



STREET IMPROVEMENTS

3RD AND 4TH STREET IMPROVEMENTS PLAN
INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

HISTORY

Originally constructed in the 1960s as a four-lane freeway, Riverfront Parkway was intended to carry industrial truck traffic through the City of Chattanooga along the Tennessee River. Shortly after the construction of the freeway, the City went through difficult economic times as the local economy's manufacturing base lost thousands of jobs. Riverfront Parkway, the freeway designed to move traffic through the city efficiently, ended up creating a barrier between the urban core and the riverfront and helped contribute to the decline of the City's downtown.

Beginning in the 1980s, the City began a concerted effort to improve and enhance the quality of the downtown and restore the urban fabric and connections to the river. A new design for Riverfront Parkway was a catalyst and key component of Chattanooga's 21st

Century Riverfront Plan. The Plan was based on an extensive public involvement process, involving community design sessions where residents, city officials, representatives from the Tennessee Department of Transportation, and key property owners worked cooperatively to recommended changes to the parkway to better fit the needs of the City.

The design of the new Riverfront Parkway (Figure 2-1) provided safer pedestrian crossings and restored access to the Tennessee River, while creating opportunities to grow and expand Chattanooga's downtown. The narrowed two- and four-lane cross-section for Riverfront Parkway was accomplished by improving and enhancing the overall street network to allow traffic to distribute more efficiently and effectively throughout the overall street grid.

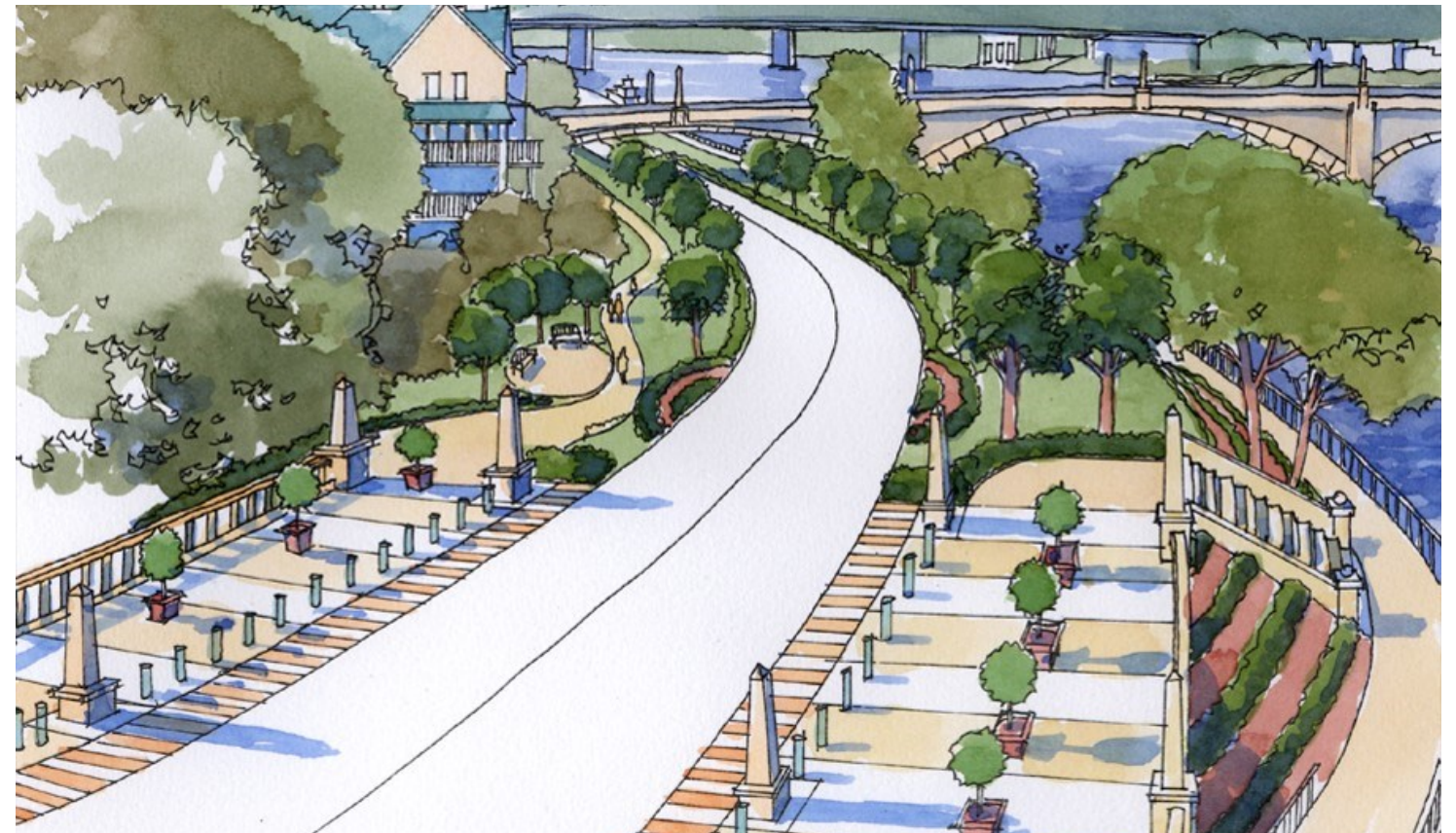


Figure 2-1. Concept Sketch for Riverfront Parkway Street Design
Source: Glattig Jackson Kercher Anglin, 2001.



PURPOSE

It is with this background and experience that the City of Chattanooga now embarks on transforming the 3rd and 4th Street corridor, including the connection to Riverfront Parkway, into an aesthetically pleasing, safe, and accessible facility that reconnects and

Chattanooga School for the Arts and Sciences, as well as Siskin and Erlanger hospitals are intended to encourage economic development and provide an enhanced connection among the community assets. More direct connections to the Riverwalk, and improved

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extends the downtown grid. As was the case in 2001 with Riverfront Parkway, the new connections to the existing neighborhoods, the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, the

vehicular, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle amenities are also key components of the 3rd and 4th Street Improvements project.

OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives for the 3rd and 4th Street Improvements project include:

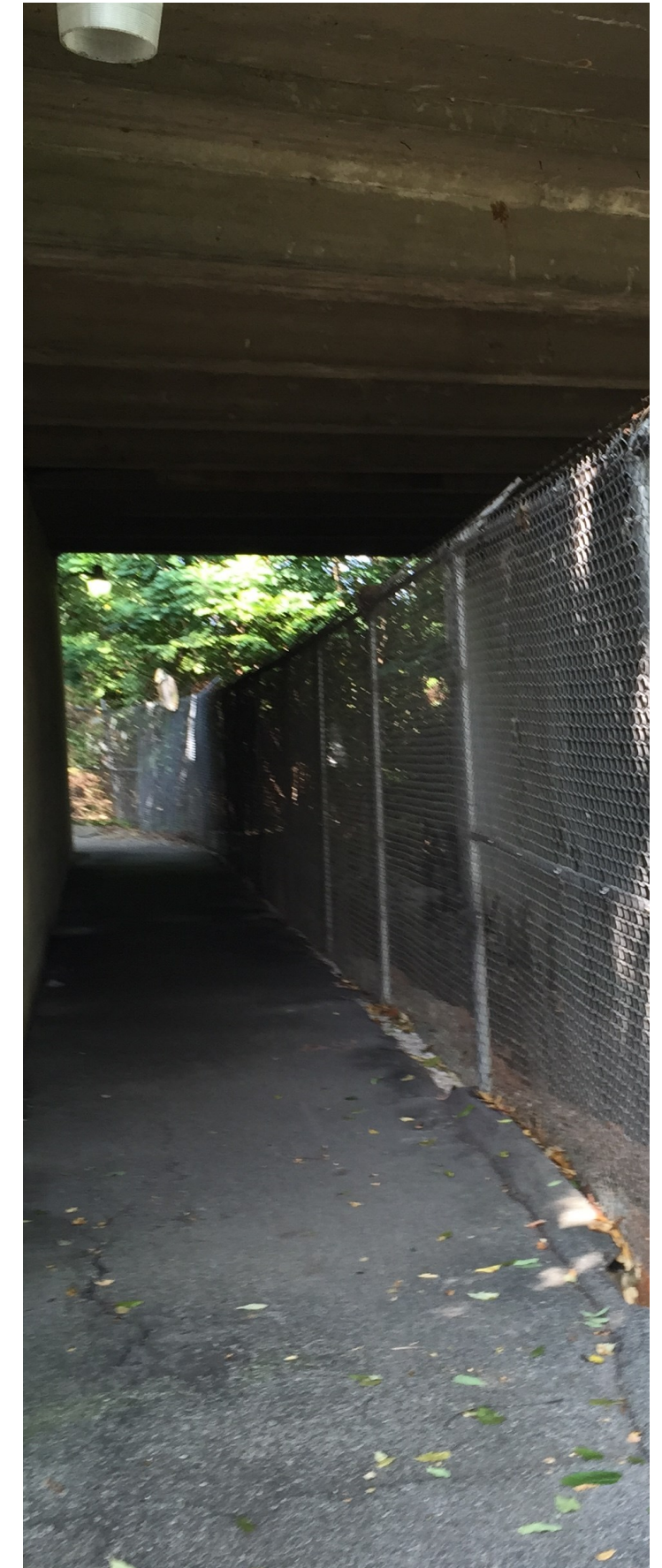
- Actively engaging stakeholders and the public throughout all phases of the project
- Improving multimodal circulation in the area
 - Establishing a well-connected network of car, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities
 - Reducing vehicle congestion on area streets
 - Enabling more direct connections to institutional campuses (University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, the Chattanooga School for the Arts and Sciences, Erlanger Hospital, etc.)
 - Converting separated grade intersections to at-grade intersections
- Improving safety
 - Developing and implementing a design that encourages safe traffic speeds
 - Providing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including additional connections to the Tennessee Riverwalk
- Encouraging economic development along the corridor
- Alleviating stormwater issues



CHALLENGES

The 3rd and 4th Street corridor has multiple challenges regarding connectivity and efficiency that need to be addressed:

- Multiple parallel streets without a clear hierarchy of development form and confusing pattern of through versus local routes
- High traffic during peak times due to the presence of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, the Chattanooga School for the Arts and Sciences, Erlanger Hospital, and large employers downtown
- Wayfinding is difficult due to one-way streets and separated grade crossings
- Poor connectivity to the Tennessee Riverwalk
- Unrealized opportunity for neighborhood growth that is an asset to neighboring institutions (University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, the Chattanooga School for the Arts and Sciences, Erlanger Hospital, and Unum)
- Safety issues for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists due to the speed of traffic coming from Riverfront Parkway onto 3rd and 4th Streets
- Better connectivity to improve traffic flow and safety
- Better multimodal connections between the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, the Chattanooga School for the Arts and Sciences, Erlanger Hospital, and the Tennessee Riverwalk



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STUDY AREA

For the masterplan phase of the project, the general study area for the project is shown in [Figure 2-2](#) and the project limits are defined as follows:

3rd Street Central Avenue to Georgia Avenue

Along 3rd Street the study area begins at Central Avenue as a four-lane roadway with turn-lane access north and south onto Hampton Street, with a bike lane and sidewalks with curb. Erlanger Hospital is located at the intersection of 3rd Street and Hampton Street, in the northeast quadrant. The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga campus is located on the south side of the roadway.

Two-way traffic on 3rd Street continues west to Palmetto Street then on to Collins Street, with no turn lanes. Utility poles block accessibility to sidewalks in several areas. A school zone begins approximately 500 feet east of Collins Street to accommodate students at the Chattanooga School for the Arts and Sciences on the north side of the roadway. The sidewalk on the south side of 3rd Street ends at Collins Street and there is noticeable deterioration of the sidewalk that precedes Collins Street.

The cemetery, comprised of the Citizens Cemetery, a Confederate Cemetery, and the Mizpah Cemetery, is directly across 3rd Street from the Chattanooga School for the Arts and Sciences. At the cemetery, 3rd Street separates into two roadways, 3rd Street to the north and 4th Street to the south. 3rd Street becomes a three-lane, one-way overpass with

continuous protected sidewalk to the north and no sidewalk to the south. Sidewalk begins on the south side past the crest of the above-grade roadway section.

Parking lots are located to the south of the roadway and Riverfront Parkway is located to the north. The roadway continues west with turn-lane access south onto Mabel Street. At the intersection with Mabel Street, the roadway converts to allow two-way traffic, with north / south directional arrows onto Mabel Street for roadway users travelling east. An auxiliary lane on 3rd Street allows users on Mabel Street to turn west onto the roadway. Sidewalks continue on the south side of the roadway at Mabel Street but end on the north side. Trees along the existing sidewalks impede accessibility.

Parking lots continue along on the south side of the roadway. The roadway continues through signalized intersections at Houston and Lindsay Streets to the overpass at Georgia Avenue. Several businesses are located to the south of 3rd Street between the two intersections.

4th Street Lookout Street to the Intersection with Riverfront Parkway

The study area for 4th Street begins at Lookout Street as a four-lane roadway allowing for two-way traffic, a landscaped median, sidewalks to the north and south both separated from the roadway with grass strips landscaped with additional street trees, decorative street lighting, crosswalks, street parking and curb with curb bulb-outs. A left turn-lane provides access from 4th Street heading south and north onto Lookout Street.

Continuing east, retaining walls impede access to sidewalks on the north side between Lookout Street and High Street. The roadway continues eastward through a signalized intersection at High Street. Left turn-lanes provide access to users to travel north or south on Georgia Avenue. The roadway turns into a three-lane, two-way roadway at the signalized intersection at Lindsay Street, with sidewalks to the north and south, grass strips landscaped with trees, with either low curb or gaps within the curb. Sidewalks are not accessible in several areas due to utility poles.

4th Street passes through a signalized intersection at Houston Street. Blood Assurance is located at the northeast quadrant of this intersection and McKenzie Arena, part of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga campus, is located at the southeast quadrant. The roadway continues to the signalized intersection at Mabel Street, which is a gateway point for the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga campus from the north. Parking lots are located on the north side of the roadway.



Beginning at the Mabel Street intersection, 4th Street becomes a three-lane, one-way street with sidewalks to the north and south with curb and gutter, and decorative street lighting. The left lane becomes a turn-lane for users to access Lansing Street, which passes under the 3rd Street overpass, and becomes the on-ramp for vehicles traveling east on Riverfront Parkway. Sidewalks end on Lansing Street before the 3rd Street overpass. There are no bicycle lanes along 4th Street within the study area.

Lindsay and Houston Streets
Riverfront Parkway to Vine Street

Lindsay and Houston Streets are both one-way directional streets. The study area for each street begins on Riverfront Parkway and ends at Vine Street. Signalized intersections for Riverfront Parkway / 3rd Street and Lindsay Street are within very close proximity to each other. Lindsay Street is a two-lane roadway allowing for south-bound traffic, with street parking on both the east and west side, sidewalks with landscaped barriers and curb.

Travelling south, right turn directional arrows exist for users wishing to turn west onto 4th Street. Deteriorating curb appears on the west side of the roadway.

Starting from its directional viewpoint, Houston Street allows for one-way northern traffic. Sidewalks with grass strip and/or landscaped buffers with street trees and curb are present on either side of the two-lane roadway as well as on-street parking. The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga campus is along this entire segment of roadway on the east side.

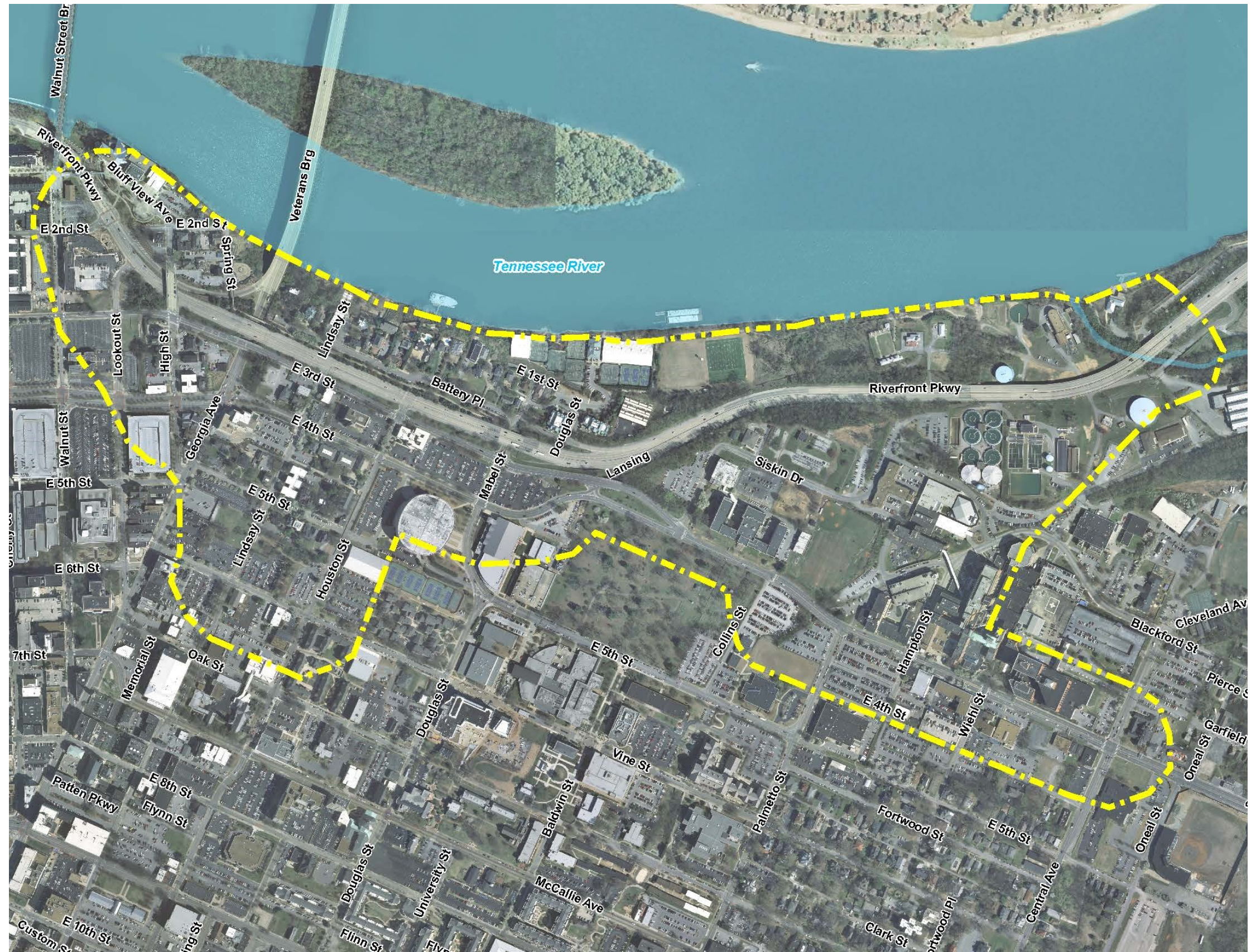


Figure 2-2. Study Area

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On-street parking stops as Houston Street veers to the right at the 5th Street access ramp and retaining wall. The roadway then proceeds through and ends at the signalized intersections at 3rd Street and Riverfront Parkway, which are within close proximity to each other.

Riverfront Parkway Lookout Street to Central Avenue Extension

The Riverfront Parkway study area begins at the intersection with Lookout Street. From the intersection traveling east, Riverfront Parkway is a four-lane, two-way roadway with a center barrier wall and shoulders. Riverfront Parkway passes under the High Street overpass and is an overpass for Georgia Avenue. Continuing east, Riverfront Parkway passes through signalized intersections with turn lanes at Lindsay and Houston Streets to the south. Riverfront Parkway is an overpass at Mabel Street and Lansing Street serves as an on-ramp to the Parkway.

Erlanger Hospital is accessible only via an off-ramp onto 3rd Street for west-bound traffic. Siskin Drive and Siskin Hospital for Physical Rehabilitation are located to the south of Riverfront Parkway with no current direct connection. The study area ends at the proposed extension of Central Avenue.

Transit

Chattanooga has developed its CARTA transit system over the past 40 years into a comprehensive bus and shuttle system serving the City, Hamilton County, and surrounding areas. CARTA currently has 16 fixed routes serving Chattanooga. Buses are wheelchair accessible and are equipped with audio and visual technology to announce when each bus stops along a route. The CARTA Bus Tracker is an online application that allows users to know where their bus is along any given route. CARTA has bike racks on all buses excluding the Downtown Electric Shuttle that can accommodate two bikes at a time. The Downtown Electric Shuttle uses battery operated, wheelchair accessible buses to provide access from the Chattanooga Choo Choo to the Tennessee Aquarium with stops at every block in between.

CARTA has several special programs to accommodate different transit users. Mocs Express is a free shuttle service that provides access from Broad Street, to the perimeter of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga campus, to parking at Engel Stadium on O'Neal Street for students, faculty, staff and visitors. Mocs Express operates during the fall and spring semesters for the University. CARTA also extends free service to university students, faculty and staff for all fixed-route service once their identification card is presented to a bus driver.

The CARE-A-Van paratransit service provides on-demand trips for persons not able to utilize fixed-route transit due to disability, impairment, or unavailability of an accessible vehicle.

Both 3rd Street and 4th Street are heavily serviced by CARTA, providing east / west access to Market Street and Broad Street. One route services Riverfront Parkway and provides access to Market Street. McCallie Avenue is serviced by two routes including the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga route. Erlanger hospital is serviced by three routes and the Tennessee Riverpark is serviced by one route.

CARTA also operates three downtown parking garages, several open-air parking lots, and Park and Ride lots spread throughout downtown.

Bicycle and Pedestrian

The Bike Chattanooga System includes 24 bike stations within a seven-mile loop that connects riders to downtown parks, attractions, residential neighborhoods, and business districts. Within the study area, one bike station exists at the intersection of McCallie Avenue and Lindsay Street.

One shared bicycle lane marking exists on 3rd Street near Hampton Street. No bicycle lanes are designated on any other roadways within the study area.

Sidewalks with curb are present on 3rd Street at Hampton Street. Utility poles block accessibility to sidewalks in several areas. The sidewalk on the south side of 3rd Street ends at Collins Street and there is noticeable deterioration of the sidewalk. At the cemetery, continuous sidewalk exists along 3rd Street on the north side with no sidewalk on the south. Sidewalk begins on the south side past the crest of the above-grade roadway section. Sidewalks continue on the south side of the roadway at Mabel Street, but



end on the north side. Often, street trees on existing sidewalks impede accessibility.

Sidewalks with grass strip and/or landscaped buffers with street trees and curb are present on either side of the roadway on both Lindsay and Houston Streets. No sidewalks exist on Riverfront Parkway.

4th Street beginning at Lookout Street contains sidewalks to the north and south separated from the roadway with grass strips landscaped with trees, and curb. Retaining walls impede access to sidewalks on the north side. At Lindsay Street, sidewalks to the north and south with landscaped medians and either low curb or gaps within the curb. Sidewalks are not accessible in several areas due to utility pole placement.

Beginning at the intersection with Mabel Street, 4th Street becomes a three-lane, one-way street with sidewalks on the north and south sides with curb and gutter and decorative street lighting. Sidewalks end on Lansing Street, before the 3rd Street overpass.