

Notes to the City of Oak Ridge for input into the city's latest "blueprint for the future"

January 26, 2017

The City of Oak Ridge can be commended for its development of the walking paths at the Marina and keeping the development limited to 'human powered' sports. Most of the time its basic services for garbage collection, electricity, sewer repairs, and fire and police protection, meet the needs of the community in a timely fashion.

I would like to see the city do a better job repairing the sidewalks in the original neighborhoods. These should not be written off as substandard housing areas. Much of the area, particularly on the east side, is occupied by people who are adding on and refurbishing their homes. They care about the neighborhood and live along the greenways. These homes provide good starter homes for young people and families of moderate income. Some of us of greater means choose to stay in these houses because the style is preferable.

The city staff and elected officials need to do a much better job of communicating to and with all of the citizens of the city. One way this can be accomplished is by providing written updates clearly posted on a city website informing the citizenry of results of city-wide public meetings and ongoing progress, completion or abandonment of certain issues. For example, the city held a public meeting a few years ago when there was some discussion of private development of the marina but to learn what happened later means to search through minutes of council meetings with no clue what date the board, staff or council meeting made the final decision.

The city should explore how to use technology (other than Channel 12 TV) to allow citizens to hear and participate in city council meetings. There are some towns in the U.S. that use web based technology, such as on-line meetings which would allow questions from the citizens while they are home taking care of their families or home-bound in general.

It is my perception and observation that staff and elected officials participate and attend the events hosted by business groups but not community activist groups. I believe this limits the input they incorporate into their decisions because they are often exposed to the same socio-economic and racial groups which represent just a small part of the community. When staff and council say they listen to the people it mostly means they are listening to a white, upper-class resident from their own neighborhood.

I envision Oak Ridge as a community which encourages younger generations to be involved and open to new ideas that will take us into the future. This means eliminating barriers for younger people to enter the council elections. When the Chamber inserts itself into the process endorsing candidates that represent DOE and private development it creates a conflict of interest between doing what is best for the city in the long run and their own personal interests. Boards such as the Planning Commission and the former EQAB should be recognized for the expertise and knowledge they bring, and their recommendations and vision should not be overruled by staff listening instead to a small minority of special interests. The process which decisions are made does not seem transparent.

I envision a community that is walkable. I envision a community with lots of unique shops and restaurants, not a glut of franchises and chains. If we are going to provide tax abatements and TIFs to developers we should require those developers pass the tax breaks to the businesses that will be occupying the space and allow for something new to be opened. The downtown mall area appears to be developing along the lines of a strip mall and not the community center once conveyed to the community.

I envision a community that embraces sustainability. We can put in place zoning and planning regulations that help us conserve water, reduce groundwater into the sewers, and use less energy overall. We can think more broadly about how to use our city buildings.

City staff needs to retire staff who have no wider vision beyond the history of Oak Ridge. We need to be open to fresh ideas, a more organized and open method of hosting public meetings, and more responsive and open

to those who ask questions. The city has a history of forcing individuals to become confrontational in order to open a meaningful dialogue challenging some decision.

I envision a nice senior center addressing the needs of the majority of our population. At the same time, I envision that we will bring in more people under 40 or so years of age who will take Oak Ridge into the next 50 years, rather than the thinking that seems to be holding us back.

To: City Blueprint Taskforce

I wish to present in writing two comments/suggestions regarding the City Blueprint, so they don't get heard but forgotten in the business of the open meeting. I am a long-time resident of Oak Ridge and I love it.

1. I was charter Vice Chair of the Environmental Quality Board many years ago. At that time and many times since, the city has addressed the location of some proposed new civic building. Too often, the first candidate location seems to be somewhere in Bissell Park, usually close to the Civic Center. We opposed such action when I was on that EQ Board, and the Council supported our stance with a resolution. Now the Friendship Bell is planning to locate its park within Bissell Park and there is talk of adding a Senior Center within Bissell Park. I don't have a problem with the Bell being there, but I am afraid it will set a precedent for future encroachment.

I implore you to preserve Bissell Park in your Blueprint. Oak Ridge is very fortunate to have such a nice city park, right in the center of town. The EQB viewed the area between ORAU, the Park, the high school fields, and the swimming pool as a composite greenway. I realize that the Bissell Park property is inviting and valuable and convenient and probably cheap for the city. So is Central Park in NYC, and it is a signature of that city. So too can Bissell Park be a signature feature of Oak Ridge.

Oak Ridge will in time grow and even become crowded. Please, please, please protect and preserve Bissell Park as is, in the blueprint. Don't allow encroachment. It is a rare asset for a city of our size now and will become more so with time. It will become a key part of our identity.

2. This is a suggestion derived from the attached article (www.aarp.org/livable-communities) about age-friendly communities. The article emphasizes seniors, but the concept includes all ages. I believe that Oak Ridge is a good candidate to become a "Community for a Lifetime." By that I mean that it would be community that is developed in ways that it nicely needs of people of all ages...citizens can grow up here and spend a lifetime here. AARP and the WHO have programs and projects directed at age-friendly cities, and they have organized the characteristics of such cities into eight separate categories ("domains"). Oak Ridge already has a significant number of features and assets associated with an age-friendly city as they define it.

My suggestion is that in developing a blueprint for Oak Ridge, you take advantage of the work and data and experience and successes and failures of the AARP and WHO programs. Their "domains" will identify some difficult issues for Oak Ridge, as they should. I hope you will address and plan for them as well as the easy ones.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Oak Ridge, TN

Ms Kathryn Baldwin
Community Development Director
Re: Oak Ridge City Blueprint
P. O. Box 1
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37830

Dear Kathryn : January 26th, 2017

Before the City appeals to the DOE to release additional DOE Reservation Lands for City and private ownership/development , first ask how can existing city-private property meet our needs . Perhaps go further and ask DOE that no reservation lands be dispositioned by public auction (GSA). As it is now the blighted, vacant, and empty properties represent incremental but cumulative liabilities to our City budget . Consider this one example— every time a public works employee, police, city staff, or public school bus travels to The Preserve at Clinch River it represents a minimum of one man hour just in travel time, Two hours if two employees, which is frequently the case for Public Works.

Often the comment is that DOE Reservation lands are necessary for community self sufficiency and jobs. Oak Ridge has jobs - perhaps 12,000 at a minimum and with above average salaries. Creating a more diverse industrial base and more jobs will not equate to more/younger residents.

Oak Ridge has the one unique resource/asset that no other city has and that is 22,000 acres of contiguous public lands mostly undisturbed for over 70 years. These do and can always bring us great benefits. Working together to continue preserving these public lands can at the same time realize and achieve an even better place for folks to want to live.



And thanks for establishing this "Blueprint" initiative. I know you have invested a lot of hard work into this already.

So without too much thought or research I have compiled the following list of unrealized potential we may first want to redouble our efforts to realize.

Itemized List and Approximate Status of Active Residential Developments In Oak Ridge

* Centennial Bluff, 405 housing units, 40 acres, Ground breaking January 2008, Contact - CEO of Brandywine Lifestyle Communities

*Centennial Village Apartments, LLC, Approximately 350 luxury apartments, some number completed and mostly occupied. more precise number unspecified at present, grading and utility installation underway, 20 million dollar project, Construction start approx March 2009,

* Additional Residential development in Centennial golf course vicinity by -- nothing specific.

* Crossroads at Wolf Creek, 175 units, 72 acre , streets & utilities 60% complete , contact [REDACTED]

* Rarity Oaks --- 548 units on 400 acres, over 15 yrs. , streets and utilities 50% complete , Contact [REDACTED], president

* Preserve at Clinch River (Rarity Ridge)----3000 units , 1300 acres, started in 2001, about 150 residences completed , -- Rezoned from Industrial to Residential largely based on input from [REDACTED] Later added the 182 acre riverfront wetlands to help the success of the development by offering boat dock/marina . DOE sold the 182 acres at \$54 per acre in violation of fair market value requirements.

* Groves Park Commons, 325 homes , 105 acres, Ground breaking June 2008, [REDACTED]

* Clark's Preserve -- Tempura Drive Development – 50 homes, 26 acres , Ground breaking May 2008, [REDACTED]

* Habitat for Humanity Development –Scarboro Village, 40 homes, 9 acres , Start ~ October 2008, [REDACTED]

* Jackson Crossing, about 116 lots , 60 acres, started in April 1998, about 50% complete after 19 years, [REDACTED]

* Main Street Oak Ridge -- 200 residential apartments [REDACTED] -- RealtyLink

Itemized List and Status of Commerical Development Land/Parcels

* Horizon Center, 957 acres, 450 Acres Released for economic development in 1995, at the time of transfer the DOE invested \$11,000,000 on grading, streets, and utilities, Two businesses/factories currently operating, LeMond Composites just occupied 88,000 sq.ft. bldg that had been for sale since 2005. Oak Ridge National Laboratory Carbon Fiber R & D Facility . Basic maintenance and other expenses of the area is costing the ORIDB. i.e. residents of O. R. more than \$30K per year.

* Heritage Center, about 1800 acres, Formerly referred to as East Tennessee Technology Park, and historically known as the K-25 site, DOE directed remediation and environmental cleanup in progress with approximate completion in 2020, some areas and buildings released for industrial use . Private use is limited at this point.

* Commerce Park, 267 acres , DOE released for economic Development about 1987, currently about 60% utilized by industry. 22 acres was rezoned for church.

* Science Technology Park adjacent to ORNL, 40 acres , initiated spring 2008, Pro2Serv is a tenant , they vacated office space in Victory Center next to Social Security Administration,
Partially reoccupied. Some empty space resulting from move still exists in Victory Center .

* Pine Ridge Industrial Park , 100 acres , Grading & Infrastructure

completed in 2001 leveled the top of scenic ridge line framing our City on the East, 10% utilized , one business with DOE contract.

* Bethel Valley Industrial Park, Some sites yet to be sold. IDB appealed to DOE to sell 20 adjacent on west, acres for promised Protomet expansion . DOE sold at below fair market value to expedite process. Protomet announced in late 2016 that they may in fact not expand their operations in Oak Ridge after all .

* Acreage by Home Depot and adjacent to small shopping center across from Roane State Community College. Several sizeable empty parcels.

* Main Street Oak Ridge development , many retail store parcels yet to be contracted. 65 Acres

* Approximately 9 acre parcel behind former K-Mart (many years ago a garden/greenhouse store and facility) . Vacant for at least 10 years.

* Former Tindall Lumber Yard and retail store

* Site of former Paragon fitness center on Emory Valley Road.

* Former 84 Lumber yard

* Two empty parcels just down street from former 84 Lumber across from Holiday Inn Express

* City council rezoned 12 acre Parcel C at South Illinois Ave and Bethel Valley rd from Economic Development to church. City staff at time recommended keeping for Economic Development

* ORUD looking to relocate operations from corner of Union Valley Rd and Scarborough Rd to 20 acre greenfield site on Rt 58 across from George Jones Church. If this happens the plans for current site (city owned land) is unclear.

* Several sites on Union Valley rd for sale or lease .

* Recently identified Parcel G across from Oak Ridge Memorial Cemetery on Bethel Valley Rd.

* For the recently transferred (GSA Public Auction) ED-3 of 150 acres , buyer has no current plans for development .

* Union Valley Rd & So. Illinois Ave -- Golf driving range

Other Commercial/retail, industrial parcels available

* Former Sage Brush Restaurant

* Adjoining empty store fronts by HobbyLobby

* Long closed (Asian) restaurant across E. Tulsa Rd from Baskin Robbins

* Vacant parcel (fenced adjacent to Hardees Restaurant)

* Main Street adjoining parcels still owned by late Gilford Glazier entities

* Former K-Mart , 105K Sq Ft

- * New Kroger Market Place out parcels
- * Former Goodwill and Pizza Hut locations behind Hardees
- * Mid Town Community Center (vacated in July by ██████████ -- O. R. Convention & Visitors Bureau)
- * Empty store fronts in Food City shopping center.
- * Parcel behind TnBank (Christmas tree sales lot)
- * Empty store fronts across from Bank of America -- (Former Edward D. Jones, etc.)
- * Former YWCA building and acreage
- * Large parcel and empty bldgs where Oak Ridge Greenhouse was behind Four Oaks center
- * Fire damaged and empty Eagles Lodge by EFPC at Illinois Ave and Turnpike
- * Empty lot on NW corner of Illinois Ave and Turnpike
- * Empty retail bldg at Time to Shine Car Wash, New but never occupied
- * 1.5 acre corner lot by Karen's Jewelry
- * Former Oakridger newspaper bldg
- * Jackson Tower empty office space
- * Former Red Cross bldg adjacent to Cheyenne Ambulatory Center
- * Vacant parcel behind new Subway restaurant on East end of town
- * 13 acre parcel , formerly Chevrolet auto dealership
- * Numerous vacant/empty sites at Fairbanks Rd vicinity
- * Space available in Victory Center
- * Numerous locations on Warehouse Rd and parallel streets (Bridgebane & Bellgrade)
- * Acreage next to Patterson Appliances & Wheel to Wheel on east end of town
- * Recently acquired 17 acre AMSE site
- * Other empty space for example Jackson Square - Jefferson Circle, etc.
- * Acreage east of Y-12 Credit Union
- * Vacancy next to Swifty's
- * Four Oaks Center vacancy including former Mayflower restaurant
- * Empty stores by the new Hanks Market
- * Empty lot by Boys Club, long ago AMSE site
- * Etc.

Ms. Kathryn G. Baldwin

Community Development Director

Re: Oak Ridge City Blueprint

P. O. Box 1

Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37830

Dear Kathryn : **January 26th, 2017**

As we prepare our City Blueprint i would like for us to consider more broadly how our 22K acres of public lands, mostly undisturbed for over 70 years, can at the same time of being preserved serve to benefit our economic self sufficiency . One approach would be to set aside some 4000 contiguous acres encompassing Clark Center Park as a "Three Bend State Park" . The Three Bend area (currently a State WMA) and Clark Center Park have all the attributes to become a State Park with every bit of the appeal and accessibility that is so recognized and respected in our Tennessee State Park system. Randy Boyd our State Commissioner of Economic Development often is very helpful financially with community development and could be approached in this instance with the relatively small investment in sewer and other infrastructure.

My sense is that the DOE would welcome working with Randy Boyd, TDEC and the City to see the Three Bend remain a public resource accessible for public appreciation and benefit while have a strong economic component . The opportunity to develop a state park already beginning with public lands and with all the sought after attributes requiring little further development, is one of a kind in this instance.

It is uniquely situated topographically but very convenient to a large and growing population of Oak Ridge, west Knox County (Pellissippi is nearly built out between Solway and i-40) and Claxton-Anderson County as well as other communities. Tennessee State Parks are one of our State's greatest assets --- think value to our economy . Having a 4000 acre state park in our City would set us apart as a "Playful City USA " And a even more desirable community in which to reside and raise a family. Easily secured after hours with a single entry point.

Enabling legislation could easily be crafted to retain the ORNL research programs and the TWRA hunting seasons ~ 6 days a year. Clark Center

Park would be the obvious developed recreational amenity and with very little expenditure could accommodate a woodland shaded RV campground adjoining (east) the upper ball field and perhaps including it. The cabin at Freels Bend (Freels Cabin) is the oldest structure in the area circa 1815 and serves as a summer science camp for kids. And has for over 20 years. Of the Three Bends , The Solway Bend has some of the most beautiful landscape with a dozen small peninsulas projecting into Melton Hill Lake. Ideally accommodating a multiuse trail, , shore birds, water fowl, etc inhabiting the riparian /wetland zones. The only facilities to be dealt with is the City Water intake station but that is already effectively secured by a protective fence. A expanded low impact multiues trail system can easily be done at Gallaher Point to supplement the existing City Greenway trail.

Clark Center was the name of the gentleman who was instrumental in early development of Oak Ridge and the Manhattan Project - Badge No.1 at K-25)

<http://smithdray1.net/historicallyspeaking/2014/9-22-14%20Clark%20Center%20Park.pdf>) .

Let me know Kathryn, if you would like to go for a tour in person and I will work to arrange it.

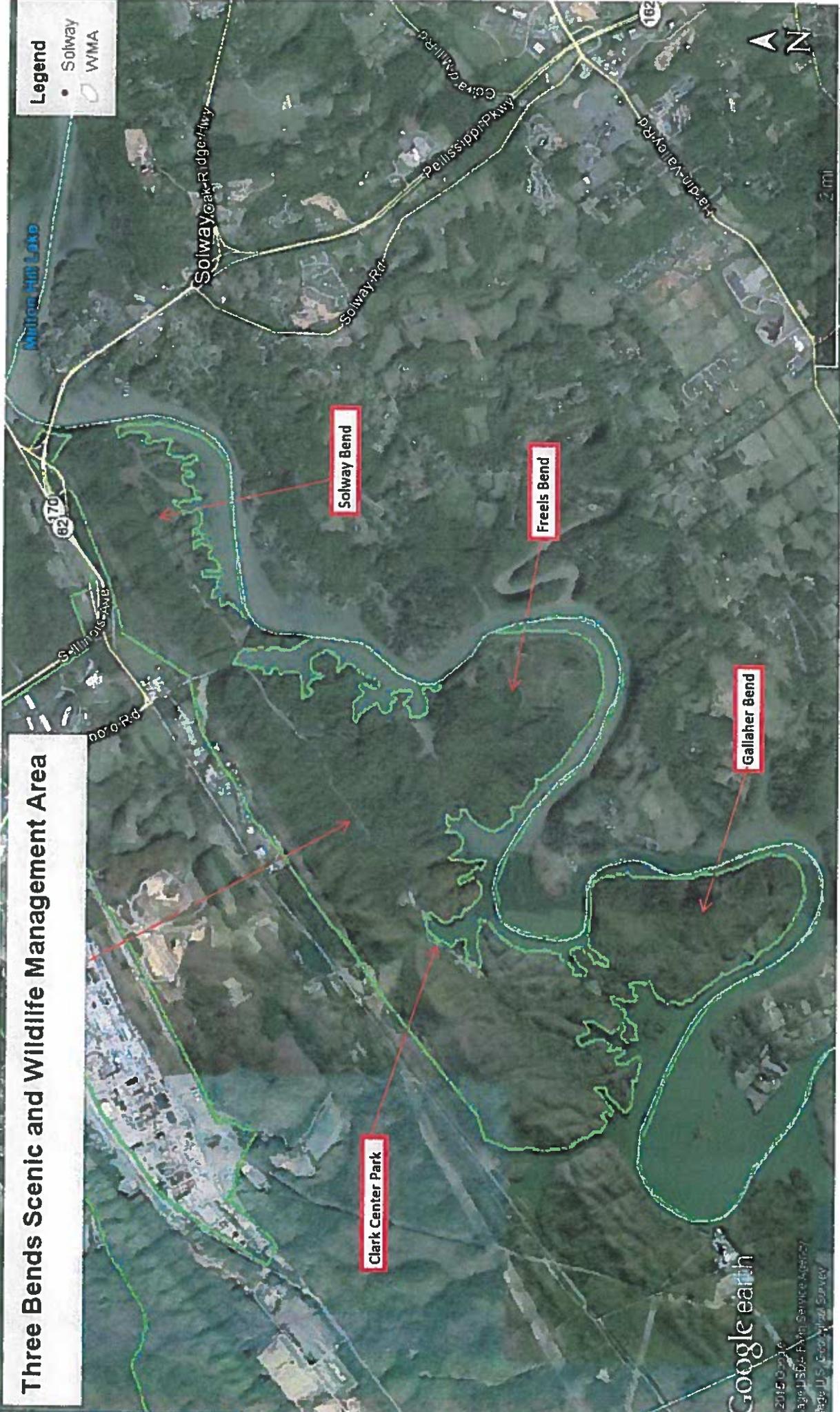
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Three Bends Scenic and Wildlife Management Area

Legend

- Solway
- WMA



Solway Bend

Freels Bend

Gallaher Bend

Clark Center Park

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Community Development Director

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Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37830

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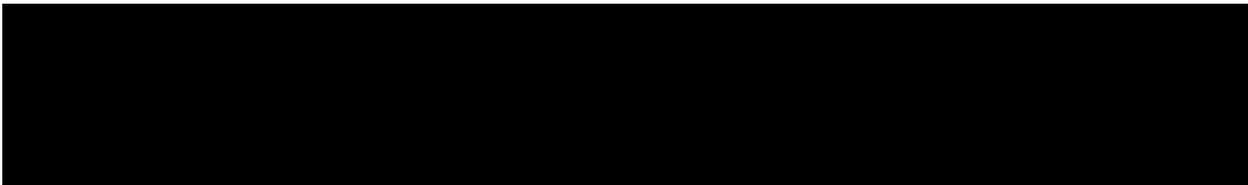
As you may be aware the Black Oak Ridge Conservation Easement (BORCE) was an agreement between trustees - DOE, TVA, TDEC & TWRA to compensate users for recreational economic value lost as a result of Mnahattan Project & cold war legacy contaminats to Watts Bar Lake. BORCE is 2 parcels of about 1500 acres each on the west end of Oak Ridge, In close proximity to the Preserve at Clinch River and residences in the Westwood Neighborhood.

A group of Greenways trails volunteers established about 6 miles of internal single track trails to compliment the one lane gravel roads/ that access mostly the perimeter of the areas - fire roads . I visit the area regularly and am convinced a modest expansion of the trails mileage (see attached maps) would be a major benefit to our community by increasing user interest and corresponding development of the adjacent residential areas. Based on experience of myself and others we estimate that the size and topography of the area could accommodate about 10 to 12 miles of additional multiues trails. These would be built following International Trailbuilders guidelines -- low impact, sustainable , purpose built, moderate gradient. There is a active volunteer user group willing to continue this work. Two of us, [REDACTED] and myself, attended the Professional Trailbuilders training sessions at the national conference held in Knoxville last February.

I would like to meet with you as soon as possible and request your help contacting the BORCE Trustees (specifically DOE and TWRA) emphasizing that the City is very supportive of this and feels it is clearly in the City's Economy interest to see the full value of BORCE realized . Trails expansion to increase the "destination value " is clearly consistent with the intent of BORCE. Jon Hetrick and the City Rec & Pks Adv. Bd. is well aware of this interest.

There is also one additional trail on ED-6 that we have scouted that will be a big benefit to visitors by providing loop routes. ED-6 is under DOE oversight only, not TWRA. At least one local homeowner told me the adjacent trails were a major reason they purchased a home in the Westwood Neighborhood residential development.

Winter is the best time for trail work so it would be good if you could help us as soon as possible. If you haven't seen the trails we have built on the west end, I would like to show you. I believe you will clearly understand why users really like these, say compared to the ones at Haw Ridge which are largely old ATV routes.

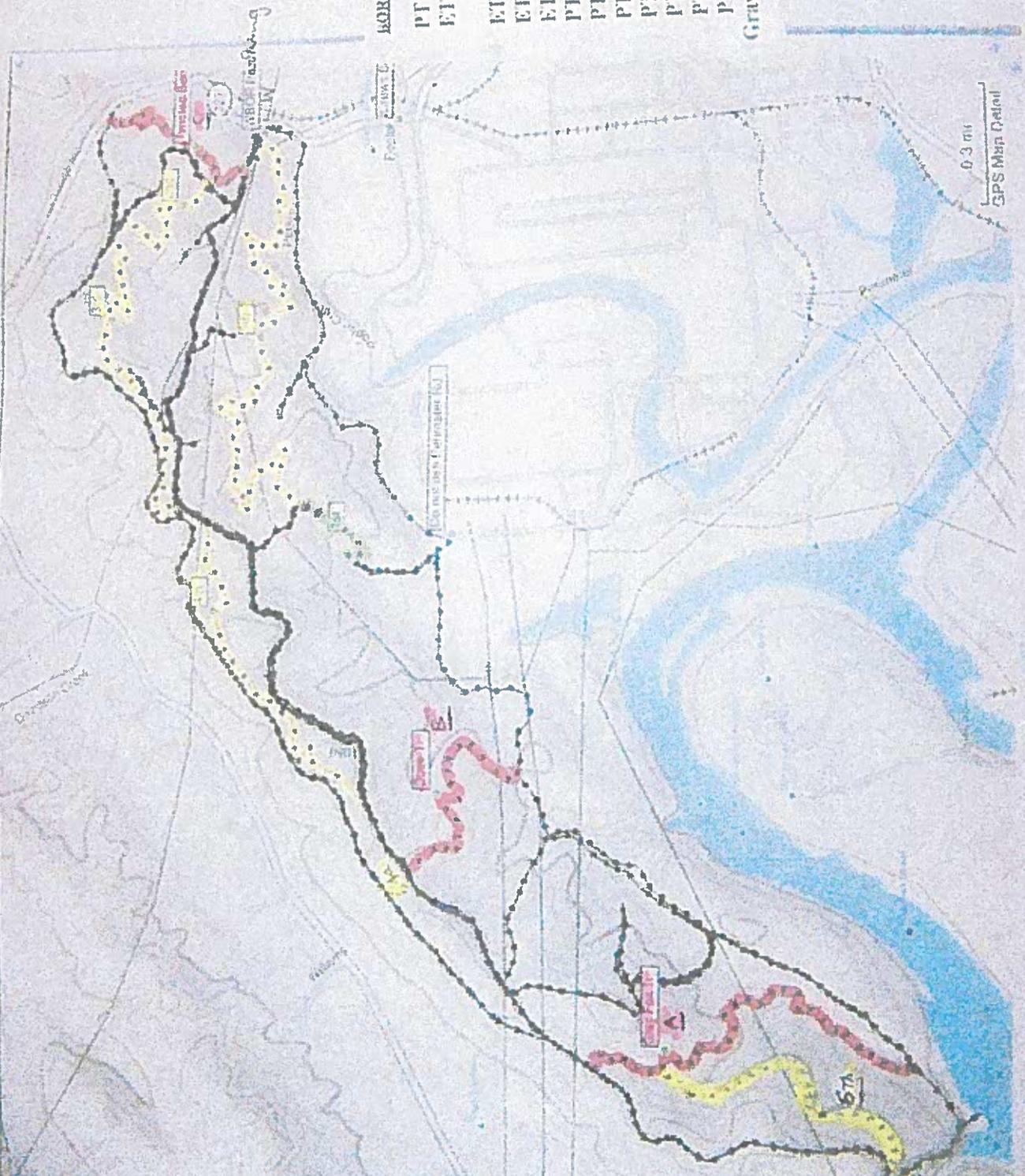


BOBCE Wild Black Oak Ridge Conservation easement (W&C)

PT ----- Proposed Trail
ET ----- Existing Trail

ET A -- Gray Fox Tr. ----- 1.1 miles (red)
ET B -- Dove Tr. ----- 0.7 miles (red)
ET C -- Twisted Beech Tr. -- 0.5 miles (red)
PT 1st ----- 0.3 miles (green)
PT 2nd ----- 0.5 miles (yellow)
PT 3rd ----- 1.0 miles (yellow)
PT 4th ----- 0.9 miles (yellow)
PT 4a ----- 0.2 miles (yellow)
PT 5th ----- 1.9 miles (yellow)
PT 6th ----- 1.2 miles (yellow)

Gravel access/patrol routes in black dotted lines



My concern is about the serious downsizing of the American Museum of Science and Energy. The museum is a major draw for tourists and one of the "jewels in the crown" of Oak Ridge. The museum attracts visitors from all over the United States and foreign countries, during fiscal year 2016 there were 66,892 visitors and students. Many of these visitors spend money in our restaurants, hotels, shops and gas stations. Moving the museum to the old Sears store in the former mall location will only give it a third the area of the existing building, this area will be shared with the Manhattan Project National Park.

One of the great attractions at the museum is the Van de Graaf generator, that gives visitors a "hair-raising experience". Parents bring their children to the museum to share this exciting activity that they remember doing when they were young. Will the new museum site have an auditorium or large meeting space where this electricity show can still be performed?

The museum is also a destination for thousands of students who come to learn about the history of Oak Ridge, the science behind the Manhattan Project, and ongoing science projects taking place at ORNL and Y-12. Museum staff educators work with students throughout the year teaching classes about many aspects of science. It is important that the new museum has adequate classroom space so these programs can be continued.

There are two science outreach educators at the museum who take equipment out to the schools to teach students in their classrooms. This program was started 28 years ago and has served thousands of public, private and homeschooled students. In 2016 there were more than 3,700 students who went through the program. These classes require kits that contain the equipment, there has to be storage space where they can be kept and easily accessed. Will the new museum site have storage space? At a time when STEM education is being strongly advocated, many schools do not have the time or the resources to develop programs, the AMSE programs offer important enrichment for students in Oak Ridge and the surrounding counties.

There are other buildings next to and behind the new museum site that could be modified into classrooms, storage areas, and meeting places. The small area being offered is not adequate for the museum programs as they are now to be able to continue. I'm asking the city staff to please negotiate for more space so the museum doesn't just become a small National Park visitor center.

Oak Ridge Botanical Gardens

Location: Summit Place

Purpose: Conservation and Education

Is 200 Summit Pl currently occupied? If so, build new building. If not, convert existing 31.470 sq ft. building into gift shop, art gallery, education and convention center.



Have several rooms for hosting talks/gatherings of various types.

Open year round with season specific events.

Provide free seminars that allow scientists at ORNL and students and instructors from UT and RSCC to show k-12 students the types of work they are doing. Set these up in advance specifically for the schools. Have similar seminars open to the public.

Seminars provided by ORNL could cover environmental conservation (both plant and animal), advances in biofuel technologies, as well as wind and solar energy advancements. These seminars would allow scientists at the lab to present their current work to local residents and to school children from local and surrounding counties to help stimulate interest in STEM courses.

Work with the Oak Ridge Art Gallery, local schools, and the UT and RSCC Art Departments to promote learning about plants and art.

Offer rooms to rent for weddings, wedding receptions, parties of various sorts, and business meetings.

Host summer camps to give students more in-depth instruction on plants and the environment, and another for art students covering early paint making techniques as well as the use of plants in art.



Provide low cost classes to the public on issues relating to caring for different types of gardens, proper lawn care, the symbiosis of plants and animals, dealing with invasive species, and dealing with wildlife in urban and rural environments.

Include an art gallery of pieces done by local artists that were inspired by plants

in the garden, have prints of some images for sale in the gift shop. Botanical garden receives a percentage of the sale of prints.

Gift shop to include not only artist prints, but books on plants and art, kits for starting herb and flower gardens, and plants approved for landscaping in our region.

Include a café that is open during business hours and provides catering for on-site events. Food in the café will be locally sourced. An herb garden could be kept as part of the botanical gardens and those fresh herbs and spices can be used in the café and excess sold to the public in the gift shop. Packaging and cutlery will be biodegradable, and all refuse from the café will be composted on site to help fertilize the gardens. Excess will be sold through the gift shop. Outdoor picnic tables will be located near the café and can be reserved for special events.



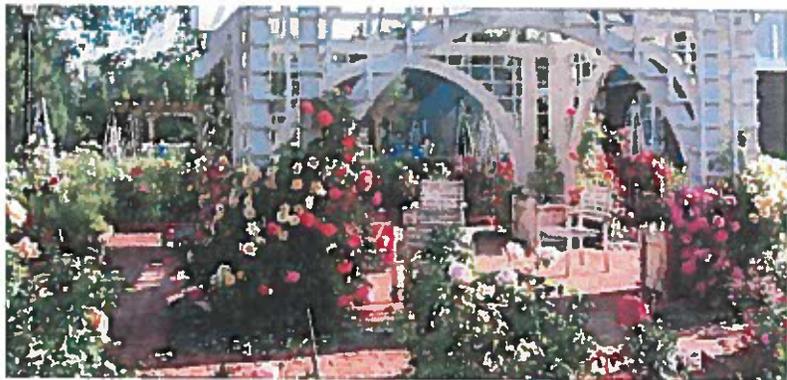
Simply visiting the gardens is free. Provide guided tours of the botanical garden for a small fee.

Features within the gardens:

- Paved pathways through the garden would make it more accessible than the Arboretum for those who are handicapped.
- Park benches for simply sitting and enjoying the gardens.
- Water features providing wetland and aquatic environments that can also help water plants within the garden and add to the ambiance of the park.
- Green houses to feature environments that need warmer or cooler climates than our own.
- Designated areas that can be reserved for a small fee for photo shoots such as wedding or engagement photos, senior yearbook photos, or special event photos. When reserved, these areas would be blocked off to provide privacy while photos were being taken.
- Volunteer programs for students of all ages to come help with the gardens. If the gardens generate enough income, provide paid as well as unpaid internship opportunities to college students taking courses in plant sciences.

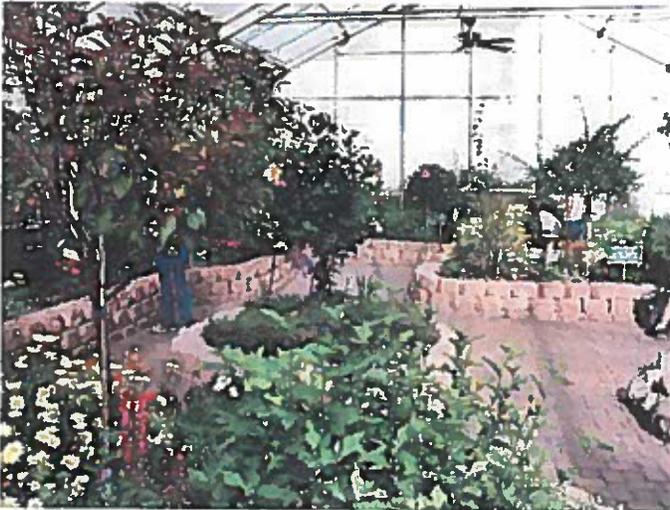
Protection:

- A wrought iron fence around the perimeter of the gardens to allow native wildlife to travel through the park and to keep from interfering with the view from those who can see the gardens from their homes.
- Security guards who patrol the perimeter and within the gardens at night to keep out vandals and thieves.
- Sections containing non-native species subject to predation by local fauna will have retractable fencing that will be hidden during business hours.



Funding for the project:

- Begin as a city owned and operated facility that would be a part of the Parks and Recreation Department.
- Reach out to local companies to provide services and sponsorship for advertising within the park and convention center.
- Seek out grants to help with construction and operation of the gardens and their conservation and education efforts.
- Accept donations from local residents, businesses, and conservation societies.



Cooperative effort between the City of Oak Ridge, ORNL, University of Tennessee Department of Plant Sciences and UT Arboretum, and Roane State Community College.

Could connect with national conservation societies.

Can look to the Missouri Botanical Gardens in St. Louis, MO and Franklin Park Conservatory in Columbus, OH as models upon which to base the one in Oak Ridge.

Resource – information on starting a botanical garden - https://www.bgci.org/resources/start_a_garden/

Developing an Invasive Plant Policy at a Botanic Garden - <https://www.bgci.org/resources/article/0494/>

Oak Ridge Animal Shelter Needs Your Help!

Input for Oak Ridge City Blueprint Kick-Off Meeting 1.26.17

The Oak Ridge Animal Shelter, currently housed in the old OR Bus Depot building is in dire need of upgrades to current facilities. The Shelter should be moved to another more suitable city owned building that could be modified. Ideally, a new Shelter building should be built in the future. Shelter currently does not conform the Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters*, as written by the Association of Shelter Veterinarians. We need your help for the animals and for the staff.

Shelter SHOULD have, but does not currently have the following facilities:

- **Indoor/outdoor kennel space for dogs.** Dogs are currently housed in chain link kennels with no solid partitions between kennels to separate dogs. There is no place for dogs to urinate or defecate other than on the concrete floor they “live in” inside their caged kennel. This is a huge cleanliness and odor concern, and can pass bacteria and disease to surrounding kennels. They are constantly wet and/or dirty. Neither staff nor volunteers can guarantee that cages are cleaned immediately after elimination. Current Shelter Guidelines (mentioned above) dictate that shelter dogs should have indoor/outdoor kennels as their primary enclosure
- **Separate rooms for new and nursing mothers with puppies/kittens to alleviate stress.**
- **Separate rooms for sick animals.** Currently sick animals are housed with the quarantined healthy animals
- **Cat room with a window.** Cats are currently housed in an enclosed small room with cages on top of each other
- **Separate indoor adoption room(s) for people to meet and greet potential new pets with their families.** The only current place to introduce a potential dog or cat to a new family is inside the cramped cat room or outdoors with a dog
- **Proper ventilation in each room.** Poor ventilation increases odor and spreads disease
- **Separate staff break room.** There is no private place for staff to eat or take a break
- **Separate food storage space.** Food is currently piled up anywhere it will fit and adjacent building cannot be used due to rat infestation

The Oak Ridge Animal Shelter accepted over 1000 animals last year, and 53 animals to date (1.26.17). It is currently run more like a pound, and does not conform to current standards. Oak Ridge citizens deserve an Animal Shelter that can not only offer services that shelter animals deserve but is housed in a facility that provides a better, cleaner, more welcoming atmosphere for potential adopters.

*Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters, The Association of Shelter Veterinarians, 2010, <http://www.sheltervet.org/assets/docs/shelter-standards-oct2011-wforward.pdf>

Creating City Vitality by Attracting Young Talent

Submitted by: [REDACTED]

The vitality of a city, while supported by many, is usually most evident in the lives of its young, growing families who are most active in the community. In recognition of this, the city should focus on building the best possible city experience for young, talented individuals and families.

Make Oak Ridge a place these people will not only want to work, but to live.

Pertinent Ideas to Attract Young Families (What we may be missing)

Attracting Young Talent - Social

- Development of Young Professionals clubs with special interests – outdoor activities, local attraction tourism, etc. – Possibly tie-in with the popularity of Meet-Up groups as a popular tool for people to get to know other people in larger cities
- Gotta Know Oak Ridge/Anderson County Ambassadors Program- utilize to help woo industry recruits
- Create Young Professionals Dining clubs w. supplemented costs or pay restaurants in Social Advertising Development – created by the members for the business's benefit
 - Potentially even extend to immediately surrounding areas, also
- Develop a true splash pad to be a crown jewel of the city parks that would be a good element to attract young families/talent (could infrastructure from the gross-looking, dilapidated fountain at the civic center be utilized to reduce costs?)

Attracting Young Talent – Child Care

- Create informational resources with In-town/In-county resources for child care
- If an audit shows a lack of quality child care, how could the city work to improve or develop this?
- This is a BIG concern for young professional families that is almost always overlooked by community development and recruiting

Attracting Young Talent – Housing

- Housing is a critical element that Oak Ridge currently lacks. While new housing is an easy target, and we all know that there is a lack of new development in Oak Ridge, there are many trends that point toward re-finishing, rehabilitating, and revitalizing “historic” housing. This is an attractive idea to many Young Families, and the additional trend of “downsizing” with popular shows such as “Tiny House Hunters”, “Tiny House Nation”, and “Tiny House, Big Living” point to a trend that *could* bode well for Oak Ridge. While many traditional Oak Ridge houses have

become small by modern American standards, this simplified step-back trend could be a positive element for Oak Ridge Housing

- Additionally, there has been a popularization of mid-century modern furnishings and architecture that could also mix extremely well with Oak Ridge Housing.
- Imagine a rehabilitative housing program in Oak Ridge that focused not on simply making homes more energy-efficient and affordable, but also more attractive to today's modern young families. Such a program might consist of elements such as:
 - Free access to professionally developed architectural plans for each of Oak Ridge's unique housing styles that re-configure them for more attractive modern-style living that young home buyers would be more welcome to.
 - Potential rehabilitative grant programs for investors who follow the program, in order to create additional interest in the private sector
 - Supportive marketing of such rehabilitated houses to help them sell quickly, while providing valuable housing for families recruited by local industry/DOE and contractors.
 - Education on ways to handle common hazardous material concerns such as lead paint, asbestos/cemento siding, etc.
 - Interior decorating resources provided locally, by referral, or paid for by city or industrial partners – with a focus on how to beautifully outfit Oak Ridge rehabilitated mid-century modern houses.
- Yes, a program similar to this was already started, however it did not receive wide enough, long enough, or consistent enough promotion to have achieved the needed results. If, after re-assessing the necessary elements, they are found to be in supply, how can we refocus efforts to do a better job of promoting these resources to the public and to investors? A quick google search reveals only a single-page pdf with reference to the program and a phone number:
<https://www.oakridgetn.gov/images/uploads/Documents/Departments/CommDev/Pertinent%20Plan%20Docs/Housing%20Design%20Program.pdf>

Attracting Young Talent – Input Opportunities

- If the city council, management, and general leadership is serious about taking steps to give Oak Ridge greater vitality and agrees that young families are the major key to city attractiveness, youth and vitality, then the forming of a Young Adult Advisory Board that could advocate, inform, and remind city leadership of the importance of these and other such endeavors should be considered a key more to help ensure the city's maintained focus and ultimate success in these efforts.
- As we should all be well aware, the

Blueprint for Positioning Oak Ridge

Our history is exceptional and unique. We will be blessed to present ourselves to tens of thousands of visitors who visit the Manhattan Project National Historical Park (MPNHP) and learn of that. But we also have a leading (if not THE leading) National Laboratory that carries out remarkable discoveries, and partners with private industry to turn those discoveries into products that provide remarkable benefits to mankind.

We should value and present both those faces to the world. Our present has been provided by our past, but our future depends on how we promote and develop the present. **We need to move Oak Ridge from “Secret City to Science City.”** It is good for us but it is also important for this country that has many people who are happy to ignore or debunk scientific knowledge.

We have an opportunity at this moment to do this, given the advent of MPNHP and the rethinking of AMSE. Let us provide to MPNHP the wealth of material and exhibits AMSE now has about the History of Oak Ridge. Together, the MPNHP and the Children’s Museum become the places that tell the historical story. **AMSE becomes a much more focused science museum.** It concentrates in particular on the national laboratories – and primarily Oak Ridge National Laboratory - and presents scientific research in a way that emphasizes the concrete benefits and products that occur because of that. In addition to indoor exhibits there needs to be a large outdoor exhibit space where the 3-D car could have been displayed or the newly developed interchangeable energy house is parked/shown. These outdoor exhibits are the drawing card and “oooo aaaahh” moments visitors to Oak Ridge remember. They also educate our local population on what is going on at their National Lab. If DOE rules allow, we should charge a modest fee to see the rest of the museum, although children could be free. Even modest fees can help with funding the operation.

Becoming the Science City is a distinctive identification for Oak Ridge. **We need to become known and appreciated for a few distinctive aspects.** There are other distinctive aspects that should always be Oak Ridge identifiers. One of these is, of course, excellence in public education. Another is rowing. Perhaps another is our outdoor recreation opportunities. There are many good things that can be said about us, but we need to agree on a limited number that automatically pop into mind when someone says “Oak Ridge”.

This is not intended primarily as a public relations message. **In every way we need to be cognizant of the role of Oak Ridge in science and the role of science in making Oak Ridge what it is.** Our distinctive aspects must be nurtured and financially supported. We do a pretty good job with most of these, but we are missing the critical role that we need to give to, and get from our National Laboratory. And when the country, the State and some residents say we need to cut taxes and cut services, we need to speak up for vision and investment in creating a future of Oak Ridge.

