

## HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCE PLAN

### ■ HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

As discussed earlier in Chapter Three, the growth of Allegheny County and its communities has been strongly influenced by the Three Rivers, abundant natural resources – especially high quality bituminous coal deposits – and proximity to major transportation routes.

Hundreds of millions of years ago, the land that would become Allegheny County was covered by a shallow ocean. The flat sea floor was uplifted and altered by erosion, resulting in a landscape characterized by steep hills with relatively narrow ridge tops and steep-sided valleys. The Allegheny and Monongahela rivers converged to form the Ohio River. Through geologic time these rivers carved the Allegheny Plateau into the rugged terrain of today.

The land is underlain by limestone, sandstone, shale and coal, which helped to fuel the emergence of our County's industry in the late 19th century.

### NATIVE AMERICANS

Evidence from Meadowcroft Rockshelter in neighboring Washington County suggests that American Indians inhabited the area as early as 16,000 to 17,000 years ago, raising new theories about when people first inhabited North America.

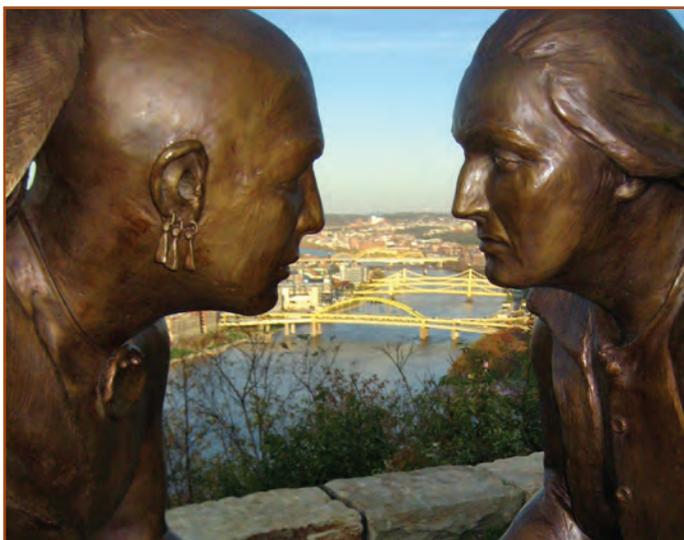


Photo credit: Kevin Smay

The region was inhabited by the Delaware, Seneca, Shawnee and Mingo peoples when European traders and trappers arrived to work along the County's rivers. Native Americans were largely nomadic, hunting and gathering food for survival. However, a few permanent settlements were established along the rivers, notably Shannopin's Town (a Delaware village near present-day Lawrenceville), Logstown (present-day Ambridge), and Chartier's Old Town (a Shawnee village in present-day Tarentum). Their homes were built of log huts and bark. The Native Americans bartered with fur traders from England and France, trading beaver pelts for goods such as salt, blankets, guns and gunpowder. The French took care to befriend the Indians, a friendship that would become very important.

### THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR

*"As I got down before the Canoe, I spent some Time in viewing the Rivers, & the Land in the Fork, which I think extremely well situated for a Fort; as it has the absolute Command of both Rivers..."* – George Washington, 1753

The French and Indian War had a significant impact on Allegheny County. Both the French and the British considered Allegheny County to be their territory, and tension between the two countries would eventually begin the French and Indian War.

In 1749, the French occupied and officially claimed land that would become Allegheny County. The British realized there was militarily-strategic importance to the site at the confluence of the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers. In 1753, George Washington left Williamsburg, Virginia to deliver a note ordering the French to leave the Ohio Valley region. Washington arrived at Ft. LeBoeuf in Erie County to deliver his message to the French. The French refused to vacate the region.

To intimidate the French, British colonists began the construction of Fort Prince George at the site of present-day Pittsburgh. In 1754, the French overtook the fort before its construction was complete and finished building it themselves, renaming it Fort Duquesne. In 1755, the defeat of General Braddock at Turtle Creek opened the Pennsylvania frontier to widespread attack by French allied Native Americans. In 1756, Britain declared war on France.



As the war progressed, the British led two marches to capture Fort Duquesne. The first march failed. But in 1758, General John Forbes and his troops successfully seized Fort Duquesne, which the French had set on fire and abandoned.

The British built Fort Pitt, named after William Pitt, the Prime Minister of England, on the site of Fort Duquesne. At the time of construction, Fort Pitt was the biggest, most expensive and most secure fort in the New World. Fort Pitt's strength would be tested following the war. Native Americans, realizing the takeover of their lands was imminent, rebelled against the colonists. After the Battle of Bushy Run, the Native Americans fled the area. It was a shaky peace. Hannastown was attacked and destroyed in 1782. It wasn't until after the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794 that western Pennsylvania was secure from attack.

The small village of Pittsborough, also named after Pitt by General Forbes, soon grew around the fort and was later renamed "Pittsburgh". The area developed because of its location west of the Allegheny Mountains and excellent river transportation at the headwaters of the Ohio River. Pittsburgh soon became known as the 'Gateway to the West'.

## THE WHISKEY REBELLION

In the 1790s, agriculture was Allegheny County's main economic activity. At first, farmers were limited to subsistence farming. Gradually, they began to produce a surplus, especially in grains. Farmers found they could make better profits by turning their surplus grain into alcohol and bartering or selling it. One out of every six farmers operated a still.

After the American Revolution, the newly formed United States government assumed the debts accumulated by the colonies during the war. In 1791, the federal government imposed an excise tax on whiskey to help pay off the debt.

Angry, farmers in Western Pennsylvania refused to pay the tax and engaged in a series of attacks on excise agents. In 1794, General John Neville was appointed tax collector and he traveled to the home of Oliver Miller. Miller was served a notice to appear in federal court for failure to pay the tax. Neighboring farmers arrived and the first shots of the insurrection were fired. Oliver Miller was shot and died. His homestead, now restored, is preserved in Allegheny County's South Park.

The uprising was known as the Whiskey Rebellion and became the lightning rod for a wide variety of grievances by local settlers against the federal government. President Washington called in the militia to restore order. This marked the first time under the new United States Constitution that the federal government used military force to exert authority over the nation's citizens.

Allegheny County was part of the western frontier, considered crucial to the survival of the young nation. This was one reason why Washington raised more troops to put down the Whiskey Rebellion than were ever raised to fight Native Americans and more than any force he had commanded during the Revolution. The tax was repealed in 1803.

## EARLY SETTLEMENTS

As the population grew, small settlements formed. Many formed at crossroads to provide supplies and services to farmers and as stopovers for travelers.

Due to pressure from settlers living in the area, Allegheny County was formed in 1788 from parts of Washington and Westmoreland counties. Pittsburgh became the County seat in 1791. Following the township system of municipal government set up by William Penn, seven original townships were established: Elizabeth, Mifflin, Moon, Pitt, Plum, St. Clair, and Versailles townships.



Photo credit: McCormick Taylor

## EARLY MINING

By the mid-1700s, a coal mine was already operating for the use of the military garrison at Fort Pitt. The first British settlers quickly realized the financial worth of the region's mineral assets. The coal was extracted from drift mines in a coal seam and transported by canoe to the nearby garrison. This, the first coal mine in Pennsylvania, was located at "Coal Hill" (Mount Washington), just across the Monongahela River from the City of Pittsburgh. While the location of Pittsburgh was initially determined by the confluence of three rivers, it was coal that drove its subsequent development.

The ready availability of energy from the burning of coal was important for glass-making and later the creation of the coke needed to turn the iron into steel. This fuel also powered other industries which developed in the area.

## EARLY INDUSTRY

The industrial era began in earnest in the early 1800s when many workers turned from farming, with exports including wheat, rye, and whiskey, to industries such as iron, glass, and wood production. Boatbuilding was important as well because after an arduous journey over the mountains, travelers could continue westward more easily on the Ohio River.

An early settlement known as Shousetown (present-day Glenwillard, Crescent Township) was an important location for boatbuilding. The first boats produced were wooden flatboats and keelboats. In 1803, Meriwether Lewis purchased a 55-foot keelboat – that he and William Clark would later use on their expedition – from a boatbuilder in Elizabeth, on the Monongahela. In 1811, the first steamboat, the *New Orleans*, was built in Pittsburgh. As shipbuilding technology improved, Allegheny County shipyards, including the large shipyard on Neville Island, produced freight barges and military landing craft.

Iron deposits in Allegheny County date to prehistoric times. Iron was used to make a variety of useful products, such as nails, train rails, and steel. In 1792, the first iron foundry opened in Shadyside, a Pittsburgh neighborhood. A blockade placed on American exports and imports by England during the War of 1812 stimulated the need for increased manufacturing inside the United States, and the subsequent growth of United States industry. Manufacturing in Allegheny County grew significantly. In the mid-1800s, Pittsburgh was the iron manufacturing center of the entire

United States. The need for iron products during the Civil War fueled the growth of Allegheny County's iron industry. For a time, Pittsburgh was known as "Iron City".

The first glass factory opened in Pittsburgh in 1797. To supply the area's growing glassmaking industry, sand was collected from bars and shoals along area riverbanks. Large amounts of sand and gravel were deposited by glacial runoff during the last ice age. This material is found in river beds and on the bottoms of valleys left stranded above the rivers. The sand of the Allegheny and Ohio valleys comes from the igneous rocks to the north. It is, therefore, hard, sharp, and clean with a high silica content, desirable for both building purposes and glassmaking.

In low water, teams of horses drew wagons out onto the river and sand was shoveled into them. By 1852, the first steam-powered sand digger raised sand from the bottom of the river and placed it into flatboats. With the introduction of concrete in the 1870s, the demand for both sand and gravel went up, and commercial extraction became a viable business.

The Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company (PPG) was founded in 1883. The company's first plant, at Creighton, was the first commercially successful plate glass factory in the United States. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, Allegheny County produced half of the glass in the United States.

## IMPROVED TRANSPORTATION

The early growth of the industry in southwestern Pennsylvania was stunted by a lack of transportation to the east and the lack of population and markets to the west. River transportation was the primary mode of transportation from the County to the west and south. Mountainous terrain to the east made shipping goods to population centers more challenging. New and improved transportation routes were needed.

Pittsburgh's status as the Gateway to the West was being threatened. Trade and travel were bypassing Pittsburgh, using the National Road from Baltimore to Wheeling, or the Erie Canal across New York state. Pittsburgh's prominence as a center of commerce was being diminished.

To link Pittsburgh to its eastern industrial and domestic markets, eastbound canals were built. The most important of these was the Pennsylvania Canal, built in 1835, which extended from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh. The canal basins



became thriving centers of commercial activity. Once the canal was built, goods and travelers crowded the city again. The population exploded. Warehouses clustered around the canal basin at 11th Street between Penn and Liberty, creating the Strip District.

The depth of the rivers in Allegheny County was unpredictable and not always suitable for shipping goods. In order to solve this problem, from approximately 1885 to the present, the Army Corps of Engineers constructed a system of locks and dams on the rivers. The lock and dam system on the rivers resulted in pools of water at least 9 feet deep year round, a depth suitable for shipping goods. Pittsburgh was then able to become a major inland port, which it remains to this day.

In the mid-19th century, several railroads built trade and passenger routes throughout the County. Many industries were able to flourish from access to expanded transportation routes. The line from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh was not completed until 1854 when the Horse Shoe Curve section was completed. Soon, the railroads had replaced the canal. They were faster and didn't freeze in wintertime. The canal was abandoned. Locks were dismantled. In our region, the canal was filled in so that the land around it could be developed. The last known remnant of the canal, Lock No. 4, was dug up on the North Side in 1987 during construction of I-279 North.

## THE EMERGENCE OF 'STEEL CITY'

To supply iron needs for the War of 1812, foundries, rolling mills, machine shops and forges sprang up on flat land along the rivers. With the growth of these factories and improved transportation, the population grew to allow Pittsburgh to incorporate as a city in 1816.

When the coke-fueled blast furnace was invented, factory owners consolidated and moved their operations to the riversides, where coal and its purified byproduct coke could be conveniently delivered. During the Civil War, Pittsburgh became a major supplier of ordnance to the Union, and its iron industry and its shipyards benefited.

Iron is used to make steel. In 1873, Andrew Carnegie opened his first steel mill in present day Carnegie Borough. A former executive with the Pennsylvania Railroad, he left to produce steel rails for the company. Two years later he opened the Edgar Thomson Works in Braddock and brought inexpensive, mass-produced steel to the Pittsburgh area.

Carnegie hired engineers to develop the most efficient system of steel production possible without a skilled work force. This ensured that Carnegie's mills would return the maximum amount of profit – mass quantities of steel could be quickly produced by lower paid, unskilled laborers. Carnegie also partnered his company with Henry Frick's coal mining and coke processing operation for further efficiency. With the merger Carnegie introduced the concept of the corporation, with control over a product from start to finish.

Allegheny County quickly became one of the most important steel producing areas in the world. Between 1875 and 1900, area steel mills produced more steel than anywhere else in the nation.

In 1901, several companies in the United States, including Carnegie's, consolidated into one large steel corporation, creating the United States Steel Corporation. At the time, it was the largest business enterprise ever created.

## COMPANY TOWNS

Commercial, industrial and residential development continued to flourish in Allegheny County throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries. During this time, communities rose around mills and industrial sites along the rivers. The owners of the larger industrial plants built neighborhoods to house their large work forces. They rented the houses to their employees, believing that an employee was less likely to quit if it meant losing his home. Supplies were sold in company-owned stores, often at prices that kept employees in debt to the company. Many of the County's boroughs came from these communities.

*Self-sustaining river towns thrived as places where people could live, learn, work, invest and play.*

## EUROPEAN IMMIGRATION

The steel industry brought an influx of both domestic and foreign immigrants to the County for employment. In 1875, an influx of thousands of immigrants arrived from Germany and Ireland to forge not only steel, but a better life as well. In the second wave of immigration, millions of people from eastern and southern European countries came to work the mills. By 1920, 66% of the population in Allegheny County was of foreign descent. The trend of heavy European immigration ceased when World War I began. Many

neighborhoods throughout the County retain a strong ethnic identity even today.

## THE RISE OF LABOR UNIONS

The great number of manufacturing enterprises in Allegheny County served as the impetus for the rise of the labor unions. Several of the nation's largest unions had their beginnings here: the American Federation of Labor, the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers, and the Steelworkers Organizing Committee. The latter two merged into one union in 1942, forming the United Steelworkers of America, which is still headquartered in Pittsburgh.

Employees at the steel mills worked 12 hours per day in dangerous manual labor positions for low wages. Injured employees were not compensated. Strife between workers and industrialists led to several major strikes in the second half of the 19th century. The most severe of these were the 1877 railroad strike and the violent 1892 Homestead Strike.

The Homestead Strike began when Carnegie cut workers' wages. Dissatisfied workers demanded their wages be restored. In 1892, 3,800 union steel workers were locked out of the Carnegie Homestead Works, beginning a four month, violent standoff between workers and police. Pinkerton Agency guards were hired by the steel mill to allow non-union workers to break through, but the union workers forced the guards to retreat in a 12-hour battle that also involved the Pennsylvania State Militia. Late in the year the union ended the strike, conceding to the steel mill.

As a result of the Battle of Homestead, the labor unionization movement across the nation suffered major setbacks until the 1930s.

## THE DISCOVERY OF OIL AND NATURAL GAS

While the existence of oil in western Pennsylvania was well known, it was not until 1859 and the success of Edwin Drake's well at Titusville, Pennsylvania that the petroleum industry was established. The first refinery in the United States, the Brilliant Oil Refinery, was opened in Pittsburgh's East Liberty neighborhood in 1861. During the 1860s, the Pittsburgh was the world's largest refiner of petroleum. Oil from the north was shipped down the Allegheny River to Pittsburgh's refineries. However, in 1874 the Brilliant Oil Refinery was merged into John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil

Company, which was based in Cleveland, Ohio, resulting in the relocation of many area refineries. Gulf Oil Company, the eighth largest American manufacturing company in 1941 and one of the Seven Sisters oil magnates, had its headquarters in downtown Pittsburgh for many years. In 1984, Gulf Oil merged with Standard Oil of California and moved its headquarters out of the County.

Another major source of energy that played a key part in the growth of Allegheny County industry was natural gas. In the late 19th century, natural gas was discovered in the area. The widespread use of natural gas for homes meant that there was a major drop in the cost of living in the County.

## AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE

Before the practice of slavery was abolished in 1865, Allegheny County played an important role in leading slaves to freedom. It has been estimated that approximately 10,000 escaped slaves reached freedom by passing through the County's Underground Railroad. Some settled in Arthursville, which was located in the present day Hill District of Pittsburgh.

Many African Americans arrived in Allegheny County after the Civil War. Free to leave the south, they chose to migrate north to work in Allegheny County steel mills. The labor force in the steel mills was unskilled and had no pre-requisites for employment. Steel mill owners were often willing to hire freed slaves.

The beginning of World War I demanded large quantities of steel from Allegheny County. When European immigration declined, owners hired African Americans in large numbers.

African Americans contributed greatly to the music culture of Allegheny County. Pittsburgh was home to many jazz greats over the years, including George Benson, Art Blakey, Ray Brown, Kenny Clarke, Billie Eckstein, Earl 'Fatha' Hines, Ahmad Jamal, Billy Strayhorn, Al Jarreau and Stanley Turrentine. The Crawford Grill, which opened in 1931 in Pittsburgh's Hill District, was world-renowned for its jazz scene. In 1941, the nation's first African American opera company, the National Negro Opera Company, was founded here.

Local African Americans have played key roles in the history of sports. The Homestead Grays and the Pittsburgh Crawfords were legendary baseball teams in the Negro League in the early 20th century. Josh Gibson, the Babe Ruth



of the Negro Leagues, played for each of the local teams in the 1930s and 40s.

## AVAILABLE VENTURE CAPITAL

At the turn of the 20th century, steel was the major industry, but it certainly wasn't the only one contributing to the city's financial success. Pittsburgh was a major center for financial activity during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Fourth Avenue was known as "Pittsburgh's Wall Street", and was the location of many of the financial institutions responsible for fueling the County's heavy industrial economy. More than 40 private banks, public banks and trust companies were located on Fourth Avenue. Several prominent banks, including Mellon Bank and Pittsburgh National Bank, were established in Pittsburgh.

In 1888, the Pittsburgh Reduction Company, with venture capital from the City's banks, was established in Pittsburgh's Strip District. As it is today, venture capital was the key to commercializing inventions back then. Charles Martin Hall discovered an inexpensive way to smelt aluminum and sought financial backing. He found it in Pittsburgh, along with a partner in Alfred Hunt. Pittsburgh banks were willing to fund the start up of the company and continued to provide capital for expansion. In 1907, the Pittsburgh Reduction Company changed its name to the Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa). In the early 1950s, Alcoa built the world's first aluminum skyscraper for their headquarters.

A number of other new companies were similarly established: Koppers Chemical Company, Gulf Oil Company, Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company (PPG), Union Switch and Signal, and many smaller ventures. Pittsburgh's industrial expansion produced vast fortunes for entrepreneurs such as Andrew Mellon, Henry Clay Frick and George Westinghouse.

The result of this explosive economic growth was a tremendous population boom. By 1910 the region's population exceeded a million people, twice as many as it had in 1890 and nearly three times as many as in 1880.

## A CITY IN GROWTH

For decades, the City of Pittsburgh pushed to grow beyond its boundaries between the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers. Between 1868 and 1900, the city increased its land area nearly 16 fold to 28 square miles through annexation. At the beginning of the 20th century, the state's second-

largest city after Philadelphia saw a chance to expand into a metropolis near the top rung of great American cities. Allegheny City, the third-largest municipality in the state, was situated north of Pittsburgh on the banks of the Allegheny and Ohio rivers. Square in the sights of Pittsburgh, Allegheny found itself in an outright struggle for survival. Its identity and autonomy, after nearly a century of growth and development on its own, was at stake.

In 1907, Pittsburgh annexed Allegheny City, one of the most controversial annexations in U.S. history. When it was over, Pittsburgh's national ranking among cities jumped from 12th to the 7th largest.

In the 1920s there were 13 companies making brick and ceramic pipe in Allegheny County. Many of the houses in older communities were built of brick because it was widely and cheaply made from local clay and shale. Equally important was the production of special firebricks needed to line the furnaces, which made coke, steel, and glass.

The sandstone in the area was also useful for building material. Many houses in the area are built from the Morgantown sandstone. This particular bed of sandstone is uniform in texture and even grained, which makes it strong and easy to cut into uniform blocks. This is the buff to gray building stone seen on many of the public buildings in downtown Pittsburgh.

## THE RISE OF THE SUBURBS

While the rivers influenced early land use patterns, the railroads and transit lines affected latter development. The railroad allowed the wealthy to move out of the city and ride the train to work. Residential suburbs developed around stations along railroad lines and allowed employees to commute to work and live away from the congestion of the city.

When the electric trolley developed as a cheap, reliable short-distance form of transportation in the 1890s, it began a revolution in urban life: the era of the suburbs and the commute. Unlike much larger trains, streetcars could go almost anywhere. Just at the time the large steel firms raised up a prosperous class of white collar middle management workers, the trolley made it possible for them to escape the city and commute to downtown.

Through the latter part of the 19th century, the City of Pittsburgh grew rapidly to the east, the north, and on the

South Side. Once the Liberty Tunnels were constructed in 1926, the South Hills were opened to even more development and the areas between trolley suburbs started to fill in with houses.

The Great Depression and World War II interrupted new house construction, but when it was over, a new building boom was on. Veterans returned with the GI Bill to help them make the move to brand-new suburbs that were completely car-dependent.

## THE FIRST RENAISSANCE

*“Our grand design in Pittsburgh has been the acceptance of a belief that a city is worth saving; that a successful organism in the plan of nature must have a head and nerve center; that the people of a city can take pride and glory in it....” – Mayor David L. Lawrence, 1956*

By the end of World War II, conditions in the city were grim, with heavy air pollution, poor services and deteriorating housing. The smoke was so heavy that street lights and car headlights would frequently be turned on during midday. Conditions were so bad that the region was once referred to as “Hell with the Lid Off”.

In 1945, business and political leaders, led by banker Richard King Mellon and Mayor David Lawrence, launched what became known as the Pittsburgh Renaissance. This was a unique attempt to renew a major industrial city through a public/private partnership. It was directed by the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, a nonprofit committee with the city's most powerful business leaders and politicians as members.

The goals of the Renaissance were environmental improvement (reducing smoke pollution, flooding and treating sewage), downtown renewal and transportation revitalization. The first public/private partnership project, Gateway Center, was completed during the Renaissance. Remnants of industry were cleared from ‘the Point’, located at the confluence of the Three Rivers, and Point State Park was created. The city undertook urban renewal projects in the Lower Hill District, the North Side and East Liberty. Major social dislocations were caused. The Hill District is today the focus of another, more sensitive urban renewal effort.

The first Pittsburgh Renaissance lasted until 1969.

## EMERGENCE OF PRESERVATION MOVEMENT

In the late 1950s, Urban Renewal efforts of Renaissance I for Allegheny City, now Pittsburgh's North Side, included complete demolition of all homes, buildings, market houses, and other structures from and including East Street to the Ohio River Boulevard, which encompassed the historic and culturally important neighborhoods of Allegheny Center, Central Northside/Mexican War Streets, Chateau, Manchester, North Shore, and Deutschtown.

In 1964, at a time when vast sums of public money were spent to replace some of Pittsburgh's most historic neighborhoods and commercial areas with characterless architecture, parking lots and roadways, and in reaction to the massive demolition campaigns and the imminent threat to Pittsburgh's North Side, Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr. and James Van Trump co-founded the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation. PHLF advocated community development and revitalization through preservation instead of dislocation and demolition. This marked the birth of the preservation movement that continues to this day.

The neighborhoods of Chateau and Allegheny City Center suffered significant damage from the wrecking ball. Most of the former Allegheny City Center was demolished, with the exception of a few buildings saved by PHLF: The Old Post Office, Buhl Planetarium, now both part of the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, and the Carnegie Free Library of Allegheny.

Preservation efforts by the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, along with community neighborhood groups and the Urban Redevelopment Authority, arrested this wholesale demolition scheme. The neighborhoods containing rich architectural heritage, including Central Northside/Mexican War Streets, Manchester, North Shore and Deutschtown, were spared.

## RENAISSANCE II

Richard Caliguiri became mayor in 1976 and restored the public-private partnership with the beginning of Renaissance II in 1980. A number of development projects downtown restored the luster of the city. As a result, Pittsburgh's downtown remained viable and service jobs grew, despite a severe downturn in the steel industry.

Renaissance II gave the city Three Rivers Stadium, the U.S. Steel Tower, Oxford Center, PPG Place and Mellon Bank



Tower. But it also hid the fact that Pittsburgh's reliance on heavy industry for its livelihood was coming to an end. A combination of high labor costs, cheap competition from foreign producers and costly environmental protection measures made heavy manufacturing – of all products, not just steel – unprofitable in the region by the end of the 1970s.

Factory after factory closed down, leaving thousands of people unemployed and thousands of acres of riverfront unused. By the late 1970s to the early 1980s, the region's reign as one of the titans of the world of Big Steel had neared its end. The decline of the steel industry reverberated throughout the region, causing economic instability and a mass exodus of residents. In 1950, Pittsburgh was the twelfth largest city in the nation. Since then, the City has lost over half of its population. Today, Pittsburgh is the 57th largest city in the United States, with 311,000 residents.

## IRONY IN THE STEEL CITY

Looking to the future, Allegheny County has worked to reinvent itself and become a national center for innovation. As a result, the region's technology sector has grown tremendously. Today, more than 800 firms and 100,000 employees are involved in the region's advanced technology industries. The key to growing these companies is, once again, readily available venture capital. State and regional officials have worked to ensure that technology invented here can be capitalized and commercialized here.

The decline of Big Steel came, in large part, because of a lack of willingness to invest in new state-of-the-art technology. Yet today, medicine and technology, not steel, define Allegheny County.

Today's economy is led by the 'meds and eds'; that is, the prominent and prestigious medical and educational institutions located here. The University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) is a leading American health care provider and institution for medical research. One of the largest research and development centers in the country is located here. The Pittsburgh Technology Center, also mentioned in Chapter Three, is a hub of innovation, application and production, where emerging technologies are shepherded from creation to implementation. The University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University along with several private research and development companies are tenants there.

Carnegie Mellon University is recognized as one of the best technical universities in the world. It has one of the top programs in the United States for software engineering, robotics and artificial intelligence. The University is the only location in the world where the offices of Microsoft, Intel and Google are housed under one roof. Carnegie Mellon's new Commercialization Center for Nano-Enabled Technologies will generate new research and help to spin off new companies.

The University of Pittsburgh and Medical Center is the largest employer in Pittsburgh. Allegheny County is also home to the Pittsburgh Tissue Engineering Initiative, a network of researchers, engineers and business professionals involved in research to restore or replace human tissue and organs.

At the NASA Robotics Engineering Consortium, researchers and engineers have developed prototypes for the Mars rover and the first totally automated harvester. Pittsburgh is becoming known as the "Knowledge City".

By changing perceptions around the nation, people today see us as we see ourselves. Allegheny County is now known for its distinguished hospitals, universities and advanced technological research centers. Our economy is based on service, especially medical, financial, corporate and educational services, and advanced (specialty metal) manufacturing. Through the centuries, the people of Allegheny County have persevered and adapted to difficult economic changes. At each turn, we have achieved a brighter future.

***The story of the Renaissance in the Rust Belt is not complete. There's more to be written. But that's in the future and this piece is history.***

## ■ TODAY'S CONDITIONS

The heritage of Allegheny County is reflected in its historic buildings, neighborhoods and landscapes. These resources connect us, physically and emotionally, to the past and attract and educate residents and visitors alike. Historic and cultural resources give us our identity and give our communities their authenticity.

In this section, we describe the historic and cultural resources found throughout the County (see Map 4B.1). We additionally describe the roles of the agencies, local governments and organizations that actively preserve and manage these resources.

### NATIONAL REGISTER RESOURCES

Due to our rich history, we have many historic and cultural resources that are recognized nationally. The National Register of Historic Places is the Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate and protect our historic and archaeological resources. The register is maintained by the National Park Service and is administered in Pennsylvania by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC).

Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture. Some diverse examples may include a historic farmstead, an early 20th-century diner, an 18th-century



Photo credit: McCormick Taylor

mill, or a turnpike milestone. They can be significant to a local community, a state, a Native American tribe, or the nation as a whole. Properties in the county that are listed on the National Register can be found at [www.state.pa.us](http://www.state.pa.us).

A property is considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places when it meets specific criteria established by the National Park Service. Allegheny County has over 220 properties listed in and nearly 500 additional properties currently eligible for the National Register. The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires government agencies to take into account the effect any state- or federally-funded project may have on historic properties.

If a proposed project may impact a Pennsylvania historic property, the state or federal agency consults with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) to determine whether the impacts can be avoided or mitigated. Also, National Register listing makes the property eligible for Historic Preservation Tax Incentives administered by the National Park Service.

The County's National Register properties include government buildings, schools, churches, theaters, retail buildings, locks and dams, tunnels and bridges, railroad stations, retail buildings, an experimental mine and industrial facilities. The names are familiar to you. Among them are:

- Allegheny Cemetery
- Allegheny County Courthouse and Jail
- Carnegie Institute and Library
- Forks of the Ohio (Point State Park)
- H.J. Heinz Company
- Homestead Battle Site (Bost Building)
- Kennywood Park
- Monongahela Incline
- Rachel Carson House
- Schenley Park
- Smithfield Street Bridge
- Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall
- Union Trust Building
- Woodville Plantation

### OTHER SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC RESOURCES

In addition to the State and national recognition of National Register properties, the Pittsburgh Historic Review Commission (HRC) protects and maintains historically and architecturally significant buildings and neighborhoods in the City. When a building is designated as a historic landmark,



the HRC has jurisdiction over all proposed new construction, demolition and exterior work to the building. The review process begins only when an owner decides to do work to the exterior of their building.

The HRC has currently designated 12 City Historic Districts, one City Historic Site, two City Historic Objects and 75 City Historic Landmarks.

PHMC administers a program of historical markers to capture the memory of people, places and events that have affected the lives of Pennsylvanians over the centuries. There are currently about 130 historical markers at Allegheny County sites. The Young Preservationists Association of Pittsburgh (YPA) updated this inventory in April 2008. For a map of these historic markers, visit [www.youngpreservationists.org](http://www.youngpreservationists.org).



Photo credit: McCormick Taylor

In 1968, the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation began a Historic Landmark Plaque program to identify architecturally significant structures and designate historic landscapes throughout Allegheny County.

In 1984, Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation was the first historic preservation group in the nation to complete a county-wide survey of architectural landmarks. Cofounders Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr. and James D. Van Trump began that survey in 1965. As a result of a second, more comprehensive survey completed by Landmarks' staff in 1984, more than 6,000 architecturally and historically significant sites in Allegheny County have been documented.

Over 525 of those sites are distinguished by one of Landmarks' "Historic Landmark" plaques. Landmarks also has surveyed steel industry sites, African-American historic sites, and historic parks and gardens, and has prepared thematic National Register nominations on Pittsburgh public schools and bridges.

## AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES

In September 1992, PH&LF and Landmarks Design Associates completed the **African American Historic Sites Survey of Allegheny County**. It was the first survey of African American historic resources sponsored by PHMC. The survey identified more than 300 sites that had been important to African Americans between 1760 and 1960.

Currently, there are only three City-designated Historic Landmarks dedicated to African Americans in the entire City of Pittsburgh:

- Centre Avenue YMCA
- John Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church
- New Granada Theater

All are located in the Hill District. The Greater Faith Tabernacle Baptist Church in Homewood was a designated Historic Landmark, but it was demolished a few years ago due to severe structural problems.

The City of Pittsburgh is in the process of listing the August Wilson House as a Historic Landmark. In 2008, the August Wilson Center for African American Culture, currently under construction in downtown Pittsburgh, will open.

## CRITICAL SITES

Threats to historic sites come from various sources, including increasing pressure due to development and neglect by owners. Advocacy groups on the statewide and local levels have been organized to promote and support efforts to preserve historic sites, including Young Preservationist Association of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, Preservation Pittsburgh, and Preservation Pennsylvania.

The National Register, discussed above, is only one way to identify historic significance. There are places with unique historic character in every community throughout

Allegheny County that may not meet the criteria for listing on the Register.

The Young Preservationists Association of Pittsburgh (YPA) is a regional advocacy organization that encourages young people to become involved in preservation. YPA was founded in Pittsburgh in 2002 and is now active in 19 states with over 350 members. YPA operates under the following objectives to raise awareness, educate diverse constituencies and provide opportunities for participation in preservation activities.

***The YPA is the only organization of its kind in the United States.***

Public input is very important when determining priorities for historic preservation and defining community character. Members of the general public often define sense of place much differently than what is used by professional planners and historic preservation advocates. Each year the YPA solicits public input regarding the region's top historic sites, which are then screened through a list of five criteria to create the Top Ten Best Historic Preservation Opportunities. The full report can be found in the Supporting Documents for this element. The following Allegheny County sites have been listed for the past four years:

**2008**

- Wilkinsburg Main Street
- McKees Rocks Main Street
- Dormont Pool
- Garden Theater in Pittsburgh's North Side

**2007**

- Glenshaw Glass Company (1900)
- Morningside School (1897)
- Crawford Grill in the Hill District (1917)
- Blairsville High School in Morningside (1930)

**2006**

- Eagles Club in McKeesport (1910)
- East Liberty Town Square
- First Presbyterian Church in Braddock (1887)
- Mooncrest in Moon Township (1943)
- McCook Mansion in Shadyside (1906)

**2005**

- Main Street Braddock (1875-1915)
- John Woods House in Hazelwood (1792)

- Andy Warhol Residence in Oakland (1915)
- Bryce-Mesta Mansion in West Homestead (1880)
- Hollywood Theater in Dormont (c. 1920s)
- Denis Theater in Mt. Lebanon (c. 1920s)
- Cinema 4 Theater in Dormont (c. 1920s)
- John Wesley AME Zion Church in the Hill District (1894-95)
- Hays Woods in Southside
- Otto Milk Plant in Strip District (1865)

In addition to the Top Ten list, YPA launched the "New Frontiers in Preservation" project in 2004. This project was designed to help educate people about the importance of historic preservation, and how the choices we make can shape our communities. Ten focus groups were held to gather public input on what was historically important in each of the nine counties and the City of Pittsburgh, which make up the Southwestern Pennsylvania region. This effort marked the first time that the region has had a list of historic preservation priorities.

The full list and report can be found in the Supporting Documents for this element. The top priorities for Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh are as follows:

**Allegheny County**

1. Preservation of Pittsburgh's Steel Heritage particularly the Carrie Furnace Site in Rankin
2. Main Street Revitalization including, but not limited to, the following communities:
  - a. East Eighth Avenue in Homestead
  - b. Main Street Braddock
  - c. Tarentum
  - d. Bellevue
  - e. West View
  - f. Coraopolis
  - g. Carnegie
3. Housing Development (affordability and accessibility)
4. Green space protection / Scenic Byways
5. Crestas Terrace in North Versailles
6. Brownfield Redevelopment
7. Preservation and Reuse of Rail Transportation
8. Dixmont Hospital in Kilbuck
9. Ethnic Churches
10. PA Train Station in Wilkinsburg



## City of Pittsburgh

1. Historic Commercial Corridors like Centre Avenue in the Hill District, Penn Avenue in East Liberty and Fifth/Forbes in Uptown
2. Preservation of historic details and decorative elements
3. Neighborhood surveys of historic properties particularly in distressed communities
4. Preservation of sites that tell a story of Pittsburgh's past
5. Preservation of Pittsburgh's parks and trails
6. New World Bank (Downtown)
7. South Hills High School (Mount Washington)
8. Preservation of homes and history related to famous Pittsburgh Women
9. Preservation and reuse of vacant schools
10. Streamlined vacant property disposition process.

## HISTORIC LANDSCAPE FEATURES

Historic landscapes, as defined by the National Park Service, include both designed and vernacular landscapes. The designed landscape was consciously laid out by a landscape professional according to design principles, or an amateur working in a recognized style or tradition. The landscape may be associated with a significant person, trend, or event in landscape architecture; or illustrate an important development in the theory and practice of landscape architecture. Examples include parks, campuses, and estates. The vernacular landscape evolved through use by the people whose activities or occupancy shaped it. The landscape reflects the physical, biological, and cultural character of everyday lives. Function plays a significant role in vernacular landscapes. Examples include rural historic districts and agricultural landscapes.

There are a number of important historic landscape features within the County. These are the historic landscapes that contribute to the 'Area of Significance' or 'Historic Function' of sites listed on the National Register:

- Allegheny Cemetery
- Chatham Village Historic District
- Evergreen Hamlet
- Longue Vue Club and Golf Course
- Oakmont Country Club Historic District
- Sauer Buildings Historic District
- Schenley Farms Historic District
- Schenley Park

## OTHER AREAS OF LOCAL HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The National Register is only one way to identify historic significance. There are places with unique historic character in every community throughout Allegheny County that may not meet the criteria for listing on the Register. Alternatively, locally important properties with identifiable characteristics provide a sense of place that has specific economic and cultural value. The visual historic character of a place can establish a sense of authenticity sometimes lacking in newer residential and commercial areas. This authenticity is often sought by discerning consumers, homebuyers and businesses and of course tourists and is an essential component in the consideration of development within the county.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Allegheny County is rich in archaeological sites, including many from the French and Indian War and the early industrial revolution. Professional archaeological excavations have been conducted at numerous sites within the county, including Fort Pitt, McKees Rocks burial mound, Blawnox Indian village site and a prehistoric rockshelter located in North Park. The specific locations of archaeological sites are not publicly identified, in order to protect the integrity and contents of the resources. As with historic properties, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires government agencies to take into account the effects that state- and federally-funded projects may have on archaeological sites. More specific information regarding planning for archaeological sites can be found in the Supporting Documents for this plan.

## EXISTING REGULATIONS

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 was enacted to prevent unnecessary impacts to historic resources by federally funded actions. In the NHPA, Congress established a comprehensive program to preserve historical and cultural foundations as part of community life. Section 106 of NHPA is crucial to that program and requires Federal agencies to consider an action's effects on historic resources and to avoid or minimize impacts. Section 106 also affords the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment on the undertaking. Sometimes there is no way for a needed project to proceed without harming historic properties; however, this process ensures that preservation values are factored into Federal agency planning and decisions.

Municipalities can protect historic resources under the authority of three enabling laws:

1. **The Historic District Act of 1961** (Act 167) authorizes counties, cities, boroughs, incorporated towns and townships to create historic districts within their jurisdiction through use of an ordinance to protect the distinctive historical character of such districts and to regulate redevelopment and new development.

The following municipalities in Allegheny County have adopted Historic Preservation Ordinances under the Historic District Act of 1961:

- Homestead, W. Homestead, and Munhall – multi-municipal ordinance
- Moon Twp
- Sewickley
- Sewickley Borough
- Sewickley Heights

2. **The Municipalities Planning Code** (MPC) gives municipalities the power to plan and govern development within their jurisdiction through the use of zoning and land development ordinances. Neville Township and Mount Oliver have included historic districts in their zoning ordinances.

3. **The Home Rule Charter** – the authority to act in municipal affairs is transferred from state law, as set forth by the General Assembly, to a local charter, adopted and amended by the voters. A county, borough or township choosing home rule can tailor its government organization and powers to suit its special needs. Under the Home Rule Charter, Pittsburgh adopted a historic preservation ordinance in 1979, giving full police powers to the Pittsburgh Historic Review Commission to approve or disapprove work to building exteriors.

## OTHER LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, the region's oldest cultural organization, operates both the Senator John Heinz History Center and Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Museum of Rural Life. With the opening of the History Center's Smithsonian wing in 2004, the Center has become the largest history museum in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The new wing allows the organization to

better realize the opportunities found in its affiliation with the Smithsonian Institution, as well as adding a new Education Center, the Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum, the Special Collections Gallery and the McGuinn Gallery.

Preservation Pittsburgh is a non-profit advocacy group dedicated to preserving our region's historic, architectural, cultural and environmental heritage. Its purpose is to assist individuals and organizations in preserving the integrity of the architecture and physical surroundings they value. The organization's primary goal is to promote the importance of preservation issues in the deliberations and decisions of public officials, private groups, developers and the general public.

Numerous regional and national foundations support preservation efforts in the County. Additionally, many neighborhood and municipal historical groups, such as the Allegheny Historic Preservation Society, promote heritage education and preservation in communities across the County.

## HERITAGE TOURISM

Pennsylvania has a Heritage Areas Program, administered by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), to keep the Commonwealth's historical legacy alive and thriving. The program is guided by five interrelated goals:

- Economic development
- Recreation and open space
- Partnerships
- Education and interpretation
- Cultural conservation

State Heritage Areas are large geographic regions or corridors of the Commonwealth that span two or more counties. These areas contain a multitude of historic, recreational, natural and scenic resources of state and national significance that collectively exemplify the heritage of Pennsylvania. Through regional partnerships and public grassroots planning strategies, these resources are identified, protected, enhanced and promoted to strengthen regional economies through increased tourism, creation of new jobs and stimulation of public and private partnerships for new investment opportunities.

Allegheny County is within a Heritage Area. The Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area identifies, conserves, interprets,



promotes and manages the historic, cultural, natural and recreational resources of steel and its related industries in Southwestern Pennsylvania. Its mission is to use these resources to encourage community revitalization through cultural tourism and related economic development. The Heritage Area encompasses 3,000 square miles in seven counties. Rivers of Steel is working to preserve our region's rich industrial heritage for generations to come by preserving historic buildings, locations and artifacts that help to interpret the story of 'Big Steel'.

## ■ ISSUES AND ANALYSIS

This section examines what can be done to better preserve the rich historic and cultural heritage of Allegheny County.

### KEY CHALLENGES

In developing the Historic and Cultural Resource Plan, the Historic and Cultural Resource Panel helped to identify these key challenges:

- Disinvestment in historic areas
- Threats to historic properties and lack of an up-to-date county-wide historic resource survey
- Loss of African American heritage sites
- Misperceptions regarding rehabilitating historic buildings
- Lack of understanding of the economic value of historic properties and resources

The following provides an understanding of these issues.

### DISINVESTMENT IN HISTORIC AREAS

Across the County, support for economic development in the outer suburbs has led to a declining investment in the core communities. Economic development subsidies from three of the state's major economic programs – the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority, Opportunity Grant Program and Infrastructure Development Program – allocated about \$68 per capita to projects in established municipalities in the region and about \$70 per capita to developments in outer suburban areas, according to the Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy. This high level of financial assistance to outlying

developments contributes to decentralization and represents a lost opportunity to focus resources on revitalizing older communities.

### THREATS TO HISTORIC PROPERTIES AND LACK OF AN UP-TO-DATE COUNTY-WIDE SURVEY

Many historic properties sit neglected in declining urban neighborhoods, subject to vandalism and arson. Windows are broken or boarded up and water damage from leaking roofs leads to structural problems. Nearby buildings crumble and fall, leading to a loss of the property's historic context. In growing areas, rampant suburbanization is leading to the same result – a loss of resources. Historic buildings are being demolished to make way for new development. Even those properties that are being tended to by public or private interests may be suffering from deferred maintenance.

Historic properties or buildings are not the only historically significant assets that are being threatened. Archaeological sites are also extremely important in preserving our history. According to PHMC's document titled *Planning Guidance for Archaeological Sites*, humans first arrived in present day Pennsylvania over 16,000 years ago. There has been a substantial amount of material that humans left behind over this time frame as a record of their existence. Archaeological sites, similar to historic buildings, are considered cultural resources. They are also historic properties if they meet the requirements in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). "...Unlike historic buildings, however, archaeological sites are not always evident to the untrained eye. While some archaeological sites have obvious above ground indicators such as earth mounds, or chimney remnants, most consist of artifacts (objects made or modified by humans such as stone tools, pottery, bottle glass) and features (post holes, trash pits, stone hearths, human burials, etc.) that are underground. There are two types of archaeological sites: prehistoric sites and historic period sites. These different types of sites require different techniques for discovery and treatment."

An up-to-date county-wide inventory of historic and cultural resources is a necessary tool for identifying threats to historic properties and sites. The last county-wide survey was done between 1979 -1984. In 1992, the African American Historic Sites Survey of Allegheny County was completed. Additionally, many municipalities do their own surveys – the ones funded by PHMC are in the state database, but other surveys may not be included. There are many groups working to preserve historic sites and properties throughout

the county, but there needs to be one location in the county where all of this information can be housed.

### LOSS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES

When the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation completed the **African American Historic Sites Survey of Allegheny County (the Survey)** in 1992, many of the sites identified faced a significant threat from neglect, lack of investment, loss of context, incompatible use or a combination of threats. Since that time, little has been done in the way of practical preservation and reuse. Therefore, many of these threats still persist today. For some sites, it's a matter of time before they are demolished.

Many of the neglected sites are within the Hill District of the City of Pittsburgh, the historic heart of the region's African American community. However, sites in Hazelwood, Homewood, Wilksburg and communities outside of Pittsburgh are also at risk.

Many local preservation groups are interested in preserving notable African American heritage sites that have contributed to our rich history:

- The Crawford Grill, which was the center of African American social life where musicians such as Art Blakey, Mary Lou Williams and John Coltrane drew a racially mixed, international clientele.
- Ammons Field, the ballpark of the Pittsburgh Crawfords and the personal playpen of the all-time greatest Negro Leagues Baseball home run hitter, Josh Gibson.
- The childhood home of August Wilson, the Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, who grew up in the Hill District. Of his 10 plays about 20th-century life of African Americans, nine were based in Pittsburgh.

According to University of Pittsburgh history Professor Laurence Glasco, author of "A History of Black Pittsburgh" and a co-author of **the Survey**, African American historic sites in Allegheny County suffer from a "double burden": the sites are often located in isolated neighborhoods in dire need of private investment and they lack a comprehensive plan that incorporates African American historic sites into the neighborhood's redevelopment. Community awareness as to the significance of these sites would assist in their restoration and reuse.

In 1995, Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation published "A Legacy in Bricks and Mortar: African-American Landmarks in Allegheny County", that tells the story of African-Americans in Allegheny County from the mid-1700s to the present day and shows 62 surviving buildings and places where black citizens have lived, studied, played, worked, and worshiped.

### MISPERCEPTIONS REGARDING REHABILITATING HISTORIC BUILDINGS

In recent years, many former industrial buildings have found a new purpose. Finding new uses for old buildings and revitalizing entire districts can provide an economic spark to a community. But one frequently encountered obstacle to adaptive reuse is the misconception that it costs more to bring old buildings up to current codes.

Pittsburgh is a leader in sustainable or 'green' architecture. Rehabilitation is inherently sustainable – thus less expensive. Numerous studies have been conducted across the nation that prove that preservation is environmentally sound as well as economically feasible.

Pennsylvania's Act 45, the Uniform Construction Code of 1999, excludes existing non-residential structures classified as historic by local, State or federal authorities from the new building requirements.

### LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES AND RESOURCES

Preservation is not always a concern to the majority of community members. Preservation activities do not always receive positive press or support from local governments either. If local leaders do not see preservation as a priority, then advocacy groups will have a tough time selling preservation to the community.

For over 40 years, the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation has published PHLF News, a quarterly membership newsletter that is sent to over 4,000 people, including feature articles on current preservation issues and major programs throughout Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. Landmarks has provided leadership assistance to numerous local preservation and civic groups that have been organized to manage the day-to-day business of caring for historic neighborhoods. These include the Manchester Citizens Corporation, the Mexican War Streets Society, South Side



Local Development Corporation, and the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG), among others. The PCRG now includes more than 30 neighborhood groups that work with every major financial institution in Pittsburgh; these banks have committed some \$2.4 billion dollars to inner-city neighborhoods in compliance with federal regulations.

In addition, each year the staff and docents of PHLF introduce more than 10,000 people – teachers, students, adults and visitors – to the architectural heritage of the Pittsburgh region and to the value of historic preservation.

In 2007, Allegheny County launched Allegheny Together, a program that focuses on Main Street revitalization and selected PHLF as the lead consultant. Allegheny Together is discussed in detail in the Economic Development element.

A 2006 report by Preserve America, *Building a Preservation Ethic & Public Appreciation for History*, determined that people do not know what historic preservation is, people do not factor historic lessons into future decisions and people do not feel as connected to a place, which hampers preservation efforts. The report suggests that the combined efforts of educators, historic preservationists, media, all levels of government and local commerce leaders are necessary to instill an appreciation for history and the value of historic preservation into the public consciousness.

## ■ RECOMMENDATIONS

### GOAL OF THE PLAN

The County's unique historic and cultural heritage is preserved, enhanced and celebrated by residents, communities and visitors.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

The objectives of the Historic and Cultural Resource Plan are to:

- A.** Promote and protect the County's historic and cultural resources
- B.** Utilize cultural resources as a tool to stimulate economic development

- C.** Encourage cooperation between historical and cultural organizations throughout the County
- D.** Protect historic landscapes including viewsheds and corridors

The following provides an understanding of the objectives.

#### **A. Promote and Protect the County's Historic and Cultural Resources**

Many of the County's historic resources are neglected and deteriorating. Because outright acquisition is not always viable, practical or reasonable; and funding is limited, other methods for protecting historic resources from development are used.

Property owners can permanently protect their properties through easements, typically façade, development rights, or open-space easements. Organizations like the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, the Allegheny Land Trust, and the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation accept these easements. There are significant economic tax incentives for property owners. Additionally, municipalities can enact local ordinances to protect cultural, historic and landscape resources. This can be undertaken through Act 167, The Historic District Act and the Municipalities Planning Code.

***Even as we seek our future, we continue to honor our past.***

The preservation of historic and cultural resources is a foundation for our future economic prosperity and livability. *Allegheny Places* seeks to direct investment to selected locations in order to protect, preserve and enhance these valuable resources. Development and redevelopment anywhere in the County should be done in a manner that respects the existing character of a community.

#### **Identify Historic Resources**

New information about our past is always being discovered. As information becomes available it can help us to better understand the remnants of the

past. While Allegheny County currently has over 200 sites listed on – and nearly 500 properties determined eligible for – the National Register of Historic Places, many more significant sites are known to exist in the County. So too, many structures may have achieved their significance within the last 50 years and so can be newly evaluated for the Register.

In order to preserve historic resources, they must first be identified and then strategies can be developed for their protection. This can be accomplished countywide by establishing a voluntary Historic Resource Committee. The committee would be comprised of County staff (at least one planning division employee), local preservation organizations (with perhaps the Young Preservationists Association of Pittsburgh playing a key role), Council of Government (COG) representatives and several municipal planning commission representatives. The Historic and Cultural Resource Panel that was established for *Allegheny Places* can be used as a beginning source for committee members.

The Historic Resource Committee can be tasked with conducting a comprehensive county survey of historic sites and creating one database for all County historic resources. This comprehensive survey should include the following steps:

1. Investigate all historic and cultural surveys being done by municipalities, organizations, universities, etc. within Allegheny County to develop a master database
2. Compare this master database with the PHMC's database
3. Update the county-wide historic survey that was completed from 1979 to 1984 using current PHMC criteria
4. Provide the results to the general public and encourage all historic and cultural organizations to use it as a basis for their work as well as to provide updates

The Committee can also identify additional resources that are not currently listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, and inform property owners on the benefits of inclusion on the

National Register. The Committee could work with PHMC to include these resources on the National Register. The Committee could also be responsible for promoting the Historic and Cultural Resources Plan and ensuring that its implementation is moving forward.

The designation of Historic Districts can be an important preservation tool for municipalities. There are three forms of state enabling legislation that empower local governments to establish historic districts – they include the Historic District Act, the Municipalities Planning Code, and Home Rule Charters. A guidebook to determine which is best suited for a municipality can be found in the Supporting Documents – *Historic District Designation in Pennsylvania*. There are two model Historic Overlay Districts available to municipalities – one developed for use with the Historic District Act by PHMC, and one developed for the MPC by Allegheny County. Both are available on the elibrary at [www.alleghenyplaces.com](http://www.alleghenyplaces.com).

### Preserve Minority Heritage

Minority history is very important to the development of Allegheny County and these resources need to be preserved so future generations can learn about and experience this heritage. Support is needed for local preservation organizations like the Young Preservationist Association of Pittsburgh to protect significant sites from neglect and demolition as well as identify additional sites that may be in danger.

***The rehabilitation of historic minority properties can be the centerpiece of revitalization efforts in disadvantaged neighborhoods.***

### Promotion and Education

Preserving our heritage is important to the region's economic well-being and identity. An important step to protecting these resources is increasing public awareness so residents join in and support preservation efforts. A news campaign promoting the county's historic resources in addition to brochures, additional historic tour opportunities and the county website would be helpful to spread the word about the importance of these preservation efforts.



This campaign could be one of the tasks undertaken by the Historic Resources Committee discussed earlier. There are a number of other local preservation groups operating in the County that can assist with this as well, some of which are listed below:

- **Allegheny City Society** (<http://youngpreservationists.org/resources.php?a=go&id=11>)  
Preserves, promotes and interprets the history of Allegheny City and Pittsburgh's North Side.
- **Crafton Historical Society** (<http://youngpreservationists.org/resources.php?a=go&id=13>)  
Established to collect and preserve properties that relate to the history of Crafton, conduct research, and act as a collective voice in the community on matters relating to the historic integrity of Crafton's buildings, residences, streets and parks.
- **Green Tree Historical Society** (<http://youngpreservationists.org/resources.php?a=go&id=15>)  
Organized in September 1985 as a direct result of Green Tree's Centennial, the group maintains cataloged archives, distribute newsletters, and displays artifacts at the library and in the historical society office.
- **Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation** (<http://www.phlf.org>)  
Founded in 1964 to bring awareness to the importance of architectural landmarks and historic neighborhoods and the value of historic preservation as a catalyst for urban renewal.

Each year the staff and docents of Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation introduce more than 10,000 people — teachers, students, adults and visitors — to the architectural heritage of the Pittsburgh region and to the value of historic preservation.

Through student/teacher workshops, tours, exhibits and a variety of educational programs, Landmarks encourages people to notice and appreciate historic buildings, parks, public spaces, bridges, streets, etc. that make up the city and its neighborhoods and compose the special character of the Pittsburgh region. By exploring and discovering something

about local history and architecture, people are more likely to preserve old buildings and thoughtfully consider the impact of new building proposals.

- **Squirrel Hill Historical Society**  
An organization committed to gathering, preserving, and celebrating the historical memories of the Squirrel Hill neighborhood.
- **Young Preservationists Association (YPA) of Pittsburgh** (<http://www.youngpreservationists.org>)  
An advocacy organization created to encourage young people to become involved with preservation activities. YPA offers events and training, just to name a few, to help educate the next generation of the importance of historic preservation as an economic development tool and to promote regional revitalization. YPA also has compiled a list of Resources for Historic Preservation programs and funding sources. The full list can be found in the Supporting Documents for this element.
- **Zelienople Historical Society** (<http://youngpreservationists.org/resources.php?a=go&id=21>)  
Offers a unique collection of genealogical resources which include family records and documents; church and cemetery records; municipal records; census lists; historical publications; and an advanced computer system linking nearly 30,000 descendants of the Zelienople area's early settlers. The Zelienople Historical Society maintains a museum in Passavant House.

Currently, Allegheny County (through the Allegheny Together Staff) is interested in applying to become a Preserve America Community. This would greatly help to provide education at both the community and governing body levels on the importance of Historic and Cultural Resources with the county. In addition, this could help the County to work with municipalities to establish historic districts and appoint Historic and Architectural Review Boards.

More information on the program can be found at [www.preserveamerica.com](http://www.preserveamerica.com). The general criteria for the program are:

- Recently supported a historic or cultural preservation project

- Governing body adopt a resolution indicating the commitment to preserving historical assets
- Meet at least five criteria specified within three broad categories of: Discovering heritage through historic places, protecting historic resources, and promoting historic assets

## B. Utilize Cultural Resources as a Tool to Stimulate Economic Development

Future economic development in the County should take place within the context of historic preservation. This can be done through the rebuilding of traditional commercial districts based on their unique assets (distinctive architecture, pedestrian-friendly environment, personal service, local ownership and a sense of community) and through the preservation and development of historical attractions and destinations throughout the County.

***Studies have shown that property values increase more in designated historic areas than in non-historic areas.***

There are many incentives for protecting historic resources, including increased property values. Additionally, reuse of existing historic buildings supports the existing tax base, stabilizes downtowns and neighborhoods, and maintains the fabric and scale of communities.

### Promote Adaptive Reuse

We encourage developers and property owners to rehabilitate and reuse historic structures whenever possible, especially within historic districts and downtown areas. Any income-producing National Register listed properties should consider participating in the Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit (RITC) program. The RITC program provides tax credits to individuals that rehabilitate buildings to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*. The buildings must be income-producing and either individually listed in the National Register or within a historic district. Additionally, certain rehabilitation expenses are eligible for this credit.

The county can also receive funding from the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP). The Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) funds up to 50% of civic construction and rehabilitation projects through State legislation as a set-aside from the State Capital Budget. The County serves as the applicant and the administrator of the project. This is a reimbursement program, so the funding has to be available up front.

Another way to encourage reuse of old buildings is through Preservation Pennsylvania's revolving fund, which is a part loan/part grant program. Preservation Pennsylvania also has low-interest loans available for the restoration or rehabilitation of specific historic properties.

Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation's subsidiary, Landmarks Community Capital Corporation, is a nonprofit corporation that draws upon its extensive knowledge, experience, partner competency and determination to serve as a major catalytic force in revitalizing distressed communities within its target market.

LCCC's Revolving Loan Fund offers two types of loans, the Urban Economic Loan and the Preservation Loan. They both provide equity, debt, and short and intermediate term financing to 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations and community development corporations for housing, preservation and economic development activities. LCCC offers below market interest rates on its loans, which permits flexibility in the financial structuring of loan requests to allow greater cash flow sufficient to complete developments. It may also consider loans to for-profit organizations at market interest rates.

LCCC also offers an array of financial services to assist nonprofit and for-profit organizations with real estate development projects. These services include, but are not limited to, historic and low-income housing tax credit consulting, technical assistance on a variety of building issues, market research, feasibility studies for municipalities, private agencies and preservation easements.

In addition to its products and services, LCCC has the capacity to engage in real estate development and has the capital and experience to act as a developer or co-developer. By pursuing high impact development



projects, LCCC's goal is to spur additional private investment that will result in comprehensive neighborhood revitalization.

LCCC also facilitates public policy initiatives and research. It has formed the first regional Minority Research Policy Group, which is composed solely of minorities who each hold doctoral level degrees. The Minority Research Policy Group focuses on unique public policy issues that impact the communities in LCCC's target market and will publish White Papers from the research conducted to help effectuate public policy change regionally and nationally.

Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation began its loan activities in 1984. Through its three funds, the Preservation Loan Fund, the Eighth Avenue Loan Fund and Landmarks Community Capital Corporation's Urban Economic Loan Fund, more than \$7,967,305.00 has been loaned to date, which has significantly contributed to the region's historic preservation and community revitalization efforts.

### Promote Heritage Tourism

Heritage tourism is important to Pennsylvania and Allegheny County. According to the Pennsylvania Heritage Tourism Study, visitors whose primary purpose for travel to Pennsylvania in 1997 was heritage tourism accounted for:

- 12 % of all state leisure travel
- \$2.99 billion in direct tourism spending

The 1999 study was published by the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Through its work, Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation is improving the quality of life for Pittsburghers and attracting tourists to the region. Today, homes in neighborhoods such as Manchester, stores on main streets such as East Carson, and the historic buildings housing shops and restaurants at Station Square survive and flourish and attract people by their architectural uniqueness, human scale and urban feel. Over 6,000 people take part in Pittsburgh History & Landmarks tours and over 3,500,000 people annually visit Station Square, Pittsburgh's premier historic tourist destination.

***Historic preservation is a powerful tool for economic revitalization that attracts tourists and investors and generates jobs.***

Lancaster County has developed a tourism program focusing on its heritage through funding received from the Pennsylvania Heritage Tourism Initiative. Through this funding, Lancaster County has developed a very good model for promoting heritage tourism in a county. The Historic Resource Committee can review this program to determine any applicability for Allegheny County. An example of heritage tourism is the Joliet Iron Works Historic Site in Joliet, IL which features a 1 mile interpretive trail of exhibits explaining the iron making process and the men who worked there (<http://www.fpdwc.org/ironworks.cfm>). Using interpretive signing similar to what was done in Joliet to explain the history of the site would be an excellent addition to the work being done by the Rivers of Steel explained below.

The work of the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area is coordinated by the nonprofit Steel Industry Heritage Corporation. This organization has been lobbying Congress in recent years to create Homestead Works National Park. Legislation currently in the House of Representatives would establish the Steel Heritage National Historic Site at the former U.S. Steel Homestead Works. Specific aspects would include the location of the Battle of the Homestead, the Carrie Furnace Complex (which was the top historic preservation priority in Allegheny County from the Young Preservationists Association's 2004 initiative) and the Hot Metal Bridge. The legislation recognizes that these sites and structures are nationally significant historic resources that symbolize in physical form the heritage of the steel industry of the United States. The bill, which has yet to be enacted, also acknowledges that these buildings and other structures may be lost without the assistance of the Federal Government. The County will continue to support the efforts of the Steel Industry Heritage Corporation.

### C. Encourage Cooperation Between Historical and Cultural Organizations Throughout the County

There are many organizations currently working to preserve historic and cultural resources in Allegheny

County. Each has forged a specific role for themselves. Undoubtedly, all will acknowledge that more can and must be done to protect sites important to our heritage. These organizations will have a sustaining and, in some cases perhaps, an expanded role in implementing the Historic and Cultural Resource Plan.

The County's role in historic preservation has been small compared to many of these organizations. One role that the County can assume is that of facilitator, developing partnerships between agencies, institutions, foundations and municipalities. That's the role expected of the proposed Historic Resource Committee.

Public planning efforts that manage historic or cultural resources need to attract private funding to accomplish preservation. In fact, most historical projects are realized through public/private partnerships. The partnerships of the preservation community will be vital in the coming years.

#### **D. Protect Historic Landscapes including Viewsheds and Corridors**

The preservation of farmland can protect historic structures and the adjacent landscapes. Thus the Historic and Cultural Resource Plan shares an objective with the Agricultural Resource Plan. The Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation's Historic Rural Preservation Program can be used to preserve farms.

Pennsylvania's Heritage Parks Program can also help to protect landscape resources. This program is geared toward industrial heritage, which is well suited to Allegheny County's history and development. The Historic Resource Committee can work with DCNR, other State agencies and adjacent counties to identify possible new Heritage Areas and secure funding for their protection through this DCNR program.

Preservation of the aesthetic character of the landscape should be the primary focus along scenic byways. Designating such routes would support heritage tourism by connecting sites together and encouraging exploration of new areas.

The National Scenic Byways Program is administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. The program is a grass-roots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the country. Since 1992, the National Scenic Byways Program has provided funding for almost 1,500 state- and nationally-designated byway projects in 48 states. The U.S. Secretary of Transportation recognizes certain roads as All-American Roads or National Scenic Byways based on one or more archaeological, cultural, historical, natural, recreational and scenic qualities.

Scenic routes would be linear resources that would require effective management in order to preserve what is unique. Any improvement – whether roadway or new development – within these corridors should be sensitive to the context of the area, that is, the rural landscape, scenic viewshed or village character.

The Historic Resource Committee can explore the possibility of developing a countywide Scenic Roads Program.

