

Executive Summary

For over 200 years, the Patapsco Valley has been the focal point for historic events and scientific advances that have transformed Maryland and the nation. Beginning in 1995, the Patapsco Heritage Greenway Committee sought to preserve and interpret the resources of the valley, from Ellicott City and Oella to Elkridge. In 1997, the Patapsco Heritage Greenway Committee acted to create the Patapsco Valley Heritage Greenway and to achieve its status as a recognized state heritage area through the Maryland Heritage Areas Program. In the ensuing years, the Patapsco Heritage Greenway, Inc. (also operating under the name of the Friends of the Patapsco Valley Heritage Greenway) assumed management responsibility for the recognized heritage area, organizing and hosting projects, programs and special events to celebrate, preserve, protect, and conserve the valley's historic, cultural, archeological, natural, and recreation resources. These activities have involved a wide array of heritage partners and engaged thousands of volunteers in local communities.

What is a Heritage Area?

Heritage Areas are locally designated and state certified regions where public and private partners make commitments to preserving and enhancing historical, cultural and natural resources for sustainable economic development through heritage tourism. The program is intended as a partnership between state agencies and local communities to optimize the appeal of the state's distinctive regions as heritage tourism experiences. At the same time, heritage areas focus community attention on under-appreciated aspects of history, culture, and natural areas to foster a stronger sense of regional pride.

Ten Core Components of a Successful Heritage Area

- **A strong focus or theme(s).** Strong themes make a place different or distinctive from the areas that surround it or that are nearby.
- **Evidence of the Area's Heritage.** This can be comprised of historic buildings, structures, districts, distinctive cultural and/or natural landscapes, as well as museums and living resources. The evidence should be available in enough abundance to signal the presence of a distinctive place, though there may be signs of modern occupation and enterprise.
- **Enthusiastic and able local leadership, preferably with a significant civic or community based level of involvement.** Leadership should include business, civic, cultural, arts, museum, environmental, tourism, and historic preservation organizations – as well as local government. Public outreach is a priority, especially an effort to involve African Americans and others who may have played important roles in the history of the area, yet who are sometimes overlooked. Finally, the leadership also involves a good working relationship with local media – newspapers, radio, and television – to assure that information about the heritage area is available to the residents of the region.
- **Visitor services, accommodations, eating and drinking establishments, shopping, and recreational attractions such as golf, tennis, boating, etc.** Ideally, the accommodations

available to the heritage visitor will have some distinction or local flavor – locally owned/managed businesses, small inns, bed & breakfasts, etc. The restaurants and shopping opportunities for visitors are special, unlike offerings back home.

- **Ease of accessibility.** Successful heritage areas require appropriate transportation facilities. Within the heritage area, visitors are able to move about easily, whether by automobile, bicycle, foot, rail, or boat as appropriate. And, public access is readily available.
- **Interpretive Structure and Programs.** The visitor is easily able to find the major stories of how the area's heritage came to happen and why it is important in Maryland and the nation's development.
- **Economic Development.** A successful heritage area needs to have a viable economy which recognizes the value of the area's heritage resources.
- **Leverage.** In creating the Maryland Heritage Preservation and Tourism Areas Program, the state is acknowledging the wisdom of investing public dollars to create value, spark private investment, and motivate local leadership. Successful heritage areas are sustainable over time, requiring less and less public support.
- **Vision.** Successful heritage areas capture the imagination and commitment of many people, especially local leaders who have the drive, passion, capabilities, and resources to make it happen. Successful heritage areas also capture a larger share of private investment.
- **Management.** A strong, effective professionally staffed management organization that orchestrates the collaborations involved, actively brokers resources, and otherwise sees to the implementation of the vision embodied in the management plan.

Benefits of Being a Certified Heritage Area

- enhanced stewardship of heritage resources – historic resources, archeological resources, cultural resources, and natural resources
- enhanced quality of life for heritage area residents and enhanced experiences for heritage area visitors
- financial benefits to heritage area partners and owners of heritage resources
- matching grants to support management of the heritage area (for the Patapsco Heritage Greenway), for capital and non-capital heritage tourism projects, and for heritage area marketing activities by PHG, Visit Howard County, and Enjoy Baltimore County)
- expanded eligibility for certain types of state tax credits for owners of historic buildings
- loans to non-profit organizations, local jurisdictions, individuals, and businesses for heritage tourism-related capital projects including acquisition, refinancing, rehabilitation, and predevelopment (projects must address or complete a priority activity outlined in the approved management plan and must be endorsed by the Patapsco Heritage Greenway)

Patapsco Heritage Area Management Plan

There is a two-stage process to become a Maryland Certified Heritage Area. First, communities within the contemplated Heritage Area prepare an application to MHAA to become a Recognized Heritage Area. Following MHAA approval of the application, the Recognized Heritage Area is eligible to apply for matching grant funds to develop a Certified Heritage Area Management Plan. The Patapsco Valley Heritage Area was designated a Recognized Heritage Area by MHAA in 1998 and has received a grant to develop a management plan.

The purpose of the management plan for the heritage area is threefold:

- to provide a strategic action blueprint for coordinating the many collaborative efforts required to develop a successful heritage area
- to enable the key stakeholders to reach consensus on the roles each will play in implementation of the management plan
- to determine the optimum investment of public resources necessary to trigger the significant private commitments of dollars, energy, and programmatic support that will make the heritage area sustainable over time

The plan incorporates all actions required for management entities in the MHAA's new strategic plan (MHAA 2009). Management actions explicitly address stewardship of resources in the four categories identified by the state heritage areas program: historic resources, cultural resources, archeological resources, and natural resources. Management actions also explicitly address state requirements for heritage area planning and evaluation.

A Certified Heritage Area Management Plan may be updated after approval if necessary or desirable to reflect proposed boundary changes or other significant changes to principal required components of the management plan such as themes, goals and objectives, Heritage Area management structure, etc.

The Patapsco Heritage Area

The Patapsco Heritage Area includes approximately 24.6 square miles along the Patapsco River from just below Elkridge to just above Daniels. The primary components of the Patapsco Heritage Area are the places in the Patapsco Valley along the Patapsco River where its natural resources supported industrial development in the 18th and 19th centuries, the communities that developed as a result of industrial development, the adjoining rural lands that supported those communities, and the travel routes that connected the Patapsco Valley to Baltimore and its port.

- the Patapsco River gorge, extending from below Elkridge to upstream of the historic community of Daniels and encompassing the remains of the many industrial enterprises that flourished during the heritage area's period of significance
- the Patapsco River's tributary stream valleys draining into the Patapsco Valley gorge

- the historic communities of Elkridge, Ellicott City, Oella, Relay, Avalon, and Daniels, including the places where the valley's business owners, workers, and their families lived
- the historic communities of Catonsville and Lawyer's Hill, including the places settled early in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as people moved west from the city of Baltimore along the National Road and the US 1 corridor
- the Historic National Road (All American Road) corridor, including the historic travel route along which raw materials needed for production were transported to the valley's manufacturing facilities and along which its finished products were taken to Baltimore for sale and shipment around the world
- other connecting travel route corridors including the roads connecting historic communities with one another and to the river, and the historic B&O Railroad rail line
- adjoining lands of conservation interest

Within these places, are significantly high concentrations of historical, cultural, and/or natural resources, which contribute to the historic significance of the heritage area. These resources already offer many heritage experiences to residents and visitors and have the potential to offer more and higher quality heritage experiences.

Vision for the Heritage Area

The vision for the Patapsco Heritage Area is composed of an overview and six supporting statements describing desired conditions related to natural resources, historic resources, scenic resources, visitor experience, economic benefits to the heritage area, and partnerships. The overarching vision is:

In 2025, the Patapsco Heritage Area lies at the heart of a network of protected lands along the Patapsco River representative of Maryland's Piedmont forest and industrial heritage. Natural processes, natural beauty, and history combine to create a unique opportunity for neighboring residents and visitors from across the state and beyond, to understand and enjoy Maryland's most dramatic river valley. Through the efforts of many partners, the public appreciates the significance of the valley's heritage, understands its history, and enjoys the experiences it has to offer.

Mission of the Patapsco Heritage Greenway, Inc.

"The Patapsco Heritage Greenway, Inc. (PHG) is dedicated to preserving, protecting, interpreting and restoring the environment, history and culture of the Patapsco Valley between Daniels and Elkridge, Maryland."

Goals and Objectives for the Heritage Area

Five strategic goals frame the management actions that will accomplish the vision for the heritage area:

Stewardship – *Promote and facilitate stewardship of heritage resources to support interpretation and appreciation of the history of the Patapsco Valley, enhance the quality of life for residents, and ensure a high quality visitor experience.*

Interpretation – *Provide heritage experiences for visitors focused on interpreting the Patapsco Valley vital importance in Maryland's industrial revolution and its role in Maryland's evolving resource stewardship ethic.*

Heritage Tourism – *Increase the economic benefits of heritage tourism in the Patapsco Valley.*

Recreation – *Offer residents and visitors opportunities to explore and learn about the heritage area through a variety of quality recreation experiences.*

Management – *Assure a strong, sustainable organization for Patapsco Heritage Greenway, Inc.*

Significance of the Heritage Area

The heritage area's significance statements express why, within a national, statewide, and regional context, the heritage area's resources and values are important enough to warrant heritage area certification.

Overarching Statement of Significance

The Patapsco Valley's overarching significance is associated with its vital importance in Maryland's Industrial Revolution, followed by its role in the region's evolving consciousness towards resource stewardship and regional planning to serve present and future generations.

Related Statements of Significance

- **The Valley as an Iconic Landscape of an Emerging Nation**

The Patapsco Valley portrays the early history of an emerging nation. It serves as a reminder of conditions, opportunities, and hardships encountered when America began seeking its economic independence.

- **The Valley as a Center for Innovation**

During much of the 18th and 19th centuries, the Patapsco Valley distinguished itself as a center for innovation in entrepreneurship, technology, and progressive social change. Its early

economic history was associated with enterprises that took advantage of the valley's resources to produce products that could be shipped to markets at home and abroad.

- **The Valley as a Forerunner of the Conservation Movement**

The Patapsco Valley is a noteworthy milestone of the transition that occurred at the turn of the 20th century when Marylanders and the nation began to understand the need to conserve natural resources and provide for the recreation and open space needs of future generations.

Interpreting the Heritage Area

The heritage area's *interpretive framework* provides a means for organizing interpretive experiences that reflect the area's significance, as summarized above. That framework consists of the following "primary themes" or main topics used as the basis for designing interpretive experiences:

The Valley's Natural Resources and Their Values

In 1608, John Smith briefly explored the Patapsco River and noted its iron deposits. By the end of the 17th century, early settlers had discovered the valley's other resources which provided the foundation for the valley's development as one of Maryland's early industrial centers. Contrary to the Native American perspective, Europeans regarded those resources as consumable and by using them for production risked increasing the valley's susceptibility to damaging floods.

Chronicles of Industries and Their Communities

The Patapsco offers a window for learning about the chronicles of Maryland's early industries and the communities that provided their labor and supporting services. Its stories range from a bird's eye view of the valley's development to those associated with individual industries and their businesses. Rather than occurring in isolation, the valley's history is best understood in a larger regional and national political, economic, and social context.

Connectivity as a Key to Prosperity

Connectivity with the outside world was a key to the valley's economic prosperity. Establishment of Elk Ridge Landing in the 1730s, the National Road in the 1790s, and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in the 1820s successively offered the means for transporting the valley's products to regional, national, and international markets. The valley's network of roads, waterworks, and river crossings also provided the internal infrastructure that enabled the movement of raw material, products, and local labor.

Towards a New Identity

In the early 1900s, the valley's declining economic advantages, combined with emerging views towards natural resource values, prompted its slow transition towards a new identity as a major recreation and conservation area in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area. The renaissance of several of its historic communities such as Ellicott City and Oella, which began in the 1950s, reinforced the valley's distinctiveness.

Building on the Past – Visions for the 21st Century

The valley's transformation from an early industrial center to a regional park with adjacent neighborhoods was largely completed by the end of the 20th century. It has entered a new era emphasizing the concept of sustainability and its interwoven components of environment, economy and communities. The valley offers unusual opportunities, particularly for state and local governments and nonprofit organizations, to collaborate in achieving their respective visions for the 21st century.

Heritage Area Management Actions

Through the management planning process, the Patapsco Heritage Greenway, Inc. (PHG) has developed a management framework that will guide its actions over the next ten years. The management actions that PHG will implement as the heritage area's management entity – in collaboration with its heritage partners – will collectively seek to accomplish PHG's mission and the vision for the Patapsco Heritage Area. Management actions fall into categories that correspond to PHG's goals.

Stewardship Management Actions

Stewardship actions will strengthen public appreciation and stewardship of the heritage area's historic, cultural, archeological, and natural resources. Patapsco Heritage Greenway, Inc. (PHG) will coordinate these efforts working with its heritage partners. Its collaborative efforts will focus on:

- increasing public appreciation of the Patapsco's heritage resources and the needs and benefits of preserving those resources
- promoting and facilitating preservation of the historic resources that are fundamental or otherwise important to the heritage area
- promoting and facilitating protection of cultural resources important to sustaining the heritage area's regional identity
- promoting and facilitating conservation of archeological resources
- protecting and conserving natural resources

Interpretation Management Actions

PHG will foster a unified image and understanding of the Patapsco's stories through coordinated interpretive messaging and materials by PHG and its partners. PHG will lead collaborative efforts to provide a heritage experience for visitors designed to interpret the Patapsco Valley as a cradle of Maryland's industrial revolution, inviting engagement by residents and visitors, and raising the Patapsco's profile as a place of state and national significance. Collaborations will focus on:

- facilitating comprehensive interpretive planning
- fostering a unified presentation of the Patapsco's stories
- conveying the stories through a variety of interpretive media, programming, and events
- using the Patapsco's heritage resources to teach American history
- enhancing interpretive efforts through scholarly research

Heritage Tourism Management Actions

PHG will collaborate with its heritage partners to enhance visibility, grow audiences, and offer a quality visitor experience in the Patapsco Valley. Enhancing the overall appeal and enjoyment of the Patapsco's history, culture, natural environment, and scenic beauty will result in overall economic benefits of heritage tourism to the Patapsco Valley by creating opportunities for small business development in heritage communities, job growth, and a stronger tax base. Collaborations will focus on:

- building the Patapsco's visibility and growing audiences
- providing consistent orientation and wayfinding via signage, printed materials, web-based information, and social media
- providing services and experiences in heritage communities that attract visitors and residents, encouraging them to spend time in the area

Heritage Recreation Management Actions

PHG will collaborate with its heritage partners to enhance opportunities for residents and visitors to appreciate the valley's heritage while enjoying a variety of quality recreation experiences. Residents and visitors to the heritage area will have opportunities to learn about the Patapsco's history while enjoying a variety of recreation experiences. The Patapsco Heritage Greenway (PHG) will support efforts led by its heritage partners to make these quality recreation experiences available, providing technical assistance, facilitating applications for grant funding, and nurturing public support for proposed investments in park management, preservation of open space, and development of recreation experiences of the type and intensity suitable for the valley. Actions will be focused in two areas:

- working with management entities for public parks to enhance opportunities for quality heritage recreation experiences

- working with management entities for public trails to address chronic trail management issues where they currently exist and provide new trail links that will enhance connectivity and the general recreation experience throughout the valley
- supporting state funding for land acquisition by MD DNR in Patapsco Valley State Park with emphasis on properties that have historic significance

Heritage Area Management Entity's Business Plan

The business plan for heritage area outlines how PHG, Inc. – as the heritage area's management entity – will govern itself, operate sustainably, collaborate with partners, and interface with the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority to accomplish the vision for the heritage area. By definition a heritage area assumes a network of partners collaborating to realize a shared vision, with the knowledge that by working with one another they can accomplish far more than when acting alone. PHG, Inc. will lead the effort, providing the framework for action through its management plan; offering leadership, incentives, technical assistance, and opportunities for financial support to partners; and fostering programs that stimulate partners to undertake projects and build the heritage area.

Part one of the business plan presents the organizational management goal and related objectives and implementing actions for PHG, Inc. Objectives and implementing actions under the management goal fall into six categories:

- PHG organizational management
- financial and asset management
- funding
- partnerships
- communications
- planning and evaluation

Part two of the business plan presents an implementation plan for all actions identified in the management plan. Implementation of the recommended actions is expected to occur over time, generally within the ten years following plan approval by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority. Management actions are assigned to one of three time periods for implementation:

- short-term (1 to 3 years) – highest priority and/or more readily accomplished
- mid-term (4 to 5 years) – moderate priority
- long-term (6 to 10 years) – lower priority and/or challenges will take longer to plan for and secure funding needed to implement

Management actions are generally described in terms of primary responsibility, collaborating partners, project cost, funding source, and desired outcomes. Some of the major work efforts in FY15, FY16, and FY17 include the following:

Stewardship Priorities

- collaborate with Patapsco Valley State Park (MD DNR) to support sustainable management of park resources
- initiate technical support and communications with heritage partners to encourage successful grant applications to the Maryland Heritage Area Program and other grant-making entities that will preserve, protect, and/or conserve heritage resources
- support efforts to permanently protect lands identified as of conservation interest

Interpretation Priorities

- work with the heritage partners, develop and implement a comprehensive interpretive plan for the heritage area that provides a coordinated vision for its interpretive and educational program

Heritage Tourism Priorities

- develop and distribute a new heritage area map and guide
- develop and implement a heritage area identity and branding plan
- create a new website dedicated exclusively to the heritage area
- generally increase collaborations with Enjoy Baltimore County and Visit Howard County to encourage and support events, programs, and activities that enhance the visitor experience within the heritage area

Heritage Recreation Priorities

- collaborate with Patapsco Valley State Park (MD DNR) to secure funding for MD DNR to complete a management plan for the park
- collaborate with partners to develop additional recreational trails

Management Priorities

- develop and implement organizational management actions needed to support and sustain PHG operations related to the heritage area
- develop and implement a long-range development plan that provides secure, stable funding from diverse sources to support PHG as the heritage area's management entity and to support special projects and programs
- cultivate relationships with heritage partners to convey opportunities for collaboration to tell the heritage area's stories, make linkages, and protect heritage resources