



## STATION SQUARE (P&LE RAILROAD)

LOCATION: Pittsburgh, PA

SIZE: 40 acres

FEATURES: Riverfront Location,  
Accessibility

OWNER: Forest City Enterprises,  
The Allegheny Foundation, & The  
Pittsburgh History and Landmarks  
Foundation

CURRENT USE: Retail, Dining,  
Entertainment, and Hotel

PAST USE: Railroad & Coal Freight  
and Box-Car Leasing

CONTAMINANTS: Oil and other  
railway fuel contaminants

TOTAL ACTUAL COST: \$72 million

### TIMELINE

1873 P&LE Railroad is first chartered.

1879 P&LE Railroad is open for traffic.

1970 The railroad system's popularity declines.

1976 The site is considered for retail reuse.

1994 Ground is broken on this site.

1994 Forest City Enterprise buys the site.

2002 The site is completed.

### HISTORY

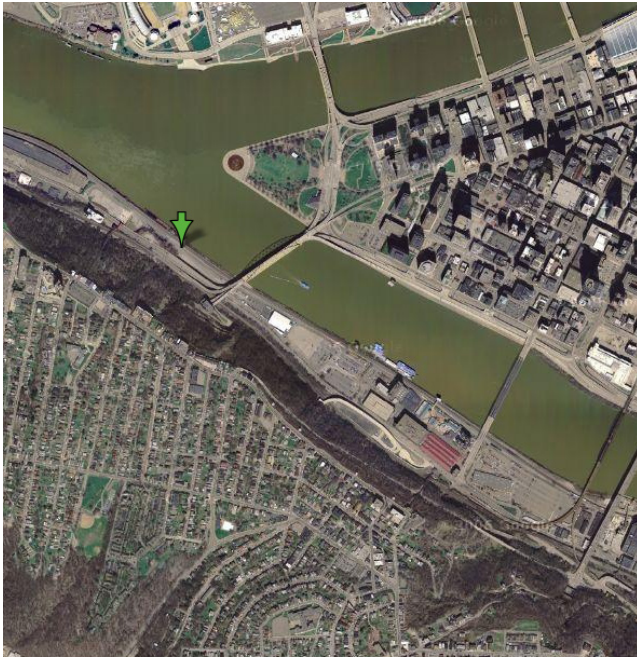
Pittsburgh and Lake Erie Railroad (P&LE) was first chartered in 1873 and opened in 1879 connecting the rich coal and coke industries of Southwest Pennsylvania to Lake Erie region. It flourished with the financial mainstays of coal freight and boxcar leasing.

### TOPOGRAPHY

Topography plays an important role in the success of this redevelopment project. Its prime location on the southern bank of Monongahela River makes it a prime riverfront property. It is proximal to downtown and Mt. Washington and opposite the Golden Triangle. Two Victorian transportation routes, the Duquesne and the Monongahela Incline, also surround it.

One of the oldest bridges in America, the Smithfield Street Bridge connects the site to downtown.





Picture courtesy of Google Maps

Station Square was the first brownfield redeveloped in Pittsburgh, located between the Smithfield Street Bridge and the Fort Pitt Bridge on the E. Carson street. It was developed as a 3-mile long rail route at the southern bank of Monongahela River.

Three years of site study and detailed discussion led to a plan for creating an upscale mixed-use center in a predominantly industrial area and to preserve the existing historic structures. Also, the fact that this was the first redevelopment project in Pittsburgh made government-based tax incentives readily available.

### MARKET CONDITIONS

Increasing popularity of air and road traffic after the Second World War degraded the passenger business of the railroad systems. The once active and important railroad stations became deserted, leaving the

magnificent spaces empty. The great railway complex covering forty acres, an express house, and several other minor buildings were in a danger of becoming a commercial cemetery. Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation (PHLF) recognized a significant market for entertainment in the area.

### SITE ASSEMBLY AND CONTROL

This site was purchased by Forest City Enterprise in 1994. With the help of a grant from the Allegheny Foundation, PHLF adapted five historic P&LE buildings in Station Square.

Station Square was developed as a mixed-use center based on its location in a blue-collar industrial area, existing historic buildings as well as its prime riverfront location to allow Pittsburgh residents to enjoy the riverfront.

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

The site's previous use as freight storage as well as a railway transport system contaminated the site. It required almost three years to study and treat the site contaminants. The major contamination - oil seepage and some other railway fuel contaminants - were easily treated and did not require further monitoring. The site did not have serious environmental concerns.

### SOCIAL / COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The community was taken into consideration while deciding the site's use. Previously the station provided transportation for Pittsburgh residents, and its current mixed use provides the community with employment, recreation, and aesthetics, preserving its architectural structures.



PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The forty-acre riverside site development was funded by The Allegheny Foundation, a Scaife family trust, which served as a prime developer. A non-profit organization, PHLF, sought a challenging large commercial restoration project. The freight house was adapted as a "themed" shopping center containing 70 shops. Site amenities, including the railroad and the trolley cars, were exhibited at the old train platforms behind the station. The Bessemer court was transformed into a major recreational spot with a unique dancing fountain.

COSTS & ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE

The Allegheny Foundation provided the funding for a major preservation demonstration that would simultaneously create jobs, help downtown grow, and establish a new model from urban renewal for Pittsburgh and the nation. The development cost \$72 million, and its initial investment was \$35 million.

CURRENT STATUS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Station Square is an abandoned railroad that transformed into a tourist destination. Its 52-acre riverfront was developed into a landing fleet for excursion boats, a museum of artifacts, an outdoor amphitheater, a river walk, and a number of shops and restaurants. It is the first development program in Pittsburgh that utilized a riverfront for entertainment rather than industry.

ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY IMPACT

Station Square is a residential and entertainment complex, but it also provides a substantial amount of employment. It is also estimated to have traffic of about 2.5 million per year.



Case Study Completed Summer 2007

SOURCES

Patel, Meghna. "Station Square, "History Revived" Apr. 2007. Student Work