



Carrollton, Kentucky River Town Review

Fresh Eyes on Enhancing Tourism & Outdoor Recreation in your Community



Round 1, Fall 2020

Ohio River Recreation Trail Team



NPS RTCA

RIVERS, TRAILS & CONSERVATION
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

www.nps.gov/rtca



Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Experience
Retrace the Expedition and Explore New People, Places, and Stories

Carrollton, Kentucky River Town Review

Fresh Eyes on Enhancing Tourism & Outdoor Recreation in your Community

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Introduction

Ohio River Recreation Trail (ORRT)

The vision of the volunteer-led Ohio River Recreation Trail steering committee is to create a 274-mile land and waterway self-guided adventure trail that connects people to opportunities for outdoor adventure, recreation and discovery on and along the Ohio River from Portsmouth, Ohio to West Point, Kentucky. It will serve to promote tourism and economic development; facilitate education about the valley’s unique history, culture, and beauty; promote environmental awareness and safety; and respect for lands and waters.

Vision: The Ohio River is an accessible and welcoming recreation corridor with vibrant river towns connected by land and water trails.

Mission: Facilitate world-class outdoor adventure opportunities through partnerships that promote healthy recreation, education, stewardship, and economic development for Ohio River communities.



River Town Review (RTR)

A team of professional planners from the National Park Service - Rivers, Trails, & Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA), leaders from the ORRT, the Lewis and Clark Geotourism project, and volunteers from outdoor recreation user groups work with engaged leaders to capture the benefits of outdoor recreation and tourism along the Ohio River. Their combined experience and skills provide a free assessment of the community recreation resources, facilitate a community input process, and prepare a summary of their findings for the community. The RTR helps communities see the possibilities and identify potential actions they can pursue to add sustainable recreational opportunities to their communities.

Carrollton/Carroll County RTR Planning Process (see Appendix A)

The Carrollton/Carroll County Tourism and Convention Commission requested a River Town Review by the ORRT Team to provide “Fresh Eyes on Enhancing Tourism & Outdoor Recreation in their Community.” The request was approved for the first round of RTRs in the fall of 2020.

The RTR Team reviewed materials provided by the community contact and conducted a desktop review of the community’s internet presence. Several RTR Team members visited the community and met with key stakeholders. It was intended to be an in-person, several-days visit but plans were modified due to Covid restrictions. The team hosted a virtual community input workshop on December 17, 2020, that included a SWOT analysis and brainstorming of ideas for enhancing outdoor recreation in Carrollton/Carroll County. The participants were asked to help prioritize the ideas generated into short-term and long-term goals for the community to pursue. They also provided a short description on their “favorite places to take visitors in Carrollton”. The RTR Team reviewed and analyzed the community input to create recommendations for this report.

Desktop Reviews

The detailed results of Desk Top Reviews can be found in Appendix B.

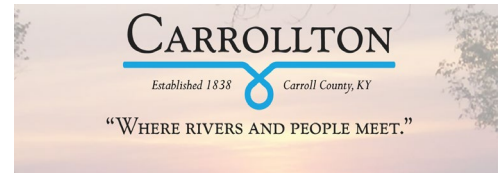
Process/Results

Seven volunteers spent about one hour each on-line to see what they could find out about Carrollton/Carroll County as if they were thinking of visiting for a day or overnight. They looked at outdoor recreation opportunities, lodging, restaurants, breweries/wineries, historical sites, attractions, and events.

Reviewers found the primary community attractions include General Butler State Park, 2Rivers Campground, Point Park, the confluence of the Kentucky and Ohio River, several scheduled community events, and the tagline "Where Rivers Meet People".

Top 5 Attractions for Carrollton listed on Trip Advisor

1. Gen. Butler State Park
2. River Valley Winery (closed)
3. Point Park
4. Butler-Turpin Historic House
5. Carrollton Office Supply



Recommendations:

- More information be provided on the rivers and biking opportunities
- The restaurant list identify which ones are downtown or on the water
- Identify and show a map of the paved river walk
- Add more photos of the area to the websites

In summary, the RTR Team found that Carrollton is a riverfront town with national lodging facilities, chain and local restaurants and outdoor recreation opportunities at General Butler State Park.

Walkability & Bikeability Scores for Carrollton

Walk Score & Bike Score measure the walkability/bikeability of any address using a patented system which analyzes hundreds of walking and biking routes to nearby amenities. Points are awarded based on the distance to amenities in each category.

- Walkability Score for Carrollton – **50 Somewhat Walkable**
- Bikeability Score for Carrollton – **48 Somewhat Bikeable**

Please visit www.walkscore.com for more information

Walk Score
90-100 Walkers Paradise
70 -89 Very Walkable
50 -69 Somewhat Walkable
25 -49 Mostly Car Dependent
0 – 24 Car Dependent

Bike Score
90-100 Bikers Paradise
70 -89 Very Bikeable
50 -69 Bikeable
0 - 49 Somewhat Bikeable



Kentucky River Lock #1

Community Visit

Community Visit details can be found in Appendix B.

Community Experiences

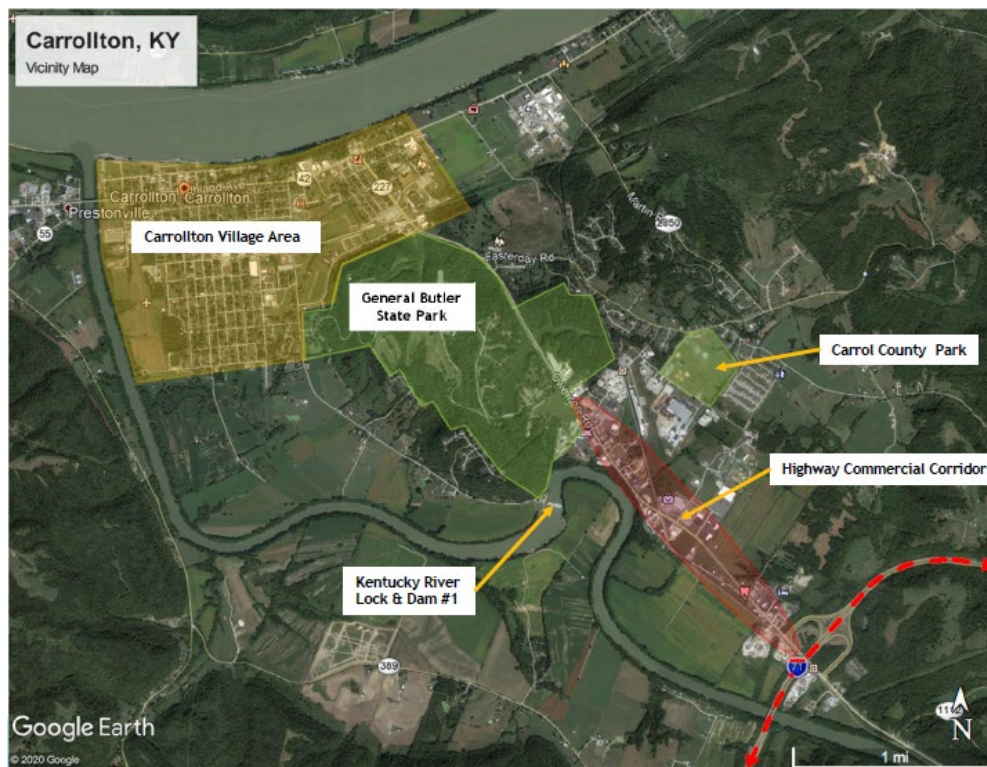
Several members of RTR Team visited Carrollton on different days to experience the community. Some also paddled the three rivers to experience the local recreation resources.

Some of the key things that the RTR Team liked about their community experience in Carrollton were:

- Small town feeling and calm pace of life
- Walkable business district, historic buildings and great viewshed of the Ohio River
- Point Park at the confluence of the two rivers and the boat ramp facilities
- The walkable proximity of the 2Rivers Campground to the riverfront parks and the historic downtown
- The proximity and the facilities at General Butler State Park
- River recreation resources with three rivers
- Historical points of interest

Some of the key things that the RTR Team would encourage the community to improve are:

- Bike and pedestrian link from the historic downtown riverfront to General Butler State Park
- Riverfront Parks – transient overnight docking for motor boaters, secure storage, tent camping, showers/restrooms for paddlers and cyclists visiting the community
- Better wayfinding signage to feature community assets
- Marked bicycle routes in the region and bike racks downtown



Community Input

The detailed results can be found in Appendix B.

Virtual Workshop

The RTR Team hosted and facilitated a virtual workshop for the Carrollton/Carroll County Tourism and Convention Commission on December 17, 2020. Twenty-two local community members, including elected officials, participated in the workshop via Zoom. The Desktop Review and Community Visit findings were shared by the RTR Team for discussion. The participants were asked to share their thoughts by entering their ideas in the chat box during the virtual workshop and then prioritizing those ideas. Also, they were invited to describe their favorite places to take visitors and their perfect day spent in the community. This virtual workshop assisted the RTR Team to better understand what is important to the community and where the special places are in the Carrollton area.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis

The workshop participants identified the following as the primary considerations for each of the categories of SWOT Analysis for the Carrollton and Carroll County area. The list identifies the higher priority items selected from all of the ideas generated during the SWOT Analysis for all four categories. Please refer to Appendix B – Carrollton/Carroll County RTR Documents to review all of the ideas generated from the SWOT Analysis.

STRENGTHS

- Confluence of and access to two major rivers (Kentucky and Ohio Rivers)
- General Butler State Park
- Location halfway between Louisville & Cincinnati with easy access to Interstate 71
- US 42 Scenic Byway
- Outdoor recreation (Birding, Camping, Boating Fishing)
- Historic charm, southern hospitality
- Point Park (One of the best on the Ohio River)

WEAKNESSES

- Need more restaurants close to downtown and the Ohio River
- Trail connectivity to local recreation assets (General Butler State Park, etc.) and better wayfinding signage
- The “It’s Carrollton” mindset that some locals might hold, limiting the vision of potential growth and demonstrating a lack of connections to the local natural resource assets.
- Unified marketing strategy and collaborative community initiatives
- Need more retail & restaurants in the historic district
- Community wide vision for the future
- No Brewery (Accessible to the river)
- Marina & fuel station

OPPORTUNITIES

- Available space within General Butler State Park
- Create outdoor adventures linked to the business district
- Recruiting good restaurants along the river
- Combining a white-water park and a mountain bike gravity park (Carrollton could be an outdoor recreation adventure destination)

- Kentucky River Lock #1 – Boat Launch
- Marina & fuel station
- Grow the downtown area with new businesses (Historic buildings available)
- Encourage recreational vendors to locate in the downtown area

THREATS

- Not enough federal or state support for tourism development
- Failure to fully utilize technology and marketing initiatives to promote the community offerings and market the strengths of the area
- Riverbank erosion
- Security for canoes, kayaks and bicycles while camping

Brainstorming Ideas

The participants were led through an exercise to identify ideas for the Carrollton and Carroll County to consider pursuing to improve or create recreation assets and tourism opportunities. The following lists identify some short-term and long-term the higher priority items selected from all the ideas generated during the brainstorming exercise. These lists also include ideas to consider from the workshop participants Homework exercise.

SHORT TERM IDEAS

- Convert General Butler State Park golf course into a bike park
- Pop-up beer pub (demonstrates potential for a new biz)
- More restaurants, a brewery in downtown. Consider a farmer’s market, food carts and vendors at the park every Saturday morning, this would be a great start! Expand as the demand grows. Try to have an event every month!
- Online marketing! We have to let people know what we offer.
- Improved signage throughout the community and the parks
- Connect pedestrian & bike linkages to General Butler State Park
- Overnight tent campsites and possible tiny house lodgings for cyclist and paddlers. Restrooms!

LONG TERM IDEAS

- Develop mountain bike trails and bike park at General Butler State Park that will draw folks from 3-4 hours away
- Full-service marina with gas & paddleboat rental. Secure docks and security for the boats, kayaks, and canoes while visitors shop and eat! Make Carrollton a destination as well as a launch site to both rivers.
- Combine whitewater park and Mt. Bike gravity park
- Trail improvements and connections throughout the region
- We need brewery, restaurants, and retail downtown to make Carrollton a destination for people to stop at whether they are on the river, biking or driving.
- Develop a great, outdoor, active event or race that showcases Carrollton’s outdoor resources, local food, and craft beer/ whiskey.
- Outdoor Amphitheater at General Butler State Park



A perfect day for a visitor in Carrollton/Carroll County is....

As a homework assignment to help identify what makes the Carrollton Area a special place, the RTR Team asked the workshop participants to describe a perfect day for a visitor in the community. Some of the common items identified were exploring General Butler State Park, dining at the lodge, enjoying a campfire at one of the cottages in the park, kayaking on the rivers, walking in the historic downtown area and walking along the riverfront to enjoy the views of the river.

Please refer to Appendix B – Carrollton/Carroll County RTR Documents to review all of the stories submitted.



A Vision for Carrollton & Carroll County

The City of Carrollton wishes to further enhance its historic riverfront to benefit existing residents and businesses and to attract new ones. A common vision for the Carrollton/Carroll County area should be created that emphasizes all of the outdoor recreation adventure opportunities that the region has to offer. The General Butler State Park (GBST) is a major recreation asset and there are opportunities to create destination mountain bike trails and disc golf facilities. The GBST needs to have a strong linkage to the historic downtown district riverfront and to the Kentucky River at the Lock #1 site.

The City of Carrollton needs to continue to take advantage of its location at the confluence of the Kentucky and the Ohio Rivers by expanding boater related services such as a marina and transient docking and supplies, encouraging new restaurants and retail in the historic downtown area, creating safe bicycle trail loops by linking local assets, exploring all options to market the region and becoming a dynamic trailtown. These efforts will provide economic benefits for the county, city and the general public as the community will be now a viable recreational gateway while increasing tourism, business opportunities and quality of life for residents.

River Town Review Executive Summary

River Town Review Input

The RTR Team looked at the internet presence of Carrollton/Carroll County and found that Carrollton is a riverfront town tucked into the confluence of the Ohio and Kentucky Rivers. The primary recreation-based attraction, in addition to the rivers, is the General Butler State Park adjacent to the City of Carrollton. During the community input meeting we learned that there is an opportunity to establish a great mountain bike trail system at the state park in a former golf course area. Another unique opportunity is the potential redevelopment of the Kentucky River Lock & Dam #1 site for recreation and a direct connection to state park facilities. The City of Carrollton could benefit from new retail and restaurants in the historic downtown area along the Ohio River. The City has great riverfront parks and a fairly new campground on the river as a great asset. The key short-term ideas to pursue are mountain bike course, better wayfinding signage, more internet marketing of the community, and improvements to link the riverfront to the state park. The key long-term ideas are to explore the opportunities to create a marina, create storage facilities for bicycles and kayaks, and explore US Bike Route connection opportunities in the region. Continued engagement with the community and other Ohio River resources would also be beneficial.

Carrollton/ Carroll County Future Objectives

The following objectives for Carrollton/Carroll County are based on what the RTR Team observed and learned from the community. These items ought to be explored, brainstormed, and action steps should be created by the community.

1. Work with GBSP to create destination Mt. Bike Trails, bike park, and other recreation features.
2. Plan and develop safe bicycle linkages from GBSP to the historic downtown and riverfront parks
3. Develop cycling routes beginning and ending downtown as loops to connect local attractions/features by implementing the recommendations of the Carroll County Trails Master Plan.
4. Plan and develop a community-oriented riverfront as a focal point to serve the area's needs: living, recreation, events, social interaction, and human development.

5. Promote and capitalize on the US 42 Scenic Byway corridor and the Underground Railroad history
6. Explore recreational alternatives for the Kentucky River Lock #1 site with the Kentucky River Authority and General Butler State Park.
7. Explore additional public access sites upstream on the Ohio River and the Kentucky River to facilitate safe water trail opportunities that converge in Carrollton.
8. Consider tent camping, restrooms/showers and secure equipment storage for paddlers and bicyclists at the waterfront parks
9. Continue to create memorable places for civic events, attracting visitors, residents, businesses, and tourists and enhancing the business district along the riverfronts.

River Town Review Recommendations

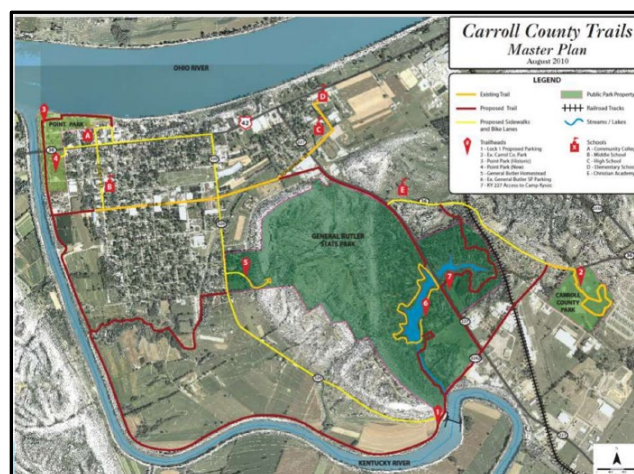
The following specific recommendations are based on all information gathered by the RTR Team.

Desktop Reviews

- Promote more about the water related recreation opportunities
- Add more photos to the website data
- Identify and show a map of the paved river walk location
- Tag more businesses and partners on social media channels to expand the audience reach.
- Add more information about recreation opportunities to the Wikipedia page and the Carrollton business directory.

Walkability/Bikability

- Continue to maintain and expand the sidewalk network within the city of Carrollton.
- There are a number of items that a community can do to improve the bikeability in the region. See Appendix C List of Resources, Bikeability Checklist.
- Create and adopt Bike Pedestrian Master Plan for Carrollton & Carroll County that complies with the Kentucky Department of Transportation standards for a Bike Ped Master Plan. This may allow for some funding for future linkages that involve the state highway. See Appendix C List of Resources, Dept. of Transportation Bike & Pedestrian Planning, Kentucky weblink for more information.
- A regional network of bicycle trails was proposed in the Carroll County Trails Master Plan (2010) by Larose Associates. The implementation of the looped bicycle trails plan will offer a variety of cycling experiences and connects several existing recreation features in the Carrollton area.



Carroll County Trails Master Plan 2010
By Larose Associates

Immediate Action Items (Low Hanging Fruit):

- Update ORRT Digital Guide with local businesses/services
<https://www.ohioriverrecreationtrail.org/digital-guide>
- Partner with the ORRT organization:
<https://www.ohioriverrecreationtrail.org/become-a-partner>
- Enroll in the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Community Partner Program
<https://lewisandclark.travel/partner-community-program/>
- Utilize the photographs from the community visit by the professional photographers, Joe Wolek and John Nation in future outdoor recreation information website updates.
- Internal newsletter or group chat among all business owners to ensure everyone stays in the loop
- Add bike racks near service facilities to welcome the cycling community. Consider installing charging stations for electric bikes in the downtown area and at the riverfront parks.
- Pop up event to close a road and have a car free – walk and roll- event with community partners.

Short Term Ideas to Pursue:

- Work with General Butler State Park and the International Mountain Bicycling Association to convert the former golf course area into a mountain bike park and learning facility
- Continue to promote opportunities for new restaurants, brewery, and retail in the historic downtown buildings. Consider a farmer’s market, food carts and vendors at the park on Saturday mornings during the summer season. Become a destination for people to stop at whether they are on the river, biking or driving.
- Continue to explore options to expand the online marketing of the recreation assets in the region.
- Explore temporary attractions such as a Pop-up beer pub to help promote the community and its assets.
- Connect pedestrian & bicycle linkages from the riverfront to General Butler State Park

Long Term Ideas to Pursue:

- Explore the opportunity for a full-service marina with gas & paddleboat rental along one of the rivers. Reach out to the Army Corps of Engineers and the Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources to evaluate potential locations. This could be a public/private partnership opportunity.
- Create lockable storage facilities for the bicycles, boats, kayaks, and canoes while visitors shop and eat!
- Lock & Dam #1 Site - Explore additional outdoor recreation facility options with General Butler State Park, Kentucky River Authority, Kentucky Riverkeeper, and the Army Corps of Engineers for the site area. Consider stabilizing Lock House No. 1, renovate it, or remove it, create an information kiosk, create a safe portage route and launch sites for paddlers, and brainstorm additional ideas for the property. This could be a future NPS – Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Project.
- Explore new US Bike Route opportunities in the region to connect with the existing US Bike Routes in Kentucky
- Develop a great, outdoor, active event or race that showcases Carrollton’s outdoor resources, local food, and craft beer/ whiskey.

Additional Ideas to Consider:

- Collaborate with others, share ideas, and engage the region in setting a course of action to capitalize on the recreation resources and establish a vision for the future.

- Coordinate with county officials to seek additional public access sites upstream on the Ohio and Kentucky Rivers in the 5-6 and 10-11 river mile range to facilitate day use paddle trips that terminate in Carrollton. This future public access effort can help support a vendor to rent paddle equipment in the historic downtown area.
- Tell Your Story – Every community has a unique history. Explore ways to create memorable experiences in your community and on the trails that link to your community.

Classic Trip Opportunities

- Paddling trips from Ghent to Carrollton on the Ohio River, Kentucky Lock 1 site to Carrollton on the Kentucky River and the Little Kentucky River to the Carrollton riverfront parks.
- Motorboat and paddling destination riverfront development with overnight tent camping, transient docking, marina, & restrooms.

Appendix A River Town Review Planning Process

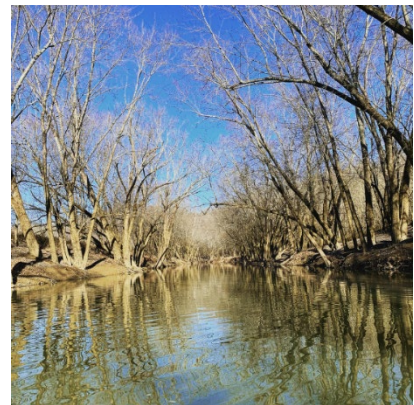
The RTR Team has summarized and created an outline for the steps of the ORRT RTR planning process with a virtual community input workshop. Appendix A contains the summaries of The Request Process, Pre-workshop Tasks, Workshop Tasks and Post Workshop Tasks.

Appendix B Documentation from River Town Reviews

The RTR Team has compiled all of the information received from the workshop participants for further reference in this document. Appendix B contains the data from the Desktop Reviews, Visitor Assessments, SWOT Analysis, Brainstorming Ideas, Homework, Comments, A Perfect Day in Carrollton/Carroll County Stories, and other information collected during the RTR process.

Appendix C List of Resources for Communities

The RTR Team has compiled a list of resources for communities to seek additional information in the following categories: Outdoor Recreation & Adventure Tourism, Sustainable Tourism, Maintaining Small Town Character, Grants and Funding Opportunities, Organizations and Community Assistance Programs. Please refer to Appendix C -List of Resources for Communities for a complete listing with website links.



Photos of the Carrollton Area by John Nation



Appendix A

River Town Review Virtual Planning Process

The following steps outline the Ohio River Recreation Trail River Town Review planning process with a virtual community input workshop.

The Request

- **River Town Review Request** – A river town community submits a letter requesting a River Town Review to the Ohio River Recreation Trail Team. Details about requesting assistance can be found at [Ohio River Recreation Trail](#). The river town communities are selected based on meeting the criteria identified on the website.
- **Community Participation Requirements** – If selected, the community agrees to provide a contact person, list of key community members to participate in the RTR workshop, list of community assets, map identifying the location of the recreation facilities, host a tour of the community with the RTR Team and promote/encourage participation in the virtual community input workshop.
- **The ORRT River Town Review Team selects** communities, notifies them, schedules the River Town Review Workshop, and engages the community contact in the pre-workshop planning process.

Pre-Workshop Tasks

- **Desk Top Review** - The River Town Review Team will explore the internet presence of the community through a desk top review by several volunteers. They will be exploring the community assets, determining if they have the information necessary to plan an outdoor recreation adventure in the community (Recreation activities, lodging, restaurants, entertainment, etc.) and preparing a summary of their findings.
- **Community Visit & Assessment** – RTR Team members and outdoor recreation volunteers visit the community, explore the recreation assets, participate in a tour with local officials, interview people about the community recreation facilities and prepare a summary of their findings.
- **Prepare RTR Working Agenda & Presentations** – RTR Team identifies presenters and prepares information for the workshop.
- **RTR team and community leads** meet for a pre-workshop confirmation review and recruit people for participation in the workshop.

Workshop Tasks

- **Virtual Community Input Workshop** – (COVID Travel Restrictions) The RTR Team facilitates a virtual meeting to share what the fresh eyes have seen and hear from the community. The Team presents opportunities for the community partner with Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail and increase their local businesses exposure on the ORRT Digital Guide. The team gathers community input/ideas through a SWOT Analysis, participants prioritize SWOT ideas, & participants Brainstorm ideas to enhance recreation and tourism in the community. After the workshop the RTR Team collects and distributes the prioritized SWOT Analysis Ideas, the Brainstorming ideas captured during the virtual meeting and sends

the data to the meeting participants. The virtual meeting includes power point presentations and interactive online polling.

➤ **Workshop Participants Homework** – The workshop participants are asked to review the prioritized SWOT ideas and the list of brainstorming ideas generated during the workshop. They are asked to identify their top three short-term and long-term ideas to pursue from the lists, visit websites and describe a what a perfect day for a visitor in my community is. This information is returned to the RTR Team to be reviewed and analyzed as additional input to consider for recommendations.

Post Workshop Tasks

➤ **Report Out** – The RTR Team assembles all of the information collected from the desktop reviews, site visits, and community input to prepare a summary of recommendations. The collected data and a List of Resources for Communities are included as appendix items with the summary.

➤ **RTR Team and all RTR communities** convene for a River Town Review Summit to share challenges, successes, and ideas for future collaboration.

Templates have been created to help record the information, document the procedures, and guide the River Town Review process.

Carrollton/Carroll County, KY

River Town Review

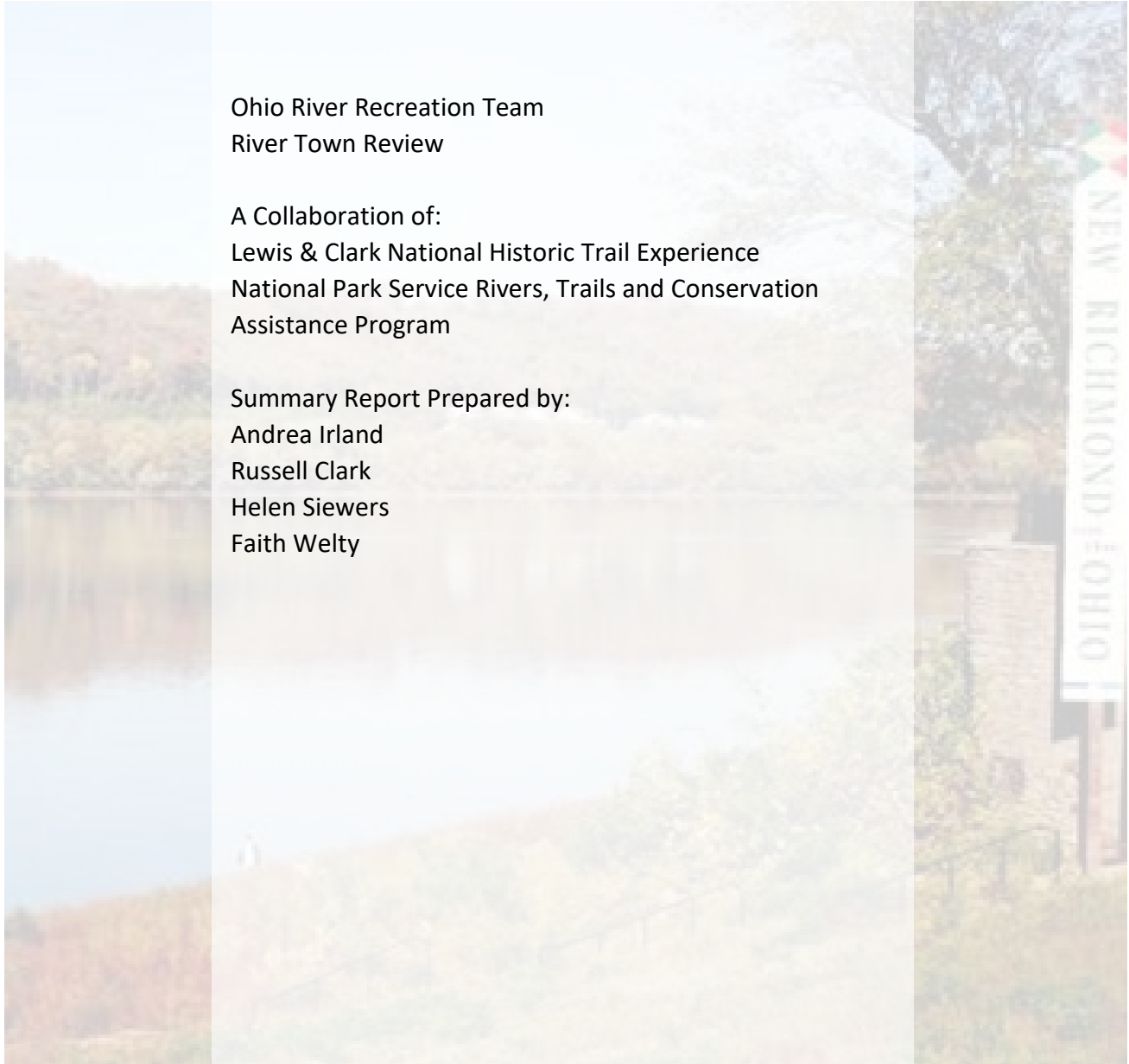
Appendix B: Background & Supporting Materials



Ohio River Recreation Team
River Town Review

A Collaboration of:
Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Experience
National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation
Assistance Program

Summary Report Prepared by:
Andrea Irland
Russell Clark
Helen Siewers
Faith Welty



Fresh Eyes on Enhancing Tourism & Outdoor Recreation in your Community



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Application Letter



515 Highland Avenue • Carrollton, KY 41008
502.732.7036 • www.visitcarrolltonky.com

Dear Mr. Clark and Ms. Irland,

Carrollton/Carroll County Tourism and Convention Commission would like to apply for an Ohio River Recreation Trail - River Town Review please.

Carrollton, Kentucky is located at the confluence of the Ohio River and Kentucky River. We are conveniently located halfway between Louisville, Ky and Cincinnati, Ohio on Interstate 71. We're approximately twenty minutes from Madison, Indiana and one hour from Frankfort, Ky. Carrollton is centrally located and easily accessible by river and interstate.

We recognize that the rivers are one of our biggest assets. The Ohio River and Kentucky River provide residents and tourists a wide variety of recreational activities and is a great natural resource we must protect. Tourism sponsors a bass tournament each year as a way to utilize one of our assets, the rivers. We also sponsor three other large events at Point Park, located at the confluence. All of our guests appreciate the venue and the river scenery.

General Butler State Resort Park and our two campgrounds are other assets in Carroll County. General Butler has a lodge and cottages for overnight accommodations as well as 111 campsites. Other park demographics include a 7500 square foot conference center, the Butler Turpin Historic Home, 18 hole miniature golf course, boat rentals on the lake, picnic shelters, and four hiking trails, basketball, tennis courts and archery range.

The city of Carrollton built Two Rivers Campground in 2012. The campground is located in downtown Carrollton, on the Kentucky River and walking distance to the confluence of the rivers at Point Park. A paved River Walk takes guests from the campground, along the Kentucky River to Point Park and then along the Ohio River. Two Rivers Campground has 33 full hook up sites and free Wi-Fi among other amenities.

Camp Kysoc is another one of our assets. Carroll County Fiscal Court purchased the 94-acre property several years ago. Camp Kysoc amenities include a 12-acre lake, a Rotary Lodge that is available for large groups year round, paved walking trails, 27 primitive cabins and many buildings (most not in service at this time though). There's also an indoor pool but it isn't operational at this time either. A local group of volunteers have recently turned one of the buildings into a Nature Center.

Location and our people are also some of Carroll County's best assets. We're conveniently located in the middle of several larger cities; one hour from Louisville and Cincinnati, 1.5 hours from Lexington, and 2 hours from Indianapolis, Indiana. A lot of visitors use Carrollton as a meeting spot due to our location.

Long time community members have lived and devoted much of their lives to Carroll County. We're proud of our home on the Ohio River and not shy with our southern hospitality. We welcome visitors and love to share our small river town with them. We may not be the biggest or have the best of other things but our people are definitely wonderful.

With the current situation and stress due to the pandemic, many changes have been forced upon people. A Kentucky Department of Tourism Survey predicts people will travel to smaller communities more than larger cities and look for more outdoor adventures. Carroll County has a lot of potential in attracting the outdoor enthusiasts and tourists to our small rural county on the Ohio River. A River Town Review would help us evaluate our current strengths and weaknesses and hopefully make improvements. We believe the qualified professionals from the National Park Service Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program, ORRT and the Lewis and Clark Geotourism Project would provide our local leaders and organizations valuable information to push our community forward with an action plan for positive change. It will also be very beneficial to gain insight on current national recreation trends and ideas so that we can use them to help Carroll County. We're blessed to have the Ohio River as an asset. It will definitely be beneficial for our community to learn how to utilize it's full potential in different ways.

I, Misty Wheeler, Carroll County Tourism & Convention Commission Director, will be the lead contact. My phone number is 502-732-7036, cell number, 502-643-7782 and email, director@carrolltontourism.com. I will invite at least, if not more than the following local leaders and organizations to participate; Carroll County Judge Executive Harold "Shorty" Tomlinson, Carrollton Mayor Robb Adams, county magistrates, city council members, Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, Carroll County Community Development Corporation, Carroll County Extension Office, Carrollton Main Street Program, downtown business merchants, General Butler State Resort Park Manager Susan Spears, and locals that have valuable knowledge of our rivers and use them on a regular basis. We agree to provide information and host meetings if selected. We are very excited about this opportunity to help our community and look forward to working together to improve our existing assets and learn of others.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Misty Wheeler".

Misty Wheeler
Director, Carrollton/Carroll Co Tourism & Convention Commission



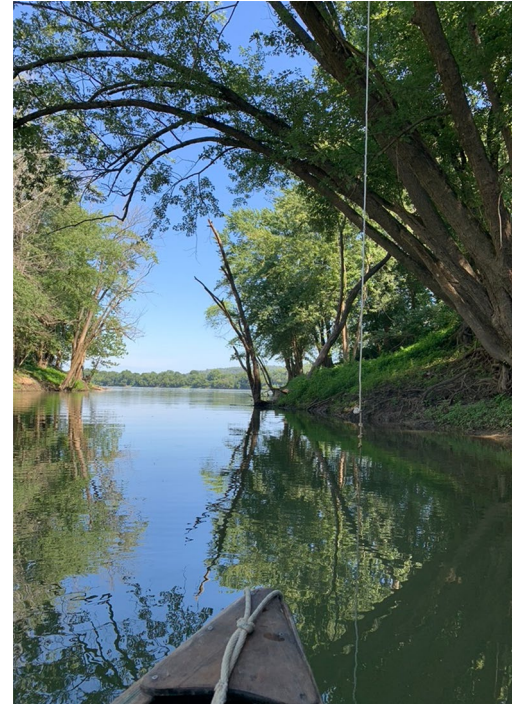
Digital Desktop Review for Carrollton/Carroll County

Seven volunteers spent about one hour each on-line to see what they could find out about New Richmond as if they were thinking of visiting for a day or overnight – lodging, restaurants, breweries/wineries, historical sites, attractions, events, outdoor recreation opportunities, etc.

Overall Feedback from reviewers...

Carrollton/Carroll County Tourism & Convention Commission
www.visitcarrolltonky.org

Landing page: The page immediately promotes hiking and paddling activities. Lots of text with small photos, especially the first with a silhouette of a man fishing on the river. The tag lines bring the page to life, but does not provide link to any useful info such as maps, rental reservations, etc. There is limited mention names of rivers, lake, parks or trails.



Overview of the website tabs:

- *Things to do*: Lots of info...lots of text... few photos. The recreation tab starts with local sports venues like ball fields, basketball courts and three sites for fishing in Carrollton. Then discusses General Butler State Park amenities. Also, brief mention about Point Park. **The** tab caters appears to be focused on experiencing the area through driving.
 - No focus on the waterfront or rivers access.
 - No mention of biking.
 - Points visitors to go to other towns: Madison, Vevay, Ghent, Bedford.
 - Overall, the Things to Do tab Gives the impression that Carrollton is best experienced by getting in the car and driving somewhere else.
- Under the recreation tab consider listing everything to be alphabetized, so change this listing to Biking/Walking/Challenge Course
 -
- *Restaurants*: Listed alphabetically. Most appear to be national chain franchises. Can't tell if they are all in the downtown. The website does not make it clear if any of the restaurants are near the river...? tab lists Arby's as first option. Not exciting. List most popular, local favorite first. Consider selling top spots as ads
- *Places to Stay*: Like the restaurants, most appear to be national chain franchises. The Carrollton Inn looks interesting. Cannot tell if its near the river. One has to explore a bit to find **The Highland**

House Estate, it appears to be a beautiful place to enjoy the river. One could also list Carrollton's [2Rivers Campground](#).

- *History*: Interesting story about the founding of Carrollton.
- *Calendar*: Very text heavy. I liked the photos associated with the Two Rivers Bass Tournament. What a shame that Carrollton had to cancel so many events this year.

Constructive Comments – I did not see much in terms of biking opportunities in downtown Carrollton, nor did I see much info on the Ohio River. IE: Does Carrollton have a bike shop? Bike Racks? Biking events?

Quick review of this site indicates that Carrollton has a lot of activities going . Their calendar of events is packed with wine festivals, Bluegrass music events, Fishing tournaments, Paddling events, Barbecue events, Crafts markets, Halloween events, Golf scrambles and more. Many of these are centered around General Butler state park which appears to be very integrated into the Carrollton events and environment.

There are several mentions of hiking and paddling, however most of these appear to be inside of General Butler state park and are not necessarily on the river. There is a downtown Carrollton paved Riverwalk which they encourage on several sites. There was no mention of River access along that walkway.

Overall, the web site has lots of useful information, but is very text heavy. It may enrich the site to add more current photos to promote Carrollton's charm. And keep the reader engaged.

Carrollton, Carroll County, KY webpage

www.carrolltonky.net

The tag line of “Where Rivers and People Meet” and the full-size photo of the Ohio River is stunning. IN Mayor Adams welcoming letter, he highlights the new state of the art campground: [2Rivers Campground](#). The mayor mentions a Beautification project where people on main street and that the River Walk project in final planning stages. The campground webpage is well laid out, great photos, easy access to the Kentucky River. Easy to make reservations.

This site the city's web page and is primarily focused on city services and serving its residents.

[Bicycle & Pedestrian Travel Master Plans](#) page appears to be out of date, but fascinating. The 2010 plan and the 2013 Park to Park Trails phase 1 construction documents look very comprehensive, it would be great to have an update on the plan, how much of it has been implemented?

FYI – When I clicked on the Carrollton Main Street Program link, it took me to an ad page, unrelated to Carrollton, KY

[Carrollton Facebook:](#)



Over 3500 subscribers! It is updated every day. Great post several weeks ago about the new mural project. They just finished their first mural of the beautification project by the Carrollton Main Street program.

It also highlighted the river sweep on September 18.



[General Butler State Park:](#)

A full-service state park with excellent lodging, camping and trails. Their website is easy to use and engaging. A comprehensive list of outdoor recreational opportunities; hiking, canoeing, boat rentals, birding, fishing and picnicking. An excellent description of [hiking trails](#).

One suggestion to consider is to work with the state park website managers to increase the presence of Carrollton's waterfront and downtown. One example could be to expand the description of the Kentucky River Lock Trail #1 to include Point Park and downtown.

The [canoeing page](#) on KY state parks, highlights canoeing at General Butler, the description could also highlight Carrollton more as well.

Kentucky Travel Guide:

www.kytravel.com

North East Region focuses on Carrollton - Landing page shows a fuzzy picture of a downtown street and buildings. It also has a tag line – “*Where Rivers and people meet*”. There is a simple vicinity map and brief overview of Carrollton's history.

Ky Fish and Wildlife: [Ohio River - Below Cincinnati - Carrollton Ramp](#), should there be a reference that Point Park has a better boat ramp?

KY Fish and Wildlife: [Point Park](#) - Consider putting a link on your webpage for the Fish and Wildlife link.

All Trails <https://www.alltrails.com/parks/us/kentucky/general-butler-state-park> - easy to find and read.

Trip Advisor: https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g39262-Activities-Carrollton_Kentucky.html

A nice description of Point Park, consider investigate a possibility of adding a description of fishing and boating on the Ohio River.

Top 5 Attractions on trip advisor

1. Gen. Butler SP
2. River Valley Winery (closed)
3. Point Park

4. Butler-Turpin Historic House
5. Carrollton Office Supply

[Yelp's Top 10 Things To Do In Carrollton](#)

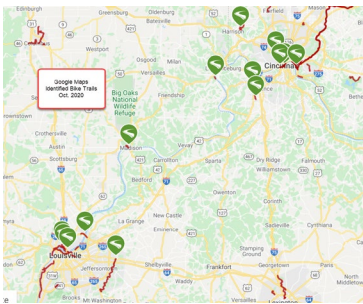
Lists Gen. Butler SP, but also attractions in Madison, IN and Cincinnati, OH

[Adventure Cycling Association's Underground Railroad national bike route](#): which spans from Mobile, AL to Ontario, Canada, and passes smack dab through Carrollton on HWY 42.

The app [MTB Project](#) is the most widely used mountain biking trail locator app. The 4.5 mile Fossil Trail at General Butler SP is not listed on the app.

Trailink web page - <https://www.trailink.com/city/carrollton-ky-trails/>

The Trailink webpage appears to have none of Carrollton's bike or hiking trails. Consider submitting local trails on [Trailink submission page](#)



Single Tracks Bike Trails - <https://www.singletracks.com/bike-trails/fossil-trail/>

An inviting off road bike trail!

Google Maps: Describes a bike route on bike friendly streets from downtown Carrollton to Shelbyville KY along 55 to Hwy 389, to 1360, for 46 miles or 4 ½ hours.

[ORRT's digital guide](#): 16 restaurants, camping sites, boat ramps and interesting sites listed.

[Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Experience](#): There are no sites listed in Carrollton, This is a free service, Carrollton could promote their restaurants, lodgings, camp grounds and historic sites. To register go here: <https://lewisandclark.travel/login/>

Overall Comments & first impressions –

- After visiting the three above web sites, I'm looking forward to coming to Carrollton. However, it is not clear from these web sites how close Carrollton's downtown is to the river or how connected the community is to the river. Is the river considered an asset? IE: is the river in Carrollton's "front yard" or its "back yard"? When considering the outdoor recreation opportunities in Carrollton, it appears that General Butler State Park is the main element. Yet, GBSP is not contiguous to the river.
- I did a quick review of Google Maps and could see how Point Park & 2 Rivers Campground relate to the confluence of the Ohio and Kentucky River. Perhaps the www.visitcarrolltonky.org web site might add a vicinity map to show the proximity of the rivers to downtown and to the community.
- Personal observation based on websites visited (Yelp, Trip Advisor, General Butler state park, Carrollton Tourism site and Carrollton Home site and TwoRivers Campground website).
- After reading the Tourism site and event calendar, I was left feeling that Carrollton had a lot going on. After I tried to dig deeper into some of points of interest, I was left feeling a little less inspired. Though they mention canoeing and Paddling, I couldn't find any locations where they rent Kayaks or canoes. There were two RV parks (one in the Butler state park), but I was unable to locate any tent camping near the river. Biking is mentioned several places, but digging deeper, all I could find was references to the Mountain biking in the Butler State park.
- After reviewing the webpages associated with Carrollton's outdoor recreation, it appears that the community is doing a lot, new campgrounds, a vibrant state park, a beautiful bed and breakfast on the river front but I did not see an emphasis on boating and fishing on the Ohio nor the Kentucky. I did not find mention of the [locks](#) on the Kentucky being open all the way to Frankfort, It would be neat to have more stories about the river and Carrollton's connection to it.
- Enjoyed reading about Carrollton with a focus on the outdoors. One question about bike paths or bike friendly roads, How is Carrollton connected to other cities?
- Other states have no-turn-away bike camping policies at their state park campgrounds. Kentucky does not have a similar policy for the SP's, but It would be great to have General Butler SP and Carrollton's two private campgrounds set the standard and institute a no-turn-away policy. (If campground is full, they will always have a spot for cyclists.) And why stop with cyclists? As part of the ORRT, they should have the same policy for paddlers (or anyone who arrives under manually powered transportation!).

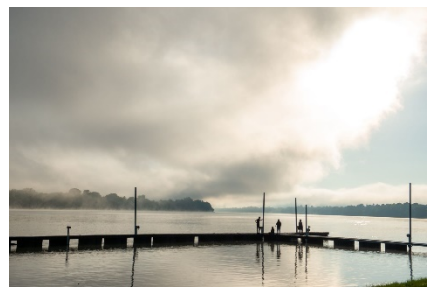
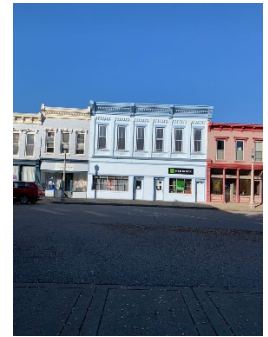
Missed Opportunities

- Location, location, location!
 - Proximity to Cincy and Louisville, right off of I-71! Invite folks to come as an easy getaway for the weekend or just the day.
 - Confluence of two rivers! Focus more on the paddling, boating, water sports opportunities.
 - Suggest some float trips on Ohio or Kentucky Rivers that lead you back to Carrollton.
 - Anyone running a shuttle service? Rentals?
- Add some navigable routes for walking and biking. Can be easily done with ridewithgps.com and/or RideSpot.
 - Self-guided walking tour of downtown
 - historic buildings, Underground Railroad, etc.
 - Bike tour of town and/or routes throughout countryside
 - Austin happy to help, along with BikeWalkKY
 - [Underground Railroad bicycling route](#)
 - Wineries nearby. Consider a driving and biking route to various wineries.
 - [Smith-Berry Winery](#)
 - [River Valley Winery](#)
 - [Little Kentucky River Winery](#)
 - Madison area wineries
 - [The Ridge Winery](#)
 - [Eagle Creek Vineyard](#)





Community Visit Photos





Carrollton/Carroll County River Town Review Visitor Assessment

Several members of RTR Team visited Carrollton and Carroll County on different days to experience the community. Some of the members also paddled the rivers to experience the local recreation resources. The following documents are the summaries of individual RTR Team members visits.

Purpose

The River Town Review Visitor Assessment is a "fresh set of eyes" taking an objective look at your existing conditions and asset inventory as a visitor would see it in relation to the Ohio River Recreation Trail and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Please note: There will also be an assessment done by stakeholders and community members that will assess things from an informed perspective.

River Connections

How easy is it to get near the river?

Very easy to access the water! Ample parking, ramps, and bathrooms.

Is the riverfront welcoming? Clean?

Yes- so beautiful and charming.

Are there signs identifying the town on the riverfront?

Yes. GPS is reliable as well.

Are there scenic views of the river?

There are both views from the "downtown" and on the actual riverfront

Are there public spaces to get near or enjoy the river?

Yes !

Parks?



Benches?



Paths or Trails? I did not see any trails to hike

Are there natural (undeveloped) areas?

Very little. Most is developed.

Is public access to the river ADA accessible?

Actually- I would say the ramp has great driving access, which made it appear as vehicles could easily get down to the water.

Are there any businesses directly on the river?

There are quite a few shops along Main Street.

Any signage about river stewardship?

No signage.

Are there any signs to the river from the town?

Yes.

Any signs from the river to the town?

Not that I saw.

What's the distance from the river to the business district if there is one?

.25 miles

Is it easy for visitors to find and access downtown from the river?

If you are coming downstream- yes it would be easy to find. If you were coming upstream, I'm not sure you would know it was there.

Is there parking?

Yes, lots.

Are there restrooms?

Yes, very clean. Closed this past time we went in November.

Anything you noticed?

Very spacious- but a bit of an odd layout. Campground is over a busy road. Downtown is depressed. There seems to be energy into revamping the waterways access.

Something done right?

I loved how close you could get to unload and load your canoe. I can't speak for the water being up, that might tell a different story. Plenty of space to go park. Overall felt safe.

Something you would change?

Better signage

River Access

The actual access to enter the river or exit the river for recreation.

Is there public access to enter or exit the river by boat?

yes.

Do access points appear welcoming?

yes and in good use.

Are there signs indicating where to access the river?

yes.

Is there access for paddle craft?

yes.

Is there access for motorized/trailer boats? Ramps?

yes.

How many access sites are there, and how far apart are they?

One that I noticed.

Any liveries/rentals of boats?

No, we went to the sporting store and it was all for hunting.

Are there marinas for temporary or long-term docking?

No.

Any signage about water safety?

No.

Are boat launches or water access ADA accessible?

Yes.

Are there signs indicating where the town is?

No.

Are there restrooms?

Yes.

Is there parking?

Yes.

Anything you noticed?

Great little park on the water. Very busy.

Something done right?

Inviting and busy.

Something you would change?

Cleaner. Both times I visited, seems to have trash in the parking lot.

Pedestrian

The walking accessibility of non-motorized transportation, a more intimate connection to the town.

What is the community's Walk Score?

Find out at www.walkscore.com.

48

Are there places to walk in and around town?

Yes, lots!

Sidewalks? Yes.

Good condition? Yes!

Streetscapes or street beautification projects?

Yes- very beautiful.

Are crosswalks well marked?

Yes.

Are there pedestrian signals?

No

As a pedestrian, do you feel safe when walking through town?

Yes- everything slow moving

Are the sidewalks ADA accessible?

Yes.

Are the sidewalks wide enough to accommodate pedestrian traffic?

Yes.

Is there signage telling you where the town or river are located?

Not that I recall.

Is there signage telling you how many minutes to walk to certain locations?

No

Anything you noticed?

Very beautiful but also depressed.

Something done right?

The gift shops we walked in to were welcoming and friendly.

Something you would change?

Not all shops required masks.

Parks

The physical, emotional, and environmental health opportunities of communities.

Are there any parks?

Yes.

Are they welcoming to visitors?

Yes.

Are there sidewalks/paths to provide easy and clear access to the park?

Yes.

Are there signs showing visitors how to get to the park?

N/A park is right there.

Is the park well maintained?

3:4 stars

Does the park appear ADA accessible?

Yes

Any programs or events that are promoted?

No

Anything you noticed?

Cute and sweet little park- had posters for High School Seniors who graduated.

Something done right?

Cute design and layout of park

Something you would change?

Better trash pickup

Other amenities

Gateway

A gateway is any welcoming element that helps visitors know when they have entered your River Town That can include things like signage, landmarks and public art.

Are there gateways to town?

The park has some signage with flags along the main road

Are there welcome signs to the community?

Yes.

Signage

Good signage guides visitors, provides a sense of place, promotes local businesses, helps make connections between towns and their recreational amenities.

Are there directional signs to let you know where to go?

I mainly relied on GPS- so I believe we saw signs for small directions

Are signs easy to read? Are they maintained?

What community amenities do the signs guide visitors to?

Are there signs interpreting the community's unique character?

Are there areas of sign clutter?

Is there sufficient signage for visitors to find businesses and services?

Is there interpretive information? Is there an informational kiosk or bulletin board?

Does it include a business directory/map?

Does it include a regional map?

Parking

Is there sufficient on-street parking? *Yes*

Are off-street parking lots identified? *Yes*

Is there ample parking near the river and for parks or trails? *Yes*

Businesses

Do the businesses connect to outdoor recreation? *One did*

Are there opportunities for business that could be useful for outdoor recreation? *Yes*

Are there stores? *Yes*

Are there restaurants? *Yes*

Are there any outfitters that serve multiple recreation needs? *There is one, but will only be of minimal help to paddlers*

Does the town appear economically healthy? *hard to gauge*

Are there empty storefronts? Blighted buildings? *Yes*

Are businesses' signs clearly visible and well-designed? *Yes*

Is there a tourist information or visitor center? Or a chamber of commerce? *Yes- very friendly*

What kinds of businesses are found downtown? *Mom & Pop shops and Restaurants*

Do businesses clearly indicate when they're open? *Yes*

What's missing? *People! Didn't seem busy at all while walking around downtown. However, boat ramp was very busy.*

Other Amenities

Is there lighting? *Yes.*

Are there garbage cans? *No- we ended up taking trash with us.*

Is there recycling? *No*

Are there other attractions to visit? *Yes !*

Is there public art? *No*

Are there trees in town and along the river?? *Yes*

Is there any public transportation? *No, and no lyft/uber either.*

Did you notice much graffiti? *No. Minimal amount.*

Is there cell reception near river? In town? *Yes- but you will lose it if you head down the Little Kentucky*

Lodging or camping? *Yes- just across the road.*

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

Did you have any conversations with people or businesses in the town, along the river or on trails?

Yes, people were super friendly. All white folks. In the first souvenir shop they were absolutely incredible and super friendly. In the sporting goods shop, no one was wearing masks, and they were telling racist jokes.

Does the town seem friendly? *If you are white.*

Does the town seem clean? *Yes.*

Do you feel safe in the town? *If you were white.*

Does the town embrace it's outdoor recreation opportunities? *Not paddling sports.*

Does the town feel like it has a unique character? *Yes and no.*

Did you enjoy your visit to the town/ *Yes.*

What was the high of your visit? Paddling the Little Kentucky River and eating the pecan caramels.
What was the low of your visit? Feeling unsafe in sporting store

Overall, what's good and what needs to be improved to capture outdoor recreation opportunities?

Think about the story you want to tell from your photos, and then consider what images you have to capture to accomplish that. This list will include any of the people, places, and locations, as well as any of the different angles of each of those.

An example list could be:

- town from the river (500 ft)
- town from the river (100 ft)
- town from the river docked
- recreation activities
- dock from in the town (50 ft away)
- Main Street
- individual shots of townspeople
- group shots of townspeople
- sky, trees, and river businesses

I have now travelled to Carrollton twice. I absolutely adore the Little Kentucky River. There are bald eagles perched on the banks of the confluence, and the Kentucky River is just as amazing. I find the town itself is hit or miss. The hits are incredible hits, meeting Jamie & Dina at the Mom and Pop Souvenir shop. They offered us free coffee and complimentary samples of the brittle. But the misses would really make me consider heading back. The blatant racism in the gun shop/sporting store was enough to leave a stinging impression- especially as it was the last store we stopped into as we headed out of town. Overall I would return for the Little Kentucky, but might be hesitant to head back and spend my energy going to Madison, instead.



Carrollton/Carroll County River Town Review Visitor Assessment Continued

Carrollton, KY Rivertown Review – Two Community Visits

Site Visit - August 17, 2020 - 9 am to 2 pm

Participants: David Wicks, Joe Wolek, Sylvia Holden, Gus Rice, Tracy Barnes, John Nation

Site Visit – December 10, 2020 – 12 noon to 4 pm

Participants: David Wicks, John Nation, Joe Wolek and Dave Wright



We drove from Louisville an hour and ½ as we took historic Hwy 42 instead of I-71 to Point Park in Carrollton KY.

[Point Park](#) is a beautiful well-maintained park with bathrooms recreational fields and a boat ramp at the confluence the Ohio River and the Kentucky River. There are three paddle trips possibilities, staying on the Ohio, padding up the Kentucky to Lock House 1 or paddle downstream to the Little Kentucky River. With the three choices, depending on the wind and the weather, one could always make a choice for a sheltered water way or out on the big water of the Ohio River.

On the other side of Hwy 42 on the banks of the Kentucky is [2 Rivers Campground](#) a relatively new campground with nice bathrooms and full-service sites, there is not great boat access there.

After canoeing we walked around downtown, visited Misty at the [Carroll County Tourism](#) offices, and then walked to the river had a late lunch overlooking the river.

Both trips were in the middle of the week and with COVID, we practiced social distanced and wore masks. But there were almost no one on the streets or stores during both visits.

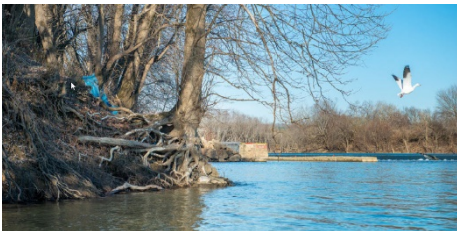
Here is a [short video \(3 min\)](#) of both trips.

Below are several ideas there were discussed during the two adventures:

- Safety and orientation maps/signage. It would be great to have additional signage at the Point Park boat ramp and at Kentucky River Dam # 1.
- We believe that either Point Park or at Kentucky River Dam # 1 would be an ideal place to have a kayak/canoe/bike rental facility.
 - Point Park could provide access to all three venues – Ohio, little Kentucky, and the Kentucky.
 - The Kentucky River Dam # 1 and lock house would allow access to the pool above Dam # 1 as well as the river below the dam.
 - If an access point could be created at 2 Rivers Campground, this might make an interesting option as there are staff there part time?
- The Lock House at Dam # 1 needs to be resolved. It is a shame that the building was not stabilized, the current status of the buildings looks bleak and it appears to almost to be an attractive nuisance. We all decided that it would just be great if the building could be fixed and brought to code. It could be neat air b and b facility or interpretive facility, check out the [C and O lock house facilities](#).



Lock House at Dam # 1



Kentucky River Dam # 1 and General Butler State Park needs significant work. Then the connection with downtown Carrollton is not clear. There were no visible or other directions/interpretive signage.

- It would be great to have a paddle sport put in and take out both in the pool above the Kentucky River Dam # 1 and below the dam so people can access both paddling venues, then make a portage path between the two.
- The trail connecting



maps



- At the Dam I think the signs are quite ugly, they tend to be negative in nature. Could there be an interpretive signage with geographic, ecological, historical and safety signage? It could really use an easy to access paddle sport beach or access point.

signs

On Both Trips we walked around Carrollton and had an interesting time, but the streets were deserted. There seemed to be few bike racks or bike route signage, also there are no lodging facilities that we found overlooking the river. We were surprised by the apparent disconnect between General Butler State Park and Carrollton, little public signage about either place.

With the campground, the potential for bikes and river sports, the parks, the historic downtown, the state park, the potential of a restored lock house, or new park at the Kentucky River Dam # 1 **Carrollton KY is River Destination** for sure.



Carrollton/Carroll County River Town Review Visitor Assessment Continued

Carrollton Site Visit Summary and Critique

10/27/2020

Austin Render

Driving I-71 from Louisville to Carrollton

As soon as I hit the Carroll County sign, the terrain immediately changed. The interstate immediately dropped down into a valley and steep rose up on each side. As a mountain biker my interest was piqued. I've made this drive numerous times before, but this time I was viewing it through different eyes.

"All right. Here we go. Carroll County has some topography," It thought to myself. "There's some potential to have fun here."

Exiting I-70 I viewed the familiar and funny 1970s dirt bike highway sign. Always makes me chuckle. I love that sign. Looks like somebody riding a 1970s trail bike.

Imagine if that was a mountain bike sign (or at least a "share the road" sign). I'd be smiling ear to ear.

Passing under the interstate, as I turned north on Hwy. 227, I drove past the requisite fast food haunts, gas stations, liquor store and convenience stores. Nothing exciting. Nothing enticing me to stop.

A half-mile or so later I noticed a of couple local restaurants. Mi Viejo and El Nopal being the only two that stick out in my mind. "At least there is hope for a decent post-ride chips and salsa, beer and burrito," I thought to myself. "Not disappointed about that."

Visiting General Butler State Park

A short distance later I drove right past the entrance to GBSP — partially out of habit (we never turn there when visiting family) and partially because the signage is somewhat lacking, especially in the gray drab of a rainy October morning. (This critique becomes a theme throughout the day.) After turning around, I enter the park through the main entrance and pull into the first parking lot to see what I can see.

GBSP has a well-maintained, seasonally themed 18-hole miniature golf course. What?! Why isn't that featured anywhere on the tourism websites that I/we reviewed? Admittedly, I'm not a miniature golf fanatic, but this looked like a really nice, fun putt-putt course. Freshly painted. Thematic holes. I was ready to play, but it was not open on a 47 degree rainy Tuesday morning at 8AM. Fair enough. But when I camp here with kiddos, we'll definitely be hitting that up!

No apparent signage regarding hours, rates, season, etc.

GBSP Campground

Next stop was the campground. After chugging coffee on the drive, I needed to inspect the restroom and shower facilities. They were adequate. About what I expected. A little on the dirty side for 8:00 on a Tuesday AM — definitely going to wear sandals in the shower. But it's always good to know I could grab a quick shower after riding and before the drive home.

Using the showers as a non-camper might be frowned upon under current park policy. But perhaps an opportunity for the campground to generate additional revenue by offering the shower facilities for a few bucks per person.

Outside of the shower house I noticed a bulletin board with lots of informational fliers. One of those fliers listed many activities that are available within the park, which I had not seen listed elsewhere on the websites that we reviewed. Noticeably absent from the board was a detailed map of the park and the trails. In fact, while touring the park I never encountered a map of the property, trails or facilities.

Riding the Trails

Eventually I stumbled upon a trailhead while exiting the campground. It wasn't the one that I was looking for, nor was it one that I had seen listed on any websites as being open to mountain biking. It also wasn't easily accessible by a 2wd car, as it was gravel and rutted. Kentucky River Lock 1 Trail, 1 mile.

The trail signage indicated that it was open to mtb's, so I gave it a shot and found a delightful trail that trended downwards towards the lock. It was mostly a double track, former ATV trail that has been scratched into the side of the hill. But with a little trail enhancement and perhaps an eventual extension that makes it a loop or connecting it to another trail, this could be a fun trail.

Surprising to me was the archery range that shared the same trailhead. I do not recall seeing that listed on other sites. It appeared to be well maintained.

Next stop was at the top of "The Hill," as my wife and Carrollton native calls it. I parked at the parking lot visible from the main road, and then decided to explore the golf cart path that winds its way around the former golf course. Wow! Lot's of potential here! The steep terrain and open space would lend itself nicely to a downhill/flow trail. The existing path could be utilized, perhaps enhanced in a few places, rerouted in a few others. At the very least it should be maintained as a walking path. I envision it as a paved exit path to a dirt downhill mountain bike course.

The Fossil Trail was a surprisingly pleasant ride. It exceeded my expectations. Overall I'd rate it an advanced/immediate (black square with black diamond) due to the hand-cut trail that is somewhat technical in several places, with rocks, roots and off-camber sections. The signage could be improved, as at times I felt a bit turned around and unsure as to whether I was heading the right direction.

Lots of natural features to utilize and enhance: rock gardens, outcroppings, log hops, etc.

There is A LOT of potential in this park to draw folks from Lou/Cincy. Imagine somewhere between Nashville, IN (Brown Co. SP) and O'Bannon Woods SP. GBSP has more potential than O'Bannon Woods SP.

Visiting Downtown Carrollton

After riding for a couple of hours I found myself quite hungry, so I decided to head downtown.

When exiting the park I spotted one sign that pointed towards downtown. Here exists a nice opportunity to create a route from the park to downtown that is conducive to biking or walking.

A good cup of coffee and a baked good, breakfast sandwich or burrito would've hit the spot — especially if enjoyed with a view of the river. Unfortunately, such a location does not appear to exist. When I asked a local, “Where can I get a good cup of coffee,” she said, “Casey’s General Store maybe,” which is a gas station. When pressed further she responded with a laugh, “It’s Carrollton.”

This is not the first time I’ve heard a similar retort, and this mindset might be a large local hurdle to progress of this project.

While perusing downtown, I stumbled upon a sign at 5th & Main pointing north towards the River Walk. After that, the signage was pretty minimal and I found myself in a large empty parking lot next to the river. A nice walking path spanned the waterfront, but no signage existed regarding the path. I was later informed that the official trailhead was one block west. Unfortunately I did not get the opportunity to visit.

In closing, the Carrollton tourism slogan is, “Where rivers and people meet.” This concept should underscore the downtown waterfront, especially along Main Street, and flow into all other recreational opportunities throughout the community. There exists a tremendous amount of short-term and long-term potential to capitalize on the **three** rivers that converge in Carrollton, along with the wonderfully rugged terrain, while also utilizing and enhancing the existing infrastructure. Carrollton is perfectly positioned to become a place where rivers and people meet to have incredible outdoor experiences.

Short-Term Goals — Low Hanging Fruit

Carrollton

- I. Create [RideSpot bike routes](#) to make cycling throughout Carroll County more accessible
 - A. Work with Austin Render and BikeWalkKY on this
 - B. Create routes from downtown/riverfront to regional wineries, distilleries and other attractions
 1. Smith-Berry Winery, New Castle, KY, 20 miles
 2. Neeley Family Distillery, Sparta, KY, 20 miles
 3. New Riff Distillery, New Port, KY, 54 miles
 4. Rabbit Hole Distillery, Campbellsburg, KY, 13 miles
 5. Kentucky Artisan Distillery, Crestwood, KY, 38 miles
 6. Six Mile Creek Distillery, Pleasureville, KY, 36 miles
 7. Elk Creek Vineyards, Owenton, KY, 35 miles
 8. numerous other wineries near Madison, IN, 15-18 miles
- II. Improved signage for riverwalk
 - A. Signage from highway 42
 - B. Signage along various access points
- III. Create signed bike/pedestrian route from GBSP to riverfront/Main Street
 - A. avoid busy roads, highways and intersections
- IV. Become a KY Trail Town (brown highway sign)
- V. Historic Downtown (brown highway sign)
- VI. Signage in campgrounds welcoming cyclists and paddlers
- VII. No-Turn Away policy in campground for cyclists and paddlers who arrive under their own power (no vehicle)
- VIII. Embrace the Underground Railroad Bicycle Route that passes through town.
 - A. Relevant signage of historical sites along the route pertaining to the UGRR in Carrollton

General Butler State Park

- IX. Improved signage throughout park
 - A. Maps of property and trails
 - B. Make it easy for first time visitors who know nothing about the park or its resources
 - C. As a first time visitor, I felt a little "lost" in the park. I wandered around until I ran into the trailheads.
- X. Repurpose former golf cart path into walking/bike path
 - A. No need to mow entire golf course. It's now a native hilltop meadow that attracts songbirds and pollinators!
 - 1. mow 2 ft. buffer on each side of path. See Parklands.
 - 2. use pea gravel for unpaved stretches
 - 3. consider switchbacks to reroute the very steep sections
 - 4. possibly work with state to plant pollinator attractors and wild flowers
 - B. Instead of removing the hole/par signs, leave them as a reminder of what it was and how it is now being utilized
 - a) add sign/kiosk explaining the project and how many folks are now able to use the former golf course
 - C. Add walking trail to TrailForks and other hiking apps Improved signage for trails
- XI. Work with KY Mountain Bike Association to improve existing trails in GBSP
- XII. Add trails to MTBProject app
- XIII. Add hiking trails to Trail forks app

Long-Term Goals

- I. Turn GBSP/Carrollton into a cycling destination for mountain biking, road biking and even cyclocross!
 - A. Golf course could be turned into a mountain biking park
 - 1. Dream big! Bring back the ski lift as a bike lift
 - 2. Carrollton would be the only lift-accessible mountain bike park within 4-5 hours of Louisville/Cincy
 - B. Golf course could be turned into cyclocross course similar to what has been created in Louisville
 - 1. brings racing, practice riding, cycling events and tourism to Carrollton
 - C. Paved bike/pedestrian path connecting GBSP to downtown
 - 1. from lodge to town
 - 2. from town following KY River upstream to Lock No. 1, where it would then enter GBSP
 - D. Work with KY Mountain Bike Association to improve and create trails in GBSP
- II. Resurrect 2010 Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan
- III. Get Carroll Co. schools involved with KY chapter of National Interscholastic Cycling Association (mountain biking as a high school sport!)
 - A. This would create an additional incentive to improve/create trail infrastructure, while creating a true local connection to the trails.
 - B. Possible opportunity to seek grants and other outside funding for trail enhancement
- IV. Attract distillery and/or brewery to downtown Main Street. There must be a connection to Carrollton as a river town and the bourbon industry. This could inject an incredible amount of tourism to Carrollton.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Location, location, location
 - Less than 45 mins drive time from two cities of +1M people

- Located short distance off of major interstate
- Terrain
 - hilly, rugged terrain is perfect for hiking and mountain biking, especially with vistas of surrounding landscape and river
- Available space within the park
 - There appears to be a lot of GBSP that is underutilized and could be developed for recreational opportunities
 - e.g., Former golf course
- Nearby amenities
 - Campground, hotels/motels, restaurants, etc.

Weaknesses

- The “It’s Carrollton” mindset. Limits the vision of potential growth.
- Limited tourism resources
 - 1 woman office, can’t do it all on her own.
 - Budget?
- Planning and implementation during COVID era
- Lack of a “local connection” to the trails, especially mountain biking

Opportunities

- Location and terrain lends itself to becoming an outdoor playground.
- Rivertown Review!
- Some infrastructure already exists. Just needs more promotion and a little enhancement.

Threats

- COVID era challenges. Especially to downtown.

Unknowns

- Relationship of town and State Park
- Local political and social issues
- Financial feasibility for capital investment in infrastructure



Community Meeting Agenda

December 17, 2020

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 2:00 – 2:10 | Welcome |
| 2:10 – 2:20 | Big Picture & Online Tools
Ohio River/ORRT
National Park Service Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program |
| 2:20 – 2:30 | On-Line Tools
Digital Guide
Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Geotourism Site |
| 2:30 - 3:00 | Tell us about your town (SWOT Analysis)
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats |
| 3:00 – 3:20 | River Town Review Observations
Desk Top Reviews
Visitor Assessments |
| 3:20 – 3:30 | SWOT Poll |
| 3:30 – 3:40 | Community Brainstorming |
| 3:40 – 4:00 | Next Steps, Wrap up, & Questions |



Participants

Community Participants

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SWOT Analysis

Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities & Threats

These are the results of the River Town Review conducted via Zoom for Carrollton, KY, on December 17, 2020. Participants listed the entries in the Zoom Chat box, we converted the entries to a Zoom Poll, and 16 participants ranked the entries. The entries are listed below according to the polling results.

Strengths

- 12 Confluence of and access to 2 major rivers - Kentucky and Ohio Rivers
- 10 Gen Butler State Park
- 9 Location: halfway btw Louisville & Cincinnati, Easy access to 71
- 9 US 42 Scenic Byway
- 8 Outdoor recreation - Birding, Camping, Fishing
- 8 Lots of people want to promote it
- 7 Historic charm, southern hospitality
- 2 Point Park: one of the best on Ohio River
- 1 Nearby amenities, access to bathrooms, food and lodging
- 1 Blending of natural and built environment
- Authentic KY river town hilly rugged terrain
- New boat dock at Point Park

Weaknesses

- 8 Need more restaurants close to downtown & river
- 7 Trail connectivity and with General Butler State Park (Better signage)
- 7 The "It's Carrollton" mindset of some locals that limits potential growth and connection to natural assets
- 7 Lack of a local connection to the trails, especially hiking, trail running and mountain biking
- 6 Need a unified marketing strategy and collaborative community initiatives
- 5 Brewery - I wish there was a place to get a cold beer as soon as I got off the river!
- 5 We need to join efforts and work together more Community-wide vision of that we want to be
- 4 More retail & restaurants in historic downtown
- 4 Pedestrian and bike linkages to State Park?
- 4 No boat or bike rental facility
- 4 Bike trails are not connected to Louisville - highway 42 is not a bike friendly road
- 4 Absentee property owners
- 4 Designated hike & bike trails
- 4 Full-fledged marina with fuel station

- 2 Lock houses - need restoration and need portage route
- 1 Is the campground on the KY River open to tent campers?
- 1 More non-auto access and safety
- 0 Historic buildings need some love
- 0 Need to involve schools

Opportunities

- 13 recruiting good restaurants along the river
 - 7 Available space within General Butler State Park
 - 7 Create outdoor adventures linked to business district.
 - 7 Combine a whitewater park and a mountain bike gravity park for outdoor adventure destination
 - 6 Recreational vendors to assist in kayaking/canoeing
 - 5 Full-fledged marina
 - 5 Opportunity and buildings are available for downtown to grow into booming tourism attraction
 - 4 A mountain bike racing team in schools to create more local ownership and connection to trails
 - 4 Work with KY transportation to get bike trail registered
 - 3 Promote small businesses and non-chain restaurants via tourism web sites and social media
 - 2 List trails and existing assets on apps such as TrailForks, AllTrails and MTBProject.
 - 1 Lock 1 boat launch
 - 1 a program at the college that focuses on natural resources and outdoor recreation.
- NOT LISTED IN THE ZOOM POLL:
- more restaurants in the downtown
 - To get more folks to know about The Little Kentucky!
 - the locks on the Kentucky river all the way up to Frankfort
 - Bring a brewery/distillery to historic downtown Carrollton.
 - Establishment of recreational marketing initiative to draw visitors from surrounding urban areas
 - improve existing trails
 - coffee shop, ice cream shop, bakery/deli
 - the terrain at general butler is ideal to have bike optimized trails. riders from Louisville and Cincinnati would come and enjoy. mountain biking is becoming very popular and starting to be a high school sport
 - vacant downtown buildings are perfect location for brewery , restaurants
 - the river is getting cleaner, is a public swimming beach in the near future
 - rare to have great mountain bike opportunities so close to a river town and place to get a beer after. opportunities for the entire family.
 - collaborative efforts among community organizations
 - Lewis and Clark exploring the Kentucky?
 - outdoor entertainment venues at point park

Threats

- 11 Not enough federal or state support for tourism development
- 9 Failure to promote community offerings and strengths of the area via technology and marketing
- 6 Riverbank erosion
- 5 Security for canoes and bikes while camping
- 5 Water pollution, the water is getting cleaner overall, but the toxic algae in the fall is a threat
- 5 Lack of overnight marina facilities
- 3 Invasive species - impact on fishing
- 3 Is depopulation an issue? is the town growing or shrinking?
- 1 Accidents at the lock houses as they are not secure

SWOT Polling Results

1. STRENGTHS: Select up to 3 (Multiple choice)

Location: halfway btw Louisville & Cincinnati, Easy access to 71	(9/16) 56%
Confluence of and access to 2 major rivers - Little Kentucky and Ohio	(12/16) 75%
Gen Butler State Park	(10/16) 63%
Nearby amenities, access to bathrooms, food and lodging	(1/16) 6%
Historic charm, southern hospitality	(7/16) 44%
Blending of natural and built environment	(1/16) 6%
Outdoor recreation - Birding, Camping, Fishing	(8/16) 50%
Authentic KY river town Hilly Rugged terrain	(0/16) 0%
New boat dock at Point Park	(0/16) 0%
Point Park: one of the best on Ohio River	(2/16) 13%

2. STRENGTHS: Select up to 3 (6 total for questions 1 & 2) (Multiple choice)

US 42 scenic byway	(9/16) 56%
Lots of people want to promote it	(8/16) 50%

3. WEAKNESSES: Select up to 3 (Multiple choice)

Lock houses - need restoration and need portage route	(2/16) 13%
Need more restaurants close to downtown & river	(8/16) 50%
Trail connectivity and with General Butler State Park (Better signage)	(7/16) 44%
more retail & restaurants in historic downtown	(4/16) 25%
historic buildings need some love	(0/16) 0%
Pedestrian and bike linkages to State Park?	(4/16) 25%
Brewery! I wish there was a place to get a cold beer as soon as I got off the river, maybe there was - I just missed it!	(5/16) 31%
no boat or bike rental facility	(4/16) 25%
Is the campground on the KY River open to tent campers?	(1/16) 6%
The "It's Carrollton" mindset that some locals might hold. Limits the vision of potential growth and demonstrates a lack of connection to the local natural resource assets	(7/16) 44%

4. WEAKNESSES: Select up to 3 (6 total for questions 3 & 4) (Multiple choice)

bike trails are not connected to Louisville - highway 42 is not a bike friendly road	(4/16) 25%
We need to join efforts and work together more Community-wide vision of that want to be	(5/16) 31%
absentee property owners	(4/16) 25%
Need in involve schools	(0/16) 0%
Lack of a local connection to the trails, especially hiking, trail running and mountain biking	(7/16) 44%
Need a unified marketing strategy and collaborative community initiatives	(6/16) 38%
More non-auto access and safety.	(1/16) 6%
designated hike & bike trails	(4/16) 25%
Full fledged marina with fuel station	(4/16) 25%

5. OPPORTUNITIES: Select up to 3 (Multiple choice)

full-fledged marina	(5/16) 31%
Available space within General Butler State Park	(7/16) 44%
We do have the opportunity and buildings available to grow the downtown area into a booming tourism attraction	(5/16) 31%
Get the National Interscholastic Cycling Association (mountain bike racing team) in Carroll County schools to create more local ownership and connection to trails.	(4/16) 25%
Promote small businesses and restaurants (Non National Chains) on tourism web sites and social media platforms	(3/16) 19%
Get the word out about existing assets. List trails on apps such as TrailForks, AllTrails and MTBProject.	(2/16) 13%
a program at the college that focuses on natural resources and outdoor recreation.	(1/16) 6%
work with KY transportation to get bike trail registered	(4/16) 25%
Create outdoor adventures linked to business district.	(7/16) 44%
Recreational vendors to assist in kayaking/canoeing	(6/16) 38%

6. OPPORTUNITIES: Select up to 3 (6 total for questions 5 & 6) (Multiple choice)

combining a white water park and a mountain bike gravity park, Carrollton could be an adventure destination	(9/16) 56%
recruiting good restaurants along the river	(12/16) 81%
lock 1 boat launch	(5/16) 31%

7. THREATS: Select up to 3 (Multiple choice)

Security for canoes and bikes while camping	(5/16) 31%
Water pollution, (toxic algae)	(5/16) 31%
Marketing: Failure to utilize technology and marketing initiatives to promote community offerings and market to strengths of the area	(9/16) 56%
not enough federal or state support for tourism development	(11/16) 69%
invasive species - impact on fishing	(3/16) 19%
lack of overnight marina facilities	(5/16) 31%
accidents at the lock houses as they are not secure	(1/16) 6%
is depopulation an issue? is the town growing or shrinking?	(3/16) 19%
riverbank erosion	(6/16) 38%



Community Brainstorming Ideas

The following list of brainstorming ideas were compiled from the chat box input from the December 17, 2020 meeting participants. This list of ideas has been grouped into mutual categories and similar ideas have been combined.

Riverfront

- Kentucky River Lock 1 could be, should be a node for recreation bikes, trails, and boats. - remove the lock houses, develop interpretation, a picnic pavilion, good connection to the state park, boat launch, boat rental for both pools
- Make a boat ramp for the campground
- Off-road triathlon: Trail run, mountain bike, paddle.
- Paddle clean-up in 2021, especially at Lock 1
- Take-out and portage: connect with the park
- Two partners-The Kentucky Riverkeeper and Kentucky River Authority.
- Adventure race: paddle the KY River to Frankfort, bike from Frankfort to Carrollton, trail run at GBSP. Could be teams/ build enthusiasm for the KR 255, it is co-sponsored River Authority relay.
- We always participate in KR255

Bicycling

- It is hard to describe the popularity of downhill gravity flow trails right now. People of all ages are enjoying dirt roller coasters and G
- General Butler State Park has potential to use the terrain that might have been a ski resort for a great trail system. Kentucky Mountain Bike Association could team up with the other trail organizations and leverage grants and volunteers. The locals will love it and folks will travel from all over.
- Repurpose former golf cart path into walking/bike path
- No need to mow entire golf course. It's now a native hilltop meadow that attracts songbirds and pollinators!
- mow 2 ft. buffer on each side of path. See Parklands.
- use pea gravel for unpaved stretches
- consider switchbacks to reroute the very steep sections
- possibly work with state to plant pollinator attractors and wildflowers
- Instead of removing the hole/par signs, leave them as a reminder of what it was and how it is now being utilized
- add sign/kiosk explaining the project and how many folks are now able to use the former golf course
- Add walking trail to TrailForks and other hiking apps Improved signage for trails
- Dream big! (Bear with me here) After creating network of mountain biking trails, bring back the ski lift and become the only lift-accessed bike trail system within a 5-hour drive. Folks would go nuts for this! (Think of the cities/communities within a 4-5-hour drive)



Brainstorming Ideas - Continued

Business Area

- I think the key to adventure tourism is to have a combination of water sports, mountain biking and road biking. the combination will help a brewery be successful

Wayfinding/ Signage

- Get two Lewis and Clark auto trail signs for Hwy 42
- Easy win: Improved signage throughout park. Maps of property and trails. Make it easy for first time visitors who know nothing about the park or its resources. As a first-time visitor, I felt a little “lost” in the park. I wandered around until I ran into the trailheads.
- I think creating a map of paddling and bike opportunities
- Easy win: Become a KY Trail Town (brown highway sign)
- Signage in campgrounds welcoming cyclists and paddlers

Community Events

- Think about a race from Madison to Carrollton
- Get Carroll Co. schools involved with KY chapter of National Interscholastic Cycling Association (mountain biking as a high school sport!) This would create an additional incentive to improve/create trail infrastructure, while creating a true local connection to the trails. Possible opportunity to seek grants and other outside funding for trail enhancement

Marketing & Outreach

- Online marketing - Lewis and Clark trail, apps, others
- Utilize RideSpot to promote bike routes and points of interest in Carrollton. <https://ridespot.org>
- Re: Fed support for tourism: don't forget the FREE Website LewisandClark.travel

Parks & Recreation

- Resurrect and reconsider the 2010 Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan (Forgive me if this is still an active project) Make sure there is walk/bike access and connectivity from GBSP to downtown/ riverfront. <https://www.carrolltonky.net/bicycle--pedestrian-travel-master-plans>
- No-Turn Away policy in campground for cyclists and paddlers who arrive under their own power (no vehicle)

Other Ideas

- It is truly thrilling to have elected officials on this call. Planning requires their action. Remember, be results focused.



Community Brainstorming Ideas

Follow-Up Notes & Priorities Results

The following tables are identifying the short- and long-term ideas to pursue from the Homework assignment for the Carrollton/Carroll County RTR workshop participants. Each of the responding workshop participants identified their own short- and long-term priorities and ranked them as 1, 2 or 3. Some of the ideas submitted have been combined. These lists do include some of the same ideas generated during the Brainstorming Exercise of the workshop. Please refer to the Carrollton SWOT and Brainstorming document to see the complete list of ideas generated during the workshop.

Community Brainstorming Ideas

Short Term Ideas to Pursue	Identified Priority
Convert General Butler State Park golf course into a bike park in spring/summer 2021	1
Pop-up beer pub (demonstrates potential for a new biz)	1
More restaurants, a brewery in downtown. Consider a farmer's market, food carts and vendors at the park every Saturday morning, this would be a great start! Expand as the demand grows. Try to have an event every month!!	1
Online marketing! We have to let people know what we offer.	1
Better signage at General Butler State Park (In the works)	1
List local trails on outdoor apps (Trail Forks, MtbProject, AllTrails)	2
Add trails to apps and cross promote with city	2
Connect pedestrian & bike linkages to General Butler State Park	2
Designated hike and bike trails in the area	2
Improved signage throughout the community and the parks (where needed).	2
Repurposing former golf course at GBSRP (in progress with KYDFW)	2
Overnight campsites and possible tiny house lodgings. Restrooms!	2
Develop preferred cycling routes beginning and ending downtown, and share them on RideSpot.org	3
Work with park, city, and volunteers for immediate and incremental steps of improvements for trails and signage.	3
Promote Little Kentucky River more.	3
Campgrounds market to bikers and boaters.	3
Promote the Kentucky River Watertrail- it is no cost but will help get the word out on many other websites, up and down the river as well as Kentucky Riverkeeper , Kentucky River Authority and Tourism.	3
Explore additional outdoor recreation opportunities in the area	3

Community Brainstorming Ideas

River Town Review - Carrollton/Carroll County, Kentucky

Long Term Ideas to Pursue	Identified Priority
Develop mtn bike trails and bike park at General Butler State Park that will draw folks from 3-4 hours away	1
Trail improvements and connections throughout the region	1
Full-service marina with gas & paddleboat rental. Secure docks and security for the boats, kayaks, and canoes while visitors shop and eat! Make Carrollton a destination as well as a launch site to both rivers.	1
Combine whitewater park and Mt. Bike gravity park	1
We need to join efforts and work together more. We need a community-wide vision of what we want to accomplish.	1
Brewery/distillery on Main Street	2
We need restaurants and retail downtown to make Carrollton a destination for people to stop at whether they are on the river, biking or driving.	2
Outdoor Amphitheater at General Butler State Park	2
Partner with the Kentucky Riverkeeper and the Kentucky River authority on portages and small parks at lock and dams 1&2. Connect with the park!!! Think the whole river!	2
Develop a great, outdoor, active event or race that showcases Carrollton's outdoor resources, local food, and craft beer/ whiskey.	3
Add dynamic outdoor adventure infrastructure	3
Kentucky River Lock #1 improvements; remove houses, add picnic area & canoe launch	3
College program- Natural resources and outdoor recreation	3
Utilize and improve Butler park. Be innovative and creative. It is such an asset!	3
Better collaborative marketing between General Butler State Park /community	3
Support annual all river race and or paddling trips. The headwaters paddlers want to come to Carrollton! Let's invite them!	3

Additional Ideas & Comments
Build a disc golf course at General Butler State Park worthy of traveling at least 2 hours to play and host tournaments.
Research and benchmark to peer communities Carrollton wants to emulate. Rebrand, strategic, and implementation plans. Leverage social media participation with # of active recreation and enjoying Carrollton. Focus biz recruitment on businesses that support an active outdoor destination. Can volunteers work on trail development and connections? Launch outdoor adventure festival with bike & boat rentals, outfitters, education, music, food, drink, etc. Other pop-up businesses and events to test ideas and needs.
There are so many ways to enjoy the beauty of Carrollton. After living in the Rockies, on the beach, and beside the desert, I have returned to my hometown of Carrollton because of our year-round recreation revolving around our waterways.
I have already started to work on collaborating with others. I am a huge advocate of that. Chamber, Butler Park and Tourism will be hosting an event in June that I think your group would enjoy. It will be a business showcase/field day with outdoor competitions throughout the park. I'm not sure anything like this has been done before here, and who knows the outcome. However, my point is, work together and don't be afraid to try something new.
I missed a few of the calls but there are so many great ideas being floated! Most of them do not require loads of cash but ambassadors. I suggest you go for the low hanging fruit . Make as much happen as soon as you can while pursuing the long-term goals. I see so much progress since we started some of these discussions 10 years ago!!!

Community Brainstorming Ideas

River Town Review - Carrollton/Carroll County, Kentucky

Potential Other Valuable Partners

People or Bike's RideSpot feature. And/or Ridewithgps.com's Experiences feature. Both of these platforms allow you to create searchable, sharable, downloadable GPS routes, while including local features, amenities, and information.

Recreation and environmental clubs and organizations. Hospital and health organizations. Bike, outdoor gear. boat, fishing related retailers.

Library
Arts Board
Health & Safety Partnership
Historical Society

I personally do not drink energy drinks. However, students love the drinks by Monster, Red Bull, etc. These companies are active in outdoor recreation and their involvement could be influential on our youth.

Someone from the school if you are wanting to get them involved. (Danny Osborne - superintendent)

Kacie Durman with Three Rivers Health

Kentucky Riverkeeper- We are working hard on connecting all of the communities up and down the river. I am also a Rotary member and I am working to reach out to other clubs along the river to help build community and commitment to the all of the 14 lock and dams (portages and parks) on the river.



Homework & Comments

Post Carrollton/Carroll County River Town Review meeting on October 14th, an action item homework assignment was sent home with the participants encouraging them to provide feedback on the following prompts:

- We invite YOU to look at your town with fresh eyes!
- Note other ideas or opportunities that occur to you!
- What other contacts could be valuable partners?
- Visit the three websites
- Describe a perfect day for a visitor in your community

A Perfect Day

Describe a perfect day for a visitor in your community

Waking up in a rustic, comfy cabin at General Butler State Park, my wife and I hitch up our bike trailer and load the toddler for a cruise through the park, with breakfast at the lodge or at a Main Street dinner. Next, we're off to hit the mtn bike trails for a day smile for miles, taking turns riding the family-friendly flow trails and exploring the park on foot. In the evening we make our way to the waterfront for a sunset paddle before grabbing a bite to eat at a great local eatery (with local craft beer!) with views of the river. Next, we bike back to the park on the stellar bike path that connects downtown to the park, and we pass out in our cozy cabin before doing it all again tomorrow.

Meet friends for coffee before heading off to kayak or hike. Return for lunch, shop, grab a drink. Take a long walk or short hike. Have dinner and drinks under the setting sun.

The visitor just docked at our marina to gather supplies and to get off the boat for a little bit. He/she was thrilled to be able to just ride his/her bike to access restaurants, shops, and parks. While exploring the area, local history left an impression on the visitor. As he/she bent down to skip a rock out of happiness, an arrowhead lay on top of the sand. Immediately the visitor "took a few steps back in time!" The visitor is sure to return.

I am not a boater or biker, but I do like to hike and love historic towns. A perfect day for someone such as myself, would be to walk the downtown historic district and shop. Grab lunch at a restaurant downtown. Walk the river walk (I would even be open to renting a canoe or kayak). Visit a museum of Carrollton if we had one. Visit the Butler Turpin House. Hike through the park and/or rent a paddle boat. Clean up at one of the cottages. Have a nice dinner at the lodge restaurant. Have a drink in the lounge. Retreat to my cottage and set by the fire outside. Go to bed because I am exhausted from my awesome day in Carrollton.

Describe a perfect day for a visitor in your community - Continued

Catch sunrise while enjoying breakfast at either Two Rivers Restaurant or Welch's on the River. Get outdoors - hike, bike, paddle, fish. Take in some of our rich history - tour the Butler Turpin House and wander downtown. Find yourself at sunset at the Overlook at Butler Park and enjoy a beer or cocktail at Port Williams Lounge. S'mores around a campfire and a peaceful night sleep. Repeat!

Paddle down the river, stay at the park or B&B, go to the point park, and get provisions, treats and beverages. Attend a local music performance and or dance have a great campfire, safe place for my kayak and a comfortable place to sleep, wake up to a great breakfast and start exploring.

Begin the day, bright & early at Welch's Restaurant on Main Street. Enjoy a fresh, hot cup of coffee while looking at the beautiful Ohio River.

Travel 3 blocks to Point Park and unload canoes/kayaks to go explore three rivers: Little Kentucky, Kentucky, and Ohio, stopping to take photos of bald eagles and other wildlife along the way.

Paddle back to Point Park. Load the boats and make your way to Cooper's Family Restaurant for the best fried chicken in town (you deserve it, you just paddled miles). Visit the Butler Turpin House, the 1859 Greek Revival home of Phillip Turpin, Mary Eleanor Butler (General William Butler's niece) and Thomas Butler (Mary Eleanor's father). Learn the fascinating history of this military family, including William O. Butler for who the park is named. Make your way to another historical home, the Masterson House located on Hwy 42. Built in the 1790's, by Richard and Sarah Shore Masterson, believed to be the oldest two-story brick house still in existence between Pittsburgh, PA and Cairo, IL.

Jump back in your car and travel back to downtown Carrollton. Visit our unique shops to pick up the perfect handmade souvenir, maybe a hand carved wooden bowl from a local farmer's land, a metal piece of art designed and made by a local merchant or a Kentucky Proud item.

Sunset is the perfect time to stroll on the River Walk and enjoy sights on the Ohio and Kentucky Rivers. Rest for a minute at Point Park on one of the benches or relax on the swing with a view of the river. (We're not joking about the beautiful sunset view here!).

It's time for a late dinner! Travel to Mi Viejo, a local Mexican Restaurant and town favorite. Enjoy a skinny margarita or cold beer on draft and a delicious dinner. The steaks are great if you're not a fan of tacos or burritos. Dine outside on the patio or inside the dining room.

Finally to end the day, relax by a soothing campfire at one of GBSRP Cottages. They have all the luxuries of home and privacy from your neighbors. Tell stories of the wildlife you saw this morning, the history you learned this afternoon, the unique treasures you found downtown, the people you met throughout the day that were so happy to share Carrollton with you, and make plans to come back again to see us soon.



Contacts

Organization Websites

Ohio River Recreation Trail	https://www.ohioriverrecreationtrail.org/
ORRT Digital Guide	https://www.ohioriverrecreationtrail.org/digital-guide
Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Experience	https://lewisandclark.travel/
NPS Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance	https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm

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Derek Schimmel	Lewis & Clark Geotourism	d.schimmel@solimarinternational.com





Ohio River Recreation Trail – River Town Review

Fresh Eyes on Enhancing Tourism & Outdoor Recreation in your Community

List of Resources for Communities

As communities explore new opportunities to enhance outdoor recreation and tourism, the following list provides assessment tools, recommendations, guidelines and funding sources. This list of resources is the beginning of a journey to seek more information and it is not to be considered an all-encompassing list.

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I. Outdoor Recreation & Adventure Tourism

Trail Town & River Town Resources

Trail Town Program: [Certified Network - Trail Town Program \(trailtowns.org\)](http://trailtowns.org) and [Trail Town Guide](#)

Outdoor Towns: [Toolkit](#) and [Resource Library \(townsandtrailstoolkit.com\)](http://townsandtrailstoolkit.com)

[Trail Towns - Northern Forest Canoe Trail](#)

[Trail Towns - Huron River National Water Trail \(huronriverwatertrail.org\)](http://huronriverwatertrail.org)

[Kitsap Peninsula Water Trails Paddle Routes - Kitsap Peninsula Water Trails](#)

[Pennsylvania Environmental Council’s River Town Program](#)

[Monongahela River Towns](#)

[River Towns Program | Susquehanna Greenway](#)

[RiverTowns Program — Tennessee RiverLine \(tnriverline.org\)](http://tnriverline.org)

[Resources - River Network](#)



Trail Town & River Town Resources ... continued

Kentucky Trail Towns Guide & Workbook

[Kentucky Trail Towns v1.0 \(kentuckytourism.com\)](#)

[Kentucky Trail Town Program Workbook \(kentuckytourism.com\)](#)

Destinations International – Variables Workbook

[DNEXT Online Diagnostic Tool Workbook 2017](#)

Community Walkability & Bikeability

Walkability Score [Get Your Walk Score](#)

Bikeability Score [Bike Score Methodology \(walkscore.com\)](#)

Walkability & Bikeability Assessment Tools

National Walkability Index [Smart Location Mapping | Smart Growth | US EPA](#)

[Healthy Communities: The Walkability Assessment Tool \(udel.edu\)](#)

[Walkability Assessment Tool | Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware \(completecommunitiesde.org\)](#)

Bikeability Checklist [bikechecklist1.ai \(epa.gov\)](#)

Departments of Transportation Bike & Pedestrian Planning

Indiana [INDOT: Bicycle & Pedestrian Program](#)

Kentucky [Bike Walk Kentucky | KYTC](#)

Ohio [Bike & Walk | Ohio Department of Transportation](#)

Public Bike Repair Station (Examples)

[Public Bike Repair Stand | Bicycle Repair Station | CycleSafe](#)

[Bike Repair Stations and Bike Pump Stations | Duo-Gard \(duo-gard.com\)](#)

Bike Rack (Examples)

[Bollard Post Bike Racks - Park Warehouse](#)

[Racer Bike Rack - The Park Catalog](#)

Mountain Biking

International Mountain Bicycling Association [Trail Accelerator Grants | IMBA](#)

Bicycle Touring

US Bike Route System [U.S. Bicycle Route System \(USBRS\) | Adventure Cycling Association](#)

Indiana Bicycle Suitability Map [LRP BicycleSuitabilityMap.pdf](#)

Kentucky Bike Routes [On Road Bicycle Routes and Events | KYTC](#)

Ohio US Bike Routes [Create A Map | ODOT TIMS \(state.oh.us\)](#)

Long Distance Cycling Routes: Economic Impacts, Best Practices, and Marketing Strategies [\(usu.edu\)](#)

Warm Showers [Home | Warmshowers.org](#)

Heat Maps (Data Analysis Tools for Outdoor Recreation)

STRAVA Heat Maps [Strava Global Heatmap](#)

Map Line Heat Maps [Create a Heat Map in Seconds | Mapline Mapping Solutions](#)



Padding

Ohio River Recreation Trail [Ohio River Digital Guide](#)
National Park Service [River Access Planning Guide](#)
[Images of Public Kayak Lockers](#)

River Safety

Ohio River Recreation Trail [Safety Tips — Ohio River Recreation Trail](#)
Ohio River Recreation Trail [On-Water Safety Guide](#)
US Coast Guard Float Plan Checklist [USCG Float Plan \(cgaux.org\)](#)
USGS Real time water data [USGS Current Water Data for the Nation](#) (waterdata.usgs.gov)
USGS Real time water data mobile version [USGS Mobile Water Data](#) (m.waterdata.usgs.gov)
Weekly Ohio River Water Quality Report [orsanco.org/weekly-ohio-river-water-quality-report](#)
NOAA Live River Forecast Center [NOAA - National Weather Service - Water](#)

II. Sustainable Tourism

USDA: Enhancing Sustainable Communities with Green Infrastructure
[Recreation Economy at USDA Economic Development Resources for Rural Communities](#)
[Rural Placemaking Innovation Challenge | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](#)

The Outdoor Recreation Roundtable Rural Economic Development Toolkit
[Rural Development Toolkit – Outdoor Recreation Roundtable](#)

Solimar International [Solimar International | Tourism Marketing & Sustainable Tourism Consulting - Home](#)

Global Sustainable Tourism Council [Criteria, Standards, Certifications \(gstcouncil.org\)](#)

Adventure Travel Trade Association (This may be a great resource for river-based product development)
[Global Network of Adventure Travel Tour Operators, Destinations, and Industry Partners](#)

United Nations World Travel Organization [Sustainable development | UNWTO](#)

The Travel Foundation [Home Page - Travel Foundation \(thetravelfoundation.org.uk\)](#)

Invisible Burden [Destinations at Risk: The Invisible Burden of Tourism - Travel Foundation](#)

World Travel and Tourism Council [\(WTTC\) | Travel & Tourism Representative Council](#)

Destinations International (A resource for DMOs and Chambers of Commerce) [destinationsinternational.org](#)

Destination Development Association [Destination Assessment Program \(destinationdevelopment.org\)](#)

National Recreation & Park Association Agency Performance Review [nrpa-agency-performance-review.pdf](#)

NRPA 2020 Engagement with Parks Report [2020-engagement-report.pdf \(nrpa.org\)](#)

Headwaters Economics [Home - Headwaters Economics](#)

Sample Survey from Township of Chatsworth, Ontario [Community Recreation Survey \(surveymonkey.com\)](#)



Additional Reports/Studies

[Innovative and Promising Practices in Sustainable Tourism](#) (viu.ca)

[Ten Principles for Responsible Tourism](#) (Urban Land 2015)

[Tools and Resources for Nature-Based Tourism](#) (worldbank.org)

COVID Management Tools

[Pandemic Toolkit](#) (PlaceMakers.com)

[Arts-and-Transportation-Rapid-Response.pdf](#) (smartgrowthamerica.org)

(Summary of creative solutions to COVID-related transportation challenges)

[How Can Destinations Resume Tourism After the Pandemic While Ensuring Sustainability?](#) (PlaceBrandObserver.com)

III. Maintaining Small Town Character

Smart Growth Principles

[Smart Growth Principles - Smart Growth Online](#)

[Smart Growth Principles – Vermont Natural Resources Council](#) (vnrc.org)

[Smart Growth in Small Towns and Rural Communities | Smart Growth | US EPA](#)

[Framework for Creating a Smart Growth Economic Development Strategy: A Tool for Small Cities & Towns](#)

[National Main Street Program](#) (mainstreet.org)

[Kentucky Main Street Program - Kentucky Heritage Council](#) (heritage.ky.gov)

[Streetscape Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts](#) (heritage.ky.gov)

[Walkable Communities Library](#) (walkable.org)

[New Designs for Growth Development Guidebook](#) (newdesignsforgrowth.com)

[Downtown Revitalization in Small and Midsized Cities](#) (planning.org)

[A Handbook for Improved Neighborhoods](#) (aarp.org)

[Citizens' Institute on Rural Design](#) (rural-design.org)

Additional Items to Consider

[Project for Public Spaces](#) [The Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper Transformation of Public Spaces](#) (pps.org)

[Creative Exchange for the Arts](#) [Toolkits for Change Archives - Creative Exchange](#) (springboardexchange.org)

[Finding Nature News, Nature Blog | Children and Nature Network](#) (childrenandnature.org)

[Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights](#) bring leaders, residents together - Children and Nature Network

[Waste in Our Waters: A Community Toolkit for Aquatic Litter Removal](#) (rivernetwork.org)



IV. Grants & Funding Opportunities

[Home | GRANTS.GOV](#)

[Economic Development Integration | U.S. Economic Development Administration \(eda.gov\)](#)

[View EDA-HDQ-OIE-2020-2006705 | GRANTS.GOV](#) FY2020 SPRINT Challenge Grant

[Grassroots Grantmakers](#)

[U.S. Department of Transportation Transit, Highway, and Safety Funds - Funding - Bicycle and Pedestrian Program - Environment - FHWA \(dot.gov\)](#)

[The Grant Plant, Inc. New Mexico \(thegrantplantnm.com\)](#)

[Office of Small Business Development Centers Resources \(sba.gov\)](#)

[Community Restoration & Resiliency Fund \(kab.org\)](#) Keep America Beautiful

[The Home Depot | The Home Depot Foundation - Team Depot Community](#)

[Shade Structure Program \(aad.org\)](#)

[Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](#)

[Community Impact | Waste Management \(wm.com\)](#)

[Online Funding Tool | Play and Recreation Funds | PlayCore](#)

[Grant Opportunities, Fundraising Resources, Funding | National Recreation and Park Association \(nrpa.org\)](#)

[Recreational Trails Program Project Database \(recreationaltrailsinfo.org\)](#)

[Thrive Outside - Outdoor Industry Association](#)

[Bicycles and Pedestrians | US Department of Transportation](#)

[How to Apply \(rural-design.org\)](#) Citizens Institute on Rural Design

[Save America's Treasures \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#)

[Equitable Funding Hub | City Parks Alliance](#)

[Funding Parks and Trails Through Land Trust Partnerships | City Parks Alliance](#)

[Community Change Grants | AmericaWalks.org](#)

[Mini-grants | Celebrate Urban Birds](#)

[Community-Based Participatory Research Technical Assistance Grants - River Network](#)

[Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities 2020 Request for Letters of Interest | Smart Growth | US EPA](#)

[Six Unique Trail Funding Solutions - American Trails](#)

[Q Community Grant | Quality Bicycle Products \(qbp.com\)](#)

[Six Grants for Trails and Greenway Funding \(permatrak.com\)](#)



[State and Local Grant Funding - Land and Water Conservation Fund \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#)

Indiana [DNR: Land and Water Conservation Fund \(in.gov\)](#)

Kentucky [Kentucky DLG - LWCF Grants](#)

Ohio [Land and Water Conservation Fund | Ohio Department of Natural Resources \(ohiodnr.gov\)](#)

V. Organizations

Adventure Cycling Association [Discover What Awaits | AdventureCycling.org](#)

American Trails [AmericanTrails.org](#)

American Rivers [Rivers Connect Us](#) (americanrivers.org)

American Canoe Association [ACA | Canoe - Kayak - SUP - Raft - Rescue \(americancanoe.org\)](#)

City Parks Alliance [About Us | City Parks Alliance](#)

International Journal of Wilderness [Foundation and Future of Long Distance Trails | IJW.org](#)

National Recreation and Parks Association [\(nrpa.org\)](#)

[Partnership for the National Trails System \(pnts.org\)](#)

People for Bikes [PeopleForBikes | Every ride. Every rider. Join us. \(peopleforbikes.org\)](#)

River Management Society [\(river-management.org\)](#)

River Network [Mission, Vision, Values - River Network](#) (rivernetwork.org)

Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals [Technical Resources \(recpro.org\)](#)



VI. Community Assistance Programs

National Park Service

[Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program \(RTCA\)](#)

- A national network of conservation and recreation planning professionals that partner with community groups, nonprofits, tribes, and state and local governments to design trails and parks, to serve and improve access to rivers, protect special places, and create outdoor recreation opportunities
- Free technical planning assistance is available for Communities and non-profit organizations through an application process



[Directory of National Park Service Community Assistance Programs](#)

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

[Smart Growth Technical Assistance Programs | Smart Growth | US EPA](#)

- Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities
- Cool & Connected
- Governor's Institute on Community Design
- Greening Americas Communities
- Healthy Places for Health People
- Local Foods, Local Places
- Recreation Economy for Rural Communities
- Smart Growth Implementation Assistance
- Smart Growth Implementation Assistance for Coastal Communities
- Special Smart Growth Technical Assistance Projects



[Environmental Justice Grants, Funding and Technical Assistance](#)

US Forest Service

Shared Stewardship Programs

- Forest Legacy
- Forest Stewardship
- Community Forest
- Ecosystem Markets
- Wood Innovation
- Urban and Community Forestry
- Forest Health Protection
- Landscape Scale Restoration
- Forest Taxation and Estate Planning



[How the Forest Stewardship Program Works | US Forest Service \(usda.gov\)](#)



US Fish & Wildlife Service

Division of Partner & Intergovernmental Affairs

- Rural Fire Assistance
- Small Wetlands Program
- Landscape Conservation Design

Several other programs are available. Please visit the website and type “*List of Programs*” in the Search Box.

[USFWS - Division of Partner and Intergovernmental Affairs](#)



National Fish & Wildlife Foundation

Active Programs

- Acres for America
- Bring Back the Natives
- Conservation Partners Program
- Five Star & Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program
- National Coastal Resilience Fund
- Resilient Communities Program
- Bats for the Future Fund
- Monarch Butterfly & Pollinators Conservation Fund

[Programs | NFWF.org](#)



US Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service

[Technical Assistance | NRCS \(usda.gov\)](#)

Rural Development Programs & Services

[Programs & Services | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](#)

Strategic Economic & Community Development

[Strategic Economic and Community Development | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](#)



National Park Service

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program

Ohio River Recreation Trail – **Resources List**

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