Community Identity:
Place and the South Knoxville Waterfront

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ABSTRACT

"With the loss of tactility and the scale and details crafted for the human body and hand, our structures become repulsively flat, sharp-edged, immaterial, and unreal" (Holl 29). Our built environment is full of constructs which are unsuccessful on a number of levels proving why it is critical to concentrate on a sense of place and identity. A great place is described as one where people gravitate towards, a place for everyone, something that is memorable, and a space which evokes a story (Placemaking Is...). South Knoxville, Tennessee, the selected site of this thesis, will test the concept of place and identity with its rich history, communal feel, and distinct character. The neighborhoods, proximity to the waterfront, view-sheds, and the people are just a few examples of what makes South Knoxville a great place. This thesis responds to a variety of users, scales, and representative elements of place present in South Knoxville, all while understanding the forces that challenge place and identity, whether they be spatial, social, economic, or natural. Three goals which drive this thesis include highlighting the identity of South Knoxville, creating public space at the Mid River section of South Knoxville, and connecting the working-class neighborhoods to the heart of the South Knoxville Waterfront which have all been under attack by poor planning and development.

South Knoxville, once full of vibrant public places with a thriving main street, began to have its identity compromised with industry and businesses that settled within proximity of the river and major roadways which run through it. The Baptist Hospital complex once at the head and center of South Knoxville, situated between two bridges, was the single most detracting element of South Knoxville's identity and proposed redevelopment is no different. Precious land was consumed for large scale development, neighborhoods were and to this date are severed, and a once vibrant identity was comprised. South Knoxville's tactility, scale, and details dramatically have transformed over time, thus presenting the challenge to reinvigorate the sense of place and identity at the most critical point on the South Knoxville Waterfront.

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CHAPTER I
PLACE MAKING

A. How can place making be defined?

Place making is far from just an overarching idea; it is a valuable hands-on tool that architects, landscape architects, and designers use today to improve the world around us on a range of scales. Place making is an approach that creates a local identity, develops public spaces that attract people, and builds community by bringing people together. At the heart of every community in the world lies a public space, and the value of those spaces are strengthened by the people that use them. We need place to create community and community to create place, so at the smallest scale it comes down to designing for the people. Whatever form that a place may take, each and every one fosters creative patterns of connections and activities whether they be cultural, economic, social, or ecological ("Why Public Places Are the Key to Transforming Our Communities").

Place should be designed at a local and regional level and not in a universal fashion. In 2006, The Project for Public Spaces, a non-profit planning and design organization received submissions from all over the globe about how place making can be defined (Figure 1). The following are a number of definitions and meanings of place which are prevalent in many of today's great spaces (What Is Placemaking?):

"…making public space a living space"

"…a meeting place"

"…all the little things that make a spot memorable"

"…design through the people's eyes"

"…creating an environment that people gravitate to"

"…creating character and meaning into a public space"

"…embracing people, buildings, events, and nature"

"…the process of giving a space a story"

Most importantly, place making is not (What Is Placemaking?):

"…imposed from above"

"…one size fits all"

B. Qualities of Place

All places in our built environment consist of key attributes, intangible qualities, and measurable data. The key attributes of any place include sociability, users and activities, access and linkages, and comfort and image. The things that attract people are intangible qualities and can include such things as walkability, convenience, safety, usefulness, and scale to name a few. To accurately measure whether a place is working in the way it was intended, things such as transit usage, street life, and property values can indicate their successfulness (What Makes a Successful Place?). Several more intangible qualities and measureable aspects of data are found in the Place Diagram from the Project for Public Spaces (Figure 2).



Figure 1. Place Making Infographics.
There are many definitions and meanings of place as specified in the Project for Public Spaces article "What is Placemaking?" This is a personal representation of the most common elements found in the 2006 Project for Public Spaces survey about place making and how it is perceived by the public.
(Source: Author)

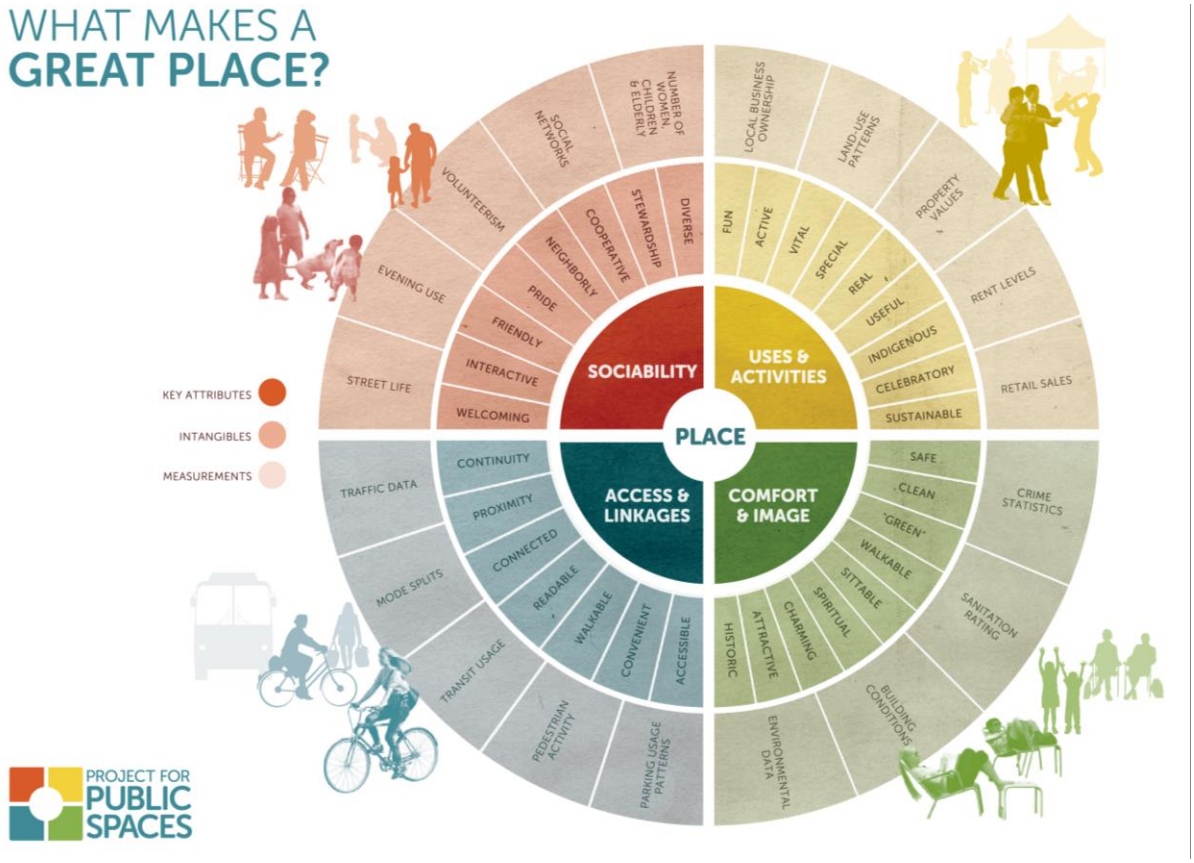


Figure 2. Place Diagram
The Project for Public Spaces Place Diagram categorizes what makes up a great place into a set of defined attributes, qualities, and data which is used in this thesis to analyze South Knoxville's potential for a reinvigorated sense of place and identity.
(Source: What Makes a Successful Place?)

C. Personal definition of place

Place making has a variety of meanings which all relate to how a sense of community and identity are achieved. The most important part of why people return to a place is a memory, which is triggered by our senses and the experience we have in a place. "The experience of our bodies, of what we touch and smell, of how we are 'centered,'.... is not locked into the immediate present but can be recollected through time (Bloomer, Moore, and Yudell)." If we have a memorable experience in a space it is likely to resonate with us, ensuring the longevity of that place.

"The tactile resilience of the place-form and the capacity of the body to read the environment in terms other than those of sight alone suggest a potential strategy for resisting the domination of universal technology (Foster)." The reason why people remember an experience, is that they use their whole bodies and all their senses, rather than just describing it with formal qualities. Thus, place can be understood through our five senses; sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. There are a number of intangible and non-visual pieces of evidence that are important to my definition of place such as local character, intimacy, walkability, convenience, materiality, incorporation of nature, and a variety of other elements which are essential to communities and the people which occupy them. All of the above qualities trigger a memory that identifies a place, ensuring longevity and people returning for memorable experiences.

The investigation of this thesis, which studies placeness in South Knoxville, will use strategies that incorporate the history and identity of place in order to establish a base line for what the area was, how it has changed, and what it could become. Understanding South Knoxville and what factors have shaped its development are key in understanding the conditions that challenge placeness there today. In the following chapter, different theories of place and periods of architecture provide a comprehensive look at how South Knoxville can be analyzed in terms of the qualities that make it a great place.

CHAPTER II
RESEARCH ON PLACE

Though place can be categorized, defined by a series of terms, and measured in several ways, it means something different to everyone. The research in this chapter explores many periods of architecture and theories of those whose work centered on what it means for a part of our built environment to have a sense of place. By keeping in consideration all of those whose work contributed to the discourse of placeness in the built environment, this thesis creates a set of parameters, hence providing the groundwork for a particular site being selected for its potential to create place.

A. From Modern Architecture to Critical Regionalism

Our built environment today is constantly changing in order to respond to changes in population, the environment, technology, and other factors that shape our society. The modern architecture movement was a pivotal point in history where architects began to utilize technological advancements in order to create new methods of representation. Critics of modern architecture state that the movement was only a mere way to cast the conditions of the past onto the realities of the present. Some architects believed that we could recycle architectural forms and adapt them in any way possible (Colquhoun 10). However, as modern architecture developed, many architects and theorists questioned how the profession could embrace historical and stylistic norms while utilizing technology and the future that it could bring (Colquhoun 11). Modern architecture directly and indirectly changed the course of the built environment as it questioned historical tradition and how society responds to change.

Many architects and theorists began to question modern architecture and how long it could stand up to change. Postmodernism, a response and critique on modernism, posed that modern architecture had become invariably universal and lacked any sort of meaning. Postmodernists felt that the profession should move away from out-of-date ideals and explore more eclectic alternatives. This new view on architecture offered a way to see the world in a

much more aesthetic way interpreting the ever-changing nature of art, literature, culture, and philosophy, which could manifest themselves in the form of architecture and the built environment.

Critical Regionalism emerged as an alternative to postmodernism, and it approached architecture in a way that gave importance to identity rather than universal themes (Lefaivre, and Tzonis 10). Postmodernism, to the critical regionalists, was a very top down approach to architecture rather than a way to embrace a much more effective bottom up approach. "Narcissistic, universal and imposing formulas of design," were representative of postmodernism, while Critical Regionalism valued the cultural, social, and physical identity of a place (Lefaivre, and Tzonis 11). This rich style of architecture recognizes the importance of the singular and aims for diversity, all while benefitting from universality (Lefaivre, and Tzonis 20).

Lewis Mumford, a notable writer and humanist, referred to regionalism as a "native and humane form of modernism (Lefaivre, and Tzonis 25)." Many still saw regionalism as a "chauvinistic sentimental national prejudice (Lefaivre, and Tzonis 26)," but that did not deter a number of architects and theorists from pushing for a new view on architecture and the built environment. Mumford's definition of regionalism, despite his slight variations and views, encapsulated what the movement was all about. Firstly, absolute historicism is not the way in which we should approach the design of our buildings and cities. Mumford favored the vernacular and use of local materials all while aiming for new forms rather than mimicking what came before (Lefaivre, and Tzonis 35). Secondly, picturesque and utopian ideals, though important in architectural discourse, should be rejected. People feel comfortable and are at home when they are amidst actual conditions of life, thus architecture should be cognizant of that (Lefaivre, and Tzonis 36). Thirdly, technology can be used to enhance the spatial experience so long as it is sustainable, functionally optimal, and not detrimental to the essence of place (Lefaivre, and Tzonis 37). Regionalism should in all its facets be representative of culture

and maintain an overarching sense of community (Lefaivre, and Tzonis 38). We should not completely reject the universal; however, architecture should strive to maintain a balance between the regional and the universal (Lefaivre, and Tzonis 39).

B. Phenomenology

Phenomenology, the study of the subjective and sensory experience of space, has a deep connection to place. Steven Holl eloquently states in his first manifesto, *Anchoring*, that we as designers must find the universal in the specific. Phenomenology has a strong connection to Critical Regionalism in that they both stress the importance of identity, place, and culture. Compared to the past, phenomenology and its connection to Critical Regionalism prescribe forms of architecture and representation that do not interfere within a landscape, but rather aim to explain it. Thus phenomenology is characterized by experiential and metaphysical links which are ways to define architecture, site, and the built environment (Holl, Pallasmaa, and Perez-Gomez).

Alberto Pérez Gomez's article entitled "The Space of Architecture: Meaning as Presence and Representation" is a very in-depth look at how architecture can shape our experience through space. "Architecture is not an experience that words can translate later (Holl, Pallasmaa, and Perez-Gomez 8)." So often in today's world the meaning of the built form is dominated by post rationalization and the application of a meaning after the fact. Much of the problem arises from the potential of architecture's varying meanings in the ever changing context of today's technological world (Holl, Pallasmaa, and Perez-Gomez 14). "Experiencing and participating in a work of architecture has a fundamental temporal dimension (Holl, Pallasmaa, and Perez-Gomez 23)." The experience of space will transform as time passes and as our built environments age. We are in a world where creating engaging architectural forms and experiences are of the utmost importance.

Another view on architecture from the phenomenological perspective is within the article, "An Architecture of the Seven Senses" by Juhani Pallasmaa (Figure 3). The realm of architecture is compared to the human senses and other ways that we perceive the world around us. Architecture has a tendency to create a fixed image of the built environment and has made society a spectator to our surroundings rather than allowing our eyes to experience our being in the world. "With the loss of tactility and the scale and details crafted for the human body and hand, our structures become repulsively flat, sharp-edged, immaterial and unreal." We must be connected to the spaces that we experience; an architecture of the senses is such a way that we can achieve that. It seems that we as a culture at large are moving away from reality to an architecture devoid of tectonic logic and material authenticity (Holl, Pallasmaa, and Perez-Gomez 29). How then could there be any sense of place?

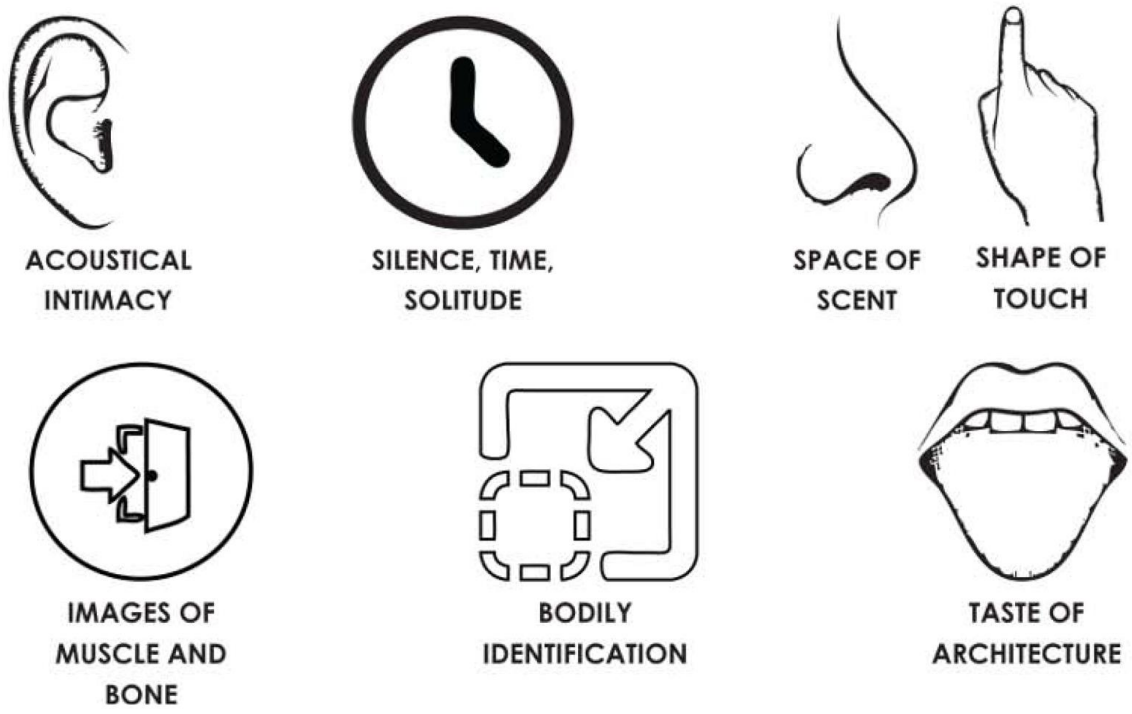


Figure 3. "An Architecture of the Seven Senses" – Infographics
Juhani Pallasmaa outlines in the form of seven senses, the way in which we can understand the environment around us. With these seven senses in mind, this thesis critically utilizes them to analyze the sense of place currently present in South Knoxville.
(Source: Author)

Architecture and the experience of built form, as previously mentioned, can be equated to the human senses as described by Juhani Pallasmaa. Every architectural experience is multi-sensory and the qualities of scale, matter, and space are equally measured by the ear, eye, skin, nose, skeleton, tongue, and our muscles (Holl, Pallasmaa, and Perez-Gomez 30). Together, seven realms of sensory experience account for how we as users of space experience the world around us.

The first sense is designated as acoustic intimacy. Pallasmaa argues that we only "stroke the edge of space with our ears while the contemporary city has lost its echo." We must immerse ourselves in space and heighten our hearing in order to create a sense of connection and solidarity. Silence, time, and solitude represent the second sense. All external noise is silenced in an architectural experience in order to detach us from our surroundings. Cities and buildings are such instruments that are a museum of time, thus allowing for an understanding of the passing of history. We can then relate the past to the present and the present to the future, citing architectural experience as a sense of place (Holl, Pallasmaa, and Perez-Gomez 31).

The third sense, the Space of Scent, cites that odor is often the strongest memory of space. Particular smells have the potential to evoke the memory of a space (Holl, Pallasmaa, and Perez-Gomez 32). The Shape of Touch states that skin has the ability to read the weight, density, temperature, and texture of matter. This tactility connects us with tradition and time (Holl, Pallasmaa, and Perez-Gomez 33). Images of the Muscle and Bone suggest that a building is encountered, approached, and confronted by the body, inferring that an experience of architecture is more of a verb than a singular act or noun (Holl, Pallasmaa, and Perez-Gomez 35).

Any encounter with a space evokes the sense of Bodily Identification. Scale, balance, distance, and movement are unconsciously felt through the body and directly communicate an experience from the architect to the body of the inhabitant (Holl, Pallasmaa, and Perez-Gomez

36). Lastly, the sense which is the Taste of architecture translates colors, details, and the visual experience to an oral sensation. Architecture, in the phenomenological perspective, creates existential metaphors to justify one's being in the world. Images of architecture are representative of ideas and images of life. Thus, architecture places human interaction with space in the continuum of culture and experiences of great places imply acts of remembrance, recollection, and comparison (Holl, Pallasmaa, and Perez-Gomez 37).

C. Selected Readings and Prominent Figures

C-1. Alvar Aalto

Alvar Aalto is considered one of the most important architects of the modern architecture movement, and his long career from the 1920's to the 1970's spans from classicism, a rational international theory, and modernism to his vast impact on critical regionalism ("Alvar Aalto : Architect Biography"). Aalto moved away from the cubic and rectilinear forms of internationalism early in his career to a humanistic approach of modernist form where he made his greatest impact. Critical regionalism, which was a reaction to regionalism itself, advocated against the top-down approach which modernism demanded. The European Congrés International d' Architecture Moderne, more widely known as CIAM, ignored local traditions and sensitivities, instead favoring architectural universality. Aalto and many others promoted the concept of regionalism, encouraging architects and planners to respond to the issues that really matter such as geography, climate, history, and culture (Gross). Lewis Mumford, an early advocator of critical regionalism, once said, "Our task is not to imitate the past, but to understand it, so that we may face the opportunity of our own day and deal with them in equally creative spirit (Mumford)." The concept of place and the genius loci of the site thus were derived from humanist principles and those things which one could easily understand and experience.

C-2. Wallace Stevens – Anecdote of the Jar

"I placed a jar in Tennessee,

And round it was, upon a hill.

It made the slovenly wilderness

Surround that hill.

The wilderness rose up to it,

And sprawled around, no longer wild.

The jar was round upon the ground

And tall and of a port in air.

It took dominion everywhere.

The jar was gray and bare.

It did not give of bird or bush,

Like nothing else in Tennessee."

The poem very succinctly expresses the concept of place, more specifically marking place. By placing a jar in the Tennessee wilderness, a center has been created and it has marked place in its surrounding context. Before that jar was placed, there was no defined space. It was without scale and had no reference point. In my view, Wallace Stevens was representing the way in which we remember a place in whatever form it may have. Until that jar was placed in the wilderness, the memory of that given place in Tennessee was not there. Rather than marking space with a jar, a parallel can be drawn by doing the same with a designed landscape for a public space or a piece of architecture.

C-3. **Kevin Lynch –** ***Image of the City***

One of the most pivotal and influential writings about the city is Kevin Lynch's, *The Image of the City*. "Like a piece of architecture, the city is a construction in space, but one of vast scale which is perceived only in the course of long spans of time." Kevin Lynch explains here that city

design by its nature is a temporal art, and that the essence of our cities are constantly shifting and responding to things such as culture, economics, and the environment. Cities are never experienced by themselves, but always in relation to the things around them, memories of past experiences, and events leading up to them (Lynch 1). Lynch delves into the visual qualities of the American city, and how it is held together by its citizens and the mental image (Lynch 3).

The image of the city is organized into three coherent components: structure, identity, and meaning (Lynch 8). The essence of his writing captures the organizing elements that constitute a place. The image of the city is classified into five elements: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks (Lynch 46) (Figure 4). Path are the lines upon which the observer moves along. These may manifest themselves as a transit lines, canals, streets, walkways, or railroads. For the most part, people find paths the most important part of their image of the city. Edges are those linear elements that are considered as breaks in continuity or boundaries between two pieces. Districts are sections of a city. Nodes are defined as strategic spots, foci, or points in a city upon which an observer can enter. Nodes can be breaks, convergences of paths, shifts, or junctions. Lastly, landmarks are physically defined objects which rest in a city and are frequently used for identification (Lynch 47). "Districts are structured with nodes, defined by edges, penetrated by paths, and sprinkled with landmarks (Lynch 48)." Together, all the elements of a city help us structure our memory of a place and that can be seen in Lynch's examples of the five elements put to use (Figure 5-6).



Figure 4. The Five Elements - Paths, Edges, Districts, Nodes, and Landmarks
The five elements in Kevin Lynch's book *The Image of the City* is an example of how the current state of South Knoxville, the proposals for redevelopment, and my design application can be deducted into five categories and elements that shape place and identity.
(Source: *The Image of the City*, Kevin Lynch)

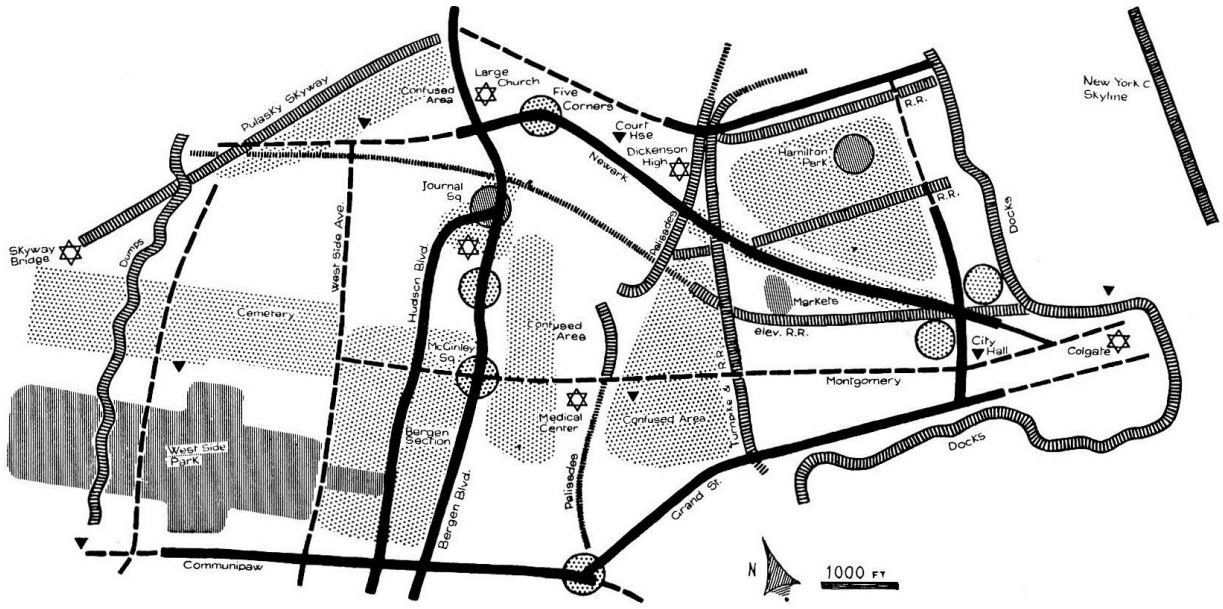


Figure 5. The visual form of Jersey City as seen from the field
Kevin Lynch put the five elements to use in his experience of a city. In a similar fashion, this thesis will implement the five elements to create a visual form of South Knoxville.
(Source: *The Image of the City*, Kevin Lynch)



Figure 6. Nolli plans by Kevin Lynch
Kevin Lynch created a series of Nolli plans and focused on the three major cities of Rome, Barcelona, and Paris. Though no specific Nolli plan will be presented in this thesis investigation, the overall ideas of solid and void, topography and space, and figure and ground will be used. They will direct the investigation of South Knoxville and its sense of place an identity.
(Source: *The Image of the City*, Kevin Lynch)

CHAPTER III
PLACE AND SOUTH KNOXVILLE

A. Historical Overview of South Knoxville

South Knoxville has undergone significant change over time and, in a variety of ways, has played an important role in the city and region. The area south of the Tennessee River, which is today known as South Knoxville, has transformed over time and been a:

- Series of forts and battlegrounds from the Civil War period (Figure 7-9)
- Place of early settlement (Figure 9)
- Rich topographical landscape (Figure 10-11)
- Initial development (Figure 12-14)
- Hub of industrial activity (Figure 15-19)
- Hub of commercial development (Figure 20-23)
- Gateway to the urban wilderness in and around Knoxville (Figure 21)
- Confluence of neighborhoods situated between the Tennessee River and the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains (Figure 24-25)

The area across the river known as South Knoxville is roughly a four and a half square mile expanse of rolling hills and includes a variety of rich neighborhoods which are a vital part to the identity of the city and region. South Knoxville was not connected to Knoxville proper until the Gay Street Bridge was built in 1898. To this day, the Gay Street Bridge remains a vital thoroughfare and an iconic landmark in South Knoxville. With a new formal connection to South Knoxville, industry began to boom at the turn of the twentieth century when marble was discovered in South Knoxville. For roughly one hundred years, that industry would provide economic stability to the region ("Knoxville: The Marble City"). In a different light, the industry, primarily housed along the river, was detrimental to the South Knoxville Waterfront's potential as a community asset and key part of its identity.

In 1931, the Henley Street Bridge was constructed, providing South Knoxville with a period of rapid growth. For much of the twentieth century, commercial development boomed, neighborhoods started to form along the Tennessee River and the foothills, and South Knoxville started to become a desirable place to live outside of the downtown area. Along Chapman Highway, which begins after crossing the Henley Street Bridge, retail shops, restaurants, motels, and other commercial businesses began to line the major thoroughfare and it remains that way today. However, in a culture dominated by the interstate, the car, and sprawl, once thriving places with a strong sense of place and identity began to diminish. South Knoxville began to experience a period of decline towards the end of the twentieth century, in contrast to the growth that downtown Knoxville and beyond was experiencing, due much in part to how South Knoxville was initially settled.

With a number of buildings and large expanses of land underutilized, abandoned, and not used in ways they once were, South Knoxville faces challenges in how it can be reinvigorated. The sense of place and identity is right below the surface, but it is only through understanding this blend of neighborhoods of distinct characters and strong sense of community, that South Knoxville can be the great place it has the potential to be. Much of why the South Knoxville Waterfront has remained undeveloped is because industry settled on the river, was abandoned, and then no action was taken until the recent Vision Plan for the South Knoxville Waterfront was implemented in 2006.

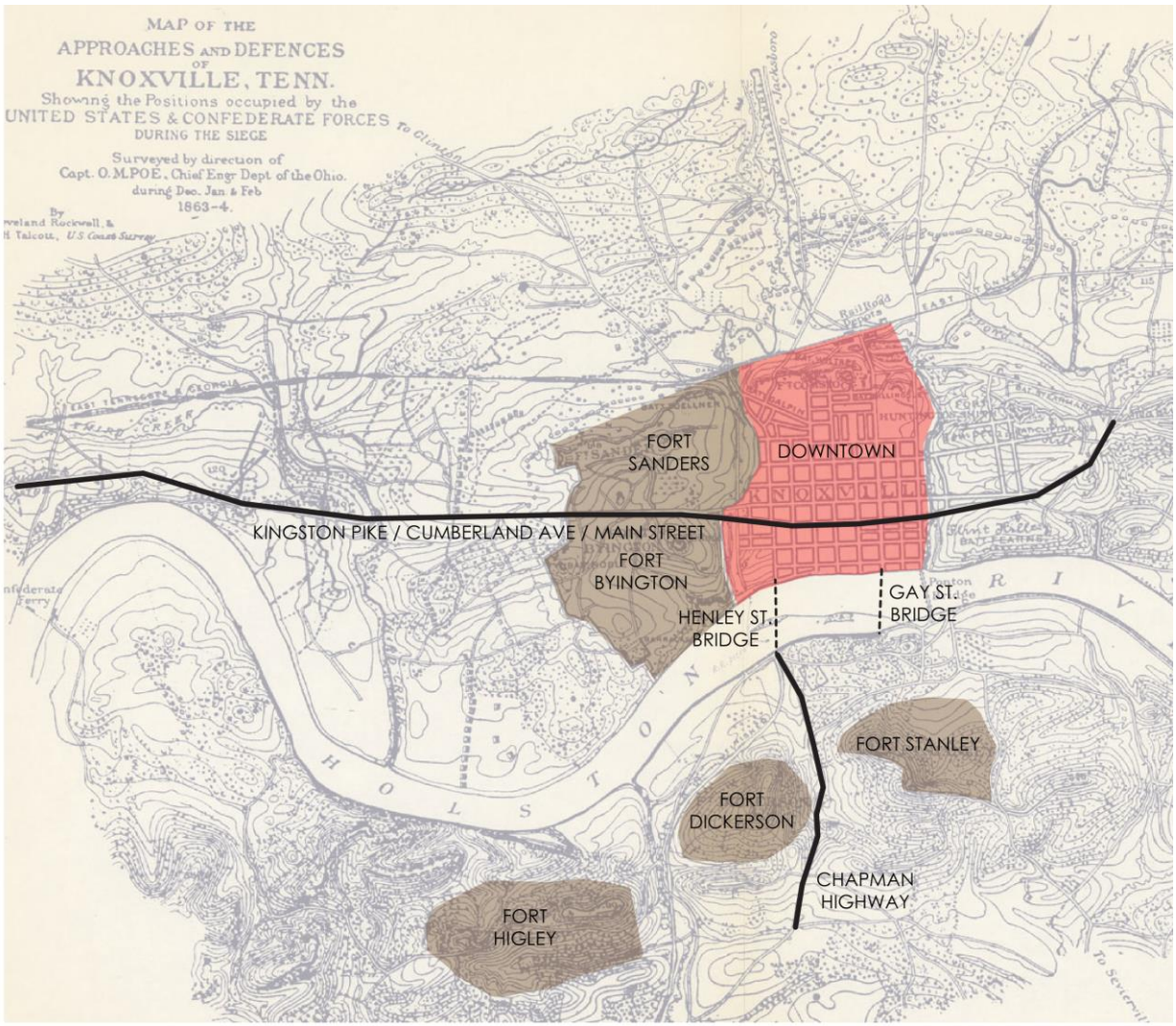


Figure 7. 1860 Historic Map – Approaches and Defenses of Knoxville, Tennessee
The map shown above depicts the state of South Knoxville during the Civil War. In a brown shade, forts during the Civil War are outlined and in a red shade, present day downtown Knoxville is shown. Black lines show main roads in Knoxville as they are in present day. Over time these areas and how they were initially settled have an impact on the formation of the city. (Source: Poe, Rockwell, and Talcott; altered by author for analysis)

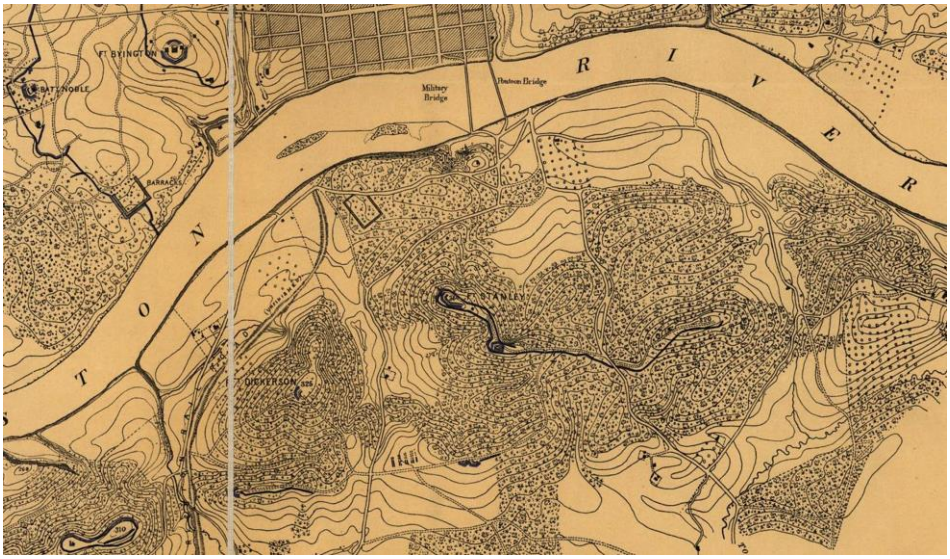


Figure 8. 1863 Historic Map – Portion of the Vicinity of South Knoxville
This map, at a larger scale, shows the state of South Knoxville during the Civil War, and it depicts the impact the topography had on the Union and Confederate forces.
(Source: Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection)



Figure 9. Civil War settlement in South Knoxville looking north
Early Civil War settlement in South Knoxville is important to the understanding of the area today because Union and Confederate forces utilized the natural landscape to their advantage.
(Source: Barnard)

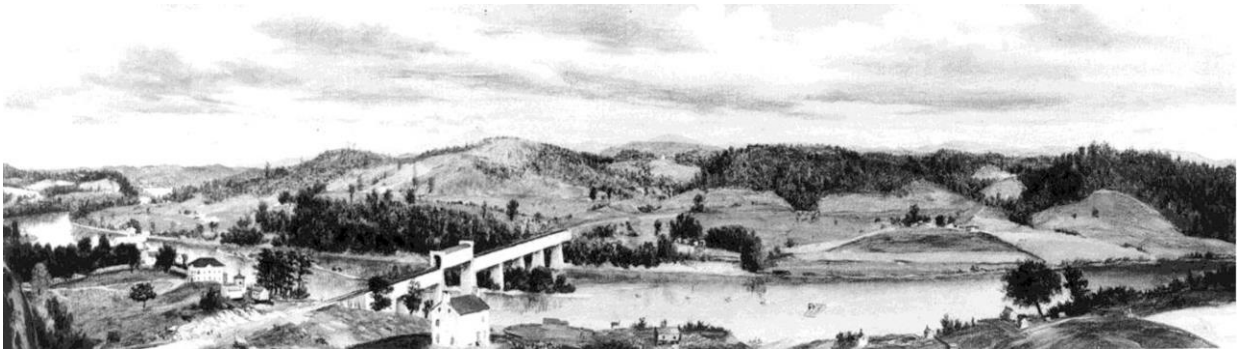


Figure 10. South Knoxville in 1874 as seen from the Old College Cupola
The rolling hills and dramatic topographical changes in South Knoxville are uninterrupted and not settled by industry, commercial development, and residential communities.
(Source: Cochran)

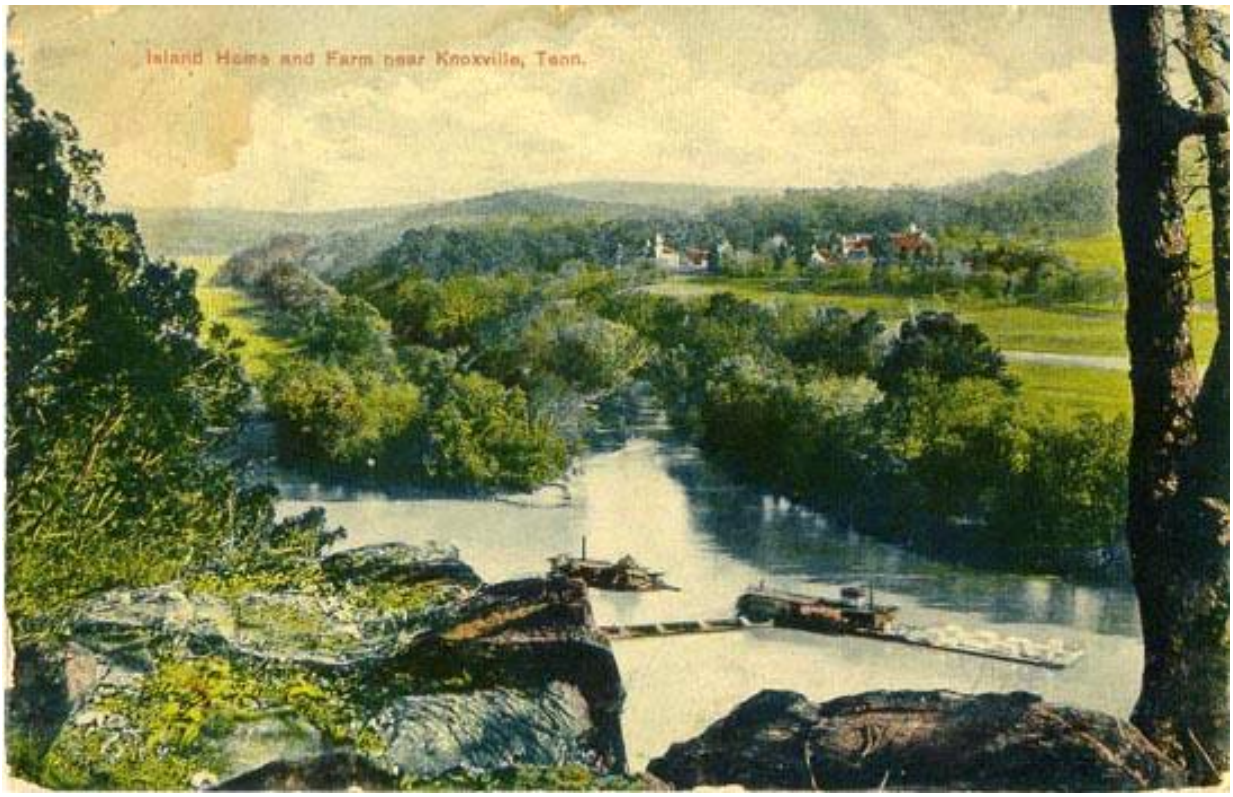


Figure 11. Island Home Farm – Prior to the Gay Street Bridge construction
Island Home, a community which was settled along the banks of the Tennessee River, was one of the first areas of South Knoxville to be developed.
(Source: "Island Home and Farm near Knoxville")

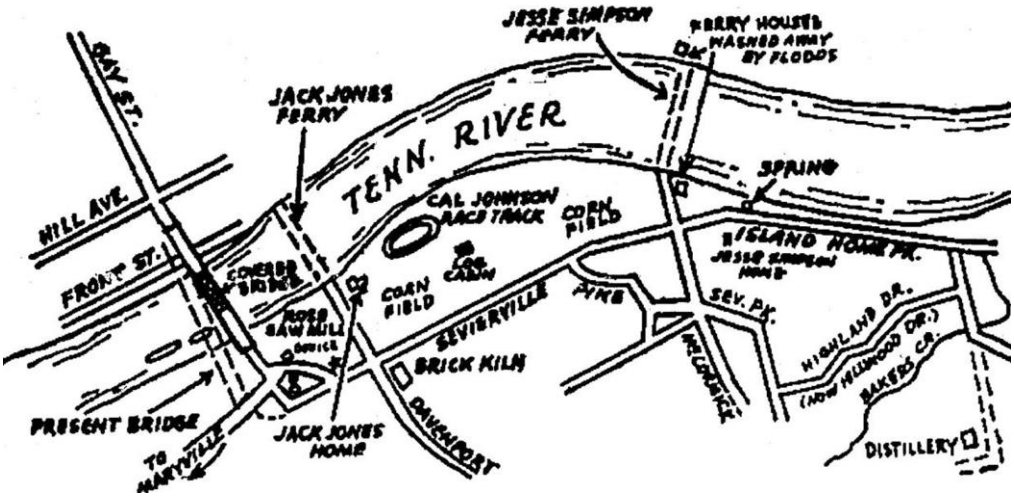


Figure 12. South of the Tennessee River drawn from memory by Dexter Simpson in 1895
At the turn of the twentieth century, South Knoxville became a place where industry began to pick up along the Tennessee River. Where industry settled had a direct influence on where neighborhoods began to develop and how the urban fabric was initially formed.
(Source: Simpson)

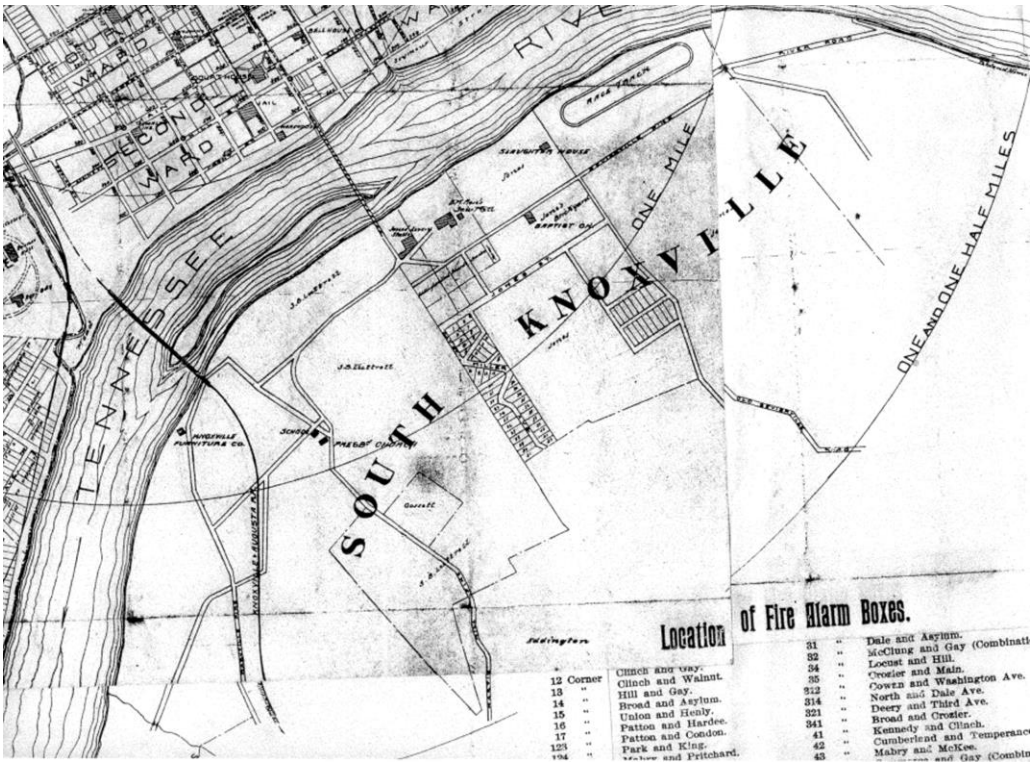


Figure 13. Initial development and growth of South Knoxville in 1897
The development and growth of South Knoxville at the turn of the twentieth century reflected the influences of downtown Knoxville. South Knoxville formed in its own unique way due to varying natural and physical conditions present.
(Source: Knox County Archives)

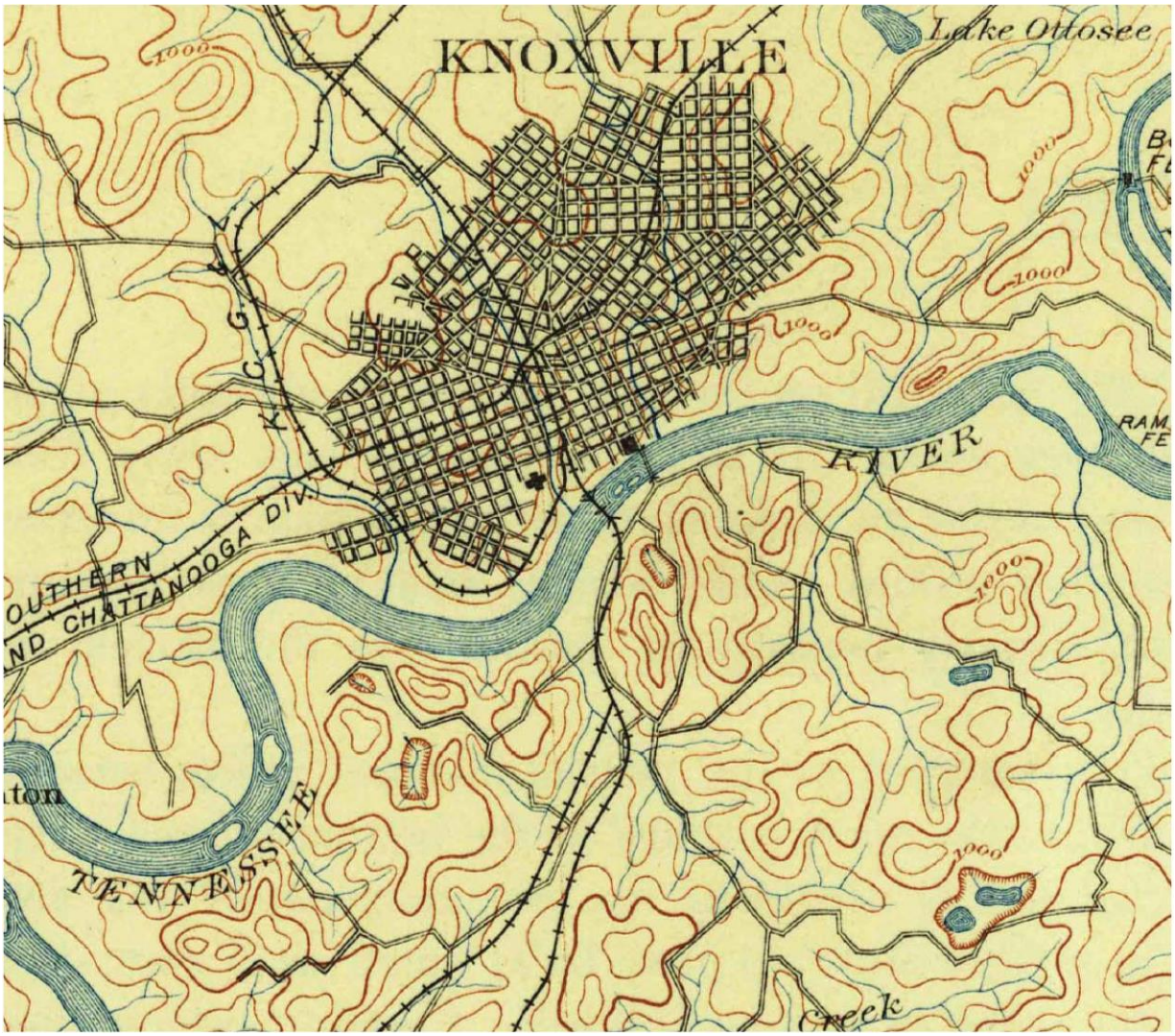


Figure 14. 1901 Historical Map
In 1901, Knoxville north of the Tennessee River was a much more developed area than South Knoxville at this point. The topography in this map shows how the river and dramatic elevations in South Knoxville made it difficult for development to happen as quickly as it did north of the river.
(Source: Hadley and Nelson)

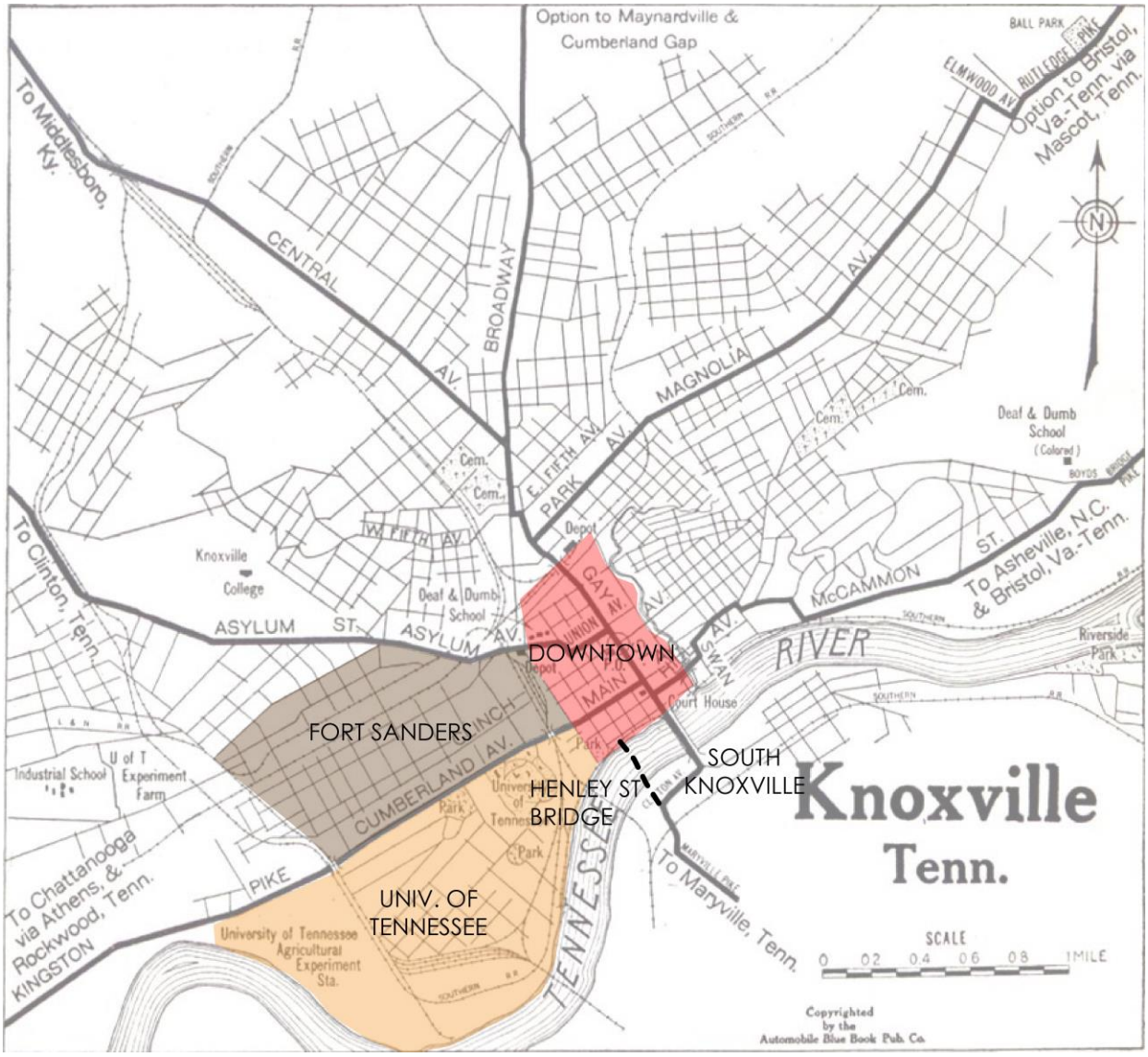


Figure 15. 1919 Historical Map
The different shades outline the development of distinct areas of Knoxville north of the Tennessee River: orange for the University of Tennessee, brown for the Fort Sanders community, once a Civil War settlement, and red for downtown Knoxville. South Knoxville, at this point in time, is undergoing a period of growth with the industry which has settled along the river and an urban grid centered on Sevier Avenue is becoming prevalent as a main thoroughfare.
(Source: "Map of Knoxville, Tennessee, USA.")

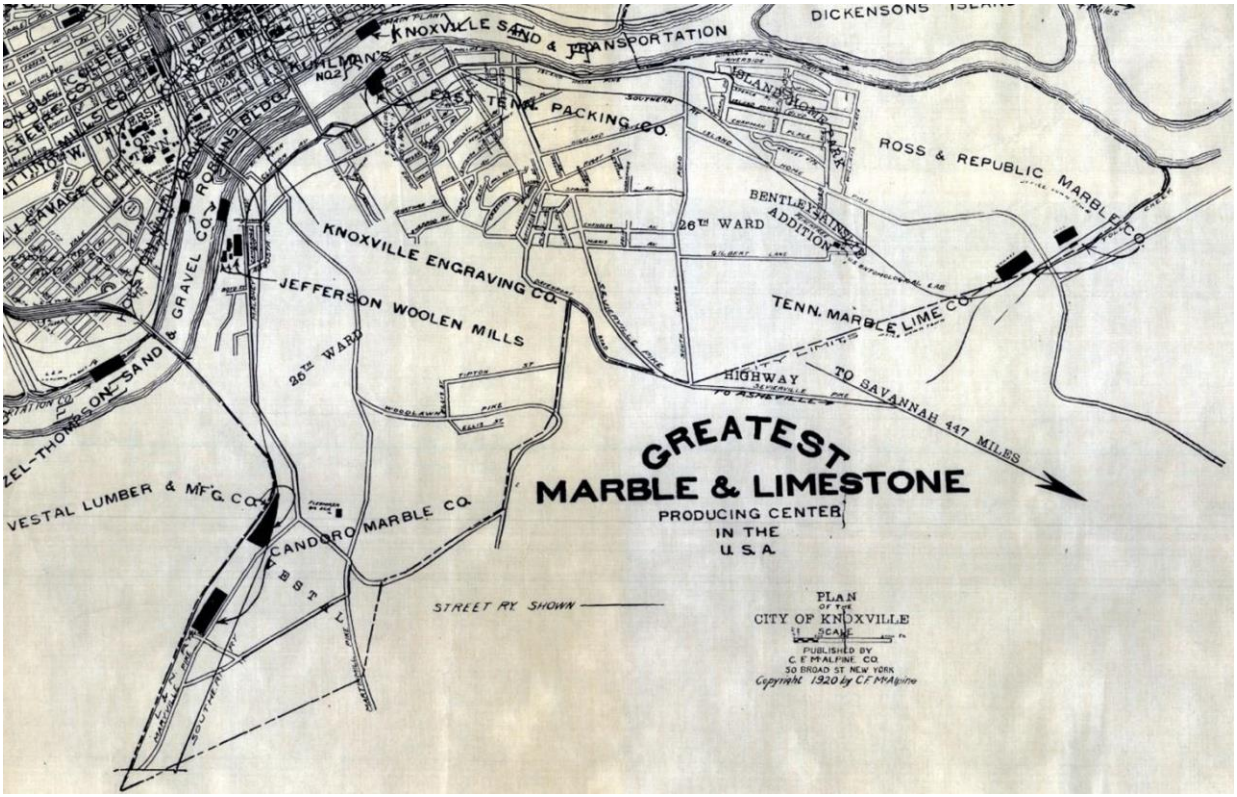


Figure 16. Industry concentrated along the Tennessee River in South Knoxville in 1920
A year later, industry in South Knoxville began to boom like many cities across the nation. Marble, which was discovered at the turn of the twentieth century, led to an influx of marble companies and other industrial mills of natural resources present in South Knoxville.
(Source: "Plan of the City of Knoxville")

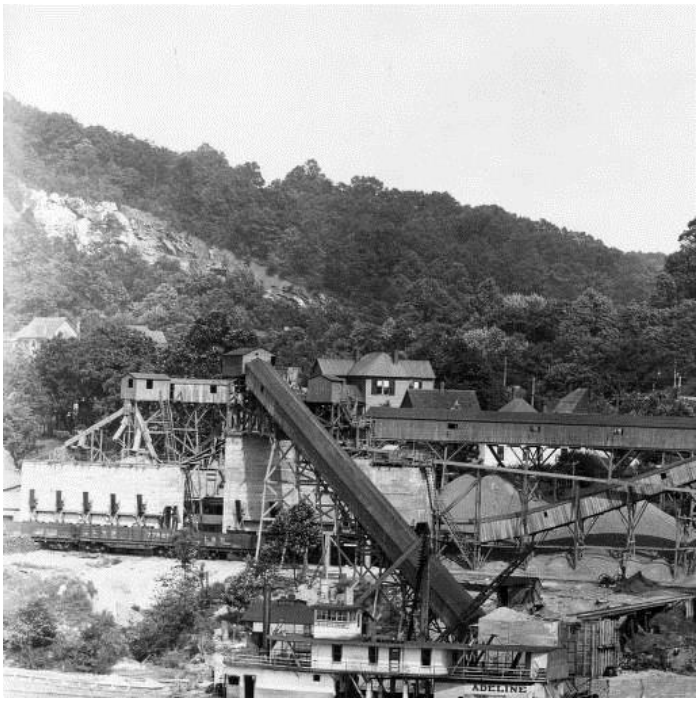


Figure 17. Kinzel Thompson Sand Company – 1921
Natural resources, sand in this instance, are being refined from the natural landscape in South Knoxville.
(Source: Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection)

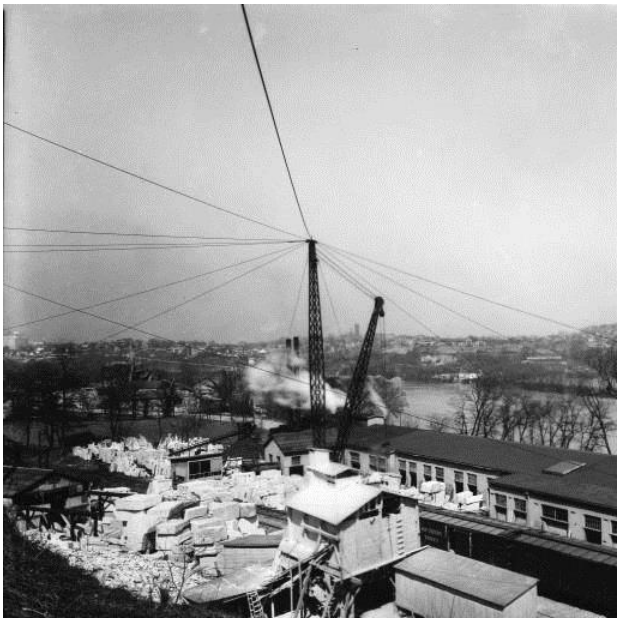


Figure 18. Gray Eagle Marble Company, South Knoxville Mill - 1920s
Marble mills, such as the one above, set up along the Tennessee River in order to improve the transportation of marble to places all across the region and nation.
(Source: Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection)

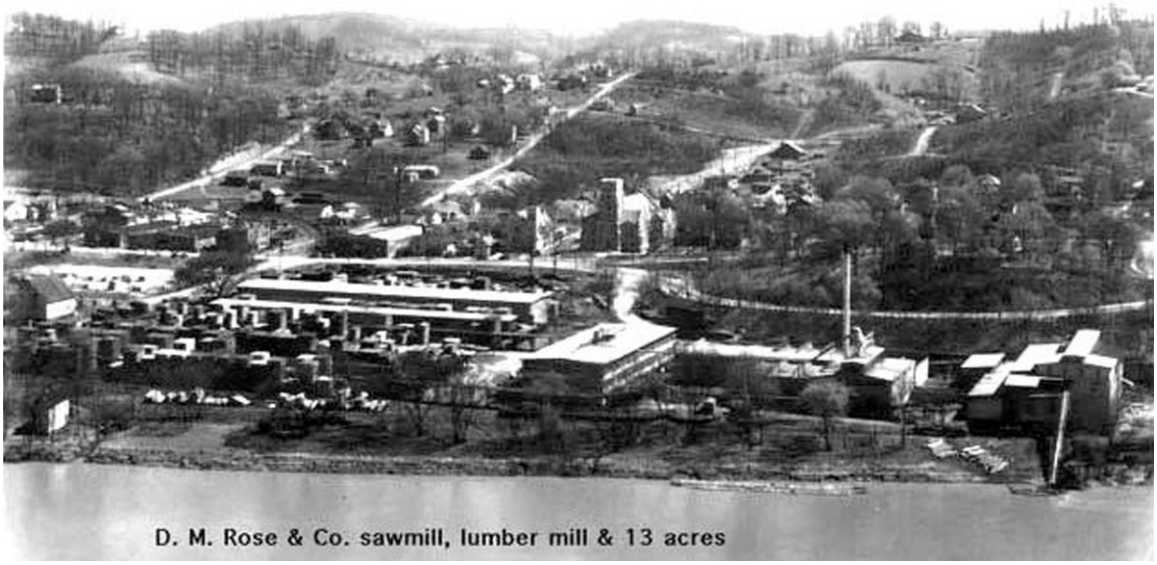


Figure 19. D.M Rose and Company – 1931
D.M. Rose and Company was one example of industrial mills set up along the river that had a vast impact on the settlement of South Knoxville. Industry along the river disconnected neighborhoods from the river.
(Source: "Knoxville Riverfront")

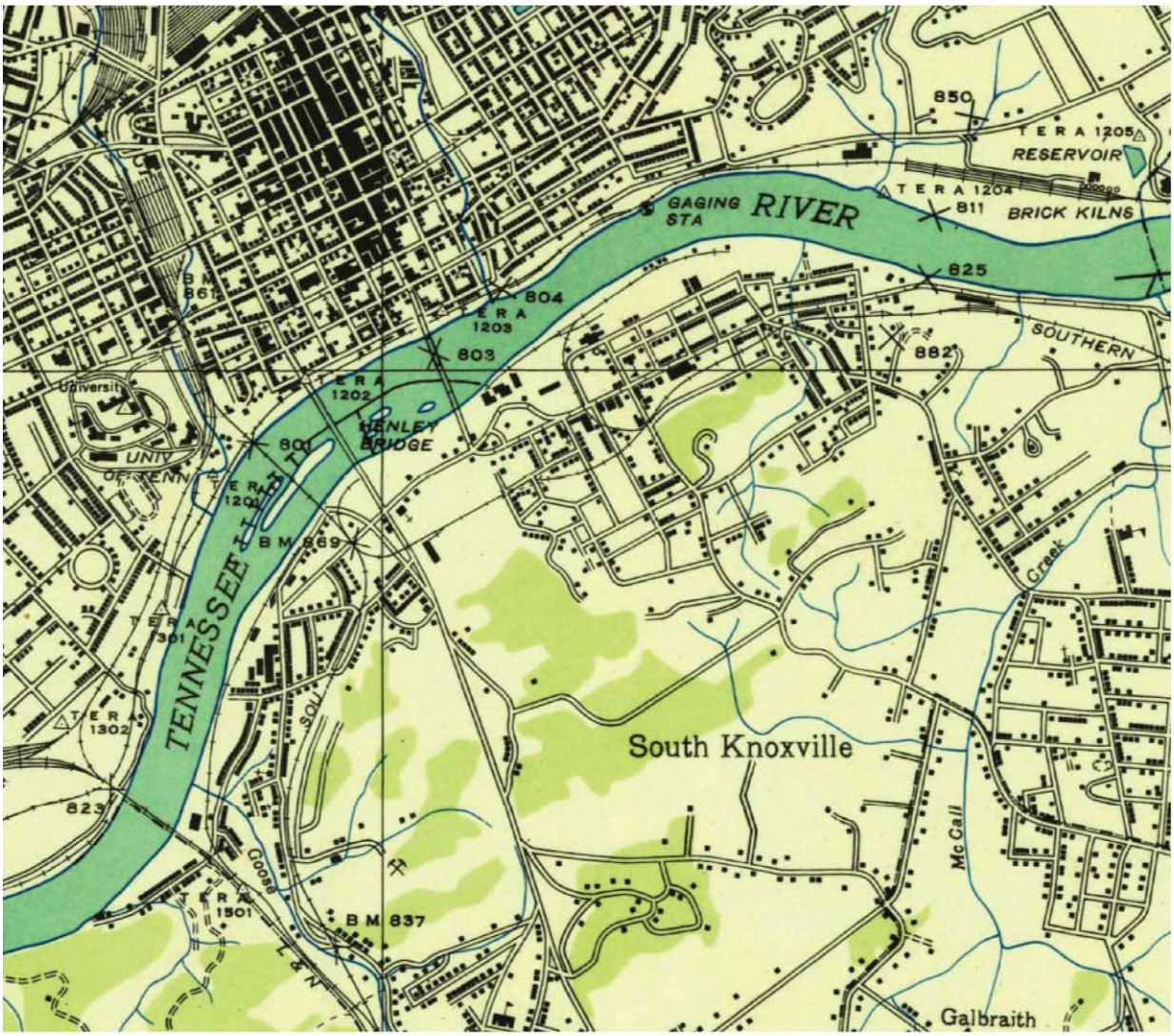


Figure 20. 1936 Historical Map
Following the construction of the Henley Street Bridge in 1931, South Knoxville began to settle in more areas than just the immediate context of the river. Commercial development built along what is today known as Chapman Highway, the Scottish Pike neighborhood, and the Old Sevier neighborhood, followed the natural form of the river and topographical changes in South Knoxville. New roads and the development of street grids were a direct result of the landscape and an important aspect to note as South Knoxville continued to grow.
(Source: Hadley and Nelson)

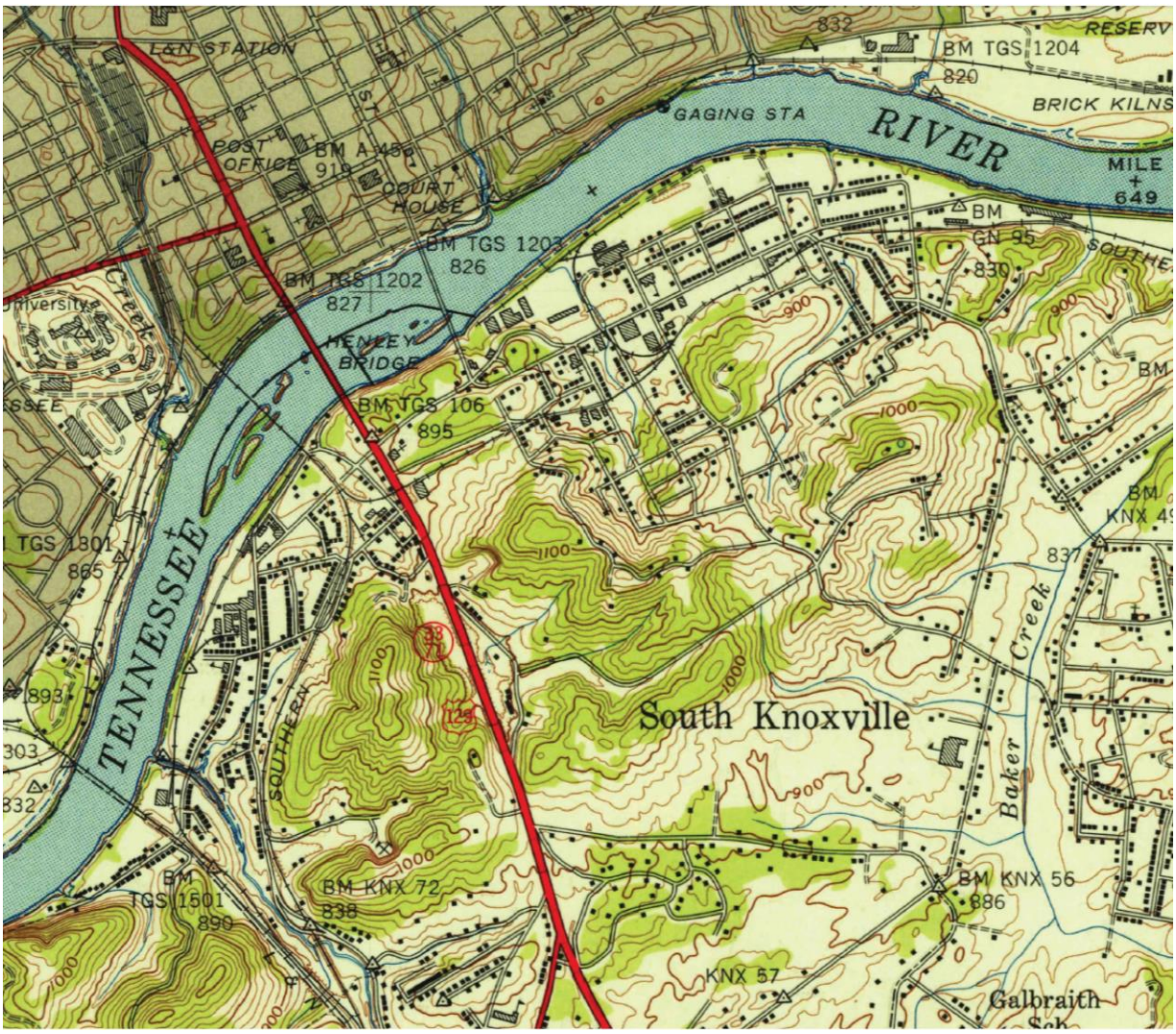


Figure 21. 1942 Historical Map
After a period of commercial development growth, some of the industrial infrastructure along the river began to fall apart. The growing neighborhoods in South Knoxville pushed further south and into the urban wilderness that the area will become known for when Ijams Nature Park is established in the 1960s. Even if residents of South Knoxville wanted to live along the river, they were pushed towards the south. This pattern of development shaped the course of future development of South Knoxville.
(Source: Hadley and Nelson)

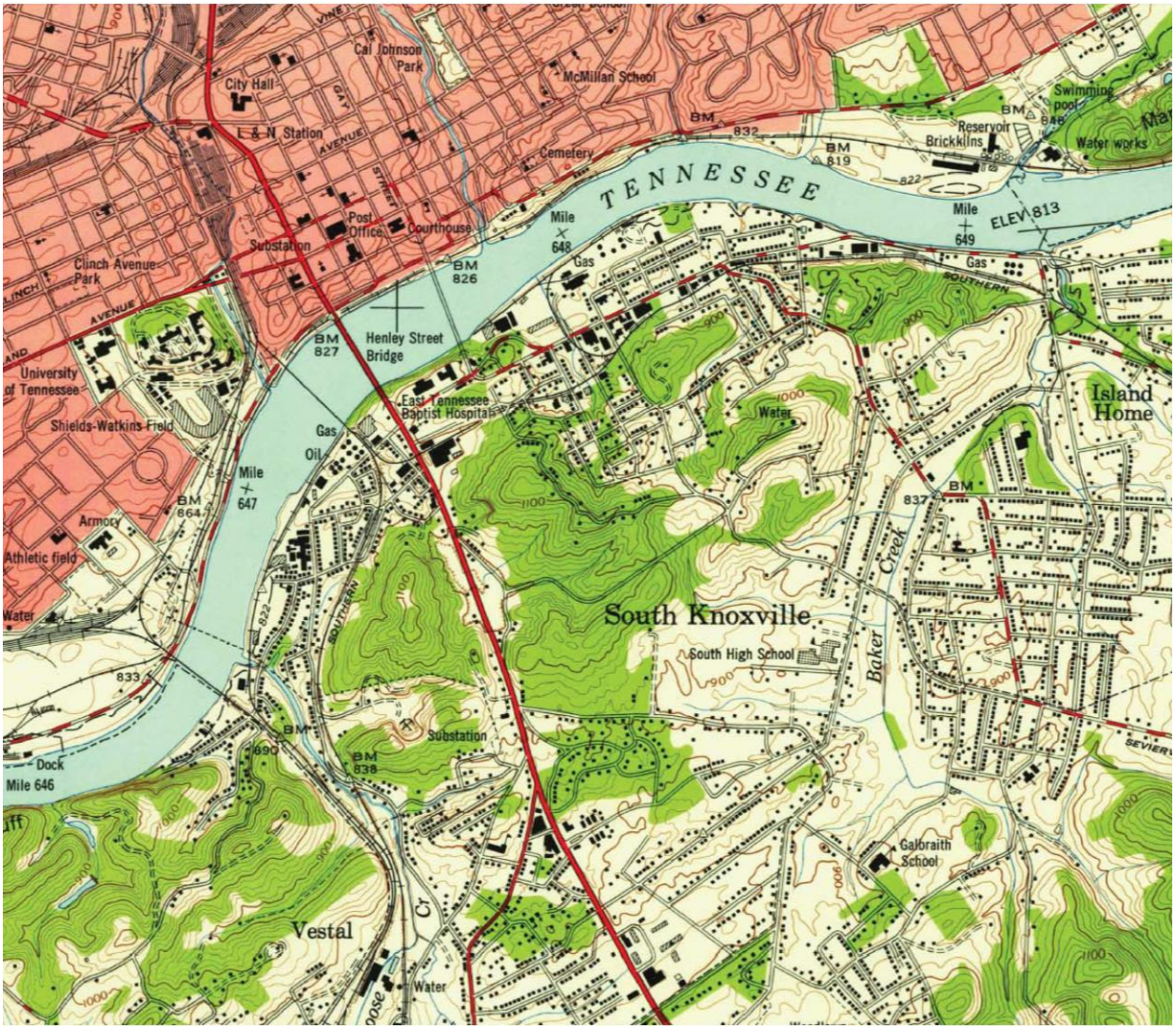


Figure 22. 1953 Historical Map
More commercial development along Chapman Highway occurred over the span of eleven years. The communities of Scottish Pike and Old Sevier continued to grow. The most notable change in the urban landscape of South Knoxville was the construction of the Baptist Hospital in 1948. Even with the beneficial element of a hospital for the city and community, the placement of the complex at the pinch point on the South Knoxville Waterfront, between a river and two large foothills, would lead to a history of neighborhood disconnectedness.
(Source: Hadley and Nelson)

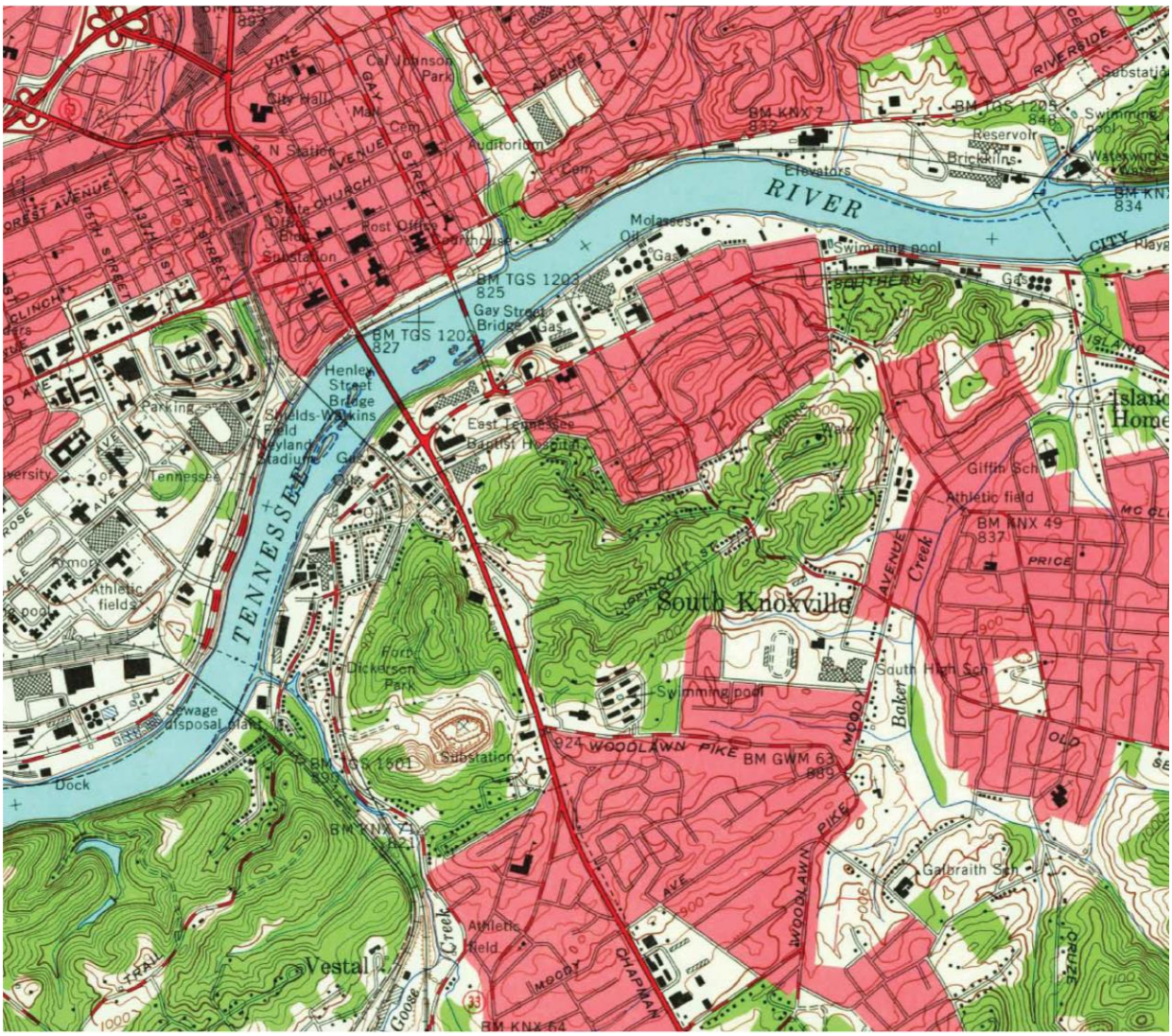


Figure 23. 1966 Historical Map
The most notable changes over thirteen years were the expansion of the network of roads, more commercial development along Chapman Highway, and newer industry such as Holston Gas setting up along the river. Topography and the river still control the growth and development of South Knoxville.
(Source: Hadley and Nelson)



Figure 24. Civil War re-enactment in S. Knoxville on Nov. 16, 1963 at Fort Dickerson Park
Fort Dickerson Park, once a prominent fort during the Civil War, remains to this day a museum of the rich history that South Knoxville has. It brings members of the community together and is an important way that they value the natural landscape and how it plays a role in the place and identity of South Knoxville.
(Source: "The 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Fort Sanders Was Marked by a Re-enactment on Nov. 16, 1963 at Fort Dickerson Park.")



Figure 25. The Knoxville Garden Club in 1965 discussing the planning of Ijams Nature Park
The natural environment and the community of South Knoxville is held in such a high regard, that the Knoxville Garden Club, along with the City of Knoxville, planned the development of Ijams Nature Park. The incredible network of trails, natural elements of the landscape, and its role as an urban wilderness play an important part in how South Knoxville changes over time.
(Source: James)

B. Inherent Qualities of South Knoxville

It is very important to define the inherent qualities of South Knoxville so that it can be understood what South Knoxville has been, what it has become, what it lacks, and the effects that any development would have on the connectivity of the place (Figure 26). South Knoxville as it is today is full of places which contribute to a strong sense of identity (Figure 27). However, there are many underlying qualities which make it difficult for any one type of solution to work in a very diverse context. The types of inherent or underlying qualities of South Knoxville include the natural form of the place, the social identity of the community, the effect of transportation networks, and the economic climate. Together, the inherent qualities present in South Knoxville define and shape the place and support the difficulties of connectedness of future development of a very unique place, in all aspects of the word.

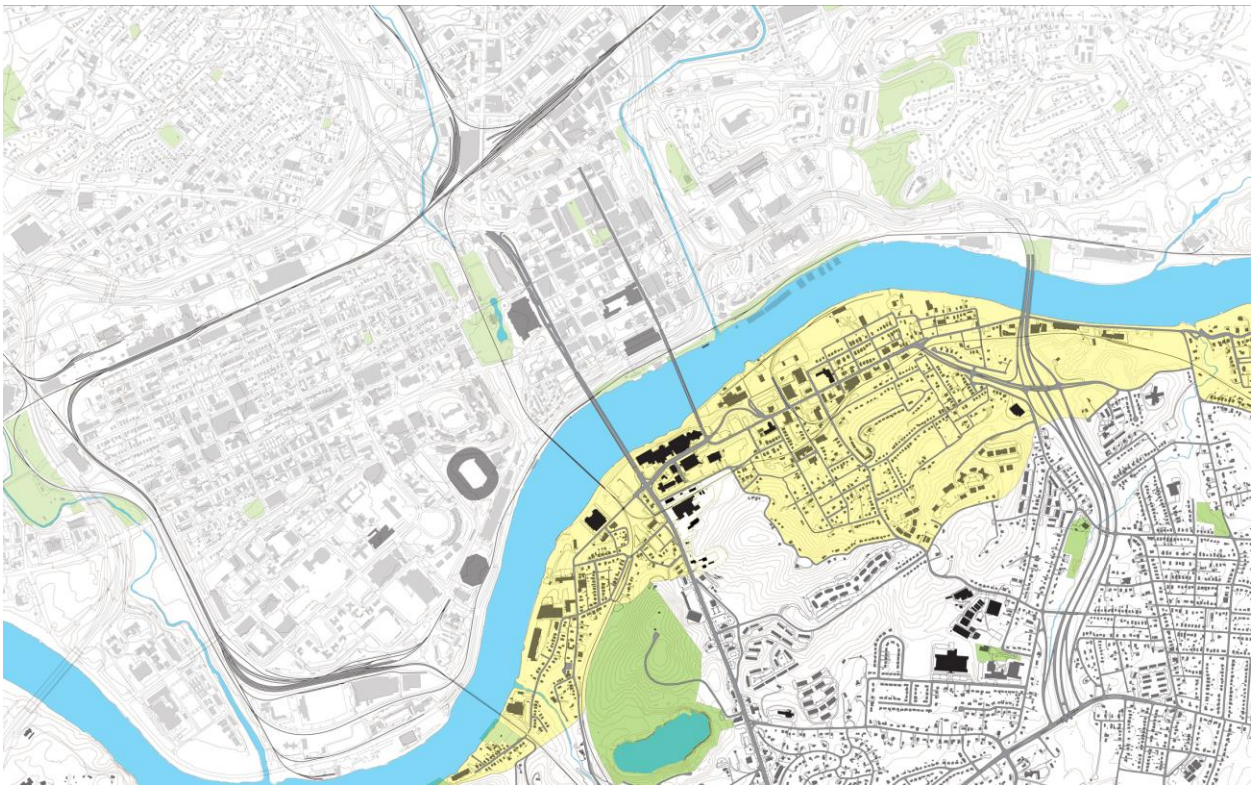


Figure 26. Existing Conditions – South Knoxville, Downtown Knoxville, and the University of TN Conditions prior to the demolition of the Baptist Hospital show dense development of the neighborhoods in South Knoxville. Because of the industrial and commercial development history, the South Knoxville Waterfront has been unevenly dividing place and identity. (Source: Author)

The most defining characteristic of South Knoxville is the vast impact that the topography and natural landforms have on the place. From the water's edge at the Tennessee River to the highest point in South Knoxville is roughly three hundred and fifty feet. The unique natural quality of the place offers great views to and from South Knoxville but the parallel nature of the Tennessee River and foothills pinch the inhabitable space into a narrow, linear form that makes it difficult to establish center. With the South Waterfront extents stretching close to three miles, bounded by a river and hillsides, it is very important to create place which responds to far more than the building alone. It becomes critical that streets, public space, and neighborhoods use the natural form of the landscape to reinforce a sense of place and identity. Though a midpoint may be found, it is hard to find center in such a unique condition.

A second defining characteristic of South Knoxville is the social identity of its residents. In order to effectively create place in South Knoxville, development must first and foremost respond to the blue collar, working class residents which inhabit the rich communities in South Knoxville. South Knoxville is also home to many college students and other young professionals who are important to the growth and vitality of the community. However, the sense of place and identity in South Knoxville was built upon the social majority which settled, have lived, and continue to make it the place it is today.

The presence of a major highway in South Knoxville and two bridges perpendicular to the waterfront have had a major impact on the connectivity of the place. While the Gay Street Bridge is a great way for pedestrians and bikers alike to cross safely from South Knoxville to downtown, the Henley Street Bridge and Chapman Highway have a much different effect on the quality of place in South Knoxville. While the two neighborhoods of Old Sevier and Scottish Pike function relatively well from a street and city block standpoint, the whole connectivity of the waterfront region falls apart at the Mid River section. Chapman Highway severs communities, is

a place designed for the car, and serves mainly as a thoroughfare to reach the Great Smoky Mountains. In order for the South Knoxville Waterfront to function properly and become a developed place, with a strong sense of identity, transportation networks must be thoughtfully laid out so that a variety of users, scales, and development can coexist.

Lastly, one of the most important inherent qualities of South Knoxville is the economic climate. It is important to understand what exists in South Knoxville and what the area could support in redevelopment. South Knoxville has had a history of being a blue collar and working class community and it relatively remains that way today. This investigation is not asserting that redevelopment in South Knoxville shouldn't bring more jobs and a stable economy to the area. Redevelopment should not exploit the South Waterfront for a purely economic gain, with no respect for the nature of and the identity of the community. It should allow for what the community can support, with room for growth, and the economic qualities of South Knoxville should always represent connectivity. As it currently stands, the vast amount of big box retail, fast food restaurants, and abandoned stores on Chapman Highway are not part of that definition. For redevelopment in South Knoxville to be an economic asset to the community, city, and region, a question of a sense of place and community identity should always be asked.



Figure 27. Place Map of Contemporary South Knoxville
Highlighted areas show the important natural, built, and communal aspects of South Knoxville and how they are important to its definition of place and identity.
(Source: "Bing Maps" - Author manipulated)

C. Placeness in Contemporary South Knoxville

Placeness in contemporary South Knoxville can be categorized into three main categories: the natural environment, the built environment, and community. Each category encompasses a range of aspects such as local character, intimacy, walkability, convenience, materiality, and nature; the list goes on and on. The natural environment in South Knoxville includes the nearly three hundred and fifty feet of elevation change from the Tennessee River all the way to the tall ridges to the south which are home to a variety of parks, greenways, bodies of water, and natural landforms. The built environment in South Knoxville includes but is not limited to those which stand on their own and are important to the very essence of place. The built environment in South Knoxville includes places such as churches, schools, community buildings, signs, and sculptures, buildings of historical significance and a very rich housing stock and typology. Lastly, communal places are the most important aspect of South Knoxville. With vibrant neighborhoods including "main streets" and areas along the South Knoxville Waterfront, South Knoxville has places just as important to the community and city, similar to Market Square and Gay Street, among many others. It is through the natural environment, built environment, and communal aspects of place in contemporary South Knoxville that this study will uncover what potential the area has to preserve, uncover, highlight, and create great spaces.

The natural environment is the greatest asset that South Knoxville, as well as the city and region, have to offer, and they are why people time and time again return to South Knoxville (Figure 28-33). With nearly three hundred and fifty feet of elevation change, access to the Tennessee River, numerous parks, miles of greenways, Ijams Nature Center, and unforgettable vistas, South Knoxville is anything short of variety. In order to maintain the identity of South Knoxville, any development to South Knoxville must respect and connect to the vast natural network present.



Figure 28. Hikers at Fort Dickerson Park overlooking the quarry
The natural environment and qualities of Fort Dickerson Park bring the community together for a shared activity.
(Source: "Explore Our Urban Wilderness")



Figure 29. Children fishing at Ijams Nature Center in South Knoxville near the TN River
The presence of built places in our natural environment allow the community to engage in outdoor activities such as fishing.
(Source: "Ijams Nature Center." *Outdoor Knoxville)*

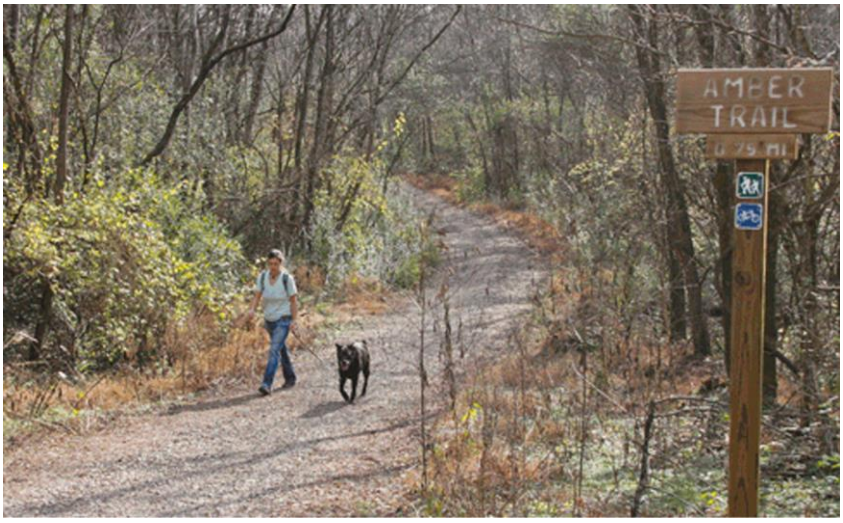


Figure 30. Hiker on a South Knoxville greenway trail
The urban wilderness and the network of trails play a part in the lifestyles of Knoxville residents.
(Source: "Ijams Nature Center." *Outdoor Knoxville)*



Figure 31. Downtown Knoxville as seen from City View Riverwalk in South Knoxville
The first product of redevelopment in South Knoxville connects residents to the river.
(Source: "Gallery." *CityView at Riverwalk*)



Figure 32. Downtown Knoxville as seen from Sevier Avenue in South Knoxville
Vistas to and from South Knoxville play an important part in the place and identity of the area.
(Source: Author)

The built environment is important to the identity of what makes South Knoxville a great place because there are tangible pieces of evidence set in stone. The built environment, full of landmarks, businesses, and industrial relics, provide evidence of the cultural, social, and economic continuum of the community. They are constant reminders, wayfinding elements, and places to which people gravitate towards. The built environment creates memories and tell a story of human inhabitation specific to the area. Some of the most important constructed places in South Knoxville include the JFG sign, the Kerbela Shriner's Temple, churches, schools, the historical Kern's Bakery, and the Gay Street Bridge (Figure 34-39). All of these examples are important locations in South Knoxville which help shape the organization of the area, and they have the potential to transform the South Knoxville Waterfront and its surrounding areas into an area full of life. If any built constructs are inserted into the fabric of South Knoxville and the waterfront proximity, they should respect what is already there, should be able to stand on their own, and should add to the overall quality of life.

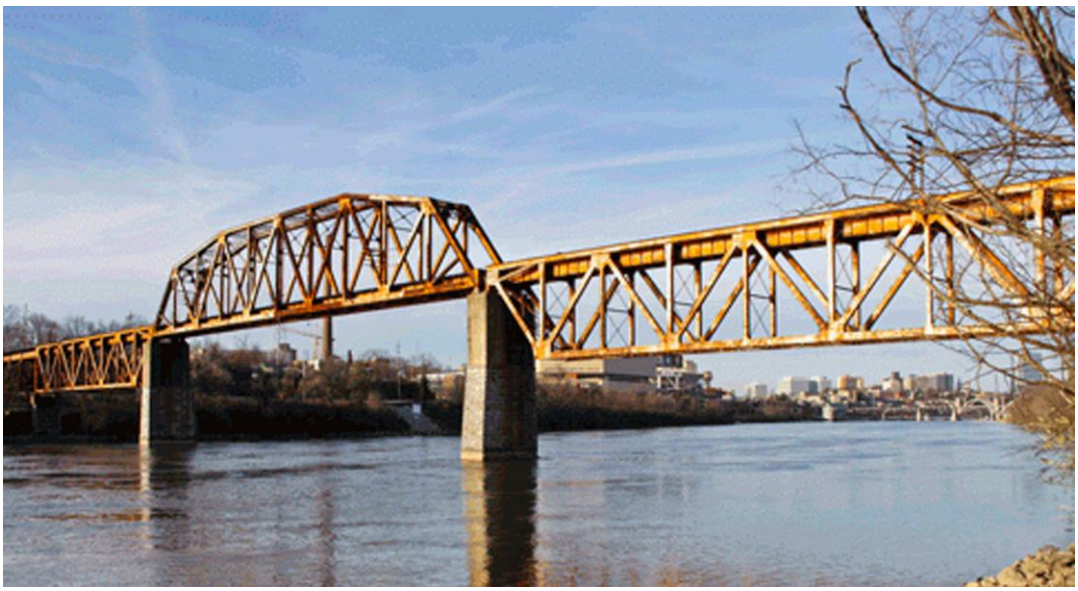


Figure 33. Downtown Knoxville as seen from Scottish Pike Park in South Knoxville
Parks such as Scottish Pike Park are important to the identity of the South Knoxville Waterfront. They provide a way for residents to connect with the topographical landscape and in this case the Tennessee River. Parks are also an important part of every community as they bring people together.
(Source: "Scottish Pike Park." *Outdoor Knoxville*)



Figure 34. JFG Coffee Sign in South Knoxville
The JFG coffee sign in South Knoxville has been an iconic symbol in Knoxville since midway through the twentieth century ("JFG sign: Restored to Glory"). The JFG Coffee Company, founded in 1882 by James Franklin Goodson, was a leading roaster and marketer of ground coffee, peanut butter, tea, and mayonnaise ("JFG Coffee Company Building"). In its current resting place, the sign serves as an iconic landmark, wayfinding element, and cultural staple important to the continuum of the community.
(Source: Author)



Figure 35. Kerbela Shriner's Temple in South Knoxville
The Kerbela Shriner's Temple in South Knoxville is home to the local chapter of the Shriners International organization. This fraternal organization of men is most known for their work in the community, especially with children's hospitals ("Who are the Shriners?'). They are an important part of the community and the modern building of which they occupy is an important landmark in the South Knoxville fabric.
(Source: Author)



Figure 36. Kern's Bakery postcard – 1930s
Kerns Bakery, which moved to South Knoxville along Chapman Highway after the Henley Street Bridge was built, became an iconic landmark in the community and was the preferred choice of bread of South Knoxville residents and beyond ("Knox Heritage Fragile Fifteen").
(Source: "Kern's Bakery, Knoxville, Tenn." *The Tichnor Brothers Collection*)

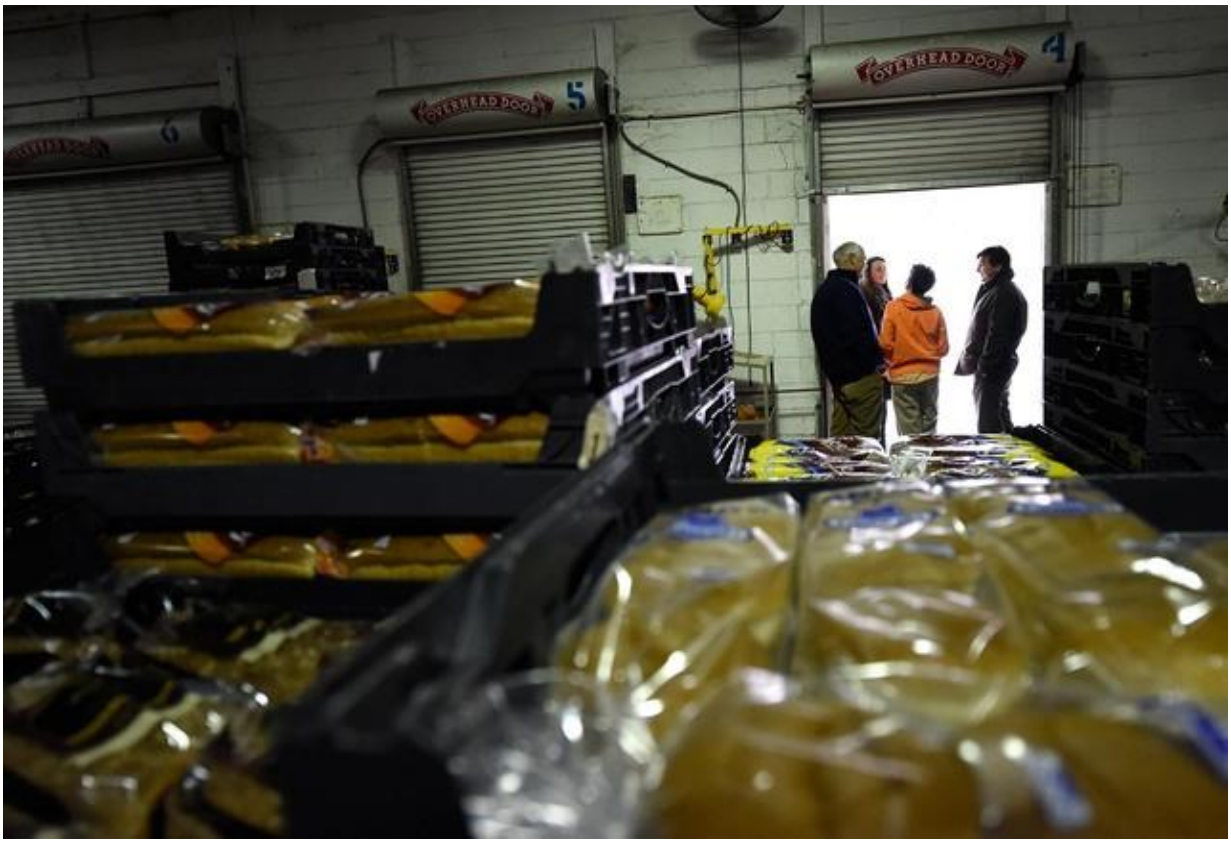


Figure 37. Dewhirst Properties and local investors discussing Kern's Bakery redevelopment
For decades the Kerns Bakery brand has diminished from South Knoxville, but the historical significance of the building has been eyed by developers for some time. Dewhirst Properties, a developer known for adaptive reuses of historical buildings, purchased the property in 2015 and plans to convert the building into a restaurant, entertainment, or community venue. "We've been craving doing something really interesting in South Knoxville for a while," Dewhirst said. "South Knoxville needs it, it's deserving of it and it's ready for it."
(Source: Boehkne)



Figure 38. South Knoxville Elementary School
South Knoxville Elementary School is just one example of the number of schools in South Knoxville which are important to the sense of community of the area. The schools in South Knoxville are places not just where children of South Knoxville attend school, but they are also important community landmarks that bring people together.
(Source: Author)



Figure 39. 2014 Beat the Winter Blues Wine and Cheese Party at Stanley's Greenhouse
Stanley's Greenhouse is not just a place upon which South Knoxville residents and beyond get their planting needs, but it is also an important venue in the community for parties, fundraisers, and other charitable events.
(Source: "Ronald McDonald House of Knoxville")

The most important aspect of place and identity in South Knoxville is community. South Knoxville is comprised of rich confluences of neighborhoods which include the Scottish Pike, Old Sevier, and Island Home neighborhoods along the waterfront and several other small neighborhoods towards the south (Figure 40-47). Each neighborhood is appropriately scaled, has a distinct identity, and a rich history, and is an important asset to South Knoxville as a whole. Development to South Knoxville as a whole and the neighborhoods along the waterfront should not lose sight of what makes those neighborhoods such great places to live. Community is prevalent in both the natural and built environment and together these three aspects of placeness in South Knoxville outline the rich aspects of its identity. Anything to compromise that rather than highlight them will alter the unique character of South Knoxville and the potential it has for future growth and development.



Figure 40. Annual Vestival fundraiser at Candoro Marble Company in South Knoxville
The Candoro Marble Company's buildings, designed by Knoxville architect Charles Barber, and the grounds which surround it serve as a unique neighborhood icon in the South Knoxville fabric. Many weddings are hosted here and each year a fundraising event called Vestival brings the whole community together. Vestival is a time of year where South Knoxvillians gather together to celebrate how South Knoxville has shaped itself. Local residents convene at the Candoro Marble Company to acknowledge the unique pride of South Knoxville and to respect the historic landmark they have in their community. The unique main building also acts as a community center for the Vestal neighborhood in South Knoxville.
(Source: "History" Candoro Marble)



Figure 41. Scottish Pike neighborhood
The Scottish Pike neighborhood in South Knoxville is pinched by a hillside where Fort Dickerson lies and the Tennessee River. This small neighborhood is characterized by single family housing along Blount Avenue and abandoned industry along the water's edge.
(Source: "Bing Maps" - Author manipulated)



Figure 42. Scottish Pike Park
Scottish Pike Park is one example of the type of public spaces that must remain or be present in South Knoxville. They are important in bringing people together, stitching the urban fabric together, and maintaining a sense of place and identity.
(Source: "Scottish Pike Park." *Outdoor Knoxville*)



Figure 43. Old Sevier neighborhood
Old Sevier, one of the oldest neighborhoods in South Knoxville, is a crucial part of South Knoxville's identity. At one time it was a thriving main street and remnants of that character still are present today. In order for South Knoxville to grow and develop, the sense of place and identity in the Old Sevier neighborhood must be maintained.
(Source: "Bing Maps" - Author manipulated)



Figure 44. Old Sevier neighborhood sign on Sevier Avenue
Simple clues of neighborhood character are essential to the identity of place.
(Source: Author)



Figure 45. Looking east to Sevier Avenue from the JFG coffee sign
Sevier Avenue, once a thriving main street had many pieces that made it a great street: sidewalks, stoplights, a church, a school, businesses, proximity to the river, a rail line nearby, and so on. However, industry such as Holston Gas, on the left, and a number of abandoned buildings at Sevier Avenue are restricting the potential that this great street has.
(Source: Author)



Figure 46. Island Home neighborhood
The Island Home Park neighborhood, initially set up as a streetcar suburb in the early 1900s, is home to most of the original houses and streetscapes. There is a large concentration of bungalow and craftsman style architecture and Island Home Park remains a desirable place to live today with its proximity to the river, access to downtown, and rich communal feel.
(Source: "Bing Maps" - Author manipulated)



Figure 47. Island Home Boulevard residence
In 1994, a majority of the properties in Island Home were placed on the National Register of Historic Places as the Island Home Park Historic District. Island Home is one of the most active neighborhood associations in Knoxville. They plan many important community events that bring people together for shared activities in the South Knoxville landscape.
(Source: Foster-Boline)

D. The East Tennessee Baptist Hospital

The East Tennessee Baptist Hospital was completed in 1948 and was built as a nine story, two hundred and fifty foot edifice, along the Tennessee River with over two hundred patient rooms, an office complex, and a nursing school (Figure 48-51). At the time of construction, it was the largest project carried out in Knoxville in decades and cost over two million dollars which in today's world would be over twenty million dollars. Nearly one hundred million dollars, made it possible for the Baptist Hospital to complete several additions including a new hospital wing, doubling the capacity of patients which it could serve, in 1968, and a medical office complex in 1992 (Lee). The East Tennessee Baptist Hospital served as a prime location between the Henley Street and Gay Street bridges and is home to a lifetime of memories for many Knoxville residents. It was at the turn of the twenty-first century when the Baptist Hospital, after financial struggles, began to diminish as an integral part of the community, closing its doors in 2008 after a sixty year life.

Even when the Baptist Hospital was in use, it was a physical barrier that was detrimental to the connectivity of the neighborhoods in South Knoxville. Because of Chapman Highway, the rolling hills in the area, and the Tennessee River, this narrow piece of land between two bridges is relatively the only element which can formally connect the South Waterfront as a whole. The Baptist Hospital, like many other hospitals of its time, was built as a towering complex of buildings dedicated to one purpose. With the complex having a history of catering to the car, architecture turning its back to the surrounding context, and situated on the most prime location in South Knoxville, it set up South Knoxville to have a future of disconnected neighborhoods and difficulty of redevelopment and growth (Figure 52).



Figure 48. East Tennessee Baptist Hospital Site as seen from the Gay Street Bridge – 1940s
In the mid 1940s, the large plot of land in South Knoxville between the Gay Street and Henley Street Bridges began to gain attention. There was a need for another hospital in Knoxville and the Baptist community rallied behind that idea. "They said they felt like if they could raise a million dollars you could build anything and so they were able to do that."
(Source: Wilhoit)



Figure 49. East Tennessee Baptist Hospital Site in the early 1940's
For the tenth anniversary of the opening of the Baptist Hospital, a brochure was published with news about the services Baptist Hospital provides, stories about patients, and how the complex came to be. The arrow above points to the first complex of buildings which would be built: a medical center, professional building, and the nurse's home.
(Source: "East Tennessee Baptist Hospital, 1958")

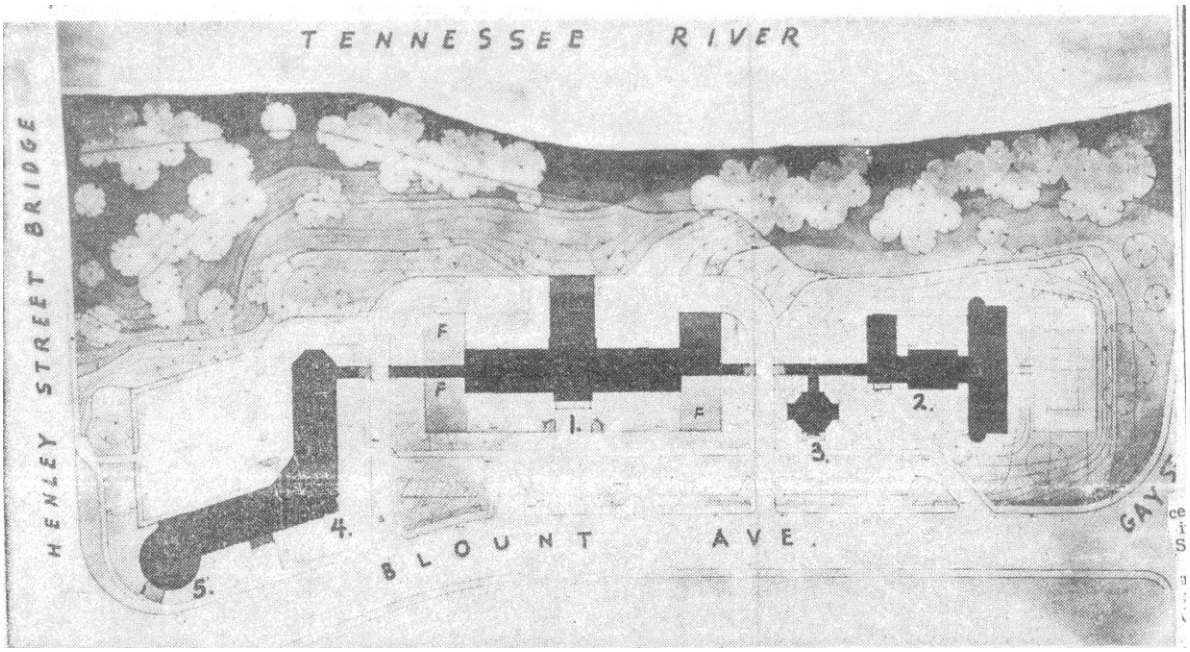


Figure 50. East Tennessee Baptist Hospital site plan by architect James R. Edmunds – 1945
This plot plan of the East Tennessee Baptist Hospital gave a comprehensive picture of how the different concrete blocks of buildings would take form on the most prominent piece of land in South Knoxville.
(Source: "Baptist Hospital Now Envisioned as 9-Story $2,000,000 Edifice")

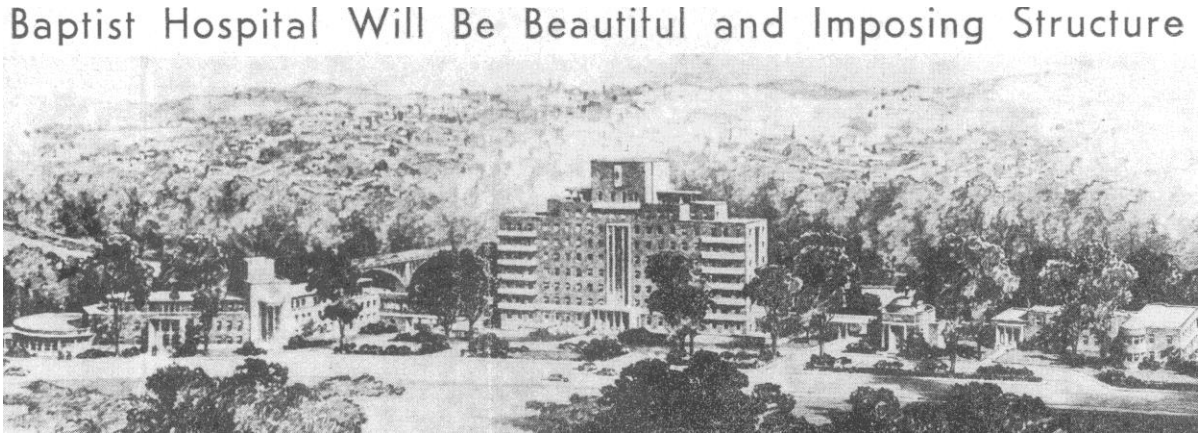


Figure 51. East Tennessee Baptist Hospital sketch by architect James R. Edmunds – 1945
In 1945, the architect of the Baptist Hospital, James R. Edmunds, envisioned the complex as a nine-story beautiful and imposing structure erected at Blount Avenue overlooking the Tennessee River. Though it was received in high regard at the time, little did they know that the Baptist Hospital complex would have a negative impact on the growth of South Knoxville, despite all the lives that were helped during its use.
(Source: "Baptist Hospital Will Be Beautiful and Imposing Structure")



Figure 52. East Tennessee Baptist Hospital in 1965
The dominance of the Baptist Hospital over the Tennessee River and the importance put on the car is prevalent here. The Baptist Hospital complex uses such a large expanse of land which could otherwise be designed as a public space or other form which would help with neighborhood connectivity in South Knoxville.
(Source: *Special Collections*. University of Tennessee Libraries, Digital Library Initiatives)

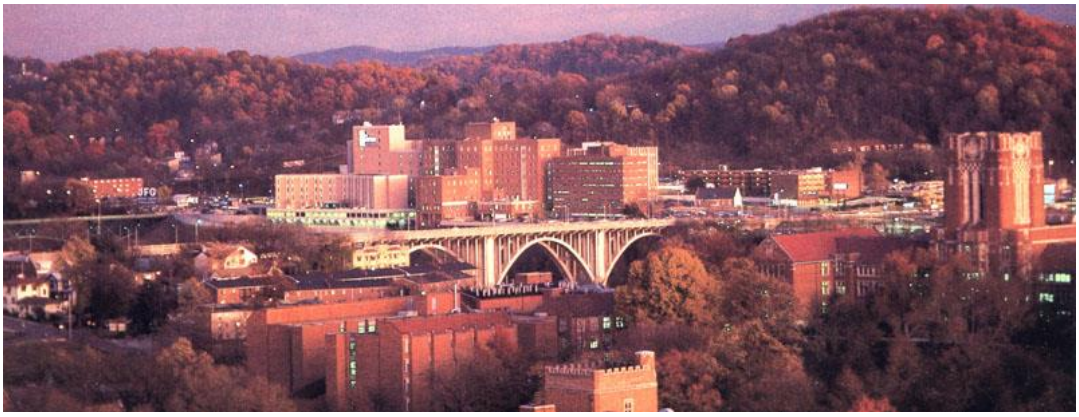


Figure 53. East Tennessee Baptist Hospital in 1992 from the University of Tennessee
The Baptist Hospital complex and its concrete form dominate the topographical landscape of South Knoxville.
(Source: Heatherly)



Figure 54. Baptist Hospital as seen from Main Avenue Parking Garage
The imposing nature of the Baptist Hospital complex blocks the rich views to the hillsides in South Knoxville and down Chapman Highway.
(Source: Author)



Figure 55. Baptist Hospital as seen from Volunteer Landing
All that is seen from Volunteer Landing is the Baptist Hospital and nothing else.
(Source: Author)



Figure 56. Baptist Hospital as seen from hospital parking garage
The Baptist Hospital complex from this perspective, blocks very important and precious views to and from South Knoxville. The scale, abandoned nature of the buildings, and its location lead to neighborhood disconnectedness which detract from a sense of place and identity.
(Source: Author)

As an architectural form and piece of the urban fabric, the abandoned hospital site did not have the qualities of a structure fit for reuse. The existing complex of buildings was a bold statement in an otherwise small town atmosphere. Sevier Avenue and Blount Avenue, which run parallel to the Tennessee River, are the main axes upon which development occurs; the old hospital site created a break in that continuity. The old hospital blocked the views from downtown towards the urban wilderness in South Knoxville and began a trend of underutilized spaces down Chapman Highway (Figure 53-57). Even if the hospital were renovated into a mixed use hub as it is currently underway to become, the context of which it is a part wouldn't be enough to make it a successful addition to the community. The hospital, currently being demolished, needs to be torn down in its entirety, and something which connects the rich confluence of neighborhoods in South Knoxville needs to take its place. As a physical form, the Baptist Hospital was a barrier rather than a connector and for that reason, the demolition of the complex was necessary, and something to the same scale should not take its place.



Figure 57. Baptist Hospital as seen from the Sunsphere
Even with a more elevated perspective, the Baptist Hospital acts as a visual barrier to the landscape of South Knoxville, and prohibits neighborhood growth and connectedness.
(Source: Author)

The East Tennessee Baptist Hospital stood vacant until the latter half of 2014 as plans for the South Knoxville Waterfront Redevelopment started to take shape. For almost a year now, the former hospital complex has been in the process of demolition (Figure 58-60). While this area seems like a developer's dream, it could also become a placeless void in a rich part of Knoxville. The Baptist Hospital, while once an important part of the city, has acted as a visual barrier to the natural beauty of South Knoxville. It has been a roadblock severing the existing communities along the South Waterfront and a place which has to the potential to become a central hub for South Knoxville and the city as a whole. The monstrosity of a building is out of scale for its time, and anything that resembles it in form would only take away from the identity of the area. Any redevelopment to be done on the former East Tennessee Baptist Hospital site should maintain unobstructed vistas to and from South Knoxville, knit the communities of the area together, and stay clear of becoming a generic development that could be part of any city.



Figure 58. Baptist Hospital Demolition – January 2015
At the early part of 2015 demolition began with the tearing down of the main building of the Baptist Hospital complex. In the distance, vistas to downtown Knoxville from Sevier Avenue are becoming visible.
(Source: Harrington)



Figure 59. Baptist Hospital Demolition – April 2015
From the Main Avenue Parking Garage, in April of 2015, the hillsides of South Knoxville became more and more apparent. With the complex nearing the end of demolition, the future growth and development of South Knoxville looks brighter. This barrier of neighborhood connectivity, once fully demolished, will serve much more than a singular purpose but rather a multi-use hub that will be integral to the sense of place and identity in South Knoxville.
(Source: Author)



Figure 60. Existing Baptist Hospital Superimposed on Demolition
This diagram uses a base image of the current state of demolition with an overlay of what buildings used to be within the Baptist Hospital complex. As a whole, it provides a clear understanding of why the topographical landscape and river play such an important role for a sense of place and identity in South Knoxville.
(Source: Author)

CHAPTER IV
THE FUTURE OF THE SOUTH KNOXVILLE WATERFRONT

A. Vision Plan

The South Waterfront Vision Plan is an over twenty year effort that began in 2006, with public involvement, to improve the long neglected and underutilized South Knoxville Waterfront (Figure 61-62). South Knoxville, which is just across the Tennessee River from downtown Knoxville, is intended, through the Vision Plan, to become a citywide asset, destination, and attraction (Knoxville South Waterfront: Vision Plan 2i). By creating a flexible framework, characterized by public transportation, market driven redevelopment, and open space improvements, the Vision Plan claims it will ensure the growth and longevity of South Knoxville. The Vision Plan as a whole responds to the current and future residents, current and future businesses, rowers and boaters, pedestrians, city and county residents, and regional visitors, as well as the developers and investors that have the resources to make the South Waterfront the crucial asset it has the potential to be.

The South Waterfront has been through periods of growth but has, for the most part, been plagued by decades of neglect. For so long it has been a base for numerous Knoxville industries, but in the past decade the remaining industries are in the process of moving out. Today, the opportunity for growth and revitalization has emerged. With such unique environmental systems, incredible views, and the proximity to downtown Knoxville, there is no question that the city and county should capitalize on one of its greatest resources: the waterfront. With a team led by the landscape architecture firm Hargreaves Associates, the Vision Plan brings together architects, urban planners, economic consultants, marine, traffic, and civil engineers, businesses involved in environmental and cultural studies; and the most crucial part, the public (Knoxville South Waterfront: Vision Plan 2i).

Through careful research, the Vision Plan team determined the extents of the South Waterfront to be defined by the series of roads that hug the base of the surrounding slopes, but

it was soon realized that the project has a much broader reach and influence. The Vision Plan encompasses adjacent neighborhoods, landforms, and roads to the waterfront including the Island Home neighborhood to the east, the Scottish Pike neighborhood to the west and the bluffs surrounding Fort Dickerson, Chapman Highway, and James White Parkway to the south (Knoxville South Waterfront: Vision Plan 4). With public input, the South Knoxville Waterfront Redevelopment was categorized into three main sections: Down River, Mid River, and Up River. Two sets of strategies, the parallel and the perpendicular, are at play, and together they work to complement each other in order to knit together transportation networks; a network of programs, open spaces, neighborhoods, businesses; and the waterfront (Knoxville South Waterfront: Vision Plan 41).

The strategy for the most sustainable future for the South Waterfront does not consist of a single program, but rather an exciting blend of diverse, mixed, and complementary uses in order to capitalize on the rich market potential present in South Knoxville (Knoxville South Waterfront: Vision Plan 44). Down River's future is categorized as a pattern of high density development whose roads will more closely follow the Tennessee River on former industrial sites and which will infill many of the prime vacant parcels in-between existing single-family housing (Knoxville South Waterfront: Vision Plan 48). Moving east, the Mid River section of the Vision Plan will become the highest density of uses, urban in character, and a mixed use hub that will tie the whole waterfront together, influencing the whole city and region (Knoxville South Waterfront: Vision Plan 54).

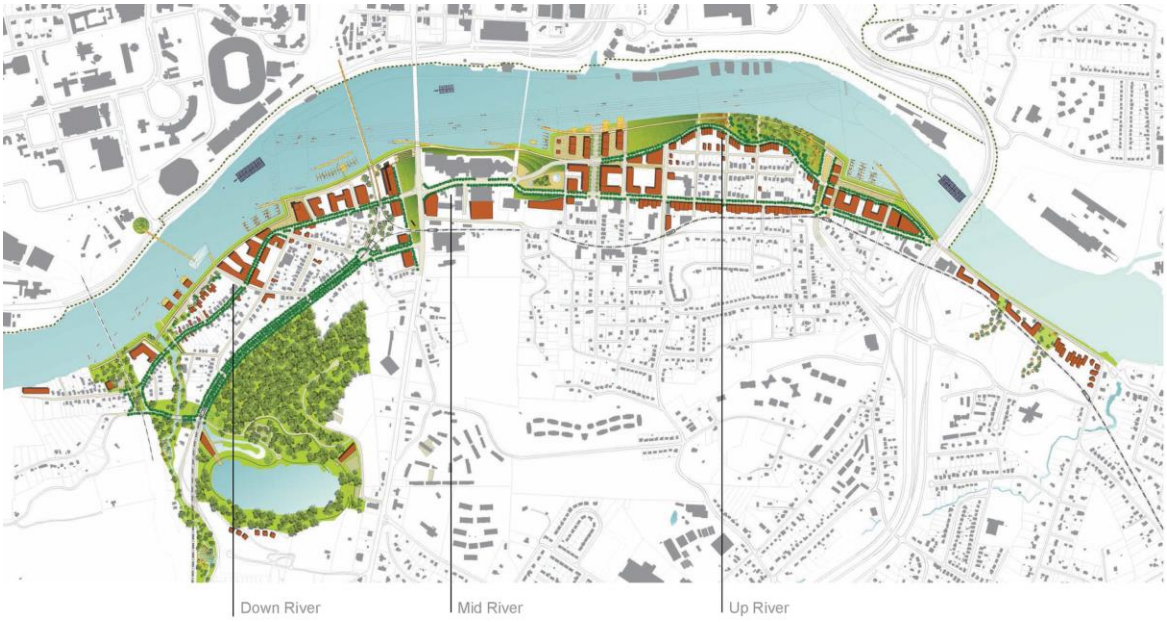


Figure 61. South Waterfront Vision Plan – 2006
The nature of how the Vision Plan was divided into three distinct sections: Down River, Mid River, and Up River, aligns with the assertion that the complex of buildings, of the once Baptist Hospital, acts as a barrier to neighborhood connectedness and future growth and development. The Vision Plan was a starting point for a discourse on what South Knoxville had the potential to become. For almost ten years, the Vision Plan has spurred a number of revisions most notably at the former site of the Baptist Hospital. In the current state of what is planned for redevelopment, certain buildings built within the last twenty-five years are designated for reuse. Any portion of the Baptist Hospital complex will always act as a barrier for neighborhood connectedness. For the South Knoxville Waterfront to become a reality, the Vision Plan must not treat development as three autonomous zones but rather a linear fabric of development situated precisely in the landscape.
(Source: "Knoxville South Waterfront: Vision Plan")



Figure 62. Superimposition of South Waterfront Redevelopment
The underlay of the superimposed image depicts the current state of demolition at the Baptist Hospital complex with a gray shade that shows the buildings which are currently demolished. Proposed developments, along the South Knoxville Waterfront, by the developer Blanchard and Calhoun, are overlaid to illustrate how any development to this scale and form will continue to act as a visual barrier to the topographical landscape and to neighborhood connectedness.
(Source: Author)

Finally, the Up River section of the Vision Plan is characterized by self-contained development opportunities which will improve access to the river, development which will maintain viewsheds to the river from existing housing, and the incorporation of a reinvigorated main street along Sevier Avenue highlighting its historic nature (Knoxville South Waterfront: Vision Plan 58). As a whole, each section of the Vision Plan shall not detract from inherent identity of South Knoxville. The most effective future of the South Knoxville Waterfront will be one that highlights what makes the area special, one that creates open space and development for all to use, and one that preserves the character of the rich neighborhoods which are of utmost importance.

The Knoxville South Waterfront Vision Plan provides a possible vision for future growth, but it is through the South Waterfront Regulating Plan and a Form-Based Coding that the revitalized South Waterfront will become a reality. Moving away from traditional zoning - which regulates development by use, consumes excessive amounts of land, and is very pedestrian unfriendly - Form Based Coding offers an alternative which deemphasizes land use and favors building form and typology. Through a Form Based Code approach, the waterfront will become a greater mix of uses, an even richer confluence of neighborhoods, and a place designed for the public realm. The Knoxville South Waterfront Regulating Plan divides the area into seven districts identified as SW-1 through SW-7 (Knoxville South Waterfront: Form Based Code Development, Sec 8:1). Each district presents its own character, scale, and development opportunities, and the plan as a whole has potential to transform the waterfront and South Knoxville into the place it so long has been waiting to become.

B. Regulating Plan and Form Based Code

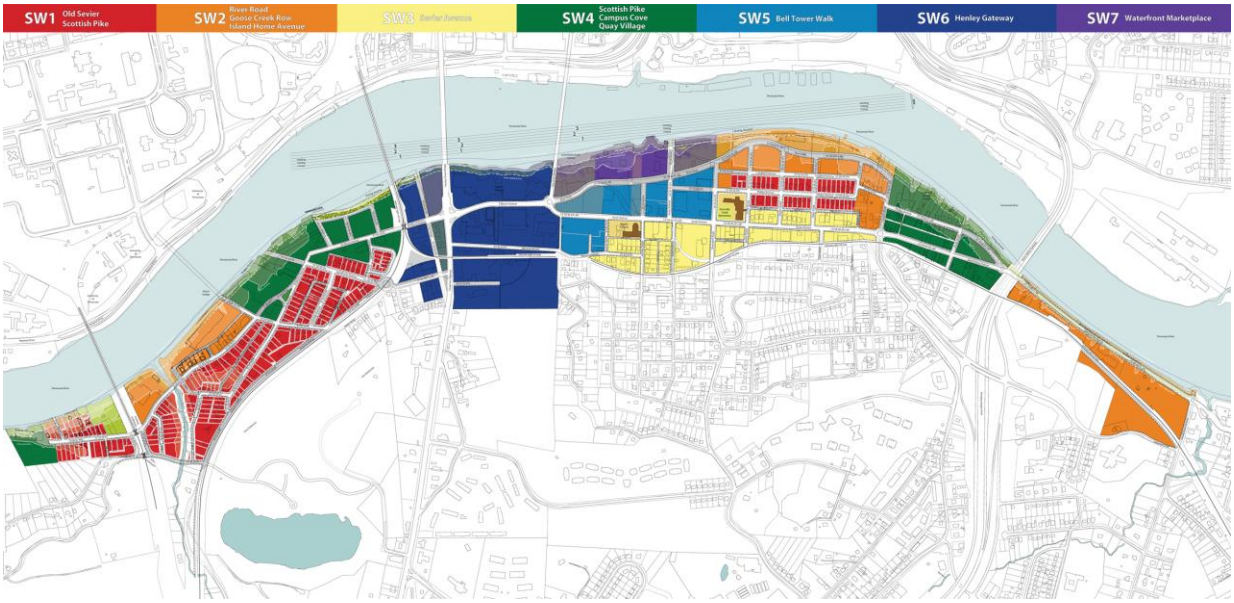


Figure 63. South Waterfront Regulating Plan – 2007
Though the Regulating Plan for the South Waterfront provides a thoughtful mix of uses and scales, it segregates the South Waterfront into three autonomous zones. By treating redevelopment as such, it misses an opportunity for greater neighborhood connectedness. With the former Baptist Hospital site, the abandoned land around Kern's Bakery, and parts of Chapman Highway, the SW-6 portion of the Regulating Plan does not provide a sound solution and in reality it is much of the same that exists.
(Source: "Knoxville South Waterfront: Form Based Code Development")

The Knoxville South Waterfront Regulating Plan combines the different form based code districts, SW-1 through SW-7, into a diverse pattern of development which treats the waterfront more as a whole rather than individual projects (Figure 63). The small town atmosphere of the Old Sevier and Scottish Pike neighborhoods defined by SW-1 will be highlighted in any redevelopment by the addition of additional single family housing on vacant parcels rather than large scale residential and commercial development (Knoxville South Waterfront: Form Based Code Development, Sec 4:1:1). Closer to the waterfront, neighborhoods including Goose Creek, Island Home, and a new area called River Road defined by SW-2 will encourage single family and multiple unit housing which should carefully consider the views of the river that residents already have (Knoxville South Waterfront: Form Based Code Development, Sec 4:2:1) At the historic commercial hub of the Old Sevier neighborhood, Sevier Avenue will transform into a mix of commercial and residential uses that promote activities at all parts of the day while, respecting the historic character that exists, and that complement the existing buildings which are already a part of the fabric of the community as defined by SW-3 (Knoxville South Waterfront: Form Based Code Development, Sec 4:3:1). Together, SW-1 through SW-3 are concerned with adding to the character that is already present in South Knoxville without detracting from its identity.

However, SW-4 through SW-7 propose a whole new vision of large scale development which is uncharacteristic of anything that South Knoxville presently is identified by. South Knoxville and the waterfront should indeed have some large scale development in some prime real estate areas; however no development should be included which does not add to the existing character and which would clearly be out of place. SW-4 and SW-7 present beneficial proposals to create public marinas and continuous promenades along the river, but they fall short when they predominantly propose large scale commercial, office, and hospitality uses (Knoxville South Waterfront: Form Based Code Development, Sec 4:4:1). The site can support, to

a reasonable degree, large scale development but not to the extents and massing it has had a history of.

SW-5 presents an interesting mix of entertainment, civic, and cultural uses which could clearly add to the character of South Knoxville. However, it proposes structures up to seven stories tall which are well out of scale to the surrounding community (Knoxville South Waterfront: Form Based Code Development, Sec 4:5:1). SW-6 is not an efficient alternative for the Knoxville South Waterfront Regulating Plan because it calls for a high-rise hotel, multiple story office buildings, and development to the scale of the existing Baptist Hospital complex (Knoxville South Waterfront: Form Based Code Development, Sec 4:6:1). The existing Baptist Hospital complex is the single most detracting element in South Knoxville; it is completely out of scale and fragments the entire plans for the South Waterfront. In the following chapter, I will present a critique, response, and new framework to the Vision Plan, Regulating Plan, and Form Based Code, especially at the SW-6 section of the Regulating Plan.

C. Proposed Redevelopment

There is a broad stoke plan for the South Waterfront as defined by the Vision Plan, Regulating Plan, and Form Based Code, and certain projects have been planned which year after year will get closer to fruition. In general, the City of Knoxville is moving in the right direction, however the plans for the mid river section of the waterfront - more specifically, the area encompassing the existing Baptist Hospital complex - is a step in the wrong direction (Figure 64). Michael Kaplan, a University of Tennessee architecture professor emeritus, states in a Knoxville Metro Pulse article that "The developers are missing an opportunity to make a significant stamp on the Knoxville skyline." Kaplan goes on to say "It's difficult to see the project as being site specific" and that "it seems kind of generic" (Gervin). It is true that plans for the waterfront should capitalize on the potential for place, however they should stay clear of becoming something that doesn't

highlight the identity of South Knoxville, and a project which could be placed anywhere in the world.

As stated before, in reference to the once abandoned East Tennessee Baptist Hospital, any redevelopment at the Mid River section of the waterfront should highlight the identity of South Knoxville, create public space, and connect the working-class neighborhoods of the area. What is proposed at mid-river does not highlight the identity of South Knoxville, rather it imposes the idea that continuous large scale developments can be supported in the South Knoxville context (Figure 65-67). The abandoned hospital site currently has a large footprint of dedicated surface parking and a parking garage which proposed redevelopment maintains. There are perfect opportunities here for continuous public spaces, but the proposed redevelopment does not acknowledge that and rather maximizes the amount of buildings and stories that can be constructed at the land between the Henley Street and Gay Street bridges. Though continuous large scale mixed use development at mid-river could be supported by residents, consumers, and businesses across the city of Knoxville, they isolate rather than connect the neighborhoods, businesses, and people in the immediate context of South Knoxville.

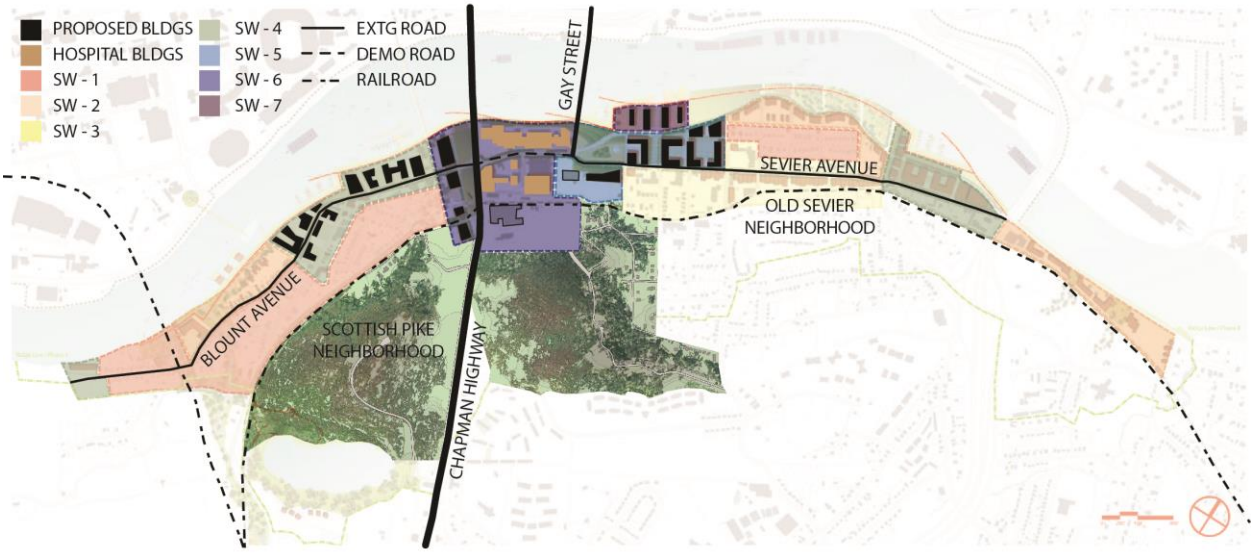


Figure 64. Regulating Plan Analysis – SW5 to SW7 as mass barrier for neighborhood connectivity
Through an analysis of the Regulating Plan it is apparent that topography, transportation networks, and proposed redevelopment continue to treat the Mid River portion of the South Waterfront as an autonomous zone. The type of development proposed is needed at the most critical part of the South Waterfront, however the Regulating Plan proposes a far too ambitious vision for a community that prides itself on the landscape.
(Source: "Knoxville South Waterfront: Vision Plan" – underlay; Author – analysis and overlay)



Figure 65. Knoxville Riverwalk proposed development – 2010
The proposed development by the developer Blanchard and Calhoun mirrors much of what has historically been on the site and follows the similar imposing nature of the former Baptist Hospital complex.
(Source: "Knoxville Riverwalk at the Bridges")



Figure 66. Knoxville Riverwalk proposed development – 2014
The site plan for the Knoxville Riverwalk development at the former Baptist Hospital site retains a number of elements of the former complex such as the existing office building, parking deck, and surface parking at the elevated area south of Blount Avenue. What is proposed still acts as a barrier for neighborhood connectedness and places importance on a highly commercialized development and caters to the car. It misses an opportunity to strategically formulate space in consideration to street life and the pedestrian, public space, and the community as a whole.
(Source: "Knoxville Riverwalk at the Bridges")



Figure 67. Knoxville Riverwalk proposed development – 2014
The residential housing proposed where the Baptist Hospital once stood, is in some regard a step in the right direction. However it turns it back to the existing community of South Knoxville and places too much importance on the commercialization of South Knoxville. Though South Knoxville has the potential and should support a level of commercial development at a very prime location in the city, it should respect the existent sense of place and identity of the area and not impose an out of place vision.
(Source: "Knoxville Riverwalk at the Bridges")

CHAPTER V
PREFACE TO DESIGN

Concentrating on a sense of place and identity in today's built environment is of the utmost importance otherwise the result is flat, sharp-edged, immaterial, and unreal. The exploration of this thesis primarily deals with the master plan and city block scale, with a focus on public space definition and street life, rather than at the scale of the building. A larger scale testing and application of the thesis allows for a critical study of connectivity, gathering, and community along with conditions and identity. It is important to understand, within the investigation of this thesis, a proposed framework for place at the Mid River section of the South Knoxville Waterfront is to be viewed and understood from a broad lens. Building development is secondary while master planning is the primary scope. To understand South Knoxville as a whole, what is challenging its identity, and what could solve how a sense of place is being compromised, a primarily research oriented project is what is needed.

The various ways in which this thesis describes place and identity is through a study at the master planning and city block scale as it pertains to place, intimacy, tactility, sensory perception, phenomelogical experiences, various patterns of direct and indirect connections, the preservation of historical context, and the identification of various landmarks and spatial nodes, just to name a few. Using a variety of design tools, the potential for place in South Knoxville is tested, however it is crucial to note that these are mere ways to explore a sense of place and identity, not a way to specifically define it. This investigation will research, test, and prove that South Knoxville has far more potential for place and that current redevelopment will comprise the identity of the area. The focus is not to specifically prescribe an exact design for the area, however the investigation will establish a set of parameters which could allow for sound redevelopment that will only strengthen place and its identity.

This thesis investigation is first and foremost a research project, massing study, and a framework for the potential for place in a selected site in South Knoxville. To prescribe an exact

solution or answer to the questions of place and identity would prove to be secondary and not critical to the crux of the argument at hand. Through this study, I will prove that a site in South Knoxville has all the elements of a great place, has a strong identity, and has a history of development which hinders its successfulness and future growth. History will be traced, trends will be identified, relationships will be established, and a framework for a design proposal will be presented. This thesis investigation of thorough, critical, and thought evoking research on the concept of place and identity, studied at the master plan and city block scale, postulates that a fully realized proposal at the building scale would detract from the primary goals of this study.

It is important to note that, within the design application, there are a series of design drawings that are to be viewed as tools which test arguments and assertions as specified in the research. They are not meant to prescribe any one solution to this thesis which simply focuses on a topic, presents a problem, and provides a framework from which to spur continued discussion and design proposals. Critical research, in this thesis investigation, takes precedence over any one construct or solution because it is impossible to determine a set of guidelines that will endure over the time that an endeavor such as the South Knoxville Waterfront requires.

The following drawings are a series of maps, images, diagrams, precedents, and other forms of documentation which are important in narrating the story and providing the framework for how the research should be interpreted. Most theses in architectural education focus on the research of a proposed topic, define a particular problem, choose a site to test that problem, and then create a physical construct which clearly articulates how a said design can propose a solution to a given issue. The following investigation has fulfilled all of those requirements, however the physical construct in this case is a framework for a sense of place and identity which can spur an entirely different investigation and project, supported by thorough, critical, and thought evoking research.

CHAPTER VI
BUILDING COMMUNITY AND PLACE

A. Precedents

The following series of precedents, each at a different scale, is a key component in how I will use issues challenging the identity of South Knoxville, and the current proposal for redevelopment along the waterfront in South Knoxville as a guide to establish a framework for what the area can become. I will use the Säynätsalo Town Hall by Alvar Aalto as a key precedent on the building scale for its ability to blur the lines between the interior and exterior and between the building and the site. At a larger master planning level, I will use the University of Virginia as an example, more specifically Hereford College and how it creates such a strong sense of community. Lastly, projects and techniques by one of the most influential landscape architecture and urban design firms in the world, Sasaki Associates, will be implemented for their strong ability to solve some of the most difficult master planning issues, especially along waterfronts. Together, these precedents will succeed in implementing strategies that are successful rather than implementing the harsh, developer driven proposals in place for South Knoxville. The projects in place by Blanchard and Calhoun at the mid river portion of the redevelopment plan are such proposals and, if realized, they will be a detriment to the identity of South Knoxville, will sever communities, and will not supply South Knoxville with the great public spaces it needs.

A-1. Säynätsalo Town Hall, Alvar Aalto

One of Alvar Aalto's greatest architectural works, representative of the critical regionalist style which captures a sense of place, is the Säynätsalo Town Hall in Jyväskylä, Finland. Säynätsalo was founded in 1897 as an industrial community full of factories, and in 1924 the town asked Alvar Aalto to create a master plan for the main island (Figure 68). Two requirements governed the plan, including an "acropolis" for sport and culture as well as a square or plaza for municipal administration offices, housing, shops, and a place for all to use in the community. After

receiving much praise for his master plan of the city, Aalto was invited to participate in a competition in 1949 for a town hall in Säynätsalo. Aalto had previously incorporated a town hall in his plan, so a building with a central courtyard in the upper end of a natural clearing which the competition called for, was a perfect fit. Alvar Aalto went on to win the competition under the pseudonym "curia" from the Greek word meaning "civic square." He wanted to create a place of assembly for the city and a place for all to enjoy. The jury commended Aalto for his excellent "location of the building in the terrain, use of materials, spatial arrangement and costs." In Aalto's words, the idea behind the town hall, "is partly single-story and partly two-story put together around a central courtyard, a patio, on a relatively steep slope" ("The Coming of Curia").

"In some mystical way, a courtyard surrounded by a building has a flavour that underlines community functions," said Alvar Aalto during the competition for the Säynätsalo Town Hall. The pivotal part of the design, the courtyard, blurs the line between interior and exterior as well as that between the building and the site. Spaces which line the elevated courtyard represent exterior space indoors and interior space outdoors. The elevated courtyard continues downward as a grassy staircase to the street level, tying the functions of the town hall to the rest of the city (Figure 69). This micro landscape blends spaces together and the steps that dissolve into the terrain are much like those seen in the Italian hill towns of Europe ("Citadel of Democracy").



Figure 68. Säynätsalo Master Plan
Säynätsalo Town Hall and the master plan which governed its formation puts an importance on how buildings are placed in a landscape. It is only through section and a careful inventory of conditions in the landscape, that place and identity in architecture can be achieved.
(Source: "The Coming of Curia")



Figure 69. Säynätsalo Town Hall Bird's Eye View
Viewed from above the Säynätsalo Town Hall blends into the landscape, forest of trees, and seamlessly into the urban fabric.
(Source: Bing Maps; author manipulated)

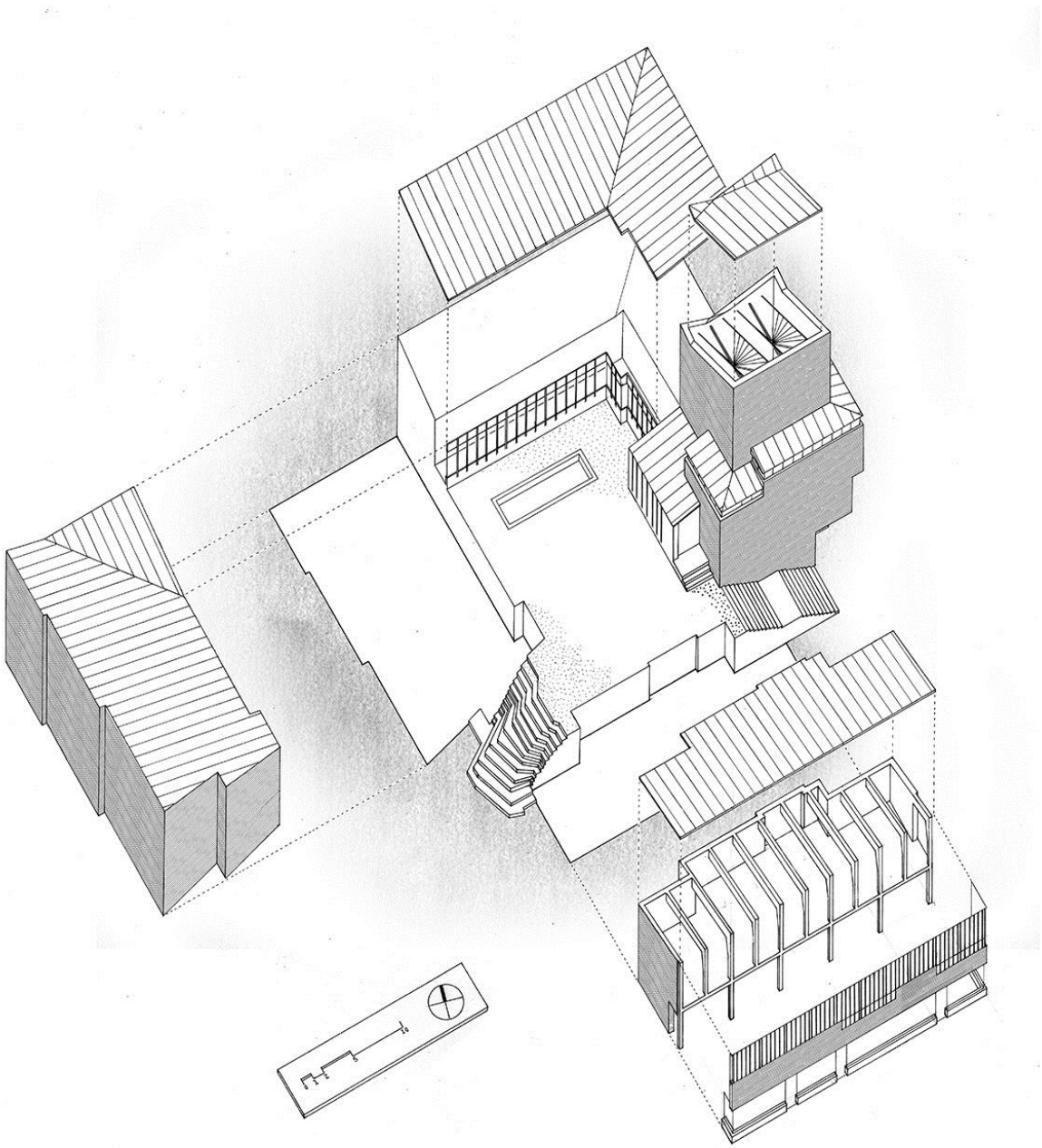


Figure 70. Säynätsalo Town Hall Exploded Axonometric
Similar to a Finnish student's analysis of Säynätsalo Town Hall, an importance must be placed on how a built construct can adapt and respond to varying topographical and natural conditions. By creating place that can be accessed, viewed, and experienced in a variety of ways in a landscape, there will be a much stronger sense of place and identity.
(Source: Venet)

The arrangement of Säynätsalo Town Hall into an administrative component with a free-standing communal component, filled with residential and commercial uses, is representative of a metaphorical community. How the building is situated in its landscape and its adjacency to the rest of the city tie the public and private domains together in a very simple way (Figure 70-71). Fascinated with the vernacular form, Aalto constructed beautiful works of art with raw, unadorned materials such as copper, glass, wood, and red brick. By using such materials, the user feels a sense of place that breaks down abstracted forms to a textured and humanistic scale. An understated monumentality is achieved by the Säynätsalo Town Hall, a building that is scaled to a common man. Using vernacular techniques, practicing critical regionalism, and inadvertently creating a national Finnish style, Alvar Aalto forever changed what community and culture means in architecture (Gross).



Figure 71. Säynätsalo Town Hall – View to courtyard
Similar to the terracing strategy that was used at Säynätsalo Town Hall for traversing the landscape to reach a public space, this thesis investigation explores much of the same techniques. To create a seamless experience across a landscape, there must be a series of experiences along the whole for it to function.
(Source: Divizia)

A-2. UVA Academic Village, Herford College, and Grounds Plan

Thomas Jefferson's Academic Village plan creates a sense of community where shared learning is infused with daily life (Figure 72). Ten pavilions were designed with living quarters and rows of student rooms, connected by a colonnade. At the head of the shared lawn sits the Rotunda, serving as the core of the plan and the library for the Academic Village (Jefferson's Vision of the Academical Village). Jefferson strongly envisioned the University as a village or campus, situated intently within a landscape, which could grow organically over time (Zechmeister) (Figure 73). Jefferson shaped the entire development and planning of universities, explaining why academic and collegial settings in today's world can maintain such a strong sense of place. By creating a place for a tightly knit group of people, the architecture of the University of Virginia fosters interaction among its users, creating lifelong learners and communities which will thrive for centuries.

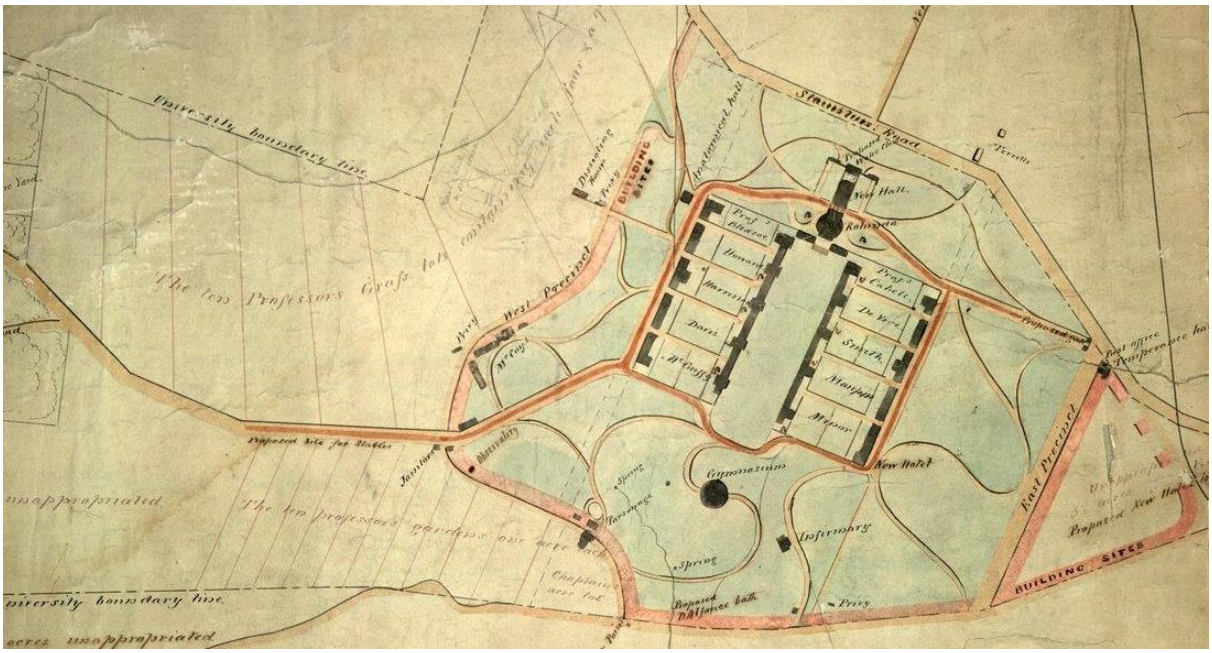


Figure 72. Plan of University Cleared Land *for Thomas Jefferson's Academic Village*
In a similar way in how Thomas Jefferson envisioned the configuration of the Academic Village at the University of Virginia, this thesis places the same importance on how a group of buildings can work together as a community.
(Source: Pratt)

Inspired by Thomas Jefferson's Academic Village at The University of Virginia and his love of the landscape, Hereford College is a contemporary construct of land, program and site. It is a residential college where students and faculty live in community together, emphasizing the power of place. The college houses five hundred and thirty six students within its five housing units and provides a library, amphitheater, faculty offices, and a dining facility. Hereford College sits on a mountainous site situated away from the historic center of the University where students and faculty socialize, dine, and live together, enriching the life of all by providing a sense of community (Hereford College, *Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects*) (Figure 74). The design architects, Tod Williams and Billie Tsien along with the local Charlottesville architecture firm VDMO are able to remain contextual in their design all while creating a self-sufficient part of the UVA campus. "With the strong steel portico and sloping glass walls of the dining hall and startling wedge on the house at the top, the whole things adds up to the first 20th century project at the University that truly engages Thomas Jefferson's work. It is more different from Jefferson than anything that has been built at the University in generations, but it rises to challenge him" (University of Virginia Hereford College, VMDO Architects: Portfolio).



Figure 73. Thomas Jefferson's Academic Village
With a combination of living, learning, and recreation functions, Thomas Jefferson's Academic Village plays an important role in the formation of master plans. The Academic Village precisely and seamlessly unifies a group of functions into a landscape and acts a vessel to create community.
(Source: Serz)



Figure 74. Hereford College Bird's Eye View
In a contemporary adaption of Thomas Jefferson's Academic Village, Hereford College at the University of Virginia exemplifies the use of landscape and how it can have a dramatic impact on a sense of place and identity. The way in which Hereford College sits in the landscape and how it is approximately scaled is something to take note of and this thesis investigation incorporates similar methodologies for responding to varying topographical conditions.
(Source: "Hereford College." Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects)

"The physical arrangement of buildings and their related green spaces along with their cultural history, creates 'the sense of place' in our human environs" (Nueman) (Figure 75). The spatial order of Jefferson's Academic Village with its interrelated site design was designed for much more than a model for the American campus. Campus planning, initially instigated by Thomas Jefferson, laid a groundwork for how cities could be planned, developed, and occupied. The Grounds Plan for the University of Virginia was implemented in order to ensure that planning and development at the University would stay true to the Academic Village and initial design of the campus. There have been significant changes in growth and transportation not only at UVA but across the country. This thesis will use the University of Virginia, Hereford College, and the Grounds Plan as driving precedents that inspire a sense of place and identity as it relates to large scale master planning in the urban fabric (Zechmeister).



Figure 75. Hereford College
By carefully crafting space within a landscape, vistas framed by architecture such as those achieved at Hereford College are possible. It is of the utmost importance to understand one's surroundings in the built environment and if that is not achieved, the built environment becomes universal rather than unique.
(Source: "University of Virginia Hereford College." VMDO Architects: Portfolio)

A-3. Selected Waterfront Redevelopments

There are a number of catalysts of change, barriers to revitalization, and current trends within riverfront development which are important aspects to consider in regards to how the South Knoxville waterfront should address change. One of the key players which is an impetus to change in redevelopment are the forms of partnership, such as public-private, which are required to create successful large scale urban, landscape, and waterfront projects. Thoughtful design truly matters in riverfront development because many of today's projects fail when engineering and infrastructural systems dominate over a place making approach. Current trends in today's riverfront developments include understanding who will be using the river, moving away from hierarchal ideas to network based systems, and advocating the use of multiple layer social systems. Using the dynamic nature of riverfronts, redevelopment in the environmental, social, and physical senses is a driving factor that embraces the inherent qualities of place (Exploring the Living River).

The Charleston Waterfront Park and National Harbor in Washington D.C., are both riverfront projects by Sasaki Associates, which are used as place making approaches in this thesis (Figure 76-77). They both place community at the heart and are projects that are designed to be timeless, flexible, and a place for everyone. National Harbor stood as a barren parcel of land on the banks of the Potomac River in Washington D.C. for so long until it transformed into a slew of vibrant public spaces framed by mixed-use storefronts, encouraging urban interaction and street life. The vision for National Harbor was to create a vibrant district close to the heart of Washington proper, similar to the renowned Las Ramblas in Barcelona, Spain. Together with its emphasis of a pedestrian oriented boulevard leading to a plaza full of retail, residential, and restaurant uses, National Harbor became more of a community dream rather than a developer's dream. National Harbor truly is a place for the people of Washington and is precisely the types of place and identity that this thesis is laying the framework for (Reising).



Figure 76. Charleston Waterfront Park
The history, timelessness, and proximity of the Charleston Waterfront Park to the historic downtown area allows residents, tourists, and other users the opportunity to experience what the water and landscape has to offer. In a similar light, with the vast topographical changes in South Knoxville, an importance must be placed on the interaction of the community with the river and other natural features.
(Source: "Charleston Waterfront Park")



Figure 77. National Harbor, Washington D.C.
Without a mixture of uses and ways upon which to access a waterfront, National Harbor in Washington D.C. cannot function as the community asset it is. This places an importance on how critical it is to respond to the landscape, the variety of users, and program of spaces.
(Source: "National Harbor")

B. Critique on South Waterfront Master Plan

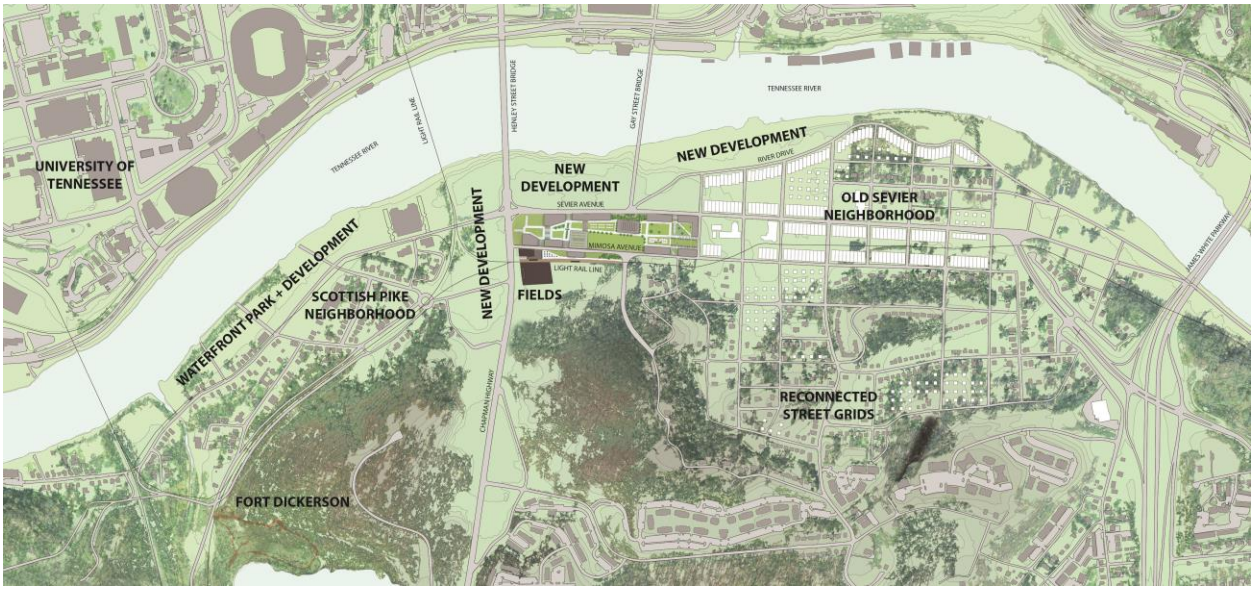


Figure 78. South Knoxville Waterfront Masterplan Critique
The critique above of the South Knoxville Waterfront Vison and Regulating Plan creates a new framework upon which the future of the area can be envisioned. As a whole the Scottish Pike and Old Sevier neighborhoods are further refined to strengthen their identity and the Mid River section provides the necessary neighborhood connectedness. Areas designated on the master plan critique for new development are a whole other investigation and the master plan critique provides a starting point for how the community would shape the form of those developments and the landscape in South Knoxville.
(Source: Author)

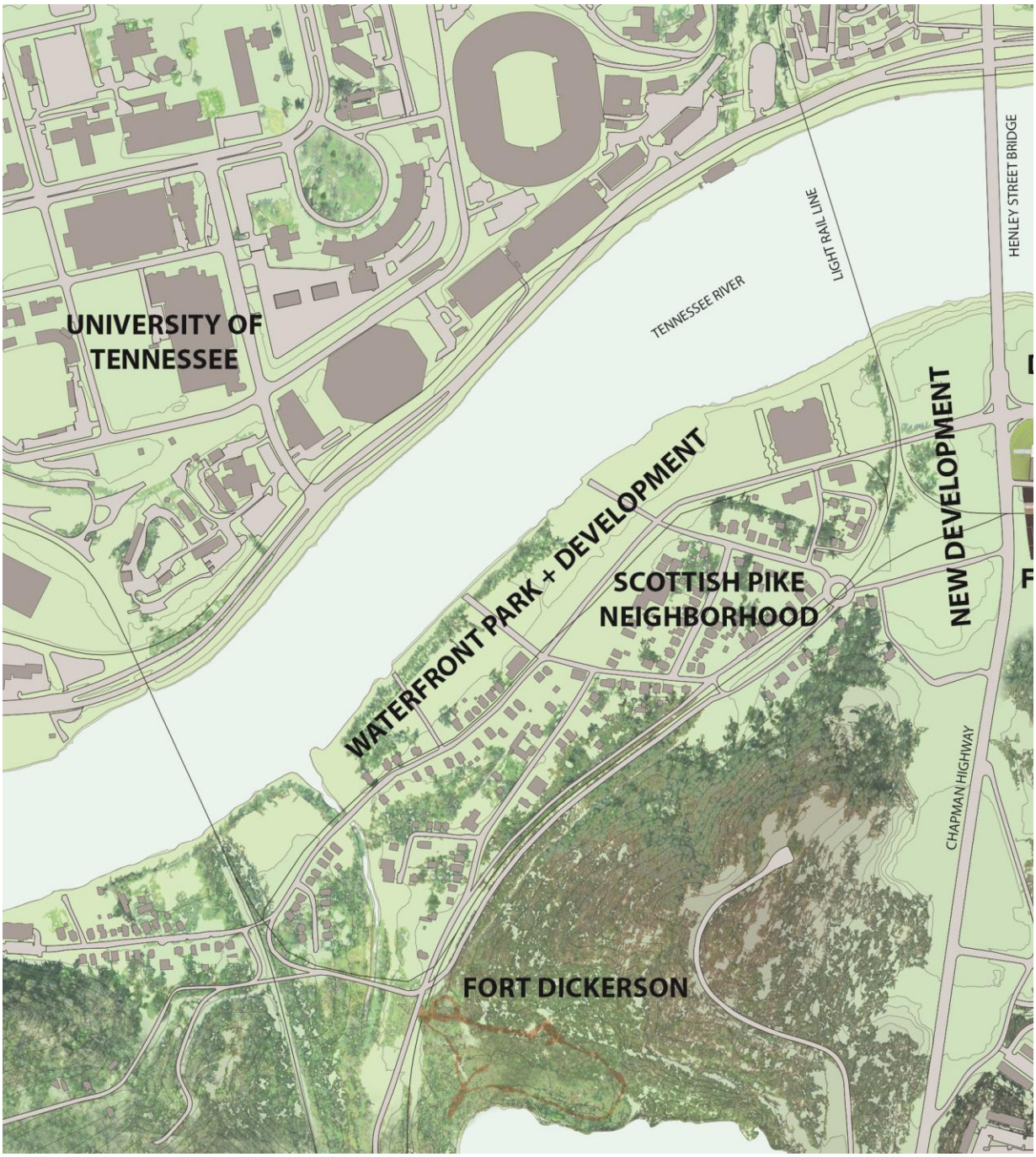


Figure 79. Down River Masterplan Critique
The critique of the South Waterfront Master Plan at the Down River portion connects a number of streets into a more efficient pattern and prescribes open space and park conditions at the waterfront rather than the multiple story housing proposed in the Vision and Regulating Plan. (Source: Author)

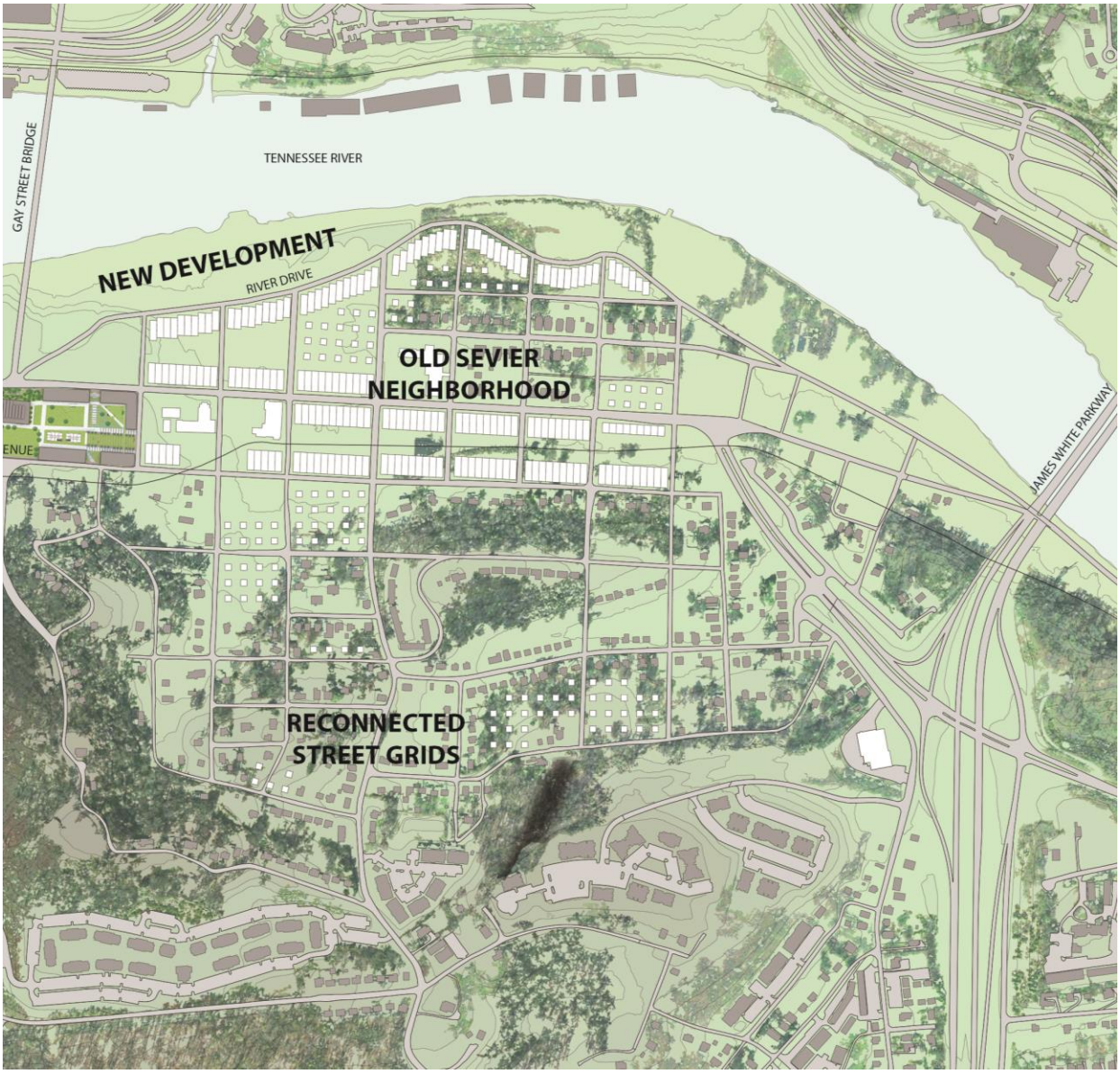


Figure 80. Up River Masterplan Critique
The critique of the South Waterfront Master Plan at the Up River portion places an importance on recreating the thriving main street which was once a part of the Old Sevier neighborhood. A new River Drive is created in order to get people down to the water's edge. Across the whole neighborhood, Old Sevier has a series of reconnected streets into a more efficient grid pattern and it helps strengthen the urban fabric. Along with a realigned Sevier Avenue, Mimosa Avenue, and a new light rail line on the abandoned rail line, neighborhood connectedness is achieved. (Source: Author)



Figure 81. Mid River Masterplan Critique
The critique of the South Waterfront Master Plan at the Mid River portion is the most critical aspect of this thesis and it serves only as a framework for what it could become. It will not prescribe any one detailed solution. As a city block, it serves as a linear formation with a series of buildings, public spaces, and opportunities to engage within the landscape.
(Source: Author)



Figure 82. City block framework for neighborhood connectivity
By analyzing the framework for this thesis, the opportunities for visual and tactile connections are apparent in how the new city block fills in the void of the grid and urban fabric of South Knoxville.
(Source: Author)

The Mid River portion of the master plan was chosen as a focus area for the thesis because without an effective hub, center, and crux of the plan, plans for redevelopment would fall apart. There are a multitude of factors and elements which make Mid River full of potential for unique places. Such things include the presence of two main streets and bridges, an underutilized rail line which could introduce a light rail train for the community, the Kern's Bakery building which is fit for an adaptive reuse project, large uninterrupted parcels of land for creative patterns of public space, and amazing views around South Knoxville and across the river to downtown, among many other things. As a whole, my framework for redevelopment at Mid River will include mixed use buildings with retail, residential, and civic functions which blend into the landscape, a network of creative patterns of public space, and the transformation of the vehicle-dominated streets into vibrant, pedestrian friendly thoroughfares.

The South Knoxville Vision Plan and Regulating Plan, together form a master plan for the redevelopment at the South Knoxville Waterfront and surrounding community. Though many parts of the plan are a step in the right direction, an emphasis must be placed on the Mid River section for the loss of tactility, scale, and details it presents. The current proposed development at Mid River is "flat, sharp-edged, immaterial, and unreal" (Holl 29). As outlined from the onset of the document, this investigation focuses primarily at a masterplan and city block scale with an emphasis on public space definition and street life rather than the scale of the building.

Three main points in a critique of the current plan would be to stay away from continuous and towering structures, to create more public space which acts as a connector, and to establish a much more vibrant street life into the urban fabric. Just as some public space at the riverfront is included in Vision Plan and Regulating Plan, there is also a need for comparable public spaces inland, strewed throughout the critique and new proposal for the waterfront. The Vision Plan and Regulating Plan also call for too much surface parking, is pedestrian unfriendly as a whole, does not connect enough streets into an efficient grid, and

uses the street more as a dividing element rather than a tool that can help stich vast expanses into a more efficient system. Lastly, from the building sense, structures should be an average of three to four stories with some taller buildings few and far between, but not nearly as much as the Vision Plan and Regulating Plan propose.

C. Design Framework

The design framework for this thesis utilizes a parcel of land at the Mid River section of the South Waterfront as a testing ground for what it could bear to have and still be part of the natural landscape and an integral part of the community. The intentions of the design application are to provide a set of masses for development to the range of three to four stories with minimal portions of the plan at five stories or above. As long as development does not interfere with the natural vistas and neighborhood connectedness in South Knoxville, the community identity will remain intact. The drawings in the design application create a framework upon which the users of the place will create the spaces, functions, and community they see fit. This thesis investigation outlines a set of parameters in the form of roads, building masses, public space at several scales, and other places of inhabitation. Each drawing is not meant to be viewed as a fully realized construct, however they are intended to direct a conversation about what the community needs and what it does not (Figure 78-91). It would be a disservice to prescribe an exact design because the details of each space would need to be informed by interaction of the community within the landscape.

As a linear city block within a varying topographical landscape, the focus area for this thesis investigation creates a multiple use development, public space at a variety of scales, and provides the necessary neighborhood connectedness that is vital to the growth and livelihood of South Knoxville. With a live, work, play type of program, the framework and building masses set forth provide an interesting mix of uses which tie into the landscape at different levels. Because the uses of the buildings within the landscape are shaped and arranged the way they are, the

possibilities are endless for how the community inhabits particular sets of space in yet an otherwise vast expanse of land. In the areas between defined building masses, public space networks are created to stich the South Waterfront together. As a whole, the framework of the proposed city block between Mimosa Avenue, Sevier Avenue, Chapman Highway, and the neighborhoods to the east, provide the neighborhood connectedness which the area has never experienced.

Each part of the proposed city block at Mid River is not treated in exactly the same way. Sevier Avenue is treated a primary vehicular threshold through the South Waterfront while Mimosa Avenue is characterized by slower traffic and a livelier pedestrian street life. The landscape plays an important role in connecting the character of Sevier Avenue to Mimosa Avenue by way of an elevated public space bounded on each side with a building mass for a multiple use program. Understanding that relationship in section is key. Whatever form that the community deems necessary for development will be informed first and foremost by the landscape.



Figure 83. Proposed city block framework
The proposed city block design at Mid River, situated between two major local streets, a major highway, two important neighborhoods, a river, and a mountain, is the perfect testing ground for a study for a sense of place and identity.
(Source: Author)

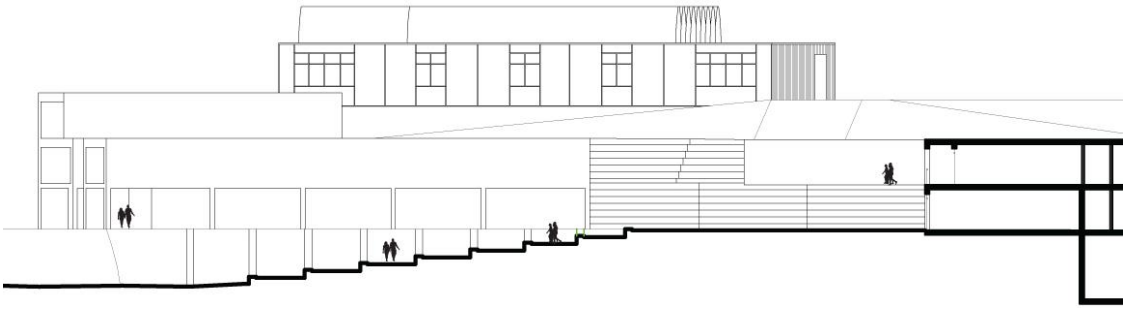


Figure 84. Transverse Section through City Block Framework
The proposed framework responds critically to the landscape and provides a thoughtful analysis of the potential the city block has to act as a vessel to connect neighborhoods and the waterfront.
(Source: Author)

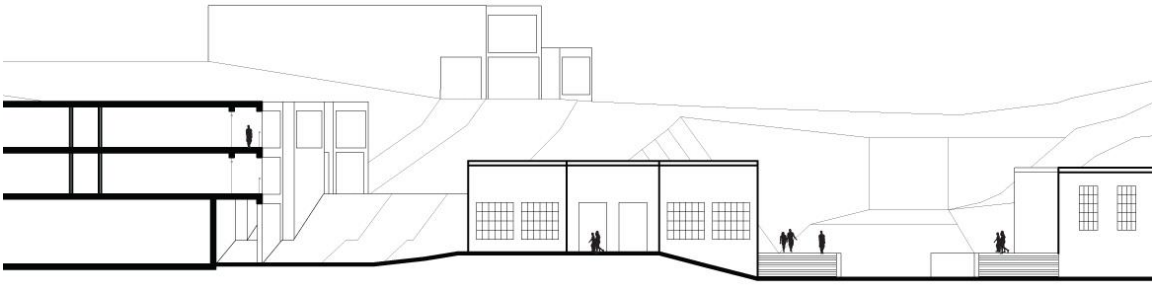


Figure 85. Transverse Section through City Block Framework
The proposed framework responds critically to the landscape and provides a thoughtful analysis of the potential the city block has to act as a vessel to connect neighborhoods and the waterfront.
(Source: Author)

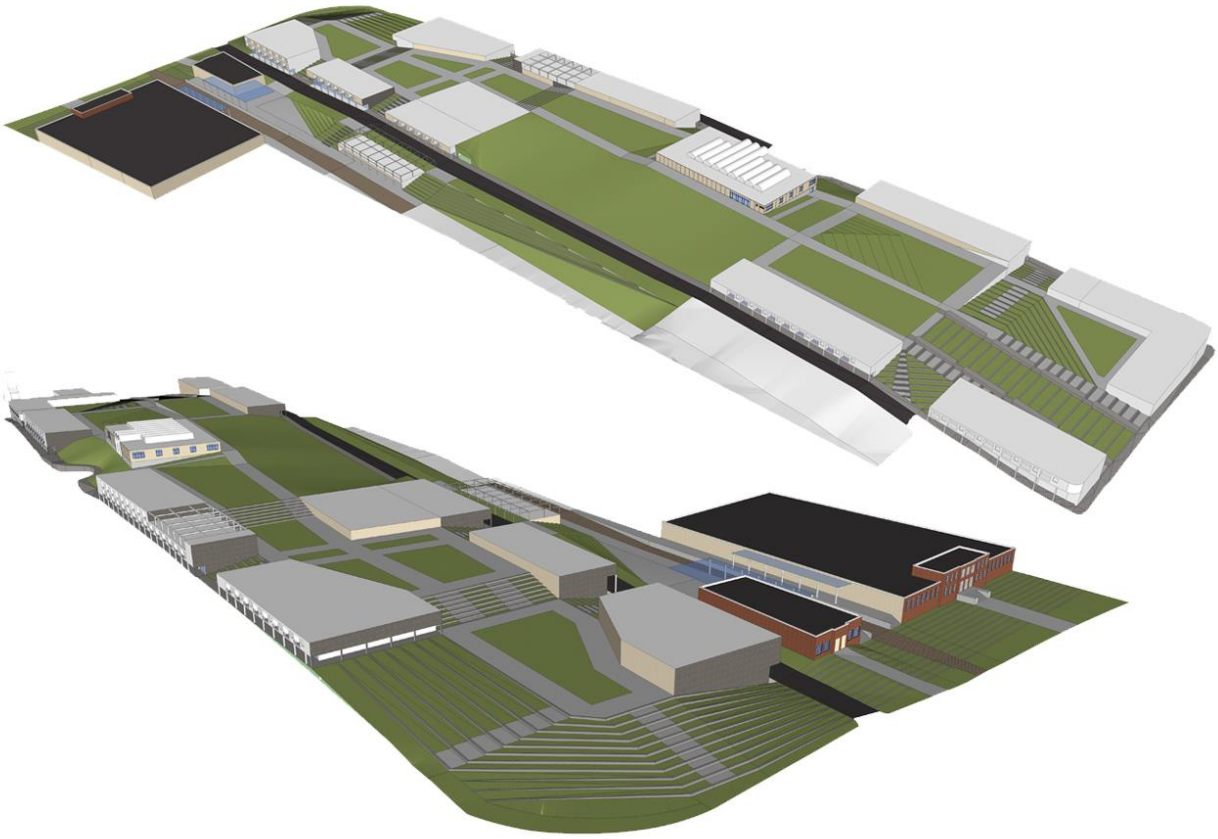


Figure 86. Proposed city block axonometric diagrams
Axonometric diagrams of the form that the design application framework takes on illustrates the continuous flow of building mass and landscape that must be achieved in order to create a seamless neighborhood connectivity.
(Source: Author)

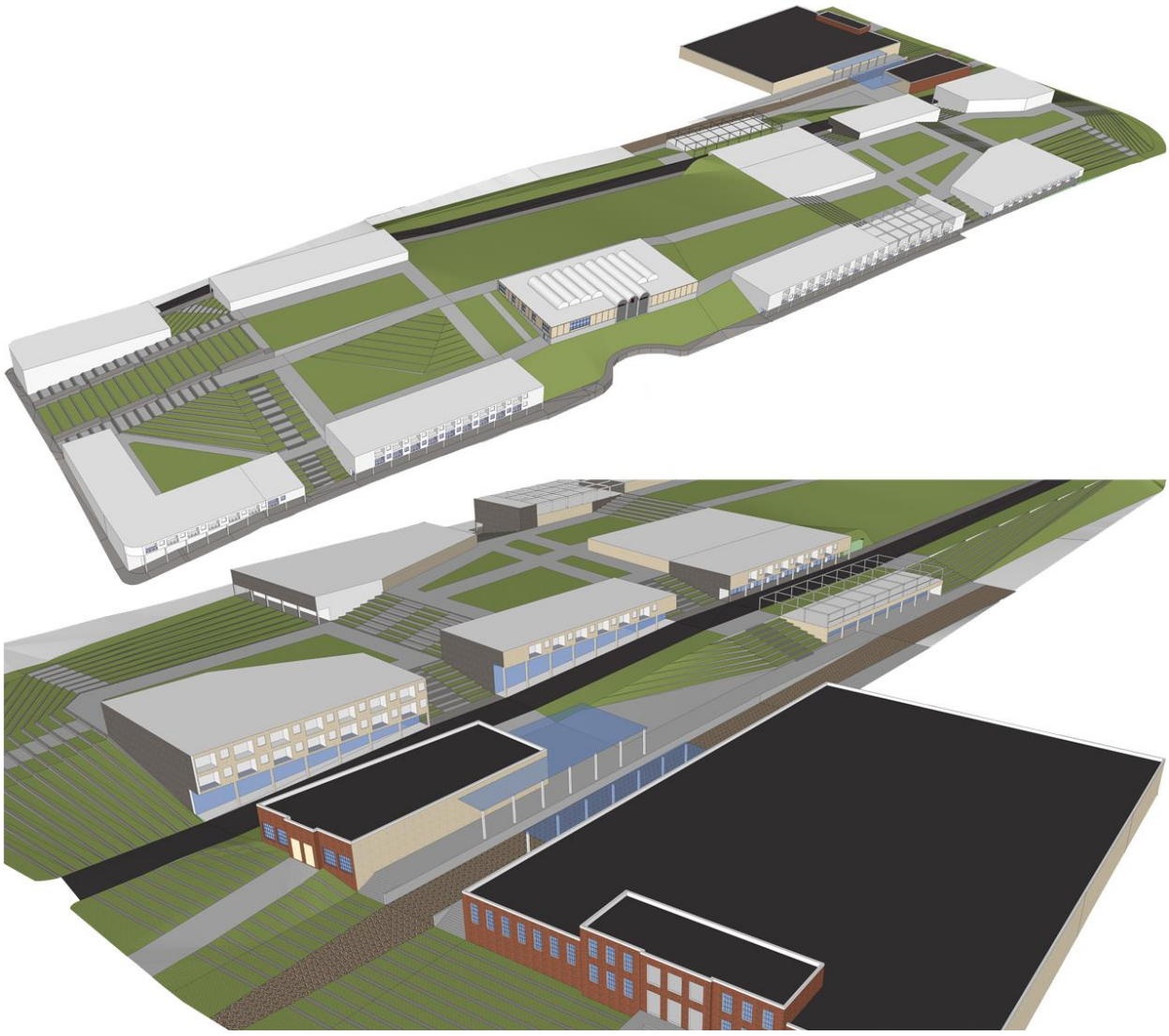


Figure 87. Proposed city block axonometric diagrams
Axonometric diagrams of the design application framework give Mimosa Avenue, for example, depth and illustrate the connections that are required between the areas behind Kerns Bakery, Mimosa Avenue, and the terraced connection to the elevated public space and beyond. (Source: Author)



Figure 88. Proposed city block - View from Sevier Avenue to West
Sevier Avenue, as depicted in this perspective is open to interpretation and it provides a visual cue about what the street may begin to look like. With existing elements in South Knoxville and a framework for the form of redevelopment, a non-concrete design allows for the community to envision what the future may hold for South Knoxville.
(Source: Author)



Figure 89. Proposed city block - View from Sevier Avenue to East
At the corner of Sevier Avenue and Chapman Highway, lies an opportunity for an open space that nods its head toward the city and acts as a gateway into the natural landscape of Mid River and how it acts as the vessel which holds the whole waterfront together.
(Source: Author)



Figure 90. Proposed city block - View from Elevated Public Space to West
At an elevated portion of the new city block at Mid River, lies a confluence of activities in a public space. The community is able to engage with the landscape, live in residences to the right, shop and dine on the ground floor of the elevated park, and enjoy the vistas further south.
(Source: Author)



Figure 91. Proposed city block - View from Mimosa Avenue to East
A number of elements are brought together in a way where different nodes of transportation, communal activities, and multiple use structures create an accessible experience for all to enjoy. The experiences at Mimosa Avenue incorporate landscape, multiple scales, public space, and neighborhood connectivity into a stronger sense of place and identity. The perspective is open to interpretation and is a tool upon which South Knoxville can envision the future of their community.
(Source: Author)

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