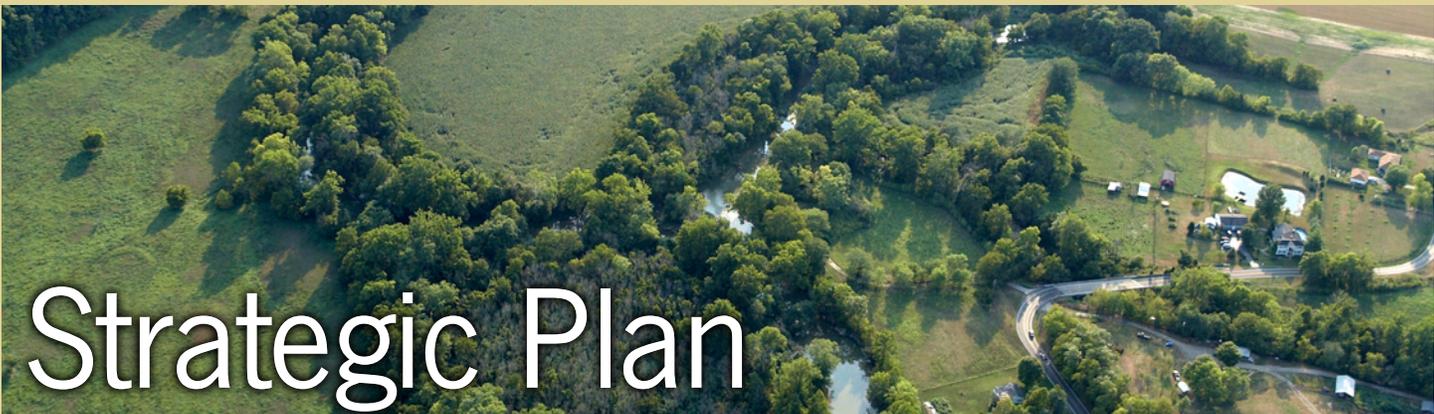




Louisville Loop



Strategic Plan



JUNE 2011



METRO Parks
www.metro-parks.org

Louisville Loop Strategic Plan

"A more livable, attractive, mobile, efficient and environmentally sensitive community" (1).

Cornerstone 2020, June 2000

The Louisville Loop Trail is "an estimated 100-mile loop trail system that will ring the city and link existing and new parks and neighborhoods to civic attractions, transportation alternatives, and recreation opportunities" (1.1).

Louisville Loop Design Guidelines, December 2009.

Mission

The Louisville Loop connects people to a greener healthier community.

Vision

The Louisville Loop is an essential component for the growth and prosperity of the Region. A network of shared-use paths, soft surface trails, bike lanes on roadways, stream corridors, Olmsted parkways, and transit routes, the Loop provides alternative transportation choices for residents and visitors of Louisville and the Region. The Loop celebrates the City's history and natural world through public art in its infrastructure and special places.

The Loop:

- Enhances economic development opportunities in the Loopshed (1/2 mile to two miles on either side of the Loop);
- Encourages sustainable development in the Loopshed;
- Provides safe and accessible opportunities to engage in active lifestyles;
- Connects neighborhoods to each other, schools, work, retail businesses and parks;
- Promotes the protection and appreciation of natural assets, culture, and history; and,
- Enhances and improves air quality and the natural environment.

History



Setting this vision for Louisville began in 1993 when more than 600 people worked together in a seven-year effort called Cornerstone 2020. The outcome was a call to transform our city into a community that brings people together in livable communities with a distinct sense of place. This call was heard by Mayor Jerry Abramson in 2003 as the first mayor of our merged city and county governments.

One of the transformative projects of Cornerstone 2020 was a "perimeter loop trail along the entire length of the Ohio River in the southwest... along Pond Creek eastward via McNeely Park to Floyds Fork... back to the Ohio River. The loop trail should be developed as a special recreational feature which could include public art and an interpretive program designed to reveal the natural and cultural history of the County" (85). Parks and Open Space Master Plan, July 1995. The Louisville Loop also would "incorporate varying types and intensity of human use, including trails for passive recreation and alternative transportation" (2). MSD Stream Corridor/Greenway Plan, March 1995.

In 2005 Mayor Abramson launched the CITY OF PARKS initiative with the Louisville Loop as its centerpiece along with expanding and improving parkland and environmental education. As a result of community input, the perimeter trail was named the Louisville Loop. An estimated 100-mile trail system, the Loop will ring the city and link existing and new parks and neighborhoods to civic attractions while providing transportation alternatives that include bike and transit access.



In 2011, Mayor Greg Fischer committed to the Louisville Loop. His charge was to complete the Loop and focus on connecting people by foot, bike and transit to community gathering places, schools, work places, natural areas and commercial centers. The vision is for these spokes to:

- create an integrated transportation network;
- support a sustainable community that values natural and cultural assets;
- provide safe routes for all; and,
- enhance the health of our citizens.

Accomplishments and Progress

A hallmark of the Louisville Loop Project is cooperation among city, state and federal agencies, and with citizens. Some of the work they have accomplished or that is underway includes:

- Completed 25 miles of the Loop from Big Four Bridge to Farnsley-Moremen Landing
- 2.5 miles from Farnsley-Moreman to Watson lane in design
- 1.5 miles MSD's Pond Creek Trail
- Trail Design Guidelines
- Wayfinding and Signage Plan
- Branding Strategy
- Coordinated Community Transportation Planning
- Multi-departmental resource survey
- Strategic Plan 2010 and 2011
- Partnership agreements with 21st Century Parks
- Maintenance Plan and implementation schedule
- Security Plan and implementation schedule
- Long-term funding strategy
- 8 public meetings in 2010/2011
- Metrosafe mileage identification
- 2010 Bicycle Master Plan
- Master Plans for 95% of the Loop
- Southwest Greenway Plan
- Establishing a Friends of the Loop Group



Strategic Approach

Prior to 2003, two sections of the Louisville Loop, the RiverWalk and the Levee Trail, were completed. In 2004, those trails were linked with on and off-road sections. From 2005 until 2009 the focus shifted to planning the Loop route, identifying design/construction funding and partners, and developing trail design guidelines. In June 2009, Mayor Abramson formed a steering committee to set the strategic direction for the Loop. Over the next six months, civic and government representatives addressed this questions: How does the Louisville Loop succeed as a priority alternative transportation/parks/greenways system? The outcome was the 2010 Louisville Loop Strategic Plan. For this 2011 update of the Strategic Plan, teams led by City staff, focused on the imperatives and work plans, applying this central question: How do we give the Loop stability?

Strategic Recommendation

Adherence to the five imperatives - community engagement, health and wellness, maintenance and conservation, sustainability, and funding/development - guarantees the long-term viability of the Louisville Loop.

To maximize the opportunity to reach those imperatives, this 2011 Strategic Plan Update carries forward the 2010 recommendation to establish an entity to ensure the success of the Loop and to create an advocacy group for the Loop.

In addition, the 2011 Strategic Plan Update commits to the prior year imperatives with updates to the key initiatives and workplans.

Strategic Imperatives

"The early goals for the Olmsted parks and parkways are not all that different than the overarching goal the city has established for the Louisville Loop: providing safe, efficient, and pleasing facilities that accommodate all levels of users and creates a more connected community" (1-1).

Louisville Loop Design Guidelines Manual

Build Community Engagement

Create and nurture a widespread belief in the community that the Louisville Loop is an essential part of the Region's quality of life that people will be inspired to support and defend.

Encourage Health and Wellness

Use the Loop to demonstrate and reinforce a lifestyle of health and wellness by promoting, partnering, and providing opportunities for all.

Maintain and Conserve

Ensure the Loop is maintained at the highest standards for safe public use, connectivity, recreation, and transportation. Ensure stewardship of the Loop and the Loopshed that enhances the physical and natural landscape.

Encourage Sustainable Development around the Loop corridor

Encourage growth and sustainable development in the Loopshed that creates healthy communities, supports local economies, and protects the environment. Ensure investment in infrastructure respects the existing communities yet creates vibrancy and sustainable community form for generations to cherish.

Ensure Funding to Develop and Sustain the Loop

Ensure the Loop has funding for planning, development, construction, and maintenance. Encourage regional economic growth through securing funds for the Loop



Build Community Engagement

Defining Statement

Create and nurture a widespread belief in the community that the Louisville Loop is an essential part of the Region's quality of life that people will be inspired to support and defend.



Key Initiatives

- Develop a functioning external advocacy group, Friends of the Loop, based on structure recommended by organizing committee.
- Ensure that metro provide adequate resources to sustain the advocacy group.
- Develop and implement a program for public outreach and communication for the Louisville Loop.
- Develop a partnership with businesses, civic groups, government entities, churches, schools and neighborhood groups to sustain and enhance the Louisville Loop through increased usage, financial support and volunteerism.

Work Plan

1. Secure a written commitment with the Parks Foundation to be the interim fiscal agent
2. Determine a formal structure for the Friends of the Loop group
3. Organize new events and leverage existing events to encourage use, improve trail conditions and promote awareness of the Loop.
4. Conduct research survey and focus group
5. Develop a volunteer program to help with advocacy, safety and maintenance
6. Promote and coordinate the use of the Loop as a venue for third-party organizational fundraising events, health and wellness programs, athletic competitions and more.
7. Develop a loop ambassadors program
8. Develop a branding strategy



Encourage Health And Wellness

Defining Statement

Use the Loop to demonstrate and reinforce a lifestyle of health and wellness by promoting, partnering, and providing opportunities for all.

Key Initiatives

- Ensure safe access to Loop from neighborhoods, schools and youth populated areas.
- Create opportunities to enhance quality of life and active living at individual, neighborhood, and community levels by using the Loop for walking, bicycling and other recreational activities.
- Provide fun and lifestyle-oriented destinations for organizations and individuals.
- Assess the health impact of the Loop and use findings to develop key indicators for measuring future progress of the community's health and wellness.
- Provide education opportunities with partners such as JCPs, which integrate the Louisville Loop.



Work Plan

1. Work with all Healthy Hometown Movement committees to identify projects and policies that promote healthy lifestyles and make recommendations for changes.
2. Coordinate with Healthy Kids, Healthy Community project to connect the 12 neighborhoods to Louisville Loop (12 neighborhoods in northwest and east central Louisville).
3. Seek funding for Health Impact Assessments in conjunction with the Southwest Greenways Study.
4. Initiate dialogue and seek partners (e.g. University of Louisville, Bellarmine University, Spalding, etc.) for performing a health impact assessment for the Loop with goal of identifying not only the health impacts of the areas around the Loop on future users, but also the impact on the community's health by using the Loop.
5. Partner with Metro Health and Wellness to host 2 events to raise awareness of trail use and its health benefits.
6. Develop a matrix to measure health and wellness impacts on loop, spokes, bike routes and transit.
7. Partner with existing incentive programs to encourage logging mileage along the Loop.
 - a. Partner with Kentuckiana Metro on the Move to help promote usage of Loop through the use of its users' challenges.
 - b. Establish central program to log miles on Loop and create incentives to encourage its use.
 - c. Install Mayor's Miles that connect to the Loop from adjacent neighborhoods to provide incentive for measuring individual progress and encourage more physical activity.

Maintain and Conserve

Defining Statement

Ensure the loop corridor is maintained at the highest standards for safe public use, connectivity, recreation, and transportation. Ensure stewardship of the corridor that enhances the physical and natural landscape.

Key Initiatives

- Determine the appropriate entity and organizational structure to oversee maintenance and protection of the Louisville Loop that appropriately addresses the statutory and regulatory roles of key agencies.
- Develop a general maintenance plan for the Loop that meets the goals of being cost effective, with efficient delivery of services, while protecting and enhancing the ecological integrity of the Loop.
- Ensure public safety within the Loop by developing the necessary relationships with local police, fire, and EMS and developing appropriate initiatives to engage the community to promote public safety
- Determine conservation initiatives and partnerships that enhances and protects the loop as a provider of habitat, a vital resource connecting the community to the natural world, and that uses public art as a tool to interpret the natural worlds as well as to celebrate special places on the Loop



Work Plan

1. Develop and submit an operating and capital budget proposal for Loop maintenance and conservation initiatives with the assumption that the Loop will be maintained at the highest level possible given its status as one of the Mayor's signature Parks initiatives.
2. Following approval of the actual budget allocation for Loop Maintenance as of July 2011, develop a detailed maintenance plan for the Louisville Loop which identifies the maintenance standards that will be adhered to and prioritizes specific activities in order of importance
3. Develop a general plan that identifies remaining maintenance, conservation, and safety needs beyond those for which funding/resources are available as of July 2011.
4. Identify ideas and strategies that the Louisville Loop Friends group can undertake to add value to or support maintenance/conservation of the Loop beyond the budget allocation.
5. Develop volunteer events/programs to support Maintenance/Conservation of the Loop (e.g., trail watch group, Loop Clean-up events, etc.)
6. Coordinate with LMPD, EMS, Louisville Fire and other relevant Metro Agencies to determine any safety gaps and identify any additional budget needs specific to safety departments).
7. Develop/improve automated process for public reporting of maintenance issues, routing of issues to appropriate responsible entity, and customer contact. Lay groundwork for eventual computerized work-order system.



Encourage Sustainable Development Around the Loop Corridor

Defining Statement

Encourage growth and sustainable development in the Loopshed (1) that creates healthy communities, supports local economies, and protects the environment. Ensure investment in infrastructure respects the existing communities yet creates vibrancy and sustainable community form for generations to cherish.

(1) The Loopshed can be defined as the links within a network or defined space (typically one half mile to two mile radius) that feed into the main Loop pathway corridor, much like waterways within a watershed. The Loopshed shall serve as the network of streets, greenways, and other key corridors that link the Louisville Loop with the immediate communities and their destinations.



Key Initiatives

- Create incentives, guidelines and regulations as part of the development review process that support the Loop as the heart of an alternative transportation network and ensures that public and private development provides appropriate connections to the Loop with shared-use paths, sidewalks, bike lanes and transit service.
- Ensure that development of the Loop respects and celebrates the environmental constraints and natural features of the land, as well as the historic and cultural resources of the community through careful planning, design and implementation.
- Create and implement a communication plan with a focus on planning, design and construction of the Loop and nearby development that inspires growth that is seen as an asset and is valued by the community and that contributes to the overall wealth and well-being of all our citizens.

Work Plan



1. Develop guiding principles and criteria for development within the Loopshed that ensure protection and enhancement of that area's natural, historical and cultural features.
2. Map the natural, historical and cultural amenities within the Loopshed and use maps as guide in identifying focal areas for investment including tourism-related businesses, redevelopment, infill, and general sustainable development.
3. Review Land Development Code regulations and language to evaluate whether existing regulations support compatibility with and connections to the Loop, including support for Loop strategic imperatives.
4. Develop a scope of work and a funding plan to create a citywide greenways plan that addresses all opportunities for trail development, including but not limited to links with city neighborhoods, activity centers, parks, existing trails, and the current and future Loop corridor.
5. Partner with City Solutions Center to hold a design workshop in a specific site (such as Fairdale) to help the public understand and visualize smart growth design concepts.

Encourage Sustainable Development Around The Loop Corridor, continued

Work Plan

6. Convene Greater Louisville Convention and Visitors Bureau, Greater Louisville Inc., Waterfront Development Corporation and other relevant stakeholders to identify tourism-related economic development opportunities along waterfront (both Indiana and Kentucky sides) portion of Louisville Loop.
7. Brief Economic Development Department to identify potential development sites (business, residential, employment, mixed use) so that they become enhancements to the Loop and to one another.
8. Identify potential transit nodes and bike route intersections and develop criteria and process for prioritization.
9. Coordinate transportation planning efforts amongst agencies whose projects and plans interface with the Loopshed in order to develop a long term strategy for an interconnected bicycle and pedestrian network.



Funding And Development

Defining Statement

Ensure the Loop has funding for planning, development, construction, and maintenance. Encourage regional economic growth through securing funds for the Loop.

Key Initiatives

- Identify public and private revenue sources.
- Create the governance structure of the Loop.
- Establish relationships with city/state, non-profit agencies to explore partnership opportunities in planning, funding, and advocacy.
- To increase awareness of the Loop's economic contribution to the community, produce a study about the economic impact of the Loop.
- Collaborate with private developers to encourage development complementary of Loop design guidelines.



Funding and Development, continued

Work Plan

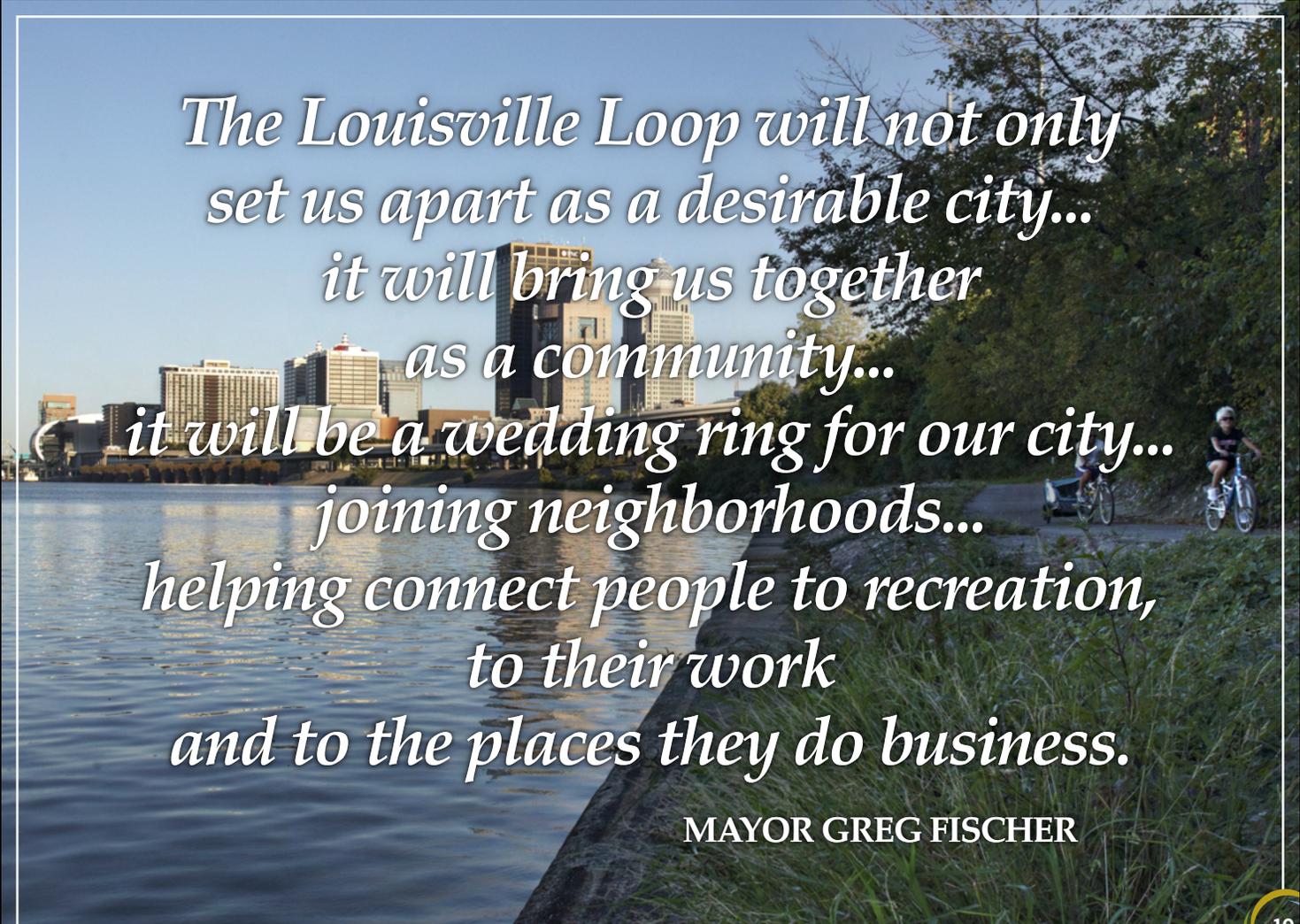
1. Develop an inventory of potential public and private fundraising sources for planning, development, construction and maintenance of the Loop.
 - a. Produce a report on the ability to use tax increment financing and other public financing options as a funding source for the Loop.
 - b. Produce a matrix that identifies grant opportunities from local, state, regional, philanthropic and national sources. Write an action plan that articulates a strategy for pursuing funding opportunities.
 - c. Coordinate fundraising with Parks Foundation, Olmsted, and 21st Century Parks.
 - d. Identify sponsorship and naming opportunities.
2. Research options for the organizational structure of the Loop. Present recommendation to stakeholders and establish the governance for the Loop.
3. Draft a strategy for developing and funding an economic impact study.
4. Develop a strategy for forming partnerships (GLI, KYTC, Health Department, TARC Neighborhood and business associations, etc.) to ensure funding and local support.



Conclusion

The Louisville Loop is guided by the principles stated in the *Louisville Loop Design Guidelines*, December 2010 (page 1-50), which in summary include:

- A safe and healthy environment for all users
- Linked, connected opportunities for a system of alternative transportation and recreation facilities
- Connections to existing trails and parkways as well as future trails
- A venue for temporary and permanent public art as part of its aesthetic environs
- Demonstrate principles of sustainability and environmental stewardship.
- Balance high-quality design with cost-effective maintenance.
- An identity that is exclusive to the city of Parks Initiative while allowing variations in distinct segments.
- Celebrate, educate and highlight the uniqueness of the communities, the people, the history, the geology, and the environment.
- A catalyst for economic development throughout the city.



*The Louisville Loop will not only
set us apart as a desirable city...
it will bring us together
as a community...
it will be a wedding ring for our city...
joining neighborhoods...
helping connect people to recreation,
to their work
and to the places they do business.*

MAYOR GREG FISCHER

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Louisville Loop-Related Planning Documents

BRAC/Fort Knox

Chickasaw Stroll: A Walkability Assessment for the Chickasaw Neighborhood

Commuter Rail Plan

Dixie Corridor Master Plan

Fairdale Library plan

Fairdale Neighborhood Plan

Farnsley Moreman Master Plan

Greenwood Road Improvements Plan

Manslick Road Improvement plan

KIPDA Interchange Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Study

Louisville Metro Eastern Thoroughfare Plan

Metropolitan Transportation Plan

MSD Pond Creek Restoration Plan

New Cut Road/Taylor Blvd Corridor Plan

Parkhill Corridor Study

Pedestrian Master Plan

The Portland Stroll: A Walkability Assessment for the Portland Neighborhood

Shawnee Stroll: A Walkability Assessment for the Shawnee Neighborhood

Southwest Library Expansion plans

Transportation Improvement Program



Louisville Loop Planning Documents

2010 Bike Master Plan

Champions Park Master Plan (Louisville Metro Parks) 2009

Chickasaw Park Master Plan (Louisville Metro Parks) 2001

Cultural and Recreational Signage for SW

Jefferson Memorial Forest Master Plan (Louisville Metro Parks) May 2009

Louisville Loop Trail Standards Manual (Louisville Metro Parks) December 2009

Louisville Loop Signage Manual

Louisville Loop Trail Extension (to Watson Lane) plan

Middletown-Eastwood Trail Schematic Plan (Louisville Metro Parks) 2008

Northeast Loop Master Plan (Louisville Metro Parks) 2010

Ohio River Corridor Master Plan (Jefferson County Planning and Development Services, MSD and Riverfields) January 1996

Olmsted Parks and Parkways Master Plan (Louisville Olmsted Parks Conservancy and Louisville Metro Parks) 1994

Olmsted Parkways Multi-use Path Master Plan (Louisville Metro Parks) 2009

Portland Wharf Park Master Plan (Portland Museum and Louisville Metro Parks) 2002

Portland Wharf Park Interpretive Master Plan (Portland Museum and Louisville Metro Parks) 2008

Pond Creek and Mill Creek Recreational Concept Plan (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Louisville Metro Parks and MSD) October 2008

Prospect Transportation Study (City of Prospect) 2009

River Road Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan Draft (Louisville Metro Public Works) 2009

Riverview Park Master Plan (Waterfront Development Corporation) 2005

Riverside, Farnsley-Moreman Landing (Farnsley-Moreman Board of Directors) 2001

Rubbertown Corridor Economic Development Strategy

Soft-surface Trails Plan

SW Greenways Master Plan

TARC's Loop to the Loop plan

The Fork: The Floyds Fork Greenway Master Plan (21st Century Parks, Inc.) December 2008

U.S. 42 Widening from Harrods Creek to River Road Study (Ky. Transportation Cabinet) 2009

Supporting Documents

Cornerstone 2020 Comprehensive Plan (Jefferson County Planning and Development Services), June 2000

Complete Streets Manual (Louisville Metro Planning and Design Services) October 2007 Falls of the Ohio River Greenway Corridor Conceptual Master Plan (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), 1994

Louisville and Jefferson County Parks and Open Space Master Plan (Louisville Metro Parks) July 1995

Louisville Streetscape Design Manual (Louisville Metro Planning and Design Services) 2006

Louisville and Jefferson County Multi-Objective Stream Corridor/Greenway Play (Metropolitan Sewer District) March 1995

Ohio River Bridges Study (Ky. Transportation Cabinet)

Oldham County Bike and Pedestrian Trails (Oldham County Planning and Zoning) 2008