

THE BANKS

Quarter in Review | January–March 2024

Opening Day

Cincinnati's favorite unofficial holiday.

Plus:

Harriet Tubman Statue • Central Riverfront Garage • Recent Awards





Letter from The Banks Project Executive, Phil Beck

Welcome to The Banks Public Partnership's 2024 Quarterly Reports! Notice anything different? We used the time between posting the 2023 Annual Report and now to discern what role these Reports could play in ensuring public engagement in The Banks. Our team concluded we should master the art of storytelling about The Banks, and the entertainment, education, and engagement it offers for residents, businesses and visitors to the riverfront.

The result is a new look and new features designed to take you behind the scenes for a glimpse of how (and why) the infrastructure built and maintained by The Banks Public Partnership (Hamilton County and City of Cincinnati) is an essential ingredient of this thriving, economically impacting, 24/7 live/work/play neighborhood. In this Report, we feature Opening Day, the Harriet Tubman Statue on loan to the Freedom Center, interesting facts about the Central Riverfront Garage, and more current events coverage in photos. Welcome to the story of The Banks Public Partnership!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Phil Beck', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Phil Beck, AIA, LEED AP
The Banks Public Partnership Project Executive

Engage. Educate. Entertain.

THE BANKS

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Photography by Samantha Grier and Joan Buttner

Tradition Hits a Home Run



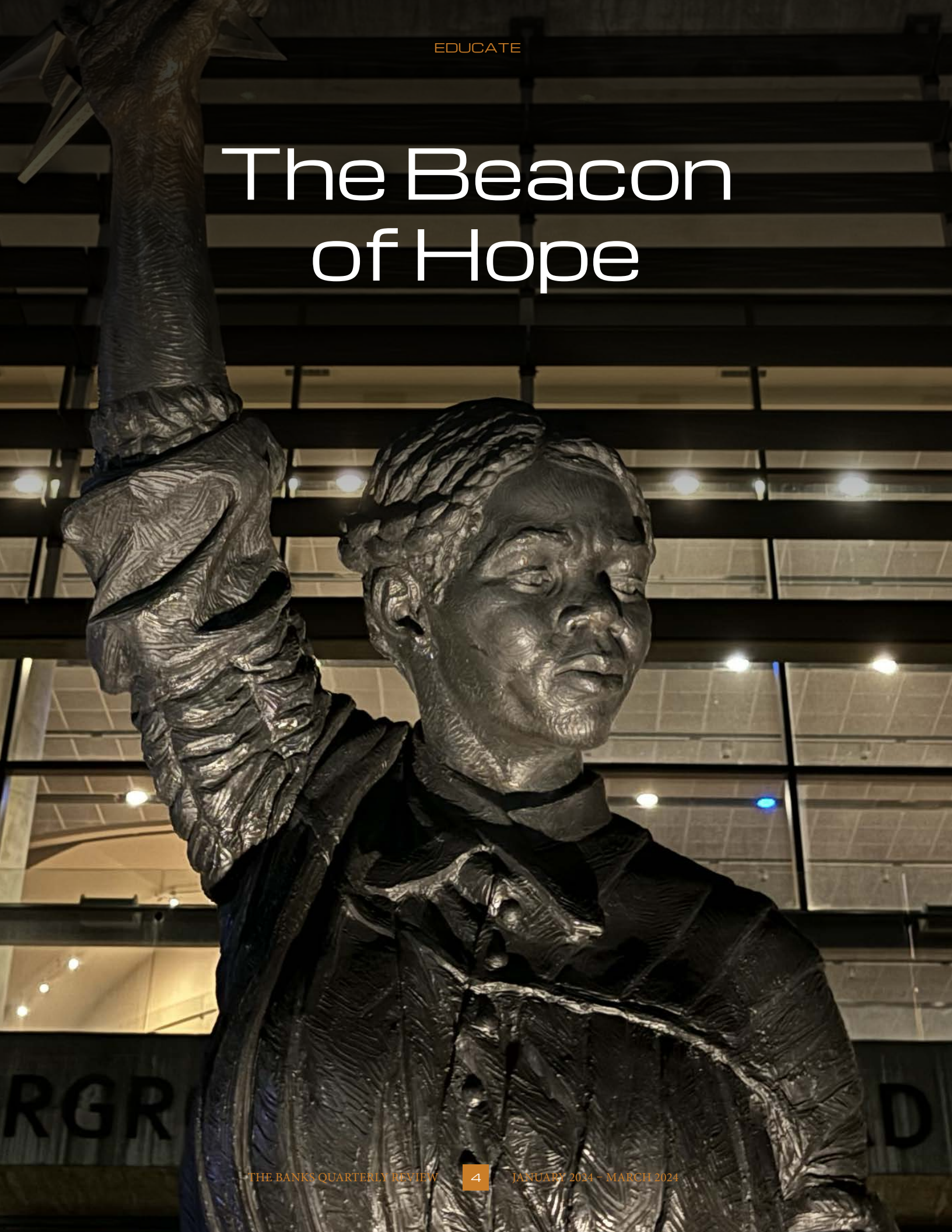
Cincinnati's unofficial holiday is Opening Day, as the Cincinnati Reds play the first home game of the 2024 season.

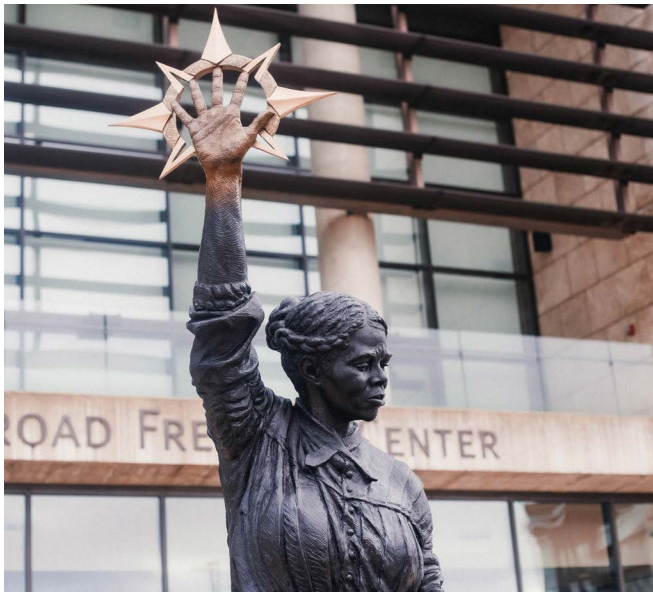


As the old saying goes, “neither rain nor snow...” nor chilly temperatures will keep fans away. This year, March 28 was sunny and fans filled Freedom Way, Joe Nuxhall Way, and spilled over to Smale Riverfront Park to support and celebrate our hometown team. The 104th Findlay Market Opening Day Parade routed floats and marching bands from Findlay Market down Race Street and east on Fifth Street. From there, baseball fans had a short walk to Great American Ball Park, the Reds Museum and Hall of Fame, and all the entertainment venues at The Banks. To top it off, the Reds chalked up their first win, 8 to 1 over the Washington Nationals.

 **More about the history of the Cincinnati Reds and the Cincinnati Reds Museum and Hall of Fame**

The Beacon of Hope





She escaped from slavery in the South. She became a leading abolitionist before the Civil War. She guided 70 enslaved people to freedom in the North, along the Underground Railroad network of safe houses. She spied on the Confederate Army and after the Civil War, became involved in the women's suffrage movement. She was Harriet Tubman.

Born in Maryland in 1820 as Araminta Ross, she later took her mother's name of Harriet. During the Civil War, Harriet was a scout, nurse, and laundress for Union forces in South Carolina. Her aid to the Union Army helped ensure the defeat of slavery.

On March 4, elected officials and leaders of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center cut the ribbon to welcome the 11-foot bronze statue honoring Harriet Tubman. Titled "The Beacon of Hope," the sculpture features Tubman lifting her right hand to the sky to represent the North Star.



Hamilton County Commission president Alicia Reece; Cincinnati Mayor Aftab Pureval; Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney; Procter & Gamble Chief Communications Officer Damon Jones; Freedom Center Curator Stephanie Lampkin, Ph.D.; City Council members Anna Albi and Meeka Owens, and U.S. Rep. Greg Landsman joined the Freedom Center's CEO Woody Keown to cut the ribbon on the entry plaza where the statue and plaque describing it are displayed.

The artist is Wesley Wofford, FNSS. His sculpture is characterized by a dynamic use of form and texture, designed to provoke passionate response. The statue is on display until April 30.

[!\[\]\(003082e50e3009141f59bd5df831749f_img.jpg\) **More about National Underground Railroad Freedom Center**](#)

[!\[\]\(17413706fd4997a1a4bdf85c6864eee1_img.jpg\) **More about Harriet Tubman**](#)

[!\[\]\(faf942dc3e59ce8eb64b4ac481eca7e0_img.jpg\) **More about the artist, Wesley Wofford**](#)

“If you hear the dogs, keep going. If you see the torches in the woods, keep going. If there's shouting after you, keep going. Don't ever stop. Keep going. If you want a taste of freedom, keep going.”

Harriet Tubman

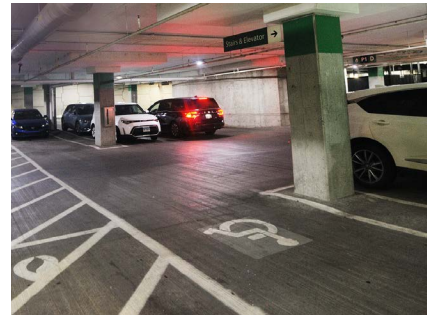
Buried Treasure

PARKING
FREEDOM WAY & WALNUT ENTRANCE



The Central Riverfront Garage spans five blocks, from Elm Street to Broadway west to east, and Second Street to Mehring Way north to south.

Buried Treasure (cont'd)



Without the parking infrastructure—including the Transit Center and the Central Riverfront Garage—the development itself would lie in the flood plain and be susceptible to damage from a rising Ohio River. Instead, the Central Riverfront Garage (CRG) was designed and built to be “flood resilient.” When heavy rains create rising river levels, the CRG can be secured to control the amount of water entering the garage and support clean up after the weather event. While not “flood proof,” the structure is designed to limit damage and facilitate efficient clean up from the elements.

The parking guidance system (now being installed) will provide a red/green/blue light notification to drivers entering the CRG. All spaces will be marked with a light that will turn red when the space is occupied, green if available, and blue if a handicap space is available. By providing information on the number of spaces per section (and floor), this system will save drivers time searching for an open space, and allow them to proceed to their destination at The Banks. Completion of the installation and activation of the system is scheduled for late third/early fourth quarter.

 **More information about Cincinnati Riverfront Garage and parking at The Banks**



4,353 parking spots



117 accessible spots



7 EV charging stations

Discover the History of Cincinnati's Riverfront

BEFORE THE BANKS



This series of brief video vignettes, *Before The Banks*, tells the amazing stories of what came before the transformational development along the Cincinnati Riverfront.

[Click here to begin your experience!](#)

AWARDS & RECOGNITION



The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

The USA TODAY 10Best Readers' Choice Awards recognized The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center as the No. 2 best history museum of 2024! **Find out more about the awards** ►

CURRENT EVENTS



Flowers bloom in Smale Riverfront Park! [🔗](#)



The Cincinnati Black Music Walk of Fame maintenance and operations site walk. [🔗](#)



Parking guidance system installation gets underway in the Central Riverfront Garage (CRG). [🔗](#)

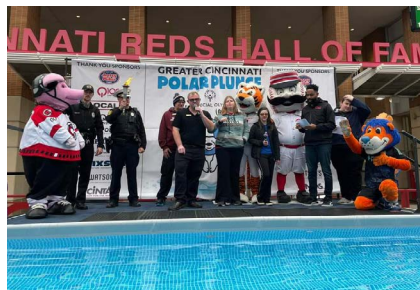
CURRENT EVENTS (cont'd)



Paycor Stadium Plaza enters demolition phase prior to design improvements for greater access and smoother pedestrian traffic flow.



The St. Patrick's Day Parade drew spectators along Freedom Way.



The January Polar Plunge benefited Special Olympics. [🔗](#)



Moms and children enjoy walking paths in Smale Riverfront Park. [🔗](#)

WHAT'S NEXT



APR

So many events are planned for the spring months at The Banks! Here is just a sampling of the activities along the riverfront:

APRIL

Baseball Season is in Full Swing
Head down to Great American Ball Park and cheer on the Reds! 🔄

Celebrating Arbor Day
Nature-based activities for the whole family on Schmidlapp Lawn! 🔄

MAY

The Flying Pig Marathon
USA Today's Reader's Choice #1 Marathon in the U. S. begins and ends at The Banks on May 5th. 🔄

Garage Improvements
The installation of the innovative parking guidance system continues in Cincinnati Riverfront Garage.

Rockin' the Roebling
The Thursday night concert series begins on May 16th at Schmidlapp Event Lawn and Concert Stage in Smale Riverfront Park. 🔄



JUNE



JUNE

Smale Family Fun Days

Enjoy family fun in and around The Schmidlapp Event Lawn on the first Thursday of each month from June through August. [🔗](#)

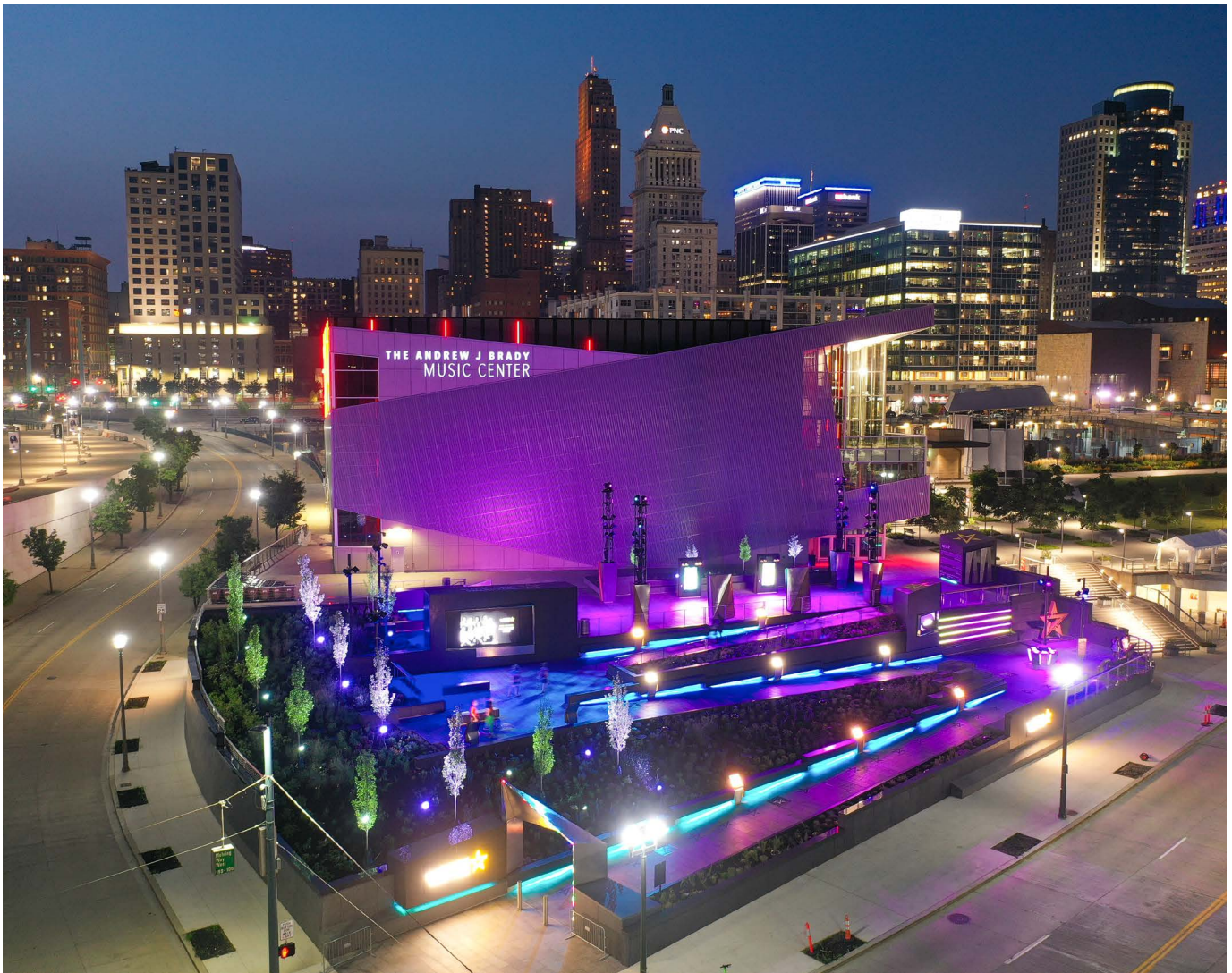
Outdoor Concerts at Andrew J. Brady Music Center

The first of many outdoor concerts takes place on the ICON Festival Stage in Smale Riverfront Park. [🔗](#)

Music at the Esplanade

Enjoy free live music each and every Saturday night through the summer at the Esplanade in Smale Riverfront Park. [🔗](#)

[📅](#) **More information and an expanded list of events at Smale Riverfront Park**



 **More information for the Cincinnati Black Music Walk of Fame**



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Interested in the latest progress statistics at The Banks? [Click here](#) for current and historical data.