



HEART OF CHESAPEAKE COUNTRY HERITAGE AREA

Master Plan Update:
Cultural Heritage Tourism: FY 2019-2024

STRATEGIC PLAN - 8/24/18

HERITAGE TOURISM

Travel to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historic, and natural resources.

- The National Trust for Historic Preservation

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*About this time, the custom arose of referring
to the Eastern Shore with capital letters,
as if it were a special place;
this tribute was never paid the western shore.*

- James A. Michener, Chesapeake

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Since the Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area was established in 2002, Dorchester County has witnessed a stream of heritage tourism landmarks. A former department store becomes a thriving center of visual and performing art (2008). Preservationists partner with community to purchase and restore Handsell House and create a 16th-century Indian village (2009). A replica of the Choptank River Lighthouse lands at Long Wharf (2012). Two friends open their craft brewery in a former pool hall, creating a “locavore” magnet for thousands of millennials (2013). And the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center, celebrating the life and legacy of Harriet Tubman, opens, shattering projected attendance records (2017).

As Dorchester’s tourism economy evolved, stakeholders and staff turned to the Heritage Area Management Plan for guidance. Developed over five years (1996-2001), it not only cataloged the county’s vast historic, recreational and cultural assets, but laid out a vision to develop Dorchester’s heritage economy along seven select themes: Agricultural Life; Architecture and Artifacts; Dorchester Families and Traditions; Harriet Tubman and African American History; Maritime Villages, Trades, and Life; Outdoor Adventure: Chesapeake Landscapes and Waterscapes; and Native American Heritage. Richly detailed, the comprehensive plan provides a blueprint to build a strong foundation for Dorchester’s nascent tourism industry. Dorchester’s original 10-Year Management Plan was subsequently updated for FY 2013-FY 2018.

While Dorchester’s progress between 2002 and 2018 has been significant – even striking – vast changes in technology and the economy, coupled with emerging lifestyle trends, have fundamentally altered the travel landscape, none more so than the emergence of the “Internet of Things” as travelers now plan, book, and purchase from the palm of their hand. Reviews and photos of places and events are shared in real time, driving traffic and decisions. User-generated content shared across multiple platforms has replaced traditional guidebooks.

Never a community to “go with the flow,” the county’s tourism leadership embraced the opportunity to return to the original plan to “take stock of progress; align actions and priorities with opportunities; canvass community stakeholders for insight and ideas; and identify existing/emerging threats to the heritage tourism landscape.”

Planning Process Objectives

In Spring 2018, the Heart of the Chesapeake Country Heritage Area board and staff launched a planning process to develop a new five-year plan. Key to this effort was community outreach; industry stakeholders and county residents were invited to participate in the planning and provide their perspective and experiences.

To facilitate the audit, we returned to the master plan and asked:

- Are the original themes still meaningful and relevant?
- What did we successfully accomplish? Where have there been setbacks?
- How has the landscape changed and what impact or opportunities does that present?
- What heritage assets have been lost? Which ones are threatened and need protection? What heritage tourism assets have growth opportunities?
- Can we identify opportunities for partnerships, product development, promotion or policies that will enhance the visitor experience and reap economic benefits?
- What are the unmet visitor/heritage traveler needs? Are these economic development opportunities?
- Is there a need to expand or diversify accommodations? If so, where and what are the needs?
- How can we further leverage the county's siren call of 'water moves us'?

Key Findings: Opportunities, Challenges & Choices

During the outreach and planning process, water literally rose to the surface as one of the strongest opportunities – and challenges – facing Dorchester's tourism economy. While there is crossover between the different findings outlined in Section II of this report, they are grounded in eight categories:

1. Lure of the Water
2. The Great Outdoors
3. The Next Generation
4. Preserving Places
5. African American History & Culture in the 20th Century
6. Arts & Entertainment
7. Agro- & Culinary Tourism
8. A Rising Tide – The Environment

II. KEY FINDINGS: OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

The Lure of the Water

Dorchester's maritime history, culture and recreation continue to play a significant role in the tourism economy. From the affordable and plentiful boat ramps and marinas, to its deep-water port, open waterways and special events, it is the county's strongest natural asset.

The water – and waterfront assets – have room for sustainable growth from a product development, visitor experience and marketing perspective. The Choptank River Lighthouse has been a tremendous addition to Cambridge's waterfront, and developing additional maritime heritage assets would enhance visitors' waterfront experiences. There continues to be strong support for increased on-water access throughout the county and, specifically, to and around Cambridge from the creek, Sailwinds Park and the public marina.

Bold ideas included: Creating a master planning partnership with Richardson/Ruark (and Yacht Maintenance) for a working shipyard campus; expanding the number of waterfront restaurants (see below); pursuing a water taxi system; exploring aquaculture tours; identifying or assisting existing river outfitters; and developing crab and oyster trails/museum/shop.

The lure of the water also recognizes that Dorchester is well positioned to embrace an emerging role as the epicenter for Chesapeake – and river - cruising. Adding to the established Choptank River boat cruises and skipjack sails, Cambridge's deep waters were instrumental in making it a port of call for American Cruise Lines. Yacht Maintenance anticipates quadrupling the number of large scale commercial ships serviced by 2019. Pleasure boat owners and anglers are lured by free public ramps, affordable marinas and uncrowded waterways. With an established yacht club and enhanced infrastructure at Long Wharf and Sailwinds, the county is well poised to package and promote its heritage as the Chesapeake's best cruising destination.

Further suggestions included development of immersive and interpretive activities for families or children along the county's waterfronts. We also see opportunities throughout the county to expand boating, tours and recreation along by partnering with organizations such as the Maryland Park Service and ShoreRivers, as well as with private businesses.

Lastly – and this crosses over with the section on Agro-/Culinary Tourism – for a county with growing culinary assets and a rich history of food and seafood production, there are relatively few waterfront restaurants or crab houses. Given Dorchester's growing identity as a “dining destination,” there is much interest in seeing seafood restaurants that honor our waterman/agriculture heritage – crab houses, oyster bars, farm stands – open here.

The Great Outdoors

Dorchester remains a magnet for outdoor recreation enthusiasts. Supported by the development and promotion of pedal and paddle trails, and landing the Mid-Atlantic's only IRONMAN triathlon, the county has greatly increased the number and nature of people visiting for outdoor recreation. Birding, biking, paddling, fishing and hunting remain top activities.

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge continues to attract visitors from across the world and the new visitor center elevated the refuge's facilities. For generations, Dorchester's outdoor recreation heritage has been one of the county's most ingrained calling cards. As duck and deer hunters fill the woods during the fall and winter, so too do anglers descend on county waterways during "rock season." For both residents and recreational visitors, Dorchester's connection to the outdoor landscape is palpable.

To support exceptional visitor experiences, the county should cultivate accommodations aimed at the outdoor traveler. RV parks, "glamping," and waterfront campgrounds should be explored. There are opportunities to enhance and expand the existing park system. The opening of Cannery Park and development of the county's first rail trail will be an important link in expanding our outdoor recreation heritage assets. The county's master plan to enhance the park system is another important opportunity to address the suggestions emanating from the planning process. Parks throughout the county, including those adjacent to marinas and boat ramps, provide platforms to improve infrastructure and the visitor experience.

Outdoor recreational assets geared for families and children, such as the planned Cannery Park, are also important for Dorchester's tourism economy. A children's museum is a concept that continues to attract support. Where compatible, partnerships aligning heritage, recreation and youth activities will be incorporated into the five-year action plan.

The Next Generation

We need to empower our young people for the future. One issue facing Dorchester even more so than in 2002 is the loss of institutional knowledge and people able to keep history alive. Volunteer-driven organizations do not have the capacity or people to serve the critical roles of docent, caretaker and guide. Interpretive staff are vital to our mission as an organization and values as a community.

As special events and programs, such as Reflections on Pine, seek to engage all community – especially youth and those born in subsequent years – with the county's civil rights struggle, it is vital to find new ways of connecting with future stewards and storytellers. Over the next five years, we will work on building capacity for our heritage organizations to recruit, train and place a new generation of preservationists and interpreters. Heritage attractions targeted in these initiatives include the Stanley Institute, Bucktown General Store, Handsell House and Spocott Village.

Preserving Places

Preserving sense of place is arguably the single most important role that heritage tourism plays in Dorchester County. The outreach process underscored the community's concern that more proactive work is needed to make up for lost and disappearing places.

Hanging in the balance are projects and places both under development -- Cannery Park, Hearn Building, etc. – and in the queue. Dorchester still has good inventory of historically and culturally significant buildings but would benefit from a stronger, coordinated, cross-agency approach. Creating strategies to identify, prioritize and resource both stable and stressed projects before they succumb to environmental, economic or natural disaster are critical for heritage tourism. The county can and is playing a significant role in this regard. For example, former Governor Holliday Hicks' home is now owned by the county, and a team of preservation and community leaders are developing a preservation and interpretation plan. Steps are being taken to preserve and provide interpretation for an outbuilding thought to be a former slave cabin, located in Cambridge's historic district.

In addition to the more visible or “grand” architectural buildings that are disappearing, there are farm structures, processing plants, houses of worship, downtown buildings and country stores that are facing a similar fate. Thanks to efforts by residents, business owners and developers, strides are being made. But more work remains. Dorchester County's efforts to remove delinquent tax properties and assume ownership of historically significant buildings like Holliday-Hicks are creating new economic opportunities. The five-year plan should lay out specific action steps to leverage the momentum and harness community interest.

African-American History & Culture

In partnership with the community, non-profit and government organizations, Dorchester made incredible strides developing an interpretive program honoring Harriet Tubman's life and legacy. But the county has a second, distinct heritage theme ready for development, promotion, and preservation: African-American history and culture in the 20th century.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2012, the Pine Street Historic District recognizes the rich cultural, economic and empowerment history of Cambridge in the 1900s. While - as with many of Dorchester's heritage themes – there is natural overlap into multiple areas. The contributions and history of this period are distinct from that of Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad.

Evidenced by Cambridge's commemoration of community, change and civil rights in 2017, *Reflections on Pine* opened a deeper conversation underscoring the opportunities for partnerships, promotion, and economic development. The unveiling of the Reflections mural visible to millions of people driving Route 50 boldly illustrates this more recent heritage. A new Groove City Culture Fest in August 2018 exemplifies prospective partnerships. It is important that the action plan support initiatives that further stewardship of the African-American experience. For example, the goals and objectives provide for capacity building initiatives that could support the Stanley Institute with an interpretive guide program.

Another key heritage initiative on the horizon is the ambitious Maces Lane High School African-American Interpretive Planning project. Envisioned as both a museum and a center of commerce and hospitality, it is currently taking shape. Recognizing the past, the project focuses on developing the former Maces Lane High School for use as a community facility, including a museum dedicated to the history of African-American education in Dorchester County.

Arts & Entertainment

Cambridge's A&E district was certified 15 years ago. Since then, the Dorchester Center for the Arts' expanded to a former furniture store on High Street in 2008 and opened a second floor

performance space in 2013, which provided Cambridge with an anchor tenant in its developing district. Galleries, including the Main Street cooperative, Joie de Vivre and 447, were early pioneers. The September Showcase and plein air competitions helped draw visual artists and arts admirers to town.

The arts are a powerful magnet – and mirror – for Dorchester’s heritage. The continued development of 447 has created a new space for performing arts and expanded the arts scene with theater, music and film events. WHCP’s move into a larger building on Race Street not only filled a long vacant space, but provided a new venue for live music and the “radio” arts. New indie retailers and galleries are offering artisan/craft classes and hosting guest artists. And Groove Fest, the revamped, end-of-season festival, is working to highlight Cambridge’s musical heritage.

A new “Groove City” children’s theater is under development in partnership with 447. The award-winning ABM Dancing Divas and Eastern Shore Dance Academy have enhanced the performing arts. The ACT theater group produced and performed musical theater shows at 447, which also hosted events like the “Wild and Scenic Film Festival.”

Given the growth and development of the arts in Cambridge since 2002, we are recommending that we expand on that success and adopting “Arts & Entertainment in Dorchester County” as a new heritage theme well suited to support the vision and goals of this plan. The action plan should identify and support the furtherance of A&E in all of Dorchester.

Agro-Tourism & Culinary Tourism

The opening of Layton’s Chance Tasting Room in 2008 marked the county’s first (and at this time only) winery. Coupled with the growth of Emily’s Produce and Breckenridge Adventures, at least three significant agro-tourism businesses have opened in Dorchester since 2002.

Dorchester’s agricultural heritage, combined with the continued interest in locally produced food, paves the way for the county to embrace a second, two-pronged tourism theme: Agro-tourism and Culinary Tourism. The development and promotion of such initiatives – including oyster/crab trails and beer/wine – have been encouraged by statewide organizations and businesses such as Preservation Maryland, the state office of tourism, Grow & Fortify and Shore Craft Beer. They recognize that these initiatives leverage an enduring reason people travel: Food.

When the master plan was adopted in 2002, the idea of Dorchester County as a dining destination was not part of the vision. Now Cambridge is a magnet for new restaurants, and there are literally dozens of sit-down restaurants within a two-mile radius of downtown. Bistro Poplar brought French cuisine to town in 2008. The Cambridge Eateries opened three restaurants in a three-block stretch. RAR’s ascent has catapulted Dorchester on the map with craft beer lovers. All of these new enterprises complement the successes of such icon establishments as Old Salty’s in Fishing Creek and Suicide Bridge in Hurlock. As wine bars and more restaurants expand, open or move into the county, a critical mass evolved.

Throughout the planning process, the tourism impact of the burgeoning food and street festival scene, including the role restaurants have had in preserving many historically significant buildings, was a recurring theme and topic of conversation.

Developing agro-tourism infrastructure has the added benefit of helping to maintain and protect Dorchester’s rural landscape. Suggestions aligned with an agro-tourism theme included: Working farm stays; development of “rustic” wedding venues/event spaces; vacation rentals; and value-

added destination farms. Similarly, ideas to enhance the county's new identity as a food destination included walking food tours, cooking classes, and farm/river-to-kitchen tours. Culinary tourism is defined as the cultural, social and economic practices related to production and consumption of food. Food has long been at the heart of Dorchester's economy. Coupled with the emergence of a "foodie" culture and local food movement, Dorchester offers prime prospects for product development, stewardship and partnerships in the agro-tourism and culinary tourism sector.

A Rising Tide - The Environment and Ecotourism

As pervasive as water is to Dorchester's heritage, so too was there a siren call to address the environmental threats to the county's lower-lying waterfront areas. At the intersection of historic preservation and environmental mitigation lie the stories, structures and symbols of a vanishing landscape.

The boldest idea emerging from the outreach and planning was the concept to recreate a living village by moving and preservation at-risk and representative structures to higher ground. (Precedents for living village preservation include historic Williamsburg, VA; Furnace Town Living Heritage Museum, Snow Hill, MD; St. Mary's City, MD; and the Zuiderzee Museum in the Netherlands.)

A recurring recommendation in conversations of high tides and disappearing landscapes was to make Dorchester a center for climate change study. For heritage tourism, the development of "eco-tourism" events (conferences, tours, "volun-tourism," etc.) in partnership with academic, government and nonprofit organizations presents an opportunity to adopt a related but distinct new heritage theme: The Environment.

We recommend looking to Dorchester's hazard mitigation plan to identify opportunities, resources and partnerships for development, preservation and/or interpretation.

III. HERITAGE TOURISM MANAGEMENT PLAN: OVERVIEW & THEMES

Overview

Dorchester County is recognized as a place where culture, recreation, quality of life, and economy are intricately connected. The county's rich history runs deep on land, and in water. From the first Native Americans and earliest colonial settlers to the enslaved peoples who forged paths of faith and freedom along the Underground Railroad to generations who worked the land and water, Dorchester's landscapes reflect rich stories of our forebears.

Fifteen years after the development of the Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area, we recognize that quality of life and economic prosperity are synonymous. The successful development, preservation and/or promotion of unique assets in this time have served as an economic engine, employer and entrepreneurial opportunity for Dorchester residents and attracted literally millions of regional and international visitors to our communities. We recognize that our residents – landowners, watermen, preservationists, shopkeepers and educators – are all stewards and stakeholders in this vast landscape and history.

Background

The Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area Tourism Management Plan - initiated in 1996 and completed in 2002 - resulted in Dorchester County being certified as a state heritage area. The goals, framework and strategies detailed in the original plan guided the activities, initiatives and resource deployment for 15 years. With much preservation and progress in hand, it was time to assess accomplishments and activities; identify and leverage opportunities; expand citizen and stakeholder participation; and develop a compelling and actionable plan for adoption by partners, funders, stakeholders and residents.

Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area: Themes

The original plan was organized around seven thematic narratives:

1. Harriet Tubman and the Eastern Shore African-American History
2. Chesapeake Landscapes and Outdoor Adventures
3. Working Waterfront Villages
4. Agricultural Life
5. Dorchester Families & Traditions
6. American Indian Heritage
7. Dorchester History, Architecture & Artifacts

The planning and outreach process confirmed that these themes are as relevant and resonant today as they were in 2002. However, it also revealed two additional themes for consideration

1. Arts, Artists & Entertainment
2. The Environment

Recognizing the enduring significance of the original themes, while acknowledging the importance of incorporating contemporary themes, we are adopting nine themes with the new strategic plan. The eight opportunities and challenges describe in the Key Findings in Section II of this document are reflected in each of the following nine themes, and some apply to more than one theme. In alphabetical order, the nine themes are:

- Agricultural Life
- Arts, Artists & Entertainment
- Dorchester Families & Traditions
- Dorchester History, Architecture & Artifacts
- The Environment
- Harriet Tubman and the Eastern Shore African-American History
- Maritime Villages, Trades and Life
- Native American Heritage
- Outdoor Adventure: Chesapeake Landscapes and Waterscapes

Organization & Oversight

The Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area is a program of the Dorchester County Office of Tourism, under the leadership of the Tourism Director. The Heritage Area Manager serves as the management plan liaison and coordinator of the HCCHA. A 13-member board provides strategic oversight and direction.

IV. VISION / MISSION / GOALS / OBJECTIVES (FY 2019)

Vision

To improve lives, protect places and cultivate community by maximizing the economic, environmental, cultural and recreational opportunities and benefits of heritage tourism in Dorchester County.

Mission

As one of the Maryland Heritage Area Authority's 13 regions designated as Certified Heritage Areas, the Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area:

1. Leverages public and private partnerships to assist individuals, organizations and government entities protect, preserve and promote Dorchester County's unique historic, cultural and natural resources.
2. Broadens and deepens the beneficial effect of heritage tourism on the local economy through advocacy, interpretation and preservation that enhances assets and people's awareness, understanding and appreciation of those assets.

Goals & Objectives

- I. Enhance Heritage Resources
 - a. Create linkages to foster sustainable tourism organizations, operations and businesses, including the capacity and resources of Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area.
 - b. Anticipate, manage, develop and deliver exceptional visitor experiences that inspire people to return.
 - c. Work with municipal leaders and planning and recreation officials to enhance parks amenities and infrastructure.
 - d. Elevate the capacity for individuals and organizations to meet the needs of today's traveler (experiences, accommodations, marketing).
 - e. Harness the growth in heritage travelers using rental accommodations and RVs through infrastructure, marketing and visitor service strategies.
- II. Raise Visibility
 - a. Leverage technology to create, amplify, customize and promote thematic itineraries and experiences geared for target audiences and interests.
 - b. Communicate the economic and community benefits of heritage assets and preservation to residents and decision makers through outreach and promotion of local programs.

III. Strive for Compatible Economic Redevelopment

- a. Create economic development and entrepreneurial linkages by proactively connecting individuals and organizations with opportunities to create and maintain sustainable heritage tourism businesses, products and assets.
- b. Identify unmet visitor and tourism needs that provide individuals and/or organizations with business development opportunities
- c. Proactively seek and identify services and suppliers that support heritage tourism. Broker interest and opportunities.

IV. Practice Stewardship

- a. Elevate the preservation, development and promotion of Dorchester's maritime, marine and water assets for the enjoyment by residents and visitors.
- b. Advocate for and support the protection and preservation of historically and culturally significant buildings and sites.
- c. Position Dorchester as a center of environmental and ecotourism experiences in the mid-Atlantic.
- d. Leverage the climate change and hazard mitigation conversation to create engagement and preservation opportunities for visitors, residents and conservationists.
- e. Identify and advocate for the preservation of threatened and vanishing places, practices and stories.

Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area

Strategic Plan: Action Steps

Goal	Objective	Action	Theme
I. Enhance Heritage Resources	a. Create linkages to foster sustainable tourism organizations, operations and businesses, including the capacity and resources of Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area.	1. Create a pilot partnership program to encourage networking, collaboration and support among non-profits, organizations and municipalities.	All: • Agricultural Life (AG) • Arts, Artists & Entertainment (AE) • Dorchester Families & Traditions (FAM) • Dorchester History, Architecture & Artifacts (HIS) • The Environment (EN) • Harriet Tubman & the Eastern Shore African-American History (HT) • Maritime Villages, Trades & Life (MV) • Native American Heritage (NA) • Outdoor Adventure: Chesapeake Landscapes and Watercape (OUT)
I. Enhance Heritage Resources	a. Create linkages to foster sustainable tourism organizations, operations and businesses, including the capacity and resources of Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area	2. Work with Economic Development offices to promote business development opportunities, services and suppliers that support heritage tourism, such as antique stores.	OUT, MV, AG, HIS, AE, EN
I. Enhance Heritage Resources	b. Anticipate, manage, develop and deliver exceptional visitor experiences that inspire people to return.	1. Implement a formal volunteer service program for youth to provide docents, guides and interpretative staff at heritage sites such as Stanley Institute, Bucktown General Store, Handsell House and Spocott Village.	HT, MV, AG, FAM, NA, HIS
I. Enhance Heritage Resources	b. Anticipate, manage, develop and deliver exceptional visitor experiences that inspire people to return.	2. Leverage technology to create and elevate the user experience with self-guided audio tours and “Guide by Cell” types of itineraries.	HT, MV, NA, HIS

Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area

Strategic Plan: Action Steps

Goal	Objective	Action	Theme
I. Enhance Heritage Resources	b. Anticipate, manage, develop and deliver exceptional visitor experiences that inspire people to return.	3. Continue development of interpretive and identification signage (identify specific opportunities, i.e., fishing piers, crab houses, general stores, new heritage sites, etc.)	HT, OUT, MV, NA, HIS, EN
I. Enhance Heritage Resources	c. Work with municipal leaders and planning and recreation officials to enhance parks, amenities and infrastructure.	1. Work with Parks & Recreation to improve water access sites.	FAM, OUT
I. Enhance Heritage Resources	c. Work with municipal leaders and planning and recreation officials to enhance parks, amenities and infrastructure.	2. Work with Parks & Recreation on inventory of park assets, noting opportunities for promotion of local history or heritage.	FAM, OUT, HIS
I. Enhance Heritage Resources	d. Elevate the capacity for individuals and organizations to meet the needs of today's traveler (experiences, accommodations, marketing).	1. Support development of waterfront and farm wedding and special event venues.	OUT, AE
I. Enhance Heritage Resources	e. Harness the growth in heritage travelers using rental accommodations and RVs through infrastructure, marketing and visitor service strategies.	1. Support development of camping and RV sites and facilities in Dorchester, and promote Dorchester as an "added night" on RV travelers' itineraries.	OUT, EN
I. Enhance Heritage Resources	e. Harness the growth in heritage travelers using rental accommodations and RVs through infrastructure, marketing and visitor service strategies.	2. Develop a workshop program to help homeowners elevate their capacity to operate vacation rentals, inns, B&Bs, or hostel properties.	OUT, MV, FAM
II. Raise Visibility	a. Leverage technology to create, amplify, customize and promote thematic itineraries and experiences geared for target audiences and interests.	1. Refine messaging and identify opportunities to promote Dorchester as one of the most accessible, affordable and authentic boating experiences on the Chesapeake.	OUT, MV
II. Raise Visibility	a. Leverage technology to create, amplify, customize and promote thematic itineraries and experiences geared for target audiences and interests.	2. Assist in raising the visibility of small towns and villages, such as Church Creek, East New Market, Hurlock, Secretary and Vienna.	OUT, MV

Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area

Strategic Plan: Action Steps

Goal	Objective	Action	Theme
II. Raise Visibility	a. Leverage technology to create, amplify, customize and promote thematic itineraries and experiences geared for target audiences and interests.	3. Work with tourism and marketing partners to communication about all products that are available in Dorchester.	AG, AE, FAM, HIS, EN, HT, MV, NA, OUT
II. Raise Visibility	a. Leverage technology to create, amplify, customize and promote thematic itineraries and experiences geared for target audiences and interests.	4. Design, print and make available digitally guides to promote fishing, boating and cycling.	EN, HT, MV, NA, OUT
II. Raise Visibility	b. Communicate the economic and community benefits of heritage assets and preservation to residents and decision makers through outreach and promotion of local programs.	1. Create and implement outreach plans to promote local programs to Dorchester County residents (such as Bayly House and Smithsonian <i>Water/Ways</i>)	FAM, HIS, AE, HT, MV, NA
II. Raise Visibility	b. Communicate the economic and community benefits of heritage assets and preservation to residents and decision makers through outreach and promotion of local programs.	2. Expand communications products, such as the <i>Insider</i> newsletter, to reach broader audiences and share news about heritage activities, programs and partners.	HIS, HT, NA, AE
II. Raise Visibility	b. Communicate the economic and community benefits of heritage assets and preservation to residents and decision makers through outreach and promotion of local programs.	3. Use the findings from the Harriet Tubman Economic and Community Impact study to inform future activities and initiatives.	AE, HIS, HT
II. Raise Visibility	b. Communicate the economic and community benefits of heritage assets and preservation to residents and decision makers through outreach and promotion of local programs.	4. Expand the annual Heritage Awards program that honors individuals, projects, and organizations that work to preserve and promote Dorchester County's heritage	AE, HIS
III. Strive for Compatible Economic Redevelopment	a. Create economic development and entrepreneurial linkages by proactively connecting individuals and organizations with opportunities to create and maintain sustainable heritage tourism businesses, products and assets.	1. Network with and strengthen relationships and ties to regional and statewide tourism and heritage programs and partners.	AE, HIS, HT, MV, NA, OUT

**Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area
Strategic Plan: Action Steps**

Goal	Objective	Action	Theme
III. Strive for Compatible Economic Redevelopment	b. Identify unmet visitor and tourism needs that provide individuals and/or organizations with business development opportunities.	1. Support the enhancement of cultural and art programs and projects.	AE, HIS
III. Strive for Compatible Economic Redevelopment	b. Identify unmet visitor and tourism needs that provide individuals and/or organizations with business development opportunities.	2. Identify and support family-friendly tourism opportunities.	FAM, HIS
III. Strive for Compatible Economic Redevelopment	c. Proactively seek and identify services and suppliers that support heritage tourism. Broker interest and opportunities	1. Use Heritage Business Spotlight to recognize and promote long-standing, local businesses with deep ties to the Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area.	HIS
III. Strive for Compatible Economic Redevelopment	c. Proactively seek and identify services and suppliers that support heritage tourism. Broker interest and opportunities	2. Partner with the Sailwinds Community Development Corporation on the Sailwinds 2020 Plan.	AE, MV
IV. Practice Stewardship	a. Elevate the preservation, development and promotion of Dorchester’s maritime, marine and water assets for the enjoyment by residents and visitors.	1. Assist in raising the visibility of historic maritime assets such as Hooper's, Elliott's and Taylor's islands.	MV, OUT
IV. Practice Stewardship	a. Elevate the preservation, development and promotion of Dorchester’s maritime, marine and water assets for the enjoyment by residents and visitors.	2. Provide support as needed to the Choptank River Lighthouse, Skipjack Nathan of Dorchester and Richardson Maritime Museum.	MV, OUT
IV. Practice Stewardship	b. Advocate for and support the protection and preservation of historically and culturally significant buildings and sites.	1. Assist with securing preservation support and resources for historic assets, such as the Gov. Thomas Holliday Hicks House, the Bayly Cabin and the Phillips Packing Plant.	HIS, HT, NA, FAM
IV. Practice Stewardship	c. Position Dorchester as a center of environmental and ecotourism experiences in the mid-Atlantic.	1. Partner with watermen, oyster growers, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, restaurateurs and businesses to develop and promote designated oyster trails or crab trails.	EN, MV, OUT

Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area

Strategic Plan: Action Steps

Goal	Objective	Action	Theme
IV. Practice Stewardship	c. Position Dorchester as a center of environmental and ecotourism experiences in the mid-Atlantic.	2. Develop resources and promote paddling trails, guided river, environmental and heritage water tours.	EN, OUT
IV. Practice Stewardship	e. Identify and advocate for the preservation of threatened and vanishing places, practices and stories.	1. Identify and inventory threatened cemeteries.	FAM, HIS, HT
IV. Practice Stewardship	e. Identify and advocate for the preservation of threatened and vanishing places, practices and stories.	2. Explore ways to preserve and/or relocate endangered historical assets identified in the Dorchester County Hazard Mitigation Plan.	HIS, EN

VI. APPENDIX

A. Heritage Board Members (Aug. 24, 2018)

Midge Ingersoll, Chair 2018
(At-large)

Ray Paterra, Vice Chair 2018
(At-large)

William E. Batson
(Hurlock Area Representative)

Russ Brinsfield
(Vienna Representative)

Caroline Cline
(Mayor, East New Market)

Jeremy Goldman
(Dorchester County Representative)

L. Louis Hyman
(At-large)

Essie Keyser
(At-large)

Marlene Lashuk
(Town of Secretary Representative)

“Jay” James W. Meredith
(At-large)

Patti Tieder
(Town of Church Creek Representative)

Don B. Satterfield
(Dorchester County Representative)

VI. Appendix

B. Maryland Heritage Areas Map

