

Introduction to
**OPERATION
BOOTSTRAP**

Proposed Downtown Petersburg, Virginia
Revitalization Program



The Goose that Lays the Golden Eggs

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Operation Bootstrap was conceived as, and is designed to be a community project. This report and the many earlier ones that set forth the details are easily available to anyone who wants them. They have all been published as PDF files that may be downloaded from:

www.Petersburg-Parks.com

Introduction

For the past half century, the City of Petersburg, Virginia has talked about a riverfront development, but to my knowledge, it has never developed a viable plan for it. The Appomattox River is silted up and it is widely accepted that such a project could not begin until the river is dredged. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began the \$9 million dredging in 1990, but a few dead fish revealed environmental issues and the work was suspended. Environmental studies were required. They were not completed until October 2002 - 12 years later. The federal funding for dredging had been lost, as the law requires that funds be used within a given amount of time.

No dredging will take place in the foreseeable future. During the past few years, Uncle Sam has allocated \$900,000 for environmental and developmental studies. These must be done sequentially and each will take from 3 to 5 years. Thus it will be 6 to 10 years before the cost will be known. Only then can appropriations for dredging be requested. Our nation is now undergoing an unprecedented financial crisis. Expenses are running far in excess of income, resulting in multi-trillion dollar deficits. Toward bringing the finances into balance, the U.S. Congress is drastically cutting a great many spending programs. The U.S. Corps of Engineers website lists 60 dredging projects in Virginia alone. Many of them are essential to the transport of goods and thus have high priority. Non-essential projects - such as the dredging of the Appomattox River - have much lower priority. In view of these circumstances, it is highly doubtful that Congress will allocate money to its dredging. *Operation Bootstrap* provides a highly viable alternative plan, one that is not dependent on dredging and that can be implemented within a fairly short period of time at no cost to the city.

The title was inspired by the term “bootstrapping,” which refers to a group of metaphors that share a common meaning: a self-sustaining process that proceeds without external help. The most common usage is “booting up a computer.” *Operation Bootstrap* recognizes that the city cannot depend on Uncle Sam and that there is no Fairy Godmother. It recognizes that far too much time has passed with nothing being done. It calls for us to:

Do what we can with what we have and DO IT NOW.

Operation Bootstrap is an economic revitalization plan. It utilizes the city’s greatest asset - its long, colorful and diverse history - to attract visitors into the city through a complex of historic theme parks. A large critical mass is essential to attracting large numbers of visitors. This is a case of “the bigger, the better.” Such necessity demands that this be a big project.

Paramount Studios built King’s Dominion for one purpose: TO GET MONEY OUT OF VIRGINIA AND SEND IT BACK TO CALIFORNIA.

Operation Bootstrap’s goal is the exact opposite. It is designed to attract money from outside the city into the city and then keep as much of it as it can in Petersburg. The parks are not an end in themselves, but rather the means to bring people into the city as the mandatory first step in revitalizing our economy. When complete, the parks should attract at least 800,000 visitors a year.

Operation Bootstrap includes a plan to encourage park visitors to shop downtown. This will provide an enormous boost to the retail economy. The many needs of the parks will foster the creation of new locally-owned manufacturing companies. The parks will employ around 500 people. That’s a lot of jobs. Best of all, these jobs require people skills rather than advanced education or technical skills, which is rare in today’s job market.

The construction cost of the parks (exclusive of the *Main Street America* shopping center) is budgeted at \$24.4 million, about the cost of one *King’s Dominion* roller coaster. One goal is to maximize potential while minimizing risk, so the plan calls for the parks to be built in four phases, over a term of roughly five years. The plan also calls for 100 percent outside financing, so there will be no out-of-pocket expense to the city and no cost to the taxpayers.

The completed parks are expected to generate annual profits in excess of \$30 million. If the parks are owned by the City of Petersburg, then much of that money can go into its coffers and can be used for many things - everything from community improvements to supporting education. City income will also be greatly increased by the admission tax, retail sales and greater real estate taxes due to rapidly increasing property values. Petersburg will once again be seen as a dynamic city, one that will attract new residents and new businesses.

Project Evolution

Operation Bootstrap - Project Description was released in September 2011. It was followed by other reports that addressed many different subjects. Development continues and this has resulted in a better understanding of key issues and more clearly defining the attractions. All of this information was incorporated into earlier drafts of this report. This latest draft presents some of the information in a different order to make it more easily understandable. It also includes new material. The parks will continually evolve and grow. Who knows what the future may bring? This report focuses on what is needed to get started.

Methodology

Operation Bootstrap is the result of a unique approach. It treats the city of Petersburg as a consumer product and then sets forth a plan for developing, packaging and marketing it in accordance with well-proven procedures and practices. A viable business and marketing plan must address the following subjects:

- Market Identification**
- Define the product**
- Review the competition**
- Design the product for the market**
- Develop a marketing plan**
- Maximize potential and minimize risk**
- Test the product**
- Once proven, commercially exploit it**

Market Identification



Appomattox River

Petersburg's past success was based on its being a major trade and transportation center. The early colonists were only able to go inland as far as the rapids, created by a change in the geological substrata. What became Petersburg was situated on the falls of the Appomattox River. It is a very narrow and shallow river. Goods were transported between Petersburg and the deep water port at City Point (now part of Hopewell) by shallow-draft boats called batteaus.

As Petersburg grew, it continually tried to keep the Appomattox River clear of obstructions. The river was dredged numerous times. In 1838, the new City Point Railroad linked the city with the deep water port of that name, now part of Hopewell. That same year, the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad linked the city with its deep water port at Walthall. The railroads provided far more dependable service. The Appomattox River has never been and will never be a viable means of transportation. Even if it is dredged, it will silt up again.

There has never been a comprehensive plan for the use of the Appomattox River once it is dredged, if it ever is. Common wisdom is that a marina will attract the boating community. That is a false premise. Petersburg is much too far off the beaten path to attract boats. That is well proven by the Hopewell Yacht Club, which attracts no more than a dozen transient boats a year. Most of the Appomattox River is 175 to 200 feet wide. Some sections are only 100 feet wide. Bringing up a small 40-foot yacht would be like threading a needle.

The most such a marina could hope to accomplish is to house a couple of dozen small boats, but that isn't even viable. The Appomattox Small Boat Harbor is a mile and a half downstream, about two blocks north of the new Temple Avenue extension. The boats are owned by fishermen who use them on the James River. Why should they move upstream, further away from their destination?



Appomattox Small Boat Harbor



Interstate 95

On the other hand, Interstate 95 is the primary north-south traffic corridor on the East Coast. It connects with Interstate 85 just south of the city and it runs southwest. It was this ideal position in relation to the highways that led Walmart to construct its enormous distribution center near their intersection.

Interstate 95 is next to the Petersburg historic district. It is traveled by over 60,000 cars a day. Many are Richmond commuters, but it is also used by many millions of state-to-state travelers each year. It certainly makes Petersburg easily accessible by car.

The city has a wonderful new bus station that can service tourists.

The Norfolk Southern Railroad is now constructing new tracks between Norfolk and Petersburg. Here they will join with those of the CSX railroad. This effort is the beginning of new, highly improved railroad passenger service that will extend from Boston, Massachusetts to Jacksonville, Florida. A new passenger terminal will be built in Petersburg, making it easily accessible by rail.

This track will later be used for the high-speed rail system that is now in development.



Modern high-speed train

**Does Petersburg direct its economic revitalization efforts toward attracting river traffic that may consist of a dozen boats a year
or
road and rail traffic that can provide many millions of visitors a year?**

Product Concept



Jamestown



Colonial Williamsburg

A “theme park” is any attraction that uses buildings, landscaping and other resources to convey a theme. In contemporary usage, the term is often interchanged with “amusement park,” which is an attraction that specializes in thrill rides, like roller coasters. *King’s Dominion* is an amusement park. *Jamestown Festival Park* and *Colonial Williamsburg* are outstanding examples of historic theme parks. Both are faithful reproductions of important periods of American history.

Walt Disney envisioned an entirely new type of park - one that families could enjoy together. *Disneyland* opened in 1955. It was a complex of amusement parks, but each had a theme - *Adventure Land*, *Frontier Land*, *Fantasy Land*, *Tomorrow Land* and *Main Street USA*. Unlike previous amusement parks, which were designed for teenagers and young adults, Disney rides were made to provide family entertainment, rather than thrills. They were suitable for everyone from young kids to their grandparents. It became the most popular attraction in the world, a title it held for many years before being surpassed by the much larger *Disney World* in Orlando, Florida. Its success resulted in other amusement parks using themes. *Busch Gardens Williamsburg* opened in 1975. It is divided into themes representing various countries in the United Kingdom and Europe. Thus there are both historic and amusement park type theme parks.

Jamestown Festival Park and *Colonial Williamsburg* present only one period of American history. We will depict many periods. This will result in far wider and much greater market appeal. The great shortcoming of these parks is that they are static attractions. There is nothing for visitors to do but look at reconstructions of old buildings. In the case of *Colonial Williamsburg*, this involves walking vast distances. Boring. Boring! Boring!!!

American Adventures introduces an entirely new type of theme park, one that combines the best of all that have preceded it. Like Jamestown and Williamsburg, we will go to extraordinary lengths to ensure the historic accuracy of everything we present.

Walt Disney did a lot of things right, so we will follow his example by providing an abundance of activities and entertainment, but, unlike Disney, we will not rely on high-tech rides, but rather on things that are historically appropriate to each park. The parks will be staffed by a great many people, who represent those of yesteryear. We have two goals: to educate and to entertain. We want to commemorate our past through highly realistic presentations, but we also want to provide our customers with interesting, active and fun-filled adventures. The emphasis must always be on:

“DO,” not “VIEW.”

This “Living History” type presentation has often been used on a small scale. It has never before been used on such a large one. Like Disney, we are the innovator and the uniqueness of our attraction will be a major factor in its success.

Packaging / Trade Name

“Packaging” is an advertising / marketing term used to describe developing a suitable container for a consumer product. It generally includes creating a trade name and advertising campaign. The term “repackaging” can refer to simply changing the cosmetics of the package, or it can mean a totally new approach to marketing. This involves giving the product a new name, new image, new package and new advertising campaign.

This project began as the *Petersburg Parks*. The original premise was that it would present our local history and the many previously written reports refer to them by that name. During the course of development, it became increasingly obvious that our history goes far beyond local interest, so that premise was re-examined.

Everything that happened anywhere in our nation during the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries happened here too, often on a grand scale. Plus, Petersburg saw many of our national “firsts,” which resulted in unique resources and events. Petersburg’s history is a microcosm of our nation’s history. No other American city can come even remotely close to matching it. We have an epic story, but it is not accurately reflected by the name *Petersburg Parks*. The parks required a name that reflects our national heritage. This led to repackaging them as:



American Adventures logo

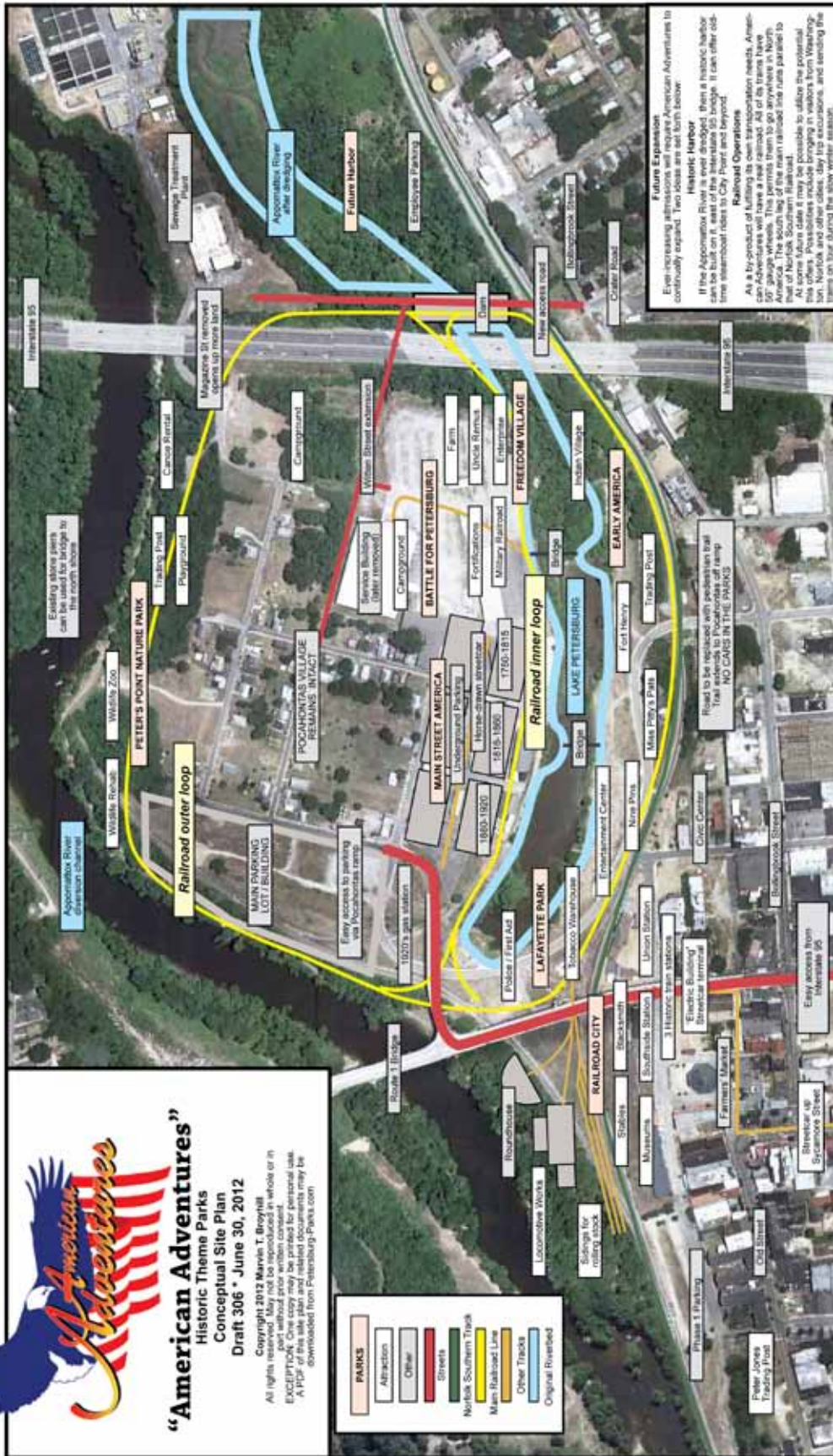
This new trade name emphasizes the national importance of the parks and suggests that it can be an exciting, interesting and fun place to visit. The upgrading of the image from a local attraction to a national one increases the market potential by a quantum leap.

The use of the term “adventure” is especially appropriate. Jamestown was the first permanent English colony in North America. It was founded by the Virginia Company of London. Those who invested in it were called “Adventurers of Purse.” Those who actually came to the colony were called “Adventurers of Person.” Genealogist Fred Dorman’s classic book on the First Families of Virginia is titled, *Adventures of Purse and Person*.

We are presenting those adventures.

(This author has registered the internet domain name America-Adventures.com)

Product Overview



The Site



Site plan
Park boundary is shown in blue
Main access roads are shown in yellow
New streets are shown in red

The parks will cover the area outlined in blue above. The Interstate 95 bridge that spans the Appomattox River goes over the parks complex. Southbound visitors can see it from their car just before encountering the exit to the parks. No attraction - anywhere - has such an ideal location in relation to a major interstate highway. This will result in many spontaneous visits.

The September 2011 *Operation Bootstrap* plan called for the use of the land on the west side of Interstate 95 and stated that the site contained 121 acres. It was later discovered that the City of Petersburg also owns 28 acres on the east side of Interstate 95, which is incorporated into the above plan. This will bring the size of the parks complex to 149 acres. That's only 11 acres smaller than the original 160 acre *Disneyland* in California. It entertained 18 million guests in 2010. Half of *Disneyland* is used for parking, thus reducing the size of the actual parks to 80 acres. We anticipate far fewer people and will need a lot less parking. We are allowing 30 acres for it, thus reducing the net size of our parks to 119 acres. The *American Adventures* parks complex will actually be about 50% larger than *Disneyland*.

Access

In constructing the new Martin Luther King Bridge, the Virginia Department of Transportation provided an outstanding new entrance into the City of Petersburg by widening and improving Adams Street. Visitors exit Interstate 95, go west three blocks on Washington Street, turn right on Adams Street, and drive six blocks to the new bridge, where they take the Pocahontas off-ramp. This brings them to the former Atlantic Coast Line rail yard, which will be the main parking lot for the parks's complex. This route provides very easy access and minimizes the disruption to downtown traffic.

Parking



The Main parking lot will be on land formerly owned by the Atlantic Coast Line and Roper Lumber. It will accommodate over 800 cars.

The west end of the Roper Brothers lot contains 80 parking places. This can provide temporary parking until the land is needed by the *Main Street America* shopping complex.

As the number of visitors increases, the Atlantic Coast Line lot will not provide sufficient parking, so a multi-story parking building must be built on this lot. It will probably be several stories high.

Main Street America will be four stories tall, thus requiring a substantial foundation. Because the ground is sedimentary, long columns / piers will probably be required. Since they will be in place, it will be relatively inexpensive to use the top ten or 12 feet for an underground parking lot. It can provide easy, convenient, all-weather access to restaurants, stores and hotels. This will really be appreciated in the winter.

Since costs may be comparable It may be wise to construct this prior to the ACL lot parking building, as it gets the foundation for *Main Street America* into place, permitting quicker development. In the interim, cars can park on both the garage level and the street level, until the latter is used developed by *Main Street America*.

New Access Roads / Employee Parking



Route of new access road

A new access road will run from the intersection of Bollingbrook Street and Crater Road to the sewage treatment plant. Trucks will now be able to access it directly without having to drive through the village. Magazine Street will no longer be needed and should be eliminated. This frees up land that can be used to expand the parks complex.

Witton Street will be extended to connect to this new access road. It will provide Pocahontas residents with quicker access to Crater Road then the ramp. It also provides an excellent way to reach downtown if the ramp from the Martin Luther King bridge is clogged up with park visitors on summer weekends.

These roads will also be needed for access to the park's service building and warehouse. This permits delivery trucks to come and go without disrupting park operations. A parking lot for park employees will be located at the Bollingbrook end of the new access road.

This leaves the north end of this 28 acres lot - next to the river - free for harbor development if the river is ever dredged. The access road Then provide an entrance to the harbor complex.

The Parks Complex

This plan calls for the following theme parks / attractions:

Early America focuses on the 17th Century. It will contain the *Appomattox Indian Village* and *Fort Henry*, which became Abraham Wood's trading post. It was our nation's first "Gateway to the West."

Lafayette Park commemorates 18th Century events. Petersburg was occupied by the British in May 1781, but were chased out by the French general. He inspired the name of this multi-function park.

Freedom Village honors Petersburg's amazing Afro-American History.

Battle for Petersburg was the longest battle of the Civil War. When Petersburg fell, the Confederacy fell with it.

Petersburg Railroads. Our city has the most extensive railroad history of any city in the world. All six of our antebellum trains will be put back into operation.

Appomattox Locomotive Works will be a fully functional factory of the 1850s, the only one in the country.

City of Industry presents our industrial heritage.

Evolution of Transportation. This is a theme operation, not a theme park, as many vehicles will be used throughout the parks complex.

Peter's Point Nature Center will have a wildlife rehabilitation facility and Virginia wildlife zoo.

Main Street America will show the evolution of our city. It will be three blocks long and provides interior space needed by restaurant, stores and hotels.

Market Identification

This report began by stating the importance of defining the product and identifying the market for it. Now that we have defined the product, what is its market? Who will it attract?

- 1. Tourists.** Virginia is a major tourist destination because of its many historic resources. *American Adventures* has so much more to offer than Jamestown and Colonial Williamsburg that it may even surpass them in admissions.
- 2. Family Day Trips.** There is very little for families to do in Virginia, as least as a family unit. *American Adventures* will fill that enormous need, as it offers something for everyone - kids and parents. Our parks provide an escape into yesteryear, a quieter time free of traffic jams, billboards and constantly ringing telephones. They provide a beautiful and unique environment and they will be a lot of fun. This may end up as our biggest market, as many families will return several times a year. It was the filling of this need that inspired Walt to build *Disneyland*.
- 3. Educational Field Trips.** This is a huge market and if *American Adventures* continually ensures that everything it presents is historically accurate, then it will become the state's leading educational field trip destination. It will eventually pull in educational field trips from other states.
- 4. Civil War Buffs.** Petersburg has long promoted its Civil War heritage, but its battlefield has always competed with dozens of others. People who visit the battlefield rarely come downtown. No matter what else they may see, the Civil War buffs will not miss the *Battle for Petersburg* theme park, which brings them downtown.
- 5. Railroad Fans.** There are millions of railroad fans, as proven by the 54 train magazines, the 100+ railroad museums, the dozen working historic railroads and over 4,500 hobby shops that sell model trains. Railroad enthusiasts travel extensive distances to see trains. No other city in the entire world can rival the extensive railroad heritage of Petersburg. No other city ever had five railroads in operation at one time. No other city has three authentic train stations. Ours are all in one block. Our railroads will become a world-class attraction that can bring in visitors from as far away as Europe and Asia.
- 6. Nature Lovers.** Our *Peter's Point Nature Center* will be a wildlife preserve, a wildlife rehabilitation center, and a Virginia wildlife zoo. *Lafayette Park* will be a garden paradise. Throughout *American Adventures*, there will be a large variety of native trees, flowers and bushes.
- 7. Horse Lovers.** *Evolution of Transportation* will have a great many horse-drawn vehicles that will be pulled by many different breeds. Transportation museums show static exhibits. Ours will all be operational. The variety of our horses can be a major attraction in its own right. We will have pony rides, old-time livery stables, blacksmith shops and horses for rent for use on our bridal paths and the Appomattox River Trail. Many people will come just to see and ride the horses.

Disneyland was built to be a family day trip destination. It is also a popular tourist attraction (two markets). *King's Dominion* appeals to young people seeking thrill rides (one market). Jamestown and Colonial Williamsburg appeal to the tourist market and are also popular field trip destinations (two markets). Virginia's many Civil War battlefields appeal only to the buffs (one market).

**American Adventures is one-of-a-kind,
as it is designed to appeal to SEVEN different markets.
No other attraction - anywhere - appeals to so many large markets.**

Viability

In the late 1990s, Disney CEO Michael Eisner wanted to build a huge new theme park in Northern Virginia, honoring our nation's history. *Disney's America* was strongly supported by outgoing governor Wilder and incoming governor Allen. Virginia was going to build a four-lane highway to the park.



Disney's America site plan

Many people objected to the name. They said it suggests that Disney owns America. The historians went rabid. They screamed that the location was too close to an obscure Civil War battlefield. They accused Disney of wanting to “Mickey Mouse” our history.

The Disney concept drawing for the Civil War park is shown at right. I know little about the Civil War, but am relatively sure that such a fort never existed. It is a fantasy fort, probably designed to house an audio-animatronics ride, such as *Pirates of the Caribbean*. State officials were bombarded by lobbyists trying to block the project and there were dozens of lawsuits filed to block it. Disney abandoned the project.

Disney is the most successful entertainment company in the world. *Disney's America* would have surely cost at least \$500 million, and that was 20 years ago. Company executives would not have been willing to make such a huge financial commitment unless they were absolutely sure of success. That conclusion was almost surely based on extensive market studies.

Disney had been welcomed with open arms at Orlando, Paris and Tokyo. It expected the same in Virginia, but failed to anticipate how its presentation would be received by history-conscious Virginia.

We will avoid that mistake. There will be nothing “Mickey Mouse” about *American Adventures*. Its attractions will be authentic and its activities and entertainment will be appropriate.



Disney's America Civil War park

Competition

No other city in the United States has such a long, diverse and colorful history and so many surviving historic resources. No other city has the capability of reconstructing so many important historic events at the actual location where they took place, and no city in the world can match our railroad history. This precludes *American Adventures* from ever having any competition. This results in the dream of every capitalist - a monopoly.

Pocahontas Village

Pocahontas Village presents a unique situation. The Appomattox Indians were wiped out almost three centuries ago and the Civil War soldiers are long gone. Pocahontas has survived. It is an active community and its residents include descendants of people who lived there two hundred years ago.

Freedom Village will commemorate their heritage, so, at a very early stage of development, there should be a community meeting of Pocahontas residents where they can contribute ideas and suggestions as to what the park should contain and what activities and entertainment it should offer. Those views should be respected and honored as much as possible. As the plan progresses, the community should be updated and consulted, as its help and support can contribute greatly to the success of this effort.

The parks will be built in four phases. The first two should not affect the Pocahontas residents, but the third phase calls for the railroad to circle the village. The September 2011 *Operation Bootstrap* plan discusses the impact that will have on the lives of residents. It calls for various means to ensure their privacy and maintain their way of life. The biggest problem will be access, as once the parks are complete, the ramp off the Martin Luther King Bridge may be backed up with customers waiting to get in, especially on summer weekends. The new access roads, just described, not only overcome this problem, but provide better and easier access.

Operation Bootstrap also recognizes that, no matter what steps are taken, some residents will not be happy with the situation. It suggested setting up a program whereby *American Adventures* would purchase the property of any resident who wanted to move. To compensate them for the inconvenience, it recommends a purchase price equal to twice the tax value. *American Adventures* does not require one inch of this land and isolated lots will be of absolutely no value to the parks themselves. This policy is solely motivated by the desire to meet moral responsibilities. The purchased houses can be rented to park employees, so this should result in no financial loss to the parks.

Chesapeake Bay Watershed

The Appomattox River is part of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Usage regulations are primary concerned with impervious surfaces. They are man-made things such as roads, sidewalks, and rooftops that prevent rain from being absorbed into the soil, resulting in greater water run off. Although *American Adventures* will be adding *Main Street America*, a parking building and attractions, it will also remove the many structures and large parking lots on the former Roper Lumber lot. Preliminary estimates indicate that the amount of impervious space will actually be reduced, which is good.

There are also setback requirements. A multi-story parking building which will eventually be built on the former Atlantic Coast Line lot. The Appomattox River Trail and the railroad tracks are between this lot and the river, and span 75 to 100 feet. This may meet the setback requirement. If not, the footprint of the building must be adjusted. If so, then it may be possible to cantilever upper floors, thus regaining the space.

100 Year Flood Plain

Some parts of the *American Adventures* site is in the 100 year flood plain, but so is all of Old Street. The Appomattox River experienced its largest known flood in 1972, and it covered Old Street with six feet of water. Floods begin with heavy rain in the mountains, the result of a major storm or hurricane. It takes the rising waters about three days to reach Petersburg, so there is plenty of notice. The water rises slowly. When it recedes, everything is covered with mud, so an extensive clean-up is required. I understand that this flood laid down the bulk of the silt that covers the harbor today. Apparently the 1972 flood had little current, as no structural damage was reported.

There are restrictions in regard to building in flood plains. Essentially, they require that habitable space (residential and commercial) be at least one foot above the flood plain. Tourist attractions are not regarded as habitable space. City officials have stated that the site for *Main Street America* is in the 100 year flood plain. This is not correct. In 2000, Roper Lumber had Pocahontas Island surveyed. State-of-the art technology revealed that the entire *Main Street America* site is above the flood plain.

Based on the earlier belief that it was in the flood plain, it was recommended that the site be raised several feet by installing an underground garage. Although that is no longer necessary, the parking garage should still be installed as it will function as the foundation, which will still have to be built. It provides additional parking and easy all-weather access to stores, restaurants and hotels.

Seasonal Fluctuation

King's Dominion probably entertains three million guests a year. It is open during the three summer months when the kids are out of school, but tries to extend its season by being open on a few weekends during the spring and fall. Disregarding the weekends, *King's Dominion* averages a million people per month.

Disneyland is open all year because of the mild California winters. It was built as a family day trip destination. During the summer, it is so packed that there are long waiting lines for rides because the kids are out of school. Once school starts, the traffic drops drastically. It is still reasonably steady in the fall and spring, but the winter is very slow. *Disney's America* was to be located in Northern Virginia. Management had originally planned for it to close for the three winter months, but later decided to close it for four.

American Adventures differs from both of these parks. *King's Dominion* services one market - kids under 24 years old. The Disney parks were designed for family day trips, generally families with small children. *American Adventures* is designed to serve seven markets. Many tourists, railroad fans and Civil War buffs are retired or they take their vacations during the "off season" when attractions are not so crowded. Educational field trips are a very big market. Many classes make their trips in October and November. They make many more in the spring. *American Adventures* will also be a very popular, year-round day trip destination for families within a hour-or-so's driving distance.

Petersburg benefits from extremely mild winters due to the influence of the warm waters of the Gulf Stream. In fact, it is in a different climate zone than Northern Virginia which was to have housed *Disney's America*. Petersburg's winter temperatures are often 10 degrees warmer than those in Northern Virginia. We enjoy a surprisingly number of warm days even during January and February.

Because of these factors, *American Adventures* will be open year-round. The three-month summer season will certainly be the busiest. It will probably account for 65 percent of the annual admissions. The three winter months will be the slowest and will probably contribute only five percent of the total. Rather than laying off employees, we will have them perform our annual maintenance or put them to work on the next phase. The spring and fall seasons will each probably account for about 15 percent of the annual admissions.

Percentages don't provide the information that we need for planning park capacity. We need some solid numbers. Toward creating a guideline, assume a base figure of 100,000 annual admissions. That means that 65,000 people will attend during the three summer months. It contains 12 weeks, which is 84 days. That results in an average of 744 people per day. For planning purposes, we will round it up to 0.75% of the annual attendance a day. Parents don't work on Saturday and Sunday, so traffic will be higher than average, perhaps twice the rounded up average. That's roughly 1,500 people a day per 100,000 annual admissions on really busy days.

Potential

The September 2011 *Operation Bootstrap* report projected that upon completion of Phase 4, *American Adventures* (then called Petersburg Parks) would attract 800,000 people a year. That, and the various interim projections, are believed to be very conservative. *Disney's America* was probably designed for an annual attendance of 10 million. Closer to home, the Petersburg Museums now enjoy 20,000 visitors a year. The National Park Service wants to use Southside Station as a Central Virginia Civil War Center. It estimates that it will draw at least 250,000 people a year. With the *Battle for Petersburg* theme park close by, it will draw far more.

Park Capacity

The Disney Company is run by very smart people, greatly experienced in designing and operating theme parks. Its *Disney's America* market studies probably projected annual attendance at 10 million visitors a year. Although details are not available, its fantasy Civil War fort was probably designed to present an audio-animatronics presentation of major events. The term is a registered trademark for a form of robotics created by Walt Disney Imagineering for shows and attractions at Disney theme parks. The limited-movement robots often talk and sing. *Pirates of the Caribbean* ride is a good example. Guests float through a larger-than-life pirate adventure featuring gunshots, cannon blasts, burning buildings, and carousing and pillaging pirates, all accompanied by the now-iconic song, *Yo Ho, A Pirate's Life for Me*. The boat train consists of many individual boats connected together like railroad cars. Passengers are quickly loaded, enjoy the ride, then are unloaded at the exit point. The boat train is then advanced to the loading area. Such rides can carry thousands of people an hour and essential to entertaining huge crowds.

The fantasy Civil War fort was almost surely designed to house such an attraction. The Disney Indian Village contained a huge Inca style building, surely designed to house another such attraction. It was this "Mickey Mouse" presentation that resulted in the park being condemned by the historians.

Disney visitors enjoy a ride that can last from five to ten minutes. Visitors to the *American Adventures* parks can come and go as they want and can stay for as long as they want. Disney designed for large volume. We are designing for historic accuracy. It's difficult to have both.

The biggest single problem confronting *American Adventures* will be park capacity. This is demonstrated by the projections. Phase 2 calls for the addition of *Battle for Petersburg* and the *Appomattox Indian Village*. They will join the *Petersburg Railroad*, *Lafayette Park* and Old Towne Petersburg for a total of five activity centers. Phase 2 projects 300,000 annual visitors. Under "Seasonal Fluctuation," the formula used for projecting attendance during the average summer day was 0.75% of the annual admissions. That will result in 2,250 guests. If evenly spread across the five attractions, that's 450 people each. That is about the limit of each park's capacity during this early phase of development and underscores the need to expand the parks as the attendance grows.

The summer weekends may become a problem if attendance is far higher than the average. Once the parks are at full capacity, we will simply have to turn customers away. Word-of-mouth advertising is all important, so it will be better to have them complain about not being able to get in than rather than about things being so crowded, they couldn't enjoy anything. That's actually a back-handed compliment to the park's popularity. We won't lose these people as customers, as this will, in most cases, make them determined to return. They will probably do so on a weekday or during an off-season.

This situation will have an enormous impact on our railroads. The parks cover 25 city blocks and the trains are essential to moving customers from one park to another. Each phase results in higher attendance and thus greater demands on the railroads. We will have to continually add new ones. Our locomotives will have the power to pull very long trains, but train length is dictated by the length of the loading platforms. Our later trains will pull four cars with a 50 passenger capacity each. Each of these cars is 50 feet long, resulting in a 200 foot long loading platform. That's two-thirds the length of a football field. That's a lot of space. Once Phase 3 is complete, the train trip will take an hour. At least four trains will be needed. The hour-long trip can result in passengers having to wait 15 minutes for the next ride.

The attendance projections are very conservative and *American Adventures* must find ways to spread out the crowds. This can be partially achieved by the constant addition of new parks, attractions and entertainment events. The easy accessibility of Old Towne and downtown Petersburg can help solve this problem.

Timing

A minimum of one year should be provided for constructing Phase 1. Two years would be better. *American Adventures* should open on a June 1st, the first day of the tourist season. The staff should be in place a week earlier to prepare for it. The June 1st date should be used for all phases.

Park Access

Amusement parks, theme parks and other attractions are almost always surrounded by barriers that isolate them from the surrounding community. This permits controlled access. Customers enter through a main gate, where they purchase tickets so that they can enter. Visitors are physically confined to the park. They can't go anywhere else to buy meals, drinks and merchandise.

This is the direct opposite of the goals of *American Adventures*, which was conceived and designed to use the parks to bring customers into the City of Petersburg so that they can shop in its stores. To my knowledge, the only tourist attraction that has a similar situation is *Colonial Williamsburg*. Signs direct visitors to the Visitor Center, where they purchase tickets. A shuttle bus then takes them to the historic district. People live in many of the historic homes and the colonial area is surrounded by shopping facilities. I have taken out-of-town guests to Williamsburg and always bypass the visitor center and park in the downtown area. From there, my guests and I can walk through the colonial area and see everything, bypassing the admissions procedure. Certainly a very high percentage of the people who visit *Colonial Williamsburg* do the same thing. In spite of this, last year it had over 900,000 paid admissions. The ticket price is \$40. The ticket basically entitles the customer to visit the interior of the various historic buildings. The open access costs the complex a great deal of money in lost revenues. We need to avoid that. Simultaneously having both controlled access and open access requires a zoned access system.

River Street

River Street must be left open for use by the public. Union Station is our ticket office and the main entrance into the parks complex. The National Park Service wants to use Southside Station for a Central Virginia Civil War Center. It may contain other museums, such as one of the U.S. Military Railroad. This building will also house our snack bar and gift shop. The report *Operation Bootstrap - Fostering Economic Revitalization* calls for the west bays to be used as an incubator to help new businesses get started. Because of these things, there should be no charge to enter this building. *American Adventures* plans to have concessions on this street and offer rides on horse-drawn vehicles. Since they are not within the complex, there would have to be a charge for such rides.

Lafayette Park

Lafayette Park can be used for many major entertainment events both in connection with the other parks and independent of the other parks. Thus there can be tickets to both. The main gate to the parks will be located next to Union Station and will provide access to both. If customers have purchased a general parks ticket, then they can get on the trains and visit all the parks, as the loading platform is behind Union Station.

If customers purchase a limited access Lafayette Park ticket, then they will be confined to it. There will be gates to the park at each end and they can purchase tickets to the other parks. It is anticipated that the limited access to Lafayette Park only will be used sparingly, only for special entertainment events.

Main Street America

Main Street America will have retail stores, hotel rooms and other things. To permit easy access, it must be located next to Pocahontas off ramp from the Martin Luther King Bridge. *Main Street America* is envisioned as a shopping mall with stores that offer unique merchandise not available from the big box retailers. (This is discussed at length in the report *Fostering Economic Revitalization*.) The success of such uniqueness is well demonstrated by the many outlets in Williamsburg. In one respect, *Main Street America* is a free-standing shopping mall, as it is intended to service customers year round. As such, there should be no ticket required. The large underground parking lot is essential to hotel guests. It can also be used by shopping center customers.

Main Street America is an attraction in its own right and should be part of the *American Adventure* experience. Some of its many rental units may be used for park attractions. There could be a separate admissions prices or tickets to these attractions should be included in tickets books, if they are used.

Pocahontas Village

Pocahontas Village residents need to be able to travel freely to and from their homes. They will be able use the off-ramp from the Martin Luther King Bridge, just as they do now. However on summer weekends, the off-ramp may be backed up with customers waiting to get in, Pocahontas residents can then use the new access road. To prevent park visitors from driving or waking into their village, we will need to control access.

The Theme Parks

The theme parks will have controlled access through gates located at the east end of Main Street and Lafayette Park. Customers will not be able to ride the trains without having a general admissions ticket.

Financial Considerations

Costs

The report *Operation Bootstrap - Financial Considerations* covers costs and related subjects and it should be consulted for the supporting details.

A conventional real estate project begins with highly detailed plans that may be used to obtain firm bids from contractors. The park plan will continue to evolve and new discoveries and ideas will result in changes and additions. Because of this, the project must be managed like a motion picture, which is also developed as it progresses through production. Budgets should be established and various controls should be used to ensure that they are honored.

Operation Bootstrap was originally budgeted at \$22.5 million, which included contingency funds. It was later discovered that the city owned 28 acres on the east side of the Interstate 95 bridge. Part of that land will be used for the new roads and employee parking lot. The addition of these and other things has resulted in a revised budget of \$22.1 million plus \$2.25 million in contingency funds for a total of \$24.4 million. That is dirt cheap. *Disney's America* would have almost surely cost \$500 million and possibly twice that. And that was 20 years ago. A single *King's Dominion* roller-coaster costs at least \$20 million. Some cost \$50 million, and the park contains 13 of them. It opened in 1975, so earlier costs were much lower than today. The replacement cost of *King's Dominion* is probably close to a billion dollars.

The construction budget for *American Adventures* is amazingly low. The factors that make it possible are set forth below.

1. The City of Petersburg already owns all the land. If it were sold as part of a development package, then \$60 million would be a fair price. It is not included in the above cost.
2. The above cost does not include the development plan, *Operation Bootstrap*.
3. The site contains existing buildings, which will be used. Their replacement cost is at least \$30 million.
4. The Virginia Department of Transportation has already provided wonderful access.
5. No provision is made for the purchase of additional land. Both banks of the Appomattox River are owned by the U.S. government. All of it should be acquired. Uncle Sam has previously quit claimed two lots to the city, so this may involve no cost. Norfolk Southern owns 35 acres of forested land east of the parks. It should be purchased for future expansion. The parks may also have to purchase homes on Pocahontas Island. These can be rented to park employees.
6. The cost does not include *Main Street America*, which will be developed separately at the appropriate time. It will probably cost at least \$20 million. It will be a major profit center in its own right, as there will be income from the rental of retail space and the renting of hotel rooms. There may also be apartments. It should easily pay for itself, which makes it another investment that will yield additional profits.
7. As the number of visitors increases, the parking lot will need to be replaced by a multi-story parking building. It will cost several million dollars. This cost can be offset by a parking charge or a higher admissions price.
8. The biggest savings result from the low cost of the attractions. *Disney's Pirates of the Caribbean Civil War* fort would probably have cost \$30 million to \$50 million. Our *Battle of Petersburg* will contain authentic fortifications made of dirt and wood. They are budgeted at \$250,000. Big difference.

Admission Prices

Traditionally, amusement parks charged by the ride, as this permitted customers to determine what they wanted to do and how much they wanted to spend. Tickets were sold at central locations and collected at the ride. Different rides often required a different number of tickets.

For many years, *Disneyland* had a general admissions price, which only permitted access to the park. It sold five classes of tickets. "A" tickets were for small things like a ride on a horse-drawn vehicle. The "E" tickets were for the really big attractions, such as *Small World*, *Magic Tiki Room*, and *Carousel of Progress*. The "B," "C," and "D," were for things between these extremes. The vast majority of these tickets were sold in ticket books. The price included general admission and a number of different tickets. Around 1960, they were marketed as "A \$50 value for \$39.95." Many of the tickets were never used. One reason for this system was that many of the rides were paid for by other companies, so the tickets provided an accounting of how many people it entertained for profit sharing purposes.

Over the past 30 years, many amusement parks have switched over to a flat price system that includes admissions and unlimited rides. Price comparisons are helpful, because they reflect the current market. The adult admission prices to popular amusement parks are shown below. The prices for children under 12 generally run only 15 percent less.

<i>King's Dominion</i>	\$ 58.95
<i>Busch Gardens</i>	79.99
<i>Disneyland</i> (California)	80.00
<i>Disney World</i> (Florida)	85.00

Central Virginia is starved for family entertainment, and our parks will certainly have a great deal to offer. This will essentially give them a monopoly on day trips. Our major goal is to bring people into the parks as a means of boosting the local economy. Because of this, prices should be low.

Each phase results in new attractions, more entertainment and more activities. Thus each is offering more value than the previous phase and this should result in an appropriate price increase. Each phase is also designed to accommodate a given number of customers, resulting in a given park capacity. There is a very strong possibility that the parks will attract far more customers than the parks can physically handle. In such case, then a substantial increase in admissions prices may reduce the traffic. This will result in fewer visitors, but they will enjoy themselves more due to not having to fight crowds. The parks are receiving higher admissions income, but are maintaining the same operational expenses, so this becomes more profitable for them. There can also be different prices for each season, which can help to spread crowds out over the year.

To summarize, there are three basic systems: (1) tickets to individual rides or parks, (2) ticket books, and (3) general admission to everything. We may have two admissions tickets - general admission to the entire parks complex and one confined to *Lafayette Park* and its events.

If we have attractions within *Main Street America*, then we may have to go with a ticket book system. It could include rides on the horse-drawn vehicles. The train buffs may want to ride all of our trains, which will reduce the capacity for other guests. If this become a problem, then must be a means of controlling it.

This is an area that requires additional research and study. Meanwhile, the admissions income projections used in this report apply to all three systems.

Ancillary Income

Admissions are an attraction's initial income, but the sale of food, soft drinks, souvenirs, gifts, books and other things is an important source of secondary or ancillary (accessory) income. The ancillary income can equal or exceed the admission price. Consider the cost of a soft drink and popcorn at a movie theater.

King's Dominion is owned by Cedar Fair Entertainment. It owns 13 amusement parks and 6 water parks. Its annual report states that its customers are under age 24 and spend an average of \$40 each on food, souvenirs and merchandise. This is surprisingly high, because there is little to buy at the water parks and the amusement parks are visited by young people with little discretionary income. On the other hand, the Disney parks are covered with eating facilities and retail outlets. They carry a far larger variety of merchandise, and their visitors include people of all ages. The high cost of the many hotels suggests that its visitors are quite affluent. Many buy souvenirs for those back home. The Disney average is surely much higher.

Food products almost always cost less than 30 percent of the selling price. Books, souvenirs and other merchandise rarely cost more than 50 percent of the retail price. Assuming that the sales of these two categories are equal, then the overall average cost of the goods sold will be 40 percent. Thus \$1,000 in ancillary income results in a \$600 gross profit.

Operating Expenses

The cost of our attractions is very low because we are basing everything on personal experience, not high technology. This will result in the need for a great many employees. They will be the park's biggest single expense. That's okay, because one of our major goals is to create jobs. It is far better to spend money on employing people rather than spending it on high-tech rides. The \$20 to \$50 million that *King's Dominion* spends on a roller coaster can provide good jobs for a very large number of people.

There will be a full-time year-round staff, but a great many more people will be required during the busy summer months. As the parks grow, the need for seasonal employees will increase dramatically. Many may be from out of town and will require housing. The budgets assume that the parks will enter into agreements with local motels for terms of 12 to 14 weeks, to provide rooms for two employees at \$60 per night. This works out to a little less than \$3,000 per seasonal employee a year.

Financing / Debt Service

The operating budgets assume that 100 percent of the cost will be financed (See "Recommendations" at the end of this report). Commercial loans are generally amortized over 15 years. Financing of one million dollars at five percent interest will result in monthly payments of \$9,158, which is \$109,896 a year.

Debt service is included in the operating expenses. Toward keeping the figures simple, it is rounded-up to 11 percent a year, which includes both 6 percent principal reduction and 5 percent interest. If a lower interest rate can be obtained, the cost of debt service will be less.

Minimizing Risk

A good business and marketing plan strives to maximize potential while minimizing risk. *Operation Bootstrap* meets that standard. It calls for the parks to be built in four phases. Each phase must be fully operational and making a profit before going on to the next. This minimizes the cash requirement and the risk. The profits from each phase can then be applied to building the next.

A very big advantage of phased construction is that it precludes having to build everything at one time. This provides ample time for each attraction to be properly researched and designed. It permits a far more controlled construction and expansion program and thus better controls over costs. It relieves management of a great deal of pressure that would result from having to build everything at one time.

American Adventures is a unique attraction and its operations will require a very big learning curve. Phased construction provides time to learn how to best manage the parks while avoiding the risk of incurring major losses while doing so.

American Adventures is evolving. It is now in what I would characterize as an advanced stage of concept development. The overall plan is in place, but research and further development will result in changes and additions. Such evolution is often accompanied by escalation. That can result in increased budgets. The phased construction provides an excellent means of maintaining financial controls.

Financial Projections

Each phase is described later in this report. The informative text is followed by projected attendance, income, expenses and profits. For example, this information for phase 2 is presented on page 61. It states, "With the addition of two more theme parks, *American Adventures* is offering a wonderful entertainment experience, one that can easily fill a day. This justifies increasing the admission price to \$28 (which is still cheap). The addition of two gift shops and additional concessions should increase ancillary sales to \$25. Allowing for a 40% cost of goods sold, this leaves net income of \$15.

PER VISITOR	
Admissions	\$28.00
Net Ancillary Income	\$15.00
Total Net Income	\$43.00

The 300,000 projection will result in net income of \$12.9 million. It will now require 212 employees to staff the parks. Annual projected payroll is \$5.8 million. The addition of debt service and other expenses results in total operating expenses of \$6.7 million. This leaves a profit of \$6.2 million. This is almost 150% of the cost of Phase 2. Now we are beginning to get into some serious money.

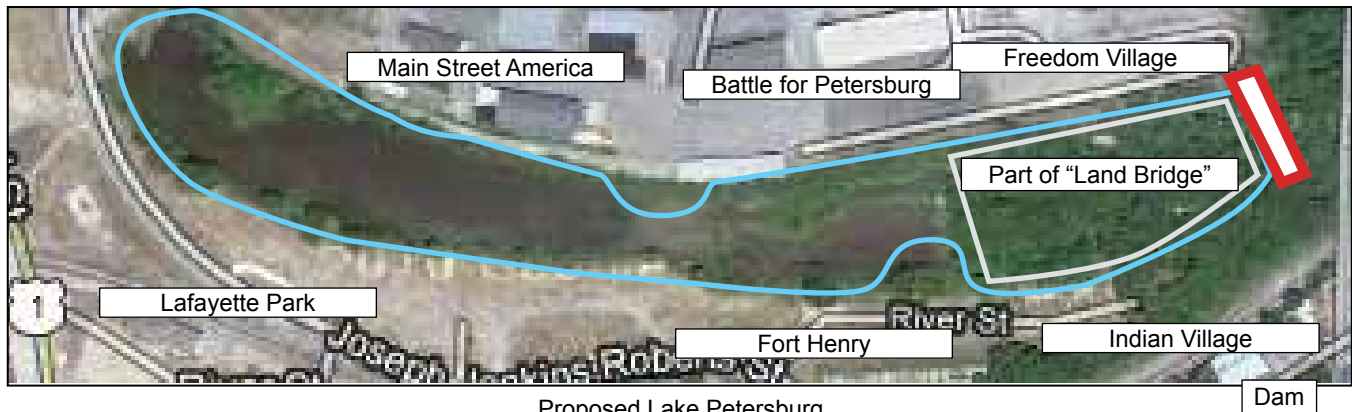
The Financial Summary appears on page 69. It lists the total projections for each phase and then summarizes them. Toward keeping the math simple, profits from each phase are shown as being accumulated. A year after the parks are complete, they will have completely paid for their construction cost and will yield a \$30 million profit. Of course, profits can be used to finance the next phase.

Lake Petersburg

The predominant physical feature of the *American Adventures* park complex is the original bed of the Appomattox River, which was formerly part of the Petersburg harbor. Proponents of riverfront development have long maintained that a water setting will help to create a more beautiful and natural environment. I agree, but also recognize that dredging will not provide the desired results.

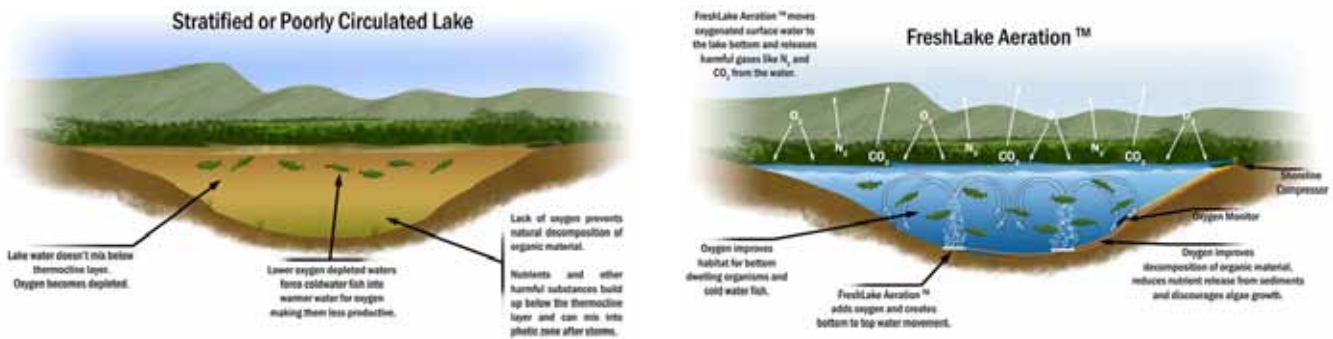
The river begins with streams in the western mountains, which are constantly eroding. The fast moving water carries the resulting sediment downstream. After crossing the rapids, the water slows down and the sediment is deposited. Much of the original harbor is now covered by so much silt that it is solid ground. This “land bridge” begins about 200 yards west of the Interstate 95 bridge and extends downstream at least a half mile. It is covered with vegetation. The biggest cost in dredging the river is the removal and disposal of this silt.

A pipe on the west end of the old harbor brings in a trickle of water from the diversion channel and a small ditch has been cut through the land bridge at the east end, permitting the water to exit. There is so little flow of water that the harbor is covered with algae and the ditch is filled with stagnant water. The water level is always a couple of feet below the banks and those banks are covered with mud. This is really ugly. The water level is controlled by the flow of the river and by tides. Between the silt and the algae, the water looks very dirty. There is no circulation. The former harbor is in effect a swamp. Dredging will only increase the water depth. It will not provide the much needed higher water level and it will not result in clean or healthy water. These are very important, as they establish the environment. They are far more important than the depth of the water.



Proposed Lake Petersburg
The most western section of the “Land Bridge” is outlined in blue. It extends a half mile downstream.
The proposed new lake is outlined in yellow.

The existing swamp should be transformed into a scenic lake. This can easily be done by isolating it from the Appomattox River. That is accomplished by closing the water line that provides water from the diversion channel and building a dirt dam at the east end of the river bed. The swamp can then be drained. The bottom should be graded to a shallow depth. The shallow depth is very important for safety because we want to let visitors use canoes and other small boats on the lake. If their boat overturns, then the visitors can stand up in the shallow water and easily walk to shore. This greatly reduces the risk of anyone drowning. Spreading the silt across the bottom provides us with a very easy and inexpensive way to dispose of it.



There should be a 20-foot-wide by six-to-eight-foot deep channel down the length of the lake to accommodate an aeration system. A pump forces air through a pipe that will run the length of the channel. Aeration heads every ten to twenty feet will continually release an abundance of small air bubbles into the water. They rise to the surface. This creates circulation that moves algae, fish and bird excrement and rotten vegetation to the surface, where natural processes dispose of it. This results in very clean water. Visitors will actually be able to see into it. Aeration also provides an extremely healthy environment for fish, water birds and aquatic plants, just as it does in a home aquarium. The result is a far better aquatic environment than that provided by nature. Such systems are widely used on lakes, ponds and historic canals throughout the United States.

The section of the former harbor that is to be converted into Lake Petersburg is essentially a long, thin ditch that is 2,000 feet long with an average width of 175 feet. The shore line can be made more visually interesting by using silt to create a couple of points, thus providing some contour. The points divide the lake into three parts. Each can provide a landscaping variation and unique resources that are appropriate to the adjacent park. The points also helps to visually separate them. The north side of the new lake is occupied by the former Roper Lumber lot. The south side was formerly the Norfolk and Western freight yard. Both are very flat. Hopefully, we will have enough silt to create a low rolling hill or two.

The water level is almost always about two feet below the river banks and these banks are covered with mud. Isolation permits controlling the water level. It should be brought up almost to the banks as it will be far more attractive. There will be some loss of water through evaporation during the hot summer months. Most will be replaced by rain, but there are several other ways to add clean water.

The site plan shows the dam located immediately east of the Interstate 95 bridge. It will be wide enough to accommodate pedestrian walkways, horse trails, space for the railroad tracks and the new access road. Thus it also functions as a bridge across the river. This new location results in a much larger lake and the additional waterfront can certainly be used by the parks. This is very doable.

Landscaping will provide a truly beautiful setting and should also provide food for wildlife, as the parks are now barren of it. Since we have a very healthy lake, it should be stocked with fish and waterbirds. Landscaping and wildlife are so important they are separately discussed.

The result is a scenic waterfront far cleaner, healthier and far more beautiful than any that can possibly result from dredging. If, and when, the Appomattox River is ever dredged, then the Corps of Engineers should end the proposed eight-foot depth at the east side of the dam. This will let us maintain Lake Petersburg intact. Having deeper water at the east end of the dam will permit the creation of a new theme park. It can be the long-awaited *Petersburg Harbor*. Another big benefit of this transformation is that it reduces the amount of dredging that will be required, which in turn lowers the cost. This may make it easier to get the federal funds. It's a win-win situation as everyone gets what they want and much more.

Best of all, this transformation can be done at a very low cost. The *American Adventures* development plan budgets \$100,000 for it. This is for only the actual conversion; it does not include the extensive landscaping and other enhancements that are required for *Lafayette Park*, discussed later in this report.

States own navigable rivers. Since this area is not navigable and is surrounded by city-owned land, the City of Petersburg has a valid legal claim to the land. This will permit the city to actually own the lake.

Transformation into a lake, legal issues and other subjects are discussed in detail in the report *Operation Bootstrap - Appomattox River Development Plan*. It may be downloaded from Petersburg-Parks.com. Two related documents may also be downloaded. The are the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (1) environmental study of the Appomattox River which was released in 2002, and (2) its plat of the site showing the land that it owns.

Petersburg Railroads



Southside Station



Norfolk and Western Union Station

Petersburg already has a theme park, but it hasn't been recognized as such. Its 1854 Southside Station is the only surviving pre-Civil War train station in the South. The magnificent Norfolk and Western Union Station is only a block away. All they need are trains. *American Adventuress* will cover over 25 city blocks, and transporting visitors between parks will be a major task. Disney solved the problem at both *Disneyland* and *Disney World* with trains. We will follow that example.

We have a remarkable railroad history. It began with a special meeting of the Petersburg Common Council (predecessor to the City Council) that was held on August 26, 1829 for the purpose of finding a more efficient way to transport goods from the Roanoke River area of North Carolina, sixty miles south of the city. This led to the city having the route surveyed by a railroad engineer. Upon receipt of his report, the city was instrumental in forming a corporation to build the Petersburg Railroad. The foresight and vision of the men on the council was amazing, as no commercial railroad had yet been built. It took over a year to raise the \$450,000 construction cost. During that time, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in Maryland and the Camden and Amboy Railroad in New York became operational. They were the nation's first and second railroads. The Petersburg Railroad was the third common carrier in the United States, the first in the South, and our nation's first interstate railroad. In 1858, the city had five different railroads - more than any other city in the entire world at any time.

In 1990, I renovated the Appomattox Iron Works into a living history museum. In preparing its history and material for educational field trips I ran across constant references to the city's railroads, but nothing was known about them other their name, the date they were chartered and where they went. Last spring I ran across a picture of the Petersburg Railroad's first locomotive. This kicked off intensive research that resulted in the *The Antebellum Railroads of Petersburg, Virginia*. This book may be downloaded from www.Petersburg-Parks.com.



Poster - The Antebellum Railroads of Petersburg, Virginia.

Petersburg had five railroads in 1858 - more than any other city in the world at any time. It can be argued that there were actually six. That's because the City of Petersburg purchased the City Point Railroad in 1848 and renamed it the Appomattox Railroad. However, it was the same railroad, just a different name.

I commissioned illustrations of them for use in a poster on early American railroads. They were used for the above cited book and are used in this report. I also used them to prepare the above poster. Copies may be obtained from the Siege Museum and main Petersburg Library on Sycamore Street.

Landscaping

One of the great benefits of *American Adventures* is that it provides an escape from our modern world of traffic-jammed streets, hordes of advertising signs, and the harsh, cold appearance of city buildings. It lets our visitors enjoy the quieter, cleaner, and more natural life of yesteryear. The parks cover 25 city blocks and the dominant visual resource will be the landscaping. We want to create a park complex that is both beautiful and functional. Because of their former industrial use, both sides of Lake Petersburg are devoid of vegetation. One result of this is the absence of wildlife, as there is no food for it. Our landscaping goals should be to provide a great deal of food for wildlife, create an environment that is beautiful year-round and display unusual plants that many visitors may have never seen before. The landscaping should be an attraction in its own right. If the parks are both functional and beautiful, then many people will visit *American Adventures* simply to enjoy the natural setting.

Trees are the most important element in any landscaping design. Because of their large size, they are the prominent feature. They can be used to hide things that detract from the environment. They provide visual separation between attractions, and a background for many things. They are also very functional. They provide food for wildlife. They reflect sunlight and can reduce ground temperature by ten to twenty degrees. They also provide shade. Both are very important, as we experience very hot and humid summers.

Many school classes are assigned the task of collecting and identifying leaves. Our parks should contain a very wide variety of native Virginia trees, as that can result in field trips. The great variety of our trees, shrubs, flowers and other resources can result in the parks effectively becoming a large botanical garden, which opens up another market.

The nice thing about this is that most plants are relatively inexpensive. However, the area around Lake Petersburg is now so barren that it will immediately require large trees, which can become expensive to both purchase and transplant. This is the main reason for the large landscaping budgets.

Aquatic Plants

Lake Petersburg is our most prominent physical feature, so everything must be designed around it. We want to stock it with an abundance of fish, and they require aquatic plants for aeration, food, shelter and reproductions. Different species of fish have different needs, so the Virginia Department of Game and Fisheries should be asked to recommend both the species of fish and the species of aquatic plants.



Giant cane bamboo



Cypress trees



Cattails

Although not an aquatic plant, giant cane bamboo is included in this section due to its location. Our dirt dam will be 100 feet wide. A 40-to-50-foot wide garden of this bamboo will be planted down the center of it. This species is native to the southeast United States. It grows to a height of 20 feet. It has a rhizome root system, which means that it spreads by runners. The clump shown above is a single plant with a massive root system. These roots will reinforce our dirt dam just as steel rods are used to reinforce concrete. Bamboo can become very invasive, so a small backhoe will be used to dig a six- or eight-inch wide ditch about three feet deep. Galvanized steel sheets will be placed in it to act as a barrier to root expansion. The ditch will then be filled with dirt. The railroad track will be on the east side of the bamboo, thus providing a scenic view of the natural river to the east. The pedestrian walkway will be on the other side.

This species of bamboo is also a cash crop. It is widely used for making fishing poles. The Native Americans used the pliable new shoots for basket making, so it very practical for these plants to be next to the *Appomattox Indian Village*, as it can supply the basket makers.

Cypress is one of Virginia's most picturesque trees. It is famous for its "knees," the ability to live in water and its exquisite wood. There is a large grove of it in Hidden Meadows, about 20 miles southeast of Petersburg. Cattail is an interesting plant found throughout the marshlands of tidewater Virginia. It was an important food source for Native Americans as many parts of it can be cooked in a variety of ways. Many animals thrive on it. These plants are very rarely seen and visitors will be fascinated by them.

Lafayette Park

Lafayette Park will run from the railroad tracks behind Union Station to the lake. It will probably extend at least a quarter of the length of the lake. This location places it immediately adjacent to River Street, which will be the main pedestrian traffic corridor.



Giant water lily



Hybrid water lily



Weeping willow

The primary function of this park is to provide a charming picnic area for guests. There will be tables, benches and stone grills for cooking. Due to its important location, we want this area to be especially charming. Weeping willow trees are mandatory. There should be other colorful shade trees. Water lilies should be planted along part of the shore. Although not native to Virginia, the giant water lily is grown in the Royal Botanical Gardens in Kew, England, so they should grow here. They will certainly fascinate our guests and be a subject of constant comment. Water lilies also have a rhizome root system and can be so invasive that they can take over the lake. Once again, we will prevent this by installing root barriers when the lake is drained.

Deciduous Trees



White oak



Crab apple



Dogwood

Deciduous trees shed their leaves in the winter. The three shown above are the top producers of food for wildlife. The white oak is the most prolific producer of acorns for squirrels, but it is slow growing. The immediate need must be filled by faster growing species, such as the pin oak and the live oak. Crab apples have a bitter sweet taste but are edible. There are many varieties. The dogwood is our state flower. It lives at the edge of forests. Both the crab apple and dogwood trees are covered with an abundance of flowers in the spring.



Red maple



Tulip Tree



Magnolia

Deciduous trees can be quite showy. The red maple is famous for its fall foliage. Virginia is also home to the magnificent silver maple with its shiny silver-colored leaves and even the sugar maple. Both the tulip tree and the magnolia produce spectacular flowers in the spring. The magnolia has long been a symbol of the South.

Over 100 trees are native to Virginia, so those shown in this report are but a small sample of the many magnificent species that can be planted.

Evergreen Trees



Yellow pine



Eastern hemlock



White cedar



Holly

Evergreen trees are very important because of their year-round foliage. This is especially important in the winter, as the deciduous trees have lost their leaves and will not get them back until spring. The first three species shown above are the leading producers of food for wildlife. The yellow pine is especially important, as it is an inexpensive, fast-growing tree that can quickly fill up a lot of space. We will use them to hide the offices on the former Roper lot. The white cedar is one of the most beautiful and striking of all the evergreens. They are raised commercially as Christmas trees. Holly comes in many forms. Birds eat the berries in the winter.

Nut Trees



Black walnuts



Chestnuts

Black walnuts, hickory nuts, and chestnuts are native to Virginia. They are a primary source of food for wildlife and have long been enjoyed by humans.

The chestnut was once one of the most important trees in North America until it was wiped out by a blight in the early 20th Century. It was one of the biggest ecological disasters in American history. In 1951, one survivor was found and it was immune to the blight. It formed the basis for the Dunstan variety, which is now grown commercially.

Shrubs and Hedgerows



Hedgerows - Acre Valley, France

Shrubs are important for providing a height transition between trees and flowers. Hedgerows are long, thin mounds that are covered with hedges or other plants. They are a great way to provide barriers, both physical and visual, between properties. The Bocage area of France makes extensive use of them to separate farms from one another. *American Adventures* will make extensive use of them to isolate Pocahontas Village from the parks. They will also be used to separate railroad tracks from walkways. They should be covered with plants that will provide food for wildlife. In critical areas, they can be covered with plants that have sharp thorns.

Wildflowers

The poster at left shows the most widespread North American wildflowers. Almost all are native to Virginia, and they represent but a small fraction of the total native species. There will be many beds of wildflowers planted throughout the park complex. As with all our plants, each will have a small plaque citing both common and botanical names.



Feenix poster "North American Wildflowers"



Sunflowers

This is an enormous subject, one that simply cannot be covered within this report. Suffice to say that the Sunflower deserves special mention because of its large size, showy appearance, importance in attracting wild birds and providing food for small animals. We will have a large bed of them.

Wildlife



Mallards



Wood duck



Canadian goose



Swans

Lake Petersburg should have water birds. If brought in as chicks, they will adopt it as their home. Virginia has many waterbirds. The mallard is the most well known duck, but few people have seen the showy wood duck. Many Canadian geese have forgotten how to migrate and have taken up permanent residence in the area. Is it now the Virginia Goose? The tundra swan winters here. The trumpeter swan is native to our western and central states and is rarely seen in Virginia. They are among the largest birds in the country. They are monogamous and usually bond for life. These magnificent birds provide the perfect background for weddings, which can be held in *Lafayette Park*.

Virginia is home to hundreds of bird species. Many are shown on the poster at right. Robins, cardinals, mourning doves, red-winged blackbirds, tufted tit mouse and many others are very common the Tri-City area. By providing them with an abundance of food, many will reside in or frequently visit the parks.



The American bald eagle is the symbol of our nation. These magnificent birds live largely off fish, which they catch by diving. The nearby James River is one of the largest sanctuaries for them in the United States. They often fish on nearby Swift Creek. Lake Petersburg will be stocked with fish and will have very clean water, so the eagles will be able to easily see them. It is highly likely that our lake will become their favorite fishing area. Wouldn't that be something? This would make our logo come alive.



Feenix poster "Backyard Birds of North America"



Chipmunk



Gray squirrel



Cottontail rabbit

We will have an American bison (buffalo) calf at the *Appomattox Indian Village* and the *Peter's Point* wildlife rehabilitation center may have deer, wolves, raccoons, bears and other animals. Small mammals, such as chipmunks, squirrels and rabbits, should be living throughout the park. Many will become tame.



Beaver



Beaver dam

The beaver was the most economically important Virginia animal. The Native Americans hunted them for both their fur and meat. Beaver skins were in high demand in England for making hats. Abraham Wood imported cloth, tools, and other goods, which he traded with the Indians for their pelts.

Beaver were almost trapped to extinction in Virginia. Then the Virginia Department of Game and Fisheries began importing them and stocked local rivers and streams. It would be great to have a family of them living in Lake Petersburg. Guests can canoe alongside these industrial critters. Beaver can destroy our trees, so we will have to find ways to control them. A number of ideas have been suggested. If they don't work, then we will relocate the family to the diversion channel.

The Theme Parks

Each of the parks will have historically accurate structures and provide an abundance of appropriate activities and entertainment. Ancillary sales (food and merchandise) can substantially increase profits, so each park should have at least one gift shop and several concessions. Within this report, the term “concession” is used to refer to a small self-contained retail outlet that will generally have a very limited product offering, such as a vendor selling soft drinks from a horse-drawn wagon.

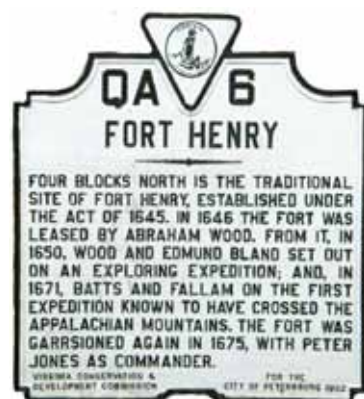
Each of the parks will require public bathrooms. They should be of a modular design that can initially be small to reduce initial costs, but can later be easily enlarged as the traffic increases. This will require each park to have water and sanitary sewers. They will also need electricity and communications systems. The parks will often be open after dark, so we will need inconspicuous lighting. In some areas, we will need theatrical lighting.

Amusement parks are generally covered with concrete sidewalks. Since they are not historically accurate to the periods we are presenting, we will use dirt paths. They will have to be graded to provide a crown for drainage and must have an excellent storm sewer system to quickly dispose of excess water. The dirt should be heavily tamped to make it more solid and it can be covered with brown stones or crushed oyster shells. In some areas, it can be covered with pine needles. This is far less expensive than fancy concrete sidewalks that are embossed or colored. It also maintains our natural environment.

Virginia is covered with historical markers that provide information about places and events. Each park should have a multi-panel presentation of the events that led to it being included in the *American Adventures* complex.

These are an important part of our educational program. During the course of researching and designing our parks, we will accumulate a great deal of information. This should be compiled into books or research reports. They can be used in connection with our educational field trip programs, sold at our stores and even distributed nationally.

American Adventures will be so magnificently landscaped, that it will become a botanical garden. Every tree, shrub, flower or other plant should have a small plaque citing both its common and its botanical name.



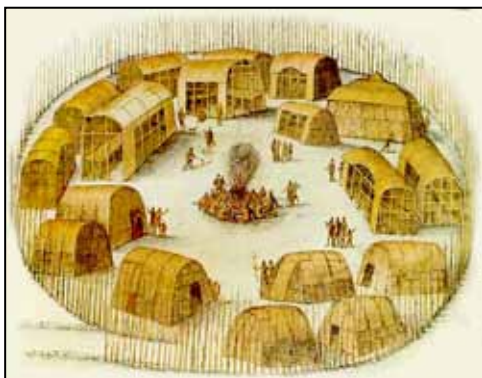
Historical marker for Fort Henry at 801 W. Washington Street

The Individual Parks

Petersburg has such a long, rich, colorful and diverse history that it provides us with a wealth of material to draw upon. However, some periods and events stand out. They provide the basis for the parks described in the following sections of this report.

Early America

This park presents our 17th Century heritage. The two main attractions will be the *Appomattox Indian Village* and *Fort Henry*.



Early Indian village



Reconstruction of an early fort

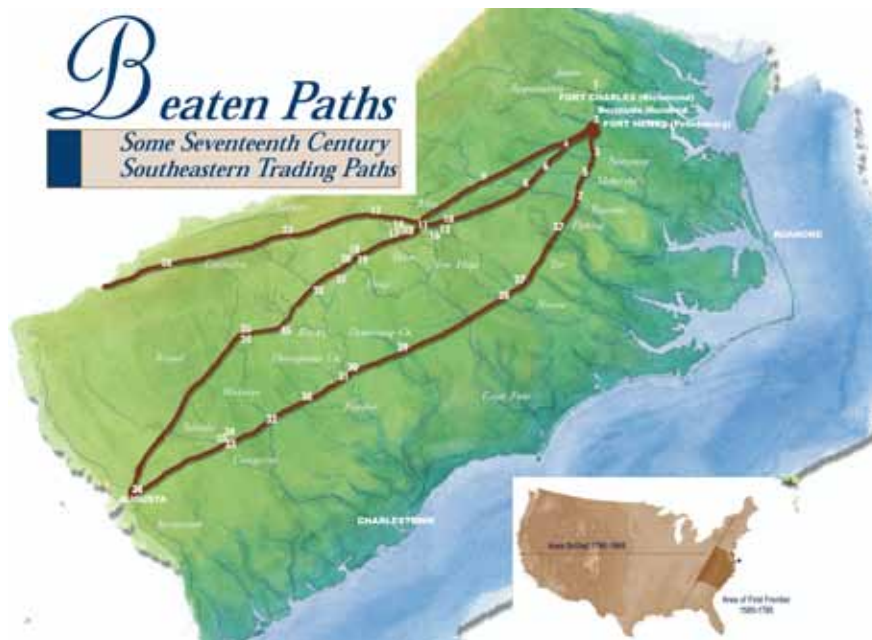
The Virginia Company sent its first settlers to Virginia in 1607. They first anchored their three ships at the “Country of the Appomattox” on May 8th. They stayed a week with the Native Americans, but were intimidated by their fierce appearance and demeanor, so they sailed back down the James River and established their settlement at Jamestown. Our nation’s history actually began on the banks of the Appomattox River, not at Jamestown. Our *Appomattox Indian Village* is described in detail later in this report.

In 1645, a wide-spread Indian massacre resulted in the House of Burgesses establishing a line of four forts stretching from Richmond to Petersburg. It was our first national boundary. Three forts were soon abandoned and were of no historic significance. Fort Henry was the southern one and was, by far, the most important outpost in the colonies during their early years. The area east of it was claimed by the English. The Native Americans had to remain west of it. The Appomattox Indians were forced to move their village from the Southpark Mall area to what is now the west end of Petersburg. They had to obtain “passports” to cross the boundary. These were the first passports used in North America, and perhaps the world. After a year, the fort and hundreds of acres of land around it were deeded to the commander, Abraham Wood.



Early exploration

Abraham Wood was the most successful all early traders and Fort Henry became our nation’s first trade center. Wood led the first explorations into the North American wilderness. They discovered the New and Roanoke rivers. He sponsored the 1670 expedition that covered 3,300 miles and discovered 12 future states, and this was 130 years before Lewis and Clark.



Map courtesy of www.Tradingpath.org

Wood was running trains of 50 or more pack horses as far south as Augusta, Georgia, as shown on the above map. One authority maintains they went as far south as Tallahassee, Florida.



Train of pack horses



When Wood died, his trading business was taken over by his son-in-law, Peter Jones. He constructed the stone *Peter Jones Trading Post*. The picture at left shows it in better days. Today it is largely in ruins, but has been stabilized and partially restored. The area around it has been transformed into a park. It is located at the northwest corner of Market and Old Streets. Although not part of the *American Adventures* park complex, it is immediately adjacent to it and can easily be enjoyed by park visitors.

Peter Jones Trading Post in better days

The Peter Jones Trading post was near a point that jutted into the Appomattox River and it became known as “Peter’s Point.” This section of the river was filled in when the diversion channel was constructed early in the 20th Century, so the point no longer exists. In 1733, “Peter’s Point” became Petersburg.

Following the Revolutionary War, Virginia rewarded its veterans with land grants in its most western county, Kentucky. Petersburg was the last city that the settlers encountered before venturing into the unknown wilderness. The city’s many merchants provided them with supplies.

Fort Henry was our nation’s first “Gateway to the West.” Although the name changed, the site retained that distinction for over for over 150 years. *American Adventures* will reconstruct the fort. Abraham Wood’s Trading Post will function as the store for it and the *Appomattox Indian Village*.

Lafayette Park

Lafayette Park will be a huge multi-function resource. It is about the size of six football fields and will run from the rear of Union Station to Lake Petersburg and from the Martin Luther King Bridge about half way down the lake. It will be magnificently landscaped. This park commemorates the high points of the 18th Century.



Tobacco Warehouses

It has been said that the history of Virginia is the history of tobacco and that the history of tobacco is the history of Virginia. Tobacco was the first significant cash crop to be exported to mother England. It was shipped in far greater quantity than all other crops combined until the introduction of cotton the early 1800s.

Cousins John and Robert Bolling built tobacco warehouses near the falls of the Appomattox River between 1815 and 1820. Tobacco was packed into large drums called hogsheads. This design permitted them to be rolled to market. The warehouses became a central collection point. From them, the hogsheads were hauled on small shallow-draft boats called batteaus down river to the deep water port at City Point.

Robert Bolling’s warehouse was on the south shore of the Appomattox River; the site is now occupied by Farmers’ Market. John Bollings warehouse was on the north shore. It became Pocahontas Village, almost surely named by John Bolling after his famous ancestor.



The only surviving tobacco warehouse is in Lynchburg, Virginia. It was built in 1791

Some unscrupulous planters filled their hogsheads with inferior tobacco and even included stalks. The Bollings were concerned that Virginia tobacco would get a bad name, so they had the hogsheads unpacked to have the tobacco inspected. The good tobacco was repacked (prized) and shipped out. The Bolling “label” ensured the buyer was getting a good product.

This system was so successful that the Virginia legislature passed the Tobacco Inspection Act in 1730. It requiring such processing of all Virginia tobacco. Another half-dozen tobacco warehouses and several stores quickly sprang up. Their owners built homes. Petersburg quickly grew from a trading post into a town. It became the largest export center in all the colonies.

Revolutionary War

Petersburg was the site of two Revolutionary War battles, but is far more famous for the ten month Civil War “Siege” so the parks will focus on it, as two battles in the same park is too much.

In May 1781, Petersburg was occupied by British troops. General Marquis Gilbert de Lafayette marched his troops south from Richmond and deployed his artillery on the heights on the north side of the Appomattox River overlooking the city. During the bombardment, a British soldier yelled, “It’s the colonials up on the heights.” The was the origin of the name of our neighboring city, Colonial Heights. The artillery barrage convinced the redcoats to flee and the French general was considered the savior of the city.

The British soon returned and the Battle of Blandford took place on April 25th. It was fought only a half mile downstream from *Lafayette Park*. The British withdrew. They surrendered at Yorktown on October 19, 1781, ending the American Revolutionary War.

The Park

Lafayette Park represents our nation’s Revolutionary Spirit. Early reports called for this site to be used for the locomotive roundhouse and passenger car sidings. Continuing development resulted in a far better use for this key location. This is an example of how *American Adventures* will continue to evolve.

If the sun set in the northwest rather than the southwest, this park would be in the shadow of the colonial heights. That inspired its name. *Lafayette Park* will have picnic tables and stone hearths, which visitors can use to prepare and eat their own meals. The *Bolling Tobacco Warehouse* will be recreated on this site. Part of it will be used to show a real tobacco warehouse of the day and how it functioned. The bulk of the building will function as a convenience store where families can buy hot dogs, buns, soft drinks, marshmallows and other supplies.

We will need a customer service facility. It can be in one bay of this building or in a free-standing building next door. It will be the headquarters for our police, a first aid station, and a place to hold lost children. This facility can also function as our information office.

Nine Pins / Bowling Green

Nine pins was a very popular game during the colonial era. Nine wooden pins were set on a grassy lawn, and folks would roll a ball at them in an attempt to knock them down. In the 1770s, the Virginia colonists became increasingly defiant and began challenging authority. The English governor responded by prohibiting free assembly (that’s why our *Bill of Rights* guarantees it). Among the many stifling laws was one that outlawed Nine Pins. The creative colonists of Virginia’s Carolina County responded by adding a tenth pin as a way to avoid the new law. They named their new game after the county seat, Bowling Green. We need to set up a bowling green. This would provide a delightful, historically accurate family activity.



Nine Pins

Enjoying Lake Petersburg

As we have seen, the former Petersburg harbor will be transformed into a magnificent lake with exceptionally clean and healthy water. It will be stocked with fish. We can offer rowboat rentals and should test the feasibility of permitting visitors to fish. They will be able to rent the boat and the necessary fishing gear. We can even sell bamboo poles provided by our own grove. (See landscaping). We may base charges on the weight of the fish they catch. If this proves successful, then we'll need to work with a fish farm to ensure that the lake is always well stocked. There are a number of fish farms in Virginia.

Entertainment Center

This wonderful park can host a very wide range of events. Since we already have picnic tables in place, during the busy summer months we can have huge outdoor barbecues, where a side of beef is roasted over an open fire, Texas style. Of course, there will be many side dishes.

Holidays provide great opportunities. Thanksgiving is an annual celebration of a good harvest that dates back to biblical days. The Pilgrims and Puritans who settled New England in the 1620s claim to have brought the holiday with them, but that's not true. Virginia Indians had long celebrated the harvest.

Regardless of origin, Thanksgiving has always been an American tradition and holiday. The Appomattox Indians should certainly host an annual Thanksgiving dinner at *Lafayette Park*. Everyone will be invited, even the Yankee soldiers from *Battle of Petersburg*. Our resident turkeys will normally wander around this park. They will not be the meal, but rather the guests of honor.



Eastern wild turkeys

Since this park represents our Revolutionary War heritage, we may have a few "redcoats" to symbolize the British occupation. Certainly the biggest annual event should be Independence Day - July 4th. It should provide a wide variety of entertainment events. As attendance grows, we may even be able to justify a reenactment of the surrender at Yorktown. The fireworks will become increasingly spectacular.

There should be a bandstand to stage musical events. There is nothing for teenagers to do on weekends in the Tri-City area, except go to a movie. It would be great to hold dances for them on weekends. Almost all amusement parks now do this, as they have proven to be highly profitable. Once *Main Street America* is in place, it can host dances during the winter months. There should be a fancy gazebo for weddings. *American Adventures* will rent out sections of the park for private events, such as meetings, parties and weddings.

Golden Ball Tavern

As the parks grow, so will the number of visitors. We will need restaurants. Not all families will want to picnic, so we should have one in *Lafayette Park*. Although not in the current development plan, at some point in the future we will add one. It should be a reconstruction of the Golden Ball Tavern, which was located at the southwest corner of Old and Market Streets, only a block away. This is because it was the British headquarters when they occupied Petersburg in 1781, so it is very appropriate to the site. The original tavern was demolished around 1943.



Golden Ball Tavern

Freedom Village

In the wake of the Declaration of Independence that proclaimed that "all men are created equal," a spirit of "Jefferson idealism" swept across Virginia and a great many people freed their slaves. Petersburg's economy began booming with the advent of the Tobacco Warehouse Act of 1730. The town attracted a great many people seeking to make their fortunes. A visitor to the city in 1800 wrote, "scarcely a person here was born here." He was right. Almost all of the merchants were from Scotland, but some were England and Ireland. There were many French. One historian estimates that a tenth of the population was from Haiti, a result of its recent revolution. Many residents had migrated from the northern states because of the warmer climate. Petersburg's unique population mix seemed to have resulted in the city having far greater racial toleration than any other city in America. Petersburg became a Mecca for recently-freed slaves.

American Adventures will commemorate Petersburg's amazing Afro-American heritage, which is best represented by an accurate reconstruction of Pocahontas Village, the nation's first community of Free Blacks.

The land it occupies was subdivided into lots in 1749. The village was named Wittontown after the man who founded it. When formally organized as a town in 1752, it was renamed Pocahontas. Tobacco merchant John Bolling was one of the city's most influential men and served on the committee that established the town. He was almost surely responsible for the new name, as he no doubt wanted to honor his famous ancestor. Interestingly, there is archaeological evidence of prehistoric Native Americans living on the site in 6500 BC.

The historically accurate name suggests a Native American attraction, which is misleading. This theme park should be named *Freedom Village*, as it better identifies what is being shown and prevents the theme park from being confused with the existing village, which will continue to go by its original name.

Freedom did not mean equality and parents often taught their children how to survive through allegorical stories, such as the famous Uncle Remus tales that told how the weak little Br'er (brother) Rabbit had to constantly outsmart his powerful enemies, Br'er Fox and Br'er Bear.

We will present these stories through a performance delivered by a professional actor, who provides the history of the stories and explains their allegorical nature. He will be a handsome young man in modern dress. As he talks, he puts on a gray wig and beard and an old-time jacket and hat. He will assume the posture of an old man and begins talking in the dialect recorded by author Joel Chandler Harris. The young man becomes the title character. The stories will be presented through a Muppet-style puppet show. This both educates and entertains. Uncle Remus can provide two outstanding examples of how the lessons were applied.



Uncle Remus singing
"There's a bluebird on my shoulder"
from the 1946 Disney movie,
"Song of the South"

On its website, the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) states that it was founded in 1909, and is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. Yet, in 1815, the Petersburg Beneficial Society of Free Men of Color was established to support its Free Black members. It predates the NAACP by almost a century. The founders were confronted with the problem of gaining recognition from the white community without appearing to be a threat. Br'er Rabbit thinking saved the day. It's first project was the construction of a cemetery for blacks, which was the first in the nation. Living in a city, many whites had buried slaves in their backyard and the organization's offer to move the bodies at no charge was welcomed.

The American Colonization Society was founded in 1816 to "return" free African Americans to what was considered greater freedom in Africa. The offer was first rejected by the Petersburg blacks. They maintained that they did not have the education needed to start their own country. They were quickly given their own schools. As Br'er Rabbit said, "Please, please don't throw me in the briar patch."

Nearly one hundred Free Blacks from Petersburg went to Liberia in 1824 on the *Cyrus*. Another large group sailed on February 9, 1829 on the *Harriet*. They included Joseph Jenkins Roberts, who became the first president of the first African Republic, Liberia. *Freedom Village* will contain a reproduction of his cabinet shop.



Cabinet shop at Colonial Williamsburg

Many Pocahontas men were river men. They built and operated the batteaus that carried goods down the Appomattox River. *Freedom Village* must be on Lake Petersburg so that we can show this activity. There should be a small dock in front of the Bolling Tobacco Warehouse in *Lafayette Park*. A batteau should be tied to it carrying hogsheds of tobacco. There can be batteau rides between the two parks.

The Underground Railroad was a system of secret routes and safe houses used by runaway slaves to reach the freedom promised by the northern states. Movement was far easier by water than it was overland. Due to the highly-secretive nature of this enterprise, there is no documentation, but surely Pocahontas was a major link in the escape chain. Its river men probably helped many a runaway. We need to show that. Maybe a runaway slave is seen hiding in the forest during the Uncle Remus presentation. The old man explains what is going on.

The Free Blacks of Petersburg were hard-working productive people who strived to create a better life for themselves and their families. *Freedom Village* will have home industries such as spinning and broom making. A key attraction will be *Miss Patty Pat's Place*, a farm store, that will be initially constructed in *Lafayette Park*, then later moved to *Freedom Village* (See Phase I).

City of Industry

For three centuries the South was so largely agricultural, that it was often thought of as being one huge plantation. Petersburg was a notable exception. It's tobacco merchants decided that rather than exporting their crop, it would be more profitable to process it themselves. This led to a host of large tobacco companies that produced chewing tobacco (which was then extremely popular) and cut tobacco that could rolled into cigarettes. Some even made cigars.

The Industrial Revolution began in 1776 as a result of the invention of James Watt's steam engine, low cost methods of making iron, and the introduction of machine tools - machines that made machines. The invention of the cotton gin made cotton production very profitable. English inventors quickly developed machines that could spin cotton into thread and yarn, then weave it into fabric. Far-sighted businessmen brought the new technology to Lowell, Massachusetts around 1810. The enormous demand for cotton resulted in it being cultivated throughout central Virginia and North Carolina. Petersburg businessmen quickly realized that it was stupid for them to export cotton to have it processed into consumer goods, which they would then have to import. It was far more profitable for them to manufacture the finished goods locally. Cotton mills sprung up all around the city, as the rapid flow of the Appomattox River provided the power needed to operate their machines.

The Industrial Revolution was one of the most important events in human history. It ranks up there with the Agricultural Revolution when man begin growing his own food rather than foraging for it, and the Scientific Revolution when men began trying to unlock the secrets of nature. Petersburg was an industrial leader and this contributed greatly to the city's growth. This aspect of our history must be presented.



Cotton mill on the Appomattox River
Water power is provided by a canal



Interior - Unidentified Petersburg fabric weaving Mill
as shown on a postcard

The city's biggest factories processed tobacco, cotton and grain, but many smaller ones produced a host of other goods, such as lumber, bricks, nails, and barrels. There was even a rope walk to weave locally grown hemp into rope. The problem is that it will be prohibitively expensive to reconstruct the huge factories of yesteryear and near impossible to obtain the ancient machinery. The most we can hope to achieve is an exhibit representing each of our many industries. However, this limitation is largely offset by the remarkable *Appomattox Locomotive Works*.

Appomattox Locomotive Works

Petersburg iron monger Uriah Wells established the Petersburg Iron Works at the northeast corner of Old and Market Street in 1831. He was from Pennsylvania and may have moved here because of the new Petersburg Railroad which was then being constructed. Wells built many machines for the local mills, wagons for hauling goods and freight cars for the new railroad. His business grew rapidly and soon covered four lots.

Around 1850, Wells founded the *Appomattox Locomotive Works*, which was a pretty gutsy thing to do because the Rogers, Baldwin and Norris Companies of Philadelphia almost totally dominated the locomotive industry. Wells most likely expanded into this field because the newly-chartered Southside Railroad was only a few hundred yards away. Wells was one of the few locomotive manufactures in the agricultural South. He built at least 18 locomotives during the 1850s. All were purchased by the Southside, but one. It was ordered by the Petersburg Railroad. He manufactured the *Appomattox* in 1855, and we are reconstructing it for Phase 3.

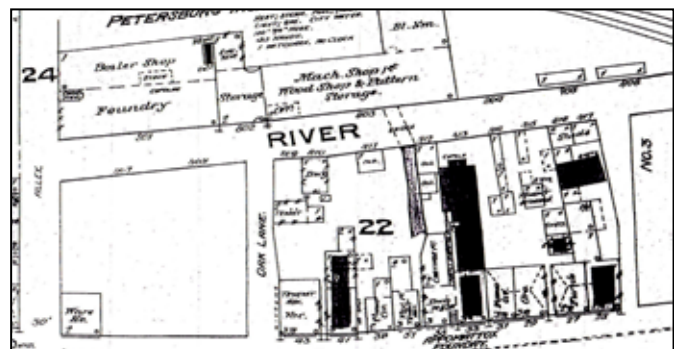
Uriah Wells died in 1864 without issue. His Petersburg Iron Works closed after the Civil War. The Appomattox Iron Works was founded in 1876 and purchased many of its machines. Some date back to the 1830s. The 1990 renovation resulted in all of its many machines being put back into operation. It had the most extensive collections of antique machinery in the nation. It opened as a living history museum on June 1, 1990. It became quite popular and attracted many educational field trips. Unfortunately, it was destroyed by the 1993 tornado.

Wells' locomotive works was located behind his iron works, only a few hundred yards west of Southside Station, behind what is now the Carriage House Apartments. The buildings are shown on the 1885 Sanborn Insurance Map. The foundations are almost surely still in place, which permits us to determine the original size of each building. We are extremely fortunate in that the outstanding collection of early machines is still on the AIW site. They should be returned to their original home.

The *Appomattox Locomotive Works* will be reconstructed and will once again become a working factory. It will be the only such living history museum in the nation. With its steam-engine-powered and belt-driven machines, it will become a major attraction in its own right. Once constructed, it will take over the task of maintaining our engines. It will also have a carriage shop to maintain the rolling stock.



Part of Disney "Enterprise" concept drawing



Petersburg Iron Works
(formerly the Appomattox Locomotive Works)

Unfortunately, we cannot rebuild it on its original site, because that will require our trains to cross the tracks of Norfolk Southern. The new facility will be built a few hundred yards to the east, behind Southside Station and on the other side of the Norfolk Southern tracks. (See plat in Phase 4.)

The ill-fated *Disney's America* was to have honored our nation's industrial heritage with a theme park called "Enterprise." Its main attraction was to be an 1850s factory. *American Adventures* accomplishes the same goal with the *Appomattox Locomotive Works*.

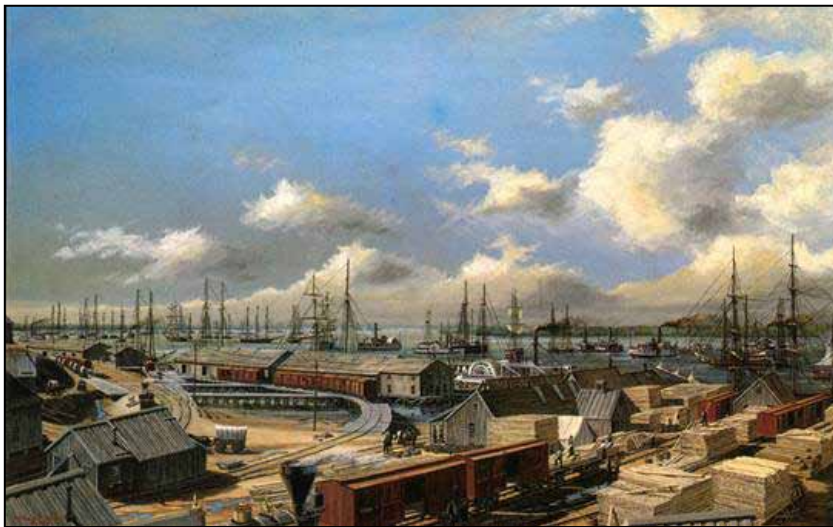
Battle for Petersburg

During the first three years of the American Civil War, the Union Army made numerous attempts to capture Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy, but all were repulsed. On March 10, 1864, President Lincoln gave command of the entire Union Army to General Ulysses Grant, who had done so well in the west. Grant made two attempts to storm Richmond, but both failed. He changed his strategy and decided to starve Richmond into submission by capturing the five Petersburg railroads that supplied it. This led to the ten-month “Siege of Petersburg.” The Petersburg Railroads were the most expensive in the world in terms of human lives, as over 10,000 men died trying to capture or defend them.



Famous Battle of the Crater

This effort began with the invasion of City Point by a vast fleet of ships. Over 100,000 men, 50,000 horses, 70,000 cattle and virtually unlimited supplies were landed at the quiet village. It was the “Normandy Invasion” of the Civil War. City Point became the busiest port in the world.



City Point Port

The American Civil War was the first war to see the extensive use of railroads. At its onset, the Union Army recognized that it would have to move and supply large armies over vast distances. It established the U.S. Military Railroad. General Grant greatly expanded it. It soon had over 100 locomotives and 2,000 freight and passenger cars. It was, by far, the largest railroad in the world. A quarter of it was assigned to the Petersburg front.



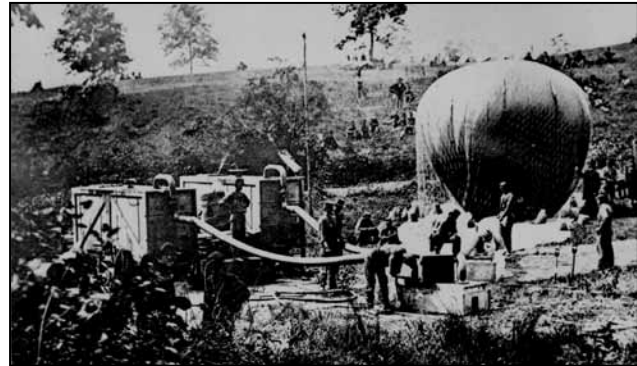
City Point Train Depot

The U.S. Military Railroad built a new depot and quickly constructed 22 miles of track behind army lines. It was served by 25 locomotives and over 200 freight cars - more than one train per mile of track - a density never matched.

Battle for Petersburg will contain both Confederate and Union lines to show the enormous contrast between the industrial might of the north pitted against the determination, courage and leadership of the South. The parks will focus on everyday life behind the lines, but the opposing armies present many dramatic opportunities.



Railroad gun



Observation balloon

There will be combat activities during the day, but the park will host a sea of tents, such as those used by the Union Army field hospitals. Families will be able to rent them for the night. Soldiers from the opposing armies often talked at night and we will build on this. Evening performances will center on soldiers telling war stories and the singing of camp songs. Of course, mess (meals) will be available.



The "Whitton" pulling President Lincoln's private railroad car

Although not included in the immediate plans, at some point in the future, we may want to construct a U. S. Military Railroad train. President Lincoln visited Petersburg twice during the battle, so this can become the basis for a future attraction or event.

Evolution of Transportation



Fort Henry was the first "Gateway to the West." As early as 1670, trains of 50 or more horses carried goods over 800 miles into the wilderness interior.



There were no viable roads in the early 1700s, so tobacco was "rolled" to market in hogsheads.



Roads slowly developed. During the 1820s, Halifax Road ran from Petersburg to Halifax, North Carolina. It was the home of transportation companies that carried tobacco in huge wagons called drays. They were drawn by six enormous draft horses.

Evolution of Transportation is not a theme "park" in that it is not confined to one physical location. It is better described as a theme "operation," as various modes of transportation will be used throughout the parks. All will be fully operational.



Prior to the wide-spread use of the automobile in the early 20th Century, horses were the primary means of moving goods and people. Cities were covered with them. *American Adventures* will make extensive use of them and they will include a great many different breeds. As there are many millions of horse lovers, our herd will become an attraction in itself.

Feenix poster - North American Horses



Native American dugout canoe



Reconstructed batteau at James River Festival

There will be dugout canoes at the *Appomattox Indian Village*, batteaus at *Freedom Village* (all were built, owned and operated by Free Blacks), rowboats in *Lafayette Park* and modern canoes and kayaks for rent at the *Peter's Point Nature Center*. They will be used on the diversion channel. If the Appomattox River is dredged, then the deeper water will open up a great many more opportunities, such as running a period steamboat to City Point. Our railroads are certainly a large part of this theme.

The Birth of Rapid Transit

The Petersburg Street Railroad was founded by George Beadle and was chartered by the City of Petersburg on November 3, 1882. Since it was to operate within the city, no state charter was required. It began service in August 1883 with six horse-drawn streetcars.



Horse-drawn streetcar, circa 1884



The Petersburg Electric Street Railroad used cars made by several different companies, but most were made by Brill.

The city of Petersburg passed another ordinance on March 1, 1886. It permitted Beadle to electrify his street cars. This was the Petersburg Railroad situation all over again, as electric streetcars had not yet been invented. Petersburg became the first city in the entire world to charter a modern (powered by a machine, rather than a horse) rapid transit system. Once again, Petersburg was on the leading edge of new transportation technology.

History tends to repeat itself. While Beadle was trying to raise money, Richmond businessmen jumped on the idea and visited Thomas Edison at Menlo Park, New Jersey. They asked him to undertake the project. He was busy trying to develop an electric light, so he referred them to Raymond Sprague; he invented the streetcar, built 12 of them and laid 10 miles of track in less than a year. Richmond became the first city in the world to actually have a modern rapid transit system in operation. The Petersburg Electric Railroad became operational the following year. They were soon joined by the Interurban that connected the two cities.

Edison did invent his light bulb and it became very popular, almost overnight. The three local streetcar companies produced their own electricity and they began selling it to others. They soon merged to become the Virginia Electric and Power Company, now Dominion Power.

The Electric Building is located midway between the other two train stations. It was the Petersburg terminal for the Interurban Street Railroad.

**Three historic train stations
in a row.
No other city can match that.**



The Electric Building when it opened in 1926

Main Street America commemorates our outstanding architectural heritage and is three blocks long. It provides the ideal location for horse-drawn streetcars.

The report *Operation Bootstrap - Penetrating Petersburg* (discussed later) calls for putting the electric streetcars back into operation as a way of getting visitors up the Sycamore Street hill to visit its many stores. The Electric Building would be the depot. The city's utility department has confirmed that the tracks are still in place, only covered with asphalt.

In 1990, I located and purchased the last remaining Petersburg streetcar and brought it back to the city. It is stored under the Martin Luther King bridge next to the Electric Building. It is too badly deteriorated to be restored, but can be used to create measured drawings for a reconstruction.



Only surviving Petersburg streetcar

Peter's Point Nature Center



This land is located at the north end of Pocahontas Island

A major goal of *American Adventures* is to provide an escape from the harsh realities of everyday life. A wilderness area occupies the north end of Pocahontas Island. It is 300 feet wide and half a mile long. Petersburg began as Peter's Point. The intersection of the west and north sides of Pocahontas Island form something of a point, so this inspired the park's name.

This forest is actually in Chesterfield County. It is the tip of a very long, thin strip of land that runs along the Appomattox River. County tax records show it divided into four parcels. Three are owned by the City of Petersburg. The fourth parcel is essentially the south bank of the Appomattox River and includes the river itself. It is owned by the United States government. Since it is public land, we can freely use it.

It is extremely rare to have a wilderness in the middle of a city and this wonderful asset needs to be properly used. The Virginia Department of Game and Fisheries and local animal control offices are swamped with injured animals every year, especially in the spring. These can range from a fawn with a broken leg to an owl with a damaged wing. Our wildlife rehabilitation center will provide such animals with a safe place to heal so that they can be returned to the wild. In some cases, the injury may be permanent, so we will provide the animal with a safe, permanent home. Over time, as the animal population increases, this will evolve into a Virginia wildlife zoo.



Playground simulates a forest environment

There will be a large and unique custom-made children's playground, with a natural decor, not unlike the one at the *Disney Port Orleans Resort*.

The Appomattox River diversion channel offers opportunities. There should be a modern canoe and kayak rental facility, so that customers can paddle up to the rapids to see the stone fish traps installed by Native Americans before the arrival of the white man. There should also be a campground that can be rented to various scout groups.

Main Street America



Bollingbrook Street. The automobiles date the photo to the 1920s

As the parks grow, they will require an increasingly large amount of interior space to house indoor attractions, restaurants, retail stores, hotel rooms, summer employee dormitories, employee cafeteria and support services, such as one to maintain period costumes. This space will be provided by *Main Street America*. It can also provide a theater, a ballroom for large dances, and a community center for the Tri-city area.

Petersburg is famous for its many historic buildings, but a great many have been lost over the years. This is well proven by the above photograph taken less than a century ago. Almost all of these buildings are gone. Although the interior space it provides will be essential, *Main Street America* provides the opportunity to recreate our lost architectural treasures. It will be three blocks long. Each block has two sides, resulting in six sections. Structurally, each section will be a single modern building, but will have facades that recreate those of yesteryear, thus providing a historic appearance.

Each block will represent a different period in the city's history. The first will show "Early Petersburg," from 1750 to 1814. In 1815, the city was destroyed by fire, and the next block will recreate its reconstruction. This is the "Antebellum Petersburg" period of our railroads. The third period covers the "Gay Nineties" to the "Roaring Twenties." Early Petersburg will contain some one and two story buildings. The other four sections are three story buildings, but the high and deep roof provides space for a fourth floor. If properly researched and built, *Main Street America* will become a big attraction in its own right, as it will show the evolution of the American City.

As previously noted, a parking garage should run the full length of *Main Street America*. It will provide convenient all-weather access to the stores, restaurants and hotels. It should be built before the parking building on the ACL lot, as it provides the foundation, making it easier to construct the buildings that will eventually set on it. As the parks and the shopping complex grow, this underground parking garage will be used exclusively by *Main Street America*. The parking building on the ACL lot will be used for park visitors. In the interim, the parking garage can be used to fill all parking needs.

This is a big project. The footprint of *Main Street America* is close to that of one-story Southpark Mall. However this complex contains four stories, making it comparable in terms of square footage when that of the Southpark department stores is added. The six sections will be built one by one over a period of time to permit each to be fully operational and profitable before beginning the next. This phased construction also provides time to conduct market tests to determine the best use of upper floor space.

The complex will provide 78 first-floor rental units with an average size of 2,500 square feet. This is the same basic rental unit size used by malls. Many attractions and stores will require several of these units. The upper floors will be used for hotel rooms, support facilities and possibly apartments. The report *Operation Bootstrap - Fostering Economic Revitalization* explains the need to have unique stores, ones that do not offer the same type of merchandise sold by the big-box stores. *Main Street America* must provide a unique shopping experience. Hotels can be run by *American Adventures* or leased to companies that specialize in them.

Main Street America also provides the setting to expand *Evolution of Transportation*. Horse-drawn streetcars can run its length. Anyone who has walked from one end of Southpark Mall to the other will appreciate this. Once the last section (1890-1920s) is in place, a 1920s service station can be built and equipped with period cars.

Operation Bootstrap recommends that *Main Street America* be handled separately from the rest of the park complex. The scheduling of the construction of each section will be largely determined by park traffic and finances. It is anticipated that some or all of one side of the street will be constructed concurrently with the construction of the parks, but that the other side will not be constructed until the parks are complete. The first sections will be needed to provide summer employee dormitories, and other support facilities.

Old Towne & Downtown Petersburg

The Old Towne Historic District and the downtown Petersburg shopping area on Sycamore Street are certainly not part of the parks, but they are an integral part of the critical mass. The goal of *Operation Bootstrap* is to attract visitors into Petersburg so that they can shop in its stores.

River Street runs between the two train stations and will be the parks' main activity corridor. It is only a few feet from Old Street. *American Adventures* can and should encourage its visitors to visit Old Towne and Petersburg. This not only helps the city, but it helps the parks, because as they attract more and more visitors, park capacity will become a problem. Spreading visitors out over a much larger area reduces the pressure on the parks.

Getting visitors into Old Towne is easy. Getting them up Sycamore Street presents a more difficult challenge. The report *Operation Bootstrap - Penetrating Petersburg* (discussed later) shows how this problem can be easily overcome.

Living History Presentation

Every structure, vehicle and object in *American Adventures* should be as historically accurate as possible. The goals are to educate and to entertain. The living history style of presentation demands appropriate activities and entertainment. We want to provide guests with a memorable, fun-filled day. The September 2011 *sOperation Bootstrap - Project Description* goes into the details of each park, but the following uses the *Appomattox Indian Village* as an example to show how that goal is accomplished.

The English invasion of their land had a devastating impact on Virginia's Native Americans, which are represented by the Appomattox tribe. Should their village and lifestyle be shown in the purity that existed before outside influence? Or should a later date be shown, one that can reflect the impact of that influence? When Fort Henry was established in 1645, the number of Appomattox had been sharply reduced by the introduction of foreign diseases and the off-and-on again extermination policies of the English. The few survivors were forced to leave their native land and resettle on the west side of Petersburg. The last record of them appears in 1705, when seven families were living in Colonel Byrd's pasture.

There is a major factor in deciding which period to show - the Indian princess Pocahontas. She is, by far, the most famous of all Native Americans. She was the favorite daughter of Wahunsunacawh, the paramount chief of the Tidewater Indians. The English called him Powhatan, after the name of his village, believed to have been located in what is now the east end of Richmond.

Pocahontas was born around 1595. In 1613, she was taken hostage and held captive in Jamestown, where she learned the English language and became Christian. There she met tobacco planter John Rolfe and they fell in love. They married the following April. This prompted an unprecedented peace between the two cultures, which has since been called the golden age of English-Indian relations.

Pocahontas when in England



In January 1615, she bore a son, Thomas Rolfe. The following year, the Rolfes traveled to London where Pocahontas became a celebrity. In 1617, the Rolfes set sail for Virginia. Pocahontas became ill and the ship docked at Gravesend where the young woman died. When news of her death hit the colony, the peace ended and the two nations soon went to war. The Appomattox was one of the three tribes inherited by her father and was not far from her home, so Pocahontas almost surely visited the village many times. She is extremely important to Petersburg's history. Her son Thomas Rolfe married Jane Poythress. They had one daughter, also named Jane. She married Colonel Robert Bolling. They had one son, John Fairfax Bolling. Jane died and Colonel Bolling then married Anne Stith; they had many children. This resulted in two Bolling clans: the "Red Bollings," who descend from Pocahontas through John Fairfax Bolling, and the "White Bollings," who descend from Ann Stith; they did not have Indian blood. Both families played an important role in Petersburg history. The Red Bollings took great pride in their Native American ancestor and this is reflected in many ways, such as the naming of the village that carries her name.

The most important event that needs to be shown in our *Appomattox Indian Village* is a visit from Pocahontas. This should be after the birth of her son in 1615. She was then twenty years old. This is a good period to show because the tribal culture was largely intact, but can reflect English influence. It can also be used to introduce the Bolling connection, which resulted in Pocahontas always being associated with Petersburg. It also explains the name of the village that honors her.

It would be wonderful if the reconstructed Indian village could actually be staffed by members of the Appomattox tribe, but they are long gone. This is a situation where our standards for historical accuracy must be adjusted to reflect what is possible. Our Indian village should be staffed by Native Americans. They will of course have to come from other tribes, but that's acceptable because our village, as part of *American Adventures*, represents and honors all Native Americans. This subject is discussed in detail in the next section.



The Native Americans of Virginia did not live in the portable teepees of the plains Indians, but rather in primitive houses, made of saplings tied together with vines. Their villages were “semi-permanent” because after a passage of time, all of the local wildlife would have been hunted and the village would have to be moved to a new location where there was more game. That, and the ever-increasing encroachment on their lands by the English, resulted in the Appomattox Indians moving their villages several times during the first half of the 17th Century. Their homes required constant maintenance. We'll put visiting kids to work helping to construct and repair them.



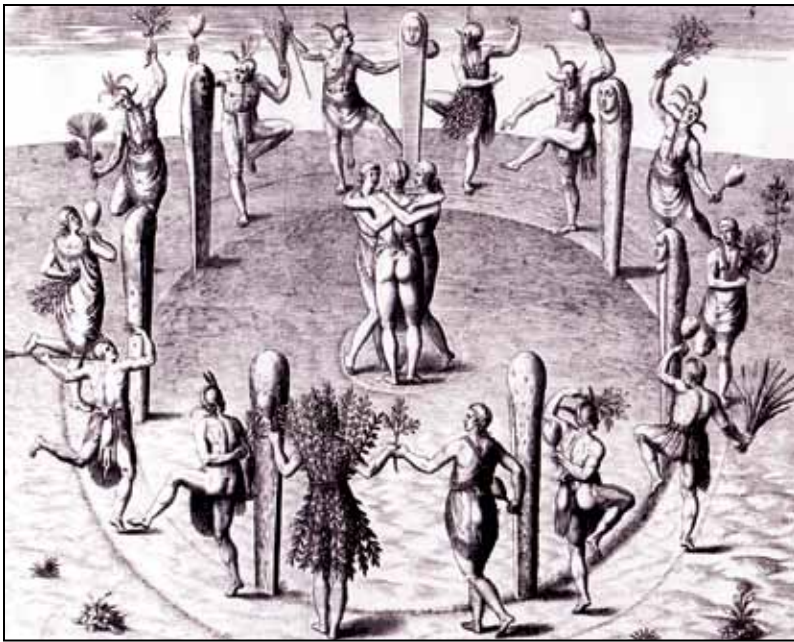
Dad will be able to take Mom and the kids out for a canoe ride using an authentic dugout canoe. Kids can help make them. *Fort Henry* will be only a few dozen yards to the west, separated by a grove of trees. It will also be on the water. Kids, dressed as Indians, can attack it by canoe. The fort will fire blanks from its small cannon. Special sprinklers sitting on the bottom of the shallow water can “explode,” simulating the cannon ball striking the water. The kids will be drenched and they will love it.

The Virginia Indians ate vast quantities of oysters. Most kids have never had the opportunity to skip a flat stone across water. They can do it with oyster shells. There can be rewards for distance and the number of skips. It's a simple activity, but it can be a lot of fun. Toward spreading out the crowds, we might move this to *Lafayette Park*.

Of course, there will be archery lessons. To provide for safety, this activity needs to be designed similar to the shooting galleries often found in arcades. The bows will be attached to a counter by leather thongs that limit the arc of fire. The bows should be designed to have a restricted range, just enough to hit the target.



A Native American can demonstrate how rocks are flaked to create projectile points - arrow and spear heads. The Williamson site in nearby Dinwiddie County is the largest Paleo-Indian stone-working site in the United States.



Ceremonial dance

Entertainment will be provided by a ceremonial dance. The Indians can even provide dance lessons.



Dog pulling a travois

Virginia Indians did not raise livestock. There were no available species for domestication and the forests were filled with wildlife. They did have dogs. They were very wolf-like and were used to pull a travois. Some of the villages raised a few turkeys. The English gave Powhatan a hen and cock in 1608 and the offspring may have found their way into other villages within a few years.



Indian corn, or maize, came in a wide variety of colors

The Virginia Indians grew crops. The most important was corn, and Indian corn was considerably different from that of today. It was the staple used in most of their meals and was the largest single food source for wildlife.

Corn was the first of the famous “three sisters” that were planted together. Beans were planted at the base of the corn stalks, which provided support for the climbing vines. Squash was the third sister. It was planted on the ground between them, stabilizing the soil. A number of other domesticated crops were also popular, including pumpkin, tomatoes, many types of peppers and sassafras. Fruits included blackberries, raspberries, and many other wild berries. The *Appomattox Indian Village* will contain vegetable gardens.

Few people know it, but the American bison, commonly known as the buffalo, once freely roamed Virginia. William Byrd killed one a few miles south of Petersburg in 1734. Buffalo Creek, near Farmville, was named in the 1750s after the herd that lived there.

It is conceivable that a couple of young braves could have killed a mother buffalo for her meat, and brought her calf home with them, perhaps as a pack animal to carry the meat. It’s stretching things, but it would make a great exhibit, as few people on the East Coast have ever seen one. Buffalo are raised commercially and we should be able to rent a calf. As it grows, it may become difficult to control. If so, we will trade it for another.

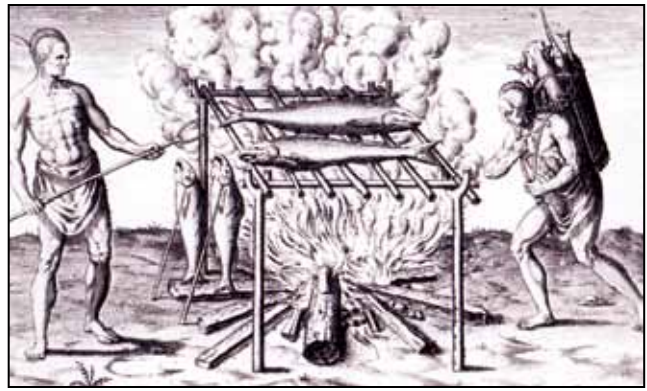


American bison, the “buffalo”

Food can be a wonderfully unique experience. The food served in every park should be appropriate to it. The *Operation Bootstrap - Development Plan* includes provisions for product development, which includes a kitchen to develop exciting new foods. Native American foods include cornbread, frybread, succotash, fried fish, oysters, venison, and soft-shell crabs. They had many stews. Utensils include those made of stone and bone. Food was most often served in hollowed-out gourds. Developing Indian food acceptable to the public will require considerable effort. Some of the foods sold at the *Appomattox Indian Village* can be cooked on site and others can be prepared elsewhere and delivered to the park.



The Indians made many stews



Frying fish. Note the large size of the fish



Indian basket



Indian pottery

Squaws will demonstrate basket and pottery making, and the weaving of reeds into mats that provided sides and flooring for their homes.

Each of the thirty tribes in the Powhatan empire had its own *weroance* (chief). Each village had a large building that doubled as the chief's home and as a facility to house tribal meetings. These were often a hundred feet long. We will have one that can serve a number of functions.

It can host many small shows. The village wise man can tell the early history of the tribe. The *weroance* can explain the impact of the English colonists. Indians from other tribes can relate their history and customs. All of this should be recorded for publication as books to support the educational field trip program. This will permit teachers to present the material in their own classroom before visiting the village. During the fall and spring, it can be used a classroom for visiting field trips.

Pocahontas is our "star" and her grand entrance should be dramatically staged. Of course she will not have a royal barge like Cleopatra, but can arrive in a very large canoe, paddled by braves. She should be personally met by the *weroance* and the people of the village should pay respect to her. She can provide visitors with a short summary of her life and her beliefs in regard to many things. This makes her a real person, not just a legend. It also provides visitors with a very personal experience.

The *Appomattox Indian Village* will not have a store, as one would be inappropriate to the nature of the attraction. It will have several concessions. However, Abraham Wood's Trading Post will be next door at *Fort Henry*. It will offer a wide variety of Native American products. Today, many tribes produce pottery, baskets and blankets for sale to tourists. This is a large industry and there are many collectors. A great many things can be made by local industries, which we want to foster. This is discussed in *Operation Bootstrap - Economic Revitalization*.

The result of all this is a wonderful educational experience. Kids will learn more about Native American cultures by spending an hour or two in our *Appomattox Indian Village* than they will in a week of classroom study. That's because first-hand experiences - seeing, touching, feeling and smelling - are far more vivid and personal than an academic presentation. The kids (and their parents) will carry memories of their experiences for the rest of their lives.

It is this highly accurate "living history" presentation that will result in the parks becoming Virginia's leading educational field trip destination. The activities and entertainment will also make the parks the favorite day trip destination of Virginia families, as they know they can look forward to a lot of excitement and fun.

Staff Requirements

The *Appomattox Indian Village* introduces a closely related subject - the unique staff requirements of *American Adventures*.

Historic attractions are normally staffed by “interpreters.” This title accurately describes their function, which is to interpret the event being depicted. These people are well trained in it. They explain everything from a third-party point of view and answer questions. Those who work in the National Park Service Civil War battlefields wear park service uniforms.

The goal of *American Adventures* is to authentically recreate various aspects of our national heritage, and the “living history” approach demands an entirely different type of presentation. Each park should be staffed by people who represent those of yesteryear. They should be appropriate for the role, dressed accordingly, and even speak in the same manner as the character they are portraying. Although they are functioning as interpreters, they are delivering first-person performances. These people are better described as “actors” or “entertainers.”

Nowhere in the entire parks complex does this become more apparent than in the staffing of the *Appomattox Indian Village*. Toward recreating our nation’s Indian legacy, this park should be staffed by Native Americans. There are several surviving tribes in Virginia that were once part of the Powhatan Confederacy, as were the Appomattox Indians. They all spoke the Algonquian language, which was also spoken by the tribes of coastal North Carolina, although they were not part of the Powhatan Empire. This language is far from dead. It is also spoken by tribes near the Great Lakes, the Rocky Mountains and across Canada. (Powhatan history maintains that members of the various tribes arrived in Virginia about 300 years before the English arrived. Archaeological evidence shows that human have lived along the Appomattox River for thousands of years, so there were earlier cultures.)

The *Appomattox Indian Village* should consist of people of all ages and both sexes. There must certainly be young braves, but older men can portray the chief, wise man and medicine man. They could tell stories, especially ones about the impact of the white man on their lives. Middle-aged women could make pottery. Young mothers could bring their children, so that they can look after them. Subject to child-labor laws, some children could be a part of the staff.

The repackaging of the parks into a national attraction permits the *Appomattox Indian Village* to not only represent that long-extinct tribe, but all Native Americans. There are over 2.5 million Native Americans in the United States. With over 300,000 members, the Cherokee are the largest tribe in the county. Most live in nearby North Carolina. Abraham Wood was trading with them in the 17th Century. In fact, he traded with tribes as far away as the Ohio River. Many Native Americans live in isolated areas of the Midwest and Southwest, where there are few job opportunities, so recruiting should not be a problem. These people not only look authentic, they are authentic!

The Native Americans have long been a neglected minority and this provides them with the opportunity to share and promote their wonderful heritage. I anticipate that many will make great contributions to the shows that they will be presenting, as they can share their own knowledge of their culture. They can speak in their native language, which adds to the authenticity. It would be interesting to watch a Cherokee trading party trying to communicate with the Appomattox, as they spoke different languages. One result of this is that Petersburg will once again become the home of a Native American community, as it was over three and half centuries ago. Wouldn’t that be something?

Federal law prohibits discrimination in employment based on race and culture, so these people will not be regular employees, but will instead be treated as what they are: actors. Rather than hiring them, *American Adventures* will contract for their performance services, per the normal standards of the entertainment industry. Rather than employment interviews, there will be cast requirements and auditions for each role. The “permanent staff” would work under long-term contracts and seasonal employees would enter into contracts for the summer months. Children have long worked under such contracts in the entertainment industry.

This same situation applies to *Freedom Village*, which will represent Petersburg’s Free Black community of 1810. Obviously it will require Afro-Americans. The *Peter’s Point Nature Center* does not require any “role playing,” so it will be staffed by regular employees. *Battle of Petersburg* presents a more complex situation. The bulk of the soldiers were Caucasian, but Afro-Americans did serve with the Union Army. Slaves helped build the Confederate earthworks around Petersburg. Resolving this situation will require a cast list with each role clearly identified. Care should be taken to find people with Northern and Southern accents.

As a result of this, *American Adventures* will have an employment department that will hire the many people needed in support functions, such as administration, logistics, technology, maintenance and some operations, such as operating the trains and horse-drawn vehicles. It will also have an entertainment department that will provide the cast for each park. To avoid confusion, this report uses the term “employee” to refer to anyone who works for *American Adventures*, either as a regular employee or as a contract worker.

Phase 1

Far too much time has spent waiting for the river to be dredged or some Fairy Godmother pleading to be allowed to revitalize the city. Objects at rest tend to remain at rest. Those in motion, tend to remain in motion. The same rule applies to cities. The primary goal of Phase 1 is to get started - to put things into motion. Like one starving vulture said to another, "I'm tired of waiting for something to die. Let's go kill something." Like that vulture, we can't sit around any more. We must take the initiative.



Phase 1 site plan
Yellow line indicates the position of railroad tracks.

Phase 1 is by far the most important, as it puts into place the team of experts that will be needed to create everything. It establishes the standards that will be used throughout the park complex. It provides the learning curve essential to establishing operating procedures that will later be used on a much larger scale. Most important, the level of its success will greatly influence the future of the parks project. Phase 1 is our market test.

Specifically, its primary goal is to simply put the first train in operation. The existing Norfolk and Western Union Station will be the train station. Southside Station provides an abundance of space for essential support functions - a gift shop, snack bar, museums and public bathrooms. A great many things will have to be built and this will be done in the Service Center, which will be housed in a large modern building on the Roper Lumber lot.

Organization

The project must begin by bringing in the key people that will be responsible for researching, designing and building everything. They are:

Chief Executive Officer. This is the big boss. His job is to oversee everything. He will need to establish the finance and human resources departments. During the construction, he will meet with various officials to ensure that the parks comply with all federal, state and city laws and regulations. He will keep the board of directors fully informed of all aspects of the parks business. Although all of our parks are historic reproductions, in one sense they are "movie sets," as they provide the background for the activities and entertainment. In addition to the normal qualifications for a CEO, this person must know show business.

Project Manager. This person will be responsible for building everything: structures, trains, horse-drawn vehicles, boats, props and many other things. He or she will work with site engineers, architects, production designers, contractors and others.

Marketing Director to handle press releases, marketing, and advertising.

Mechanical Engineer to research and design the trains and other vehicles.

Research Director to oversee the extensive research essential to historic accuracy.

Shop Manager will oversee the constructions of the trains, vehicles and props.

Entertainment Director to develop and produce activities and entertainment.

Construction Manager will be needed in Phases 2, 3, and 4.

Grounds Manger will be in charge of maintaining the extensive landscaping.

Park Supervisor. Each park will require one.

Master Site Plan

A master site plan must be prepared, showing the parks when complete. It should be prepared on a computer-aided design (CAD) program that permits various elements to be on different layers that can be hidden or displayed. Layers should include property lines, topography, underground utilities, walkways, track layout and the approximate location and size of attractions. Details of each park will be added as they are developed.

Site Improvements

Half the budget for Phase 1 is devoted to site improvements. By far, the most obvious will be the conversion of the former Petersburg Harbor swamp into scenic Lake Petersburg. Half of its length will be spanned by the magnificent new *Lafayette Park*.

The east bays of Southside Station that were destroyed by the 1993 tornado will be rebuilt. They will house several museums. Lumber warehouses on the former Roper Lumber lot will be demolished, significantly increasing the beauty of the entire area. The City of Petersburg will enjoy major improvements to its downtown area at no cost to the city. You can't beat that.

Utilizing the Roper Lumber Lot



Former Roper Lumber lot.

Yellow line indicates existing railroad track. Blue line shows the new road to Witton Street. Labels indicate the use for various buildings. An X is used to indicate the ones to be demolished.

The City of Petersburg was very wise to purchase the former Roper Lumber lot, as it provides a wealth of resources that can be utilized.

An asphalt parking lot is at the west end, at the base of the Pocahontas ramp that comes off the Martin Luther King Bridge. It contains 90 parking spaces that may be used by visitors. There is a much larger asphalt parking lot at the east end. This can be used for employee parking during Phase 1, as Phase 2 will use most of the land for the *Battle of Petersburg* park.

The lot contains a modern steel building that was constructed in 2007. It contains 60,000 square feet. At a cost of \$50 per square foot, it would cost over \$3 million to replace. That is more than the city paid for the entire 25 acre lot and everything on it. This huge building will become the Service Center. It will house the locomotive shop that will manufacture our engines, the fabrication shops that will build the rolling stock, horse-drawn vehicles and a host of other things. Adjacent to it is a 16,335 square-foot L-shaped building that served as the warehouse. The parks will utilize it for the same function.

The Roper offices occupied a two-story building on the east end of the lot. It measures 30 feet by 100 feet. Each floor provides 3,000 square feet of space. The building is air-conditioned and has a sprinkler system. The first floor has a showroom, service area, offices and kitchen. The second floor contains offices and a conference room. This building will be used to house the parks' offices.

The three buildings near the offices are three-sided warehouses constructed of wooden poles, as is a larger building to the east of them. All four should be demolished, as they detract from the natural environment. This should not be done by a ball-swinging crane that will destroy everything, but rather, these buildings should be disassembled board by board, as they will yield a very large quantity of aged lumber that can be used for many future projects. Aged lumber is expensive. Replacement costs will probably run in excess of \$200,000, so this lumber should be stored in one of the storage buildings at the north end of the lot to protect it from the elements.

During Phase 1, the office building should be painted a dark green and surrounded by evergreen trees. This will not make it disappear, but will make it far less conspicuous. The storage buildings and office building will eventually be demolished to make space for *Main Street America*. At the appropriate time, the offices will be moved into the upper floors of *Main Street America* so the original building can be demolished. *The Appomattox Locomotive Works* will be built in Phase 4. It will take over the function of maintaining our engines. The big Service Center building will then be removed (hopefully it can be sold and reassembled elsewhere) in Phase 4, as such a vast amount of space will no longer be needed. The site will then be used to expand *Battle for Petersburg* or for other attractions.

The Railroad



Of course, our first train will be the Petersburg Railroad. We will reconstruct its first locomotive, the *Roa-noke*. Earlier documents refer it as the *Liverpool*, but it was later learned that referred to a type. It will be powered by a modern diesel engine, rather than steam. The technology is rather simple. Special effects will add the steam and sounds. It will pull a stagecoach design passenger car of 1831, and two four-wheel tandem-style passenger cars that were introduced the following year. These cars were often in different colors and individually named..

Earlier plans called for the passenger cars to be built by the parks and they would have a metal frame covered with wood and painted fiberglass. Since then, a company has been located that can make authentic all-wood reproductions. The train will also pull a freight car. A second freight car may be modified to become a baggage car. These will be built by the parks.

Our parks are essentially beginning as a train ride. This very limited product offering does not justify the use of the *American Adventures* name, which suggests a much larger attraction. This single park will open under the trade name:



Once Phase 2 is complete, we will have the start of a theme park. At that time, amid great publicity over the progress, we will change the name to *American Adventures*.

Train Stations



Norfolk and Western Union Station



Southside Station

The magnificent, recently-renovated Norfolk and Western Union Station will be the train station. Unfortunately, it is too small to provide room for essential support activities, such as a snack bar, gift shop, museums and large public bathrooms. The west bays of Southside Station are intact, but they are too far away. The east bays were leveled by the 1993 tornado. As they are the only viable location to provide such facilities, the east bays must be rebuilt. They should be rebuilt in any case, because their half-destroyed appearance suggests a depressed city, which is not the image that we wish to convey. The rebuilt east bays will provide space for the support functions. The west bays will be developed into retail store space that can be used to help new businesses get started. This is discussed at length in *Operation Bootstrap - Fostering Economic Revitalization*.

Railroad Tracks

A professional railroad design engineer should lay out the tracks for the entire complex. Once the master plan is in place, then sections will be built as needed. Track construction should be contracted to professionals.

Early trains ran on strap rail, which was a wood beam with a two-inch-wide by half-inch-thick metal strap attached to the top. It provided low initial cost, but was very expensive to maintain. Modern T-rail did not come into widespread use until the 1850s. It was 30- to 50-pound track (weight per yard). As train cars grew larger and carried heavier loads, they required bigger and more powerful locomotives. Trains required heavier track. Different railroads had different requirements. During the last quarter of the 19th Century, most railroads used 60- to 90-pound track. There are now around 3,500 running feet of track on the *American Adventures* site. Since track contains two rails, there are around 7,000 linear feet of rail. It was rolled between 1915 and 1920 and is 115-pound. Our railroad tracks will be a major cost. There is an abundance of 70-pound track available, due to the lack of a market for it. It is too light for heavy modern trains, but it is far stronger than that needed by our light weight antebellum railroads. Although it is tempting to use our existing 115-pound track, it is actually more cost effective to replace it with 70-pound track, as it is very cheap, about \$10 a linear foot. This avoids the expense of converting from one size track to another and this lighter weight track is more historically accurate. The biggest cost saving is in buying switches. Ones for 70-pound track can be purchased for less than \$10,000. Those for 115-pound track will cost at least \$150,000. Our railroad will eventually need a lot of them.

The cost of purchasing rail, ties, fish plates (used to attach the rails together), spikes and installation by a professional track laying company is estimated at \$70 per running foot of track. Phase 1 will require 5,000 feet for the loop and another 1,000 feet for the line to the service center where locomotives and rolling stock will be built. Thus, building the actual railroad for Phase I is estimated at \$420,000. We have over 7,000 linear feet of 115-pound tracks on the site. If sold for \$15 a foot, then our track cost is reduced by \$105,000.

Railroad Safety

Norfolk and Southern railroad tracks run directly behind the Norfolk and Western Union Station. Trains rarely use this track during the day. They are used primarily to move coal from the western mountains to the docks at City Point. These trains have to cross 15 blocks of downtown Hopewell, so this is almost always done very late at night when vehicular traffic is light. Just in case a train does use this track during the day, we need to construct attractive, period-style wrought iron fencing on both sides of it to prevent small children from wandering onto the track. There will be historically accurate crossings. They also function as gates into the park complex.

Museums

The guiding principal of *American Adventures* is “DO,” not “VIEW.” Activities and entertainment provide a far more exciting adventure than stuffy museums filled with static displays. However, some visitors will certainly want to know more about our history and our attractions. The newly rebuilt east bays of Southside Station will provide an abundance of space that can be used for more academic presentations.

The nature of our parks provides the opportunity to have several complementary museums. Certainly there should be one on the City of Petersburg, our many railroads, our unsurpassed Afro-American heritage, and on the Virginia Tidewater Indians.

Of course there should be one on the Battle of Petersburg, but we may not have to create it. The National Park Service wanted to purchase Southside Station for use as a central Virginia Civil War Museum, but was unable to obtain the appropriations. Our *Battle of Petersburg* theme park makes the site far more desirable for that purpose. We could provide the National Park Service with rent-free space, as it adds to our critical mass and substantially increases our drawing power.

If the U.S. Military Railroad existed today, its logistic support function would almost surely place it under the command of the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps. It is headquartered at nearby Fort Lee, which is the home of the Quartermaster Corps Museum. The U.S. Army Transportation Museum is at nearby Fort Eustis. One of them may work with us on a U.S. Military Railroad Museum or exhibit. At some point in the future, the parks may want to reconstruct one of these trains to be used in connection with our *Battle of Petersburg* park.

The Norfolk Southern Railroad began as our own City Point Railroad. The Norfolk and Petersburg Railroad was the first to carry the Norfolk name. The Petersburg Railroad was built by Moncure Robinson, who later built the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad and the Richmond and Fredericksburg Railroad, which he later expanded to Aquia Creek near Alexandria. This became the basis for the “Great Metropolitan Railroad” that connected Washington, D.C. with Augusta, Georgia. It was the Interstate 95 of 1840. It is now part of CSX Transportation. One or both of these companies may want to contribute exhibits to honor their own heritage.

The museum complex can become quite large. If necessary, it can expand into the 11,000 square feet contained in the west bays, but this will reduce the amount of space available to retail stores.

Production Design

Each of our parks must be an accurate recreation of our past. Petersburg residents recently enjoyed a wonderful demonstration of this in the filming of the movie *Lincoln*, as the production design led to the city being restored to the way it was during the Civil War. We must think of each of our parks as a movie set and dress them with appropriate props.

Virginia has a large film industry that supports films coming in from out of state. The Virginia Film Commission publishes a comprehensive directory of local services and suppliers. We will require the services of a production designer to design our parks, obtain the props and dress our sets. All park employees should wear period costume, which should be designed by a wardrobe professional to ensure authenticity. These are not full-time employees, but are hired for a specific job per industry production procedures.

Parking



Parking lot locations

Phase 1 is designed to accommodate 120,000 visitors a year. The existing River Street parking lot is immediately to the west of Southside Station and will probably be of sufficient size to provide ample parking. In especially busy periods, there are areas that can handle the overflow. This temporarily precludes the need to construct a parking lot.

Expanded Phase 1

The September 2011 *Operation Bootstrap - Description* report limited Phase 1 to putting the first train into operation. The railroad was to be supported by a gift shop, snack bar and museums. These specifications were determined by the desire to keep the initial cost as low as possible, but the cheapest way of doing things is rarely the best way of doing them.

Phase 1 is extremely important because its relative success will determine everything that follows. We want customers to have a great experience, as word-of-mouth advertising can make or break the project. The original plan simply did not provide enough activities and entertainment. This was recognized in the February 7, 2012 draft of this report, which called for adding more entertainment value.

We do not want to get into the expense of building a theme park, but there are many other things that can be added at a much lower cost. Most of these were called for in later phases, so this revised plan simply pushes them forward from a later phase. This results in no additional total cost, just a reallocation of funds.

Lafayette Park / Bolling Tobacco Warehouse

Both of these have been previously described. These will be constructed in Phase 1.

Miss Pitty-Pat's Place

Petersburg's trade was based on the export of agricultural products, primarily tobacco, cotton and grain. We need to show these crops being grown. The need for an antebellum farm seems obvious, but that's more than we want to take on at this time. Petersburg was a country town. Outside the downtown area, homes were scattered all over the place. There were no local grocery stores similar to those of today, so families had to be self-sufficient. Almost every home had a kitchen garden. Most families had chickens and many kept cattle, goats and pigs.

Freedom Village calls for a modest home of the period - one that would have been owned by a working class family. It should have the things mentioned above. It was scheduled for Phase 3, but we will build it now, on a solid wood base permitting it to be easily moved at a later date. The cost is minimal because we have the used Roper lumber. It will initially be located on the south shore of Lake Petersburg at the east end of *Lafayette Park* and will be moved to *Freedom Village* in Phase 3. The name, "Miss Pitty-Pat's Place" is a temporary one. Once moved to *Freedom Village*, it should be renamed after a family that has lived there for many years.



Working class home

Crops should include corn, beans, squash, cucumbers and a wide variety of good traditional tomatoes, not the plastic ones now sold by the grocery stores. Watermelon will be popular in the summer. In the fall, we will have a large pumpkin patch. This can provide the means to hold a pumpkin carving contest in adjacent *Lafayette Park*.

The enterprising Miss Pitty-Pat runs a farm store. This is a profit center, as all the crops are for sale. We want to provide activities so customers will be able to pick their own. They pay for the crops after they have picked them. The store will also offer traditional country foods, such as honey still in its honeycomb and home-made preserves and pickles. All should be made in Virginia.



There should be a berry farm that has raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, strawberries, elderberries and other berries. There is nothing happier than a child wandering through the vines and plants, picking and eating the delicacies. Customers would purchase a traditional wooden basket, which they can fill. The berries also provide food for birds and wildlife

Evolution of Transportation



Rolling a hogshead

We can have a hogshead of tobacco continually rolled from train station to train station. Most people will be surprised to know that they ever existed. This can be turned into entertainment by having funny arguments as each station master refuses to take the cargo.



Drays such as this one hauled hogsheads of tobacco from the Roanoke River to Petersburg in the 1820s

Drays did not have sides to permit them to carry extra-wide loads. However, brackets permitted sides to be added. We can add sides and then put in bales of hay that will function as seats to take our visitors for a ride.

England built its railroads to transport passengers and goods between cities. Americans rejected this idea because its railroads were built to enrich cities. They did not want to be a way station, but rather the destination. Petersburg was a classic example. The Petersburg Railroad terminal was on the south side of Washington Street between Union and Walnut (now Sycamore). The City Point Railroad station was at the site of the present-day Farmers' Market. The Richmond and Petersburg Railroad station was on the north bank of the Appomattox River. They did not connect with the rails of each other. The city's commission merchants profited through buying and selling of goods. The transportation companies that used drays and Conestoga wagons to transport goods from one station to another stayed busy. Early trains ran only during daylight hours. (This was the source of the term "day trip"), so passengers had to stay overnight. This provided customers for the hotel industry, which flourished.

This system worked reasonably well until the Civil War, then the transporting of essential war goods became backed up at freight stations due to the shortage of horse-drawn vehicles. The problem was especially acute in Richmond. In 1861, a new law required that all of the rail lines be linked.

Both the Petersburg Railroad and the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad used omnibuses to transport passengers between stations. These horse-drawn vehicles were the direct ancestor of the modern bus. The omnibus was a big status symbol. They were very ornately decorated and pulled by the finest and showiest horses available. The omnibus was much larger than a stagecoach and ours will carry 28 passengers.



Petersburg Railroad omnibus



Conestoga wagon



Covered wagon

The Conestoga wagon was a large, heavy, broad-wheeled covered wagon that was used extensively during the late 18th Century and most of the 19th Century to transport goods. These wagons could carry up to eight tons. They were designed to resemble a boat, to help it cross rivers and streams. The covered wagon was much smaller. They were used by the early settlers departing Petersburg for the Kentucky wilderness.

Drays, omnibuses and Conestoga wagons were pulled by large, very strong draft horses. All of our horse-drawn vehicles will take visitors for rides. As one of our goals is to get people into Old Towne, some can loop Old and River Streets. They can even take guests to the Siege Museum.

The omnibus will be the most expensive vehicle. A highly experienced custom coach maker estimated the cost at \$85,000. The dray will cost around \$20,000 and the Conestoga wagon around \$25,000. When I told him about our cobblestone streets, he recommended that the solid steel tires that normally surround the wooden wheels be replaced with channel steel containing a rubber insert. This is because steel wheels are very noisy when running on cobblestone. Cobblestone provides little traction, especially when wet from rain. The rubber will provide a much better grip. There are a great many authentic farm wagons, buggies and other horse-drawn vehicles available on the Internet. Prices range from as little to \$700 up to \$3,500.

Entertainment

Although everything in the parks must be historically accurate for many reasons, *American Adventures* must be a fun place to visit. Entertainment provides plays a vital role in the accomplishment of this goal. Of course, it must be appropriate to the location where it is provided.

Petersburg's biggest enemy has always been fire. It almost completely destroyed the city in 1815 and wiped out a good part of it in 1826. Fire destroyed the first Petersburg Railroad station, workshops and freight storage buildings. A month rarely goes by without another historic building experiencing a fire. A few years ago, a large fire almost completely destroyed the block at the southwest corner of 2nd and Bollingbrook Streets.

Petersburg established its fire department in 1788. A typical antebellum fire engine was a water pump powered by a steam engine and pulled by a pair of horses. The firemen hooked it up to a fire hydrant, just as they do today.



Typical fire engine of the 1850s



Keystone Kops

This provides a great entertainment opportunity. Silent movies were the golden age of physical (slapstick) comedy, but the tradition was carried on by the Marx Brothers and the Three Stooges. One of the most popular acts of the silent movie era was the Keystone Kops. These bumbling, fumbling guys continually knocked each other over, broke everything in view, and created chaos and confusion. We'll have a Keystone Fire Department, but must find a more suitable and unique name for it.

The BullEx Company of Albany, NY manufactures an extensive line of equipment to train professional fire fighters, such as its compact smoke machine. Disney's *Pirates of the Caribbean* simulates fire through the use of colored lights reflecting off of sheets of clear flexible material. We can use that technique to achieve the illusion of flames, but we can also create real, highly controlled flames utilizing the equipment made by BullEx. Each application may require a different solution.



Compact BullEx smoke machine

Our Keystone Firemen should put on several different shows that would be rotated. There could be a show every hour or ninety minutes.

We can construct a small shed made of fire-proof concrete. The motion picture production designer can most certainly make it look like wood. If it is isolated, then real flames can be used. The fire is easily controlled through the use of a fuel feed valve. Give it a turn and the fire is immediately extinguished.

Antebellum locomotives were fire-breathing dragons. They burned wood and spewed out a shower of sparks and burning cinders that burned passengers' clothes, destroyed cargo, caused roadside fires and even burned down their own bridges (our locomotives avoid this by having modern diesel engines). The freight car will be at the end of the train and it can belch smoke. The firemen chasing the train can result in hilarious antics.

We could have a simulated fire on the second floor of the two-story Southside Station depot. Our clowns can have a ball knocking over everything with ladders. A stunt lady can jump into a net.

If properly written, directed and performed, this can result in shows that have visitors roaring in laughter. It could be such a big draw that many people will come to the parks just to see them. But that's the way everything should be done.

Horses soiled the street and every American city had an army of street cleaners. They scooped up the manure and dumped it into two-wheeled carts. Our street cleaner will not only perform this function, but he should do so in a very funny way. The great silent screen star Charlie Chaplin would have really enjoyed this role and would have developed a great character. We should do the same.



Street cleaner

Cities routinely sold the manure to private companies. They sold it to farmers as fertilizer. We will use ours in our various flower beds and gardens. This provides an environmentally sound way to nourish them while providing *American Adventures* with a very simple and efficient means of disposing of it.



New York City policeman of 1851

The parks will need security and every city needs policemen. Because of the distances involved, ours must ride horses. This is not uncommon, as even today, several American cities, such as New York, use horse-mounted police. Although budget-conscious cities usually provided inexpensive, common breeds, ours should be showy. The policemen can be of great help to visitors, as they can direct them to different things. This can be a great part time job for off-duty city police officers, as they have enforcement powers. Of course, they will have to learn to ride a horse.

Stables Complex

Horses were the primary means of land transportation prior to the automobile. Cities were covered with them, as will be our parks. We must provide accommodations for the horses. There is a long rectangular lot immediately behind Southside Station that provides an abundance of space for this function. It will be our primary horse maintenance area. Due to saving the Roper lumber, we already have the materials for the livery stable and blacksmith shop, but will have to obtain split-rail fence, as they were widely used at the time. The facilities will be used to maintain our horses and vehicles. This provides the opportunity for demonstrations. The Appomattox Iron Works blacksmith shop made products that were sold at its store. We will too.

There will be smaller horse facilities elsewhere in the park. This include ones for the Confederate Cavalry horses at *Battle for Petersburg* and Police Horses in *Lafayette Park*



Livery stable



Split-rail fence



Blacksmiths

There can be pony rides for the kids. The location is immediately adjacent to the Appomattox River Wilderness Trail, which extends west to Campbell's Bridge across from Virginia State University. In the other direction, it extends east around Pocahontas Island. It would be easy to connect this with the new access road. A small trail will run behind between the *Appomattox Indian Village*, *Fort Henry*, and the railroad tracks, permitting riders to loop the park. This would permit horse rentals. This is another case of leveraging our resources. We have to house the horses anyway, so why not turn that into a profit center?

Other Street Activity

River Street will certainly be the main street of the park complex due to the location of the two train stations. Antebellum streets were covered with vendors hawking their wares.



Popcorn and peanut wagon



Shaved ice wagon

During the course of researching horse-drawn vehicles on the Internet, I ran across an ad for two concession wagons. They come with a trailer for transporting them and they were probably used at special weekend events. The problem with that is the limited number of days that can actually be used each year. We won't have that problem as they will be in constant use, normally 10 hours a day. The asking price for everything is \$60,000.

Additional research showed that the cost of ingredients averaged about thirty cents per serving. During the busy summer season, there will be probably be lines at each one, but to be conservative, assume that only 300 bags of popcorn are sold in a day. That's an average of only 30 an hour. The price will be \$3, around half of that charged by movie theaters. That's \$900 in income. Expenses will run: \$90 for ingredients, \$120 for an employee working 10 hours at \$12 an hour and \$20 to feed the horse. The result is a daily profit of \$670. The shaved ice should sell for \$2. Assuming the same number of units sold, profits are \$370. Total daily profits for both concessions is \$1,040. The two wagons pay for themselves in only two months. They will be in use for many years, cranking out profits year after year after year.

A big benefit of these concessions being wagons is they can be easily moved to follow the crowds. This is something that cannot be done with a fixed stand. Just the simple act of them being moved adds another activity that helps bring the complex to life.

These wagons are lightweight and can be pulled by a pony. If the wagon stays in one place, then a helper can provide pony rides, opening up another profit center. Each of the two ponies can easily provide at least 10 rides an hour. That's 200 rides a day. At \$5, that's another \$1,000. The only cost is the person to lead the pony and collect the money.

We also need a way to sell soft drinks and bottled water. This can be from a horse-drawn cart similar to that used for hauling manure, only it will be packed with ice.



Hoop rolling and jump roping have been around since Egyptian days. Both were very popular during the antebellum period. Jump roping is popular with many adults, but you rarely see kids doing it anymore. Both of these items should be hawked by peddlers who can skillfully demonstrate their wares. This creates more entertainment. In this case, it doubles as a profit center. These are good examples of things that can be made locally.

The Farmers' Market was recently leased to a Richmond group. It plans to renovate the building into a fine-dining restaurant. A newspaper article stated that the group wanted to put the original outdoor farmers' market back into operation as a retail outlet for local farmers. *American Adventures* will attract a great many visitors. That traffic will encourage local farmers to take advantage of the wonderful location and facility. As this critical mass increases, the market will begin to attract more and more local shoppers.

A few antebellum period residents can add to the atmosphere; for example, women shopping in period clothes and perhaps an eccentric character taking his or her pet pig for a walk. More squeals from the kids.

There should certainly be street musicians and performers. The music should be from the antebellum period. The favored instruments were banjo and fiddle, as they were small and portable. Street musicians would most likely have played folk music, much of its based on traditional slave songs. *Amazing Grace* was written in 1835. A Christian hymn, it is one of the most recognizable songs in the English-speaking world. Its message was that people can be delivered from despair through the mercy of God. Slaves often sung it as the means of praying for freedom. America's first great composer, Stephen Foster, wrote many of his songs during this period. Jazz would be delightful, but it did not begin until the early 1900s, so we will have to postpone playing it until that period of *Main Street America* is built.

Street performances can be anything that people find entertaining. It can include acrobatics, animal tricks, clowning, contortions, dance, juggling and other things. What will be presented will be largely determined by the availability of the acts.

Disney parks have sidewalk artists that create caricatures and portraits in charcoal and pastels. There is surely a great deal of local talent available. The art will, of course, be another profit center.

There should be chickens. There are dozens of very fancy, exotic breeds. Coops can be located almost anywhere. Miss Pitty-Pat can certainly have them at her place and perhaps some should be allowed to stroll around River Street. This is historically accurate, avoids the lifeless look of *Colonial Williamsburg* and will result in many squeals of delight from young children, as most have probably never seen one.



A Critical Review

The original specifications for Phase 1 called for the train, supported by a snack bar, gift shop and museum. The expanded version moves forward into Phase 1 things originally called for in later phases. It also adds a few new ones. It more precisely defines the entertainment and activities and adds a number of profit centers.

All of this results in a wonderful day-trip destination. The result will be several hours of good, solid family entertainment fun. *Colonial Williamsburg* was never like this. We have brought our history to life. Now we really have something to sell and we'll have customers lined up, waiting to get in.

In the course of doing this, we improve the financial consequences through a higher admissions price and higher ancillary sales.

Phase 1 Financial Considerations

Operation Bootstrap - Financial Considerations covers this subject in detail. Although the text is now outdated, it is now accompanied by an all-new Excel workbook that provides an abundance of details. The financial information in this report is from that workbook. It may be downloaded from www.Petersburg-Parks.com.

Construction Budget

Operation Bootstrap - Financial Considerations established a \$3 million budget for Phase 1, which included a \$500,000 contingency fund to provide for unforeseen expenses. This budget was based on the desire to get the parks into operation at the lowest possible cost.

Since then it was discovered that the cost of rebuilding Southside Station may be more than anticipated due to the floor and supporting joists being damaged by 20 years of rain. Toward providing more entertainment value, Phase 1 was expanded to include *Lafayette Park*, *The Bolling Tobacco Warehouse*, and *Miss Pitty-Pat's Place*, which were not in the original specifications. It also moved the many horse-drawn vehicles called for in later phases and the stables complex into this first phase. It adds an additional railroad passenger car to increase park capacity and concessions / profit centers. The result is a revised budget of \$4,287,000 and a contingency budget of \$500,000 for unforeseen expenses. This results in a total budget of \$4,787,000.

The greatly increased entertainment value justifies a higher admissions price and should significantly increase customer traffic. The concessions / profit centers boost ancillary income. The result is that Phase 1 will generate much higher sales and greater profits.

Advertising

The Phase 1 budget includes \$100,000 for advertising, which is more than adequate. Small two-inch ads in the railroad magazines will run around \$200 per month. Many are published every other month; thus annual budgets will run from \$1,200 to \$2,400 per magazine. The same holds true with Civil War publications. Distributing brochures in "take one" racks on Interstate 95 should not run more than \$500 per month.

At least \$10,000 should be budgeted for special events at the Grand Opening, which should be preceded with a \$10,000 to \$20,000 TV campaign. We want to get things off to a roaring start.

Income

Income is dependent on the number of visitors. This is the big unknown, as none of us have a crystal ball to see into the future. The best we can do is made an educated guess. *Disneyland* in California entertained 18 million guests in 2010. Its ambitious *Disney's America* was probably designed to entertain at least 10 million guests a year. *King's Dominion* probably entertains around three million guests during the summer months.

Toward keeping prices low, the admission charge for the Phase 1 park will be only \$20. Ancillary sales should run another \$20. Less 40 percent for the cost of goods sold, the net ancillary income is \$12.

PER VISITOR

Admissions	\$20.00
Net Ancillary Income	\$12.00
Total Net Income	\$32.00

Projected Profit and Loss

The greatly increased entertainment value resulted in increasing projected Phase 1 annual admissions from 90,000 to 120,000, which is most likely very low. A net income of \$32 a visitor results in annual income of \$3.84 million. The Income and Expenses spreadsheet shows that the start up operation requires 84 employees. This results in an annual payroll of \$2.58 million. Debt service, insurance, utilities and other expenses increase the total projected operating cost to \$3.2 million. This leaves a profit of \$647,870.

This is outstanding, as few businesses break even their first year and profits represent 17% of gross sales. Few well-established business realize profits in excess of 15%. The profits also represent a 13.5% return on the \$4,787,000 investment, but that is really not applicable as there was no investment, because all of the funds were provided by outside financing. This is an outstanding financial performance by any standard.

Profit Participation and Royalties

The *Operation Bootstrap* plan published in September 2011 called for a generous profit participation for key executives as an inducement to maximize their performance. It should probably be budgeted at 10% of the profits. The *Operation Bootstrap Development Plan* carries a price tag, which may include a royalty arrangement. Both of these things will have to be negotiated, so that they are not included in the operating expenses cited in this report, as they are now unknowns.

Our Report Card

Financial performance is very helpful, as it provides an objective standard by which the effectiveness of our efforts can be judged. However, Phase 1 has resulted in far more than profits. The most visible is the enormous improvement to the Petersburg infrastructure. Half of the original budget was spent on it. We now have a scenic lake instead of swamp. The Southside Station has been restored and the unsightly buildings on the Roper Lumber lot have been demolished. *Lafayette Park* incorporates a beautiful natural setting into an area now dominated by the coldness of brick buildings. Everything is greatly enhanced through the extensive use of landscaping. All of this was accomplished at no cost to the city. The operating railroad, the horse-drawn vehicles, widespread use of period props, the entertainment, the colorful citizens, and the new attractions result in a charming atmosphere not found anywhere else.

Almost everyone who comes to the park will visit Old Towne. That enormous surge in customer traffic will have a dramatic impact on how buildings are used. Property values and rents will soar and buildings that are now being used functionally for such things as offices will be in very high demand for specialty shops. This expands the critical mass.

For a half-century, residents have watched their beloved city sink into ever-increasing economic decline. Within the past two years, Arnold Pen and Petersburg Builder's Supply closed their doors after a century of successful operations. They were the last of the old-line businesses. These and the many closures preceding them have resulted in a feeling of hopelessness. This has led to complacency. No one thought anything could be done about these deplorable conditions. Instead, they waited and waited and waited for riverfront dredging or some Fairy Godmother to save them. This first step represents a major change in direction. The city has taken the initiative and has embarked on a bold new adventure - one that will lead to a new found prosperity.

Phase 1 will result in hopelessness being replaced by pride. Petersburg will be seen as a forward-thinking and dynamic city, as it was years ago. Look to our past. Our nation's first trade routes into the interior wilderness, introduction of the tobacco warehouses, the new cotton industry, the railroads, the expansion of industry, and other things, resulted in enormous migrations into this city. These new residents brought in new blood. They were dynamic, ambitious people who added to the growth. The parks will do the same thing. They will attract new residents and new industries. They will set an example for long-time residents and can help provide them with the confidence to start their own businesses. *American Adventures* is setting an example of what can be done.

Best of all, this is only the beginning, because we are just getting started. As the parks expand, they will attract more and more visitors, resulting in far greater benefits.

Market Test

In spite of our projections, we really have no idea of what to expect in the way of admissions, so Phase 1 is our market test. It will provide a sales history that will be invaluable to future planning. If Phase 1 admissions are lower than expected, then Phase 2 is postponed until attendance has built up to an acceptable level. The methodology cited on page 4 stated, "Once proven, commercially exploit it." If Phase 1 attendance is far higher than estimated, then we will do just that. We must completely replan Phase 2 to accommodate much larger crowds than earlier anticipated.

The Learning Curve

When Phase 1 opens, we will have no actual experience in operating such an attraction, but no one else does either because there is not one even remotely like ours in existence anywhere. Walt Disney was confronted with the same problem, as no one had ever built a *Disneyland*. Somehow, Walt managed to muddle his way through it. We will too. It will take us some time to learn "what kind of bull we have by the horns." Operating procedures will have been made in advance, but they represent theory and best guesses. Day-to-day experiences will reveal the realities, especially the errors and omissions. This will almost certainly result in many modifications to our procedures. Starting out on a relatively small scale lets us accumulate experience and make necessary revisions before our expansion results in greater crowds.

Phase 2



Early America will include the Appomattox Indian Village and Fort Henry. It is on the south shore of the lake. The Battle of Petersburg will be on the north shore. Each will require a train loading platform.

Phase 2 calls for adding *Early America* and the *Battle of Petersburg*. They open up the educational field trip and Civil War buff markets, thus significantly increasing the drawing power of the park complex. *Operation Bootstrap - Financial Considerations* projects annual attendance of 300,000 after Phase 2 is in operation.

Early America will contain the *Appomattox Indian Village*. Its activities and entertainment have been described in detail, but a great many details must be researched, such as the type of wood used to construct the houses and the type of reeds that were woven in mats to cover them.

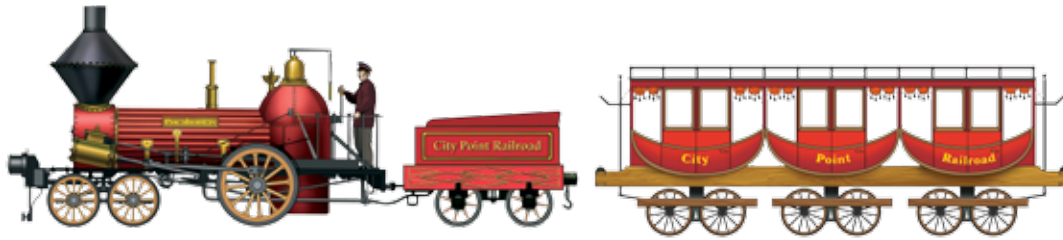
Fort Henry presents a challenge. It is well documented that it was at the “falls of the Appomattox,” but no one really knows the precise location. It was extremely important historically, but no one knows what it looked like. One authority maintains that it was made of stone, but the lack of archeological remains make that doubtful. It was most likely made of wood. No one knows its size or layout. The same situation applies to Abraham Wood’s Trading Post, which will be our general store. Both almost surely used the same construction techniques that were used at Jamestown, so its staff should be consulted in regard to design. Size will be largely influenced by capacity.

We are extremely fortunate in that there is extensive documentation of the Civil War fortifications that surrounded Petersburg and the National Park Service has a highly knowledgeable staff of historians that can make a host of recommendations.

The National Park Service wants to use Southside Station as a Central Virginia Civil War Museum and has estimated that it will attract a quarter-million visitors a year. It was unable to obtain the appropriations to purchase and restore the building. *American Adventures* will restore the building and provide the park service with rent-free space, as this will considerably enhance the drawing power of the parks.

The National Park Service has very strict rules governing what can and cannot be done on park property, which I believe precludes constructing reproductions. The *Battle of Petersburg* will have no such restrictions, so it can contain the many wonderful things that the actual battlefields do not offer. At some point in the future, *American Adventures* can even construct a U.S. Military Railroad train to be used with the park.

The National Park Service Museum and the *Battle of Petersburg* support and complement one another. This can result in Petersburg becoming the nation’s leading Civil War attraction.



1838 City Point Railroad

Our trains are an attraction and a ride, but they also fill a functional need, as they provide the transportation essential to moving visitors around the 25 square block park complex. Upon completion of Phase 2, the train will have to stop at the main station and two parks. Each stop will require time to load and unload passengers. This will significantly increase the time required for the trip. Each trip will probably take a half hour, twice that of Phase 1. Between the increased travel time and increased admissions, the parks will require a second train. It will be the City Point Railroad, powered by the *Pocahontas*. This locomotive had the new Jervis design; there was a truck with four leading wheels and two drive wheels. These were very different from the *Roanoke* of Phase 1, which had no leading wheels and four drive wheels. Passenger cars then had eight wheels. We will need four. trains will be in use during the summer, but only one will be needed the rest of the year. The train not in operation can be stored on the Service Building branch. This avoids having to build a siding for it.

Operation Bootstrap - Financial Considerations, as recently updated, established a Phase 2 budget of only \$3,800,000. The \$500,000 contingency increases the total to \$4,300,000.

If Phase 1 admissions significantly exceed our 120,000 estimate, then we will have to build much larger parks in Phase 2. We'll also need to add more wheeled vehicles and enlarge the things built during Phase 1. It should be noted that much of this increase will result from moving things planned for the Phase 4 expansion into Phase 2. To the extent possible, there will be no increase in the total budget.

The necessity of spreading out the crowds may result in our having to add new attractions. This will increase the costs. The cost of something is nowhere near as important as the profit that you make on those costs.

Battle of Petersburg will have a small cavalry unit. Since one of its jobs was reconnaissance, it can freely roam around the parks complex, even the streets of downtown Petersburg. To do this, it must be a Confederate unit, but that works in our favor. The 43rd Battalion, Virginia Cavalry was the most famous cavalry unit of the Civil War. It was commanded by Lt. Col. John Mosby. He led lightning strikes on Union targets and consistently eluded pursuers. This led to Mosby being called the "Gray Ghost." This is a new entertainment event, one not included in previous reports. It is but another example of the continuing evolution of *American Adventures*.



Confederate cavalry

Phase 2 Finances

With the addition of two more theme parks, *American Adventures* is offering a wonderful entertainment experience, one that can easily fill a day. This justifies increasing the admission price to \$28 (which is still cheap). The addition of two gift shops and additional concessions should increase ancillary sales to \$25. Allowing for a 40% cost of goods sold, this leaves net income of \$15.

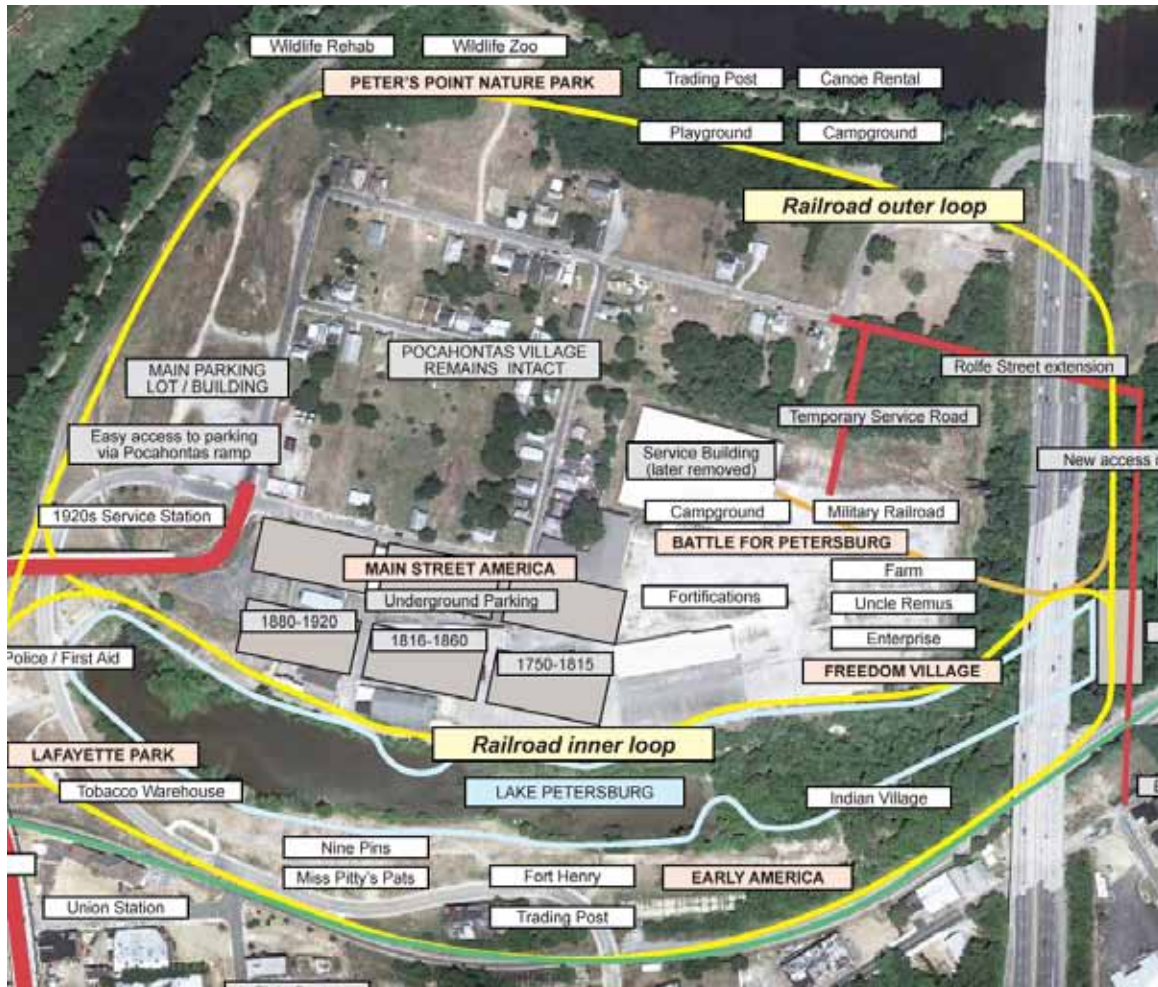
PER VISITOR

Admissions	\$28.00
Net Ancillary Income	\$15.00
Total Net Income	\$43.00

This projects 300,000 annual admissions, but if the National Park Service Central Virginia Civil War Museum is incorporated into *American Adventures* then that figure may prove to be extremely low.

The 300,000 projection will result in net income of \$12.9 million. It will now require 212 employees to staff the parks. Annual projected payroll is \$5.8 million. The addition of debt service and other expenses results in total operating expenses of \$6.7 million. This leaves a profit of \$6.2 million. This is almost 150% of the cost of Phase 2. Now we are beginning to get into some serious money.

Phase 3



Site plan upon completion of Phase 4.

Norfolk and Southern Rail line shown in green.

Primary rail lines are shown in yellow. Secondary lines are shown in blue.

A large size PDF of this site plan may be downloaded from www.Petersburg-Parks.com

With the success of the first two phases behind us, we can confidently proceed with the major expansion called for in Phase 3. This will introduce *Freedom Village* and the *Peter's Point Nature Center*.

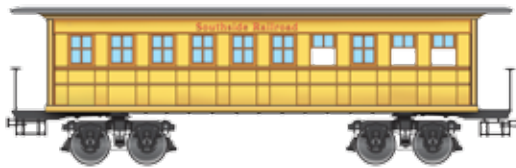
The most visible expansion will be the railroad. The tracks will now run all the way around Pocahontas Island. This is our main line, sometimes referred to as the "Outer Loop" to distinguish it from the track that we previously used and now refer to as the "Inner Loop." The main line is almost two miles long. There are five stops - the train station and four parks. Passengers will have to be loaded and unloaded at each. This can increase travel time to an hour, plus we are carrying a lot more passengers on each train. Two more trains will be required.



"City of Petersburg"

"Appomattox"

The locomotives will be the magnificent *City of Petersburg*, which was purchased by the city in 1852, and the *Appomattox*, which was built by Uriah Wells in Petersburg in 1855. Both were of the revolutionary and highly popular American Design, as they had four lead wheels and four drive wheels.



Typical 1850s passenger car

The square shaped passenger cars were then being widely used. We will reconstruct several different models. These cars carried 40 to 60 passengers. Each engine will pull up to four passenger cars.



Both of these locomotives saw extensive use during the Civil War. Once we have them and the much longer track, we can introduce what will almost surely become our most famous attraction. “The Great Locomotive Chase” was one of the most famous events in American railroad history. Yankee spies stole a train in Georgia and were chased for over 200 miles by Confederates. A detailed description of this event appears in the September, 2011 *Operation Bootstrap* report. This will be a big show that will attract a great many visitors, especially Civil War buffs and railroad fans. In fact, many people will visit the parks just to witness this extraordinary event.

Poster for Disney’s movie, “The Great Locomotive Chase”

American Adventures now has four trains. All will be in continual use during the busy summer season, but during the spring and fall, we can cut back to two, and in the winter, possibly one. Provision must be made for storing the unused locomotives and their many passenger cars. The northern leg of the Inner Loop provides plenty of space, but it may be needed for the “Great Locomotive Chase.” In such case, we will need a siding for storage. It should be constructed immediately north of the east end of the Inner Loop. This siding can later be used for the U.S. Military Railroad train, if it is ever built, as it will be adjacent to the *Battle for Petersburg*.

At this point, the City of Petersburg finally has a real theme park complex. Prior to this, it had the start of one. The increased critical mass will draw a lot more visitors. There is so much to do that visitors will spend the bulk of the day in the park complex. With its diverse resources, *American Adventures* is now poised to become Virginia’s leading field trip destination.

Phase 3 Finances

The Phase 3 construction budget is \$5,386,000. The \$500,000 contingency fund brings the total to \$5,876,000. The admissions price has been increased slightly from \$28 to \$35. Ancillary sales should run at least \$30. Deducing the cost of goods sold leaves a net ancillary income of \$18.

PER VISITOR	
Admissions	\$35.00
Net Ancillary Income	\$18.00
Total Net Income	\$53.00

Annual attendance is projected at a modest 450,000. That results in net income of \$23.8 million. The staff has increased to 327 employees, and an annual payroll of \$8.4 million. Debt service and other expenses increase the total operating expenses to \$10.15 million. Projected profits are \$13.7 million.

Phase 4



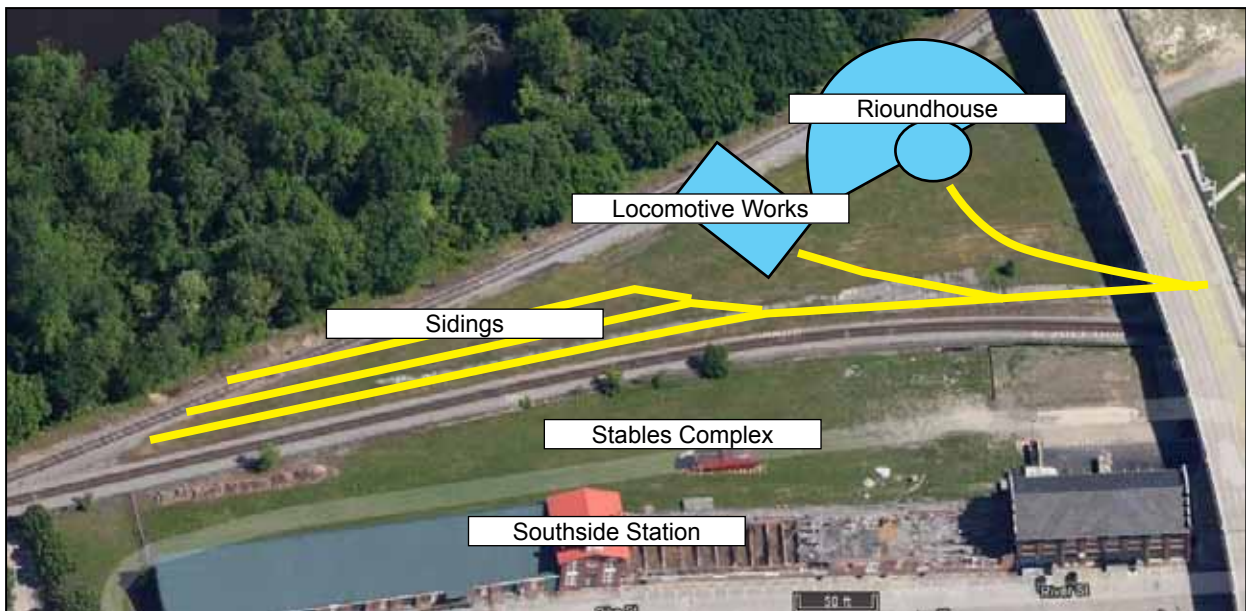
1856 Richmond and Petersburg Railroad "Black Diamond"



1858 Norfolk and Petersburg "Number 1"

Increased customer traffic is once again going to require two more trains. At this point, we bring in the locomotives shown above. Each will need four passenger cars. This rounds out our fleet. As an alternative to one of these trains, we could reconstruct a train from the U.S. Military Railroad, as it can tie in nicely with our *Battle for Petersburg* theme park. It would normally be parked on its own siding, previously described.

We now have a fleet of six locomotives, 24 passenger cars and a dozen other assorted other cars, such as freight cars, baggage cars and a sleeper (the Petersburg Railroad had one of the first in the nation). Between them, they include every type of locomotive, passenger car and freight car used anywhere in the United States prior to the Civil War. We need to maintain and store those not in use.



Railroad support complex

Phase 4 focuses on our railroad heritage. This is when we will build the *Appomattox Locomotive Works* and our roundhouse. The locomotive works will be fully functional and will utilize many machines original to the complex. It will be the only fully operational 1850s factory in the world. It will take over the maintenance of our engines and rolling stock. The roundhouse will be used to store the locomotives not in use. The sidings will be used for our rolling stock. We could not have a better location because these new facilities are directly behind our two authentic railroad stations. We will have the most extensive historic railroad attraction in the world.



Petersburg Railroad Roundhouse from 1878 Beers map of Petersburg

Phase 4 also provides for adding the *City of Industry* exhibit. It will be in the railroad complex. By this time, we have facilities for our many horse-drawn vehicles. We will no longer have need for the huge service building. We will demolish it. This will permit us to substantially increase the size of *Battle for Petersburg* and will provide space for other attractions. It also gets rid of the biggest eyesore in the complex.

Phase 4 also provides for increasing the size of the other parks as needed.

Phase 4 Finances

The admissions price is increased to \$40, which is a third less than *King's Dominion* and *Busch Gardens*. Ancillary Income is projected at \$36. After deducting 40% for the cost of goods sold, the net income is \$21.60.

PER VISITOR

Admissions	\$40.00
Net Ancillary Income	\$21.60
Total Net Income	\$61.60

Annual Admissions are conservatively estimated at 800,000. This results in an annual income of \$49.2 million. *American Adventures* now employs 493 people. Annual payroll is \$12.6 million. Debt Service and other expenses increase the total operating cost to \$15.8 million. This results in a profit of \$33.42 million.

Future Attractions

American Adventures will never be complete. Like *Colonial Williamsburg*, *Disneyland*, *King's Dominion* and other parks, ever increasing attendance is going to demand more attractions to spread out the crowds. This report has previously cited future attractions such as the Golden Ball Tavern and the U.S. Military Railroad.

Historic Petersburg Harbor is at the top of the list of future attractions. It will be located immediately east of our dam on the land now owned by the City of Petersburg. The need for deeper water makes this dependent on the Appomattox River being dredged. The conversion of the swamp into *Lake Petersburg* greatly reduces the area to be dredged, thus reducing the cost. Current specifications call for the river to be dredged to a depth of 8 feet. That is excessive, as such great depth is not required by small boats. If the depth is reduced to 4 feet, then the dredging cost will be greatly reduced. If no federal funding is provided, it may be feasible for *American Adventures* to undertake the project. In such case, it can operate shallow-draft boats, as they were used in the past. It would be great to have old-time steamboat rides to City Point.

Immediately east of the 28-acre track owned by the city is a 35-acre forest-covered tract owned by Norfolk Southern Railroad. It stretches from the Broadway Rail Yard on Route 36 to the Appomattox River. It is of no use to the railroad and should be purchased for future use, such as a greatly-enlarged harbor area. Immediately to the east of it is the former landfill area, where "Mount Petersburg" is now being built. It is my understanding that once this land is used up, then ownership will revert back to the city. If not, then it should be purchased. The "mountain" will severely restrict how this land can be used, but surely some use can be found for it. We also need to obtain land along the Appomattox River from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

As a by-product of providing for its own transportation needs, *American Adventures* has a real railroad. All of its trains will use standard 4-foot 8.5-inch gauge (distance between the rails) track, which is used throughout North America. Our trains can go anywhere, including Alaska and Panama. The possibility of off-site operations should be explored and tested. There is a big difference between operating a theme park train and running a real train over common carrier rail, so actual operations should be contracted to professionals. The most likely candidate is Amtrak, as it is responsible for our nation's railway passenger service.

This is discussed at length in the September 2011 *Operation Bootstrap* report. Suffice for now to say that the first goal will be to provide transportation to *Battersea Plantation*. It is a wonderful, historically accurate resource and is only three miles away. Norfolk and Southern tracks run from our Union Station to the rear property line of Battersea. The train would loop the plantation so that it could reverse direction for the return trip.

American Adventures could provide day trip excursions. The destination should be another attraction. It's a three-hour train trip each way to Luray Caverns. Our trains can also be used to bring visitors into the parks. Norfolk and Petersburg's *Number 1* could be stationed in Norfolk, bring up visitors for the day and return in the late afternoon or early evening. We should explore sending our trains out for exhibit tours during the winter months rather than having them sit in our yards. They can carry wildlife from our zoo and various exhibits. They will function as the circus trains of yesteryear. However, they are not carrying the attraction. They are the attraction. If properly managed, the caravan would spend a day or two at each destination, where the audience would largely consist of pre-sold educational field trips.

Economic Revitalization

The goal of *Operation Bootstrap* is to revitalize the Petersburg economy by using our biggest asset - our long, colorful and diverse history - as the basis for a historic theme park complex that will attract a great many visitors. That in itself will change Petersburg forever, and for the better. This report began with:

**Paramount Studios built King's Dominion for one purpose:
TO GET MONEY OUT OF VIRGINIA AND SEND IT BACK TO CALIFORNIA.**

Our goal is the exact opposite. We want to bring money from outside of Petersburg into the city and we want to keep as much of it here as possible. Two *Operation Bootstrap* reports address this subject.

Penetrating Petersburg

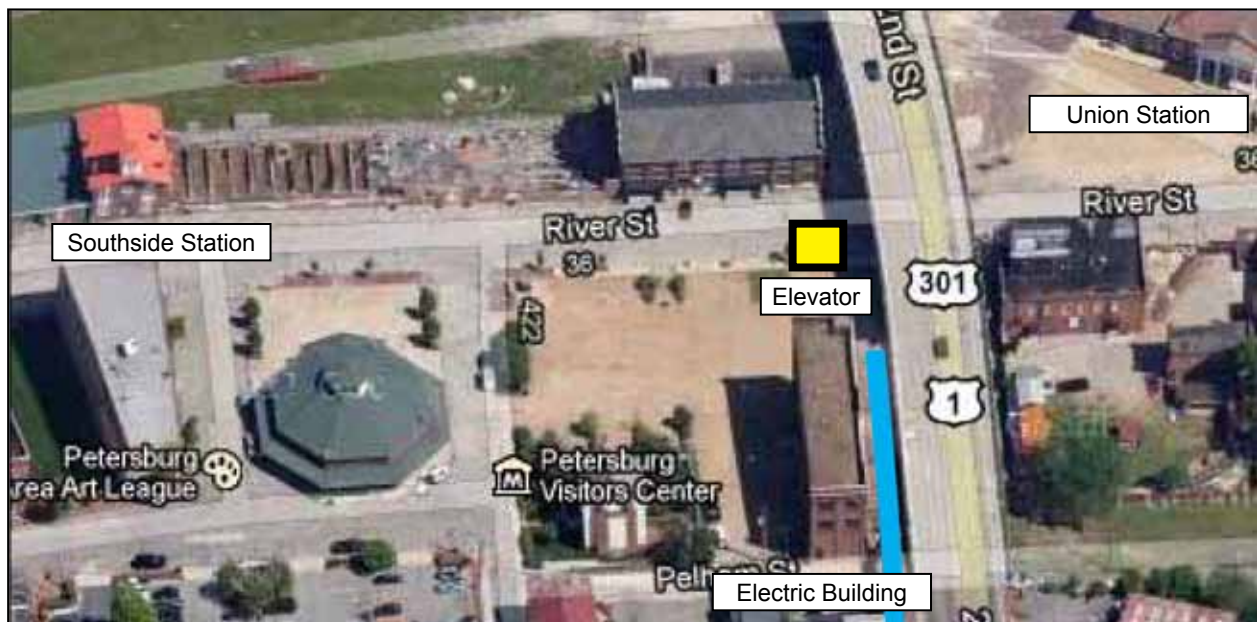
The parks will be highly profitable venture. We don't need to be greedy and strive to soak every possible cent out of customers. There will be more than enough money to go around.

Old Towne is only a few steps away, so almost all park visitors will wander its streets. The challenge is getting them up the Sycamore Street hill to visit the downtown area. The big obstacles are the walking distance, the fact that visitors have parked within the *American Adventure* park complex, and that there is very little public parking on Sycamore Street.



Operation Bootstrap - Penetrating Petersburg addresses this problem. It calls for putting the city's biggest white elephant, the Electric Building, back into operation as the electric streetcar terminal. It was built in 1926 to serve as the Petersburg terminal for the Interurban Electric Streetcar. VEPCO donated it to the city in 1955 and it has been vacant ever since. There are numerous problems that have prevented its renovation and reuse. These include difficulty of access, lack of parking, method of construction and the small amount of interior space.

This building is really only suitable for one thing - to function as a streetcar terminal. Such use requires minimal interior renovation, as we want to maintain the original ambience. For example, we will not install air conditioning, just open the many large windows, just as they did years ago. Exterior cleaning will remove almost a century of grime, making it look like new. As this is the first building that people see when crossing the Martin Luther King Bridge from the north, the cleaning will dramatically improve this entrance into the city.



The Electric Building is midpoint between the two railroad stations.

The elevator on River Street is indicated by the yellow box.

This makes the station easily accessible to visitors. Many will want to ride the streetcar.

The location of the streetcar tracks is shown in blue.

The earlier Appomattox River Bridge had a dedicated lane for the streetcars, which pulled off on a 20-foot-wide ramp that connected the terminal to the bridge. The Interurban Streetcar tracks extended to Bollingbrook Street, where they turned right. They went one block, then turned right on Sycamore and turned right again on River Street to permit the streetcars to be parked in a building located behind the terminal. The Petersburg Electric Railway ran up the Sycamore Street hill to Washington Street. It will be easy to tie the two lines together.



The Sycamore Street line had dual tracks that permitted two-way traffic. Streetcars could run in either direction so at the end of the line, the driver just switched over to the other track and went to the other end of the streetcar to drive it in the reverse direction.

The dual tracks on Sycamore Street are clearly visible in this postcard.

The access problem is easily solved by having an inviting glass elevator shaft on River Street between the two train stations. It should have a Victorian appearance and will connect with the streetcar terminal through an overhead walkway. Easy access will result in a great many park visitors wanting to ride the streetcar. If customers see the service is rather continuous, then they won't hesitate to get off and visit the retail stores. This can have an enormous impact on downtown Petersburg. It would also help the parks. It would provide another major attraction and help to spread out the crowds, thus reducing the demand on the attractions in the parks complex.

This was not included in the original *Operation Bootstrap* plan, and so no budget was allocated for it. *Operation Bootstrap - Penetrating Petersburg* estimates that everything can be put into place for one million dollars, which includes purchasing and renovating the station, building the expensive elevator and constructing two streetcars. We may need more.

The Petersburg utility department has confirmed that the streetcar tracks are still in place on Sycamore Street, but are covered with asphalt. Its representative said that sections of track have been cut out over the years to install utility lines. The above budget allows \$100,000 for removing the asphalt and making repairs. However, the condition of the track is unknown. The amount of track that is in place can easily be determined by using a metal detector. In the normal course of installing new utility lines, the digging up of Sycamore Street will provide the opportunity to physically inspect the track and ties at no cost. Serious consideration of putting the streetcars back into use should be deferred until such time that park admissions justify such an action. This provides more than enough time to determine the condition of the tracks.

The streetcar could be run by the city's bus company, as its job is to provide local transportation. In this case, fares would be charged. It could also be run by *American Adventures*. In this event, it would just be another ride and there would be no additional fare.

Fostering Economic Revitalization

The report *Operation Bootstrap - Fostering Economic Revitalization* makes a number of recommendations as to how the greatly increased visitor numbers can be used to expand two areas of the city's economy.

The first is retail. Petersburg cannot compete with malls and strip shopping centers, so it needs to create an entirely different type of retail environment. It should be largely composed of specialty shops that do not offer the types of merchandise carried by the chain stores. Our goal should be to encourage the establishment of many new locally owned businesses. The report recommends ways in which this can be accomplished.

Next is manufacturing. *American Adventures* will have enormous demands for a great many things, ranging from period costumes to store fixtures to souvenirs. To the extent possible, all should be made locally. The report outlines the many ways that the parks can aid in the establishment of new businesses to produce them.

Employment

Upon the completion of Phase 4, the parks will require a minimum of 340 full-time employees and 153 seasonal employees. Perhaps even more important is the nature of the jobs. In today's high-tech world, most employers are seeking people with advanced technical skills and high levels of education. These are of little importance to *American Adventures*. It will need employees with "people skills" that can interpret the things being shown. The locomotive works and fabrication shops will require skilled and semi-skilled workers as well as apprentices. Employees will be needed to drive the trains and horse-drawn vehicles. The parks will need a host of amateur actors to perform in its many entertainment events. Every school has its "class clowns" and we can use them as the "Keystone Firemen." We'll even need street musicians and sidewalk artists.

This can have an enormous social impact on the community. There are few job opportunities available for unskilled young people, resulting in a feeling of hopelessness. To many, it appears that the only opportunities open to them are dealing in drugs and committing other crimes. By providing the young people with viable alternatives, we eliminate the underlying cause and this can help to change many of their lives. Everyone benefits.

The greatly expanding retail economy and the establishing of many new small manufacturing companies will also result in a great many more new jobs.

Tax Revenues

Petersburg has a five percent admissions tax. Our \$32 million in admissions will provide the city with a big jump in additional taxes. The value of real estate is going to soar. Retail sales will greatly increase. Both of these will result in huge increases in the city's tax revenues.

Main Street America

Main Street America has been largely ignored by this report because it should be treated as a separate project. The first of the six sections should probably be started after Phase 2 is in operation. This would be wise from an economic standpoint, as the parks will then be employing many seasonal employees and housing them will be a major cost. This first section should contain hotel rooms that can provide housing for the seasonal employees. The cost savings should pay most of the debt service on this section.

Of course, these same hotel rooms will be needed by tour groups and overnight educational field trips during the rest of the year. The first-floor retail space generates more income. Another big advantage is that it lets us test the market for hotel rooms and this information will prove invaluable in planning the other sections of *Main Street America*.

This first section is Early Petersburg (1750-1815), so it will contain mostly one- and two-story buildings. Some of the first-floor space will be needed by the parks for attractions. The rest will be rented. There will not be a great deal of retail space in this section, so it will not seriously compete with the rental of downtown stores. This first section should certainly have a restaurant, as one will be needed. It should be the *French Betsey*, which was established by Elizabeth Allergue at 20 Old Street in 1810. She was called the "French Betsey," because she was from Haiti and raised in the French language. Betsey was a mulatto and a woman, but she established the city's most popular "ordinary" (restaurant). In view of the racial and sexual discrimination that existed at that time, it was a truly remarkable accomplishment. Her ordinary was destroyed by the 1815 fire, but she built a new one next to her home on Grove Avenue. (In 1993, this author wrote a detailed biography of this amazing woman.)

Operation Bootstrap - Fostering Economic Revitalization describes ways that we can help to launch new stores. This first section provides them with room for expansion.

In developing this project, one side of the street should be completed before starting on the other side. This provides the opportunity to more quickly show the three periods of our history. Constructing the second two blocks will require the demolition of the remaining Roper Buildings. The *American Adventures* offices should then be moved into an upper floor of *Main Street America*.

Main Street America should have an underground garage. Such easy access is essential to hotel guests and this facility can also be used by shoppers. This will be an expensive project and it may be possible to build it in phases. For example, upon completion of phase 2, it is recommended that one side of the first block be constructed. It may be possible to only build the garage under that area and the other side of the street. When the next block is constructed, it begins with the parking garage. All of this is to conserve working capital. It does require interim entrances and ramps, so it would be certainly be more cost efficient to build the entire garage at one time. This is a trade-off between conserving cash and maximizing construction efficiency.

Financial Summary

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Total
Budget	4,287,000	3,800,000	5,376,000	8,578,000	22,041,000
Contingency	500,000	500,000	500,000	850,000	2,350,000
Total	4,787,000	4,300,000	5,876,000	9,428,000	24,391,000
Existing Debt	4,787,000	4,499,780	8,271,793	13,298,926	
Additional Draws	0	4,300,000	5,876,000	9,428,000	
Total Debt, gross	4,787,000	8,799,780	14,147,793	22,726,926	
Existing Debt 6% reduction	-287,220	-527,987	-848,868	-1,363,616	-3,027,690
Total Debt, after payments	4,499,780	8,271,793	13,298,926	21,363,310	
Projected Income	3,840,000	12,900,000	23,850,000	46,400,000	
Projected Expense	-3,192,130	-6,716,330	-10,149,630	-15,851,480	
Profit	647,870	6,183,670	13,700,370	30,548,520	
Previous Profit	0	647,870	6,831,540	20,531,910	
New Profit	647,870	6,183,670	13,700,370	30,548,520	
Accumulated Profits	647,870	6,831,540	20,531,910	51,080,430	

The above data is from the Excel Workbook *Operation Bootstrap - Economic Considerations*, draft 205. It shows that the parks will have a total budget of \$24,391,000, which includes \$2,350,000 in contingency funds, which will most likely be used. If not necessary for covering shortfalls, then the funds will be applied to expanding or improving the attractions.

The spreadsheet assumes that phases will be introduced at the rate of one every year. *American Adventures* is continually paying debt service, which is budgeted at 11% of the loan balance. 5% of that is interest and the other 6% is applied to the principal. Each phase results in additional debt, but the principal of the previous debt is being paid down. Over the four-year period, total debt is reduced by \$3,027,690.

Toward keeping the math simple, profits are shown as being accumulated. At the end of the Phase 4 year, there will be \$51,080,430 in accumulated profits and the outstanding loan balance is \$21,863,310. This means that the accumulated profits can not only pay off the outstanding debt, but \$30 million will be left over.

A more practical alternative is to apply the profits from each phase to the cost of developing the next phase. For example, upon the end of the Phase 2 year, there are \$6.83 million in accumulated profits, which is more than enough to pay the \$5.87 budget for Phase 3. Phase 3 profits are projected at \$13.7 million, which is more than enough to pay for the \$9.4 million budgeted for Phase 4. This reduces the loan balance and debt service, resulting in higher profits for each phase.

Business Value

Interest rates are now at an all-time low. Banks rarely pay above 2% on saving accounts and Treasury bonds don't pay much more. Other bonds may yield higher return. They are safe, as there is a guaranteed return and very little risk. Toward seeking a higher return, many investors buy stocks. Their total return consists of annual dividends and the profit they hope to make by later selling the stock at a higher price. Stocks that offer high potential gain generally provide low dividends.

The same factors apply to a business. We live in an age of mergers and acquisitions. There are many factors that go into establishing a viable purchase price, but current profits are at the top of the list. A good place to start is valuing a business at ten times its annual profits, as that will provide the buyer with a 10% return on the investment. To the extent the business offers growth potential, the multiple can be increased. Value is also influenced by assets and liabilities.

The profitability of the parks helps to determine their value. For example, Phase 2 projects profits in excess of \$6 million. That means the parks are then worth \$60 million. Each phase will result in even higher values. The importance of this is that increased value results in a much lower asset to liability ratio, which may make it possible to obtain new loans at lower interest rates. This reduces debt service and operating expenses.

Implementation

Today, the City of Petersburg owns three parcels of land formerly used for industrial purposes. Due to their historically important location, they are no longer suitable for industrial use. The city also owns three lots in the wilderness area on the north end of Pocahontas Island, the large forested area on the east side of the Interstate 95 bridge, an abundance of land along the Appomattox River and two historic train stations. There is no plan for the development of this land.

Operation Bootstrap provides an outstanding development plan. It meets all the requirements set forth in the beginning of this report. It clearly identifies the product and the market for it. It meets the requirement of maximizing potential while minimizing risk. The completed parks will be a major attraction and the resulting attendance will have a major impact on the city.

Land is worthless without a viable development plan, and the *Operation Bootstrap* plan is totally dependent on the use of the city-owned property. Putting the two of them together results in a highly viable package. The question then becomes what to do with it.

There are only three basic possibilities: (1) sell the package, (2) enter into a partnership or joint venture with another party, whereby the city puts up the physical assets and the other party puts up the cash, then builds and operates the parks, and (3) do it ourselves. The problem with the first two options is that the purchaser or partner is going to be in the same position as Paramount Studios. It will want to soak every cent it can out of the parks so that it can ship the money out to the home office. It will not want visitors to leave the parks and visit the city, as this deprives it of income. Rather than having things made locally to encourage local industries, it will want to obtain them at the lowest possible price. We can count on everything being made in China. In short, a purchaser or partner won't give a damn about community economic revitalization, only maximizing its own profits.

Recommendation

The economic revitalization goals can be best met by the City of Petersburg having total control over the parks project. The obstacle is that the city does not have the manpower, organization, experience or expertise to tackle such a large and unique project.

The City of Petersburg has spent many years and a large amount of money assembling all the many resources that make *American Adventures* possible. The parks will be a goose that lays golden eggs. To my way of thinking, the city would be foolish to give those eggs to a purchaser or partner when so little money and so little risk is involved, especially when doing so will preclude achieving the economic revitalization goals. Once the parks are complete and paid for, the parks will need to retain some funds for expansion, but the bulk of the golden eggs will go to the City of Petersburg. The many millions of dollars coming into the city year after year can be used for a great many things, such as city improvements and education.

In 1848, the City of Petersburg formed the Appomattox Railroad, which purchased the City Point Railroad. This new railroad was run by professionals. We should follow that example. The city should set up a parks development corporation and turn the construction and management over to it. This frees the city of direct involvement and lets parks management bring in the many specialists that will be needed.

The city should convey all the real property to the parks corporation. The corporation can use it to secure the construction financing. The funds required for Phase 1 are far less than the value of the real estate. Once the parks have proven themselves financially, then they dramatically increase in value, permitting funding for later phases. Since the City owns 100 percent of the parks corporation, it still owns the land. It has simply moved it into another pocket. It did the same thing with the Roper Lumber lot, which is legally owned by the Petersburg Economic Development Authority, not the city. Since the city owns all the stock, it controls the corporation. The result of this is 100 percent outside financing. The parks are built without costing the City of Petersburg taxpayers one penny. This is a textbook example of maximizing potential while minimizing risk.

American Adventures was conceived as a community project. Its sole goal is to foster the economic revitalization of the city, so there should be community involvement. The board of directors should include business leaders. The corporation CEO should keep the board fully informed on all matters dealing with park business. The board of directors should establish goals, priorities and budgets. It should approve all plans, and determine how profits should be used. They can be applied toward the next phase, but can also be used to pay dividends. This means that a good chunk of the \$6.8 million profit projected for Phase 2 can be distributed to the city for such use as it deems appropriate. This results in immediate cash benefits rather than having to wait for park completion. In this case, the parks would continue to draw loans and pay the debt service.

The board of directors should not attempt to micro-manage *American Adventures*. It should leave the details to the professionals. It is extremely important that the CEO have the freedom, flexibility and authority to make the many day-to-day decisions that will be required.

Alternatives

American Adventures should be owned by the City of Petersburg, as this permits total control over the revitalization effort and the city reaps all the golden eggs. However, if for one reason or another this may not be possible or desirable, the project can be turned over to a purchaser or partner. In developing this project, I have identified a number of companies that would most likely be interested in it.

Based on the income potential, the \$60 million previously-cited price tag for the land may be low and a potential purchaser may be reluctant to invest so much cash up front. The city could require a substantial down payment, then hold the first deed of trust. Payment would be made over a number of years. Of course, interest would be charged. As an alternative, the city could lease the real estate. This has the effect of transforming the deal into a partnership or joint venture. In compensation for its big contribution, the city should receive a percentage of gross sales with a guarantee for each phase as profit participations are inherently dangerous.

Under both purchaser and partnership arrangements, the City of Petersburg still realizes substantial revenues resulting from the customer traffic. This will be due to increased tax income resulting from admission taxes, greater sales and meal taxes, and much higher real estate taxes resulting from increases in the property value. The city also benefits from the purchase price or lease payments.

Any such agreement must provide guarantees that all four phases of the parks will be built. Provision should be made for timing and the lease guarantee amounts should be appropriate to each phase.

With proper planning, many of the revitalization goals can still be realized. The first step is for the contract with the other party to permit easy, unrestricted access from the parks complex into the city. Of course, provision must be made for handling how people go from the city into the parks, as there will be no free admissions.

The City of Petersburg does not now own the Electric Building, so it is not part of the property being conveyed. The city could purchase it and put the streetcar back into operation as described in the report *Operation Bootstrap - Penetrating Petersburg*.

Among other things, the report *Operation Bootstrap - Fostering Economic Revitalization* calls for utilizing the east bays of Southside Station as an incubator for new retail businesses. The city should exclude this building from the deal, as it may need to provide space for National Park Service and other museums. It should rent out space to the parks for their gift shop.

Main Street America would be a separate project. It can lease space to the parks and use other space for community activities and to help build up the retail community.

The above cited report also calls for utilizing the many needs of the parks to encourage new locally-owned industries to supply those things. However, buying decisions must be vested in the park's management company. Accordingly, the most that can be hoped for is a contractual provision that will require locally produced products to be considered.

Conclusion

This is a big project and, as with all such projects, there are issues that will need to be addressed. None are insurmountable. The biggest problem is complacency. The city has waited and waited and waited for some extraordinary event to take place that will revitalize the economy.

In the spring of 1993, Old Towne was on a revitalization roll. Its streets were covered with day trip visitors. Toward keeping that momentum going, I submitted a report to the Petersburg City Council recommending ways to do that. In the introduction, I referred to the Arthur Cotton Moore river development project that was prepared for the city in 1973. It was never realized. In the preface, I wrote that "Twenty years has passed and nothing has been done. That is the worst possible thing that the city can do. If you do something and it's wrong, you can quickly fix the mistakes and go from there. At least you are moving forward." I wrote that 20 years ago, and still nothing has been done. We must take the initiative and get started. We can't sit around waiting for a Fairy Godmother for another 20 years.

I will close this revitalization plan with the prediction made by the mysterious voice to the Iowa farmer played by Kevin Costner, as he walked through his cornfields in the movie *Field of Dreams*:

"If you build it, they will come."

About the Author

Marvin T. Broyhill III descends from a family of very successful real estate developers. As a young man, he became an accomplished writer and photographer. He wanted to combine his two skills and make movies, so he packed up his Corvette and drove to Hollywood. Within a week, he began working as a “gopher” (go for this and go for that) for Pegasus Films, a leading motion picture company that made television commercials for national accounts, such as Ford, Budweiser and Alberto Culver. Broyhill quickly rose to production manager, then line producer. He was responsible for producing high quality films on time and within budget.

Coworkers compared his seemingly unlimited creativity to that of legendary filmmaker Orson Wells. That, and his beard, resulted in the nickname, “Orson Marvin.”



Young “Orson Marvin”



The agency name and logo presented what it did

Los Angeles is covered with miles and miles of companies that manufacture or import products. Broyhill founded his own advertising agency that specialized in marketing consumer products. He was often involved in product concept and design, but the bulk of his work was devoted to marketing. He was one of the pioneers of the infomercial and wrote, produced and directed the first TV commercials specially made for an ethnic market. Almost all of the campaigns were highly successful and the advertising agency grew at a rapid rate and was extremely profitable. At the age of 40, Broyhill sold the advertising agency and retired to Virginia.

Broyhill constructed a 7,000 square foot “colonial mansion” and devoted a couple of years to research and writing. He took up sailing and had a 42-foot custom sailboat built for him. After a year of cruising the Florida Coast and the Caribbean, he came to realize, that “you can only drink so many margaritas, listen to so much Jimmy Buffet music and tolerate so many magnificent sunsets in paradise.” He became bored and wanted to get back to work. He returned to his real estate development roots.

Between 1987 and 1993, he renovated 23 buildings in the Petersburg Old Towne Historic District and established four successful new businesses. The Old Towne Antique Mall attracted 50 new dealers into the city. The Appomattox Iron Works was a living history museum. The prestigious Marriott Corporation ran his new French Betsey restaurant. Broyhill Properties managed the real estate. It brought seven new specialty stores into Old Towne. Broyhill was described as “a one-man downtown revitalization program.”

In the course of researching his buildings and writing the many academic programs for the Appomattox Iron Works, Broyhill became a Petersburg historian. He has published over a dozen works on various aspects of its past. He has also written six theatrical feature films and numerous reports.

Toward building a critical mass, Broyhill’s properties were very close together. On August 6, 1993, the worst tornado in Virginia history touched down around 500 yards west of his buildings and roared through them. Broyhill jokes, “The tornado had my name on it,” as it destroyed or heavily damaged almost all of his buildings. “I lost over three million dollars in 45 seconds.” The disaster was compounded by insurance companies who refused to pay claims. FEMA promised help, but it actually provided very little and it was a long time in coming. It was a prelude to its gross mismanagement of Hurricane Katrina.

In the summer of 1993, Old Towne was covered with customers. In the wake of the tornado, traffic dropped to almost zero. Stores relocated or simply went out of business. Toward trying to save the city, Broyhill renovated the Old Towne Antique Mall into the French Betsey Orleans House to replace the earlier restaurant, which had been destroyed. His friends thought he was crazy when he brought in motion picture set artists to create the charm of old New Orleans, but they were impressed by the results. Extensive product development resulted in great food. But it was too little, too late. The rest of Old Towne looked like a war zone, which deterred customers. The French Betsey Orleans House closed its doors. It is now the Sycamore Rouge entertainment center. Some of the original “movie set” decor survives.



Entrance to small private dining room at the French Betsey’s Orleans House

Broyhill ended up losing everything he owned - his buildings, his businesses and even his home. In the wake of this disaster, he took stock of his assets and found that his biggest one was his marketing skills. He didn't have the proverbial "two nickels to rub together," but was not deterred. He founded *Einstein Emporium*, the first Internet Science and Nature Store. It was instantly successful and over the next few years he established 14 more Internet stores. Sales soared and everything was reorganized as *Web-Shops.Net*.

The failure of high profile Internet sites like *E-Toy* and *Value America* triggered the technology crash of January 2001. Internet company stock prices were grossly inflated and they dropped drastically in value. Other technology stocks followed and this caused the big recession of that year. Closer to home, customers lost confidence in the Internet and *Web-Shops* sales dropped by more than 60 percent virtually overnight. This brought home the fact that the Internet was extremely volatile. By then, it was becoming increasingly apparent that the early success might be short lived because of rapidly expanding competition and changing economics.

Broyhill wanted a more stable business and looked at many different possibilities. This led to his decision to publish educational posters, as those on the market were very poor, but sold well due to lack of viable competition. He developed an entirely new type of poster. Each presented a comprehensive overview of the subject presented through extraordinary images and terse interesting text. He founded Feenix Publishing in 2003. Its hundreds of customers include all of the educational supply companies that sell to schools and almost all of our nation's natural history museums, including the prestigious Smithsonian, Carnegie, Field, and the American Museum of Natural History. These museums have extremely high product standards and the fact that they carry Feenix posters says a great deal about their accuracy, their design and, especially important, how well they sell. The company now has 82 titles in print. See www.Feenix.com.

2010 was the worst year of the current "super recession." In spite of the economy, Feenix enjoyed a 30% increase in sales. As the publishing business expands, Broyhill is reducing his Internet business.



Broyhill today



The Feenix Geological Time Chart is now in its 7th printing.

Broyhill has a unique combination of skills. As a motion picture production manager, he has created an incredible array of one-of-a-kind things on time and within budget. He has an extensive background in product development and has developed and executed countless marketing campaigns. Ninety percent of all new businesses fail within five years. Broyhill has founded a dozen successful ones. The only failure was The French Betsey Orleans House.

He has extensive knowledge of Petersburg's history. He is skilled at restoring historic buildings and is one of the city's two authorities on early machinery. He has written a book on the Petersburg Railroads (available at www.Petersburg-Parks.com) and is the only expert on the subject. Most important of all, he has a proven track record in downtown economic revitalization. No one else has ever come even remotely close to matching his accomplishments in this area.

It is this broad range of complementary knowledge, skills and experience that make him especially well qualified to create *Operation Bootstrap*. This plan applies well-proven business and marketing principals to the challenge at hand: revitalizing the city's economy.

