

# **Natural Assets as Economic Generators**

**APA- PA 2015 Annual Conference**

**October, 2015**





# Asset Based Community Development

- Sustainable community-driven development.
- Mobilizes community to take action
- Not dependent on outside expertise
- Communities drive the development process by identifying and mobilizing existing, but often unrecognized assets
- Creates local economic opportunity.

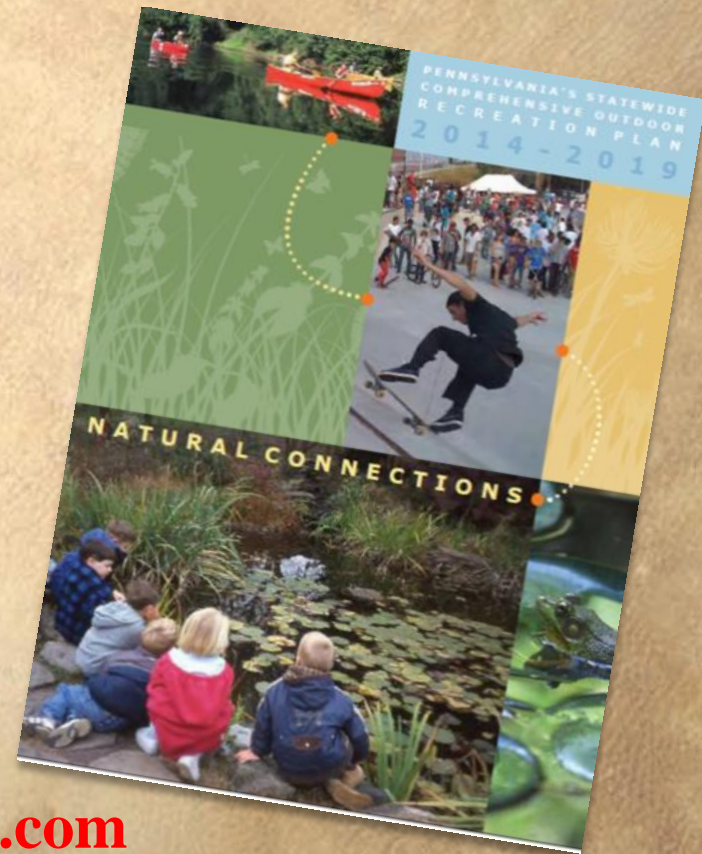
# Linking communities, tourism and conservation

- Economic recovery efforts in communities based on a growing interest in outdoor recreational activities.
- Capitalizing on existing assets of natural environment, navigable rivers, developed trails.



# PA Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (2014-2019)

- Identify issues, policies, investments related to outdoor recreation
- Over 10,000 residents provided input via surveys and meetings
- Action oriented plan





# PA SCORP Resident Survey Results: Outdoor Recreation Quality of Life Benefits

- More desirable place to live
- Opportunities for recreation based businesses
- Protects natural environment, historical & cultural heritage





# PA SCORP Online Survey Results:

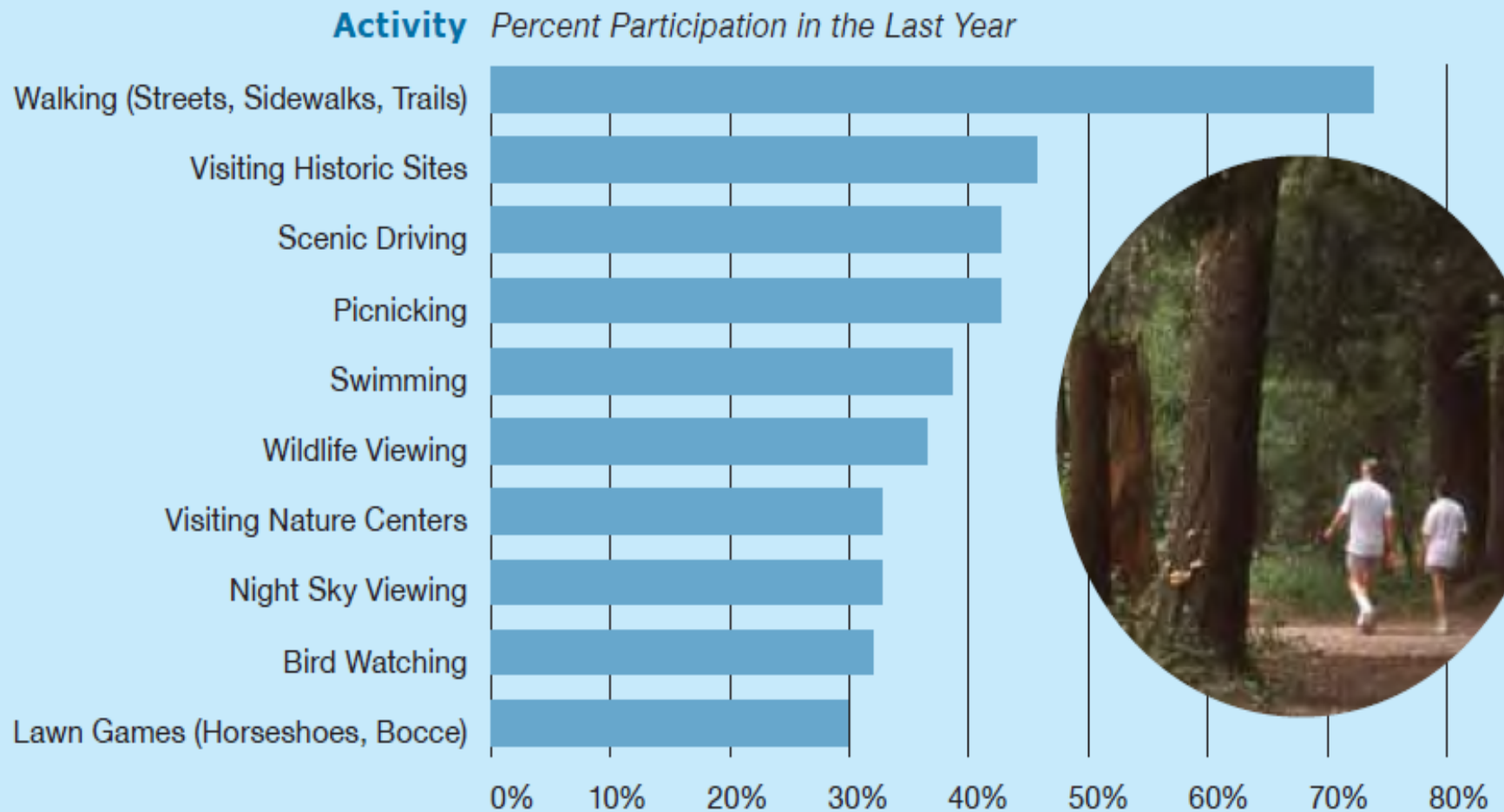
## What places best reflect what you value about your community?

- Trails, natural areas, waterways (89%)
- Local parks & public spaces (75%)
- Surrounding countryside & farmland (75%)



# PA SCORP Resident Survey Results

## The Top 10 Outdoor Recreation Activities





# 2014-2019 PA SCORP PRIORITY AREAS



## Health & Wellness

- Walkable/  
Bikeable  
Communities
- Alternative  
transportation
- Connections to  
outdoors

## Local Parks & Recreation

- Diversity
- Popularity
- Funding
- Political  
Support
- Partnerships

## Tourism & Economic Development

- Measuring  
Impact
- Coordination
- Communication
- Marketing
- Partnerships

## Resource Management & Stewardship

- Prioritizing
- Hunting &  
Fishing
- Natural Gas
- Conservation &  
Protection

















CONFLUENCE CYCLERY

LET'S RIDE!  
TODAY COUNTS!  
LET'S RIDE!  
TODAY COUNTS!



# Program Focus

- Regional
- Recreational economy
- Visitor attraction strategy
- Business growth
- Community conserves resources













Desert Rose  
Cafe

- \* Coffee
- \* Pastries
- \* Sandwiches
- \* Espresso

OPEN











# The Power of Small Business

- 39% of GNP
- 75% of new jobs in our economy
- 60-80% of net new jobs annually over the last decade
- On average entrepreneurs make at least 25% more than the general population.

» Experian, 2006









© paul g wiegman





# Land-based Trails are Good Business

- The Great Allegheny Passage (2008) Over \$40 million in economic impact April – November
- \$7.26 million in wages in trail-related businesses
- Dozens of businesses launched and expanded



# Water Trails are Good Business

- University of Vermont, Northern Forest Canoe Trail study (2007)
- 90,000 visitors per year
- \$12 million in total economic impacts
- 280 jobs created
- \$215 spending per trip
- Non-locals spending average of \$414-\$498 per trip
- Paddler recreation & tourism impacts local economies







# The First Steps

- Understand community culture and heritage
- Inventory existing community groups
- Find a community leader/organization-the catalyst (often a trail/river user)
- Attend community meetings or events



# Next

- A community- wide meeting, engage business and government
- Provide information that demonstrates the value of the outdoor market
- Create Action Team 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
- Prioritizes capital projects
- Directs planning and early implementation projects
- Involves and further engages community



# Short term Projects:

- Signage
- Business Directory
- Amenities: Benches, bike racks, water, toilets
- Public Art







Laurel Highlands



Bike Trail

3

Rockwood

Bike Trail



Confluence

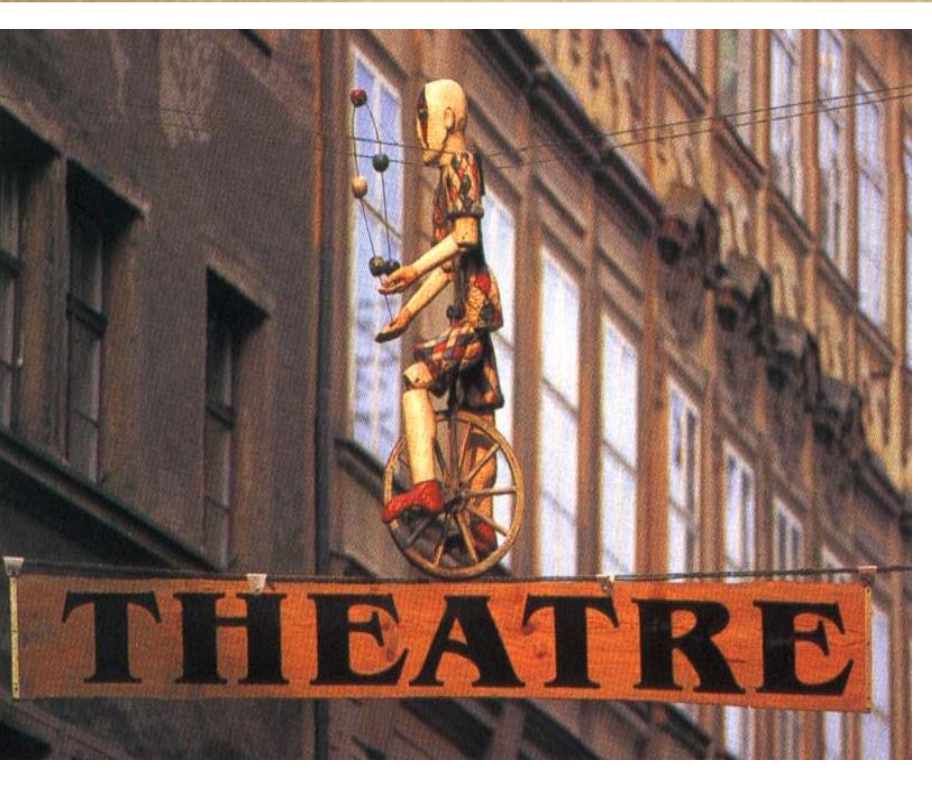
15





Plenty of outdoor seating

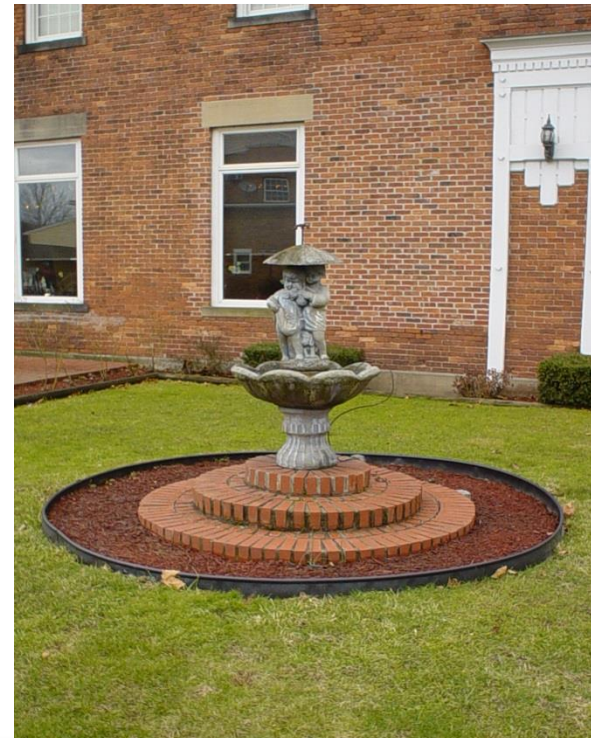




Use color and whimsy to attract



# Open attractive public spaces





# 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

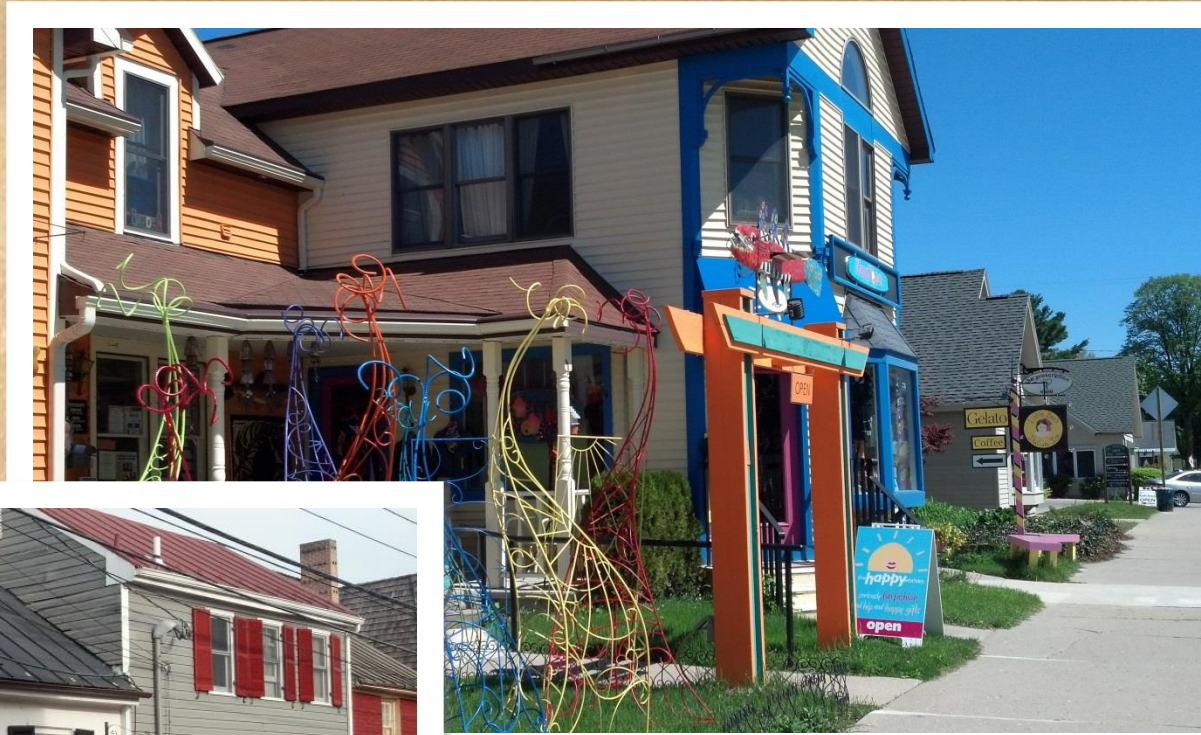


Attract new businesses to fill service gaps and expand new businesses





# Create inviting streets





# PROPERTY FOR SALE



Open your business here!

For more information about this property,  
or other business opportunities  
along the Upper Monongahela River,  
visit [www.rivertownspa.org](http://www.rivertownspa.org)  
or call 814-395-9139



The River Towns program is a partnership of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, McCollom Development Strategies, and the Student Conservation Association



# Business Attraction Strategy

- Target business clusters
- Technical assistance team
- Centralized messaging







## Farmers' Markets

With weekly farmers' market in many of the River Towns, fresh [fruits and vegetables](#) abound. Check out the event calendar for days and times.



## Join Us at the Holiday Party December 4th!



POSTED ON NOVEMBER 7, 2013

You are invited to the River Town Program meeting and [holiday party](#) on Wednesday, December 4th at the Fredericktown [Fire Hall](#), 831 Crawford Road. A [business meeting](#) will be held from 5:30-6:15, followed by a year-end celebration with drinks, hors ... Continued

[READ MORE >](#)

SEARCH

## Recent Posts

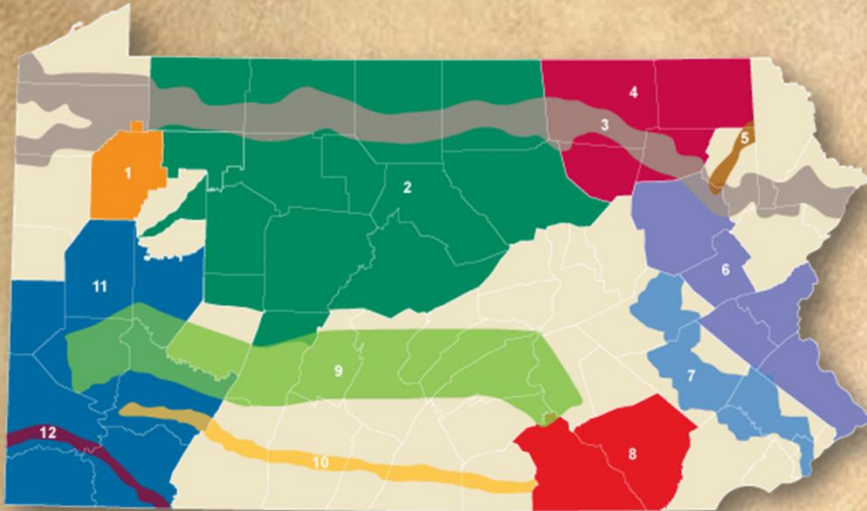
*Join Us at the Holiday Party December 4th!*

*Registration now open for September 7th Paddling Trip*

*Registration now open- August 1st paddling trip!*



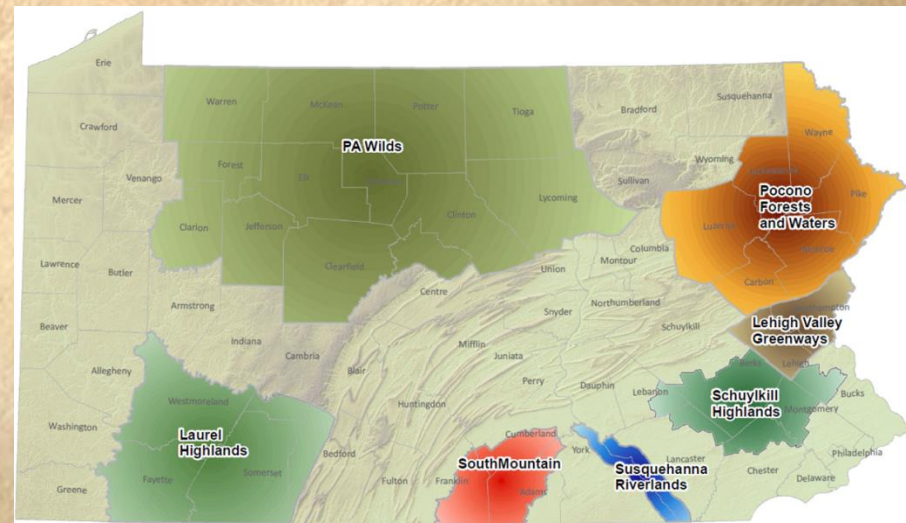
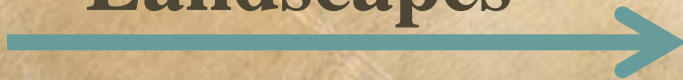
# Implementing Partners



**12 Heritage Areas**



**7  
Conservation  
Landscapes**





# Implementing Partners



**good for you.**  
**good for all.**  
PENNSYLVANIA PARKS & RECREATION



# SMAART: Sustainable Marketplace for Art, Artisans, Recreation and Trending businesses

- \$10,000 D2 PA grant
- Workshops
- Web site
- SBA , SBDC, Borough





# Case Studies: Point Marion

Project: Community Park, Trailhead, Trail,  
Water Access

Funding: DCNR, CFA Act 13, Tourism, County  
Funds





# Case Study: Brownsville

Private Foundations

DCNR

County Agency

PHFA tax credits

Historic tax credits





# Case Study: Race Street Pier (Philadelphia)

- Commercial
- Neighborhood Connections
- Residential

