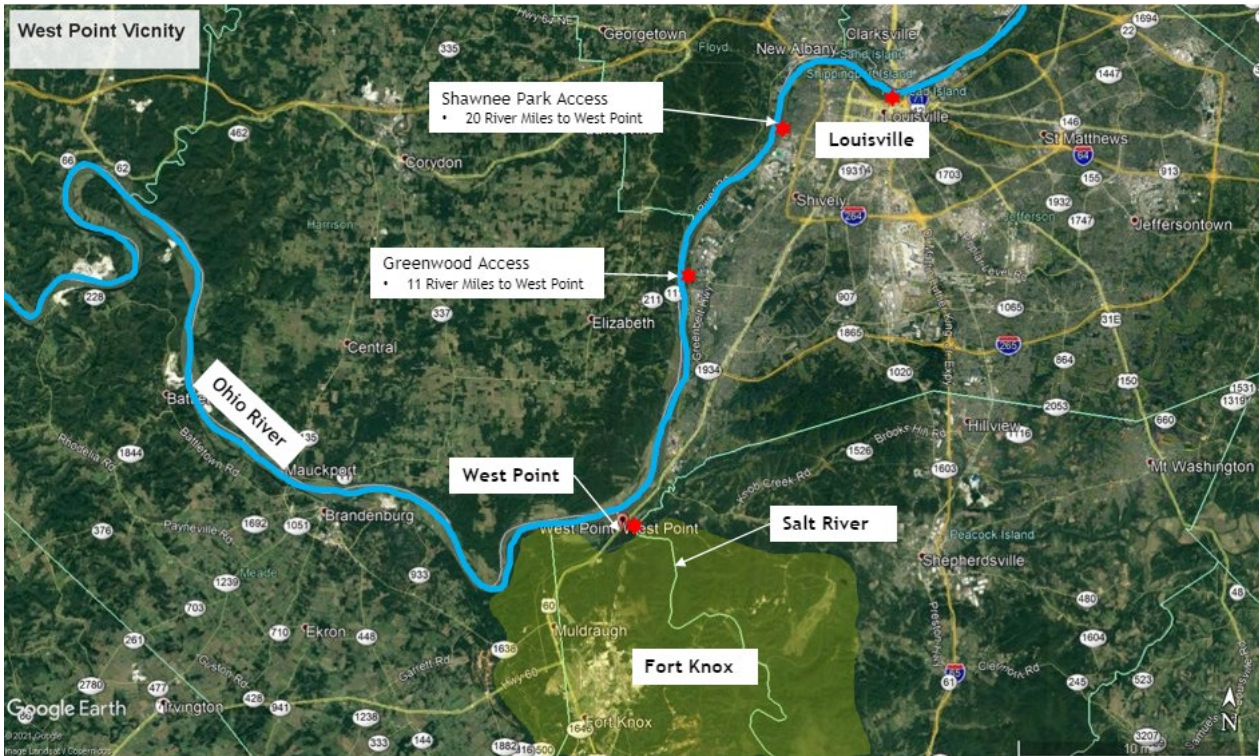




West Point, Kentucky River Town Review

Fresh Eyes on Enhancing Tourism & Outdoor Recreation in your Community



Round 2, Summer 2021

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

West Point, 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 encourage 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.

City of West Point RTR Planning Process

(see Appendix A for details)

The City of West Point requested a River Town Review by the ORRT Team in the fall of 2020, but due to local changes could not take place until summer of 2021.

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-19 restrictions. The team hosted a virtual community input workshop on July 29, 2021, that included a SWOT analysis and brainstorming of ideas for enhancing outdoor recreation in the City of West Point. The participants were asked to help prioritize the ideas generated into short-term and long-term goals for the community to pursue. 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

Seventeen volunteers spent about one hour each online to see what they could find out about the City of West Point 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 Fort Duffield, West Point History Museum, hiking trails, Tioga Falls trail, and the Bridges to the Past trail.

Recommendations:

- Provide picnic grounds, boat ramps, family friendly outdoor activities.
- Utilize the towns connection to River Commerce, sponsor activities at the Civil War fort.
- Attract and support a restaurant for dining.
- Hire a museum director or someone that can turn the town into a historic tour stop.
- Take advantage of the inherent beauty of all of the city's natural resources: hiking, biking, and paddling opportunities, by more sharing photos of these resources as well as providing captions to the existing photos on the different trails.
- Highlight how close they are to other hubs like Louisville, Fort Knox, and Elizabethtown, which may provide day-trip tourists.
- Update the City Web page and link other organizations to the City Web page. There appears to be several semiofficial Facebook pages that could be better coordinated, West Point History has 1,300 plus followers, West Point Revitalization has over 600, West Point River Days has 780.
- Highlight the feasibility of paddle sports on the Ohio River launching from Veterans Park, The Beach there is beautiful.

In summary, the RTR Team found that the West Point related web sites and social media sites could provide more information and maps about outdoor recreation and activities in the West Point area.

Walkability & Bikeability Scores for West Point

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 West Point – **17 Car Dependent**
- Bikeability Score for West Point – **35 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



Community Visit

(Community Visit details can be found in Appendix B.)

Community Experiences

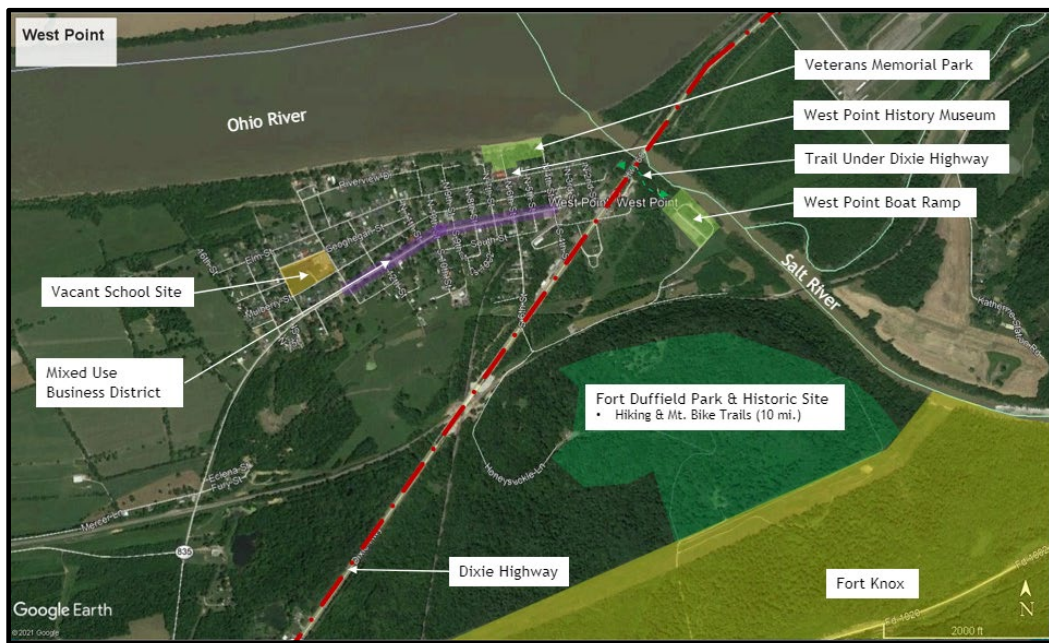
Several members of RTR Team visited West Point to experience the community. Some of the key things that the RTR Team liked about their community experience in West Point were:

- Small town feeling and calm pace of life
- Views of the Ohio River and Veterans Memorial Park
- West Point Museum
- Fort Duffield
- The confluence of the Salt & Ohio Rivers
- The Committee also took several canoe trips on the Salt River and the Ohio River, below is a map of canoe/kayak routes from West Point.



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

- Promote the City's connection to the John Muir Trail and continue the connection process to Elizabethtown and Louisville.
- Explore strategies to build a recreation bridge over the Salt River to connect to the Louisville Loop.
- Work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Knox, and/or Kentucky Fish and Wildlife to repair and upgrade the Salt River boat dock.
- Add safety signage to the dock and the surrounding area and explore new management options for the dock and the camping area.
- Create a paddlesport access on the beach and regrade the path from the end of 4th street to the beach.
- Create and publish a hiking, biking, kayaking, and equestrian trail map. Also consider publishing a historical walking map. The Map could also be displayed permanently at each outdoor activity site that clearly identifies the connections between each site.
- Explore opportunities for the reuse of the vacant school building.



Community Input

(The detailed results can be found in Appendix B.)

Virtual Workshop

The RTR Team hosted and facilitated a virtual workshop for the City of West Point on July 29, 2021. Twelve 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 through the virtual workshop using an online platform called Mural. The participants then prioritized those ideas using Mural's voting system. This virtual workshop assisted the RTR Team to better understand what is important to the community and where the special places are in the West Point 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 West Point and Hardin 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 – West Point RTR Documents to review all of the ideas generated from the SWOT Analysis.)

STRENGTHS

- Small town within easy commuting distance to larger cities
- Salt and Ohio Rivers
- Water recreation opportunities
- Traditional town form with multiuse opportunities, vacant property, and land for potential development
- Historical interpretation with the museum and Fort Duffield.

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of local leadership and vision
- Some Local citizens do not want change
- Lack of focus for pedestrian access, trails, and parks
- Lack of financial resources
- Complex government requirements to develop along river

OPPORTUNITIES

- Food trucks in Veterans Park on the weekends
- John Muir Trail connections to other communities
- Developing the school building
- Involvement of many planners and outside organizations supporting West Point
- Repair boat dock and camp ground

THREATS

- Entire town is designated as a floodplain limiting investors and financial aid
- Lack of funding
- Local barge traffic eroding riverbank
- Hard to open a new restaurant
- Not bringing in experts from places where similar challenges are already being met



Brainstorming Ideas

The participants were led through an exercise to identify ideas to improve or create recreation assets and tourism opportunities in the West Point area. The following lists identify some of the higher priority short-term and long-term items selected from all the ideas generated during the brainstorming exercise. These lists also include ideas to consider from the workshop participants homework exercise.

(Please refer to Appendix B – West Point RTR Documents to review all of the Brainstorming ideas.)

SHORT TERM IDEAS

- Open the Salt River through Fort Knox for fishing and paddling year round
- Pop up food trucks at Veterans Park on Saturdays
- Promote school building for businesses
- Open a kayak rental business
- Music concerts by the river
- Repair the boat dock
- Offer camping at Veterans Park for organized paddling and cycling groups

LONG TERM IDEAS

- Open an art gallery or two. West Point could be an artist community
- Have the state legislators push to build a walking and biking bridge over the Salt River
- Have somewhere to eat
- Fuel dock on the Salt River
- Connect the trail to Otter Creek Park

A perfect day for a visitor in West Point is....

As a homework assignment to help identify what makes West Point 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 West Point were Fort Duffield, Bridges of the Past, Tioga Falls, historic markers, and enjoying the views of the Ohio River.

(Please refer to Appendix B – West Point RTR Documents to review the stories submitted.)



River Town Review Executive Summary

A Brief Summary of RTR Observations

[\(See Appendix B for more details\)](#)

The RTR Team looked at the internet presence of West Point and visited the community to experience what it has to offer in person. They found that West Point was the western most english speaking settlement in its early history and that three men of the Lewis & Clark Westward Expedition were from West Point.

The Team observed that the community has several historic homes, the community is a riverfront town tucked into the confluence of the Ohio and Salt Rivers, and the area is subject to flooding.

Some of the unique attractions are Fort Duffield with ten miles of hiking and mountain bike trails, Veterans Memorial Park on the Ohio River, the West Point Boat Launch on the Salt River.

A Connecting Vision for the City of West Point

West Point participated in the River Town Review process because it wishes to further enhance its river town destination potential to benefit existing residents and businesses. The city would like to attract new investments and increase outdoor recreation tourism. The following suggestions for the City of West Point 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. **The RTR team believes the future of West Point should include the Ohio River Recreation Trail and improvements to CONNECT:**

- the neighborhoods, businesses, parks, boat launch site, historic bridges, falls, and Fort Duffield with safe sidewalks and trails.
- by a comprehensive wayfinding signage system to welcome/guide visitors to the recreation and business assets in the community.
- with more support facilities, overnight accommodations, restrooms, secure equipment storage, bicycle racks and other amenities for various recreation user groups.
- with downstream river access sites to promote a local water trail experience.
- with outdoor recreation users with the community by continuing to create routes and host events that include hiking, cycling, equestrian, and paddlers.
- These efforts will provide a multitude of benefits for the city, residents and the visiting public as the community will become a viable Ohio River Recreation Trail gateway - increasing tourism, business opportunities, and quality of life for the residents.

River Town Review Recommendations

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

Desktop Reviews

- The social media platform designs and content need to attract and accommodate river-oriented businesses and recreation opportunities.
- Update the City Web page and link other organizations to the City Web page.
- Consider adding a description and link to the Ohio River Recreation Trail on all of the relevant websites and social media sites to help cross promote the Ohio River as a destination corridor for outdoor recreation.
- Utilize the photographs from the community visit by the professional photographers, Joe Wolek and John Nation in future outdoor recreation information website updates.
- Update ORRT Digital Guide with local businesses/services
<https://www.ohioriverrecreationtrail.org/digital-guide>
- The town should take advantage of the inherent beauty of all of the natural resources: hiking, biking, and paddling opportunities, by sharing photos of these resources as well as linking to more information on the different trails. Highlight how close they are to other hubs like Louisville, Fort Knox, and Elizabethtown, which may provide day-trip tourists.
- Explore options to expand the online marketing of the many recreation and cultural assets in the community, county, and the region.
- West Point KY has lots of potential to become a popular destination for families seeking glimpses into history while walking, paddling, biking, or riding. Three cheers!

Walkability/Bikeability

- Complete and adopt the Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan for the Community of West Point that complies with the Kentucky Department of Transportation standards for a Bike Ped Master Plan. Plan and evaluate how to connect all of the parks, neighborhoods, and schools to the business district and the river with sidewalks and trails. Once a Bike Ped Master Plan is adopted by the community and submitted to the state DOT any future state highway improvements will need to consider and potentially include the sidewalk or trail needs of the community. (See Appendix C List of Resources, Dept. of Transportation Bike & Pedestrian Planning, Indiana weblink for more information).
- Continue to support the John Muir Legacy Trail efforts to follow the corridor of John Muir's 1,000 mile walk to the Gulf. The first phase will connect Louisville to Elizabethtown and this trail network will connect West Point to cities in the county and region.
- There are a number of items that a community can do to improve bikeability. (See Appendix C List of Resources, Bikeability Checklist.)
- Explore opportunities to designate easy on road bike routes or create protected bike lanes where it can be done. Create pop-up temporary bike lanes so people can see the possibilities.
- Hold events that feature the opportunities to be more bikeable/walkable - temporarily close streets for Walk and Roll or Saturday strolls. Activate those closed streets with events, vendors, partners.

Immediate Action Items (Low Hanging Fruit):

- Meet with elected officials, local tourism advocates and residents to discuss the results of this report.
- Update ORRT Digital Guide with local businesses/services

<https://www.ohioriverrecreationtrail.org/digital-guide>

- Continue to partner with the ORRT organization:
<https://www.ohioriverrecreationtrail.org/become-a-partner>
- Continue to engage with the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Community Partner Program
<https://lewisandclark.travel/partner-community-program/>
- Schedule a pop-up event or a meet up group to walk and/or bike the riverfront area and its connections to downtown to discuss the questions and ideas in this RTR with others to get more input and develop support.

Short Term Ideas to Pursue:

- Explore doing a joint tourism/marketing effort with other Ohio River Cities.
- Create and publish a hiking, biking, kayaking, and equestrian trail map. Publish a guide/map to the historic walk along elm street. Monnie's knowledge is invaluable.
- Explore opportunities for the reuse of the school facilities.
- Add safety signage to the dock and the surrounding area and explore new management options for the dock and the camping area.
- Continue advertising the Salt River Launch Park as a safe place to launch kayaks and canoes from once the facility has been repaired.
- Consider creating a secure storage facility for kayaks and gear at the Salt River Launch Site or Veteran's Park on the Ohio River to encourage paddlers to visit the community service facilities.
- Display large copies of the maps at each park.
- Add bike racks near service facilities to welcome the cycling community.
- Continue with the West Point festivals Your festivals should include activities on or around the Ohio River. Include a recreational component or demonstration in your festivals.
- Promote the City's connection to the John Muir Trail and continue the connection process to Elizabethtown and Louisville.
- Start hosting events. Farmers markets, "music on the water", get WFPK involved and bring in music fans from Louisville. Have food trucks and make it inviting to town community as well as Louisville outsiders that don't know about the town.

Long Term Ideas to Pursue:

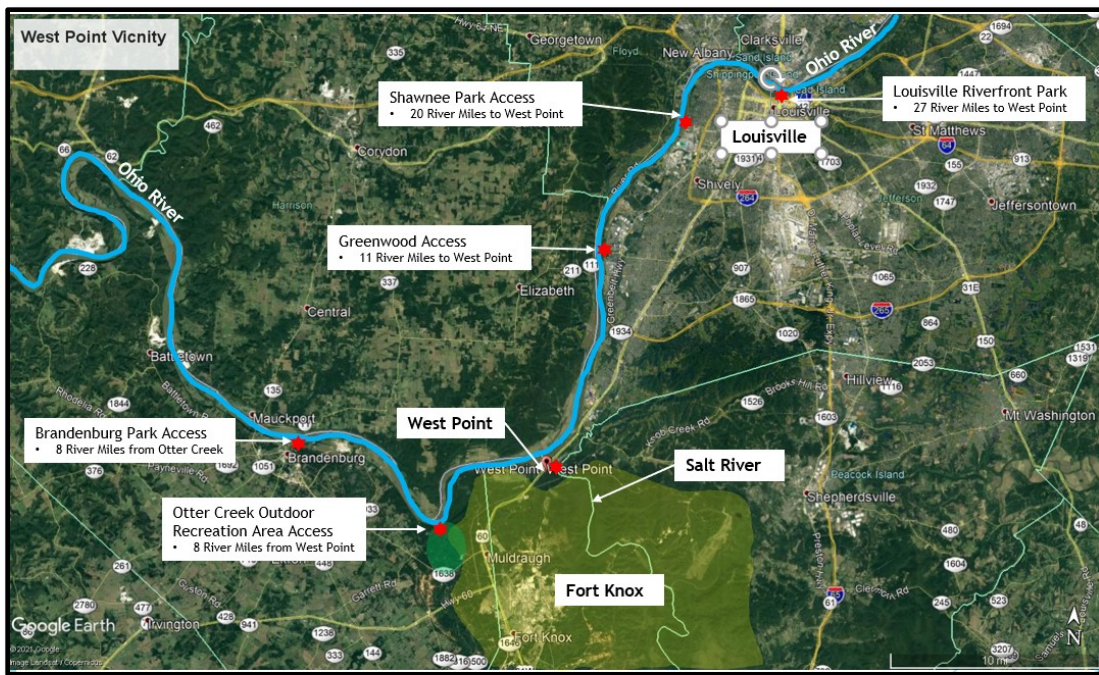
- Continue to explore strategies to build a walking/bike bridge over the Salt River connecting West Point with the [Kulmer Beach Reserve](#) - The multipurpose – hiking and bike bridge is crucial to connect West Point to the Louisville Loop.
- Continue the long range work of the John Muir Trail – phase 1, connecting West Point with Elizabethtown and Louisville.
- Re-establish the trail from downtown West Point (under Dixie Highway) to the Salt River Boat Launch and on to Fort Duffield.
- Work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Knox, and/or Kentucky Fish and Wildlife to repair and upgrade the Salt River boat dock as a floating transit dock. Explore the feasibility of adding a fueling station to attract more motor boating users into West Point.
- Continue to explore management options for the boat dock and camping area. Consider applying for a NPS River, Trails and Conservation Assistance grant to develop a conceptual master plan for a sustainable RV/tent camping plan and recommendations for the boat ramp.

- Create a paddlesport access on the beach and regrade the path from the end of 4th street to the beach. Add an information Kiosk at the launch site with safety information, a map of the public access sites in the region, the distances to the access sites and the Ohio River Recreation Trail website to access the ORRT Digital Guide.
- Explore the future use of the elementary school facility and site. This can be a redevelopment opportunity for West Point as a great community asset.
- Recruiting and supporting a restaurant or two as well as additional Air B & B's to provide needed services in the community.
- Explore grant funding opportunities to improve and or add recreation facilities in West Point and Hardin County thru the Land & Water Conservation Fund and the US Economic Development Administration – Travel, Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Competitive Tourism Grants. (See Appendix C for a list of Grants and Funding Opportunities.)
- Work with other River Towns upstream and downstream to explore multi-day trips or long-distance destination tourism.
- Create a Paddle/Pedal Event to showcase outdoor recreation in the Ohio River valley.
- Support efforts to remove the log jams in Pond Creek up to the [MSD pump station](#). It is a great fishing stream.
- Explore opportunities to support the increased use of the Salt River within Fort Knox. (Perhaps more than one day per year)
- Explore and support the feasibility of working with the Salt River Basin Collaborative project Bernheim-Fort Knox Wildlands Corridor.

Additional Ideas to Consider:

- Continue to engage with the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail and including its auto tour signage <https://lewisandclark.travel/>
- 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.
 - Highlight the history and cultural assets of the community. (Websites, signage, walking tour routes, etc.)
- Explore the opportunities for river towns to secure riverfront development funds as destination attractions thru the state and federal funding sources.





Classic Trip Opportunities

- Paddling trip opportunities on the Ohio River from West Point. West Point Boat Launch to Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area (8 river miles), Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area to Brandenburg Park (8 river miles)
- Paddling trip opportunities on the Ohio River to West Point. Greenwood Access to West Point Boat Launch (11 river miles) Support efforts to create an additional public access on the Ohio River between the Greenwood Access and West Point.
- Explore future opportunities to use the Salt River for paddling.



Appendix A River Town Review Planning Process

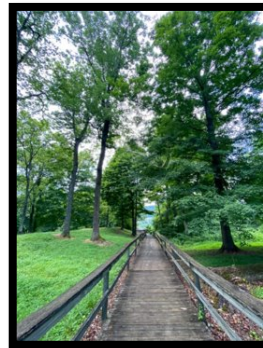
The RTR Team has summarized and created an outline for the steps of the ORRT RTR planning process with a virtual community input workshop. Appendix A contains the summaries of The Request Process, Pre-workshop Tasks, Workshop Tasks and Post Workshop Tasks.

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 West Point 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 West Point Area by John Nation and Joe Wolek



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

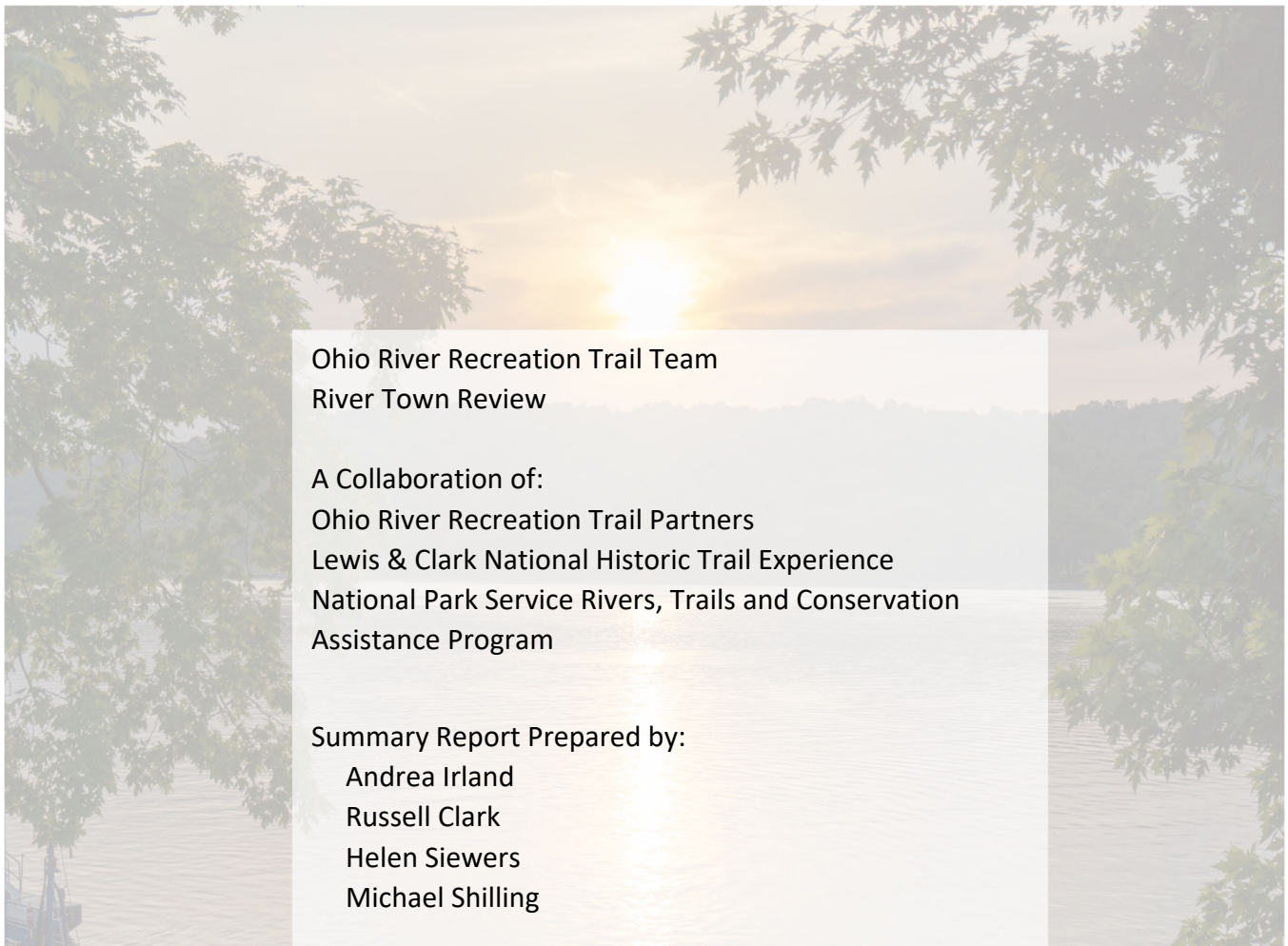
- **Report Out** – The RTR Team assembles all of the information collected from the desktop reviews, site visits, and community input to prepare a summary of recommendations. The collected data and a List of Resources for Communities are included as appendix items with the summary.
- **RTR Team and all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

West Point, Kentucky

River Town Review

Appendix B: Background & Supporting Materials



Ohio River Recreation Trail Team
River Town Review

A Collaboration of:
Ohio River Recreation Trail Partners
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
Michael Shilling

Fresh Eyes on Enhancing Tourism & Outdoor Recreation in your Community



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Application Letter



April 12, 2021

Andrea Irland
Russell Clark
National Park Service
Rivers, Trails, & Conservation Assistance Field Staff

Re: River Town Review

Dear Ms. Irland and Mr. Clark,

This letter is an official request for a River Town Review from the Ohio River Recreation Trail, National Park Service, and the Lewis and Clark Geotourism project team for the city of West Point, Kentucky.

We are requesting this review to enhance our ongoing efforts to maintain and improve on the natural assets and promote reasonable and measured growth of tourism and travel in the community, tourism that sustains and enhances the distinctive geographical character of West Point, and the well-being of its residents, the very definition of Geotourism. From this collaborative review we hope to capture recommendations of how we can improve the resources and programs in place and identify areas of weakness and strengths for future planning and implementation.

West Point, Kentucky has unique natural assets in its location where the Salt River meets the Ohio River along with the Union Army Civil War outpost, Fort Duffield, and a well-maintained trail system that promotes hiking, biking, and horseback riding. We have a volunteer-maintained museum and many historic markers and buildings to explore in the town. West Point's biggest asset though is a robust group of volunteers that share the common goal of not just survival for the town, but for preserving the history and nature found there for generations to come. The volunteers on the West Point Revitalization Committee are a varied and gifted group of individuals with skills and abilities that combine to bring new meaning to the term Civic Duty which is something usually attributed to our parents' generation but does not always exist in today's culture. Another term can be found in this group and that is Civic Pride, taking pleasure in seeing your efforts result in a thing of beauty you can share with others. At enclosure #1 there is a list of the committee's accomplishments to date and enclosure #2 list goals and plans in progress for the future of West Point.

Some challenges we have are that West Point's demographics include lower incomes and educational attainment than surrounding areas. The town is surrounded on all sides by the Fort Knox Military Reservation, the Ohio River and the Salt River. There is no public transportation,

no pedestrian infrastructure on Highway 31W which is the only roadway in and out of town, and no pedestrian access to cross the aging Salt River bridge which is only for vehicles at this time. The town does own acres of beautiful, forested parks, a well-preserved park at Fort Duffield and hiking and biking trails with waterfalls and historic stone bridges. However, these natural, healthy town assets are seldom used by townspeople as these trails are on the other side of a highway with no pedestrian crossings or infrastructure. The River Town Review will potentially help to bring a wide swath of volunteers and planners together to build consensus and pursue the exceedingly difficult task of ensuring that pedestrian infrastructure is designed, constructed, and funded to reunite people, parks, trails and business, for improved health, environment and economic tourism. In 2020 the Preschool through 8th grade West Point School was closed by Hardin County and the building and real estate currently sit empty. All Main Street business and the last two restaurants closed down in the last couple of years.

The West Point City Council is active and supportive of volunteer efforts to improve the town and its natural resources, trails, and parks.

The main contacts for the River Town Review Team will be:

Annette Baker, City Council Member- annettebaker1505@gmail.com
1505 Elm Street, West Point, KY 40177 - 502-922-4450 h, 502-424-4021 c

Richard Ciresi, City Council Member and Building Inspector- richard@aslouisville.com
1134 Riverview Drive, West Point, KY 40177- 502-639-6616 c

Gary Masterson, West Point Revitalization Committee Chairman -
gary23502@gmail.com - 23502 Louisville Nashville Turnpike, West Point, KY 40177-
502-594-9995 c

Meetings will be open to the residents and all friends of West Point. The entire revitalization committee, the city council, Mayor Billy Ash, will host meetings and provide necessary online meeting invitations, meeting space venues (as Covid allows), setup of seating and tables, audio-visual-computer equipment, printed and emailed meeting information, agendas, meeting minutes, refreshments, directions, and support for the team. We will be developing plans to share opportunities to participate during the meetings via sign ups at other council meetings and civic events, by personal requests for help and announcements on city website and by notifying local and regional partner organizations' websites and social media, and through the city's newsletter, The West Point Current.

Thank you in advance for considering this request.

Sincerely,



William C. Ash
Major, West Point, Kentucky



Digital Desktop Review for West Point

Four volunteers spent about one hour each on-line to see what they could find out about West Point 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...

Team Review Summary

West Point River Town Review – Desk Top Review

17 respondents

Nine people left their emails, the others were anonymous - Data collected via [google form](#) during July 2021. Questions are in **red** all of the answers below the questions have been imported without editing.

<i>Review the town’s social media, websites, articles, and existing tourism information. Look for connections to the river and outdoor recreation. What are the highlights? Do any common themes emerge? Is there an experience to capture?</i>
Social Media not up to date Needs one centralized website. There are brochures at City Hall and Fort Duffield. No access to Ohio River beach and Salt River Boat Dock needs serious repair. There are no common themes, City Hall needs to work with different organizations to decide where everyone can work together for the whole City. We have the Ohio River that could be used in many ways to capture an experience, walking, hiking, biking, trails, swimming, boating, picnicking, photography, just sitting.
The history of WP and the rivers instrumental in making it.
We have the river the trails and fort Duffield...
Military history, civil war to Ft Knox expansion. Hiking. Little reference to water presently.
Nature and History
Civil War Fort Duffield also should go back to having a Civil War Days Festival & Reenactment with events held down by the River Front with Sutlers Etc. Cannon Firings and Living History Demonstrations with all types period Reenactors-!!!
I really did not find any substantial connections to the river and outdoor recreation.
A historic, shining gem south of the busy south end of Louisville, Ky. A place of historic events became the building blocks of exploration.
Small town people

Ohio River Views and access. Fort Duffield Historic Site. Historic buildings. Phenomenal museum with lots of local history.
I have not seen any of the town's social media or websites. I recently have learned more about West Point due to the biking trails and cute Airbnb railroad house.
There is very little information other than when the town was founded, by who and some information on the very early history of the town. The only experience for outdoor activities is the mountain bike trails. Ok if you're young.
I find the history of West Point to be its most fascinating draw along with the location on the river.
After surveying the town website and social media presence, I am inspired to spend more time exploring the town and surrounding areas on foot and by boat. The motto of "preserving our past to protect our future" fits West Point well, especially when one knows about all the work happening in the present to create opportunities for visitors to explore and learn about cultural and natural heritage. There could be more active links between the town website and a town Facebook/Instagram presence. For some reason I'm not able to open the town's Facebook page, but the Historical Society's page is in good shape, with frequent recent posts. How about incorporating a link to the Historical Society's Facebook page from the history section of the town website?
The town's connection to the Ohio River and the history of the town were common themes.
<i>If you were planning to visit there what would interest you from what you learned from your web search? Is it inviting? What is missing?</i>
The only things that would bring me to West Point would be to visit someone I know, launch a boat, or walk the trails.
The drive around to visit the signage.
There are plenty of outdoor activities but no facilities such as lodging or dining.
Information on kayak and canoe opportunities missing...
Visit the museum, see the historic buildings and places like Fort Duffield
Bridges to the past and Tioga Falls walking tour-!!!
The web sites do seem somewhat inviting, but I would like to see a link to local lodgings like VRBO and maybe how close or far away the local dining facilities may be.
Yes, a visit to West Point, Kentucky would be one to return to. These who work tirelessly to preserve the history are to be commended for their efforts.
Businesses & restaurants
There are trails at nearby Fort Duffield and a river walk. Also, access to the Ohio and Salt Rivers is available but limited. I am unaware of any B & B's, hotels, motels, or other overnight accommodations actually in West Point. There are some within 20 miles.
The only west point website I know of is the KY Gov. website for the town. It looks very government run as if I'm on a PVA website or something similar.
There are no restaurants, no cafes. The only attraction that seems to have any info is their tiny museum which is only open on specific days. There are no mentions of picnic areas, playgrounds, boat ramps, or anything that is inviting for families.
Yes, a visit to West Point, Kentucky be kind one to return. These who work tirelessly to preserve the history are to be commended for their efforts.
I'd visit the small history museum and realize beforehand that it is not fancy, but it is fascinating. Fort Duffield is a good visit and I like the ability to hike around there. I want to explore the falls. Restaurants are missing. Home upkeep seems hit or miss.

I would be interested in exploring trails in and around West Point, and the descriptions of walking bridges entice me. One thing that would give me pause is that I'm not able to find a map of recommended walking routes on the town website. I do see that a map is available from City Hall and various businesses, but I would be reluctant to count on those places being open on a Saturday or Sunday (when I typically go on KY adventures). I also see that the Historical Society is open Saturday afternoons, and that's great!

The biggest interest for West Point through online research is first and foremost the history of the town. Fort Duffield is one of the most highlighted features of the town. Other points of interest from a tourism view would be Tioga Falls and the Bridges to the Past. There doesn't seem to be a large connection to either the Ohio River or Salt River from a tourism standpoint.

Look at their social media sites: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter. How many followers? What is the most recent post? How often updated? Are there photos? Any events promoted? Are followers engaged?

I think the most important site is the City of West Point which has 1425 followers, that is more than is residents. Most recent post was Wednesday of the previous week. Weekly updated. Yes, there are Photos. Yes, Events are posted. Very few followers are engaged.

West Point Community Forum has lots of input.

The city website rarely updates; however, the Facebook page updates sporadically. And the community forum on Facebook is extremely active,

Local folks are engaged, outsiders not much...

Interesting comments and updates

NOT MUCH INFO OUT THERE ON WEST POINT HISTORY-!!!

Clearly, folk are becoming increasingly curious about West Point locals and those who have visited there.

Don't know

The Museum page on Facebook is updated, however, I sent an email to the Ft Duffield site months ago and never got an answer.

I think getting the West Point community involved in the social media if they aren't already, would help build a stronger community feel.

The only post I could find on Facebook was about the museums 10th birthday. Having been to the museum in person it is very disappointing with no history of the town and its connection to the river.

I visited AirBnB and found two beautiful possibilities for accommodations in West Point. Both are managed by people designated as "super hosts" by AirBnB, which is a designation I look for when selecting places to stay. As discussed during our site visit, there's also an opportunity to create "experiences" and advertise them on AirBnB. For West Point these could range from historical walking tours to river paddles, horseback excursions, and guided mountain bike rides.

Facebook:

-West Point History Museum: 1264, last post was July 17. Frequent posts on various history exhibits at the museum. Great photos and videos, good engagement.

-West Point Revitalization: 664 followers, last post was July 14, frequent posts updating the community about upcoming events and engagement opportunities. Not as much tourism info. Some photos and not many videos, good engagement.

<i>Visit the town's website. Does it make you want to visit there? What is missing from the view of a visitor?</i>
No, only government activity is posted no tourism is employed
Lots of incorrect information and little to make me want to visit other than the Rivers.
The website is a bit sparse and is missing a little info. The facilities/activities we do have need to be up front
Water-sports opportunities missing
The missing soldiers I found riding horseback when I was 17. There are about 15-20 buried in a graveside that passed away of the fever. They are not lost....just not found yet. I remember to this day how to get there. I believe these soldiers deserve a final resting place, and the next of kin contacted if any. And if the name hasn't been found, they deserve the highest of honor and let our president send them to Arlington Cemetery where they are guarded day and night. These men deserve to be honored. I don't want anything for myself. Just these remaining soldiers be acknowledged among the public. Greater love has no one than this, to lay down one's life for his friends. John 15:13
Our fallen soldiers and heroes have made the ultimate sacrifice. They've laid down their lives so that we may enjoy the freedom they fought to secure for us. Let us keep them in our thoughts and prayers every day. Pray that they have found eternal rest and peace in the hands of God. For those who have sacrificed their lives so that we may be free. We remember you; we honor you; we love you and we humbly thank you for your service. A simple thank you is not enough for all that you've endured. We pray that you live on through the loving memories shared by your family and loved ones. We pray that the strife, battles, and wounds of war be calmed for eternity in God's loving grace. May you find rest at last and know that those commitments, send their love and will never forget your sacrifice.
Yes. Links give me what isn't included in their web site.
SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR FORT DUFFIELD CAMP #1 WEST POINT KY.
The town's website could be better. Visitors want to know where they can sleep and eat, even if it's in Louisville or Elizabethtown.
Yes, we now live in Northern Kentucky but have participated in & enjoyed the re-birth of this special River town. More effort to share the pluses from the town's local community residents would go a long way to go getting the word out to the surrounding areas.
I'm not aware of a town site.
The website is a repeat of the information that was available on KY.gov.
As above, it needs eateries and upkeep.
The town's website is attractive and intriguing. There's a good amount of information without being overwhelming. I wonder if there could be more information about the remarkable mountain bike trail network.
City's website (https://westpoint.ky.gov) is not overly impressive. It is a simple website that would definitely benefit from more photos, especially of all of the natural resources the city has to offer. There is relatively good information on hiking, the museum, and other tourism attractions, but would like to see more images, maps, and hyperlinked information to learn more about the various tourist attractions.
<i>Look at crowdsourced sites for reviews (trip advisor, yelp, etc.). What is consistently reviewed well or makes the top ten list? What are the consistent negative comments from reviewers about the town?</i>
There was a bad review on The Better Business Bureau about the Boat Dock, stating how the man running was drunk and harassing the campers. Which was true. He is gone now.

Ft. Duffield. No restrooms in the community.
Fort Nuffield gets the majority of reviews, but the trails get some attention
Ft. Duffield consistently good reviews, other than the hill. Only one mention of Tioga Falls, positive.
Must specify West Point, KY or it will bring up NY and other states. Offered things to do. Could be better.
FORT DUFFIELD
I could not find anything.
Have not looked at social media reviews. My personal comments are expressed from our visits, hikes, and news from others who live and work toward preservation.
Trip Advisor only shows Ft. Duffield as an attraction in West Point. There are no accommodations or restaurants.
trails and fort Duffield.
Mountain bike trails seem to be the only crowd sourced reviews
Have not looked at social media reviews. My personal comments are expressed from our visits, hikes, and news from others who live and work toward preservation.
I found great reviews of Fort Duffield. On AirBnB, reviews were all positive. Restaurants and conventional lodging are a gap.
Trip Advisor highlights Fort Duffield, Knob Creek Gun Range, and Tioga Falls. Yelp highlights Tioga Falls, Bridges to the Past, and Fort Duffield. Mostly good reviews for all of these resources!

<i>Did you find much information about outdoor recreation? Hiking, Fishing, Paddlesports, Power boats, sailing or bicycling. if so describe, if not do you have recommendations for West Port to consider?</i>
No, Only on Fort Duffield's site
Not much information.
Hiking and the fort get the most mentions
West Point a great kayak launch for Salt and Ohio Rivers, but no info available...
Just info for outdoor trail. Could offer more. Doesn't offer a boat ramp to depart or arrive on water.
NOT MUCH
N/A
There is no mention of these in West Point, Kentucky
Not much info - I think it takes visiting the area to know where trails/ boat ramps are.
None at all.
N/A
For the website, a prominent picture of the playground in Veterans Memorial Park would be a draw for families. If West Point is able to arrange for a pop-up kayak and canoe livery on weekends, that would also be a good draw for families, especially if the number of AirBnB options were expanded.
Yes. Information on hiking trails and visiting Fort Duffield. Hardly any information on the water resources (boating, fishing, etc.) that both the Ohio and Salt Rivers offer.

<i>What advice would you have for the town about how to better communicate and coordinate their assets, rich history, key annual events, lodging and dining options, tips on what to do there, etc.?</i>
Maybe have a tourism committee
Update the City Web page and link other organizations to the City Web page.

Signage for all the assets
Need simple restaurant in town and get boat ramp and docks back in operation.
Use online resources to better advantage.
PERIOD REENACTORS AT THE YOUNG HOUSE-!!!
A really active Facebook page that has no new content daily would be a good start.
Contact the local public media sources. Be persistent, don't give up & stay the course. Let everyone you know the good points about West Point, Kentucky
Restaurants, businesses.
More publicity! Involve the community so that they clean up their properties and are proud to show off their town.
Start hosting events. Farmers markets, "music on the water", get WFPK involved and bring in music fans from Louisville. Have food trucks and make it inviting to town community as well as Louisville outsiders that don't know ab the town.
Provide picnic grounds, boat ramps, family friendly outdoor activities. Utilize the towns connection to River Commerce, sponsor activities at the Civil War fort. Attract and support a restaurant for dining. Hire an educated museum director or someone that can turn the town into a historic tour stop.
Continue on with the group that is now invested to regain the hidden gem attraction that West Point has.
After reviewing my responses above, I wonder whether the Historic Trails Chautauqua - Storytelling on the River event could be featured more prominently on the town's website and social media. I found the West Point Revitalization Facebook Page with 715 followers, and the event announcement with three going and seven interested (including me); however, I didn't find mention of the event on the town website or History Museum Facebook Page. This may be due to the pandemic because there was a post about the 2019 West Point 5K and River Days Festival that received five likes and was shared four times.
West Point KY has lots of potential to become a popular destination for families seeking glimpses into history while walking, paddling, biking, or riding. Three cheers!
I would suggest that the town takes advantage of the inherent beauty of all of the town's natural resources: hiking, biking, and paddling opportunities, by sharing photos of these resources as well as linking to more information on the different trails. I might also suggest the town highlight how close they are to other hubs like Louisville, Fort Knox, and Elizabethtown, which may provide day-trip tourists.



Community Visit Photos



Photographs provided by Joe Wolek and John Nation



West Point River Town Review Visitor Assessment

Several members of RTR Team visited West Point to experience the community. Some of the members also have 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.

West Point - Visitor Assessment Summary

July 13, 2021 - 3 to 6 pm

Twelve people met (6 guests and 5 West Point Residents) at the [West Point History Museum](#), We started with introductions, snacks, drink and had an overview of the museum and a brief history of West Point by Monnie Mathews, museum curator. He said the top three reasons for visiting West Point -

- History - The Lewis and Clark Connection: Three men of the expedition came from West Point. He had a nice display of West Point's role in The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail.
- The Military Connection - West Point is surrounded by Fort Knox and the Ohio River. From Fort Duffield to Civil War Occupation, and the decades of being adjacent to Fort Knox are an important draw,
- The confluence of two rivers - The Ohio and Salt. There is a long history of commerce here. They used to have a wharf where commercial shallow stern wheelers went up the salt on a regular basis.

Monnie gave me a full folder of information on the Old Ohio River Lock House that is still standing just downstream of West Point in Indiana.

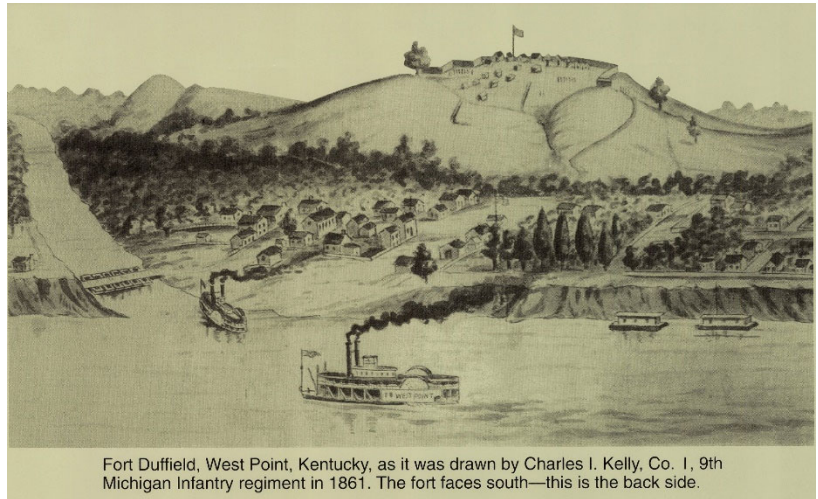
We took the historical walking tour with Monnie as guide exploring the individual history of the 200 plus year old brick homes. At the end of Elm Street, we toured a beautifully restored home that is available through Air B & B. [Check it out!](#) It was mentioned that it would be great to have a walking bridge across the Salt to the Metro Louisville Park at the confluence. On the way back we toured 4th Street and Veterans Memorial Park overlooking the Ohio River. It was pointed out that 20 years ago, the beach used to be very clean, and the boat

ramp was in good condition. Currently the ramp/road is only available for foot traffic and beach, while beautiful has a lot of flood debris on it. It started to rain, and we ended up in the pavilions overlooking the river at the downstream end of the park. The pavilions and park are available for events - \$75.00 for the entire park. Under the pavilion we talked about

- Flooding of West Point
- The Upcoming Chautauqua festival - Oct 2 and 3
- Horse Back riding and hiking options around West Point
- The Vacant elementary school – what is the future for the building?
- Could there be a tent camping section in Veterans Park?
- Strategies to develop resident support for tourism.
- The need for a restaurant or food truck.

We got in the cars and drove about a mile across Dixie Highway and toured Fort Duffield with incredible views of the river and interesting ruins of the fort. The Park also has 10 miles of hiking and mountain biking trails, a hidden gem. The park has mature forest now as compared to when the fort was built. Before then the trees were harvested for fuel for the steamboats on the river.

Our last stop was the West Point Boat Dock and RV/camping park. It is currently closed and is need of major repair - one estimate is \$30,000 just to repair the concrete ramp and stabilize the rest of the ramp from slipping into the river. The boat dock was built by the U.S. Army Corps and transferred to the city many years ago. A walking bridge and trail was developed over 40 years ago connecting downtown West Point, the Boat Dock and Fort Duffield, but it is need of maintenance and increased wayfinding signage. It was stated that poor management, the condition of the ramp and RV sites has made it difficult to find a new manager for the park.



Fort Duffield, West Point, Kentucky, as it was drawn by Charles I. Kelly, Co. I, 9th Michigan Infantry regiment in 1861. The fort faces south—this is the back side.

We talked about but did not visit an adjacent walking historical tour [“Bridges of the Past”](#)

We ended the site visit with a discussion about the upcoming community meeting on July 29 from 4 to 6 pm - It will be a hybrid meeting, on Zoom and in person.

We all were very impressed with the energy, enthusiasm and long-term commitment of the community members present.

Participants:

Dr. David Wicks, River City Paddle Sports and Co-Chair Ohio River Recreation Trail
Brewster Rhoads, Adventure Crew and Co-Chair Ohio River Recreation Trail
Dr. Perry Thomas, KY Division of Water - Salt River Basin
Charlotte Cardwell, KY Waterways Alliance
Dave Wright, Ohio River Enthusiast, and engineer
John Nation, Photographer
Joe Wolek, Photographer

Annette Baker, West Point Council Member, Rivertown Review Liaison
 Richard Ciresi, West Point Council Member
 Gary Masterson, West Point Revitalization Committee
 Janis Eberenz, West Point Revitalization Committee
 Monnie Matthews, West Point History Museum
 One other resident

Observations and considerations:

Connections:

1. Continue to explore strategies to build a walking/bike bridge over the salt river connecting West Point with the [Kulmer Beach Reserve](#) - The multipurpose – hiking and bike bridge is crucial to connect West Point to the Louisville Loop.
2. Continue The long range work of the John Muir Trail – phase 1, connecting West Point with Elizabethtown and Louisville.
3. Re-establish the trail from downtown to the Boat Dock and Fort Duffield.



Boat Access.

1. Work with the U.S. Army Corps, Fort Knox and or Ky Fish and Wildlife to repair and upgrade the West Point Boat Dock on the Salt River. I have been at the boat dock when soldiers launched boats - could the Army support maintaining the ramp? KY Fish and Wildlife also has support for boat ramps.
2. Consider rebuilding the dock, maybe expand it as a transit dock. It would be good to have a fueling station.
3. Add safety signage and location maps images.
4. Continue to explore management options for the boat dock and camping area. Consider applying for a NPS River, Trails and Conservation Assistance grant to develop a landscape and business plan for a sustainable RV/tent camping plan and recommendations for the boat ramp.
5. Create a paddlesport access on the beach and regrade the path from the end of 4th street to the beach.

Outdoor Recreation Promotion and Wayfinding:

1. Create and publish a trail map – bike, canoe, hiking, horseback trails.
2. Publish a guide/map to the historic walk along elm street. Monnie’s knowledge is invaluable.
3. Display large copies of the maps at each park.
4. Continue West Point festivals

Long Term issues

1. Future use of the elementary school.
2. Recruiting and support a restaurant or two as well as additional Air B & B’s.
3. Continue to lead and support the establishment of the John Muir Trail.
4. Work to remove the log jams in Pond Creek up to the [MSD pump station](#). It is a great fishing stream.
5. Explore the feasibility of Open Access to the Salt River through Fort Knox. Here is a [description of the idea](#). One step could be to increase the number of days that fishing on the Salt River is open, currently the [Army only allows it on Memorial Day](#).
6. Explore the feasibility of working with the [Salt River Basin Collaborative’s](#) project [Bernheim-Fort Knox Wildlands Corridor](#)



Community Meeting

RIVER TOWN REVIEW

West Point, KY

July 29, 2021

Agenda

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 4:00 – 4:10 | Welcome |
| 4:10 – 4:25 | Big Picture <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Ohio River/ORRT/LECL</i><i>RTR process</i><i>LECL Geotourism Site & ORRT Digital Guide</i> |
| 4:25 – 5:15 | Tell us about your town <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Strengths</i><i>Weaknesses</i><i>Opportunities</i><i>Threats</i> |
| 5:15 – 5:30 | What We Learned (Observations) |
| 5:30 – 5:50 | Brainstorming |
| 5:50 – 6:00 | Questions, Wrap up, Next Steps |



Participants

Community Participants

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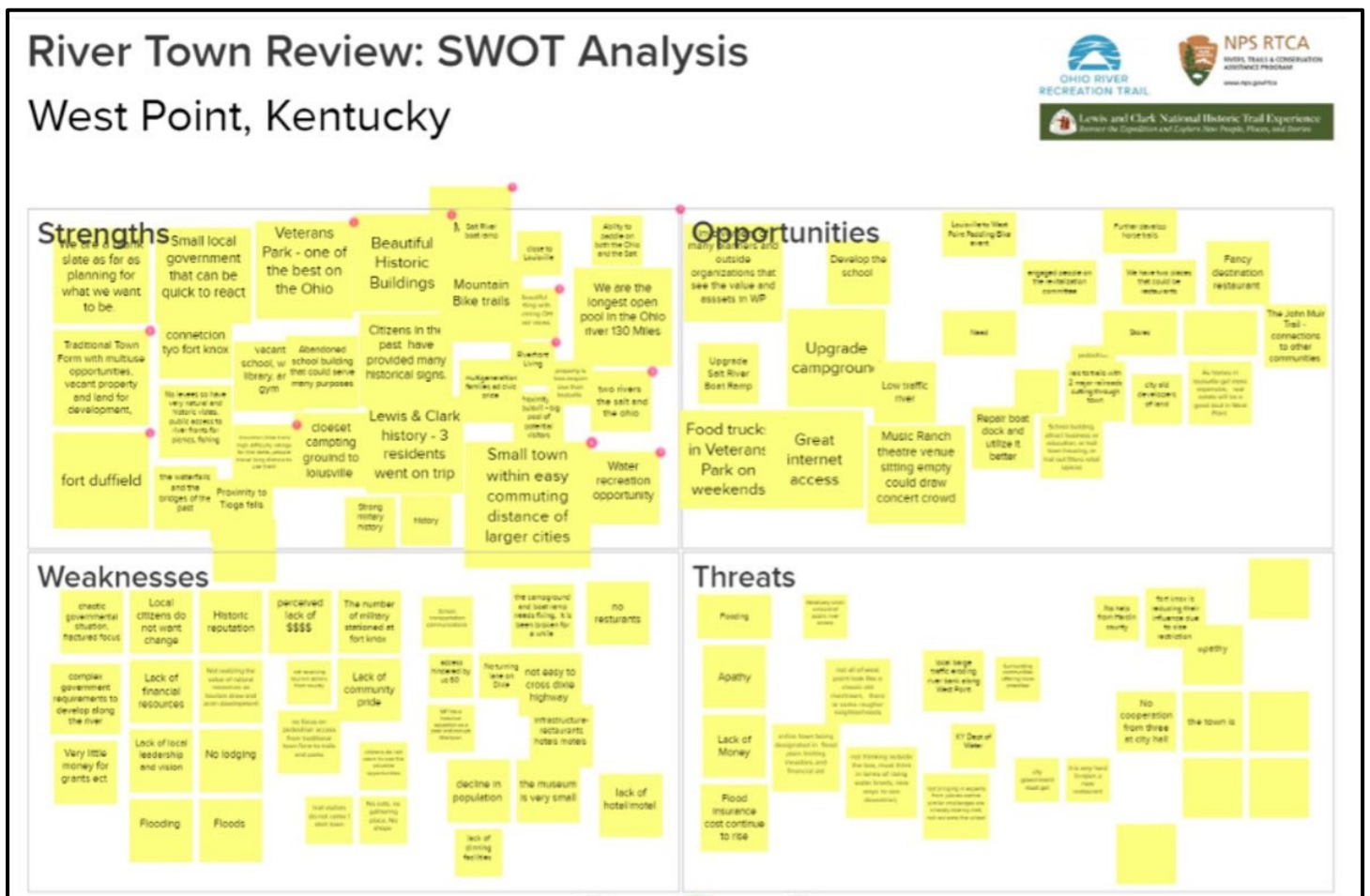




SWOT Analysis

Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities & Threats

These are the results of the River Town Review conducted via Zoom for West Point, Kentucky, on July 29, 2021. Participants listed the entries via Post-It-Notes in the Mural software. The Images below show the zoom meeting participants and the results of the ideas entered for each of the four categories of the SWOT Analysis. The table on next page lists all of the ideas in each of the categories for your information.



West Point, KY SWOT Analysis Results 7/29/21

Mural Whiteboard Comments Highlighted = Most Voted for by Participants



STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
We are a blank slate as far as planning what we want to be.	Chaotic governmental situation, fractured focus
Small local government that can be quick to react	Local citizens do not want change
Veterans Park - One of the best on the Ohio	Historic reputation
Beautiful historic buildings	Perceived lack of \$\$\$
Salt river boat ramp	The number of military stationed at Fort Knox
Close to Louisville - Large pool of potential visitors	School, transportation communications
Ability to paddle on both the Ohio and the Salt	The campground and boat ramp need fixing, it has been broken for awhile
Traditional town form with multiuse opportunities, vacant land for development	No restaurants
Connection to Fort Knox	Complex government requirements to develop along the river
Vacant school with library and gym	Lack of financial resources
Citizens in the past have provided many historical signs	Not realizing the value of natural resources as tourism draw and economic development
Mountain bike trails and their high difficulty ratings	Not receiving tourism dollars from county
Multigeneration families and civic pride	Lack of community pride
Beautiful setting with stunning OH river views	access hindered by US 60
We are the longest open pool in the Ohio River 130 miles	No turning lane on Dixie
No levees so have very natural and historic vistas, public access to riverfronts for picnics and fishing	Not easy to cross Dixie Highway
Property is less expensive than Louisville	Very little money for grants, etc.
Fort Duffield	Lack of local leadership and vision
The waterfalls and the bridges of the past	No lodging
Proximity to Tioga Falls	Flooding
Closest camping ground to Louisville	No focus on pedestrian access from traditional town form to trails and parks
Lewis & Clark History	Citizens do not seem to see the valuable opportunities
Small town within easy commuting distance of larger cities	West Point has a reputation as a poor and corrupt little town
Strong military history	Lack of infrastructure, hotels, and restaurants
Water recreation opportunities	Trail visitors do not come to town
	No eats, no gathering place, no shops.
	Decline in population
	The museum is very small

Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities & Threats – Continued

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Involvement of many planners and outside organizations that see the value and assets in West Point	Flooding
Develop the school	Apathy
Louisville to West Point paddling and biking event	Relatively small amount of public access on the river Not all of West Point looks like a classic old river town, there are some rougher neighborhoods
Further develop horse trails	Lack of money
Repair and upgrade Salt River boat ramp	Flood insurance costs continue to rise
Upgrade campground	Entire town being designated in floodplain limiting investors and financial aid
Low traffic river	Not thinking outside the box, must think in terms of rising water levels, new ways to see development
Engages people on the revitalization team	Not bringing in experts from places where similar challenges are met, not recreate the wheel It is very hard to open a new restaurant
We have two places that could be restaurants	No cooperation from three at City Hall
Fancy destination restaurant	Fort Knox is reducing their influence due to size restrictions
Pedestrian bridge across the Salt River	Surrounding communities offering more amenities
The John Muir connections to other communities	Local barge traffic eroding river bank along West Point
Food trucks in Veterans Park on weekends	No help from Hardin County
Great internet access	
Music Ranch theatre venue sitting empty could draw concert crowd	
Rails to Trails with two major railroads cutting through town	
City aid developers of land	
As homes in Louisville get more expensive, real estate will be a good deal in West Point	
School building, attract businesses or education, or trail town housing, or trail outfitters retail spaces	



Community Brainstorming Ideas

The following list of brainstorming ideas were compiled from the Mural Post-It-Notes input from the July 29, 2021 meeting participants. The highlighted ideas were identified as priority items by the participants.

West Point, KY Brainstorming Goals Results 7/29/2021

Mural Whiteboard Ideas Highlighted = Most Voted for by Participants

Short-Term Ideas to Pursue (1 to 3 Years)

West Point is bigger than Rabbit Hash, maybe elect a dog for mayor

Promote school for businesses

Hire Americorps members to lead trips

Scheduled, managed paddle events on the river

Refurbish the beach

Offer camping at Veterans Park for organized Paddling and Cycling groups

Short term rental cooperative organization

Repair the boat dock

Pop up food trucks at Veterans Park on Saturdays

Hire a manager for the boat ramp and RV park, promote it widely

Open a kayak rental business

Music concerts by the river

Use message board by caboose

Market river traffic to boaters to come to music venues

Promote the three men that went on the Lewis & Clark Expedition

Invite scout groups to camp at Veterans Park and paddle on the Salt and Ohio Rivers

Use boat dock for all water, river, camping, and activities on the parking lot

Sponsored fishing tournaments

Sponsor "Music in the Park" one Saturday each month

Ordinances to encourage house boats and camping on private property

Open the Salt River through Fort Knox for fishing and paddling year round

Long-Term Ideas to Pursue (3 to 10 Years)

Connect the trail all the way to Otter Creek Park

Have the state legislators push building a walking and biking bridge over the Salt River

Develop city vacant land across Dixie into equestrian center with barns and trails and lots of equine trail mini ranches

Have somewhere to eat

Fuel dock for Salt River

Find investors and tiny houses at run down trailer parks

Get millenials involved with free artist display spaces and pop breweries

Walking and biking trail along the river

Open music ranch

Open an art gallery or two. West Point could be an artist community.

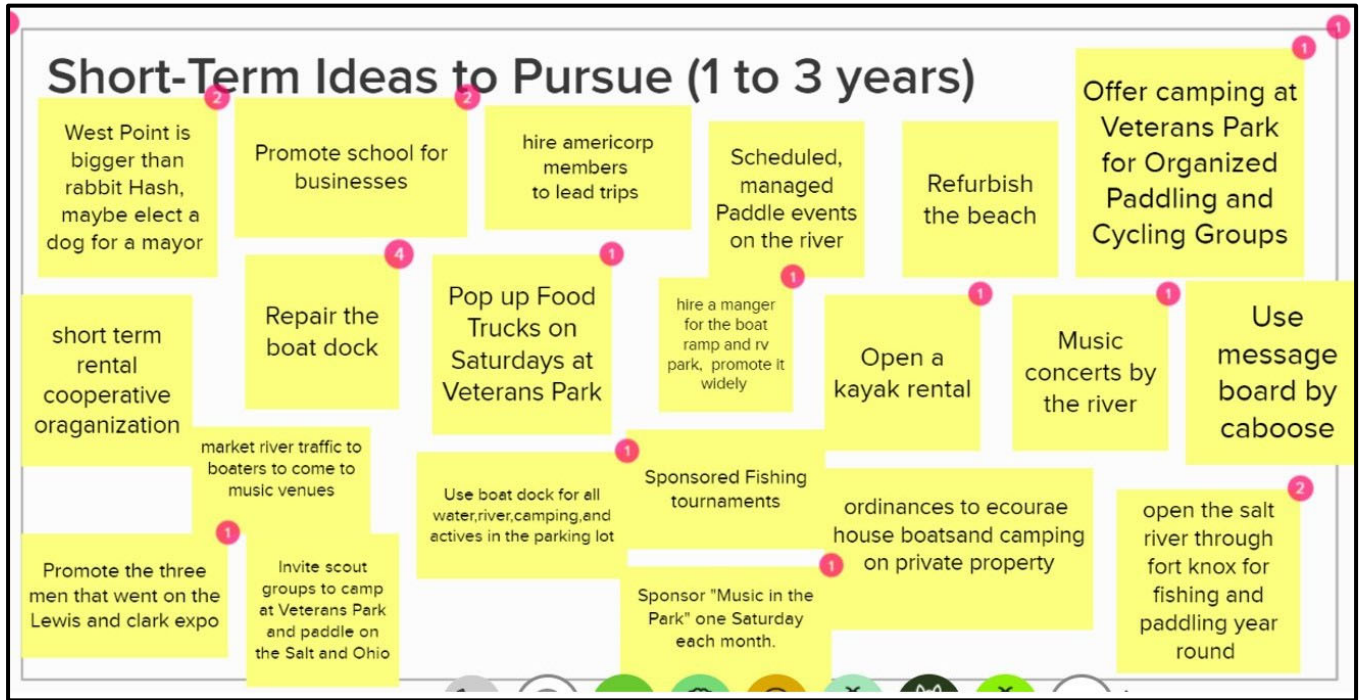
Get historic horse trails mapped and approved on public streets for anytime horse visitors

Foot bridge across the Salt River

Major donors to share vision and support Salt River pedestrian bridge

Hazard mitigation grants to improve property

Brainstorming Ideas – Continued

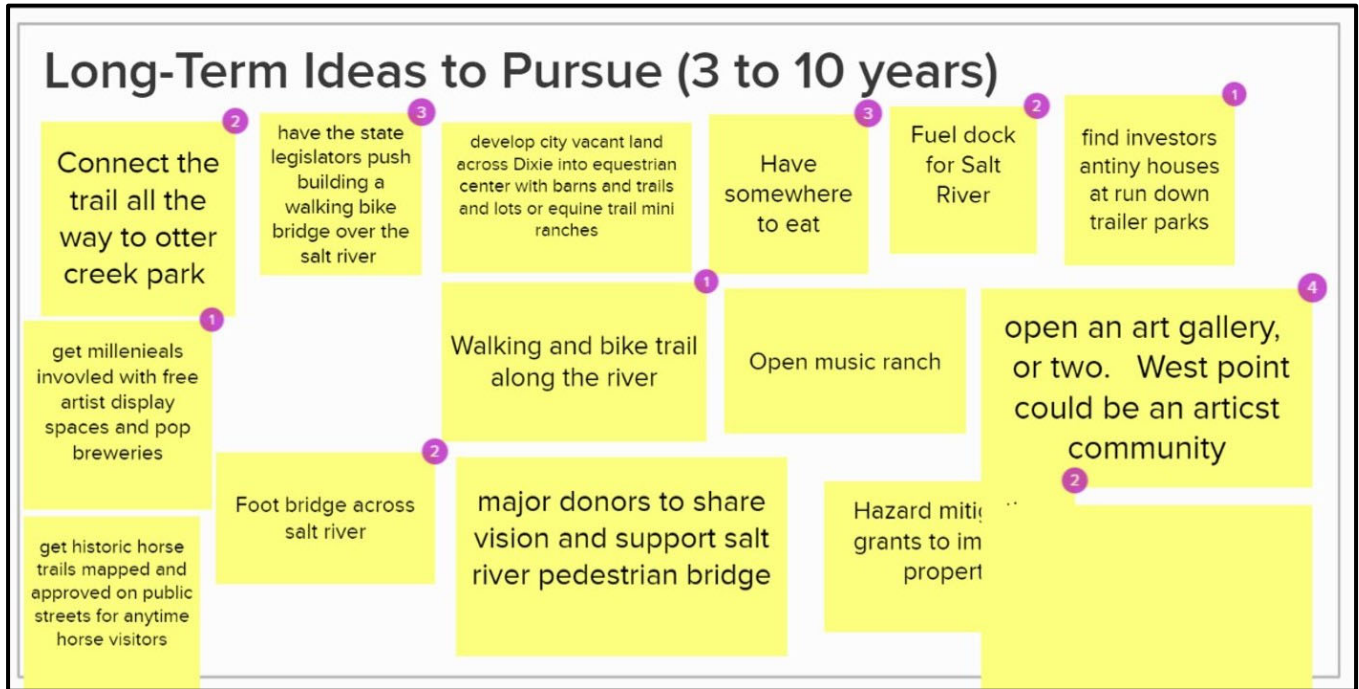


Mural Board Brainstorming Short-Term Ideas Input Results

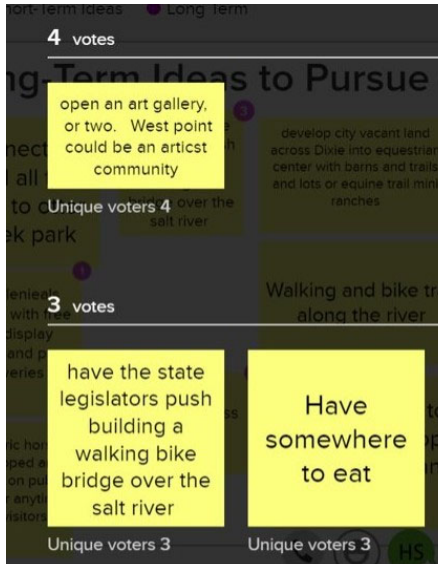


Polling Results to Prioritize Short-Term Ideas for West Point

Brainstorming Ideas – Continued



Mural Board Brainstorming Long-Term Ideas Input Results



Polling Results to Prioritize Long-Term Ideas for West Point



Homework & Comments

Post West Point River Town Review Workshop, 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

- We have guests all the time who are unaware of what West Point has to offer. We show them the historic homes, if they like to walk, we take them around the historic markers, if the weather is nice, we take them across the highway to Fort Duffield, Bridges and Tioga if they are able to do all that. Then we sit on the porch, drink sweet tea, and watch the barges and boats on the river. Children love to come visit they enjoy hunting rocks and shells on the riverbank and they also love the playgrounds in the park.
- Take visitors to Tioga Falls, Ft. Duffield, and Bridges of the Past. Then go for a boat ride on the river.



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

Contact Information

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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)
- [River Towns Program | Susquehanna Greenway](#)
- [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](#)

Bicycle Friendly Business Designation [Businesses](#) | [League of American Bicyclists \(bikeleague.org\)](#)

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 \(destinationdevelopment.org\)](#)

Destination Stewardship [Destination-Stewardship-Framework.pdf \(wtcc.org\)](#)

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 Mid-sized 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](#)

[US Economic Development Administration Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation - American Rescue Plan | U.S. Economic Development Administration \(eda.gov\)](#)

[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 \(sba.gov\)](#)

[Keep America Beautiful's Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund Application Survey \(surveymonkey.com\)](#)

[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](#)

[Applications Now Live for the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design \(rural-design.org\)](#)

[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 Costal 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 Park Service

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program

Ohio River Recreation Trail – **Resources List**
April 2021 – R7

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](https://www.nfwf.org)

US Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service

[Technical Assistance | NRCS \(usda.gov\)](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov)

Rural Development Programs & Services

[Programs & Services | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/ruraldevelopment)

Strategic Economic & Community Development

[Strategic Economic and Community Development | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/economicdevelopment)

