

3.3 CAPITAL AVENUE BRIDGE AREA

The second priority area for the Riverfront Development Committee is the area on both ends of the Capital Avenue Bridge. Formerly the site of two lumber yards and other industrial uses, the parcels are prominently located at the base of Capital Avenue.

Former Frankfort Lumber Site and South Riverfront Area

The site's historic industrial use is no longer appropriate with the change in the river's function and its proximity to historic sites and residential districts. Much of the riverfront area in this priority area is privately owned, and the private sector will be a key partner in redevelopment.

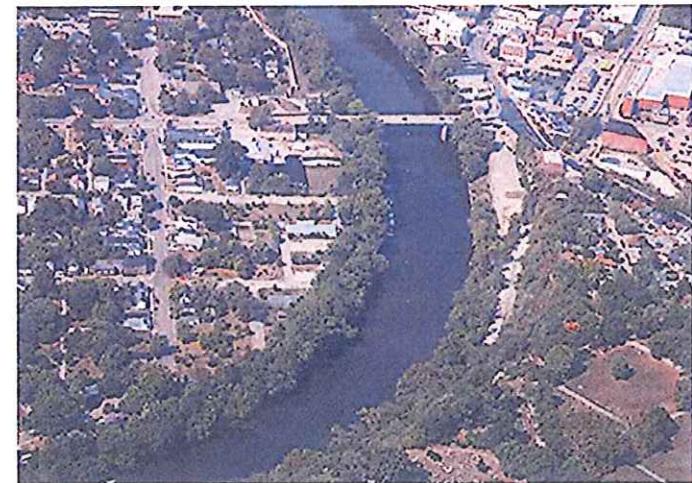
The South Frankfort Neighborhood Historic District has a northern boundary that roughly follows East Second Street. Contributing historic sites include Rebecca Ruth Candies and other historic dwellings along East Second Street.

The former Frankfort Lumber site should be combined with the Veterans of Foreign Wars site to create the opportunity for higher density residential and retail, taking advantage of the picturesque views of the Kentucky River and historic Capital Avenue Bridge and the easy walking distance to downtown. Residential uses can be stacked to take advantage of the change in topography and transition from East Second Street toward the river, allowing full views for residents. Riverfront redevelopment can provide public dockage, including for residents. The current floodwall splits the block, so the entire redevelopment site must be designed for occasional flooding. The ground floor should include structured parking.

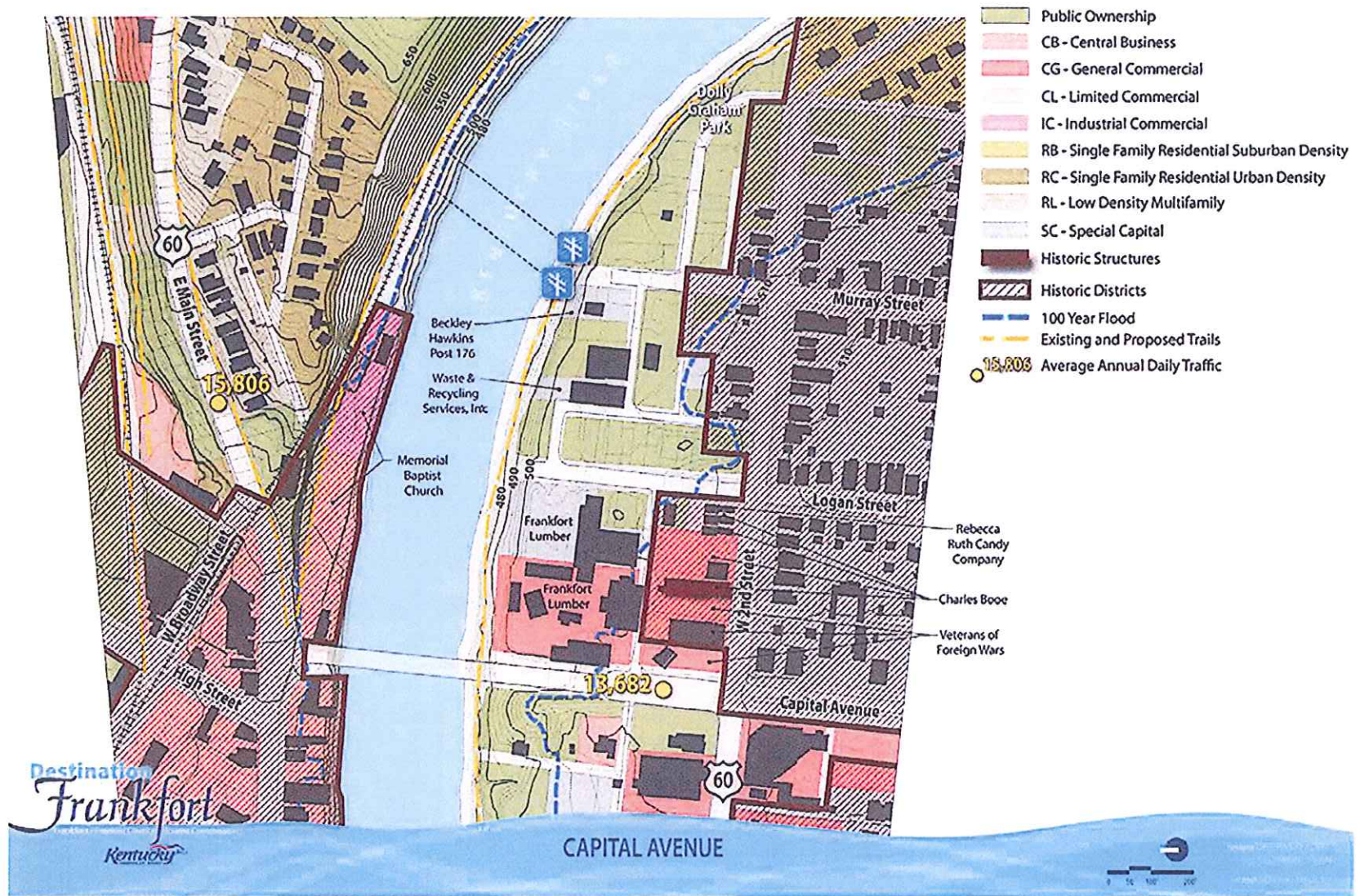
The East Second Street frontage should respect the South Frankfort Neighborhood Historic District by limiting the number of floors to three with the third stepped back from the street. The East Second Street frontage should accommodate, incorporate and promote Rebecca Ruth Candies and associated buildings. The intersection of the grand Capital Avenue and the neighborhood retail East Second Street has citywide importance, so redevelopment at the northwest corner should address the street. New buildings should be brought up to the corner. The first floor can include retail uses such as a restaurant or other small commercial.

Section Highlights

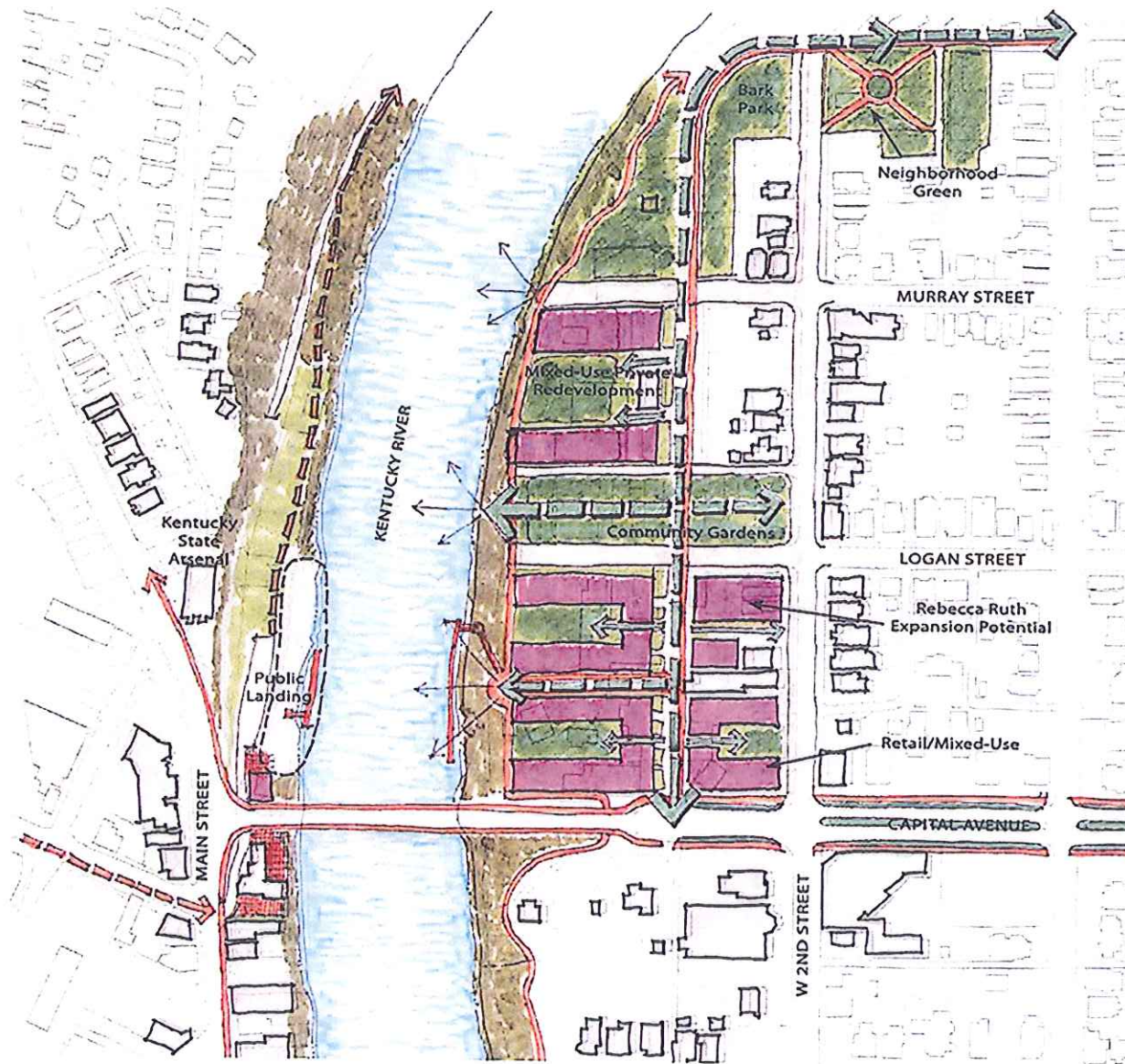
- *The former Frankfort Lumber site and adjacent parcels should be redeveloped as riverfront residential with supportive retail.*
- *Rebecca Ruth Candies should be protected and expanded.*
- *Parcels in the floodplain should be redeveloped as South Frankfort neighborhood parks.*



Capital Avenue Bridge Aerial View



Capital Avenue Bridge Constraints and Opportunities



Redevelopment of the former Frankfort Lumber site should catalyze the redevelopment of the entire riverfront east of Capital Avenue and should include mixed-use buildings and neighborhood open spaces.

Kentucky State Arsenal Building

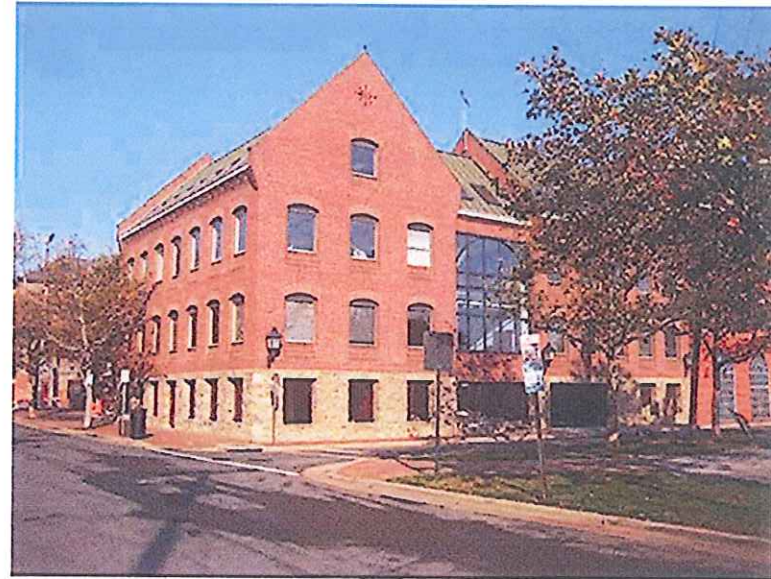
Built in 1850 in the Gothic Revival style, the Kentucky State Arsenal replaced an earlier facility that burned in 1836. A provision by the state legislature was that the new arsenal be built a minimum of 1/2 mile away from the Kentucky State Capitol to ensure its safety from potential future fires. The arsenal was utilized to store weapons and other equipment for Kentucky troops and militia from its construction until the early 1970s, when its contents were relocated to the newly constructed Boone National Guard Center.

The Civil War period marked the only time in the building's history that the grounds were utilized in defense of the capital city. Confederate forces controlled the arsenal for one month in 1862, and a second attempt to capture Frankfort in 1864 was foiled by Union gunners taking aim at Confederate cavalymen on the opposite side of the Kentucky River.

The Kentucky State Arsenal building is utilized as the Kentucky Military History Museum and is undergoing extensive preservation/rehabilitation work. The site has a commanding view of downtown Frankfort and is a popular museum for school children and tourists to visit. Its proximity to the Kentucky River, its location between the Central Business District and the Frankfort Cemetery, and its unique local and state history offer clear opportunities for inclusion in a general heritage tourism program in Frankfort. The Kentucky Historical Society, which maintains the site today, has expressed interest in working with the City of Frankfort to boost educational and heritage tourism opportunities.



*River View of Kentucky
State Arsenal Building
from the Kentucky
River*



River Terrace (Aquarium in Background) - David Andrews

Redevelopment of the former Frankfort Lumber site should be mixed-use and multiple stories, but still ensure public access to the riverfront.



The former Frankfort Lumber site redevelopment should catalyze redevelopment of other private parcels east of Capital Avenue. The waste and recycling center and the American Legion sites between Logan and Murray Streets should be redeveloped as residential or mixed-use buildings that capitalize on the riverfront location and that respect the South Frankfort neighborhood. Redevelopment of the former Frankfort Lumber site and adjacent parcels on the south bank should be sensitively designed to avoid adverse visual impacts to the viewshed from the Kentucky State Arsenal site.

East Second Street redevelopment can include a dock that serves the residents of the redevelopment site in addition to the public.

Riverfront redevelopment should preserve and expand public access to the riverfront. Riverfront and recreational access are critical components of supporting the redevelopment of the former Frankfort Lumber site and adjacent parcels, and the growth and change of South Frankfort.

Riverfront redevelopment on the south bank should provide an easement to allow a riverfront multi-use trail from under the Capital Avenue Bridge to Dolly Graham Park. This trail can extend along the riverfront to the west to the Singing Bridge, and to the east through local South Frankfort neighborhood streets to the Capitol Complex Parking Garage. The riverfront trail should benefit both South Frankfort neighbors and regional trail users.

East of Logan Street and north of East Second Street is a small community garden on a City-owned parcel. Community gardens support local and healthy eating and provide neighborhood gathering and interaction locations. The South Frankfort Neighborhood Association and the City should collaborate to expand and promote the community gardens and provide supporting infrastructure such as water and a small structure to store gardening implements.

Further east, the City has purchased and demolished homes within the floodplain that have been damaged in past floods. Some of this land has become Dolly Graham Park, but other land contains vacant lots. Due to the risk of flooding, these

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Rebecca Ruth Candies should be preserved, supported and expanded.



Dolly Graham Park



Existing Logan Street Community Gardens



Community gardens provide inexpensive and healthy eating options, and are also often neighborhood gathering spaces.

Economic Importance of Community Gardens

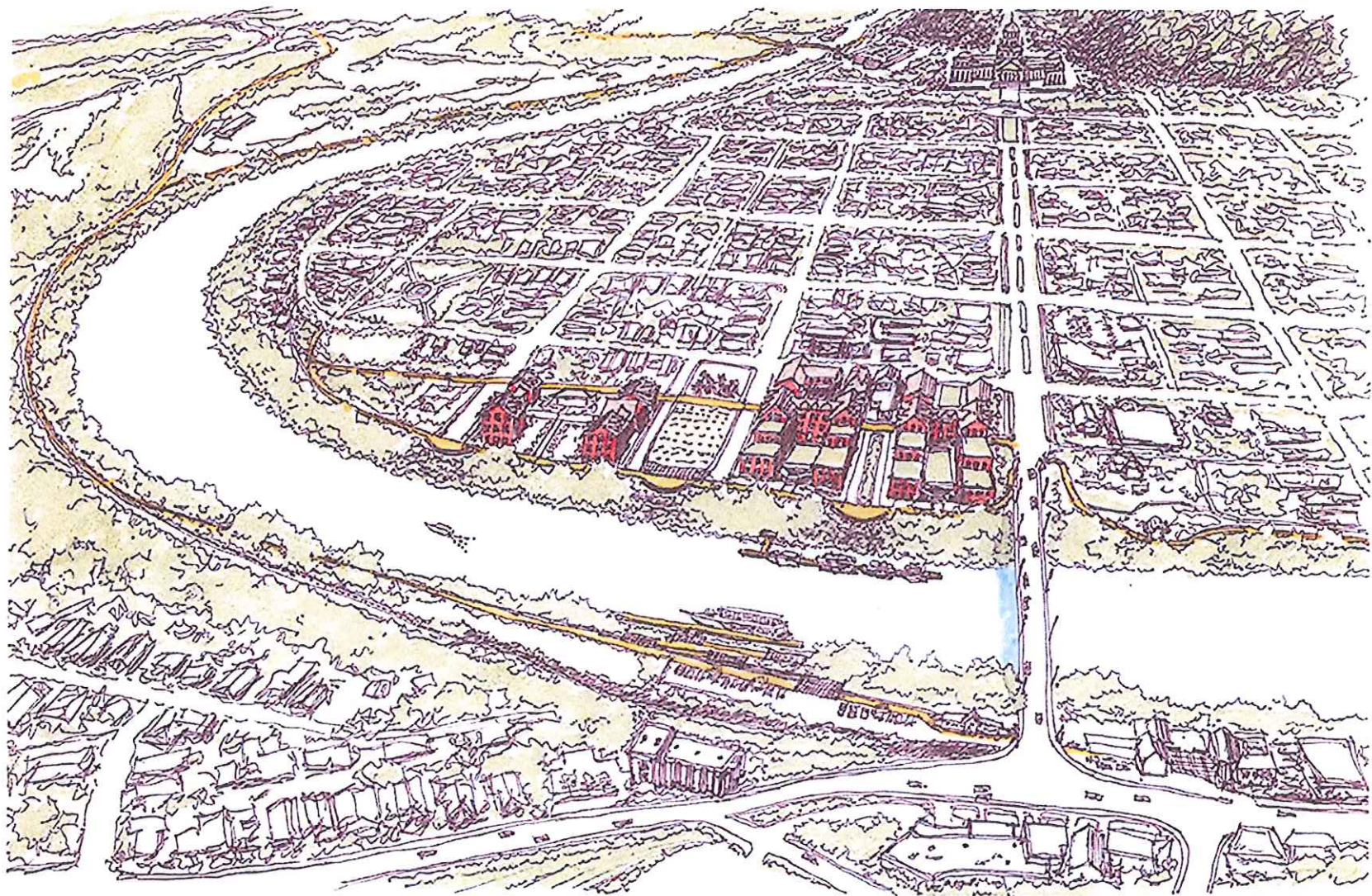
Community gardens are important to people and places for a number of reasons—both economic and non-economic. Community gardening's economic benefits, which accrue to both participants and to local government, are the most easily measured and often the most societally sanctioned justification for investing in community garden space.

The economic returns of community gardening are, of course, climate dependent. In New Jersey, with a colder climate than Frankfort, a Rutgers University study showed that the average community garden plot (about 700 square feet) produced approximately \$500 in vegetables during an average growing season. The average cost of inputs was \$25. These New Jersey gardeners netted \$475 tax-free dollars each season.

No other food-related program could claim the economic efficiency of community gardens. In a twenty-three city program that encouraged community gardening that was sponsored by the USDA and managed by university extension programs, \$6 in vegetables were produced for every \$1 of government investment.

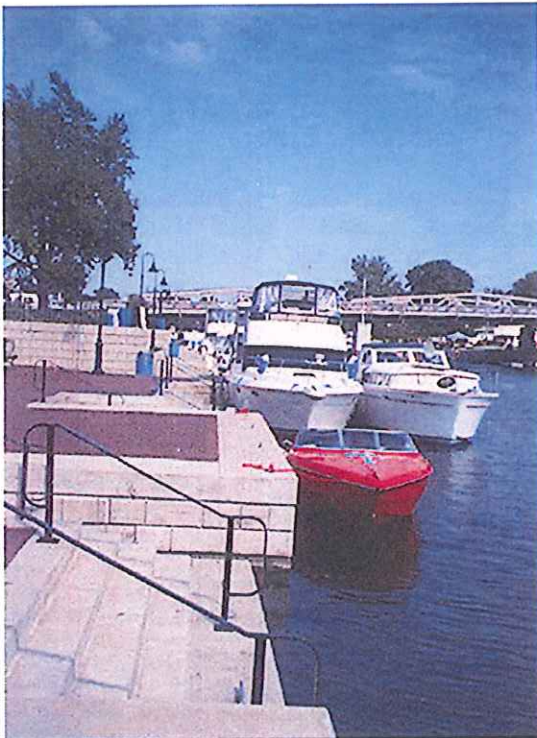
Community gardening economically benefits local government as well. Development and maintenance of garden space is less expensive than development and maintenance of parkland. A 1985 Sacramento study compared the development and maintenance costs of a park containing 140,000 square feet with the same costs in a community garden that contained 121,300 square feet. The researcher found that the park cost \$46,000 to develop and \$15,000 per year to maintain while the garden cost \$2,200 to develop and \$550 per year to maintain. The costs of garden construction and maintenance have likely increased relative to the costs of parks since this study was completed, and there are regional differences based on climate. Clearly, however, community gardens are less expensive to build and maintain than parks.

Adapted from: Geoff Herbach, "Harvesting the City: Community Gardening in Greater Madison, Wisconsin," July 1998.

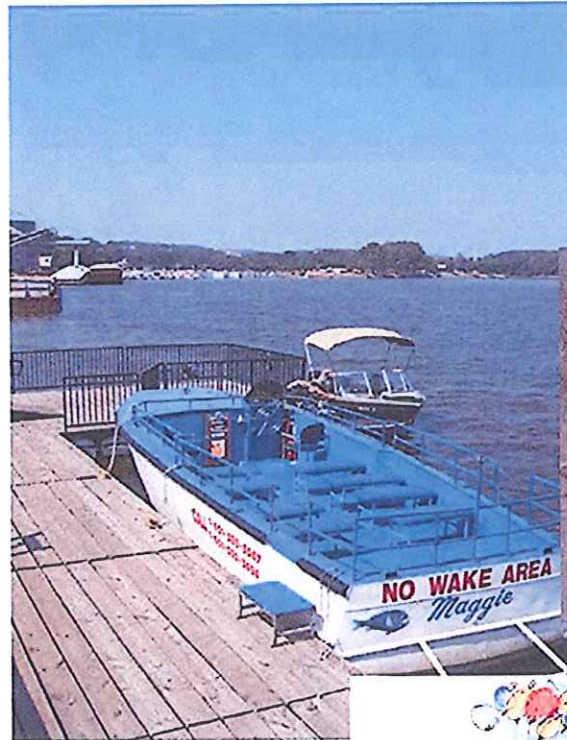


A waterfront plaza will be the focal point of North Riverfront Park.

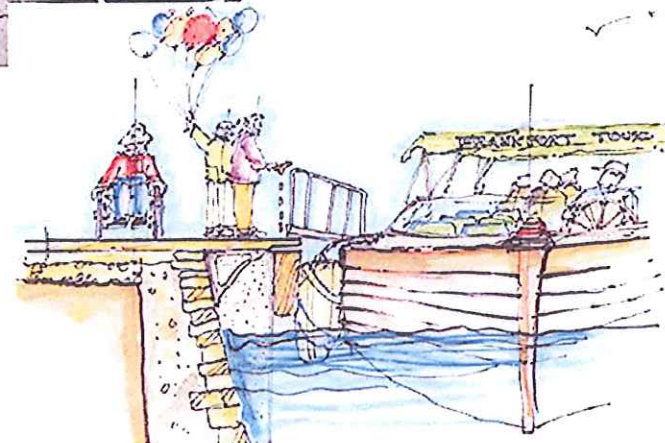
parcels should not be conventionally redeveloped. Rather, the South Frankfort Neighborhood Association and the City should collaborate to redevelop and expand Dolly Graham Park to better serve South Frankfort residents. A "bark park" can be incorporated to better serve South Frankfort residents with dogs, and a neighborhood green will serve as a formal gathering space for this portion of the South Frankfort neighborhood.



Example of Public Landings



Public art and river interpretation can be incorporated into functional dock elements.



A public marina can host transient slips, a tour boat stop and seasonal vendors.

Old Blanton Lumber Site and North Riverfront Area

On the north bank adjacent to (and under) the Capital Avenue Bridge is the Old Blanton Lumber site. The City owns the site, and it is currently used as a bus parking lot and maintenance storage. Access to the site is limited to one driveway off Main Street that passes under the Capital Avenue Bridge.

The Old Blanton Lumber site is a high profile site, with clear visibility from the Capital Avenue Bridge and located below the Kentucky State Arsenal. A rock wall is a dramatic background for the site and a local landmark.

This Kentucky Riverfront Development Plan recommends redeveloping the site as a public landing. A transient dock will provide public access to the river and a location for public excursion/tour/taxi service within easy walking distance of downtown. The dock should also provide public access to the water and allow fishing. Additional vitality and activity can be introduced by allowing seasonal vendors along the riverwalk. Vehicular access to the site is difficult, so the intensity of uses on the site and the related generated traffic should be managed.

Redevelopment of the Old Blanton Lumber site should complement on-site and nearby cultural and historic structures. Redevelopment should be respectful of, preserve and incorporate the rusticated wet-laid rock retaining wall located along the riverbank. The Kentucky State Arsenal building is located on a cliff well above the riverbank; thus, direct impact is unlikely. However, redevelopment can have a visual impact on the arsenal, so design care should be taken.

Section Highlights

- *The Old Blanton Lumber site should be redeveloped as a public marina and landing.*



Old Blanton Lumber Site

Economic Benefits of Off-Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

All across the country, bicycle and pedestrian facilities are proving to be a wise economic investment for the communities through which they pass. Studies have shown that they stimulate local economies by attracting bicyclists, hikers, cross-country skiers and other tourists to an area.

This, in turn, attracts and revitalizes businesses, creates jobs, and increases public revenue. Trails and pathways also have a positive effect on nearby properties as homebuyers and business owners realize the value that such facilities bring to a community.

If You Build It, They Will Come

Many Americans prefer to visit places such as green ways and trails which offer safe, scenic recreation and transportation for the whole family. The U.S. Department of Transportation, in its National Bicycling and Walking Study (NBWS) final report estimates that 131 million Americans regularly bicycle, walk, skate or jog for exercise, sport or recreation. According to research conducted by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, 85 million people used rail-trails in 1994 alone. Given these numbers, it is easy to understand how communities can profit by responding to trail users' needs.

There are a variety of businesses that attribute their success to nearby trail: restaurants, convenience stores, bicycle shops, campgrounds and bed- and-breakfast establishments. Anecdotal examples from around the country further illustrate the positive economic impacts of trails:

- The downtown area of Dunedin, Florida was suffering a 35 percent storefront vacancy rate in the early 1990s until the Pinellas Trail came into town. Now, storefront occupancy is 100 percent and business is booming.
- Peak-season hotel rooms along Wisconsin's Elroy-Sparta State Park Trail are booked up to a year in advance. A study of the trail revealed that the average visitor travels 228 miles to experience it.
- After biking the Youghiogheny River Trail in southwestern

Pennsylvania, Robert Benns and his wife purchased a rundown trailside building and converted it into the River's Edge Café which now serves over 1,000 meals a day.

Trail-Related Tourist & Visitor Expenditures in Local Communities

Recent studies have shown exactly how much the average trail user is bringing into communities which have multi-use paths.

- A study of the Oil Creek Bike Trail in Pennsylvania revealed the average visitor spending \$25.85 per day. This was broken down into \$9.09 for food, \$6.27 for transportation, \$2.56 for lodging (many visitors camp) and \$7.94 for equipment and other activities (Pennsylvania State University, 1992).
- Approximately 170,000 individuals visit the Tallahassee-St. Marks Trail in Florida every year, where the average user spends more than \$11 per day (National Park Service, 1992).
- The 135,000 visitors of the Heritage Trail, which winds through eastern Iowa's farmland, spend \$9.21 each, and the California communities of Lafayette and Moraga receive \$3.97 from each of the 400,000 users of the 7.65-mile suburban trail. In each case, total annual revenue exceeded \$1.2 million (The Impacts of Rail-Trails).

Suburban and rural trails that encourage "vacation style" trips tend to generate more revenue per user than urban and suburban trails used primarily by nearby residents. However, a substantial amount of revenue can still be generated from the large number of users that a residential trail typically attracts.

Trailside Property is at a Premium

Homebuyers have begun to recognize the benefits of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and are showing a preference for properties close to those facilities.

- "Walking and biking paths" ranked third among 39 features identified by homebuyers as crucial factors in their home-purchasing decisions, according to a 1994 study by American Lives, a research firm serving the real estate industry. "Community designs that deliver low traffic

and quiet streets" were ranked first, and "lots of natural, open space" was second.

- The increased salability of listings is considered to be the greatest value that the Northern Central Rail-Trail has brought to trailside properties in Baltimore County, Maryland. According to a 1994 study conducted for the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, "if two identical properties are for sale and one is near the trail and the other is not, the trail is used as a selling point and helps many nearby owners sell their property faster." (Analysis of Economic Impacts of the Northern Central Rail-Trail).
- In addition, 63 percent of survey respondents, comprised of trail users, nearby landowners and local businesses, felt the trail added value to nearby properties. Not only has Seattle's Burke-Gilman Trail been used as a selling point for nearby properties, but it has also been proven to increase the value of those properties. According to a study conducted by the Seattle Engineering Department (1987), "property near but not immediately adjacent to the trail is significantly easier to sell and, according to real estate agents, sells for an average of six percent more as a result of its proximity to the trail. Property immediately adjacent to the trail, however, is only slightly easier to sell ..."

Business is Booming

The 235-mile Katy Trail traverses nine counties and adjoins 35 towns in Missouri, ranging in population from 60 to 60,000. These communities, many in economic decline since the railroad's demise, were initially opposed to the trail. But when the first sections opened, sentiments changed. Visitors flocking to the new rail-trail proved to be responsible, likable guests who needed goods and services available in the towns.

Within weeks of the trail dedication, new and old businesses were vying for tourist dollars. Restaurants, bed-and-breakfasts, bicycle rental shops, antique dealers and campgrounds all opened to meet the needs of hundreds of thousands of visitors. A 1993 user survey on the trail's western half showed that it generated an estimated \$3 million in local revenue.

The Northern Central Rail-Trail attracts 457,000 visitors every year and has had an enormous economic impact on nearby businesses, leading to the creation and support of 262 jobs. These positions range from trail construction and maintenance work, to jobs in local restaurants and hotels serving trail users, to added positions in regional sporting goods companies and supermarket chains due to increased business.

Bicycle and pedestrian trails also attract high-quality businesses by providing commuting options for employees, scenic places for stress-free strolls at lunchtime, and safe, convenient sites for family recreation.

Choosing a location that will help attract and retain key personnel was cited as the number one factor in selecting office locations, and corporate real estate executives now say employee "quality of life" issues are as important as cost when deciding where to locate a new factory or office (June 8, 1989 San Francisco Chronicle).

Trails Save Taxpayer Dollars

Locally and nationally, bicycle and pedestrian facilities have proven to be a cost-effective use of public funds. The study of Maryland's Northern Central Rail-Trail found that while the trail's cost to the public in 1993 was \$191,893, it generated state tax revenue of \$303,750 the same year. This revenue was a direct result of a growing economy's sales, property and income taxes. The construction of multi-use trails allows more Americans to replace automobile trips with non-motorized trips. According to the NBWS final report, the American public saves between five and 22 cents for every automobile mile displaced by walking and bicycling due to reduced pollution, oil import costs and costs due to congestion, such as lost wages and lost time on the job.

Source: National Bicycle and Pedestrian Clearinghouse, Technical Assistance Series, Number 2, September 1995. Article includes additional social and environmental benefits of bicycle pedestrian trails.