

# **VISION**TEAMS

*Imagining Allegheny County's Tomorrow*

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# Executive Summary

The Parks, Recreation & Trails Vision Team espoused the belief that the county's abundance of parks, trails and riverfronts is an important component of the region's economic development while simultaneously acting as a mechanism to preserve the integrity of the environment. Furthermore, the team recognized that the County's park system is a major component of the regional value proposition will enhance the region's ability to promote itself as "green" which gives it a strategic and competitive edge in the race to recruit companies, families, individuals, and students to move here.

Using these fundamental beliefs as a point of departure, the team recommends the following:

- **Adopt a Comprehensive Vision of a world-class system of interconnected parks and trails, including a Countywide Riverfront Park, serving residents and visitors throughout Allegheny County**
  - Define our park system not just our traditional county parks, but also our significant trail system and our efforts to develop lengths of linear park along our riverfronts.
  - Include Development of a Countywide Riverfront Park, as contemplated by County Ordinance (No. 52-07-OR) enacted into law in 2006 in the comprehensive vision.
  - Define the system as uninterrupted trails and linear parks running, to the greatest extent possible, with bridge connections and amenities along the way.
  - Endorse the vision of a comprehensive network of trails that, to the greatest extent possible, connect to existing trails, communities, traditional county parks and the riverfronts.
  - View the park system as a substantial competitive advantage for the Pittsburgh region in attracting new business and new residents and boosting recreational tourism.
- **Develop a Unified and Accountable Management Structure, Including Moving Parks Maintenance Crews from the Department of Public Works to a newly-reconstituted Department of Parks and Recreation**
  - Embrace "best practices" in park management which contains all functions directly related to parks management and maintenance.
  - Provide accountability and permit strategic deployment of resources via a unified management structure.
- **Immediately Establish a Woodland Management Program**
  - Commit resources and acquire professional assistance to manage the 9,000 acres of woodlands.
  - Recognize park trees reap environmental and economic benefits.
- **Maximize Revenue from Park Operations and Protect the Dedicated Allegheny Regional Asset District (ARAD) Funding Designated for the County Parks**
  - Establish a county park cost accounting and budgeting system.
  - Revise and modernize policies regulating annual fees and charges for park facilities, programs and services.

- Develop and administer a year-round marketing and public relations plan.
- Review current operations to determine additional sources of revenue.
- Preserve and increase dedicated ARAD funding.
- **Promote a Focus on the “User Experience” including a Coordinated Universal Navigation/Information System**
  - Give primary focus to developing a coordinated universal signage and online/mobile guidance system.
  - Convene a stakeholder group to develop and implement a coordinated system with universal appeal.
- **Implement Development of Countywide Riverfront Park and Connectors**
  - Create a “Trail Ombudsman” within the Unified Park Structure.
  - Develop a List of Priorities and Opportunities for Property Acquisition for the Enhancement of Existing Parks and for Development of Linear Parks, Trails and Related Amenities.
  - Negotiate with Railroads and other Riverfront Property Owners to Acquire Property Interests consistent with Development of a Comprehensive Network of Trails and a Countywide Riverfront Park.
  - Develop Trails and Linear Parks, and Prioritize Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements, as Part of Transportation Initiatives.
  - Encourage Municipalities with Riverfronts to Adopt Local Zoning Regulations to Protect and Restore Riverfronts and to Facilitate Development of Riverfront Linear Parks, Trails and Amenities.
- **Propose a Referendum to Add to Dedicated Funding for Parks and Trails**

## *Vision Team Charge*

The Parks, Recreation & Trails Vision Team is charged with reviewing the current efforts to address these portions of the county's quality of life experience, to identify coordination of efforts and to make recommendations as to how that coordination can be improved and a process put forth to integrate and collaborate on these efforts as much as possible in order to further the county's overall development

Each vision team, within its charge and conversation, is expected to address sustainability, intergovernmental relations (recognizing existing relationships and identifying potential new ones) and diversity/inclusion. Each of these items should be folded into the recommendations and report made by the team. Additionally, for each recommendation that is made, the scope must be within one of three fields for which the county has a role: the county performs, or should perform, an administrative function related to the recommendation; the recommendation pertains to a financial interest or financial support of the county; and, the recommendation lends itself to advocacy by the county. Those recommendations that do not fit within one of those three fields should not be a focus of the vision team.

# Findings & Recommendations

## **Recommendation # 1(a): Comprehensive Vision**

The Allegheny County Vision Team for Parks, Recreation and Trails endorses the vision of a comprehensive world-class system of interconnected parks and trails, including a Countywide Riverfront Park, serving residents and visitors throughout Allegheny County. Thus, our park system should be defined as not just our traditional county parks, but also our significant trail system and our efforts to develop lengths of linear park along our riverfronts.

## **Recommendation # 1(b): The Vision Should Include Development of a Countywide Riverfront Park, as contemplated by County Ordinance enacted into law in 2006 (County Ordinance No. 52-07-OR attached)**

The Team endorses the vision of a Countywide Riverfront Park, defined as uninterrupted trails and linear parks running, to the greatest extent possible, along one side or the other of every major river in the County – the Allegheny, the Monongahela, the Youghiogheny and the Ohio – with bridge connections and amenities along the way. The Team also endorses the vision of a comprehensive network of trails that, to the greatest extent possible, connect to existing trails, communities, traditional county parks and the riverfronts. When combined with the many wonderful traditional parks in the region, this system would be a substantial competitive advantage for the Pittsburgh region in attracting new business and new residents and boosting recreational tourism.

## **Recommendation # 2: Develop a Unified and Accountable Management Structure, Including Moving Parks Maintenance Crews from the Department of Public Works to a newly-reconstituted Department of Parks and Recreation**

The Vision Team endorses a management recommendation made in earlier studies, namely:

*Allegheny County should adopt an integrated management structure to manage, restore, maintain, budget and operate the system.*

A full ten years have passed since this recommendation was first made to the County. A management study completed in 2005 by Wallace, Roberts & Todd, reminded readers that:

*The 2002 Allegheny County Parks Comprehensive Master Plan...recommended numerous changes to help the park system achieve its full potential. Establishment of a new organizational structure to enable a greater focus on the success of the park system was identified as the highest priority recommendation.*

The current occupants of the positions of Allegheny County Director of Parks and Recreation and Allegheny County Director of Public Works, who share responsibility for current operation of the existing county park system, attended the Vision Team meeting on April 25, 2012. It was evident that these individuals enjoy excellent communication and work as cooperatively as possible in a “partnership” mode to further the interests of the county park system. Nonetheless, as stated in the 2005 Wallace, Roberts & Todd Report, “Park and recreation functions are not wholly integrated within the new department, with Public Works retaining responsibility for parks maintenance and purchasing”. The “best practices” in park management would be for the Parks & Recreation Department to contain all functions directly related to parks management and

maintenance. Thus, for example, the park maintenance work crews should be transferred from the Department of Public Works to the Parks Department and supervised by the Parks Department on an ongoing basis.

A unified management structure would provide accountability and permit strategic deployment of resources.

**Management Objectives Should Be To:**

1. Restore and develop the physical and ecological infrastructure of the entire park system.
2. Implement programs that provide a range of activities for people of all ages and interests and that encourage the development of future generations of park and trail stewards.
3. Preserve, interpret and disseminate the history of the parks, respecting the historic character and design of the parks and the social and ecological history of the parks and the region.
4. Upgrade park operations, including enhancement of security, through the development of a park ranger corps.
5. Develop and execute a marketing plan. Advertise and promote to the general public, particularly Allegheny County residents, the entire park system as a unified, comprehensive system, including its traditional parks, trails, linear parks and associated amenities.
6. Determine a prioritized list of capital projects and improvements needed to reach stated objectives, including access agreements and/or acquisition needed for trail gaps.
7. Establish a level of sustainable and consistent financial and volunteer support for park and trail operations, development and restoration.

***Recommendation # 3: Immediately Establish a Woodland Management Program***

The nine existing County parks currently contain 12,000 acres of parkland – approximately 75% (9,000 acres) of which is woodlands—yet there are not significant resources currently going into woodland management presently, for example, there is no forester, no certified arborist, no tree crew and essentially no Woodland Management Program whatsoever. During the Vision Team Process we learned that about 10-20 acres of South Park is infected with oak wilt, a contagious disease. Without professional assistance, diseases such as oak wilt will spread and woodlands will suffer.

Park trees provide important environmental and economic benefits. In addition to reducing air temperature and absorbing solar radiation and providing bird habitat, they help to keep storm water out of the sewer system, saving the expense of treatment. They also stabilize hillsides, preventing landslides that can close roads and undermine park ecology.

***Recommendation # 4: Maximize Revenue from Park Operations and Protect the Dedicated ARAD Funding Designated for the County Parks***

**A. Maximizing Revenue**

The 2007 Study of Allegheny Parks by the American Leisure Institute contains detailed recommendations for maximizing revenue from park operations through the creation and staffing of a marketing and revenue development unit within the parks department to function under the overall leadership of the Parks Director.

The Vision Team urges that these recommendations from the 2007 study be implemented as follows:

1. Establish a county park cost accounting system as a first step.
2. Revise and modernize policies regulating annual fees and charges for park facilities, programs and services, to reflect both the market value and the cost of providing the facility/program. Update the fee and charge schedule every 3-5 years.
3. Develop and administer a year-round marketing and public relations plan.
4. Review golf course operations to determine if contracting for management services is an option for enhancing revenues.
5. Analyze the potential of constructing cabins in North and South Parks for overnight camping as a revenue generator.
6. Analyze the potential for increasing revenue from shelter rental by enabling park users to complete and pay for shelter rentals online.
7. Analyze the potential for increasing usage of and revenues from parks through development and rental of spaces for recreational vehicles (RV's).

**B. Protecting Revenue**

An additional concern of Vision Team members is the apparent erosion of the dedicated ARAD funding for the Allegheny County Parks. Although the total funding supplied by ARAD has actually increased in the last three years, the portion of the funding designated for "indirect costs, debt service and police" has increased by over 40% in the last three years, leaving less and less for direct services.

Trail groups in Allegheny County currently participate in a joint application prepared by the Allegheny Land Trust (ALT) to the ARAD for funding to complete the riverfront trail system including both land and water trails. The ALT application has been consistently funded; however, funding for this application is not secure and does fluctuate from year to year. This funding is very important for property acquisition and development of the riverfront trail system and provides non-profits and municipalities with valuable match to state and federal grant applications. It should be preserved and increased as much as possible in future years.

***Recommendation # 5: Promote a Focus on the “User Experience” including a Coordinated Universal Navigation/Information System***

Considerable focus should be placed on strengthening the “User Experience” of those enjoying trails, linear parks, existing county, municipal, and state parks. The Vision Team urges the County Executive to focus on this user experience to promote park system unification that appears seamless to parks users. The first, key element of the strategy should be coordinated universal signage and online/mobile guidance system. Realizing that different parks of the envisioned unified park and trail system are under different municipal managements and that some even belong to disparate trail system hierarchies, team members nonetheless felt that agreement could and should be reached quickly on coordination of signage and other navigation standards so that all future efforts could further this goal.

The Team suggests that the County Executive convene a group of local officials and park groups to discuss, with the goal of reconciling differences and developing and implementing a coordinated system with universal appeal.

***Recommendation#6(a-e): Implement Development of Countywide Riverfront Park and Connectors***

*Recommendations 6 (a-e) are specific recommendations that will bolster the effort to create the Countywide Riverfront Park. These are tools that are drawn from the experiences of Allegheny County, non-profits and local municipalities who are actively working toward this goal.*

***Recommendation # 6(a): Create a “Trail Ombudsman” within the Unified Park Structure***

The County Executive provides leadership related to the development of Allegheny County’s riverfront trail system. Allegheny County is currently partnering with several non-profit groups and with municipalities to add ever-increasing mileage to the riverfront trail system. Team members conveyed the information that 100% of the County riverfronts had been studied and that some percentage of the trail system has been completed (*See Appendix A*). Many of the areas where trails have been constructed could be widened and developed into linear parks that would include standard design features and multiple opportunities to enhance the user experience for walkers, bikers, hikers, joggers, inline skaters and commuters.

Those currently working on completing the riverfront trail system would welcome additional assistance from Allegheny County. A Trail Ombudsman within the unified Parks & Recreation Department could provide the crucially important function of serving as a central repository of all the myriad legal agreements concerning trail segments. The Trail Ombudsman, perhaps in conjunction with a non-profit partner, should maintain a GIS based map of all existing and prospective trail sections, noting who owns relevant parcels, the nature of the ownership interests (e.g., easement or ownership in fee), maintenance requirements and responsibilities, and an estimate of maintenance costs and/or acquisition costs. A Trail Ombudsman also could provide a centralized knowledge base and support for additional land acquisitions, such as furnishing model agreements. It also is necessary for Allegheny County to continue to have robust Land Bank funding available as a revolving fund for emergency land acquisition. The Trail Ombudsman could also encourage usage of the coordinated universal navigation system by providing funding for appropriate signage as a “carrot” to any newly completed trail segments.

One very important tool that is available to Allegheny County is the development of public private partnerships with non-profit organizations and local municipalities related to trail development and maintenance. The Trail Ombudsman could also propose and institutionalize these agreements thereby strengthening partnerships

between local non-profits and municipalities and the county to grow and strengthen our riverfront trail system. This system would reduce the County's maintenance responsibilities, allowing the County to use its limited resources to promote completion of the trail system, to serve a central coordinating and support function, and to centralize information.

***Recommendation # 6(b): Develop a List of Priorities and Opportunities for Property Acquisition for the Enhancement of Existing Parks and for Development of Linear Parks, Trails and Related Amenities***

Since the county acquired the property for Boyce Park and Settlers Cabin Park over 50 years ago, there have been few major property acquisitions to enhance our existing parks. More recently, Allegheny County has participated in key acquisitions along the Monongahela River as part of completion of the Great Allegheny Passage and key properties along the Allegheny River were acquired as part of completion of the trail connection to Armstrong County, but there is still a substantial amount of property that is needed to complete a continuous system. Although significant opportunities continue to present themselves for acquisition of properties to enhance our park system, significant segments of riverfront property are under-utilized or could be enhanced by being included, in whole or in part, as part of the Countywide Riverfront Park. Certain properties adjacent to our parks and along pathways could be acquired for development of trails or linear parks. These opportunities should be listed and prioritized so that the appropriate party (county, local municipality, non-profit partner) is in a position to acquire property or property interests when the opportunity presents itself.

***Recommendation # 6 (c): Negotiate with Railroads and other Riverfront Property Owners to Acquire Property Interests consistent with Development of a Comprehensive Network of Trails and a Countywide Riverfront Park***

The Vision Team recognizes a need to bring together resources from our political, business and non-profit communities to negotiate with those entities, mainly railroads, that own large swaths of property, parts of which could be used to complete the vision of a comprehensive network of trails and linear parks into the Countywide Riverfront Park. When negotiations with railroads are contemplated, the personal intervention of the Allegheny County Executive is a necessary prerequisite for success. The additional corporate support which the County Executive can enlist will further enhance the chances for success.

***Recommendation #6(d): Develop Trails and Linear Parks, and Prioritize Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements, as Part of Transportation Initiatives***

*The Vision Team recommends that Allegheny County take a leadership role in developing linear parks – including trail, bike and pedestrian improvements – as part of new transportation initiatives that are undertaken in the county. Whether it is the reconstruction of major roadways, rehabilitation of a bridge or underpass improvements, these are all projects that are connectors between communities. Often these transportation projects occur along or near planned trail corridors. The Route 28 project is a good example. With some advance planning and partnership with local municipalities and non-profits, partners were able to work with PennDOT to construct a trail connection between the City of Pittsburgh and Millvale Borough. Without this construction as part of the Route 28 reconstruction, this opportunity would have been lost.*

*Identifying transportation projects and opportunities requires collaboration with other agencies like PennDOT, and require the strong support of local municipalities to make sure that the inclusion of bike and pedestrian improvements is a priority for development in project budgets. The Team recommends that Allegheny County*

*take the lead in identifying these opportunities and bringing partners together to incorporate the goals of completing the riverfront trail system.*

***Recommendation #6(e): Encourage Municipalities with Riverfronts to Adopt Local Zoning Regulations to Protect and Restore Riverfronts and to Facilitate Development of Riverfront Linear Parks, Trails and Amenities***

Municipal zoning can be an effective way to promote a comprehensive network of riverfront parks, trails and amenities. Draft ordinances presently exist which seek to protect, preserve and/or restore area along our riverfronts and set backs for the development of riverfront parks, trails and amenities consistent with the vision of a Countywide Riverfront Park. The County should incentivize or otherwise encourage widespread adoption of such ordinances.

***Recommendation # 7: Propose a Referendum to Add to Dedicated Funding for Parks and Trails***

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh was recently successful in passing a binding referendum to add 0.25 mills to real estate taxes in the city with the proceeds going to support maintenance and operations of the Library. Allegheny County should propose a similar referendum to assist efforts to acquire and maintain properties to benefit parks, trails, bikeways, and the development of a Countywide Riverfront Park. Park resources, like libraries, are critical components of a region's vitality and economic viability.

# Members

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# References

### **LIST OF VALUABLE PAST STUDIES:**

- 1989 – The Plan for the Pittsburgh Riverfronts – prepared by Environmental Planning and Design for City of Pittsburgh Department of Planning
- 1990 – Riverfront Development Study of the Citizens League of Southwestern Pennsylvania
- 1993 – Allegheny County Riverfront Policy Plan – prepared by Allegheny County Planning Department for Allegheny County Board of Commissioners
- 2002 – Allegheny County Parks Comprehensive Master Plan – Wallace, Roberts & Todd, LLC<sup>1</sup>
- 2005 – Allegheny County Parks Management Research – Wallace, Roberts & Todd, LLC<sup>1</sup>
- 2007 – Revenue Sources Management Study of the Allegheny County Park System – American Institute for Leisure Resources<sup>1</sup>
- 2011 – Active Allegheny: A Comprehensive Commuter Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan for Allegheny County – Michael Baker Corporation<sup>1</sup>
- 2011 – The Community Trails Initiative for Multi-Municipal Trails & Greenways – McTish Kunkel & Associates (available at [www.friendsoftheriverfront.org](http://www.friendsoftheriverfront.org))

### **OTHER VALUABLE REFERENCES:**

**Alberts, Robert C., The Shaping of the Point (U. of Pittsburgh Press 1980)**

**Horsbrugh, Patrick, Pittsburgh Perceived: A Critical Review of Form, Features and Feasibilities of the Prodigious City (Pittsburgh City Planning Commission 1963)**

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<sup>1</sup> Available at [www.alleghenycounty.us/parks/](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/parks/) Under “Development Plans”

# Trail Development

## **Allegheny River – North Bank**

City of Pittsburgh (Point) to Millvale – Trail Built.

- Trail system by city ordinance- Three Rivers Heritage Trail
- Three Rivers Park System through Riverlife from Point State Park to 31<sup>st</sup> -Three Rivers Park.
- Trail system part of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance
- Trail system part of the Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway

Millvale to Freeport Borough – Plan completed for 26 miles (17 municipalities)

- Trail system by agreement with municipalities- Three Rivers Heritage Trail
- Trail system part of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance
- Trail system part of the Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway
- Trail built as part of parks in Millvale(trail and park) , in parts of Sharpsburg, (riverfront park) Aspinwall (riverfront park) , O’Hara (trail along riverfront) , Springdale (park/trail) , Tarentum, Brackenridge (2 parks/trail side by side) , Harrison (park)
- Challenges – approximately 16 miles of railroad (Northfolk Southern) runs along the corridor and in certain areas the riverfront access is cut off.
- Challenges – in some municipalities s homes/apartments are part of the riverfront access.
- Challenges – in some municipalities riverfront is taken up by commercial/industrial access.
- Plan allows for riverfront access in areas as the preferred method and guides the trail system into the communities allowing for community access where necessary.

## **Allegheny River – South Bank**

- Trail system by city ordinance- Three Rivers Heritage Trail
- Three Rivers Park System through Riverlife from Point State Park to 31<sup>st</sup> -Three Rivers Park.
- Point to 26<sup>th</sup> Street – Trail Built
- 40-43<sup>rd</sup> Street - Trail Built
- Trillium Trail built through Oakmont

Green Boulevard Planning in process from the Strip District to the Highland Park Bridge.

- From near Highland Park Bridge (City of Pittsburgh) to New Kensington / Arnold/Freeport Plan completed in 2001 by TriLine Associates. 7 municipalities. This corridor follows the Allegheny Valley Railroad corridor. This system would connect to both the Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal in Freeport and then the Erie to Pittsburgh System.
- Challenges – private railroad corridor.

## **Monongahela River – North Bank**

- Trail system by city ordinance- Three Rivers Heritage Trail (Duck Hollow)
- Three Rivers Heritage Trail and Three Rivers Park through Friends of the Riverfront and Riverlife from Point State Park to Hot Metal Bridge.
- Great Allegheny Passage from Point State Park to Hot Metal Bridge in Southside
- Trail built from Eliza Furnace (along 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue) through ALMONO site to Hazelwood Avenue in Hazelwood.
- Trail built in Duck Hollow section along the riverfront to Carrie Furnace site. (there is a segment not built due to city legal concerns. At this time the Hazelwood section and Duck Hollow segment do not connect due to property ownership and railroad issues)

- Trail planned through the Carrie Furnace site. Access to Braddock and Rankin Bridge planned; access across the Rankin Hot Metal Bridge planned.
- No planned trail as of yet from Braddock through Turtle Creek Valley.
- Please note: the Great Allegheny Passage cross the Mon at Duquesne (via the Riverton Railroad Bridge) to McKeesport

### **Monongahela River – South Bank**

- Trail system by city ordinance- Three Rivers Heritage Trail (until Sandcastle)
- Three Rivers Heritage Trail and Three Rivers Park through Friends of the Riverfront and Riverlife from Station Square to Hot Metal Bridge.
- Great Allegheny Passage from Hot Metal Bridge to McKeesport (then to Yough River)
- Trail built from Station Square (with detour near 4<sup>th</sup>) through Baldwin Borough and all the way to McKeesport along the Mon River. At McKeesport the trail moves to the Youghiogheny River. Current construction: Keystone Metals in construction; Sandcastle will be in construction. Remaining Great Allegheny Passage Trail completed. (185 miles to Cumberland then meets with the C & O Canal Trail to DC)
- From McKeesport to Clairton – Steel Valley Trail (where it meets with the Montour Trail). Currently a road route.
- Clairton to Forward – needs to be reviewed. Industry dots this riverbank.

### **Youghiogheny River**

- Great Allegheny Passage is built on the south side of the river. There is not currently a discussion about trail development on the other side of the river.

### **Ohio River - North Bank**

- Trail system by city ordinance- Three Rivers Heritage Trail
- From Millvale to Northside (past stadiums, casino, up to ALCOSAN Plant) built
- At ALCOSAN and up to Leetsdale – no plan at this time
- Future Three Rivers Park development to West End Bridge

### **Ohio River – South Bank**

- Trail system by city ordinance- Three Rivers Heritage Trail
- Trail at Station Square stops due to railroad and property issues. Future Three Rivers Park development to West End Bridge, linking to West End trail system
- Reconstruction of West Carson Street will include some accommodation for bike/ped to McKees Rock
- From McKees Rocks to Coraopolis – current planning for trail development in process. With 6 municipalities. This includes Allegheny County’s Sports Legacy project. (at this junction the trail meets with the Montour Trail and the Ohio River Trail)
- From Coraopolis to Crescent (and into Beaver County to Monaca) Ohio River Trail plan completed. Coraopolis has a small riverfront park

### **Local Organizations Engaged in Trail Planning – Riverfronts only**

- Memorandum of Understanding between Allegheny County, Friends of the Riverfront and Pennsylvania Environmental Council to engage communities in planning and implementation of trail corridors throughout Allegheny County. Focus on transportation, recreation corridors and connections to the rivers.
- Friends of the Riverfront – Non profit trail organization. Management of trail system (Three Rivers Heritage Trail), administration and planning/implementation.
- Pennsylvania Environmental Council – Planning and implementation.

- Riverlife. Focus on the development of Three Rivers Park loop: West End Bridge to 31<sup>st</sup> Street Bridge to Hot Metal Bridge. Landscape management Guidelines for the Pittsburgh Pool.
- Ohio River Trail Council. Organization undertaking the planning and organizing of a trail from Ohio following the Ohio River corridors. Strong partnerships with Beaver & Lawrence Counties.
- Regional Trail Corporation. Consortium of 3 Counties (Allegheny, Westmoreland and Fayette ) who work together to build and maintain trail along the Monongahela and Youghiogheny Rivers.
- ARTEZ-Allegheny River Towns Enterprise Zone-collaboration of communities along North Bank of Allegheny River.
- Allegheny Trail Alliance. Organization coordinating the efforts and raising the funds to build the Great Allegheny Passage