



NEW BETHLEHEM-A TRAIL TOWN

Created by:

McCollom Development Strategies

December 15, 2010

Trail Towns

Economic development and community
revitalization programs
linking communities, tourism and conservation

- These programs can provide a rallying point for economic recovery efforts in small communities based on a growing interest in outdoor recreational activities.
- Born of the recognition that outdoor recreational activities were already having an effect on the economies of nearby communities.







Program Focus

- Facilitate regional approaches to hospitality, marketing, and economic development
- Engage the community in an outdoor recreational economy and visitor attraction strategy
- Expand and increase revenues of existing businesses
- Attract sustainable, new businesses
- Involve the community in sustaining and conserving resources.

Criteria to consider in the Towns

- Available services
- Available outdoor recreational resources within a reasonable distance
- Potential for growth in business sector
- Willingness of the community to engage
- Program leadership

















The First Steps

- Research the community to better understand its culture and heritage
- Inventory existing community groups
- Find a community leader/organization- the catalyst (often a trail/river user)
- Visit the community with the catalyst and attend community meetings or events

Next

- Host a community- wide meeting to engage business and government; present to municipal leadership
- Provide information that demonstrates the value of the trail user market
- Create a Trail Town Task Force of civic, municipal and business leaders
- Manage expectations
- Meet and communicate regularly

Conduct a Community-wide Needs Assessment

- Develop a work plan based on needs
- Prioritize capital projects
- Direct planning and early implementation projects
- Involve and further engage community

- Emphasize potential economic impact
- Develop baseline information to track progress
- Deploy Technical Assistance when needed

The Great Allegheny Passage Trail Towns, 2008

- Over \$40 million in economic impact in the 2008 season –April - November (Campos Market Research study)
- Plus another \$7.26 million in wages in trail-related businesses in the same period

Economic Impact of Trails

- Pine Creek Trail, 2006 \$3.6 million
- Schuylkill River Trail, 2009 \$3.6 million
- Oil Heritage Regional Trail System, 2006 \$4.3 million
- Torrey C. Brown Trail, Md., 2005 \$5.2 million

Implementing Projects: Connect Trail to Town

- Consistent, clear signage offering directions to and from town
- Design and install a business directory kiosk with map to direct visitors from trail to town
- Consider a print piece that supplements the kiosk information and contains the town map and available services



Laurel Highlands



Bike Trail

3

Rockwood

Bike Trail



Confluence

15

Area
Attractions

Welcome To
Meyersdale

Maple City
Loft
150 Center St.
Call 814-289-1447

Sechler
Fashions
634-8151
205 Center Street

G.I.
Day Room
634-8624
309 Main Street

Little Town
Toys
Opening Nov. 15th

Main Street
Inn
634-8226
322 Main Street

Albright's
Pizza
320 Main Street

Missy's
Cafe
634-8366
336 Grant Street

Pit Stop
Kremery
346 Main Street
634-8160

Meyersdale
Trail Hostel
Near Rt.
Call 814-634-9478

Story Book
Castle
634-8920

218
Java Cafe
218 Center Street

Thomas
Drug Store
327 Main Street

Donges
Diner & Motel
110 Center Street

Take
Six
634-9294
302 Grant Street

Fox's
Pizza
634-7029
25 Center Street

Levi Deal
Mansion
A Restoration Project



Community Business Directory



Attract new businesses to fill service gaps and expand new businesses



Attract new businesses to fill service gaps and expand new businesses



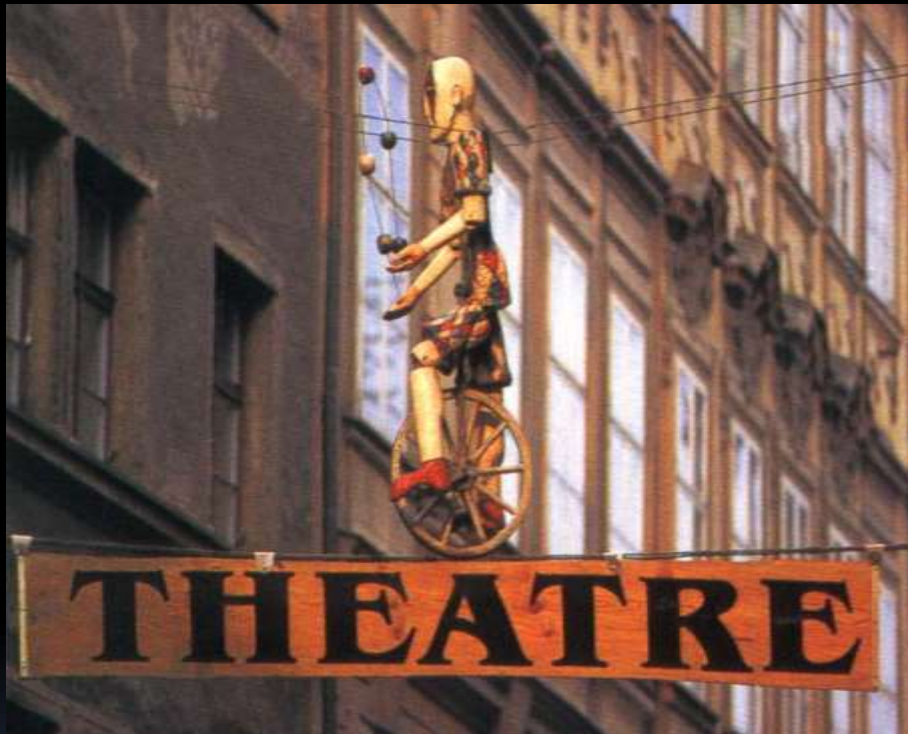
OTHER AMENITIES TO CONSIDER



Shipping Services for larger purchases



Plenty of outdoor seating



Unique and whimsical storefronts

Town to Participate



Attractive sidewalks for the visitor as well as residents



Safe and well marked crossings

create special places





Embrace your distinctive heritage



Celebrate your historic buildings



Open attractive public spaces



Create inviting streets



Longer Term Strategies: Business Attraction

Objectives:

- Market buildings and businesses that are available- sale or lease
- Reduce vacant and underutilized buildings
- Enhance business mix
- Engage real estate community
- Facilitate business expansions

Business Attraction Strategy

Tactics:

- Determine service gaps and target business clusters
- Concentrated technical assistance team
- Use central web platform to list available properties
- Market available properties-national real estate web site, posters, open houses and tours







STOP

EXCEPT
RIGHT
TURN

TOWN PARK



Morgan's Edge Cafe





Celebrate the Successes: Trail Towns along the Great Allegheny Passage

- 55 new or expanded businesses, 227 new jobs
- Master planning in three communities
- Trail access area improvements in nine communities
- Regional communication and advocacy

Trail Towns along the Great Allegheny Passage

- Over \$1 Million raised for community programs
- Regional attention to trail-wide issues
- Creation of a trail-wide signage program
- Dedicated loan program of \$1,000,000

Canal Towns along the C & O Canal Towpath

- Regional initiative now involving seven communities in Maryland and West Virginia
- Needs assessed in all towns and priorities developed
- Trail access area improvements including signage underway
- Regional communication through monthly meetings
- Over \$100,000 raised for projects
- Regional attention to trail-wide issues

Sustaining the Resource: A closed loop system

- Eco-tourism grows businesses; growing businesses make communities stronger
- Aggressive marketing and regular maintenance of the resource is essential to attracting outdoor recreational users.
- Engaged and informed communities will support the long term sustainability of the resource, whether it is trail, river or canal.

Conclusions

- Outdoor recreational users spend millions of dollars and the market is growing
- The longer a visitor stays, the more money spent in communities.
- Visitors are attracted by welcoming, authentic towns
- More services and attractions means more visitors
- End result: Lively, engaged, revitalized communities invested in sustaining and protecting the natural environment.

