, illuminating its risk to the functionality of the city. The increased frequency and severity of natural disasters in the years since — flooding in 2019 and 2021 and the 2020 tornado — have only underscored that there is no time to waste in developing climate mitigation and adaptation strategies for Nashville, including a system-wide plan for flood prevention and management.

HEAT ISLAND EFFECT AND IMPERVIOUS SURFACES

Heat island effect is the most common weather-related cause of death in the U.S.² In Nashville, temperatures in the urban core are hotter than the rest of the city due to impervious surfaces, like asphalt, that retain heat and the lack of tree canopy.

At the [Summer 2021 workshops](#), we asked about the Cumberland River’s function today, and in the future.

HOW DO YOU SEE THE RIVER TODAY?

- » an environmental concern - pollution
- » a division between Downtown and East Nashville
- » an underutilized economic generator
- » an environmental concern - flood hazard
- » something they pass over to get somewhere else
- » inaccessible to the public

WHAT WOULD MAKE THE RIVER MORE APPRECIATED AS A RESOURCE?

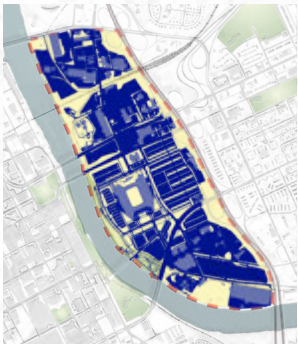
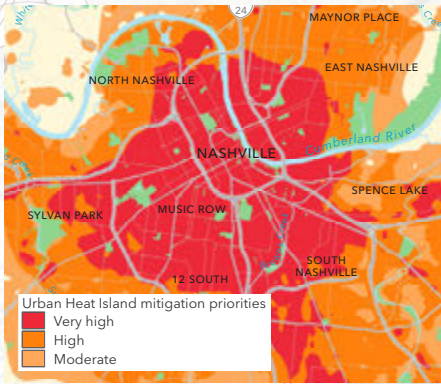
- » waterfront dining, viewpoints
- » waterfront greenways and walking paths
- » stormwater filtering and places designed to flood
- » water interaction (boating, kayaking, etc.)

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The majority of the East Bank study area sits within the 500-year floodplain, and over 75% of it is blanketed in impervious surfaces that intensify stormwater runoff and erosion. These impervious surfaces — combined with a lack of tree canopy — exacerbate the dangerous heat-island effect in the urban core. In effect, this makes most of the East Bank a hot and uncomfortable, if not dangerous, place to be.

Inadequate stormwater infrastructure and severe heat are critical topics at the intersection of environmental justice and public health. A reason resiliency is a top priority of the *Imagine East Bank* vision is because environmental stressors disproportionately affect minority and under-resourced communities. Equity on the East Bank looks in part like finding sustainable solutions, such as more tree canopies and green spaces to combat urban heat-island effect and mitigate flooding, to these important issues.

Urban Nashville is hotter than the rest of the county.



75% of the East Bank is covered in impervious surfaces (in blue). This includes surface parking lots, building footprints, streets, and sidewalks.

the east bank and the floodplain

100-year floodplain: Areas with a 1% chance of flooding in any given year. Several areas in the East Bank and much of River North are located in this floodplain.

500-year floodplain: Areas with a 0.2% chance of flooding in any given year. Most of the East Bank, and almost the entirety of River North are located in this floodplain.

opportunity to bolster resiliency

Developing innovative strategies around the following three key environmental planning topics could greatly bolster the resiliency of the East Bank and make it a more welcoming and pleasant place to live:

- » **system-level stormwater management:** reducing the velocity of storm water runoff and increasing ground filtration to reduce the overall load on stormwater infrastructure
- » **river management:** providing room for the river to fluctuate and places for water to go during high-volume rain events
- » **heat mitigation:** increasing tree canopy and other shade structures to mitigate the danger of severe heat

respecting the river

The East Bank has 1.7 miles of riverfront — representing an opportunity to reorient the city towards the Cumberland River through placemaking that prioritizes the river, and a resiliency strategy that thoughtfully and creatively deals with climate change and incorporates the following:

- » **room for the river:** plan for a wide, gently sloping riverbank with floodable programming to accommodate fluctuations in water level and riverfront recreational opportunities
- » **publicly-accessible riverfront:** provide direct and inviting ways for people to access the river; incorporate a variety of passive and active programs like waterfront greenways, river viewpoints, recreation areas, and boating opportunities
- » **river-oriented placemaking:** plan neighborhood development that is oriented towards and prioritizes views of the river
- » **network of outdoor spaces:** include a connected network of working, outdoor green spaces — pairing programming with stormwater management — into the neighborhood development framework
- » **system-scale water management:** instead of parcel-by-parcel stormwater management, manage stormwater and flood water at a district scale, to increase capacity and provide redundancy

¹ *Planning & Design Principles Public Engagement Summary, 19*

² *NOAA. Weather Related Fatality and Injury Statistics.*



3 PUBLIC VISIONING PROCESS

THIS SECTION SUMMARIZES THE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY INPUT THAT CRAFTED THE IMAGINE EAST BANK VISION CONCEPTS.

- 3.0 INTRODUCTION
- 3.1 VISIONING TIMELINE & FRAMEWORK
- 3.2 ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS
- 3.3 IMAGINE EAST BANK VISION CONCEPTS

Four "Planning + Design Principles" public engagement events were held during the Summer of 2021 and focused on various topics relating to the East Bank.



3.0 INTRODUCTION

Meaningful public engagement is the foundation of any successful planning project. The *Imagine East Bank* planning process was divided into the following phases:

- 1. Imagine
- 2. Research and Analyze
- 3. Test Ideas
- 4. Draft and Refine Vision Concepts
- 5. Draft Vision Plan
- 6. Feedback and Adoption

Each phase included opportunities for various stakeholder groups to provide feedback across different outreach platforms and events. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, several engagement activities were adapted to an online format in order to safely gather public opinion.

During the public visioning process, four vision concepts that describe the community’s vision for the East Bank emerged:

- » Equitable & Affordable East Bank
- » Safe & Simple Multimodal Connections
- » Respect for the River
- » Neighborhoods for Nashvillians

Members of the public at the Summer 2021 Planning + Design Principles Workshops listen to a summary of findings at an engagement station.

3.1 VISIONING TIMELINE & FRAMEWORK

PHASE 1: IMAGINE

SPRING 2021

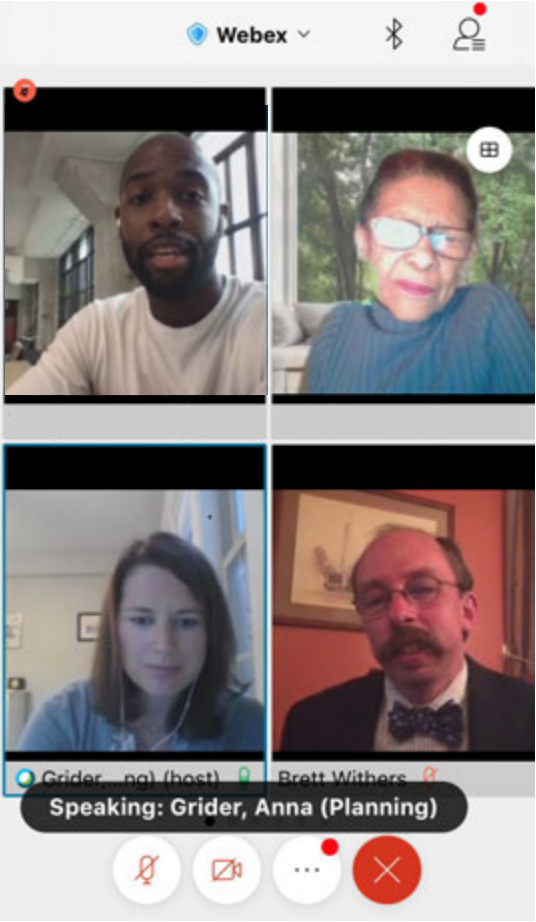
Public input during the Imagine phase helped to identify community priorities. This phase began with a virtual meeting on February 4, 2021, with 150+ attendees.

This was followed on May 11 with a virtual kickoff presentation to introduce the consultant team and poll stakeholders on their priorities. Eighty-one people attended the kickoff.

PHASE 2: RESEARCH AND ANALYZE

SUMMER 2021

This phase was characterized by extensive research into the existing conditions, constraints, and opportunities on the East Bank. Four public workshops were held to explore planning and design principles. Residents participating in these interactive events helped craft a common vision that reflects the needs and desires of the community at-large. More than 750 people participated.



Due to COVID-19, many engagement events were held virtually, or had a virtual option.



A member of the public at the Summer 2021 Planning + Design Principles Workshops.

PHASE 3: TEST IDEAS

FALL 2021

Ideas around mobility, open space, land use, resilience, and infrastructure were tested, based on initial engagement. Through this work, mobility became a priority, and a multimodal survey was distributed to dig deeper into this issue (more than 525 people responded).

PHASE 4: DRAFT AND REFINE VISION CONCEPTS

FALL AND WINTER 2021-2022

On November 30, 2021, a public meeting was held to present draft vision concepts, gauge initial reactions, and determine necessary refinements, based upon additional community feedback.

127 people attended the meeting, and 266 responded to an accompanying online survey.

PHASE 5: DRAFT VISION PLAN

SPRING AND SUMMER 2022

The *Imagine East Bank* vision plan is drafted. It includes a summary of all research and analysis, engagement, vision concepts, and recommendations for implementing the community's vision.

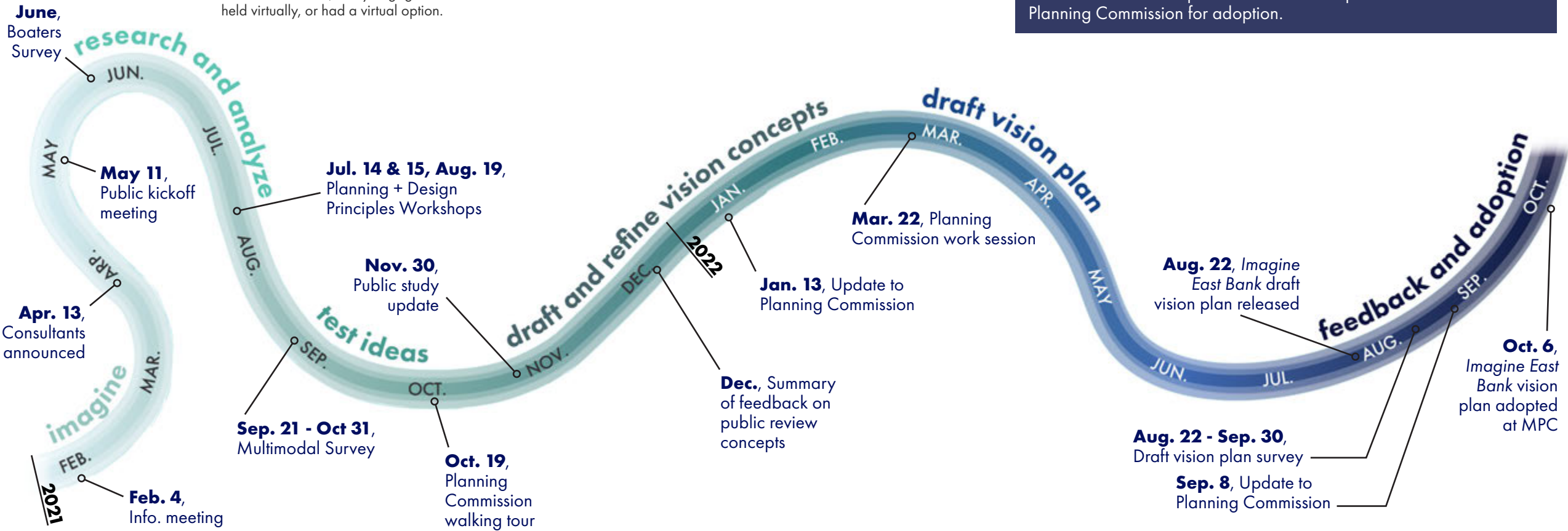
PHASE 6: FEEDBACK AND ADOPTION

FALL 2022

The draft vision plan underwent an extensive and multi-pronged public feedback and review process before it was presented to the Metro Planning Commission for adoption.

VISIONING GOAL

Craft a dynamic planning process that supports inclusive and meaningful engagement of all stakeholders in the creation of a forward-thinking, information-driven, and community-led vision for the East Bank.



3.2 ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

The *Imagine East Bank* vision plan represents a 21-month effort to meaningfully engage as many residents and stakeholders as possible, to understand their experiences, and craft a collaborative vision for the future of the East Bank. These conversations directly shaped the infrastructure and design recommendations presented in this document.



The East Bank Neighborhood Advisory Committee joined Planning Staff and consultants on a 'Sentiment Walk' through the East Bank in July 2021.

engagement principles

STAKEHOLDERS & COMMITTEES

- » Technical Advisory Committee
- » Neighborhood Advisory Committee
- » Community Stakeholder Group
- » Residents and neighbors
- » Property owners and elected officials

Engage every stakeholder. Learn from their expertise & experiences.

Provide a diversity of platforms for collaboration. Overcome logistical barriers.

Incorporate opportunities for engagement and feedback at every phase.

VARIOUS PLATFORMS

- » In-person workshops
- » Virtual meetings with Q&A
- » Online and paper surveys
- » Interactive polls
- » Web, email, and social media
- » Physical mailings

EXAMPLE EVENTS

- » Virtual Info Meeting
- » Virtual Kickoff Meeting
- » Planning + Design Principles Workshops
- » Multimodal Survey
- » Study Update Presentation

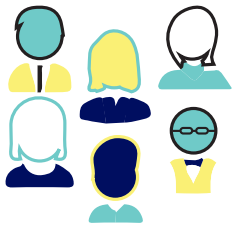
engagement by the numbers



21 months



50+ public meetings



1,200+ attendees



200+ technical meetings



1,100+ email subscribers



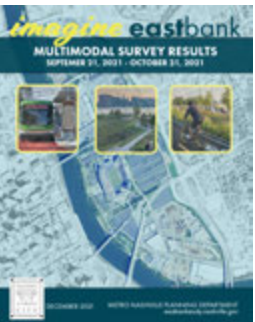
1,700+ survey responses

engagement summary documents

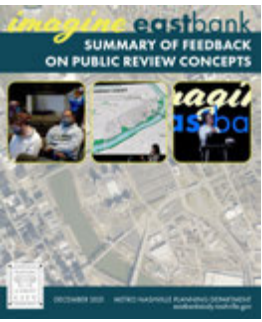
Four public engagement summary documents were published during the planning and adoption process. Click the links below to learn more about the community's feedback at each stage of the *Imagine East Bank* study.



PLANNING + DESIGN PRINCIPLES PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY



MULTIMODAL SURVEY RESULTS



SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK ON PUBLIC REVIEW CONCEPTS



DRAFT VISION PLAN COMMUNITY + STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

3.3 IMAGINE EAST BANK VISION CONCEPTS

Below is a sampling of the public feedback received through the visioning process that shaped the *Imagine East Bank* vision concepts, outlined in the following chapters.



Equitable & Affordable East Bank

BIG IDEAS:
access to jobs, affordability, safety, transportation, housing, equitable places

“Working-class people deserve access to greater mobility and accessibility just as much as anybody else. Make sure this plan thinks about affordability.”



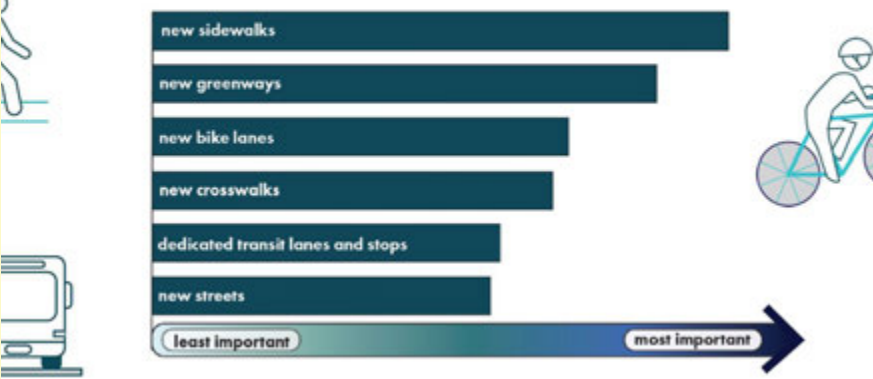
Safe & Simple Multimodal Connections

BIG IDEAS:
multimodal opportunities, pedestrian & cyclist safety, north-south connectivity, downtown connectivity

“Connections and continuity to downtown is paramount to the success of the whole district.”



What are your mobility priorities for work on the East Bank?



Respect for the River

BIG IDEAS:
resiliency, river access, placemaking, improved greenway network, riverfront parks

“River activation and usage as mobility.”



Neighborhoods for Nashvillians

BIG IDEAS:
places for Nashvillians, family-friendly destinations, housing diversity, mixed-use neighborhoods, pedestrian-friendly, parks, outdoor dining

“People should be able to walk to their jobs in the neighborhood.”



3.3 IMAGINE EAST BANK VISION CONCEPTS CONT.



Equitable & Affordable East Bank



Public input throughout the visioning process emphasized a need for equitable and affordable development that achieves the following:

- » provides housing diversity and truly affordable units
- » promotes equal access to all transportation users and modes
- » ensures new plans and development prioritize the community’s vision
- » invests in public infrastructure and diversifies land uses to create more opportunities for Nashvillians
- » provides access to open space for the whole community
- » provides critical infrastructure for resiliency

OBJECTIVE:

Advance equity, resiliency, and high quality of life for all Nashvillians through the creation of accessible and affordable places to live, work, and play.



Safe & Simple Multimodal Connections



Early in the visioning process, planning staff sought public input on a major East Bank obstacle - connectivity. Feedback from the public workshops and the July 2021 survey demonstrated a lack of street connections. In order to identify community priorities for enhancing connectivity, a multimodal survey was put out in October 2021. Participants showed support for creating critical street connections coupled with improvements to the multimodal network.

OBJECTIVE:

Provide a robust, multimodal transportation system enabling easy and equal access to and through the East Bank.



Respect for the River



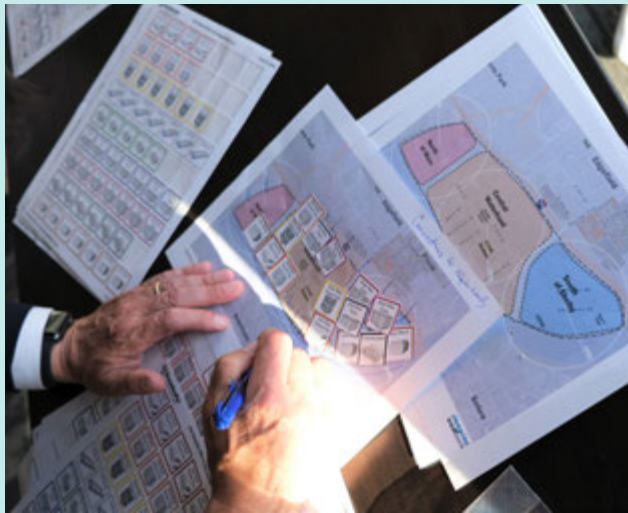
While the East Bank borders the Cumberland River, the river is often not visible. In the past, the river was considered a liability rather than an asset; however, attitudes towards the river have shifted in recent years. The public visioning process aimed to understand community members’ preferences for riverfront access and resiliency efforts. At the planning workshops in July and August 2021, the public provided feedback on riverfront strategies and identified development preferences such as waterfront dining, viewpoints, boating, and greenways.

OBJECTIVE:

Re-center the river as a vital community amenity and bolster resiliency through enhanced floodplain and stormwater management.



Neighborhoods for Nashvillians



The East Bank can play a sizable role in meeting the need for housing and jobs in the core of the city. We heard from the public the desire for the new neighborhoods, services, and jobs on the East Bank to be designed with intention for Nashvillians, in contrast to the visitor-oriented places across the river.

Feedback included having family-oriented spaces and activities, locally owned businesses, and housing for a diversity of incomes. Outdoor spaces like Cumberland Park and Shelby Bottoms and greenways were held up as examples of safe spaces appropriate for all ages.

OBJECTIVE:

Create vibrant, livable, and authentic neighborhoods that prioritize the everyday needs of Nashvillians.



THE VISION

THE VISION

Throughout the planning and engagement process the community has shared their hopes and dreams for the future of the East Bank. Deciding what a place should be in the future is not an easy task but building a community-based vision before development is essential to creating neighborhoods for Nashvillians.

Rarely do all parties agree on the same solutions, nor do they always agree on what the problems are in the first place. A community vision process is, however, an important first step in bringing residents and stakeholders closer together and establishing a solid blueprint for sustainable growth and positive change — the ideal result being that everyone who participated feels that at least some, if not all, of their hopes and expectations were met along the way.

During the study process the Tennessee Titans organization began exploring the option of building a new stadium on the East Bank. While the stadium is a component of the study area, the sole purpose of this study has been to put forward a plan that would provide the foundational aspects and values necessary to build the neighborhoods

Nashvillians want to live, work and play in — we believe this plan achieves that regardless of where the stadium lands.

vision concepts

During the engagement process, four concepts emerged that convey the community’s objectives for the East Bank and provide a framework for the future vision. They are, as follows:

1. EQUITABLE & AFFORDABLE EAST BANK

Advance equity, resiliency, and high quality of life for all Nashvillians through the creation of accessible and affordable places to live, work, and play.

Equity and affordability are promoted through a multi-pronged approach that includes housing, multimodal connectivity, economic development, resiliency, and land use. Several strategies and tools for advancing housing diversity on the East Bank are addressed, including dedicating a portion of Metro-owned land.

2. SAFE & SIMPLE MULTIMODAL CONNECTIONS

Provide a robust, multimodal transportation system enabling easy and equal access to and through the East Bank.

The proposed mobility plan prioritizes the experience of transit riders, cyclists, and pedestrians, while improving street connectivity. It identifies placement and sections for these networks. Close coordination with state and other local agencies is critical for successful outcomes.

3. RESPECT FOR THE RIVER

Re-center the river as a vital community amenity and bolster resiliency through enhanced floodplain and stormwater management.

The environmental strategy links flood resiliency and stormwater management with the creation of vibrant park spaces that provide a variety of river-oriented activities.

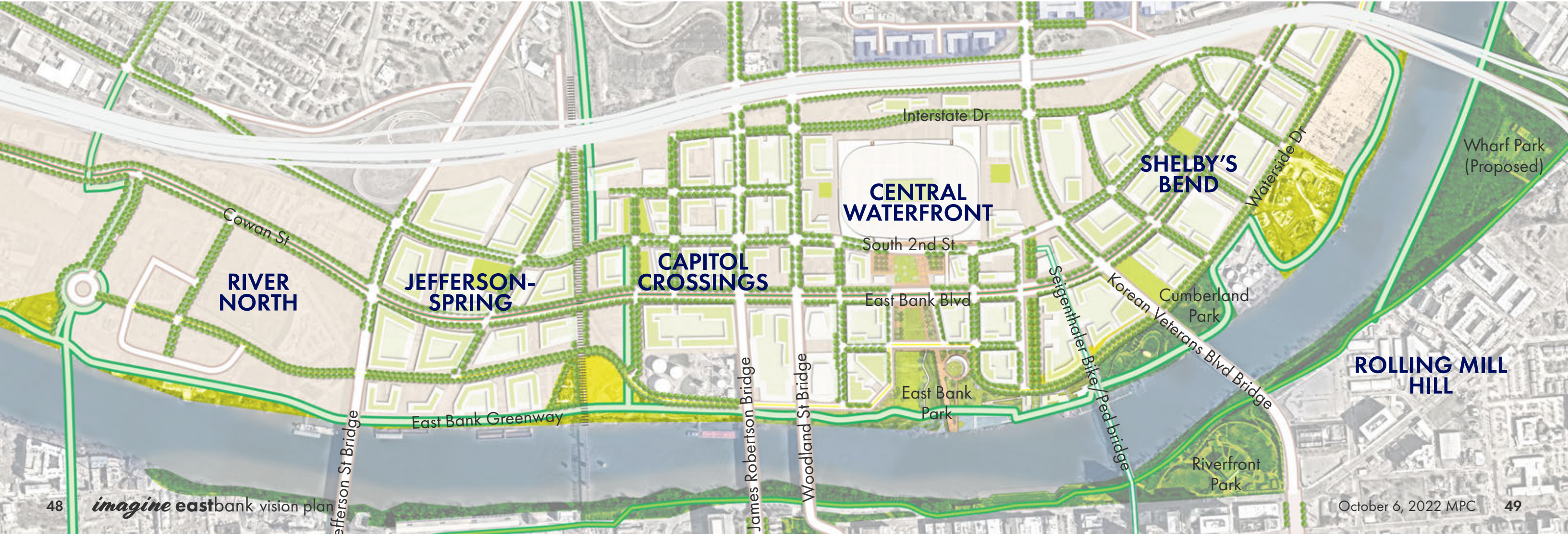
4. NEIGHBORHOODS FOR NASHVILLIANS

Create vibrant, livable, and authentic neighborhoods that prioritize the everyday needs of Nashvillians.

The East Bank is divided into four neighborhoods with unique contexts and characteristics. Objectives and guidelines are proposed for the development of buildings, streetscapes, and outdoor spaces.

METRO-OWNED LAND IN FOCUS

This chapter explores and illustrates key ideas and opportunities for Metro-owned land on the East Bank. Ideas include the creation of an East Bank Park — and advancing resiliency and outdoor space objectives through it. Furthermore, a potential extension of the John Seigenthaler Pedestrian Bridge, a mobility hub, and a site for cultural resources, among other ideas, are explored.



Members of the public attend a Planning + Design Principles Workshop, Summer 2021.



4

EQUITABLE & AFFORDABLE EAST BANK

ADVANCE EQUITY, RESILIENCY, AND HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL NASHVILLIANS THROUGH THE CREATION OF ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE PLACES TO LIVE, WORK, AND PLAY.

- 4.0 INTRODUCTION
- 4.1 HOUSING FOR ALL
- 4.2 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL
- 4.3 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL
- 4.4 MOBILITY FOR ALL
- 4.5 RIVER ACCESS FOR ALL
- 4.6 RESILIENCY FOR ALL
- 4.7 NEIGHBORHOODS FOR ALL



4.0 INTRODUCTION

An equitable East Bank is a place for all Nashvillians.

The East Bank offers a historic opportunity to create fully realized, equitable, urban neighborhoods. Because of its location at the center of our city, the East Bank is also an opportunity to enhance the quality of life for residents in existing surrounding neighborhoods.

Lack of access to jobs and capital, housing discrimination, concentrated poverty followed by gentrification and displacement, and exposure to pollution and flooding have all impacted Nashville's minority communities. The East Bank should be part of building a better Nashville by taking actions that make it accessible to all — mindful of past discriminations and current biases.

Most fundamentally, an equitable East Bank requires opportunities for high-quality affordable living, regardless of income. It requires access to retail that accommodates a range of interests and incomes. Based on community feedback, Nashvillians seek alternatives to the existing commercial centers in Downtown, The Gulch, and Green Hills. The East Bank should allow for opportunities for new entrepreneurs and small businesses. An equitable East Bank requires that the job of building these new neighborhoods supports Nashville workers through skills training and, where Metro can, leverages the hiring of a local labor force.

Achieving an equitable East Bank for all cannot simply depend on the words of this vision plan. And while the private market is a critical tool for the East Bank's future, it cannot ensure an equitable East Bank on its own. Moving from vision to reality requires intentional implementation through further detailed planning that incorporates equity at every stage, with regular, routine reporting to promote transparency and accountability.

The East Bank's vision for equity represents the first of four *Imagine East Bank* vision concepts — and is woven throughout the entire vision plan.

A typical residential street on the East Bank. Native plantings, high-quality building materials and multimodal transportation options are present.

4.1 HOUSING FOR ALL

The rising cost of housing places economic pressures on lower- and moderate-income residents throughout Nashville — resulting in housing insecurity and often displacement. To address this, mixed-income communities should be established throughout the city — including on the East Bank. Housing at multiple price points, including for the lowest-income households, will help reduce long-term increases in the costs of housing, throughout the East Bank, its surrounding neighborhoods, and the region. Mixed-income housing and neighborhoods seek to alleviate the harms of concentrated poverty and have been shown to promote neighborhood improvements, including increases in housing quality and public safety.¹

The 2021 Metro Affordable Housing Task Force Report found that Davidson County needs 52,500 new units dedicated to households with incomes at or below 80% AMI (Area Median Income) by 2030. A significant amount of those are expected to be downtown — the county's population center. Today, only 2% of the approximately 7,000 existing residential units in Downtown Nashville meet this threshold. And of the almost 10,000 units announced or under construction downtown, none are currently income restricted. While nearby MDHA properties offer a range of affordability, they will not be able to support all of Downtown Nashville's affordable housing needs.

The East Bank's 338 acres — currently occupied by industrial uses and asphalt parking lots — and prominent location in Nashville's core, make it an ideal location for new housing. It could accommodate a mix of densities and typologies that will help the county meet some of its significant housing needs.

The opportunity to create new neighborhoods is unprecedented in our city's recent history, and it must be done right. The East Bank essentially is a "blank canvas" to build model-neighborhoods for Nashville. However, residential development on the East Bank should be considered as one part of Nashville's comprehensive housing strategy — not a singular solution. Metro should continue to seek additional opportunities to create and preserve dedicated affordable housing throughout the county.

lacking infrastructure does not support residential development

The East Bank's significant opportunity does not come without constraints. The "blank canvas" lacks the basic infrastructure needed to support even the most minimal uses, let alone mixed-use neighborhoods and their residents. Furthermore, flood risk and other man-made barriers present challenges to implementing neighborhoods. To fully realize the East Bank's potential — substantial investment in mobility networks, environmental remediation, and accessible public open spaces — must be made. Prudent fiscal practices suggest that only a certain amount of density will maximize our return on this infrastructure and its costs.

phased approach to housing goals

What we envision now must look forward to the future as it is anticipated that the East Bank will be developed in phases, with the full build-out taking years, if not decades. While our vision must respond powerfully and clearly to the moment we are in as a city, we do not yet have a precise and detailed picture of each phase of development. Where Metro owns the land, these phases may be formally defined through development agreements. The phasing can and should evolve over time, so as long as it is consistent with the *Imagine East Bank* vision concepts presented in this plan.

As the East Bank develops, we must pause with each new phase to confirm that the vision concepts are being followed, and touch base with Nashvillians — who helped shape this vision. This holds equally true for the East Bank’s housing goals — which is at the forefront of the Equitable and Affordable East Bank vision concept. Housing goals

that guide development are strongly desired by the community and by Metro, however, we should also ensure that these goals are flexible so that course corrections can be made along the way, if need be.

Our current state of housing and our current projected needs will change. Current AMI targets will also change, and as currently set, do not guarantee housing that is truly affordable to all Nashvillians. Goals set now for 15-20 years into the future may not be meeting the city's housing needs at that time. However, with a phased approach, responsive goals can be set, based on market evaluations, as development begins for each phase. In addition, experiences from previous phases can inform and support goals made for subsequent phases.

The phasing of the East Bank redevelopment will ultimately be determined by the final location of the Titans Stadium.

housing equity

As acknowledged in the *Affordable Housing Task Force Report*, racial inequity permeates Nashville's past and present — and racial inequity related to housing is no exception. While existing Fair Housing policies are intended to protect vulnerable communities, many Black and brown Nashvillians still face housing discrimination. Current status-quo practices and policies continue to perpetuate harm. New anti-racist solutions — both in outcomes and processes — must be designed and implemented with intention. In ensuring housing equity, the *Affordable Housing Task Force Report* argues that the following questions should be asked:

- » Are the people responsible for making decisions representative of the communities impacted by those decisions?
- » Are Fair Housing best practices being used? Does this solution affirmatively further Fair Housing?
- » Does this solution reduce or eliminate barriers for communities of color?
- » Does this solution repair or reconcile past harm done to Black and brown residents and communities?
- » Does this solution challenge or reinforce systems of oppression?
- » How is the affordable housing industry complicit in the systems of oppression, and must that change?
- » What unintended consequences might this solution have for Black and brown residents?



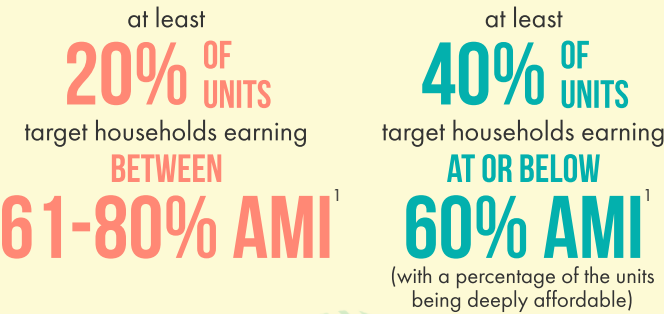
Last summer, we asked Nashvillians to describe how they want future generations to experience the East Bank. Some of the most common responses were related to equity; affordable, accessible, housing, inclusive, diverse, community, local, etc.

4.1 HOUSING FOR ALL CONT.

guiding principles for future housing goals

To develop housing goals for the East Bank that addressed the needs and input of the larger community, multiple housing-specific public engagement opportunities were offered, in addition to consulting the Affordable Housing Task Force. Notably, the Affordable Housing Task Force is composed of a diverse set of housing practitioners and has been engaged since 2021 to identify solutions to address the city’s housing challenges.

The Affordable Housing Task Force analyzed relevant data and the public’s feedback to develop housing benchmarks for the East Bank’s Metro-owned land that advance affordability while emphasizing economic integration. These benchmarks set a vision for a mixed-income community and represent the goals of the land in aggregate rather than per individual building. For the first phase of development on the East Bank, the benchmarks for the Metro-owned land dictate that:



As mentioned previously, these benchmarks will be re-evaluated for appropriateness in future phases of development.

Developing housing that promotes housing security requires implementation of intentional policies that advance equity and long-term affordability. Guiding principles for the East Bank’s future housing goals include, but may not be limited to:

- » Further engaging the Affordable Housing Task Force, stakeholders, and the community to assist in establishing clear housing benchmarks for dedicated (income-restricted) units through future decisions for which Metro is a landowner or a participant in an agreement with private landowners.
- » Metro will not sell its land on the East Bank, and may form an agreement with MDHA, or another

- affordable housing provider, to develop a portion of it to ensure long-term affordability and corresponding uses.
- » Each phase of development on Metro-owned land should include dedicated units. To ensure that dedicated units are attainable, properties on Metro-owned land should:
 - » Prohibit source of income discrimination.
 - » Require holistic tenant selection and application review that may enable tenancy for individuals with limited credit, eviction histories, and/or criminal records.
- » Housing benchmarks should include a mix of income ranges to address Nashville’s affordability challenges and to provide housing that intersects with incomes of workers on the East Bank and surrounding areas.
- » Deeply affordable housing units should not be concentrated in one phase of development.
- » Dedicated units in a building should be comparable to unrestricted units in terms of room size, bedroom quantity, construction standards, and amenity access.
- » All dedicated units on Metro-owned land, or that utilize a Metro incentive must be listed on the City’s Resident Portal (coming soon).
- » Metro will explore development of both ownership and rental options.
- » Metro should develop affordable housing in conjunction with the development of a mobility hub.
- » To further equity and attainability, all developers creating housing on Metro-owned land on the East Bank (regardless of whether units are dedicated/income-restricted) must:
 - » Abide by Fair Housing Laws.
 - » Develop affirmative marketing plans as part of a project proposal and undertake affirmative marketing efforts to encourage those least likely to apply for housing learn about their options.
 - » Provide accommodations for individuals with disabilities.
 - » Sharply limit the use of short-term rentals.

¹FY 2022 Area Median Income (AMI) Calculations

affordable housing toolkit

Achieving affordability throughout the East Bank is a priority on both Metro-owned land and through partnerships with private property owners. Utilizing a portion of the East Bank’s Metro-owned land to create housing is key to ensuring affordable units are available. In addition, Metro commits to actively pursuing all resources and utilize many tools to achieve this. On top of aggressively pursuing state and federal funding, local funds will be a critical component. Other notable local tools available to Metro include:

- » Federal supports, such as the HOME Investment Partnerships Program
- » Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) with Payment-In-Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) support
- » Infrastructure Participation Agreements

- » Barnes Fund
- » Mixed-Income PILOT
- » Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- » General Obligation Bonds
- » 2% of local capital dedications, per the 2020 Metro Transportation Plan
- » Rental assistance (Vouchers, Housing Incentive Pilot Program)

Three of these tools (LIHTC PILOT, Mixed-Income PILOT, and TIF) provide local funding for affordable units through property tax incentives. As TIF may also be a component of financing the East Bank’s infrastructure needs, financing plans should be carefully crafted to ensure all the East Bank’s needs are met.



A typical residential street on the East Bank.



4.2 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

The development of the East Bank and the businesses that will result from it will provide a wide selection of jobs in a variety of industries and trades. By creating and/or incentivizing high-quality jobs, job and skills training for the workforce, and supporting small businesses, Metro can address income inequality and create economic opportunities for all.

BIPOC SUPPORT

Metro will strive to involve BIPOC-owned (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) small businesses as the development of the East Bank continues. The Urban League’s Real Estate Development (RED) Academy provides one way to build the capacity of minority developers who could participate in the future development of the East Bank. Engaging with LIUNA and other building trades unions, who have robust workforce development and apprenticeship programs, can help ensure local labor is included in the economic opportunities. Other ways to support BIPOC developers and entrepreneurs on the East Bank include:

- » Learning more about the obstacles that BIPOC entrepreneurs face and develop strategic programs to counter these obstacles.
- » Partnering with the private sector to ensure equitable access to capital.
- » Conducting input sessions with the community and BIPOC business leaders to determine existing barriers to opening a successful business.
- » Expanding opportunities for mentorship, apprenticeships, and training.

SMALL AND LOCAL BUSINESSES

Local, independent businesses are foundational to community character and economic health but face unique challenges with rising market demand. Programs and initiatives to support local businesses and entrepreneurs, such as the creation of a local Business Improvement District or East Bank Merchants Association, will generate economic vitality and preserve authenticity in the study area.



Various recreational opportunities are envisioned for the East Bank.

4.3 DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL

New development plans (both public and private) must be created and reviewed through the lens of the *Imagine East Bank* vision concepts, reflected in this plan. Development that successfully advances this vision should be encouraged and supported.

4.4 MOBILITY FOR ALL

Infrastructure that provides equal access to all our transportation system’s users and modes must be prioritized. Furthermore, this infrastructure must be well connected so that Nashvillians can use it to traverse the county and the region. **Chapter 5 - Safe & Simple Multimodal Connections** further describes how the East Bank will create an urban street grid with a robust transportation network for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and vehicles. These transportation networks provide a broader range of mobility options for those households that do not have access to a car, or for those who are unable to drive a car due to disability or age.

4.5 RIVER ACCESS FOR ALL

The Cumberland River is Nashville’s most significant — yet most undervalued and underutilized — natural resource; however, much of it is inaccessible, and even invisible, to the public. **Chapter 6 - Respect for the River** envisions an open, accessible, and public riverfront on the East Bank, offering a diversity of active and passive uses, wild and urbane outdoor experiences to enhance the quality of life and well-being of Nashvillians.

4.6 RESILIENCY FOR ALL

When major weather events strike, minority and low-income communities are more vulnerable and suffer greater catastrophic loss. In the years since the 2010 flood, as the region has been rapidly urbanizing, Middle Tennessee has also experienced more frequent and intense rain events more often — resulting in increased flooding and devastation for local communities. **Chapter 6 - Respect for the River** proposes a proactive, system-scale approach to stormwater management and flood mitigation on the East Bank that will bolster environmental resiliency for the entire community and increase our capacity to withstand the next big storm.

4.7 NEIGHBORHOODS FOR ALL

New neighborhoods on the East Bank should serve existing nearby residents in East Nashville and in Downtown, as well as future East Bank residents. **Chapter 7 - Neighborhoods for Nashvillians** describes how these neighborhoods should include people’s daily/weekly needs, such as jobs, healthcare, childcare and schools, groceries and shopping, and parks and open spaces. By bringing all of these needs together within the East Bank’s neighborhoods, residents of the East Bank, and its surroundings, will be able to access them more easily.



5 SAFE & SIMPLE MULTIMODAL CONNECTIONS

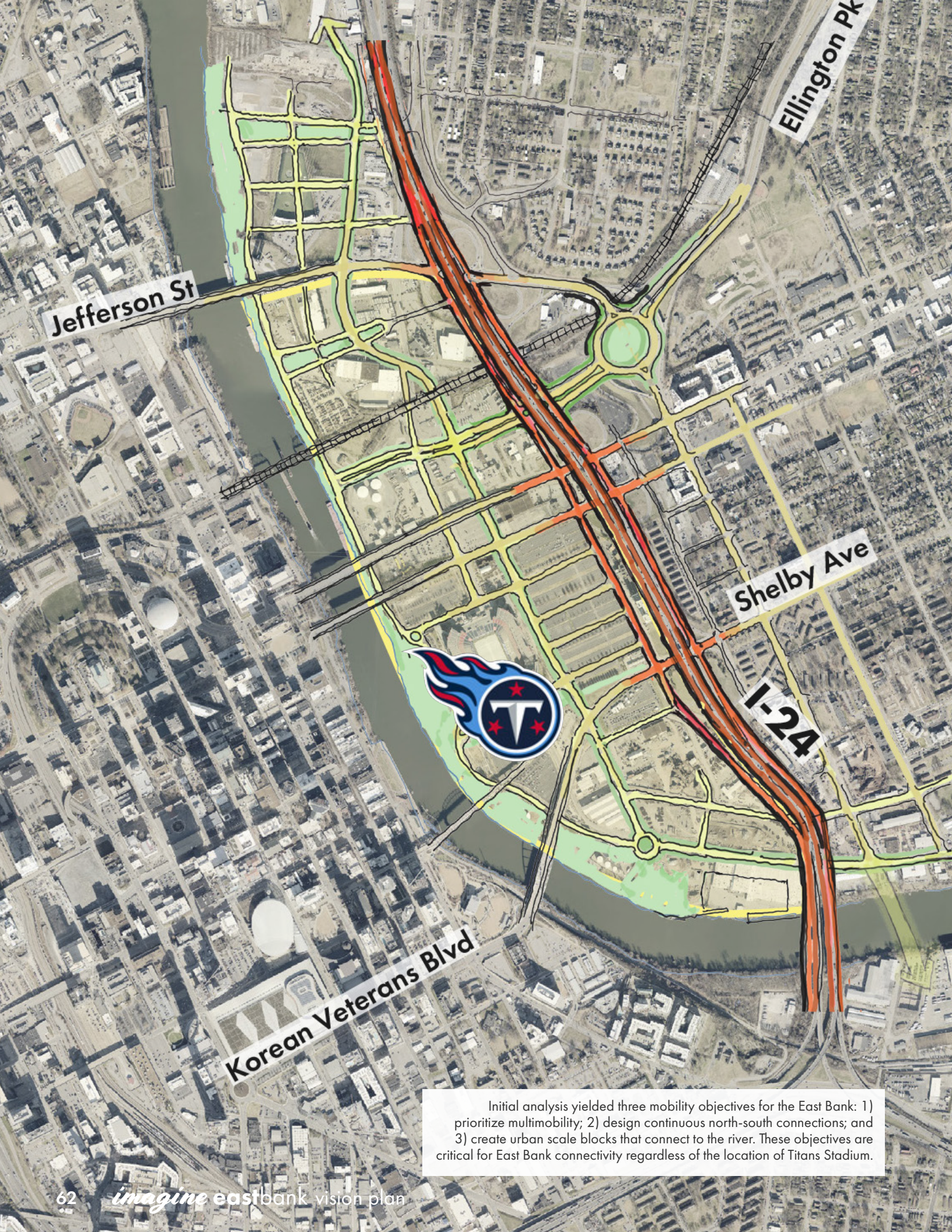
PROVIDE A ROBUST, MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ENABLING EASY AND EQUAL ACCESS TO AND THROUGH THE EAST BANK.

- 5.0 INTRODUCTION
- 5.1 URBAN STREET GRID
- 5.2 CONNECT NASHVILLIANS
- 5.3 PRIORITIZE TRANSIT WITH DEDICATED LANES
- 5.4 NASHVILLE'S MOST ROBUST BICYCLE NETWORK
- 5.5 FILL GAPS IN THE GREENWAY NETWORK
- 5.6 ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO THE EAST BANK



The East Bank will provide priority corridors for both transit vehicles (above) and bicycles (below).





OPTION A: URBAN STREET GRID WITH NEW STADIUM



OPTION B: URBAN STREET GRID WITH EXISTING STADIUM

5.0 INTRODUCTION

The East Bank’s emergence as a new destination within Nashville relies heavily on its ability to reestablish itself as a part of the city’s fabric — primarily through multimodal transportation options. The desire for safe, simple, and connected, multimodal options was a strong theme during initial community engagement — as the current network of disconnected streets on the East Bank does not facilitate multimodal connectivity. Providing these options will ensure that everyone will be able to get to, and move around the East Bank, in whatever form of transportation they are using.

The East Bank’s relative “blank-slate” offers the rare opportunity to envision streets with multimodal priorities — rather than retroactively integrating bike or transit lanes into existing streets. Furthermore, given that the East Bank is located at the center of our radially organized city, it can fill gaps in Nashville’s existing transportation networks. This will improve connections between communities throughout the county and the region.

With the varying development needs and scenarios for the future in mind — including the potential relocation of the Titans Stadium — the East Bank’s urban street grid has been planned with flexibility at the forefront. However, each vision concept and idea presented in the plan remains possible, albeit in a different form, no matter the future that takes shape.

5.1 URBAN STREET GRID

An urban street grid on the East Bank — a top priority from the beginning of the planning process — will set the framework for various multimodal networks. This grid will also be able to facilitate the kinds of mixed-use development and urban forms that are expected to emerge in the area.

An evaluation of successful bicycle, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), and pedestrian facilities in various U.S. cities found that modal priorities must be carefully considered for each street/corridor. This is why some streets on the East Bank are envisioned to be bicycle-priority, while others are transit-priority, etc. Regardless of the street, pedestrians, cyclists, and transit will be prioritized before cars. Best practices from Vision Zero, Complete Streets, and NACTO

Urban Street Design Guide will ensure safety and enjoyment for all users.

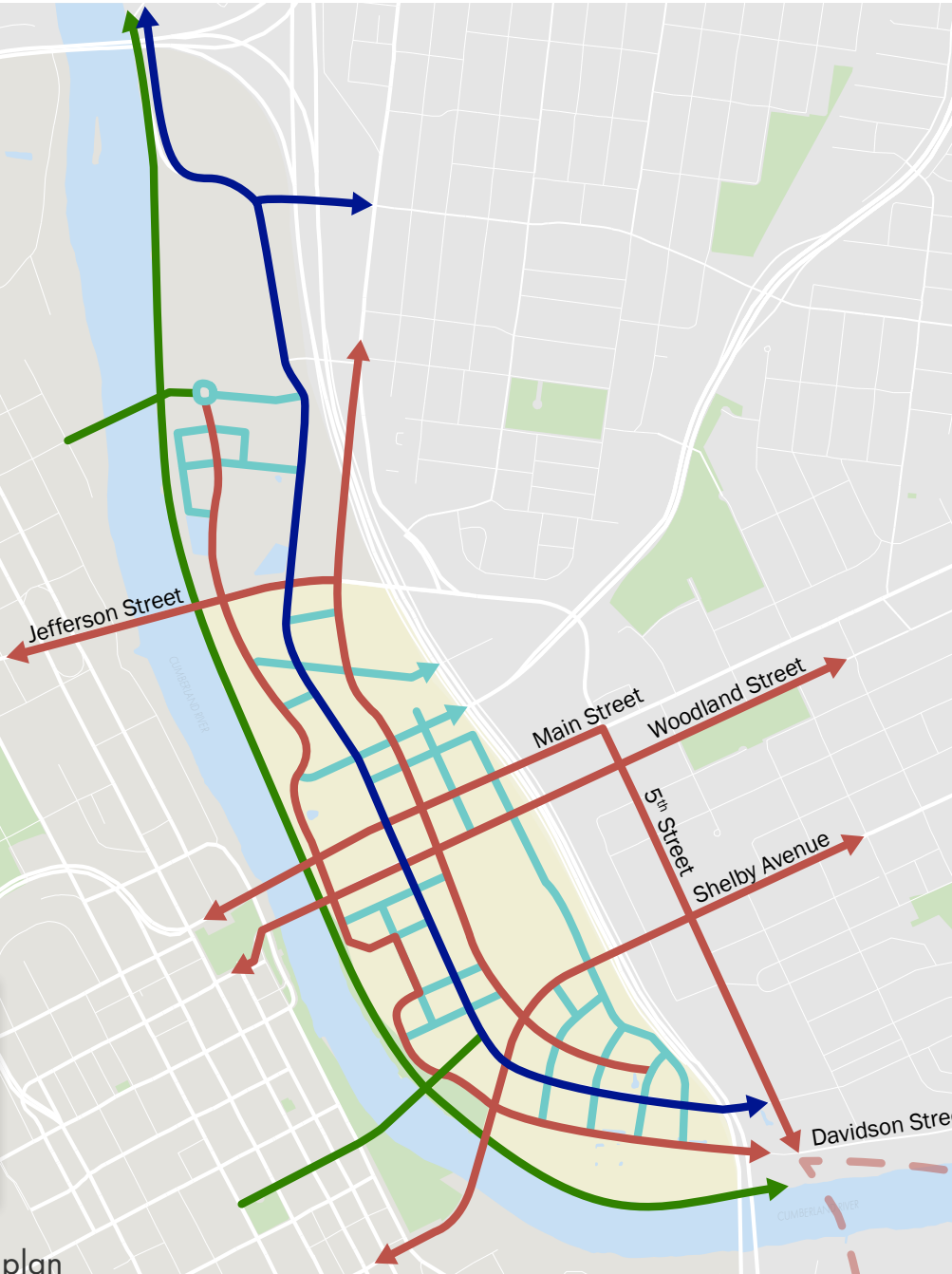
Several proposed modal priority corridors will be implemented through continuous north-south corridors — the lack of which is a major obstruction to mobility on the East Bank today. These north-south corridors will intersect with four existing east-west corridors — which will be upgraded with modal priorities — to improve access at multiple levels. At the micro level, these corridors will be the ‘main’ streets that people use to move around the East Bank. At the macro level, these corridors will provide greater access for neighborhoods throughout the county. In total, four north-south corridors are envisioned for the East Bank — each with their own modal prioritizations.

urban street grid

- Transit/Pedestrian Priority:** Dedicated transit lanes on the East Bank Boulevard.
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Priority:** Protected bicycle lanes on 2nd Street, Waterside Drive, and each of the four existing east-west streets.
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Exclusive:** East Bank Greenway and existing and proposed bicycle/pedestrian bridges.
- Local Priority:** Local streets will prioritize pedestrians. Select streets will include buffered bicycle lanes.
- Future Connection:** Long-term opportunity to improve multimodal access and connectivity to and from Southeast Davidson County via a bridge over the Cumberland River.



ALL STREETS
on the East Bank will
have a speed limit of
25 MPH



east bank boulevard (transit/pedestrian priority)

The East Bank Boulevard is envisioned to extend north-south along the entire length of the East Bank, and into River North. As the backbone of the *Imagine East Bank* vision, it sets the foundation for the East Bank’s future urban street grid and multimodal transportation networks.

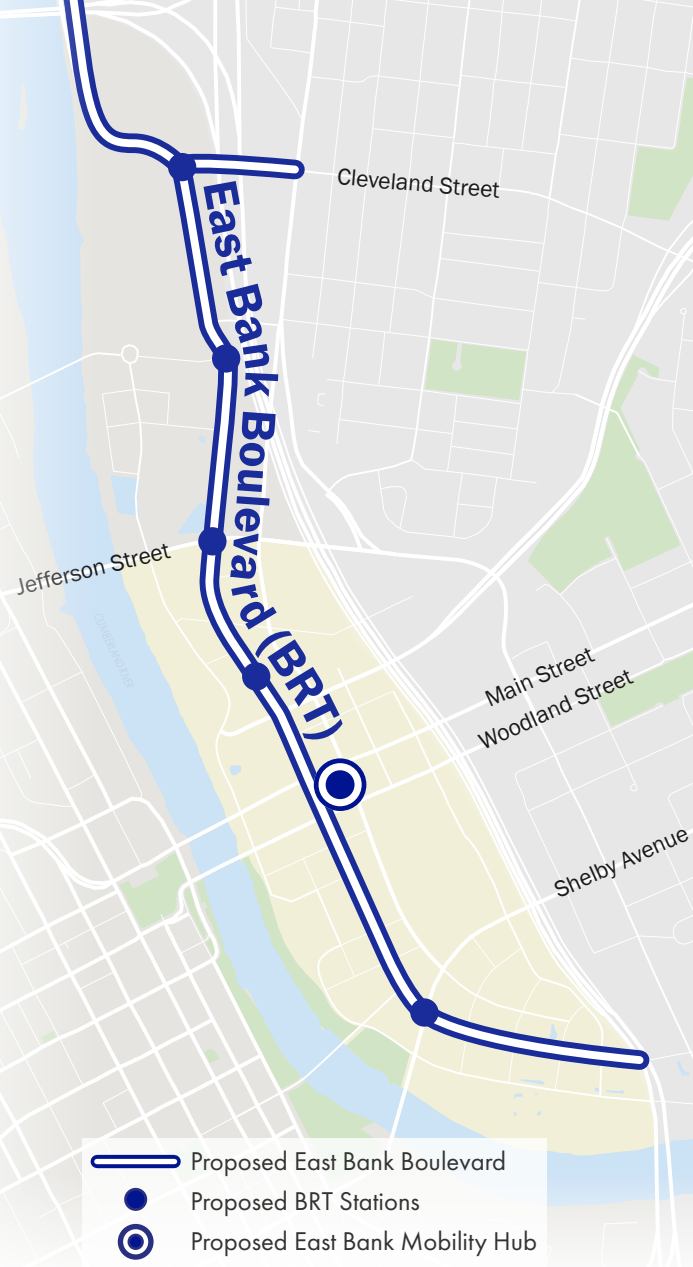
A minimum of 110’ of right-of-way will allow the East Bank Boulevard to provide 20’ wide tree-lined sidewalks, two vehicular travel lanes, and a dedicated transit lane in each direction. In some areas, on-street parking will be provided.

The boulevard’s dedicated center-running BRT lanes will allow transit vehicles to move through the East Bank efficiently, and without conflict. Iconic stations and top-notch amenities will serve transit users at various stops along the boulevard.

The East Bank Boulevard’s streetscape design will be grand. Active ground floor uses will reinforce the pedestrian quality of the boulevard through a lively street wall. The boulevard will provide sidewalks made with high-quality materials and unique paving patterns; spaces for outdoor dining and gathering; clear and prominent wayfinding; flexible parking zones; and street trees (within the sidewalk and in the median) and other landscaping that contribute to shading and stormwater management. In some areas, publicly accessible open spaces will front the boulevard and extend the pedestrian realm.



Conceptual rendering of the East Bank Boulevard.



5.1 URBAN STREET GRID CONT.

east bank boulevard alternatives

During implementation, more detailed engineering and design analysis will determine the appropriate street section configuration of the East Bank Boulevard — balancing right-of-way constraints, community preference, connectivity priorities, and streetscape experience. The most critical elements to the vision of the proposed East Bank Boulevard are dedicated transit lanes, sidewalks, and landscape. If an alternative to the proposed street section were to be developed, it should not come at a loss (in full or in part) of these elements. Two preliminary alternatives (shown below) include bicycle facilities, in place of one vehicular travel lane in each direction.



EAST BANK BOULEVARD - IMAGINE EAST BANK PROPOSAL



EAST BANK BOULEVARD - ALTERNATIVE A (PROTECTED BICYCLE LANES)



EAST BANK BOULEVARD - ALTERNATIVE B (PROTECTED TWO-WAY CYCLE TRACK)

Conceptual rendering of the East Bank Boulevard, as proposed in *Imagine East Bank*.



5.1 URBAN STREET GRID CONT.



2nd street
(bicycle/pedestrian priority)

2nd Street is envisioned to extend north-south along the entire length of the East Bank, and into River North and McFerrin Park via Dickerson Pike. Running parallel to the East Bank Boulevard, and one block to the east, 2nd Street will feature grade-separated protected bicycle lanes — level with the sidewalks and separated from vehicular traffic — to enhance cyclist comfort and safety. One vehicular travel lane and 17’ wide tree-lined sidewalks will be provided in each direction. On-street parking will help buffer bicyclists on the west side of the street. Connections to intersecting east/west streets, also with protected bicycle lanes, will provide excellent bicycle access to the East Bank Boulevard as well as to East Nashville and Downtown.

A relocated Titans Stadium would have frontage on 2nd Street. Here, a curbless environment could exist — a way to encourage sharing of right-of-way by all transportation modes. On event days, the segment of the street adjacent to the stadium could close to vehicular traffic in order to provide additional space for pedestrians and vendors.



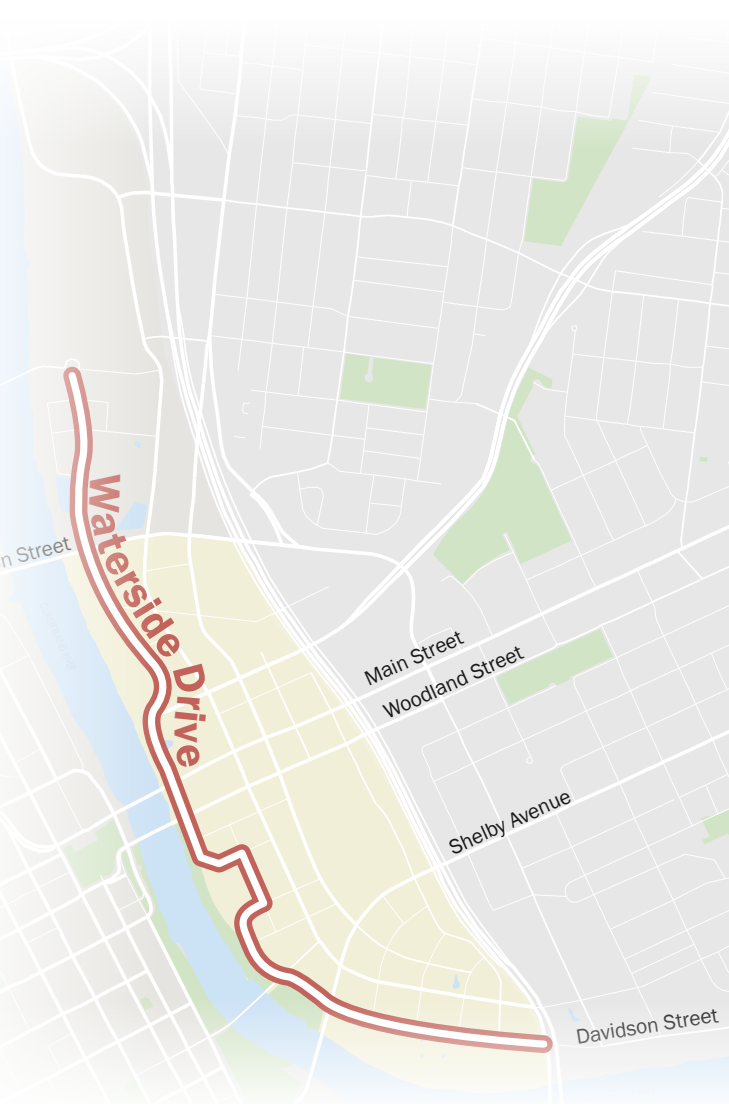
Conceptual rendering of 2nd Street.



waterside drive
(bicycle/pedestrian priority)

Waterside Drive is envisioned as a continuation of Davidson Street — which currently connects Shelby Park to the East Bank along the Cumberland River. It is envisioned to extend north-south along the entire length of the East Bank, and into River North — where a planned bike/pedestrian bridge will provide connections to Germantown, and a planned Grace Street bike/pedestrian connection will provide access to East Nashville and across I-24. The west side of Waterside Drive is envisioned to feature a protected two-way cycle track, while both sides of the street will include 15’ wide tree-lined sidewalks.

Locating the cycle track on the west side of the street will enable it to operate in a free-flow condition at most locations, since there will be no intersecting streets from the west. This design will provide a high-quality, low-stress bike facility that will significantly enhance safety, comfort and accessibility for cyclists. Bicycle connectivity to the East Bank Boulevard will be provided by intersecting east/west streets with protected bicycle lanes. Waterside Drive will bend and jog along its route to encourage the corridor’s one vehicular travel lane in each direction to be slow-moving and to give greater priority to cyclists and pedestrians. The corridor will have development on its east side, and views of the Cumberland River on its west side.



Conceptual rendering of Waterside Drive.

5.1 URBAN STREET GRID CONT.



east bank greenway (bicycle/pedestrian exclusive)

The East Bank Greenway is envisioned to span the entire bank of the Cumberland River on the East Bank and in River North, providing an exclusive north-south corridor for cyclists and pedestrians — free from vehicular traffic. Various expansions of the greenway beyond this are planned, and will connect it to Nashville’s greater greenway network. This corridor will facilitate safe, accessible, and low-stress movement for recreational cyclists and pedestrians. Additionally, it will provide opportunities for observation and interaction with the river.

In River North, a planned bike/pedestrian bridge will provide greenway connections to the west bank’s Cumberland River and MetroCenter Greenways, and a planned Grace Street bike/pedestrian connection will provide access to various parks in East Nashville and across I-24.



Conceptual rendering of the East Bank Greenway.

upgrades to east-west corridors (bicycle/pedestrian priority)

Four existing east-west corridors currently traverse the East Bank — Jefferson Street/Spring Street, James Robertson Parkway/Main Street, Woodland Street and Korean Veterans Boulevard/Shelby Avenue. These streets are envisioned to each be upgraded with protected bicycle lanes in each direction, similar to what is proposed for 2nd Street. Providing these existing east-west streets with protected bicycle lanes will allow cyclists to access the East Bank Boulevard as well as to East Nashville and Downtown.

establishment of local streets

Local streets will fill the spaces in between the existing east-west, and new north-south corridors. Spaced at around 300’-400’, local streets will facilitate pedestrian-scaled walkable blocks. Local streets will provide 10’ wide tree-lined sidewalks, one vehicular lane in each direction, and on-street parking on at least one side of the street. Several local streets are envisioned to include buffered bicycle lanes — giving cyclists even more options for maneuvering the East Bank.



Typical local street section.



Conceptual rendering of a typical local street.

corridor prioritization

The *Imagine East Bank Multimodal Survey* identified bike/pedestrian infrastructure — including sidewalks, greenways, bike lanes, and crosswalks — and enhanced public transit as the top community priorities for the East Bank’s multimodal network.

During the planning process, it was found that other cities with successful multimodal transportation networks often have separate transit-priority and bicycle-priority corridors in order to keep conflicts between transit vehicles and bicyclists to a minimum. This translates directly to enhanced safety and higher comfort levels for cyclists. Based upon these evaluations, corridor prioritizations and corresponding street sections were configured to create an effective modal balance across the East Bank.

While the East Bank is set to have the most robust bicycle network in Nashville, as well as some of the first dedicated transit lanes, they are not planned to be included on

the same corridors. This determination was based on a number of factors including the following:

- » The inability to fully prioritize both transit and bicycles on a single corridor (for example, left turns off of the boulevard would be restricted at most intersections due to the dedicated transit lanes — complicating left turns for cyclists)
- » The ability to provide high-quality, low-stress, and direct, bicycle facilities on three parallel north-south corridors, and various east-west streets that intersect with the boulevard
- » The need to accommodate multiple mobility and resiliency goals within the boulevard’s limited right-of-way
- » Vehicular activity will be less impactful to cyclists on Waterside Drive and other streets where cyclists are prioritized

5.2 CONNECTING NASHVILLIANS

The East Bank's position at the center of our city provides great opportunities to better connect and fill gaps in our existing transportation networks — improving connections between communities throughout Nashville and the region. Extending the influence of the East Bank's multimodal priority corridors along existing major roadways to the north, east, and southeast would connect existing neighborhoods throughout Nashville to one another, and to the East Bank, through enhanced multimodal infrastructure.

1 LEBANON PIKE AND MURFREESBORO PIKE

Two potential alignments show the connection of the East Bank Boulevard to the south, via a potential bridge located east of the interstate, and crossing the Cumberland River. This new bridge would introduce additional connections to South Nashville, Donelson, Hermitage, Antioch, and Nashville International Airport — removing local reliance on I-24.

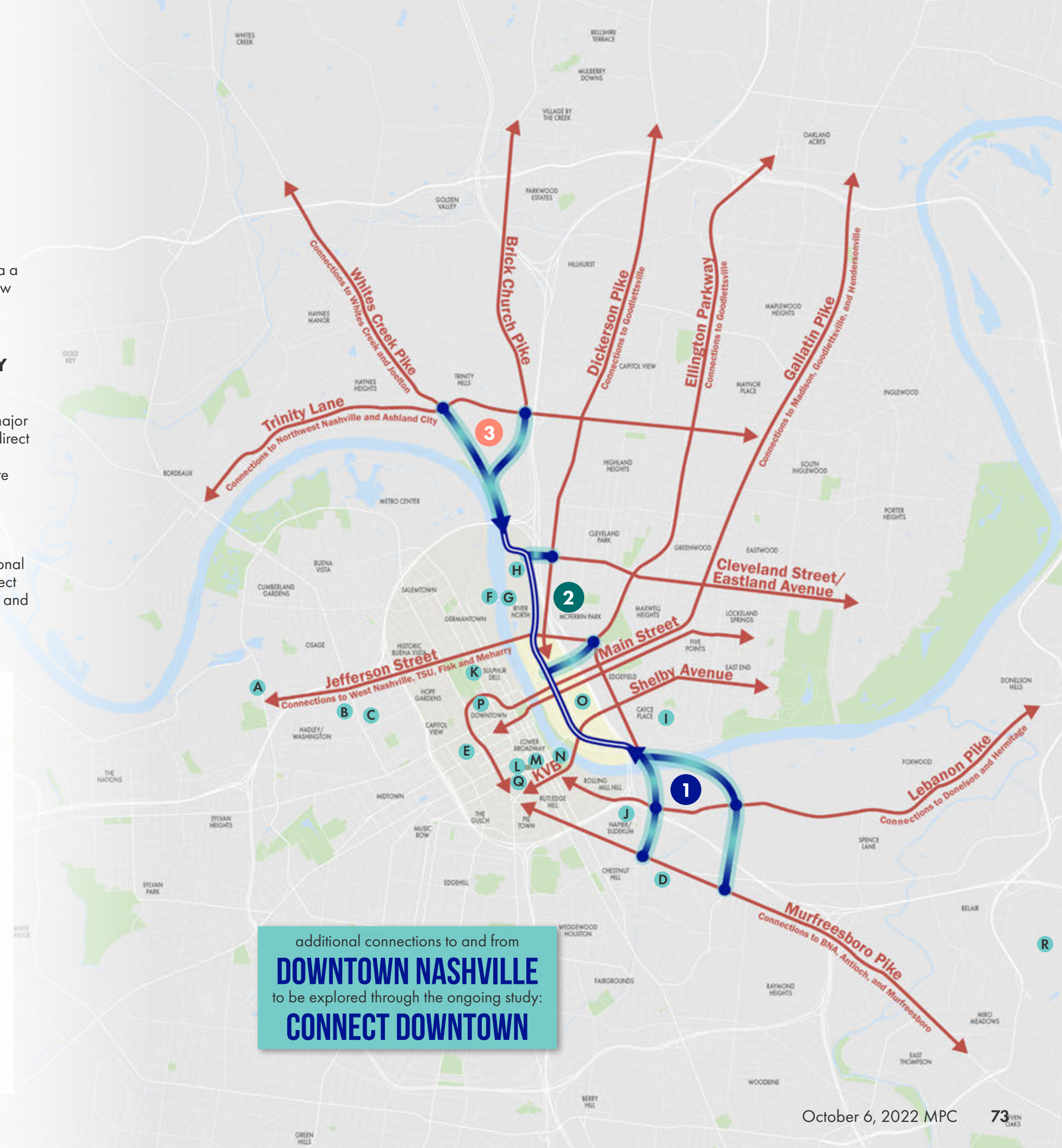
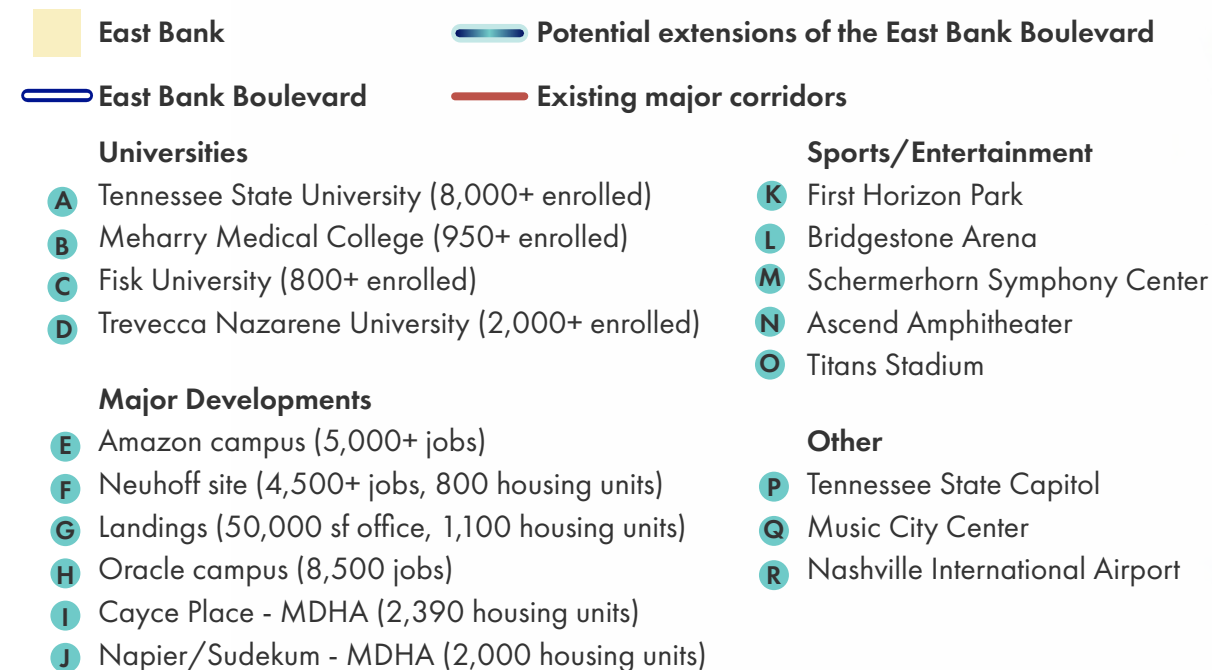
2 DICKERSON PIKE, CLEVELAND STREET, AND ELLINGTON PARKWAY

The East Bank Boulevard will extend into River North via Cowan Street — which will be transformed to match the streetscape design of the boulevard. Here, a new connection, across the interstate is envisioned to connect Dickerson Pike and Cleveland Street, both major thoroughfares through East Nashville, to River North, and the East Bank. Additionally, a direct connection between the East Bank Boulevard and Ellington Parkway is strongly desired. Preliminary discussions with TDOT, regarding these connections, have taken place and are anticipated to continue.

3 WHITES CREEK PIKE, BRICK CHURCH PIKE AND TRINITY LANE

Extending the East Bank Boulevard north of River North and I-65 would introduce additional connections to Whites Creek Pike, Brick Church Pike, and Trinity Lane — and would connect neighborhoods in North Nashville, Haynes-Trinity, East Nashville, Whites Creek, Joelton, and Goodlettsville to and from the East Bank.

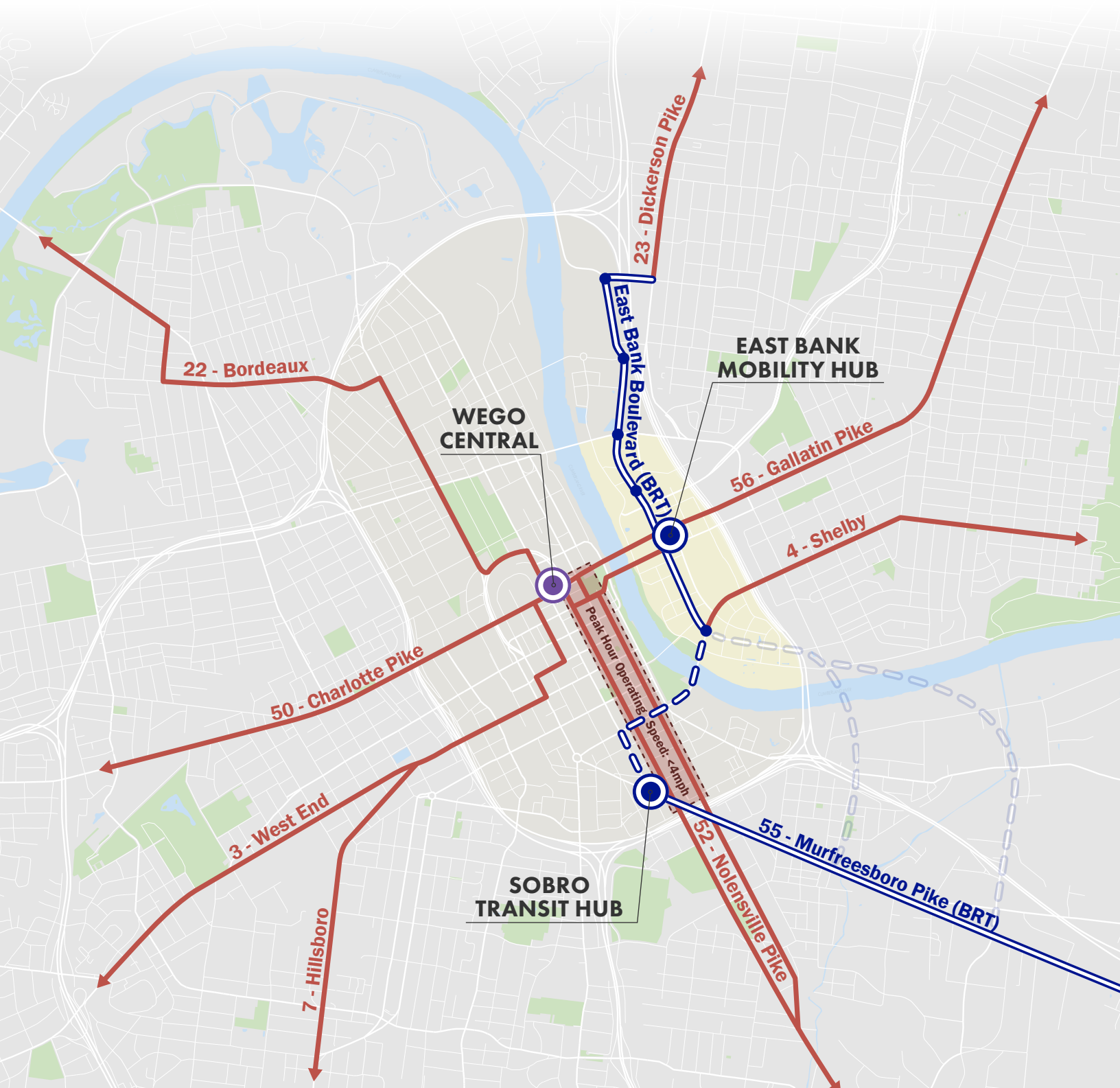
regional connectivity



5.3 PRIORITIZE TRANSIT WITH DEDICATED LANES

Today, most of WeGo Public Transit’s bus routes (including nine routes currently on or targeted for ‘Frequent Service Network’ designation) radiate from the WeGo Central bus station in Downtown Nashville. Buses traveling to/ from WeGo Central are required to pass through a highly-congested and undependable corridor where buses

operate at less than four miles per hour during peak hours. The East Bank Boulevard’s dedicated transit lanes, along with planned and desired transit-priority corridors through Downtown Nashville, would make all transit service in Nashville more efficient.



nashville’s current transit plans

In 2020, the Mayor’s Office released the *Metro Nashville Transportation Plan* which proposed various transit investments including dedicated BRT lanes on Murfreesboro Pike — from Hickory Hollow at Bell Road in Antioch, to a new SoBro transit hub in Downtown Nashville. Connecting the dedicated transit lanes and BRT on the East Bank and Murfreesboro Pike is critical to improving cross-city routes.

In 2022, the *Connect Downtown* study was launched to explore mobility enhancements (including transit service) in Nashville’s downtown core. One major topic that will be explored is transit-priority corridors in Downtown Nashville.

east bank mobility hub

A mobility hub on the East Bank would be able to serve the routes that pass through the area — including several of the busiest routes in the WeGo Public Transit system. It would also provide multimodal transfer opportunities to other buses, bicycle, or first/last mile walking trips. Furthermore, it would alleviate pressure from WeGo Central and the downtown core.

long-term solutions

Existing and future transit routes would be able to utilize the East Bank Boulevard’s dedicated transit lanes as their primary movement through the East Bank. This presents opportunities to connect routes together — filling existing gaps in Nashville’s transit network. Future regional transit concepts could also benefit from the boulevard’s advanced transit infrastructure, and connectivity.

transit network

- Planned BRT:** Dedicated transit lanes on the East Bank Boulevard and on Murfreesboro Pike.
- Proposed East Bank BRT Stations**
- Potential Future Downtown BRT:** Dedicated transit lanes on Korean Veterans Boulevard and on Rep. John Lewis Way S. could connect the East Bank Boulevard BRT and Murfreesboro Pike BRT to one another.
- Future Transit-Priority Connection:** Long-term opportunity to improve multimodal access and connectivity to and from Southeast Davidson County via a bridge over the Cumberland River.



Example of a center running dedicated BRT lane.



Example of a mobility hub.

- Future Transit-Priority Corridor(s) through Downtown Nashville:** Dedicated transit lanes on a downtown north-south corridor(s), where peak hour operating speeds are less than four miles per hour, should be explored.
- Future Frequent Service Network:** Together, these nine routes carry over 70% of WeGo’s total ridership. Frequent Service routes are envisioned to provide 7-day per week service, 4:00am - 1:30am service spans, and at least 15 minute frequency for most of the day.

5.4 NASHVILLE'S MOST ROBUST BICYCLE NETWORK

With the East Bank's urban street grid being envisioned and planned prior to major development, world-class bicycle infrastructure is able to be proactively integrated into streets — rather than retroactively placed into existing right-of-way. This is why the East Bank is set to have the most robust bicycle network in Nashville.

To serve a wide range of cyclists and their needs (commutes, recreation, and local trips), experience levels, and abilities — the proposed bikeway network includes several facility types.



Example of a buffered bicycle lane.



Example of a protected two-way cycle track.



Example of a protected bicycle lane.

bicycle network

- Existing Bicycle Facilities
- Existing and Proposed Greenways
- Protected Two-Way Cycle Track:** Located along the north-south Waterside Drive corridor, this facility is separated from vehicular traffic and allows people to bike in both directions on one side of the street.
- Protected Bicycle Lanes:** Vertical separation, such as bollards, parked cars, or planters, buffer cyclists from vehicular traffic. This facility makes up the majority of the proposed bicycle network — including the north-south 2nd Street corridor and each of the four existing east-west streets.
- Future Protected Bikeway Connection:** Long-term opportunity to improve multimodal access and connectivity to and from Southeast Davidson County via a bridge over the Cumberland River.

- Buffered Bicycle Lanes:** This facility includes a buffer space that separates cyclists from vehicular traffic. On the East Bank, buffered bicycle lanes connect protected bicycle facilities to each other on less traveled local streets.
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge:** A new bridge connecting River North to Germantown (to be built by Oracle), and upgrades to an existing bridge (to be built through the Foster Street SP).
- Shared-Use Path:** Located in River North along the East Bank Boulevard, this facility supports multiple recreational and transportation modes — including walking, biking, roller-skating, and wheelchair use — in a shared zone.
- Signed Share Routes/Neighborways:** This facility is located on low-speed streets that are optimal for people biking. They use signage, pavement markings, and traffic calming measures to discourage non-local vehicular traffic, while prioritizing cyclists.

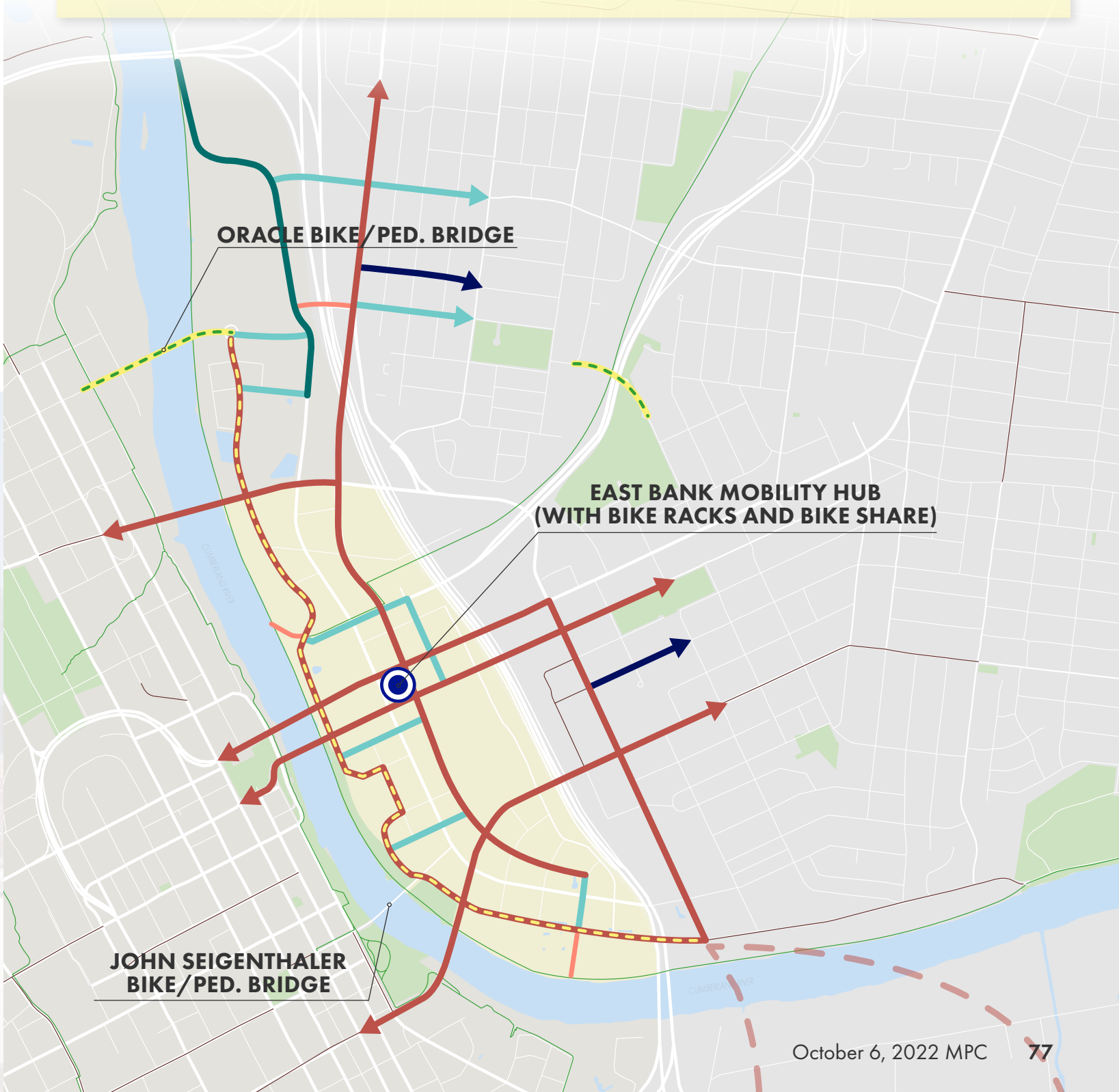
bike share promotes equity

As part of a robust multi-mobility system, the East Bank will host a robust bicycle share program. In recent years, cities like Chicago and Detroit have found that their popular bike share programs are integral to promoting equitable transportation options for low-income residents.

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Philadelphia's program gained popularity as a safe way to commute and exercise while maintaining social distancing. This was especially true for those without access to single-occupancy vehicles or the option to work from home.



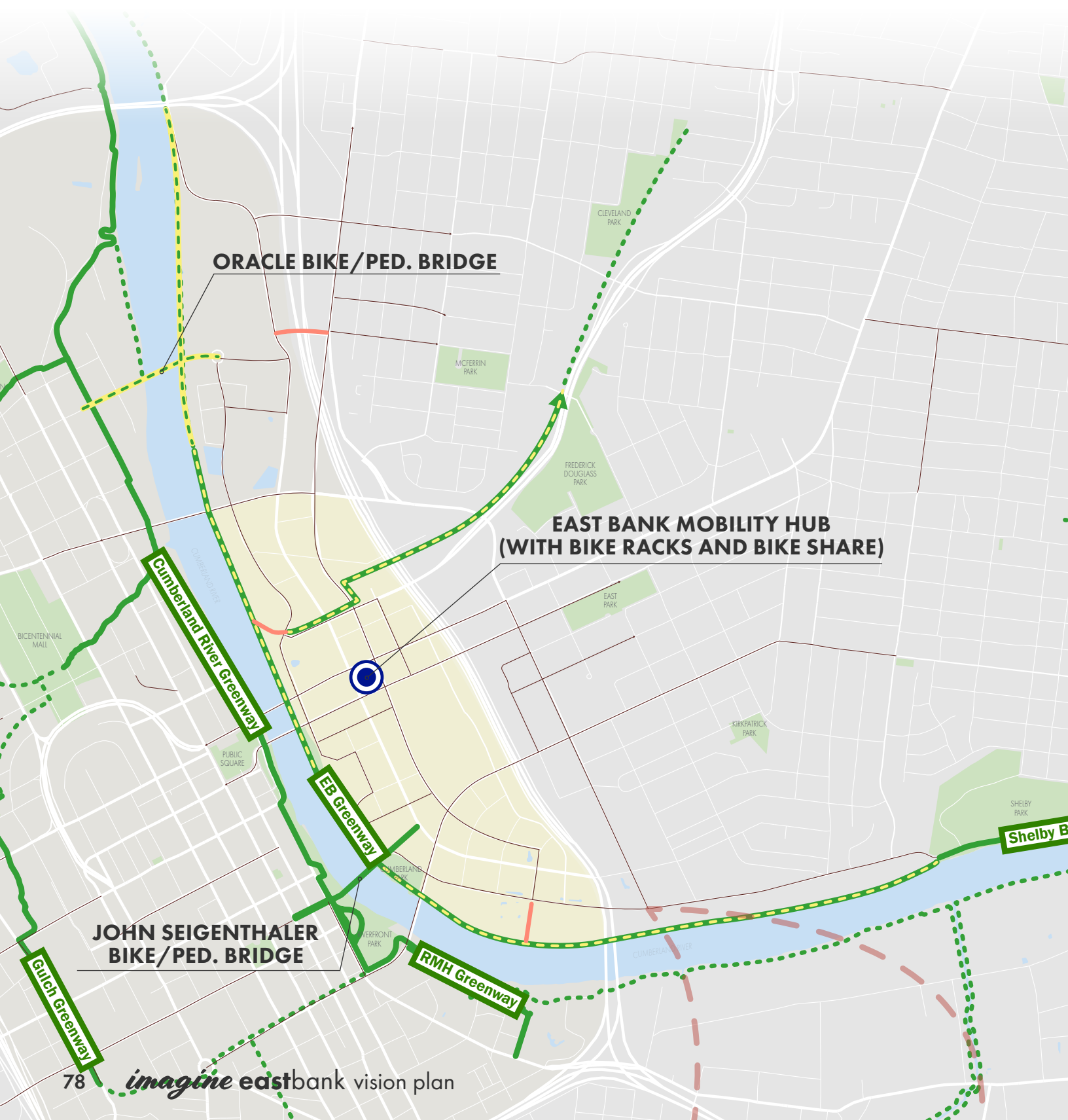
image: grist.com Jasmine Alston



5.5 FILL GAPS IN THE GREENWAY NETWORK

The East Bank Greenway is envisioned to run the entire length of the Cumberland River within the downtown interstate loop. With Oracle set to build out the segment of the greenway along its property in River North (and a bicycle/pedestrian bridge connecting to greenways on the west bank), the next priority will be to fill the gap in

the East Bank Greenway, and connecting it to the Shelby Bottoms Greenway. This would result in an almost 20-mile uninterrupted greenway route spanning the MetroCenter Greenway to the Stones River Greenway and Percy Priest Lake. Future planned greenways would create similar routes through Downtown Nashville and the rest of the county.



Example of a waterfront greenway.



Example of an off-street connector.

greenways' dual function

On the East Bank, greenways are envisioned to serve two main functions. First, as a means for getting around. Greenways provide a bicycle/pedestrian-exclusive corridor — free from vehicular traffic. They facilitate safe, accessible, and low-stress mobility for recreational users. Secondly, greenways act as linear open spaces. On the East Bank, greenways will provide various open spaces and other destinations along their route. Furthermore, they will provide opportunities for observation and interaction with the Cumberland River.



Example of a greenway.

greenway network

- Existing Greenways**
- Planned Greenways:** Outside of the scope of the *Imagine East Bank* vision plan.
- Existing and Proposed Bicycle Facilities:** Connections between Nashville's existing and planned bikeway and greenway networks will expand mobility for people walking and biking throughout the county.
- Proposed East Bank Greenways:** Integrated into the landscapes along the Cumberland River — connecting the East Bank and River North to Shelby Bottoms Greenway. Another greenway segment will connect the East Bank to McFerrin Park, and Frederick Douglass Park in East Nashville.

- Proposed Oracle Greenways:** Oracle has agreed to build out the East Bank Greenway along its frontage on the river. Additionally, they will build a bicycle/pedestrian bridge connecting River North to Germantown.
- Proposed Off-Street Connectors:** This facility type joins bicycle and greenway networks to one another. This includes a bicycle/pedestrian-exclusive interstate crossing — providing access to Grace Street on the east side of the I-24 corridor.
- Future Greenway Connection:** Long-term opportunity to improve multimodal access and connectivity to and from Southeast Davidson County via a bridge over the Cumberland River.

5.6 ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO THE EAST BANK

Eliminating physical and perceptual barriers between the East Bank and surrounding neighborhoods is a key part of the *Imagine East Bank* vision. Currently, three sets of ineffective, closely spaced interchanges are located along the I-24 corridor — immediately adjacent to the East Bank. Traffic conditions on the interstate, as well as these interchanges, tend to have a spillover effect on traffic conditions on the East Bank. To reduce traffic volumes on local streets surrounding the interstate, the existing interchanges adjacent to the East Bank should be redesigned. This could also free up adjacent land for new development that is better suited for the proximity to Nashville’s core.

The railroad is another major barrier in the East Bank. Several railroad spurs still exist in the area, although they are mostly out of commission or expected to close as redevelopment occurs. Furthermore, the main spur through the East Bank passes through Cumberland Park, which creates tremendous safety hazards.

NDOT has partnered with TDOT, the rail authority, and other state and federal entities to vet how these barriers could be eliminated, but further study and evaluation will determine if and how these proposals could be implemented. The following are ideas as to how these barriers could be eliminated in the future.

ellington parkway arrival

The redesign of the ‘spaghetti junction’ ramps associated with Ellington Parkway would provide an opportunity for a new, formal arrival into the East Bank. Instead of terminating at Spring Street, Ellington Parkway is envisioned to transition into the East Bank’s urban street grid, where it will intersect with the various new north-south corridors. This would free up a significant amount of land that is currently occupied by Ellington’s on- and off-ramps.

interstate collector-distributor roads

Collector-Distributor (C-D) Roads are envisioned to run parallel to the interstate through the East Bank and River North — reducing unsafe weaving conflicts on I-24, and consolidating the number of on- and off-ramps to one in each direction. This would eliminate the need for all but a northbound off-ramp and a southbound on-ramp at Shelby Avenue, and a northbound on-ramp and a southbound off-ramp at Dickerson Pike/2nd Street.

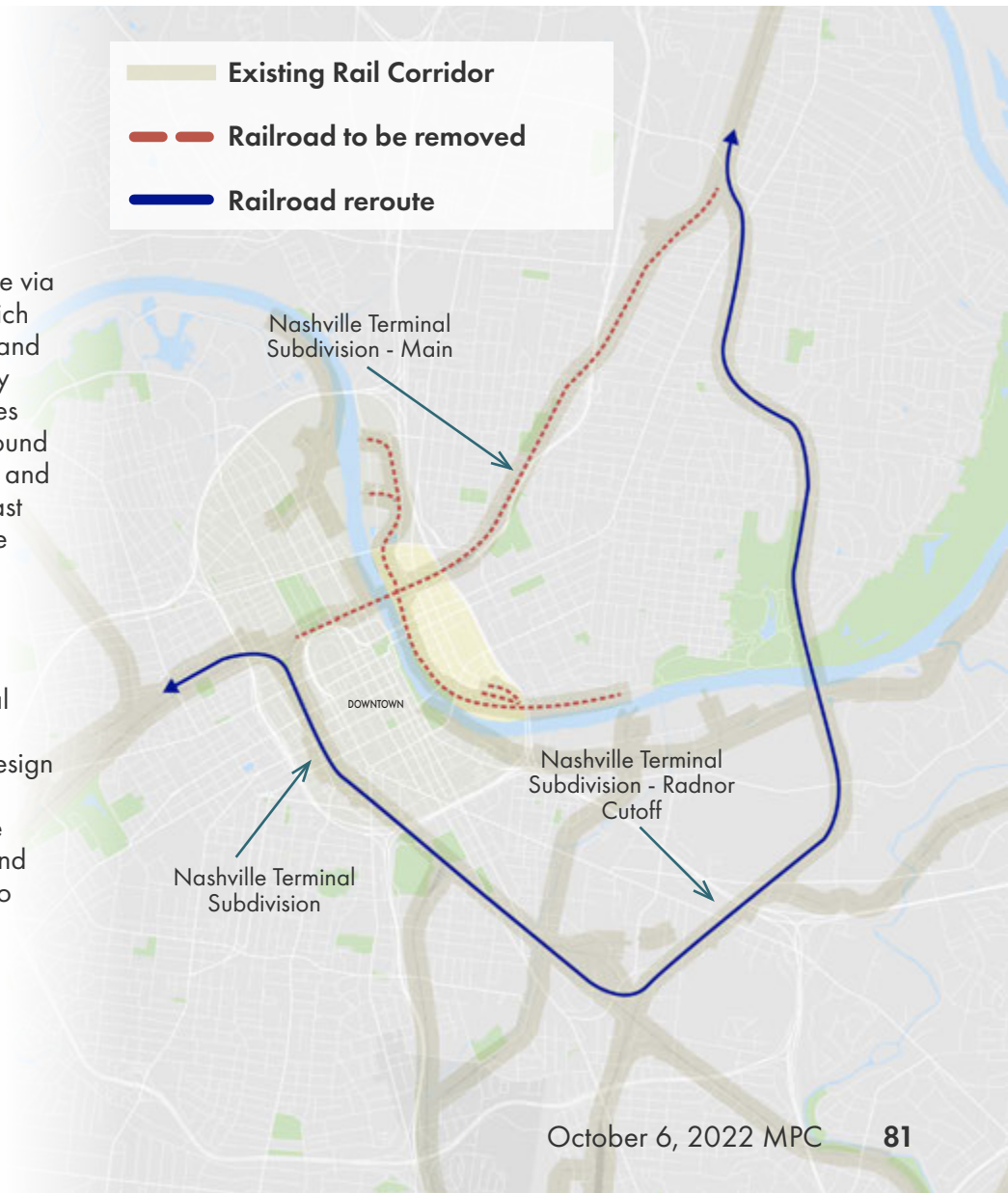
Once an off-ramp is taken, vehicular traffic will be able to travel down the one-way C-D Road to their desired turn at either Dickerson Pike/2nd Street, Jefferson Street/Spring Street, Ellington Parkway, Main Street, Woodland Street, or Shelby Avenue. TDOT is currently preparing an inner-loop study, which is evaluating this C-D Road concept, as well as other overall system improvements.



reroute the railroad

CSX currently operates through Nashville via their Nashville Terminal Subdivision, which diverges into two corridors — the Main and the Radnor Cutoff. The Main runs directly through Downtown Nashville and crosses the Cumberland River as it heads eastbound — providing rail access to the East Bank and River North. The Main continues northeast to Hart Lane, where it converges with the Radnor Cutoff.

The future development of the East Bank could face challenges based on the current location of the Nashville Terminal Subdivision - Main. A feasibility study is under development to understand the design constraints and potential infrastructure investments associated with the upgrade of the Radnor Cutoff. Additional study and coordination with CSX will be required to evaluate the viability of this approach.



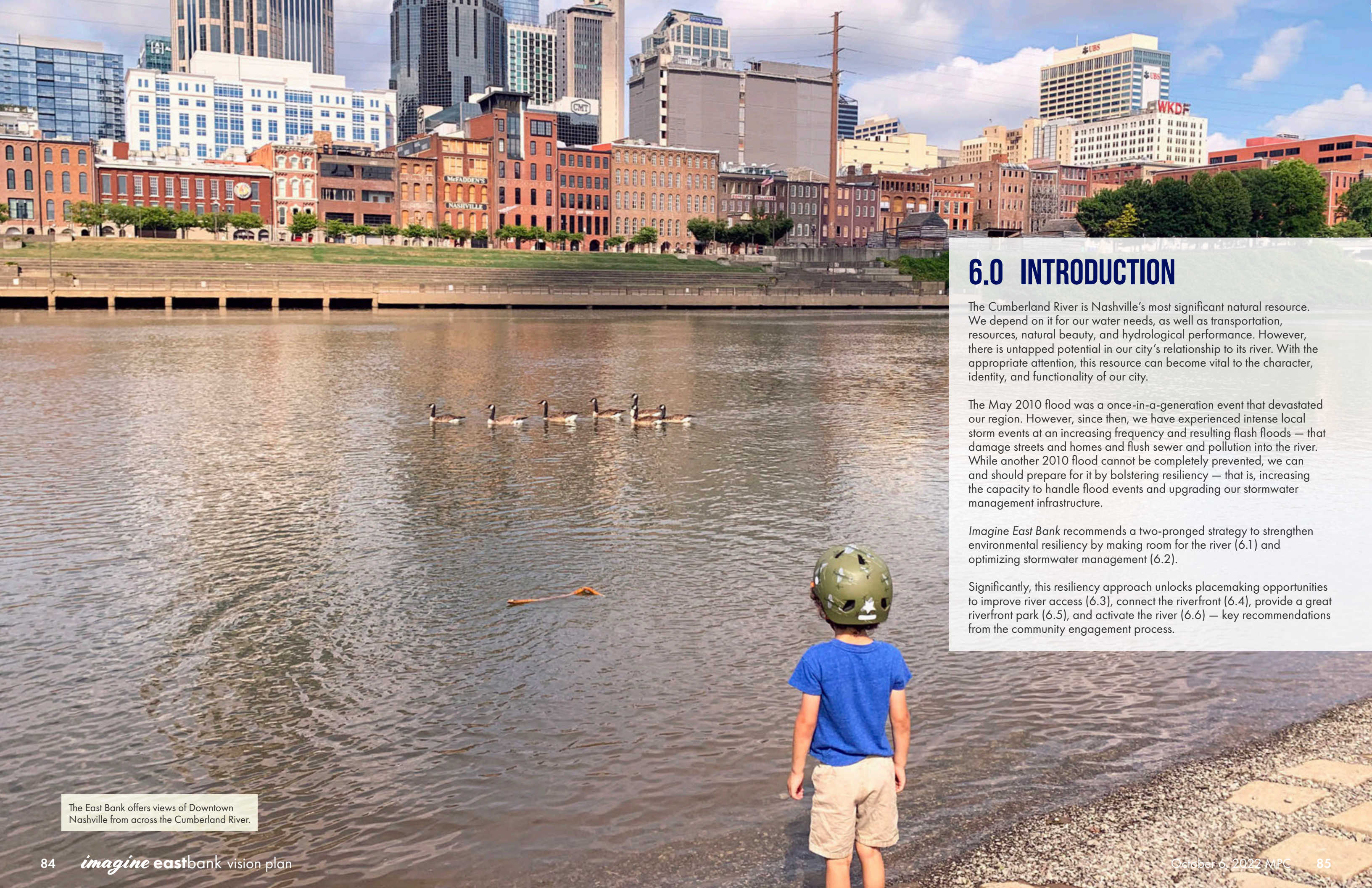
Kayakers on the Cumberland River.



6 RESPECT FOR THE RIVER

RE-CENTER THE RIVER AS A VITAL COMMUNITY AMENITY AND BOLSTER RESILIENCY THROUGH ENHANCED FLOODPLAIN AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT.

- 6.0 INTRODUCTION
- 6.1 MAKE ROOM FOR THE RIVER
- 6.2 OPTIMIZE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
- 6.3 IMPROVE RIVER ACCESS
- 6.4 CONNECT THE RIVERFRONT
- 6.5 PROVIDE A GREAT PARK
- 6.6 ACTIVATE THE RIVER



6.0 INTRODUCTION

The Cumberland River is Nashville's most significant natural resource. We depend on it for our water needs, as well as transportation, resources, natural beauty, and hydrological performance. However, there is untapped potential in our city's relationship to its river. With the appropriate attention, this resource can become vital to the character, identity, and functionality of our city.

The May 2010 flood was a once-in-a-generation event that devastated our region. However, since then, we have experienced intense local storm events at an increasing frequency and resulting flash floods — that damage streets and homes and flush sewer and pollution into the river. While another 2010 flood cannot be completely prevented, we can and should prepare for it by bolstering resiliency — that is, increasing the capacity to handle flood events and upgrading our stormwater management infrastructure.

Imagine East Bank recommends a two-pronged strategy to strengthen environmental resiliency by making room for the river (6.1) and optimizing stormwater management (6.2).

Significantly, this resiliency approach unlocks placemaking opportunities to improve river access (6.3), connect the riverfront (6.4), provide a great riverfront park (6.5), and activate the river (6.6) — key recommendations from the community engagement process.

The East Bank offers views of Downtown Nashville from across the Cumberland River.

6.1 MAKE ROOM FOR THE RIVER

Reducing flood risk on the East Bank was a critical directive that arose in both community engagement and technical analysis.

This can be accomplished by integrating stormwater management (reducing rainwater runoff and removing pollutants) and riparian management (altering the floodplain to reduce flood risk). Together, these strategies can help avoid devastating damage to human life, property, and ecological systems.

This effort does not have to come at the expense of our enjoyment and use of the river. Rather, this two-pronged strategy of tying floodplain improvements with district-scale stormwater management supports a more direct and active relationship with the Cumberland River and invites opportunities for the creation of parks, outdoor spaces, and development that interact directly with it.

understanding urban flooding

As Nashville developed into an urban condition, it encroached on the edge of the Cumberland River. Watershed drainage — a transition that was once wide and allowed for the slow movement and gradual infiltration of water across a large area — was compressed and channelized into pipes and a narrow floodway.

During a heavy storm, when the river is forced to move more water through its narrower channels, the water speeds up — causing more erosion of the banks — and lifts up (floods) higher, eventually spilling over the banks and flooding adjacent areas.

LAYING BACK THE RIVER TO REDUCE FLOODING

Riparian edge framework strategies, such as laying back the Cumberland River, will mitigate flooding by restoring a channelized, urban riverbank back to its natural, healthy condition.

Laying back the riverbank provides more space for the water to spread, thereby reducing the velocity moving through the channel, encouraging groundwater infiltration, and reducing erosion.

Unlike “hard” infrastructure, such as pipes or flood walls, this framework allows public access to the river. Short- and long-term riparian edge strategies should be further evaluated in concert with Metro Water Services and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



Underlying the design for East Bank Park is a riparian framework that slows and stores stormwater and lays back the river’s edge to reduce flooding.



show

restore the riverfront to highlight the resilient and ecological nature of a natural riverbank

restore

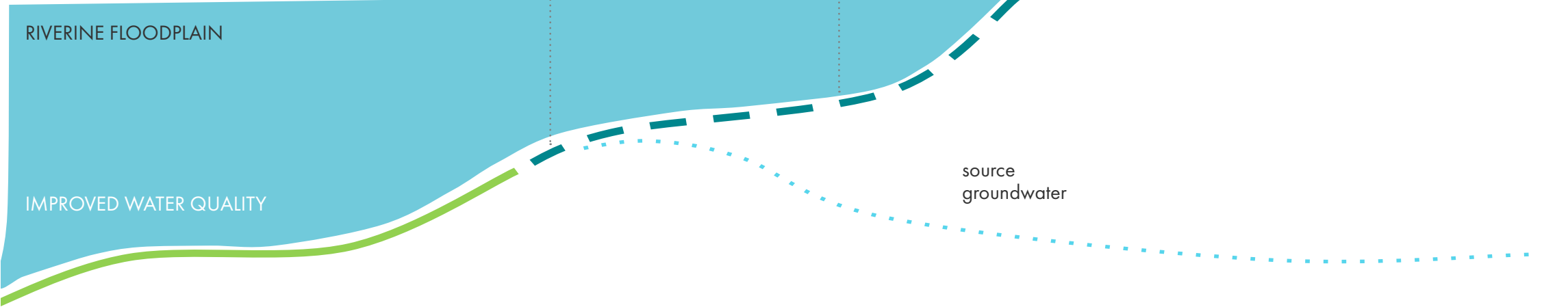
intercept flow upstream to infiltrate and treat stormwater via green infrastructure along the corridor

store

provide space for local rainflow and retention during compound rainfall and riverine flood events

slow

provide space for local rainflow to move towards the river



6.2 OPTIMIZE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Traditionally, stormwater is handled parcel-by-parcel, or project-by-project — meaning, each property is responsible for managing its stormwater onsite before it re-enters the municipal drainage system. This approach — while logical for an urban area that is already developed — is both costly and limited in its effectiveness.

Because the land on the East Bank is currently under-developed, and a portion of it is metro-owned property, it presents a rare opportunity to implement a district-approach to stormwater management — where infrastructure is connected and shared among all developments within the district — particularly in the scenario where Titans Stadium moves.

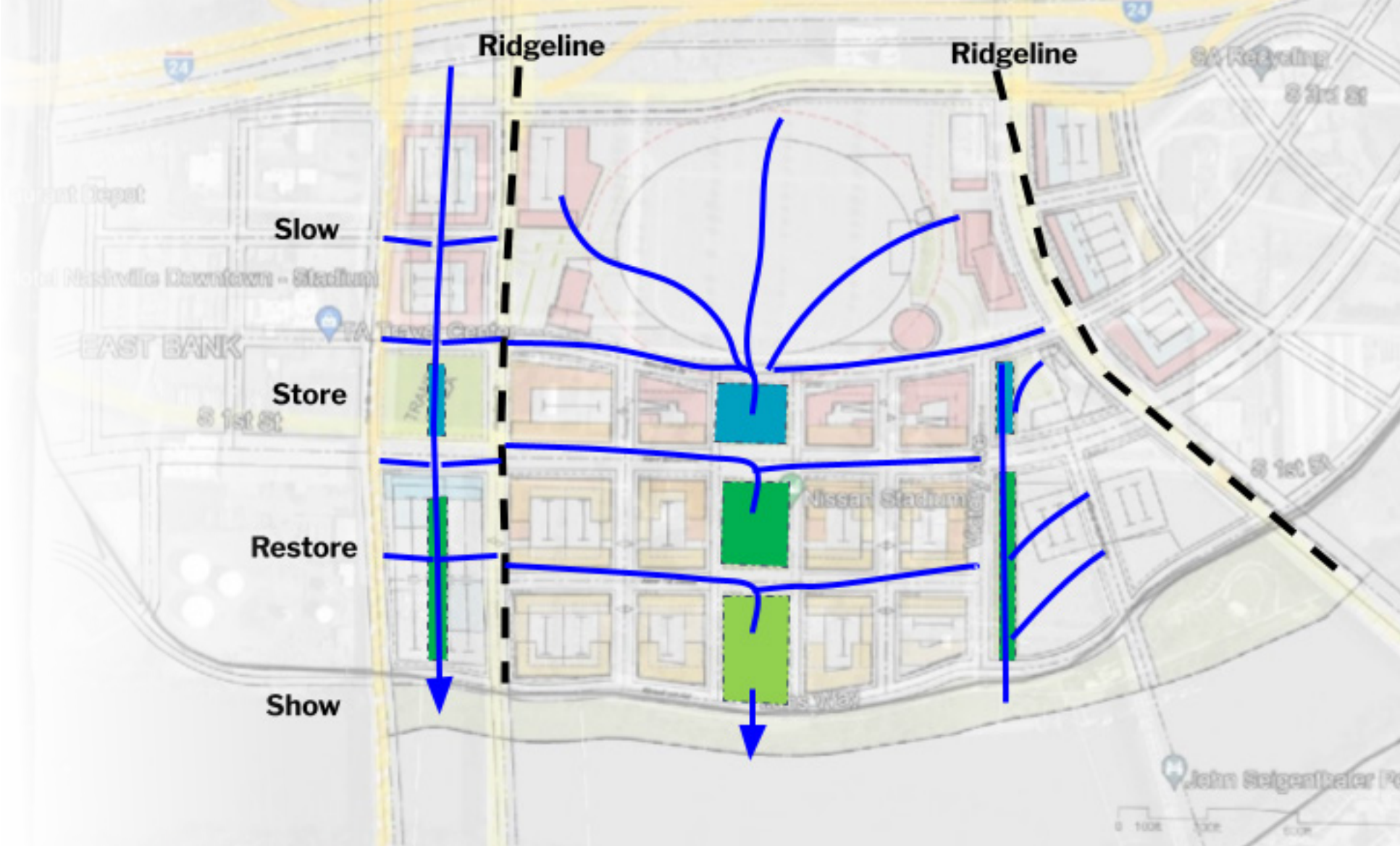
benefits of district stormwater management

This concept has the following benefits:

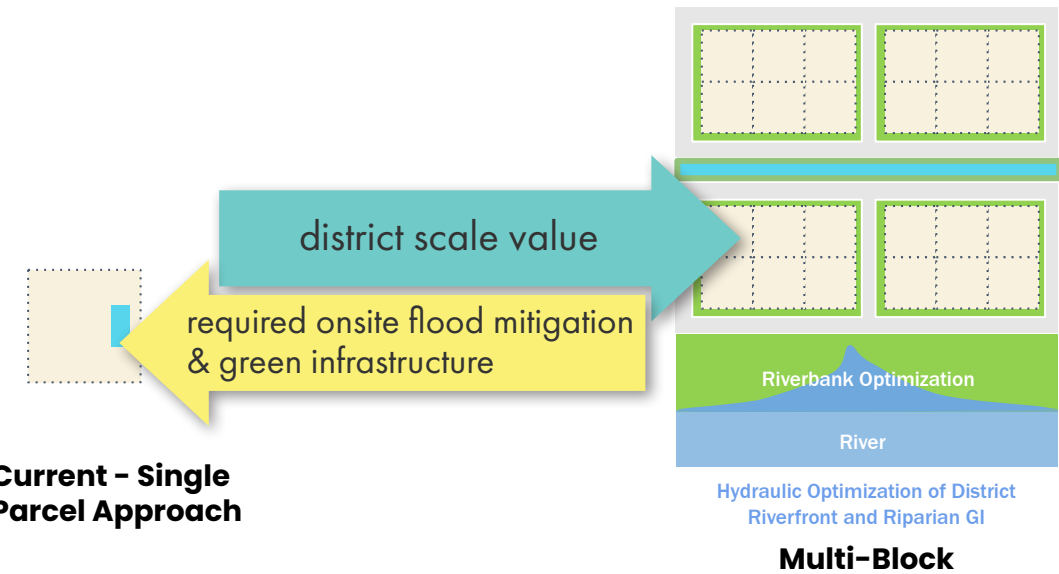
- » Increase the capacity and efficacy of the system
- » Save costs on infrastructure
- » Reduce the burden on development to fit stormwater infrastructure
- » Balance cut/fill across the site as a whole
- » Better connect Nashville’s neighborhoods to the waterfront and the East Bank

A district stormwater management system based on green infrastructure and utilizing multiple parcels can optimize resiliency, return on investment, and public benefit in the creation of parks and other outdoor spaces.

As part of *Imagine East Bank*, Metro partnered with resiliency engineers to study the feasibility, potential, and cost-benefit of this idea as a component of the overall flood mitigation plan for the East Bank. Further analysis, collaboration with Metro Water Services, and design engineering of this concept is needed and is included in the recommendations.



Early concept sketch of utilizing outdoor park spaces within a district stormwater system on the East Bank.



weave recreation and ecological restoration for public health

One significant benefit of an integrated flood resiliency strategy is the creation of ample waterfront outdoor spaces that can be programmed for a variety of river-related activities.

Recent waterfront park projects in other cities — like Buffalo Bayou in Houston, TX — use this as an opportunity to weave together recreational spaces — like nature trails and boat launches — with areas that support native habitats and ecological functioning. This incorporation of “wild landscapes” into cities has been shown to vastly improve public health and quality of life, as well as the environmental performance of outdoor spaces.



Buffalo Bayou, Houston, TX

6.3 IMPROVE RIVER ACCESS

During community engagement, many Nashvillians expressed the idea that the east bank of the Cumberland River is inaccessible, and often invisible. A primary reason for that being that wayfinding to the river is difficult, and, once there, it does not feel open and welcoming to the public.

strategies for improving river access

Imagine East Bank proposes several strategies to make the river more visible and accessible for people on the East Bank. These strategies also will improve access to the East Bank for boaters on the Cumberland River.

CREATE A DRIVE ALONG THE RIVER

Waterside Drive is envisioned as a local thoroughfare running parallel to the river on the East Bank — connecting neighborhoods on the East Bank to one another, and to other neighborhoods along the Cumberland River. This slow-moving road will prioritize active transportation while also allowing local vehicular connectivity and emergency access.

ORIENT TOWARDS THE RIVER

On the waterfront, buildings will be oriented with respect to the river. Retail, restaurant, and other waterfront amenities will be encouraged along the public waterfront, and on Waterside Drive. Further inland, development in each neighborhood on the East Bank will work with topography and viewsheds to optimize views of the river.

EXTEND THE EAST BANK GREENWAY

The plan proposes filling a current gap in the greenway network by connecting Shelby Bottoms Greenway to the East Bank Greenway, along the Cumberland River waterfront. This will provide greenway access along the entire stretch of riverbank within the East Bank and in River North.


CONNECT TO THE WATERFRONT


The East Bank’s proposed street grid includes direct access for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles to Waterside Drive, riverfront parks and the East Bank Greenway. Woodland Street, Main Street, and Shelby Avenue will also provide through connections to East Nashville neighborhoods and over the river to Downtown.

LAY BACK THE RIVER BANK

Lay-back areas are proposed in several locations on the East Bank and in River North. These areas are envisioned to provide both resiliency (in making room for the river) and amenity (in providing open space or other waterfront amenities) functions. The amenity function of a lay-back area could come in many forms or combinations of spaces including a large urban park, nature trails, a community boathouse, a marina, etc.



 **potential lay-back area**
During the planning study, these sites were analyzed as places where the riverbank could be regraded to accommodate flooding. Lay-back areas can be programmed for a multitude of uses—including boating infrastructures like docks or fueling stations.

 **riverfront access points & connections to East Bank neighborhoods**

cumberland park access

Cumberland Park, a relatively new park situated directly on the river, is an example of this missed opportunity. Stakeholders noted that it is not used because it is difficult to access, parking is often closed for private events, and that the splash pad and concession stands (amenities that would be a draw) have been closed for the past two years due to COVID-19 and lack of staff and maintenance. All of this makes what would be a prime investment on the riverbank, rather underutilized.

The proposal for parks and greenways on the East Bank connects each space directly — enabling greater access, and building upon the amenities already offered at existing nearby parks, such as Cumberland Park. Together, the system of parks and greenways will provide complementary programming to ensure that a variety of recreational needs are met on the East Bank.



Waterside Drive (far right) provides space for vehicles, bicyclists, and wide sidewalks for pedestrians. Connections from the sidewalk to the waterfront entice people to access the river.

6.4 CONNECT THE RIVERFRONT

Plan to Play: The Nashville Parks & Greenways Master Plan, argues that current downtown parks are under pressure, and as population grows, they are reaching capacity. New parks are needed to meet demand, as well as expanded programming beyond that which downtown parks currently offer.

During the public visioning process, community members expressed a desire for more active and passive recreational opportunities on the Cumberland River. Nature trails, boating facilities, event spaces, and play areas were a top priority. Stakeholders noted that more walking paths, riverfront greenways, and overlooks were ways to make the river more appreciated as a community resource.

Nashville already has several existing waterfront parks, including Cumberland Park, Riverfront Park, Ted Rhodes Park, and Shelby Park. Plan to Play envisions connecting these vital community spaces via greenways along both sides of the river.

a blue-green necklace on the cumberland

Imagine East Bank proposes parks and greenways with a diverse array of new programs to encourage interaction and enjoyment of the river for Nashvillians of all ages — including scenic viewpoints, riverfront trails, play areas, boating, and outdoor recreation amenities.

Extending the East Bank Greenway to Shelby Bottoms Greenway, and into River North, will fill the existing greenway gap along the east bank of the Cumberland River. The John Seigenthaler Pedestrian Bridge and proposed bicycle-pedestrian bridge at River North will connect over the river to downtown and Germantown — creating a blue-green necklace on the Cumberland.

waterfront programming

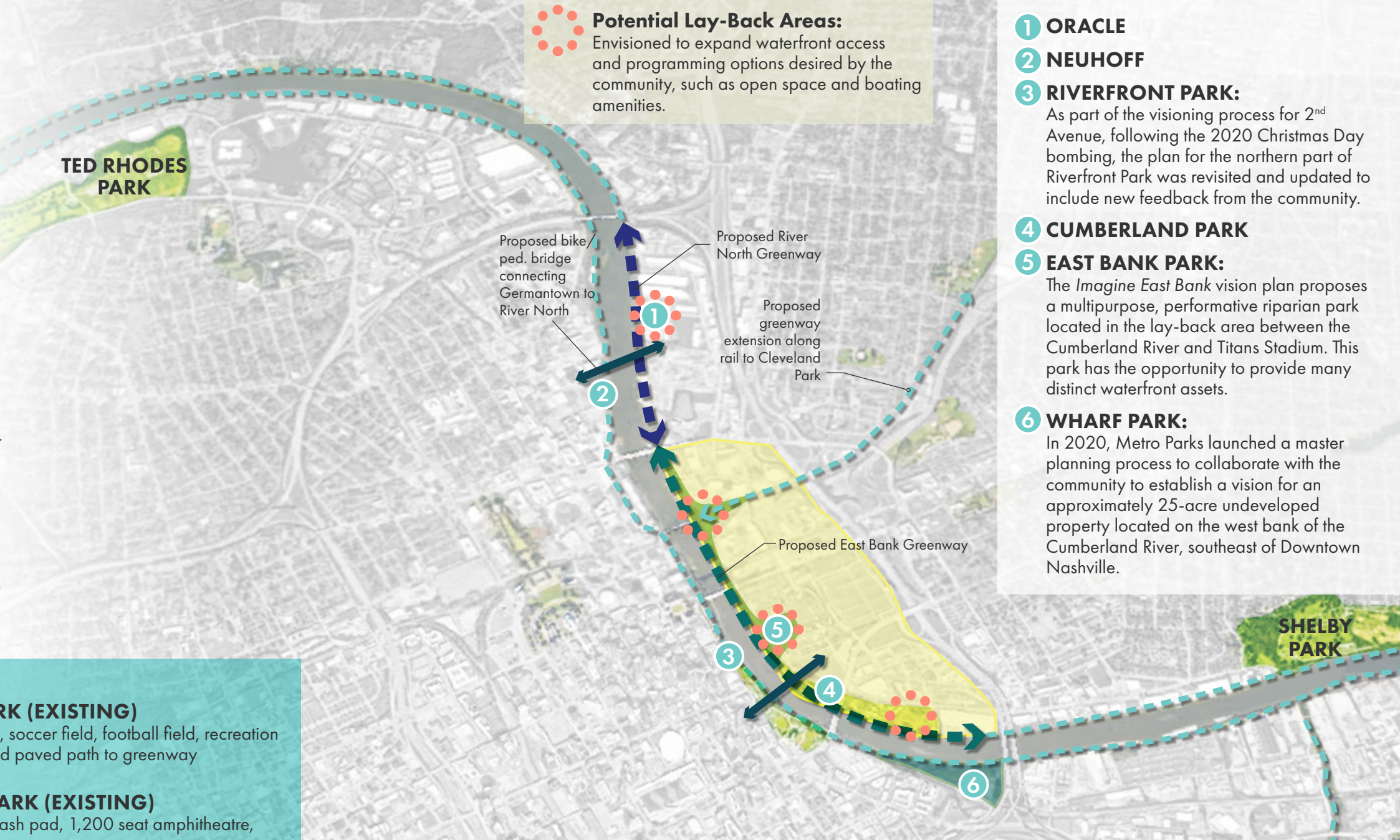
During the community engagement process, Nashvillians expressed interest in the following waterfront and open space programming being featured on the East Bank:

- nature trails, playgrounds, dog park, boat/kayak launch, marina, boat slips, boating amenities, event space, recreational fields

These programming elements are envisioned to be located within lay-back areas on the East Bank, and work in tandem with other existing and proposed waterfront spaces along the Cumberland River, such as:

- TED RHODES PARK (EXISTING)**
paved trail along river, soccer field, football field, recreation center, golf course, and paved path to greenway
- CUMBERLAND PARK (EXISTING)**
unique play areas, splash pad, 1,200 seat amphitheatre, climbing wall, trails
- RIVERFRONT PARK (PROPOSED RENOVATION)**
green beach, terraced seating, kayak launch, and visitors' center
- WHARF PARK (PROPOSED)**
fitness trails, picnic shelters, nature play areas, boathouse and rowing center, hard surface courts, skate park
- SHELBY PARK (EXISTING)**
trails, recreational fields, dog park, community center, nature center, golf course, picnic areas, and playgrounds

Potential Lay-Back Areas:
Envisioned to expand waterfront access and programming options desired by the community, such as open space and boating amenities.



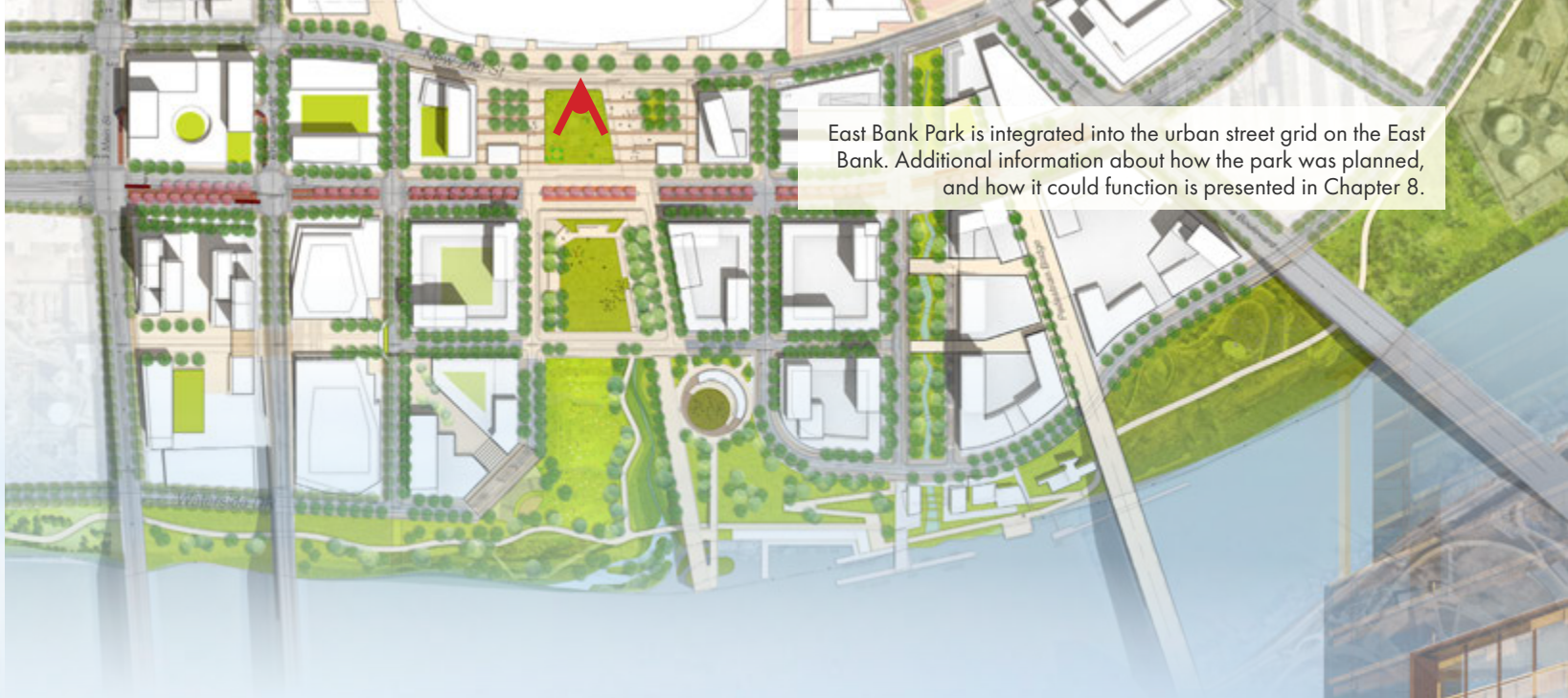
- existing and proposed river activation**
- 1 ORACLE**
 - 2 NEUHOFF**
 - 3 RIVERFRONT PARK:**
As part of the visioning process for 2nd Avenue, following the 2020 Christmas Day bombing, the plan for the northern part of Riverfront Park was revisited and updated to include new feedback from the community.
 - 4 CUMBERLAND PARK**
 - 5 EAST BANK PARK:**
The *Imagine East Bank* vision plan proposes a multipurpose, performative riparian park located in the lay-back area between the Cumberland River and Titans Stadium. This park has the opportunity to provide many distinct waterfront assets.
 - 6 WHARF PARK:**
In 2020, Metro Parks launched a master planning process to collaborate with the community to establish a vision for an approximately 25-acre undeveloped property located on the west bank of the Cumberland River, southeast of Downtown Nashville.



6.5 PROVIDE A GREAT PARK

The hallmark of *Imagine East Bank* is a signature, riverfront park on the Cumberland River. While the plan envisions a diverse network of outdoor spaces — including plazas, pocket parks, privately owned public spaces, playgrounds, greenways, and bioretention areas — this central park is designed to accommodate large-scale, neighborhood-oriented programs.

The size of the park and its location on the river have been optimized to meet the flood and stormwater resiliency objectives of this plan. Connected to Cumberland Park and new East Bank neighborhoods, this community asset will increase flood resiliency, manage stormwater, enable access to nature, and support vital community recreation needs. At over 10 acres, it will relieve pressure on the crowded downtown park network and provide programs currently unavailable.



East Bank Park, from the perspective of a relocated Titans Stadium, looks out towards the Cumberland River.

6.6 ACTIVATE THE RIVER

Throughout the public visioning process, Nashvillians expressed their desire to better engage with the Cumberland River. A key goal of the *Imagine East Bank* vision is to encourage and create new activity in the water and along the river — bringing people closer to the river than ever before. This, in turn, will create additional value in the upland areas of the East Bank.

Boating enthusiasts especially expressed a desire for new investments on the river — including recreational boating and waterborne transportation opportunities. The Cumberland River in Nashville could be more widely used by boaters if adequate infrastructure and amenities were present to support them. Such investments can range from smaller scale investments such as overlooks, docks, and kayak launches (far right image), to larger scale

investments such as a marina with overnight boat slips, fueling stations, water/electricity hookups, etc. Activation of these spaces on the land side can also come at different scales — the below image shows active use restaurant/retail on the waterfront, adjacent to boating facilities, where other concepts show intergration into natural planting areas.

The opportunity to activate the Cumberland River extends far beyond the East Bank, however, the four planned lay-back areas on the East Bank and in River North, provide great opportunities for various waterfront programming. Boating facilities integrated into these lay-back areas are envisioned at multiple locations on the East Bank in order to create robust and cohesive infrastructure.



next steps

Additional coordination and analysis is required to understand the scope of the opportunities and safety risks associated with a more active river — particularly as new activities intersect with barge traffic. **Chapter 9 - Action Items** lays out the following next steps related to activating the river:

- » Undertake a waterfront investment and management plan to identify the scope of users on the river and the financial opportunities available
- » Undertake a market analysis to understand the demand for boating, docks, marina, and other amenities in Nashville
- » Undertake a market analysis of potential future river activity and its interaction with the working river
- » Understand the scope of capital investments needed to meet the demand for boating facilities



A conceptual sketch of a marina on the East Bank.

I would love to see more recreational access to the river—canoes, kayaks, paddleboats. I would love to see more waterfront dining and relaxation places.

—SUMMER 2021 WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT



Kayakers on the East Bank in July 2022. Currently, the East Bank does not have adequate facilities such as launches and storage facilities to support the demand for recreational boating.


Outdoor dining spaces and recreational playing fields are among the many features that will activate East Bank Park.



7 NEIGHBORHOODS FOR NASHVILLIANS

CREATE VIBRANT, LIVABLE, AND AUTHENTIC NEIGHBORHOODS THAT PRIORITIZE THE EVERYDAY NEEDS OF NASHVILLIANS.

- 7.0 INTRODUCTION
- 7.1 FOUR WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS
- 7.2 COMPLETE COMMUNITIES
- 7.3 THE PUBLIC REALM
- 7.4 DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE



Public art and greenways are among the many features that will activate East Bank Park.

7.0 INTRODUCTION

Nashville's quality of life and economic opportunities have made it one of the fastest growing cities in the United States. This intensity of development must be balanced with an equal investment in the infrastructure required to ensure that new neighborhoods on the East Bank are and remain strong, livable, and healthy.

One way to regard the success of a particular neighborhood is to study its ability to support a complete community — that is a neighborhood that provides the infrastructure to support its residents, workers, and visitors through connectivity, prosperity, resilience, and responsibility.

The preceding *Imagine East Bank* vision concepts outlined the infrastructure that is necessary to support complete communities on the East Bank. This vision concept will describe the four walkable neighborhoods that are envisioned, and the catalysts within them. Additionally, a series of objectives, applicable to the entire East Bank, will be summarized.

7.1 FOUR WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

At 338 acres, the East Bank is large enough to support several distinct future neighborhoods. Each neighborhood is envisioned to provide walkable access to a complete range of amenities, services, and infrastructure that supports complete communities. Unique visions for four neighborhoods — Jefferson-Spring, Capitol Crossings, Central Waterfront, and Shelby’s Bend — were created based on community input, existing character, adjacent neighborhoods, and the potential capacity of each area for development.

jefferson-spring

CURRENT CONDITIONS

The East Bank’s Jefferson-Spring neighborhood is located south of Jefferson Street-Spring Street and north of the CSX railroad. The neighborhood includes industrial uses such as warehouses and storage yards. Also located here are two hotels and Cross Point Church. The railroad, railroad spurs, river, interstate, and interstate ramps, have all shaped this area with few street connections, limited accessibility, and a number of oddly configured lots.

FUTURE CONDITIONS

Jefferson-Spring’s location allows it to act as a transition between the East Bank and River North. The intersection of Jefferson Street and the new East Bank Boulevard will become a key intersection that connects the East Bank to River North. Future work should explore a prominent gateway to Jefferson Street in this area. The new East Bank Boulevard will extend into River North via Cowan Street.

ACRES: 50

capitol crossings

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Capitol Crossings provides direct connections to East Nashville and Downtown Nashville, via James Robertson Parkway/Main Street and Woodland Street. It is in close proximity to major civic entities across the river, including the Tennessee State Capitol and the Davidson County Courthouse. The neighborhood’s current conditions include surface parking lots, a truck stop, a vacant hotel, and several warehouses. NES, Metro Water, and Marathon Petroleum also have significant infrastructure in this area that are expected to remain in place for the foreseeable future.

FUTURE CONDITIONS

The future of Capitol Crossings will see James Robertson Parkway and Woodland Street redeveloped into mixed-use, multimodal streets that aim to mitigate the presence of I-24 by creating a seamless transition to the Main and Woodland Street mixed-use corridors on the east side of the interstate. Furthermore, these corridor’s existing bridges over the Cumberland River should be enhanced with increased capacity for pedestrians and cyclists. Active ground-floor uses should be built up to either side of both bridges to avoid underutilized space at the bridge levels.

ACRES: 75

central waterfront

CURRENT CONDITIONS

The East Bank’s Central Waterfront neighborhood connects to East Nashville and Downtown Nashville via Shelby Avenue. It is the location of Titans Stadium, Cumberland Park, and an existing greenway. The neighborhood has a strong connection to downtown via the John Seigenthaler Pedestrian Bridge, which connects to lower Broadway and Riverfront Park on the west bank. The area east of the stadium is predominately used for surface parking lots, with the exception of two hotels, and a gas station/convenience store.

FUTURE CONDITIONS

The Central Waterfront neighborhood is envisioned to be the most energetic and densely urban of the four East Bank neighborhoods. Titans Stadium will remain an important focal point, whether the stadium is renovated or relocated. In either scenario, the public face of the stadium should be integrated with the surrounding neighborhood — in scale, mass, and character. Stadium parking should be distributed as evenly as possible throughout the neighborhood in underground parking structures. However, the East Bank’s new urban street grid and connected multimodal transportation networks will allow stadium-goers to get to the East Bank in modes of transportation that do not require parking garages. Mixed-use developments, the proposed East Bank Park and other open spaces, and an activated waterfront will be established throughout the neighborhood to activate it 24/7.

ACRES: 120

shelby’s bend

CURRENT CONDITIONS

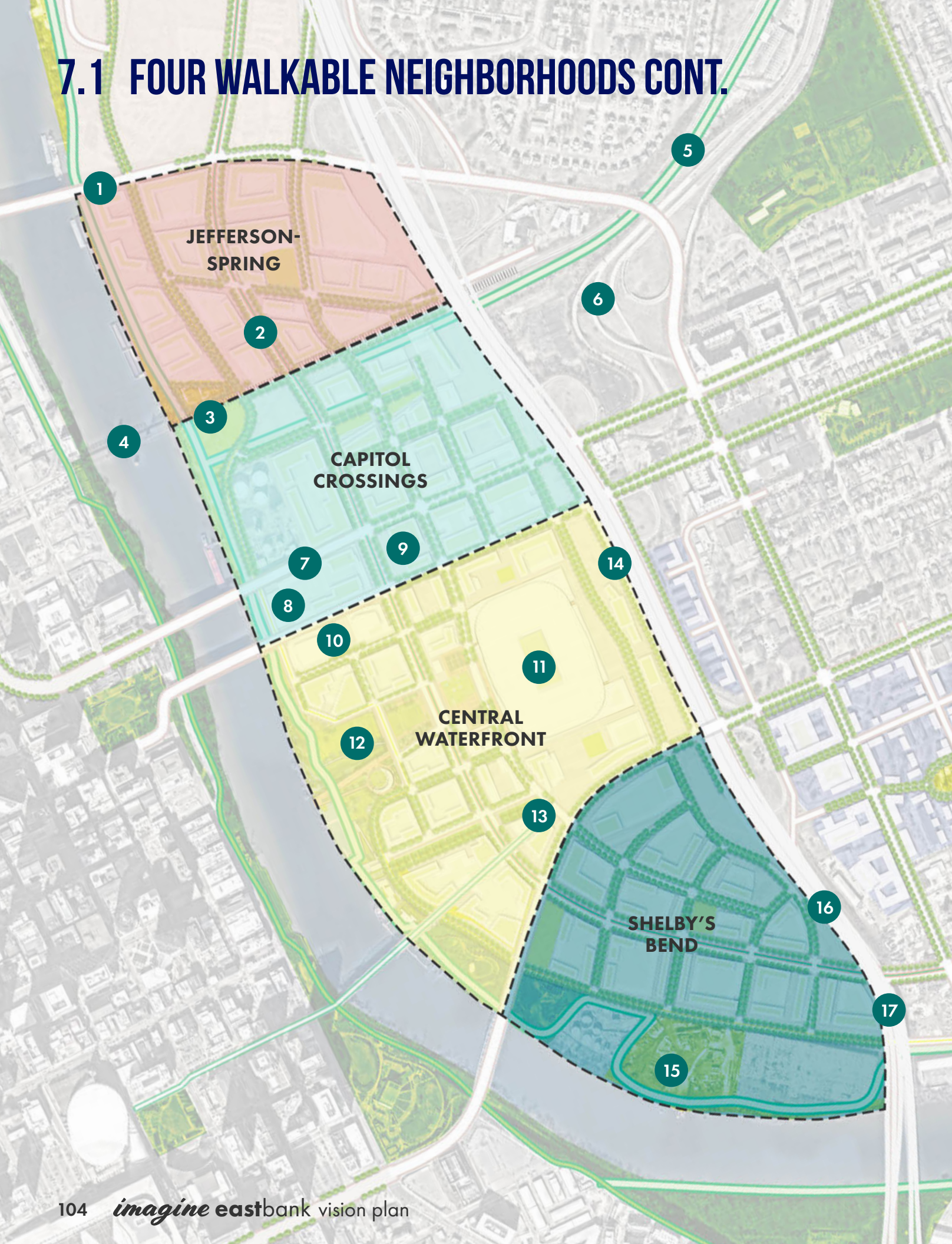
Shelby’s Bend is located south of Shelby Avenue and along the bend of the Cumberland River. It is located directly west of I-24, which isolates it from neighborhoods in East Nashville, including Cayce Place. However, there is an opportunity to add additional street connections under the interstate and develop the area beneath it as a public space — bringing Shelby’s Bend and Cayce Place together. Current uses include industrial uses related to steel and machining, surface parking lots, and a warehouse with indoor go-karting, airsoft and crossfit tenants.

FUTURE CONDITIONS

Given the neighborhood’s current conditions and common ownership, and that development plans are already in process in the other three neighborhoods, it is likely that Shelby’s Bend will evolve more slowly. The evolution of Shelby’s Bend will be influenced by the development of key adjacencies over time — including the riverbank and Cayce Place — as well as mobility improvements.

ACRES: 90

7.1 FOUR WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS CONT.



neighborhood catalysts

Catalysts are key sites, projects, and places of opportunity. During the planning process, many catalysts were identified as vital to the transformation of the East Bank into vibrant, walkable urban neighborhoods. Often, they link the neighborhoods with the other vision concepts in the plan — providing connections, bolstering resiliency, and creating great outdoor spaces.

Some catalysts were discussed in more detail in previous or following chapters of the vision plan. However, further exploration should be undertaken to determine appropriate next steps for each catalyst.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1 JEFFERSON STREET GATEWAY
A visually prominent gateway to mark the significance of the Jefferson Street corridor, on the East Bank, is envisioned.</p> <p>2 EAST BANK BOULEVARD AND BRT
Details in Chapter 5</p> <p>3 JEFFERSON-SPRING LAY-BACK
Details in Chapter 6</p> <p>4 HISTORIC RAIL BRIDGE
If the railroad is rerouted out of the East Bank, the structure (built in 1931), could be assessed and possibly reused.</p> <p>5 EAST NASHVILLE GREENWAY
Details in Chapter 5 and 6</p> <p>6 ELLINGTON PARKWAY ARRIVAL
Details in Chapter 5</p> <p>7 JAMES ROBERTSON BRIDGE & VIADUCT
Assess and possibly rebuild the bridge and viaduct (built in 1956) to land sooner, so that it intersects with East Bank Boulevard and South 2nd Street.</p> <p>8 EAST BANK GATEWAY
Details in Chapter 8</p> | <p>9 EAST BANK MOBILITY HUB
Details in Chapter 5</p> <p>10 CULTURAL TERRACE
Details in Chapter 8</p> <p>11 TITANS STADIUM AND STADIUM VILLAGE
Details in Chapter 8</p> <p>12 EAST BANK PARK (CENTRAL WATERFRONT LAY-BACK)
Details in Chapter 6 and 8</p> <p>13 JOHN SEIGENTHALER PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE EXTENSION
Details in Chapter 8</p> <p>14 COLLECTOR-DISTRIBUTOR (C-D) ROADS
Details in Chapter 5</p> <p>15 SHELBY'S BEND LAY-BACK
Details in Chapter 6</p> <p>16 INTERSTATE UNDERPASS TO CAYCE PLACE
An I-24 underpass could see South 2nd Street continue from Shelby's Bend into Cayce Place, improving access.</p> <p>17 OPEN SPACE UNDER INTERSTATE VIADUCT
I-24's viaduct condition in Shelby's Bend presents a placemaking opportunity to develop the land underneath it as an open space.</p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

7.2 COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

While the East Bank will be comprised of four neighborhoods with their own unique characteristics, the following constants have been identified for each neighborhood to share in common. The following complete community objectives demonstrate how the *Imagine East Bank* vision ensures accessible and sustainable neighborhoods for those who visit, live, or work in them.

EQUITABLE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND SERVICES

The East Bank presents an opportunity to add a significant number of housing units — including affordable units — to Nashville’s core. A range of housing typologies that meets the requirements of a diverse population with varied needs, including supportive services for vulnerable populations, should be established — whether it be built by Metro or private developers.

INTEGRATED MULTIMODAL NETWORKS

The East Bank’s proposed urban street grid allows each neighborhood to be traversed — as a pedestrian or as a cyclist — in approximately five minutes. In addition, the East Bank Boulevard with dedicated transit lanes for BRT will ensure that transit riders can traverse the neighborhoods efficiently.

MIX OF USES

While some neighborhoods are envisioned to be more residential in character than others, each neighborhood will include a mix of uses. Commercial uses at the street level, and residential, office, or hotel uses at the upper levels will promote activity throughout every building.

AUTHENTICALLY NASHVILLE

As the site for Titans Stadium, and directly across the river from Nashville’s bustling tourism district, the East Bank will certainly need to accommodate visitors. However, the East Bank must prioritize those who live in its neighborhoods more so. Uses, such as a grocery store, pharmacy, library, daycare, etc., are strongly desired.

PUBLICLY-ACCESSIBLE WATERFRONT AND OPEN SPACES

The Cumberland River belongs to all Nashvillians and should not be privatized. Ensuring everyone has access to the entire length of the East Bank’s frontage on the river is a top priority. Parks and other outdoor open spaces are envisioned to line the waterfront and be located throughout the East Bank.

RESILIENT RELATIONSHIP TO THE RIVER

The East Bank contains a large amount of floodplain, making it critical for any redevelopment to be designed with resilience in mind. Stormwater management systems must be put in place to keep the East Bank’s neighborhoods safe from future floods.

ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIATION

Due to the East Bank’s primarily industrial existing uses, significant work will need to be done to prepare this land for future redevelopment. This includes removing pollution or contaminants from the soil and water.



Street level view of the East Bank Boulevard.

7.3 THE PUBLIC REALM

Nashville’s existing open and outdoor spaces are among the city’s greatest assets — essential to the quality of life that Nashvillians enjoy, and vital to the character of each neighborhood.

The public realm provides vital functions — promotion of mental and physical health, a sense of community and social cohesion, and ecosystem services. As the East Bank develops into urban neighborhoods, a robust open space network, inclusive of public and privately-owned open spaces, and great streets, will be necessary to accommodate the residents, visitors, events, and everyday activities in the area.

public open space

The planning, design, and development of public open spaces — such as parks, plazas, streets, greenways, and waterfront areas — will be guided by the following objectives:

- » Create functional, interesting, and engaging spaces that are accessible, connected, safe, and comfortable year-round
- » Accommodate and engage people of all ages and abilities
- » Encourage public life through site-specific placemaking and pedestrian amenities that foster social interaction, such as landscaping, water-features, active-uses at grade, way-finding, public art, and programming
- » Provide amenities such as public restrooms, seating, and drinking water stations, where feasible
- » Provide an interconnected network of parks, outdoor spaces, trails, and recreational facilities
- » Meet the needs of residents, workers, and visitors
- » Provide neighborhood gathering places and civic spaces that support social interaction, healthy lifestyles, and a range of activities
- » Contribute to sense of place
- » Enhance environmental health and resiliency by supporting native ecosystems and biodiversity
- » Utilize durable materials
- » Accommodate community and special events, where appropriate



privately-owned public space (POPS)

POPS are open to the public, yet privately owned and maintained. They play an important role in supplementing Nashville’s network of open spaces. To be effective, they should be planned and designed to relate and connect to the existing and planned public open spaces.

Developers, local institutions, and other private property owners will be encouraged to integrate their outdoor spaces — such as pocket parks, church and school yards, and retail promenades — into the East Bank’s network of publicly-accessible open spaces through improved design, access, and connections. POPS provided through development will:

- » Be sited and designed to be accessible and welcoming to the public
- » Incorporate universal design principles
- » Be sited in highly-visible locations and designed to serve the local population
- » Be sited and designed to seamlessly integrate and connect to the broader open space network
- » Identify the space as being publicly accessible
- » Include canopy trees, seating and shade furnishing, public art, native planting and the integration of stormwater capture, where possible

great streets

Streets are important — not just as mobility infrastructure, but as destinations in of themselves. At their best, they play an important role in fostering public life, supporting economic activity, and providing connections. All streets on the East Bank are expected to be beautiful, comfortable, safe, and accessible. Successful streetscape design on the East Bank will:

- » Create a unified streetscape that reinforces identity and distinct place characteristics
- » Optimize the pedestrian experience
- » Implement and maintain a high standard of design and materials
- » Prioritize native tree planting and investment in infrastructure to support the growth of a healthy tree canopy
- » Incorporate green infrastructure where feasible
- » Improve visual and physical connections to the river
- » Incorporate outdoor open spaces at significant intersections
- » Have a maximum vehicular speed limit of 25 miles per hour
- » Limit sidewalk vending

7.4 DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

The *Imagine East Bank* vision will steer the transformation of the area from underutilized industrial uses to four mixed-use urban neighborhoods. The following development objectives are meant to be the initial set of guidance — for property owners and their East Bank development proposals; for the Metro Planning Commission and its staff in evaluating these projects; and for advice to Metro Council on rezonings, agreements, or other mechanisms — and thus are not exhaustive.

buildings

Successful buildings enhance livability and sense of place by fitting into the existing or planned context, contributing positively to the public realm and urban fabric, and acting as “good neighbors.” They should promote and contribute to the experience of comfort, vibrancy, diversity, safety, and beauty within a neighborhood. They should also:

- » Create spaces that ensure comfortable microclimatic conditions by protecting access to sunlight, reducing and mitigating wind, providing privacy, offering openness between buildings, and creating human-scaled streetscapes
- » Utilize best practices for sustainability, including but not limited to: reusing grey water, installing solar panels and other energy efficient equipment, energy and environmental building design (such as LEED), allocating space for traditional recycling and food waste diversion, etc.
- » Define, support, and contribute positively to the experience of the public realm
- » Respect and reinforce their existing and planned contexts
- » Contribute to spaces for people that are clearly legible and safe
- » Exhibit the highest standards of design excellence and beauty through building design, articulation and materiality, contribution to views and skyline, improvements to the public realm, and heritage conservation
- » Contribute necessary amenities and infrastructure to serve residents and employees, as well as the broader community
- » Include high-quality, durable materials, and sustainable and resilient building practices consistent with Nashville’s existing Downtown Code requirements
- » To encourage views of the river and prominent civic spaces, generally buildings will significantly scale down to the river and major public open spaces
- » To avoid long building walls and facilitate a walkable human-scaled neighborhood, block lengths (measured from curb to curb) are not to exceed 375 feet
- » Mobility networks are to be implemented with development

built form

The East Bank’s built form will be diverse and vary street by street, block-by-block, and neighborhood-by-neighborhood. Buildings should be appropriately sited, oriented, massed, designed, and programmed to make a positive contribution to the built environment by:

- » Careful consideration will be given to the lower floors’ and/or the bases of buildings’ uses, siting, massing, and design — and how they shape, define, and support the pedestrian experience within the public realm
- » Tall buildings should be designed and programmed as vertical communities
- » Tall building floorplates should be designed to reduce the visual and physical impacts of the tower from the public realm and neighboring properties

The East Bank Boulevard will provide dedicated transit lanes and its streetscape design will be grand. Active ground floor uses will reinforce the pedestrian quality of the boulevard through a lively street wall.





2nd Street will provide protected bicycle lanes on both sides of the street. If relocated, the Titans Stadium will have frontage on a portion of the street.

7.4 DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE CONT.

developments adjacent to open spaces

Developments adjacent to either public or private spaces will:

- » Provide an appropriate interface between the open space and the development
- » Orient the development to maximize public access and views of the open space
- » Have an attractive façade with active uses facing the open space
- » Provide for casual overlook, or passive surveillance, increasing the sense of security
- » Avoid locating loading and other back-of-house uses adjacent to the open space

parking and curbside management

The East Bank's proposed multimodal transportation networks will ideally limit the amount of parking necessary in the area. Still, the following efforts should be made to limit impacts of parking and curbside activities on the East Bank:

- » Below-grade structured parking will be encouraged, and in some instances required, depending on the type of development request and conditions
- » If above-grade structured parking is necessary, it should be located behind a liner building with an active use
- » Parking standards within the East Bank shall follow industry best practices for dense urban design set forth in the *ITE Parking Generation Manual, 5th Edition*
- » Parking shall not be required within the Central Waterfront neighborhood, outside of designated Metro facilities
- » Development will generally be required to limit and/or consolidate vehicle access points
- » The use of smaller vehicles and non-motorized modes for deliveries, couriers, and goods movement will be encouraged
- » Pick-ups and drop-offs, loading, and parking activity shall be encouraged off-street wherever reasonable and practical to free up curbside space
- » Development will be encouraged to provide shared community parking spaces — dedicated for short-term use for residents and visitors, and located separately from commercial parking spaces
- » Provide EV-ready parking spaces to incentivize residents, workers, and visitors to drive electric vehicles

PROMOTING ALTERNATIVE MOBILITY

The following policies shall be implemented to promote alternative mobility and reduce the need for parking on the East Bank:

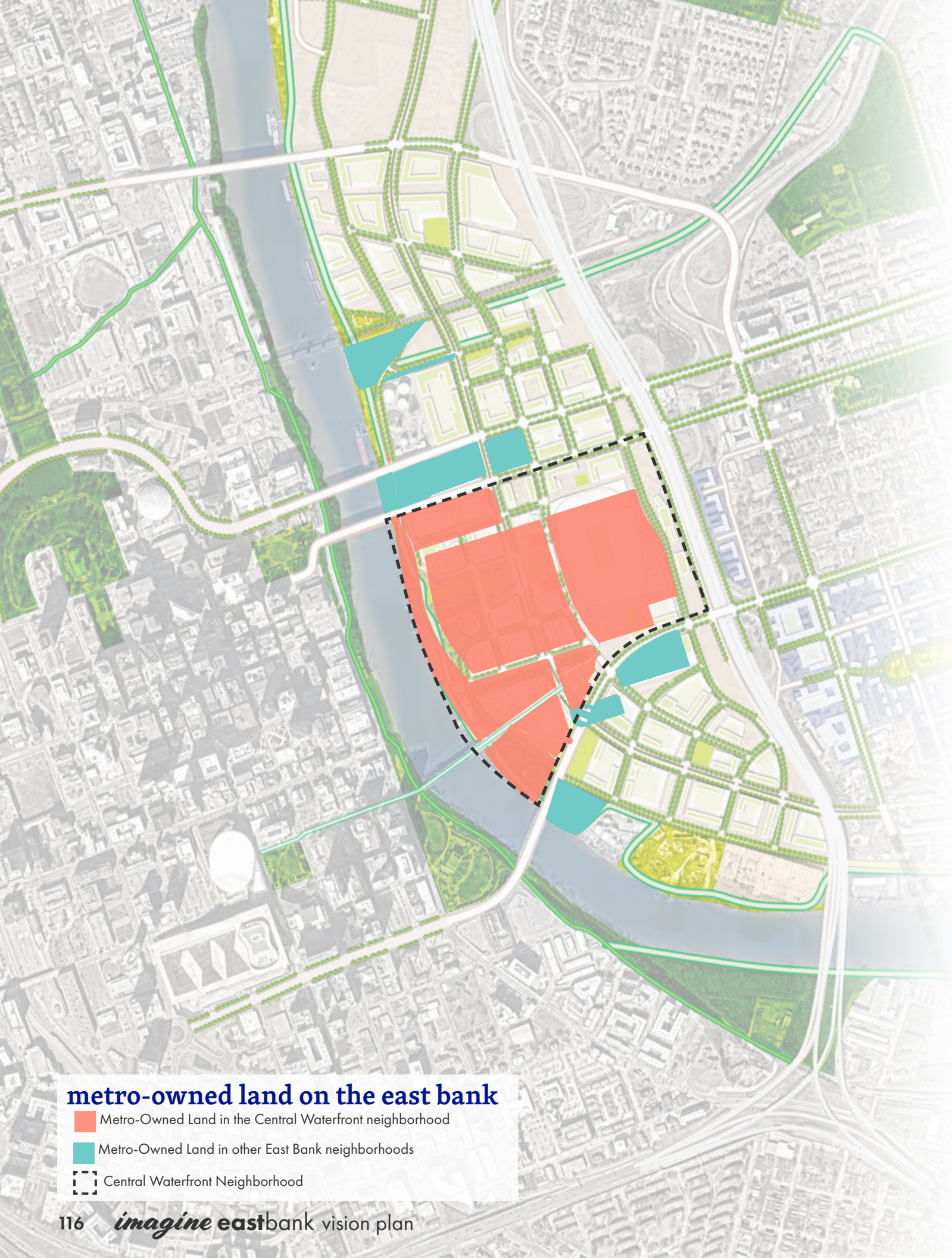
- » Minimum parking should be provided for special events
- » Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies should be developed that encourages the use of alternative mobility

East Bank Park, from the perspective of a relocated Titans Stadium, looks out towards the Cumberland River.

8 METRO-OWNED LAND IN FOCUS

THIS SECTION SUMMARIZES KEY IDEAS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR METRO-OWNED LAND ON THE EAST BANK.

- 8.0 INTRODUCTION
- 8.1 EAST BANK PARK
- 8.2 MOBILITY HUB
- 8.3 EAST BANK GATEWAY
- 8.4 CULTURAL TERRACE
- 8.5 TITANS STADIUM VILLAGE
- 8.6 PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE EXTENSION



metro-owned land on the east bank

- Metro-Owned Land in the Central Waterfront neighborhood
- Metro-Owned Land in other East Bank neighborhoods
- Central Waterfront Neighborhood

8.0 INTRODUCTION

A majority of the land within the Central Waterfront neighborhood — and all of its riverfront — is owned by Metro and leased to others, such as the Tennessee Titans. Additional Metro-owned land exists in the adjacent Capitol Crossings and Shelby’s Bend neighborhoods. Due to its public ownership, this land is more apt to house public amenities and advance specific uses that may not be priorities for private developers, but are critical to community vitality, neighborhood functionality, and quality-of-life.

This chapter illustrates and describes key ideas and concepts for the Metro-owned land on the East Bank — emphasizing the creation of dynamic, multi-purpose spaces that will enrich the experience and functionality of our city.

Given Metro’s responsibility as stewards of public property, the vision for this public-owned land was developed further than that of the other neighborhood catalysts presented in previous chapters. This is especially true for the East Bank Park — a key feature that required an integrative feasibility, design, and planning process.

Other ideas described in this chapter, include a village for stadium-related events and an extension of the existing pedestrian bridge; a mobility hub; sites for new mixed-use developments; and sites for civic and cultural uses.

private development on metro-owned land

The East Bank’s proposed urban street grid creates several development blocks on Metro-owned land. These blocks are designed to be able to support mixed-use developments with the kinds of uses desired by Nashvillians — housing, retail, community, and cultural uses.

development guidance for all metro-owned land

In addition to the development guidance outlined in **Chapter 7 - Neighborhoods for Nashvillians**, the following objectives should also be followed for all development on Metro-owned land:

- » Ground floors shall be active
- » Underground parking may be required, pending conditions
- » A parking strategy should be utilized to determine optimal ratios for the district as a whole
- » Deliveries shall be accommodated below-grade
- » Development should meet standards set forth in a comprehensive grading plan — that includes all Metro-owned land — approved by the city

8.1 EAST BANK PARK

Through the exploration of riparian edge strategies — coupled with the possibility of Titans Stadium shifting away from the river and closer to the interstate — a multi-purpose performative park was envisioned for Metro-owned land within the Central Waterfront neighborhood. This concept is reliant on Titans Stadium moving, and, thus, corresponds only with Option A.

East Bank Park includes various multi-purpose performative landscapes spanning the area between the stadium and the river. Performative landscapes are

outdoor spaces that generate recreational and social benefits while also providing critical ecosystem services.

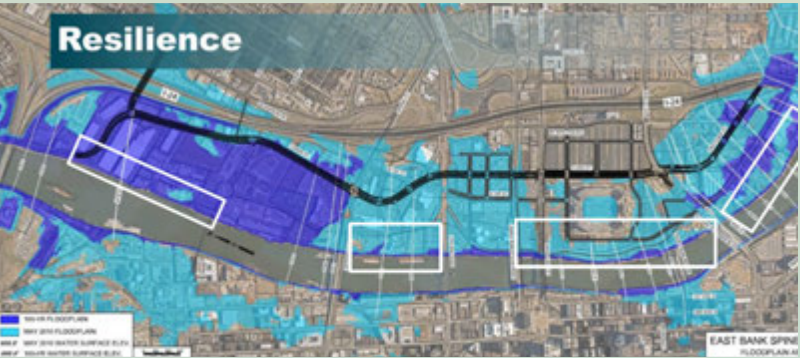
As a visitor moves through the park — from the stadium towards the riverbank — she strolls through a diverse series of spaces and an array of programming from a vibrant urban plaza, through neighborhood recreational fields and playgrounds to a soft, wild riverbank threaded with trails and overlooks and finally to a marina, which activates the Cumberland River.

East Bank Park, from the perspective of a relocated Titans Stadium, looks out towards the Cumberland River.



progression of the performative riparian park concept

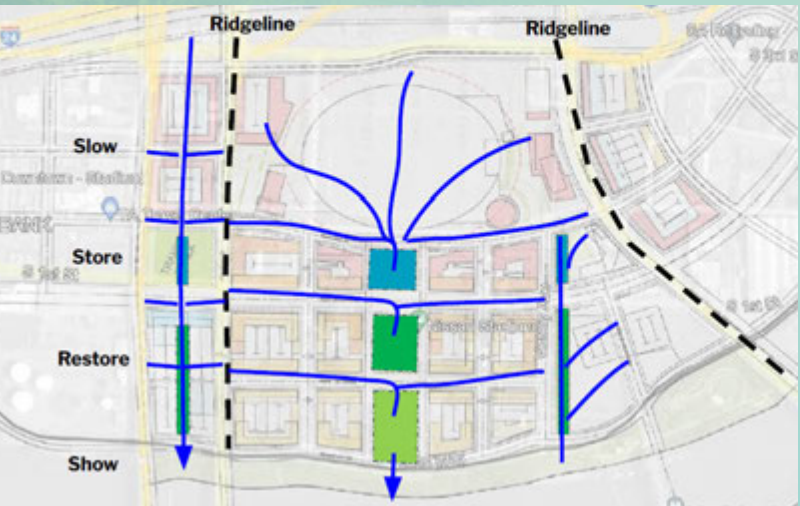
East Bank Park is proposed to function as a transition between the Cumberland River and the Titans Stadium, while mitigating stormwater and reducing the risk of flooding. The following images show the planning process behind the park, and how it relates to the riparian edge strategies discussed in Chapter 6 - Respect for the River.



1. The elevation of the East Bank and River North are much lower to the Cumberland River than that of Downtown Nashville. Significant portions of these areas are located within the 100- and 500-year floodplains and thus prone to flooding.



2. Flooding and river bank analysis, in coordination with the USACE, determined that lay back areas as a riparian edge strategy could make the East Bank, River North, and surrounding areas, more resilient to future flooding by giving stormwater room to breathe.



3. A concept of a performative riparian park between the stadium and the riverbank was developed. Stormwater flows through the park — beginning at the existing east-west streets and their ridgelines, through the various zones of the park and into the Cumberland River.



4. Option A (new stadium concept) enables a performative riparian park integrated into the East Bank's proposed urban street grid. The park provides recreational, leisure, placemaking, and other functions in addition to resiliency.

8.1 EAST BANK PARK CONT.

multi-purpose performative landscapes

The best parks provide something for everyone. That is why East Bank Park will provide various distinct spaces spanning from Titans Stadium to the Cumberland River. Each space includes a performative function (critical to stormwater management within the Central Waterfront neighborhood) and recreation/leisure opportunities (providing amenities to residents and visitors to the neighborhood).



room for the river

The elevation of East Bank Park's multi-purpose performative landscapes will transition from +425 feet at the event plaza levels, down to +400 feet at the living shoreline — providing built-in room for the river to breathe in the instance of major flooding events.



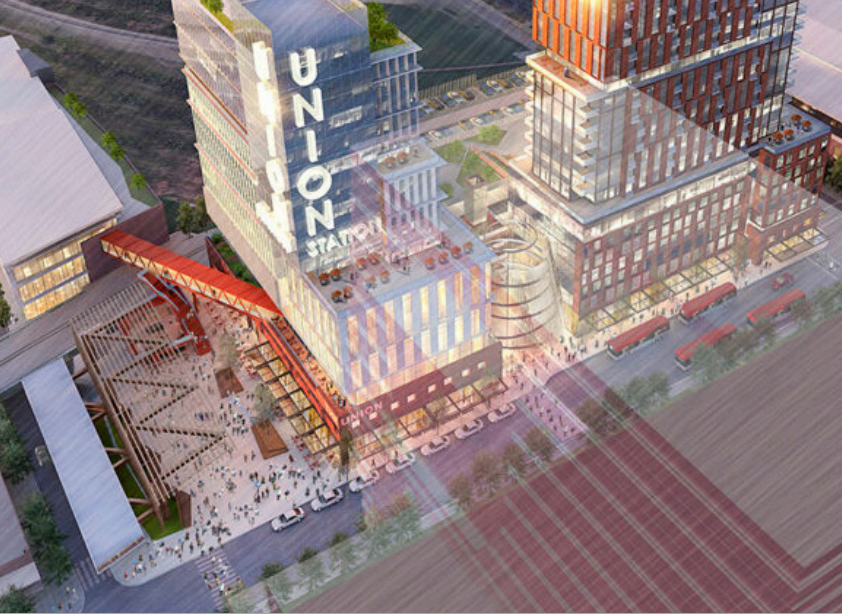
- 1 **EVENT PLAZAS**
 - » slows down stormwater with permeable pavements and landscapes
 - » supports local festivals and markets, and other events

- 2 **PLACES FOR RECREATION**
 - » stores and restores stormwater through green infrastructure to improve ecological performance
 - » supports neighborhood gathering, interaction, and passive and active recreation

- 3 **RIVER'S EDGE**
 - » shows how the natural environment and resilience efforts intertwine to mitigate flooding
 - » supports observation and nature trails

- 4 **LIVING SHORELINE**
 - » explore how natural waterways protect fragile ecosystems and reintegrate stormwater
 - » supports contact with the river and nature through boating and greenways





RUS Bus, a concept for a vibrant, vertically integrated, bus facility and mixed-use development in Raleigh, NC is a precedent for the East Bank Mobility Hub.



Above: East Bank Gateway concept sketch.
Right: Cultural Terrace options A and B concept sketches.



8.2 MOBILITY HUB

- 1 As discussed in **Chapter 5 - Safe & Simple Multimodal Connections**, a mobility hub is envisioned for the East Bank. Here, transit riders, bicyclists, and pedestrians will converge and be able to switch modes of transportation. An ideal location for the mobility hub is on Metro-owned land, between the Main and Woodland Streets, and directly off of the East Bank Boulevard's dedicated transit lanes. This site is large enough to accommodate several mixed-use buildings, next to, or on top of the mobility hub.

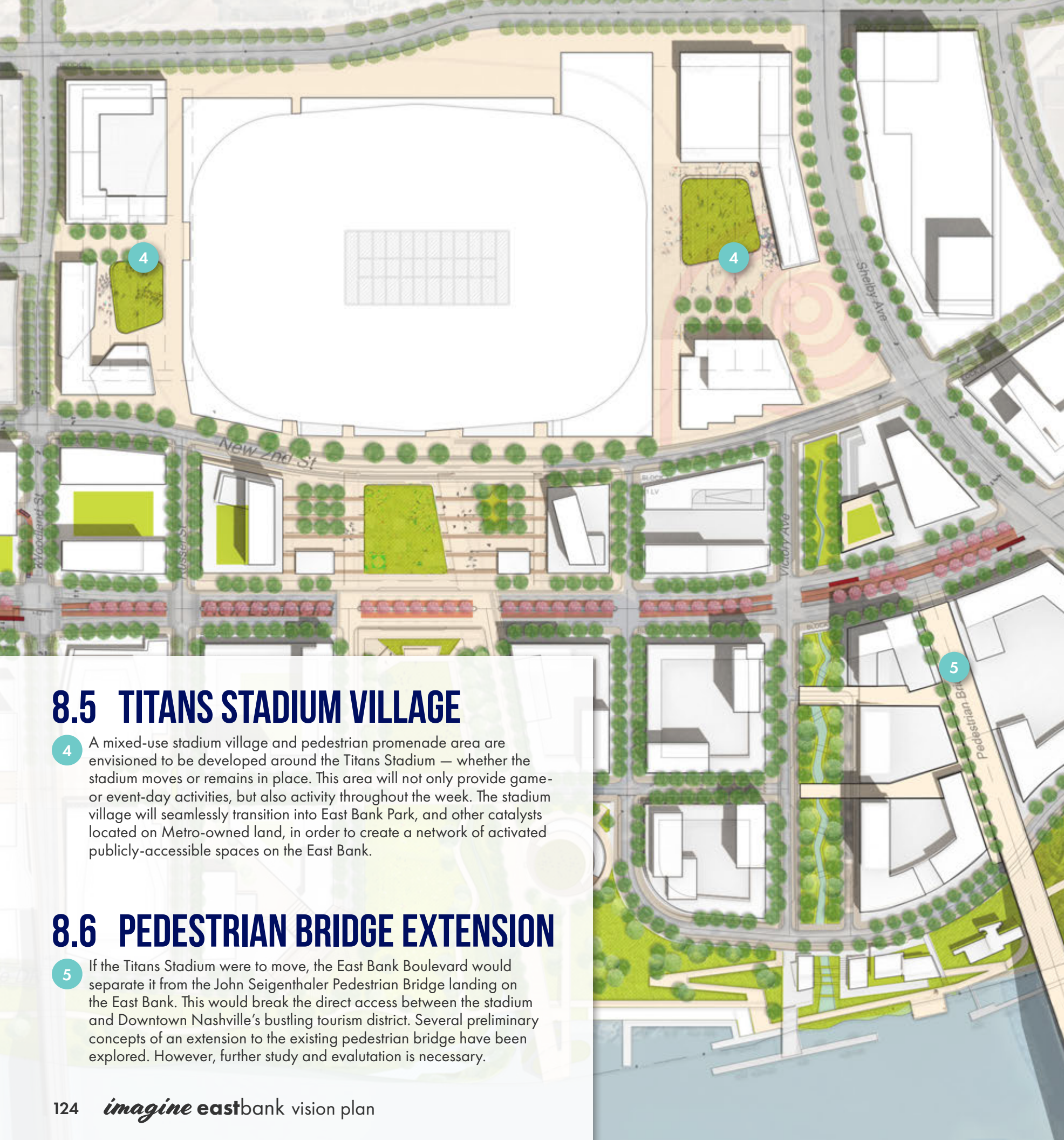
8.3 EAST BANK GATEWAY

- 2 A visually prominent gateway to the East Bank is envisioned for the site between the James Robertson Parkway and Woodland Street bridges, along the Cumberland River. Establishing a public-facing civic, cultural, and/or outdoor use on the east side of the river, of equal magnitude to the civic uses on the west side, will encourage pedestrian movement across the river. Given the large footprint of the site, it could include space for increased pedestrian capacity on the bridges. Additionally, the existing NES substation, located on a portion of the site, could be integrated into the gateway's design.

8.4 CULTURAL TERRACE

- 3A Nashvillians have made it clear the East Bank should not just be for tourists. A grouping of family-friendly, cultural uses — museums, theaters, galleries, etc. — could be located adjacent to a landing of an existing bridge to allow for direct pedestrian access from both sides of the river.
- 3B Two potential options for the location of a cultural terrace have been explored — Option A: south of Woodland Street and Option B: north of the John Seigenthaler Pedestrian Bridge. These kinds of uses will help activate the East Bank and its neighborhoods on days when the Titans Stadium is not in use.





8.5 TITANS STADIUM VILLAGE

4 A mixed-use stadium village and pedestrian promenade area are envisioned to be developed around the Titans Stadium — whether the stadium moves or remains in place. This area will not only provide game- or event-day activities, but also activity throughout the week. The stadium village will seamlessly transition into East Bank Park, and other catalysts located on Metro-owned land, in order to create a network of activated publicly-accessible spaces on the East Bank.

8.6 PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE EXTENSION

5 If the Titans Stadium were to move, the East Bank Boulevard would separate it from the John Seigenthaler Pedestrian Bridge landing on the East Bank. This would break the direct access between the stadium and Downtown Nashville's bustling tourism district. Several preliminary concepts of an extension to the existing pedestrian bridge have been explored. However, further study and evaluation is necessary.



A mixed-use stadium village adjacent to Wrigley Field in Chicago, IL.



Public plaza adjacent to mixed-use developments.



Various options for the John Seigenthaler Pedestrian Bridge extension have been explored.

Conceptual rendering of waterfront activation on the Cumberland River.



9 ACTION ITEMS

THIS SECTION IDENTIFIES KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND CRITICAL NEXT STEPS TO REALIZING THIS PLAN'S VISION.

- 9.0 INTRODUCTION
- 9.1 IN-PROCESS ACTION ITEMS
- 9.2 PRIORITY ACTION ITEMS
- 9.3 FUTURE ACTION ITEMS

9.0 INTRODUCTION

Imagine East Bank proposes an ambitious vision that will take years, if not decades, to be fully realized. Many components of the vision are interdependent and, thus, require careful consideration of priorities, phasing, resources, and other factors like additional feasibility or subsequent planning studies. The action items presented in this plan are separated into three categories — in-process, priority, and future.

9.1 IN-PROCESS ACTION ITEMS

Due to the urgent and high-profile nature of the East Bank, implementation of some action items has already been initiated by various entities.

1.	Established a partnership agreement between TDOT and Metro to complete early acquisition of a portion of the necessary right-of-way for the East Bank Boulevard.				
2.	NEPA technical analysis of the East Bank Boulevard is being coordinated with the TDOT Local Programs Office.				
3.	NDOT’s consultant is completing a mobility analysis (focused on transit, pedestrian, cycle, automobiles, freight, etc. trips) for the East Bank’s planned neighborhoods.				
4.	In compliance with Metro Water Service’s current stormwater guidelines, it has been established that all new roads on the East Bank are required to be constructed to the 100-year storm event elevation plus one foot. Where possible, roads are to be built at the most resilient elevation possible.				
5.	In conjunction with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, floodplain modeling has been undertaken to understand the impact of the East Bank’s planned street network and their elevations on the floodplain.				
6.	Metro has retained a consultant to complete a stormwater and resiliency analysis for the Central Waterfront neighborhood on the East Bank.				
7.	Extensive infrastructure and housing requests have been made in Metro’s 2023 Capital Improvements Budget to implement portions of the <i>Imagine East Bank</i> vision.				
8.	For each phase of development, establish clear housing benchmarks — consistent with the <i>Imagine East Bank</i> vision and the city’s Unified Housing Strategy — for which Metro is a landowner or a participant in an agreement with private landowners.				

EQUITABLE & AFFORDABLE EAST BANK

SAFE & SIMPLE MULTIMODAL CONNECTIONS

RESPECT FOR THE RIVER

NEIGHBORHOODS FOR NASHVILLIANS

9.2 PRIORITY ACTION ITEMS

After the adoption of *Imagine East Bank*, the following key plan components and action items will be prioritized. These action items represent the most pressing and urgent tasks needing to be completed prior to the implementation of the remainder of the plan.

1. develop an east bank implementation strategy

1.	Set forth a clear process for the redevelopment of Metro-owned property on the East Bank, consistent with the <i>Imagine East Bank</i> vision.				
2.	Following the adoption of <i>Imagine East Bank</i> , the Metro Planning Commission should evaluate new zoning change requests in accordance with the vision.				
3.	Create design guidelines for Metro-owned property on the East Bank.				
4.	Establish a design review and approval process — such as a design review committee — to ensure proposed developments meet the intent and standards of the vision.				
5.	Set aside land on Metro-owned properties for key public resources outlined in the vision, including parks, greenways, rights-of-way, affordable housing, a mobility hub, and cultural assets.				
6.	Determine the needs for Metro services, such as fire safety, and plan for appropriate allocation in future development agreements.				
7.	Acquire, or negotiate through agreements, land for public infrastructure.				
8.	Explore feasibility of creating a Business Improvement District (BID), to support public services and manage assets on the East Bank.				
9.	Develop a parking operational plan — that incorporates the needs of the city, mixed-use developments, and the Titans Stadium — that also aligns with the mobility strategy.				

2. advance livability through implementation

1.	Utilize the policies and procedures of land development — such as zoning reviews, lease negotiations, and development incentives — to address community needs like housing, fresh food, and childcare.				
2.	Explore strategic funding or policy models and partnerships that link development with community objectives for equitable and affordable housing, workforce development, and educational attainment.				

9.2 PRIORITY ACTION ITEMS CONT.

3. place multimodal transportation at the forefront



1.	Continue feasibility exploration, planning, design, and construction of the East Bank Boulevard.				
2.	Dedicate lanes for transit service, in accordance with NDOT and WeGo operational standards.				
3.	Dedicate lanes for bikeways, sidewalks, and streetscape improvements that are consistent with the vision.				
4.	Prioritize a separated and safe bicycling experience through detailed design and operational standards.				
5.	Coordinate with NDOT and WeGo to ensure the East Bank Boulevard creates safe, reliable connections to and through the East Bank, and between adjacent neighborhoods and corridors, such as extensions to Dickerson Pike and Murfreesboro Pike.				
6.	Negotiate and acquire rights-of-way needed to advance an equitable mobility network, including for the East Bank Boulevard and other streets.				
7.	Develop and approve streetscape design standards to ensure the creation of complete streets on the East Bank.				
8.	Partner with TDOT to prioritize key improvements, such as renovation or replacement of state bridges, the arrival of Ellington Parkway, and improving the interstate on- and off-ramps.				
9.	Continue the exploration of a mobility hub on the East Bank, and evaluate opportunities to co-locate housing and other services with the Mobility Hub.				

4. invest in performative and resilient outdoor spaces



1.	Set aside land for a riverfront park on Metro property that expands access to outdoor recreational amenities, engages the river, and improves resiliency through riparian edge management.				
2.	Establish a resiliency framework that sets goals and benchmarks for environmental design and performance — such as outdoor space requirements and minimum elevations for development.				
3.	Collaborate with Metro Parks and Greenways to explore the feasibility of developing an implementation plan for parks and greenways on the East Bank — including financing mechanisms for design, construction, and ongoing operations and maintenance.				
4.	Develop an implementation plan for district stormwater management for the Central Waterfront neighborhood, in coordination with Metro Water Services.				
5.	Develop an operational plan, feasibility/market analysis, and capital strategy to coordinate boating investments on the East Bank and its broader river context.				

KEY Each action item works towards one or more of the East Bank vision concepts.



9.3 FUTURE ACTION ITEMS

The future action items list is the most extensive, as it covers a wide range of items from smaller-scale to immense capital improvement projects that will take many years to be realized. The list is not exhaustive, but rather, meant to lay the foundation for implementation of the plan’s vision.

It is expected that in the coming months and years, as implementation of the *Imagine East Bank* vision begins, new and additional action items will come to light. Thus, a bi-annual update of these action items has been proposed.

public infrastructure



1.	NDOT, Metro Planning, and consultants will determine the final cross sections and alignments of the East Bank’s urban street grid.				
2.	Metro Government to develop a plan to acquire right-of-way for the East Bank's urban street grid.				
EAST BANK BOULEVARD					
3.	During the NEPA analysis NDOT will determine final cross section and alignment.				
4.	Metro to acquire right-of-way for the construction of the boulevard.				
5.	Upgrade Cowan Street in River North to match the East Bank Boulevard’s final cross section.				
6.	Rename Cowan Street in River North to East Bank Boulevard.				
7.	Ensure that the right-of-way includes space for dedicated transit lanes that are suited for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).				
8.	Provide enhanced transit stops — including elements such as shelters, level-boarding, benches, trash cans, route information, and lighting.				
9.	Continue working with TDOT and NDOT to connect Cleveland Street and Dickerson Pike to the East Bank Boulevard.				
10.	Explore northern extensions of the East Bank Boulevard and its connections to existing major corridors — including Trinity Lane, Whites Creek Pike and Brick Church Pike.				
11.	Explore southern extensions of the East Bank Boulevard and its connections to existing major corridors — including Murfreesboro Pike and Lebanon Pike.				
12.	Pursue local, state, and federal funding for the East Bank Boulevard and its extensions.				
STREETSCAPES AND PEDESTRIAN REALM					
13.	Establish a complete network of sidewalks on the East Bank connected via safe and accessible street crossings.				
14.	Adopt streetscape design standards to ensure a high-quality streetscape.				
15.	Ensure that the East Bank’s pedestrian realm is safe and accessible for all — including those who use wheelchairs or face other mobility challenges.				
16.	Add canopy trees, landscaping, bio-swales, and/or other green infrastructure within the public right-of-way to provide shade, reduce air pollution, and reduce stormwater runoff.				

9.3 FUTURE ACTION ITEMS CONT.

STREETSCAPES AND PEDESTRIAN REALM (CONT.)



17.	Enhance the pedestrian realm with street furniture — including public art, gateway markers, wayfinding signage, and pedestrian-scaled lighting.				
18.	Coordinate with NDOT Engineering to establish a strong access management tool to consolidate vehicular access points on all public roads to facilitate pedestrian/cyclist safety				
19.	Clear up visual clutter by burying overhead lines, consolidating access points/curb-cuts, and encouraging pedestrian-scaled signage.				
20.	Continue working with TDOT and NDOT to connect Grace Street to the East Bank Boulevard via a bicycle/pedestrian-exclusive connection.				
21.	As TDOT reassesses the condition of the James Robertson Parkway bridge, explore how the approach of the James Robertson Parkway viaduct should be modified in order to create an at-grade crossing with the East Bank Boulevard.				
22.	Utilize the Mayor’s Office’s Equity by Design tool to prioritize, measure, and gauge success of infrastructure projects.				

multimobility

EAST BANK MOBILITY HUB

1.	Establish a mobility hub that would serve the various transportation options that are proposed for the East Bank.				
2.	Integrate a park-and-ride lot (or garage), ride-share pick-up/drop-off zones, bicycle/scooter parking/storage, and a bike-share station into the mobility hub.				
3.	Consider partnering with the private sector to build mixed-use buildings, including those that prioritize affordable housing, on the same block and/or on top of the mobility hub.				

TRANSIT

4.	Ensure high quality transit access for those who do not own a car or who are unable to drive due to disability or age.				
5.	Continue working with TDOT and NDOT to connect Cleveland Street and Dickerson Pike to the East Bank Boulevard.				

BIKEWAYS

6.	Pursue temporary bicycle facilities to serve the East Bank in the interim until more permanent facilities are constructed.				
7.	Implement <i>Imagine East Bank's</i> proposed bicycle facilities for streets adjacent to and/or parallel to the East Bank Boulevard within the same time frame as the boulevard's implementation.				

KEY Each action item works towards one or more of the East Bank vision concepts.



EQUITABLE & AFFORDABLE EAST BANK



SAFE & SIMPLE MULTIMODAL CONNECTIONS



RESPECT FOR THE RIVER



NEIGHBORHOODS FOR NASHVILLIANS

open and outdoor spaces



1.	Establish a network of publicly-accessible open spaces throughout the East Bank.				
2.	Create better access to Cumberland Park by improving street and greenway connections and providing dedicated parking.				
3.	Improve the utilization of Cumberland Park through a dedicated funding source for parks operations and amenities and encouraging adjacent development.				
4.	Consider how the area underneath viaducts and the interstate can be transformed into welcoming spaces.				
5.	Encourage new development to include privately owned and operated publicly-accessible open spaces (POPS).				
6.	Establish design, operations, and maintenance standards and a standard Memorandum of Understanding for publicly-accessible, privately-owned open space (POPS).				
7.	Continue to explore opportunities for new open spaces on public-owned land — including East Bank Park, and at or around the mobility hub.				
8.	Make the entire length of the East Bank and River North waterfronts publicly-accessible, either by public ownership or by easements.				
8.	Create meaningful interactions between publicly-accessible open spaces and the river through piers, overlooks and walkways.				
9.	Create meaningful interactions between the publicly-accessible open spaces on both sides of the river — including to Riverfront Park and Wharf Park — both of which are on the west bank.				

GREENWAYS

10.	Design and build riverfront greenways on the East Bank to connect to planned greenways in River North and the Oracle pedestrian bridge.				
11.	Pursue a greenway connection between the East Bank and Shelby Bottoms Park along the Cumberland River.				
12.	Pursue a greenway connection between the East Bank and Cleveland Park along Ellington Parkway.				
13.	Pursue a greenway connection between the East Bank and Riverfront Park and the planned Wharf Park — both of which are on the west bank.				

equitable and affordable housing

1.	Utilize the guiding principles, as outlined on page 56, to guide implementation and accountability for the housing goals on the East Bank.				
2.	Utilize the tools identified on page 57 to create and incentivize affordable housing on the East Bank.				
3.	As new tools for providing affordable housing are developed or as regulations are changed, their use on the East Bank should be explored.				
4.	Encourage a variety of housing typologies throughout the East Bank to create opportunities for socioeconomic diversity.				
5.	Support the creation of middle housing typologies within the Shelby’s Bend and Jefferson-Spring neighborhoods.				

9.3 FUTURE ACTION ITEMS CONT.

economic development

1.	Require future development on the East Bank, performed by Metro, or utilizing Metro resources, include at least 20% Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) contractors.				
2.	Encourage entities on the East Bank to work with surrounding neighborhoods and community organizations to establish clear community guidelines that work towards common goals and the <i>Imagine East Bank</i> vision.				
3.	Determine the evolution of MDHA’s East Bank Redevelopment District, which is set to expire in 2025.				
4.	Explore the creation of a Business Improvement District and/or a Transit-Oriented Redevelopment District on the East Bank — possibly including surrounding areas.				
5.	Work with the Mayor’s Office of Economic Development to establish resources for small, local, and/or independent business development — such as neighborhood business incubators, technical assistance and counseling, etc.				
6.	Partner with local chefs, makers, and community groups to drive early local retail success.				

land development

1.	Ensure that buildings, streetscapes, and outdoor spaces are designed and constructed according to universal design best practices.				
2.	Explore opportunities to incorporate Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies into all new developments.				
3.	Encourage best practices in stormwater management and low-impact development to absorb runoff.				
4.	Coordinate with NDOT Engineering to establish a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategy for all new developments.				
5.	Encourage the planting of trees and other landscape.				

METRO-OWNED LAND

6.	Consider how the site between James Robertson Parkway and Woodland Street could become an iconic gateway for the East Bank.				
7.	Work with NES to evaluate options for how the NES East Bank Substation can be integrated into the design of a potential gateway.				
8.	Utilize publicly-owned land for community priorities — including open space, riverfront access, a mobility hub, affordable housing opportunities, and cultural uses.				

plan adoptions/amendments

1.	Adopt <i>Imagine East Bank: A Vision Plan for Nashville’s Next Great Neighborhoods</i> .				
2.	Amend the <i>Major and Collector Street Plan</i> to include the East Bank Boulevard and the East Bank’s urban street grid.				
3.	Amend the <i>WalknBike Plan</i> with the East Bank’s proposed bikeways.				
4.	Amend <i>Plan to Play: The Nashville Parks & Greenways Master Plan</i> to add proposed greenways and parks.				

further analysis and future studies

MOBILITY					
1.	Remain closely involved in the ongoing <i>Connect Downtown</i> study to ensure the <i>Imagine East Bank</i> vision is incorporated.				
2.	Work with TDOT to explore how I-24 and Ellington Parkway’s on- and off-ramps can be simplified and better integrated into the East Bank’s urban street grid.				
3.	Work with CSX to explore how rerouting freight trains out of the East Bank can be achieved.				
4.	Pending the reroute of the railroad, consider how the Cumberland River Swing Bridge can be used as a placemaking opportunity in the future.				
5.	Work with TDOT to explore additional street connections under the interstate to improve connections between Shelby’s Bend and Cayce Place.				
HOUSING					
6.	Further engage the Affordable Housing Task Force and the community to assist in establishing clear housing benchmarks for future phases of development.				
PARKS AND THE PUBLIC REALM					
7.	An East Bank Parks and Public Realm Plan should be established and serve as the framework to improve the quality, quantity, and connectivity of parks and the public realm on the East Bank, and along its riverfront. It should have guidance on development review, parkland dedication, acquisition priorities, and the allocation of capital funding.				
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS					
8.	Retain a consultant to conduct a social and economic impact study to help Metro and future developers understand the impacts of construction to the immediate and surrounding neighborhoods, as well as what the impacts of a new development that utilizes government financing tools will be on small, minority businesses that operate nearby and could operate within the East Bank.				

KEY Each action item works towards one or more of the East Bank vision concepts.



EQUITABLE & AFFORDABLE EAST BANK



SAFE & SIMPLE MULTIMODAL CONNECTIONS



RESPECT FOR THE RIVER



NEIGHBORHOODS FOR NASHVILLIANS

9.3 FUTURE ACTION ITEMS CONT.

further analysis and future studies cont.

URBAN DESIGN/LAND DEVELOPMENT



9.	Undertake viewshed analyses to understand important views in need of preservation and provide guidance on building placement.				
10	Craft and adopt a design-based zoning tool that reflects the <i>Imagine East Bank</i> vision and its preliminary development guidance, beginning with the Central Waterfront.				
11.	Establish regulations that allow greater density on major corridors and centers within the East Bank.				

RIVER

12.	Work with Metro Water Services and consultants to create a district-wide stormwater management plan for the East Bank.				
13.	Work with Metro Water Services and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to model the Cumberland River to ensure the long term resiliency of the new neighborhoods is effective.				
14.	Undertake a waterfront investment and management plan to identity the scope of users on the river and the financial opportunities available.				
15.	Undertake a market analysis to understand the demand for boating, docks, marina, and other boating facilities.				
16.	Undertake an operations analysis of potential future river activity and the interaction with working river.				
17.	Understand the scope of capital investments needed to meet the demand for boating facilities.				

STADIUM

18.	Establish a district-wide parking plan for managing parking demand and supply, including shared parking programs.				
19.	Explore the extension of the John Seigenthaler Pedestrian Bridge to terminate further into the East Bank, and/or near the stadium, and to provide multiple opportunities to get on and off.				

IMAGINE EAST BANK

20	Publish a bi-annual report that updates the <i>Imagine East Bank</i> action item list, and provides the status of all previous action items.				
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KEY Each action item works towards one or more of the East Bank vision concepts.



A young child wearing a blue t-shirt, khaki shorts, and a green helmet with an orange chin strap is walking on a stone path that leads into a river. In the background, there are several bridges, including a large steel truss bridge and a red bridge, and a city skyline with tall buildings under a blue sky with clouds.

imagine eastbank

A VISION PLAN FOR NASHVILLE'S NEXT GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS

October 6, 2022 MPC

METRO NASHVILLE **PLANNING** DEPARTMENT