

Corridor Management Plan *for the*

# US 15 Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway

April 2004

*Prepared for:*  
Frederick County, Maryland  
as part of  
the State of Maryland Scenic Byway Program

*Prepared by:*  
Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C.  
in association with  
Daniel Consultants, Inc.  
John Milner Associates  
Bay Area Economics  
Watson Heritage Strategies  
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This plan was developed in cooperation with the Frederick County Department of Comprehensive Planning, the Tourism Council of Frederick County and the Maryland State Highway Administration.



## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1 *The Catoctin Mountains*

The Catoctin Mountains form the easternmost ridge of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Maryland. “Catoctin” has been taken to mean “the place of many deer,” “the old hill or mountain”, or “speckled mountain”. Catoctin Mountain refers to the 2- to 4-mile wide ridge between Leesburg, Virginia and Emmitsburg, Maryland. Many people refer to the singular form in reference to this long ridge. Others refer to the Catoctin Mountains when climbing an individual peak, such as Piney Mountain or Round Top.

However they are referred to, the Catoctin Mountains offer the closest preserved natural area to the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan region, with over 32,000 acres of protected park land including the highest waterfall in Maryland (Cunningham Falls) and an extensive system of trails and outdoor recreational opportunities. Many people recognize the Catoctin Mountains as home to four CCC-era Camps, one of which is now known as Camp David (formerly Hi Catoctin). It has served as a presidential retreat since President Roosevelt sought out the Catoctin Mountains as a place for a secure rural retreat away from the summer heat of Washington.

The Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway, US 15, is a modern highway that is the primary north/south transportation route for residents of Frederick County and beyond. Between 10 and 20 million vehicles travel along US 15 every year. A portion of those are through-travelers from Virginia, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Others are commuting to or from the Baltimore/Washington Metropolitan Area from the I-70 corridor West of Frederick.

The historic sites of Gettysburg to the north and Monocacy and Harpers Ferry to the south are primary Civil War interpretive destinations for travelers who use the byway. The construction



## **Scenic Byway Designation and Property Rights**

*Throughout the planning process, concerns have been raised about the implications of the byway management plan on future land use, development rights, zoning, and the resale of property. The byway management plan recommends that the County apply for National Scenic Byway designation. The existing County land use and zoning regulations coupled with the existing County, State, Federal, and private agricultural land and open space preservation programs are some of the best available. The plan suggests that better use of these programs is all that is needed to conserve the intrinsic qualities of the byway.*

*No changes to growth areas, land use, or zoning regulations of any kind are proposed as part of this plan, nor are they needed for byway designation. Instead the plan recommends that new incentives be developed that encourage property owners to take advantage of these programs on a voluntary basis. Anyone who buys property either now, or in the future (once the byway is designated as a National Scenic Byway), can continue to use that property in any way current zoning allows. The County will publish information about the programs that become available as a result of implementing the plan's recommendations.*

of the modern roadway supplanted historic 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century north/south roadways in Frederick County. These former alignments, also part of the system of byways, provide excellent opportunities for sampling the extensive 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century historic sites that dot the landscape.

The Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway also serves as the principal gateway to Maryland's rich Civil War legacy. Maryland's Civil War Trail winds along many of the former alignments of US 15, giving visitors a sampling of what it was like during the Civil War away from the battlefields— in towns and rural areas during the Gettysburg and Antietam Campaigns.

The byway's appealing character is a result of the beauty and appeal of the landscape through which it winds. Catoctin Mountain and the historic agricultural landscape of Frederick County provide a setting that enhances the quality of life of residents and provides a strong positive image to visitors. Preservation of the intrinsic qualities of the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway will help preserve the landscape that gives Frederick County its distinctive character.

### **1.2 Purpose of the Plan**

The purpose of the byway management plan is not more regulations. Instead, the planning effort is aimed at encouraging some of the many visitors that use US 15 when traveling to Gettysburg, Manassas or Harpers Ferry to stop in the small towns and historic sites along the way in Frederick County. Designation as a National Scenic Byway is being sought and the plan is being developed to coordinate the activities of those who are actively involved in the management of the byway, including the many individuals who have served to steward the scenic, natural, recreational, and historic resources of the Catoctin Mountains for many years.

### **1.3 Planning Context and Process**

In November 1999, the entire length of Maryland's section of US 15 from the Point of Rocks Bridge on the south to the Maryland-Pennsylvania border on the north was designated as a Maryland Scenic Byway. A task force was formed and met several times about how to preserve and enhance the byway to promote heritage tourism. The task force recommended that Frederick County pursue a federal grant to prepare a management plan for the byway. In 2001, Frederick County was awarded funds from the Federal Highway Administration to complete a Scenic Byway Management Plan for US 15 in Maryland.

Frederick County then formed a management committee including representatives of the County, Maryland State Highway Administration, and the Tourism Council of Frederick County to



develop a scope of work for the plan and hire a consultant to assist in the preparation of the byway management plan. Frederick County hired a multi-disciplined team of landscape architects, planners, engineers, and historians, headed by Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C., to assist in the development of the plan.

At the end of the byway management planning process, the people and communities along US 15 will decide whether to pursue, along with US 15 communities in Virginia and Pennsylvania, designation as a “National Scenic Byway” as part of the Federal Highway Administration’s National Scenic Byway Program. The designation provides additional opportunities for heritage-based tourism development including additional funding opportunities for preservation and enhancement projects.

A committee was formed to assist in the development of the management plan. The US 15 Scenic Byway Advisory Committee represents a cross-section of people who live or work along the byway, who are responsible for its management, those with extensive knowledge of the history of the route or with extensive knowledge of the Civil War events and activities that happened along the route. The US 15 Scenic Byway Advisory Committee has:

- Assisted in the formulation of a vision, goals and objectives for the plan.
- Provided information to the planning team about important features and points of interest along the byway.
- Assisted in the development of strategies to preserve and enhance important features and to help determine how best to take advantage of the opportunities.
- Made recommendations regarding how the plan will be implemented.
- Made recommendations on whether or not to pursue designation as a National Scenic Byway.

The US 15 Scenic Byway Advisory Committee met a total of eight times over a one year period at different locations throughout the corridor. Public meetings were held at two different periods during the planning process: one meeting in March of 2003 to provide more information to the public about the planning effort and to review the plan’s vision, goals and objectives; and three meetings (in different locations along the byway) in October and November of 2003 to review the plan’s recommended strategies for preserving and enhancing US 15 as the main access route to Frederick County’s rich scenic, recreational and historic sites and features.

### **Scenic Byway Designation and Property Rights (Continued)**

*The only regulation that has taken place as a result of the designation of US 15 as a State Scenic Byway is the prohibition of new billboard construction. No new billboards are allowed on US 15 based on its designation as part of the National Highway System and its designation as a State Scenic Byway. See page 4-52 for details.*

*Should the byway’s intrinsic qualities be lost due to gradual changes in land use over time, it is possible that the byway’s scenic designation will be taken away. It is completely up to the County and the municipalities to determine how to conserve the byway’s intrinsic qualities and the plan provides them with a range of options.*

All meetings of the Advisory Committee were open to the public and all were welcome to attend and participate. The schedule of meetings and their topics was as follows:

- #1 What are the Vision and Goals for the Byway? 1/31/03
- \*\* Public Meeting - Are we headed in the right direction? 3/27/03
- #2 Where are the special places along the byway and how can they best be preserved? 3/27/03
- #3 How can we enhance the byway and make it more attractive? 4/24/03
- #4 How do we encourage visitors to stop in the towns and businesses along the byway? 5/29/03
- #5 What is the best way to tell the byway's many Civil War era stories? 6/26/03
- #6 How can we make sure the byway is both safe and attractive for travelers? 7/24/03
- #7 Who will be responsible for implementing the plan? 9/25/03
- \*\* Public Meetings - Did we get the plan right? 10/29/03, 11/3/03, and 11/5/03
- #8 Endorsing the plan. 10/29/03

Pursuit of National Scenic Byway designation is recommended. The Frederick County Board of County Commissioners was asked for their support in early 2004. A permanent group will need to be identified that will be responsible for implementing the plan (see Chapter 5).

### ***1.4 Ongoing Public Involvement***

Implementing the plan's recommendations will require the continued involvement of all of the stakeholders along the byway. Chapter 5 spells out the recommendations for forming a permanent management entity with responsibilities for implementing the plan. As with any type of community-based planning, ongoing public involvement is the cornerstone of a successful byway designation and management effort.

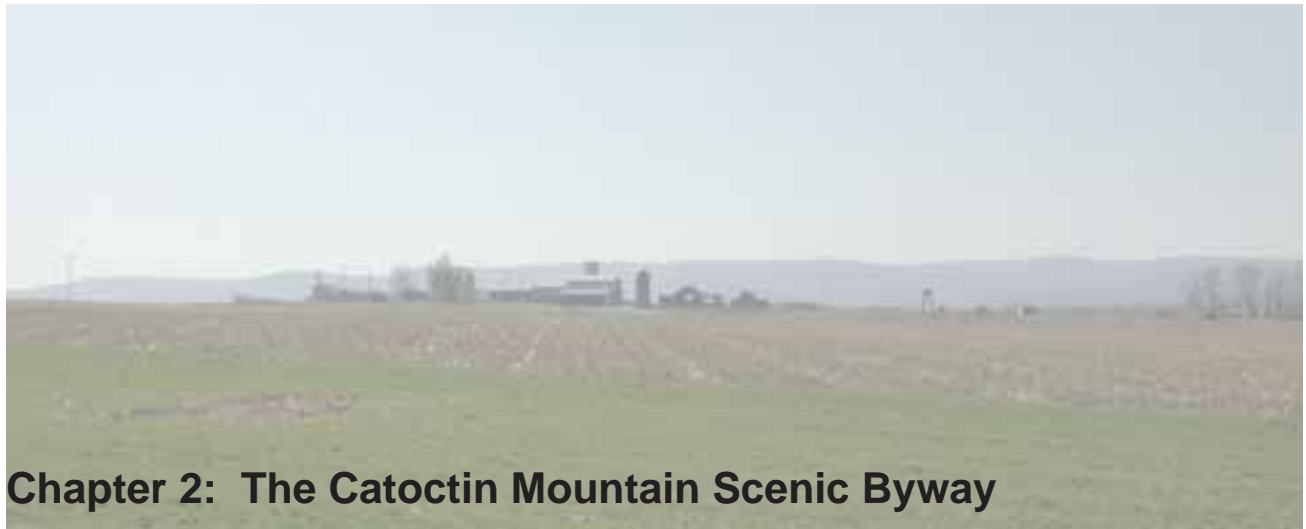
In order for the plan to be successful, byway leaders need to be constantly growing the byway organization. For that to happen, everyone needs to know about the byway—from the desk clerk at the local hotel, to the Congressional delegation. Decision-making on byway planning and management activities must be done through a consensus building effort: those elements of the plan that everyone agrees on are usually acted upon first.

Consensus building also means that those persons that are most often affected by a particular management strategy, such as a byway neighbor, need to be consulted prior to moving forward with implementing a project or activity. For example, at one of the public workshops, a byway neighbor wanted to be sure that if something were constructed along the byway, that

they would be given a chance to look at the plans and have a say in whether or not it should be built in the proposed location, and if it is in the right place, to make sure that the design fits well within the neighborhood. A wayside planned for one location may be a concern to a neighbor if it is unclear who will be responsible for maintaining and policing the location. Even tree planting to screen one particular view of an adjoining industrial area may be a concern to a neighbor if they are unsure whether or not the trees will grow and block their view overlooking Sugarloaf Mountain.

With good communication among byway neighbors, the projects that get built along a byway can serve to be a positive contribution to the neighborhood, rather than a negative, if the communication is started early in the process and repeated as often as necessary. More than just good communication, it builds ownership that often leads to a stronger commitment for maintenance and management.





## Chapter 2: The Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway

This chapter defines the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway Corridor and describes the byway's existing features. The vision and goals for the byway, as recommended by the Advisory Committee, are described in this chapter along with a listing of the recommended strategies that will need to be implemented to achieve the vision and goals. Existing features and their significance are identified in Chapter 3, and the strategies are detailed in Chapter 4.

### 2.1 Corridor Definition

US 15 is the dividing line between two different physiographic provinces (Figure 2-1). To the west of the byway is the Blue Ridge province, composed of mountains, heavily rolling terrain, and deep restricted streams. To the east is the Piedmont province, characterized by rolling terrain of the Monocacy River valley. Traveling on US 15, one experiences numerous scenic vistas and the contrast between the two regions. This setting is integral to the experience of traveling along the byway, and plays an important role in defining the byway's significant scenic, natural, recreational and historic qualities.

#### Byway Route

Many visitors are already coming to the area for its scenic, natural, recreational, and historic qualities and strengthening those qualities may increase opportunities for a wide range of tourism development activities. Defining the corridor in terms that maximize opportunities for enhancing the overall experience (including safety) of US 15 will help to better serve its desired role as a gateway to the many layers of scenic, natural and cultural points of interest found along the Catoctin Mountains.



Figure 2-1: Frederick County  
Physiographic Regions

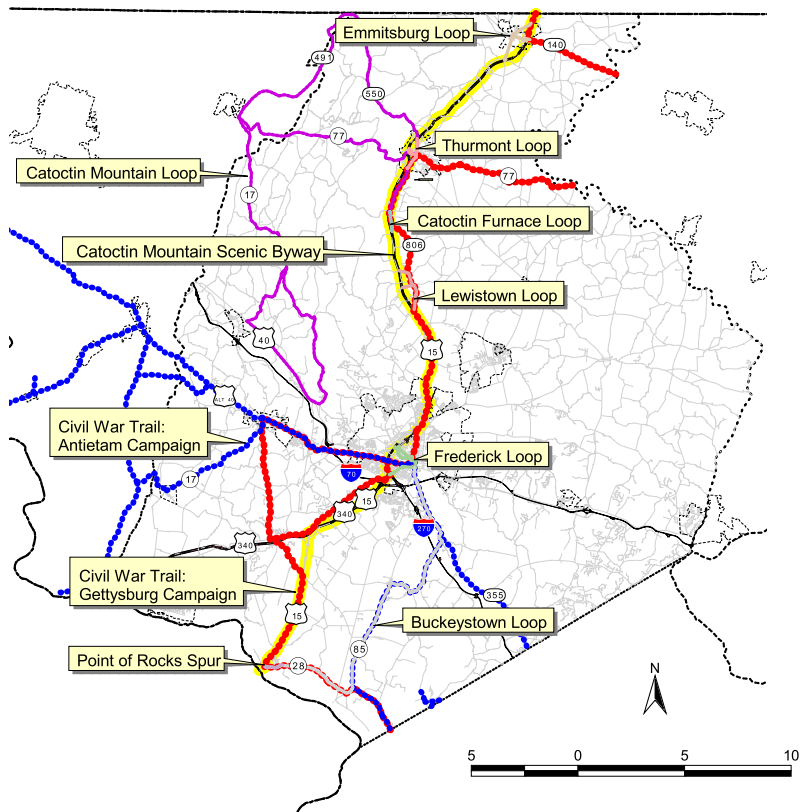


Figure 2-2: Catoctin Mountain Corridor Definition

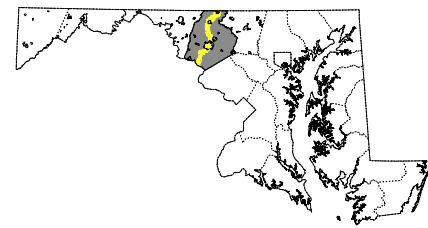


Figure 2-3: Frederick County, Maryland

The byway shall include:

- Existing US 15 and its associated public right-of-way.
- Former alignments that are still in public right-of-way including the former alignments associated with the entrances to the nearby cities and towns of Point of Rocks, Frederick, Lewistown, Catoctin, Thurmont, and Emmitsburg.
- Catoctin Mountain Loop Scenic Byway shall be incorporated into the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway.\*

## Related Landscapes

The setting of these routes is also included in the corridor definition for the purpose of encouraging private and voluntary conservation efforts such as the purchase of conservation easements or donation to a qualified tax-exempt organization. Historic sites and points of interest will be incorporated into marketing and promotion efforts of the byway if the primary travel directions to that site or point of interest requires travel on US 15 in Frederick County, MD.

*\* The Catoctin Loop Scenic Byway will not be included in the application for National Scenic Byway Designation. Catoctin Loop is a state-designated scenic byway and was not included in the original funding for the preparation of the US 15 Corridor Management Plan. Additional FHWA Scenic Byway Program funding will be needed to extend the corridor management planning effort to incorporate Catoctin Loop should local interest warrant such a request.*



## Related Linkages

The following distinct loop tours are part of the byway experience.

### ***Proposed Linkages:***

- Emmitsburg Loop – This loop travels through the downtown of historic Main Street Emmitsburg. Several local restaurants and quaint shops are available for visitors. Other points of interest include a site on the Gettysburg Campaign Civil War Trail, the National Fallen Firefighters' Memorial, and the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton.
- Thurmont Loop – This loop passes through downtown Thurmont, a small manufacturing town originally called Mechanicstown. Thurmont is also a site on the Gettysburg Campaign Civil War Trail.
- Catoctin Furnace Loop —This loop leads to the historic Catoctin Furnace. A walking trail leads from the furnace to Cunningham Falls State Park. Other buildings of interest are the historic worker housing (all privately owned), Collier Log House, Catoctin Cottage, and Harriet Chapel.
- Lewistown Loop— Points of interest on this loop include a site on the Gettysburg Campaign Civil War Trail (Figure 2-4).
- Frederick Loop – Bringing visitors through historic Frederick, this loop offers a multitude of options for dining and entertainment. The loop also travels near the Schifferstadt Architectural Museum, a Gettysburg Campaign Civil War Trail site, a historic B&O Railroad station, the National Museum of Civil War Medicine, and a visitor center.
- Buckeystown Loop – This loop passes several sites on the Antietam Campaign Civil War Trail (Figure 2-5).
- Point-of-Rocks Spur – This spur passes near the C&O Canal, the historic Point of Rocks Train Station (currently a station on the MARC train line), and a site on the Gettysburg Campaign Civil War Trail.



*Figure 2-4: Lewistown Loop*



*Figure 2-5: Buckeystown Loop: Catoctin Inn Conference Center*

### ***Existing Travel Routes and Byways:***

The following routes either cross or run parallel to the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway (see Map 1 in the appendix):

- Civil War Trail: Gettysburg Campaign – This existing trail follows the invasion leading up to and the retreat from the battle at Gettysburg.
- Civil War Trail: Antietam Campaign –This trail follows the route taken by Robert E. Lee during his 1862 Maryland Campaign.

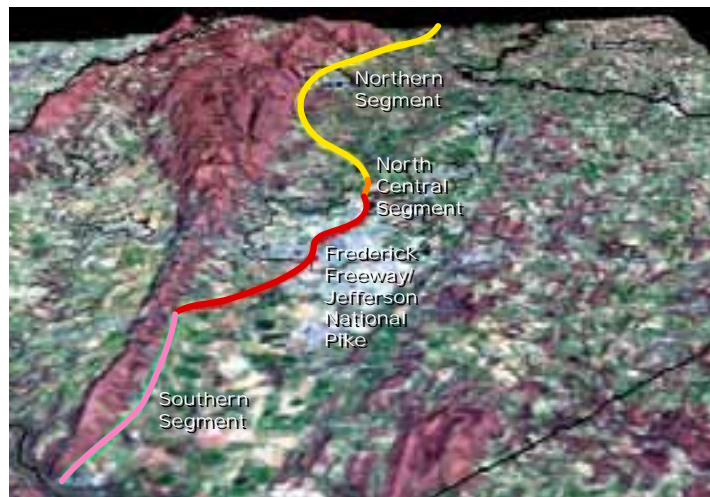


Figure 2-10: Byway Segments

- Catoctin Mountain Loop Scenic Byway (For future byway promotion, this loop byway shall be part of the primary byway.) – This byway traces a variety of entrepreneurial endeavors, including sawmills, tanneries, the nation's first match factory, and the making of moonshine.
- National Road – This Nationally designated All American Road is the first federally planned and funded highway in the United States. The byway traces the evolution of transportation and commemorates the movement that ultimately stretched the nation's boundaries from the Atlantic to the Pacific.
- C&O Canal Scenic Byway – This byway parallels the historic C&O Canal for its entire length and passes locks and historic lock houses, canal boat houses, aqueducts, and landings.
- Old Main Streets Scenic Byway – This byway explores quaint towns and villages of Carroll and Frederick Counties, focusing on the old Main Streets.

## Byway Regions

In the case of the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway, management strategies will need to be tailored to distinct sections of the byway. These segments shall include:

- Northern Segment - including US 15 from the Pennsylvania State Line to Biggs Ford Road – This portion of US 15 is predominantly agricultural and is scenic in nature. Within this segment, US 15 is close to the Catoctin Mountains. Scenic views are commonly comprised of rolling agricultural land in the foreground with the mountains in the background. Near Thurmont, some areas of new residential development are visible at the base of the mountains.



Figure 2-6: Northern Segment

- North Central Segment – including US 15 from Biggs Ford Road to the Frederick Freeway. The North Central Segment is the shortest of the segments (about 1.25 miles). The area surrounding this segment is relatively undeveloped, but is designated for future growth in the Comprehensive Plan and will require additional effort to guide that growth in a manner that is appropriate to its future role as a major gateway to Frederick. Like the northern segment, scenic views in this segment are comprised of rolling agricultural land in the foreground and mountains in the background, although the mountains are farther away than in the northern segment.
- Frederick Freeway/Jefferson National Pike – includes segments within the City limits of Frederick and the section that includes US 340. Within Frederick County, this is the most heavily urbanized portion of US 15 and provides direct access to the significant historic qualities found within Frederick Town Historic District.
- Southern Segment – includes US 15 from the 340 split to the Potomac River at Point of Rocks — Looking to the east of US 15 in this segment, there are scenic views of Sugarloaf Mountain and there is a potential view to historic St. Paul's church and cemetery. This area is too far south for views of the Catoctin Mountains.



*Figure 2-7: North Central Segment*



*Figure 2-8: Frederick Freeway/  
Jefferson National Pike Segment*



*Figure 2-9: Southern Segment*

## **2.2 Related Programs and Projects**

Frederick County is also involved in two separate, but related, efforts. The Civil War Heritage Area project is a regional initiative involving leaders in Carroll, Frederick, and Washington Counties in an effort to certify a Civil War Heritage Area through the Maryland Heritage Areas program. Boosting the number of overnight stays and encouraging heritage travelers to explore the area will help both the local and State economy. Certified heritage areas are eligible for financial support in the form of loans and tax credits for preservation activities.

The red, white, and blue Civil War Trails signs now appearing in the County are part of an ongoing effort by the Maryland Office of Tourism Development to improve the visibility and access to the region's Civil War related historic sites. Currently, there are two touring routes related to the Civil War Trail, the Antietam Campaign and the Gettysburg Campaign (shown in Map 1, Existing Byways & Touring Routes). The routes follow and intersect US 15 at various points throughout Frederick County and have sites with interpretive signage along the way.



Figure 2-11: C&O Canal



Figure 2-12: Community Bridge Mural  
(photo by John Fiesler)



Figure 2-13: National Museum of Civil War Medicine (photo by John Fiesler)

## 2.3 Existing Facilities and Services

### Existing Visitor Attractions

The following visitor attractions are along or a short side from the byway:

- Baker Park
- C & O Canal (Figure 2-11)
- Catoclin Furnace
- Catoclin Mountain Orchard
- Catoclin Mountain Park
- Catoclin Wildlife Preserve and Zoo
- Community Bridge Mural (Figure 2-12)
- Cunningham Falls State Park-
- Everedy Square & Shab Row Farmers' Market
- Frederick County Fairgrounds Market
- Frederick Town Historic District
- Barbara Fritchie House and Museum
- Hessian Barracks
- Loy's Station Covered Bridge
- Monocacy National Battlefield
- Monocacy River
- Mount Saint Mary's College
- National Fallen Firefighters' Memorial
- National Museum of Civil War Medicine (Figure 2-13)
- National Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, National Shrine Grotto of Lourdes
- National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
- NCI-Ft. Detrick Farmers' Market
- Pryor's Orchard
- Roddy Road Covered Bridge
- Roger Brooke Taney Home and Francis Scott Key Museum
- Rose Hill Manor
- Schifferstadt Architectural Museum
- Sugarloaf Mountain
- Summers Farm Inc.
- West Frederick Farmers' Market

### Existing Visitor Services

#### Overnight Accommodations

Overnight Accommodations in Frederick County range from bed and breakfasts, hotels and motels, to cabins and camping. Hotels include both national chains and locally owned businesses.



## Restaurants

Visitors to the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway can choose from a wide variety of different places to eat. Food choices include home-style restaurants, church dinners, brew pubs, ethnic cuisine, and fine dining. In addition to quality food, many of the restaurants offer a unique atmosphere.

## Public Restrooms

Comfort facilities are open to the public at the following locations:

- Welcome Center/Rest Area near Pennsylvania border
- Catoctin Mountain Park Visitor Center
- Cunningham Falls State Park Visitor Center

## 2.4 Existing Roadway Conditions

### Road Classification and Volume

US 15 serves as an important regional transportation facility for Frederick County and the State of Maryland. As shown in Figure 2-14, the existing route is classified as a rural principal arterial in the County and an urban freeway/expressway within the limits of the City of Frederick. South of its junction with US 340 the route is an undivided 2-lane road. North of its merger with US 340 it is a 4-lane divided highway. There is full access control between US 15's merge with US 340 and its intersection with MD 26 on the north side of the City.

North of the intersection of US 15 and MD 26 there are some access controls to limit the types of turning movements. This includes three grade-separated interchanges in Thurmont and one grade-separated interchange in Emmitsburg. Additional modifications have included traditional acceleration and deceleration lanes for right and left turn lanes, and a "median side" acceleration lane to assist left turning traffic with merging onto US 15.

The section of US 15 through the City of Frederick is referred to and signed as the "Frederick Freeway". Between South Jefferson Street in Frederick and the 340 split, US 15/340 is known as Jefferson National Pike. All other sections of US 15 in the County are referred to as "Catoctin Mountain Highway".

Traffic volume varies significantly within Frederick County (Figure 2-15). Traffic volumes are greatest within the city of Frederick, where Average Daily Traffic Volume (ADT) is between 39,635-93,950. Traffic volumes are not as high near the northern and southern borders of Frederick County: ADT is as low as 14,250 to the north and 14,030 to the south.

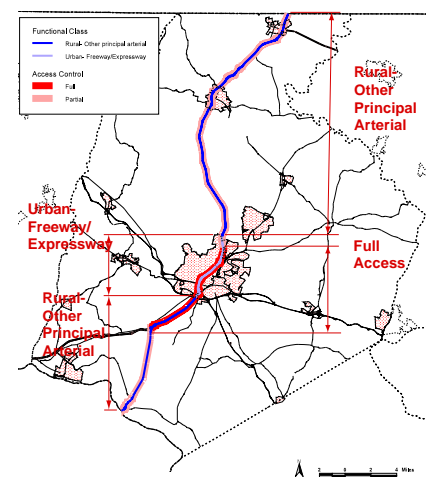


Figure 2-14: Roadway Classification

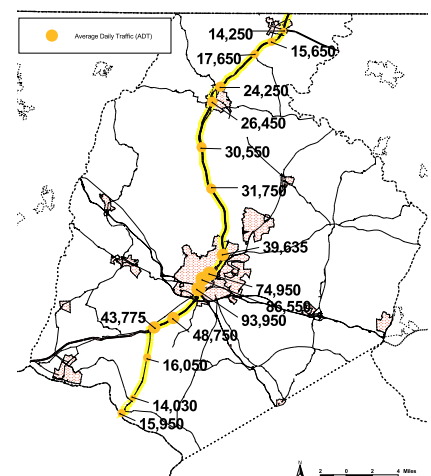


Figure 2-15: US 15 Average Daily Traffic Volumes

## Highway Safety and Roadway Character Issues

The following key issues and concerns have been raised as part of the scenic byway planning process (shown on Map 5, Transportation and Traffic Safety, in the appendix):

- The desire to improve the roadside character and make the route into more of a “parkway-like” travel route – especially in the southern end and in the vicinity of Catoctin Mountain Park.
- U-turns and left turns in general, merge lanes and other problems resulting from excessive speed and the at-grade intersections north of the Frederick Freeway.
- The need to maintain access to visitor-oriented businesses (e.g. farm markets, restaurants, recreational opportunities, towns, etc.).
- Two different types of drivers (casual and commuter) and adding trucks to that mix.
- Traffic volume, especially in the central section.
- Wayfinding – how to follow the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway as well as to gain access to intersecting routes (Civil War Trails, National Road, C&O Canal and Byway, Main Streets Scenic Byway).
- Screening views of non-scenic areas (industrial, urban, and utility).
- The purchase/donation of adequate right-of-way to assure standard ramp and alignment geometries, building setbacks and preservation of scenic values.
- Construction of limited access highway interchanges to eliminate at-grade crossings for improved driver safety.

## Planned Improvements

The Maryland Highway Needs Inventory continues to identify a “freeway reconstruction” of the Frederick Freeway from US 40 to North of Biggs Ford Road and the Catoctin Mountain Highway from Biggs Ford Road to the Pennsylvania State Line as long-term projects. The section of US 15 from US 40 north to north of Biggs Ford Road is included in the I-270/US 15 Corridor Study and SHA is identifying sources to complete Project Planning for this section. However, there is currently no construction funding for either of these projects, and therefore they should be considered long term projects that are currently eligible for future state funding. The Highway Needs Inventory also identifies the section of US 15 from US 340 to the Potomac River as a “freeway reconstruction.”

The Thurmont Region Plan recommends proposed improvements along US 15 subject to further study by the State Highway Administration at the following locations (see Map 5, Transportation and Traffic Safety):

- North Franklinville Road interchange.
- Mt. St. Mary's College interchange (1000' north of MD 76).



- Mt. St. Mary's College underpass at College Lane.
- South Seton Avenue interchange.
- North Seton Avenue interchange.

The Adamstown Region Plan supports the eventual improvement of US 15 to four lanes using parkway design standards that would include the construction of grade-separated interchanges south of the intersection with US 340. Recommended interchange locations include (see Map 5, Transportation and Traffic Safety):

- MD Route 464/MD Route 28.
- Manor Woods and Hawker Road.

The following planned projects identified for the byway corridor have been broken down into short-term projects (likely to be constructed within five years), midterm projects (5-10 years), and long-term projects (beyond 10 years).

### ***Short-term Projects***

- Centerline Rumble Strips Along US 15 (South of US 340) - These safety improvements have already been installed. Headlight usage is also mandatory in this area.
- Intersection Improvements - US 15 at MD 28 (signal), US 15 at MD 464 (signal or roundabout), US 15 at Mountville Road (signal or roundabout). Although there is not specific funding by SHA for these intersection improvements, these will very likely be installed in the near term (within 5 years). Preliminary engineering is funded for the widening of US 15 to provide left turn lanes in both directions at Mountville Road and widening to provide left turn lanes in both directions at MD 464.
- US 15 Auxiliary Lane Improvements Near Rosemont Avenue - The acceleration lane from Rosemont Avenue along southbound US 15 will be extended to connect the deceleration lane to US 40. These are funded improvements that will be installed in the near term.
- US 15 Emmitsburg Welcome Center - Construction is underway and is estimated to be completed in November of 2004.

### ***Midterm Projects***

- US 15 at MD 355 Interchange/At-grade - There are potential midterm radius modifications that could be made within the next 5-10 years.
- US 15 Channelization (from Hansonville Lane to Welty Road) - SHA has evaluated each at grade intersection to conceptually show how turning movements could be controlled in the future to improve safety. The intersection modifications will be completed as needed and based on further growth and priority.

- US 15/MD 26 interchange - adding a ramp to north-bound US 15. The planning study is complete and the design phase is funded.

### ***Long Term Projects***

- The I-270 - US 15 Multi-modal Corridor Study from Shady Grove Road (Montgomery County) to North of Biggs Ford Road is a planning study to develop road-way/transit projects to relieve congestion along the corridor. There is no construction funding and completion of the study is anticipated in 2004. The study proposed widening US 15 within the City from 4 to 6 lanes up to MD 26, widening US 15 between MD 26 and Biggs Ford Road from 4 to 6 lanes and constructing interchanges at Monocacy Boulevard/Christopher's Crossing and at Biggs Ford Road.
- US 15/MD 355 intersection - complete closure when the Monocacy Boulevard/Christopher's Crossing interchange is constructed.

## ***2.5 Vision, Goals, and Objectives***

The US 15 Scenic Byway will serve as the gateway to Frederick County's scenic, natural, recreational, and historic opportunities found along the Catoctin Mountains. Over time, the route will be developed into an attractively designed byway in a park-like setting offering a pleasant and safe driving experience from the Potomac River to the Pennsylvania line, with protected scenic views of farmsteads, orchards, and the Catoctin Mountains; gateways into historic, revitalized downtowns; numerous historic sites and stories from the Native Americans through the Civil War; and parks for hiking, camping, picnicking, and exploring—as well as wonderful places to stay, eat, and shop along the way. In order to reflect the important relationship of this historic travel route to its setting, the byway will be called the “Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway”.

### **Resource Conservation and Enhancement:**

The intrinsic qualities of the byway shall be conserved through the use of voluntary, non-regulatory programs already in place and being used in Frederick County. The overall goal of the byway management effort is to further encourage the use of these existing measures along US 15. Recommended strategies include:

- Establish a byway conservation easement program working with existing land trusts and conservation organizations to assist landowners wanting to voluntarily donate a conservation easement on their property.
- Increase the acreage of farmland enrolled in Agricultural Land Preservation Districts with priority focused on those farms north of Frederick and that are visually prominent from the byway.

- Increase the acreage of lands where development rights have been purchased by the State or County as part of Frederick County's Agricultural Land Preservation Program, including the County's Installment Purchase Program, or the County's Critical Farm Program.
- Consider expanding existing rural legacy areas to incorporate visually prominent lands as seen from the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway (see Conservation Priority Map for locations).
- Private Forest Conservation Program – Work with private landowners to develop forest stewardship plans and implement best forest management practices that recognize the scenic and recreational qualities of the corridor. Work with existing and new programs to focus efforts on preserving forest land along the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway:
  - Preparation of forest stewardship plans.
  - Forest Conservation and Management Program (property tax assessment benefit).
  - Income Tax Modification Program (income tax deduction benefit for certain forest practices).
  - Forest Land Enhancement Program – cost sharing assistance for certain forest management practices.
- Coordinate with existing and ongoing studies for watershed related conservation efforts to determine how best to take advantage of related federal and state agency programs to achieve conservation goals. The following programs should be monitored:
  - Frederick County, Maryland is receiving Federal grant funding to prepare a Watershed Restoration Action Strategy (WRAS) for the Lower Monocacy River Watershed. Additional funds have been received for the Upper Monocacy.
  - The Potomac Watershed Partnership (PWP) draws on the strengths of five primary organizations—the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, the Virginia Department of Forestry, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources/Forest Service, Ducks Unlimited, and the Potomac Conservancy. Working with private landowners, community organizations, businesses, and governments, the Partnership has undertaken a variety of efforts to protect the land and waters of this important watershed. Projects are being designed to improve water quality; enhance forest, wetland, and aquatic habitats; restore threatened and endangered species; reduce erosion; and conserve open space. The Monocacy is a priority watershed.

- Encourage recognition of historic sites along the byway by owner-initiated designation on the County Register of Historic Places (Maryland and Federal as well), and protect those designated sites through the requirement for review of exterior alterations by the Historic Preservation Commission (as per existing County Historic Preservation Plan).
- Encourage use of the County's existing "Community Design Guidelines and Development Principles."

## **Tourism and Visitor Management**

Position the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway as the gateway to mid-Maryland's scenic, natural, recreational, and historic qualities using the following strategies:

- Develop a logo/brand for the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway and prepare a map and brochure marketing the scenic byway's many attractions and amenities.
- Create a Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway Web Page linking directly to area amenities (e.g. local lodging and restaurants along US 15), attraction's websites (e.g. National Shrine, Grotto of Lourdes), Emmitsburg.net and other related web sites (Tourism Council of Frederick County, National Park Service, Maryland Office of Tourism Development, Frederick City and County); and sites typically visited by targeted audiences for the byway (Civil War enthusiasts, eco-tourists, visitors to historic sites).
- Develop bus tour itineraries along the scenic byway and participate in Frederick County marketing to tour bus operators.
- Prepare joint ticketing/event options for families and groups. These packages need to incorporate several areas of interest, allowing members to purchase tickets and select options for attractions and events.
- Prepare joint marketing packages available for visitors at the visitation center as well as at participating attractions. Add pamphlets from other area attractions or provide a small map displaying nearby amenities.
- Ensure inclusion of all Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway related events in the Tourism Council of Frederick County calendar.
- Develop Scenic Byway display to be used at Frederick County festivals and events.
- Work with MOTD and other agency partners to secure a site and construct a new visitor center at Point of Rocks that incorporates themes associated with the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway. Work with MOTD/MSHA to incorporate byway related marketing information to be distributed at the renovated Emmitsburg Visitor Center (construction underway).

## Interpretation and Education

Telling a clear and compelling “story” along the byway is one way to encourage people to linger longer. The byway effort will focus on working with the National Park Service and local historic societies to develop a coordinated vision for telling the story of the landscapes found along the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway. The following strategies shall be utilized:

- Develop a detailed interpretive master plan to coordinate the ongoing interpretation of each of the historic sites, points of interest, National and State Parks, and to identify any future sites for interpretive development along the byway. The recommended themes include:
  1. “First Mountain”
  2. “Agricultural Prosperity”
  3. “Town Life”
  4. “Cultural Crossroads”
  5. “Civil War”
- Develop a distinct visual identity for the byway by coordinating the design of new and replacement roadside design features.
- Wayfinding System – develop a roadside signage system for use along the byway appropriate for extension throughout Frederick County. It will include a complete range of potential sign types, from gateway signs, to place names, to wayfinding, to interpretation, to traffic signs (in accordance with state and federal standards). Key intersections associated with communities, resources, trails, and special places will have special design features to encourage visitors to exit and explore. Information will be provided at small highway pull-offs at the intersections or on additional wayfinding signs.
- Encourage visitors to explore using clearly marked and well designed linkage routes to towns, parks, heritage areas, intersecting trails and byways and to nearby attractions. The goal of the byway is to support resources and initiatives located off of the roadway.
- Interpretive pull-offs or rest areas – Develop pull-offs at Payne’s Hill (existing asphalt area) in the northern section and at East Basford Road in the southern section. Information, interpretation, artwork, and amenities should be provided. Roadside pull-offs are being considered in two additional locations: one south of Frederick on the northbound direction and one north of Frederick in the southbound direction.
- Encourage Community Interpretation through the development of walking tours, visitor information kiosks, web-based communication tools, and driving tours.

## Transportation/Traffic Safety

Achieve a safe and attractive travel experience for byway visitors as well as commuter and local traffic in a manner that is sensitive to the byway's scenic, natural, recreational, and historic context by working proactively with MSHA, Frederick County and the City of Frederick, the National Park Service, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and the many stakeholders along the route to accommodate and balance the unique needs of all the roadway users including residents, commercial and recreational users, businesses dependent upon access, pedestrians, and transit. Especially important is the goal of making it easier and safer for travelers to find their way into the communities adjacent to the byway and to make it easy for visitors to stop and get out of their cars within the byway communities. The following strategies shall be utilized:

- Work with MSHA to develop and adopt a set of byway specific design guidelines to help project staff and other stakeholders understand the special qualities of a byway and make project and operational decisions that will reinforce and enhance these qualities.
- Use the guideline document to make adjustments to planned and programmed projects (see above) so that they incorporate context sensitive design techniques.
- Work with tourism oriented businesses, services and site managers to identify and preserve appropriate access through the use of innovative access management techniques including the use of shared service drives, tourist oriented destination signage, and creative intersection design to achieve a park-like setting.
- Support the existing efforts in the communities of Point of Rocks, Frederick, Lewistown, Catoctin Furnace, Thurmont, and Emmitsburg to improve the appearance of community entrances and downtown destination areas through comprehensive preservation, enhancement and revitalization programs.
- Develop strategies to encourage slower traffic and safer traffic operations through the use of alignment shifts, lane narrowing, shoulder treatments, striping, signage and roadside features on the community linkages connecting to and from US 15.
- Develop a "Catoctin Mountain Bicycling Guide" to encourage use of suitable parallel and historic travel routes (including rail-trail) as a byway related activity.



## Roadside Character

To gradually convert the character of the byway into a more “parkway-like” setting by working with those responsible for managing and maintaining the right of-way in a coordinated manner through the use of appropriate landscape maintenance and management techniques.

The following strategies shall be utilized:

- Community Entrances –prepare site specific corridor design recommendations for each town. These recommendations should include suggestions for:
  - Community entrance features.
  - Traffic calming on community linkage routes.
  - Roadway design details.
  - Pedestrian and bicycle facilities and linkages.
  - Landscaping, screening and buffering.
  - Business signage and directories.
  - Lighting.
  - Community character.
- Aesthetic Treatment of Bridges and Guiderails – incorporate open (see-through) bridge rails and aesthetic treatments and details to bridge piers, abutments and railings; this could include architectural details, concrete form liners and/or cladding.
- Use soil-bioengineering where feasible as an alternative approach to bank stabilization.
- Consider adoption of “good design – good business” approach to assist commercial operators of car and RV dealerships to improve the appearance of their operations.
- Billboards and Off-premise Signage – consider developing a program to amortize existing billboards so that they can eventually be removed in a manner that preserves owner financial interest.
- Work with civic groups and other volunteer organizations to gain 100% adoption of US 15 and community entrance corridors for litter pick-up through the MSHA Adopt-a-Highway program.
- Develop a comprehensive roadside tree planting program for use in screening undesirable views, traffic calming, and byway beautification efforts.
- Establish vegetation management plans that limit the amount of turf areas and maximize meadow shrub and tree environments as ecologically preferable right-of-way treatments, without compromising driver recovery zones and deer management techniques.
- Additional deer management strategies are needed to minimize potential deer-motor vehicle collisions such as the use of additional deer fencing, ensuring that tree plantings near the road are pruned up above the browse line, and set back a sufficient distance from the road.

## **Coordination and Management**

Ensuring that the plan moves forward requires that a permanent “management entity” be established to coordinate and implement the corridor plan as it develops.

- Pursue designation as a National Scenic Byway.
- Form a permanent management entity capable of implementing the plan, including extending the byway to Virginia, Pennsylvania and possibly Harpers Ferry, West Virginia and coordinating with nearby byways.



## Chapter 3: Intrinsic Qualities

When deciding whether a byway merits designation as a national scenic byway, six intrinsic qualities are considered: scenic, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, and natural. Intrinsic qualities are considered regionally significant when the characteristics are representative of a geographic area encompassing two or more states and are considered nationally significant when they are representative of a geographic area encompassing the United States. In order to be designated as a National Scenic Byway, at least one quality must be regionally significant. Two nationally significant qualities are required for designation as an All American Road.

The basis for the Catoclin Mountain Scenic Byway's designation rests primarily in the following intrinsic qualities: scenic, natural, recreational, and historic. The cultural and archeological qualities, although not as significant, add to the richness and diversity of the byway.

### 3.1 Scenic Quality

This section describes the scenic qualities of the Catoclin Mountain Scenic Byway. The byway's scenic qualities provide a stunning backdrop for the other qualities of the byway. The overall setting of the byway, recognized views and features (including other scenic byways and scenic rivers), visually prominent landforms, and other important views all contribute to the scenic quality of the byway.

#### Setting

US 15 is set between two different physiographic regions in Frederick County (see Figure 2-1). To the west of the byway is the Blue Ridge province, composed of mountains, heavily rolling terrain, and deep restricted streams. To the east is the Piedmont province, characterized by the gently rolling terrain of the Monocacy River valley. The Monocacy River has been designated a State Scenic River in recognition of its scenic and recreational qualities.



*Figure 3-1: View from Buckeystown Road showing the Piedmont in the foreground and the Blue Ridge in the background*

Traveling on US 15, one experiences numerous scenic vistas and the contrast between the two regions. This setting is integral to the experience of traveling along the byway, and plays an important role in defining the byway's significant scenic, natural, and historical qualities.

These scenic qualities are especially important due to the proximity of the Washington/Baltimore metropolitan area. Just a short drive away, many residents of the metropolitan area drive to the Catoctin Mountain Byway to experience scenic qualities that are absent in the more urban areas.

### **The Byway as a Series of Outdoor Rooms**

As described in Chapter 2, US 15 can be easily broken down into five distinctive character zones. Within each of these zones are a series of distinct "outdoor rooms" that can be easily identified. Within each of these rooms there are certain landscape qualities that stand out and are recognized within the region for their qualities.

### **Recognized Features and Views**

Within Frederick County, many scenic features and views have been identified. Several byways have been designated at State and Federal levels in recognition of the scenic qualities of Frederick County. Frederick County is also home to a Maryland State designated scenic river. Other views and features have been recognized as scenic by people who have been so impressed that they have stopped to photograph them.

### **Scenic Byways**

Several other byways parallel or cross the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway. US 15 serves as a central spine from which these other byways can be accessed. The following byways intersect or parallel the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway:



*Figure 3-2: Three state designated scenic byways, one All-America Road, and two Civil War Trail routes cross or run parallel to the US 15 Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway*

- C&O Canal Route (106 miles): Parallels the canal for its entire length and passes locks and historic lock houses, canal boat houses, aqueducts, and landings. Intersects the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway just North of Point of Rocks, and follows US 15 until Point of Rocks (then continues southeastward).
- Catoctin Mountain Loop (52 miles upper and lower loops combined): (the upper loop joins the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway in Thurmont) Traces a variety of entrepreneurial endeavors, including sawmills, tanneries, the nation's first match factory, and the making of moonshine.
- National Road (178 miles): The first federally planned and funded highway in the United States, the federally

designated All-American Road traces the evolution of transportation and commemorates the movement that ultimately stretched the nation's boundaries from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Intersects the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway near the City of Frederick.

- Old Main Streets (87 miles upper and lower loops combined): The byway explores quaint towns and villages of Carroll and Frederick Counties, focusing on the old Main Streets (including Emmitsburg).
- Gettysburg Campaign Trail (66 miles): Follows the invasion and retreat at Gettysburg. Intersects and follows along the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway at various locations throughout Frederick County.
- Antietam Campaign Trail (90 miles): Follows the route taken during Robert E. Lee's September 1862 Maryland Campaign. Intersects the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway just south in the City of Frederick.

### **Scenic Rivers**

The Monocacy River is a designated Maryland State Scenic River for its scenic and recreational qualities (Figure 3-3). In 1982, the Monocacy River was included on a National Park Service List of American rivers eligible for National Scenic River designation. The river travels roughly parallel to the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway for much of its length, and there are opportunities to improve access to the river from US 15.

### **Often Photographed Views and Features**

Standing out against a backdrop of gently rolling farmland, Sugarloaf Mountain is one of the most frequently photographed features along the southern portion of US 15 in Frederick County (Figure 3-4). The lone mountain stands 1,282 feet above sea level. The mountain is a monadnock, which is a geological feature that remains after the surrounding land erodes.

Cunningham Falls, within Cunningham Falls State Park, is ubiquitous for being included in tourist guides as one of the scenic qualities of the area (Figure 3-5). The 78-foot cascading waterfall draws visitors from around the region into the State Park.

A scenic pull-off north of Thurmont shows off a panoramic view of Payne's Hill (Figure 3-6). This view of the Catoctin Mountains is particularly majestic because of the rolling agricultural land in the foreground.



*Figure 3-3: The Monocacy River*



*Figure 3-4: US 15 at Basford Road looking toward Sugarloaf Mountain*



*Figure 3-5: Cunningham Falls is Maryland's highest waterfall*



*Figure 3-6: View of Payne's Hill*

### ***Visually Prominent Landforms***

Some lands are more visible than others from the byway, such as lands along mountainsides and ridgelines. These lands are shown on Map 2 in the Appendix. High quality views of visually prominent landforms will be prioritized for conservation (shown as darker gray areas on Map 2).

### ***Other Important Views***

At the southern end of the US 15 byway, a view to historic Saint Paul's Episcopal Church could be improved with the thinning of some vegetation (view # 10, on Map 2). At the northern end of the US 15 byway, views to the Grotto of the Lourdes National Shrine and Mount Saint Mary's College showcase some sites important to American Catholic history (view #1, on Map 2).

## ***3.2 Historic Quality***

In northwestern Maryland lies a unique resource for investigation into both pre-history and history, Frederick County. This fertile, mountainous landscape has left for us remnants of the stories of our Native American predecessors, through the earliest European explorers, through modern-day industrial capitalists. Fragments of these stories can be seen throughout the countryside, as well as from the historic routes of travel that wind their way through the County. Modern roads and highways take us on a geographic and visual tour of colonial farmsteads, mountain foothills, flowing rivers, historic villages, and architectural and industrial treasures. Experiencing these valuable and unique resources first-hand will provide Frederick County's inhabitants and visitors with a deeper appreciation for the role that this land played in Maryland's development into a prosperous and distinguished state.

The history of Frederick County has been divided into eight specific topics of discussion and influence, from Pre-History and Early European Settlement to Urbanization and the Modern Period. In the following pages, those topics will relate to the reader the colorful and remarkable progression of the state of Maryland's largest county.

### **Pre-History and Early European Settlement (10,000 BC – AD 1730)**

Frederick County, Maryland is comprised of 664 square miles and is nestled within the Piedmont and Blue Ridge Provinces. The County is further bisected into the Monocacy and Middletown Valleys by the Catocin Mountain chain, named for a local Native American tribe called the "Kittoctons." The Monocacy River and Catocin Creek carry water from the valleys to the Potomac River (appropriately meaning "gathering



place” in the local Native American language) at the Maryland-Virginia border. Mineral-rich soils combine with layers of quartzite bedrock to create an undulating, fertile landscape.

### ***Pre-historic Inhabitants***

The central area of Frederick County has been host to human habitation since 10,000 BC. As early as the Paleo-Indian Period, very small populations of early inhabitants were producing fluted projectile points in camps along the Monocacy and Potomac Rivers. Over time, these scattered prehistoric groups grew into larger populations that began to move toward the Catoctin Mountain Ridge and into the Monocacy Valley floor and Piedmont Uplands. Here, they hunted and foraged for food, and collected materials for making tools and points.

Individuals began to move freely between separate camps throughout the valley as the overall population grew and required increasing amounts of food and supplies. Large fishing camps moved back toward the rivers' edges, supplemented by smaller hunting and gathering camps, which rotated with the changing seasons. By AD 1600, the habitation pattern had changed once again into multiple, large villages for the cooperative production of projectiles, ceramics, bone ornaments, and shallow storage pits; and the farming of beans, squash, and maize. Remains of village sites such as this have been uncovered throughout the Monocacy Valley, and provide us with tangible evidence of the evolution of early life in Maryland.

## **Early European Settlement (AD 1730 - 1805)**

### ***Contact Period***

Until AD 1720, the area now known as the Piedmont Region of Frederick County existed undisturbed save for a few settlers searching to buy corn or trade furs with the local Native Americans. However, shortly thereafter, surveys were granted, maps were drawn, and large tracts of land drew the interest of investors from the Maryland's tidewater areas. The Proprietary Letter of 1732 paved the way for an influx of English-American, German Palatine, Swiss, and Ulster Scotch settlers moving along established Indian trails from Pennsylvania and the Chesapeake Bay toward the Shenandoah Valley, in search of religious freedom and economic prosperity. They brought with them the building methods and styles of their native homes, and left for us greatly diverse examples of Germanic and vernacular residential construction, such as the Schifferstadt stone house and gardens.

### ***Early Trade/Commerce***

Many German settlers had already established well-worn trade and migration paths leading to the Potomac River and Virginia. Their routes of travel led them from Pennsylvania's Lancaster, York, or Adams Counties, along the Maryland mountain chains, and through the Monocacy and Middletown Valleys; becoming so often frequented that the terms "Monocacy Road" and "German Monocacy Road" were used to describe all of the routes simultaneously.

### **Religion (1635 - 1810)**

#### ***Religious Freedom***

George Calvert, the first Lord Baltimore, petitioned King Charles I for a grant of land between Pennsylvania and Virginia, with the goal of founding a colony where all religions believing in Jesus Christ could be practiced freely. His son, the second Lord Baltimore, led a group of more than two hundred colonists to America in 1633. They arrived at the mouth of the Potomac River three months later, where they founded St. Mary's City, far from Frederick County.

The colony of Maryland is said to have been founded as a refuge for the oppressed Roman Catholics, which was the religion adopted by Calvert. However, the majority of colonists who traveled with him were Protestants and so they made up the body of the local administration. More Puritans poured in from Virginia and New England, reducing the population to only twenty-five percent Catholic.

In an effort to ensure the religious freedoms of the minority, as well as in response to repercussions from the execution of Charles I and the great political and religious upheaval in England, the Maryland Assembly passed the 1649 Act of Religious Toleration. This Act called for legal toleration of all those professing to be Christians, but also imposed harsh fines for any individual who openly disparaged any Christian or non-Christian religious belief.

#### ***Revolution***

However, in 1692 newly-throned William and Mary passed the "Act of Religion," which installed the Church of England as the official church of the colonies, therefore instating all English laws that stripped the Catholics, Jews, Quakers, and Atheists of their inherent political and religious freedoms.

Rampant reports to England of Indian atrocities, drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, swearing, and other moral outrages led to

the revocation of Lord Baltimore's political power and the immediate placement of the colony in the hands of the king and queen. Their solution was to apply a tax to all colonists in order to establish a non-state church that would educate the colonists and teach them high moral truths.

### ***Westward Migration***

The new laws instated by the king and queen did not restrict any specific type of worship other than Catholicism, as long as it was done privately and caused no disruption to the official religion of the colony, that being the Church of England. Nonetheless, Roman Catholics were loathed in the colony, and the Act of 1704 refused the importation of Roman Catholic servants, Protestant children were forbidden influence by the Roman Catholic Church, and practicing of the faith was prohibited. Additionally, oaths were introduced as a test of faith; devoted Catholics were unable to swear the required oath and therefore could not serve in public office.

The already small population of Roman Catholics in the St. Mary's City region dwindled as increasing numbers of Catholic families moved westward and northward to escape persecution for a second time. They joined fellow settlers of the Lutheran, Evangelical Reformed, Anglican, and Presbyterian denominations.

In 1734, the first Catholic community was founded near the present-day location of Emmitsburg. Faithful families shared their homes with others as makeshift worship spaces when they were forbidden to worship publicly. The first church was built in Frederick County in 1793, only two years after the First Amendment was added to the United States Constitution, which legally provided for the separation of church and state in the colonies. This eventually paved the way for the founding of churches of all denominations throughout Frederick County.

In 1794, the first Catholic bishop in America gave Father John DuBois a large tract of land with instructions to build a church where he could begin teaching small children. The church grew into a boarding school and eventually a preparatory seminary, at which point it officially became Mount Saint Mary's College and Seminary. Having obtained the state of Maryland's first official charter, Mount Saint Mary's has graduated many of the Catholic Church's American leaders, giving it the name the "Cradle of Bishops." Today the College provides co-educational courses in liberal arts, business, and education in addition to its highly respected Seminary.

During the early years of Mount Saint Mary's, Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton worked closely with Father DuBois to establish the country's first parochial school in Emmitsburg. In 1810, she and her Sisters of Charity opened Saint Joseph's Academy and Free School, which was made up of a small chapel, an infirmary, refectory, parlor, thirty rooms, a school, and a workroom. Because of Mother Seton's dedication to education and her religious order of the Sisters of Charity, she became the first American-born saint and is interred in the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton (Figure 3-7).



*Figure 3-7: National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton*

Over time, Saint Joseph's Academy evolved into a high school and finally into Saint Joseph's College, which was run by the Sisters of Charity until 1973 when staffing and financial difficulties caused the historic institution to close. The White House, which served as Mother Seton's residence, has been relocated, restored, and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Agriculture & Milling (1730 – 1805)**

The majority of early American settlers were financially less independent than their English counterparts, but brought with them varied profitable skills such as farming, blacksmithing, milling, tanning, wheelwrighting, and coopering. Churches were built to support the varied religious sects moving into the area, and taverns were constructed to accommodate traders and travelers along the Monocacy Road.

### ***Plantations***

In the southern and western regions of Frederick County, English settlers instituted a plantation system that required slave labor for clearing land and maintaining valuable harvests of tobacco, the trademark cash crop of southern Maryland. Crop rotation and other agricultural improvements helped to minimize financial losses due to poor soil and excessive shipping costs. By the early nineteenth century, tobacco fell secondary to the more fruitful and profitable grain crops while the demand for household slaves dwindled.

English mansions were built of bricks made on-site by slaves and were designed in the high Georgian and Federal styles. Each consisted of windows and doors oriented in a symmetrical pattern, with formal moldings and trim. Plantation outbuildings were far more extensive than those of the small farmsteads, typically with any additional combination of the following: stone dairy, carriage house, workshop, privy, bake oven, ice house, wagon shed, hog house, horse barn, well house, tenant house, and bank barn. Most of the surviving farms of this type are scattered throughout the south central and southeast regions of Frederick County.

### ***Farmsteads***

Near the Catoctin Mountains in the Middletown Valley, farms were typically fairly small in size and were cultivated by families and free labor. Farmers depended on a variety of crops for sustenance and income, including corn, wheat, barley, rye, vegetables, some tobacco, and often raised chickens, hogs, and other livestock in addition.

Being owned largely by Germans, domestic buildings on the farmsteads were typically made of logs or skillfully cut fieldstone in an eclectic style brimming with curious details. The addition of a kitchen or workroom to the side or rear of the main house gave birth to a new style that pervaded domestic architecture in western Maryland through the mid-1700s. Their collection of outbuildings was minimal, typically including a springhouse, smokehouse, corncrib, milk house, silo, and several chicken coops and sheds. One can still see many of these small farmsteads intact throughout the County landscape.

### ***French and Indian War***

Shortly after 1755, all expansion into western Frederick County came to a standstill due to attacks from the French and Iroquois Indians during the French and Indian War. Colonists fled to eastern cities in fear for their lives while outlying western towns were burned. Eventually, the Colonial Army drove the Iroquois tribes northward and settlers were once again free to establish farms and villages in the western regions of the County.

### ***Mills***

As settler populations increased, readily available waterpower from springs and flowing creeks gave rise to mill production throughout Frederick County. More than eighty grist, flour, and sawmills were built along the Ballenger, Carroll, Fishing, Hunting, Monocacy, and Tuscarora Creeks. Other trades were able to share in the benefits of waterpower, including tanneries, paper mills, and cotton and woolen mills. Less than a dozen of these early brick and stone structures remain today, but include representatives of the National Register such as the Lewis Mill, Shafer's Mill, and the Union Knitting Mill.

By the latter part of the eighteenth century, standardized mill design guidelines and technological advances increased both productivity and profit. A collection of mill structures often served as the starting point for the establishment of a new village or community.

## Industry (1775 - 1870)

### *Dairies*

Most Frederick County farmsteads and plantations dealt primarily with grain crops and small-scale animal husbandry until the early 1900s, at which point dairies took over as the predominant farming industry. Resultant were the construction of slaughterhouses and the formation of agricultural societies that sponsored cattle and farm equipment shows.

### *Iron Ore*



Figure 3-8: Catoctin Furnace

Catoctin Furnace was the first iron furnace constructed in Frederick County, at the base of the Catoctin Ridge (Figure 3-8). The furnace was in full blast by 1776 and is said to have produced cannon and shot to the Continental Army. The original stack remained in use until 1890, by which time it had been replaced by a more sophisticated steam-operated stack. As the need for iron furnaces increased as well as the construction of the first glass furnace in 1785, Irish, Welsh, and German immigrants found their way to Frederick County in search of new employment opportunities.

### *Mines and Quarries*

The Revolutionary War also provided an impetus for the establishment of various mining and quarrying facilities. Copper mines sprung up in the area of present-day Linganore, two of which are still heavily mined today. Slate and various shades of limestone continue to be quarried from central Frederick County along Catoctin Mountain, providing excellent building materials that have been used from Maryland to Washington, DC.

### *Brickworks and Limekilns*

Brick making in Frederick County began on the early Plantations, where skilled indentured servants and slaves were able to produce large amounts of the building material for use in domestic structures. The County's lime industry also emerged from local farmsteads during the late 1700s, where lime was burned in small, single-stack kilns for making fertilizer. Large, commercial lime kilns were built in the 1860s along the Monocacy River Valley and Piedmont Uplands limestone deposits; two in particular still stand southeast and north of Frederick City and produced some of Maryland's best quality lime for both agriculture and construction.



## Transportation (1800 - 1930)

### *Roads and Bridges*

Many of Frederick County's original roads sprung from early Native American paths that became well-worn and nearly impassible over time. During the first half of the nineteenth century, three turnpike routes were established in Maryland, which allowed for easy access from Cumberland to the Ohio River Valley, Frederick to Harper's Ferry, and Frederick to Emmitsburg. Other existing routes of travel were improved and maintained, resulting in a commercial boon as wagonloads of grain, produce, salt, sugar, hides, cloths, hardware, and mail traveled from mill to farm and back again.

As road travel expanded, so did the occurrence of wood covered bridges, which provided a means for crossing the many streams that flowed through the County. Dozens of these new transportation hubs stimulated small village growth, and were often linked to a tollhouse as well as groupings of taverns, inns, stables, blacksmiths, and wheelwright shops. Many of the original bridges were updated or replaced with iron or steel bridges during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Three of the wood covered bridges are still standing today, in the protection of the Frederick County Covered Bridge Preservation Society, Frederick County, and the National Register (Figure 3-9). Additionally, twenty-five iron and steel bridges and one stone arch bridge remain intact, including the 1900 Legore Stone Arch Bridge.



*Figure 3-9: Roddy Covered Bridge*

### *Railroads and Canals*

In 1831, the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad created a critical link between Baltimore and Frederick, roughly following the modern-day National Road and then turning southwest to follow the Potomac River (Figure 3-10). The rail line did provide passenger service, but most importantly it served as a major economic, developmental, and industrial stimulus to the surrounding areas. Coal and water stops provided mail service to local farmers, heavy industrial development ensued east of Frederick, and previously isolated mill communities expanded into much larger villages. Over the next fifty years, additional rail lines connected points all throughout the County, save for Middletown Valley where many of the wagon roads remained treacherous.



*Figure 3-10: Railroad Tunnel at Point of Rocks*

The final section of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal was completed in 1850, and followed a course along the Potomac River's north bank and the western Maryland Railroad. For three quarters of a century, the canal's barges transported flour, grain, corn, lumber, building stone, sand, whiskey, and coal between Washington, DC and Cumberland. However, by the

early 1870s, economic depression and Potomac floods had forced the canal into a precarious financial position, and the canal was bought out by the B&O Railroad. The property was sold to the U.S. Government in 1938, whereupon it was partially restored, repaired, and declared a National Monument. Today, visitors are able to follow the path of the canal via the hundreds of lock houses, stop and river locks, bridges, and aqueducts that remain intact.

## **The Civil War (1861 - 1865)**

### ***Campaigns***

#### The Battle of South Mountain

In September of 1862, Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan successfully diverted Gen. Robert E. Lee's Confederate Army from capturing Harpers Ferry and therefore prevented them from gaining control of the Shenandoah Valley's communication and supply capabilities. McClellan followed Lee to Frederick, where his Union soldiers found a document detailing Lee's campaign plans, as well as the locations of his five divisions of troops. Maryland's first major Civil War battle ensued at South Mountain, where McClellan's Federal troops drove back twelve thousand Confederates under Lee. The Battle of South Mountain completely shattered Lee's agenda to march his troops through Maryland into Pennsylvania and potentially earn a victory on Northern soil; however, he was fortunate in that McClellan failed to follow the Confederates through the South Mountain pass and destroy Lee's remaining artillery and reserves.

#### The Battle of Antietam

Three days after the Battle of South Mountain, Lee gathered his dispersed Confederate Army from Harper's Ferry and Hagerstown and reassembled them at Sharpsburg. There, he placed his depleted troops between the Potomac River and Antietam Creek in a three-mile long battle line. McClellan attacked Lee's left flank at dawn, initiating the single bloodiest day of battle in United States history. The two armies skirmished through dusk and into the following day, leaving more than twenty-three thousand soldiers dead, wounded, or missing, at which point Lee withdrew his troops across Botelers Ford and into the Shenandoah Valley.

#### The Battle of Gettysburg

In the spring of 1863, Gen. Robert E. Lee marched his Confederate troops up the Shenandoah Valley, across Maryland, and into Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Gen. George Gordon Meade advanced his Federal troops to head off the Confederate arrival, and on July 1, heavy fighting began. The Confederates were able to drive the Union back to a location southeast of

Gettysburg, delivering heavy losses and taking over four thousand prisoners. The following day, Meade positioned his troops in the shape of a horseshoe, successfully defending Cemetery Hill, Cemetery Ridge, and Little Round Top. Pickett's Charge on Cemetery Ridge broke the Union's first line of defense, but resulted in the loss of over three quarters of the Confederate force. Under heavy rain, Lee's decimated army retreated again, marching back through Maryland to Virginia. This three-day battle became the largest known civil war battle ever fought in the history of the Western Hemisphere, and ended Lee's labors to move the Civil War North from Virginia to Pennsylvania.

### The Battle of Monocacy

July of 1864 marks the "Battle That Saved Washington," the Confederacy's last effort to carry the Civil War onto Northern soil. Maj. Gen. Lew Wallace initiated a fierce battle against Lt. Gen. Jubal A. Early's Confederates along the Monocacy River. Wallace's troops were defeated; however, the Monocacy Battle succeeded in delaying Early's march to Washington, DC. Grant was alerted to the defeat, immediately sent troops to defend the federal capital, and a successive Confederate victory was thwarted.

### Geographic Significance

Frederick County's geographic location was the foundation for two prominent aspects of the Maryland Civil War: internal unrest between its citizens and strategic military occupation.

First, Frederick County's location south of the Mason-Dixon Line labels it as "Southern." However, Maryland's border with Pennsylvania, a strictly Northern commonwealth, caused a schism in sympathies for the Union and Confederate causes. Additionally, the eastern and southern Maryland English plantation owners felt differently about slavery than did the western Maryland German farmers. As a result, many Maryland families and communities were divided by their loyalties, and were looked upon as possible converts to the other side.

Secondly, Maryland's border with Washington, DC provided an obvious route of access into the federal capital, which could instantaneously throw the war in favor of one side or the other. Additionally, the County's established rail lines and turnpikes provided excellent methods of transporting troops and supplies from the Shenandoah Valley to Pennsylvania, over a fairly narrow stretch of land. It was this strategic military importance that ultimately resulted in the Battles of South Mountain, Antietam, and Monocacy, dividing Maryland's citizens even further as the Civil War made its way into the hearts of their communities.

### ***Consequences of War***

Due to its proximity to the battles of Antietam and Gettysburg, as well as its well-established rail lines and road systems, Frederick Town quickly became a Civil War medical center for both the Union and Confederate Armies. By 1864, nearly thirty hospitals had been established in Frederick alone, in community homes, churches, barns, and assembly halls, including the 900-bed Hessian Barracks. Thousands more of the wounded and dying were cared for in surrounding small towns such as Hagerstown, Emmitsburg, Boonsboro, and Middletown. Frederick's National Museum of Civil War Medicine is dedicated to telling the story of the dedicated doctors, nurses, and surgeons who treated and cared for the overwhelming number of patients, with limited supplies and often makeshift facilities.

Unfortunately for the residents of the Frederick Region, the very same qualities that made it an ideal location for a hospital center also doomed it to repeated ravaging and occupation by either Union or Confederate troops. Homes and churches were commandeered for military headquarters and threatened towns were forced to pay ransoms to Confederate armies. When ransom was not an option, bridges, fences, crops, and outbuildings were destroyed and animals and dry goods were looted from mills, farms, and warehouses. These military raids spread south through the County, affecting towns such as Adamstown, Point of Rocks, and the Sugarloaf Mountain communities.

### ***Economic Recovery***

After the Civil War conflict had run its course, separated families were reunited and soldiers returned to their homes to begin life anew. Due in part to the efforts of theologians to encourage peace, most Maryland residents adopted an attitude of acceptance of their wartime enemies and rebuilding was swift and efficient throughout the state.

Slaves were freed to choose their new way of life: some remained on their former masters' land to work as sharecroppers; many moved to industrialized towns to find employment; and some went on to found new African American villages.

These alterations in both the general population and cultural makeup of towns throughout Maryland had a lasting effect on agriculture and the economy. As the available workforce grew, so did industrial production and advancements. Similarly, as industry progressed, so did modern agricultural production and processing. The newly arrived Industrial Revolution opened up a whole new world of opportunities for Maryland and Frederick County.

## **Urbanization and Modern Period (1870 - Present)**

### ***Urbanization***

The end of the Civil War brought with it changes in population, further knowledge of agriculture and cultivation methods, advancements in technology and transportation, and new architectural trends. Costly mechanized field equipment such as steam-powered reapers and balers were purchased by wealthy landowners and then shared by smaller groups of farmers. Long-term storage structures for livestock fodder saved farmers the expense of investing in winter food for their animals. The canning industry grew out of the Chesapeake Bay area, providing consumers with preserved oysters, sardines, and clams, and introducing to Frederick County the procedure for canning large amounts of vegetables, fruits, and beans. Pasteurization technology and government-mandated safe handling regulations made dairy consumption both healthier and more common.

Along with increased production on the farms came the increased need for storage facilities and sheds. Pull-through wagon sheds with corn storage bins, vertical silos, granaries, equipment sheds, and separate dairy barns with milking parlors dotted the landscape throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Aiding in the shipment of produce and goods were the modern updates in transportation methods. In 1896, the electric trolley opened between Frederick and Middletown, which transported both passengers and farm produce to the B&O Railroad. Rail stations at towns such as Yellow Springs, Lewistown, and Catocin Furnace were converted to electric a few years later, which not only provided transportation, but also valuable electric service to homes and farms. Roads and bridges were expanded and improved by macadamization, road-building machines, and steel and iron trusses. Gasoline-powered trucks became the primary means for shipping produce between the railroad depots and trolleys. Farmers were able to access industrial town centers to sell their produce much more quickly and efficiently than ever before.

Villages evolved and expanded their boundaries and resources to better serve their inhabitants and visitors. Creameries, warehouses, stores, and post offices were built along major roads and rail lines. Rural one-room schools were built in accordance with state-mandated design guidelines. Public and domestic architecture took on the characteristics of the Renaissance Revival and the Queen Anne style. Frame, brick, and concrete block were the primary building materials and were often as-



sembled according to the new mail-order building plans and architectural catalogues. Manufactured building materials and pre-fabricated structures could be shipped on the trolleys, bringing architectural styles and ideas from the larger cities into the smaller, more isolated villages.

### ***Modern Period***

The Great Depression caused a universal deceleration in the economy and development of the nation as a whole, which lasted until the beginning of World War II. The electric trolleys saw a temporary resurgence in business due to gasoline restrictions, but after the war they were closed and dismantled. Agricultural production slowed as farmers moved to the cities to work in defense factories; others found work in the prisoner of war camps in the County's southern regions.

The Modern Period was delayed in reaching Frederick County by approximately fifteen years, but with it once again came changes in transportation, architecture, and commerce. Newfound interests in education, travel, recreation, and occupation added up to a new dependence on automobiles. The steady stream of commuters from farms to cities precipitated the need for modern inter-regional highways such as U.S. 40 and later U.S. 15. Poured concrete or ashlar stone bridges were constructed to replace or update the stone and truss bridges. Eventually, the inter-regional roads were replaced by interstate highways such as I-70 and I-270.

By the 1960s, the Frederick County landscape began to change rapidly with the annexation of farmland and small villages for development by larger cities. Sprawling subdivisions of modern houses were built using simple, streamlined designs and artificial building materials such as aluminum and vinyl siding and asphalt shingles. Shopping centers have replaced the small rural stores, office and industrial parks line historic roads through the County, and the first shopping mall was built outside of Frederick in the 1980s. Today the County is making swift efforts to reverse the trend of inappropriate development and preserve its remaining architectural, cultural, and agricultural resources.

### ***3.3 Recreational Quality***

The Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway provides access to a wealth of recreational opportunities as shown in Map 3 in the Appendix. For many Marylanders, the Catoctin Mountains represent the first nature-based recreational opportunity heading westward from the greater Baltimore and Montgomery County urban areas. For many Marylanders, the Catoctin Mountains represent a quick getaway—whether you are head-



ing to Cunningham Falls on a hot day or to take a hike through the extensive trail network in both National and State Parks, you can get there from the Catoclin Mountain Scenic Byway. Frederick County is a popular biking area and some of the historical travel routes and old alignments of US 15 provide some of the best on-road cycling opportunities in the mid-Atlantic region.

### **Catoclin Mountain National Park**

Located just outside Thurmont on US 15, Catoclin Mountain National Park offers recreation fit for the president of the United States. The park is home to presidential retreat Camp David as well as many recreational activities including climbing, camping, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, lodging, picnicking, winter sports, and wildlife viewing. The park contains two National Register historic districts and offers curriculum-based educational programs.

Within Catoclin Mountain Park, Big Hunting Creek and Owens Creek are MDDNR Class III trout streams that support healthy populations of brown and brook trout and other species.

Prior to becoming a 5,810 acre park, the area was extensively logged in the 18th and 19th centuries, and now the forest is second growth mixed hardwood. In 1933, the Catoclin Recreation Demonstration Area was formed to rehabilitate sub-marginal farm land. In 1954, half the land from the Demonstration Area became Cunningham Falls State Park, the other half became Catoclin Mountain Park.

### **Cunningham Falls State Park**

The main attraction at Cunningham Falls State Park is a 78-foot cascading waterfall. The park also offers 5,000 acres of recreational activities including boating, camping, fishing, hiking, hunting, lodging, picnicking, recreational vehicles, water sports, and winter sports.

### **Gambrill State Park**

Gambrill State Park's 13 miles of trails cater to hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding. Camping, fishing, picnicking, and recreational vehicles are also popular activities at the park. On the 1,600 foot summit of High Knob there are three native stone overlooks providing views of the surrounding area.

### **Frederick City Cooperative Wildlife Management Area/ Frederick Municipal Watershed**

The Frederick City Cooperative Wildlife Management Area (CWMA) in western Frederick County is more than 7,000 acres in size. The forest is popular for hunting deer, squirrel, grouse,



*Figure 3-11: Catoclin Mountain Park Visitor Center*

migrating waterfowl, and turkey. Several small ponds are fished for bass and panfish, and two branches of Fishing Creek offer trout fishing.

### **Monocacy River Natural Resources Management Area**

The Monocacy River Natural Resources Management Area is 1,800 acres in size and includes natural areas and farmlands along the Monocacy River. Hunting, fishing, hiking, and horse-back riding are permitted in the area.

### **C&O Canal National Historical Park**

The C&O Canal National Historical Park preserves an early 19th century canal (Figure 3-12). The park is part of a pathway system that connects Cumberland, Maryland with Washington, D.C. Approximately 16 miles of the path runs alongside the Potomac River in southern Frederick County. Recreational activities include hiking, cycling, skating, picnicking, and camping.



*Figure 3-12: C&O Canal*

### **Catoctin Mountain Zoological Park**

The Catoctin Mountain Zoological Park is home to a diversity of animals, including tigers, bears, goats, and alligators. Over 350 species of animals can safely be enjoyed in exhibits that respect the natural habitat, a petting area, and shows. The park is privately owned and is 30 acres in size.

### **Sugarloaf Mountain**

Three thousand acres of privately owned and managed open space that is open to the public for hiking and recreation with no fee charged for visiting the mountain or hiking the trails. Sugarloaf is a “monadnock” or isolated peak that is the prominent landmark to the east as seen from US 15 between Point of Rocks and US 340.

### **Connecting Greenways and Recreational Paths**

In addition to the C&O Canal (described previously) several greenways and recreational paths offer recreational opportunities for bicyclists, hikers, equestrians, and joggers. Many others have been proposed and may be built in the future. The Appalachian Trail/South Mountain Greenways runs along the western border of Frederick County on the South Mountain ridge line. The Catoctin Mountain Greenway includes the Catoctin Trail starting in Gambrill State Park, passing through Frederick City Municipal Forest and Cunningham Falls State Park and extending to the northwest corner of Catoctin Mountain Park. The trail is natural surface and is a length of 27 miles. The trail ends at

Mt. Zion Road, 1.3 miles north of Owens Creek Campground in Catoctin Mountain Park. The back country trail experience can be further extended by continuing on Mt. Zion Road to Raven Rock Road. Finally, the town of Thurmont constructed a portion of the H&F Trolley Trail from East Main Street and Water Street. It is planned that the trail will eventually connect Thurmont, Lewistown, and Frederick.

### **3.4 Natural Quality**

As mentioned previously, US 15 is located on the border between two physiographic provinces: the Blue Ridge and the piedmont. This unique geography forms the foundation of a landscape with other notable natural features. Many areas of particular natural significance have been incorporated into public lands such as State and National parks. Many of these areas are home to a diversity of plant and animal life, some areas even provide habitat for several Maryland Threatened and Endangered Species.

### **Existing Conservation Areas**

The state of Maryland is home to numerous land conservation programs, and many of these are currently in use to preserve areas of natural significance in Frederick County. Existing conservation areas range from State and National Parkland to private conservation easements and environmental trusts. Following is a description of the different types of conservation areas within Frederick County as shown on Map 2 in the Appendix:

- Private Conservation Lands: Lands preserved by private entities, for example, the Nature Conservancy.
- Sensitive Species Project Review Areas: General areas primarily containing rare, threatened, and endangered species. General locations for Habitat Protection Areas, Nontidal Wetlands of Special State Concern, Natural Heritage Areas, Colonial Waterbird Sites, and Waterfowl Concentration and Staging Areas are also shown.
- Agricultural Easements (Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Easements and Districts): This is a voluntary program that preserves agricultural land and woodland to ensure that these resources will be available for the future production of food and fiber for the citizens of Maryland.
- Maryland Environmental Easements and Districts  
Maryland Environmental Trust Easements (or MET Conservation Easements): Areas intended to help

protect significant natural resources and rural areas. A landowner makes a perpetual legal agreement with the Trust guaranteeing that a property will not be developed beyond an agreed-upon limit.

- Federal Lands, DNR Lands, County Parks: Public lands owned by the federal government, the State of Maryland, and Frederick County respectively.
- Rural Legacy Areas: Part of a program that uses grants to protect large, contiguous tracts of Maryland's most precious agricultural, natural, forestry or cultural resource lands.
- Priority Funding Areas: While not conservation areas themselves, these areas enable land conservation by designating which land is best suited for new development and specifying that these areas should be prioritized for funding. This helps ensure that development is concentrated into certain areas and helps preserve land outside those areas.

## Monocacy River

The Monocacy River flows south 58 miles from southern Pennsylvania to the Potomac River. It is Maryland's largest tributary to the Potomac River and a significant natural resource within Frederick County. The land of the Monocacy River valley is extremely fertile, which has led to significant agricultural use of the area. Non-point pollution from these agricultural lands has degraded the quality of the river water, which is currently of fair to poor quality.

*"The place is without question, the most healthful and pleasant place... And for deer, buffaloes, bears, turkey, the woods do swarm with them and the soil is exceedingly fertile..."—Henry Fleet, while visiting the Monocacy River Valley during the 17<sup>th</sup> century*

## Cunningham Falls

Cunningham Falls, within Cunningham Falls State Park is an example of the natural beauty of Frederick County. The 78 foot cascading waterfall is the highest waterfall in Maryland. The falls are easily accessible and popular with tourists.

### **3.5: Archeological Quality**

#### **Prehistoric (10,000 BC – AD 1730)**

The majority of archeological exploration that has been undertaken in Frederick County has been east of Catoctin Mountain, where documented prehistoric habitation dates back to 10,000 BC. A few, scattered artifacts near the Monocacy and Potomac Rivers indicate that Paleo-Indian camping and hunting activities were restricted mainly to the deciduous forest along the river shores. Over the next thousand years, the Catoctin Mountain and the Monocacy Valley floor provided early inhabitants with fragments of glassy, volcanic rock for making cutting tools. Evidence of Middle Archaic site clusters indicates that habitation patterns began to shift from the riverbanks inland, toward the Monocacy Valley and the foothills of Catoctin Mountain. Projectile points began to vary greatly in style, distribution, and quantity over the next two thousand years, demonstrating a new trend toward seasonal migration. Populations moved between multifarious sites along the Catoctin Mountain northern foothills, the Monocacy River, and the Piedmont Uplands in search of additional means for hunting, gathering, and tool making. The Early Woodland Period saw these seasonal camps scattered throughout rock shelters and foothills in the Monocacy Valley. Combined, the smaller camps served as a support network for the more substantial, permanent sites now located along the Potomac River, where artifacts of pottery date through AD 300. During the Late Woodland Period, large riverine sites expanded into village settlements, often oriented around an open, circular common area. These village communities farmed squash, corn, and beans; fabricated extensive collections of clay pipes, pottery, quartz projectiles, bone tools, and ornaments; and constructed shallow structures, storage pits, and burial sites.

The collection and study of artifacts such as those listed above are crucial to understanding how modern man evolved in North America, and more specifically, in Frederick County, Maryland. By analyzing settlement patterns, one may begin to surmise how local climate, landscape, and natural resources affected the survival of early inhabitants. Stone and bone tools provide a glimpse of what types of protective garments early inhabitants wore and what types of game or plants they consumed. Fragments of pottery can indicate how water was collected or how food was stored and cooked. Camp configurations, ornaments, and decorative elements may indicate some sort of social order or community hierarchy.

### **Historic (AD 1730 – Present)**

At one time, farmsteads, plantations, mills, and domestic structures blanketed the Frederick County landscape. Scenes from the unfolding of colonial Maryland existed north and south, east and west: architectural and agricultural treasures wrought by the hands of our forefathers, depicting for us our historic struggles and successes. Over time, the abundance of these treasures has diminished due to war, natural deterioration, and over development. Less than one hundred colonial plantations remain today, with the majority of their associated outbuildings still standing. Many more small farmsteads are intact; however, modern roofing, siding, doors, and windows were typically added in the early to mid-1900s. Late nineteenth and early twentieth century agricultural buildings such as wagon sheds/ corn cribs, concrete block dairy barns, and frame bank barns can commonly be seen throughout the County, while stone and brick bank barns remain primarily in the north. Adversely, the vast majority of nineteenth century wood frame silos, water towers, windmills, dry houses, and bake ovens were abandoned or demolished as their functions became obsolete.

Approximately one tenth of the once prominent eighteenth and nineteenth century mills and affiliated structures still remain, albeit some have been left as ruins. Several nineteenth and twentieth century stone quarries and lime kilns are still operating, and their respective workers' housing complexes have been slightly modified, but still exist as modern residences. Nearly forty of Frederick County's historic schoolhouses are still extant, and many have become candidates for adaptive reuse in the form of residences, offices, or community centers. Only three covered wood bridges and one stone bridge still exist, as most have been destroyed over time or replaced by iron, steel, or concrete. However, many steel and iron truss bridges remain and are listed as National Register-eligible.

Prehistoric or historic, all of these elements combined begin to recreate life before our time, so that we may learn from our past and remember it in the future. Archeological exploration is critical to this process, as it is the foundation for understanding the intrinsic historical quality of a place and therefore the source of historic resource preservation.

### **3.6: Cultural Quality**

Frederick County has a history woven tightly with cultural differences and influences. The pattern begins with the prehistoric Native Americans, who gave names to the mountains and rivers, and established the first routes of travel through the rolling landscape. It continues with the first English explorers, who brought religion and government to an otherwise wild, virginal countryside. Still it continues on with the German



settlers, the largest single cultural influence in colonial Frederick County, who brought their religion, craftsmanship, agricultural capabilities, and building traditions from Pennsylvania and their homeland. Furthermore, it carries on with the native Africans, who were enslaved by the English, freed by the Union, and continued on to contribute their own religion, trades, and culture to the development of the County. Later, Frederick County was further molded by the addition of Irish, Welsh, Ulster Scotch, Italian, and Eastern European traditions.

At a smaller scale, Frederick County's history has also been written by the religious conflicts brought on by combining so many varied cultures and religious denominations. Throughout its history, the County has been home to Roman Catholics, Puritans, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans, Evangelical Reformed, Brethren, Episcopalians, Atheists, and the list goes on. Religious conflicts altered the course of England's grasp on the colony, early colonial politics, settlement patterns, and community development. Further proof is found in the multitude of small rural chapels, city churches, parochial schools, and seminaries established throughout Frederick County.

Both nationality and religious affiliation are powerful characteristics of Frederick County's early inhabitants, and have embedded deep roots in the cultural development of its towns and cities. The coalescence of historic, archeological, and cultural resources preserved through time has given Maryland's largest county a very rich and unique heritage that should be preserved for many years to come.





## Chapter 4: Byway Management Strategies

### ***4.1 Conserving the Intrinsic Qualities along the Byway***

The Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway is literally at a crossroads: a crossroads of two major east-west and north-south highway systems; a crossroads of the civil war; and now at a crossroads between rural and urban. It is becoming increasingly difficult for farms to remain in agriculture with new housing starts pushing further out from Frederick every day.

While nearly a third of the corridor is currently protected through existing public land ownership, and through voluntary and non-regulatory programs, there are some lands that remain worthy of continued voluntary and non-regulatory conservation efforts and that should be given a priority for technical and financial assistance to those landowners that wish to keep their lands in farm or forest use.

Luckily, the County has a number of programs already in place to help landowners wishing to preserve their lands. The most important strategy for conserving the intrinsic qualities of the byway is to further encourage the use of these existing, voluntary and non-regulatory measures along US 15.

To assist property owners, conservation groups, and the County in their continued efforts at voluntary, non-regulatory conservation efforts, the plan includes a conservation map (Map 2 in the Appendix) that illustrates the geographic distribution of various conservation activities in relation to the byway.

The following categories of voluntary, non-regulatory conservation actions have been identified:

- Private Conservation - this data layer shows privately owned conservation lands, for example, land owned by the Nature Conservancy.
- Agricultural Easements- this data layer shows Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Easements and Districts.
- Maryland Environmental Easements and Districts - Maryland Environmental Trust Easements (or MET Conservation Easements) are intended to help protect significant natural resources and rural areas. A land-owner makes a perpetual legal agreement with the Trust guaranteeing that a property will not be developed beyond an agreed upon limit.
- Federal Lands - the Federal Lands data shows land owned by the Federal government.
- DNR Lands - this data layer shows lands owned by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.
- County Parks - this layer shows parks owned by Frederick County. Some of the smaller parks may be missing from this layer.

*There are approximately 14,766 acres of land that are considered to be visually prominent as seen from US 15. Of these lands, approximately 2,771 acres (19%) are currently protected through existing public ownership and an additional 1,493 acres (10%) are protected through conservation easements. Also, 558 acres (4%) are privately conserved (Nature Conservancy, etc.). In total, nearly one-third of the visually prominent lands that can be seen from US 15 are preserved through both public and private conservation efforts.*

The Plan recommends that conservation priorities be established to focus limited amounts of public and private funding on those lands that are most critical to the continued preservation of the rural and historic character of the byway. The following conservation priorities are recommended:

- 1) Lands that are visually prominent as seen from US 15 – these are lands that can be seen from a larger number of places along US 15 based on a statistical sampling of representative viewpoints along the highway.
- 2) Lands that are visually prominent from areas where the goal is to attract new visitors (such as visitor centers, historic sites open to the public, existing or proposed pull-off locations, and along approaches to byway communities.
- 3) Lands adjacent to existing conservation easements, public lands, or other lands otherwise protected from further development.

Maryland's existing programs for preserving open space are some of the best in the country. Not everything can be preserved, however, and it will be important to focus on the highest conservation priorities, and then apply the County's existing voluntary community design guidelines along with some new incentives to help willing landowners who may need the income from their property but also want to make a positive contribution to the byway efforts. No one will want to come to this byway or stop in any of the delightful nearby communities if it looks like the place they are trying to leave behind!

The following describes the recommended preservation strategies. The first group of strategies should be applied to the conservation priorities. The second group of strategies should be applied to those lands that are of conservation interest, but may not meet all the criteria for a conservation priority.

### **Byway Conservation Easement Program**

In order to encourage use of existing voluntary and non-regulatory programs to conserve byway resources, the plan recommends that efforts be made to encourage property owners to voluntarily place conservation easements on their property. This can be achieved through the existing programs that the County already has in place.

The plan recommends that the efforts of existing nonprofit land trusts and conservation organizations be coordinated through the establishment of a Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway Conservation Easement Program. The program would have the following key components:

- Develop and assist the County in adopting or amending an official open space map showing conservation priorities for the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway. This map can then be used for establishing conservation interest for private conservation action, as well as any public conservation action that the County may pursue in the future. Adopting an official open space map may also be beneficial in establishing eligibility of projects for funding.
- Pursue funding for technical assistance grants to assist landowners wishing to voluntarily establish conservation easements on their property.
- Provide monitoring capacity for maintaining conservation easements.

### **Agricultural Land Preservation Districts**

As part of the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation (MALPF) Program, property owners meeting minimum requirements may request formation of an Agricultural Land Preservation District. The minimum requirements include: a minimum of 50 acres unless adjoining a property already enrolled in the program and a minimum of 50% class I, II or III soils, or a minimum of 50% Woodland Groups 1 or 2. A number of property owners have formed Agricultural Land Preservation Districts along the byway as shown on the Conservation Map.



*Figure 4-1: Typical Farm complex at the base of the Catoctin Mountains*

### **Frederick County's Agricultural Land Preservation Program**

Frederick County has an existing agricultural land preservation program that has been used to purchase development rights including lands that are in the vicinity of US 15.

### ***County's Installment Purchase Program***

Frederick County recently enacted a new Agricultural Land Preservation program. According to the County the program: "enables the County to leverage existing funding to purchase more easement acreage than through traditional lump-sum-easement purchase programs. Upon approval by the County and agreement by the landowner the County will invest in a Zero Coupon Bond that will mature to the full value of the easement at the end of a specified term from 10 to 20 years. In the interim, the landowner will receive interest payments on the easement value which may be exempt from federal income tax. At the end of the term the seller of the easement receives the full matured value of the easement."

According to the County the requirements of the program include a minimum of 50 acres unless the farm adjoins a property already under a permanent land preservation agreement and soils requirements similar to MALPF. The easement value and ranking system for this program is established through a point system.

Effort should be made to amend the easement value ranking to provide additional value for farmlands that are identified as a conservation priority from the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway (and the Maryland Historic National Road).

### ***County's Critical Farm Program***

The County purchases "options" to acquire easements on farms that are being sold to full-time farmers. This allows the prospective purchaser to be able to purchase farmland in the County by providing the "up-front" capital needed for such a purchase.

The farmer has five years to sell an easement under the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Program or another Governmental Land Preservation Program. If the applicant were successful in selling an easement to the State, they would then repay the County the original option price. If they are not successful with the State purchase of the easements, the County can acquire the easement at no additional cost.



*Figure 4-2: View towards Sugarloaf mountain from US 15*

### ***Rural Legacy Areas***

The Rural Legacy Program redirects existing state funds into a dedicated land preservation program specifically designed to limit the adverse impacts of sprawl on agricultural lands and natural resources. The program reallocates state funds to purchase conservation easements for large contiguous tracts of agricultural, forest and natural areas subject to development pressure, and fee interests in open space where public access and use is needed. The Program is a targeted land preservation



Frederick County has one successfully operating Rural Legacy Area – the Mid-Maryland Rural Legacy Area. According to the County, the Mid-Maryland Rural Legacy area is a joint partnership between Frederick County's network of local land trusts and Frederick County government that is committed to ensure permanent protection, through easements and transfers of development rights, of a substantial portion of the County's unique and highly significant Catoctin ridges and valley landscapes. The Rural Legacy applications were a regional effort that also included Montgomery and Washington Counties.

A second Rural Legacy Area has been approved by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources in Frederick County cosponsored by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). The Carrollton Manor Land Trust, Inc. received support from the Frederick County Planning Commission and the BOCC which found the grant application consistent with the County-wide Comprehensive Plan. Matching funds were pledged by the Board of County Commissioners which further supported the Carrollton Manor Rural Legacy Initiative.

According to the Carrollton Manor Land Trust, a total of 37 properties with 4,337 acres were included in this grant application, suggesting that many landowners in the area share a strong commitment to preservation of the land.

There is also continuing interest in creating a third Rural Legacy Area in the northern section of the County associated with the lands in the vicinity of Catoctin Mountain Park and Cunningham Falls State Park. This rural legacy area would create a very important tool for conservation of the ridgelines of the Catoctin Mountains as seen from US 15.

### **Private Forest Conservation Programs**

Large portions of the lands that comprise the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway are privately held forest lands. Efforts should be made to encourage landowners to manage and retain their forest land to preserve the scenic and recreational qualities of the byway. Although funding for these programs is not a high state or federal priority, funds are available and could be taken advantage of to further steward the forest resources of the byway. Finding ways to increase the income for those that are dependent upon their land is one way to reduce the pressure on lands for the creation of second homes or other types of uses that may not be compatible with byway conservation efforts. Encouraging appropriate woodland management activities can help rural landowners reduce tax liabilities and pay for future tax obligations, thereby keeping the land in rural use.



*Figure 4-3: US 15 near Point of Rocks*

***Preparation of forest stewardship plans***

The first step in the process of taking advantage of existing forest conservation programs is to prepare a forest stewardship plan. According to Maryland DNR, the Forest Stewardship Plan is a working document that provides the landowner with professional and technical information needed to manage and conserve forest resources. The Forest Stewardship plan is necessary to qualify for various tax programs, such as the Forest Conservation Management Agreement, and to qualify for cost share assistance. Parcels that are contiguous and have identical ownership can be combined into one plan.

***Forest Conservation and Management Program***

Any owner of five or more contiguous acres of forest land may enter a State program to encourage landowners to manage their forest land in return for a reduced and/or frozen property tax assessment. House sites, crop land and other non-forest open space are not eligible.

The program is a legal agreement between the landowner and the Department of Natural Resources, recorded in the land records of the county in which the property is located, stipulating that the landowner will manage their forest land according to the stewardship plan for a minimum of 15 years. The property tax assessment on the forest land in the agreement is generally reduced and frozen at a low agricultural rate. Back taxes will be levied and will be computed back to the beginning of the agreement if the agreement is broken. The agreement can be amended to increase or decrease acreage and it can be transferred to a buyer if the buyer is willing to assume the responsibilities of the agreement.

***Income Tax Modification Program (income tax deduction benefit for certain forest practices)***

Forest landowners that own or lease between 10 to 500 acres of forest land capable of growing more than 20 cubic feet of wood per acre per year, which is available for the primary purpose of growing and harvesting trees to manage their forest land may deduct double the cost of reforestation and timber stand improvement from their federal adjusted gross income for Maryland income tax purposes. Practices must be continued for at least 15 years and the tax savings must be repaid, if the practice is discontinued.

### ***Forest Land Enhancement Program – cost sharing assistance for certain forest management practices***

Landowners who are implementing an approved Forest Stewardship Plan are eligible for certain cost sharing assistance for managing forests for all their values.

Incentives in the form of cost sharing are offered to participants who agree to adopt and carry out a Forest Stewardship Plan based on realistic management objectives that match the landowner's interests and goals with the capability of his/her land. The practices that are recommended in the plan and have received cost share assistance must be maintained for a minimum of ten years. The maximum amount a landowner may receive in a year is \$10,000. The eleven broad practices are:

- FLEP 1 Forest Stewardship Plans
- FLEP 2 Afforestation/Reforestation
- FLEP 3 Forest Stand Improvement
- FLEP 4 Agroforestry
- FLEP 5 Water Quality Improvement & Watershed Restoration
- FLEP 6 Fish & Wildlife Habitat
- FLEP 7 Forest Health Protection
- FLEP 8 Invasive Species Control
- FLEP 9 Fire & Catastrophic Risk Reduction
- FLEP 10 Fire & Catastrophic Event Rehabilitation
- FLEP 11 Special Practices

### **Watershed Related Conservation Efforts**

Another important strategy for conserving the byway is to link up with related watershed conservation planning already taking place in the County.

Frederick County is receiving Federal grant funding to prepare a Watershed Restoration Action Strategy (WRAS) for the Lower Monocacy River Watershed. The watershed covers about 194,700 acres in three counties. The WRAS project area focuses on the Frederick County portion of the watershed which encompasses nearly 87% of the drainage area — about 169,093 acres.



*Figure 4-4: Monocacy River at Biggs Ford*

### ***The Potomac Watershed Partnership (PWP)***

The Potomac Watershed Partnership (PWP) is one of 15 such partnerships nationwide that are bringing public and private organizations together to protect the nation's most vital watersheds.

Partnerships involving five key organizations—the USDA Forest Service, the Virginia Department of Forestry, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources/Forest Service, Ducks Unlimited, and the Potomac Conservancy and working with private landowners, community organizations, businesses, and governments, the Partnership undertakes projects to improve water quality; enhance forest, wetland, and aquatic habitats; restore threatened and endangered species; reduce erosion; and conserve open space.

The Monocacy River is one of the primary watersheds that the Partnership is focusing on, having some of the lowest percentages of healthy riparian forests and wetlands, the highest levels of nutrient and sediment pollution, the most forest tracts destroyed by gypsy moths and wildfire, and some of the greatest development pressures in the Potomac basin.

### ***Watershed Restoration Action Strategy (WRAS) for the Upper and Lower Monocacy River Watershed***

As part of WRAS project, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is providing technical assistance, including preparation of a Watershed Characterization—a compilation of available water quality and natural resources information and identification of issues—and two surveys of on-the-ground conditions, which may be used as the County generates its Watershed Restoration Action Strategy.

Funding was recently received for the preparation of a Watershed Restoration Action Strategy for the Upper Monocacy River Watershed as well. That effort is just getting underway at the writing of this corridor management plan and is expected to include a similar level of detail for the Watershed Characterization.



Figure 4-5: Emmitt House, Emmitsburg

### **Preservation of Historic Sites**

Preservation of historic sites and districts related to the byway can also be accomplished by utilizing existing programs at the County, State and Federal level. Listing of properties on either a County, Maryland or National Register is an important first step in gaining recognition for an historic site or district and for making that historic site or district eligible for certain tax benefits and other incentives for preservation.

### ***Local Tax Credits***

The City of Frederick offers a tax assessment freeze and Frederick County offers a Property Tax Credit for certain eligible historic properties.

## **County Register of Historic Places**

The Frederick County Historic Preservation Plan was written to make incentives available to County citizens and making the County Government eligible to participate in the existing and proposed programs for historic preservation.

The County's Historic Preservation Ordinance established the County Historic Preservation Commission as the reviewing body and the County Register of Historic Places as the official landmark list. The program is voluntary and owners wishing to have their properties listed on the County Register must nominate them for designation. After listing on the County Register, exterior changes to the structures and their setting within the designated area must be reviewed by the Preservation Commission and, if the changes meet the established guidelines, a Certificate of Appropriateness is issued.

## ***Maryland Rehabilitation Tax Credits***

Although potentially subject to termination in 2004, the Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Program, administered by the Maryland Historical Trust, provides Maryland income tax credits equal to 20% of the qualified capital costs expended in the rehabilitation of a "certified heritage structure."

According to MHT, a certified heritage structure can include structures:

- Listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- Designated as a historic property under local law.
- Located in a historic district listed in the National Register or in a local historic district and certified as contributing to the district's significance.
- Located in a certified heritage area and certified as contributing to the area's significance.

The credit is available for owner-occupied residential property as well as income-producing property. The rehabilitation expenditure in a 24 month period must be substantial, exceeding \$5,000 for owner-occupied residential property, and the greater of the adjusted basis of the structure (generally the purchase price, minus the value of the land, minus any depreciation taken) or \$5,000 for all other property. The rehabilitation must conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and must be certified by the Maryland Historical Trust. If the credit exceeds the taxpayer's tax liability, a refund may be claimed in the amount of the excess. Additionally, organizations exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code are also eligible for a refund. Additional considerations are found at [www.marylandhistoricaltrust.net](http://www.marylandhistoricaltrust.net).



### ***Sites and Districts Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in Scenic Byway Corridor\****

*Biggs Ford Site*  
*Camp Greentop Historic District*  
*Camp (2) Misty Mount Historic District*  
*Catoctin Furnace Historic District*  
*Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Park*  
*Company Toll House*  
*Covered Bridges in Frederick County, Maryland (Roddy Road, Loys Station, Uitca Covered Bridges)*  
*Edgewood*  
*Emmitsburg Historic District*  
*Fourpoints Bridge*  
*Frederick Armory*  
*Frederick Historic District*  
*Graceham Moravian Church*  
*Guilford*  
*Hessian Barracks*  
*Loats Female Orphan Asylum of Frederick City*  
*Linden Grove*  
*John C. Motter House*  
*Nallin Farmhouse*  
*Nallin Farm Springhouse and Bank Barn*  
*Old National Pike Milestones*  
*One-Million-Liter Test Sphere*  
*Point of Rocks Railroad Station*  
*Prospect Hall*  
*Rose Hill Manor*  
*St. Euphemia's School and Sisters' House*  
*St. Joseph's College & Mother Seton Shrine*  
*St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal Church*  
*Schifferstadt*  
*Spring Bank Farm*  
*George Widrick House*  
*George Willard House*  
*Woodsborough & Frederick Turnpike*

*\* See Map 4 for Locations (In Appendix)*

### **Maryland Inventory**

According to the Maryland Historical Trust, the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties is "a broad-based repository of information on districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects of known or potential value to the prehistory, history, upland and underwater archeology, architecture, engineering, or culture of the State of Maryland." The inventory now includes data on more than 8,000 archeological sites and 80,000 historic and architectural resources. Inclusion in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties involves no regulatory restrictions or controls.

### **Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits**

Wide ranges of severely deteriorated buildings have been brought back to life using federal rehabilitation tax credits. Abandoned schools converted into senior housing; mill complexes utilized for housing or retail; even a church rehabilitated as an artist's studio — these are just some examples of projects resulting from this program. The program enables the owners or long-term lease holders of income-producing certified historic structures (listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or a contributing element within the boundaries of an historic district), to receive a federal tax credit. The credit amounts to 20 percent of the cost of a certified rehabilitation (a rehabilitation that meets the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation"). Applications for this program contain three parts and are available through the Maryland Historical Trust. For more information, contact Ray Goodrow, Preservation Officer, at (410) 514-7626.

### **National Register of Historic Places**

Listings in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) are generally accompanied by similar recognition at the state level. Listing in the NRHP establishes certain review requirements for state and federal projects, can lead to preferential treatment in funding programs, and can enable owners of commercial properties to take advantage of significant federal tax incentives for preservation. Owners of both commercial and residential properties can avail themselves of similar state tax incentives.

There are over 33 National Register sites and districts and approximately 262 listings on the Maryland Inventory within two miles of the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway.



## Community Design

Along the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway there are a number of additional issues that must be addressed in order to conserve the qualities of the byway that make it an interesting place to visit and a delightful place to live. While much of the preceding discussion is focused on how to preserve the most beautiful or historic places and properties, it does not mean that other lands should not be considered for some kind of appropriate voluntary and non-regulatory conservation action.

In fact, a big concern about the byway's potential to attract new visitors is that new development is fast encroaching on the treasured farms, forests and rural communities that people are coming to experience. The byway is not likely to achieve its visitation goals of encouraging some of the fifteen thousand daily highway travelers to get off US 15 and explore, unless the farms and forests of the Catoctin Mountains and nearby rolling Piedmont are conserved.

Frederick County has the policies already in place to address the issue of conservation of rural farms and forests. Frederick County's Community Design Policies contained in the County-wide Comprehensive Plan and further clarified in the "Community Design Guidelines and Development Principles" adopted in July of 2002 to assist property owners in their efforts to be consistent with the Community Design Policies. The guidelines may be downloaded from the County Web site at <http://www.co.frederick.md.us/planning/pubs.html>. However, some additional voluntary guidance coupled with additional incentives for following the guidance would be helpful in conserving the byways' intrinsic qualities.

Most of the larger scaled development projects proposed in Frederick County are required to dedicate a certain amount of open space and landscaping. For development projects located near the byway, the open space and landscaped areas should be carefully designed from the point of view of the byway – primarily views towards the project from US 15. Key issues include the appearance of the projects' entry areas, its setbacks along US 15, its relationship to the sloping topography and its treatment of the prominent hillsides as seen from US 15 (such as the nose of a slope).

Additional guidance for property owners along the byway may be needed as a supplement to the County guidelines--especially for those seeking advice about how to protect views while accommodating development in a manner that is sensitive to the intrinsic qualities of the byway. For example, in the segment between the Frederick Freeway and Biggs Ford Road, some additional guidance is needed to identify ways to relate the width of any forested buffer plantings to the proposed building



*Figure 4-6: Suburban development patterns in Thurmont, Maryland*

mass (height and bulk). That way an owner could develop land in a manner consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, while easing the byway traveler into the more developed sections of Frederick as they approach the linkage route to the historic downtown area.



Figure 4-7: US 15 at northern edge of Frederick

### ***Ridgeline Development***

- New residences are being constructed higher and higher up the slopes of the Catoctin Mountains to take advantage of the spectacular views. Incentives are needed to encourage new homes to be sited in a manner where the homes can see out to the view without being so visually prominent on the hillside. The conservation map identifies visually prominent ridgelines where these voluntary guidelines would be most beneficial.
- Site homes away from the edge of a steep hill often called the “military crest” of the hill. By setting the home away from the slope a homeowner can reduce the amount of area that can be seen from Route 15, while at the same time retaining the panoramic view – being able to see out without being seen!
- For ridgeline sites, locate the home slightly below the top of the hill so that the roofline does not stand out above the trees. Clearing trees for a ridgeline home will create a “notch” in the hill when seen from a distance. Care should be taken to preserve trees close to the home to reduce visual contrast. Driveways sited parallel to the slope also reduce stormwater runoff and the potential for erosion.
- Selectively remove vegetation, rather than clear cutting to improve the view. The picturesque qualities of a view can actually be improved by framing the view with nearby trees. Such foreground elements (leaves and branches) provide a scale reference, increasing the depth of the view.
- Site driveways so they are parallel to the slope, winding up a hill rather than perpendicular to the hill. This reduces the cost of grading the road, makes it easier to traverse in winter, and reduces the amount of tree clearing that is required.
- Site homes so the long dimension of the house is parallel to the slope. When building on slopes, houses should be designed with multiple levels with one wall buried into the slope, thus reducing the amount of grading required to accommodate the house. Houses designed to be on more gentle slopes (such as a Colonial-style home) should be built on flat sites, not steeply sloped hillsides.
- Utilize architectural styles, building materials, and techniques that are endemic to the area. Use paint

colors that minimize contrast with the surrounding landscape. Dark colored roofs and siding left to weather normally (protected by transparent stains) will have much less contrast in a woodland setting than a house painted white.

### **Residential Neighborhoods**

Construction of new community-oriented development projects can be accomplished in a manner that is compatible with byway goals of preserving and conserving the byway's intrinsic qualities.

New residential subdivisions are being constructed at the outskirts of most of the byway communities. Some voluntary and non-regulatory guidance coupled with financial incentives are all that is needed to ensure that the subdivisions are built in a consistent manner with Frederick County's existing and adopted goal of encouraging compact, mixed-use pedestrian – oriented communities that seek to maximize the preservation of open space and natural resources while discouraging an over-reliance on the automobile.

From the perspective of the scenic byway, aggressive tree preservation and newly planted urban forests can help to ameliorate the visual effects of some of the new subdivisions, especially if they are appropriately sited utilizing the County's Community Design Guidelines and Development Principles. The following considerations should also be incorporated by reference into the Community Design Guidelines for new residential or mixed use development along the byway:

### **Open Space Design Practices**

As encouraged by County policy and guidelines, the rural character of the land along the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway can carefully be preserved using several strategies.

- As directed by County Policy, new subdivisions should seek to be less of a subdivision and more of a self-reliant hamlet or village with small-scale commercial areas within walking distance for village residents. This creates a more pedestrian friendly environment with less vehicle dependency. A village can be more self-reliant, with more of a sense of place and identity, while still offering rustic views and plentiful open space. A variety of lot sizes in a development supports a diverse community, with diverse building structures.
- Siting homes away from environmentally sensitive lands (such as steep slopes, stream corridors and wetlands, can be coupled with efforts at encouraging developers to be considerate of the view from the scenic byway. Visual



*Figure 4-8: Plan and photo illustrating typical rural landscape under consideration for development*



Figure 4-9: Plan and photo simulation illustrating standard development practices



Figure 4-10: Plan and photo simulation illustrating benefits of open space design practices

analysis has identified the most visually prominent lands as seen from the byway (see Map 2). Leaving the most prominent lands in open space use (as seen from the byway) helps to ensure that the predominant view from the byway is of open space (in existing rural areas).

- Alternatively, allocating a gracious setback along the US 15 frontage and planting the setback with appropriately selected trees can help to reduce the amount of the community development project that can be seen (see section 4.5 on Roadside Character).
- Reducing the overall amount of pavement and cleared area can be beneficial for subdivisions built within wooded areas on slopes. This may involve seeking exceptions to standard roadway widths required for subdivisions and being very aggressive about tree preservation strategies. The less clearing and the more tree preservation efforts made, the more the subdivision will blend with its surroundings. Replanting, reforestation, or natural succession can restore the appearance of a forested hillside. Permeable paving systems and other stormwater runoff management techniques that work with natural systems rather than structural techniques will also maintain some of the natural resource qualities.
- As with the siting of individual homes noted above, homes within new residential neighborhoods that are located on more steeply sloping hillsides, should also be sited so that they are parallel to the slope and that the home selected is suitable for a hillside location. Home buyers moving to rural locations are often very concerned about privacy and they will generally appreciate a well sited home that fits into its natural setting, rather than standard subdivision home where the land is reshaped to fit a preconceived idea of what a rural home should be like.
- Lighting should be designed with cut-off fixtures in a manner that hides the source of the light and eliminates glare. Light pollution is a significant problem in rural areas and can be minimized through careful design practices. Lighting should be directed to targeted activities and surfaces. Lighting should be designed for maximum energy conservation through the use of occupancy sensors, dusk to dawn photoelectric cells, and energy efficient bulbs. Fixtures should reflect the appropriate historic or architectural styles.

Following the recommended open space design practices has mutual benefits for the developer and future residents. Open Space Design provides the structure for managing storm water runoff more naturally, without expensive structural treatment systems. The preservation of surrounding agricultural land supports the continued rural character of the area, and will allow agricultural practices to continue to benefit the community.



More forested areas are preserved, protecting existing wildlife habitat. Flood prone land areas can be preserved. Water quality will benefit with less non-point source pollution than from a more spread out standard development due to higher amount of road surface. From the point of view of the byway, Open Space Design practices tend to have a better “fit” with the natural landscape and therefore has less visual contrast.

Frederick County’s community design guidelines point out that there is a need to consider the “urban to rural transect” and the geographic context within which a proposed development sits. The Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway cuts through that urban to rural transect in a very distinct manner. The landscape character zones discussed in Chapter 2 identify the approximate boundaries for that transect. The most critical segment of the byway in terms of planned community development is the section from MD 26 to Biggs Ford Road. The highest priority for incentives and the need for creative land development practices are in this segment.

### ***Commercial Development***

New commercial shopping centers are being planned and constructed at the outskirts of Frederick and Thurmont. Issues of signs, building mass and siting, parking lot design, lighting, and landscaping need to be addressed, especially as they relate to the view from the byway. A landscaped setback is recommended as part of the Roadside Character strategies in the section under Roadside Character.

From a byway perspective, the three most critical issue in the design of new commercial projects include signs, landscape of parking lots and buffer yards, and the massing of big box retail centers.

### **Commercial Development Signs**

Recognizing that business and property developers need visibility and recognition from a high volume roadway like US 15 is an important first step in byway management. However, that does not mean that a sign needs to be constructed as tall and as large as humanly possible. Lacking a tourist oriented destination signage system similar to Vermont’s, (see Chapter 4.5) other techniques are needed to help put the best face forward for a commercial development project.

First, the need for a large sign can be reduced by taking better advantage of the development project’s community context. It is to the advantage of the developer to relate the identity of a commercial development to that of an existing destination already signed from the highway.

Second, selectively framing a few of the most distinguishing features of the design, such as an attractively designed entrance feature will associate a visitor's first impression with a high quality environment— one with higher property values and lease rates.

Third, a well-placed sign of modest size can be just as visible as a very large sign that will cost more and cheapen the overall first impression of the development project.

#### Parking Lots and Setback Areas

While a prospective customer is always pleased to know that there is a lot of parking, hitting them over the head with a sea of asphalt often causes a higher degree of anxiety than a well-designed entry sequence. Transitioning from the major route (in this case it happens to be the byway) to the destination should be designed as a safe, comfortable and aesthetically pleasing experience. Establishing a clear order to the entrance experience using the following guidance is the best way to achieve that goal:

- SEE – making sure that the entrance to the destination is clearly visible and attractively marked.
- ARRIVE – making sure that the arrival sequence leads the visitor for the entrance towards the parking lot. Landscaped areas can do this very attractively by framing views in the general direction of desired travel.
- PARK – parking lots should be designed as outdoor rooms defined by landscape. Each identifiable room helps the visitor to relate their experience to a more personal scale.
- PROMENADE– visitors should then be able to clearly walk to the desired destination on shaded sidewalks directly to the entrance.
- ENTER – a clearly marked and attractive building entrance.

Using these simple terms as a guide, the end result will be an attractively designed landscape that takes best advantage of the required buffers, setbacks and parking lot landscaping. It will also have the added benefit from the byway perspective of breaking down the scale of the parking areas and building masses that are visible from the byway. Parking lots should be designed to accommodate all intended uses (large trucks, buses, RV's, etc. and by following these basic guidelines for parking areas, even the most demanding parking requirements can be met in a safe and attractive manner.



## Building Scale and Mass

The mass of large structures is also an important byway management issue. Too often, the back side of large commercial structures faces the most heavily traveled route. If that is the case on US 15, then adequately landscaped setbacks should be established to screen the large buildings. The size of the landscaped setback area should be determined based on the height of the buildings and the position of the driver. Sufficient setback can be achieved by tree plantings that are high enough to block the sightline of the driver and deep enough so that it is difficult to see through. See section 4.5 for discussion of landscaped setbacks.

Alternatively, the design of the building should take into account the visibility from all sides. Building mass should be broken down in scale through the use of fenestration, variation in roof and building height, creative use of color and materials, and through the use of light and shadow. A prospective building project can be designed so that it is attractive when seen from the byway, thereby eliminating the need for extensive landscaped setbacks. Perspective sketches or computer-generated simulations can be developed that demonstrate the appearance of the project as seen from the byway.

## Interchange Design and Development Issues

As US 15 further develops into a limited access highway over time, more pressure will evolve for development of the interchange areas. The goal of creating a more parkway-like character for US 15 should extend to the design of interchanges (further discussed in section 4.4). The development associated with future interchanges should also extend the parkway-like character into attractively designed communities, using the arrival sequence described above. The first thing that a visitor should come to off of an interchange is a “park” that creates an identity to the place that is being created at the interchange.

*Figure 4-11: Before (top) and after (bottom) photo simulation illustrating how new bridge structures can be designed to serve as a gateway to Frederick*



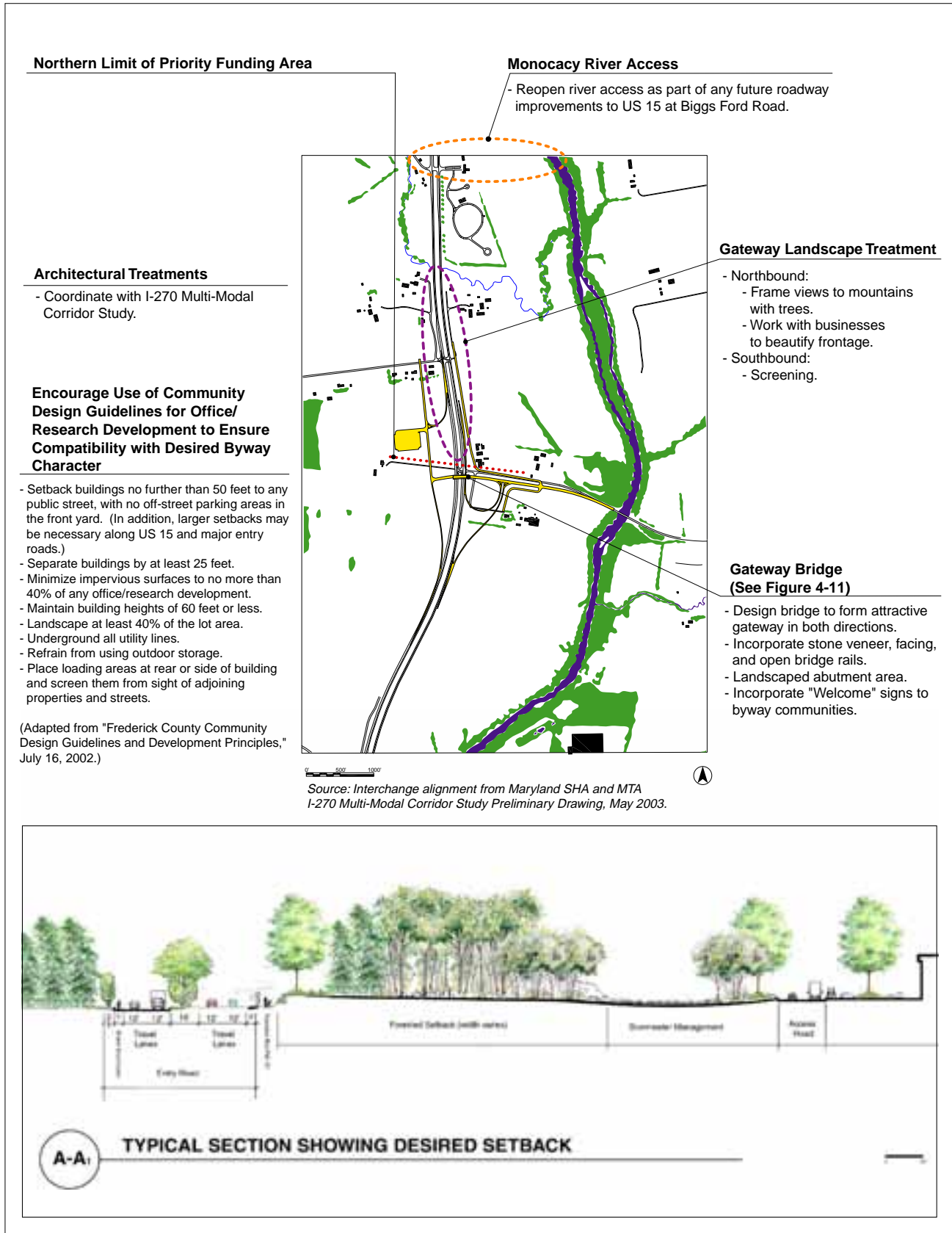


Figure 4-12: Diagram illustrating interchange design and other recommendations for Biggs Ford Road

New development should be organized around this arrival park. A network of local roads and streets should evolve from the arrival park in a manner that fits within the context that it is developed. The example of Biggs Ford Road (see Figures 4-11 and 4-12) has been developed to show how such a system of arrival sequence and road network can be designed to establish the essential character of the community that evolves.

Typical interchange uses such as convenience foods and big box retail can be mixed with residential and other types of commercial uses to create a new neighborhood, rather than a collection of individually developed parcels all with individual entrances and parking lots separated by barriers.

## 4.2 Tourism and Visitor Management

Along a scenic byway, each attraction, event/festival and amenity (restaurant, hotel/ motel, theater, etc.) is a tourism product that has the potential to contribute to the visitor's experience. These products may be a small attraction (such as Schifferstadt, Figure 4-13) with limited amenities or larger attractions that more efficiently accommodate visitors. Smaller attractions may focus on niche audiences and typically have lower annual attendance figures. Larger attractions tend to have more resources, enabling sophisticated marketing schemes that attract more visitors than smaller attractions, including visitors from outside the immediate vicinity, from other sections of the US or foreign countries.

A good mixture of attractions along the scenic byway attracts larger audiences. Along the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway, the mixture and integration of tourism products produces a great visitor experience. The better the visitor experience, the more likely the visitor will be to encourage friends to visit. Personal recommendations and word-of-mouth are critical sources of information about the byway, that increase the area's tourism potential.

By improving the visibility of the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway and actively marketing it as a destination or mix of attractions, more visitors will be attracted to the area. The new economic activity associated with tourism creates business opportunities for expansion and development, job growth, and a stronger tax base.

Increasing the number of visitors and extending the length of their stays along the scenic byway benefits hotels, restaurants, entertainment and retail operations. Overnight guests generate a need for additional rooms in hotels, bed and breakfasts and inns. While day-trippers, who constitute the majority of visitors in an area like Frederick County, spend less per day than do

*Goal: Position the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway as the gateway to mid-Maryland's scenic, natural, recreational, and historic qualities.*



*Figure 4-13: Schifferstadt, example of a small-scale visitor attraction with regional visitor interest*

overnight visitors, they may visit the area repeatedly. Overnight visitors and day-trippers support existing and new restaurant, retail, and entertainment operations.

Various employment opportunities generated by the expanded tourism base within Frederick County improve the quality of life for residents as well as the area's economy. New visitor spending creates new jobs with the opening of additional hotel rooms, extended hours of restaurant and retail operations and construction of new visitor amenities. Depending on the level of development, the economic activity resulting from increased visitation will generate an increase in annual tax revenues for Frederick County.

While it is obvious that increasing tourism provides an economic impact, investment in tourism can also improve residents' quality of life. New visitor dollars to the economy provide incremental revenues to area businesses, allowing them to expand existing services and products to residents. Residents benefit from the improved ambiance and mix of restaurants, entertainment, and retail operations supported by a mix of resident and visitor spending. As importantly, the Scenic Byway's marketing and interpretation link the community with a defined identity that typically relies on the historical character of the area. Heritage tourism and ecotourism help to link area residents with their past while encouraging the preservation of the area's scenic resources and history.

### **Meeting Visitor Expectations**

Successful tourism areas meet or exceed visitor expectations and ultimately produce an excellent visitor experience. Setting visitors' expectations clearly from their first introduction to an attraction or destination is important. Visitors may research a specific attraction on the Internet, by reading printed materials, or by contacting the attraction itself. Other visitors may simply venture off the highway, discovering attractions or events along the road. In either case, visitors need a clear explanation of the potential experience, whether educational or entertainment in nature.

In order to meet visitor expectations, a destination must provide a clean, safe, and easy-to-find environment. No visitor leaves the safety of his or her own home expecting any less and certainly no visitor returns to an environment that is not clean and safe. For visitors unfamiliar with an area, finding an attraction may prove difficult or impossible. Making an attraction easy to find with proper signage can encourage unplanned visits by travelers passing through the County.

An attraction sets out to tell a visitor a particular story, providing information in an entertaining format. Portraying information in a manner that requires visitors to use more than one of their five senses usually provides a more stimulating experience. For example, attractions may offer the visitor exhibits to view and read, interactive activities, movies to watch, and/or guided docent tours to follow. More sophisticated attractions give visitors educational information in various formats.

Most visitors prefer experiences different from options available near their homes. It is important to remember that visitor attractions, like museums, compete with other activities such as movies, sports, Internet and televisions. Unique attractions distinct from everyday life directly engage visitors and vie more successfully for a visitor's time. Visitor experiences that distinguish themselves from everyday life typically provide a memorable encounter. The more memorable each visit, the more likely the visitor is to return and/or recommend the attraction to family and friends.

## Potential Markets

There are several different types of visitors an area may attract based on the amenities, attractions and events. For the most part, visitors can be categorized by the length and purpose of their visit. Day-trippers are visitors interested in leaving their home, driving one to three hours and returning to their home the same day. These visitors tend not to spend as much as an overnight visitor, who spends one or more nights away from home and must pay for lodging and additional meals. National trends in tourism show a decrease in the traditional long vacation and an increase in shorter trips in closer proximity to home. However, heritage or cultural visitors typically take longer trips with several destinations and have a higher propensity to spend money on activities outside of lodging and meals. Ecotourists tend to be older than the average visitor, with higher levels of education and more supplementary income for vacation spending. While ecotourists spend more time in an area, their appreciation for wildlife makes them less likely to spend the night in a hotel/motel or local bed and breakfast.

### ***Civil War Enthusiasts/ Heritage Tourism***

The Civil War battlefields and the Museum of Civil War Medicine draw Civil War enthusiasts to Frederick County. In addition, the County has a unique location between several large Civil War attractions, including Pennsylvania's Gettysburg, Antietam and Virginia's Shenandoah Valley battlefields. Visitors unable to visit these attractions in a single day may use Frederick County as their overnight base for visits to these larger Civil War attractions. Staying in Frederick County overnight affords visitors the



*Figure 4-14: Civil War Trails site near Buckeystown*



opportunity to explore attractions along the scenic byway while en route to larger destinations or as a break from these intensive day trips. As downtown Frederick continues to develop with additional restaurants and nightlife in a historic setting, the County becomes very attractive to these overnight visitors. The more new visitors traveling along the scenic byway who can be persuaded to spend the night, the greater the economic impact on the economy.

### ***Ecotourism***

Ecotourism consists of nature-based travel that incorporates the history and culture of an area. Fortunately, Frederick County's scenic nature and abundant recreational activities already attract ecotourism visitors (see Map 3 for locations). The Frederick County Department of Recreation and Parks has an expansive parks program with 19 parks providing picnicking, hiking, biking, fishing and ball fields. While the County's parks serve local residents, out of the area visitors may take advantage of the recreational amenities as well. Maryland's Catoctin Mountain Park, with Camp David (the Presidential retreat) on the grounds and more than 25 miles of hiking trails, attracts more than 700,000 visitors annually. The C&O Canal, which stretches from the District of Columbia to Cumberland, Maryland, has a significant park along the canal located at the southwestern end of the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway. The C&O Canal is a major regional draw for bicyclists and outdoor enthusiasts.

To further encourage this niche market, local businesses must provide targeted products and services. Ecotourists typically need food supplies, sports and outfitting equipment and supplies as well as guide services. Local sporting goods stores as well as small convenience stores may expand their merchandise to provide supplies for ecotourists. In addition, a strong network of local businesses that can refer these visitors to other merchants or specialty service providers usually provides the largest benefit. For example, guides may post an advertisement for their services within a camping store or leave referral information on a campers bulletin board located in the retail store.

### ***Religious Visitors***

There are several religious attractions in Frederick County including the Grotto of Lourdes and the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. Mount St. Mary's College draws visitors from around the country and the world to visit the Grotto. The National Shrine, Grotto of Lourdes is the oldest American replica of the revered French shrine and was proclaimed a Public Oratory on December 8, 1965 by His Eminence Lawrence Cardinal Shehan, Archbishop of Baltimore. The



*Figure 4-15: Blessed Mother*



National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, located in Emmitsburg, provides visitors from around the world with the opportunity to view a short video, visit one of the largest museums in the area, and visit two historic homes and a cemetery. The Shrine was designated a Basilica by Pope John Paul II in 1991. Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton's remains rest beneath her alter in the Basilica. Annual visitation for the Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton ranges between 55,000 to 60,000, whereas the Grotto of Lourdes receives approximately 500,000 individuals on bus tours alone, as well as many individual visitors. Many of these religious visitors make a regular pilgrimage to each site spending a day in the area.

### ***Genealogy***

The study of an individual's family history has increased in popularity over the recent decades. As the baby boomers begin to retire, they devote more leisure time to retracing their ancestry. Those interested in genealogy will travel to different parts of the country or world in order to use local resources to trace family history. As Frederick County, like much of the State of Maryland has deep history in the colonial era, individuals are often attracted for genealogical research.

Many people interested in genealogy begin with research about the origin of their family history. This type of initial research starts with family interviews or work on the Internet. Websites that reference the resources of the local Frederick County Library System help to draw these types of serious genealogy researchers to the area.

### ***Families***

Regional area families are a special niche market segment for Frederick County. While a regional area family may only make the trip to Frederick County for one day or a short weekend, they tend to visit repeatedly and be more willing to spend on meals and retail items. These families usually travel with a party of 4 or more members increasing their overall impact.

Capitalizing on the natural mixture of visitor interests allows Frederick County to appeal to different members of the same family. One member of the family may have strong interest in horses, while another may want to tour the Civil War sites and yet another to visit unique local shops. While the family's interests may divide them during the day, they often come together for one joint activity or for meals before heading home. Typically, families attracted to the area's diverse visitor assets may return to the County several times in one year for recreational facilities, agri-tourism, local family events (car shows, apple festivals, chili cook-offs, church bake sales) and historical attractions.



*Figure 4-16: Catoctin Wildlife Preserve and Zoo*

## **Marketing and Promotions**

The Scenic Byway needs a cohesive marketing strategy with associated promotional materials to tie together the multitude of visitor attractions, events, and amenities along US 15.

### ***Piggyback Marketing***

The Maryland Office of Tourism Development (MOTD) works to create partnerships with tourism organizations, provide regional marketing and joint advertising opportunities, and support the operation and advertising at welcome centers/rest areas. In order to promote all of the tourism opportunities within Maryland, MOTD attends various trade shows, uses electronic and public relations marketing, and compiles information about area visitors. The Tourism Council of Frederick County works well with MOTD. Frederick County needs to continue to take advantage of MOTD's success and piggyback on its advertising campaigns and website links.

The Maryland Civil War Trails Initiative, led by MOTD, connects and markets Civil War sites as touring trails. Maryland Civil War Trails Initiative is designed to attract the traveler off of the highways to tour the byways and visit sites of Civil War events. Additionally, MOTD and Virginia Civil War Trails, Inc. cooperate in the development of trails that connect Maryland and Virginia with similar signage and logos. The driving trails follow events of the Civil War in Maryland, using historic road traces enhanced with wayside exhibits providing accurate historic interpretation. The planned inter-modal linkages, such as water and hiking trails, will add significant impact to the visitor experience.

### ***Website/ Internet***

In today's high technology world the Internet provides many visitors with the first level of detail on any destination. There are several fundamental elements to successful website design for attracting visitors. Most visitor websites list the dining, lodging, restaurants, museums, events and attractions in an area. These sites provide further links to local businesses, making it easy to find more information according to the visitor's level of interest. More advanced websites provide visitors with maps and directions, making wayfinding easier. It is important that a visitor destination's website link to other organizations, search engines, hotel reservation pages and nearby destinations. The best travel websites offer trip-planning itineraries with linkages to area accommodations and specific attractions along with an up-to-date calendar of events.

The website for Emmitsburg provides a good example of successful linkages and connections for visitors with a variety of interests. The nonprofit operator of Emmitsburg.net boasts over

2,000 visitors to the website per day. This website encourages visitors to browse the web pages of other attractions, events and festivals within the larger community, not limiting visitors to Emmitsburg.

### ***Linkage of Attractions, Events and Amenities***

To take advantage of the different types of attractions, marketing linkages between existing attractions need to be strengthened and new linkages need to be created. Typically visitors search for information on an area's attractions as they plan their trip, or they discover information when they arrive at their destination. Those travelers not familiar with or able to utilize the Internet often rely on the local visitor or orientation center. Therefore, it is important that the visitor center provide extensive information and linkages to area tourism assets.

Many tourism products focus only on the information they need to convey to visitors, not considering linkages to other tourism assets such as nearby places to eat. Adding a pamphlet from another area attraction or providing a small map displaying nearby amenities may encourage visitors to spend more time in the area and even return to attractions. Miniature summaries of larger exhibits at area museums, such as posters or booklets, can help visitors understand why they should visit an attraction and what they could expect to see. These types of simple linkage services enhance the visitor's overall experience, making a positive impression.

### ***Visitor Packages***

In order to attract larger groups of visitors or to encourage current visitors to increase the length of their stay, tourism products need to be packaged together. Packaging may consist of including a hotel accommodation and attraction admissions fee in one package or it may be more elaborate including several attractions, tickets to a play or concert, and a discount coupon for a meal as well as lodging. Successful packaging may incorporate several different types of attractions to appeal to groups of visitors with varying interests. As travelers become more sophisticated, they require options for each member of their party and flexibility within packages. Rather than requiring visitors to select a package with a limited amount of attractions, successful packages offer additional attractions or features for a small increase in the fee.

Area visitor/orientation centers should sell individual tickets or packages for many of the area's tourism attractions. In addition, local attractions could sell joint tickets for admission to multiple attractions, helping to promote the assets along the entire scenic byway.



*Figure 4-17: Brewer's Alley, Frederick, one of many restaurants with visitor appeal*

Tour bus operators often market to foreign visitors and other groups of individuals with common interests. Bus tours generate a significant economic impact for an area. To take advantage of these tour groups, marketing materials must be packaged to target independent tour bus operators and larger conglomerates represented at trade shows.

### ***Press Relations***

Capturing an audience's attention using creative public relations skills can enhance marketing efforts for any visitor destination. Encouraging the media to run a positive story about a local attraction or group of attractions builds awareness and credibility. As visitors read an article about an area they become more familiar with the area itself and linkages to other assets. Trusted news sources provide a sense of credibility with visitors. It is important to use media releases and third party published research to promote the location and vast tourism assets.

### **Recommended Marketing and Promotion Priorities:**

- Develop a logo/brand for the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway.
- Prepare a map and brochure marketing the scenic byway's many attractions and amenities.
- Create a Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway Web Page linking directly to area amenities (local lodging along US 15, restaurants), attraction's websites (e.g. National Shrine, Grotto of Lourdes), Emmitsburg.net and other related web sites (Tourism Council of Frederick County, National Park Service, Maryland Office of Tourism Development, Frederick City and County)
- Develop web links to sites visited by targeted visitors (e.g., Civil War enthusiasts, Eco-tourists).
- Develop bus tour itineraries along the scenic byway and participate in Frederick County marketing to tour bus operators.
- Prepare joint ticketing options for families and groups. These packages need to incorporate several areas of interest, allowing members to purchase tickets and select options for attractions and events.
- Prepare joint marketing packages available for visitors at the visitation center as well as at participating attractions. Add pamphlets from other area attractions or provide a small map displaying nearby amenities.
- Ensure inclusion of all Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway events in the Tourism Council of Frederick County calendar.
- Develop Scenic Byway display to be used at Frederick County festivals and events.

## Economic Development Potential

Currently Frederick is one of the top ten destinations within the State of Maryland for visitors. Within the capital region of Maryland it is the most visited destination with 423,979 person-trips in 2001 and 479,000 total visitation in 2002. There are several different types of visitors an area may attract based on the amenities, attractions and events. For the most part, visitors can be categorized by the length and purpose of their visit. Day-trippers are visitors interested in leaving their home, driving one to three hours and returning to their home the same day. These visitors tend not to spend as much as an overnight visitor, who spends one or more nights away from home and must pay for lodging and additional meals. Twenty-two percent (or 108,000) of the visitors to Frederick County are day-trippers and 371,000 are overnight visitors. According to statistics provided by the Maryland Office of Tourism Development, visitors to Frederick County have an average travel party size of 2.0 persons, remain in the area for 2.2 nights and spend \$250 on average household trip expenditures.

The Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway attractions and amenities account for approximately 85 percent of these visitors. By improving the visibility of the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway (US 15) with the full implementation of the plan more visitors will be attracted to the area. As a result of additional marketing an increase of 5 to 10 percent in total visitation is anticipated. Partial implementation of the marketing plan for the byway may result in a smaller increase with approximately 3 to 5 percent more visitors to the area. In order to meet an economic goal of a million dollars annually, the byway would need to increase annual visitation by at least 5 percent. The following table details the characteristics of these new visitors by level of implementation:

The new economic activity associated with increased tourism creates business opportunities for expansion and development, job growth and a stronger tax base.

### Increased Visitors to the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway

Visitors/Spending	Current Visitation	Byway Plan Implementation	
		Low	High
New Visitors	407,150	424,000	437,700
Extended-Stay Visitors	317,600	330,200	340,500
Day Visitors	89,600	93,800	97,200

*Source: Bay Area Economics, 2003*



*Goal: Telling a clear and compelling "story" along the byway is one way to encourage people to linger longer along the byway. The byway effort will focus on working with the National Park Service and local historical societies to develop a coordinated vision for telling the story of the landscapes found along the Catoclin Mountain Scenic Byway.*

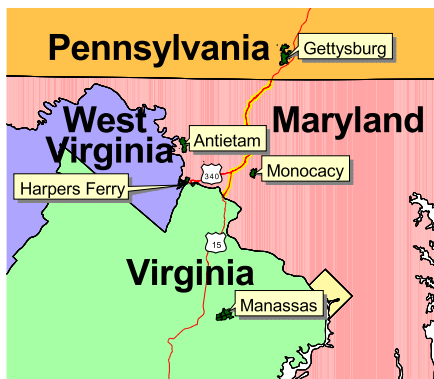


Figure 4-18: Civil War Battlefield sites in relation to US 15 and 340

### 4.3 Interpretation and Education

The Catoclin Mountain Scenic Byway, US Route 15, is a modern highway that is a primary north/south transportation route for residents of Frederick County. The byway serves through-travelers from Virginia, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania and is closely associated in the south with Route 340. The historic sites of Gettysburg to the north and Harpers Ferry, Monocacy, and Antietam to the south are primary Civil War interpretive destinations used by travelers on the byway (Figure 4-18). The construction of the modern roadway bypassed and supplanted historic 18th and 19th century roadways in the County, in effect preserving them and their associated agricultural landscape. The byway's appealing character is a result of the beauty and appeal of the landscape through which it winds. Catoclin Mountain and the historic agricultural landscape of Frederick County provide a setting that enhances the quality of life of residents and provides a strong positive image to visitors. Preservation of the intrinsic qualities of the Catoclin Mountain Scenic Byway in Frederick County will help preserve the landscape qualities through which the byway derives its significance and merits interpretation.

Given the qualities and significance of the historic landscapes and sites that are found along the byway, the following broad goals for byway interpretation are recommended:

1. To promote awareness and appreciation of the history and culture of Frederick County among residents and visitors.
2. To help preserve the uniqueness of the Catoclin Mountain landscape and related historic sites and communities
3. To promote community revitalization while preserving community identity.
4. To promote visitation to towns, businesses, and attractions within the County based on their history, character, and appeal.

### Potential Audiences for Interpretation and Education

The potential audiences for interpretation and education are more focused than the broader market potential for the byway. Not everyone that travels the byway will be interested in interpretation, and therefore the interpretation should be more closely oriented towards those that are most likely to appreciate it. Interpretation should be targeted to children in grades 4 through 8, be curriculum based, and tied to the Content Standards for Maryland Public Schools (see [http://mdk12.org/instruction/standards/social\\_studies/grd4.html](http://mdk12.org/instruction/standards/social_studies/grd4.html)). Potential audiences include:



- **Local Residents:** Interpretation and education efforts associated with the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway will be a constant reminder to residents of the history and character of the County's natural and agricultural landscapes. It will symbolize the region's quality of life and become a source of pride within the community.
- **Visitors to Frederick County:** Interpretation and education efforts associated with the byway will be the means through which visitors from the north and south receive their first impressions of Frederick County. It will communicate to visitors the quality of life that can be experienced here. It will provide visitors that may be coming to the area for different reasons, a chance to see what else the County has to offer.
- **Through Travelers:** Interpretation and education along the byway will provide an impression to through-travelers of the character and quality of life of the region. Through-travelers will take this impression with them and help create and reinforce a regional image of Frederick County in the mid-Atlantic (Figure 4-20).



*Figure 4-19: Visitors to C&O Canal*



*Figure 4-20: Cozy Mural, Thurmont; conveys a distinct regional image associated with the Catoctin Mountains*

## Interpretive Principles

The following interpretive principles are proposed to guide future development of interpretive materials:

- **Authenticity:** The Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway will present and promote awareness of the authentic landscapes, communities, and resources of the area.
- **Privacy:** The privacy of local residents will be respected. No interpretation of privately owned historic resources would be undertaken without the consent of property owners.
- **Safety:** Safety along the roadway will take precedence over all other goals and objectives. All design, construction, and interpretation will be undertaken in a manner that provides safe driving conditions.
- **Sparkling Interest:** The byway will endeavor to spark the interest of visitors and residents in Frederick County's landscape, communities, and resources.
- **Promoting Exploration:** The byway will promote and facilitate exploration of the County and its resources. The byway is a means to encourage visitors to get off the road and explore.

## Recommended Interpretive Themes

### **1. First Mountain/First Frontier**

Catoctin Mountain marks the end of the Piedmont Province of Maryland and the beginning of the Blue Ridge Province. Among the oldest mountains in the world, the Appalachian Mountains are characterized by long north-south ridges that dominate the

landscape. With their dramatically different geologies, these steep ridges altered settlement patterns and created contrasting economic opportunities. As the first frontier, the huge landforms impeded travel, making the Potomac River and gaps in the mountain important focal points for transportation, and later as points of defense during the Civil War. Today these mountains provide the first opportunity for residents of the Baltimore and Washington Metropolitan areas to experience a large expanse of natural landscape, largely undeveloped and free from intrusions.

## ***2. Agricultural Prosperity***

Frederick County's agricultural landscape was among the most stable and prosperous in the region. In the years before the Civil War, a strong agricultural economy developed based upon the production of wheat and other grains. This agricultural economy supported a distinctly American rural way of life and is an outstanding example of the way America developed. The nineteenth century cultural landscape is still clearly visible and is the defining element of the County's rural character today. Today's agricultural enterprise, although not as prosperous, has adapted to rapidly changing patterns of land use and market demand by providing city dwellers with opportunities to purchase fresh food close to home through farmers markets and farm stands along the byway.

## ***3. Community Life***

Small towns in Frederick County were closely associated with the surrounding agricultural landscape, providing services, markets, social contact, and locations for processing agricultural goods. The region saw the evolution of an industrial economy and way of life within a broad agrarian landscape. Transportation, by country road, turnpike, canal, railroad, and trolley, linked communities and created economic opportunity.

## ***4. Cultural Crossroads***

Frederick County became home to settlers arriving from different directions and with differing cultural traditions. From the east, came settlers from the Chesapeake region, many of Catholic faith and accustomed to southern plantation cultural traditions. From the north came independent farmers from Pennsylvania, including Quakers, Germans, and Scotch Irish. Over the generations, these cultures mixed in Frederick County, creating an agricultural landscape that conveys its dual identity.

## **5. Conflict**

The Catoctin Mountains have played significant roles in many different eras of conflict including the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. Maryland was a border state both physically and philosophically. Clashing cultural traditions fostered differing views regarding union, state's rights, slavery, and other issues. Maryland was a battleground, as the Confederate army sought to take the conflict north.

## **Interpretive Strategies**

Interpretive strategies should include a range of media from print to digital through waysides and exhibits and include the provision of personal services at specific locations and events. The following specific actions are recommended to implement the interpretive strategies.

### ***Develop Detailed Interpretive Master Plan***

The next step in helping to tell the byway's story is to get funding to prepare a detailed interpretive master plan. As part of the interpretive plan, it is important to further expand upon the themes and to develop the necessary interpretive tools to use in telling the story. How much of the story can be told through digital or print media? How much of the story needs a physical presence along the byway in the form of physical displays that are accessible to the public at all times (such as wayside panels or kiosks)? What are the specific stories that need to be told and where is the best place to tell them?



*Figure 4-21: Existing interpretive panel at C&O Canal*

### ***Develop a Distinct Visual Identity for the Byway***

A distinctive design vocabulary will be developed for the byway that will be expressed through all future construction and implementation projects. This design statement will be visible in all products, ranging from that seen in published materials, such as brochures and websites, to future roadway design projects. It will include signage, interpretive elements, landscape design, road and bridge treatments, and other design elements. It might include appropriate roadside artwork. The design will complement and reinforce the views of the surrounding landscape. Visitors will be immediately aware of the distinctive design of the roadway upon entering the County. This strategy is discussed further in section 4.5, Roadside Character.

### ***Develop a Wayfinding System***

As part of the design treatment, a roadside signage system will be developed that will be implemented along the byway and will be appropriate for extension throughout the County. It will include a complete range of potential sign types, from gateway

signs, to place names, to wayfinding, to interpretation, to traffic signs (in accordance with state standards). This strategy is discussed further in section 4.5, Roadside Character.

### ***Improve Linkages to Byway Communities***

While US 15 travels a scenic alignment along the base of the Catoctin Mountain Range, it has for decades bypassed the hearts of the communities that it links. The historic downtowns offer a wealth of cultural and heritage tourism resources within a short distance of the byway, yet, many visitors are completely unaware of the interpretive and educational opportunities.

The Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway (US 15) will serve as the principal gateway to the County and region's special places and landscapes. A hierarchical organization is needed to make it easier for byway visitors to find these special places and landscapes. Key intersections associated with communities, resources, trails, and special places will have special design features to encourage visitors to exit and explore. Small highway pull-offs at the intersections or additional wayfinding signs will provide information to direct visitors to sites and attractions.

### **Visitor Information**

Visitor information should be readily available at both ends of the byway for visitors entering the County (and Maryland).

From the North, visitors will easily find visitor information at the newly renovated Welcome Center on US 15 north of Emmitsburg. Although it is too late to add interpretive displays about the Catoctin Mountains at this point, a brochure should be developed and placed at this center and at a point in the southern section.

A visitor information center has been widely discussed as a potential use for the B&O Train Station in Point of Rocks. However, creating an ADA-accessible access to the station is problematic. In the meantime, a visitor information kiosk should be constructed at the new park on Clay Street (currently being planned).

### **Waysides**

For those that miss the visitor center, waysides should be developed at both ends of the byway where travelers can pull off of the roadway. From the North, the existing Payne's Hill Overlook (and former pull-off overlooking Piney Mountain, shown on Map 6, Concept Map Sheet 1) can be developed as a wayside. From the south, a pull-off is proposed overlooking Sugarloaf Mountain at East Basford Road (see Map 7, Concept Map Sheet 2). Information, interpretation, artwork, and ameni-



*Figure 4-22: Community bulletin board in Emmitsburg*

ties will be provided. Visitors will be encouraged to get off of the main roadway and explore the back roads and communities of Frederick County.

Though considered an attraction itself, the primary focus of the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway will be to encourage visitors to explore the County. Clear linkages will be made to towns, parks, trails and attractions. The goal of the byway is to support resources and initiatives located off of the roadway.

### ***Interpretive Facilities in Byway Communities***

The byway should encourage the interpretation of all towns within the region using interesting and creative means that promote revitalization. Community interpretation should be coordinated primarily through the Civil War Heritage Area. Visitor information kiosks are recommended for each of the major communities with walking tours.

### **Point of Rocks**

Key interpretive opportunities include the new park (now in the planning stages); the C&O Canal (with existing interpretive panels); the expanded MARC parking area, and the walking path connecting the existing park to the MARC Station and Clay Street.

### **Frederick**

There is extensive interpretation already in place and planned for Frederick related to the Civil War Trails (including the Museum of Civil War Medicine) and the National Road. Some additional interpretation relative to the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway (and Catoctin Mountains in general, should be considered for the new visitor center.

### **Lewistown**

The primary interpretive opportunities in the Lewistown area are two potential wayside locations: one at is at an old Monocacy River access point just north of Resthaven Memorial Gardens, and the second is at the turn off to Old US 15 (Hessong Bridge Road). Themes related to old travel routes could be interpreted at the Hessong Bridge site, while First Mountain/First Frontier themes could be interpreted at the Monocacy River.

### **Catoctin Furnace**

There is an existing interpretive pathway connecting the Manor Area at Cunningham Falls State Park with the Catoctin Furnace site. There is extensive interest on the part of the Catoctin Furnace Historical Society to extend this walking path into Catoctin Furnace as part of a locally developed walking tour. The current pedestrian overpass at US 15 is not ADA accessible and is in need of new ramps and landings connecting to



the trails. There is also interest on the part of the MDNR to revamp the interpretive panels and tell a more complete story about Catoctin Furnace.



Figure 4-23: Catoctin Mountain Park Visitor Center

### **Catoctin Mountain Park and Cunningham Falls State Park**

There is extensive interpretation and education already taking place in Catoctin Mountain Park and in Cunningham Falls State Park (Figure 4-23). Any future interpretive plans and projects should build upon the existing themes and stories already being told at each Park.

### **Thurmont**

An excellent opportunity for interpretation and education has taken place every fall—the Catoctin Colorfest. Drawing between 100,000 and 200,000 every year, the event provides an excellent opportunity to reach a wide audience of both visitors and residents that may be interested in other similar types of activities along the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway.

### **Emmitsburg**

The Town has a significant historical district downtown with extensive interpretive opportunities. The Town is very interested in drawing more visitors to the downtown. A kiosk and visitor information sign is needed at South Seton Ave. plus additional information placed at the new renovated Welcome Center. In addition to the downtown sites, the Seton Shrine, and the National Fire Academy offer additional interpretive opportunities.

### **Maintaining Interpretive Facilities**

Too often, byway leaders work so hard to get interpretive facilities installed that they never get around to figuring out how they will be maintained. The result is that a nice interpretive wayside quickly turns into an inaccessible sign in foot-high weeds. To avoid this dilemma, no interpretive waysides or signs should be installed unless there is a maintenance agreement stipulating who the responsible person is for mowing, monitoring graffiti, patching walkways, picking up litter, and otherwise ensuring that the location is both suitable and attractive to visitors.

### ***Interpretive Facilities Along Historic Travel Routes***

#### **Civil War Trails Linkages**

Close coordination is needed to ensure that the identity and interpretive resources associated with the Civil War Trails are kept intact, not compromised or confused by any new interpretation proposed along the byway.



To that end, the byway's name was changed from the Civil War Battlefields Scenic Byway to the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway.

At the same time, US 15 represents a significant portal to the Civil War Trails travel routes. Efforts should be made to coordinate interpretation and wayfinding.

### Old Frederick Road

Old US 15 represents an excellent opportunity to talk about the Agricultural Prosperity themes associated with the Byway (Figure 4-24). The plan recommends creating a series of loops into the historic downtowns and communities along the byway.

### Greenways and Recreational Trails

Several greenways and recreational trails cross the byway. The most extensive system is the C&O Canal. Point of Rocks can become a more developed waypoint along the trail system by creating better linkages to the existing stores and the MARC Station.

A second extensive greenway trail system is being developed along the old H&F Trolley right-of-way. The H&F right-of-way runs from Thurmont to Frederick. This will also provide opportunities to interconnect the byway with significant byway resources.

## 4.4 Transportation/Traffic Safety

### Highway Safety Analysis

Daniel Consultants, Inc. (DCI) has conducted a field investigation and transportation assessment of the US 15 corridor. The objective of the transportation analyses include the evaluation of the following:

- Roadway conditions and geometrics.
- Traffic controls and pedestrian issues.
- Traffic volume characteristics.
- Programmed road improvements.
- Accident patterns and statistics.
- Pull-off areas at vistas.
- Signing issues – way finding.

A description of the roadway characteristics, accident areas, and potential context sensitive solutions to highway design issues is included below. Refer to Map 5, "Transportation/Traffic Safety" in the Appendix along with a list of planned improvements in Chapter 2.



Figure 4-24: View from Old Frederick Road toward St. Mary's College

*Goal: Achieve a safe and attractive travel experience for byway visitors as well as commuter and local traffic in a manner that is sensitive to the byway's scenic, natural, recreational, and historic context by working proactively with MSHA, Frederick County and the City of Frederick, the National Park Service, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and the many stakeholders along the route to accommodate and balance the unique needs of all the roadway users including residents, commercial and recreational users, businesses dependent upon access, pedestrians, and transit. Especially important is the goal of making it easier and safer for travelers to find their way into the communities adjacent to the byway and to make it easy for visitors to stop and get out of their cars within the byway communities.*

### ***Roadway Characteristics***

US 15 traverses 38 miles of Frederick County from the Virginia State Line at Point of Rocks to the Pennsylvania State Line just north of Emmitsburg. Listed below is a physical description of the roadway characteristics beginning from the Virginia State Line to the Pennsylvania State Line:

US 15 crosses the Potomac River from Virginia and into Maryland at Point of Rocks across a 2-lane concrete bridge. US 15 is a 2-lane roadway with a speed limit of 45-MPH near Point of Rocks and a 55-MPH speed limit just north of Point of Rocks. Paved shoulder areas are provided for the entire 2-lane section until US 15 joins US 340 approximately 7 miles from the Virginia State Line. Traffic volumes increase from 15,950 ADT (Average Daily Traffic) at Point of Rocks to 43,775 ADT at the junction with US 340. Access to/from US 15 is provided at 4 at-grade intersections between Point of Rocks and the US 15/US 340 junction. This section of roadway is considered a partial access-controlled facility.

US 15/US 340 traverses in a northeasterly direction towards Frederick City as a 4-lane divided roadway. The posted speed limit varies from 65 MPH just after US 15 joins US 340 to a speed limit of 40 MPH just prior to the US15/US 40 junction. Traffic volumes increase from 43,775 ADT at the US 15/US 340 junction to a peak ADT of 93,950 ADT just north of the junction with US 15/US 340. Access is limited to grade-separated interchanges from the US 15/US 340 junction to the US 15/US 40 junction. This section of roadway is considered a full access controlled facility.

US 15/US 40 continues in a northerly direction as 4-lane divided roadway. US 40 shares the roadway designation with US 15 for only 0.7 miles. After West Patrick Street, the full access controlled roadway is designated solely as US 15. The posted speed limit along this section of roadway is 55 MPH. Traffic volumes decrease from the peak 93,950 near the US 15/US 40 junction with US 15/US 340 to 39,635 just south of Hayward Road.

US 15 changes to a partially access controlled facility at a point just south of Hayward Road. US 15 is a 4-lane median divided roadway with turn lanes at most intersections from Hayward Road to Pryor Road (just south of Thurmont). A 55-MPH speed limit is maintained along this section of US 15. Average Daily Traffic decreases from 39,635 vehicles to 30,550 vehicles.

The Town of Thurmont is served by 3 grade-separated interchanges along US 15 (Thurmont Boulevard, Main Street, and Church Street). A 4-lane US 15 is maintained and the speed

limit remains at 55 MPH. The ADT decreases from 30,550 vehicles near Pryor Road to 24,250 vehicles just north of Church Street.

US 15 north of Church Street returns to a partially access controlled facility all the way to the Pennsylvania State Line. US 15 remains a 4-lane divided roadway with turn lanes at all major intersections in this section of roadway. The speed limit remains at 55 MPH. The ADT decreases from 24,250 vehicles near Pryor Road to 14,250 vehicles near the Pennsylvania State Line.

Listed below is a Summary Table of the various road segments of US 15 with the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of the roadway and the pavement widths and type (divided or undivided).

<u>Intersecting Roadway</u>	<u>ADT</u>	<u>Width/Type</u>
MD 28	15,950	24 Feet (Undiv.)
MD 464	14,030	24 Feet (Undiv.)
Mountville Road	16,050	24 Feet (Undiv.)
US 340	43,775	48 Feet (Divided)
Mt. Zion Road	48,750	48 Feet (Divided)
US 40	93,950	48 Feet (Divided)
Rosemont Avenue	86,550	48 Feet (Divided)
7th Street	74,950	48 Feet (Divided)
Hayward Road	39,635	48 Feet (Divided)
Stull Road	31,750	48 Feet (Divided)
Baughner Road (North)	30,550	48 Feet (Divided)
Church Street	26,450	48 Feet (Divided)
Motters Station Road	17,650	48 Feet (Divided)
Seton Avenue (South)	15,650	48 Feet (Divided)
MD 140	14,250	48 Feet (Divided)

### ***Accident Evaluation Areas***

Daniel Consultants, Inc. (DCI) researched accident data from the Maryland State Highway Administration (MSHA) files.

Based on DCI's review, the following roadway links or intersections were identified as areas of concern and were evaluated:

- US 15 at Mountville Road – Problematic accidents included opposite direction accidents and angle accidents. SHA recently instituted a mandatory headlight use in this undivided section of US 15. Centerline rumble strips and a flashing beacon signal were recently installed. It is likely that a full traffic signal will be installed at this location within the next 5 years (Average Daily Traffic = 16,050 vehicles).
- US 15 (From US 40 to Rosemont Avenue – 0.37 Miles) – Problematic accidents included sideswipe accidents. SHA has a funded project to install a continuous auxiliary lane on US 15 between US 40 and Rosemont Avenue that should mitigate the accident problem (Average Daily Traffic = 93,950 vehicles).

- US 15 at Willow Road – Although there have been only a total of 8 reported accidents at this location over the past 5 years, two of these accidents have been fatal accidents. The intersection allows northbound and southbound US 15 left turn movements (the southbound US 15 left turn lane serves a minor residential driveway on the east side of US 15 and provides an opportunity to U-turn to go back north on US 15). Eastbound Willow Road left and through movements are not permitted and physically restricted by a raised channelization island in the median area of the intersection. Only eastbound Willow Road right turn movements are permitted. The available sight distances for each of the turning movements at the intersection were examined. A formal survey by SHA indicated that sight distance is adequate for the posted speed limit. In addition, the signing in the intersection vicinity was also reviewed. There are intersection warning signs along southbound US 15 approximately 600 feet prior to the intersection (Average Daily Traffic = 39,635).

### **Context Sensitive Design/Solutions**

With the high degree of probability that US 15 will be undergoing significant changes, especially at intersections north of the City of Frederick, there is a tremendous need to work with MSHA, the County, the municipalities, and the various stakeholders with an interest in the future of the appearance of US 15 to work together towards solutions that will contribute to the positive development of the byway.

On the one hand, the planned and programmed elements could completely alter the character of the byway in a way that is not supportive of encouraging additional visitors to sample the County offerings. On the other hand, with the planned investments in modifications to the roadway, there is a great opportunity to make the planned and programmed modifications create a safer and more attractive road, a win-win situation.

### ***Recommended Strategies:***

The following specific strategies are recommended as a means of achieving the overall goals for the road and right-of way. Note that related goals for preserving and enhancing the character of the byway (preserving rural character and views, preserving historic sites and landscapes, and guiding new development) are discussed in section 4.1 of the corridor management plan.

### **Process Guidelines**

The most important strategy for traffic and transportation is to work with MSHA to develop and adopt a set of byway-specific design guidelines to help project staff and other stakeholders

understand the special qualities of the byway and make project and operational decisions that will reinforce and enhance these qualities. Guidelines should incorporate the following design issues:

*1. Understand the Overall Significance of the Roadway as a Scenic Byway*

The significance of the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway is described in Chapter 3. In summary the byway is the principal gateway to mid-Maryland heritage tourism opportunities including Civil War Trails, the Civil War Heritage Area, the Historic National Road, three additional state-designated scenic byways, and heritage resources of Point of Rocks, the City of Frederick, Catoctin Mountain Park, Cunningham Falls State Park, Catoctin Furnace, Thurmont and Emmitsburg.

*2. Understand the Positive Quality of a Traveler's Experience along the Byway*

Given the importance of the US 15 Corridor as a gateway to mid-Maryland's heritage areas, natural and cultural resources, the design of the roadway must be carefully considered to help achieve the tourism development goals of the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway. The byway needs to be attractive, well-designed and maintained, and it needs to reinforce the type of travel experience that leads to higher visitation and longer stays.

*3. Understand the Character-defining Features of the Project Area and determine what treatments are appropriate given the character defining features.*

There are five distinct character zones of the byway as described in Chapter 2. Most importantly, the desired character of the byway needs to match the overall landscape character of the distinct byway segments:

- Southern Segment - south of 340 Split: parkway-like 2-lane highway with forested slopes to the west and long views towards Sargarloaf Mountain and the Piedmont to the East. A parkway-like design character is recommended (Figure 4-25). Incorporation of natural stone facing on barrier or retaining walls, steel-backed wood guardrails as part of barrier treatment, and reinforced turf shoulders are examples of techniques that can be used to accomplish this design goal.
- Frederick Freeway/Jefferson National Pike – from 340 Split north to City limits including all of the Frederick Freeway – The urban freeway segment of the byway should incorporate architectural treatments for all structural systems including sound walls, overpasses, barriers, and interchange ramps to achieve a character that is sensitive to Frederick's historic character. Examples of techniques to achieve this design goal include the





*Figure 4-25: Desired parkway-like character is exhibited in the section near Catoctin Furnace*

incorporation of brick treatment rather than stone and color galvanized box beams rather than steel backed timber guardrails.

- North Central Segment – City Limits to Biggs Ford Road is the segment that is most likely to undergo the greatest amount of change over the next 6-10 years. In this segment great care should be taken to transition from the use of brick or other architectural treatment back to the parkway-like character proposed for the northern segment. This transition can be accomplished through the incorporation of public art into the design of bridge overpasses and abutment walls and a Catoctin Mountain gateway design feature as part of the Biggs Ford Road intersection/planned interchange. Guardrails should retain more urban character such as could be established with color galvanized box beams.
- Northern segment – Biggs Ford Road to State Line has the greatest amount of recreational and heritage travel. A parkway-like character is desired. The use of treatments such as natural stone veneer for bridges, barriers, and retaining walls, steel-backed timber guardrails, reinforced turf shoulders with mountable curbs, and landscaped medians through forested areas (wildflowers in medians through agricultural areas) are techniques that could be used to produce a parkway-like character.

## **Design, Maintenance, and Management Guidelines:**

### **1. Safety**

When considering safety-related design changes to the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway, changes should strive to retain, to the maximum extent possible, the scenic and historic character of the roadway. The traditional methods of trying to improve safety on state highways may not be possible or appropriate for scenic roads. These methods have concentrated on physical modifications to the roadway and roadside such as widening lanes and shoulders, adding guardrails, cutting trees, and changing the vertical and horizontal geometry. These techniques will often destroy the visual quality that led to the scenic designation. In addition, by creating a more wide-open look to the road, these techniques, while attempting to reduce the apparent dangers for the driver, usually result in higher operating speeds. This is especially problematic for scenic roads, since a substantial proportion of the users of these roads are new to the road, wish to drive slowly to enjoy the view, and may include bicyclists as well. For scenic roads, therefore, an increase in accidents could possibly be the result of traditional strategies to improve safety, since these techniques would be likely to increase the speed differential between users.



For safety considerations along the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway, design treatments may be different in each of the distinct segments of the byway. Direct observation in the field to understand the causes of a safety problem may assist in identifying means to address the problem that will not alter the scenic and historic character of the roadway.

When confronting problems associated with travel speeds well in excess of posted speeds, consideration should be given to improving the driver's behavior through appropriately scaled traffic calming techniques as a means to maintain the character defining features of the byway, with the goal being to match design speed and posted speed on the roadway. An example of such a technique on US 15 would be the use of trailer-mounted speed radar signs.

When considering safety-related design changes to the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway, to be compatible with the byway's setting, any changes should strive to minimize the visual contrast between the safety feature and its setting. Examples of such techniques include the use of steel-backed wood guardrails in rustic or natural setting; or color galvanized box beam in urban sections (Figure 4-26).

For the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway, the following types of improvements are being considered primarily in the North and North Central segments (as discussed in Chapter 2): 1) grade separated interchanges, 2) at-grade Z-intersection designs (restricting left and through movements from the side street), and 3) median acceleration lanes to serve left turn movements from side street. The reason for these types of improvements being considered by SHA is to maintain a relatively free-flowing traffic pattern along US 15 without the introduction of traffic signals. These 3 measures will help facilitate traffic while maintaining the highest level of safety.

It is anticipated that an extensive amount of barriers may be needed for these improvements when median widths are narrowed or accelerations added. Stone-faced barriers for center median and right-of-way edge treatments should be considered because they exist in the Route 15 Corridor. The following context sensitive solutions are recommended:

For intersections in the southern segment, consideration should be given to the use of roundabouts rather than signalized intersections as a means of slowing traffic down to manageable and safe speeds. By reducing speeds to 20-25 mph through the intersection, the severity of crashes may be dramatically reduced. Multiple roundabouts are currently being designed in Virginia at the US 15 and US 50 intersection (Figure 4-27). (Construction is scheduled for 2006.)



Figure 4-26: Steel-backed timber guardrail on Paris Pike (photo courtesy of HW Lochner)



Figure 4-27: Design concept for proposed roundabout at US 15 and Route 50



*Figure 4-28: On the Baltimore-Washington Parkway turf shoulders are reinforced with a “dirty-stone” mix of soil and aggregate making it possible for turf to get established; Cars can easily move out of the travelway over the mountable curbs*



*Figure 4-29: Turf grid on Route 100 near Brandywine Valley state Park*

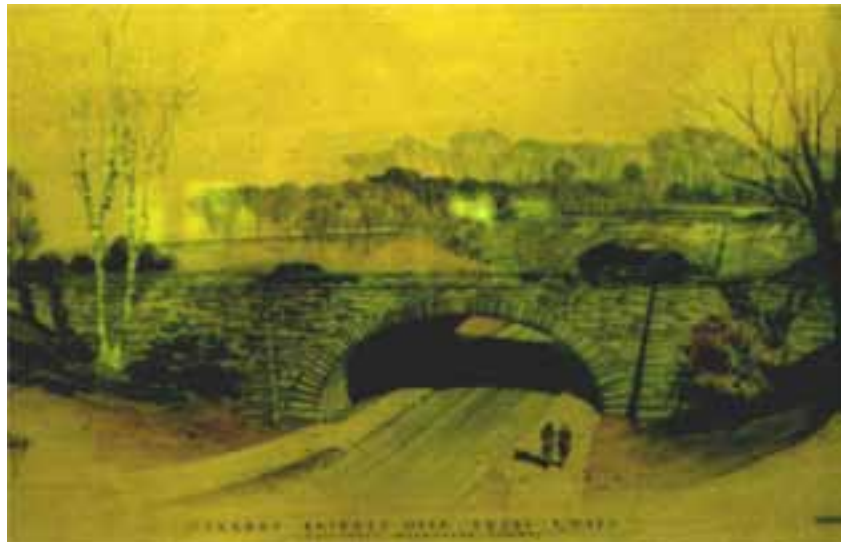
The visual treatment of shoulders is extremely important on Scenic Byways. For shoulders, pressure exists to have very wide paved shoulders, nearly the equivalent of an additional travel lane. However, this tends to encourage higher travel speeds, passing on the right and other unsafe driving practices. Narrower shoulders can be used along with mountable curbs and reinforced turf shoulders so that vehicles can pull off the road safely onto the grass shoulder when breakdown space is needed.

Turf shoulders also increase the pastoral quality of the roadway. Porous pavers like turf grids have been used on road shoulders in Delaware and could be considered for use along US 15, especially in the areas near the National Parks (Figure 4-29). However, turf establishment has proven difficult and further research and testing is necessary for the use of this product on shoulders. Should a wide paved shoulder be required for safety, contrasting paving materials (such as utilizing a different color/type of aggregate in the asphalt mix) should be used to differentiate paved shoulder areas from the traveled way. This will minimize the visual impact of broad expanses of asphalt, and will provide greater safety by clearly delineating vehicular circulation.

## **2. Alignment and Geometry**

The natural topographic characteristics of the roadway and how it fits into the landscape – its alignment and geometry – should be preserved to the maximum extent practical. The primary issues that may affect alignment and geometry are mostly related to newly planned interchanges north of the Frederick Freeway.

Efforts should be made to lower the profile of US 15 so that it goes underneath crossing roads (rather than using overpasses



*Figure 4-30: Early sketch of Palisades Interstate Parkway showing concept of grade separation of intersecting roads*



for the crossing roads, as shown in Figure 4-30). Interchange ramps must also fit carefully with the landscape, making sure that large excavations are not needlessly piled adjacent to the interchange. Instead, excavated earth should be reshaped in a manner that is similar to the existing topography.

### 3. Grading and Drainage

Grading and drainage should be undertaken in a manner to reinforce the existing character of the roadway when the byway was designated. Direct observation in the field can be extremely valuable in determining compatible approaches.

When considering changes that require modifications to the adjacent slopes (cut and fill) or modifying drainage patterns, compatibility can be achieved through the use of biological slope stabilization rather than structural methods (Figure 4-31).

The “knife through butter” look of a precisely engineered and constructed slope has a super-highway character, and should be avoided. Uphill cut slopes needed to accommodate additional roadway width or drainage should look like they are a part of the natural landscape. This approach means accentuating a natural drainage swale, or steepening or relaxing a slope according to the specific soil and rock materials found. In some cases this will require agreements with abutting owners since some additional land may be involved. The result, however, can be more stable and less expensive, as well as better looking.

Stormwater management facilities should be designed to be an integral part of the natural landscape structure associated with their location. A landscaped pond in a pasture would not be an appropriate means for handling storm water management whereas such a feature might be quite appropriate in a neighborhood.



*Figure 4-31: Before and after simulation illustrating the benefits of utilizing soil bio-engineering in combination with a stone veneer barrier wall as an alternative to standard concrete barrier and bin-walls*





*Figure 4-32: Travelers are confronted with a dizzying array of welcome signs, regulatory and informational signs when entering Maryland on US 15; consolidating informational signs would be one way to improve the appearance of the roadside environment*



*Figure 4-33: George Washington Parkway has signs with dark brown backs to reduce visual contrast*

#### **4. Traffic Control Devices and Signs**

Traffic control devices including regulatory signs, signals, and traffic barriers should not detract from or overwhelm the visual character of the natural or constructed landscape (Figure 4-32).

When considering traffic control devices, compatibility can be achieved by selecting appropriately scaled signs, barriers, signal control boxes, and other devices designed to be no larger than necessary and to have minimal visual contrast with the setting. For example, traffic signs at an intersection may be smaller on an intersecting lower volume street than on the higher volume cross street. In terms of color, consider using dark colors in a forested environment or painting the back of the signs and devices as a means of reducing visual contrast.

Regulatory signs are guided by the manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Along a scenic byway, warning signs and reflective markings are often used as a means of warning travelers of upcoming curves, speed zones, intersections, and steep grades. The cumulative visual impact of these necessary signs can be reduced by specifying dark colors on the back of the signs similar to what is done on National Park Service roads, such as Park Central in Catoctin Mountain Park or the George Washington Parkway (Figure 4-33).

#### **5. Utilities**

Utilities should be placed or relocated so as to preserve or enhance the character of the scenic byway. Utilities along the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway are less of an issue due to the nature of land uses along the route. See section 4.5 for a discussion of roadside character issues relative to high voltage transmission lines.

#### **6. Landscaping**

Natural landscape features, particularly native and traditional plant materials and tree cover, should be preserved and maintained to support the visitor's experience envisioned in designing the byway.

- Landscape materials may serve as a useful screening device to accomplish enhancement goals for the project (see section 4.5).
- Landscape designs may serve as an important tool to accomplish both safety and traffic calming objectives. Plantings should be designed to narrow the look and feel of the road and to establish a rhythm that is appropriate to the posted speed of the highway. Clear zone areas need to be respected on a major road such as US 15. In certain circumstances, however, it is desirable to place trees in the median and along the roadway edge outside the clear zone at regularly spaced intervals. This is particularly useful approaching speed zones or settled

areas. Trees should be placed closer and closer together so that drivers begin to feel the need to slow down.

- Plantings of roadside grasses or native ground covers may be used to address erosion problems on shallow slopes. Erosion problems on steeper slopes should be addressed, where applicable, by the planting of vines, ground cover, or other lower-growing herbaceous or woody plants.

More detailed information about landscape screening is included in section 4.5

## 7. Bridges

When a bridge must be replaced, compatibility can be achieved by replacing the structure in kind with what was originally there or by reconstructing a bridge with similar types of details. If, however, the existing bridge is of a style that detracts from the byway's character, a replacement bridge can enhance the byway by selecting a design that is more compatible with the character of the byway.

For an example of a design detail that could enhance a replacement bridge design, one might use the two-tube open steel bridge rail developed by the Wyoming DOT or a Texas Type C411, crash tested for urban streets with 45 mph speed limits or less. The Texas rail looks like open concrete rails with parapet wall openings and is particularly useful for recreating the appearance of historic bridge rails. Tubular steel railings are used on the George Washington Parkway (Figure 4-34).

Along the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway, the primary bridges to be constructed will be overpasses (or underpasses) associated with the creation of a limited access highway. Architectural treatment is strongly recommended so that each newly constructed overpass is given a distinct architectural character, similar to the bridges originally designed for the Merritt Parkway (Figure 4-35).

## 8. Signing

Signs should be limited in number and size to be effective in communicating necessary information while minimizing their impact on the scenic and other values of the scenic byway.

- Signs should be appropriately sized for the design speed of the road.
- Signs should be consolidated where possible to minimize sign clutter and a proliferation of sign poles.
- Existing billboards should be considered for removal to improve scenic road values (see section 4.5).
- New billboards are not allowed to be permitted or constructed along designated scenic byways



*Figure 4-34: Bridge railing using tubular steel along the George Washington Parkway in Virginia*



*Figure 4-35: Architectural treatment for each of the 49 bridges along the Merritt Parkway are unique*

- Local planning and zoning officials should be included in project working groups to coordinate project strategies for signage with local jurisdictions codes and enforcement plans. A comprehensive wayfinding study designed to ensure that byway travelers can easily find their way into byway communities, to related travel and touring routes, to points of interest, and to find facilities and services is recommended.



*Figure 4-36: The approach to Emmitsburg along South Seton Avenue is a good candidate for gateway, traffic calming, and other types of enhancement and preservation actions*

The study should include a prototype town gateway and wayfinding signage system and associated website to link the culture and heritage resources of the historic downtown areas of both incorporated and unincorporated communities along the US 15 corridor in Maryland with the Byway. While US 15 travels a scenic alignment along the base of the Catoclin Mountain range, it has for decades bypassed the hearts of the communities that it links, such as Emmitsburg. The historic downtowns offer a wealth of cultural and heritage tourism resources within a short distance of the Byway. However, at first glance a visitor would not feel confident that they were heading into town (Figure 4-36). Improved guidance is necessary for motorists seeking to visit the downtowns along the Byway. A website establishing online linkages to the historic and cultural resources in the Byway communities is the first step in improving the wayfinding capability of visitors to the byway. The wayfinding system can then reinforce wayfinding recommendations found on the web page with physical signage and roadside information.

For the Catoclin Mountain Scenic Byway with its numerous scenic byways, heritage areas, Civil War Trails, and recreation areas, all with their very unique signing requirements, an appropriate approach would be to develop a distinctive black background sign for the Catoclin Mountain Scenic Byway with the appropriate linkage portrayed in either brown, blue, or green depending on the MUTCD function. The black background for the sign grouping would be a very simple common element without logos.

### **9. Lighting**

Lighting along the byway should incorporate cut-off fixtures to minimize night lighting pollution.

### **10. Access Management**

The primary strategy will be to work with tourism-oriented businesses, services, and site managers to identify and preserve appropriate access through the use of innovative access management techniques including the use of shared service drives, tourist-oriented destination signage, and creative intersection design to achieve a park-like setting.



Approval of access permits and decisions regarding requirements for acceleration or deceleration lanes should be made carefully taking into consideration the importance of maintaining and enhancing the character-defining features of the roadway.

For the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway, the primary access issue has to do with making left turns either into or out of a tourist-oriented destination, or point of interest. MSHA has proposed using “Z” channelized intersections with median acceleration lanes as a means of merging traffic onto the high speed roadway (Figure 4-37).

Accessing visitor sites along the US 15 corridor will not change significantly in the future if the potential SHA improvements are implemented (such as the ‘Z’ type intersection). Access to the tourism sites will likely not change since right and left turn movements from US 15 are typically not restricted. Access from the tourism sites may only change slightly if the site is accessed from an intersection with the left and through movement side-street turning restrictions. However, a simple U-turn at the next intersection is all that would be required.

### 11. Enhancing the Byway

Opportunities to enhance the byway can sometimes be accomplished when resurfacing, restoration, or rehabilitation (RRR) work is being considered for a scenic byway. At a minimum, any work should not overwhelm nor detract from the distinctive character of the roadway and should be compatible with the existing road features in size, scale and proportion. Examples of byway-related enhancements that can be constructed as part of ongoing RRR work include:

- Landscaping and appropriately scaled signs can be used to create a gateway to a community, helping to establish the community’s sense of place.

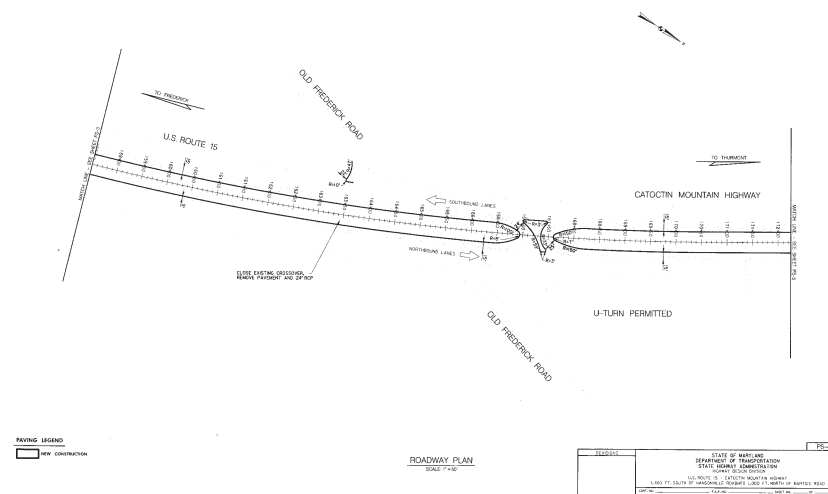


Figure 4-37: Example of ‘Z’ Type intersection planned for selected US 15 at-grade crossings

- Interpretive signage can be added to pull-off areas to tell the stories of the byway and provide information about the byway's significance.
- Where appropriate, the use of native plant materials in natural planting patterns and historically traditional plant materials should be emphasized to enhance the character of the roadway.

## **12. Maintenance**

A scenic byway should receive the level of maintenance necessary for safe public travel by auto, bicycle, and agriculture-related equipment while still preserving the character-defining qualities of the route. The primary purpose of maintenance practices along state highways, including scenic byways, is to maintain appropriate clear areas and sight distances, remove rapidly decaying and dying branches and trees to minimize hazards of falling branches along the roadway and along utility easements. Along scenic byways maintenance programs can also beautify the roadway and roadside environment. Suggestions include:

- Adjust mowing practices to maximize flowering times of roadside wildflowers.
- Develop landscape design plans that encourage natural revegetation to minimize mowing requirements.
- Encourage private citizens within towns to adopt the maintenance program for the area for planting areas at community entrances, medians, street tree planting beds, and roadside pull-offs.
- Where feasible, when bridge repairs are necessary, they should be made in such a way as to preserve the scenic and/or historic qualities of the structure.
- Where feasible, when a guardrail is replaced along a scenic byway, it should be of a material that enhances the scenic roadway.
- Tree removal and/or pruning should be selective and follow good arboricultural practices in order to maintain the character of the roadway. Selective tree cutting may be deemed a necessary periodic maintenance technique to maintain the scenic vistas of a designated roadway. Such a determination should be made in consultation with MSHA's scenic byways coordinator.

## **Community Linkages**

The communities of Point of Rocks, Frederick, Lewistown, Catoctin Furnace, Thurmont, and Emmitsburg are all interested in and working to improve the appearance of community entrances and downtown destination areas through comprehensive preservation, enhancement, and revitalization programs.

The 1999 'Your Town' design workshops identified a number of strategies that can and should be implemented along US 15.

The County also has adopted Community Design Guidelines and Development Principles that reinforce these concepts. In order for any idea or concept to be implemented, the next step is to prepare site specific corridor design recommendations for each town. These recommendations should include suggestions for:

- Community entrance features.
- Traffic calming.
- Roadway design details.
- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities and linkages.
- Landscaping, screening and buffering.
- Business signage and directories.
- Lighting.
- Community character.

A good example of the relationship between the byway and nearby communities is found in Point of Rocks. An extensive amount of community effort has already taken place to ensure that the planned expansion of the MARC parking lot does not overwhelm the character of the community. FEMA efforts to reduce flood risk have also resulted in changes to the community. Byway planning efforts are needed to reinforce the need for additional traffic calming efforts along Clay Street and for the implementation of a visitor information center (Figures 4-38 and 4-39). The addition of these elements will help provide a southern gateway to the byway that is easy to get to and safe for visitors who may want to get out of their cars and linger at the C&O Canal.

### **Catoctin Mountain Bicycling Guide**

The extensive amount of old US 15 highway alignment as shown on Map 1 Existing Byways and Touring Routes in the Appendix (e.g. Old Frederick Road) offers excellent opportunities to promote bicycling as part of the byway experience. The Tourism Council has in the past published a bicycling guide. An update of the guide that focuses on bicycling opportunities associated with the byway would be an excellent way to both market to an audience that is often interested in the types of intrinsic qualities that the byway has to offer and to direct bicyclists to those roads that are appropriate for bicycling use.

Based on DCI's review of the US 15 corridor, bicycle traffic was observed to be minimal. Due to the high speed/high traffic volume of full access controlled roadways, bicycle traffic is prohibited along these roadway classifications. Thus, the section of US 15 from the junction point at US 340 to Hayward Road north of Frederick City prohibits bicycle traffic. However,



Figure 4-38: Existing (at right) and proposed splitter islands for Clay Street (above) to shorten the long sight lines as a method of self enforcing the posted speed limit

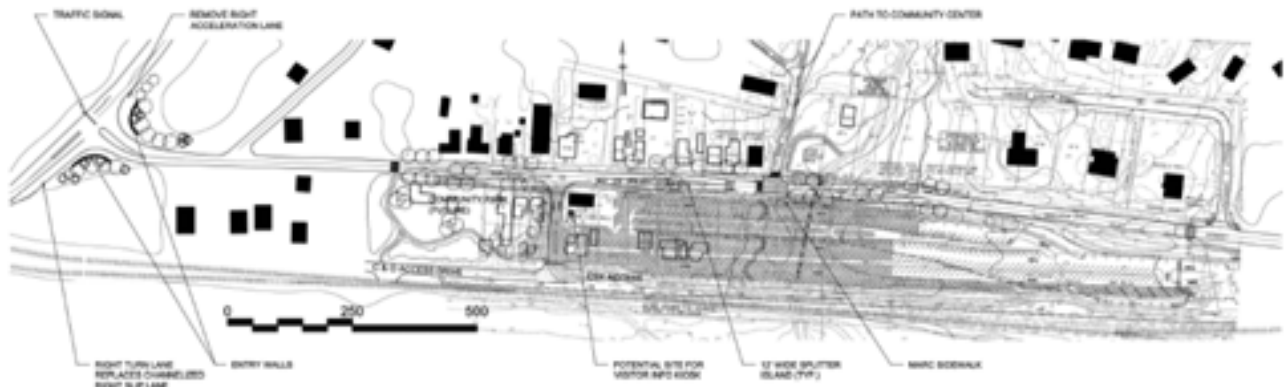
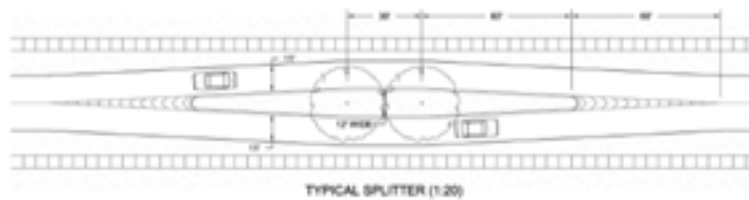


Figure 4-39: Proposed locations of splitter islands and pedestrian connections along Clay Street in Point of Rocks

due to the high-speed traffic on the other partially controlled sections of US 15 in Frederick County, bicycle traffic should not be encouraged. Alternative routes such as MD 351, MD 180, Hessong Bridge Road, and Old Frederick Road should be considered for use by bicycles.

Grade-separated interchanges along US 15 are likely to enhance bicycle use of the former US 15 alignments and historic travel routes as on-street bikeways. Shoulder improvements on these roadways are recommended to provide for safe cycling.

#### **4.5 Roadside Character**

In addition to the context sensitive solutions described above for work within the road and right-of-way, there are additional activities along the byway that influence the experience of traveling the byway.

##### **Good Design-Good Business Practices for Commercial Frontage Properties**

Major highways such as US 15 have long supported commercial uses along the roadway frontage. These historical uses, such as restaurants, hotels and motels, automobile and recreational vehicle dealers, and retail centers have become part of the fabric of historical travel routes like US 15. Often the businesses locate at key intersections where there is good access and high visibility.

For the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway, the presence of roadside commercial establishments can either be a positive contribution to the byway experience or a distraction. Most business owners want to present a coherent image to potential customers along a highway and to present themselves as a quality business operation wanting to attract new business.

The recommended approach for the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway is to work with commercial business owners to promote a program called “good design-good business”. It is based on the proven track records of a number of commercial and retail entrepreneurs that have been able to improve their bottom line by paying attention to good design practices.

When industrial designer F. Eugene Smith was asked by the owners of a used car dealership in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio to help them turn a former gas station into a used car lot he said that he never had a burning desire to design a used car lot, but if they would like to do something better, he would like to help. So he suggested that they should turn it into a park. They agreed.

*Goal: One of the primary goals of the byway management effort is to gradually convert the character of the byway into a more “parkway-like” setting by working with those responsible for managing and maintaining the right of-way in a coordinated manner through the use of appropriate landscape maintenance and management techniques.*





*Figure 4-40: Good Design, Good Business: Before and after construction of the BEEP Car Dealership in Akron, Ohio – the unique design contributed to much higher than expected sales figures*



*Figure 4-41: Removal of billboards that disrupt the highest quality views such as this view at Hessong Bridge Road can be accomplished through amortization coupled with a Tourist Oriented Destination Sign (TODS) program geared especially for rural routes*

If the design worked well enough they might want to franchise it. Smith developed the name, “BEEP” and rewrote the sales agreement in plain English. Their attorney approved.

The old gas station was covered with dark cedar, so that the cars look good in front of it. Trees were planted and the site was landscaped with evergreen materials to screen the less than attractive properties on either side. Lots of flowers were added in baskets and flower beds. Smith designed a square tower to hold the primary identification and below a large square elevated platform was placed on which only one car was displayed. The car was changed every day, sheltered from the rain, sun, and snow. The display car was illuminated more intensely which made it stand out among the other cars. Most car lots still look more like a mall parking lot. People driving by really looked at that car since it is the center of interest and it frequently changed.

The owners originally thought they would sell about 15 automobiles per month. They tried especially hard to find good cars, make them look great and, with mechanics all checked out and with the help of fine landscaping, their figure seemed reasonable. So without pennants or other traditional, but less attractive attention grabbing approaches they had many more sales than a typical lot, and their sales to women actually surprised them. So Instead of about 15 cars per month they sold 25 to 35 and by the end of their first year they had grossed over \$100,000 that they had not estimated or expected.

Good design – good business approaches can work for any of the businesses along US 15.

## Billboards and Off-Premise Signage

According to Federal regulations, no new billboards can be constructed along US 15 since it is part of the National Highway System and it is designated a state scenic byway (designated in 1999). Existing billboards can remain in place, but cannot be rebuilt should they fall down or be removed for any reason. The enforcement of this federal regulation is accomplished through the Maryland State Highway Administration’s review of building permits (undertaken at the District Office)

For those portions of the byway that are not on the National Highway System (connecting routes into towns and the Catoctin Mountain Loop) local government is responsible for regulating construction of new billboards. The removal of existing billboards for these non-National Highway System segments of the byway can be accomplished through a process known as amortization (see definition below). Amortization cannot be used to remove billboards on National Highway System segments.

An amortization process allows for nonconforming signs to remain in place for a sufficient period of time so as to amortize its cost before requiring their removal. In a May 1991 letter addressed to the late Senator John Chaffee of Rhode Island, the Office of the Comptroller General of the United States advised that it had reviewed the constitutionality of the use of amortization in the removal of billboards and concluded that the majority of cases hold that billboard amortization is not violative of the US Constitution. According to the publication *Street Graphics and the Law*, the overwhelming majority of courts hold that amortization is a constitutional technique that does not violate the taking-of-property clause in the US Constitution.

The most critical element in implementing an amortization process is the time frame under which the billboard should be amortized. Local officials should pay close attention to the valuation of billboards. Billboards are considered to be tangible personal property and are taxed each year according to their value. If local officials check the number of permitted locations for a particular company against the tangible personal property tax rolls, they should easily be able to determine whether billboard companies are filing returns and the approximate value per structure (this is the value that is offered).

Local officials should then determine the commercial rates for local billboards. If the commercial rates average \$1,000 per month per sign face, then the gross annual revenue can be expected to run in the area of \$24,000 (for a double-sided billboard). Over a five-year period, the gross revenue may yield \$120,000. If billboard structures have an average value of \$10,000 (or whatever is claimed on the tax return), and given a choice between the alternatives of “cash compensation” or a “five-year amortization,” (and then removing the billboard), the billboard industry would choose the amortization alternative every time. However, local governments are usually unable to come up with the funds to immediately purchase a billboard structure. Billboard companies typically fight the amortization method because they know it is unlikely that the local government will agree to “buy them out” up front.

Some key points to remember:

- That billboards are tangible personal property (not real property).
- That a structure is not actually seized or confiscated, but is simply required to be removed.
- That most billboard structures, or portions of the structures, are movable and reusable.
- That amortization represents a “middle ground” between immediate termination and the indefinite continuance of a nonconforming use.



Figure 4-42: Iowa makes extensive use of its Tourist Oriented Destination Sign Program to dramatically reduce the need for off-premise signs directing travelers to local businesses



Figure 4-43: Example of Vermont TOD sign (top), Vermont's TODS program also includes small scale visitor information kiosks such as this one on Route 7 entering Vermont from New York

- That billboard companies will come out better with a reasonable amortization schedule than they ever would by up-front cash compensation for a sign's value.

In summary, a two-pronged approach is recommended. Prohibit future construction of billboards along the entire route, through the adoption of local ordinances along portions of the route not on the National Highway System (NHS). Then seek removal of existing billboards through cash compensation for NHS routes and through the use of the amortization method with a reasonable time frame to amortize the cost of a billboard on non-NHS sections of the route. National Scenic Byways grant funds are one source of funds for cash compensation to remove existing billboards along NHS routes.

The initial focus of the amortization effort should be placed on those billboards owned by national advertising firms. The advertisement of local businesses along the byway can and should be encouraged through the use of a rural "tourist-oriented destination sign" program or TODS. However, Maryland does not have a program in place. A good state program to emulate is that used by Vermont, a state that banned billboards many years ago. Iowa and Minnesota have TODS Programs that work well also.

Advisory committee members who own property or businesses along the byway have expressed a strong desire for the need to have some kind of sign program that will help byway visitors find their businesses. In addition, retail operations rely upon impulse shopping and use billboards to attract new customers. Using a TODS program has the benefit of providing a roadside sign to alert travelers to upcoming byway related businesses, without detracting from the very view that is attractive to the visitors to begin with. This plan strongly recommends that the County along with other byway communities request a TODS program through their State Legislative and Congressional offices.

### Utility Corridors

Careful pruning and management of utility right-of-ways along the Byway can help to mitigate some of the aesthetic and habitat impacts. The standard pruning interval for many utility companies appears to be five or more years. Pruning more often will create less of a jarring visual impact by taking away fewer large branches shaping tree growth habits away from the wires. Selected removal of trees above a specified height can also help to maintain vegetative cover while limiting disturbance in utility corridors. Limiting herbicide use in areas immediately adjacent to the byway will also help to reduce the visual contrast.



Planting small flowering trees and shrubs along the edge of the right-of-way adds color and variety and softens the harsh straight line edge. In the long-term, this will also help to compete out otherwise invasive species that must be continuously pruned. New shrub layer plantings help to mimic the natural occurring woodland edge while enhancing wildlife values. Many small flowering trees can be safely planted near utility lines. Plant shrubs in masses for greatest effect.

When attempting to landscape under powerlines, consult with the responsible party for a specific right-of-way. In many cases, a simple maintenance agreement can be developed with the utility company to ensure that trees planted are appropriate for use in and around power and other utility lines, and that underground utility lines will not be disturbed. The agreement should also make it clear to the maintenance crews that they do not need to maintain this particular section. Property owners can undertake planting projects on their own properties, taking responsibility to maintain adequate intersection sight distances from their driveways.

## Communication Towers

Communication towers are being proposed and constructed based on the need to transmit an unobstructed signal, often conflicting with scenic resource conservation objectives. Towers need to be programmed, designed, and sited according to the least visual impact possible.

Unfortunately, telecommunication towers require an ability to send signals in an unobstructed straight line. The result is that the preferred sites are usually located on ridgelines. The companies desiring to construct these towers wish to do so at the lowest economic cost, resulting in the construction of a few taller towers, rather than more frequently spaced shorter towers located at tree line, for example. While the tower top needs to have an unobstructed signal, the tower base can and should be placed downslope to minimize visual contrast. The feasibility of using existing structures such as water towers or other utility towers should be examined prior to the construction of any new structures.

For future utility siting issues, whether it is a communication tower, or for a high-voltage or gas transmission line, a simple process can be used to ensure that visual impacts are minimized:

- Identify alternative locations, alternative heights, and/or alternative transmission routes. Encourage the sharing of facilities by service providers (saving installation costs, time, and potential legal fees).



*Figure 4-43: Before and after simulations should be required for all cell towers proposed for visually prominent lands along the byway; simulations such as those above allow plan reviewers to evaluate the potential visual contrast of different tower types*

- Describe the visual characteristics of the project for each alternative (e.g. the height of the tower and clearance required for vegetation).
- Determine, for each alternative, the extent of the geographic area from which the proposed facility can be seen (using digital elevation models from the US Geological Survey and viewshed analysis software).
- Use balloon tests to demonstrate the location of towers. Balloons should be flown at the height of the proposed tower and photographs taken from the most visually sensitive locations (as demonstrated in step 3).
- For areas where there is a high degree of concern for the potential visual impacts, such as a panoramic view, use digital editing to superimpose a photograph of a similar type of tower onto the photograph of the balloon taken from the scenic viewpoint (using the balloon for a scale reference).
- Map the geographic extent of signal strength at three different tower heights to optimize coverage at the lowest possible height.

This approach will provide clear and factual information about both the geographic extent and significance of the visual impacts. The visual impact evaluation should include investigation of utilizing stealth technology, such as placing towers in church steeples, disguised trees, silos, or water towers. By comparing viewshed maps and simulations, the site with the least visual impact can be recommended. If the location or height of the structure cannot be mitigated, a request should be made to use the tower configuration with the least visual contrast possible. The problem with the pine tree camouflage approach that has been used in certain locations, is that the silhouette of the “tree” is often out of scale with the surrounding vegetation. This approach can work if the height of the tower can be lowered to the point where the tower is in scale with its surrounding tree line.

### **Adopt-a-Highway**

An important goal of byway management is to work with civic groups and other volunteer organizations to gain 100% adoption of US 15 and community entrance corridors for litter pick-up through the MSHA Adopt-a-Highway program.

### **Roadside Tree Planting and Landscape**

An important goal of the byway management effort is to develop a comprehensive roadside tree planting program for use in screening undesirable views, traffic calming, and byway beautification efforts.

By planting trees in areas between US 15 and adjoining residential or commercial development, everybody benefits. Trees





Figure 4-44: Before (above) and after (left) simulation showing the potential screening effect of roadside tree planting in Thurmont

are effective at blocking both views and sounds of the highway from residential development. They are also effective at softening the impact of development, allowing development while maintaining a more park-like nature of the byway (Figure 4-44).

For planting within the right-of-way, MSHA strongly encourages the use of native plants where possible. Evergreen trees provide the best sound and visual barrier, but only a few native species are particularly effective. Various native pines and cedars can be used as evergreen screens, mixed with larger deciduous trees. Rather than using just one species, it is recommended that groupings of different species be used to enhance the park-like nature of the byway.

Residential tree planting programs could help reduce the impact of development on the Catoclin Mountain Scenic Byway. By providing incentives for property owners to plant trees on their properties the byway setting will appear more park-like. This sort of program should be prioritized on visually prominent lands such as mountainsides and ridge tops.

Enhancement plantings along the road and right-of-way create visual interest at important points along the corridor, as well as provide weed control and soil stabilization. Native wildflowers are a low maintenance planting alternative, providing color at strategic points. Use colorful plantings to attract drivers' attention at town entries, along steep embankments of bridges, or at important points of interest to visitors. Direct seeding of an annual/perennial wildflower mix will provide years of color in seeded areas.

Existing native wildflowers such as Bachelor Buttons are a spring and summer delight along many parts of the Byway. Some wildflowers (any that respond to deadheading) may also respond well to carefully-timed mowing, allowing plants to repeat bloom if mowing is done before all bloom color is lost.

*Deer management techniques can help reduce the incidence of deer-auto collisions. This will be important in locations where new trees are planted and where existing woodlands are immediately adjacent to the highway. Adequate clear spaces will be necessary between vegetation and the highway so deer will not browse near the highway and increase the likelihood that deer will run into the road. Other possible management techniques include the use of fencing at frequent deer crossings, or the use of vegetation that deer find unpalatable. Refer to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources for more information.*

and plants have gone dormant. Mowing at a height of 4-6 inches will keep weeds from invading wildflower plantings and preserve basal leaves of the wildflower plants allowing them to rejuvenate and bloom again.

The use of wildflowers within non-interstate state-owned right-of-ways has not been extensively examined. Prior to utilizing wildflowers to accomplish roadside conservation and enhancement goals, it is recommended that a test site be developed to determine optimum seed mixtures, mowing regimens, and other maintenance or management requirements.



## Chapter 5: Implementation

In order to successfully achieve the vision and goals laid out for the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway, there is a need for agreement on a clearly defined agenda that includes the identification of those who are responsible for implementing the plan. In addition, gaining designation as a National Scenic Byway requires the establishment of a permanent management entity whose responsibility is to implement the plan. The following describes the considerations and options for how the management entity might be organized and a list of action agenda items that are recommended.

*Goal: Ensuring that the plan moves forward requires that a permanent “management entity” be established to coordinate and implement the corridor plan as it develops.*

### 5.1 Overall considerations

There are several identified needs and programmatic considerations that must be addressed when establishing an action agenda and an organization to implement that agenda:

#### Roles and Responsibilities

One of the most important issues in determining how to implement the plan is to identify the potential administrative and programmatic responsibilities. One person needs to be identified that is capable of moving the byway plan forward. It may not be a full-time job, but at least one-half of a full time equivalent position needs to be dedicated to a person serving as the Byway Leader. Many of the administrative responsibilities can be accomplished by the Byway Leader. If there is a strong byway leader, then many of the programmatic responsibilities can be divided up among existing local and state governments, civic and other volunteer organizations.

### ***Administrative Needs***

The following administrative needs and roles have been identified:

- Byway “keeper” – responsible for leadership and advocacy on behalf of the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway – perhaps expand to “on behalf of the Catoctin Mountains.” If there are multiple “keepers,” they should be geographically distributed, perhaps including one from each town along the byway.
- Pursuit of National Scenic Byway Designation – responsible entity for implementing the plan.
- Coordination with Pennsylvania and Virginia with regard to National Scenic Byway designation.
- Fund-raising in private sector (individuals, businesses, foundations).
- Fund-raising in public sector; ability to accept government grants.
- Record-keeping and grant administration.
- Communication with all stakeholders along the byway with regard to all of the above.

### ***Programmatic Issues***

Along with administrative needs, there are a number of programmatic areas that must be addressed as part of any action plan to implement the byway management strategies. Many of these programmatic areas can and should be addressed, at least for the first 2-5 years of the plan’s implementation within existing agencies and organizations.

### ***Tourism Promotion and Marketing***

The primary responsibility for byway related tourism promotion and marketing should continue to fall within the purview of the Tourism Council of Frederick County. Unlike other Maryland Byways, the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway is unique in that there already are a significant number of destinations and activities– they just need to be promoted and emphasized as byway related experiences.

The Tourism Council of Frederick County is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to promoting and developing tourism in Frederick County. Its mission is to unite and represent individuals, business organizations, governmental entities and other membership groups interested in the Frederick County tourism industry. Additional support for web-related development has been offered by “Emmitsburg.net”, a non-profit internet source for news, events, history, and culture of Northern Frederick and Carroll Counties in Maryland and Southern Adams County in Pennsylvania. Emmitsburg.net has indicated that they would be interested in expanding their service area to include the entire byway.

The priority tourism promotion and marketing actions that are needed to implement the byway management plan include the following:

- Common calendar for Catoctin Mountain communities.
- Unified message, advertising & promotional campaigns including logo and brand development.
- Web development and coordination – own page and links from other web sites.
- Byway specific events development and coordination
- Byway specific product development.
- Coordination with Civil War Trails and Civil War Heritage Area.

### **Stewardship Activities**

Responsibilities for stewardship activities will need to be organized as a multi-pronged approach. Taking better advantage of the County and State programs for Agricultural Land Preservation will require some outreach to farmers along the byway to encourage them to apply for the program. At the same time the criteria for accepting farms into the program may need to be changed to incorporate visually prominent agricultural lands from the County's scenic byways (including both state and nationally designated byways).

Responsibilities for other types of conservation easements for those lands not qualifying for the Agricultural Land Preservation programs will require work by the two land trusts in the area to encourage landowners to voluntarily place conservation easements on lands along the byway. The continued efforts by the National Park Service and Maryland Department of Natural Resources to conserve lands within and adjacent to existing public park and forest lands could also benefit from byway related conservation activities.

Responsibilities for Historic Preservation activities along the byway should continue to be filled within the existing County Historic Preservation Commission (and comparable municipal historic preservation boards or commissions, if applicable).

From a conservation perspective, there is a strong need for someone to speak and advocate on behalf of the interests of the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway. While it may be in the County's and the other municipal government's best interest to promote stewardship along the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway, there are a complex web of other issues that the County and the municipalities must consider in addition to byway conservation. Existing conservation groups and land trusts are the logical responsible parties for this activity.



The priority stewardship actions that are needed to implement the byway management plan include the following:

- Pursuit of funding for conservation projects (primarily conservation easements, tree planting programs along highway and in communities, adopt-a-highway, etc.).
- Coordination with existing agricultural preservation and activities in County.
- Coordination with existing historic preservation activities in County.
- Coordination with the National Park Service's ongoing management planning for C&O Canal and Catoclin Mountain Park.
- Coordination with DNR for ongoing management planning for Cunningham Falls State Park and in taking better advantage of existing state forest management programs for private lands.
- Coordination with ongoing watershed restoration activities within the Upper and Lower Monocacy River Watershed.
- Advocate for byway interests in development related issues (big box retail, large-scale residential, strip highway commercial).

### **Interpretation**

Telling the byway's many stories also will require a coordinated effort among the many existing groups that are already interpreting the rich historical, cultural and natural resource legacy of Frederick County and its environs.

The rich civil war legacy is currently being interpreted by a state, local and civic group partnership focused on developing two Civil War Trails that traverse much of the byway. The Tourism Council has taken the lead on this activity and is the logical group to continue its leadership efforts in developing and coordinating interpretive resources along the Byway.

The National Park Service has been interpreting the rich natural and cultural history of the Catoclin Mountains and the C&O Canal. The Maryland DNR has been interpreting the natural and cultural history of the Catoclin Mountains, especially the Catoclin Furnace.

The Seton Shrine and Mount Saint Mary's College have been interpreting the rich religious history of the area, along with the many historic churches, such as Saint Paul's, that open their doors to curious visitors. Local historic societies also offer a wealth of local knowledge and resources that must be tapped to encourage the development of new and expanded walking tours in byway communities.

Priority actions for interpreting the byway include:

- Byway-wide interpretive plan - Catoctin Mountains theme development and the development of a consistent style and format for interpreting the byway.
- Implement interpretive plan
  - Visitor Center/Welcome Center.
  - Wayfinding.
  - Interpretive Waysides.
  - In-town Walking Tours and Interpretation.
  - "Portable media" (brochures, maps, guides, audiocassettes).
- Coordinate with existing interpretive facilities (NPS, MDNR, Seton Shrine, Civil War Trails, City of Frederick, etc.
- Utilize the Historic Sites Consortium and the Master Docents workshops to develop the interpretive themes and sub themes.
- Reestablish the "Friends" consortium of federal, state, county, and local public levels to develop interpretive themes and sub themes.

### **Transportation and Community Enhancements**

The primary responsibility for advocating for transportation and community-based enhancement activities will most likely need to fall on local governments. All of the recommended roadway related enhancement proposals are already included in and consistent with the existing County Transportation Plan. There is additional need to advocate on behalf of the byway so that these measures are funded and implemented in a logical order and compete with other transportation related projects in the State, especially the safety related proposals for intersections. Priority transportation and community enhancement actions include:

- Attention to maintenance.
- US 15 safety measures.
- Preserve access to tourism related businesses.
- Coordination with MSHA regarding future modifications to US 15 – both major projects and District initiated safety and maintenance (RRR) projects.
- Wayfinding and tourist-oriented destination signs.
- Enhancements to community entrances and linkages to encourage visitors to get off the highway and into the byway communities.

### **Potential Partners**

Based on the wide ranging involvement in the development of the byway management plan, there exists a tremendous potential for the byway to link together a number of local, state, and federal government activities, with business, civic, environmen-

tal, and historic interests in a common community-based effort. Any management entity that is organized to implement the plan must encourage the continued involvement of each of the following key stakeholders:

- County Government.
  - BOCC.
  - Boards and Commissions.
    - Planning Commission.
    - Agriculture Preservation Advisory Board.
    - Historic Preservation Commission.
  - Departments (Planning, Public Works, Economic Development).
- State agencies
  - MDOT/MSHA.
  - MDNR (including State Parks).
  - DBED/OTD.
  - DHCD/MHT.
  - MDP.
- Municipalities and Communities.
  - Frederick.
  - Thurmont.
  - Emmitsburg.
  - Point of Rocks.
  - Lewistown.
  - Catoclin Furnace.
- National Park Service (C&O Canal, Catoclin Mountain Park).
- Tourism Council of Frederick County.
- Land trusts (Carrolton Manor Land Trust, Catoclin Land Trust).
- Business and Civic organizations.
- Heritage area (Civil War Heritage Area).
- Greenway Initiatives (Monocacy River).
- Historic Societies.
- Historical sites and institutions with visitor facilities.

### ***Issues***

There are a number of difficult issues that must be addressed in the final recommendations for a management entity. These include:

- Complexity of transportation and roadway safety issues.
- Growth and development pressure create vulnerability with scenic qualities.
- Lack of available funding and/or financial support – must rely on outside funding.
- Complexity and overlap with Civil War Trails and Heritage Area initiatives.

- Few recent successes in regional and/or intergovernmental cooperation.
- Need for scenic byway advocacy may conflict with governmental role in management.

Based on the nature of the recommended byway actions and the logical agency or citizen volunteers that would be needed to implement those actions, the plan recommends a two-phased approach to establishing a permanent management entity. The first phase involves the continuation of the existing committee, to be called the Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee for a period of up to three years. This committee would then be phased out in favor of a permanent management organization with 501 (c)3 status that would serve in a byway leadership capacity while still continuing to involve local and state government in implementing the various elements of the plan.

## **5.2 Catoctin Mountain Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee**

Frederick County Commissioners would formally appoint an *ad hoc* committee that would include current Byway Committee members and the management committee. (*Ad hoc* simply refers to the committee's lack of status under enabling legislation governing County affairs that prescribe the County's organization of its leadership and roles, not lack of status *per se*.) A modest budget should be attached to this activity, run through one County agency with responsibility for supervising and making expenditures on the group's behalf. Expenditures would include the cost of meetings and an annual report as described below.

The group should be kept as small as possible to minimize administrative and communications complications. Either the Commissioners or the group itself should appoint a chair, perhaps rotating this duty yearly. The chair is the convener and first (but not necessarily last) spokesperson, and should be someone who is comfortable with delegating a great deal of the work (and perhaps someone with access to administrative assistance) and leading and enabling but not dominating conversations among the group.

The coordinating committee would be responsible for the first phase of implementation: pursuing the nomination for national status, applying for the \$25,000 FHWA grant for start-up activities after successful nomination, and undertaking early organizing activities to develop longer term leadership. That leadership may continue under this recommended structure, or it may over time find it advantageous to change to a new arrangement.

Conditions change and evolve, and so it is important that this committee continually evaluate its strengths and weaknesses and the possibilities for change or new alliances. Options for new arrangements are suggested below.

The use of the word “coordinating” should be explicit in the title of this group, or similar wording. One of the advantages of byway management plans is that responsibility for implementation is generally spread across a wide range of parties. The committee should view itself as “governing” with a light hand. The parties directly responsible for key implementation activities must be clearly identified in the plan and they must clearly understand and have embraced these responsibilities. Municipalities, civic organizations, and county agencies are among such parties. So long as coordination and communication takes place, the need for the committee itself to take a hand in implementation can be limited to fully regional initiatives (such as a signage system); administrative pursuits (the nomination, grant application, and grant administration); and communications with bodies beyond Frederick County (Scenic America, MSHA).

Among the committee's early organizing activities should be a means of regular communications among the parties being coordinated. Without such regular communications, it is easy for busy people to lose focus and commitment. This could include a monthly e-mail letter and list serve to keep recipients focused on tasks and commitments; a public annual report reporting on progress; and, perhaps best of all, an annual or biannual meeting of byway parties. The meeting or meetings would allow face-to-face exchanges of ideas, build enthusiasm for common goals, help to hold the implementing parties accountable, and allow informal evaluation of progress. Those attending the meeting could identify additional needs for resources, shifts in management structure, and other aspects of this work that are difficult to predict. The parties attending this meeting might change from time to time, depending on who is working on what. All or a part of the meeting might be open to the public with an outside speaker brought in to add to the mix. Although there is work involved in putting on such meetings, most of those involved benefit from not having to attend more frequent meetings.

The long-term tasks of building leadership to take over from the early organizers and building a constituency are important to keep in mind in all organizing activities. Although the formal appointment by the County Commissioners is desirable to provide a level of authority for the coordinating committee, a certain amount of fluidity in the committee's participation is desirable. The committee should encourage others to attend its meetings as appropriate with an eye to developing new leaders. Inviting the general public to the general meetings described above can help to develop a constituency.



To help cement the committee's authority, develop a constituency, and provide an additional means of communication, the committee should have a regular place on the County Commissioner's agenda for its regular meetings. This might be every other month or quarterly, but no less (and no more – monthly is too much for a long-term activity unless there is something important to report).

In addition, the committee should pay attention to how it relates to the press. It is recommended that press releases for the committee's activities should come through the County Commissioners and not directly from the committee to the press. Committee members should make a point of briefing the press directly, however, as appropriate, as long it is made clear that the committee's authority stems from its position as an appointed *ad hoc* advisory body.

Advantages:

- Can be undertaken immediately.
- Confers authority from County Commissioners.
- Maintains focus on the single agenda of creating the byway by implementing the plan.
- Maintains focus within Frederick County.
- County Commissioners can provide seed funding for committee's activities.
- Can be viewed as temporary, allowing the best long-term opportunity for management structure to evolve from within or outside this group.

Disadvantages:

- Informal status; Commissioners could rescind the group's status at any time.
- Government status may not be as attractive to some groups with responsibilities for implementation.
- Government status may attract property rights arguments that could hamper the group's activities.

### **5.3 Other Possible Long Term Options**

#### **A committee of the Civil War Heritage Area:**

The function of the CMSB could be subsumed under the state Civil War Heritage Area's management entity (CWAH).

Advantages:

- Allows an identifiable source of some or possibly all matching funding for the \$25,000 scenic byway operational grant through use of the \$50,000 operational grant for heritage areas (that's the upper limit).
- Offers possibilities for alliances with other interested organizations.
- Similar interests among all representatives.

Disadvantages:

- CMSB is one-county, CWHHA is three-county.
- \$50,000 matching funds should cover entire three-county area, therefore a full \$25,000 should not be considered available. It would be hard to track use of such funds under this arrangement.
- CWHHA has its own organizational challenges in multiple jurisdictions, different state program, different organizational imperatives (e.g., Civil War interpretive theme and focus, regional promotion of Civil War heritage tourism), and start-up. All of these challenges would probably be worked out and/or clearly apparent before the CMSB would become a part of CWHHA.
- Confers little power to make necessary changes, dilutes what responsibility the County might take.

Comments:

CMSB should be sure to be represented on the CWHHA management entity in some fashion, informal or formal.

It might be possible to undertake a contract with the CWHHA to take over management of the CMSB – this would have the benefit of clarifying when and how spending and other organizational attention is to be given to the byway exclusively.

### **An alliance under the “Journey through Hallowed Ground” (JTHG) concept:**

Advantages:

- Few advantages. Conditions can change, of course. This could confer more fund-raising credibility among donors.

Disadvantages:

- The organizational potential here is only a concept – no real alliance appears to exist and the two large non-profits have not taken action to make this a priority on their own agendas.
- Thematic emphasis on Civil War is limiting.
- Confers little power to make necessary changes, dilutes what responsibility the County might take.

## **Create a new County-based organization with a broader agenda than the CMSB:**

### Advantages:

- The broader agenda is more in regional coverage than in mission & goals, which would be less problematic than in the other two options.
- County focus also is less problematic, more likely to draw leadership with good understanding of the CMSB portion of the new organization's mission.
- Official status gives the organization independence and ability to raise private (and government) funding.

### Disadvantages:

- The "conservancy" model works best here, but has its limits – an organization with a broader mission beyond land trust action, however, has fewer models in the state.
- Start-up. Much time in the beginning is required to attend to administrative details: gaining corporate and nonprofit status, making up bylaws, naming directors.

### Comments:

It is easy to see how the CMSB coordinating committee could evolve in this direction given the right inclinations and experience shared among the committee representatives. Representatives should be carefully vetted to make sure that they are interested in tourism and interpretation and understand the strategic benefits of pursuing these (building a broader constituency).

## **5.4 Funding:**

Finding matching funds for the first (and possibly continuing) operational funding of \$25,000 available through federal programs is a challenge. County and municipal budgets in Maryland are going to be very slim in the coming budget year, but this must be pursued nevertheless. A 20% match must be seen as an investment in getting ready for the next economic expansion. The plan is being completed at the point that county and municipal employees are putting together their first-draft budgets, around November; they are the ones who should consider amounts and the budget categories into which such funding could be placed.

Other potential sources for the organizational match could come from the Tourism Council, from community-based foundations, or from the business and civic group contributions.

## **Funding Opportunities**

Although the budgets of most local governments including Frederick County along with Frederick, Thurmont, and Emmitsburg are significantly constrained as this plan is being finalized, there are several key funding opportunities that should not be passed up.

Of particular importance is the need to establish community-based partnerships that meet both byway management and community needs goals. Based on the range of projects identified as part of the byway management planning effort, it appears that there are four general areas of funding needs that are priorities for both the byway and the communities that are being served:

- Community-based Leadership Opportunities.
- Tourism/Economic Development.
- Conservation of Farms and Forests.
- Transportation and Community Enhancement.

## **Community-based Leadership**

Byway leadership development presents an excellent opportunity for Frederick County citizens with an interest in community development, leadership, and volunteer coordination to gain some experience in these important areas.

In January of 2003, the Frederick County's Board of County Commissioners expressed a concern about the lack of citizen interest in volunteering for some of the many Boards and Commissions open to County residents. One such obstacle to increased participation in County government is the lack of entry level leadership opportunities. Certainly one of the benefits of byway organizing and leadership is that it represents an excellent chance for an individual to gain some leadership experience on a community-based project with a broad array of activities. For example, someone with computer skills could help to build and implement web pages. Someone who has organized PTA fund drives could assist with volunteer coordination. Someone who has retired from the business world could help organize and start a small non-profit organization with 501 c(3) status.

The initial impetus for byway leadership can come from the FHWA Scenic Byway Program. Under the previous TEA-21 legislation, the Scenic Byway Program offered \$25,000 byway leadership and organizing grants. Many byway organizations have been formed and developed using these funds. Some groups have hired part-time staff to pursue and administer grants. The Community Foundation is another possible source of start-up funding.

### ***Tourism/Economic Development***

Funding opportunities for tourism and economic development related projects include FHWA's Scenic Byway Program grants. These grants require a 20% match. A grant for community wayfinding has already been submitted for Fiscal Year 2004.

A second source of funding for rural areas includes the USDA's RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (RCDI). Congress appropriated approximately \$6 million in Fiscal Year 2003 for the Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI). The purpose of this initiative is to provide a program of technical assistance to recipients to develop or increase their capacity to undertake projects in the areas of housing, community facilities, and community and economic development in rural areas. The RCDI grant has a dollar-for-dollar matching funds (cash) requirement. Additional rural economic development programs are excellent sources of small sized grants to assist in tourism-related economic development activities.

### ***Conservation of Farms and Forests***

Funds for voluntary private conservation activities can come from the Scenic Byway Program as long as the use of those funds apply to lands that are accessible from the byway (visual accessibility is acceptable). The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Program and Rural Legacy Program provide state funding in this area.

USDA provides funds through its state and private forestry programs (MDNR administers this program) that should be better utilized to promote forest stewardship.

Emergency revolving funds are available for short term financing required for some conservation actions from many national nonprofit organizations such as the Conservation Fund, especially in areas adjacent to units of the National Park Service.

Additional funding assistance for voluntary conservation easements has been available in the past from several federal programs of note:

- Land and Water Conservation Fund: Created by Congress in 1964, the *Land and Water Conservation Fund* (LWCF) provides money to federal, state and local governments to purchase land, water and wetlands for the benefit of all Americans. The LWCF program provides matching grants to States and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The program is intended to create and maintain a nationwide legacy of high quality recreation areas and facilities and to stimulate non-federal investments in the protection and maintenance of recreation resources across the United States.



- **North American Wetland Conservation Act:** These matching grants can be used to fund wetlands conservation projects in the US, Canada, and Mexico. The Standard Grants range from \$50,000 to \$1 million; applications for the Small Grants program are due in December. The program helps to fund on-the-ground projects for the protection, restoration, or enhancement of wetland habitats for the purpose of protecting the wetland/upland habitats on which waterfowl and other migratory birds in North America depend. Public or private, profit or nonprofit entities or individuals establishing public-private sector partnerships are eligible.
- **National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grants:** The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation conserves healthy populations of fish, wildlife and plants, on land and in the sea, through creative and respectful partnerships, sustainable solutions, and better education. Provides grants to organizations working on a local level to protect and improve watersheds in the Chesapeake Bay basin, while building citizen-based stewardship.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is working to expand and strengthen partnerships with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to support innovative and effective conservation and stewardship of our country's private lands. The goal of the partnership is to support high quality projects that engage private landowners, primarily farmers and ranchers, in the conservation and enhancement of fish and wildlife and natural resources on their lands. The NRCS has a long and established history of providing voluntary assistance to landowners for natural resource management.

- **Wetlands Reserve Program:** The Wetlands Reserve Program is a voluntary program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their properties. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical and financial support to help landowners with their wetland restoration efforts. The NRCS goal is to achieve the greatest wetland functions and values, along with optimum wildlife habitat, on every acre enrolled in the program. This program offers landowners an opportunity to establish long-term conservation and wildlife practices and protection.
- **Safe Drinking Water Act:** In the past funds have been used for conservation easements. This may be especially appropriate relative to the City of Frederick Water Supply.

- Farm Bill Conservation Easement Program: Conservation easements are an eligible activity in the 2002 Farm Bill.
- Transportation and Community Enhancement: Perhaps the most popular program is the TEA-21 program that has funded enhancement projects throughout the past 12 years. The new Transportation Bill is very likely to reauthorize this program as of the date of this writing.

Additional sources of funding include:

- Community Development Block Grant Program - provides grants to local government for housing, public facility and economic development activity that predominantly benefits low and moderate income persons.
- Community Legacy Program - an ongoing program that provides financial assistance to help existing communities develop comprehensive revitalization plans and implement projects targeted at reducing sprawl and enhancing community life for businesses and residents.

