

HAMILTON COUNTY / CINCINNATI

CENTRAL RIVERFRONT
URBAN DESIGN AND STADIUM SITING
CONCEPT PLAN

Prepared for

Hamilton County
and the
City of Cincinnati

by

UDA

April 1997

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Acknowledgements

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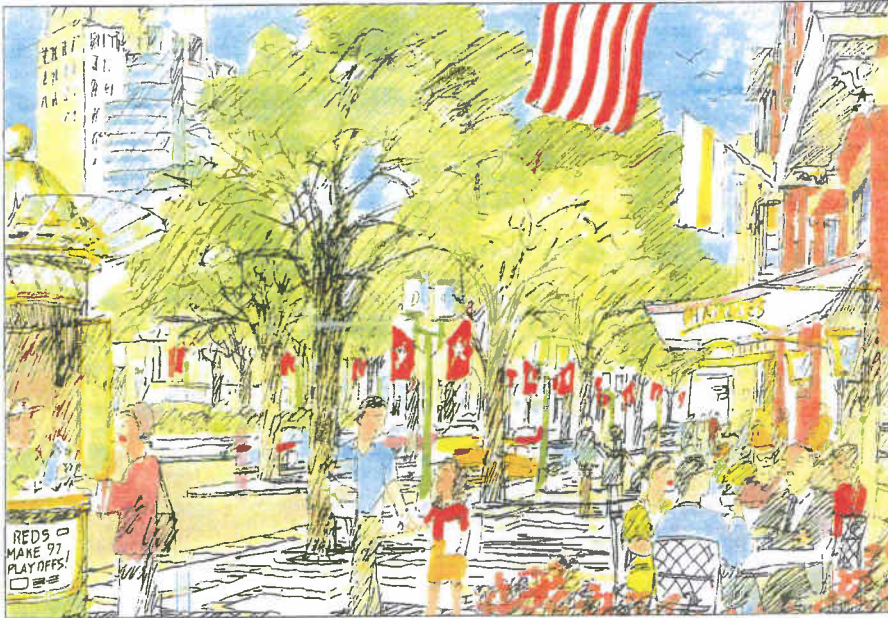
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I EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



1 Recommendations and Next Steps

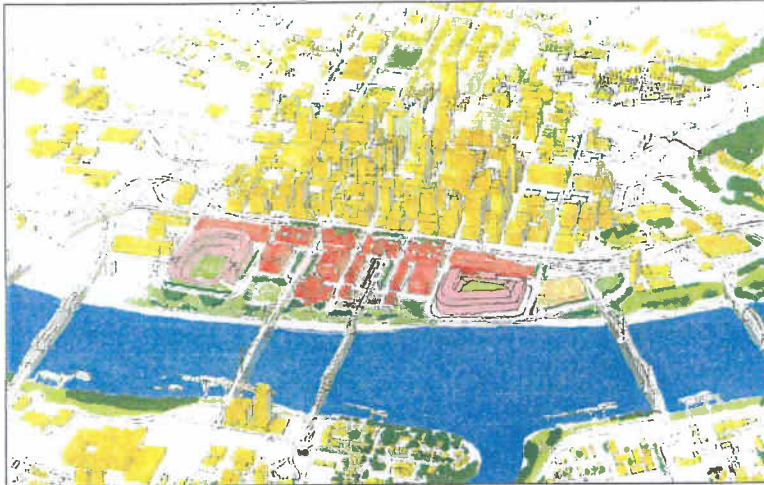
The primary purpose of the Concept Plan was to give direction to Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati so that siting decisions could be made for two new stadiums for the Reds and the Bengals. In addition, an overall urban design framework for the central riverfront was to be developed which would result in maximum economic development benefit for downtown Cincinnati.

A multi-disciplinary team of consultants, working with a Steering Committee, conducted a participatory planning process over four months from October 1996 through January 1997 which resulted in the development of three design alternatives for stadium siting and riverfront development: **Big Bang**, which locates both stadiums on the riverfront, along with four cultural attractions, and an Urban Entertainment District (UED); **Nameplate**, which locates

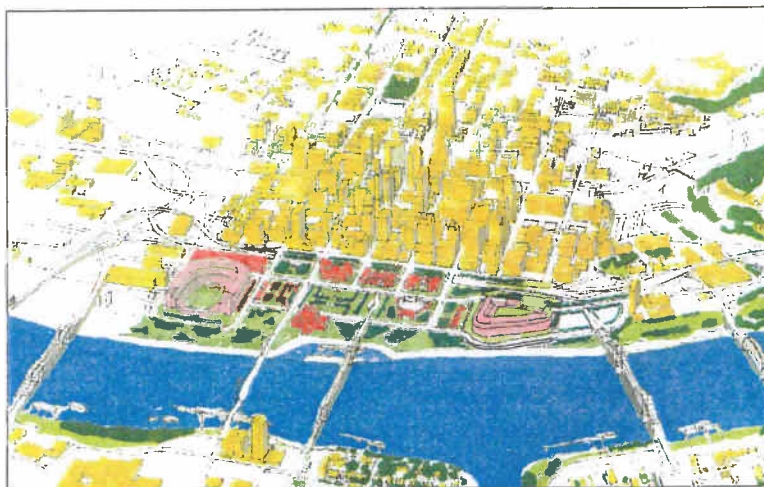
both stadiums on the riverfront, but which essentially landbanks the rest of the riverfront for future uses when funding or the market will support additional development; and **Baseball at Broadway**, which locates the Bengals stadium on the west riverfront and the Reds stadium on a cleared site in the northeast quadrant of the downtown.

The three design alternatives grew out of an agreed set of urban design principles resulting from the participatory planning process, which involved meetings with over 150 individuals (stakeholders) as well as a public meeting attended by over 300 citizens on November 14, 1996. Those principles are: (1) reconnect the downtown to the river; (2) extend the riverfront park system to the central riverfront; (3) eliminate the highway barrier between downtown and the river; (4) create centrally located shared parking; (5) link economic

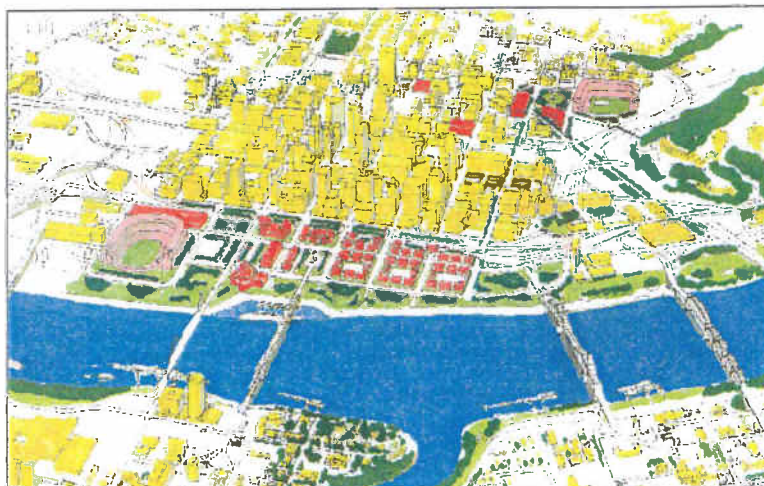
Executive Summary



Big Bang aerial perspective



Nameplate aerial perspective



Baseball at Broadway aerial perspective

development to downtown; (6) link cultural attractions to downtown; (7) provide a light rail transit (LRT) or parking shuttle from Northern Kentucky and the I-71 corridor to downtown Cincinnati; and (8) limit the height and scale of new development on the central riverfront to protect and enhance views.

Three public investments are common to all three design alternatives: (1) reconstruct Ft. Washington Way to reduce the width of the expressway, deck over the expressway, and create new at-grade boulevards and subsurface shared parking; (2) extend the riverfront park system to the central riverfront; and (3) develop an LRT or parking shuttle from Northern Kentucky and points north to downtown Cincinnati.

Within the three design alternatives, all of which meet the requirements of the urban design principles, there are eight sites for the stadiums. A comparative analysis of the three designs and the eight stadium sites reveals the following:

The total project costs (land, stadium construction, and parking) of each alternative are in the range of \$600 million. None of the three is decidedly more costly than the others. However, since land costs are shown in the comparative analysis at assessed value, not negotiated market price, the relative costs could be significantly different once the land is acquired.

The Big Bang alternative has the potential for the largest economic development spin-off, which could bring a total of 10.9 million visitors a year to the central riverfront. But it is a risk requiring an estimated additional public investment of \$50 million in four cultural attractions (aquarium, I-Max theater, National Underground



Railroad Freedom Center, and the Home of Professional Baseball). The Urban Entertainment District would include 360,000 sq. ft. of cinemas, themed restaurants and nightclubs, electronic entertainment centers, and retail.

The Nameplate alternative, which also locates the two new stadiums on the riverfront, but projects no other riverfront development in the near term, preserves the option to develop the Big Bang alternative in the future if public and private funds become available.

Baseball at Broadway offers the quickest spin-off development, in that the adjacent restaurant area of Main Street, and the nearby historic Over-the-Rhine neighborhood would experience almost immediate revitalization with construction of a Reds stadium. However, social investment in the Over-the-Rhine

neighborhood would be required to mitigate the impacts of dislocation on the low income population which resides there currently. Baseball at Broadway is also the alternative which could lead to the most residential development.

Next Steps

The Steering Committee will recommend to the County and the City its preferred sites for the two stadiums in the context of the eight urban design principles and an analysis of the three design alternatives.

The County will continue negotiations with the Reds and Bengals and the affected property owners on the selected sites.

Once agreement is reached, the consultant team will develop a detailed plan for the selected stadium sites and urban design alternative.

