

Old Lawrenceburg/Capital View Park Opportunities and Constraints

3.2 OLD LAWRENCEBURG/CAPITAL VIEW PARK

The south end of the study area, the Riverfront Development Committee's first priority area, is approximately 1/3 of the corridor study area. One of the challenges of this segment of the riverfront is its disconnect from downtown, South Frankfort and much of the City. The current highway network and topography contribute to this separation. One of the greatest assets is that the majority of property is publicly owned.

The Old Lawrenceburg/Capital View Park area is adjacent to one historic site and one historic district that proposed improvements will not impact. The historic site is the Pepper-Spring Hill Distillery located at the north end of this priority area on the east bank of the Kentucky River. A portion of the South Frankfort Neighborhood Historic District also lies within this priority area. Its boundaries are located at the north end of the study area on the east side of the Kentucky River above Old Lawrenceburg Road. No previously recorded archaeological sites are located within the boundaries of this priority area.

Capital View Park

Capital View Park is owned by the Commonwealth but is maintained by the City as a public park. Capital View Park features multiple sports fields that are popular with competitive teams. Capital View Park also has a somewhat formalized boat tie-up area next to a clearing with seating and picnic facilities. This riverfront clearing is popular in the summer for informal boater gatherings.

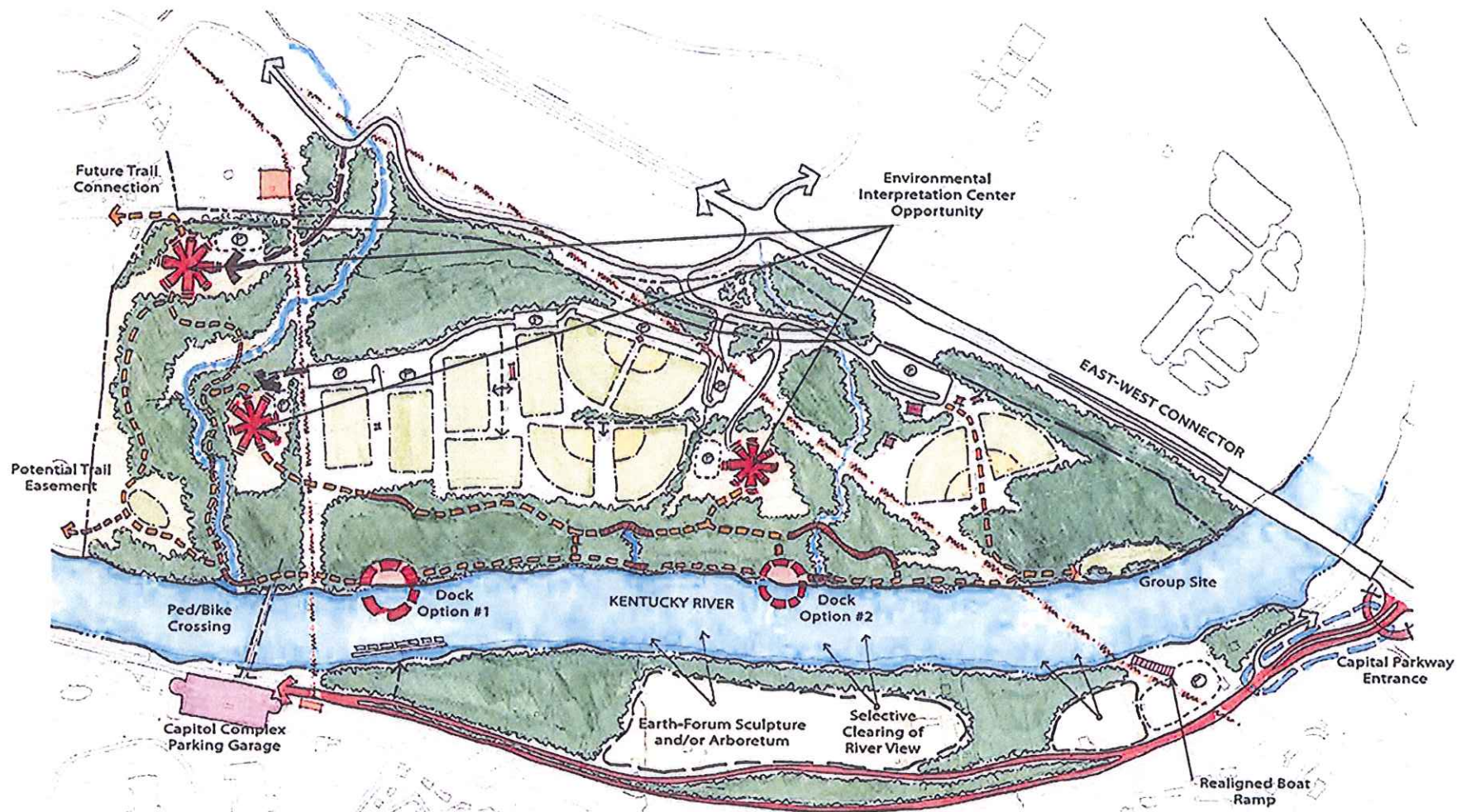
However, the park is not meeting its full potential. No pedestrian paths or bicycle trails access the park, so all users of the recreational fields must arrive via an automobile. The riverfront and its clearing are not well connected to the park's activity areas, making accessing the river from the parking lots very difficult. The areas outside of the recreational fields along the riverfront are not maintained but show evidence of informal walking paths. Picnic shelters, informal mountain bike trails and seating areas with special views are not fully "capitalized" on. The park's namesake is visible from some locations but completely inaccessible.

Section Highlights

- Expand Capital View Park's mission to include environmental education and environment-focused recreation.
- A transient dock will connect the park via a science boat to the downtown KSU campus and other educational sites.
- Multiple sites offer an opportunity for an interpretation center and expanded recreational uses.



River clearing is popular with summer boaters.



Old Lawrenceburg/Capital View Park

This plan recommends expanding Capital View Park's recreational mission to include environmental education and experiential learning. The plan suggests two potential sites for a park dock, three sites for an environmental interpretation or recreation station and trails to connect these areas to the river, parking lots and other amenities.

Capital View Park can become an outpost environmental education center for KSU and local high and grade schools. For example, KSU's downtown campus will contain a riverfront science education curriculum housed in the Old Federal Building and a science boat moored on the Kentucky River. Initially, the curriculum should focus on the urban environment and riverfront habitats of downtown Frankfort. As the program expands, the curriculum should incorporate more natural riverfronts, so that students can understand the wide variety of habitats within a single river. After exploring the urban river adjacent to the downtown KSU campus, the science boat should travel to the natural riverfront edge of Capital View Park. The park contains wetland and upland habitats not present at the downtown campus. Conversely, the science boat can also transport students from the State Capitol Complex pedestrian bridge to the downtown KSU campus.

A transient park dock will allow for temporary tie-ups of the science boat and other transient vessels. The transient park dock design should facilitate a wide range of riverfront activities, including platforms to allow student access to the water and fishing. This plan suggests two potential sites for the park dock; one closer to the pedestrian bridge, the other closer to a minor stream outlet. Each location will need to be evaluated once a program has been developed for an environmental learning center and recreational programs within the park. The dock's access should be designed to adapt to changing water levels.

From the transient park dock at Capital View Park, students can walk over natural trails to an environmental interpretation center. Activities at the interpretation center can include upland habitat instruction, including wetland and/or meadow habitat. The interpretation center can begin as a simple shelter for lectures and experiments and evolve to a more formal building containing classroom materials, as needed by the environmental science curriculum.

Pepper-Spring Hill Distillery

Built in the late 1860s, the Pepper-Spring Hill Distillery was located west of Glenn's Creek Road on the east bank of the Kentucky River. The site was originally constructed by Robert Pepper and E.H. Taylor, but after nearly a decade of operation as the Pepper Distillery, a fire destroyed much of the facility and it was sold and reused by the new owner as a horse farm. While archaeological remnants are all that is left of the main distillery building and branding house, the site fits within the context of Frankfort's distilling history along the riverfront.

While the former site of Pepper-Spring Hill Distillery is privately owned, opportunities to link the Frankfort Cemetery and Capital View Park through it should be further studied. Interpreting the site and educating the public about its contribution to the industrial heritage of Frankfort and Franklin County offers a heritage tourism experience and could open up a great walk/bike connection between the cemetery and park.



*Images Suggesting the Character of
the Transient Dock and Nature Trails
Connecting to the Environmental
Interpretation Center and Parking Lots*



Recreational options should be expanded to include sports other than formal team sports. Expanded recreational options should be focused on the environmental resources of the park. Community residents have suggested installing a rock climbing wall and/or bouldering site. Camping can be included in Capital View Park, either supported RV camping or primitive camping. KSU now utilizes an off-site parcel to host overnight primitive camping that is part of a science education curriculum; the overnight stay can be hosted within Capital View Park.

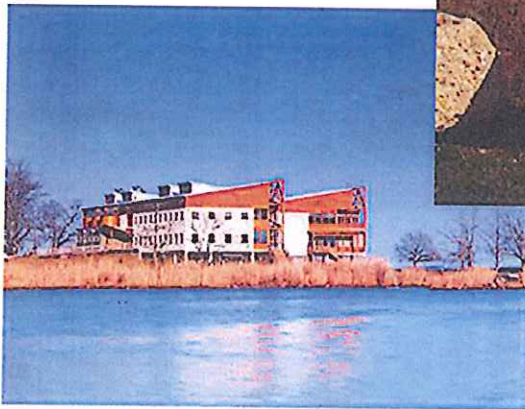
The plan suggests three potential locations for the environmental interpretation center and/or the resource-focused recreation sites. One is on or near the current park caretaker residence, and two others are west of the overhead power line. Once programs have been developed for an environmental interpretation center and expanded recreational opportunities, each location will need to be evaluated in relation to specific program needs.

The environmental education and recreational sites should be connected to the existing recreational fields and parking lots. Low impact trails with occasional stream crossing bridges or boardwalks will enable not only access to the learning sites but also additional recreational opportunities for the public users of Capital View Park. The plan suggests a trail system through Capital View Park to connect a variety of uses. When the new dock site, environmental interpretation center and expanded recreational uses are installed, the trail system will connect them to each other and to existing park amenities. The nature trails should connect to the regional bicycle trail network that is recommended to extend north to connect to downtown Frankfort.

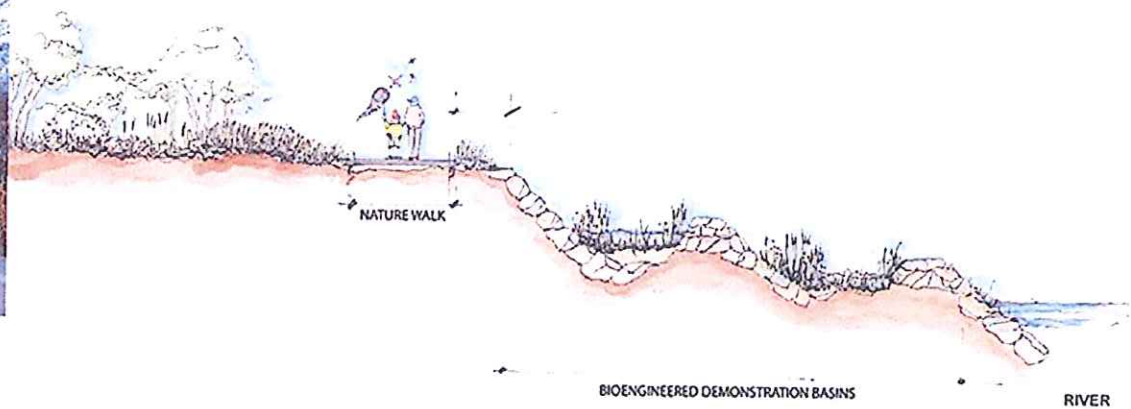
The introduction of new educational and recreational uses into Capital View Park will occur incrementally as educational programs expand, funding becomes available and community interest grows. The expansion of programming should occur carefully and in concert with a park master plan.



The existing caretaker residence is a possible environmental interpretation center location.

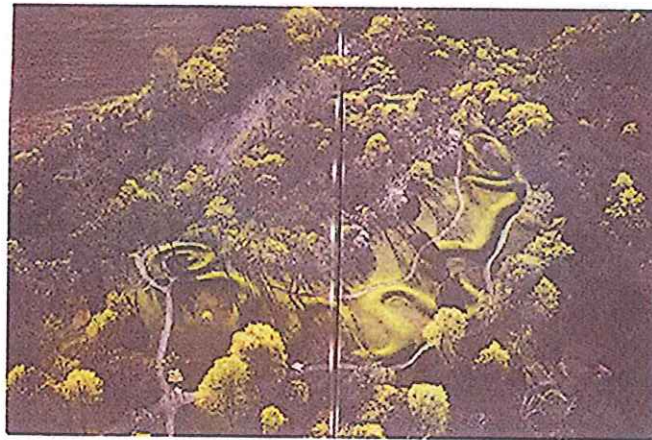
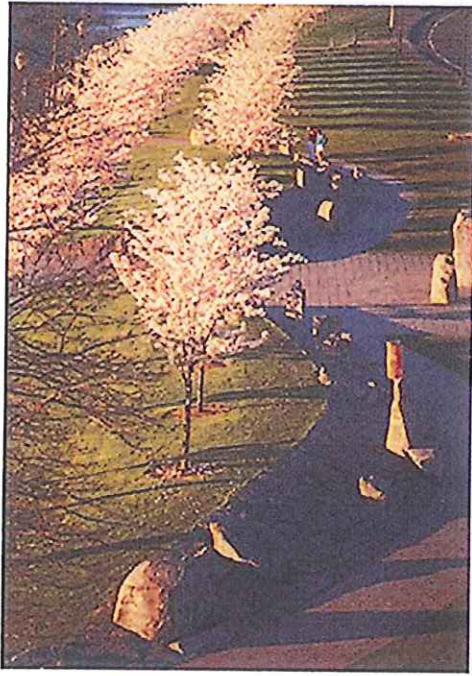
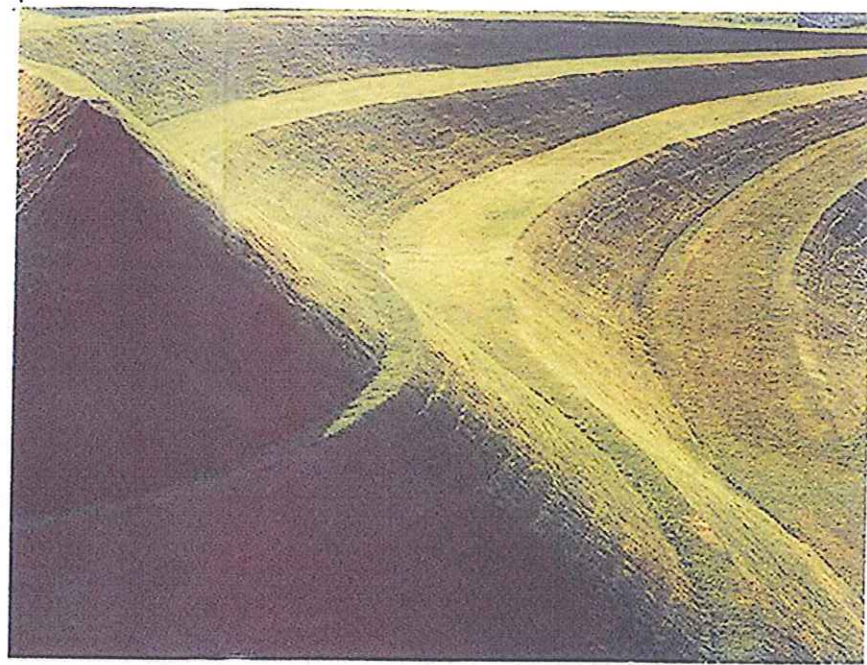
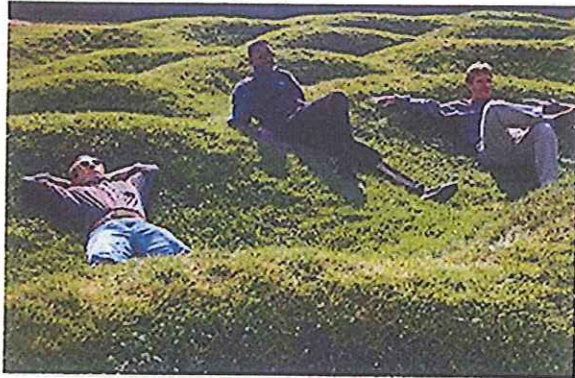


*Images Suggesting the Character of a
Environmental Interpretation Center,
Nature Trails and Boardwalks, and
Interpretative Signage*





Streams in Capital View Park offer opportunities for instruction about aquatic



In limited areas, earth can be sculptured and incorporated into the Capital Parkway grand entrance, creating in itself a unique identity.

Old Lawrenceburg Road

Old Lawrenceburg Road offers an opportunity to create a “civic parkway” from the south to the State Capitol Complex and South Frankfort. The beautiful State Capitol Complex has a prominent function in both its physical location and its statewide symbolic role. However, traveling to the State Capitol Complex from Interstate 64 using other entry roads leads through uninspiring strip and industrial development. The State Capitol Complex and downtown Frankfort deserve a grander regional entrance. Rarely can a historic and prominent site create an entirely new entrance experience, effectively redefining its character. The Old Lawrenceburg Road corridor provides that opportunity.

The Commonwealth has been purchasing parcels along the Old Lawrenceburg Road corridor in an effort to remove former industrial users to improve the “back door” to the State Capitol Complex. The Commonwealth-owned land has been cleared of most structures, and it offers temporary recreational uses. Two industrial users still remain; the Commonwealth desires to purchase these sites when they become available.

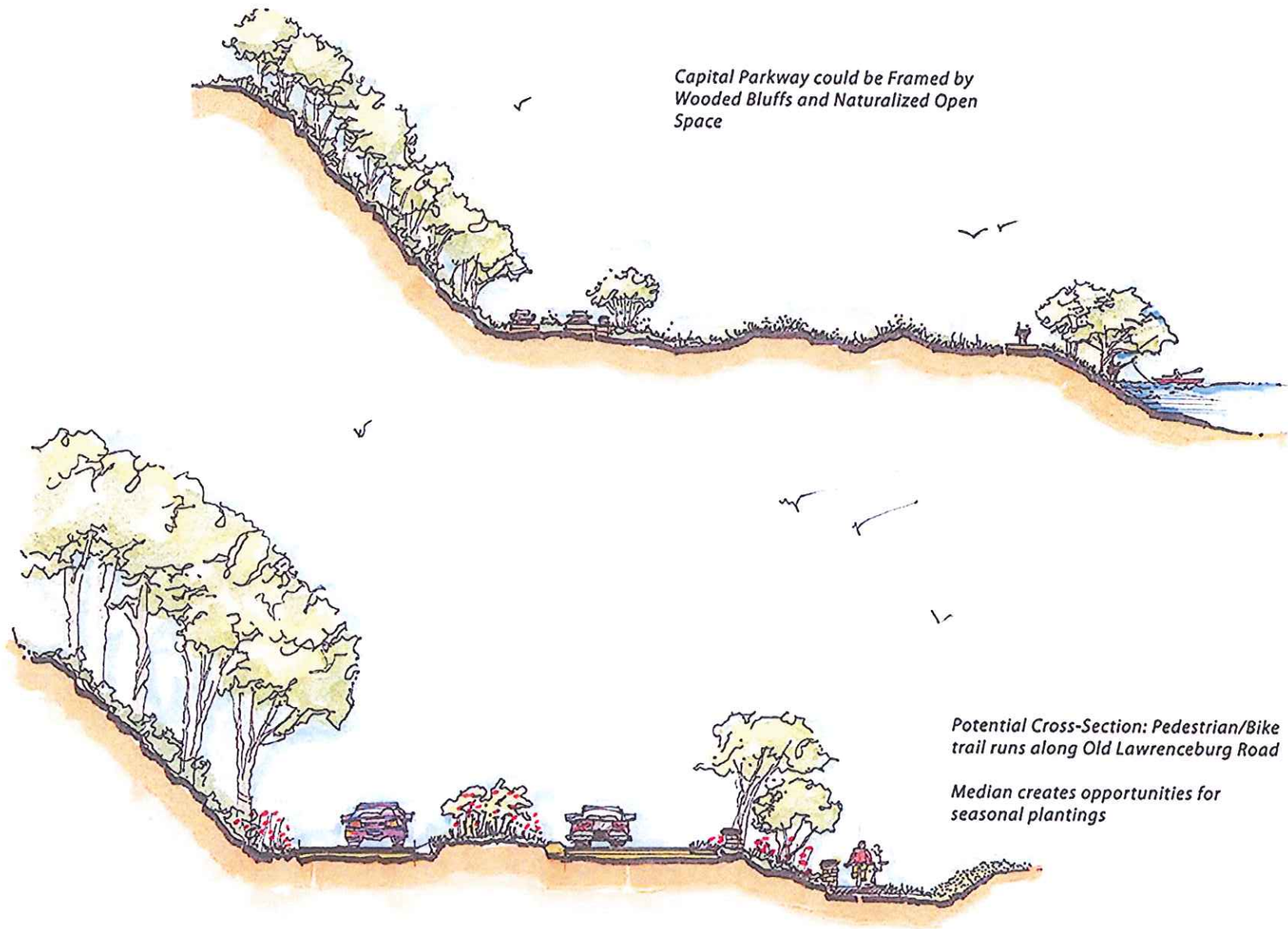
The untapped potential of the Old Lawrenceburg Road corridor is its transportation function. Conventional development in this corridor will be challenging. The land between the road and the river is separated by topography from adjacent neighborhoods and the rest of the riverfront. The land is mostly in the floodplain, so development is possible but difficult. The parkway design can make vehicular transportation access to the riverfront parcels problematic for large traffic generators. Transportation and public open space are the best land uses for this corridor.

The Commonwealth does not have project planned for the improved entry roadway. This plan recommends realigning, reconstructing and redefining Old Lawrenceburg Road as a grand entrance—a Capital Parkway. Where the floodplain narrows, the travel lanes of the entry parkway can separate, creating a median that can feature seasonal plantings. The alignment of the road should be as context-sensitive as possible, taking full advantage of topography and picturesque views of the river. The

Section Highlights

- *Old Lawrenceburg Road should be transformed into Capital Parkway, a civic grand entrance to the State Capitol Complex*

*Capital Parkway could be Framed by
Wooded Bluffs and Naturalized Open
Space*



*Potential Cross-Section: Pedestrian/Bike
trail runs along Old Lawrenceburg Road*

*Median creates opportunities for
seasonal plantings*

road should balance its function as the primary regional vehicle entry to the State Capitol Complex with a parkway design. The cross-section can include landscaping and amenities that recall the best of Kentucky's roadways, including the traditional dry stone walls of rural highways and the fencing of the Blue Grass Parkway. The start of the Capital Parkway at the East-West Connector should include entry markers and landscaping.

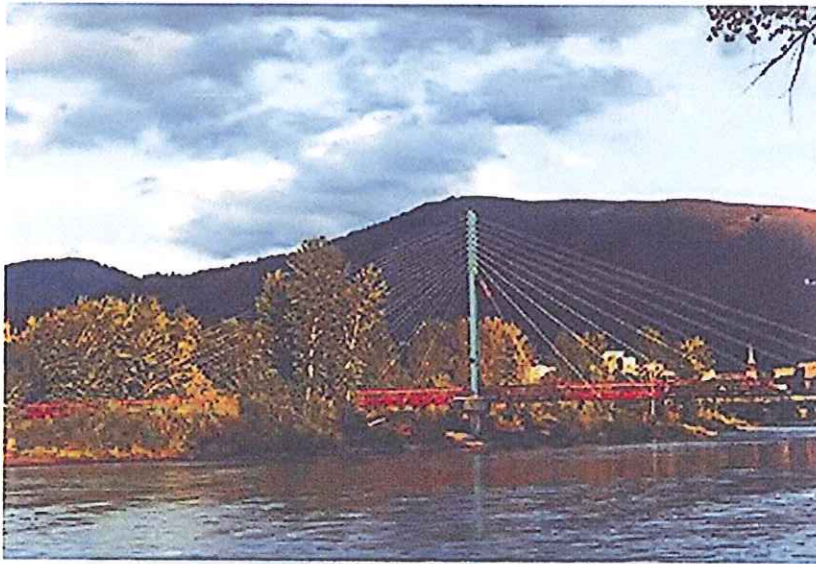
The area between the road and river will be largely floodplain and thus should be dedicated to open spaces. In the tradition of Frederick Law Olmsted, the parkway alignment and views from it to the river and open spaces should be carefully chosen and designed. Some views of the river will require vegetation clearing.

The open spaces in the floodplain are ideal locations for large-scale public art. The highly visible open space can showcase the best work of Frankfort and Kentucky sculptors and other artists against the backdrop of the Kentucky River. In addition, the land itself can be shaped to become a sculpture. The land and the manipulation of topography can become the artist's canvas. Drawing inspiration from the Native American mounds to contemporary earthworks, the parkway can become an outdoor gallery and memorable experience for residents, commuters and tourists.

A bicycle trail should parallel the entry parkway, providing access to riverfront amenities. The trail should connect to a potential exterior bicycle elevator constructed on the river side of the Capitol Complex Parking Garage and the pedestrian bridge.



The proposed pedestrian bridge will connect the State Capitol Complex with Capital View Park. The bridge design could be simple and functional. However, it will be highly visible for those traveling on the Capital Parkway, so it is an opportunity for a gateway statement for Kentucky's capital.



Connecting Capital View Park and Old Lawrenceburg Road

A primary constraint of Capital View Park and the Old Lawrenceburg Road corridor is their isolation from the rest of the riverfront due to topography. These two sites are nearly impossible to access from downtown Frankfort and South Frankfort for those not in vehicles.

This plan recommends multimodal connections from these two areas to South Frankfort and downtown Frankfort. On the east bank, WalkBike Frankfort has planned and is advocating the Downtown - Capital View - East Frankfort bicycle trail that connects downtown with Capital View Park, and this Kentucky Riverfront Development Plan encourages the trail's implementation. When parcels north of Capital View Park are developed or their use is otherwise changed, the City and County should pursue a riverfront easement to enable this trail connection. The trail can connect to the former site of the Pepper-Spring Hill Distillery, allowing a historic interpretation site. On the west bank, this plan recommends a multi-use trail parallel to the civic parkway.

The two sides of the river are completely divided for those not in a vehicle. The East-West Connector Bridge is the only link between the two, but it is not welcoming for pedestrians or bicyclists. A pedestrian bridge should connect the State Capitol Complex with Capital View Park to link employees, tourists and students at the Kentucky State Capitol with recreational and environmental education opportunities in the park. The State Capitol Complex attracts many students from around the state every year, and these students can extend their visit and expand their education to the KSU-sponsored environmental interpretation sites in Capital View Park and downtown.

The pedestrian bridge can be incorporated into the Capitol Complex Parking Garage and connect to the Old Lawrenceburg Road bicycle trail. The pedestrian bridge will enable a riverfront multimodal loop.

Section Highlights

- *Multimodal trails should connect tourists, residents and employees in downtown and South Frankfort to Capital View Park and civic parkway amenities.*
- *A pedestrian bridge should connect Capital View Park to its namesake, linking educational opportunities and the regional trail network.*