

**Design, Community & Quality of Life:**

*Report from Chattanooga*

*Civic Design Exchange*

*Pittsburgh Civic Design Coalition*

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## *Pittsburgh Civic Design Coalition*

American Institute of Architects / Pittsburgh Chapter

Carnegie Mellon University / Urban Lab

Department of City Planning / City of Pittsburgh

Community Design Center of Pittsburgh

Green Building Alliance

The Heinz Endowments

Riverlife Task Force

Sustainable Pittsburgh

# CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE



## *Executive Summary*

The Pittsburgh Civic Design Coalition was formed in April 2004 to promote quality design as a defining feature of the Pittsburgh region. In October 2005, our first Civic Design Exchange took 30 Pittsburgh leaders in land use, economic development, quality of life projects and community building to Chattanooga to connect with its leadership.

**Why Chattanooga?** With an economy and environment similar to Pittsburgh's, at half its size, Chattanooga has undertaken an impressive makeover of its infrastructure and amenities while cutting property taxes. The object of the visit was to see the results of the project and to learn from those who engineered it.

Since 1986, Chattanooga has leveraged an initial \$12 million in public-private investment into \$1.5 billion in robust private development.

### **Chattanooga's signature projects include:**

- the Tennessee Aquarium, a two-phase development totaling \$75 million;
- a ten-mile recreational greenway along both sides of the Tennessee River;
- revitalized neighborhoods with new owner-occupied housing;
- connections to the downtown riverfront incorporating a \$1.2 million public art project, a free electric shuttle, and pedestrian paths; and
- re-routing a riverfront parkway to encourage pedestrian access and create commercial and residential development.

A healthy economy and budget surpluses had allowed Chattanooga to reduce property taxes by 10 percent in 1998. At the same time, voters approved a half-percent increase in the sales tax, with revenue divided between economic development and education. The resulting \$140 million in revenue funded neighborhood revitalization and promoted private developments, such as the Chattanooga Trade Center. Beginning in 2001, hotel tax revenues were applied to riverfront amenities.

With an underused downtown riverfront, the city was able to clear and redevelop over 120 acres of land relatively quickly. Early riverfront projects were funded through a separate partnership including foundations and a private non-profit developer, the RiverCity Company. Chattanooga has synergized public transportation through a free downtown electric shuttle, greenways, and pedestrian paths.

"ChattaNEWga," as its slogan suggests, is justifiably proud of its achievements. As the leaders of its redesign spoke to us about their "culture of cooperation," they echoed five principles that helped them achieve their goal. We believe these lessons can be applied to support quality planning and design in Pittsburgh.

**A Clear Regional Vision:** Faced with a decline in manufacturing and dwindling federal resources, Chattanooga forged a public consensus to invest in downtown riverfront infrastructure and amenities to promote growth. The consensus is reflected in guidelines for transit, infrastructure, amenities and housing. An effective partnership among elected officials, private developers, banks and foundations has continued through the terms of four mayors. Pittsburgh must define its vision and strengthen those partnerships.

**Public Participation in Planning:** Chattanooga has invited broad community participation in the planning process, asking contributors to be “hopeful and helpful.” In open forums, 1,700 citizens suggested specific, actionable goals from affordable housing to environmental clean-up. Each phase of development maintains its connection to the original goals and aspirations discussed and agreed upon by the community.

Public buy-in at the beginning of the process has helped Chattanooga’s development proceed smoothly through two phases. The Vision 2000 plan created in 1984 resulted in the opening of the Tennessee Aquarium and other amenities in 1992. The immediate success of that project fueled public confidence and private investment. The ambitious three-year, \$120 million follow-up, the 21st Century Waterfront plan, continued downtown’s momentum. Pittsburgh’s citizens should have a corresponding process to share their ideas for moving the city forward.

**A One-Stop Design Center:** Defining design standards for public agencies and developers and offering technical assistance, the Planning and Design Studio has become the one-stop office for problem-solving and approvals for Chattanooga’s regional planning authority. Originally a university storefront organization, the Planning and Design Studio created streamlined guidelines and a consistent language for design priorities. Its constant focus on quality details and the effect that each new element has on the fabric of the city has kept design in the forefront of development.

Pittsburgh can leverage equal design talent. With effective coordination among the private, public and non-profit sectors, we can define guidelines and a one-stop office to improve the quality of our projects.

**Portable Planning for Neighborhoods:** In Chattanooga, non-profits, lenders, foundations and the city have helped targeted neighborhoods become safe, stable and friendly. The team catalyzes rehabilitation, infill and new housing, including landscaping and traffic calming. The group follows the same three-step process in each project: the city identifies priority zones, a non-profit helps neighbors set goals, and the development agency follows. Two new downtown magnet schools serve the target neighborhoods. Incentives for some corporate and public employees encourage home-buying. The strategy is designed to replace public investment with private development as property values rise. As a result, some neighborhoods have seen property values rise 60 percent in four years.

Pittsburgh’s “portable” expertise, demonstrated in small-scale projects throughout the city, should be expanded to support neighborhood revitalization, in collaboration with the Pittsburgh’s public and private sector leaders.

**Design Excellence.** Attention to detail has integrated Chattanooga’s landscape, public art, recreation, cultural attractions, and river into a harmonious pedestrian experience that attracts residents and tourists. Pittsburgh must continue its riverfront revitalization and strategically invest in high-quality infrastructure to connect public spaces and prime development parcels in the Golden Triangle and nearby communities.

Vision 2000 process begins.  
In public meetings, over 1,700 residents  
create 40 goals for the city, from a  
human relations commission to a new  
aquarium.



Walnut Street Bridge renovated for  
pedestrian use between South Shore and  
North Shore developments

1984

1992

1994

Tennessee Aquarium opens; electric  
downtown shuttle begins operations.



1993

First multi-family housing  
in downtown in 20 years,  
Riverset Apartments,  
opens; reaches 100 percent  
occupancy in 8 months



Creative Discovery Museum opens



Coolidge Park opens on the North Shore.



21st Century Waterfront Plan, developed through public meetings, proposed to extend riverfront development and connect downtown destinations; the \$120 million public-private project included museum improvements, waterfront piers and marinas, and re-design of the Riverfront Parkway to two lanes through downtown

BellSouth Baseball Park opens on South Shore

1996

1997

2001

2005

1995

1999

2000

2002

Southside Redevelopment Plan adopted by City Council for former industrial area south of the central business district, including residential and public development.

21st Century Waterfront plan completed

IMAX Theatre opens



Groundbreaking for two new downtown schools, catalysts for commercial and residential development



## The Civic Design Vision

*Twenty years after creating its first riverfront master plan, Chattanooga is reaping the benefits of developing underused downtown property along the Tennessee River. The River City Company, a private non-profit developer, leveraged an initial \$12 million in seed money from local banks and foundations to stimulate \$1.5 billion in private investment. The vision called for sustained public involvement in planning, coordinated design, and excellence in materials and public art.*

### **Project: 21st Century Waterfront:**

Three-year, \$120 million package of museum expansion, promenades, public art, marinas, and road re-engineering to create new development parcels and lure pedestrians

### **Process:**

- Public meetings identified goals
- Planning and Design Studio coordinated plans
- Public art committee juried competitions for art installations

### **Funders and Mechanisms:**

Hotel tax (\$69 million) and private sector investment (\$51 million)

### **Implementation:**

- State gave Riverfront Parkway to city in 2001
- Aquarium broke ground for second building as the Creative Discovery Museum added improvements
- Competition selected artists for First Street and the riverfront; RiverCity Company oversaw waterfront development with consultant Hargreaves Associates

## Background

In 1969, Chattanooga was labeled the most polluted city in America. Manufacturing decline, environmental degradation and a desire for sustainable growth, coupled with fewer federal dollars for revenue sharing, led the region to re-examine its priorities. In the 1970s, the city concentrated on meeting clean air and water standards. In 1984, citizens committed to investing in a city that would grow by improving quality-of-life amenities, focusing on downtown.

The project began with open meetings that set “helpful and hopeful” goals; 1,700 citizens responded with 40 concrete objectives, from affordable housing to environmental improvements.

Chattanooga’s Vision 2000 and the later 21st Century Waterfront Plan called for infrastructure and amenity investment to generate tourism and downtown economic growth. The strategy required close coordination of the public, private and non-profit sectors.

Public funds developed the plaza adjacent to the privately-built Aquarium. The RiverCity Company, a non-profit created with bank and foundation backing in 1986 to assist city and county governments and the private sector to spur economic development and public spaces in downtown Chattanooga, directed nearby developments: a visitors center, the Creative Discovery Museum, an IMAX theater, and shops and restaurants around the Aquarium. For the 21st Century Waterfront project, RiverCity managed the creation of a riverfront promenade, pier, and marina.

## Making Good Design Easier

Coordinating the design of both public and private projects was the job of the Planning and Design Studio, a one-stop center for visioning, problem-solving and approvals. Originally a university storefront organization, the Studio is now part of regional planning services.

Housed with other regional planning offices at the new Development Resource Center and funded by city and county government, the Planning and Design Studio provides technical assistance that supports design excellence in all city projects. “The Design Studio has no legal standing. But it’s known as the black box where we solve problems,” said Bob Dugan, manager of the Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority.

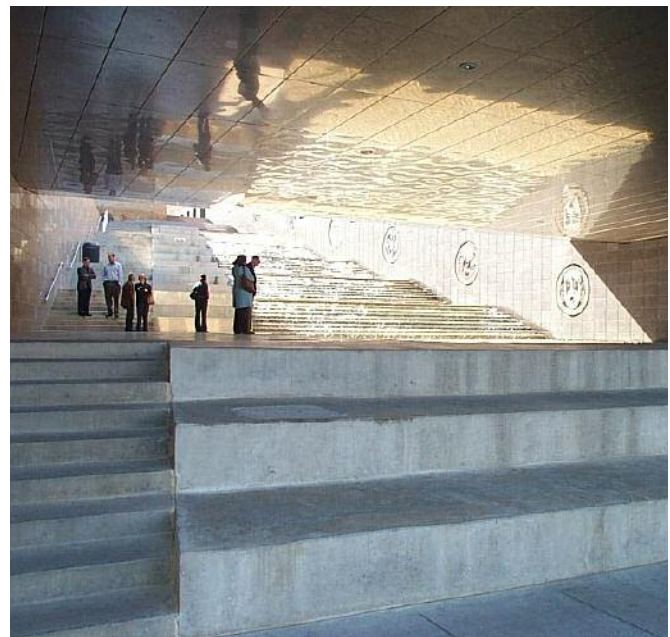
## Continuing Momentum

Since the Tennessee Aquarium opened in 1992, it has attracted over one million visitors and \$133 million in income for the city each year. Those tangible results quickly proved to Chattanoogaans that their investment had paid off and prompted public approval for an ambitious follow-up.

In 2002, Mayor Bob Corker proposed the 21st Century Waterfront plan to complete the city’s connection to the river. Some funds enhanced tourist destinations directly: a second building for the Tennessee Aquarium, a \$30 million saltwater exhibit, has boosted attendance by 40 percent since its opening in April 2005. A \$3 million renovation improved the nearby Creative Discovery Museum.

**“Every decision you take reflects on your past, reinforces the present, and produces a future structure. When we start making decisions that are just today, or just tomorrow, then we’re losing the notion that we are part of history.”**

—Stroud Watson, Principal, Kennedy, Coulter, Rusbing and Watson, L.L.C.,  
Chattanooga



*The Passage, by the Native American artist team Gadugi, is a cascade of water following a broad flight of steps from the Aquarium plaza beneath the Parkway. It commemorates Cherokee culture through seven wall-mounted medallions, and brings today’s visitors to a landing with a fountain and 200 linear feet of boat moorings.*

**“If all we’d done was open the Aquarium, it probably would have been successful for a while, but people wouldn’t have come back the next year. We had to look at streetscape improvements and new hotels downtown, new restaurants and other things for people to do while they are here.”**

– Karen Hundt, Director, Planning and Design Studio, City of Chattanooga

**“The trails and public art add to the sense of space. They’ve turned useless space into something people can utilize and created marketable parcels. That’s taking a negative and turning it into a positive.”**

– Dennis Davin, Director of Economic Development, Allegheny County

*Light masts by artist Jamie Carpenter illuminate the 180-foot pier by a marina adjacent to The Passage.*

Other aspects of the plan linked attractions. Reducing the four-lane Riverfront Parkway to two lanes helped the museums achieve river access and created development parcels throughout the riverfront district. The nearby Hunter Museum of American Art, isolated on a bluff, was connected to downtown by a striking glass pedestrian bridge, sculpture garden and incline railcar.

### **A Community Consensus on Public Art**

Following community meetings attended by over 800 citizens, a one-percent-for-art plan was adopted. The comprehensive proposal called for art to delineate waterfront space in three ways: by serving as infrastructure, by animating space, and by commemorating Cherokee culture. It included both permanent and temporary installations, with juried competitions for works selected. The overall budget of \$1.2 million covered all aspects of the projects, from acquisition to construction. An additional \$150,000 was donated to cover interpretive signage.

A public art committee of local artists, civic leaders and government representatives administers the plan. Several sculptures will be moved to neighborhood locations at local groups’ request.

### **Downtown Housing**

In 1994, the city donated land to the RiverCity Company to develop a \$3.1 million riverfront project. Riverset was the first multi-family downtown housing development to be built in 20 years; its 41 middle-income rentals were completely leased within eight months. Further improvements to riverfront amenities have attracted higher-end private development.

While some retail and restaurant development has occurred in the neighborhood, there is not yet enough demand for basic amenities like a supermarket. Nevertheless, downtown population increased 29 percent between 1990 and 2000, with owner-occupied housing growing from 833 to 1,320 units. Increases in income levels and drops in average age accompanied the growth.





*First Street Steps: eight sculptures line the First Street corridor and link the Hunter Museum, the Walnut Street Bridge, the street and the riverfront.*

**“They thought big. They didn’t incrementalize it. The mayor said, I’ll spend political capital to do it right. The connectivity – that is, getting people to use both sides of the river – is their biggest accomplishment.”**

*– Mark C. Schneider, President, Rubinoff Company, Pittsburgh*



## Parks, Pedestrians and Transportation

*Bringing life to Chattanooga's riverfront meant giving priority to pedestrians and providing easy connections between destinations. Reverting to two-way, two-lane streets has calmed traffic and increased public space; cooperative planning of parks, downtown attractions, parking and public transportation encourages walking. Parks on both sides of the Tennessee River, joined by a popular downtown footbridge, extend a regional master plan. Pedestrian greenways are beginning to connect neighborhoods with the river.*

### **Project:**

Redesigning downtown for walking, cycling and recreation

### **Process:**

Land acquisition and creation of new parcels for recreation and private development; free downtown shuttle; parking garage with ground-level mixed use

### **Funders and Mechanisms:**

Federal and state transportation funds, public-private partnership (21st Century Waterfront plan funds)

### **Implementation:**

Shuttle and first garage opened in 1992; Walnut Street pedestrian bridge opened 1993; Trust for Public Land begins acquiring property for regional Riverpark, 1994; Coolidge Park opened 1999; Tennessee Department of Transportation cedes Riverfront Parkway to city for rerouting in 2001, in anticipation of 21st Century Waterfront improvements; Waterfront projects and ten-mile downtown Riverwalk completed spring 2005.

### **Parks on the North Shore, Greenways Around Town**

With an effective mechanism for acquiring riverfront land, Chattanooga has been able to leverage federal transportation monies, foundation grants and other donations to create new public spaces. Since 1994, the non-profit Trust for Public Land has purchased or arranged donations of 5,000 acres for parks and greenways, with a current market value of \$20 million.

The backbone of the region's park plan is the Tennessee Riverpark, a 22-mile linear park along the riverbanks, which incorporates a ten-mile paved section called the Riverwalk. Extending through downtown to the Chickamauga Dam Recreation Area, the Riverwalk is the spine to which neighborhood greenways will connect. The city has committed \$2 million for six neighborhood greenways along local creeks, with matching funds from the Lyndhurst Foundation and federal TEA-21 funds; the first one-mile section opened in 2005.

The Riverwalk includes the pedestrian Walnut Street Bridge. This important connector between the South Shore's downtown and the North Shore's Coolidge and Renaissance Parks moved Chattanooga's revitalization across the river.

Touching the city's Theater Center on the east and the emerging Renaissance Park to the west, Coolidge Park was previously a Naval Reserve base. "A dozen years ago, the city was leasing it to the Naval Reserve for \$1 a year," said Bobby Davenport of the Trust for Public Land. "Waiting [to acquire land for public use] until an area booms is too expensive."

The most recent investment, Renaissance Park, is being built on a reclaimed brownfield. It will emphasize environmental awareness for residents and tourists and complement nearby amenities. The 22-acre site faced higher development hurdles than Coolidge Park; after years of negotiations, the city began to remediate the former General Electric property, capping the site with a clay cover and adding fill. An existing wetland at the mouth of the Chattanooga Creek will help purify sewer outflow from a creek on the site. The park, to be completed in 2007, will include a nature education center. Six neighborhood parks will be also renovated in 2006.

*Chattanooga's new parks attract 1.5 million visitors to riverfront festivals and concerts each year. Rowing, fishing and pleasure boating visibly promote Chattanooga as a livable city.*



To encourage pedestrian and cyclist use of the greenways, the Trust for Public Land diverted some greenway construction funds from the Lyndhurst Foundation to CARTA, the transit agency, for bike racks on buses and a public advocacy campaign. CARTA estimates that over 300 riders, many of them first-time transit users, use the racks each month.

### **Redesigning Riverfront Parkway for River Access**

The 21st Century Waterfront Plan envisioned reducing the four-lane Riverfront Parkway to two lanes along the south riverbank downtown to enhance visitor access to the river. At the same time, Chattanooga shifted the four-lane, one-way streets perpendicular to the river to a two-way traffic pattern that is friendlier to pedestrians and tourists.

The state gave the Parkway to the city in 2001 and cooperated on the roadway project to complement the city's 1993 restoration of the historic Walnut Street Bridge.

*Opened in 1999, Coolidge Park offers a climbing wall, an interactive fountain flanking a carousel pavilion, riverfront pathways and a canoe launch.*



*Renaissance Park capped a former brownfield with a clay cover. Its environmental education center will demonstrate remediation and stormwater management techniques—with gardens.*



An electric bus enters Shuttlepark North. The CARTA terminal provides upper-level parking for hotel guests and downtown visitors. The Bijou Theater cineplex on the ground floor extends mixed-use development and defrays shuttle costs.

### The Electric Shuttle

Chattanooga's efforts to comply with clear air standards during the 1970s mandated non-polluting people movers. Too many cars were commuting downtown. In the mid-1980s, city code mandated three parking spaces for every worker or visitor; more than 65 percent of the downtown land area was dedicated to cars. The city sought a downtown system that would attract new riders, serve as a tourist attraction in its own right, and wean downtown motorists away from surface parking.

Prior to the opening of the Aquarium, representatives of the Design Studio, city government and the Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) planned public transportation to serve the crowds expected to follow downtown redevelopment. The ingenious solution was an electric shuttle bus service, running on a loop between two new parking garages. The route took advantage of the downtown shape, a long, narrow rectangle, and allowed the city "to capture traffic at the ends of town, then use the shuttle to move people around," explained CARTA general manager Tom Dugan. The shuttle was based on a Santa Barbara model and manufactured locally. The clean, quiet system has eliminated an estimated 130,000 pounds of diesel particulates and reduced urban noise.

The North and South shuttle terminal garages, 1.5 miles apart, offer an alternative to the surface lots, which can now be converted to higher use. Federal funding provided 80 percent of the \$14 million construction of the multi-story, mixed-use brick-facade garages. The North Garage houses a rent-paying seven-screen cinema near riverfront attractions, and both garages provide parking for adjacent hotels. The terminals include a visitor information desk, brochures, and colorful banners for signage to nearby attractions. Well-designed canopies and signage signal shuttle stops.

The revenue generated by the parking garages covers 80 percent of the shuttle's operating expense, allowing CARTA to offer free service every five minutes throughout downtown. Its garage parking costs of \$7 per day or \$40 per month have doubled since they opened, but are modest compared to Pittsburgh prices.

Shuttle ridership now averages one million per year, more than half of the CARTA's overall passenger total, and has spurred investment in restaurants, retailing, and loft housing.

**"The most exciting part of the Chattanooga story: Everything was cooperative, from the engineering of the roads to the look of [shuttle] shelters, designed through the Planning and Design Studio here. The map brochure markets the shops along the route and was paid for by the merchants. All shuttle drivers go through hospitality training provided by our convention and visitors bureau. They know downtown."**

*– Tom Dugan, General Manager,  
Chattanooga Area Regional  
Transportation Authority*

**"The connections, among the professionals as well as physical spaces, were impressive. Whatever the project, there was genuine dialogue."**

*– Meg Cheever, President,  
Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy*



## Neighborhoods

*Older Chattanooga neighborhoods have benefited from downtown revitalization through strategic planning and transportation development. Introducing attractive mixed-income infill housing, with incentives for developers and buyers, has built wealth for homeowners, with some neighborhoods' real estate value rising 60 percent in four years.*

### **Project:**

\$55 million in mixed-income housing in high-opportunity neighborhoods

### **Process:**

City donated some lots to developers to start process; teams of community organizers, designers and realtors work together in a variety of mixed-rate, owner-occupied neighborhoods; exit strategies set goals for shift to private development

### **Funders and Mechanisms:**

One-quarter percent increase in sales tax funds neighborhood improvements; non-profit housing organization acts as developer and mortgage lender; foundations fund some infrastructure improvements and home-buying incentives for public employees to augment city capital planning and housing funds

### **Implementation:**

Community groups identify problem properties with the help of Community Impact; Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprises builds approximately 600 units per year and rehabs other properties;

Planning and Design Studio coordinates new school and residential construction in targeted neighborhoods; private developers extend projects into market-rate housing

Chattanooga has shifted its housing mission from providing low-income housing to creating neighborhoods where property values grow to meet or exceed other neighborhoods. In the city's new sustainable, wealth-building strategy, homeowners recoup the initial investment of the city and its partners and improve the city's tax base.

The lead residential developer is Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise; CNE, a private non-profit, receives support from the city, foundations, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and local banks. Representatives from the city's department of capital planning, foundations and developers meet with CNE weekly. Other key players include the Planning and Design Studio; the joint city-county Planning Department; the school district (city and county schools merged in 2000); and local community development groups.

Two South Side projects, in the city's M.L. King and Cowart Place-Jefferson Heights neighborhoods, reflect Chattanooga's cooperative approach: grass-roots involvement, sustainable development, strong public-private partnerships, and an exit strategy for turning projects over to private developers. Both neighborhoods were connected to new downtown development by good public transportation, and offered new elementary schools as neighborhood magnets.

The projects capitalized on citywide public safety efforts. Chattanooga reduced crime 26 percent from 2002 to 2005, and violent crimes in the city have dropped by more than half. Neighborhood groups understand that active development will need to concentrate on a few priority neighborhoods at a time to be effective. The strategy has helped the city frame its capital investment budget.

In Chattanooga's portable development model, community groups first approach Community Impact. This foundation-backed non-profit helps neighborhood coalitions identify solutions for problem buildings. With grant support from the Lyndhurst Foundation, the city's revolving loan fund acquires lien properties for clean-up and demolition. The foundation support has allowed CNE to provide some lots free to developers; typically, a neighborhood's worst properties are offered first. CNE captures, rehabs, and holds some individual properties until the local market gains strength.

*Design standards for Jefferson Heights suggest that houses occupy 60 percent of the width of their lots; finish materials must be permanent and high-quality. Guidelines for parking, garages and fences are set, and porches are encouraged.*



**“There’s been a very deliberate sequencing of events in M.L. King and Jefferson Heights –the two elementary schools, conversion of one-way streets to two-way traffic, close proximity to the revitalizing areas of downtown, access to one end of the [transit] shuttle. We expected that with the appropriate policy, retail would follow, and we are now just at that point. We’ve seen a 60 percent increase [in home values] on an investment of about \$2 million in six years, a few houses at a time, slowly.”**

*– Bob McNutt, Vice President,  
Chattanooga Neighborhood  
Enterprise, Inc.*

*Incorporating New Urbanist design standards, Chattanooga’s handsome affordable housing leads the market, encouraging private developers to build market-rate homes to follow.*



### **Partnerships Leverage Development**

The Lyndhurst Foundation has donated over \$25 million to city housing initiatives. Its commitment to “courageous capital” extends into all aspects of successful development: property acquisition, connections to community groups, infrastructure, and developer and homebuyer incentives.

Lyndhurst further leverages public investment by funding landscaping incentives for developers and making grants to the city for improvements such as new sidewalks. Those incentives have reduced risks for private developers, who have been willing to comply with community design standards. As a result, a 60-unit private development underway in Jefferson Heights seamlessly extends CNE’s original 19-unit development to a variety of price points. An abandoned school was given to a private developer to be rehabbed into loft housing, attracting young professionals to urban neighborhoods.

In order to measure success, the task force tracks transaction data on all properties, along with demographics of owners and occupants, to analyze neighborhood development patterns.

### **Homebuying Incentives for Professionals and Artists**

The Lyndhurst Foundation has also funded \$770,000 in incentives to attract professionals as home buyers. City police officers and teachers can defray as much as \$15,000 each in mortgage expense by committing to stay in their new homes for five years. Employees of other participants (hospitals, universities and financial institutions) are also eligible for discounts. The incentives have allowed purchase prices to rise, while stabilizing neighborhoods. CNE is now planning a similar program for working artists. A neighborhood realtor works with the development team to extend its marketing efforts.





*Battle Academy in Jefferson Heights, which may draw students from all over Hamilton County, is not yet at full enrollment capacity. Families with school-age children are expected to increase future demand for mixed-rate housing.*

### **Connecting Schools and Neighborhoods**

The 1997 plans for South Side redevelopment called for an undefined “civic space” to anchor a community near a light-industrial corridor. A school district decision to build two new downtown magnet schools in 2001 galvanized the project.

In Jefferson Heights, the Planning and Design Studio created standards for both homes and nearby Battle Academy on Market Street. Brown Academy, the new elementary magnet in the M.L. King district, had originally been envisioned as part of the master expansion plan of the nearby University of Tennessee-Chattanooga (UTC). Its plan includes new student housing for several thousand undergraduates along with university-run primary and pre-schools. The university maintains a close relationship with both magnets and has promoted a faculty homebuying incentive program around M.L. King.

### **Exit Strategies**

The development team planned to move from public subsidy to privately-developed, market-rate housing within three years, beginning with affordable housing. Both the M.L. King and Jefferson Heights construction began with prices near \$70 per square foot. Private developers showed interest when values reached \$100 per square foot. Overall goals for affordable housing remain at 25 percent of neighborhood totals.

### **Greenways and Recreation**

The success of neighborhoods is linked to investments in public infrastructure, including parks, playing fields and greenway connectors. The new Tennessee Riverpark includes plans for redeveloping brownfields along abandoned railways in the M.L. King district. Completed portions connect the neighborhood to the campus of the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga and the river beyond. In the opposite direction, toward Jefferson Heights, the greenway will connect the UTC campus with its new football stadium. Another community park, adjacent to the thriving Jefferson Heights development, is the focal point of a planned three-acre, 38-unit townhouse development.

**“It shows affordable housing is a market driver if it’s done right. The light posts, the iron grates, the big trees, the curbs and sidewalks — they finish that last 20 percent of the job.”**

*— Rob Stepany, Director of Commercial Development, East Liberty Development Inc., Pittsburgh*

*With attention to design excellence, a shared vision and voice, streamlined planning and coordination of public and private resources, Pittsburgh, like Chattanooga, can forge a sustainable city renewal for all residents.*

**American Institute of Architects / Pittsburgh Chapter**

[www.aiapgh.org](http://www.aiapgh.org)

**Carnegie Mellon University / Urban Lab**

[www.arc.cmu.edu](http://www.arc.cmu.edu)

**Department of City Planning / City of Pittsburgh**

[www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/cp](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/cp)

**Community Design Center of Pittsburgh**

[www.cdcp.org](http://www.cdcp.org)

**Green Building Alliance**

[www.gbapgh.org](http://www.gbapgh.org)

**The Heinz Endowments**

[www.heinz.org](http://www.heinz.org)

**Riverlife Task Force**

[www.riverlifetaskforce.org](http://www.riverlifetaskforce.org)

**Sustainable Pittsburgh**

[www.sustainablepittsburgh.org](http://www.sustainablepittsburgh.org)

To request print copies of this report or view it online, visit the web sites of Pittsburgh Civic Design Coalition members.

Photos courtesy of Design Exchange participants, City of Chattanooga, RiverCity Company, and Chattanooga Area Convention and Visitors Bureau.

# *Civic Design Exchange*

## **Agenda**

*Thursday, October 27, 2005*

### **Overview of Metro / Regional Issues**

Site: Hunter Museum of American Art

Tom Edd Wilson, Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce  
[www.chattanooga-chamber.com](http://www.chattanooga-chamber.com)

### **Panel Discussion: Defining the Vision**

Ken Hays, KPH Development  
[www.kinseypro.com](http://www.kinseypro.com)

Karen Hundt, Planning and Design Studio  
[www.chcrpa.org](http://www.chcrpa.org)

Stroud Watson, Kennedy, Coulter, Rushing and Watson, LLC  
[www.kennedycoulter.com](http://www.kennedycoulter.com)

### **Preview of Waterfront / Waterfront Walking Tour**

Paul Brock, RiverCity Company  
[www.rivercitycompany.com](http://www.rivercitycompany.com)

### **Panel Discussion: The Details—Transportation, Greenways and Parks & Public Art**

Site: Regional Resources Building / Planning and Design Studio

Thomas Dugan, Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority  
[www.carta-bus.org](http://www.carta-bus.org)

Robert Davenport, The Trust for Public Land  
[www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org)

Don Andrews, Allied Arts  
[www.alliedartschattanooga.org](http://www.alliedartschattanooga.org)

Debrief (Moderators: J. Barlow, A. Lubenau)

*Friday, October 28, 2005*

### **What Chattanooga Has Been Successful and Unsuccessful at Accomplishing**

Site: Chattanooga Community Theater

Mayor Ron Littlefield  
[www.chattanooga.gov](http://www.chattanooga.gov)

### **Panel Discussion: The Challenges: Funding & Neighborhood Involvement**

Robert McNutt, Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise  
[www.cneinc.org](http://www.cneinc.org)

Sarah Morgan, Lyndhurst Foundation  
[www.lyndhurstfoundation.org](http://www.lyndhurstfoundation.org)

Jeff Pfitzer, Chattanooga Capital Planning Department  
[www.chattanooga.gov](http://www.chattanooga.gov)

Tour of M.L. King and Jefferson Heights Neighborhoods

Debrief (Moderators: A. Swager, V. Loftness)

# *Civic Design Exchange*

## **Participants**

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## Comparative Data

Pittsburgh and Chattanooga

	Pittsburgh	Chattanooga
Size:	55.6 square miles	124 sq miles
<i>Demographics:</i>		
Population:	334,563 PA's second-largest city	155,554 TN's fourth-largest city
Median Age:	35.5 years	36.8 years
Population 25+ years	218,594	104,198
High School graduation Rate or higher:	81.3 percent	77.6 percent
Bachelor's degree or higher:	26.2 percent	21.5 percent
White:	67.6 percent	59.7 percent
African American:	27.1 percent	36.1 percent
Hispanic:	1.32 percent	2.1 percent
<i>Government:</i>		
Form of government:	Mayor/City Council	Mayor/City Council
Current mayor:	Bob O'Connor (2006)	Ron Littlefield (2005)
Property tax:	10.8 mills land 10.8 buildings	2.202 mills
Earned Income Tax:	1 percent	0
Sales Tax	7 percent (1 percent to regional asset development)	9.25 percent (2.25 % to city and county, 7 percent to state)
<i>Economic:</i>		
In Labor Force (16 yrs.+)	58.5 percent	61.4 percent
Mean commute to work:	23.1 minutes	19.8 minutes
Per capita income:	\$18,816	\$19,698
Median household income:	\$28,588	\$32,006
Families below poverty level:	15 percent	14 percent
Individuals below poverty level:	20.4 percent	17.9 percent
Median home value:	\$59,700	\$83,500
Main industry	Advanced manufacturing	Service