

**“Public Scoping and Development Mapping for the City of Warren, PA:
Eco-Tourism, Cultural Heritage and Economic Diversity”**

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ATP 2014 Project Outline

Project Focus:

The University of Pittsburgh at Bradford will partner with the City of Warren, PA, Pennsylvania Kinzua Pathways (PKP), and Leadership Warren (BOOM!¹) to begin to inventory, scope and frame the sustainable development components of their soon to be updated development plan.

Project Details:

Course:

PS 1450 – Participatory Community Development.

Instructor:

Dr. Stephen F. Robar, MPA; Ph.D.

Partners:

City of Warren, PA; Pennsylvania Kinzua Pathways (PKP); Leadership Warren (BOOM!).

Need:

This work is essential to supporting the sustainable development and tourism industries of Warren County given the outstanding natural assets of the county, including the Allegheny National Forest, the Kinzua Reservoir, the Allegheny River and many other natural, cultural and historic assets. The project will also expose students to community development strategies that will encourage internship placements and independent research that represents a next-step evolution of the community development work UPB and the ATP has undertaken to date. Coupled with the existing partnership infrastructure created through past ATP projects, the objective is to establish a viable network of collaborating institutions that will regularly provide UPB students with advanced, experiential learning opportunities that funnel students into employment in sustainable industries in northwestern Pennsylvania.

Background:

The University of Pittsburgh at Bradford (UPB) was approached by Leadership Warren of Warren County, PA, in 2013 about a research collaboration for 2014. Leadership Warren's objective is to: "form partnerships to improve the economic vitality and quality of life in Warren County" by training local leaders and raising the capacity of local businesses to utilize economic opportunities based on existing economic assets.² BOOM! had been thinking about mapping local historical, recreational, environmental and agricultural assets when they were introduced to UPB's previous ATP work using digital mapping, and sought our partnership.

¹ BOOM! is the name of the particular team/class within Leadership Warren spearheading the project.

² <http://www.leadershipwarrencounty.org/>

UPB's environmental studies program already has a working relationship with PKP, and has been working with PKP on the advancement and implementation of its development goals, centered around cultural and historical awareness and promotion, as well as the development of a 46-mile mountain bike trail. The mission of PKP "is to attract visitors to the area surrounding the Allegheny Reservoir, educate them on the rich history of its past, provide facilities to enjoy the present, and enhance wilderness access and stewardship for the future."³

UPB was also approached at the same time by the City of Warren to explore how the work being done by both BOOM! and PKP could be incorporated into the next stage revisions of their upcoming new development plan. In particular, the city wishes to focus on eco-tourism, cultural heritage, and fostering economic diversity, and including in their plan a strong commitment to sustainability. After several discussions with the city, the city decided that in addition to the work being done by BOOM! and PKP, they would like UPB to begin to structure a public scoping and asset inventory process, and begin to formally include the work of the two groups into their strategic plan.

Building on, and expanding, the research of the 2012-14 ATP project at Pitt-Bradford, students and faculty in the 2014-15 ATP will utilize interactive trail mapping software to provide a digital mapping implementation platform for both BOOM! and PKP for the furtherance of their goals, ultimately transferring ownership and maintenance of the mapping process into the hands of the Warren community. The digital phone application (developed here at UPB) has been instituted in the towns of Smethport and Bradford in McKean County, PA since 2012. This year's project will extend this successful work into a new, adjacent county and advance the work by focusing on community-based training. The digital "app" promotes the natural and historic tourism assets of rural Pennsylvania, encourages public health and fitness, and can facilitate place-based education within the curriculum of area schools.

The 2014-15 project will further this work by identifying strategic, long-term partnerships that will advance and enhance UPB's ATP project whereby digital "trail" mapping will become a tool, rather than the focus, of student and faculty engagement in the region. The first step in this broader application and utilization of our previous ATP work will come in the form of our work this year with the City of Warren in terms of its public scoping and asset inventory process. The basic functions of the application will be expanded to be applied in the asset inventory process, and students in the class and ATP program will be trained in and learn the dynamics of, public scoping and asset inventory processes. It is important to point out that this is envisioned as a multi-year endeavor, with other civic organizations and municipalities already expressing interest in joining the work.

³ <http://www.pennsylvaniakinzuapathways.com/about.html>

Planned Meetings with Community Partners:

June 2014: ATP project team leaders and UPB faculty will meet with BOOM! and PKP members at least once to finalize the digital mapping goals, framework and implementation plans. Students in the fall course and community partners will be trained in the design and utilization of the digital application. Feasible summer work will be identified.

July 2014: ATP project team leaders and UPB faculty will meet with city officials, the City Manager, and members of the Planning Commission at least once to outline and structure the asset mapping portion of the project (the asset mapping element of the work is just an initial stage component). Feasible summer work will be identified.

August 2014: All ATP project students in the fall course, team leaders and faculty will meet to review implementation plans, calendar, responsibilities, logistics and review and update plans as needed based upon the completion of summer accomplishments.

September 2014: Two weekend asset mapping sessions will be planned to finalize the first round of the inclusion of the BOOM! and PKP data. The first of the community asset mapping forums will be scheduled.

October 2014: Depending on the outcome of the July meetings with city officials, the month of October is intended to be devoted to the asset mapping/inventory portion of the project. It is projected that at least two public meetings including partners and the community will be scheduled, though the exact nature is not available yet.

November 2014: It is projected that at least one public meetings including partners and the community will be scheduled, though the exact nature is not available yet.

December 2014: A final (as is) work product presentation will be scheduled to include both partners and the community so as to present the work to date, and to discuss and take feedback on moving forward.

Project Overview:

“Public Scoping and Development Mapping for the City of Warren, PA: Eco-Tourism, Cultural Heritage and Economic Diversity” is a teaching/applied research project that provides Pitt-Bradford students with applied learning experiences through campus-community research partnerships, and that contributes to tangible, outcomes-based sustainable community development capacity. This project is designed to continue the ATP work already accomplished here at UPB (the GPS mapping project), and to expand the impact of ATP vis-à-vis UPB by identifying further uses for the work so far implemented, and by identifying new partners in a way that contributes to regional capacity and planning and development discourse. This project will yield no fewer than two community-based presentations, in addition to the various meetings scheduled between project partners, participating faculty, the community, and UPB students. Specifically, the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford will partner with the City of Warren, PA, Pennsylvania Kinzua Pathways (PKP), and Leadership Warren (BOOM!) to begin to inventory,

scope and frame the sustainable development components of the city's soon to be updated development plan, as well as to further the work of PKP and BOOM!.

Project Goals and Objectives:

- Further BOOM!'s goals of mapping local historical, recreational, environmental and agricultural assets.
- Further the mission of PKP, in particular "to attract visitors to the area surrounding the Allegheny Reservoir, educate them on the rich history of its past ... and enhance wilderness access and stewardship for the future."
- Train partner business and non-profit groups how to use GPS mapping in support of community development goals.
- Construct a sustainable relationship between UPB and Warren by bringing university capacities, student and community needs, and partnership assets together to promote community development.
- Construct, in partnership with the City of Warren, a sound foundation for the inclusion of sustainable development activities into their new plan.
- Strengthen the capacity of Appalachian people to compete in the global economy.
- Develop and improve the region's infrastructure.

The 2014-15 project is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Appalachian Regional Commission by virtue of developing the socioeconomic and cultural assets of rural Appalachian communities.

Project Outcomes:

- Students will digitally map the data goals of PKP and BOOM!, which will be available for smart phone and computer use through the website. Increasing the communication and marketing capacity of the community improves the community's infrastructure.
- Students will complete first stage of the process of community asset scoping, inventorying and mapping for the City of Warren, PA. All such public activity and consideration increases the capacity of Appalachian communities to adapt to a global economy.
- Students will conduct research to add site-specific user content to the digital maps.
- The training of business and non-profit groups how to use GPS mapping in support of development goals.
- Students will co-lead community mapping and asset inventory workshops to promote public awareness and participation, involving project partners and the larger community.
- Students will survey community business, government, and non-profit organizations to identify specific internship opportunities for future, more intensive collaborations geared toward building local capacity and infrastructure.
- Students will develop an informational poster and conference presentation for the ATP meetings in Washington, D.C., Dec. 2014.