

A person is riding a bicycle on a bridge. The bridge has a dark metal railing. In the background, there is a valley with green hills and a body of water. The text is overlaid on the image.

# **The Great Allegheny Passage & The Trail Town Program®**

William Prince, Program Manager  
September 4, 2014

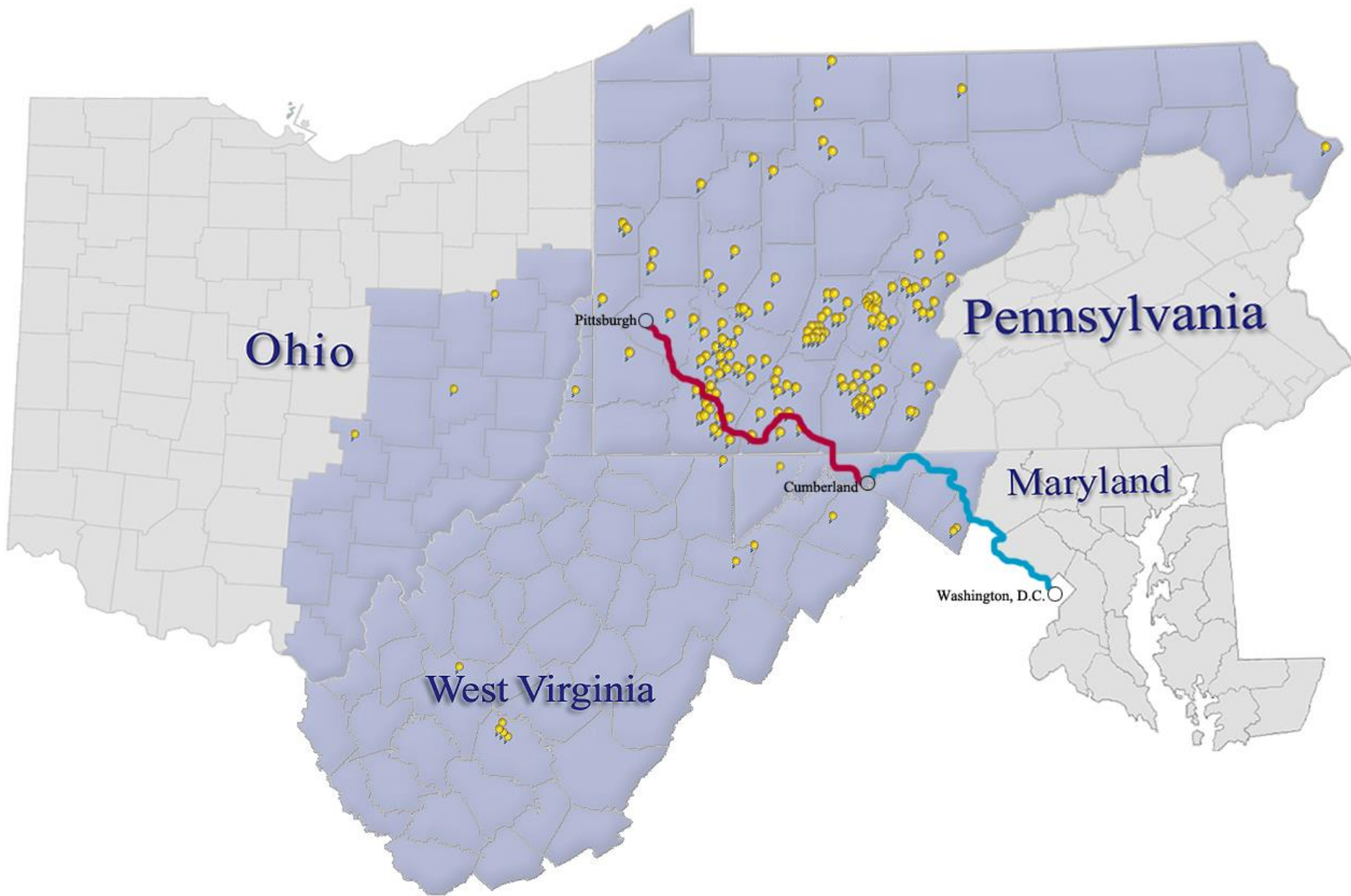
# Trail Town Program®

- The Progress Fund
- Great Allegheny Passage
- Take you for a ride
- TTP History
- Trail Town Qualities
- Trail Town Assessments
- Six Services – including Economic Impact of GAP Trail



- Non-Profit Established 1997
- CDFI with Rural Focus
- Provides Capital & Business Coaching
- Tourism & Agriculture
- OH, PA, WV, and western MD
- Over \$52 Million in Loans



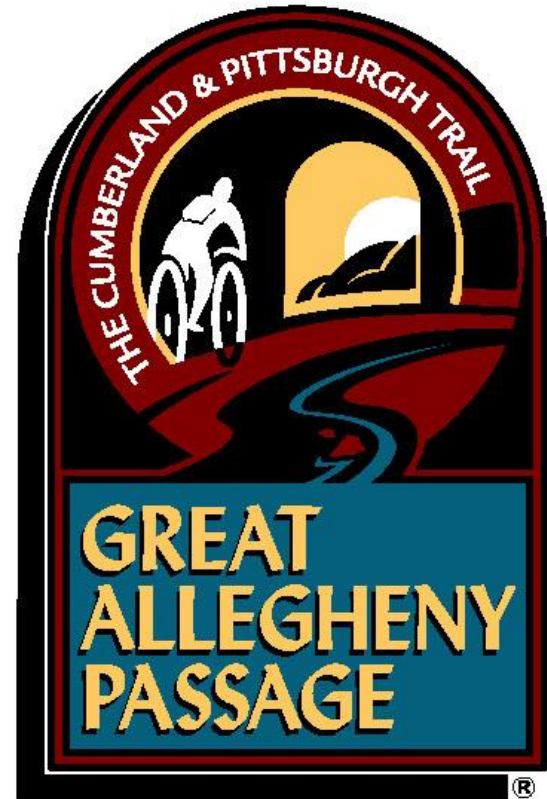




# Great Allegheny Passage

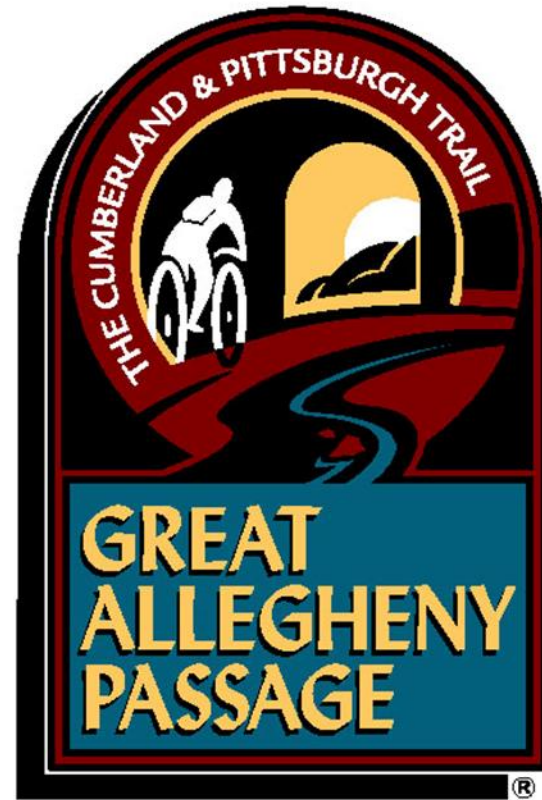
## *Fast Facts*

- P&LE and WM Railroads
- 150 miles of non-motorized biking & hiking trail
- 2 States, Five Counties
- First Section started in 1986
- Completed June 2013
- Connects with C&O – 335 miles
- Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail



# Allegheny Trail Alliance

1. Mountain Maryland Trails
2. Somerset County Rails to Trails Association
3. Ohiopyle State Park
4. Regional Trail Corporation
5. Steel Valley Trail Council
6. Friends of the Riverfront
7. Montour Trail Council



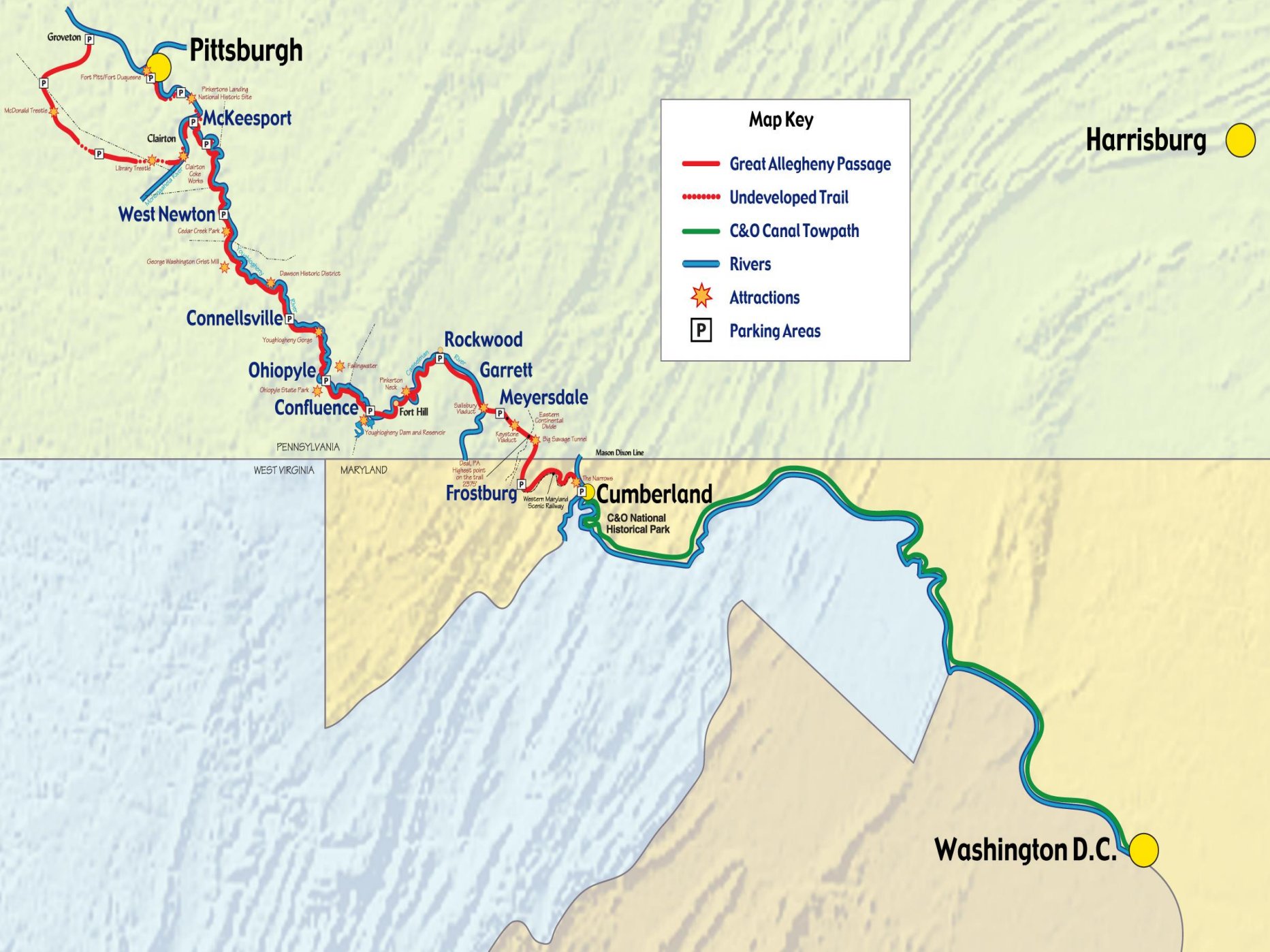
# Highly Honored & Recognized

- First trail named to “Rail-Trail Hall of Fame”
- Featured in:
  - *New York Times*
  - *USA Today*
  - *National Geographic Adventure*
  - *Washington Post*
  - *Adventure Cyclist*
  - *US Airways Magazine*

**50 States, 50 Spots**  
**CNN Travel 2014**



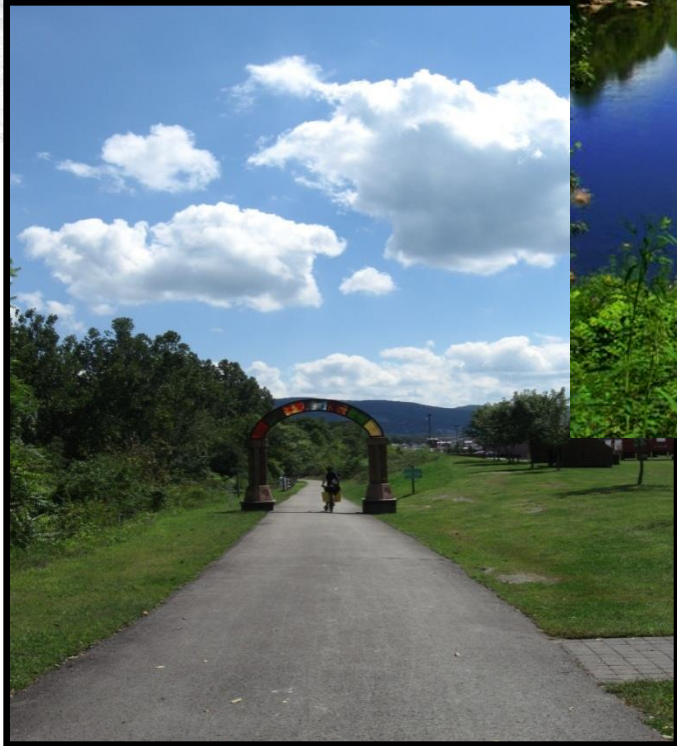
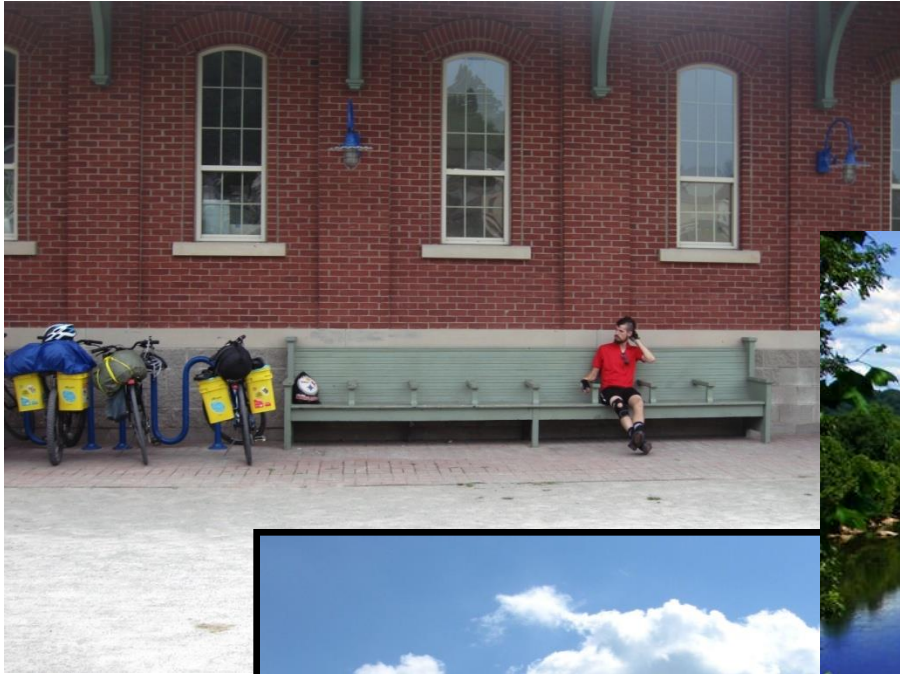


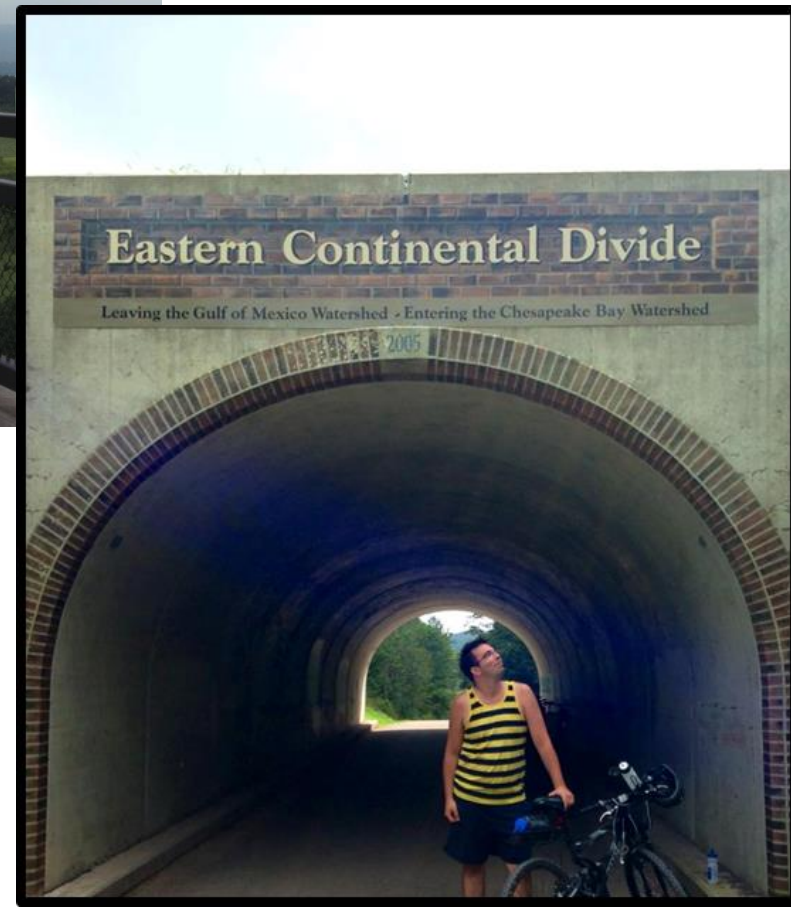














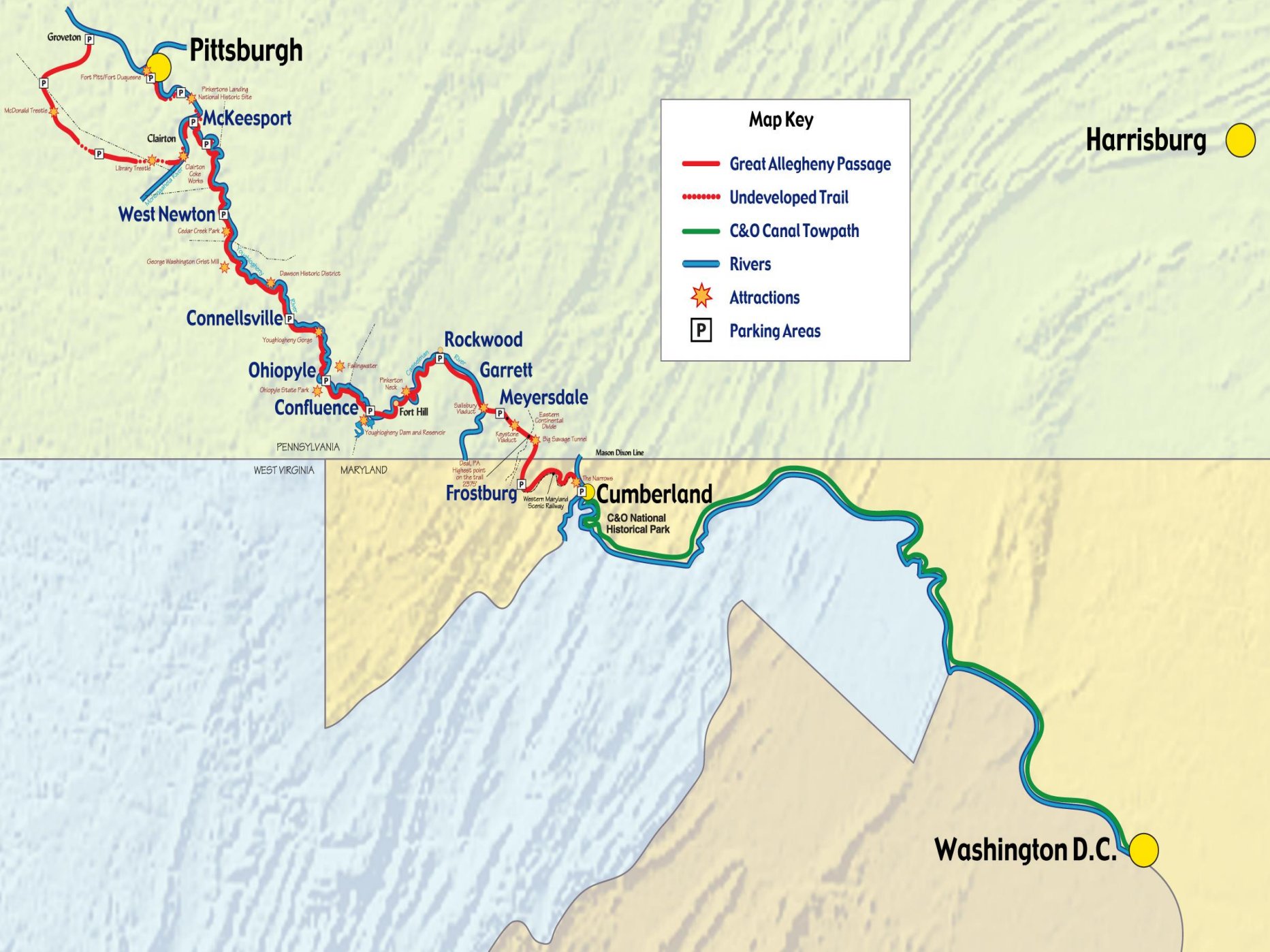












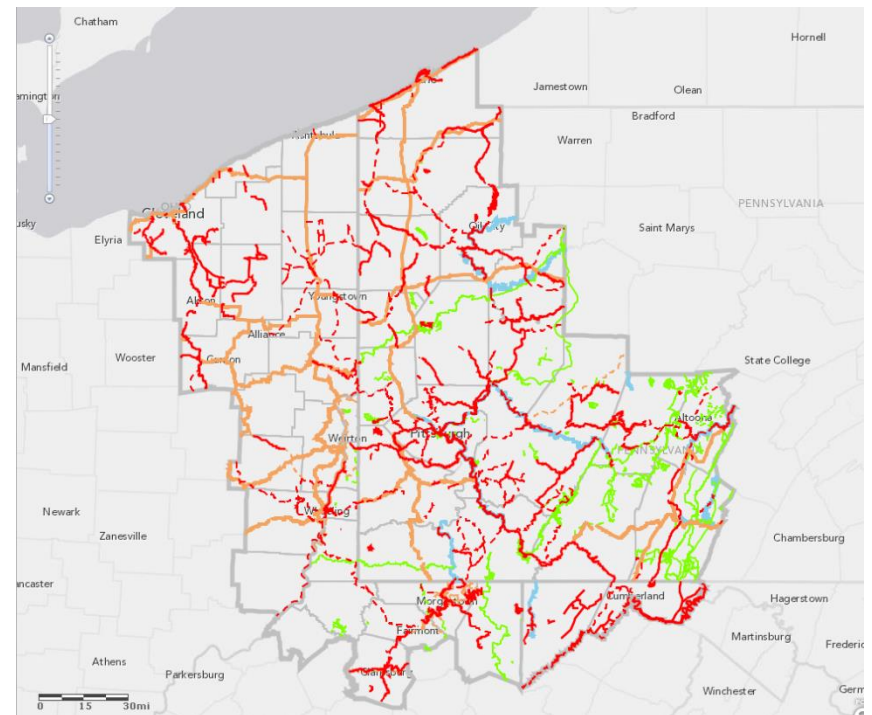
# Trail Town Program

An economic development  
initiative along the  
Great Allegheny Passage

- Concept developed in 2001
  - State agencies & tourism officials
  - Trail builders
  - Economic & community developers
- Trail Town Manual in 2005
- Program staffed in 2007
- Expanded to Maryland in 2009
- Expands to new corridors in 2014

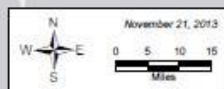


# *Power of 32+ Regional Trail System*





# THE NETWORK - STATUS POWER OF 32 REGIONAL TRAIL SYSTEM 2013 REGIONAL TRAIL STAKEHOLDERS MEETING



### MEGA TRAIL CORRIDORS

#### CORRIDOR TO PITTSBURGH MEGA CORRIDOR

Segment	Start/End	Length (mi)	Status
1	0+00 to 0+10	10	Planned
2	0+10 to 0+20	10	Planned
3	0+20 to 0+30	10	Planned
4	0+30 to 0+40	10	Planned
5	0+40 to 0+50	10	Planned
6	0+50 to 0+60	10	Planned
7	0+60 to 0+70	10	Planned
8	0+70 to 0+80	10	Planned
9	0+80 to 0+90	10	Planned
10	0+90 to 1+00	10	Planned

#### MEGA CORRIDOR TO CLEVELAND MEGA CORRIDOR

Segment	Start/End	Length (mi)	Status
11	1+00 to 1+10	10	Planned
12	1+10 to 1+20	10	Planned
13	1+20 to 1+30	10	Planned
14	1+30 to 1+40	10	Planned
15	1+40 to 1+50	10	Planned
16	1+50 to 1+60	10	Planned
17	1+60 to 1+70	10	Planned
18	1+70 to 1+80	10	Planned
19	1+80 to 1+90	10	Planned
20	1+90 to 2+00	10	Planned

#### MEGA CORRIDOR TO CLEVELAND MEGA CORRIDOR

Segment	Start/End	Length (mi)	Status
21	2+00 to 2+10	10	Planned
22	2+10 to 2+20	10	Planned
23	2+20 to 2+30	10	Planned
24	2+30 to 2+40	10	Planned
25	2+40 to 2+50	10	Planned
26	2+50 to 2+60	10	Planned
27	2+60 to 2+70	10	Planned
28	2+70 to 2+80	10	Planned
29	2+80 to 2+90	10	Planned
30	2+90 to 3+00	10	Planned

#### MEGA CORRIDOR TO CLEVELAND MEGA CORRIDOR

Segment	Start/End	Length (mi)	Status
31	3+00 to 3+10	10	Planned
32	3+10 to 3+20	10	Planned
33	3+20 to 3+30	10	Planned
34	3+30 to 3+40	10	Planned
35	3+40 to 3+50	10	Planned
36	3+50 to 3+60	10	Planned
37	3+60 to 3+70	10	Planned
38	3+70 to 3+80	10	Planned
39	3+80 to 3+90	10	Planned
40	3+90 to 4+00	10	Planned

## MEGA TRAIL CORRIDORS (CONT.)

### MEGA CORRIDOR TO CLEVELAND MEGA CORRIDOR

Segment	Start/End	Length (mi)	Status
41	4+00 to 4+10	10	Planned
42	4+10 to 4+20	10	Planned
43	4+20 to 4+30	10	Planned
44	4+30 to 4+40	10	Planned
45	4+40 to 4+50	10	Planned
46	4+50 to 4+60	10	Planned
47	4+60 to 4+70	10	Planned
48	4+70 to 4+80	10	Planned
49	4+80 to 4+90	10	Planned
50	4+90 to 5+00	10	Planned

### MEGA CORRIDOR TO CLEVELAND MEGA CORRIDOR

Segment	Start/End	Length (mi)	Status
51	5+00 to 5+10	10	Planned
52	5+10 to 5+20	10	Planned
53	5+20 to 5+30	10	Planned
54	5+30 to 5+40	10	Planned
55	5+40 to 5+50	10	Planned
56	5+50 to 5+60	10	Planned
57	5+60 to 5+70	10	Planned
58	5+70 to 5+80	10	Planned
59	5+80 to 5+90	10	Planned
60	5+90 to 6+00	10	Planned

### MEGA CORRIDOR TO CLEVELAND MEGA CORRIDOR

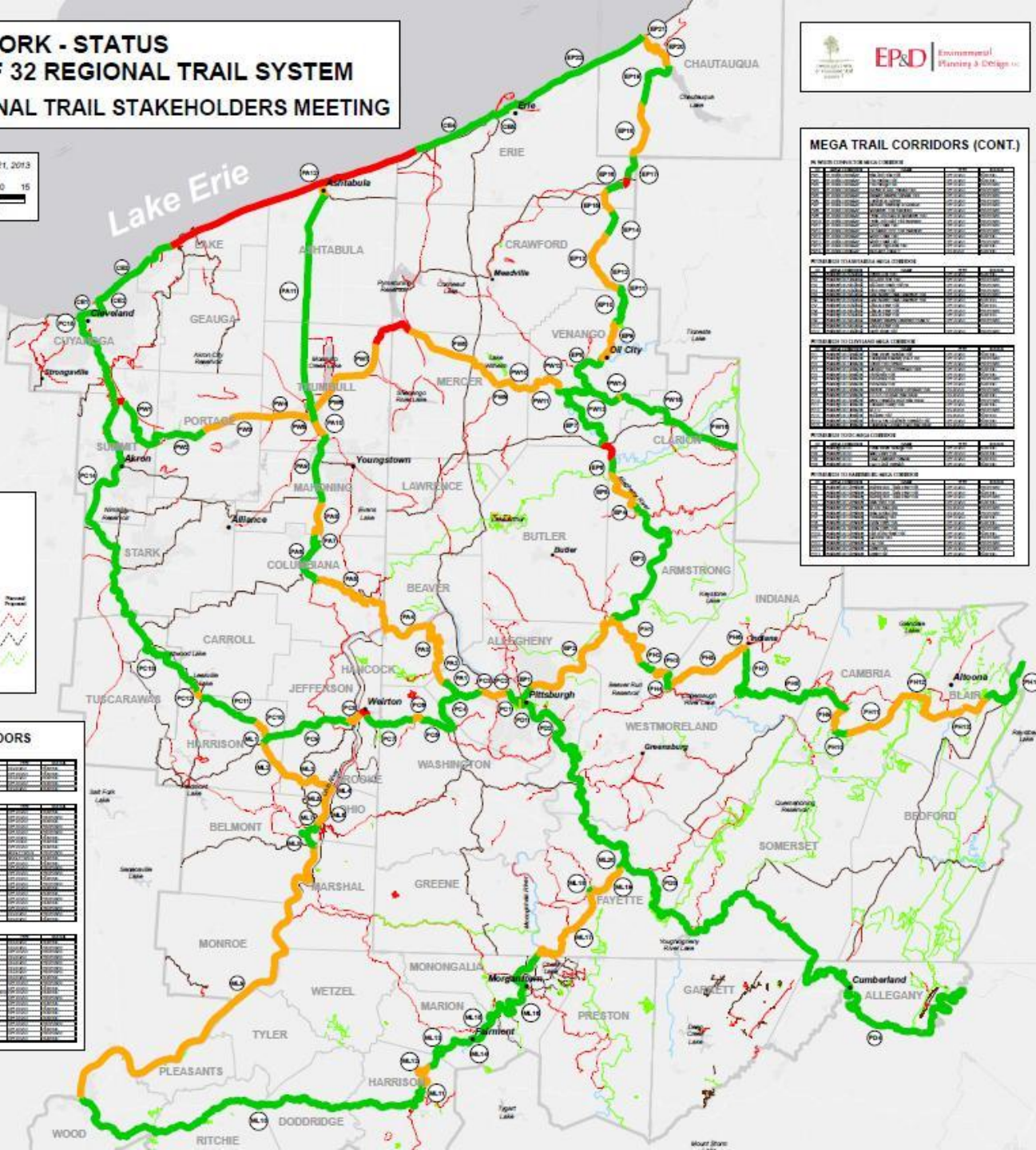
Segment	Start/End	Length (mi)	Status
61	6+00 to 6+10	10	Planned
62	6+10 to 6+20	10	Planned
63	6+20 to 6+30	10	Planned
64	6+30 to 6+40	10	Planned
65	6+40 to 6+50	10	Planned
66	6+50 to 6+60	10	Planned
67	6+60 to 6+70	10	Planned
68	6+70 to 6+80	10	Planned
69	6+80 to 6+90	10	Planned
70	6+90 to 7+00	10	Planned

### MEGA CORRIDOR TO CLEVELAND MEGA CORRIDOR

Segment	Start/End	Length (mi)	Status
71	7+00 to 7+10	10	Planned
72	7+10 to 7+20	10	Planned
73	7+20 to 7+30	10	Planned
74	7+30 to 7+40	10	Planned
75	7+40 to 7+50	10	Planned
76	7+50 to 7+60	10	Planned
77	7+60 to 7+70	10	Planned
78	7+70 to 7+80	10	Planned
79	7+80 to 7+90	10	Planned
80	7+90 to 8+00	10	Planned

### MEGA CORRIDOR TO CLEVELAND MEGA CORRIDOR

Segment	Start/End	Length (mi)	Status
81	8+00 to 8+10	10	Planned
82	8+10 to 8+20	10	Planned
83	8+20 to 8+30	10	Planned
84	8+30 to 8+40	10	Planned
85	8+40 to 8+50	10	Planned
86	8+50 to 8+60	10	Planned
87	8+60 to 8+70	10	Planned
88	8+70 to 8+80	10	Planned
89	8+80 to 8+90	10	Planned
90	8+90 to 9+00	10	Planned



# Partnerships along the GAP

Local	Regional	State	National
Borrowers	Allegheny Trail Alliance	PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources	Appalachian Regional Commission
Business Groups	Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau	PA Department of Community and Economic Development	Student Conservation Association
Main Street Programs	Chatham University, Center for Women's Entrepreneurship	Maryland Department of Planning	National Park Service
Town Councils	Saint Vincent SBDC		
County Governments	Commercial Banks		
	Foundations		



# Trail Town Qualities

- Located on a long distance trail
- Towns approx. 12-16 miles from neighboring Trail Towns
- Physical connection between trail and town
- Gateway moment between trail and town
- Defined access and parking area





# Trail Town Qualities

- Traditional downtown commercial area & trailside businesses
- Services catering to cyclists
  - Bike repair/rental
  - Lodging
  - Food
  - Unique retail
  - Snacks/To-go options
  - Other recreational services



# Trail Town Qualities

- Potential for growth in businesses/services
- Marketing efforts with neighboring towns & trail
- Includes other natural, historic, tourist attractions
- Culture of Hospitality: welcome visitors to town
- Incorporates bike/pedestrian infrastructure





# First Step: Trail Town Assessment Checklist

- Self look at your community
- Traffic & Access
- Businesses
- Design
- Developed & © by ATA



*Creates a priority for each town and the region*



# Sample Questions

- What is the distance between the business district and the trail?
- Can visitors tell they've entered a town?
- Are sidewalks in good shape?
- Are there bike racks (in easy to find places?)
- Is the central business district easily identified?





# Sample Questions

- Do businesses offer information about town/region?
- Are business hours posted on front door/window?
- As a whole, are you enjoying your walk?
- Are all buildings occupied?
- Are there enough benches (and well placed)?

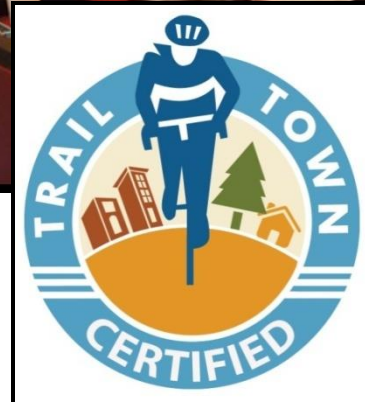
# TTP's Six Services

1. Business Assistance & Development
2. Marketing
3. Economic Research
4. Community Connection Projects
5. Real Estate Development
6. Small Business Loans



# 1. Business Assistance & Development

- Assess Existing Business Services
- Identify Opportunities
- Provide Market Information
- Regional Summits/Networking Events
- Trail Town Certified Business Network





# Trail Town Certified

## Certified Sustainable

- Recycle & reuse
- Local foods, products, jobs
- Reduce waste
- Historic buildings
- Energy efficiency
- Natural lighting
- Add greenspace

## Certified Trail Friendly

- Familiarize with trail (name, mileage, features, etc)
- Bike racks & storage
- Provide information
- Bike tools
- Free/discount incentives (bathroom, wifi, air, ice-cream)

Triple Bottom Line: ***People, Planet, and Profit***





# 2. Marketing

## Collaborative

- TrailBook
- Website resources
- Brochures
- Newsletter & Blog
- Social Media
- Events Calendar



# 3. Economic Research



- Trail Counts
  - Electronic, Manual, Synchronized
- Research Studies
- Monitor Business Opening/Closings



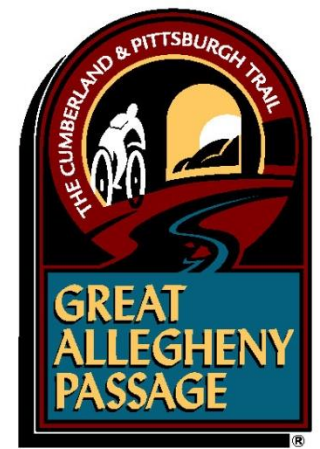


# Knowing Your Visitors



- Intercept Surveys & Counts
  - Zip Codes
  - Local vs. Through Rider
  - Starting/Ending Locations
  - Age
  - Group Size
  - Use of Trail
  - Spending
  - Lodging
  - Services Wanted
  - Find out about





# Economic Impact of the

## Total Trips

2002: 347,000

2013: 940,000+







**Visitors From Around the Globe**

# Economic Impact Studies



- Previous Studies
  - 1998 baseline study
  - 2002 economic study
  - 2006 trail user survey
  - 2007-08 economic study
- 2011 Trail User Survey
  - 1,200 GAP Trail Users
- 2012 Business Survey



# 2011-12 Economic Impact Study



- Most Trail Users are 35+
  - Nearly half **45-64** year range
- **22%** first time users
- Average day/local users - **\$17**
- Groups - **\$51**



# Overnight Visitors

- **28%** plan on overnight stays
- Overnight accommodations:
  - **60%** indoor lodging
    - B&Bs followed by hotel/motel
  - **26%** camping
  - **7%** mixed (indoor and camping)
  - **6%** stay with family/friends
- **82%** staying more than 2 nights
- **16%** one night only





# ***Business Survey Results***

- About **25%** of responding businesses close *for more than 2 weeks*, most commonly in the winter
- On average about **30%** of gross revenues were attributed to the Trail
- **30%** of surveyed businesses plan to expand
- About **half** of the businesses agreed that the Trail affected their decision to expand

Estimated **\$50  
Million** in  
Direct  
Economic  
Impact from  
the Great  
Allegheny  
Passage





# 4. Community Connection Projects





# Community Connection Projects

- Bike Racks
- Town Bike Loops
- Trailhead & Park Improvements
- Landscaping
- Viewsheds
- Public Art
- Signage
  - Directional
  - Interpretive
  - Business















# 5. Real Estate Development

- List Available Properties

[www.trailtowns.org/availableproperties](http://www.trailtowns.org/availableproperties)

[www.historicproperties.com](http://www.historicproperties.com)

- Renovate Key Buildings/Properties





# 6. Small Business Loans

- Progress Fund Loan Program
- Bike shops, Restaurants, B&Bs, Hostels, Outfitters, Farm to Table...
- Over two dozen businesses along the GAP



# Confluence Cyclery

Confluence,  
Pennsylvania

\$50,000 for inventory & improvements





# Savage River Lodge

Frostburg, Maryland

\$347,500 for solar power





A photograph of the Levi Deal Mansion B&B, a large, ornate, two-story house with a curved porch supported by columns. The house has a mix of light-colored siding and dark trim. A group of people are walking up the steps to the porch, and two bicycles are parked on the brick-paved area in front. The scene is set in a sunny, outdoor environment with trees and a lawn in the background.

## Levi Deal Mansion B&B

Meyersdale, Pennsylvania

\$405,000 for purchase and improvements



# Contributing factors to success

- Access to capital
- A trail long enough to visit
- Community character
- A local culture that embraces trails



# Trail Town Program

An economic development  
initiative along the  
Great Allegheny Passage

William Prince, Program Manager

[wprince@progressfund.org](mailto:wprince@progressfund.org)

724-216-9160 ext 318

More information:

[www.trailtowns.org](http://www.trailtowns.org)

[www.progressfund.org](http://www.progressfund.org)

[www.gaptrail.org](http://www.gaptrail.org)

Facebook, Twitter, & Newsletter