



The Banks Urban Design Plan Update

Housing and Growth Committee

June 9, 2026

Project Details

Applicant: Hamilton County

Site: Planned Development #43 (PD-43) “The Banks”

Request:

- The Banks Urban Design Plan Update
- Major Amendment to the PD Concept Plan and Development Program Statement

Project Details

**The Banks Urban
Design Plan Update**

Plan



**Major Amendment to the
Concept Plan and
Development Program
Statement for PD-43
(The Banks)**

Zoning Law

Project Details

**The Banks Urban
Design Plan Update**

Plan



**Major Amendment to the
Concept Plan and
Development Program
Statement for PD-43
(The Banks)**

Zoning Law

Process

Public Staff Conference



Staff Report



City Planning Commission



City Council



Project Details – Plan Update

Why?

- The Banks Urban Design Plan was last updated in 2000



**DUKE ENERGY
CONVENTION CENTER**

**FOUNTAIN
SQUARE**

Study Area

PD-43

3rd St.

2nd St.

Race St.

Rosa Parks St.

Marion Spence Way

Joe Nuxhall Way

E. Pete Rose Way.

Lot 4

Lot 13

Lot 1

Freedom Way

Lot 25

Lot 24

71

Broadway St.

**HERITAGE
BANK**

**GREAT AMERICAN
BALL PARK**

**BENGALS
PRACTICE FIELD**

Central Ave.

**PAYCOR
STADIUM**

Elm St.

**SMÅLE
RIVERFRONT PARK**

Menning way

**THE ANDREW J. BRADY
MUSIC CENTER**

**CINCINNATI
BLACK MUSIC
WALK OF FAME**

**NATIONAL UNDERGROUND
RAILROAD FREEDOM CENTER**

John A. Roeblin

OHIO RIVER

Taylor Southgate Bridge

Clay



Plan Timeline

April 2025 – Consultant Selection

May - June 2025 – Assessment and Early Concept Ideation

July - Sept. 2025 – Development Options

Oct. 2025 - April 2026 – Plan Finalization

Steering Committee

District Advisory Group

The Banks

URBAN DESIGN
PLAN UPDATE

The Next Chapter for
Cincinnati's Riverfront

—
Thank you to our public and private partners whose shared vision and commitment makes The Banks' next chapter possible.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

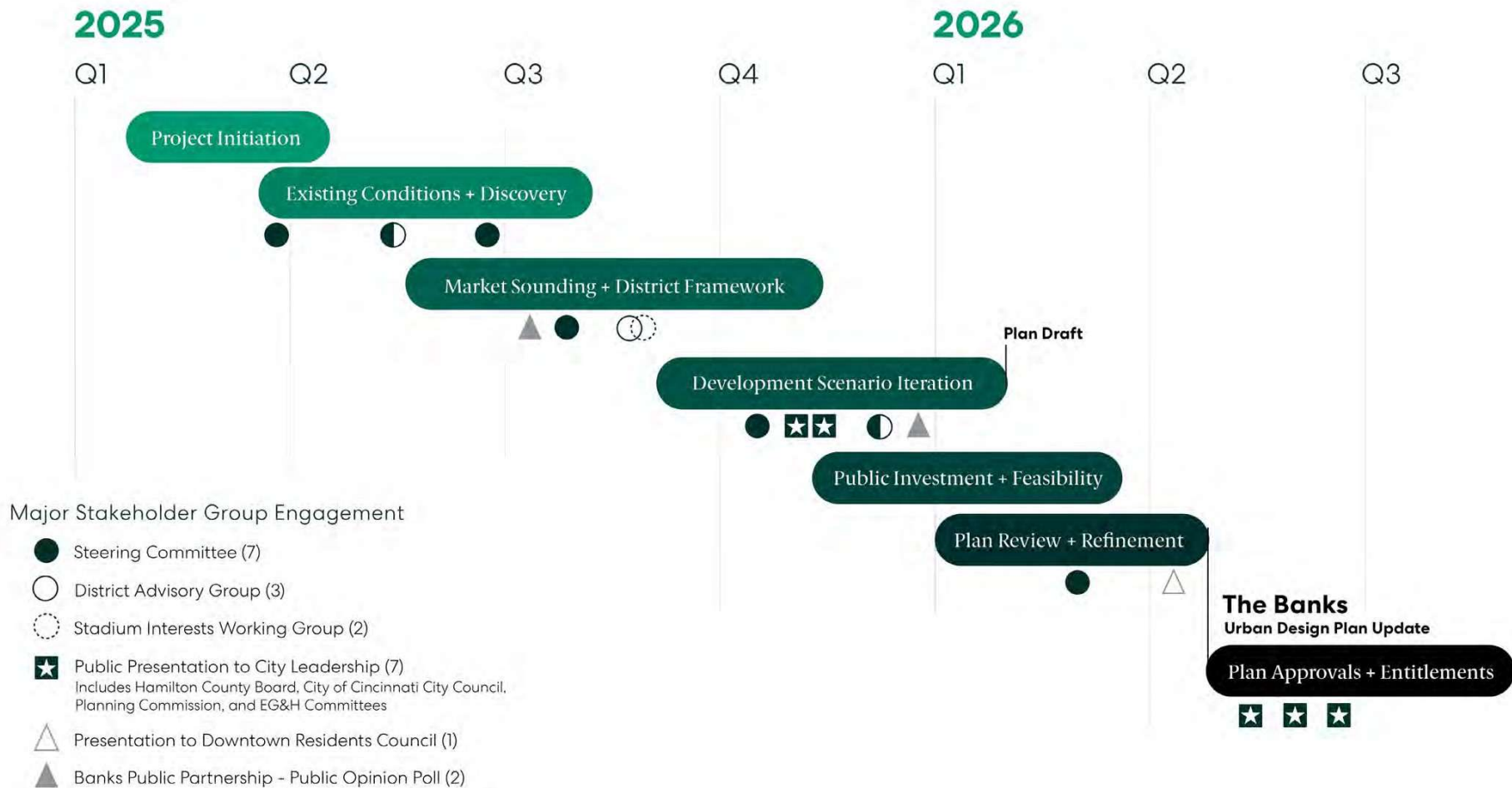
Phil Beck – Project Executive, The Banks Public Partnership
Richard Tranter - Partner, Dinsmore, Legal Counsel, The Banks Public Partnership
Roger Friedmann - Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Hamilton County, Ohio
Kelly Adamson – Sr. Economic Development Officer, Hamilton County
Caroline Blackburn – Sr. Manager, Digital Strategy, Cincinnati Bengals
Markiea Carter – Director, Community & Economic Development, City of Cincinnati
Phil Castellini – President & CEO, Cincinnati Reds
Holly Christmann – Assistant County Administrator, Hamilton County
Katherine Keough-Jurs – Director, City Planning & Engagement
Timothy Lynch – Supervising Attorney, Economic Development, City of Cincinnati
Steve Johns – Assistant Director, Planning & Development, Hamilton County
William “Billy” Weber – Assistant City Manager, City of Cincinnati
Jason Barron – Director, Cincinnati Parks

DISTRICT ADVISORY GROUP MEMBERS

Major tenants, landowners, venue operators, institutional partners

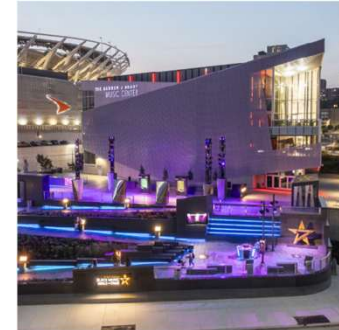
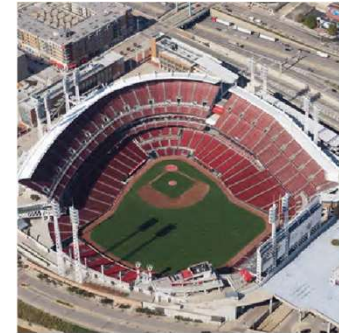
Elizabeth Pierce – Executive Director, Cincinnati Museum Center / Freedom Center
Woody Keown Jr. – President, Freedom Center (recommended for DAG by EP)
Rob McDonald – Operations Lead, Freedom Center
Kristin Ropp – VP & GM, Heritage Bank Center & Cincinnati Cyclones
Greg Hardman – Owner, Cincinnati Lager House / Vice Chair, New Community Authority
Chase Mosijowsky – Downtown Residents Council
Andrew Naab – Downtown Residents Council
Tracy Schwegmann – Marketing Director, Anderson Real Estate / NCA Events
JR Anderson – Director of Development, Anderson Real Estate
Matthew Starr – EVP, Commercial Real Estate, Crawford Hoying
Nicholas Veneman – Assistant Property Manager, NAI Hiffman
Rob Pritz – Associate Director, NAI Hiffman

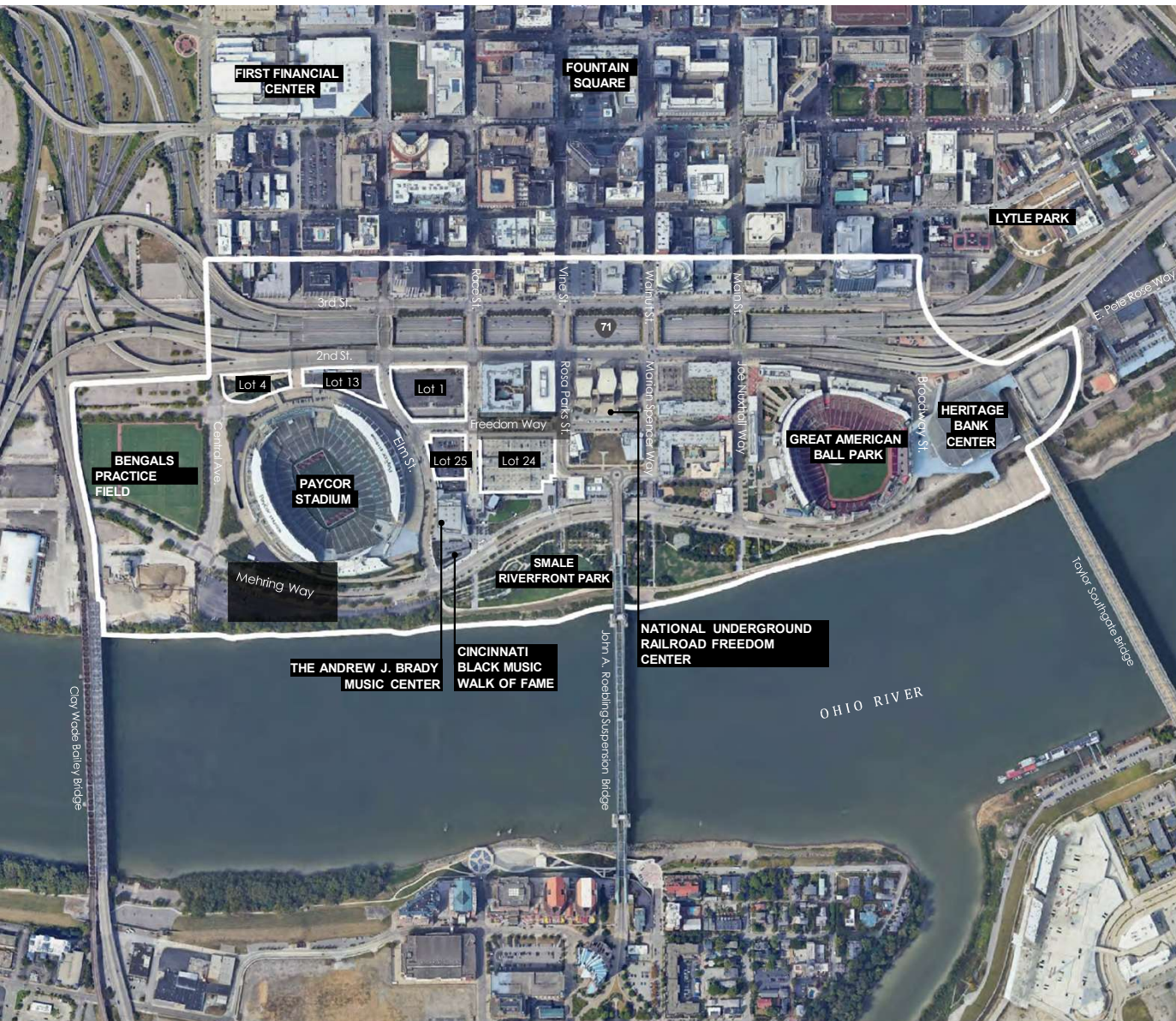
PLANNING PROCESS



A signature riverfront district defined by world-class sports venues, cultural institutions, iconic public spaces that collectively anchor Cincinnati's most visible urban address.

The economic impact of The Banks is huge and growing. According to a 2025 study conducted by the University of Cincinnati, the district generates approximately \$2.5 billion in combined direct and indirect economic output each year, supporting 28,124 jobs and nearly \$1.3 billion in total earnings across the Cincinnati metropolitan area.



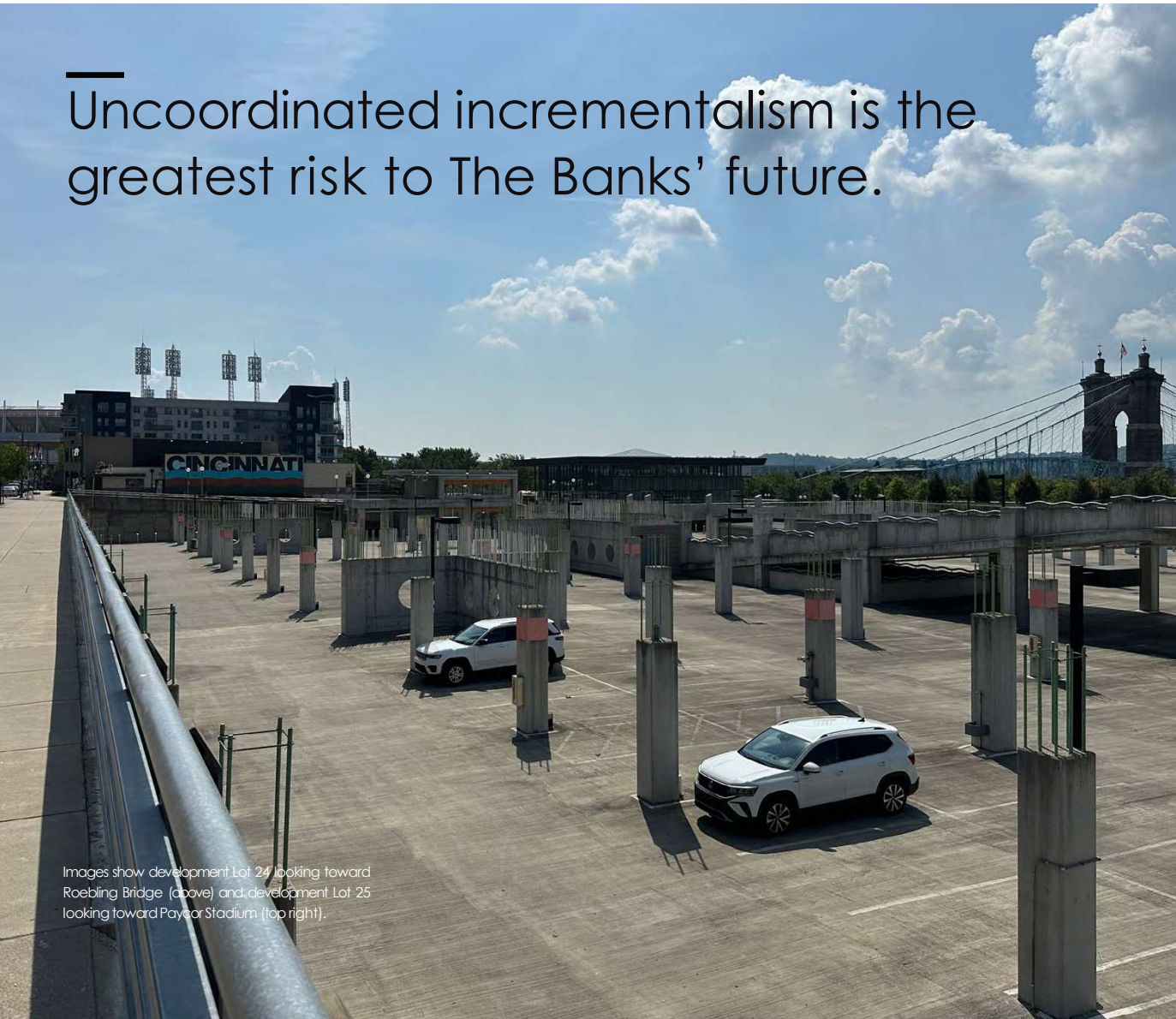


—
 The Banks as currently built has not achieved the desired residential densities envisioned in past plans.

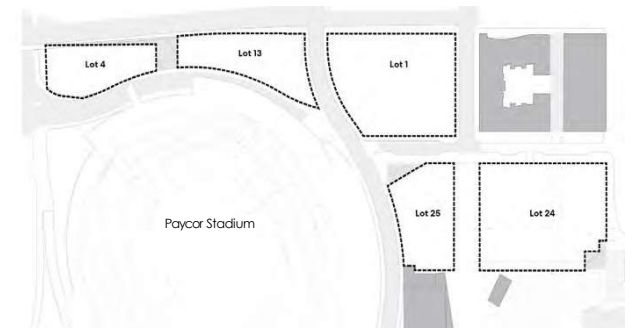


(Right) 2026 Study Area. (Above) The 2000 Master Plan Vision illustration.
 The Banks Urban Design Plan Update

Uncoordinated incrementalism is the greatest risk to The Banks' future.



Images show development Lot 24 looking toward Roebling Bridge (above) and development Lot 25 looking toward Paycor Stadium (top right).



The five remaining development sites benefit from CRG parking and riverfront premium, and face complex development conditions. Parcel-by-parcel development without a unified framework could fill in the district without ever fully forming it.

NARROWING THE MARKET NICHE



Over-the-Rhine

- Low to mid-scale
- Neighborhood feel
- Cultural and historic roots
- Artistic venues
- Civic spaces — Washington Park and Findlay Market



Fountain District

- Office-Heavy CBD
- Free civic events
- Destination dining
- Office-to-residential conversions provide nascent downtown population



Newport on the Levee

- Low to mid-scale
- Casual dining
- Free classes/concerts
- Movie theater
- Newport Aquarium
- Esports, Immersive Gamebox
- 100K SF office



Factory 52 (Norwood)

- Low to mid-scale
- Historic redevelopment
- Light residential population
- Food Hall, brewery
- Pickleball court complex

The Cincinnati region features several entertainment hubs, but there is no truly mixed-use entertainment district at an urban scale with residential density.

The Banks is tuned to game day but needs to evolve for every day vitality.

DISTRICT VISITOR TYPES AND NEEDS



Major Event Attendees

This journey is made up of places build to handle a crowd while still feeling like a place.



Culture Seekers

This journey has a natural itinerary, effortless to navigate and impossible to forget.



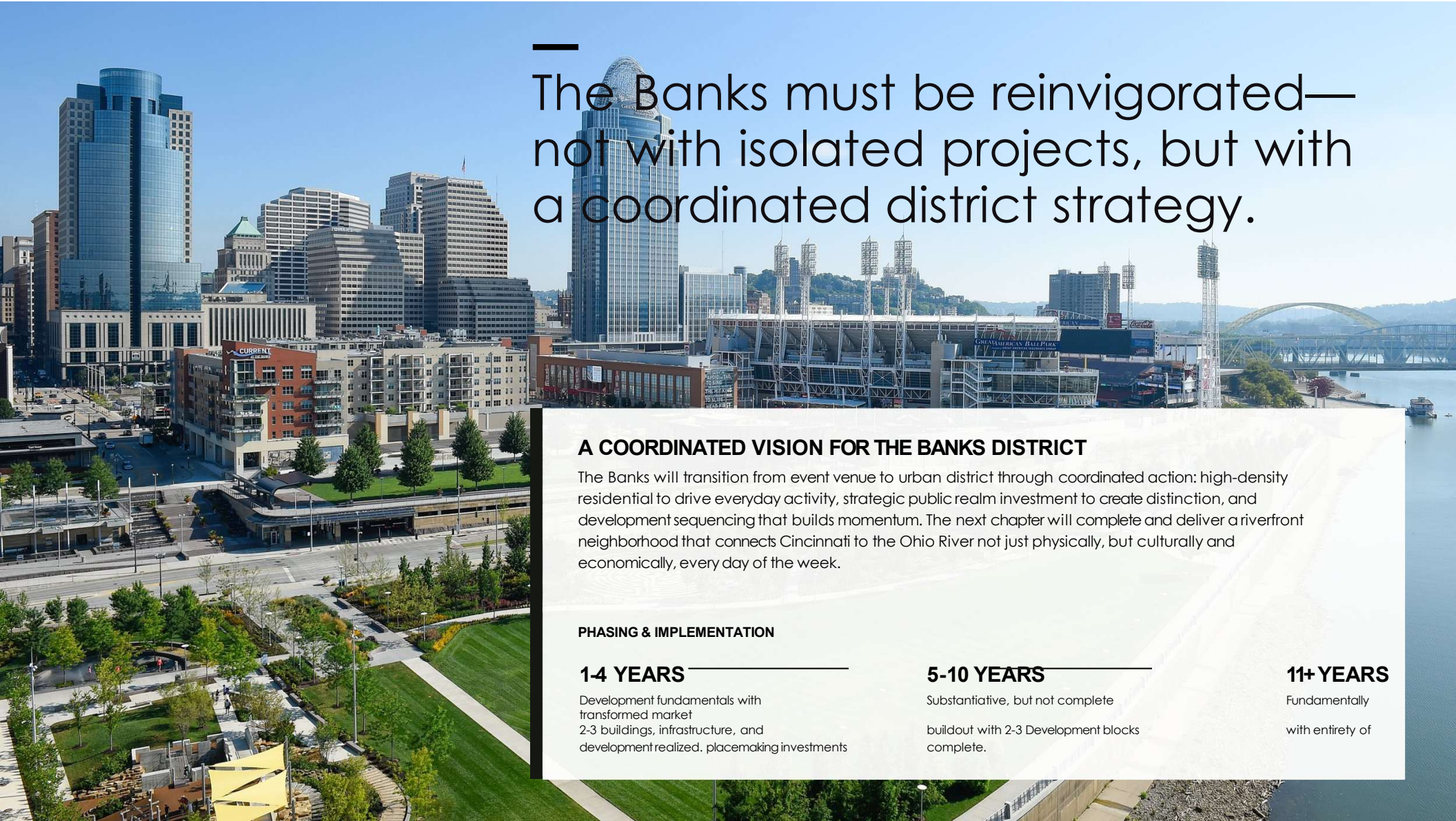
People at Play

This journey has close-proximity parking, with a welcoming district that makes planning and playing easy for all ages.



Amenity and Convenience

This journey has direct access, convenience, and variety that makes mid-day meals, errands and moments better.



The Banks must be reinvigorated—
not with isolated projects, but with
a coordinated district strategy.

A COORDINATED VISION FOR THE BANKS DISTRICT

The Banks will transition from event venue to urban district through coordinated action: high-density residential to drive everyday activity, strategic public realm investment to create distinction, and development sequencing that builds momentum. The next chapter will complete and deliver a riverfront neighborhood that connects Cincinnati to the Ohio River not just physically, but culturally and economically, every day of the week.

PHASING & IMPLEMENTATION

14 YEARS

Development fundamentals with transformed market
2-3 buildings, infrastructure, and development realized. placemaking investments

5-10 YEARS

Substantiative, but not complete
buildout with 2-3 Development blocks complete.

11+ YEARS

Fundamentally
with entirety of

**The
Banks**
URBAN DESIGN
PLAN UPDATE



Aerial view of The Banks rendered showing development and open space concepts.

The
Banks
URBAN DESIGN
PLAN UPDATE

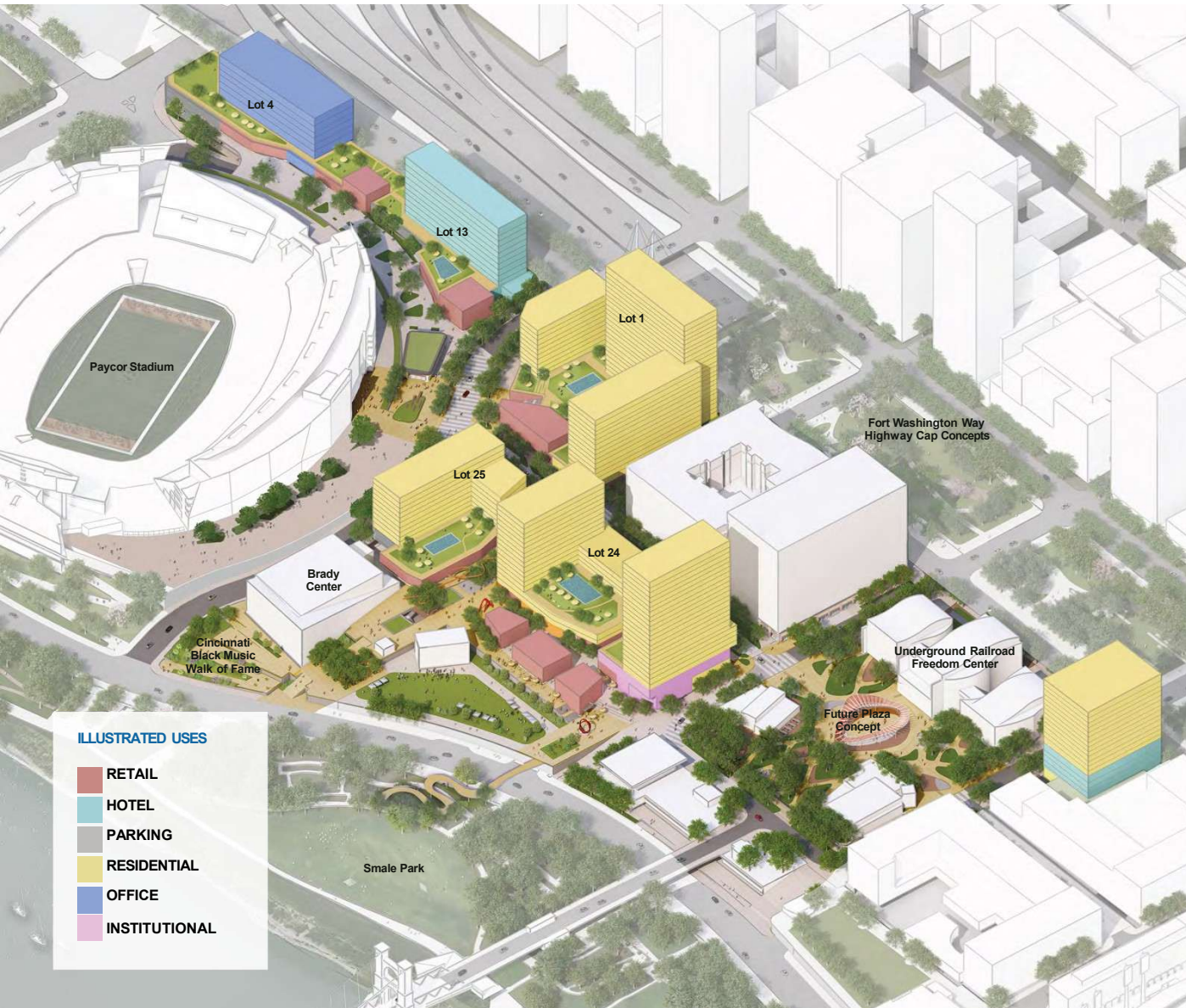


View looking west between the ICON Stage and Lot 24 showing a pedestrian walk fronted by new restaurants and retail.

The Banks
URBAN DESIGN
PLAN UPDATE



Illustrative plan shows new vision for the future of The Banks.



New residential construction is essential to long-term district vitality.

DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

- 2.18 million gross square feet of new buildings plus 315,000 gross square feet of structured parking for a total of 2.5 million gross square feet of new construction above street level.
- 1.5 million square feet residential; 154,000 square feet of hotel, 147,000 square feet of ground level active-uses including retail, restaurant food and beverage, and other commercial activity; 202,000 square feet of office in the last phase of development (market dependent)



DISTRICT DRIVERS

A BANKS DISTRICT THAT IS BIGGER AND BOLDER

The Banks has the opportunity now to advance market value in alignment with transformational civic life in Cincinnati.

A QUALITY DISTRICT THAT DRIVES VALUE

Investing in our public realm will raise the long-term value of future development. The District will be a place for people connected by cohesive projects.

A RIVERFRONT BUILT FOR GAMEDAY, DESIGNED FOR EVERYDAY

The Banks is designed for dual performance, seamlessly supporting daily life and high-capacity events as a regional destination. Evolving the district brand programming and operations will enhance the experience.

View of a fully activated riverfront area in alignment with the proposed vision for The Banks Urban Design Plan Update.

THE PURPOSE AND ANATOMY OF THE BANKS DESIGN GUIDELINES

Sub Section
 General Guidance
 Regulatory Standards

02 ARCHITECTURAL FORM

2.1 DESIGN TO EXPECTATION
 The design approach begins with the design team in consultation with the project owner and the project team to establish the project's vision and goals. The design team should then develop a design concept that is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should then develop a design concept that is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should then develop a design concept that is consistent with the project's vision and goals.

2.2 BUILDING ELEVATION
 2.2.1 General Building
 2.2.2 Tower Placement & Spacing
 2.2.3 Podium Parking

2.3 GROUND LEVEL STRUCTURAL
 The design team should ensure that the building's structural system is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's structural system is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's structural system is consistent with the project's vision and goals.

2.4 MID-LEVEL MASSING
 The design team should ensure that the building's massing is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's massing is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's massing is consistent with the project's vision and goals.

2.5 REGULATORY STANDARDS
 The design team should ensure that the building's design is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's design is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's design is consistent with the project's vision and goals.

Diagrammatic Illustration of general standards

Applied Regulatory Standards Illustrating Guidance on Lot 1 and Lot Groups 24/25 & 4/13

2.6 TOWER PLACEMENT AND SPACING
 The design team should ensure that the building's tower placement and spacing is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's tower placement and spacing is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's tower placement and spacing is consistent with the project's vision and goals.

2.7 REGULATORY STANDARDS
 The design team should ensure that the building's design is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's design is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's design is consistent with the project's vision and goals.

02 ARCHITECTURAL FORM

2.1 DESIGN TO EXPECTATION
 The design approach begins with the design team in consultation with the project owner and the project team to establish the project's vision and goals. The design team should then develop a design concept that is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should then develop a design concept that is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should then develop a design concept that is consistent with the project's vision and goals.

2.2 BUILDING ELEVATION
 2.2.1 General Building
 2.2.2 Tower Placement & Spacing
 2.2.3 Podium Parking

2.3 GROUND LEVEL STRUCTURAL
 The design team should ensure that the building's structural system is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's structural system is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's structural system is consistent with the project's vision and goals.

2.4 MID-LEVEL MASSING
 The design team should ensure that the building's massing is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's massing is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's massing is consistent with the project's vision and goals.

2.5 REGULATORY STANDARDS
 The design team should ensure that the building's design is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's design is consistent with the project's vision and goals. The design team should ensure that the building's design is consistent with the project's vision and goals.

Site-Level Guidance Illustrating Guidance on Lot 1 and Lot Groups 24/25 & 4/13

- Ground & Podium Level Plan
- Tower Level Plan
- Isometric Illustration

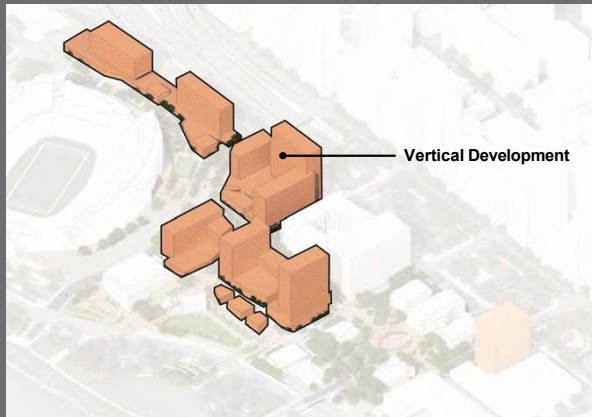
These Design Guidelines are intentionally streamlined to focus only on the essential controls necessary to shape future development outcomes.



A signature civic plaza fronting the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, anchored by a sculptural canopy, creates a flexible space for activation and park-like extension to the river and linking Freedom Way shared street segments.

VERTICAL DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT ESTIMATE: \$750M–\$800M

INCLUSIVE OF PHASED VERTICAL MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT
IMPLEMENTED OVER THE NEXT DECADE



VERTICAL MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

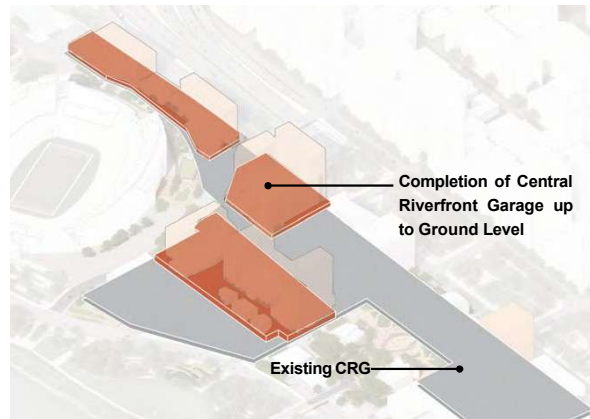
Residential, hotel, office, retail, and integrated parking across the five remaining development parcels.

Includes:

- Above-grade buildings
- Integrated parking structures above ground
- Mixed-use program buildout

COST TO BE DETERMINED

ADDITIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS



INFRASTRUCTURE ALIGNMENT

Infrastructure and other area investments separate from the vertical development estimate and will be required to support long-term district buildout.

May Include:

- Central Riverfront Garage expansion
- Structural foundation support
- Utility upgrades

COST TO BE DETERMINED

OTHER FUTURE DISTRICT PROJECTS

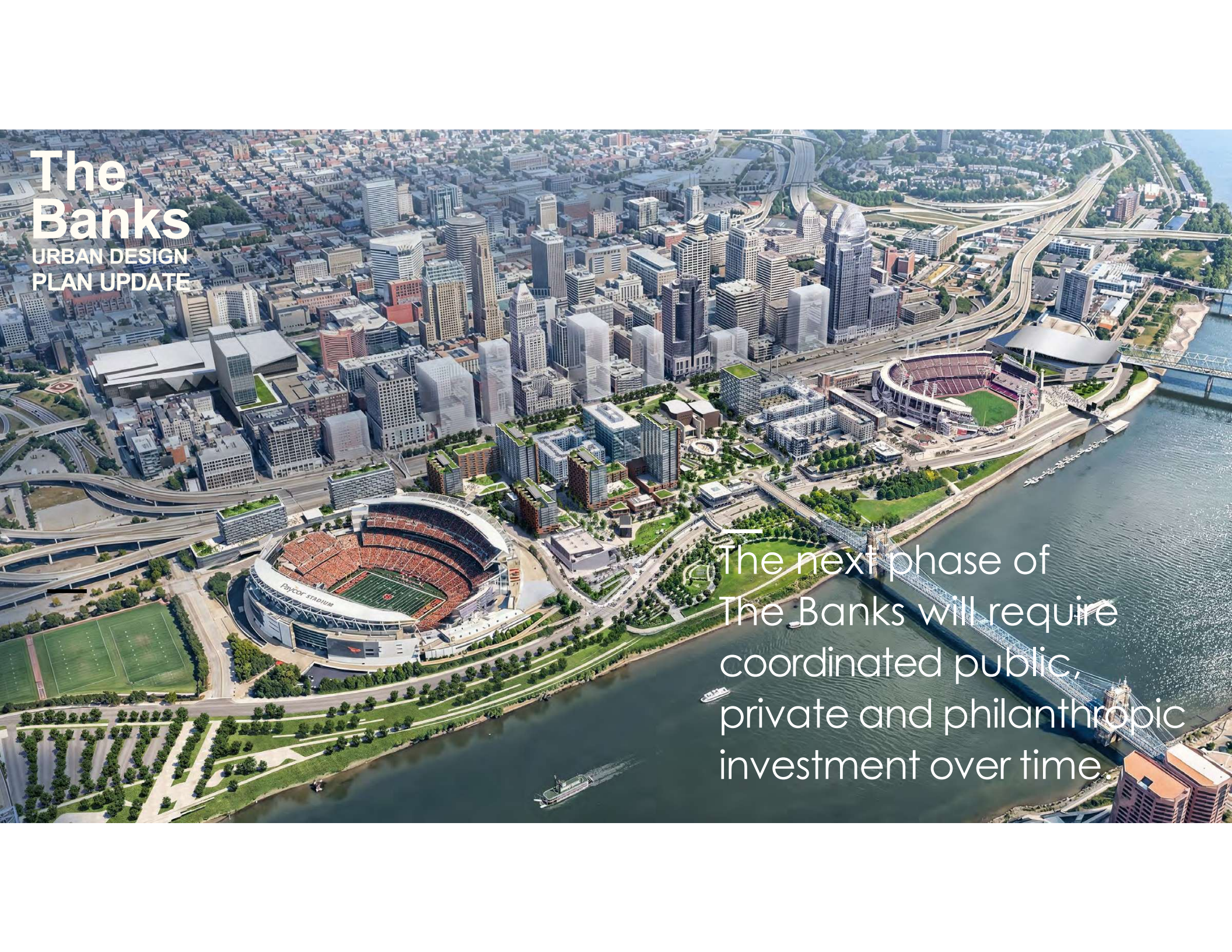


FUTURE DISTRICT PLACEMAKING & ACTIVATION SPACE

Public space enhancements intended to sustain and expand district activation of the 24/7 Banks District.

Examples May Include:

- Potential new arena
- Central Civic Plaza
- Freedom Way enhancements
- Future riverfront public realm projects



The Banks

URBAN DESIGN
PLAN UPDATE

The next phase of The Banks will require coordinated public, private and philanthropic investment over time

PROPOSED URBAN DESIGN PLAN UPDATE AND MAJOR AMENDMENT TO PD #43 - THE BANKS

City Planning and Engagement / Planning Projects and Studies / Active / Proposed Urban Design Plan Update and Major Amendment to PD #43 - The Banks

CITY PLANNING AND ENGAGEMENT MENU

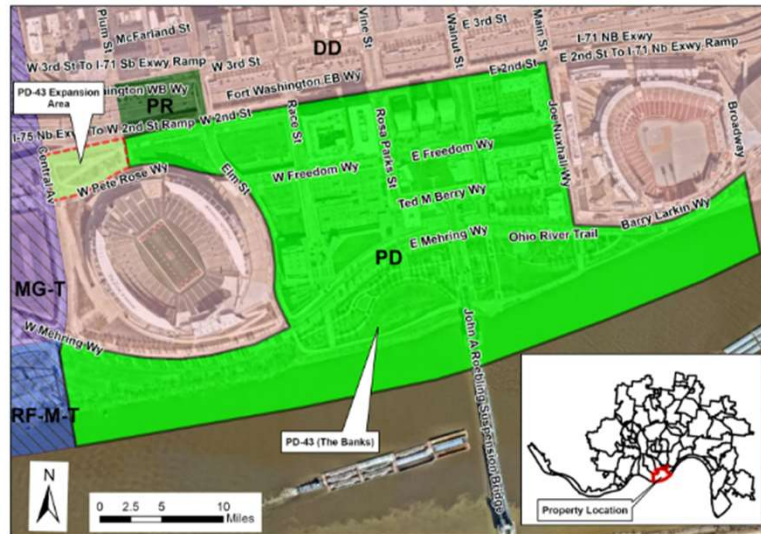
- About Us
- City Planning Calendar
- Apply & Pay Online
- City Planning Commission
- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Community Engagement
- Planning Projects and Studies
 - Active
 - Completed
- Plan Cincinnati
- Neighborhood Plans
- Zoning Administration
- Historic Conservation
- Committee of Names
- Subdivisions and Lot Splits
- Resources
- News

Proposed Urban Design Plan Update and Major Amendment to PD #43 - The Banks

Background

The applicant, Hamilton County, is proposing for The Banks Urban Design Plan Update to be the guiding planning document for The Banks. Additionally, Hamilton County is also proposing a Major Amendment to the Concept Plan and Development Program Statement for PD-43 (The Banks) in the Central Business District, which will incorporate recommendations from The Banks Urban Design Plan Update.

A Proposed Major Amendment to The Concept Plan and Development Program Statement for PD-43 (The Banks)



Consistency with Plans

Plan Cincinnati (2012) ✓



Compete ✓
Connect ✓
Live ✓
Sustain ✓
Collaborate ✓

City Planning Commission

Recommended approval of
The Banks Urban Design
Plan Update on May 15, 2026,
by a vote of 6-0-0, with one
excused



RECOMMENDATION

The City Planning Commission recommends that City Council take the following action:

APPROVE the proposed district plan, The Banks Urban Design Plan Update, as the guiding planning document for The Banks in the Central Business District.