

THREE FORTS of PRESQUE ISLE and INTERPRETIVE CENTER



PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN
October 2021

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INTRODUCTION

■ THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PAST

Since the late 1870s, the landscape in and around the mouth of Erie, Pennsylvania's Mill Creek has captured. The first archaeological digs just to the west uncovered artifacts from the French and Indian War thought to have been forever lost. Further excavations on Garrison Hill revealed information about the final days of General Anthony Wayne, one of the country's most important military figures who succumbed to an illness in a blockhouse at the American fort site.

These digs by Civil War veterans were the community's first venture into exploration of important characters and events associated with Erie's historic past. They sought answers to questions about the French and British occupation of Presque Isle in the 1750s and 60s, Anthony Wayne's burial, and the men who served with Oliver Hazard Perry in the War of 1812. They even went so far as to build a replica blockhouse and create a well-manicured and maintained park on Garrison Hill for visitors coming to Erie.

Their work, and Erie's past, did not go unnoticed when John Nolen prepared the first city-wide redevelopment plan for Erie. He too recognized the importance of the Mill Creek sites, noting the cultural significance of the blockhouses built by the French, those on the Garrison Hill grounds, and the prominence of Perry's fleet. "Here (Mill Creek) was erected the first dwelling house in Erie County by an American citizen," noted Nolen. Yet, by 1913, all were but a distant memory.

Almost a century passed before the fort sites were once again acknowledged as a strategic priority

worthy of protection and interpretation. In 2002, Representative Phil English introduced a bill in Congress to "establish as a unit of the National Park System the Fort Presque Isle National Historic Site in Erie, Pennsylvania." Perpetually underfunded, the park service passed on supporting the legislation, and once more hallowed ground in Erie failed to gain the distinction it deserved.

■ THE THREE FORTS OF PRESQUE ISLE —A NEW INITIATIVE

The Three Forts project traces its origins to the summer of 1995 when Erie staged a year-long celebration marking the 200th anniversary of the founding of Erie. While a series of events were held throughout the city, the Bicentennial celebration refocused the community's attention on Erie's bayfront particularly the east bayfront where the French, British and American forts once stood.

As the celebration drew to a close, Bicentennial organizers built the Heritage Monument at the foot of Parade Street to mark the site where surveyors first began to plan the settlement of Erie and to leave a lasting legacy of the Bicentennial celebration. The Heritage Monument was dedicated on September 10, 1995, during the closing ceremonies for the Bicentennial, with then Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge as the keynote speaker. The auspicious occasion also included the attaches representing France and England and from the Iroquois Confederation.

Fast forward 25 years. With Erie undergoing an economic and cultural renaissance, local historian Michael Fuhrman approached the board of

the Bayfront East Side Taskforce (BEST) with an ambitious plan to reconstruct the French, British and American forts that once stood near Wallace Street Park and on Garrison Hill, the neighborhood that BEST serves. The project's goals were to commemorate often overlooked history that dated back to 1753: the international struggle to control what was seen then as the frontier of the "New World" and pivotal moments in Erie and the nation's early history.

In addition to the forts, attention was also given to creating a new Interpretive Center through an adaptive reuse project involving the Janitor Supply offices and warehouse. Located between the park and hill, the buildings at 540 E. 2nd Street are a combined 38,000 square feet. Thus, the Three Forts project was envisioned as an important new anchor for the region's tourism and recreation sector that draws over 4 million visitors each year and stimulates a \$1 billion county wide tourism base. In 2019, prior to the pandemic, the BEST board formed a limited liability corporation charged with raising funds and completing a Master Plan.

The City of Erie's immigration history starts at the mouth of Mill Creek and extends along East Front Street at the bluff's edge overlooking Presque Isle Bay. Reconnecting with and investing in East Bayfront's historic past will position Erie to stand out from the homogenized mainstream of strip malls, chain restaurants, amusement parks, and suburbs, gaining a decisive edge in the competition for people's attention and interest.

—Michael Fuhrman

Our vision is for every visitor to be able to connect with Erie's historic past.

■ **THE THREE FORTS OF PRESQUE ISLE AND INTERPRETIVE CENTER MASTER PLAN**

In June 2020, work began in earnest to create a master plan to serve as a blueprint for the development of the Three Forts of Presque Isle and Interpretive Center located in Erie's historic East Bayfront community. It is difficult to envision the 13.5 acre Three Forts Campus, comprised of Wallace Street Park, Ted Amendola Memorial Field, the 540 E. 2nd Street properties, and Garrison Hill, outside the context of the surrounding neighborhood, an immediate landscape that also includes the majestic structures of the Soldier's and Sailors' Home and the Veterans Cemetery. Combined, they represent 200 plus years of Erie's built environment and provide the community with the oldest collective memories of the city's historic past.

The Planning Process

The process for preparing this plan was slightly stunted because of concerns over the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, public input from the community was limited. However, in order to evaluate support and generate an inventory of historic and cultural resources in and around Erie, five separate visits an average of four days each were conducted between July 2020 and May 2021 to Pennsylvania. While in Erie, meetings were held with numerous stakeholders, community leaders, and interested parties. They included members of the Three Forts board: Michael Fuhrman, Jeremy Bloeser, Tom Tupitza, Father Pimen Simon, Father Henry Kriegel, Del Birch, and Ken Vybiral. We also met with or talked to Mayor Joseph Schember, State Rep. Pat



The shaded area represents the boundaries of the approximately 13.5-acre Three Forts of Presque Isle study area

Harkins, Councilman David Brennen, Tom Hagen, Board Chair, Erie Insurance, Jeffrey Brinling, Erie Insurance, Nick Scott and Nick Scott, Jr., Scott Enterprises, Emily Aloiz, Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development, George Deutsch, Hagen History Center, Ferki Ferati, Jefferson Educational Society, John Persinger, EDDC, William Sabatini, Flagship Niagara, John Oliver, VisitErie, Carl Anderson, Michael Batchelor, Erie Community Foundation, Casey Wells, Erie Events, and Brenda Sandberg, Erie Port Authority. As outsiders, it was important to gather local perspectives on tourism, historic preservation, economic development, and community planning.

We were fortunate to consult with Maj. Gen. Anthony J. Carrelli at the Pennsylvania Department

of Military and Veterans Affairs. Garrison Hill is owned by the State of Pennsylvania and administered by the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home. Gen. Carrelli offered his support for the project and a willingness to work with local government agencies to transfer control of the site to the City of Erie. Ed Mascharka III, owner of the Janitor Supply Company, supplied blueprints for his historic buildings at 540 E. 2nd Street for evaluation as to their potential restoration and adaptive reuse as mixed use space and the interpretive center. Court Gould, local sustainability consultant, gave us direction on how to scope our interpretation and navigate local environmental issues. John Vanco offered insight into current efforts at urban reforestation in Erie. Jasper Sachsenmeier and Chris Shelton,

as collaborators from Penn State Behrend's VAR Lab, indulged our desire to create immersive experiences for visitors to the campus. Brian McNulty and Tom McClelland, from PennDOT, updated us on the Garrison Hill bridge design and construction, and the new pedestrian bridge design for the Bayfront Parkway. Dr. Joe Stahlman, from the

Seneca Nation, brought Native knowledge and an understanding of the environmental issues associated with interpreting past and future engagement of the Great Lakes and sustainability. Dr. Chris Majoc, with Mercyhurst University, helped define a local interpretive and community involvement process for the new interpretive center and the East

Bayfront neighborhood. Dr. Mary Ann Owoc, also at Mercyhurst, enlighten our understanding of past archaeology studies at Garrison Hill. Roland Cagle, from Village Restorations located in Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania, provided guidance on the reconstruction of the French and British forts. Finally, Michael Fuhrman, Pat Cuneo, Judy Lynch, and



The Three Forts of Presque Isle and Interpretive Center Campus is a reimagining of the Wallace Street Park, the janitor Supply Company Warehouse, and Garrison Hill.



This master plan was influenced by the conclusions and recommendations made by Herberling and Associates' Phase I/II Archaeological Studies for the Bayfront Parkway Central Corridor Improvement Project for Garrison Hill. The report states that near the Wayne Blockhouse there remains "intact and potentially significant deposits related to precontact settlement and the blockhouse era." As a location with the potential to yield significant material culture deposits, Garrison Hill needed a "softer" approach to interpreting the site's historical significance and conveying those stories to the general public in a way that does not damage or destroy archaeological resources.

Jerry Skrypzak gave much needed assistance with the background study on Erie's history.

We also conducted independent local research at the Erie County Library, on Garrison Hill, at the Wallace Street Park site, and in the East Bayfront neighborhood, uncovering layers of information on the changes in Erie's land and streetscapes over the past 250 years. Unfortunately, access to the Pennsylvania State Archives was unavailable during the

majority of the project timeline. However, we were able to locate information on the French and British fort design written in letters between officers from the 1750s and 1760s.

As part of our fact-gathering process on heritage tourism in Erie, we walked greenways, visited numerous local historic sites, and Presque Isle State Park. On every occasion we made side trips to regional attractions and historic sites in western

Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio, northern West Virginia, western Maryland, and western New York, to assess the size and scale of investment in heritage tourism and interpretive scope at other historic resources outside Erie County.



Onöhsagwë:de' Cultural Center



Intermodal Transportation Center

■ THE PLAN

Museums and cultural heritage sites are powerful assets for local development. They can inspire creativity, boost cultural diversity, help regenerate local economies, attract visitors and bring revenues. There is also increasing evidence that they can contribute to social cohesion, civic engagement, health and well-being.

—International Council of Museums, 2019

This Master Plan is broken down into six sections. Each section addresses different aspects of the project. Along the way we have tried to tell a story, support a vision, identify collaborative partners, and find common ground for realizing this unique opportunity to combine these historic and cultural resources with economic development and community enhancement.

Master Plan Goals

The Three Forts of Presque Isle Master Plan identifies educational, tourism, and economic development goals that utilize and leverage the Erie's unique historic past.

- Tell the story of how human cultures have changed and transformed Erie's natural environment and surrounding landscapes
- Attract investment for the development of a distinct and authentic place-based destination to draw a national audience to Erie
- Offer the five million annual visitors to Presque Isle State Park more reason to visit Erie's downtown and bayfront
- Play a major role in creating a more sustainable future by crafting interpretive goals and objectives that explore the unintended consequences of Erie's historic past
- Collaborate with other cultural attractions to create a new heritage tourism initiative in Erie
- Strengthen Erie's connection to regional and national tourism resources by supporting the establishment of the "Land and Lake" Heritage Area
- Activate Erie's east end by redeveloping underutilized historic and recreational resources in the East Bayfront community
- Develop new collaborative relationships with innovative partners to enhance the visitor experience
- Build connections with other agencies, organizations, businesses, and attractions in the downtown and bayfront area to establish and promote a new east end "gateway"
- Spur economic development in the East Bayfront neighborhood by activating underutilized cultural and recreational resources

The Three Forts of Presque Isle 13.5-acre campus will take visitors on an immersive journey across hundreds of years of Erie's historic past. Viewed through the lens of sustainability, audiences will discover how human cultures have changed and transformed the environment and surrounding landscapes since the first indigenous peoples called the region home. This is a chance to create a distinct and authentic place-based destination to attract a national audience to Erie by recognizing the city's rightful place as a member of the region's overall visitor experience associated with Native cultures, the French and Indian War, the War of 1812, and industrialization.

The campus environment also provides a multiplicity of teachable moments for visitors of all ages to explore Erie's past, including stories of the East Bayfront community and the successive wave of immigrants that have called that neighborhood home for more than 200 years. This approach encourages our patrons to be lifelong learners with a curiosity to explore history and sustainability in their own hometowns and backyards—including Erie.

A New Tourism Initiative

Tourism is the life-blood of many communities. This plan provides a blueprint for launching a new collaborative heritage tourism initiative championed by the city's historic sites, museums, preservation community, and supporting cultural institutions. The partnership will result in further leveraging local investments, such as those at the Hagen Center, the Maritime Museum, the Experience Children's Museum, the *USS Niagara*, or the preservation work near Erie Insurance or along W. 6th Street, with the rebranding of the city as a major historic destination with the possibility of

Erie's maritime and environmental history becoming a state or even National Heritage Area. Additionally, collaboration strengthens the city's connections to regional and national tourism corridors, trails and byway systems, sites, grants, along with other potential preservation or adaptive reuse possibilities. For instance, a mutual effort to promote a new Three Forts of Presque Isle and Interpretive Center along with the Hagen Center or the Maritime Museum, or outside Erie with Ft. Ticonderoga, and Ft. Necessity, or the correlation between the Hagen Center's FLW exhibit, Fallingwater, Kentuck Knob, even Polymath Park, allows for these relationships to be more judiciously exploited.

Creating a new tourism consortium is also an opportunity to realize the full potential of the current Intermodal Transportation Center by

reimagined and rebranded the facility as a Welcome Center and wayfinding station for travelers, a hub for tour trolleys, and a landing for water taxis to Presque Isle from the Bayfront.

Erie's New Gateway

In light of Penn DOT's restructuring of the Bayfront Parkway that includes a high-profile pedestrian bridge, there is an opportunity to establish a new "gateway" into Erie from the east that is immeasurably enhanced by the high-profile visibility of the Three Forts campus, the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, and the Veteran's Cemetery. This provides a distinct and prominent "first impression" for visitors to Erie's bayfront and downtown. It is also a way to recapture visitors exiting Erie to the east.



The roundabout at Holland Street will require a new pedestrian bridge to cross the Bayfront Parkway. The south landing will touch within the vicinity of Front Street.



One proposal for the design of the new pedestrian bridge at the Holland Street roundabout. This view is looking west from just below Front Street near the Parade Street Memorial.

Past Planning and Historic Resource Investment

This Master Plan is the first created to directly address the Three Forts of Presque Isle as a serious resource preservation, restoration, and investment project by the local community. Though a feasibility study was not part of the scope, we were able to glean from previous city-wide and bayfront redevelopment studies how the historic East Bayfront neighborhood has been addressed and valued as both a preservation and investment opportunity in the past. To be sure, the majority have identified the significance of the French, British, and American sites as important assets for the state and city to protect and preserve. For example, the Port Authority’s 2009 Erie Waterfront Master Plan mentions the underutilized Bayfront Overlook Park at E.

Front Street and the Land Lighthouse as worthy of improvements. They also suggest that there be public access, signage, a trailhead, and parking facilities for the Wayne Blockhouse.

Over the past two decades, dozens of studies have looked at the economic impact that cultural attractions and historic resources have within our communities around the world. “Museums generate revenues from exhibitions and also through branding and merchandising activities,” noted the International Council of Museums in their 2019 guide for collaborative museum development within communities that promotes a sustainable future through “the transformative power of culture.” The study observed that “in most cases, museum activities foster links with other players in creative industries as

well as other sectors in the rest of the economy.”

Understanding the full range of how museums, historic sites, and cultural resource development is not only worthy of investment but attracts diverse audiences through education and tourism, creates other investment incentives and opportunities, and supports quality of life issues has, to some degree, been overlooked and underfunded in the East Bayfront neighborhood.

In 2016, *Erie Refocused* noted that in the East bayfront community, “despite its current levels of distress and disorder, possesses several outstanding historic and cultural assets that should, along with newly created parks, serve as anchors for new public and private investment.” Though further study is needed to address the feasibility of this project, and the overall reinvestment in the East Bayfront Community, our plan seeks to give direction on how the preservation, restoration, construction, and adaptive reuse of historic properties as vehicles for investment can help activate previously underutilized resources using the past as a catalyst for community development. As Michael Fuhrman points out,

Making the Forts of Presque Isle part of the bayfront experience would also reset how the greater Erie community perceives and values its east side. Through this project, Erie residents would rediscover their shared heritage, and in doing so, begin the journey of unifying the city’s disconnected parts.

The East Bayfront Neighborhood Plan

In January 2020, the City of Erie finalized their plan for the East Bayfront neighborhood. The overall goal is to address systemic issues that have created disinvestment and blight in an area. Three main long-term strategies were crafted to address the neighborhood's current needs and future development. The Historic resources associated with the Three Forts of Presque Isle project were not directly addressed but it is worth mentioning that this Master Plan falls within the neighborhood's goals and objectives. For instance: Park and Trail Network—This long-term goal recommends connecting the parks in the North and South end of the neighborhood by creating a trail and park system through targeted demolition of highly distressed buildings. Workforce development opportunities will be sought to help with the entire process from demolition to park and green lot maintenance to ensure sustainability of the system.

Three Forts proposes the reimagining of the Front Street sidewalk/greenway. The current overlooks (one has been removed) can be repurposed as interpretive space with wayside exhibits that tell the story of the Anchor docks along the bayfront. An additional greenway would be added along Front Street that can connect to any new proposed greenways in the neighborhood and create more opportunities by extending the greenway along Front Street at Garrison Hill.

Targeted Reinvestment and Blight Reduction— This strategy builds off of the recommendations of Erie Refocused, which calls for targeted demolition of highly distressed and blighted buildings while adding greenspace to the area. A redevelopment plan will be

created that will take into consideration the needs of the residents that call this neighborhood home.

The Three Forts Interpretive Center will provide exhibition space that tells the story of the East Bayfront community. These exhibits have the potential to be changed, meaning that as more information becomes available on neighborhood history or demographics so can the exhibits. Enhance Parade Street Business Corridor — The Parade Street corridor has a rich history and a number of businesses that continue to flourish. This strategy identified the need for more support for those businesses through a corridor plan, façade grant program and developing a cultural heritage trail that tells the rich history of the area and will act as an attraction to the corridor.

Parade Street is the main gateway into the Three Forts Campus. We would recommend enhancements along this important and historic corridor along with a reimagining of the memorial at the foot of Parade Street.



Economic Development in the East Bayfront Neighborhood

Without doubt, the Three Forts of Presque project is a chance to spur economic redevelopment within the East Bayfront neighborhood. Additional investment incentives can also be leveraged to address the needs of the community by creating a sustainable source of fiscal energy via tourist dollars, job training, the tech industry, ties to local and national universities and schools, development of new research methodologies, and historic preservation. This project, in part, can protect the current investments made in the area by enhancing the quality of life, helping address safety and housing issues, and making East Bayfront a more welcoming place for people to live, work, visit, open a business, and raise their families.

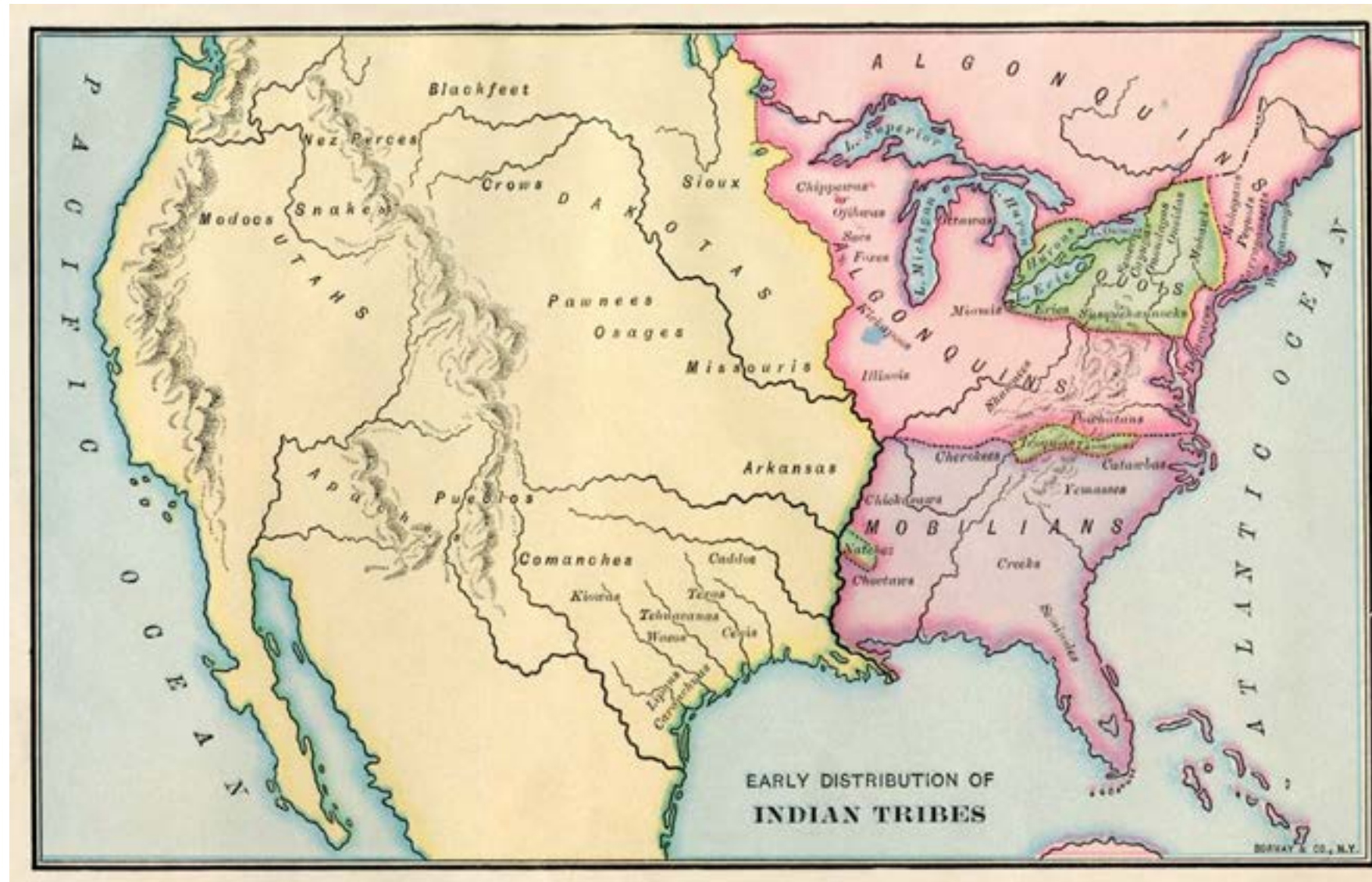
The Three Forts of Presque Isle and Interpretive Center Master Plan was created to spur the imagination and take a serious look at the possibilities.

THREE FORTS OF PRESQUE ISLE

■ THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF THE SOUTHERN GREAT LAKES AREA

When Europeans first arrived in western Pennsylvania in the late seventeenth century, the region was not a place without a past. Humans had lived along the shores of the Great Lakes and their surrounding hinterlands for more than 12,000 years. Since the end of the last Ice Age and up until the early fifteenth century, a succession of prehistoric periods and civilizations—Paleolithic, Archaic, Woodland, and Mississippian (Adena-Hopewell)—have been identified by historians and anthropologists as indigenous to the area, including in and around present-day Erie. Their archaeological remains shed some light on these group’s distinct cultural characteristics if only giving us an opaque glimpse of each civilization’s ascent and decline. By the late fifteenth century, however, the remnants of these past peoples coalesced, and new groups emerged, each with their own tribal and linguistic distinctions. They include, to name a few, the Huron, Miami, Ottawa, Potawatomi, Oneida, Iroquois, Seneca, Fox, Chippewa, and Shawnee.

From 1400 to the mid-1650s, the southern shore of Lake Erie was dominated by Iroquoian-related tribes. The largest to emerge in the central



Native Tribes of North America, c. 1600

region during the period were the Erielhonian, or “Eriez” for short. Linguistically, they are associated with the developing Iroquoian organizational structure. The name “Eriez” refers to the now extinct eastern panther, a native animal whose tail was used for tribal adornment. In the seventeenth

century, the first of the French fur trappers to enter the region identified this indigenous group as *Nation du Chat*, or “cat nation.”¹

Anthropologists believe that the Eriez lived in fortified villages along the rivers and streams that fed into the lake. Like the previous Adena-Hopewell

culture, they planted corn, squash, and beans—the three sisters—along with gathering a collection of nuts and berries. They also fished the waterways and lake using hooks and weighted nets and hunted forest game with bow and arrow. The Eriez’ dominance in the region was fleeting.²

■ THE IROQUOIS CONFEDERACY

By the late 17th century western New York, Pennsylvania, and eastern Ohio, was controlled by three communities of indigenous peoples: the Haudenosaunee Confederation (the Iroquois Confederacy); the Lenni-Lenape (the Delaware); and the Shawnee. Of these, the Haudenosaunee proved to be the most powerful, creating a confederation which eventually combined six nations, all of the Iroquois language group; the Mohawk, the people of the flint country; the Oneida, the people of the standing stone; the Onondaga, the people of the

hills; the Cayuga, the people of the great swamp; and the Seneca, the people of the big hill; and the Tuscarora, the people of the shirt who migrated from North Carolina.

The origin of the Haudenosaunee, or Iroquois, Confederation lay in the constant conflict among



the Iroquoian-speaking communities, each seeking dominance of the entire region. According to current day Haudenosaunee, wars between the separate nations was constant and brutal, threatening the survival of all. By the middle of the sixteenth century fighting ceased. The ensuing Iroquois Confederacy ended the internal conflict and created a constitutionally organized confederated government. This was not a temporary alliance of convenience or a simple non-aggression pact. Rather, the combined nations crafted a structured confederation designed for unity of action while preserving the identity of each of the six groups. By producing a constitution with exacting rules, procedures, and protocols, the confederation ensured the equality of each of the five nations when it came to making decisions and constructing common policy.

Although pact ended the internecine conflict, their combined resources also increased the collective power of the six nations against outsiders. In addition, the highly advantageous geographical position of the Confederacy further enhanced their power. The majority of their settlements were located just above the zone where the Hudson River empties into the Atlantic and just south of the St. Lawrence River Valley. Later, when the French entered North America from the Atlantic and worked their way up the St. Lawrence and then the Dutch moved in and created the port town of New Amsterdam, the Confederacy were perfectly situated between the two European powers. These combined indigenous nations became a contending power, and played the two European groups, and their respective Native allies, off against each other.

■ OTHER INDIGENOUS GROUPS TO THE EAST AND SOUTH

Another Indian group, the Lenni-Lenape or Delaware Indians were understood to be of ancient lineage, or a “grandfather people.” At their height they controlled present-day Pennsylvania and New Jersey down to the Chesapeake Bay region. The Lenape were divided into three main groups; the Minsi, the people of the stone country; the Unami, the people who live down river; and the Unalachtigo, the people who live by the ocean. All three of these tribes were Algonquian speakers. Those Lenape who lived closest to the Chesapeake Bay area had the largest population. Located at the Bay’s edge, the Algonquian people could harvest the abundant marine life, as well as reap food from the plants and animals of the forests.

The Shawnee—also Algonquian speakers—were located over the Appalachians in present-day southern and eastern Ohio, Kentucky, and West Virginia. Given their regional placement, they depended on hunting as well as agriculture. The Shawnee ranged through the forests during wintertime searching for game and worked in stationary farming villages during the summer months.³

■ THE IMPACT OF WESTERN EUROPEANS ON INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS

When Europeans entered the indigenous North American world in the late sixteenth century, they brought with them two important biological and cultural elements that eventually resulted in the ascendancy of European culture in the western hemisphere. The first was disease. In the decades before European settlements first appeared in 1609 in Virginia, various teams of explorers along with hunting and fishing expeditions moved up and



Map of the British Empire in America with the French, Spanish and the Dutch settlements adjacent thereto, c. 1741. (Library of Congress)

down the Atlantic coast, bringing with them a host of lethal pathogens. It was no accident that when the English Pilgrims arrived in Massachusetts

in 1620, they found a deserted landscape. Only skeletal remains lingered in what had once been populated villages. The native populations had



no resistance to maladies such as smallpox, measles, and syphilis. Anthropologists today estimate that eventually ninety percent of indigenous peoples succumbed to these and other European based illnesses.⁴

Another feature accompanying European invasion was intercultural commerce. Neither the Dutch nor the French, the first Europeans to make contact with the Indian communities, sought to colonize or geographically control the region. In upstate New York, western Pennsylvania, and eastern Ohio country, for example, there was initially no conflict over land settlement prior to the 1750s. Instead, the struggle focused entirely on harvesting natural resources and the trading goods.

The “Indian Trade,” however, produced complications and difficulties. On the positive side, the Iroquois Confederacy, along with other inland communities, such as the Lenni-Lenape and the Shawnee, welcomed the Dutch and French traders. The Europeans brought guns, ammunition, metal tools, metal cooking utensils, bolt cloth, and other useful items. These goods did not disrupt Native life; they enhanced it. The metal items, in particular, made the daily tasks of cooking, cutting, carving, and like activities much easier.⁵

The French traders learned quickly that trade with the Native nations was not simply a commerce in goods, but a matter of establishing trust and solid networks between the different peoples. They learned that negotiating with the Iroquois nation, the Shawnee, Mohawk, or other tribes demanded elaborate attention to protocol, extended discussion, and ceremonies of reassurance and obligation.

The exchange also included Wampum belts, a



Defeat of the Iroquois at Lac Champlain (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/C-5750)

form of communication which the Iroquois used to tell their history, tradition, and laws. Further, the French and Dutch learned that it was necessary to marry into the villages and clans of the Native groups with whom they did business. Simply put, trade required proper attention to the welfare of the Native peoples and their village life, and all the Native nations had long-established procedures and customs to ensure these obligations were met. Because they paid close attention to the Native peoples’ demands, both the French and Dutch traders established mutually profitable relations with the Haudenosaunee, Shawnee, and other nations.

However, two problems quickly materialized. First, all native communities quickly became dependent on European goods, particularly guns,

ammunition, and tools. These were resources they could not produce internally. In addition, a growing addiction to alcohol made the Indian communities increasingly dependent on European trade. The need to satisfy their addiction led directly to resource depletion, specifically beaver pelts. In Europe, beaver hats were all the rage by the mid-seventeenth century, and the increasing European demand for pelts created an increasing urgency by the Native groups to trap more beavers, leading eventually to depopulation of the animal in the region.⁶

■ THE BEAVER WARS AND THE OHIO COUNTRY

As beaver in the Great Lakes region dwindled, the Iroquois Confederacy looked for new sources for trade, turning their attention west toward the Ohio

country. Beginning in the mid-17th century, the Haudenosaunee conducted a series of wars to remove or dominate the Shawnee and other indigenous peoples living in western Pennsylvania and Ohio. Though traditional rivalries and competition for resources among these tribes was heightened by the profitable and essential returns of the fur trade, the Beaver Wars were a seventeenth century struggle of attrition and involved the burning of villages and crops, leaving refugee Indian communities with no ability to subsist. Over time, the Confederacy pushed the Shawnee out of Ohio and into Kentucky. During the five-year conflict, the Eriez were also decimated. What remained of this once flourishing tribe was either dispersed or assimilated into the Seneca.⁷

■ COLONIAL EXPANSION

In the early decades of the eighteenth century another problem arose in the Ohio country. Native peoples were forced to move across the Appalachian Mountains to the Ohio territory to make room for European settlement. During the period, major treaties swindled numerous tribes out of their ancestral lands. In the Walking Purchase of 1737 with the Lenape, for example, the Penn family claimed 1,200,000 acres along the northern reaches of the Delaware River at the northeastern boundary between the Province of Pennsylvania and the West New Jersey area to the east of the Province of New Jersey. Though they appealed to the Iroquois Confederacy for aid, assistance was denied, and the Lenape were forced to move.⁸

Indian refugees were pushed further west, seeking land for settlement. Collectively, these peoples

PLAN
of the
RIVER



French explorers entered the Ohio River valley in the 18th century, and in 1749 buried numerous leaden plates to mark their claim to the territory. This is a register map from the Ohio Company, drafted in 1749 showing the survey of what is now Marietta, Ohio. The clash between the French and the British over these colonial claims was one of the catalysts to the French and Indian War. (Library of Congress)

came to be known as the “Ohio Indians.” Thus, as the Iroquois Confederacy, having eradicated the Eriez and others, encountered the flood of new exiles, more conflict erupted. These quandaries, however, were soon overshadowed by what was known as the Great War for Empire.⁹

■ VIRGINIA EXPANDS WESTWARD

In 1748, several wealthy Virginians, including Lawrence Washington, older half-brother of George Washington, and Virginia colonial governor Robert Dinwiddie, founded the Ohio Company. The investors hoped to secure lands west of the Appalachian Mountains from the British government and then resell tracts to settlers for a profit. The crown granted 200,000 acres in what is now western Pennsylvania. The group agreed to build a fort at the “forks of the Ohio” (Pittsburgh) to be garrisoned by the Virginia militia. To encourage settlement and trade with the Native tribes, they hired Thomas Cresap, an English born agent, to open a series of trading posts along the Potomac River all the way to the Monongahela. Two years later, Christopher Gist was employed to survey the grant area and provide detailed descriptions of southern Ohio and northeastern Kentucky. He was also tasked with establishing trading relationships with tribes living in the Ohio Country.¹⁰

■ THE WARS FOR EMPIRE

Throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries the English, French, Dutch, Portuguese, and Spanish conducted a series of international wars over their territorial claims. Yet, none of these conflicts produced a decisive victor. Rather, by 1750, there existed a relatively stable balance of power among the belligerents. The Spanish

An Emphasis on Forts

Europeans had long connected the idea of protection of towns to walls and fortifications. However, by 1500 A.D., advances in cannon fire power had made the medieval high-walled, turreted castle obsolete. Solid shot cannon balls eventually would even crack vertical walls. Italian engineers began to experiment with sloping and lowered walls.

What emerged from these experiments was the star fort. Based originally on the concept of geometric design that would enclose a utopian community, the star fort was reworked as a design for defense. The star created multiple layers of mutually supporting walls within walls (bastions), along with a design of exterior walls that allowed defenders to trap attackers in zones of crossfire.

By the late 17th century, Sebastien Le Preste de Vauban (1633-1707) had become France’s most important military engineer, and an architect of elaborate versions of the star fort. More importantly, the installation of his forts created a defensive zone of fortification—the “dueling zone,” as he called it—in the area dividing northern France and the Spanish Netherlands. This dense

zone of fortifications located along a line relatively close to what would become the Western Front trench system in World War I, became a basic model for what the French would attempt to do along the western slope of the Appalachians. To be sure, fortifications hardly ruled out offensive war (de Vauban gained the most fame by attacking forts, not by building them), but the de Vauban design did create a fort with a barrier or zone of operation around which to base a strategic defense and it was this concept that was copied by the French in North America (de Vauban, 1968).



Sebastien Le Preste de Vauban



maintained control of their possessions in Central America, South America, the Philippines and what is Florida today. However, they relinquished their holdings in eastern North America. The Dutch, once removed from North America, focused on their colonies in modern-day Indonesia. The Portuguese retained Brazil, Macao and ports in India and conducted an immense trade in southeastern Asia. The French and British competed for India, the Caribbean sugar islands and North America.¹¹

What seemed to be a stable balance of power among the European nations competing for empire, however, quickly eroded in the 1750s. The Ohio Company's venture alarmed the French who had long claimed the territory west of the Appalachians. They responded with a plan to secure the territory through a series of forts meant to intimidate traders and settlers.

■ THE FRENCH AND BRITISH COLONIAL EXPANSION

In 1752, Michel-Angu Du Quesne de Menneville—the Marquis Du Quesne—arrived in Canada as governor. He immediately ordered the construction of forts in what was called the Ohio or Great Lakes country. Du Quesne hoped that this defensive system would help solidify French control over their territory and contain British colonial expansion. Moreover, French officials had expansionist dreams, too. In addition to the profitable trade in furs, they imagined that the flat prairie land of the Illinois country might be developed into a farm-grain basket to support what was, at this point, their growing colonial effort in North America. (Kent, 301–315)

As part of the Marquis Du Quesne's defensive efforts, the fort system would create a river-and-road trading and supply line running from the

Great Lakes down the Allegheny River and onto the Ohio River. In mid-February 1753, Charles Deschamps de Boisébert and a 250-man advance party was sent to scout for an optimal lakefront location with adequate portage to the interior. The initial plan was to build the French fort in what is today Barcelona, New York, directly north of Westfield. From there, they could portage to Chautauqua Lake and create a water route to the Allegheny River using one of its many tributaries. That track proved both insufficient and costly. After venturing further west, the Presque Isle location was recognized as better suited to the expedition because the "peninsula and bay provided excellent shelter for the boats from squalls."

The building of a French fortification at Presqu'île was an integral part of the Great War for Empire between Britain and France from 1753 forward. The French envisioned the Presqu'île military fort as a portage base on Lake Erie positioned to supply a multi-fort barrier system along the Allegheny River. The other forts in this chain included Le Boeuf (Waterford), Machault, (Franklin), and Fort Duquesne (Pittsburgh). The plan was to use the waterways as transportation and supply corridors for the trade with the native communities and the forts would provide man-made barriers protecting the trade route to the northwest from the Appalachian Mountains. That line ran, in total, from the Great Lakes to as far south as present-day Tennessee and Alabama, as well as west to the Mississippi River basin at New Orleans. The French goal in Pennsylvania was to stop English settlement expansion into the Ohio valley.

For the British, the French forts, along with the Shawnee, Lenape, and other French Native allies in the Ohio country, posed a direct threat to

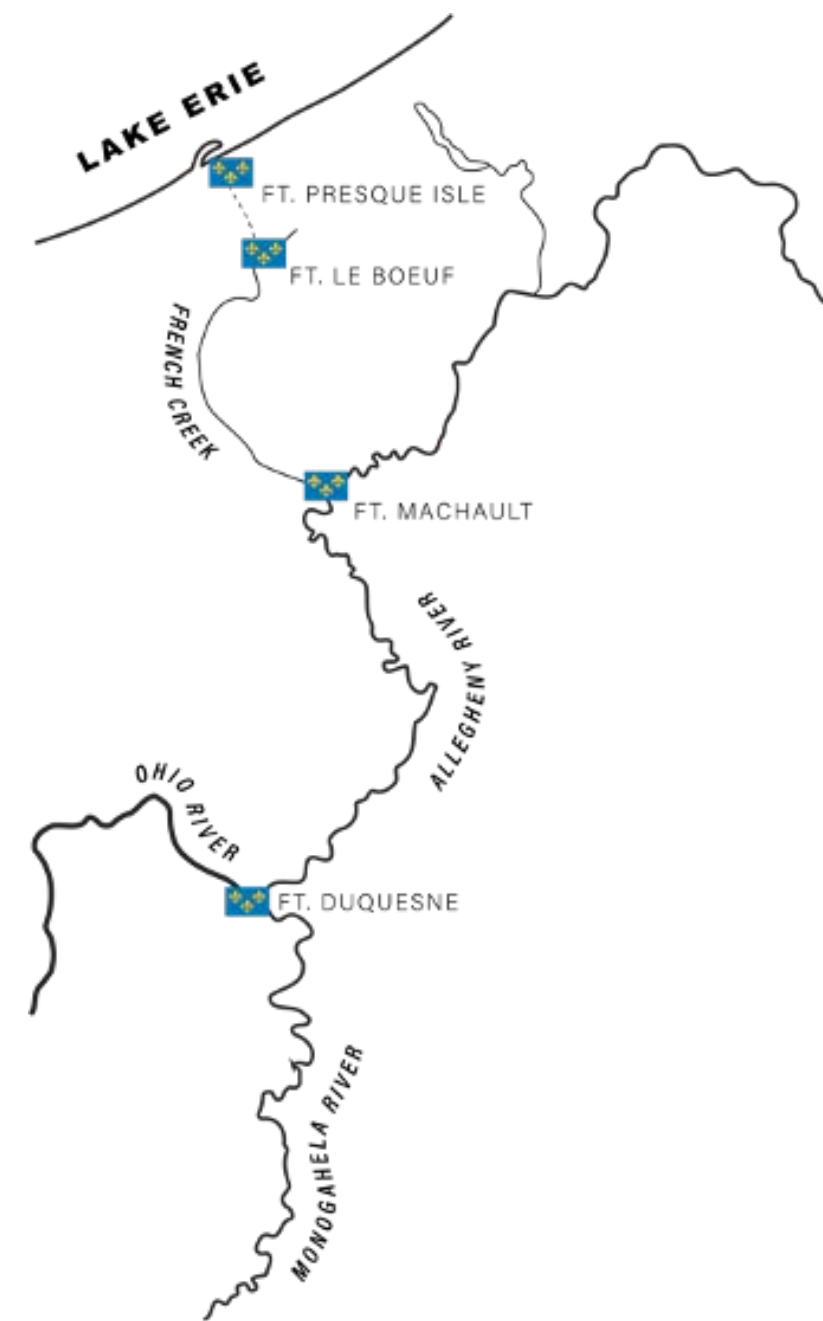
British colonial expansion and private land speculators, such as the Ohio Company and the Loyal Company of Virginia, chartered in 1749, by influential Virginians such as Thomas Walker and Peter Jefferson, a surveyor and father of Thomas Jefferson. It was not long before these European empires clashed over control of the Ohio country.

■ NORTH TO SOUTH; EAST TO WEST

Paramount to the success of the French were the forts which stretched from the garrison at Presque Isle, on Lake Erie to all the way to the Fort Duquesne, at present day Pittsburgh. Moreover, the Ohio Valley fortifications represented a commitment to the Native American nations located in this vast landscape beyond the Appalachian Mountains. Their support for the Shawnee and other tribes helped sustain both the Indian presence in the area and the trading system that was the foundation of the original relationship between the French and indigenous communities.

By the same token, the military power of the collective tribes supported the French and helped the French make their long, fortification system viable. In addition, it also ensured that, so long as the north to south system of forts remained, along with the defensive and economic system behind it, the Native American existence in the trans-Appalachian zone was assured.

However, when the British began attacking this French-designed north-south system, the



French Forts, 1754

geographical direction changed from north to south to east to west, most notably with Braddock's campaign in 1755. From that point forward, Native settlements and influence in the Ohio Valley began



a downward spiral because the British intent was to eradicate the Indian nations altogether.¹²

The French establishment of the Fort at Presqu'isle (sic), about May 3, 1753, marks the beginning of the French attempt to gain control of the Ohio country. The fort established at Presque Isle became the usual place of entry and departure in the movement of men and supplies to and from the other French forts on the waters of the Ohio. In a very real sense, the story of Pennsylvania's frontier forts begins at Presqu'ile Isle with the building of the French fort.¹³

■ THE FRENCH FORT AT PRESQU'ILE

In April 1753, French governor Du Quesne dispatched a force of 2,000 men from Montreal under the command of Paul Marin de la Malgue to begin construction of the fort system and portage road from the Lake Erie shoreline at Presqu'ile to French Creek. Captain Francois le Mercier, an engineer, arrived mid-May with a group of seventy skilled laborers. Mercier planned and organized the construction of the fort. Marin reached Erie a month later.

According to Jean Pidon, a French soldier, the soldiers "began to build a Fort on an Eminence, about one hundred yards from the Bank of the Lake, which they called Duquisne, the Name of their General, the Marquis Duquisne." Duquesne's name was eventually dropped, and the name changed to de la Presqu'ile when the last fort was completed at the forks of the Allegheny and Ohio

Rivers (Pittsburgh).¹⁴

The French forts built in western Pennsylvania during the period were highly perishable. All were constructed out of a combination of wood, earth, and some rock. The American Chestnut was the material of choice at Presqu'ile. At the time, the tree was abundant in Pennsylvania. Settlers used the wood for cabin, fence, and furniture making. The nuts also fed deer, elk, bear, turkey, and grouse who were hunted by both Native Americans, traders, soldiers, and settlers. Strong and light, the chestnut was rot resistant.

The majority of these small forts like Presqu'ile were isolated and served mainly as "posts of passage" for troops or materials traveling along the trade and expedition routes, such as the Venango Path, an Indian hunting trail that ran from Lake Erie to present-day Pittsburgh and used by both the French and British armies. At the conclusion of the military campaigns, the forts served as the nexus for the development of frontier communities and as protection against Indian raids.¹⁵

The plan for the fort at Presqu'ile was similar to the other major French defensive field installations to be built to and along the Allegheny River. All, except Duquesne, were configured as a square with four corner bastions connected by curtain walls, a fortification design revolutionized by Vauban. The fort was of a single wall design. Thomas Forbes, an English mercenary fighting for the French described the installation as:

*situated on a little rising ground at a very small distance from the water of Lake Erie, it is rather larger than that at Fort Niagara...It is a square area enclosed with logs about twelve feet high, the logs being squar[ed] and laid on each other and not more than sixteen or eighteen inches thick.*¹⁶

And still another account states that the fort was: *a square Fort of Chestnut logs squared & laped (sic) over each other, to a height of 15 feet, it is about 120 feet square, a Log House in each Square, a Gate to the Southward and another to the Northward, not one Port Hole cut in any part of it.*¹⁷

The fort was located between 100 and 200 yards southwest of the mouth of Mill Creek and atop a steep cliff at an elevation of 55 feet above the Lake Erie shoreline. Later, in 1759, the French added a stone magazine with a split shake roof in the northeast bastion. There were no embrasures or firing loopholes in the walls. Instead, an elevated firing platform was in the corner of each bastion. For the most part, soldiers could discharge their weapons over the top of the horizontal piece-on-piece palisade. When completed on August 3, 1753, the south gate opened to the portage road leading to Fort Le Boeuf, both still under construction at that time.

Presqu'ile served a dual purpose for the French. The log and earthen facility was constructed for use as both a supply station for goods to be transferred south along the portage road and as the anchor for protecting the French landing along the bayfront, the only way in or out. Though considered a temporary fortification, if threatened from land, the garrison could abandon the stockade or refit the outer works for defense.

Because of the light construction materials used, all of the French and British western Pennsylvania field fortifications, except Fort Pitt, were susceptible to artillery fire. Critics of these forts complained that they "are in general no such formidable things; they are for the most part no more than a sort of retrenchment of Trees and Earth and even when

they have a facing of stone they are generally too small to sustain regular siege and may be reduced by simple bombardments."¹⁸

After construction was completed, life at Presqu'ile settled into a seasonal routine. Although 1,000 workers, soldiers, and traders might be in the immediate vicinity during the summer, in winter the permanent garrison was self-contained. Isolated against the lake, the fort's defenders depended solely on stored supplies and life was difficult when food resources ran low.

The barracks within the fort, garrisoned with about 150 men, supported chiefly from a French settlement established along nearby Mill Creek. The settlement consisted, as the prisoner was informed, of about 150 families. The Indian families about the settlement are pretty numerous; they have a priest and a schoolmaster. They have some grist mills and stills in this settlement.

Using canoes to carry their cargo, Native American fleets arrived at the French fort and settlement to sell their pelts and wood products. At times, the garrison had problems with scurvy. Despite the defensive concerns that pushed Duquesne to construct the forts in the first place, Presqu'ile experienced little trouble militarily until 1759. In the early years of the Great War for the Empire (French and Indian War), the major fighting took place elsewhere.¹⁹

■ THE PORTAGE

From the fort at Presqu'ile, a 14.5-mile road was constructed to Fort Le Boeuf, located on the banks of French Creek in what is today Waterford. The trail was up to twenty yards wide in places and corduroy construction (cut timbers laid side-by-side) was used to cross the swampy areas. Construction took most of the summer and left Marin's troops in



Map showing the location of Fort Presqu'île and the portage road to French River in Waterford.

disarray because of the severity of the conditions.

When Fort Le Boeuf was completed IN 1753, the installation was slightly smaller than Presqu'île and used upright log palisading instead of the horizontal stacked timbers found in Erie. A "halfway post" was also built along the portage to aid in the transfer and protection of goods via pirogues (small boats) for their journey down French Creek.

The actual journey along this portage line could be difficult. A French soldier commented that French Creek was "small and at some places very shallow so that we towed the canoes wading and

sometimes taking ropes to the shore a great part of the way. When we came into the [Allegheny] we had a fine deep water and stream in our favor so that we rowed down that river" all the way to Fort Duquesne (Pittsburgh). Thus, the fort at Presqu'île was the keystone of a corridor that stretched from the St. Lawrence River now in Ontario, Canada, to the headwaters of the Ohio River at Pittsburgh.

■ FRENCH INTENTIONS AT PRESQU'ÎLE

By constructing a fort at the Presqu'île site, the French created a port of entry from Lake Erie down

into the Ohio country. Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, aid to General Montcalm, described the fort as "an essential storehouse" between Niagara and Ft. Le Boeuf; however, in Bougainville's mind, the entire system to the south represented something more. Moving both men and supplies from Presqu'île into the hinterland was difficult. Summer was about the only time that one could reliably use wagons. In winter, Native trails were impassable, while spring and fall were risky due to rains. Only packhorses, Bougainville pointed out, moved in all seasons. And this required Native Americans. "Their help is almost always needed," he stated. But while Bougainville argued that a system of good roads would eliminate the need for Native involvement, the patronage of the local peoples served both French and the Native communities' interests. As Bougainville described it, those Native groups that hauled the freight "prevent bad tribes" from interfering with supply shipments. Then, "what they earn by doing this enables them to clothe themselves." Without this dependence on French goods, the officer continued, these Natives would trade with the British, "who treat them much better than we."

For Bougainville, this relationship of payment for transport could serve as a building block in further economic integration. "It would be easy to draw the Indians to this fort to settle there and form villages." The local fishing and hunting were excellent. As a result, the fort would be a source of resources in times of scarcity. Were the French to stock Presqu'île with sufficient goods, the troops on hand could support several villages and "allow [the Natives] the portage." Bougainville surmised that the French traders would get this portage-wage money back in exchange for essential goods that would be sold to the Natives.²⁰

■ THE OHIO INDIANS AT PRESQU'ÎLE

Apparently, by the spring and summer of 1753, Bougainville's idea was gaining traction among the French command. Native tribes in western Pennsylvania, however, saw the French forts and the occupation that they brought as a direct threat to their independence. In July, while the Presqu'île lakefront fort was under construction, the Oneida leader, Scarroyady, and other Indians from the Ohio tribes, ventured to Presqu'île to deliver notice to the French that they were not happy with the new line of forts. All of these Indians had close ties to the British.

Marin responded that he was going to build these forts based on orders from Duquesne but reassured them they were friends, not enemies. Not wanting to alarm his commander, he wrote to Duquesne "that all the Delawares (Loups), Chaouanons, and Senecas on the Beautiful river had come to meet him, and that he had so well [received] them, that they are very zealously assisting, with their horses that they have brought along with them, in making the Portage."²¹

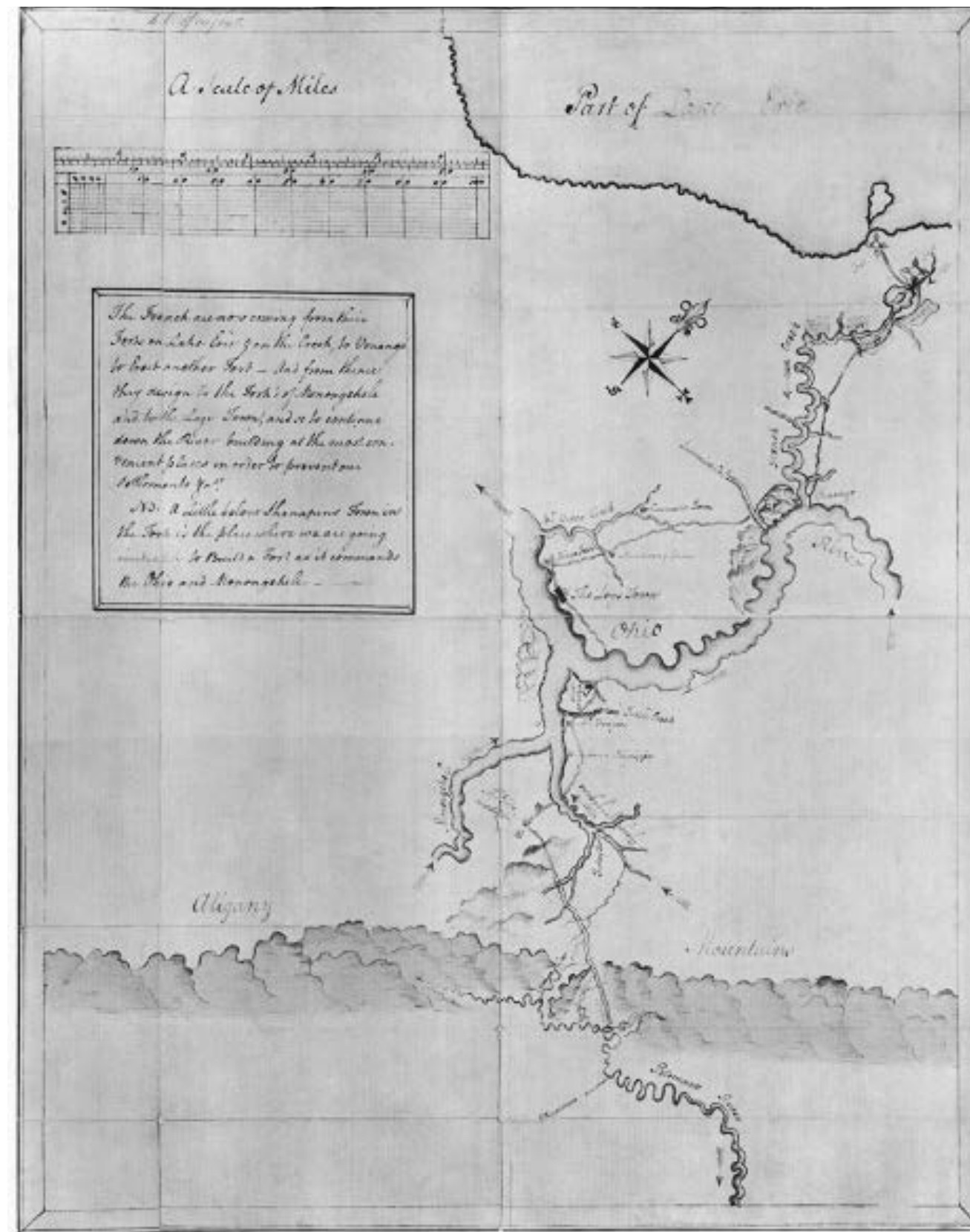
In September, the "Half King," Tanacharison, visited Presqu'île to deliver another warning. The Ohio Iroquois leader demanded that the French abandon their plans. Marin, again, refused. He questioned why the "Half King" did not have the "four-towns" speech belt that his people had accepted at the previous conference, and informed Tanacharison he was standing alone. After all, the Shawnee supported the French against the British. Although the rebuffed "Half King" returned home unsuccessful, his show of hostility undoubtedly affected the later French reassessment of their venture into the Allegheny River valley.

■ **GEORGE WASHINGTON: SURVEYOR AND LAND SPECULATOR**

As the French moved to complete their forts in 1753, Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia sent George Washington, a twenty-one-year-old major in the Virginia militia, with a message for the French Commander at Presque Isle. In no uncertain terms the British told the French that the English in Virginia had a superior claim to the region and insisted that the French leave the area. Washington, however, was not simply an envoy, but a surveyor and Virginia planter quite interested in land speculation (as he would prove to be throughout his life).

Washington and his escorts, frontiersman Christopher Gist, Mingos Chief, Tanacharison, and the Seneca Chief, Guyasuta, met the French at Fort Le Boeuf, where the commander—Jacques Legardeur de Saint-Pierre—politely informed the Virginian that the French had every intention of holding on to the Ohio territory.

Washington returned to Richmond in early January 1754 where he submitted his report to Dinwiddie concerning the French refusal to negotiate. This information was forwarded to London, causing the British government to consider military action in western Pennsylvania. From the moment that Washington's account reached the crown's capital city, the issue of the Ohio country became a British imperial matter, not simply a struggle between Virginia and the French military. It not only kindled what became the French and Indian War but also the reputation of George Washington. Once in Virginia, Washington compiled his notes of the trip into a piece called *The Journal* that was published in several newspapers. He later commented, "It was an extraordinary circumstance that so young and inexperienced a person be employed



Washington's Map of his western Pennsylvania journey to meet with the French at Fort LeBoeuf, 1753.

on a negotiation with which the subjects of the greatest importance were involved." The publication enhanced Washington's reputation in Virginia and he quickly became known throughout both the colonies and in England.

In May 1754, Dinwiddie ordered Washington back to western Pennsylvania to build a small fort near the forks of the Ohio to confront the French. Along the way, the young Lieutenant Colonel inadvertently helped turn the Ohio conflict into a shooting war when he misidentified a French diplomatic mission as a military raiding party. Washington, along with his Native allies, attacked. Once captured, Joseph Coulon de Villiers, sieur de Jumonville, was murdered by Tanacharison. His warriors also killed several of the wounded French soldiers. This violation of diplomatic decorum inaugurated open borderland war. The inexperienced Washington quickly retreated, constructed a small fort he called Necessity to defend against a French counterattack. In the end, he and his men were overrun and forced to surrender. Washington returned to Richmond.

The British took advantage of Washington's blunder and sent a large force of regular troops under General Edward Braddock in a three-pronged invasion of western Pennsylvania. Braddock directed one column toward the French Fort Du Quesne located at the "forks of the Ohio." A second thrust was aimed at the upper Hudson Valley. Finally, a third British force invaded Acadia. Braddock wanted nothing less than a total effort to drive the French out of North America. The French government, in response, sent troops of their own. The clash of empires began.²²



■ GREAT WAR FOR THE EMPIRE, EARLY CAMPAIGNS TO 1759

While British general James Braddock set in motion a three-pronged campaign against the French in mid-1755, he personally led the main effort in Pennsylvania. Most of the British regular troops who accompanied him to America were merged with colonial Virginians in an overland campaign to attack Fort Du Quesne at the “forks of the Ohio.” Throughout the war, this fort was regarded as the critical installation of the French in the Ohio country. Both the French and the British believed that whoever controlled this important position would control the region.

The resulting campaign produced one of the most famous (or infamous) disasters in British military history. Braddock wrongly presumed he could use the tactics of parade-ground European formation fighting even though he was marching his men through an all-but trackless forest. Predictably, the French garrison at Du Quesne along with their Native allies—Shawnee and Lenape among them—ambushed the British force six miles from the forks, killing, wounding, or capturing half of Braddock’s small army. The general himself was mortally wounded.²³

The immediate consequence of the fiasco shifted the action in the North American war. The Virginians, French, and “Ohio Indians” had initiated the conflict along the line of the Allegheny forts. However, after Braddock’s defeat, the main British and French efforts turned north towards the St. Lawrence River line and present-day northern New York (the Hudson Valley). For this reason, the fort at Presqu’ile experienced no direct threat over the next four years. The major fighting moved to the upper reaches of New York and Canada.

From 1755 to 1757 the conflict in North

America favored the French. Their commander, Louis-Joseph de Montcalm-Grozon, Marquis de Montcalm, proved a skillful general. British commanders failed to counter. In the Ohio Country and the line of forts along the Allegheny, the Shawnee, Lenape, and other Native nations allied with the French created a solid defensive curtain that prevented any British incursion into the west. As these Native nations well understood, the British represented the existential threat—removal from the land itself—while the French did not. Meanwhile, the Iroquois Confederacy maintained neutrality.

By 1758, pursuing a global war with the British began to show as French resources dwindled. In London, the new prime minister, William Pitt, told the seaboard colonial legislatures that His Majesty’s Government would pay for raising and supplying colonial troops, a previous obstacle when local governments refused to bear all the expenses. Thus, the situation changed immediately in two ways. First, because American troops now enlisted in numbers, a British military expedition captured Fort Frontenac on Lake Ontario. This installation was not simply a fort but a major supply base. Seizing this base cut the supply of French trade goods and other material to the Shawnee, Lenape, and “Ohio Indians,” and forced these Native groups to question the reliability of their French allies. Second, British general John Forbes organized a new expedition against Fort Du Quesne while at the same time negotiating a peace with Lenape leader, Teedyuscung. The result was the October 1758 Treaty of Easton. Five hundred headmen representing 15 peoples gathered at the Pennsylvania town in late fall to arrange a settlement. The Pennsylvanians promised not to allow colonists under its jurisdiction to cross the Alleghenies to settle. In return, the Native

leaders pledged their neutrality when the British attacked Fort Du Quesne.²⁴

Thus, the overall tenor of the war changed. In November 1758, as Forbes approached Fort Duquesne, the French garrison pulled out. The British took command and renamed the installation after Pitt. Word quickly swept up and down the line of French forts all the way to Presqu’ile. The next year, the Iroquois Confederacy ended its neutrality and allied with the British. By now, the major fortifications at Louisbourg, in Nova Scotia, had fallen, which meant the British fleet could blockade the St. Lawrence and seal the French military inside Canada. As the British moved in July 1759 against the last of the French strongholds, Fort Niagara, located in western New York near present-day Buffalo, one thousand Iroquois warriors honored their treaty with the British and fled.

■ AT DE LA PRESQU’ILE

In response to the siege of Fort Niagara in 1759, the French gathered a relief party to assist the defenses at Fort Niagara. Fifteen-hundred men departed to help defend the beleaguered garrison in New York. The effort failed, and five hundred French soldiers and Indian warriors became casualties. More importantly, following the fiasco, the French made the decision to leave Presqu’ile, Le Boeuf, and the other installations up and down the Allegheny line. Each of the forts was razed. Supplies were transferred to Detroit in August, 1759, in hopes of defending the remaining French western garrisons in North America.

■ GREAT WAR FOR THE WEST, 1760-1815

British victory created enormous problems that could not easily be resolved. Indeed, historian Fred

Anderson argues that, regarding North America, the British gained a “hollow” empire. The imperial government simply had no way to control and organize the vast territory they had won from the French. As a result, even though 1760 ended the Great War for the Empire in North America, this only began what one might call the Great War for the West. This new conflict was about who would control all the lands bounded by the Great Lakes on the north, the Appalachians on the east, the Mississippi River on the west, and the Gulf of Mexico on the south.²⁵

■ THE BRITISH ARRIVE AT PRESQUE ISLE

In 1760, British commander Major General Jeffery Amherst had no way to know that the war with France was over in North America. In response to what he perceived was an ongoing threat, he directed one of his district commanders, Robert Monckton, to establish a chain of forts running from Niagara to Presque Isle, down the French Creek-Allegheny line (Machault, Venango), to Fort Pitt (formerly Du Quesne). Using the French strategy and blueprint, this chain of military installations would connect Lake Erie with Fort Pitt. Obedient to these instructions, Monckton sent Major Henry Gladwin to Presque Isle, where he arrived on July 6, 1760. Gladwin, accompanied by a small force, began to construct temporary works at the site of the abandoned and burned French fort.

Soon, Colonel Henry Bouquet arrived with 400 men, followed by Colonel Hugh Mercer with 150 Pennsylvanians. An English Lieutenant Bassett became the engineer for the new fort-building project.²⁶



■ CONSTRUCTION OF THE BRITISH FORT

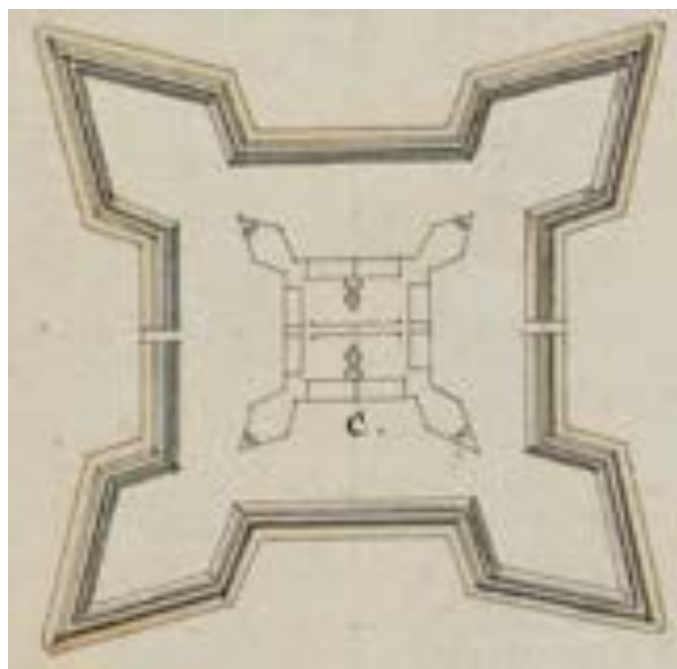
Under Bouquet's instructions, Bassett and his laborers constructed a two-story blockhouse in the center of the former French works. The outer works were bastion entrenchments and constructed of earthen walls. According to Monckton, "It must be made to Contain about One Hundred and fifty Men, with Officers in Proportion." Captain Henry Gordon later reported,

*At Presquise is a Blockhouse 56 Ft. square and 16 high in which are 8 large Rooms with Chimneys, besides four Rooms for Officers in the Bastions that cover the Angles, and into which is a passage from the Body of the House. These Bastions are one Story high and afford a very good Defence both to the Body of the House and different Fires at a Distance round the Blockhouse is a Retrenchment, with four Bastions fraised.*²⁷

This contemporary description by Gordon was repeated by author-historian, Francis Parkman, in that the blockhouse "was built of massive logs." It was designed as a two-story structure, with the top floor overhanging the first floor. As Parkman described it, projecting the upper story over the first floor provided the "means [through] which a vertical fire could be had on the heads of assailants, through openings in the projecting part of the floor, like the *machicoulis* of a medieval castle." The blockhouse was divided into eight rooms, with chimneys, and could house 150 men. Surrounding the structure were breastworks with Four corner bastions. These bastions containing officers' quarters and gun emplacements were connected to the blockhouse through retrenchments. A sentry box was added at the structure's crown. The roof material consisted of wood shingles.²⁸

■ SUPPORTING OUTBUILDINGS

In addition, a shed was built to store flour and other supplies, a bake house, and a necessary (latrine). They also excavated a well on the parade ground, possibly re-excavating the French well.



British Design for their Fort at Presque Isle, c. 1763. This final blockhouse and bastions do not totally match this drawing.

On the neck of the peninsula a blockhouse was erected large enough to hold twelve men and their commander.

Col. Mercer built a blockhouse upon the neck to be a Post for a Sergeant and 12 men with loopholes, and Platform, picketed on the outside.

A redoubt and a cattle corral were also placed near the eastern end of the peninsula across the bay entrance from the mainland fort. In September, flooding from a storm carried away the peninsula blockhouse. Twenty-four days of rain also slowed down the building of the main

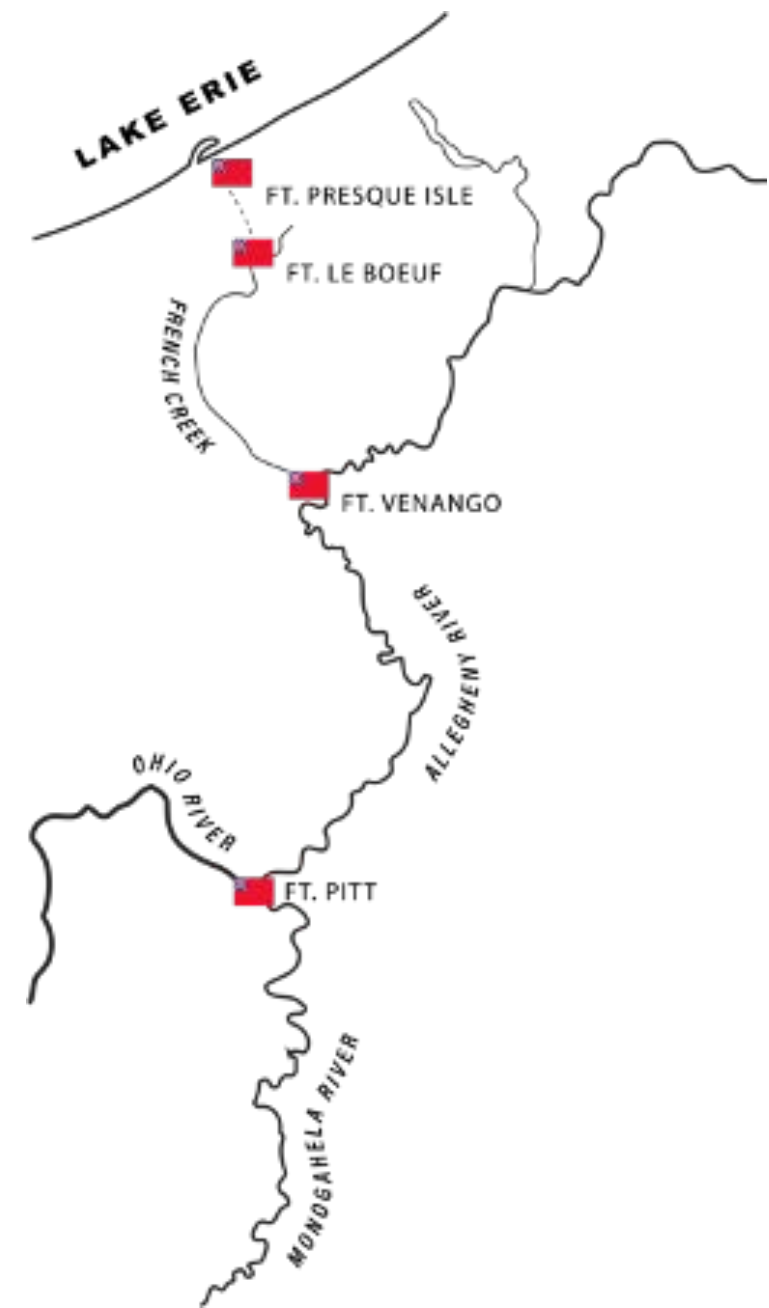
blockhouse. As of early September, only the first floor was complete.

■ VIGILANCE

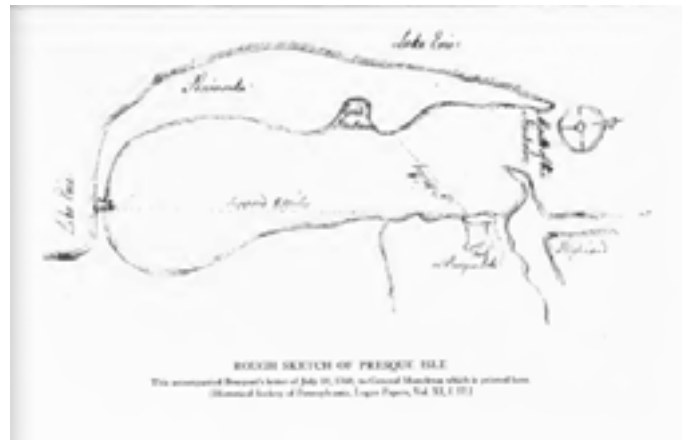
The threat of attack of the British fort was ever present. A detachment returning to the fort from the neck of the peninsula on July 22, 1760 was ambushed by a band of Indians reportedly loyal to the French. They included Delaware, Mississauga, Ottawa and Seneca tribes. Colonel Bouquet wrote to General Monckton about the skirmish.

*About 3 in the afternoon two of those men returned to the camp and reported that the canoe being too leaky, they were coming back by land when they were fired upon by 20 French and Indians near the neck of the peninsula. I sent immediately a party of 100 to the place, who found the sergeant alive, wounded by seven buckshot, two of our men killed and scalped, and two supposed to have been taken.*²⁹

During the first year, commanders at Presque Isle were replaced on several occasions due to the hardship of life at the post. Garrison troops were also exchanged. Bouquet responded to constant harassment and theft by Indians along the portage between Le Boeuf and Presque Isle by issuing a proclamation that prohibited settlement or hunting west of the Appalachians without a permit. By the same token, soldiers were forbidden from mistreating Native peoples. In all, the British fort at Presque Isle was in a tenuous position.



French Forts, 1763



A map accompanied Bouquet's letter to General Monckton in July 1760 showing the location of the British fort. To the right of the fort is Mill Creek.

■ **GREAT WAR FOR THE WEST—NEOLIN'S WAR, FIRST PHASE, 1760-63**

As the French presence receded in the Ohio country and Canada after 1760, it became clear to the various Native nations in the west that the British were not going to be their partners as France had been. Although the British were also traders, the conditions of that commerce harshened. Amidst this worsening situation, a Lenape religious figure suddenly emerged who created a large-scale movement to reject the European presence altogether.

Neolin, a member of the Lenape people, began to experience religious visions around 1760 that offered renewal to the Native peoples of the area. In his visions Neolin imagined two possibilities. First, if the Native peoples renewed themselves spiritually, they could overcome their dependence on European trade and power. Second, this renewal would end the division between tribal groups. In Neolin's visions, all Native peoples were one.

News of these revelations spread quickly. Soon, throughout the Ohio country the separate groups and Nations began to engage in common purification rituals. Then Pontiac, an Ottawa headman, learned of Neolin's movement. Quickly, Pontiac took the movement and shifted it from a spiritual

revival into a confederated military alliance. Pontiac wanted to end the European presence in the Ohio country, and intended to accomplish this objective by force.³⁰

■ **GREAT WAR FOR THE WEST—NEOLIN'S WAR, SECOND PHASE: 1763-66**

Pontiac and his forces began their campaign by besieging Fort Detroit in April 1763. The British, however, managed to hold the Native alliance in check until Pontiac gave up the effort in November.

In the meantime, Pontiac's allies struck at forts across the Ohio country. Most of the garrisons succumbed, including the British fort at Presque Isle. In the end, only the British garrisons at Detroit, Pitt, and Niagara survived.³¹

■ **THE ATTACK ON PRESQUE ISLE**

On June 20, 1763, Ensign John Christie and a small garrison of 26 Royal American troops (the Royal Americans were American colonists enlisted in the British army in specially designated units) suddenly



Pontiac visits Major Gladwin. Ottawa chief Pontiac visits Major Henry Gladwin, commanding Fort Detroit, planning to kill him and start a massacre of the English. Gladwin, fore-warned, dismisses him. (digitalpaxton.librarycompany.org)



This lithograph by Alfred Rudolph Waud (1828-1891), a famous lithographer who produced numerous battlefield drawings from the field during the Civil War, shows the attack at Presque Isle by a combined force of Senecas, Ottawas, Hurons, and Chippewas. The drawing, however, is not an accurate depiction of the fort's blockhouse, outbuildings, or outer works from June 1763. (Alfred R. Waud Collection, The Historic New Orleans Collection)

to surrender. As there was a small lookout station on top of the fortification, Christie's men could respond to the arrows by throwing water at the flames. This action continued throughout the day, and not only exhausted Christie's men physically, but drained their available water supply. There was a well in the interior of the larger stockade, but it would be death to attempt to retrieve any buckets. As darkness fell, the attackers maintained their positions, waiting to renew the assault in the morning.

The next day, the 21st, the attackers shifted tactics. They began to dig under the fort in the direction the commanding officer's quarters so they could set it afire. This they accomplished. The fire began to close in on the blockhouse. The garrison managed to get hold of enough water to put it out,



but their situation had become desperate.

Isolated, short of access to water, and on limited supplies, Christie's men debated surrender. Soldiers discussed the massacre of the British garrison at Fort William Henry (on Lake George) in 1757. On that occasion, the Hurons allied to the French under general Louis-Joseph de Montcalm turned on the British soldiers after they had surrendered and left the fort. However, despite their justified unwillingness to capitulation given this history, Christie's men were surrounded with no way out. The commander negotiated with the attackers, securing the release of the men with the provision that each soldier could take 6 days-worth of rations with them. After the surrendering, the soldiers were attacked and killed as soon as they left the fort. Christie and two others who escaped were captured and taken to Detroit to exchange.³²

In Neolin's War (or, Pontiac's Rebellion, as it is often termed) 1763 was the year of Pontiac's initiative. However, by the next year, Amherst retaliated with a strategy aimed to divide the Native groups from each other, destroying crops, and wasting villages. In a letter to Bouquet, the general asked: "Could it not be contrived to send the Small Pox among those disaffected tribes of Indians? We must of this occasion use every stratagem in our power to reduce them." Pursuing this strategy, Henry Bouquet launched an expedition to attack the Shawnee and Lenape and forced them to negotiate a cease-fire. Bouquet was successful. What began as an extraordinarily successful campaign of spiritual renewal and "pan-Indian" identity ended in 1766 with Pontiac's surrender. However, Neolin's vision would return in several new manifestations.³³



This map from 1765 shows the red line as the western boundary of British colonial expansion. Settlers were not allowed to move west in fear of provoking unrest or further war with Native tribes. (Library of Congress)

■ GREAT WAR FOR THE WEST—1763-1787

Soon after the Treaty of Paris of February 1763 ended the Great War for the Empire, the British monarchy issued the Royal Proclamation Line (October 7, 1763). This royal decree prohibited subjects in the British seaboard colonies from crossing over the Appalachians for the purpose of settling in the western possessions that had just been surrendered by the French to the British. The purpose of the edict was stop settlement encroachment

in the west, and this, it was hoped, would provoke less Native resistance. The British were anticipating Neolin. To be sure, the British government understood that the Native peoples' days on the land were numbered. Native control over the western territories would be terminated eventually, of course, but the British government—the military particularly—wanted to make this process of dispossession incremental and orderly.

The Proclamation Line also represented a

recognition by the British authorities in North America that the Haudenosaunee Confederation's alliance with the redcoats had helped turn the tide in the recent war with France, and recognition as well that the Treaty of Easton had made the seizure of Fort Du Quesne—and thus the fall of the French western forts—possible.

Of course, the British crown could hardly enforce this imposed boundary line. The line was simply an abstraction on a map. Individuals and groups could cross over the mountains anywhere. The real problem was that the Royal Proclamation would invalidate or imperil the titles of any major land purchases made in the region. For this reason, George Washington, along with other seacoast colony planters and merchants interested in western lands, objected strenuously. Washington and others had every intention of establishing land companies in the Ohio country to feed off the stream of settlers that they expected to flow west.

■ BRITISH RETURN TO PRESQUE ISLE

After the surrender of the garrison at Presque Isle in June 1763, the blockhouse was probably set ablaze and burned to the ground. With hostilities in the area subsiding, the British returned to the area sometime in the first six months of 1764. Several commanding officers, including Col. Henry Bouquet, allude to the presence at the old fort site. A planned expedition by Col. John Bradstreet in mid-1764 to meet the Indians in Ohio to discuss peace marks his starting point at Presque Isle.³⁴

On August 14th, Bradstreet formally arrived with a 2,000-man expedition force. They camped on the Presque Isle peninsula. The following day, "A Council held with the Indians and Deputies from the Enemy (sic) Indians and the Articles with the



Terms of peace were Signed in Council by both parties.” One of the terms of Bradstreet’s treaty was, *That this Peace may last forever, the Nations above mentioned must entirely relinquish their claims to the Forts and Posts the English now have in their Country; and that the English shall be at liberty to build and erect as many Forts or Trading Houses as they may find necessary for carrying on Trade betwixt them and the Savages without Interruption, and they shall grant us as much Land round the Forts as a Cannon can throw a shot over, for the raising a proper supply of Provisions for the use of the Garrison and Traders, which Lands they are to renounce and look on as the property of the English forever.*³⁵

After the terms of the treaty was agreed upon in late November 1864, it is very likely the British rebuilt Presque Isle. The bay and portage to Fort Pitt were too important to the overall campaign to control the Ohio Valley to leave unsecured. At this time, no primary source documents from the period reference to a new installation being constructed. However, the British still occupied most of the Ohio Valley and parts of western Pennsylvania in the years following the end of the American Revolution. Presque Isle remained British outpost before, during, and after the Revolution.³⁶ In November 1785, John Adams, the American Minister at London, wrote to Lord Carmarthen, English Secretary of State,

That, although a Period of three Years has elapsed Since the Signature of the Preliminary Treaty, and of more than two Years, Since that of the Definitive Treaty, the Posts of Oswegatchy, Oswego, Niagara, Presqu’ Isle, Sandusky, Detroit, Michilimachinac, with others not necessary to be particularly enumerated, and a considerable Territory round each of them, all within the incontestable

*Limits of the said United States, are Still held by British Garrisons, to the Loss and Injury of the said United States.*³⁷

Historian John Miller, who inaccurately states that Col. Rogers built the original British fort, not Bassett, also says that,

*It was not built according to its original plan. The new plan consisted of a stockade enclosure with a block house, the second story of which extended out over the first all round, occupying a position at or near the northwest corner of the stockade. There was a house of logs for the commander of the post, other smaller houses, a stone magazine (which the French had left), and a well, all within the stockade, which was provided with strong gates.*³⁸

Given that Colonel Henry Bouquet was upset that Ensign Christie surrendered the fort and felt that the blockhouse (56’ x 56’, two-story with bastions) was impenetrable, and the after-battle description of the structure being attacked from behind earthworks, a smaller structure surrounded by a wooden palisade Frances Parkman states that the blockhouse was located between the lake and the creek, and the “bank of the stream (Mill Creek) rose in a high steep ridge within forty yards of the blockhouse, thus affording cover to assailants, while the bank of the lake offered similar advantages on the other side.” Potential attackers could use these ridges, along with the outer earthen breastworks and entrenchment, to provide themselves a covered approach to fire on the blockhouse from multiple directions.³⁹



This drawing from a 1973 archaeological study may show the location and design of the post-1863 British fort at Presque Isle. (WPA)

■ ROAD TO REVOLUTION AND THE NORTHWEST ORDINANCE

In sum, after 1763, British authorities had alienated both the western Native peoples *and* the colonists. Neolin was only the most eloquent and philosophical of the Native people to see that 1760 had created an existential crisis for all the aboriginals of North America. For his part, George Washington was only one of the more notable and wealthy colonists to be enraged by London’s attempt to bar their

hopes of making money from the west. Therefore, after 1763, a three-way war was brewing. Native peoples would be fighting for their survival. Parliament and the king would be fighting to retain the empire they had just spent so much treasure to win. The colonists would be fighting to end imperial interference with their efforts to create their own empire in the west.

After the war ended, colonials protested London’s imperial policies, and these protests



grew over time into a movement to secede from the British empire. At the top of the list was the Proclamation of 1763 that forbid settlement west of the Appalachian Mountains. From 1775 to 1783 the colonials then prosecuted a successful war to escape London's direct control. This meant that after 1783, the United States now claimed the legal right to set land settlement and administrative policies for the Ohio country and the rest of the west out to the Mississippi River.

Congress wasted no time in establishing such policy for their new domains. From 1784, delegates like Thomas Jefferson labored hard to get the seaboard states to relinquish their old, overlapping colonial claims to western lands and turn the entire west into United States public lands. Among other things, these western lands represented a desperately needed source of revenue for the new government. War debt, not simply settlement pressure, drove Congressional action.

Then, in 1785, again under Jefferson's leadership, Congress passed what was called the Land Ordinance that applied to the entire Ohio country. The decree established a Public Land Survey System, in which surveyors would grid the entire Northwest (as it was now being called). Starting at a point where the corners of Virginia and Pennsylvania met at the Ohio River, surveyors would grid the US Public Lands into squares 6 miles by 6 miles. This would make each grid—or township—a large square composed of the 36 squares, each of which would be one square mile (640 acres).

Two years later, in 1787, Congress passed the Northwest Ordinance (again under Jefferson's direction), applicable to the same territory. This ordinance facilitated the settling and creation of states and effectively abolished colonialism.

Instead of moving west and becoming subjects of the United States in a territory controlled from an imperial center far away, prospective settlers could assure themselves that Congress had established a clear method by which western local communities could become equal to those in the rest of the Confederation. In the 1787 ordinance, Congress established a three-stage process through which western areas would attain equal statehood.

One cannot exaggerate how important these measures were. By creating the land grid, Congress made establishing clear land title a matter of simple geometry. The Land Ordinance did not eliminate the problem of speculator v. settler, but it established a process to create clear, easily defined land claims. In addition, the Northwest Ordinance created political reassurance. If one's family headed west, there was no longer a concern whether one was heading into land owned by Virginia or Pennsylvania. One was headed onto United States public land, and Congress had created clear rules by which these areas would become self-governing states equal to those in the rest of the Confederation.

Of course, this same legislation spelled the doom of the Native peoples in the Ohio country and the rest of the west. By the 1780s, pressure to move over the mountains had been building for over a generation. The Congressional ordinances facilitating settlement allowed this pressure to become a flood. Simply put, the lands of the Native peoples were not conquered by United States soldiers, but by surveyors with their chains and instruments, plat maps located in hundreds of county courthouse towns, and the deed records kept in those same courthouses.

■ GREAT WAR FOR THE WEST: CLEAR TITLE, 1787-1795

Although the 1783 peace treaty that ended the American Revolutionary war stipulated that the British would vacate the trans-Appalachian west, the London government and its army had no intention of leaving. Neither the British nor their Native allies had any reason to fear the pitifully weak confederation of newly independent states. If the US wanted the British out and the Natives removed, the country would have to find a way to force it.

Adoption of the new constitution in 1789 certainly strengthened the federal government from what it had been under the Articles of Confederation. However, the new national authority and its president, George Washington, would have to create an army able to remove the British and Natives from the west. Early military operations were not promising.

In 1790 and '91, the initial efforts of the Washington administration ended in defeat. Most critically, on November 4, 1791, a force of about 1,200 men (mostly state militias) under Major General Arthur St. Clair was decisively defeated at the Battle of the Wabash. The regular army recruits in St. Clair's force had been poorly trained, while the militiamen were raw. Moreover, neither St. Clair nor his subordinates had any experience in woodlands' fighting. They were completely unprepared for the well-coordinated enemy force that hit them. It was clear to the president that he would have to rethink his plans.

For the Americans, the fundamental problem was that two new Native leaders in the Ohio country had created a formidable alliance of Native peoples, along with a well-considered strategy to employ their warriors. Blue Jacket (Shawnee) had teamed with Little Turtle (Miami) to forge

a powerful alliance that combined all the Native groups of consequence in the Ohio country. The two leaders then developed a two-pronged strategy to keep the Americans out of the territory they claimed. First, the warriors would attack any prospective settlers who worked their way into the Ohio lands. Deliberately, the attacks would be spectacular and brutal—a form of terror war. Second, Blue Jacket and Little Turtle learned how to conduct large-scale, complex battle. This was made painfully evident when the Native alliance destroyed St. Clair's force. The American commander had based his men in Fort Washington (Cincinnati, Ohio) and planned to march inland up to the Miami's major town—Kekionga (near Ft. Wayne, Indiana). St. Clair was poorly supplied and did not leave until late in the campaign season. Then, as he moved deeper into the Ohio country, his force grew weaker. Soldiers and militiamen deserted in numbers. The general's original force of 2000 had dwindled to around 1200 by the time that Blue Jacket and Little Turtle concentrated their Native allies to confront the Americans. Then, even when it became clear that St. Clair's weakened army faced around 1000 Natives, the US commander in an act of criminal negligence refused to fortify his position.

The result was predictable. The November 4 engagement was a pitched battle in the open woodland. This was no simple ambush. Blue Jacket and Little Turtle conducted their combat expertly. The Native allies first attacked the state militia to panic them and remove them from the field. Snipers then picked off the cannons in St. Clair's army. Units of the US regulars tried to respond by attacking in bayonet charges, but the two Native leaders had their warriors retreat and then turn to encircle their foes. St. Clair's defeat was total. At every point in

the campaign, Native skill was matched by the US command's complete incompetence.

St. Clair's shameful defeat created a predicament for President Washington. The government was new; his administration was the first one. If Washington could not produce a success, the entire constitutional structure might fall. As a result, when the president chose Anthony Wayne to replace the disgraced St. Clair, the new general and his president understood that new methods were needed. There was no more room for bungling.

■ THE CONFEDERACY PUSH BACK

A 1784 treaty between the federal government and the Iroquois Confederacy, known as Pennsylvania's "Last Purchase," ceded the northwestern territory of the state (not including the Erie Triangle) to the United States. However, the treaty was viewed as illegitimate by many within the Six Nations.

"[W]e must observe to you, that we are sent in order to make peace, and that we are not authorized to stipulate any particular cession of lands," Mohawk leader Thayendanegea (better known as Joseph Brant) warned when the negotiations for the "Last Purchase" commenced. Only Cornplanter had signed the treaty. Yet, other tribal leaders argued that diplomats such as Cornplanter had no authority to speak for the Six Nations.

When Pennsylvania wanted to expand its borders to include the Erie Triangle, the Seneca and other Iroquoian-speaking people to the east,



Major General Arthur St. Clair
(Library of Congress)

along with the Western Confederacy tribes, made their own claims and vowed to resist any American invasion of their lands. The Six Nations tried to leverage the violence already taking place between the Americans and the Western Confederacy and raise fears of an expansion of the conflict into Pennsylvania.

A 1789 treaty then authorized the American annexation of the Erie Triangle. The Six Nations again complained with Joseph Brant telling Cornplanter that he was "alarmed to hear the people of the United States being in possession of Presque Isle on Lake Erie."



Cornplanter

The Six Nations were paid \$2,800 from the State of Pennsylvania and \$1,200 from the federal government for the Erie Triangle tract. Cornplanter was rewarded for "excellent statesmanship" with "a fine reservation near Warren ... [as] recompense for his services to the State." He and hundreds of other Seneca lived out their lives on what was known as the Cornplanter Tract.

■ ANTHONY WAYNE

Anthony Wayne was born January 1, 1745, in Easttown Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania, the son of a wealthy tanner, Isaac Wayne, and his wife, Elizabeth Iddings. After studying at a school run by his uncle, Gilbert Wayne, and at the Academy of Philadelphia, he found work as a surveyor in Chester County and then in Nova Scotia. Upon his return to Pennsylvania in 1766, Wayne married Mary ("Polly") Penrose (1749–1793), with whom he had two children, Margaretta (1770–1810) and Isaac (1772–1852). In 1774, he inherited his father's substantial estate, known as Waynesborough.

On the eve of the Revolution, Anthony Wayne was a member of the Chester County Committee of Safety and the Provincial Assembly of Pennsylvania, active in both through 1775. The following year, Congress appointed him a colonel and he received command of the 4th Battalion of the Pennsylvania Line. In this role he participated in the unsuccessful Canadian expedition and the Battle of Trois Rivières in 1776, and then led the disgruntled forces at Fort Ticonderoga the following winter. In February 1777, he was promoted to brigadier general, and saw heavy action at the battles of Brandywine and Germantown later in the year and at Monmouth in June of 1778. At Stony Point in July 1779, he won one of the most impressive victories of the war with his Corps of Light Infantry. In January 1781, he proved his ability as a leader with his settlement of the mutiny of the Pennsylvania Line.

Wayne left the army in 1783 with the rank of brevet major general and was elected to the Pennsylvania Assembly and to the Council of Censors the next year. In March of 1785, he moved to Georgia, where he had received a 1600-acre rice plantation

near Savannah, called Richmond and Kew, for his services to the state during the Revolution. He served as part of the state convention, which ratified the United States Constitution in 1787.

When Wayne assumed command, he brought with him an organizational concept—the idea of the Legion—first proposed by Baron von Steuben during the war against Britain. According to the plan, the US army would organize four such Legions, each one to be a combined arms team designed for offensive campaigns (1200 men each). Each Legion would have a troop of mounted dragoons, an artillery company, and eight infantry companies. Furthermore, within the infantry companies, some of the units were armed with rifles, making the men, effectively, snipers. As with every combined arms formation ever devised, the critical issue was coordination. The Legion's capability in combat depended on the commander's ability to combine the units of artillery, horse, and musket/rifle infantry to produce overwhelming power at the chosen point of contact with the enemy.

Unlike his predecessor, Wayne understood that his soldiers required training and discipline, along with proper supplies, to make the new Legion formation work. The commander's nickname, "Mad Anthony," derived largely because of his insistence on strict discipline.

In 1794, Wayne moved his army—which included 1000 Kentucky militia—northward from the Ohio River line into the Natives' country to confront Blue Jacket and Little Turtle. On August 20, 1794, the two armies met on the Maumee River near present-day Toledo in a stand of fallen timbers knocked over by a tornado. This time, it was the Americans' discipline and ability to maneuver on the battlefield that decided the question. The Native



allies were shattered. The next year, the Americans imposed the Treaty of Greenville on the “Ohio Indians,” in which most of the current-day state of Ohio was surrendered to the US. At least in terms of the Native peoples of the northwestern country, the army had won clear title to the land.

■ **LAND SPECULATION: UNCLEAR TITLE, 1783-1815**

As the strategic battle for control of the trans-Appalachian west deepened, another struggle emerged. For several decades, the mercantile and planter elite of the seaboard colonies had viewed the “over-the-mountain” region, as it was termed, as a vast territory from which they could make a fortune. They believed that if they could manipulate government control over newly acquired territory, they could acquire vast amount of land at cheap prices and thus shape the process of “western settlement” to their own ends and benefit directly from land sales or from various forms of tenantry. When George Washington had made his venture to Fort Le Boeuf back in 1754, land speculation was at the heart of the mission.

By the time that the colonies had secured independence from Britain, speculation in land was a business of obsession, boom, and bust as opposed to orderly settlement. In the area of Erie (the Triangle), the Pennsylvania Population Company was a good example. Formed by John Nicholson—the Pennsylvania Comptroller—along with other prominent east coast investors, the company was created to take advantage of a state land settlement law of April 3, 1792. According to provisions of the act, one could earn title to land in one of two ways. One could travel to the land itself and make genuine improvements, or one could purchase land warrants from the state land office in Philadelphia. Of

course, the combines, like Nicholson’s, purchased vast numbers of warrants in Philadelphia.

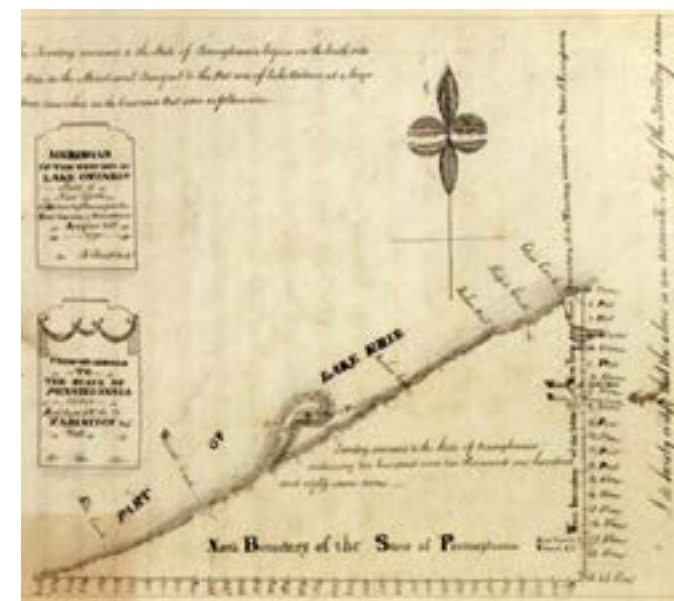
Initially, Nicholson used investor funds to buy 640 warrants, filling out each of the documents with a fictitious name. Over the next two years, he purchased 500 more warrants using the same procedure. It is estimated that the Pennsylvania Population Company bought title to 500,000 acres. The investors presumed that they would hold the land until settlement pressure raised the value of the parcels. There was a potential difficulty, because the 1792 law had a provision that land, once purchased, had to be improved and settled within two years. However, because of Nicholson and the prominence of the other investors, ignoring this part of the law was not a problem.

Nonetheless, the Pennsylvania Population Company’s plan did not quite work out. Purchases were slow (mostly in Allegheny, Mercer, Erie, Crawford, and Beaver counties). Then, boosters like Nicholson invested in many ventures and spread themselves too thin. By the end of the 1790s a market



General Anthony Wayne
(Library of Congress)

contraction forced them under. Nicholson was in debtor’s prison by 1799 and, when he died the next year, four million dollars in debt (around eighty million today). In 1800, the Jeffersonian Republicans took control in the state, and began to favor those who, as farmers or tradesmen, settled the land and worked it. The warrants began to be contested in the courts and were bottled up until the company was liquidated in 1812.



The Erie Triangle as surveyed by Andrew Ellicott, 1790.

■ **AMERICANS AT PRESQUE ISLE**

Throughout this period of reorganizing the US army there was little interest, outside Jefferson’s proposal in early 1792, in establishing a fort at Presque Isle. Obviously, the military action lay further west. It was suggested to Wayne that he use Presque Isle as a supply-communication base for his campaign against Blue Jacket and Little Turtle, and so move his force straight west along the southern shore of the lake.

Wayne rejected this idea immediately. The commander pointed out that the British at Fort Niagara would be directly in his rear and would be able to use the lake to threaten his line of advance. The American commander well understood that he had to make his move from the south, along the Ohio River line (as St. Clair had done), because this was the only way to secure his line of supply, communication, and reinforcement.

In 1792, the so-called “Erie Triangle” was incorporated into the state of Pennsylvania,

purchased from the Federal government for \$151,640.25. The platting of the town and surrounding area could now proceed. A few years later, the first real estate transaction took place in a tent pitched near the old French fort.

Seth Reed, one of the first settlers, purchased from the Pennsylvania Population Company land at the mouth of Mill Creek and built a log structure called Presque Isle Tavern, establishing a family dynasty that would span nearly a century.⁴⁰

As late as October 1794, elements of the “old English fort” were still

standing. Maj. Ebenezer Denny, newly appointed commander in the state militia and prior aid-de-camp to American MG Arthur St. Clair, was sent to northwestern Pennsylvania to protect the Pennsylvania commissioners who were laying out the towns of Erie and Waterford, and to survey the British and Native American influence in the region. His march halted at Waterford to avoid entanglement with the British, he ventured with a few men on to Presque Isle to take measure. He recorded in his journal that the British Presque Isle site was



Seth Reed built the first log cabin in the town of Erie in 1795. A Revolutionary War veteran, Reed and his family arrived on a small sailboat from Buffalo. They camped on the peninsula before moving to the mainland and settling by Mill Creek, just a short distance from the remains of the British and French forts.

“a perfect seaboard prospect, and one of the most beautiful. The bank along the lake is high and dry, perhaps about forty feet. Six or eight feet of the bottom is a slate rock. For a mile and a half, the country round the fort has been cleared, but is



To the left, the 1795 Ellicott and Irvine "Plan of the Town of Erie" map. To the right, Ellicott's survey of Garrison Hill for Rochefontaine (Pennsylvania State Archives)



Andrew Ellicott served as a Major with Maryland's Elk Ridge Battalion during the Revolutionary War. After the war he became a surveyor. In 1784, he was among a handful of men commissioned to complete the Mason-Dixon Line. Ellicott was hired by President George Washington in 1796 to survey the Capital City.

The description provided by Denny of a "regular pentagon" at Presque Isle, like Fort Pitt, does not match the original design. Post-Civil War historians have stated that the British fort also had a wooden palisade and a blockhouse less than one-third the size of the structure built in 1760 by Bassett based on

Bouquet's design. Denny retreated back to Waterford and on to Pittsburgh, after he was recalled by the Governor.

Following his victory at Fallen Timbers in August 1794, Wayne ordered Captain Russell Bissell to take 200 men and construct a new fort at Presque Isle. When troops arrived in late July 1795, the town of Erie was in the process of being surveyed by Andrew Ellicott and William Irvine. Ellicott, who was born in Pennsylvania in 1754, had been a major during the Revolution, afterwards teaching mathematics and holding office in the Maryland state legislature. His assistance on the extension of the Mason-Dixon line, which determined the western boundary of Pennsylvania ("Ellicott's Line"), demonstrated his surveying skills and precision. Under the direction of George Washington, he surveyed the boundaries of Washington, D.C., famously clashing with the esteemed Pierre Charles L'Enfant.⁴²

The renowned U.S. Army Chief of Engineers, Stephen Rochefontaine, a veteran of the Revolution and trained at the Vauban school in France, arrived

now grown up with young chestnut timber. Even within the fort the brush is so thick that it is difficult passing. There have been very fine gardens here; parsnips, currant bushes and many other things growing wild. The old fort a regular pentagon; about one thousand feet round the parapet,

overlooking and commanding the basin or harbor, and affording a boundless view of the lake. It has been a handsome but light work; neither ditch nor parapet are sufficiently large. Five feet is about the base and height. The ditch perhaps three feet, and four in width. There must have been some

other defense, pickets or fraising. The walls of the magazine are yet good, and the well wants nothing but cleaning out. The chimneys of the houses, some brick, others stone, are still standing; and the walls of a stone house, down by the old mill, are yet tolerably good."⁴¹



in August 1795 to begin construction. George Washington made him a lieutenant colonel and commandant of the new Corps of Artillerists and Engineers in February of that year. According to George Burges, who was employed by Ellicott to assist in the survey, Rochefontaine was “a corpulent French man...” Burges also noted that he “speaks tolerable English, and to appearance is a good-natured man.”

The survey called for setting aside sixty acres for the fort to be located on the high ground between Mill Creek and Garrison Run, a small creek running just east of the site and emptying into the bay. Capt. Martin Strong stated that, “I came to Presqu’Isle the last of July 1795. A few days previous to this a company of United States troops had commenced felling the timber on Garrison Hill, for the purpose of erecting a stockade garrison.” The land for the garrison was “in the form of a regular half polygon of 6 sides.” The fort was positioned to have a commanding view of the entrance of Presque Isle harbor encompassing “thirty [acres] of which was on the high land and the other thirty acres in the marsh between the fort and the entrance of the harbor.” The garrison was situated “100 perches from the spot where the old French fort stood.”⁴³ A perch, or rod, is a surveyor’s tool and a unit of length equal to five- and-one-half yards or sixteen-and-one-half feet. If we use the current location of the Wayne Blockhouse as a starting point, the American Fort would be 1,650 feet or 100 perches from the site of the French and British fortifications between Parade and Sobieski Streets and Front Street.⁴⁴

The overall size of the American fort was 100 square yards. It started at the bluff with a zig zag palisade at the northwest corner and ran east along the bluff line. The palisading was designed to allow

troops to fire on the enemy using the shelter from the bank. Ellicott’s and Irvine’s 1795 map of the garrison ground originally show three blockhouses to be erected; one at the east and one at the west, both on a parallel line. The third was to be built on the south of the two blockhouses, splitting the distance between them. The troops under Bissell built a sawmill during the fall at the mouth of Mill Creek, the first in Erie County, and named the stream for the mill. However, by 1796, only two blockhouses, east and west, were completed. The south blockhouse was never built.

In testimony to the effectiveness of Wayne’s victory at Fallen Timbers, the new American fort at Presque Isle quickly fell into disrepair even as the town of Erie began to take shape. Later, in 1813, when Oliver Hazard Perry came to the area to build his scratch flotilla of naval vessels, he reported that the fort “had all but deteriorated.”

■ THE DEATH OF ANTHONY WAYNE

On his return journey from his Ohio military campaigns, Gen. Anthony Wayne stopped at the two American blockhouses at Presque Isle. Plagued for a long time with gout, at 51, he fell ill and died in Erie on December 15, 1796. At his own request, he was buried by the flagstaff near one of the blockhouses. Here matters should have rested except for a bizarre incident involving the Wayne family.

In 1809, the Wayne family, from Radnor Pennsylvania, decided that they wanted the general’s remains returned home. His son, Isaac, set out on the 300-mile trip in a small, two-wheeled cart—a sulky—not thinking about the kind of wagon that would be required to return a casket on a long journey over primitive roads. At any rate, his son arrived in Erie and, with the help of a physician—a

One of the earliest settlers that arrived in Erie with the party of surveyors and militia in 1795 was John Grubb. With Grubb was several enslaved males, including Boe Bladen. Possibly related, they are considered the first African Americans in Erie. Sometime around eighteen hundred, Bladen purchased a 400-acre tract of land in Millcreek Township from the Pennsylvania Population Company, possibly with the help of Grubb.

By the early eighteen-hundreds, Harborcreek Township had the largest population of enslaved and free Blacks in northwest Pennsylvania. Robert McConnell and James Titus came as young children with Thomas Rees. When the men turned eighteen, Rees granted both McConnell and Titus fifty acres of land each.

Dr. Wallace—the body was exhumed. To the astonishment of all, the body was remarkably preserved. But this presented a problem. Isaac had no means to take a rotting but whole corpse back to Radnor. So, the decision was made to boil the corpse to scrape and remove the flesh from the bones. Packed, the skeleton was given to Isaac to take back to Radnor. These bones are buried in St. David’s Episcopal Church in that city. The remainder of the body, presumably, was poured back into its original grave in Erie.

Once again, the story should have stopped here. However, in 1879, the Erie gravesite was discovered by a Dr. Germer near the original southwest blockhouse.

Of course, a story like this had to become the stuff of legend. According to one of the ghost stories, the bones that Isaac took back to Radnor were not packed properly. As the little carriage jolted and bounced its way back to Radnor, bones here

and there fell out along the road, or so it is claimed.

Apparently, the general is not pleased about this dismemberment of his corpse, so every January 1st Anthony Wayne travels along the road to search for his missing parts.

■ THE FRENCH AND BRITISH FORT SITE AFTER 1800

By the early nineteenth century, portions of the French and British fort site east of Parade between 2nd and 3rd streets became a brickyard owned by Isaac Austin and B. Rice. Brick made in this yard was used by James Baird to build the first brick house in Erie County on German between Front and Second streets. The structure was two stories and became a hospital in 1813 for the wounded prisoners captured at the Battle of Lake Erie. The building burned in 1827. Though it is hard to know exactly how much of the site was reduced by Austin and Rice brickyard, several other businesses, including another brickyard, were located on or near the spot in later years. Over a period of decades, the embankment and landscape south were further reduced to its present elevation. The construction of the railroad in the 1860s along the original shoreline had a major impact as well.⁴⁵

■ GREAT WAR FOR THE WEST: CLEAR TITLE, 1811-1815

Even though Anthony Wayne had begun the process of removing Natives from the Ohio country lands, the British remained just to the north. With the signing of the Jay Treaty of 1796, the empire promised to remove its men and installations from US territory in the west. In reality, the British had no intention of complying. To establish complete title to the lands in the west, another war would be needed.

Once again, this war involved the “Ohio Indians”—particularly, two brothers from the Shawnee



people, Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa. Together, they paralleled almost exactly the relationship between Neolin and Pontiac forty years earlier.

Originally named Lalawethika, Tenskwatawa was small, and by all accounts physically inept. In this respect, he was precisely the opposite of his fearsome brother. Unable to perform the duties of a man, as he understood them, Lalawethika became lethargic and turned increasingly to alcohol. Here the story might have ended. However, in 1805 he entered a deep trance, and there encountered the Master of Life. As with Neolin, the Master told Lalawethika that the Native peoples' dependence on European goods had destroyed their spiritual worth and legitimacy. The Master pointed to guns, glass beads, metal cookware, and, of course,



Tenskwatawa

alcohol. Lalawethika was told to spread the message of redemption among all the Native peoples of the west. If Lalawethika—now Tenskwatawa (“the open door” or “the prophet”)—could inspire all the Native peoples to purify themselves, then the “Master of Life” would drive the Europeans away.

As with Neolin's prophesying earlier, the Master's promise spread like wildfire among the western peoples. For his part, the governor of the Indiana territory, William Henry Harrison, was certainly alarmed. For obvious reasons, the Americans feared “Indian confederation” more than anything else. Unity among the Native peoples was a real threat, and this unity always involved spiritual revival at

some level. Particularly troubling was Tenskwatawa's venture to construct what was called Prophetstown, a large village that would institutionalize the return to a purified “Native life” that the Master had demanded. Tenskwatawa would build a working model town of his restored Native civilization.

Prophetstown was duly built and drew many Native people from the Ohio country to live a restored, traditional life. The response by white settlers was to demand that Governor Harrison destroy the village. On November 7, 1811, at the so-called Battle of Tippecanoe, this is precisely what Harrison did. The American commander burned Prophetstown to the ground.

This battle discredited Tenskwatawa. For one thing, he was no combat leader. Worse, he insisted that the “Master of Life” had told him that the white man's bullets could no longer kill the now re-sanctified Native inhabitants of Prophetstown. This delusion proved horribly false, of course, and so ended “Open Door's” credibility among the “Ohio Indians.”

Tecumseh was another matter. By all accounts, a courageous, honorable, and able leader, Tecumseh had been trying to use his brother's spiritual unity movement for another purpose: to create a “pan-Indian” military confederation that would then ally with the British. Tecumseh hoped that his warriors drawn from many Native peoples would be able to combine with British and Canadian troops and drive the Americans back to the Appalachians, or at least significantly cripple their westward movement.

When the US declared war against Britain the next year—in 1812—Tecumseh was ready to fight. In August 1812, a combined British, Canadian, and Native army forced a larger American army under William Hull to surrender Detroit. A few months

later, in January 1813, another group of Americans were routed at the Battle of Frenchtown, or the River Raisin, in southeast Michigan. As a result of these two victories, the British were discussing the possibility of providing Tecumseh with the present-day state of Michigan as a permanent “Indian territory.”



Daniel Dobbins

The American Navy interrupted these plans. The British captured Detroit in 1812, creating a problem for the navy. Because Detroit was lost, all of Lake Erie could be accessed by ships that the British could readily build. This, in turn, not only exposed all the Ohio country to direct invasion but made impossible any move by the Americans into Canada. Clearly, the United States would have to build its own lake fleet. For this reason, Erie became important once again.

■ ERIE AT WAR, AGAIN.

By 1810, the population of Erie had increased from 81 a decade earlier to 394. A new war with the British and their allies brought a new cast of characters to town. The American effort to build a fleet to fight the British and control of the Great Lakes put Erie front and center. Enter Daniel Dobbins, who ventured to the District of Columbia to see President James Madison about the need for an American naval force that could be built in the natural harbor of Erie. Dobbins was already familiar with the coming war. The shipowner was held captive twice by the British while on trips above Detroit. General David Mead, based in Meadville,

sent Dobbins to Washington, D.C., to report the developments and urge President James Madison to launch a defense against the British at Erie.

Dobbins was appointed Sailing Master by the Navy Department and ordered to build a fleet. In September 1812, he received authorization from Secretary of the Navy, Paul Hamilton, to build two brigs and four gunboats at Presque Isle. In early Spring 1813, Master Commandant Oliver Hazard Perry was ordered to Erie to oversee Dobbins shipbuilding. In addition to gaining the services of



Oliver Hazard Perry, 1818

master shipwright Noah Brown, Perry secured skilled ship's carpenters—150 of them—plus sailmakers, riggers, and block makers. By the following April, the “Fleet in the Wilderness” began to take shape. *Tigress* and *Porcupine* were launched in April from the yard at the

mouth of Lee's Run at the foot of Myrtle Street, followed in early May by *Scorpion*. The U.S. Brig *Lawrence* was launched June 25 at the Cascade Yard at the mouth of Cascade Creek, followed by the U.S. Brig *Niagara* and pilot boat *Ariel* on July 4.

Perry also had to secure Presque Isle and find crews for his ships. One thousand militiamen were employed to build blockhouses (despite being the site of three successive forts, Perry declared the Erie area defenseless), defend the area, and do other manual work. The commandant also had to contract for all the necessary supplies in Pittsburgh, and then ensure that all the material was hauled overland up to Erie. As they worked, the British



navy kept a close eye beyond the bay. On July 20, Perry wrote, “The enemy’s fleet of six sail are now off the bar of this harbor. What a golden opportunity should we have men.”⁴⁶

Perry was in desperate need of crews for his ships. He petitioned his superiors with limited success. Perry begged, “For God’s sake and yours and mine, send me men and officers ... send on the commander, my dear sir, for the *Niagara*. She is a noble vessel ... send me officers and men and honour is within our grasp.” A few days later, seventy men arrived from Black Rock Shipyard in Buffalo on a boat commanded by Perry’s cousin, Sailing Master Stephen Champlin. Many were African American militiamen. Few had ever been on a ship.⁴⁷

■ THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE

In August, Perry floated his newly completed ships over the bar into the little Presque Isle bay and gave his crews as much training in seamanship as possible. On September 10, 1813, he sailed for Put-in-Bay where he met and defeated the British at the Battle of Lake Erie. The American victory secured the lake for the United States.⁴⁸

This naval conquest destroyed Tecumseh’s alliance within a month. With the northern shores of the lake now exposed to American naval and troop movement, the British commander, Henry Proctor, decided to withdraw from Detroit. Harrison moved his forces north from Ohio and caught up with the

British at what became the Battle of the Thames in Canada on October 5, 1813. Tecumseh was killed during the fighting.⁴⁹

Although other elements of Tecumseh’s confederation remained to fight in the southern territories, these warriors were defeated as well. By 1815, with the war officially over, the Native American

presence east of the Mississippi was fatally weakened. While comprehensive removal of the Native peoples was twenty years in the future, the long history of a formidable Native presence in the Ohio country and elsewhere east of the Mississippi was finished. In this respect, it was significant that Tenskwatawa was moved to a Shawnee mission in what would later be the Kansas territory, where he would die in 1836. By virtue of the US Navy’s victory on the lake, clear title to the lands of the Ohio country were won. Westward expansion was now unobstructed.⁵⁰

The end of the War of 1812 finally secured the town of Erie as a permanent American settlement. The threatening presence of both the British from Lake Erie and inland Native American tribes was all but eliminated.

■ ERA OF CANALS

Prior to the War of 1812, little “settlement” occurred across the Appalachians. After the war, towns and farms quickly filled up the land area. “Wilderness” was turned into farm-scape and townscape. However, unlike the plantation states, in the northeastern quadrant this rapid expansion of farming across the mountains did not create an agri-industrialization. At this stage, farming combined sufficiency on the land with raising crops for market. On the other hand, given the rapid physical expansion into the “west,” the market expanded with it. For example, the “canal craze” produced many “artificial rivers” to create new transportation corridors into areas which before had been “remote.” As well, to handle the increased business the money supply was increased via a private enterprise in the printing of paper. Finally, the entire process became a kind of future’s market, for the

population in the area felt continual pressure to move further west to new lands, lest the youth of the farmers and tradesmen fall prey to the factory industrialization that had overtaken Britain.⁵¹

This relatively “light touch” of farm and town nonetheless represented a vast expansion of the capitalist market world. In addition to clearing vast new acreages to cultivate and opening hundreds of new stores and workshops, Americans carved out new and up-to-date transportation and communication corridors and innovated in new methods of commodification and exchange.

Given this energized—almost frantic—market-driven expansion, there was no longer any need for the “Indian Trade” that had been the center of the colonial economies. Because the Native peoples were now considered “useless,” and because they inhabited land that speculators and “settlers” intended to turn into homesteads, commodities, and cash, the various Nations were simply removed from the area. Although this era would produce many road-building projects—turnpikes of various types—water-borne transportation was still the most reliable, cost-efficient, and quickest (if traveling long distance). As a result, the two most important transportation innovations of the era were the steamboat and the canal—the “artificial river.”

The Beaver and Erie Canal, also known as the Erie Extension Canal, was the first major infrastructure development in Erie. Started in 1831, the canal ran 136 miles, near the western edge of the state, from the Ohio River to Lake Erie, through Beaver, Lawrence, Mercer, Crawford, and Erie Counties. Construction was supposed to complete a transport network through northwestern Pennsylvania that would connect Lake Erie with the Ohio River; the Main Line of Public Works, a canal

which joined Philadelphia to Pittsburgh; and the Erie Canal, which connected Albany, New York, to Lake Erie. The Beaver and Erie Canal was heavily used in its early years but was hard to maintain. Competition from railroads and the collapse of an aqueduct over Elk Creek in Erie County led to the canal’s abandonment in 1871.

At 60 feet wide and 10 feet deep, the primary challenge was the change in elevation of about 1,000 feet over the entire 136-mile stretch from the Ohio River to Lake Erie. In all, 137 locks, 72 of which sat between Erie and Conneaut Lake, were used to manage the elevation changes. The canal also played an important role in the birth of the local oil industry by providing the means to ship heavy barrels of oil from the fields of Crawford and Venango counties. The dollar-figure difference between wagons and canalboats brought the cost of transporting coal down from \$100 a ton, to \$25 a ton.

The influx of new German and Irish immigrants into Erie fueled the development of transportation and trade. Canal workers were paid \$8 a month and three jiggers of whiskey. Some of these workers lived in East Bayfront, just across the “tracks” from the docks.

The Erie Canal Company was organized in 1837 by Rufus S. Reed, son of Seth Reed, one of Erie’s founders and a major supporter and investor in Erie Extension Canal. Reed was also one of the largest ship and property owners in Erie, which included Reed’s Wharf, the final destination of the canal into the bay and where Reed controlled the flow of goods and people that used both Lake Erie and the Canal.

By the fall of 1844 the Erie Extension Canal was finally open. On December 5th, 1844, two canal boats reached the Canal Basin in Erie - the “Queen



of the West,” filled with passengers, and the “R.S. Reed,” filled with coal from Mercer County. Erie had its artificial river, using lock technology to move goods from the lake to Pittsburgh and back.⁵²

While the canals certainly reduced costs, the time involved in water-borne transportation was still considerable. Moreover, reliability and safety—with steamboats, particularly—remained a considerable problem. As events would show, in terms of creating transportation corridors and means of conveyance, the canal and steamboat era represented transitional technologies. Erie was an important port for steamboats during the period. The town pushed to be part of the American market revolution taking place.

The rapid growth of the region after the War of 1812 was also reflected in the development of commercial fishery, which by 1830 was a significant part of Erie’s economy. Traditionally, Lake Erie has produced the greatest variety of commercially important fishes of any of the Great Lakes. Around 1815, twine nets and seines began to replace the primitive brush gear mastered previously by Native Americans. Until 1850, commercial fishing was only in the shallow areas near shore, and in bays, marshes, rivers and streams. Deep-water fishing was limited.⁵³

■ NEW INDUSTRIAL ERIE

During this era, the railroad matured as a technology and would, soon after the Civil War, largely replace the canal and the steamboat. The railroad had two critical advantages that secured its dominance. First, tracks could be laid for long distances and the trains could move with few interruptions. There was less of a need to stop and break down cargo to shift from one mode of transport to another. Second, because tracks could be laid

anywhere, railroad corporations gained total access to the American continental landscape. The railroad all but abolished the idea of “remote.”

These two characteristics of the railroad combined to turn the US into one integrated continental marketplace. Economically speaking, regions were abolished, although different areas of the country specialized in different activities. Moreover, this integrated marketplace generated the growth of a corporate industrialization built around two principles: efficiency and mass-production. Because huge quantities of goods could be shipped anywhere on the continent, the integrated economy stimulated such new inventions as the assembly line. At the same time, because such enlarged operations increased costs dramatically, corporate owners devoted all their attention to cost-cutting—the definition of efficiency.

Railroad mania between 1840 and 1920 remade the nature of transportation and industry because of two major factors. First, it became clear that the technology would allow the transport of goods and people across enormous distances. Second, because track could be laid anywhere, it was now possible to imagine railroads as a grid system covering nearly every nook and cranny in the country. Thus, while the early rail companies were small-scale, the uniform technology made it possible to envision something much grander.⁵⁴

■ ERIE AND THE RAILROAD

The railroad, like the canal, also changed Erie’s pre-industrial landscape as lines connected the town with points east, south, and west. The Franklin Canal Company, chartered in 1844, constructed a narrow-gauge railroad from Erie southwest to the Ohio border. The Cleveland, Painesville, and

Ashtabula Railroad, incorporated in 1848, built a line northeast from Cleveland, Ohio to the Pennsylvania state line. The full line from Erie to Cleveland opened in 1852 with the majority of the line from Buffalo to Cleveland gauged at a width of 4-foot-10-inch track.

The Erie and North East Railroad was chartered in 1842 to extend the Buffalo and State Line Railroad from the New York state line to the part from the state line west to Erie. It began operation in 1852 and was built with the wide gauge, 6-foot tracks favored by the New York and Erie Railway. A “war” ensued between the supporters of the two tracks until the dispute was finally resolved in 1854 when the gauges were matched.⁵⁵

Large-scale development, like railroads, in turn, produced a vast economic polarization. Those owning, financing, and managing the expansion process made fortunes above anything ever seen in the US before. For instance, John A. and John F. Tracy, father and son, were pioneers of the American railway system. Both were involved in railroad construction from the 1840s forward. John F. became Superintendent of Railroads for Erie and North East railroad and served as president of the Chicago and Rock Island, and Chicago and Northwestern railroads. During the Erie Railroad War in 1853, Tracy held the position that railroad gauges should. He also built the first railroad bridge across the Mississippi River.

William L. Scott, an Erie mayor in the 1860s and 1870s, congressman, coal mine owner, shipping magnet, iron manufacturer, and banking industry investor, was Erie’s wealthiest 19th century businessmen. His worth is estimated at over \$500 million in 2021 dollars. He was also a shareholder and president of a number of railroad companies,

including the New York, Pennsylvania, and Norfolk Railroad and the Erie and Pittsburgh Railroad. He was married to the daughter of Erie’s other railroad magnet, John A. Tracy.

■ EXTENDING THE SHORELINE

In 1862, the Philadelphia and Erie line, a project that began in the 1840s as the Sunbury and Erie line, was completed all the way to the Erie shore. The track bisected Garrison Hill and crossed Mill Creek (using a bridge), before continuing along the bayfront to Erie’s public dock, located at the entrance to today’s promenade. Over the next two decades, the bluff along E. Front Street was gradually reduced and used as fill to help expand the east end docks and wharf for iron ore, coal, and coke storage, extending the shoreline almost a quarter mile into the bay.

■ NEW IMMIGRANTS, NEW AMERICANS

Mass-production operations generated thousands of unskilled jobs. And because they were low skill, the jobs were low paid, attracting immigrants just off the boat from Europe. In 1830, the first known German arrived. Wolfgang Erhart, who built his home on what is now the corner of East 10th and State Streets, was soon followed by his brother Stephen and W. F. Rindernecht. By 1880, 5,800 German immigrants called Erie home. The early Germans settled originally near Parade Street from East 10th and Holland Street.

Irish immigrants also flocked Erie. The potato famine in Ireland during the 1840s and 1850s pushed poor and starving refugees across the Atlantic. In a town eager for canal and eventually railroad workers, Erie became a haven for these new Americans. It was in neighborhoods like East Bayfront



A Road to Freedom: The Cultural Transformation of Erie

During the early nineteenth century Pennsylvania's large canal systems moved both passengers and goods. As much as the building of these canals transformed the state's natural landscape along with commerce and trade, it also had an impact on Pennsylvania's cultural landscape as well. Since these waterways were a faster mode of transportation as opposed to wagons and turnpikes, they were used as a means for escaped slaves searching for freedom in Canada from bounty hunters and where, by 1850, the Fugitive Slave Act could not be enforced. Both the Allegheny Portage Railroad, an extension of the Pennsylvania Main Line Canal, and Seneca Falls, part of the Erie Canal, were the Underground Railroad routes. Most likely, the Erie Extension Canal was also a passage to the Presque Isle port across the lake from Canada.

Though Pennsylvania passed the "Act for the Gradual Emancipation of Slavery" in 1780, the existing 6,000 enslaved people in the state remained in bondage, and their registered children would be enslaved until their 28th birthday. In response to "gradual emancipation," many Pennsylvania cities enacted legislation that restricted and oppressed free people of color. Recognition of the institution did not fully end until the Civil War.

Throughout much of the pre-Civil War period, Erie was divided on the issue. However, Albert Vosburgh, a free Black and affluent barber shop owner on French Street, worked with other prominent African Americans to create the Erie County Anti-Slavery Society. He, his wife, and brother, aided fugitives and refugees with food, clothing, and shelter, and with connections to other abolitionists. He may have also helped runaways cross Lake Erie to Canada.

Many of the Vosburghs' nine children became part of Erie's emerging middle class and went on to successful careers in real estate and railroading. Two sons, Israel, a porter, and Henry, a second cook on the 497-ton side-wheeler, *The Erie*, were among the 242 passengers killed in 1841 when barrels of oil and varnish stored on the boiler deck exploded on a return trip from Buffalo.

William Himrod, a partner in a local ironworks, operated the Sabbath School for Colored Children at his home on the corner of East Second and French streets. According to family diaries, Himrod and his wife provided food and a temporary respite for refugees making their way to Canada. He also purchased property and divided it into lots that were sold to free blacks, forming the community known as New Jerusalem, complete with a church, school, and many private residences. As expected, much of the anti-slavery movement in Erie was centered in New Jerusalem.



This 1909 shows how manufacturers used the Erie and North East Railroad as factories sprang up along the lines south and east of town. The docks at the bayfront became a major utility as the port expanded to accommodate heavier industries.

that they built their homes, churches, and lives in the shadow of the town's earliest community.

The first Russian immigrants arrived in Erie in the early 1870s to work and assist in the development of the Port of Erie. Erie's original Russian neighborhood, known as "Russian Town," was located from Front Street to Third Street, and Parade Street to French Street, in the area today we call the East Bayfront community. The original Church of the Nativity of Christ was the center of this neighborhood.

■ GROWTH OF INDUSTRIES

Erie continued to grow as manufacturing eclipsed

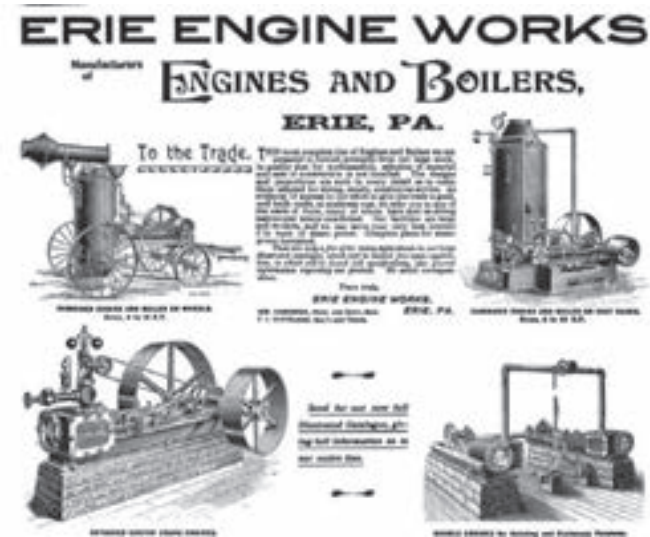
previous pre-industrial trades. For example, in the 1850s, the Erie City Iron Works became a major supplier of boilers, stationary and portable engines, and machinery for sawmills and steam riveting. By the 1870s, the company also produced railroad freight and passenger cars. As the 1880s rolled around, it was one of the largest manufacturers of boilers and engines in the United States. The plant was expanded to include a machine shop. The Erie Car Works, the Erie Forge, and the Erie Engine Works all grew out of the success of the iron works factory. These companies built factories along the railroad south of town to move product in and out of town.

Erie was not devoid of skilled craftsmen.



Beginning in the mid-1800's the city also attracted hundreds of new immigrants, especially German, to the organ industry. For example, Organ Supply Corporation, located at the 540 E. 2nd Street building, was an important part of Erie's recognition as one of the leading organ capitals of the world.

The Heisler Locomotive Works, located in Erie, was the last variation of the three major types of geared steam locomotives. First produced by Stearns Manufacturing Company of Erie, Charles L. Heisler, a recent graduate of Cornell, had patented the design in 1892. The geared engine could haul heavy loads up steep grades and worked efficiently on uneven tracks. Heisler constructed over 600 geared steam locomotives, more than 30 fireless steam locomotives, and a single diesel-electric locomotive during its 50 years of production.



Advertisement for Erie Engine Works

After the turn of the twentieth century, the Port of Erie emerged as a major trans-shipment point for iron, iron ore, coal, oil, grain, and hay. Using the lake, Erie was recognized as a major manufacturing



Lawrence Park, c. 1920

center for locomotives, locomotive components, and trolley engines, and paper products as Hammermill, a company created by German immigrants, became one of the largest paper manufacturers in the world.⁵⁶

■ **TRANSFORMING ERIE'S PRE-INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE**

After the turn of the century, the Erie landscape was transformed once more by the influx of even larger companies who built massive industrial complexes. In 1910, General Electric opened its first plant to build generators and engines. Over the next six decades more structures were added to the 360-acre campus.

Following the trend of other large manufacturers, GE pushed the concept of the self-contained

“Garden City” in Erie. Architects, aided by city planner, John Nolen, studied Ebenezer Howard’s community models. Howard believed older cities had reached their capacity and outgrown their civic and commercial functions. To him, green spaces and public parks, mixed with residential and industrial zones, would form a self-sufficient and sustainable community.

In 1913, Lawrence Park, a “company town” named after War of 1812 naval hero James Lawrence, opened offering single homes at moderate prices and with low monthly payments. They installed utilities, street lighting, and planted 1,000 trees along the streets. Additionally, the Erie and Suburban Company started a trolley service between the neighborhood and downtown. General Electric also constructed the first four-room school

and several commercial buildings to support their employees’ family lives. A greenbelt separated the factory from the residential and commercial districts.

In 1913, John Nolen also published this plan for the city: *Greater Erie 1913: Plans and Reports for the Extension and Improvement of the City*, sponsored by the City Planning Committee of the Chamber of Commerce and the Board of Trade. He noted that “No city is probably in better position than Erie to command phenomenal prosperity through the utilization of natural advantages. These advantages have been always an invaluable asset but never before—if indeed even yet—have they been appreciated at their full value.” Nolen, like his work on Lawrence Park, addressed every current landscape feature in Erie, natural and man-made, to offer a comprehensive redesign of the city that addressed

the problems of street location, street widening and street extension; of the separation of grades and other railroad changes; of a new Union Depot for all railroads; of a belt line railway; of a city-owned or city-controlled water front, modernized, and held for the benefit of all as an honest supplement to, and complement of, the railroads; of buildings, public and private, properly located, constructed, regulated, and controlled; of open spaces, playgrounds, and parks, selected, laid out and maintained for the good of the entire city population.(95)



John Nolen



At the time of Nolen’s planning work, Erie was a hodge-podge of industrial development, seemingly moving in a multiplicity of directions with no clear outcome for how and where private and public spaces would or should be managed and maintained. Instead, wealthy industrialists colluded with local political cronies to control the shape and growth of Erie’s public investment, institutions, and built environment. Their carefully crafted corporate plans only benefitted their individual industries. As Nolen points out, “The final word in city planning, therefore, is not its effect on business and commerce, but upon the increasing mass of human beings who must live and work in cities.”⁵⁷

Following the outbreak of WWI, GE abandoned the “Garden City” concept and instead built hundreds of brick row houses that became the core of the Lawrence Park community. Nolen’s 1917 new “industrial village” design embraced the earlier concept but added green space between factory and town and included homes for factory managers next door to employees. In many ways, he was implementing a portion of his city plan.⁵⁸

■ **DECLINE OF COMMERCIAL FISHING**

Commercial fishing peaked in the late nineteenth century. However, by the 1920s much of the fisheries were played out for various reasons and commercial fishing waned as an economic engine in Erie. In addition to the increasing number of dams built in Lake Erie’s tributaries after the turn of the century, many of the marshes of the south shore in the western basin were drained to create farmlands, and others were blocked with dikes to maintain private duck-hunting preserves.⁵⁹

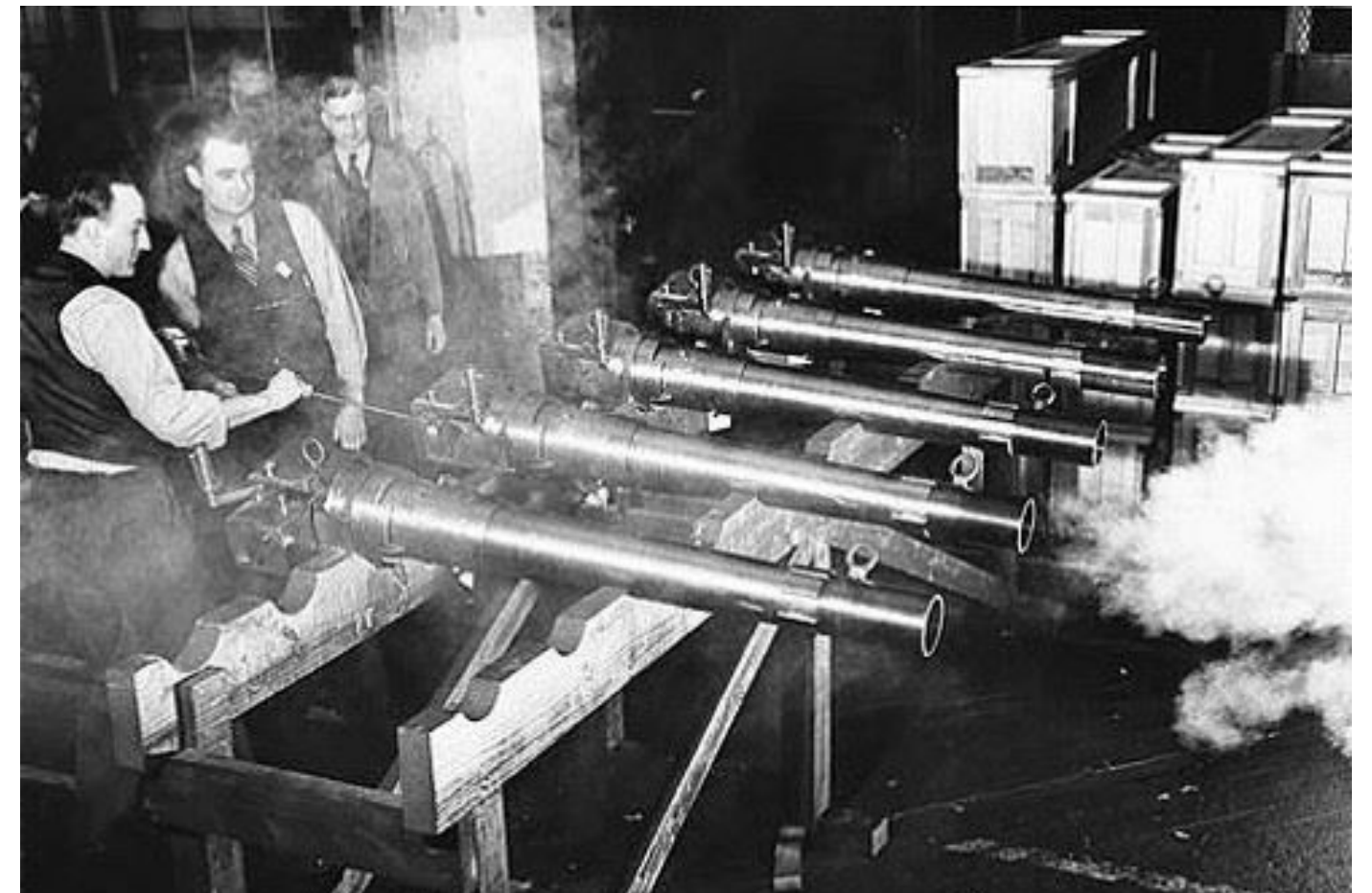
■ **DEVELOPMENT AND DISASTER**

By World War I, Erie had more than 500 manufacturing plants with a population of almost 80,000. Industrial development defined the city’s expanding urban environment. direct impact on Erie’s urban landscape when Mill Creek flooded in 1915, killing around 40 people and destroying some 250 houses. The tragedy was partially man-made. Over time, humans had altered the watershed and flow of Mill Creek and the other tributaries by clearing the forests, building mills and dams, filling in wetlands and marshes for residential development, channelizing streams, and creating impermeable surfaces, such as roads and buildings, thus restricting the natural flow of water.

In the aftermath of the flood, Erie responded with the innovative construction of the Mill Creek Tube, channelizing the creek using an underground aqueduct that runs beneath the East Bayfront neighborhood and Wallace Street Park before exiting into Lake Erie. Garrison Run was also moved underground.⁶⁰

■ **RISE OF CONSUMER ECONOMY**

The industrialization of the previous era had focused on heavy industry and infrastructure building (railroad lines, steel mills, coal mines, etc.). By contrast, the New Era—as the period after 1920 was called—focused the economy on producing and selling mass quantities of consumer goods. This had two profound consequences. First, while the earlier period impoverished labor because of the need to cut costs, the New Era was devoted to expanding “purchasing power” due to the need to increase the capacity of ordinary people to buy. Second, the culture became absorbed in advertising and the psychology of marketing.



Howitzer tubes at General Electric during World War II

Although this transformation to a consumer economy was billed as the wave of the future, it was in fact quite uneven. The beneficiaries of this new order were the affluent middle and upper classes of the major cities. Many segments of the population were left behind. Then came the Depression which seemed, at the time, to end the very idea of prosperity.⁶¹

Before the Great Depression hit, the New Era economy not only put thousands of consumer goods in circulation, the 1920s generated a new vision of what one might call “creativity.” The possibilities of synthetic and/or exotic materials exploded onto the scene. Suddenly, there were plastics. In the industrially advanced US, it now became possible to imagine that humans could make an



Erie Forge and Steel Company



This 1917 map shows the extent of the railroad yards on the bayfront.

alternative world out of alternative materials.⁶²

The National Organ Supply Corporation was the first company in Erie to introduce the use of plastics as consumer products. At their plant on E. 5th and Wayne Street, they used injection molding to make plastic organ parts in the 1930s. In the 1950s they began producing plastic toys for “Cracker Jacks” boxes. It is estimated they generated over 13 million toys for this popular candy. By the 1960s, they were producing plastic components for the appliance, pharmaceutical, air conditioning, radio, television, aeronautics, and automotive industries. Today, over 10% of the nation’s plastics are manufactured or finished in Erie-based plastics plants. The Plastek Group, for example, is a major producer of plastic packaging materials for consumer goods, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals,

as well as connectors for cars, circuit cards, card holders, and other plastic products.

Synthetics also had a downside. Specific to Erie, compounds used to produce plastic had an adverse impact on the lake, the main dumping ground for these residual chemicals. As pollutants increased in the water, so did phosphorus and nitrogen levels, which led to the development of algal blooms. These blooms decreased levels of oxygen in the water, and in turn, killed larger lifeforms like fish. It wasn’t long before dead fish began to line the shores of Lake Erie.⁶³

After the Great Depression collapsed the New Era economy, Franklin Roosevelt worked to create a New Deal that would not only generate recovery but put the industrial capitalist order on a firmer and broader foundation. The president and



Stockpiles of wood at Hammermill, 1958.

Congress developed recovery plans along with initiatives to reform the stock market and the investment structure. However, the economy did not rebound. The original crash of 1929 was compounded by a series of catastrophic bank failures whose cumulative result was a devastating contraction of the money supply that proved impossible to undo.

The New Deal’s greatest contribution, however, came in the form of numerous work relief programs, such as the NRA, the WPA, and the CCC, that kept people alive and preserved the sense of dignity for laborers. By 1938, Roosevelt came to believe that work relief programs might become a permanent feature of the American economic order.

The great unknown factor that finally contributed to a national recovery was war: the second Sino-Japanese War (1931–45) and the war

of National Socialist expansionism (1938-1945). These two conflicts then fused together in 1940 and became World War II. American entrance into these now-combined wars altered the US economic order.

Once the US entered the war in 1942, the national effort to supply our allies and thus outproduce—as well as outfight—the enemy took off. In simple military terms—the production of planes, warships, tanks, etc.—the resulting effort was prodigious. American manufacturers created what can only be called a “productivity revolution” using as their foundation the capacity to mass-produce commodities and the consumer goods economy developed a generation earlier. War work, however, took this process to a new level of “hyper-productivity.”

The war had a major impact on Erie. For instance, to increase the machine-product output



of the Erie Forge and Steel Company, the Navy in 1940 entered into a facilities contract that included manufacturing finished machined crankshafts for submarines, mine sweepers, and other small ships; compressor crankshafts for larger ships; propulsion shafting for naval and maritime vessels; and gun forgings.

General Electric made howitzers in Erie during World War II. Employment at the Erie Works of General Electric jumped from 5,675 people in 1940 to 9,544 persons during World War II.

The federal government also closed several large paper manufacturers and requisitioned 660 tons of sulphite for use in producing explosives. The limited paper that companies did manufacture was first reserved for government use in support of the war before being sold to the public. Hammermill was the only mill in the country that owned the necessary equipment to make the fire-resistant, plasticized paper used in the fabrication of bazookas. The maintenance department pitched in by machining tools for other companies that manufactured guns and tanks. In a converted warehouse Hammermill carpenters were busy building the assault boats that were used in the crossing of the Rhine River. In partnership with General Electric, they designed and manufactured the Dura-Glo Cover for army weather balloons. Hammermill's most sacred contribution to the war effort was in manpower: about four hundred employees served in the armed forces; fourteen of them never returned.

As the war wound down, far-sighted businessmen pondered what this "productivity revolution" could mean if it could be translated to the peacetime economy. In other words, the wartime "productivity revolution" created a corporate structure and engineering culture that found a way to mass

produce a new American "way of life" at low cost. This vision of American society included the fabrication of new homes and single-family ownership, automobiles and freeways, and other consumer products that rested on a platform of technology,



Maurice Rotival

education, and medicine. The result was an economic explosion that turned the stubborn Depression into a distant memory and once more transformed the American landscape. Economic disruption pulled families off the farm and out of the small town into ever-en-

larging industrial cities. Factories concentrated workers, skyscrapers concentrated offices, suburbs and high-rise apartment buildings concentrated housing, public transportation moved people *en masse* within confined space.

Between 1946 and 1951, employment at GE averaged 15,031 per year. With the headquarters of the company's Motor and Generator Division at the Erie Plant, the Direct Current Motor and Generator Department, Locomotive and Car Equipment Department, and Erie Relations and Utilities Operation are assigned to the Motor and Generator Division.

■ **THE DECLINE OF ERIE'S INDUSTRIAL BASE**

However, by the early 50s, it all began to change. Large-scale industrial expansion and manufacturing rapidly declined in Erie as the ore and coal docks closed on the bayfront. Shipbuilding operations followed suit. The rise of the interstate eclipsed the railroad and shipping for commercial



Erie Central Mall was part of an urban renewal project

transportation. And Erie's metals industries were stunted by competition from newer, more efficient domestic mills and foreign manufacturers. Hammermill and GE closed down portions of their plants. Erie's urban landscape began to deteriorate as jobs were lost and families moved to the suburbs.

In 1958, Maurice H. Rotival, a French urbanist from New Haven, Connecticut, was hired to produce a new citywide design study for Erie. Another student of Ebenezer Howard's transformative view on regional planning, Rotival noted that Erie's port, once a major trans-shipment location for coal, iron, and grain, had suffered a rapid decline and the city failed to develop new facilities or methods to accommodate international trading and be more cost efficient. The report predicted that

manufacturers would eventually be lured by economic globalization to larger and more developed ports in other areas, or countries, with less regulation, cheaper labor, and lower manufacturing costs.

The downtown district suffered the most from the decline of workers along the bayfront. Following Rotival's lead, Erie's Redevelopment Authority addressed the issue of building and neighborhood blight through a process of sixteen "urban renewal" projects. With Mayor Louis J. Tullio's encouragement, the city adopted a plan to revitalize of the business district, improve port facilities, spur industrial development, and improve the highway system. The eight-block Peachfront-Sassafras project replaced a "slum" area with the Central Mall. The Liberty-Sassafras project attempted to



stabilize a twelve-block industrial area, and the Downtown Erie and State Street projects removed nineteenth-century commercial buildings, many the districts most historically significant and architecturally notable structures. Hoping to reinvent itself once more, Erie struggled to catch the next wave of economic re-development.⁶⁴

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CURRENT CONDITIONS

■ THE THREE FORTS PROJECT AND ERIE'S EAST BAYFRONT NEIGHBORHOOD

The Three Forts Project is located within Erie's oldest neighborhood, the Historic East Bayfront community. The twenty-five-block area is directly east of downtown Erie. Historic East Bayfront's boundaries are Holland Street on the west, Wayne Street on the east, East Sixth Street on the south, and East Front Street on the north. The area along Mill Creek, now an underground aqueduct across much of the neighborhood, is recognized as the "front door" to Erie's historic past. The city's first built environment took shape within the boundaries of Historic East Bayfront. However, the community has lacked the investment that other areas of town have received as evidenced chiefly by the state of the housing market in the neighborhood.

■ BACKGROUND: REINVENTING ERIE

Like many other post-industrial cities, Erie has been going through a process of intermittent redevelopment since the 1960s. Much of the investment over the last two to three decades has concentrated on three specific areas of town: **the bayfront**, one of many reasons that Erie has been a strategic point of interest since the mid-eighteenth century and a prime area for attracting tourism; **downtown**, recently led by the Erie Downtown Development Corporation, that includes core historic properties that are targets for preservation, restoration, and adaptive reuse; and **retail areas** near the two major interstates (90 and 79) that bisect Erie south and west of town.



Erie's Historic East Bayfront neighborhood, located east of downtown, is the city's oldest landscape in terms of pre- and post-Revolutionary War settlement. The Three Forts campus is the shaded area.

In 2017, Michael Fuhrman, a board member for the Three Forts of Presque Isle and Interpretive Center, LLC, a non-profit created specifically to revive Erie's origin story and promote the significance of the city as a heritage tourism destination, argued that for generations the Historic East Bayfront community has been one the city's most underutilized and undervalued historic and cultural resources. The neighborhood has largely

been underestimated by economic and community planners for more than 100 years.

Fuhrman was not the first to recognize the distinctiveness of Historic East Bayfront and the contested landscape where much of Erie's earliest history emerged. In 1913, the city hired John Nolen, the nation's first self-identified town planner. A student of Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. and Arthur Shurcliff, his firm completed over four hundred planning

projects in the first two decades of the twentieth century, including comprehensive surveys for more than twenty-five cities across the United States.

Titled *Greater Erie 1913: Plans and Reports for the Extension and Improvement of the City*, Nolen pointed out the importance of the area by expounding on the French and Indian War, British occupation of Presque Isle, the death of General Anthony Wayne on Garrison Hill, and Oliver Hazard Perry's fleet in the War of 1812. More prominently, he admonished the Erie community for losing sight of the neighborhood's overall significance, stating that "the history made on this piece of ground would fill a large volume." The criticism and desire to exploit the area along Mill Creek in Historic East Bayfront fell on deaf ears.

■ ROTIVAL AND ERIE REDEVELOPMENT

In 1958, Maurice H. Rotival, a French city planner, authored a *Reconnaissance Study for Erie*. His analysis concentrated on documenting Erie's industrial decline following World War II, noting that the port, once a major trans-shipment point for coal, iron, and grain, was losing its economic viability. The State and City government's lack of investment in redeveloping the port to accommodate international trading was putting Erie at a disadvantage to neighboring cities, especially with the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway. Eventually, jobs and manufacturing associated with the coal and grain industries would go elsewhere. Rotival also suggested redirecting access to the bayfront with a new highway and modernizing

the downtown, an area devastated by families and businesses moving to the suburbs. The consequences of these recommendations are still being felt today. Lost in the mix were Erie's neighborhoods, including Historic East Bayfront.

■ URBAN RENEWAL

Erie's industrial decline in the 1950s highlighted by Rotival and others spurred local interest in the new government incentivized economic redevelopment dollars. Touted as urban renewal, downtowns across the country were targeted for investment. Nationally, some historic structures suffered under the wrecking ball while new road projects parceled up existing minority and underserved neighborhoods.

In Erie, Mayor Arthur Gardner responded by creating the Erie Redevelopment Authority as the local vehicle for federal investment monies. The agency took on sixteen projects throughout the 1960s into the 1970s. Erie, too, lost some of its historic fabric during that time, including the old City Hall, the Lawrence Hotel, Shea's Theater, and the Reed Mansion, at 420 West 6th Street, and the entire six-block stretch of the western side of State Street between 8th and 14th streets.

Contributing to the redevelopment push in the 1960s was Mayor Louis J. Tullio. In the early years of his almost three-decade tenure, the city adopted a business district revitalization plan as well as strategies to improve port facilities, industrial infrastructure, and the highway system. The Bayfront Parkway, constructed in the 1990s, was a direct result of the new tactic to get people and traffic to the shore (not unlike the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad did one hundred years earlier). The parkway proved successful. However, access to historic

sites such as the Wayne Blockhouse and Garrison Hill were restricted. Erie's Historic East Bayfront community was further isolated as the parkway bypassed the area, limiting access only available from Holland and 6th Street.

Amidst the charge to reinvest in the downtown area, the city also proposed to build the "General Anthony Wayne Historical Park" in 1963 as part of the east bay landfill project. This was one of the first attempts since the late nineteenth century to champion Erie's historic past as a potential destination. The park would offer recreational and interpretive opportunities, including rebuilding parts of the 1795 American fort. They would also provide ferry service across the channel to Presque Isle State Park. Sadly, the project was rejected by Erie's Port Authority.

However, in the mix of suburban flight, urban renewal, bayfront redevelopment, and channeling infrastructure projects that resulted in moving the center of Erie's retail business community closer to Interstate 90, Historic East Bayfront, along with the opportunity to create a new gateway into the city from the east that exploited Erie's historic past, was neglected.

■ EAST BAYFRONT: AN ISOLATED COMMUNITY

Since the introduction of the railroad in the early 1860s, access to the Historic East Bayfront community has been restricted. In an era of horse and buggy, or when Erie was a major industrial city, the neighborhood was a physical space where many inhabitants were working-class laborers who filled the docks, commercial fishing boats and lake transports, or toiled in the coal, steel, paper, and grain industries along the bayfront. Getting from their homes or boarding houses to jobs at the bottom of

the bluff was provided by long staircases at the end of German Street, down Holland, or on foot across the tracks. For the most part, the neighborhood's cultural community experience was supplanted by the suburbs in the decades following World War II. However, as industry also left the bayfront, so did the jobs and the families they supported. Those who remained were marginalized as their property values fell and they were forced to find work in other parts of Erie. Jobs in the area moved out, not in.

When the Bayfront Parkway was constructed in the 1990s under the leadership of Mayor Joyce Savocchio, access to the Historic East Bayfront community was further restricted. Though the new road benefited the growing waterfront tourism industry, and assisted suburbanites driving downtown for work, little economic investment was made to infrastructure or access within Historic East Bayfront or the surrounding communities.

Finally, in 2016, a new plan for redevelopment was introduced, one that took a harsher look at how the city had neglected neighborhood investment, especially in places like the East Bayfront. *Erie Refocused* points out that

Tens of millions of dollars have been spent on sports and entertainment complexes, new waterfront facilities, and upgrades to Gannon University, UPMC Hamot, Erie Insurance and other community anchors – all in hopes of stimulating a transformative level of investment and economic activity. True, each of these projects has contributed assets to Erie that have improved the city and are justifiably points of pride. But such an approach hasn't been enough—and it won't be enough—to return the city to a path of sustainable growth.

Erie Refocused goes on to say that,

When disinvestment becomes the norm; falling demand, falling prices, and declining tax revenue are also normalized. This is why Erie's big-ticket projects that individually have shown promise remain compromised and, ultimately, disconnected from one another.

Currently, the City of Erie is in the process of evaluating Historic East Bayfront through the lens of *Erie Refocused* and creating new strategies that focus "on the area from Erie's waterfront south to East 15th Street, between State Street and the Bayfront Connector, and includes goals that local officials and neighborhood groups hope to accomplish within three years." Some of the priorities the plan recommends are:

- Enhanced street lighting. The city plans to work with the Erie Innovation District to replace streetlights in the area with more efficient and powerful LED lighting to help reduce crime and make residents feel safer.
- A "porch lights" initiative that would work with Penelec to install energy-efficient porch lights on residents' homes, also to enhance safety and security.
- Working with the Innovation District to install additional security cameras throughout the east bayfront.
- Facade and beautification projects at eastside businesses, particularly along Parade Street.
- The creation of a new park/trail network that would help connect Nate Levy Park, in the 200 block of East Third Street, with Roessler Park, near East 15th and Ash streets. The trail would take into account existing roads and sidewalks, and new green space that helps links the two parks would be created through targeted



The Three Forts campus is surrounded on two sides by the Bayfront Parkway. CSX rail line bisects Garrison Hill and borders the current Janitor Supply and Wallace Street Park section of the campus to the north, running just below the Front Street bluff. The Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, located south and west of the CSX rail lines, has been ruled eligible for the National Register of Historic Places by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) but has not been formally nominated. Access to the Three Forts campus is only available through the Historic East Bayfront Neighborhood. The main ingress and egress off the Bayfront Parkway are E. 6th Street and Holland Street.

- demolition of blighted properties, according to the plan.
- New affordable, market-rate housing, as well as additional blight reduction strategies.
- Working with UPMC Hamot, Primary Care Network, the Hamot Foundation and others on comprehensive health surveys of neighborhood residents, to deal with social and health-related issues.

■ **TODAY'S EAST BAYFRONT**

Though past and current plans take aim at the immediate housing crises in the community, these short-term initiatives do not address the neighborhood's long-term sustainability or possible redevelopment. It goes without saying that the economic viability and cultural identity of the East Bayfront is central to the overall success of the Three Forts Project. Not only do neighborhood streets provide

the only access to campus, but those who live and work in the community are intimately connected to Three Forts plan for telling Erie's origin story. Currently, Historic East Bayfront is one of Erie's poorest and most diverse neighborhoods in terms of combined natural and immigrant populations. Erie's first immigrant populations began arriving not long after the end of the War of 1812. Historic East Bayfront was the first destination for many,

including Irish, Polish, Italian, and Russian immigrants and refugees. All left an indelible mark on the neighborhood through their influences on building architecture and material culture. Today, the neighborhood is home to groups of "New Americans," such as Somalis, Nepalese, and Congolese.

- Households: 3,353
- Residents: 9,574
- Average home sale price: \$24,369
- Poverty rate: 46 percent

There are approximately 1,194 housing units in the neighborhood. Eighty-eight percent of housing units are occupied, while thirteen percent remain vacant. Thirty-nine percent of units are single family and sixty-one percent are multi-family. The median real estate price is \$45,680, which is less expensive than 97.9% of Pennsylvania neighborhoods and 98.2% of all U.S. neighborhoods. The majority of housing is occupied by renters at seventy-five percent as compared to twenty-five owner-occupied units. The average rental price is currently \$938. Rents here are currently lower in price than 78.0% of Pennsylvania neighborhoods. As the numbers suggest, creating and sustaining a vibrant community in Historic East Bayfront is a challenge. However, resources do exist to help navigate the torrent of unpredictability.

■ **BAYFRONT EAST SIDE TASKFORCE**

In 1998, Erie Insurance Group and UPMC Hamot assisted in reviving the Bayfront East Side Taskforce (B.E.S.T.), a non-profit development corporation active in the mid-1970's and the first nonprofit in Erie focused on the revitalization of a specific neighborhood. Their mission is to improve the quality of life for Historic East Bayfront's residents and assure a stable, desirable working environment



Main access into the Historic East Bayfront neighborhood is the intersection of E. 6th Street and Parade Street. The Erie Armory is a prominent restoration effort made possibly by Erie Insurance that welcomes residents and visitors to the community.

for businesses and their employees. Since the early 2000s, B.E.S.T. has worked to bring improvements to the East Bayfront neighborhood. Some of their accomplishments have been:

■ **PRESERVATION EFFORTS IN EAST BAYFRONT**

B.E.S.T. has been intimately involved in redevelopment efforts in Historic East Bayfront with the help of Erie Insurance. Some of those efforts involve the preservation of historic structures, the backbone of any historic neighborhood, area, or district. The vast majority of restoration efforts have been carried out by Erie Insurance, Historic East Bayfront's close neighbor to the west. There are, however, individual residences that are pre-Civil War and at least two that date back to the War of 1812.

Erie Armory

The Erie Armory was originally built in 1920 by Pittsburgh architect, Joseph F. Kuntz, of the W.G. Wilkins Company. The Armory building was expanded in 1929, almost doubling the square

Owned by Erie Insurance, the Erie Armory is one of the city's most prominent historic structures.



Historic and Cultural Resources in Historic East Bayfront

footage of the property. The armory originally included a drill hall, a kitchen and dining room, a locker room, classrooms, and offices. The Erie Armory was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989.

In 2013, Erie Insurance purchased the Erie Armory building. In 2015, the renovation was completed. The exterior of the structure was preserved, and the interior modernized for office and conference use by Erie Insurance. The original features such as ammunition locker doors and fireplaces were restored.

Von Buseck and Colt Houses

In 2017, Erie Insurance moved and restored two historic homes that are now rentals properties at the corner of E. 5th and German streets. The first, the Von Buseck house, was originally located on

the south side of West 38th Street between Asbury and Millfair roads as part of a 100-acre farm built in the 1830s by Friedrich Von Buseck, a German immigrant, and his wife, Rachel Weigle. The second property, known as the Judah Colt house, was built in 1820 at the corner of East Fourth and French streets. Judah Colt was the first land agent for the

Von Buseck and Colt Houses





The Parish of the Church of the Nativity

Pennsylvania Population Co., and entertained the Marquis de La Fayette, the French and American patriot, in this house in 1825 during La Fayette's return to the U.S. after the Revolutionary War. Judah Colt's nephew, Thomas G. Colt, served as Erie's first mayor in 1851.

The Parish of the Church of the Nativity

Located at 247 E. Front Street, The Parish of the Church of the Nativity was established in 1916 by Russian Old Believer immigrants. By 1919, the Church of the Nativity's original house of worship was constructed for the growing Russian community. The church prided on its sense of culture and tradition, conducting masses in Slavonic, their native language. Masses were held in the Slavonic language until 1980, when Father Simon Pimen

began conducting services in English to attract new parishioners. To further the development of the church, Father Simon, along with the parish committee, decided to unite with the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

On July 22, 1986, the entire original church was destroyed by the fire, except for the royal doors, deacon's doors, iconoclasts, icons, books, altar, vestments, and the sanctuary. It was considered a miracle that the parish's most sacred objects were spared by the fire. Four days after the fire, a temporary church was opened in the church's community center. Construction for the new church began in October 1986 and was completed in Summer 1987. On August 25, 1987, the church held its first service in the new church—68 years after the original church opened in 1919.



St. Hedwig's Roman Catholic Church

St. Hedwig's Roman Catholic Church

Located at the corner of Wallace and E. 3rd streets, the church building that stands today was completed in 1933 in what was called "Jadwigowo," meaning the area or district of St. Hedwig. The original building church was constructed in 1911 by a new parish in Erie's large Polish community, or "Polonia" (the term used for any community of Poles outside Poland). Two other parishes, Saint Stanislaus (1883) and Holy Trinity (1903), also existed in Erie.

In 2017, the St. Hedwig Parish was merged into St. Stanislaus Parish. The building is now used as a secondary church. They will be open for baptisms, weddings, and funerals, and for the solemnity of the anniversary of the Church's dedication and the Church's feast day.



Erie Heritage Parade Street Memorial

Erie Heritage Parade Street Memorial

At the end of Parade Street is a small memorial park that designates the French, British, American, and Native American sites, and influences at Presque Isle along with the founding of Erie and the Erie Stone. The memorial was installed by the 1995 Erie Bicentennial 200th Celebration.

Native American Marker

Native American influence on this area of northwestern Pennsylvania pre-date the 1492 encounter by at least 13,500 years. Erie County is named after its first known inhabitants, the Erie Nation. The Erie Nation, also known as the Cat Nation, bordered other aboriginal territory in New York and Ohio. Most notable were the Seneca Nation, "Keepers of the Western Door" of the Five Nation

Iroquois Confederacy, based in New York. Disputes between the Iroquois and Erie resulted in conflict, ending with the Erie Nation being vanquished and assimilated by the Seneca. Iroquois dominance of this region lasted until the 1790's when signed treaties safeguarded local settlement.

French Fort Marker

This was the first of four French forts built by Marin and Boishebert in Northwestern Pennsylvania to protect their claim to the Ohio Valley. Built in 1753, the fort overlooking the bay was 120 ft. square with squared log wall 12–15 ft. high with two entrances, the South entrance leading up Parade Street to Fort LeBoeuf (Waterford) and the North to the lake some 300 yards away.

British Fort Marker

The British Fort was built by Major Rodgers in 1760 on the site of the old French Fort. It had a different configuration consisting of a stockade enclosure with a blockhouse, the second story of which extended all around, located in the northwest corner of the stockade. It was attacked in June of 1763 during Pontiac's Rebellion and fell after three days of spirited defense by Ensign Christie when the shingle roof of the Blockhouse was set afire.

American Fort Marker

The American Fort was built a few blocks east of the French and British forts on a bluff behind the current Soldiers and Sailors Home. It was erected in July 1795 by a detail of General Anthony Wayne's soldiers commanded by Captain Bissel. The fort was a large stockade with at least three blockhouses. Although never attacked the Fort was crucial to the safety of the first Erie settlers. It

was the final resting place of General Wayne who died and was buried there in 1796. A replica of the blockhouse where he died was erected by the State in 1880.

Erie Stone

In 1795 Andrew Ellicott and General William Irvine commissioned by the State, arrived in the area to survey and lay out "a town to be called Erie." Using the southeast corner of the old French fort at the foot of Parade Street as a starting point they placed this stone which has since been known as the "Erie Stone." The town was laid out in three sections each one-mile square extending from the bay south to Twelfth Street. A plot of land in the center of each section was to be reserved for public use—Central Park or Perry Square being the first one.

The Russian Old Believers Church of the Holy Trinity

The Russian Old Believers Church of the Holy Trinity is located on the corner of East 3rd and Holland Streets. The cornerstone of the church was laid in 1984.

Soldiers' and Sailors' Home and Veteran's Cemetery

Originally the federal Marine Hospital, the State of Pennsylvania took control of the property and opened the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home in 1886. Just north of the hospital is the Veteran's Memorial Cemetery. 19 of the more than 1,300 veterans buried at the home's four-acre Veterans Memorial Cemetery are veterans of the U.S. Colored Troops from the Civil War. The structure is eligible for the National Register.



Soldiers' and Sailors' Home



This row of late 19th and early 20th century homes along E. 6th Street is an example of other historic structures in the neighborhood influenced by a multiplicity of populations who have lived and worked in the Historic East Bayfront neighborhood since the 1820s.

Parade Street

In 1753, the French cut a portage road 20 feet wide from their fort at Presque Isle to Fort LeBoeuf, located in Waterford. Parade Street follows this original portage, making it the oldest non-indigenous road (path) in Erie.

E. 6th Street

There are multiple residential structures along E. 6th Street that were built between 1890 and 1940 that give cultural character to the Historic East Bayfront Neighborhood. Currently, some of these houses are in need of repair or restoration.



The Conrad-Brevellier Houses

Conrad-Brevellier Houses

Located at 502 and 510 Parade Street, Prominent German born brewer Charles M. Conrad (1841–1910), whose home was on Erie Armory site, built these houses for two married daughters. The 502 House was designed 1898 by Erie architect Jos. Frank for Katherine Conrad (1870–1960) and Frederick A. Brevellier (1866–1931), Erie Brewing Co. executive and Bank of Erie Trust Co. president. The 510 House was built c.1904 for Eda Conrad (1872–1919) and Arthur W. Brevillier (1871–1955), Erie Brewing Co. official & president of Erie County Mutual Insurance Co.

Brewery Lane Marker

Located at East 5th Street west of Parade Street, this was, for sixty-six years, the entry to a brewery. First, in 1852 with Jacob Fuess (1827–1863) Brewery. Succeeded in 1863 by his German immigrant stepson Charles M. Conrad (1841–1910), becoming National Brewery that by 1895 produced 150,000 barrels per year. Merged with Koehler Family Breweries in 1899 to become Erie Brewing Co. with

Conrad as first president. The brewery closed in 1918.

409 Ash Street

This house was built in 1852.

404 Ash Street

This house was built in 1812

313 Ash Street

This house was built in 1854.

654 E. 5th Street

This house was built in 1812.

Saint James African Methodist Episcopal Church (non-extant)

Erie’s African Methodist Episcopal Church was re-organized in the spring of 1877, by Rev. J. M. Morrison, of Oil City, Pennsylvania. There were fifteen original members and services took place at the Wesleyan Methodist Episcopal Church on 3rd street, between Chestnut and Walnut. They soon



Dickson Tavern

moved French street near the park before acquiring a building on E. 6th Street, just east of Holland, owned by the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA). The building was dedicated in 1878. In 1881 they moved once more, to 7th Street between French and Holland.

■ CONTIGUOUS SITES

Though not in the Historic East Bayfront neighborhood, these historic buildings or sites are near or along Holland Street, one the major access roads to the Three Forts campus.

Harry T. Burleigh Marker

Thought this marker is located across from the Erie Insurance Headquarters on E. 6th Street, the preminent African American baritone, composer, and arranger was born 3 blocks north in 1866. He arranged “Deep River” and other spirituals and set to music poems by Walt Whitman. Was a student and associate of Dvorak. He died in 1949.

Dickson Tavern

The Dickson Tavern, or the Perry Memorial House, is the oldest building in the city of Erie in the U.S. state of Pennsylvania. Located at the corner of 2nd and French Streets, the structure was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990.

Tibbals House

Located just on the edge of Historic East Bayfront at 146 E. 5th Street, the Federal style Tibbals House



Tibbals House



Federal Row

was built in 1842 by William Fleming, a shoe and boot maker, as well as a real estate investor and merchant who sold dry goods, groceries, crockery, and hardware. The house was purchased in 1983 and restored by Erie Insurance and is part of the Federal Row Historic District.

Federal Row Historic District

The Federal Row Historic District consists of five Federal and Greek Revival structures built between 1823 and 1840. The Kennedy Row House was built by David Kennedy, an Irish immigrant who worked in Erie as a contractor, in 1836. The structure, which is located at 158–162 East 5th Street, was split into two homes in the 1880s and rented out to various tenants. Attached to this structure

is the David Kennedy House, which was built in 1832. The David Kennedy House sits at the corner of East 5th and Holland Streets. Kennedy also built the Kennedy Double House at 424–426 Holland Street in 1840. The property was intentionally built to house two families during a time when the City of Erie’s population was booming. In 2016, these three properties were added to the National Register.

St. Patrick’s Church

Located at 140 E. 4th Street, Erie’s first Roman Catholic parish was organized in the predominantly Irish first ward in 1840. The present church, a massive late Victorian Romanesque building, was erected in 1903.



St. Patrick’s Catholic Church

Himrod House (non-extant)

William Himrod, a pioneer of the city’s renown iron industry and an outspoken abolitionist, used

his home at Second and French Streets (Hamot Hospital) to house the “Sabbath School for Colored Children” prior to the Civil War.

Vosburgh Barber Shop (non-extant)

Albert and Robert Vosburgh, father-and-son barbers who for many years used their shop at 314 French Street to harbor, re-groom, and outfit runaway slaves, also them across Lake Erie to Canada. Indispensable to their work was Hamilton E. Waters, (maternal grandfather of world-famous musician Harry T. Burleigh), hired by Albert Vosburgh to clean and press clothes—and also to surreptitiously help direct fugitives toward their freedom.



The Three Forts Campus is a combination several contiguous tracts associated with the French and Indian War, Pontiac’s Rebellion, the founding of Erie, and the War of 1812.

■ **THE THREE FORTS CAMPUS**

Located within the northwest corner of Erie’s Historic East Bayfront neighborhood, the Three Forts study area consists of three contiguous properties, Wallace Street Park, owned by the City of Erie, Garrison Hill, owned by the State of Pennsylvania, and a local business office and warehouse, Janitor Supply Company, located at 540 E. 2nd Street. Combined, these properties create a Three Forts campus that is 13.15 acres in size with several historic and building assets.

Wallace Street Park

Just east of the original site of both the French and British forts that were constructed in the 1750s and 1760s, Wallace Street Park is owned by the City of Erie and is part of the local parks system. Bisected by Wallace Street, the site is 3.6 acres in size. Within the park boundaries are Ted Amendola Memorial Field, a baseball/softball diamond, and a children’s playground.

Because of past use of the park site by local brickworks companies, the surface elevation has been reduced significantly since the late nineteenth century. The building of the Mill Creek Tube, completed in 1923, further compromised the site in terms of archaeological significance. The original French and British forts were built at or near the corner of Sobieski and Parade streets. The park grounds, however, and the west bank of Mill Creek, were possibly the site of the 1750s French village that accompanied the French military to Presque Isle. Currently, here is no physical evidence remaining that pinpoints the exact location of the village.



Wallace Street Park is located between East 2nd Street and Front Street on Erie’s lower east end. The Mill Creek Tube (red line), completed in 1923, runs under the park.



The entrance to Wallace Street Park. To the left is the playground and to the right is Ted Amendola Memorial Field.



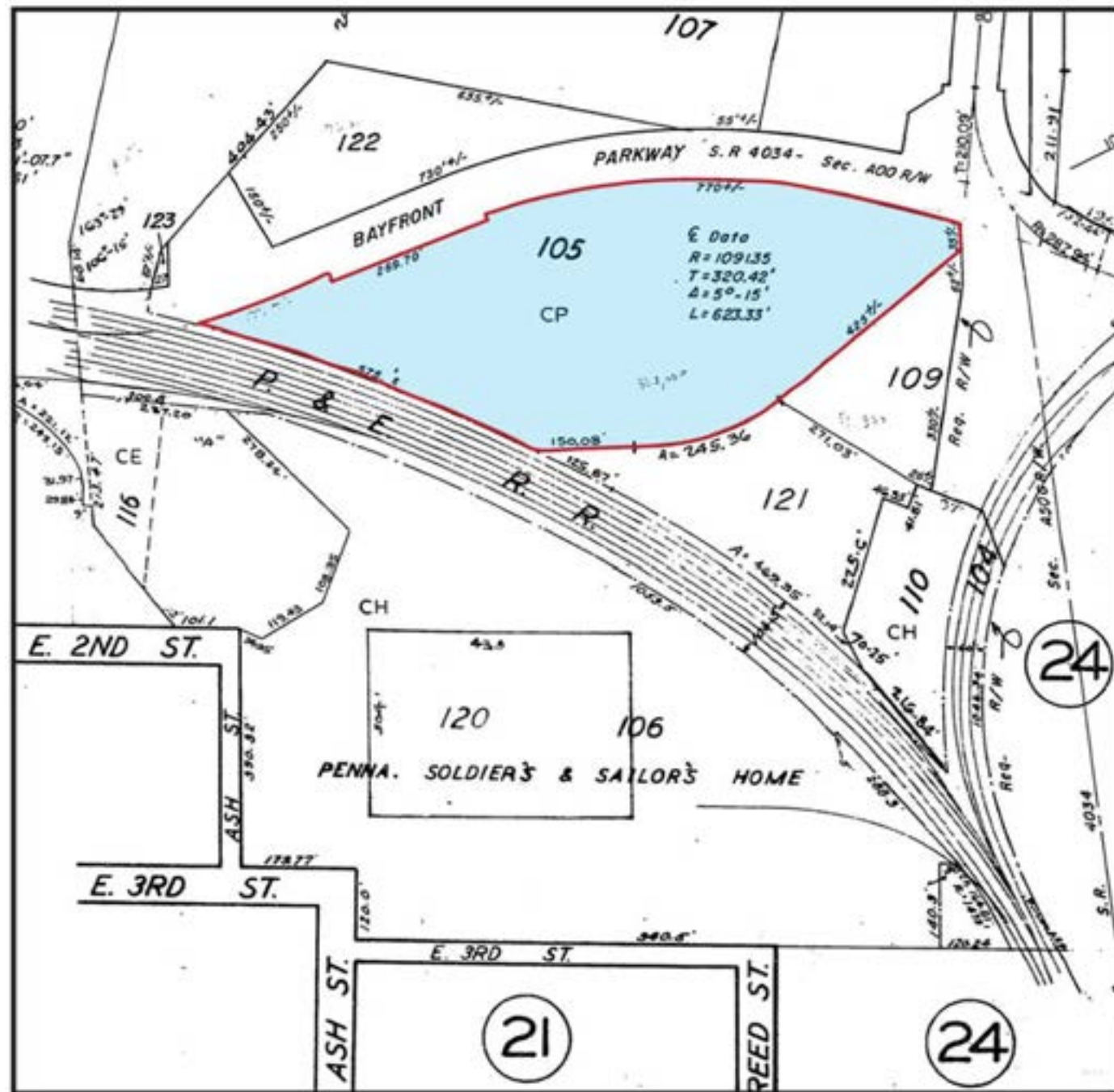
Wallace Street Playground from Front Street looking southeast.



Looking west at Ted Amendola Memorial Field from atop the roof of the Janitor Supply warehouse.

Garrison Hill

The site of the two American forts built in 1795 and 1813, Garrison Hill is located less than 200 yards to the northeast of Wallace Street Park. The 7.45-acre parcel is owned by the State of Pennsylvania and is managed by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs through the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Home. In the 1880s, a replica blockhouse dedicated to Gen. Anthony Wayne was built on Garrison Hill. Just to the south is the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Home and to the east is the Veteran’s Cemetery, also owned, managed, and maintained by the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veteran’s Affairs.



The park site of Garrison Hill owned by the State of Pennsylvania and managed by the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home

In the summer and fall of 2021, construction will begin on a new bridge over the CSX railroad lines from the back loop road of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home to the Garrison Hill site. A Section 106 review was conducted by the State of Pennsylvania in the summer of 2020. The report concluded

that the site, though archaeological significant, would not be negatively impacted by the new bridge. The bridge is part of a larger Bayfront Parkway redevelopment plan.



View of Garrison Hill from the top of the Janitor Supply Warehouse. For most of the year, trees and a dense understory obscure the site from every direction.

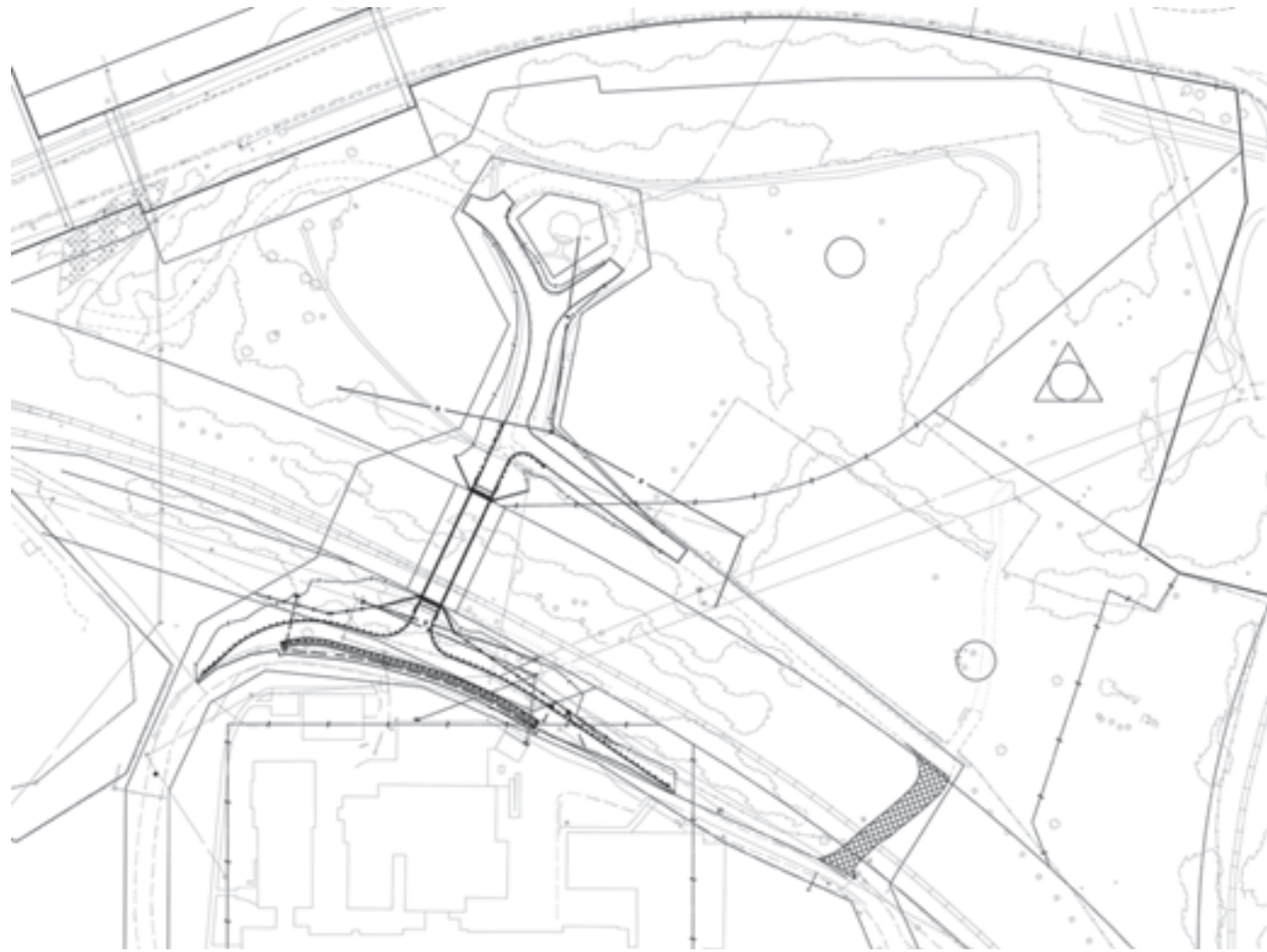


The Anthony Wayne Blockhouse on Garrison Hill is a replica constructed in 1880 as a memorial to the fallen general who died on Garrison Hill in 1796 as a result of a previously contracted illness.



Exhibits in the Wayne Blockhouse tell the story of General Anthony Wayne





The new bridge follows the same path as the original wooden truss bridge built in the 1880s. The on-grade crossing, located in the lower left of the survey, will be removed. The current road to the blockhouse will be repaved.

Janitor Supply Company

The Janitor Supply Company currently owns the 3.14-acre, 36,000 sq. ft. office and warehouse situated between Wallace Street Park and Garrison Hill at 540 East 2nd Street. The site also has an aluminum storage building and the former office of the Pennsylvania State Police Testing Grounds.



The front entrance to Janitor Supply is located at 540 E. 2nd Street.



The shaded area shows the property owned by the Janitor Supply Company.



East view of Janitor Supply warehouse.



West view of Janitor Supply Warehouse



North end and dock of Janitor Supply Warehouse



Interior view of post and beam construction.



Rooftop of Janitor Supply offers a panoramic view of the forts and the bay



Cinder block construction of the warehouse.



Janitor Supply from the Bayfront Parkway. The Wallace Street Park is to the right and the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home is to the left.

The Bayfront Overlook Park

The Bayfront Overlook Park is located along Front Street, on top of the bluff south of the Bayfront Parkway. The Port Authority acquired this property from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 2002 after completing a master site plan outlining the development of a linear park along the bluff. To date, development of the park consists of the

Promenade Trail and a few overlook seating areas. One of the original seating areas failed and was removed. The remainder of the plan has yet to be realized. Presently, though the bluff property is owned by the Port Authority, the City of Erie owns the trail and is responsible for maintenance.



The Bayfront Overlook Park looking east along E. Front Street. The Parish of the Church of the Nativity is to the right of the street.

FRENCH AND BRITISH FORT SITE

“The expense and exertions of the French and British in that part of the country is one among the many proofs of the great value and importance it was thought to be of to those nations.”

Andrew Ellicott, 1795

■ THE FRENCH FORT AT PRESQUE ISLE

Ever since the French first arrived at Presque Isle in 1753, the historic landscape in what is today Erie’s East bayfront neighborhood has witnessed a multiplicity of transformations over the past two-and-a-half centuries. Though Native peoples had lived along the shores of Lake Erie for thousands of years before the French appeared, and the town would eventually bear the name of a regional indigenous tribe, the Eriez, there seemed to be no physical or recorded evidence of their past presence in the area at the time of European contact. As noted in a recent archaeological study (2020), there exists no reliable information on settlement types and patterns.

Uninhibited by Native resistance, the French quickly went to work, felling chestnut and other trees to construct the first of several military fortifications along their Allegheny river defensive line that ran to present-day Pittsburgh. According to reports, the fort was sited between 100 and 200 yards southwest of the mouth of Mill Creek and at an elevation of thirty-five feet above the Lake Erie shoreline. The embankment offered protection against any potential attack from below and at the same time was close enough to the bayfront for the



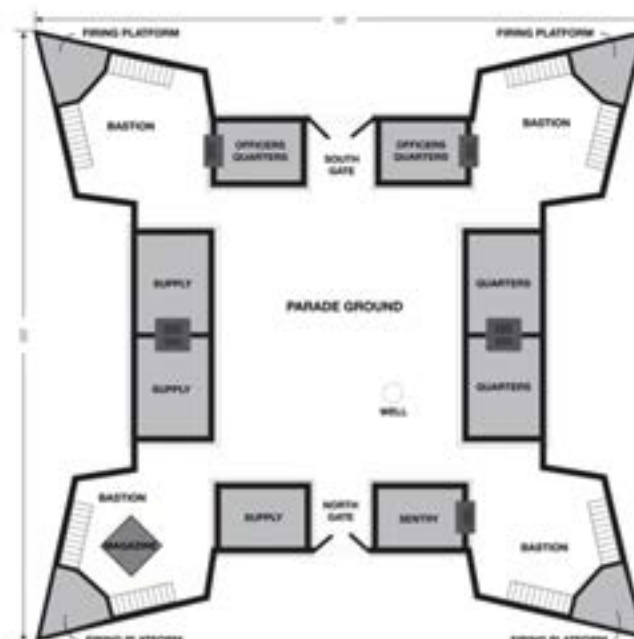
The French and British Forts were constructed within the boundaries of Front, Parade, Wallace, and E. 3rd streets. The bluff to the north of Front Street was reduced, in part, by the building of the Philadelphia & Erie Railroad line in the 1860s and the landscape where the forts once existed by Standard Brick Works after 1888.

quick and convenient offloading of materials and goods transported on boats from Fort Niagara and other locations. Locating an adequate spring fed well may have also contributed to the fort’s siting.

The design of *de la Presqu’île* was described by those who saw the facility as unusual. Instead of the conventional upright log palisade anchored into the ground, engineers used piece-on-piece horizontal log construction, with the back of the interior lean-to or shed buildings serving as the curtain wall. In 1759, Captain Bull, son of Delaware Chief Teedyuscung, described the fort as

a Square with four Bastions Square Log Work

no Platform’s raised yet, so that they cant be Used, Only a small Platform in each Bastion, for a Centry (sic), no Guns upon the Wall, but four. four pound Peaces (sic) be in one of the Bastion not Mounted on Carreges (sic). The Wall only Single Loggs (sic), no Banket within nor no Ditch without, two Gates, of an Equal Size about Ten feet wide, one Fronts the Lake about three hundred [yards] Distance, the other the Road to La Buf (sic) [Fort Le Boeuf], The Magazine is a Stone House covered with Shingles, and not sunk in the ground Standing in the Right Bastion next the Lake....the other Houses



Following the traditional design pattern of Vauban, the renowned French engineer, there were four corner bastions and a central parade ground surrounded by a piece-on-piece palisade. The bastions allowed for enfilade fire from almost every angle to protect each exterior or curtain wall.

Square Loggs (sic), a Considerable Quantity of Indian Good’s but little Flour, 12 Battoes (sic) are every day Expected to Arrive from Niagara with Provisions.¹

■ FRENCH VILLAGE

Along with *de la Presqu’île*, a small French village also emerged. Pierre Pouchot, a French military engineer, stated, “In 1755 it is said three hundred and fifty-six families resided near the fort, and in 1757 there were four hundred and eighty. There were soldiers, carriers, traders, missionaries, mechanics, Indians, &c.”² William Johnson, a British prisoner, also described a significant French village in 1756. He wrote that,

“The barracks within the fort and garrisoned with about one hundred and fifty men, supported chiefly from a French settlement begun near to it. The settlement consists, as the prisoner was informed, of about a hundred and fifty families. The Indian families about the settlement are pretty numerous; they have a priest and school-master. They have some grist mills and stills in this settlement.”³

The village, probably located on the east bank of Mill Creek, was dependent on protection from the French garrison. These families were possibly trappers and traders who sold goods and other items to the French soldiers and the Indians. Reverend Luke Collett, a Franciscan priest who accompanied the army built a small wooden chapel in the settlement.⁴ Native peoples were employed by the military to help transport materials and goods



Charles Stotz Plan for the French garrison. The village would have been of considerable size if there were almost 500 inhabitants. One report states it was disbanded by 1758.

along the portage road to Fort Le Boeuf, fifteen miles to the south in present day Waterford.

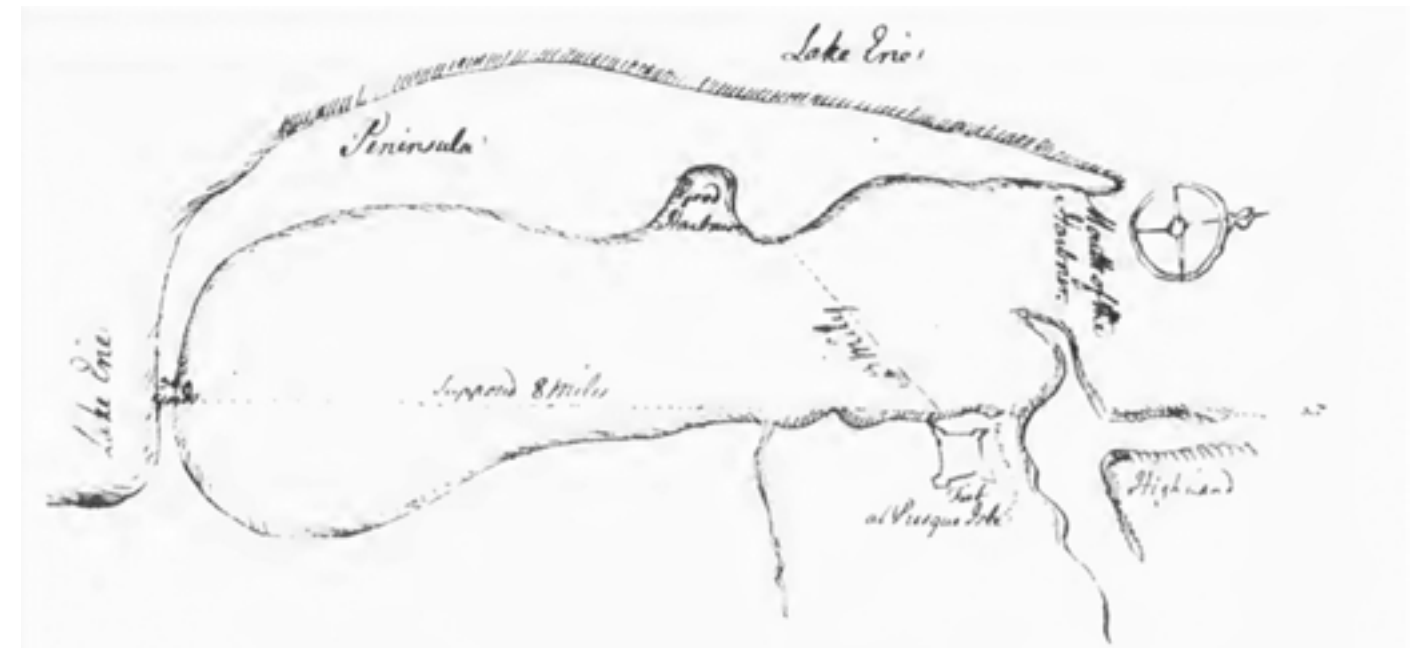
■ THE FIRST BRITISH FORT—1760

There is no current record of what the British discovered in terms of the burned remnants from the French fort when they arrived at Presque Isle in 1760. Though possibly spoiled, the well was one feature they may have recovered. If that was the case, then the British fort was constructed literally atop the French remains.

British field engineers had their own design plans for Presque Isle. With a tradition of fortifying field positions almost as storied as the French, we find many of their ideas on general types and construction techniques in engineering manuals they



This 1936 Worker's Progress Administration (WPA) Map shows the probable location of the French fort. No known references exist on how the WPA derived this as the site other than the location of the Erie Stone being used as the base.

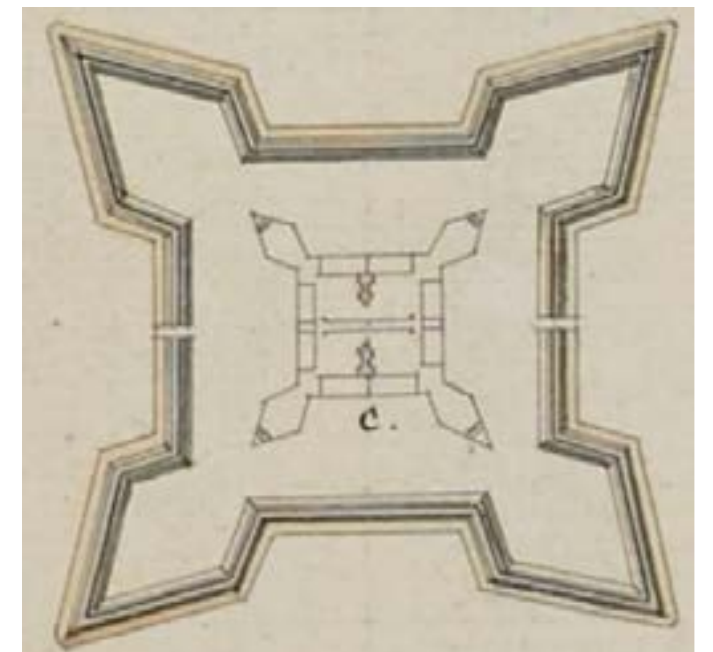


Col. Henry Bouquet's sketch of Presque Isle (Pennsylvania State Archives)

produced in the eighteenth century.

There are several kinds of fieldworks, such as flèche, redoubts of four or more sides, star forts, tête-de-pont, entrenchments behind which troops encamp, &c. It is not at all necessary that an officer, who means to trace out any of these works should do it mathematically, which requires both calculations, and proper instruments; there is a method much more easy, less complicated, and entirely depending upon practice. Let a cord be provided, one end set off in twenty divisions, a foot each, and the remainder in toises of ten feet; a few small pickets are likewise necessary, to mark the angles; and thus you have everything requisite for tracing out fieldworks. If one is obliged to construct them in the night, a rope of straw may be made use of, as it is more easily distinguished.⁵

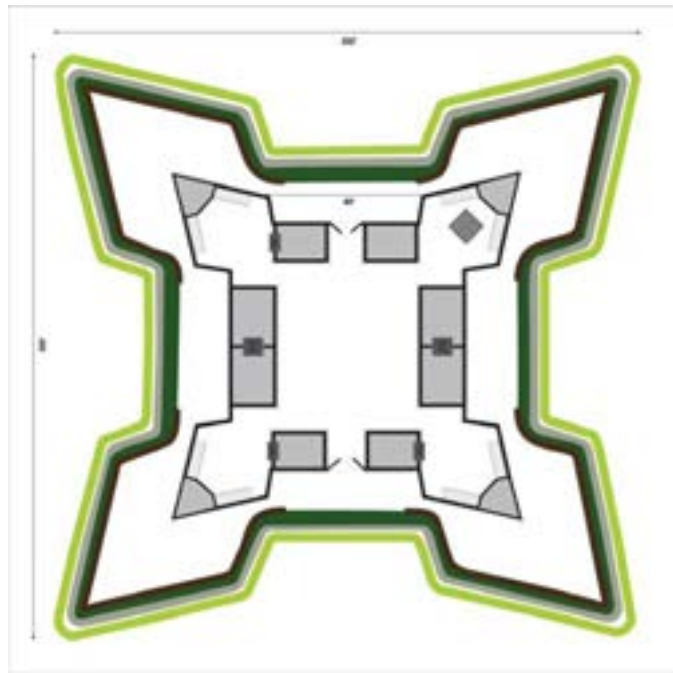
Like the French, they left few records of the exact construction of the fort. However, maps and a small handful of letters give us some insight into what existed at Presque Isle between mid-1760 and mid-1763. We do know that when British Colonel Henry Bouquet visited the Presque Isle fort in July



From a 1763 map of British Western Pennsylvania line of rivers and forts. Located on the map was the fort design for Presque Isle. (British Museum)

1760, he sketched the four-corner bastion outline and location just west of Mill Creek.

The main feature of the British fort at Presque Isle was the blockhouse. Lieutenant Thomas



In this diagram, the French installation easily fits within the boundaries of the British fort. The British Presque Isle fort was almost twice the size in terms of volume. Construction materials were much the same, with both using hardwoods from the surrounding Erie landscape. However, the British chose to build earthen bastions originally with an angled escarpment and outer ditch.

Bassett, using 150 Pennsylvanians, constructed a two-story structure in the center of what was at one time the French parade ground. According to Robert Monckton, district commander, “It (the blockhouse) must be made to Contain about One Hundred and fifty Men, with Officers in Proportion.”⁶ Captain Harry Gordon later reported, “At Presquisle is a Blockhouse 56 Ft. square and 16 high in which are 8 large Rooms with Chimneys, besides four Rooms for Officers in the Bastions that cover the Angles, and into which is a passage from the Body of the House.”⁷

The 1760 British fort’s outer works consisted of an earthen berm parapet with a six-foot escarpment, a three-foot ditch, and a four-foot counterscarp. There were two sallyports, or entrances, that scaled the ditch via a bridge. Originally, the parapet in the bastions used fraises sunken in the earthen



Fraises lodged in the parapet above the ditch and escarpment at Fort Ligonier

parapet wall. However, in early 1762, the earthworks were collapsing into the ditch below due to Erie’s harsh weather conditions. Every winter the ground froze. That was followed in spring and summer with intense thawing. The extreme hot and cold temperatures made the earthworks unstable due to the weight of the fraise.

Captain John Schlosser was ordered to Presque Isle in late January 1762 to fix the failing parapets and other problems with the structures. He relayed to his commanding officer, Col. Henry Bouquet, the issues with the fort and his solutions to these problems, especially with the parapet walls.

You told me to set Palisades in the bottom of the Ditch to hinder Surprises, but then everybody in the yard would be discovered to the Soles or his Shoes, As the ruined remainders of the Parapet must be taken away, therefore except you order me otherwise, I shall take only the fascines & Pickets away & burn them, and plant a

*Row of good Palisades upon the inside Line of the former Parapet, to preserve the Shape of the Entrenchment & the most part or the Earth or the Parapet.*⁸

Schlosser went on to say that *The Palisades Shall be 6 feet above the Horizon & 2 ½ foot in the Bottom, leaving the Earth of the Parapet on the outside of the Palisades 3 feet thick, Sloping to the Bottom of the Ditch & throwing the remainder or the Earth upon the Counterscarp in the form of a House, this Way will Save me a great Deal Work, in removing only a little Earth, the Palisades will be lighter & Shorter then in my former Project to Capt. Bassett, the Men will be entirely covered in the Yard & behind the Palisades, their heads will be Safe behind the Lintel which is fastened above the loop holes, & the little Intervals of the Palisades, will be Shut up by the Small earthen Parapet against the Shots of the Enemy.*⁹

During the time Schlosser was at Presque Isle, he replaced the fascines on the parapet with an upright palisade of wood logs. He also buttressed the counterscarp with the dirt that had collapsed into the ditch from the parapet. Schlosser made additional repairs to the blockhouse and outbuildings by replacing missing brick in the chimneys and adding windows to each room, including panes of glass to windows in the officer’s quarters.¹⁰

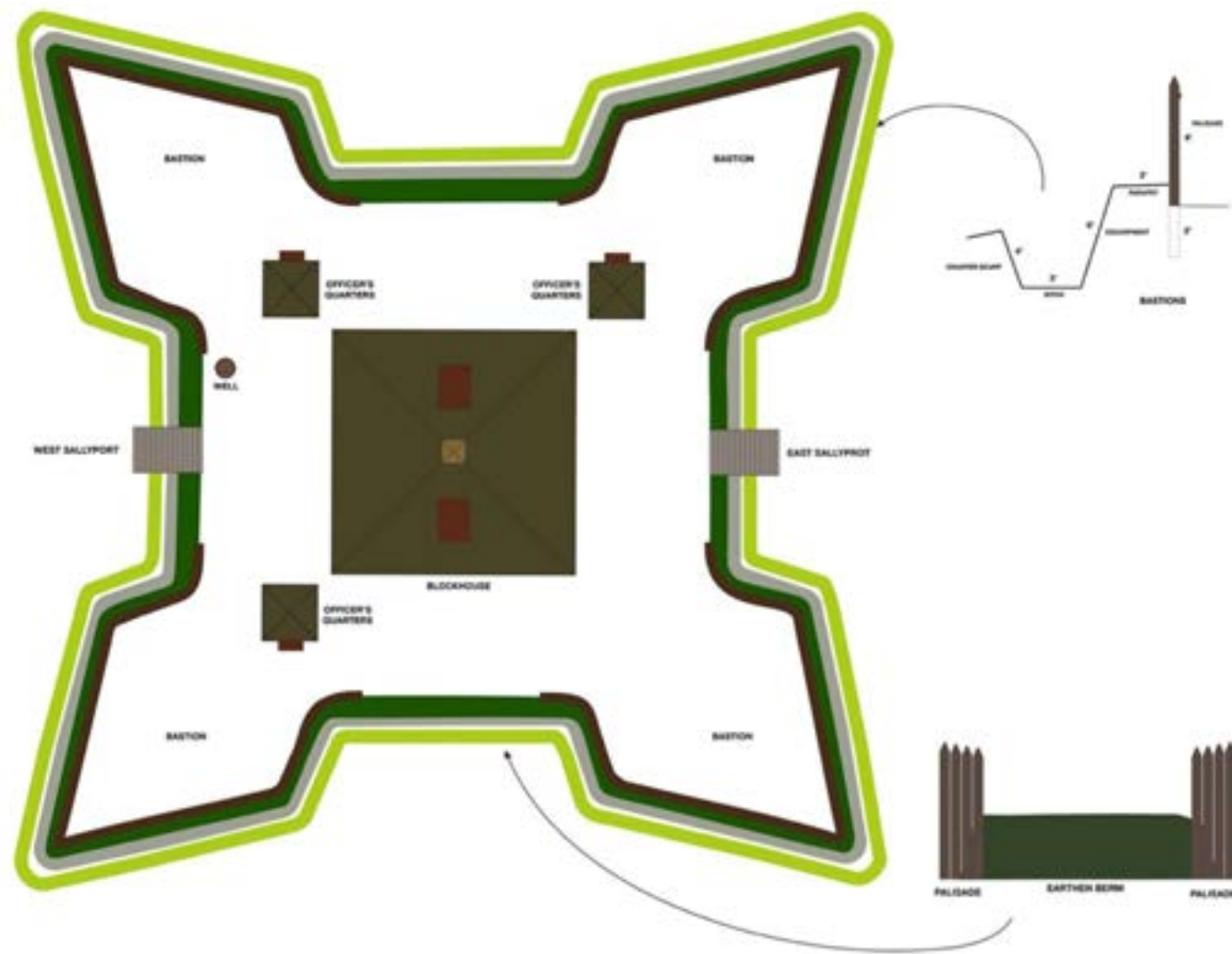
When the British fort was attacked during Pontiac’s Rebellion in June 1763, the outer works were quickly overrun. The blockhouse was unable to defend against fires set during the assault. Ensign Christie, the 29-year-old officer in charge, did not have enough men (27) to make a concerted defense. After his surrender, the structure was burned by Native warriors.

■ SECOND BRITISH FORT AT PRESQUE ISLE

The British returned to Presque Isle in 1764. It is unclear when they built a new fort or its design, but references are made during the period to troops being at Erie in the years following the American Revolution. The British evacuated Presque Isle for the final time after 1785.

As late as October 1794, elements of the “old English fort” were still standing. Maj. Ebenezer Denny, newly appointed commander in the state militia and prior aid-de-camp to American MG Arthur St. Clair, reported that the British Presque Isle site was,

a regular pentagon; about one thousand feet round the parapet, overlooking and commanding the basin or harbor, and affording a boundless view of the lake. It has been a handsome but light work; neither ditch nor parapet are sufficiently large. Five feet is about the base and height. The



This Workers Progress Administration map from 1936 shows a different fort configuration than the original British plan or descriptions from the period. By the 1930s, the elevation of the area had been reduced by the railroad, numerous brick works, the building of neighborhood housing, and the construction of the Mill Creek Tube. There is no record of the sources used to build the above map. This fort is drawn much closer to Mill Creek than the previous French or British fort.

*ditch perhaps three feet, and four in width. There must have been some other defense, pickets or fraising. The walls of the magazine are yet good, and the well wants nothing but cleaning out. The chimneys of the houses, some brick, others stone, are still standing; and the walls of a stone house, down by the mill, are yet tolerably good.*¹¹

Denney's description, however, does not match the original British design from 1760.

■ POST-1795

When the American military arrived in Erie in force in 1795, much of the previous fortification structures built by the French and the British just to the west of Mill Creek had deteriorated. Though a few elements of the British works remained, and foundations from the French structures, a new site to the east of Mill Creek was chosen for the American installation. The garrison was composed of "thirty [acres] of which was on the high land and the other thirty acres in the marsh between the fort and the

entrance of the harbor."¹² This location offered a more sweeping view of the bayfront. A mill was constructed using the creek for power and ten acres of forested landscape were cleared to the south to provide a field of fire in case of attack.

■ ERIE'S EARLIEST SETTLERS

In the spring of 1795, among the first Americans to arrive and settle permanently at Erie were Captain John Grubb and Thomas Rees. Grubb, commanding a company of State troops, escorted a corps of surveyors including Gen. William Irvine and Andrew Ellicott to Erie. In this party was Rees who was appointed Deputy Surveyor of the Pennsylvania Land Population. Rees erected a tent near the mouth of Mill Creek which doubled as Erie County's the first real estate office and justice of the peace. Later that summer, the 22-year-old French Duke of Orleans, Louise Philippe stayed with Rees for a couple of days. Thirty-five years later, Philippe would become the King of France.

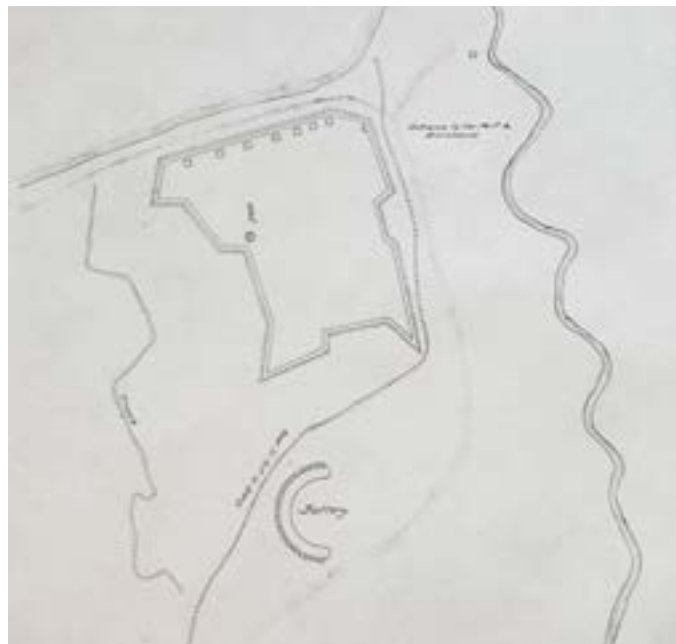
Just weeks prior to the army's arrival in July 1795, settlers began landing at Presque Isle. Seth Reed and his wife, Hannah, were among the first few. They had traveled by boat from Buffalo. With their two sons, they built what is recognized as the first non-military permanent structure in town, a single log cabin with a cucumber bark floor. Located just to the west of the mouth of Mill Creek, the ordinary served as both a tavern and a boarding house. As the immediate threat of Native reprisal dissipated, the settlement expanded further west, according to Ellicott's plan, into what is today downtown Erie. A year later, when Daniel Dobbins arrived, it was still a primordial wilderness. He noted that "there were but four occupied houses. One on the flats on the west side of Mill

Creek, occupied by James Baird as a Tavern, Col. Read's already described, one on French and Second owned by Thomas Rees, and one on Holland and Fifth, a tannery kept by Ezekiel Dunning, whose family resided there."¹³ Settlers like Reed, Baird, and Dunning offered domestic services for soldiers, selling them goods they could not get from the army, such as alcohol, tobacco, coffee, or sugar, and other wares.

■ NINETEENTH CENTURY FEATURES

By the early nineteenth century (1803), portions of the extended grounds of the French and British fort site east of Parade between 2nd and 3rd streets was a brickyard owned by Isaac Austin and B. Rice. This manufacturer, however, was too far from the fort sites to directly affect any archaeological remains for these forts. We do know that James Baird built the first brick house in Erie County on German between Front and Second streets using brick from Austin and Rice. The company possibly reduced the elevation of the area within the vicinity of the forts, but it is hard to determine the extent of their excavation.

In 1819, a brick yard and a carding machine were operating on or near the site. We do not know the name of the companies or the potential affects they may have had on the site. A little over a decade later, George W. Reed and William Himrod built another sawmill on the same tracts at Mill Creek. Himrod became a very successful Erie businessman, opening the first blast furnace in the county in 1843. He also founded a Sunday School for African Americans fleeing slavery, the Himrod Mission, and was involved in the Underground Railroad. As for the 1819 mill, some of the wooden framing from these buildings were still extant in 1860.



WPA sketch from the 1930s showing their understanding of the location of the French fort.

Throughout the 1840s and 50s, Erie may have continued to reduce the embankment below Front Street between the base of Garrison Hill to Sobieski Street. Part of this was possibly due to the start of construction in the late 1850s of a railroad line along the bayfront. More fill was also added to the Erie shoreline below Front Street in the mid-1880s in order to expand the area for docks, more rail lines, the storage of coal and iron ore, and eventually Erie's wastewater treatment plant. In 1862, the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad, a project that began in the 1840s as the Sunbury and Erie line, was completed all the way to the Erie shore. The tracks bisected Garrison Hill, crossed Mill Creek (using a bridge), and continued along the bayfront to Erie's public dock, located at the intersection of today's East Front and State streets, entrance to the promenade. As local historian, John Miller, states, "It was early in the seventies (1870s) while earth from the side-hill was being removed for railroad construction that the lower portions of much decayed timbers (probably from the British fort) were exposed to view."

In 1870, the first formal excavation of sites associated with the French and British occupation took place to the west of Mill Creek and just south of what was then the Philadelphia and Erie rail line. William F. Lutje, a German immigrant and a local Civil War artillery veteran, was at home tending a wound in 1863 when he supervised the construction of an earthen redoubt on the east side of Garrison Hill. Lutje became the curator of Erie's short-lived German Museum in the years that followed the war. His work uncovered one of the French bastions. As Historian John Miller notes,

*The side next to the shore was not intact. Part of it had fallen during the work of excavating that had progressed from below (on the rail line), but the points where the angles occurred for the flank and the other face, both of which of course extended inward, were seen, and by the use of the shovel could be verified as part of the bastion formation. In the judgment of Capt. Lutje that bastion had contained the armory or arsenal because of the remains of weapons, in numbers, that were found.*¹⁴

If Lutje's description is accurate, he probably hit the northeast bastion of the French fort where the magazine was located.

■ BRICKYARDS

The area around the French and British forts was rich with clay for brick making. In 1885, David Kennedy established a brick yard "near the site of the old French fort on the west bank of Mill Creek at the lake bluff."¹⁵ A year later a skeleton was unearthed on the site during an excavation.¹⁶ In 1889, "the old lot known as the French fort at the foot of Parade Street, with brick kiln," was sold for \$20.

In June 1888, stone foundations from one of



French fort site overlooking the bay from an 1867 sketch.

the forts were removed by Paradine and McCarty, owners of a new brickyard (established that same year) located between Sobieski Street and Mill Creek. The foundations they discovered while probably excavating to test the soil for clay were three feet below grade. Other items were unearthed as well, including knives, musket balls, and bayonets. By 1895, the brick company had lowered the landscape west of Mill Creek around thirty feet below the original grade, with intentions to continue excavating. Over a period of decades, both the embankment above the railroad tracks and the landscape south toward 2nd Street were further reduced, possibly to its present elevation.

■ PUBLIC PARK

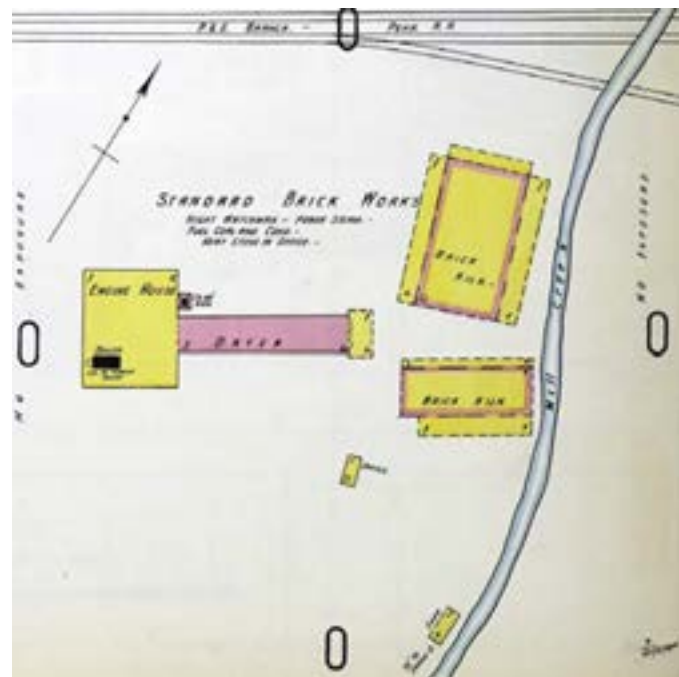
Not long after the brick works began destroying the historic landscape where the forts once stood, citizens in Erie discussed purchasing the properties for use as a park for the first time. In 1889, Major Tyson, Commander of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, suggested that "the city ought to interest itself to save from total destruction what remains of the old French fort, which is rapidly disappearing through the brick machines now greedily devouring the clay upon which it stood. It is of

too much historical interest to be wiped out of existence without raising a finger to save it."¹⁷ The following year, the mayor is quoted as saying that "no other city in the commonwealth possessed so many points of interest." He went on to assert that "Erie has its Massassauga Point, old French Fort, Wayne's tomb, the old Niagara, in which Perry fought, the Soldier's and Sailor's Home, and the highest stand-pipe in the country" to pull from that are of historical curiosity.¹⁸

The brick works, however, continued into the early twentieth century. By 1906, the Cement Products Company was operating the plant at the end of Parade and Wallace streets. Frank P. Coyle, one of Erie's most active turn-of-the-century entrepreneurs, was part owner. He would go on to build the structure at 540 East 2nd Street the following year.¹⁹ A few years later, Coyle opened Erie Sand and Gravel Company on the site.

■ 540 E. 2ND STREET BUILDING

Around 1907, a two-story office structure was built near the intersection of Ash and East 2nd streets. The exact date of construction and the owner are unknown but was possibly erected in 1907 by Frank Coyle. The Arandsee Machine Company, chartered in 1909



Standard Brick Works just west of Mill Creek and south of the railroad. Founded in 1888, the company existed into the early 20th century as evidenced by this 1900 Sanborn Map. (Library of Congress)

and partially owned by Coyle, opened their new office and industrial works in the building that same year. Their time was short-lived. Coyle was also President of Erie Auto Parts Company, Erie Sand and Gravel Company, and the Mutual Telephone Company. In 1910, Arendsee folded, and he moved his auto parts company into the building.

■ CITY DUMP

In 1912, a proposal was made by Erie’s “Garbage Committee” to purchase the former brick works and fort sites, the Coyle property, for use as a city dump. The East Bayfront community fought the measure, stating that they wanted “cleaner yards and alleys, better housing facilities for our neighbors; we want more ‘settlement work.’ We want to be recognized as the ‘beautiful water front,’ not ‘the city dumping ground.’”²⁰



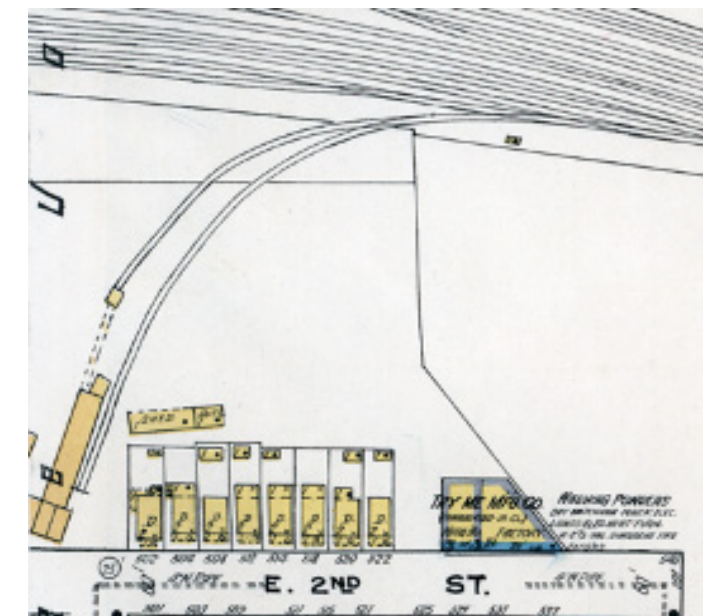
This 1921 Sanborn Fire Map shows that Standard Brick Works is no longer standing. Because of the construction of the “Mill Creek Tube,” a railroad spur was built to service the gravel and cement plant owned by Erie Concrete and Steel. The plant supplied the materials used to build the underground viaduct. The red line is the approximate location of the “tube.” The green square is the probable location of the French (1753) and British (1760) forts. (Library of Congress)

■ TRY ME MANUFACTURING COMPANY

In 1913, the Try Me Manufacturing Company began operation of a factory to make soap powder at 540 E. 2nd Street. Originally started in Youngstown, Ohio, they moved to Erie where Try Me leased the building until 1924 when they went out of business and liquidated their equipment.

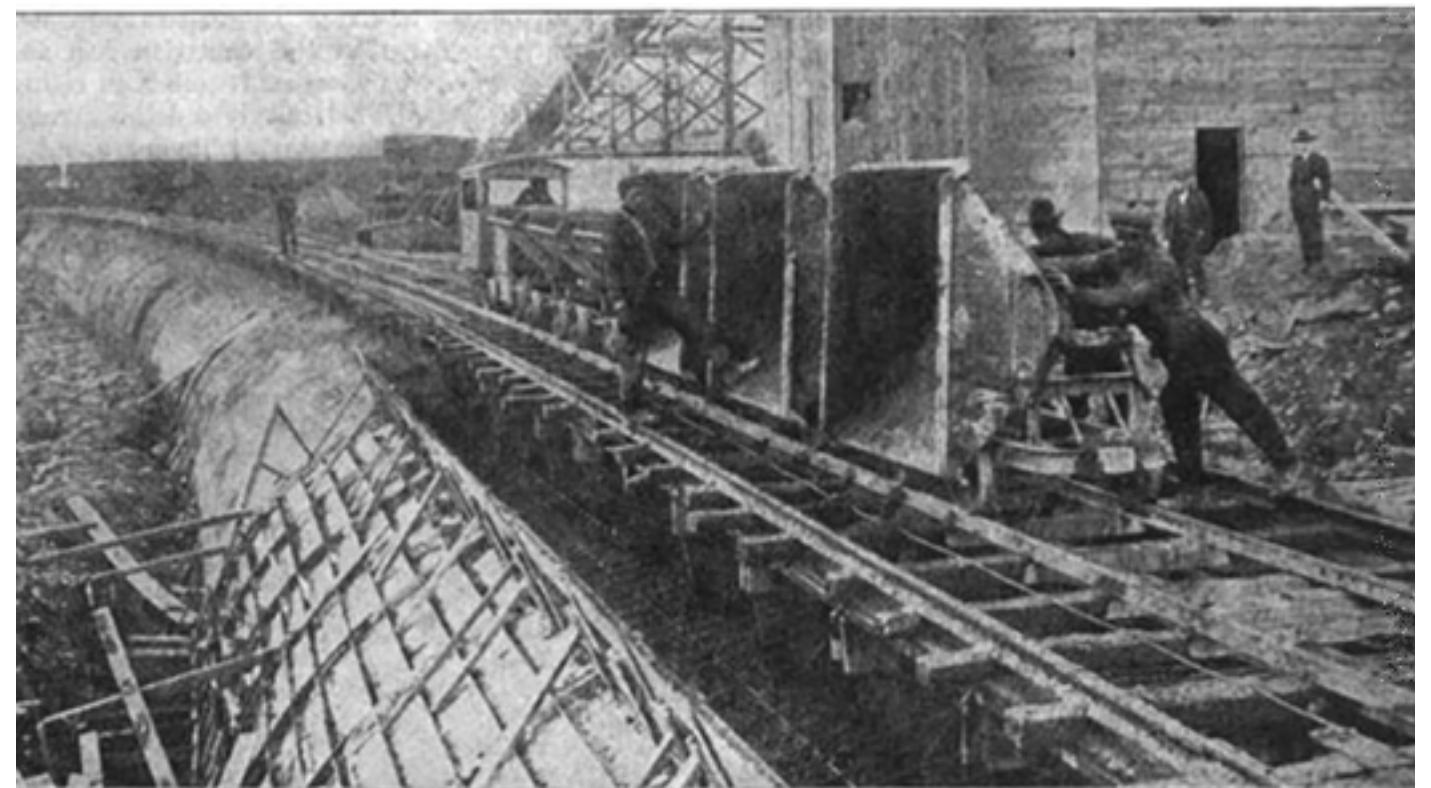
■ THE MILL CREEK FLOOD

On August 3, 1915, an unusually heavy rainfall led to the infamous Mill Creek flood. Thirty-seven people were killed in the city’s worst natural disaster. In response, the creek was rerouted underground. Between 1917 and 1923, the Mill Creek Tube was constructed. The tube itself was “tomato” shaped, being twenty-two-feet wide and nineteen-feet tall.



The Try Me Corporation produced “washing powders.” This Sanborn Map from 1921 shows the building at 540 E. 2nd Street. (Library of Congress)

Construction of the Mill Creek Tube. A service train track was laid on top of the tube to move concrete and gravel from the Erie Concrete and Steel plant located at the end of Wallace Street (Ted Amendola Memorial Field)





Organ Supply Corporation located at 540 East 2nd Street. This picture was taken in the early 1960s after the addition of the back wing.

■ ORGAN SUPPLY CORPORATION

By the late 1800s, Erie was a center for organ manufacturing. Immigrants who served as organ craftsmen in their home countries, especially Germany, arrived in town with the promise of a job in a booming economy. In 1926, the Organ Supply Corporation (OSC) began operation at 540 East 2nd Street. They specialized in the manufacture of wood organ pipes, wind chest, and consoles. OSC leased or purchased the three-story brick building as their production facility. After acquiring National Organ Supply in 1958, they added a two-story cinder block wing two years later that measured 120 feet by 60 feet. They made another addition in 1972, this time a two-story, 60-foot by 60-foot extension to the end of the existing cinder block structure. The company moved in 1972.



Caption

Though more residential housing was built along East 2nd Street, and in the surrounding neighborhood, the vacant land bisected by Wallace Street just west of Organ Supply may have been used as a dump following the Mill Creek Tube completion in 1923. The parks were added after World War II.

■ WALLACE STREET PARK

December 1, 1937, the City Council of Erie condemned the area around the Mill Creek Tube and created Wallace Street Park. At the time, the owner of the property was Isaac Baldwin. His brother, Daniel, was one of the largest landowners in the United States. Together they owned Baldwin Brothers real Estate Company.

■ JANITOR SUPPLY COMPANY

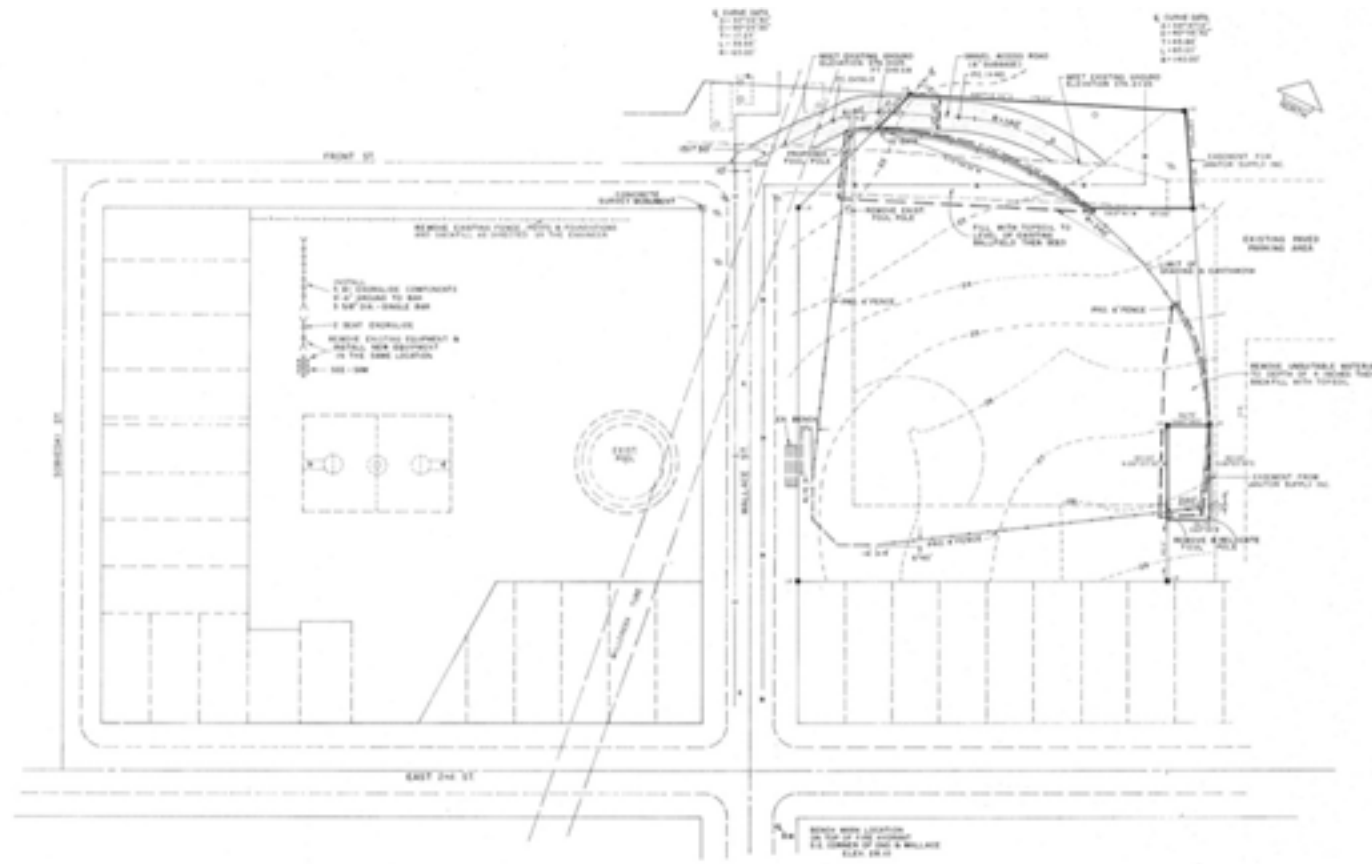
The Janitor Supply Company started in Erie in 1954. They moved into the 540 East 2nd Street buildings (Organ Supply Corporation) in 1973. In 2003, they purchased the Pennsylvania State Police Driver testing Ground from the state. That same year they also added the large medal storage structure next to the Driver testing building.



The Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, along with the Veteran's Cemetery, established in 1886 (upper left), are in the background of this photograph from the late 1950s. The Pennsylvania State Police Driver Testing Point was dedicated August 31, 1949. The headquarters building is located in the center of the testing track.



The Janitor Supply Company added the back dock and large storage shed to the grounds.



The pool was removed in the 1990s and playground equipment was added to the park.

■ WALLACE STREET PARK ADDITIONS

In the 1976, improvements were made to Wallace Street Park. A small pool, swings, a seesaw, and basketball courts were added in 1979. On May 19, 1985, Mayor Louis J. Tullio dedicated the baseball ballpark to Ted Amendola, the longtime Director of Park and Recreation for the City of Erie.

The area where the French and British forts were constructed has been transformed multiple times over the past 275 years. The lakefront bluffs that were seen as an important landscape feature by military engineers in the eighteenth century, became a commercial attribute for brick yard developers and the railroad. Following the flood of 1915, Mill Creek was rerouted through an underground viaduct further reducing the property’s elevation and destroying any remaining archaeological evidence of the existence of these facilities. Finally,



Ted Amendola Memorial Field from the roof of the Janitor Supply Company Warehouse.

the construction of houses on nearby Parade and Sobieski streets during the early 20th century all but eliminated any potential fort remains just outside Wallace Street Park. Thus, Erie’s earliest historic landscapes seem lost in time, waiting once again for renewal.



Bayfront Parkway and Wastewater Treatment Plant, which became operational October 2, 1931, from the Janitor Supply Company Warehouse.

■ ENDNOTES

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- 4 Erie Daily Times, April 12, 1938, pg. 2.
- 5 Pleydell, J. C., An Essay on Field Fortification: Intended Principally for the Use of Officers of Infantry, Shewing how to Trace Out on the Ground, and Construct in the Easiest Manner, All Sorts of Redouts and Other Field Works. v-vi.
- 6 Monckton to Bouquet, July 6, 1760, in The Papers of Henry Bouquet, ed. by Louis M. Waddell, John L. Tottenham, and Donald H. Kent (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1978), 621.
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- 8 Capt. John Schlosser to Col. Henry Bouquet, March 24, 1762.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Military Journal of Maj. Ebenezer Denny, Historical Society of Pennsylvania: Philadelphia, 1859, 200.
- 12 Journal of a Survey Trip into Western Pennsylvania, George Burges, ed. Marydeana Duckworth, 1965, 21.
- 13 Buford, Mary Hunter, Seth Read, Lieut-Col. Continental Army: Pioneer at Geneva, New York, 1787, and at Erie, Penn., June 1795: His Ancestors and Descendants, 114.
- 14 Miller, John, A Twentieth Century History of Erie County, Pennsylvania, Vol 1, Chicago, 1909, 24.
- 15 The Erie Morning Dispatch, May 1, 1885, pg. 4.
- 16 Ibid. June 11, 1886, pg. 4.
- 17 The Erie Morning Dispatch, September 24, 1889, pg. 6
- 18 Ibid., June 1890, pg. 4.
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EVOLUTION OF THE GARRISON HILL SITE

When the survey party arrived in Erie in force in June 1795, much of the previous fortification structures built by the French and the British just to the west of Mill Creek were gone. In the initial expedition were Andrew Ellicott and William Irvine, commissioners, and an escort of state troops under the command of Capt. John Grubb. They began their work of laying out the town. On September 21, 1795, they set the last of four stones at the corners of Erie and left. The famous “Erie Stone” is recognized as the initial monument reference point for the survey.

In late July, Captain Russell Bissell, at the direction of Gen. Anthony Wayne, landed with 200 men at Erie to begin constructing the first American fort. Ellicott and Irvine surveyed 60 total acres located on the high ground between two creeks, Mill and Garrison. The forests were thick with walnuts, hickories, and oaks.

We laid out the ground for the [American] fort, which is to be 100 yards square, and is situated a hundred perches from the spot where the old French Fort stood, down the lake from the old fort on a high bank commanding the entrance of Presque Isle Harbor, from whence there is a beautiful prospect of the lake as far as the eye can see.

Between the fort and the lake there is a marsh of about 50 perches in breadth into which there runs a fine creek [Mill Creek]. The town is to be laid out on the bank of the harbor above the old fort.¹

The higher elevation offered a more sweeping view of the bayfront. Before construction began Bissell ordered a mill built along the creek to the



west, now called Mill, and ten acres of forested landscape cleared to the south to grow corn and provide a field of fire in case of attack.²

The palisade was approximately 100 yards by 100 yards. The bluff side wall was constructed of upright logs in a zig zag formation to allow for enfilade fire. Traditional two-story blockhouses were constructed in the middle of the east and west palisade. A section of the Ellicott survey map shows the location of the Garrison grounds and the with the fort in the center. Though the size of the blockhouses is unknown, a third blockhouse to the south seems to not have been completed.

By the summer of 1796, the American garrison at Presque Isle consisted of 95 men, including 3



Left: The image shows a portion of the Ellicott and Irvine map that shows the American fort site on Garrison Hill. The outer blue border is the boundary of the lower fort site and parade ground, where the Soldier's and Sailor's Home is today.

Right: Little else is known about the living conditions or changes to the fort between 1797 and 1806, when the site was abandoned. To the right is an example of a frontier blockhouse.

officers, 17 non-commissioned officers, 72 privates, and 3 fifers and drummers. In mid-November, when General Anthony Wayne arrived, Fort Presque Isle had two log blockhouses and “good quarters for the men.” Both of these structures were probably the traditional blockhouse design, lower square with a second story overhang. Based on Ellicott’s Map, they also had a hipped roof.

■ DEATH OF ANTHONY WAYNE

Gen. Anthony Wayne was gravely ill when he arrived at Erie on November 19, 1796. He was taken to the western blockhouse on Garrison Hill where he expired on December 15th. Two days after his death Wayne was buried in a plain wooden

coffin, dressed in his uniform and boots, at the foot of the flagstaff near the blockhouse. In 1809, his body was exhumed at the direction of his son, Isaac, for a return journey to their home in Radnor, Pennsylvania. To prepare for the trip it was determined that Wayne’s remaining flesh should be boiled off the bones in a large kettle and the skeleton packed away in a trunk. The water in the kettle, along with the remaining flesh, knives, and instruments used in the operation, were returned to the coffin and reburied in the flagpole grave.

■ WAR OF 1812

By 1810, Erie was a small settlement with 400–500 people, 200 floaters (ships), and about 47 clapboard houses. Many of those who lived in and around town worked as farmers, merchants, sailors, and waggoners in the salt trade. The surrounding forest was dense and composed of large oak trees that reached all the way to the Erie shoreline.

With the outbreak of the War of 1812, Garrison Hill became the focus once more as a military site. In the fall of 1813 a new blockhouse, palisade, and barracks were constructed. Named “Fort Wayne,” it is reported that three twelve-pounders, artillery

American-Made Artillery

In 1808, The United States Army decided to standardize their artillery. Most of the guns at the time were imports from Europe, especially France, and were holdovers from the American Revolution. New casting techniques for cannon tubes in the United States resulted in the development of two specific types of iron guns; the 6-pounder; the 12-pounder; along with the 6-inch brass howitzer. American iron cannon foundries in Philadelphia found a way to cast stronger, lighter, iron cannon tubes that could be forged more quickly. This made the United States far less dependent on European military hardware.

pieces, were brought in and trained on the entrance to the bay.

After Oliver Hazard Perry arrived in March 1813, he found the military force inadequate to defend the town and the shipyard against a British attack. In early April, he ventured to Pittsburgh where he “met with a Captain A. R. Woolley, an intelligent ordnance officer of the army, from whom he received valuable aid and advice in the way of procuring armament, and matters pertaining to it,



This lithograph depicts the Wayne blockhouse on Garrison Hill above the mouth of Mill Creek in the 1880s.



The only known plan of the 1813 fort comes from a sketch made by John Widney, a soldier garrisoned at Erie. (University of Michigan Archives)

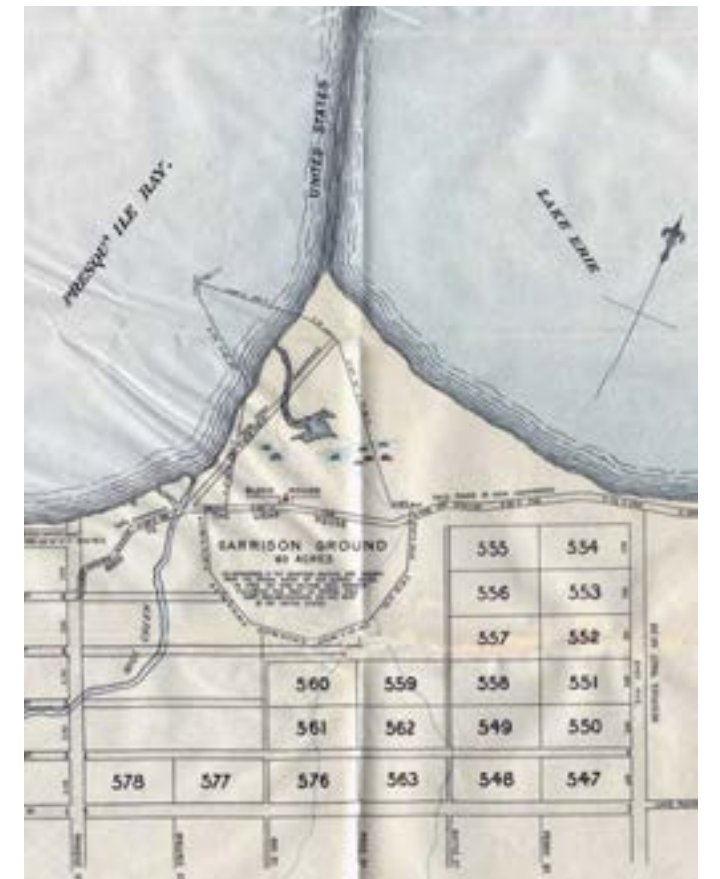
and from whom he obtained four small field pieces (artillery), and some muskets.” Upon his return to Erie, Perry engaged General David Mead, commander of Pennsylvania’s 16th Division stationed at Waterford. He petitioned Mead for troops to guard the shipbuilders and the bayfront. By May 7, five hundred men of Colonel Rees Hill’s 147th Regiment of Pennsylvania Militia arrived in town. More reinforcements, in the form of United States Marines, reached Erie on May 17. The added defense included “a redoubt thrown up at the point where the land lighthouse now stands; and Mr. Dobbins having in the meantime arrived from Buffalo with two long 12-pounders, they were mounted upon it. On Garrison Hill another was thrown up, with the four pieces obtained at Pittsburgh mounted thereon.”³

Ft. Wayne was also used as a field hospital by Dr. John Wallace, the first physician in the county and son of William Wallace, the county’s first lawyer and a large landowner. He settled in Erie around 1803 to settle his deceased father’s estate after nine years of service as a surgeon in the United States Army under Gen. Anthony Wayne. Wallace was summoned to Presque Isle from Pittsburgh in the days before Wayne’s death but did not arrive in time. He was also responsible for preparing Wayne’s skeleton for removal to his hometown in 1809. As Colonel of the Erie regiment of militia during the War of 1812, Wallace assisted in caring for the ninety-six wounded soldiers and sailors on Garrison Hill after Perry’s victory.

Seemingly, the Garrison Hill fortifications were abandoned immediately after the war. It is believed



1822 Map shows the “Hospital” located on the point of the peninsula above the location of the American fort. A blockhouse is marked on the map where the Perry Monument is located today on the Presque Isle peninsula. The U.S. Arsenal is just south of the hospital.



This reproduction of an 1837 map of Erie shows the location of the western blockhouse and the road to the land lighthouse.



1867 Lossing Map showing the location of the Old French Fort, the Perry Blockhouse, and the blockhouse and battery located at the land lighthouse (circled in red).

that the eastern blockhouse was razed in the summer of 1827.⁴ The western blockhouse, where Wayne died, survived up until 1853 when it was burned by arsonists, “an occurrence much regretted by the inhabitants.”⁵ Sometime after 1815 and prior to 1837, a road to the land lighthouse that ran along the shoreline and passed just south of the western blockhouse was constructed and then abandoned.

Bissel’s 1796 Mill Creek sawmill burned in 1820. A second mill was built on the site in 1831 by George W. Reed and William Himrod. This mill was visible in part until the Civil War. Currently, little is known of the fort area between 1820 and the mid-1850s. As Erie grew, most of the settlement gravitated west toward today’s downtown area.

■ CIVIL WAR REDOUBT

For almost a decade after the blockhouse burned there was no noted activity at the Garrison Hill site. However, that changed with the outbreak of the Civil War. On November 11, 1863 Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton warned several northern governors of the possibility of a Confederate raid into the Lake Erie region. Lord Lyons, British ambassador to the United States, had informed the secretary



On a reproduction map originally created by Paul Kreuzpointner in 1877, the Civil War era redoubt is seen in position “T.”

that the Canadian governor-general had “reason to believe that a plot is on foot by persons hostile to the United States ... to invade the United States and destroy the city of Buffalo.” Lyons continued that “they propose to take possession of some of the steamboats on Lake Erie, to surprise Johnson’s Island, and set free the prisoners of war confined there.” The raiders, Lyons concluded, would turn these POWs into a force to attack the city.⁶

Johnson’s Island was located on Lake Erie just off Sandusky, Ohio. Early in the war, the War

In this 1862 map, the P&E line bisects Garrison Hill, leaving behind the railroad cut present today. (Library of Congress)



Department had turned it into a prisoner of war camp, originally for Confederate officers. Over the course of the war the camp would intern 9,000

POWs, although at any given point in time it housed no more than 2,000 to 2500. Lyons’ document to Stanton did not detail how the Confederate





The pensions veterans received were held in escrow. The state did not require the men to use those funds to live at the home. (Library of Congress)

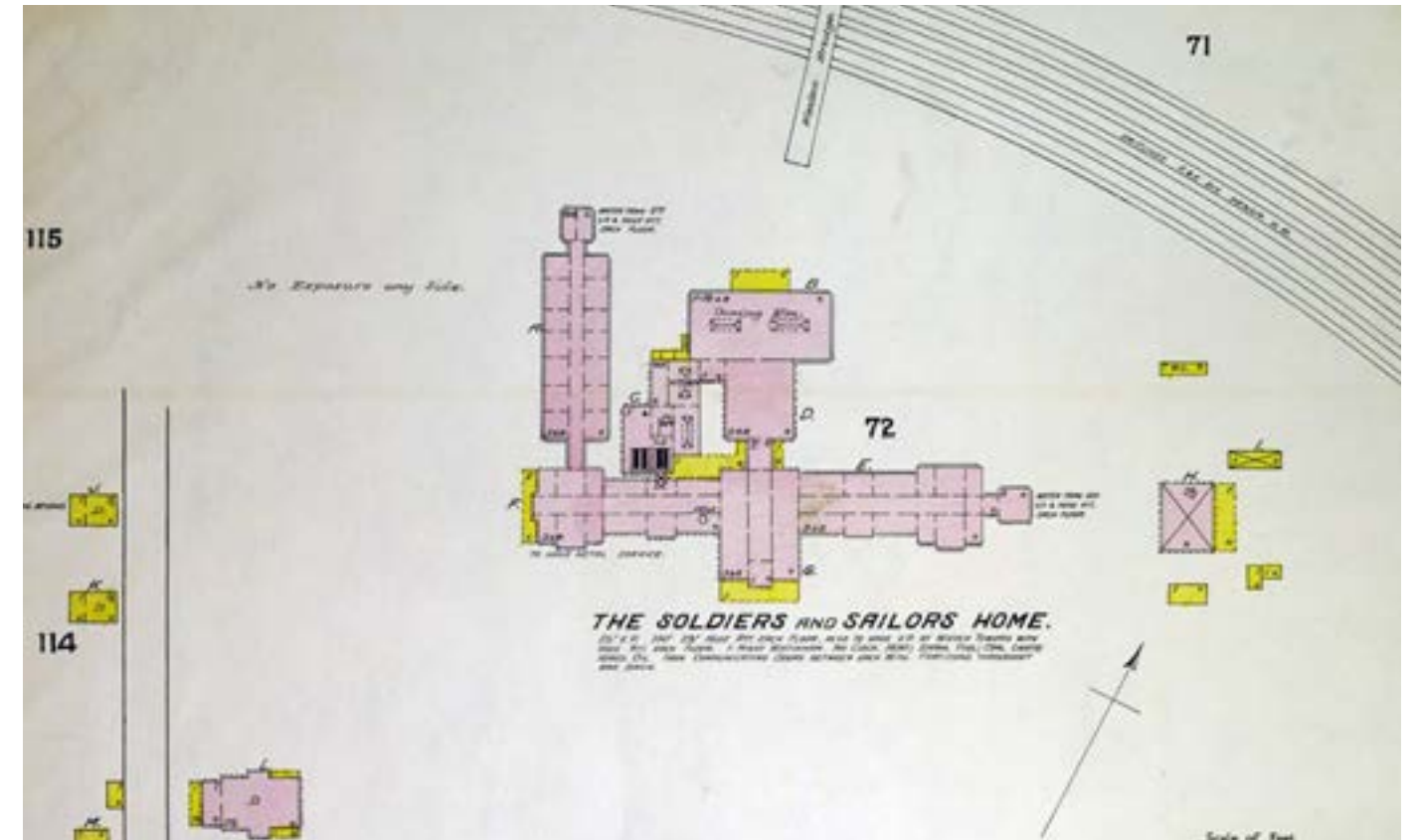
raiders planned to arm and equip so large number of prisoners or turn them into a military force sufficient to take and hold Buffalo. Nonetheless, it was presumed that the point of the raid would be to disrupt the Erie Canal. It was also presumed that, given the numerous boats required for transporting

so many prisoners, the raiders would need to capture the harbor at Erie.⁷

Stanton ordered the “Army Corps of the Monongahela” to respond to the potential raid. It was a military district composed of counties in western Pennsylvania, the northern tier of West Virginia, and three counties in Ohio along the Ohio River. The corps was created to recruit men and provide a command structure to defend “the public property within [the] department.” Recruits were “mustered into the service of the United States,” to serve at the pleasure of the president. These men were Home Guards, and not part of either the Regular or Volunteer armies. The enlistees remained in their home areas—drilling upon occasion—and were subject to conscription. They were organized into company-sized units, the whole body being titled the “Departmental Corps.”⁸



The earliest known image of the Marine Hospital



This 1888 map shows a wooden bridge was built over the tracks in order to access the Wayne blockhouse and the veteran's cemetery. A commandant's house was also constructed (lower left corner).

This department of the Monongahela was commanded by MG William T. H. Brooks (West Point 1841). Brooks moved up to Erie upon receipt of Secretary Stanton's warning, arriving in town on 12 November. The general quickly issued orders calling for a company to be sent to Erie from Camp Copeland (located near Pittsburgh on what was called “Braddock's Field”). Brooks also called for artillery from a unit called Knap's Battery. Finally, the general ordered in four companies from Belmont County, OH, plus two additional companies from Lawrence County, PA. All troops were part of the “Departmental Corps.” According to Brooks' report, troops began arriving in Erie on the 13th of November. “Some 500 men were collected from a distance of 250 miles,” the general reported. Under the direction of a Colonel Henry S. Burton, “a small field-work commanding the entrance to the harbor

of Erie was laid out ... and worked upon with commendable zeal by the citizens.” Of course, no Confederate raiders appeared and so the men were returned to their home counties within a few days.⁹

■ 1864 RAILROAD

In 1864, the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad (P&E) was completed all the way to the Lake Erie shoreline. The track bed bisected Garrison Hill, crossed Mill Creek, and continued along the shoreline just below the bluff. After moving fill to the area below the Front Street bluffs, the P&E opened a large coal transfer terminal just before the Lake Erie terminus at the State Pier in 1866. A year later, the docks were expanded to handle iron ore shipments from the Midwest. Though the train ran on an elevated track as it crossed Mill Creek, some of the embankment between Sobieski Street and Mill Creek was possibly



This photograph was taken just prior to WWI. Note the Civil War artillery in the front around the flagpole.

reduced to create a more level elevation.

■ **MARINE HOSPITAL AND THE SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' HOME**

In 1850, Congress authorized the federal government to acquire property for eight Marine Hospitals at various coastal towns, including Erie. Several prominent citizens promoted the location to the Secretary of the Treasury, William Meredith, stating that “there is a large reservation at the mouth of the harbor set apart by Pennsylvania to the use of the United States for this and other public purposes.” They go on that say that “lumber and all other building materials are cheap here, and it is believed the necessary structures could be erected as cheaply as at any other place.”

The process was stunted by political tensions during the decade followed by the Civil War. Work finally began in 1867 on a Federal Marine Hospital just south of the railroad and American forts site on Garrison Hill. The facility was built through the legislative efforts of State Senator Morrow B. Lowry for sick and disabled merchant seamen who

sailed the Great Lakes. Because of inadequate funding, however, construction lagged. The building sat dormant for nearly two decades and was for a brief time served as the Home of the Friendless.

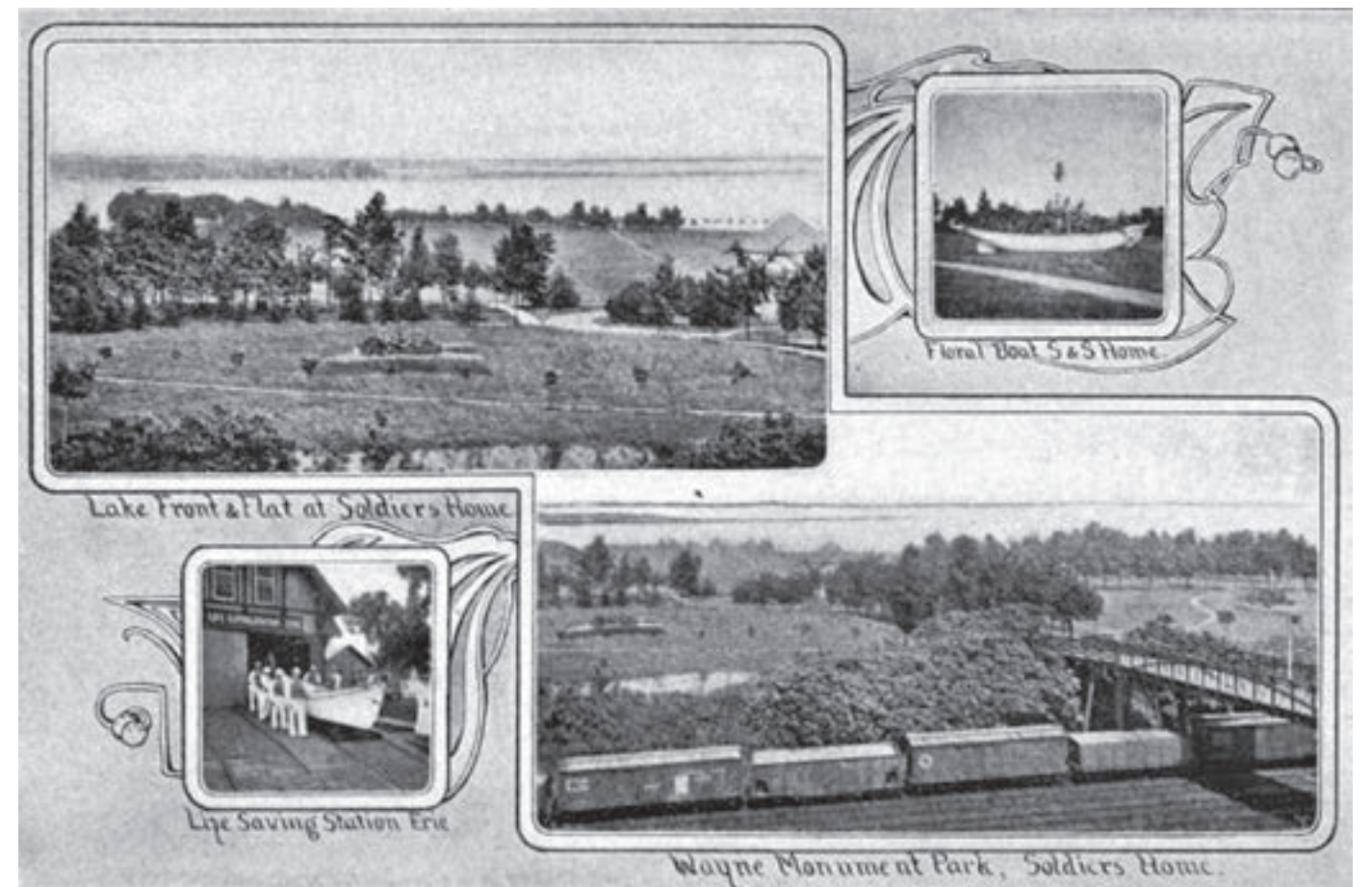
Finally, in 1883 the state legislature appropriated the money necessary to finish the job and the hospital was converted into the Pennsylvania Soldiers' and Sailors' Home. For several years, the Grand Army of the Republic had lobbied for retirement homes for indigent Civil War veterans across the country. As more filled the ranks of state legislatures they worked to create a system of care for the men who had fought to preserve the Union. Their mission was to provide care to infirmed and impoverished Pennsylvania Civil War veterans. When the renovations were completed in February 1886 at the former Marine Hospital in Erie, the building dedicated.

■ **VETERAN'S MEMORIAL CEMETERY**

The 4-acre cemetery across the tracks from the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home was also established



The Veteran's Memorial Cemetery row pattern was similar to National Cemeteries built during and after the Civil War. Headstones matched those at the National Cemeteries as well.



A page from a scrapbook form 1909 with detailed images of the Garrison Hill landscape.



The picture on the far left was taken not long after the completion of the reproduction blockhouse. Civil War artillery and caissons decorate the grounds. On the right, a 1906 photograph shows that trees have grown up around the site and that landscaping was completed, including the addition of roads and sidewalks.



This map depicts Erie around 1870. Several buildings associated with the Marine Hospital (left center) are present. On Garrison Hill (far left center) are both the Wayne Blockhouse and the Pest House. The Philadelphia and Erie Railroad crosses Mill Creek and runs under the Front Street bluff.

in 1886 just below Garrison Run for the burial of veterans. The first to be interred were from the Civil War, including nineteen soldiers from United States Colored Troop regiments. It is unclear if any



This 1883 map shows the location of the "City Hospital," or pest house, near the reproduction of the Wayne Blockhouse dedicated in 1880.

veterans were moved to Erie from other burial sites. Since the late 1800s, more than 1,300 interments have taken place.

Locating the cemetery near the railroad made

access easier for those visiting the home and the cemetery from outside town. No separate depot was built near the site. However, train passengers traveling through the manicured landscapes of the Soldier's and Sailor's Home, the cemetery, and the fort site offered a welcoming pastoral park-like setting to friends, family, and patrons.

■ EXCAVATING FOR A NEW BLOCKHOUSE

In 1875, Dr. Edward W. Germer, the Erie County Health Officer and "an ardent admirer of General Wayne," championed rebuilding the Garrison Hill blockhouse that was burned in 1853. He also led the search for the grave of Anthony Wayne. After "a vast amount of excavating," Germer located the general's burial site along with "fragments of tinware, potsherds, scraps of leather and such things as accumulate in a rubbish heap around old houses." The grave contained a marked coffin and the knives used to remove the flesh from Wayne's bones, as well. Garrison Hill was commemorated

with a new flagpole, a circle of chains, and four old artillery pieces. Germer organized the Wayne Monument Association who successfully petitioned the state legislature to fund the construction of a replica of the original blockhouse. The reproduction was dedicated in 1880.

■ PEST HOUSE

In 1872, a separate hospital was built by the Public Health Department under supervision from Dr. Edward Germer on Garrison Hill for infectious disease patients in response to a smallpox outbreak the previous summer. Though no widespread epidemic occurred, the town prepared for more outbreaks. The 1880 census reported that "the pest house is situated out upon a bluff overlooking Lake Erie, with a fine view, well ventilated well supplied with water and a bathroom, and is a good building, with dimensions of 130 by 30 feet."¹⁰ The structure was located in between the 1813 fort and the Civil War era redoubt. In 1938, WPA excavators uncovered the building's foundation.

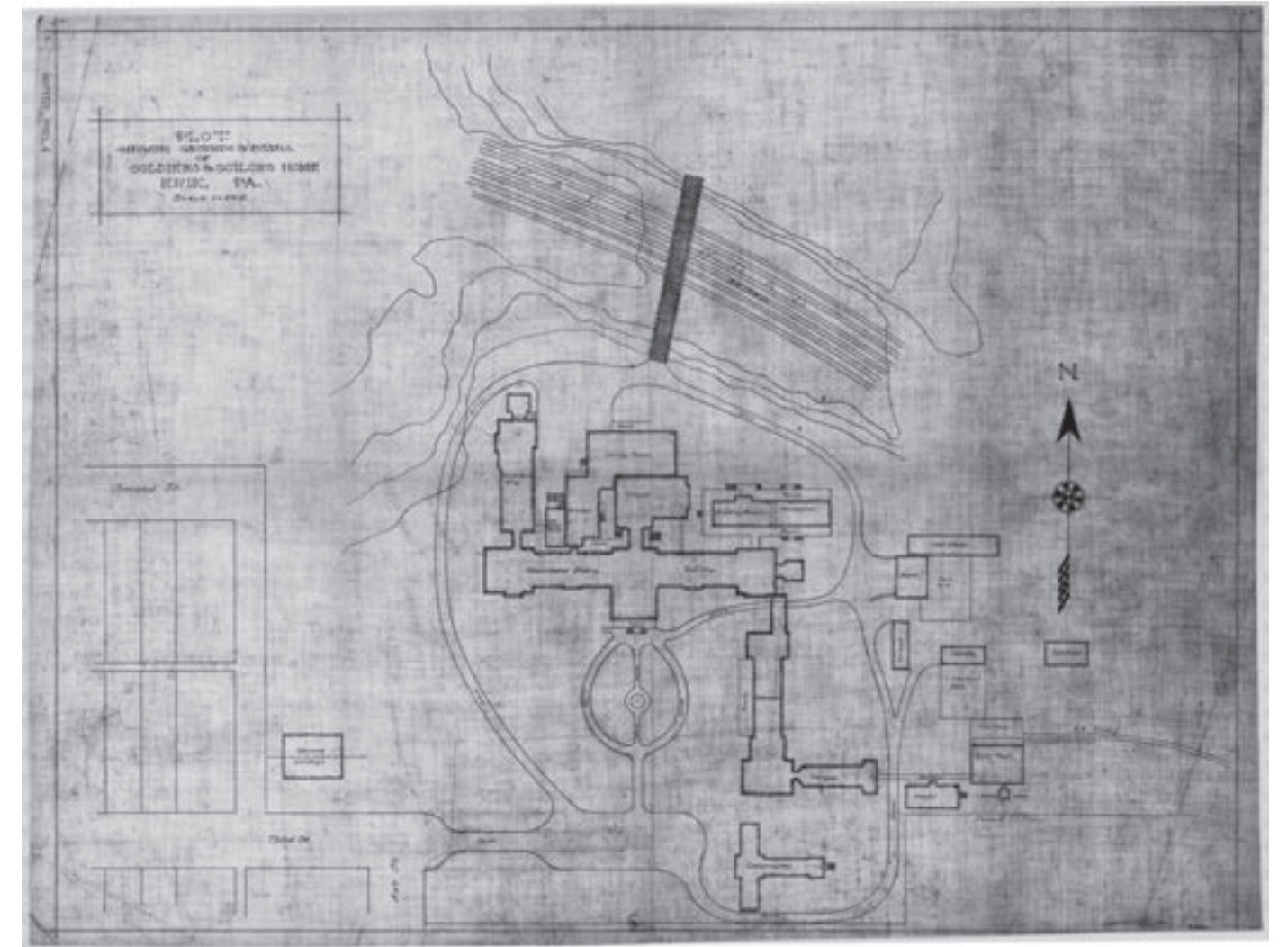
The American forts site was relandscaped around the turn of the twentieth century as a bucolic park containing the Wayne Blockhouse, a pagoda, and winding roads and trails. The park was linked to the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home by a small truss bridge that spanned the railroad tracks. "The sole remaining relic of Capt. Bissell's original work on that defense of 1795," according to historian John Miller, was "the well dug within the stockade, which is still serviceable at times by



This section of a 1909 panoramic map of Erie graphically depicts the Soldier's and Sailor's Home (left center) just south of the railroad tracks. Mill Creek is in the center of the map and three buildings associated with the Standard Brick Works, one with a belching smokestack, are just to the west, in between the site where the French/British forts were located and Garrison Hill. A bridge crosses the tracks to the American fort sites on Garrison Hill. A blockhouse and two other structures are also present on the hill. The Pest House has been razed. The road running along the eastern bank of Mill Creek and the peninsula led to a boat dock used by the Soldier's and Sailor's Home. By this time the marshy swamp was filled and possibly used as a kitchen or vegetable garden by the home.

means of a modern pump, from which the blue-coated veterans of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home can quench their thirst."

By 1917 the campus of the Soldier's and Sailor's Home included several additional buildings. That same year, construction of the Mill Creek Tube commenced. A similar tube was built for Garrison Run that bisected the Veteran's cemetery.



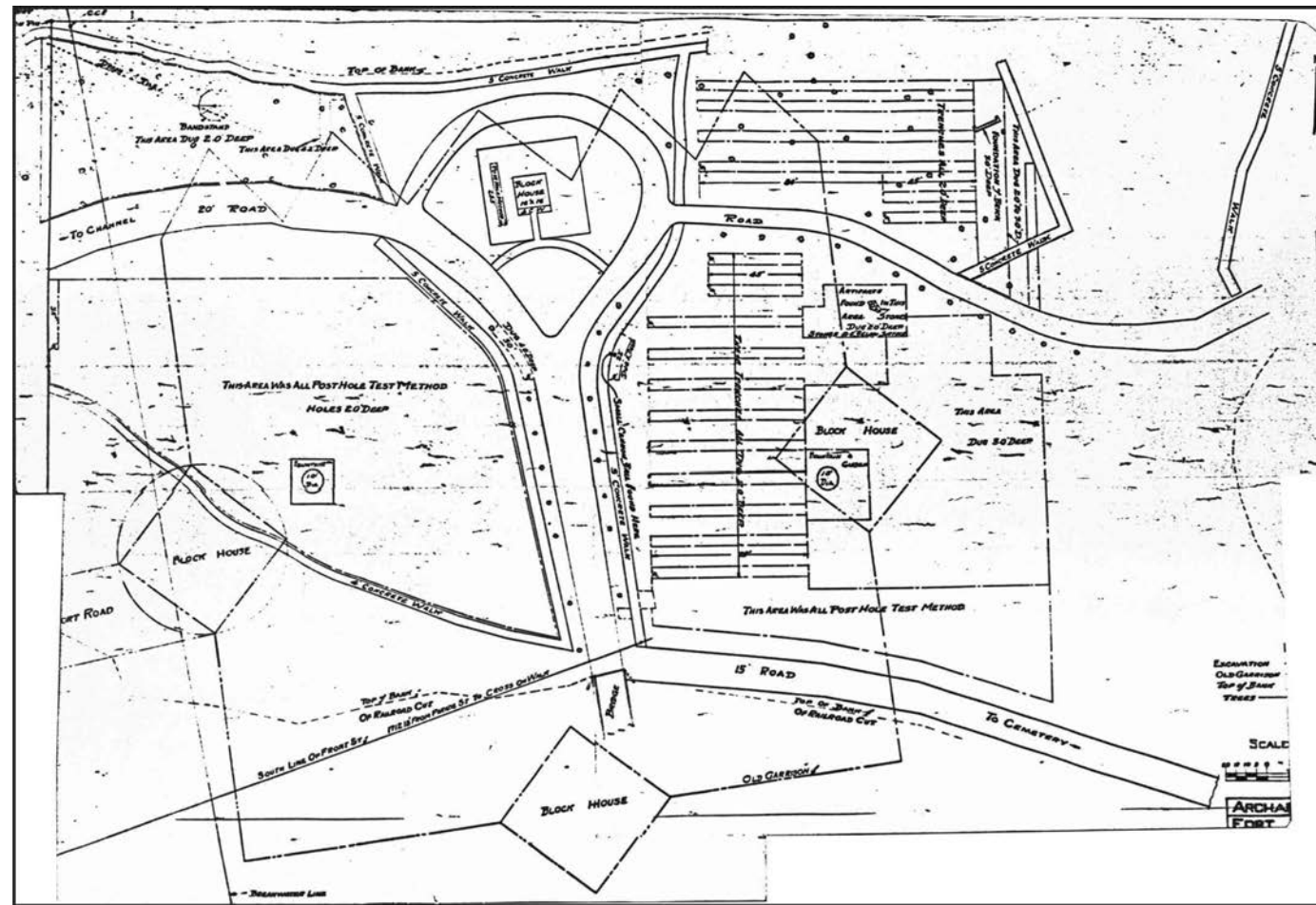
In 1988 the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) determined that the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home was eligible for the NRHP under Criteria A and C. No historic boundaries were defined for the property at that time. In 2019, it was redetermined that the property continued to be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A with a period of significance of 1879 (date of construction of blockhouse) to 1969. Contributing resources within the property include the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, the Staff Housing, the Veteran's Memorial Cemetery and the General Anthony Wayne Blockhouse.

■ 20TH CENTURY ARCHAEOLOGY STUDIES

1937 WPA Excavations

In the late 1930s, the first archaeological excavations were conducted at the site of American forts on Garrison Hill. From July 1937 to November 1938 the Federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) funded a program known as the *Frontier*

Forts and Trails Survey, which was designed to gather historical and archaeological information pertaining to early colonial and French forts in northwestern Pennsylvania. The Garrison Hill dig was directed by archaeologist Harry Schoff, who states that, "We first laid out the area in five-foot trenches, then excavated them to the average depth of two-and-one-half feet. In this manner we located the site of one of the blockhouses and in the surrounding earth found many uniform buttons, coins, pewter objects and iron articles." Fort-related artifacts also included a large ashen feature contained animal bone, military pottery, wine bottles, gun parts, and ammunition. Domestic use items



A survey of Henry Schoff's fieldwork at Garrison Hill. A final report on his findings was never published. In many ways, the WPA project was non-professional and created more questions than answers about the site. Schoff used the 1795 Irvine and Ellicott plan of the fort. Though his crude methods lacked scrutiny, he defined what he thought was the fort's design on the 1937 landscape. The south blockhouse was possibly never completed in 1795. The "fountains" on the map are late nineteenth/early twentieth century features.



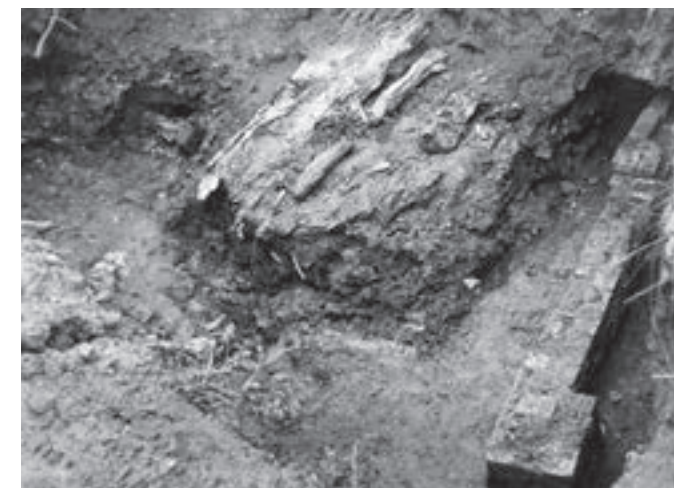
WPA workers on the 1937 Garrison Hill dig. The Soldier's and Sailor's Home is in the background.



Trench excavations 30" in depth located part of the Pest House foundation and evidence of the 1795 east blockhouse.



Some of the artifacts recovered by Schoff's 1937 excavations.



The 1937 excavation located a foundation to the northeast of the fort in the vicinity of where the Pest House, built in 1872, was located.

included bone-handled knives, forks, a letter seal, and bottle fragments.

Schoff also states that at the time of his excavations there was an extensive relandscaping project being conducted by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Veteran's Affairs.

1995 Mercyhurst Excavation

In 1995, the Mercyhurst Archaeological Institute field school conducted a geophysical survey of the site. The excavation of 80 units in several blocks revealed 48 postmolds representing portions of two of the fort's stockade wall—southwest and



The Mercyhurst excavations revealed a different palisading pattern than the 1795 Irvine and Ellicott plan suggests.



The 1987 satellite image of Garrison Hill (prior to construction of the Bayfront Parkway) shows that the bridge over the railroad has been removed and replaced by an at-grade crossing 400 feet to the east. CSX Railroad also reduced the number of tracks.

northwest. An inventory of the recovered artifacts also indicated evidence of pre-Columbian contact materials, including flaked stone artifacts, sherds of pottery, ground stone artifacts, and pieces of “obsidian.”

The Mercyhurst field work, however, is at odds with the 1795 Irvine and Ellicott plan of fort, and with Schoff’s conclusions concerning the initial design. Mercyhurst implies that the fortification was laid out in a diamond shape, with southwestern and northwestern stockade lines and no apparent blockhouse present at the western corner. The absence of definitive evidence in terms of the blockhouse is consistent with Schoff’s findings, but the identified stockade lines clearly indicate a plan diverging significantly from that presented by Irvine and Ellicott. Lack of archeological features at the site, however, does not mean that the 1795 plan as drawn by Irvine or Ellicott is inaccurate. A second fort was built in 1813 and some of the 1795 remains may have been moved and reused. With the clearing and re-landscaping of the grounds, any evidence of the western blockhouse may have been destroyed.

No final report was prepared for the Mercyhurst investigations.



By 2005, the Bayfront Parkway was completed and access to the site and the cemetery was restricted to the at-grade railroad crossing from the Soldier’s and Sailor’s Home.

■ 2020 ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY

In 2020, a new archaeological study was conducted as a 106 Review for the redevelopment of the Bayfront Parkway, the expansion of the railroad, and the rebuilding of the bridge from the Soldier’s and Sailor’s Home to the fort site. The project found further evidence of the 1795 and 1813 forts. Likewise, later artifacts and features related to the development of the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Home property, a National Register-eligible resource, were also present.

The study found that:

The bulk of the artifacts reflect building materials and the preparation and consumption of food, suggesting that we sampled a portion of the fort’s interior containing structural features dedicated to cooking and meals. One of these was the well for the fort, which remained open and used after the abandonment of the fort. A number of postmolds and related features likewise suggest the presence of buildings or other structures related to domestic functions. The recovery of items like kaolin pipes, pottery, and vessel glass are consistent with this interpretation. Military artifacts are present but in the minority in contrast to their greater



New bridge and road redevelopment are part of the Bayfront Parkway project.

Right: One of the most significant features found during the excavation was the fort’s well. A few of the artifacts recovered from the well include a kaolin pipe stem and bit from the feature interior with a bore diameter of 5/64 inch that would date to between 1710 and 1750. A fragment of a kaolin pipe bowl; Two fragments of a hand-blown aqua bottle, one with a pontil scar; Two metal buttons with obscured decoration; A flake of amber (French Grand Pressigny) flint from the manufacture or maintenance of a gun flint; A 7.32 mm diameter piece of buckshot and another, impacted buckshot; Six sherds of undecorated and 2 sherds of decorated pearlware (annular design, blue hand-painted); and a canister round with large shot and metal fuses.

prominence at other contemporary forts. Diagnostic artifacts are largely consistent with the date of the fort’s use, although later development of the property is also evident in the artifacts and non-fort related features





Looking east across to Garrison Hill shows the extent of the excavation for the new bridge to the Veterans' Cemetery.



Looking north across the railroad ravine.



Looking west toward the bay showing the extent of the excavation on the south bank of railroad ravine.

■ ENDNOTES

- 1 Burges, George. A Journal of a Surveying Trip into Western Pennsylvania. John Cumming. Mount Pleasant, Michigan. 1965. 20.
- 2 Ibid., 21.
- 3 Dobbins, William W., History of the Battle of Lake Erie (September 10, 1813): and Reminiscences of the Flagship "Lawrence". Erie, PA: Ashby & Vincent, Printers, Stationers and Binders. 1876.
- 4 (Mulkearn and Pugh 1954:210).
- 5 (Albert 1916:560; McFeeters-Krone 1995; Miller 1909:71, 77, 85; Warner, Beers and Company 1884:219, 506).
- 6 Secretary of War Stanton to the Governor of PA (and the other governors of the lake-bordering states), Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Series 3, Volume 3, p. 1013.
- 7 "Depot of Prisoners of War on Johnson's Island, Ohio," Johnson's Island Preservation Society.
- 8 Orders dated 9 June 1863, OR, Series 1, Volume 27, Part 3, pp. 44-45.
- 9 Report by MG Brooks to the War Department, 29 November 1863, Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Series 3, Volume 3, pp. 1102-03.
- 10 Census Reports Tenth Census. June 1, 1880: Social Statistics of Cities by United States. Census Office. 10th Census, 1880, United States. Census Office, 1883, pg. 760.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE AND INTERPRETIVE PLAN

“Old places are deeply beneficial to people because of the way they give us a sense of continuity, identity and belonging, because they inspire us with awe, beauty and sacredness, because they tell us about history, ancestry and learning, and because they foster healthy, sustainable communities.”

**Tom Mayes, National Trust
for Historic Preservation**

THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The success of any great business is measured by its ability to *recognize and fulfil* the needs of its customers. In today’s *experience economy*, it has also become important to emphasize, promote, and measure the *impact* any company’s goods and services have on their customer’s lives. According to management advisors Joe Pine and Jim Gilmore, “An experience occurs when a company intentionally uses services as the stage, and goods as props, to engage individual customers in a way that creates a memorable event. Commodities are fungible, goods tangible, services intangible, and experiences memorable.” Pine and Gilmore’s work has led to new strategies for customer engagement and satisfaction.

Museums and history-related venues are not just stewards of the past but responsible for crafting engaging and memorable visitor experiences.

Like any business, they must determine who their customers or audiences are and understand their characteristics, visiting patterns, needs, interests, and motivations. Museums and historic sites are effectively challenged by a wide range of other leisure activities and attractions and must compete for a visitor’s attention in a competitive market.

■ VISITOR ENGAGEMENT

There are seven stages in the visitor engagement process. Though linear in scope, the visitor can enter or exit any stage at any time.

- **Desiring:** The prospective visitor is aware of and wants to experience a community or its historic resources, the opportunities available in the community, and the resulting experiences that may occur.
- **Planning:** The prospective visitor is researching a destination that best meets their interest, needs, and expectations. The visitor must have access to information involving the potential visit, which can include information on its history, attractions, relevance, the weather, nearby accommodations, fees, and directions.
- **Traveling:** The prospective visitor makes their way to the destination. Directions and signage to the site, or “wayfinding,” needs to be straightforward and clear.
- **Arriving:** The visitor enters the community. They receive orientation and informational materials about the interpretive resources or opportunities available.

- **Visiting:** The visitor participates in, enjoys, and learns from the site’s interpretive elements or features, including programs, services, and facilities. An important part of visiting an historic resource or museum is the opportunity for discovery. These opportunities can help to create and reinforce an engaging and memorable experience.
- **Leaving:** The visitor had an enjoyable, meaningful, satisfying, safe, and entertaining visit. There is a distinct sense of personal fulfillment at departure.
- **Remembering:** The visitor shares the details of their visit through pictures, stories, and materials they have collected with others. Their memories are filled with positive recollections of the community. Follow-up communication through websites, emails, and social media can lead to a return visit or financial support for the association and their efforts.

Journey Mapping

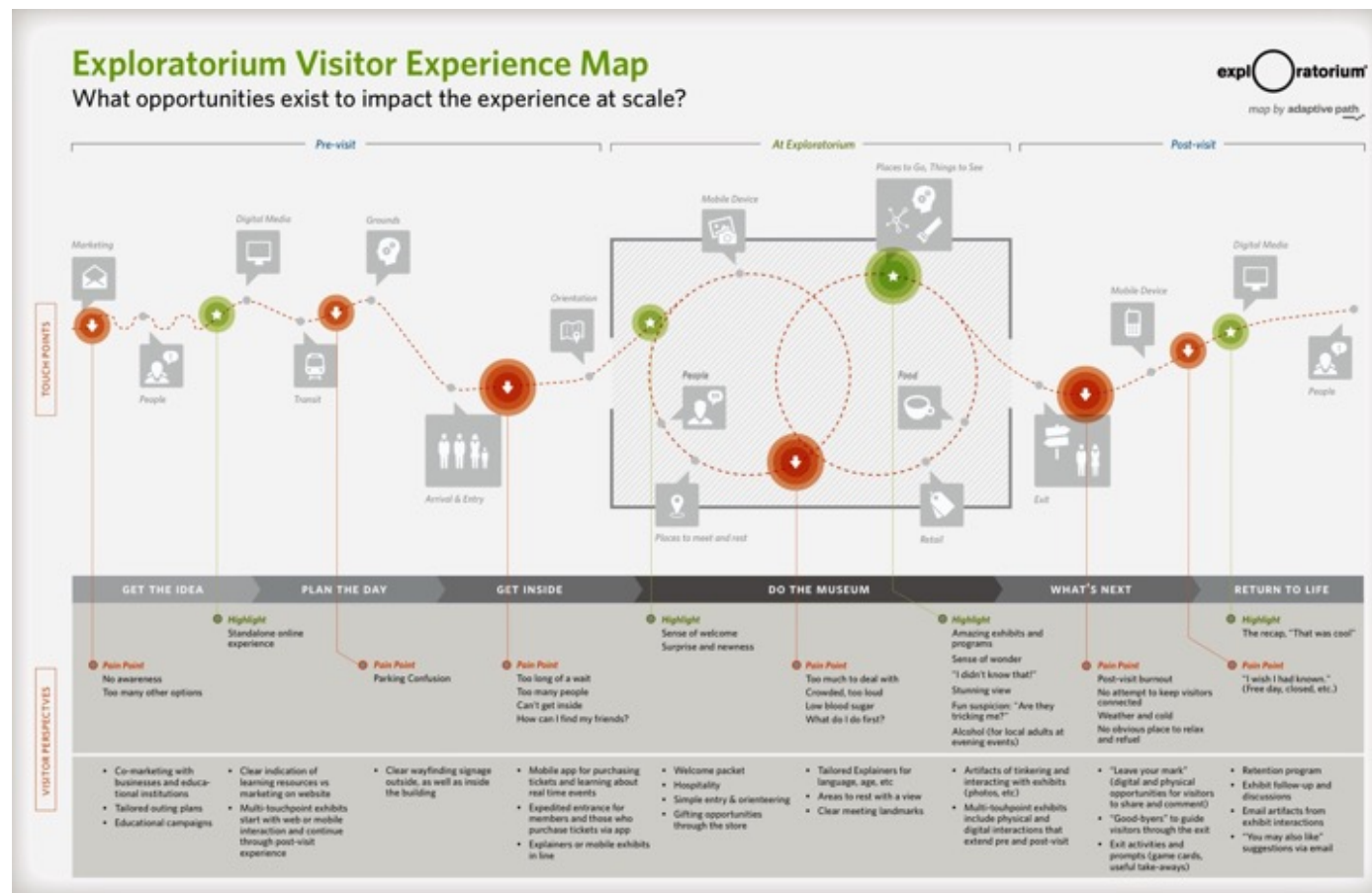
Journey mapping is the creation of a visual representation of who, where, when, and how a visitor interacts with the organization. The journey map can assist cultural institutions, like Three Forts, to better understand, within the context of their average visitor, the various avenues of access and engagement they have with the organization before, during, and after their visit. The results from the journey mapping process helps to shape the overall visitor experience by not only determining each place or location they encounter the visitor, but

how the organization responds to key opportunities to make a significant effort to meet or exceed their expectations. Identifying these places where to improve will provide the greatest return. From a cognitive perspective, historic sites often have a hard time visualizing, from start to finish, individual outcomes because not all guests take the same route or experience the same journey. This is where mapping comes in. The exercise forces the organization to step into the shoes of their visitors and see their institution from the visitor’s perspective.

It should also be noted that when creating a journey map, emotions are a fundamental part of the visitor experience. They overwhelmingly drive most of our decisions. Without sounding too Freudian, to build an emotionally impactful experience that will lead visitors to recommend and return to the site, determining what triggers their subconscious desires by critically observing or listening to what and how they feel when engaging with the resource or the organization is paramount to long-term sustainability.

Touchpoints

In creating the journey map, the array of places where visitors engage an organization is called a **touchpoint**. The concept behind touchpoints is to help identify macro and micro destinations—contact areas—that can positively impact or influence the visitor experience. For an historic site or interpretive center, these places can be broken down into two categories: digital or physical. A visitor touchpoint can be a observing a vista, reading an interpretive



The Exploratorium developed an ideal “happy path” where they examined each “touchpoint” to describe the visitor’s behavior, feelings, and thoughts along with the potential highlights and pain points through each stage of the visitor engagement process.

wayside exhibit, visiting pages on the website, picking up a brochure at a visitor’s center, scrolling through a mobile app, or taking a guided tour.

Transmedia Storytelling:

The power behind touchpoints is the opportunity to deliver transmedia storytelling events, presentations, or experiences—the practice of creating, sharing, and encouraging participation in a cohesive and engaging narrative distributed across multiple traditional and digital delivery platforms. Those platforms can take the form of static, immersive, and interactive exhibits, educational programming, publications, documentary, dramatic arts, mobile applications, or websites. Transmedia storytelling, in essence, is the

ability to communicate different parts of the same story across multiple media platforms.

STORYTELLING AND THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE AT THREE FORTS

One of the main reasons for paying so much attention to journey mapping is to recognize opportunities to influence and encourage certain behaviors from patrons before, during, and after their visit to Three Forts. However effective mapping may be in helping to identify the tools necessary to meet the wants and needs of visitors, the driving force behind a meaningful and memorable experience at any historic site, museum, or heritage-related resource is based on the success of the storytelling process.

Brain scans are now revealing what happens in our heads when we read a detailed description, an evocative metaphor or an emotional exchange between characters. Stories, this research is showing, stimulate the brain and even change the way we act and respond.

Storytelling involves a multiplicity of creative and strategic considerations. Often it is hard to predict what will engage audiences, especially across cultural boundaries, different demographics, and within the scope of the organization’s mission. Yet, history, and historical inquiry in general, has a transformative ability to embody and reflect stories that relate to our own personal narratives or of the narratives of friends or family. It feeds our need for belonging by fostering connections to distant times, people, places, and experiences. Often, that comes in the form of trying to answer basic questions; Who are we? Who were they? How did we get here? Will any of this tell us where we are going or what comes next? And, as importantly, how should we feel about all of it?

INTERPRETIVE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES AT THREE FORTS

To start the storytelling process—developing a stream of consciousness at Three Forts—we must first identify and describe the behaviors and outcomes within the context of the site’s interpretive goals and objectives we hope to achieve. Interpretive goals and objectives are statements that express the intended purpose of the interpretive activities at the site. They also serve as measurable guidelines

to evaluate the effectiveness of those activities. In essence, goals are policy statements that drive the overall interpretation. Objectives address behavioral outcomes and express the specific desired impact and influence the site hopes to have on its visitors.

INTERPRETIVE GOAL 1

Increase awareness of the historical and evolving relationship between the region’s indigenous and migrant populations and their connections to the continually changing environment of western Pennsylvania.

Objective A: Visitors will feel an increased cultural association to the region’s historic land and waterscapes and how these vital resources relate to their own lives.

Objective B: Visitors will feel an increased intellectual and emotional understanding of the historical relationship between indigenous and migrant peoples.

Objective C: Visitors will understand how the “law of progress” associated with industrialization transformed the region’s pre-modern landscape and how unsustainable development continues to impact their lives today.

Objective D: Visitors will be able to name at least one way that technology and innovation have positively and negatively impacted the region’s social, economic, and environmental development.

INTERPRETIVE GOAL 2

Provide an enhanced experience by informing visitors about opportunities and expectations at the Three Forts Campus.

Objective A: Visitors will learn about everything the Three Forts has to offer through a network of marketing and promotional activities that makes use of

new technologies that impact awareness.

Objective B: All visitors will report feeling welcome and the Three Forts Campus will be recognized as a place where different groups or individuals having different backgrounds are culturally and socially accepted and treated equally.

Objective C: Visitors will be provided with the necessary information to safely and responsibly engage all areas of the Three Forts campus open to the public in a way that makes their experience positive and memorable.

Objective D: Visitors will know where to go and how to best experience the Three Forts Campus.

INTERPRETIVE GOAL 3

Inform and strengthen the visitor's understanding of the historical roots of sustainability and the contemporary connections to the region's social, economic, and environmental past, present and future

Objective A: Visitors will participate in projects and programs that enlighten and reflect on how the region's social, economic, and environmental landscape has changed, both positively and negatively, over the last four hundred years.

Objective B: Visitors will know that a network of collaborative partners is working to find holistic solutions to the issues of resource depletion, climate change, unsustainable development, and fostering inclusive and resilient societies where all citizens have a voice and equal access to opportunity.

Objective C: Visitors will feel an increased sense of responsibility for the conservation, preservation, and restoration of historic and natural resources.

Objective D: Visitors will complement their experience at Three Forts with other cultural heritage sites in the region and will feel the power associated place.

Who's Coming: Identifying Audiences

Who are we creating these goals and objective for? There are several ways to identify the potential audiences for a particular experience including demographics and psychographics or lifestyle considerations. In general terms, audiences are divided into the following:

- **Intrastate Visitors**—these are people that come from Pennsylvania and are exploring their own state. The majority of these visitors come from in and around Pittsburgh.
- **Interstate Visitors**—are those that come from New York, Ohio, and possibly Maryland and West Virginia.
- **International Visitors**—are those that come from Canada or beyond.
- **Local Community**—With a population of over 95,000, Erie is the fifth largest city in Pennsylvania. The local market is vitally important for several reasons, including:
 - ~ They have a personal connection with the place
 - ~ They can bring visiting friends and relatives to the site
 - ~ They have an understanding of the site's history
 - ~ They can promote the site beyond Erie
 - ~ They have the greatest potential to be repeat visitors

Of the four million visitors to Erie annually (2019), the overwhelming majority are drawn to Presque Isle State Park, the largest recreational and environmental attraction in western Pennsylvania. A lesser number take advantage of the city's cultural and historic sites. However, since mid-2020, COVID-19 has put a dent in those statistics. Recently, Erie Insurance released a national survey

conducted to “better understand how the pandemic has impacted road travelers, and what distractions are impacting driver safety.” What they found was the majority (41%) will travel in the near future to visit family and friends. Others (21%) will make a trip to the beach, which is good news for Presque Isle State Park and ancillary businesses in the vicinity. In light of the pandemic, most (76%) will travel with just one other person. Road trips will be comprised of “many outdoor, socially spaced locations, including campsites, lakeside resorts, lodges and cabins to partake in fishing, golfing, hiking and overall sight-seeing activities.”¹

Specialty Audiences

Visitation surveys are an effective way to gauge the different audience types who frequent Erie's attractions. Those surveys, however, are not always readily available, and it is important to recognize that the most effective sites are those designed for a specific audience. Although Three Forts will offer numerous levels and layers of interpretation consumable by all types of visitors, specific groups should be targeted, and interpretive media created to address their interests and needs. Some of the more identifiable and mainstream audiences to sites like Three Forts include:

- **History Aficionados:** One of the largest audience types of heritage tourism is aficionados, or history buffs. They can consist of organizations, heritage groups, or just individuals. All have a unique passion for the subject, a wide variety of backgrounds, and demand a high level of interpretive expertise. Providing informative tours and unique experiences for these visitors is one of the keys to success.
- **School Groups:** There are two types of groups

related to education and schools. The first is local teachers seeking to enliven their classroom experience through field trips. Their goal is to enrich the subject matter by visiting places associated with historic events or characters.

The second, and often overlooked crowd, are youth organizations, such as scholastic groups, bands, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, or sports teams, outside the area. They often try to find secondary attractions to spend time while involved with their special extracurricular or school-related trips.

- **Heritage Travellers:** This audience seeks history associated sites and activities. They demand in-depth interpretation and have a wider array of interests. Often, they combine site visits with dining, shopping, and recreational activities. They also have a higher level of family travel.
- **Group Tourists:** They can be anything from tour buses, to elder hostels, to church groups. Their activities are often driven by cross-marketing with other trendy sites or tailor-made vacation packages.
- **Drop-Ins:** This is the most unpredictable group. They show up by chance, either off the main highway or visiting someone in the area.
- **Shoppers:** Shopping was a major draw for travelers to Pennsylvania's Great Lakes Region in 2019, with the region ranking 2nd among the state's 11 tourism regions in terms of the percent of traveler dollars spent on retail purchases.
- **Recreational Visitors:** This audience seeks recreation first but looks for opportunities to visit nearby historic sites that add to the overall experience of the trip. Walking, backpacking, and biking trails, along with camping and

COVID-19 and the Visitor Experience

The recent pandemic has had a major impact on historic sites and other educational and travel-related institutions. Places like museums, a foundation of urban tourism, will not likely fade away anytime soon. However, COVID-19 has created new challenges to how visitors interact with cultural resources.

Studies have found that people feel safer visiting smaller cities and towns, like Erie. And as travel rebounds and visitors find themselves at these destinations, they will be looking for real experiences where they are less exposed to others, such as outdoor venues or places with restricted access. If indoors, they want larger interior spaces that are well ventilated. In a general sense, safety-first is the key to offering a positive experience into the foreseeable future.

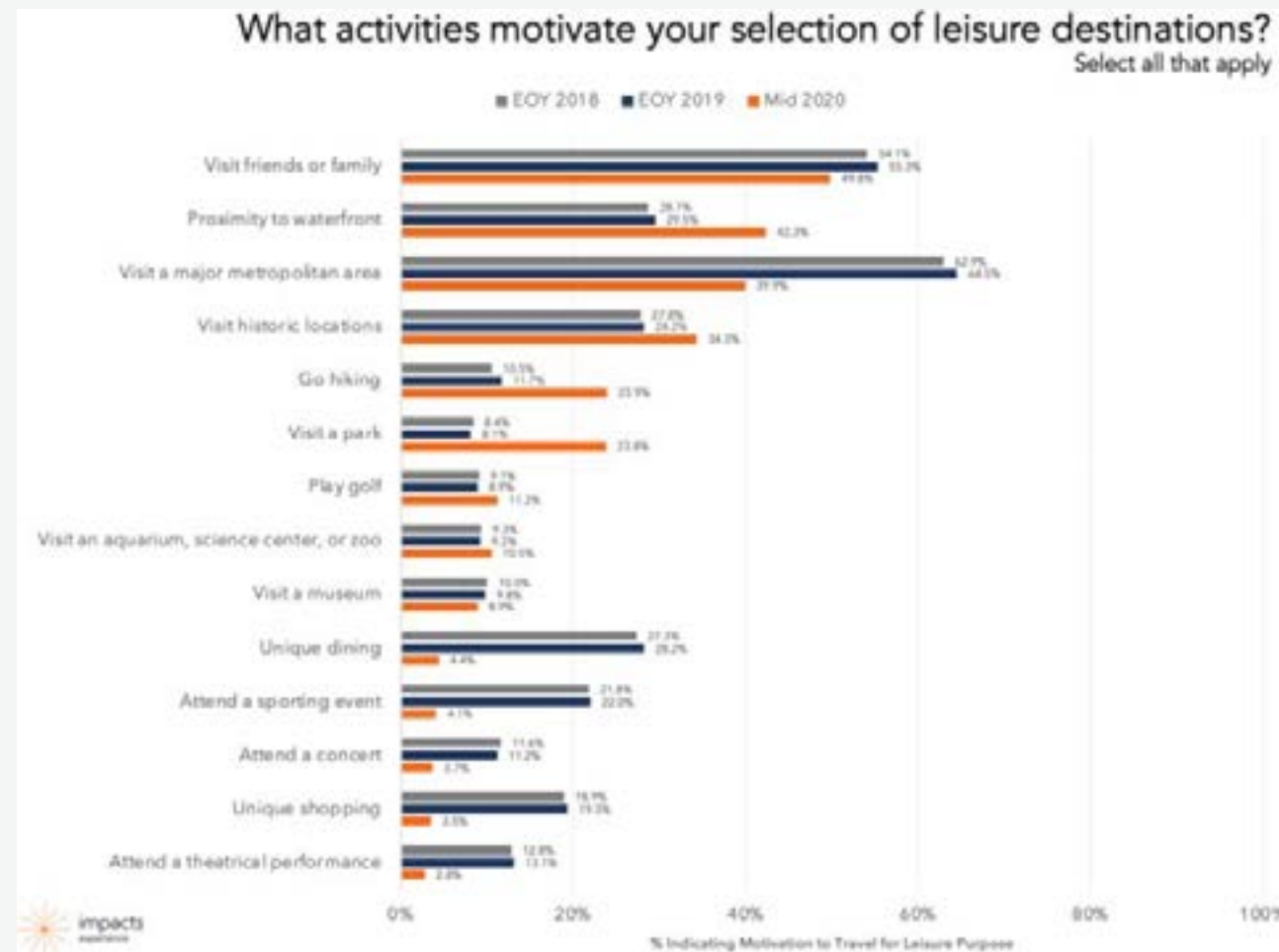
New Spaces and COVID-19:

Three Forts of Presque Isle and Interpretive Center

While many existing museums are adapting their galleries, public spaces, and implementing new safety measures before reopening, new facilities will see pro-active spatial designs that maintain the current Covid-19 protocols, like timed ticketing and visitor count restrictions.

What will emerge are more sculptural and artistic lobbies, possibly with inside and outdoor courtyards, allowing lines to form in the open air. Outdoor museums, and historic sites, like Three Forts, will become more popular because they already offer open-air spaces.

Interior spaces will also be less hands-on, such as touch screen interactive, and provide more touchless opportunities to engage exhibits. Gift shops may incorporate a pick-up window. Merchandise associated with the



exhibits or the site history will be displayed throughout the interpretive center. Visitors can then place orders from their phone without touching the actual item and pick up purchases in a designated area to avoid other patrons.

water-sport activities are seen as enhancements to these visitors. Presque Isle State Park visitors fall within this category.

- **Internet Users:** In 2019, 148.3 million travel bookings were completed online. Most online travel planners are somewhat or extremely satisfied with their experiences in using the

Internet to plan their trips. The primary tools for travel planning are online travel agency websites, search engines, company websites and destination websites. Airline tickets, overnight

lodging accommodations, and car rentals are the dominant travel products and services purchased online by travel planners.

Visitors to destination websites may choose to not make a physical visit to the site, but instead seek information about the story for various purposes. An undervalued and under-emphasized audience type, those who hit history-related websites can be the best repeat customers. They seek various types of multi-media experiences and can direct others to these opportunities.

The father of modern interpretation, Freeman Tilden, suggested six interpretive principles necessary to effectively develop and deliver information to the public:

- The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.
- Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
- Information does not equal interpretation, but all interpretation contains information.
- Interpretation is an art which combines many arts regardless of subject material. Any art is to some degree teachable.
- Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part.
- Interpretation for children must be designed specifically for children, and not simply a dilution of programs and information for adults.

The Fundamentals of Active Engagement at Three Forts

The combined outcome of journey mapping, touchpoints, and transmedia storytelling process is to reward visitors with the opportunity to become active participants in their journey.

Wayfinding: Visitors will be provided with a clear, easily followed guide to experience the Three Forts sites and Interpretive Center. This guide will be available both at the site, at contiguous venues, hotels, at the Convention Center, in downtown businesses, at other interpretive facilities in Erie, and online.

Planning: Visitors will have the opportunity to engage a variety of touchpoints online to plan for their visit to Three Forts.

Interpretation: Interpretation will be based on scholarship and follow the themes as proposed in the interpretive plan.

Interpretive Media: Interpretive media will be diverse and engage multiple audiences on multiple levels, extending beyond the site to online venues, including individuals who are handicapped (ADA), or where English is a second language. They will also receive current information about programs and activities at the site.

Points of View: Visitors will be able to engage interpretive media from multiple perspectives, including gender and ethnicity.

Memorable: Visitors will leave with an understanding of the significance of Erie's historic past, and why this was an important place. They will also have a clear understanding of the site's interpretive themes.

Quality: Visitors will receive high-quality wayfinding and interpretive materials within all areas of engagement.

Commemoration: Visitors will have the opportunity to contemplate the meaning of this place and the people whose lives were touched by western Pennsylvania's changing environment.

Input: Visitors will have the opportunity to give their opinion about the site's interpretive programming and their overall experience.

This may go without saying but when planning the visitor experience it is important to remember that one of the first orders of business for historic sites and museums is to meet a guest's essential needs, such as food and water sources, restrooms, and feeling safe. The visitor wants to feel welcome, comfortable, and clear about how they should interact with the site. Any public facilities that are open must be well-maintained, sanitary, and safe.

"Interpretation is a communication process, designed to reveal meanings and relationships of our cultural and natural heritage, through involvement with objects, artifacts, landscapes, and sites." —Interpretation Canada

INTERPRETATION AT THREE FORTS

Every culture looks to history to establish precedents. Thus, interpreting the past is an essential component of the visitor experience at historic sites and history-related interpretive centers. To communicate effectively, interpretation must not only provoke, relate, and reveal important information, it must also produce a deeper connection between the world as it once existed and the world we live in today.

History, all history, is the story of change over time. Interpretation offers fundamental insight into what makes that history, that place, that person, that object, that mood, so important that people want to learn about it, touch it, feel an emotional connection to it, and, if all possible, experience it. Successful interpretation not only spurs imagination by giving voice or insight into the past but is also an opportunity to leave a lasting impression and influence future behavior.

■ TYPES OF INTERPRETIVE MEDIA AND ENGAGEMENT AT THREE FORTS

Transmedia storytelling is told through various kinds of media and communication platforms. It is not based on individual characters or specific plots but rather complex worlds that have the capability to support and maintain multiple interrelated characters and their stories. In essence, history is a story based on multiple characters, movements, locations, and events that play out over a specific time period. The convergence of transmedia storytelling and the

Interpretive Tools and the Visitor Experience

Visitors, bringing their own diverse backgrounds and understandings, will experience Three Forts in a variety of ways. It is important to develop a strategic set of interpretive tools that can reach the broadest range of audiences as well as those who choose to "dig deeper" into Erie's historic past.

When investing in interpretive media it is important to be cognizant of every touchpoint as defined in the journey map, always remembering that how a story is told is as important as the story itself, especially given the sophistication of today's visitor. Each of the exhibits on campus must be:

Engaging: provoke an emotional response

Informative: the content must be useful

Accessible: not limited to pre-defined audiences

Memorable: must leave an impression

Relevant: essential to pertinent to people's everyday lives

Challenging: compel the visitor to interact with the content

Meaningful: contribute to the cultural conversation

historic past is an opportunity to combine multiple media and communication platforms to create avenues for information and participation by visitors.



Digital displays can be targeted, offer more content, and updated.

Static Exhibits—Interior and exterior static exhibits, whether permanent or travelling, can produce an excellent, self-directed experience for all audience types. They can convey an abundance of information, can be low-maintenance, and have the capability to replace more expensive human interpreters. Static exhibits can also be interactive, adding a supplement to passive displays to create an exciting pathway to learning.

Digital Displays—Digital displays are a compromise between the static exhibit panel and the interactive monitor. They can convey information that changes based on several factors, such as time, a particular visitor demographic, or a rotating collection. They can also be continually updated at relatively little cost.

Interactive Exhibits—Museums and historic sites are increasingly turning to interactive exhibits to heighten audience engagement and participation. These exhibits can be used within static exhibits, as stand-alone assets, or on a mobile device. The interaction gives both the visitor and the site flexibility.

Exterior Wayside Panels—Exhibits can be produced for outdoor experiences in the form of interpretive



Example of a wayside already in Erie

wayside panels. Located at specific places on the campus, these panels can direct, inform, and educate audiences who want to fully experience the visual and environmental elements of the site. At Three Forts, wayside interpretive panels expand the opportunity to engage visitors along the greenway, or at places where low-impact media is needed in order not to overwhelm the visual impact of the site.

Living History—First-person demonstrators are one of the most effective learning experiences for visitors. They can involve local actors or students or period reenactors who specialize in representing camp, garrison, or life inside a frontier fortification, or as a member of an Indian village.

Dramatic Performance—Combining history and the arts is becoming more commonplace today than it has been in the past. Theater performances based on historic or historical events can attract audiences who seek both entertainment and information. These can, much like living history, also be participatory.



Recreating environments is the foundation of a quality immersive exhibit

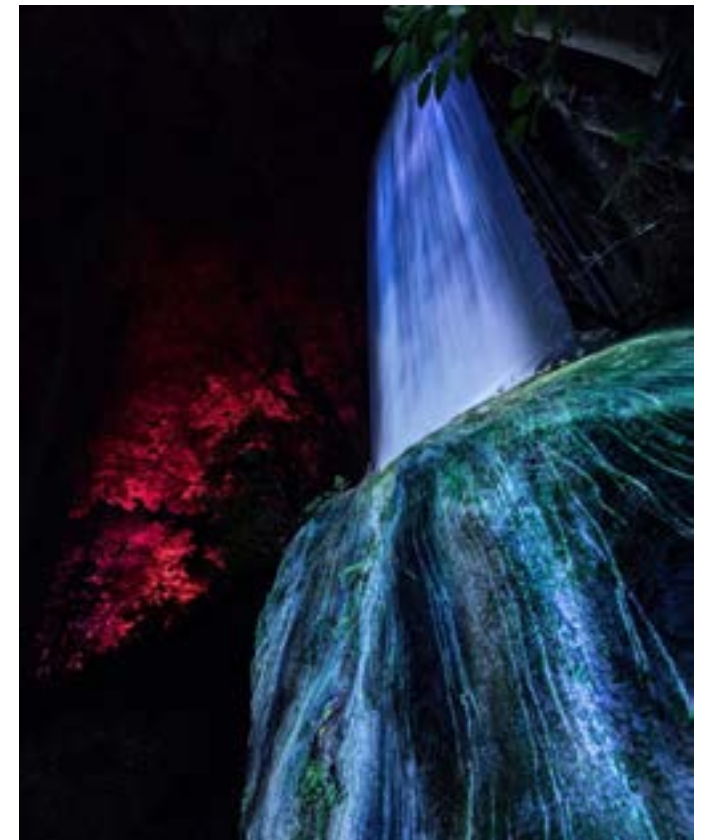
Immersive Exhibits—The term “immersive” means a space where the surroundings feel real, intimate, and are happening within the moment. While an immersive exhibit may be well intentioned, the visitor will not be convinced the event is “real” unless they perceive the experience as authentic.

There are various types of immersive exhibits and immersive environments that incorporate digital technology within physical gallery spaces to cater to younger, more digitally-oriented generations. With tools like Virtual Reality headsets, immersive screens, projection domes, and

holograms installations, there is an opportunity to tell a fuller and clearer story than in the past.

■ **MOBILE TECHNOLOGY AND THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE**

As stated above, technology is continuously reshaping the museum experience. Institutions can deliver



Immersive exhibits seek to recreate real or experiential encounters or events that impact the visitor emotionally through light, sound, visuals, smells, changing temperatures, or all of the above. They can be employed in any interior or exterior environment

engaging experiences that were not possible before. Virtual tours, mobile first websites, mobile apps, video, e-commerce, gamification and much more are possible with our mobile phones.

Applying this technology in various ways for museum and historic sites can offer interactive and immersive experiences that provide both online and offline opportunities to engage visitors. These experiences can build relationships and ongoing support for museums, interpretive centers, historic sites, and other non-profit businesses. Opportunities include:

Digitally Led In-Person Experiences—Unlike live-streamed video or podcasts, both of which are consumed remotely, immersive digital experiences

take place within museum settings.

Social Media—The use of social media outlets, like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Foursquare (location), YouTube (video sharing), and Flickr (photo sharing) have added a new and exciting layer of information and interpretation to historic sites. These media types can attract audiences that would be considered non-traditional, such as those under the age of 25 who visit historic sites in relatively few numbers. They do, however, enjoy making their observations, opinions, and criticisms known to the world through social media outlets.

Live Streaming from the Three Forts Interpretive Center—Perhaps the simplest way of providing a digital experience within a facility is to live stream from the center. Various live streaming platforms exist, such as Facebook and Twitch. Among the most popular, however, is YouTube which supports both live streams and pre-recorded video content.

Podcasting—Podcasts offer a way for visitors to access a wide variety of information about the site without visiting the campus. Podcasts are digital media files that can be accessed through the Internet. They can be easily recorded and quickly uploaded. Events like a symposium or audio tours can expose audiences to information and interpretation via their computer, smart phone, or other digital media players.

Three Forts Website—Websites are now the “front door” for almost every business. The overall design of the Three Forts website is central to the visitor experiences and extremely important in creating a substantial first impression for potential and ongoing visitors to both the website and the Three Forts campus. Because it is most often the first thing they

engage as part of their visitor experience, websites should be easy to navigate and deliver impactful content. Put yourself in your visitors’ shoes when you design your website:

- Let them know that they’re at the right place.
- Help them make sense of the information on your website so they can find what they’re looking for.
- Show them options while presenting information in a way that aids their decision-making process.
- Let them know what actions they need to take.

By incorporating the following tips, you can improve the usability of the website and create a more memorable visitor experience.

- **Make an emotional connection with visitors**—Most museum websites provide general information about the mission, location, operations, background history, exhibits and events, educational programming, and a way to contact the facility. The majority of visitors search the site to satisfy one or more of these specific needs. Subconsciously, however, they want to also make an emotional connection between themselves and the resource.
- **Make sure the theme or topic of your website is clear**—One cannot assume that the content the website provides is easily understood by visitors. Thus, it is important to make sure the information delivered is based on common themes or topics. It must also be easily accessible and allow visitors to navigate the site unobstructed by excessive content.

- **Keep distractions to a minimum**—Since the objective is to provide information and content based on themes or topics, it is important to minimize and limit the amount of scrolling and links on each page. Keeping the length of each page manageable, and sidebars and page surfing to a minimum will allow the visitor to focus their attention on the emotionally impactful content.
- **Ensure content is easy to read**—Long, complex pages can be overwhelming to website visitors. Avoid jargon, and break up your content using subheadings, bullet points, and lists. This makes the information easier to digest, and helps visitors identify important concepts and themes. Font size, color, spacing, and contrast can help to improve the appearance and readability of your pages.
- **Responsiveness**—The website should be based on the mobile first concept that allows the same information made fast and readily available across all desktop and mobile devices.
- **Keep forms simple**—All forms should be kept as clean as possible. Remove any unnecessary fields or criteria. Long, complicated forms can be detrimental to the visitor experience.
- **Make it easy for visitors to contact you**—Make it as easy as possible for visitors to get in contact with you. The contact information should be clearly visible on every page. Buried or hidden contact information sends a message to visitors that you don’t want to be bothered with their inquiry. When you do receive a message or request, make every

effort to respond as quickly as possible.

- **SEO and analytics**—A great website with no visitors is just a waste. SEO (Search Engine Optimization) will help drive traffic to your site. Having relevant site content will connect you with new visitors. You want to be recognized by Google as an appropriate match and include your site URL within the first page (ideally) of the search results. Incorporating tracking and site analytics programs will give insight into what’s really trending on your website, from traffic metrics to keyword searches.

Mobile Apps

Mobile apps are not the equivalent of mobile websites. They are much more robust and engaging due to the nature of the content and features. Engagement is the key to creating more opportunities for more frequent visits and sharing of the content via

Recommendation: Mobile-First Website for Three Forts

Mobile-First websites are currently the top criteria that Google uses to track websites in 2021. This type of website is built with a mobile experience first and ensures you can rank higher in searches within search engine results. Most websites today are built Desktop first and are only mobile responsive.



email, text, or social media. This engagement means greater opportunity for the user to become visitors and donors for Three Forts.

Mobile apps also provide data that give more insight to the user's habits and interests. These analytics can be captured from the engagement and used to understand the visitor intent and interest. Habits, individual user spending, and both sharing/comments are a few of the vital stats that can be captured with a mobile app.

SEO is also a vital benefit of a PWA (Progressive Web App) mobile app because the content is retrievable by Google bots for search indexing in search results.

Some of the significant features of a mobile app include: *events/calendaring, chat walls, video, e-commerce, photo gallery, rewards & loyalty programs, social sharing, push notifications, news ticker, blog, one click call & directions, booking / reservations, online reputation and reviews.*

Push Notifications

Push notifications enable the organization to stay in touch with prospective visitors and users both before, during, and after they are engaged with the organization, museum, virtual tour or business.

This level of communication delivers a more personal approach to provide up-to-date tips, information, and discounts/special offers as well as value content to keep the customer engaged.

Push notifications also create opportunities to engage the user while they are touring the site to provide unique content delivery that enhances the user experience. Content delivery in real time or scheduled ahead of time is possible with this form of communication.

For the Three Forts Campus

Virtual Walk / Driving Tours—Using the mobile app, and GEO Targeting/GEO Fencing, you can create walking tours for the campus that encourage the user to take a specific path where they can consume content when they enter that specific location area. This could include content delivered as text, video, photos, special offers and much more. Gamification is also possible on these tours and are often extremely beneficial to create user engagement at a higher level.

QR Codes—Making a comeback in recent, QR codes can expand interpretive materials beyond labeling or panels. Connected to a digital archive, they can provide more narrative, images, audio and video, multi-language, and wayfinding opportunities using a handheld device. Because they can be web-based and not a proprietary app the materials can be continually updated using a conventional website or web-database.

Augmented Reality (AR)—A good AR experience can be an engaging way of presenting information. The Three Forts Interpretive Center can deliver content in a way that gives visitors the opportunity to engage and/or participate in the storytelling process using video, text, 3D images, and more.

AR can also add more to the visitor experience by layering relevant augmentations over artifacts or props to present richer, more detailed access. In addition, Three Forts can use this technology to provide context. They can place objects in different scenes, peeling back layers and telling their stories from a new perspective.

Benefits of AR Apps

- Create visual tour guides that are adaptable, updatable and viewable on mobile devices.
- Resurrect nonexistent objects, structures, or landscapes, such as Erie's changing physical or natural environment during the various periods of interpretation so that visitors can immerse themselves in virtual worlds.
- Turn education into entertainment through interactive AR gaming experiences for young visitors.
- Create compelling storylines that can be taken outside the interpretive center, or re-created differently during the visits, so the experience never feels repetitive.

Publications—Printed materials are one of the most cost effective ways to promote and educate

audiences on the Three Forts campus resources. These materials are produced in many shapes, sizes, and forms.

- **Brochures**—a fold out interpretive piece that can be a combination of background information with a map of the estate and directions on how to access the site.
- **Rack Cards**—typically a two sided brochure made available at welcome centers, contiguous sites, businesses, tourism offices, motels, etc. for background information and directions to the site.
- **Guidebooks**—a comprehensive booklet that gives a detailed understanding of the events surrounding the historic events, complete with maps and images, to offer audiences more than just an overview of the resource.
- **Maps**—like a brochure, the map drives the



Augmented reality can take many forms. In the current COVID climate, a dedicated mobile app can add to the visitor experience by enhancing the existing static content using a hand-held device.



Video content in conjunction with an immersive environment for small areas can be emotionally impactful

interpretation through a timeline of events and activities. This map can also be an accompaniment to a brochure or guidebook but is also meant as a stand-alone piece.

Documentary and Promotional Films

Films and videos have an emotional appeal few physical venues can compare to. If well done, they can convey a mood, recreate a setting, or interpret a relationship. They can be stand-alone or part of an immersive exhibit or environment.

Film and video projects, however, can be more

expensive to produce than other media content. However, micro versions of this media type can also be used on the Three Forts website, or by uploading to social media outlets such as YouTube or Vimeo. Smartphones are making content development simpler to create because of their size, low cost (compared to cameras), and high production value—they can shoot in 4K! Through podcasting, guest speakers, or demonstrators, this content can be marketed as educational or informational programs that can then be broadcast over the website or on a mobile device.

INTERPRETIVE THEMES

An interpretive theme is the central concept or key idea of any interpretive experience, interpretive exhibit, or interpretive presentation. Not only do interpretive themes provide organizational structure and clarity of purpose for understanding the entire resource they also have a dramatic effect on all the individual parts of the visitor experience that make up the whole.

Interpretive themes function on two levels: primary themes and sub-themes. Primary interpretive themes personify the most important ideas, concepts, or state the inherent significance of the Three Forts story. They also define the core content and serve as a building block for the visitor experience. Sub-themes expound on the primary theme, are more focused in scope, and express one main idea. Together they give purpose and meaning to the storytelling process.

What do themes help us learn from the past?

This project presents an extraordinary opportunity to tell the story of how human cultures have changed and transformed the natural environment and surrounding landscapes of Erie, Pennsylvania, since the first indigenous peoples called the region home. Throughout most of human history societies have struggled with famine, poverty, and a lack of raw materials and energy. As the Three Forts background study demonstrates, in the Trans-Appalachian region of which Erie is a part, they led to disruptions in the form of disease, war, mass migration, and the introduction of a market economy that produced technological innovations as well as ways of reorganizing the landscape that had both deliberate and unintended consequences.

Mass industrialization harvested what seemed like a wealth of human, economic, and environmental resources to create what they thought was a world of certainty. However, as we have come to realize, abundance and stability were an illusion that have contributed to the social and environmental crises we live in today. In essence, in their journey to create a modern world in Erie they produced what was and continues to be unsustainable.

While exploring the Three Forts campus, visitors will also learn about the area's indigenous peoples and cultures, the arrival of the first Europeans and the relationships they forged with western Pennsylvania's Native world, the "taming of the wilderness" through westward expansion and settlement, examine the perception of "progress" that spurred innovation and built empires while transforming Erie's pre-industrial landscape, and how the East Bayfront community and those who called it home have witnessed centuries of change.

The following themes are the foundation for telling these stories:



An Iroquois village with agricultural fields.

PRIMARY THEME: *The Peoples of the Lake: The World of Trans-Appalachia's Indigenous Cultures*

Humans have lived along the shores of the Great Lakes and their surrounding hinterlands for more than 12,000 years. The first of these indigenous peoples left an indelible mark on the region's cultural landscape.

Sub-Theme: *Orenda: The Power of Nature's Collective Energy*

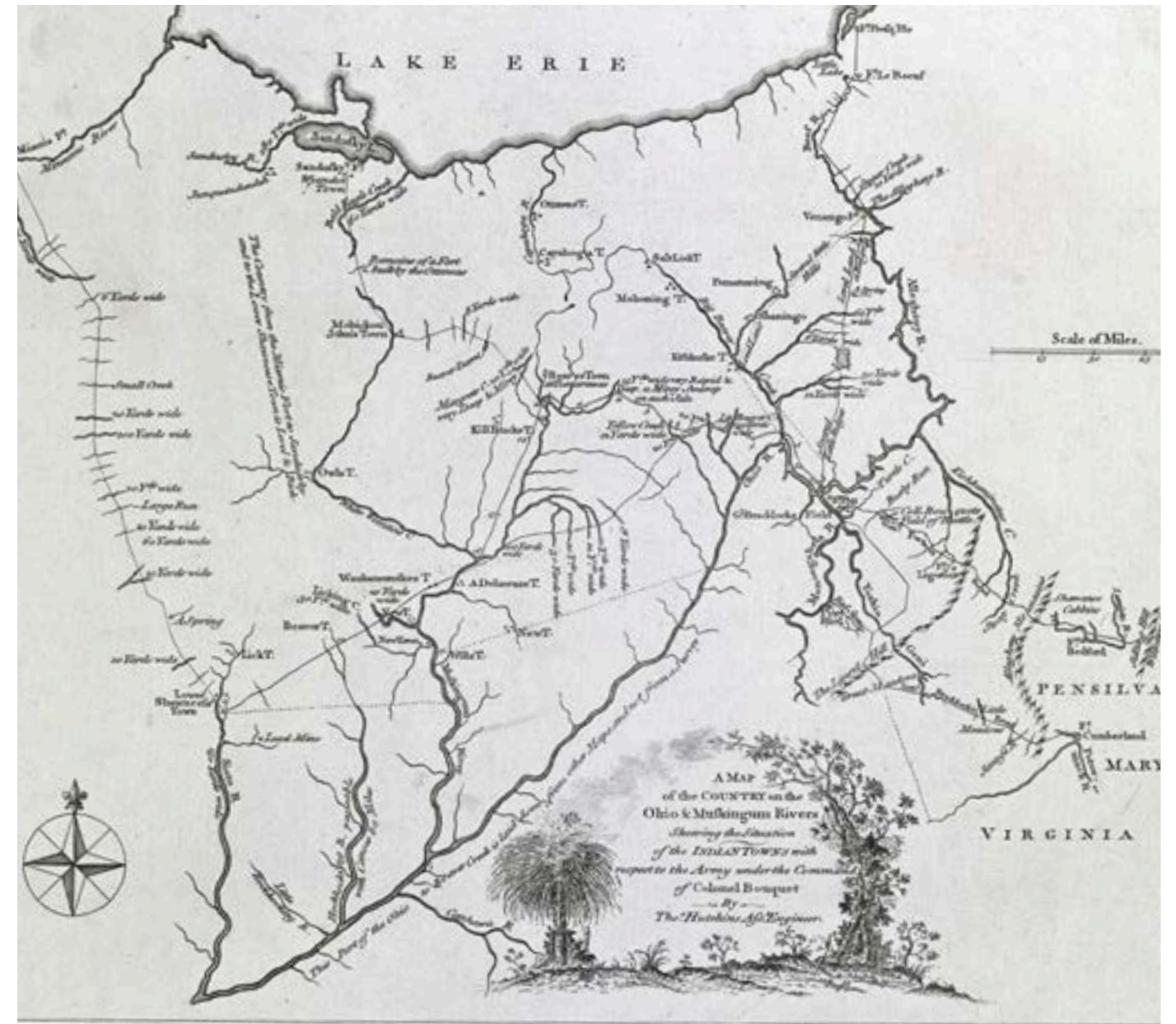
Orenda, as defined by the Haudenosaunee, is a collective power of nature's energies through the living energy of all natural objects, both animate and inanimate.

Sub-Theme: *Dekanawida's Dream and the Creation of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy*

Known as the Great Peacemaker, Dekanawida is credited with the vision of uniting the Haudenosaunee nations and bringing peace.

Sub-Theme: *The Erielhonan: The "Nation du Chat" and managing the forest*

From 1400 to the mid-1650s, the southern shore of Lake Erie was dominated by Iroquoian-related tribes. The largest to emerge in the central region during the period were the Erielhonan, or "Eriez" for short.



1750 Map of the Ohio Valley from Presque Isle to what is today the Indiana border

Sub-Theme: *The Three Sisters: The foundation of indigenous agriculture.*

"The Three Sisters," given to indigenous people by the Orenda, is a companion planting technique using corns, beans, and squash, that is often attributed Northeastern Woodland tribes, especially the nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

Sub-Theme: *Some keys to environmental stewardship and sustainable agriculture from our Native forefathers*

Indigenous peoples introduced sustainable agricultural and other elements of landscape management.

PRIMARY THEME: Contact and Conflict: The clash of colonial empires and the struggle for survival.

In the seventeenth century North America's upper northeast, including Pennsylvania, saw the first sustained contact between indigenous nations and Europeans. During this period relations were fluid – the Dutch, English, and French dealt with a diverse group of Native peoples in the area – while the main business was the “Indian trade.”

Sub-Theme: *The Deadly Specter of Disease and Native Resistance.*

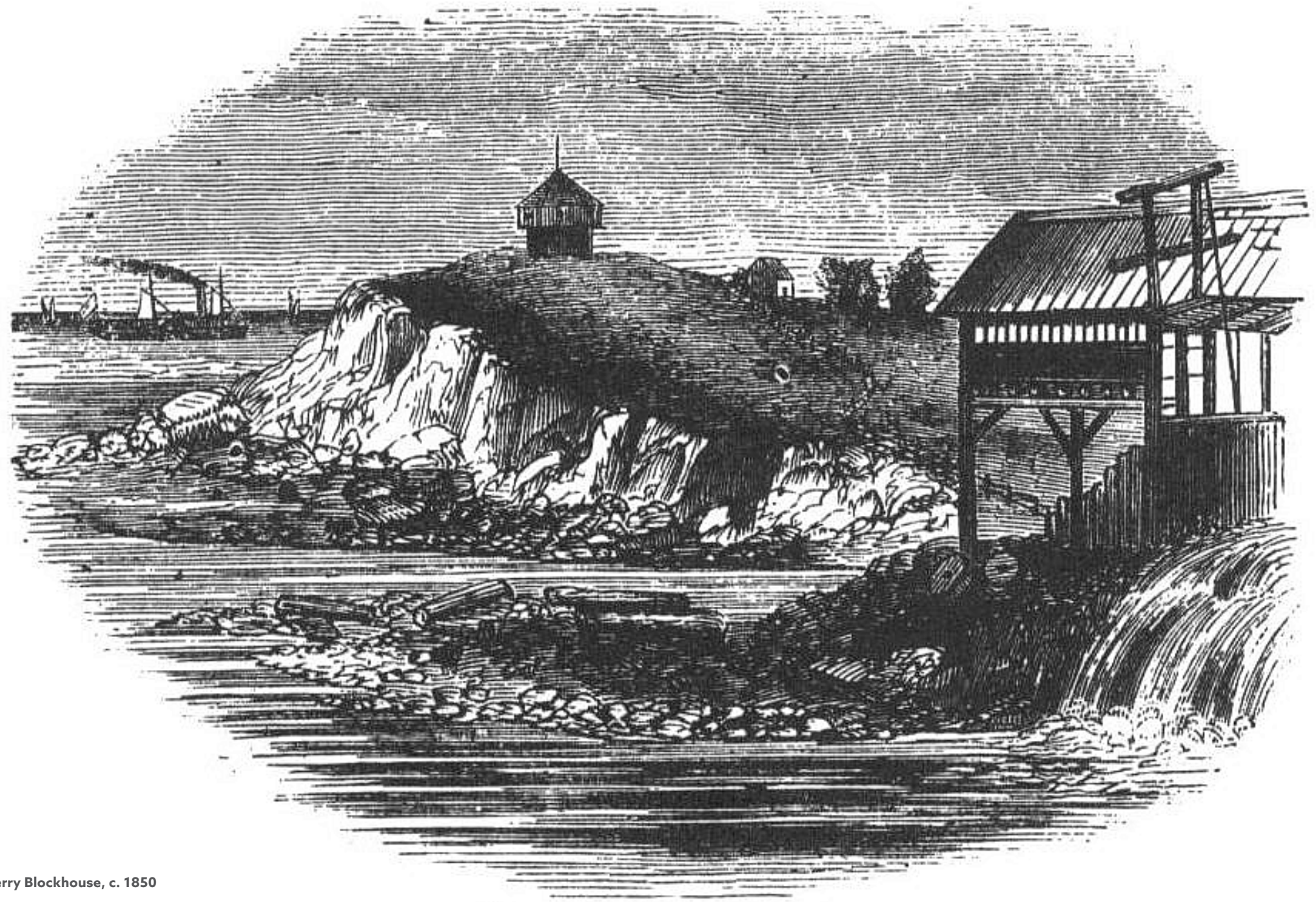
Disease was a destructive element as Native communities' vulnerability to epidemics was a direct result of the disruptions associated with war.

Sub-Theme: *The fur trade, the Beaver Wars, and the Ohio Country: The birth of “land and lake” commerce.*

Though traditional rivalries and competition for resources among indigenous tribes were heightened by the fur trade, the Beaver Wars were a seventeenth century struggle of attrition and involved the burning of villages and crops, leaving refugee Indian communities with no ability to subsist.

Sub-Theme: *The Wars for Empire and Presque Isle: Controlling the “Frontier.”*

In the 1750s, the English and French began a series of wars for control of the entire region. The more flexible system of the earlier period was replaced by a winner-take-all fight over fortifications, trade corridors, and alliances.



Perry Blockhouse, c. 1850

Sub-Theme: *A Land of Destiny: Erie's Origin Story*
The Triangle Purchase, Indian removal, and the Northwest Ordinance combined to open the western Pennsylvania coastal region to settlement.

Sub-Theme: *The Western Pennsylvania Roots of American Empire: Anthony Wayne, Tecumseh, and the War of 1812*

The fight for control of the Trans-Appalachian region and the Ohio Valley against the British and

the remaining Native allies saw the young American nation struggle for survival.

PRIMARY THEME: *Eclipsing the Orenda: The Effects of Westward Expansion in Trans-Appalachia*

As the strategic battle for control of the trans-Appalachian west deepened, another struggle emerged between the monied elite of the seaboard colonies and settlers who moving west.

Sub-Theme: *Neolin and Renewal: A Native Awakening and Rebirth*

A spiritual awakening took place during the 1760s and 70s led by Lenape leader, Neolin, who envisioned a renewal among Native tribes to end division and overcome their dependence on European trade and power.

Sub-Theme: *Erie's First Industries: Exploiting natural resources through the salt and timber trade*

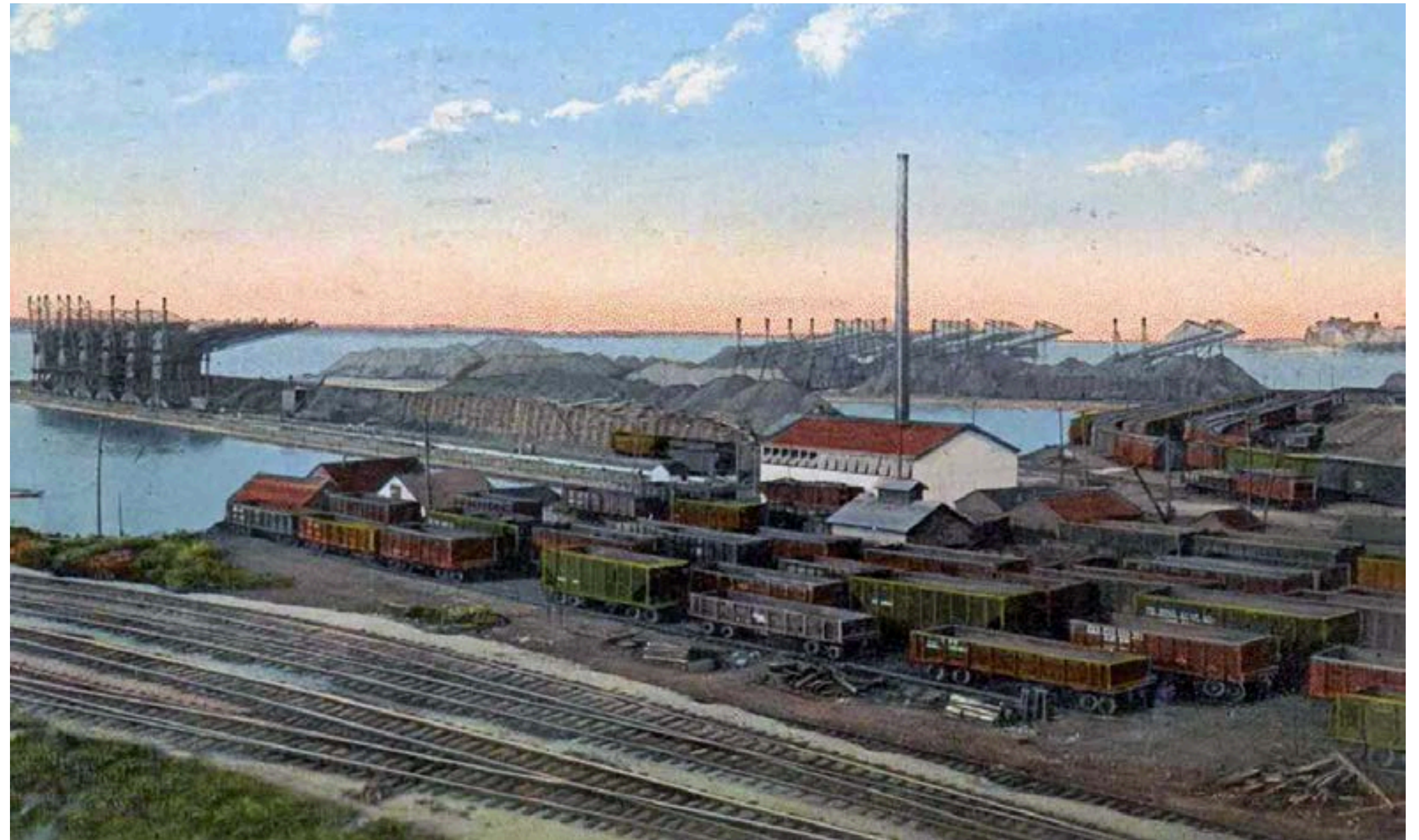
The salt trade and cottage industries, like lumber mills and brickmaking, were the first industries traded outside Eire. The lake quickly became an avenue of transportation linking tones along the shore both east and west.

Sub-Theme: *Reinventing "Wilderness:" Western Pennsylvania as the "best poor man's country."*

Prior to the eighteenth century, the "wilderness," places where Native peoples lived, had little or nothing to offer "civilized men and women." As settlement moved west, however, it was redefined as somewhere that the individual and society could be remade.

Sub-Theme: *Overcoming Landscape: Erie's Artificial River and the Extension Canal*

The first major efforts to remake landscape for purposes of economy were canal systems, or artificial rivers to move people and goods more easily across vast distances.



PRIMARY THEME: *Unsustainable Development: The remaking of Erie's pre-industrial landscape.*

Industrialization caused “the greatest revolution in outlook that has ever taken place,” leading communities like Erie to believe that there was an abundance of resources to sustain development in perpetuity.

Sub-Theme: *Extending the Shore: The New Bay-front as Erie's Front Door*

With the arrival of the railroad in the 1860s, Erie created docks and wharfs on the east side by moving rock and fill that extended the shoreline into the bay to accommodate lake and land traffic.

Sub-Theme: *Industrial Technology and the Railroad: The Geographic Separation of Production and Consumption*

The railroad was the centerpiece of a technological and cultural revolution that connected urban centers with rural resources.

Sub-Theme: *Paper, Plastic, and Prosperity: Industry, Agri-Business, and the effects on Lake Erie*

What began as brick, carriage and steam works, engines, organs, mills, and foundries, soon gave way to major industries, such as Hammermill Paper, General Electric, and eventually plastics.

Sub-Theme: *Generating Wealth: The Boom and Bust Affluence of Erie's Industrial Development*

Large-scale development, like railroads, in turn, produced a vast economic expansion. Those owning, financing, and managing the expansion process, like the Tracy, Scott, and Behrend families, made fortunes above anything ever seen in the US before.



Anchor docks below Front Street, c. 1910

Sub-Theme: *Innovation and the Crisis of Unintended Consequences*

Large-scale manufacturing at places like Hammermill and the plastics industry led, in part, to the environmental degradation of Lake Erie. On the

Three Forts campus, Mill Creek and Garrison Run, once flowing tributaries, became “ghost streams,” a condition meant to control deadly flooding but instead created stagnant pools of waste.

PRIMARY THEME: *New Faces/New Americans: The power of Erie's immigrant communities*

For more than two centuries, Erie has been a magnet for immigrant populations and refugees from all over the world who came seeking opportunity and prosperity.

Sub-Theme: *Establishing Erie's East Bayfront neighborhood*

For over 225 years, the East Bayfront, Erie's first sustained settlement community, has attracted a multiplicity of new arrivals who have brought with them their own cultural templates. That trend continues today.

Sub-Theme: *A Company Town: Lawrence Park and Erie's expanding suburban landscape*

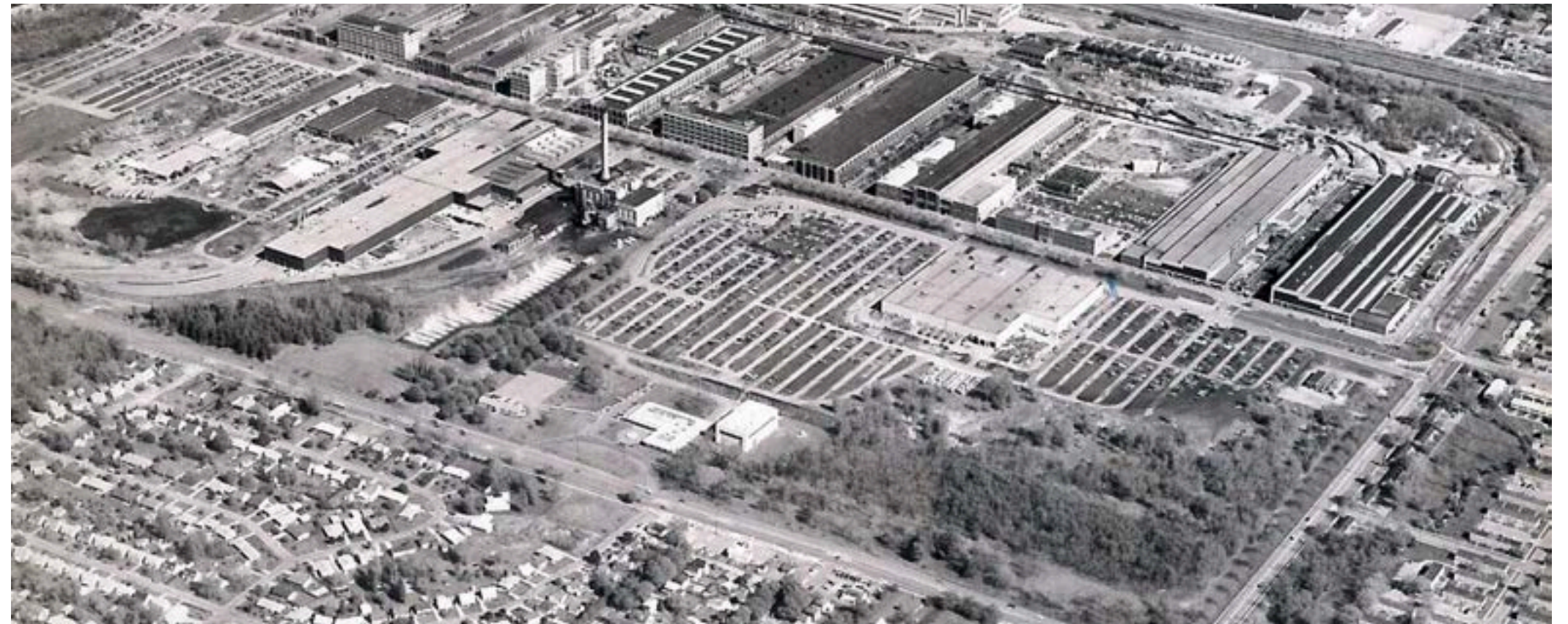
As Erie's industrial base grew so did the city's expanding suburban landscape, leading planners to create "park-like" neighborhoods as a contrast to the urban core and bayfront's factories, warehouses, and commercial docks.

Sub-Theme: *The Price of Victory: Erie's changing industrial landscape*

Following the unsustainable buildup during WWII that saw the influx of new capital and new industries, the post-war decline of commercial infrastructure and the core urban landscape in the 1960s left behind a city and a diverse population in static transition.

Sub-Theme: *Sustainability and the New Erie*

Three Forts offers an honest assessment and a place of discussion of Erie's historic past as a baseline for the city's sustainable development.



General Electric and Lawrence Park

Summary Recommendations

Begin the Visitor Experience process by:

- Creating a Journey Map
- Identifying on the Journey Map all the touchpoints associated with the organization where there is currently the potential for visitor engagement.
- Developing an online and physical visitor survey in collaboration with other historic sites or museums in the city to identify who is currently attracted to/planning a visiting/already in Erie.
- Identifying where specialty audiences are already visiting Erie
- Developing a website that introduces audiences to Three Forts
- Creating online content or programming through podcasting or digital exhibits

■ ENDNOTES

1 <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/erie-insurance-national-survey-shows-americans-are-eager-to-take-road-trips-in-2021-301261125.htmlw>

RECONSTRUCTING THE PAST

ERIE'S THREE FORTS

There are three main elements to the Master Plan: the rebuilding of the French and British forts; the Memorial Park on Garrison Hill, and the Interpretive Center. On one level, these venues represent an opportunity by the city to create a distinct and authentic destination to attract a national audience to Erie. This effort enriches Erie's rightful place as a member of the region's overall visitor experience associated with Native cultures, the French and Indian War, and the War of 1812 in western Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Michigan, and into Canada. On another level, they are place-based educational resources that present an opportunity to capture the public's imagination and play an informed roll in presenting the historic past as a platform for renewal and regeneration of Erie's underutilized east side.

WEST CAMPUS—PREPARING WALLACE STREET PARK

The West Campus is the site of the French and British forts and the Native American interpretive zone. Currently, Ted Amendola Memorial field and a playground are in Wallace Street Park. There are necessary changes to the landscape and streetscape to create a "clean" canvas and to enhance the overall visitor experience and interpretive reach of the site. Major initial steps include:

- *Removal of the baseball field and playground*
- *Removal of Wallace Street from the current south park entrance to Front Street*



The heart of the Three Forts plan for Wallace Street Park and Ted Amendola Memorial Field is to: 1) rebuild the French fort and elements of the French Village in the west playground; 2) construct a Native American interpretive area in the center of the park with a longhouse, amphitheater, and a recreation of Mill Creek; 3) and reconstruct the British blockhouse and elements of the outer works at Ted Amendola Memorial Field.

- Straighten Front Street from Wallace to the Interpretive Center parking lot on the east side of the building
- Repaving and marking of Front Street at pedestrian crossings

Additional visitor and landscaping enhancements include:

- Extending the 6' greenway on the north side of Front Street, around the front of the Interpretive Center and on to the ring road behind the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home
- Adding an elevated 8' promenade along the west and the south perimeters
- A pergola at the promenade nexus in the southwest corner
- Development of a Vegetation Master Plan for the Three Forts campus

To make the site more secure we recommend:

- Installing a 7-foot security fence around the perimeter of Wallace Street Park to deter after-hours visitors
- Gated entrance at Front Street and at the southeast corner of the property on E. 2nd Street
- Gated entrance at Wallace Street (for maintenance purposes only)

■ THREE FORTS VEGETATION PLAN

The purpose of a Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) for the Three Forts campus is to provide guidelines for interpretive landscape improvements, as well as maintenance and operations standards. The VMP can be used in a variety of ways and for multiple purposes. It can be used in its entirety for campus-wide planning efforts, used in parts for smaller enhancement and interpretive projects, or read for broad information and ideas. A series of references, maps, and appendices provide

Best Management Practices and graphical aides to enhance the overall scope and understanding of the VMP.

Vegetation Management Plan Goals

- Preserve and enhance a sense of regional identity on the Three Forts campus
- Take advantage of the campus areas variety of views: water, interior landscapes, bayfront, and bluffs
- Promote the indigenous character of the region, especially along the Erie shoreline
- Restore native forest stands to enhance natural forest processes
- Create interpretive areas that identify species of trees, shrubs, and grasses
- Conserve soil quality
- Protect and enhance wildlife habitat
- Buffer land uses
- Ensure public safety

Recreating Forest

Understanding how Erie's landscape has changed over the centuries is a major interpretive theme. An important element of that transformation is habitat. Creating areas on the campus where visitors can experience and learn more about Erie's pre-settlement environment can be achieved through the establishment of interpretive planting zones for native grasses, trees, wildflowers, and other vegetation.

Within this interpretive context there is the opportunity to create what is known as a "tiny forest," a dense fast-growing native woodland. Known as the 'Miyawaki method,' this approach selects species that mimic the old forest that includes the dense planting of a large number of species.



Little Bluestem



Switchgrass



Allegheny Forest pine stand



Bayberry

Indigenous Trees, Shrubs, and Grasses in Erie County

Understory Trees

Allegheny
Serviceberry
Chokeberry
Eastern Redbud
Flowering Dogwood
Pawpaw

Large Trees

Black Birch
Black Cherry
Black Oak
Eastern White Pine
Hackberry
Red Maple
Red Oak
Shagbark Hickory
Tupelo

Grasses

Big Bluestem
Blue-eyed Grass
Bottlebrush Grass
Indiangrass
Little Bluestem
Pennsylvania Sedge
Riverbank Wildrye
Switchgrass
Wild Rye
Wool Grass

Shrubs

American Bladdernut
Bayberry
Buttonbush
Carolina Rose
Common Elderberry
Deerberry
Gray Dogwood
Lowbush Blueberry
Meadowsweet
Ninebark

Purple-Flowering
Raspberry
Red-berried Elder
Rosebay
Shrubby St.
Johns-Wort
Silky Dogwood
Spicebush
Sweet Azalea

Three Forts Arboretum

An arboretum is a place that has intentionally preserved specific trees and shrubs for educational and scientific purposes. Currently, there are three accredited arboretums in Erie; Lake Erie Arboretum at Frontier Park; The Arboretum at Penn State Behrend; and the Erie Zoo and Botanical Gardens. At Three Forts, developing a distinct forest environment where the visitor experience includes immersion in a recreated natural habitat offers an array of interpretive and learning opportunities involving issues associated with biodiversity and sustainability.

Lake Erie Arboretum at Frontier Park and Keystone 10 Million Tree Partnership

The Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership is a collaborative effort of national, regional, state, and local agencies, conservation organizations, outdoors enthusiasts, businesses, and citizens committed to improving Pennsylvania's communities, economy, and ecology. The Partnership aims to facilitate the planting of 10 million new trees in priority landscapes in Pennsylvania by the end of 2025 through expansive and collaborative:

- Partnerships that strengthen and diversify;
- Assistance that builds capacity and ability; and
- Inspiration to preserve and protect.

In Erie, the local Keystone partner is the Lake Erie Arboretum at Frontier Park. Through their RELEAF Program, they want to make a direct response to climate change and a chance beautify the community spaces *outside of Frontier Park*. The Three Forts project has an opportunity to partner with Frontier Park and the RELEAF program in supplying the campus with native trees.

The most basic level of accreditation requires achievement of the following standards:

- An arboretum plan documentation of some sort, such as an organizational plan, strategic plan, master plan, or other, that defines the purpose of the arboretum, its audience(s), the types of plants that are to be grown to achieve that purpose and serve those audiences, provisions for the maintenance and care of the plants, and provisions for the continuing operation of the organization through time with a clear succession plan.
- An arboretum organizational group of people or governing board or authority that is dedicated to the arboretum plan and its continuation beyond the efforts of a single individual. Such an organizational group can affirm fulfillment of standards and authorize participation as an accredited arboretum.
- An arboretum collection with a minimum number of 25 species, varieties or cultivars of trees or woody plants that have been planted and are growing in accordance with the arboretum plan. Plants in the arboretum collection must be labeled in some way as to identify them taxonomically, including scientific name and cultivar if applicable, and documented in some way so that information on their acquisition (source or origin, date of acquisition, etc.) is available for access.
- Arboretum staff or volunteers who ensure fulfillment of the arboretum plan and provide for the basic needs of the arboretum collection and functions of the arboretum.
- An arboretum public dimension that includes some level of public access, and at least one public event or educational program each year focused on trees or arboretum purposes (for example, an Arbor Day observance).

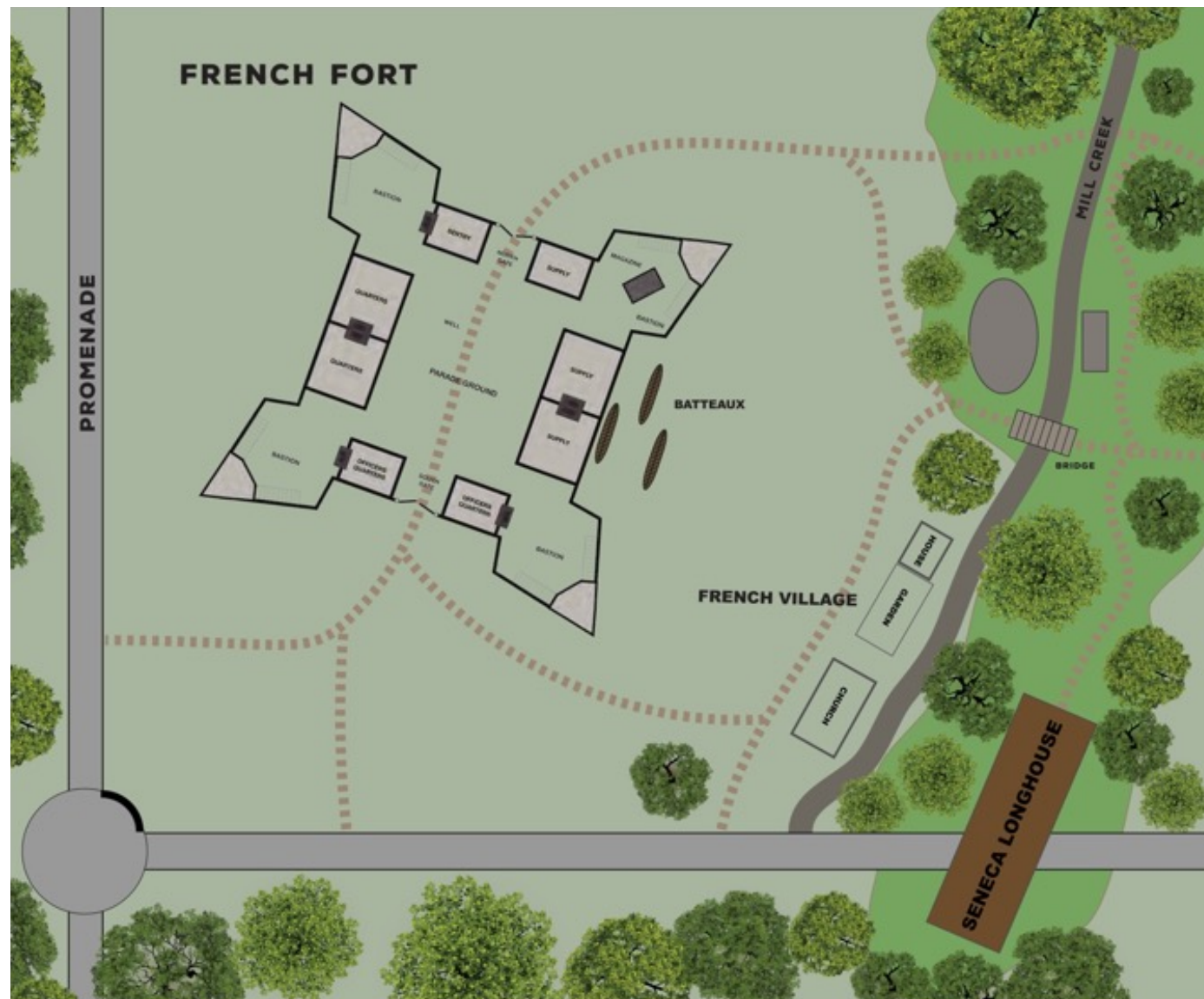
Two areas where tiny forests can be achieved in the West Campus are the Native American zone and along the perimeter of the promenade where dense plantings can act as a screen or buffer from the surrounding neighborhood. Sowing a combination of indigenous trees, shrubs, and grasses, the Three Forts Campus can achieve arboretum status.

Arbor Trail

The tree and understory screening employed around the west and south perimeter of the park is an opportunity to establish an Arbor Trail where visitors can experience an urban forest and learn more about indigenous trees, shrubs, and other foliage along with how these species have been affected over time by Erie's changing environment.



A mulched trail with indigenous flowers, trees, and other plantings, is an opportunity to combine recreational spaces with outdoor places.



The French fort at Presque Isle in the west playground at Wallace Street Park. Near the east curtain wall are batteaux, boats that carried men and supplies on Lake Erie and down the Allegheny River to the "forks of the Ohio."

FORT DE LA PRESQU'ILE

Fort de la Presqu'île, built by the French in 1753, was located approximately one hundred to two hundred yards southwest of the mouth of Mill Creek and at an elevation of thirty-five to fifty-feet above the Lake Erie shoreline. In siting Fort de la Presqu'île, it was also important to build in close proximity to drinking water. The French dug a well in the parade ground of the fort to have easy access to water for the garrison.

Rebuilding Fort de la Presqu'île

A centerpiece of the interpretation at Presque Isle is rebuilding the French fort at Wallace Street Park based on available primary source documentation and comparative study of similar facilities built by the French during the period. This re-creation will give visitors a stage to explore and learn about:

- *The Fort's design*
- *Construction techniques*

- *Garrison life for French soldiers and civilians*
- *The Fort Le Boeuf portage*
- *The supply depot*
- *Military armaments*
- *Watercraft*

Pièce-sur-Pièce Construction

The 120-foot by 120-foot fort was pièce-sur-pièce (log-on-log) construction, or squared logs stacked horizontally and joined at the corners by half lap notching (assemblage à mi-bois) to create the outer bastion and curtain walls. On one or more sides of the Chestnut logs were hewn flat with a broadaxe, or more finely finished with an adze as smooth thick planks. Only the gates were vertical log construction. This single stacked log design was unusual for the outer wall of a fort and was potentially unstable. Typical pièce-sur-pièce fort construction required two stacked log walls, an inner and outer, with compacted fill dirt in between the sections. However, the French compensated for the instability by using the back walls of interior lean-to structures - the barracks, supply, and officer's quarters - as the curtain, or the walls between



Rendering of a corner bastion firing platform. Handrails have been added as a feature for visitors experiencing the facility.

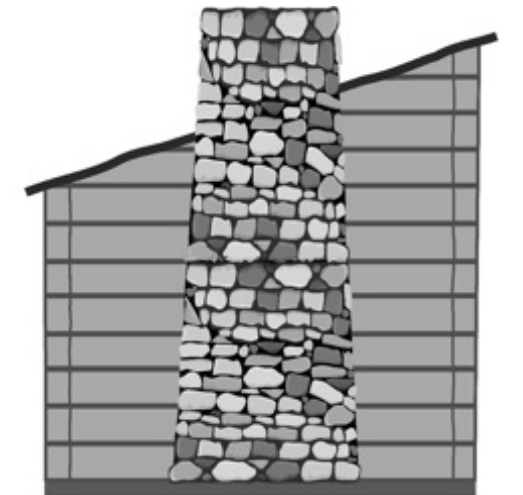
the corner bastions. It was reported that the garrison could hold up to fifty men. However, it was noted that in 1758 Fort de la Presqu'île had just "two officers and thirty-five men.

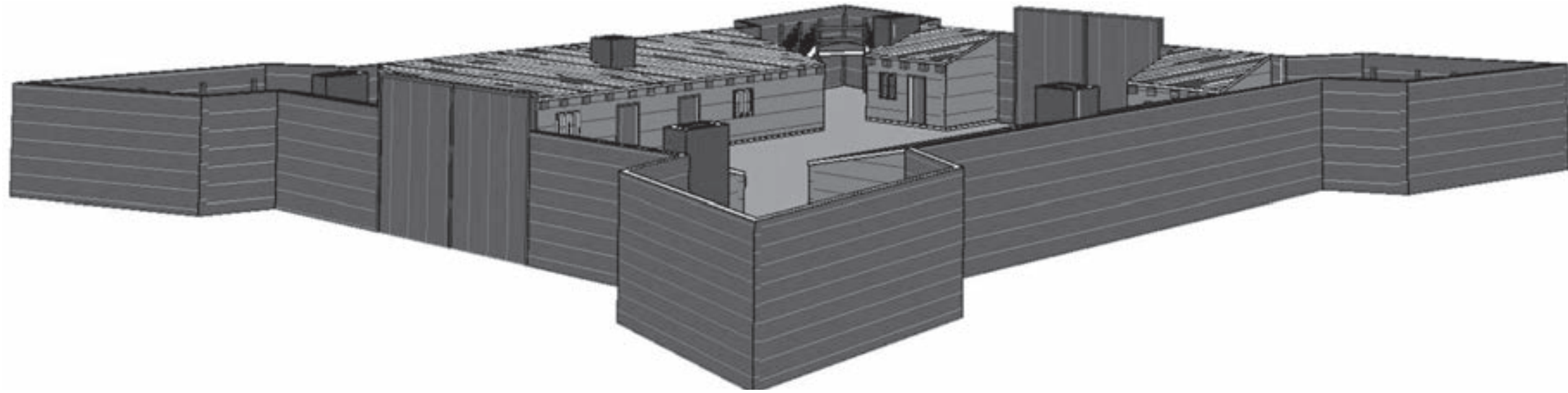
Bastions

Corner bastions gave the fort the ability to protect the curtain walls using enfilade fire. Inside the bastions were firing platforms that also helped to stabilize the outer walls. The French planned to use four-pounders on naval carriages on the platform. The platform also offered cover for supplies or materials stored underneath.

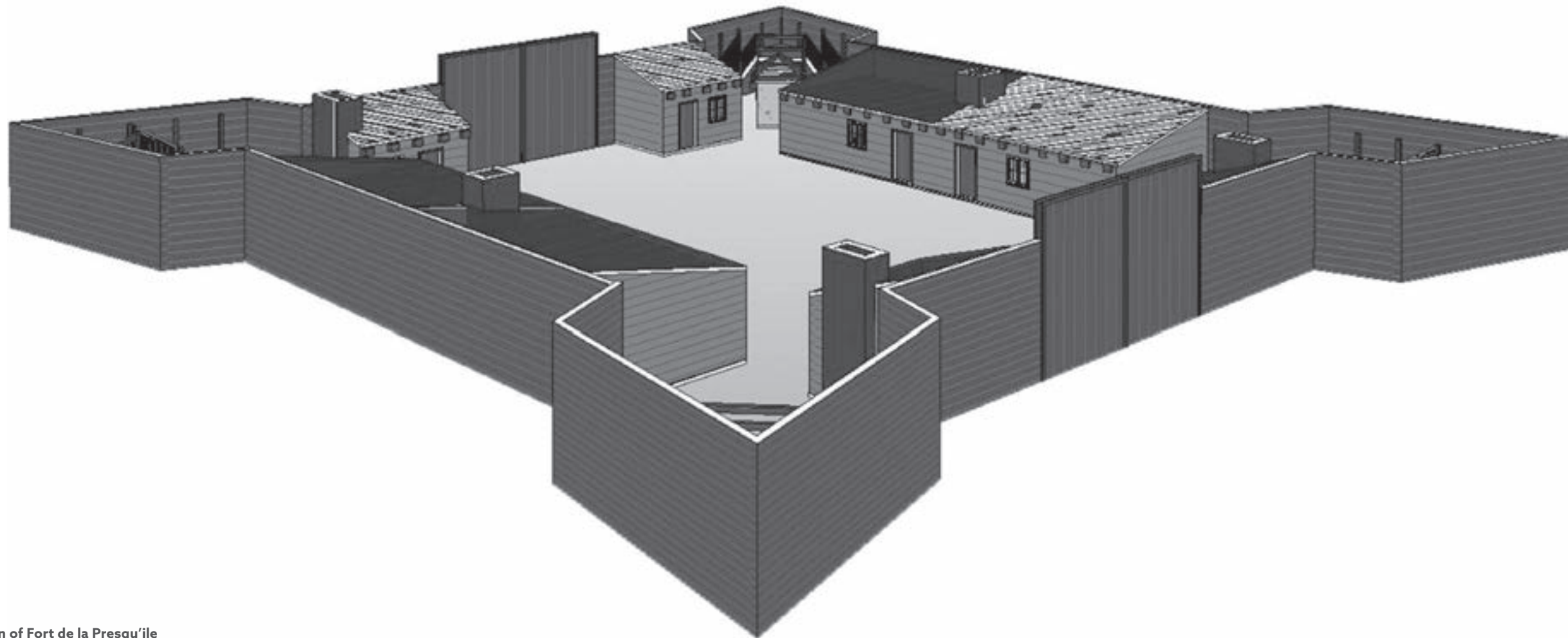


Officers' Quarters/Gate Cabins

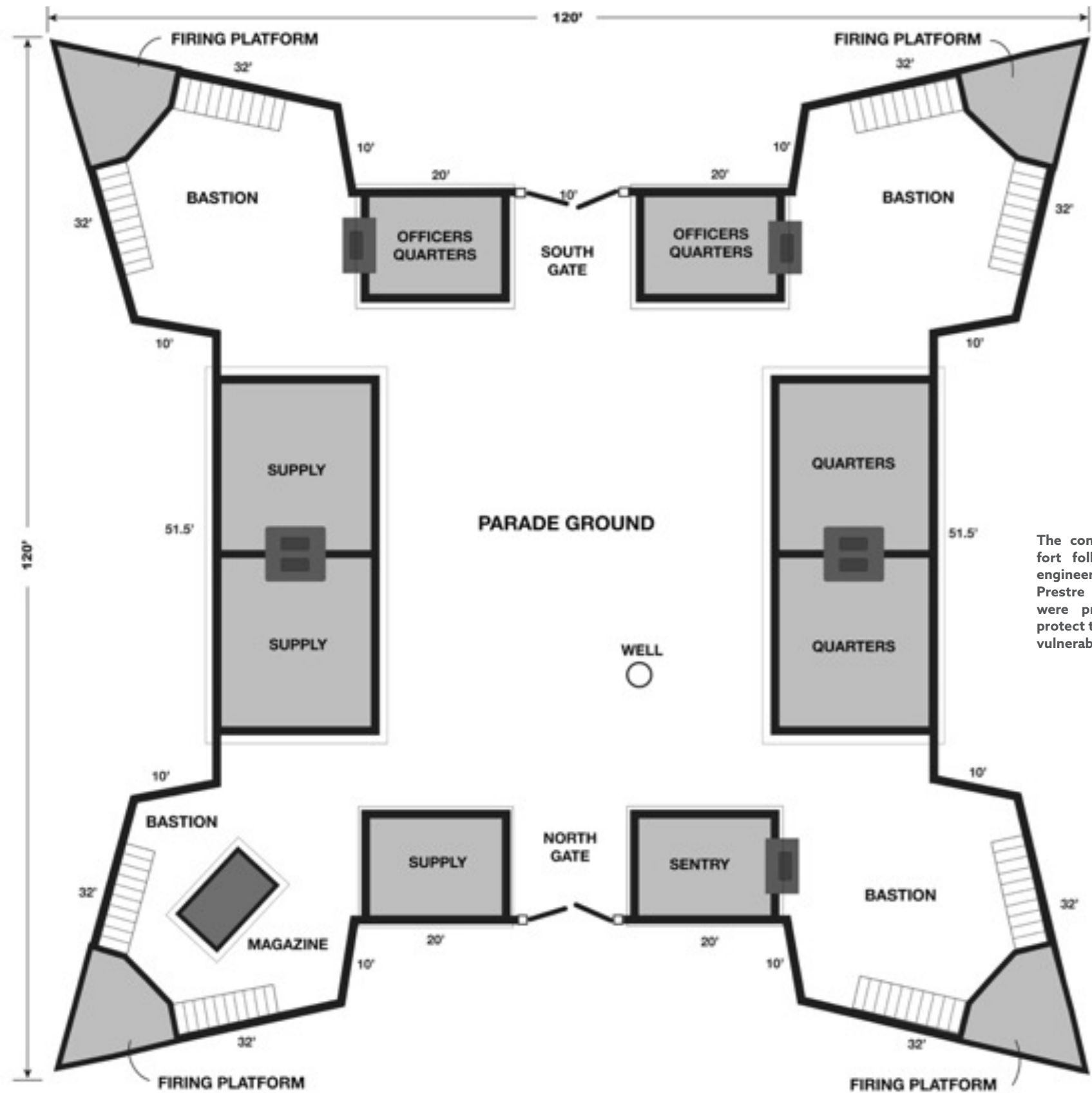




Southeast elevation of Fort de la Presqu'île



Southwest elevation of Fort de la Presqu'île



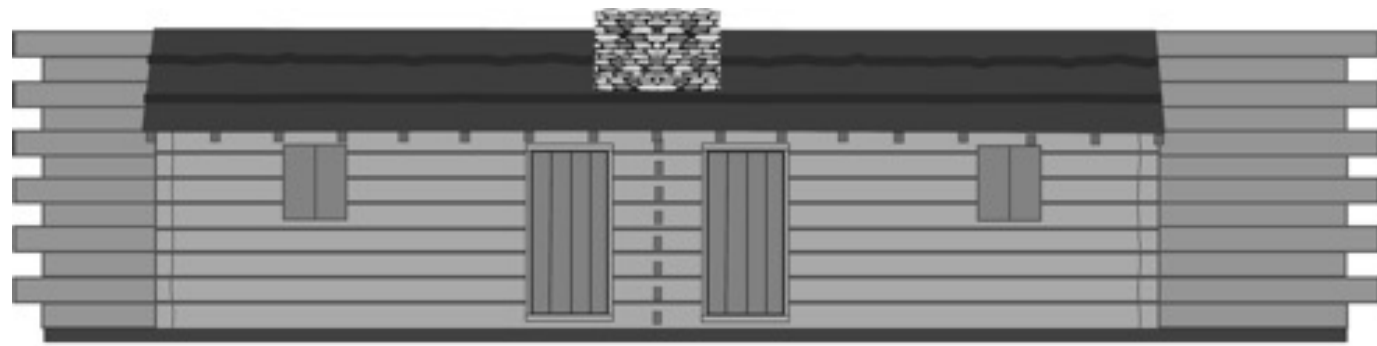
Officers' Quarters and Sentry Posts

There were several structures that comprised the supply and living quarters at Fort de la Presqu'île. By regulation, officers and soldiers were housed in separate rooms and often in separate buildings. The officers' quarters were located on the north and south sallyport curtains. These small, single-story lean-to structures were modest pièce-sur-pièce construction with wooden plank floors, a small hearth and chimney, and a split shingle roof. They were joined at the corners by grooved upright endlogs. They were joined at the corners by dovetail notching. Chinking and daubing between the logs consisted of a mixture of rock, soil, and clay.

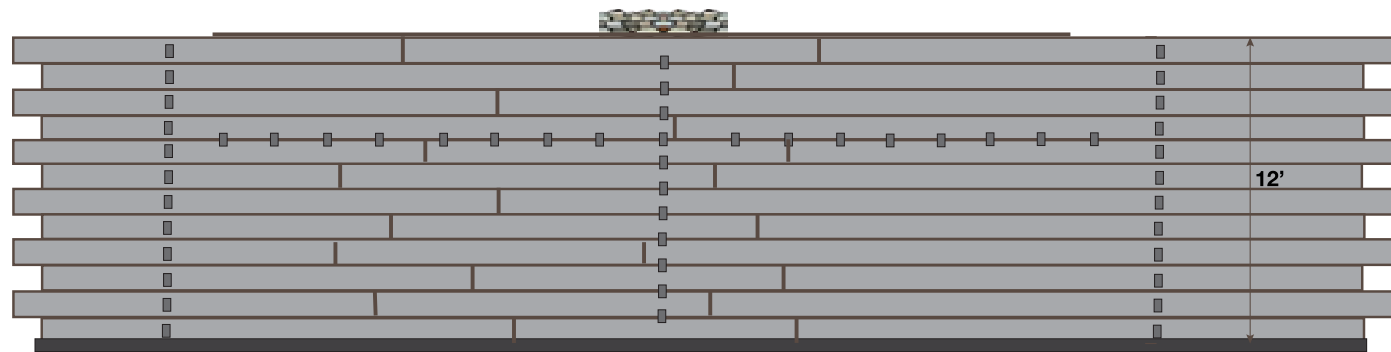
Soldiers' Quarters and Supply

The main soldier's barracks were pièce-sur-pièce one-story, single "pen" lean-to structures with plank floors built on irregular dry-laid limestone foundations. The horizontal American chestnut logs were joined at the corners by dovetail notching. Chinking and daubing between the logs was usually a mixture of rock, soil, and clay. The roofs were split shingle and may or may not have had sod laid over the shingles to guard against fire when or if attacked. If two barracks were joined, as was probably the case at Presque Isle, the stone chimney was more than likely in the center between the structures with an open firebox on each side. Bunk beds and often lofts that were used for storage.

Each building served a primary function in the Presque Isle supply depot. The quartermaster had a building for provisions and supplies moving through Presque Isle to Fort Le Boeuf, fifteen miles to the south. Other structures served as barracks for the garrison, officers' quarters, and as a guard house for sentries.



Quarters and Supply



Back Lean-to Curtain Wall

Hearth, Firebox, and Chimney

These wooden structures, except for the magazine where black powder was stored, had chimneys made using local stone. Builders used clay mortars for the chimney's core and limestone mortar to fill the exterior joints. Made from burning limestone, marble, oyster shells, and other calcareous materials, building lime required both an ample supply of stone or shells and firewood. Unlike modern masonry that excludes water, limestone mortar was a permeable system that absorbed rainwater and released it quickly through evaporation. In

addition, it allowed vapor to move through walls and evaporate out through mortar joints, thereby reducing condensation and the buildup of moisture in walls.

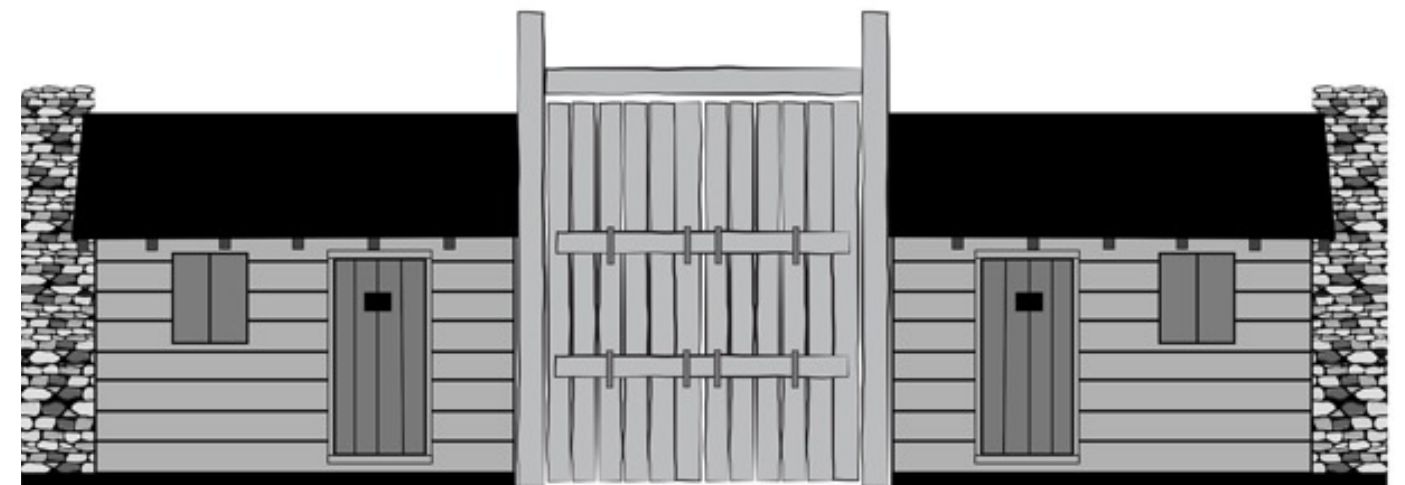


The Old Stone Chimney, located in Niagara Falls, NY, is a fair representation of the style of stacked stone chimneys constructed by the French during the period. It was once part of their Fort Petite Niagara complex built in 1750. They burned the fort in 1759, much like they did Fort Presque Isle, after losing the French and Indian War to the British. The chimney survived the fire. The British reused the chimney when they built Fort Schlosser in 1760. During the War of 1812, the Americans occupied the fort, but it was captured and again burned by the British and their Indian allies. The chimney has been relocated three times.

Sallyport

Located at the fort's north and south curtain wall, the sallyport, or gate, was ten feet wide and up to fifteen feet tall and secured by forged iron hinges and wooden crossbeams. Framed with upright logs and a horizontal lintel, there were no firing loop-holes. On each side of the gate were log structures used as officer's quarters or sentry posts. Like the supply and garrison barracks, there were stone chimneys, limestone foundations, and shake roofs. The back wall of these lean-to log buildings served as the curtain that flanked the sallyport.

structure, built around 1758, was constructed using stone in order to protect the barrels of black powder and other munitions stored inside. Roofs were usually arched and covered with earth and sod for shelter against fire and enemy artillery. However, some roofs were made of shingles, as was probably the case at Fort de la Presqu'île. The magazine's stone floor was at ground level and was proportionally sized in order to fit within the bastion. These stone structures had one or more windows to allow the building to breathe and reduce the buildup of moisture that could render the powder ineffective.



Gate

The magazine is a stone house covered with shingles, and not sunk in the ground, standing in the right bastion, next the lake

*Thomas Bull
March 1759*

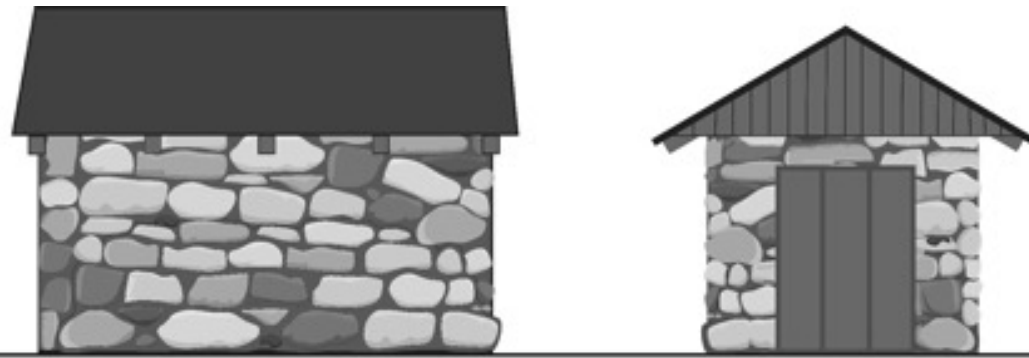
Although these structures were generally safe, soldiers still feared living in close proximity in case of accidental explosions.

Door and Window Hardware

Every building within the fort complex had doors, windows, and shutters. Thus, various types of hand forged iron hardware, such as strap hinges, latches, and door handles were needed to secure the hardware onto frames. The level of craftsmanship by blacksmiths who accompanied the army determined

Powder Magazine

Located in the northeast bastion was the powder magazine. The ability to dispense black powder for use in firearms to French regulars and their Native allies was key to the overall military strategy. This



Stone Powder Magazine

the design, size, and shape of these items. The use of wrought iron also allowed for repairs or alterations if needed.

■ DEFENSE OF THE FORT

Documentation from the period states that there were no embrasures or firing loopholes in the walls. Instead, an elevated firing platform was built in the corner of each bastion. For the most part, soldiers could discharge their weapons over the top of the pièce-sur-pièce bastion wall while standing on a corner firing platform. The upright posts used to



De Vallière's four-pounder field gun bronze tube



756 bronze French swivel gun reconfigured to mount on a naval gun carriage

support the firing platforms also helped to stabilize the bastion walls.

De Vallière's Four-Pounder Field Guns

A 1753 report stated that there were four, four-pounders in one of the bastions that were unmounted, meaning they were only tubes and not on carriages. It is unknown if these bronze field artillery pieces were ever mounted but if they were they probably used naval gun carriages. Considering the lack of embrasures in the bastion wall, the intention may have been to use these pieces *en barbette* from either the platform or the ground inside the fort. Currently, there is no record of the guns ever being fired.

It should be noted that in the mid-eighteenth century, the French standardized their guns under the direction of Jean-Florent de Vallière, a French artillery officer. The method of forging cannons was significantly improved by drilling the bore, a method first developed by Jean Maritz. This process allowed for a much higher precision of the bore shape and surface, and therefore improved firing efficiency and accuracy. These 1430-pound guns at Fort de la Presqu'île, if need be, fired a solid iron cannon ball weighing 4 French pounds (a little more than 4 English pounds).



The powder magazine at Fort de Chartres, located in Prairie du Rocher, Illinois, and constructed by the French in 1753, is the oldest building in the state.

INTERPRETING THE FRENCH VILLAGE AT DE LA PRESQU'ÎLE

Civilians, including Jesuit priests, accompanied the French army in North America to numerous fort locations. At, near, or inside these fort facilities they constructed churches, homes, blacksmith shops, grist mills, and bake houses. This was the case at Presque Isle where a French village existed, probably as early as 1754, and was possibly located along the bank of Mill Creek. William Johnson, a British prisoner, described a significant parish when he was held captive in 1756. The fort was "supported chiefly from a French settlement begun near to it," he wrote. "The settlement consists... of about a hundred and fifty families. They have a priest and schoolmaster. They have some grist mills and stills in this settlement." References are also given to the farming of corn and other vegetables

for local consumption.

Since there are few descriptions of the composition of the settlement, interpreting the French village at de la Presqu'île is based on available primary source documentation and comparative study of similar communities built by the French during the period prior to and around the French and Indian War. Visitors can explore and learn about:

- *Erie's earliest European settlement*
- *Re-Creating the "European French village"*
- *Foodways, herbal remedies, and vegetable gardens*
- *The Evangelizing Jesuit mission and "Europeanizing" Indians*
- *The Jesuit school and education on the frontier*
- *Indigenous peoples within the French village*
- *Building and farming techniques*
- *Blacksmiths and the technology of forging iron*
- *Grist Mills—"Feeding the flock"*



Davidsonville Historic State Park, Arkansas, recreates the old town through "ghost structures."

Ghost Structures

Near the French fort on the Three Forts campus, the French village can be interpreted through "ghost structures." In Philadelphia, where Benjamin Franklin's home and print shop were located, steel frames create an outline of these two buildings. No reference remains of the original look of the structures. This practice only suggests the design and leaves it up to the viewers imagination.



At the Three Forts campus, the French mission, school, and other buildings that once stood at de la Presqu'île can be re-created through the use of "ghost structures," interpretive signage, and projection mapping.

Mission and School

The Jesuit priests, who were called on to "save souls," were among the most devout believers in New France. They played a major role in converting Native peoples to Christianity. In so doing, they lived within indigenous communities, learned Native languages, and communicated between the French military and Native tribes throughout the region. At de la Presqu'île, it is noted that the Jesuits formed a mission and operated a school. It is not known whether an actual structure was erected for either. Some references to "mission" during this period at remote locations were most likely to a field of missionary activity, including schools, and not to actual buildings. However, given the length of time the village existed, from 1754 to 1759, structures were probably built under the protection of the fort. No archaeological evidence of the location has been identified.

Grist Mills

Like the rest of the French village at de la Presqu'île, the relative size and location of the grist mills is unknown. These mills may have been small and used either wind, man, or horsepower to operate. If larger, Mill Creek was a good source for power. The mill served a dual purpose of grinding corn meal for bake houses and for the local stills known to be in or near the settlement. Specialized

Left: Interpretation of Benjamin Franklin's house and print shop in Philadelphia using "ghost structures"



Reproduction Mission at Sainte-Marie among the Hurons, Ontario, Canada



Reproduction house and garden at Sainte-Marie among the Hurons, Ontario, Canada

bake houses were built at many of the forts throughout New France, though none are referenced at de la Presqu'île. If constructed, the facility may have been used communally and supplied bread and other baked goods for the garrison.

Blacksmithing Shops

Blacksmiths were employed at many of the forts and settlements throughout New France. They provided invaluable skills needed to produce and repair metal objects in remote places like de la Presqu'île. On the frontier, metal objects were important resources used for cooking, gardening, cutting wood, hunting, fishing, trapping, and for door and window hardware. They were also valuable trade goods. At de la Presqu'île, a blacksmith forge would have been built with a stone chimney and waist high platform where the blacksmith could easily access the heat source. The floor was usually made of packed earth rather than wood in order to prevent fires.

Inhabitants of the French Village

Though little is known about the French Village, there are comparative sites where a civilian population played a role in the sustainability of these fort facilities. However, at Presqu'île, keeping the portage road between the lake and Fort Le Boeuf was a major concern, leading the French government to employ private contractors who then hired whoever they could find to work in the harsh and deadly conditions in western Pennsylvania during the war. The village was most probably a center for these workers and their families. The region was plagued by an illicit liquor traffic. With the grist mills at de la Presqu'île, and several known distilleries, it is most likely the settlement was a haven for alcohol. The fort commander, Lieutenant Antoine-Gabriel Francois Benoit, tried to stop the trade but was unsuccessful. Liquor remained a problem for the French and their Indian allies.

NATIVE PEOPLES AT PRESQUE ISLE

"The Indian families about the (French) settlement are pretty numerous..."

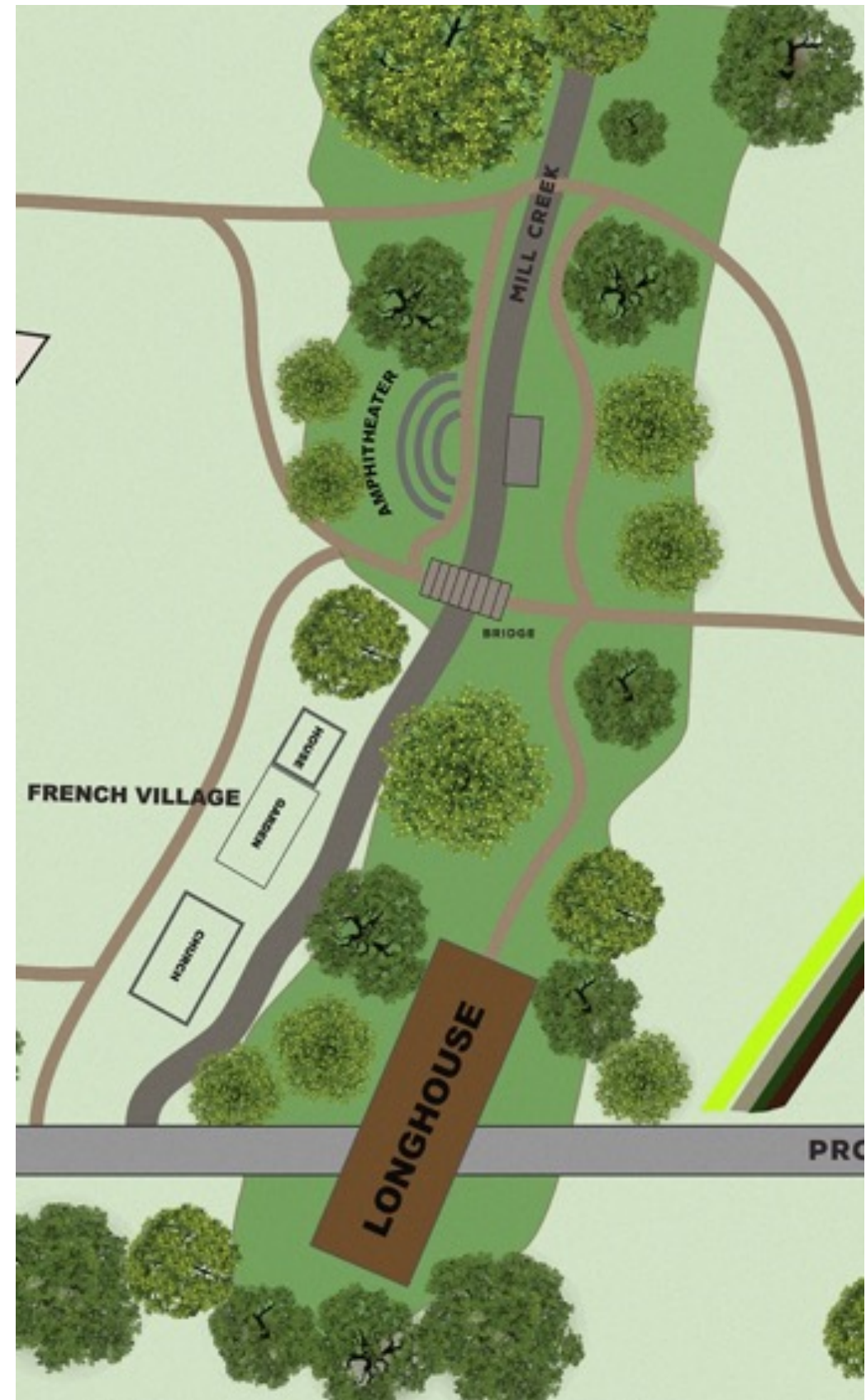
The importance of indigenous peoples in western Pennsylvania before and after contact with Europeans cannot be understated. Their physical presence and interaction with the local environment offer a distinctive understanding of the ecological and social transformation that impacted Native cultures and landscape during the period.

■ INTERPRETING ERIE'S NATIVE AMERICAN PAST

On the Three Forts Campus, the area between the French and British forts offers an opportunity to create a separate interpretive infrastructure and visually immersive experience to tell the story the region's indigenous cultures, specifically the Eriez and the Iroquois. Within that physical space we propose several interpretive assets, including an Iroquois longhouse, a small amphitheater, and "Mill Creek," a reproduction of one of Erie's most important landscape features.

Erie's Indigenous Landscape

Within the Native American interpretive space, we encourage the planting of pre-contact indigenous tree species, such as beech, tuliptree, white ash, basswood, sugar maple, oaks, white pine, and eastern hemlock. Some of these trees are not as plentiful or no longer exist in the area because of overuse, deforestation, and disease (American hickory). As these trees grow, they will eventually create a canopy to give the area shade, especially within the vicinity of the amphitheater. In areas near the walkways, we propose the planting of native grasses, like





Recreating Mill Creek as a dry bed stream is an interpretive landscape feature that simulates the creek bed using rocks, boulders, along with native grasses and other spill rocks. Though the size and scale of Mill Creek prior to the mid-1800s was much larger than the proposed dry bed stream (8-feet wide), the dry bed will follow the original route and offer the opportunity to demonstrate the importance of the creek's physical presence in the development of Erie. This feature also serves as a divide between the French and British forts and raises the level of significance of the Native American area and their association with both belligerents.

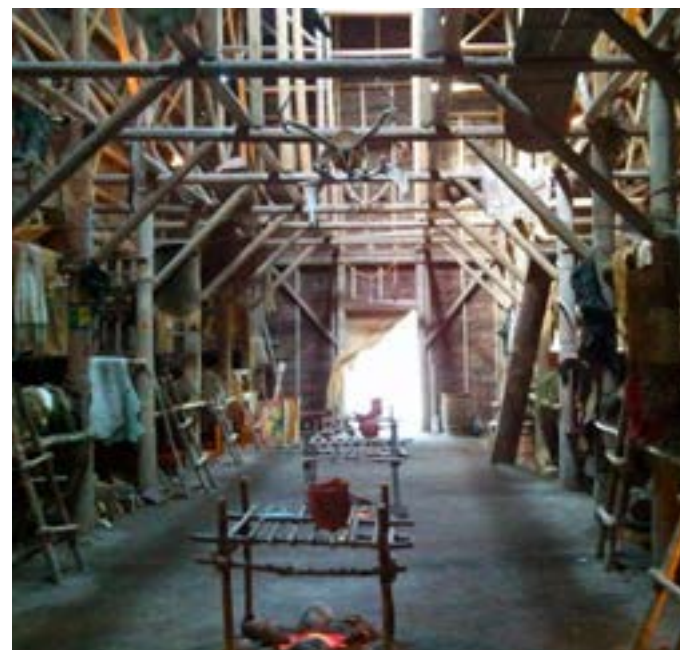
sweetgrass, little bluestem, and switch grass. They can act as a buffer and encourage visitors on the walkways. They also attract birds to the park.

Mill Creek

Mill Creek played a prominent role as a Lake Erie tributary for indigenous, displaced, and immigrant peoples. The French, British, and Americans all sited their forts in the vicinity. And Erie's first settlements, both French and American, used the creek as a source of water and power. In 1923, Mill Creek was buried after a deadly flood in 1915 threatened developing neighborhoods. Today, the branch is a "ghost stream" submerged beneath Wallace Street Park, unknown to visitors.



The Longhouse



Recreating Mill Creek as a dry bed stream is an interpretive landscape feature that simulates the creek bed using rocks, boulders, along with native grasses and other spill rocks. Though the size and scale of Mill Creek prior to the mid-1800s was much larger than the proposed dry bed stream (8-feet wide), the dry bed will follow the original route and offer the opportunity to demonstrate the importance of the creek's physical presence in the development of Erie. This feature also serves as a divide between the French and British forts and raises the level of significance of the Native American area and their association with both belligerents.

Iroquois Longhouse

The longhouse played a prominent role in Iroquois culture. The design reflects, among other things, their social organization and was a symbol of many Iroquois traditions. The Iroquois adapted raw materials in their surrounding environment to build these structures using their own insular set of tools and technology.

Recreating the longhouse allows for an immersive experience where visitors can learn about the origin of native customs and rituals, foodways, and the use of physical spaces.

Amphitheater

This interpretive feature gives visitors the opportunity to experience native customs, rituals, traditions, music, and history, through direct demonstration, performance, screenings, and interface with period reenactment. The stage area is separated from seating by Mill Creek, allowing for the interpretation of the important this large stream played to both indigenous peoples and Erie's earliest settlers. The 100-seat amphitheater also provides a place for quiet contemplation for visitors with a focus on the indigenous landscape and a respite away from the more active longhouse, fort, and interpretive center facilities.

Shape

- A semi-circular or fan shaped layout, focused on the stage, brings spectators closer to the performers, allowing for better sound and viewing experience.
- Twenty-degree slope between rows of seats. Allowing enough height difference from row to row of seating creates better sight lines. It also reduces the amount of sound attenuation and absorption by the audience.

Stage

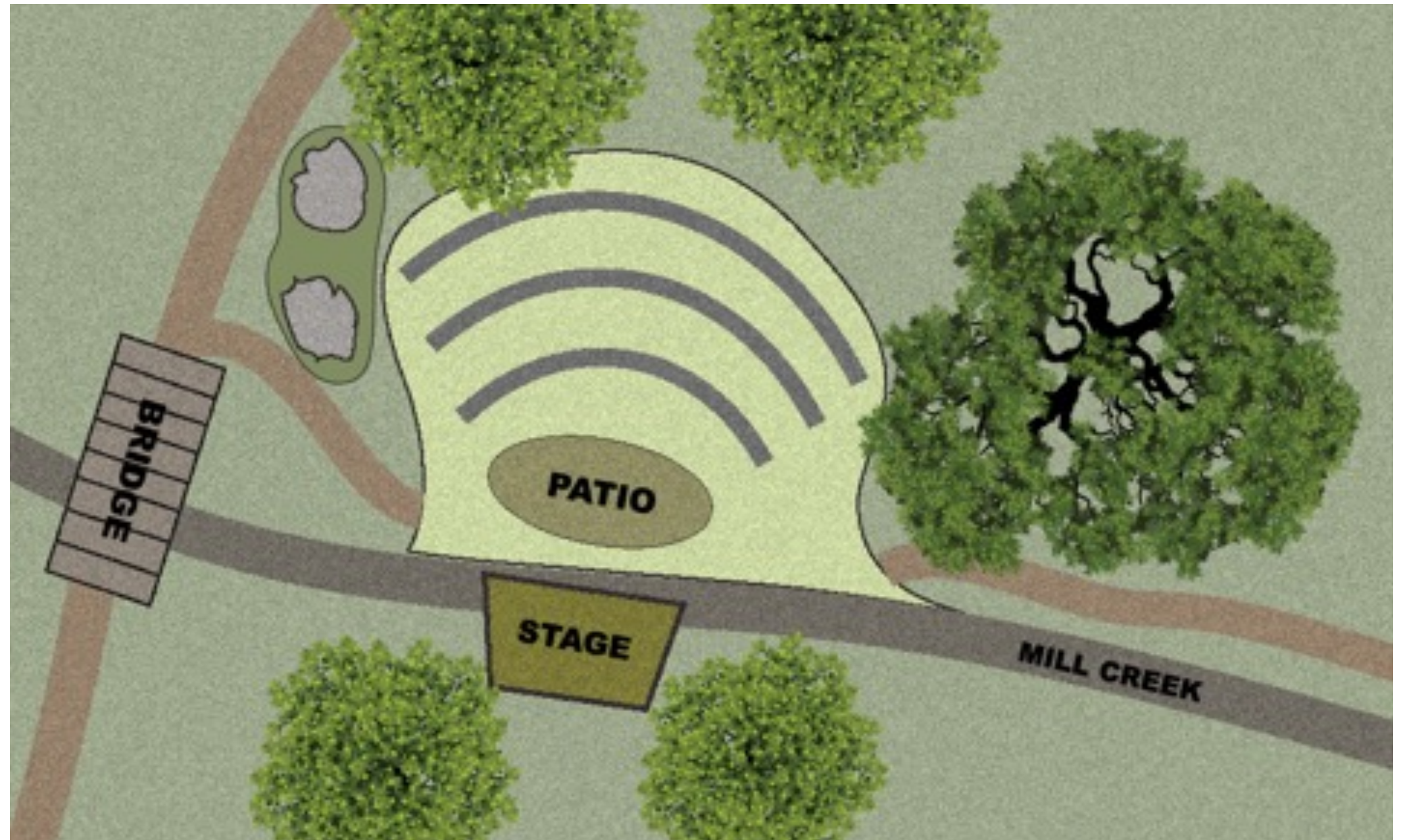
- A raised platform or stage is important to allow all spectators good sightlines to the performers. The platform needs to be 8" to 16" high for good audience sightlines.
- The stage material should be wood to make it easier on performers who stand for long periods.

Seating

- For maintenance purposes, semi-circular stone seating is appropriate.

Accessibility

- Be aware of challenges that disabled and the



The amphitheater is located in a partially shaded area with access from the north and south.

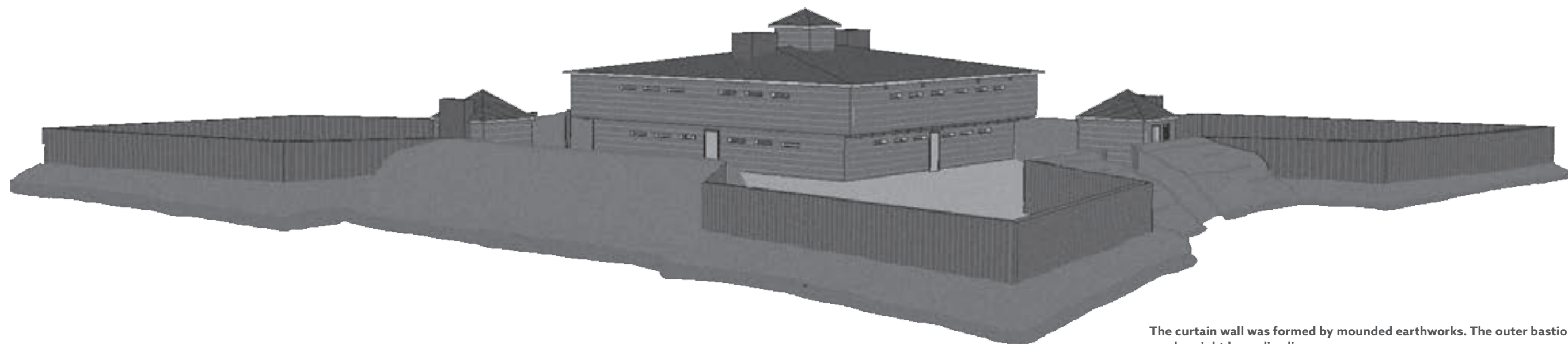
mobility impaired might face in the facility. This can be especially important, given the drastic changes in elevation that are inherent to an amphitheater and the seating.

- Spaces should be included for wheelchairs, with adjacent companion seats, within the lower seating area.
- There are accessible paths to all seating areas.

Interpretation at the Amphitheater

- The outdoor stage is an opportunity to expose visitors to first-person interpretation of historic events and activities associated with Native cultures from the area.
- The amphitheater is also an opportunity for contemporary foodways demonstrations.
- Performance art, such as theater, music, and

dance, can encourage repeat visits with new programs that build loyalty to the institution, foster a relationship with the local community, and create a dialogue with those who are engaged with your new initiatives.



The curtain wall was formed by mounded earthworks. The outer bastions used upright log palisading.

BRITISH FORT AT PRESQUE ISLE

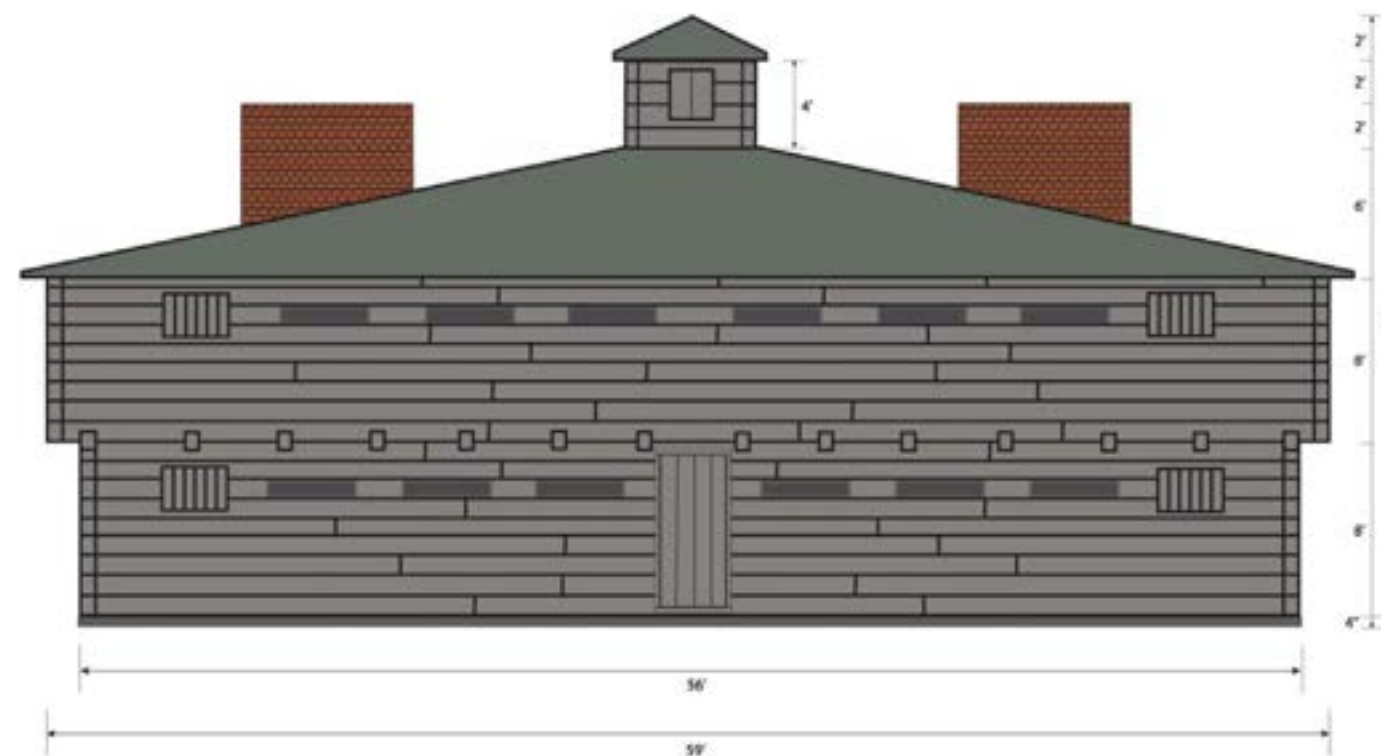
In 1760, the British arrived at Presque Isle to find the remains of the French fort burned the previous year. Major Henry Gladwin, accompanied by a small force, began to construct temporary works in the form of entrenchments at the site. Soon after Colonel Henry Bouquet reached the lakefront with 400 additional men. Colonel Hugh Mercer followed with 150 Pennsylvanians. British engineer Lieutenant Thomas Bassett oversaw the new fort-building project. The British fort was built on top of where the French fort existed between 1753 and 1759.

- The original British fort built that year was approximately two-hundred-and twenty-two feet square and consisted of a large center blockhouse with three corner bastions connected to the main structure through retrenchments.
- The British blockhouse's lower level was fifty-six feet square.
- The outer works were entrenchments and earthen walls with upright palisading in the outer bastions.
- There were sallyports on the east and west curtain wall.

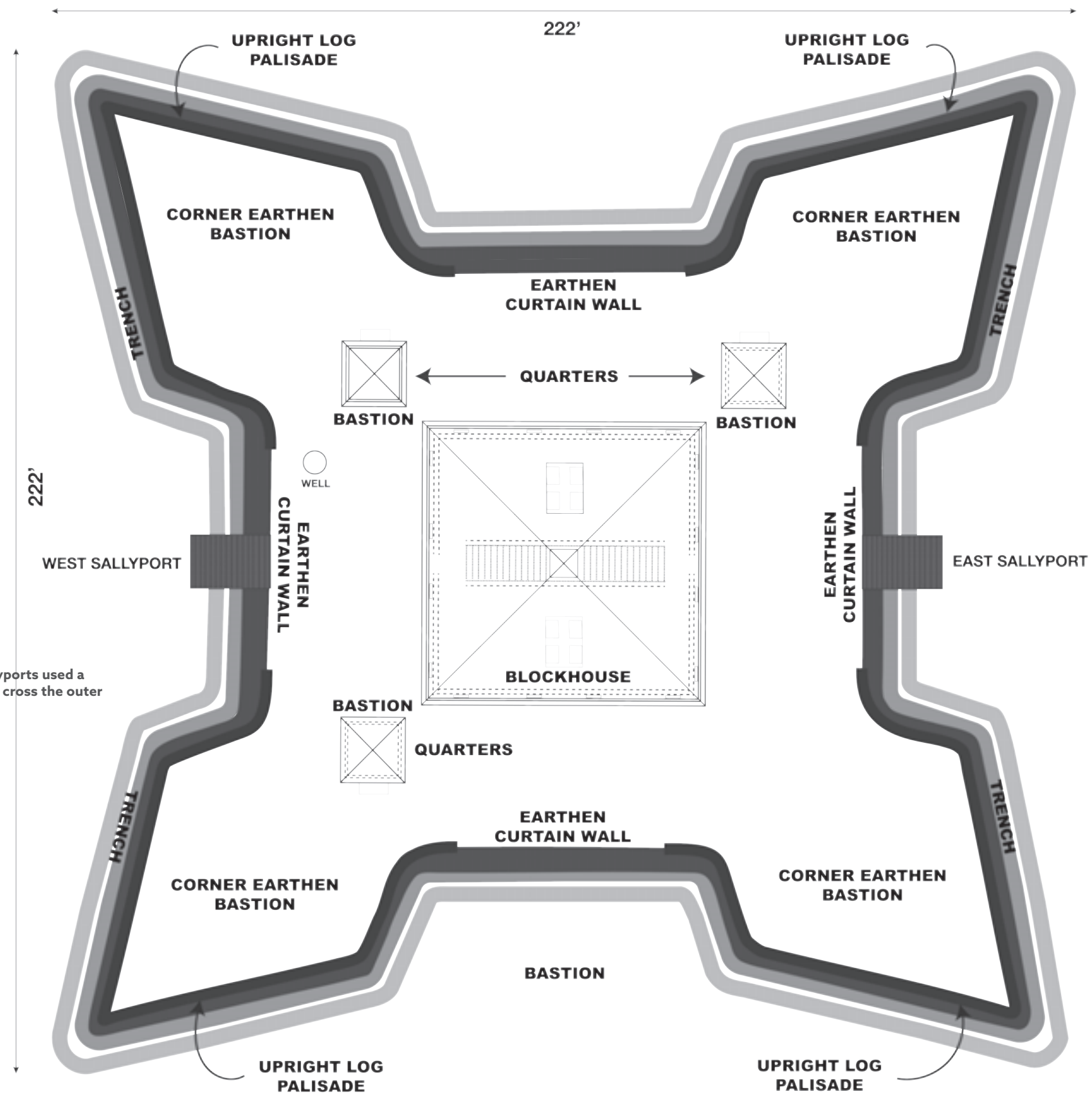
■ RECONSTRUCTING THE BRITISH FORT

Using the Ted Amendola Memorial Ballfield at Wallace Street Park more than seventy-five percent of the British fort can be reconstructed to scale.

- Bounded by the promenade to the south, Front Street to the north, and the Interpretive Center to the east, the outer works, palisade walls, earthen ramparts, ditch, parapet, east and west sallyports, three officer's quarters, and the British blockhouse can be constructed.
- Chestnut oak is the preferred wood species for the construction of the British blockhouse and the quarters.
- Reclaimed limestone foundations as the base for all wood structures. No stone piers.
- White pine is the preferred wood species for the upright palisading in the outer bastions.
- A stone patio in the northwest outer bastion for interpretive purposes.
- Walking paths within the British fort site are at least 5' wide and constructed using permeable pavement. (See Sustainability Section)



East Elevation



The east and west sallyports used a wooded drawbridge to cross the outer ditch.

The British Blockhouse

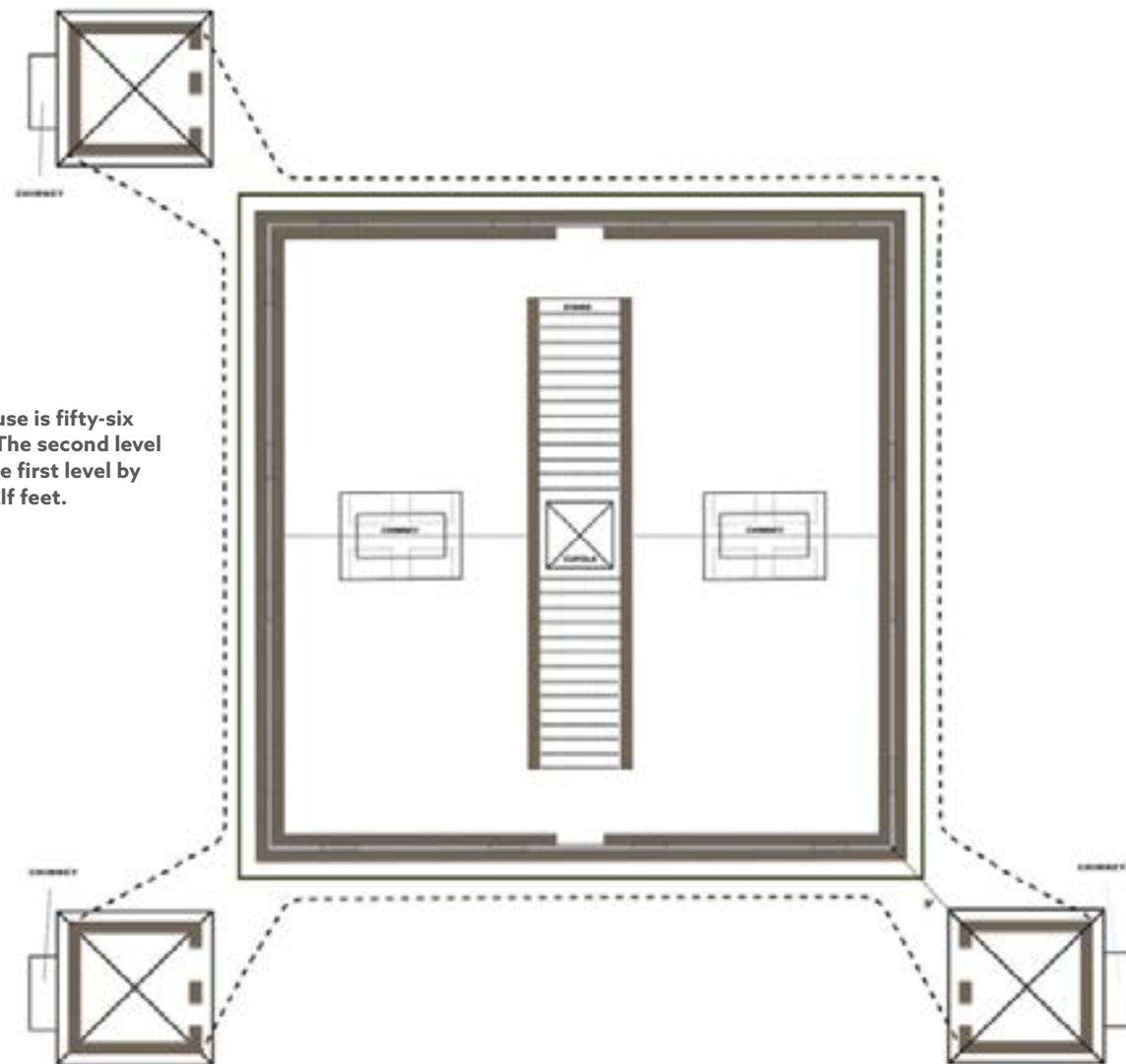
“At Presquise is a Blockhouse 56 Ft. square and 16 high in which are 8 large Rooms with Chimneys...” at a Distance round the Blockhouse is a Retrenchment, with four Bastions fraised.”

Bassett and his laborers built a vernacular two-story blockhouse with the top floor overhanging the first level in the center of the former French works. The Pennsylvanians, familiar with local frontier log construction techniques, probably constructed both the blockhouse and outbuildings.

According to Monckton, the blockhouse “must be made to Contain about One Hundred and fifty Men, with Officers in Proportion.” Captain Henry Gordon later reported,

- A sentry box was added at the structure’s crown.
- The corners were joined by steeple or half-dove-tail notching.
- Gravel covered with wood planks on the bottom floor and a wood plank floor on the second level.
- The roof consisted of wood shingles. On top of the shingles sod was added to reduce the possibility of the structure’s roof being set ablaze from enemy fire. This technique proved inadequate when the fort was attacked in 1763. After Presque Isle was burned, Colonel Bouquet suggested that any new blockhouse should have a slate roof.
- Elongated loopholes were present along the exterior wall of both levels. In February 1762, Captain John Schlosser visited the fort and made additions to the blockhouse. Those included shutters on the windows and closing the elongated loopholes with clay and straw in order to protect the men from harsh winter conditions.

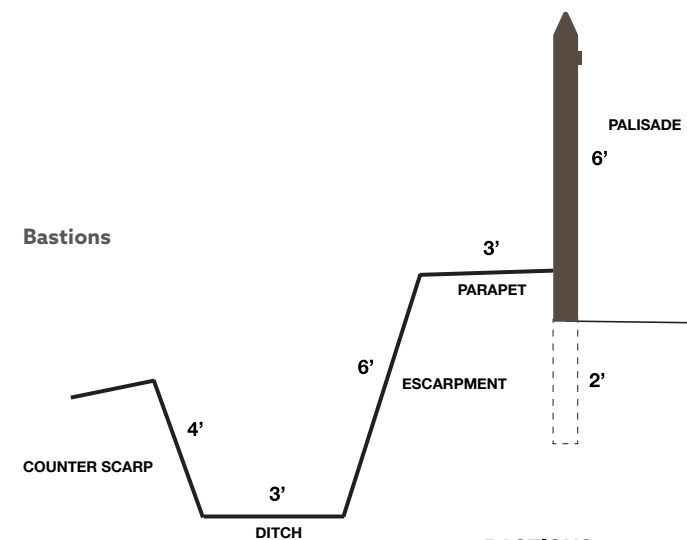
The blockhouse is fifty-six feet square. The second level overhangs the first level by one-and-a-half feet.



Corner Bastions

“Besides four Rooms for Officers in the Bastions that cover the Angles, and into which is a passage from the Body of the House. These Bastions are one Story high and afford a very good Defence both to the Body of the House and different Fires.”

When Captain Schlosser arrived in February 1762, he noted that there were only three corner bastion structures. He added two glass-paned windows to the three buildings. Each window had six panes. On average, these structures were twelve-by-twelve with corner steeple notching and brick chimneys. They had a hip roof with wood shingles. It is



East Elevation

unknown if sod was added to the roofs for protection against fire. According to Schlosser's report, the buildings had wood plank floors. Inside were single or bunk beds, depending on the number of officers in the garrison.

Chimneys

Fireplaces served the dual purpose of providing heat and for cooking. We know from Schlosser's report that the British blockhouse and outbuildings had brick chimneys with a firebox for cooking and a baking oven. Two central chimneys were constructed as room dividers in the blockhouse. The chimneys had fallen into disrepair and needed to be updated when Schlosser arrived. Brick made on-site with local clay was used to build the hearths, fireboxes and chimneys.

Outer Works

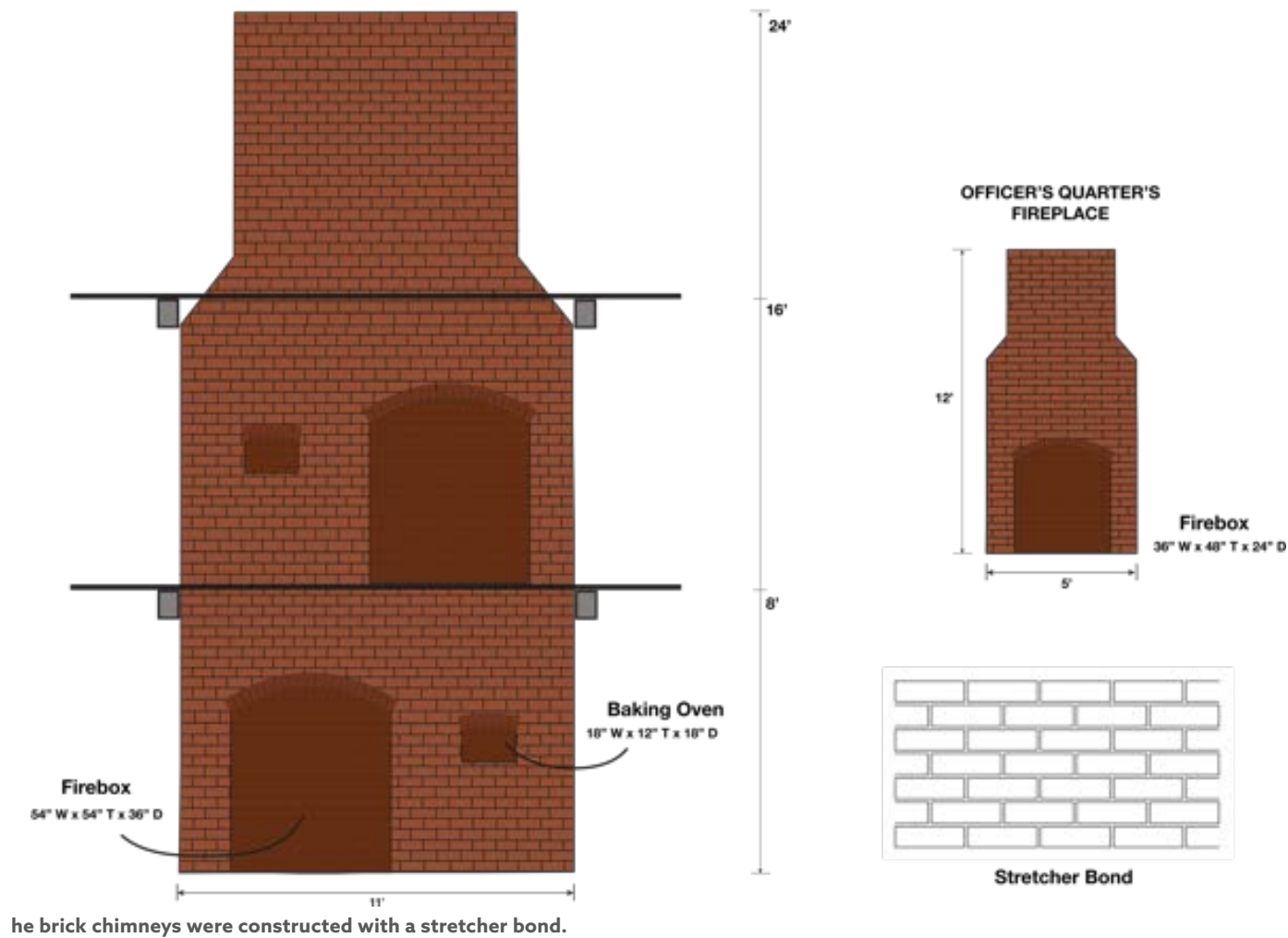
The original construction of the outer works consisted of a low earthen parapet along the bastions and curtain walls with an escarpment and trench that followed the exterior boundary of the parapet.

The bastions were fraised. Fraising is a type of palisade placed at the front of a rampart or berm that consists of pointed stakes driven into the ground in a horizontal or inclined position. Spaced close together, it deters entering the bastion from below.

The height of the parapet at the top of the rampart proved inadequate as the extreme environmental conditions caused the berm and fascine to slide into the trench below within the first year. In 1762, the bastion's earthen parapet was enclosed at all four corners by a log palisade. As well, additional mounding increased the height of the curtain walls to give British soldiers more cover from an attack.

Supporting Outbuildings

In addition, a shed was built to store flour and other supplies, a bake house, and a necessary (latrine). They also excavated a well on the parade ground, possibly re-using the French well. These structures will not be rebuilt as part of the interpretation.



An example of fascine at Fort Ligonier. A cylindrical bundle of small sticks of wood, bound together, used in raising batteries, filling ditches, strengthening ramparts, and constructing parapets.

Interpreting the British Fort

Life at Presque Isle was hard for the British soldiers. Raids against the garrison were made on several occasions and the men were ordered to remain vigilant at all times. The final attack of June 1762, when the garrison was overrun and captured by 200/250 Ottawa and Seneca warriors, is the focus

EAST CAMPUS—GARRISON HILL

Garrison Hill, the site of the two American forts between 1795 and 1815, and a Civil War era redoubt, is one of the most important historic resources in Erie. An archaeological survey conducted in the summer of 2020 on a section of the hill associated with the construction of a new bridge revealed the site still has a presence of material culture. With that in mind, Garrison Hill will be treated as an archaeological site, making the construction of interpretive facilities like those proposed for the French and British forts a potential threat to any remains from the period between 1812 and 1865.

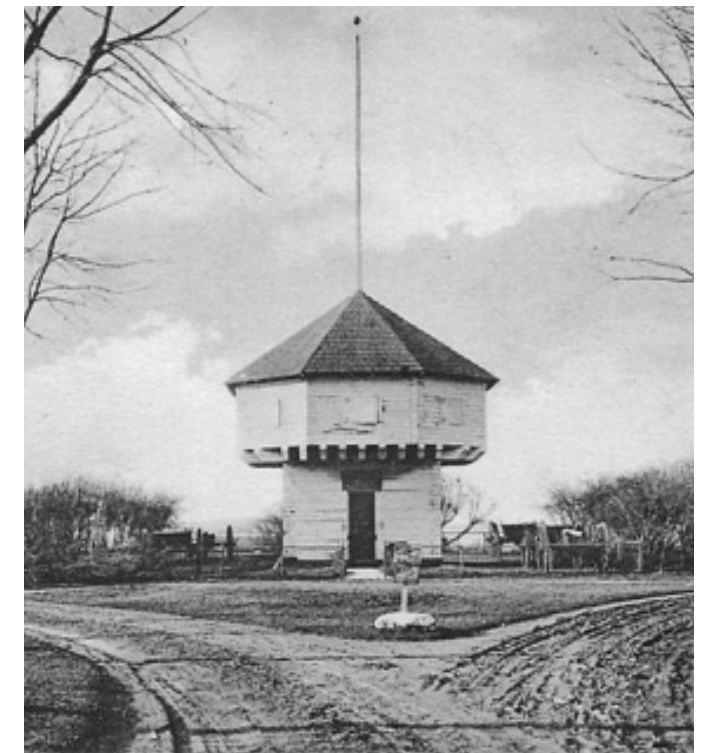
Instead, a different approach to interpreting Garrison Hill is needed, one that considers that any excavation below twelve inches has the potential to damage or destroy artifacts that might remain. The Wayne blockhouse (1880) is the only above ground historic resource that remains from the relandscaping plan in the late nineteenth century.

■ ACCESS TO GARRISON HILL

The Veteran's Cemetery Bridge

Access to the Garrison Hill site is available only by the new bridge being built from the north side of the ring road at the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home. The on-grade crossing will be eliminated.

of the interpretation at the British blockhouse as the structure was set afire and eventually burned with the surrender. Thought to be impregnable, the British command quickly realized the design was flawed because the garrison was undermanned and supplies inadequate.

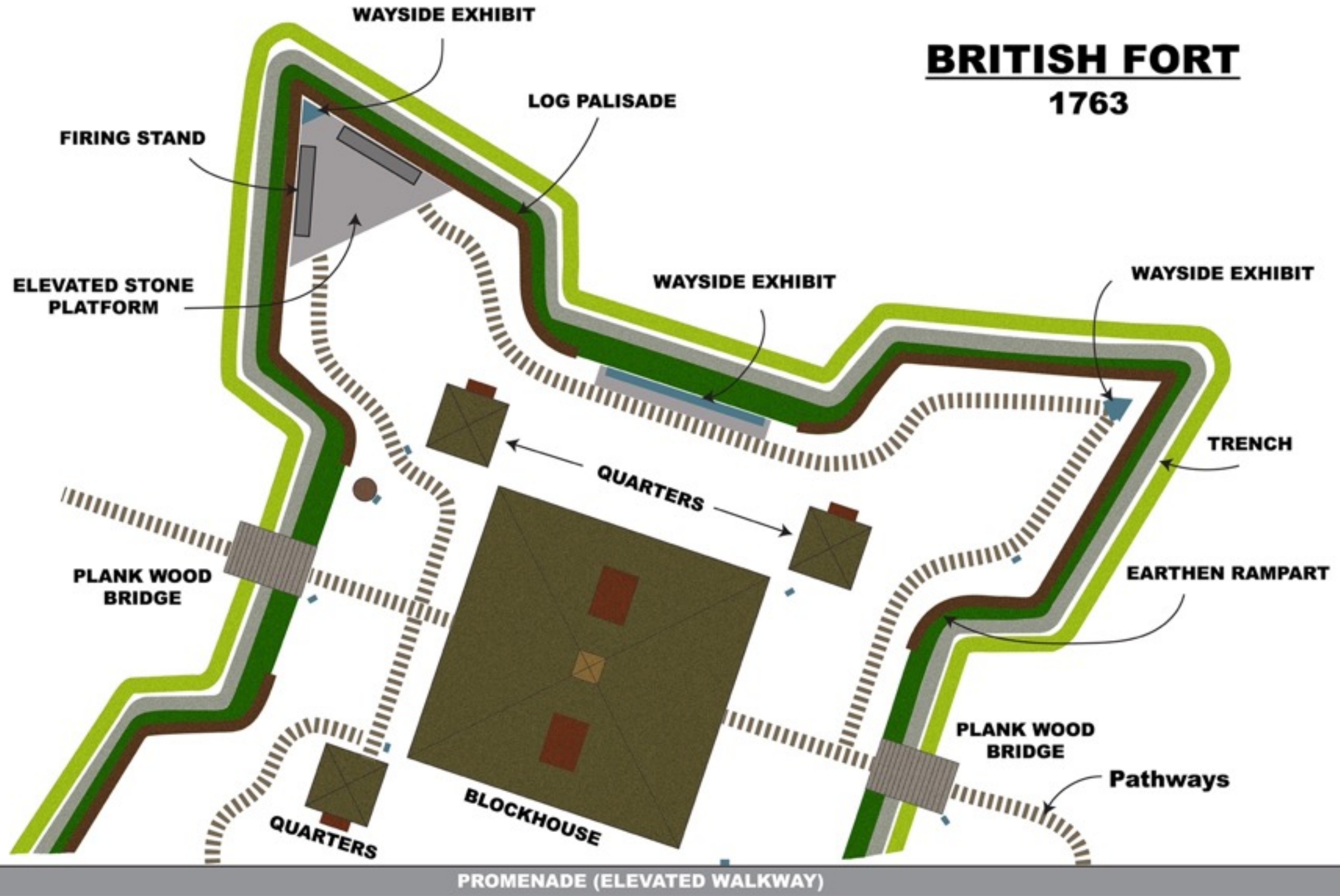


The Wayne Blockhouse reconstruction (1880) was modeled after an 1850 lithograph that illustrated the structure on Garrison Hill from the War of 1812. Ironically, the remains of the fort from the Anthony Wayne era (1795-1807) had all but disappeared by the time that Oliver Hazard Perry made the hill his headquarters. The "Wayne Blockhouse," however, became the name of choice for identifying the structure.

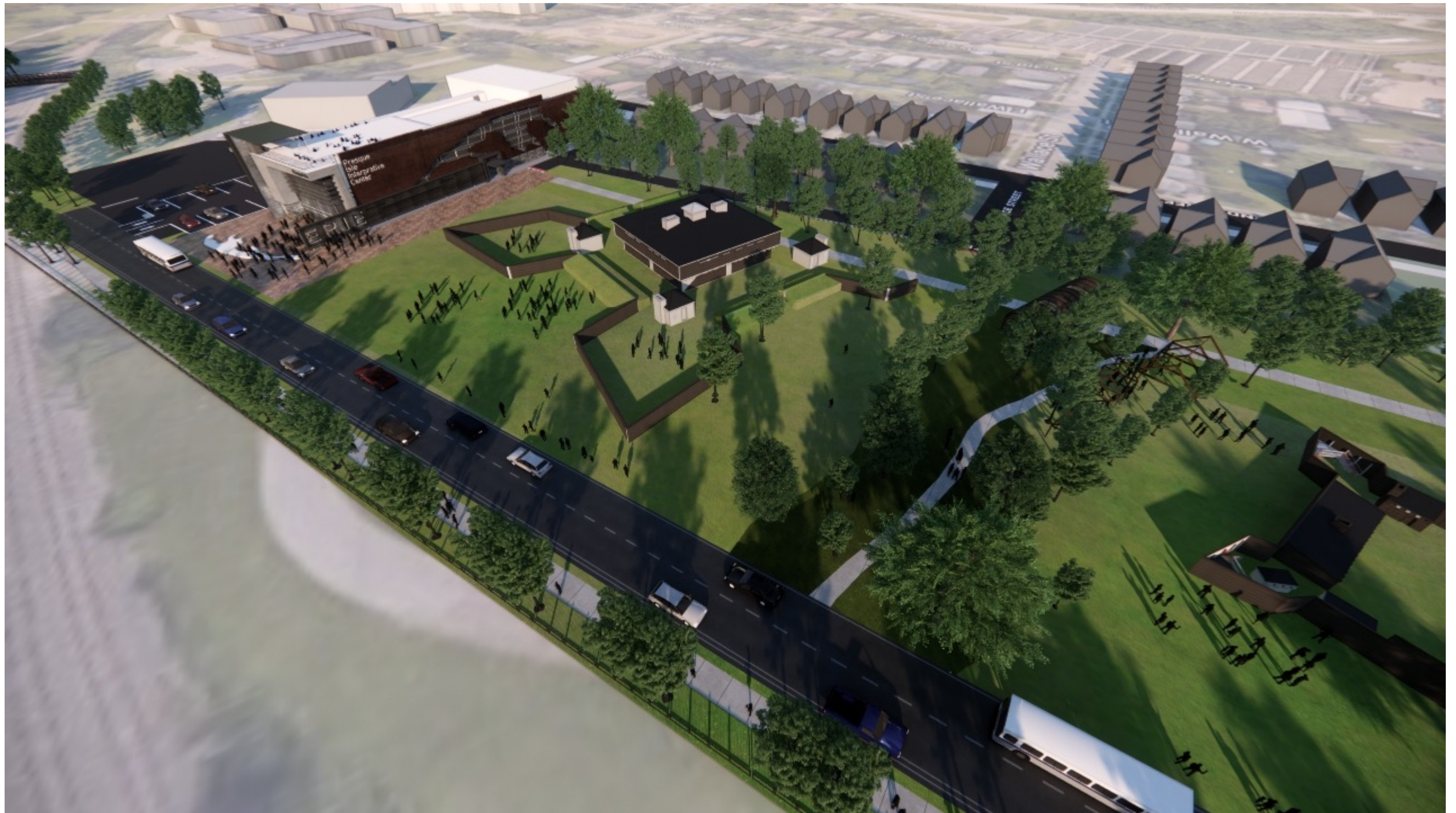
The Pennsylvania of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) has granted access to Garrison Hill by using the bridge as a pedestrian walkway. As part of the bridge project, the asphalt access road that

BRITISH FORT

1763



Rebuilding the British: Bordered by the Promenade to the south, the British fort is almost twice the size of the 1753 French fort. Connecting elements of the fort design through pathways leads the visitor through the story of the attack that took place in 1763 during Neolin's War.



The West Campus at Three Forts consists of: a forested boundary screen along the west and south perimeter fence; a full-scale replica of the French fort; two "ghost structures" and an enclosed garden that represent the French Village; an Iroquois longhouse, a dry bed representing Mill Creek, and an amphitheater; a full-scale replica of the British blockhouse, bastions, and two-thirds of the outer works; and a greenway along Front Street that connects with the East Campus on Garrison Hill..



Located to the east of British, Native American, and French interpretive facilities, the Interpretive Center adaptively reuses the Janitor Supply warehouse building. The observation deck on top of the building will give commanding views of the West Campus, the bayfront, and Garrison Hill located on the East Campus.



Any areas outside the identified zones should be maintained as a low tuft grass for ease of access to interpretive elements by all visitors, including handicapped. Care should be taken in removing trees. Root excavation can potentially damage archaeological resources.

Vegetation Zones: Recapturing Viewsheds

Zone 1—A dense canopy and understory has formed over the last several decades. Removal of all foliage, except for indigenous trees 24' in circumference and above, is recommended. This will allow for the site to be visible to travelers on the Bayfront Parkway for provides a viewshed from Garrison Hill looking north toward Lake Erie.

Zone 2—This area was cleared in the summer of 2021 when the new bridge was constructed. The zone should remain clear so there is an unobstructed viewshed to and from the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home.

Zone 3—A dense canopy of indigenous trees greater than 24" in circumference is preferred. Smaller trees and other understory foliage should be removed.

Zone 4—Most of this area is intensive understory with few indigenous trees larger than 24" in circumference. All foliage in this zone should be removed except for trees larger than 24" in circumference. This will provide a viewshed for eastbound drivers on the Bayfront Parkway.

loops around the blockhouse on Garrison Hill will be repaved once the bridge landing is completed.

Greenway Easement

DMVA has also agreed to an easement on their property just northwest of the ring road from the adjoining property to the west (proposed Interpretive Center). The greenway, as proposed, will be extended across the DMVA property to the ring road. A short walk along the ring road to the bridge will give visitors access to Garrison Hill.

Anthony Wayne's Fort

In the latter half of 1795, the first American fort was constructed on what eventually became known as Garrison Hill. Since that time there have been additional structures including an 1813 American fort and garrison complex and the 1872 Pest House, along with other defensive fortifications built on site, including the 1863 Civil War redoubt. In the early 1860s the railroad cut Garrison Hill in half, destroying any remains of the southern portion of the 1795 complex. In 1880, a replica blockhouse was constructed as a memorial to Gen. Anthony Wayne. There is little evidence that the building followed any primary or secondary source documentation, if any existed, in reference to the original location or design. That being the case, today's Wayne Blockhouse is more closely linked to the location of Oliver Hazard Perry's 1813 blockhouse. As these wood structures deteriorated over the years and the ground "swept" for the construction of a park in the 1890s, Garrison Hill became a memorial park for visitors to and veterans in the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home.

An Archaeological Site

Recent studies have indicated that there are archaeological remains still present on Garrison Hill. Until a more complete survey is conducted (though not necessary), the least destructive method to tell the story of the American experience on Garrison Hill is through the re-memorialization of the site using a combination of "shallow" landscape features combined with digital interpretive elements that offer the least potential damage to any material remains or other non-renewable resources.

Preparing the Site

Trees are essential elements of human culture. They serve as landmarks, sentries, and silent witnesses to the past. They are also used as a resource for construction, fuel, air filters, shade, and shelter. However, parks are a meeting place for landscapes that include more than trees. Currently, Garrison Hill has a dense understory that has grown over the years and obscures the site from almost every direction. Intensive modifications are necessary to "open up" the site. In consultation with the City of Erie Arborist on vegetation removal, steps include:

- Using a licensed arborist to remove foliage and trees identified in the site plan's Vegetation Zones
- Vegetation replanting using the site plan and zones.
- Any harvested trees being used for reconstruction purposes with the French and British forts in Wallace Street Park

Removal of Previous Park Elements

Garrison Hill was relandscaped as part of the development of the Veteran's Cemetery in the late 1880s. Roads, walkways, a gazebo, Civil War era artillery, and fencing were installed. Over the years some of these features, structures, and artifacts, such as the



Early twentieth century view from the Soldier's and Sailors' Home across Garrison Hill to Lake Erie. The gazebo is in the far left of the frame and the Wayne Blockhouse is in the center left under the flagpole. In the distance, beyond the bay, is Presque Isle.



Existing park features targeted for removal.

fencing, the gazebo, and the artillery, have been removed. Others, however, remain, such as non-essential stone borders and outlines. These features should be removed.

Interpretive Infrastructure

One of the main interpretive issues on Garrison Hill is that there were three different fortifications on the site at different historic periods along with at least one other structure, the pest house. Thus, there must be multiple layers of interpretive context made obvious to the visitor in order to avoid confusion. Upgrades and additions to the site's physical infrastructure, such as new portals, pathways, and patios, can be physical references to past historical features, such as blockhouses and palisading, that are low impact on the landscape but powerful in their ability to act as visual aids or references for each period of concentration. Other interpretive elements, such as wayside exhibits, exhibit panels, or mobile apps, provide the necessary content at each touchpoint along the visitor's journey.

Outside of the new bridge from the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home currently under construction, there are three (3) sets of major infrastructure additions proposed for Garrison Hill.

Stone Patios

- The construction of two raised 20-foot square stone patios, using reclaimed stone, located in the vicinity of the 1795 east and west blockhouses. On both patios there is stone seating and stone wayside standards for panel exhibits. In the center of the west patio is a monument to General Anthony Wayne. In the center of the east patio is a monument to Oliver Hazard Perry.
- The construction of two raised 10-foot hexagonal stone patios, using reclaimed stone, one located northwest of the blockhouse, the other to the east above Garrison Run. Aluminum-based wayside exhibits at both.

Stone Outline of 1795 Fort

- Using a combination of the 1795 Ellicott and Irvine map and the 1937 archaeological survey, create a granite paver outline, using reclaimed granite, of the fort that closely matches the original 1795 design. The granite pavers should be no deeper than six inches below grade.
- Recreate a portion of the palisade in the northeast bastion front using 12-foot vertical columns made from Corten steel to give visitors the sense of the enclosure.

Interpretive Greenway

- An interpretive greenway around the north and east quadrant of the site that links the two hexagonal stone patios and the east blockhouse stone patio.
- Aluminum-based wayside exhibits along the greenway to interpret the forts, the Pest House, and the Veteran's Cemetery.



On-grade stone perimeter outline of Fort Duquesne in Pittsburgh's Point State Park.



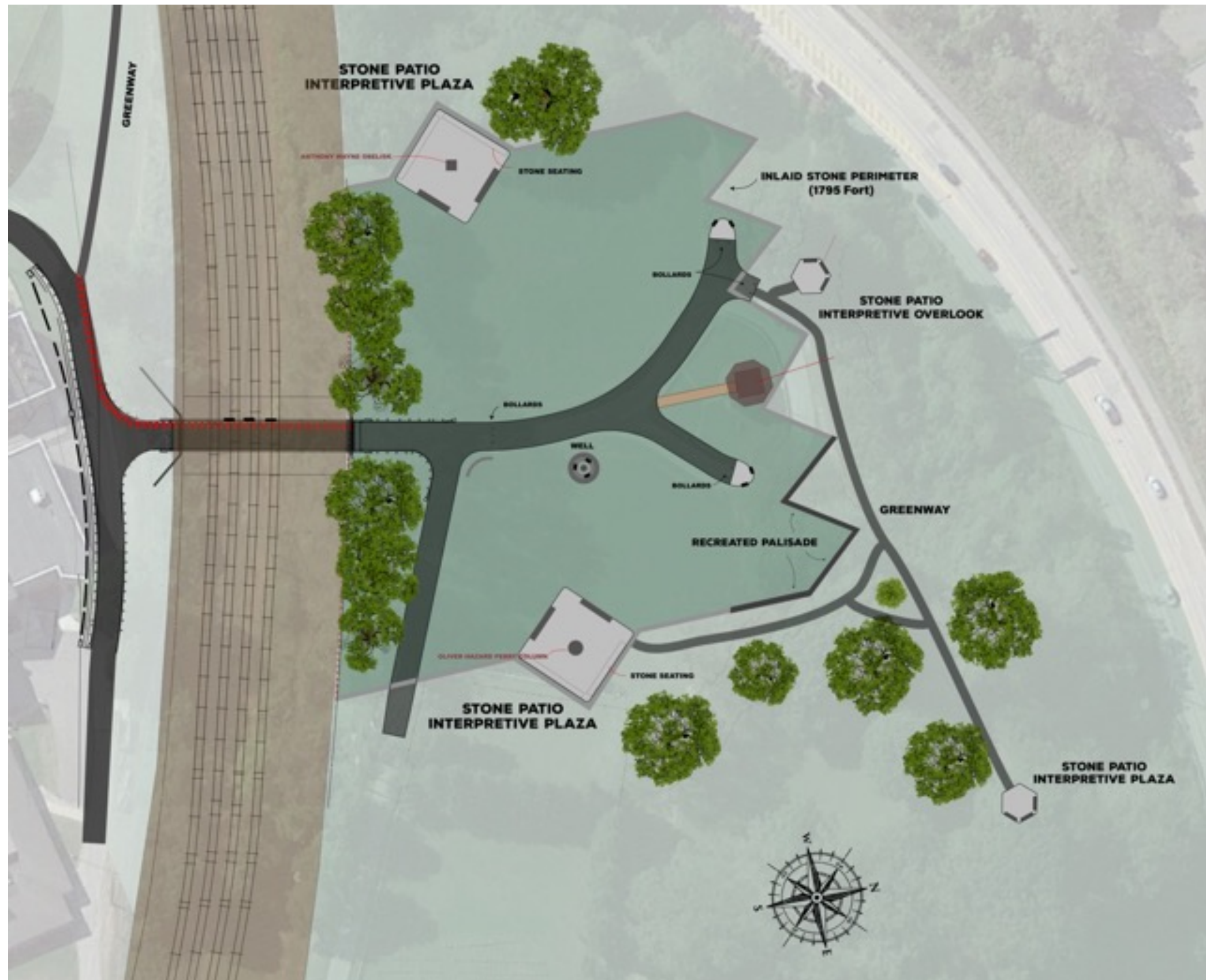
The stonework by the WPA and the CCC at National and state Parks in the 1930s and 40s have withstood the test of time. Garrison Hill can recapture a similar look and level of craftsmanship employed by these agencies.



Corten steel vertical columns give visitors a sense of enclosure provided by the original palisade.

The interpretive infrastructure of Garrison Hill should be low impact. Stone patios, fort outlines, and a greenway, give visitors the opportunity to move around the site along designated pathways or on there on without direction.

Clearing the understory and reducing the number of smaller trees opens up viewsheds to the lake, the bay, and the other parts of the campus.





Stone infrastructure can endure the harsh Erie winters

Additional Features

- Limestone ring and wayside exhibits around the location of the unexcavated well.
- Bollards to restrict vehicle traffic east and west of the blockhouse.



Stone-based Wayside Exhibits

Wayne Blockhouse

The Wayne Blockhouse, constructed in 1880 as a memorial to Gen. Anthony Wayne, currently has exhibits on Wayne's career and demise in Erie in 1796. In all actuality, the building should be more closely aligned with Oliver Hazard Perry, who constructed the American fleet at Erie during the War of 1812 from a blockhouse on Garrison Hill that was probably near the current structure. Though Wayne is an important character who died on Garrison Hill, and his frontier story a significant chapter in American military and Erie history, his physical presence was a random consequence of poor health.



The interior of the bastion blockhouse at Fort Vancouver (1847) was rebuilt in the early 1970s. The minimalist interpretation leaves room for visitors to get a better feel for interior architecture of the structure.

Reinterpreting the Wayne Blockhouse

- The story of the building of this blockhouse in 1880 as a memorial to Wayne should remain to contextualize the structure.
- Rename the building the Wayne/Perry Blockhouse
- Develop new exhibits based on:
 - ~ Memorializing General Anthony Wayne
 - ~ Oliver Hazard Perry and his Erie Expedition
 - ~ Daniel Dobbins and the building of the American Fleet
 - ~ The 1813 fort and the American army at Erie
 - ~ Dr. John Wallace and the wounded from the Battle of Lake Erie

Blockhouse Restoration

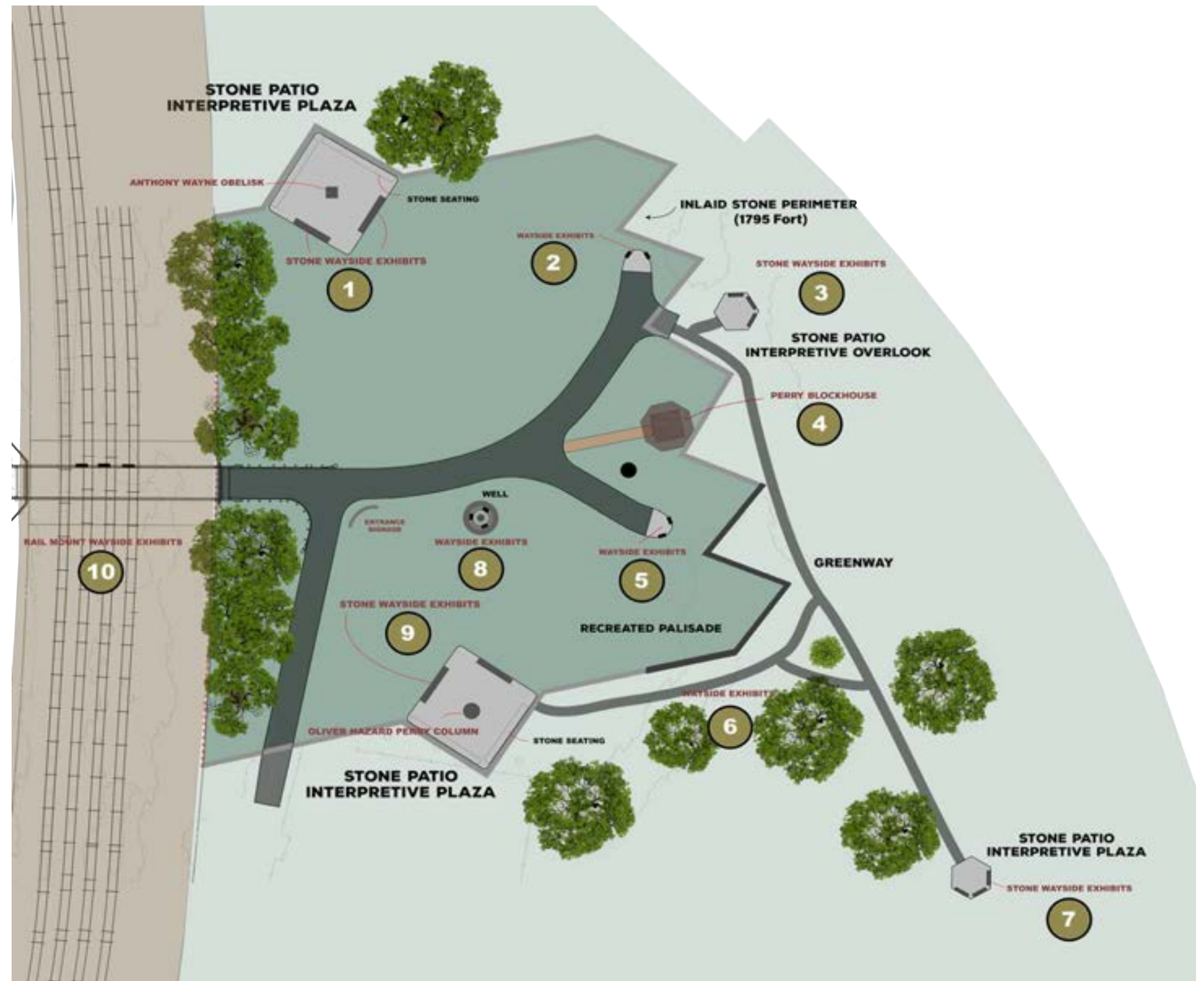
The current condition of the Garrison Hill blockhouse should be evaluated by a restoration specialist familiar with log construction. When the structure was built in 1880 the roof was wood shake. Restoring the original material will add to the general interpretation of the blockhouse. Also, the interior paint should be stripped to reveal the original wood. Any new exhibits should not be attached to the structure but instead displayed on stands or in free-standing cabinets.

Additionally, the Wayne wooden head marker should be moved and displayed in the Interpretive Center for long-term conservation, interpretation, and protection. It should be noted that 1880 structure may be National Register eligible and should be evaluated by the Pennsylvania SHPO.

GARRISON HILL—INTERPRETIVE MEDIA

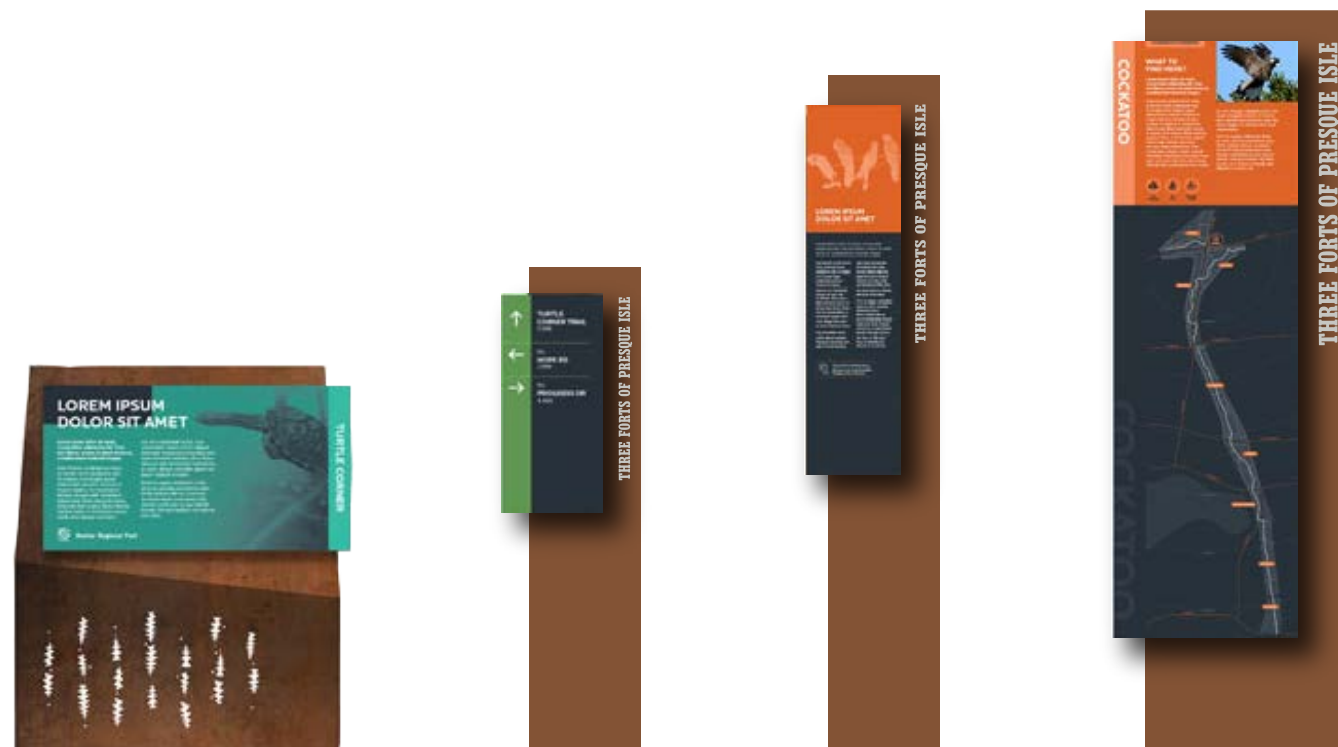
Touchpoints associated with specific topics for various interpretive media elements

- 1 • Gen. Anthony Wayne and the Legion of the United States
• Capt. Russell Bissell, Stephen Rochefontaine, and the American Fort
• The Western Reserve
• Andrew Ellicott and William Irvine: Surveying Erie
- 2 • 1795 American Fort Design
• Military Life at the Fort
- 3 • Presque Isle Bay
• The British Fleet
• The Changing Peninsula
- 4 • Oliver Hazard Perry
• Daniel Dobbins and the American Fleet at Erie
• The American Army at Erie
• Dr. John Wallace and Treating the Wounded
- 5 • 1813 Fort Design
• The Pennsylvania Militia
- 6 • The Pest House
- 7 • The Erie Ecosystem
• The Chestnut Tree
• Garrison Run
- 8 • Archaeology at Garrison Hill
- 9 • The Changing Landscape at Garrison Hill
• The Soldiers' and Sailors' Home
• The Veteran's Cemetery
• The Civil War at Garrison Hill
- 10 • The Pennsylvania and Erie Railroad
• The Railroad and Bayfront Development
• Garrison Hill



SAMPLE EXTERIOR IDENTITY AND INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE

Exterior identity, interpretive, and wayfinding signage are an important part of the visitor experience. They lead the visitor along their journey, are integral in the transmedia storytelling process, and reinforce the interpretive themes through stimulating and engaging content. These are samples of an environmental signage family.



According to the Society for Experiential Graphic Design, Environmental Graphic Design (EGD) “embraces many design disciplines including graphic, architectural, interior, landscape, and industrial design, all concerned with the visual aspects of wayfinding, communicating identity and information, and shaping the idea of creating experiences that connect people to place.”

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The foundation for student visitation to Three Forts are Education Programs that meet Pennsylvania's core curriculum requirements for field trips to the campus. Below is a brief sampling of target grades and themes associated with the site's resources and interpretation that match the state's guidelines and time periods along with the nearby states of New York and Ohio.

Target Grades in Erie for Field Trips and Educational Programs

4th Grade: Pennsylvania History

8th Grade: American History from Colonial Times to the Civil War

10th Grade: History instruction combined with ELA (English Language Arts) with Module 2 focused on the War of 1812

- “In this module, students will gain a historical overview of how America, as a new nation, faced many challenges. The solutions to these challenges formed the fundamental policies of American government that are still in use today. The writers of this period represented the American people and their spirit of individualism and encouraged self-expression. America was forging its own identity and taking its place in the global community.”
- Taught around October/November
- Primary Task: In what ways did the time period surrounding the War of 1812
- (1789–1816) influence American identity? After reading primary sources, literature, and informational texts on this time period; write an essay that describes how the American government distinctively faced challenges of a new nation and addresses the question. Support

your discussion with evidence from the texts.

- Other Module questions: What led America to go to war with England for the second time in a generation? Was the War of 1812 justified?

Target Grades in Ohio for Field Trips and Educational Programs

5th Grade: Regions and People of the Western Hemisphere

8th Grade: US Studies from 1492–1877:

Exploration through Reconstruction

High School Modern World History: World Events from 1600-Present

Target Grades in New York for Field Trips and Educational Programs

5th Grade: The Western Hemisphere

7th Grade: US History Part I: Colonization through the Civil War

11th Grade: US History and Government

Major Themes for Educational Programs

- **History:** timeline of major events from 1753–1815
 - Land Speculation: motivation for early settlers, plus leads to conflict with Natives
 - War: conflicts, military tactics
- **Government/Civics:** Native confederation, colony and mother country relationship, Articles of Confederation to the Constitution
- **Economics:** Indian Trade, commerce, industry and farming
- **Geography:** Mapping the territory and the importance of the geographical location
- **Engineering:** military engineering in the design of the fort
- **Disease:** the impact of European diseases on Native Americans



- **Technology:** how technology evolved and especially influenced Native Americans (example: bows and arrows to guns)

Proposed Educational Programs

On-Site Programs

- **Immersive Experience:** To fully process the unique immersive experience, students will need the opportunity to question what they see, feel, think, and wonder (based on Harvard’s Project Zero)
- **Perspective-taking:** Part of what makes this site so unique is the presence of four distinct groups: Native Americans, French, British, and Americans. Each side had a different motivation (survival, empire, land, etc.), culture, and way of life, some of which students can relate to but most that will be new to them. Through perspective-taking activities, students will better understand what life and decision making would have been like for the people of the time, even if they are different than them.
- **Evaluating Strengths and Weaknesses:** Activities and discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of each of the groups. This exercise, which uses the skills of comparing and contrasting, could then be used to predict what happened in specific historical events.
- **Professional Development for Teachers:** Offer a series of seminars for teachers on different topics such as Native Americans in the Ohio Valley, the Great War for the Empire, the War of 1812, and

Online Resources for Classroom or Individual Use

- **Pre-visit and post-visit lessons:** Students should have prior knowledge of the content through a pre-visit lesson. After their visit, they will need a

chance to reflect on what they learned in a post-visit lesson. Additionally, the post-visit lesson should include an assessment to measure the impact of the site on their learning.

- **Teacher’s Guide:** This resource will allow teachers to curate lessons prior to their visit and know what to expect during their visit.
- **Document-Based Question Essays (DBQs):** Collections of primary sources related to the site that can be used to answer an essential question like “Was the War of 1812 justified?” Available online with potential for site-run essay contests.



Dedicated Education App

Apart from a general site app, an education application that students can use before, during, and after their site visit enhances their ability to recall information about Three Forts. The application can use reading, math, social studies, or other disciplines associated with the core curriculum requirements to convey various themes and interpretations of the actions and events of the period. These apps can also apply games, use AR/VR technology, and link to other resources as part of the learning experience.



Period demonstration attracts both children and adults

Summary Recommendations

Begin the Visitor Experience process by:

- Creating a Journey Map
- Identifying on the Journey Map all the touchpoints associated with the organization where there is currently the potential for visitor engagement.
- Developing an online and physical visitor survey in collaboration with other historic sites or museums in the city to identify who is currently attracted to/ planning a visiting/already in Erie.
- Identifying where specialty audiences are already visiting Erie
- Developing a website that introduces audiences to Three Forts
- Creating online content or programming through podcasting or digital exhibits

Potential Interpretive and Community Programs

Campus Architecture: Learn how culture, landscape, place, and natural resources were important factors in the location, design, and construction of the Seneca longhouse, the French, British, and American forts, indigenous settlements, the French village, and the establishment of Erie as a military outpost.

- **Indigenous Foodways:** Learn how Native peoples adapted, used, and changed the region's natural environment to establish hunting areas and a base for sustainable agricultural development.
- **Neighborhood Tours:** Monthly tours of the East Bayfront community that highlight the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, the Veteran's Memorial Cemetery, churches, and other structures and stories that date back to the founding of Erie.
- **Cultural Festivals:** These events can be based on criteria associated with indigenous peoples and immigrant communities. For example:
 - ☒ Inter-Tribal Native American Pow Wows
 - ☒ Summer Food Festivals
 - ☒ Harry T. Burleigh Gospel Music Festival
 - ☒ Erie Roots Festival that celebrates the various cultures from around the world that have called Erie home.



Harry T. Burleigh



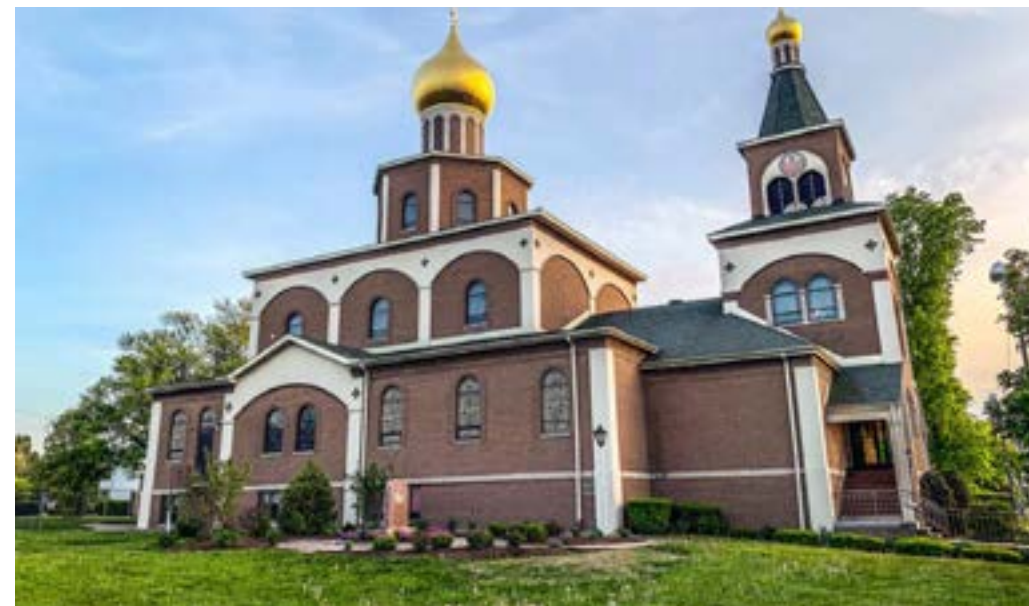
Officers' Quarters, British Fort



Vietnamese Festival



German Oktoberfest



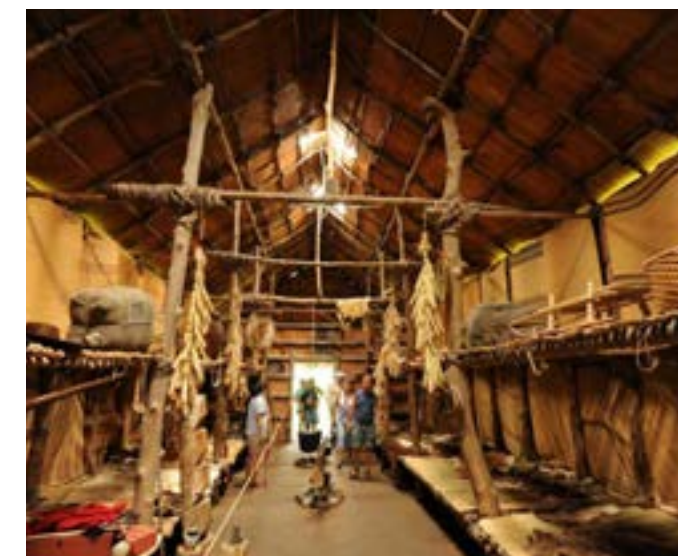
Russian Parish of the Church of the Nativity



Vietnamese Festival



Soldiers' and Sailors' Home



Seneca Longhouse and Cultural Celebration





Education programs attract learners of all ages. It is an opportunity to capture new audiences for specific topics.

Education programs are the backbone of interpretive centers, museums, and historic sites.



After hours programming attracts different audiences to experience the Interpretive Center, like this sleepover.



Historical reenactment is a staple at historic sites, especially those that involve encampments or period demonstrations like these programs at Fort Massac along the Ohio River in Illinois.



SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES AND PRODUCTS

Reclaimed Stone

Over the past twenty years, reclaimed stone has seen a surge in popularity and become a leading material for sustainably minded architects and contractors. Reclaimed stone is the eco-friendly option for many reasons:

- It takes less carbon to reclaim stone than it does to quarry new stone because it does not involve using heavy extraction machinery and fabrication equipment.
- Locally sourced reclaimed stone reduces the carbon emissions from shipping.
- Reclaimed stone can be structurally more reliable than recently quarried or harvested stone.
- Green points are awarded through the Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system.

The Three Forts exterior construction will require:

- foundations for the wood buildings
- the fort curtain and bastion walls
- the Iroquois longhouse
- the promenade
- the patio at the amphitheater
- The stone patios at Garrison Hill
- The stone outline of the 1795 fort
- There may also be other interpretive areas that will use as well. For this purpose, reclaimed stone sourced from old roads and bridges, walls, buildings, foundations, and other structures no longer in use can be salvaged and repurposed.

Wood Structures

Originally, both the French and British forts were built with American chestnut, a hardwood species that was plentiful in western Pennsylvania in the eighteenth century. However, the species was

devastated by chestnut blight, a fungal disease introduced into North America with the importation of the Chinese chestnut tree in 1904. When built, the new facilities will be reconstructed using Chestnut oak, a wood that is plentiful in the Allegheny Forest in central Pennsylvania.

- **Wood Protection:** The primary techniques to protect wood include drying, coating, and impregnation. These can help eliminate the main limitations of the material. However, only drying comes without risk of contamination. Drying reduces the decomposition of wood. Typically, wood is dried by air or with a kiln. Kiln drying is more effective because it kills fungi and insects and removes moisture more efficiently.
- **Wood as a Green Product:** Unlike other building materials like concrete and steel, wood is renewable. It can be grown and harvested multiple times. Wood waste products can be recycled and transformed into new products. Also, innovative designs can optimize the usage of materials to reduce waste.
- **Carbon Footprint:** The manufacturing processes of steel and concrete release carbon dioxide to the environment, also transportation also adds to the carbon emissions. Wood harvested from sustainably managed forests has a smaller carbon footprint.
- **Forest Certification:** The wood used at Three Forts will be from a certified sustainable forest. This helps enforce forestry practices among consumers and retailers, eliminating destructive lumbering practices.

Interior and Exterior Lighting

A green strategy for designing any electrical and lighting system can be summed up in three words: Use less power. LED lights are being used almost exclusively for exterior applications because of their extremely long life. Interior lighting is both an art and a science. LED lights are often selected for their energy efficiency, long life, and dimmed capabilities. LEDs are also capable of producing an array of colors to convey direction and mood.

The following are brief guidelines for outdoor lighting to cut down or eliminate light pollution:

- Light only those areas that need to be lighted.
- Minimize site lighting where possible.
- Utilize modeling the site lighting with computer software.
- Use full cutoff fixtures, low-reflectance surfaces, and low-angle spotlights.

Steel “Ghost Structures”

Buildings associated with the 1754 French village will be recreated using steel “ghost structures” to interpret Erie’s earliest European settlement. Steel is dimensionally stable and can be fabricated to exact specifications to minimize on-site waste. The benefits include high strength, durability, material reduction through integrated design, recyclability, decreased maintenance cost, and potential adaptive reuse. Steel complies with the requirements of sustainable design standards such as:

- International Green Construction Code (IgCC)
- ASHRAE Standard 189.1, Standard for the Design of High-Performance Green Buildings Except Low-Rise Residential Buildings
- National Green Building Standard (ICC-700)

Permeable Pavement

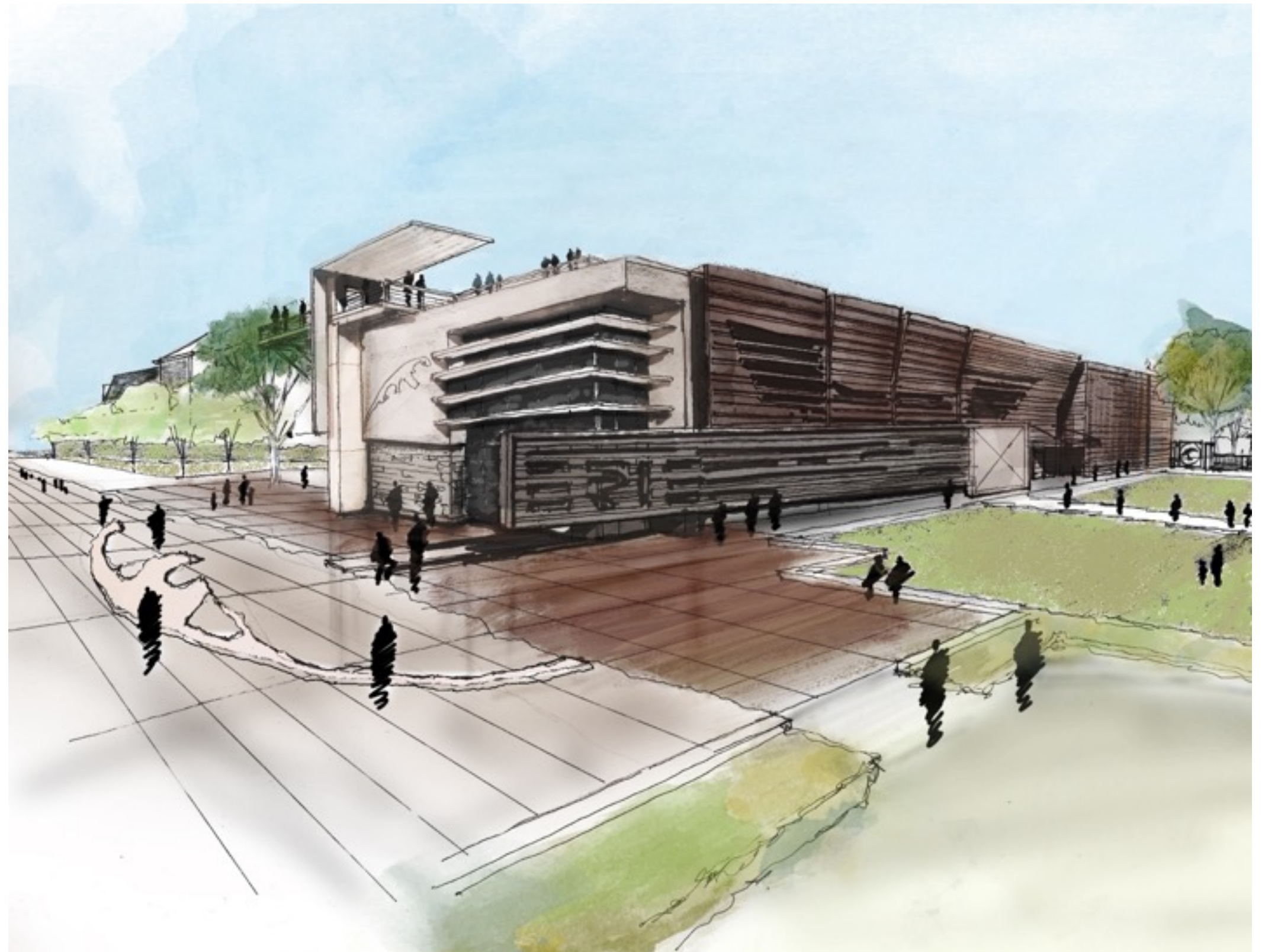
For all walkways, greenways, and the “floor” area within the “ghost structures,” permeable pavement is an innovative paving technique that allows stormwater to pass through the surface, into the sub-base, and percolate into the ground or find its way to a drainage system. This sustainable technique has been shown to reduce stormwater runoff, keep solids and pollutants from flowing into drainage facilities, naturally filter and recharge stormwater to groundwater, reduce the damage caused to pavement overtime by puddles, noise reduction, improvement in urban heat island effect, decrease the amount salt needed on pavement during icy or snowy conditions, and condense the number or area of drainage facilities needed to sustain a newly paved area.

The recharge of ground water is a sustainable feature of permeable pavement. In other cases, approximately 50 percent to 93 percent of stormwater was able to enter the soil and recharge groundwater through permeable pavement. For permeable pavement systems to be effective, there can be no grade within the space. Porous pavement requires maintenance, typically annually. However, only minimal repairs are typically needed. Landscaping materials such as mulch or sand cannot be near pervious pavement. Finally, permeable pavements cannot withstand as heavy of loads as traditional pavements. All permeable pavements are an ADA compliant surface.

THREE FORTS INTERPRETIVE CENTER

The centerpiece of the Three Forts Campus is the Interpretive Center. Through the adaptive reuse of the 21,600 square-foot Janitor Supply Company Warehouse, the new facility fits within the organization's sustainability goals by creating a LEED-certified structure that extends the life cycle of the existing building, conserves resources, reduces waste, and lowers the environmental impact of materials manufacturing and transportation associated with new construction. According to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, it can take 80 years to negate the adverse environmental impact produced by a new building. Because of the location between Wallace Street Park and Garrison Hill, the excellent overall condition of the cinder block construction, the accessible interior spaces, the retaining of the original wooden post and beam joist and floor system, and the viewshed opportunities from the flat rooftop, the Janitor Supply warehouse is an ideal candidate for the preservation, rehabilitation, and repurposing of an important part of Erie's urban infrastructure and the built environment of the East Bayfront neighborhood.

The primary purpose of the Center, like the other campus resources, is to promote critical thinking by providing interpretive resources and opportunities for visitors to engage, explore, and experience Erie's historic past in a way that enlightens and informs their daily decisions and help create a sustainable future.



Adaptive reuse enables communities to re-imagine underused spaces, transforming them into places where people can gather and spend time. The exterior conceptual design pays homage to Presque Isle while at the same time complimenting the surrounding park facilities by using soft tones and natural materials associated with the wood resources at the Wallace Street campus and stonework on Garrison Hill.

■ ACCOMMODATING THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The new Interpretive Center, once the home to the Organ Supply Corporation and in 1958 National Organ Supply, is a rectangular cinder block warehouse that has an intact 1959 heavy timber (redwood) post and beam floor joist system to support the weight of the second floor. The 1972 addition has the same joist system. In one area of the warehouse there is a large opening between the two floors where organ pipes being built or repaired that were too tall for the first-floor ceiling could project unobstructed above the second floor. There is also a service elevation.

Following property acquisition, to prepare the building for use as an interpretive center, a combination of restoration and some new construction will be necessary to adequately repurpose the warehouse to accommodate visitors and house exhibits. The structure will require a “front end” lobby and gift shop addition, exhibit areas, a meeting room, office and storage space, and mechanical rooms. A short list of repairs, additions, and upgrades will include:

- Repointing portions of the cinder block building
- Adding a “skin” to the exterior that is an homage to the park setting and attracts attention from the Bayfront Parkway
- Adding a 1,100 sq. ft. “front end” for lobby, gift shop space, and provides for covered access to the roof via staircase
- Restoration and reconditioning of the post-and-beam floor joists and wood floors
- Replacement of all windows
- Leveling of warehouse first floor

A fully immersive environment created to give the illusion of entering an alternate world. This form of visual storytelling is impactful, especially to contemporary audiences



Combining interpretive elements and exhibit types can produce a specific interior environment that recreates exterior landscape features.



- A 4” raised wood first floor to accommodate new electrical wiring and plumbing systems
- Additional interior walls to accommodate exhibits
- Staircase to access the second floor
- Exterior flooring and railing on the roof for use as an observation deck

**It should be noted that the 540 E. 2nd Street buildings, the original structures built by Frank Coyle in 1907 with an adjoining addition in 1919, will be restored as Mixed Use space, as addressed below.*

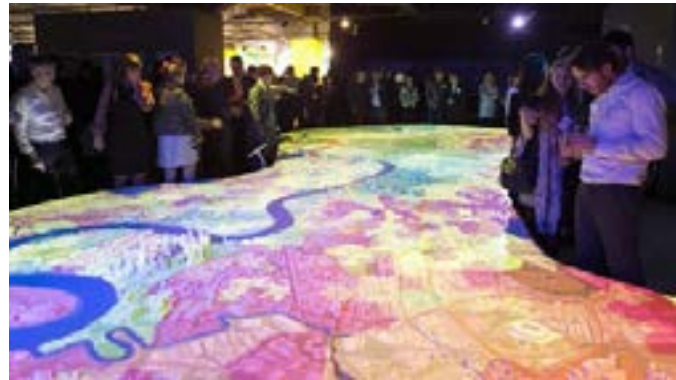
Interior Spaces

With 21,600 square feet of floor space evenly divided on a first and second level, the new Center will be a multi-use facility whose main function is expanding on the interpretation of the exterior campus facilities (Wallace Street Park and Garrison Hill) to address themes on transformation and sustainability within the context of Erie’s historic past.

Creating interpretive spaces that attract visitors is fundamental to the success of any historic site or museum. Though the scope of this project does not include a full exhibit plan for the Three Forts



From the PBS series Native America, and animated story of the origins of the Three Sisters according to Seneca tradition. Large screen digital presentations from floor to ceiling can capture the attention of audiences on multiple levels.



New London Architecture is an independent forum for discussion, debate and information about architecture, planning, and construction in London, with a core mission to bring people together to shape a better city. This interactive exhibit presentation demonstrates the story of the city's historical and physical development through a 1:2000 scale interactive model of central London.



The Pipers Central London model is the centerpiece of the New London Architecture galleries. Built to a scale of 1:1500, the model shows how several London boroughs will be transformed over the coming decades by connecting static and digital wall panels with the large-scale model in the center of this gallery space.

Interpretive Center, it is important to remember the exhibit design process should reflect heavily on the interpretive goals, objectives, and themes in this document when considering how best to provide a unique visitor experience.

Twenty-first-century exhibit planners have an assortment of innovative tools and interpretive

techniques at their disposal. Consequently, visitors today are exposed to a multiplicity of traditional and contemporary exhibition practices, procedures, and presentation platforms. The most successful institutions weave a narrative that engages audiences on a variety of levels using these various forms of transmedia storytelling and interpretive elements.

The new Center should focus on providing an immersive experience for visitors that includes a combination of static, digital, interactive, and environmental exhibits.

Immersive Environments

The Three Forts Interpretive Center is not a collections-based institution. Though artifacts and other material culture may play a reference role, they are not central to the storytelling process. Instead, the Center will provide an immersive environment that uses emerging media, such as projection mapping, virtual and augmented reality, along with other digital media elements to transport the visitor to the past, exposing them along the way to how Erie's landscape was transformed, changed, and

Exhibit Ideas

- An immersive exhibit we shall call "Dekanawida's Dream," exposes visitors to the imagination of one of the most important Haudenosaunee figures, Dekanawida, who envisioned uniting the Haudenosaunee nations in a form of democracy in the 12th century.
- Using tabletop projection mapping, demonstrate how Erie's landscape has changed over the past 300 years.

culturally impacted over time. Much like cinema, the objective is to provoke an emotional response from visitors.

First Floor Plan—Erie's Changing Landscapes

The first floor will include the main permanent exhibit space, office and storage space, a staircase, along with meeting and mechanical rooms. The exhibit area can be divided into regions or time periods based on the interpretive framework and the type of exhibit.

Opportunities for Collaboration—The Seneca Nation

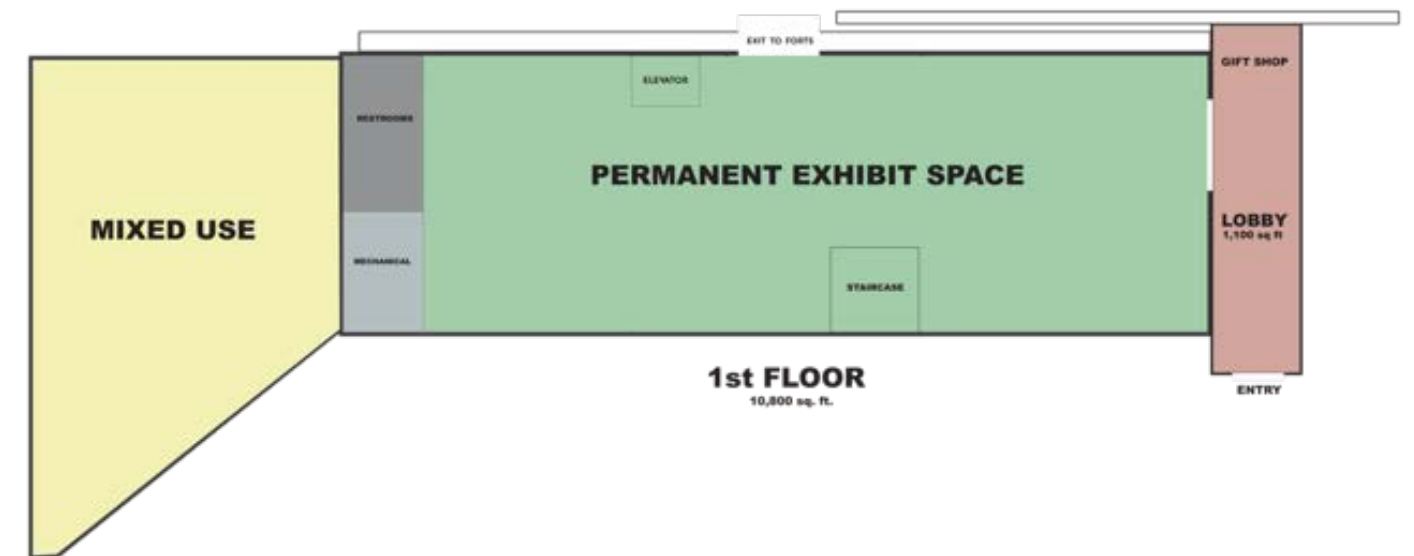
Interpretation at the Three Forts Campus seeks guidance from Native communities to better understand the depth and breadth of area's historic past and the area's indigenous peoples, one of the site's central themes. It is important to make sure that these stories are told by cultural descendants and that visitors are exposed to the Native

understanding/perspective of how the landscape, including the lake, has changed by human culture over time. Collaborative efforts would include:

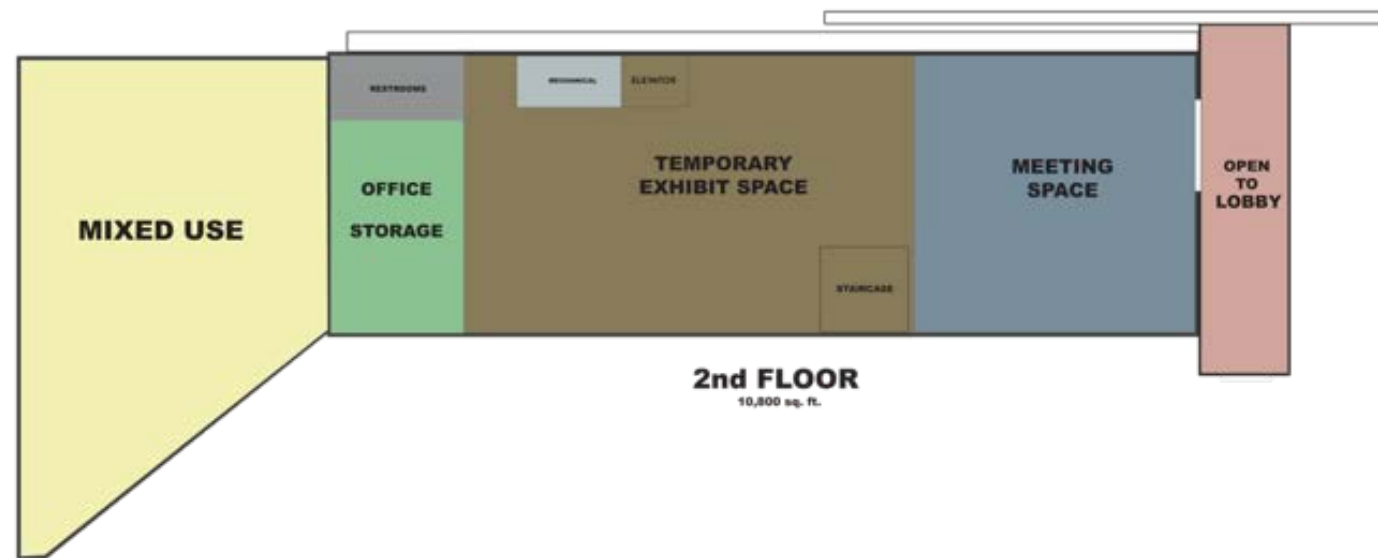
- Native American advisors to assist in understanding sustainable development
- Craft a heritage trail that identifies indigenous sites in the region—especially places that may be unknown to the average traveler but exposes them to the story
- Creating a long-term relationship with the Onöhsagwë:de' Cultural Center and Seneca Iroquois Museum in Salamanca, NY, and to partner in driving visitors to these facilities

Second Floor Plan—East Bayfront

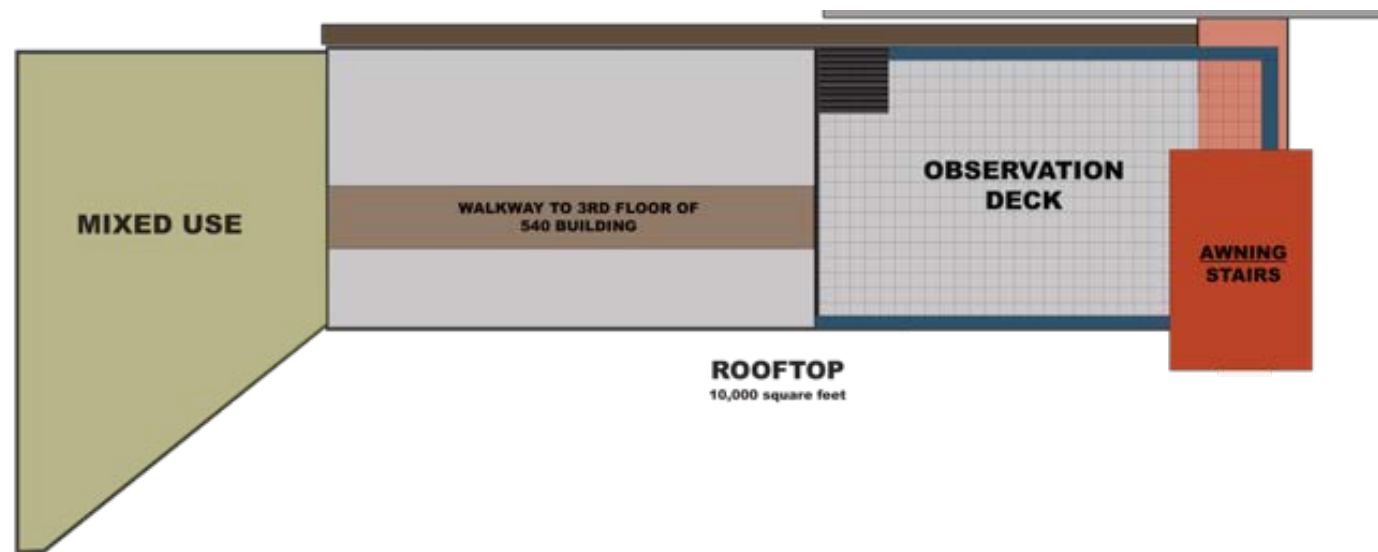
The second floor houses the temporary exhibit space. This area can be subdivided if necessary to accommodate multiple exhibits at the same time. The interpretive plan defines space within



The first level entry addition includes a lobby area along with space for a secured gift shop. The backend is the 10,000 sq. ft. Permanent Exhibit area and 800 sq. ft. mechanical room and restroom space. The Mixed Use area to the far left is the 540 E. 2nd Street building that will be restored as a leased property. It is not part of the 10,800 sq. ft. floor space of the Center. (This floor plan is for reference purposes only)



The second level layout can accommodate temporary or community exhibit space along with areas for office, storage, restrooms, and a meeting space for education functions or community meetings. The Mixed Use area is the 540 E. 2nd Street building and is not part of the 10,800 sq. ft. floor space of the Center. (This floor plan is for reference purposes only)



The rooftop is ideal for use as an observation deck for viewing the campus, the bay, or Garrison Hill. The deck can also function as an outdoor meeting space for events or gatherings. (This floor plan is for reference purposes only)

the Center that specifically tells the story of the transformation of the East Bayfront neighborhood. Mill Creek is a foundational “journey of discovery” landscape feature for visitors. Nearby archaeological evidence suggests that various peoples have visited or lived in the vicinity of this invaluable Lake Erie tributary since AD 500. East Bayfront was also home to Erie’s first permanent American settlement

and has been part of the city’s cultural transformation ever since. As John Nolen recognized, “the history made on this piece of ground would fill a large volume.”

Unraveling East Bayfront’s Immigrant Past

A good place to start gathering local information on some of the historical changes to East Bayfront

are churches in the neighborhood, specifically the Parish of the Church of the Nativity. Located at 247 E. Front Street, the church was established in 1916 by Russian Old Believer immigrants. By 1919, the original house of worship was constructed for the growing Russian community. The church prided on its sense of culture and tradition, conducting masses in Slavonic, their native language. Masses were held in the Slavonic language until 1980, when Father Pimen Simon began conducting services in English to attract new parishioners.

The Roof

The roof of the Center provides an opportunity for visitors to take in the full breadth of the Three Forts campus and provide views of the bayfront and the original shoreline, lending context to how the area around Mill Creek has been transformed and developed over the past 200 years. To access the roof, an external staircase is provided in the front end addition. There is also access from the third floor of the 540 building. The floor will require decking and safety railing around the perimeter of the raised ledge.



16th Street Baptist Church—Community-based exhibits attract input and interest



The Maintenance Shed (1), the Pennsylvania State Police Building (2), and the 540 E. 2nd Street Building (3).

Opportunities for Collaboration— Mercyhurst University

An operational objective of the Three Forts organization is to attract collaborative partners who envision the Interpretive Center as a place for engaging the Erie community. For nearly two decades, the Mercyhurst University Public History program has

been forging partnerships with a variety of community organizations throughout northwest Pennsylvania to advance the preservation and public interpretation of the region’s history. Public History students and faculty have conceived and executed projects throughout Erie County and as far south as Forest County. To cite four notable examples:

Erie County Historic Properties Survey (2012–14)—working in collaboration with Preservation Erie (PE), students helped to launch this immense project to document more than 31,000 structures throughout Erie County. PE went on to secure grant funding to complete the Survey, which served as the foundation for the Erie County Cultural Heritage Plan.

- In 2014-16, *You Are Here, We Are Here*—a multi-faceted community history project carried out in partnership with the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network—aimed to celebrate the rich history, common threads, and cultural vibrancy among Erie’s Eastside immigrants from German and Polish Americans to more recent Iraqi refugees.
- *Home of the Brave: A Documentary History of the Erie, Pennsylvania Soldiers and Sailors Home* (2017–18)—this senior project resulted in a 30-minute documentary film tracing the history and legacies of the Pennsylvania Soldiers and Sailors Home, which wove oral histories with historical images to tell the story of a venerable community institution.

A Shared Heritage (2018–2020) offers an illustrated driving tour brochure of 29 sites of African American history throughout Erie County, coupled with a web site featuring oral history interviews and an array of supplemental educational resources.

Grounded in the Mercyhurst Mission of social responsibility and a rich tradition of positive community engagement, the program seeks out opportunities for collaborative local history projects that can also help advance community and neighborhood revitalization. Program faculty include early American historian, Dr. Ben Scharff, whose scholarship

and public history experience encompasses work on the French and Indian War, Colonial era, and early Republic, the foundational period at the center of the proposed Three Forts Interpretive Center. Scharff’s areas of expertise are complemented by the program’s founder, Dr. Chris Magoc, whose broad portfolio includes early leadership of Preservation Erie and a range of traditional and public history scholarship. Mercyhurst is confident that the breadth of their expertise, combined with the energy of their students, holds the promise of making significant contributions to advancing the dynamic vision of the Three Forts Interpretive Center.

Imagining the Three Forts Interpretive Center as a Vital Community Institution

As currently envisioned, to be a self-sustaining site that appeals to more than one-time visitors, the campus aspires to be a place of vital engagement for the East Bayfront neighborhoods in which it is located, what sociologist Ray Olenburg might call a “good place” where social and cultural capital among disparate peoples might be cultivated. One strategy is to take the story of the Three Forts and all it encapsulates *forward in time*, illustrating the manifold thematic points of connection between the first peoples of northwest Pennsylvania and the stories of immigrants and peoples of color who have come to populate the lower Eastside over time.

Developing a site that offers a richly layered history that serves as a vehicle for discussing contemporary issues will require investing residents of the neighborhoods with what public historian Michael Frisch calls “Shared (historical) Authority” in developing such public history initiatives as oral history projects, museum exhibits, podcasts, walking tours, and community/streetscape interpretation. Through



540 East 2nd Street

such education, outreach, and community programs, the Three Forts Interpretive Center can help forge links and partnerships among diverse groups and organizations, fostering greater engagement with residents of East Bayfront that have been traditionally excluded. As a physical and social focus for civic engagement, it promises to become a building block of community identity and cohesion, a site that not only tells the seminal story of imperial martial conflict and transformation, but a great American story of shared identity that celebrates our rich multi-racial, multicultural diversity, one that can build empathy and socio-cultural understanding.

The faculty and students of the Mercyhurst University Public History Program envision being able

to contribute to Three Forts Interpretive Center initiatives such as the following:

- Community workshops
- Ethnographic field work, including oral histories and oral history workshops
- Monographs centered on various still-largely untold dimensions of the area's historic past
- Grassroots-driven census of "Places That Matter" generated by a combination of community meetings, social media, an interactive Web site, and faculty/student engagement in the community that might document important extant sites of social and cultural meaning in the East Bayfront Community

A Collaborative Model

Established in the wake of late-1960s social turbulence, Anacostia Museum, though operated under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution, is a dynamic grassroots-based interpretive center that shares historical authority with the city's diverse population as a means of telling histories of urgent, universal contemporary relevance. Their mission statement reads:

At the core of the Anacostia Community Museum's work is the belief that active citizen participation in the recovery and use of cultural and historical assets is an important and powerful instrument in creating and maintaining a sense of community and civic ownership. The museum's Community Documentation Initiative makes historical data and materials directly available to residents and other citizens and seeks to understand the ways that these constituent communities can use the museum to advance issues of identity, economic security and social change.

As a steward of community and family history, the Anacostia Community Museum regularly partners with community historians, scholars, and students. These partnerships provide an outlet for

the work of these civic-minded individuals while assisting the museum in its efforts to fulfill its mission.

The Anacostia's "Houses of Worship Project" documents the central importance of churches and other sites of religious worship in the communities it serves. *Neighborhood Change* is a research project that "examines neighborhood change, gentrification, and changing demographics in selected neighborhoods in the Washington DC metropolitan area. Museum educational programs, research, documentation, and the resulting exhibition will highlight diverse social issues and research queries, including memory and neighborhood change; land use and the role of zoning and planning; demographic change, immigration, and migration; attitudes about neighborhood change; suburbanization of poverty; and infrastructure and community development." Its acclaimed "Gateway Exhibit" told the story of what it means for Latinx migrants and immigrants to make a home in a U.S. city, an ongoing history of struggle and triumph.

Maintenance Shed

The shed is in solid condition and can accommodate grounds and building maintenance equipment along with storage of interpretive signage materials, living history, and other reenactment accoutrements.

Pennsylvania State Police Driver Testing Point Building

This structure, built in 1949, can be repurposed for office, meeting, or programming space. A full assessment is advised to determine if the building is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

540 East 2nd Street Buildings

Re-use of historic and older buildings, greening the existing building stock, and reinvestment in older and historic communities, is crucial to combating climate change.

—National Trust for Historic Preservation

540 East 2nd Street

The Janitor Supply Company building at 540 East 2nd Street was originally constructed in 1907 (3 story) with a second structure (2 story) added around 1919. Combined, there is approximately 14,500 square feet of floor space. These two



540 Building's original boundaries

structures are a central component of the Three Forts Campus for several reasons.

- The buildings are the first physical encounter for visitors from 2nd Street and should be treated as an historic property.
- Their presence is a direct connection to Erie's organ industry that flourished a century ago.
- Their adaptive reuse sets an important precedence that mirrors the organization's sustainability mission.
- The buildings have had few external alternations

since they were built over a century ago and are potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A due to their role in Erie's early twentieth century organ industry.

- The buildings offer the organization an opportunity for a revenue stream for office, retail, or as space for strategic partners of the Three Forts project.
- The third floor of the 1907 building gives visitors access to the roof of the back warehouse and use as an observation deck for the fort complex and the bay.

Building Restoration and Rehabilitation

Restoration and operational rehabilitation of the 540 buildings through a process of adaptive reuse is a major goal of the Three Forts Campus Master Plan. There are two restoration options:

1. Restoration by the non-profit and use as office, retail, and meeting space for the Interpretive Center.
2. The creation of a for-profit arm of the Three Forts organization that restores the building for use as rental space. Three Forks can form a limited partnership and maintain a minority ownership interest as a general partner. The limited partners would be entitled to the rehabilitation tax credit and the tax-exempt entity is able to ensure that the organizational goals are being met.

What is the Historic Preservation Tax Credit?

The Historic Preservation Tax Credit (HPTC) provides tax credits to qualified taxpayers who will be completing the restoration of a qualified historic structure into an-income producing property. All projects must include a qualified rehabilitation plan that is approved by the Pennsylvania Historical and

Museum Commission (PHMC) as being consistent with the standards for rehabilitation of historic buildings as adopted by the United States Secretary of the Interior.

Tax credits may be applied against the tax liability of a qualified taxpayer which includes an individual, corporation, business trust, limited liability company, limited liability partnership or any other form of legal business entity. The tax credits awarded to a qualified taxpayer shall not exceed 25 percent of the qualified expenditures as determined by the application in connection with the completed project. Tax credit awards can be increased to 30 percent of the qualified expenditures in connection with a workforce housing completed project. The total tax credits awarded to a qualified taxpayer may not exceed \$500,000 in any fiscal year.

Those eligible to apply are qualified taxpayers, which include an individual, corporation, business trust, limited liability company, limited liability partnership or any other form of legal business entity. Qualified taxpayers must be subject to the Personal Income Tax, Corporate Net Income Tax, Capital Stock-Franchise Tax, Bank and Trust Company Shares Tax, Title Insurance Companies Shares Tax, Insurance Premiums Tax, Gross Receipts Tax, or Mutual Thrift Institutions Tax.

There are 4 factors to meet the basic requirements for the 20% rehabilitation tax credit.

1. The historic building must be listed in the National Register of Historic Places or be certified as contributing to the significance of a "registered historic district." The State Historic Preservation Officer can determine if the building is National Register eligible under Criteria A.
2. The project must meet the "substantial rehabilitation test." This means that the cost of

rehabilitation must exceed the pre-rehabilitation cost of the building. Generally, this test must be met within two years or within five years for a project completed in multiple phases.

3. The rehabilitation work must be completed according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
4. After rehabilitation, the historic building must be used for an income-producing purpose for at least five years. Owner-occupied residential properties do not qualify for the federal rehabilitation tax credit. The 20% credit is available only to properties rehabilitated for income-producing purposes, including commercial, industrial, agricultural, rental residential or apartment use.

■ OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION— PENN STATE BEHREND

As a leaseholder, the 540 Building can help establish and nurture collaborative partnerships between Three Forts and other groups, organizations, for-profit businesses, non-profits, and educational institutions by offering rental space. These partnerships can directly benefit the organization, the local East Bayfront neighborhood, as well as others in the Erie community. For example:

Penn State Behrend—VAR Lab Satellite Research and Community Outreach Center

VAR Lab's field-specific expertise, educationally focused mission, and pre-existing regional relationships would directly enhance the ability of the Three Forts Interpretive Center to provide sustainable benefits to the community in the areas of education and historical preservation, mental well-being, and economic development.

VAR Lab Overview

The Virtual/Augmented Reality Lab (VAR Lab) of Penn State Erie, opened in Summer 2019. They focused on engaging with students and community/industry partners to leverage cutting-edge technology to create and implement immersive, digital solutions (XR; e.g., augmented reality [AR] and virtual reality [VR]).

Within their mission of enhancing the immersive learning environment of any partner with whom they work, they are currently focused on four key initiatives:

1. integrating immersive technologies into both K-12 and college educational experiences
2. digital preservation and creation (e.g., 3D scanning of existing historical sites and artifacts, creating 3D models of structures that no longer exist)
3. promoting mental health and well-being through digital initiatives (e.g., creation of digital wellness apps and other interactive digital media)
4. addressing training gaps in the workplace (e.g., virtual training simulations)

In pursuit of these key initiatives, they prioritize the involvement and integration of students as both student learners (i.e., using the educational immersive experiences they create) and student researchers (i.e., direct involvement with the creation of immersive experiences). By involving students with their work, they seek to create familiarity with emerging technologies, provide opportunities to gain skills and experience with these technologies, and ultimately teach for the future.

Using immersive experiences for learning in school and workplace environments

As the technology progresses, significant advances

have been made towards using VR for educational purposes, as there are certain characteristics that render this technology unique and a valuable tool for educators. Authenticity is the most basic advantage of VR in educational settings. Theoretical and/or practical knowledge learnt through the authentic environment that VR can provide is more likely to be transferable and applicable to real life. Research has shown that learning environments low in resemblance to the real task can still have good learning results, as long as the learning environment has the same criteria, the same social context, and the same physical objects with the real task. Considering this evidence, the learning environment in highly realistic VR settings is likely to provide even more than just the minimum needed results for the skills and knowledge to be transferred to reality due to its high resemblance to real-life tasks.

A second unique advantage of VR is the depth of immersion of the learner's experiences. Immersion can have the meaning of "the participant's suspension of disbelief that she or he is 'inside' a [...] setting" or "the degree of feeling of involvement and enthrallment caused by stimuli." Settings low in authenticity can still cause immersion, so some level of learning can still occur. Of course, the greater the immersion, the greater the learning

capacity of the setting. All the senses that are involved when an individual uses VR (i.e., visual, auditory, and tactile) result in high levels of immersion in the created experience, at both psychological and perceptual levels.

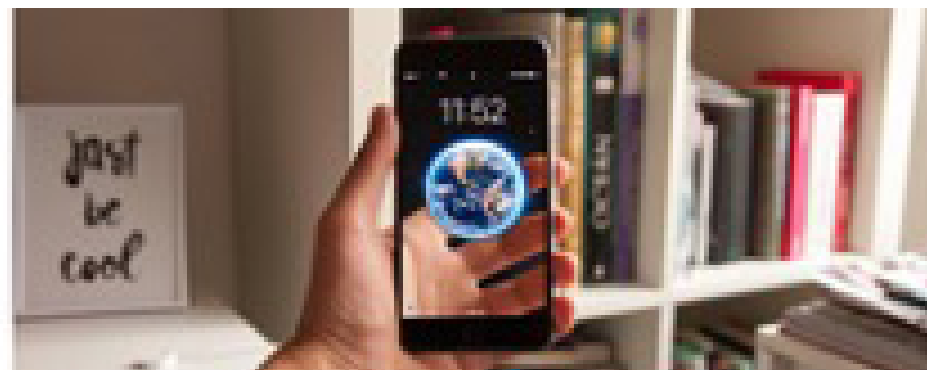
In addition to the direct effects of using VR applications in education, VAR Lab's student-centric mission provides valuable indirect benefits. By involving students in the construction and application of these technologies, we provide them with the opportunity to learn skills which will only become more valuable as use of VR becomes more widespread. They teach students how to generate virtual assets and models based upon real-life objects and locations, how to integrate them into virtually accessible environments, and how to tailor those environments to user-specific access. Again, these skills and proficiencies give students a unique advantage as they enter the workforce and begin careers of their own.

Using digital initiatives to promote mental health and well-being in the community Typically, mental health and wellness needs outpace the resources available. Mental health concerns across the United States are receiving considerable attention due to numerous factors.

Data reveal that emerging adults (8-25 y.o.)

have the highest rates of any mental health illness in comparison to all other adult populations. Emerging adults also receive the lowest rate of mental health treatments compared to all others (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2017). Numerous factors likely impact their ability to seek treatment even though they report having significant mental health needs. For example, there are many barriers to treatment seeking such as affordability, accessibility, and availability of treatments or providers as well as the stigma associated with mental health. Addressing mental health needs using technology offers a way to reduce these barriers.

For instance, smartphones have been evaluated as a way to integrate mental health services through technology. As of 2018, 89% of adults use the internet and 77% of adults in the US own a smartphone with more adults having access to a smartphone apps than to a laptop computer. Digital apps can be downloaded and used to monitor, record, and in some cases modify mental health, such as providing location-based services to alert users to the nearest mental health clinic, providing self-help mantras and guided meditations, and tracking mood ratings based on self-reporting. Other newer applications addressing health needs through



automated technology include such things as fitness watches automatically alerting users with feedback regarding different health concerns (e.g., having an elevated heart rate and the benefits of taking a deep breath to help correct it). Overall, there is ample data supporting a variety of online interventions and their effectiveness.

Currently, VAR Lab's work on digital mental health initiatives includes helping to identify and address health inadequacies, as well as, working to gain better insight into current and potential future uses of technology to address mental health needs. This type of work holds great potential for providing a variety of resources to the regional community. For instance, with a better understanding of areas of strengths and weakness (e.g., availability of mental health resources, resource usage, psychological trends, etc.), as reported by the community, we can work to remediate identified weaknesses. VAR Lab's work to create and design digital mental health initiatives for regional community members would provide additional avenues for the public to access mental health resources and potentially help reduce the discrepancy between the increasing need for mental health services and resource constraints. Ultimately, the Lab's work, on projects related to digital mental health, can address the needs of broad swaths of the population beginning at a regional level.

Potential Audiences

As a part of Penn State Erie, The Behrend College, VAR Lab possesses access to a wide range of audiences through the Penn State University system at large, the Behrend campus in specific, and VAR Lab's own regional outreach efforts. This wide-ranging, inter-connected list of educational

partners, non-profit organizations, and for-profit corporations represents a valuable network for building regional partnerships to further develop educational and community-based collaborations.

VAR's network

Penn State University system
Innovation Commons
Knowledge Park
Departmental programs
Youth Outreach
CORE
Center for Immersive Experiences
Teaching and Learning with Technology (TLT)

Partners with higher ed

Mercyhurst DAFS
La Roche University CSI Lab

Partners with K-12 ed

Fairview SD
Asbury Woods

Regional non-profit organizations

Fort LeBoeuf Historical Society
Hagen History Center
Asbury Woods
MEP Innovation Lab
PA Soldiers and Sailors Home
Ahmad Butler Foundation
Network of additional historical societies in PA, OH, and NY

Regional for-profit businesses

HD Forensics
Steeltoe Consulting

Other Behrend-specific relationships

- Magee Women's Research Institute in Erie
- Collaboration between Penn State Behrend, the Hamot Health Foundation, UPMC and the Magee-Women's Research Institute and Foundation
 - Companies working within the Penn State Behrend Knowledge Park Network, such as Erie Insurance

XR Educational Platform Development

The VAR Lab aims to build a platform to host VR programs accessible to instructors and students of K-12 and higher education. The proposed platform will allow instructors and students to have free and easy access to a variety of VR educational material created by VAR Lab and its collaborators. Currently, those interested in VR educational material have to find, gain access, and download the VR programs they want separately. The proposed platform will solve this problem by hosting a variety of VR programs accessible to the user at once. The platform would make the location of such material easier, less time-consuming, and potentially more focused and individualized. It would provide its users the ability to access, use, and possibly create VR programs easily according to their academic level and needs. Moreover, the platform could serve as a research tool with which to study XR projects and their potential impact.

This platform would not only serve as a valuable repository for educational VR projects but will also address critical issues of access. Most pertinently, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has created an increasing need for development and implementation of immersive digital experiences that can be experienced in a socially distant manner.

This is especially true for educational institutions as having access to high-quality, interactive, and immersive educational material is crucial for students working remotely from home. Historical/cultural sites are also trying to continue their operation and serve the public by employing new methods to accommodate to COVID-19 restrictions. Immersive digital presentations and other virtual/augmented reality technologies and scanners for digital preservation are among the most viable and valuable assets the Lab can provide to our community partners to help them meet the challenges they face currently, as a result of COVID-19.

However, for many members of the community, particularly those in low-income areas or other similarly disadvantaged groups, issues of educational access existed prior to the onset of COVID-19, which has only exacerbated these issues. The creation of VAR Lab's XR platform also seeks to address these issues of educational inequality by enhancing the access of these specific community populations and the educators who serve them to cutting-edge technologies. The immersive experiences hosted thereon provide opportunities for students to access locations, events, experiences, and learning opportunities which would otherwise be closed to them, such as studying abroad and visiting global heritage sites across the world.

Direct Integration with the Three Forts Campus

Moreover, this platform could be used to create and host immersive experiences and XR-related educational content specifically tailored to serve these populations and communities, such as a VR application based upon the experiences of refugees living on the East side of Erie, which could be used to promote intercultural understanding and foster



VAR Lab rendering of a canoe at Ft. Le Boeuf

community. Given the proximity of the proposed Three Forts campus to the East side of Erie, the inclusion of the VAR Lab Satellite Center in the campus represents a unique opportunity to cross-promote the community outreach efforts of both VAR Lab and the Three Forts Interpretive Center, improving the scope and efficacy of that work.



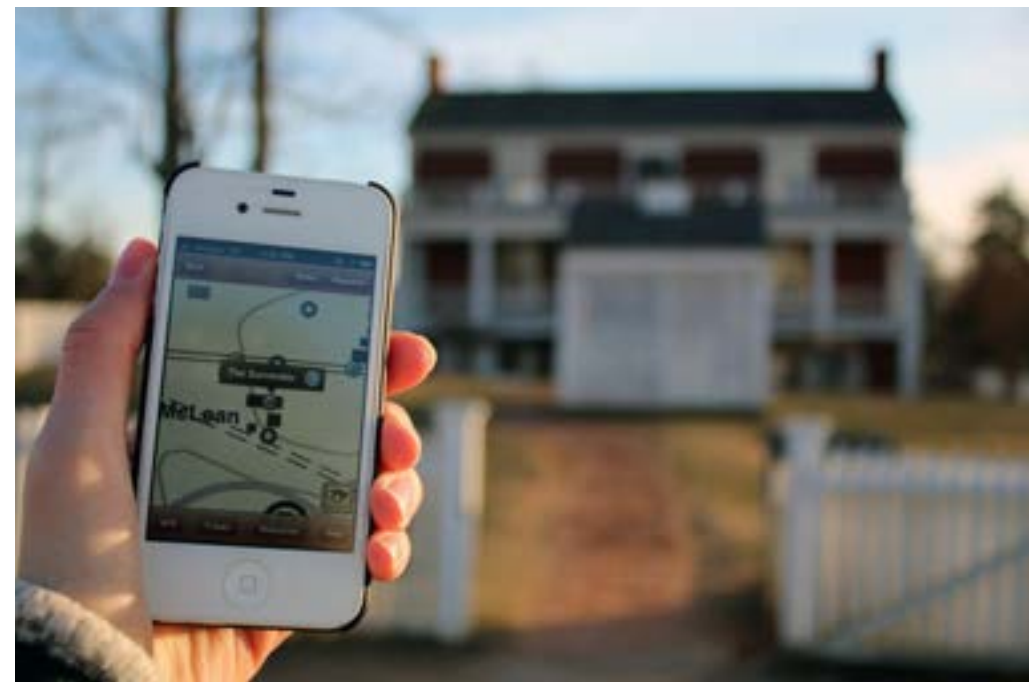
VAR Lab rendering of a canoe at Ft. Le Boeuf

VAR Lab Sustainability Engagement

VAR Lab engages directly with multiple United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including: (4) Quality Education; (6) Sanitation; (8) Decent Work and Economic Growth; (9) Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure; (10) Reduced Inequalities; (11) Sustainable Cities and Communities; and (12) Responsible Consumption and Production.

VAR Lab engages with these goals by:

- **Transforming Education:** Provide real-world learning opportunities for students to gain XR-related skills and experience, then apply those skills and experiences to real-world projects in collaboration with real-world partners; build and develop XR-based educational applications to be used both in and out of the classroom; offer opportunities for educators to incorporate XR technology into curriculum
- **Enhancing Health:** Provide immersive, virtual experiences to benefit mental health (SERENE App); create virtual experiences to foster cultural awareness and global understanding, to promote community well-being; use XR technology to address issues of equal access
- **Reduce Consumption:** Create virtual experiences which can be digitally-transmitted, reducing need for physical travel; create virtual experiences and applications which require few physical resources; generate XR-based solutions to improve efficiency and reduce waste in business and industry
- **Advancing Technology and History:** Create immersive, XR-based, historical experiences, highlighting regional and national history, multimedia artwork, and cultural awareness; create digital records and archives of important



and/or delicate artifacts, both physical and non-physical; offer expanded access to history through alternative presentations of those topics; use technology to foster interdisciplinary engagement with historical topics

- **Empowering through Innovation:** Prepare students for success in the digital age by helping

them gain skills, experience, and proficiencies with XR hardware and software; demonstrate the broad range of ways in which this technology can be applied to benefit education, business, industry, our community, and other fields; offer opportunities for students to directly engage with the development of XR applications; offer

opportunities for educators to incorporate XR technology into curriculum; offer opportunities for our community to employ XR technology to improve community resources and further economic development.

ACCESS

As indicated in the Current Conditions report, access to the Three Forts Campus is restricted to streets from the south and west off Holland and E. 6th. Currently there is no direct access across the Bayfront Parkway. However, critical to the long-term sustainability of the facilities is a recognizable “front door.” The intersection of E. 6th and Parade streets offers that gateway opportunity. The street is also the only road wide enough to accommodate two-way car and bus traffic.

■ ACCESS RECOMMENDATIONS: VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

Parade Street as the “front door” to the Three Forts Campus

Historically, Parade Street developed as a result of the portage road constructed by the French in 1753 that links Presque Isle with Fort Le Boeuf located in present day Waterford. This makes the street the oldest European built “road” in Erie County, and one of the oldest in western Pennsylvania. Currently, Parade Street’s northern terminus at Front has a small Memorial Park dedicated to the European forts that were built in the vicinity and the founding of Erie by way of the Erie stone marker.

Parade is also the most direct and the widest street between East 6th to Front Street. Though residents park cars along the curb in front of houses, bus traffic would find Parade as the least route of resistance.

Recommendations

Improvements and upgrades need to be made to each of the Three Forts “gateway” entries from the Bayfront Parkway and E. 6th Street. These include:



- Directional signage at E. 6th Street and the Bayfront Parkway
- Directional signage at Holland Street and the Bayfront Parkway
- Directional signage at Holland and E. 6th Street
- Entrance signage at E. 6th and Parade streets
- Directional /Parking signage down Parade to Front Street

Streetscaping

The East Bayfront neighborhood, from Wayne to Holland, E. 6th to Front Street, needs a new and improved streetscape plan. Successful streetscaping

is important to the long-term sustainability of the community and the Three Forts Campus. Improvements to crosswalks, traffic control devices, assisting persons with disabilities, public transit placement, recognizing safe routes to the Three Forts Campus, and traffic-calming actions can enhance safety. Streetscapes that provide greater mobility and access to transportation choices can also lead to more healthy and active lifestyles.

Currently, both Downtown Erie and East Bayfront are walkable areas. Enhancements can improve on that walkability. Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit-friendly streetscapes are achieved by

widening sidewalks, providing buffers along the street, and reducing the frequency for curb cuts. Streetscapes can also help improve environmental sustainability by decreasing dependency on automobiles, minimizing traffic and congestion, and reducing carbon emissions.

1. Streetscaping on Parade Street that improves parking for residents and visitors.
2. Street directional signage on arterials, including E. 7th through 2nd streets from downtown and/or Perry Square to German, Parade, and Front streets.
3. All signage should be consistently branded to recognize the Three Forts Campus and any local heritage tourism trail.
4. Because all streets have different types of users and serve multiple functions, each design must be context sensitive to the area (neighborhood, schools, hospitals, historic resources, homes, etc.).
5. The aesthetic appeal elements of beautification initiatives, attractive lighting, street furniture, clean streets, and outdoor dining contribute to East Bayfront’s sense of place.



Proposed Holland Street Pedestrian Bridge

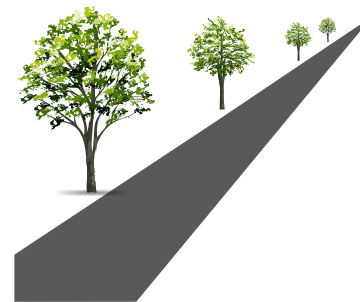
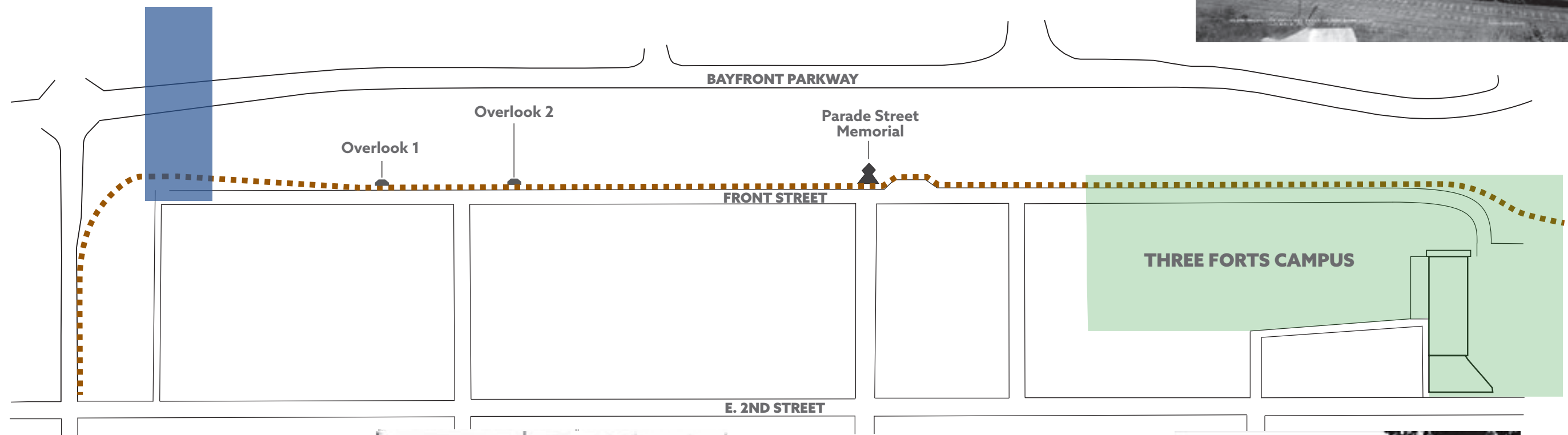
FRONT STREET GREENWAY

New roundabouts are proposed for the Bayfront Parkway at Holland and Sassafra Streets. A pedestrian bridge is planned to move foot and bike traffic across the Bayfront Parkway to the landing at Front Street.

To take advantage of the new bridge that connects the bayfront to the bluff area west of the Three Forts Campus, there exists an opportunity to update and upgrade the current sidewalk, overlooks, and the Parade Street Memorial.

WAYSIDE EXHIBITS

Installing wayside exhibits at the overlooks is an opportunity to interpret the east bayfront area and how the shoreline was extended to accommodate the railroad. Docks and storage areas for gravel, ore, and coal were synonymous with Erie's industrial development.



Greenway from Bridge Landing



Overlook 1



Overlook 2



Parade Street Memorial

CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM IN ERIE, PENNSYLVANIA

Heritage and Cultural tourism offers more opportunities for new products and services every year because history and the human need to learn about the past never stops.

Cultural Heritage Tourism is traveling to experience the places, artifacts, and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historic, and natural resources.

NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Tourism is one of the most dynamic economic sectors in the world according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). The Council's research shows that travelers account for 10.4 percent of the global gross domestic product (GDP) and 8.6 percent of the GDP in the United States.

Since early 2020, however, a global pandemic (COVID) has adversely impacted almost every aspect of human interaction. That is especially true of the travel industry. International and business travelers saw the sharpest decline with a drop of over forty-two percent in the last year. Domestic travel was slightly less, at thirty-six percent. Yet, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), "Culture was indispensable during this challenging period, with millions of people seeking out cultural experiences from their homes. The ability to virtually access and enjoy culture served a sense of comfort, as well as a source of inspiration for the travel of tomorrow."

Developing an innovative and sustainable cultural heritage tourism plan for Erie that takes into consideration the new dynamics associated with the post-pandemic traveler is an opportunity to catch



Encore Interpretive Design

the wave, so to speak, once tourism returns in the coming months. Currently, the city has numerous attractions and sites associated with Erie's historic past. With the addition of the Three Forts of Presque Isle and Interpretive Center, the community is offering a new destination of national significance that not only expands but enhances Erie's appeal to the convention, historic, and family-oriented travelers.

■ BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE HERITAGE TOURISM PROGRAM

A sustainable and successful heritage tourism, as an engine for economic development, enhances the quality of life of a community while at the same

time provides a meaningful visitor experience for travelers. Two of the main outcomes of an effective tourism program is to generate new sources of revenue for local businesses as well as offer direct financial support for cultural institutions, such as Erie's historic attractions and programs. An effective program also provides a central location or "place" where a community can explore its past and share with visitors the continuing evolution of its culture identity. The Three Forts of Presque Isle offers that central location as a hub for exploring Erie's other historic and cultural resources.

A sustainable cultural heritage tourism program achieves three goals:

1. **Preserves a community's cultural legacy**—Offers places to see buildings and landscapes where events happened, to hear the voices and read the words, to watch local artisans at work and to participate in unique celebrations.
2. **Attracts Visitors**—Encourages travelers to seek out the places that connect us to a historical time and place that still shapes us—individually, as a community and as a nation—today.
3. **Builds Community Pride**—Engages residents in learning about their history and encourages them to advocate for their community's preservation and to become ambassadors in sharing their community's culture and heritage with visitors.

■ CURRENT TOURISM IN ERIE

Erie has strong tourism industry that generated \$1.2 billion in visitor spending in 2017. (Source: *Tourism Impact*, VisitErie). Anchored by Presque Isle Park, which draws approximately four million visitors each year, tourism is certainly a growing industry in Erie. VisitErie is the membership-based tourism promotional agency for the city of Erie as well as the county. Funded primarily through a hotel tax, VisitErie's annual budget of approximately \$2 million supports a wide variety of media promotions, advertising, a matching funds cooperative marketing program, meeting planner assistance, website maintenance, and materials for visitors including guidebooks, maps, and an app. In 2017, VisitErie, in partnership with Presque Isle State Park and the Ridge Center Foundation, opened the Erie Visitor Center in the Tom Ridge Environmental



Center, an institution dedicated to telling the story of Presque Isle and the many different forms of life that inhabit the peninsula.

VisitErie’s most recent impact report (2019) shows growth in multiple areas:

- In 2017, visitors spent \$1.2 billion, an increase from \$463 million in 2001;
- Tourism supported 17,500 jobs in 2019, an increase from 11,000 in 2001;
- \$190 million was collected in taxes in 2017, an increase from \$96 million in 2001.

(Source: *Tourism Impact*, VisitErie)

■ PROMOTIONAL MESSAGES

In 2020–2021 in response to COVID-19, VisitErie’s website promotes travel to the city as “Safe. Fun. Affordable. Close.” The 2020 visitor’s guide is presented as an adventure guide and invites visitors to “Experience Awesome.” Both the website and the visitor’s guide provide information in a variety of categories: experiential tours, water activities, history & heritage, outdoor adventures, arts & culture, and others. Visitors can also access the “Hello Erie” app to plan a trip, access maps and find out about upcoming events.



■ TOURISM RESOURCES AND ATTRACTIONS

In addition to Presque Isle State Park, Erie is fortunate to have many resources and attractions to appeal to visitors including:

- *Two convention centers*—Bayfront Convention Center is anchored by two hotels with a total of almost 400 rooms. The Ambassador Banquet and Conference Center also has two hotels with over 200 rooms. VisitErie’s economic impact data reports 256 conventions between 2003–2020, generating \$68 million. A number of unique meeting facilities are available at hotels, museums, and other sites.



- *Experiential activities*—Sightseeing cruises, a mural arts tour, the Lake Erie Ale Trail, and a variety of outdoor activities are promoted.
- *Heritage*—The Erie Maritime Museum and Hagen History Center share Erie’s stories, along with a new African American Heritage Trail.
- *Downtown*—In addition to attractions, the downtown provides visitor amenities such as shopping, dining, and lodging.

■ TOURISM IN PENNSYLVANIA AND THE GREAT LAKES REGION

Economic Impact of Travel in Pennsylvania, a study completed in 2018, clearly shows the importance of travel and tourism to the state’s economy. Travel in 2018 marked the ninth consecutive year of growth as an estimated 208 million visitors traveled in Pennsylvania and spent \$44.8 billion. Tourism supported 515,100 jobs, representing 6.6 percent of the state’s total employment, and generated \$4.6 billion in state and local taxes and \$5 billion in federal taxes.

The study also provided data for each of the state’s 11 tourism regions. Erie is located in the Pennsylvania’s Great Lakes Region which includes four

PENNSYLVANIA'S GREAT LAKES REGION TOURISM

record **\$1.7b**
regional traveler spending

1.1%
increase over 2017

10th in state
for shopping

9th for lodging
expenditures

2018 TRAVELER SPENDING

Erie County
\$996m

Mercer County
\$313.7m

Crawford County
\$248.6m

Venango County
\$146.5m

10th
state market
traveler spending

almost **10%**
region's employment
and labor income

Source: *The Economic Impact of Travel in Pennsylvania*. Tourism Economics, An Oxford Economics Company, for the Pennsylvania Tourism Office.



Gridley Circle (Encore)



Kayaking at Presque Isle State Park (Encore)

counties—Erie, Crawford, Venango, and Mercer.

A study of Pennsylvania traveler profiles found that two-thirds of overnight visitors to the Great Lakes Region come from Pennsylvania (35 percent), New York (17 percent), and Ohio (15 percent). Of particular interest for Erie's planning to become a cultural heritage destination, the study found the factors that were most influential in deciding to visit the Great Lakes Region were:

#1—Lots of historic things to see or experience (46 percent)

#2—Lots of cultural things to see or experience (46 percent)

(Source: *Pennsylvania Annual Travel Profile: 2017 Travel Year*. Longwoods International for the Pennsylvania Tourism Office.)

■ DEFINING CULTURAL HERITAGE TRAVELERS

Although people have been traveling to visit historic places in the United States since the late 19th century, the advent of a travel industry segment known as “cultural heritage tourism” dates to the early

1990s. In the ensuing decades, the desire to promote culture and heritage moved to the forefront of agendas for many tourism agencies, museums, historic sites, and others who saw it as a way to generate economic revenue and improve quality of life for residents.

Since that time, numerous studies have sought to understand which travelers can be categorized as cultural heritage travelers. Although a narrow definition is someone who travels specifically to experience culture and heritage, the most accepted definition is broader—someone who engages in a cultural and heritage activity while traveling. A 2013 study found that 76 percent of all U.S. leisure travelers—almost 130 million adults—engage in a cultural or heritage activity while traveling. (Source: *The Cultural Heritage Traveler, 2013 Edition*, conducted by Mandala Research, LLC for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the U.S. Cultural and Heritage Tourism Marketing Council, and the U.S. Department of Commerce.)

Studies over the past three decades have consistently shown that people who want to experience culture and heritage are frequent travelers who spend more than general leisure travelers. They are

more likely to stay in a hotel, motel, or bed-and-breakfast, and almost half of their expenditures are spent on activities, dining, and shopping. (Source: *The Cultural Heritage Traveler, 2013 Edition*.)

In considering cultural heritage travelers as a tourism industry segment, it is essential to understand their motivations and interests in order to provide a compelling and memorable visitor experience. In addition to the requirements of all travelers—feeling safe when they travel, finding affordable destinations and ease of gathering information for travel planning—cultural heritage travelers have specific expectations. The 2013 report determined that cultural heritage travelers want:

- Travel experiences where the destination, its buildings and surroundings have retained their historic character.
- Travel to be educational. They want to explore and learn about local arts, cultural, environment and history.
- To participate in experiences rather than be a spectator.
- To engage with locals.
- To stay in lodging that relates to the culture or heritage of the destination.



Museum of the American Revolution (Encore)



Independence Hall (Staff)

Duluth, Minnesota

Duluth, Minnesota, a port city on the north shore of Lake Superior at the westernmost point of the Great Lakes, was settled in the mid to late 19th century as European Americans overtook lands from the indigenous Ojibwe. As new channels and locks were constructed, allowing large ships into the area, Duluth became a major port with access to the Atlantic and Pacific oceans as well as a center of the lumber and mining industries. Duluth's fortunes would rise and fall in the 19th and 20th centuries, with the Port of Duluth becoming the busiest port in the country in the early 20th century. In the late 20th and early 21st century, as industry declined, Duluth shifted its economic focus to tourism. In addition to promoting winter sports and outdoor adventures, Duluth also focuses on cultural heritage tourism at historic sites and museums that share the stories of Duluth's shipping, lumber, and railroad history. The Lake Superior Maritime Museum is operated by the Corps of Engineers with support from a friends group and features exhibits on the history of the Great Lakes. The Duluth CVB also promotes the S.S. Meteor Whaleback Ship Maritime Museum in nearby Superior, Wisconsin. The ship was launched in the Twin Ports in 1896 and carried cargo on the Great Lakes until the 1970s.

■ A PLACE-BASED APPROACH: CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES FOR ERIE AND THE THREE FORTS OF PRESQUE ISLE

Tourism is an ever-changing industry. The fastest-growing segments focus on experiencing unique and authentic places and cultures (the Experience Economy) while being sensitive to maintain or enhance the qualities that originally attracted visitors and contribute to a good quality of life for residents. Such tourism encompasses many categories

including cultural heritage, nature-based, community-based, outdoor recreation, agritourism and even “voluntourism” or vacation-based philanthropy. In contrast to mass-market tourism, such as cruise ships and theme parks, a place-based approach to cultural heritage tourism stresses quality over quantity, favors unique experiences based on a place's resources (such as distinctive destinations, unspoiled landscapes and historic sites), and relies on locally owned businesses that circulate money in the local economy.

There is a five-step process for cultural heritage tourism development that provides a foundation for developing a program that is unique to Erie's culture and heritage and opportunities for growth of its tourism industry. (*Source of five steps—adapted from Cultural Heritage Tourism: Five Steps for Success and Sustainability. Cheryl Hargrove, author. American Association for State and Local History.*)

STEP 1: Analyze the Potential

Analyzing the potential for cultural heritage tourism development in Erie should encompass a wide range of objectives to evaluate how local heritage and culture is documented and presented to visitors and to assess overall visitor readiness. Analysis should include:

- Assessment of cultural and heritage resources currently offered to visitors;
- Assessment of the visitor experience—events, programs, festivals, and other activities that offer opportunities for engagement;
- Identification of resources that have the potential for development as cultural heritage attractions;
- Identification of historic resources that are priorities for preservation;
- Review of documentation of Erie's history by experts (scholars, historians)—identify stories

- that could be shared and gaps in research;
- Evaluation of current visitor services including lodging, shopping, dining, signage, operating hours, hospitality training, etc.;
- Analysis of current target markets and promotions;
- Identification of stakeholders, advocates, and partners.

OUTCOME: As noted in previous sections, tourism is already a thriving industry in Erie. This analysis will offer additional insights, in addition to existing economic impact reports, which can build on Erie's success and highlight areas for development to further enhance the visitor experience. Additionally, completing this analysis will provide the foundation for a feasibility study for the Three Forts of Presque Isle and Interpretive Center to assess the tourism market for this new heritage attraction.

STEP 2: Engage and Plan

Cultural heritage tourism can be a key part of place-based economic development as it brings together partners from many different disciplines. Merging of expertise and interests can create a strong program and a cohesive visitor experience. Partners can include people working (or volunteering) in areas such as:

- Historic preservation organizations
- Historic sites
- History museums
- Historical societies
- Art museums
- Main Street/downtown/cultural districts
- Cultural organizations
- Art galleries
- Local restaurants
- Historic neighborhood groups

- Nature conservancies
- Land trusts
- City development agencies
- Chambers of commerce
- Tourism bureaus
- Tour companies
- Receptive tour operators
- Event producing organizations
- Lodging—hotels, motels, short-term rentals/B&Bs
- Transportation—airlines, rental cars, taxis
- Schools, libraries, and archives
- Civic organizations
- City, county, and state government

There are many stakeholders currently working on various planning, development, and promotional activities for Erie which can contribute to a successful cultural heritage tourism program. Some of these stakeholders include VisitErie, Erie Downtown Partnership, Preservation Erie, the Erie Port Authority, the Erie City Government, and Erie County Government. It is essential to understand that every organization, group, and agency has its own mission, goals, programs, and ways of doing things.

As a first step in building a cultural heritage tourism network, information can be gathered from potential partners to understand what each can bring to a partnership. Information can include:

- What is the organization/group/agency's mission?
- If cultural heritage tourism is part of the mission, what is the organization/group/agency currently doing related to cultural heritage tourism?
- How does the mission connect to a larger vision for cultural heritage tourism in Erie?
- What could the organization/group/agency accomplish with assistance from new partners?
- How would this new activity contribute to Erie's

cultural heritage tourism program? (Does it tell an important story that has not been told? Offer a new event or activity for visitors? Create new ways to tell visitors about Erie?)

Once partners are identified, planning can proceed in four areas to determine where each partner can be involved. The four areas and examples of involvement opportunities include:

1. Organization/Operations

- **Businesses**—serve on boards, provide volunteers, create materials;
- **Attractions**—compare notes on who has expertise in various areas such as writing press releases, creating a website, working with tour operators, working with artists, researching historical information, etc. Set up educational programs to help train each other.
- **Stretch budgets**—pool funding for visitor research, advertising, etc.;
- **Share new information**—one partner could attend a conference and share what was learned with other partners;
- **Share volunteers**—guides, event planners, etc.

2. Visitor Experience

- **Increase product offerings**—New products—activities, events, tours, etc.—give visitors more to do, increasing the chances they will stay longer and spend more money.
- **Put a new spin on an established product**—Partnerships create opportunities for making an established attraction “new” through new programs, packaging, or events.
- **Develop new programs**—As an example, an organization which owns a historic home may not have the resources to develop extensive programming, but by working with other

attractions, thematic tours could be developed to tell a broader story.

3. **Marketing**—Sharing the costs of advertising and promotion can reach new markets in a cost-effective way.
4. **Local Awareness and Support**—A united front when asking for support from government agencies, businesses or others is always more impressive because it demonstrates a potential for greater return on the investment.

OUTCOME: This analysis will result in an in-depth look at how organizations, groups and agencies in Erie are currently operating and how they can be part of a strong partnership network to develop a cultural heritage tourism plan and program.

STEP 3: Develop Authentically to Create a Sense of Place

When promoting culture and heritage, the message being communicated is one of authenticity and a sense of place. The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines a sense of place as: *Those things that add up to a feeling that a community is a special place, distinct from anywhere else.*

Several historic resources in Erie offer the authenticity associated with place, including Gridley Circle, Hagen Center, the Land Light House, and the USS Niagara. The addition of the Three Forts of Presque Isle, however, enhances the level of authenticity by recapturing in detail the area of town directly connected to the city’s origin story. It’s the one place where various worlds both clashed and came together to create Erie’s first communities born out of cause and conflict.

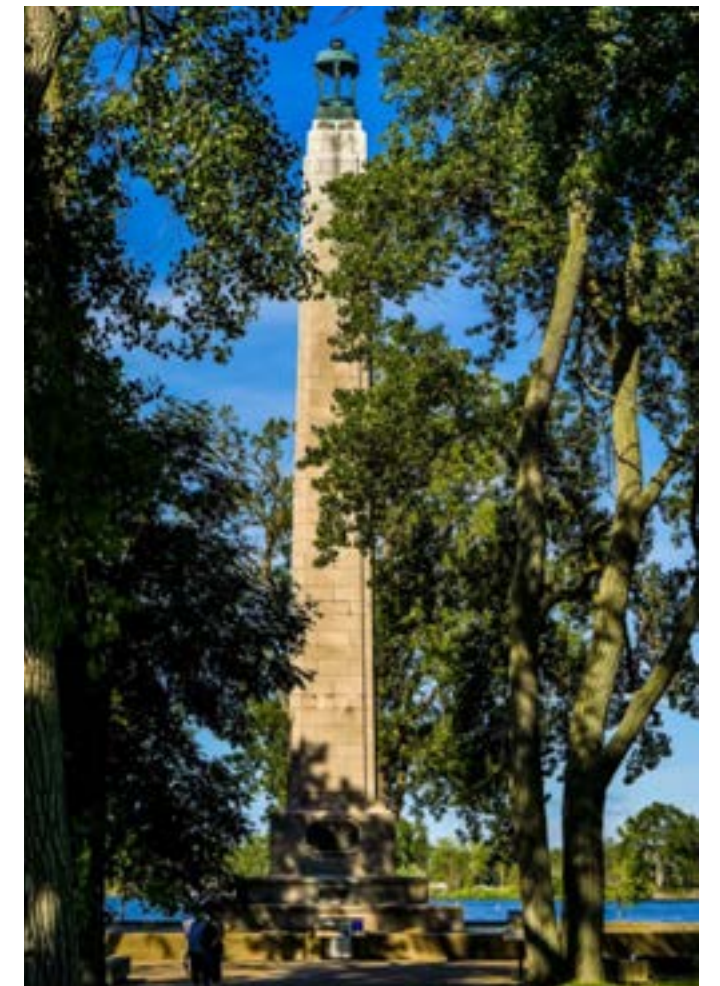
Preservation of historic, cultural, and natural resources is essential for a community’s sense of place and for a successful cultural heritage tourism



Hagen Center (Encore)



USS Niagara (Staff)



Perry Monument (Encore)

program. Among the considerations for preserving and protecting resources are:

- **Preservation plans**—Plans are needed for the community as a whole as well as individual historic, cultural, and natural resources.
- **Community Education**—Programs (such as tours, lectures, classes) can increase local awareness and appreciation of historic and cultural resources and build support for their preservation.
- **Partnerships**—Partnerships among preservationists, historians, tourism promoters, and other experts and advocates will ensure coordinated planning, implementation, and management. Erie’s preservation ethic and support for cultural

heritage tourism got a tremendous boost in recent years with several activities. Each of these activities provides resources and information for cultural heritage tourism planning. Developers of these plans and projects should be engaged as partners in development of Erie’s cultural heritage tourism plans.

- **Survey of historic resources**—In 2014, Preservation Erie and Wise Preservation Planning surveyed and documented over 30,000 buildings in Erie County that dated prior to 1940. Information is organized by town and historic district and can also be searched by architectural style. Each district includes its history and architectural description, map, and link to a National Register of Historic Places nomination.

Historic Preservation & Heritage Tourism

Creative industries are much more likely to locate in livable urban areas, and for that reason corporate location decisions will increasingly be based on the relative attractiveness of cities rather than of countries.

—from *The Economics OF Uniqueness*, 2011

Communities across the country have used historic preservation as a tool for economic development for decades. Places such as Charleston, South Carolina, New Orleans, Louisiana, New York City, Palm Springs, California, and countless others, have recognized the value of restoration, rehabilitation, reconstruction, along with the adaptive reuse of their historic structures and landscapes, to revitalize aging downtowns, increase property values, create jobs, and build successful heritage tourism programs. All of these communities seek to harness the authenticity of “place” in order to create meaningful and memorable visitor experiences that use the built environment as a vehicle for exploring each community’s unique identity as defined by their historic past.

Historic preservation, however, does not mean merely preserving the historic fabric of Erie to promote tourism. Rather, it uses existing historic properties as an urban design and planning resource to create a better living environment for those who choose to call the city home. Today, human and corporate capital is more mobile than ever, and places like Erie compete for talent by trying to distinguish themselves from rival locations. Those decisions about where to live, work, open a business, or expand operations, are not arbitrary. Thus, preserving and conserving Erie’s natural and built environments—the city’s historic infrastructure—is the foundation for creating a distinctive place-based identity.



Ryman Auditorium

Music City USA

Numerous heritage tourism programs are identified in this document. All measure their cultural and economic impact in different ways. However, in each and every case, historic preservation, a product of the collaborative efforts of a community that values its distinctive past, is the foundation, the backbone, for building an effective program. The road to success is never easy.

For example, Nashville, Tennessee, combines historic preservation, public and private partnerships, targeted investment by the city, and transmedia storytelling to attract visitors to “Music City USA.” At the heart of Nashville’s downtown redevelopment in

the past twenty-five years is the Ryman Auditorium. Originally constructed in the 1890s as a tabernacle, the building was repurposed as a performance venue in the 1910s and then as the home of the Grand Ole Opry, still the nation’s longest running radio show, in 1943. Slated for demolition in the 1970s, the “Mother Church of Country Music” was rescued and restored. Today it is not just a major tourist attraction and music venue but is recognized as a primary catalyst for luring other businesses in the cultural, entertainment, and hospitality industries to Nashville through the continued revitalization and preservation of core structures associated with

the city’s rich musical heritage in the Lower Broad historic district. In January 2021, the National Museum of African American Music opened its doors. The institution occupies 56,000 square feet of space just across the street from the Ryman.

Yet, the Ryman is not alone in local efforts to preserve historic resources. The top four tourist venues in Nashville, outside of downtown, are all historic sites that tell different stories of Nashville’s past—Music Row, the Parthenon, Belle Meade Plantation, and The Hermitage, the Home of President Andrew Jackson. Each has their individual stories about being saved by preservationists, and now are at the heart of a tourism industry that welcome’s more than 16-million visitors a year (2019). Nashville has successfully used the preservation of unique cultural resources, combined with the story of both its historic past and current status as a recording and performing anchor in the nation’s rich musical heritage, as an effective strategy in creating a distinctive identity based on place that attracts an ever-increasing crowd of visitors.

Harnessing Change

Nashville has no Presque Isle and no Lake Erie. There is no story of once great indigenous civilizations who first harnessed the power of the land and the lake, no historic resources associated with a cornucopia of immigrant populations that invented and reinvented the city, no building of a fleet to secure the right of a young and disparate American nation to exist, no victorious veterans that defended that imperfect union, and no place that scrutinizes the accomplishments and failures of the past in order to create new and innovative ways to reimagine an ever-changing world. What better stories to tell and what better place than Erie to tell them?

Historic Preservation in Erie

In the Current Conditions section of this Master Plan, we discussed historic preservation efforts in and around the East Bayfront community, how the neighborhood was transformed by industrialization, and the adverse impact of urban renewal on other areas of Erie’s built environment. We also identified the preservation initiatives of several agencies, organizations, and individuals who have worked to save historic structures. In each of these cases, alterations to and relocations of buildings struck a balance between preserving the structures historic character and allowing them to fully participate in modern life. Understanding the need to change in order to continue to have meaning and relevance is an effective way to address the ongoing struggle between the rigidity of previous preservation practices and altering historic structures or landscapes without regard to the intent of their original design.

Preservation Erie

Preservation Erie (preservationerie.org) was formed in 2007 as an all-volunteer organization with a mission to promote, preserve, and enhance the distinctive character of greater Erie through community-based planning, design, and historic preservation. They provide educational opportunities and technical assistance (National Register nominations, preservation planning, grant writing, etc.) to County and municipal leadership, neighborhood/community organizations, and individual property owners, and advocate for preservation at the local, state, and national levels. The organization champions the belief that certain structures are instilled with a deep sense of history and tradition, and that most historic buildings need to be periodically updated in order to remain useful and relevant.



The Boston Store Livery and Garage

Erie Insurance

Erie Insurance, while under the leadership of Tom Hagen, acquired and restored numerous historic structures located in the vicinity of the Erie Insurance campus. They include:

■ THE TIBBALS HOUSE

The Tibbals House, located on East Fifth Street, and the four adjacent historic Federal Period houses were restored by Erie in 1984. Known as “Federal Row,” they are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Tom Hagen and Erie Insurance received an Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History Leadership in History Awards for the publication, *The Historic Tibbals House—1842*.

■ THE GIDEON BALL HOUSE

The Gideon Ball House, located on East Sixth Street across from the H.O. Hirt Building, the Home Office of Erie Insurance, was acquired and restored in 1992.

■ THE ARMORY

Erie Insurance restored the 24,000-square-foot Armory and the structure was added to the National Register in 1989.



C.F. Adams Building

■ THE BOSTON STORE LIVERY AND GARAGE

This building, located on French Street, was originally completed in 1906. Erie Insurance restored the building in 1986 and donated the structure to the Experience Children’s Museum.

■ JUDAH COLT AND VON BUSECK HOUSES

Two historic houses, Judah Colt and Von Buseck, were dismantled from their original locations and relocated to the corner of East 5th and German Streets in Erie in 2018.

■ FIREHOUSE

The Constable Brothers Construction Company built the 13,500-square-foot Firehouse, located at 414 French Street, in 1907-1908. Erie Insurance purchased the building in November 2015. After an extensive renovation, the two-story structure reopened in July 2017 as an employee event center for meetings and conferences.

■ C.F. ADAMS BUILDING

The 1938 C.F. Adams Building was Erie Insurance’s second office from 1938 to 1956.



Firehouse

The preservation happening in the West 6th Street Historic District at the hands of Tom Hagen (a local philanthropist) and Jeff Kidder (an architect whose specialty is in historic architecture), is particularly exciting. They are working to restore and preserve a large number of the historic mansions in this district.

Erin Phillips, aka *Old Erie on Foot*



Troy-Sterrett Building



Canalside Townhouse Apartments

Tom Hagen

Former Erie Insurance CEO, Tom Hagen, has played a major role in the last several decades in the restoration and adaptive reuse of numerous structures associated with the city's historic past. Currently, he is working on restoring seven three-story mansions on West Sixth Street, all within the West Sixth Street Historic District. Using \$500,000 in historic tax credits to help fund the \$5 million restoration of two brick duplexes at 328-332 W. Sixth Street, built in the mid-1870s on the former

basin of the Erie Extension Canal, has been a labor of love for Hagen. He hopes that these preservation projects will spur more investment in historic properties around Erie. "My goal I have in mind is to try to save some of these buildings that have not only historic, but architectural value, maybe even cultural value to the city because of the people who lived in them," Hagen said. "I have gotten concerned that many of them have fallen into disrepair."

Erie Downtown Development Corporation

The EDDC was formed in 2017 to "transform the city of Erie's downtown core and spark revitalization across the region." Using the recommendations made in *Erie Refocused*, the organization is attracting investment for the 16-block area defined as 3rd Street to Perry Square, Holland Street to Sassafras St.

The EDDC has actively worked to purchase several historic structures in downtown Erie, including the Cashier's House, designed by Philadelphia-architect William Kelly and built as part of a three-structure complex in 1839.



North Park Row Exterior and Interior

While some of Downtown Erie lost its character during development in the past, CEO John Persinger says the team is working to keep as much of the look of the area in the EDDC footprint as possible to "preserve the historic integrity of these buildings."



Otto Germer House

West Sixth Street Historic District

The West Sixth Street Historic District, known as Erie's "Millionaires Row" during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was listed on the National Register in 1984. The district is bounded on the east by Peach Street, on the west by Poplar Street and on the north and south by property lines with the exception that two entire city blocks are included. The first entire block included is bounded by Sassafras Street on the east, Myrtle Street on the west and West Sixth and Seventh Streets to the north and south. The second entire block included is known as the Garden Court Subdivision and is bounded on the east by Cherry Street, on the west by

Poplar Street and on the north and south by West Sixth and Seventh Streets.

The district is an impressive array of significant American architecture styles prominent before and after the end of the nineteenth century. They include Federal, Greek Revival, Italian Villa, Italianate, Second Empire, Stick style, Queen Anne, Romanesque Revival, Beaux-Arts, Shingle style, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Bungalow style, Craftsman, and Prairie style. The district also contains work of at least three regionally prominent architects, as well as several vernacular designs by local architect-builders.

Creative Placemaking for Cultural Heritage Tourism

Developing authentically to create a sense of place is often referred to as creative placemaking. In recent years, this approach has become popular with planners in the U.S. and internationally. Creative placemaking plans for what residents want for their community and the resulting economic benefits, often focused on cultural heritage tourism.

The American Planning Association notes: “Successful creative placemaking highlights unique community characteristics. Projects can focus on connecting local history with the present, bringing cultural influences into the spotlight and creating new traditions. It builds connections between people and places by encouraging collaboration and visualization.”

Many planning organizations have developed guidelines and how-to manuals for creative placemaking. A recent presentation identified four primary attributes of placemaking for cultural heritage tourism. These attributes are summarized to include:

Context and conservation—An aesthetically appealing visual appearance can contribute to a sense of place and a meaningful experience for tourists. Destinations should be preserved, protected, and maintained.

Site interpretation—Sites hold the stories and history for a place to engage tourists and residents. Interpretation should be clear, memorable, and accurate to encourage interaction with a place.

Comfort and image—Destinations should reflect a sense of place and be visually pleasing. They should feel safe, comfortable, and clean.

Access and linkage—Visitors should be able to easily reach a destination on streets, bike lanes, and pedestrian paths.

(Source: Adapted from: “Placemaking as an Approach to Foster Cultural Tourism In Heritage Sites,” Haitham Samir, Salwa Samargandi and Mohammed F. M. Mohammed, Department of Architecture, Effat University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2019.)

- **Cultural heritage plan**—In 2017, *Erie County: A Cultural Heritage Plan, A Component of the Erie County Comprehensive Plan*, was completed. The plan includes three goals—capacity, awareness, and stewardship—with accompanying action steps to support historic preservation. The plan identified a wide range of tangible and intangible assets and organized resources into six thematic cultural areas:
 - ~ Maritime/Manufacturing
 - ~ Agricultural/Vineyard
 - ~ Agricultural/General
 - ~ Route 6 Heritage
 - ~ Erie Extension Canal
 - ~ Marine Sanctuary

The city of Erie is located in the maritime/manufacturing area. The plan identifies resources and discusses the historical importance of Lake Erie to the city:

“The original grid for the City of Erie was laid out in relation to the lake; its docks and wharves, developed beginning with the War of 1812 and the construction of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry’s fleet, became the city of Erie’s commercial center in its early years. A remnant from that era remains as Dobbins Pier. Volunteers poured into the City of Erie to help build the fleet and fight the British. Many, including African Americans, remained and became the backbone of the city’s nascent industrial economy.”

Historic Preservation Task Force and Certified Local Government Application—In 2019, Erie City Council approved formation of a Historic Preservation Task Force. In 2020, Preservation Erie awarded the Mayor’s Office and City Council a Greater Erie Award in the category of education and advocacy for this action. The Task Force’s

directive is to “study, analyze, and develop a historic preservation plan for the City of Erie that will identify community supported goals for preservation, identify policy recommendations, and funding opportunities that will be presented to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation to City Council and the Mayor.” The forthcoming historic preservation plan can contribute significantly to ensuring that Erie’s sense of place is carefully preserved and nurtured. In the fall of 2020,

the Task Force took a substantive step forward with submission of an application to the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG) along with a grant application to support a staff position. CLG designation is a great benefit to a cultural heritage tourism program as it would provide historic preservation expertise and technical assistance through a local staff position and the SHPO. Additionally, CLGs can apply for grants

Cultural Heritage Tourism in Natchitoches, Louisiana Cane River National Heritage Area

Fort St. Jean Baptiste, Fort Jesup, and Fort Los Adaes

The town of Natchitoches is the oldest permanent settlement in Louisiana and is the centerpiece of a rural, agricultural area which stretches 35 miles along the Cane River in north-central Louisiana. A unique blend of French, Spanish, African, Native American, and Anglo-American cultures stretches back almost three centuries to form the Creole population who continue to live here today.

Natchitoches is the location of three forts constructed by the French, Spanish, and Americans to signal control at various times. The area was first occupied by the Natchitoches Caddo and Adaes. The arrival of French explorers in the early 18th century opened the door to claims of territory by the French, who built Fort St. Jean Baptiste, and the Spanish, whose fort was built in nearby Los Adaes.

The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 brought the territory under U.S. control. In 1822, the U.S. military constructed Fort Jesup, a sprawling complex of 82 structures including a hospital, kitchen, offices and soldiers’ quarters. In time, the settlement of Natchitoches would emerge as a bustling town, with soldiers staying after their tours of duty ended

to raise their families. Settlers soon followed the military, bringing with them the first African slaves to the region and ushering in a plantation system that would dominate the region’s economy for more than 200 years.

Today, the sites of the three forts are state-managed tourist attractions. Visitors to Fort Jesup State can tour the museum housed in the reconstructed officers’ quarters and see the restored original kitchen. Los Adaes offers a museum and guided tours. The full-scale reconstructed Fort St. Jean Baptiste is located near the site of the original fort and presents living history re-enactments of life at the fort in the 1750s.

The forts are an integral part of the visitor experience in Natchitoches which includes several historic house museums and churches, and the 33-block downtown which is a National Historic Landmark. To help visitors experience all that Natchitoches has to offer, the Cane River National Heritage Area developed [a guidebook](#), maps, interpretive signage, a system of wayfinding signage, and guided walking tours.

to fund a variety of preservation projects such as National Register nominations, feasibility studies, and public education programs. The CLG program also coordinated with Pennsylvania's Keystone Communities program to give special consideration in awarding grants. Erie's Downtown Partnership is a designated Keystone Community, placing the city in line for increased funding when CLG designation is awarded.

Erie Downtown Partnership—Downtowns of all sizes and in locations across the country have become vibrant tourism destinations which draw travelers to enjoy an authentic visitor experience, learn the community's story (past and present), enjoy local cultural programs and events and to shop and dine—making downtowns an important economic driver for the communities. As a state-designated Keystone Community, the Erie Downtown Partnership's priorities are placemaking, marketing, and advocacy, making the organization an important partner in Erie's cultural heritage tourism program. The downtown partnership's services help start up businesses, support local arts and culture, host events, and promote downtown as a destination among other activities.

OUTCOME: A strong preservation ethic will become an essential part of Erie's cultural heritage tourism program. Partners will support research, documentation, and advocacy to nurture Erie's sense of place to appeal to tourists and enhance residents' quality of life.

STEP 4: Program and Market for Impact

The success of VisitErie's marketing is evident in the 2019 tourism impact report. Increased

programming and marketing focused on maritime and military sites can further increase visitation and prepare for the addition of the Three Forts of Presque Isle and Interpretive Center as a new, must-see heritage attraction. Programming and marketing strategies for Erie's cultural heritage tourism plan should focus on building a regional network which will offer visitors more reasons to travel to a destination and to stay longer. Two particular areas of focus for programming and marketing are:

Washington's Trail—This heritage trail retraces 21-year-old Major George Washington's travel in the fall of 1753 on his first military and diplomatic venture—to tell the French to evacuate the region. The trail's driving route begins at the Maryland-Pennsylvania border and travels north, ending in Erie where a French fort was located overlooking Presque Isle Bay. Historic markers are placed along the route. Information about the trail is found on VisitErie's website, and the tourism agency is also included on the trail's brochures. Washington's Trail operates as a 501(c)3 with a volunteer board of directors. As plans proceed for reconstruction of the three forts, a partnership with this heritage trail should be strengthened to enable gathering data on visitors who travel the route, to identify promotional outlets to reach a larger audience, and to incorporate the three forts into the visitor experience on the trail.

Link with forts in the region—Sites in Pennsylvania associated with Fort Presque Isle include Fort LeBeouf Museum in Waterford, Fort Machault and Fort Venango (historic markers) in Franklin, Fort Ligonier in Ligonier, and Fort Necessity National Battlefield (National Park Service) in Farmington. Sites in and around Pittsburgh include Point State

Fort King George State Historic Site

302 McIntosh Road SE • Darien, Georgia 31305

"The reconstructed Fort King George anchors present day visitors to a rich history where Native American and European cultures met, colonial empires collided, soldiers toiled and perished, and industry boomed on the shores of the Altamaha River."

This is the oldest English fort remaining on Georgia's coast. From 1721 until 1736, Fort King George was the southern outpost of the British Empire in North America. A cypress blockhouse, barracks and palisaded earthen fort were constructed in 1721 by scoutmen led by Colonel John "Tuscarora Jack" Barnwell. For the next seven years, His Majesty's Independent Company garrisoned the fort. They endured incredible hardships from disease, threats of Spanish and Indian attacks, and the harsh, unfamiliar coastal environment. After the fort was abandoned, General James Oglethorpe brought Scottish Highlanders to the site in 1736. The

settlement, called Darien, eventually became a foremost export center of lumber until 1925.

Using old records and drawings, this fortification has been reconstructed for public tours. Structures include a blockhouse, officers' quarters, barracks, a guardhouse, moat, and palisades. A museum and film cover the Guale Indians, the Santo Domingo de Talaje mission, Fort King George, the Scots of Darien, and 19th century sawmilling when Darien became a major seaport. In addition to the many fort buildings, remains of three sawmills and tabby ruins are still visible.



Park—location of Fort Duquesne/Ft. Pitt, Braddock’s Crossing (Kennywood Park), and Bushy Run Battlefield Park. Less than 200 miles away is Historic Fort Steuben in located in Steubenville, Ohio. Within a 300–400-mile drive are two additional sites in New York—Fort Stanwix National Monument (National Park Service) in Rome and Saratoga National Historical Park (National Park Service) in Stillwater. Forming a network of historic sites with forts, museums, and historic markers will position Erie as a must-see stop for travelers who are seeking this type of heritage travel experience. Erie’s cultural heritage tourism program planners could organize a meeting with representatives from these sites to discuss how they currently operate, events such as re-enactments that are held annually, where each site’s visitors originate, and how they reach target markets.

OUTCOME: Building a regional network will help define target markets for travelers who enjoy visiting military sites and learning about maritime history and will inform the types of experiences that are offered as well as the best places to focus promotions to reach these audiences.

STEP 5: Manage for Growth and Sustainability

Sustainable tourism is particularly attractive for communities interested in maintaining or enhancing their community’s character and sense of place. In addition to economic development and job creation, sustainable tourism increases the area’s attractiveness to outside industries and people seeking to relocate to locales rich in historic, cultural, and natural amenities, which results in more civic pride, and offers residents more shops, activities, and entertainment offerings the local market alone



Ft. Necessity (Encore)



Jumonville Glen (Encore)



Ft. Ligonier (Encore)



Sites in Pennsylvania associated with Fort Presque Isle include Fort LeBeouf Museum in Waterford, Fort Machault and Fort Venango (historic markers) in Franklin, Fort Ligonier in Ligonier, and Fort Necessity National Battlefield (National Park Service) in Farmington. Sites in and around Pittsburgh include Point State Park—location of Fort Duquesne/Ft. Pitt, Braddock’s Crossing (Kennywood Park), and Bushy Run Battlefield Park. There is also Fort McIntosh located in Beaver, just northwest of Pittsburgh. Less than 200 miles away is Historic Fort Steuben located in Steubenville, Ohio.



French and Indian War Exhibit at the Heinz Center, Pittsburgh
(Encore)



Fort Pitt Blockhouse, Pittsburgh (Encore)

might not be able to support.

It is important to recognize that in cultural heritage tourism, the measures of success can mean different accomplishments to different individuals, organizations, and groups. For example, a hotel manager will seek to increase overnight stays at his/her property. A preservationist's success may lie in saving an important historic building. A museum director may desire increased visitation. An artist may want to sell more of his/her works. Local government officials may focus on increased sales tax collection and job creation. Although each of these goals may seem unique to a particular discipline, all are needed for a successful and sustainable cultural heritage tourism program. All must be recognized as contributing to both the economic health and quality of life of a community.

As Erie's cultural heritage tourism program is developed, it will be important to also identify measurements to evaluate accomplishments in the areas previously discussed. The National Geographic Society's Center for Sustainable Destinations summarizes success as meeting the following goals:

- Protects its product—the destination
- Conserves resources
- Respects local culture and traditions
- Aims for quality, not quantity

To support these goals, the center (now supported by the nonprofit Destination Stewardship Center), put forth 13 principles in their Geotourism Charter. (Read here for a discussion of these principles.)

These sustainable tourism principles can provide the basis for developing measurements for Erie's cultural heritage tourism program. (*Note:*

Fort Ticonderoga

102 Fort Ti Road • Ticonderoga, NY 12883

70,000 on-site visitors in 2019

2,700 tours—school outreach programs (grew 252% from 2016–2017 school year)

Fort Ticonderoga is an 18th-century star fort built by the French near the south end of Lake Champlain. It was constructed by Canadian-born French military engineer Michel Chartier de Lotbinière, Marquis de Lotbinière between 1755 and 1757, during the action in the "North American theater" of the Seven Years' War, often referred to as the French and Indian War. The fort

was of strategic importance during the 18th-century colonial conflicts between Great Britain and France, and again played an important role during the Revolutionary War. Early in the 20th century, private owners restored the fort. A foundation now operates the fort as a tourist attraction, museum, and research center.



National Geographic uses the term “geotourism.” As defined and reflected in these principles, it is synonymous with cultural heritage tourism.)

■ SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRINCIPLES

1. **Integrity of place:** Enhance geographical character by developing and improving it in ways distinctive to the locale, reflective of its natural and cultural heritage, to encourage market differentiation and cultural pride.
2. **International codes:** Adhere to the principles embodied in the World Tourism Organization’s Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and the Principles of the Cultural Tourism Charter established by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).
3. **Market selectivity:** Encourage growth in tourism market segments most likely to appreciate, respect, and disseminate information about the distinctive assets of the locale.
4. **Market diversity:** Encourage a full range of appropriate food and lodging facilities to appeal to the entire demographic spectrum of the market and so maximize economic resiliency over both the short and long term.
5. **Tourist satisfaction:** Ensure that satisfied tourists bring new vacation stories home and send friends off to experience the same thing, thus providing continuing demand for the destination.
6. **Community involvement:** Base tourism on community resources to the extent possible, encouraging small businesses and civic groups to build partnerships to promote and provide a distinctive, honest visitor experience and market their locales effectively. Help businesses develop approaches to tourism that build on the area’s



Perry Monument on Presque Isle. There exists an opportunity to combine Erie's historic maritime resources into a driving and walking trail to attract visitors to the nationally significant sites associated with that past.

7. **Community benefit:** Encourage micro- to medium-size enterprises and tourism business strategies that emphasize economic and social benefits, especially poverty alleviation, with clear communication of the destination stewardship policies required to maintain those benefits.
8. **Protection and enhancement of destination appeal:** Encourage businesses to sustain natural habitats, heritage sites, aesthetic appeal, and local culture. Prevent degradation by keeping volumes of tourists within maximum acceptable limits. Seek business models that can operate profitably within those limits. Use persuasion, incentives, and legal enforcement as needed.
9. **Land use:** Anticipate development pressures and apply techniques to prevent undesired overdevelopment and degradation. Contain resort and vacation-home sprawl, especially on coasts and islands to retain a diversity of natural and scenic environments and ensure continued resident access to waterfronts.
10. **Conservation of resources:** Encourage businesses to minimize water pollution, solid waste, energy consumption, water usage, landscaping

chemicals, and overly bright nighttime lighting. Advertise these measures to attract the large, environmentally sympathetic tourist market.

11. **Planning:** Recognize and respect immediate economic needs without sacrificing long-term character and the geotourism potential. Where tourism attracts in-migration of workers, develop new communities that constitute a destination enhancement.
12. **Interactive interpretation:** Engage both visitors and hosts in learning about the place. Encourage residents to show off the natural and cultural heritage of their communities, so that tourists gain a richer experience and residents develop pride in their locales.
13. **Evaluation:** Establish an evaluation process to be conducted on a regular basis by an independent panel representing all stakeholder interests and publicize evaluation results.

OUTCOME: Erie’s cultural heritage tourism plan will include strategies for managing sustainable tourism and for tracking and evaluating progress in all areas.

■ **ADDITIONAL HERITAGE TOURISM RECOMMENDATIONS**

Erie’s Intermodal Transportation Center

The 55,000-square-foot Intermodal Transportation Center, located on Erie’s Bayfront, is currently the headquarters for VisitErie and the Greyhound Bus Station. The facility is owned by the Erie Metropolitan Transportation Authority and is a stop on the city bus line. The architecture of the building makes the intermodal center stand out on the Bayfront. Rebranded, the facility can serve as a Visitor’s Center gateway to Erie’s multiple attractions, eateries, transportation, and accommodations.



- The exterior signage of the building should be rebranded as the Erie Visitor’s Center
- Exterior signage along the Bayfront Parkway to direct visitors to the center.



- Exterior signage in the parking lot can provide information on Bayfront attractions that are within walking distance of the facility.
- Interior spaces under the central dome should be



- dedicated to information on local and regional attractions using popup or wall mounted displays.
- The central lobby space can be used for temporary or traveling exhibits.
- During the spring, summer, and winter months, a destination trolley can be used to move visitors between local attractions that are not within walking distance or the downtown area.
- Erie should consider a tenant who can provide ferry service or water taxis to Presque Isle from the Visitor’s Center.
- The facility can be the main hub for Erie’s greenway system with its close proximity to Bayfront hotels.
- Train volunteer tourism ambassadors to staff the facility.
- Expand the gift shop to include local crafts and destination memorabilia.

Erie Land Lighthouse

In 2017, the Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port Authority Master Plan listed eight great ideas for the Port of Erie. One was to enhance the Erie Land Lighthouse as an historic attraction.

“This Master Plan recommends drawing attention to this historical gem in a substantial way. A new pedestrian and/or vehicular connection is proposed to take visitors from the parking lot at the end of East Ave., up to the lighthouse grounds about 650 feet to the east. This existing parking lot serves the boat ramp and has a gravel surface. This parking lot would be improved with a hard

surface and designed to accommodate both boat trailers and vehicles associated with lighthouse visitors. The new vehicular/pedestrian route lead would lead through a wooded area with substantial grades. Design development steps would include defining elements that would create a unique experience that culminates in arrival at the lighthouse grounds. A new site development plan including the lighthouse and surrounding property is needed to better define vehicular pedestrian and circulation. Land ownership issues also need to be addressed.”

East End Bike/Walking Trail



Extend the current sidewalk beyond the Bayfront Parkway. Establish a bike/walking trail from the Bayfront to Gridley Circle. Stops along the way include McCarty Park and The Land Lighthouse. Overgrown foliage should be removed at the lighthouse so that visitors can get, like they do at Grindley Circle, an unobstructed view of Lake Erie.

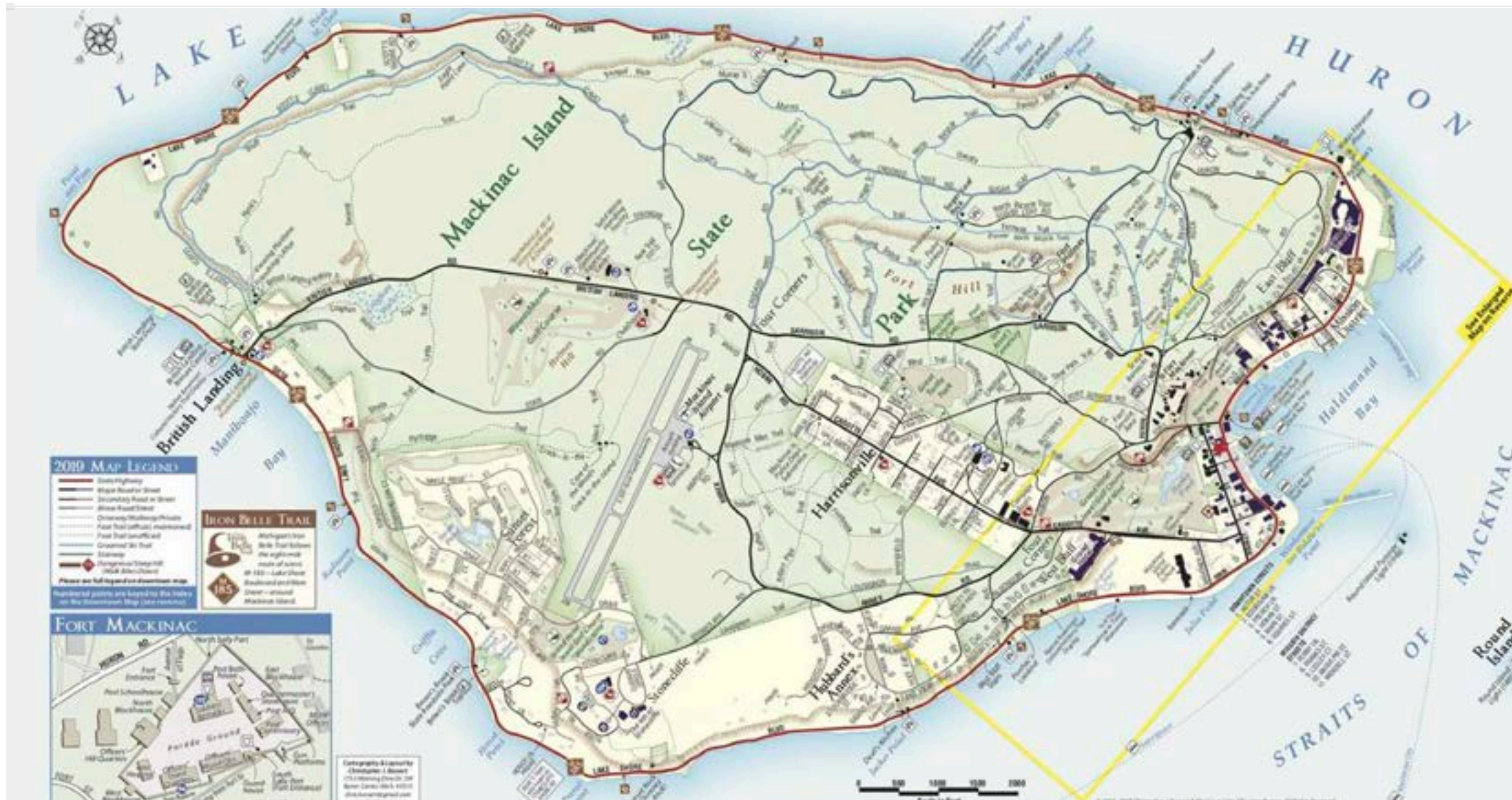


Johnstown's Inclined Plane

Clustering Resources in Johnstown, Pennsylvania

In June 2021, Johnstown, PA, announced it is leveraging funding from the Community Foundation of the Alleghenys, PennDOT, the Federal Transit Administration, the National Park Service, and other agencies and organizations, to restore the Inclined Plane, the mountainside railroad built a few years after the infamous 1889 Johnstown flood that took over 2000 lives. Plans also include mountain bike trails, expanded and newly connected walking trails, a 90-acre Inclined Plane Riverside Park across the hillside opposite downtown Johnstown, a brand-new, ADA-compliant river access point called Sliver Park, and rehabilitation of the Inclined Plane railway itself. Conemaugh Valley

Conservancy Project Manager Brad Clemenson calls it a “very nice cluster of activity that will make it more attractive for people to live downtown,” creating “a new identity that will reshape and rebuild our local economy.” Combining local assets continues to trend across the country. Johnstown is but one example. “Every element on that hillside—the trails, the park, the accessibility enhancements, the Plane itself—everything sort of came together when we realized we ought to think about it in totality,” says FA president Mike Kane. “I think in a lot of Pennsylvania’s older, smaller cities, people learn to settle for what was there. It’s because in a lot of cases, we just don’t give ourselves enough credit.”



Grand Hotel



Fort Michilimackinac



Island streets



Wawatam Lighthouse in St. Ignace, Michigan

make the visitor experience in a place where automobiles are banned more appealing to foot and hoof traffic.

Mackinac Island

Mackinac Island is Michigan's number one tourism destination. Located at the eastern end of the Straits of Mackinac, where Lake Michigan meets Lake Huron, the island has a year-round population of about 500 people, but in the summer, that number rises to well over one million. Eight miles (13 km) in circumference and thickly forested, Mackinac has been a state park since 1895 and continues to retain much of its 18th- and 19th-century atmosphere; automobiles are banned, and horses and buggies and bicycles are the only

modes transportation besides walking. Today, over eighty percent of Mackinac Island is State Park property, and most of this park land remains in its natural condition. Mackinac has a rich history from which to draw. First visited by French explorers in the 1600s, the island was an ancient Indian burial ground called Michilimackinac ("Great Turtle") when, because of its strategic location, the British established a fort there in 1780. After the United States took possession (1783), it became the headquarters of John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company and

later developed as a resort. Occupied by the British during the War of 1812, it was regained by the United States in 1815. The island is home to a bevy of beautiful Victorian homes and 19th century churches, over 70 miles of hiking trails, and nearly 15 fudge shops. The Grand Hotel, built in 1887, still sits on the south shore of the island and has welcomed such famous guests as Mark Twain and President John F. Kennedy. The restored Fort Mackinac, Beaumont Memorial, and the Stuart House (1817; the residence of the island's American

Fur Company agent) are preserved as historical museums. Heritage tourism at Mackinac works off several important historical themes. Some are relevant to Erie, such as the fur trade, the building of forts following the American Revolution, and the involvement in the War of 1812. None of these themes reach the heights of Erie's prominent past but Mackinac has been able to save and restore many of its historic resources, make thoughtful decisions about preservation, and recognize the importance of clustering historic and cultural resources to



State of Pennsylvania Heritage Areas

Established in 1989, the Pennsylvania Heritage Areas Program is a multi-region asset-based economic development program that promotes the state's rich natural, cultural, and industrial history. Today, there are 12 state-designated Heritage

Areas that operate independently but are unique in the history they preserve, the resources they enhance, and the communities they support. As well, cross-sector partnerships between these areas enhance each region's "sense of place" and strengthen local and regional economies. Their

partnerships create vibrant livable communities that attract private investment and house the products and places that drive Pennsylvania's tourism industry. Heritage Areas are present in 57 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties, including Erie County which is part of the Pennsylvania Route 6 Alliance.

- Allegheny Ridge Corporation
- Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor
- Endless Mountains Heritage Region
- Lackawanna Heritage Valley
- Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor
- Lumber Heritage Region of Pennsylvania
- National Road Heritage Corridor
- Oil Region National Heritage Area
- Pennsylvania Route 6 Alliance
- Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area
- Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area
- Susquehanna National Heritage Area

In 2016, an economic impact study of five Pennsylvania Heritage Areas was released that found tourists spent an estimated 7.5 million days/nights in Pennsylvania's 12 Heritage Areas in 2014, purchasing \$2 billion worth of goods and services. The total contribution of heritage visitor spending (direct, indirect, and induced effects) to the state's economy was 25,708 jobs and \$798 million in labor income. the Pennsylvania Route 6 Alliance was part of the study.

Lake and Land Heritage Area

Erie County is uniquely qualified to establish a Heritage Area that incorporates the region's maritime, military, and industrial past. As this plan illustrates, the Presque Isle sandbar, created more than 15,000 years ago, is a distinctive physiographic landscape feature associated with a wealth of human interaction for a dozen millennia. A few of the major stories that fit within the "Lake and Land" theme are: the Eriez Indians; the French and Indian War; Pontiac's Rebellion; the War of 1812; Shipbuilding; the salt trade; the Coke, Steel, and Plastics industries; the

Point State Park



Point Park is easily the most recognizable attraction associated with Pittsburgh's historic and contemporary identity. Combined with the Rivers of Steel Heritage Area, the city is a good model for Erie to tell its own nationally significant story of settlement and transformation.

Pittsburgh's Point State Park has unique historic, natural, and recreational features that provide a respite from the stresses of urban life. The area's rich history dates back to the 1700s, when it played an important role in the French and Indian War and the development of English colonies. The park was a product of the Pittsburgh Renaissance, an urban renewal project in the 1950s that cleared a former blighted 36-acre industrial area. The park opened in 1974. Enhancements and updates were added after 2000. Significant elements of Point Park include:

- The tip of Point State Park features an 800,000-gallon fountain that sprays water 150 feet into the air.
- Woodlands and Overlook areas are home to 54,000 native plants that have inhabited the park since the mid-18th century.
- Fort Pitt Museum tells the story of western Pennsylvania's pivotal role during the French and Indian War, the American Revolution, and the birth of Pittsburgh.
- The Fort Pitt Block House (1764), a small defensive stronghold redoubt, is the only surviving structure of Fort Pitt; the only authentic pre-Revolutionary War structure west of the Allegheny Mountains.
- Three granite traceries are present in the park, marking the former Fort Duquesne (1754) and Fort Pitt (1759) and outlining the original confluence of the three rivers and the point.
- Great Lawn, a large green space that features views of the three rivers, fountain, and downtown Pittsburgh.
- The Portal Bridge connects the city side of the park to the park's river side, allowing pedestrians to cross underneath the eight-lane interstate; arches over a reflecting pool representing the transition from city to park.

Fallen Timbers



Wayne Monument at Fallen Timbers, Maumee, Ohio

There are also significant sites in Ohio that have a direct connection to Erie. In 1794, at Fallen Timbers, Gen. Anthony Wayne secured the Ohio Country with the defeat of a combined Native American force of Shawnee under Blue Jacket, Ottawas under Egushawa, and many others. Following the battle, Wayne returned to Erie where he ultimately died. This historic site, along with others in a 60-mile radius of Toledo, is part of the Maumee Valley Heritage Corridor.



Rivers of Steel Boat Excursions

railroad; freshwater fishing; the Erie Triangle; Lake Erie's earliest lighthouse; and the only location on the lake with three lighthouses. Combined with the restoration efforts downtown, along W. 6th Street, the Hagen Center, the other maritime and military attractions, including Waterford and Ft. Le Boeuf, the Washington's Trail, etc., the county has a rich plethora of historic sites and attractions.

Native American Trail in Western Pennsylvania and Western New York

Erie should develop a new trail associated with the region's indigenous cultures. Native peoples have lived in western Pennsylvania for thousands of years. Since the end of the last Ice Age and up until the early fifteenth century, a succession of prehistoric periods and civilizations—Paleolithic, Archaic,

Woodland, and Mississippian (Adena-Hopewell)—have been identified by historians and anthropologists as indigenous to the area, including in and around present-day Erie. Their archaeological remains shed some light on these group's distinct cultural characteristics if only giving us an opaque glimpse of each civilization's ascent and decline. A few historic sites associated with these civilizations have been identified.

- Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village, Avella, PA (prehistoric)
- Sommerheim Park Archaeological District, Erie, PA
- Indian God Rock Petroglyph, near Venango, PA
- Sugar Grove Petroglyphs, near Masontown, PA
- Household No. 1 Site, Rostraver Township, PA

- Sommerheim Park Archeological District, Erie (Prehistoric)



Onöhsagwë:de' Cultural Center and Seneca Iro-quois Museum, Salamanca, New York

- Francis Farm Petroglyphs, near Jefferson Township, PA
- Squirrel Hill Site, near St. Clair Township, PA

By the late fifteenth century, however, the remnants of these past peoples coalesced, and new groups emerged, each with their own tribal and linguistic distinctions. They include, to name a few, the Huron, Delaware, Miami, Ottawa, Potawatomi, Oneida, Iroquois, Seneca, Fox, Chippewa, and Shawnee. Many of the villages associated with these tribes were attacked in the eighteenth century and have all but disappeared. However, white settlers built towns where these villages once stood. Several have historic markers noting their existence. There are also cultural centers associated with these tribes that welcome visitors to learn about the story





Hagen History Center



Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village



Ganondagan State Historic Site in Victor, New York

of indigenous peoples and their descendants.

- Hagen History Center, Erie, PA
- Heinz Center, Pittsburgh, PA
- Logstown, PA (Shawnee, Delaware, Mingo, Seneca)
- Kittanning, PA (Delaware)
- Chartier's Town, PA (Shawnee)
- Conewango, at Warren, PA (Seneca)
- Diondega, at Pittsburgh (Seneca)
- Punxsutawney (Delaware)
- Shenango, at Sharon, PA (Delaware)
- Casewago, at Meadville, PA (Delaware)
- Gangarahhare, at Franklin, PA
- Venango, at Franklin, PA (several)
- Rique, at Erie, PA (Eriez)
- Shannopin's Town, At North Pittsburgh (Delaware)
- Sewickley, at West Newton (Shawnee)
- Loyalhanna, at Ligonier, PA (Delaware)
- Iroquois Museum, Howes Cave, NY
- Seneca Art & Culture Center, Victor, NY
- Canadasaga, near the present Geneva, NY (Seneca)
- Canandaigua, near Canandaigua, NY (Seneca)
- Onöhsagwë:de' Cultural Center and Seneca Iroquois Museum, Salamanca, NY
- Kinzua Dam on the Alleghany River, near Salamanca, NY
- John R. Oishei Native American Gallery at the Buffalo History Museum, Buffalo, NY

- Akwesasne Cultural Center, Hogansburg, NY
- Ft. Pitt Museum, Pittsburgh
- Allaquippa's Town, McKees Rocks, PA

Appendix: Funding Sources for Erie Bayfront Greenway Development

The following funding opportunities provided through federal and state grants, as well as private funds from national and area community sources. Other funding mechanisms include incentives offered through partnership development, leveraging additional funds securing private capital, as well as philanthropic grants. Other creative grant opportunities might focus on addressing health and public safety concerns and objectives in partnership with State Department of Health, local health insurance providers, and area transportation planners in funding Active Transportation Plans and Policies



FUNDING SOURCE	AGENCY / ORGANIZATION	NOTES
NATIONAL LEVEL		
Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)	State DOT PENNDOT: https:// www.penndot.gov/ ProjectAndPrograms/ Planning/Pages/ Transporta- tion Alternatives-Program.aspx	Federal funding administered through PENNDOT via the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program in the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. TAP provides funds for programs projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian/bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation. Rails-to-Trails Conservancy maintains a website with detailed information: http://trade.railstotrails.org/index . Eligible applicants are local governments. MATCH: Cash match required. Construction projects must have a construction cost of at least \$50,000, but may not exceed \$1 million, unless the project is of exceptional regional or statewide significance. LINKS: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/ environment/transportation_alternatives/
Recreational Trails Program (RTP)	State agencies vary by state. See https:// www.fhwa.dot.gov/ environment/ recreational_trails/ rtpstate.cfm PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Communi- ties/Grants/TrailGrants/Pages/default.aspx	Federal funding administered through state agencies via the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program in the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. RTP provides funds to the States to support a wide variety of trail activities and related facilities, as well as environmental education and safety programs. Eligible applicants include local government and non-profit organizations. Annual cycle typically closes early in calendar year. Funding tied to federal transportation bill. Paved paths typically discouraged. MATCH: Varies, cash and in-kind supported. LINK: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/ recreational_trails/ERIE
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State side	National Park Service (NPS) State and Local Assistance Program Division Department of Conservation and Natural Resource: https://www.grants.dcnr.state.pa.us/	The Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State Assistance Program, established in 1965, is a federal source of funding provided by the U.S. Department of the Interior’s National Park Service (NPS) to all states to provide 50% matching grants for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Eligible applicants include cities, counties, or district authorized to acquire, develop, operate, and maintain park and recreation facilities. LWCF funding is federal but allotted to states to provide matching grants to help communities protect parks and recreation resources. Federal funding is in state of flux and program future is unknown. PA LWCF grant priorities include: the acquisition of critical wildlife habitat, forested watershed, wetlands and riparian corridors, as well as rehabilitation of existing local parks with a focus on playground replacement and upgrades. MATCH: 50/50; Link: https:// www.nps.gov/orgs/1600/index.htm . LINKS: https://www.grants.dcnr.state.pa.us/ ; PA DCNR https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Communities/ TrailDevelopment/pages/default.aspx ; http://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument? docId=1742599&DocName=LWCF%20Factsheet%20Final. pdf
STATE LEVEL		
Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF)	PENNDOT	Federal funds administered through PENNDOT for project development, rehabilitation and enhancement of transportation assets to existing communities, streetscape, lighting, sidewalk enhancement, pedestrian safety, connectivity of transportation assets and transit-oriented development (TOD). This program also funds greenways. MATCH: Grant projects range from a total cost of \$100,000 or more, and shall not exceed \$3,000,000 for any project. Financial assistance shall be matched by local funding in an amount not less than 30 percent of the nonfederal share of the project costs. Funds matched by a county or municipality, shall only consist of cash contributions provided by one or more counties or municipalities. Matching funds from a government council, business, economic development organization, or other public transportation agency shall only consist of cash contributions or cash equivalents for the appraised value of the real estate. LINKS: https://www.penndot.gov/ ProjectAndPrograms/MultimodalProgram/ Documents/ ; AND http://www.newpa.com/find-andapply-for-funding/ fundingand-program-finder/multimodal-transportation-fund

FUNDING SOURCE	AGENCY / ORGANIZATION	NOTES
<p>Erie County Metropolitan Planning Organization</p>	<p>Erie County Regional Planning Commission (ERPC)</p>	<p>Situated within Erie County's Department of Planning and Community Development, the Metropolitan Planning Organization, or MPO, is a transportation policy-making board made up of representatives from local government and transportation agencies. The Erie MPO has twenty-three voting members that represent all of Erie County.</p> <p>After the 2017 Program year, the Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development suspended this competitive grant program and initiated the Erie County Parks, Trails and Recreation Plan, to develop a strategic and implementable plan for focused investment in Erie County's network of recreational assets and their connections to communities within Erie County. Through the Erie County Greenways program, using future allocations funding from the Marcellus Legacy Fund (2012) will be focused on larger, more impactful projects benefiting the county on a more regional level, based on focused priorities as identified in the planning process. The Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development will play an important role in supporting our municipalities and agencies that own and operate recreational assets throughout Erie County. Erie County only qualifies for Marcellus Legacy Funds at this time.</p> <p>MPO's usually have TIP funds as well as other potential grant funding with a MATCH of 80/20; LINKS: https://eriecountypa.gov/departments/planning-and-communitydevelopment/programs/metropolitan-planningorganization/</p>
<p>Pennsylvania Byways Program</p>	<p>PENNDOT, https://www.penndot.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/Planning/Pages/BYWAYS-Program.aspx</p> <p>Contact info: Jacqueline Koons-Felion PA Byways Coordinator jfelion@pa.gov 717-787-6388</p> <p>An emerging byway initiative along Route 6 (east to west) through Erie, PA; contact Route 6 Alliance (non-profit), Candace Hillard, Executive Director. 814-435-7706 or info@paroute6.com</p> <p>US Route 6 in Pennsylvania extends through the eleven counties of Crawford, Erie, Warren, McKean, Potter, Tioga, Bradford, Wyoming, Lackawanna, Wayne and Pike. This effort focuses to preserve, enhance and promote the transportation heritage of one of the nation's first transcontinental highways that sustained and enhanced small rural communities linked east to west by industry and railroads. railroads enhance natural, scenic beauty of one of America's favorite "road</p>	<p>Great Lakes Seaway Trail in Pennsylvania extends 64 miles along the state's freshwater shorelines, an approximate two-hour drive along the byway without stopping or 14 hours to stop and visit places along the way. Follow US 20: Ohio state line to PA 5; PA 5: US 20 to Alternate PA 5 and Alternate PA 5 to the New York state line; Alternate PA 5: PA 5 to West 6th Street; West 6th Street to Cranberry Street; and East Bayfront Parkway to PA 5 SR 4034: Cranberry Street to Alternate PA 5.</p> <p>The entire Great Lakes Seaway Trail is a 500-mile scenic driving route that follows the shores of Lake Erie, the Niagara River, Lake Ontario, and the St. Lawrence River in New York and Pennsylvania. Designated a National Scenic Byway, the Great Lakes Seaway Trail includes unique historical locations and cultural heritage sites in addition to outstanding views and scenic vistas. The Great Lakes Seaway Trail connects unique destinations such as Presque Isle, Niagara Falls, and the Thousand Islands; the cities of Erie, Buffalo, Rochester, Oswego, and Ogdensburg.</p> <p>Future greenway development at Presque Isle in Erie County, PA, will be a significant heritage tourism destination along the Great Lakes Seaway Trail situated within the larger National Scenic Byway Program. The proposed Erie Bayfront Development Corridor project can benefit significantly from both the marketing partnership relative to the addition of recreation activities and accessible amenities, as well as interpretation of the Erie, PA cultural heritage along the waterfront area and situated on PA 832: West 6th Street to Presque Isle State Park. On September 22, 2005, the Seaway Trail became Pennsylvania's first designated National Scenic Byway. Five years later, the name was changed from the Seaway Trail to the Great Lakes Seaway Trail.</p>

FUNDING SOURCE	AGENCY / ORGANIZATION	NOTES
Greenway Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP)	PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)	The Marcellus Legacy Fund established in 2012 allocates funds to the PA Commonwealth Financing Authority (the "Authority") for planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation and repair of greenways, recreational trails, open space, parks and beautification projects using the Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP). Projects involve development, rehabilitation and improvements to public parks, recreation areas, greenways, trails and river conservation. Eligible applications include: for-profit businesses, municipalities, councils of governments, authorized organization, institution of higher education, watershed organization. MATCH: Grants shall not exceed \$250,000 for any project, with a 15% required match of the total project cost. LINK: https://dced.pa.gov/programs/greenways-trails-and-recreationprogramgrp/
Community Conservation Partnership Program Grants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation Conservation Planning Funding • Park Rehabilitation and Development Funding • Land Acquisition and Conservation Funding 	PA Department of Conservation Natural Resources (DCNR); Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (BRC)	Grant assists local governments and recreation and conservation organizations with funding for projects related to: Parks, Recreation, Conservation. Applications are accepted once a year, typically during the spring, for Planning, acquisition, and development of public parks, recreation areas, motorized and non-motorized trails, river conservation and access, conservation of open space. Grants also support regional and statewide partnerships that build capacity to better develop and manage resources. Eligible applicants include: counties, municipalities, municipal agencies, nonprofit organizations, state heritage areas, prequalified land trusts, for-profit enterprises (for some grant types). MATCH: Most programs require a minimum cash or non-cash matching contribution from the applicant equal to 50 percent of the project cost. LINK: https:// www.dcnr.pa.gov/Communities/Grants/Pages/ default.aspx FUNDING
Water Trails Mini-Grant	PA Department of Conservation Natural Resources (DCNR)	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. All types of projects that increase access to Pennsylvania's water trails, support the PA Water Trail Program's eight program principals, and have a one-year time frame will be considered. Any project on or for a designated Pennsylvania Water Trail is eligible to receive funds from this mini-grant program; applicants do not have to be the water trail's manager. Typically, the grant period opens in mid-April and closes in early July with awardees selected by August. MATCH: Mini-grants are capped at \$5,000 and require a 1:1 match, LINK: https:// www.pawatertrails.org/funding

PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

People for Bikes Community Grants	People for Bikes	Grant funding supports bicycling, active transportation, or community development, from city or county agencies or departments, and from state or federal agencies working locally. Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations for projects in the United States that focus on bike paths, lanes, trails and bridges, mountain bike facilities, bike parks and pump tracks, BMX facilities, end of trip facilities such as bike racks, bike parking, bike repair stations and bike storage. Funds can include engineering and design work, construction costs including material, labor and equipment rental and reasonable volunteer support costs Funding also includes some advocacy programs that transform city streets and campaigns to increase bicycle infrastructure, including staffing directly related to goals of initiative. MATCH: accepts requests for funding up to \$10,000.00 and looks at leverage and funding partnerships very carefully. LINKS: https://www.peopleforbikes.org/grants
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FUNDING SOURCE	AGENCY / ORGANIZATION	NOTES
Helping Today Grant	The Erie Community Foundation	Funds capital, facilities or system's needs that improve, repair or maintain a non-profit's facilities that include construction projects, equipment or systems for improved access or safety. Match; generally capped at \$30,000 or less and limited to one year in duration. Grants offering a direct response to COVID-19 pandemic will receive priority. LINKS: https:// www.eriecommunityfoundation.org/assets/documents/ Grant-Information/Grant-Guidelines-2021.pdf
LOCAL LEVELS		
Business		Corporate foundations: grants, volunteers; small businesses or business partnerships: co-branding, events, sponsorship
Non-Profit Organizations		Community foundations; non-profit collaborators
Local Government		Bonds, levies; granting programs; Tax districts, such as resort tax, tax increment finance districts (TIF), improvement districts, renewal districts