SSI ENGINEERING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There has been a revolution in Pittsburgh and its surrounding communities in recent years, one that has been promoted through new technologies and a desire for a more sustainable infrastructure. The sustainable lifestyle of live, work, and play has been emulated in developments such as the South Side Works and has prompted the reclamation of Brownstone areas like the Waterworks, both successful redevelopment projects in the Pittsburgh area. Threading though the heart of all of these locations are the multiuse trail systems. These trail systems and others around the country have become more than just recreational paths used for leisurely walks; they have become community lifelines, provided economic stimulus, and in some cases have become destination attractions. In today’s progressive city neighborhoods, there has been a decrease in private transportation, an increase in public transportation needs, and a skyrocketing demand for provisions supporting alternative transportation modes such as bicycles, walking and jogging.

Hazelwood is one community that is currently in the infancy of its urban redevelopment. However, the community remains disconnected from existing bike and pedestrian friendly trail systems in the surrounding neighborhoods. There are very few if any safe walkways leading in or out of town and the existing trails end at the eastern, western, and southern borders. The railroad has discouraged any access along its edges or across it tracks. The rail company even recently erected a fence that creates a dead end to the Duck Hollow Trail. This prevents access to Hazelwood, further crippling the community’s already nonexistent connectivity. On the opposite end of the town, the Eliza Furnace Trail abruptly ends and users must navigate up onto a perilous
2nd Avenue. This has been a growing concern for local organizations such as Hazelwood Initiative. With the clear necessity of these trail systems, the connection of the existing trails becomes a social and economic need that cannot be ignored.

This project was designed with the concept of providing a safe, sustainable solution to the problem associated with Hazelwood’s isolation from trail connectivity. In this endeavor, several alternatives were investigated. The champion proposed alternative is ambitious and potentially monumental. The project will be defined by two phases. The phases are presented in order of the proposed construction order. For phase one, the Mon River Mile trail, the project will begin at the intersection of the existing train trestle underpass and adjacent paved road. The trail will continue, at a distance from the railroad tracks so that not to encroach upon any right of way, down river and up the inclined shoreline with a concrete pile and bridge structure ending at the top of the steep inclined area near the Glenwood Bridge. The trail will then continue on grade through a new cut section beneath the Glenwood Bridge and terminating at the intersection of a new ramp structure and the Duck Hollow trail.

Phase two, the Hazelwood Hanging Bridge, for description purposes will begin on the north side with an intricate ramp system up into the interior of the truss system of the Glenwood Bridge. The “hanging” bridge will continue within the truss system across the river to the south shore. At this point the bridge will connect with another ramp system that will intersect the Great Allegheny Passage trail system.

This proposed solution would connect all four trail systems without interfering with the railroad or vehicular traffic while connecting the greatest number of communities and providing the most direct route for commuters.