

3. Shawnee Park

"If you wish the city to possess broad and tranquil meadowy spaces, with, by and by, the shadows of great spreading trees slanting across them, and offering at once areas of turf to be inexpensively kept in a suitable condition for lawn games, more can be done to meet this want for a thousand dollars on the site you have named Shawnee Park than on this of Iroquois Hill for a million."—Excerpts from First Annual Report, Louisville Board of Park Commissioners, July 1891, prepared by F. L. Olmsted & Co., Landscape Architects.

"Softball is overprioritized—no more recreation facilities should be encroaching into quiet spaces."—Comments from public forum, April 1992

"Parks are green space for the renovation of the soul. We must reserve our open spaces without clutter, like the natural countryside. The park is an extension of my house—it's part of my garden."—Comments from public forum, April 1992

"We deem it an important point that the principal parks of a city should be distinguished one from another somewhat markedly in the way in which they are used and in their landscape treatment. Having this general principle in mind, we have aimed to so design the three principal parks of Louisville that they would serve somewhat different purposes, each being as complete as possible in itself, and the purpose to which each park is designed being in harmony with the existing topography and natural growths.

Having thus selected a principal purpose to be accomplished in each of the parks, we aimed to improve and increase their natural adaptability to those purposes and to make the necessary artificial constructions, (enabling the people to use the parks in great crowds, with the least possible injury to natural growths) as little inimical as possible to the selected character of landscape. Shawnee Park differs from the other two in having a considerable proportion of nearly level land almost free from trees, and in commanding views over the great river. At the same time, this park is of such limited area that it would take only a few minutes to drive all around its circuit drive, and the local views across its meadow, while agreeable enough in themselves, are not sufficiently extensive to become the controlling circumstance in the design of the park. In seeking to determine, therefore, what should be the principal controlling characteristic of this park, it has seemed to us that it would consist in its use as a great public playground, leaving all the other advantages of the site to become of subordinate importance.

The principal feature in our design for Shawnee Park, therefore, is the central play-ground, upon which we should expect, unlike most other large parks, that military parades and large public gatherings could be permitted upon suitable occasions. Such a use of most parks would be entirely destructive of the most important elements of their value. In all cases where public parks are large enough to tempt people to go to them with the conscious or unconscious purpose of enjoying natural scenery, and of escaping from city sights and sounds, it is absolutely essential to prohibit the gathering of large numbers of people in organized bodies, or as spectators of parades, exhibitions, public speaking and the like. In the case of Shawnee park, it seems to us that it would not be inappropriate to develop its landscape in the direction of a great public common, associated on the one hand with a certain character, and on the other, with a picturesque natural treatment of the slopes between the meadow and the river. The leading motive in planting should be that of creating agreeable foregrounds to the views across the river, and of thickening up the inland borders of the park in order to obtain a certain degree of seclusion which will be available at times when the park is not being used for its principal purpose."—Excerpts from F. L. Olmsted & Co. to John B. Castleman, November 17, 1892

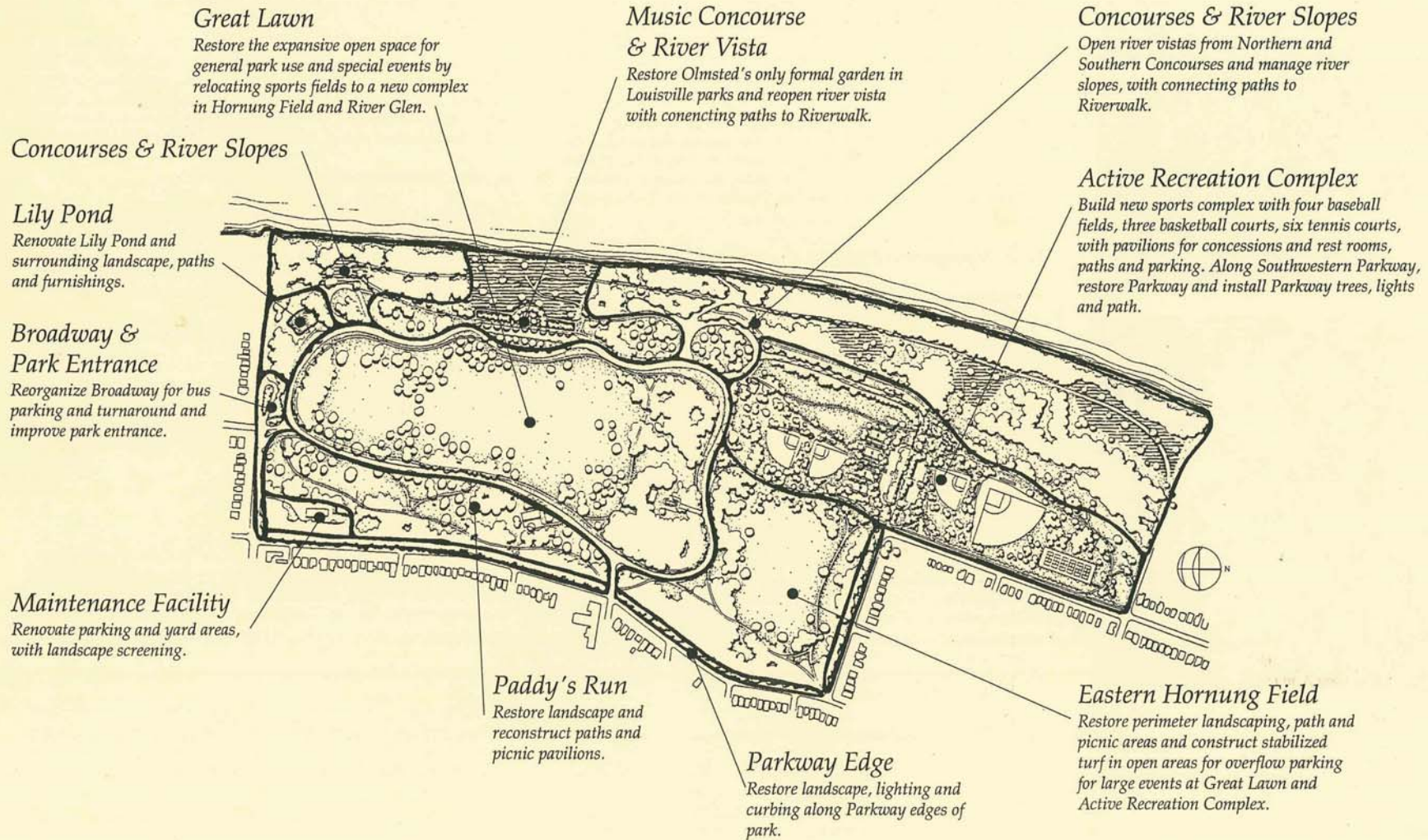
Chapter 3 Shawnee Park

Prepared by Andropogon Associates, Philadelphia PA

Renewal Strategy

The key to renewing Shawnee Park is to relocate its deteriorating sports facilities, which now obstruct the Great Lawn's open spaces. Indeed, the great sporting tradition and history of Shawnee Park need renewal just as much as its historic landscape character. A new sports complex, located on Hornung Field and River Glen Park, will allow active recreation to coexist with the passive recreation afforded by the historic parkland. The renewal of Shawnee Park itself will center on the Great Lawn, Concourse, and access to the Ohio River, both visually and physically. The proposed Riverwalk, a seven-mile recreational trail connecting downtown Louisville with Chickasaw Park, should be routed along the old river road alignment on the lower terrace, with new connecting pathways to the Great Lawn and river overlooks. A small boat ramp would also bring people back to Shawnee. The Music Concourse, Olmsted's only formal garden design for Louisville's parks, will be reestablished with flowering plants and walkways, connected to the Music Pavilion in a mini-amphitheater space created by using the floodwall. Program planning, as well as interpretive signage to tell its fascinating history, is also required to encourage neighborhood and community-wide use of this park.

Key Master Plan Recommendations for Shawnee Park





(Top) View of presently closed river vistas from the Concourse in Shawnee Park. These vistas would be reopened for framed views of the river, according to a landscape management program that would establish stabilized savannahs and open woodlands on the river banks that are maintainable over time. (Andropogon Associates, 1993)

(Bottom) View of old river road, where the proposed Riverwalk would occur, along with open views of the Ohio River. (Andropogon Associates, 1993)

Landscape Management

"Before settlement the area was densely forested on several terraces of the river's floodplain. The terraces formed a natural levee that probably prevented regular flooding on the plateau areas of what is now the park."—from "Natural Communities & Disturbance Analysis," prepared by Eco-Tech, Inc.

Forest Management Issues

Only a few fragments of the original forest on the broad terraces of the Ohio River in Shawnee Park remain in two ravines that connect the riverfront to the uplands. Both are relatively disturbed and require timely management to preserve their value for future generations. Invasive exotic vegetation is a serious problem in the landscapes of both ravines.

Forest Management Priorities

- Protect and restore the silver maple/box elder/sycamore ravine forest, which is the most important wildlife habitat in Shawnee Park.
- Protect and manage the beech/ash/silver maple/sycamore ravine forest, which has some of the largest, mature trees of the original forest.

Woodland Management Issues

The once broad vistas of the Ohio River that were maintained by clear-cutting the woodlands on the terrace slopes have now largely closed and the slopes are poorly stabilized with undesirable exotic plants that threaten adjacent natural areas. The terraces now support relatively open woodlands. The few canopy trees are often quite large. Beneath them exotic shrubs and native successional trees, such as black locust and cherry, proliferate. This rank growth that completely obscures the view of the Ohio River is, in part, a result of clearing operations designed to expose the view. The restoration of vistas must be more selective and accomplished without damaging habitat values. The willows and box elder along the immediate shoreline are subject to damage, not only by floods, but also by the efforts to clad the slope with rip-rap material to protect it from flood flows.

Woodland Management Priorities

- Redefine goals of vista management to address appropriate management of native communities. Select a few critical views and manage the remainder of the terrace woodlands to provide intermittent rather than sweeping views. Selective clearance will also help to stabilize the slopes and reduce the rate of exotic invasion.

- Initiate an exotics control program that focuses on protecting the ravine forests and least disturbed areas first.
- Reestablish riparian corridors. Initiate selective clearing as well as replanting using soil bio-engineering techniques.

Savannah/Meadow Management Issues

The riparian corridor along the Ohio was probably converted to a savannah-like condition by grazing livestock soon after the lush presettlement forest was cleared. Increased flooding due to forest clearance also ravaged the floodplain vegetation periodically, maintaining an open condition. The park was largely focused on these vistas that have since been closed, mostly by exotic invasive vegetation.

Savannah/Meadow Management Priorities

- It is crucial that a consistent management program be established. In particular, the mowing must be regular enough to favor herbaceous species forming a dense and stable cover. Intermittent clearance every few years or so will simply favor the rankness of exotic vegetation. Such management in the past is in part why the slopes are in such poor condition.
- The initial effort should be to develop stable herbaceous cover rather than control of herbaceous exotics.
- Reseeding and jute matting are likely to be necessary in many places as well as the removal of debris and trash for safety purposes and to facilitate future management.
- Some consideration should be given to savannah margins in portions of the picnic groves to reduce negative impacts by maintenance equipment to the large trees.

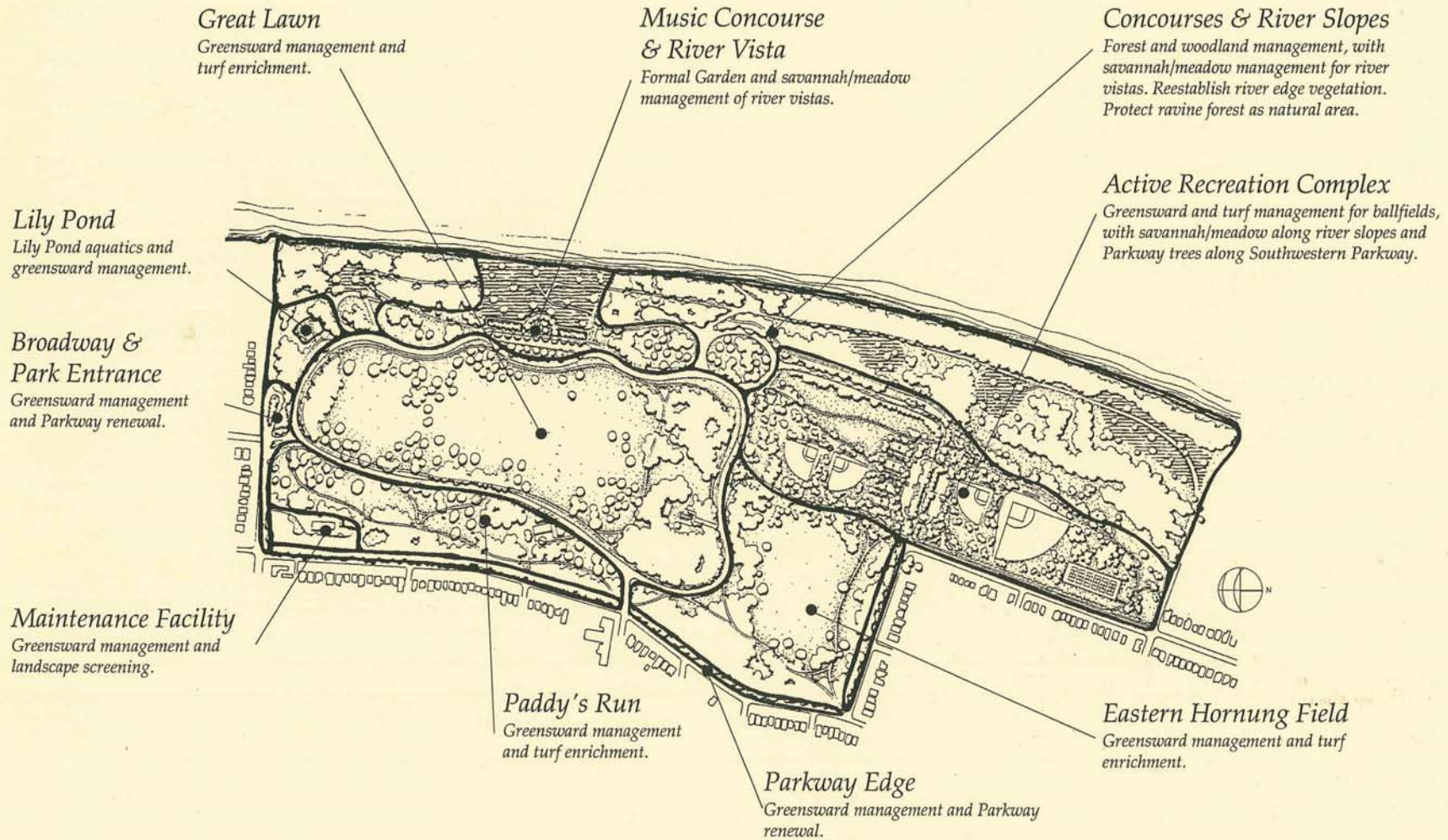
Greensward Management Issues

The historic greensward of Shawnee Park provided ample recreation opportunities, from picnic groves to casual playfields and acres of grass to play upon and stroll about on. With the creation of the flood control berm and the intrusion of athletic fields, the character was dramatically changed. Today these open landscapes are severely impacted by improper or deferred maintenance and conflicting uses.

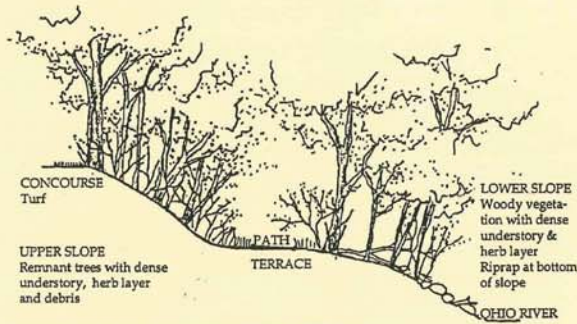
Greensward Management Priorities

- The removal and relocation of inappropriately sited athletic facilities will provide an opportunity to field test a variety of soil treatments, seed mixes, and maintenance techniques for greensward as well as for the turf on the new athletic facilities.

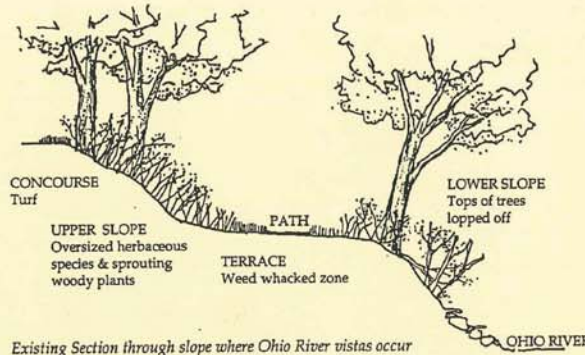
Landscape Management Areas for Shawnee Park



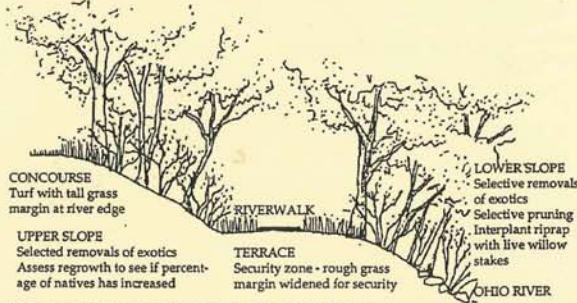
3. Shawnee Park



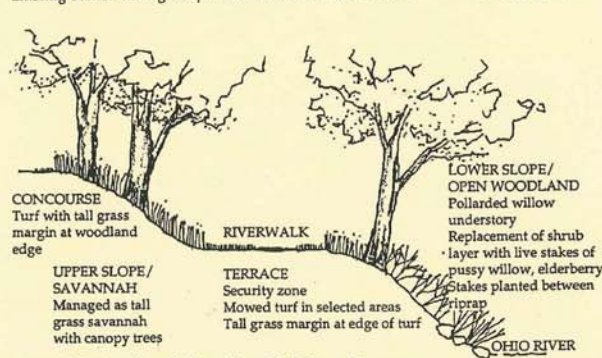
Existing Section through slope without vistas to Ohio River



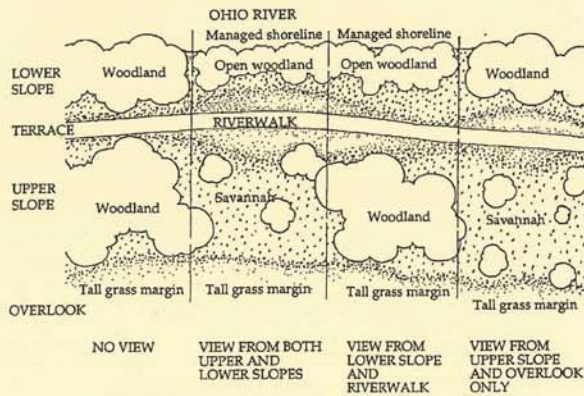
Existing Section through slope where Ohio River vistas occur



Proposed Section through slope without vistas to Ohio River



Proposed Section through slope where Ohio River vistas occur



Landscape management recommendations for river slopes.

Landscape management recommendations for river slopes.

Infrastructure & Features

Circulation and Parking

The main park drive is proposed as a one-way loop for vehicles, with a striped multi-use lane for walkers, runners and bicyclists. The concern about Sunday cruising, when vehicles clog the park drives, could be reduced by this loop, although additional measures may be required to ensure enforcement, such as security patrols on bicycles, signage, and park gates that could be closed when the need arises. Entrances to the park would remain two way.

For normal everyday use, parking would be dispersed with paved parking lay-bys for 5 to 6 cars, the small parking area at the Picnic Pavilion, and parallel parking at the overlooks. Parking on the Music Concourse would be for handicapped drop-off, or on a reservation-only basis for special events on the Concourse, such as wedding receptions in the garden, or as temporarily designated parking for small concerts at the Music Pavilion. The athletic complex at River Glen would have larger parking areas for 100 cars. For special events on the Great Lawn, such as an outdoor concert, parallel parking would be permitted on the multi-use lane around the entire park loop. For a multi-cultural fair event, where concession vehicles and exhibits might occur on the park loop, with more passive events and tents on the Great Lawn, the park loop would become one large public promenade for pedestrians and emergency vehicles only. In this case, parking would occur at the River Glen athletic complex area, on a stabilized turf area on Hornung Field, and on surrounding streets. For large athletic events at River Glen, overflow parking could also be accommodated on Hornung Field, without conflicting with the passive nature of the Great Lawn and Concourses.

Drainage and Utility Systems

The drainage and utility systems for Shawnee and River Glen will require major renovation and new service lines for proposed new uses. Hornung Field and portions of the River Glen athletic complex will need new drainage systems to stabilize overflow parking areas and athletic fields. The athletic complex will also need new lighting, along with utility services for the restroom and pavilions. Likewise the main park loop of Shawnee will need a new electrical service to power special events, along with a water system to establish new plantings.

Facilities and Features

As described in the Renewal Strategy for Shawnee Park, major facilities include the relocation and development of an athletic complex for active recreation on the west side of Hornung Field and at River Glen. Utility and drainage infrastructure reconstruction will need to be a central component of every project area. The Northern and Southern

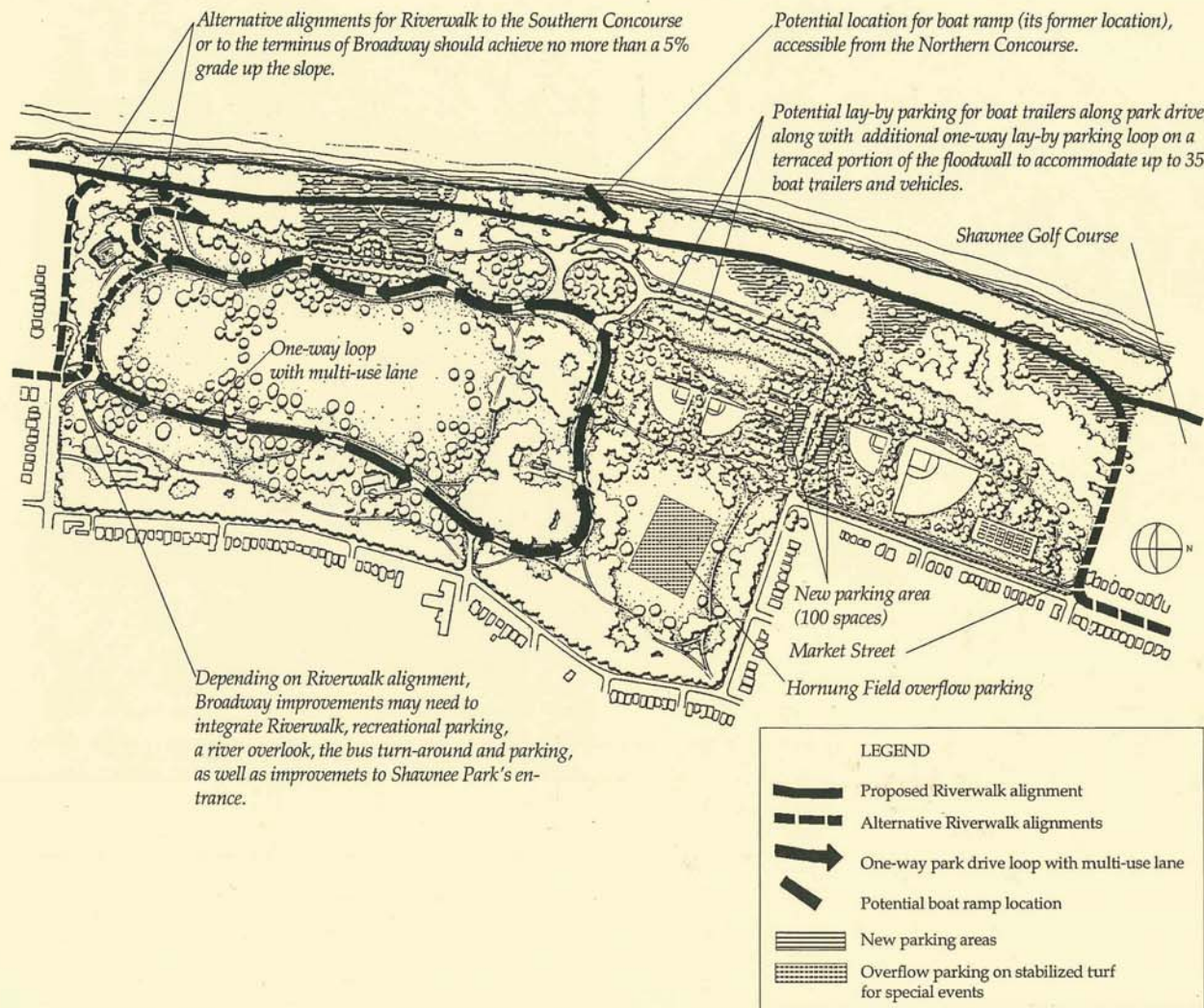
Concourses would also be reopened, involving bank stabilization for river vistas, as well as accommodations for parallel parking. New paths would link these concourses to Riverwalk on the lower terrace next to the Ohio River, which will also require a functional drainage infrastructure. Riverbank stabilization and the removal of past debris should be addressed with these projects. The Bandshell and the main Picnic Pavilion would be renewed and, pending program development for the athletic complex and special events on the Great Lawn, the Ballhouse should be renovated. Potential programs for the Ballhouse include exhibit space, ranger station, base for multi-cultural marketplace at the Northern Concourse, rental kiosk for bicycles and skates, restrooms and storage.

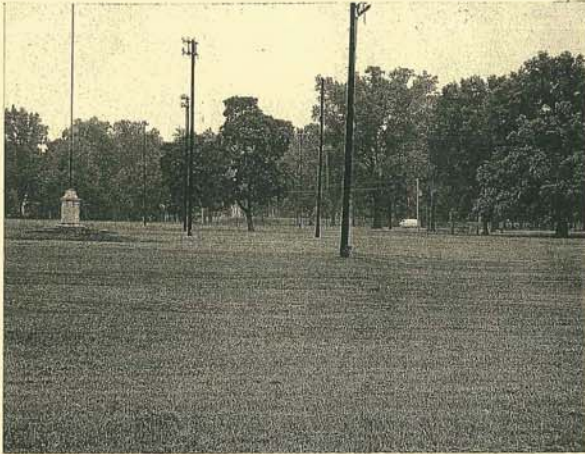
Integrating Riverwalk, Broadway Improvements and a Potential Boat Ramp into Shawnee Park's Renewal

While these three projects have yet to go into planning studies, they are interrelated and need to be comprehensively addressed and integrated into the Master Plan for Shawnee Park. A proposed Riverwalk alignment would follow the lower terrace along the old river road alignment from Shawnee Golf Course to Chickasaw Park. Alternative alignments would come up to the Southern Concourse or Broadway, where the path would follow Southwestern Parkway to Chickasaw Park. Any section of Riverwalk along the parkways should follow the guidelines in this Master Plan for multi-use ways on the parkways. Given the river slopes and the goal of meeting the Americans with Disabilities Act standards, obtaining a maximum 5% slope for this path will require careful review of the topography. It may prove more feasible to have an extended ramp for Riverwalk connecting to the terminus of Broadway, in which case the improvements for Broadway would need to address recreational parking, Riverwalk, a potential river overlook, as well as the bus turn-around and parking. The suggested treatment for Broadway is described in the Parkways chapter.

If river depths and channels are feasible, a boat ramp for small and light craft could be reintroduced to Shawnee Park. The original roadway to the boat ramp from the Northern Concourse could be reconstructed; there would be no parking at the boat ramp to minimize the security and dumping problems associated with parking areas in out-of-the-way places; boaters could use parallel parking along the park drive just west of the floodwall on Hornung Field, if this drive were widened to accommodate lay-by parking. However, this stretch is only about 800 feet in length, not enough to accommodate up to 35 boat trailers. Additional parking would have to be considered, perhaps paralleling this lay-by area on a terraced lot along the floodwall. Clearly, access and parking for a boat ramp need to be carefully assessed so that they do not conflict with other park activities.

Planning Considerations for Riverwalk, Broadway and a Potential Boat Ramp





(Top) Barren turf and deteriorated sports fields were also a problem for the passive enjoyment of open spaces in Central Park, New York City. (Central Park Conservancy. Photo by Sarah Cedar Miller)

(Bottom) With relocation of its sports facilities, Central Park's renewal strategy brought these open spaces back to life. (Central Park Conservancy. Photo by Sarah Cedar Miller)

Shawnee Park's Great Lawn would be liberated from the litter of deteriorating sports facilities which obstructs its great open spaces. (Andropogon Associates, 1993)

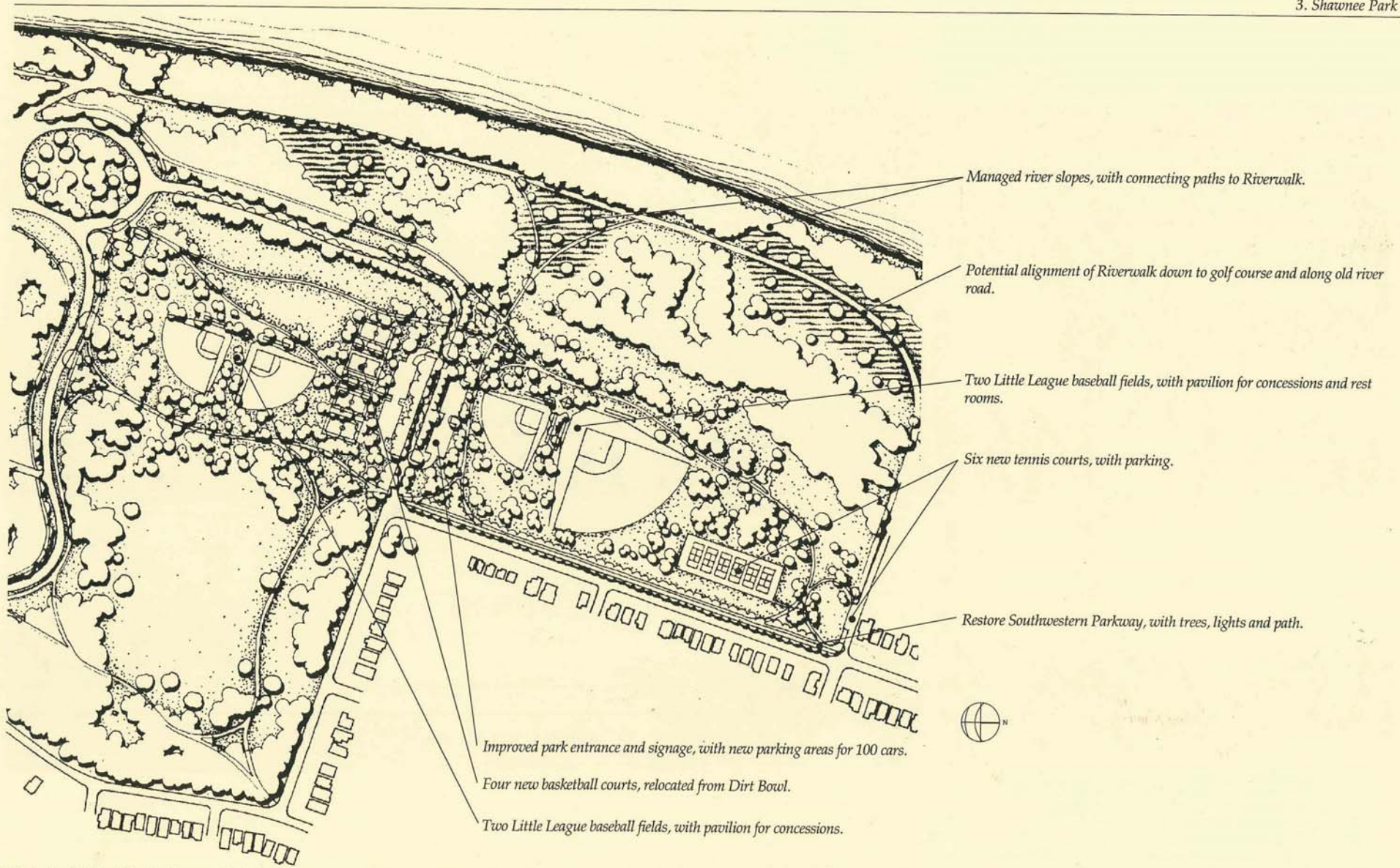
Renewal Projects

Active Recreation Complex

The new sports complex will meet the needs of growing youth athletic programs for both baseball and basketball. Existing deteriorated facilities in the Great Lawn and the Dirt Bowl would be relocated to a more appropriate zone in Hornung Field and River Glen Park. The complex will include four baseball fields, scoreboard/announcer's pavilions with concession space and restrooms, new basketball courts and tennis courts, parking for about 100 cars, lighting, landscape plantings and paths.

Given the reconstruction needs and expanded spectator space required for the Dirt Bowl, which is now surrounded by mature parkland tree groves, it is recommended that this complex also be relocated to a more open area on the western half of Hornung Field—the original Dirt Bowl area would become a shaded picnic area site.

The eastern half of Hornung Field will also be addressed, with paths and picnic groves reflecting the Olmsted Brothers design for this park extension that was not fully implemented. For the open area of Hornung Field, soil and drainage renovation would accommodate overflow parking on reinforced turf for large events. An entrance triangle on Southwestern Parkway, along with the replanting of the parkway allée of trees, will give Shawnee and River Glen a welcoming public entrance from the direction of Shawnee Golf Course, Portland and the expressway.



Managed river slopes, with connecting paths to Riverwalk.

Potential alignment of Riverwalk down to golf course and along old river road.

Two Little League baseball fields, with pavilion for concessions and rest rooms.

Six new tennis courts, with parking.

Restore Southwestern Parkway, with trees, lights and path.

Improved park entrance and signage, with new parking areas for 100 cars.

Four new basketball courts, relocated from Dirt Bowl.

Two Little League baseball fields, with pavilion for concessions.

Illustrative Master Plan for Shawnee Park, showing portions of Hornung Field and River Glen, proposed for active recreation complex.

3. Shawnee Park

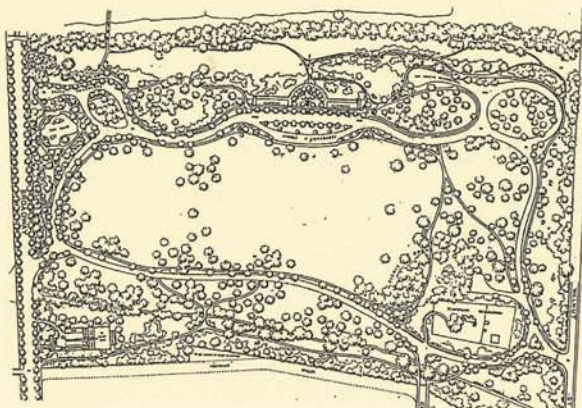


*Panorama of proposed renewal of the Great Lawn, reintroducing the passive nature of the open space, with new tree groves and vistas, renovated drainage system and topography, along with new pedestrian path loops, linking the Great Lawn to other features of the park.
(Rendering by Colin Franklin, Andropogon Associates, 1993)*

The Great Lawn

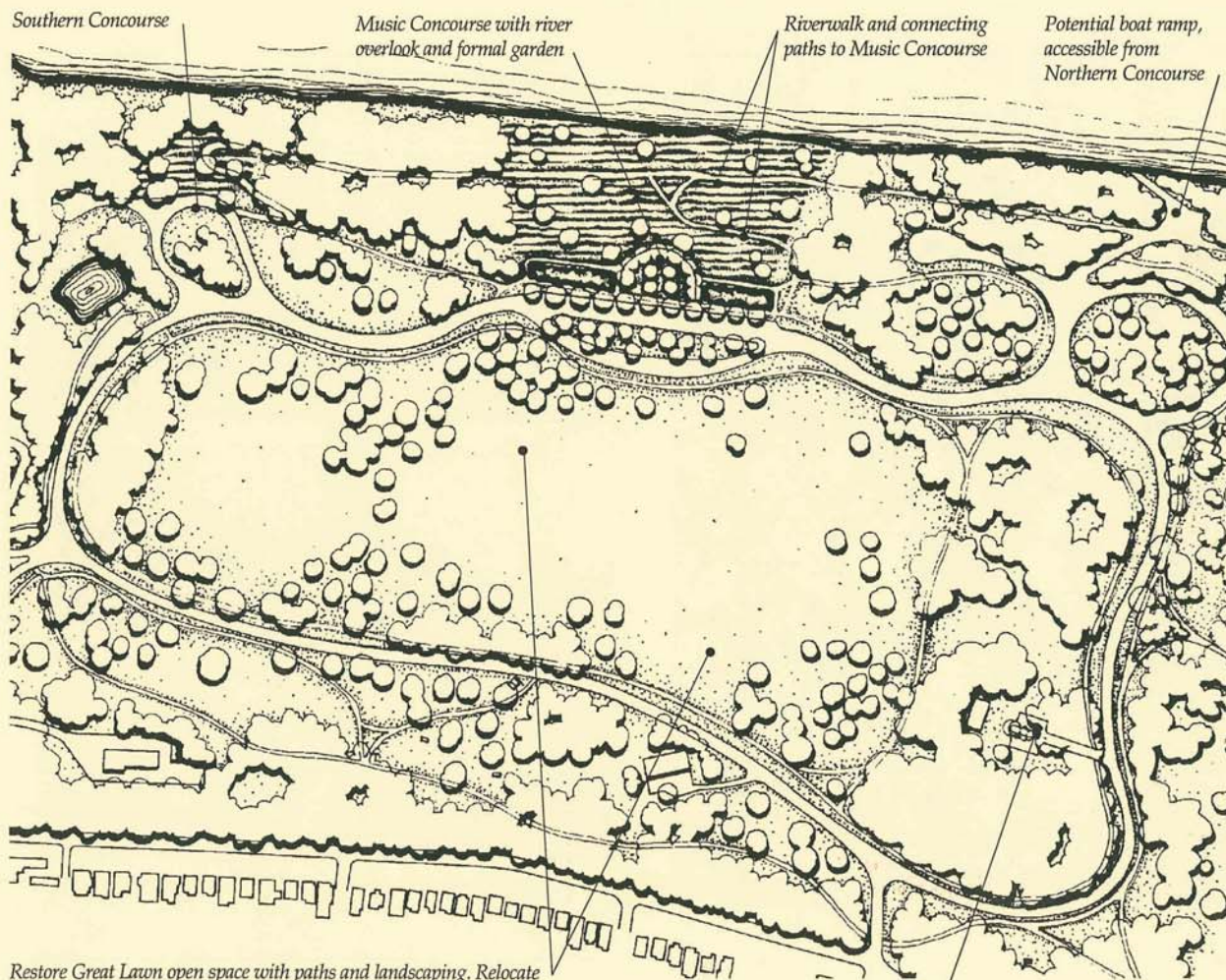
The heart of Shawnee, a broad greensward shaded by mature trees and picnic groves, will be restored for unstructured play and passive recreation by families and groups, as well as for special events. The existing clutter of light poles and backstops will be removed, and new grading and planting will help the floodwall appear to be a more natural part of the topography, rather than a barrier. The collapsed drainage system will be reconstructed and a new greensward established. Neighbors and visitors will enjoy strolling the new path loops that connect interesting points in the park. Large events will be well supported by a new infrastructure of utilities. The Northern and Southern Concourses would also be reopened for viewing, once landscape management efforts and riverbank pathways are underway to connect the plateau area with the proposed Riverwalk on the lower terrace along the Ohio River.

OHIO RIVER



General Plan for Shawnee Park, Louisville, Kentucky, July, 1893, Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, Landscape Architects (Courtesy Archives, FLONHS)

Illustrative Master Plan for Shawnee Park, showing portions of the Great Lawn and Concourses, proposed for renewal.



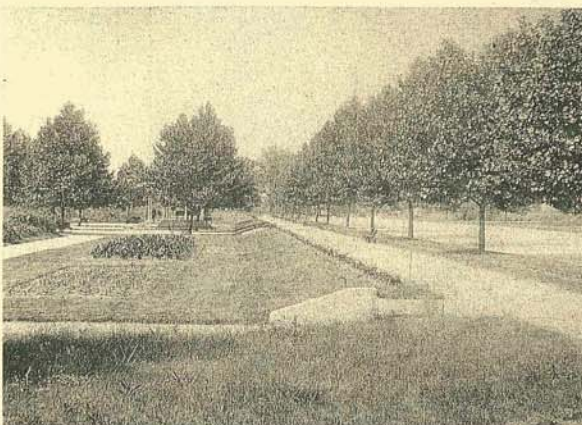
Restore Great Lawn open space with paths and landscaping. Relocate ballfields and tennis courts to Active Recreation Complex. Provide grading modifications to mitigate presence of flood wall. Stabilize park drive edges and stripe for multi-use lane. Reconstruct drainage system and provide electrical system improvements for special events.

Repair Picnic Pavilion and provide parking improvements.





Small performances could also occur near the bandshell on the Music Concourse, where the flood wall would be regraded to form a natural amphitheater. (Central Park Conservancy. Photo by Sarah Cedar Miller)

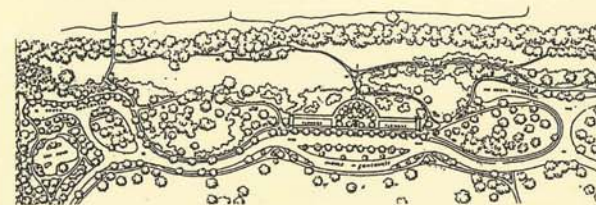


Historic views of gardens and Concourse, early 20th century. (University of Louisville, Photographic Archives)

The Music Concourse

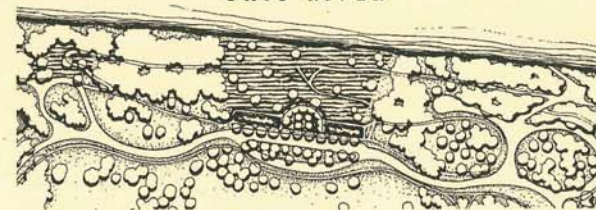
Olmsted's only formal garden design for Louisville's original parks will be reestablished with flowering plants and walkways. It will command a breathtaking, pivotal view of the Ohio River and the Great Lawn. Furnished with benches and interpretive signage, the garden spot could become a city-wide favorite for weddings and other ceremonies, and could be cared for, in part, by a volunteer program in horticultural therapy. The Bandshell would be provided with new paths and plantings that link it to the Concourse, as well as regrading of the floodwall to create a natural amphitheater for small performances. New walkways will lead visitors down the banks to Riverwalk, where there will be picnic areas and river views.

OHIO RIVER



Music Concourse, from General Plan for Shawnee Park, Louisville, Kentucky, July, 1893, Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, Landscape Architects (Courtesy Archives, FLONHS)

OHIO RIVER



Illustrative Master Plan for Shawnee Park, showing the proposed renewal of the formal garden, including the allée of trees along the Concourse, flowering shrubs and perennials, new river vistas of the Ohio River, opened up and stabilized slopes along the river banks, with new paths leading down to the proposed Riverwalk. Additional paths would link this garden to the Music Concourse and other features of the park.

Riverwalk

The proposed Riverwalk from downtown Louisville to Chickasaw Park will bring a multi-use path to Shawnee Park, and link up with the historic river road along the Ohio River. The park's pedestrian path loops will also connect to Riverwalk. As shown previously in "Infrastructure & Features," there is a need to integrate the alignment of Riverwalk with the Broadway improvements and the potential boat ramp, so that there is no conflict with park activities. Although Riverwalk should be sloped to meet the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act, or a maximum slope of 5%, the secondary paths to Riverwalk from Shawnee Park need not meet this standard. For this project to be perceived by the public as welcoming and safe, the recommendations for landscape management, including opening of river vistas and stabilizing slopes with savannah cover along park slopes, should be implemented at the same time. The natural area of the ravine forest should also be protected and signed. Nature trails and care for this forest could be done by volunteers and students from Shawnee neighborhood schools.

Eastern Hornung Field, Paddy's Run & Parkway Edge

New paths, picnic areas, tree groves and parkway edge plantings would be extended around the park perimeter, from the Lily Pond along Broadway to the Southwestern Parkway edge at River Glen Park. Special attention should be given to additional screening of the park's maintenance facility and the various MSD brick structures. Since relocating these MSD structures is not feasible, we recommend that Virginia creeper wall-clinging vines be planted on all exposed walls, which will effectively and economically mute their presence in this historic landscape setting.



View of old river road today, with its mature cottonwoods and shrub understory that obstructs river views. (Andropogon Associates, 1993)



The recent installation of a Riverwalk in Philadelphia, which included a multi-use path and a jogging path, brought the public back to this park in a dramatic way. (Andropogon Associates, 1993)

3. Shawnee Park



Historic view of the old river road along the lower terrace of Shawnee Park, c. 1900. (University of Louisville, Photographic Archives)



1974 aerial view of Ohio River. Riverwalk would be aligned along the river side of the Shawnee Golf Course or come down Southwestern Parkway to Shawnee Park. After Shawnee Park, the walk would be aligned along the river or Southwestern Parkway to Chickasaw Park.

3. Shawnee Park

The demonstration projects for the parks and parkways strike at the heart and soul of each park's original vision and design intent, while responding to contemporary needs.

For Shawnee Park, the construction of a new sports complex at Hornung Field and River Glen will allow the restoration of the Great Lawn, with its concourses and river vistas. With the introduction of Riverwalk, Shawnee Park would once again invite people to walk along the Ohio River. Thus, the proposed demonstration projects for Shawnee Park include project areas 1 through 4.

Project Areas for Shawnee Park

1. Active Recreation Complex

- At River Glen, provide parking, paths and landscaping for two baseball fields for youths, with lighting and pavilion, concessions, restrooms, six tennis courts, picnic area, playground and paths along upper edge of river slopes.
- At Western Hornung Field, provide parking, paths and landscaping for two baseball fields and four basketball courts, with lighting and pavilion and picnic areas. Relocate courts and parking area at Dirt Bowl and restore as park groves with picnic pavilion.
- Along Southwestern Parkway, restore Parkway and install Parkway trees, lights and path.
- Improve northern park entrance and park drive from Southwestern Parkway into Shawnee Park.

2. Great Lawn

- Restore Great Lawn open space with paths and landscaping. Relocate ballfields and tennis courts. Reconstruct drainage system. Provide grading modifications to mitigate presence of floodwall.
- Stabilize park drive edges and provide striping for multi-use lane, with drainage improvements. Provide electrical system for special events.
- Repair Picnic Pavilion and provide parking improvements.

3. Music Concourse & River Vista

- Create formal garden, with paths, landscaping, furnishings, interpretive features, and parking and curbing improvements along drive.
- Open river vista and stabilize river slopes with savannah and shrub vegetation, along with connecting paths to Riverwalk (to be funded through the Department of Public Works).
- Restore Music Pavilion and regrade floodwall to form amphitheater.

4. Concourses & River Slopes

- Open river vistas from Northern and Southern Concourses, stabilize river slopes, and provide paths to Riverwalk.
- Manage woodlands and stabilize river banks, with open glades and river views from Riverwalk. Provide paths in existing woodlands on river slopes west of Hornung Field and manage as natural area.
- Explore feasibility of boat ramp and connecting roadway from Northern Concourse. Study access and parking for boat trailers.
- Improve Concourse roadways and provide curbing for parallel parking.

5. Eastern Hornung Field

- Restore perimeter landscaping, paths and picnic areas at eastern portion of Hornung Field.
- Construct stabilized turf in open areas for overflow parking for large events at Great Lawn and Active Recreation Complex.
- Renovate Ballhouse to serve program needs of Active Recreation Complex and general park use.

6. Paddy's Run

- Restore landscaping and reconstruct paths and picnic pavilions.
- Provide landscape screening of MSD buildings.

7. Broadway & Park Entrance

- Reorganize Broadway for parking and bus turnaround. Integrate Riverwalk alignment, with recreational parking as required.
- Reorganize park entrance and reconstruct paths and steps.
- Landscape and curb park edge of Broadway in keeping with proposed Parkway treatment.

8. Parkway Edge

- Landscape and curb park edge along Southwestern Parkway.

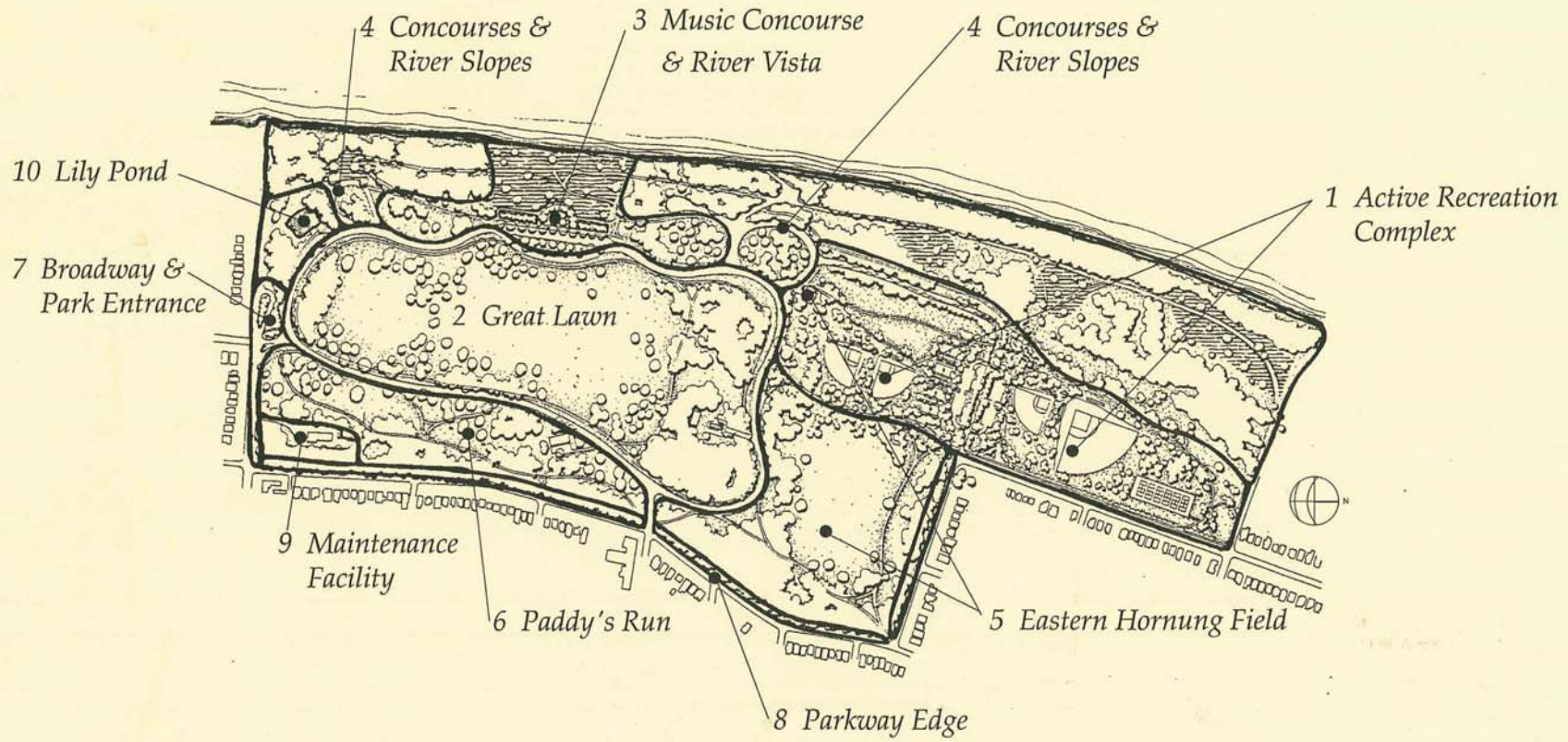
9. Maintenance Facility

- Renovate facility driveway, parking and fencing.
- Provide landscape screening of facility.

10. Lily Pond

- Renovate Lily Pond, surrounding landscape, paths and furnishings.

Project Areas for Shawnee Park



Inventory and Analysis Summary

The following areas of concern were inventoried and analyzed by the Andropogon Associates master planning team in the fall of 1992:

Natural Resources

- Management needed for the upper and lower slopes of the Ohio River floodplain to remove exotic species, overgrowth, and to develop a sustainable landscape appropriate to park use and river vistas.
- Even-aged canopy trees within park landscape are in decline.

Infrastructure and User Conflicts

- Underused river floodplain area could be opened up with Riverwalk and paths down to river from Concourse areas, as well as a potential boat ramp (if river depths and geotechnical aspects of building a ramp are feasible).
- Too few paths and conflict of road use with cars, parking and bicyclists.
- Lack of use of main park, in part due to its history as a segregated park, perceived lack of security and lack of programs and special events. Shelter, Ball House and Bandshell are underused; MSD facilities are obtrusive and need screening.
- Athletic facilities in Great Lawn area conflict with historic landscape and preclude potential use for individual recreation and large events; some facilities are in poor condition and some merit demolition and relocation to an active recreation zone bridging the northwest corner of Shawnee and River Glen.
- Broken-up concrete along Ohio River has severely disturbed the lower slope.
- Haphazard and inadequate parking and road-use conflicts are unresolved.

Historic Resources

- Loss of river views and physical access to river.
- Loss of continuous path system as originally built under Olmsted General Plan.
- Floodwalk obstructs landscape experience and historic structure.
- Park edges have little sense of enclosure and separation from the Parkway.
- Use zones of park conflict with historic zones of landscape character.
- Replanting and current landscape management not related to historic landscape structure.

Park Survey

From the interviews and public forums held in 1991 and 1992, by Susan Rademacher, Executive Director of the Louisville Olmsted Parks Conservancy, and The Halvorson Company, the following issues were identified and ranked by participants—representing both users and non-users.

Major Features of the Park as the Public Perceives Them

The riverfront is unused because it is physically inaccessible due to closed roadways and lack of pathways, and it is visually inaccessible in summer due to overgrowth. In winter, when leaves are off the trees, there are few places from which to view the river. Currently, the only use is for ad hoc fishing and illicit dumping. People of all ages, city-wide, want to restore physical and visual access to the Ohio River through walkways, managed vistas, overlooks, and, perhaps, a boat ramp.

The other major features at Shawnee are the athletic facilities. Several tennis courts are in disrepair and slated for removal. "Dirt Bowl" basketball courts and softball fields are extremely popular with young people. In Paddy's Run, along Southwestern Parkway, the play equipment and basketball court are well used by younger children and are considered safe areas.

Shawnee is heavily used by cruising drivers after 6 p.m. and on weekends. The roadway also attracts speed cyclists.

Shawnee is currently regarded as a neighborhood park by the community. Some Shawnee neighbors see it as dominated by a narrow segment of the local population, primarily males 18-25, and so perceive the park as uncomfortable or unsafe for younger and older people. They seek wholesome activities and improvements that will appeal to families. The community perceives Shawnee as more poorly maintained than the rest of the Olmsted Parks.

Projects Suggested by the Public

- Clear scenic river views and provide access to bring back fireworks displays and fishing. Restore boating access to Shawnee with a ramp.
- Provide concessions for soft drinks and snacks.
- Maintain trees, install more "landscaping" and flowering garden.
- Install walking circuits.
- Provide places to sit.
- Repair and maintain restrooms.
- Provide separate bicycleways and bicycle racks.

Programs Suggested by the Public

- Provide security and direct proper use of the park through parks police or ranger program.
- Bring back metro-wide sporting and cultural events.
- Return park to family activities to attract all kinds of people to park.

Historic Landscape Analysis

Prepared by Landscapes, Westport CT

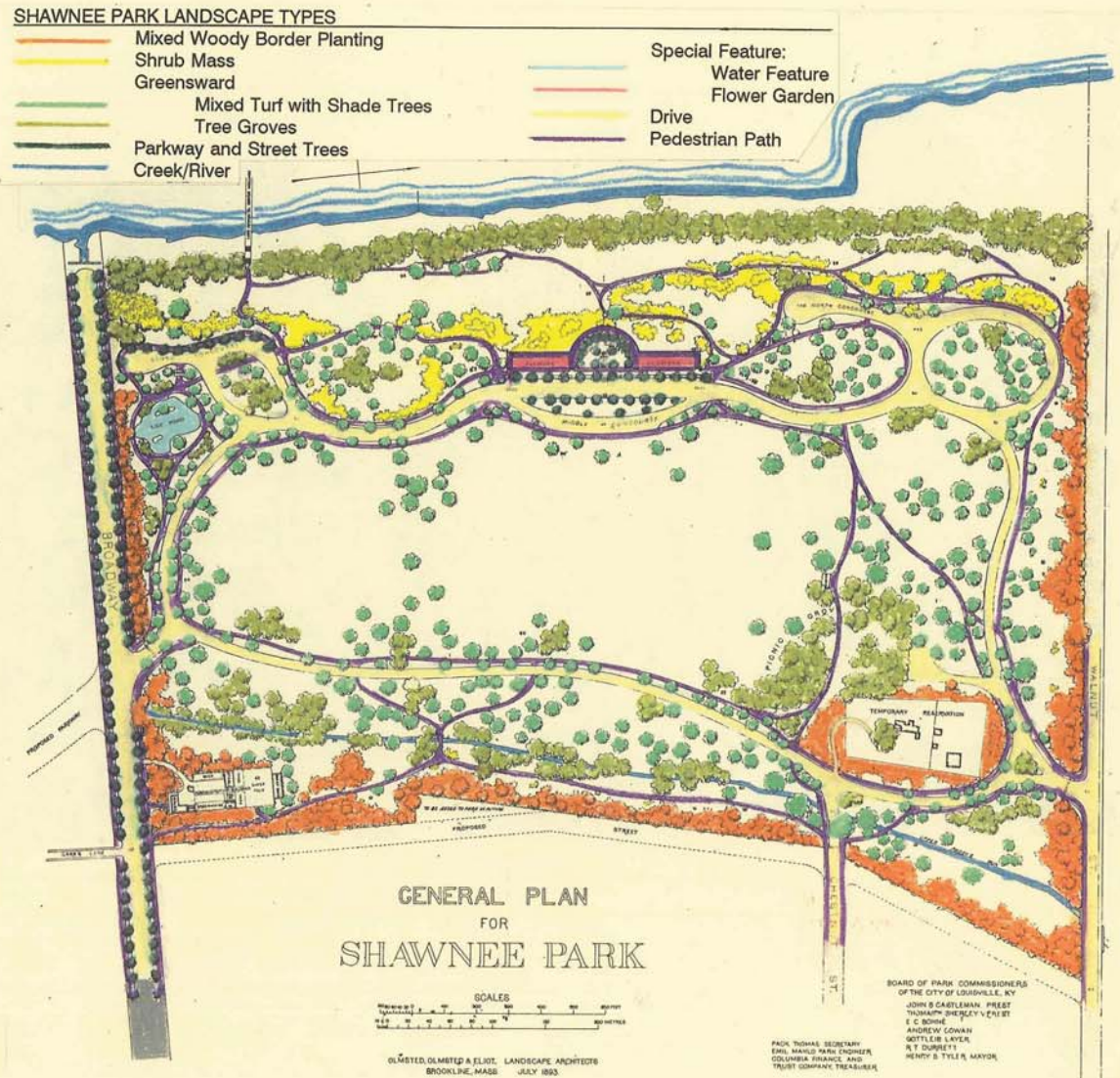
Prior to park development the 180 acres along the river that became Shawnee Park were homesteaded by three families. Some framing activity was taking place and there were a number of native trees on the ground, especially the oaks along the Paddy's Run drainage way and the poplars along the first river bench, as shown in the 1892 topographical survey. The lands were secured after the 1890 park legislation, with the published General Plan for Shawnee Park, by Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, dated July, 1893 and a planting plan developed by the firm in January of 1894. The Olmsted design for the park added to the existing landscape, retaining valuable trees and shaping the ground to accommodate drives and paths, while using the Ohio River frontage for visual and physical access.

Shawnee Park Historic Landscape Types

Shawnee Park was set aside as a public ground to take advantage of the sweeping Ohio River frontage. A colored version of the Shawnee Park General Plan illustrates the park landscape by type as presented in chapter 2. Shawnee Park Historic Landscape Types Plan [1], portrays the quality of the park vegetation. It reveals the openness of the central lawn, the edge enclosure and the nearly continuous concourse for viewing the river.

The central space of Shawnee Park was the Great Lawn, an open space surrounded by a pedestrian walk and drive, lightly dotted with informally arranged shade trees placed as individuals and small groups. This open space was adaptable for both large gatherings and sports uses as shown in [2]. Toward the northern end of the space, two pedestrian walks crossed the open lawn through a more densely planted Picnic Grove. In the northeast corner of the space, the residence and near surrounds of a former private owner remain; these would eventually be replaced with additional lawn and grove.

The topography of the river edge land establishes a tiered arrangement of the landscape consisting of the relatively level upland area, leading to a short steep slope, followed by a gently sloping bench. The steep slope dropping to the river was to be planted primarily with shrub masses, low enough to view over. This bench leads directly to the steep, sandy river bank. Each level of the descending landscape was integrated into the original park design. Path segments at five points ran down the sloping grade to the open bench of earth that was likely used for picnicking, family outings and free play such as games of catch, etc. This bench was lined with trees, possibly pre-existing cottonwoods, as an edge above the high water mark, from which the slope extended to the river edge. The Olmsted firm recommended a pier near the south end to provide boat dockage and waterborne access to the park. Historic photographs show crowds of people wad-



1. Shawnee Park Historic Landscape Types Plan, color coding of vegetation types and circulation, prepared by Landscapes, 1993, overlaid on General Plan for Shawnee Park, Louisville, Kentucky, July 1893, Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, Landscape Architects. (FLONHS)

3. Shawnee Park



2. View of Great Lawn in Shawnee Park with pageant in progress, c. 1926. (University of Louisville, Photographic Archives, Caufield & Shook Collection)

ing and swimming at the river edge, and document the existence of the intended pier.

The perimeter of the park to the east was bisected by Paddy's Run, a drainage way, now culverted, that provides some rolling topography and a combination of single and grouped shade trees. Administration structures were sited in the southeast corner. The north, east and west park edges were all planted to shrub masses as an enclosing element. Broadway was lined with a double row of formal trees. An overall planting plan and specific area plans demonstrate the detailed planning that guided the enhancement of Shawnee Park [3].

Shawnee Park Spatial Organization Plan

Shawnee Park Spatial Organization Plan [4] shows the scenic vistas over the Ohio River, the visual barriers of mixed border plantings along three edges of the park and the continuously open park views from the park drives. A focal area of the park was the Middle Concourse with its Music Court and Flower Gardens. This formal feature, placed on the west edge of the uplands, was raised slightly to emphasize the broad vista out over the river and also over the lawn. It was a gathering place, where promenading and viewing were enhanced by features and an integrated network of paths and drives provided easy access. This relationship to the river was extended in the development of North and South Overlooks, which were additional places for vehicles and pedestrians to experience scenic river vistas. The North Overlook is shown at dusk in winter [5]. The river vistas are both open and through tree trunks which would vary the quality of the view in different seasons. These overlook areas were framed and accented by trees rather than being completely open. The South Overlook area was made more interesting with the addition of a special feature, the ornamental Lily Pond. In general Shawnee Park was an open landscape with broad, nearly continuous views within the interior, a visual barrier along the inland edges and dramatic river vistas from three overlooks.

Historic Zones & Character of Shawnee Park

Shawnee Park Historic Zones Plan [6] is the reference for this description of the areas of Shawnee Park. The essential character of Shawnee Park is defined by seven zones: (1.) the Great Lawn is the central feature; (2.) the Middle Concourse with its formal trees, Flower Garden and Music Court combined with the North and South Concourses developed the transition zone between the upland and the river slope as a place for people to gather; (3.) the Paddy's Run area of sloping ground and shade trees defines the park edge on the opposite side; (4.) the steep slope and gently sloping bench of open space descending nearer the river provides another park use space; (5.) the river edge itself is the water access zone of the park; (6.) the park perimeter, as treated historically with shrub masses and formal trees, created a frame for the park; (7.) the southeast corner holds the administrative functions of the park, thickly planted so that the buildings do not

overly intrude on the green landscape of the park; another zone, (8.) was added to the north of the park area shown in the General Plan, as level areas for additional playing fields.

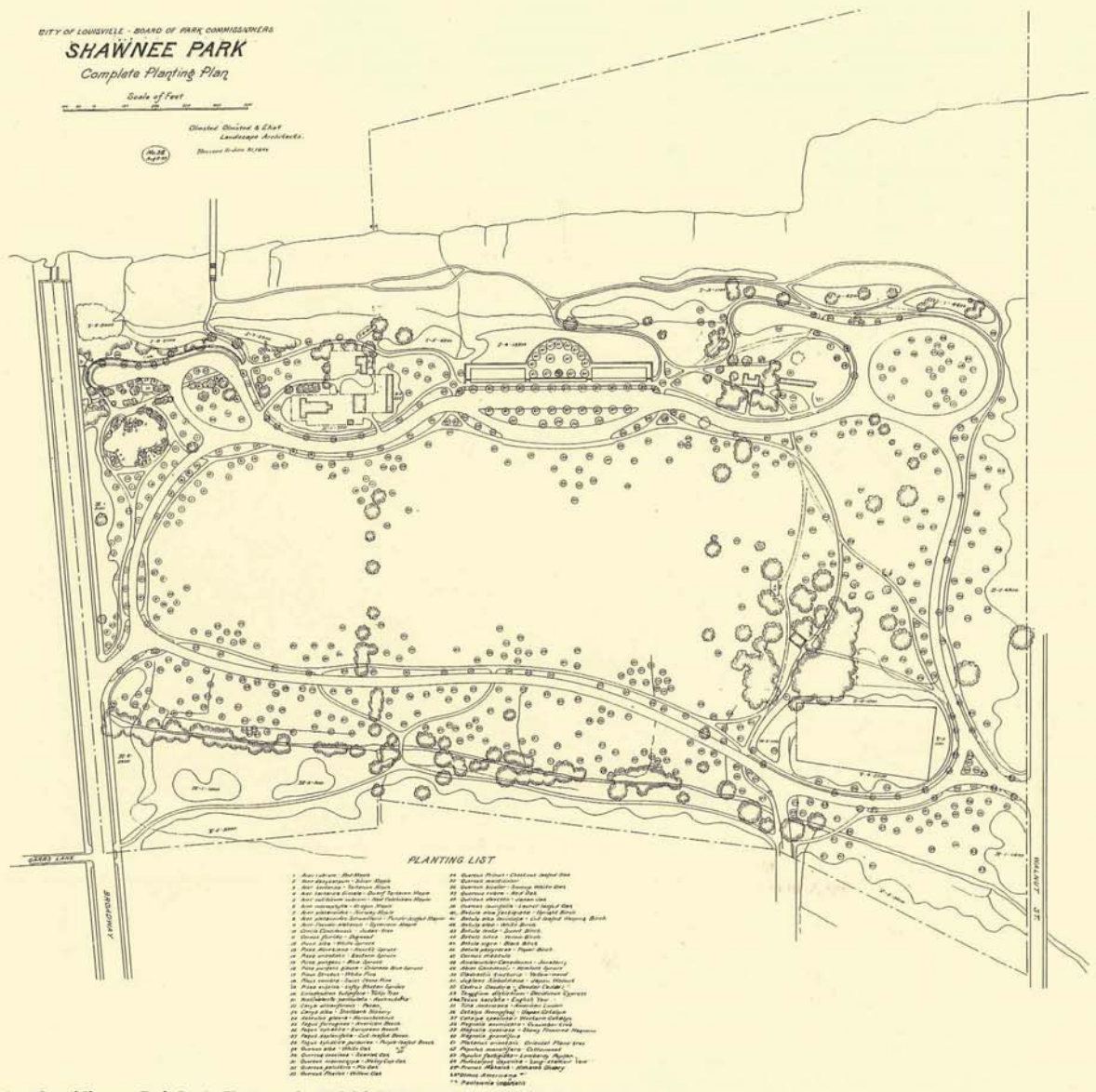
The character of Shawnee Park can be best visualized in a cross section that reveals the upland-slope-bench-slope-river relationships. In discussions among the project team, the seminal space of the park was defined as the central portion of the park encompassing the Great Lawn, the Middle Concourse, slope and open bench and the related pedestrian access to each of these features. The rehabilitation of this core area would recapture the heart of the park.

Shawnee Park As-Built Condition

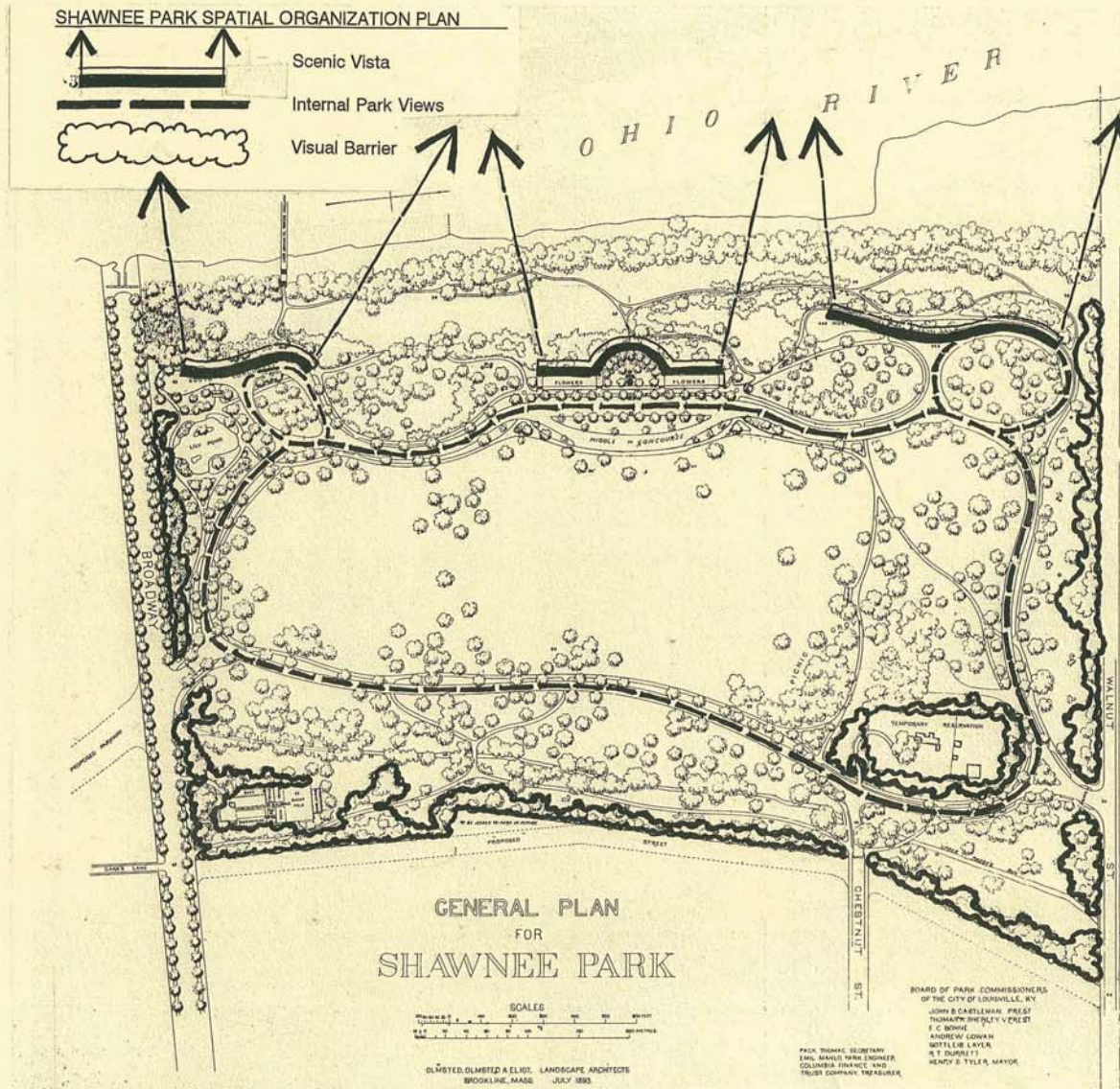
Shawnee Park encompassed 181.5 acres in 1913 and includes a larger area today having incorporated acreage to the north. Early views of the park and a 1928 aerial photograph reveal the park as it existed in the early twentieth century [7]. This as-built condition relates closely to the Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot General Plan of 1893. The park was constructed to include the area shown on the General Plan and an additional parcel to the north. The 1928 aerial photograph shows the entire park. The appearance at this date will be discussed as it relates to the seven park zones which are numbered on the plan to match the numbers used in the following description.

1. Early postcard views show the Great Lawn as an open, gently rolling lawn with shade trees. By 1928, the Great Lawn is intensively developed for field games with ten baseball fields and two sets of tennis courts arrayed within the area shown as open lawn with a few trees on the General Plan. Although the area was relatively level, the playing fields likely altered the topography through additional leveling. This area is edged with a pedestrian path system that matches the General Plan, and one path crosses the Great Lawn from east to west. The path shown on the General Plan at the north end angled northwest toward the Music Concourse, while the existing path in 1928 is centered and runs directly north-south. Individual trees and small groups edge the area with additional trees to the north end in the Picnic Grove and around the service building. These trees are both large and small indicating that pre-existing trees were retained and incorporated and new plantings added to the area as the park was constructed. This is true for other areas of the park as well.

2. Middle, North and South Concourses, with associated gardens and a Lily Pond, were the formal features of Shawnee Park. These gathering places were for people to promenade and enjoy the Ohio River view and the near park areas with shade trees, gardens and the pond. The 1928 aerial shows this area built out to match the General Plan in all but a few details, such as missing path segments. The formal character of the area is evident in period photographs. Vehicular and pedestrian movements were clearly separated. The



3. Shawnee Park



4. Shawnee Park Spatial Organization Plan, vistas, internal views and barriers, prepared by Landscapes, 1993, overlaid on General Plan for Shawnee Park. (FLONHS)

system of drives and walks provided access to the park landscape and to the riverfront slopes.

3. The Paddy's Run area of sloping ground and shade trees defines the park edge on the east side. A drainage ditch at the low point was eventually piped underground. A photo from the 1893 report shows a wooden bridge over this ditch and the surrounding shade trees. By 1928 paths parallel the entry drive and circuit drive, and link to the Administration area and north loop with two additional path segments. These segments reflect portions of the system shown on the General Plan, but only the partial organization is present. The aerial view [7] shows scattered trees of varied sizes. As a result of the 1937 flood this zone of the park was altered with the addition of a flood control berm that overlaid the concourse features and changed the landform.
4. These riverfront slopes provided another park use space. This popular spot for photographs is portrayed in several views. The 1893 report shows a sloping, open area with rough grass in the foreground and trees at the upper and lower edges of the slope. Additional views show the lower drive near the river, with one a more open view and a second with a tree enclosure. Although the splicing of the 1928 aerial view obscures some segments, this area was connected to the upper park with a path system at the North Concourse and at the street to the south. The lower drive originated at the south end of the park and continued north to Hornung Field before joining with the parkway. By 1928 the plant massing in the area has increased, with the aerial showing both dark planting clusters and individual canopies, as well as more open spaces.
5. Zones 4 and 5 were separated by an open band of trees, likely poplars. The river edge is the water access zone of the park where people swam in the river. The shoreline included a boat landing pier for embarking and disembarking at the park.
6. The park perimeter to the south and east shows plant massing of trees, possibly with shrubs below, in defined areas along the edges. This organization appears to follow the approach shown on the General Plan. A view of the entrance from Broadway shows a drive, path, lighting and plantings. Although additional views do not picture the perimeter, the aerial photo also shows informal tree plantings along the edge of the park area shown in the General Plan, without a shrub understory. The north and east edges of the park beyond the baseball fields also contain plantings that appear to be small trees as individuals and limited groupings. These 1928 conditions would indicate that the park perimeter was not highly developed along these added areas.
7. The administrative area, in the southeast corner of the park is shown in 1928 as a complex of two buildings and an open yard. Contrary to the General Plan, the area was not organized as an

enclosed court screened from park views. Some plantings around the area provide uneven visual screening.

8. The flat area to the north of the park, developed for additional playing fields, was the subject of study by the Olmsted Brothers to integrate the pedestrian circulation system [8]. In 1928 the area was connected by a narrow straight path, that remains today. Seven baseball fields are arrayed in the area within the park drives while two more fields are adjacent to the parkway and a third is downslope near the river. Open areas with some tree canopy span the descending grades between these fields.

Shawnee Park Existing Conditions

The park today contains much of the historic organization of spaces in remnant form. Several structures have been added park-wide. The following text is again organized by park zones with some grouping of adjacent areas.

The Great Lawn remains in use for lighted baseball fields and two groups of tennis courts. The pedestrian system remains in a fragmented form, with breaks where the flood control berm covers paths and areas where the paths have been obscured. Two small, functional buildings address park user needs in the former Picnic Grove area. Overall the Great Lawn area is cluttered with lighting, backstops, skinned infields, and minor buildings, losing much of its sense of openness and pastoral quality and flattening its formerly subtle topography.

The Music, North and South Concourses, with the paths, steps, beds, trees and other elements of the earlier formal landscape remain present only in remnant form. These traces can all be seen on the ground although they are far from fully functional. The purpose of these concourses was to look out from this higher elevation to the Ohio River. The mass of trees and invasive growth blocks much of the river view and opposite shore today. The lily pond and immediate surrounds are in relatively good condition, unlike the balance of this area. The edge of this pond is an angular concrete wall, which appears to be more regular than the historic form. The entire concourse area was overlaid after the 1937 flood with a steeply sloped flood control berm. This feature, snaking through the area from one side of the drive to the other, countered the existing landforms and covered path segments. It was accompanied by several pump station structures that are also intrusive. Today the berm confuses the park user and creates a barrier to movement. The Music Stand, south of the Middle Concourse, provides a setting for small scale performance events in this area of the park.

The Paddy's Run area is a shaded, gently sloping picnic grove which contains restrooms, Pumping Station, Maintenance building and area, basketball court and two small pavilions. The Pumping Station is a functional structure located so that it intrudes on the park setting. The maintenance complex is also highly visible and unattractive. The bridge

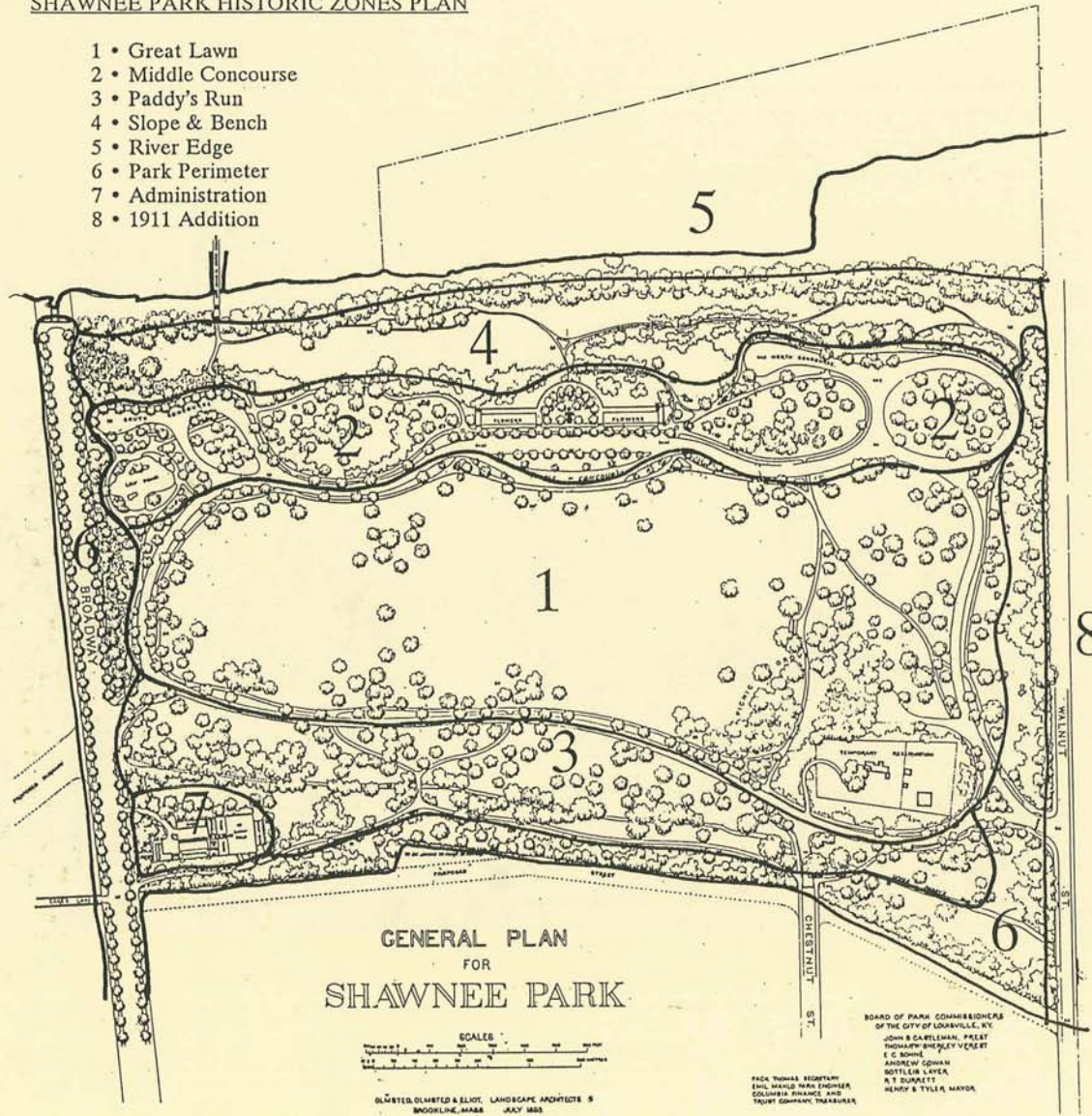


5. View of Northern Concourse in Shawnee Park, c. 1927. (University of Louisville, Photographic Archives, Caufield & Shook Collection)

3. Shawnee Park

SHAWNEE PARK HISTORIC ZONES PLAN

- 1 • Great Lawn
- 2 • Middle Concourse
- 3 • Paddy's Run
- 4 • Slope & Bench
- 5 • River Edge
- 6 • Park Perimeter
- 7 • Administration
- 8 • 1911 Addition



6. Shawnee Park Historic Zones, prepared by Landscapes, 1993, shown on General Plan for Shawnee Park. (FLONHS)

over the former Paddy's Run at the park entry is brick with a glazed ceramic tile cap. Designed by the Olmsted Brothers, this attractive bridge is showing signs of deterioration including the loss of some capping tiles. Overall, the area contains many more structures than in earlier times, shade trees have matured and many have been lost, especially in areas where structures have been added.

The area between the concourses and the riverfront has become overgrown with invasive vegetation blocking river views. A recent clearing effort opened one area but has already reverted to dense herbaceous and woody plant growth. Former paths and drives are not readily accessible although traces of these circulation elements are evident. While a power plant with two tall stacks is within the river view today, this view is still a desirable one with the Ohio River as its primary element.

The perimeter of the park today is visually open to the surrounding streets. Park edge shrub plantings, evident in the 1928 aerial view are no longer present, although mature edge trees are massed informally along the eastern park edge. These open park edges blend the park and surrounding city rather than providing separation. The south edge of the park, shown on the General Plan as a tree lined street, is only partially edged with trees today. A large drainage structure at the end of this street is unattractive.

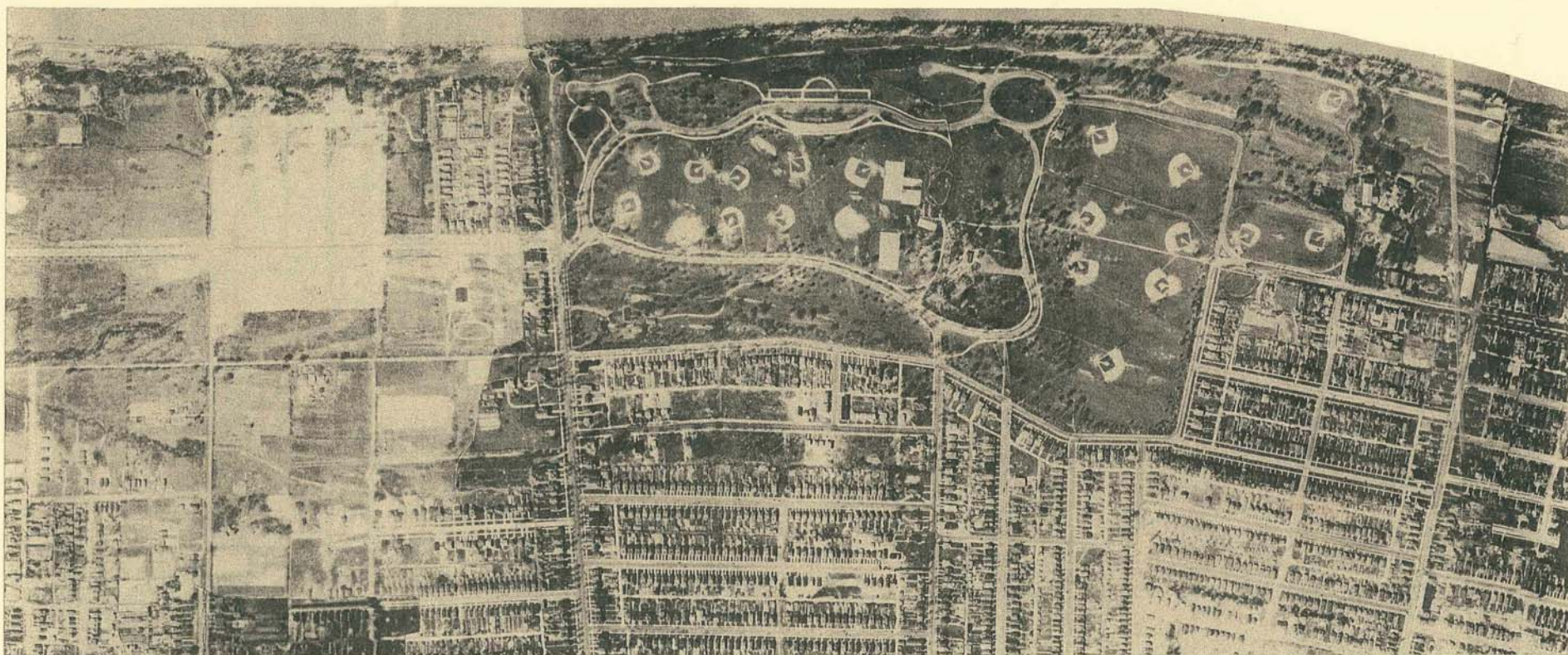
The additional lands immediately to the north contain baseball fields, basketball courts and an all purpose field in an open, relatively level area. Trees along Southwestern Parkway on the north edge of the park continue the informal plantings around from the east. Additional lands to the north, known as Paul Hornung Field, contain parking lots and playing fields.

Shawnee Park Planning Issues

These planning issues relate primarily to the historic qualities and remaining historic elements of Shawnee Park. As a National Register historic landscape, the history of the park is an important aspect of its present and future. The overriding planning issue for Shawnee Park is the recapture of its historic character as an expansive open space with a grand river view. The carefully articulated spaces of the historic plan have been obscured through both losses and additions. Each space in the described park zones had unique qualities that should be studied for potential recapture. For example, the Great Lawn open space is currently cluttered with playing fields and lights. This area was the primary open space of the park, a grand gently rolling greensward. As an open space it can be adapted to various uses for gatherings of groups, special events, free play or organized sports as well as walking and relaxing in a large open area. The lands to the north of the park afford opportunities to relocate specialized sports fields allowing the removal of these facilities from the Great Lawn. These lands allow for extension of useful park areas that are compatible with the historic

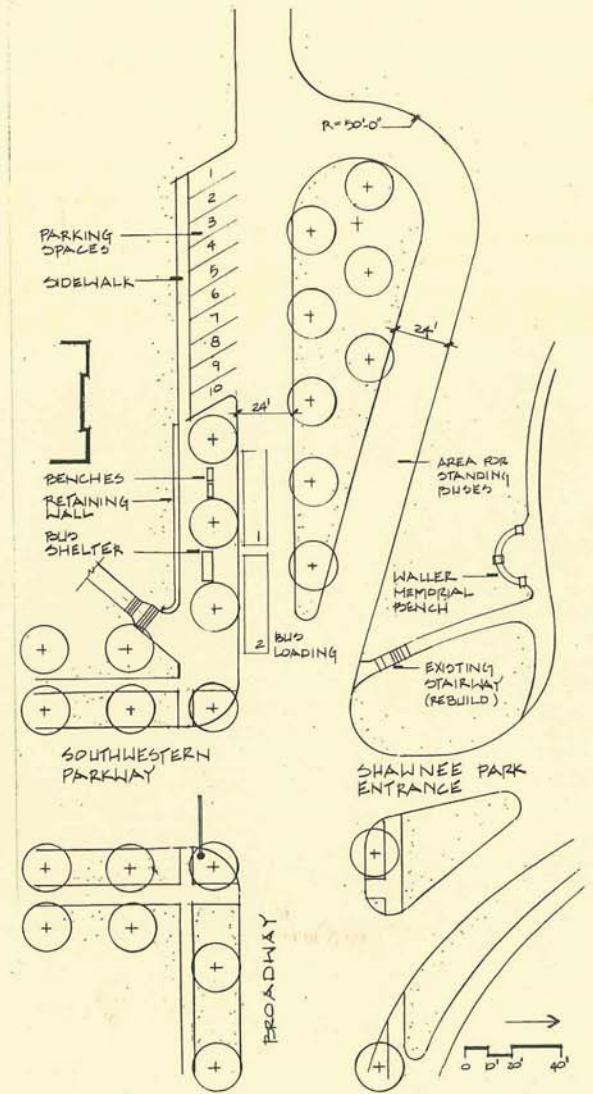
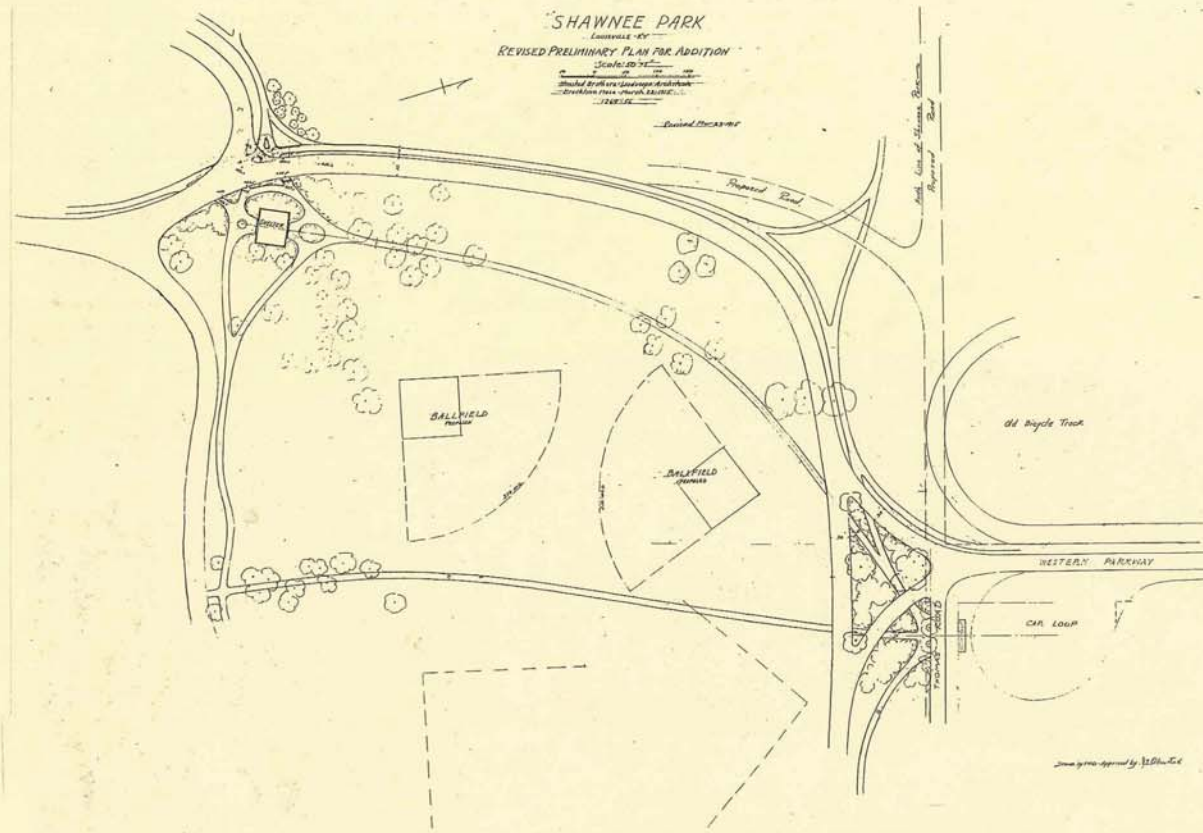
park, while providing for needed active recreation facilities on the uplands. This active use zone can potentially extend to the gently sloping "bench" and river access, linking with the planned Riverwalk.

Planning for Shawnee Park needs to address the recapture of river views; provision of a fully accessible pedestrian path system; modulation of flattened topography; blending of the flood control berm into the landscape; renewal of tree canopy park-wide; consideration of edge vegetation treatment to reinforce a sense of partial enclosure and separation; and screening of buildings. Each area of the park requires detailed consideration of its remaining historic features and its current and future uses to retain historic fabric, recapture historic character, and serve contemporary needs.



7. 1928 Aerial view of Shawnee Park. (Bowman Park Aero Co. Incorporated)

3. Shawnee Park



8. Shawnee Park Revised Preliminary Plan for Addition, Olmsted Brothers Plan, Landscape Architects, Brookline, Mass., March 22, 1915, #1296-56, Revised March 23, 1915. (FLOHNS)

Sketch plan of Broadway terminus. (Landscapes, 1993)

Natural Communities & Disturbance Analysis

Prepared by Eco-Tech, Inc., Frankfort KY

Introduction

This analysis of the plant communities and disturbance of Shawnee, Cherokee and Iroquois Parks in Louisville, Kentucky was developed from aerial photographs, topographic maps and brief field investigations primarily in the fall of 1992. Because of its unique position in the urban landscape as a critically endangered habitat of supreme importance, more attention was given to the flora, and especially the native fauna of Iroquois Park. However, this community description should not be considered a complete floral or fauna inventory, but rather as a beginning to that task and as a tool for planning purposes.

Shawnee Park Overview

Shawnee Park lies along the alluvial slopes of the Ohio River in north-western Jefferson County. Before settlement the area was densely forested on several terraces of the river's floodplain. The terraces formed a natural levee that probably prevented regular flooding on the plateau areas of what is now the park. The terraces are overlain by a mixture of river deposited soils, but the soils on higher ground are outwash deposits of glacial origin. The dominant plant community at Shawnee Park is now an open, mowed meadow. However, in a few areas, especially along the Ohio River and its tributaries, remnants of the original vegetation persist.

Plant Communities

Riverbank Willows

This is a narrow strip along the river's edge in a sandy substrate. A few feet up the slope, the sand falls out and clay becomes the dominant soil type. Here grow a few scattered black willows (*Salix nigra*) that have been misshapen by the moving current. Clumps of the shrubby sandbar willow (*S. exigua*) also have sprouted here and are persisting in this shifting substrate. The understory stratum is sparse and contains some native and exotic weedy herbs dominated by annuals. These include smart weed (*Polygonum lapathi folium*), wormwood (*Artemisia annua*), Mexican tea (*Chenopodium ambrosioides*) and black nightshade (*Solanum nigrum*).

First Terrace — Cottonwood Forest

This riverbank community occurs on the first terrace above the river's edge and the Riverbank Willows. It begins along the lower side of the

old river road and extends almost the whole length of the park. Large, old eastern cottonwoods (*Populus deltoides*) are the dominant overstory species. They are mostly over thirty inches in diameter at breast height (dbh) and some approach fifty inches dbh. A few large sycamores grow in this community, but they don't usually reach the size of the cottonwoods. The sub-dominant and sapling strata include hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), 6-15 inches dbh, box elder (*Acer negundo*) and silver maple (*A. saccharinum*) saplings and larger nearer the river, and the introduced white mulberry (*Morus alba*) that clusters along the edge of the roadway. Herbaceous species here are characteristic of lowland old fields and open riparian woodlands. They include white snakeroot (*Eupatorium rugosum*), wild rye (*Elymus* sp.), stinging nettle (*Laportea canadensis*), yellow wingstem (*Actinomeris alternifolia*), goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*), ironweed (*Vernonia altissima*) and the alien biennial wormwood (*Artemisia vulgaris*). This is a narrow strip of riverbank forest with a weedy shrub strata and understory. A small clump of this original riverbank community also survives across the river road at the base of the second terrace.

Second Terrace — Hickory, Hackberry Slope Forest

This forest occurs along the slope of the second river terrace which begins at the mowed meadow and inclines toward the river road. It is the plant community of the forest closest to the river overlook. The two dominant species in the overstory are hackberry and shellbark hickory (*Carya laciniosa*), the largest of which are twenty to thirty inches dbh. The large trees are very scarce on this slope and smaller trees are very important in the community coverage. This slope has been greatly disturbed by a history of poor cutting practices and numerous trails that shortcut to the river. Smaller trees on the slope include black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), black locust (*Robinia pseudo-acacia*), box elder, sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) and flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*). Other species in the shrub or ground layer include coralberry (*Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*), Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) and ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*). Included on this slope is a small area of Kentucky coffee tree (*Gymnocladus dioica*) and white mulberry forest in the area of the original flower garden. Japanese honeysuckle and coralberry are also abundant in this area.

Ravine Forest — Silver Maple, Box Elder, Sycamore

This is a lowland forest along an intermittent tributary of the Ohio River. Dominant overstory species are silver maple, box elder and sycamore, with smaller amounts of hackberry. This is an even-aged forest approximately eight to fifteen inches dbh. Herbaceous species include ground ivy, wild rye, jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*), white avens (*Geum canadense*) and white aster (*Aster* spp.). There are no alien shrubs and the overstory species are well represented as saplings. The banks are steep and the forest is probably often inundated by backwater from the river. This is the most important wildlife habitat at Shawnee Park, because it is moist, relatively undisturbed and provides a corridor to the river.

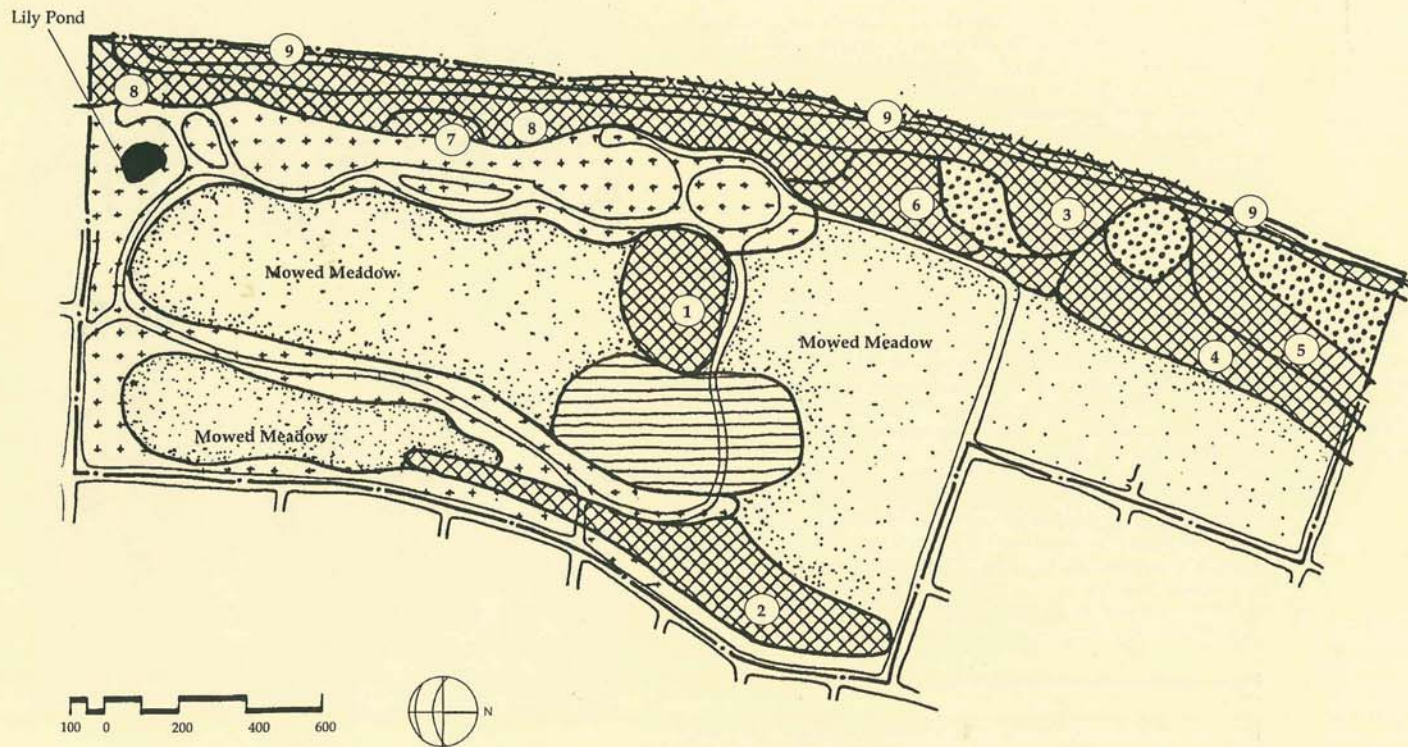


(Top) Ravine forest, Shawnee Park. (Eco-Tech, Inc., Photo by John MacGregor, 1992)











(Bottom) Ohio riverbank, Shawnee Park. (Eco-Tech, Inc., Photo by John MacGregor, 1992)

Shawnee Park: Plant Communities

Prepared by Eco-Tech, Inc., Frankfort KY

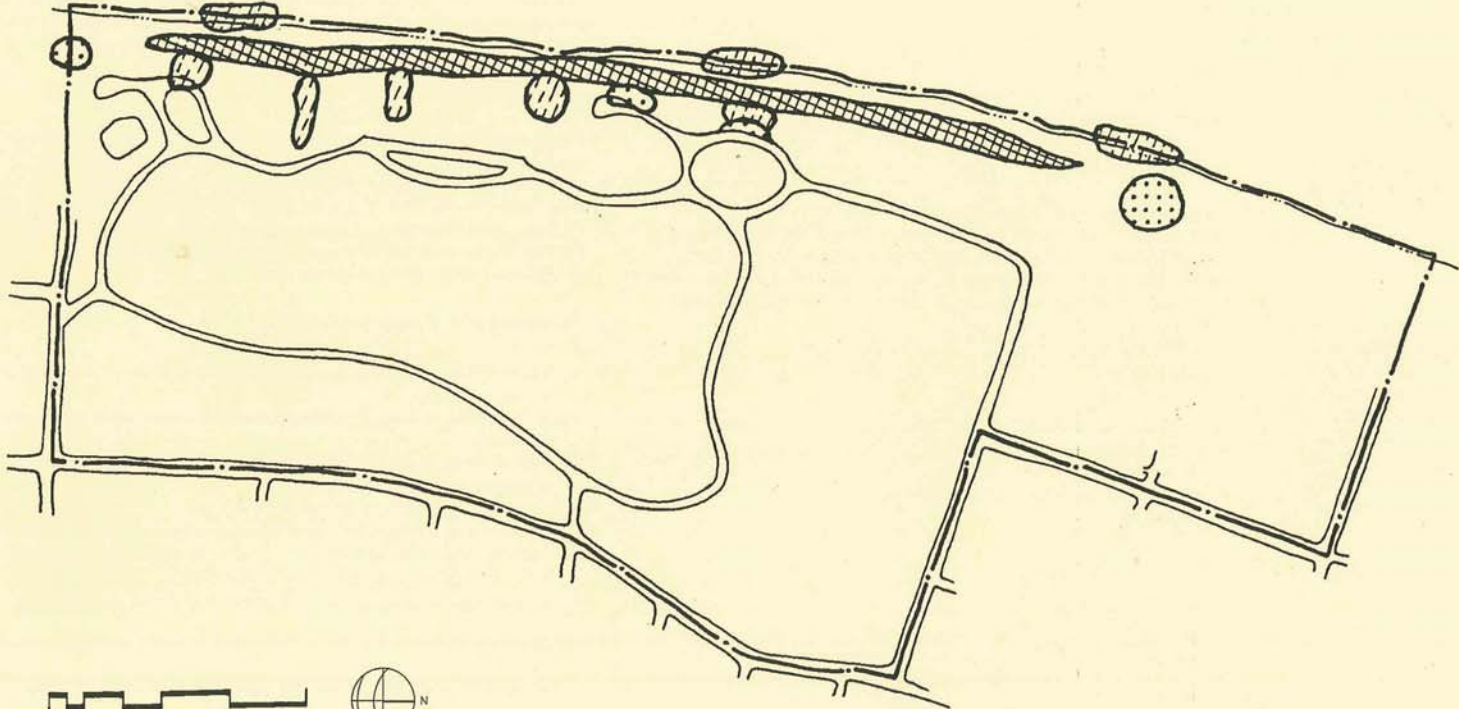


LEGEND




- | | |
|---|---|
|  | Park-like Remnant Upland Forest – Red Oak, Bur Oak, Hickory |
|  | Forest Communities and Remnants |
|  | Parklike Remnant - Swamp Chestnut Oak, Shellbark Hickory, Persimmon |
|  | Parklike Remnant - Swamp Chestnut Oak, Pin Oak, Sycamore |
|  | Cottonwood Forest |
|  | Black Locust, Elm, Hackberry, Cottonwood Forest |
|  | Silver Maple, Box Elder, Sycamore Ravine Forest |
|  | Beech, Sugar Maple, Sycamore Ravine Forest |
|  | Kentucky Coffee Tree, White Mulberry |
|  | Hickory, Hackberry |
|  | Riverbank Willows |
|  | Mowed Meadow |
|  | Unmowed Old Field |
|  | Mowed with Large Trees |

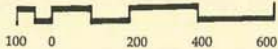
Shawnee Park: Disturbance

Prepared by Eco-Tech, Inc., Frankfort KY



LEGEND

	Erosion
	Exotic Plant Species
	Trash, Debris, and Litter



3. Shawnee Park

Ravine Forest — American Beech, Ash, Sugar Maple, Sycamore

This steep ravine forest spills off the river overlook and harbors some of the largest, mature trees of the original forest. American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), ash (*Fraxinus* sp.), sugar maple and sycamore are the largest trees and average twenty-five to forty inches dbh. Smaller sugar maples and hackberries grow in the understory and the overstory is reproducing. Shellbark hickory grows at the mouth of the ravine. The ground layer includes the spring wildflowers, wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*) and waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum appendiculatum*), but is dominated by Japanese honeysuckle.

Terrace Forest — Black Locust, Elms, Hackberry, Cottonwood

This transitional community occurs on the terrace above the silver maple, box elder, sycamore ravine forest. It includes some large cottonwoods and elms (*Ulmus americana*) and (*Ulmus rubra*) which are between thirty and forty inches in diameter. Smaller black locust and hackberry grow slightly higher on the slope and most of the black locust are dying. The ground layer is typical of streamside communities and includes jewelweed, stinging nettle, common blue violet (*Viola papilionacea*), white snakeroot, wild rye and jumpseed (*Tovara virginiana*).

Unmowed Old Fields

Unmowed old fields occur at two places in the park. One, which is being used as a dump site, is near the middle of the riparian forest. The other is at the end of the golf course, above and adjacent to the silver maple ravine forest. Although maintenance and exact species composition of these fields are somewhat different, their structure and dominant species are similar. They are dominated by native and alien herbaceous species such as Queen Anne's lace (*Daucus carota*), goldenrod, asters, red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), ironweed, yellow wingstem and fescue (*Festuca* sp.). The field near the golf course is periodically mowed.

Park-like Remnant Lowland Forest Swamp — Chestnut Oak, Pin Oak, Sycamore

This open park-like stand of old trees grows in and adjacent to the intermittent tributary that once flowed through the middle of the park. Here an oak dominated bottomland hardwood forest once existed and is today represented by a few relics of the original overstory. This lowland community persists in two sections, separated by a ridge of remnant upland forest described below. Dominant trees in the lowlands include swamp chestnut oak (*Quercus michauxii*), pinoak (*Q. palustris*), sycamore and shellbark hickory. Several of these trees exceed forty inches in diameter and are estimated to be one hundred to one hundred fifty years of age. The clear bole and unbranching character of these old trees indicate that they were forest grown. There is no shrub strata in this remnant and the ground layer, i.e., grasses, white

clover (*Trifolium repens*), mock strawberry (*Duchesnia indica*) and ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), is regularly mown.

Park-like Remnant Upland Forest — Red Oaks, Bur Oak, Hickory

This maintained, park-like stand of remnant trees occurs between the two sections of the relic forest described above. It differs from the previous community by its topographic position and therefore the species composition. Both northern red oak (*Q. rubra*) and shumard red oak (*Q. shumardii*) are here. Other large trees include yellow poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), sugar maple, white ash (*Fraxinus americana*) and bur oak (*Q. macrocarpa*).

Mowed Meadow

The dominant vegetation of Shawnee Park is a mowed meadow. It is used for recreational fields and open space.

Roadside Large Trees

Large, old trees occur adjacent to most of the roadway in the park. Most appear to be healthy and some may be original remnant vegetation. However, many of the exotics are certainly planted. Species include pin oak, ash, bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), Norway fir (*Abies* sp.), magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) and white pine (*Pinus strobus*).

Disturbance

Disturbance in Shawnee Park is of four main types: (1) trash deposition, (2) erosion caused by trampling, (3) erosion by river action, and (4) exotic plant species invading the natural flora communities. These problem areas are identified and discussed in the following paragraphs.

Trash Deposition Areas

The largest trash dump in the park is in the unmowed meadow on the river's floodplain. Here piles of rock, woody debris, concrete chunks and rubber tires are dumped in separate piles on disturbed ground. Although there is a sign at the entrance to this area that prohibits dumping, it is obviously ignored by everyone. A smaller dump that has recently been reduced lies in the floodplain at the park's downstream boundary. Litter lines the shortcuts to the river. Where dense brush hinders foot travel, litter is less common.

Erosion Gullies

Numerous gullies occur through the second terrace woodland where people shortcut through the woodland to the river road below. Everywhere that a trail begins, a watercourse soon follows and deepens

the gully. This is especially significant along the levee where the woody vegetation has been removed. Dense brush such as coralberry, briars and multiflora rose often tangles the understory and inhibits tree regeneration, but it also reduces off-trail encroachment by casual hikers and resultant erosion.

Riverbank Erosion

At several places along the riverbank, gullies in the clay substrate have been created by river wash. The relatively steep bank and high powered engines from commercial river traffic are probably the main causes. Even where there are a few larger black willow and silver maple trees, the clay banks still gully. Only where dense stands of the shrubby sandbar willow grow is bank erosion significantly reduced.

Exotic Plant Species

The dominant exotic species in Shawnee Park include white mulberry, Japanese honeysuckle, privet and several alien herbaceous species, especially in flood-prone lowlands. At the locations marked on the map, white mulberry is a special pest. This includes the edge of the Hickory, Hackberry Slope Forest, especially at the site of the old flower garden. White mulberry is also invading at the edge of the first terrace cottonwood forest along the river road.

Summary and Recommendations

- Most of Shawnee Park is a mowed meadow with large trees planted on the roadsides.
- A remnant of the original forest persists as large trees in the mowed meadow.
- The silver maple - box elder ravine forest is the most important wildlife habitat in the park.
- The river forest occurs in disturbed terraces.
- Erosion should be controlled on the overlook woods by seeding and planting with native shrubs. Species to use include dogwoods, redbuds, plums, viburnum and indigo bush.
- Riverbank erosion should be reduced by dense plantings of sandbar willows.
- Trash dumps which serve as the center of weed invasions should be removed.
- New stabilized paths should be provided to river road at several locations from the overlook.
- White mulberry should be removed from the overlook area and along river road.

Infrastructure & Facilities Inventory

Prepared by PDR Engineers, Inc., Louisville KY

Key Issues

River Bank Area

The river bank area from the main park down to the lower road and river presents maintenance problems for Metro Parks and safety problems for park users.

Currently, the area is overgrown with vegetation which prevents park users from enjoying views of the Ohio River, creates a concern for personal safety, and prevents walkers from using the lower road as a walking trail.

Metro Parks does not have proper equipment to keep the weeds in check on the steep slopes. Because of the overgrown vegetation, the area is currently used for dumping. Waste building materials (large sections of concrete, etc.) have been dumped on portions of the bank. There is also concern for the stability of the river bank since there have been washouts at other points along the river bank near Chickasaw Park.

Parking

There is not adequate parking in the park. Currently, parking is not allowed along the inner park side of the roads. However, during special events, parking occurs on both sides of the road, creating a dangerous situation for pedestrians. Portions of Hornung Field are also used for special events parking. The existing parking lot at the Picnic Pavilion is not organized and should be redesigned.

Athletic Facilities

Duffy Field and the other three dirt ballfields are heavily used by the Youth Baseball program and help create some of the parking congestion and reduce available open space within the park.

There is an ongoing discussion concerning relocating the ballfields to an area north of the park, possibly in the old River Glen Park area. Relocating the fields would reduce parking congestion in the main park area and would free open space on the Great Lawn. The new field location would require relocating support facilities (restrooms and concession stand) into the area.

Walking

There is a need for more walking paths within the park. In designing a path, perceived safety of the users along the path is important. If problems along the lower road are resolved, the path should tie into the lower road.

Drainage

There are several areas with drainage problems in the park. Drainage problems at the bandstand create the need for bleachers to keep people from sitting on the ground. There are drainage problems in Hornung Field, particularly near the Dirt Bowl basketball courts and there are longstanding drainage problems in the valley area (Paddy's Run).

Boat Ramp

There has been discussion of locating a boat ramp in the Shawnee Park area. According to the Corps of Engineers, if a boat ramp is constructed, several issues will need to be addressed. For example, due to the apparent instability of the river bank, the stability of the sides of the necessary cut along the road is a cause of concern. The boat ramp may be located along the Portland Sand Bar which, in addition to a shallow launch area, may create a need for more frequent dredging. To minimize maintenance problems, the boat ramp should be designed to be "self cleaning" by extending the ramp into the river and orienting the ramp downstream. Access and parking for the boat ramp must also be assessed in relation to Riverwalk and the park drives.

Floodwall

The floodwall creates a natural barrier within the park, separating the Great Lawn area from vista areas along the river bank. Because it creates a barrier, the floodwall creates concerns for pedestrian safety and access problems for the use of the Ball House and Bandstand. The floodwall is also a factor in the routing of storm drainage. Storm lines that traverse beneath the floodwall must be routed through manholes equipped with sluice gates.

3. Shawnee Park

Shawnee Park: Facilities Matrix

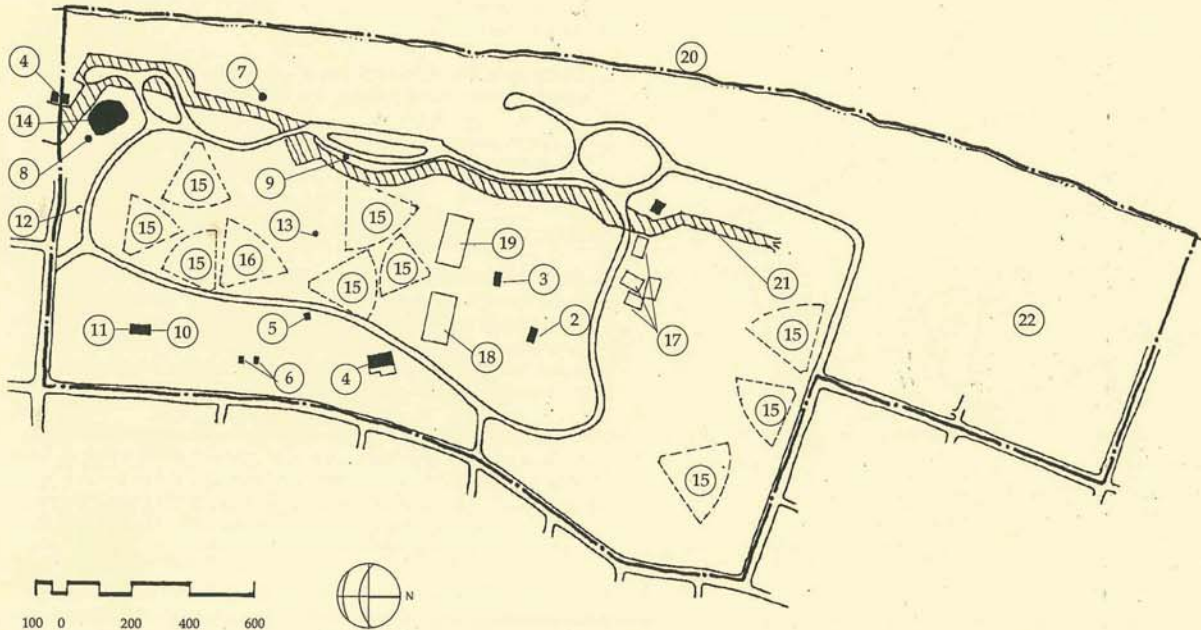
Prepared by PDR Engineers, Inc., Louisville KY

Structures

Struct	Type or Name	Usage/ Time Period	Purpose	Condition						Restrooms			Remarks
				Roof	Walls	Ceiling	Drainage	Electric	Plumbing	Present	Hdcp	Condition	
#1	Ball House	Seldom - only @ Dirt Bowl	Office & restroom	OK	OK	needs repair	OK	needs upgrade	OK	Yes	No	OK	Dirt Bowl runs June - Aug
#2	Picnic Pavilion	Moderate - weekends	picnic shelter	fascia needs repair	stucco needs work	OK	OK	OK	N/A	No	N/A	N/A	can be reserved
#3	Concess'n Stand	Not used	concession stand	OK	OK	unknown	OK	none	poor condition	No	N/A	N/A	open pit on floor Parks Dept wants to abandon
#4	MSD Pump Station	N/A	Storm Flow Pump to River	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Building under jurisdiction of MSD
#5	Restroom	Heavy - when Park occupied	restroom	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	Yes	Yes	OK	
#6	Concrete Picnic Pavilions	Moderate - weekends	picnic shelters	OK	N/A	N/A	drainage problem in valley	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	used by daycares and school groups
#7	Bandstand	3 or 6 events per year	Church events, talent shows	OK	OK	OK	poor in sitting area	OK	N/A	No	N/A	N/A	renovated in 80's
#8	Gazebo	unknown	Passive use	OK	N/A	N/A	OK	N/A	N/A	No	N/A	N/A	new building
#9	MSD Bldg	unknown	unknown	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
#10	Maint. Bldg	Daily year round	maintenance office, repairs	OK	doors could use repair	OK	OK	OK	OK	Yes	unknown	OK	renovated in late 1970's
#11	Metal Storage Building	Daily year round	storage	OK	open on 3 sides	N/A	OK	OK	N/A	No	N/A	N/A	exterior storage should be screened
#12	Stone Seating Area	Heavy - when park is used	Waller Mem. Fountain Area	N/A	N/A	N/A	OK	N/A	OK	No	N/A	N/A	some chips on stone seats, weather proof stn
#13	Duffy Field Flagpole	not used	Flagpole	N/A	N/A	N/A	poor at ballfields	N/A	N/A	No	N/A	N/A	masonry base need repair, pole weakened
#14	Lily Pond	Unknown	Passive Area	N/A	N/A	N/A	OK	N/A	spray is makeshift	No	N/A	N/A	trash in water

Shawnee Park: Facilities

Prepared by PDR Engineers, Inc., Louisville KY

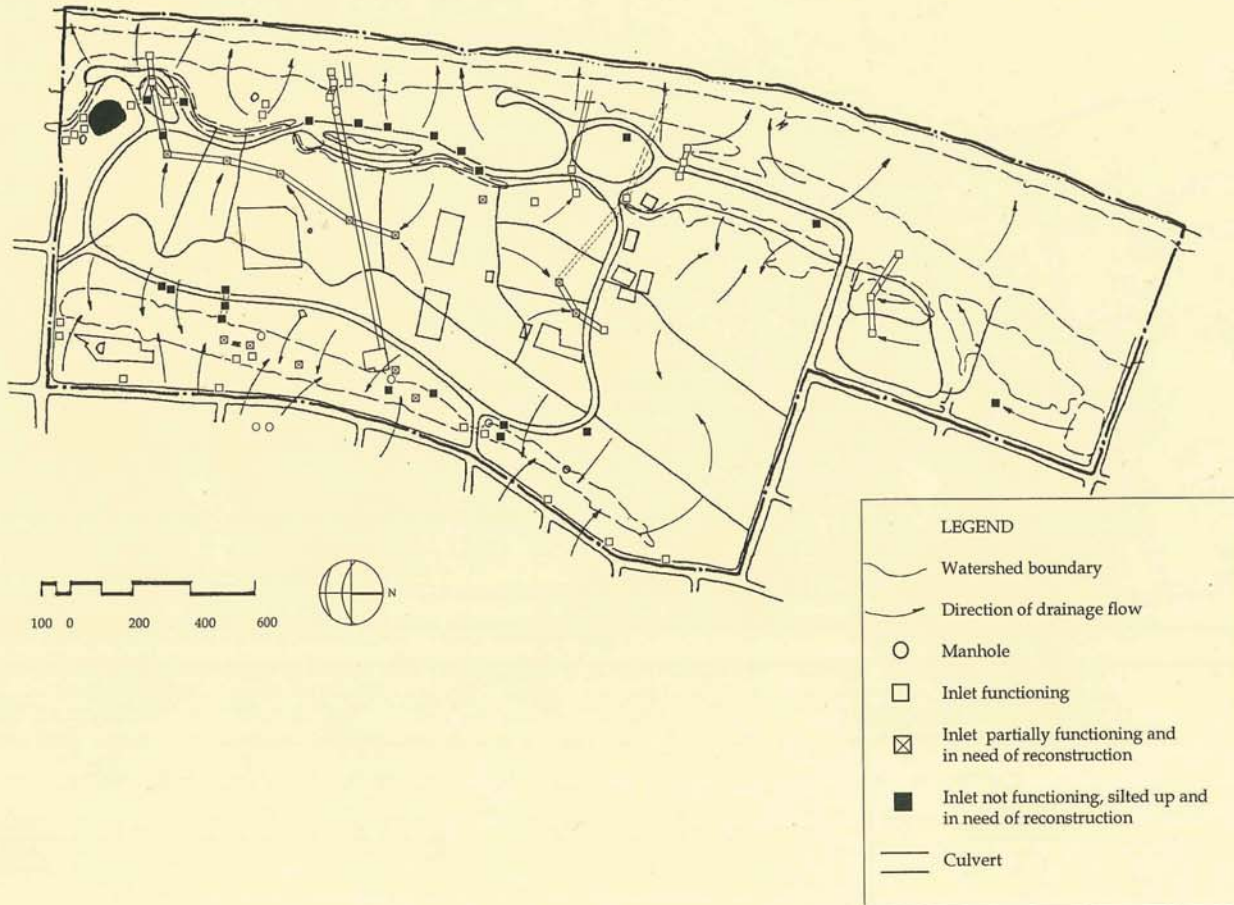


LEGEND

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| ① Ball House | ⑫ Stone Seating Area |
| ② Picnic Pavilion | ⑬ Duffy Field Flagpole |
| ③ Concession Stand | ⑭ Lily Pond |
| ④ MSD Pump Station | ⑮ Baseball Fields |
| ⑤ Restroom | ⑯ Duffy Field |
| ⑥ Concrete Picnic Pavilion | ⑰ Basketball Courts |
| ⑦ Music Pavilion | ⑱ Abandoned Tennis Courts |
| ⑧ Gazebo | ⑲ Active Tennis Courts |
| ⑨ MSD Building | ⑳ Former Boat Ramp |
| ⑩ Maintenance Building | ㉑ Floodwall |
| ⑪ Metal Storage Building | ㉒ Playground & Pavilion |

Shawnee Park: Watersheds & Drainage

Prepared by PDR Engineers, Inc., Louisville KY



Shawnee Park: Drainage Infrastructure

Shawnee Park's drainage infrastructure has been poorly maintained. Most of the inlet boxes are filled with silt, completely covering the inlet and outlet pipe. There are a significant number of areas in the lawn that have potholes in line with the presumed pipe routing between drainage structures, which is evidence of pipe cave-ins.

Due to the condition of the structures and the lack of documentation, it is difficult to determine the routing of water in the system. Corps of Engineers' drawings for the floodwall show some drainage structures in the vicinity of the floodwall. Based upon the Corps drawings and our own observations, the following is our theory of how the water is intended to flow:

1. The catch basins in Paddy's Run discharge into the large combined sewer that runs along the length of Paddy's Run.
2. The catch basins west of the floodwall have their own local discharge point, although the basins were in such bad shape we could only see the grates.
3. There were virtually no drainage structures in Hornung Field.

For the Great Lawn to function as a gathering place and for the Hornung Field and River Glen areas to serve as athletic fields, a properly designed and maintained underdrainage system must be in place. The lack of maintenance in the current system makes it almost nonfunctioning. Extensive work will be required to utilize the existing drainage system in any capacity in a new, enhanced system.

The existing pipes and inlets should be cleaned by "routing out" the lines. Cave-in areas should be excavated and the pipes replaced. Reconstruction should be studied, because it may be more cost effective to cap and abandon the lines (it would be better to remove them if they are caving-in), rather than cleaning the existing system. The existing line may also be found to be undersized.

Metro Parks must develop an ongoing maintenance program to clean pipes and inlets. Otherwise, even a newly designed drainage system would become "nonfunctioning," rendering public areas unusable in wet weather.

