

Danville Cemeteries
Master Plan Study for Bellevue and Hilldale Cemeteries



**Master Plan Study for Bellevue and Hilldale
Cemeteries**

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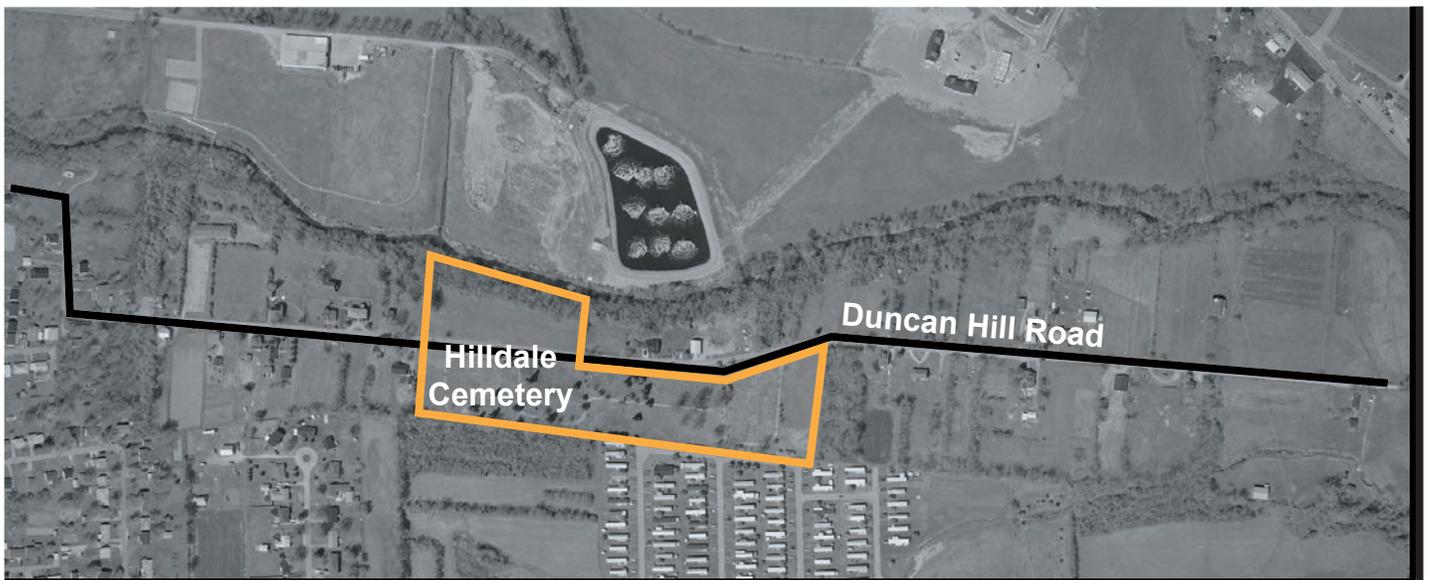


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Bellevue Aerial.



Introduction

Cemeteries represent a spiritual center for both the history and memory of their community. Danville's Bellevue and Hilldale Cemeteries are priceless tracts of open space in a quickly growing city and region. These cemeteries should be planned carefully to continue to be an inspiration and play an important role in the active day-to-day lives of the community of Danville. This Master Plan process has been intended to assist the City in the long-term successful perpetuation of both City owned cemeteries.

With this in mind, John L. Carman and Associates, Inc. began the process of planning the future of Danville's two public cemeteries. The mission was to look at the cemeteries holistically in order to harmonize the existing historic areas of each cemetery with the presently unused and undeveloped areas. The master plan also strives to create an environment that encourages visitors and loved ones to display their memories and spiritual desires. This layer of the process provides significant meaning to the space. Careful integration of culture and history of the cemetery and community with the natural environment promotes the notion of timeless beauty. The primary goal is to maximize the sustainability of each cemetery that includes expanding the number of available interment spaces. The addition of key architectural structures, such as columbaria, garden mausoleums and covered pavilion assist in promoting the functionality and capacity of the cemetery.

History

During the early 1800's cemeteries were undergoing a transition in America. Unlike older and chaotic urban cemeteries with endless fences

and individual gardens that presented maintenance challenges as a result of uncontrolled overgrowth, designers conceived the Lawn Park cemetery in 1855 to combine efficiency and professionalism with the natural beauty of the landscape. The Lawn Park cemetery established uniformity to the maintenance of the grounds without fences or individual gardens.



Known as Danville Cemetery until 1897, Bellevue was established in the 1840's with four acres of land purchased from the Philip Yeiser farm by Robert Montgomery and William Speed. The city of Danville assumed management when they acquired the cemetery in 1931. The first interment occurred in 1847 near the Boyle Circle section, and reburials from outside the cemetery were accepted soon after. Bellevue also contains a national cemetery dating back to the 19th Century, although is no longer accepting interments. This veterans cemetery is one of the first established veterans burial plots in the country. This portion of the cemetery is maintained by the NCA.

The establishment of Hilldale Cemetery is not certain, although the earliest tombstone inscription reads 1806. Hilldale has been referred to as Hillsdale and Hill-n-dale in historic accounts. The city of Danville assumed management of the cemetery in 1962.

Hilldale was historically referred to as an African American cemetery and is currently used primarily as such. Although Hilldale is not experiencing the same growing constraints as Bellevue, the existing cemetery does have additional areas for expansion that should be planned as well as needed upgrades and improvements to existing infrastructure: entrances, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, etc.

Process

Opportunities and Constraints

The Danville Cemeteries Master Plan is the result of a eight (8) month process involving the community of Danville, the Cemetery Committee and John L. Carman and Associates, Inc. The general phases of the study (site inventory and analysis, opportunities and constraints, program development, and exploration of concepts) were undertaken in concert with the Cemetery Committee which provided input and evaluation of each step of the study process.

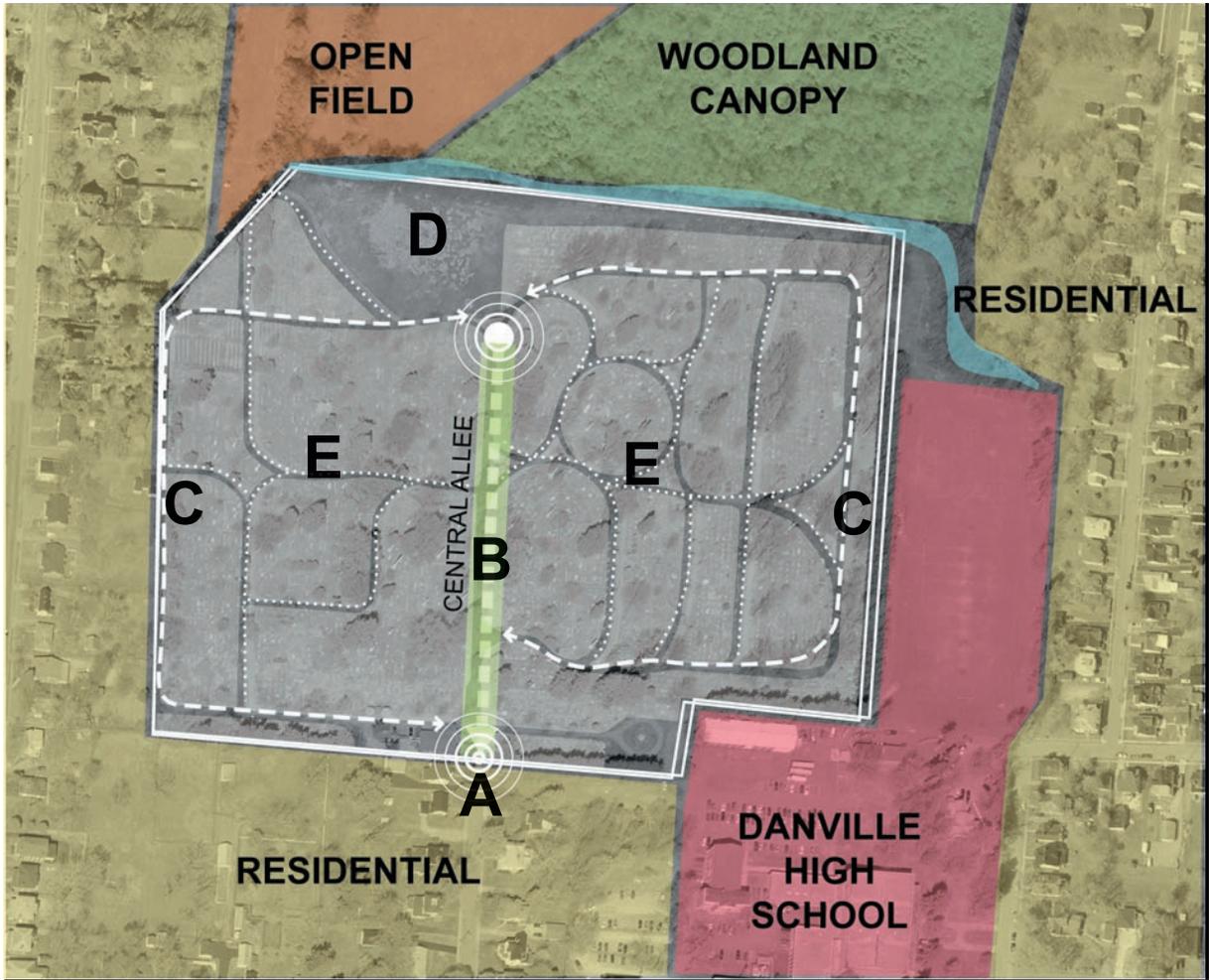
Bellevue:

Bellevue Cemetery is located in the historic layer of downtown Danville, surrounded by or in close proximity to downtown, Centre College, Danville High School, an established residential neighborhood, and open agricultural fields. The 29 acre site is primarily composed of a network of narrow roads, open lawn area, mature tree canopy and a grid of grave markers and memorials of all shapes, sizes and orientation. The only remaining undeveloped space in the existing cemetery property lies along the northern boundary of the site.

The small historic monument sign on the corner of East Lexington Avenue and North 1st Street serves its purpose of marking the location of the cemetery, but it does little to convey the cemetery's function as a center of local history and memory. The main entrance on North 1st

Street offers a simple and graceful introduction to the cemetery. Finding one's way through the cemetery may present a challenge, especially to those who may be unfamiliar with the circulation and layout. Signage and wayfinding within the cemetery is minimal at best. The master plan recommends enhancing cemetery signage in order to promote navigational ease and clarity by the way in which the cemetery is organized. Structuring and identifying the environment into a coherent pattern is the objective of the wayfinding strategy.

On axis with the main entrance is an existing allee of mature red oak trees. This allee provides symmetry to the cemetery by dividing the eastern and western halves evenly. It is also the most direct route to the northern half of the property from the entrance. Although the allee is still visible, there are noticeable gaps where trees have been removed or damaged throughout the course of time. Many trees throughout the cemetery have hanging or low-growing limbs that block desired views of the cemetery and grave markers, as well as disrupt pedestrian and vehicular circulation. A pruning and limbing process should be introduced in order to open up usable space for cemetery visitors and maintenance operations. Trees that have become unsightly or damaged due to weather or disease should be removed and replaced with trees native to central Kentucky region.



Site diagram illustrating surrounding landuses, major cemetery circulation and central axis (allee). Letters on diagram correspond to inventory photos on pages 8 & 9.



A. N 1st Street entrance - Cemetery Gateway - Historic gate and column mark the only entrance to Bellevue located on N 1st Street. The use of flowers, grasses and shrubs should add a layer of color to the main entry.



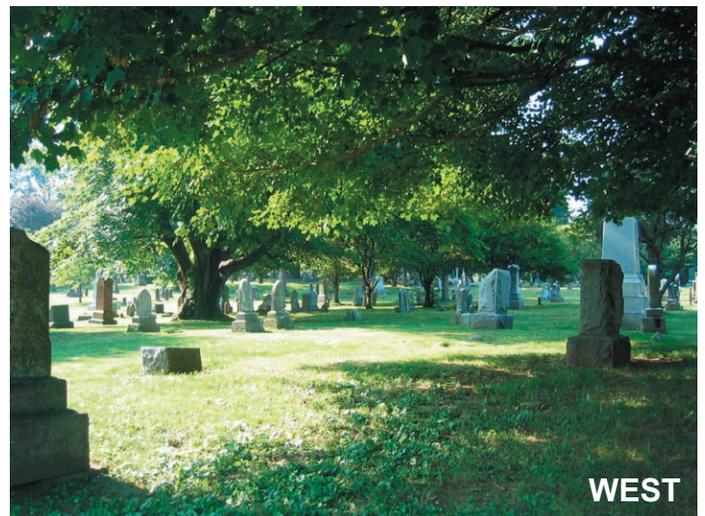
B. Suggestion of an allee (pathway lined with tall trees or shrubs) along central axis road. Several trees have appeared to perish over the years as indicated by the gaps in the trees lines. Reestablish strong allee.



C. The eastern and western edges of the cemetery are very porous. The existing edges allow flow of views and noises to enter into the cemetery, potentially distracting or disturbing cemetery visitors. Consider introducing filtered screening to the edges in order to block undesired views and retain those views that are desired.



D. One of Bellevue’s potential expansion opportunities lies along the northern edge of the cemetery. The space is currently undeveloped and can be described as an open lawn. This area also contains buried debris from its use as a construction material dumping area for some time. This area is located at the end of the central axis and is a potential location for mausoleum, columbarium and garden development.



E. The cemetery has two distinct landscape strategies working at the same time. Areas on the eastern side of the main axis have an abundance of random plantings and overgrown shrubs. Areas on the western side of the main axis have a more open lawn appearance and appear less cluttered. Consider removing undesirable and overgrown plant material in order to promote a ‘lawn-park cemetery’.

Both pedestrians and vehicles share an 8’6” wide road as a means of primary circulation. Although visitors can walk in the lawn throughout the cemetery, there are no designated pedestrian pathways. This may present a challenge for individuals attempting to negotiate the undulating terrain of the cemetery. For that reason, depressions in the ground of considerable depth should be filled with soil in order to create a more consistent walking surface.

Although located adjacent to downtown Danville, the cemetery is primarily used as a passive open space for reflecting the history and memory of the community. Several surrounding land uses (private residential back yards, practice football fields and parking lots) currently present undesirable views and/or noise distractions; a potential compromise to the peaceful and reflective nature of the cemetery atmosphere. The master plan recommends partial screening and

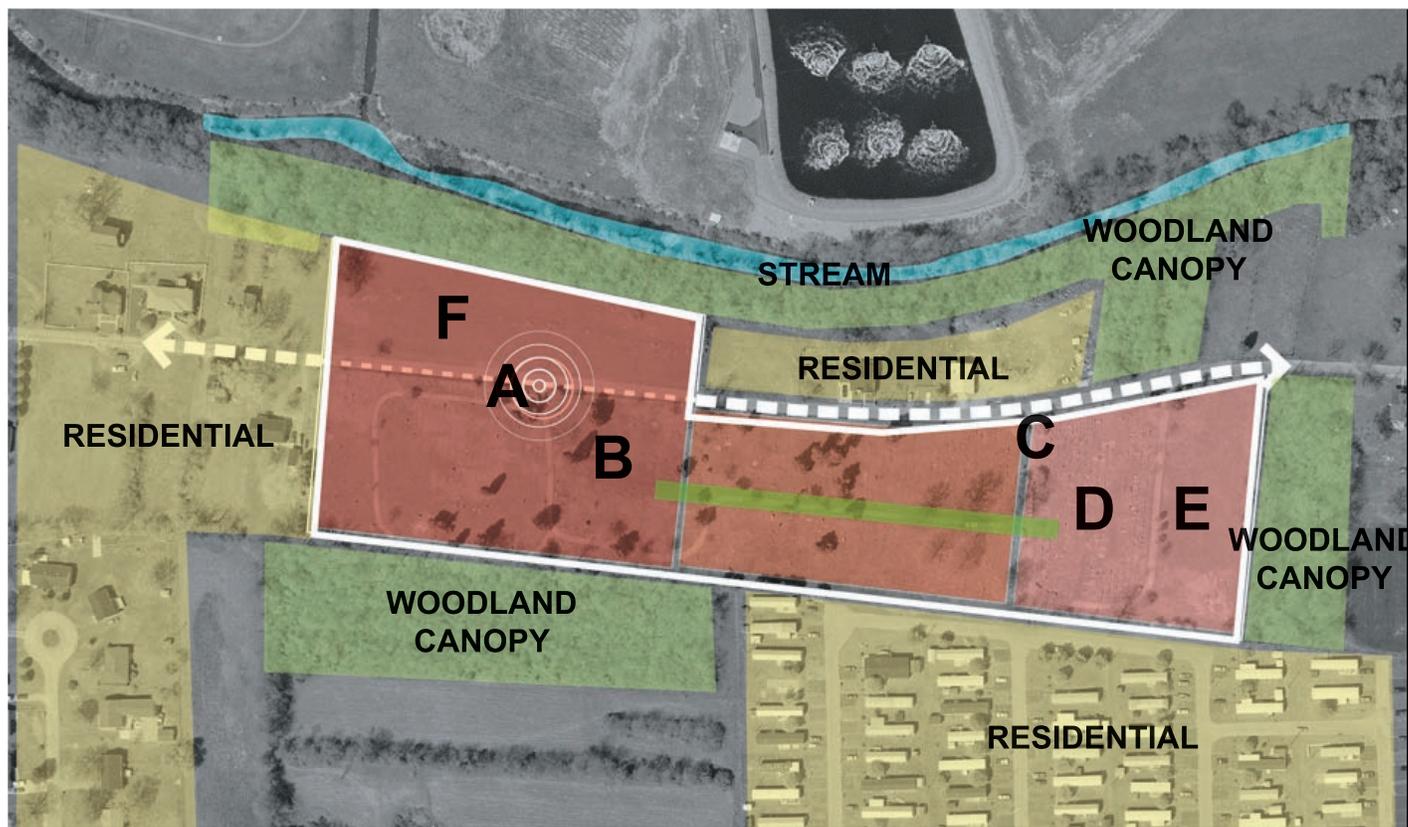
buffering of these views and noises in strategic locations along the eastern and western edges of the cemetery without disrupting the connection of the cemetery to the community.

Hilldale:

Hilldale Cemetery is located southeast of downtown Danville along Duncan Hill Road. The site is surrounded by a mobile home development and woodland canopy along the south, single family residential on the east, west and portions of the north, and Clarks Run stream and the water treatment facility along the majority of the northern border. The nearly 13 acre site is

composed of open lawn and narrow tree lined streets. The existing cemetery is currently divided into two sections: the old/historical section and the new/contemporary section.

The historic section of the cemetery, with grave markers dating back as early as 1806, has very few markers still visible. This area is accessed by the celebrated main entrance off of Duncan Hill Road. In transitioning from the historic section to the new section the amount of visible markers increases and several mature oak trees form the remaining pieces of what used to be a formal allee along the major circulation route.





A. The primary entry to the cemetery is marked with stone wall on either side of the entry drive. Overgrown 'Burning Bush' shrubs lie between stone walls and a paved drive and obstruct views toward oncoming traffic. This entry can be improved both aesthetically and functionally with the implementation of new landscaping, walls and vehicular / pedestrian circulation.



B. The western portion of cemetery dates back to early 1800's. Many of the headstones and markers are either damaged, buried or missing. The area can be tested to determine locations and numbers of burial sites.



C. Secondary entrances to cemetery provide access to the newer sections of the cemetery. The plant material at these access points obstructs site for vehicles exiting the cemetery. Consider new landscaping for both secondary entrances.



D. The newer sections of the cemetery (east end) have a fairly dense and regular grave marker layout. Artificial flowers and decorations of all sorts paint this section of Hilldale.



E. Future cemetery expansion, roughly one acre of open lawn, lies on the eastern edge of the site. The area is bordered by Duncan Hill Road on the north, Woodland Canopy on the east, and a mobile home park on the south.



E. Roughly 3.5 acres located just north of both Duncan Hill Road and the celebrated cemetery entrance. The site is composed of open lawn bordered by a stream and woodland canopy on the north. There is a moderate slope with the high point at Duncan Hill Road and low point at Clark's Run Stream. Investigate possibilities of linking with existing cemetery across Duncan Hill Road.

Community Input

The design and planning of the master plan for Bellevue and Hilldale cemeteries has been an open and interactive process. Many of the desires of the community, local businesses, city officials and cemetery committee have been collected and investigated thoroughly. The Cemetery Committee and the City of Danville held several meetings during the course of the project to incorporate ideas assembled for the master plan program design.

The central theme of input into this process can be summarized as a need to extend and expand the capacity of the existing cemeteries. Although several spaces are available in each cemetery, the long term capacity for future burials is reducing quickly, particularly at the Bellevue Cemetery.

Cemetery Program

As a result of the community, committee and city input, a list of program elements has been created in order to provide a structure for the design and planning process. The list of program elements include the following:

Bellevue:

1. Expansion Area
2. Central Allee
3. Pavilion / Shelter
4. Signage
5. Mausoleum
6. Gardens (Scatter, Reflection, etc.)

Hilldale:

1. Expansion Area
2. Celebrated Entry along Duncan Hill
3. Pavilion / Shelter
4. Monument for Unmarked Graves
5. Stream Trail with possible linkage to Greenway System



Planning Goals and Objectives

1. Preserve and enhance views within the Cemetery

Establish tree pruning program and remove overgrown shrubs throughout the cemetery

2. Integrate cemetery functions, landscape, and historical resources

Future cemetery planning should anticipate burial ceremonies and procedures in order to allow for a more convenient and efficient process. The landscape and plantings should enhance critical views throughout the cemetery as well as simplify wayfinding strategies. Historical resources should be repaired and/or cleaned if necessary. Locations of significant or historic resources should be recorded in order to establish new and existing landmarks in order to strengthen wayfinding systems established in the cemetery.

3. Provide effective solutions for both pedestrian and vehicular circulation

Existing roadways should be evaluated for repair. Roadway widths should not exceed 9 feet in order to promote slow speeds throughout the cemetery. Evaluate need for network of gravel or permeable paths for pedestrian circulation.

4. Explore expansion opportunities

Potential expansion areas have been suggested or identified. In order to prolong the inevitable “sold out” phase of cemetery life cycle, these areas should be planned and integrated into the future of the existing cemetery and community. Increasing the availability of future interments should strongly consider the promotion of non-traditional grave burials including cremains, crypts, mausoleums and double depth interments. These areas should be prioritized for the successful and continued use of each cemetery.

5. Identify and propose focal and ceremonial spaces/structures

The creation of ceremonial spaces and/or structures would extend the mission of the cemetery as a place of remembrance and inspiration. These spaces would serve as gathering areas during funeral services as well as celebrate those who are being memorialized.

6. Strengthen the cemetery’s qualities as an inviting space for remembrance, contemplation and healing; create an attractive environment that will encourage people to come and enjoy nature, art and civic history

Provide the most appropriate setting for family, friends and visitors by creating a peaceful and beautiful

environment. Promote use of the cemetery as a passive open space (walking, jogging) in order to enhance public awareness of the cemetery as an asset to the community.



7. Maintain the cemetery's district as a center of local history, celebrating the diverse cultural heritage of the people of Danville

8. Enhance the existing ecological function of the cemetery as an open green space and sanctuary for native plant and animal life.

Promote the use of native plant materials throughout the cemetery through new and replacement plantings.

9. Establish operational 'Rules and Regulations' that will help sustain each cemetery and assist with administrative procedures for the use of each cemetery.

Planning and Design Concepts

Bellevue Cemetery



NTS  North

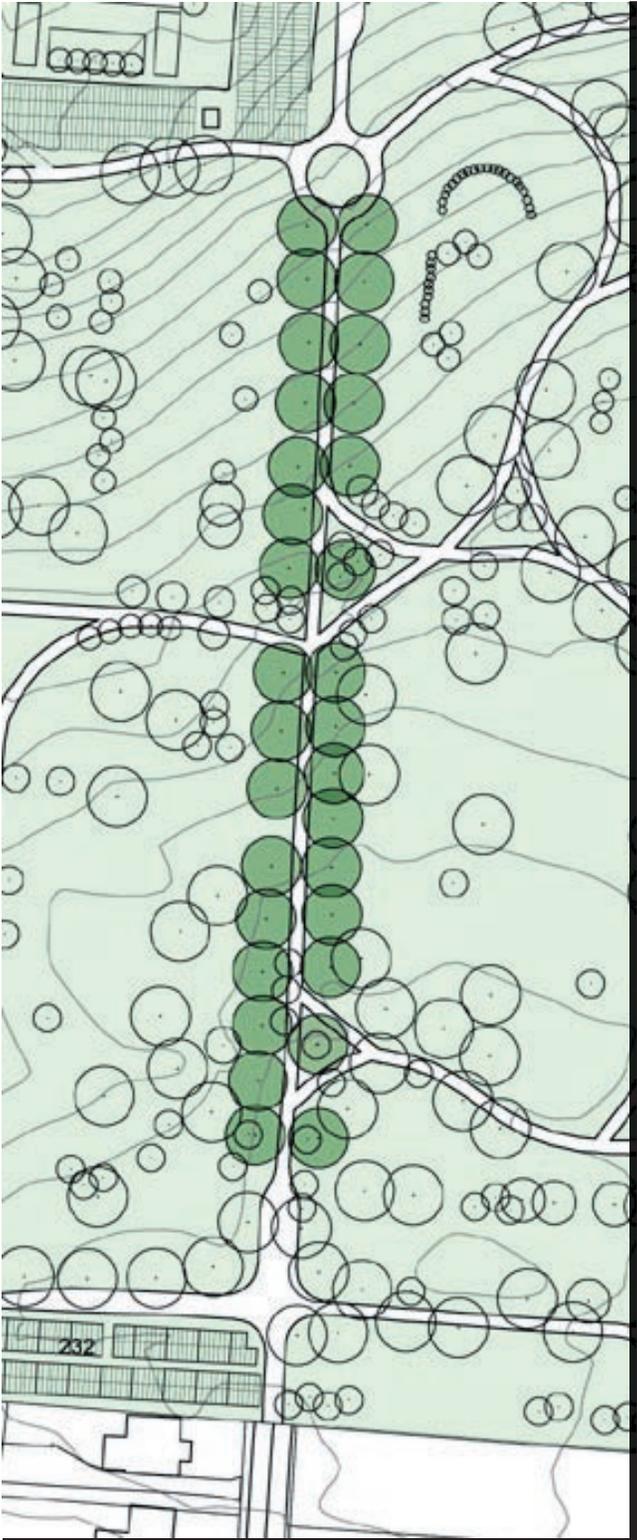
LEGEND

1. Cemetery Entrance - Key Decision Point - Locate Directory
2. Regrade roadway surrounding Cremation Area to reduce drainage issues.
3. Screening to obstruct views to and from Danville High School parking lot
4. Central Allee - Replace existing (damaged or diseased) and install new oak in order to recreate historical drive.
5. Roundabout - Serving as the terminus to the Central Allee, the roundabout simplifies, both form and function, the intersection created by the addition of the proposed new road.
6. Future Pavilion - Area includes both Garden Mausoleum and Columbarium Sections, Scatter Gardens and Donor Paths.
7. New Burial Plots
8. Short-term aquisition for cemetery expansion
9. Long-term aquisition for cemetery expansion
10. Filtered Screening along fence
11. Filtered Screening along fence
12. New burial plots - short-term
13. Cemetery Directory and Information System
14. Removal of all plant material obstructing views, creating safety concerns, detrimental to adjacent plots, diseased and/or damaged.
15. Cemetery Directory and Information System
16. Historic/Interpretive Marker for Veterans Section



Central Allee

Running north-south through the center of the cemetery, the main entry drive/allee is the primary access point for all areas of the cemetery. Mature pin oaks, nearly 36" in diameter and 60-70' tall, line either side of the drive directing views and circulation to the north end of the cemetery. The master plan recommends creating a round-about at this end in order to simplify vehicular circulation as well as promote the notion of arriving at a special place or destination. The existing memorial could be located to the center of the round-about. The south end of the entry drive/allee is home to the primary cemetery entrance and cemetery directory. In conjunction with the creation of the roundabout and drive expansion, new wayfinding signage at the front entrance and repavement of the drive should be accomplished. These improvements will greatly enhance the experience of visitors to the Bellevue Cemetery.



Entry Drive / Allee Plan



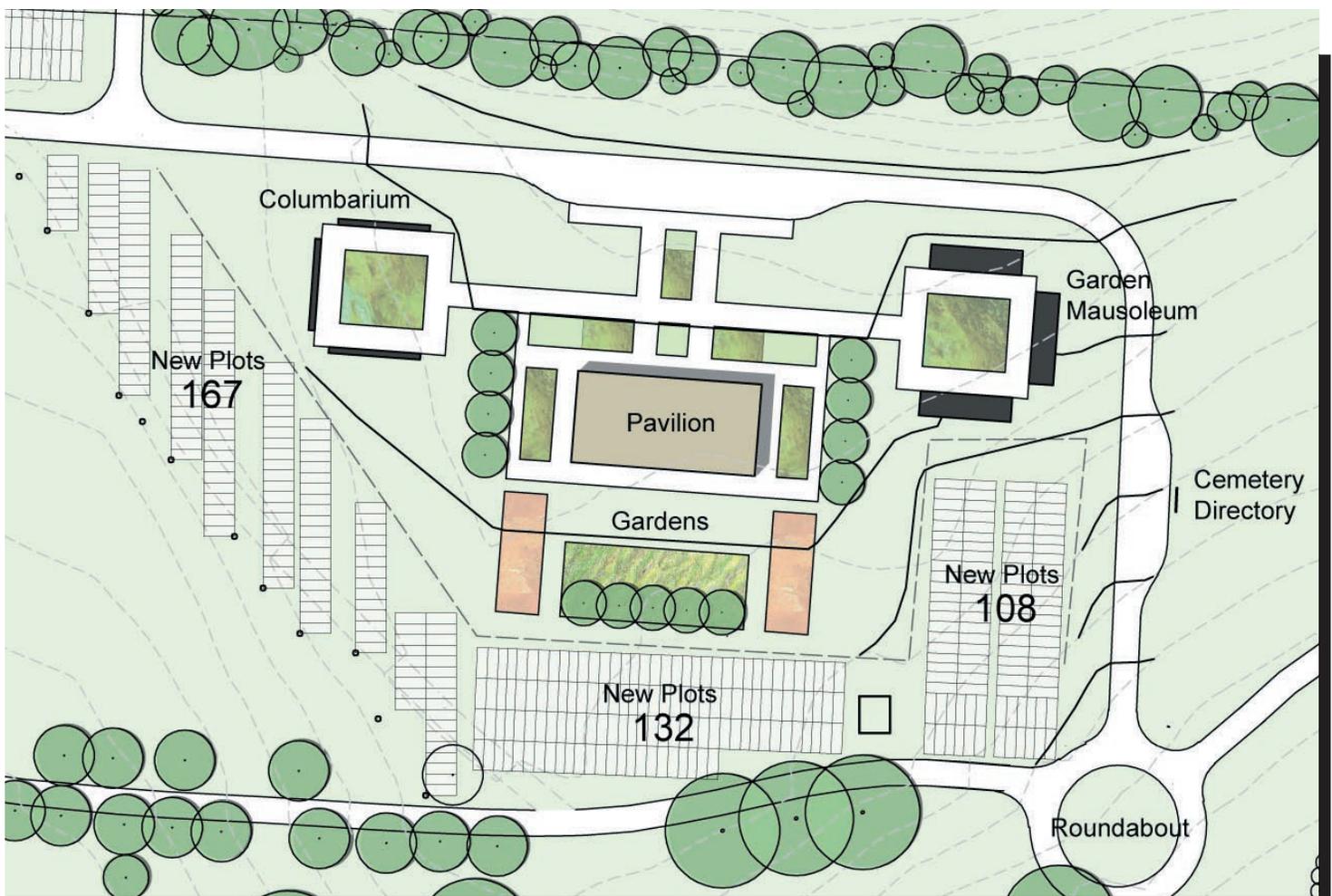
Entry Drive / Allee Photo

Pavilion / Mausoleum and Gardens

Bellevue Cemetery will be a functioning cemetery and public green space for many years. As a functioning cemetery, Bellevue will be a place for funerary congregations. The master plan study recommends providing a pavilion where visitors can find protection from inclement weather. The proposed pavilion should also provide a place where practitioners of all faiths are able to perform funeral ceremonies. In addition to serving as a shelter, the pavilion could also function as a mausoleum (building that houses above ground crypts), expanding the amount of burial sites and options for Bellevue Cemetery. The pavilion should also provide space for equipment storage that will be utilized for maintenance and could also provide space for use by local funeral directors.

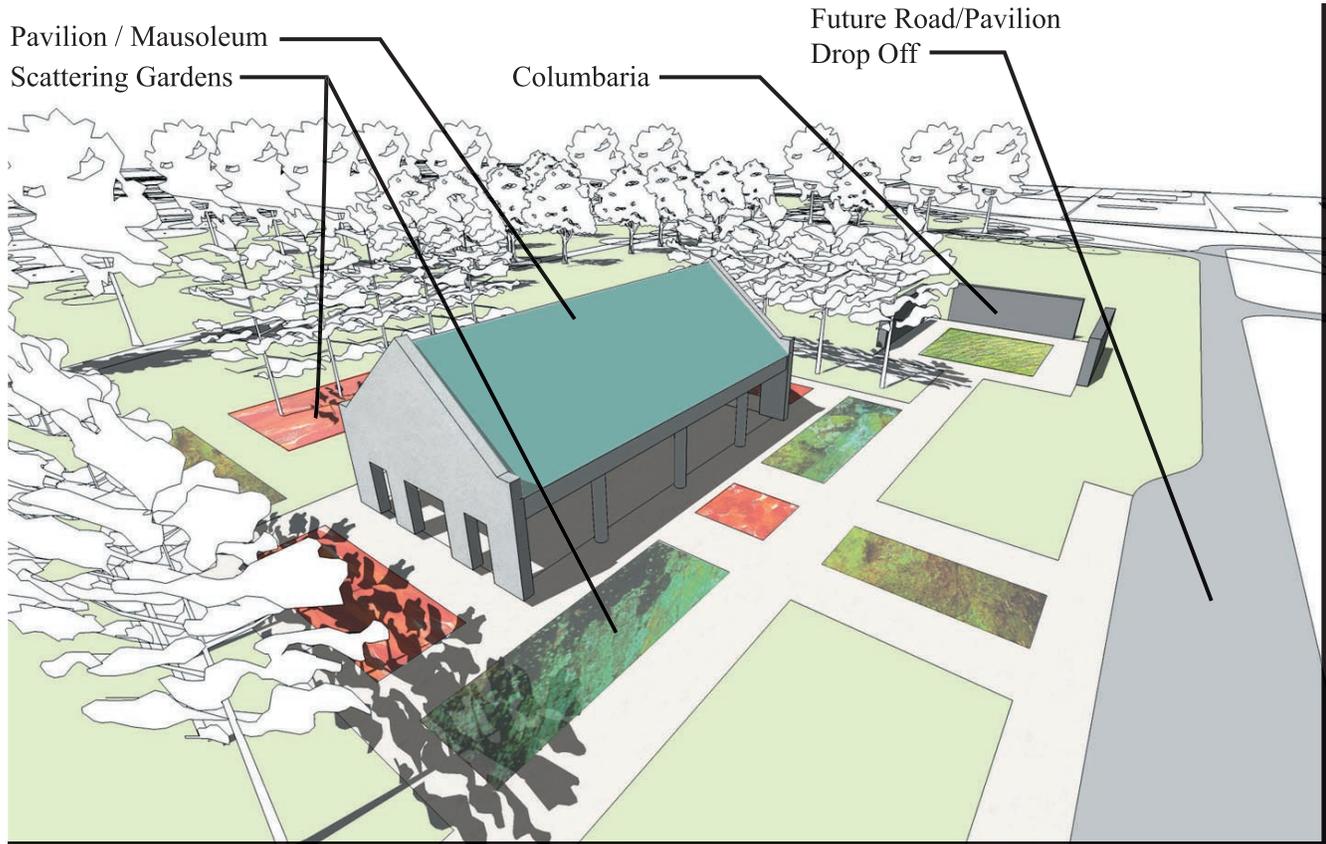


Surrounding the pavilion will be several additional burial options including a columbarium garden, a garden mausoleum and a cremains scatter garden. These areas will not only provide additional burial spaces and options, but will provide an area for visitors to walk, reflect, relax and contemplate within the cemetery. Development of these areas will begin to offer alternate means of interment to the traditional plot burials. As grave plots become less available, alternate means should be encouraged by the City and Funeral Directors. Pricing of interment options should be reflective of this needed culture of celebrating the deceased.



Pavilion and gardens plan

Pavilion / Mausoleum and Gardens



Pavilion, columbarium and gardens concept sketch.



Pavilion, garden mausoleum and gardens concept sketch.

Landscape Recommendations

Historically, lawn-park cemeteries were very pastoral and park-like places that evolved from the picturesque and natural rural cemeteries of the mid-1800's. Lawn-park cemeteries were characterized as having large monuments and sculpture, close-to-the-ground markers and consisting of primarily open green lawn and tall overhead tree canopy.



As mentioned in the 'Opportunities and Constraints' section of this report, the western half of Bellevue Cemetery (containing the older sections of the cemetery) has many of the same attributes as a lawn-park cemetery. The eastern half however contains a variety of overgrown shrubbery that effectively obstructs views of numerous grave markers and headstones as well as views throughout the cemetery. The master plan recommends a process of shrub removal over time to return these areas and the entire cemetery to the historic lawn-park cemetery aesthetic. This process should start immediately with appropriate public notifications that should appear periodically. The process of re-creating the open-lawn character could be done over a 2-3 year period with moderate budget allocations. In addition, the cemetery should install plant material native to the region in order to promote minimal irrigation, pruning and pesticide application.

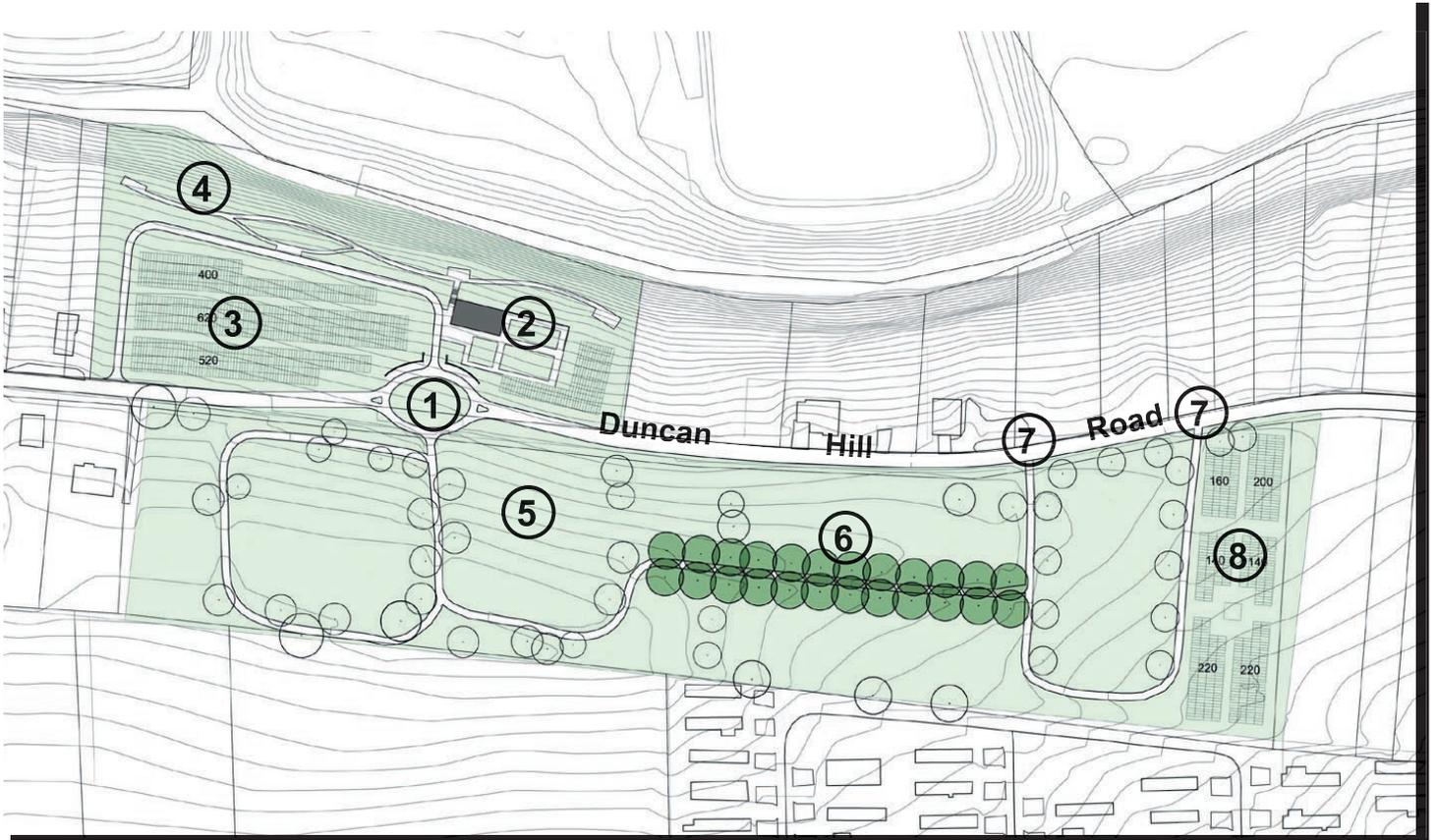


Illustration of existing cemetery landscape.



Illustration of proposed cemetery landscape.

Hilldale Cemetery



Conceptual Site Plan for Hilldale Cemetery.

LEGEND

1. Traffic Circle - Entrance / Link between existing cemetery and expansion as well as traffic control device along Duncan Hill Road. Placement of monument could also promote significance of cemetery as well as memorialize unmarked grave sites.
2. Pavilion - Area includes scatter garden and burial plots.
3. Additional 1,540 burial plots in expansion area.
4. Stream walk - potential connection along stream to Bellevue Cemetery - Greenway System.
5. Repair damaged markers and fill in depressions in ground creating safer walking surface.
6. Allee of Oaks - Restore historical link between old and new sections of cemetery.
7. Install new plant material at secondary entrances to cemetery
8. Additional 1,080 burial plots withn existing cemetery property

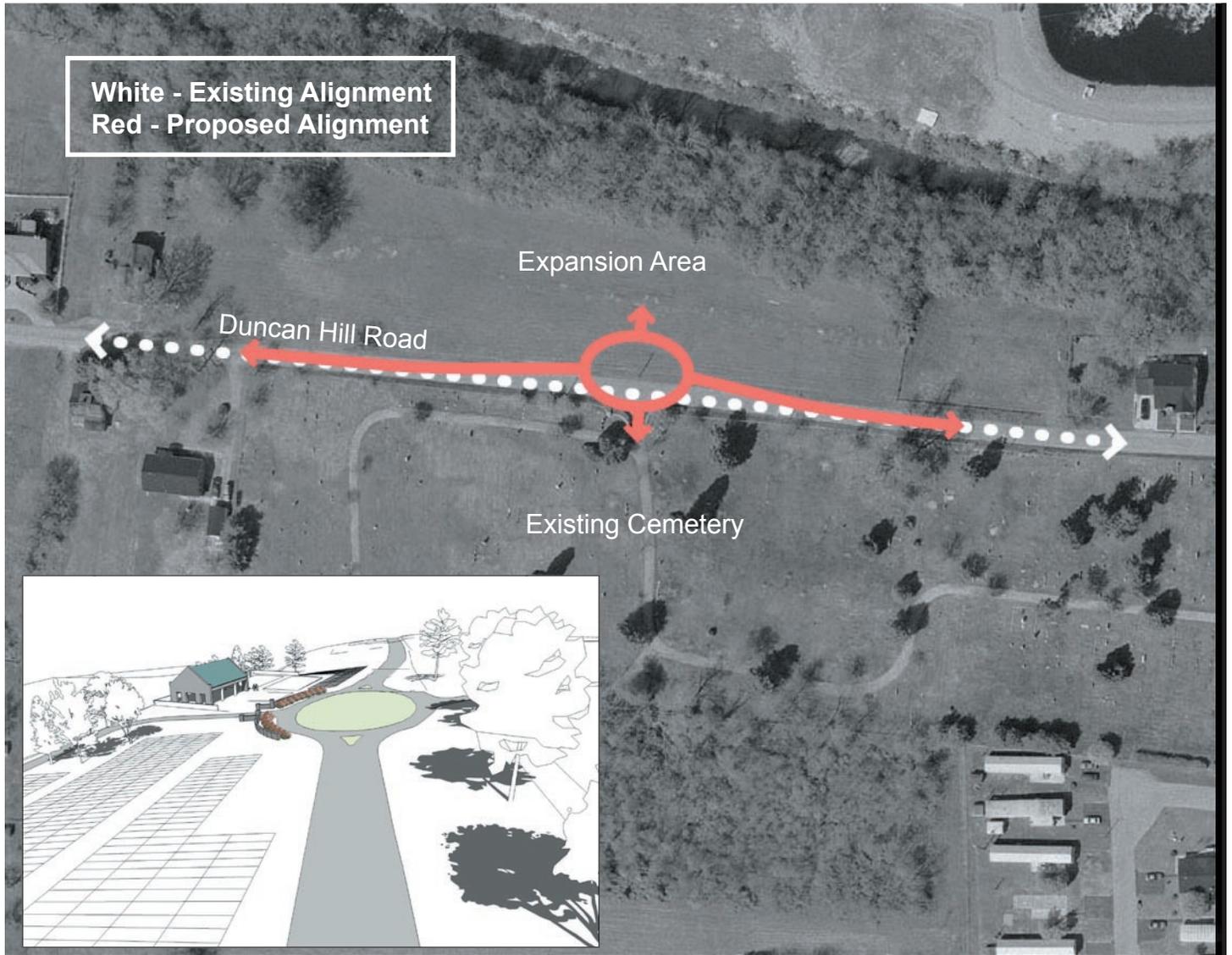


Duncan Hill Road Realignment and Roundabout

Duncan Hill Road currently runs along the northern edge of Hilldale Cemetery. As the two exist, the relationship presents conflicts between those vehicles passing by the cemetery and those entering/exiting the cemetery. The existing configuration and treatment of the access points obstructs views of approaching vehicles, potentially leading to a conflict between two vehicles. In addition, there are no provisions for expansion on the north side of the cemetery. The existing alignment and nature of Duncan Hill Road effectively severs the two sides, creating a challenge to the unification of the proposed expansion of Hilldale Cemetery.

The master plan recommends a realignment of Duncan Hill Road in favor of establishing a round-about. This gesture would establish this point along Duncan Hill Road as a gateway to Hilldale Cemetery. The roundabout will also perform as a traffic calming device used to slow speeding vehicles and allow a safer and friendlier north-south pedestrian connection across Duncan Hill Road. Development of the roundabout for the main entrance will greatly help in celebrating this historic cemetery and creating a more useable entrance.

The single-lane rural roundabout will allow for an expanded and improved access into and out of the existing cemetery as well as provide vehicular access to the expansion area on the north side of Duncan Hill Road.



Expansion Area: Pavilion / Mausoleum and Gardens

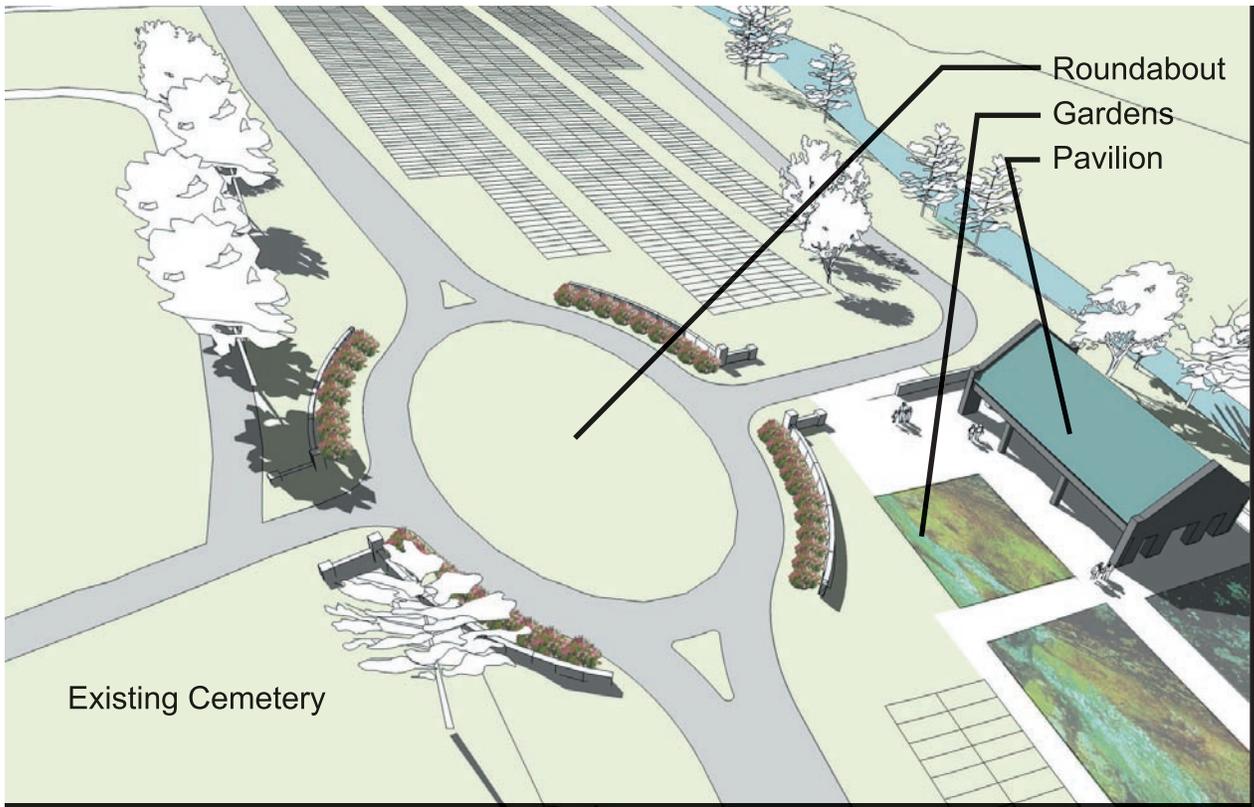


Currently, Hilldale has opportunities within the existing cemetery for expansion. Although this area, located on the east end of the site, will extend the life of the cemetery several years, the city will need to plan possible opportunities outside for future expansion. The area north of Duncan Hill Road is currently owned by the City of Danville, and has been determined as a potential site for future Hilldale Cemetery expansion. The master plan recommends establishing the area as a park space until demand for additional grave sites is needed. The expansion of Hilldale Cemetery and the potential for future development along Duncan Hill Road will increase the cemetery's visibility and visitation.

Hilldale is currently and will continue to be a place for funeral congregations as well as a public green space for many years. Family, friends and visitors will desire a place to find protection from heat and rain during funeral ceremonies. As the cemetery expands north across Duncan Hill Road, the master plan recommends constructing a congregation area, including a pavilion / mausoleum and gardens. The location for the proposed pavilion, as indicated in the illustration below, is immediately adjacent to the proposed roundabout in order to simplify access and visibility.



Enlarged plan of expansion area (Pavilion and Gardens)



Concept sketch illustrating relationship between roundabout and pavilion area.

Clark's Run Trail - Greenbelt System

The City of Danville has expressed interest in expanding its existing Greenbelt System, noting that Hilldale Cemetery could potentially be a link or destination. The multi-use pathway would run parallel with Clark's Run Stream and link with the cemetery near the proposed pavilion site.



Concept sketch illustrating proposed trail adjacent to Hilldale Cemetery.

Landscape Recommendations

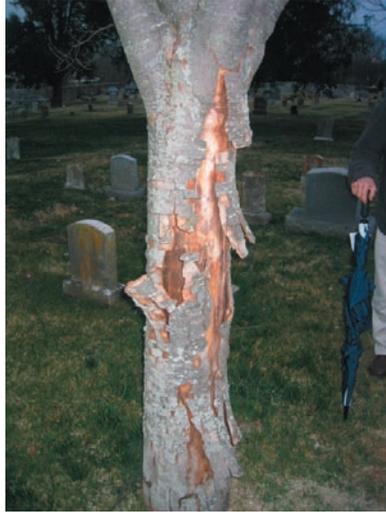
In general, the overall landscape character of Hilldale Cemetery is clean, simple and open, all qualities of a 'lawn-park cemetery'. Although the overall landscape strategy for Hilldale is successful, there are certain areas the master plan recommends improvements.



1. Restoration of Oak Allee - Remove damaged or poorly growing trees along central drive in favor of installing red oaks native to the area.



Existing Oak Allee.



Damaged Zelkova Tree.

2. Improve secondary entrances - The removal of overgrown plant material will improve visibility for vehicles entering and exiting the cemetery as well as unify all access points to the cemetery.



Existing Entry

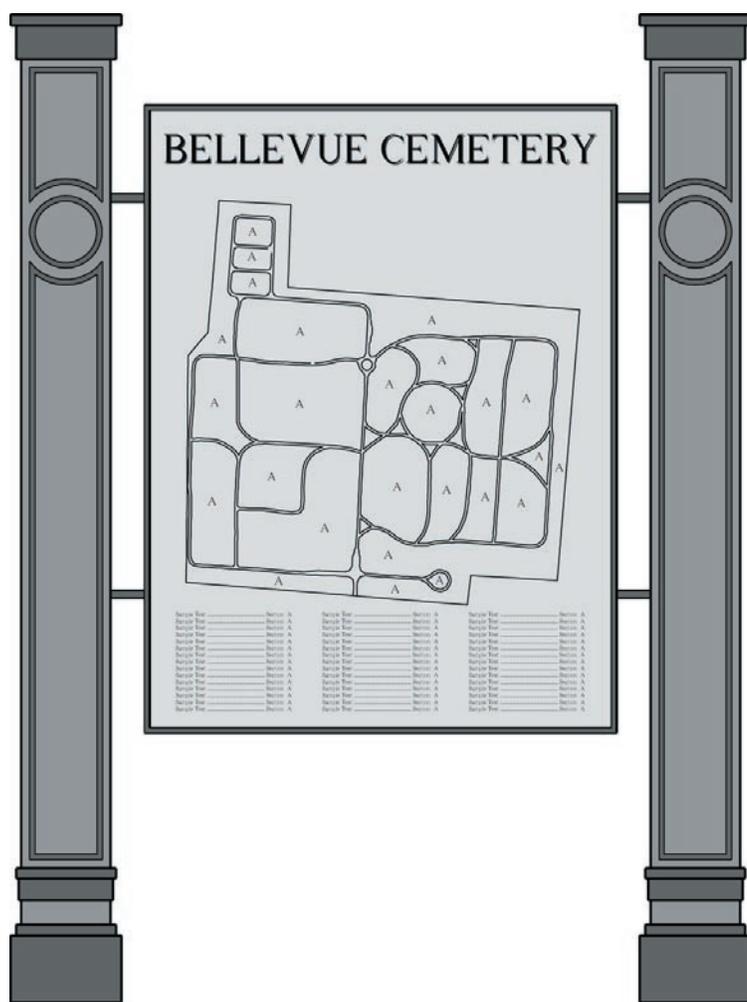
Proposed Concept Sketch

Bellevue and Hilldale Signage System

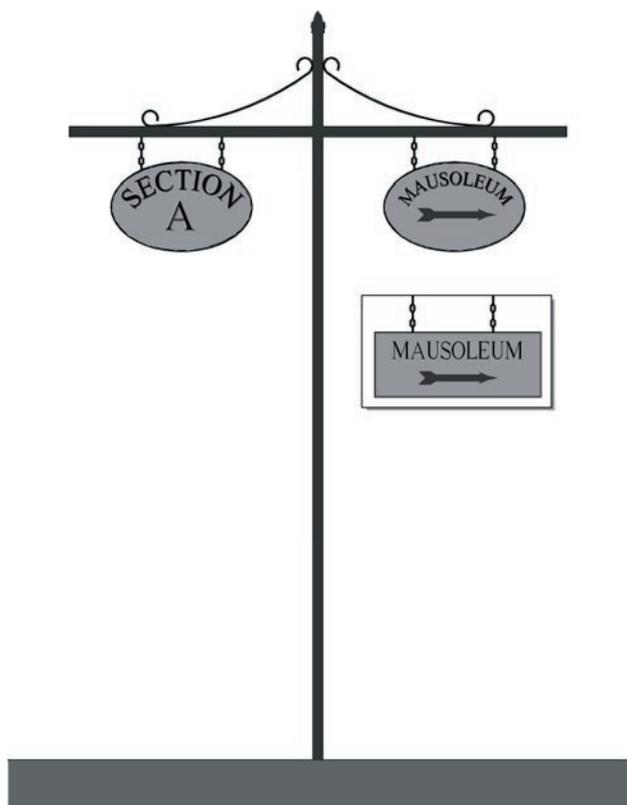
The establishment of an effective signage strategy allows potential cemetery visitors to experience the environment in a positive way. One method of achieving this is the creation of a visually cohesive signage system in addition to placement and acknowledgment of significant landmarks to allow visitors to move freely throughout the cemetery to acquire and comprehend information with ease. Legibility and comprehension ease are priorities. Integral graphics become functional as well as decorative elements.

The master plan recommends three (3) signage types for both Bellevue and Hilldale Cemeteries.

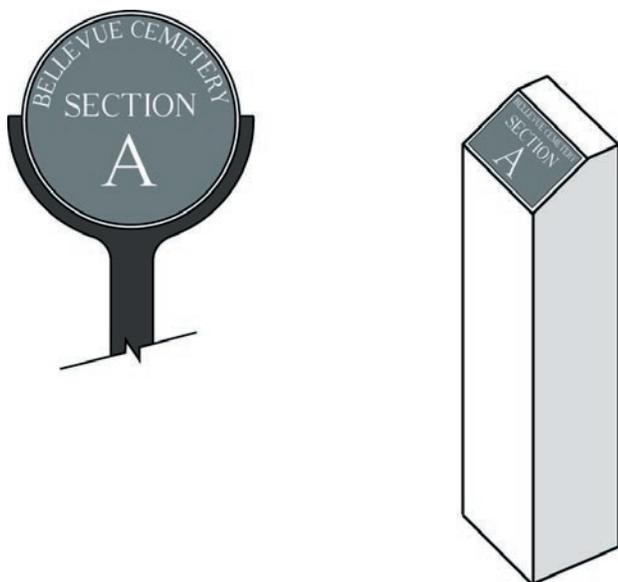
1. **Landmark / Directory** - The Landmark serves purposes of aesthetic (art) object and wayfinding component. This wayfinding directory houses an overall map and destination listing.



2. **Orientation Sign** - The Orientation (Street) Sign is representative of a public street sign and is used to orient individuals to the sections of the cemetery and to identify and confirm the location. The sign holds a maximum of two destinations and combines arrows and text to convey directions.



3. **Section Plaque** - The Section Plaque uses components of the street sign along circulation routes to identify and confirm destination.



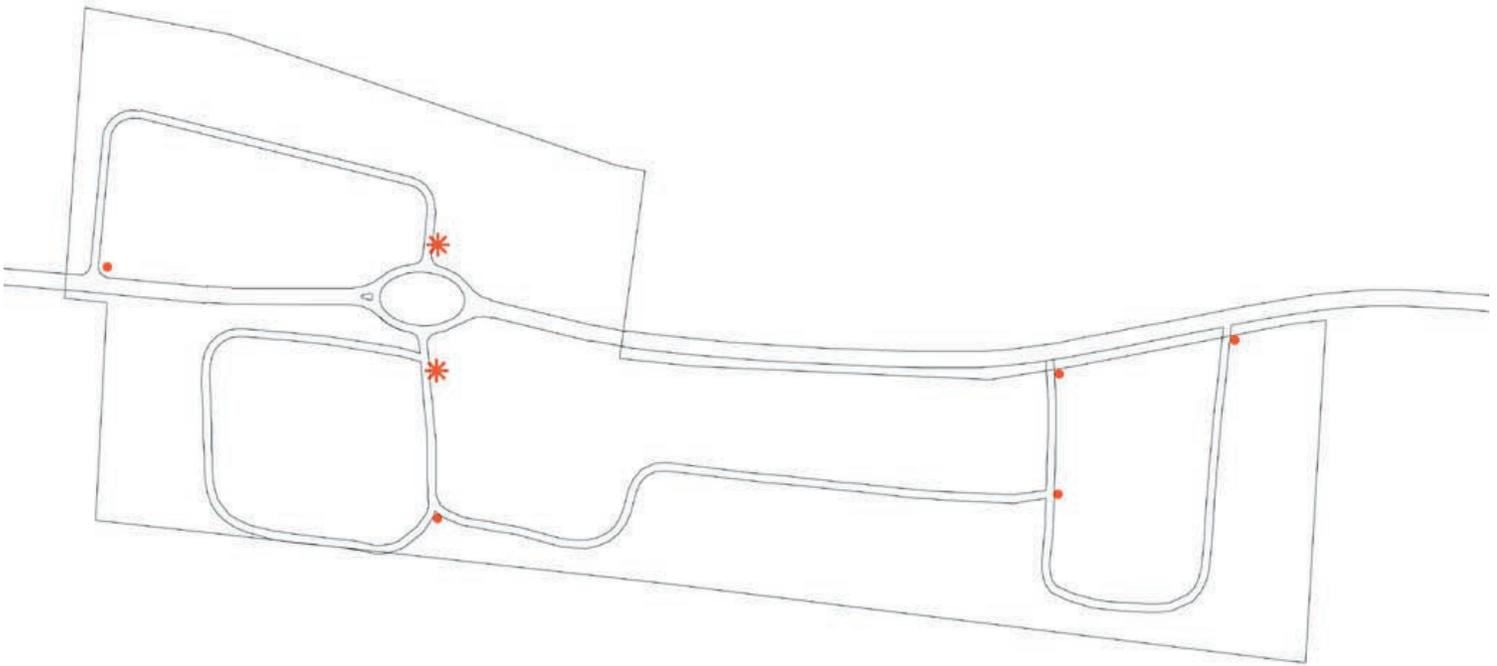
Bellevue Signage Location Map



Hilldale Signage Location Map



-  Landmark / Directory Sign
-  Orientation (Street) Sign



Rules and Regulations

A contemporary set of Rules and Regulations have been developed with significant input from the Cemetery Committee. These Rules and Regulations are in response to specific ideas and conditions for Bellevue and Hilledale Cemeteries and also a collection of standards that have been successfully utilized in the “cemetery industry”. The Rules and Regulations are intended to work in concert with the recommendations in the Master Plan, both short-term and long-term. The complete Rules and Regulations have been assembled for review and approval by the Danville City Commission. The intent and purpose is to establish guidelines for operations and maintenance for the City Administration and for the use of each cemetery by the public. The Rules and Regulations also address more contemporary interment options such as cremation, that should be encouraged to sustain the life of each of Danville’s historic cemeteries.

The Rules and Regulations have been published as a separate document and are available from the City and/or the Cemetery Committee.

Budgets



Consideration has been given to both the short-term and long-term sustainability of each cemetery committee. Expenses for each cemetery should be allocated to:

- Immediate maintenance and operations issues;
- Ensuring the long-term sustainability of each cemetery;
- Preserving the history of each cemetery and celebrating the past;
- Allowing and encouraging public use and understanding of each cemetery.

The following is a summary of budget consideration for each cemetery that will address the immediate objectives of sustainability for Bellevue and Hilldale Cemeteries.

Bellevue Cemetery

Drive Relocation	\$48,000
Northeast Burial Expansion	\$15,000
Reflection and Scattering Garden	\$15,000
Wayfinding Signage	\$32,000
Interactive Map and Kiosk	\$55,000
Landscape Enhancements	\$25,000
Landscape Maintenance, Clearings and Renovations (3 yrs)	\$60,000

Hilldale Cemetery

Duncan Hill Road Roundabout	\$65,000
Entry Gate Improvements	\$60,000
Landscape Maintenance	\$20,000
Burial Plot Expansion - North	\$15,000
Memorial and Scattering Garden	\$20,000

Summary of Master Plan Recommendations

Bellevue Cemetery

The most critical endeavor facing Bellevue Cemetery is sustainability. To this end, the creation of interment spaces will be the most critical aspect for the longevity of the Cemetery. This Master Plan has recommended locations for the non-traditional interments, cremation, scattering and crypt interments and these should be encouraged.

The following are phasing priorities recommended in the Master Plan:

1. Acquisition of property adjacent to the northeast quadrant of the cemetery.
2. Relocation and development of northeast drive (extension of main access road).
3. Develop burial plots adjacent to relocated drive.
4. Create gardens and cremains scattering area.
5. Landscape renovations and maintenance.

Hilldale Cemetery

Hilldale Cemetery does not face a critical shortage of burial plots. Although, plans to expand the available space should be initiated for the property north of the existing cemetery. Access into the existing and new areas should be celebrated.

The following are phasing priorities recommended in the Master Plan:

1. Develop traffic circle on Duncan Hill Road that will provide better access into the Cemetery and also collaborate the arrival with the Cemetery.
2. Landscape enhancements to each entry.
3. Landscape maintenance in Cemetery.
4. Create memorial and scattering gardens.