

# Very Brief Summary of "American Adventures"

*Operation Bootstrap* is an economic revitalization plan that calls for the City of Petersburg to use its most valuable resource - its long, rich and diverse history - as the basis for a complex of historic theme parks. When complete, they will attract over 800,000 visitors a year into the city.

[www.Petersburg-Parks.com](http://www.Petersburg-Parks.com)

This was conceived as a community project, so the information must be freely available to everyone. All of the underlying reports and documents have been published to the above website. Consult them for details. There is a lot of information, so start with *Introduction to Operation Bootstrap*, which provides an excellent overview.

## Goals

Everything from structures to props must be historically accurate, but there must be an abundance of activities and entertainment that can provide a fun-filled day. The emphasis must always be on "DO," not "VIEW."

## Project Evolution

The original premise was to show our local history, so all of the earlier reports refer to the project as the *Petersburg Parks*. It soon became apparent that our history is a microcosm of our nation's history. Everything that happened anywhere in the country happened here, often on a grand scale. This resulted in the parks being renamed. The result is a national attraction.



## Business Plan

The estimated cost of constructing the parks is \$24.5 million. The Business Plan calls for maximizing potential while minimizing risk, so the parks will be built in four phases. Each must be profitable before going on to the next. See the report and spreadsheet *Financial Consequences*.

## Economic Revitalization

The City of Petersburg will benefit greatly from increased tax revenues. The report *Fostering Economic Revitalization* provides a plan for restoring the retail economy and creating new locally owned industries to supply the park's many needs. The report *Penetrating Petersburg* tells how to get park visitors up Sycamore Street to shop. The parks will employ 493 people.

## Implementation

The city owns all the essential real estate, but has no plan for how to use it. *Operation Bootstrap* fills that need. Together they make an outstanding package. It can be sold to another party or the city can enter into a joint venture or partnership with another party. The city puts up the land. The others guys do the rest.

## Recommendations

The city should form a Petersburg Parks development corporation and transfer all the land to it. It can, in turn, use the land to secure the financing. Thus there is no cost to the taxpayer. A year after the completion of Phase 4, the parks will have paid off their construction loans and will be generating an annual profit of over \$30 million. After a reserve for expansion, the balance can go to the city.

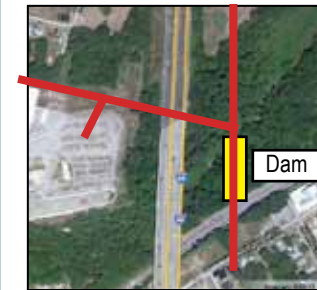


The parks will be the goose that lays the golden eggs



## Lake Petersburg

The former Petersburg harbor is silted up. The water is dirty and covered with algae. The water level is always low, revealing banks covered with ugly mud. These problems can only be solved by isolating this "swamp" from the Appomattox River and transforming it into a scenic lake. A mechanical aeration system will add air to the water, providing the means for it to clean itself. The water level can be controlled. This results in a far more beautiful and healthier waterfront than can ever be accomplished through dredging. For details, see the *Appomattox River Development Plan*.



## New Access Road

Witton Street will be extended to go below the I-95 bridge, where it will connect with a new access road linking Magazine Street to Bollingbrook Street at Crater Road. This provides easy access to Pocahontas residents and an unobtrusive way for many goods to be delivered to the parks. Rolfe Street can also be used. The land next to the river can be used for a new harbor if the river is ever dredged. The area south of it will be used for employee parking.

## Main Street America



The parks will eventually require interior space for stores, restaurants, attractions and hotel rooms. This space will be provided by *Main Street America*. Due to its large size, it is treated as a separate project.

## Evolution of Transportation



Horse-drawn vehicles will be extensively used. They can carry visitors between the parks and the city. Canoes, batteaus and other boats can be used on the diversion channel and Lake Petersburg.

## Landscaping



The extensive landscaping plan focuses on providing food for wildlife while creating a beautiful environment. We will have so many species of trees, shrubs, bushes and flowers that our parks will be a botanical garden. All will be identified.

## Wildlife



The parks will provide a safe habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. Rabbits, squirrels and chipmunks should be abundant. Our lake will be filled with aquatic birds. We may even add beaver.

## Phase 1 Petersburg Railroads

The parks cover 25 city blocks, so trains must be used to transport visitors between them. Petersburg has the most extensive railroad history of any city in the world. It is the only city to have five railroads in operation at one time. They will be a major attraction in their own right.



The recently renovated Union Station will be the passenger depot.

The east bays of Southside Station must be rebuilt to provide space for essential support services: snack bar, gift shop and several museums.



The Petersburg Railroad was the third in the U.S., first in the South and the nation's first interstate railroad. It will be put into operation. The parks will build their own locomotives. To minimize initial costs, Phases 1 and 2 use the inner loop, which circles Lake Petersburg. It is a mile long.

## Lafayette Park

This large park will run from Union Station to Lake Petersburg. This will be a truly beautiful park that will host family picnics. It will be supported by a "tobacco warehouse" that functions as a convenience store. It provides a wonderful location and setting for many major entertainment events.

## Street Activity

There will be horse-drawn vehicles. Street musicians and comedy acts will provide entertainment. Vendors will hawk food, soft drinks and souvenirs. Artists will provide caricatures and portraits.

## Other Attractions

Miss Pitty-Pat's Place will be an 1810 home with a kitchen garden and berry patch. Our many horses will require a livery stable and blacksmith shop. There will be pony rides and horses available for rent.

## PHASE 1 PROJECTIONS

Phase 1 is budgeted at \$4.27 million. It projects 120,000 annual visitors and will employ 84 people. Net income\* is projected at \$3.8 million and operating expenses at \$3.19 million. This results in a profit of \$647,870.

## Phase 2 Early America



The *Appomattox Indian Village* will honor the Native Americans. It will be staffed by them.



Fort Henry was our nation's first gateway to the West. It has an incredible history.

## Battle for Petersburg



This park will contain both Union and Confederate lines. This will show the vast differences in resources. For example, the Union Army had observation balloons, railroad guns and its own railroad. The "Mosby's Raiders" cavalry unit will continually provide reconnaissance by riding around the parks and even the city. Visitors can live like the soldiers by renting an army tent for the night. The opposing lines provide conflict, the essence of dramatic confrontations. The camps will have an outdoor "mess."

## Railroad



The train now has three stops and thus a longer travel time. There will be many more visitors. We will have to add a second train to transport them. It will be the 1838 City Point Railroad. The locomotive was the new Jervis design and it pulled tandem style passenger cars.

## PHASE 2 PROJECTIONS

Phase 2 is budgeted at \$4.3 million. It projects 300,000 annual visitors and will employ 212 people. Net income\* is projected at \$12.9 million and operating expenses at \$6.71 million. This results in a profit of \$6.19 million.

## Phase 3 Railroads



The main railroad line will be added, resulting in the outer loop. It will now take an hour for trains to circle the parks and there will be many more visitors. We will have to add two more trains. One will be *City of Petersburg*, purchased by the city in 1852.

## Peter's Point Nature Center



Petersburg is extremely fortunate to have a large wilderness area downtown. A forest runs along the north edge of Pocahontas Island. It is 300 feet wide and extends for a half mile. The Nature Center will have a wildlife rehabilitation area, a Virginia Wildlife zoo, an incredible playground for the children and a camp ground for scout groups. There will be canoe rentals for use on the diversion channel.

## Freedom Village



This will honor the city's unsurpassed Afro-American heritage. The village of Pocahontas was the nation's first Free Black community. It will be represented. Various activities and entertainment will be provided. There will be rides on bateaus (river boats), as they were built, owned and operated by Pocahontas rivermen.

## PHASE 3 PROJECTIONS

Phase 3 is budgeted at \$5.87 million. It projects 450,000 annual visitors and will employ 327 people. Net income\* is projected at \$23.85 million and operating expenses at \$10.15 million. This results in a profit of \$13.7 million.

## Phase 4 Railroads



This phase will require two more trains. One of them will be pulled by the *Appomattox*. This engine was built in Petersburg by the Appomattox Locomotive Works.



We will rebuild this factory and it will maintain our fleet of locomotives. Some of its original machinery is still in the city. Support shops will maintain passenger and freight cars.



When not in use, our locomotives will be stored in the new roundhouse, which we will build. Petersburg will have the most extensive collection of early railroads in the world.



In Phase 3, we will reenact the *Great Locomotive Chase* of the Civil War. It was one of the most famous railroad events in American history. It is expected to be a major draw for tourists.

## City of Industry / General Expansion

In Phase 4, we will also introduce *City of Industry*, which will focus on tobacco and cotton. This phase also calls for all of our theme parks to be enlarged.

## Future Expansion

Ever-increasing admissions will require future expansion. If the Appomattox River is ever dredged, then *Petersburg Harbor* will be constructed east of the Lake Petersburg dam. It should offer steamboat rides to City Point.

## PHASE 4 PROJECTIONS

Phase 4 is budgeted at \$8.6 million. It projects 800,000 annual visitors and will employ 493 people. Net income\* is projected at \$49.3 million and operating expenses at \$15.8 million. This results in a profit of \$33.4 million.