

3. Wheeling Today

As noted in Chapter 2, many positive changes are visible in Wheeling since the inception of the heritage movement in the early 1990s. Wheeling has experienced some decline in recent years, mainly due to further losses in its industrial base including the Marsh-Wheeling Stogie operation on Market Street. But a positive direction is apparent in the numerous initiatives, detailed in Section 3.2 Parallel Initiatives, by local organizations and companies intent on improving the quality of life for Wheeling’s residents and increasing number of visitors.

3.1. Resources and Story

3.1.1. Historic Resources

The impressive number of National Register listings for historic districts and individual buildings in Wheeling testify to the city’s desire to acknowledge and appreciate its historic and architectural importance. Designation on the National Register of Historic Places can provide to property owners outside recognition, possible eligibility for federal tax credits for income producing property, and the ability to receive charitable deductions for contributions of full or partial interests, including granting of facades easements.

In the early 1990s, only a small number of Wheeling’s historic resources were officially recognized through their listing in the National Register of Historic Places. All of the city’s historic districts were concentrated in downtown and in closely adjoining neighborhoods. Since that time, all of Wheeling Island and most of the neighborhood of East Wheeling have been listed. The distinctive warehouse area in Center Wheeling along the Ohio River is Wheeling’s newest historic district. Several turn-of-the-century suburban residential areas along the National Road were listed under the Multiple Property listing, *Historic and Architectural Resources along the National Road in Ohio County, West Virginia*. These areas, known as the Woodsdale-Edgwood, National Road, and the Highland Park Historic Districts, illustrate the redevelopment of the former country estates and farms that lined the old turnpike for new single and multiple family residences for Wheeling’s middle class. Table 4: National Register and National Historic Landmark Properties reveals the breadth of resources that represent the city’s multi-faceted character.

Table 4: National Register and National Historic Landmark Properties

Property Name	Address/Boundaries	Date of Listing	Significance
Cathedral Parish School	14th & Bryon Streets	January 9, 1997	1896 school designed by local firm Franzheim, Giesey, and Faris that is associated with the development of the Catholic school system in Wheeling during the late 19th and early 20th centuries
Centre Wheeling Market Centre Market Square Historic District and district boundary increase	Roughly bounded by Main, 20th, Eoff and 24th Streets	January 20, 1975 (market building); January 12, 1984 (original district); February 25, 1987 (district boundary increase)	District focuses on the 1853 and 1891 market house structures, the center of an architecturally intact late 19th century neighborhood with strong associations to the German community that originally settled the area.
Chapline Street Row Historic District	West side of Chapline Street from 23rd to Lane 20	January 12, 1984	Located within the boundaries of the Centre Market Square Historic District, the eight houses in this small district are fine examples of late 19th century Victorian architecture, mainly built by successful German immigrants.

Property Name	Address/Boundaries	Date of Listing	Significance
East Wheeling Historic District	Roughly bounded by Chapline, Eoff, 18th, McColloch, 12th and 11th Streets	November 22, 1999	Large district that incorporates residential, religious, and commercial buildings from its founding in the 1830s through the mid-20th century
Edemar (Stifel Fine Arts Center)	1330 National Road	May 28, 1992	1910 Neoclassical mansion of fire proof construction that served as the Stifel family home from 1910-1976
Elm Grove Stone Arch Bridge	US 40 and WV 88	August 21, 1981	1817 limestone bridge on the National Road constructed by Moses Shepherd that is the state's oldest extant bridge
Feay Inn *	9 Burkham Court	February 11, 1993	1811 fieldstone I-house with later Italianate details that served as an inn on the National Road
Fischer-Lasch Farmhouse	100 Waddles Run Road	July 21, 1995	1884 Italianate farmhouse that was part of the Hillwood Dairy complex in operation from 1932 until 1960
Harry C. and Jessie F. Franzheim House	404 S. Front Street	March 27, 1989	1897 Shingle Style house designed by the owner's brother, Edward Bates Franzheim, Wheeling's most noted architect
L.S. Good House	95 14th Street	November 28, 1988	1904 Neoclassical townhouse designed by Wheeling architect Millard Giesey for Lee Good, a successful dry goods merchant and philanthropist
Robert W. Hazlett House	921 North Main Street	May 2, 1991	1887 Second Empire mansion built as the retirement home of Dr. Robert W. Hazlett, who was also involved in early industrial and banking pursuits in the state and city.
Highland Park Historic District	Highland Park, Lots 3-17	April 7, 1993	Streetcar suburb adjacent to the National Road that was initially developed in 1899 and features residential architecture designed by local architects that mainly date from 1899-1911
La Belle Iron Works	31st Street and Wood	November 24, 1997	Industrial complex including original 1852 Italianate structures that is the largest cut nail factory still in operation in the nation
Henry K. List House	827 Main Street	October 4, 1978	1858 Renaissance Revival mansion built for Henry List, grocer and banker, which remained in family ownership until the 1940s
John McClure House	203 S. Front Street	August 15, 1991	Federal residence with later Greek Revival elements that was the home of Captain John McClure, builder of passenger steamboats that were operated on the Ohio River under the Wheeling Union Line.
Johnson-Camden-McKinley House	147 Bethany Pike (WV 88)	August 18, 1993	1914 mansion built for coal owner and operator Johnson Camden McKinley that is a fine example of early 20th century baronial architecture
Monroe Street East Historic District	12th Street and Byron Street	February 12, 1980	Small district within the East Wheeling Historic District features six buildings from the early and late 19th century, including the 1837 Protestant Episcopal Church, the oldest church structure in the city.
Mount de Chantal Visitation Academy	410 Washington Avenue	November 27, 1978	Girls' academy operated by the Sisters of the Visitation since 1863 on a former farm in a late 19th century building with early 20th century additions.
National Road Corridor Historic District *	National Road between Bethany Pike and Park View Lane	February 11, 1993	1-1/2 mile corridor that illustrates the turn of the century residential development of former farms and country estates along the National Road. The district includes Greenwood and Mt. Calvary cemeteries and Wheeling Park.
North Wheeling Historic District	Roughly bounded by Main Street Terrace, Market Street, I-70 and North Main Street	December 9, 1988	One of the earliest settled areas of Wheeling, the district features the homes of Wheeling's prosperous 19th century industrialists and businessmen, rendered in high style examples of Victorian architecture.
H.C. Ogden House	12 Park Road	July 12, 1990	1893 Queen Anne house that was the home of Herschel Coombs Ogden, who built the largest and most influential newspaper group in the state.
Oglebay Mansion Museum	Off WV 88 or Bethany Pike, Oglebay Park	August 29, 1979	1844 residence with later alterations acquired by Earl W. Oglebay, a Cleveland industrialist, in 1900. Oglebay's estate included an early experimental farm and was bequeathed to City of Wheeling as a city park.

Property Name	Address/Boundaries	Date of Listing	Significance
Charles W. Russell House	75 12th Street	November 12, 1993	1848 Greek Revival house built for local attorney, Charles Russell, who is significant for his defense of the lawful height of the 1849 Wheeling Suspension Bridge
Shepherd Hall (Monument Place)	Kruger Street and WV 88	December 18, 1970	The oldest house extant in Wheeling, the 1798 stone house was home to Moses and Lydia Shepherd, who were influential in the selection of Wheeling as the terminus of the National Road.
William Miles Tiernan House	5 Kenwood Place	March 25, 1993	1901 Georgian Revival house that is associated with Tiernan, the vice-president of Bloch Brothers Tobacco Company
Warwood Fire Station	1609 Warwood Avenue	May 2, 1996	1923 firehouse designed by local architect Millard Giesey for the community after its annexation to Wheeling in 1920
West Virginia Independence Hall	1528 Market Street	January 26, 1970	1858-1859 First Renaissance Revival structure designed by federal architect, Ammi B. Young. Built as a federal post office, custom house and courthouse, it served as the venue for debates and conventions during the Civil War that led to statehood for West Virginia in 1863. It was designated an NHL in 1989.
Wheeling Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Passenger Station	1704 Market Street	March 26, 1979	1908 Beaux Arts station that was constructed by the B & O railroad as both a passenger and freight station.
Wheeling Historic District	Roughly bounded by 17th, Water, 10th and Eoff Street	December 31, 1979	Encompassing the city's central business district, the area is significant for its concentration of 19th and early 20th century commercial architecture, with many buildings designed by leading Wheeling architects.
Wheeling Island Historic District	Includes the entire island with rough street boundaries of Stone, Front, North, Ontario, Erie and Wabash Streets	April 2, 1992: additional documentation in 1997	One of the largest inhabited river islands in the country, the district is associated with the community's development of high style 19th century architecture here after the construction of the 1849 Wheeling Suspension Bridge.
Wheeling Suspension Bridge	Crossing east channel of Ohio River from 10th Street to Virginia Street on Wheeling Island	January 26, 1970	1849 structure designed by Charles Ellet, Jr., was the first bridge to cross the Ohio River and the longest suspension bridge at the time of its construction. Its opening greatly expanded traffic on the National Road. It received NHL designation in 1975.
Wheeling Warehouse Historic District	Roughly bounded by 17th, Ohio River, 24th, S. Main and Eoff Street	December 16, 2002	The district is significant for the concentration of industrial and warehouse buildings bordering the B & O railroad and the Ohio River and their association with Wheeling's industrial activities.
Robert C. Woods House	923 North Main Street	May 12, 1991	c.1840 Federal/Greek Revival residence with later Italianate elements that was the home of county surveyor and real estate investor, Robert C. Woods.
Woodsdale-Edgwood Neighborhood Historic District	Roughly bounded by Orchard Road, Edgwood Street, Carmel Road, Bae-Mar Road, Lenox to Wheeling Creek, Pine Avenue to Park Road	March 21, 1997	Two non-contiguous areas along the National Road that represent extremely intact suburban areas of late 19th and early 20th century architecture that were developed on former farms after 1888.

* Refers to a property nominated as part of the National Road multiple submission

Bold typeface Refers to a property listed as a National Historic Landmark

The entire route of the early nineteenth century National Road in six states, including the section in Ohio County, West Virginia, was designated as an All-American Road in June 2002. The designation from the National Scenic Byways Program of the Federal Highway Administration recognizes that the road possesses multiple intrinsic qualities that are nationally significant and contains one-of-a-kind features that do not exist elsewhere. The section of the road in Ohio County received state byway status in 1999.

Cultural resources

Wheeling's cultural resources, like its historic resources, reflect the different periods of its history and the varied background of its residents. These resources include the many festivals held throughout the community, the renowned country music and classical music in Capitol Music Hall, Oglebay Institute's array of arts and history programs in five separate venues, and the Museums of Oglebay Institute at Oglebay Park, and West Virginia Independence Hall. Festivals include a celebration of the siege of Fort Henry, West Virginia Day at West Virginia Independence Hall, its affiliation with the National Road, its Italian, Greek, German, Lebanese, Celtic, and African-American heritage, and its most famous celebration as the "City of Lights" during the Oglebay Park Festival of Lights.

Natural Resources

The Ohio River, Wheeling Creek, and the distinctive topographic variations of the region played a fundamental role in the city's initial settlement and growth. The geologic resources within the region's steep hills and flat areas next to the river and creeks provided the raw materials for Wheeling's steel, coal, glass, and pottery industries. The variations in the city's topography create impressive views from various vantage points including Mt. Wood Cemetery and Overlook on the National Road and along Grandview Street. The area's ecosystem and local flora and fauna, and habitats are interpreted at the Oglebay Institute's Schrader Environmental Center and A. B. Brooks Discovery Trail System in Oglebay Park.

3.2. Interpretation of Wheeling's Story

Communicating the stories and importance of Wheeling's past to the city's residents and its visitors remains a challenge. Because no single period or theme defines its significance, the stories that are told seem fragmented without an overarching context that synthesizes them in a meaningful way. The context of Wheeling's history is today best expressed in the exhibit, *Pioneering Spirit: A History of Wheeling in West Virginia*, in the Mansion Museum operated by Oglebay Institute in Oglebay Park. This exhibit explains the crucial role of the Ohio River and the surrounding topography in the city's settlement and their continued influence on the city's later industrial and residential development and appearance.

Since 1990, four studies (1990 NPS Wheeling Heritage Draft Concept Plan, 1992 Management Plan, 1993 Interpretive Master Plan, and 1994 Community Venue Plan) have examined and defined the significant themes, time periods, and associated resources in Wheeling. While each presented some variation in its grouping of periods or themes, all of the studies recognized the Ohio River as the central element in the city's importance. The city's origins as a military outpost, as the terminus of the National Road in the early nineteenth century, its location of the first bridge crossing of the river, as a major distribution center for goods traveling by river and a United States port of entry, and the attraction of manufacturing activities due to the easy shipping access by river, road, and railroad by the late nineteenth century, combined with its abundant natural resources, are all solidly linked to the Ohio River.

3.2.1. Current Interpretative Venues and Activities

Current interpretative venues with WNHAC involvement include the exhibits on transportation history at the Intermodal Transportation Center, the Artisan Center's display on locally-produced manufactured goods and services, and the story of Wheeling's role in the birth of the state during the Civil War and its Custom House operations at West Virginia Independence Hall. Exhibits and tours at four late nineteenth century mansions in North Wheeling by the Victorian Wheeling Landmarks Foundation have also been supported by WNHAC. The house museums portray

both the grand lifestyle of their late nineteenth century occupants and the contrasting circumstances of their servants. An exhibit funded by WNHAC is located in the John List House on Main Street and features the activities and appearance of the kitchen in the late nineteenth century. A small interpretive exhibit about the history and contributions of the Wheeling Stamping Company is located in the lobby of the former Wheeling Stamping Building, now occupied by the global operations center for the international law firm of Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP.

In addition to the overview of Wheeling's history at the Mansion Museum, the museum also features an adjacent area that contains interior sets of Wheeling stores, including a general store and pharmacy that are stocked with products made in Wheeling and other historic memorabilia. The display comes alive with a presentation by Betty June Wymer who has collected these artifacts over a number of years and is the proud caretaker and interpreter of this exhibit.

A series of events took place at Heritage Port and other sites throughout Wheeling to commemorate the Lewis & Clark Bicentennial in 2003. Merriweather Lewis and his crew landed at the Wheeling waterfront on September 7-8, 1803.

Overall, the existing interpretive installations in Wheeling and the interpretive events and activities over the past ten years, including first person portrayals of some of Wheeling's important citizens that were successfully staged at Greenwood Cemetery, have contributed to local awareness of the city's heritage. As noted in section 2.2, *Implementation to Date*, interpretive elements of the plan that have not been implemented include a Bridge Museum on Wheeling Island, tours of operating historic industrial resources, a heritage trail and accompanying brochures and signage linking interpretive venues, and the interpretive performances and events at key venues.

3.2.2. Interpretive Strategies

The 1992 Plan laid the framework for interpretation efforts in the Heritage Area through its presentation of five recurrent themes, The River and the Land, Transportation, The Union, Commerce and Industry, and The Landscape of Culture, within five defining periods from before the National Road's completion at Wheeling in 1818 to the present.

A summary of the key stories and resources outlined in the plan are presented in Figure 2. The interpretive strategy in the plan also suggested the stories to interpret and specific resources to use in each of the six key settings. The 1992 Plan's theme and period definition has proven invaluable in the community's understanding of its history, most recently in its use for the establishment of criteria for eligible activities in the recent Interpretive Grants program.

A 1993 interpretive master plan, followed by a summary of the plan in 1995, expanded upon the ideas generated in the 1992 plan through an exhaustive analysis and categorization of the stories and their associated resources and the means by which they could be interpreted. Strategies for implementation formulated in this plan included the establishment of an Interpretive Action Committee and community-based Interpretive Coalitions which would act as the primary stewards of the interpretive master plan, strengthening of collaborations between existing interpretive entities in the city, and specific ideas for media, performances, and events for the community settings, especially the waterfront. Waterfront interpretation included a three-dimensional map/model of the Ohio River Valley in Wheeling, a steamboat museum, interpretive carousel, and an interpretive playground. While few of these programs or facilities have been implemented to date, the plan remains a valuable reference for ideas for future interpretation efforts.

**Figure 2:
Summary of Wheeling's Key Stories and Resources**

Period	Theme				
	The River & The Land	Transportation	The Union	Commerce and Industry	The Landscape of Culture
Prior to 1818: The End of the East	Natural Features Wheeling Creek/ River and Island Early Settlement Town Plat/Main St. Mt Wood Cemetery	Nemacolin's Trail Route of Zane's Toll Road	Revolutionary War Panhandle Boundary Site of Ft. Henry	Natural Resources Cut nails Site of boat yards The G. Washington	Shepard Hall Fetes
1818 to 1849: Gateway to the West	Market St. Linear growth "between the road and the river" Wheeling Island	National Road Suspension Bridge River Transportation Steamboat Landing/ Iron Tie-up Rings	US Port of Entry	Provisioning/ Market Plaza and early comm bldgs. C.H. Berry supply Ott-Heiskel N. Wheeling Glass Stifel Dyehouse	Riverboat Gambling Reading Societies Public School System
1849 to 1865: Secession and Statehood	Development of Wheeling Creek/ Center Wheeling Irish and German Immigration	The B&O Railroad Remaining rail viaducts, tunnels, bridges, rights-of-way	The Civil War/ Statehood Custom House/ Ind. Hall Linsly School Ft. Henry club	Diversification/ Rail Trade Center Market	Jenny Lind The McClure Hotel/ Lodging houses
1865 to 1926: Prosperity in the Panhandle	Victorian Wheeling/ North Wheeling Chapline District Wheeling Island Eastern European Immigration	Wheeling & Elm Grove Street Rail B&O Passenger Sta.	Capitol of State Labor Movement Georgian Center	Entrepreneurial Expansion Wheeling Steel LaBelle Nailworks M. Marsh/ Bloch Bros Warwick China Reymann/ Schmulbach Breweries	Parades/Productions Vaudeville Traveler's Aid Beer Gardens Outdoor Recreation
1926 to Present: The Stage of the Mountain State	Definition and growth of Metro area Muni Park System	Interstate Hwys. Fort Henry Bridge Rt. 2	Waning and resurgence of political standing	Transition from Manufacturing to service and cultural tourism	WWVA/Capitol Theater Oglebay Park Wheeling Downs Arts/Crafts Ctr. Festival of Lights Valley Voyager Victorian Wheeling

3.3. Parallel Initiatives

WNHAC's efforts in Wheeling are being matched by a number of parallel initiatives by local entities that are directly associated with WNHAC's goals.

City of Wheeling

The City of Wheeling is pursuing a number of highly beneficial developments, including the clean up and beautification of the Ohio River bank surrounding Heritage Port and construction of missing links in the east-west segment of the Wheeling Heritage Trail.

The City's "raze or repair" orders on sub-standard buildings have caused some owners to improve historic structures but, too often, demolition has been the alternative taken. The list of buildings with such orders is available to organizations concerned with their preservation, an effort that may see some positive outcomes soon.

National Road Alliance of West Virginia

The National Road Alliance of WV, Inc., is a non-profit organization with the mission to preserve, protect, and promote the historic National Road in West Virginia. Formed in 1999, its first accomplishment was to secure state byway designation for the route. Funding was obtained for the completion of a corridor management plan and interpretive materials, including a video, brochure, and kiosks. The distinctive cast iron mile markers that identified every mile of the 16-mile route will be restored or replicated. The West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT) will install the markers in their original locations, where feasible, restoring markers to their locations within the National Heritage Area. Creation of the interpretive materials is underway, with a companion video and brochure. Kiosks along the route are planned as well.

The Alliance's Corridor Management Plan, finalized in February 2003, is a far-reaching document that addresses signage, rehabilitation and development projects, marketing and promotion, interpretation, partnerships, and funding. Key proposals that have implications for WNHA include the proposed improvement of the Mt. Wood Overlook; creation of a central interpretive venue in North Wheeling; update of a downtown walking tour; and the development of a river overlook/interpretation platform at 23rd Street on the Wheeling Heritage Trail in Center Wheeling (the National Road originally followed Main Street south to 24th Street to the south end of Wheeling Island).

Federal and state grants, including National Scenic Byway and TEA-21 funds at the federal level and West Virginia Division of Tourism grants, are available to help implement the proposals for physical enhancement and tourism activities proposed in the Corridor Management Plan completed for the section in West Virginia.

Wheeling Outlets

Over the last few years, WNHAC has supported studies and plans for a proposed retail outlet development in downtown Wheeling. Although the project was recently cancelled due to a lack of funding, the studies conducted in support of the proposal will provide useful recent data on the buildings and area that can be used in future proposals. These data include, but were not limited to, detailed existing conditions on buildings and infrastructure within Wheeling's downtown, condition assessments for nearly all individual structures, historic structure identification for Investment Tax Credits, parking and transportation analyses, and surveys of downtown streets and utilities.

Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center

Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center is currently building a new 150-room hotel and banquet facility to encourage patrons to spend more time in Wheeling, an investment of over \$150 million. Further expansion of the hotel is anticipated in the future. The ownership group of Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center, Delaware North, has recently acquired the passenger steamboat line that includes the Delta Queen, American Queen, and the Mississippi Queen. Some of these boats will dock directly at Heritage Port and their presence, along with their passengers, will be a major draw on the riverfront that will link Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center more closely with the Heritage Port.

Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center management has expressed a cooperative attitude toward the redevelopment of the vacant Exposition Building on their property. Located at the edge of their property close to the river, the building presents enormous future potential for commercial, office, or visitor use.

West Virginia Independence Hall

“West Virginia: Born of the Civil War” is the only exhibit detailing the complicated statehood story of the four properties in the state owned and operated by the West Virginia Division of Culture and History. The West Virginia Independence Hall museum is planning an exhibit of Civil War flags that is expected to attract more visitors to this site on the Civil War Discovery Trail. WNHAC recently provided a \$15,000 grant for this exhibit through their Interpretive Grants 2002 Program.

Oglebay Institute

Oglebay Institute, founded in 1930 by the Oglebay family, offers lifelong learning opportunities in environmental education, performing arts, regional history and interpretation, and visual and creative arts. Their recent accomplishments include the opening of the Henry Stifel Schrader Environmental Center in Oglebay Park; increased community participation in their programs; and the installation of the *Wheeling in West Virginia* exhibit at the Mansion Museum, the only comprehensive overview of Wheeling’s history in the city.

The Institute is overseeing the development of a passport program that would provide discount admission prices to several Wheeling heritage attractions, an effort that could be expanded to other venues in the future. The Institute will focus their interpretation at the Mansion Museum in Oglebay Park on Wheeling’s dominant historic theme, as part of the museum’s continuing accreditation by the American Association of Museums. This effort provides the opportunity for the use of the interpretive themes defined in the 1993 Interpretive Master Plan and an opportunity for more closely associating the Museum with the WNHA. The Institute’s lead in developing these interpretive themes requires minimal direct WNHAC financial resources.

Oglebay Park

Oglebay Park has made recent improvements to its recreation and lodging facilities and continues to add to the appeal of the Festival of Lights. Attendance at the seasonal display has significantly increased over the years, including an extremely popular cruise from Pittsburgh, operated by the Gateway Clipper Fleet, to the Festival of Lights. The cruise ship disembarks its passengers upstream of Wheeling, who then travel by motorcoach through the city to Oglebay Park.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh District

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) Pittsburgh District commissioned a report in 2000 that concentrated on an analysis of potential improvements to Wheeling Creek at the confluence of the Ohio River and the adjacent waterfront properties. The study also evaluated the feasibility of improvements suggested in this area in the 1992 plan. Recommendations in the report included water quality improvements for Wheeling Creek, dredging to accommodate recreational boating on the creek, extension of the Wheeling Heritage Trail along the creek to Tunnel Green Park, ecosystem restoration and brownfields redevelopment, and the construction of a boat launch and dock on the Ohio River.

Preparations for the dredging of Wheeling Creek to a depth of 5 feet are underway and will likely be completed by 2004 or 2005. The dredging will occur from the mouth of the creek to Tunnel Green Park, approximately one mile upstream. The ACOE has also offered *Section 22 Planning Assistance to States* funding to the City of Wheeling, which requires a cost-sharing agreement, for trail planning along Wheeling Creek in the same vicinity. The ACOE has also explored options with the City for landscaping improvements to the Ohio River banks surrounding Heritage Port.

West Virginia Northern Community College

West Virginia Northern Community College (WVNCC) is proposing to expand their downtown Wheeling campus, located in the southern end of the central business district. WVNCC now enrolls 2,900 students, full and/or part-time, per year. Enrollment is growing at a rate of 6% per year and WVNCC estimates that there is demand for significant expansion of its student body, up to double the current enrollment. Their plans include acquisition of buildings to more closely integrate their facilities in the downtown. A Retail Skills Center and a Culinary Arts center with associated restaurant are major goals. The expansion is projected to add a significant number of new students downtown, which would increase pedestrian activity and provide new clientele for retail and commercial activities.

HOPE VI Housing Development, North Wheeling

The Wheeling Housing Authority has recently completed a new housing community of 62 units in North Wheeling on the site of the old Wheeling Hospital on Main Street. The appearance of the townhouses and single-family houses is sensitive to the adjacent Victorian-era architecture. The development combines owner-occupied houses and rental units at a variety of income levels. A second HOPE VI development of 68 units is underway in Wheeling Heights, above downtown, and is scheduled for completion in 2005.

East Wheeling

The community of East Wheeling is taking steps to solve the problems of dilapidated housing, proliferation of surface parking lots, lack of or under-maintained parks and recreation facilities, and other serious issues. With funding from the Wheeling Housing Authority, the local group called Hopeful City sponsored a community-based revitalization plan process in 2002. The plan's recommendations include realignment of certain streets for improved accessibility within the neighborhood; alternatives to revitalize the area around Clay School, the heart of the neighborhood; new housing and parks; and physical improvements to the commercial areas.

Friends of Wheeling

One of the state's largest preservation organizations, Friends of Wheeling has been involved in many early preservation efforts in the city including the Centre Market rehabilitation, purchase, and stabilization of several buildings for re-sale, original hosting of the National Pike Festival in West Virginia, and several interpretive booklets and posters.

The organization has recently stabilized a building in East Wheeling for re-sale and is considering the purchase of other buildings throughout the city that are on the City's raze or repair list. Their priority lies with the buildings judged to be the most significant and/or endangered. The organization also recently provided matching funds for the TEA-21 grant to restore and replicate the National Road mile markers.

Victorian Wheeling Landmarks Foundation

The Foundation, established in 1993, has a North Wheeling focus, although it has been active in other neighborhoods. The Foundation operates house tours and a tea room in four historic residences and gains additional income from the rental of apartments in the non-public areas of these residences.

The Foundation owns over 10 buildings and acquired three buildings in the 700 block of Main Street, assisted by the Vandalia Heritage Foundation, West Virginia Division of Culture and History, and a private foundation. These buildings currently house commercial and residential uses, which provide income to the foundation while incremental rehabilitation on them is undertaken.

WVNHAC underwrote an analysis of an interpretive strategy for four Victorian Wheeling Landmarks Foundation historic tour homes in North Wheeling.

Victorian Wheeling Society

The Victorian Wheeling Society, organized about 15 years ago, is involved in downtown beautification efforts through the installation of hanging flower baskets on the major streets. Together with the Civitan Club, the society sponsors Property Improvement Awards in diverse categories, including sympathetic additions to historic buildings, craftsmanship, interior and exterior rehabilitation, and a Grand Victorian award. The organization has also been involved in heritage education efforts in the schools and with West Virginia Independence Hall.

Centre Market Commission

In addition to managing the market buildings, the Centre Market Commission collaborates with local merchants in offering its monthly program of gallery hops, exhibits, and musical performances that provide a hub of activity during the day and in the evening.

Vandalia Heritage Foundation

Based in Fairmont, West Virginia, the foundation was created in 1998 through the efforts of Congressman Alan B. Mollohan to promote historic preservation and redevelopment in West Virginia communities located in the First Congressional District. The foundation's activities feature a Preservation Resource Center to provide counseling, design, and technical assistance for preservation efforts and focused developments in several communities in the District.

The foundation is engaged in two projects in North Wheeling. The foundation's development arm, the Vandalia Redevelopment Corporation, is working with the National Housing Development Corporation to rehabilitate five former single-family homes on 12th Street in East Wheeling to preserve affordable housing in the neighborhood. The Victorian Wheeling Landmarks Foundation received a grant from the Foundation to augment the down payment for their recent purchase of three buildings in North Wheeling.

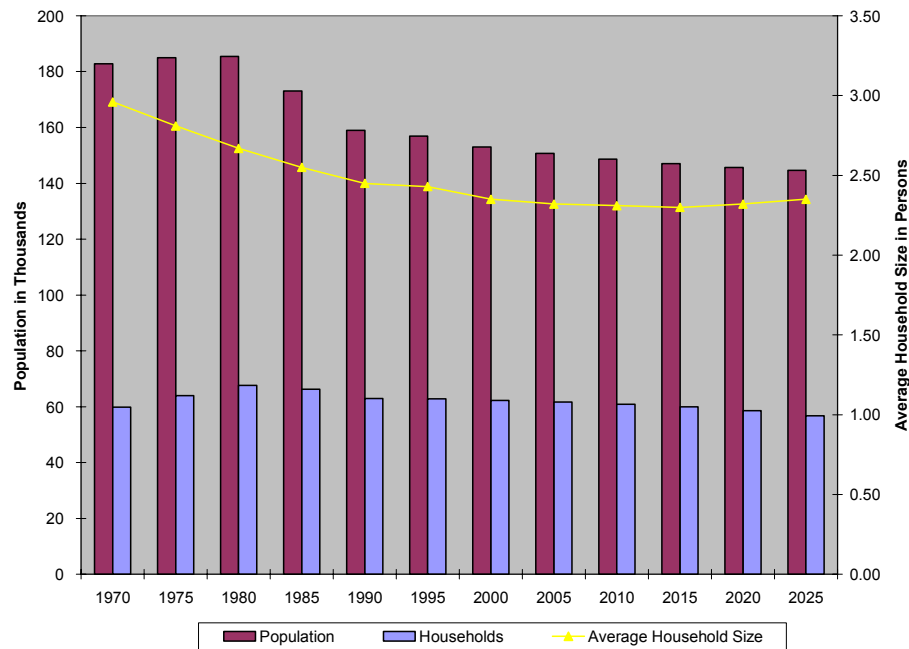
3.4. Economic Context of the Community and Region

Though recent years have seen decline in the resident population of Wheeling, the population is projected to become more stable in future years. Recent declines in resident population are, however, in contrast to trends in increasing visitor volumes at attractions throughout the area.

3.4.1. Socioeconomic Context

Local Market

Figure 3 : Wheeling Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Population, Households, and Household Size, 1970-2025



Source: Woods & Poole and Economics Research Associates

The local or primary resident market includes residents within a 30-minute drive of Wheeling. This area is approximately equal to the Wheeling MSA, which includes Ohio and Marshall Counties (WV), Belmont County (OH) and portions of adjacent counties.

The population of Ohio County peaked decades ago and has been declining ever since. In 1990, the county had 50,800 residents. That number declined to 47,300 in 2000 and is projected to continue this trend to 46,700 by 2006. Figure 3 shows the history and trends for the Wheeling MSA area, roughly equivalent to a 30-minute drive from Wheeling, which like Ohio County has been experiencing a decline in population.

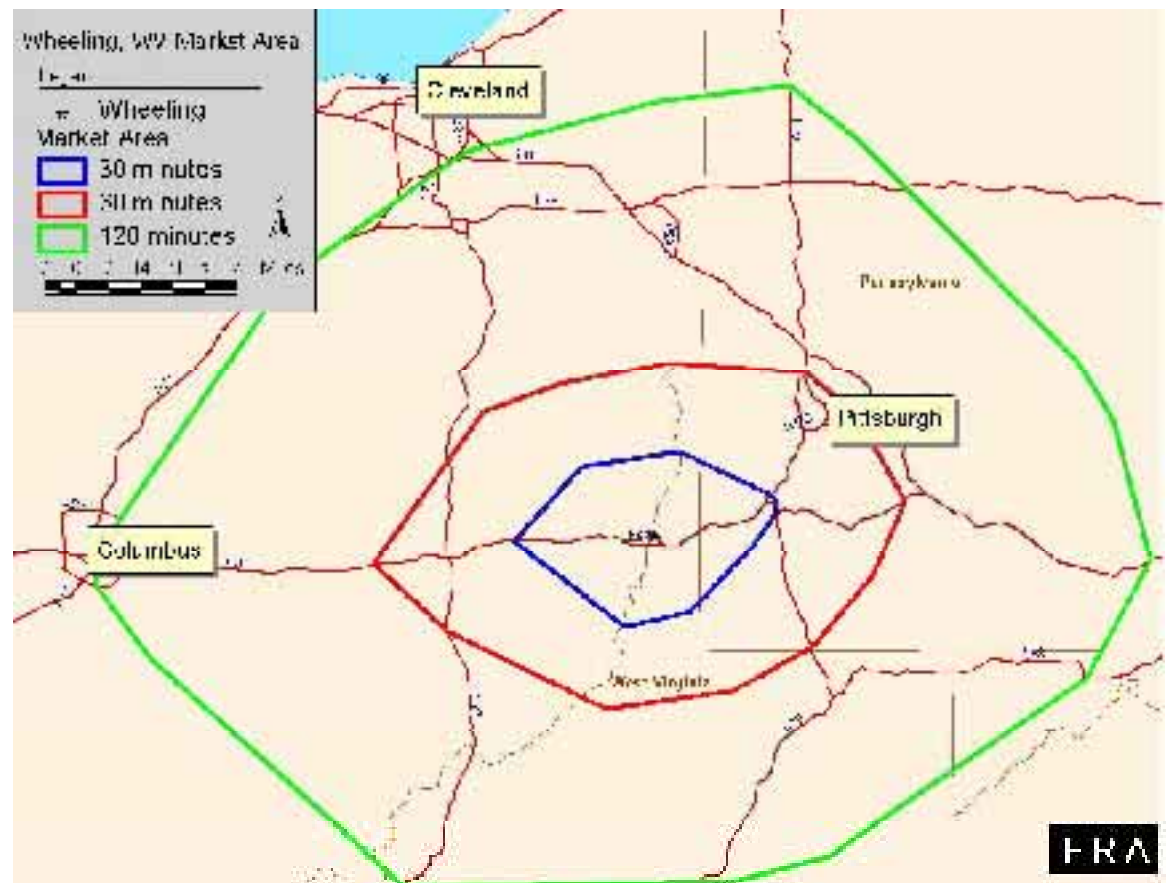
The population of the 30-minute drive time local market most recently peaked in 1980 with 185,500 residents. In 1990, this number had fallen to 158,900 and dropped further to 152,500 by 2000. Residents within a 30-minute drive of Wheeling are slightly older than those in the regional market, with their median age increasing from 41.0 in 2001 to 42.6 in 2006. Total

households in the primary resident market are projected to decline from 88,400 to 84,900 in 2006. In Wheeling's local market, median household income was \$31,400 in 2001 and projected to grow to \$37,600 by 2006. Average household income was \$40,036, and projected to grow to nearly \$48,700 by 2006.

Regional Market

For the purposes of this study, the regional market was defined as residents and day-trip visitors between a 30-minute and a two-hour drive from Wheeling. This market is the source of most current day-trip visitation. In contrast to the local market, the region within a two-hour drive of Wheeling is large and stable, with many areas experiencing growth. Several major markets are within a two-hour drive of Wheeling, including Pittsburgh, Columbus, Akron, Canton, Youngstown and parts of Cleveland.

Figure 4: Wheeling Market Area



Population and Age

The regional market within a one-hour drive of Wheeling is also projected to decline slightly, from 1.49 million to 1.44 million in 2006, while the market between a one- and two-hour drive will increase only slightly, from 4.97 million to 4.99 million residents.

All segments of the market are aging, with the median age increasing between 2001 and 2006. The median age of the regional market within a one-hour drive of Wheeling is projected to increase from 39.8 to 41.2 years in 2006, while the age of market between a one- and two-hour drive will increase by over a year, from 38.2 to 39.4 years.

Households

Like the population, the number of households in the primary and secondary markets is projected to decline. In the secondary market, households are expected to decline from 618,000 to 598,000 in 2006. Average household size is expected to remain constant, at 2.3 persons for both the primary and secondary markets. Average household size of the tertiary market is expected to increase from 2.4 to 2.5 persons between 2001 and 2006.

Income

Household and per capita incomes are projected to increase in every market segment. The median household income of the regional market within a one-hour drive of Wheeling is projected to increase from \$36,000 in 2001 to \$42,200 in 2006, while the average household income would increase from \$46,400 to \$57,100. The median household income of the market between a one- and two-hour drive is expected to \$37,800 to \$43,300 and the average household income would increase from \$47,600 to \$57,000.

Table 5: Wheeling Area Demographic Profile

Wheeling Area Demographic Profile

Primary (30 minute drive), Secondary (1 hour drive) and Tertiary (2 hour drive) Markets

	2001 Estimates			2006 Projections		
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Population	218,404	1,488,244	4,970,359	209,604	1,440,407	4,987,035
Households	88,424	617,504	1,958,497	84,893	598,240	1,957,274
Average Household Size	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.5
Median Household Income	\$31,407	\$35,966	\$37,823	\$37,634	\$42,184	\$43,286
Average Household Income	\$40,036	\$46,441	\$47,552	\$48,692	\$57,080	\$56,985
Per Capita Income	\$16,406	\$19,491	\$18,904	\$19,952	\$23,965	\$22,553

Source: CACI and Economics Research Associates

3.4.2. Tourism Market

State of West Virginia and its Northern Panhandle

Total Visitation

According to D. K. Shifflet & Associates and the West Virginia Division of Tourism, the total number of visitors to West Virginia in 2000 was 21.17 million, up 7.4 percent from 19.8 million in 1999. This included a 5.6 percent increase in overnight visitors, bringing the total number of overnight visitors to 6.6 million. The average visitor in 2000 stayed for just over 4 days, and spent an average of \$69.50 per day. By 2001, total visitation was up 4 percent, and day trips increased 11 percent, but overnight business travel was down 16 percent. Visitors did not stay as long, with the average stay dropping to 3.77 days.

Visitor Origin

The West Virginia Division of Tourism defines its four major tourist markets as Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Washington, D.C., and Charlotte. Overall, however, 16.4 percent of visitors to the state are from Ohio, with 15.8 percent of travelers reporting West Virginia as home. The top five states from which visitors travel are rounded out by Virginia (9.3 percent), Pennsylvania (8.1 percent) and Maryland (7.5 percent).

Other Visitor Characteristics

The State of West Virginia is primarily a drive-to market, with 95 percent of visitors to the state arriving by car. While visitors to the state, like most leisure visitors, report shopping, dining and entertainment as primary activities, West Virginia's unique offerings in outdoor recreation (including national and state parks, hiking and biking, historic sites, hunting, fishing, camping and festivals and fairs) draw a higher proportion of visitors interested in these activities than surrounding states.

Regional and Local Tourism Market

Travelers to the Northern Panhandle region of West Virginia (including the Counties of Brooke, Hancock, Marshall, Ohio, and Wetzel) accounted for 950,000 person-trips and a 14.4 percent share of travel to the state in 1998. These visitors traveled mostly from Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia, and stayed an average of 3.4 days. Most visitors were couples, aged 18-54 years, with household incomes between \$25,000 and \$49,000. Most were visiting friends or relatives, and primary activities were gambling, sightseeing, and visiting National and State Parks.

3.4.3. Wheeling Area Attractions

Many major attractions in Wheeling are experiencing growth in visitation. In some cases, they are expanding programs or facilities to accommodate and attract additional visitors. This section discusses the current offerings of these facilities, while expansions are discussed in the following section. Wheeling's major attractions, Oglebay Park, Jamboree USA and Capitol Music Hall, and Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center, are characterized by significantly larger annual visitor counts and the ability to draw visitors from outside of the Wheeling regional market.

Oglebay Park

Oglebay is a unique 1,650-acre resort, most of which lays outside of the city limits of Wheeling. Wilson Lodge at Oglebay has overnight accommodations with fine dining, indoor pool, fitness room and massage therapy. For families and larger groups, 49 cottages are also available. Oglebay features two championship golf courses, one designed by Robert Trent Jones, and the newest course, designed by Arnold Palmer.

The 30-acre Good Zoo at Oglebay features several rare and endangered animal species, a hands-on Discovery Lab, the Benedum Science Theater with laser shows, train ride, and miniature train display. Annual attendance is estimated at 175,000.

Bissonnette Gardens at Oglebay features seasonal floral displays from April through October, and the Winter Festival of Lights at Oglebay in November and December is America's largest light show with a million lights. The Mansion Museum, Oglebay's heritage attraction, reportedly draws around 45,000 visitors annually, far more than any downtown heritage attraction. There are also seven retail shops featuring gifts, wearables, and collectibles. Other activities at Oglebay include swimming, tennis, Schenk Lake, Schrader Environmental Education Center, and horse stables. Throughout the park, there are admission and user fees for most activities.

Attendance in 2001 was reported by the park as a total of 3.4 million visitors, including one million for the annual Festival of Lights. The Festival of Lights has reportedly doubled its attendance since 1985.

Jamboree USA and Capitol Music Hall

Home to Jamboree USA since 1969, the Capitol Music Hall features live country music with top-name entertainers, Broadway touring musicals, Las Vegas style acts, and The Wheeling Symphony Orchestra. Jamboree USA is broadcast live over 50,000-watt WWVA Radio to 18 states and 8 Canadian provinces. There is an admission fee for all shows.

An estimated 300,000 patrons attend concerts at the Capitol Music Hall, Jamboree USA, and Jamboree in the Hills (summer outdoor event) annually. Included in this number are an estimated 125,000 visitors attending events at the Capitol Music Hall and a reported 110,000 attendees to Jamboree in the Hills. Many of these visitors come to the Capitol Music Hall via one of the 1,500 annual motorcoach tours that the facility hosts.

Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center

The Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center's 2 million annual visitors play video slots, poker, blackjack and keno on over 1300 machines. Racing fans enjoy live greyhound racing, clubhouse dining, and an off-track betting parlor. Reported visitation of 658,000 in 1990 has grown to about 2 million, and the facility is in the process of expanding.

Other Wheeling Attractions

Several other venues in Wheeling draw smaller numbers of visitors than those described above. These are located mostly in downtown Wheeling:

- **Wheeling Artisan Center** --The Wheeling Artisan Center, developed by WNHAC, features an exhibit entitled "Made In Wheeling", retail sales of West Virginia arts and crafts, as well as the Children's Museum of the Ohio Valley. All located on the 2nd floor, they attract an annual attendance estimated under 10,000, not including patrons to the ground floor brewpub restaurant. For the last seven years, WNHAC and the Wheeling Celtic Society have sponsored a Celtic festival in the Artisan Center that becomes more popular every year. Generally, the attendance figure at the Celtic Festival is over 5,000 people.
- **West Virginia Independence Hall** --This National Historic Landmark building draws an estimated 10,000 to 12,000 visitors annually.
- **The Kruger Street Toy & Train Museum** -- Located in a restored Victorian-era schoolhouse in the Elm Grove area, the Kruger Street Toy & Train Museum features a guided tour, interactive displays, an operating O gauge train layout, a unique gift shop, and a restored railroad caboose on-site. The Toy Museum is also the host site of the Annual Marx Toy & Train Collectors National Convention, held in June each year. The museum reports an estimated 20,000 annual visitors.

3.4.4. Wheeling Events Market

The events and event facilities described here illustrate the potential drawing power of downtown Wheeling. While most downtown attractions do not enjoy the visitor volumes of the major attractions described earlier, the following events illustrate the willingness of residents and day-trippers to visit downtown Wheeling if given a reason.

Wheeling Civic Center

Wheeling's East Coast Hockey League team, the Wheeling Nailers, is celebrating its 10th anniversary in the Ohio Valley. Games are played October through April at the Wheeling Civic Center in downtown Wheeling. The civic center is also the site of other major entertainment events. An estimated 250,000 people attend events here each year.

Heritage Port and Downtown Festivals

Heritage Port is viewed as a “hugely” successful addition to downtown Wheeling. Activities include 13 free concerts sponsored by the city. Programs include ethnic festivals, the largest of which is the Italian Festival, with over 150,000 visitors. The Sternwheeler Festival, a newer event, attracts some 80,000 visitors. The Fourth of July fireworks event draws approximately 60,000 people. Other events include symphony performances, teen dances, and chili cook-offs. There is potential to expand events, but many of the larger events are already pushing the limits of the existing facilities and support infrastructure of Heritage Port.

3.4.5. New Initiatives Increasing Visitation to Wheeling Attractions

Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center

The Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center expansion includes a 150-room hotel, a 600-seat entertainment venue, expanded dining facilities and parking. Management expects this to increase visitation by 50 percent, bringing the total visitation to 3.0 million.

Steamboat Stops

The Delta Queen and Mississippi Queen steamboats cruise the Ohio River to Pittsburgh with stops coming and going at Wheeling's Heritage Port. Riverboat passengers have the opportunity to visit downtown attractions, including the Artisan Center, West Virginia Independence Hall, Centre Market, and Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center, as well as excursions to Oglebay Park.

Oglebay Park

Oglebay Park, in addition to a recent expansion of its golf course, is planning the renovation of its Wilson Lodge accommodations as well as the addition of 50 rooms and a number of additional cabins.

Wilson Lodge is the venue for Oglebay Park's National Training Center for Public Facility Managers, attracting students from throughout the country. Oglebay Park has a partnership agreement with WNHAC to provide technical assistance in the areas of sustainability and fundraising, accessing the motorcoach and group business marketplace, and maintenance procedures for downtown public spaces.

3.4.6. Planned Retail Development

Two larger retail developments are planned to be undertaken in the next few years that can positively affect the number of visitors to the Wheeling area and provide venues for advertising and interpreting the heritage themes of the WNHA.

Cabela's

The Cabela's development at the Dallas Pike interchange on Interstate 70 will include a distribution center, retail megastore, television broadcast studio, and wildlife museum. Ultimately, the development is expected to attract complementary businesses that will help create

a new tourism hub for the area. The hunting, fishing and outdoor gear retailer is teaming with the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources (WVDNR) at the site, at which the latter is planning to build a field office and deluxe shooting range. The distribution center will be the company's first such facility on the East Coast and is expected to grow as the retail climate improves. The distribution center is projected for completion in the initial development phase by summer 2004. This initial development should require at least 350 employees, with 200 of them expected to be full-time. The retail store could bring in an additional 400 sales positions.

Wheeling Gateway Centre

The Wheeling Gateway Centre is a big box retail development proposed in Center and South Wheeling near Interstate 470. A Lowe's home improvement store is a certainty in the development, while discussions with Wal-Mart for a new store here are ongoing. The first phase, which includes Lowe's, will contain 165,000 square feet and is expected to be completed by spring 2005. Two other phases would add 230,000 square feet by the fall of 2005. Approximately 1,000 full- and part-time jobs are anticipated from this \$70.75 million project.

3.5. Opportunities for the Plan Update

The assessment of the 1992 Plan, in today's implementation and market context has revealed the following opportunities that have been the basis for the update of the physical development plan:

- **Strengthen and unify the identity of heritage resources** – WNHAC should build and reinforce the “brand” of the City and its heritage resources with a unifying logo, themes, and marketing approach. Wayfinding and interpretive signage need to reinforce this identity, not only within the community, but also on interstate signage.
- **WNHAC should focus its immediate efforts to reinforce the Heritage Port and its surroundings** – The Heritage Port is at a central location and attracts significant visitor activity at many events, including the sternwheeler festival and several ethnic and other celebrations. Additional interpretation at this venue would be accessible to many visitors and residents and would potentially create linkages to other resources within the city's core. The highly successful program of events and activities should be strengthened and expanded and revenue opportunities should be explored. A priority should be placed on the development of commercial, residential, and visitor uses along Water Street and in the proposed Heritage Port Gateway that can benefit from proximity to the Heritage Port and views of the Ohio River.
- **WNHAC should continue to be involved in economic development opportunities both at the Heritage Port and in surrounding areas** -- WNHAC's participation in downtown and Center Wheeling developments has been critical to their success. WNHAC's involvement has not only made projects happen, it has created community-wide confidence in the organization
- **WNHAC should engage Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center in development and operation of water shuttle service** -- Connections between the Heritage Port and Wheeling Island will offer supplementary activities to patrons of Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center and capture some of the explosive growth projected at this facility.
- **The Heritage Trail should be enhanced and strongly marketed** -- The Trail provides a sense of continuity and connection between resources in Wheeling, including Center Wheeling, the downtown area, and areas to the north of Wheeling.

- **Strengthen existing attraction products** – Many of these sites, including the Artisan Center, West Virginia Independence Hall, and Civic Center are proximate to one another and to the Heritage Port. Improvements can enhance the cumulative visitor interest and “draw” at these facilities. These should include not only improvements at individual sites but also enhancing the quality of the settings that connect these resources. WNHAC should consider moving and strengthening the Visitor Center at the Heritage Port Gateway. The current visitor center is “hidden” in the Intermodal Transportation Center, does not clearly accommodate large-scale bus parking, and is removed from the entry to downtown.
- Beyond the physical development elements of the Plan, WNHAC should take advantage of the cumulative impact potential of the visitor attractions within and directly adjacent to the Heritage Area. These include, but are not limited to, Oglebay Park and its related downtown venues, the National Road corridor, Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center, the new Cabela’s development, and the operations of Heritage Port. With Heritage Port reinforcement, WNHAC should be in a position to advocate for and support expanded visitor services including restaurants and hotels and to advocate credibly for a wide range of preservation, interpretation, and marketing initiatives across the Heritage Area.