



# City of Tuscaloosa

## River Margin Park Improvements Master Plan

Master Plan  
Executive Summary Document  
September 2003



Almon Associates  
2008 12th Street, Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35403 . 205/349-2100





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### Master Plan

Executive Summary Report

**September 2003**

Prepared By:

Almon Associates, Inc.  
2008 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35403  
205/349.2100

Assisted By:

Woolpert, LLP  
8731 Red Oak Boulevard  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28217  
704/525.6284



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# Section One

## Intent of the Master Plan



## Intent of the Master Plan

The primary scope of this project is the preparation of a design master plan for the approximately 13 miles of Riverwalk along the Black Warrior River and the North River corridors. This Riverwalk feature will include the design of a pedestrian/biking/jogging corridor that will parallel both the Black Warrior River at select locations on the north and south edges, as well as along the and North River on the west side of the river as shown on Exhibit 1. There are four different starting areas, also shown on Exhibit 1, that allow for easy access onto the Riverwalk.

The first area of beginning is the CORPS of Engineering scenic overlook area located in the far west portion of town, on the south side of the Oliver Lock and Dam on the Black Warrior River. This area has a parking lot and is easily accessible to the proposed Riverwalk. The second area is the Black Warrior Council office of the Boy Scouts of America on the far east portion of the south side of the Black Warrior River. The third location of beginning is the connection of the pedestrian corridor with Northport greenway which is located on the levee at Rice Mine Road just at the City of Northport City limits. The final point of beginning is the Mary Ann Phelps Recreation Center located just west of the dam at Tuscaloosa Lake and north of the spillway beginning of the North River at the Police Firing Range.

The detailed work for this project shall include the development of an analysis of the entire corridor area, research of the current conditions and the development of a master plan that will define the design extent of the corridor. There will also be a detailed study of the specialty areas identified though the master plan process and costs will be developed to give a budget for the City to develop the plan.

The design process will include the field reconnaissance of the existing conditions, preparation of analysis plans, determination of a site suitability plan for key design areas, the implementation of design charettes and the preparation of a final master plan for the entire 13 mile area.

The study is broken down into two different areas. The first area is the study along the south side of the Black Warrior River. This study section of the Riverwalk is approximately seven (7) miles in length and it includes such key locations for study as:

- The public use area at the Oliver Lock and Dam
- Capitol Park/CityFest block
- Queen City Park area
- River Road Park
- The University of Alabama tie to the Riverwalk
- The old Riverview Water Plant



- The existing boat access
- The Black Warrior Boy Scout Council Headquarters
- Holt High School

The second area of the study is along the north side of the Black Warrior River from the City limits of Northport to the North River confluence with the Black Warrior River and up to the Tuscaloosa Lake Dam and the Mary Ann Phelps Recreation Center. This section is approximately six (6) miles long and will include:

- The tie of the City of Northport greenway at the City levee
- Rice Mine Road between the City of Northport limits and McFarland Boulevard
- The area east of McFarland Boulevard including the residential and commercial areas
- Rice Mine Road near the Gates of Wellington
- Lake Tuscaloosa Dam
- The Police Firing Range
- The scenic areas along the west edge of the North River
- The Mary Ann Phelps Recreation Center



## Section Two

### Issues and Goals of the Master Plan



## Issues and Goals of the Master Plan

There are a number of issues and goals that make up the initial directives for the development of the analysis and ultimately the directives for the development of the master plan. Each of these issues and goals are contingent on each other and they represent the design elements that need to be solved in the planning process.

### Issues

The issues of the project are as follows:

- Downtown Tuscaloosa was developed in the past with it's back toward the river. The Riverwalk project needs to provide a tie to the river for the City to allow for a better front door for the City.
- The floodway is a determining factor for development along both the Black Warrior and North Rivers due to it's meandering location along the river banks. This floodway will restrict the type of development along the river.
- There is a need to provide a connection of key areas along the Black Warrior River with key elements of the Cty including the downtown, the University of Alabama, the City of Northport, the Town of Holt and key focus points along the way including Queen City Park, the Cityfest area of downtown, the public use area at the Oliver Lock and Dam.
- There is also a need to connect the northeast portion of Tuscaloosa with the Black Warrior River via the North River, to the City of Northport. The key areas of connection will include the Mary Ann Phelps Recreation Center, Tuscaloosa Lake, the scenic areas along the North River and scenic areas along the Black Warrior River at the connection of the North and Black Warrior Rivers.
- There is an issue of how the north side and the south side of the Black Warrior River Riverwalk trails can be connected.
- There is a concern regarding the benefit of connecting Holt High School with the Riverwalk due to the lack of parking at the athletic fields and suitable corridors for the Riverwalk along River Road.
- A concern must be raised on how the Riverwalk with pass the Corus Tuscaloosa Steel Mill.
- There is an issue on how the design can be accomplished for the Riverwalk that will allow for security and safety of the thirteen (13) miles of Riverwalk corridors.
- There is an issue on how many Riverwalk ties will be required from the downtown area of Tuscaloosa. This includes areas such as the historic district, the proposed urban renewal area, the City offices location, the downtown entertainment section of town, the West End and the New Town area.





- The riverfront at the site of the city's baseball complex is a concern because of the evidence of a land fill that is present under the site.
- There is an issue on how the Riverwalk will tie the major residential areas on the north side of the Black Warrior River area.

### Goals

To provide a direction for the development of the Riverwalk Master Plan, major goals have been established that will give a directive for the preparation of the plan. Each of these goals are separate entities within themselves but combined they make up the direction for the total planning process.

- Develop a Riverwalk corridor that connects the different elements of the City of Tuscaloosa including the downtown area, the University, the scenic areas along the rivers and the perimeter connection points such as the City of Northport and Holt areas.
- Establish a key node of development adjacent to the downtown Tuscaloosa area between the Black Warrior River and the Capital Park area.
- Provide a new area for Cityfest that is tied to the entertainment area for the City.
- Design a plan that will bring entertainment to the downtown area of Tuscaloosa.
- Provide access to the riverfront via structured greenways and corridors.
- Provide interest nodes along both the Black Warrior and the North Rivers.
- Develop a safe yet interesting walking/biking/jogging corridor along the scenic Black Warrior River.
- Allow access of the river by spectators via boardwalks, trails, overlooks and boat access locations.
- Allow the Riverwalk to be a tie along the river as well as be a draw for visitors and residents alike.
- Coordinate the Riverwalk with representatives of the City of Tuscaloosa and the City of Northport to generate teaming on the Riverwalk establishment.



## Section Three

### Opportunities of the Master Plan



## Opportunities of the Master Plan

The master plan for the River Margin Park encompasses over 13 miles of development opportunities tied to the Riverwalk along both the north and south edges of the Black Warrior River and along the west edge of the North River. This development opportunity provides individual opportunities for both the public and private market entrepreneurs. The development of these potential key areas will provide a stimulus to the community as well as they will take maximum advantage of one of the most important resources that the City of Tuscaloosa has to offer, it's river heritage.

The analysis process identified a number of areas along the Riverwalk that would offer Potential Project Locations that would be suitable for development. These areas are identified herein and exist within the limits of the Riverwalk corridor for the conceptual and master plan development of this project. The key identified areas and potential development options as shown on Exhibit-1 are as follows:

### South Side of the Black Warrior River

#### Area #1

- This location along the Riverwalk includes the development potential of a greenway along the Black Warrior River, starting at the Oliver Lock and Dam and continuing along the rivers edge to the elevated railroad crossing near downtown. Options for the area include cantilevered boardwalks, trails, additional parking areas and picnic pavilions.

#### Area #2

- The second area of potential development options includes the Riverwalk connection to Capital Park, through the West End Park and to the West End neighborhood area. This alignment option would tie the existing parks to the Riverwalk and the main waterfront along the Black Warrior River. Potential development options would include the establishment of shared roadway corridors for bicycles and the connection of new trails at Capital Park and through the West End Park. This would occur along existing streets in the West End, tying at the current terminus of the existing trail at the Oliver Lock and Dam beginning of the trail area identified in Area #1.

#### Area #3

- The next area is the property that lies between the elevated railroad bridge and the Lauren Wallace Boulevard bridge crossing. This area is currently occupied by an athletic complex and it is felt that a much better use for this area should be determined through the master plan. Opportunities would include utilizing the site for a new Farmers Market, providing an outdoor amphitheater for the area or providing an urban green space that would compliment the renovation of the downtown area identified in Area #4.

#### Area #4



- The area identified in this portion of the study encompasses the areas adjacent to the main downtown area and the Black Warrior River. Key aspects that need to be planned into this area include lodging and conferencing space, water front access, outdoor activity areas and more entertainment areas such as theaters, restaurants, shops and plazas that could double as the venue for Cityfeast. The river boat should also be considered in this area of development potential.

#### Area #5

- Queen City Park and the existing CORPS property are present within this area of potential development. The existing park offers a lot of connectivity options for the Riverwalk along with an adaptive re-use of the existing pool building. The CORPS property allows the chance for the Riverwalk to utilize an existing waterfront that only needs to be enhanced to tie it into the overall water front trail development.

#### Area #6

- This area is the location of the old Black Warrior River Locks. The old walls are still visible during low water and could be used as a focal point for the area. This was an important area along the river in days gone past. This area offers the opportunity to take advantage of the historical element of the area to make a focal point and access point to the river along the Riverwalk.

#### Area #7

- Area number seven is the one major archeological area that has been identified along the river corridor. History and restoration of past life styles are always great draws when a trail is identified along a major corridor. This historic area offers a great opportunity to bring history back for the modern day visitor to enjoy as well as learn about the past living styles of the Indians that populated the Black Warrior River corridor.

#### Area #8

- The abandoned water treatment plant located adjacent to the US Highway 82 bridge crossing of the Black Warrior River provides a unique opportunity for development through re-use and adaptive re-use of the existing buildings and water clear-well areas. The housing area adjacent to the treatment plant site, up as far as River Road, also allows for a great opportunity for the development of commercial and residential facilities for the area. Water access to the site is also possible within this development area.

#### Area #9

- Area number nine is the planned terminus for the southern leg of the Riverwalk. It is anticipated that additional parking could be planned in conjunction with the Boy Scout Council Office. Additional access corridors to the Holt Community could also be planned out of this location at some future date.



## North Side of the Black Warrior River

### Area #10

- This location of the plan is the tie with the Northport Greenway. Discussions have been held to have a joint development of trails at the levee and the placement of an historic bridge for use of both the residents of Northport and Tuscaloosa. There are a number of public and private opportunities that can be developed in this area.

### Area #11

- One key area is the open flood plain that is located along the Black Warrior River between the US Highway 82 bridge and the Gates of Wellington. This area is bordered, and accessed via Rice Mine Road. Potential development of this area includes the establishment of a major recreation complex, the development of a key commercial and residential development and/or the establishment of open play areas, shelters and parking areas that would complement the Riverwalk.

### Area #12

- The area that is directly opposite of the Gates of Wellington subdivision offers the easiest access to the Riverwalk from the neighborhoods on the north edge of Rice Mine Road. A potential penetration of the river is possible from this area allowing for the development overlooks, trail connections and associated rental equipment provisions for bikers, walkers, fisherman and boaters.

## West Side of the North River

### Area #13

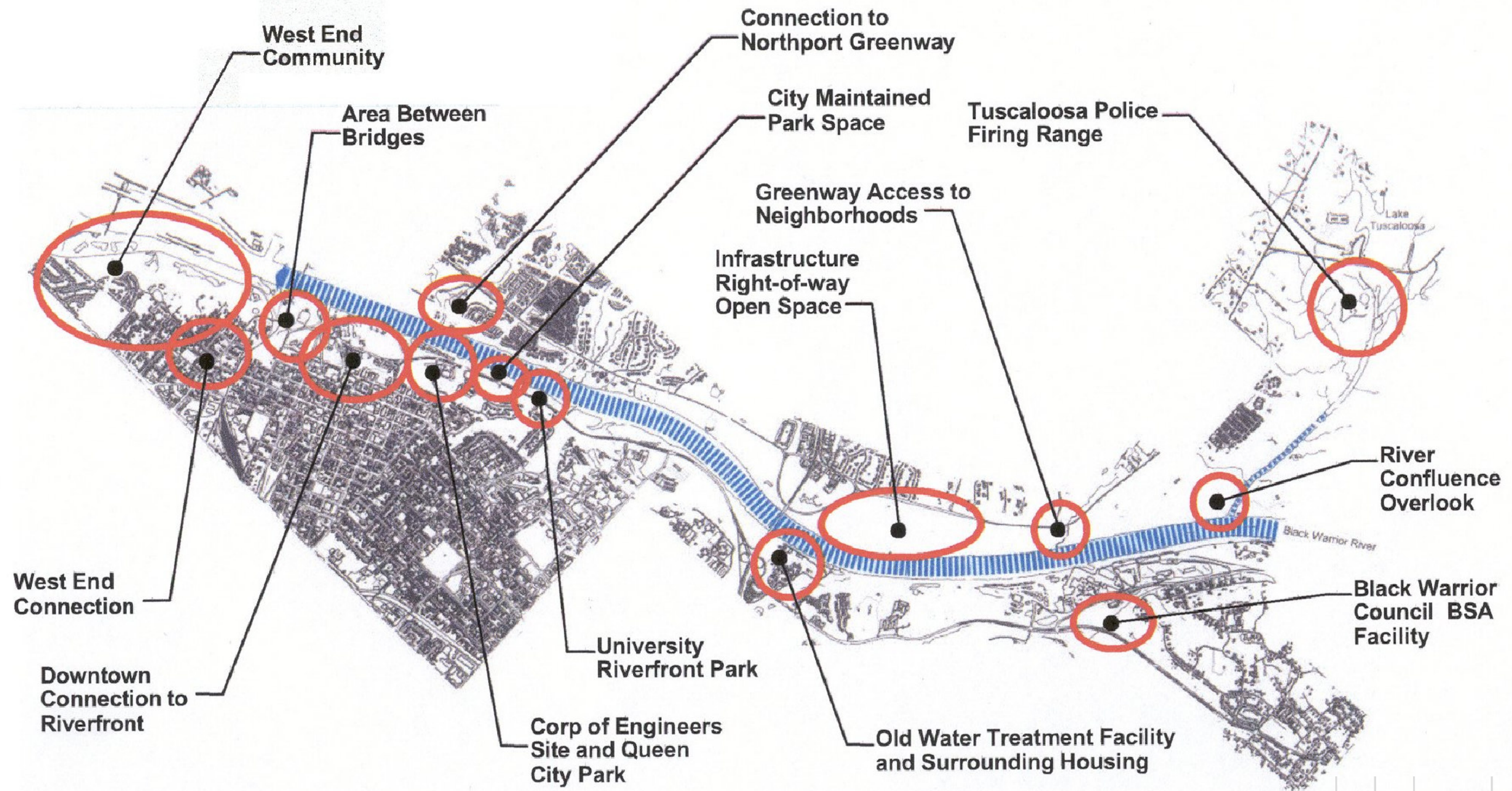
- Area number thirteen is the confluence of the North River with the Black Warrior River. This westernly corner offers a great opportunity for the development of a focal area for overlooks or Riverwalk identification that can become an identification of confluence. Trails and/or boardwalks can complement this area.

### Area #14

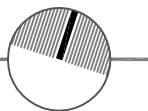
- The existing Police Firing Range provides a ready made park area that could be easily enhanced as a start of the eastern edge of the greenway. While it is anticipated that the Riverwalk would begin at the Mary Ann Phelps Recreation Center, a day use park with passive and active opportunities would be beneficial to the success of the trail. Additional parking and security could also be established at this location.

# master plan

## Project Locations



1000 0 500 1000 2000 4000



8731 Red Oak Boulevard  
Suite 101  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28217  
704/525/6284

**Almon Associates**

2009 12th Street - Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35403 - 205/349-2100

City of Tuscaloosa, Alabama

tuscaloosa, alabama



# Section Four Master Plan



## Master Plan

The master planning text and descriptions are divided into seven different segments along the Riverwalk Trail. Each segment is identified as a separate estimate and the costs for implementation for this segment are included in Section Five of this report to correspond with the description of the improvements within this section of the Executive Summary.

The overall master plan for the Riverwalk is included in this section as Exhibit 41. The segment descriptions that follow identify the key elements of the final design approach and the information identifies key characteristics of the individual design aspects for each segment.

*(It should be noted that this is an Executive Summary of the overall report, therefore the Exhibit numbers do not start at as 1, 2, etc..)*

### **Segment A – Oliver Lock and Dam to Lurleen B. Wallace Boulevard**

The final Riverwalk master plan begins at the Oliver Lock and Dam located on the west edge of Tuscaloosa. This facility is adjacent to the West End of town, along the Black Warrior River at the northern edge of the Tuscaloosa Country Club golf course. The trail parallels the rivers edge but also becomes a loop trail around the West End part of town. The Riverwalk for this segment of the plan is made up of a number of different components that combined, make up a loop trail system for the Riverwalk. The descriptions of those key sections include the following key components:

- **Riverwalk Trail Portion along the Black Warrior River from the Oliver Lock and Dam to the Amphitheater and Farmers Market**

The first section of the Riverwalk begins at a new parking lot that is built east of the existing Corps parking lot at the Oliver Lock and Dam. This new parking lot is provided for those people who will be using the Riverwalk so that the current parking facility is not always taken up with Riverwalk patrons.

The Riverwalk will be identified by a new entrance feature sign that identifies the Riverwalk. The trail continues on as a paved 12' wide trail along the top of the riverbank. As the Riverwalk approaches the abandoned lock area, the available trail corridor space is cramped by the existing Tuscaloosa Country Club, golf course. This restriction of the corridor predicated a need to provide a boardwalk trail that would be cantilevered out from the top of the riverbank towards the river in order to provide a trail along the river.

The beginning of this boardwalk has a small covered gazebo with perimeter seating that would allow the Riverwalk patrons to sit and watch the river in the shade. This section of the boardwalk would run approximately 400' to the connection of the abandoned locks with the riverbank. Along the abandoned locks, the riverbank ties directly to the locks and allows access to the concrete lock areas. Care should be taken to restrict the movement of persons onto the locks due to the narrow design of the walkways however. The trail will be landscaped in this area and will continue to an additional gazebo shelter area on the east side of the existing abandoned lock area. At this point the cantilevered boardwalk will begin again and will run approximately 1,400' LF to another gazebo shelter area.





The existing loading facility located east of the golf course will be removed under this plan and the Riverwalk will continue along the riverbank to the Amphitheater area where it will tie into the series of walkways that make up the Amphitheater and Farmers Market area. The Riverwalk will also tie to the proposed Softball Complex crossing the existing railroad tracks at a strategic location.

- **Jack Warner Parkway Extension**

The four lane roadway known as Jack Warner Parkway currently turns into a two lane roadway just west of the Hugh Thomas Bridge. During the reviews of the previous concepts it was recommended that this roadway become more of a collector road for the new downtown riverfront complex. It was decided that the roadway should be extended as a four lane road section through the downtown development area, near the Greensboro Avenue junction of Jack Warner Parkway, past the proposed Farmers Market and Amphitheater Complex and that the roadway should tie directly into Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. This improvement would allow a better traffic flow past the new complex by increasing the amount of lanes available for traffic and the tie with Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard would provide another major corridor to the riverfront. The style of the improvement would match the existing Jack Warner Parkway with medians and designated pedestrian crossing areas and pedestrian style lighting.

- **West End Softball Field Relocation**

The removal of the existing ball fields at the site of the proposed Amphitheater and Farmers Market complex required that replacement fields be provided somewhere else within the downtown area of Tuscaloosa. Through the development of the different concepts, it was decided that two new softball fields should be added to the West End of town and that the complex should be located with access to the Riverwalk corridor.

Review of the available locations for property in the West End found a piece of property that would be suitable for the development of a two field ball field complex and an accessible route to the Riverwalk Trail. This piece of property is located at the area north of the Historic New Town Area, east of the end of the existing golf course and on the south side of the existing railroad area. The site would be accessible from both the extension of Jack Warner Parkway and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Within the complex there would be two competition ball fields with a combined scorers tower and concession/restroom building, team dugouts, a parking lot, along with a loop walking trail around the field that would tie directly with the Riverwalk Trail. Parking for 40 vehicles will be provided. The access off of Jack Warner Parkway will be a gated access with signage and landscape development. The site will receive pedestrian and parking lot scale lighting for security. The fields will be lighted for night use.

- **Amphitheater & Farmers Market Complex (Potential CityFest Area)**

The proposed Amphitheater and Farmers Market Complex, as noted in Exhibit 42, Figures A,B & C, will replace the current ball field complex that exists between the Hugh Thomas Bridge and the existing elevated railway known in the past as the old GM&O Railway. This



complex will provide for a seating potential for 10,000 people with 2,500 of the seating potential being fixed seating adjacent to the main stage facility. The Amphitheater will be a covered stage facility that will be combined with the wall system along the rivers edge. This stage facility will provide for dressing rooms, restrooms, set storage areas, orchestra areas and backstage gathering areas. A unique feature of the amphitheater would be that when not in use, it would be open on the front and riverside to allow the visual vista through the stage area to the Black Warrior River from the Farmers Market area. The non-structured seating for a potential 7,500 patrons would be a graded terrace type of configuration which would allow for table seating as well as blankets and portable chair seating. This can be seen best in Exhibit 42, Figure C.

It is anticipate that this area also be used for the CityFest Festival. The spaces and open parking areas adjacent to the complex provide ample space for the festival without disruption to the downtown entertainment district areas. Traffic control would also be better defined if this space is used for the festival.

The Farmers Market is composed of a three building complex that is located on the upper south side of the Amphitheater Complex. Exhibit 42, Figure A indicates that all three of the buildings will have the first floor available for open use for the Farmers Market. Some enclosed spaces will be provided for special uses including toilets and concession areas but the majority of the spaces will be open air spaces. The design of the plaza areas around the buildings will provide for outdoor venders to supplement those venders located within the interior of the building structures. A center corridor between the two main buildings is set as a sight vista to the stage area of the Amphitheater from the parking and pedestrian routes on the north side of the structures.

The second and third stories of the three buildings would provide for commercial and/or office spaces. Suitable parking is provided on the northern perimeter of the complex to provide parking for both the Farmers Market, the commercial traffic parking and special events. The terraced Amphitheater grades can also be utilized for the Farmers Market, if necessary. The entire complex can also be utilized for events such as craft shows and CityFest activities.

The Riverwalk would split when it reaches the Amphitheater and the Farmers Market Complex to allow for the trail to stay in operation during events. During normal days, patrons of the Riverwalk can utilize the trail/walk system that borders the river. When a scheduled event is happening, the Riverwalk patron can merge towards the Farmers Market and miss the event that is in process. The flow of pedestrians can therefore move, unimpeded, into the main entertainment district on the east side of the Hugh Thomas Bridge. Different walkways are provided throughout the entire site to allow for a variety of access routes within the area.

To provide for a sound buffer from the adjacent overpass roadways and railroad bridges, suitable landscaping will be provided with good canopy opportunities to buffer the sounds from the elevated transportation corridors. The Amphitheater will be wired for sound and lighting that will also help to deter the noise from the elevated corridors. Pedestrian scale lighting will be provided throughout the area to allow for night use of the spaces.



- **Loop Bikeway/Walkway from Capital Park through the West End**

An alternative to the Riverwalk is a walking and bicycle trail that will loop through the center portion of the West End. This proposed trail provides a loop trail within the West End of Tuscaloosa and it provides another opportunity to access the Riverwalk.

Currently the Riverwalk ends at the Historic Capital Park location. The master plan recommends that the trail continue from this park, west along 6<sup>th</sup> Street to the existing bridge that crosses over the railroad. This would be a shared trail with both bicyclists and walker/joggers. This 6<sup>th</sup> Street bridge is scheduled for demolition by the city but it is recommended that the vehicular traffic be taken off of the bridge and the bridge be left, to be revamped for pedestrian use only. This would allow the trail to cross over the railroad corridor safely.

On the west side of the bridge, it is recommended that the roadway be transformed to a destination parking lot, still allowing the residents to park as they currently do in front of their homes. The trail would then leave the parking lot and continue south on the east shoulder of the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard within existing green space that is vacant at this time. The trail is still a shared path at this time. At 7<sup>th</sup> Street the combined walking and riding trail would cross Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and continue up to the northeast corner of the West End Park. The trail would split at this time with bicyclists on the road and walkers/joggers on the walkway along the road. The trail then cuts across the center of the park site and a new gazebo shelter with picnic tables, bar-be-que area, bike rack and seating plaza will be provided.

After the trail leaves the West End Park, it would continue up along the north side of 8<sup>th</sup> Street as a separated trail. Bicycles would be on the roadway while walkers/joggers would be on the sidewalk along the roadway. Some of the sidewalk does exist and there are a number of areas where new sidewalks will need to be established and existing sidewalks will need to be widened. This shared trail would then continue up to the cul-de-sac at the western end of 8<sup>th</sup> Street and then cross along the west end of the golf course, across a controlled crossing of the railroad line to the Oliver Lock and Dam parking lot, therefore completing the total loop within the West End neighborhood.

Additional study will be required for this shared section of the trail to determine it's best location, the exact widths for the walks and trail along with the exact extent of the trail need to be determined prior to moving forward.

### **Segment B – Lurleen B. Wallace Boulevard to 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue**

The second segment of the Riverwalk development is the downtown Entertainment District enhancements. This portion of the project is the most visible and it has the biggest impact to the overall project. The design in this section happens between the Hugh Thomas Bridge and 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue from the west to the east and from University Boulevard on the south edge of the district to the Black Warrior River on the north edge of the segment. Key design aspects of this portion of the Riverwalk include the following:

- **Development North of Jack Warner Parkway to Rivers Edge**



There are a number of different aspects that occur in this section of the Riverwalk development. Starting at the river, the master plan provides for a number of hard edges that define the rivers edge. Exhibit 43, Figures A & B indicates the improvements to this portion of the Entertainment District. The improvements starting at the rivers edge include hard design walls that define a sweeping waterfront edge. This allows the river to be accessible to patrons and boaters alike. The undulation of these curved lines of the main waterfront show a sensitivity to the existing rivers edge. The existing character of the inlets and backwater areas are enhanced by the walls and open plaza areas at the river. Green space and hard pavements along with decorative landscape development make up a natural looking space at the rivers edge that are sensitive to the amount of patrons that would be using the area. This space is meant for use by those persons who want quiet and solitude as well as those persons who want to enjoy the natural space in groups.

The main waterfront area is taken up with a series of paths and plaza areas that offer a variety of spaces and outdoor experiences. The pavements will be a mixture of materials including decorative concrete, manufactured pavers and pressed pattern concrete pavements. A number of green spaces are also provided along the waterfront to bring the natural aspect of the river and the downtown Entertainment District together. Plaza levels are integrated into the overall master plan to allow a variety of different level observation areas that can be used for a number of different opportunities. Pedestrian lighting and numerous site amenities are provided within the pedestrian spaces. This includes benches, signage and other amenities to support the open space and walkway corridors.

The primary Riverwalk corridor snakes through the center of this area. The location of this corridor as shown in Exhibit 43, Figure A, allows for a number of opportunities and options for those on the Riverwalk, to enter the downtown Entertainment District and the outdoor use areas of this master plan. It should be noted however that it is important to allow the free flow of the Riverwalk through the riverfront spaces so that a maintained corridor is always present. The master plan provides this with a primary corridor designation via pavement changes and signage.

The key to any downtown space is having a variety of options for the patrons to become involved with. The northern part of the downtown development includes a wide variety of outdoor spaces and support facilities that provide the patrons a chance to enjoy a multitude of indoor and outdoor spaces as well as different activities. Key components that make up the northern section of the downtown redevelopment plan for the riverfront include the following:

1. A Hotel & Convention Center Complex With a Parking Garage
2. The Realignment of Greensboro Avenue Into a Focus Point
3. The Relocation of the Existing Waterfront Gazebo
4. Miscellaneous Walks, Plaza Areas and Green Spaces
5. The Implementation of a Performance Green
6. The Installation of Support Facilities such as Restaurants
7. A Primary Corridor for the Riverwalk Trail
8. Numerous Observation and Seating Areas Along the Rivers Edge
9. Various Mixed Use and Office Space Buildings



- **Development South of Jack Warner Parkway to University Boulevard**

The northern portion of the downtown redevelopment is composed of three different components of use. This development includes a commercial/office complex, an entertainment/restaurant and commercial/support facility area and a condominium housing development within this segment of the downtown redevelopment area. This total development area is connected with a series of plaza areas, walkways and different grade changes that will enable a concentrated flow of both patrons and residents for the area. Key focal points will include fountains, plaza overlooks and landscape corridors as indicated in Exhibit # 44, Figures A & B.

In detail, the redevelopment west of the realigned Greensboro Avenue includes the enhancement of the current City Fest Block by adding an additional space for outdoor plazas, seating, and landscape corridors that enhance the green space already present in this downtown area. This space will be tied directly to the on and off walkways from the Hugh Thomas Bridge. To provide the pedestrian connection across the Black Warrior River to both Northport and the Riverwalk, the master plan recommends that the current attached walkway corridor, on both sides of the bridge be removed. This walkway would then be replaced with a 8' wide walkway on the north bound and south bound sides to allow both walkers and bicyclists to cross the bridge at the same time on opposite sides of the bridge(s). Pedestrian lighting is also recommended on the bridge because of the nighttime use that the bridge will receive to get people to and from the downtown area.

The facilities in the area include space for entertainment venues, mixed use space and an additional hotel/parking garage complex that is tied directly to parking garages and the Hotel Convention Center Complex via an overhead covered walkway across Jack Warner Parkway. These facilities will be stepped into the slopes that are present and the space will provide an anchor for the multi-use entertainment spaces that are provided in the central core of the southern portion of the downtown redevelopment.

Within the central core of this portion of the downtown redevelopment plan is the concentrated mass of shops, restaurants and entertainment spaces. The steep grades from 4<sup>th</sup> Street to Jack Warner Parkway provide an opportunity to step the elements of the Entertainment District allowing for key plaza and site vistas within and out of the space. This will enhance the experience that the patron has within the southern portion of the downtown redevelopment area into the northern river development area on the rivers edge of the Jack Warner Parkway. The steep grades of the site also allow for the installation of key enclosed parking structures under the stepped plaza areas with access directly to Jack Warner Parkway. These garage spaces will provide the necessary parking for the Entertainment District and the tops of the garages will become the upper plazas and shop areas of the Entertainment District. Specialty landscape development, lighting and key site amenities such as fountains, kiosks and signage will be provided for this section of the master plan. A key crossing of Jack Warner Parkway, at grade level will be provided and it is recommended that the crossing be signalized.

The eastern side of the southern portion of the downtown redevelopment includes condominium style housing that is tied directly to the Entertainment District of the downtown



area. This style of housing will be tied to some entertainment venues by being on the second and third stories of the buildings. Other condominiums will function as stand alone structures. In all cases the housing is tied directly with the Entertainment District.

One key aspect of the eastern portion of the redevelopment area is the bus transit station that will be incorporated into the plan. The facility will be located on the western corner of the Jack Warner Parkway and 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue. This facility will be a destination station for the city wide transit system and a small station with a bus loading and unloading area will be provided. Patrons will also be able to access the Riverwalk and the Entertainment District from this location.

Key components that make up the southern section of the downtown redevelopment plan include the following:

1. The Realignment of Greensboro Avenue
2. Provision for a Parking Garage & Hotel Tied to the Convention Center Complex
3. Widening and the Connection of the Pedestrian Walkways on the Hugh Thomas Bridge to the Downtown Area
4. Establishment of an Entertainment District of Shops, Restaurants and Service Facilities
5. Establishment of Outdoor Gathering Spaces and Plaza Gathering Areas
6. Condominium Housing Adjacent to the Pedestrian Promenade.
7. Combined Housing and Multi-Use Spaces
8. Entertainment District Parking Garages
9. Bus Transit Station

### **Segment C – 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue to the University of Alabama**

The third segment of the Riverwalk is the portion that includes the properties along the Black Warrior River from the existing Corps of Engineers Property to the existing plaza now owned by the University of Alabama along the Black Warrior River. The detailed improvements in this area are:

- **Tuscaloosa Landing (Corps Property Development)**

The redevelopment of the Corps property will provide a venue that is both passive and somewhat active. The renovation of the space provides a number of free form wood deck/dock areas at the rivers edge with opportunities for group use of the spaces. No permanent structures other than the deck/dock areas would be possible due to the rise and fall of the river. This lower deck/dock area is also a potential boat mooring for the existing Riverboat. Access to the lower deck will be by stairs only because of the distance from the top to the bottom of the bank. The lower deck/dock area is also a potential mooring for the existing Riverboat with provisions for larger Tour Boat moorings as well as emergency loading for large cargo items.

Along the top of the Corps property two structures are provided for restaurants and specialty shop areas. These facilities will have outdoor seating areas, plaza's and use areas that will supplement the interior square footage and uses of the buildings. Parking will be provided



for the site along with a series of trails and the Riverwalk corridor that will pass through the space at the top of the riverbank.

One of the Corps metal buildings could be retained for use as storage and potentially for the housing of the Riverwalk police detachment. This will put the police on the fringe of the Downtown Entertainment District as well as directly on the Riverwalk corridor. The elevated catwalk pier will also remain with some changes to the image of the deck and railings.

Exhibit 47, Figure B & C indicates the arrangement of the new deck/dock areas and the relationship of the top of the bank to the lower portion of the deck/dock areas.

- **Queen City Park Redevelopment**

The historic pool house within the Queen City Park provides a suitable venue for the development of a small entertainment area for special events and it was the decision of the master plan committee that this building be left in place and restored for a new purpose. The exact purpose for the building would revolve around the pool/plaza restoration and the use of the space for special events. An exact use will require additional planning and study.

The architectural character of the building provides for a tie to Tuscaloosa's architectural history and this is a focal point that the master planners felt would enhance the development of the downtown area and also provide a fringe softening of the development of the downtown Entertainment District. Exhibit 47, Figure A indicates the extent of the Queen City Park development. The existing pool area will be transformed into an open lawn style plaza for group usage. Finally, this space will have a small stage area for presentations, concerts or plays. The "Warner Fountain" will be retained at the south end of the pool/courtyard area.

A new two acre lake is to be formed within the confines of the Queen City Park. This pond will have two-fold purpose. First, the lake will be a passive water body away from the river, where people can stroll and sit and reflect. There will be walking trails and seating areas throughout the park area along with green spaces for use in a passive setting. Secondly, the lake will be used for wet detention therefore helping with the stormwater issues coming from the 21<sup>st</sup> Street area of town. The current AA facility will need to be relocated based upon this plan. A suitable location will be provided in an additional location per the City.

Decorative landscape development will be provided for through the park area along with pedestrian level lighting for night use. A new parking lot will also be provided for 80 vehicles.

- **Old River Locks Redevelopment**

Part of the history of the river is the old river locks that are located approximately 800' LF upstream from the Corps property on the southern edge of the Black Warrior River. The years have taken most of the original locks away but a major part of the original foundation is visible during low water times. The huge stones are still in place for the foundation of the lock and it is recommended that a fishing/observation plaza and boat hookup dock area be developed for this area. The Riverwalk would pass by the Old Lock Plaza along the top of the riverbank, allowing access to the plaza and boat hookup area. Within the area along the



top of the riverbank would be two covered shelters with picnic tables and bar-be-que grill areas.

- **Historic Indian Village Interpretive Area**

Previous archeological investigations along the Black Warrior River have indicated that prehistoric Indian's lived along a portion of the Black Warrior River corridor that is within the third segment of the Riverwalk. Approximately 2,000' LF upstream from the Corps Property, evidence was found of a settlement of prehistoric Indian's who were the ancestors of the Choctaws, the Indian's who constructed the Moundsville archeological site near Tuscaloosa.

To add to the cultural portion of the Riverwalk, it was decided that an interpretive Indian Village would be constructed and used as a walking museum area in conjunction with the Riverwalk. Replicated living dwellings and associated Indian lifestyle areas of a working village would be developed for viewing by the walking public. This exhibit would be on a separate gated trail off of the Riverwalk trail. The Riverwalk would pass by the village but the actual village would be secured from non-supervised activities. Additional programming will need to be completed for this area.

- **Trail Development & Improvement**

The Riverwalk would be installed primarily along the top of the Black Warrior Riverbank or on an existing plateau already utilized by some of the trail within this segment area. Walls will be required in some areas and the Riverwalk will maintain a 12' pavement width. Pedestrian scale lighting and site amenities such as benches and trash receptacles will be provided.

### **Segment D – The University of Alabama to Black Warrior Council Office, BSA**

The fourth segment of the Riverwalk is the development of the trail from the University of Alabama riverfront park to the Black Warrior Council Office of the Boy Scouts of America. This portion of the Riverwalk provides for the update of the existing trail along the riverbank, from the existing University waterfront park, to the US Highway 82 bridge. This trail is currently in great need of repair and the Riverwalk will provide an enhancement to the corridor.

Currently no trails are present going east towards the Holt Community. This segment plans the development of a new trail around the Tuscaloosa Steel Mill to the Boy Scout Council Office as a destination point. No provisions to extend the trail past the Boy Scout Council Office has been included in this project scope. The key aspects of this portion of the Riverwalk are as follows:

- **Upgrade of Trail Extension From The University Park**

Currently there is a semi-paved trail from the existing University Riverfront Park to the US Highway 82 bridge. This trail is very narrow and in places, the trail is starting to slide over the hill. The proposed Riverwalk enhancement will provide a 12' wide paved surface. This 3,200' LF section of the Riverwalk will provide a scenic, tree covered walk along the river, protected from the noise of the vehicles on Jack Warner Parkway. Approximately 1,600' LF downstream from the US Highway 82 bridge, there is an overlook planned for this section of





the Riverwalk. This element will be a deck construction type of overlook that cantilevers over the edge of the riverbank. There will be seating on the deck and an observation railing that will restrict persons from getting too far over the bank towards the river. The trail renovation will include pedestrian scale lighting and miscellaneous site furniture such as strategically located benches and trash receptacles.

- **Riverview Village Development (Old Water Treatment Plant Site)**

After the Riverwalk crosses under the US Highway 82 it parallels the existing abandoned water treatment plant site. The review of this site noted that the treatment plant facility with its concrete walls and masonry buildings could be a key candidate for adaptive re-use. The conceptual plans looked at a number of uses for the facility and the more the area was studied, the more it was agreed that the site should be expanded to include the properties up to Jack Warner Parkway.

The design for this space, as indicated in Exhibit 45, Figure A, ultimately includes the development of a village area for the establishment of housing, offices, commercial shops and restaurants along with parking and support facilities to provide a commercial center, a living and working environment and an entertainment venue for the area. This space could become a separate community unto itself.

Starting at the rivers edge, the master plan provides for the Riverwalk to traverse past the old treatment plant buildings and continue on to the east. At the level of the abandoned water treatment plant clear wells, the design calls for the existing buildings to be rehabilitated for commercial uses. The upper levels are to become elevated plaza's with observation decks that protrude out over the edge of the riverbank. Parking is provided on both the west and east sides of the complex. The overall commercial complex provides plenty of outdoor use areas in the forms of plaza's and outdoor gathering areas so this portion of the design can be used as a gathering and observation area with the benefit of the river. Exhibit 45, Figure B shows this comparison in section with the overall site development options.

To the east of this complex is the existing boat access ramp area for the river. This is the only boat access area in this pool elevation of the Black Warrior River and the plan calls for the addition of a boat dock area on the upstream side of the boat access ramp. As an added entity for the river, a new inverted boat access facility is provided to allow canoes and kayaks to enter the river in a controlled environment. This facility is an inverted pyramid, stepped design that has three terraced edges of the boat access that are out of the main flow of the river. The open side of the launch area is actually in line with the rivers edge. The terraces are stacked to a height of approximately 20' in a stair stepped style of stacking configuration. This allows access to the river at any level of the water. A central handrail is provided to allow patrons to slide boats down the waters edge.

To supplement the connection of the north and south sides Riverwalk Development, it is recommended that a pedestrian bridge be installed that spans the Black Warrior River. This structure is located on the upstream side of the US Highway 82 Bridge and it would be an independent bridge that connects the northern side of the Riverwalk with the southern route of the Riverwalk. (A good time to implement this bridge is when the US Highway 82 Bridge is



renovated. This bridge improvement is scheduled per the DOT improvement schedule, to happen in the next five years.) When the pedestrian bridge enters the Riverwalk on the downstream side of the abandoned water treatment plant, it connects to the trail through a series of ramps and switchbacks that allow the bridge connection to be ADA accessible.

The development of the property behind the abandoned treatment plant site includes the complete renovation of the space. The existing housing would be purchased and removed. The new development includes a new, boulevard style access road off of Jack Warner Parkway to the water front development area. The central core of the property is planned for shops and office buildings. Outdoor plaza areas and gathering spaces along with suitable parking is provided within the design. Along the west edge of the site, housing is provided in a townhouse/condominium style of configuration. Within the central core of the site, upscale High Rise Housing would be implemented and tied into the commercial and waterfront corridor plans. There is also some combined office and housing in the central core of the property wherein the first story would be office or commercial and the upper stories would be housing. Housing would also be provided along the southern edge of the site, buffering the view of the site from the boulevard.

The lower development along the river is connected to the upper development by the means of an accessible ramp series that would be landscaped and lighted. The site development would include pedestrian friendly site design, landscape development and pedestrian style lighting along with the amenities needed to make this a walking style of community.

- **Riverwalk Development to the Black Warrior Council Office of the BSA**

As the Riverwalk leaves the boat access location it jumps onto the abandoned railroad line. The current tracks have been removed and the vegetation has started to take back this corridor but the grades are still in tact. The Riverwalk now leaves the rivers edge and continues along the abandoned railroad right of way behind the Gulf States Paper Corporate Offices to a roadway that exists through the wooded area on the east side of the Gulf States Paper property. This trail continues along the existing stone service road to a location on the west edge of the Tuscaloosa Corus Steel Company. At this point the trail enters a wetland area that buffers the steel plant from Jack Warner Parkway. The trail is planned as an elevated boardwalk, as indicated in Exhibit 46, Figure D, that continues 1,400' LF through the wetlands to the crossing of the service access road to the steel mill. This elevated boardwalk will have railings and lighting for safety. The boardwalk will provide a protected yet interesting corridor that will allow the patrons to enjoy another portion of nature, aside from the river, as they go on their walk.

At the crossing of the steel mill service access, it is recommended that a controlled crossing be completed with crossing lights and painted cross walks. After the crossing the trail again enters another 600' LF stretch of elevated boardwalk to the main entrance access road to the steel mill. Again this will need to be a signalized crossing with lights and marked pavements.

The trail now enters a wooded area on the east side of the mills main entrance road and continues up the hill toward the BSA Council Offices. The major aspect of this portion of the



trail is the crossing of the railroad. A 12' wide pedestrian bridge is planned for the crossing of the depressed railroad track system. This bridge will have handrails and it will be lighted for safety. No vehicle access will be provided on this bridge. Currently the railroad tracks go under Jack Warner Parkway. The Riverwalk trail will need to go over the tracks.

The final link of the trail for the south side of the Riverwalk is the continuation of the paved and lighted trail to the BSA Council Office. This trail will end at the current parking lot and will be considered a destination point for the Riverwalk. Future development of the trail east towards the Holt community is anticipated but not included in this master plan study.

There is also a spur trail that follows another abandoned railroad corridor, that goes into the campus of the University of Alabama. This corridor goes under Jack Warner Parkway and McFarland Boulevard, continuing along the corridor to the old Bryce Hospital site on the northeast side of the campus. As with the other trails, this trail will be paved and lighted.

### **Segment E – Northport City Limits to McFarland Boulevard**

The Riverwalk corridor starts on the north side of the Black Warrior River at the current levy for the City of Northport. The City of Northport has already planned a greenway and it ends at the limits of the levy, which is also the property line between Northport and Tuscaloosa. The detailed parts of this fifth segment of the Riverwalk master plan is as follows:

- **Historic Steel Truss Bridge Connection**

The Riverwalk is to start at the City Limits for the City of Northport and continue east along Rice Mine Road. An added interest feature for this corridor is the implementation of the relocation of a steel truss bridge that would cross the backwaters from the river on the east side of the levy. The City of Northport has recommended that this historic steel truss bridge be relocated from its current location to the connection over the water between the two cities. The master plan committee has recommended this and the bridge is part of the master plan recommendation. This action would serve as a wonderful cooperation between the two cities and additional coordination outside of the master plan study will need to occur.

- **Riverwalk Along Rice Mine Road**

After the installation of the historic steel truss bridge then the trail continues east along Rice Mine Road. The Riverwalk will parallel an existing access road to Rice Mine Road and then it will continue on the river side of the road, approximately 2 miles to the US Highway 82 bridge. At this point the Riverwalk crosses under the bridge and connects to the sixth segment of the Riverwalk.

Within the two miles of the Riverwalk, the trail crosses many access roads on the southern edge of Rice Mine Road. Care will need to be taken to provide signage and pavement designations to define the Riverwalk and to warn motorists of potential users. The trail will be located a minimum of 10' Feet off of the edge of the Rice Mine Road and considerations for buffers will be given for the trail to protect the patrons using the trail. This segment of the Riverwalk will provide access from the local residential neighborhoods, such as Reston



Place, High Forest, Indian Hills and Rivermont, to have direct access to the waterfront as well as the Riverwalk.

Part of this segment on the Eastern end where the riverside property is undeveloped may be located along the river margin if it works well with the property owners' development plan. The City does have a sewer easement in the area and needs to have access to it.

### **Segment F – McFarland Boulevard (US Highway 82 Bridge) to the Gates of Wellington**

The sixth segment of the Riverwalk begins at the US Highway 82 Bridge and continues along the north edge of the Black Warrior River to the Gates of Wellington. The details of this portion of the Riverwalk are as follows:

- **Day Use Park**

A new Day Use Park is planned as one of the primary destination locations for the northern portion of the Riverwalk. Exhibit 46, Figure A, shows this day use facility and the plan indicates that there is a 120 space parking lot that will be paved and lighted for patron's use. The lot also is tied to a cul-de-sac and has a formal boulevard entry off of Rice Mine Road. A formal entrance sign identifying the Riverwalk will be provided at the entrance to this day use area. There are two major shelters that are provided at this location. They both have picnic tables providing seating for up to 80 people each and provisions for bar-be-que grills will be included in the complex. The parking and shelters are tied to the Riverwalk trail by paved trails that will be lighted and handicapped accessible. Exhibit 46, Feature B indicates a typical section of this area showing how the observation/fishing decks at the river correspond with the trail at the top of the bank. This facility will be lighted and gated for security. Signage and site amenities such as benches and trash receptacles will be provided.

- **Riverwalk Trail**

The proposed Riverwalk will follow the wooded area along the river's edge. The trail will be a paved trail, 12' in width and it will be confined to the wooded area along the river's bank. There will be some seating at random locations along the trail and the trail is recommended to be lighted for nighttime use. In all cases, this portion of the Riverwalk will not deter the development of the property on the north side of the trail between the river and Rice Mine Road. Site amenities such as trash collection bins and signage will be provided along the trail. In this segment, there are a number of locations where the trail will cross a small gorge that has been made by the drainage entering the river from the adjacent property. Pedestrian bridges will be provided at three locations to cross these drainage channels. These bridges will be 12' in width and they will have handrails and provisions to keep vehicles off of the bridge. Pedestrian lighting will be provided for the bridges for security. A central connection trail will also be provided to the Woodbridge neighborhood area from the Riverwalk. This will also be a paved trail. Care will need to be taken to provide an identified crossing of Rice Mine Road with signage and painted designations. This should be done at the traffic signal for Rive Valley Road.

- **Gates of Wellington Access Day Use Facility**



At the location of the Gates of Wellington Subdivision on the north side of Rice Mine Road, it is recommended that a vehicle access be provided on the south side of Rice Mine Road. This access will be a destination location for parking and accessing the Riverwalk trail. The parking lot will provide spaces for approximately 40 vehicles. The lot will be paved and it will be lighted. Pedestrian access, including handicapped access, will be provided to the Riverwalk. City of Tuscaloosa operation and maintenance crews need access to the water and sewer mains at this point.

- **Boardwalk/Deck Fishing Overlooks**

Along this segment of the Riverwalk are three major boardwalk overlook areas. These facilities are wooden river observation decks and walkways that allow the patrons of the Riverwalk to access the waters edge of the Black Warrior River. The deck areas will have security railings and built in seating. There will be designated fishing areas and a fish cleaning station will be included with each of the overlooks. The actual deck areas will be cantilevered out over the river so that those using the decks can get good access to fishing and the views of the vistas up and down the river. Each of these deck areas will also be lighted for nighttime use. At the Gates of Wellington boardwalk overlook an additional canoe access area similar to the one at the boat access area in Segment D.

### **Segment G – Gates of Wellington to Rock Quarry**

The seventh and final segment of the Riverwalk begins at the destination parking lot called the Gates of Wellington, and the Riverwalk will run east along the Black Warrior River to the North River confluence. At this location the trail continues north to the Police Firing Range and then to the Mary Ann Phelpes Recreation Center. The details of this portion of the Riverwalk are as follows:

- **Equestrian Trail to Sokol Park**

Sokol Park currently exists some 2 miles from the intersection of the Gates of Wellington and Rice Mine Road. The master plan currently provides that the equestrian component for the Riverwalk, originate at Sokol Park and that equestrian trails be tied to the Riverwalk Project. This would be accomplished by providing an equestrian trail from the equestrian area at Sokol Park, down to Rice Mine Road at the Gates of Wellington. The equestrian crossing of Rice Mine Road will be provided under Rice Mine Road when the roadway is updated and realigned. This will happen under a bridge overpass to be located in the future.

- **Equestrian Trail**

A separate equestrian trail will then be provided on the uphill side of the Riverwalk. This trail starts at the road crossing from the Gates of Wellington at Rice Mine Road and continues to and along the Black Warrior River and then it runs east to the North River confluence. At this point the equestrian trail runs north to a loop equestrian trail just south of New Watermelon Road. A tie is also made of the trail with the destination parking lot that is located south of the existing Police Firing Range. This trail is to be a 15' wide, unpaved trail. Appropriate signage will be provided for the trail. The length of the trail from the Sokol Park beginning to



the loop at Watermelon Road and back again is approximately 9 miles. This trail is planned to be the same traveled way for both the Water Works access road and the Shared Operation and Maintenance Crews access to the area.

- **Riverwalk Trail**

The Riverwalk Trail for this segment begins at the Gates of Wellington destination parking lot and continues east along the Black Warrior River. The trail is the same 12' wide paved trail that was discussed earlier. This trail is along the top of the riverbank and it continues to the confluence of the North River and the Black Warrior River. At this junction the Riverwalk continues north, adjacent to the North River, to a new 40 vehicle parking lot located south of the existing Police Firing Range location. This is a paved parking lot and it has walkway ties to both the Riverwalk Trail and the equestrian path. A playground is included as a part of the plan. A canoe launch will also be located in close proximity to the paved destination parking lot adjacent to the Police Firing Range area.

Along the North River route of the Riverwalk there are two boardwalk overlooks that have both fish cleaning stations and designated fishing areas. Both of these boardwalks cantilever over the bank of the North River to allow the patrons to get as close to the river as possible.

The Riverwalk continues north after the destination parking lot and it meanders through the heavy wooded areas to an elevated bridge crossing of New Watermelon Road to the other destination point within the parking lot at Mary Ann Phelps Recreation Center. The elevated roadway crossing will be lighted and security will be provided crossing the roadway.

The entire Riverwalk trail will be lighted and paved. Adequate signage, bench areas and amenities such as trash receptacles will be provided for the trail.

- **Confluence Overlook @ North & Black Warrior Rivers**

At the confluence of the North and Black Warrior Rivers the master plan provides a large hexagon shelter with a series of boardwalks and outdoor spaces that take advantage of the vista in and out of this downstream corner of the river. This design is indicated in Exhibit 46, Figure C. Suitable landscape development, lighting and site amenities will be provided for the feature. A memorial will also be a part of the area to honor those who lost their lives so many years ago in the boating accident that occurred on the Black Warrior River. This total facility will only be accessible by foot and by maintenance vehicles.

- **Future Handicap Park @ Police Firing Range**

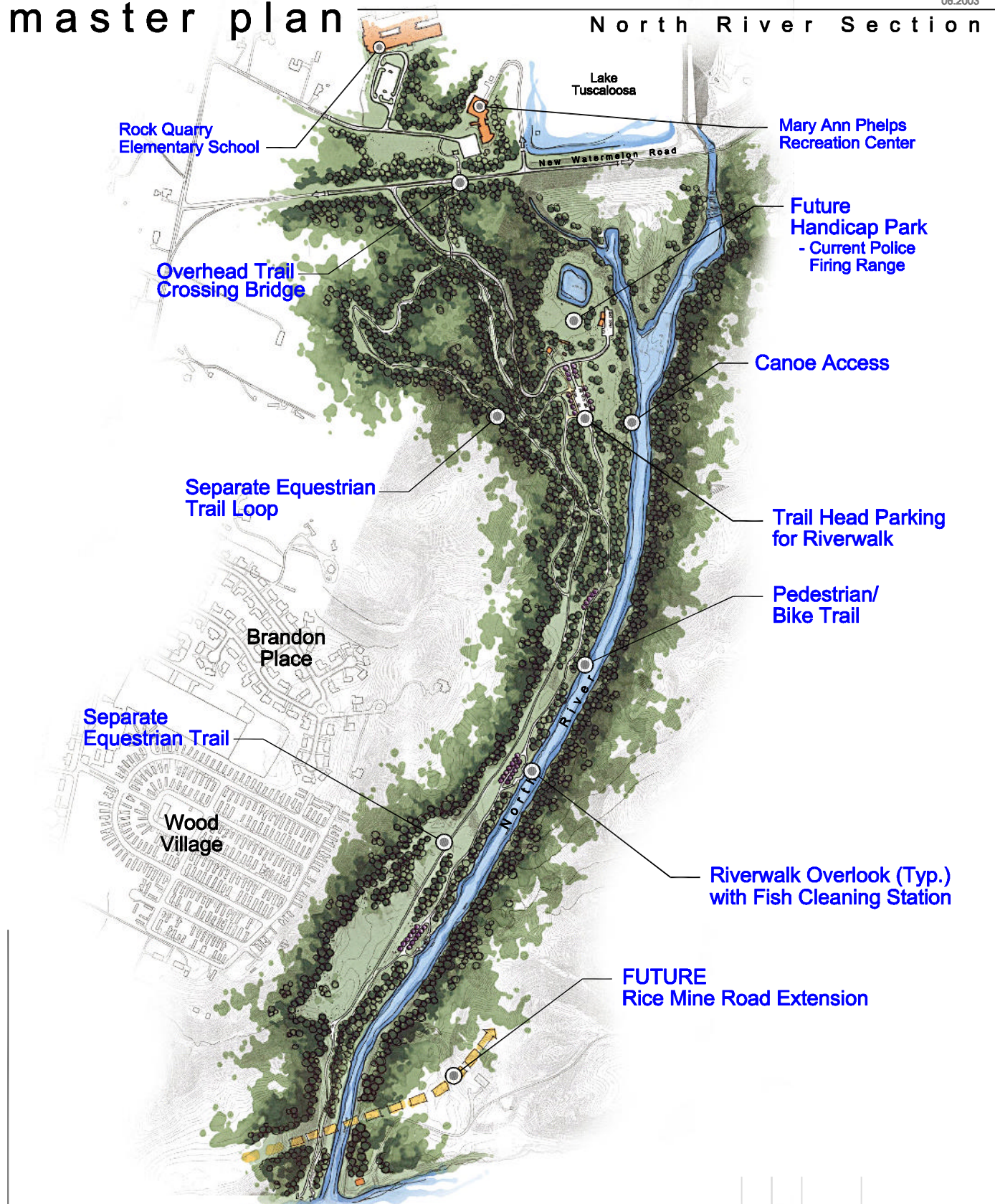
The future of the Police Firing Range will include the conversion of the site into a handicapped park as indicated in Exhibit 47, Figure D. This park will convert and expand the existing building into a meeting and activity center to supplement the Mary Ann Phelps Recreation Center. Outdoor plaza areas are planned in the renovation for outdoor activities. New parking for 12 vehicles and a drop off area will be designed with accessibility in mind. The existing pond will have a new trail system installed around the pond with a dock area provided for paddle boats and fishing on the pond. Four different sensory gardens will be



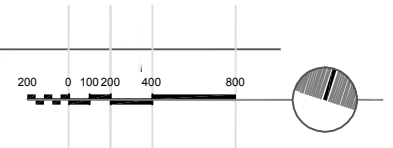
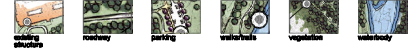
provided along the trails to allow for different experiences for those visiting the park. An accessible dock on the North River will be provided under this plan. Miscellaneous trails will be a part of the plan, thus tying each of the park areas together. In all cases, the paths will be 12' feet in width and appropriate pedestrian scale lighting will be provided.

# master plan

## North River Section



### Legend



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 Suite 101  
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 206/745-2100

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# master plan

# Performance Space

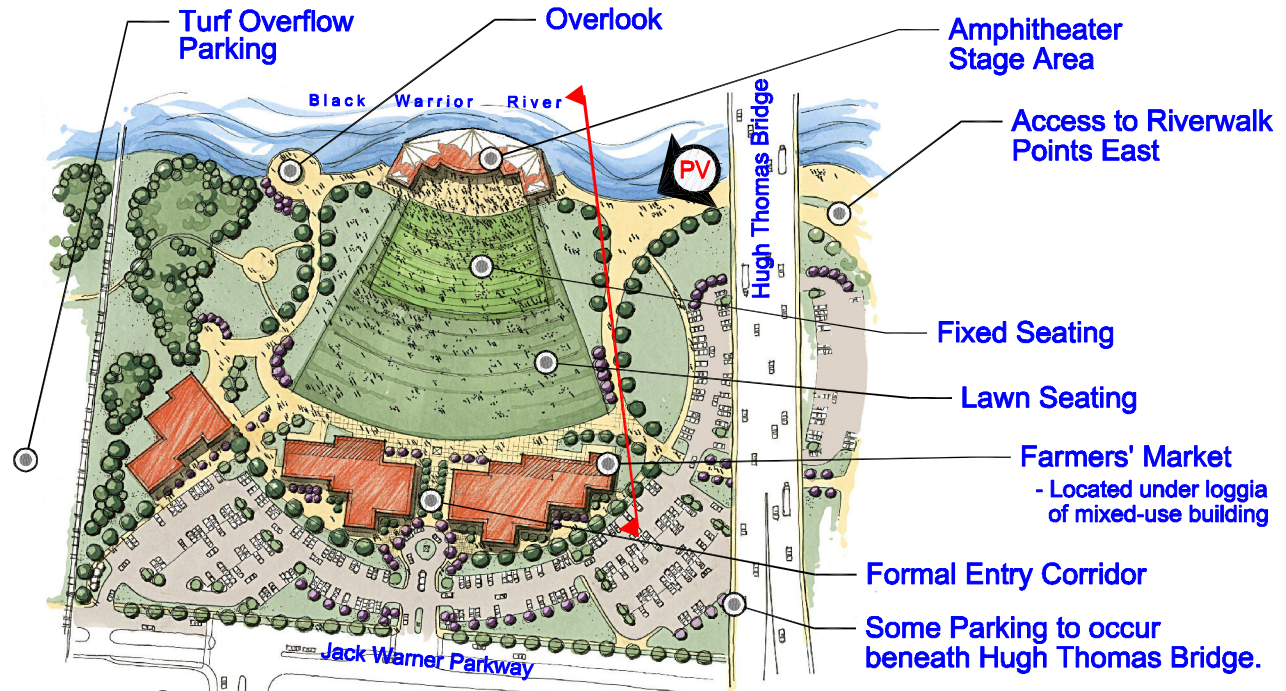


Figure (A)

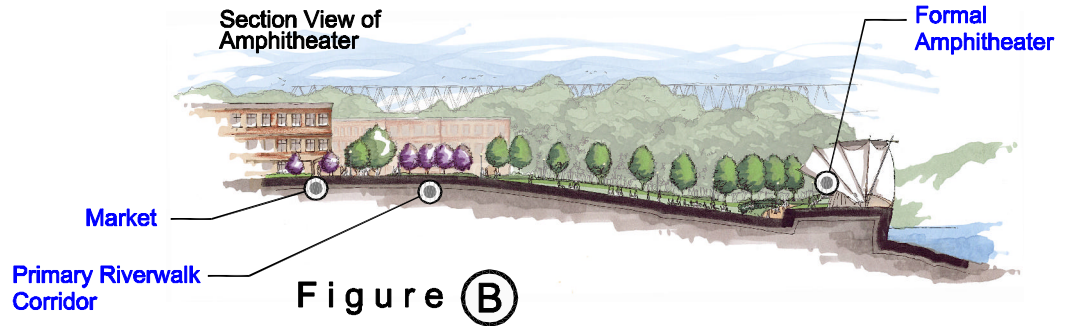
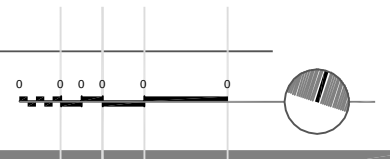


Figure (B)



Figure (C)



# master plan

# An Urban Waterfront

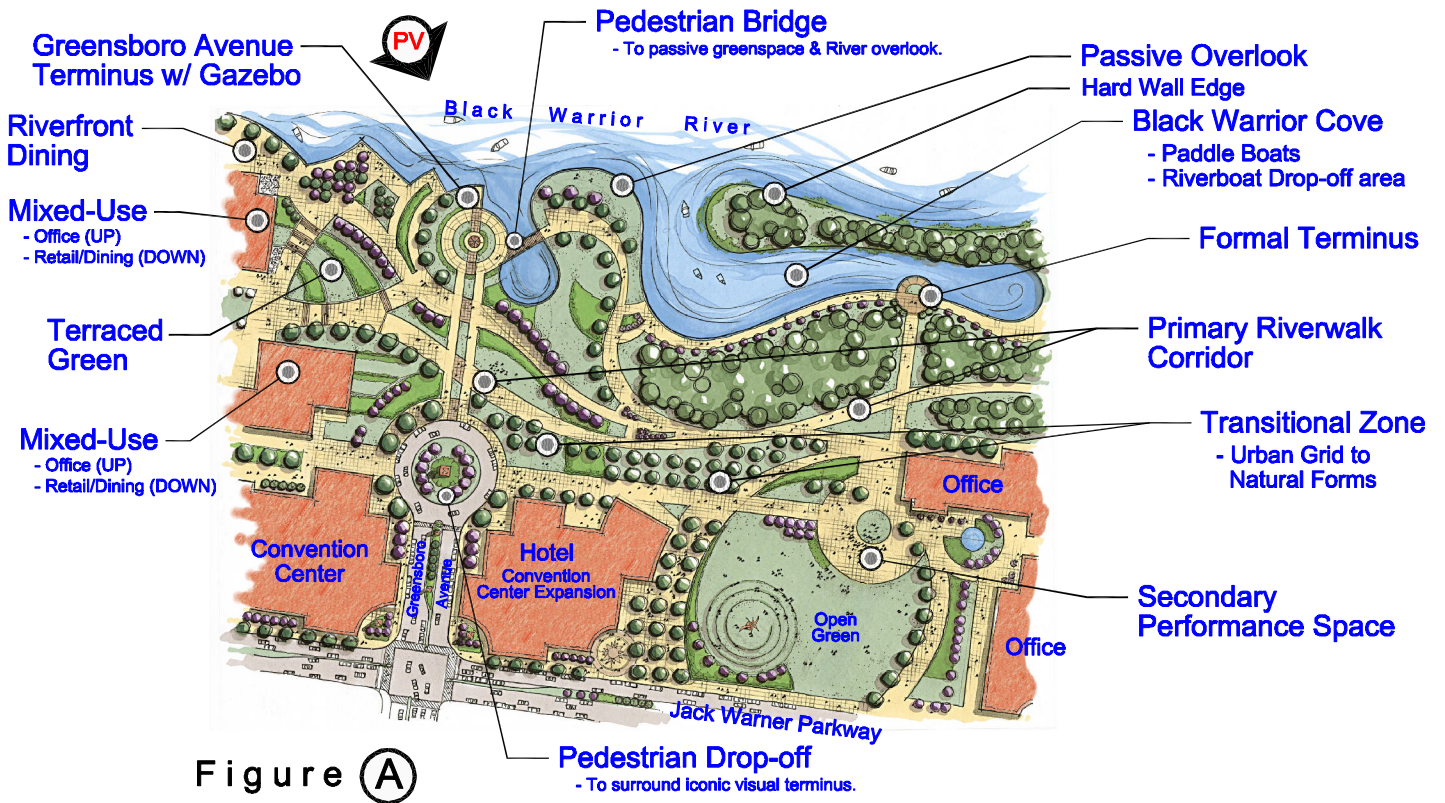
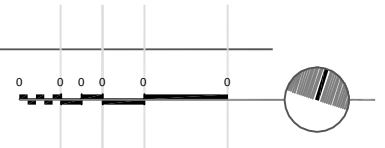


Figure (A)



Figure (B)



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# master plan

## Downtown Connectivity

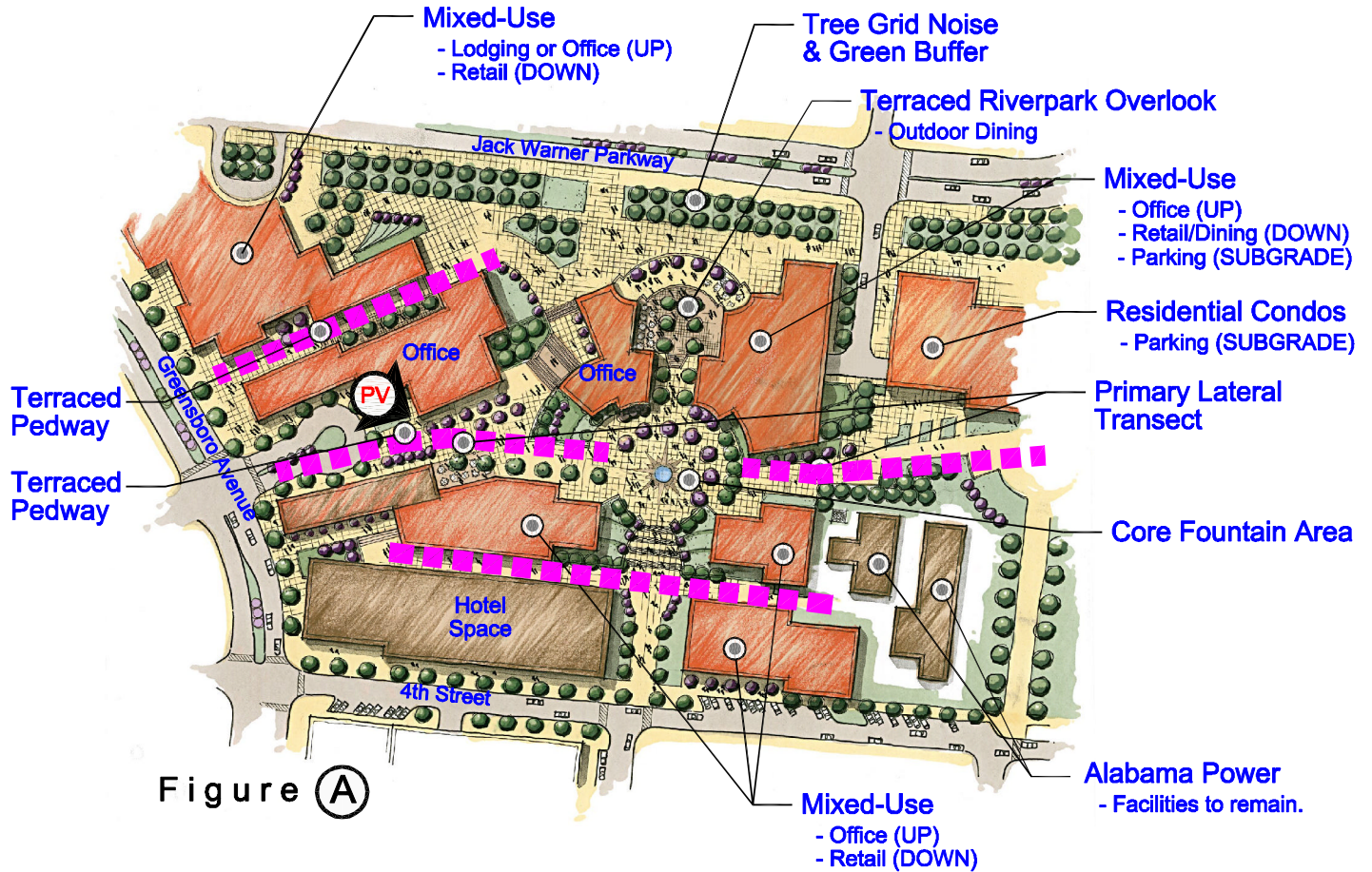
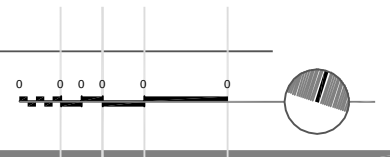


Figure (A)

Perspective View of Primary Pedestrian Corridor



Figure (B)



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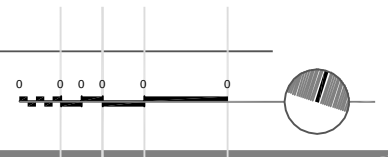
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## A New Riverview Village



**Figure B**



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## Passive Design

### New Passive Access



Figure (A)

### Typical Trail

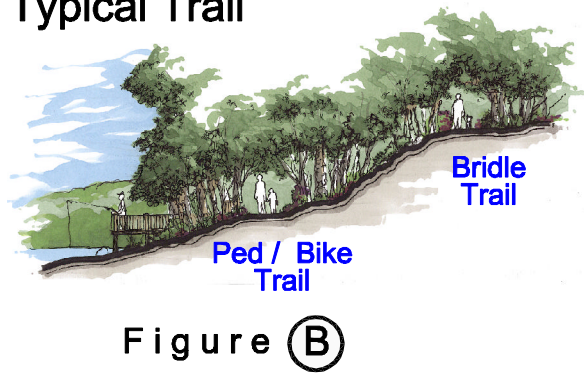


Figure (B)

### River Confluence

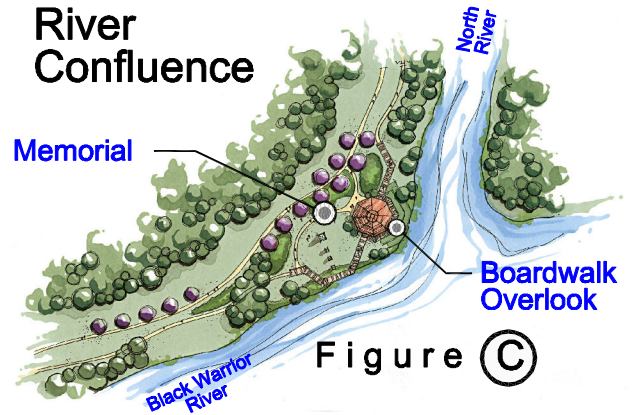


Figure (C)

### Holt Access

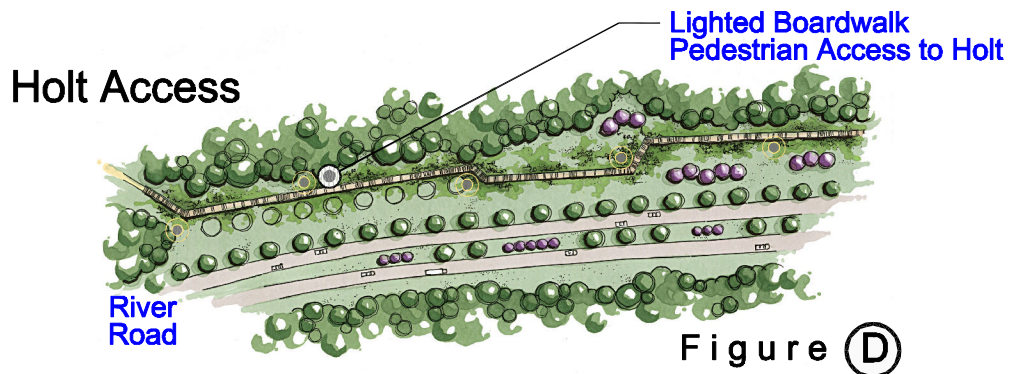
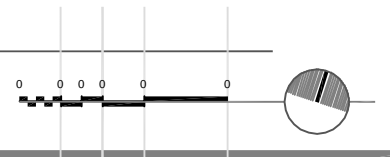


Figure (D)



# master plan

# Amenity Design

## Queen City Park



Figure (A)

## Tuscaloosa Landing



Figure (B)



Figure (C)

## Handicap Park

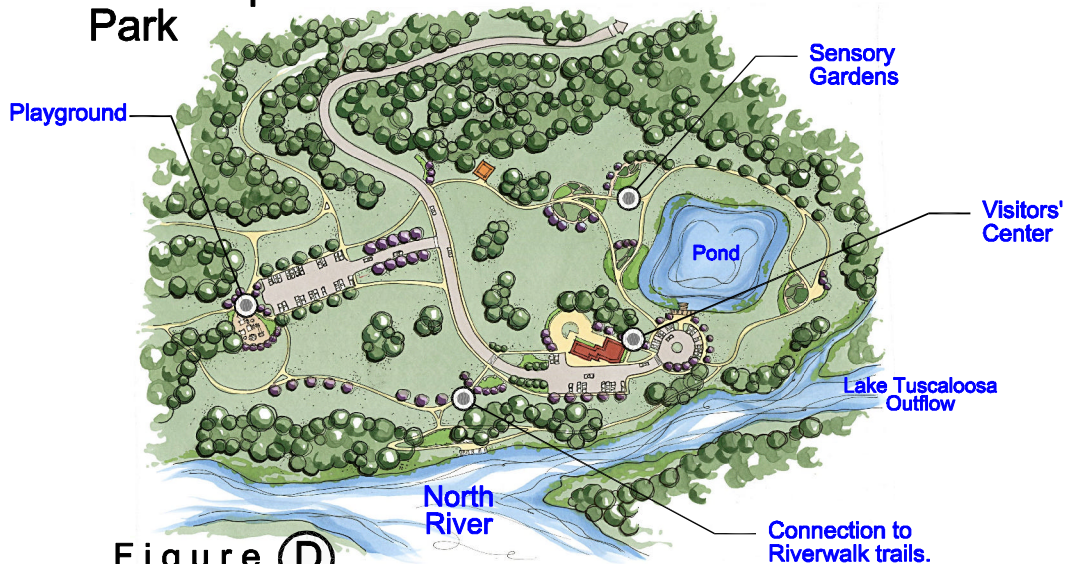
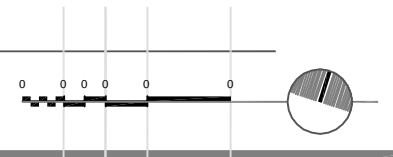


Figure (D)



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## Section Five Phased Implementation



## Phased Implementation

The following Riverwalk Budget and Implementation Schedule, Matrix 5-1, outlines all of the individual projects that are identified in the overall master plan as presented in Section Four of the Executive Summary Report. The matrix is broken down into a number of different categories that combined indicate the basic information of each of the identified projects. The information that is presented is in the following categories:

- **Segment Identification**

The individual projects along the Riverwalk Corridor are broken down into seven different Segments. Individual projects are identified under each segment.

- **Budget Per Project Identification**

Each project under each segment is estimated with a combined cost for the implementation of that particular project. Each segment is also subtotaled and the cost of mobilization and a contingency cost is included in the costs to give an overall segment total for budgeting purposes.

- **Estimated Duration Of The Project Implementation**

An estimated time of construction is included for each of the segment projects. This will allow the city to budget funds and construction periods.

- **The Priority Of Each Project for Implementation Within Its Segment**

To allow the city to make decisions on the implementation of the proposed projects, the team has established a ranking for each of the projects that ranks them from first to last per segment. This is done to allow the owner to know which projects need to follow which other project in a logical sequence.

- **Bar Chart Indicating The Overlap Of Projects Over A 15 Year Implementation**

The final item of the matrix is the bar chart that identifies the time frame that is recommended for the implementation of the individual project within the framework of the overall program for the Riverwalk. This bar chart indicates the individual projects and how the individual project can be implemented within each quarter of each individual year, starting in 2004 and continuing until 2018.







## Section Six Conclusions & Findings



## Conclusions & Findings

The development of the 13 mile plus corridor for the Riverwalk has provided some very interesting projects that will enhance the Black Warrior and North River corridors. The total Riverwalk development plan identified 39 different projects that are included in 7 different segments along the extent of the Riverwalk. The total cost for the implementation of the Riverwalk is provided in 2003 dollars. The overall costs for the development of the total project are indicated as follows:

- Property Acquisition .....\$ 8,500,000
- City Development Costs.....\$ 64,425,240
- Private Development Contribution .....\$440,000,000

The excitement that has been realized by the public and the city will only be surpassed when the actual implementation of the actual Riverwalk projects begins. Key greenways are now being constructed and when they are connected with the overall Riverwalk scheme, the benefit will be enormous to the City of Tuscaloosa and the adjacent communities.

The overall appearance of both the river corridor and the downtown area will improve over the next fifteen years as the implementation of the Riverwalk becomes a reality. This city wide improvement will promote tourism and it will draw the local community back to its heritage...the river.

Key aspects of the plan include a number of significant projects that are tied by walking corridors that allow free flow of the Riverwalk on both sides of the Black Warrior and North Rivers. The key projects within the design of the Riverwalk include the following:

1. A **Loop Trail** around the West End that provides access from the community to the Riverwalk as well as key vistas to the Oliver Lock and Dam.
2. The development of a new **West End Ballfield Complex**.
3. The establishment of an **Outdoor Amphitheater** with support buildings and facilities for festivals and presentations.
4. The development of a **Waterfront Plaza and Activity Area** that will bring people back to the waterfront complete with outdoor spaces, hotels, meeting facilities and support commercial spaces.
5. The establishment of an **Extension of the Downtown Area** into the Riverwalk Downtown Linkage along the slopes of the waterfront development complete with indoor and outdoor entertainment areas, offices, shops, restaurants and hotel/meeting areas.
6. A **Renovation of the Existing CORPS Property** into a Passive Day Use Park and Boat Landing.



7. The complete **Renovation and Update of Queen City Park** into a passive park and mini-amphitheater presentation space.
8. The establishment of a **Mixed Use Development and Waterfront Development** at the site of the abandoned water treatment plant.
9. **Day-use Picnic Areas and River Access Decks for Fisherman and Pedestrians** are sprinkled along the Riverwalk for both the Black Warrior River and the North River with Fish Cleaning Stations in select areas.
10. An **Equestrian Trail** is provided as an additional trail from Sokol Park to the dam at Tuscaloosa Lake.
11. **Two Pedestrian River Crossings** are provided with the first being a widening of the walkways on the Hugh Thomas Bridge and the second crossing is a new bridge that will parallel the McFarland Boulevard Bridge.
12. A key **Overlook and Gazebo** area is located at the confluence of the North River and the Black Warrior River
13. Over **13 miles of Paved Riverwalk** Trails are provided in the master plan.
14. A future **Handicapped Park** is planned for the replacement of the Current Police Firing Range.

The City of Tuscaloosa should be congratulate themselves for being a visionary to promote the planning and design of a city wide Riverwalk Development Plan. The support of the city officials and their willingness to look toward the future is be commended. This starting point will set the stage for the development of downtown Tuscaloosa that will be matched by very few. The next fifteen years will show great change and excitement for the residences that call Tuscaloosa home.