



# Great Places in Pennsylvania

## 2018 Category Criteria

### For Nominating

## Great Public Spaces and Great Greenways/Trails

### Great Public Spaces

**What is a Public Space?** A public space may be a formal or informal gathering space within a neighborhood, downtown, district, waterfront or other area of a community that is within the public realm, promotes social interaction and community engagement, and fosters a sense of community. Public spaces may be indoors or outdoors, man-made or natural, and provide opportunities for passive or active social interactions. Some examples of public spaces include plazas, parks, public commons or greens, marketplaces, convention centers, monuments, and special areas within public or private buildings. **Public Spaces must be at least 10 years old.**

**Nomination Form/Description of the Public Space:** It is important to describe the geographic, demographic and social characteristics of the public space and its immediate surroundings. Tell layout us about its locational setting; connectivity; economic, social, and ethnic diversity; and functionality. Additionally, address whether a plan or specific planning efforts or partnerships contributed to or sustained the character of the public space, or if the space formed more organically and not through a formal planning process.

Please use the following criteria as guidance in writing your description and be sure to emphasize why it should be designated a Great Public Space. What sets the public space apart from others public spaces to qualify it for a Great Public Spaces designation? Where possible, quantify the information provided, such as number of visitors, events, activities, and economic impact.

#### **Form & Function - *How does the public space...***

- utilize design, scale, form, architecture and other features to create a visually interesting experience?
- incorporate landscape and hardscape features that are unique or special to the public space?
- incorporate natural features, topography, vistas, and public art?
- accommodate multiple users for a variety of purposes/activities?
- connect to surrounding uses (connectivity/accessibility), including residential, commercial, and public uses, as well as transit systems?

### **Unique Characteristics - *Does the design of the space convey...***

- a sense of importance or extraordinary characteristics that set it apart from other public spaces in the community?
- an atmosphere of discovery, inspiration, contemplation, or spiritual reflection?
- its cultural, economic, historic, or natural importance?

### **Social Interaction - *How does the space...***

- provide a sense of comfort and safety to people using the space?
- encourage users to interact with each other?
- encourage use by a diverse cross section of the community?
- utilize activities or events to attract people to the space or engage them?

## **Great Greenways/Trails**

**What is a Greenway/Trail?** A greenway/trail is a linear parcel of land or right-of-way set aside to preserve/protect open space, scenic landscapes, historical resources, natural resources and plant/animal habitats. It can be in urban, suburban and rural settings and is frequently created out of a disused railway, canal towpath, utility, or similar corridor. Locations in areas unsuitable for development, such as floodplain areas, stream corridors, and woodlands, are also common. A greenway/trail provides linkages to connect people to parks, schools, downtowns, places of employment, pristine natural areas, and historical structures and features. It can be limited to foot traffic or accommodate multiple users (pedestrians, bicyclists, horseback riders, or others).

**Nomination Form/Description of the Greenway/Trail:** It is important to describe the setting in which the greenway/trail is located, identify its start and end points, note the trail length, and explain how it serves to connect people and places. Using the following criteria, submissions should document the greenway/trail's form & function, unique characteristics, and environmental & sustainable practices to emphasize why it should be designated a Great Greenway/Trail in Pennsylvania. What characteristics set it apart from other greenways/trails to qualify it for a Great Greenway/Trail designation?

Additionally, please note any related planning studies, partnerships, or public involvement processes that contributed to development of the greenway/trail. Where possible, quantify the information provided, such as number of visitors, events, activities, and economic impact.

### **Form & Function: *Does the greenway/trail...***

- Have trail heads for access and parking?
- Incorporate natural features, topography, vistas, and public art?
- Accommodate multiple users?

- Encourage use by a diverse cross section of the community?
- Provide connectivity to surrounding uses, such as residential, commercial, and public, as well as transit systems and other trails?

**Unique Characteristics: *Does the greenway/trail...***

- Have a sense of importance or extraordinary characteristics that set it apart from other greenways/trails in the community?
- Connect to places of cultural, historic and natural importance?
- Incorporate interpretive signage?
- Provide opportunities for environmental or public health education?
- Reflect local, State, or national history/culture?
- Serve as a site for any special or unique programming or events?

**Environmental and Sustainable Practices: *Does the greenway/trail...***

- Have public/private or multi-municipal investment or commitment for ongoing operations, maintenance, and environmental stewardship?
- Incorporate green infrastructure (i.e. pervious pavement, natural buffers, native plants)?
- Support economic development and ecotourism?
- Promote the safety of users?