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# DOWNTOWN

## KNOXVILLE

# PLAN



**For** Not To Be Taken  
From the Room  
**reference**

# DOWNTOWN KNOXVILLE PLAN

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PREPARED FOR  
**CITY OF KNOXVILLE**  
MAYOR KYLE C. TESTERMAN

DEVELOPED BY THE  
**DOWNTOWN TASK FORCE**  
CHRIS WHITTLE, CHAIRMAN

REPORT PREPARED BY  
KNOXVILLE/KNOX COUNTY  
**METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION**

DECEMBER 2, 1987



# DOWNTOWN KNOXVILLE PLAN

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ADOPTED BY

DOWNTOWN TASK FORCE  
DECEMBER 2, 1987

KNOXVILLE/KNOX COUNTY  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION  
DECEMBER 10, 1987

KNOXVILLE'S COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (KCDC)  
DECEMBER 17, 1987

KNOXVILLE CITY COUNCIL  
FEBRUARY 9, 1988

KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION  
MARCH 21, 1988

REFLECTS RECOMMENDATIONS OF  
WORLD'S FAIR PARK AND FESTIVAL CENTER PLAN  
ADOPTED BY  
DOWNTOWN ORGANIZATION  
JUNE 22, 1989

# *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

**D**owntown Knoxville is, in many ways, a symbol of East Tennessee to the nation. Visitors will take away an impression of this region based on the image that downtown projects. Equally important is the fact that part of our self image comes from what our "home" reflects about us. Downtown is not the only important activity center in the region, as it was historically, but unlike suburban areas, Downtown is everybody's neighborhood.

**PLAN  
DEVELOPMENT  
AND INTENT**

This report, the final product of the Downtown Task Force, is intended as a guide to the challenges downtown Knoxville will face in the coming decades. The Plan is a means of ensuring that the values and virtues of "the Resource Valley" are represented by downtown.

In 1986, Mayor Kyle Testerman recognized the need to update the almost fifteen year old plan for downtown. In October of that year, he named a group of civic and business leaders to serve on the Downtown Task Force, and challenged them to develop this new vision. Since that time the Task Force, chaired by Chris Whittle of Whittle Communications, has overseen the compilation of a comprehensive data base for downtown, established and received reports from a series of special topic committees, and supervised the synthesis of this information and further community input, into the Plan documented in this report.

The Downtown Plan is designed as a policy guide for public officials, property developers, business recruiters and their clients, and the community at-large, in making individual decisions. If the Plan is an effective guide, the sum total of these decisions will result in the kind of downtown envisioned.

Like most urban plans, the Downtown Plan has no regulatory force. The recommendations of the Plan, will be implemented by public and private investment, land use incentives and controls, and government programs.

**MAJOR  
THRUSTS**

The Plan contains the following major recommendations:

**1. BEAUTIFICATION:**

A NEW IMAGE OF DOWNTOWN KNOXVILLE SHOULD BE CREATED, FEATURING LANDSCAPED ENTRY PORTALS, ATTRACTIVE PEDESTRIAN LINKAGES, AND NEW PARKS AND PLAZAS.

Regional roads leading to Knoxville should be landscaped, attractive new 'portal parks' developed at major entry points, and a network of pedestrian-biased streets and parks implemented, using as a model landscape improvements designed for the Gay Street corridor.

As an example, Henley Street (now a barrier between the business core and the fair site) can be rebuilt as a landscaped boulevard --a new 'foyer' for downtown-- featuring wide, tree lined medians, and pedestrian crosswalks.

**2. URBAN FORM:**

DOWNTOWN SHOULD REINFORCE ITS DISTINCTIVE DEVELOPMENT PATTERN BY CONCENTRATING VARIOUS SCALES AND HEIGHTS OF BUILDINGS IN SPECIFIC APPROPRIATE AREAS.

Maintaining the current low-rise pattern of development along the Market Street spine in the center of the Business Core will maintain the attractive, pedestrian-scale environment which is one of downtown Knoxville's greatest strengths.

Medium-density development on smaller sites west of the business core, overlooking the Fair Site, can take advantage of the value added by the public investment in 'Henley Boulevard.'

And building on downtown's existing form, new high-density development should locate on the eastern edge of the business core. Lower-level parking can be incorporated into below-plaza garages, with high-rise office or residential development above.

### **3. ACTIVITY AREAS:**

THE MAJOR SUBAREAS OF DOWNTOWN SHOULD CONTINUE TO DEVELOP AS DISTINCTIVE ZONES, EACH LINKED TO THE OTHERS, BUT WITH ITS OWN PERSONALITY AND MIX OF ACTIVITIES.

Much of downtown's personality can be traced to the character of its distinctive although mixed-use subareas, as opposed to the separation of land uses which characterizes suburban areas. The business core should continue its primary orientation, that of a commercial center to the region, while adding new residential uses and cultural amenities. The fair site, currently an open space resource for downtown and home of many of the city's major cultural and tourism facilities, has potential for future development. The old city area is a recently-revived zone which should continue in its role as an entertainment and residential center.

Peripheral areas include the transition zones along Henley and State Streets, as well as the Summit Hill and Maplehurst areas, the waterfront, and the northern corridor adjacent to Interstate 40. Each of these areas can serve the function of helping link downtown Knoxville's subareas to each other and to adjacent areas.

### **4. PARKING AND CIRCULATION:**

THE CONTINUATION OF THE CITY'S POLICY OF LONG-TERM PARKING ON THE PERIMETER OF THE BUSINESS CORE SHOULD BE COUPLED WITH AN EMPHASIS ON CREATING ADDITIONAL SHORT-TERM PARKING SPACES IN THE INTERIOR FOR SHOPPERS AND VISITORS.

Convenient parking must be provided to support not only offices, but also retail and tourist activities. Potential sites for long-term parking include the corridor between State and Central Streets and other peripheral locations. Long term parking should be linked to the core by transit and trolleys. Short-term parking should have priority at lots and garages within the business core, with pricing policies structured to attract rather than deter shoppers.



Downtown should be an easy place to get into and circulate around. New entries should be created off the Business Loop and Neyland Drive to complement the improved access at Henley Street from the interstate system to the north.

**5. WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT:**

NEW CONNECTIONS FROM DOWNTOWN TO THE TENNESSEE RIVERFRONT WILL PROVIDE ACCESS TO AN UNDERUTILIZED RESOURCE: A SITE FOR NOT ONLY EVENTS AND FESTIVALS, BUT ALSO FOR RIVER-RELATED DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

The first step is a comprehensive plan to examine long term opportunities for the entire regional riverfront, while at the same time setting in motion an action plan for improving access from downtown. The potential for expansion of the popular Watersports Festival can provide a focus for downtown summertime events.

**6. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT:**

DOWNTOWN SHOULD BE A 24-HOUR ACTIVITY CENTER, A PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO LIVE, AS WELL AS WORK OR PLAY.

Building on the recent success of downtown residential developments that stress the unique qualities of older well-renovated buildings, a number of potential new projects should be pursued. These include ideas for residential rehabilitation of the 100 block of Gay Street in the old city, as well as the longer-term possibility of new construction near the Henley Street bridge, stepping down the steep hillsides to the waterfront.

**7. CULTURAL/ENTERTAINMENT/TOURISM DEVELOPMENT:**

MAKING DOWNTOWN AN ACTIVE NIGHTTIME AS WELL AS DAYTIME CENTER BY EXPANDING VISITOR ATTRACTIONS AND SERVICES WILL BENEFIT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND RESIDENTIAL GROWTH.

The 1982 World's Fair was the catalyst for downtown's recent development. Continuation of that same attitude, that downtown is the region's recreational core as well as its center of employment, can provide the incentive for new growth.

The development and enhancement of downtown museums, theatres, and libraries can spur the growth of restaurants and hotels, while providing the amenities needed to attract an expanded residential, office, or retail market. Programming popular events and festivals, both out of doors or in spaces such as the Bijou or Tennessee Theatres, will bring visitors to Knoxville from both the surrounding region and other cities. New night life and activity can center on emerging districts such as the old city as well as existing and proposed facilities at the Fair Site.

**8. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND RECRUITING:**

THE CONTINUING GROWTH OF DOWNTOWN OFFICE AND RETAIL WILL REQUIRE A CONCERTED PROGRAM OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT, INVOLVING IDENTIFICATION AND MARKETING OF OPPORTUNITY LOCATIONS FOR MAJOR PROJECTS.

Recruiting and attracting new office developers and tenants to downtown should be a major continuing task. Potential sites for large-scale projects include locations along Gay and State Streets, Henley Street, or Main Avenue.

The retail revitalization of Gay Street between Church Avenue and Summit Hill Drive is a corollary development priority. A retail marketing strategy should be prepared, aimed at defining and recruiting the proper mix of stores. At the same time, existing efforts aimed at organizing existing merchants, designing improvements to shopfronts, and promoting events and activities, should be continued. Provision of a new subsurface garage and street-level park at Gay Street and Wall Avenue can provide an attractive functional focus for this area.

**9. ORGANIZATION:**

TO ACCOMPLISH THESE OBJECTIVES, A NEW DOWNTOWN ORGANIZATION IS REQUIRED, MADE UP OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE RECENTLY BEEN INVOLVED IN DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION.

Three such groups are now active in central Knoxville development: the Downtown Task Force, charged by the Mayor with preparing this downtown plan; Knoxville Tomorrow, Inc., whose responsibility is overseeing the development of the Fair Site, and Main Street Knoxville, Inc., whose role includes representation of merchants and property owners along with revitalization of Gay Street and overall promotion of downtown. A new non-profit group would continue each of their separate charges, put in the context of implementing the vision and goals for downtown as laid out in this plan.

Formation of this group is the most important recommendation of the plan. With the active and enthusiastic participation of a representative group of public officials and civic leaders, the plan's vision of downtown as an active, attractive city on a hill — the capital of the Resource Valley — will become a reality.



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## CHAPTER 1

# *INTRODUCTION TO THE DOWNTOWN PLAN*

**W**hy have a downtown plan?

The answer to this question is closely linked with the answer to “why do we need a prospering downtown?”.

There was a time when downtown was everything. It was where all but the farming community lived, worked, traded, studied, practiced their religion, and had fun. Even for those who lived in the hinterland, downtown was crucially important.

Today, many of the functions and roles once played by downtown are found elsewhere. The majority of the population now lives in suburban areas. Likewise, many commercial activities have migrated to those same suburban areas to be near their customers. Employers who traditionally located downtown have found they can move their facilities to fringe locations, often at lower cost.



This said, why not just write off downtown as a place that was once important, but is now just the stuff that history and nostalgia are made of? The answer lies not in what downtown has ceased to be, but in what it is and is becoming. In the preliminary presentation of this plan to The Downtown Task Force and invited guests, Chris Whittle, Task Force Chairman, reviewed what downtown is and why it is important to us all.

**DOWNTOWN  
KNOXVILLE  
TODAY**

Downtown Knoxville houses the greatest concentration of employment in the region. Although many jobs are now located outside, nearly 20,000 people work in the immediate downtown area. Office employment makes up the largest category of these, making it one of the highest paid employment areas, on the average. If two major institutions adjacent to downtown — the Baptist Hospital and the University of Tennessee, are considered, employment swells notably. No outlying area has near this concentration of workers.

Downtown is the financial center of the region; the place we keep and change our money. All major banks in the area locate their main offices downtown, where they can interact with other banks and businesses. Most other financial and investment companies maintain downtown offices for the same reasons.

As the seat of local government and the courts, downtown is where we make public policy and settle our disputes. The largest concentration of hotel rooms is also downtown; thus it is where we house our guests. And while we are on the subject of housing, although there has been a twenty year exodus of housing from the center city, recently the trend has begun to reverse itself. From 1980 to 1986 a seven percent increase in residences was recorded.

Downtown is the center of arts, culture and tourism in the region. Our major museums, theaters, historical landmarks, and convention facilities, and arts-related individuals and groups, are found downtown.

Finally, in addition to its physical centrality, downtown is also the hub of our regional transportation network.

Given all of this, downtown Knoxville is in many critical ways the capital of the East Tennessee region. Is it important that our "capital" prosper and be kept in good repair? The answer is "YES", for at least four reasons.

*Symbol of the East Tennessee area...*it is the image that visitors take away with them. Since many of those visitors are evaluating the area with thoughts of locating their businesses and families here, it is crucial from a recruiting standpoint that downtown is as good as it can be.

*Impact on our own self image...*if our downtown is faltering it hits at the very confidence of the City and its people; if it is prospering it is a source of confidence in all our endeavors.

*Protecting our investment...*much work and financial investment have gone into the development of downtown, through previous revitalization efforts and the private commitment of corporate citizens. Maintenance of these efforts protects this investment.

*A thing called Competition...*this same job, trying to project the best possible image, is being done by cities our size throughout the southeast and beyond. Each of these cities is vying to attract many of the same employers, their investment, and their people.

We need to create a downtown that can stand up to any other. We have the resources, we need only take up the challenge.

In October of 1986, Mayor Kyle Testerman appointed the Downtown Task Force, and challenged them to prepare a blueprint for the next chapter in the development of downtown Knoxville. Chris Whittle, of Whittle Communications, agreed to serve as Chairman. Since that time, with the help of a series of citizen committees, and staff from the Metropolitan Planning Commission, the City of Knoxville and the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Task Force has:

## PLAN BACKGROUND

- prepared a comprehensive data base on downtown;
- investigated specific topics through the committee structure, and reported those findings;
- sought widespread community input through hearings, workshops and reporting sessions; and
- synthesized this information into the Plan presented in this report.

The Plan includes conceptual and specific recommendations for downtown Knoxville, covering:

- the open spaces, parks and pedestrian ways;
- the physical form and design;
- the transportation system;
- the uses of property; and
- the institutional, legal and organizational changes.

Additionally, the Plan outlines the means of implementing its recommendations, with particular emphasis on assigning responsibility for each task to a group, agency or individual.

Like most urban plans, the Downtown Plan has no regulatory force. The recommendations of the Plan, will be implemented by public and private investment, land use incentives and controls and government programs. The Plan is therefore a strategic framework for detailed projects and programs. No actions are mandated or prohibited solely by the adoption of this Plan.

## CONTEXT

At the outset of this process, the Plan's framers recognized that downtown must be considered not as an island, but as part of the regional and local context. Just as adjacent neighborhoods and the region rely on downtown, downtown is dependent on them.

### REGIONAL CONTEXT

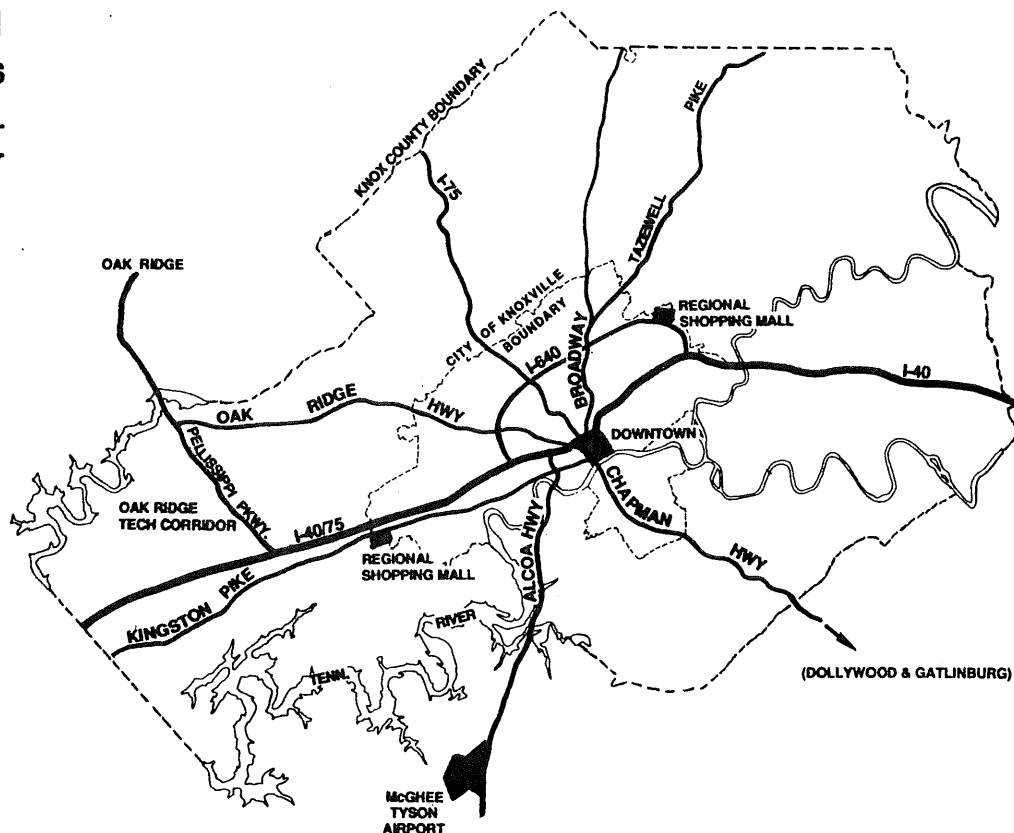
Travelers and area residents use the regional transportation network to get to downtown, its workers live in surrounding neighborhoods, and visitors often come to downtown while enroute to another destination. Map 1 illustrates the central location of downtown in the region, and its relationship to other important activity centers.

### LINKAGES

The relationship between downtown and its immediate neighbors is even more apparent. Traffic from one affects the other. Resources in each are enjoyed by the other. The physical design and condition of downtown impacts the attractiveness and therefore the value of neighboring property, and vice-versa.

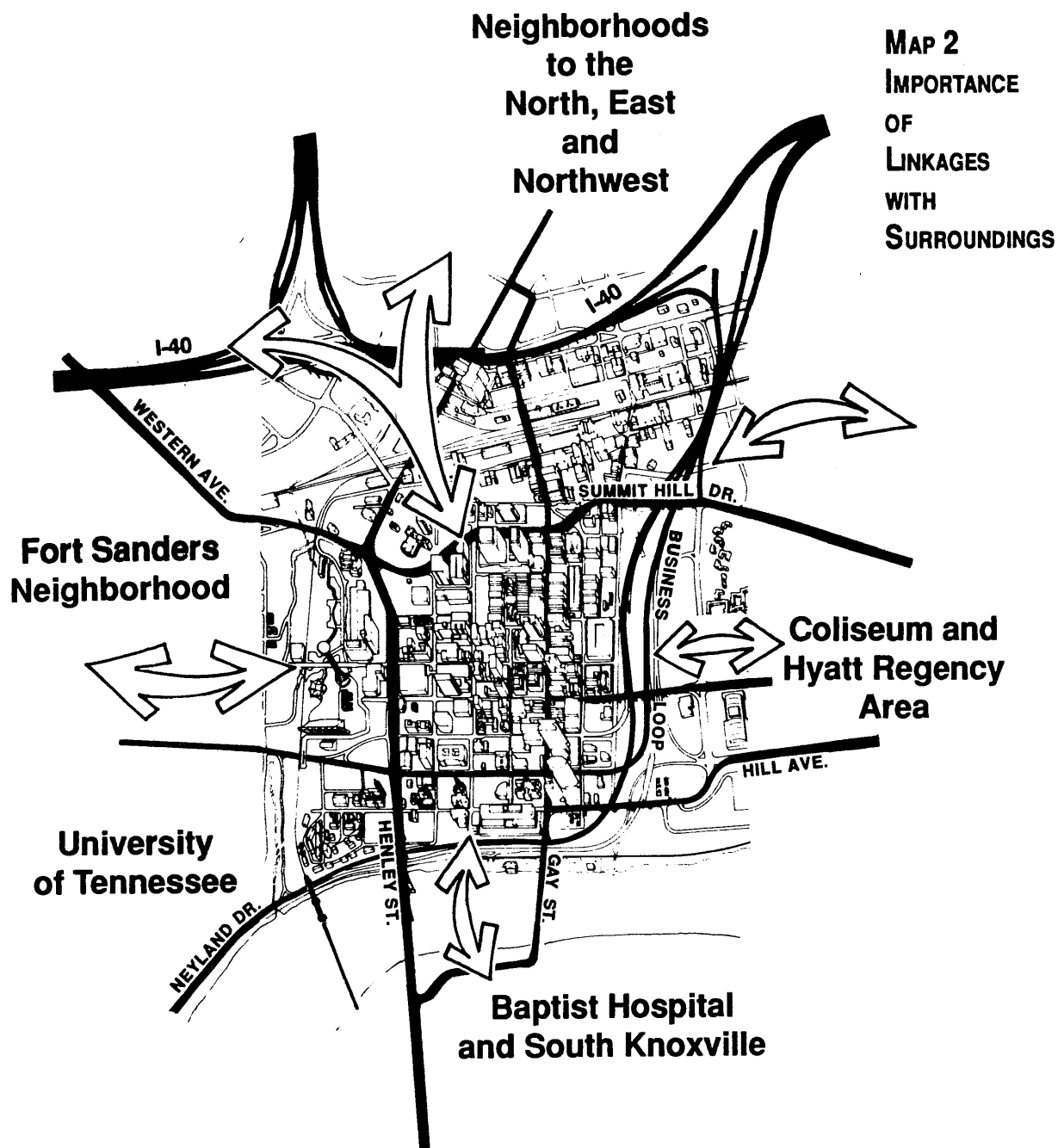
Several important linkages with downtown's neighbors should be stressed. In light of their contiguous borders, the University of Tennessee and Baptist Hospital can be considered as parts of downtown in many ways. Traffic from each affects the other, as do parking resources. Resident and worker populations of each area often intermingle. This creates a larger retail market for downtown and the Cumberland Avenue "Strip", than would otherwise be available.

**MAP 1**  
**DOWNTOWN'S**  
**REGIONAL**  
**CONTEXT**



It is important to improve the physical linkages, working relationships, and spirit of cooperation among downtown and adjacent areas. The recent extension of service by the downtown trolley to Baptist Hospital is one example of a way to do this. Discussions about extending service to the UT area as well are underway. Another possibility is cooperative development of parking facilities, to serve two or more adjacent activity centers. Similarly, the interrelationship between downtown and surrounding residential areas must be enhanced. Good transportation links between downtown and Fort Sanders, for example, can ease access by neighborhood residents to downtown museums and theaters. If not well designed, however, these same roads can cause problems through increased vehicular traffic. It is important that all decisions for downtown and the surrounding areas, are made in consideration of the impacts on the other.

Map 2 illustrates downtown's position relative to neighboring areas.



## **BASIC ASSUMPTIONS**

### **ABOUT KNOXVILLE**

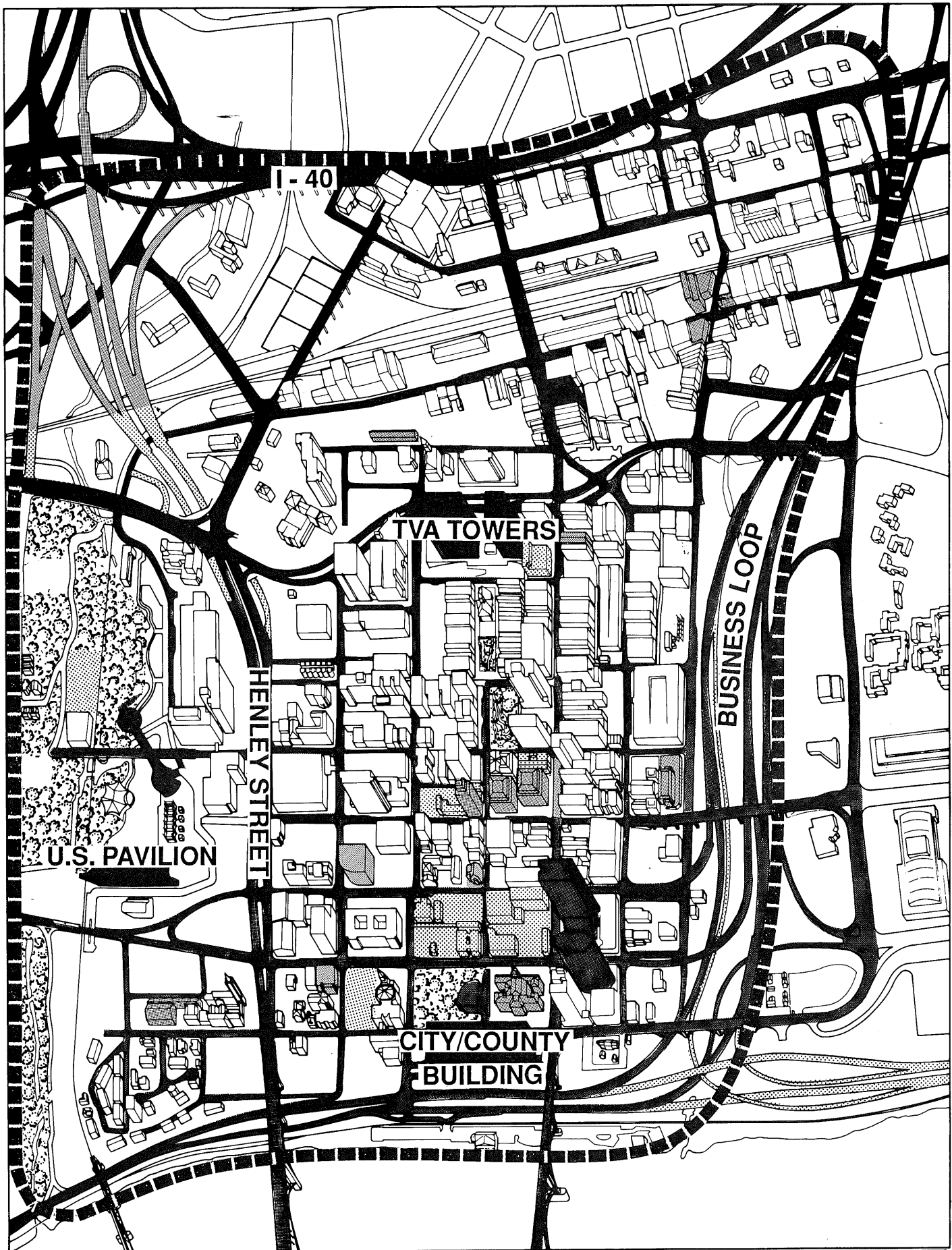
- Knoxville is located at the headwaters of the Tennessee River in the east central portion of the state of Tennessee. It is the largest city in East Tennessee and ranks third in the state. The 1985 Census Bureau estimate for the MSA is nearly 600,000. It is located in a broad valley between the Cumberland Mountains to northwest and the Great Smoky Mountains to the southeast. These two mountain ranges help provide a pleasing climate, with an annual average temperature of 60 degrees, and many recreational opportunities for area residents and visitors. Knoxville's land area is 77.6 square miles and Knox County's land area is 528 square miles. Downtown Knoxville is 936 feet above sea level.
- Three of the nation's busiest interstate highways intersect at Knoxville: I-40, I-75, I-81. Via the interstate system one-third of the population of the U.S. is within 500 miles of Knoxville. The city is linked to the Great Lakes by the Interconnected Inland Water System and to the Gulf of Mexico by the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway.
- Knoxville has a strong-mayor form of government with a nine-member City Council. Knox County has a County Executive and nineteen member County Commission.

### **DATA BASE SUMMARY**

The in-depth Downtown Data Base (MPC, 1986) developed at the outset of this process represents the major source of background information relied upon in the Plan's formulation. Some of the more obvious givens and basic components of the existing situation are illustrated on Map 3. Elements of this "planning framework" shown include:

- the boundaries of downtown are Interstate 40 on the north, the Business Loop on the east, the Tennessee River on the south, and Eleventh Street on the west
- the network of streets, its connections to the regional transportation system, and major planned roadway projects;
- major landmark buildings such as the City-County Building, TVA Towers, Plaza and Riverview Towers, the Sunsphere and U.S. Pavilion, and the old Sterchi Furniture building;
- current projects under construction, such as the Centre Square buildings, the Federal Office building, and the streetscape improvements on Gay Street; and
- major proposed projects, such as the Whittle Communications headquarters and the parking structure on Main Avenue at Walnut Street.

Map 4, Existing Streets, illustrates street names in downtown.





MAP 3


## BASIC ASSUMPTIONS


Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission


### MAJOR BUILDINGS & ROADS

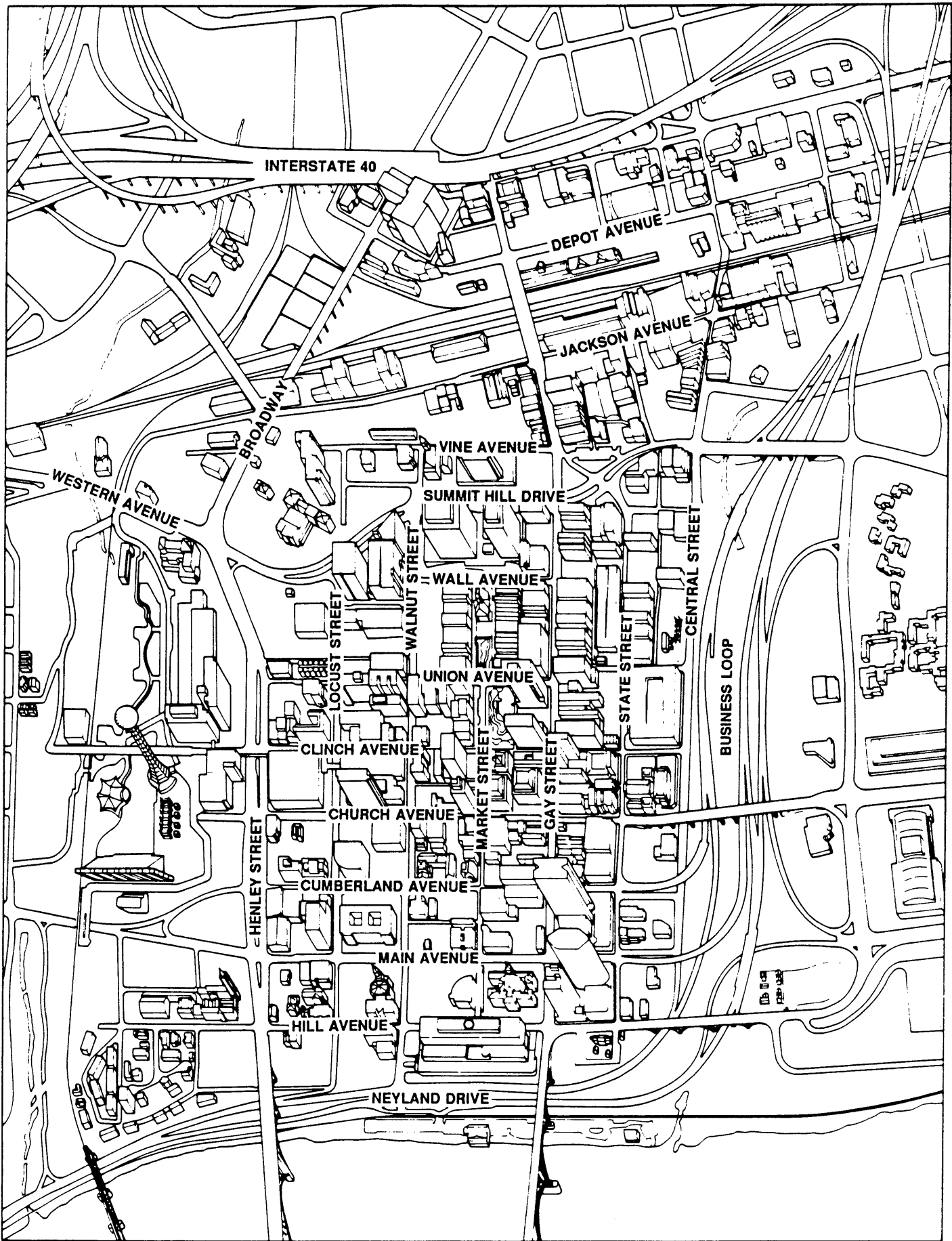
 Existing

 Proposed

 Under Construction

 Parks/Open Space

 Study Area Boundary



MAP 4

## EXISTING STREETS

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

## CHAPTER 2

# *A VISION FOR DOWNTOWN KNOXVILLE*

### INTRODUCTION

In 1974 Knoxville embraced a plan for its center city. The plan was simple and strong, and it has remained in peoples' minds.

The plan focused on the core of downtown. It identified a handful of strategic developments that were intended not only to change the face of Knoxville's center city, but also to guide later decisions not specifically addressed in the plan. For these reasons, and because many people shared the work of its preparation, the plan has been well followed.



The concept and accomplishments of "the '74 Plan", as it is often called, included:

- establishing Market Street as an important organizing element, and as the pedestrian spine of downtown;
- locating the TVA Towers and the City-County Building as major anchors at the north and south ends of this spine;
- constructing Summit Hill Drive, a beautiful urban boulevard at the north end, to improve vehicular circulation;
- developing an east-west connection, dubbed "the East-West Mall", through downtown's midsection;
- the peripheral parking scheme, or developing a parking "wall" at the edge of downtown, to reduce vehicular circulation and congestion in the center of town; and finally,
- redeveloping the unsightly railroad yard in the lower Second Creek valley -- The 1982 World's Fair Site, home of one of our proudest accomplishments.

The vision of the plan's framers fifteen years ago, and the implementation of their concepts set a high standard for any future downtown planning effort to follow. Knowing this, those involved in fashioning today's downtown Plan began with a careful look at the '74 concept. Being generally still valid and substantially implemented, the basic thrusts of the plan have been carried over. The Downtown Task Force accepted the challenge of addressing the next major chapter in Knoxville's history. This Plan, building on many of the principles of the earlier effort, adds another dimension.

**CAPITAL  
OF THE  
RESOURCE  
VALLEY**

*"When I've visited outstanding cities I've been impressed with the fact that all the people of the community --not just the top leaders-- had a vision of where they wanted to go with their community. We need a vision of where we want to go with our downtown, and it needs to be imbedded in our vision for the region."*

Mark Medley, local businessman

With the advent of a broader philosophy about our role in the East Tennessee region, Downtown is an increasingly important element in the prosperity of the entire area. There is a heightened understanding that downtown Knoxville symbolizes East Tennessee to the world. As that symbol, visitors will take away an impression of this region based on the image that is projected by downtown.

The Plan sets out to create a downtown that will not only serve the needs and aspirations of those who live, work and play in our center city, but will also make an indelible, positive impression on those who visit and evaluate East Tennessee. This Plan document specifically recommends actions and policies intended to create the downtown envisioned. However, each of those specifics is designed to bring about a very simple, strong vision for the Capital of the Resource Valley.

#### **A BEAUTIFUL PLACE...**

The Vision for the Capital of the Resource Valley is characterized best by the first of the adopted goals for Downtown:

Downtown Knoxville has physical potential only dreamed of by many growing urban centers. This potential should be realized through development of urban park spaces, street scapes, and attention not only to buildings but the spaces around them.

Realization of this goal is critically important if Knoxville is to distinguish itself from the crowd of other medium-sized metropolitan areas vying for new businesses. The decisions on where to locate new businesses will be made by people accustomed to a high quality living and working environment.

We must present a face which can not be forgotten; it must be memorable because it is as breathtaking in its urban quality as the Smoky Mountains are in their natural majesty.

Building on the principles of the 74 Plan, the new Vision for achieving this goal emphasizes:

*Beautification...* attention to existing and proposed parks, open spaces, and pedestrian areas;

- reaffirming the importance of Market Street as the major north-south pedestrian spine, supplemented by Clinch Avenue as the major east-west path, along with Gay Street and Church Avenue to form the Primary Pedestrian Network;
- reconstructing Henley Street as a heavily landscaped urban boulevard — the “Foyer” of downtown — to be the cornerstone in a system of major green spaces along Main Avenue, Henley Street, Summit Hill Drive, the Business Loop right-of-way, and the waterfront/Neyland Drive;
- emphasizing the major portals (entry points); and
- linking an interior network of parks and plazas.

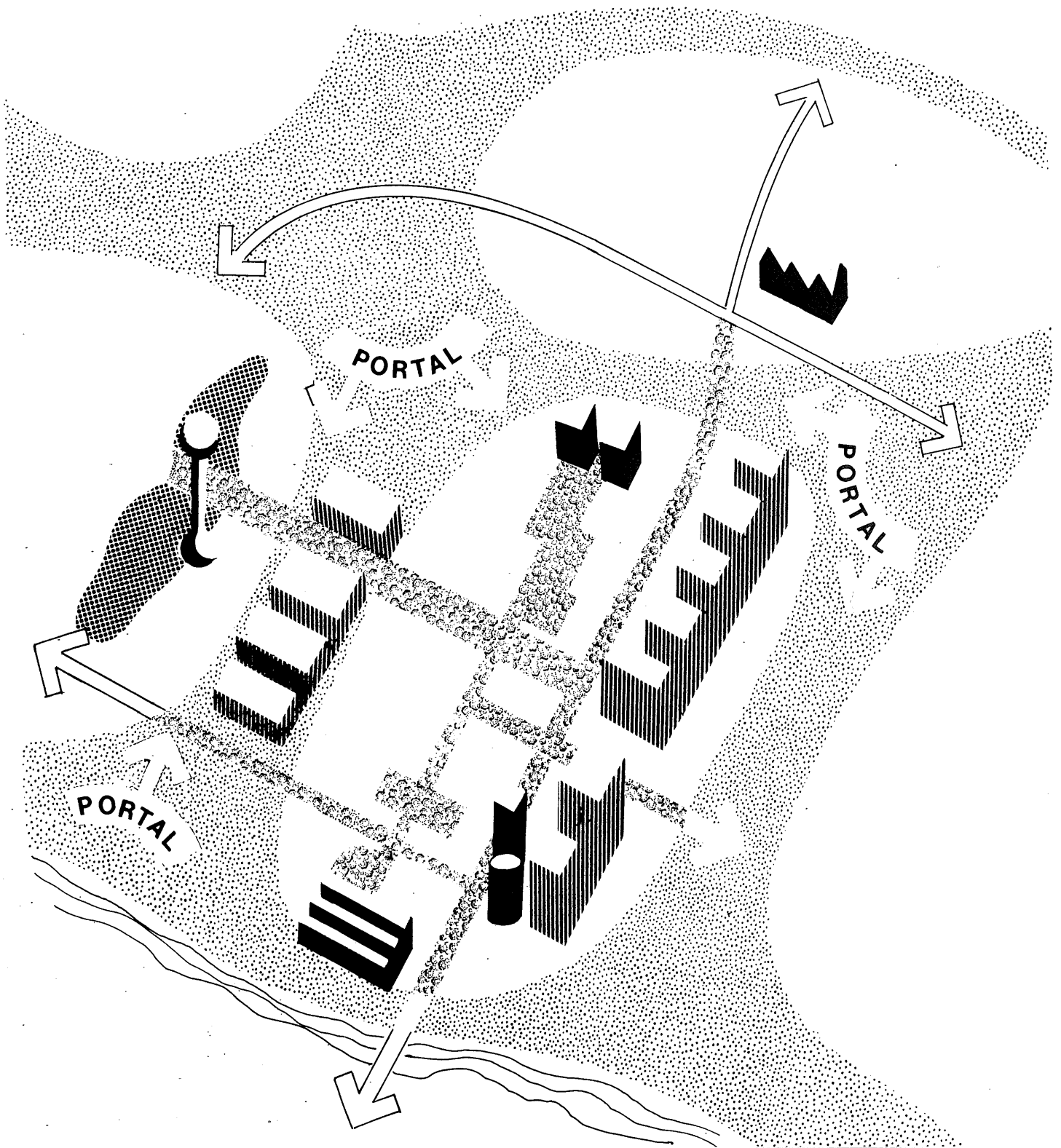
*Urban Design*...commitment to proper design considerations for new buildings and the spaces around them. This will intentionally continue the development pattern;

- maintaining an intimate character in the heart of the business core and on the fair site;
- promoting more intensive urban growth between the core and fair site;
- encouraging the most concentrated development corridor along the eastern face of downtown, and
- reaffirming the peripheral parking concept.

*Activity Areas*...recognition and further development of distinctive "subareas" within downtown, with a diverse, well-linked mixture of commercial, residential, and cultural activities, such as:

- major residential projects on the waterfront and on Gay Street near Jackson Avenue; and
- major redevelopment of the entire Waterfront area.

Map 5, graphically illustrates the major thrusts of the Plan Vision. Maps, figures and text in Chapter Three elaborate, while detailed recommendations in the remaining chapters of this report represent specific steps to realizing the Vision.



MAP 5

## VISION

Prepared by Tennessee Valley Authority

## DOWNTOWN GOALS

Prior to coalescing the work which would form the Plan , the Task Force adopted a list of goals which address all levels of aspirations for downtown. Realization of these goals represents not only accomplishment of the Vision just described, but a further embellishment of the complex, colorful place called downtown. The complete list of goals calls for:

1. *A Beautiful Place...* downtown Knoxville has physical potential only dreamed about by many growing urban centers. This potential should be realized through development of urban park spaces, street scapes, and attention not only to buildings but the spaces around them.
2. *A Place by the River...* the Tennessee River is a fabulous resource, upon which we've turned our backs. Physical improvements and access to the River are high priorities.
3. *A Place to Live...* the presence of people in downtown at all hours of the day is an important factor in the economic and social vitality of downtown. Residential development is therefore a high priority.
4. *A Place to Visit...* the convention, hotel/motel and other visitors' facilities available downtown should be enhanced and promoted to continue the growth of tourism and convention activity.
5. *A Place to Do Business...* downtown should continue to function as the office/business core of the metropolitan area.
6. *A Complete Place...* downtown needs to become the focus of art and culture, entertainment and recreation, history, health and fitness, and mixing of the broadest cross section of people.
7. *A Functional Place...* downtown must be easy to get about in and it must support the people who use it. The utilities, roads, transit service, parking and other facilities must be built and maintained at a high level of service quality.
8. *A Connected Place...* downtown is not an island. It exists in the context of its neighbors. The good of both downtown and the neighborhoods and institutions surrounding it, is enhanced by maintaining strong linkages and a cooperative spirit.
9. *A Promoter for the Place...* if the varied interests of downtown can be coordinated, all will profit. An organization to perform this coordinating function and to address the things not dealt with by other groups should be established. Their charge would be to promote downtown and lead the improvement effort.

# CHAPTER 3

## *CONCEPT PLAN: BEAUTIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT*

**T**he Concept Plan is a series of elements which, when combined, outline a framework for downtown development. The vision, illustrated in Chapter Two, is further embellished here. The Concept Plan goes on to explain more about the major thrusts of the vision. The principles and desired characteristics intended for downtown are described in detail. Succeeding chapters supply specific recommendations which “color in” the Concept Plan. Elements of the Concept Plan include:

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **SUBAREA ANALYSIS**

Downtown is seen not as one homogeneous district, but rather as a group of sub areas, each with its own existing and desired character. The descriptions in this section of the Concept Plan give an overall picture of what is important now about each area and what each should be like in the future.

## **ACCESS AND CIRCULATION**

Although the existing and proposed street system is covered in depth in the Transportation section of this report (Chapter Five), it is briefly discussed here to highlight the role of streets in determining development patterns. The existing street system, proposals for new roads, and changes to traffic patterns are covered here.

## **NEW DEVELOPMENT AREAS**

To identify some of the prime areas where major new projects might occur, the downtown area was analyzed in terms of "susceptibility to change". All property and buildings were reviewed to identify historic areas, areas which have had recent investment, and areas with stable land uses. The areas with the fewest of these desirable characteristics are identified as possible redevelopment targets.

## **OPEN SPACE/PEDESTRIAN NETWORK**

The open space/pedestrian network is potentially the most important element available in improving the image of downtown. Although several attractive areas exist, there are many unattractive sites, and little sense of connection among pedestrian and open space areas. This element identifies the areas within downtown which should be given special attention to improve the visual appeal and the connections between spaces. Recommendations cover: roadway-related open spaces, streets with pedestrian-oriented features, portal entries, and parks and plazas.

## **URBAN FORM**

The scale, height, and bulk of buildings and their relationship to open spaces around them, are critical elements in the overall physical image of downtown. Similarly, the finer details of building design or the presence of landscaping and amenities on-street, strongly influence perceptions of downtown at a more intimate scale. This section shows how various areas within downtown should be developed to create the best image possible. Included are discussions of the overall form and the fine-grained details.

## SUBAREAS OF DOWNTOWN

In addition to treating downtown as a single entity, it is important to look at the center city as a series of interrelated subareas, each with its own characteristics and opportunities. Map 6 illustrates the subareas.

### INTRODUCTION

The central focus of downtown is the existing central business district, defined on the east by State and on the west by Locust, although these boundaries are not distinct with respect to adjacent areas. On the north, the business core's edge is Vine Avenue; on the south it is the river and Neyland Drive.

### BUSINESS CORE

Its office development continues to expand; new projects such as the Federal Building, the Centre Square buildings, and the new Whittle Communications headquarters represent steady growth. Retail activity is centered at Watson's on Market Square.

The business core has a pedestrian, low-scale focus on the Market Street spine, with higher-density uses east and west of Market Street. In addition to its primary commercial development of office and retail, other uses such as residences, hotels, and entertainment facilities provide limited nighttime activity. These uses are scattered and for the most part are unrelated to each other.

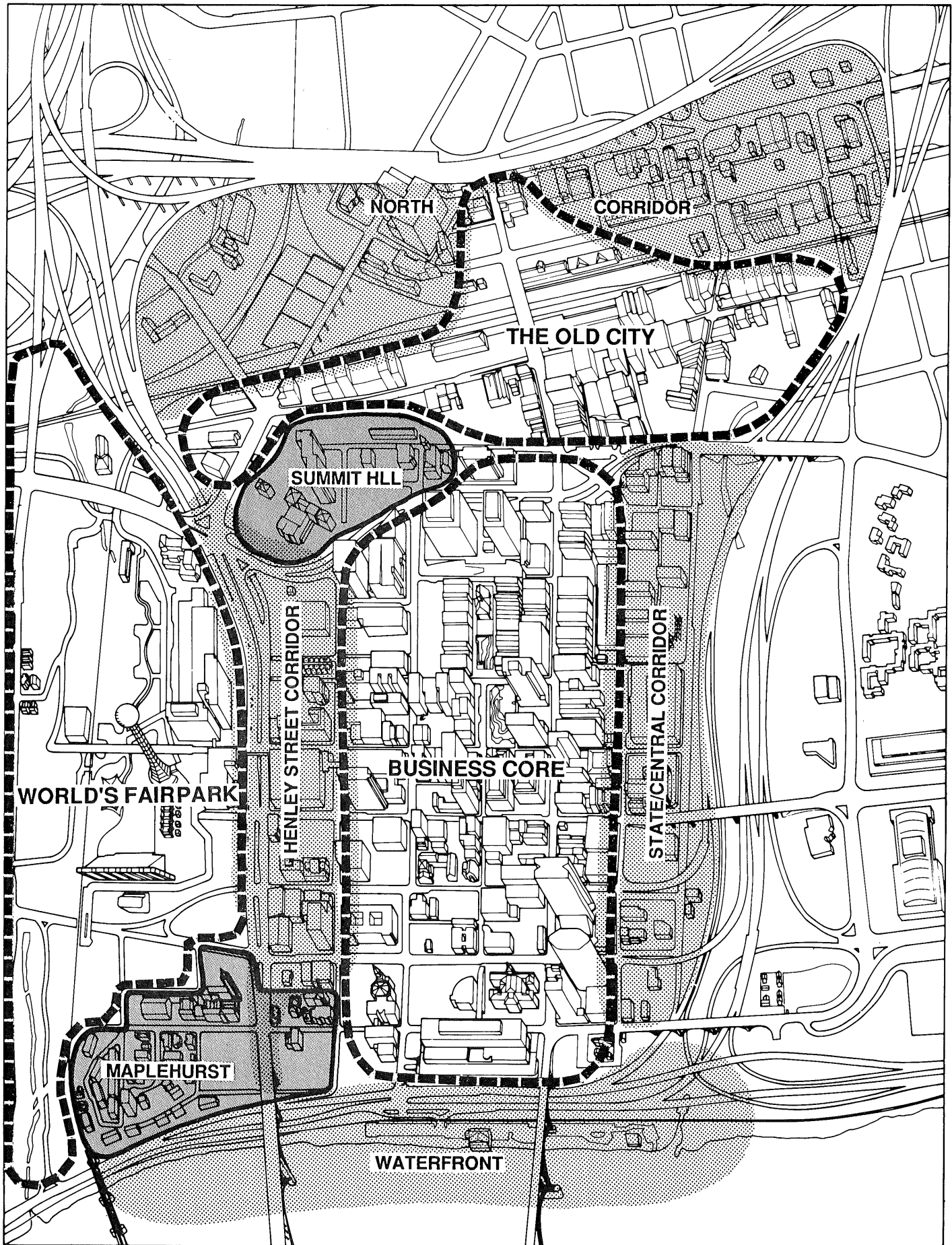
The second major subarea is the World's Fair Park: a currently active group of open space/recreation and cultural/tourism resources — a convention center/hotel/office complex, amphitheater, festival spaces, and restaurants.

### WORLD'S FAIR PARK

Future development of the Fair Park is controlled by the City of Knoxville through the Downtown Organization. This non-profit group, which promotes the vitality of downtown, reviews proposals for the use of the Park's property. The Park has potential as a major resource for Knoxville's economic development: either directly, as building sites proposed for eventual development by the approved plan, or indirectly, as a location for cultural activity, encouraging Knoxville area citizens to work, shop and live downtown.

Its urban design potential lies in its status both as an open space resource and as an activity focus, setting the rationale for pedestrian linkages with the existing Business Core and for carefully planned new urban development within the Park.








MAP 6

## SUBAREAS

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

-  Primary Subareas
-  Transition Areas
-  Secondary Subareas

## THE OLD CITY

Although it is the Subarea with the largest concentration of contiguous, older buildings, The Old City area to the north of Summit Hill Drive is also the newest part of downtown in terms of economic rejuvenation. Primarily a collection of industrial loft buildings, originally built for warehousing or light manufacturing, the Old City is now experiencing new life as an address for restaurants and night life--such as Annie's and Manhattan's--and for urban living, loft apartment style.

Much of the current development is centered on the Jackson-Central intersection but opportunities are emerging for expansion outward from this catalyst, connecting back to the Business Core and to the north. The 100 block of Gay Street, adjacent to the viaduct, is a prime area for residential growth; development of the Southern rail station and adjacent baggage/warehouse building can provide a focus rather than a void for the center of the district, reinforcing the Regas Restaurant area to the north.

Between these primary subareas, often overlapping their edges, are a series of more peripheral districts, each having differing characteristics and opportunities of its own:

## SECONDARY SUB AREAS

### **HENLEY STREET CORRIDOR**

Located between the Business Core and the World's Fair Park, this two-block-wide area includes a variety of quality buildings mixed with under-utilized structures and surface parking lots. The internal areas of this zone can continue to provide a service function for commercial support and long-term parking. The area's main circulation function will be as an auto entry to downtown along Henley Street, and as an important pedestrian link between the Fair Site and the Business Core.

In higher-visibility areas of public investment, such as along Henley Street, there is potential for private development response, such as new office or residential facilities.

### **MAPLEHURST**

Adjacent to the waterfront, Maplehurst is a small residential quarter made up of attractive low to medium-density units. Built around narrow cul-de-sac streets, the area has a pleasant pedestrian environment, within easy walking distance of downtown offices. This area is important because it represents an interface between the University of Tennessee and the downtown area.

Future development on selected sites could complement existing housing. For instance, locations on either side of the Henley Street bridge offer the potential for residential units stepping down the slope overlooking the river.

## **WATERFRONT**

On the southern border of downtown is the currently underutilized Tennessee River. Divorced from downtown by topography, highways, and a rail line, the Waterfront at present contains only a restaurant (now closed but soon to reopen), a riverboat dock, a marginally developed park, and adjacent parking.

The Waterfront's potential is dependent on its accessibility. Attractive and convenient pedestrian linkages to parking resources and activity generators in the Business Core and adjacent areas are needed. The river's edge can then become a focus for recreation and entertainment activities. The fast-growing "Watersports Festival", as well as pockets of residential or university-related uses, are examples of the Waterfront's potential.

Because it is a major regional as well as a downtown resource, a comprehensive effort to enhance the river's recreational and cultural potential should begin immediately.

## **STATE/CENTRAL CORRIDOR**

The eastern edge of downtown sloping away from the central Business Core is a transition area, which lies between Gay Street and the Business Loop. Currently it is a reservoir of parking garages and other minor land uses. Due to its location, it should continue to function as a support area for the central core by providing long-term structured parking and other commercial service uses.

At the same time, its visibility and accessibility from the regional highway system suggest that residential or office development may also be desirable uses. High-rise buildings constructed in conjunction with lower-level parking garages would take advantage of changes in elevation. This can provide dramatic views of adjacent areas as well as an attractive facade for downtown's edge as seen from the east.

## **NORTH CORRIDOR**

The northern corridor adjacent to the "Old City" is another support zone for the primary subareas. This zone is primarily an industrial employment district, bounded by rail lines and major highways, at the edge of the downtown plan area. For the foreseeable future a continuation of these same uses can be expected. As downtown evolves, these pressures may change; potential exists for structured parking as well as future commercial uses.

## **SUMMIT HILL**

The final subarea is the zone north of Summit Hill Drive overlooking the Business Core. The area contains institutions, such as the Old City Hall at Summit Hill and Broadway and residences, including housing for the elderly and townhouses. The Quality Inn, a high-rise hotel, is a prominent use lying in the area of overlap between Summit Hill and the Business Core.

Because additional land in this area is limited, it is expected that any new development will supplement or support existing uses.

The following table summarizes the important characteristics of each sub area as envisioned by the Plan. Although these are not binding recommendations, the characterizations in this table and text should guide decisions on new development in the areas.

**SUB  
AREAS  
SUMMARY**

## SUB AREAS SUMMARY

SUB AREAS	PRIMARY LAND USES	PEDESTRIAN/AUTO BIAS	PARKING SHORT TERM/ LONG TERM	INTENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT
<b>BUSINESS CORE</b>	Office, retail, open space, civic, cultural	Pedestrian/ Auto	Short Term	Mixture of Intensities
<b>WORLD'S FAIR PARK</b>	Open space, institutional, cultural, residential, festive retail	Pedestrian	Short Term/ Long Term	Low/ Medium
<b>THE OLD CITY</b>	Light manufacturing, residential, restaurant/ entertainment	Pedestrian/ Auto	Short Term/ Long Term	Medium
<b>HENLEY STREET CORRIDOR</b>	Transportation, open space, office, retail, residential, hotel, institutional	Auto/ Pedestrian	Long Term/ Short Term	Medium
<b>MAPLEHURST</b>	Residential, institutional	Pedestrian/ Auto	Long Term	Low and Medium
<b>WATERFRONT</b>	Open space, entertainment, festive retail	Pedestrian/ Auto	Minor Short Term	Low
<b>STATE/CENTRAL CORRIDOR</b>	Parking, office, residential, utilities, institutional	Auto	Long Term	High
<b>NORTH CORRIDOR</b>	Light manufacturing, wholesale/ distribution, transportation, (no residential)	Auto	Long Term/ Short Term	Medium - High
<b>SUMMIT HILL</b>	Institutional, office, residential, hotel	Pedestrian/ Auto	Long Term	Medium

TRANSIT	EVENTS	AMENITIES	ISSUES	ROLES
Highest concentration bus and trolley	Ceremonial and festival	Streetscape, small parks, public art	Flight of retail	Representing image of downtown and region
Peripheral bus with trolley	Large regional scale festivals, shows, conventions	Large open space, civic facilities, historic buildings	Implementation of redevelopment plan	Community gathering place, with people oriented uses
Peripheral bus with trolley	Street parties	Streetscape, historic buildings	Maintenance, renovation, expand use, reduce vacancies, future core expansion area	Mixed use, culture, entertainment and residential bias
Major bus, with trolley	Festivals/ linkage	Landscaping, portal entry, streetscape	A seam, not a barrier; to become a positive space	The "Foyer" entry to downtown, and a mixed land use area
None, possibly trolley	Street parties	Streetscape, improved sidewalks	Good linkage to core but no thru traffic; control location of highrise	Residential alcove
Trolley	Festivals	Major landscaping, transportation connection	Improving access, creating an activity center	Natural amenity, activity area
Bus and trolley	None	Pedestrian connections, building design, landscaping	Implementation approach, improving visual impact, making linkages	Commercial and transportation, extension of Business Core
Peripheral bus	None	Interstate and railroad are assets	Maintenance, renovation, future core expansion area, keeping infrastructure up	Industrial character
Trolley	None	Streetscape, pedestrian connections	Emphasize residential for new growth, needs parking	Convenient but not bustling, mixed use area

## ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

### INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the access and circulation elements are reviewed to reflect the street network as a major parameter for the form of downtown. Chapter Five - Transportation, of this report covers access and circulation as well as other elements of the total transportation system in some detail.

To first-time or occasional visitors, the street network is the basis for their perception and perspective on downtown. How easily and comfortably they find their destinations and park their cars are major factors in their first impressions of the city. Beyond this matter of perception, the location of streets, the circulation patterns and the resulting accessibility of property downtown dramatically impacts what is built on it, and when.

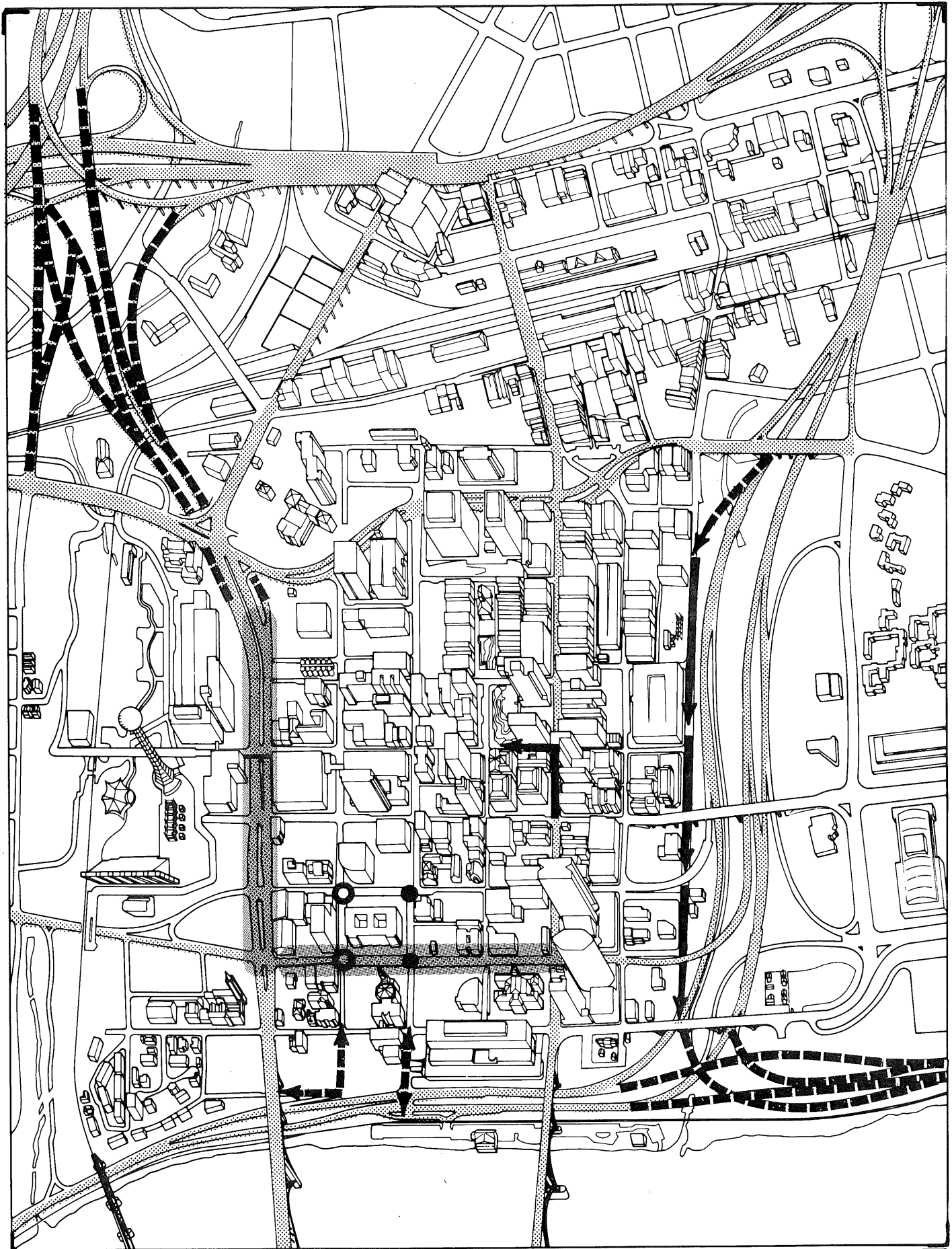
This section summarizes the existing network and major proposals for new road segments, and changes to one-way streets, traffic signals, and other changes which affect circulation.

### EXISTING STREET NETWORK

The downtown streets are part of the regional network, connected through interstates and arterial streets. Major access routes to the downtown area include these: From the west - Interstate 40/75 to Oak Street or the Business Loop, and Western Avenue, and Neyland Drive to Walnut Street or the Business Loop; from the east - Interstate 40 to the Business Loop, and Church Avenue, and Riverside Drive to Hill Avenue; from the north - Interstate 275 to Interstate 40 to the Business Loop, and Broadway and Central Avenue; and from the South - the Henley Street, Gay Street and South Knoxville bridges crossing the Tennessee River.

In downtown, Henley Street, Summit Hill Drive, Main Avenue and Gay Street form an inner ring used to reach internal circulation streets and final destinations. The policy employed since the adoption of the 1974 Downtown Plan, and reaffirmed here, is to locate major, long-term parking structures on the edges of downtown to minimize traffic congestion and enhance pedestrian movement in the Business Core area.







Map 7 illustrates major existing roads and proposals for changes in access and circulation.



MAP 7

## ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  Major Existing Roads      |  Remove Traffic Signal  |
|  Proposed Roads            |  Install Traffic Signal |
|  Traffic Control Proposals |  Redesign Road          |



**NEW  
ROADWAYS/  
ACCESS**

In order to improve access to several areas and to reduce congestion caused by the existing street pattern, new roads or road segments are proposed. Map 7 shows these proposed roads as dashed lines. The biggest changes are proposed connections to the interstate system. These include the Henley Street/I-40/75/275 connector, and the Business Loop/South Knoxville Boulevard connector. These two changes will dramatically improve access to downtown from all directions. A proposed exit ramp from the southbound Business Loop to Central Avenue will reduce congestion on Summit Hill Drive at Central, and simplify access to Central where major new developments are proposed.

With the intent of improving access to downtown from Neyland Drive and improving vehicular and pedestrian access to the Waterfront, a new connection is proposed for Walnut Street over Neyland Drive. The connection would minimize the effects of the steep grade change and allow a safe route for pedestrians to reach the north bank of the Tennessee River. As part of this project, Locust Street, which now connects to Neyland Drive via a very steep ramp, should be connected instead to Front Street and become a local road serving the Maplehurst residential areas. This is possible since access to Neyland Drive, westbound, will be available from Walnut in this concept.

**TRAFFIC  
CONTROLS  
AND  
DIRECTIONAL  
PROPOSALS**

As a result of the proposed changes to access via Locust and Walnut Streets, and anticipated traffic due to the new office construction it is recommended that the traffic signals on Locust Street at Cumberland and at Main, both be moved one block east to the intersections of Walnut Street with Cumberland and Main. These changes should reduce congestion and facilitate better pedestrian crossing on Main and Cumberland Avenues.

Two changes are proposed with respect to turning movements and one-way streets. To improve access into the core, a left turn will be allowed from northbound Gay Street onto westbound Clinch. In addition, the middle blocks of Central Avenue will be made one-way south to reduce congestion and improve safety in this area. Traffic counts have shown that the very small number of northbound vehicles in this area can not justify the problems caused by the current two-way traffic.

**OTHER  
DESIGN  
CHANGES**

As described in the Open Space/Pedestrian section of this chapter, it is recommended that Henley Street and Main Avenue undergo major facelifts to improve landscaping and general aesthetic appeal. In the case of Main Avenue this will include reducing the number of lanes to two through lanes, but creating turning lanes and passenger loading bays outside the moving traffic lanes.

## NEW DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

To encourage new development in areas where the greatest benefits will accrue, the Plan separates property and buildings that are currently strongest in terms of contribution to the total downtown environment, from those where redevelopment would be most beneficial.

Three characteristics were used as indicators of this type of strength. They are:

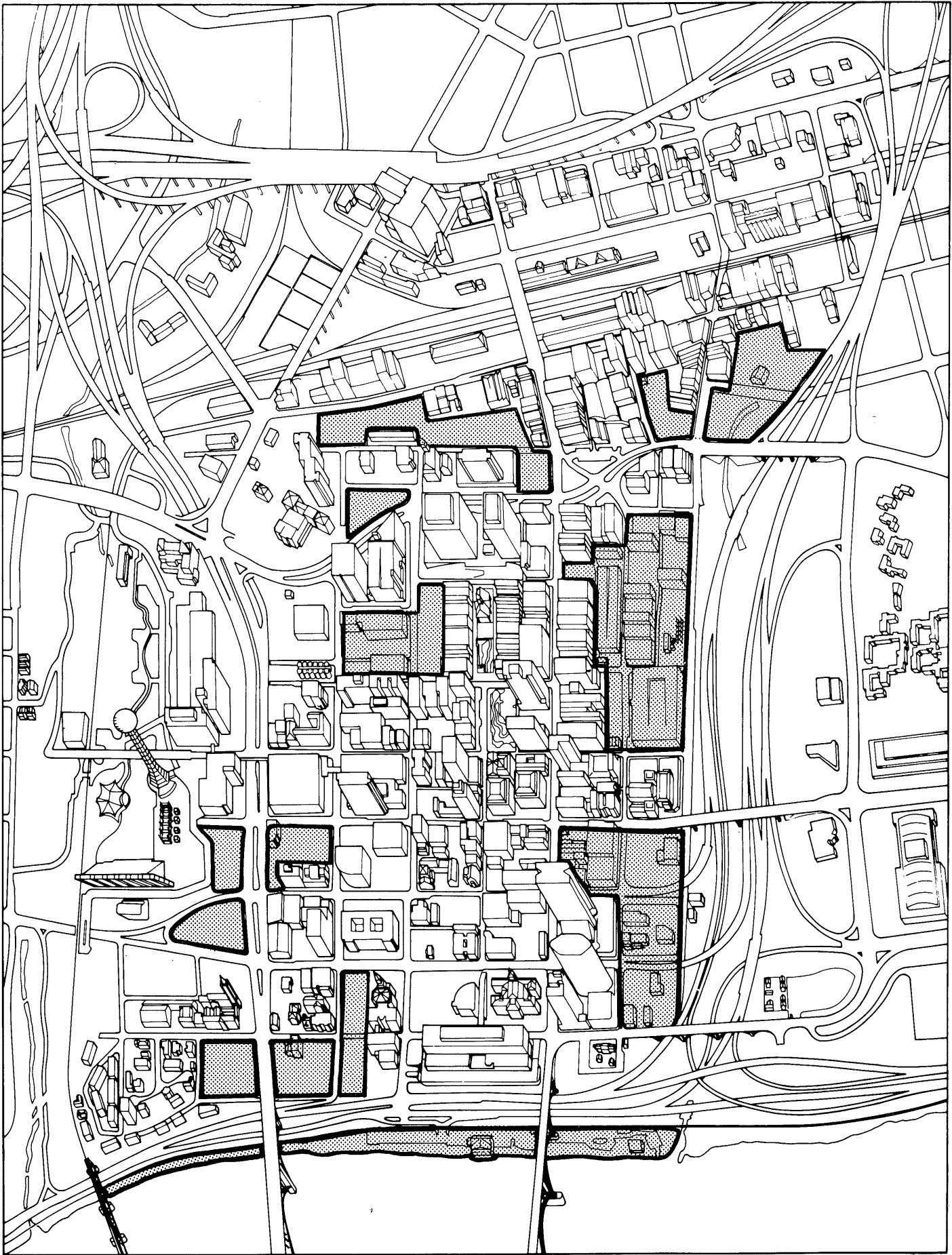
- historic districts and landmarks
- recent investment in property improvement, and
- stable land use.

Areas which have the tax advantages associated with historic status and which are important to retain for their historic character have a special status that makes them less susceptible to renewal by clearance and redevelopment with new structures. The same lack of susceptibility to new development is found in areas or structures where there has been a major investment or which are occupied by uses that should not be displaced.

The strong areas are not as much in need of new development as other areas in downtown. As a corollary, their characteristics make them more expensive to redevelop. Some of the strong areas may need new investment in the form of major renovation, rather than removal and redevelopment. The 100 block of south Gay Street for example is an area that is prime for attention as a renovation investment opportunity. Its historic character gives it a strength, however, which precludes it from being considered as a demolition and redevelopment area.

Areas less characterized by the indicators of strength mentioned above, are identified as potential development sites.

Map 8, on the next page, shows the major sites identified through this analysis. It does not cover every site which has potential for development. This analysis is a first, rough cut, and does not imply that these areas are subject to public acquisition. Further study must precede final decisions about any new development projects. Finally, this map illustrates generalized development areas. Within each area certain structures may be retained.



MAP 8

## NEW DEVELOPMENT

 New Development Potential

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

# OPEN SPACE/PEDESTRIAN SYSTEM

## INTRODUCTION

From the start, those participating in the Plan's formulation have joined as a single, strong voice to call for the beautification of downtown. Based on the overwhelming consensus that we have a great opportunity and good reason to create a truly beautiful, green area as our region's focal point, the Plan lays out a scheme for achieving this feeling of downtown as a park.

Downtown Knoxville has an attractive though limited inventory of open space. While many existing features are pleasant and well designed--landscaped blocks, a central square, a fairground--they are not connected and are somewhat hidden from the casual observer. Combining the Plan's recommendations for portals, roadway-related open space, pedestrian streets, and parks and plazas outlines basic elements of a "beautification plan" for downtown. This framework of interrelated actions will increase the imageability and marketability of downtown to visitors and residents alike.

The following features of this composite plan are important:

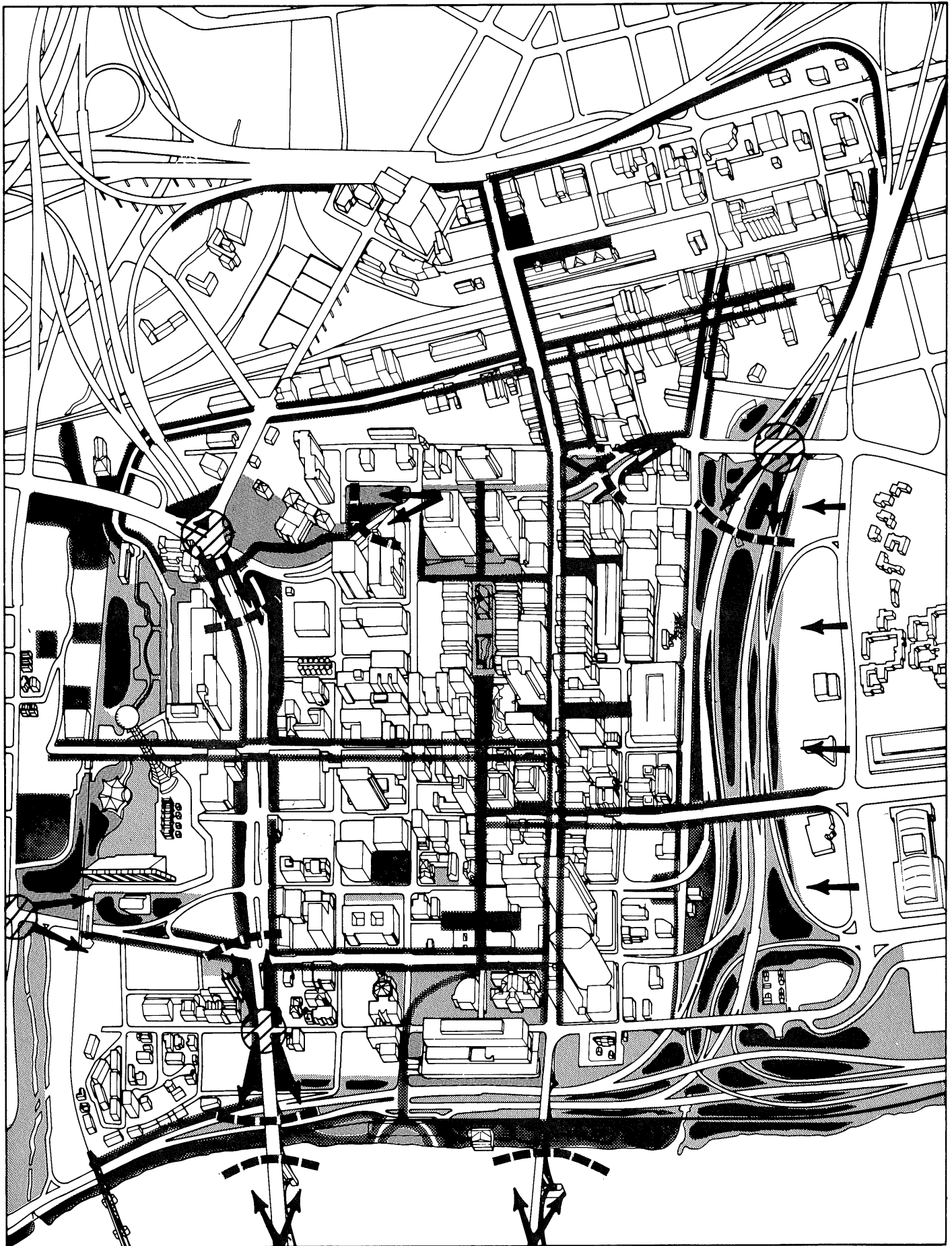
- An outer ring of existing or potential open space around the perimeter of downtown, consisting of Neyland Drive and the River, the Business Loop and the slopes overlooking downtown from the east, the interstate highway and potential landscaping to the north, and the World's Fair Site to the west;
- An inner ring of open space related to arterial streets, including proposals for "Henley Boulevard", Main Avenue, and Gay Street, supplementing the existing landscaping along Summit Hill Drive;
- An overlapping network of other pedestrian bias streets, crossing at the demonstration block for streetscape improvements bounded by Gay, Market, Church, and Clinch; and
- An infill pattern of parks and plazas, accentuating key entry portals, reinforcing important streets, and improving and enhancing existing open space development.

Through attention to four major categories of spaces, including:

- Portal entries to downtown
- Roadway-related open spaces
- Pedestrian streets
- Parks and plazas

the Plan envisions the transformation of downtown to the new vision.




Map 9 illustrates all of the major existing as well as proposed open space and pedestrian improvement areas. The subsequent text describes, in detail, the physical changes recommended for each area.



MAP 9

## BEAUTIFICATION PLAN

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

-  Existing Areas
-  New or Enhanced Areas
-  Portals and Views (Open Space Related)

**PORTAL  
ENTRIES  
TO  
DOWNTOWN**

As regional roadways enter Knoxville's downtown, they provide the opportunity to introduce the area to motorists, and to enhance downtown's image through landscaping, public art, and lighting. This emphasizes the symbolic importance of the center of the city. The portal entries are described below.

**Summit Hill Drive Entry (East)**

At the entrance to downtown from the north and east, adjacent to the intersection of the Business Loop and Summit Hill Drive, is a parking lot and a space remaining from the construction of the Business Loop. Combining these spaces and introducing visual amenities there would provide an attractive entrance gate to downtown.

**Cumberland Avenue Entry (East)**

The Cumberland Avenue exit ramp from the Business Loop should be provided with additional space to improve the entry vista. Introducing landscaping and open space at this entry would also afford an improved vista from the downtown toward the area of the Coliseum.

**Church Avenue Entry (East)**

At the eastern edge of downtown, the Church Avenue Viaduct provides a portal to downtown. The omission of some of the on-street parking at the western end of the Viaduct would provide space for landscaping which would frame the view of downtown and provide enhanced views of the Coliseum to the east.

**Gay Street Entry (South)**

At the northern end of the Gay Street Bridge as it enters downtown there is a small amount of landscaping. Additional improvements in that area, including both the open space at the Blount Mansion and the lawn space of the renovated Knox County Courthouse, would result in a stronger focus for this important downtown gateway.

**Walnut Promenade Entry (South)**

A new entry into the Business Core via a connection over Neyland Drive is proposed. This should be designed to provide pedestrian access to the River. It should emphasize and beautify an important entry into downtown. The design should include landscaping and other appropriate treatment in the open space next to the City-County Building and the First Baptist Church, as well as approaches to the bridge.

**Henley Street Entry (South)**

As one approaches downtown from the south via the Henley Street Bridge, the city appears to sit on a green hillside. This vista should be preserved as part of any development which occurs adjacent to the Henley Street Bridge.

Views out of the downtown toward the River will be improved by the same techniques that strengthen the “city on a hill” image.

Further travel north along Henley provides a view of the World’s Fair Site at Main Avenue. This is the only remaining view, from the Business Core, of the World’s Fair Site’s open space. Preservation of the open space around Church Street United Methodist Church, and urban design controls over the height and bulk of development on sites to the west of Henley are critical.

#### **Cumberland Avenue Entry (West)**

Entering the Business Core from the Kingston Pike/Cumberland Avenue/University of Tennessee area to the west presents a dramatic view of downtown, particularly at the corner of Eleventh Street and Cumberland Avenue. Because Cumberland Avenue bends, this view is essentially along the downtown Cumberland Avenue axis, framed by the U.S. Pavilion on the north. Maintenance of open space south of the U. S. Pavilion and controls on height and mass of development on the “triangle site” between Main and Cumberland at Henley, will enhance and maintain this vista into downtown.

#### **Henley Street Entry (North)**

As the new connection to I-40 is built and Henley Street is adapted to the boulevard configuration recommended in this plan, the careful design of the entry conditions at the Summit Hill intersection will assume increasing importance. Design of the underpass itself is critical. Then, as one leaves the momentary constriction of the underpass and emerges into the heavily landscaped boulevard area, elaboration of this open space theme is crucial. The portal park recommended for this entrance should include open space on the east side of Henley south of Summit Hill. Additional landscaping to soften the edges and architectural design of the convention center to the west of Henley should also be a part of the portal park.

#### **Bridge Treatment into Downtown**

The Gay and Henley Street Bridges present opportunities to further emphasize entry into downtown. In order to enhance these entries, the bridges could be lighted with floodlights from below or outlined with small bulbs which highlight their structure. This could create a festive and dramatic accent to the image of downtown as a hilltop city. In addition, both bridges should receive pedestrian-scale lighting and pedestrian-vehicular separation through such things as the use of bollards. This emphasis will highlight the unique design of the bridges and make them more attractive pedestrian facilities.



**ROADWAY-RELATED  
OPEN  
SPACES**

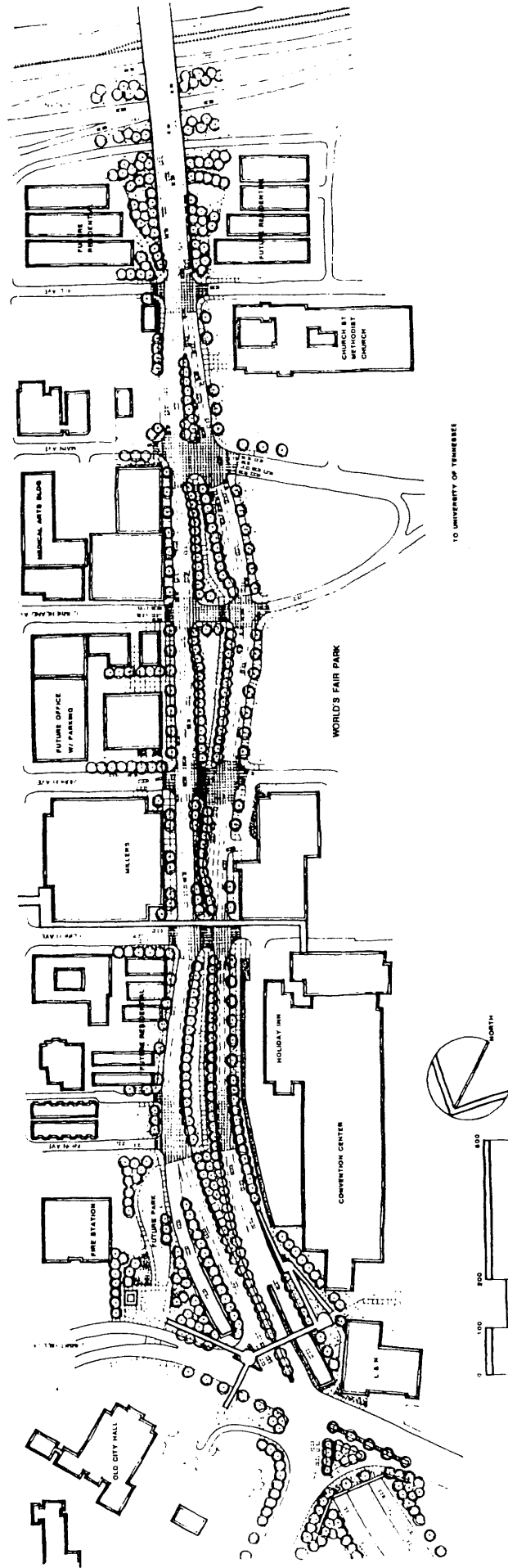
Map 10 illustrates proposed roadway-related open space improvements. For the most part, existing roadway-related open space is treated as leftover land--minimally landscaped edges adjacent to major arterial streets or highways--such as along Neyland Drive and the Business Loop. An exception to this approach is found on Summit Hill Drive, where treating that roadway as an important public space has resulted in an attractive urban boulevard, featuring pleasant vistas, mature trees, and sculptured topography.

**Henley Street "Foyer"**

An opportunity now exists to achieve a similar result along Henley Street. As previously described, the street is at present an artery that acts as a barrier between the Business Core and the Fair Site, due as much to its lack of design amenities as to its traffic.

When the new interstate connection is constructed at its northern end, a major reconfiguration of Henley can result in a radical new image: the street as a major entrance to downtown--a new "foyer" for Knoxville--with the same pedestrian-oriented quality as a landscaped Washington D.C. boulevard. This new design approach recommends widened medians to accommodate more trees and grass, landscaping along street boundaries, pedestrian crosswalks, and new lighting standards. It can also include creation of new park space at either end of the street as entry portals, creating a sense of arrival and emphasizing key views. Figure A portrays the type of design envisioned for Henley Street.

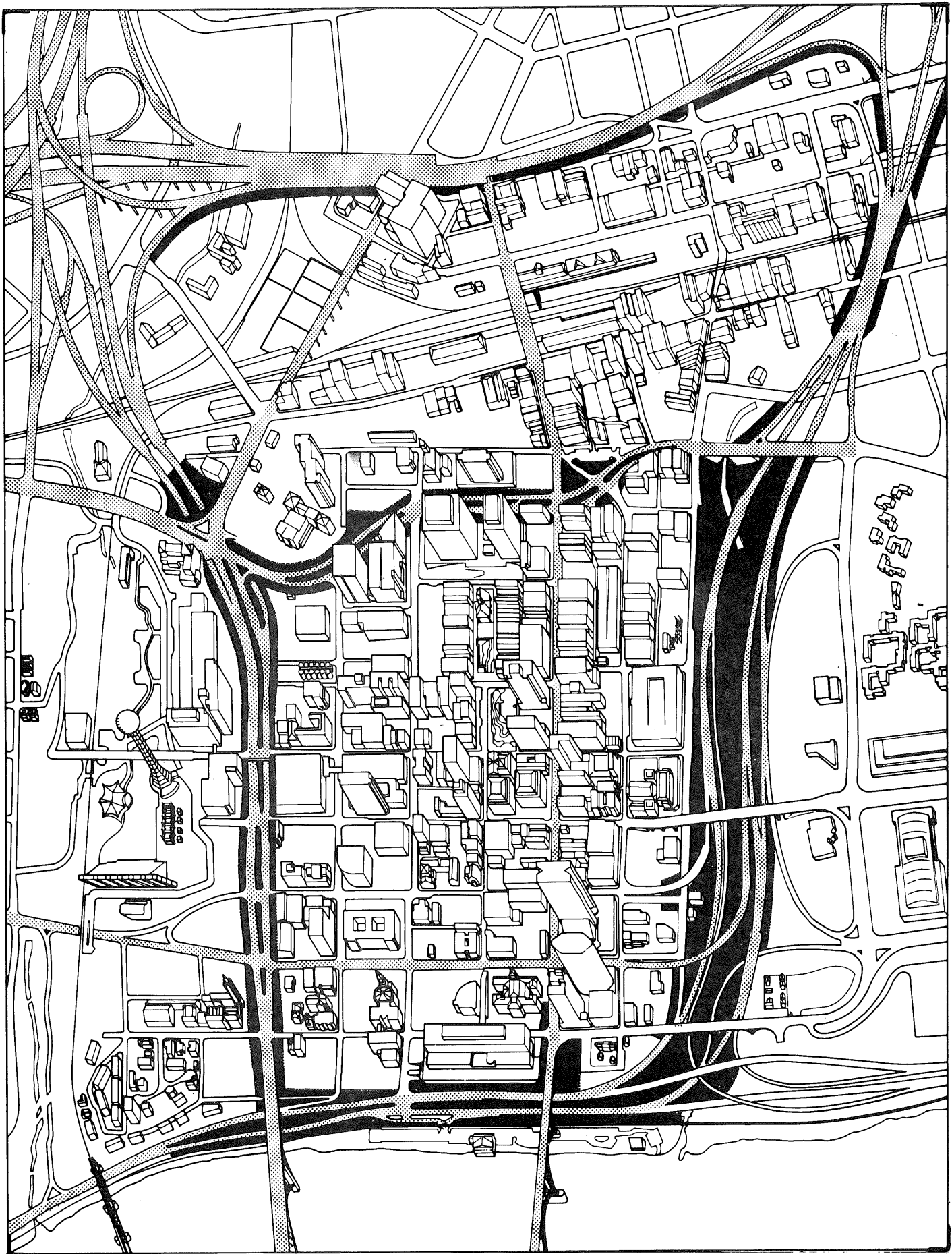
Specific items which should be included in a reconstructed Henley Street include contemporary, vehicular scaled street lights, the use of 4" caliper or larger street trees, pedestrian scaled lighting in the widened, curvilinear median of Henley Street, and pedestrian crosswalks paved with brick or textured paving. The surface of Henley Street should be paved with concrete. Pedestrian-scale architecture at ground level should be encouraged where possible.



**FIGURE A**

# **HENLEY BOULEVARD DESIGN PROPOSAL**


Prepared by Tennessee Valley Authority



MAP 10

# **ROADWAY RELATED OPEN SPACE**

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

 Proposed Improvements

### **Business Loop/Neyland Drive/Central Avenue**

Similar objectives should be pursued in improving the quality of existing highways adjacent to downtown. Private efforts are now underway to improve Neyland Drive; the addition of public resources can advance the completion of such efforts as additional tree planting along edges and in the medians. Along the Business Loop, increased planting adjacent to Central Street can create a more attractive landscaped buffer between the highway and adjacent properties. An emphasis should be placed on landscaping with large trees and smaller shrubbery to suggest an "understory". Lighting along Central should replicate the vehicular scale used on Henley Street. In the median of the Business Loop, the possibility of adding not only landscaping, but also water features--retention ponds or even fountains--should be examined. This might be accomplished in conjunction with a water pollution and runoff control project being considered by the Tennessee Valley Authority.

### **Interstate 40**

The view from and to the elevated interstate highway which forms the northern boundary of downtown can be enhanced through tree plantings on adjacent land wherever possible. Tall, slim trees, such as poplars, can be introduced at ground level. This will help to both mask the rather brutal view of the highway structure when seen from nearby streets, as well as filter, through upper-level branches and leaves, the view from the road of adjacent parking lots and industrial buildings.

### **Summit Hill Drive**

Summit Hill Drive itself can be further enhanced; the addition of new open space at key locations can build on and even improve its currently attractive character. These projects can include a portal park at the intersection of Summit Hill and the Business Loop, improvement and better definition of open space at Summit Hill and Gay Street, and creation of new open space north of Summit Hill between Locust and Walnut. Crosswalks should be paved in a textured material, with the street surface in concrete, as proposed for Henley Street.

Pedestrian streets are treated in the plan as those which in addition to their local traffic role can also have a strong pedestrian bias: they serve as primary linkages into downtown from the immediate environs or provide connections within downtown between adjacent subareas.

## **PEDESTRIAN STREETS**

A network of such streets has been defined, overlapping the perimeter framework of arterial roadways.

## **PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN STREETS**

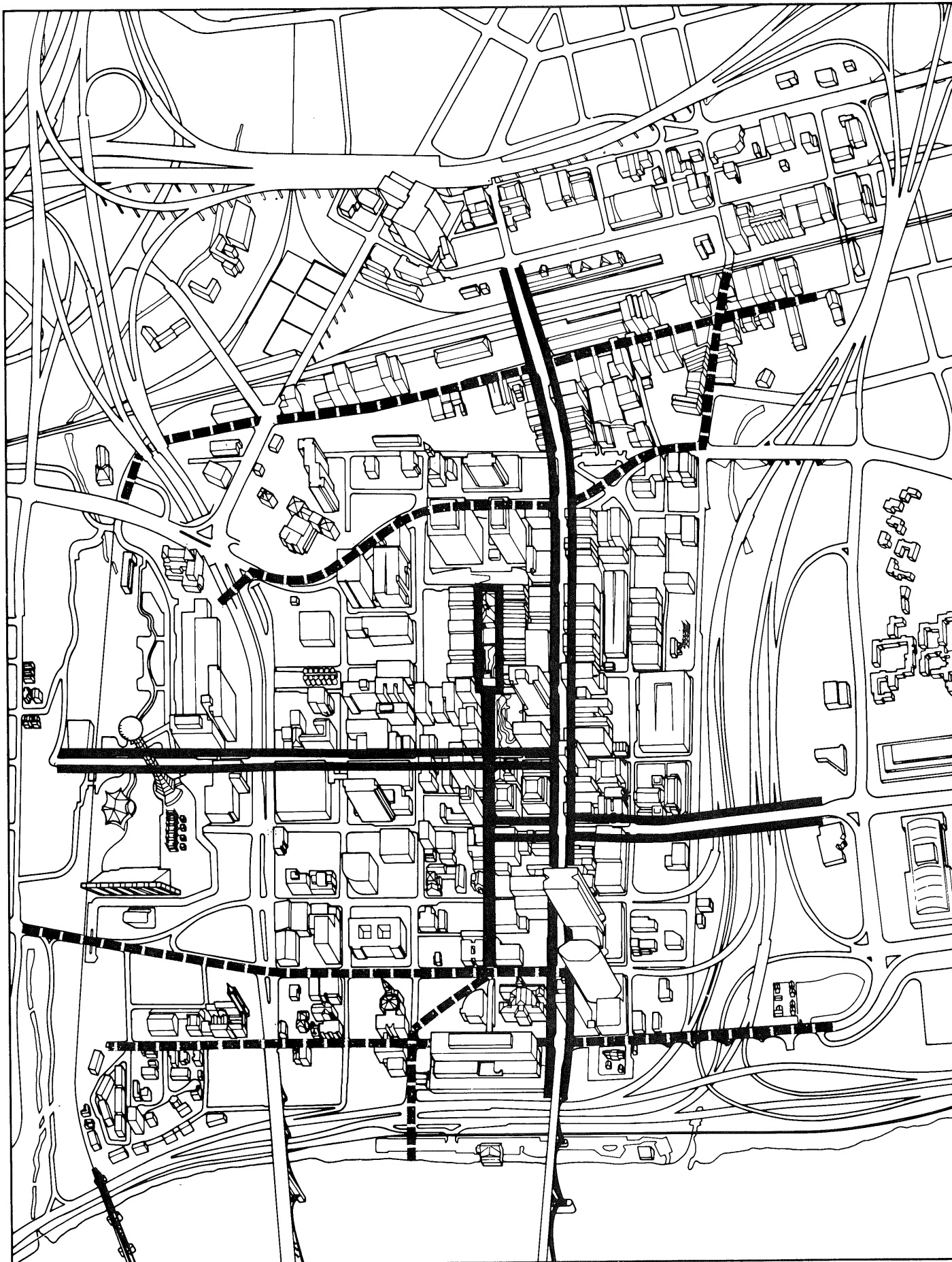
The most important pedestrian streets include:

- Gay Street, downtown's traditional retail street, connecting the Business Core to the Old City and South Knoxville;
- Market Street, the Business Core's central organizing spine;
- Clinch Avenue, an important link between the World's Fair Park and the Business Core;
- Church Avenue, a key connector to downtown from the Civic Coliseum area to the east;

Each pedestrian street, and specific recommendations for its treatment, are discussed in more detail below. However, there are several general recommendations which apply to each of these streets. They include:

- The buildings along the pedestrian systems should provide ground floor architecture that is pedestrian oriented and human-scale. The ground floors of primary pedestrian street buildings should be occupied by uses that encourage pedestrian activity (e.g. restaurants, stores, museums).
- The street lighting on the pedestrian network should be human-scale and traditional in design, with single-head fixtures, similar to the double-head fixture being installed in the ceremonial district of Gay Street.
- An emphasis should be placed on providing street trees and other landscaping along pedestrian streets.
- Where brick crosswalks are recommended, the street they cross should be paved in concrete rather than asphalt.




Map 10 illustrates the recommended pedestrian street improvements.



MAP 11

## **PEDESTRIAN RELATED OPEN SPACE**

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

-  Primary Pedestrian Streets
-  Secondary Pedestrian Streets
-  Market Street Brick Paving

### **Gay Street**

Gay Street is the north-south artery which links the Business Core north to the Old City and south across the Tennessee River. The retail viability of this historic retail corridor of downtown Knoxville, has diminished in recent years. The retail decline is in large measure due to forces unrelated to the actual retail market: Miller's moved to a new location on Henley Street, and Penny's closed its store due to a change in national corporate policy.

Revitalization of this area has been the central objective of Main Street Knoxville, Incorporated, an organization linked to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's nation-wide program. It contains the most concentrated collection of older loft buildings in the Business Core, grouped into two of downtown's three National Register historic districts. Most of the historic structures are located at the upper end of the street, from the Gay Street Viaduct south to Church Avenue.

Gay Street, because of its historic importance and retail potential, has been the subject of a focussed streetscape design study. Now being implemented in part by improvements to the demonstration block on Gay Street between Clinch and Church Avenues, the study's design proposals include the following:

- **Sidewalks** - repaving with concrete banding and mortarless brick infill (brick color to complement historic context);
- **Crosswalks** - paving at all intersections similar to sidewalks, with decorative medallion inset at selected cross-streets;
- **Planting** - different types of landscaping (such as planters or street trees) on different portions of Gay Street, partially a function of below-grade vaults and sidewalk width;
- **Lighting and Street Furniture** - specially-selected fixtures to match the historic context of the area, including single-head or double-head (depending on location) "traditional style" pedestrian lights and single-fixture traffic control modules.

The accompanying design plan, prepared for Main Street Knoxville, Inc., illustrates the planned improvements. It divides Gay Street into several sections, including a "ceremonial" section between Summit Hill Drive and Church Avenue, a southern section which incorporates some of the newest development along the street, and the section north of Summit Hill designed to accommodate residential rehabilitation. Although each of the sections has design elements in common, specific design details in each section vary somewhat.

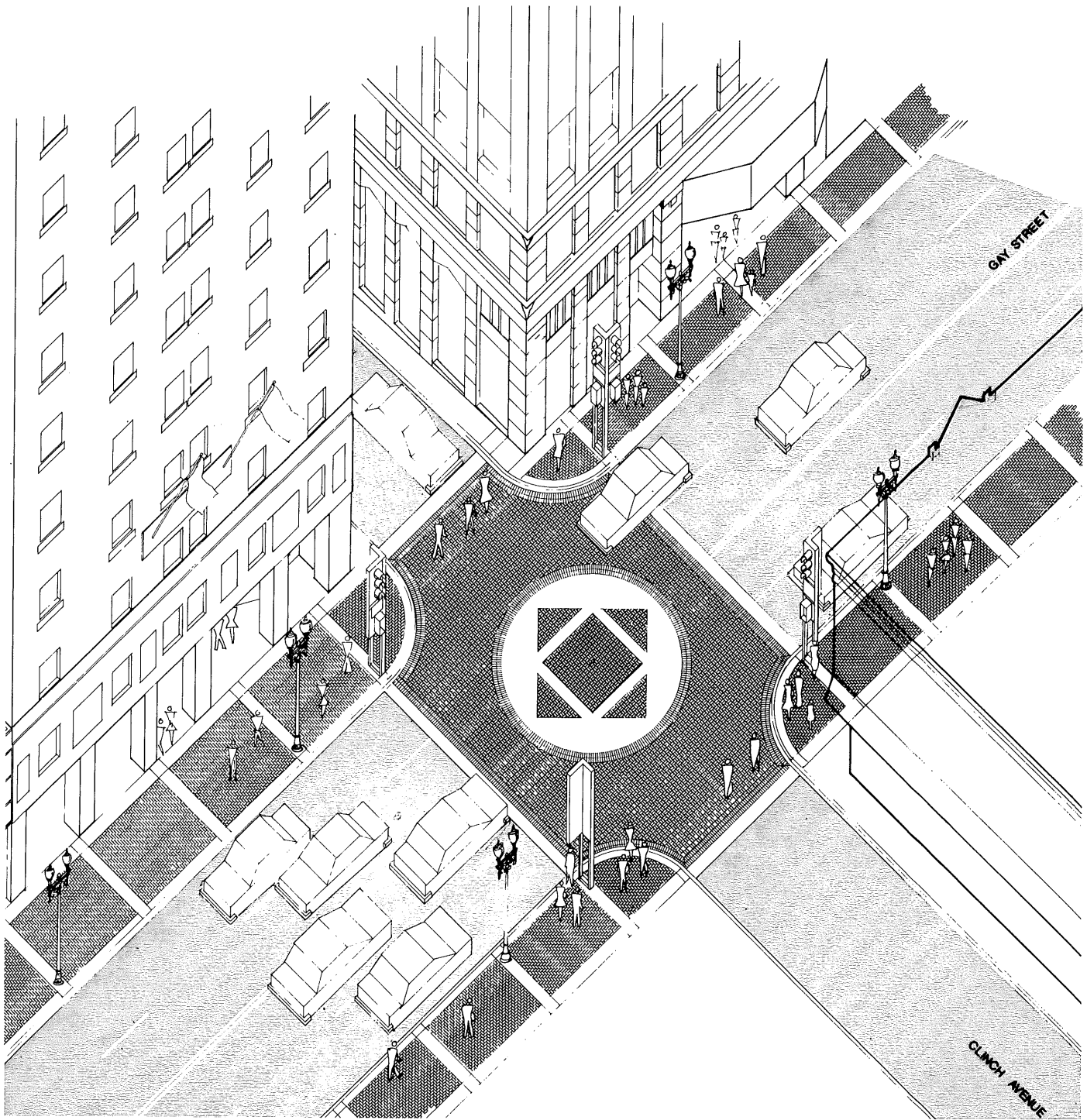


FIGURE B

## ***GAY STREET DESIGN PLAN***

Prepared by Ross/Fowler Architects



### **Market Street**

Although not a through street or a major traffic carrier, Market Street is one of downtown Knoxville's main organizational elements. Bounded at one end by the TVA Towers and at the other by the City-County Building, it is a central spine for pedestrian movement, open space, and new development.

Currently Market Street has intermittent and variable-width brick sidewalks along its length. In order to emphasize its unique pedestrian nature, it is proposed that this corridor receive a unique streetscape treatment: its curbs removed, the entire street paved in brick, with bollards and a continuous drain or gutter separating foot traffic from auto movement. Pedestrian crosswalks at intersecting streets should be paved in brick or a textured paving. Light fixtures should be a single headed style replicating the Gay Street fixtures. Planters or street trees should be provided for as the current sidewalk widths will allow. Regulations that pertain to on-street parking should be strictly enforced, and parking for commercial loading on Market Street should occur only from 9:00-11:00 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

The streetscape treatment would culminate, as at present, in Market Square at the northern end of the street. This movement pattern could be extended further to the north by improving the connection from Market Square to the plaza between the TVA Towers, which is separated from the square by elevation and circuitous circulation. An upper-level connection could also be continued across Summit Hill Drive to the Quality Inn, whose function and economic viability would be improved by a more direct linkage to the Business Core.

Market Street will continue through the pedestrian/open space of the proposed Whittle Communications courtyard, at the south. From there the intent is to lure the pedestrian into and through the park-like lawn of the City-County Building, to the waterfront, with the eventual development of a better linkage to the River.

A summary of design elements which should be utilized in a redesign of Market Street include the following:

- Brick street paving;
- Continuous drain and bollards at the current curb line;
- Street trees or landscape planters, as the width of existing sidewalks permits;
- Pedestrian scale single head street lights;
- Brick paved crosswalks at intersecting streets.

### **Clinch Avenue**

The Clinch Avenue corridor includes both surface street connections linking Krutch Park to the World's Fair Park, bridging the rail line into the Candy Factory and future Knoxville Museum of Art complex, and an above-grade walkway crossing Henley Street. It has the potential to become downtown's primary east-west pedestrian route.

Streetscape treatment for the section west of Gay Street, as for the other remaining downtown pedestrian ways, will be based on a modified version of the Gay Street model. Sidewalk treatment will include repaving and repairing concrete sidewalks where necessary. Intersection treatment will include brick crosswalks without the decorative medallions specified on Gay Street. Existing, intermittent street trees will be supplemented by additional planting. Street furniture will include the same traffic modules as Gay Street, single-headed pedestrian lights similar to Gay Street's fixtures, similar trash receptacles, and other street furniture as appropriate. A summary of improvements for Clinch Avenue includes:

- Repair concrete sidewalks as needed;
- Install brick crosswalks;
- Plant street trees and additional landscaping where none exists; and,
- Install single-fixture traffic control modules, single head pedestrian lights, trash receptacles and other appropriate street furniture.

### **Church Avenue**

Church Avenue is the major east-west connector leading into downtown from the coliseum area to the east. Application of the same streetscape techniques described above (from Mulvaney to Market) will stress the importance of Church as a major entry street into the Business Core. Removal of selected parking spaces can allow attractive planting to improve the image of the Church Avenue Viaduct.

A summary of specific design elements which should be introduced on Church and Clinch Avenues include the following:

- Brick paved or textured pedestrian crosswalks;
- Additional street trees;
- Pedestrian scale single head street lights; and
- Single head traffic signal control modules.

## **SECONDARY PEDESTRIAN STREETS**

Although the following streets are very important for pedestrian travel, they have a slightly greater auto bias and therefore will receive somewhat less attention to pedestrian oriented detail.

- Main Avenue, the major entry street to downtown from the University area, and connection to the Fair site;
- Hill Avenue, a secondary connector to downtown from the hotel/residential areas to the east and west;
- Jackson Avenue, linking the Old City entertainment and residential area to Gay Street and the Fair Site; and
- Central Street, linking this same entertainment and residential area to Summit Hill Drive.

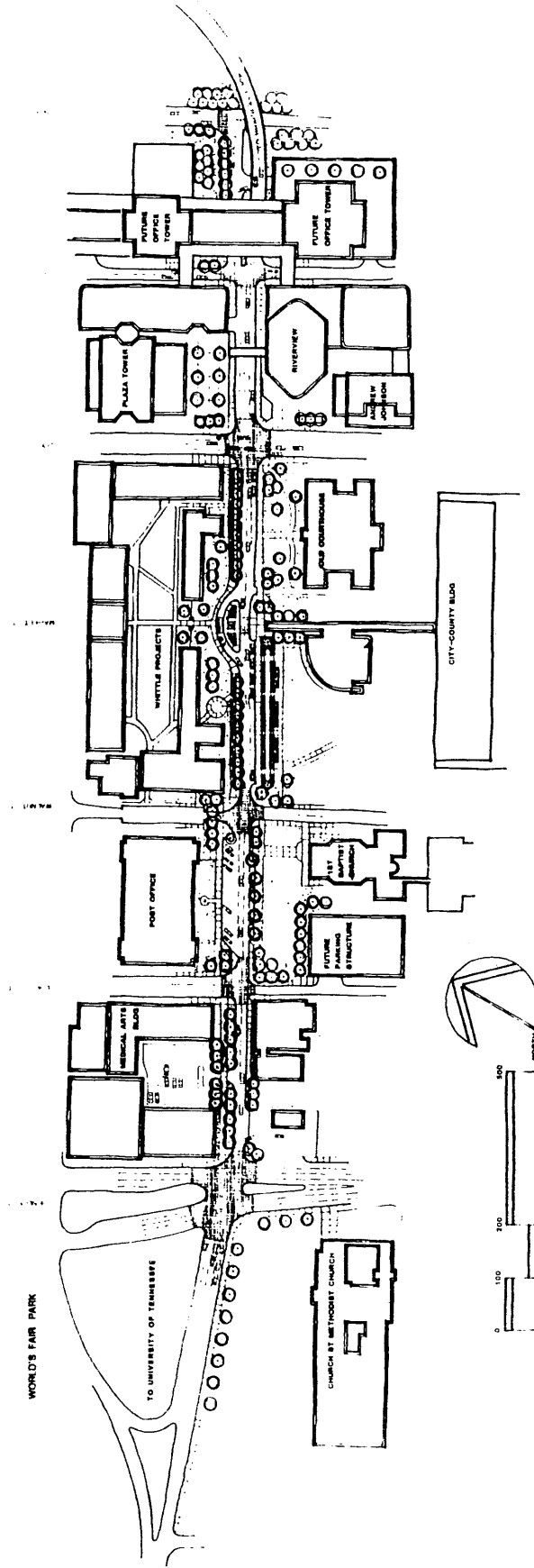
### **Main Avenue**

The Main Avenue corridor is an important auto entry into downtown. It is also one of the major proposed pedestrian connections between the Business Core and the World's Fair Park.

Two factors impact its short-term potential: first, Main Avenue has a very wide right-of-way and can be easily modified to reflect a better balance of auto and pedestrian traffic; second, imminent projects affecting major frontage can incorporate specific streetscape provisions in their designs.

Traffic studies indicate that only two moving lanes are required on Main Avenue, although at certain locations turning lanes are necessary. As the street width is now up to four lanes wide (often with parallel parking), this means that sidewalks can be widened to accommodate additional street trees and planting. Parking can still be accommodated, punctuated with intermittent planters. Crosswalk treatment similar to Gay Street is proposed, although not to include inset medallions. Due to the heavy auto usage of the area, tall street light fixtures like those on Henley Street will be required.

Figure C portrays the type of design changes proposed for Main Avenue.



**FIGURE C**

## **MAIN AVENUE DESIGN PROPOSAL**

Prepared by Tennessee Valley Authority

### **Hill Avenue**

Hill is a secondary connector to the Business Core from Maplehurst, and the hotel complex and Coliseum. It also links two historic sites, the Blount Mansion and the James White Fort. Every effort should be made to retain the pedestrian character now existing at various locations along Hill Avenue. Future redevelopment along Hill, such as the proposed residential development in Maplehurst, and the extension of a pedestrian way from Market Street to the waterfront should trigger the extension of the pedestrian street design features, at least in the affected areas.

### **Jackson Avenue**

As redevelopment proceeds in the Old City area, Jackson Avenue has the long-range potential to become an attractive connecting street between new residential/entertainment activity and the Fair Site. First stage actions should focus on the Jackson/Central intersection, where initial private redevelopment is creating an attractive activity area. Any streetscape changes in the Jackson Avenue/Central Street area should be preceded by a design study which recognizes and attempts to retain the unique historical and architectural character of the area. It must adequately address the historic fragments such as concrete sidewalks, stone curbs, and sidewalk width which now form such a significant setting for the area's buildings. The adopted design should be well-coordinated with that of the other pedestrian streets. The design study recommended for this area should involve the residents and property owners in the area.

### **Central Street**

Central Street connects the currently-emerging Jackson/Central activity area back to Summit Hill and the proposed Central Street landscaping adjacent to the Business Loop. This connection will help strengthen the linkage between the Business Core and Old City residential and entertainment development. As noted in the description under "Roadway-related open spaces", landscaping and vehicular scale lighting should be included along Central Street (and the Business Loop).

The creation of new open space development--strategically located parks and plazas--is extremely important in filling out the framework of roadway and street-related landscaping. This major accent of green can be used to accentuate key views, provide activity space for downtown workers and residents, and act as amenities to attract new development to adjacent sites. Map 12 illustrates locations for proposed parks and plazas.

#### **Market Street/Gay Street**

The further upgrading of existing spaces can be a starting point. For instance, the Market Square area can be better linked into its context. Upgrading the connection to the plaza between the TVA Towers, and looking at ways to better activate that space through design and programming, can lead to an expansion of central area open space available for festivals, noon-time events and downtown pedestrians.

Tying the Market Street spine more closely to the parallel Gay Street corridor can also be accomplished through new open space. A new mid-block park on Gay Street between Church and Union, created on an existing parking lot adjacent to Krutch Park, could provide an attractive window into the internal pedestrian-oriented precinct and add an incentive to the upgrading of storefronts on the opposite Gay Street facade.

On the east side of Gay Street, development of a mid-block park opposite the terminus of Wall Avenue could provide a street-level connection to parking and new development along State and Central as well as a needed amenity to improve the image of the adjacent Gay Street area for redevelopment.

At the opposite end of the Business Core, the new Whittle Communications headquarters will feature a courtyard open space, bisected by the Market Street spine. This space will further accentuate the north-south pedestrian movement leading to the river.

#### **Waterfront**

The waterfront will remain isolated until a connection is made across Neyland Drive. Transportation consultants have recommended such a connection as part of a vehicular link over Neyland Drive from Walnut Street. This project should be given a heavy pedestrian as well as auto bias. Characterized as the "Walnut Street Promenade", this structure can extend the Market Street corridor past the City-County Building to the water's edge.

Once at the river, a wide range of new recreation/open space opportunities present themselves. The growth of the "Watersports Festival" in the last two years provides a focus for downtown summertime events; provision of seating areas along the shoreline and improvement of parking and other services will support these and other activities. The Promenade could terminate in a dramatic amphitheater for up to 2,000 people, stepping down at the water's edge to a stage available for popular entertainers, orchestral concerts, or other performance events.

In light of the narrowness of the land area along the river, dramatic improvements might be necessary to realize the type of development outlined above. One possible scenario would literally relocate the shipping channel from the north edge to the center of the river. If done, this could provide a new development area through filling or building on piers. Existing water depth would remove the need for significant dredging to move the channel. A major obstacle to this scenario, however, is the Norfolk-Southern Railroad Bridge just west of the Henley Street Bridge. Because of its design, the bridge would need major reconstruction to allow relocation of the channel. Given this constraint, and the negative impact this rail line has on redevelopment of the World's Fair Site and road connections near Western Avenue, removal of the rail line should be given serious consideration.

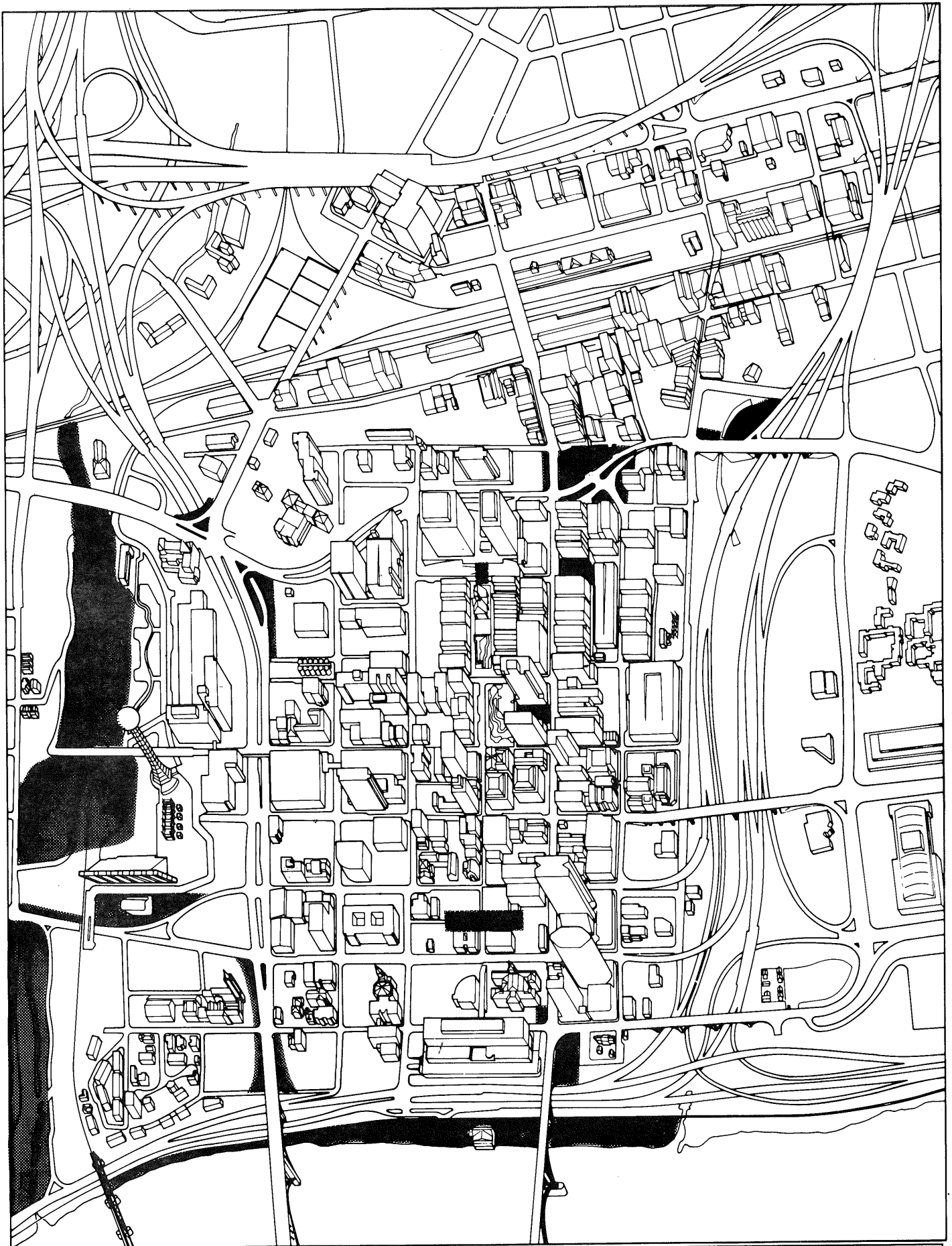
In order to address the needs of the downtown waterfront within the regional context of the River, it is recommended that a comprehensive river study and plan be completed. This should be done as a joint effort including the City, County and Tennessee Valley Authority, and represent others interested in the River. Development of this plan should begin immediately to build on the momentum of the Downtown Plan and assist, not delay, implementation of improvements to the downtown waterfront area.

#### **Summit Hill Drive at Gay Street**

Along Summit Hill Drive, there are opportunities for additional open space improvements. The primary focus should be on the park created between Gay Street and State Street. This park is at present a collection of landscaped traffic islands, separated by a network of roadways and parking lots. Sorting out necessary from unnecessary paved areas can result in a consolidation of open space: making possible more attractive landscaping and spaces for public art and creating the potential for an active urban square, surrounded by uses such as restaurants, shops and galleries.

#### **World's Fair Park**

The World's Fair Park represents one of the major challenges for Knoxville's downtown development. Built for the 1982 exposition as a venue for festivals, events and cultural activities, the Park has continued that role for the last five years. While the site is seen as an opportunity for future development, its continuing function as a "central park" area for recreation and culture must also be accommodated. Additional public investment in landscaping and site improvements will increase the value of this important amenity, increasing the short-term utility of the site for continuing public use, while enhancing its longer-term development potential. Development, including that of private interests, cultural institutions and public groups, should be located toward the periphery of the site. This will allow the core of the Park to be retained in open space, including botanical gardens, lakes, lawns and walkways.



MAP 12

## PARKS AND PLAZAS

 New or Enhanced Spaces

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission



## **GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

There are some improvements which should be made throughout the downtown area, regardless of a specific area classification, which will make the downtown more accessible and pleasant for all to use. These include the following:

- Curb cuts and other access for the handicapped should be improved throughout downtown, with ramps of the proper width and slope to render easy access. A first emphasis in the placement of these facilities should be in the pedestrian network defined above, but the final goal should be their installation throughout downtown.
- The City Engineering Department should develop a uniform, legible and identity-building sign system to direct people to and within the downtown area.
- Maintenance should be mandated in public budgets and by private cooperation, and be monitored by a downtown organization. Maintenance in this instance includes landscaping maintenance, trash and litter clean-up, and snow and ice removal, as well as street and sidewalk cleaning.
- All overhead wires should be relocated underground.
- Public art should be encouraged throughout downtown. Public art includes not only art works, but also public fountains and other features which add to the ambience and diversity of downtown. The new downtown organization should see that a program is developed and implemented to locate, design and pay for public art.
- Minimum sidewalk widths should be provided throughout downtown, and major pedestrian barriers should be removed.
- Guidelines and regulations should be developed to encourage pedestrian scale, ground floor architecture for new buildings and major renovations.

The scale, height and bulk of buildings and their relationship to open spaces which surround them, are critical elements in the physical image of downtown, especially when viewed from a distance. Likewise, details of the built form: the finer grain of building design or the presence of landscaping and other amenities on-street strongly influence the pedestrian's image of the place.

As a complement to proposals for circulation patterns, development sites and an open space framework, a corollary issue is how to create--for resident and visitor alike--a strong image of downtown Knoxville as an active and attractive regional core.

As one drives into downtown, the central business district is perceived as a diverse cluster of individual buildings. The variety of independent designs reflects varying functions and styles. At the same time, this variety takes place within an ordered framework: specific subareas of the business core each contain groupings of similar height buildings--low, medium, or large scale structures.

The intent of looking at downtown's skyline as a piece of evolving urban design is to define how the city can continue to maintain its individual identity--a strong and distinctive image of its own, expressive of Knoxville's unique qualities and environment--yet escape the sameness that makes most other cities indistinguishable from one another.

What is it that makes Knoxville different? What qualities should be reinforced and which changed? From the point of view of downtown as a total image, the city's skyline has a logic and order which should be carefully maintained and enhanced. From the perspective of the pedestrian user of downtown, other qualities having to do with detail and amenity should be refined and improved.

The Urban Form element of the Concept Plan addresses these issues at two levels:

- overall height and bulk of buildings and their relationship to surrounding open space, and
- pedestrian scale details.

**BUILDING  
HEIGHT  
AND  
BULK**

Looking at downtown's image, the approach is to identify existing patterns and define how they can be reinforced through appropriate height and bulk guidelines for various parts of the urban core.

Analysis of the existing and emerging pattern of central city development reveals that downtown is not a jumble of unrelated buildings, but rather a series of subareas with varying intensities of development. These intensities consist of three general scales of building height: low (approximately 1-6 stories), medium (6-12 stories), or high-rise (more than 12 stories).

Knoxville's skyline as seen across the Tennessee River from the south offers the most striking view of this development pattern. Seen from this perspective, various development corridors stand out against the horizon. From west to east, these areas include:

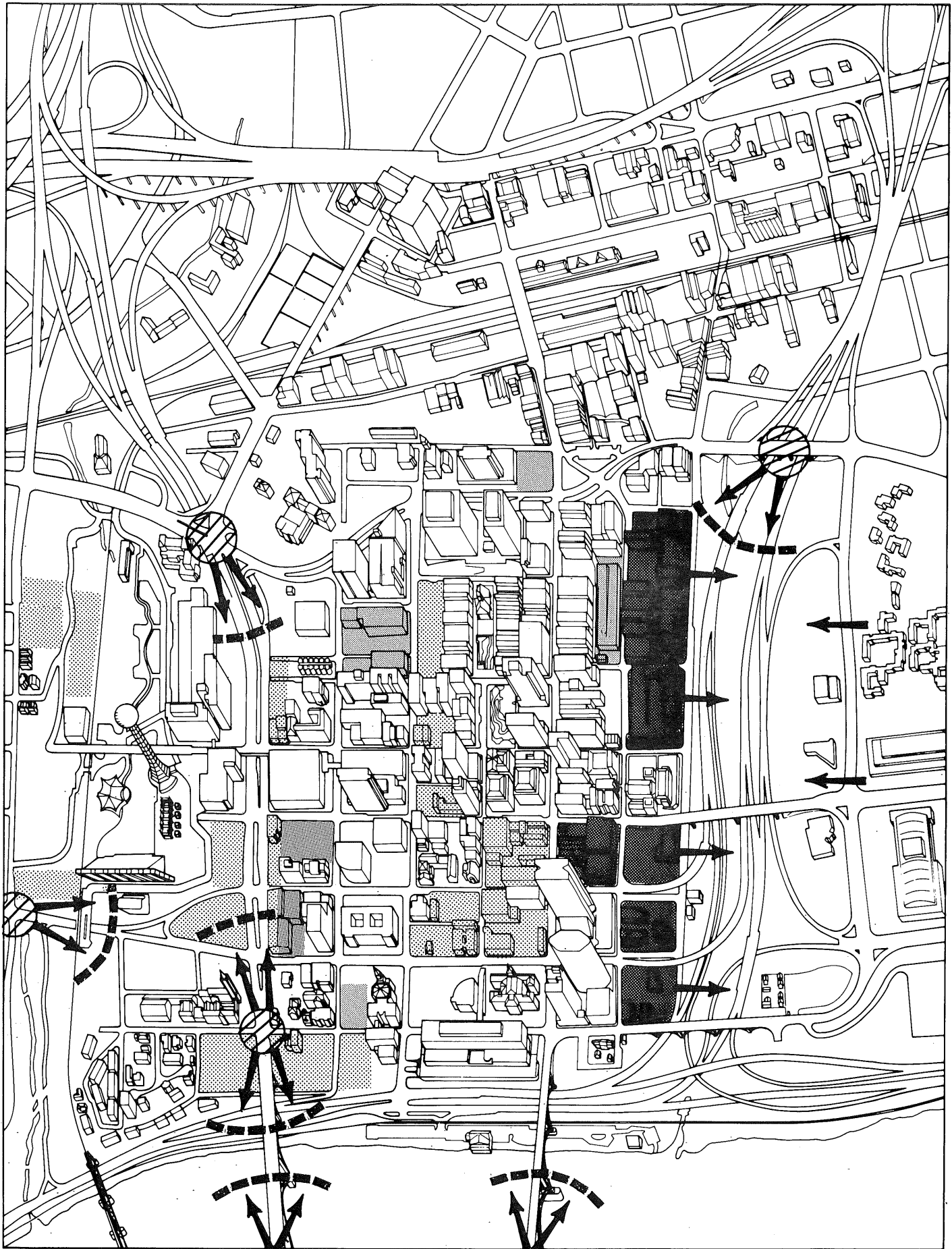
- the World's Fair Park, consisting of both open space and primarily low-scale pavilions, punctuated by the distinctive landmark: Sunsphere;
- the Henley Street Corridor, with predominantly medium scale buildings, such as Miller's, the new Federal building and the Pembroke, supplemented by miscellaneous low-scale (Kendrick Place, the fire station) and higher-rise structures (Holiday Inn, the Hilton);
- the central portion of the business core, with its low-rise structures clustered along the Market Street corridor: this attractive pedestrian-scale environment in the heart of downtown is one of Knoxville's major strengths, which the campus-like Whittle Communications headquarters will reinforce; and
- the south Gay Street area, its high-rise development of the Plaza and Riverview office towers, on axis with the Cumberland Avenue entrance to downtown from the west and overlooking East Knoxville, the River, and the remainder of downtown.

Other subareas are more readily perceived from other vantage points, such as from East Knoxville looking across the First Creek valley or from the north, looking over downtown from the interstate:

- on Gay Street north of Clinch Avenue, the medium-scale historic district, featuring older loft buildings backing up to the lower-scale Market Square to the west and potential development sites along State and Central to the east;
- the cluster of medium to high rise buildings at the northern end of the business core: the two TVA towers and the Quality Inn hotel;
- finally, in the Old City area to the north, medium to low-rise loft buildings, protected by their historic district designation from major assembly and demolition, and holding the promise for continued renovation.

Adherence to guidelines for new development will help enhance this evolving pattern, reinforce the characteristics of various subareas, and create a positive, indelible image of the city's central core.





These guidelines, illustrated on Map 13, consist of identifying the general height and mass desired for potential development sites, and important views and vistas which are related to the built environment. Examples include the following:



MAP 13

## URBAN FORM

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

-  Low Building Height and Bulk
-  Medium Building Height and Bulk
-  High Building Height and Bulk
-  Portals and Views (Development Related)

## **WORLD'S FAIR PARK**

Due to the importance of the view corridor from the Henley/Main Avenue area into the open space heart of the site (the only downtown view of this central park space, the World's Fair Park's major characteristic), and of downtown's skyline looking east along Cumberland Avenue, this Plan recommends a different approach. A primarily low-rise, pavilion-like development, maintaining the view into the site from Henley, and into downtown from the west is proposed. The wall of buildings to the north (convention center/hotel complex) which visually separates the World's Fair Park from the rest of downtown, should not be extended further south.

The 1989 World's Fair Park and Festival Center Plan goes beyond these guidelines in recommending the following major concepts:

- a core linear public park, surrounded by private and quasi-public development;
- improved and enhanced gateways to provide entrances to and help define the linear public park; and
- a system of bicycle paths and pedestrian walkways to link activity areas.

## **HENLEY STREET CORRIDOR**

Along the eastern, Business Core-side of Henley Street, a number of potential development sites exist which will become more valuable downtown addresses as Henley is improved. Along this side of the street the intent is to create an urban atmosphere similar to that of a wide Washington D.C. boulevard: a continuous facade of attractive, moderately-scaled buildings that will frame the open space improvements along Henley without overpowering the desired ambience.

The guidelines for new development therefore suggest a low-rise (approximately 5-6 story) street facade for new development on the east side of Henley, that can step back to medium-rise (up to 12-story) toward Locust Street overlooking the landscaped artery and World's Fair Park.

On internal blocks between Locust and Walnut medium-height development is also appropriate. Potential sites are all partial blocks, and limited availability of space for convenient parking tends to militate against high intensity development.

Adjacent to the Henley Street bridge overlooking the River, lower-rise development that steps down the hillside, possibly incorporating below-grade parking, will maintain views of the waterfront and create an attractive image appropriate to the scale of the adjacent Maplehurst community.

## **CENTRAL BUSINESS CORE**

Maintaining the pedestrian ambience in the heart of the Business Core is extremely important. New development adjacent to Market Street should continue the lower height scale of most existing buildings (even where a newer, tall building exists, such as the bank building at Market and Clinch,

it is stepped back, framing out the street with a continuous lower-scale facade).

The Whittle corporate headquarters, for instance, meets these guidelines: it is a low-rise scheme which reinforces its surrounding streets and reemphasizes, through its orientation and internal courtyard, the strength of the Market Street axis.

#### **SOUTH GAY STREET AND THE STATE/CENTRAL CORRIDOR**

Prime sites for future development, both on Gay and in the State/Central Corridor behind, are found adjacent to existing high-rise office towers. The block immediately north of the Plaza Tower, and several along State and Central Streets are important new building sites. Several development scenarios could be considered. For example, the block which is home to the newspaper headquarters, could be envisioned with a terraced design--low-mid rise at Gay Street, taller near State--to provide a transition between the nearby historic district and the adjacent towers. On the other hand, a pleasant open space fronting on Gay Street, with the building set well back, could become a focus for development on all sides.

However, these are among a limited number of sites in downtown appropriate for high-rise development. An objective of the Plan is to provide appropriate locations for new corporate headquarters or speculative office space. Such sites are valuable resources and should be evaluated in light of potential market conditions a decade or more in the future. From the urban design point of view, high-rise buildings, properly located, can reinforce the image of urban intensity which is an important characteristic of downtown.

Due to the topography, which falls off sharply to the east, available future development sites along the State/Central Corridor also have the potential to support large parking structures. As with the Plaza or Riverview towers, this parking could be located beneath a plaza level connected to the Gay Street elevation via pedestrian walkways. Atop and adjacent to this platform, high-rise office or housing towers could overlook the First Creek Valley, creating a new and attractive facade for the city from East Knoxville beyond.

#### **THE GAY STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT**

North of Church Avenue, the older buildings along Gay Street have been grouped into a National Register historic district, which not only offers further justification for their preservation, but also provides tax credits which can act as an incentive for renovation.

With this assistance, the contributing medium-rise buildings in this area should remain; new infill development should match their urban design characteristics. Similar heights and relationships to the street should be maintained, and to the extent possible, architectural characteristics such as cornice lines or window treatments should be incorporated into new designs.

## **THE NORTH BUSINESS CORE**

At the upper end of the business core, the two TVA towers and the Quality Inn hotel form a cluster of medium to high-rise buildings. Other future development sites in this area offer locations in which this pattern of development can continue.

For instance, the Gay Street site adjacent to the Quality Inn represents an important link between the Gay Street retail area to the south and the historic buildings to the north which have been earmarked for residential rehabilitation. Continuing the eastern facade of Gay Street with a building of similar scale at the street will maintain the continuity of the street frontage. It will also complete the enclosure and definition of the adjacent green space square along Summit Hill Drive. Additional height for a building on this site can occur as a setback from the lower-scale street facade.

Enhancement of this green space square can provide the incentive for development of other facing sites. These can include low to medium scale development on the blocks to the south. A potential site for medium to high-rise development is on the eastern side of the square, adjacent to the entry from the Business Loop, and at the northern end of the State-Central corridor.

## **THE OLD CITY**

Finally, development of the Old City area should proceed in recognition of its historic significance and architectural quality. New infill development should be carefully designed with respect to its context, relating facade heights and design characteristics to adjacent structures.

Concern for detail and quality at the pedestrian level is in many ways even more important than building height and bulk, which affect downtown's overall skyline and built form. These urban design elements create a perception of downtown as a hospitable and friendly place.

## **PEDESTRIAN SCALE DETAILS**

The inherent personality of an urban street is influenced by architecture, abutting land use, and the public or private amenities it boasts. An equally major influence, however, is the design of the street itself. This includes not only its streetscape improvements, but also more fine-grained design considerations having to do with enclosure, scale, and appearance.

## **ENCLOSURE**

Thinking of a street corridor as a room in a house is a useful metaphor. In order to provide enclosure and spatial definition, it needs consistent building facades, just as a room needs walls.

Maintenance of the "street wall"--the face of adjacent structures at the building line or at a plane of common setback--is a useful guideline for the



urban design of downtown Knoxville. Continual stepping in and out of adjacent buildings with no overall rhythm creates a jumbled visual effect, confuses the pedestrian flow and stifles access to the buildings.

Periodic and deliberate interruptions in the street wall, of course, can be used to good effect. Large open areas can provide spaces for pocket parks; smaller insets can emphasize an architectural feature such as a major entry point. Minor intrusions can frame a terminus to a street, especially if reflected in adjacent buildings. For the most part, however, an emphasis on regularly-defined enclosures for street-level space can establish a framework for more detailed design treatments.

## **SCALE**

Again thinking of downtown streets as rooms, it follows that just as ceiling or window height and door width are important to a room, building dimensions are important to a city block.

Scale in this context is a term describing the relationship between the physical size of the individual pedestrian and that of his surrounding urban environment. It deals with the question of how buildings and open spaces can be designed to create a sense of both comfort and vitality.

In Knoxville, as in most cities, many of the older buildings have the best sense of scale. When standing next to an older commercial building on Gay Street, for example, one has a sense of the ground level, with its intimately scaled first floor height and welcoming windowed shopfront, often defined by vertical brick or cast iron columns. Above, the solid, masonry facade contains more private uses.

Another example is a more classically-designed building: the Customs House on Clinch Avenue. Although it has a more monumental design approach, it still has a clear definition of base, middle, and top. The ground floor, although a heavy foundation-like level, is designed to relate to the physical size of a pedestrian. The building as a whole, because of its horizontal, layered organization, succeeds in remaining a comprehensible, friendly structure.

Newer buildings, both in downtown and the suburbs, often take a different tack. Setting back from the street to provide plazas (often not designed for active use), hiding ground floor activity behind fashionably dark glazing or windowless blank walls, or presenting sheer vertical expanses of facade rising from ground level to the sky without a horizontal break, these structures represent the opposite extreme; they lack human scale.

New guidelines for downtown buildings should emphasize positive design principles such as those described here. If downtown Knoxville is to create for itself an image distinct from the suburban malls, it needs to emphasize itself as a built environment conscious of its pedestrian constituency.

## **APPEARANCE**

Finally, an urban street needs appropriate street lights and benches, similar to a room's fixtures and furniture. It needs attractive signs and window displays, landscape amenities or public art to communicate function and civic aspiration, just as a room's personality is defined by its utensils, plants, books, and paintings.

Appearance is therefore the final element to be considered in terms of detailed urban design. This is a broad category which encompasses a variety of amenities, including landscape and public art improvements.

### **Planting**

As described in the Open Space/Pedestrian section, a heavy emphasis on trees and plantings will reinforce the concept of downtown as a park. A strategically-phased program of planting can connect existing landscaped areas and enhance pedestrian areas.

Where possible (although vaults and subsurface conditions in some locations may cause restrictions), trees should be planted at grade, rather than in above ground planters. This will minimize obstructions to pedestrian movement and create the most natural setting. Trees selected should be of as large caliper as possible, to give an immediately finished feel to newly constructed improvements. Flowering trees should be considered as accents at key locations. It is recommended that a detailed landscape/ planting plan be prepared.

### **Street Furniture**

Items such as lighting or traffic standards, sign posts, information kiosks, newspaper stands, trash cans, and benches should all be considered as part of a total system. Some standard elements may be used throughout the city or downtown, others may be specific to a certain location or type of area.

Achieving maximum consistency of materials and design, though allowing for subtle changes in detail, is an important objective. To as great an extent as possible, details agreed to in the Gay Street plan should be used in other areas. As the beautification plan is detailed, standards for street scape elements should be reviewed and refined.

### **Water Features**

Fountains and other water features were specifically suggested by Task Force committees for incorporation in the Plan. The existing features in the Market Square area (including Krutch Park and adjacent to the Custom House), as well as on the World's Fair Park, can be supplemented by other fountains or water areas. Other suggestions include:

- the extension of water features all along Market Street from Market Square to the Waterfront;

- in the proposed Gay Street plaza at Wall Avenue, where a waterfall-like effect could be created using the wall of an adjacent building;
- in the proposed Summit Hill square area, serving as a portal entry and an attractive centerpiece for this link between the Business Core and the Old City;
- along the Business Loop, where an environmental demonstration project might create ponds or fountains using the First Creek water supply now channeled into a box culvert beneath the right-of-way;
- along the Fort Loudon Lake waterfront, where a fountain in the lake on axis with the proposed Walnut Street promenade and amphitheater could provide a focal point for riverfront improvements.

A coordinated approach to creating these attractive features would be an important element in improving the visual image of downtown.

### **Public Art**

A final important consideration in downtown urban design is that of public art: the deliberate insertion into the downtown environment of elements--sculpture, wall murals, historic artifacts--which help create a sense of place. The intent is to help structure the image of the city by providing new landmarks: not necessarily tall or prominent structures but more modest elements, designed by individual artists or craftsmen to the scale of the individual observer.

These elements can include work in a variety of media and artistic approaches:

- Knoxville's "Fireman" is an example of the popular appeal of life-size statuary--in the past celebrating political, military, or cultural heroes; more recently depicting ordinary citizens at work or play. Adding new members to this theme--possibly statues of other unsung heroes, perhaps even leavened with a touch of gentle humor--can create both focal points for individual places as well as a theme for downtown as a whole.
- More serious works of art can also have their place. Choosing museum-quality pieces of sculpture and carefully placing them in relation to adjacent buildings and pedestrian patterns, can provide downtown workers and residents with an evolving appreciation of works of art that become familiar icons in the local landscape.
- Play sculptures are another way to provide both a sense of place and a focus for activity. Sculpture that can be climbed upon, sat on, or otherwise interacted with attracts children and adults alike.

- Other sculptural elements can provide dual functions even as they serve as works of art. Gateways, directional signs, pedestrian bridges, or even tunnel portals can be designed as unique, colorful and memorable elements in their own right.
- Historic artifacts, either existing or recreated, are important tools in creating imageability; tying the past into the present. Streets, parks, or buildings can incorporate architectural details, segments of old brick roadways, panels describing important sites, or comparative photographs of skylines past.
- Finally, the public itself can be brought into the process. Local competitions for ideas (possibly involving schoolchildren as well as adults), public “adoption” of monuments or trees, and citizen participation in incremental parts of a whole (such as purchase of individual personalized bricks in a park paving pattern) are techniques that can increase ownership and public enthusiasm.

Public art can be created by local as well as internationally known artists; representatives from each category are appropriate. The important balancing standards are quality of work and public acceptance. While involving the public in the actual choice of art is often difficult, participation by the community in defining the selection criteria and process is critical.

The point of this examination of urban design is to define downtown as a distinctive, memorable, and attractive central image for the region as a whole. Downtown should embody Knoxville’s best character traits--hospitality, initiative, volunteerism, pride--and express these in terms of its highest civic ideals--beauty, quality and permanence.

## CONCLUSION



## CHAPTER 4

# *LAND USE*

### INTRODUCTION

**T**he Downtown Plan land use elements provide information and recommendations to be used by developers, lenders, civic leaders and public officials in evaluating the appropriateness of property for a certain type of activity or development.

In each section (office, residential, retail, cultural/entertainment/tourism) various areas are considered for a given type of use. From one section to the next a particular piece of property or area may be identified as a potential location for more than one land use. In these cases a mixed use development or, either one of the uses, is deemed appropriate. Market forces will determine which use is best under these circumstances. In cases where only one land use is appropriate, or where a given use will have important spin-off effects, the Plan recommends that the use be strongly encouraged or be the only allowable use.

The 'Project Ideas' described and illustrated in this chapter are not official recommendations of the Plan. These project ideas are presented here to offer a better understanding of the potential developments outlined within the Plan, and to illustrate how dynamic an effect projects like these could have.

By providing this level of information, the Plan can be a stimulus to public and private efforts to develop projects. It is hoped that the sketches and project descriptions can become springboards to specific efforts for putting the Plan's proposals on the ground.

These project descriptions are not intended to limit the ideas to be entertained for these sites, or to suggest that different locations should not be evaluated for projects similar to these.

**IMPLEMENTATION  
OF  
LAND USE  
PROPOSALS**

Several tools are available to help bring about the types, locations and intensities of development envisioned in the Plan.

**ZONING**

Historically, the downtown area has been zoned C-2, Central Business District, a district which is very broad in terms of allowable land uses and has very few restrictions or requirements for development. Changes to this zoning can help encourage or guide the type of downtown development called for by the Plan. (Specific changes are discussed in Chapter Six.)

**TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS**

As described in the Transportation section of this document (Chapter Five), new connections to the Interstate and arterial streets are proposed, as are changes to traffic signal locations, allowed turning movements, one-way streets, and other improvements to the total transportation system. These should improve access to and attractiveness of proposed sites.

**PUBLIC CONTRIBUTIONS**

Not only the proposed beautification improvements, but also specific incentives or subsidies (e.g. contribution to parking development) should be used to encourage development which conforms with the letter and spirit of the Plan.

# OFFICE LAND USE

## INTRODUCTION

Office uses include business, professional and service offices of both government and the private sector. According to the Downtown Data Base (MPC, 12/86) office land uses are now and are expected to continue as the largest category in downtown. Nearly thirty percent (30%) of all downtown property, almost double the second largest group, is used for offices. In areas where office uses exist or are recommended, buildings may include other, non-office, uses such as retailing, restaurants or dwelling units. In some cases the location of office uses within buildings may be specified. Examples of this are areas along the pedestrian system where retail or other more pedestrian oriented uses are encouraged at ground level with offices on upper levels, or areas where upper floors of office buildings are earmarked for residential use.

Office developments are important to downtown as stated in the fourth of the adopted goals:

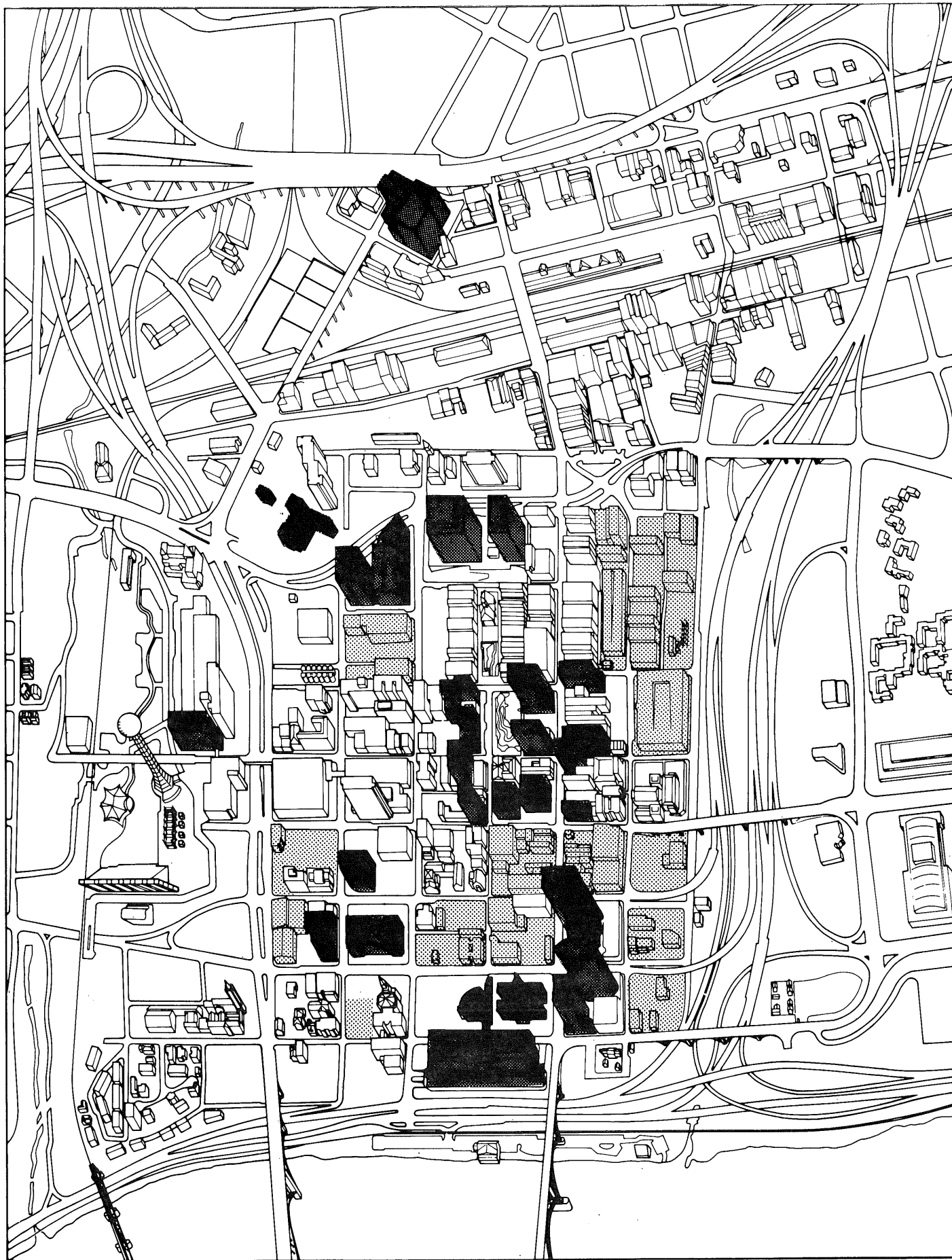
*A Place to Do Business...*downtown should continue to function as the office/business core of the metropolitan area.

## INTENSITY OF OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

The office land use category is the most critical in terms of potential high rise building locations, since office buildings are typically the only high rise structures in medium sized cities like Knoxville. As discussed in the Urban Form section of this report certain areas of downtown lend themselves best to low, medium or high intensities of development.

The following map shows major existing and potential office areas. Generally, the most intensive office sites are proposed for the eastern edge of downtown, with the lowest scale of offices focused in the area surrounding Market Street and on the periphery of the World's Fair Park. Office buildings of moderate height and mass are recommended in various locations along Henley, Locust, and Walnut Streets.





MAP 14

## MAJOR OFFICE AREAS

-  Existing Major Office Buildings
-  Potential Office Development Areas

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

**OFFICE  
DEVELOPMENT  
POLICIES**

The following general policies should guide the development or redevelopment of all offices within the downtown area.

1. The overall intensity or scale (height, mass, lot coverage) of any new office building should respect the scale of existing buildings, open spaces and views in the area which it impacts.
2. Long term (employee) parking which is developed to support office uses should be located so that it does not attract high volumes of traffic into or through the pedestrian areas of the Business Core.
3. New developments (and rehabilitation projects, where possible) should be designed to accommodate commercial and passenger loading in off-street locations.
4. Speculative office development should be considered in light of available data from MPC, Center for Business and Economic Research, East Tennessee Development District and other sources, to maintain an appropriate office occupancy rate.

**SPECIFIC  
OFFICE  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The block immediately north of the Plaza Tower and the three blocks between State and Central Streets and north of the Hill Avenue viaduct should be the prime target sites for new high rise office structures, for several reasons: These blocks:
  - a. reinforce the pattern outlined in the urban form section,
  - b. have availability of redevelopable land,
  - c. have good access to and visibility from, the interstate,
  - d. are appropriate locations for long term parking in buildings,
  - e. address need to improve visual blight along east edge of downtown,
  - f. are compatible with surrounding uses.

## *PROJECT IDEA...*

### **OFFICE TOWERS — State/Central Corridor**

#### **Concept**

A staggered cluster of high-rise office towers terraced down the hillside. Construction of additional office space, as the market indicates, relates to an important goal of the Downtown Plan:

***A Place to Do Business...*** in order for downtown to continue to function as the office/business core of the metropolitan area, adequate high quality office space must be available.

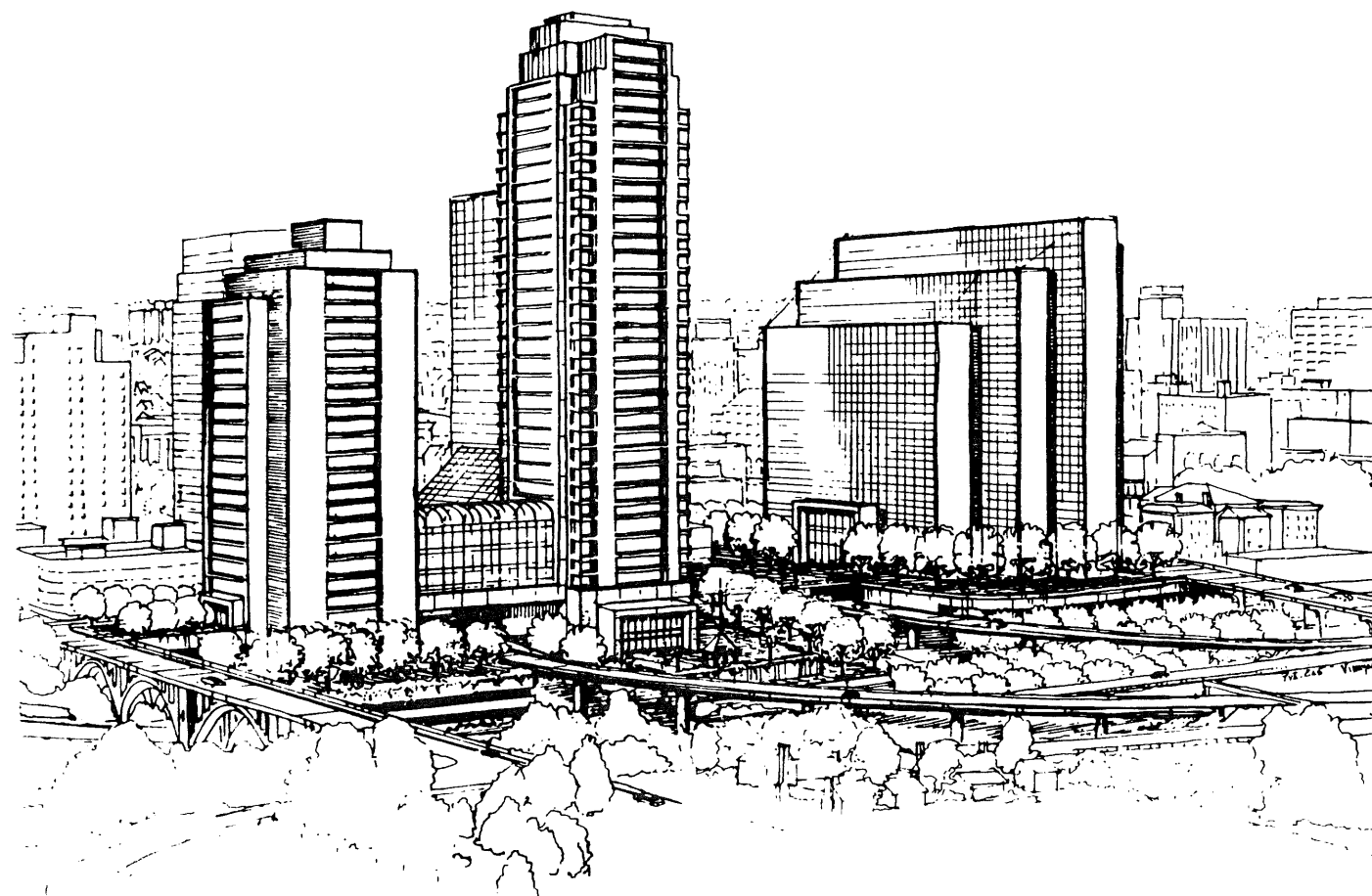
Locating new high-rise office towers in southeast downtown would further support two additional Downtown Plan goals:

***A Beautiful Place...*** Part of the beauty of downtown Knoxville lies not only in the effect of the whole, but in the differing characteristics of its parts. The construction of modern, high-rise office towers would be intrusive in areas which have a historic flavor, or which are low-scale and pedestrian-oriented. The southeast corner of downtown has a mixed old and new character that is compatible with new construction. Architecturally striking office towers would be an improvement over the surface parking that visitors now see when approaching from the east.

***A Functional Place...*** the proposed location has good vehicular access, and the potential for good pedestrian access and parking.

#### **Design Recommendations**

1. **Size** - minimum of 13 stories, target range: 20-30 stories.
2. **Grade** - work with it, bridging pedestrian walkways across from building to building at the Gay Street level.
3. **Access on Central** - In order to avoid "turning our backs" on Central Street, have major entrances and lobbies on the east side of the buildings, even if these are not the primary entrances.
4. **Parking** - the slope is conducive to on-site parking structure designs.
5. **Views** - stagger buildings to preserve views from each of the sites and from existing high-rise structures.
6. **Microclimatic Effects** - buildings should be located and shaped to avoid common consequences of office towers, particularly the wind effects and impact on solar access.



*Artist's Concept*

A combination of factors makes the four block site well suited for high rise office redevelopment. Good vehicular access is available via the Business Loop and by means of major downtown arteries such as Main and Cumberland Avenues, and Central, State and Gay Streets. The moderately sloped topography is suitable for on-site parking garage designs, and offers excellent views to the east and south. Many of the parcels show little recent investment - much of the space is surface parking or vacant. Finally, the area has already become a preferred location for new, high rise office towers, and surrounding land uses are compatible with additional office development.

2. The area bounded by the Business Loop and the Promenade parking garage on the east and west, and Commerce and Clinch Avenues on the north and south should be the site of a major mixed use redevelopment project with office as a major component (for the reasons noted in No. 1, above).
3. New low rise office development (6 story maximum) should be strongly encouraged in the center of the "Business Core" to enhance the pedestrian scale.
4. The area between Locust and Walnut Streets, north of Union Avenue and south of Summer Place, as well as other sites between the Business Core and Henley Street may be developed with mid rise offices.
5. Two sites on the east side of Henley Street may be considered for office (or mixed use) development. In order to enhance the boulevard character intended for Henley Street, respect views of the open space on the Fair Site, and not draw off demand from the Business Core, office buildings in this area should be no more than mid-rise (12 story maximum). The portions of buildings fronting directly on Henley Street would preferably be lower scale (5-6 stories) to maximize the effects of the urban boulevard setting. Higher rise elements of these buildings should be positioned in the eastern or interior areas of these sites.
6. At some future date, if the areas in and around the Business Core have been fully developed and office demand still exists, some sites in the North Corridor and the old city areas could be considered for office expansion.



## *PROJECT IDEA...*

### **HENLEY STREET OFFICE/RESIDENTIAL BUILDING**

#### **Concept**

Midrise, high-quality office and residential development on an improved and attractively landscaped Henley Boulevard. Such a development would support three of the Downtown Plan goals:

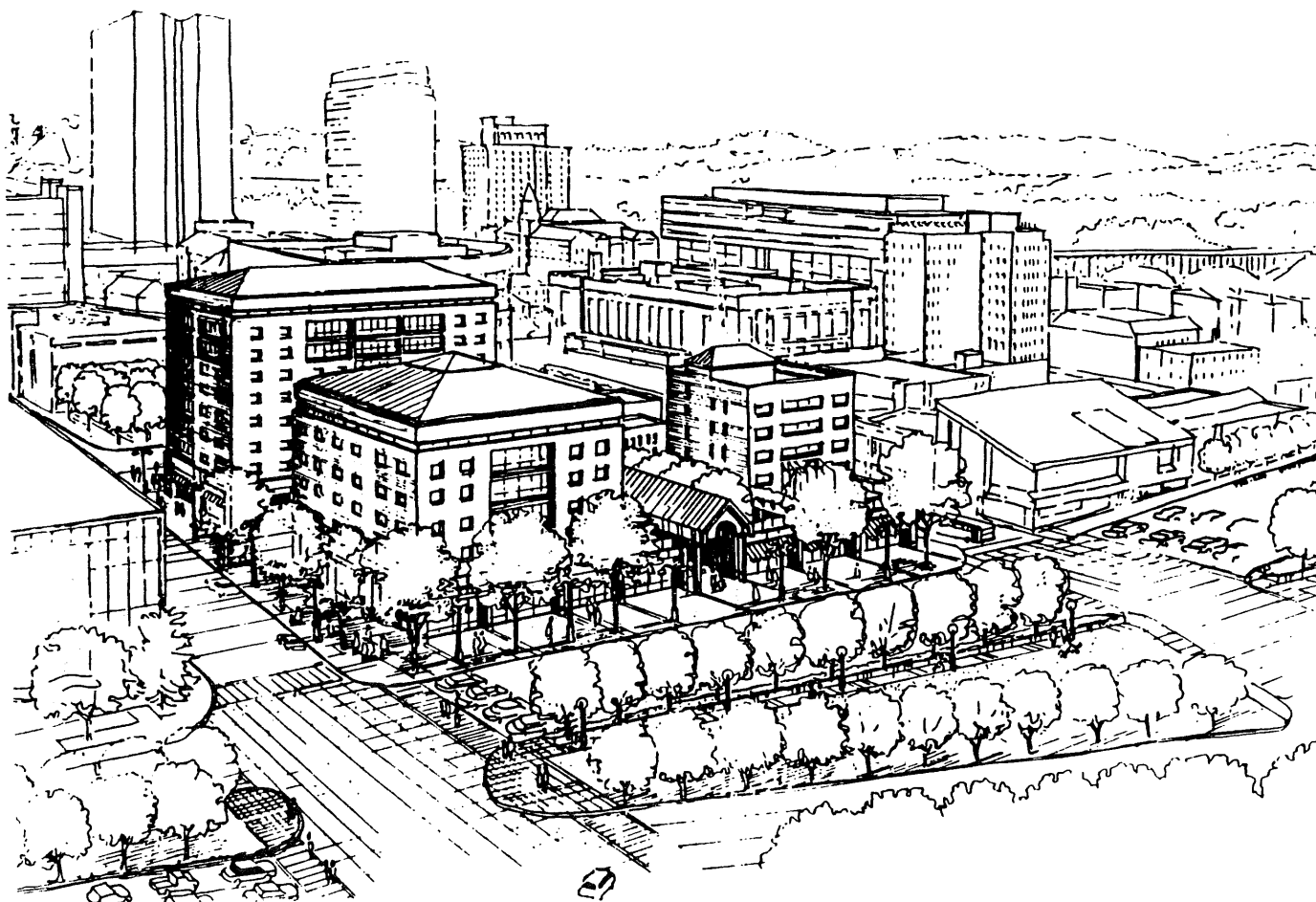
***A Beautiful Place...*** the design of the proposed office/residential structure should enhance the attractiveness of the Henley Boulevard improvements.

***A Place to Do Business...*** the addition of high quality office space from this project will reinforce downtown's role as the office/business core of the metropolitan area.

***A Place to Live...*** the residential component of this project would help to add vitality to the Henley Boulevard area, the World's Fair Site, and to all of downtown.

#### **Design Recommendations**

1. **Size & Bulk** - Could be about 250,000 square feet. Along the Henley Street frontage, building height should be limited to 5-6 stories. The building height could potentially rise to 12 stories (maximum) at Locust.
2. **Should front on Henley Street.**
3. **On-site parking** should be provided for any residential development. Parking for office uses as well as adjacent state and federal offices can be included. On-site parking should not front on Henley Street, and access to parking should be from Cumberland, Church, and/or Locust.



*Artist's Concept*

The site is located on the west side of downtown, convenient by vehicle or on foot to the Business Core area, the World's Fair Site, and the University of Tennessee. Henley Street is a major entry road into downtown which should have even better access after the Henley Street Connector to Interstate-40/75 is completed. If planned design improvements are carried out to make Henley Street into an attractive, landscaped, more pedestrian-scale boulevard, the site's potential development value for office and residential use should be enhanced further. For the above reasons, the west half of the next block south, excluding the Medical Arts Building, could also be attractive for redevelopment.



7. Regarding the east side of the World's Fair Park, office development as part of a mixed use pattern should be considered for two locations. An area that includes the block south of Hess's garage and the triangular block bounded by Henley Street and Cumberland and Main Avenues could include a mix of offices, retail, a hotel, and housing. Offices also may be accommodated in the area that includes the L&N Depot, the Butcher Shop restaurant, and the Foundry Building.
8. On the west side of the World's Fair Park, two potential development areas are identified: the area near the corner of 11th Street and Cumberland Avenue, and the parcel between 10th and 11th Streets across from parking for the Museum of Art. Development could include office use, although such uses would not be determined until design guidelines and a proposal process have been created.

# RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

## INTRODUCTION

The residential land use category includes single family and multifamily homes, and boarding rooms. Hotel/motel units are not included. With only four percent (4%) of the total downtown land devoted to housing (Downtown Data Base, MPC, 12/86), the residential component may seem to be of little importance in the Plan. On the contrary, as heralded in the goal:

*A Place to Live...*the presence of people in downtown at all hours of the day is an important factor in the economic and social vitality of downtown. Residential development is therefore a high priority.

The establishment of a downtown residential population is a cornerstone of the Plan's success.

Historically, the center city was a concentration of all major land uses, which included housing as a primary component. After a long period of residential flight to the suburbs, renewed interest in downtown housing is a national trend. Likewise in Knoxville, a seven percent (7%) increase in downtown housing units occurred between 1980 and 1986 after a twenty year pattern of decline.

For more information on downtown housing see the Downtown Data Base report and the Downtown Task Force Committee Reports, both produced by MPC as part of the Downtown Plan development.

## RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

The following general policies should guide all residential development or redevelopment within downtown.

1. Expansion of the downtown residential population in a wide range of age and income groups should be encouraged and supported by local government, the real estate industry and financial institutions.
2. The Coalition for The Homeless, in cooperation with the City and the new downtown organization should develop a comprehensive program to deal with the problems of the homeless in downtown.
3. The City and County should participate in the implementation of significant residential developments, by offering financial incentives and in-kind staff assistance.
4. Development of both new and rehabilitated structures for residential use should be encouraged.

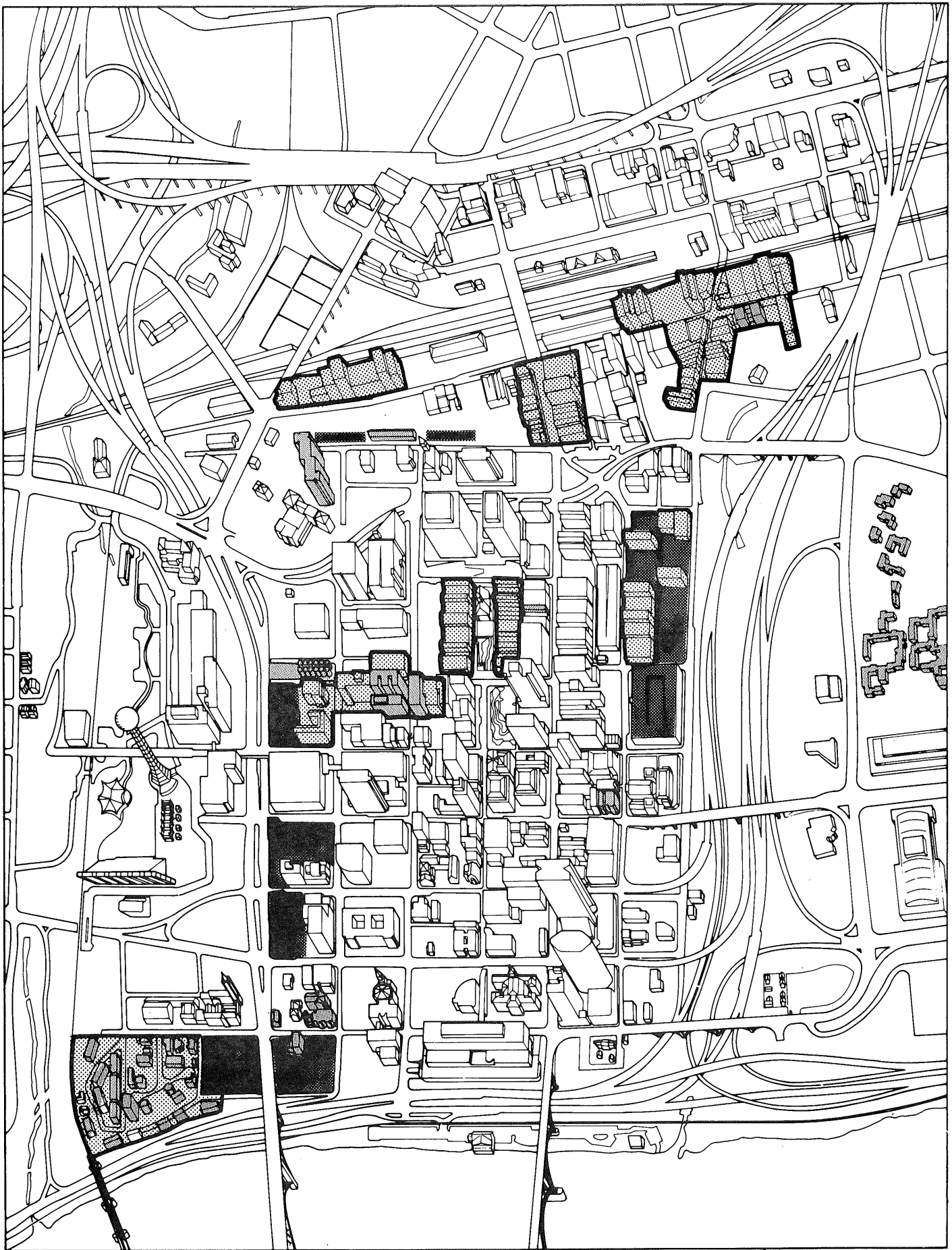
5. The promotion of downtown residential development should focus on the following issue areas, as outlined in the Residential Committee report:
  - a. Development Activity, Financing and Incentives,
  - b. Marketing and Promotions
  - c. Livability - Maintenance and Enhancement
  - d. Parking and Circulation
  - e. Educational Facilities.

## **RESIDENTIAL LOCATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

The map on the following page identifies existing and potential residential areas which are described in the following text. Residential rehabilitation and construction of new units should be initiated as outlined below:

### **MAPLEHURST**




1. The largely vacant tracts on the east and west of the Henley Street bridge and adjacent areas should be targeted for a new residential development. This project should advance the following objectives:
  - a. The design should take advantage of the river overlook location, while respecting the scale, architecture, and views of existing, adjacent buildings.
  - b. The site and architectural design should enhance this important portal entry to downtown.
  - c. Any structures built should accommodate not only their own demand for parking, but also replace any existing parking that might be displaced.
  - d. Any new development should seek to extend the presence of the existing neighborhood, not be a barrier between it and the core of downtown.
2. The possibility of providing seed money to a developer for preparation of a master development plan and implementation program should be investigated by the City.



MAP 15

## MAJOR RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

-  Existing Development
-  Potential Rehabilitation Areas
-  Potential New Construction

## *PROJECT IDEA...*

### **MAPLEHURST RESIDENTIAL**

#### **Concept**

Mid-rise development terraced down the hillside, with river views and within-structure parking, compatible with the historic character of the neighborhood. Because of the location and construction costs, the potential market would be higher-priced. Similar development might eventually be expanded further west within the neighborhood.

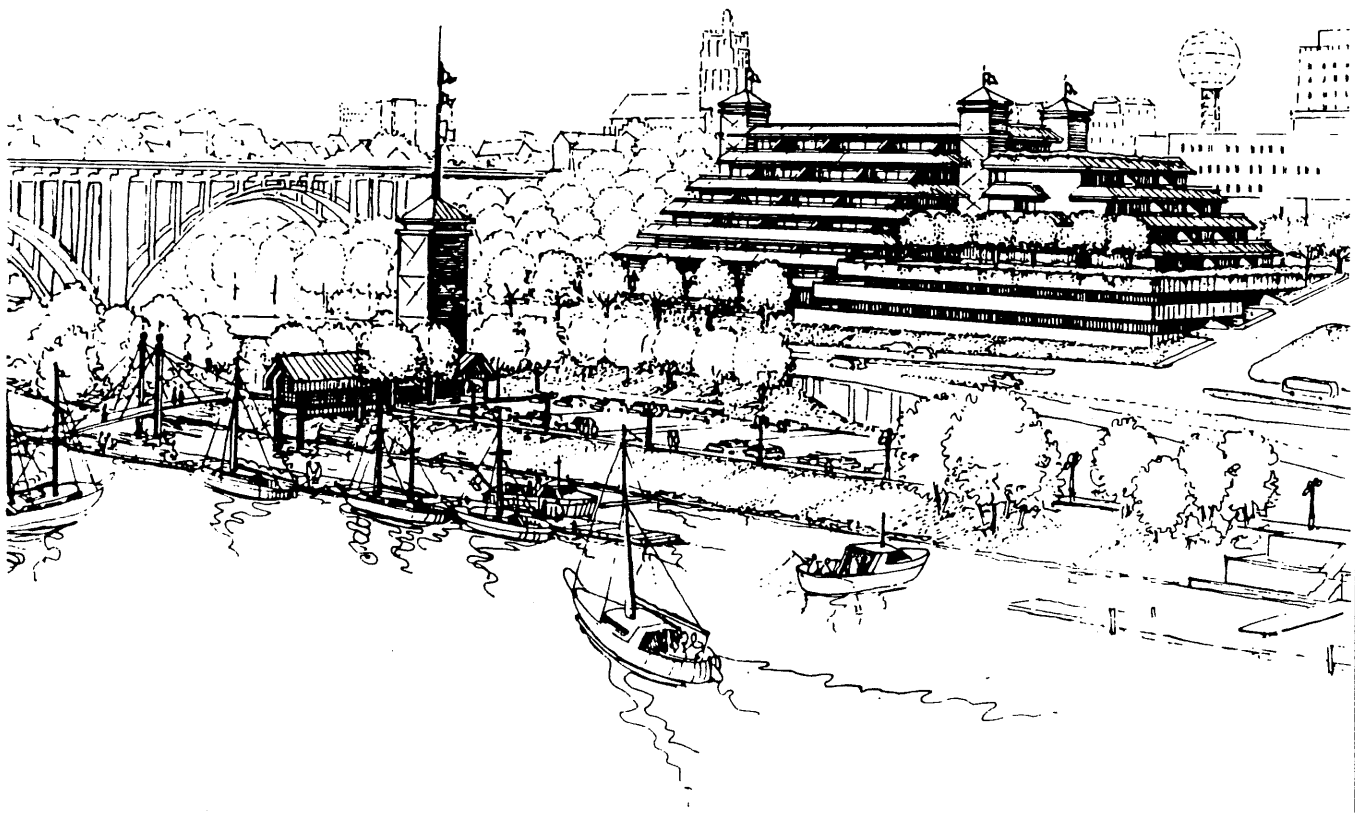
This type of residential development would address two of the major goals presented within the Downtown Plan:

***A Place to Live...*** residential development is of high priority in increasing the economic and social vitality of downtown.

***A Place by the River...*** such a project not only would make better use of the Tennessee River as one of downtown's important assets but might serve as a catalyst for further river front improvements.

#### **Design Recommendations**

1. **Slope** - allows possibilities for parking and views without a high-rise structure not in keeping with the character of the existing neighborhood.
2. **Size & Bulk** - Structures could be low/mid-rise at Hill Avenue level and low-rise down the slope.
3. **Parking** - Could be contained within the hill. Because the Church Street United Methodist Church currently uses a portion of this property to meet its parking needs, developers should accommodate any parking lost.
4. **Historic Compatibility** - Should blend with historic buildings in materials, bulk, and setback, although need not be a particular historic style. Any development should work around historically significant buildings.
5. **Neighborhood Character** - Retain the character of an established neighborhood by carefully landscaping and saving mature trees where possible. This site combines unique surroundings with a convenient, accessible location. It is within walking distance of the University of Tennessee, and the World's Fair Site.



*Artist's Concept*

It can be easily reached by vehicle via Henley Street, and Main, Cumberland, and Hill Avenues. The site lies adjacent to and partly within the proposed Maplehurst and Hill Avenue Historic Districts, with structures dating from 1885-1925. Views of the river and beyond are dramatic, and although Henley Street is heavily travelled, the neighborhood retains a quiet, private character. The proposal to turn Henley Street into a landscaped boulevard, with a park at the bridge entrance, would improve pedestrian access and further enhance the residential suitability of the site.

## **THE OLD CITY**

### **100 Block of Gay Street (Jackson to Vine Avenues)**

1. KCDC should declare the property facing on both sides of the block as a residential redevelopment area. This project should advance the following objectives:
  - a. Reuse of historic structures should be a high priority;
  - b. Use of buildings should be restricted to housing and uses which enhance or support this primary use;
  - c. Inclusion of moderately priced units should be encouraged;
  - d. Parking for the housing complex and nearby retail, entertainment and cultural activities should be developed simultaneously.

### **Jackson Avenue**

1. Residential units should be developed in renovated structures, or as in-fill in new structures where appropriate, on and adjacent to Jackson Avenue. The area near the intersection of Jackson and Central, as well as the warehouses just east of Broadway are two areas of emphasis.
2. KCDC should look at the possibility of extending the recommended redevelopment area to cover the Jackson Avenue locations as well as the Gay Street site.

## **WORLD'S FAIR PARK**

1. The current plan does not propose residential as a major development option. Such a possibility, however, should remain open, with proposals for selected parcels considered on a case-by-case basis.

## **HENLEY STREET CORRIDOR**

1. Upper floors of new buildings which could be constructed on Henley Street, should be considered for residential use.
2. Property on the east side of Henley Street adjacent to the YMCA and Kendrick Place should be considered for residential development after Henley Street is reconfigured for the Interstate connector and the proposed street improvements. (See the Open Space/Pedestrian Network section of Chapter 3.)

## **BUSINESS CORE**

1. Buildings on Clinch and Union Avenues in the Kendrick Place/Pembroke "neighborhood" should be rehabilitated for residential use, particularly on upper floors. The YMCA building reused as a housing complex could be a major component of this.
2. Upper floors of buildings on Market Square should be considered for renovation to residential uses.

## **SUMMIT HILL**

1. The areas east and west of the Walnut Square development, as well as other vacant tracts in the Summit Hill area should be encouraged for residential use.

## **STATE/CENTRAL CORRIDOR**

1. The area generally bounded by Central Street on the east, the Promenade parking structure on the west, and Commerce and Clinch Avenues on the north and south, should be encouraged for residential rehabilitation or redevelopment to a major mixed use complex. If the latter, residential uses would probably be secondary to office/commercial uses, and the residences should be located on upper floors.

The following specific recommendations should be implemented to encourage and help insure the quality of residential development.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF RESIDENTIAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. KCDC should write down land costs, as needed, to increase potential for residential redevelopment.
2. Develop financial incentive programs for center city residential development. Coordinate programs through a single city department or through the downtown organization. Incentive programs could include:
  - a. Public/private loan programs for the renovation of existing structures and new construction.
  - b. Facade improvement loans.
  - c. Pre-development freeze on property tax assessments for a 10 year period.
  - d. Bond funds for center city residential development.



3. The City and MPC should establish design controls and implement zoning changes to protect or establish residential areas. The Maplehurst area should be restricted to residential and direct support uses.
4. The downtown organization should see to it that necessary analyses and informational publications are produced, including:
  - a. a residential market study to assess existing and future market potential.
  - b. an inventory of structures available for residential reuse.
  - c. informational materials for distribution to builders and developers on available development incentive programs for the residential reuse of existing structures.
  - d. an informational and marketing brochure that describes existing center city residential areas to market those areas to renters and buyers.
5. The Knoxville Police Department should develop a plan to address the public's perception (or misperception) of a crime problem in the center city. The KPD should consider a combination of solutions such as increased walking patrols, patrols on horseback, and a wider use of private security forces. A mix of public/private financing of programs should be considered.
6. Require the Air Pollution Control Board to closely monitor air quality downtown and recommend and advocate appropriate measures for improvement.
7. The Knox County School Board should explore the potential for magnet schools near downtown that attract students from throughout the county, and explore the potential for demonstration schools (grades 1-12) operated in conjunction with U.T. and Knoxville College. Such schools should be used for advanced educational programs.

# RETAIL LAND USE

## INTRODUCTION

There was a time--that everyone over thirty will remember-- when downtown was where you went to do your shopping. Since the advent of the suburban shopping malls which sprung up in response to the shift in residential patterns, downtown has been in a steady state of retail decline. Suburban malls simply fill many general merchandising needs in a more convenient manner than downtown stores.

All this, however, does not suggest that downtown retailing is only something for the history books. With the existing concentration of employment downtown, and the expectation of significant employment growth as well as expansion of downtown housing, a market for certain types of retail clearly exists. The Downtown Data Base (MPC, 1986) shows that retailing is the fourth largest land use in downtown, representing about nine percent (9%) of the total.

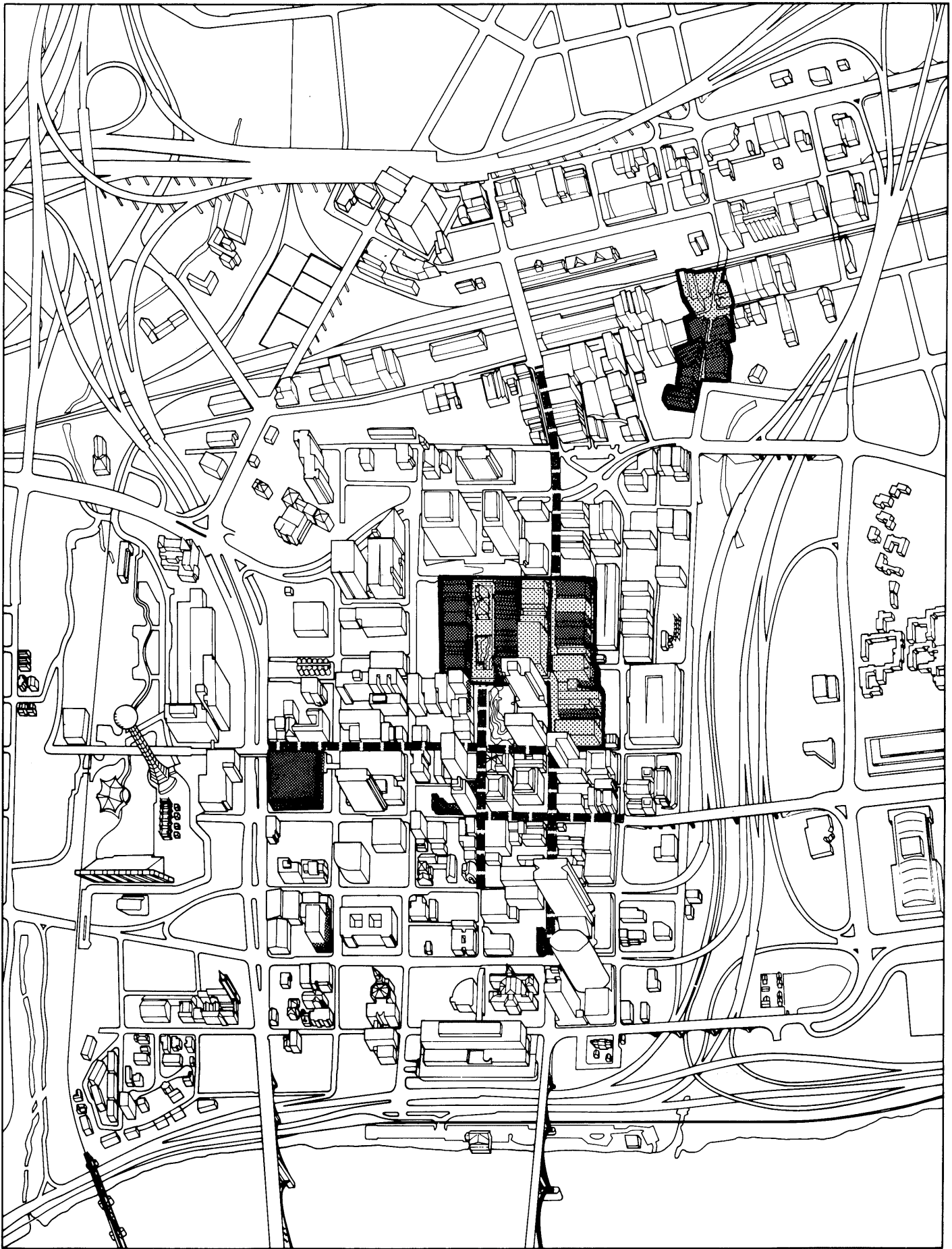
Three of the adopted goals for downtown support or are enhanced by maintaining a stable retail component:

*A Place to Live...*being able to satisfy shopping needs nearby is important to those considering downtown residences. At the same time, the expanding downtown population means a larger retail market.

*A Place to Do Business...* retail is an important component of downtown as the business core.

*A Complete Place...* shopping opportunities are part of the diverse mix of activities which makes downtown unique.

In order to tap this market, a variety of actions by government, merchants and downtown interest groups are necessary. This section describes the proposed locations of retail uses and the types of actions needed to make retailing successful.



MAP 16

## MAJOR RETAIL AREAS

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

-  Existing Retail Areas
-  New Retail Emphasis Areas
-  Encourage Ground Floor Retail Uses

As noted, a significant decline in retail activity has taken place; certain types of retailers continue to close downtown stores. The preceding map (Map 16) shows major existing retail areas and areas of proposed retail emphasis.

In terms of new or enhanced retail location proposals for downtown, the Plan relies on some of the basic and applicable principles which make retailing successful in suburban malls. People tend to shop where they can take care of several retail needs at once, or on the other hand, go to one store at a mall and end up making another unplanned stop along the way.

This is not to suggest that the key to successful downtown retailing is to make downtown a sort of pseudo mall. Suburban malls serve a particular market, one for which they are specifically designed, expertly located and tightly managed. Another market is best served by neighborhood and community centers, and still another by the burgeoning strip centers that line Kingston Pike and other arteries. "Festival retail", the shopping-as-entertainment concept has been developed with phenomenal success in Baltimore, Boston, Norfolk and other cities that have large numbers of tourist and convention visitors. There is a market niche for Knoxville's downtown, too. Retailing can succeed downtown by finding that niche and serving it better than the competing locations.

A main reason for downtown's success as a retail center in its heyday, was that all of a person's shopping needs could be met in one general area. The transferability of this to today's downtown comes by creating a "critical mass" of retail opportunities. Although it is not expected that downtown will again become the main shopping area of the region, the principle of clustering many shopping opportunities together is applicable. This clustering also helps make it possible to provide common support services for retailing --parking being the most important.

The importance of parking that shoppers perceive as free and which they also find very convenient to their retail destination, can not be overstated. People are simply less willing to walk several blocks downtown than they are to walk the same distance in the parking lot and corridors of a suburban mall. Ways must be found to provide short term parking very near retail locations downtown. Every effort should be made to minimize parking fees charged directly to customers.

In addition to creating this critical mass of retail opportunities (shown on the map around Market Square and nearby blocks of Gay Street), the Plan supports and encourages the expansion of the retail node in the Jackson and Central area of The Old City. This area is envisioned as the location for one-of-a-kind retailers offering something a little different. The Miller's Department Store on Henley Street at Clinch Avenue is another viable and very important retail location. Every effort should be made to support this operation since it not only represents a substantial retail presence but also enhances Clinch Avenue as a primary pedestrian street (as described in the Open Space/Pedestrian section of Chapter Three). Continuation of the entertainment-oriented retail characterized by the L & N Station, on the Fair Site, should be encouraged.

Finally, downtown retailing and enhancement of the primary pedestrian streets can have mutually beneficial impacts on one another. The pedestrian street network (see the Open Space/Pedestrian Network section of Chapter 3), links various retail stores to one another similarly to the "mall" of a suburban shopping center. Improvement of on-street amenities along this system, and encouragement of retail uses at the ground floor level are mutually advantageous steps.

**MARKETING,  
PROMOTIONS  
AND  
INFORMATION  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

For retailing to be successful downtown, merchants must provide the right goods and services for the market segments that exist. This takes: (1) knowing what the "right" goods and services are, and (2) effectively providing them to the customers. Enhancement of downtown retailing should be an important responsibility of the new downtown organization. The following specific recommendations are intended to help accomplish this.

1. Use the current retail analysis being conducted through MPC by the University of Tennessee, to identify the downtown market niches and specific types of retailers needed to address them.
2. Actively recruit the types of retailers identified in the study.
3. Continue efforts to encourage cooperation among merchants with respect to hours of operation, promotions and advertising, decorations, provision of parking, etc.
4. Expand activities which bring people downtown, and downtown workers out on the street, (e.g. Dogwood Arts Festival, Sundown in the City, etc.) Support and encourage established events and help build fledgling, but successful events, such as Christmas in the City and the Watersports Festival.
5. The City should investigate issuing a "request for proposals" for a retail development in the 400-500 block area of Gay Street, or ask KCDC to declare a like area for retail redevelopment.

**RETAIL  
SUPPORT  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

To augment the programmatic actions outlined in the preceding section, certain physical improvements should be made to provide support services and image enhancement to the retail sector.

1. The City and the new downtown organization should cooperate in the establishment of convenient, appropriately priced parking, aimed at serving shoppers. This parking should:
  - a. be located in the area of the surface lot west of Market Square, the Promenade Garage, and/or the State Street Garage;
  - b. have parking fees which minimize direct charge to the customer;
  - c. be well identified with signs and promotional efforts (e.g. advertising);
  - d. be linked, through on-street amenities, to the primary pedestrian network.
2. The City should implement the plan for beautifying and improving (as described in the Open Space/Pedestrian section of Chapter Three) the primary pedestrian network. The selection of areas to be completed first should be done, in part, as an incentive to new retail development.
3. The public plaza on Gay Street at Wall Avenue, described previously, should be built to enhance the retail environment in this area. This amenity could be a catalyst to the location of new retail and office uses, while serving as an important public gathering space.

## *PROJECT IDEA...*

### **PUBLIC PLAZA - GAY STREET AT WALL AVENUE**

#### **Concept**

Transform an unsightly surface parking lot into an attractive, landscaped public gathering space, also serving as a focus for the Gay Street retail area. This would address the following Downtown Plan goals:

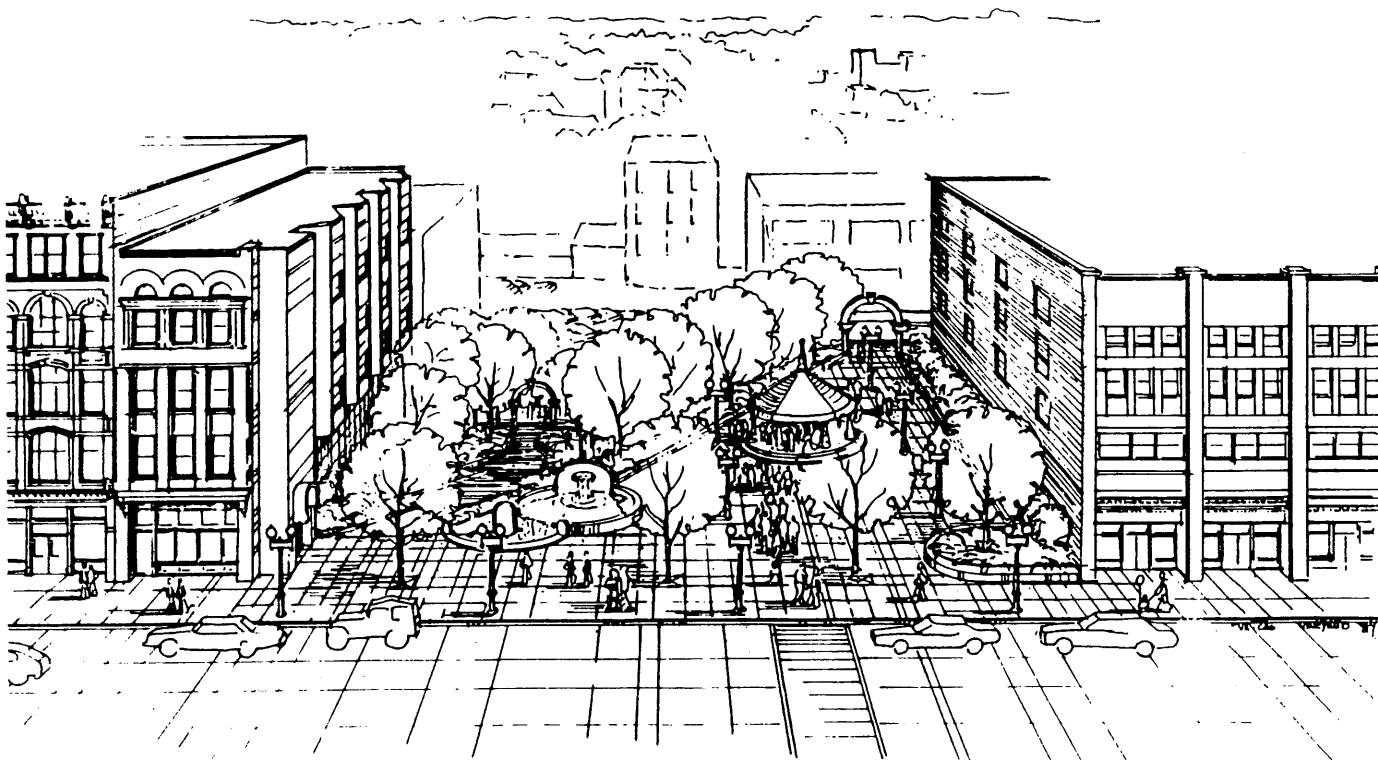
***A Beautiful Place...*** the creation of such an urban plaza would encourage rehabilitation and use of nearby buildings for retail and other uses.

***A Complete Place...*** a public plaza in this location would encourage retail, as well as cultural and entertainment events on Market Square and Gay Street.

***A Functional Space...*** creating a pedestrian link between the Business Core and State and Central Streets would improve downtown's accessibility. Better pedestrian accessibility to the Business Core will be vital to the redevelopment of properties on the east side. Lower level parking will help satisfy retail and other short term parking demand.

#### **Design Recommendations**

1. Work with the grade differential to link Gay Street to State Street through creation of State Street level parking underneath a Gay Street level plaza, with stairs linking the two levels.
2. Have a water feature, such as fountains or a small stream, and/or a major piece of public art.
3. Have design features that show continuity with Market Square and Gay Street. These should also be along Wall Avenue to link public areas.
4. Have a design style that fits with Gay Street design guidelines and with the surrounding historic district.



*Artist's Concept*

Because the site occupies a strategic location with significant public exposure, it is important to downtown's overall image as well as its specific Gay Street context. It is located at the intersection of two major pedestrian corridors, Wall Avenue and Gay Street, as well as on a major vehicular route through downtown. Proposed below-grade parking and the Promenade Parking Garage make the site accessible to vehicles as well as pedestrians. It also lies within the Gay Street Historic District, which provides downtown with much of its unique identity, and which has recently become the focus of extensive private renovation and public beautification efforts.



# CULTURAL/ENTERTAINMENT/TOURISM LAND USE

## INTRODUCTION

One of the important distinctions of downtown is its role as the region's center for culture, entertainment and tourism (C/E/T). Major community festivals, theaters, concerts, restaurants, museums and libraries, parks and nearby sporting and cultural events at the University of Tennessee, are just a few examples from downtown's resume. As described in the introductory chapters of this report, it is important to build on this role for downtown because it is from these events that the visitor draws his most vivid images of the Knoxville area.

Two of the adopted goals for downtown apply directly to culture, entertainment and tourism:

*A Place to Visit...*the convention, hotel/motel and other visitors' facilities available downtown should be enhanced and promoted to continue the growth of tourism and convention activity.

*A Complete Place...*downtown needs to become the focus of art and culture, entertainment and recreation, history, health and fitness, and mixing of the broadest cross section of people.

Economic developers report a more tangible rationale for developing the C/E/T element in the community. Decisions on corporate and industrial locations are strongly influenced by the presence of "quality of life" factors such as theaters, museums, parks and attractions. (For more information see the report of the Arts and Culture Committee, in Task Force Committee Reports, MPC, 1987.)

In order to expand and enhance downtown's role as the center for culture, entertainment, and tourism, two important objectives must be accomplished:

- creation or expansion of cultural, entertainment and tourism events and facilities in downtown, and
- creating linkages between facilities on the World's Fair Park, in the Business Core and in The Old City, and developing a clear identity for these linked districts.

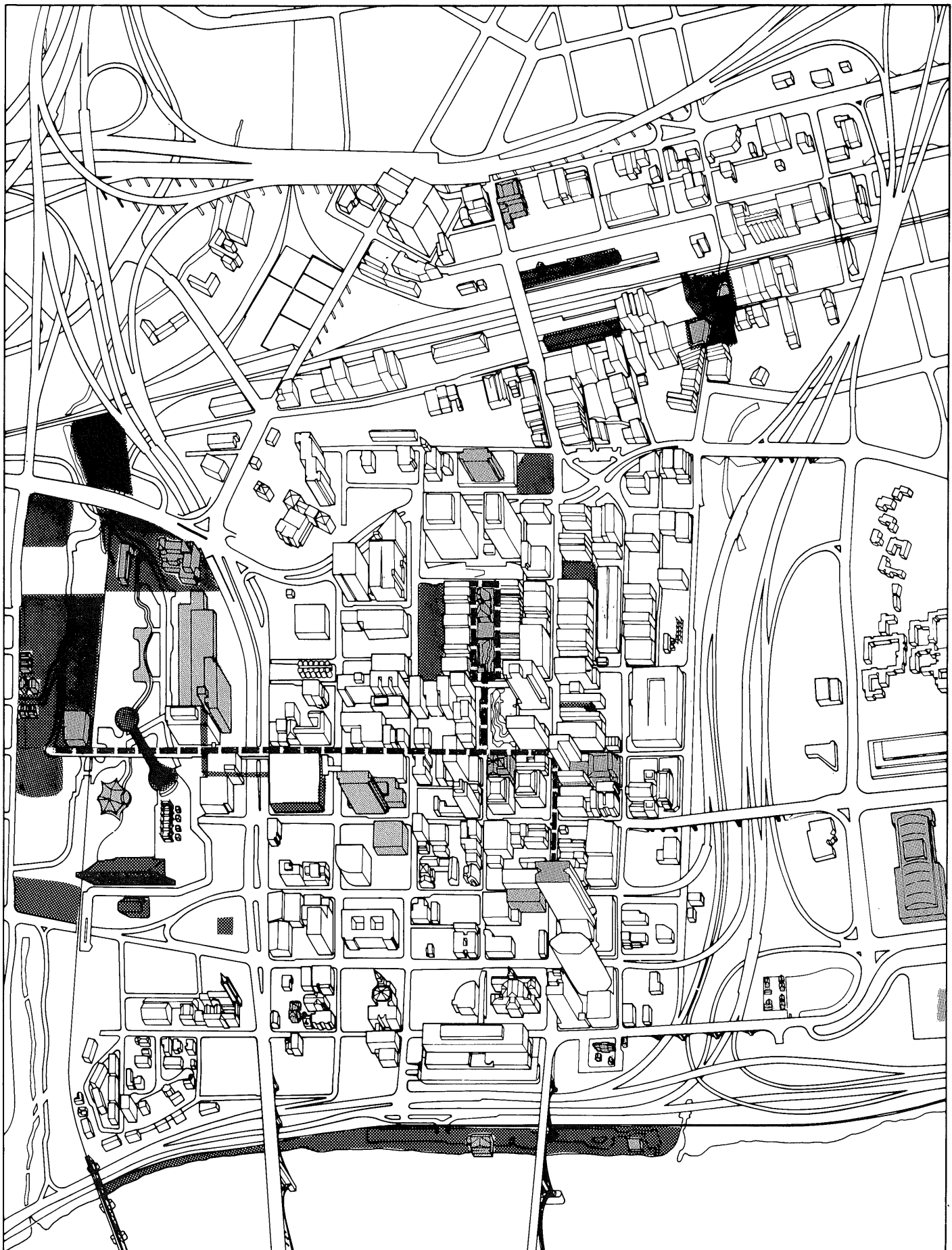
The following general policies are recommended to encourage the improvement of culture, entertainment and tourism in downtown.

1. The City, County and State government, as well as downtown property owners, should provide financial support for C/E/T facilities and events. A development surcharge or special assessment district could be sources of private sector contribution.
2. As with residential and retail land use, the City should provide incentives to C/E/T developments by participating in the provision of parking and other capital improvements.
3. Continued coordination of C/E/T events and activities by all related groups should be encouraged, to maximize benefits of each activity and provide a clear message to visitors and residents about the available C/E/T opportunities.
4. Public improvements to beautify the primary pedestrian streets, as described in the Open Space/Pedestrian section of Chapter Three, should be carried out, to encourage new and expanded C/E/T activities along these linking streets.

The map on the following page shows major existing cultural entertainment and tourism areas, as well as possibilities for new sites and uses. As noted, it is important to enhance the individual facilities as well as create a sense of connection among them.

**POLICIES  
FOR  
DEVELOPMENT  
OF  
CULTURE/  
ENTERTAINMENT/  
TOURISM**

**CULTURE/  
ENTERTAINMENT/  
TOURISM  
FACILITIES  
AND  
SITES**



MAP 17

# **CULTURAL/ENTERTAINMENT/ TOURISM AREAS**

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

- Existing
- Potential
- Major Linkages

## THE OLD CITY AREA

1. In light of its unique historic character and deteriorating condition, it is recommended that efforts be made to restore and reuse the Southern Railway Terminal on Depot Street. Development of a museum within the building would not only offer an opportunity for restoration but also ensure public access to this landmark. Museum uses could include one of more of the following:

- TVA Region History Museum
- TVA Visitor's Center
- Appalachian Folk-Life Museum
- Smoky Mountain Railroad Museum
- Terminus for railroad excursions.

An alternative use could be renovation of the structure for a group of restaurants. It has been suggested that a "second location" for two or three popular, local establishments could work in concert with the long standing presence of Regas Restaurant across the street, and the emerging cluster of eating and drinking places in the Jackson and Central area.

2. To further enhance the area for residential, restaurant and tourist development, it is recommended that an open-air farmers' market be established in the baggage/warehouse building on Jackson Avenue, just east of Gay Street. This market could serve as a retail satellite to the regional farmers' market proposed by Knox County, and serve downtown workers, existing and potential residents in the area, and local restaurants, as well as tourists.

## *PROJECT IDEA...*

### **Museum in the SOUTHERN RAILWAY TERMINAL (306 Depot Avenue)**

#### **Concept**

Renovate the terminal and freight depot for some sort of cultural or entertainment function. Some ideas that have been suggested include a historical museum about railroads, East Tennessee folklife, or the TVA region, a train excursion station, or a complex of restaurants. Such renovation and reuse would support the realization of three Downtown Plan goals:

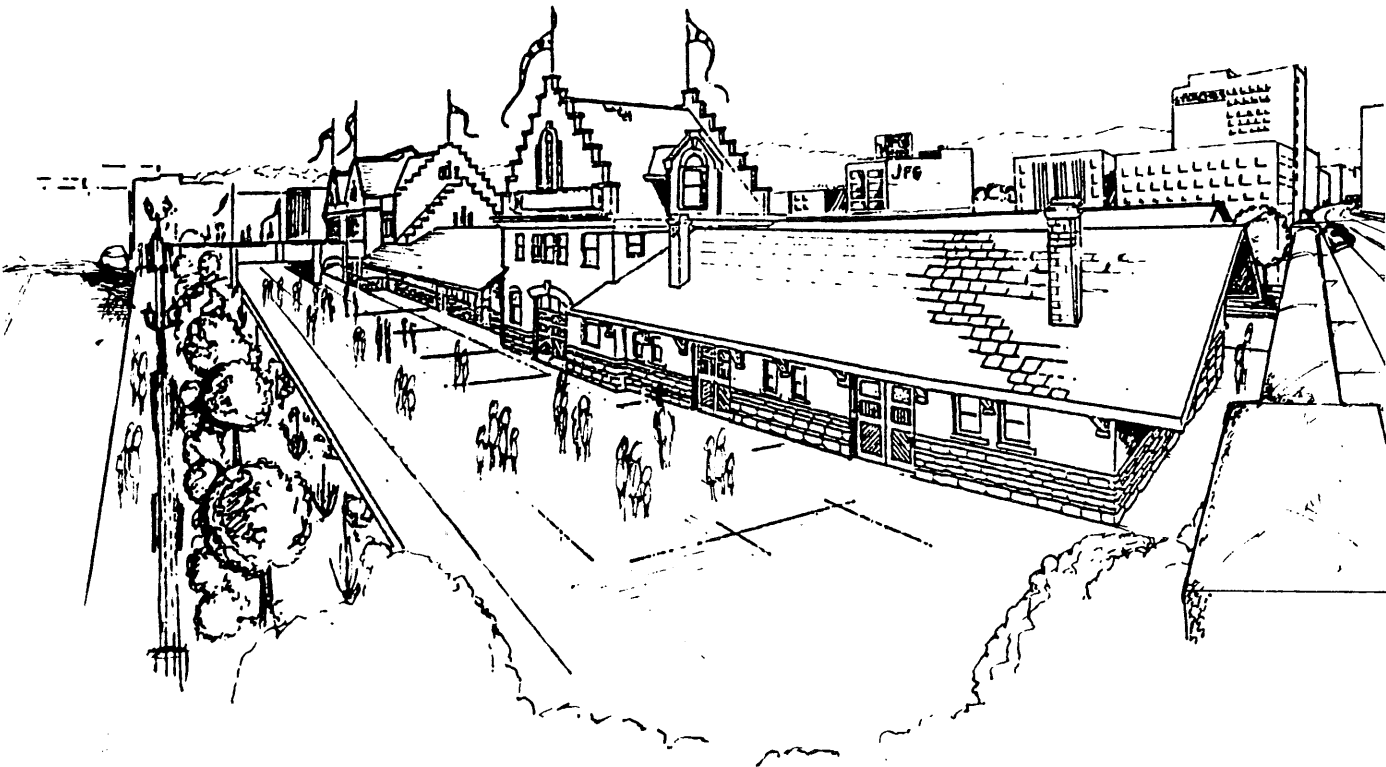
**A Complete Place...** such a project would help downtown to become the focus of cultural, entertainment, and historic preservation activities in the region. The proposed activities would dovetail with the current revitalization of the historic Jackson Avenue and Central Street area and with a proposed farmers market across the railroad tracks on Jackson Avenue.

**A Place to Visit...** a successful cultural or entertainment activity in the terminal would promote Knoxville's tourism and convention growth.

**A Beautiful Place...** the renovation of the Southern Terminal would preserve a beautiful and unique example of Knoxville's architecture, constructed with a high degree of architectural detail and craftsmanship.

#### **Design Recommendations**

1. Renovation should be sensitive to the historic character and significance of the buildings. Because these are certified historic structures, renovation costs are eligible for a historic tax credit, providing work is done according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
2. Additional parking will need to be provided. Some possible options include the following:
  - a. a proposed parking garage north of Summit Hill Drive near Short State Street.
  - b. Norfolk-Southern Railroad property across the Gay Street Viaduct
  - c. adjacent parking on Depot Avenue
  - d. negotiate with Norfolk-Southern for unused or little-used right-of-way
  - e. construct a garage and green space on the north side of Depot Avenue, to serve the museum and Regas Restaurant.



*Artist's Concept*

At the northern end of downtown, and located within or adjacent to two historic districts, the Southern Terminal is a focal point for what is coming to be known as "The Old City". Its location is well suited for an institutional or entertainment function. Once bustling with commerce and industry, this recently overlooked area is combining a sense of its past with creative commercial and residential redevelopment.

The terminal can be reached by vehicle via Gay Street, Broadway, and Summit Hill Avenue, and is central to several interstate exits. The Gay Street Viaduct provides a pedestrian link to downtown's Business Core, to the Jackson Avenue/Central Street area, and to the World's Fair Park.

Renovation costs of the terminal and freight depot may be eligible for a 20% rehabilitation tax credit. The property must be income producing and rehabilitation must follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

## *PROJECT IDEA...*

### **East Tennessee FARMERS AND CRAFTS MARKET (205-207 W. JACKSON AVENUE)**

#### **Concept**

A retail farmers market selling produce and other homegrown or handcrafted products from the East Tennessee region. This type of activity would promote several of the goals of the Downtown Plan:

***A Complete Place...*** a farmer's market would offer a larger selection of food for retail sale in the central Knoxville area and serve as an entertainment attraction.

***A Connected Place...*** a farmer's market would strengthen downtown's linkages to surrounding residential neighborhoods and to the entire East Tennessee region.

***A Place to Visit...*** as an entertainment attraction, a farmer's market would support the growth of tourism and convention activity and add to the general Knoxville economy.

The 1986 Knoxville Area Food Policy Council Annual Report concluded that the inner city is underserved by food stores. Both consumer demand and vendor availability should be surveyed to determine potential demand. Vendors can be regional to provide a larger customer pool to draw from; those serving many larger city markets draw customers from up to 60 miles away.

#### **Design Recommendations**

1. Because part of the atmosphere of a farmers market is a certain "roughness", the building need only be structurally sound with sufficient space to contain both vendors and consumers. Aesthetic improvements can come later.
2. Since the structure is a contributing part of a historic district, any renovation of the historic portion should follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
3. Basic physical improvements needed:
  - a. Truck Access and loading docks for vendors. These facilities are available at the site.
  - b. Parking for consumers and vendors. The Norfolk-Southern property on Jackson Avenue across the Gay Street Viaduct should be considered.
  - c. Other Physical Facilities: signs, lighting, tables, phone, restrooms.



*Artist's Concept*

### **Other Development Considerations**

Although on the northern fringe of downtown, the site is located in a historic area which has recently become a major focus for commercial and residential redevelopment. To the east, there are properties in the Central and Jackson vicinity that are undergoing renovation. Gay Street to the South, Jackson Avenue to the west, and the Southern Terminal to the north of the site also have tremendous potential for eventual renovation and redevelopment.

Because it is a contributing property in a historic district on the National Register, renovation costs of the warehouse may be eligible for a 20% rehabilitation tax credit. The property must be income producing and rehabilitation must follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

The property is easily accessible by vehicle from several interstate exits as well as from local streets. Pedestrian access from downtown is good via Gay Street. Although on-site parking is limited, additional parking may be possible across the Gay Street viaduct on property Norfolk-Southern has leased previously for that purpose.



## BUSINESS CORE

1. As noted in previous sections, the below grade parking lot on Gay Street at Wall Avenue offers an opportunity for a much needed expansion of public plaza space. This site, should be developed as a plaza, which could:

- dramatically improve the aesthetics of the area,
- create a linkage to the parking and potential development sites along State Street,
- provide overflow and alternative space for public festivals and gatherings currently housed on Market Square (e.g. Dogwood Arts, Sundown in the City),
- be a much needed catalyst to redevelopment and reuse of vacant buildings on the adjacent blocks of Gay Street, plus support the existing rehab efforts in nearby buildings,
- be a potential site for a major piece of public art or fountain, and
- still maintain the existing parking spaces by creating the plaza on a Gay Street level platform with stairs or escalator to the parking below (which would become enhanced by its enclosure).

Further information and a sketch of this concept are included in the retail section of this chapter.

2. The former S & W Cafeteria building should be repaired and reused. A restaurant, bar or dinner theater would help reinforce the concentration of C/E/T opportunities and appropriately utilize the gracious spaces in this structure.
3. In that their current facility was not designed for a modern health and fitness operation, the downtown YMCA has been contemplating a move to a new building.

Site criteria for a new 'Y' or other popularly priced health and fitness facility should include:

- proximity to the primary pedestrian network;
- convenience for a high concentration of downtown workers; and
- room for on-site, short term parking.

Examples of areas meeting these criteria include:

- the surface parking lot immediately west of Market Square;
- the surface parking lot immediately east of the Quality Inn; and
- the World's Fair Site.

4. The structures and the programs of the Tennessee and Bijou Theaters should be supported and expanded. City, County and State government and the new downtown organization should all work to support these cultural resources.
5. Property, particularly store fronts, along primary pedestrian streets should be encouraged for C/E/T or related uses, to create a linkage between existing facilities and enhance the pedestrian streets themselves.

#### **WATERFRONT**

As described in the Concept Plan (Chapter Three) and introductory sections of this report, the Tennessee River and abutting property are sorely underutilized resources in our community. Developing the waterfront area as a major public open space/activity center would have many important benefits, including:

- providing additional space for community festivals and private gatherings, especially the annual Watersports Festival which is growing into a very major event,
- beautifying the south "face" of downtown,
- helping to enhance the connection of public open spaces,
- enhancing the potential for private developments nearby, especially the residential development proposed for the eastern portion of Maplehurst.

For further information on waterfront development and related proposals, see Chapter Three (Concept Plan) and Chapter Five (Transportation).

#### **WORLD'S FAIR PARK**

It is recommended that the World's Fair Park continue to be developed as a focus for culture, entertainment and tourism. Specific proposals include the following:

1. Development of arts related facilities and activities should be encouraged in the Candy Factory/Seven Houses/Knoxville Museum of Art area.
2. Active, entertainment oriented uses should be encouraged in the Station 82 area.
3. Uses which will preserve and provide public access to the Sunsphere and U.S. Pavilion should be promoted.
4. The triangular property formed by Main and Cumberland Avenues and Henley Street should be considered as a possible site for private development.

5. The World's Fair Park should be considered as the primary site in fulfilling Knoxville's long term convention center needs. The expansion of the existing center or new convention center development should be investigated.
6. The City and State should investigate a joint project to expand the Tennessee Amphitheater to 2500 seats and improve the sound system to accomodate larger and higher quality productions. A second amphitheater seating approximately 2500 should be examined for the northwest corner of the Park.
7. Portal entries (as described in the Open Space/Pedestrian section of Chapter Three) should be developed to create a sense of entry, give a positive first impression and create potential sites for public art in downtown.
8. Location of a health and fitness center, as discussed previously in this section, should be considered.

**PROPOSED  
EVENTS  
AND  
ACTIVITIES**

Several specific events or programs can be used to expand the presence of C/E/T in downtown and make better use of existing and proposed facilities.

1. Firmly establish a fourth (Art Fest, Christmas in the City, and Dogwood Arts Festival being the first three) major community festival, during the Summer, to augment existing events. The fledgling Watersports Festival, begun in the Summer of 1986, should be expanded and enhanced to fill this slot. Both expansion of the Festival's events and attractions, as well as improving facilities needed on the Waterfront to support it, should be pursued.
2. Development of an annual "International Comedy Festival" should be encouraged. This proposed event could help raise national and international awareness of Knoxville, be a source of local pride and eventually become a major contributor to regional economic development.
3. Encourage the establishment of a "Theater Under the Stars" and/or "Open Air Concert Series" in the Tennessee Amphitheater each summer.
4. Encourage the various arts, festival, and promotions organizations to coordinate the scheduling of events and publicize the complete, annual schedule.
5. Reduce the 17% amusement tax to enhance Knoxville's ability to compete for national and regional entertainment.

## CHAPTER 5

# *TRANSPORTATION*

### INTRODUCTION

The third major section of the Plan is transportation. Elements include: Access and Circulation, or the way drivers enter and move about downtown; Parking, the typical destination of the cars; and Transit and Trolley, the system for full size and shuttle buses. Access and Circulation are covered in the Concept Plan section of this report with respect to the influence the road network and traffic patterns have on the overall development pattern. Therefore, information provided here on access and circulation will reiterate and expand somewhat on that presented in Chapter Three.

Although the transportation system affects almost every aspect of downtown, and therefore, virtually all of the adopted goals, the seventh goal specifically addresses its importance:

*A Functional Place...*downtown must be easy to get about in and it must support the people who use it. The utilities, roads, transit service, parking and other facilities must be built and maintained at a high level of service quality.

For further information on downtown transportation, see the Downtown Data Base report (MPC, 1986) and the Task Force Committee Reports document (MPC, 1987), both produced as part of this downtown planning effort.

# ACCESS

## INTRODUCTION

To the first time or occasional visitor, the street network is the basis for their perception and perspective on downtown. How easily and comfortably they find their destination and park their car, are major factors in their first impressions of the City. Beyond this matter of perception, the location of streets, the resulting circulation patterns and accessibility of property, dramatically impact what is built on it, and when.

## EXISTING STREET NETWORK

The downtown street network is an element of the regional network, connected through interstates and arterial streets. Major access routes to the downtown area include these: From the west - Interstate 40/75 to Oak Street or the Business Loop, and Western Avenue, and Neyland Drive to Walnut Street or the Business Loop; from the east - Interstate 40 to the Business Loop, and Church Avenue; and Riverside Drive to Hill Avenue; from the north - Interstate 275 to Interstate 40 to the Business Loop, and Broadway and Central Avenue; and from the South - the Henley Street, Gay Street and South Knoxville bridges crossing the Tennessee River.

In downtown, Henley Street, Summit Hill Drive, Main Avenue and Gay Street form an inner ring used to reach internal circulation streets and final destinations. The policy employed since the adoption of the 1974 Downtown Plan, and reaffirmed here, is to locate major, long-term parking structures on edges of downtown to minimize traffic congestion and enhance pedestrian movement in the Business Core area.

## GENERAL ACCESS POLICIES

The following general policies should guide decisions for new road or development changes which will affect access to or within downtown.

1. Changes to the regional and local road network should enhance access to downtown.
2. Access to and from the Interstate system should be improved.
3. Access to and from the Waterfront should be improved.
4. Access to the eastern edge of downtown from the Business Loop should be improved.
5. Access for pedestrians and the handicapped should be improved, and evaluated with respect to all new road or development proposals.

**RECOMMENDATIONS  
FOR  
IMPROVED  
ACCESS**

The following specific recommendations are proposed to improve access in and to downtown. Map 18 illustrates the proposals for changes to the street system which are aimed at improving access.

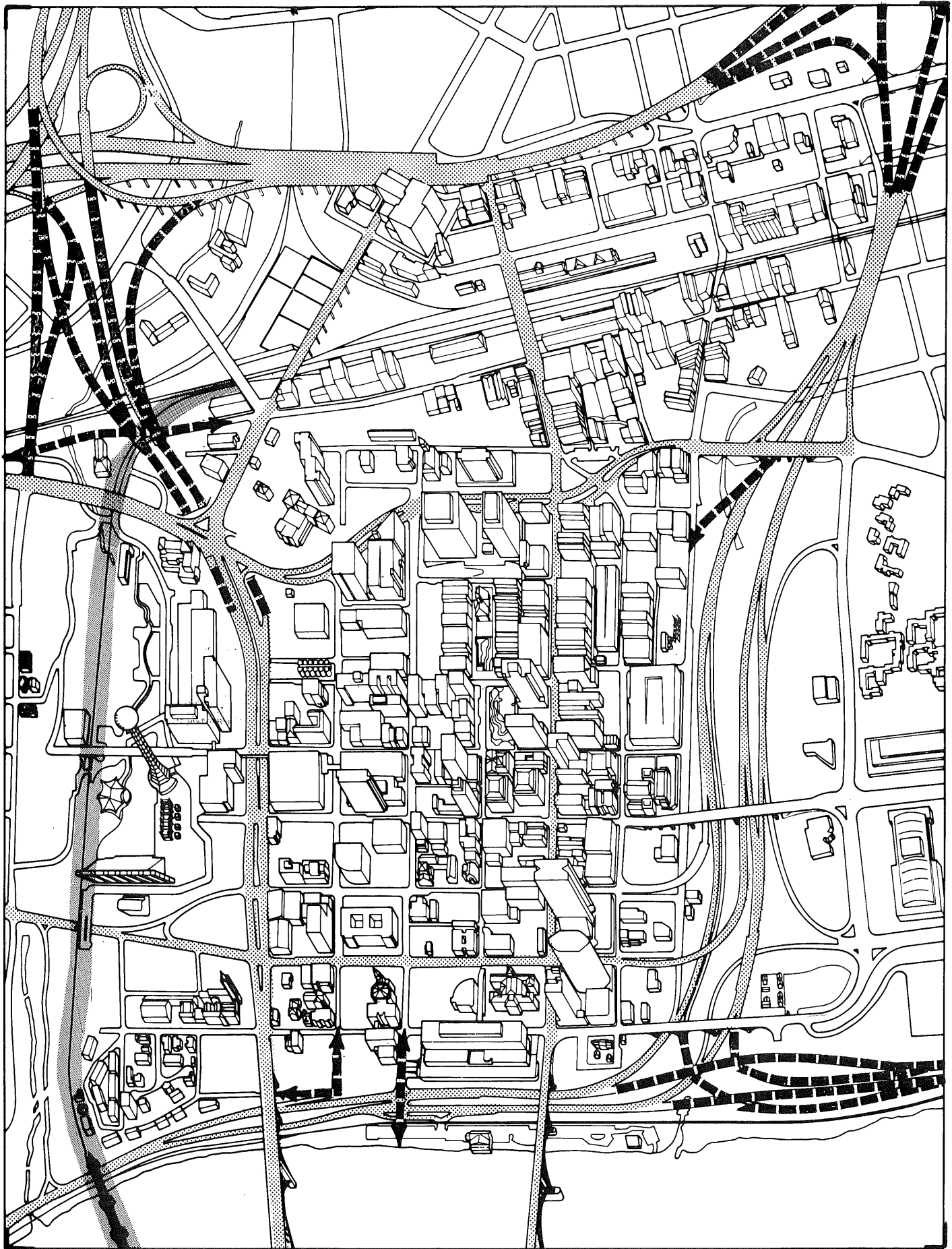
1. The Henley Street at Summit Hill Drive connection to Interstates 40/75/275 currently proposed, or a conceptually similar design, should be constructed.
2. The reconfiguration of the Business Loop/I-40 interchange currently proposed, or a conceptually similar design, should be constructed.
3. A connection between the South Knoxville Boulevard and the Business Loop/I-40 should be constructed. An alternative to the current design, which would consume less Waterfront property, would be preferred, but existing structures and constraints may preclude any reasonable alternatives.
4. An exit ramp from the southbound Business Loop to Central Street, just south of Summit Hill Drive, should be constructed to reduce congestion at the Summit Hill/Central Street intersection, and simplify access to existing parking and proposed parking and development sites along Central.
5. A study should be conducted to evaluate downtown access at Neyland Drive and the Waterfront, with special consideration given to:
  - construction of a vehicular/pedestrian connection over Neyland Drive at Walnut (referred to as the "Walnut Promenade"), to increase the practicality of waterfront activities, and improve convenience and safety with respect to downtown access via Neyland Drive, and
  - connecting Locust Street at its south end to Front Street, making it a local service street for the Maplehurst area rather than a connection with Neyland Drive. (Improved access to and from Neyland Drive would be developed at Walnut Street.)

This study should include urban design and landscape architecture, as well as traffic engineering analyses for the Waterfront area. The City Engineering Department should coordinate this study.

6. A comprehensive, distinctive sign system should be developed and implemented, to improve understanding of access and circulation to and within downtown. The City Engineering Department should coordinate development and implementation of this system.
7. Removal of the Norfolk-Southern Railroad track which bisects the World's Fair Site should be considered, in order to: enhance Fair Site development potential, improve alternatives for access around the north end of the Fair Site, and enhance the potential for new development on the north bank of the Tennessee River (by removing a major obstacle to relocation of the shipping channel).

8. If the rail line is removed, a connection between Jackson Avenue and Grand Avenue, across the north end of the Fair Site should be considered. This would improve access to the north portion of the Fair Site as well as between there and The Old City area, and possibly simplify access problems related to redesign of the Western Avenue viaduct.





MAP 18

## ACCESS

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

-  New or Enhanced Road Connections
-  Investigate Removal of Railroad Tracks

# CIRCULATION

Hand in hand with the role access plays on the motorist's perception and impression of downtown, is the effect of traffic circulation patterns. If one-way streets, turning restrictions or undue traffic congestion inhibit the driver from finding his destination, downtown will be viewed as an inhospitable place to be avoided if at all possible. Traffic controls, regulations and lane configurations all dictate how easily the circulation system can be understood and mastered.

## INTRODUCTION

The following general policies should guide decisions for new traffic controls, regulations, lane configurations or other changes which will affect circulation downtown. Certain policies (as noted) have been carried over from the 1974 Downtown Plan.

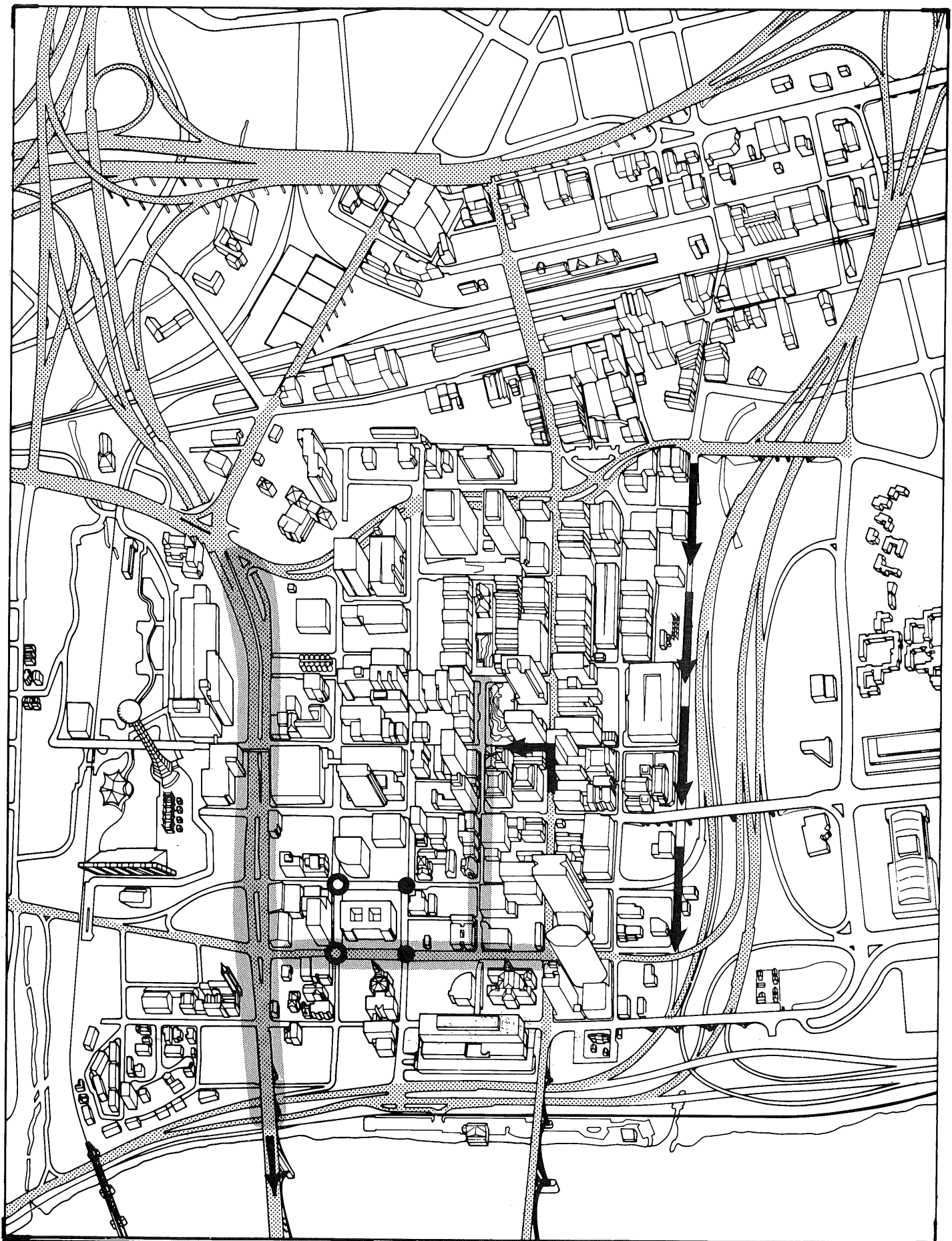
## GENERAL CIRCULATION POLICIES

1. The direction and function of the circulation system must be comprehensible to the average driver. It should be direct and obvious. Major streets should look and function in such a way that traffic is attracted away from local streets. (1974 Plan)
2. Streets designed to carry major traffic movements should be continuous in order to keep traffic from using local streets. (1974 Plan)
3. Circulation patterns should discourage through-movement of traffic in the Business Core area, in order to enhance the pedestrian orientation.
4. Circulation patterns should provide the most direct routes possible to major parking facilities, to reduce the need for vehicular movement in the Business Core.
5. Design improvements as detailed in the Open Space/Pedestrian section of Chapter Three, should be implemented to improve the safety and enjoyment of pedestrian movement in the Business Core.

The following specific recommendations are proposed to improve the safety and function of the circulation system in downtown. Map 19, identifies the locations for circulation proposals.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING CIRCULATION

1. As a result of the proposed changes to access via Locust and Walnut Streets, and the anticipated traffic patterns in light of the planned new office developments, two changes are proposed for traffic signal locations. The signals on Locust Street at Cumberland and Locust at Main, should be relocated one block east, to Walnut Street. These changes should reduce traffic congestion and improve pedestrian crossing on Main and Cumberland Avenues.
2. The two-way segment along Central Street, south of Summit Hill Drive, should become one-way southbound only. Current traffic counts in this stretch indicate that the northbound movement is extremely small, and does not justify the safety and congestion problems caused by two-way movement. Additional southbound traffic from the proposed Business Loop exit ramp, south of Summit Hill Drive, would further exacerbate this existing situation.
3. Left turns should be allowed from northbound Gay Street to westbound Clinch Avenue, to provide a limited amount of access to the center of the Business Core, without creating excessive circulation on peripheral streets.
4. The center lane of the Henley Street Bridge should be designated for southbound rather than northbound traffic. Traffic counts have shown southbound to be the predominant peak movement.
5. Reduce the through-traffic lanes on Main Avenue from three or four, to two, between Henley Street and Gay Street, while maintaining or adding turn lanes as needed. Traffic analysis of this stretch indicate only two through-lanes are required. Passenger loading areas and on-street parking will be addressed in the design as well. These changes would be made in conjunction with landscaping and other street improvements proposed for Main Avenue, as described in the Open Space/Pedestrian section of Chapter Three, and illustrated in Figure C.
6. As described in the Open Space/Pedestrian section of Chapter Three, Market Street should be given an increased pedestrian bias, while still maintaining vehicular access.
7. All major new developments, and rehabilitation projects (to the extent possible) should provide off-street commercial and passenger loading areas.
8. A comprehensive sign system for downtown, as described in the Access section of this chapter, should be developed and implemented.



MAP 19

## CIRCULATION

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

-  New Traffic Signal
-  Remove Traffic Signal
-  Redesign Road
-  Traffic Control Changes

# PARKING

## INTRODUCTION

The issue of parking in downtown Knoxville, as in most urban centers, is perceived by most as one of the most critical elements to be addressed. The range of parking issues includes: parking location, estimation of present and future supply and demand, pricing, responsibilities of the private and public sectors, and the use of parking as an incentive to or control of new development. The Downtown Data Base (MPC, 1986), shows that surface parking lots and parking garages are the second largest land use in downtown, representing sixteen percent (16%) of the total. Still, the current and planned transformation of many centrally located lots to building sites, is rapidly changing the ratio of parking supply and demand in the Business Core.

The analysis to date, has produced general policies, and limited recommendations; and has identified the need for an in-depth, quantitative parking study, to provide the answers needed to make many of the detailed decisions. Undertaking this most-needed analysis is a fundamental recommendation of the Plan.

## PARKING POLICIES

A major plank of the 1974 Downtown Plan was the establishment of the "peripheral parking" concept, which has been generally adhered to since that time. It proposed that all major parking structures should be located along the edges of downtown, to reduce congestion and thereby improve the pedestrian environment. This plan reaffirms the wisdom of that parking concept, but goes a step further to clearly define where the "periphery" is, and subdivides parking by type, to better answer questions about the provision of parking for shoppers and visitors, as well as for workers who stay all day long.

The following general policies should guide decisions on parking issues in downtown Knoxville.

1. The peripheral parking concept established in the 1974 Plan is resoundingly reaffirmed; this policy can guide the provision of needed parking while at the same time, maintaining a dominant pedestrian atmosphere in the central core area.
2. There shall be a strong bias in favor of short term (shopper/visitor) parking within the core area.
3. Multi-level garages, rather than surface lots, should generally be encouraged; architectural design of such garages should be sensitive to the surrounding buildings and open spaces.

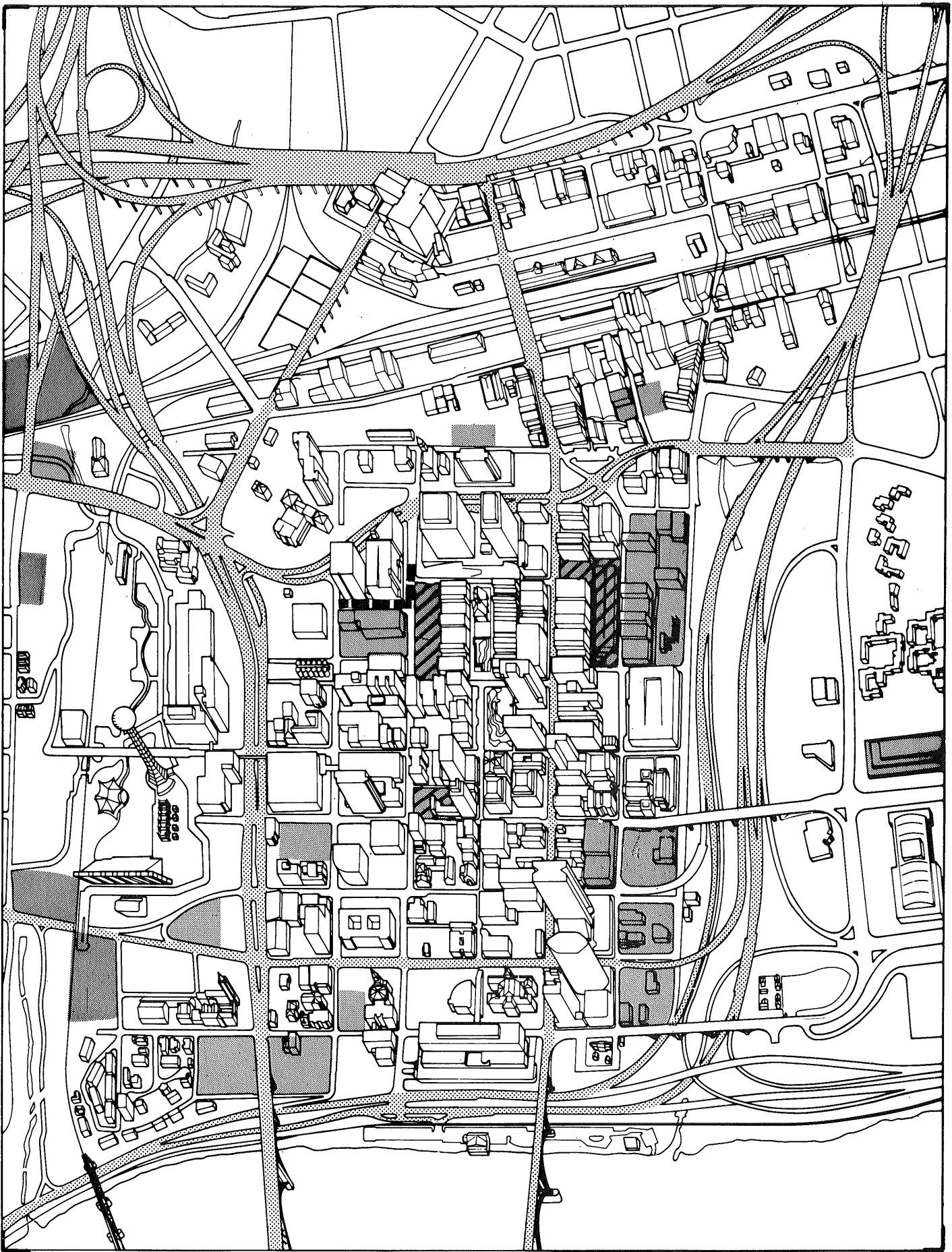
4. Local government should coordinate development of major new parking facilities in downtown. Financial contribution to said facilities should be considered if facility is in compliance with this Plan, and associated development is determined to be economically significant.
5. Specific decisions on the provision of long term parking should encourage increased use of the excess parking supply at the Knoxville Coliseum, taking advantage of shuttle service by the downtown trolleys.
6. Completion of a detailed parking study providing quantitative information on which to base specific parking recommendations, should be a high, short term priority.

## SPECIFIC PARKING RECOMMENDATIONS

The following specific recommendations are proposed to address the existing parking issues, in line with the above stated policies.

1. Long term (employee) parking should be strongly discouraged in locations where it will increase traffic within the center of the Business Core; specifically:
  - new parking facilities should not be built in the Business Core, unless ingress and egress are limited to Locust and State Streets, Summit Hill Drive or Hill Avenue;
  - provision of new parking should be slightly undersupplied until the Coliseum parking garage is fully utilized;
  - construction of new parking garages should be on sites near (including under) the sources of parking demand and among those identified on Map 20, in this Plan. These locations should be reevaluated and modified as necessary, as a part of the proposed, detailed parking study.
2. Local government, merchants, and the new downtown organization should cooperate in the provision of short term parking facilities (for shoppers, visitors, etc.), in consideration of the following:
  - by building new facilities or moving long term parkers to peripheral locations and thereby freeing up centrally located spaces;
  - with a parking rate structure, or subsidy to the individual that will not discourage them from coming downtown; and
  - by promoting parking opportunities via a coordinated marketing campaign (e.g. advertising; printing and distribution of a parking lot locator map, etc.)

3. With respect to potential parking locations identified on Map 20, the following additional guidelines should apply:
  - sites on or near Henley street should have ingress or egress on adjacent east-west streets, rather than on Henley, to reduce traffic conflicts;
  - sites within the Business Core, abutting Walnut Street, should be heavily biased toward short term parking; and
  - the site south of Summer Place, between Locust and Walnut Streets, could be oriented to long term parking if access is limited to Locust Street.
4. All new parking structures should be designed with non-parking uses (shops, restaurants, offices, etc.) along their street side exterior walls, at the ground floor level, to avoid creation of hard, inhospitable edges -- particularly along the primary pedestrian streets (as designated in the Open Space/Pedestrian section of Chapter Three). It is preferred, although not required, that parking structures be a part of office, retail or other buildings, rather than free standing.
5. The City, County, and State government, should contribute financially or through in-kind services to the provision of parking which complies with these policies and recommendations.
6. Property owners and developers should be partially responsible for provision of parking or contribution to joint parking facilities, in proportion to demand generated by their property/development.
7. A detailed parking study should be carried out by City Engineering and MPC, to ascertain the data needed to make further recommendations (or modification to those outlined here). The study should address the following.
  - Analysis, covering topics such as:
    - current and future parking supply and demand;
    - pricing structure;
    - short vs. long term parking supply needs;
  - Recommendations, to include refinement of potential locations and parking policies identified in this Plan; and
  - Implementation strategies and evaluation of each (e.g. funding sources, requirements for new development, timing, etc.)



MAP 20

# **PARKING, TRANSIT AND TROLLEY**

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

-  Potential Parking Site
-  Short Term Biased Potential Parking Sites
-  Bus Transfer Point



# TRANSIT AND TROLLEY

## INTRODUCTION

The final element of the transportation section addresses the K-TRANS bus system and the newly created Main Street Trolley Company.

K-TRANS, Knoxville's fixed route transit company, serves the downtown area as well as most parts of the city; with some routes extending beyond the city limits. Downtown is the traditional central transfer point for K-TRANS, the area where all routes converge. The Main Street Trolley Company is a new service, recently instituted as a permanent system after a twelve month demonstration period funded in part by the Tennessee Department of Transportation. The Trolley is intended as a shuttle to and from peripheral parking, and a circulator for shoppers, visitors and workers; while the K-TRANS system is primarily designed for intercity trips. Although not jointly operated, the two systems are run in a cooperative manner.

## TRANSIT AND TROLLEY POLICIES

The following general policies should guide specific decisions on transit and trolley service.

1. K-TRANS and the Trolley should be coordinated and operated to ensure that their services are complimentary and not competitive.
2. Support of the transit and trolley systems should be viewed as part of the solution to parking problems.
3. Bus service should be maintained on Gay Street, but the volume of bus traffic should be reduced.
4. Both the transit and the trolley systems should be maintained, since each performs an important, if different, service to downtown. Service on both should be expanded to the extent possible.

## TRANSIT AND TROLLEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following specific recommendations are proposed to provide solutions to transit and trolley issues and concerns.

1. Relocate the K-TRANS bus transfer point from Gay Street to the proposed Summer Place/Walnut Street location.
2. Continue to include Gay Street service as a part of appropriate transit routes, and provide sheltered waiting areas as needed.
3. Continue to investigate means of long term funding for the K-TRANS system.

4. Coordinate routing between K-TRANS and the trolley systems.
5. Investigate the possibility of extending trolley service to the University of Tennessee, and additional downtown areas, such as The Old City.
6. Develop long term revenue sources for the trolley system, to include limited state and local government funding, and maximum private funding from affected downtown property and business owners, area institutions, convention and tourism revenues, and others.
7. Develop a comprehensive information campaign to let area residents and visitors know what transportation services are available and how to use them (for all components of transportation system, not just transit and trolley).



## CHAPTER 6

# *IMPLEMENTATION*

### INTRODUCTION

In addition to the specific actions proposed within previous chapters of the Plan report, this chapter identifies more sweeping recommendations, aimed at implementing a whole categories of goals or intentions of the Plan.

Three specific areas are covered:

- new downtown organization;
- organizational relationships;
- development controls.

In each section of the chapter specific recommendations and policies or objectives for addressing the topic, are presented.

# DOWNTOWN ORGANIZATION

## INTRODUCTION

The Plan for downtown is only as good as its implementation. Throughout the process of developing this plan, and in fact since the development of the '74 Plan, there has been general agreement that executing the Plan's recommendations will require involvement of an organization dedicated to the Plan's goals and vision. Accordingly, the Downtown Task Force began early in the process to consider how to create a downtown organization that is economical to operate, effective in the difficult task of revitalizing downtown, and one that knits together government, business and existing organizations, to achieve the common vision.

Three downtown related organizations have been actively involved in recent years, with the work of revitalizing downtown areas. Main Street Knoxville, Incorporated (MSK), which merged with the Downtown Association of Knoxville, was charged with addressing: promotion, organization, design, economic development and advocacy for downtown interests. Knoxville Tomorrow, Incorporated (KTI), was formed to select a developer and have responsibility for redevelopment of the 1982 World's Fair Site (now World's Fair Park), which forms downtown's western border. The Downtown Task Force (DTTF), appointed by the Mayor in October of 1986, was given responsibility for preparing a Plan, representing the overall vision for Knoxville's downtown.

## POLICIES FOR THE DOWNTOWN ORGANIZATION

The following general policies should be a guide to the formulation of the new group.

1. The three organizations most involved in downtown related activities — MSK, KTI, and DTTF — should join in the formation of the new group, to plan, initiate and execute projects;
2. The purpose of the new organization should be implementation of the vision and goals for downtown, as laid out in the Plan;
3. The group should have 501(c)3 (non-profit) status, and be characterized by an open membership, and leadership through a small governing body;
4. The tried and proven four point approach demonstrated by The National Main Street Center, and practiced by MSK, including: organization, design, economic restructuring, and promotion, should be the basis for the group's program development;

5. A lean, but full-time staff, supplemented by assistance from other local public and private agencies and organizations, should support and administer the work of the new organization; and
6. Accomplishment of short term, achievable objectives should be a part of the continuing role;
7. The organization should facilitate development of future plans, as needed.

The new downtown organization must be created in a way that increases cooperation, provides a broad base of public support and credibility, and insulates it from political changes. At the same time, it must have a strong tie to local government. The following key points are recommended to accomplish development of an organization meeting these policies and objectives.

## **KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **PURPOSE:**

To oversee, advocate and facilitate implementation of the Vision and goals for downtown, as described in the Downtown Plan.

### **STRUCTURE:**

**Board:** representing broad based interests of downtown.

**Executive Committee** (initial members from):

- Downtown Task Force
- Knoxville Tomorrow, Inc.
- Main Street Knoxville, Inc.
- Chamber of Commerce
- Tennessee Valley Authority
- University of Tennessee
- media
- appointments by Mayor  
(Chairman elected by Committee)

**Membership:** open to all interested parties.

**Staff:** Executive Director, MSK staff

**Technical Assistance** (from):

- Metropolitan Planning Commission
- City of Knoxville
- Tennessee Valley Authority
- Knoxville's Community Development Corporation
- University of Tennessee
- Chamber of Commerce
- Resource Valley

**FUNDING SOURCES:** City/County government, Private contribution

**FORMATION TIME FRAME:** immediately upon adoption of the Downtown Plan; prior to City/County FY 89 budget decisions.

## ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

One of the most crucial roles of the new downtown organization outlined here, will be to coordinate and help get the greatest synergism possible from the work of other existing groups. For example, the new organization must work with the Resource Valley and the Chamber of Commerce in finding sites for new businesses which are considering downtown locations. Additionally, they will need to cooperate with the University of Tennessee and the Tennessee Valley Authority, with respect to new programs and development of land controlled by these institutions.

### INTRODUCTION

These examples only begin to touch on the wide array of relationships which must be fostered and developed. The work of the Knoxville Food Policy Council and the Knoxville Coalition for the Homeless are other examples. These two groups already cooperate in service to certain segments of the population. The issue of homelessness and the needs of those who are homeless are covered, in a preliminary way, in this report.

Neither the issue of homelessness or the problems related to those who are on the streets, are solely downtown concerns. In fact, homelessness is a pervasive issue of the late 1980's for the City, the State and the Nation. There is a great interest in finding a comprehensive solution to the problem, and agreement that efforts to date have been too diffused.

### HOMELESSNESS

In downtown Knoxville, two facilities currently house and provide direct service to homeless people. They include the family-oriented shelter on Church Avenue, and the former Volunteer Helpers Mission on Gay Street, which provides services primarily to single men. Recently, the Knoxville Coalition for the Homeless, a cooperative effort led by downtown churches, has become actively involved in trying to find solutions to the problem. Reverend Gary Jones, Chairman of the Coalition, became a member of the Downtown Task Force in 1987 to help focus further attention and efforts on finding solutions. With guidance of the Coalition, the facility on Gay Street, now called the Volunteer Ministry Center, is under new management and has a new commitment to provision of service which is good for those served and downtown as a whole.

The policies and recommendations of this Plan are drawn from a report by the Coalition, to the Task Force, relative to the role and operation of the Volunteer Ministry Center (VMC).



## **POLICIES**

1. Recognizing that only fledgling efforts have been made in developing a comprehensive solution to the homeless issues, and that these issues transcend the boundaries of downtown, the Coalition should continue to lead the effort, with the cooperation of the new downtown organization and others, to develop a solution;
2. Recognizing that simply moving the facility at Gay Street and Jackson Avenue to a different location, will not necessarily move the clients, ways to make it a more effective service should be pursued before any efforts to move it are considered;
3. VMC should become a referral and coordination center for the homeless, serving as an overnight shelter only as an emergency back-up for other facilities;
4. VMC should work to reduce negative impacts resulting from the presence of homeless people on the street, while providing humanitarian and self-help services to these people; and
5. The VMC facility should be renovated to ensure that investment and redevelopment in its neighborhood are not stifled.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VMC**

1. VMC should implement its plan to become a coordinating center, rather than an overnight shelter (except for emergencies);
2. VMC, in its coordinating role, should help to direct the manpower resources of its clients into efforts to maintain and improve the downtown area, including day-work and clean-up efforts;
3. VMC staff, working in conjunction with the Knoxville Police Department, should help to mitigate problems caused by some members of the homeless population (e.g. public intoxication, vagrancy, etc.);
4. VMC should improve the physical condition and appearance of its facility, and pursue the possibilities for leasing its Gay Street storefront area, for a high quality, revenue producing retail use.

For further information on the homeless, see the Downtown Data Base (MPC, 1986) and the report by the Coalition to the Task Force (available at MPC library), or contact Reverend Gary D. Jones at the Episcopal Diocese of East Tennessee.

# GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT CONTROL REVISIONS

## INTRODUCTION

Downtown development is regulated primarily by the Knoxville Zoning Ordinance. Zoning ensures the health, safety and welfare of the community by regulation of the height, bulk, use and site design of property and buildings. Zoning ordinances in many communities also control certain architectural design considerations of new developments. This section reviews general objectives for changes to the existing local regulations, aimed at implementing the vision and goals of this Plan.

Although it is the Plan's intent to encourage new development, some modifications to the specific development controls in downtown are in order. These changes are likely to be more restrictive, as a rule, and will require greater developer contribution. At the same time, the regulatory review process should be streamlined, since time and uncertainty are significant costs to any development.

The rationale for regulatory changes is that enforcement of these controls, coupled with implementation of the overall Plan, will make affected property more valuable, thereby more than offsetting the added costs. The net effect: everybody wins.

## ZONING ORDINANCE

Nearly all of the property within the boundaries of the Downtown planning area is zoned C-2, Central Business District. This zoning district is characterized by broad categories of allowable land uses, and very limited restrictions on the shape, size, and location of buildings. The ordinance should be reexamined in light of current conditions and recommendations of the Downtown Plan.

### ZONING ORDINANCE REVISIONS

A process for review of new downtown development should be established, featuring the following objectives:

1. Building height and bulk in accordance with the Urban Form section of this Plan, should be encouraged;
2. Pedestrian-oriented land uses should be encouraged at ground floor level, along the primary pedestrian streets identified in the Open Space/ Pedestrian section of this Plan;
3. Architectural designs which are pedestrian-oriented, as described in the Urban Form section, should be required along the primary pedestrian streets;

4. Long term parking should be restricted, within the Business Core area, as prescribed in the Transportation/Parking section of this Plan;
5. Short term parking should be encouraged near activity centers, as described in the Transportation/Parking and Retail Land Use sections of this Plan;
6. Developers should be required to contribute to the development of parking, as described in the Transportation/Parking section of this Plan;
7. Off-street commercial and passenger loading areas should be required for all new, major developments, and in renovations to the extent possible, as described in the Transportation/Circulation section of this Plan; and
8. Developers should be encouraged to help provide the proposed street scape improvements, as described in the Open Space/Pedestrian Section of this Plan, in areas immediately adjacent to their projects.

MPC should evaluate the ordinance, as a part of current ordinance revisions, and recommend changes which will address these objectives.

#### **DESIGN GUIDELINES**

The Plan places great emphasis on the unique physical characteristics and historical importance of downtown Knoxville to the region. If downtown is to retain and enhance that position, design guidelines, enforced through the zoning ordinance, should be considered. Design guidelines can shape future development such that the overall vision of the Plan is realized, without limiting the creativity and individuality of designers and property owners.

The specific content and administration of design guidelines can be developed in several different ways. MPC, the City of Knoxville, and the downtown organization should work together to recommend a set of guidelines for adoption, most likely as a part of the Zoning Ordinance. This recommendation should address the design principles and Plan recommendations discussed in the Urban Form and Open Space/Pedestrian sections of this report, and consider the following objectives:

1. Encourage new construction to respect the positive attributes of the design of adjacent buildings;
2. Recognize and enhance historically significant architecture that remains in downtown;
3. Incorporate design elements such as window openings, entries, string courses and materials selection that will serve to enhance pedestrian environments;

4. Encourage relationship of building facades to street lines which provide efficient pedestrian flow and shape attractive urban spaces;
5. Incorporate features such as plazas, fountains and public art into downtown;
6. Use retaining walls, steps and other architectural features, as well as benches, to incorporate seating in public areas;
7. Encourage landscaping on the public rights-of-way, as a part of individual site design;
8. Encourage the consolidation of open space at strategically selected sites;
9. Enhance the vistas into and out of downtown at the portals entry points(as described in this plan);
10. Avoid negative microclimatic conditions, such as creation of wind effects, dangerous reflections or excessive shading of buildings, streets or pedestrian areas;
11. Recognize the unique character and personality of individual areas within downtown;
12. Eliminate inappropriately sized or designed signs; and
13. Employ appropriate setback and lot coverage provisions.

#### **ZONING OF PROPERTY**

All property within the downtown planning area should be evaluated with respect to the Plan's recommendations and the effects of changes in the ordinance. Needed changes in the zoning district applied to individual properties should then be made. In the case of property where the Plan deems only one land use is appropriate (e.g. certain residential proposal areas), or where building form, parking requirements or other Plan proposals are affected, the property should be rezoned accordingly.



## CHAPTER 7

# *PRIORITY PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS*

**T**he recommendations in this Plan report have been presented to this point, without reference to timing of implementation. This chapter describes the considerations for establishing project priorities and makes initial recommendations.

### INTRODUCTION

Many factors can affect the decisions on timing of projects and programs. In addition to the usual considerations, such as removing health or safety problems, or taking advantage of job or revenue-creating opportunities, other important factors include:

- Can the project or program take advantage of imminent funding or public actions, which affect not only downtown but the whole region?
- Can it build on current development projects which affect downtown or its subareas?

- Can it set in motion other desired projects or programs?
- Can it lay the groundwork for future longer term projects or programs?

By grouping actions to be undertaken within the same timeframe, they can constitute a “critical mass”, which generates more benefits than the sum of the individual project impacts.

The following is a discussion of short and mid-long range priorities for downtown development, presented in terms of the above objectives. A two-fold strategy has evolved.

- First to focus on catalyst projects which will act as incentives for other desired developments, such as landscaping improvements on Henley Street setting in motion adjacent office or residential projects.
- Second, to concentrate initially on projects which reinforce current development internal to the major subareas, with subsequent emphasis on linking subareas to each other.

#### **SHORT RANGE PRIORITIES**

Establishment of a new organization to take a comprehensive view of downtown and the Plan’s implementation, is an overriding thrust of this Plan. As such, formation of this group should be the first priority. Once established, the group should carefully review the Plan and set an agenda of implementation project and program priorities.

It is recommended that the top, short term priorities be:

1. Beautification improvements which will take advantage of imminent public actions.

#### **PROJECTS:**

- a. Construction of the Henley Street Boulevard;
- b. Embellishment of entry portals (at Henley Street connector and Henley Street at Hill Avenue).

These projects are described in the Open Space/Pedestrian section of Chapter Three and Transportation, Chapter Five.

2. Beautification improvements in major subareas, in conjunction with development projects.

PROJECTS:

- a. Business Core — make improvements to Main Avenue, Gay Street and Market Street, in conjunction with construction of Centre Square One and Two, Whittle Communications Headquarters, and the Lawler-Wood Office/Parking structure.
- b. Old City — make improvements to Jackson Avenue and Central Street, in conjunction with developments near the intersection of these streets.
- c. World's Fair Park — make site improvements and remove railroad track, in conjunction with construction of Knoxville Museum of Art and site redevelopment activities.

These projects are specifically discussed in the Open Space/Pedestrian section of Chapter Three and Transportation, Chapter Five.

3. Work to set new projects in motion.

PROJECTS:

- a. Residential development and associated infrastructure improvements in the 100 block of Gay Street.
- b. New headquarters building for the newspaper companies.
- c. Knoxville Convention Center expansion into the Millers Department Store building.
- d. Recruitment program for business retention and new businesses.

These projects and programs are described in Land Use, Chapter Four.

4. Actions intended to set the stage for future projects.

PROJECTS:

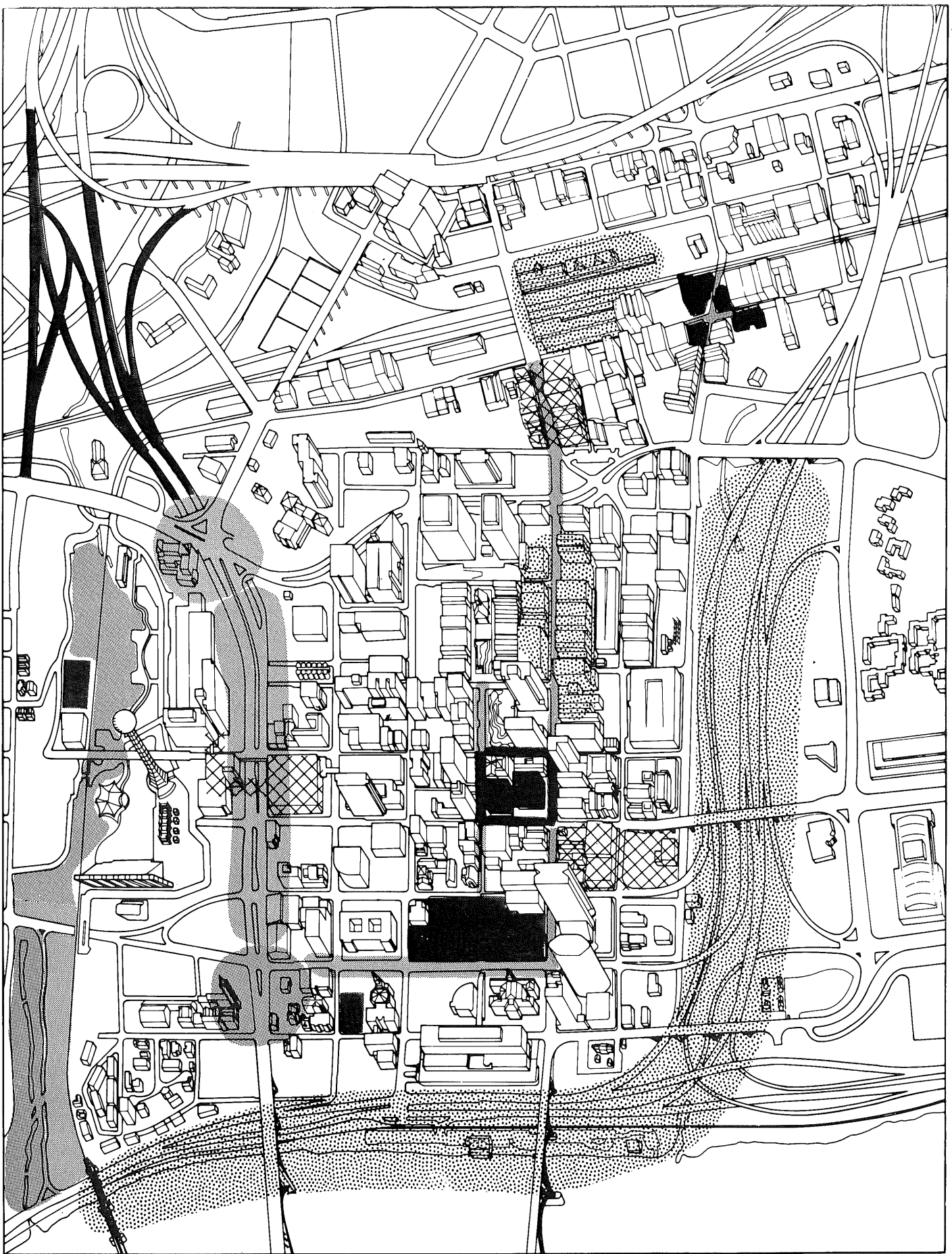
- a. Parking Study and action on subsequent recommendations.
- b. Waterfront Plan and action on subsequent recommendations.
- c. Retail Plan and action on subsequent recommendations.



- d. Water Quality study (on First Creek as means of helping to implement proposed Beautification improvements along Business Loop right-of-way.)
- e. Southern RR Terminal/Jackson Avenue Baggage building redevelopment feasibility study.

These projects and programs are described in the Open Space/Pedestrian section of Chapter Three, the Retail section of Chapter Four, and Transportation, Chapter Five.





Map 21 illustrates the locations of projects cited as short range priorities.



MAP 21

## **SHORT RANGE PRIORITIES**

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

-  Catalyst Projects
-  Beautification Improvements
-  New Projects
-  Study Areas

## **MID-LONG RANGE PRIORITIES**

In addition to continuing programs and projects which are incomplete or on-going, the next priorities should be:

1. Additional Beautification improvements which will take advantage of imminent public actions.

### **PROJECT:**

- a. Open Space improvements in Business Loop right-of-way in conjunction with reconstruction of I-40/Business Loop interchange.

2. New projects which improve linkages between subareas.

### **PROJECTS:**

- a. Additional streetscape improvements on Clinch, Church, and Main Avenues and Gay Street.
- b. Neyland Drive/Walnut Street auto and pedestrian overpass.

3. Work to set new projects in motion.

### **PROJECTS:**

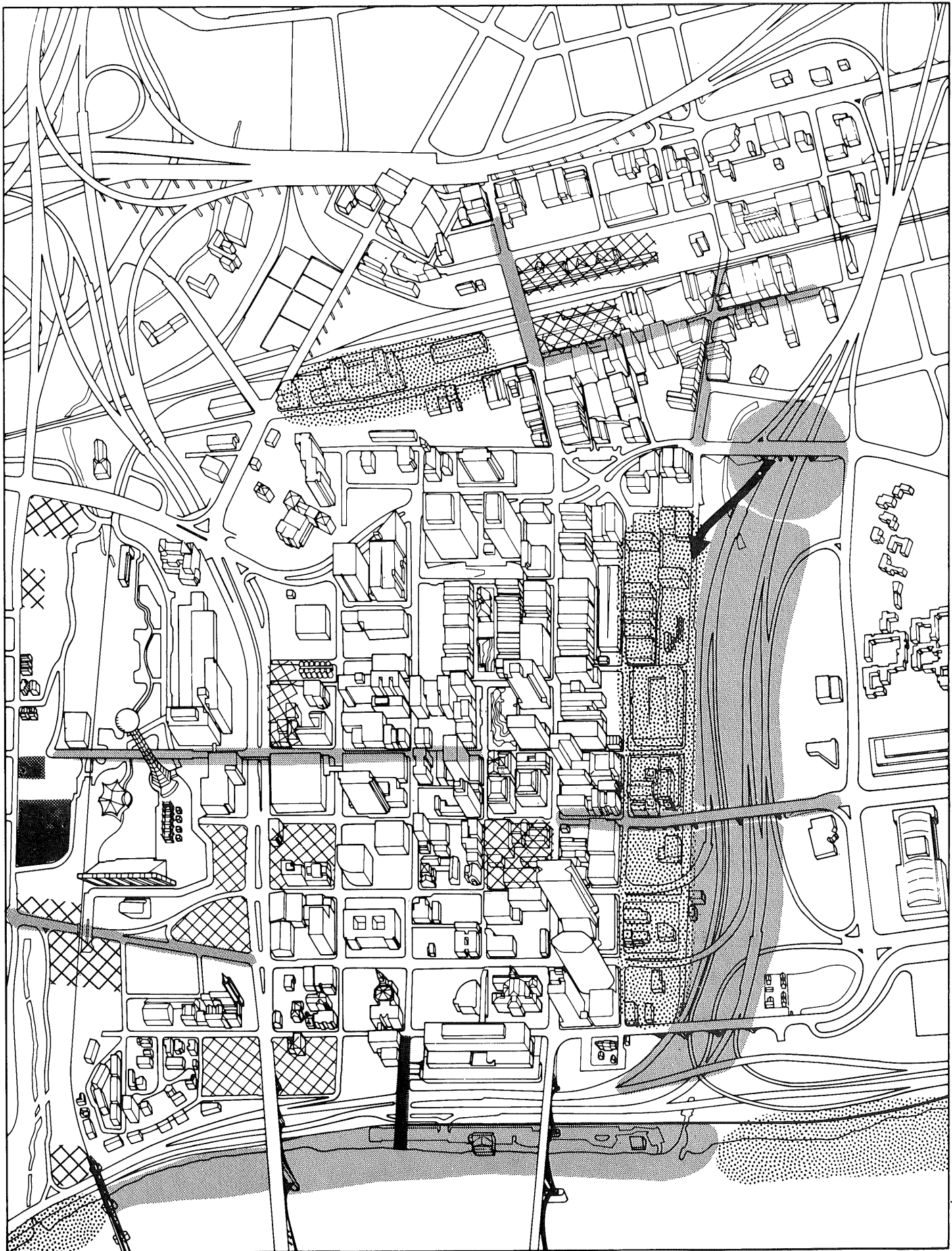
- a. Maplehurst Residential development.
- b. Phase II of Whittle Communications Headquarters.
- c. Office/residential buildings on Henley Street.
- d. Redevelopment of Southern Railroad Terminal.
- e. Farmers' Market in baggage/warehouse building on Jackson Avenue.
- f. Fair Site redevelopment.

4. Actions intended to set stage for future projects.

### **PROJECTS:**

- a. Development plans for: State/Central Corridor, Jackson Street, Waterfront expansion, Fair Site (as needed).





Map 22 illustrates the locations of projects cited as mid-long range priorities.



MAP 22

## MID-LONG RANGE PRIORITIES

Prepared by Metropolitan Planning Commission

-  Catalyst Projects
-  Beautification Improvements
-  New Projects
-  Study Areas



# CHAPTER 8

## *CONTINUING WORK*

**T**he two elements included in this chapter are not additions to the Plan, but rather summarized restatements of recommendations found in previous chapters. They are highlighted here as a quick reference for those involved or interested in the continuing work of implementing the Plan.

### INTRODUCTION

**SUMMARY  
OF  
SPECIFIC TASKS  
AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations summarized below do not constitute additional or new ideas. They are merely a distillation of the recommendations in the Plan which are specifically assigned to individuals, public agencies or organizations. These recommendations are listed under the agency, organization or business which would most likely implement or initiate action on the proposal. Implementors are listed in alphabetical order and the recommendations for each appear in the same order as they appear in the Plan. Page number citations identify where the recommendation and/or discussion of the idea can be found within this report.

**AIR POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD**

1. The Air Pollution Control Board should be required to closely monitor air quality downtown and recommend and advocate appropriate measures for improvement. (Pg. 82)

**ARTS COUNCIL**

1. Continued coordination of cultural/entertainment/tourism events and activities by all related groups should be encouraged, to maximize benefits of each activity and provide a clear message to visitors and residents about the available cultural/entertainment/tourism activities. (Pg. 91)
2. The establishment of a "Theater Under the Stars" and/or "Open Air Concert Series" in the Tennessee Amphitheater each summer should be encouraged. (Pg. 100)

**BEAUTIFICATION BOARD**

1. Additional trees should be planted at the edges and in the median of Neyland Drive. (Pg. 37)

**CITY OF KNOXVILLE**

1. A new mid-block park should be created on the existing parking lot adjacent to Krutch Park on Gay Street between Church and Union. (Pg. 47)
2. A mid-block park should be developed on Gay Street opposite the terminus of Wall Avenue. This public plaza could enhance the retail environment of this area. (Pg. 47 and 87)
3. Invest in landscaping and site improvements on the World's Fair Park to increase the value of the site's short-term utility for continuing public use while enhancing its longer-term development potential. (Pg. 48)
4. A comprehensive river study and plan should be completed as a joint project among TVA, the City of Knoxville, and Knox County. (Pg. 48)
5. Maintenance should be mandated in public budgets and by private co-operation, and be monitored by the downtown organization. (Pg. 50)
6. The expansion of the downtown residential population in a wide range of age and income groups should be encouraged and supported by local government, the real estate industry and financial institutions. (Pg. 75)

7. The City and County should participate in the implementation of significant residential developments by offering financial incentives and in-kind staff assistance. (Pg. 75)
8. The Coalition for The Homeless, in cooperation with the City and the new downtown organization should develop a comprehensive program to deal with the problems of the homeless in downtown. (Pg. 75)
9. The possibility of providing seed money to a developer for preparation of a residential master development plan and implementation program in Maplehurst should be investigated by the City. (pg. 76)
10. Financial incentive programs for center city residential development should be developed, with the programs coordinated through a single city department or through the downtown organization. (Pg. 81)
11. The City and MPC should establish design controls and implement zoning changes to protect or establish residential areas. (Pg. 82)
12. Maplehurst should be restricted to residential and direct support uses. (Pg. 82)
13. The City should investigate issuing a "request for proposals" for a retail development in the 400-500 block area of Gay Street, or ask KCDC to declare a like area for retail development. (Pg. 86)
14. The City, the new downtown organization and downtown merchants should cooperate in the establishment of convenient, appropriately priced parking, aimed at serving shoppers. (Pg. 87, 111)
15. The City should implement the plan described in the Open Space/Pedestrian section of this document for the primary pedestrian network. (Pg. 87,91)
16. The City, County and State government, as well as downtown property owners, should provide financial support for cultural/entertainment/tourism facilities and events. (Pg. 91)
17. The City should provide incentives to cultural/entertainment/tourism developments by participating in the provision of parking and other capital improvements. (Pg. 91)
18. An effort should be made to reuse the unique and deteriorating Southern Railway Terminal on Depot Street, possibly as a museum or for a group of restaurants. (Pg. 93)
19. An open-air farmers' market should be established in the baggage/warehouse building on Jackson Avenue, just east of Gay Street. (Pg. 93)
20. The structures and programs of the Tennessee and Bijou Theaters should be supported and expanded. City, County and State government and the new downtown organization should all work to support these cultural resources. (Pg. 99)
21. Continue to develop the World's Fair Park as a focus for cultural/entertainment and tourism activities with related activities in the area of the Candy Factory, entertainment at Station 82, public access to the Sun-sphere and the U.S. Pavilion. (Pg. 99)
22. The City should investigate the expansion of the Tennessee Amphitheater to 2500 seats and improve the sound system to accommodate larger and higher quality productions. A second amphitheater also seating 2500 should be examined for development. (Pg. 100)
23. Reduce the 17% amusement tax to enhance Knoxville's ability to attract national and regional entertainment. (Pg. 100)



24. Removal of the Norfolk-Southern Railroad track which bisects the World's Fair Park should be considered. (Pg. 104)
25. The City, County and State government should contribute financially or through in-kind services to the provision of parking which complies with the policies and recommendations of the Plan. (Pg. 112)

#### **CITY OF KNOXVILLE, DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING**

1. Construct the I-40/I-75/I-275/Henley Street Connector. (Pg. 26, 104)
2. Build an exit ramp from the southbound Business Loop to Central Avenue. (Pg. 26, 104)
3. Construct the Business Loop/South Knoxville Boulevard connector. (Pg. 26, 104)
4. A study should be conducted to evaluate downtown access at Neyland Drive with special consideration to constructing a vehicular/pedestrian connection at Walnut and connecting Locust to Front Street at the south end of Locust. (Pg. 26, 32, 104)
5. Construct an exit ramp from the southbound lanes of the Business Loop to Central street just south of Summit Hill Drive. (Pg. 26, 104)
6. Relocate the traffic signals on Locust at Cumberland and on Locust at Main one block east to Walnut at Cumberland and Walnut at Main. (Pg. 26, 108)
7. Central Avenue should be one way south from Summit Hill to its terminus. (Pg. 26, 108)
8. A left turn should be allowed from north bound Gay Street to west-bound Clinch Avenue. (Pg. 26, 108)
9. The Gay street and Henley Street Bridges should be lighted with flood-lights or small bulbs emphasizing the outlines of their arches, and with pedestrian scale lighting throughout their length. Vehicular-pedestrian separation should be enhanced. (Pg. 33)
10. Open space and landscaping should be added along Summit Hill Drive. (Pg. 37)
11. Market Street should be redesigned to include street paving of brick, bollards and a continuous gutter separating auto and foot traffic, brick or textured pedestrian crosswalks, pedestrian-scale street lights and landscaping. (Pg. 42, 108)
12. A pedestrian link should be constructed from Market Street to the riverfront. (Pg. 47)
13. Main Avenue should be narrowed to two lanes of moving traffic with additional parking and turn lanes and textured crosswalks, street trees and plantings. (Pg. 44, 108)
14. Handicapped access and existing ramps should be improved. (Pg. 50)
15. Minimum sidewalk width should be provided and pedestrian barriers removed throughout downtown. (Pg. 50)
16. A comprehensive, distinctive sign system should be developed for downtown, which would make access to and circulation within downtown easier and more understandable. (pg.50, 104, 108)
17. The center lane of the Henley Street Bridge should be designated for southbound instead of northbound traffic. (Pg. 108)
18. A detailed parking study should be carried out by City Engineering and MPC. (Pg. 112)

## **CITY OF KNOXVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

1. Regulations for on-street parking should be enforced. (Pg. 42)
2. On-street commercial loading should be from 9-11 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m. (Pg. 42)
3. The Knoxville Police Department should develop a program to address the public perception of crime considering measures such as foot patrols, mounted police, and the wider use of private security forces. (Pg. 82)

## **COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS**

1. The Coalition for the Homeless, in cooperation with the City and the new downtown organization should develop a comprehensive program to deal with the problems of the homeless in downtown. (Pg. 75)
2. The Volunteer Mission Center should implement its plan to become a coordinating agency for the homeless of Knoxville, rather than an overnight shelter. (Pg. 122)
3. The Volunteer Mission Center should direct the manpower resources of its clients to maintaining and improving downtown. (Pg. 122)
4. The Volunteer Mission Center should work with the police to solve the problems caused by some members of the homeless population. (Pg. 122)
5. The Volunteer Mission Center should clean up its facility and try to lease its Gay Street storefront area for retail use. (Pg. 122)

## **DEVELOPERS**

1. The now vacant S&W Cafeteria Building should be repaired and reused. (Pg. 98)
2. The downtown YMCA or other popularly-priced health and fitness facility should consider locating at: 1) the parking lot west of Market Square; 2) the parking lot east of the Quality Inn on Summit Hill; or 3) the World's Fair Site. (Pg. 98, 100)
3. Property owners and developers should be partially responsible for supplying parking in proportion to the demand generated by their developments. (Pg. 112)

## **DOWNTOWN ORGANIZATION**

1. Maintenance activities should be mandated in public budgets, enhanced by private cooperation, and monitored by the downtown organization. (Pg. 50)
2. The new downtown organization should see that a program is developed and implemented to locate, design and pay for public art. (Pg. 50)
3. The Coalition for the Homeless, in cooperation with the City and the new downtown organization should develop a comprehensive program to deal with the problems of the homeless in downtown. (Pg. 75)
4. Various sites on the periphery of the World's Fair Park should be encouraged for housing. (Pg. 80)

5. Financial incentive programs for center city residential development should be developed, with the programs coordinated through a single city department or through the downtown organization. (Pg. 81)
6. The Downtown Organization should see to it that necessary analyses and informational publications are produced. (Pg. 82)
7. The Downtown Organization should actively recruit the retailers identified in the University of Tennessee Market Study currently underway. (Pg. 86)
8. Merchant cooperation on hours of operation, promotions, decorations, parking and other activities should be continued. (Pg. 86)
9. The City, the new downtown organization and downtown merchants should cooperate in the establishment of convenient, appropriately priced parking, aimed at serving shoppers. (Pg. 87, 111)
10. The structures and programs of the Tennessee and Bijou Theaters should be supported and expanded. City, County and State government and the new downtown organization should all work to support these cultural resources. (Pg. 99)
11. Establish a Summer Festival expanding and strengthening the existing Watersports Festival. (Pg. 100)
12. Encourage the arts, festivals and promotions organizations to coordinate scheduling events and publish an annual calendar. (Pg. 100)
13. Encourage the development of an International Comedy Festival. (Pg. 100)

#### **FINANCIAL AND REAL ESTATE INDUSTRIES**

1. The expansion of the downtown residential population should be supported by local government, financial institutions and the real estate community. (Pg. 75)

#### **KCDC**

1. KCDC should declare the 100 block of Gay Street a residential redevelopment area with an emphasis on reuse, moderately priced units, and supporting retail, entertainment, and cultural activities and parking. (Pg. 80)
2. The area proposed for redevelopment in the 100 block of Gay Street should be considered for extension along Jackson Avenue. (Pg. 80)
3. KCDC should write down land costs as needed to stimulate residential development. (Pg. 81)

#### **K-TRANS**

1. Relocate the K-TRANS bus transfer point from Gay Street to Summer Place/ Walnut Street. (Pg. 114)
2. Continue to include Gay Street as part of appropriate transit routes and provide sheltered waiting areas as needed. (Pg. 114)
3. Continue to investigate means of long term funding for the K-TRANS system. (Pg. 114)
4. Coordinate routing between K-TRANS and the trolley systems. (Pg. 115)

## **KNOX COUNTY**

1. A comprehensive river study and plan should be completed as a joint project among TVA, the City of Knoxville, and Knox County. (Pg. 48)
2. The City and County should participate in the implementation of significant residential developments by offering financial incentives and in-kind staff assistance. (Pg. 75)
3. The City, County and State government, as well as downtown property owners, should provide financial support for cultural/entertainment/tourism facilities and events. (Pg. 91)
4. The structures and programs of the Tennessee and Bijou Theaters should be supported and expanded. City, County and State government and the new downtown organization should all work to support these cultural resources. (Pg. 99)
5. Reduce the 17% amusement tax to enhance Knoxville's ability to attract national and regional entertainment. (Pg.100)
6. Short-term parking facilities to benefit shoppers should be provided by local government, the downtown merchants and the Downtown Organization. (Pg. 111)
7. Financial or in-kind contributions should be made to the provision of parking which complies with the policies and recommendations of this plan. (Pg. 112)

## **KNOX COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD**

1. The School Board should explore establishing magnet schools in downtown, possibly in conjunction with the University of Tennessee and Knoxville College. (Pg. 82)

## **KNOXVILLE TOMORROW, INC.**

1. An new downtown organization should be formed through the merger of MSK, KTI and the DTTF. (Pg. 118-120)

## **KNOXVILLE UTILITIES BOARD**

1. All wiring in downtown should be relocated underground. (Pg. 50)

## **MAIN STREET KNOXVILLE**

1. A new downtown organization should be formed through the merger of MSK, KTI and the DTTF. (Pg. 118-120)

## **MAIN STREET TROLLEY COMPANY**

1. Coordinate routing between K-TRANS and the trolley system. (Pg. 115)
2. Investigate extending trolley service to the University of Tennessee and additional downtown areas. (Pg. 115)
3. Develop long term funding for the trolley including limited state and local funding and maximum private funding from downtown areas owners and merchants, area institutions, convention and tourism revenues and other appropriate sources. (Pg. 115)

### **MERCHANTS/PROPERTY OWNERS**

1. The City, County and State government, as well as downtown property owners, should provide financial support for cultural/entertainment/tourism facilities and events. (Pg. 91)
2. The City, the new downtown organization and downtown merchants should cooperate in the establishment of convenient, appropriately priced parking, aimed at serving shoppers. (Pg 87, 111)
3. Property owners and merchants should be partially responsible for supplying parking. (Pg. 112)

### **METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION**

1. Jackson Avenue and the Jackson/Central intersection should be the subject of a design study which takes into account the unique historical and architectural character of the area. (Pg. 46)
2. Guidelines should be developed to encourage pedestrian scale architecture on ground floors of newly constructed and renovated buildings. (Pg. 50)
3. A Design Plan should be developed for downtown which addresses the questions of urban form, streetscape, public art, pedestrian amenities, and other pertinent issues as outlined in this plan. (Pg. 51-61)
4. The City and MPC should establish design controls and implement zoning changes to protect or establish residential areas. (Pg.82)
5. Maplehurst should be restricted to residential and direct support uses. (Pg. 82)
6. Retailers needed downtown to fill specific niches should be identified through the market study being carried out by The University of Tennessee. (Pg. 86)
7. Property along primary pedestrian streets should be encouraged for use as retail and cultural/entertainment/tourism facilities. (Pg. 84,85,86,99)
8. A detailed parking study should be carried out by City Engineering and MPC. (Pg. 112)
9. An information campaign should be developed to help area residents understand the total transportation system. (Pg. 115)
10. The zoning ordinance should be revised to better provide for regulation of building height and bulk, pedestrian oriented ground floor uses and architectural designs, restriction of long-term and encouragement of short-term parking, developer contributions to parking and streetscape improvements and off-street loading areas, in downtown. (Pg. 123)
11. Property should be rezoned based on the plan recommendations. (Pg. 125)

### **STATE OF TENNESSEE**

1. Construct the I-40/I-75/I-275/Henley Street Connector. (Pg. 26, 104)
2. Build an exit ramp from the southbound Business Loop to Central Avenue. (Pg. 26, 104)
3. Construct the Business Loop/South Knoxville Boulevard connector. (Pg. 26, 104)
4. Construct portal park entrances at identified locations in conjunction with roadway improvements. (Pg. 32-33)

5. Landscape along the Business Loop adjacent to Central Avenue and add vehicular scale lighting. (Pg. 37)
6. Landscape and add water features in the median of the Business Loop. (Pg. 37)
7. Plant tall slender trees along the right of way of I-40 to screen views to and from the expressway. (Pg. 37)
8. The City, County and State government, as well as downtown property owners, should provide financial support for cultural/entertainment/tourism facilities and events. (Pg. 91)
9. The structures and programs of the Tennessee and Bijou Theaters should be supported and expanded. City, County and State government and the new downtown organization should all work to support these cultural resources. (Pg. 99)
10. The City and State should investigate a joint project to expand the Tennessee Amphitheater to 2500 seats and improve the sound system to accommodate larger and higher quality productions. (Pg. 100)
11. The City, County and State government should contribute financially or through in-kind services to the provision of parking which complies with the policies and recommendations of the Plan. (Pg. 112)

#### **TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY**

1. A comprehensive river study and plan should be completed as a joint project among TVA, the City of Knoxville and Knox County. (Pg. 48)

The following further studies are recommended in this Plan:

#### **FURTHER STUDIES NEEDED**

1. Detailed parking study, as described in the Parking section of Chapter Five.
2. Comprehensive Waterfront study and plan, as described in the Open Space/Pedestrian section of Chapter Three and the Cultural/Entertainment/Tourism section of Chapter Four.
3. Traffic/Urban Design/Landscape Architecture study and plan for the proposed Walnut Street overpass at Neyland Drive, to include surrounding area, as described in the Access section of Chapter Five. (as an element of number 2, above).
4. Comprehensive downtown signage study and plan, as described in the Access and Circulation sections of Chapter Five.
5. Residential market study as described in the Residential section of Chapter Four.

6. Retail emphasis and recruitment plan, to follow retail market study being conducted by the University of Tennessee, as described in the Retail section of Chapter Four.
7. Study on a comprehensive solution to issues of homelessness, as discussed in the Organizational Relationships section of Chapter Seven.
8. Design plan focusing on landscaping/streetscaping, as discussed in the Urban Form section of Chapter Three.

## APPENDIX 1

# *PROCESS/CHRONOLOGY*

**D**evelopment of Knoxville's Downtown Plan was carried out by a mayoral-appointed citizens' task force, led by an executive committee and staffed by local and federal government agency representatives. The time frame for the entire process, from decision to proceed through Plan adoption by the task force, was approximately 15 months.

## INTRODUCTION



Major components of the process included:

1. Establishment of need for update to Downtown Plan and naming of Downtown Task Force (DTTF).
2. Preparation of Downtown Data Base.
3. Formation of topic related committees; analysis and recommendations by committees.
4. Preparation of preliminary plan concept; review of preliminary plan.
5. Development and adoption of proposed Plan by DTTF.

**CHRONOLOGY  
OF  
EVENTS**

**September 1986**

- Decision is made to update previous ("1974") Downtown Plan

**October 1986**

- Mayor names Downtown Task Force (DTTF), Executive Committee and Chairman.
- Mayor requests MPC to take on role of lead project staff, along with major staff contributions from City Engineering and the Tennessee Valley Authority.
- MPC assigns project staff, develops proposed work program, and all staff begin preparation of comprehensive downtown data base.
- First full meeting of DTTF is held on October 30, 1986.

**November 1986**

- Work continues on data base preparation.
- Executive Committee meets with staff to map out process.

**December 1986**

- "Mayor's Community Conference on Downtown Planning" is held on December 10, to let community know about the process and gather preliminary input.
- Data Base preparation is completed by staff.

**January 1987**

- Second DTTF meeting is held on January 7; staff presents Data Base.
- Executive Committee meets.
- Special topic Committees are established to consider: Residential, Transportation, Arts and Culture, Downtown Organization, and Design.
- Ten meetings are held by topic committees.

**February 1987**

- Twenty meetings are held by topic committees.
- Executive Committee meets.
- RFP for consultant is developed.

**March 1987**

- Nine meetings are held by topic committees.
- Executive Committee/Topic Committee Chairpersons all day workshop is held on March 3, to discuss committee work progress.
- Request for Proposals for project consultant is finalized and released.

**April 1987**

- Six meetings are held by topic committees.
- Executive Committee meets.
- Candidates for project consultant are interviewed.

**May 1987**

- Additional candidates for project consultant are interviewed.
- Four meetings are held by topic committees.
- Executive Committee meets.
- Committee reports are presented to DTTF and public at meeting on May 28.
- Consultant is selected.
- Organizational "Staff Team" meeting is held May 29.  
("Staff Team" was an executive staff group made up of members from MPC, City Engineering, TVA and the project consultant which synthesized reports of Committees, data, and other community input, and from these developed the Plan proposals.)

**June 1987**

- Executive Committee meets and in addition to continued overall policy guidance, recommends downtown goals to guide Plan development.
- Staff Team meets June 17-19 and June 29-June 30.
- Design Committee meets in conjunction with Staff Team work sessions, to monitor and advise on progress.

**July 1987**

- Executive Committee meets.
- Staff Team meets July 1, July 21-22, and July 28-29.
- Design Committee meets in conjunction with Staff Team work sessions to monitor and advise on progress.

**August 1987**

- Executive Committee meets.
- Staff Team meets August 27-28.
- Design Committee meets in conjunction with Staff Team work.
- Transportation and Arts and Culture Committees meet.

**September 1987**

- Preliminary Plan is prepared and reviewed.
- Executive Committee meets.
- Staff Team meets September 8-10.
- Design Committee meets in conjunction with Staff Team work.
- Arts and Culture Committee meets twice.

**October 1987**

- Preliminary Plan is presented to DTTF and public at meeting on October 15.
- Staff begins preparation of final draft plan report.

#### **November 1987**

- Staff Team and Design Committee hold final meetings to finish review.
- Final draft of Plan report is completed.
- Executive Committee reviews and approves report.

#### **December 1987**

- Proposed draft of Plan is presented via slide presentation and written report to DTTF and public at December 2 meeting.
- Plan is approved by DTTF.

### **SCHEDULE FOR PUBLIC ADOPTION PROCESS**

- MPC - December 10, 1987
- Knoxville's Community Development Corporation (KCDC) - December 17, 1987
- City Council - February 9, 1988
- County Commission - March 21, 1988

### **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

The following lists all major public meetings and surveys sponsored by the DTTF, its committees and staff.

#### **Large Group Meetings**

- "Kick-off" - December 10, 1986
- Committee Reports Presentation - May 28, 1987
- Presentation of Preliminary Plan - October 15, 1987
- Presentation of Final Draft Plan - December 2, 1987

#### **Public Workshops and Hearings**

- Arts and Culture Committee - hearings on January 27 and 29, 1987, to solicit comments on arts and cultural aspects of downtown and general comments.
- Downtown Organization Committee - meeting on March 18, 1987 to solicit comments on a new downtown organization.
- Design Committee Workshop for local design-oriented professionals - April 13, 1987.
- Public Open House - December 8, 1987.

#### **Surveys**

- General - survey of those who attended "kick-off" meeting (12-10-86).
- Residential Committee - survey of selected downtown interest groups.
- Downtown Organization - survey of existing groups and organizations active in downtown.
- Transportation Committee - survey of DTTF, Committee members, other interested citizens (re: trolley).

Records of meetings and results of surveys are on file at the MPC library.

Copies of the three quarterly reports prepared during the process are attached.



KNOXVILLE-KNOX COUNTY

**M P C**

METROPOLITAN  
P L A N N I N G  
C O M M I S S I O N

T E N N E S S E E

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