



Elizabeth, Pennsylvania
RIVER TOWN ASSESSMENT
Synthesized results from 3/8/17

Customized for Trail and River Towns by:

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(Modeled with permission from the Trail Town assessment developed by the Allegheny Trail Alliance)

Elizabeth, PA River Town Needs Assessment

Summary:

Business District

Overall impression is relatively good, customers are greeted warmly, appearance of businesses is clean and attractive.

Amenities for visitors limited: no accessible restrooms. Limited signs, no directional signs, public parking not apparent, no visible tourism information.

Service gaps: vending machines, ice cream, fast food, informal cafes, outdoor seating in restaurants, bookstores, and lodging of any kind.

There is public transportation but no access to emergency medical service.

There does seem to be an understanding of the value of promotions and events.

Design

Town feels safe, attractive, generally free of graffiti and clean. Buildings are generally in good repair, historic buildings sometimes maintained and restored. Building code is generally enforced.

Window displays could be more attractive, more windows lit at night is needed, more banners and color on the street. There are decorative lamps and they are lit at night.

Again for visitors there are no public fountains, few benches, no parklets, green spaces for visitors. Generally clean with adequate trash cans, but street trees could be used more effectively.

Traffic and Access Areas

No signage to access areas, no signs to launch (although PFBC has one, but not even all of the residents knew where it was). No information available on Elizabeth. Some parking near river access area, perhaps adequate at PFBC launch site.

No amenities at river access: no public fountains, toilets, shelters, pavilions, bike racks, lighting. There are trash containers.

It is easy to access riverfront from downtown business district – a short walk but there is no signage directly either pedestrians or motorists.

Sidewalks and streets are generally in good shape with notable exceptions, there are a few bike racks, and no adequate parking for boaters with hitches

POSSIBLE RIVER TOWN PRIORITIES (to be determined):

Business District:

- Inventory available properties and possible uses
- Determine service gaps
- Develop focused business attraction strategy
- Review Code, permitting process – are updates necessary?

Design:

- Consider window display contest
- Create banner program
- Flower Box Program?
- More Murals/public art?

Traffic and Access:

- Create a Gateway Welcome to town
- inventory existing signs and determine any new ones needed
- Develop a Focused Marketing Strategy: Survey bike traffic to determine if additional bike racks are in order. Are bike riders a strong enough visitor market to focus on? Are river recreators? Is it too close to lock and dam?

SECTION 1 - BUSINESS CHECKLIST

Overall Impressions:	Yes	No		
Is there a gateway point to enter/leave town (e.g. a piece of art; mural; sign)?	1	7		
Do business hours match customers' needs (e.g. open on weekends)?	2	4		
Are customers greeted warmly when they walk through the door?	8			
Are businesses clean, including windows?	9			
Are businesses attractive, both exterior and interior?	6	2		
Accommodating to Visitors:				
Are there publicly-accessible restrooms in the businesses?	2	7		
Is there a tourism information or visitor center?		8		
Can employees answer questions about Elizabeth or the region?	2	6		
Business Signs:				
Are businesses open on Saturday and Sunday?	6	3		
Are business signs clearly visible with hours of operation noted?	5	4		
Services:				
Does Elizabeth have the following types of businesses or services?				
Food:	Yes	No	Open Weekdays?	Open Weekends?
Outdoor vending machines		9		
Grocery or portable food	6	3	4	3
Coffee shop	9	2	2	1
Ice cream	3	6	1	1
Fast food or chain restaurant		8		
Informal café with wait service	1	7		
Restaurant with liquor service	9			
Restaurants that offer outdoor seating		8		
Do restaurants serve local food?	3	1		
Lodging:				
Hotel or Inn		9		
Bed and Breakfast		9		
Motel		9		
Hostel		9		
Nearby camping		9		
Services and Amenities:				
Convenience/quick stop store	7			

Drug Store	7			
24 hour ATM	6			
Bookstore		8		
Laundromat	3	5		
Emergency medical service	1	7		
Shuttle service to nearby towns		7		
Public Transportation	7			
Taxi service		7		
Access to public email service (e.g. at the library)		6		

Promotions:	Yes	No
Does Elizabeth host special events to encourage people to come to town?	8	
Do businesses use special promotional tactics to invite people in (e.g. free ice cream?)	2	2
Are there any events now linked to outdoor recreation?	5	3
Do businesses offer out of town shipping for large items?	1	6

SECTION 2 - DESIGN CHECKLIST (Visual Appearance)

Town and Storefronts:	Yes	No
Does the business district feel distinct or special?	6	2
Does Elizabeth feel safe?	8	
Is a walk through the business district generally a visually pleasant experience?	4	3
Are walls and storefronts kept free of graffiti and clean?	5	1
Buildings and Parking:		
In general, are vacant storefronts reasonably maintained?	5	3
Does the community enforce building codes?	5	2
Are historic buildings restored and recognized?	3	5
Storefronts:		
Are store windows lit at night?	2	5
Are storefronts maintained (e.g. no broken glass, crumbling bricks, peeling paint)?	4	2
Do stores have attractive window displays?	1	5
Are there street banners and/ or pole banners in the business district?	2	5
Are there drinking fountains or free access to potable water?		8
Are there decorative lampposts for night lighting?	7	
Clean and Green Elements:	Yes	No
Are there enough benches in public spaces?		
Are parks/green spaces easily accessible and welcoming to visitors?	3	4
Do parks have adequate benches or other amenities?		6
Are street trees used effectively?	2	5

Are the sidewalks swept and kept neat and free of debris?	5	3
Are there sufficient trash cans in town?	6	2
Are there recycling receptacles in town?	3	6

Access Area: Monongahela River	Yes	No
Signage:		
Is there an attractive, well-placed access area to the river?	2	5
Is there a motorized launch?	5	2
Is there a canoe/kayak launch?	6	1
Is there an informational kiosk or bulletin board at the river access area?		8
Is there a rules and regulations courtesy sign at the access area?		7
Is there available information about Elizabeth's services and other attractions that can be "taken away" (e.g. a brochure)?		8
Are there signs to emergency facilities?		8
Is there any historic information about Elizabeth and its significance?	5	3
Parking lots:	Yes	No
Is there parking near the river access area?	5	3
Does the parking lot have extra length for boats?	2	3
Does the parking lot have extra turning radius for boats?	1	4

Amenities at or near the Access Area:	Yes	No
Are there toilet facilities available to the public?		8
Is there a public water fountain?		8
Are there trash receptacles?	6	2
Are there picnic tables?		7
Are there pavilions or shelters?		7
Are there bike racks near boat access?		7
Is there security lighting?	1	5

SECTION 3 - TRAFFIC AND ACCESS ISSUES

General Access Between the Mon River and Town:	Yes	No
Is it easy for visitors to access the downtown commercial district from the river?	5	
Signage:		
Is there adequate signage for motorists to find river access from town?		6
Is there adequate signage from the river leading to town?		4
Safety:		
Are sidewalks in good shape?	4	1

Are crosswalks well-marked?	3	2
Do motorists generally respect pedestrians in crosswalks?	3	2
Are there pedestrian walk/don't walk signals?		6
Parking (vehicles, and/or bicycles):	Yes	No
Is there sufficient on-street parking?	6	
Are off-street parking lots placed behind stores?	2	3
Are curb cuts in front of businesses limited in size and number resulting in a continuous sidewalk?	3	1
Are there bike racks near businesses?	4	2
Are there secure off-sidewalk bike parking areas close to the business district?		5
Is there adequate space in parking lots for vehicles with boat hitches?		3

Add any notes of further items noticed on your tour:

- No crosswalks near river**
- Gateway from SR 51 not attractive**
- No information about river access**
- No promotional takeaway**
- No green space**
- No street signs**
- Directions are needed to riverfront**
- Public parking not readily apparent**
- Desperate need of signage**
- Need to encourage owners to clean up buildings**