

THE NANTONG WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION

Nantong City, Jiangsu Province, China

Project Title

THE NANTONG WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION, NANTONG CITY, JIANGSU PROVINCE, CHINA

Project Statement

The Nantong Waterfront Revitalization is an ambitious project spanning 20 kilometers along the Yangtze River, repurposing former industrial port sites into a vibrant public space. The first phase includes Tonglv Canal, Rengang River, and the Riverside Flower Meadow. This project innovatively integrates flood control engineering with public green spaces, catalyzing enhanced connectivity between the city, the waterfront, and the community. Especially after the pandemic, people's desire for public spaces has been unprecedented. The waterfront space attracts the public back outdoors, re-establishing social connections. Simultaneously, numerous public activities aimed at stimulating the economy have been held at the waterfront, successfully creating a resonance between public and open spaces both economically and emotionally. This project transforms previously neglected industrial brownfields into Nantong's first truly vibrant riverside public space, setting a benchmark for subsequent waterfront development projects.



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SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY HEALTH CATEGORY

Nantong's urban fabric has developed along several rivers, including the Yangtze River, Hao River, Tonglv Canal and Rengang River. Historically, these riverbanks have been vibrant public spaces. In 1904, to boost local industry, Nantong Port was officially established. Large-scale wharf construction began in the late 1970s. In recent years, the port has expanded downstream along the Yangtze River to deeper waters, leading to the gradual decommissioning of old docks in the project area. In 2019, the city government initiated a bold renewal plan to transform nearly 20 kilometers of industrial docks along the Yangtze River into green public spaces, giving rise to our project. The first phase focuses on Tonglv Canal, Rengang River, and the Riverside Flower Meadow, covering an area of 1,120,000m².

This project's primary goal is to reestablish the link between the waterfront and communities. Integrating with the new riverfront flood control infrastructure, the project introduced connecting paths and integrated them into Nantong's greenway system, filling the gap in the city's greenway network along the river. The pedestrian and cycling paths along the Tonglv Canal and Rengang River extend into the community and lead directly to the Yangtze River, and making the waterfront more accessible. The connecting paths link the reclaimed and revitalized abandoned sites along the rivers, opening up water landscape corridors for the public and effectively turning the waterfront spaces into integral parts of Nantong's green public spaces. Previously underutilized waterfronts are now actively used by visitors and communities.



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Project Narrative and Contents

The project restores the original riverside lifestyle of Nantong, reviving the riverfront space that had gradually disappeared due to industrial development. The Tonglv Canal, with its century-old history, still hosts numerous cargo ships, with crews living onboard. To facilitate their disembarkation, the project includes open waterfront boundaries and organized pathways, allowing crew members to conveniently access the riverfront. The busy dock landscape also attracts the public, creating a unique blend of industrial use and public life. The banks of the Rengang River, in contrast to the larger scale of the Yangtze River and the Tonglv Canal, offer a more intimate setting, reminiscent of traditional local water towns. Before the rise of dock industries, the Rengang River was once a passage for fishermen between Nantong city and the Yangtze River, carrying deep local memories. The project reshapes the unique identity of the historically winding Rengang River waterfront in Nantong, attracting the public back to the riverbanks for strolling, jogging, fishing, and reshaping the water town lifestyle, inviting local residents to reconnect with this "mother river" of Nantong.

At the same time, creating inviting spaces suitable for modern urban functions is critical. The original site, after the docks were decommissioned, was quite desolate, with large areas of untended land or hard surfaces along the Yangtze River. Effective renovation and utilization of these open waterfront spaces are key to the project's success. The project team devised a comprehensive functional strategy at various levels, including zoning, activity organization, and economic operation. The hinterland on both sides of the Tonglv Canal is relatively narrow with underdeveloped urban facilities, but offers excellent views of the Yangtze River. Therefore, small-scale leisure and Yangtze River viewing functions are arranged here. The landscape along the Tonglv Canal features rolling grass-covered hills, rows of trees and shrubs forming natural boundaries. The undulating terrain and a series of gardens attract the public for various activities. At the same time, the project considers future development by reserving space for further improvements to waterfront functions as urban facilities are completed. The Riverside Flower Meadow, surrounded by residential communities, office campus, became of a new hub of public activities. The area is divided into several lawn spaces enclosed by terrain, offering flexible usage functions. People come here to play, relax, or camp, making it an ideal outdoor recreation area for Nantong. Notably, the project was completed during the COVID-19 pandemic when the local economy was struggling. Through the collaborative efforts of the project team, the owner, and the local government, the project's flexible and open space layout became an ideal venue for many public activities aimed at stimulating the economy, aiding in the local post-pandemic economic recovery. According to media reports, a carnival held at the Riverside Flower Meadow after the pandemic attracted 60,000 visitors. At the talent night market event hosted at the Riverside Park, 10,000 job opportunities were offered by 226 companies, resulting in over 1,600 individuals securing employment. It was a remarkable event that significantly contributed to job creation and employment opportunities in the community.

While enhancing public use, the project also focuses on protecting the Yangtze River's natural habitat. Alongside the water conservancy levee projects, landscape architects and hydraulic engineers collaborated closely during construction to preserve sedimentary riverbanks at the confluences of the Tonglv Canal and Rengang River with the Yangtze River, creating bird habitats. Low-intervention boardwalks were introduced among the reed beds, allowing citizens to engage closely with the river ecology. Statistics show that the project preserved 28,000 square meters of wetland, providing habitat for about 180 birds across six species.

The Nantong riverfront is a massive undertaking. The completion of the first phase laid the foundation for the overall project, achieving brownfield restoration, preserving local water town culture, and revitalizing urban waterfront spaces. It provides an ideal space for Nantong's citizens to reconnect with the riverfront.

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The History of Nantong Riverfront Development

Nantong's urban fabric has developed along several rivers, including the Yangtze River, the Hao River, Tonglü Canal and Rengang River. Historically, these riverbanks have been vibrant public spaces. In 1904, to boost local industry, Nantong Port was officially established. Large-scale wharf construction began in the late 1970s. In recent years, the port has expanded downstream along the Yangtze River to deeper waters, leading to the gradual decommissioning of old docks in the project area.



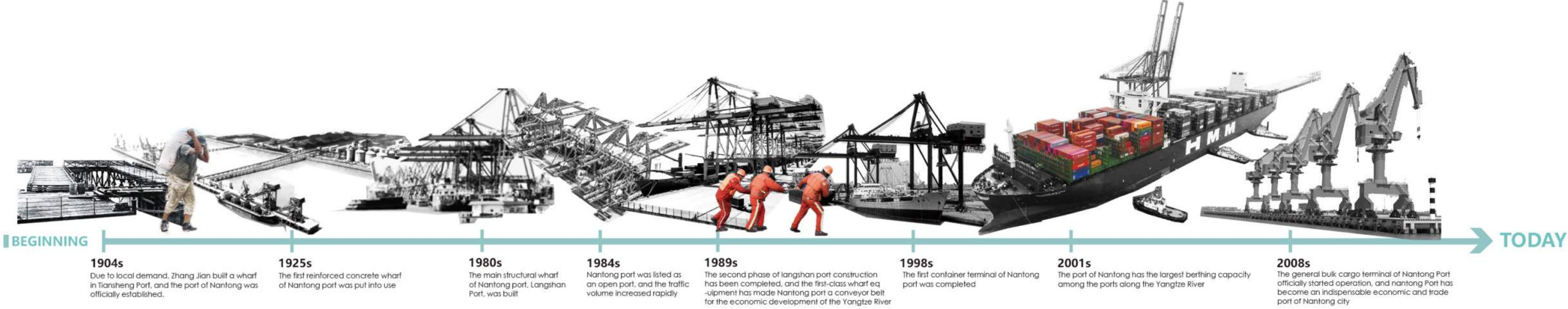
1930s-2000s Communities along Rengang River



1960s-2000s Port Industry along The Yangtze River



1980s-2010s Nantong Ferry Terminal

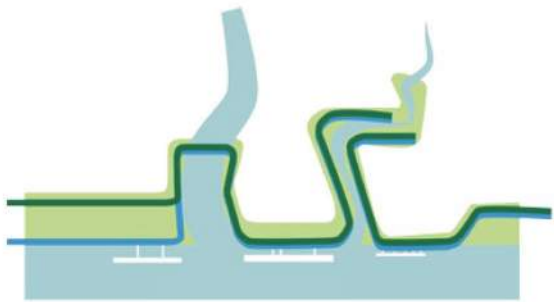


THE NANTONG WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION

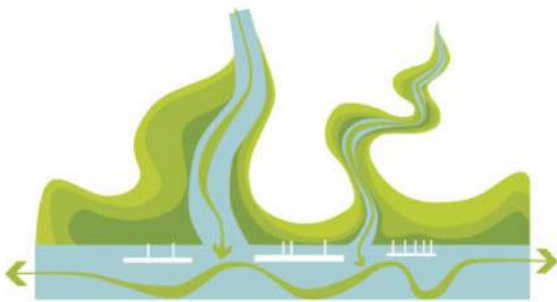
Nantong City, Jiangsu Province, China

A Renewal Plan to Transform Grey to Green

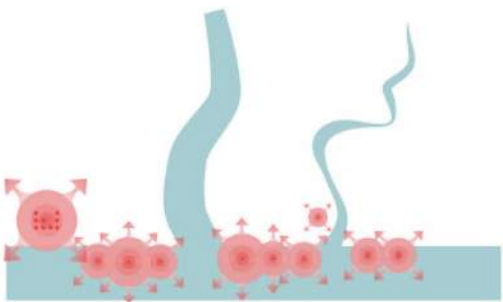
The project transforms this vital waterfront and create new prosperity by celebrating the industrial past, enhancing ecological performance, reconnecting locals to the water, and providing greater security from flooding.



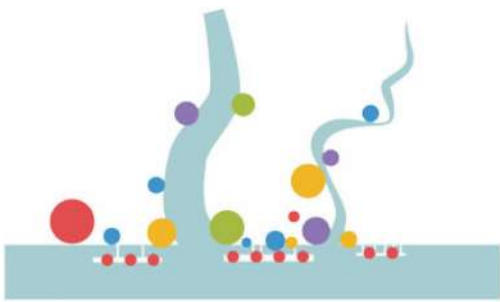
ENHANCED LEVEE



ECOLOGY RESTORED



INDUSTRY REBORN



CULTURE RENEWED



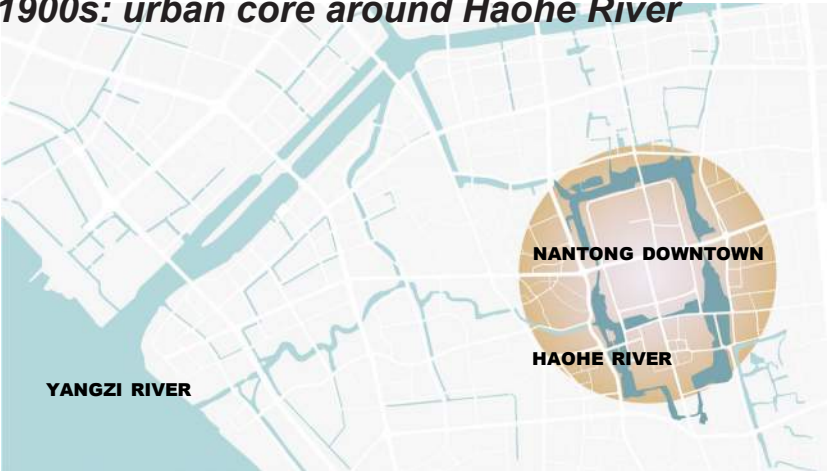
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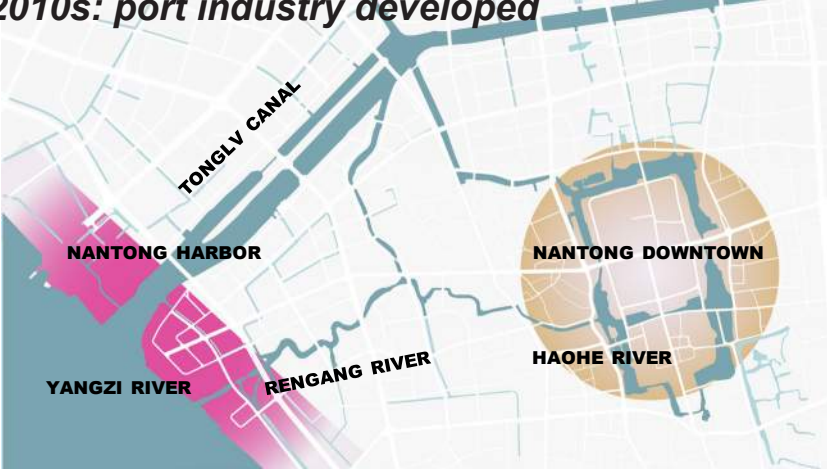
Master Plan

The Nantong Waterfront revitalization is an ambitious project spanning 20 kilometers along the Yangtze River, repurposing former industrial port sites into a vibrant public park. The first phase includes the Tonglv Canal, the Rengang River, and the Riverside Flower Meadow.

before 1900s: urban core around Haohe River



1900s-2010s: port industry developed



2010s-: ecology restored and industry reborn



THE NANTONG WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION

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Revitalizing Riverfront, Restoring Brownfield and Preserving Culture



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Greenway System

Integrating with the new riverfront flood control infrastructure, the project introduced connecting paths and integrated them into Nantong's greenway system, filling the gap in the city's greenway network along the river. The pedestrian and cycling paths along the Tonglü Canal and Rengang River extend into the community and lead directly to the Yangtze River, making the waterfront more accessible.



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Cargo Ships along Tonglv Canal



Preserve and intergrate the cargo ship docking area into the waterfront design, creating a unique blend of industrial use and public life.



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Reconnection to Waterfront and Restoration of Ecology

Rengang River offers a more intimate setting, reminiscent of traditional local water towns. The project reshapes the unique winding waterfront, attracting the public back to the waterfront for strolling, jogging, fishing, and celebrate the water town lifestyle, inviting local residents to reconnect with this "mother river" of Nantong.



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Reconnection to Waterfront

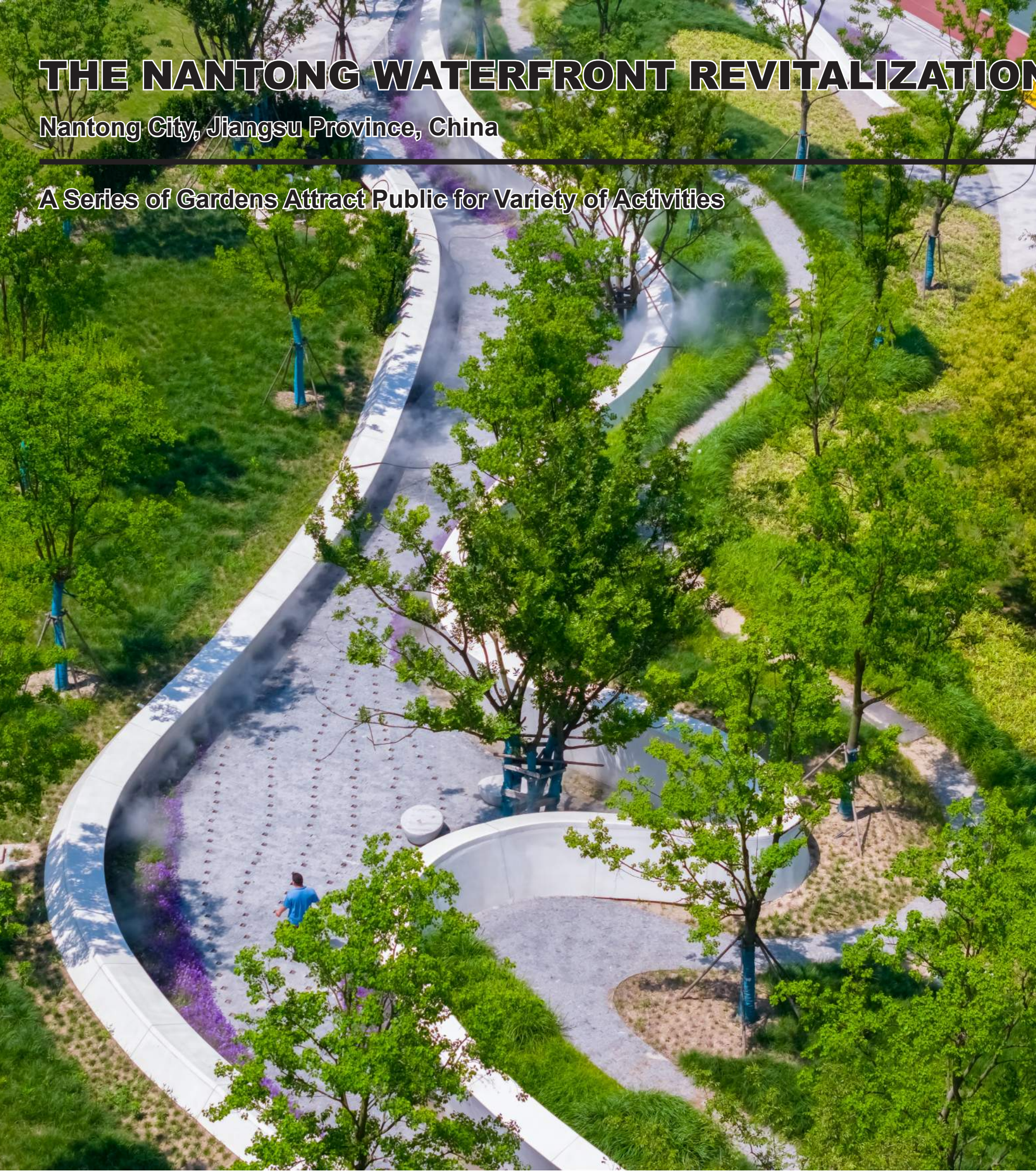
A transformation of abandoned post-industry waterfront into the vibrant park and public spaces



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A Series of Gardens Attract Public for Variety of Activities



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Protecting and Restoring The Yangtze River’s Natural Habitat

Landscape architects and hydraulic engineers collaborated closely during construction to preserve sedimentary riverbanks at the confluences of the Tonglü Canal and Rengang River with the Yangtze River, creating bird habitats. Low-intervention boardwalks were introduced among the reed beds, allowing visitors to engage closely with the river ecology. Statistics show that the project preserved 28,000 square meters of wetland, providing habitat for about 180 birds across six species.



28K

square meters
of wetland are
preserved

6

species are
observed

180

birds living in this
habitat

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A New Public Activity Hub in Nantong

The Riverside Flower Meadow, surrounded by residential communities, office campus, became a new hub of public activities. The area is divided into several open lawn spaces enclosed by terrain, offering flexible usage spaces. People come here to play, relax, or camp, making it an ideal outdoor recreation area for Nantong waterfront.



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The Recreation Hotspot in Nantong

遛街好状态
我们有动静 / GOOD STATE

约上好友 假日组个春日LIVE欢乐局

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH A FRIEND TO FORM A SPRING DAY LIVE HAPPY BUREAU DURING THE HOLIDAY

- THE BUND OF -
NANTONG



①接点地气：草坪露营野餐会

②遛娃好去处：社区儿童运动会

5月1日 欢乐开局

滨江和他的朋友们，快来一起组队



3.16

去滨江 放个风
南通滨江风筝节 全城向上看

带着你爱的人
跟三月的好天气Say HI
一起在滨江·放飞你的纸鸢
看一万次的春和景明



REVIVAL OF SPRING
PLANTING THE HOT AND HOT SPRING

Culture and Art Festival

我们与滨江的故事
未完待续 continued

国际滨首届友邻文化艺术节



A SERIES OF URBAN OPERATION
ACTIVITIES HELD HERE



THE NANTONG WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION

Nantong City, Jiangsu Province, China

An Ideal Public Space for Economic Stimulus Activities After The Covid-19

60K

VISITORS ATTRACTED BY
THE CARNIVAL

10K

JOB OPPORTUNITIES
PROVIDED IN THE
CAREER DAY

1.6K

PEOPLE FIND
EMPLOYMENT IN THE
CAREER DAY

