

Cumberland Park, Nashville, Tennessee

Along the east bank of the Cumberland River, adjacent to downtown Nashville, the Nashville Bridge Company was originally founded as a bridge builder in the 1890s. In 1915, the company converted to shipbuilding, and by the 1960s, it was said to be the world's largest builder of inland barges. In 1996, the facility closed when it was determined a new stadium for the Tennessee Titans would be built on a portion of the property. However, the closure left the riverfront portion of the property sitting vacant. Under the New Riverfront Park Plan, it was determined that new public parks, open space and recreational amenities would be added along the riverfront. In 2008, due to the historical uses of the property, Environmental site assessments were conducted utilizing EPA Region 4 Targeted Brownfields Assessment assistance. Additional assessment and technical oversight by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Division of Remediation (TDEC-DoR) was funded using EPA 128(a) brownfields funds. The assessments identified several areas impacted by polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, lead and arsenic that required cleanup. The TDEC-DoR and the Metro Parks and Recreation Department worked cooperatively to develop and implement plans that incorporated a combination of soil removals, engineered caps and institutional controls to address environmental concerns and provide for safe reuse of the property.

Today, the Cumberland Play Park is an innovative play space for children and families located on the East Bank of the Cumberland River in downtown Nashville. It is a portion of an overall project to revitalize approximately 3 miles on both the East and West bank of the river. The park includes a local stone climbing wall, sand play areas, mazes made out of plants, outdoor seating, meandering paths and other interactive play areas. As a part of the project, adaptive reuse, water harvesting for irrigation and improved biodiversity were included in this brownfield redevelopment. Each year 1 million gallons of stormwater is captured and reused for irrigation. Over 1.6 acres of meadow and riparian grasses were restored. There is also an outdoor amphitheater for 1,200 people and the historic renovation of the Bridge Building. The Bridge Building was built in 1908 for the Nashville Bridge Company and now is home to a MetroParks office, an event space and ground floor amenities.



The Nashville Riverfront when it was home to an active barge manufacturing facility.



Today the east bank of the Nashville Riverfront is home to Cumberland Play Park.