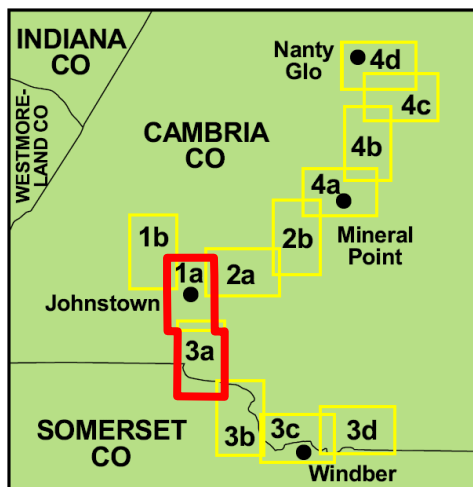




Section 5.6 Corridor 3

Path of The Flood Trail - Downtown Johnstown to Jim Mayer Riverswalk Trail

A. General Alignment Context



Section 5.6 POF Trail Downtown Johnstown to The James Mayer Riverswalk is depicted in Maps 1a (Downtown Johnstown) and 3a (existing James Mayer Riverswalk Trail)



The September 11th National Memorial Trail

will connect the three sites where lives were lost in the terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001:

- The September 11th National Memorial in New York City,
- The Pentagon Memorial near Washington, DC, and
- The Flight 93 National Memorial near Shanksville, PA

The Path of The Flood Trail (POTF) to The Jim Mayer Riverswalk Trail is designed to function as a separated stand-alone Feasibility Study which is part of the larger Johnstown Urban Connectivity Plan (JUCP). As a testament to the importance of this project to the region, during the preparation of this report, two significant grants have already been attained (DCNR C2P2 and DCED CFA) to pursue design, engineering and construction of these highest priority significant connectivity projects. This section focuses on defining a functional, feasible routes to:

Connect the northern reaches of The Jim Mayer Trail (JMT) in Moxham at Sandyvale Gardens northward (inbound) to the existing POTF and Iron to Arts (I2A) corridor at Clinton Street.

The existing **POTF Trail**, currently aligned along Clinton Street is a part of a major investment by Gautier Steel Corporation and Cambria County Redevelopment Authority (CCRA) called '**The Iron to Arts Project**'. POTF is also the host corridor for colocation of **The September 11th National Memorial Trail**, which connects downtown Johnstown along a planned 1,300 mile pilgrimage trail connecting numerous National Heritage Sites:

- Flight 93 National Memorial, Shanksville, PA;
- The Johnstown Flood Museum, downtown Johnstown, PA;
- The Staple Bend Tunnel. 'Oldest Railroad Tunnel in America', Mineral Point, PA;
- Johnstown Flood National Memorial, South Fork, PA;
- The Allegheny-Portage Railroad National Historic Site, Museum and Visitor's Center, Gallitzin, PA.



This Section of the JUCP is comprised of **4 Key Segments:**

- 1. Downtown POTF Trail from Central Park to Haynes Street** - via Somerset and Franklin Streets;
- 2. Through Kernville** – Haynes Street to Sandyvale Gardens via Somerset and Hickory Streets;
- 3. Old Conemaugh Borough/ Upper Downtown** – POTF Trail/I2A from Clinton Street to Bedford and Haynes Streets at Baumer Street;
- 4. Through Hornerstown** – Bedford Street via Baumer Street to Jim Mayer Trail at Sandyvale Gardens.

Based upon feedback at numerous Public Meetings, feedback from the Study Committee, CCCRA and regional bicycling club Laurel Highlands On and Off Road Bicycling Assn. (LORHBA), this section addresses the three challenging intersections in the Kernville and Hornerstown Communities:

Master Gardeners and volunteer staff shared access to the Master Plan for Sandyvale Gardens, which is providing a highly sought after quality riverside park and public open space.

- 1.) The Franklin/ Hickory/ Napoleon Streets intersection**
- 2.) The Bedford/ Baumer Streets intersection**
- 3.) The Bedford/ Haynes Streets intersection**



Segments 2 and 4 are both recommended to be implemented to form a highly functional urban transit loop system with associated requisite enhancements and improvements. The loop system is not intended to promote redundant alignments, but rather to provide an inclusive bike/ped system that connects both the Kernville and Hornerstown communities. Many local citizens currently navigate this loop daily for work, shopping and community events.



1. Downtown POTF Trail from Central Park to Haynes Street - via Somerset and Franklin Streets

The primary proposed connection to downtown Johnstown between the POTF Trail and The Jim Mayer Riverswalk (and co-located 9/11 NMT) is via Somerset and Franklin Streets to cross from Kernville into downtown Johnstown via the Franklin Street bridge. A second connection is envisioned to link Hornerstown to downtown via Baumer and Adams Streets.

The POTF is currently aligned along Washington and Clinton Streets, but is proposed to align along the north side of Locust Street to connect directly with the downtown business district and Central Park. The JUCP study concurs with the initiative to continue investment in Franklin Street's generously wide sidewalks that are served by dual access pedestrian walkways on the Franklin Street bridge.





2. Through Kernville – Haynes Street to Sandyvale Gardens via Somerset and Hickory Streets



Brotz Place (view from Dibert St. to north)

With courteous coordination, the trail route may extend through this space behind Christ Centered Church (former Brotz Place Alley) for a more direct connection to Haynes Street rather than detour on-road Somerset Street.

At the onset of the JUCP, Somerset Street was originally identified as a prime connector from Haynes Street to the Hickory Street bridge, which will serve well as a share the road configuration for experienced cyclists who are comfortable traveling roadways in traffic. During the process of site inventory and analysis, the consulting team discovered the remnant portion of Brotz Place can be used to connect the Haynes Street bridge most directly to the Somerset Street Park. Historically, Brotz Place originally connected to Dibert Street, but was cut off during construction of the COE Flood Wall construction.

Brad Clemenson, Cambria County Conservation and Recreation Authority (CCCRA) Board

Member, coordinated with leaders of Christ Centered Community Church, who reaffirmed in early winter of 2020 that the trail may be able to be located behind their building to provide this desired connection. Further coordination will be needed to coordinate closely with church leadership to relocate two small sheds and reconfigure the 20'+ space to provide privacy/security fencing and potentially landscape enhancements.



Consulting team members consider downtown connectivity to The Riverwalk at Conemaugh Medical Park and UPC/ Hillman Cancer Center

From this point between the church and river, the route can continue east directly to the Haynes Street bridge, north to the Franklin Street bridge, **The Riverwalk** at Conemaugh Medical Park and The UPMC/ Hillman Cancer Center. At this juncture, the trail can also continue beneath the SR56 (overhead) viaduct through a public space now known as “Pillar Park”, which is essentially becoming a popular gateway art gallery within the PennDOT Right-of-Way. The gateway shares space for public and private parking and is envisioned to lead to another planned trail parallel to SR 56 along the river to connect directly to the historic Inclined Plane and various planned recreation venues in “Inclined Plane River Park”.



Pillar Park under SR 56

PennDOT has coordinated with The City of Johnstown to provide mixed use of this area of Right-of-Way beneath the SR56 overhead 'viaduct'. Continued enhancement of this space can continue to



Artistic Renderings of bike/ped accommodations under SR56 within the PennDOT Right-of-Way commonly known as 'Pillar Park'.

Enhancements may include signs, informational kiosks with 'you are here' maps, sidewalk, multi-use trail, landscape and continued art commissions can be added to further enhance and utilize this public space.

provide local businesses and residences with parking spaces that may also accommodate visitors to the city trail system. This space is already in productive use and can readily be enhanced to provide a direct connection to an envisioned multi-use trail along the SR56 ROW between Somerset Street and Menoher Blvd./Coconut Place.

A multi-use trail is being planned at this location to connect northward to the Historic Inclined Plane to access the river, downhill mountain bike trails and other outdoor adventure destinations along 'Riverside Park'.



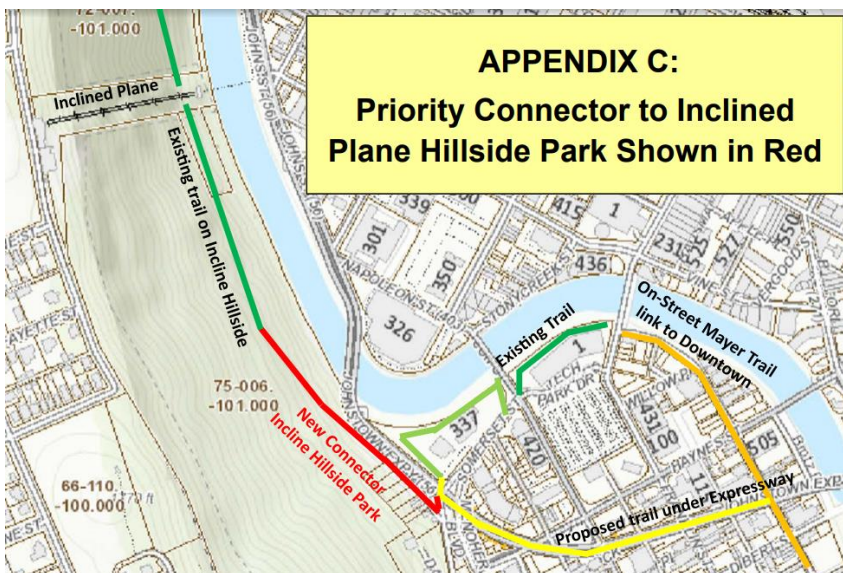


JUCP Team contemplating potential for a multi-use trail to connect Pillar Park (under SR56) at Menoher Blvd./Coconut Place to north to The Historic Incline Plane at Incline Hillside Park.



Several plans are being prepared to introduce new features and amenities to The Incline Plane area and Riverside Park including creative concepts such as mountain bike trails, ziplines, expansion of the James Wolfe Sculpture Trail and addition of numerous historic interpretive panels. Among these plans is a concept to develop a multi-use trail opposite the river from SR56 (The Johnstown Expressway). Coordination is already underway with PennDOT District 9-0 to consider allowing use of their Right-of-Way to develop a trail connection from behind The Hillman Cancer Center to Coconut Place, where a parking lot is planned.

This new connector Trail to Coconut Place and The Incline Plane will provide a long desired off-road direct link from the Kernville community. The trail from Coconut Place, is conceived to be able to be benched into the hillside and provide accessible route to the Incline Plane. Grants will be pursued for design and construction of this potential trail within and adjacent to the SR56 PennDOT ROW.



(above left) Accessible ramp at Johns Street (SR56) and Union Street will be useful in conveying trail users of all ages and abilities to access not only the historic Incline Plane, but also the many amenities envisioned on The Hillside Park, which can be connected through implementation of a New Connector Trail to Menoher Blvd.

(above right) Diagram of New Connector Trail envisioned and inserted as Appendix C in a grant application package to attain Design Development funding.

(left) Hillside Park terraces and trails visible in a winter photograph.



From The Somerset Street Park, a multi-use off-road trail is envisioned to continue southward through several formerly blighted parcels that have been purchased and cleaned up by The Cambria County Redevelopment Authority (CCRA). These parcels form a riverside public greenspace that extends to The Trinity Asbury

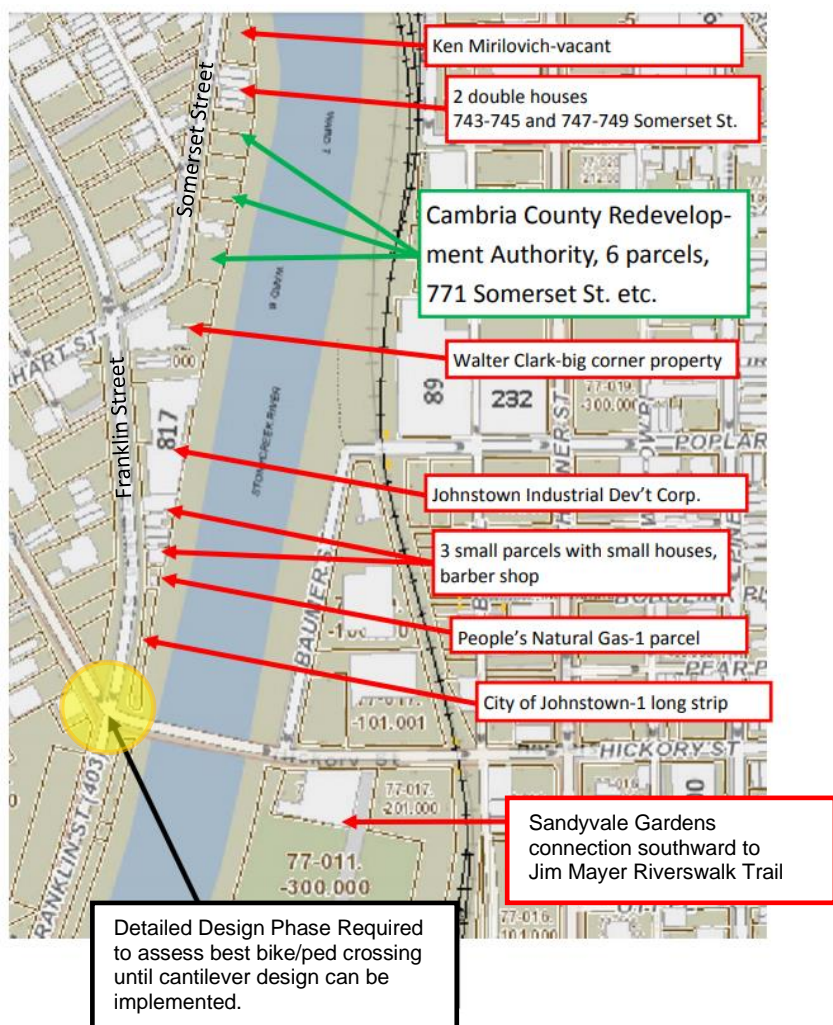
United Methodist Church opposite Crow Place. It is conceivable that with cooperation of this church's leadership, a very narrow (pinched down to 3-4' sidewalk width) passage between the church's foundation and the River Walls could be considered similar to the Christ Centered Community Church's configuration.

Opposite Plummer Alley, four existing private residential lots have buildings with rear porches that touch the river walls, essentially prohibiting passage of the trail in that location. This pattern continues southward along Somerset Street to the intersection of Franklin and Everhart Streets. It is highly recommended, however that CCRA and The Johnstown Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) and other City organizations continue to monitor these properties in the event that they become available for purchase so that the buildings could be razed and provide open space for placement of the trail.

The Franklin/ Hickory/ Napoleon Streets intersection is among the most reviled points of conflict between vehicles and bike/peds within the entire study area. A primary goal of the JUCP

is to identify a route that maximizes bike/ped access near the river, connecting destinations and minimizing conflicts with vehicular traffic. Therefore, significant efforts have been made to find plausible solutions to meet those goals while working within the highly regulated and restrictive parameters of the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE) flood wall system.

Many locals (observed and testimonials) indicate that they travel Franklin St. (city inbound only) to avoid the outbound conflict of bicycle and pedestrian conflicts of waiting in and crossing traffic making the left (east) turn onto the Hickory Street bridge. Most people are comfortable making the right hand turn movement from the Hickory Street bridge to Franklin St. (northward/ inbound to downtown), but not in the opposite movement direction – even though the intersection is signalized and the bridge includes sidewalk accommodations. To avoid the traffic conflict, many choose to make the Bedford/Baumer Streets Loop (southward/ outbound from downtown) their return route home or as their routine fitness loop.





A significant investment has been made by the City, PennDOT and the CCCRA to enhance portions of Franklin Street, yet the 500' section between Hickory St. and Somerset Street continues to present access challenges given the limited space for infrastructure between the river (COE flood walls) and Franklin Street.

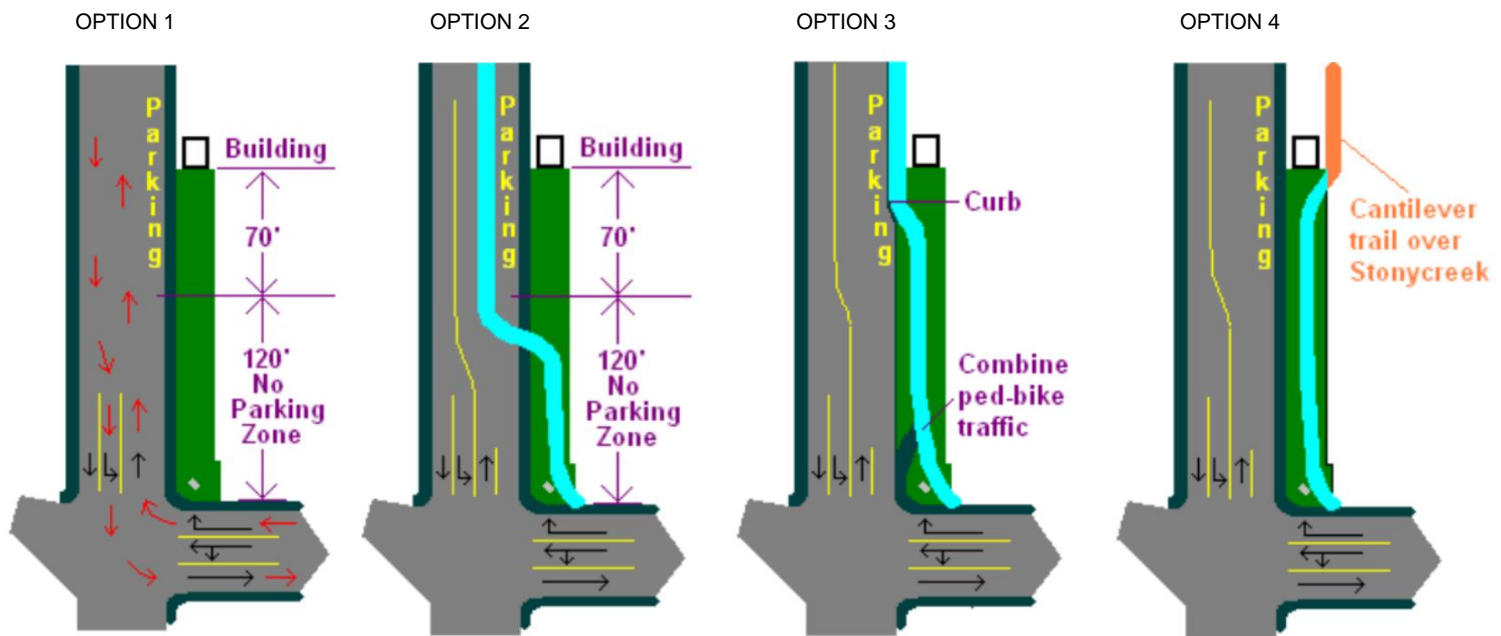
See *The Franklin Street Corridor Redevelopment Plan*, which is included as an Appendix.

CCCRA board members investigated numerous concepts to utilize the strip of greenspace between the river and Franklin Street for off-road multi-use bike/ped accommodations. The various concepts are summarized as three potential configurations:

Option 1, on-street bicycle 'Share The Road' configuration;

Options 2 and 3, utilize the green strip to align with a wide multi-use sidewalk;

Option 4, design a Multi-Use Trail cantilevered along the top of the concrete Flood Walls from Hickory Street to Somerset Street;



Potential solutions for consideration of providing enhanced bicycle pedestrian accommodation within the busy Franklin/ Hickory/ Napoleon Streets intersection including: 'Share The Road' configuration (OPTION 1), Reconfiguration of Franklin Street to provide a 'Cycle Track' (OPTION 2), Convert sidewalk to 'Cycle Track' (OPTION 3), or a full off-road multi-use trail cantilever system out over the USACOE Flood Walls (OPTION 4)

In order to consider provision of a multi-use trail between Hickory and Somerset Streets other than on Franklin Street, a trail would need to be built on a very narrow strip of real estate between the buildings and river walls. This situation is very similar to the proposal (See Section 4) for cantilevering along Roosevelt Blvd. to connect the Cambria City Historic District to the Iron To Arts Trail located on The Lower Works Steel Bridge between Roosevelt Ave and Iron Street.



Above: view to Hickory Street Bridge highlighting newly added pedestrian accommodations (push button ped phase actuator) button.
Below: View north of Franklin Street toward Somerset Street. Note discontinued new sidewalk on riverside.





The JUCP consulting Team coordinated with The US Army Corps of Engineers (COE) to conduct a series of meetings focused on evaluating potential modifications of the concrete

River Flood Mitigation Walls that line the entire length of the Conemaugh and Little Conemaugh Rivers throughout downtown Johnstown. An initial meeting in 2019 with COE staff produced an opportunity for a formal presentation of proposed conceptual alterations of the flood walls. Several concepts for cantilevering over, and/or ‘notching into’ the flood walls were prepared and submitted for consideration.



The JUCP Team investigated further and determined that a free-standing cantilevered trail ‘promenade’ might be possible by locating anchored footings behind the flood walls to cantilever over the flood walls. In order to engineer such a cantilever system, further detailed investigation will be required to assess the structural composition, footing and foundation configuration as well as proximity of the walls within The COE’s jurisdictional Rights-of-Way.

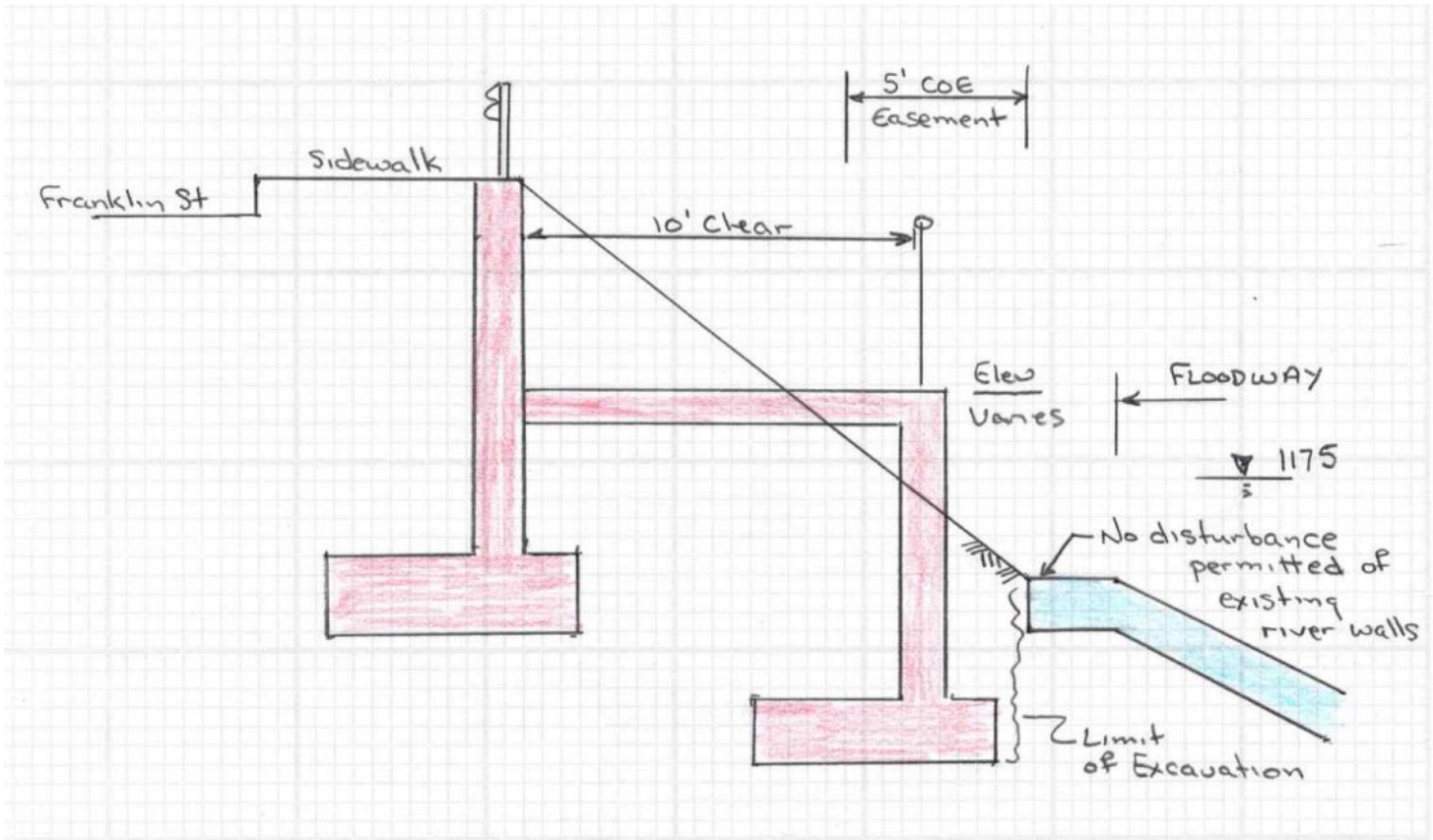
In February, 2020, The COE Dam and Levee Safety Section provided a process by which The City of Johnstown can formally request design plans that may include cross sections and foundation construction details of the river walls.

In the spring of 2020, COE was indicating that virtually **no** modification of the walls would be permitted and projects such as painting murals on the walls were being denied.



According to correspondence received from USACOE on December 13th, 2020, The JUCP Team concludes that The USACOE may and may not consider the proposed cantilever trail concept, however, depending upon potentially favorable wall foundation and footing configuration and composition, this concept may be considered and pursued further phases of design.

The following conceptual cross section was presented and discussed with USACOE (and PennDOT District 9-0), which provides a trail 'bench', requiring modification of the existing flood walls:



The Cambria County Redevelopment Authority (CCRA) has been in the process of acquiring numerous blighted and underutilized properties along the Somerset Street portion of the riverfront, which reduces the required



length of cantilevered trail to approximately 600' feet in length to reach open space currently owned by the Authority.

If and when the remaining properties become available for

purchase, The Authority can continue to reduce the cantilever length or the need for a cantilevered trail altogether. With the exception of several buildings currently under the management of The Johnstown Industrial Development Corporation, several residences, a barber shop and Planned Parenthood compete for the few available parking spaces at their frontage along Somerset Street.

It is entirely conceivable that The CCRA and/or IDA can identify more appropriate and accommodating parcels within the downtown – also on the bus and transit loops that could be considered for relocation of these residences and businesses. Relocation of these facilities would provide an opportunity for more functional and

adequate parking, ingress and egress from

a lesser traffic volume street. The narrow space between Somerset Street and the river walls could be returned to quality green open space that could accommodate location of a multi-use trail and associated support and trailhead facilities, landscape and kiosk/signs.

A next step in pursuit of the cantilever concept will be for the City to prepare and submit formal request for wall details, then conduct detailed survey and geotechnical investigations that would determine the potential for pile driven or cast-in-place pilings and piers that could potentially support the cantilever design. It is conceivable that creative solutions for placement of support piers could render a solution that will support favorable consideration by COE for the cantilevered trail.

(above left) 3-D Google Earth image of The Reconstruction of Haynes Street bridge 2015-2019 looking from Kernville to north Hornerstown.

(middle left) Multiple rear porches and stoops extend toward the river flood walls along the Stonycreek River

(lower left) Very limited space exists behind the existing buildings fronting Somerset Street.





3. Old Conemaugh Borough/ Upper Downtown – POTF Trail/I2A from Clinton Street to Bedford and Haynes Streets at Baumer Street



During one of several site visits to the Bedford/Baumer Streets Intersection, The JUCP Team noticed several local persons with disabilities navigating this important but challenging crossing. The person in the personal mobility device (Center) is a local resident and the other two persons have been added to the photo to illustrate an 12' wide multi-use trail and gateway landscape enhancements in this location.

The JUCP planning team has generated several solutions that enhance pedestrian crossings to connect from Hornerstown to downtown and POFT at Clinton Street.

The Bedford/ Baumer Streets intersection is a known challenge for pedestrians and bicyclists to navigate given the four lanes of vehicular traffic entering this uniquely configured 5-point intersection gateway into the city's downtown.

The consulting team observed and spoke with several local citizens who express concerns with the existing circuitous sidewalk/ crosswalk that is

less practical than making a direct crossing with higher visibility (to vehicles), shortest distance and line of sight. Several locals admitted that they never use the existing accessible route or hadn't realized its existence, but they need to cross at this location multiple times per day between home and work, shopping and neighborhood destinations.

Two primary plausible options have emerged:

1. Construct a 6' wide Pedestrian Refuge Island across the 4-lane crossing at the Baumer/ Adams Streets intersection;
2. Plan and Design a Coordinated bike/ped phase crosswalk parallel to the active CSXT railroad tracks from Bedford to Main Street.

Both of these conceptual scenarios have been preliminarily discussed with PennDOT District 9-0 with the understanding that further detailed investigation and coordination with traffic study, survey and crossing design in detailed engineering phase will need to be conducted to

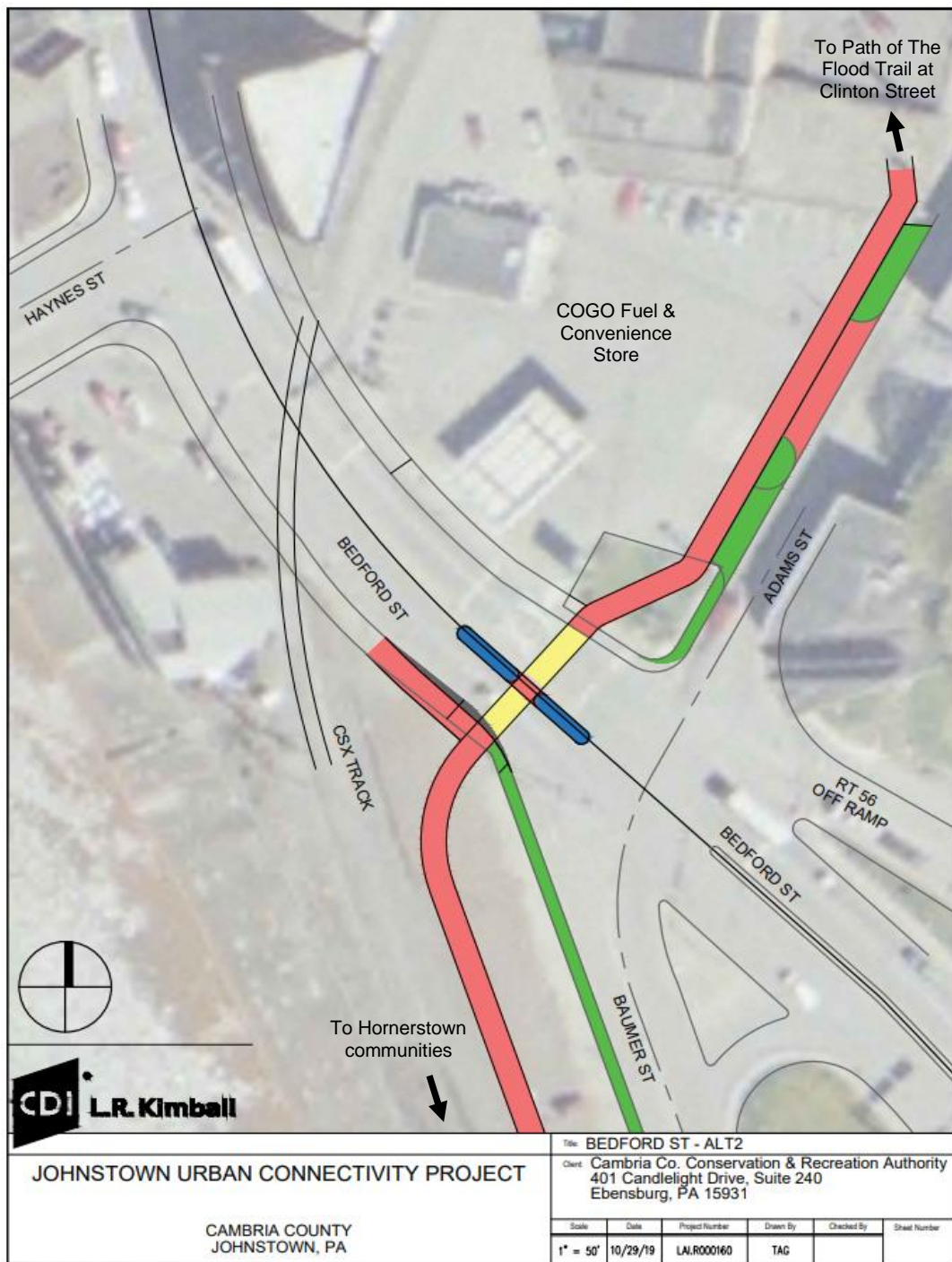


Richard Burkert, JAHA President in front of the Ludvig House, 662 Main Street, which survived all three Johnstown floods. Credit: tberkey@tribdem.com



establish parameters for detailed design and future permitting and construction.

Extensive coordination will be required to coordinate timing and location of the CSXT rail crossing and unique signal phase, which possibly could also serve to accommodate a dedicated pedestrian signal phase.



This public crossing is so important that, even prior to completion of the JUCP, grants have been pursued and successfully attained to advance the project to Preliminary Engineering Phase of Design.

From the refuge island, a multi-use trail is envisioned from the Cogo Convenience Store parallel to Adams Street, possibly using the historic Ludwig House (Where Clara Barton in 1889 brought in the Red Cross) to Main Street, then along Feeder Street to the Freight Station on Clinton and Mathew Streets.

The JUCP Team met with PennDOT District 9-0 to discuss the concept of enhancing the Bedford/Baumer Streets intersection, which resulting in conclusion that a full 6' refuge island would be required due to the four lane crossing configuration. Realignment of the lanes and south curbline will be required, but is certainly within the realm of possibility.

Similar coordination with

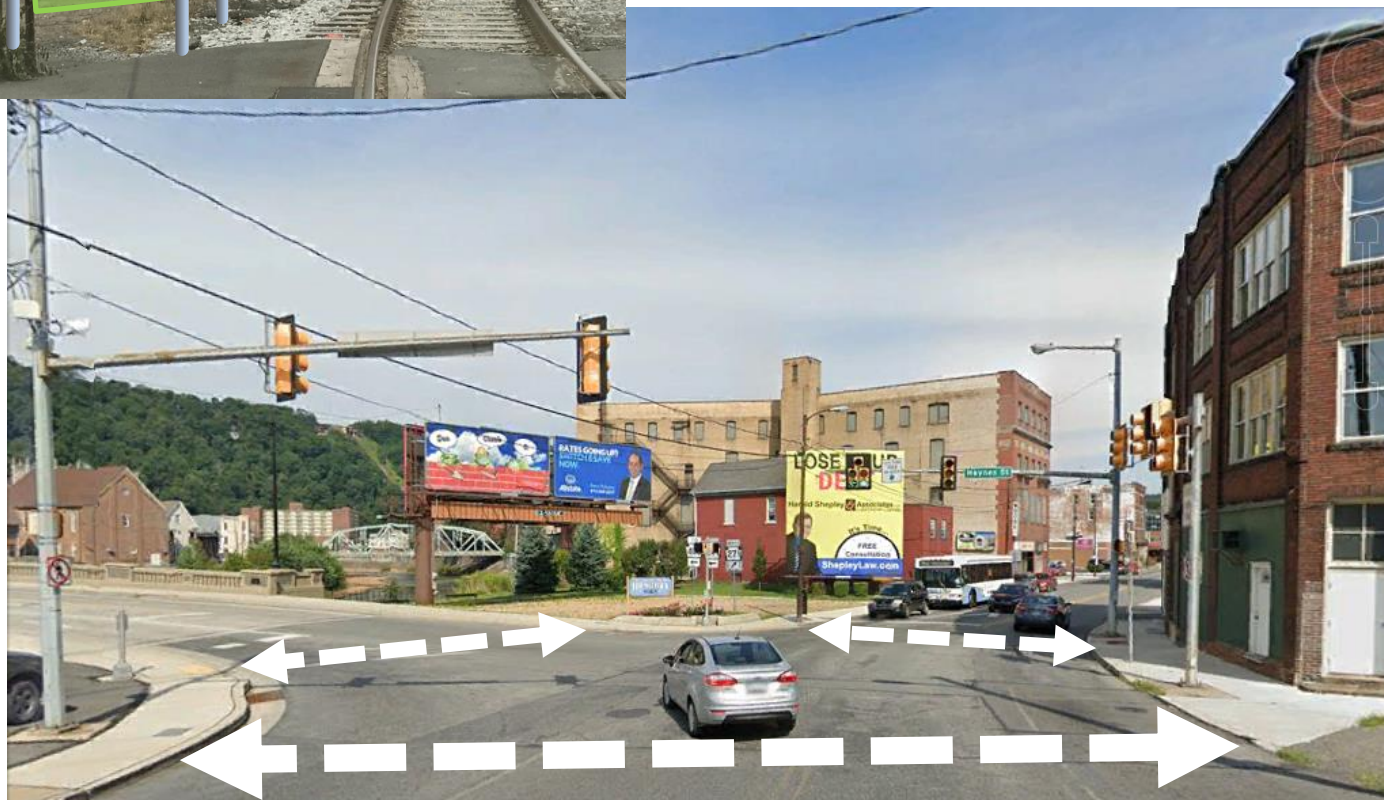
CSXT Rail Corporation concluded that extensive coordination would be needed to consider location and configuration of a bike/ped crossing at the Haynes/ Bedford Streets Intersection or between Haynes and Baumer Streets.



The Bedford/ Haynes Streets intersection and recently completed Haynes Street Bridge (2018) provide pedestrian enhancements and can accommodate Share The Road bicycle traffic (or dismount and walk your bike along the sidewalk), however a stand alone multi-use bike/ped bridge has been considered to provide separated bike/ped traffic from the busy intersection, which is further complicated by rail movements along the active CSXT Rail corridor

located between Haynes and Adams Street. This alignment can also take advantage of available underutilized open space for use as a trail gateway (kiosk, map/signs, retail business marketing and landscape) at the east end of the Haynes Street bridge.

The vision here is to coordinate with CSX Transportation (CSXT) and PennDOT to implement a safe bike/ped crossing from Haynes Street bridge northeast to connect to



Notice the 'NO PEDESTRIAN CROSSING' signs, which make walking, crossing or riding a bicycle unadvised and practically illegal.

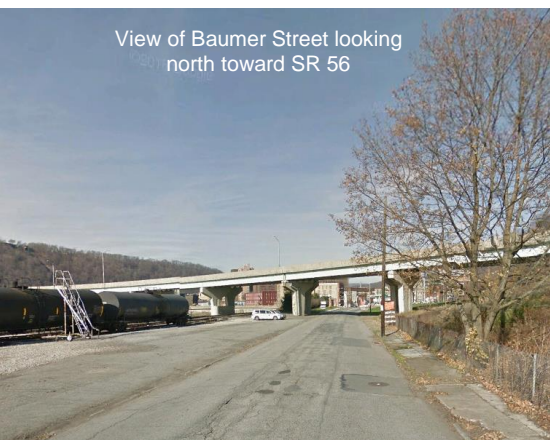
The Haynes Street intersection is a prime location and opportunity for an enhanced parklet/ gateway to be developed – with views to the river and access to multiple CamTran routes.

the existing POTF at the historic Freight Station on Clinton Street. Further coordination would be needed to propose that the multi-use trail continue along Strawberry Alley across Main, Locust and Railroad Streets to reach the enhancements underway in Gautier Steel's Iron To Arts (I2A) Corridor along Clinton Street.



4. Through Hornerstown – Bedford Street via Baumer Street to Jim Mayer Trail at Sandyvale Gardens.

View of Baumer Street looking north toward SR 56



Segment 4 is the most straightforward part of the plan. From the Bedford Street bike-ped crossing outlined in detail in Segment 3, Segment 4 will be a simple share-the-road route that uses Baumer Street, Bell Alley, Poplar Street and back to Baumer Street. This route will most directly connect the Upper Downtown to Sandyvale Memorial Gardens and the existing off-road Mayer Trail. This trail segment can be made much more attractive with appropriate curb and sidewalk enhancements, landscaping and beautification, especially along Baumer Street to create a visible barrier from the railroad tracks and a more attractive viewshed looking across the Stonycreek River toward Kernville. It is anticipated that the

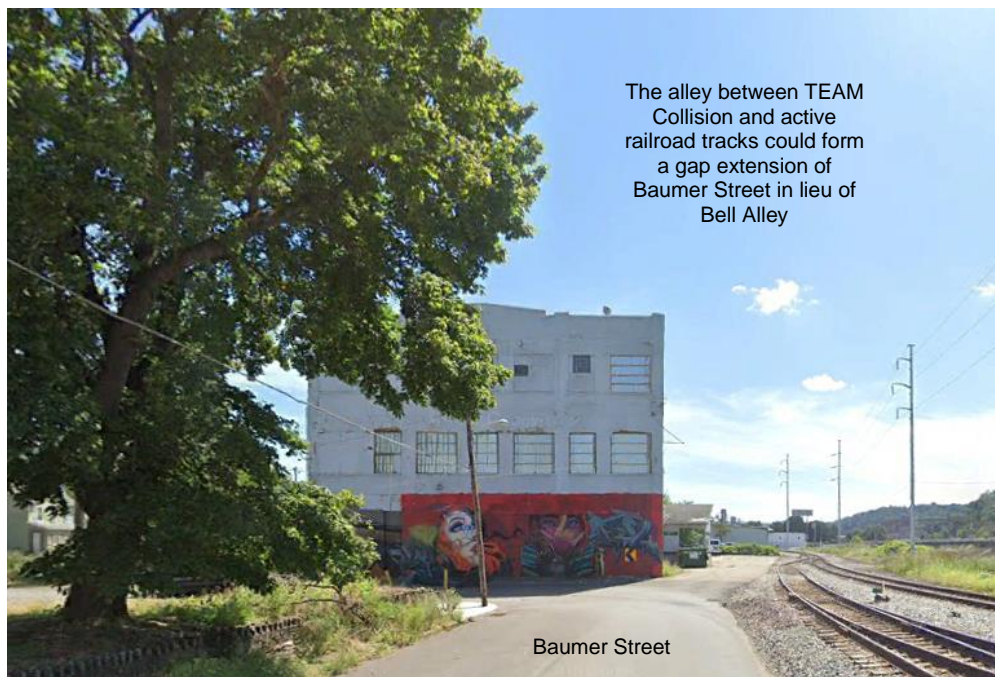
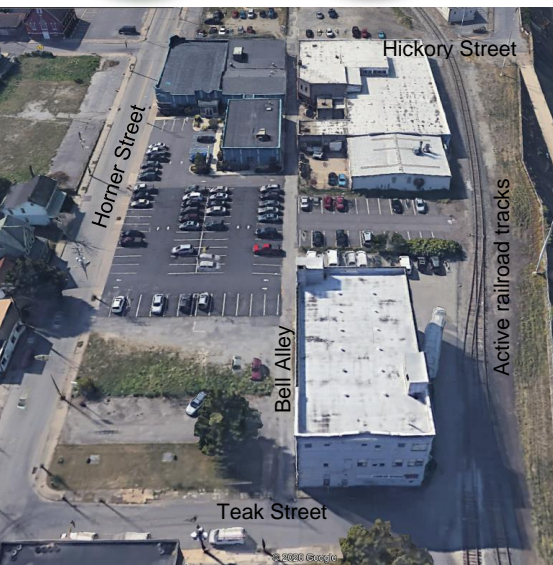


gravel parking lot fronting Hickory Street at Sandyvale Gardens will be enhanced in order to serve as a trailhead with maps and informational kiosk. As in all public crossings, whether existing or proposed, it is highly recommended that each crosswalk such as the crossing of Haynes Street,



that high visibility Continental style Crosswalks be implemented in addition to the high visibility trail crossing signs provided at the Horner Street crossing of the Jim Mayer Trail.

The JUCP consulting team also considered the possibility that the trail may be able to be routed between the active railroad tracks and the TEAM Collision & Service Center, however Bell Alley can be used for short or long term alignment in the event that coordination for trail 'next to rail' is a time consuming long term pursuit or not possible.





Key Recommendations

- Enhance the ‘Welcome to Johnstown Gateway’ sign at Bedford/ Haynes Streets intersection to modern aesthetics, seasonally attractive landscape and street trees with benches and an informational kiosk with orientation sign, marketing of local services, eateries and destinations;
- Consider integration of a dedicated pedestrian bridge parallel to Haynes Street bridge to better accommodate bicycles and to frame a gateway connection to the potential park/ parklet in the existing public open space at the Haynes/ Bedford Streets intersection;
- Continue discussion and interchange of plans, drawings and concepts to present to USACOE in consideration of a cantilevered multi-use off road trail along the flood walls at Franklin and Somerset Streets;
- Discuss and negotiate an accessible route an easement through the COGO Convenience Store Properties and LVR to provide a multi-use trail parallel to Adams Street;
- Coordinate with CSXT and PennDOT to prepare Preliminary and Final Detailed Design of amenable bicycle and pedestrian accommodating crossing (6’ minimum pedestrian refuge island within the 4-lane context of Bedford Street; continental crosswalks, signalized pedestrian phase, signage) at the Bedford/Haynes Streets intersection;
- Enhance the Hickory Street Bridge intersection to integrate high visibility continental crosswalks and a dedicated bicycle/ pedestrian phase;
- Coordinate with PennDOT and The City to consider bike lanes, a dedicated Cycle Track and enhanced bike/ped awareness along Franklin Street;
- Encourage The City, CCRA and IDC to relocate residence and businesses along Franklin Street to other better accommodating properties within the city that will provide adequate parking, safe ingress/ egress and on-street parking and loading space;
- Encourage The City, CCRA and IDC to acquire these same properties outright in consideration of turning the riverfront space into greenspace and public park realm with a multi-use off-road trail from the Hickory Street bridge to Somerset Street to both the Franklin and Haynes Streets bridges.