

Redesigned Curtis Hixon Park to be Tampa's Central Park



Rendering of the future Curtis Hixon Park.

Curtis Hixon was a four-term mayor of Tampa, first elected in 1943. His dedication and contributions to Tampa were recognized in 1964 with the construction of the Curtis Hixon Convention Center, along the Hillsborough River between Cass

Street and Kennedy Boulevard. With the goal of attracting larger conventions and events to Tampa, the new Tampa Convention Center opened in 1990 and the Curtis Hixon Convention Center was demolished in 1993. The city dedicated Curtis Hixon Park in March 1995 at the location

where the Curtis Hixon Center once stood.

Since the park's dedication, the landscape of downtown has changed substantially with new tourist destinations, increases in the residential population and the construction of the Riverwalk. With

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Water Works Park Progressing



Schematic design of the Water Works Park.

On July 13, 2006, Tampa City Council approved a development agreement that allows for the construction of a \$500 million planned development project in the Tampa Heights neighborhood. The project is slated to include 1,900 condominiums and town homes, 260,000 square feet of office and retail space, redevelopment of the historical Tampa Armature Works building and improvements to Water Works Park. In addition, the project is taking

advantage of its waterfront location with the construction of the Riverwalk, the addition of docks, sidewalk cafes and shops. Water Works Park is currently an underutilized green space, but it will soon become an active park as an anchor for the northern section of The Tampa Riverwalk.

Developers of the park will emphasize and restore its natural beauty with plans to expand the natural spring that runs through the park. It will also include an interactive

water feature, playground, canoe/kayak launch and renovation of the Old Tampa Water Works Pumping Station No. 3 for future commercial uses. The Riverwalk will gently wind through the park under the shade of numerous large trees set slightly away from the river's edge, allowing for a natural connection to the water.

According to Heights Development Manager Darren Booth, "Water Works Park rests at the doorstep to The Heights development. Its interaction with the

Riverwalk and surrounding area is key to providing a beautiful and peaceful sanctuary to both the residents and visitors of The Heights."

A Better Place Group is currently working with the Department of Urban Development towards the completion of the park design. Developers hope to begin construction in early 2008.

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the transformation of downtown into an urban cultural center and the anticipated relocation of the Tampa Museum of Art to Curtis Hixon Park, plans to redesign the waterfront park began in 2005. The park is currently in the final design phase after the city conducted a series of public workshops in 2006 to gather input from the community. After careful review by staff and stakeholders, the final design was made public in March 2007 and negotiations for

construction drawings are currently underway.

The redesigned Curtis Hixon Park will integrate the Children's Museum of Tampa and the Tampa Museum of Art. It will include amenities such as the Riverwalk, boat slips, a children's play area, a dog run, a visitors' center, a water feature and a café and restaurant that will overlook Kiley Gardens.

Director of the City of Tampa Parks and Recreation Department

Karen Palus states "with downtown Tampa emerging as a residential neighborhood, Curtis Hixon Park will serve as a central gathering place and destination where residents throughout the city can enjoy the festivals and the riverfront."

The newly redesigned park will be one of the many exciting destinations along The Tampa Riverwalk.

More information is available online at www.tampariverwalk.net.

Tampa Bay History Center Will Have a New Home on The Tampa Riverwalk

After years of operating in a small, limited space, the Tampa Bay History Center will shortly break ground on their new 60,000 square foot facility. For the last ten years, the History Center has been located in a 6,000 square foot space in the Tampa Convention Center Annex. Through the generosity of numerous private donors, financing by Hillsborough County and a land donation by the City of Tampa, the Tampa Bay History Center will soon build a brand new facility. The new center will be located in Cotanchobee-Fort Brooke Park along The Tampa Riverwalk at Garrison Channel and Beneficial Drive. It will include three levels of exhibit galleries, extensive collection storage and event meeting space. Construction is slated to begin in summer 2007 and History Center officials expect to open the new facility to the public in fall 2008.

According to Hillsborough County Real Estate Department Project

Manager Bill Hand, The Tampa Riverwalk will provide pedestrian access to the History Center from nearby parking facilities and attractions.

Hand noted, "The new History Center will be a cultural and

educational asset to the community and region. It is an example of the good things that can come out of partnerships between public agencies, and the positive role private resources can play in leveraging limited public resources."



South side conceptual view of the new Tampa Bay History Center.

Steps to a Healthier Hillsborough Supports Tampa Riverwalk



Dr. Holt presents the mayor with a \$20,000 donation to the Riverwalk.

The Tampa Riverwalk has found a new partner in its efforts to create a waterfront destination that appeals to everyone seeking an active lifestyle.

Hillsborough County's Steps to a Healthier Hillsborough is a new five-year program focused on helping Hillsborough County citizens live healthier lives. The program focuses on reducing diabetes, obesity and asthma by addressing three related risk factors: physical inactivity, poor nutrition and tobacco use.

On February 16, 2007, Hillsborough County's Steps to A Healthier Hillsborough held the *Step Up, Florida* event at the Rampello Downtown Partnership School. Program Manager Walter Niles and Hillsborough County Health Director Dr. Douglas Holt presented the City of Tampa

with a contribution of \$20,000 for The Tampa Riverwalk during the event.

According to Niles, "The Hillsborough County Health Department is pleased to support the Riverwalk through the *Steps* initiative because the purpose of the Riverwalk aligns itself with the goals of Steps to a Healthier Hillsborough. The *Steps* program is interested in people being physically active and a walkway along the Hillsborough River encourages people to get out and walk."

The City of Tampa welcomes the support of the *Steps* initiative as they take another step towards completing The Tampa Riverwalk.

Tampa Riverwalk Donor Takes Pride in His Community



Sandy MacKinnon and his wife Dottie Berger-MacKinnon at the Mayor's Beautification Program painting party.

Sandy MacKinnon, CEO of Yale Lift Trucks of Florida and Georgia, has caught the excitement of The Tampa Riverwalk, so much so that he and his wife Dottie Berger-MacKinnon recently committed \$250,000 to the Friends of the Riverwalk. MacKinnon moved to Tampa 27 years ago upon acquiring a Yale Lift Trucks dealership. He takes great pride in the area and believes that we all have a responsibility to give back to our community.

MacKinnon encourages others to support the project because he believes "It will bring Tampa to a new forefront. This is a marvelous project and one that, when completed, will be the pride of every citizen of this community."

Sandy is heavily involved in the Tampa Bay community serving as a board member of the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise Florida, Inc., the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center, and as secretary of the Tampa Bay Convention and Visitor's Bureau Board.

For more information about the Riverwalk and this publication, please contact:
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Did You Know?

- ▶ The next segment of the Riverwalk at the Platt Street Bridge began construction in April. The official groundbreaking took place on April 17, 2007 in USF Park on the Riverwalk. Construction is expected to be complete in approximately one year.
- ▶ The Riverwalk segment at the Brorein Street Bridge is currently in design by EDAW, the landscape architectural firm that also completed the Riverwalk Master Plan. The firm will soon begin designing Kennedy Plaza, an exciting over water segment reaching from the Sheraton Hotel to Curtis Hixon Park.
- ▶ The Tampa Riverwalk is quickly making headway. You can be a part of the progress by becoming a 'Friend of the Riverwalk.' Visit the website at www.friendsoftheriverwalk.com/ for more information.

Students from the Rampello Downtown Partnership School illustrated their ideas for the Tampa Riverwalk. The drawing below is by Amanda, a fourth grader at the school.

