



Application Questions

- 1. Project Statement:** Ambridge, named for the American Bridge Company, is at a crossroads. Facing declining population since the golden days of American Bridge (ceasing production in Ambridge in 1983); Ambridge is beginning to come back. New businesses are springing up in both the commercial district (Merchant Street) and the historic district (Old Economy), and existing businesses are beautifying their facades. Additionally, international entrepreneur Robert Moltoni has begun work on a \$65 million project to turn Ambridge’s “brownfields” into a vibrant new residential and commercial district. Looking forward, the Committee to Clean and Beautify Ambridge (CCBA) sees the potential for our community and wants to play a larger role in it. The “Gateways to Ambridge” project will highlight the points of entry into our well-traveled town. These “Gateways” will be a source of pride for Ambridge residents and a symbol to the region that things are changing.
- 2. Inspiration/Focus:** The focus of this grant application is the beautification of PJ Caul Park. In addition to being located on one of the gateways into Ambridge (via the 11th Street bridge), this park is a center of the community. It is used throughout the year by various community groups for many events such as picnics, church festivals, concerts, movies, parades and rummage sales. The park is situated at the end of the 11th Street Bridge, which carries 22,500 people through Ambridge daily. It is a block away from the \$65 million “brownfields” project. It is across the street from Trinity School for Ministry, which hosts students, employees and visitors from across the nation and around the world. It is also located on the same block as the Park and Ride. The PJ Caul Park is an ideal location for a water element to draw attention and distinction to our community. The fountain will not only be eye-catching for passers-by, but will be an attractive element for visitors to the park.
- 3. Community:** Ambridge is a community of 7,500 people with a rich, multi-cultural history. In 1824, the Harmonist Society, a pious, industrious sect from Germany, established their third and final community in present-day Ambridge. The community thrived and prospered with the manufacture of textile products, and seventeen original buildings of the society still stand in Old Economy Village. The site is a designated National Historic Landmark, and is visited by over 30,000 people each year.

In 1903, the American Bridge Company purchased 2,500 acres from the dissolving Harmonist Society, and thousands of European immigrants moved to the town to work in what would become the largest bridge manufacturing company in the world. By 1930, 60% of the town’s population was foreign born. The hard-working immigrants established over twenty churches and fraternal organizations where their customs and traditions were preserved.



When the steel industry collapsed in the late 1970's, Ambridge fell into decline and showed all of the signs of a community in distress: Lack of jobs, abandoned storefronts, overt signs of drug trafficking and prostitution. Many of the people in Ambridge no longer saw a future for the town. Nay-sayers and apathy became prevalent. Affluent nearby communities continue to foster a negative opinion of Ambridge because of its run-down look and empty storefronts.

Presently, Ambridge's future has turned around with the interest of an Australian developer, Robert Moltoni. Mr. Moltoni, with local and state assistance, has purchased over 50 acres of "brownfields" property in the center of town. Demolition of the blighted properties, which began in July '07, will give way to an exciting mix of commercial and residential development.

With the expected new investment of \$65 million in Ambridge over the coming years, Ambridge has become a town on the cusp of a new and exciting future. We would hope that with the historical Old Economy Village as a tourist destination, and the new development injecting new life into the economy, the town of Ambridge will represent a remarkable revitalization story, and regain its solid, financial footing for years to come.

4. **Connections:** The "Gateways to Ambridge" project will involve the eventual beautification of at least three gateways into Ambridge, the 11th Street corridor, the south end of Beaver/Merchant Street, and the north end of town at Ohio River Boulevard. The beautification of these gateways will benefit the community and the thousands of visitors and passers-by. It will also send a message to investors, such as Robert Moltoni, that the people of Ambridge are proud of their community. The water element will be built by an artisan who is an Ambridge resident. There are also plans underway to use high school and/or college students to design and implement the beautification of the Merchant/Beaver Street corridor, the work for which will also hopefully begin in the spring of 2008. Additionally, community groups that use PJ Caul Park will benefit from its beautification. These groups include the Chamber of Commerce, the Crime Watch, and the Trinity School for Ministry. Stakeholders also include a number of current and future donors and volunteers.
5. **Audience:** The audience for this project includes the 7500 residents of Ambridge, the 22,500 daily users of the bridge, and the 30,000 annual visitors to Old Economy Village.
6. **Timeframe:** The project will begin in April of 2008 (pending funds) and will take approximately 80 hours of labor to complete.
7. **Implementation/Promotion:** In our efforts to implement the construction of a water element in P.J. Caul Park, we contacted a resident, accomplished artisan who provided us with several designs. We reviewed the plans with the borough manager and received positive feedback from her. We will also be meeting with the borough's Parks and Recreation department shortly. Following these sessions, we will also review the proposed project with the borough



council and influential business leaders. We do not anticipate any challenges since the water element will enhance the park's appearance, and its water recycling feature and low maintenance will not pose a financial or liability burden on the borough. Since the community has already seen benefits from our clean-up and flower planting efforts in several areas of town, we anticipate continued support and enthusiasm for our projects.

8. **Measures for Success:** The goal of the project is to increase civic pride and improve public perception about Ambridge. The measures of success will include recognition of the project (e.g. in favorable letters to the editor), increases in volunteers and donations to the CCBA, and further grass-roots efforts to improve and beautify Ambridge. Eventually, as the public perception about Ambridge changes, the community will expect to see more commercial business and increased tourism.
9. **Lasting Value:** This project involves the permanent beautification of the PJ Caul Park. The water element will provide an attraction to visitors and residents. The maintenance of the fountain will cost \$475 per year and will be done by the designer. Donations will be sought within the community to pay for this maintenance.

10. **Applicant Background, Rationale, and Goals:**

If you are applying for a Grassroots Project:

- The Committee to Clean and Beautify Ambridge (CCBA), a grass-roots 501(c) 3 organization, is applying for this grant. The fountain will be installed by a local business *Indoor Oceans* and will require approximately 80 hours of labor to complete. The CCBA will plant flowers and maintain the area around the fountain. The group has booked over 1,800 volunteer hours since July '06 doing this type of beautification.
- Professional references are: 1) Mr. James Sas, Creekside Springs LLC, 667 Merchant Street Ambridge PA 15003, and phone: 724-266-9000 and 2) Ms. Kristen Denne, Ambridge Borough, 600 11th Street Ambridge, PA 15003, and phone: 724-266-4070.
- The goals for the project are:
 - i. To beautify Ambridge for the benefit of residents and visitors
 - ii. To increase civic pride
 - iii. To increase community cooperation through volunteerism, donations and the stimulation of other grass-roots efforts from the community.

The CCBA expects to use this project as a means of showing its pride and commitment to the community and to encourage others in the community to do the same.



Attachments

- **Budget**
- **Timeline**

