The Maryland Heritage Areas Program

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What is the Maryland Heritage Areas Program?

- Heritage Areas support the economic well-being of Maryland’s communities by preserving and celebrating the State’s history, cultural traditions and natural resources through partnerships that promote, support and create place-based experiences for visitors and residents alike.
What is Heritage Tourism?

Traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present.

- The National Trust for Historic Preservation

Fort McHenry National Monument & Shrine, Baltimore Heritage Area
Maryland’s Heritage Areas

- There are **13 Certified Heritage Areas** in Maryland – part of a Heritage Area is in every County & Baltimore City.

- Locally designated, certified by the State – **Local Management** is a key component.

- Commitment both locally and at the State level to **economic development** through **a locally determined level of heritage tourism**.
Maryland Heritage Areas Authority
An independent unit of State government in the Executive Branch that operates in the Maryland Department of Planning

- **Members include:**
  - Secretary of Planning (Chairperson)
  - Secretary of Housing & Comm. Dev.
  - Secretary of Commerce
  - Secretary of Transportation
  - Secretary of Natural Resources
  - Secretary of Higher Education
  - State Historic Preservation Officer
  - Ten members appointed by the Governor including:
    - President of Senate (2 Reps.)
    - Speaker of the House (2 Reps.)
    - Maryland Tourism Board rep.
    - MACO rep.
    - MML rep.
    - Public members with expertise in:
      - Historic Preservation
      - Heritage Tourism
What are the benefits of being in a Certified Heritage Area?

- Matching **Grants** to non-profits, local governments, Federal & state agencies
- Approximately **$2.8 million** in grant funding annually
- In FY 2017, **52 grants** were awarded totaling **$2,699,532 + $100,000** for emergency grants available
- Leveraged over **$10,000,000** in non-state cash and in-kind support

**Bucktown Village Store, Dorchester Co.**

Site of Harriet Tubman’s first public act of defiance against slavery
Additional Benefits Available

- **Loans**  
  (can go to businesses & Individuals)

- **Tax Credits**  
  (To otherwise ineligible tourism-related projects)

- **Marketing**  
  (Matching grants)

- **Technical Assistance**  
  (From State and local Certified Heritage Area)

- **Training**

- **Partnerships**
The Maryland Heritage Areas Program Strategic Plan identified three areas where Heritage Areas are uniquely positioned to bring added value to the core missions of preservation and heritage tourism development.
1. Development of Heritage Tourism Product:

*Heritage Areas lead or initiate the creation of new or enhanced place-based experiences for both visitors and Maryland residents.*

Reconstructed Lord Mayor’s Tenement, London Town
Anne Arundel County
2. Building Partnerships

*Heritage Areas bring partners together around a common, local vision.*

Four Rivers Heritage Area and the U.S. Lighthouse Society, Inc. and other public and private organizations partnered to rehabilitate the Thomas Point Lighthouse for visitation and overnight stays by visitors.
3. Sustaining Regional Identity

*Heritage Areas provide a connection to place that showcases each area’s distinctive cultural, historical, and natural assets.*

For those that may not know, this is Smith Island Cake, Maryland’s State Dessert! The Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area played an important role in getting its official designation.
Heritage Areas as a tool to help build Sustainable Communities

- The following real world examples illustrate how the Heritage Areas program is helping to build sustainable communities across Maryland through broad goals shared with the Smart Growth community.

- All projects received funding assistance from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority through its network of Certified Heritage Areas.
The **Footer’s Dye Works** was once part of the largest clothing cleaning and dyeing establishment in the United States, employing over 500 people.

The Canal Place Heritage Area, Maryland Historical Trust, City of Cumberland, Joy Development, LLC and others saved the building from demolition. It is being rehabilitated into a mixed-use retail, office, residential and restaurant complex. [www.footerbuilding.com](http://www.footerbuilding.com)

**RESTORING AND ENHANCING EXISTING COMMUNITIES**

**CANAL PLACE HERITAGE AREA, CUMBERLAND**
In Anacostia Trails Heritage Area a grant helped develop a bikeways network linked to a system of regional trails. Nestled between the historic planned community of Greenbelt and the University of Maryland, the Town of Berwyn Heights constructed a bikeway trail with on-road shared bike lanes and biking amenities.

The project includes signage at historic sites, bike racks at multiple locations, two bike repair stations, and on-street painted bike lane signage. The Trail links bicyclists to regional amenities through the a connection to the 30-mile Anacostia Tributary Trails System that includes off-road and on-road segments providing access to multiple towns, parks, Arts & Entertainment Districts, and nearby Washington, DC.

The project improves residents’ quality of life and enhance the appeal and accessibility of the Heritage Area to tourists.
During the recent 150th Commemoration of the Civil War, a Heritage Areas grant to the Civil War Trust helped acquire an important parcel associated with the Battle of Williamsport (Falling Waters) where the last engagement of the Gettysburg Campaign was fought. The battlefield was identified in a 2010 Federal Civil War Sites Advisory Commission report as needing urgent action to save the currently unprotected open space.

**DID YOU KNOW:**

A 2013 study found that 956 battlefield visitors results in 1 Full-Time job. In the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area this formula translates into 770 jobs from the 735,762 visitors.
Southern Maryland has been the ancestral home of the **Piscataway Indian people** for over 10,000 years. Today, the **Southern Maryland Heritage Area**, Piscataway-Conoy Tribe and Piscataway Indian Nation, and Maryland Historical Trust are leading a broad-based public-private partnership to create a multi-county **Piscataway Indian Heritage Trail**. The Steering Committee also includes the **Maryland Office of Tourism, National Park Service, Maryland Indian Tourism Association, Inc., St. Mary’s College** plus over **19 other key public-private partners**.

Through immersive Piscataway-led experiences the trail will allow visitor to see and experience the story **“Through Piscataway Eyes.”** New and upgraded visitor destinations are anticipated to provide economic and community benefits including job creation and small business development both within the Piscataway Indian community and broader Southern Maryland region.
For Heritage Area certification MHAA requires development of a *heritage area management plan* that local governments adopt as an amendment to their comprehensive land use plans. The Garrett County (Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West) Heritage Area’s experience illustrates how the process typically proceeds. The Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, also the Tourism Office, formed a steering committee comprised of the county, municipalities and rural villages, state government, local historic preservation, land conservation, and recreation organizations, and business, economic development, and tourism organizations to oversee a *broad-based process of plan development*.

On plan approval this wide-range of interests was further expanded and formalized as an Advisory Board that works to foster heritage tourism, historical, natural and cultural resource protection, and other goals and objectives in the *heritage area management plan*.
Questions or for Further Information

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