

A. Community History

Greenville Borough and Hempfield Township in Mercer County are located approximately 60 miles north of Pittsburgh, PA. The community of Greenville was established in 1838 as the first incorporated borough in Mercer County. Greenville would play a dominant role in the county's development and some people thought it should be the county seat, although this title was given to Mercer Borough. Hempfield Township was established in 1856 after James Kamerer campaigned to have land annexed from Salem, West Salem, Pymatuning and Delaware Township. Both Greenville Borough and Hempfield Township's founders had ties to Westmoreland County as they heralded from Greensburg and Hempfield Township and choose to honor these roots by naming their new homes after the Westmoreland County municipalities.

Early settlement of the region was made difficult by the presence of American Indians who, until the early 1800's, persisted in maintaining their claim to the land. The first white settlers often faced bands of hostile warriors and conflicts were numerous and deadly. It was during 1800 that Mercer County was formed from Allegheny County. Similar to other counties, following the Revolutionary War, veterans received land in lieu of financial reimbursement for their service. Although no record exists of any veterans actually claiming land, Donation Road in Greenville remains a testament to the act.



Figure 2:1 1907 USGS Shenango Quad 1

Regional history relates a heritage of industrial dominance and transportation with strong roots in the railroad industry. With the building of the Beaver to Erie Canal (locally known as the Erie Extension Canal) in 1844, Greenville was situated on a major transportation corridor between Pittsburgh and Erie, PA. The canal system transported large amounts of iron ore and other industrial goods to and from Pittsburgh and Erie. The canal system was vital to the economy of the Greenville region and it was primarily this event that spurred development and growth in the area. The canal would be the single most important transportation route until the later



Figure 2:2 Erie Extension Canal

building of the Atlantic and Great Western Railroad in the mid 1880's.

Canal traffic began declining once the railroad was constructed in 1864, connecting Pittsburgh to Erie. The rail system quickly outpaced the canal and the canal closed in 1871. Soon the Shenango and Allegheny Railroad (later Bessemer and Lake Erie Railroad) was built along the Erie Extension itself. The strong rail system lent well to the corresponding growth of manufacturing in the area. Between 1869 and the early 1900's, numerous industrial companies settled in the region to capitalize on the efficient transportation network provided by the rail lines.

With this rapid growth came increased interest in educational pursuits and Thiel College was relocated to Greenville in 1871. This educational institution was founded in 1866 in Monaca, PA but moved to Greenville to capitalize on the community's location and growth brought about by the rail network. The college, associated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, remains a significant influence in the region today.

Not only was the region known for its industrial dominance and significant educational facility, but it was also recognized as the center for social pursuits such as theatre and opera. Once again, the rail lines facilitated the development of the entertainment industry as production companies could readily access Greenville. Until the Laird Opera House closed in 1924, famous persons of the day were frequent visitors and included such notables as Harry Houdini, Lillian Russell and Buffalo Bill Cody.

Early in its history, the region could claim a free press. Today's Record-Argus can be traced back to the Weekly Express established in 1848. Today the Record-Argus is privately owned and circulates to over 5,500 readers.

The region has many claims to fame, including being the birthplace of two United States Governors; William Bigler, Pennsylvania Governor circa 1850's; and, John Bigler, California Governor. The brothers held office at the same time—a first in United States history.

Similar to other areas in Pennsylvania, the Greenville Region saw a down turn in its economic prosperity in the 1980's. In 1982 Bessemer and Lake Erie Railroad Company began to relocate its operations from Greenville to Monroeville. The mighty railroad and industrial heritage was fading, compounded by the closing of CB&I Company, Westinghouse Electric's plant, and the Niagara Therapy Manufacturing Company. Trinity Industries took control of the Greenville Steel Car operations following cutbacks on operations during the early to mid 1980's. But by the end of the 1990's, Trinity Industries had also begun to scale back operations and by 2000 the Trinity owned Greenville Rail Car Division was closed.

Today, the region maintains a strong industrial flavor and many fine examples of historic architecture are present. With the continued presence of Thiel College and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC), the region now has a strong education and medical-oriented character. These institutions are fostering a cultural renewal and could be instrumental in promoting the quality of life in the region.

B. Analysis

HISTORIC RESOURCES

The history of Greenville Borough and Hempfield Township region is rich and should be celebrated. With its canal and rail heritage, the two communities have two significant opportunities to promote the historical character of the municipality. Both industries are represented by the presence of the existing Canal Museum and the Greenville Railroad Park and Museum.

The Canal Museum in Greenville showcases the canal era and the Erie Extension Canal. Located in downtown Greenville, the Canal Museum has a full-size replica of a canal boat, canal artifacts, and a working model of a canal lock. The Railroad Park and Museum also located in Greenville Borough houses the only remaining largest steam engine ever built. The railroad museum also is home to a 1913 Empire Car, built in Greenville and currently owned by the Greenville Area Historical Society. The museum is also home to a tribute to Stefan Banich who patented a parachute prototype that was used by Air Force soldiers in World War I.

The Greenville Historical Society is a well-organized and respected historical society that is active in preserving the historical character of the region. The society has numerous information and artifacts relating to the canal and rail eras. In addition, the society catalogues the growth of modern industry in the region and promotes several walking and lectures of local history. The Greenville Historical Society could be of great benefit to further promote the historical legacy of the borough and township. Elected officials should give consideration to partnering with the society to catalogue and preserve historic documents, photos, and structures, and hosting community events.

Established in 1978, the Historical Society has recently moved into the historic Waugh House located at 23 West Main Street, and actively serves the community from this location. The house is a Federal style structure built in 1826 that is listed on the National Register of Historic Properties. The house was purchased in the early 1990s from the First National Bank of PA. The structure was renovated to the specifications required for a museum while maintaining its historical integrity and now houses nine rooms of artifacts moved from the previous location of Thiel College Campus.

Located in the Greenville and Hempfield area are the following structures and historic districts that are identified on the National Register Listed Eligible Properties (Online: Source: <http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/PA/Mercer/state.html>).

Greenville Borough:

Greenville Commercial Historic District

Centered on Main, Canal and Clinton Sts., Greenville

Period of significance: 1850-1874, 1875-1899, 1900-1924, 1925-1949, 1950-1974

Waugh, Alexander P. and James S., House
23 W. Main St., Greenville

Period of significance: 1825-1849

Hempfield Township:

Kidd's Mills Covered Bridge Historic District

5 mi. S of Greenville off PA 58, in Pymatuning Township

Period of significance: 1850-1874

Quaker Bridge

LR 43135 over Little Shenango River

Period of significance: 1875-1899

New Hamburg Historical Area

7 mi. S of Greenville off PA 58 in Delaware Township

Period of significance: 1825-1849

The municipalities have the opportunity to capitalize on their shared heritage by developing events that honor past events and industries. By promoting events that celebrate their heritage, the municipalities could realize an increased the recognition of the region. Coupling with the historical society, the museums, Thiel College and local industries, including the Record-Argus, the municipalities could develop an annual event that could draw visitors and celebrate the region.

After the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the municipalities should begin to identify all historic or cultural resources that should be preserved. The next step is to incorporate preservation tools such as a historic zoning overlay district to protect and preserve these important community features (see Section 605 (2) (vi) of the PA MPC). Funding is available to non-profit organizations and local governments for historic preservation, structural rehabilitation, and restoration of historic properties. Grants from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission are awarded on a competitive basis and can be used for identification, evaluation, and preservation planning initiative at the local government or regional level.

Located in or near Greenville Borough and Hempfield Township are several locations that should be considered as contributing to the historical character of the region and efforts should be made to promote these locations to attract visitors to the area. One such location is Camp Roland. Two Hempfield Township Citizens donated 8 ½ acres to the Kiwanis Club for use as a Girl Scout Camp. The land, donated by David and Helen Rowland, and is located off of Methodist Road.

The Bigler Cemetery is located next to where the Old Salem Presbyterian Church stood on PA Rt. 58, south of Greenville.



Camp Roland (Mackin, 2003)



Bigler Cemetery (Mackin, 2003)

The Bigler Cemetery contains the remains of soldiers from the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, and the American Civil War. The Old Salem Church was the location for the first Sunday school held in Mercer County.

To protect the region's architectural heritage, historic preservation provisions should be incorporated into the zoning ordinance and building codes as authorized by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. Ordinances focused on demolition, historic zoning overlays, zoning bonuses for the preservation of specific resources and protection of such features as scenic areas and historic sites could be particularly effective for Greenville Borough. Once local controls are incorporated into the zoning ordinance, the municipality will have more say in the community's balance of preservation and development.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation were established to guide the rehabilitation of historic properties for contemporary use. They have become the nationally accepted standards for such projects and should be adopted as a basis for its review of projects. These Standards are, by necessity, general.

The Standards for Rehabilitation:

- A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
- The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
- Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
- Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
- Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
- Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
- Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
- Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
- New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
- New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Although the Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission formally recognizes several structures in the region, many other structures offer fine examples of period architecture. Many homes built before or around the turn of the 20th Century exist and are in fine condition. These homes and businesses serve to impart a sense of character and elected officials would be wise to use these structures as the basis for future streetscape planning.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Community appeal is provided largely by its visual aesthetics. Several things are important to a positive community image, such as well-kept properties, streets free of litter, mature tree-lined streets, and landscaping at key points and entryways. Landscaping at an entry point into a municipality imparts a sense of arrival or departure along roadways, railroad crossings, river access points or trails. These visual gateways can serve to increase awareness of the community and promote the municipality to visitors as well as enhance community appeal for residents.

Gateways play a vital role in the initial perception of a community and can be tied into the local history, businesses, and community events. Gateways should include a thematic design in which such aspects, as signage and landscaping should be attractive but not overpowering and developed with consideration to maintenance and the overall features of the community.

Future Access Locations and Opportunities:

The river and railroad provide natural access points. Consideration should be given to establishing public access to the river and developing these areas in such a way as to offer an attractive vantage point when viewed from the river. The region can then capitalize on the traffic that is generated through recreational river use.

Gateways at railroad crossing would serve to minimize the intrusion of tracks into a community's visual landscape. Beautification efforts must adhere to safety regulations and constraints, but there is much that can be done to offset the dramatic effect that railroads can have on the visual appeal of a community.

As the project area sits along key roadways that experience significant amounts of traffic, there are numerous opportunities to capitalize on the opportunity to increase awareness of the municipalities by improving visual appeal.

Areas have been identified as key locations for the development of gateways to welcome residents and visitors into the community. These locations are identified on Figure 7-3: Transportation Improvements. The Greenville Area School District should be viewed as a collective community and gateways should be established at the following locations:

- Intersection of Baker Road and Hadley Road
- Williamson Road at the Hempfield Township boundary
- Jamestown Road at the Hempfield Township boundary
- Vernon Road

- Clarskville Street
- Intersection of Mercer Road and St. Glory Road
- Hadley Road near Quartermile Road

Greenville and Hempfield will need to identify the potential property owners and begin negotiations in order to begin gateway development. There are numerous gateway designs to choose from and the cost of gateway development will depend upon the design chosen. Funding for gateways can be acquired through grants, such as transportation enhancement grants, community block grants, or by partnering with local community organizations or through private donations.

Shade trees and landscaping along roadways, sidewalks and public spaces provides residents and visitors a pleasing atmosphere. The communities should strive to support volunteer groups who can assist in planting and maintenance efforts. One such group is the SPIGOT (Show Pride in Greenville our Town) organization that has been offering volunteer services for over 20 years. The biology department at Thiel College may be willing to partner in this endeavor.

Greenville Borough and Hempfield Township have a wealth of opportunities in place to capitalize upon their heritage. The tools are available for municipal officials to take the action needed to foster community character and promote the borough. As these steps are taken, the communities will see benefits both socially as community pride increases and economically (with increased property values and an infusion of spending by visitors).

HISTORY AND CHARACTER IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

GOAL: Improve the visual appeal of the community

Strategies	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Funding Sources
Develop beautification strategies that will create an identity for the community	Greenville Borough Council & Hempfield Township Supervisors	Mercer County Conservation District, Greenville Area Chamber of Commerce, Greenville Museum Alliance, Greenville Area School District	PA Department of Transportation, Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Local Social & Civic Groups, Western PA Conservancy,
Establish gateways at key locations (identified on the Transportation Improvements Map) to welcome visitors to the community	Greenville Borough Council & Hempfield Township Supervisors	Mercer County Regional Planning Commission, Greenville Borough and Hempfield Township Joint Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, Governing Bodies, Greenville Planning Commission, Hempfield Township Planning Commission	Community Revitalization (DCED), CDBG/DCED, Sustainable Development Challenge Grants (US EPA), Special Economic Development and Adjustment Assistance Grants (US Dept. of Commerce)
Develop a business owners association for Main Street and Hadley Road	Chamber of Commerce	Greenville Area Chamber of Commerce, Local Businesses, Service Corps of Retired Executives SCORE	International Economic Development Council, The National Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Downtown Research & Development Center, The National Urban League, Inc., International Downtown Association
Replace deteriorated awnings and streetscape furniture	Local business owners		CDBG, Mercer County Regional Planning Commission
Implement a downtown street cleaning program	Greenville Borough Council		Municipal budgets, local donations, corporate sponsorships
Implement landscaping requirements within municipal ordinances	Greenville Borough Council & Hempfield Township Supervisors	Real Estate Agencies, Local Developers, Landscape Companies, Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, RDM	DCED, CDBG
Plant shade trees and easily maintained landscaping elements in the downtown and along Hadley Road	Greenville Borough Council & Hempfield Township Supervisors	Greenville Business & Professional Women, Greenville Lions, Kiwanis of Greenville, Moose Club, American Legion Post 140, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Eureka Lodge, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Lions Club, Knights of Columbus, Northwest Pennsylvania Cooperation Council, The Good Shepard, Greenville Area Ministerial Association	International Society of Arboriculture

HISTORY AND CHARACTER IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX			
GOAL: Work with Thiel College and surrounding municipalities to develop and promote additional entertainment and cultural pursuits			
Strategies	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Funding Sources
Complete a Market Study to identify all entertainment and cultural opportunities	Chamber of Commerce	Thiel College, Chamber, DCED	International Economic Development Council, The National Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Downtown Research & Development Center, The National Urban League, Inc., International Downtown Association
Develop a community arts guide	Chamber of Commerce	Thiel College, Chamber, Greenville Business & Professional Women, Greenville Lions, Kiwanis of Greenville, Moose Club, American Legion Post 140, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Eureka Lodge, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Lions Club, Knights of Columbus, Northwest Pennsylvania Cooperation Council, The Good Sheperd, Greenville Area Ministerial Association, Greenville Area School District, Greenville Symphony	Thiel College, Municipal Budget, private and corporate sponsorships/donations
Identify specific programs that can be offered by the college to community residents	Thiel College & Chamber of Commerce	Chamber, Greenville Area School District	Thiel College
Develop a marketing strategy with the Mercer Co. Convention and Visitors Bureau	Chamber of Commerce	Mercer County Convention and Visitors Bureau	International Economic Development Council, The National Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Downtown Research & Development Center, The National Urban League, Inc., International Downtown Association
Develop a web site to market entertainment and cultural opportunities	Chamber of Commerce	Thiel College, Convention & Visitors Bureau, Chamber, Greenville Museum Alliance, Greenville Area School District	Technology Opportunities Program, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (U.S. Dept. of Commerce)
Hold workshops semi-annually or quarterly to discuss strategic planning efforts and local projects	Chamber of Commerce	Thiel College, Chamber, Downtown Group,	N/A

HISTORY AND CHARACTER IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

GOAL: Establish a downtown improvement plan that builds upon the existing streetscape and building façade programs

Strategies	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Funding Sources
Implement the streetscape plan	Greenville Borough & Chamber of Commerce	Local businesses, Chamber, Greenville Business & Professional Women,	CDBG, Mercer County Regional Planning Commission
Establish gateways at key locations (identified on the Transportation Improvements Map)	Greenville Borough & Chamber of Commerce	Greenville Lions, Kiwanis of Greenville, Moose Club, American Legion Post 140, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Eureka Lodge, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Lions Club, Knights of Columbus, Northwest Pennsylvania Cooperation Council, The Good Sheperd, Greenville Area Ministerial Association	Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Local Social & Civic Groups, Western PA Conservancy, Greenville Area Historical Society
Identify funding programs to support building façade improvements	Greenville Borough & Chamber of Commerce	DCED, Greenville Area School District	PA Department of Transportation, Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Local Social & Civic Groups, Western PA Conservancy, Community Revitalization (DCED), CDBG/DCED, Sustainable Development Challenge Grants (US EPA), Special Economic Development and Adjustment Assistance Grants (US Dept. of Commerce)
Develop criteria to identify and prioritize dilapidated buildings for renovation or demolition	Greenville Borough & Chamber of Commerce	Local businesses, DCED	