CHESTER COUNTY HERITAGE TOURISM PLAN

Chester County, Pennsylvania

April 2024

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Chester County Commissioners
Josh Maxwell, Chair
Marian D. Moskowitz, Vice-Chair
Eric M. Roe

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Prepared for the
Chester County Planning Commission

Prepared by
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In partnership with
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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPT

Chester County has prepared a comprehensive Heritage Tourism Plan through which communities, sites, and entities may tell local and regional stories that highlight community identity and support local and regional preservation, conservation, and quality of life. The Heritage Tourism Plan is intended to increase heritage tourism in the county as an economic factor; encourage preservation of and investment in heritage sites and resources; and raise public awareness of the significance of historic communities and landscapes.

The Heritage Tourism Plan will implement community planning and enhancement goals outlined in Chester County's 2018 Comprehensive Plan, *Landscapes3*.The Heritage Tourism Plan describes a countywide interpretive framework and presentation based upon six broad themes that have been identified as central to Chester County's character and identity. The plan is organized for flexible, long-term phased implementation and in the short term provides a foundation for Chester County's commemoration of the nation's 250th anniversary, the Semiquincentennial.

1.1 VISION AND GOALS

Chester County is one of three original Pennsylvania counties established by William Penn and is characterized by a mix of towns, crossroads villages, farms, open space, and contemporary suburban communities. Despite its wealth of historic landscapes, historic structures, and cultural attractions, the visitor experience of Chester County is currently less than the sum of its parts.

Within the county are sites of tremendous significance. This Heritage Tourism Plan has been undertaken because presentation of the county's history and significance currently lacks breadth and clarity. The proposed countywide interpretive presentation requires a multi-faceted effort that includes improved interpretation of existing historic and cultural sites, interpretation of additional sites to tell the county's full story, coordination and interpretive connectivity between sites, and marketing strategies to target audiences and increase the number of visitors.

With these points in mind, the Heritage Tourism Plan espouses the following vision and goals.

Vision
Chester County is a place where residents and visitors appreciate the natural, historic, and cultural attributes that give the county its distinctive character. We are committed to their recognition, preservation, and enhancement.

Goals
A comprehensive Heritage Tourism Plan that will

1. Engage residents in telling the stories of their communities;
2. Create community pride in the unique history and identity of Chester County;
3. Encourage ongoing investment in the preservation and maintenance of historic resources;
4. Anchor planning for Chester County's 250th commemoration; and
5. Support heritage tourism in Chester County well into the future.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Interest in planning for heritage tourism in Chester County was spurred by establishment of an ad hoc Heritage Task Force in 2020 through which representatives of heritage sites and local historical commissions met to address the desire for a pro-active initiative. Purposes included documentation of the value of heritage tourism within the county; development of a coordinated approach to interpretation and programming; advocacy and support for the preservation of historic resources; and establishment of funding sources for preservation, programming, and events.

Following up on these interests, the Chester County Planning Commission identified funding and established a scope of work to prepare of a Heritage Tourism Plan for the county. Oversight for the planning was undertaken in

concert with the Chester County Conference and Visitors Bureau, Chester County History Center, and Chester County 250th Commission.

1.2.1 Tourism in Chester County

Chester County has a wide array of experiences and attractions that together establish the county as a distinctive and memorable tourism destination. Visitor attractions in Chester County are promoted primarily by the Chester County Conference and Visitors Bureau (Chester County Tourism) which serves as the county's Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) with the purpose of building quality of life and creating opportunity in local communities by attracting visitors and investment to the area.

Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, with its annual visitation of 1.6 million, is Chester County's flagship attraction. The Chester County Tourism focuses much of its marketing around Longwood Gardens, capitalizing on the Greater Philadelphia region's claim as the "Garden Capital of the World," with over 30 gardens and arboretums here and in neighboring Delaware. In 2013, Chester County Tourism rebranded itself as Chester County's Brandywine Valley**,** coordinating promotion of Longwood Gardens with related world-class attractions including Winterthur and the Hagley Museum along the Brandywine River in Delaware. Promotion is undertaken in close partnership with the Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitors Bureau and Delaware County Brandywine Conference and Visitors Bureau.

Chester County Tourism also highlights attractions at other larger, visitor-ready museums and attractions, including the Brandywine Museum of Art, Chester County History Center, Valley Forge National Historical Park, Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, and the American Helicopter Museum. Smaller regional attractions include the Antique Ice Tool Museum, Historic Sugartown, Historic Yellow Springs, Saint Peter's Village, and the National Iron & Steel Museum. Visitors are invited to view the intimate studios of renowned artists Wharton Esherick and the Wyeths, who have been inspired by Chester County's beauty for generations.

Valley Forge National Historical Park is among the region's primary visitor attractions.

West Chester, Phoenixville, and Kennett Square are marketed as "Must See Main Streets" for dining and shopping. Chester County Tourism promotes a number of other communities with smaller scale services as "Countryside Villages," including Oxford, Downingtown, Marshallton, Malvern, St. Peter's Village, Chadds Ford, Exton, Unionville, and the City of Coatesville

Working with the county's craft beer, wine and spirits industry, Chester County Tourism has created both "Chester County Cheers" and the "BV BrewScene," to highlight the 20+ breweries and 10+ wineries and a growing number of distilleries in the county.

Chester County Tourism focuses on creating packages that offer a different twist on how to experience the same attractions in the county. For example, Chester County Tourism's website suggests that visitors could visit Longwood Gardens and then wind their way through the county visiting a variety of candy and ice cream shops just in time for Valentine's Day. Tapping into the scenic beauty of Chester County's landscapes, Chester County Tourism has published a driving tour of the County's covered bridges.

Chester County's location is highly favorable for tourism, as it is located within 2 to 2 ½ hours from the metropolitan areas of Philadelphia, Washington, DC, and New York City, and is accessible by train from New York, Harrisburg, and Lancaster by Amtrak, and from Philadelphia by SEPTA. Prior to the pandemic, tourism visitation to the Greater Philadelphia region grew steadily, reaching 45.3 million visitors in 2018. Visitor spending grew by 32% between 2009 to 2017. In 2017, tourism spending in Chester County reached $835 million, making up 22% of total visitor spending in the Greater Philadelphia region. 22% of overseas travel spending also occurred in Chester County, contributing $67 million to Chester County's local economy. The Visitor Analysis and Marketing Plan prepared by ConsultEcon in coordination with this Heritage Tourism Plan provides a detailed overview of visitation to Chester County (see Appendix D).

In a visitor survey conducted in 2019 in conjunction with Chester County Tourism's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, respondents came to Chester County for the following reasons:

- 38% General vacation or get-away
- 26% Exhibition, performance, or sporting event
- 16% Visiting friends or family
- 5% In transit
- 3% Business

In terms of visitor interests, more than 70% of survey respondents reported that visiting historic sites and museums was the most appealing travel activity, followed by 55-60% responding that gardens and farms were their favored attraction. These were followed by culinary/food experiences, historic homes, festivals/events, and performances.

This documented interest in historic sites and farming landscapes suggests **opportunity in promoting Chester County's rural communities and landscapes—authentic places** that both are scenic and have interesting stories

to tell. Chester County's popular *Town Tours and Village Walks* program demonstrates how smaller, low-key places can become attractions providing rewarding experiences. It also demonstrates how local communities can be activated to become enthusiastic participants in telling their stories to visitors.

Essential to such an initiative is **coordinating local storytelling within a larger countywide interpretive framework** such that each community, landscape, and historic place fits comfortably within a related set of stories. At present, historic and other attractions are presented individually as separate places to visit. This Heritage Tourism Plan seeks to weave such separate stories together so they relate to each other through the county's history and identity as a whole.

Appendix A of this plan provides a more detailed overview of tourism in Chester County from which much of the summary above is drawn. **Appendix B** is a Heritage Sites Directory listing existing attractions within the county that currently offer active interpretation to visitors. Appendix B is representative of a larger database about the existing sites that was collected in preparation of this plan and may be expanded and revised over time. **Appendix C** is a proposed Creative Campaign including branding and graphics to be used in marketing the Heritage Tourism Program to national and international visitors once it is deemed to be visitor ready. As noted above, **Appendix D** is a detailed Visitor Analysis and Marketing Plan prepared in coordination with this Heritage Tourism Plan.

1.2.2 The Nation's 250ᵗʰ – Semiquincentennial

The Chester County Commissioners established the AMERICA250PA Chester County Commission (CC250) in 2022 to build the foundation for commemoration of the nation's 250ᵗʰ anniversary in Chester County. In so doing, the CC250 is adhering to the goals of the national America 250 initiative in creating a commemoration that invites full participation of residents through inclusive programming and input, and to celebrate the nation's past achievements while considering its ongoing journey toward "a more perfect union." CC250 is guided by the four pillars of Pennsylvania's AMERICA250PA initiative—to Educate, Preserve, Innovate, and Celebrate.

This Heritage Tourism Plan has been prepared in close coordination with planning for the 250ᵗʰ commemoration in Chester County. It is anticipated that CC250 will adopt aspects of the plan for implementation over the next three to five years and that this will provide the impetus for continued implementation beyond the time period of the 250ᵗʰ commemoration.

The Heritage Tourism Plan seeks to bring together the various countywide heritage interests into a single initiative to be spearheaded by CC250. It proposes a broad heritage partnership implementing objectives outlined in *Landscapes3* as a legacy of the 250ᵗʰ commemoration in Chester County.

The overarching goal of CC250 is to create a compelling and sustainable experience through which residents and visitors commemorate America's 250ᵗʰ anniversary, encounter the many ways in which Chester County participated in

and influenced our nation's past, and examine our continuing journey to build a more perfect union.

As outlined in the resolution creating CC250, the Commission may:

- Gather input and information from the general public, municipalities, and other partners about the county's history;
- Assess historic sites and recommend enhancements for improving capacity;
- Develop and implement an interpretive framework for historic tourism;
- Prepare and implement countywide marketing;
- Tailor a civic based educational curriculum for Chester County schools;
- Organize and sponsor on-going programs and events for the 250th celebration; and
- Identify financial support for the 250th celebration and related tourism efforts.

A legacy of CC250 will be the establishment of heritage partnerships and programs that endure beyond the period of the commemoration to positively impact community awareness and quality of life into the future. The commemorative programs will help increase public awareness and appreciation of Chester County's rich history and its relationships to communities, landscapes, and resources; strengthen Chester County's heritage infrastructure; and increase public support for conservation, preservation, and community enhancement—all in direct support of the Chester County's 2018 comprehensive plan, *Landscapes3*.

CC250 seeks community-based partnerships in the implementation of programs raising public awareness of Chester County's rich history and its relationship to the history of the nation. Martins Tavern is a preserved and interpreted historic ruin in Marshallton.

Organizing Framework

CC250 is composed of 29 members appointed by the Chester County Commissioners for terms that run through 2027. CC250 has been organized with a series of committees, each responsible for different areas of activity. In June 2023, a Strategic Plan for CC250 was approved, including committee goals and workplans. Additionally, the Chester County Community Foundation (CCCF) was retained by the county as project administrators for CC250, providing staff support in coordinating and facilitating the work of the volunteer commission members. As this Heritage Tourism Plan is being finalized, CC250's organization is being further refined in preparation for fund raising and implementation.

As concepts for the Heritage Tourism Plan have developed, it has become clear that there is significant overlap between the plan and the 250 initiative, that aspects of the Heritage Tourism Plan might be used to implement the 250 initiative, and that, if successful, the Heritage Tourism Plan might continue to grow and develop beyond the period of the 250th commemoration.

Examples of overlap include:

- Development of an interpretive framework for heritage tourism;
- Establishment of an organizing framework for the development and implementation of interpretive programs;
- Identification, assessment, and engagement of heritage sites;
- Outreach to communities and other potential partners for input and engagement;
- Need to establish countywide marketing; and
- Intent to undertaken development and fundraising to implement proposed programs.

With these thoughts in mind, the planning team for the Heritage Tourism Plan proposed a framework for implementation of Chester County's 250th commemoration using elements of the county's Heritage Tourism Plan. Specifically, it has been proposed that the 250th commemoration undertake:

1. interpretation of the primary theme *The Philadelphia Campaign* in Chester County in September 1777 as a primary initiative in collaboration with stakeholders, and

2. implementation the "Base Program" described in Chapter 6, Section 6.1 of the plan in which heritage sites and communities throughout the county are invited to participate in interpretation as part of a countywide presentation. This aspect of the plan could interpret any primary or secondary theme with stakeholder commitment and that could be made visitor ready.

As the CC250's work has continued to develop, the Steering Committee and planning team for the Heritage Tourism Plan have consulted with and provided draft proposals for programming to the CC250 for their consideration and use.

1.2.3 Landscapes3

Chester County has a history of innovative community and regional planning dating back to the 1990s focused on coordinated, responsible growth and open space conservation that has received broad public support. Through its Vision Partnership Program, the Chester County Planning Commission has engaged with local municipalities, funding their comprehensive planning, zoning and subdivision ordinances, and open space planning, and providing incentives such as funding for parks and other community enhancements. The result has been the coordination of planning and growth between municipalities in accordance with the countywide plan and a significant investment in open space and agricultural conservation.

Chester County's most recent update of its comprehensive plan was completed in 2018 as **Landscapes3.** This Heritage Tourism Plan has been prepared in direct support of the comprehensive plan. The "Base Program" outlined in Chapter 6, Section 6.1, promoted to CC250, envisions as an ongoing county initiative implementing goals and objectives outlined in *Landscapes3*.

Chapter 6 of the comprehensive plan, *How We Appreciate*, addresses heritage and culture and states the following objectives:

> C. *Identify and foster historic and natural resource connections to advance their protection and maintain quality of life; and*

> D. *Preserve the stories of our cultural heritage and connect them to our residents and our future.*

Recommendations in *Landscapes3* implementing those objectives include:

> 1. *Growing heritage tourism programs to strengthen cultural awareness and the beneficial economic impacts of historic and cultural resource preservation, and*

> 2. *Expanding historic preservation interpretation and educational opportunities that promote core themes of the county's history and sense of place, with an emphasis on linking past, present, and future.*

This Heritage Tourism Plan proposes a Tourism Program for Chester County that engages communities and heritage sites in telling their heritage stories to residents and visitors with the intent of strengthening community identity and building support for preservation and conservation. Providing beneficial economic impacts through local and regional heritage tourism is an added value.

Additionally, Chapter 4 of the Heritage Tourism Plan describes a potential Preservation & Enhancements Program that would establish a source of assistance to municipalities and non-profit organizations for preservation and preventive maintenance projects for historic buildings under their stewardship. The program implements Recommendation 5 in Chapter 6 of *Landscapes3*, How We Appreciate, which states, "Foster the creation of funding programs for protection of designated historic resources."

This Heritage Tourism Plan is the means for implementation of the objectives and recommendations outlined in Landscapes3 promoting preservation, conservation, identity, and community enhancement.

The Heritage Tourism Plan has been prepared in support of Landscapes3, Chester County's 2018 Comprehensive Plan, in promoting preservation, conservation, identity, and community enhancement.

1.3 WHAT IS HERITAGE TOURISM?

The National Trust for Historic Preservation has defined heritage tourism as *"traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present."* Heritage tourism is experiential tourism. It combines engaging historic and cultural stories with experiencing the authentic places where those stories happened and that are the focus of local community life.

Heritage tourism has real economic impacts – the heritage traveler is among the most desirable of tourism markets today, tending to stay longer and spend more per party. This market was identified a little more than two decades ago, when studies began under leadership of the National Trust. The Trust had recognized "heritage tourism" as an important economic opportunity for communities engaging in historic preservation and Main Street revitalization.

The driving concept behind the revitalization of Main Streets was to generate economic activity in historic downtown centers by establishing visitor services

such as restaurants in places rich in historic character—places that residents would frequent and that would thus also attract heritage travelers.

Through its heritage tourism work with Main Street communities, the National Trust stimulated collaboration among other national groups and agencies with tourism in their portfolios, ultimately succeeding in gaining new economic census data to begin tracking tourism as an industry. Today, tourism as a whole is found to rank high among many communities' and regions' economic activities, often first, second, or third. This is less often the case for rural areas, although many have begun actively engaging in cultural heritage tourism development in recent years.

As outlined in Chapter 5 of this plan, *Placemaking and Visitor Services*, West Chester, Phoenixville, and Kennett Square are examples of successful Main Street communities in Chester County, revitalized downtown centers with active services frequented by residents and visitors. Other Chester County downtown centers are also successfully implementing the Main Street model.

The concept behind this Heritage Tourism Plan is to extend the heritage tourism experience throughout the historic landscape such that the entire county is perceived as a visitor destination.

In its work in heritage tourism, the National Trust developed five guiding principles for successful and sustainable heritage tourism programs:

Collaborate: Much more can be accomplished by working together than by working alone. The value of a collective effort is greater than the sum of its parts. Successful heritage tourism programs bring together partners who may not have worked together in the past.

Find the Fit: A good heritage tourism effort makes the destination a better place to live as well as a better place to visit. Balancing the needs of residents and visitors is important to ensure that heritage tourism benefits everyone. It is important to understand the kind and amount of tourism that a community can handle.

Make Sites and Programs Come Alive: Heritage travelers have higher expectations, and it is vital that the visitor experiences offered to these travelers are exciting and engaging so they stay longer, plan return visits, and encourage others to visit the area. The human drama of history is what visitors want to discover, not just names and dates. Interpreting sites is important, and so is making the message creative and exciting. Find ways to engage as many of the visitor's five senses as you can, as the more visitors are involved, the more they will retain.

Focus on Authenticity and Quality: Heritage travelers are looking for high quality, authentic experiences that reflect the unique heritage of the region. Quality is an essential ingredient for all heritage tourism, and authenticity is critical whenever heritage or history is involved.

Preserve and Protect Resources: A community's cultural, historic, and natural resources are valuable and often irreplaceable. Sustained

preservation and conservation of valued cultural, historic, and natural resources should be a core ethic for the heritage tourism initiative.

The National Trust's heritage tourism initiative also suggested four steps for getting started, or for taking an existing heritage tourism program to the next level. Developing a successful program is an incremental process; these four steps can be repeated at each stage of development:

Step One – Assess the Potential: Evaluate what your community has to offer in attractions, visitor services, organizational capabilities, ability to protect resources, and marketing.

Step Two – Plan and Organize: Make good use of human and financial resources. They are the keys that open the doors to sustainable cultural heritage tourism. Set priorities and measurable goals.

Step Three – Prepare for Visitors; Protect and Manage Your Resources: Look to the future as well as the present. Be sure that the choices you make now improve your community for the long term.

Step Four – Market for Success: Develop a multi-year, many-tiered marketing plan that targets your audiences. Look for partners in local, regional, state, or national groups.

These guiding principles and suggested steps are incorporated into the program outlined for Chester County in this Heritage Tourism Plan. Appendix D of this plan, Visitor Analysis and Marketing Plan, has a detailed analysis of the potential benefits for implementation of a high-quality heritage tourism initiative in Chester County.

1.4 CONCEPT AND APPROACH

The Chester County Heritage Tourism Plan envisions implementation of a countywide interpretive program through which communities, sites, and entities can tell local and regional stories that highlight community identity and support local and regional preservation, conservation, and quality of life.

The Heritage Tourism Plan is part of Chester County's celebration of the nation's 250th anniversary, the Semiquincentennial. As such, a primary organizing concept and focus for the plan is commemoration of the region's landscape, peoples, lifeways, perspectives, and events as they existed in 1776 and their relationships to the regional and national story. This pivotal year may serve as **a** lens through which the entire history of the region may be viewed and appreciated⸺Chester County's natural and cultural history leading up to the nation's founding and the county's physical and cultural evolution over the past 250 years to the present.

The Heritage Tourism Plan emphasizes **community identity and enhancement** as outlined in *Landscapes3*, the 2018 Chester County Comprehensive Plan. Interpretation is a means through which residents and visitors can be engaged and become informed about the nature and character of their communities and the county as a whole. Engaged and informed residents are more likely to

support and participate in local and regional initiatives for community revitalization and betterment. Interpretation is central to the goals of this Heritage Tourism Plan⸺engaging residents, attracting visitors, supporting preservation and enhancement, and enhancing quality of life. It should be achieved creatively in as many ways as possible through the coordinated actions of a wide variety of stakeholders and partners.

Interpretation communicates the **meaning and significance of places, people, and events** to audiences who experience it. Through interpretation, residents and visitors learn about their local communities, how they have evolved over time and why their peoples, landscapes, buildings, and resources are significant. Such understanding helps place our lives in context, forging meaningful connections between our experiences and the place in which we live. It helps us realize our character and chart our direction as a community.

Interpretation is a means through which residents and visitors can be engaged and become informed about the nature and character of their communities.

Chester County has a **fascinating and complex history**⸺plenty of stories to tell. Chester County includes rural agricultural landscapes, crossroad villages, boroughs, and expanding suburban landscapes. The county's colonial era cultural landscape is particularly significant because it established the patterns, structure, and character for the community identity that remains evident today and that we value and are working to preserve and enhance.

Central to its character is the county's geographical range, both *physically*, in terms of communities, landscapes, and natural resources, and *conceptually*, in terms of the history, experiences, and stories of its people. Chester County's history is well studied by local historians and enthusiasts but is less well known to the broader population, especially new residents as the county has grown in

recent decades. Everyone appreciates the historic physical character, but not everyone is aware of the rich and engaging stories embedded in that character.

The key means to achieving the goals of this Heritage Tourism Plan is through making interpretation as broadly available and engaging to as wide an audience as possible. The Chester County Heritage Tourism Plan suggests a structure for interpretation and the opportunity to create physical and thematic linkages between communities and sites across the landscape. The role of county level partners is to bring vision, leadership, and resources to the task, providing coordination and incentives to qualified local communities and sites interested in implementing the interpretive program at the local level.

1.4.1 Thematic Framework

Chester County has established **six primary themes** through which to view regional and local history and culture. Within these themes, subthemes and storylines are identified to embrace key aspects of region's development. Together, these themes, subthemes, and storylines may be used to illustrate, support, and enhance the county's distinctive character. The themes are touchstones in commemorating the county's 1776 cultural landscape and lifeways and in its growth, development, and change since. Each Chester County community, site, peoples, and story may find its place within this interpretive framework. The six primary themes, presented in more detail elsewhere in this plan, include:

The Natural Landscape – presenting the region's natural landscape history as it has evolved over thousands of years and is present today. This theme focuses on the dynamics of the natural world—geology, landforms, ecology, and biotic communities. It focuses on the natural landscape's inherent character today as well as its health and issues. It lays the groundwork for understanding how the natural landscape is inextricably intertwined with, has shaped, and has been shaped by the region's evolving cultural factors.

The Cultural Landscape – explores the historical development of the Chester County landscape through cultural intervention and use. Special focus is placed on the colonial landscape that existed at the time of the nation's founding and how that landscape continues to shape community identity today. However, the theme also examines how Native Americans influenced the landscape prior to the arrival of Europeans and how the cultural landscape has evolved to the present, including the central roles of agriculture, industry, transportation, and more recent suburban growth.

Evolving Values – explores the principles and beliefs of Chester County's peoples, how they have impacted the region and the nation, and how these principles and beliefs evolved over time. Native American values were vastly different than those of later European settlers. William Penn's Quaker-based founding values determined the diverse range of European peoples who shaped our colonial landscape. The Declaration of Independence expressed the founding values of our nation. Quaker-based values led to local leadership in abolition, the underground railroad, and women's rights. Freedom seekers created communities here. Immigrants from many countries came to Chester

County over the decades and shaped local life and institutions. Continuing social evolution has expanded upon the county's founding vision, and it continues to expand today.

The Philadelphia Campaign – War Comes to Chester County – tells the story of the Revolutionary War events of September 10 through 23, 1777 in Chester County that led to the British occupation of Philadelphia and the Continental Army's winter encampment at Valley Forge. The county's cultural landscape was central to the troop movements and engagements, and local residents were greatly impacted by the campaign through the winter and spring of 1778.

Iron and Steel – interprets stories of the region's iron and steel industries, the landscapes and communities they developed, and how they influenced Pennsylvania and the nation. The theme is closely intertwined with *The Philadelphia Campaign* and also describes the 19th century transition from iron to steel.

Creative Expression – conveys stories of the region's authors, artists, architects, landscape designers, educators, athletes, and others who influenced regional and national culture, including the Wyeths and the Brandywine School focused upon the regional landscape.

Every community and site should be able to find its place within the county's thematic framework.

1.4.2 Interpretive Programs

In general, interpretation may be conveyed through both direct and indirect means. *Direct means* include interpretive **exhibits and programs** that may be offered by interpretive sites, communities, and other partners to various audiences who set out specifically to see and experience them.

Indirect means of interpretation are conveyed through **community character and sense of place** and can be **reinforced by providing interpretive content**, often purely visual, in the public domain where it is absorbed as people go about the routine of their daily lives. Public art, historic buildings, revitalized village and borough centers, landscapes, streetscapes, parks, memorials, and other forms of community enhancement are potential vehicles for offering indirect interpretive content.

Two countywide programs are proposed as centerpieces of the Heritage Tourism Plan's interpretive initiative: a Community Interpretation Program and

an Outdoor Exhibit Program. Both programs will assist local partners in the design and installation of interpretive exhibits with county leadership and support and in accordance with countywide graphic and interpretive standards.

The **Community Interpretive Program** will provide resources and guidance to assist interested communities in telling their own stories in association with the countywide thematic framework. Communities will be guided in developing community interpretive plans that outline key local themes and storylines, identify places where their stories can be told, and plan for phased implementation of exhibits, media, and physical enhancements.

The **Outdoor Exhibit Program** will be used to help implement the community interpretive plans. The program will also assist individual sites in the preparation and implementation of self-guided outdoor interpretive exhibits, telling their stories in accordance with the countywide interpretive framework. Coordinated graphic identity and branding will be developed for the program along with a range of exhibit types. Creative and high-quality **public art** and landscape installations are proposed to be a distinguishing feature and attraction for the program.

Beyond the implementation of interpretive exhibits, **capacity building and organizational support** will be provided to stakeholders and entities participating in the Heritage Tourism Plan. Funding will be sought to support operations, enhance capacity and visitor experience, work with partners to attract more and larger audiences, and implement programming and events.

A key role for the county and its leading partners is to provide the **interpretive context** within which local stories fit. At present, local sites may interpret an individual, a building, a place, or objects with interesting stories. It is difficult, however, for visitors to understand how these stories connect, how they fit into the larger sweep of regional and national history, and why they are significant.

The countywide presentation will coordinate storytelling between the rich variety of communities and sites.

Heritage Tourism Plan implementation at the county level will provide background and context for the themes and storylines through a **dedicated website**, media content, and promotion. Local communities and sites with shared or related themes and storylines will be linked in their presentations through **related content, touring routes, trails, and media**.

Selected themes and storylines will be featured at the county level because of their significance and/or because their presentations have been substantially developed by stakeholders. *The Philadelphia Campaign* and *Iron and Steel,* for

example, are both closely associated with the colonial era's cultural landscape, the foundation for Chester County's rural landscape identity, and both have stakeholder groups that have already made substantive progress in planning, organizing, and telling their stories. Similarly, *The Natural Landscape* also has significant stakeholder leadership through initiatives such as The Hopewell Big Woods and Brandywine Valley Greenway. Themes and storylines with fully developed visitor experiences will be **actively promoted** to outside visitors.

Chester County has a wide range of potential **interpretive stakeholders**, each of which can participate in the coordinated countywide initiative by telling their own stories within the countywide context. Stakeholders include existing interpretive attractions, historic sites, communities, parks, art and cultural organizations, educational institutions, businesses, and others. Existing interpretive sites with **professional staff** will play a particularly important role in helping to shape and coordinate the countywide presentation and in **mentoring** smaller volunteer, community, and non-profit partners.

Chester County seeks to engage this range of stakeholders and craft a countywide interpretive program in support of their missions and interests and as an expression of the goals of *Landscapes3*. The countywide interpretive presentation envisioned here proposes a significantly increased level of coordination and collaboration among participating sites.

The **primary audience** for the countywide interpretive presentation is Chester County's **existing residents**. Chester County has a significant and growing population, and many of its residents have not yet explored the diverse range of communities and resources found here. Local residents are an easy target and the most important target in support of the local heritage economy. Enhancing local residents' knowledge and appreciation of their own communities as well as adjacent communities will build community pride and encourage community engagement. Focusing upon local residents will help interpretive sites build constituencies, support, and capacity. Local residents will bring visitors, friends, and family to their favorite sites as special places to go, showcasing their communities.

The quality of the local presentations will also be attractive to outside visitors, especially **heritage travelers** and **residents of neighboring counties** within the Philadelphia metropolitan area. As noted above, themes and storylines with fully developed visitor experiences will be actively marketed to outside visitors. But emphasis will be placed on the countywide program as a whole as well, encouraging visitors to experience local communities, landscapes, and places throughout Chester County and to enjoy the restaurants, lodgings, and other amenities they offer.

The Chester County Heritage Tourism Plan is a vehicle for local grassroots action in preserving resources, enhancing community character, and strengthening local quality of life. Through county-level leadership, coordination, and resources, local stakeholders will be empowered to strengthen local communities for current and future benefit.

CHAPTER 2 – THEMES AND STORYLINES

Chester County is a living landscape—an active, dynamic, and continuously evolving place that is imbibed with history. Through interpretation, we tell this landscape's stories—the people and the places we live in today, their character and significance, and how they came to be. This Heritage Tourism Plan seeks to promote and strengthen interpretation and storytelling by outlining a regional framework and interpretive presentation that connect the stories of individual communities and sites around countywide themes and storylines.

Chapter 2 outlines a thematic framework for interpretation and storytelling that can be used by communities and sites countywide to relate and coordinate their interpretive presentations. Chapter 3 of the plan, *Presentation and Visitor Experience*, describes how a countywide interpretive presentation can be organized and goes into further detail about each of the county's primary themes in terms of context, existing conditions, and approach. Chapter 4, *Heritage Tourism Programs*, presents ideas for how interpretation and storytelling might be implemented.

2.1 THEMATIC FRAMEWORK

Themes are the Big Ideas that convey meaning and significance to a story or interpretive subject. Themes help audiences connect individual stories with broader contexts and help them understand what those stories mean and why they matter.

Chester County has established **six primary themes** through which to view regional and local history and culture. The themes are touchstones in commemorating Chester County's growth, development, and change over time. Titles for the county's six primary themes are:

- The Natural Landscape
- The Cultural Landscape
- Evolving Values
- The Philadelphia Campaign
- Iron & Steel
- Creative Expression

Chapter 3 of this plan describes these themes in some detail, describes where interpretation of the themes is currently taking place, and offers an approach to their expanded interpretive presentation countywide.

The foundation for this interpretative presentation is a proposed **thematic framework**, outlined below. For each primary theme a **theme statement** is presented, which is the Big Idea that the theme is intended to convey and that should be the basis for the further development of interpretive content. Every interpretive installation or effort should ground itself in the theme statement for the primary theme with which it is associated. The theme statement may be explicitly stated or it may be implied through the content presented.

Beneath each primary theme is a set of **theme topics**, each of which is a subject that may be used to inform local interpretation. Each theme topic is essentially a **storyline** for which a theme statement should be created conveying the Big Idea about that topic and for which supporting interpretive content should be developed. Storylines convey the larger context and the threads of events about that topic that supports and helps illuminate the interpretation of individual communities or sites.

Together, this outline of primary themes and theme topics/storylines establishes the thematic framework upon which countywide interpretive presentation should be based and coordinated.

Communities and sites wishing to participate in the countywide interpretive presentation should identify the themes and storylines to which their history relates. They should use the thematic framework to connect their stories and places to the larger context and central ideas of the countywide presentation. Local stories should be used to illustrate and bring themes and storylines to life, to associate them with authentic places and the lives of real people to which visitors can relate.

The thematic framework is broad in scope—every interested community and site that wants to participate in the countywide presentation should be able to find a place within the framework. Every participating community and site will be expected to organize interpretation using the thematic framework, showing how their sites and stories relate to the wider context. Theme statements should be incorporated directly or indirectly into the interpretive content developed specifically for the particular community or site.

Heritage Website

Among the programs outlined in Chapter 4 is development of a comprehensive website that presents information on background, history, visitation, community engagement, and educational resources for the countywide interpretive presentation. This heritage tourism website is expected to be the primary vehicle through which the countywide interpretive presentation is made available to the public.

As outlined in Chapter 4, the heritage website should present all six primary themes along with their storylines and supporting content. The website's educational and interpretive content should establish context, elaborate upon the primary themes, provide substantive background and context for the various theme topics/storylines, and relate the storylines to the exploration of sites, experiences, touring routes, and places to visit. The educational and interpretive content should be expansive enough to provide ways for communities and sites throughout Chester County to relate their own individual stories to the countywide website.

Further development of the thematic framework outlined here needs to be undertaken through preparation of the heritage website by historians knowledgeable of the history and context related to each theme topic and storyline. From the thematic framework, communities and sites can identify the themes, theme topics, and storylines appropriate to their sites with the assistance of historians and interpreters supporting the proposed Outdoor Exhibit Program and Community Interpretive Program described in Chapter 4.

Many Chester County sites are related to multiple themes and storylines. As an historic 18th and 19th century village, Historic Yellow Springs is a distinctive cultural landscape type, is of important Revolutionary War significance, was a period health spa, and is closely related to the arts both historically and today.

2.2 THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE

Theme Statement:

Chester County's natural resources have shaped its history and development.

The theme *The Natural Landscape* presents the region's natural landscape history as it has evolved over thousands of years and is present today. This theme focuses on the dynamics of the natural world—geology, landforms, ecology, and biotic communities. It focuses on the natural landscape's inherent character today as well as its health and environmental issues. This theme lays the groundwork for understanding how the natural landscape is inextricably intertwined with, has shaped, and has been shaped by the region's evolving cultural factors. It includes recent and ongoing efforts to conserve natural lands.

Potential Theme Topics/Storylines:

- Geology and Landforms –
    - Piedmont Uplands South – Low rolling hills of the Wissahickon Formation
    - The Great Valley – Limestone; richest agriculture; and travel corridor west
    - Piedmont Uplands North – Rocky metamorphic hills; last settled; PA Highlands; ironworks
    - Triassic Lowlands – along the Schuylkill

- Rivers and Watersheds –
    - Schuylkill River and related creeks and runs
    - French & Pickering Creeks
    - Brandywine Creek – East and West Branches
    - Chester, Crum, Ridley and Darby Creeks – drain to the Delaware
    - White Clay Creek, Red Clay Creeks, Big and Little Elk Creeks, others
    - Octoraro Creek and others – drain to the Susquehanna

- The Piedmont – Rich diversity of native plant communities and ecosystems
    - Special Places – woodlands, wetlands, barrens, others
    - Environmental Challenges – water quality, invasive species, fragmentation, climate change, others

- Land Conservation – Organizations and initiatives

Lead Partners: Conservation organizations, Chester County Parks, DCNR, Schuylkill River Greenway National Heritage Area, Schuylkill River Conservation Landscape, others

Potential Sites: Natural areas, parks, preserves, trails, conservation lands, gardens; concentrations for focus include The Hopewell Big Woods, Brandywine Creek Greenway, and others
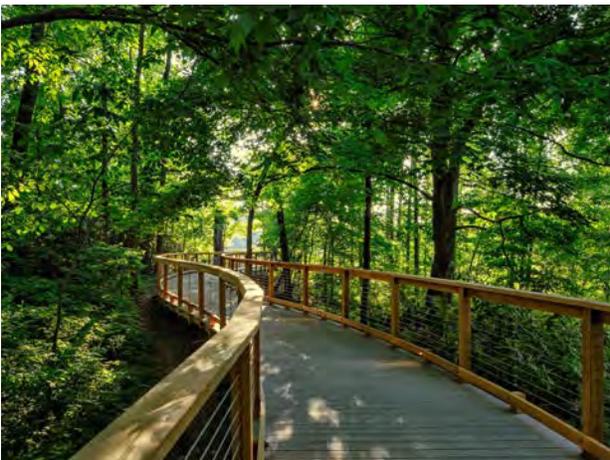
Natural areas, parks, preserves, trails, and conservation areas throughout Chester County are places where the natural history stories can be told along with the character, significance, and dynamics of today's ecological communities. Interpretation lays the groundwork for addressing ecological issues.

2.3 THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Theme Statement:

Chester County preserves rare insights into daily life in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries through its evolving agricultural landscape and the character of its historic communities and structures.

The theme *The Cultural Landscape* explores the historical development of the Chester County landscape through cultural intervention and use. Special focus is placed on the colonial landscape that existed at the time of the nation's founding and how that landscape continues to shape community identity today. However, the theme also examines how Native Americans influenced the landscape prior to the arrival of Europeans and how the cultural landscape has evolved to the present.

Agriculture is a primary topic as the basis for the regional economy from the early 18th century to the present and the degree to which it has shaped landscape patterns and character. Roads, bridges, railroads, canals, and other transportation infrastructure influenced the region's growth. Manufacturing and industrialization occurred in some places. The theme includes suburbanization in the late 20th century to the present.

Every community and site within the county can find its place within this theme and present the stories related to the community or site's development. The theme includes past and current preservation efforts – the preservation of buildings and landscapes and their role in Chester County's community identity today. (See Chapter 5 for further discussion of communities and agritourism.)

Potential Theme Topics/Storylines:

- Native Peoples – The Lenape and their predecessors
    - How Native Peoples utilized, shaped, and made their lives here; their interactions with European settlers; and how their experience changed over time

- European Settlement and the Pennsylvania Cultural Hearth
    - Chester County's role in the 18th century European settlement of the nation
    - Who came; where and how they settled on the land
    - Religious Diversity – the central role of religious groups in early settlement
    - The Arc Boundary and the Mason Dixon Line – setting colonial boundaries

- Colonial Settlement Patterns
    - Farmsteads – yeoman farmers and farms are variations on a theme
    - Landscape Patterns – how natural features influenced settlement
    - Mills and Local Industries – supporting the early agricultural and industrial economy
    - Crossroad Villages – centers serving surrounding farms
    - Transportation Routes – how they shaped the landscape
    - Market Orientation – Philadelphia and Wilmington

- Three Centuries of Agricultural Development
  - Mixed farming and Local Commerce
  - 18th and Early 19th Century Wheat – export markets
  - Late 19th Century Dairy and Livestock – urban markets
  - Gentlemans' Farms – affluent urban families acquire rural properties and experiment with agriculture
  - The Mushroom Industry – a regional specialty; how and why
  - The Equestrian Scene – a regional specialty; its impact on open space conservation
- Suburban Transformation
  - Late 20th century development and change
  - Vision for the Future – Landscapes1-3

Lead Partners: Communities, historic sites, Chester County Planning and Parks, Chester County Agricultural Development Council

Potential Sites: Communities, rural and agricultural landscapes, historic sites, agricultural-tourism sites

Communities and sites from across Chester County can tell their own stories within the context of the county's cultural landscape as it has evolved from Native American times to the present. Interpretation can identify the patterns of development, how specific places embody and enrich those patterns, and the stories of peoples and their lives.

2.4 EVOLVING VALUES

Theme Statement:

The varied experiences and perspectives of peoples have shaped our social conscience and laid the groundwork for the diversity and social values that continue to influence Chester County today.

The theme *Evolving Values* explores the principles and beliefs of Chester County's peoples, how they have impacted the region and the nation, and how these principles and beliefs changed over time. Native Americans values were vastly different values than those of later European settlers. William Penn's Quaker-based founding values determined the diverse range of European peoples who shaped our colonial landscape, attracting the numerous religious groups to Pennsylvania that dominated the Chester County's early growth.

The Declaration of Independence expressed the founding values of our nation. Quaker-based values continued to impact county history over time, leading to widespread participation in anti-slavery movements, the underground railroad, and campaigns for women's rights and social justice.

Freedom seekers created communities here. Immigrants from many countries came to Chester County over the decades and shaped local life and institutions. Continuing social evolution has expanded upon the county's founding vision, and it continues to expand today.

Potential Theme Topics/Storylines:

- Native American relationships and belief systems
- Quakerism – The Big Idea
- William Penn, the Settlement of Pennsylvania, and its influence on Chester County
- The Diversity of Peoples Settling within the County Over Time
- The Quaker Meeting and Community Influences
- Pacifism and the Revolutionary War
- Freedom Seekers
- Abolition and the Underground Railroad
- Woman's Rights, Social Justice, and Other Causes
- African American, Hispanic, and Other Minority Experiences
- Religious movements in Chester County
- Urban Ethnic Communities
- The Continuing Legacy

Lead Partners: Quaker Institutions, social advocates, ethnic communities, religious and social organizations

Potential Sites: Communities, Friends Meeting Houses, historic sites, churches, African American neighborhoods and churches, Hispanic communities, urban areas
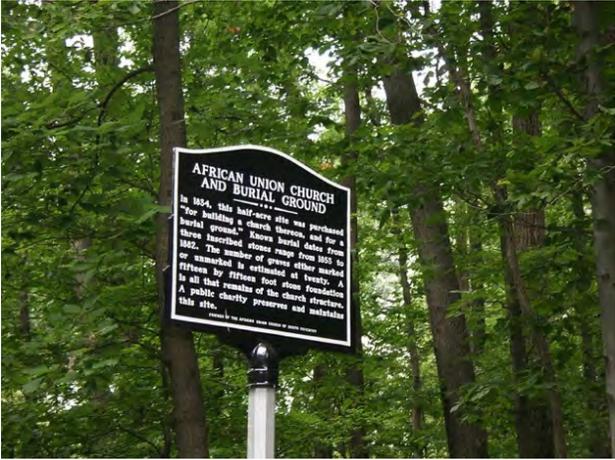
Many sites are able to relate the stories of the peoples who have lived in Chester County and their values, beliefs, struggles, and successes. Chester County's diversity from early European settlement onward is key attribute of its character.

2.5 THE PHILADELPHIA CAMPAIGN

Theme Statement:

From Brandywine to Valley Forge, the Philadelphia Campaign was a turning point in the American Revolution. The Chester County landscape played a central role in the unfolding of events.

The theme *The Philadelphia Campaign – War Comes to Chester County* tells the story of the Revolutionary War events of September 10 through 23, 1777 in Chester County that led to the British occupation of Philadelphia and the Continental Army's winter encampment at Valley Forge. The county's cultural landscape was central to the troop movements and engagements, and local residents were greatly impacted by the campaign through the winter and spring of 1778.

The Continental Army matured, and course of the war changed. These early beginnings set the stage for the creation of our nation, our Constitution, and our continuing reevaluation of its founding principles.

Potential Theme Topics/Storylines:

- Why Here? – Strategy, Context, and Circumstance
- The Colonial Landscape and its Peoples
- The Route to Philadelphia / Washington's Defense
- Battle of Brandywine
- Battle of the Clouds
- Withdraw/Iron Country
- Battle of Paoli
- Philadelphia
- Valley Forge
- Civilian Experience – Armies forging through the countryside

Lead Partners: Brandywine Battlefield National Historic Landscape Partners, Paoli Battlefield Preservation Foundation, Valley Forge National Historical Park, related historic landscapes and sites

Potential Sites: Brandywine Battlefield National Historic Landscape, Paoli Battlefield, Valley Forge National Historical Park, Historic Yellow Springs, related historic landscapes and sites

Signage format developed for identification and interpretation of the Brandywine Battlefield.

Interpretation of *The Philadelphia Campaign* across the Chester County landscape involves many public and private sites. Of all of the county's primary themes, it is closest to being ready for presentation to the broader public with respect to heritage tourism.

2.6 IRON AND STEEL

Theme Statement:

Early iron furnaces and forges flourished in the region and were the birthplace of Pennsylvania's three centuries of industrial prominence.

The theme *Iron and Steel* interprets stories of the region's iron and steel industries, the landscapes and communities they developed, and how they influenced Pennsylvania and the nation.

Chester County's iron industry developed in the early 18th century and was prominent within the region. Over the decades, the iron industry spread west across Pennsylvania as the Commonwealth developed into a national and internationally known powerhouse in iron, steel, and manufacturing. Chester County's iron industry supplied war materials and munitions for the American Revolution and the Civil War. The theme is closely intertwined with *The Philadelphia Campaign*.

Regional furnaces and forges supported the core of Chester County's industrial development, transitioning into the production of steel in emergent urban centers. The county's industrial beginnings have continued to develop through industrial innovations and technology leadership.

Potential Theme Topics/Storylines:

- Colonial Ironworks
  - Why Here? – geology/early technology/early investment
  - The Iron Industry Spreads West – Foundation of Pennsylvania's industrial base
  - Pottstown, Coventry, Reading, Warwick, Isabella, Hibernia, Hopewell, others

- Growth of Steel
  - Phoenixville
  - Coatesville

- Urban Centers
  - Railroads, manufacturing
  - Peoples – immigrant labor and social life
  - Urban communities

- Decline and Legacy

Lead Partners: Iron & Steel Heritage Partnership, National Iron & Steel Museum, Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, Phoenixville, Coatesville, Schuylkill River Greenway National Heritage Area, Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape, conservation organizations

Potential Sites: Museum, communities, historic sites, the iron & steel landscape

Iron and steel resources are found across northern Chester County, depict two centuries of industrial development, and are the economic foundation of historic villages, boroughs, and the City of Coatesville.

2.7 CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Theme Statement:

The arts and culture have long flourished in Chester County in many forms. Some nationally recognized visual artists have been inspired by the beauty of the landscape.

The theme *Creative Expression* conveys stories of the region's authors, artists, architects, landscape designers, educators, athletes, and others who influenced regional and national culture. Early 20th-century American illustration had its roots in the region, featuring such artists as Howard Pyle, N.C. Wyeth, and Maxfield Parrish. Andrew Wyeth's paintings produced the indelible images that, for many, define the essence of the regional landscape.

Many artists continue to produce modern echoes of the early landscape tradition. Artists homes and studios, such as those of N.C. Wyeth and Wharton Esherick, personalize and enrich encounters with Chester County's artistic legacy. Longwood Gardens is renown as a designed landscape and is supplemented with other high quality regional gardens and arboretums.

Potential Theme Topics/Storylines:

- Authors, Arts, Artists, Architects, Educators – Humphrey Marshall, to Christian Sanderson, to John Boyle, and others
- The Wyeths
- The Brandywine School
- Wharton Esherick
- The DuPont's Cultural Legacy
- Gardens and Designed Landscapes
- Performance Art
- Professional/Collegiate Athletes
- The Continuing Legacy

Lead Partners: Brandywine Museum of Art, Longwood Gardens, Chester County Art Association, Chester County Community Foundation, Cultural Alliance of Chester County, local galleries and artists

Potential Sites: Brandywine Museum of Art, N.C. Wyeth Studio, Longwood Gardens, Wharton Esherick Museum, Christian Sanderson Museum, Historic Yellow Springs, Chester County Art Association, local gardens and arboretums, local galleries

The theme *Creative Expression* is conveyed through some of the region's premier attractions such as Longwood Gardens, the Brandywine Museum of Art, and others. It is also a part of the community landscape through the work of local artists and galleries.

2.8 INVENTORY OF ACTIVE HERITAGE SITES BY CATEGORY AND THEME

Appendix B of this Heritage Tourism Plan presents an inventory of active heritage sites in the county that have been identified during the planning process. Active heritage sites are sites offering interpretive experiences either through guided or self-guided tours, programs and events, outdoor interpretive exhibits, or other interpretive means and are available for the public to visit. They do not include sites that are not actively interpreted. Many significant historic sites across the county could be interpreted and added to this inventory through the programs suggested in this plan. Sites must be publicly accessible.

Appendix B lists the active heritage sites alphabetically and provides basic organizational and locational information. The full inventory is maintained in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and collects information including the basic site information: site name, managing organization, physical location, contact information for the managing organization, including websites and social media information if available. It also collects information related to governance and management structure, property details, site description, represented themes, public access, programming, visitor services, human resources, financial resources, and the effects of COVID. Not all information could be collected for each site.

The full inventory was provided to the Heritage Tourism Plan's economic consultant, ConsultEcon, for use in preparation of a Visitor Analysis and Marketing Plan. ConsultEcon added some additional information to the spreadsheet, which may be used as a resource database in implementation of the Heritage Tourism Plan.

On the following pages is spreadsheet listing of most of the heritage sites showing to which of the county's primary interpretive themes they relate. The listing is organized by category of site based on audiences and visitor facilities and programming.

National Attractions are interpretive sites with significant capacity and programming, currently attracting a national audience. They include two National Park Service sites located in Chester County: Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site and Valley Forge National Historical Park; as well as the Schuylkill River Greenways National Heritage Area. Also included is Longwood Gardens, identified by Chester County Tourism as the county's flagship tourist attraction, and the Brandywine Museum of Art.

Regional Attractions are heritage sites or preserves with strong and direct connections to the county's six interpretive themes and the capacity to offer a high-quality visitor experience. These sites generally offer year-round or seasonal programs and public access at some level. They are managed and governed by private nonprofit organizations or by municipal, county, or state government, and they range in size and management capacity. There is also a handful of privately owned properties.

Regional Attractions are further broken down by type:
- Attractions (heritage sites or museums)
- County Parks
- Regional Preserves (stewarded by nonprofits)
- Regional Trails
- Historic Railroads
- Historic Theaters

Community Attractions are interpretive sites that fill out the interpretive presentation of Chester County's six interpretive themes with a rich and diverse variety of local stories. They consist of historic buildings, small museums, monuments, and other outdoor experiences. Public access is largely limited to seasonal and weekend visitation, or special programs or events. Their management is characteristically local township historical commissions or 100% volunteer-managed nonprofit organizations with audiences that are primarily local in nature.

The attached list is a starting point for assessment of the range and type of heritage attractions in the county. Further discussion is included in the presentation of the six primary themes in Chapter 3 and in Appendix B.
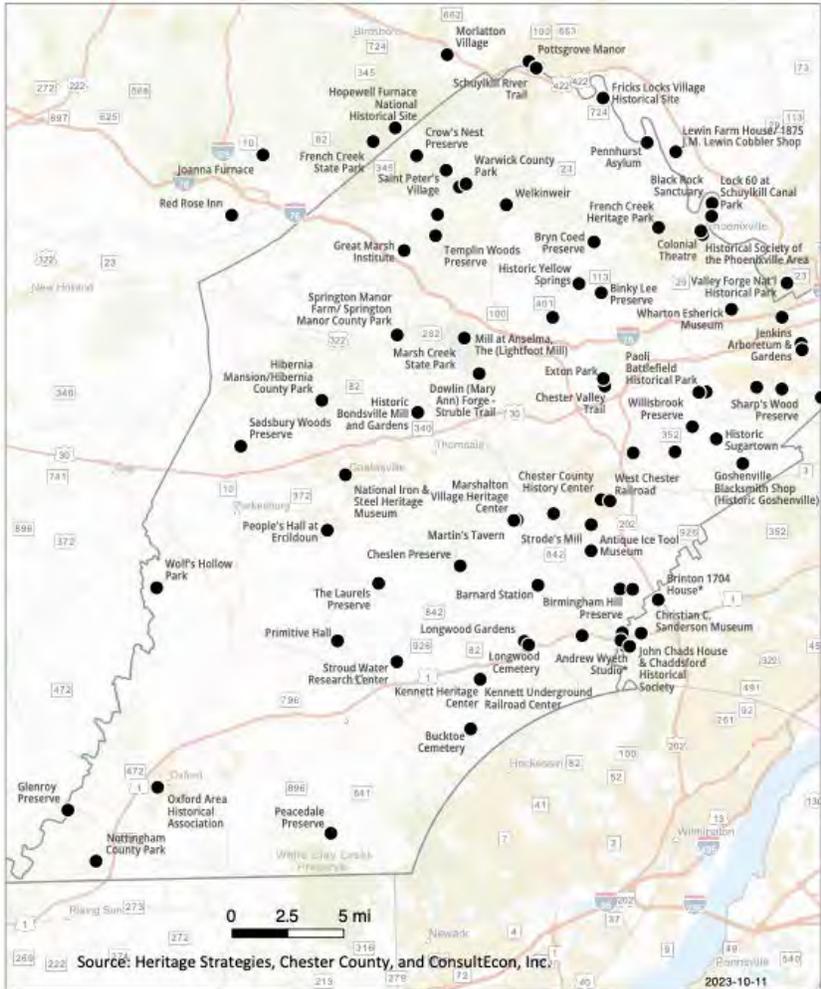
Chester County Heritage Tourism Plan
Interpretive Themes

Active Interpretive Sites	Natural Landscape	Cultural Landscape	Evolving Values	Philadelphia Campaign	Iron & Steel	Creative Expression
Lead Countywide Partner						
Chester County History Center	X	X	X	X	X	X
National Attraction						
Attactions						
Longwood Gardens	X					X
Brandywine Museum of Art / Wyeth Studios					X	X
National Parks and Heritage Areas						
Valley Forge National Historical Park		X		X		
Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site		X		X	X	
Schuylkill River Greenways National Heritage Area	X	X		X	X	
Regional Attraction						
Attactions						
American Helicopter Museum						
Antique Ice Tool Museum		X				

Chester County Heritage Tourism Plan
Interpretive Themes

Active Interpretive Sites	Natural Landscape	Cultural Landscape	Evolving Values	Philadelphia Campaign	Iron & Steel	Creative Expression
Brandywine Battlefield Park		X		X		
Brandywine Battlefield National Historic District		X	X	X		
Chester County History Center	X	X	X	X	X	X
Historic Sugartown		X				
Historic Waynesborough		X		X		
Historic Yellow Springs		X		X		
Longwood Meeting House / Visitor Center		X	X			
Mill at Anselma, The		X	X			
National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum					X	
Newlin Grist Mill		X				
Paoli Battlefield Historical Park		X		X		
Pottsgrove Manor		X			X	
Saint Peter's Village	X	X			X	

Chester County Heritage Tourism Plan
Interpretive Themes

Active Interpretive Sites	Natural Landscape	Cultural Landscape	Evolving Values	Philadelphia Campaign	Iron & Steel	Creative Expression
Wharton Esherick Museum						X
County Parks						
Black Rock Sanctuary	X					
Hibernia Park	X	X			X	
Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens	X					X
Nottingham County Park	X	X				
Springton Manor Farm		X				
Warwick County Park	X	X			X	
Wolf's Hollow Park	X					
Regional Non-profit Preserves						
Binky Lee Preserve	X					
Birmingham Hill		X		X		
Bryn Coed Preserve	X	X				

Chester County Heritage Tourism Plan
Interpretive Themes

Active Interpretive Sites	Natural Landscape	Cultural Landscape	Evolving Values	Philadelphia Campaign	Iron & Steel	Creative Expression
ChesLen Preserve / Stargazer's Stone	X	X				
Crow's Nest Preserve	X					
Sadsbury Woods Preserve	X					
Stroud Preserve	X					
Templin Woods Preserve (Great Marsh Uplands)	X					
Warwick Furnace (Thomas P. Bentley Preserve)	X	X			X	
Welkinweir	X	X				
Willisbrook Preserve	X					
Regional Trails						
Chester Valley Trail	X	X				
Struble Trail / Dowlin Forge	X	X			X	
Schuylkill River Trail	X	X				
Historic Railroads						
Colebrookdale Railroad		X				

Chester County Heritage Tourism Plan
Interpretive Themes

Active Interpretive Sites	Natural Landscape	Cultural Landscape	Evolving Values	Philadelphia Campaign	Iron & Steel	Creative Expression
West Chester Railroad		X				
Community Attraction						
Barnard Station		X	X			
Barnes-Brinton House		X		X		
Brinton 1704 House		X		X		
Chadds Ford Historical Society/John Chadd House		X		X		
Charlestown Mill		X				
French Creek Heritage Park		X		X		
Fricks Lock Village		X				
Goshenville Blacksmith Shop		X		X		
Great Marsh Institute	X					
Historic Bondsville Mill and Gardens		X				
Historical Society of the Phoenixville Area		X			X	

Chester County Heritage Tourism Plan
Interpretive Themes

Active Interpretive Sites	Natural Landscape	Cultural Landscape	Evolving Values	Philadelphia Campaign	Iron & Steel	Creative Expression
Joanna Furnace		X			X	
Jones Log Barn Living History Center		X				
Kennett Heritage Center		X	X	X		
Kennett Underground Railroad Center		X	X			
Lewin Farm House		X				
Lock 60 at Schuylkill Canal		X				
Marshalton Village Heritage Center		X		X		
Martins Tavern		X				
Oxford Area Historical Society		X				
Primitive Hall		X				
Sandy Hollow Heritage Park		X		X		
Schuylkill River Heritage Center		X			X	
Strode's Mill		X		X		

Chester County Heritage Tourism Plan
Interpretive Themes

Active Interpretive Sites	Natural Landscape	Cultural Landscape	Evolving Values	Philadelphia Campaign	Iron & Steel	Creative Expression
Thornbury Farm		X		X		
Historic Theater						
Colonial Theater		X				X
Uptown Knauer Performing Arts Center		X				X

Chapter 3 – Presentation and Visitor Experience

Chester County is known for its historic communities and landscapes, which are the foundation of local quality of life. While many residents and visitors appreciate the character of the county's historic communities and landscapes, not everyone appreciates their significance and how they came to be this way. This Chester County Heritage Tourism Plan outlines how a countywide Heritage Tourism Program can be organized and implemented over time.

Chapter 3 is about presentation of the region's stories, helping residents and visitors understand how the county's communities and landscapes developed, why they are the way they are, and why they are significant. Such understanding reenforces support for the continued preservation and conservation of historic and natural resources as well as for best practices in community planning and future growth as outlined in *Landscapes3*, Chester County's 2018 Comprehensive Plan.

With respect to heritage tourism, the county's historic communities, landscapes, and sites are attractions to which visitors are drawn, with economic benefits to local businesses and services in historic communities. While it is the character of historic communities and landscapes which may be the attraction, visitors need something to do while they are there—they need a reason or excuse to visit. Such reason may be to visit a restaurant or shop, or it may be to see the stories that the place has to tell.

The basic approach for this Heritage Tourism Plan to assist interested communities and sites in telling their own stories within a broader countywide context. The themes and storylines outlined in Chapter 2 of this plan provide the thematic context for coordination of storytelling by communities and sites throughout Chester County.

The first half of Chapter 3 provides general guidance for overall storytelling that communities and sites should consider when thinking about and developing their own interpretive presentation. This includes guiding principles for storytelling, the characteristics of potential audiences they may be presenting to, and the desired visitor experience they wish to convey.

The second half of this chapter provides conceptual summaries for the interpretive presentation of each of the county's six primary themes as outlined in Chapter 2. Existing conditions are outlined, the purposes and broad concepts of the presentations are noted, and the potential organization and structure for the interpretive presentations are described. This information is intended to provide a conceptual approach to the interpretive presentation of each primary theme from both a countywide perspective and a local perspective.

3.1 ORGANIZING A COUNTYWIDE HERITAGE TOURISM EXPERIENCE

Interpretation⎯storytelling through public exhibits, programs, tours, public events, and media⎯is a means of exposing residents and visitors to the rich and diverse stories of Chester County's historic communities, landscapes, and sites. It raises awareness about those places by stimulating interest, conveying significance, and highlighting the assets important to a community or site. Interpretation relates regional history to the authentic places that give Chester County communities, landscapes, and sites their distinctive character.

A countywide interpretive presentation should be developed that offers a comprehensive summary of Chester County's history to the public using online and onsite exhibits, media, and events. Communities, landscapes, and heritage sites should be used to present different aspects of the county's history by telling their own stories. The presentation should feature and build upon the high-quality interpretation that is currently offered and promoted to visitors at existing heritage attractions. An overview of existing heritage sites and attractions that currently provide interpretation to the public is included in Appendix A of this plan.

The countywide presentation should coordinate storytelling between communities and sites and enable the introduction of new community-based experiences over time. Chapter 4 of this plan outlines a series of potential programs that could be used to organize interpretive presentations, the most important of which are the suggested Outdoor Exhibit Program and Community Interpretive Program. Together, existing attractions and new experiences should be presented as a single coordinated countywide system such that interpretation of the county's identity is consistent between communities, landscapes, and sites.

Implementation of a countywide program requires coordinated interpretation and planning and can be undertaken in a manner that is flexible and easily executed. The program should be readily perceived as a network that can be promoted — a countywide effort linking coordinated interpretation of communities, landscapes, and sites. **It is important that the program have a consistently high level of quality, content, and visual appeal.**

Implementation can begin immediately with sites, attractions, and programs that are visitor-ready and already active. Priority can then be given to adding sites and programs that can be developed in coordination with the countywide vision, beginning with those that are easily implemented and require the least work to become visitor-ready. Over time, new communities and sites can be added as they become ready to enrich the presentation of existing storylines, add new storylines, and fill gaps in interpretation of the countywide identity. Chapter 6 of this plan, *Management and Implementation*, provides a suggested organization and framework for implementing the countywide presentation.

3.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles may be used to help guide interpretation and visitor experience that is implemented as part of the Chester County Heritage Tourism Program. The Chester County heritage landscape has distinctive character, and its interpretation is about illuminating that character and drawing meaningful connections. The guiding principles outlined below in part identify unique aspects of this place and in part suggest how they might be presented and experienced.

Experience of Place: Use the natural and cultural landscape as the vehicle through which stories are told, relating stories to real places and tangible features and evoking sense of place. Use authentic physical features – landforms, plant communities, waterways, roads, villages, streetscapes, buildings, and other resources – to tell the stories.

Holistic Landscapes: Natural and cultural influences are inseparable within the landscape. Biotic communities evolved and were in part shaped by the successive human cultures that utilized and depended upon them. We recognize that this co-evolution of our landscape continues today.

Significance and Meaning: Interpretation goes beyond conveying a story's facts. Good Interpretation draws connections, significance, and meaning to audiences. In developing interpretive content, examine each subject or story for its significance, for a key message to be conveyed by the story or exhibit. Communicate this significance or message to audiences in ways that connect to their life experiences.

Shared Human Experience: Provide interpretation in ways that help audiences relate it to experiences in their own lives. Using the authentic stories of real people in their words in the actual places where events occurred is encouraged wherever possible. The expression of universal concepts such as love, loss, uncertainty, and success to which everyone can relate in their lives helps forge personal connections to a story.

Points of View: Present stories from multiple perspectives in their thematic and historical context to help audiences appreciate how different people from diverse cultures see things and communicate differently. Encourage audiences to draw their own conclusions from each story.

Acknowledge the Unpleasant: Cultural stories are not always pleasant or uplifting. Difficulty and conflict are represented both in the challenges of life and in the interactions of diverse groups of peoples. These difficulties and conflicts will be accurately represented in the storytelling.

Context: While individual stories may be unique, they will all connect to the countywide themes. Stories will illustrate the themes and connect to the bigger picture in ways that make them immediate and understandable.

Connections: Where applicable, connect local stories to the stories of other communities and sites within the county and region as part of the communication of context, significance, and meaning. Encourage visitors to visit other places to learn about other aspects of related themes and stories.

Accuracy: Stories and content will be well researched and accurate. If the stories are based upon legend, lore, or oral tradition, clearly state so.

Quality: Every interpretive program, installation, and media experience will meet the highest standards of quality in terms of location, design, orientation to resource, storytelling, physical installation, accessibility, and visitor experience. Guidelines, review processes, and technical assistance will be used to help maintain quality standards.

Experiential Learning: People learn and remember things better when they physically do them. Emphasize communication that is visual and tied to real things and authentic places and features over the reading of waysides and text. Physical activities provide visitors with various sensory experiences—the sights, the distances, the sense of landscape and landforms associated with places and events.

Variety of Experiences: Provide a variety of interpretive approaches to satisfy the interests and capabilities of different age groups, temperaments, and orientations. Options will offer varying levels of activity, timeframes, and levels of required concentration. Provide alternative ways to experience interpretation for individuals with physical limitations or disabilities. Make use of cutting edge technology where useful and appropriate.

Opportunities to Explore: Present themes and stories in ways that encourage audiences to explore other places and sites. Draw interpretive connections, insert tempting leads, and provide the information and tools needed to spark and follow through on their interests. Encourage audiences to explore the landscape physically by inviting them to move around from place to place.

Depth of Information: Primary interpretive content will be succinct and well written, emphasizing key messages, context, and connections. In addition, develop information and guidance for exploring subjects in greater

detail to encourage those who are interested to explore subjects to whatever level of detail they wish.

Opportunities to Engage and Support: Make audiences aware of the mission, programs, and initiatives of the region's partnership organizations. Encourage them to engage in programs and activities that support partnership initiatives and help address environmental and cultural challenges.

3.3 POTENTIAL AUDIENCES

In planning for the Chester County Heritage Tourism Program, it is necessary to be acutely aware of who the intended audiences are, their interests and capabilities, and how interpretive programming will reach them. This begins with understanding the plan's goals for interpretation and visitor experience, which are discussed in this chapter and in Chapter 1.

The Heritage Tourism Program has two broad sets of audiences: residents and visitors. The purpose in reaching out to **residents** within Chester County is to strengthen community awareness, engagement, identity, and placemaking as expressed in *Landscapes3* and to sustain the local heritage economy through which local residents support restaurants, shops, and services in historic communities.

The purpose in reaching out to **visitors** from outside Chester County is to help strengthen communities economically through regional heritage tourism, using historic community character and interpretive programming to attract visitors who will patronize local lodging, restaurants, shops, and services. High quality interpretation strengthens historic community character, turning historic communities into destinations.

Different audiences have different needs and expectations. The interpretive and visitor experiences planned in each community, at each site, and across the landscape must be capable of meeting the needs and expectations of the different types of audiences who are being engaged through the heritage tourism program. Interpretive planning prepared for individual communities and sites needs to specifically plan for the audiences they expect to serve.

Below is a summary of a range of audiences anticipated by Chester County's Heritage Tourism Plan and some of their characteristics. This summary is largely anecdotal and has been derived through discussions and observations. It is further considered and analyzed in Appendix D, Visitor Analysis and Marketing Plan, which is an independent, stand-alone document produced under a separate cover.

3.3.1 Resident Audiences

The following audiences from within Chester County are of special interest and focus by the Heritage Tourism Plan.

Local Community Residents

As discussed above, local community residents within Chester County are a primary audience for the Chester County Heritage Tourism Plan with the goal of instilling a sense of shared identity among the people who call Chester County home in the various local places where they live.

Exhibits and programming embedded into the fabric of local historic communities are the primary means through which residents will be offered interpretive experiences. Interpretation is proposed as a central component of community revitalization and enhancement initiatives promoted through *Landscapes3* and the Heritage Tourism Plan and is intended to raise public awareness of community heritage, character, and identity. Community interpretation will highlight the unique aspects of each community's historical development and link them to the countywide historic themes and those of other neighboring communities.

Local community residents will be exposed to interpretation in a variety of ways. First, they may intentionally visit local historic sites and attractions where interpretation is presented. Second, they may frequent community places where exhibits are installed in implementation of a community interpretive plan (see discussion of the Community Interpretive Program in Chapter 4).

Much of their exposure in the latter case will be incidental over time. A variety of types of interpretive exhibits and installations are proposed to be implemented through community interpretive plans and expanded, enriched, and enhanced over time. Residents will associate these exhibits with public spaces where exhibits will enhance the special places of community focus such as historic villages and town centers, public parks, trails, and sites. Places where services such as restaurants, shops, and lodging are offered are of particular importance as they support the local heritage tourism economy.

Residents will experience these exhibits in the background of their daily lives as they go about their day-to-day business. They call attention to and enhance existing historic community character. Residents may not seek them out as a visitor would in a single endeavor but are likely to absorb them bit by bit over time. They encourage public support for preservation, conservation, and placemaking.

Residents of Neighboring Communities

Within Chester County, there are many individual communities and sites with their own unique characteristics. The focus upon telling the unique stories of individual communities and sites within the broad context of the countywide plan is intended to encourage exploration by Chester County residents.

Visitation by the residents of neighboring communities within Chester County is important in support of the local heritage economy and keeps such expenditures within the local communities. Community interpretive planning

and community enhancement and placemaking that focus upon local residents will also appeal to the residents of neighboring communities, encouraging them to become local heritage travelers. Neighboring visitors are an important audience for each individual community and site and should be supported through marketing.

Families

Families are a primary audience for many visitor attractions. Families are as likely to be local residents as they are to be visitors. Local families are an important constituency and should make up a significant proportion of the visitation to heritage attractions. If historic sites can draw a substantial number of residents as a visitor base, they are more likely to be successful and to be able to fill out their visitation with travelers from outside of the region. Families are among the most important type of resident groups.

The contemporary definition of family is broad. As a visitor group they likely represent a mix of ages, from children to grandparents, genders, and sexuality. Regardless, in order to attract and satisfy families, a mix of activities and options is required – something for everyone. Different interests, abilities, and activity levels need to be engaged and accommodated in a safe environment. Engaging experiences for children are particularly important – parents, guardians, and grandparents will seek out and participate in experiences and activities in a safe environment that their children enjoy. Family groups may divide up, do different things, and meet back together.

Families tend to have limited time periods for their visits. They require visitor services, such as rest rooms, places for older people to rest, friendly and respectful guides, and snacks, if possible. Families are looking for fun in a safe environment. They are more interested in the experience than in the subject matter. They need quick, easy learning. Learning should be visual and experiential, not text based. Only the high points and the basics need be presented. They are more likely to be interested in cultural themes than in war-related themes. They are more likely to be interested in people's lives and experiences than in abstract information.

Residents have the potential to be repeat visitors to an attraction they enjoy. Changing exhibits and special programming and events such as day camps and living history presentations encourage them to visit. Seasonal presentations such as fall harvests, Christmas decor, and spring flowering draw repeat visitation during the year. Chester County's more experienced attractions are well versed in establishing themselves as venues for such events.

Guests of Residents, Visiting Friends, and Family

Historic communities and interpretive sites provide places where residents can take visiting guests, friends, and family to have a nice time and to learn about the area. When friends or family come to visit, local residents look for something interesting to do with them. They want to show their guests where they live, take them to the best places to visit, and put their community's best foot forward. Historic villages, Main Street communities, gardens, nature preserves, and historic sites help fill this need in providing something interesting

to do with guests. The friends of families are therefore an important extension of the resident base visitation for a site as well as for a community.

Nature Enthusiasts/Conservationists

Chester County and its communities and non-profit organizations have been proactive in conserving open space for many years. Open space conservation has been a driving force in the county's comprehensive planning since the 1990s and has been led by the county's strong regional and local land trusts, often with state level support.

Nature enthusiasts and conservationists are an audience that likes to explore the region's forests, parks, and preserves and may also often be non-profit members, financial supporters, and volunteers. They may have an in-depth knowledge of plant and animal species or may simply have a passive appreciation of the natural world. They have an environmental consciousness and seek learning experiences, perhaps participating in educational programming and walking tours. They are most likely to be local residents or residents of neighboring communities.

Recreational Users

Closely associated with the nature and conservation audience are the many types of recreational users throughout Chester County. Hikers, bikers, runners, paddlers– recreational users are natural constituents who have a close association with and experience of the landscape. Interpretation can help enhance their experience and build support for landscape initiatives.

One consequence of the region's emphasis on preserving open space has been the increase in recreational opportunities throughout the county. With the growing suburban population, trails, parks, and public open space are widely used for passive recreation and are highly appreciated. Historic sites with trails and open space, such as Valley Forge National Historical Park, may be more heavily frequented by local recreational users than by visitors with historical interests.

Recreational users are therefore an important constituency. The passive recreational use of natural and historic sites should be encouraged and accommodated. Historically significant landscapes can be preserved in part for their recreational potential. Through recreational use, residents will become aware of the significance of sites within the community even if they do not have strong historical interests.

Interpretive presentation can be designed specifically for appreciation by recreational users. Such presentations should be landscape oriented using placemakers that communicate content and significance visually and quickly. Landscape art is an important means for such communication. Trails can be designed to illuminate stories and themes along their routes. Recreational users may be encouraged to stop and partake of more detailed exhibit content, but it should not be required. Non-profit and community events such as bicycle races and tours can be used to attract recreational enthusiasts and promote natural and historical themes and places.

Students and Teachers

Student groups make up a large proportion of the yearly visitation to many regional attractions and historic sites with interpretive programming and are a primary focus of Chester County's 250th commemoration.

Pennsylvania state curriculum guidelines call for the study of various topics at different grade levels, and regional school districts often take advantage of the professional programming offered at historic and natural resource sites that is specifically tailored to the curriculum guidelines. The same holds true for homeschooling, whether as part of a collaborative or an individual family. Programming at visitor attractions engages students with experiential learning, supplementing and enhancing in-class work. Teachers are interested in creating meaningful experiences for their students and appreciate the impact that programs at historic and natural resource sites have on learning.

Attracting student groups takes significant planning and effort. Visitation by student groups is regional in nature. Only school districts or home schooled pupils within a reasonable driving distance will be able to visit a particular site, as the entire trip must fit within the time limitations of the school day.

Challenges in attracting student groups include the cost of busing for local school districts and private schools that are already under financial pressure. Many school districts have reluctantly had to eliminate field trips from their programming due to budgetary constraints. The same holds true for some homeschoolers. The recent COVID 19 pandemic has also prevented field trips from occurring to the detriment of both student experiences and the visitor attractions whose programming was tailored to it. Some communities, non-profit organizations, and heritage regions provide financial support to local school districts for student field trips.

As with group tours, attractions that wish to serve student groups must have the capacity to accommodate buses and groups of thirty to forty students at one time. Sites must be safe, and adequate visitor services must be available, including not only rest rooms but meeting rooms, circulation space, and places to eat lunch.

Engaging programming is the key. Attractions must develop a range of programs in accordance with curriculum guidelines and the interests of teachers, students, parents, curriculum planners, and administrators. Meeting the educational needs of specific courses and subject matter is essential. Educational programming must be engaging and real. It must not only be interesting and fun for students, but it must also make the work of the teacher easier and more successful.

Most of Chester County's leading attractions are already experienced in planning for student groups. The range and quality of programming that they currently provide are impressive. Most existing programming is personal in nature and conducted by experienced educators and interpreters, some of whom are volunteers.

Some smaller attractions with talented interpreters currently struggle to serve student groups, however, due to limited staff and available services. Supportive

programming implemented as part of the Heritage Tourism Plan could assist these sites to help address this situation. In addition to being important in and of itself, successful student programming can lead to increased visitation by parents, families, and friends.

3.3.2 Visiting Audiences

The following audiences from outside of Chester County are of special interest and focus within the Heritage Tourism Plan.

Heritage Travelers

Heritage travelers are the common demographic group to which historic communities and many historic sites appeal. Heritage travelers are older, affluent, and well-educated. They tend to travel by automobile in small groups: as couples, pairs of couples, or small groups of family and friends. They do not usually travel with children.

Heritage travelers are interested in and engaged with the places they visit. They are looking for a high-quality experience. They are capable of absorbing detailed interpretive information, and they are interested in understanding the broader implications of the information presented. They are interested in a broad range of subjects, including agricultural, economic, social, ecological, and cultural themes.

Authenticity is a key attraction to heritage travelers. They want to see, experience, and appreciate the actual places where things happened. Quality of life is of particular interest. Heritage travelers are interested in a holistic experience, not just visiting attractions. They want to be in interesting places, and they want to experience the places that local residents frequent.

Heritage travelers are interested in the quality of the overall experience: the driving, the scenery, the lodging, dining, and shopping. Potential destinations must be safe and of sufficient quality. Heritage travelers are willing to spend more money than other types of audiences. They tend to be repeat visitors if they like the place and feel there is more to see and do. They are also likely to explore from one site to another.

Heritage travelers are a key audience for the economic component of the Heritage Tourism Plan. Many heritage travelers may be attracted from the broad Philadelphia metropolitan area including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. Heritage travelers from farther away are likely to be from the places that the existing Brandywine Valley tourism initiatives currently attract. Appendix D, the Visitor Analysis and Marketing Plan associated with this plan, provides additional information and detail on this topic.

Flexibility is important for heritage travelers as they plan their trips. A range of short, medium, and longer experiences should be available. Discovery of the unexpected while they are here will encourage visitors to adjust their plans as well as visit again. Interpretation and visitor experience should not only be of high quality but should be intellectually stimulating and enlightening.

Revolutionary War Enthusiasts

Revolutionary War enthusiasts are a core audience for the interpretive themes *The Philadelphia Campaign* and *Iron and Steel* as well as for presentation of Chester County's colonial era landscape. They are particularly relevant to the county's 250th commemoration. They can be a target audience for customized small group and heritage touring given the strength of the stories in Chester County and the amount of effort that has been devoted to the preservation of battlefield and related colonial landscapes and resources.

Revolutionary War enthusiasts are knowledgeable about the United States' 18th century history. They include local historians, preservationists, history buffs, and re-enactors. They are familiar with the county's Revolutionary War era history and resources. Many are probably already engaged with history related interests in their communities such as local historical societies, historical commissions, and the Chester County Historic Preservation Network and can be encouraged and inspired to help support and initiate interpretive programs where they live.

Other Revolutionary War enthusiasts will come from adjacent states where Revolutionary War era history is of interest or as an extension of Civil War battlefield exploration. They are a potential target market for heritage tourism experiences.

Revolutionary War enthusiasts are likely to come having already studied the battles, campaigns, and events, and they are interested in seeing and experiencing the actual places where events occurred. Revolutionary War enthusiasts will likely not only be knowledgeable about war-related subjects but also about colonial life and the county's broader cultural themes.

Revolutionary War enthusiasts may be primarily male but are likely to be traveling with spouses with similar interests. Like heritage travelers, they tend to travel in small groups of friends and family. Revolutionary War enthusiasts are not necessarily as affluent as heritage travelers and may not be as interested in quality-of-life experiences. They will go places that are off the beaten path, places that traditional heritage travelers will not venture, to see authentic places and understand the war-related stories.

Revolutionary War enthusiasts are a target audience for special events at the county's historic sites and communities, such as re-enactments, living history, and special tours associated with the Brandywine and Paoli Battlefields and at Valley Forge. With respect to interpretation, depth of information is important to Revolutionary War enthusiasts. Like other visitors, they need to understand the broad context and significance of the Revolutionary War era, but they also need to be given the opportunity to delve more deeply into details and minutia that are not likely to engage most visitors.

Revolutionary War enthusiasts will go directly to battlefields and key historic sites and skip other attractions. They will spend time at historic sites and on battlefields and will want to explore them. They are open to a more athletic and demanding experience. Revolutionary War era landscapes should be made understandable to them. They will be interested in major sites and battlefields,

but they will also seek out lesser known and recognized places where interesting events occurred. They will want to know exactly where detailed events took place, what conditions were like, and what exactly occurred. They will spread their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their experience to others by word of mouth and the internet.

International Travelers

International travelers are an important component of the visitor audience from outside of the county and are a target audience of Chester County Tourism (the Chester County Conference and Visitors Bureau). The City of Philadelphia is an international visitor destination, and because of its proximity to the city, international travelers are drawn to high-quality experiences and attractions within the suburbs.

High profile attractions such as Longwood Gardens, Brandywine Museum of Art, Wharton Esherick Museum, and Valley Forge National Historical Park are known to international travelers and are featured in international travel guides. When visiting these attractions, international travelers will also be exposed to Chester County's historic communities and the restaurants, lodging, and other visitor services they provide.

International travelers are intelligent and sophisticated. They expect a world-class experience and will quickly perceive shortcomings in the visitor experience. Chester County's heritage tourism experience should be designed to be compatible with the world-class levels that international visitors will have seen. Authenticity is key. International visitors want to see the authentic America, places where Americans live and work. In that sense, the inclinations of international travelers and heritage travelers are very similar.

International travelers will not be knowledgeable about Chester County history or heritage. Presenting the county's broad themes and how they play out in the region's cultural development can be of great interest. Chester County's historic sites and historic visitor service communities provide an opportunity to make a positive impression upon foreign visitors.

Group Tours

Group bus tours organized and conducted by special interest groups and professional tour operators are an important constituency for tourist visitation as implemented through Chester County Tourism and partnering regional CVBs and attractions. The Brandywine attractions, including Longwood Gardens; Brandywine Museum of Art; Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library; and others, are experienced in promoting to and accommodating group tours. Valley Forge National Historic Park is also a focus of tour groups. Some group tours are self-organized, but many are run by professional tour operators.

Because of the importance of tour audiences, many large attractions and visitor bureaus market only to tour operators and do not market to incidental, leisure travelers at all. Marketing is undertaken through conventions, familiarization tours, and direct marketing. Group tours are lucrative because they combine large volume (and visitation fees) with short timeframes. Bus tours arrive, visit, and leave. A single attraction or event is usually one stop in a series that are

being visited by the tour. Visits are quick, and extensive programming is not required.

The people participating in group tours tend to be older. There is some discussion that with the passing of the World War II generation, group touring will tail off, as the baby boomer and subsequent generations tend to prefer independent travel. Attractions that wish to draw group tours must first have the level of quality and interest that appeals to those who participate in them. Tour operators will only go to places that sell, and the competition is stiff. High quality and visitor appeal is essential.

Attractions that wish to host group tours must have the capacity to accommodate buses and large groups easily. Attractions must have sufficient quantity and quality of visitor services, especially rest rooms, and they must be accessible to individuals with limited physical capabilities. Only a handful of Chester County's current attractions can meet these requirements. In addition to those mentioned above, the Chester County History Center and Brandywine Battlefield Park have the capacity to host group tours.

Aside from the current range of group tours to the county's larger attractions, the possibility of organizing specialized thematic bus tours has interesting potential. Some tours with qualified step-on guides have been organized to explore the Brandywine and Paoli Battlefields, as well as local Underground Railroad sites, though smaller buses and vans are generally used. Much of the county's rural cultural landscape is inappropriate for large buses, and local suburban and rural residents are opposed to tour buses on local rural and suburban roads.

Small companies currently organize customized themed tours for private groups throughout the country and could be tapped to create locally appropriate touring of Chester County. Providing planning and logistics for customized group tours could provide an income stream for local attractions. The possibility of creating themed tours will take coordination and marketing by staff, attractions, and tourism organizations. Subjects, storylines, and potential stops must be carefully planned and organized. Dining and lodgings along the tour must be of sufficient quality to satisfy travelers.

Virtual Visitors

Today the internet is a powerful tool for communicating with people throughout the world. With appropriate programming, many people can be expected to explore Chester County sites and attractions without ever actually coming to the region. High quality internet content is an important means of communication in promotion of the county and its landscapes, communities, and sites.

This Heritage Tourism Plan outlines a website component to engage and orient potential visitors. The website should present the background and significance of the region's history, allow virtual exploration of authentic places associated with that history, provide information that encourages and supports visitation, and reach out to potential supporters for cooperative programming, community enhancement, fundraising, and development.

3.4 DESIRED VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The Chester County visitor and interpretive experience is designed to connect people with the region's communities and living landscape and to build support for the stewardship of its natural and cultural resources and for further enhancement of its quality of life. Upon experiencing the county's heritage tourism presentation, residents and visitors will:

- Appreciate and enjoy Chester County's diverse **communities** and quality of life;
- Gain a **shared identity** and sense of value that is tied to the county's historic, cultural, and natural landscapes among Chester County residents;
- Be stimulated to **explore new places** and return to favorite places for enjoyable, valued, and enriching experiences;
- Appreciate how Chester County's history is related to the evolving **national story**;
- Connect the natural and cultural landscapes with Chester County's key **themes and storylines**;
- Appreciate the character and significance of the **Piedmont Ecoregion** and its varied biotic communities and landscapes;
- Appreciate how **natural and cultural influences** upon the landscape are intertwined and inseparable;
- Appreciate how **colonial settlement patterns**, technologies, and land uses shaped the landscape and remain evident in the landscape today;
- Recognize the distinctive aspects of the county's **evolving** technologies, economic initiatives, cultural perspectives, and lifeways and their relationships to the landscape;
- Be supportive of public and private **stewardship** initiatives in land conservation, historic preservation, and community enhancement;
- Engage in a **vision for the future** that balances natural and cultural priorities and supports sustainability and best practices in growth and change.

3.5 WAYFINDING AND MEDIA

Chester County Tourism is in the process of updating its existing wayfinding system that provides branded signage directing visitors to existing attractions throughout the county. It is hoped that this new wayfinding system can be implemented in conjunction with the county's Heritage Tourism Program.

Chapter 4 and Appendix C of this plan provide information on identity, branding, and market presentation for the Heritage Tourism Program and provides a basis for further development of related graphic identity for the orientation of visitors. In short, graphic identity and branding are proposed to adopt and build upon those of Chester County Tourism's new wayfinding system. Exception will be for identity, branding, and wayfinding for the primary theme, *The*

Philadelphia Campaign, which is proposed to build upon the existing graphic identity, branding, and wayfinding signage already being used for the Brandywine Battlefield.

Wayfinding signage proposed by Chester County Tourism to replace existing wayfinding signage throughout the county. Graphic identity for implementation of the Heritage Tourism Plan for orientation, exhibits, and supporting public media should be based upon and coordinated with this system. (Chester County Tourism)
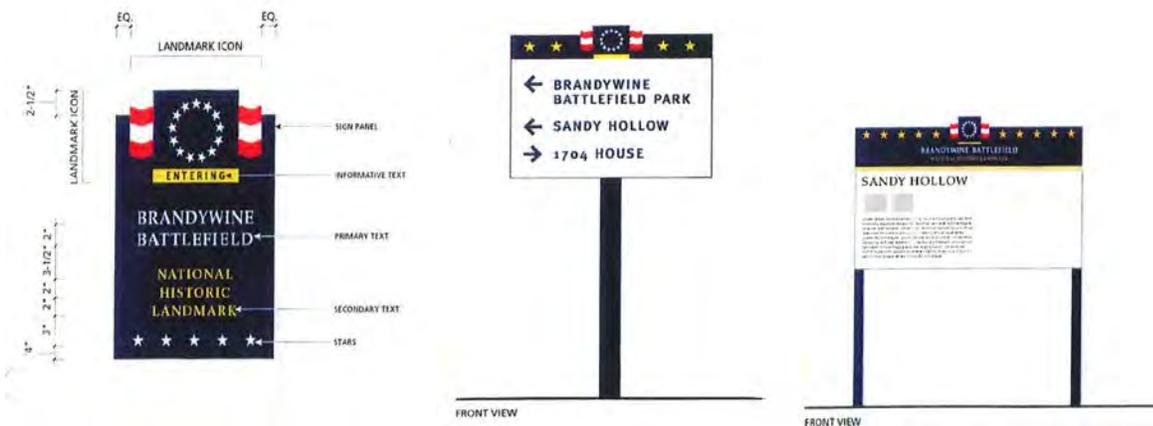
However, graphic identity for wayfinding, orientation, exhibit, and supporting materials for the primary theme *The Philadelphia Campaign* should build upon the existing graphic identity established for the Brandywine Battlefield. (Brandywine Battlefield Task Force/AGS 2000)

The proposed countywide interpretive presentation outlined in this plan emphasizes the design and implementation of interpretive exhibits in communities and sites throughout the county to tell the individual stories of those communities and sites within a countywide context. In part this is due to the need for self-guided exhibits in order to provide interpretation to visitors in the many authentic historic places throughout the county. The use of creative public art and landscape installations for interpretation is also strongly encouraged. (See Chapter 4.)

The emphasis upon exhibits and physical infrastructure should not dissuade the use of other forms of media for the countywide presentation. In addition to the website, the use of mobile apps, personal guides, living history presentations, and events are also discussed in the presentation discussions below and in the suggested programs outlined in Chapter 4. Other creative ways to enhance interpretation and visitor experience should be considered whenever possible in the development of the interpretive presentation for Chester County.

3.6 PRESENTATION OF THEMES AND STORYLINES

A set of six primary interpretive themes have been adopted for Chester County and are presented in Chapter 2 of this plan. A number of theme topics/subthemes have been outlined beneath each primary theme that convey different aspects of the county's history and significance. Together, the primary themes and theme topics establish a thematic framework through which the countywide interpretive presentation can be organized.

As noted in Chapter 2, themes are the Big Ideas that convey the meaning and significance of historic communities, landscapes, and sites. Themes are intended to help residents and visitors connect individual stories with broader contexts, understand what those stories mean, and why they matter. Every potential site should have a place within the thematic framework for the countywide presentation and should be able to identify local storylines that connect to and illustrate aspects the thematic framework.

A conceptual summary for the interpretive presentation of each of the county's six primary themes is described below. For each primary theme existing conditions are outlined including issues and opportunities, purposes for the presentation are noted, the broad concepts for the presentation are listed, and a potential organization and structure for the presentation is suggested based upon existing conditions and opportunities.

These conceptual summaries will need to be confirmed, adapted, and revised by partners and stakeholders as they plan for implementation. Additional detail will need to be developed for each presentation as implementation begins and is further developed over time.

3.6.1 The Natural Landscape

The theme statement for the primary interpretive theme *The Natural Landscape* says: *Chester County's natural resources have shaped its history and development.*

Chester County's natural and cultural landscapes are inextricably intertwined, each influencing the other. The natural landscape has always been influenced and impacted by human use going back thousands of years through Native American use and management practices intended to maximize the plant, animal, and mineral resources upon which they depended. The human impacts on the natural landscape increased dramatically after European settlement and the widespread clearing of the land for agriculture and industry.

Yet despite the intertwined relationship, the natural landscape has its own character and dynamics which are of great significance and are important to understand and appreciate. The natural landscape today is different than it was during Native American times or during early settlement—it is evolving. Understanding of its character, dynamics, and the issues to which it is responding is essential to the natural landscape's future conservation and management.

Chester County has had broad public support for the conservation of open space, including significant natural landscapes and agricultural lands. In large part, this is due to public recognition of the suburban growth pressures threatening the landscape, regional affluence, and general appreciation for the natural landscape. A number of strong regional and local land trusts are at the forefront of the land conservation efforts.

The purposes for presentation and interpretation of the natural landscape are:

- for the education, appreciation, and enjoyment of residents and visitors;
- to raise awareness about natural systems; and
- to help build support for conservation and stewardship as key components of environmental health and local quality of life.

Audiences

Primary audiences for presentation of *The Natural Landscape* are of local and regional origin and include:

- Local Community Residents – The number, range, and diversity of natural resource sites provide a rich array of opportunities for exploration by local residents. Many are locally and easily accessible and are considered local community assets. Different types and lengths of experience are available.

- Residents of Neighboring Communities – The number, range, and diversity of sites invite exploration of interesting places across the county by residents from throughout the county.

- Nature Enthusiasts/Conservationists – Nature enthusiasts from within the county and outside the county will be attracted to Chester County's natural sites, especially if well-presented. Programs of local

conservation groups may provide the basis for broader promotion to nature enthusiasts throughout the Philadelphia metropolitan region.

- <u>Recreational Users</u> – Regional trails provide opportunities to attract visitors—walkers, runners, bikers—from throughout the metropolitan area. Most local community sites feature trails that are attractive for recreational use as well.

- <u>Guests of Residents, Visiting Friends, and Family</u> – *The Natural Landscape* provides interesting and convenient places to take guests for short outdoor experiences.

Broad Concepts

Broad concepts and ideas to be conveyed through presentation of *The Natural Landscape* are outlined in Chapter 2, *Themes and Storylines*, and include:

- Character and dynamics of the Piedmont Physiographic Province of which the county is a part;

- How the four geographic areas of the county—Northern Piedmont Upland, Piedmont Lowland (The Great Valley), Southern Piedmont Upland, and Triassic Lowland—are different, with differing geologies, landforms, and natural communities;

- The importance of rivers and watersheds in establishing landscape character;

- The dynamics of the region's natural communities of plant and animal life, how they have developed, and how they continue to evolve in response to influences and opportunities;

- Environmental issues that are impacting natural communities; and

- Best practices for stewardship of the natural landscape throughout Chester County.

Website

The website created for the heritage tourism project will serve as the principal gateway to presentation and experience of *The Natural Landscape*. The website will begin with a comprehensive presentation of the background and context of the natural landscape in Chester County—geology, landforms, ecology, natural systems and communities— with maps, photographs, and descriptions. The presentation will be an educational resource to which individual natural resource sites can relate and that establishes their broader context. The county's natural history and current condition will be summarized. References and links will be provided to facilitate further reading.

To encourage visitation to and exploration of the county's natural resource sites, themes and storylines related to *The Natural Landscape* will be presented on the website. Publicly accessible sites associated with the county's various landscape areas will be identified along with the themes and storylines to which they relate. Links will be provided to the websites and social media pages of the various participating sites. The extent of interpretation and experience available

at each site will be provided. Suggestions for how sites may be explored will be available.

Organization and Structure

The interpretive theme *The Natural Landscape* will be presented at publicly accessible parks, preserves, trails, conservation lands, and gardens throughout Chester County. There are many existing sites that may participate. The organizational structure is one of a **constellation of individual sites** of various sizes and types but with characteristics in common. Some sites are linked by trails, roads, or waterways.

The number, range, and diversity of sites invite free exploration. Most natural resource sites involve some amount of walking and exercise. All present intimate experiences of special places of distinctive character. Each has stories to tell about the plant communities, ecology, and natural resources at their location, and each contributes to appreciation of the broader natural landscape context.

Where possible, each individual site should try to coordinate its interpretation with the countywide presentation of natural history on the heritage tourism website and with countywide themes and storylines. Every site should be able to find its place within the county's natural landscape story and should be able to contribute to understanding of that story.

Several large natural landscape areas within Chester County are home to sites that coordinate their conservation, interpretation, and recreational opportunities.

The **Hopewell Big Woods** in the northwestern portion of the county is part of the larger Pennsylvania Highlands and the state's Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape. The Hopewell Big Woods is 73,000 acres in area bridging Chester and Berks Counties and is the largest remaining contiguous forest in southeastern Pennsylvania. French Creek State Park and Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site comprise its core. Some 40 governmental agencies, private non-profits, and municipal entities collaborate in the Hopewell Big Woods Partnership to protect and preserve the landscape while providing recreational and cultural experiences.

The Hopewell Big Woods may be presented as a landscape region within the Heritage Tourism Plan. The French & Pickering Creek Conservation Trust serves as the Partnership's coordinating entity. Support is provided by the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape, a program of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) with Natural Lands as its coordinating entity.

The **Brandywine Creek Greenway** is a strategic planning initiative of the Brandywine Conservancy and Chester County Planning Commission encompassing the core of the Brandywine Creek watershed and focused on land and water conservation. Over 4,000 acres of public land and 36,000 acres of private land have been conserved, 24% of the land within the Greenway. Parks, preserves, and trails within the Greenway provide public access for recreational use and provide opportunities for interpretation and promotion of the

Greenway's natural history, resources, and stories. The Brandywine Conservancy is the lead coordinating entity with a regional structure of municipalities and other partnering entities. A system of gateways, trails, and interpretive exhibits have been planned and implemented and can be supported, further enhanced, and promoted through the heritage tourism program.

Additional large landscape areas may be presented by groups of stakeholders working in collaboration as appropriate. Examples might be the White Clay Creek, Red Clay Creek, or others. Guidelines for collaboration and presentation may be prepared similar to those for community interpretive presentations in Chapter 4.

Regional trails such as the Chester Valley Trail, Struble Trail, and Schuylkill River Trail provide opportunities for coordinated interpretation of the natural landscape over extended areas.

Some natural landscape sites prefer not to install wayside signage and exhibits along trails and in natural areas, considering them a visual intrusion. Kiosks, maps, and exhibits are often installed at trailheads, and brochures are often provided for visitor use and reference while hiking. Additional thought should be given as to how best to provide educational content in natural areas while not intruding upon the landscape experience.
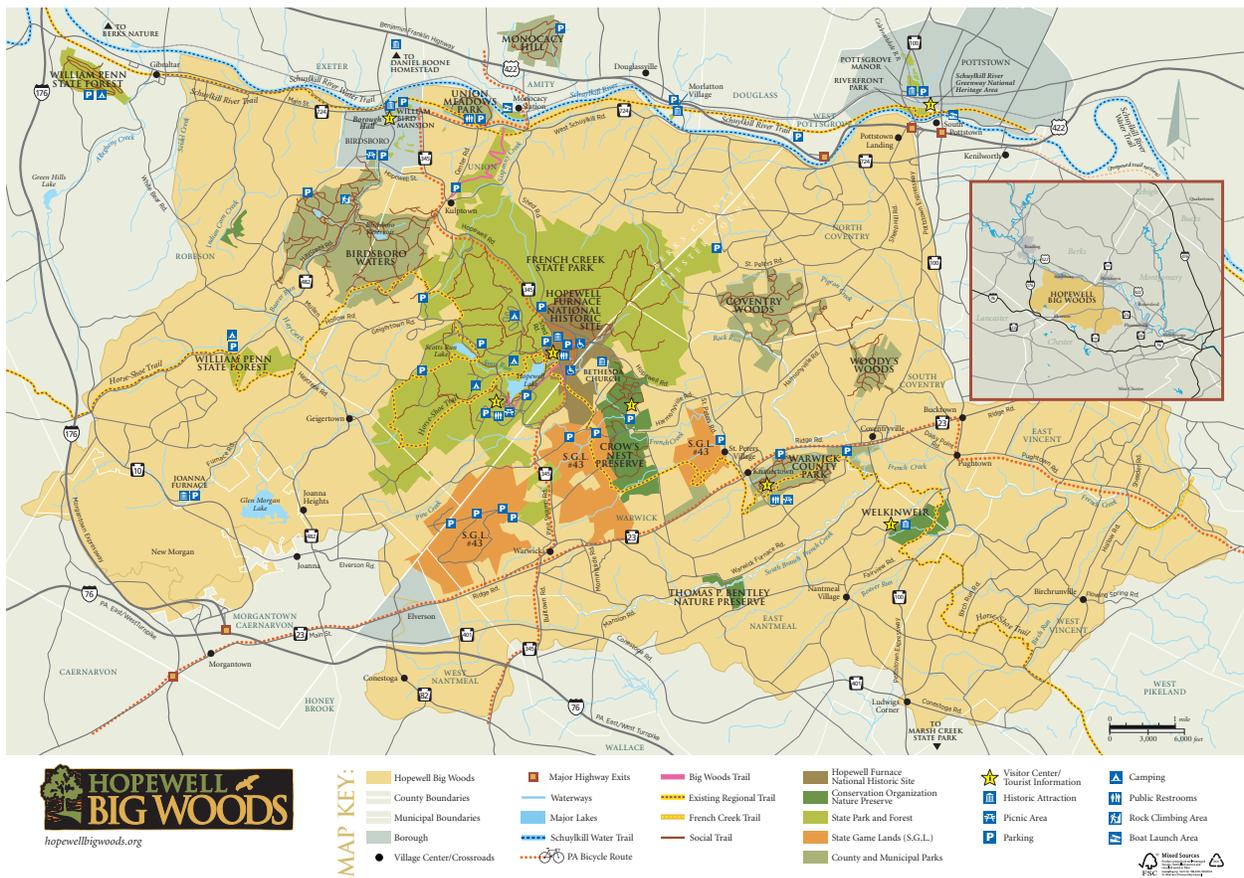
The Hopewell Big Woods in northern Chester County and adjacent Berks County (hopewellbigwoods.org)
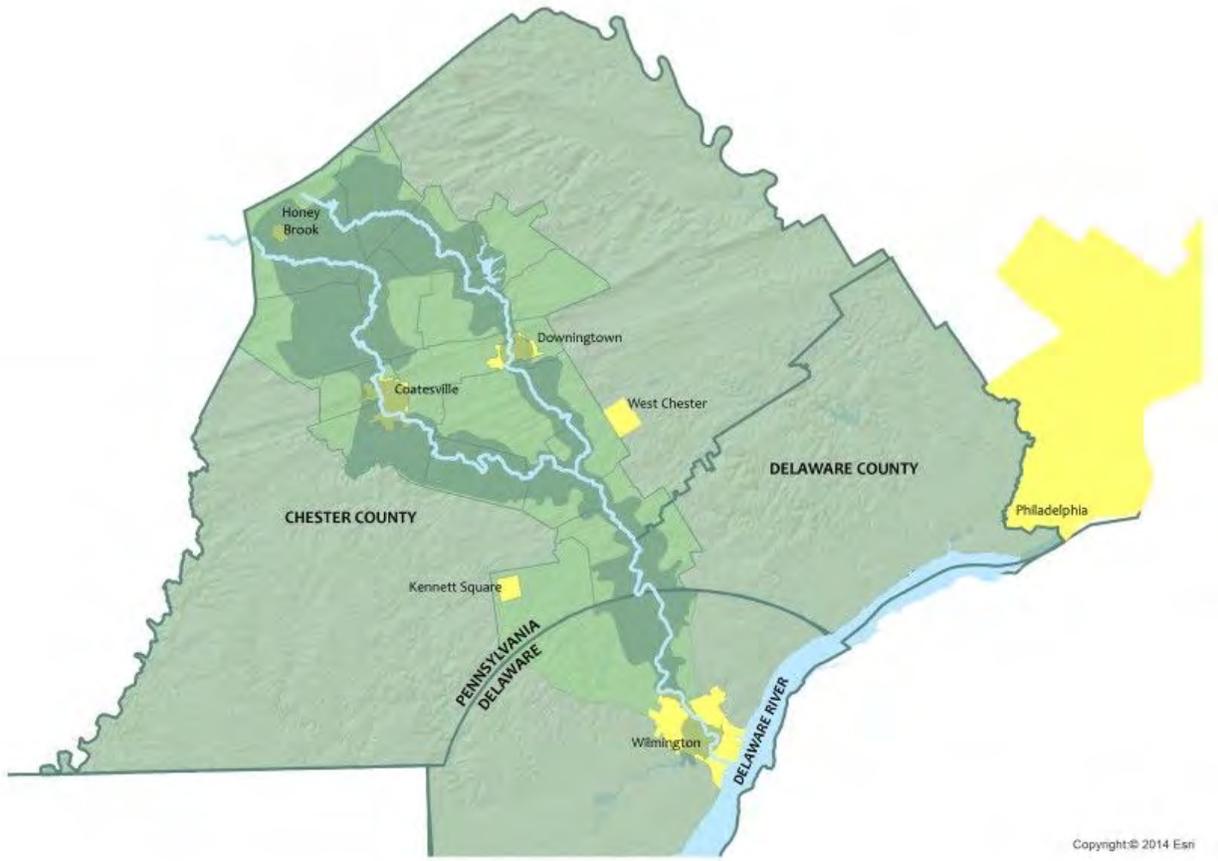
The Brandywine Creek Greenway through central Chester County into Delaware (Brandywine Conservancy 2014)

The Brandywine Creek in winter
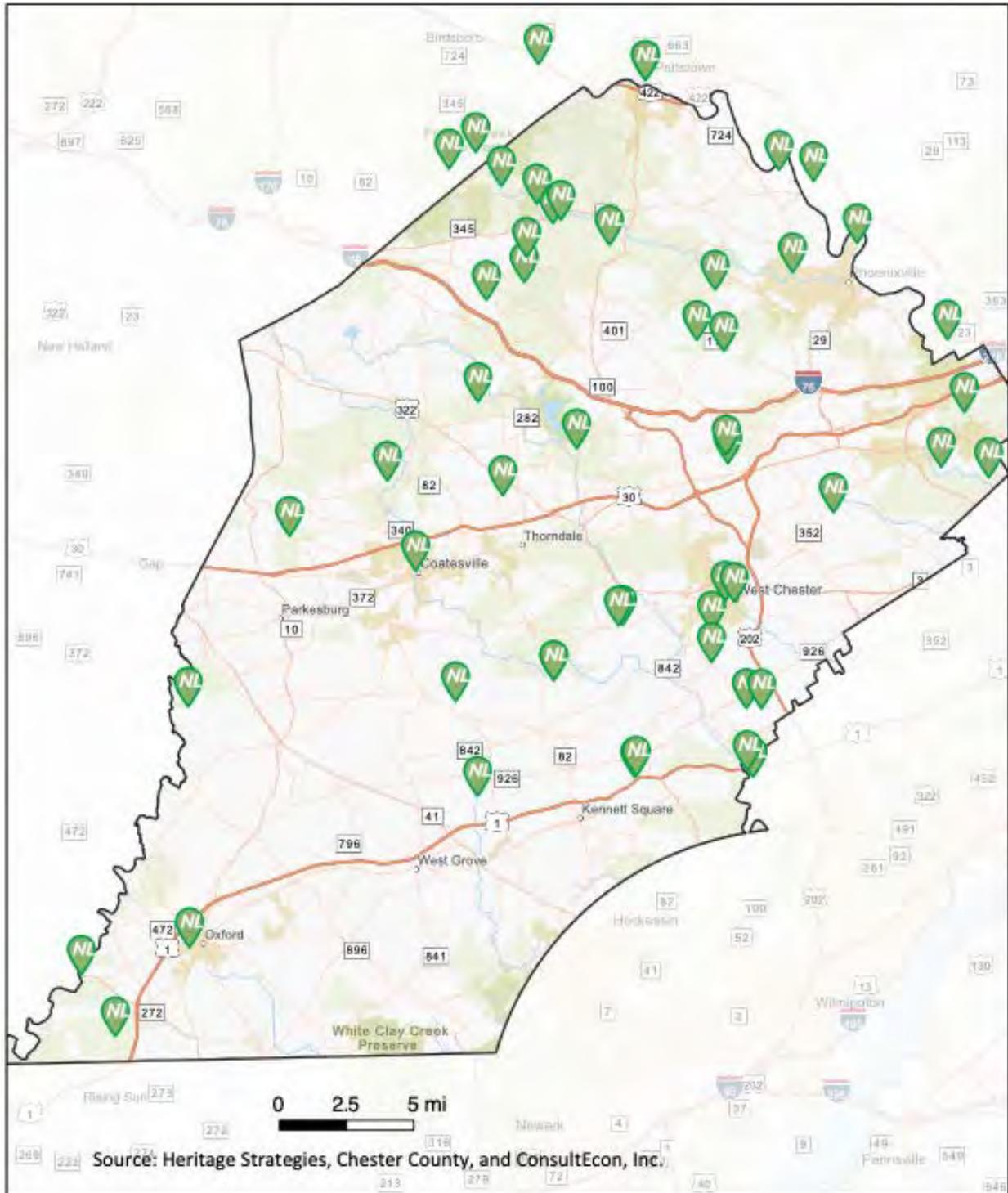
Locations of publicly accessible non-profit preserves and county parks that are identified in the Heritage Sites Inventory in Appendix B. Map by ConsultEcon.

3.6.2 The Cultural Landscape

The theme statement for the primary interpretive theme *The Cultural Landscape* says: *Chester County preserves rare insights into daily life in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries through its evolving agricultural landscape and the character of its historic communities and structures.*

Chester County's cultural landscape is the centerpiece of community identity and quality of life throughout the county. Successive periods of the county's pre-history and history may be seen and appreciated through reading of historic landscape patterns, resources, and structures.

The county's landscape supported agricultural uses for thousands of years. From the time of European settlement, agriculture was the primary economic force within Chester County. This can be traced from the 1680s and early 1700s through the expansion of the suburbs of metropolitan Philadelphia in the mid-to-late 1900s.

Native American Cultural Landscape – Native American cultures have been present in southeastern Pennsylvania for over 11,000 years. Most recent and best known are the Lenape who inhabited the Delaware Valley, including portions of today's eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and southern New York. The Lenape are linguistically related to the Algonquin peoples of the northeast as are coastal tribes extending from the Chesapeake Bay north through New England. The Lenape of southeastern Pennsylvania below Trenton and adjacent to southern New Jersey spoke a Southern Unami Dialect. Their ancestors are thought to have moved into the region hundreds of years ago or more, perhaps from today's upstate New York.

The Lenape tended to live in small hamlets and scattered farmsteads, perhaps relocating seasonally to make use of a rich variety of natural resources. This differs from the settlement patterns of neighboring tribal groups, such as the Susquehannock or Iroquois, who tended to live in large settlements and had more developed and sedentary agricultural systems. The Lenape's continued reliance upon natural plant communities rather than intensive agriculture may be due in part to the abundant natural resources of the Piedmont, which were adequate for the provisioning of smaller groups.

Lenape use of the land was extensive—artifacts such as hunting points can be found everywhere—but not intensive—with few identified village or other settlement/use sites within the county. The characteristics of plant and animal communities within *The Natural Landscape* inform our understanding of how the Lenape likely made use of landscape resources. The extent to which the Lenape managed their landscape is not documented, but they likely sought means to enhance the resources upon which they depended. The landscape present when Europeans arrived was different in character from the natural landscape that evolves today through succession.

European settlement in southeastern Pennsylvania began later than in other colonies—1680s as opposed to the 1620s and 1630s in New England, Maryland, and Virginia. By this time, European diseases had devastated the Native American populations along the Atlantic coast and reached inland tribes as well.

Consequently, the Lenape population that was present at the time Europeans arrived was likely significantly smaller than it had been a hundred years earlier. As much as 75% to 95% of the Native American population in the northeastern and mid-Atlantic regions is believed to have been lost to European diseases during the 1600s. To Europeans, the land seemed open to settlement.

The Lenape are prominent in the history of William Penn and the founding of Pennsylvania. Penn sought to treat them with fairness, but when he died in 1718, that policy changed. They were cheated out of their land holdings and moved from the Delaware Valley by the 1730s. Lands were set aside for them in Chester County, but they remained there only briefly. They moved to western Pennsylvania for a time, but by 1800, they had migrated to Indiana. The main groups are currently in Oklahoma and Ontario, Canada. (Carr 2015:209; PHMC 2002:27-41)

European Cultural Landscape – Close to the port of Philadelphia through which Europeans flowed, Chester County was rapidly settled once the colony was opened to Europeans in the 1680s. William Penn's approach to settlement was guided by his Quaker beliefs, discussed under the theme *Evolving Values*, which welcomed peoples of a diverse range of European national, ethnic, and religious persuasions⸺those for whom the risk of relocation to a strange land was preferable to the struggles in the places from which they had come.

Penn's open system learned and benefited from the mistakes of earlier colonial initiatives, which were more narrow and philosophically limited in their approach. A distinctive landscape of independent farms developed which were tolerant, practical, economically vital, adapted to the landscape context, and flavored with the cultural traditions of the diverse groups who settled here. Geographers describe this as the Pennsylvania Cultural Hearth, and as migration through southeastern Pennsylvania spread west over the next hundred years, these cultural forms and traditions became core elements of the American heartland.

The woodlands existing prior to the arrival of Europeans were almost entirely cleared for farming and related industrial enterprises. A market economy of yeoman farmers with individual farms was established. Colonial patterns of roads, farmsteads, mills, and crossroads villages established the patterns of the agricultural landscape even as the agricultural economy changed over the decades. Those early patterns remain clearly evident in the landscape today.

The county's early industries of mills and iron furnaces and forges were closely tied to the availability of natural resources such as streams for waterpower and forests for wood and charcoal and may be considered as an extension of the broader agricultural landscape. Transportation corridors and geology, landforms, and soil types greatly influenced settlement patterns.

As transportation, industry, and manufacturing evolved, larger urbanized communities developed at advantageous locations⸺Phoenixville, Coatesville, West Chester, Downingtown, Kennett Square, and others. These industries evolved as well, shaping and expanding their communities. Many of the industries eventually disappeared.

Suburbanization beginning after World War II brought new prosperity to the county and was preceded by an influx of wealthy owners from the city and inner suburbs in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, buying up farms and creating gentlemen's farms that promoted advanced agricultural practices and equestrian society.

Over recent decades, there has been broad public support for investment in open space conservation and historic preservation in recognition of the role that the agricultural landscape and historic communities play in the region's quality of life. As suburban growth has intensified and dramatically expanded, so have efforts to preserve community character and identity as expressed in Chester County's evolving comprehensive plan, *Landscapes1* through *Landscapes3*.

The rich character of Chester County's agricultural landscape and historic communities has made it an attraction for heritage visitors, especially in places where visitor services are offered.

The purposes for presentation and interpretation of Chester County's cultural landscape is to:

- raise public awareness about community character and identity;
- promote heritage tourism as a component of the regional economy; and
- build support for historic preservation, open space conservation, and best practices in community planning as expressed in *Landscapes3*.

Audiences

Primary audiences for presentation of *The Cultural Landscape* are of local, regional, national, and international origin and include:

- Local Community Residents – The range and quality of historic landscapes, communities, and sites present across the county provide a rich array of opportunities for exploration by residents. Local residents are engaged in and are the drivers for open space conservation, preservation of historic resources, and community enhancement in their communities, often with county support. Local residents appreciate the places in which they live.

- Residents of Neighboring Communities – The range and quality of historic landscapes, communities, and sites invite exploration of interesting places across the county by residents from throughout the county.

- Heritage Travelers – Chester County's cultural landscape is a primary attraction for heritage travelers to the region. Visitation may be initiated by specific visitor sites, attractions, and events such as Longwood Gardens, Valley Forge, equestrian venues, and others, but the county's cultural landscape provides opportunities for exploration and extended stays as visitors seek interesting places they and quality services in local communities.

- ▪ <u>International Travelers</u> – Like heritage travelers, international travelers take interest in the character and quality of local communities and landscapes as they explore and seek quality services.

- ▪ <u>Guests of Residents, Visiting Friends, and Family</u> – The Chester County landscape provides interesting places to take guests for touring, restaurant, and shopping experiences.

Broad Concepts

Broad concepts and ideas to be conveyed through presentation of *The Cultural Landscape* are outlined in Chapter 2, *Themes and Storylines*, and include:

- ▪ Chester County's role in the 18th century European settlement of the nation⸺the Pennsylvania Cultural Hearth;

- ▪ Native American and colonial settlement patterns and their influence upon the subsequent history, development, and character of Chester County;

- ▪ The distinctive character of individual places throughout Chester County⸺variations on a theme: landscape areas, scenic roads, crossroad villages, farmsteads, mill sites, towns and boroughs, neighborhoods, and others;

- ▪ Development and change in agriculture over three centuries and how they have influenced landscapes and communities;

- ▪ Development and change in industry over three centuries and how they have influenced landscapes and communities;

- ▪ The role of transportation in the growth of communities and changes to the landscape;

- ▪ Suburban growth and change in the late 20th century;

- ▪ The peoples who have come to Chester County during each successive period of its development and influenced its communities; and

- ▪ Best practices for the conservation, preservation, and enhancement of historic landscapes and communities throughout Chester County.

Website

The website created for the heritage tourism project will serve as the principal gateway to presentation and experience of *The Cultural Landscape*. The website will provide an overview of Chester County's history focusing on how the landscape has evolved and changed over time and the peoples who have lived here. References and links will be provided to facilitate further reading.

The website presentation will be an educational resource organized in accordance with the outline of themes and storylines presented in Chapter 2. Individual communities and sites may use the website history as context to identify how they relate to Chester County history broadly and may contribute their own stories in illustrating that history.

Visitation and exploration of Chester County landscapes, communities, and sites will be encouraged. Suggested scenic landscape drives will be described with downloadable maps and content. Participating communities and sites

associated with the county's various landscape areas will be identified along with the themes and storylines to which they relate. Emphasis will be placed on visitor services that are available at various locations. Links will be provided to the websites and social media pages of the various participating communities and sites. The extent of interpretation and experience available at each community and site will be provided. Suggestions for how communities and sites may be explored will be available.

Organization and Structure

The interpretive theme *The Cultural Landscape* will be presented in **participating communities and at participating sites throughout Chester County**. Every community and site will be able to find its place within the countywide presentation and will be encouraged to participate.

Most important is continuing local engagement in the preservation and enhancement of the county's authentic places—landscapes, villages, communities. Residents and visitors are attracted to these authentic places because of their rich and distinctive character and appeal. Their preservation is paramount to any additional efforts toward presentation. Potential exhibits, media, and presentation techniques can be supportive of but cannot substitute for the authentic places themselves.

The Heritage Tourism Plan's **Community Interpretive Program** and **Outdoor Exhibit Program** will be the basis for the engagement of communities and sites and for phased implementation. Participation will emanate from the grassroots—communities and sites will step up and seek participation and county support in the establishment of viable, quality visitor presentations and experiences. Communities and sites will demonstrate stakeholder commitment and capability in implementation.

Presentation will begin with landscapes, communities, and sites that are already visitor-ready or close to being visitor-ready. Additional landscapes, communities, and sites will be added over time as resources are available. Priority will be given to communities and sites that are best positioned to tell the county's key stories and that have robust stakeholder partnerships in place. These are likely to include community centers such as historic Main Streets, boroughs, and villages, especially where visitor services are offered.

Over time, the entire county will be engaged, and every community and site will be able to tell its stories within the context of the countywide presentation. The county Heritage Tourism Program will provide guidance and support to local stakeholders for implementation and will actively promote the communities and sites when they are visitor-ready. Promotion may be organized by landscape region, with communities and sites linked by theme and storyline and through designated driving tours.

Chester County's centuries of agricultural history will be a particular focus of the presentation. Agritourism sites may be promoted in addition to communities and historic sites as destinations either individually or along driving routes. Active historic sites and heritage destinations will be encouraged to partner with their local communities as focal points within a broader community

presentation. In telling their stories, communities will also tell the stories of the peoples who have lived there. Some peoples, such as the Hispanic community in Kennett Square or the immigrant communities of Phoenixville and Coatesville, might be highlighted for special focus.
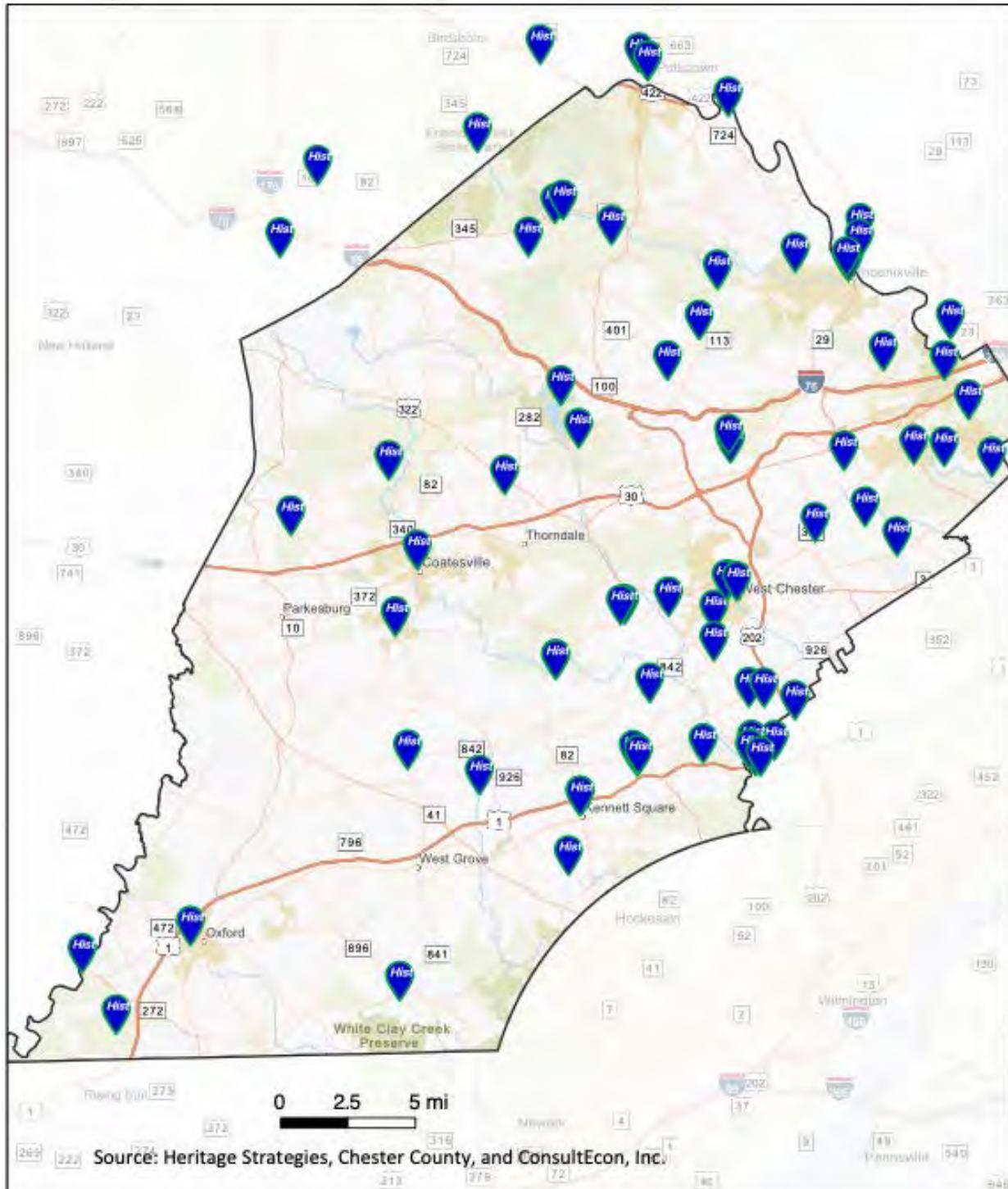
Locations of publicly accessible historic sites that are actively interpreted as identified in the Heritage Sites Inventory in Appendix B. Map by ConsultEcon.

3.6.3 Evolving Values

The theme statement for the primary interpretive theme *Evolving Values says: The varied experiences and perspectives of peoples have shaped our social conscience and laid the groundwork for the diversity and social values that continue to influence Chester County today.*

Evolving Values offers the opportunity to explore how the beliefs and ideals of the people of Chester County shaped how the region was settled and the events that happened here. *Evolving Values* encompasses the stories and experiences of Chester County's native peoples, its unique Quaker heritage, and its diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds. It explores how this diversity of perspectives shaped how Chester County residents responded to questions of freedom and social justice over the course of its history: enslavement, women's rights, civil rights, and equality. Aspects of *Evolving Values* can be interpreted at individual heritage sites and through interpretive programs spearheaded by individual organizations, community groups or municipalities. Continued dialogue through exhibits and events such as Juneteenth and Cinco de Mayo make visible and celebrate the rich heritage and traditions among the wider community, allowing residents to appreciate and engage with Chester County's distinctiveness.

Specifically, there is tremendous opportunity to enhance and expand current interpretation of Chester County's role in the national story of freedom seekers, abolitionism, and the Underground Railroad, and to make it a highly marketable heritage tourism experience for heritage travelers and local residents.

Native American Lifeways – Native American lifeways were closely intertwined with the landscapes upon which they depended. As discussed above under *The Cultural Landscape*, The Lenape were present within Chester County hundreds of years or more prior to the arrival of Europeans. They lived in small settlements dispersed across the landscape rather than in large, centralized villages and to moved with the seasons to take advantage of available resources.

The Lenape's many small bands were comprised of a few dozen to a few hundred people who were, for the most part, autonomous but united into loose regional political groupings sharing strong affinities of marriage, trade, and language. Kinship was primarily matrilineal. Women played a central role focused on the settlement and gathering/gardening while men were responsible for obtaining resources from afar—hunting, fishing, trading, and other needed activities.

The Native landscape and nearly everything within it was considered to be alive with animating spiritual powers, each distinctive and each of which could help people or bring them harm. These spiritual beings demanded respect in the form of offerings, ceremonies, and giving of thanks. Relationships with the various elements of the outer world needed to be respected and maintained.

Similarly, relationships between people were based upon similar reciprocal relationships. Property and material goods belonged to those who needed or made use of them, rather than ownership or possession. Social status and political authority went not to those who merely *had* the most, but to those

who were in a position to *give* the most away. Economic exchanges generally took the form of gift-giving rather than buying or selling. Competition for authority rested upon the effectiveness with which people could build bonds of reciprocal obligation. These lifeways, relationships, and beliefs were in contrast to those of Europeans. (Carr 2015:209; PHMC 2002:27-41)

Quaker Roots – Chester County's *Evolving Values* are deeply influenced by the Quaker ideology rooted in Pennsylvania's founding. In his land grant that established Pennsylvania in 1681, William Penn created his "Holy Experiment," a colony where Quaker ideals of acceptance, tolerance and pacifism would be put into practice. The main tenet of the Quaker faith was the theological belief that each person held an "Inner Light" or divine presence within them, and therefore all people were of equal value regardless of ethnicity, gender or religion.

Pennsylvania was open to all ethnicities, social and economic backgrounds, and religious persuasions. Early efforts were made to sign treaties with the Lenape to maintain peaceful relations and instill a level of acceptance, though these were not lasting. (Klepp 2002: 63-65) This culture of tolerance contrasted sharply with other North American colonies such as dominantly Puritan Massachusetts and Anglican Virginia that actively excluded other groups.

Chester County's Diversity – These Quaker tenets laid the foundation for Pennsylvania to become a melting pot, where diversity and tolerance of religious and ethnic differences became widely shared values. While Chester County remained largely settled by the English, Welsh, and Irish, there were other influences as well, including Anabaptists, German speakers from central Europe, the Scots-Irish, and to a lesser extent, Swedes and French Huguenots. Quakers eventually lost their majority as various Protestants, Anglicans, Catholics, and others began to settle the region.

The interpretation of *Evolving Values* is entwined with *Iron & Steel* and *The Cultural Landscape* as immigrants and freedom seekers found work in the iron and steel mills such as Coatesville and Phoenixville, creating diverse communities. Chester County's cultural landscape continues to evolve and change in places like Kennett Square, whose community now reflects its distinct Hispanic traditions brought by the immigrants who came here to support the mushroom industry.

The Impact of Enslavement – Quaker moralism played an important role in the end of slavery in Pennsylvania. As early as 1754, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting declared that slavery practices were not consistent with Christianity and common justice, and in 1776, adopted a policy of disownment of Quakers who were enslavers. Amid the American Revolution, Pennsylvania, with the support of non-Quaker abolitionists as well as Quakers, passed the Gradual Abolition Act of 1780, which slowly ended enslavement in the colony (anyone born after 1750 would be freed when they reached 28 years), while mitigating the financial losses of slave-enslavers.

As enslavement faded in Pennsylvania, its free African American population grew and established communities throughout the state. It is estimated that African Americans made up 30% of Pocopsin Township's population in 1860.

While most freedom seekers would continue to points north, some would settle in Chester County, helping establish African-American communities such as Hinsonville near Oxford, Hayti near Coatesville that supported the steel industry, and East Linden Street in Kennett Square that supported agriculture and industry. These communities would play an important role in helping other freedom seekers through the Underground Railroad, supporting the abolitionist movement, and later, by serving in the United Stated Colored Troops during the Civil War as evidenced by graves in cemeteries at Longwood Cemetery, Hinsonville, Bucktoe Cemetery, Mt. Zion Church, Ercildoun and others throughout Chester County.

The interpretation of *Evolving Values* is closely entwined with the interpretation of *The Cultural Landscape*. With Pennsylvania's prohibition of slavery, Chester County became geographically important for freedom seekers, as the Mason-Dixon Line delineated the border between slave and free states. The 1793 Fugitive Slave Act and later the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act allowed southern slave catchers to enter free states to retrieve freedom seekers and required all Americans to assist in recapture.

Chester County residents were confronted with the moral dilemma of how deeply involved they might become with the question of enslavement and the circumstances of freedom seekers. Frighteningly, the Fugitive Slave Act also endangered the safety of free African Americans who made Chester County home, effectively putting targets on their backs for kidnapping by southern bounty hunters. The most famous case of kidnapping in Chester County was the Parker sisters, two free women who were kidnapped from East and West Nottingham in 1851. They were eventually freed with the help of local community members.

It is important to understand that Chester County's Quaker population found itself at a crossroads as its members differed in viewpoints towards the anti-slavery movement. Only a small minority of Quakers took the more extreme position of abolitionism, which demanded the immediate emancipation, and those who participated in the Underground Railroad were considered radicals. Kennett Square figured highly in these conversations, becoming known as a "hotbed of abolitionism." A number of radical Quakers broke away from the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to establish the Longwood Progressive Meeting House in 1854, inviting anyone, regardless of race, gender or religious persuasion who believed deeply in the abolition of slavery as well as other reform activities including schooling, prisons, and temperance.

The Longwood Progressive Meeting House hosted a who's who list of nationally significant abolitionists and women's rights advocates including Harriet Tubman, Thomas Garrett, Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, Sojourner Truth, John Greenleaf Whittier, Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, and Harriet Beecher Stowe, among others. Similar divisions and disagreements occurred among other Quaker Meetings in Chester County. In Ercildoun in East Fallowfield Township near Coatesville, members of Fallowfield Meeting constructed nearby "People's Hall" in 1845 to serve as a separate place for civil discourse, where it

welcomed both white and African American abolitionists, and avoided a split within its congregation. (Kachatus 2021; Lanyon 2022; Thames-Taylor 2021)

The purposes for presentation and interpretation of *Evolving Values* are to:

- create a high quality and marketable heritage tourism visitor experience;
- instill a sense of value and enhance Chester County's unique community identity among its residents by highlighting the history and distinctiveness of its diverse communities;
- raise an awareness among its residents of Chester County's role in the national story of aiding freedom seekers and the Underground Railroad;
- support the interpretation of the history of other social issues in Chester County, including women's rights, civil rights and social justice; and
- engage in a continuing dialogue about how our *Evolving Values* continue to evolve and impact the lives of Chester County's residents today.

Audiences

Primary audiences for presentation of *Evolving Values* are local, regional, national, and international. The close proximity of Longwood Gardens to the Brandywine Valley Tourism Information Center located in the Longwood Progressive Meeting House offers the opportunity for both national and international travelers to discover and explore Kennett Square's role in the story of freedom seekers and the Underground Railroad.

- Local Community Residents – Presentation of *Evolving Values* will reinforce a sense of place and appreciation among local residents regarding Chester County's distinctiveness and its place in our national story. Interpretation of *Evolving Values* through community interpretive programs and events provides interesting experiences for visiting guests, friends, and family. It also provides an opportunity to connect with new local audiences by telling, in some cases, previously untold stories. *Evolving Values* provides the opportunity for educational resources for educators to explore Chester County's local role in the national story of freedom seeking and the Underground Railroad.

- Heritage Travelers – Heritage travelers will respond to a high-quality presentation of authentic places that interpret the national story of freedom seeking and the Underground Railroad, particularly if it extends existing Underground Railroad interpretive experiences in Maryland and Delaware into Chester County and are accompanied by visitor amenities.

- International Travelers- *Evolving Values* provides an opportunity to attract and engage international travelers with experiences beyond Philadelphia, Longwood Gardens, and other regional international destinations, particularly through interpretation at the Brandywine Valley Tourism Information Center at the Longwood Progressive Meeting House.

Broad Concepts

Broad concepts and ideas to be conveyed through presentation of *Evolving Values* are outlined in Chapter 2, *Themes and Storylines*, and include:

- William Penn's principles of inclusion, religious freedom, tolerance of others, and a desire for peaceful coexistence provided an atmosphere that allowed Chester County to attract numerous religious and ethnic groups, in addition to the Quakers;

- The values of Chester County's people continue to evolve today through conversations as ethnic groups celebrate individual cultures and histories, and residents continue to engage in conversations about social justice;

- Chester County's location near Philadelphia, Delaware, and Maryland, and where the Mason-Dixon Line separated free states and slave states, played an instrumental role in the quest of freedom seekers and the work of the people and communities who supported them;

- Chester County residents, both white and African American, Quaker and non-Quaker, played a role in supporting freedom seekers and the end of enslavement.

Website

The website created for the heritage tourism project will serve as the principal gateway to the presentation and experience of *Evolving Values*. The website will provide an overview of Chester County's history and how *Evolving Values* have influenced how its communities have developed and responded to changing circumstances over time. Individual sites, organizations, municipalities, and communities should coordinate the interpretation of their stories with the countywide presentation of *Evolving Values* on the heritage tourism website and with countywide themes and storylines. The website will present linkages to initiatives and resources offered by various groups and communities as related to *Evolving Values*.

The website will specifically offer the background and context of the history and multi-faceted aspects of the topics of Native American heritage, Quaker heritage, freedom seeking, abolitionism, and the Underground Railroad in Chester County, and identify active heritage sites available for visitation, as well as educational resources.

For the topic of freedom seeking and the Underground Railroad, the website should include enhanced driving tour materials and the mobile app developed by the Kennett Underground Railroad Center. The website should also offer links to the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway in Maryland and Delaware. Once ready, the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway in Pennsylvania should coordinate with the developers of harriettubmanbyway.org to supply content and update maps accordingly, extending the byway content to Pennsylvania.

Organization and Structure

The presentation and interpretation of *Evolving Values* should be managed with the following strategies:

Community Interpretation: "All Comers"

Individual community stakeholders including individual heritage sites, organizations, communities, Main Streets, or municipalities with a story or idea related to *Evolving Values* will be encouraged to reach out to the lead Implementing Entity (see Chapter 6) to pursue the development of a community interpretative plan or outdoor exhibits. Like the implementation of *The Cultural Landscape* theme, participation will emanate from the grassroots where the sites and organizations will step up and seek participation and support in the establishment of viable, quality visitor presentations and experiences. The Implementing Entity would guide participation and assist in linking organizations or communities with similar stories or interpretive focuses together. An example might be a church celebrating a milestone anniversary that wishes to create a community program about its history.

Historic churches and cemeteries are places in Chester County where the stories of diversity can be told. Many of the county's early European settlers associated as religious and ethnic groups.

Focus on Chester County's Diversity

This focuses specifically on the interpretation of the experience of Chester County's ethnic groups, inviting specific ethnic and religious groups to tell the story of their people. Examples include African American communities with distinct beginnings like Hayti near Coatesville and the Mt. Zion AME Church and Cemetery, Kennett Square's Hispanic community, and the various immigrant groups in communities such as Downingtown, Phoenixville, and Coatesville.

Ideas and stories could include interpretation and dialogue on topics related to civil rights, women's rights, gay rights, and other issues related to social justice. Again, participation will emanate from the grassroots – where communities and other entities step up and seek participation and county support in the establishment of viable, quality visitor presentations and experiences. The efforts of Voices Underground to coordinate countywide Juneteenth celebrations and the work of Casa Guanajuato to create authentic Cinco De Mayo and other events that celebrate Mexican heritage are examples of potential initiatives related to the interpretation of *Evolving Values*.

Neighborhoods, communities, Main Streets, and municipalities, as well as individual religious institutions, heritage sites, community organizations, and other groups will be encouraged to reach out to the lead Implementing Entity to develop a Community Interpretative Program to share the story they wish to tell. The Outdoor Exhibit Program would also offer opportunities for sites, organizations, municipalities, and others to share their unique stories with the wider community. Like with individual stakeholders, the Implementing Entity will guide the development of a Community Interpretive Program and link them with other entities exploring similar themes and storylines. Refer to descriptions of these proposed programs in Chapter 4.

The **Chester County History Center** should serve as a central focal point for the interpretation of *Evolving Values* through its permanent exhibit "Becoming Chester County" which focuses on Native American history, Quaker history, ethnic influences, and Chester County's role in the story of freedom seeking, abolition and the Underground Railroad, and other related topics. The History Center's interpretive exhibits should serve as a launch point that connects visitors with interpretive experiences at individual heritage attractions and tours throughout the county.

Native American Beginnings

The story of Native Americans does not appear to be well told in Chester County, perhaps because of the ephemeral nature of their presence here and the limited number of settlement sites that have been identified. Much of the presentation in local histories is speculative and romanticized. When addressed, the interpretation of Native Americans should be undertaken by a working group of sites who step forward because of their interest in the topic. Interpretation should be accurate and coordinated between sites countywide so that interpretation is consistent and so that stories from throughout the county are connected to each other.

Natural resource sites are the most appropriate places where Chester County's Native American stories can be told. Potential sites overlap with the primary theme *The Natural Landscape*.

The entire 11,000-year history of Native American cultural evolution should be addressed. Regional archeologists should be consulted—a significant portion of the story is how much we *don't* know and how and what we glean from the scant information we have. Central to the story are Native American lifeways, relationship to the world, and cultural perspectives as represented through the theme *Evolving Values*.

The Lenape, who were present here at the time of European contact and are thus represented in the written record of the region's early settlement, are of particular focus. The Lenape perspective should be presented by engaging the two federally recognized tribes representing their peoples, the **Delaware Nation of Oklahoma** and the **Delaware Tribe of Indians**, both located in Oklahoma but with contacts and representation in Pennsylvania. Each group's designated Tribal Historic Preservation Officer is an appropriate point of contact who can assist in the development of interpretive content. The National Park Service regional office in Philadelphia should be contacted to advise and assist. Pennsbury Manor, a reconstruction of William Penn's country estate and state historic site in Bucks County, has a program that might serve as a model of interpretation related to the Lenape.

The Delaware Nation and Delaware Tribe of Indians should be invited to tell their own stories in their own way without alteration. Financial support and technical assistance should be provided. Input may be received from other potential stakeholders as well, but it should be noted that the two federally recognized tribes will not participate if non-federally recognized entities purporting to represent the Lenape are involved.

The story of William Penn's positive engagement with local tribal groups is well documented in the historical record and is representative of Quaker values and the early settlement story, as is how that changed after Penn's death in 1718 and the tribes were cheated of their lands and driven from the region by the 1730s.

Perhaps the most appropriate places to tell the Native American story is within the county's natural areas and preserves. Their ecology and plant communities can show where and how the natural resources Native Americans depended upon were found and utilized. Evolving Native American cultures shaped the landscapes they inhabited by managing vegetation in ways that favored and enhanced the resources they needed. The woodlands and wetlands that were present prior to European contact and incursion were not purely "natural"—they were intentionally managed by the peoples living within them. That story is directly related to the interpretive theme *The Natural Landscape* as well as the theme *Evolving Values* and the Native American period of *The Cultural Landscape*.

Regional trails are also places where the Native American story can be presented. Trails course through different types of landscape areas, which can be used to relate how they were utilized. One particular location of interest might be along the Chester Valley Trail in the vicinity of Main Street at Exton, where there is believed to have been a substantial Native American settlement. Other similar sites might also be identified, though specific known archeological sites are generally not made public due to the danger of looting.

Quaker Heritage
Quaker heritage remains a living tradition, still active and influential within the county today. Its most prominent resources are its historic meetinghouses, most of which are still in use. Its second most prominent resources are the farmsteads of Quaker families that remain throughout the landscape.

Through the implementation of this plan, an outreach initiative will be established to explore how to develop interpretative experiences focused on Chester County's distinct Quaker heritage and its influence on the landscape. It is envisioned that this initiative could be spearheaded by the Chester County History Center or another entity in collaboration with other interested stakeholders.

Outreach should be undertaken to individual Meetings of the Society of Friends in Chester County, as well as to heritage sites and other entities related to the preservation and interpretation of Quaker heritage. A conversation should be initiated on how tours, outdoor exhibits, and other interpretive strategies might be developed to offer a high-quality tourism experience that explores how Quaker heritage influenced Chester County's communities and landscape, and to devise steps for moving forward. Interpretive strategies might include a call for proposals for the development of a driving tour.

Freedom Seekers, Abolitionists, and the Underground Railroad
There is tremendous opportunity for creating a high-quality, marketable tourism experiences related to the interpretation of freedom seeking, abolitionism, and the Underground Railroad in Chester County. Over the last several years, individual organizations have conducted research to support interpretation, as well as to identify and preserve heritage sites that are significant to this important story in Chester County's history.
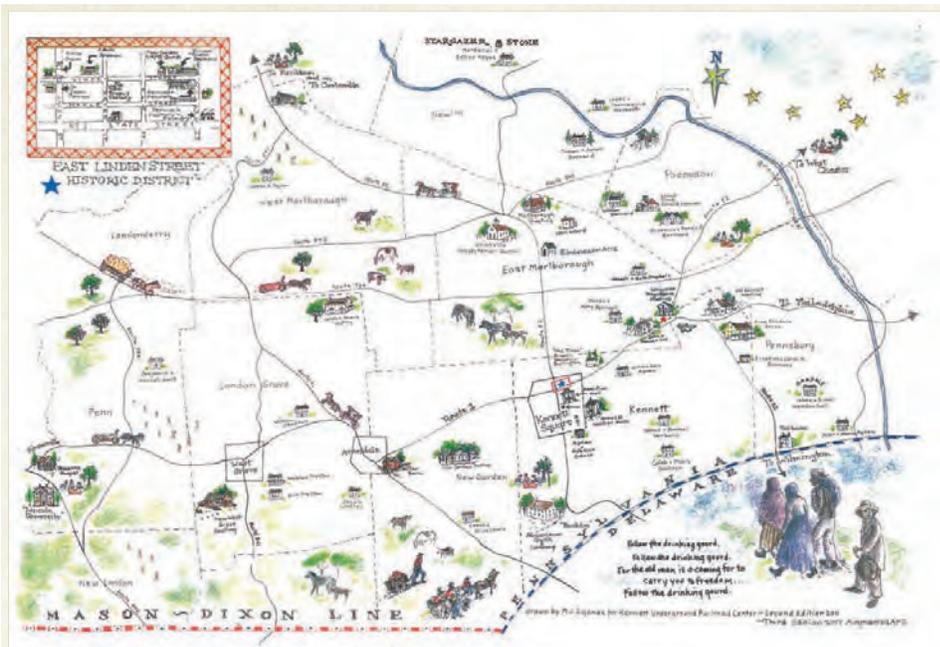
The **Kennett Underground Railroad Center** offers richly substantive and intimate bus tours (approximately 15-20 participants) to a range of sites, as well as a mobile app through PocketSites that supports a driving tour. Active preservation efforts of structures related to freedom seekers and the Underground Railroad include the restoration of the **Eusebias Barnard House** in Pocopsin Township, **People's Hall** in Ercildoun near Coatesville, and **Bucktoe Cemetery** in Kennett, among others, and these sites have become available to the public on a limited basis. **Longwood Gardens** stewards the **Longwood Progressive Meeting House** (Tourism Center)**, Longwood Cemetery, and John and Hannah Cox House,** and is currently engaging in research on Longwood's community and its relationship with the story of freedom seekers and the Underground Railroad. Other heritage sites, such as **Hosanna African Union Methodist Protestant Church** at Lincoln University, while not currently available to the public, have important stories related to freedom seeking and the Underground Railroad that could potentially become available in the future or be incorporated into an interpretive experience in other ways as appropriate through mobile apps, markers, outdoor interpretive exhibits, or other resources.

In December 2022, the state designated a 7.68 stretch of Route 52 as the **Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway.** Managed by the **Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway Commission,** there are plans to develop content to support interpretation along this route. In a separate initiative, **Voices Underground,** an organization focused on the interpretation of the Underground Railroad through scholarly research, partnerships, and experiences, and that coordinates the county's Juneteenth celebration, is leading a 10 to 12-year initiative to establish a **National Underground Railroad Memorial** in Chester County.

By engaging these individual heritage resources and initiatives, and by establishing a singular coordinated effort to create a high-quality interpretative experience, there is tremendous opportunity to raise the visibility and awareness of Chester County's role in the national story of freedom seeking and the Underground Railroad among both county residents and heritage travelers. There is a need to tell the story of freedom seeking, abolitionism, and the Underground Railroad, and the impact of participation of various stakeholders in this national story in a more cohesive way that lifts up the voices and contributions of all its participants: freedom seekers, free African Americans, both African American and white abolitionists, Quakers, non-Quakers and others.

Individual heritage sites with a verifiable connection to the Underground Railroad in Chester County are encouraged to apply to join the **National Park**

Service's Network to Freedom program to gain broader visibility as contributing to the nation's story of the Underground Railroad. Currently there are seven sites in Chester County that are designated by the National Park Service as Network to Freedom sites. They include the **Chester County History Center**, **Hosanna AUMP Church (2023), the Kennett Underground Railroad Center, the Longwood Progressive Meeting House and the Longwood Cemetery, the Pines – the home of Bartholomew Fussell, the Eusebius Barnard House, and the Frederick Douglass Institute at West Chester University.** Some of these sites could play an important role as Gateways or Heritage Centers (see below) for the interpretation of the Underground Railroad. It should also be evaluated whether any heritage sites connected with the Underground Railroad story in Chester County are eligible for the designation as a **National Historical Landmark**.

Underground Railroad sites in southern Chester County as depicted in the Kennett Underground Railroad Center brochure.

Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway: Interpretation of the Underground Railroad in Chester County should also be driven by the recent state designation of the **Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway.** This route overlays part of the existing Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway which features Longwood Gardens, the Brandywine River Museum of Art, and

the Brandywine Battlefield. It also extends the existing Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway that winds through 125 miles of Maryland's Eastern Shore and 98 miles through Delaware to Philadelphia and features more than 30 sites. The existing Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway in Maryland and Delaware offers a robust website with information about individual stops along the route, driving maps, and an audio guide as well as educational resources.

The Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway Commission intends to develop a corridor management plan that both addresses aspects of the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway and the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway. This plan will include interpretive content. The Commission anticipates the establishment of an Underground Railroad Coalition of Pennsylvania to guide the content and interpretation of the Byway, similar to one formed in Delaware for this purpose.

The Byway Commission is encouraged to coordinate its efforts with other organizations interpreting freedom seekers, abolitionism, and Underground Railroad heritage, both inside and outside the byway, and also to develop partnerships with its heritage tourism counterparts in Maryland and Delaware to support future inclusion of Pennsylvania's interpretive content on the HarrietTubmanByway.org website.

Heritage Centers: The presentation may make use of the Heritage Center framework to be employed in the interpretation of the Battle of the Brandywine and The Philadelphia Campaign in which selected sites offer introductory exhibits and limited visitor services, providing context for other self-guided interpretive sites within their locale.

The Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway proposes that **Barnard Station**, the home of Underground Railroad participants Eusebius and Sarah Barnard, serve as a Heritage Center for the byway. The **Kennett Heritage Center** (also the home of the Kennett Underground Railroad Center) offers an excellent orientation to the story of freedom seekers and the Underground Railroad in the region. **Chester County History Center** should play an important role in introducing and orienting visitors to the county-wide story of freedom seekers and the Underground Railroad through its permanent exhibit "Becoming Chester County," and by connecting them to countywide interpretive experiences.

The **Brandywine Valley Tourism Information Center** could also play an important role as a Heritage Center, with its location in the **Longwood Progressive Meeting House** (owned by Longwood Gardens) as well as its existing association with the Kennett Underground Railroad Center's bus tour program. **Longwood Gardens**, which owns the **Progressive Meeting House**, the adjacent **Longwood Cemetery,** and **the Cox House**, which is currently being moved to accommodate the expansion of Route 1, could also play an important role in this interpretation.

Bus & Driving Tours: The **Kennett Underground Railroad Center** (KURC) currently offers an excellent small bus tour that explores all facets of the stories of freedom seeking, abolitionism, and the Underground Railroad. The two-hour,

small bus tour begins at the historic Longwood Progressive Meeting House, which serves as the Brandywine Valley Tourism Information Center and the headquarters of Chester County Tourism and features roughly eight individual sites in the Kennett Square area. The small bus tour (approximately 15-20 participants) is currently extremely limited, as it occurs once a month from May through October and requires pre-registration. The tours fill up quickly, and in recent years, KURC has offered additional tours by special request.

To make the tour more publicly available, KURC recently created a self-guided driving tour based on its bus tour and brochure, and offers it as a mobile app through the PocketSights TourGuide app. The feasibility of expanding the availability of these small bus tours should be explored, as well as whether they could be expanded to focus on other parts of the county including sites in and around West Chester, Coatesville, Chester Springs, and Phoenixville.

This should include conversations regarding the additional capacity needed, including infrastructure, as well as volunteer or staff resources needed to expand the bus program. KURC's driving tour, particularly with the use of a mobile app, has tremendous potential for expanding the reach of the interpretive experience related to freedom seekers and the Underground Railroad. KURC is encouraged to continue to improve and enhance it with additional locations and stories.

Outdoor Interpretive Exhibits: It is recommended that outdoor interpretive exhibits be developed for heritage sites related to freedom seeking and the Underground Railroad to create a consistent interpretive experience that could support the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway, the bus and driving tours, as well as self-guided tours at specific heritage sites. For example, outdoor interpretive exhibits facing the Longwood Cemetery from the Longwood Progressive Meeting House, could highlight the significant abolitionists interred there, as well as the racially integrated nature of the cemetery in a way that has minimal visual impact.

These efforts should be coordinated by the Implementing Entity in concert with the Scenic Byway project, the Kennett Underground Railroad Center, the development of an Underground Railroad National Memorial, as well as with other organizations and stakeholders focused on the interpretation of freedom seeking and the Underground Railroad.

Coordinated Implementation: The presentation of freedom seekers, abolitionism, and the Underground Railroad requires a single coordinated implementation effort to align the work of individual heritage sites and initiatives to create a successful, high-quality, and cohesive heritage tourism presentation. This would be accomplished by creating a working group or task force that brings together stakeholders from individual sites, community organizations, congregations, museums, and municipalities, as well as descendants.

Lead stakeholders should include the **Chester County History Center, Kennett Underground Railroad Center, Kennett Heritage Center, Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway Commission, Longwood Gardens, Lincoln University's Center for**

the Underground Railroad, and **Voices Underground**. Representatives from individual heritage sites telling this story will also play an important role. Voices Underground's foundational work in creating a "design congress" of historians and stakeholders to discuss the potential stories, locations, and what people would like to see in their proposed Underground Railroad National Memorial could serve as a model for initiating the conversation.

This working group will work with the staff of the Implementing Entity to foster a sense of community among stakeholders, coordinate efforts in devising strategies for connecting sites and stories, planning and development of interpretive outdoor exhibits and other initiatives, and to support the overall goal of raising the visibility of Chester County's role in the national story of freedom seekers, abolitionists, and the Underground Railroad.
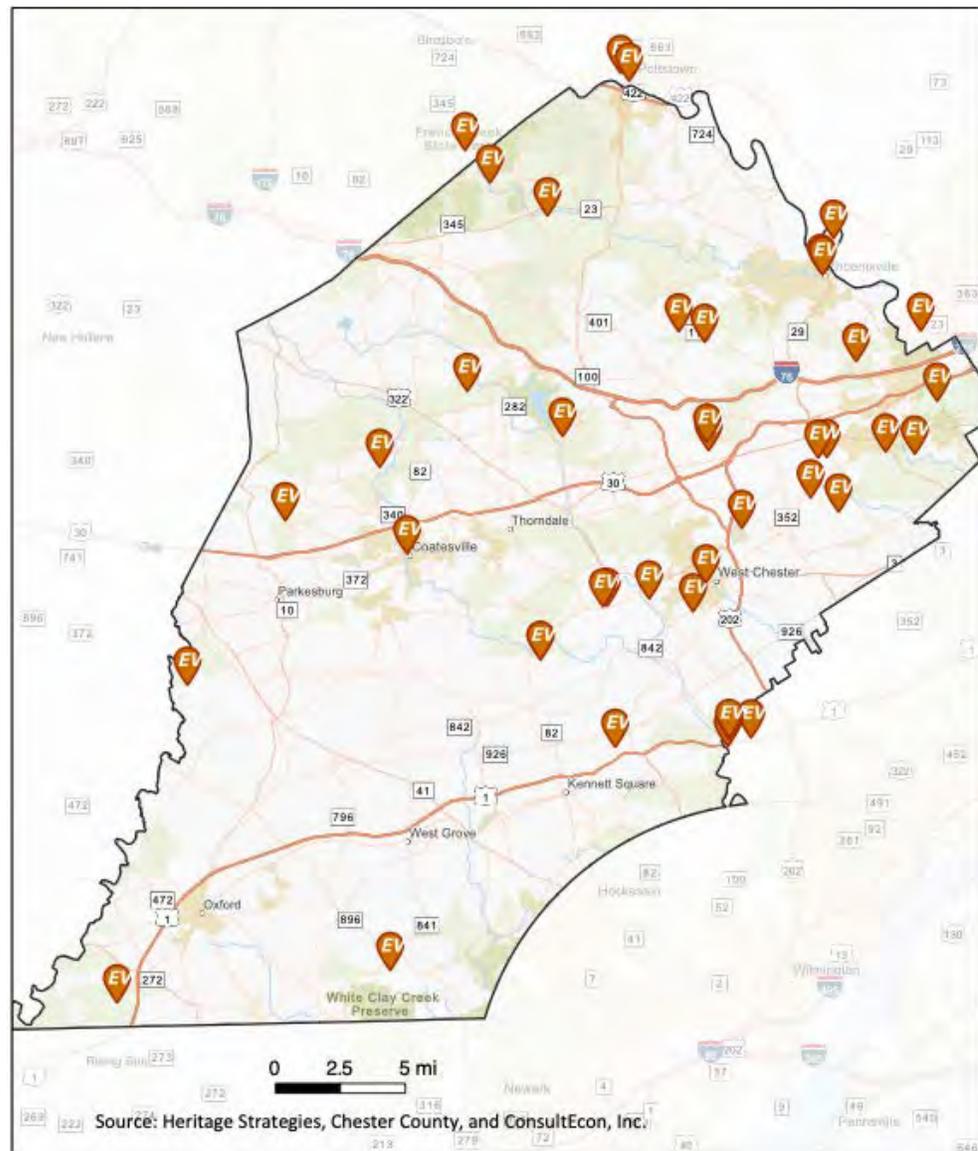
Locations of publicly accessible sites associated with the theme *Evolving Values* that are actively interpreted as identified in the Heritage Sites Inventory in Appendix B. Map by ConsultEcon.

3.6.4 The Philadelphia Campaign

The theme statement for the primary interpretive theme *The Philadelphia Campaign* says: *From Brandywine to Valley Forge, the Philadelphia Campaign was a turning point in the American Revolution. The Chester County landscape played a central role in the unfolding of events.*

The Philadelphia Campaign provides the greatest opportunity for creation of a new marketable visitor tourism experience, particularly one directly related to the nation's 250th commemoration. Chester County's portion of *The Philadelphia Campaign* tells the story of events between September 9, 1777, the eve of the Battle of Brandywine, and September 23, 1777, when the British army crossed the Schuylkill River near Valley Forge and marched toward Philadelphia.

This fourteen-day period saw the war conducted over the Chester County landscape as Washington's army sought to protect both Philadelphia and the iron furnaces and forges in the highlands extending from Valley Forge west to Reading Furnace, and as Howe's army sought to take the Revolutionary capital. It included the Battle of Brandywine, Battle of the Clouds, Battle of Paoli, and significant tactical troop movements across the county's colonial landscape as each army sought to outmaneuver the other.

The theme also includes the encampment of Washington's army at Valley Forge from December 1777 into June 1778, a story that is well known and well told at Valley Forge National Historical Park. In addition to the stories of the two armies during The Philadelphia Campaign and the winter at Valley Forge are the stories of the people living in the county through which the conflict was contested and the role the colonial landscape played with respect to movement and tactics.

Over the past few decades, significant work has been undertaken to understand *The Philadelphia Campaign* and preserve its resources. Of particular importance has been land conservation undertaken with respect to the Battle of Brandywine and the Battle of Paoli. In-depth research and technical studies have been undertaken to understand actions related to the battles and to identify the landscapes and landscape resources associated with them. Significant landscape areas associated with the battlefield actions have been conserved with the leadership of non-profit land trusts, county and municipal governments, and private citizens. Most recently, interpretive planning has been undertaken outlining how the battles may be presented to the general public while minimizing the impact on local residents. A wide range of stakeholders has been involved in these efforts, and grant support through Chester County, non-profit organizations, American Battlefield Protection Program, and American Battlefield Trust has been instrumental in the planning.

This Heritage Tourism Plan fully embraces the planning undertaken for interpretation of the Battle of Brandywine and seeks its phased implementation, particularly over the next three years in advance of the 250th commemoration in 2026 and 2027. The Heritage Tourism Plan proposes extension of the interpretive concepts, structure, and branding planned for the Battle of Brandywine to encompass the entire fourteen-day period of *The*

Philadelphia Campaign in Chester County, from the Chadds Ford area north to Battle of the Clouds, Battle of Paoli, maneuvering in the Great Valley, and protection of the Iron and Steel region.
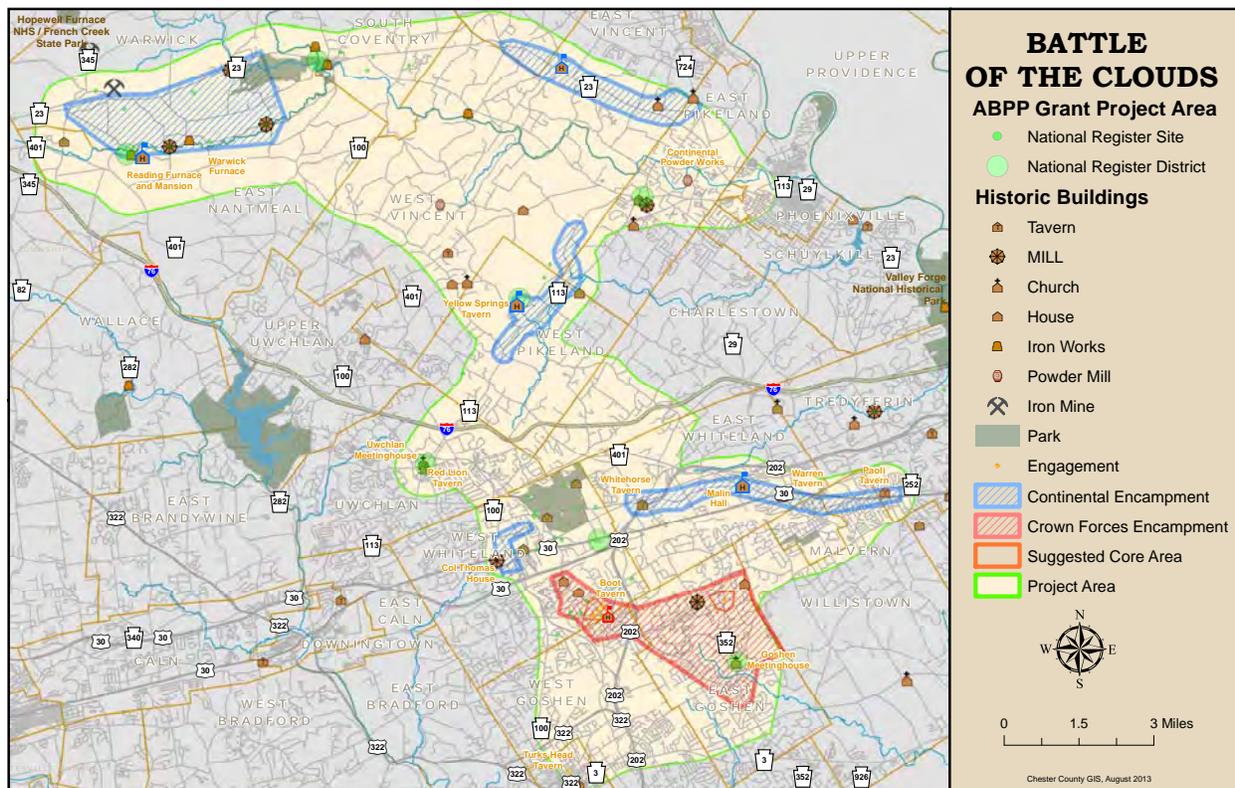
Landscape in central and northern Chester County over which troops were engaged during and following the Battle of the Clouds. (CCCP 2013)

Turning *The Philadelphia Campaign* into a marketable visitor experience will require commitment to creativity and high quality. Investment in creative storytelling through continuing land conservation, installation of onsite exhibits, personal interpretive experiences, and supporting media will be required. The impressive work undertaken in research, conservation, and planning over recent decades has laid the groundwork for implementation, and the 250th commemoration provides an occasion for this investment.

A well-recognized challenge to telling *The Philadelphia Campaign* stories is the encroachment of suburban development upon the colonial landscape and, particularly, the battlefields. Significant portions of the colonial landscape are hard to visualize due to later development, despite the extent of still remaining colonial roads, structures, and landforms.

This challenge is not unique to *The Philadelphia Campaign* in Chester County, however, and has been faced in the interpretation of many Civil War battlefields over the years. It requires a specific approach to place-based storytelling that is high quality, low key, small scale, intimate, and personal. Such experience is particularly suited to the rolling hills of the county's complex battlefield landscapes. Such approach is addressed in the interpretive planning for the

Battle of Brandywine. A high-quality experience representative of Chester County's character and identity is required.

The purposes for presentation and interpretation of *The Philadelphia Campaign* are to:

- commemorate the campaign, battles, and 1776/77 colonial life;
- create a high-quality and marketable heritage tourism visitor experience;
- raise awareness of the county's colonial heritage among residents; and
- promote continued conservation and preservation of landscapes and resources associated with the colonial era in Chester County.

Audiences

Primary audiences for presentation of *The Philadelphia Campaign* are of local, national, and international origin and include:

- Revolutionary War Enthusiasts – *The Philadelphia Campaign* provides a marketable product specifically for Revolutionary War enthusiasts for the 250th commemoration. Revolutionary War enthusiasts are likely to bring their families and friends and may be regional and national in origin. They will respond well to a high-quality presentation and will convey their appreciation to others of similar interest. They are likely to already know the basics of the battles and campaign. They want to see the authentic places where specific events occurred and to understand what happened there. They are willing to explore and are likely to return to see places they have not yet visited.

- Heritage Travelers – Though less knowledgeable about the battles and campaigns, heritage travelers will respond to the high-quality presentation of authentic places prepared for Revolutionary War enthusiasts. Because the campaign takes place across the broad landscape, heritage travelers will have the opportunity to experience the wide range of historic places within the county, particularly those offering visitor amenities.

- International Travelers – *The Philadelphia Campaign* provides an opportunity to attract and engage international travelers with experiences beyond Philadelphia, Longwood Gardens, and other regional international destinations.

- Local Community Residents – Presentation of *The Philadelphia Campaign* will reinforce the appreciation of colonial era stories, landscapes, and resources among local residents with respect to community identity. It will provide them with interesting places to take visiting guests, friends, and family, as well as for school field trips.

Broad Concepts

Broad concepts and ideas to be conveyed through presentation of *The Philadelphia Campaign* are outlined in Chapter 2, *Themes and Storylines*, and include:

- Context associated with *The Philadelphia Campaign* and its significance in the course of the Revolutionary War;

- Character and settlement patterns of the colonial era landscape in Chester County and how they affected unfolding events;

- Authentic places where specific actions occurred, what happened where⸺maneuvers, routes, fords, battle actions, encampments, sequences of events;

- Civilian attitudes, interests, and experiences⸺the people of Chester County and their experiences of the campaign and of foraging armies during the winter at Valley Forge;

Website

The heritage tourism website will be the means of exploring the history, sites, and visitor opportunities associated with *The Philadelphia Campaign* before coming to Chester County. It will convey the high quality of the experience that can be anticipated.

Context and background will be provided on the campaign as a whole⸺an overview of preceding events, the British decision to transport troops to the Chesapeake Bay, events in Delaware, preparations for defense, the campaign in Chester County, and the taking of Philadelphia. The significance and events associated with the winter at Valley Forge should link to relevant pages of the National Park Service (NPS) website for Valley Forge National Historical Park. Background interpretive content throughout should be coordinated with that of the NPS.

The Chester County Planning Commission prepared a set of Animated Battle Action Maps in 2010 that have continued to be updated and enhanced. These maps provide an easily accessible overview illustrating troop activities leading up to and during the Battle of Brandywine. The maps should be a feature of *The Philadelphia Campaign* website as well as Gateway sites and should be extended to cover the entire fourteen days of the campaign.

The Philadelphia Campaign website should provide detailed information to guide visitation and touring of the colonial era Chester County landscape. Driving tours linking sites related to battle movements and activity should be suggested and supported with downloadable Google Map route directions. Website and downloadable content should be provided for each visitor-ready interpretive site.

Guidance and models for battlefield content and touring media may be sought from leading partners such as the NPS and American Battlefield Trust. New models continue to be developed. The American Battlefield Trust and South Carolina Battlefield Trust have created the Liberty Trail **website and**

downloadable app that provide touring content for over 30 Revolutionary War battlefield sites in South Carolina. A similar website and downloadable tour guide app should be considered for *The Philadelphia Campaign*. While the Liberty Trail was state-wide connecting 30 different battlefields, *The Philadelphia Campaign* app may be more intimate, connecting each individual interpretive site within *The Philadelphia Campaign* with Google Map driving directions, photographs, and interpretive content.

Organization and Structure

Presentation of *The Philadelphia Campaign* will be organized in two ways: (1) a **robust and high-quality presentation of the campaign** from the Battle of Brandywine to the British army's crossing of the Schuylkill River will be prepared as a marketable visitor tourism product and a primary initiative of the county's 250th commemoration; and (2) a broader, **more generalized Civil-War-Trails-type presentation** will be organized in which individual communities and sites may tell their individual Philadelphia Campaign/Revolutionary War period stories through outdoor exhibits or other media. Both will use branding and graphic identity based on the existing signage designs established for the Battle of Brandywine.
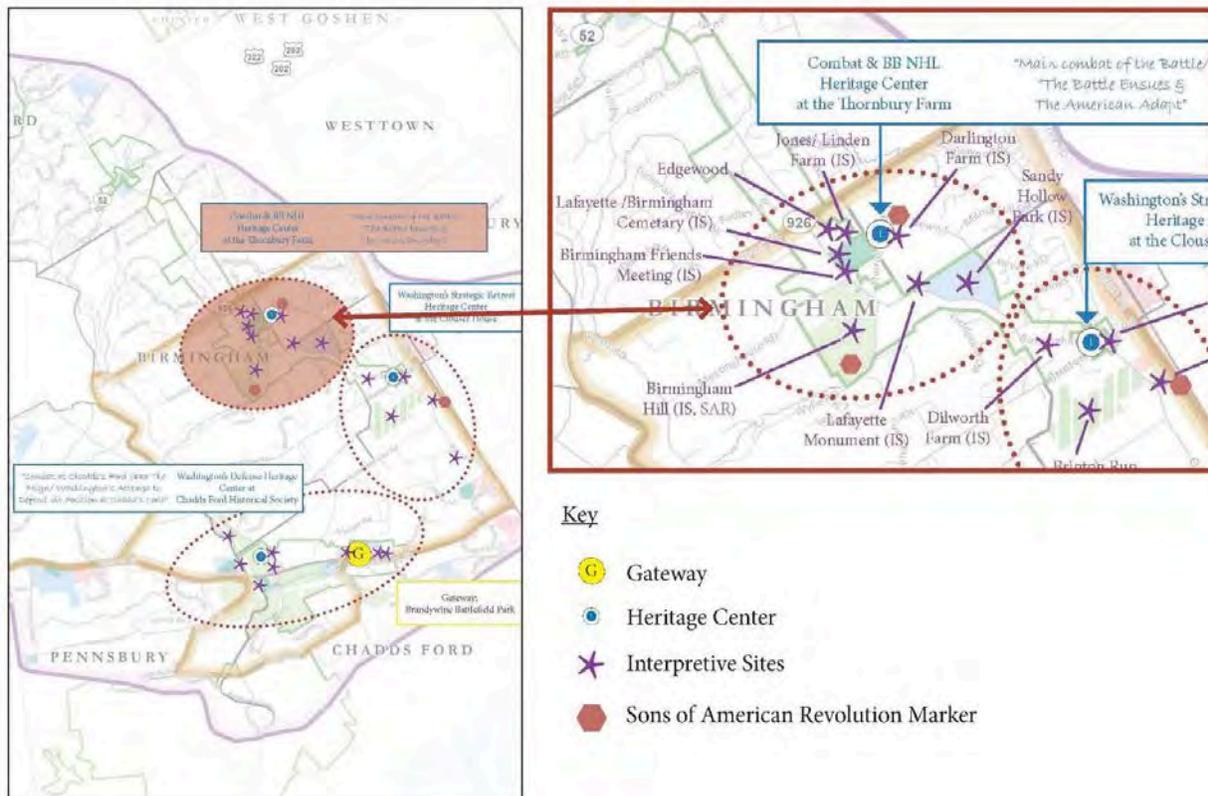
Concept for interpretation of the southeast portion of the Brandywine Battlefield through a network of Gateways, Heritage Centers, Interpretive Sites, and other interpretive resources. (Brandywine Conservancy 2022)

The Philadelphia Campaign

Focused presentation of the events associated with *The Philadelphia Campaign* between September 9 and September 23, 1777, will **adopt the current interpretive planning already developed for the Brandywine Battlefield** and extend that concept northward to the Great Valley, Valley Forge, and Iron and Steel region, telling the story of the entire two-week campaign in a coordinated and engaging manner.

Over the past eight years, the Chester County Planning Commission and local stakeholders have led the preparation of a series of Strategic Landscape Plans focused on the documentation, conservation, and interpretation of the Brandywine Battlefield. The most recent plan was completed in 2022 by the Brandywine Conservancy for the Thornbury Farm/Chadds Ford/ Dillworthtown portions of the battlefield.

Overall, interpretive planning for the Brandywine Battlefield is highly developed and ready for implementation. This Heritage Tourism Plan fully embraces the interpretive planning that has been prepared to date and focuses on its implementation within the Brandywine Battlefield and its extension northward to embrace the entire campaign.

The interpretive planning for the Brandywine Battlefield outlines a multi-pronged approach for an interpretative network knitting together exhibits and experiences at multiple sites in different communities and contexts that together will tell the larger, shared story about the battle and the campaign.

The network establishes a hierarchy of sites within the battlefield including several core components: Gateways, Heritage Centers, Interpretive Sites, and Viewing Corridors.

Gateways are the top of the hierarchy and have the greatest visitor capacity and most intensive use. Gateways provide visitors with a 30-to-90-minute experience and offer amenities such as rest rooms and ample parking. All interpretive and educational programming begins at a Gateway, which presents an overview of the battle and the campaign and outlines how the battlefield and campaign landscape may be experienced. Gateways are the launching points for potential guided car, van, and small bus tours.

The principal Gateway for the Battle of Brandywine is the **Brandywine Battlefield Park** in Chadds Ford Township. This is the first place that battlefield visitors should go to become oriented. Implementation will require working with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates to enhance the park's capacity to receive and orient visitors, increase staffing, and expand hours of operation. The new permanent exhibition in the visitor center will enhance existing interpretation but guided tour programs should be expanded. A robust and high-quality outdoor orientation exhibit and visitor facilities (rest rooms) should be installed for times when the park building is not open.

West Chester Borough may also serve as a Gateway through presentation at the Chester County History Center. Additional Gateways should be identified and implemented for the entire Philadelphia Campaign.

Birmingham Hill, acquired by the Brandywine Conservancy, is in the heart of the Brandywine Battlefield's combat area. The Birmingham Hill site is about 114 acres in size and presents an opportunity to relate the story of an important battlefield landscape. If successfully implemented, the Brandywine Conservancy's master plan for Birmingham Hill envisions visitor education, programming, and interpretative facilities to include an outdoor history pavilion accommodating up to 50 persons, indoor exhibit space on the scale of a Heritage Center, indoor lecture room accommodating up to 50 persons, walking trails with wayside exhibits, and a viewing terrace providing a sweeping vista of the battlefield landscape. The plan also proposes parking and visitor facilities, such as rest rooms.

Implementation of the interpretive program for the Brandywine Battlefield will include support to the Brandywine Conservancy for phased implementation of the Birmingham Hill master plan. Similar facilities should be considered for other locations within the broader Philadelphia Campaign.

Heritage Centers are smaller scale and have less intensive use than Gateways. They provide a 15-to-30-minute experience for visitors and can be located in areas where a cluster of historic resources pertinent to the battle and campaign exist. They should include amenities such as parking and rest room facilities. Interpretation at Heritage Centers may be indoors or both indoors and outdoors.

Six Heritage Centers have been identified for interpretation of the Battle of Brandywine, two of which have been partially implemented. The six include Heritage Centers at Marshallton, Kennett Square, Strode's Mill, Thornbury Farm, Chadds Ford Historical Society, and Dillworthtown. Additional Heritage Centers should be identified for the entire Philadelphia Campaign.

Heritage Center in Marshallton with kiosk, exhibits, visitor information, and rest rooms inside.

Interpretive Sites are smaller scale locations with less amenities and less intensive use in comparison to Heritage Centers. Interpretive Sites are the authentic places where actions occurred, and they tell their stories through place-based exhibits and landscape features. They are locations significant to the battle and campaign that work collaboratively in concert with Heritage Centers and Viewing Corridors to highlight different themes and stories about key people, places, and events.

Publicly accessible Interpretive Sites have been identified throughout the Brandywine Battlefield and are linked to Heritage Centers and designated driving routes. Additional Interpretive Sites should be identified for interpretation of the entire Philadelphia Campaign.

Tall, upright metal historical markers similar in design to state historical markers are proposed to be installed at identified Interpretive Sites. These historical markers are excellent as place-makers and are easily identified from automobiles as places to stop. They are not adequate in-and-of themselves, however, for interpretation of a designated Interpretive Site. Additional exhibits and media are required for a fulsome visitor experience. The exhibits installed at Jeffries Ford on the Brandywine Battlefield are an example of a good, minimum presentation adjacent to a historical marker. The use of additional media providing engaging content for Interpretive Sites should also be explored.

Viewing Corridors are incorporated into conceptual designs linking Heritage Centers and Interpretive Sites in a coordinated manner for good storytelling. Viewing Corridors are areas along designated driving routes that provide scenic views of landscapes similar to how they may have appeared during the Battle of Brandywine. They are opportunities for highlighting the landscape whether visitors are driving, biking, or walking.

Given its expansive nature, the entirety of the Brandywine Battlefield and broader Philadelphia Campaign will be experienced by most visitors through vehicular means, such as personal cars and self-guided driving tours. **Designated driving tours** supported by Google Map guides as discussed above in the section on websites will link Heritage Centers and Interpretive Sites throughout the landscape over which *The Philadelphia Campaign* took place.

Additionally, **walking and biking trails** may be created through which the battlefield landscape may be experienced in more intimate and meaningful ways. Heritage Centers, nearby Interpretive Sites, and Viewing Corridors have the potential to form smaller scale micro-networks within the larger battlefield and Philadelphia Campaign network providing opportunities for exploration via walking or biking. These micro-networks provide opportunities for residents and visitors to drive to Heritage Centers, park their cars, and explore the Heritage Center structure and grounds, nearby public Interpretive Sites, Viewing Corridors, and historic landscapes in active, experiential ways.

A **Designated Guide Program** is proposed to provide enhanced visitor experience for the entire Philadelphia Campaign. The program would build upon and expand the current guide programs offered by the Brandywine Battlefield Park and Paoli Battlefield. The program would be marketable and income

producing. Guided tours for individual automobiles and small groups using vans or small buses would be offered. Larger bus tours could be accommodated by parking the large buses at Gateways and dividing the passengers into smaller groups using vans or small buses. Additional discussion of a potential guides program is included in Chapter 4.

Countywide Civil-War-Trails-Type Presentation

In addition to focused presentation on the battle action associated with *The Philadelphia Campaign*, communities and sites throughout Chester County will be invited to participate in telling their own individual stories associated with the campaign and Revolutionary War. Such storytelling may make use of the Community Interpretive Program and Outdoor Exhibit Program described in Chapter 4 of this Heritage Tourism Plan. Branding and graphic identify, however, would be based on that already established for the Brandywine Battlefield.

Civil War Trails is an interpretive program initiated in Virginia but now expanded through several states through which site-specific interpretive exhibits are installed in the authentic places throughout the landscape where Civil War events occurred. The individual sites tell their own stories and are linked through driving tours and conveyed though brochures and websites. The program is well established and easily adaptable to presentation of the Revolutionary War stories in communities and sites throughout Chester County.

Civil War Trails wayside exhibits at community and landscape interpretive sites within the Shenandoah Valley.

Valley Forge National Historical Park is where the 1777/78 winter encampment is interpreted. Interpretation of *The Philadelphia Campaign* in Chester County will coordinate closely with National Park Service programming at Valley Forge. The British occupation of Valley Forge and crossing of the Schuylkill River at Fatland Ford within the park ended the campaign in Chester County and preceded the winter encampment.

One set of stories important to community and site interpretation throughout the county is that related to the winter encampment and the foraging undertaken across the landscape by parties from both armies seeking food, hay, and other resources and leaving local farms in desperate conditions. Additional stories will be identified by stakeholders.
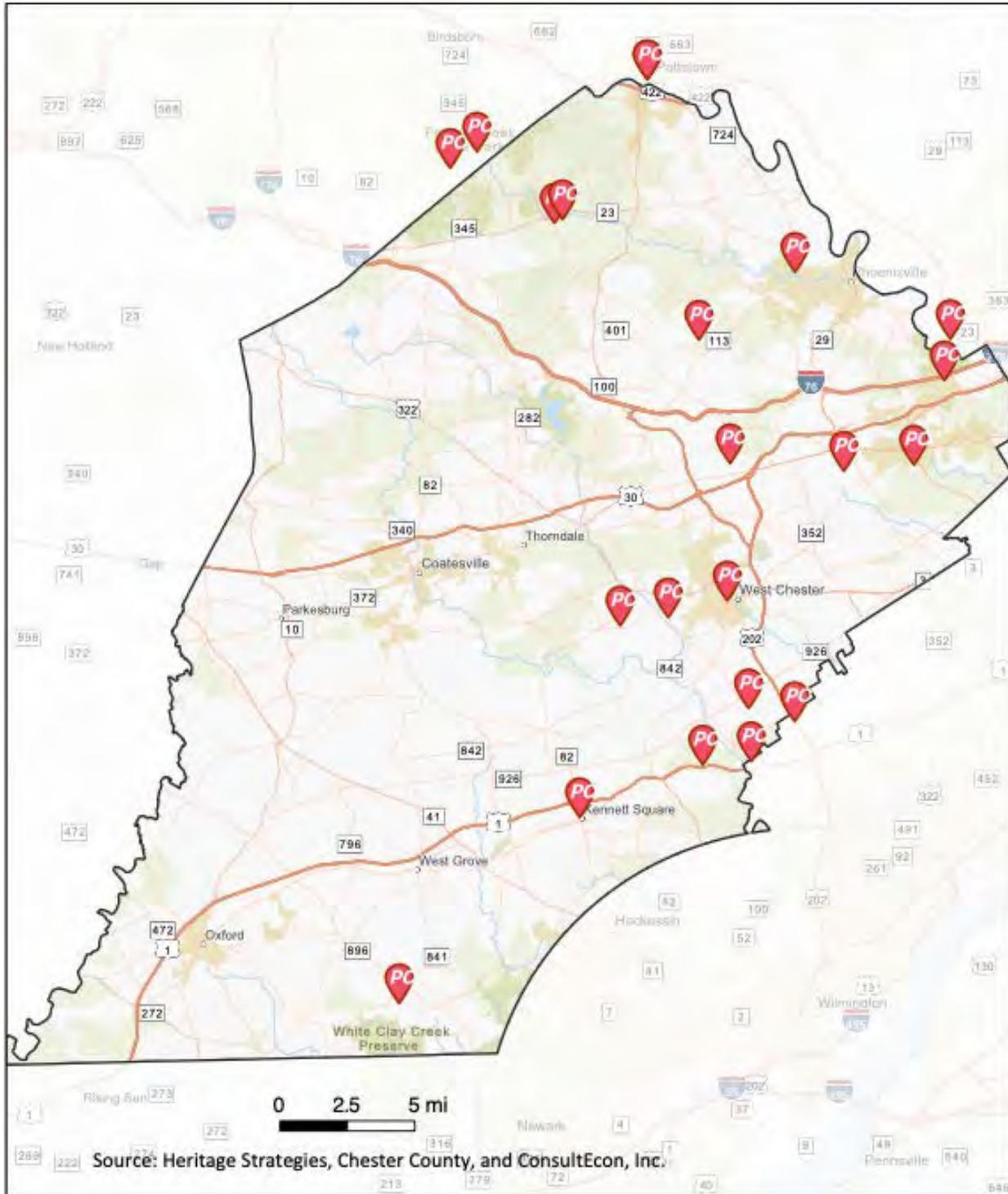
Locations of currently active interpretive sites associated with *The Philadelphia Campaign* as identified in Appendix B. Map by ConsultEcon.

3.6.5 Iron & Steel

The theme statement for the primary interpretive theme *Iron & Steel* says:
Early iron furnaces and forges flourished in the region and were the birthplace of Pennsylvania's three centuries of industrial prominence.

Similar to *The Philadelphia Campaign*, stakeholders associated with the interpretive theme *Iron & Steel* have made great progress in coordination and storytelling. Heritage sites associated with *Iron & Steel* are spread across the northern highlands of Chester County, from Valley Forge to Hopewell and south to Coatesville. They include the national attractions Valley Forge National Historical Park and its associated Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site; regional attractions such as the National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum, Schuylkill River Heritage Center, and Warwick County Park; non-profit Warwick Furnace (Thomas P. Bentley Preserve); and as many as fifty other local affiliated sites.

Iron & Steel provides an opportunity for further enhancement and promotion as a marketable visitor tourism experience. Stakeholders have organized themselves into the Iron & Steel Heritage Partnership, which meets regularly and has established a website at https://ironandsteelheritage.org. A series of four *Iron & Steel* driving tours have been created and promoted through the countryside using the website and a downloadable brochure. Information on each potential visitor site is provided on the website. The Partnership is closely associated with the regional Hopewell Big Woods, state sponsored Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape, and national Schuylkill River Greenway National Heritage Area.

Pennsylvania's *Iron & Steel* story begins in the northern Chester County highlands and extends westward through central Pennsylvania with the westward expansion of the settlement of Europeans in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Pennsylvania's first iron bloomery forges were established in 1716/17 in two unrelated ventures on opposing tributaries of the Schuylkill River, Manatawny Creek in Montgomery County and French Creek in Chester County. Within several decades, ironmasters within the northern Chester County region had established the greatest concentration of iron making facilities in colonial America.

The growth of the American iron industry from about 1720 to 1775 was phenomenal, with Pennsylvania leading the way in production and development of iron plantations—self-sufficient communities located in rural areas near the sources of iron ore, waterpower, and woodlands (charcoal) from which iron bars and products could be produced. The entire northern Chester County highlands landscape was consumed with the iron industry. From here, new iron industry ventures spread westward into central Pennsylvania, many affiliated with the same interrelated group of owners and managers.

Structures associated with most of Chester County's furnaces and forges are lost to time, but the sites, stories, and associated resources remain. Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site is the premier iron industry attraction within the region, with a preserved working furnace, plantation buildings, and a robust

living history visitor experience. Throughout northern Chester County a significant number of related resources remain where stories can be told⸺stabilized furnace ruins at Warwick Furnace; ore beds near Warwick Village; charcoal hearths at Warwick County Park; ironmasters' houses at Hibernia, Coventryville, Pottstown, and other locations; and the later steelmaking industries in Phoenixville and Coatesville. Many of these stories are brought together at the National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum in Coatesville.

Several important iron and steel sites, such as Hopewell Furnace, Joanna Furnace, and Pottsgrove Manor, are located just beyond the Chester County's borders and are included in the story told here. The *Iron & Steel* story extends to other significant attractions further west as well, such as Cornwall Iron Furnace, Pine Grove Furnace, and others.

Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site is the primary interpretive site within the Iron & Steel Heritage Region.

The *Iron & Steel* theme is closely intertwined with the interpretation of the primary theme *The Philadelphia Campaign* due to the role of the iron industry during the Revolution and Washington's efforts to protect the furnaces during the campaign. It is also closely intertwined with the theme *The Natural Landscape* due to the role natural resources played (iron ore, woodlands, and waterpower) and the impact of the iron industry on the landscape (clearing of woodlands and the resulting second growth plant communities we have today). Interpretation of *Iron & Steel* may be implemented in close coordination with those two themes.

Potential exists to enhance and expand interpretation of *Iron & Steel* into a stronger heritage tourism experience. Some sites that are currently promoted through the existing driving tours have limited or no interpretation in

place—additional engaging interpretation needs to be implemented. Collaborative and connected interpretation among sites could be strengthened. Regionally, the breadth of the story across the Chester County landscape is not fully conveyed. The Iron & Steel Heritage Partnership is a strong, professional collaboration with great capabilities. The partnership is well suited to guide further enhancement of the *Iron & Steel* story.

The purposes for presentation and interpretation of *Iron & Steel* are to:

- convey the significance of Chester County's iron and steel industry to the American Revolution and the industrial history of Pennsylvania and the nation;

- convey the central role of the iron and steel industry in shaping the landscape and communities in northern Chester County; and

- create a high quality and marketable heritage tourism visitor experience.

Audiences

Primary audiences for presentation of *Iron & Steel* are likely to be local and regional, but the presence of Valley Forge National Historical Park and Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site offers the potential for encouraging national and international visitors to explore related Chester County sites as well. Potential audiences include:

- Local Community Residents – Presentation of *Iron & Steel* will underscore the role of the iron and steel industries in community identity among local residents, both with regards to the natural landscape and individual communities such as Phoenixville, Coatesville, and the various rural suburban townships. Interpretation provides residents with interesting places to take visiting guests, friends, and family. Hopewell Furnace in particular is an important educational site for school field trips.

- Heritage Travelers – Heritage travelers may be regional or national in origin and will respond to the high-quality presentation of authentic places associated with the *Iron & Steel* story. Phoenixville and Coatesville are featured locations where high-quality visitor services, such as dining, are offered.

- International Travelers – *Iron & Steel* provides an opportunity to attract international travelers who may be visiting Valley Forge National Historical Park and Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site.

Broad Concepts

Broad concepts and ideas to be conveyed through presentation of *Iron & Steel* are outlined in Chapter 2, *Themes and Storylines*, and include:

- Context and significance of the iron and steel industry in Pennsylvania over three centuries;

- Northern Chester County as the birthplace of the iron and steel industry in Pennsylvania;

- Why here? – iron ore, waterpower, woodlands, wagon roads;

- How it worked – the iron & steel making processes;

- Scope and impact of iron & steel across the landscape;

- Communities – from iron plantations to steel cities;

- Peoples and personalities associated with the iron and steel industry.

Website

The existing website for the Iron & Steel Heritage Partnership may be retained, enhanced, and linked to the proposed new website for the county's heritage tourism initiative. As with other themes, the heritage tourism website will be the means of exploring the history, sites, and visitor opportunities associated with *Iron & Steel* for both residents and visitors. It will convey the high quality of the experience that can be anticipated.

Educational content and background information will be provided on the iron and steel industry in Pennsylvania and northern Chester County. The website may be linked to pages within the Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site and other lead attractions for some aspects of the educational content. The beginnings of the iron industry should be described and the extent of the industry's impact across the landscape should be illustrated. The workings of iron plantations should be presented along with changes to the industry over time, including the transition from rural sites to urban centers and the production of steel.

Currently, the website provides detailed information guiding visitation and touring of the *Iron & Steel* landscape but may be further enhanced. Existing and/or updated driving tours linking sites should be suggested and supported with downloadable Google Map route directions. Website and downloadable content should be provided for each visitor-ready interpretive site. As with *The Philadelphia Campaign*, a downloadable tour guide app should be considered to support visitor orientation and the interpretation of individual sites.

Organization and Structure

Planning and management of presentation of *Iron & Steel* will be undertaken by the Iron & Steel Heritage Partnership with leadership from the professional interpreters associated with its key attractions. The presentation will build upon the significant work that has already been undertaken and displayed on the Partnership's website. Modifications, adjustments, and phasing may be necessary to address limited visitor readiness at some sites as well as coordinated interpretation between sites.

Interpretive presentation of Iron & Steel will be coordinated with those of both *The Natural Landscape* and *The Philadelphia Campaign*. Valley Forge, Phoenixville, and Coatesville may be considered Gateways to the presentation. Hopewell Furnace is a must-see destination and should be strongly promoted and supported.

The presentation may make use of the Heritage Center framework to be employed in interpretation of the Battle of Brandywine and *The Philadelphia Campaign* in which selected sites offer introductory exhibits and limited visitor

services, providing context for other self-guided Interpretive Sites within their locale. Such framework, if employed, will be developed by the Iron & Steel Heritage Partnership with county and regional support. Heritage Center installations would be appropriate at the village of Valley Forge in Valley Forge National Historical Park, the Schuylkill River Heritage Center in Phoenixville, and National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum in Coatesville, and Warwick County Park near Knauertown.

Current planning has divided the *Iron & Steel* landscape into four separate themed driving tours, each featuring between ten and fifteen visitor sites. Each driving tour is suggested to take about a day to explore. The four tours are titled: (1) Forging Freedom – in the northwest Hopewell Furnace region; (2) Powering Freedom – northeast along the Schuylkill River between Phoenixville and Pottstown; (3) Supplying Freedom – in the central Yellow Springs vicinity; and (4) Building Freedom – in the southwest Coatesville/Springton/Downingtown vicinity.

The Partnership should consider how the Heritage Center framework should be applied to these four tours to facilitate exploration by residents and visitors. Variations to these tours might also be considered for visitors with more limited, one- or two-day timeframes. A single core tour might be necessary as a viable marketable product.
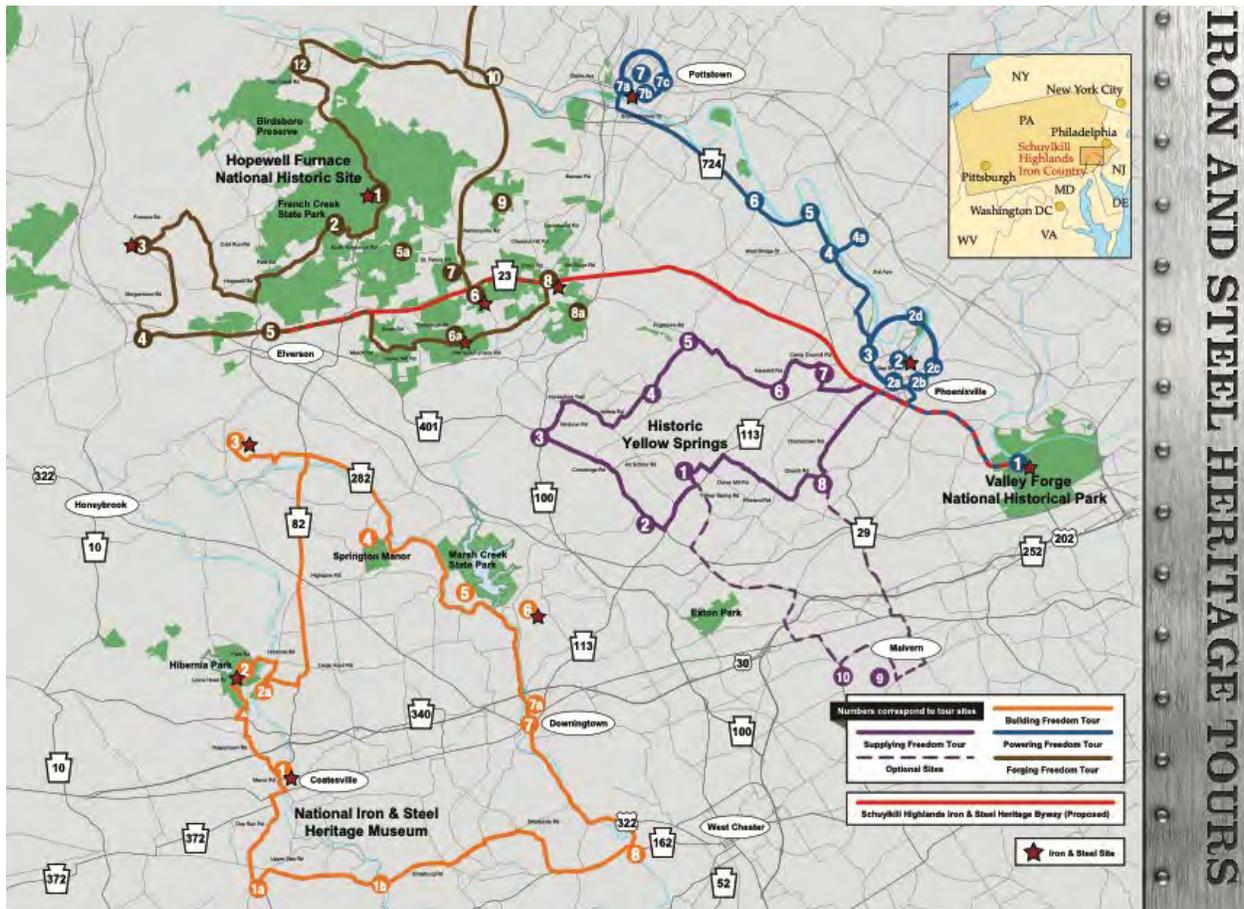
Themed driving tours created by the Iron & Steel Heritage Partnership (Iron and Steel Heritage Partnership 2021)

Many of the sites listed on the four existing tours at present do not have *Iron & Steel* interpretive experiences, and some of the existing experiences need to be strengthened. Coordination of interpretation between sites should be strengthened and more complete context for the *Iron & Steel* theme and stories should be provided.

Phased implementation of enhanced and coordinated interpretive experiences will be introduced as resources permit. No visitor should be sent to a site without some level of high-quality visitor experience that is readily visible and accessible. More comprehensive introductory experiences would be helpful both on the website and at Gateways and Heritage Centers.

While the county's early iron industry is presented across the landscape where furnaces and forges were located, presentation of the steel industry is focused in Phoenixville and Coatesville and may be based upon planning and implementation undertaken through the Community Interpretive Program process as described in Chapter 4 of this plan. The Schuylkill River Heritage Center and National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum are key sites in those presentations.

The Foundry Building in Phoenixville location of the borough's Schuylkill River Heritage Center. The truss of an iron bridge over French Creek is in the foreground.
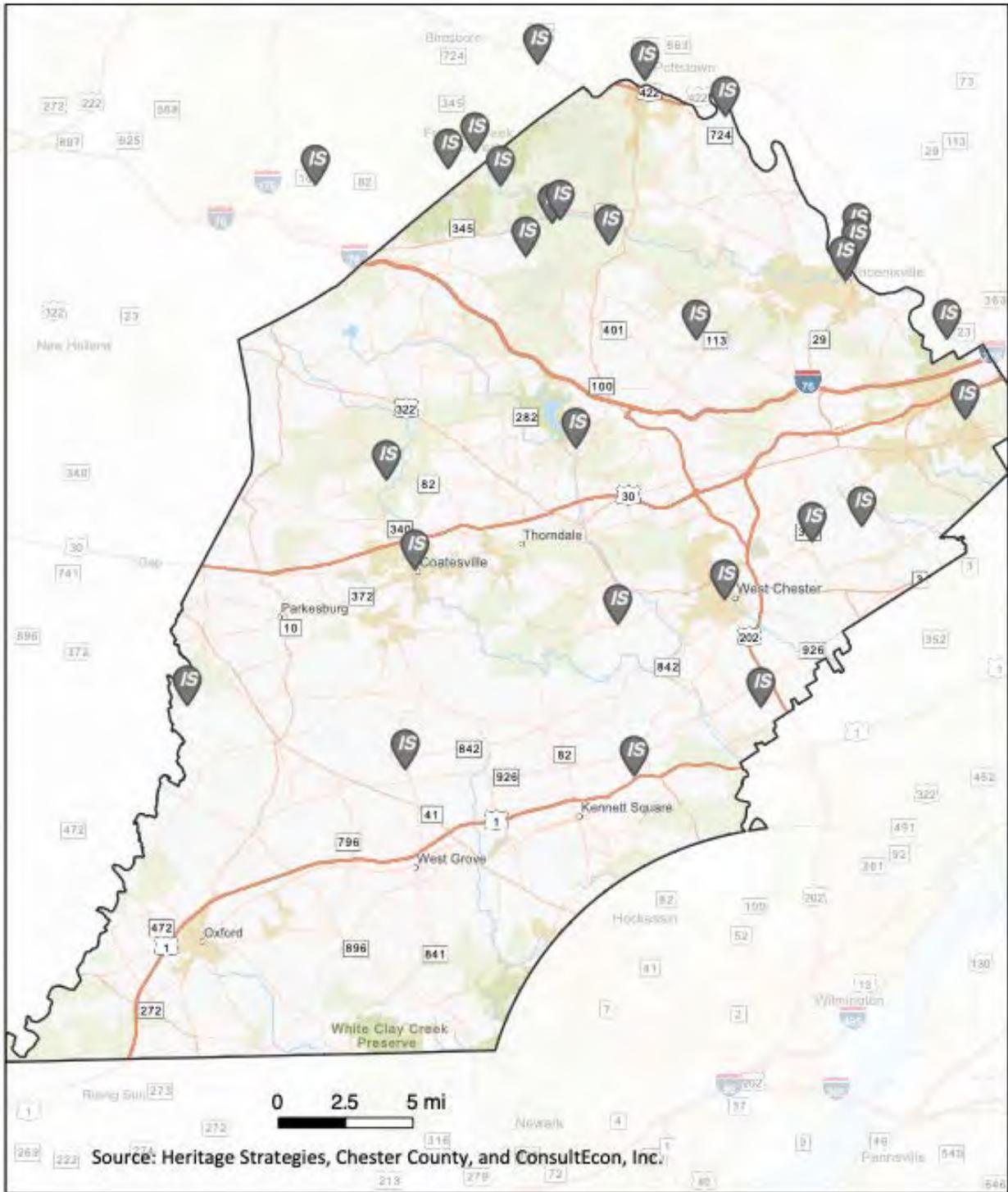
Locations of currently active interpretive sites associated with *Iron & Steel* as identified in Appendix B. Map by ConsultEcon.

3.6.6 Creative Expression

The theme statement for the primary interpretive theme *Creative Expression is: Arts and culture have long flourished in Chester County in many forms. Some nationally recognized visual artists have been inspired by the beauty of the landscape.*

Creative Expression offers the opportunity to tell the stories of the region's artists, architects, authors, horticulturalists, educators, musicians, athletes, and others who influenced regional and national culture. Individuals have been inspired by the intrinsic beauty of Chester County's landscapes and environs since its early settlement. They studied it, recreated it, and shaped it, discovering their own forms of expression through art, horticulture, writing, music, sport, and other mediums.

For Humphrey Marshall and the Pierce brothers in the 1700s, Chester County's landscape became a laboratory where they studied and cultivated America's native plants and trees, bringing attention to America's distinct botanical treasures, and creating lasting legacies that Chester County residents and visitors continue to study and enjoy today. Pierre S. du Pont added layers to Pierces' legacy with his own impactful horticultural design elements, and under Longwood Gardens' lasting stewardship, their vision continues with new and evolving interpretation that attracts national and international travelers, as well as local audiences.

Chester County's historically authentic and beautiful qualities have inspired generations of artists, creating settings where accomplished artists could train and teach, and individuals could perfect their craft. Howard Pyle's Brandywine School at Painter's Folly in Chaddsford, and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts' Country School in Yellow Springs, both established in the early twentieth century, left an indelible mark on the development of American illustration and the artistic careers of Maxfield Parrish, Horace Pippin, and N.C. Wyeth, among others. Andrew Wyeth's paintings produced the images that, for many, define the essence of the regional landscape. In the same period, Wharton Esherick established his home and studio on Valley Forge Mountain where his love of nature inspired much of his sculpture, art, design, and architecture, and made lasting contributions in Arts and Crafts and Expressionism.

The studios and the landscapes where these artists mastered their craft still exist in their unaltered, original form, providing academics and visitors alike with a glimpse into the artists' hearts and minds. Visitors to Chester County can experience the highly authentic and preserved studios of N.C. Wyeth, Andrew Wyeth, and Wharton Esherick. The Brandywine Museum of Art creates exhibitions that explore the region's influences on art and preserves the studios and landscapes that influenced the Wyeths and others. The Wharton Esherick Museum is focused on creating a highly academic fine arts resource for art historians and artists, an incubator and platform for fine artists to practice their craft, and on research to support the interpretation of Wharton Esherick, both the man and his artistic contributions.

Chester County's rich artistic legacy is very much present here today. Historic Yellow Springs, through its annual Art Show (in its 43rd year) and its classes at the Chester Spring Studio, continues the tradition of PAFA's Country School. Plein air events hosted by various artist groups and organizations connect artists with natural and historic settings throughout the county. Local artists can showcase their work with residents and heritage travelers through the annual Chester County Studio Tour and the Chester County Craft Guild's shows. Galleries can be found in nearly every town, as well as on private properties throughout the county. Murals bring art into communities, creating a welcoming atmosphere and a deep sense of place for residents and visitors, such as the vibrant mural of the foundry in action in Phoenixville or a charming carriage ride scene in Victorian Malvern.

Both accomplished and budding artists as well as schoolchildren enjoy classes, exhibitions, and summer camps offered by the Chester County Art Association in West Chester, continuing a tradition that started with its founding in 1931. Residents and visitors can explore other artisanal crafts at heritage sites such as Historic Sugartown's Book Bindery which offers workshops in the crafts of bookbinding and paper marbling.

Music and performance arts also thrive in Chester County at venues that include People's Light & Theatre Company in Malvern and the Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center in West Chester. The Kennett Symphony has performed in Chester County for over eighty years at venues including Longwood Gardens' Open Air Theatre, and the Brandywine Ballet has a nearly 50-year history, producing its popular annual performance of *The Nutcracker*. Smaller music and theatre groups and organizations exist in nearly every town and village, creating enriching experiences for Chester County residents.

Collegiate and professional athletes from Chester County have made an impact on the regional, national, and international arena of sport. The full gamut is represented: equestrians, lacrosse, basketball, football, baseball, soccer, ice hockey and more. This rich legacy comes to life at the Devon Horse Show and with the County's collegiate sports teams.

In 2019, the Chester County Community Foundation brought together organizations representing arts, music, heritage, and other cultural organizations to establish the Chester County Cultural Alliance to elevate the profile of the arts and culture sector and to foster connections among these organizations and the wider community.

The purposes for presentation and interpretation of *Creative Expression* are to:

- tell the story of how Chester County's beauty and landscape has inspired individuals to express themselves through art, horticulture, writing; music, performance art, and other forms of expression;
- celebrate the national contributions of individual Chester County residents to Chester County's creative heritage;
- inspire residents and visitors to explore and practice their own forms of *Creative Expression* while discovering Chester County's artistic, horticultural, and other contributions through engaging experiences; and
- create a high quality and marketable heritage tourism visitor experience.

Audiences

Primary audiences for presentation of *Creative Expression* are:

- <u>Local Community Residents</u> – The existence of Longwood Gardens, the Brandywine Museum of Art, and studios of nationally recognized artists offer local residents high-quality visitor experiences. Specific local audiences include art enthusiasts and gardeners as well as artists who enjoy practicing their craft in their own backyard. Murals and other public art installations create a sense of place and community identity for residents. Local residents are also attracted to events that bring together the arts with heritage settings offering a sense of community. Visitation to heritage sites, classes, and events can offer interesting experiences for visiting guests, friends, and family.

- <u>Heritage Travelers</u> – Heritage travelers may be regional or national in origin and will respond to the high-quality presentation of places associated with *Creative Expression.* Heritage travelers might be art enthusiasts or horticulturalists who seek to view the work of nationally recognized artists and landscape designers. Artists seeking landscapes and authentic places to paint are also potential audiences.

- <u>International Travelers</u> – *Creative Expression* provides an opportunity to attract and engage international travelers to Longwood Gardens, Brandywine Museum of Art, and other art-related sites and experiences. The Wharton Esherick Museum also has an international following.

Broad Concepts

Broad concepts and ideas to be conveyed through presentation of *Creative Expression* are outlined in Chapter 2, *Themes and Storylines*, and include:

- Context and significance of the study of botany, horticulture, and landscape design over three centuries in Chester County and how it continues to evolve today;

- Contributions and influences of individual artists, authors, horticulturalists, musicians, craftspeople, and others, both regionally and nationally;

- Chester County's role in the development of early twentieth-century American illustration, Expressionism, Arts and Crafts, and other influences and its lasting impact on today's artistic communities;

- Rich traditions of performance art in Chester County and how the arts and culture sector continues to grow and serves as an important part of community life today.

Website

The website created for the heritage tourism project will serve as the principal gateway to the presentation and experience of *Creative Expression*. The website will offer the background and context of Chester County's arts and culture legacy, will highlight key figures who influenced regional and national culture,

and identify active heritage sites and venues available for visitation with links to those organizations.

Individual sites, organizations, municipalities, and communities should coordinate the interpretation of their stories with the countywide presentation of *Creative Expression* on the heritage tourism website and with countywide themes and storylines. The website will present linkages to initiatives and resources offered by various groups and communities as related to *Creative Expression*.

Organization and Structure

The interpretive theme *Creative Expression* should be managed and presented with the following strategies. The Community Interpretation and the Public Art Programs may be led by the Heritage Tourism Program's Implementing Entity. The other suggested programs and initiatives may be led by other entities, such as the Chester County Cultural Alliance, arts organizations, or Chester County Tourism.

Community Interpretation

Individual community stakeholders including individual heritage sites, organizations, communities, Main Streets, or municipalities with a story or idea related to *Creative Expression* will be encouraged to reach out to the lead Implementing Entity to pursue the development of a Community Interpretative Plan or Outdoor Exhibits. Like in the implementation of *The Cultural Landscape* and *Evolving Values* themes, participation will emanate from the grassroots where the sites and organizations will step up and seek participation and support in the establishment of viable, quality visitor presentations and experiences.

The Heritage Tourism Program's Implementing Entity would guide participation and assist in linking organizations or communities with similar stories or interpretive focuses together. An example might be an outdoor exhibit at Kuerner Farm at the Brandywine Museum of Art that ties Andrew Wyeth's artwork directly to scenes on the property, or a program at Historic Yellow Springs that explores the history of PAFA's Country School.

Public Art Program

This Heritage Tourism Plan has proposed a Public Art Program as an interpretive medium to tell local stories and enhance the character of historic places. This could be a separate stand-alone program or incorporated into an Outdoor Exhibit. Local artists should be engaged to create art installations to interpret *Creative Expression*, tying their artistic talents to the interpretation of local stories and experiences of local communities.

Public art offers the opportunity to bring together the interpretation of *Creative Expression* with the interpretation of all the other themes, employing visual art to convey the themes and stories in public settings. For example, artists could be commissioned to create public art installations that link the stories of freedom seekers and the Underground Railroad together through parts of the county.

Murals currently exist in Phoenixville, West Chester, Malvern, Kennett Square, and Oxford, and contribute significantly to the identity and sense of place to those communities, offering a sense of motion and evoking their unique histories. There is tremendous opportunity to apply this medium to other streetscapes, particularly in Coatesville as the city continues to infuse new life into its downtown to support its revitalization efforts through new restaurants, shopping, and a sports facility.

Public art is a means of engaging audiences with interpretive content and of employing local and regional artists. The Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens uses a series of large wood sculptures to interpret different aspects of natural woodlands

Art Shows and Gallery Scene
Chester County hosts several Art Shows and experiences throughout the year, including the Malvern Retreat Center Art Show, the Historic Yellow Springs Art Show, and the Chester County Studio Tour, which features 60+ artist studios throughout the county. West Chester, Kennett Square, and other towns host Gallery Walks and Art Strolls in the spring and fall, and individual galleries also host their own events. These events can be combined with an evening out or a weekend visit to Chester County.

Immersive Art and Craft Experiences
Chester County Art Association, the Chester Springs Studio, and Historic Sugartown's Book Bindery offer workshops focused on watercolor, oil and other mediums, pottery, and book arts. These could be packaged with visits to local museums, heritage sites, and studios, as well as with the annual Historic Yellow Springs Art Show or the Chester County Studio Tour to create multi-day visits. A couple could attend a day-long workshop at Historic Sugartown's Bindery, stay over and dine at the General Warren Inn, and visit the Wharton Esherick Museum the next day.

In recent years, heritage sites including Valley Forge, Historic Sugartown, the Brandywine Museum of Art's Kuerner Farm, and Cheslen Preserve have

partnered with local art instructors, art groups, and other organizations to offer "En Plein Air" events at their sites, where artists are invited to practice the art of outdoor painting. During these events, artists either register to attend or simply show up at the heritage site to paint on the grounds of the heritage site or landscape. Some sites offer it as a class with local instructors. The host site usually, but not always, offers a map indicating areas available to paint and restrooms for the artists. In some instances, the Plein Air Day culminates in an art show or sale that benefits the host organization. The creation of a "Chester County Plein Air Site Guide" would help connect the local and regional art community to heritage sites available for Plein Air painting, fostering new collaborations that could both increase the visibility of Chester County's heritage sites and support local artists.

Studio Tours

There is an opportunity to package intimate tours to the studios of three nationally recognized artists: N.C. Wyeth, Andrew Wyeth, and Wharton Esherick. These tours could be packaged as a two-day tour, where visitors spend a day at both Wyeth studios and a day at the Wharton Esherick Museum. These tours would have to be coordinated between the Wharton Esherick Museum and the Brandywine Museum of Art.

Initially these tours would necessarily be extremely limited due to the physical size restrictions of the studios. The Wharton Esherick Museum is currently in a protracted self-study phase, recently inheriting the remainder of the archival and art collections from Wharton Esherick's son-in-law, and receiving a large endowment from the Wyngate Foundation. The organization's efforts are largely focused on research and interpretation of the fine arts, an increased understanding of Wharton Esherick, and engaging its neighbors to acquire community support for the Museum's proposed growth. The Wharton Esherick Museum's long-range plan is to implement a campus master plan completed in 2020 that will allow for expanded visitor experiences at the site.

Immersive Horticultural Experiences

Similar to sites and museums offering art and craft experiences, Longwood Gardens offers immersive horticultural classes and workshops in garden care and design for all skill levels. These classes can be packaged with tours of Longwood Gardens, as well as to other gardens and arboretums such as Welkinweir or Chanticleer, or with appropriate heritage sites (depending on the topic) to draw visitors for longer stays. Longwood Gardens' existing programs are well established and play a vital role in the county's ongoing Heritage Tourism Program. Their organization and implementation are well managed by Longwood Gardens.

Performance Art and Other Events

Performance art and other events are offered by organizations and entities and promoted by Chester County Tourism. These programs should be recognized in the county's Heritage Tourism Program but do not necessarily require heritage tourism support.

There is potential, however, for heritage sites and preserves to host music and other events that draw larger crowds. For example, Natural Lands will host a "Field Jam" at Stroud Preserve in May. Historic Sugartown holds "Biergartens" three times each year as a music and community event. These events draw community residents and are effective in engaging visitors to discover more about the heritage site while also supporting local musicians and small businesses that operate breweries, food trucks, etc. Living history events may also include artistic performance. The Heritage Tourism Program can support and promote community events at heritage sites that bring together the arts, music, and interpretation.
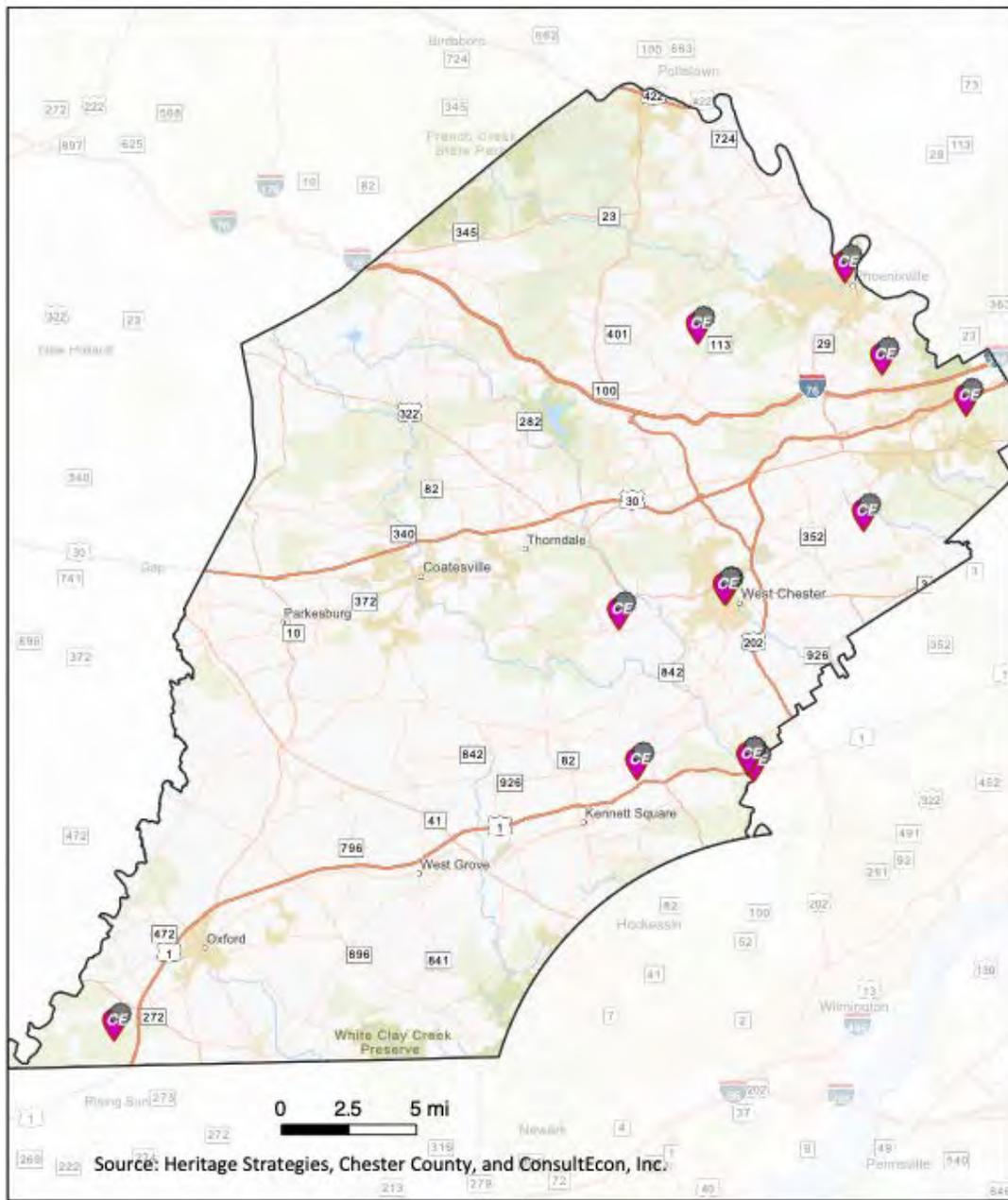
Locations of currently active interpretive sites associated with *Creative Expression* as identified in Appendix B. Map by ConsultEcon.

CHAPTER 4 – HERITAGE TOURISM PROGRAMS

Telling of the county's stories as outlined in Chapters 2 and 3 requires coordinated programming in which heritage sites and communities can participate and through which they may be provided with guidance and support. Chester County's Heritage Tourism Program should provide leadership in the development and implementation of such programming.

Chapter 4 presents concepts for a series of potential programs that may be used to implement a countywide heritage presentation. It begins with discussion of a presentation website and related media that may serve as an educational resource as well as an introduction and orientation to participating heritage communities and sites that may be visited.

The chapter then describes a series of potential county level programs to provide process, structure, guidance, support, and quality control for the interpretive presentation at communities and sites such that, together, they may be perceived and marketed as a coordinated countywide heritage tourism presentation. These include a potential Outdoor Exhibit Program, Community Interpretive Program, Public Arts Program, and others. Each of these potential programs, if implemented, will need to be organized, managed, and funded.

4.1 WEBSITE AND ORIENTATION

The heritage presentation for Chester County should have a comprehensive website that presents information on background, history, visitation, community engagement, and educational resources. The heritage website should be consistent with the graphic identity and branding discussed in the next section and should provide a full-service site for virtual visitors. The website should be the foundation for a state-of-the-art media experience, serve as a portal to and from other media formats, and be a launching point for features, services, and utilities that may be developed.

The heritage website may be a stand-alone creation but should be a featured link for heritage tourism from the websites of Chester County Tourism, Chester County History Center, Chester County Planning Commission, and Chester County Parks+Preservation. Other partnering websites should be encouraged to link to it as well.

Chester County Tourism's website www.brandywinevalley.com, branded as *Chester County's Brandywine Valley*, is the primary site for visitors coming to the county and looking for things to do and places to stay. Under the primary heading *Things to Do*, the website presents a list of types of attractions, including Gardens, Historic Sites, Museums, and Performing Arts. Under each of those categories, individual sites are presented with an image, one sentence description, and link to their website. Under Historic Sites, twenty-nine attractions are listed. Under Museums, twenty-four attractions are listed.

Under a separate primary heading, *Towns & Villages*, featured historic communities are presented with the categories *Main Streets* and *Countryside Villages*. Phoenixville, West Chester, and Kennett Square are featured under *Main Streets*. Downingtown, Oxford, Coatesville, Malvern, Saint Peter's Village, Chadds Ford, Marshallton, Exton, and Unionville/Willowdale are featured as *Countryside Villages*. Similar to the listings under *Things to Do*, each community is presented with an image, one sentence description, and link to its own website.

Chester County Tourism's website is friendly, visually appealing, and easy to navigate. With respect to this Heritage Tourism Plan, no changes are necessary to its overall format and presentation. It is recommended, however, that an additional primary heading be created for *Heritage* that links to the proposed heritage website.

The Chester County History Center website, https://mycchc.org, is handsome and engaging and well represents the History Center's programs and professionalism. Its primary headings include *Events, Exhibits, Collections,* and *Learn*, all of which relate directly to History Center programs. The heading *Learn* offers customized private tours and lectures as well as school and youth programs.

The History Center website is entirely focused on programs and has no general educational content on Chester County history. Assuming the History Center plays a leading role in coordinating the countywide presentation of heritage

sites, it is recommended that its website add an additional primary heading for *Heritage Sites* that would link to the proposed heritage website.

Cultural Landscape Presentation

The proposed heritage tourism website is expected to be the primary vehicle through which the countywide interpretive presentation outlined in this Heritage Tourism Plan is offered and made accessible to the public. In addition to providing information on visitation to heritage sites, the website should be an educational resource, providing the background and context for the understanding of Chester County's history and historic places.

The website should take a cultural landscape approach, focusing primarily upon the complementary primary themes *The Natural Landscape* and *The Cultural Landscape*. Together, these two themes represent the entirety of the county and provide context for other themes and storylines. As an introduction, the website should present these two themes through text, maps, illustrations, working through their various theme topics and storylines as outlined in Chapter 2

The interpretive presentation should take a cultural landscape approach, identifying patterns in the landscape, relating them to themes and storylines, and encouraging best practices in their preservation and management.

Historic and cultural landscapes are central to an understanding of Chester County's historical development and a central component of community character. Chester County is an evolving cultural landscape. Every landscape in the county has been impacted by human activity, from the occupation of the land by Native Americans to the present. Key periods of the county's development have led to specific types of historic building and landscape resources that remain evident today. Individual historic resources were constructed within larger landscape contexts and community patterns of use.

Changes in the landscape can be complex and are comprised of layers built one upon another over time. These layers of change may be difficult to perceive and are often taken for granted. Chester County's overall geology, landforms, drainage patterns, and ecology provide the foundational setting for the landscape and are instrumental in the characteristics determining spatial patterns, topography, natural systems and features, and vegetation. The county's road networks and land divisions create large-scaled patterns related to circulation and land use.

Buildings and structures are associated with each period of the county's historical development and often have particular relationships to larger landscape patterns, such as the layout and patterns of farmsteads or the locations of crossroad villages.

Cultural landscape methodologies are useful in helping to understand county and municipal landscapes as they have evolved over time. Association with those contexts and patterns helps enrich the meaning and significance of individual resources and provides a broader and deeper perspective regarding the county and its communities as a whole. The proposed heritage website should be an educational resource making these connections clear and relating them to authentic places that can be visited and scenic routes that can be explored.

Privately owned historic resources are part of the scenic cultural landscape and may be appreciated thematically even though not individually interpreted.

Themes, Storylines, and Sites

In addition to the cultural landscape approach advocated above, the heritage website should present all six of the county's primary themes along with their theme topics and storylines as outlined in Chapter 2. It is recommended that the website's home page list the six primary themes at its top with drop down windows listing the theme topics/storylines leading to educational information and content for each.

The website should include educational and interpretive content that is engaging and fun to explore—filled with photographs, maps, videos, and varying depths of information. Content should establish context, elaborate upon the primary themes; provide substantive background and context for the various storylines; and relate the storylines to sites, experiences, touring routes, and places to visit. The educational and interpretive content should be expansive enough to provide ways for communities and sites throughout Chester County to relate their own individual stories to the countywide site.

In presenting the cultural landscape, the website should address the county's landscape as a whole, whether or not communities or landscape areas have designated interpretive sites to visit. This presentation provides the context for every community and potential heritage site to participate by providing onsite exhibits over time. In the meantime, residents and visitors can drive through the countryside and visit historic communities and appreciate their significance even though onsite interpretation is not provided.

Where onsite interpretive exhibits *are* provided, the website will emphasize those communities and sites as places to visit and outline how they relate to the countywide themes and storylines. The dropdown window for each primary theme should present the communities and sites that are visitor ready with exhibits and experiences.

Chadds Ford has several significant historic interpretive sites preserved and presented by the Chadds Ford Historical Society.

In identifying the publicly accessible sites related to storylines, the website should introduce each site with a brief overview and statement about its relationship to the theme or storyline and then link to partner websites where visitor information and additional interpretive content is provided, similar to the way that Chester County Tourism works currently. Partnering heritage sties should be asked to add educational content to their websites that clearly relates their sites to the countywide interpretive themes and storylines.

Valley Forge National Historical Park and Hopewell National Historic Site are two examples of sites with high quality websites including educational content. Regional sites such as Historic Sugartown, Historic Yellow Springs, and the National Iron & Steel Museum have similar quality websites. The countywide heritage website is expected to provide interpretive content for self-guided sites that do not have websites.

Visitors exploring the heritage website should be able to easily see sites that can be visited, both through listing of the sites with interpretive content and through an interactive map. The interactive map should be explorable by individual theme or storyline or by multiple themes and storylines. Visitors should be able to explore different regions of the county using the map and see all of the publicly accessible sites, perhaps color coded by theme and storyline.

Orientation

While the proposed heritage website will be the primary interface with residents and visitors looking for heritage tourism experiences, other ways to provide visitor orientation will be needed. As the Heritage Tourism Plan is phased in, planning should be undertaken to determine how visitors and residents will be oriented to the countywide interpretive presentation beyond the website.

A family of maps, brochures, and publications that can be downloaded or displayed should be created based on the themes and storylines. The family of maps, brochures, and publications will be added to and further developed as the countywide interpretive presentation is phased in, new themes and storylines are added, and new sites are made visitor ready.

Orientation materials should include an overview of the countywide themes and storylines; sites where they are presented; and suggested routes, trails, and itineraries. To further orientation, kiosks or exhibits should be installed at key places where residents and visitors gather, such as downtown centers in the boroughs and villages or at parks and trailheads. Participating heritage sites should be expected to host orientation exhibits and/or display printed materials for visitors.

Orientation kiosks in Phoenixville and Oxford (Upper photos) and two other locations not in Chester County providing visitor information in a high-quality design format.

4.2 BRANDING AND GRAPHIC IDENTITY

The branding and graphic identity to be used by the Heritage Tourism Program supports interpretation by creating a visual impression for residents and visitors that is recognizable and immediately communicates a sense of quality and expectation. It is critical in helping to create a visual presence and in conveying the program's message about the importance of community character. Graphic identity is visual communication that is immediate and experiential.

The branding and graphic identity proposed for the Heritage Tourism Program should be based upon the designs for the new wayfinding signage being implemented countywide by Chester County Tourism. This new wayfinding signage is replacing an earlier system installed in the 1990s and early 2000s. By using the graphic identity established for the wayfinding signage, an overall consistency will be established between wayfinding to attractions and the interpretation proposed for the Heritage Tourism Program.

An exception will be made for signage and exhibits related to the primary theme The Philadelphia Campaign, which will use the graphic identity already established and in use for wayfinding and interpretation of the Brandywine

Battlefield. In expansion of the Brandywine Battlefield interpretation northward to encompass the entire *The Philadelphia Campaign*, use of the established branding will provide consistency for Revolutionary War interpretation and will set that presentation out from interpretation related to other countywide themes.

Branding and graphic identity for these two separate formats⸺the Heritage Tourism Program and The Philadelphia Campaign⸺should be further developed with designs for a variety of exhibit and publication formats. The graphic identity should be used for design elements associated with the heritage website, orientation materials, interpretive exhibits at heritage sites supported by the program, brochures, maps, publications, and other media formats and materials presenting interpretive content.

Designs for the two graphic identities should specify logo, graphic elements, fonts, colors, and other components. It should be developed to include a variety of anticipated formats and media and should coordinate with the Creative Campaign for the Heritage Tourism Program discussed in the next section. In addition to graphic components, the Heritage Tourism Program will develop guidelines for use of the graphic identity by partners in interpretation and related media in a manner similar to the Campaign Toolkit for marketing discussed in the next section. Use of the graphic identity by partners will be encouraged but closely monitored and only undertaken by permission and adherence to the Heritage Tourism Program's guidelines.

The proposed graphic identity will:
- Convey and communicate Chester County's regional identity;
- Relate to the county's culture and heritage;
- Be easily recognizable under the variety of conditions of its use;
- Be easy to use and adapt to different formats; and
- Be accessible and convey a sense of enjoyment and fun in experiencing Chester County's heritage landscapes, communities, and sites.

Exhibits and initiatives supported or promoted by the Heritage Tourism Program should recognize its contribution by including its logo and acknowledging its support in its media. Print and technological media will be used to present and promote the countywide presentation holistically. Communications will reach out to engage residents. Public visibility is important to the Heritage Tourism Program.

Heritage Tourism Marketing Creative Campaign
As part of this Heritage Tourism Plan, a concept and format for branding and promotion was developed by the planning team's design consultant, SWELL whose work was focused in three areas:

1. Defining a Chester County Heritage Tourism **Brand Promise** and corresponding public-facing messaging platform to inform and inspire unified communications and advertising.
2. Creating a Chester County Heritage Tourism **Campaign Theme** to guide visitor marketing and communications through and beyond

the 250 period, drawing from and supporting *The Philadelphia Campaign* and providing useful material *The Base Program* going forward.

3. Delivering a **Campaign Toolkit** for use by all Tourism Plan partners in advance of, through, and beyond 2026.
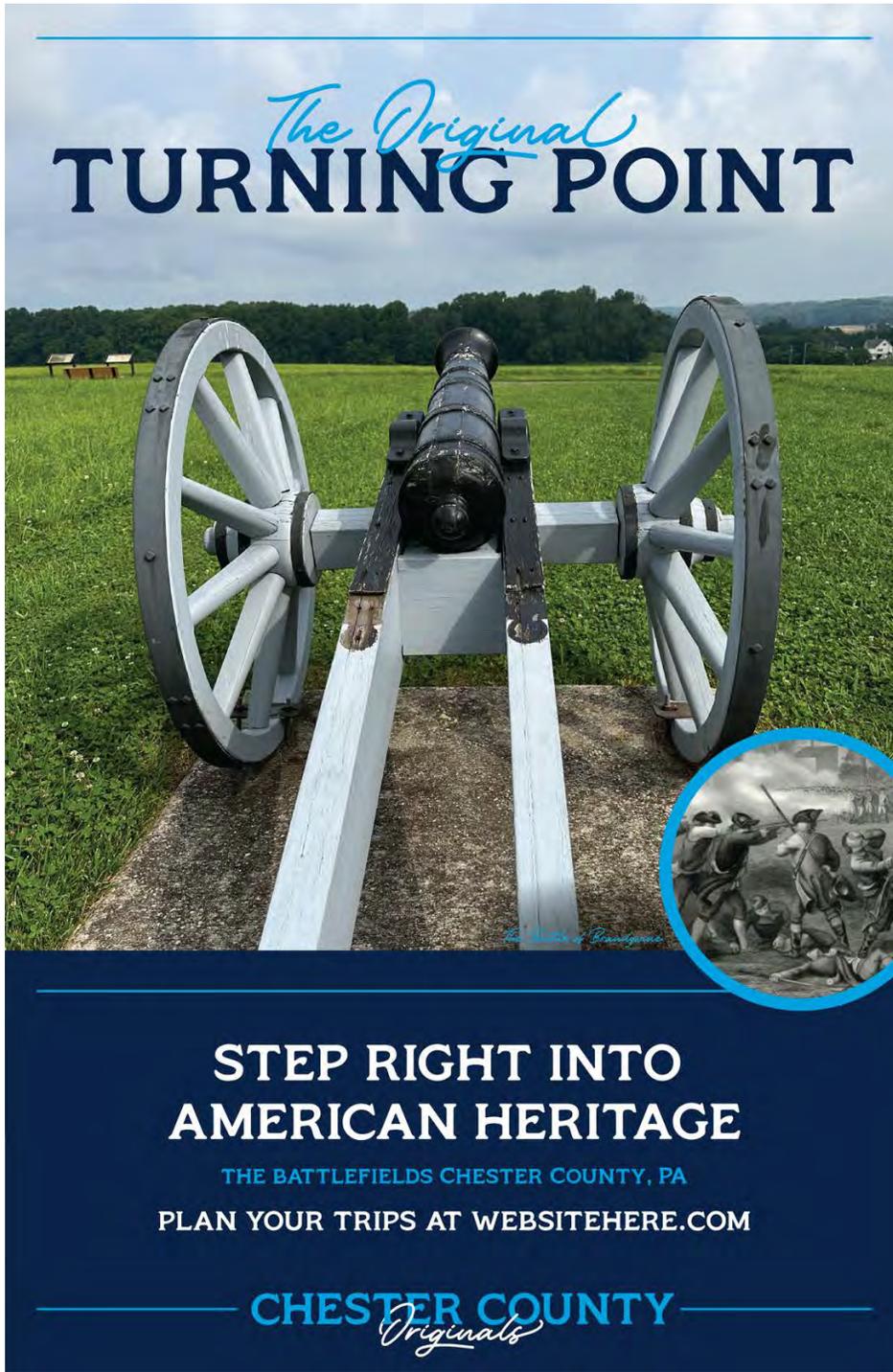
Sample poster for the Chester County Originals creative campaign as applied to the primary interpretive theme *The Philadelphia Campaign*. (SWELL 2023)

The Creative Brief is an internal document that embodies the creative vision and key messaging points for a public facing marketing campaign. The Brief serves as a foundation for future advertising and marketing communication decisions, providing direction for marketing programs and experience opportunities.

A unified and creative Campaign Theme was prepared around the concept **Chester County Originals** reflecting the Brand Promise and intended for general market advertising, promotions, and communications. The Campaign Theme is presented for use in formats including digital advertising, sign and posters, brochures, and other media.

The Campaign Toolkit provides a working toolkit of all graphic materials for use and repurposing by Chester County Heritage Tourism partners and their marketing staff going forward. The toolkit includes a detailed primer on how and where materials are to be use, including a campaign summary, downloadable graphics, and print-ready materials with use guidelines and examples. The toolkit provides the graphic basis for development of interpretive formats discussed earlier in this section.

SWELL's approved creative campaign featuring Chester County Originals is presented as **Appendix C** as a separate stand-alone document.

The campaign will be used solely for presentation of themes and storylines associated with the counties Heritage Tourism Program including multiple sites in coordinated interpretation The campaign will only be used when coordinated interpretive themes and related sites are visitor ready and of sufficient quality for public promotion. It will not be used for individual sites unrelated to the coordinated interpretation of themes and storylines.

The creative campaign's use is under the authority, guidance, and permission of the Implementing Entity and Heritage Tourism Program Steering Committee for the Heritage Tourism Program (see Chapter 6) in coordination with Chester County Tourism, primary marketing entity for the initiative.

4.3 OUTDOOR EXHIBIT PROGRAM

A centerpiece of the Heritage Tourism Plan is an Outdoor Exhibit Program that can be used for self-guided interpretive experiences at local heritage sites, within communities and parks, and along trails. The Outdoor Exhibit Program will enable publicly accessible sites to tell their stories without the need for staffing or for indoor museum programming. Self-guided sites can be made visitor ready with great flexibility and minimal cost such that they can be marketed to visitors alongside the larger attractions.

The Outdoor Exhibit Program will be managed on behalf of the county by dedicated staff of the lead **Implementing Entity** (see Chapter 6) in association with other regional attractions and stakeholders. The **Heritage Tourism Program Steering Committee** will oversee the program and establish priorities. An **Interpretive Subcommittee** comprised of professional interpreters from regional attractions will provide guidance and quality control in accordance with a defined design and implementation process.

Through small matching grants, the program will facilitate the installation of outdoor exhibits at partnering sites, coordinating interpretation specific to the site with the Heritage Tourism Plan's countywide themes and storylines. The partnering site will be responsible for care and ongoing maintenance of their exhibits through a maintenance agreement with the Implementing Entity. Once installed and visitor-ready, the partnering site may be marketed along with other attractions as part of the countywide presentation and be linked to other interpretive sites through thematic tours and itineraries.

The outdoor exhibits should use a common graphic format using the countywide graphic identity. It is suggested that National Park Service exhibit carriers be considered to simplify the design process, reduce costs, ensure consistency, and achieve a high-quality product. However, customized exhibits, kiosks, and installations may also be possible and encouraged. Local partners will be responsible for developing content with support, guidance, and quality control provided by the Interpretive Subcommittee.

The exhibit program should also consider the use of digital content that can be accessed using smartphones, tablets, and online. Digital content should be rich in its visual presentation and has the advantage of being able to be easily and frequently updated.

Exhibit Planning Process

Implementation of the Outdoor Exhibit Program requires coordination and planning and may be undertaken in a manner that is flexible and easily executed. The exhibit program should be readily perceived as a coordinated countywide heritage presentation linking small scale self-guided heritage sites that can be promoted to residents and visitors. It is important that the program have a consistently high level of quality, content, and visual appeal. To that end, a simple process should be established to guide implementation in the preparation, installation, and maintenance of the interpretive exhibits. Participating sites must be publicly accessible seven days a week, year-round.

Implementation of the Outdoor Exhibit Program will be phased in over time in accordance with the availability of funding. Prioritization will be given to heritage sites that are visitor-ready, well organized, and may be coordinated, linked, and marketed as a network with other sites thematically or physically. Selected sites may be part of a prioritized thematic presentation, such as *The Philadelphia Campaign, Iron and Steel,* or a local community interpretive presentation. Over time, a wide range of heritage sites may be included presenting a wide range of themes and storylines.

Partnering heritage sites will be guided in development of their exhibit types and content through consultation with the Interpretive Subcommittee with the following considerations:

- Statement of Purpose: Outline the background, purpose, organization, and process for planning, design, and implementation of the proposed exhibit. Demonstrate the commitment of the organization, property owner, and any other necessary stakeholders.

National Park Service exhibit carriers are widely recognized by the general public for their quality and professionalism, and they are available in a variety of sizes and formats.

Customized exhibit carriers are possible as well.

- **Themes and Storylines**: Identify the countywide themes and storylines to which the site relates. Interpretive themes are the big ideas that frame the county's historical development and relate it to regional and national contexts. Storylines are threads of events that can be used to illustrate and present the themes.

  A heritage site may relate to several relevant county themes, which may track between storylines. Every potential heritage site should be able to find its place within the county's framework of themes and storylines.

- **Identify Significance and Stories**: Outline the historical significance of the site and its resources. Identify the site-specific stories that can be told using the site's building and landscape resources as interpretive subjects in the storytelling.

- **Location and Media**: Identify the type(s) of exhibits to be used and their proposed locations. Most exhibits are anticipated to be from a family of prototypes established specifically for the Heritage Tourism Program. Custom designs may be created where appropriate, especially when they enhance the overall quality of the presentation and location. Identify any supporting media such as apps that may be utilized.

- **Additional Site Enhancements**: Identify other site enhancements that are to be undertaken by the partnering site in enhancement and support of the exhibit and its location. Enhancements such as paving, plantings, placement of objects, building or landscape restoration, benches, lighting, or other improvements may be considered. The use of public art is encouraged.

- **Draft Content**: Develop draft text for the exhibit in accordance with the guiding principles for interpretation set out in this plan. Accuracy and authenticity are essential. For some sites, there may be interpretive text or guidance in existing interpretive planning documents. Relate the story and text directly to the place where the exhibit is located and the view afforded to readers. Identify the theme statement to which the presentation relates. Establish context, meaning, and significance. Where possible, link the site to other sites to which it relates.

- **Illustrations and Graphics**: Identify and obtain photographs, maps, illustrations, and other visual content that may be used. Exhibits should have visual graphic appeal and a limited amount of text.

- **Design and Production**: Graphic design and exhibit fabrication will be undertaken by a qualified contractor under contract to the lead Implementing Entity and in coordination with the partnering site.

- **Installation**: Exhibit installation will be undertaken by a qualified contractor under contract to the lead Implementing Entity and in coordination with the partnering site. Installation will be timed in coordination with other improvements that may be undertaken at the site.

- Maintenance Agreement: Every participating site will be required to take responsibility for the care and maintenance of exhibits they have installed as part of the Heritage Tourism Program presentation. A simple maintenance agreement between the Implementing Entity and participating sites outlining responsibilities and expectations will be prepared and executed.

4.4 COMMUNITY INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM

The Heritage Tourism Plan encourages partners within local municipalities to organize community interpretive presentations as a central component of the county's heritage tourism initiative. Community interpretive presentations are a principal means through which local stories can be told addressing the primary theme *The Cultural Landscape*. It is a means of engaging residents and visitors, and it may be associated with local visitor services—restaurants, shops, lodging, and other services—to create a complete heritage tourism experience.

Chester County's Main Street communities, including West Chester, Phoenixville, and Kennett Square are regional economic centers where robust visitor services are already present (see Chapter 5). The City of Coatesville is in the process of developing a Main Street program. The Main Line railroad centers of Berwyn, Paoli, and Malvern might also be included in this grouping, as may other community centers such as Downingtown, Oxford, Spring City, and Parkersford. Community interpretive presentations will enhance the visitor experience of the county's historic community centers.

A number of the county's small historic villages also are also destinations with outstanding visitor services and will benefit from interpretation. Marshalltown is an example of a historic village that already combines community interpretation with high quality services and seasonal programming for residents and visitors.

Phoenixville has an active interpretive program that engages visitors and enlivens its downtown.

But any municipality or community—borough, village, township—may benefit through implementation of a community interpretive presentation, helping to build and reenforce community identity. Townships may use the interpretive program to highlight the historic agricultural landscape and settlement patterns

that are central to the county's character and appeal. The Community Interpretive Program will assist local partners in developing ways to tell their community's stories, primarily through the installation of outdoor exhibits and public art. Special programming such as living history, music, and other types of events may be part of the ongoing presentation as well.

In developing a community interpretation, local partners will be asked to prepare a simple interpretive plan in accordance with countywide guidelines. The Outdoor Exhibit Program discussed elsewhere in this document may be used as a means of implementing self-guided exhibits as part of a community interpretive plan on publicly accessible sites that are readily available to visitors.

In general, the **community interpretive plan** should provide a blueprint of how best to present an overview of the community's history, character, and identity to which visitors and residents can relate. The interpretive plan should:

- Identify the **local partners** who will be involved in developing and implementing the interpretive presentation;
- Convey a **statement of purpose** outlining the historical significance of the community and its resources and outlining the goals, guidelines, and expected visitor experience for the community interpretive presentation;
- Provide a brief overview of any **existing interpretation, programming, and visitor services** in the community;
- Identify the countywide **themes and storylines** to which the community's history and resources relate;
- Identify the **local stories** that convey the community's history and how they relate to the countywide themes and storylines;
- Identify the **historic resources and places** that can be featured in the storytelling, the stories with which they are associated, and the locations where exhibits may be sited;
- Identify the **exhibits types,** public art, or other media that may be used in the presentation;
- Organize a local design and implementation process to assure **quality control**; and
- Prioritize a program of **phased implementation** that can be used for funding purposes.

The Community Interpretive Program will be managed in a manner similar to the Outdoor Exhibit Program discussed above in this plan. It will be led by dedicated staff of the lead **Implementing Entity** (see Chapter 6) in association with the community and with other regional attractions and stakeholders. The **Heritage Tourism Program Steering Committee** will oversee the program and establish priorities. The **Interpretive Subcommittee** comprised of professional interpreters from regional attractions will provide guidance and quality control during planning and implementation in accordance with a defined design and implementation process.

Matching grants and additional technical assistance will be offered to support development and implementation in accordance with the availability of resources. Community presentations will be featured in countywide heritage tourism orientation and promotional materials. Thematic linkages, character, visitor readiness, and the availability of visitor services may provide ways to set priorities in considering proposals for development of community interpretive presentations.

The village of Marshallton also has an active community interpretative presentation to engage visitors.

4.5 PUBLIC ART AND LANDSCAPE INSTALLATIONS

Public art is an important medium through which public places may be enhanced and interpretation may be offered, especially within communities and parks. Historically, monuments, statues, plaques, historic objects, and similar forms of public art have been used as a means of commemorating places and events. Where they are present, these traditional works of art should be recognized and preserved and perhaps supplemented with additional interpretation.

Within many communities, public art such as sculpture, murals, and other creative installations have been used to enhance streetscapes, plazas, parks, buildings, sidewalks, and trails, enlivening the landscape and visually interpreting community stories.

The large mural in the center of Phoenixville in the public park at the intersection of Bridge and Main Streets is an outstanding example of public art used as a landmark and placemaker to establish community identity. Nearby, the Phoenix columns in the plaza in front of the Foundry and the Schuylkill River Heritage Center are an example of historic objects used as public art for interpretation. In Warwick County Park, a historic 19th century metal truss fabricated at Phoenix Iron Works is used to support a climbing structure providing a scenic view of the French Creek Valley at the end of the park's Iron Heritage Interpretive Trail. These are all examples of forms of public art used for interpretation.

Additional forms of public art may be used expressly for interpretive purposes. At the West Point Foundry Preserve in Cold Spring, New York, large scale

interpretive installations placed across the 87-acre landscape help bring the archeological site to life, dramatically conveying the site's rich history through art.

This Heritage Tourism Plan encourages the use of public art as an interpretive medium to tell local stories and enhance the character of historic places. Establishment of a Public Art Program in support of interpretation is suggested either as a stand-alone program or as an adjunct to the Outdoor Exhibit Program discussed above in this plan. Public art may be integrated into the interpretive presentation at any heritage site and should be featured in the development of community interpretive presentations.

Phoenixville's mural in the heart of downtown is an excellent example of the use of public art to enliven the streetscape.

As a stand-alone program, funding may be sought expressly for outdoor art installations presenting local interpretive themes and stories. Local artists may be engaged to create art installations for communities on a case-by-case basis. Local arts and cultural organizations may be included in collaborative efforts to interpret communities and sites.

The process for using public art as an interpretive medium should be similar to that outlined in this plan for the Outdoor Exhibit Program and Community Interpretive Program. Sites appropriate to the use of public art should be identified along with the themes and stories to be related. Proposed art installations should be sympathetic to the character of the landscape in which they are placed and should work in conjunction with other forms of interpretation being used.

Conceptual designs should be developed for the art installations and refined as appropriate. Accurate cost estimates should be prepared by qualified

fabricators, with whom consultations may be undertaken to find the most cost-effective materials and means of fabrication. Installation may be coordinated with other desired site improvements.

Landscape Installations as Placemakers

Art installations are particular appropriate as placemakers within a natural or large-scale historic landscape context. Some nature preserves prefer art installations over signage for interpretation because they are more in keeping with the character of the natural landscape and because of the high-quality experience they communicate to visitors

Placemakers are objects or installations used to convey information visually without words. As discussed in description of presentation of *The Philadelphia Campaign* elsewhere in this plan, interpretation of the Brandywine Battlefield uses tall, upright metal historical markers similar in design to state historical markers as placemakers at interpretive sites. A form of public art, these markers are easily identified from automobiles as intended places to stop. No words are necessary.

Creative landscape installations may be used as a form of public art to interpret important sites where a substantive interpretive presentation is desired on a large scale and where a self-guided experience is necessary. Creative landscape installations may employ objects, sculpture, vegetation, and other means and can be used to create an engaging, impactful, and high-quality interpretive presence with minimal signage.

The West Point Foundry Preserve in Cold Spring, NY, uses landscape installations for interpretation. The structure at left is a representation of a water wheel within a foundry building. The one at right is a re-creation of a structure used to suspend and test large cannon barrels cast during the Civil War. (Photos C&G Partners)

Stabilized ruins are a form landscape art that are evocative because of their character and authenticity. The stabilized ruins at Warwick Furnace (Thomas P. Bentley Preserve) clearly convey the story of the site and are used in conjunction with an illustration in a wayside exhibit depicting the historic view showing the remaining structures as well as missing buildings and features.

Battlefields often use replica artillery pieces as placemakers to mark locations where artillery pieces were used during the battle. When installed, accurate replicas should be employed, and their locations should be as close as possible to the accurate battlefield locations identified through research. The

reconstructed earthworks in Valley Forge National Historical Park have a similar role.

At Saratoga National Historical Park in New York, four-foot-high painted wood posts are used as placemakers to mark the locations of opposing battlelines in the landscape—posts with red tops for the British lines and posts with blue tops for the American lines. Spaced about fifteen feet apart across the landscape, the simple posts are unobtrusive and create an impression of landscape art, helping visitors visualize the length and scale of the battlelines and the distances between the opposing forces.

A similar impression can be conveyed solely through the use and management of vegetation, such as by allowing tall grass to grow along the battlelines while more frequently mowing the field as a whole.

Some Civil War battlefields use tall, flagpole sized installations spaced at considerable distances apart to visually convey the large scale of the battlelines from a distance. This can be an effective visual tool in battlefield landscapes that are compromised with new development. At Sandy Hollow on the Brandywine Battlefield, for instance, such an installation east and west of the park in adjacent developed areas would visually convey the actual scale of the battlelines from within the park. Within the developed areas, the installations would have the character of public art.

Public art should be incorporated into the interpretive presentation of the county's heritage themes and storylines in as robust a way as possible and should be a signature feature of Chester County's heritage tourism experience.

Granite installations are environmentally sympathetic objects for interpretation at the Brister's Hill Preserve in Concord, MA.

4.6 STEP-ON GUIDE PROGRAM

The Heritage Tourism Plan recommends the establishment of a "Step-On" Guide Program as a key interpretive strategy in the implementation of *The Philadelphia Campaign*. This program would create a high-quality, personal, and deeply substantive visitor experience that would be highly marketable as a heritage tourism product for Chester County Tourism.

In the Step-On Guide Program, guides would be vetted and highly trained to offer tours of the Battle of the Brandywine and the Philadelphia Campaign. Through the program, an authorized guide would join visitors in their personal vehicle to offer an engaging tour of key sites and locations for an admission fee.

This program would also support small bus tour experiences, either commissioned by private tour companies or initiated by the Implementing Entity for *The Philadelphia Campaign*. Step-on guide services are currently offered by the Brandywine Battlefield Park Association and Paoli Battlefield Preservation Fund, Inc., which organizations could play lead roles in the development of the program outlined here.

For the Battle of the Brandywine, an authorized guide would vividly set the stage and context for the battle, conveying a deep sense of the power of place as they share the stories of the people and events of the days leading up to and the aftermath of the battle on September 11, 1777, while standing at the exact locations and landscapes where it took place.

A second tour would focus on the expanded 14-day period of the Philadelphia Campaign as it occurred across Chester County, taking visitors to key locations including the Battle of the Clouds, Paoli Battlefield, Great Valley, and Valley Forge, as well as to locations that illustrate how the stories of Chester County's iron and steel industry were intertwined with the war. An advantage of the Step-On Guide Program is that the guide will be able to share stories and point out locations of lesser-known sites that might be privately owned, not available for public visitation, or that have been obscured by modern development.

The Step-On Guide Program will play an integral role in the implementation of the theme *The Philadelphia Campaign*, building on the interpretive planning already completed for the Battle of Brandywine by the Chester County Planning Commission and the Brandywine Conservancy. The program will require the development of a highly detailed outline based on existing and new research that identifies the stories, locations, and tour route, and should be highly authenticated and vetted by historians and other appropriate reviewers. Tour routes and timeframes should be identified and tested. The tours should be developed in conjunction with outdoor interpretive exhibits and site enhancements to create an engaging and layered visitor experience that combines interaction with a trained professional guide and high-quality visual exhibits that bring to life the events and stories that occurred during the battle in their original and deeply authentic settings.

Once a highly detailed outline has been developed and vetted, it is envisioned that a training program would be developed and implemented to create a pool of authorized guides. It would be modeled loosely after the long-established Licensed Battlefield Guide Program in Gettysburg. Individuals would need to complete a specified number of hours of training and testing to become an authorized guide. Guides would also be encouraged to participate in the 32-hour Certified Interpretive Guide Program offered by the National Association of Interpretation. It would be a paid position.

The Step-On Guide Program would be managed by one entity or through a collaboration of entities and should be designed to be minimally self-funded. The managing entity would facilitate the tour script development and the training program and would coordinate the admissions sales and tour guide management for the step-on tours, both with individual visitors and bus tours, as well as any tours initiated by the entity.

Living history interpreters can be transformative in presenting history to young people.

4.7 LIVING HISTORY TROUPE

The Heritage Tourism Plan envisions the creation of a "Living History Troupe," to support and enhance interpretive programs at individual heritage sites and organizations, and at events. Costumed interpreters and actors offering first-person interpretation of the experiences of a freedom seeker, a Continental soldier, or a determined suffragette could provide visitors with a vivid and memorable glimpse into the past and deepen a historic site's sense of place when these stories are told in their original settings. They also bring stories and scenes to life for visitors in places where the buildings or landscapes no longer exist or have changed dramatically.

A Living History Troupe could focus on the interpretation of selected storylines under any of the six identified themes, such as the daily life of a steel worker, the role of a Quaker agent helping freedom seekers on the Underground Railroad, or an injured soldier at the Battle of Birmingham Hill. The creation of the living history troupe would require script development that is vetted by appropriate historians or heritage partners, as well as sources for period costumes and props where appropriate. Trained actors should be engaged in the creation process and execution of the living history troupe program. The living history troupe could be managed by an existing theatre company or group, as a collaborative initiative between a heritage organization and a theatre group, or by an independent LLC. Local colleges and universities could also be engaged to create living history experiences or manage the program.

The troupe should be minimally self-funded, where fees are charged based on the number of actors and the length of the interpretive program or experience. Actors would be paid. Seed money may be needed to initiate the program. There may be interdisciplinary grant opportunities that would support a

collaboration between a heritage organization or site with a theatre group or college theatre program that could produce a pilot living history troupe production. An example might be the creation of a series of vignettes focusing on individuals with differing perspectives towards the impact of the events of 1776 that could be performed at various events during the America 250 PA Chester County initiative.

There are several independent interpreters and re-enactors in the region who have developed living history experiences based on individuals such as William Penn, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Edward Hector, Rebecca Lukens, Carrie Chapman Catt, Harriet Tubman and others. A resource guide that identifies interpreters and reenactors who currently interpret specific people or events related to the six themes and storylines of the Heritage Tourism Plan could be developed and made available to the county's heritage organizations and other entities through the proposed Heritage Tourism website.

Women working at a Revolutionary War living history encampment

4.8 CHESTER COUNTY TRAVELING EXHIBIT

The Heritage Tourism Plan proposes the development of a Chester County Heritage Traveling Exhibit that introduces residents and heritage travelers to Chester County's rich history and its role in the nation's story. This interpretive exhibit would be intended to be sent to programs and events at individual heritage sites and attractions throughout the county. The exhibit would serve as an important outreach tool in raising the visibility of heritage sites and stories, reinforcing a sense of value and community identity among Chester County residents. It would also promote further discovery and exploration of Chester County among both residents and heritage travelers. It could become a highly effective interpretive and marketing tool at programs and events connected with the America 250 PA Chester County initiative, appearing at larger events throughout the course of the commemoration.

The exhibit would be designed to be portable and free-standing, so that it could be easily transported and assembled as part of outreach tables and displays for the Chester County History Center and the Chester County Planning Commission or could be made available to heritage sites and organizations upon request. It should be constructed of materials that are light, but durable and easily maintainable, and that are weather-resistant for outdoor events.

The exhibit would orient visitors to Chester County's heritage through the interpretation of the six themes and storylines, highlighting heritage sites where visitors can visit to discover more. The interpretation should be highly substantive and visual, with images and vivid stories that capture the essence of Chester County's history. The exhibit should connect visitors with Chester County's heritage sites and attractions, offering visitor information through QR codes or other links. At outreach tables, the exhibit could be supplemented by printed materials such as postcards with website information, or by having a tablet available where visitors can search online.

The traveling exhibit could be funded as a specific grant project, or as part of a larger funded project that supports Chester County's heritage tourism or the America 250 PA Chester County initiative. The traveling exhibit program should be managed by the Heritage Tourism Program's Implementing Entity, as outlined in Chapter 6, and made available to organizations and groups upon request. Ongoing management costs should be included in the overall budget for the initiative. The Chester County History Center would be the most effective candidate for developing and implementing the traveling exhibit and could use the exhibit as part of its own outreach efforts. Use of the exhibit should follow certain guidelines and a refundable deposit may be instituted to ensure its return after events. Depending on demand and availability of funds, it may be desirable to manufacture two exhibits at the same time.

4.9 CUSTOMIZED SMALL GROUP TOUR PROGRAM

The Heritage Tourism Plan encourages the development of customized small group tours to be marketed to heritage travelers. The customized tours would highlight one or more of the plan's interpretive themes or storylines by featuring specific heritage sites, experiences, or events in Chester County. The tours would be designed to be intimate, featuring high-quality interpretation and experiences at richly authentic historic settings. These smaller-scale tours and experiences would create new interpretive opportunities for individual heritage sites, offering interpretive linkages between sites and helping drive visitation to places restricted by limited visitor capacity. It will also offer an opportunity to highlight farms, shopping, and dining experiences unique to Chester County's towns, villages, and the countryside.

A tour related to the theme *Iron & Steel* could package a visit to the Schuylkill River Heritage Center at the Phoenixville Foundry, with visits to the Thomas P. Bentley Preserve and Warwick County Park and a stop at Warwick Furnace Lavender Farm, ending with dinner and a possible overnight stay at the St. Peter's Inn in St. Peter's Village. The tour could also visit the National Iron & Steel Museum the next morning before making its return trip. Another example

would be a day trip focused on the theme *Creative Expression*, where travelers would combine a visit to Historic Yellow Springs' Annual Art Show with a tour of the Wharton Esherick Museum, stopping for lunch in Phoenixville or other location. Small group tours could also feature classes, workshops, or unique art experiences such as Plein Air Days at specific heritage sites or organizations.

Tour experiences could be further enhanced by a visit from an actor from the proposed Living History Troupe. For example, during a tour focused on the story of freedom seekers and the Underground Railroad in Chester County, visitors could be greeted at Barnard Station by Sarah Barnard, who ushers them quickly inside because bounty hunters have been spotted nearby. Customized tours related to *The Philadelphia Campaign* could be designed to coordinate with the proposed Step-On Guide Program, where a guide joins the small group bus tour at a specific location such as the Brandywine Battlefield.

The tours should be designed as small and intimate with 10 – 20 travelers depending on the capacity of the destination. The tours could be packaged as a day trip or a weekend getaway, and the tour could be designed to be driven either by a small bus or by personal car.

These small group tour experiences would be developed and marketed by a boutique tour operator, an individual heritage site or group of sites, or other entities. A special initiative developing customized small group tour experiences with an appropriate, selected boutique tour operator could be undertaken through the Heritage Tourism Program in partnership with Chester County Tourism. Heritage travelers would purchase the tour package through the coordinating tour operator or through a sponsoring entity. The customized small group tour program should support and be coordinated with Chester County Tourism's existing group information and tour services where appropriate.

To help aid in the development of customized small group tours, a resource directory should be developed based on the Heritage Sites Inventory, with contact information of participating sites, the themes and storylines they interpret, and visitor amenities (or restrictions). It should be made available to heritage sites and tour operators on the proposed heritage tourism website for Chester County. It should include links to Chester County Tourism and to the Chester County Ag Council's Guide to Local Farm Products.
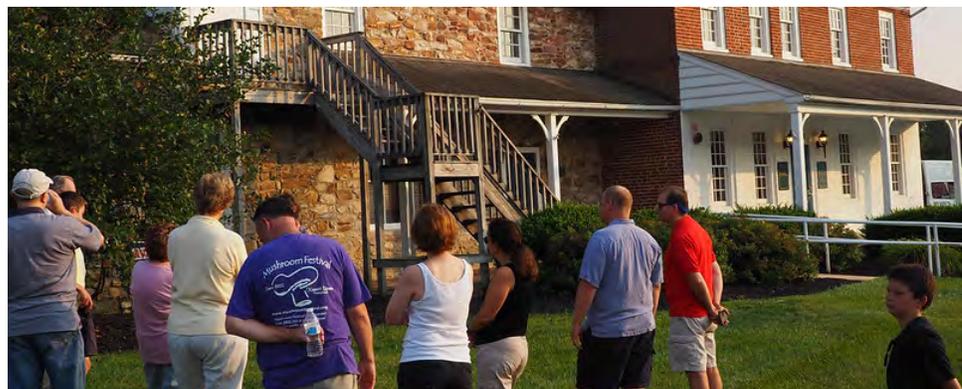
Small group tours provide economic potential and are appropriate to the intimate settings of most of the county's historic communities and sites.

4.10 PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENTS PROGRAM

A program to assist municipalities and non-profit organizations in the preservation and enhancement of historic places is proposed as a component of Chester County's Heritage Tourism Program. Many of the county's publicly accessible heritage tourism sites are owned by municipalities or small non-profit organizations, which struggle to raise funding for their general operations and programming, let alone preventative maintenance and preservation. In contrast to land conservation and other nonprofit sectors, there is a general lack of grant funds from federal, state, local, and private sources to support the care of historic resources.

The Preservation & Enhancements Program would implement Recommendation 5 of Chapter 6 of *Landscapes3*, How We Appreciate, which states, "Foster the creation of funding programs for protection of designated historic resources." This recommendation seeks to provide funding support for physical historic restoration and rehabilitation projects to encourage preservation of historic resources. As outlined in *Landscapes3*, funds could be designated, in part, for technical assistance (such as for an architect or restoration carpenter) or as matching funds in bricks and mortar projects.

Preservation and preventative maintenance of heritage sites can be costly, and when maintenance is deferred, what could have been a relatively simple preservation project becomes a larger and more difficult one. Similarly, stewards of heritage sites struggle to establish the necessary amenities to welcome visitors and offer adequate services. Municipalities and non-profit organizations would greatly benefit from a new source of financial support for their preservation efforts and to make them visitor ready and marketable as part of the county's heritage tourism presentation.

Small non-profit historic sites such as The Mill at Anselma (left) and Historic Sugartown (right) struggle to fund maintenance and visitor improvements and would benefit from a Preservation & Enhancement Program.

The Preservation & Enhancements Program is envisioned as a small grant program managed by a lead non-profit partner experienced in grants management. The program would be made available to municipalities and non-profit organizations throughout Chester County. A designated annual funding source for the program will need to be identified and could be county-based or grant/sponsor-based, or both.

Two types of grants are envisioned: Preservation Grants and Visitor Readiness Enhancement Grants. Grants may or may not require a match depending upon the grant criteria that is established. Smaller sites may have difficulty finding a match.

Preservation Grants would assist applicants with the cost of restoration, rehabilitation, and appropriate maintenance work for recognized historic buildings, structures, or landscapes. Examples could include restoration carpentry, masonry or chimney repairs, upgraded security systems, or a new roof.

Visitor Readiness Enhancement Grants would assist applicants in making heritage sites visitor-ready and enriching visitor experiences. Enhancement projects are expected to focus on physical infrastructure and could include a wide range of non-historic projects that improve conditions at the sites. This could include way-finding signage to welcome and direct visitors, ADA-compliant walkways, technology for facilitating admission and gift shop sales, or visitor orientation facilities.

Applications to the grant programs would be accepted annually and would be awarded on a competitive basis in accordance with established criteria balancing physical need (replacement of a leaking roof, for instance), significance of the resource, programming, the operating capacity of the applying entity, and its contribution to the Heritage Tourism Program. Sites should demonstrate how their interpretive experience relates to the Heritage Tourism Program's six themes.

Only one application may be submitted each year. Funding could be made immediately available and would have to be expended within a set period of time. Sound planning, as well as minimum standards for contracting, implementation, and documentation of projects would have to be met.

For Preservation Grants, some level of designation or documentation establishing the historical significance of the resource would be required and would be considered in the award process. Resources need not be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but such listing would certainly aid in the recognition and assessment of significance. Local recognition in a municipal historic resource inventory would also be beneficial. Enhancement grants may be available to heritage sites, such as museums or preserves, that are not in or do not have historic buildings.

Preservation and enhancement projects are likely to be stand-alone projects but could also be part of a larger project so long as the work funded can be undertaken and documented separately. The Preservation grants could be modeled after the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission's Keystone Preservation grants, which would help applicants streamline their grant applications, and meet the State's preservation standards. The size of the grants awarded will depend upon the availability of funding for the program. Ideally, grants of up to $100,000 would make the greatest impact for Chester County's heritage sites. At minimum, the program should offer grants in the $10,000 to $25,000 range.

CHAPTER 5 – PLACEMAKING AND VISITOR SERVICES

The economic benefits of heritage tourism are derived from visitor expenditures for lodging, dining, shopping, and other services—all contributing to the local economy. Expenditures by visitors from outside of the county are most highly prized, especially for lodging, and are closely monitored by tourism promotion entities, including Chester County Tourism, our county conference and visitors' bureau. However, in-county expenditures by residents are also valuable, keeping tourism dollars local as residents visit local attractions in neighboring communities.

Heritage tourism is holistic in nature, attracting visitors not only to historic attractions but also to historic places where services are provided—places where historic character is an important part of the visitor experience.

Chapter 5 looks at the distribution of visitor services in Chester County in relation to heritage tourism, highlighting observations on existing conditions, opportunities, and challenges. A more in-depth analysis of the county's tourism industry and its economic benefits is included in Appendix D of this plan, Visitor Analysis and Marketing Plan, which is a separate, stand-alone document.

Landscapes Map

The Landscapes Map is Chester County's guide for growth and rural resource protection to help achieve our vision. The map's six categories—four in the Growth Areas and two in the Rural Resource Areas—guide future growth while protecting the special characteristics of the county. Each landscape may be appropriate for multiple land uses, with the mix and intensity varying to reflect the character of the specific landscape. The Landscapes Map also recognizes significant historic and natural resources through map "overlays."

Chester County **Planning** Commission

Prepared by the Chester County Planning Commission.
Adopted 2018.
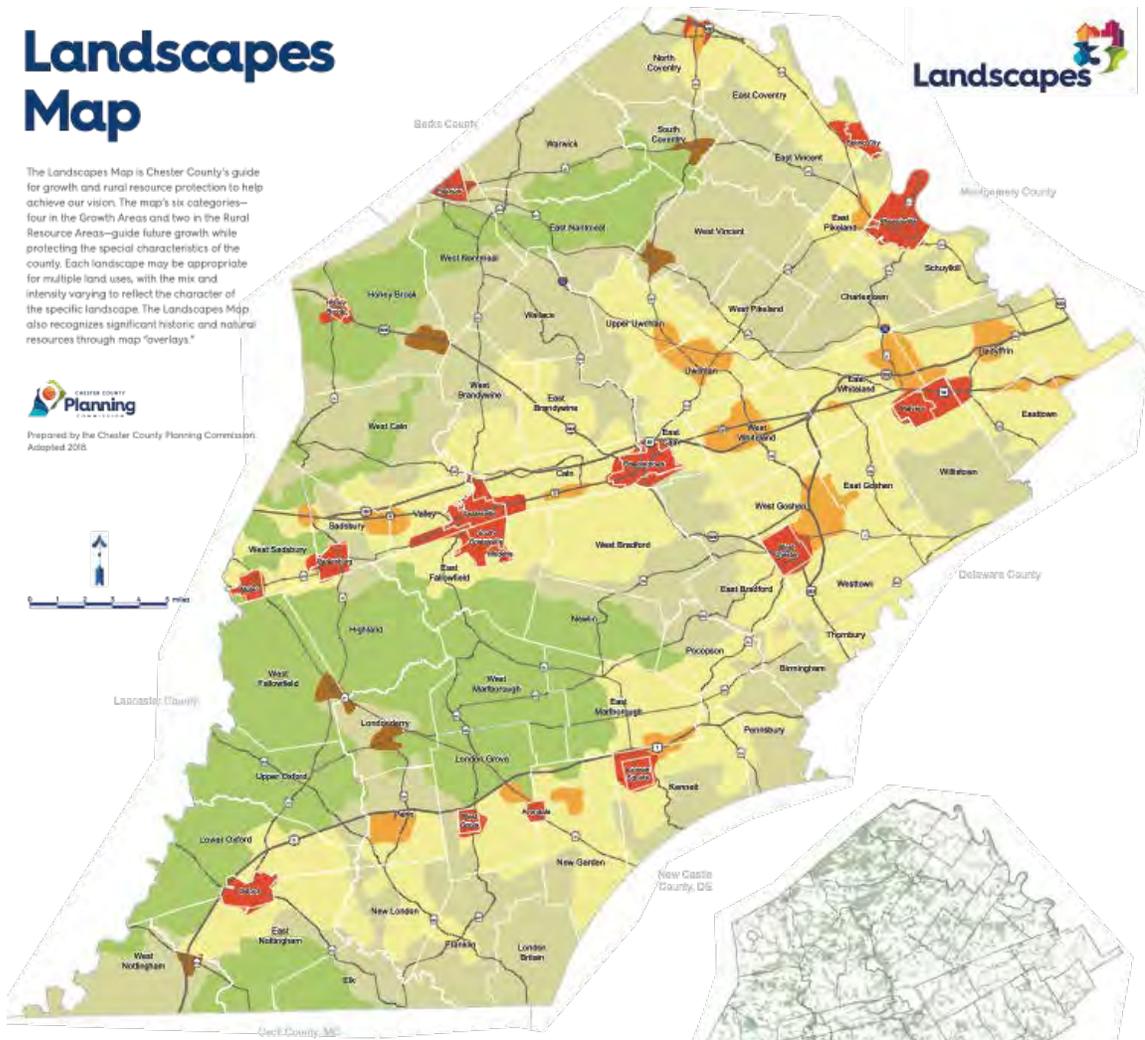
Growth Areas

The four landscape categories of the Growth Areas can best accommodate future growth, are planned for a full range of infrastructure, and are highly suitable for redevelopment.

Urban Center
Historic downtowns and established neighborhoods that serve as civic, economic, and population centers.

Suburban Center
Regional economic, population, and transportation centers with varying land uses.

Suburban
Predominantly residential communities with locally-oriented commercial uses and community facilities.

Rural Center
Often an extension of a village at a historic crossroads.

Rural Resource Areas

The two landscape categories of the Rural Resource Areas are not appropriate for significant growth, strongly reflect the agricultural and rural character of the county, and serve as a focus for preservation efforts.

Rural
Open and wooded lands, with scattered villages, farms, and residential uses.

Agricultural
Large concentrations of active and diverse farm operations, along with related support services.

Significant Natural Landscapes

Significant Natural Landscapes Overlay

National Historic Landmark
National Register Historic District (2016)
Village
Borough or City
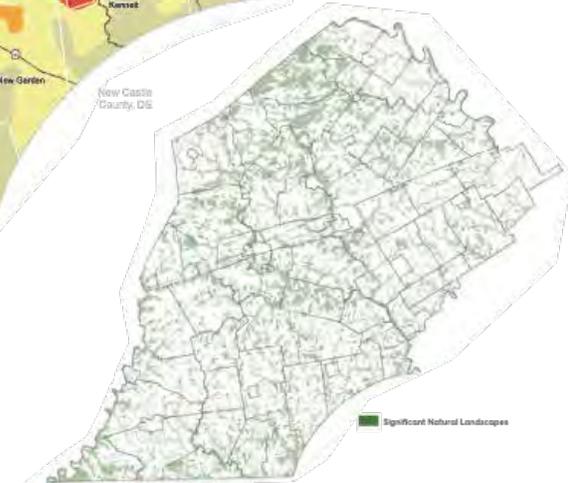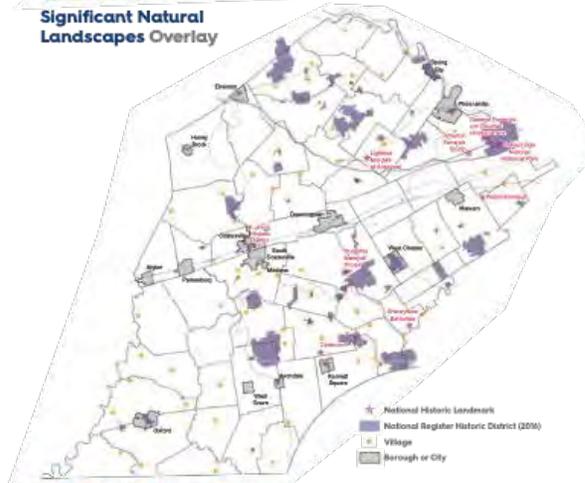
Significant Historic Landscapes Overlay

The discussion here focusses on the importance of historic community character and placemaking and is organized around five broad topics that are important to the local heritage economy.

The map on the facing page is from *Landscapes3*, the 2018 Chester County Comprehensive Plan, and divides the county into urban, suburban, rural, and agricultural areas based upon the character of the existing landscape and county goals for future growth and conservation. The map is helpful in depicting where visitor services are located in Chester County and their relationships to heritage tourism, as discussed further below. In summary:

Main Street Communities are historic community centers that have successfully developed into strong visitor service centers over the past few decades. They are strengths of the heritage tourism experience in Chester County, but they are already vibrant and successful and don't necessarily rely on the addition of new heritage tourism product.

Historic Villages are located throughout the county and are prized by local residents for their character and charm. Some feature high-end restaurants that are already successful and highly patronized, but most lack and do not have the potential to provide visitor services.

Agriculture and Farm Experiences are important to tourism in Chester County, especially as attractions frequented by local residents. While closely related to Chester County history and landscape appeal, agritourism attractions often do not interpret history or heritage. Strongly promoted, there is synergy and the potential for stronger collaboration between agritourism and heritage tourism.

Suburban Amenities are of high quality and are located along suburban corridors and in suburban centers as depicted on the Landscapes Map. They are important for their visitor services but do not directly relate to historic attractions or historic places.

Lodging in Chester County is located in clusters along suburbanized corridors. While in abundance and of high quality, existing hotels are not directly related to historic attractions, places, or experiences.

5.1 MAIN STREET COMMUNITIES

Chester County's Main Street communities are the strongest county locations providing visitor services to heritage travelers because they are authentic places with high quality visitor experiences and high-quality services. Boroughs with Main Street initiatives are locations within the county where heritage travelers are best and most appropriately served.

As discussed in Chapter 3 and Appendix D, heritage travelersare among the most desirable leisure and tourism visitors—they tend to stay longer and spend more. Heritage travelers want a complete experience, expect high quality, and like to linger in the restaurants and other places where residents tend to gather. They want to experience authentic places. They want to learn about a place and combine their visits to cultural and interpretive attractions with interesting dining and shopping opportunities in historic areas of rich character.

Chester County's boroughs, including most of the Urban Centers shown on the Landscapes Map above, are authentic historic places where dining and other services are offered and enjoyed by local residents. These are places to which heritage travelers are attracted as well. Main Street programs have been instrumental in the success of these communities in establishing themselves as visitor service centers.

5.1.1 National Main Street Program

The National Main Street Program was created in 1977 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation through the introduction of three pilot projects in communities in Illinois, Indiana, and South Dakota. Based on the success of these pilot projects, follow-up Main Street programs were established in six states in 1980, including Pennsylvania.

Statewide and regional Main Street programs are managed through accredited "Coordinating Programs" that work with local communities across the state or region. Pennsylvania's coordinating program is managed by the non-profit Pennsylvania Downtown Center, which receives significant funding through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). Communities participating in the program are eligible for technical assistance and grants to help revitalize their historic downtown centers.

Since 1980, the National Trust's Main Street Program has expanded to include many local communities and coordinating programs. As of 2020, there were 860 nationally accredited local Main Street programs and 44 state or regional coordinating programs. These designated programs follow best practices in Main Street revitalization, including support of a full-time Main Street Manager to implement the program locally.

In 2014, the National Trust's program was spun off as an independent non-profit subsidiary called the National Main Street Center, Inc. Today it does business as Main Street America.

The Main Street approach is implemented through work in four broad areas, known as the Four Points:

- **Economic Vitality** focuses on capital, incentives, and other economic and financial tools to assist new and existing businesses, catalyze property development, and create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and innovators that drive local economies.

  Main Street's focus on creative economic restructuring involves (a) analyzing current market forces to develop long-a term strategic approach customized to the individual community; (b) strengthening the competitiveness of existing merchants and service businesses, recruiting new businesses, and diversifying the economic base; (c) creatively converting unused space for new uses; and (d) seeking appropriate solutions for historic commercial buildings that ensure their continued occupancy, maintenance, and preservation.

- **Design** supports a community's transformation by enhancing the physical and visual assets that set the downtown center apart. Most importantly, design focuses on preserving and enhancing the historic character of the downtown center.

  In the early stages of a Main Street program, achieving high visibility before-and-after rehabilitations of historic storefronts is a common activity and "best practice." This work often includes implementation of grant-supported facade improvement programs that helps to build momentum for downtown revitalization. This design element also includes keeping the downtown area clean; implementing public improvements; and encouraging creativity in storefront and directional signage, street furniture, lighting, and public art.

- **Promotion** positions the downtown area as the center of the community and a hub of economic activity while creating a positive image that showcases the community's distinctive character. Many participating communities establish Main Street organizations focusing on this element. Individual businesses' marketing activities are supplemented with collective promotional activities, including marketing and events.

- **Organization** involves creating a strong foundation for a sustainable revitalization effort, including cultivating partnerships, community involvement, and resources for the downtown center. Business and property owners associated with the historic downtown and other supporters are encouraged to organize and hire at least one full-time staff person to serve as Main Street Manager. Some level of public funding is usually a part of the organization's financial sources.

Main Street initiatives emphasize collaboration by bringing partners together in mutual support. They emphasize finding the fit for the individual community, balancing the needs of residents and visitors to ensure that heritage tourism benefits everyone. It is important to understand and plan for the specific kind and amount of tourism that the individual community can handle.

Main Street programs focus on quality and authenticity—they make the downtown come alive. Interpretation is often an important way of enhancing the visitor experience. Main Street programs preserve and protect historic, cultural, and natural resources, using them to convey character and tell stories. The human drama of history in a place through high quality interpretation is what visitors want to discover, not just names and dates. Interpreting downtown sites is important, making the message and experience creative and engaging.

5.1.2 Chester County's Main Street Communities

Three Chester County communities have adopted the Main Street approach and achieved significant success over the past decade in revitalizing their historic downtown centers—Phoenixville, West Chester, and Kennett Square. All three communities have established local historic districts in their downtown centers to preserve historic character through design review by Historic Architectural Review Boards. All three communities are featured as "Must-Visit Main Streets" by Chester County Tourism. Phoenixville and West Chester were formerly accredited Main Street America communities in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Downtown Center but are currently not program participants.

Phoenixville's economy grew in the 19th and early 20th centuries through the development of the Phoenix Iron Works (Phoenix Iron and Steel Company), with the establishment of a historic downtown center adjacent to the Iron Works and to surrounding residential areas with the homes of steel workers and their families.

In 1987, Phoenix Steel closed, and Phoenixville experienced an economic downturn. Most of the steel buildings were demolished and plans were made to revitalize the Phoenix Steel site and the borough. Though early attempts struggled, by the early 2010s downtown Phoenixville began to resurge with the introduction of street improvements, new restaurants and businesses, and the eventual construction of a significant number of new apartments on the former mill site. The Phoenixville Economic Development Corporation acquired the mill's historic Foundry Building adjacent to downtown which was rehabilitated into the Schuylkill River Heritage Center and an event venue.

Today, through its Main Street initiative, Downtown Phoenixville has become a vibrant and busy downtown center serving local residents and the surrounding suburban community. Bridge Street, the downtown core, has as many as 18 or

more restaurants and cafes, including ten breweries and pubs, causing Phoenixville to be marketed as a destination brewery location. Today Downtown Phoenixville is economically vital and a regional dining Mecca. The borough interprets its heritage through the Heritage Center, public art, exhibits, and historic structures. Colonial Theater is a historic cultural attraction in the center of downtown Phoenixville with programs that attract regional audiences.

Phoenixville has no lodgings downtown or in its immediate vicinity except for one small inn on Bridge Street. While strong as a center for dining, breweries, shops, and street life, the lack of lodging for heritage travelers is an issue and development opportunity for heritage tourism in the northern portion of the county.

West Chester is the county seat and home to county government and the historic Chester County Courthouse. While county government offices were moved to a new building on the edge of the borough in the 1990s causing a decline in economic activities downtown, Chester County recommitted to downtown in the 2000s through construction of new court facilities in the downtown core, which opened in 2008.

West Chester's downtown struggled in the 1990s with loss of businesses and activities. In 2000, the borough established the West Chester Business Improvement District (BID) which adopted the Main Street approach and has been instrumental in Downtown West Chester's resurgence over the past two decades.

The West Chester BID is a municipal authority that is reauthorized every five years. The BID has a budget of about $410,000 a year derived mostly from property assessments and parking revenues. This budget is spent on marketing, promotion, public improvements, grants, services, and staff. An associated non-profit West Chester Downtown Foundation sponsors events, supports projects,

and funds community enhancements downtown. The West Chester BID was an accredited Main Street program until 2019 and is planning to become re-accredited, in part to access state Main Street funding.

West Chester's strength is in its dining and shopping, with about 24 restaurants within the downtown core. West Chester serves a regional market as well as downtown businesses, including law offices and other county-related public and private services. Adjacent local residential neighborhoods are appealing and desirable places to live. West Chester University is also an important component of downtown life and the local economy. The Chester County History Center and Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center are important historic and cultural venues. In contrast to Phoenixville and Kennett Square, West Chester does have accommodations within the downtown areas, including the Hotel Warner and a new hotel/conference center currently under development.

Kennett Square is located in the southern portion of Chester County and is noted for its mushroom industry and related attractions. Smaller than Phoenixville or West Chester, Kennett Square Borough has nonetheless had an active downtown revitalization program that has spearheaded promotion of the downtown core. Formerly known as Historic Kennett Square, the entity was rebranded as Kennett Collaborative in 2021.

With a staff of three, Kennett Collaborative undertakes marketing and promotion, supports programs and events, offers grants, and undertakes placemaking and other projects. Its budget of about $500,000 a year is derived from sponsorships, grants, contributions, programs, and events. Kennett Square has about 10 restaurants in its downtown core and about 35 within the region. The borough has no lodging facilities downtown but is the center of a regional cluster of seven hotels. In addition to its well-known mushroom industry, Kennett Square benefits from its proximity to Longwood Gardens.

Other Municipalities

In addition to the three Main Street communities discussed above, other county municipalities depicted as Urban Centers on the Landscapes Map have Main Street assets as well. Though not accredited Main Street programs, these municipalities benefit from a Main Street approach to revitalization and strengthening of their downtown cores. Among these municipalities, Coatesville, Malvern Downingtown, and Oxford are currently marketed by Chester County Tourism.

Coatesville is Chester County's only city and, like Phoenixville, is a historic iron and steel community. Its National Iron & Steel Museum and Lukens Historic District are regional attractions associated with the county's Iron and Steel Heritage Partnership.

Coatesville is in the process of developing its downtown using a Main Street approach. A targeted priority for county support, the effort is being led by the Coatesville 2nd Century Alliance, a public/private partnership focused on the city's economic revitalization. The 2nd Century Alliance is funded by local government agencies and private sector contributions and works to revitalize Downtown Coatesville, stabilize and strengthen residential neighborhoods, and promote the city's assets. Business networking, public events, and façade improvements are among the Alliance's current activities. Coatesville has two downtown restaurants and a nearby brew pub. The potential for further revitalization as a visitor service center for residents and visitors is strong.

The Borough of **Malvern** is a railroad community with a strong residential neighborhood and appealing Main Street corridor. Malvern boasts two successful brew pubs which anchor downtown street life and has the potential to develop more visitor service assets. The Paoli Battlefield is located within the borough, and the historic General Warren Inn is a high-quality restaurant and inn located nearby.

Malvern (left), Oxford (right), and other Chester County boroughs have active downtown streetscapes with appealing amenities for local residents and visitors.

Downingtown Borough is a historic mill community located on the east branch of the Brandywine Creek. Its Lancaster Avenue downtown streetscape and surrounding area has matured in recent decades, with four restaurants, three pizza places, and a coffee shop. Victory Brewing Company, a regional dining and brewing attraction, is located near downtown. Downingtown is located within a vibrant suburban portion of the county.

Oxford Borough is a regional anchor for southwestern Chester County. The borough's downtown center has been transformed over the past couple of decades, enhancing its charming Main Street character. The downtown center features two restaurants with two additional restaurants, two grills, and a diner a short distance away.

Other county boroughs also have historic downtown areas with Main Street character but are not currently promoted as visitor service areas. A few of these downtown areas do have restaurants, such as Honeybrook, which has the Waynebrook Inn, and Parkesburg, which has the Animated Brewing Company and El-Limon Mexican restaurant. Other downtown centers that are not promoted as visitor service centers include Elverson, Spring City, Atglen, Avondale, and West Grove. Prized by their surrounding residents, these communities provide potential for introduction of additional restaurants and amenities serving local residents that could also be promoted to visitors.

5.1.3 Main Street Communities⸺Approach

Chester County's three primary Main Street communities⸺Phoenixville, West Chester, and Kennett Square⸺are historic community centers that have successfully developed into strong visitor service centers over the past few decades. They are strengths of the heritage tourism experience in Chester County but are already vibrant and successful and don't necessarily rely on the addition of new heritage tourism product. Other smaller community centers also host services that could be further developed and supported. The following recommendations are intended to support Main Street communities as part of the county's heritage tourism experiences.

- Continue to **market** the county's Main Street communities as heritage tourism service centers.

- Encourage **interested communities** in using the Main Street approach to develop programs, services, and enhancements in their downtown commercial areas.

- Encourage the county's three Main Street communities to participate in the **Main Street America** and Pennsylvania Downtown Center programs to benefit from potential networking, technical assistance, and state DCED grant funding.

- Support existing and interested Main Street communities at the county level with **planning grants and technical assistance** focused on the Main Street approach.

- Encourage local action for the **preservation** of historic downtown areas.

- Encourage **placemaking** to enhance the character and use of historic downtown areas.

- Encourage development of interpretive programs for historic downtown areas using the **Community Interpretive Program** outlined in Chapter 4 of this plan.

5.2 HISTORIC VILLAGES

Historic villages are important features of Chester County's historic cultural landscape, and many have been recognized and preserved by local municipalities. Historic villages are closely associated with the county's agricultural landscape in the Rural and Agricultural Resource Areas shown on the Landscapes Map earlier in this chapter. Historic villages are primary resources for experience and interpretation of the county's cultural landscape as heritage tourism attractions.

Historic villages are located throughout the county. In Suburban Growth Areas, they have been impacted by new development but still remain as remnant villages. Along Route 100 in the northern portion of the county for instance, Lionville, Eagle, Ludwig's Corner, Pughtown, and Bucktown have all been impacted by suburban development to different extents. Despite the impacts, these villages can still be recognized, preserved, and incorporated into new development as suburban growth continues. In some cases, they are or may be developed as visitor service centers, taking advantage of and featuring their remaining historic character.

In the county's Rural and Agricultural Areas, most historic villages retain their historic integrity and character. Some feature limited services, especially high-end restaurants, that are frequented by local residents and may also be promoted as service attractions for visitors. These include Marshallton, Unionville, Kimberton, Birchrunville, Coventryville, and Dilworthtown, among others, all of which have high-end, high-quality restaurants that are representative of the best of the county's visitor experience.

Marshallton is a distinctive example of a historic village with high-end restaurants that has coordinated preservation of its historic character and resources with interpretation to create an authentic attraction presenting the county's cultural landscape while offering quality visitor services. Saint Peter's Village is an example of a historic village that operates as a visitor attraction under single ownership with restaurants, shopping, and lodging. Both Marshallton and Saint Peter's are marketed as attractions by Chester County Tourism.

Many other historic villages do not have visitor services and should not be expected to develop them. They are, nonetheless, potential interpretive resources for visitors exploring the county's rural cultural landscape. At present, they are not interpreted. An appropriate means of interpreting historic villages as part of the larger cultural landscape should be found that does not negatively impact local residents.

Marshallton, Unionville, Birchrunville, and Dillworhtown (upper left to lower right) are all historic villages with intimate, high-end restaurants frequented by local residents.

5.2.1 Historic Villages⸺Approach

Historic villages are located throughout the county and are prized by local residents for their character and charm. Some feature high-end restaurants that are already successful and highly patronized but most lack and do not have the potential to provide visitor services. The following recommendations are intended to support historic villages as part of the county's heritage tourism experience.

▪ Encourage and support the **preservation** of historic villages by local municipalities through inventory, planning, technical assistance, establishment of National Register historic districts, and establishment of local historic districts where possible.

▪ Interpret Chester County's historic villages as part of the county's larger **cultural landscape** through driving tours and other means.

▪ Encourage development of interpretive programs for historic villages using the **Community Interpretive Program** outlined in Chapter 4 of this plan.

- Promote **restaurants** in historic villages as visitor service attractions.

- Promote interested historic villages as **interpretive sites**.

- Support interested historic villages in developing **visitor services** in keeping with their character.

5.3 AGRICULTURE AND FARM EXPERIENCES

Whether it's an active century farm managed by the same family for over 100 years, or the rolling hills and views of vibrant green farmland planted in corn, or a 19th-century Pennsylvania barn that has been converted into a modern family home, Chester County's rich farming story remains evident everywhere in the landscape today.

Operating farms throughout the countryside supply local food and goods, contribute to open space, and create opportunities to connect farm to table through engaging agricultural experiences. Farmers' markets in main streets and communities, as well as pop-up farmstands along country roads further connect residents and visitors to Chester County's rich agricultural heritage, creating a vibrant sense of community and deepening relationships between producers and consumers. In Chester County's suburban landscapes, historic 19th-century barns, farmhouses, springhouses, and root cellars have been preserved, sometimes repurposed, and incorporated into the contemporary scene.

The quality of life of Chester County's residents is deeply entwined with its rich agricultural heritage, whether through the close connection to local farm products and experiences, or the passive interaction with agricultural elements existing throughout Chester County's landscape. Agriculture and farm experiences are an integral part of Chester County's heritage tourism experience, both for residents and visitors alike.

5.3.1 Chester County's Agricultural Past

Agriculture has been central to Chester County's economic development since the colonial period. In the period of 1730 to 1780, Chester County's farming mostly focused on general mixed farming and the extensive use of land, with a focus on grain production. Chester County was known as the "breadbasket," supplying wheat crops that supported Philadelphia's and Wilmington's milling industries sending flour exports to Europe and the West Indies. Other crops included rye, barley, oats, buckwheat, Indian corn, potatoes, turnips, cabbage, apples, peaches, cherries, flax, hemp, and hay. Chester County's agriculture was connected to Philadelphia and Wilmington markets and beyond through a growing network of roads and the use of waterways.

While Pennsylvania continued to lead the nation in wheat production in 1850, competition due to western settlement in the mid-to-late 19th century led southeastern Pennsylvania farmers to shift from crop-oriented farming to livestock production and mixed crops. Instead of wheat, hay became an important crop, as well as corn and oats, which were important to feeding cattle, oxen, horses, pigs, and chickens.

Butter became a vital commodity, as well as meat and eggs. Chester County produced over 2 million pounds of butter in 1860, and by 1880 was second in the state in terms of butter production. The average Chester County farm produced 700 pounds of butter in 1880. Other important products in Chester County were beef cattle and hogs. Since the early 1800s, Chester County earned a national reputation for its successful breed, the "Chester White Pig," which are still raised today.

After 1870, farm production shifted in southeastern Pennsylvania with a growing focus on dairying and poultry raising serving the expanding nearby urban Philadelphia market. By 1929, 46% of Chester County's farms were dairy farms. It was after 1870 that the mushroom industry, nursery businesses, and flower production began to take hold in the region.

Chester County's historic dairy farms have been the foundation of the county's agricultural economy since the late 19th century.

The post-World War II period brought fundamental change to southeastern Pennsylvania farming, with new industry health requirements, rising real estate prices, and taxes forcing small family farms out of business. Increasing suburban development and a growth in non-farm industries in previously rural areas also pushed families away from farming. Remaining farms continued to prosper through increasing specialization. Dairy and poultry production at these specialized farms continued to prosper through the 1960s, but because of rising feed costs, overall income declined.

Chester County's shift to grain and livestock production after 1780 led to the development of the distinctive "Pennsylvania Barn" or "Pennsylvania Bank Barn" which are such a vital part of the county's historic landscape today. These barns featured a forebay and banked construction, allowing wagons and

livestock entrance on both the lower and upper floors. Bank barns facilitated both hay and grain storage, and dairy and beef cattle feeding, making them extremely highly adaptable and versatile for the farmer. The bank barn became a prominent feature associated with the Pennsylvania cultural hearth that spread west through central Pennsylvania, south through the Shenandoah Valley, and into the mid-west.

Among other important agricultural outbuildings, the springhouse became a key building that supported home dairying production at family farms. Like Pennsylvania bank barns, surviving springhouses are found throughout the Chester County landscape.

5.3.2 Agriculture in Chester County Today

Chester County's agricultural industry, though smaller in scale than it was in the early 20th century, continues to be a vibrant part of the county's landscape. In 2017, Chester County ranked second (behind Lancaster County) of all of Pennsylvania's 67 counties, and 53rd in the United States in the total value of agricultural products sold with annual sales of $712,468. Kennett Square's mushroom industry, with its 68 farms, ranked first in Pennsylvania in sales of agricultural products; followed by milk, floriculture, and bedding plants ranking in fifth place; corn in sixth; and cows and calves in ninth place. Soybeans, hay, and other crops rounded out the top ten in sales.

Chester County's agricultural industry is supported at the county level by the Chester County Agricultural Development Council (Chester County Ag Council), a department of county government, whose mission is to administer programs educating the general public on the importance of agriculture and encouraging the continuation of farming in Chester County. Ag Council members are appointed by the County Commissioners. The Ag Council produces its annual *Chester County Farm Guide* that highlights over 125 farms selling local products and recognizes an annual Farmer of the Year.

Mushroom farming in the Kennett Square portion of Chester County has become a major component of the agricultural economy.

Two comprehensive studies regarding agriculture in Chester County have been completed in the past five years. In 2019, Chester County Tourism completed an *Agricultural Tourism Development Research Report* which assessed current conditions and opportunities in Chester County in regard to agriculture and tourism. In 2022, the Chester County Ag Council completed its *Chester County Agricultural Economic Development Strategic Plan* that focuses on six strategic areas: Agricultural Markets, Business & Financing, Education & Outreach, Labor & Workforce, Land Access, and Zoning & Land Use with the goals that largely emphasize the growth of Chester County's industries and employment opportunities while mitigating constraints.

According to the Ag Council's Strategic Plan, 3,000 acres in Chester County are farmed in produce with the majority in potatoes, corn, pumpkins, apples, and grapes. This produce is distinguished from the 95,000+ acres farmed in field crops such as hay and grains. There are approximately 302 vegetable farms and 157 fruit farms. In addition, there are 197 horticulture farms, along with 16.2 million sq ft in indoor agriculture making up 51% of the state's agricultural sales – mostly through the mushroom farms. Greenhouse and indoor production, including flower farms are expected to grow in future years. Chester County ranks third in the state in grape acres, with 25 grape vineyards on 157 acres.

Sunflowers are a profitable crop for some historic farms.

There are 333 dairy farms in Chester County with over 21,600 dairy cows producing 515 million pounds of milk annually. Unlike the produce, mushroom, and field crop industries, which have declined, Chester County's dairy industry has grown in recent years. 21% of Chester County's farms are devoted to diversified livestock including beef cattle, hogs, sheep, goats, and poultry.

Finally**,** 4,110 acres of Chester County is devoted to equine activities**,** with 1,000 farms and 10,300 horses, ponies, mules, and donkeys. The Ag Council's Strategic Plan notes the vibrant and historical equine culture in the county citing a "wide

array of activities spanning from tradition to competitive events to leisure. People of all ages can engage in activities that include dressage, fox hunting, racing, trail riding, historic reenactments, therapeutic offerings, and more."

Chester County is home to nationally recognized equine training and event centers, including the New Bolton Center, and offers high-profile equine events including the Radnor Races, the Willowdale Steeple Chase, the Devon Horse Show, and the International Horse Trials and Country Fair at Plantation Fields.

5.3.3 Agritourism

Agritourism has played an important role in Chester County's agricultural community as a way for farms to diversify their revenue streams and educate the community about the value of local agriculture. Agritourism, also known as "agritainment," is defined by the National Agricultural Law Center as "a form of commercial enterprise that links agricultural production and/or processing with tourism to attract visitors onto a farm, ranch, or other agricultural business for the purposes of entertaining and/or educating the visitors while generating income for the farm, ranch, or business owner." Agritourism experiences include hayrides and recreational activities, farm and wine tours, U-Pick or Pick-Your-Own experiences, farm weddings and events, farmer's markets, and country fairs.

On-farm markets (left) and weekend farmers' markets in downtown areas (right) are popular ways by which local residents buy fresh local produce.

The Ag Council's Strategic Plan cites that agritourism generated $949 million in revenue nationwide in 2017. $1 million of that number was generated by Chester County's 40+ farms that offer agritourism experiences. However, the 2019 study by Chester County Tourism cautions that agritourism in Chester County had declined between 2012 and 2017.

An obstacle to the expansion of agritourism in Chester County has been local zoning by municipalities balancing the privacy of neighbors with the ability of farms to accommodate customers or visitors. Like many of Chester County's heritage sites, farms struggle to be "visitor-ready" with adequate parking and other required amenities. The Chester County Ag Council works to educate local municipalities on the needs of farms and potential obstacles in allowing farms to engage in farm tourism.

5.3.4 Agritourism Experiences in Chester County

Chester County offers an array of agritourism experiences in every corner of the county, reflecting every season, and truly capturing all that Chester County has to offer through an array of local food, beverage, and family activities.

In the early summer, residents and visitors can pick their own berries at Highland Orchards or Sugartown Strawberries or purchase them at roadside stands. All ages can experience sheep to wool day demonstrations at Springton Manor Farm & County Park.

Summer brings pop-up roadside farm stands chockful of fresh local produce. Farmers' markets in Chester County's main streets and town centers bring together local foods, artisanry, and music to create a deep sense of community. Summer brings residents to Milky Way Farm and Creamery in Chester Springs or Bailey's Dairy at Pocopson Meadow Farm near West Chester where families can learn about the milking process, see the animals, and enjoy ice cream.

Fall brings apple season and pumpkin picking, with family-oriented experiences such as hayrides at Sugartown Strawberries and corn mazes at Hurricane Hill Farm. The holiday season brings trips to local Christmas tree farms including Clark's Christmas Tree Farms, Yeager's Farm & Market, Wiggin's Trees, and others.

Combined experiences such as hayrides or train rides coupled with pick-your-own, food and beverage vendors, and children's activities further attract families, making agritourism experiences very much a vibrant part of Chester County life for residents.

On-farm hayrides are a popular seasonal activity.

At Highland Orchards, families can take a hayride to pick pumpkins, returning to enjoy something from their bakery. Parents can enjoy Highland Orchard's barbeque and beer garden while their kids enjoy petting goats or participating in their various games and activities. December brings similar opportunities at Chester County's Christmas tree farms. In West Chester, families can hop on the West Chester Railroad to take them to Wiggin's Trees to pick out their Christmas tree. These experiences offer residents memorable ways to enjoy Chester County's seasons and create wonderful family traditions.

Destinations such as September Farm Cheese in Honeybrook offer fun countryside day trips to the western edge of Chester County, complete with a café, their cheese products as well as other local goods, and their proximity to several roadside produce stands. Visitors and residents alike can get a taste of Chester County's mushroom farming tradition with a visit to The Woodlands at Phillips Mushroom Farm where they offer an exhibit about mushroom farming and a retail store. Tours of Herr's Potato Chip Factory in Nottingham, as well as during their holiday light display in December, create fun day trips for different age groups.

5.3.5 County Fairs, Sporting Evenets, and Horse Shows

For equestrians, the Devon Horse Show and Country Fair offers a week's-worth of experiences during the last week of May each year. Country fairs, some over 100 years old, fill the summer calendar and stretch across every corner of the county from Nottingham County Park to Ludwig's Corner, to the Kimberton Fairgrounds, to the Goshen Fair Grounds. In addition, the Chester County 4-H Fair occurs at the Romano 4-H Center in Honeybrook every August, encouraging youth to engage in animal science as well as crafts and artisanship. Collegiate and regional sporting events are throughout the county every season of the year.

5.3.6 Chester County Spirits

Chester County's wineries, distilleries, and breweries are promoted through Chester County Tourism's "Chester County Cheers" marketing promotion. The county's Main Street communities are centers for breweries and brew pubs. Several of Chester County's wine, beer, and spirits businesses also participate in larger festivals such as the annual Kennett Summer Fest and Kennett Brew Fest, as well as a growing number of smaller community gatherings and fundraisers such as Historic Sugartown's Summer Biergartens, Natural Lands' Cheslen Preserve's "Pints on the Preserve," and the Brandywine Park's "Brews at the Battlefield."

5.3.7 Connecting Chester County with its Ag Products

For over twenty years, the Chester County Ag Council's *Chester County Farm Guide* has connected Chester County residents with sources of local farm products and where to find them. It highlights Farmer's Markets, Farm Outlets, Retail Outlets, Mobile Markets, Food Delivery, and CSA's (Community Supported Agriculture), as well as promoting the county's various country fairs. It offers an excellent map showing farm and market locations, as well as where to purchase specialty farm items such as honey, beef, or other products. The Ag Council also seeks to educate residents by providing farm product availability calendars, and important information on topics such as how to safely pass tractors on roadways. The Farm Guide is free and made available online and at local farms, businesses, and other locations.

There are 26 CSA's (Community Supported Agriculture) spread through all parts of Chester County, where residents may purchase shares of produce (see https://www.chescofarming.org/WhereToBuy.cfm). There are unique cooperative farm experiences as well, including that at Lundale Farm in South

Coventry Township, which brings together several farmers to farm cooperatively at one property and offers educational experiences including farm tours.

The newly established FarmerJawn Agriculture at the former Pete's Produce Stand at Westtown School near West Chester offers an opportunity to support collaborative organic farming and serves as a farming incubator operated by a cohort of black farmers chosen and trained through the FarmerJawn and Friends Foundation Fund. Many of these CSAs and cooperatives also work closely with the Chester County Food Bank, providing farmland and support to produce fresh vegetables and other produce to support vulnerable populations.

5.3.8 Blending Agricultural and Heritage Experiences

Agricultural experience is very much a part of the story at many of Chester County's heritage sites. Thornbury Farm, CSA encompasses historic roles as a significant site of the Battle of the Brandywine and connections to the Underground Railroad as well as serving as a vibrant and active CSA with tours, events, and programs.

The Mill at Anselma National Historical Landmark actively interprets Chester County's agricultural history as well as its technological history, offering flour milling as well as other farm-to-table demonstrations, and periodically offering its products for sale. Springton Manor Farm has an excellent, if dated, exhibit on Chester County's agricultural history combined with the opportunity for visitors to learn about livestock through Sheep-to-Wool demonstrations and interaction with their animals. Historic Sugartown has a strong educational exhibit and school program focused on agriculture, supported through artifacts on display from the Chester County History Center.

Farms with agricultural tourism experiences can participate in the Heritage Tourism through interpretation of their historic resources and landscapes and through collaborative programs with historic attractions.

Heritage sites and agritourism farms and sites should continue to look at ways to work together, enhancing site interpretation with real "you can taste it" experiences. For example, the Mill at Anselma and Milky Way Farm & Creamery have developed joint programs and tours over the years, including offering coupons to encourage visitors to visit the Creamery for ice cream after their tour and to see the springhouse where the water that powers the Mill originates.

There are ample opportunities to interpret Chester County's agricultural heritage through demonstrations of old farming and food processing technology. Heritage sites should continue to look into opportunities to sell locally produced food products in their gift shops, particularly when they can connect directly to the site's agricultural history or its active farming community. The Mill at Anselma sells flour and cornmeal produced at the historic gristmill. The Chester County History Center sells several artisan-made goods and food products in its gift shop to highlight Chester County producers. Historic Sugartown recently teamed up with a local beekeeper to produce and sell Sugartown honey.

5.3.9 Agritourism—Approach

Agriculture and farm experiences are important to tourism in Chester County, especially as attractions frequented by local residents. While closely related to Chester County history and landscape appeal, agritourism attractions often do not interpret history or heritage. Strongly promoted, there is synergy and the potential for stronger collaboration between agritourism and heritage tourism.

Agritourism experiences have the potential to enhance other types of heritage tourism in the county, supplementing stops on driving tours or bus tours, and offering engaging experiences that bring together Chester County's rich array of food and other farm products with its deeply meaningful heritage. Agritourism sites should participate in telling the story of agricultural history in Chester County through their buildings, landscapes, and experiences. Heritage sites should look at opportunities to collaborate with nearby agritourism destinations to see how they can tie their interpretation and experiences together in ways that are captivating to the public, both supporting site educational programs and preservation missions and promoting agricultural product sales.

Overall, marketing resources should be devoted to continuing to raise the visibility of agritourism destinations for local and regional audiences, not necessarily national audiences. Local agricultural experiences are valued most by current Chester County residents – they are part of what makes Chester County home. The following recommendations are intended to coordinate agritourism and heritage tourism as part of the county's visitor presentation.

- Continue to actively **support and promote** agritourism as an important component of the county's economy and to help farms prosper through the work of the Chester County Agricultural Development Council and Chester County Tourism.

- **Feature agritourism sites** in the development of regional interpretation of agricultural aspects of Chester County's cultural landscape through driving tours, websites, and other means.

- Encourage agritourism sites to **include interpretation** of the historic cultural landscape and structures in their experiences, aligning with themes and topics outlined in this plan.

- Encourage heritage sites to **collaborate** with nearby agritourism destinations to see how they can tie their interpretation and experiences together in ways that are captivating to the public.

5.4 SUBURBAN AMENITIES

The Landscapes Map from *Landscapes3* presented earlier in this chapter shows Suburban Growth Areas along the Route 30, Route 1, and Route 202 corridors that have grown and developed in the late 20th century and become a predominant feature of the county. This suburban growth continues, is addressed in *Landscapes3* and the planning of local municipalities, and is in part balanced by the county's open space and agricultural landscape conservation initiatives.

In general, Chester County's suburban growth has been of high quality, a factor that is supported by the general affluence of the county's residents. The policies outlined in *Landscapes3* are intended to provide county vision, leadership, and resources to local municipalities in managing suburban growth in a way that enhances quality of life and (1) encourages high quality development and improvements, (2) places a premium on preserving and enhancing landscape and community character, and (3) promotes best practices in historic preservation.

Aside from the Main Street communities discussed earlier in this chapter, most dining, shopping, and other visitor services in the county are located within the Suburban Growth Areas identified in the Landscape Map. This is as true for dining as it is for lodging, discussed further in the next section. Heritage travelers coming to Chester County are most likely to stay in and dine in the suburban areas while visiting heritage attractions in rural and agricultural areas.

This is an issue in terms of logistics—how to easily and quickly travel from heritage sites to service areas—but it is not necessarily a negative because of the overall quality of the services and the appealing character of the suburban areas. Planning for heritage tourism in Chester County must take these factors into account and turn them into a positive. Promotion must demonstrate how visitors should plan their visits—how they should navigate, where they should dine, and where they should stay. Coordination between heritage tourism destinations and supporting amenities located in suburban areas should be part of the plan and be as seamless as possible. The overall quality of growth management in the county, creating appealing and high-quality suburban areas, is of priority.

5.4.1 Suburban Amenities⸺Approach

Chester County's suburban amenities are of high quality and are located along suburban corridors and in suburban centers as depicted on the Landscapes Map earlier in this chapter. They are important for their visitor services but do not directly relate to historic attractions or places. The following recommendations are intended to highlight suburban amenities as service centers serving heritage tourism in the county.

- Continue the **growth management** and conservation strategies outlined in *Landscapes3* that encourage and incentivize high quality development, land conservation, and historic preservation enhancing quality of life for residents.

- **Identify** suburban centers and dining sites that can be marketed to heritage travelers and can be integrated with and contribute positively to their overall visitor experience.

- **Coordinate** dining and other visitor services with promotion of lodging opportunities in suburban areas as outlined in the next section of this chapter.

5.5 LODGING

Among the suburban amenities important to heritage tourism, lodging stands out as both a challenge and an opportunity and has been closely studied by Chester County Tourism. Their 2020-2025 Strategic Plan reports that Chester County's lodging market is organized into distinct clusters as depicted on the map below.

The majority of the county's lodging properties are located along the 202 corridor and near Exton and Downingtown in the northern portion of the county. These properties are located along key business, highway, and train corridors and are bolstered by corporate travel and group events like youth sports tournaments. A smaller number of properties are located near West Chester and Kennett Square in the central and southern portion of the county, reflecting a mismatch in the locations of hotels, B&Bs, and home sharing product with leisure destinations.

Chester County's occupancy rate is about 63%, slightly lower than those of surrounding counties, with an average daily rate of $122, which is slightly higher. Room occupancy is strongest during the middle of the week (peaking at 77% on Tuesday nights and 74% on Wednesday nights) driven primarily by business travel. These nights feature a higher average rate than weekend nights, where travel is more discretionary and thus travelers are likely to be more price sensitive. A goal of promoting heritage tourism within the county is to increase room occupancy rates on weekends.

The clustering of hotels along the county's major arterial routes and business corridors is considered a strength with respect to visitation overall but is a weakness with respect to serving other parts of the county where many heritage tourism experiences are located. Visitor service infrastructure is lacking in outlying areas. Visitors must travel back to suburban areas to find places to

stay, compromising the overall heritage tourism experience, which is stronger when lodging is a direct part of the experience.

Chester County has very few historic inns, including St. Peter's Village (left) in the Iron & Steel region and the Fairville Inn (right) south of Chadds Ford.

The growth of the non-traditional sharing economy (eg. AirBnB, HomeAway, VRBO, etc.) and the current supply of B&Bs presents an opportunity to offer a range of options to visitors seeking more personalized experiences and provides lodging alternatives in areas of the county lacking traditional hotel supply. However, Chester County Tourism only markets eight B&Bs and Inns within the county, half of which are in suburban areas, and current AirBnB listings are limited and not evenly distributed. As noted above with respect to suburban amenities in general, the locations of lodging primarily in suburban areas must be taken into account as a reality in planning for heritage tourism.

Additional discussion of the economics of lodging and amenities in Chester County is included in the Visitor Analysis & Marketing Plan for this project in Appendix D, a stand-alone document.

Most of Chester County's over 4,152 hotel rooms are with upscale national chains.

Geographic distribution of hotels in Chester County as depicted by Chester County Tourism
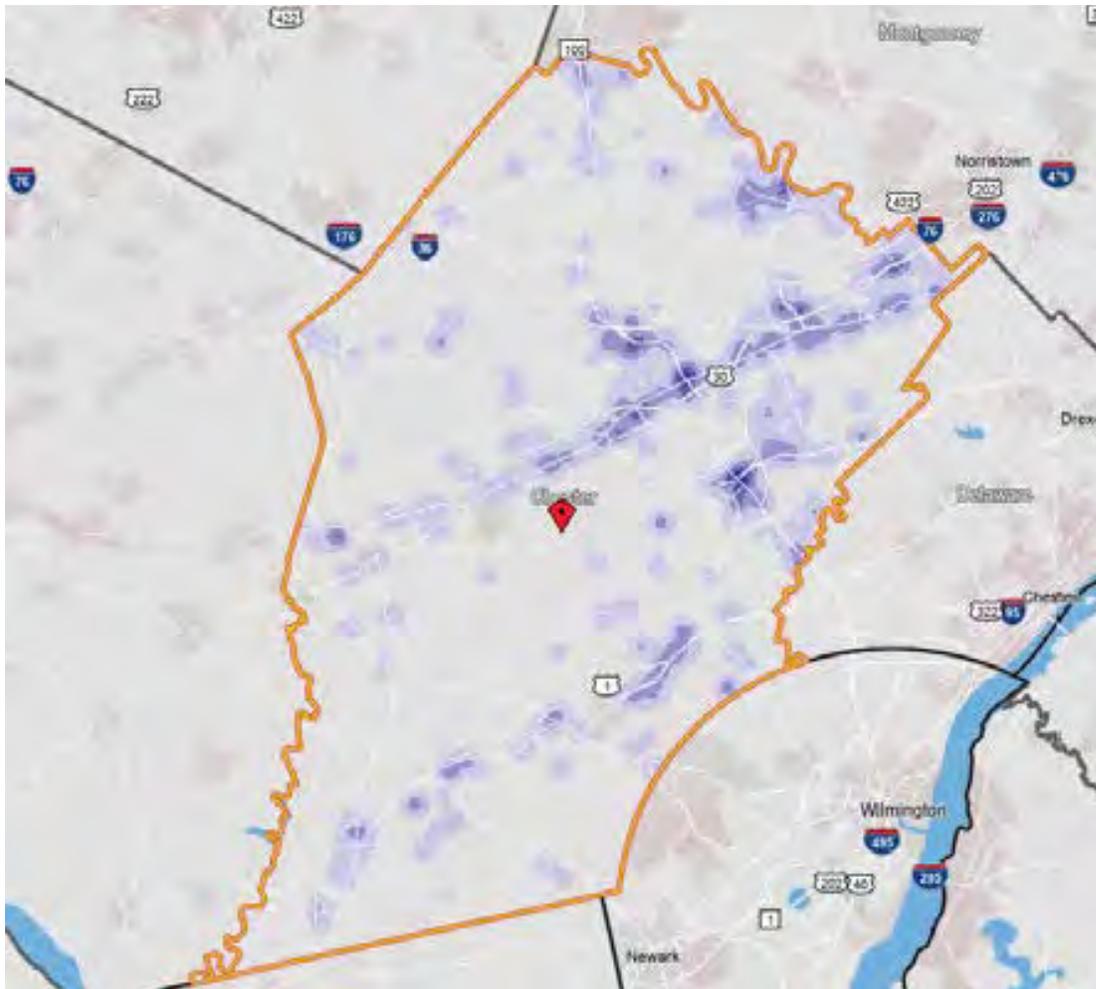
Geographic distribution of accommodation and food jobs (Chester County Tourism Strategic Plan 2020-2025, Appendix XXI)

5.5.1 Lodging—Approach

Lodging in Chester County is located in clusters along suburbanized corridors. While in abundance and of high quality, existing hotels are not directly related to historic attractions, places, or experiences. This is an accepted reality for heritage tourism in the county—coordinating heritage experiences located in largely rural landscapes with visitor services located in nearby largely suburbanized areas. Planning should be undertaken to address how heritage travelers should integrate lodging into their experiences. The following recommendations are intended to coordinate and promote lodging in service to heritage tourism in the county.

- Prepare marketing and promotion materials that demonstrate how heritage visitors should **plan for and integrate** lodging into their overall visitor experience.

- **Coordinate** existing lodging opportunities with dining and other visitor services as a complete and seamless visitor experience.

Historic outbuilding converted into an ice cream shop in a suburban Main-Street-like enterprise named Exton Town Center and featuring shops, restaurants, and services.

CHAPTER 6 – MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Heritage Tourism Program for Chester County is a collaborative effort to be undertaken by a range of local partners and stakeholders under the coordination and guidance of the Heritage Tourism Program's Steering Committee. This Heritage Tourism Plan describes a management framework through which Chester County's vision for heritage tourism will be implemented in a phased manner in accordance with established priorities, opportunities as they arise, and funding resources as they become available.

Earlier chapters of this plan outline how Chester County's heritage communities, landscapes, and sites may be presented to residents and visitors. Chapter 3 outlines the proposed visitor experience while Chapter 4 outlines a set of programs that may be used to achieve that experience.

Chapter 6 addresses how Chester County's Heritage Tourism Program will be organized and managed. It proposes two levels of programming. A **Base Program** will be an ongoing initiative organized through a local non-profit "Implementation Entity," coordinating and assisting heritage sites and communities in telling their stories countywide. As a separate level, a series of **Special Programs** are outlined that may be implemented in addition to the base program to focus on particular opportunities. The suggested Special Programs

may be organized, managed, and funded in conjunction with or separately from the ongoing Base Program.

Both the Base Program and suggested Special Programs may be utilized by Chester County's America250th Commission (CC250) for implementation of its planned initiatives over the next few years in commemoration of the nation's semiquincentennial.

As it has developed over the course of planning for this project, **the CC250 initiative is envisioned as managing Phase 1 of implementation of the Heritage Tourism Plan, transitioning beyond 2027 to another entity for continuing development and implementation as Phase 2 of implementation.** It is anticipated to include implementation of both the Base Program and Special Programs as further outlined below.

Implementation of the Base Program for Chester County is grounded in the initiatives and capabilities of local partners and stakeholders. While the Base Program provides a framework and process for interpretation and visitor experience, implementation is dependent upon local heritage communities and sites stepping forward to tell their stories.

Forming partnerships among a wide variety of partners and stakeholders is a fundamental strategy for achieving the vision outlined in this plan. The proposed Implementing Entity will have the critical role of building relationships with partners around the presentation of themes and stories countywide. This chapter explores ways of structuring partner involvement and recognizes how partnerships are essential in achieving the Heritage Tourism Program's goals.

The Chester County landscape is central to the county's character and quality of life and is a primary subject for interpretation.

6.1 THE BASE PROGRAM

The Base Heritage Tourism Program (Base Program) for Chester County is envisioned as an ongoing county-wide initiative implementing goals and objectives outlined in *Landscapes3*, Chester County's 2018 comprehensive plan. Chapter 6 of the comprehensive plan, *How We Appreciate*, states the following objectives:

> C. Identify and foster historic and natural resource connections to advance their protection and maintain quality of life; and

> D. Preserve the stories of our cultural heritage and connect them to our residents and our future.

Recommendations implementing those objectives include (1) growing heritage tourism programs to strengthen cultural awareness and the beneficial economic impacts of historic and cultural resource preservation and (2) expanding historic preservation interpretation and educational opportunities that promote core themes of the county's history and sense of place, with an emphasis on linking past, present, and future.

With these objectives and recommendations in mind, the proposed Base Program is intended to engage communities and heritage sites in telling their heritage stories to residents and visitors with the intent of strengthening community identity and building support for preservation and conservation. Providing beneficial economic impacts through local and regional heritage tourism is an added value.

Implementation of the Base Program embraces the entire countywide **interpretive framework** outlined in Chapter 2 of this plan⸺every community and site will find its place within this framework. It is anticipated, however, that the primary interpretive themes *The Natural Landscape*, *The Cultural Landscape*, and *Evolving Values* will be particularly relevant to most communities and sites.

The Base Program expects to use the **Outdoor Exhibit Program** and **Community Interpretive Program** outlined in Chapter 4 as the primary means through which to implement the program. The Outdoor Exhibit Program is a vehicle through which individual heritage sites may receive guidance and support for installation of self-guided outdoor exhibits enabling them to be visitor ready for interpretation and promotion. The Community Interpretive Program is a means of providing coordinated interpretation and visitor experience by communities⸺boroughs, towns, villages, townships, landscapes⸺enabling them to be visitor ready in conveying their stories to residents and visitors.

Processes for implementation of the Outdoor Exhibit Program and Community Interpretive Program are briefly outlined in Chapter 3 and are further developed through the management framework outlined below. It involves establishment of a Steering Committee, Advisory Committee, staffing through a designated non-profit Implementation Entity, and quality control through an Interpretive Subcommittee.
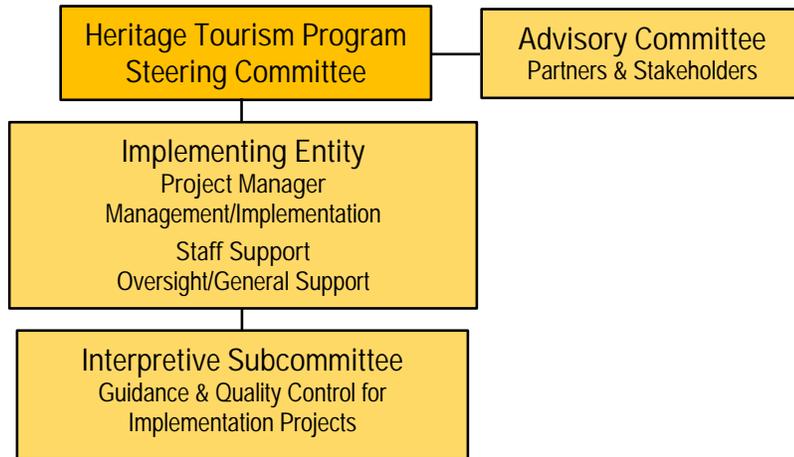
Organizational chart for the Base Heritage Tourism Program

6.1.1 Heritage Tourism Program Steering Committee

The county's current America250[th] Commission will serve as the Steering Committee for this program while the Commission is in existence, through 2027. In 2027, as Phase 2 of implementation, a new Steering Committee that oversees the organization, management, and implementation of the county's Heritage Tourism Program, serving essentially as a board of directors for the initiative, will need to be created. Possibly appointed by the Chester County Commissioners, the Steering Committee should be comprised of key stakeholders representing the county, such as the Chester County Planning Commission, Chester County Parks + Preservation, Chester County Tourism, Chester County History Center, Chester County Community Foundation, and others as appropriate.

The Steering Committee sets policy and direction for the Heritage Tourism Program. It is a governing body responsible for strategic direction and that exercises operational authority for the initiative, guiding program development, establishing budgets, setting priorities, approving annual workplans, making spending decisions, and overseeing day-to-day operations.

The Steering Committee may establish other subcommittees on an as-needed basis to guide aspects of the initiative. Subcommittees may be comprised of Steering Committee members or representatives from other entities as deemed appropriate. The proposed **Interpretive Subcommittee** outlined below is one such subcommittee. Another is a **Grants Subcommittee** to advise the Steering Committee on the award of grants to stakeholders in accordance with the various programs being implemented. Other subcommittees might be established to guide **Special Programs** as outlined later in this chapter.

During the planning process in development of the Heritage Tourism Plan, it was determined that Chester County's America250[th] Commission (CC250) will serve as both the Steering Committee and Implementing Entity (see below) for Phase 1 implementation for the Base Plan through 2027. The 250th

commemoration will provide the partnership initiative and potential to raise funding for implementation of a significant portion of the plan. In 2027, with momentum established, implementation will be transitioned to a non-profit or public/private Implementing Entity. A successor to CC250 will serve as the Steering Committee.

The Base Program focuses on assisting local communities and sites in telling their stories to local audiences in support of community conservation and preservation.

6.1.2 Advisory Committee

The Steering Committee should establish an Advisory Committee of participating partners and stakeholders to provide input and to help facilitate the implementation of programs. The Base Program can be viewed as a network of partners and stakeholders working together toward the common vision articulated in this Heritage Tourism Plan. Generally speaking, **partners** are entities taking an active role in coordinating and implementing the plan, while **stakeholders** are entities with a more passive role and whose programs align with the plan's overarching goals.

Partners and stakeholders may include visitor attractions, heritage communities, heritage sites, state and regional entities, non-profit organizations, and others with interests in interpretation, conservation, preservation, and heritage tourism. Partners and stakeholders are expected to benefit by participation in the Base Program.

The Advisory Committee is a vehicle through which partners and stakeholders may engage with, communicate with, and coordinate their participation in the Base Program. It serves as an advisory body to the Steering Committee that will help shape the program through the recommendation of priorities and support

in coordinating initiatives. The size and scope of the Advisory Committee will be determined by the Steering Committee and may be adjusted over time, as necessary.

The Advisory Committee will be engaged through:

- Regular, ongoing communications through an e-newsletter, targeted e-communications to partners and stakeholders, meetings and workshops, and direct outreach;

- Advisory Committee meetings with broad participation to be held on a semi-annual basis or as otherwise deemed appropriate;

- Recruitment to work on the planning, development, and implementation of specific programs and initiatives either through working groups, subcommittees, or other vehicles as appropriate; and

- Direct support of programs and initiatives through grants or other means as funding resources are developed or otherwise become available.

Meetings of the Advisory Committee should be led by a member of the Steering Committee and/or its Project Manager. *During Phase 1 implementation by the CC250, ongoing public meetings, outreach, and communications with partners and stakeholders representative of the Advisory Committee will be undertaken.*

The Chester County History Center in West Chester is a gateway for visitors and embraces all of the historical themes outlined in the Heritage Tourism Plan. Along with other lead partners, the History Center may guide local communities and sites in storytelling. (Photo: Kimberly Paynter/WHYY)

6.1.3 Implementing Entity

The Base Program requires staff to manage day-to-day operations in the implementation of the programs and initiatives outlined in the Heritage Tourism Plan or as otherwise developed. Such staff might be housed in a non-profit organization or public/private entity described here as the program's Implementing Entity. The Implementing Entity may be designated by the Chester County Commissioners with a cooperative agreement outlining its responsibilities.

During Phase 1 implementation through 2027, the Chester County's America250th Commission (CC250) will serve as both the Steering Committee and Implementing Entity as noted above. In 2027, with momentum established, implementation will be transitioned to a non-profit or public/private Implementing Entity.

Program Manager: The Program Manager is the principal program staff member responsible for developing and managing initiatives as part of the Base Program. A full-time position, the Project Manager works under the direction of the Implementing Entity with oversight by the Steering Committee.

The Program Manager must be capable of engaging with partners and stakeholders and coordinating the implementation of projects and initiatives. It is possible that some specific projects or types of projects may be contracted to subcontractors, part-time positions, or partners for implementation. The Program Manager may also manage and provide oversight to project grants awarded to partners and stakeholders in implementation of the plan.

The Chester County Community Foundation was retained to provide administrative and coordination services to CC250, essentially serving as Project Manager for the 250th initiative. This arrangement may be continued or another developed through the Phase 1 implementation timeframe.

Staff Support: The Implementing Entity will need funding for a specified amount of staff support to the Project Manager for work being undertaken. In addition to general oversight, staff support may include services related to communications, graphic design, administration, accounting, or other work. At the beginning, it is anticipated that staff support may require up to one half FTE spread across several individuals. Staff support may be increased over time as the program develops, as additional programs are undertaken, and as funding is available.

Overhead: The Implementing Entity will need funding for overhead costs for the housing of the Project Manager and staff.

The work of the Chester County Community Foundation for the CC250 includes staff support and overhead costs.

Website: Among the responsibilities of the Project Manager and staff will be the development and ongoing management of a website for the Heritage Tourism Program as described elsewhere in this plan. A yearly amount will be needed for ongoing management, additions, and changes to the website over time. It is anticipated that website development and ongoing management will be

undertaken by a subcontractor under the direction and oversight of the Project Manager with possible assistance from staff. Funding for the website may be included as a cost covered by the Implementation Fund discussed below.

Implementation Fund: In addition to the costs for staff and other services as outlined above, an annual amount will be needed for implementation of the programs and initiatives authorized by the Steering Committee under the Base Program. The Implementation Fund will be managed through the Implementation Entity and tracked as a separate accounting fund with regular reporting to and oversight by the Steering Committee. It is expected that the fund will be used for implementation of the Outdoor Exhibit Program, Community Interpretive Program, and other initiatives of the Base Program.

6.1.4 Interpretive Subcommittee

An Interpretive Subcommittee comprised of professional interpreters from regional attractions will provide guidance and quality control during implementation of programs such as the Outdoor Exhibit Program and Community Interpretive Program in accordance with defined design and implementation processes. The subcommittee should have access to and understand the interpretive plans that guide the work of organizations that manage and execute an interpretative function and work group. The Interpretive Subcommittee shall work under coordination of the Project Manager. As outlined in the program processes, the Interpretive Subcommittee will provide input, guidance, and approval to partners and stakeholders in the identification of themes and storylines to be interpreted, location and types of media to be employed, exhibit layout and site design, exhibit content, and graphic design.

6.1.5 Program Budget

The following annual budget is suggested for implementation of the Base Program described here and elsewhere within this plan. The annual budget could be increased as the program grows, additional programs and initiatives are undertaken, and additional funding becomes available.

Project Manager (salary and benefits):	$69,000
Staff Support (1/2 FTE):	$34,500
Overhead (20% staffing costs):	$20,700
Total Administrative Costs	$124,200
Implementation Fund	$150,000
Total	$274,200

Assuming an average of $5,000 for implementation of a self-guided wayside exhibit and $15,000 for a full self-guided interpretive site, the Implementation Fund amount listed above would allow for a total of 30 wayside exhibits or 10 full interpretive sites. Should available funding allow for an increased amount for the Implementation Fund, additional staffing may be required to manage an increase in the number of projects undertaken.

Should less funding be available, the following reduced annual budget would allow for implementation of about 5 full interpretive sites per year.

Project Manager (salary and benefits):	$55,000
Implementation Fund:	$75,000
Total	$120,000

6.2 SPECIAL PROGRAMS

A series of potential Special Programs have been suggested in this plan over and above the Base Program outlined above. Special Programs are separated from the Base Program so their organization, management, implementation, and funding may be independently assessed for potential implementation. Special Programs may be targeted for specific funding opportunities, such as grants or sponsorships.

Implementation of Special Programs will be undertaken at the discretion of the Steering Committee based upon the interests and benefits and upon the availability of funding resources. Several key potential Special Programs are outlined below. Others are included in separate chapters of this Heritage Tourism Plan. Additional potential programs may be identified over time.

During the planning process in development of the Heritage Tourism Plan, the Chester County's America250th Commission (CC250) determined to begin with interpretation of** The Philadelphia Campaign **as a Special Program intended to be of sufficient quality to be marketable to national and international visitors as a bone fide tourism product. Other themes will most likely be implemented by the CC250 as well under the Base Program as outlined earlier in this chapter.

The Chester County's America250th Commission will undertake presentation of *The Philadelphia Campaign* in Chester County as a high-quality visitor experience marketable to national and international audiences.

6.2.1 The Philadelphia Campaign

Implementation of the primary theme *The Philadelphia Campaign* could be undertaken as a discrete Special Program initiative and would be particularly appropriate as an initiative of the Chester County's America250th Commission (CC250) over the next three to five years. A conceptual approach to the theme's presentation is described in Chapter 3 of this plan. Of all the themes and storylines described in this plan, *The Philadelphia Campaign* probably has the most potential to be promoted as a major heritage tourism product to visitors on a national or international scale.

Because of its relationship to the 250th commemoration, specifically dedicated funding and grants may be available for its implementation. A high-quality presentation and visitor experience will be necessary— a significant amount of infrastructure funding will be required. A cornerstone of this effort may be the new permanent exhibition planned for the visitor center at the Brandywine Battlefield.

Interpretive planning and cost analysis has been undertaken in association with the preparation of Strategic Landscape Plans for the Brandywine Battlefield. Additional planning will be necessary to expand the presentation northward through the Great Valley to Valley Forge and the furnace region to include the entire campaign.

Design and implementation costs may be prioritized and phased. Given the infrastructure costs involved, a phased 10-year period for implementation is suggested. Ongoing annual operational funding will also be required for Heritage Centers, some programs, and maintenance. Additional programming beyond exhibits, such as step-on guides and living history events, may be included in the initiative. Once the presentation is visitor ready, funding for active promotion by Chester County Tourism as a heritage tourism product will be needed.

A distinct implementation structure for implementation of *The Philadelphia Campaign* under the CC250 should be established with leadership from key partners such as the Brandywine Conservancy, Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates, Paoli Battlefield Preservation Fund, Inc., Valley Forge National Historical Park, Iron & Steel Partnership, and others. Regional non-profit organizations such as the Brandywine Conservancy and Schuylkill River Greenway National Heritage Area might serve as partners and funding conduits for implementation, with staffing costs for implementation covered.

Implementation of *The Philadelphia Campaign* may be closely coordinated with the Base Program outlined earlier in this chapter through the prioritization of exhibits for heritage sites and communities interpreting the Revolutionary War experience throughout the Chester County. (See discussion of the Civil War Trails-type Presentation under *The Philadelphia Campaign* in Chapter 3.) Heritage Centers established for *The Philadelphia Campaign* could expand their presentations to cover other primary themes as well.

Project Budget

Recommendations for implementation of interpretation of the Brandywine Battlefield have been outlined in the six Strategic Landscape Plans prepared for the battlefield between 2015 and 2022. The most recent plan provides the most detail, including cost estimates. Overall, the following budget outline provides an order of magnitude summary for the level of infrastructure investment that will be necessary.

Brandywine Battlefield - Infrastructure

Gateway Improvements   *$250,000*
   (Brandywine Battlefield Park – exterior exhibits,
   site infrastructure, and program enhancements)

Heritage Centers   *$1,350,000*
   (Six Heritage Centers averaging $225,000 each)

Interpretive Sites   *$525,000*
   (35 Interpretive Sites at $15,000 each, including
   an average of 1 roadside marker, 2 waysides, and
   additional site improvements each)

Major Interpretive Site Improvements   *$2,400,000*
   (Interpretive planning, site work, visitor
   facilities, parking, etc.)

Brandywine Subtotal	$4,525,000

Philadelphia Campaign - Infrastructure

Heritage Centers   *$1,125,000*
   (Five Heritage Centers from Paoli to Valley
   Forge to the Furnaces averaging $225,000
   each)

Interpretive Sites   *$375,000*
   (25 Interpretive Sites at $15,000 each, including
   an average of 1 roadside marker, 2 wayside, and
   additional site improvements each)

Philadelphia Campaign Subtotal	$1,500,000

If implemented over a 10-year period, infrastructure costs would average about $600,000 a year. Additional anticipated programming and operational costs are outlined below.

Program Enhancements

Website – design/implementation	*$30,000*
Mobile App – design/implementation	*$35,000*
Guides Program – design/implementation	*$20,000*
Program Subtotal	$85,000

Annual Operations

Heritage Centers	*$55,000*
(11 Heritage Centers at $5,000 each)	
Website/App – maintenance/updates	*$8,000*
Events	*$20,000*
Marketing/Promotion	*$30,000*
Total Annual Operations	$113,000

6.2.2 Iron & Steel

A similar but less intensive interpretive presentation could be implemented as a Special Program for the primary theme *Iron & Steel*. To some extent, the 18th century portion of the *Iron & Steel* story is included in presentation of *The Philadelphia Campaign* outlined above, if implemented. However, the *Iron & Steel* story begins in 1716/17, extends into the 19th and 20th centuries, and includes locations beyond those related to the Revolutionary War.

As discussed in Chapter 3, presentation of *Iron & Steel* is also closely associated with The Hopewell Big Woods and Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape in their interpretation of *The Natural Landscape*.

Interpretation of *Iron & Steel* could be implemented in a phased manner through the Base Program outlined above using the Outdoor Exhibit Program and Community Interpretive Program described in Chapter 4. Heritage sites such as Warwick Furnace and Hibernia Forge could be implemented using the Outdoor Exhibit Program. Communities such as Coventryville, Phoenixville, and Coatesville could be implemented using the Community Interpretive Program.

With necessary investment, the theme *Iron & Steel* could also be implemented as a Special Program and high-quality tourism product suitable for promotion to national and international audiences. Pictured is the Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site.

The framework of Heritage Centers and Interpretive Sites established for the Brandywine Battlefield would be appropriate for the interpretation of *Iron & Steel* as well. Chapter 3 suggests that Valley Forge, Phoenixville, and Coatesville serve as Gateways with Heritage Center installations at the village of Valley Forge in Valley Forge National Historical Park, the Schuylkill River Heritage Center in Phoenixville, and National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum in Coatesville. An additional Heritage Center might be considered for Warwick County Park near Knauertown or for Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site. The existing themed driving tour for *Iron & Steel* identifies a number of potential Interpretive Sites, most of which are currently lacking interpretive exhibits. Additional sites might be added.

Also as mentioned in Chapter 3, a working group including members of the Iron & Steel Partnership should be convened to coordinate interpretation of *Iron & Steel* between sites. Initial implementation could be coordinated under the umbrella of the CC250. Professional interpreters associated with the Partnership's key attractions should provide guidance and quality control in the development of visitor experience and exhibits. Representatives of The Hopewell Big Woods are included in the Partnership, and interpretation of *The Natural Landscape* through the impact of the iron industry upon the region's landscape can be woven into the overall presentation.

If implemented as a Special Program (as opposed to through the Base Program), project management and funding for *Iron & Steel* could be channeled through capable non-profit partners such as the French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum, and Schuylkill River Greenway National Heritage Area. Order of magnitude costs for interpretation of *Iron & Steel* might be in the range outlined below.

Iron & Steel - Infrastructure

Gateway Community Presentations (Phoenixville and Coatesville: kiosks, exhibits, public art, and site infrastructure downtown and in areas of the existing and former mills)	*$120,000*
Outdoor Heritage Center Pavilions (Valley Forge, Schuylkill River Heritage Center, National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum, and Warwick Park; four at $50,000 each)	*$200,000*
Interpretive Sites (20 Interpretive Sites at $15,000 each, including an average of location signage, 2 waysides, and additional site improvements each)	*$300,000*
Iron & Steel Subtotal	$620,000

Program Enhancements

Website – design enhancements	*$20,000*

Mobile App – design/implementation	*$35,000*
Program Subtotal	$55,000

Annual Operations

Heritage Centers (5 Heritage Centers at $5,000 each)	*$25,000*
Website/App – maintenance/updates	*$4,000*
Events	*$20,000*
Marketing/Promotion	*$20,000*
Total Annual Operations	$69,000

6.2.3 Preservation & Enhancements Program

Chapter 4 describes a potential Preservation & Enhancements Program through which assistance would be provided to municipalities and non-profit organizations for preservation and preventive maintenance projects for historic buildings under their ownership. The program implements Recommendation 5 of Chapter 6 of *Landscapes3*, How We Appreciate, which states, "Foster the creation of funding programs for protection of designated historic resources."

The program is envisioned as a small grant program managed by a lead non-profit partner experienced in grants management. Two types of grants are proposed: (1) Preservation Grants for restoration, rehabilitation, and maintenance for recognized historic buildings and (2) Visitor Readiness Enhancement Grants for physical infrastructure to assist in making heritage sites visitor ready. The size of the program would depend upon the availability of funding. At minimum, grants in the range of $10,000 to $25,000 per site are anticipated.

The Preservation & Enhancements Program has the potential to be implemented as a Special Program for which dedicated funding could be sought from granting organizations, corporate sponsors, and other sources. A target of $150,000 to $300,000 per year could be established to fund the program. A percentage of the program cost would need to go to its administration by the host non-profit partner.

6.2.4 Public Art Program

Another heritage tourism program for which dedicated funding could be sought is the Public Art Program described in Chapter 4, which would incorporate art installations into interpretive presentations at heritage sites and in communities.

The proposed Public Art Program could be implemented as a Special Program with grant funding from state or federal governmental humanities agencies, corporate sponsors, or private donors. The case statement in seeking funding support for the program should emphasize the community benefits in public

engagement and placemaking in addition to its artistic merits and support for artists.

6.2.5 Other Potential Programs

Other programs outlined in the Heritage Tourism Plan might also be appropriate for dedicated funding support through grants and sponsorships. Like the Public Art Program noted above, the Living History Troupe described in Chapter 4 would help support the performing arts by employing actors and theater groups. The suggested Step-on Guides Programs or Traveling Exhibit could be pitched to corporate sponsors, who could be given naming rights and have their logos incorporated into graphic design and promotional materials. Development for the heritage tourism initiative should seek to match suggested programs with potential grants, donors, sponsorship, and other funding opportunities.

6.3 MARKETING AND PROMOTION

The project of which this Heritage Tourism Plan is a part includes preparation of a Visitor Analysis and Marketing Plan based on the Heritage Tourism Plan's conclusions and recommendations. The Visitor Analysis and Marketing Plan is a stand-alone document listed as Appendix D of the Heritage Tourism Plan. It provides a detailed overview and analysis of the tourism market and infrastructure in Chester County as may be applied to heritage tourism.

Two levels of visitor marketing are anticipated with respect to this Heritage Tourism Plan: (1) general heritage tourism by visitors and residents in historic communities throughout Chester County based upon implementation of the Base Program outlined in the plan, and (2) heritage tourism by audiences outside of Chester County as may be generated by targeted, high quality Special Programs such as presentation of the primary theme *The Philadelphia Campaign* as described above in this chapter and in Chapter 3.

Visitor marketing for general heritage tourism as anticipated for the **Base Program** will be low key and targeted mostly to **local and regional audiences**. It assumes that local visitors and residents will be motivated to visit historic communities and landscapes for interpretation, events, or other experiences and in doing so will make use of available food and other services, generating economic benefits for local communities. Overnight stays are less likely under the Base Program in the local heritage tourism economy. This aspect of the Heritage Tourism Program is directly related to *Landscapes3*, Chester County's 2018 Comprehensive Plan.

Marketing for themes interpreted as high-quality **Special Programs** are targeted to **national and international audiences** from outside of Chester County as new, bone fide, economic generating tourism product. It is assumed that such high-quality programs will attract national level visitation and generate respectable levels of visitor spending on food, lodging, and other services in their enjoyment. See the discussion of potential tourism spending in Appendix D.

As outlined in Chapter 3, the Heritage Tourism Plan's promotional consultant, SWELL, has designed a promotional creative campaign to be applied primarily to

the implementation of high-quality Special Programs targeted to audiences from outside of the county. Such marketing and promotion is expected to be implemented by Chester County Tourism taking into account their recognized visitor markets and preferred approach and capabilities. Required costs for marketing will be determined and costs/benefits assessed. Sources of funding from which the allocation of funds for implementation of marketing and promotion will need to be determined.

6.4 FUNDING RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT

Chester County's Heritage Tourism Program has the potential to receive funding from a variety of sources, including governmental allocations, state and federal grants, foundation grants, and corporate grants and sponsorships. However, as this plan is being written, no specific funding sources have been identified or committed in support of the program. The securing of funding will require work. This section of Chapter 6 provides a brief overview of the approach to development needed to support the Heritage Tourism Program.

This Heritage Tourism Plan has been organized to facilitate opportunities for funding from different sources through its division into a proposed Base Program and a series of potential Special Programs.

It is proposed that the Base Heritage Tourism Program outlined earlier in this chapter can be a stable, ongoing program with annual funding from a reliable source, such as an endowment created for heritage tourism. Additional matching, donated, and/or volunteer support for the Base Program is expected from the heritage sites and communities that seek to participate in it as a measure of their interest and commitment.

In contrast, individual Special Programs have the potential to receive funding from specific grants, sponsorships, and other sources that may be targeted to the particular type of initiative proposed. The examples of Special Programs discussed earlier in this chapter include the presentation of particular themes (*The Philadelphia Campaign, Iron & Steel*) as well as particular activities such as public art or historic preservation. As noted, other types of programs and activities discussed in this plan could be the focus of targeted funding as well.

The America250PA initiative provides an opportunity to seek funding support for heritage tourism and community enhancement around a strong national program with a compelling narrative and appeal. It is hoped that aspects of the Heritage Tourism Program presented here will be embraced by the CC250 for implementation as part of Chester County's 250th commemoration and that targeted funding can be identified and secured.

As planning for this project has progressed, the CC250 has committed to implementation of interpretation of *The Philadelphia Campaign* as a major, high-level initiative as outlined above in this chapter targeted to national and international audiences. The CC250 has also stated its intention of implementing the Base Program as outlined above for implementation of other primary themes, although it is not completely clear that implementation of

those other themes will rise to the level of quality such that they can be marketed to national and international audiences.

Once operational for the period of the 250th, it is expected that the economic and community benefits of the overall Heritage Tourism Program will be recognized and that momentum for the initiative will be sustained and transitioned to leadership through a regional non-profit organization or public/private entity. The new entity will need to be capable of soliciting for and accepting funding for the program from governmental, business, and non-profit sources.

6.4.1 Organizing for Development

Chester County's Heritage Tourism Program will require work from **Development Professionals** to undertake research, identify funding prospects, and do the work necessary to apply for and secure funding for various initiatives. This Development Professionals could be staff or a consultant assigned to the CC250, Implementing Entity, or partnering non-profit. In either case, seed funding will be needed to retain these individuals. The CC250 has retained the Chester County Community Foundation (CCCF) to work on the development effort in the near term.

Implementation of the Heritage Tourism Plan requires collaboration among partners, such as Historic Yellow Springs, who are experienced in development and fundraising from a variety of potential funding sources.

Leadership and ongoing participation will need to come from the members of the CC250, CCCF, and key partners. Organizing for resource development starts with a determination to involve everyone with a stake in the success of the Heritage Tourism Program, and to build their enthusiasm and skills for the effort. Commission members, partners, and staff must be ready to pitch in

where needed and be constantly on the lookout for funding opportunities. Everyone anywhere in the program— including partners, stakeholders, and volunteers—should see raising funds as a part of their role in the initiative. Particular funding opportunities will be of interest to particular partners who can be expected to participate in their development.

Successful fundraising relies on development of close and lasting relationships with funders and donors, existing and potential. This emphasis on developing relationships is the reason why the preferred term for fundraising in recent years has become "resource development."

Grant writing—what many outsiders to the non-profit world believe to be the way that funds are raised—is just one part of a wider range of activities to cultivate the resources that will help sustain the Heritage Tourism Program. Even the most successful grant writing program begins with a good understanding of the grantors' wishes and programs, often built strategically from personal contact and familiarity over time.

6.4.2 Planning for Development

A basic ingredient in organizing for resource development is a plan. The plan is a record of decisions and direction based on research done to learn about possible sources, analysis of strategies for seeking funds, and establishment of objectives.

There are two levels to resource development planning. The first level is a long-range plan that sets goals and direction for approximately three to five years, updated periodically. Given the speed with which the context for resource development can change, a long-term resource development plan for more than five years is difficult to determine.

The second level is an annual work plan that outlines short-term opportunities and actions as well as laying groundwork for later opportunities. Integrating annual resource development planning with long-term strategic planning can help to set priorities and suggest ways to design programs to optimize the likelihood of raising needed resources.

The annual work plan guides the daily work of resource development, step by step. It is a road map, as opposed to the general description of the itinerary and destination that would be comparable to the long-term strategic plan. The strategic plan ensures that the objectives and activities in the annual work plan are moving the Heritage Tourism Program toward ultimate resource development goals. It is a more general guide, setting objectives against which longer term achievement can be measured.

Experienced fundraising professionals can advise the Steering Committee or CC250 in creating the strategic plan and can assist in carrying it out if planning reveals the desirability of such added expertise. There are also many good how-to resources available through websites and books.

6.4.3 Potential Sources of Funding

Planning and research will help identify specific sources of funding available for implementation of the Heritage Tourism Program. Generalized types of funding are outlined below.

It is hoped that an endowment will be created to fund the long-term needs of the heritage tourism plan implementation.

Governmental Funding

It is possible that some governmental support for the Heritage Tourism Program can be identified. CC250 and the Chester County Planning Commission have been working to obtain grant funding dedicated to the America250 initiative from state and federal sources. Decisions on these grant applications have not yet been rendered.

The Base Program described earlier in this chapter has been organized to encourage potential support from Chester County's Vision Partnership Program (VPP) or similar programs in the development of community interpretive plans for implementation of the Community Interpretive Program as outlined in Chapter 4. The VPP, however, is not capable of providing funding for physical implementation. Additionally, the proposal must originate from a municipality.

Room tax funding is already being utilized for community benefit and if diverted to the Heritage Tourism Program would have to be replaced by another source to maintain current funding levels for Chester County Tourism and Chester County Parks+Preservation.

State and federal governmental entities administer a number of programs that may be able to fund aspects of Chester County's Heritage Tourism Program. Two important examples are the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape and the Schuylkill River Greenway National Heritage Area, both of which are active in the northern part of the county.

The **Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape** is a project of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), one of eight Conservation Landscape Initiatives across the state. The project is managed on behalf of DCNR by Natural Lands, one of the region's leading conservation organizations.

The Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape spans across the Pennsylvania Highlands from the Delaware River through Berks County and includes the northern portion of Chester County—the Hopewell Big Woods and iron and steel region. The initiative is a partnership of governmental entities, land trusts, non-profit organizations, and businesses working collaboratively to conserve, protect, enhance, and promote the region for the benefit of residents and visitors. It includes a mini-grant program and other potential initiatives that could be used by partners to implement aspects of the Heritage Tourism Program.

The **Schuylkill River Greenway National Heritage Area** was designated by Congress to promote conservation, historic preservation, community enhancement, recreation, and heritage tourism along the river. The program is

managed by the Schuylkill River Greenway Association, a non-profit organization based in Pottstown, and receives federal and other sources of funding. Its primary initiative has been the establishment of the Schuylkill River Trail from Philadelphia northwest to Pottsville. Seventy-five miles of the proposed 120-mile trail are currently completed and open to the public.

The Schuylkill River Greenway National Heritage Area administers program and grant funding that could be used to implement aspects of the Heritage Tourism Program. Trail infrastructure, interpretive exhibits, and visitor experience are among the initiatives funded.

Other potential governmental programs should be researched for their compatibility with implementation of the Heritage Tourism Program.

Implementation through the America250th commemoration, featuring sites such as the John Chad House, enhances the potential for attracting funding from non-governmental sources.

Non-Governmental Funding
There are several general sources of funding familiar to non-profit organizations outside of the governmental sources that are expected to be the focus of resource development efforts. It is hoped that this funding can provide the basis for an endowment that will meet the ongoing needs of the heritage tourism plan implementation:

- **Foundations:** Foundations manage funds set aside by individuals, families, and businesses to support a wide range of community needs and issues. These include foundations managed by large corporations and well-known national foundations with highly competitive grant-making programs.

Smaller family foundations and community foundations, which often help to manage family foundations, are more local and regional in nature. Our leading local example is the Chester County Community Foundation, who are currently contracted to work with the CC250. Community foundations are "grantmaking public charities that are dedicated to improving the lives of people in a defined local geographic area. They bring together the financial resources of individuals, families, and businesses to support effective non-profits in their communities. Community foundations vary widely in asset size, ranging from less than $100,000 to more than $1.7 billion."

The Heritage Tourism Program might consider promoting its Outdoor Exhibit program, Community Interpretive Program, Preservation & Enhancement Program, and others as vehicles through which family and community foundations can reach local communities and non-profit heritage sites.

- **Large Businesses:** In addition to foundations established by corporations to lead their charitable giving efforts, corporations also may devote a portion of their annual operating funds or marketing budgets for charitable giving in the form of sponsorships, cooperative advertising, or outright gifts. They may also choose to partner with non-profit organizations in offering volunteer programs to their employees.

- **Small Businesses:** While it is difficult for many small businesses (which technically are also corporations) to establish the kinds of formal and sizable grantmaking capabilities found in larger corporations, many are community-oriented and are willing to make smaller donations. This is especially true if they are offered some kind of advertising or promotion in acknowledgment of their gifts—for instance the businesses that buy advertising in programs or communications for local events.

- **Individuals:** Individual giving requires much cultivation and visibility to attract. Individual giving includes not only outright gifts but also "planned giving" that includes such actions as bequests and living trusts. In targeting individual giving, the Heritage Tourism Program might focus on individuals with an eye to the long-range support of partnering heritage sites and resources and the community benefits they offer. Heritage Tourism Program partners, such as land trusts, that are experienced in work with individual donors might be able to cultivate funding for implementation of interpretation at their preserves.

6.4.4 Financial Record-keeping

The financial system to be utilized for the Heritage Tourism Program as administered by the Implementing Entity, Development Professionals, or others should be designed to enable making real-time accounting information readily available for reporting to the Steering Committee and county officials, as well as for the generation of financial data for planning, resource development, and reports to funders, and the public. Transparency is the general rule as would be

for any non-profit organization. An annual report including financial data is a critical element of the Heritage Tourism Program's transparency and public communication.

The financial management system used for the Heritage Tourism Program should be expected to accomplish the following, at a minimum:

Track expenses by a *chart of accounts* using line items typical of profit-and-loss budget statements that can be reviewed by the Steering Committee at its meetings and in sufficient detail to support annual financial reviews and reporting to the county and on non-profit IRS Form 990s as appropriate;

Show the actual cost of specific projects, programs, and initiatives by allocating portions of costs tracked in the chart of accounts by project, program, or initiative and aggregating them, including time and expenses; and

Enable automated financial reporting specific to grants given to the program by multiple sources. Financial software can enable not only tracking of expenses by budgetary line items and programs/initiatives but the assignment of those expenses (or a portion of them) to any given source, including specific grants. Once such a breakdown exists, it is easier to compile reports to individual funders.

The Implementing Entity and other implementing partners should manage their programs through established budgets recorded in their non-profit financial chart of accounts. Budget statements and balance sheets for programs should be made available for examination by the Steering Committee regularly in order to review progress in meeting the budget and managing program obligations. It is important that accounting software be used that allows an at-a-glance understanding of program budgets and spending.

6.4.5 Maintaining Strategic Focus

Specific suggestions for the implementation of programs and projects are outlined in chapters of this Heritage Tourism Plan and are intended to allow flexibility in their selection, organization, and execution. The selection of which programs and projects to implement will be based upon the benefits that are expected to accrue and may be economic or may be related to quality-of-life considerations.

In general, a *program* is an ongoing activity while a *project* is a specific activity with a defined end, usually undertaken in implementation of a program. Partners and stakeholders are expected to come to the Heritage Tourism Program with proposals for projects for potential funding and implementation.

For each project to be undertaken, basic project descriptions should be developed for assessment and consideration. Everyone should be able to access project descriptions and understand how they relate to the overall Heritage Tourism Program's vision and mission.

The following information should be included in project descriptions proposed to be undertaken through the Heritage Tourism Program.

- Project description;
- Specific measurable objective(s);
- How the project supports the Heritage Tourism Program's mission and goals and the benefits that are to be accrued;
- Tasks and timeframes to complete the project (in phases if necessary);
- Entities responsible for coordination or leadership;
- Partner(s) and their roles;
- Cost, including staff hours; and
- Performance measures.

The Grants Subcommittee will be responsible for project review and assessment and for making recommendations to the Steering Committee for approval. The Steering Committee should consider this information in making decisions on which projects to select for implementation with the following questions in mind:

- Is the project clearly defined and related to the core vision, mission, and goals of the Heritage Tourism Program?
- Is the project well designed? Are objectives, partners, partners' roles, steps, tasks, and performance measures clearly and effectively defined?
- Are the proposing partners and stakeholders capable of performing their roles in the project's implementation both short term and long term?
- What benefits accrue to the local community through the project's implementation?
- Does the project coordinate with other initiatives such that it enhances, contributes to, and advances the larger whole?
- Do the resources available for implementation support the project at the level it requires?
- Is success well defined?
- What other projects will not be implemented because we are undertaking this project? How do they compare?

6.4.6 Evaluation

Evaluation is an important, ongoing activity to assess the Heritage Tourism Program's effectiveness in meeting its intended goals and in making the case for its continued implementation. There are two basic kinds of evaluation. First is the evaluation of individual projects as they are implemented and continue to be in effect. The second is evaluation of the overall program in its performance over time—is the whole yielding more than the sum of its parts?

Individual project evaluation should be undertaken upon completion of the project and periodically thereafter. Overall programmatic feedback and review should be built into the Heritage Tourism Program's administrative practices on an annual basis at minimum to help guide the selection of individual programs to emphasize and projects to implement.

Programs and projects should have performance measures identified in their conception and design to help the Steering Committee and partners understand what was expected to be achieved and whether the program or project hit its mark. Evaluation should provide guidance in making adjustments in program emphasis and project selection and/or performance based on targets achieved, exceeded, or missed.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, record-keeping should be designed to collect, memorialize, and present information specifically for the purposes of meeting evaluation needs, both year-by-year and on a long-term basis. Implementation of the Heritage Tourism Program should incorporate robust documentation and evaluation processes to meet both internal best practice operational needs and the needs for successful long-term, external programmatic evaluation.

Careful attention to resources and best practices for both program development and administration of Chester County's Heritage Tourism Program are the foundations for encouraging excellence in the various areas of the program's endeavors—conservation, historic preservation, interpretation, education, heritage experiences, and quality of life.

Revolutionary War cannon recently unearthed, conserved, and placed on display at Warwick Furnace, the Thomas P. Bentley Nature Preserve, managed by the French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust.

APPENDIX A – TOURISM IN CHESTER COUNTY

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Whether it's while driving the windy, scenic roads through the rolling hills and forests of its iron and steel country, taking in the energy of the vibrant and historic main streets of West Chester, Phoenixville, or Kennett Square, or absorbing the fragrances and beauty of the world-class Longwood Gardens, visitors to Chester County can find experiences that are inspiring, fun and deeply meaningful.

Geographically, Chester County is 579 square miles, or 485,600 acres in area. It is two-thirds of the size of the state of Rhode Island. Within it, there are two units of the National Park Service, multiple historic sites and landmarks, art and history museums, world-class gardens and nature preserves, quaint villages and vibrant main streets, railroads, industrial sites, farms and rolling landscapes. The quest for stories about freedom and social justice abound here – visitors can traverse the once blood-stained grounds where the struggle for American independence took place, trace the path of freedom seekers on the Underground Railroad, and experience the community pride and the celebration of the cultures of the people who live here. Visitors are invited in to view the intimate studios of renowned artists of Wharton Esherick and the Wyeths, who have been inspired by Chester County's beauty for generations. And they can tote their own easels to countless historic or natural locations to create their own works of art.

This wide array of experiences makes Chester County a distinctive and memorable tourism destination. Chester County's location is highly favorable for tourism, as it is located within 2 – 2 ½ hours from the metropolitan areas of Philadelphia, Washington, DC and New York City, and is accessible by train from New York, Harrisburg and Lancaster by Amtrak, and from Philadelphia by SEPTA. Prior to the pandemic, tourism visitation to the Greater Philadelphia region grew steadily, reaching 45.3 million visitors in 2018. There was $835 million in tourism spending in Chester County in 2017 making up 22% of total visitor spending in the greater Philadelphia region. Visitor spending grew by 32% between 2009 to 2017. 22% of overseas travel spending occurred in Chester County, contributing $67 million to Chester County's local economy. (source – CCT Strategic Plan)

BRANDYWINE VALLEY *things to do*

1. 1723 Vineyards
2. American Helicopter Museum & Education Center
3. American Treasure Tour
4. Anson B. Nixon Park
5. Antique Ice Tool Museum
6. Applecross Country Club
7. Black Rock Sanctuary
8. Black Walnut Winery
9. Boulder Falls Mini Golf
10. Brandywine Battlefield Park
11. Brandywine Outfitters Canoe Company
12. Brandywine Polo Fields
13. Brandywine River Museum of Art
14. Brandywine River Tourism Information Center Historic Building on National Registry
15. Broad Run Golfer's Club
16. Chadds Ford Historical Society
17. Chaddsford Winery
18. Chanticleer Garden
19. Chester County Art Association
20. Chester County Historical Society
21. Chester County Sports Arena
22. Cheyney University
23. Choo Choo Barn
24. Christian C. Sanderson Museum
25. Colonial Theatre
26. Delaware Art Museum
27. Delaware Museum of Natural History
28. Devon Horse Show Grounds
29. Downingtown Country Club
30. Flickerwood Wine Cellars & Tasting Room
31. French Creek State Park
32. Galer Estate Vineyard and Winery
33. Great Valley Nature Center
34. Hagley Museum and Library
35. Harvest Ridge Winery Tasting Room
36. Herr's Snack Factory Tour
37. Hibernia County Park & Mansion
38. Historic Sugartown
39. Historic Waynesborough
40. Historic Yellow Springs
41. Honeybrook Golf Club
42. Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site
43. Hurricane Hill Farm Corn Maze
44. Ice Line
45. Immaculata University
46. J. Maki Winery
47. Jenkins Arboretum and Garden
48. Kimberton Fair Grounds
49. Kreutz Creek Vineyards & Winery
50. Lincoln University
51. Longwood Gardens
52. Ludwig's Corner Fair Grounds
53. Marsh Creek State Park
54. Moccasin Run Golf Club
55. Mt. Cuba Center
56. Mushroom Industry Display at The Mushroom Cap
57. Nemours Mansion & Gardens
58. New Garden Airport
59. Newlin Grist Mill
60. Northbrook Canoe Company
61. Nottingham County Park
62. Opera Delaware
63. Oxford Arts Alliance
64. Paoli Battlefield Historic Park
65. Paradocx Winery, Vineyard & Tasting Room
66. Penn State Great Valley
67. Pennhurst Asylum
68. Penns Woods Winery
69. People's Light
70. Phillips Mushroom Exhibit – The Woodlands
71. Pickering Valley Golf Club
72. Plantation Field Equestrian Events
73. Play a Round Golf
74. Port Providence Paddle Canoe & Kayak Company
75. Schuylkill River Heritage Center at Phoenixville
76. Springton Manor Farm
77. Stargazers Vineyard
78. Stone Barn Cellars Winery
79. Strasburg Rail Road
80. Strasburg Scooters
81. Struble Trail
82. The Kennett Flash
83. The Mill at Anselma
84. The National Iron & Steel Museum
85. Treehouse World
86. Tyler Arboretum
87. United Sports
88. Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center
89. Urban Air Trampoline Park
90. Va La Vineyards
91. Valley Forge Casino Resort
92. Valley Forge National Historical Park
93. Warwick County Park
94. WayVine Winery
95. Welkinweir
96. West Chester Railroad
97. West Chester University
98. Westtown School
99. Wharton Esherick Museum
100. White Clay Creek Golf Club
101. Willowdale Horse Show Grounds
102. Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library
103. Wolf's Hollow County Park
104. Wynote Golf Club

Learn about all of what Chester County offers by visiting:
BrandywineValley.com

Nearby Philadelphia Attractions
- Adventure Aquarium
- Big Bus Tour
- Independence Visitor Center
- Museum of the American Revolution
- National Constitution Center
- One Liberty Observation Deck
- Penn Museum
- Philadelphia Museum of Art
- The Barnes Foundation
- The Franklin Institute
- The Philadelphia Orchestra
- The Philadelphia Zoo

Begin Your Journey Here
Things to Do

In a visitor survey conducted in 2019 in conjunction with the Chester County Conference and Visitors Bureau's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, respondents came to Chester County for the following reasons:

- 38% General Vacation or Get-Away
- 26% Exhibition, performance or sporting event
- 16% Visiting friends or family
- 5% In Transit
- 3% Business

In terms of visitor interests, more than 70% of survey respondents reported that visiting historic sites and museums was the most appealing travel activity, followed by 55-60% responding that gardens and farms were their favored attraction. These were followed by culinary/food experiences, historic homes, festivals/events, and performances.

Chester County Conference & Visitors Bureau/Chester County Tourism
Visitor attractions in Chester County are promoted primarily by the **Chester County Conference and Visitors Bureau** (doing business as Chester County Tourism) which serves as the county's **Destination Marketing Organization** (DMO) with the purpose of building quality of life and creating opportunity in their communities by attracting visitors and investment to the area. Chester County Tourism also promotes some out-of-county attractions are also featured; they are payment-based members.

> Established in 1963, the CCCVB's mission is *"to build awareness of and promote Chester County's Brandywine Valley as an ideal conference and visitor destination to help stimulate healthy economic development and sustainability for the County and its stakeholders."* It has since been amended to emphasize that locals are the ultimate benefactors: *Improve the quality of life for Chester County residents & workers through the economic and community benefits of tourism.*

In 2013, Chester County Tourism rebranded itself as **Chester County's Brandywine Valley,** and adopted a logo which was recently refreshed to illustrate impart more energy, vibrance and appeal to a broader audience with a longer shelf-life. The mission of Chester County's Brandywine Valley as a destination is *"to intrigue, captivate and welcome visitors with our charming small towns and scenic countryside within proximity to Philadelphia. We invite guests to connect with our fascinating history, unique renowned attractions, diverse events, tranquil environments, and vibrant lifestyle."* With this mission, Chester County Tourism not only aims to attract out-of-town visitors to stay, eat and experience Chester County's attractions, but in doing so, support the economies of the local communities and businesses that call this place home.

Chester County Tourism is fully funded by a 5% hotel occupancy tax levied on visitors staying in lodging properties in Chester County. The Hotel Room Tax Ordinance was originally established in 1999 by the Chester County Commissioners with a rate of 2%. The tax rate was increased to 3% tax in 2013,

and most recently to 5% in 2017. The 5% room tax is collected by hotels and B&Bs, as well s online travel agencies (short term rentals) such as Expedia, VRBO and Air B&B, and is submitted to the county. The county deducts of 4% administrative fee, and the remaining 96% is transferred to Chester County Tourism. Chester County Tourism then remits 30% of the funds back to the county to support the Parks+Preservation Department, retaining a 10% administrative fee. In 2019, $5,612,117 was collected in room tax, with $4,103,653 going to Chester County Tourism and $1,508,464 supporting the Chester County Parks+Preservation Department, primarily marketing initiatives. While the total revenue dropped to $2,822,922 in 2020, it has rebounded to roughly $4.9 million in 2022. It is expected that the full recovery from the pandemic for Chester County's tourism economy will occur by 2025. (Source: Tourism Economics)

There are approximately 50 hotel properties with 4,900 rooms as well as bed and breakfasts and an unknown number of Air BnB locations that generate the hotel occupancy tax in Chester County. The average occupancy rate between 2015 and 2018 was 62.5%. Occupancy was strongest mid-week at 74%, vs. its weakest at 43% on Sundays. The pandemic impacted business travel and corporate meetings which have not returned as quickly as leisure business, changing the balance with stronger weekends than weekdays until full recovery is realized, Hotels are currently concentrated along the Rt. 202 corridor and the Rt. 100 corridor in Exton.
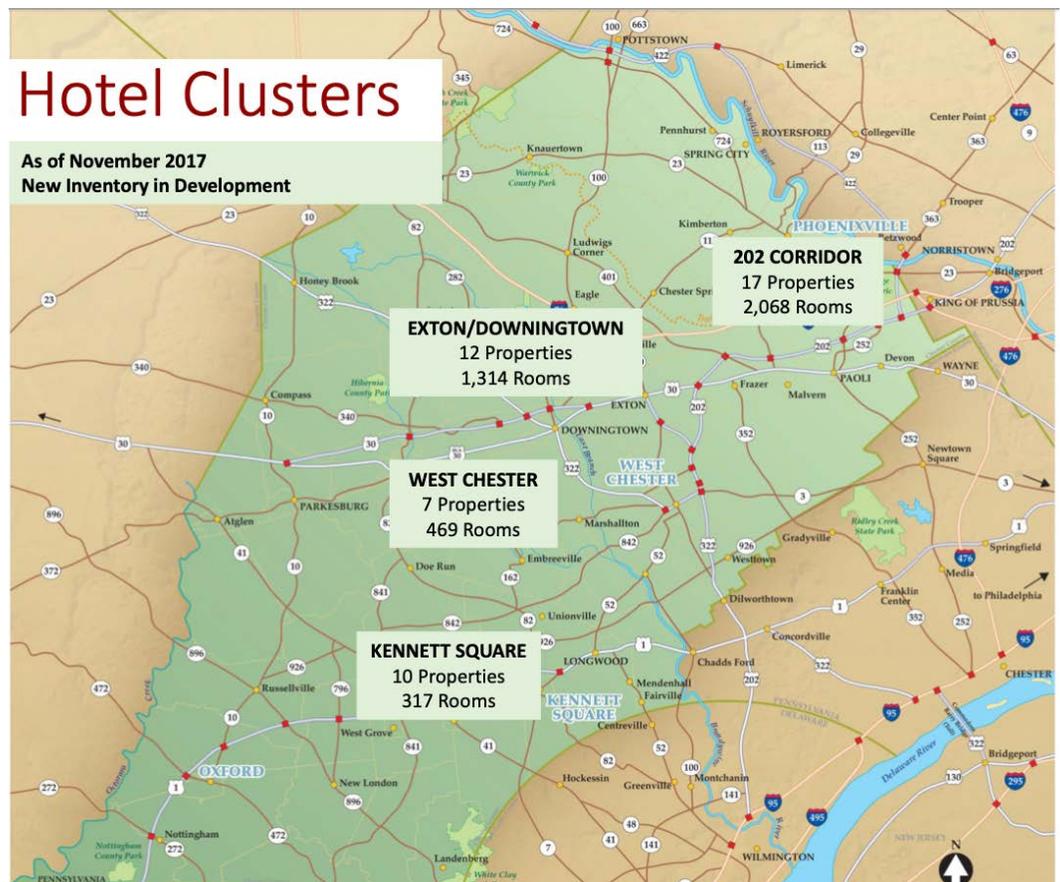
A constant struggle for Chester County Tourism is a inbalance of lodging and attraction locations throughout the county. Many of the services that support tourism, particularly lodging, but also dining and shopping, are not located in more densely attended tourist areas. There are only nine properties serving the Kennett Square area, which receives the highest concentration of visitors with 1.6 million visiting (local and out-of-town) Longwood Gardens on an annual basis. There is also a lack of hotels serving attractions in the northern part of the county, causing visitors to seek lodging outside the county, or to skip the area altogether. No luxury hotels exist in Chester County, despite the fact that it is the wealthiest county in the state. The lack of a conference center in Chester County, in addition to limited meeting facilities at existing hotel properties, constrains the county's ability to attract business travelers and larger conferences and meetings that would promote longer stays here.

Chester County Tourism Initiatives

To encourage participation by various cultural attractions and supporting services, and to better facilitate the creation of engaging travel packages, Chester County Tourism eliminated its membership dues in 2010. Chester County Tourism works with individual attractions and businesses one-on-one to discover and market specific experiences and weekend get-aways. Chester County Tourism relies heavily on the active communication of individual attractions for this purpose, so it is paramount that attractions of all types regularly communicate their offerings to the Chester County Tourism.

The Chester County Tourism considers Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, with its annual visitation of 1.6 million, as the county's flagship attraction. Chester County Tourism focuses much of its marketing around it, capitalizing on the Greater Philadelphia region's claim as the "Garden Capital of the World," with over 30 gardens and arboretums here and in neighboring Delaware. Longwood Gardens is expected to complete and open its $250M expanded conservatories – *Longwood Reimagined* - in 2024.

Chester County Tourism also highlights attractions at other larger and more visitor-ready museums and attractions, including the Brandywine Museum of Art, Valley Forge National Historical Park, and some Delaware attractions such as Winterthur and the Hagley Museum.

West Chester, Phoenixville, and Kennett Square, are currently marketed as "Must See Main Streets for dining and shopping. Chester County Tourism also highlights a number of smaller scale towns and village experiences, including Oxford, Downingtown, Marshallton, St. Peter's Village and Coatesville as "countryside villages."

Working with the county's craft beer, wine and spirits industry, Chester County Tourism has created both "Chester County Cheers" and the "BV BrewScene," to highlight the 20+ breweries and 10+ wineries and a growing number of distilleries in the county.

Tapping into the scenic beauty of Chester County's landscapes, Chester County Tourism has published a driving tour to the county's covered bridges. Chester County Tourism focuses on creating packages that offer a different twist on how

to experience the same attractions in the county. For example, Chester County Tourism's website currently suggests that visitors could visit Longwood Gardens and then wind their way through the county visiting a variety of candy and ice cream shops, just in time for Valentine's Day.

Specialized events figure highly in Chester County Tourism's marketing, particularly equestrian events, with 10 horse shows and races annually, and arts events that include the Historic Yellow Springs Art Show and the Chester County Studio Tour. Chester County Tourism also markets smaller events at county attractions through its social media and other avenues. Again, communication and coordination from these attractions is extremely vital in order to market these events effectively.

Sporting events are a vital source of tourism visitation and spending in Chester County, bringing primarily families with amateur athletes to participate in tournaments at large sports facilities that include United Sports in Downingtown and Ice Line in West Chester. The National Sports and Events Center, a multi-use sports venue, is planned for Coatesville, with an anticipated 2024 completion date. Chester County Tourism has a dedicated staff person for sporting event sales and views sports tourism as a strategic way to increase awareness of Chester County's venues, attractions and amenities to encourage repeat visitation.

Overseas Travel
Overseas visitors are a significant audience for Chester County, with $67 million in visitor spending, making up 28% of total suburban spending in the region. The UK, India, China and Germany represented the largest share of overseas travelers before 2020. South Korea's overseas travel market is expected to grow in the next five years as well. Because of this expanding travel market, Chester County Tourism has a dedicated staff person focused on global sales.

Group Sales/Tour & Travel
With respect to other venues and businesses, Chester County Tourism sells to meeting, association, tour & travel, and wedding planners, and works with those locations to create and offer packages. Chester County Tourism has a dedicated staff person focused on Group Sales.

Brandywine Valley Tourism Information Center
Chester County Tourism is headquartered in the nationally historic Longwood Progressive Meeting House outside the gates of Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square. Chester County Tourism also operates its **Brandywine Valley Tourism Information Center** at this location. The Visitor Center serves as concierge to the county, with interactive kiosks for visitors to learn more about individual attractions, important historical events that took place in the county including the Battle of the Brandywine, and offers visitors brochures supplied by individual attractions.

Because the Longwood Progressive Meeting House once served as a meeting place for nationally prominent abolitionists and participants of the Underground Railroad, the Visitor Center also specifically interprets this story, and serves as

the starting point for the Kennett Square Underground Railroad Center's bus tour program.

It should be noted that Chester County Tourism sees immense potential in leveraging a major history focal point to help draw visitors, such as the Battle of the Brandywine, as well as the creation of a variety of experiences that creatively tie Chester County's heritage attractions to other activities, such as canoeing on the Brandywine or visits to wineries.

Wayfinding Signage Program

Chester County Tourism maintains installed way-finding signage, an extension of a program initiated in collaboration with the **Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitors Bureau** in the early 1990s. Initially focused on the Route 1 corridor, the signage program was expanded to include attractions throughout the county in 2004-2007. Attractions contributed to the cost of the initial sign installation and also to an annual maintenance fund managed by Chester County Tourism.

Unfortunately, today the signs are quite out-dated and 100% out of compliance with PennDOT guidelines. In 2017, Chester County Tourism partnered with the Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitors Bureau to conduct a new signage study and developed guidelines and a budget for their installation in both the greater Wilmington area of Delaware and Chester County. The study identified the specifications for the signs, and the locations and attractions that would be included in the installation. The plan also included a provision where local municipalities could extend the signage within their own townships and boroughs.

The Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitors Bureau acquired funding and installed 50% of its signage in 2022. They plan to install their remaining signage in 2023.

Ease of Getting Around

More than GPS, signs are marketing tools that create awareness, prompt visitation/return and evoke a quality, attractive and welcoming experience.

- Wayfinding Signage System
  - Replace existing signs with new design and fabrication in full compliance with PennDOT regulations.
  - Add 'badges' to signs for larger historic attractions (and agricultural?) to indicate inclusion in themed 'trail.'
  - Utilize consistent branding with overall wayfinding signs at historic attractions for a unified system (where appropriate/welcome).

Chester County Tourism planned to replace all signs in Chester County in 2020/2021 but the pandemic and its impact on financials paused that initatives. With grant funding from PennDOT, and Board approval to fund a good deal of the fabrication and installation in 2023, Chester County Tourism intends to install 70% of the Chester County signs in this $800,000 project in 2023 and complete the program by end of 2024. The Chester County signage will first be installed along the Route 1 and Route 202 corridors, where there is a heavy concentration of attractions and that connects with the completed signage program in Delaware, as well as the West Chester area. In its next phase, Chester County Tourism will replace signs at the remaining attractions. In contrast to the previous signage program, the plans will not require individual attractions to pay for their signage, just the annual maintenance fee.

Interactive Outdoor Kiosk Program

In 2023, Chester County Tourism will revisit plans to install interactive outdoor kiosks in five key main streets in Chester County: West Chester, Phoenixville, Kennett Square, Coatesville, and Oxford. The kiosks will be placed in high profile locations and will offer inform visitors of attractions and amenities in that specific locale, as well as connect them with other attractions throughout the county. There is an enormous opportunity to share stories and interpretive experiences with these kiosks. The kiosks will be modeled after indoor kiosks already in place at both the Brandywine Tourism Information Center and the Marshallton Village Heritage Center in Marshallton, with data fed by Chester County Tourism's CRM.

Alternate Information Assistance

TOWNS KIOSK PROGRAM
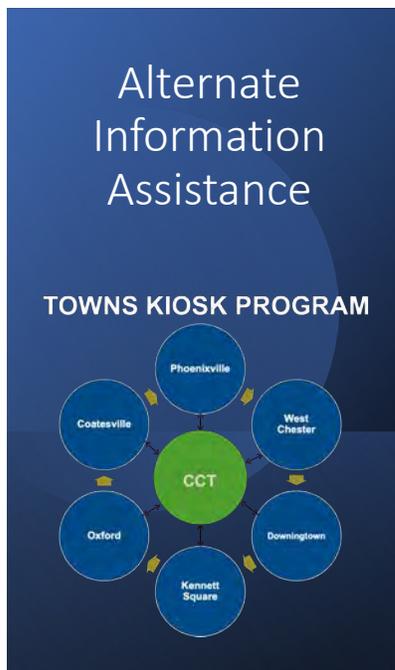
Interactive Kiosks System

- Prominent geo-dispersed town locations throughout Chester County
- Hyper-local home pages
- CVB tourism info to link assets together and move people around the county
- Tourism-oriented business listings with filters, interactive maps, itinerary builders, possible photo 'booth,' language translation, etc.
- Include kiosks within historic sites for continuity, more comprehensive stories and higher quality experiences (history trail)
- Include kiosks within Chester County and other prominent parks to advise amenities, provide nature education, expand recreation options, map trails
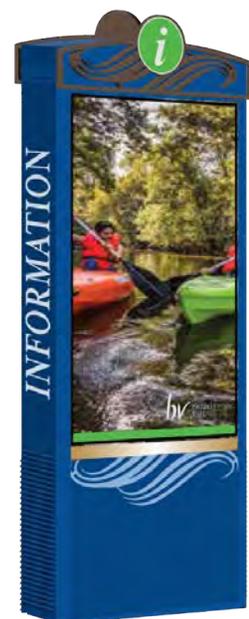
Past Chester County Tourism Programs

Special Tourism Marketing Initiative Grant Program
When the Hotel Occupancy Tax was first initiated Chester County in 1999, it was intended to support tourism with 50% of the tax directly funding Chester County Tourism, and the other 50% supporting a Special Tourism Marketing Grants Initiative. The grants, which required a match from other sources, supported programs and marketing efforts of Chester County attractions, such as specific events or collaborative initiatives, as well as improvement projects enhancing visitor readiness at attractions and historic preservation at specific historic sites or communities.

Grants focused on programs and marketing efforts averaged from $2,500 - $15,000, and funded projects such as marketing for a performance at the People's Light & Theatre Company, the Chester County Balloon Festival, and smaller events at individual sites. Improvement grants ranged from $20,000 - $75,000 for infrastructure and restoration projects at individual sites.

Beginning in 2000, $609,000 in grants were awarded in the first round, followed by $416,000 and $95,660 respectively in the second and third rounds in 2001. At the time, Chester County Tourism's executive director anticipated that there would be about $300,000 awarded every six months going forward. (Daily Local, December 9, 2001)

In 2008, the grant program was referred to as the Chester County Conference & Visitors Bureau Foundation, and at that point approved $130,000 in grants. (Press Release – Chester County Commissioners, November 6, 2008) After 2011, the grant program was discontinued and the funds were absorbed into plans to restore and adaptively reuse the Longwood Progressive Meeting House as Chester County Tourism's headquarters. Subsequently, the hotel tax was reallocated so that Chester County Tourism would receive 96% of the income and the county received a 4% administrative fee. 30% of Chester County Tourism's portion of the income, minus a 10% administrative fee, is remitted back to the county to support the Chester County Parks+Preservation Department's marketing activities.

Other Tourism Collaborative Initiatives in Chester County

Chester County Town Tours & Village Walks
Town Tours and Village Walks is an annual series of free summer walking tours through historic neighborhoods, villages, and heritage attractions, highlighting Chester County's rich heritage and landscape. First offered in 1994, Town Tours and Village Walks focuses on specific themes, such as women's history, iron and steel, technology, the Underground Railroad, and the American Revolution, to name a few, and how these themes touched specific places in Chester County.

The Tours are a collaboration of the Chester County Planning Commission, Chester County Tourism, and the Chester County History Center, and are developed and led by individual municipal historical commissions, heritage attractions, historic villages and main streets, as well as private owners.

Iron & Steel Heritage Partnership

The Iron & Steel Heritage Partnership formed in 2016 to commemorate 300 years of Pennsylvania's Iron and Steel industry. The Partnership grew out of master planning efforts for Chester County's iron and steel heritage in the early 2000s. Its mission is to foster a better understanding of the Schuylkill Highland's contribution to iron and steel making in America.

The Iron & Steel Partnership consists of nearly 30 nonprofit or municipal historic sites and attractions, as well as multiple hamlets, villages, and main streets. The Partnership produces a website maintained by the National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum, as well as printed brochures that highlight four thematic tours that highlight and link villages, main streets, and historical attractions: Forging Freedom, Supplying Freedom, Building Freedom and Powering Freedom.

In recent years, the Iron & Steel Heritage Partnership has been funded by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, under the administration of the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation in support of the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape.

Chester Springs Surrounds Project

In 2006 – 2009, a consortium of arts, heritage and natural attractions came together with unique regional businesses to develop a collaborative marketing project for northern Chester County. With grants from the Chester County Conference and Visitors Bureau's Special Tourism Marketing Grant Program and the PA Department of Community and Economic Development, the project developed a marketing plan and brand identity for the region.

The Chester Springs Surrounds project highlighted 18 heritage, conservation and art organizations including The Mill at Anselma National Historical Landmark, Historic Yellow Springs, Welkinweir, Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, French Creek State Park, St. Peter's Village, and Warwick County Park, as well as agricultural tourism sites within the region.

The collaboration produced a printed brochure and a website. During the project, the firm that produced the marketing plan expressed concern that there was no one coordinating entity, and that the project's sustainability was in doubt. Coordinated by a steering committee of leaders from the key attractions, with small staffs and limited resources, the collaboration did not survive the natural turn-over at the individual attractions and disappeared by 2010.

Other Local Organizations & Entities Supporting Tourism in Chester County

Chester County Community Foundation

The Chester County Community Foundation, headquartered in the National Historic Register Lincoln Building in West Chester, connects people who care with the causes that matter, so their philanthropy makes a difference "*now & forever*." The Community Foundation brings together donors and beneficiaries of charitable funds to create lasting legacies that make a difference.

The Foundation currently manages over 400 different charitable funds in the form of family foundations, nonprofit endowments, field of interest funds, and scholarships. In addition, the Community Foundation offers extensive resources for nonprofit management and governance, as well as training and workshops for nonprofit staff and peer learning circles for executive directors and development directors. It also offers workshops and training specifically for Board of Directors, and recently initiated "GetOnBoard Chester County," an effort to better recruit and prepare individuals for effective nonprofit board service.

Cultural Alliance of Chester County

The Chester County Community Foundation worked with a cross-section of Chester County's arts, culture and heritage community and the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance to establish the Cultural Alliance of Chester County in 2019. Its mission is to *"elevate the profile of Chester County's arts & cultural sector by strengthening the connections local organizations have to each other and the larger community, in order to build engagement, audiences and support."* The Community Foundation administers the Cultural Alliance, with input from a Leadership and an Advisory Committee, and focuses on audience development, promotion, networking and advocacy.

The Cultural Alliance lists approximately 100 organizations on its website including theaters, music and performance arts organizations, art museums, visual arts, and craft organizations, cultural centers, historical associations, historic sites, and museums. The Community Foundation and the Cultural Alliance offer *"Culture Builds Community"* programming, including their *"Art of Reopening"* Zoom series during the pandemic.

The Cultural Alliance has participated in Juneteenth planning since 2020 and is currently facilitating monthly meetings to plan for Juneteenth 2023. The Cultural Alliance also maintains a list of resources for nonprofit management, fundraising, arts management, and governance, advocacy, and other nonprofit technical assistance resources. culturechesco.org

Chester County Historic Preservation Network

Founded in 1979 through the efforts of Jane L. Davidson and others, the mission of the Chester County Historic Preservation Network (CCHPN) is to connect local governments, organizations, and individuals in their efforts to protect, preserve, and promote the historic resources and cultural landscapes of Chester County through communication and education. The vision of the CCHPN is to enhance

the quality of life and community character of Chester County through historic preservation.

CCHPN largely works with municipalities, sharing information and resources to support historic preservation in townships, and connecting the Chester County Planning Commission with the individual historical commissions. They produce a newsletter, an annual workshop, and support the Town Tours and Village Walks. CCHPN also played an important role in the development of historic preservation aspects of Landscapes3.

State and Regional Tourism Partners

Visit PA |PA Tourism Office
Tourism is the second largest industry in the state of Pennsylvania, second only to agriculture. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism supported 6.6% of jobs in the state, and provided $4.8 billion in state and local taxes. (Tourism Economics study – PA Restaurant and Lodging Association)

The **Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development** is the official travel and tourism office for Pennsylvania. The **PA Tourism Office**, known as **Visit PA**, whose slogan has been "Pursue Your Happiness" since 2012, works with individual destination marketing organizations across the state, including Chester County Tourism.

Chester County Tourism shares packaged experiences and events with Visit PA that are published in their annual visitors' guide, The Happy Traveler, as well as their monthly newsletter, Happy Thoughts. Individual attractions can also submit event information through the VisitPA website. Chester County Tourism purchases advertising annually from the PA Tourism office to support their efforts.

Visit PA also administers the State's "Pennsylvania on Display" Brochure Distribution Program which distributes brochures to PA Turnpike rest areas and individual attractions that pay to participate in the program. Individual sites can pay a fee to send their brochures to Pennsylvania on Display for distribution.

The PA Tourism Office is severely under-funded since spending cuts occurred in 2010. In 2022, the state's Tourism Office budget was only $9.1 million, in contrast to the $29.8 million budgeted in 2009. Currently, the state's proposed budget for the tourism office for 2022-23 is $4 million.

According to a 2022 study by Tourism Economics commissioned by the Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association in partnership with the state's destination marketing associations, Pennsylvania's tourism budget in 2020-21 ranked 35th of 41 states. The study also revealed that Pennsylvania has experienced the significant decline in tourism market share of 6.3% between 2010 and 2019 compared to eight competitive states. Furthermore, the study estimated that between 2015 and 2019, PA tourism budget shortfalls caused Pennsylvania to lose $9.7 billion in visitor spending, while the state saved only $151.7 million of tourism budget expenditures. (Source: PA Restaurant & Lodging Association press release, 5/24/2022) Tourism Economics was

commissioned by the Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association (PRLA) to conduct a study which showed that a $39M investment by the State in tourism would generate about $4.47 per dollar in combined state and local tax revenue. This net tax benefit would save each Pennsylvania hourself about $100/year.

Visit Philadelphia

Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation (GPTMC), founded in 1996 by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the city of Philadelphia, and The Pew Charitable Trusts, serves as the region's marketing agency. GPTMC was rebranded as "Visit Philadelphia" in 2013 with the mission "to build Greater Philadelphia's image, drive day and overnight visitation and boost the economy." It is funded in part by a hotel occupancy tax, but also grants, foundation and state & city dollars.

Although Visit Philadelphia continues to bill itself as "the official visitor site for Greater Philadelphia, including Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties," in practice for the last several years it almost exclusively focused on Philadelphia and neighborhoods within the city. Recently, however, Visit Philadelphia has worked with Chester County Tourism to offer packages and experiences in Chester County in response to growing concerns about crime in Philadelphia and its impact on tourism there.

Philadelphia Conference & Visitors Bureau

The **Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau (PHLCVB)**, also known as **Discover Philadelphia,** creates positive economic impact across the Philadelphia region, driving job growth and promoting the health and vibrancy of our hospitality industry by marketing the destination, the Pennsylvania Convention Center, and attracting overnight visitors. Their work engages the local community, as well as culturally and ethnically diverse regional, national, and international convention, sporting event, and tourism customers. The Bureau is a a private nonprofit partnership corporation established in 1941 and serves asthe official tourism promotion agency for the City of Philadelphia globally and the primary sales and marketing agency for the Pennsylvania Convention Center. The PHLCVB has successfully brings in large events including visits by the Pope, the Democatic National Convention, the All-Star Game and FIFA to the city of Philadelphia. They also work with the international tourism market and coordinate international tourism marketing with county CVB's, including Chester County Tourism.

PhillyFunGuide

The Phillyfunguide, created and administered by the **Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance (GPCA)** since 2002, has served as a centralized online events calendar for the greater Philadelphia region, allowing organizations to post artistic, cultural, heritage, entertainment and sporting events in one location. The events information would automatically populate other online calendars including Visit Philadelphia and regional county CVBs. Other PhillyFunGuide partners included the Broad Street Review, DelcoArts, Theatre Philadelphia, the Avenue of the Arts and the Valley Forge Tourism and Convention Board.

In 2019, the Chester County Community Foundation, through its newly formed Cultural Alliance of Chester County, partnered with GPCA to promote the use of the Phillyfunguide among Chester County's arts and heritage organizations. Unfortunately, the platform that supports the PhillyFunGuide has become out-dated and not friendly with mobile devices. Chester County Tourism does not use PhillyFunGuide, nor encourages its use. It is understood that the GPCA is no longer investing in updates and maintenance to the current platform and is planning for a new platform in two years.

Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitors Board

The Greater Wilminton Convention and Visitors Board was founded as a nonprofit organization in 1978 by charter by the Governor of Delaware, the New Castle County Executive and the Mayor of Wilmington. Its mission is *to serve as the community's customer-focused destination marketing organization, generating economic growth through leisure travel and meetings development by aggressively marketing attractions, facilities, amenities and services for visitors.*

Delaware County Tourism Bureau

The Delaware County Tourism Bureau, branded as **Visit Delco, PA**, is tasked with driving the economic vitality of Delaware County, Pennsylvania, as a dynamic tourism destination by promoting its diverse experiences, and the region as a welcoming place to visit, meet, stay, and play. Visit Delco primarily focuses on the Brandywine Valley attractions and collaborates with Chester County Tourism, Bucks County and Montgomery County as well as Greater Wilmington CVB.

Valley Forge Tourism and Convention Board

The Valley Forge Tourism and Convention Board was originally established by the Montgomery County Commissioners in 1963 as a chartered promotion agency of Montgomery County. It was privatized in 1999 and now operates as a private nonprofit organization that "actively promotes the Valley Forge area and Montgomery County as a convention site and leisure visitor destination by promoting patronage of its member hotels, restaurants, attractions and services." Its mission is to "inspire the world to fall in love with Montgomery County." In 2019, its total revenue was just under $9.5 million. It is funded by a combination of Pennsylvania grants, membership dues ($159,164), and a hotel occupancy tax that generated a little over $9 million in 2019.

APPENDIX B – INVENTORY OF ACTIVE HERITAGE SITES IN CHESTER COUNTY

APPENDIX B – INVENTORY OF ACTIVE HERITAGE SITES IN CHESTER COUNTY

A key component of the **Chester County Heritage Tourism Plan** is the development of an inventory of heritage sites and attractions in Chester County that are actively interpreted and accessible to the public, representing the county's six interpretive themes included in the county-wide interpretive presentation. An **actively interpreted site** is one that offers a theme-based interpretive experience either through guided or self-guided tours, programs and events, and outdoor interpretive exhibits or through other interpretive strategies and is available for the public to visit.

The **Inventory of Active Heritage Sites** is currently maintained in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, and collects information including the basic site information: site name, managing organization, physical location, contact information for the managing organization, including websites and social media information if available. It also collects information related to governance and management structure, property details, site description, represented themes, public access, programming, visitor services, human resources, financial resources, and the effects of COVID. Not all information could be collected for each site.

At the end of this appendix is an alphabetical list of the sites currently included in the inventory spreadsheet noting each site's name, managing organization, location, phone number, and website. The full inventory spreadsheet with the additional information described above is too long to be printed as part of the Heritage Tourism Plan and has been provided to the Chester County Planning Commission. The inventory is intended to be working document to be used for recordation, analysis, and assessment and as a resource to help guide decisionmaking. Additional information is expected to be added to the inventory on an ongoing basis. It is recommended that this information should be migrated to a **resource database** software so that it could be maintained and updated in a central location, to avoid data loss or multiple versions of the list from being circulated.

Additionally, the inventory has been provided to the Heritage Tourism Plan's economic consultant, ConsultEcon, for use in preparation of a Visitor Analysis and Marketing Plan based upon the Heritage Tourism Plan's recommendations. It is aniticpated that ConsultEcon will undertake further research which may result in additional site information being added to the spreadsheet.

National, Regional, and Community Attractions

The Inventory of Active Heritage Sites is broken into three categories based on a site's capacity to offer a range of interpretive experiences and its audience reach, as well as its level of significance and connection to the county's interpretive themes. A list of the heritage sites broken down by category and also showing the interpretive themes to which each site relates is included at the end of Chapter 2, *Themes and Storylines*, of the Heritage Tourism Plan.

National Attractions are interpretive sites with significant capacity and programming, currently attracting a national audience. They include two National Park Service sites located in Chester County: **Hopewell Village National Historic Site** and **Valley Forge National Historical Park**; as well as the **Schuylkill River Greenways National Heritage Area**. Also included is **Longwood Gardens**, identified by the Chester County Conference and Visitors Bureau as the county's flagship tourist attraction; and the **Brandywine Museum of Art**.

Regional Attractions are heritage sites or preserves with strong and direct connections to the county's six interpretive themes and the capacity to offer a high-quality visitor experience. These sites generally offer year-round or seasonal programs and public access at some level. They are managed and governed by **private nonprofit organizations** or by **municipal, county** or the **state government,** and range in size and management capacity. There is also a handful of privately owned properties.

Regional Attractions are further broken down by type:

- Attractions (heritage sites or museums)
- County Parks
- Regional Preserves (stewarded by nonprofits)
- Regional Trails
- Historic Railroads
- Historic Theaters

Community Attractions are interpretive sites that fill out the interpretive presentation of Chester County's six interpretive themes with a rich and diverse variety of local stories. They consist of historic buildings, small museums, monuments, and other outdoor experiences. Public access is largely limited to seasonal and weekend visitation, or special programs or events. Their management is characteristically local township historical commissions or 100% volunteer-managed nonprofit organizations with audiences that are primarily local in nature.

A separate list of **Prospective Sites** identifies historic sites and attractions that have been identified as important to the interpretive presentation of themes, but not available to the public either due to organizational capacity or private ownership, or because the site is currently under restoration and not ready for public visitation. Some of these prospective sites could become available to the public in the future as organizations participate in the Community Interpretation or Outdoor Interpretive Exhibit Programs recommended by this plan, or could become incorporated into interpretive presentations of specific themes as they are further developed. Additionally, a list of **Quaker Meeting Houses** has been

identified to support this Plan's recommendations to create a task force to develop interpretation regarding Quaker heritage. It should also be noted that the Chester County Conference & Visitors Bureau has developed and promotes an excellent **Guide to Chester County's 14 covered bridges.**

Other Resources

There are **78 Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) historic markers in Chester County** that are not included in the inventory. Additional information on PHMC historic markers can be found online at https://share.phmc.pa.gov/markers/. In addition, the **Historical Marker Database** (https://www.hmdb.org/), a searchable database of local markers, monuments, and plaques submitted by the public (including PHMC markers), currently lists and maps 302 submissions of local markers, plaques, and interpretive panels throughout Chester County.

The Inventory of Active Heritage Sites in Chester County

There are 92 heritage sites currently identified in the main active heritage sites inventory (national, regional, and community attractions), and there are currently 20 sites on the **Prospective Heritage Sites List**. It should be noted that some sites located nearby in Berks, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties are included if they are directly related to Chester County's heritage interpretation. It is expected that these two lists will evolve as individual heritage sites either grow or shrink in capacity.

Heritage Site Locations

Generally, the heritage sites are concentrated in or near Chester County's towns and villages, or in between, offering opportunities for packaged interpretive experiences and cross-marketing among nearby sites, and for organizations with greater visitor capacity to serve as lead organizations, either at gateways or heritage centers. Concentrations of sites can be found in and near:

- West Chester, plus its surrounding towns including Marshallton, and points east including Malvern, Paoli, and Devon

- Downingtown and Coatesville, and points west

- Northern Chester County: Phoenixville & Pottstown, as well as Chester Springs, Eagle, Kimberton, Kimberton, Spring City, Elverson, and St. Peter's Village

- Kennett Square and Chadds Ford

- Southern Chester County: Avondale, New London, Landenberg, Nottingham, Oxford, and Lincoln University

It should be noted that southern Chester County is under-represented on the main list, but that there are opportunities for heritage tourism through preserves including **Nottingham Park** and Glenroy Preserve, and as interpretation focused on freedom seekers, abolition, and the **Underground Railroad**, as well as the **Mason-Dixon Line**, develops in these areas. Similarly, in western Chester County, in such places as Atglen, Parkesburg, and Honeybrook, there are few or no active heritage sites. However, these areas are rich with

agriculture which could be tied into visitor experiences through the efforts of the **Chester County Ag Council** with their extremely thorough *Guide to Local Farm Products in Chester County,* available online at: https://www.chescofarming.org/PDF/FarmGuide2022.pdf

Heritage Site Management & Capacity

Roughly one-third of Chester County's active heritage sites are managed by **municipal, county, state, or federal governments. Government-managed** sites have a greater capacity to facilitate both interpretation and maintenance partly because such expenses as insurance, landscape maintenance, and utilities are wrapped into larger budgets, and professional staff roles are shared among heritage site locations and other departments. However, these government-managed organizations still frequently find their budgets stretched thin and inadequate in staying ahead of preservation maintenance and other needs.

The other two-thirds of Chester County's active heritage sites are managed by **private nonprofit organizations or foundations** of varying sizes, leadership capacities, and visitor readiness. **Longwood Gardens, Natural Lands,** and the **Brandywine Museum of Art** are the largest and most fiscally well-established organizations, with budgets ranging from $12 million to upwards of $76 million, and are managed by professional staff supported by trained volunteers. By and large, however, most nonprofit organizations stewarding heritage sites in Chester County operate with budgets well under $500,000, and many have budgets of well under $100,000. A few, such as **Historic Yellow Springs,** the **National Iron & Steel Museum**, and the **Wharton Esherick Museum,** are managed by professional staff. The remaining one-third of nonprofit organizations stewarding Chester County's heritage sites, including **the Mill at Anselma, Friends of Martin's Tavern,** and **Paoli Battlefield** are 100% managed and interpreted by volunteer boards.

Similarly, sources of financial support vary among heritage sites. With the notable exception of the **Wharton Esherick Museum**, which receives much of its funding through an endowment, most of these nonprofit organizations rely exclusively on financial support from the community through contributions and fundraising events. Program income can be fairly minimal, particularly for sites with limited open hours or program capacity. Some organizations are able to supplement contributions with real estate or event rentals of their space.

Contrary to common perceptions, private nonprofits receive little to no government funding (municipal, county, or state). For example, an eligible site with an annual budget of roughly $300,000 typically is awarded no more than $4,000 in annual general operating support from the **Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's Cultural and Historical Support Grant Program** – approximately 1.3% of the site's annual budget. While there are some limited opportunities for special project grants, generally through local and state funding for preservation or education, grant funding for general operations is minimal or non-existent.

Visitation and Public Access

We were only able to collect annual visitation data from 35% of the active heritage sites, but the information is in line with expectations for public availability and visitor-readiness. **Valley Forge National Historical** Park and **Longwood Gardens** are the most highly visited sites with 2 million and 1.6 million annual visitors respectively. Preserves and parks attract a wide range of visitors, ranging from 40,000 at smaller preserves to nearly 400,000 on the **Chester Valley Trail.** Historic sites typically attract 1,000 to 10,000, with the exceptions of sites that offer larger scale one-day events that attract more visitors.

The calculation of annual visitation is something that should be standardized and encouraged at individual heritage sites as this data would be valuable in calculating the economic impact of heritage tourism for Chester County. It should be noted that preserves and parks, such as those run by **Chester County Parks+Preservation**, use electronic counters to track visitation effectively. The use of these counters should be considered at other types of heritage sites where staff or volunteers cannot be present to monitor visitation.

Of Chester County's active heritage sites, 75% are available year-round. However, less than half are available on a daily basis, with the majority open fewer than five days per week. Approximately ten sites are only open by advance arrangement. Outdoor interpretive exhibits could allow several of Chester County's heritage sites, such as **Historic Yellow Springs, Historic Sugartown**, and the **Wharton Esherick Museum**, to offer high-quality interpretive experiences while they are not open or able to accommodate visitors.

One-third of Chester County's 92 active heritage sites are preserves and trails, with some featuring historic buildings or sites on their properties. These preserves, such as **Natural Lands'** nine properties, are generally more available to the public on a daily basis, and generally do not charge an admission fee. Preserves are much more advanced in their self-guided interpretation through outdoor interpretive exhibits. They are also better-positioned to be more widely available than historic buildings and sites, as they do not have to offer access or tours of building interiors.

Interpretation and Programs

The majority of Chester County's heritage sites, particularly the preserves, rely on self-guided tours. Guided tours are the most common form of interpretation for many of the historic building experiences, as well as internal exhibits. As noted, availability of these tours for the public can be rather limited. More than half of the heritage sites offer lectures (either in-person or virtual), and approximately 15% offer more immersive workshops such as the bookbinding workshops at **Historic Sugartown**. Approximately 35% of Chester County's heritage sites offer school programs, either on-site or off-site.

Visitor Services

With the exception of **Longwood Gardens**, **the Chester County History Center, the Brandywine Museum of Art,** and several of the federal, state or county-managed parks and preserves, the lack of visitor services is a near universal issue for Chester County's heritage sites. While most sites can claim the availability of parking, that does not usually extend to bus parking. Basic amenities such as restrooms are lacking at nearly half of the heritage sites in the county. Similarly, approximately half of the heritage sites offer some form of ADA accessibility to either the buildings or grounds. Few have all three of these basic services (bus parking, restrooms, ADA accessibility). Gift shops can be found at one-third of the heritage sites; while considered amenities (and a source of revenue), they are also an important way for visitors to enjoy one last encounter with interested staff and create lasting memories through mementoes.

Implications for Chester County's Heritage Tourism

While Chester County's active heritage sites represent delightfully rich and both nationally and locally significant stories connected to the six themes in this Heritage Tourism Plan, the challenge remains that the majority of these sites are not widely available to the public, nor do they have the infrastructure and visitor services to be visitor-ready on an on-going basis. While the preserves and parks, managed by **Chester County**, **Natural Lands**, and others, can accommodate visitors through programs and visitor services, the smaller heritage sites, many of them interpreting critical stories related to Chester County's themes, are not in the position to do so.

There is an opportunity to maximize site visitor-readiness and capacity by relying on the theme presentations recommended by this plan to link these heritage sites together strategically. Sites that do not have visitor amenities can team up with those that do. The **Iron & Steel Partnership** is an excellent example of such teamwork. Heritage sites and businesses located on main streets such as Phoenixville could team up to facilitate complete visitor experiences. The Community Interpretive Program of the **Base Program** (see Chapter 6, Section 6.1, *Chester County Heritage Tourism Program*) could play an integral role in making these connections, enhancing both opportunities for increased heritage tourism and to encourage Chester County's residents to value the heritage sites in their own communities.

Similarly, many of Chester County's heritage sites could greatly improve their interpretive experiences and connect with their communities through the **Outdoor Exhibit Program** of the **Base Program.** While heritage sites designated as **Community Attractions** are limited in public availability, in many cases, they are vital monuments in Chester County's historic landscape and are vital to Chester County's quality of life and sense of place. The **Outdoor Exhibit Program** of the **Base Program** is a key strategy in both making Chester County's heritage sites visitor-ready and instilling a sense of value and appreciation among Chester County residents for their rich and unique local history. Individual heritage sites with historic buildings that can only be open on a limited basis could offer visitors an interpretive experience throughout the week

and year without creating additional staff or volunteer needs. As they provide interesting stories and interpretive linkages to other attractions, outdoor exhibits would increase awareness and appreciation of these resources.

Opportunities for Increased Community Representation

Among the Prospective Sites, there are more than a handful of sites related to the **Evolving Values** theme, specifically the stories of freedom seekers, abolition, and the Underground Railroad, as well as other stories related to social justice and under-represented history. The **Community Interpretation Program** and the **Outdoor Exhibit Program** offer unique and necessary strategies for lifting up these important stories related to the Evolving Values theme, and allowing these under-represented heritage sites to become actively interpreted heritage sites.

The **Community Interpretive Program** is well-positioned to launch new programs focused on under-represented stories by helping organizations or community partners to develop and implement an Interpretation Plan. For example, an organization such as the **W.C. Atkinson Community Center,** located in the former **Clement Atkinson Memorial Hospital** in Coatesville could develop its efforts to create an interpretive center focused on the accomplishments of Whitier Clement Atkinson, the first African-American doctor in Chester County, as well as other African-American contributions in the Coatesville community, and connect these stories to others throughout Chester County.

While the content for the interpretation of **freedom seekers, abolitionists, and the Underground Railroad** is well-developed, and related heritage sites identified, many of the heritage sites are either not open to the public or are not yet visitor-ready. The **Outdoor Exhibit Program** offers the opportunity to create an interpretive experience at each individual heritage site, and connect them together, without requiring the site to be open or the need for additional staffing. This would enhance visitor experiences during existing bus tours, and allow visitors to the individual sites to not only learn about that specific site, but to explore other locations in the county. For the stories of freedom seekers and the Underground Railroad, this would further support current efforts to establish and provide content for the **Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway.**

Historic Resource/Interpretive Site	Managing Organization	Site Physical Address: Street Address	Site Physical Address: City	Site Physical Address: Zip	Site / Organization Main Phone #	Website
American Helicopter Museum & Education Center	American Helicopter Museum	1220 American Blvd	West Chester	19380	610-436-9600 x203	www.americanhelicopter.museum/
Andrew Wyeth Studio*	Brandywine Conservancy & Museum of Art	1 Hoffman's Road	Chadds Ford	19027	215-859-2677	www.brandywine.org/
Antique Ice Tool Museum	Antique Ice Tool Museum	825 Sconnelltown Road	West Chester	19382	610-738-7081	www.antiqueicetoolmuseum.org/
Barnard Station	Friends of Barnard Station	751 South Wawaset Road	West Chester	19382		www.barnardstation.org/Visit.html
Barns-Brinton House	Chadds Ford Historical Society	1736 N Creek Rd	Chadds Ford	19027	610-388-7376	www.chaddsfordhistory.org/about-us/
Binky Lee Preserve	Natural Lands	1445 Pikeland Road	Chester Springs	19425	610-353-5587	www.natlands.org/cheslen-preserve/
Birmingham Hill Preserve	Brandywine Conservancy	1272 South Birmingham Road	West Chester	19382	610-388-2700	www.brandywine.org/conservancy/preserves/birmingham-hill-preserve
Black Rock Sanctuary	Chester County Parks + Preservation	953 Black Rock Road on Rt. 113 in Phoenixville	Phoenixville	19460	620-469-1916	www.chesco.org/4624/Black-Rock-Sanctuary
Brandywine Battlefield State Park	Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates	1491 Baltimore Pike	Chaddsford	19317	610-459-3342	www.brandywinebattlefield.org/
Brandywine Museum of Art	Brandywine Conservancy & Museum of Art	1 Hoffman's Road	Chadds Ford	19027	215-859-2677	www.brandywine.org/
Brinton 1704 House*	Brinton Association of America, Inc.	21 Oakland Road	West Chester	19382	484-624-9235	www.brintonfamily.org/
Bryn Coed Preserve	Natural Lands	1869 Flint Road	Chester Springs	19425	610-353-5587	www.natlands.org/bryn-coed-preserve/

Historic Resource/Interpretive Site	Managing Organization	Site Physical Address: Street Address	Site Physical Address: City	Site Physical Address: Zip	Site / Organization Main Phone #	Website
Bucktoe Cemetery	Brandywine Red Clay Creek Alliance/Land Conservancy of Southern Chester County	229 Bucktoe Road	Avondale	19311		www.tlcforscc.org/bucktoe-cemetery
Charlestown Mil	Charlestown Township	2405 Charlestown Road	Phoenixville	19460	610-240-0326	www.charlestown.pa.us/historical_mill.aspx
Cheslen Preserve	Natural Lands	1199 Cannery Road	Coatesville	19320	610-353-5587	www.natlands.org/cheslen-preserve/
Chester County History Center	Chester County History Center	225 N. High Street	West Chester	19380	610-692-4800	www.mycchc.org/
Chester Valley Trail	Chester County Parks and Preservation	132 Church Farm School Lane	Exton	19341	610-344-5656	www.chesco.org/4643/Chester-Valley-Trail
Christian C. Sanderson Museum	Christian C. Sanderson Museum	1755 Creek Road	Chadds Ford	19317	610-388-6545	www.sandersonmuseum.org/
Colebrookdale Railroad	Colebrook Railroad Preservation Trust	64 S. Washington Street	Boyertown	19512	610-367-0200	www.colebrookdalerailroad.com/
Colonial Theatre, The	Colonial Theatre, The	227 Bridge Street	Phoenixville	19460	610-917-1228	www.thecolonialtheatre.com/
Crow's Nest Preserve	Natural Lands	201 Piersol Road	Elverson	19520	610-353-5587	www.natlands.org/crows-nest-preserve/
Dowlin (Mary Ann) Forge - Struble Trail	Chester County Parks + Preservation	Shelmire Road	Downingtown	19355	610-344-5656	www.chesco.org/4645/Struble-Trail; www.uwchlanconservationtrust.org/dowlin-forge/
Exton Park	Chester County Parks + Preservation & West Whiteland Township	800 Swedesford Road	Exton	19341	610-344-5656	www.chesco.org/4736/Exton-Park; www.westwhiteland.org/Facilities/Facility/Details/Exton-Park-5

Historic Resource/Interpretive Site	Managing Organization	Site Physical Address: Street Address	Site Physical Address: City	Site Physical Address: Zip	Site / Organization Main Phone #	Website
French Creek Heritage Park	East Pikeland Township	1135-1145 Rapps Dam Rd	Phoenixville	19460	610-933-1770	www.eastpikeland.org/index.as p?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={2EF E10D4-55ED-4FD6-B865-DD6F2B374009}
French Creek State Park	PA DCNR	843 Park Road	Elverson	19520	610-582-9680	www.dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks/Fi ndAPark/FrenchCreekStatePar k/Pages/default.aspx
Fricks Locks Village Historical Site	East Coventry Township/Constellation Energy Generation LLC	504 Fricks Lock Road	Pottstown	19465	610-495-5443	www.eastcoventry-pa.gov/
Glenroy Preserve	Oxford Area Foundation	10 West Christine Road	Nottingham	19362	610-932-4627	www.oxfordareafoundation.org/ preserving-glen-roy
Goshenville Blacksmith Shop (Historic Goshenville)	East Goshen Township	North Chester Road (Rt. 352) and Boot Road	West Chester	19355	610-692-7171	www.eastgoshen.org/about-us/blacksmith-shop/
Great Marsh Institute	Great Marsh InstituteBin	34 Moores Road	Elverson	19520		www.greatmarshinstitute.org/
Hibernia Mansion/Hibernia County Park	Chester County Parks + Preservation	1 Park Road	Coatesville	19320	620-469-1916	www.chesco.org/4691/Hibernia-Mansion; www.chesco.org/4625/Hibernia-Park
Historic Bondsville Mill and Gardens	East Brandywine Township	1647 Bondsville Road	Downingtown	19335	610-269-8230	www.bondsvillemillpark.org/
Historic Sugartown	Historic Sugartown, Inc.	690 Sugartown Road	Malvern	19355	610-640-2667	https://historicsugartown.org/
Historic Waynesborough	Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks	2049 Waynesborough Rd.	Paoli	19301	215-925-2251	www.philalandmarks.org/; www.historicwaynesborough.or g/
Historic Yellow Springs	Historic Yellow Springs	1685 Art School Road	Chester Springs	19425	610-827-7414	www.yellowsprings.org/
Historical Society of the Phoenixville Area	Historical Society of the Phoenixville Area	204 Church Street	Phoenixville	19460	610-935-7646	www.hspa-pa.org/

Historic Resource/Interpretive Site	Managing Organization	Site Physical Address: Street Address	Site Physical Address: City	Site Physical Address: Zip	Site / Organization Main Phone #	Website
Hopewell Furnace National Historical Site	National Park Service	2 Mark Bird Lane	Elverson	19520	610-582-8773	www.nps.gov/hofu/index.htm; www.friendsofhopewellfurn.org
Horse-Shoe Trail - Warwick County Park Trail Head		191 County Park Road	Pottstown	19465		www.cart.hstrail.org/
Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens	Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens	631 Berwyn Baptiste Road	Devon	19333	610-647-8870	www.jenkinsarboretum.org/
Joanna Furnace	Hay Creek Valley Historical Association	1250 Furnace Road	Geigertown	19523	610-286-0388	www.haycreek.org/joanna-furnace/
John Chads House & Chaddsford Historical Society	Chadds Ford Historical Society	1736 N Creek Road	Chadds Ford	19027	610-388-7376	www.chaddsfordhistory.org/about-us/
Jones Log Barn Living History Center & Duportail House	Tredyffrin Historic Preservation Trust	297 Adams Drive	Chesterbrook	19087	610-644-6759	www.tredyffrinhistory.org/
Kennett Heritage Center	Kennett Heritage Center	120 N Union St. 1st floor	Kennett Square	19348	484-905-4170	www.kennettheritagecenter.org/#/
Kennett Underground Railroad Center	Kennett Underground Railroad Center	120 N Union St. 1st floor	Kennett Square	19348		www.kennettundergroundrr.org/bus-tours
Kuerner Farm*	Brandywine Conservancy & Museum of Art	1 Hoffman's Road	Chadds Ford	19027	215-859-2677	www.brandywine.org/
The Laurels Preserve	Brandywine Conservancy	Applegrove Road	Coatesville	19320	610-388-2700	www.brandywine.org/conservancy/preserves/laurels-preserve
Lewin Farm House/1875 J.M. Lewin Cobbler Shop	Spring-Ford Historical Society	526 Main Street	Royersford	19468	610-948-7127	www.sfahs.com/
Lock 60 at Schuylkill Canal Park	Montgomery County	400 Towpath Road	Mont Clare	19453	610-917-0021	www.montcopa.org/1145/Lock-60-at-the-Schuylkill-Canal-Park; www.schuylkillcanal.org/

Historic Resource/Interpretive Site	Managing Organization	Site Physical Address: Street Address	Site Physical Address: City	Site Physical Address: Zip	Site / Organization Main Phone #	Website
Longwood Cemetery	Longwood Gardens	945 East Brandywine Highway	Kennett Square	19348	610-388-1000	https://longwoodgardens.org/
Longwood Gardens	Longwood Gardens	1001 Longwood Road	Kennett Square	19348	610-388-1000	https://longwoodgardens.org/
Longwood Progressive Meeting House	Brandywine Valley Conference & Visitors Bureau	300 Greenwood Road	Kennett Square	19348		www.brandywinevalley.com/
Marsh Creek State Park	PA DCNR	675 Park Road	Downingtown	19335	610-458-5119	www.dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks/FindAPark/MarshCreekStatePark/Pages/default.aspx
Marshallton Village Heritage Center	Friends of Martin's Tavern	1300 West Strasburg Road	West Chester	19382	610-996-5815	www.martinstavern.org/
Martin's Tavern	Friends of Martin's Tavern	1400 West Strasburg Road	West Chester	19382	610-996-5815	www.martinstavern.org/
Mill at Anselma, The (Lightfoot Mill)	The Mill at Anselma Preservation & Educational Trust	1730 Conestoga Road	Chester Springs	19425	610-827-2241	www.anselmamill.org/
Morlatton Village	Historic Preservation Trust of Berks County	31 Old Philadelphia Pike	Douglassville	19518	610-385-4762	www.historicpreservationtrust.org/
Mt Zion AME Church & Cemetery	Mt. Zion AME Church	380 North Fairfield Road	Devon	19333	484-325-4011	www.historicmtziondevon.org/about-mt-zion
National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum	National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum	50 South 1st Ave	Coatesville	19320	610-384-9282	www.steelmuseum.org/
N.C. Wyeth House & Studio	Brandywine Conservancy & Museum of Art	1 Hoffman's Road	Chadds Ford	19027	215-859-2677	www.brandywine.org/
Nottingham County Park	Chester County Parks + Preservation	150 Park Road	Nottingham	19662	620-469-1916	www.chesco.org/4626/Nottingham-Park

Historic Resource/Interpretive Site	Managing Organization	Site Physical Address: Street Address	Site Physical Address: City	Site Physical Address: Zip	Site / Organization Main Phone #	Website
Oxford Area Historical Association	Oxford Area Historical Association	140-142 Locust Street	Oxford	19363		www.oxfordhistorical.org/
Paoli Battlefield Historical Park	Paoli Battlefield Preservation Fund	Monument & Wayne Avenue	Malvern	19355	484-320-7173	www.pbpfinc.org/
Paoli Memorial Association	Paoli Memorial Association	Monument & Wayne Avenue	Malvern	19355		www.paolimemorialassociation.org
Peacedale Preserve	Natural Lands	157 Peacedale Road	Landenberg	19350	610-353-5587	www.natlands.org/peacedale-preserve/
Pennhurst Asylum	Pennhurst Memorial & Preservation Alliance	250 Commonwealth Drive	Spring City	19475		www.pennhurstasylum.com/visit/; www.preservepennhurst.org/
People's Hall at Ercildoun	People's Hall at Ercildoun	802 Doe Run Road	East Fallowfield	19320		www.peoples-hall.org/
Pottsgrove Manor	Montgomery County	100 West King Street	Pottstown	19464	610-326-4014	www.montcopa.org/930/Pottsgrove-Manor
Primitive Hall	Primitive Hall Foundation	830 North Chatham Road	West Grove	19390	610-486-6864	www.primitivehall.org/
Red Rose Inn	Penn Township	804 W Baltimore Pike	West Grove	19390	610-869-9620	www.penntownship.us/about/pages/red-rose-inn
Rushton Conservation Center/Rushton Preserve	Willistown Conservation Trust	915 Delchester Road	Newtown Square	19073	610-353-2562	www.wctrust.org/rushton-conservation-center/
Sadsbury Woods Preserve	Natural Lands	443 Old Wilmington Road	Coatesville	19320	610-353-5587	www.natlands.org/sadsbury-woods-preserve/
Saint Peter's Village		3421 St Peters Rd	Warwick	19470		www.brandywinevalley.com/st-peters-village-is-a-step-back-in-time-2/

Historic Resource/Interpretive Site	Managing Organization	Site Physical Address: Street Address	Site Physical Address: City	Site Physical Address: Zip	Site / Organization Main Phone #	Website
Sandy Hollow Heritage Park	Birmingham Township	1313 S Birmingham Rd	West Chester	19382	610-793-2600	www.birminghamtownship.org/history/pages/sandy-hollow-heritage-park
Schuylkill River Heritage Center at Phoenixville	Schuylkill River Heritage Center	2 North Main Street	Phoenixville	19460	610-935-2181	www.phoenixvillefoundry.org/
Schuylkill River Greenways National Heritage Area	Schuylkill River Greenways Association	140 College Drive	Pottstown	19464	484-945-0200	www.schuylkillriver.org/
Schuylkill River Trail	Schuylkill River Greenways Association and others	140 College Drive	Pottstown	19464	484-945-0200	www.schuylkillriver.org/schuylkill-river-trail/
Sharp's Wood Preserve	Natural Lands	1435 Byrd Road	Berwyn	19312	610-353-5587	www.facebook.com/SharpsWoodsPreserve
Springton Manor Farm/ Springton Manor County Park	Chester County Parks + Preservation	860 Springton Road	Glenmoore	19343	620-469-1916	www.chesco.org/4627/Springton-Manor-Farm;http://www.friendsofspringtonmanorfarm.org/
Star Gazer's Stone at Cheslen Preserve	Natural Lands	1199 Cannery Road	Coatesville	19320	610-353-5587	www.natlands.org/cheslen-preserve/
Strode's Mill	Friends of Strodes Mill*	1000 Lenape Road	West Chester	19382	484-237-8725	www.friendsofstrodesmill.com/
Stroud Preserve	Natural Lands	454 North Creek Road	West Chester	19382	610-353-5587	www.natlands.org/stroud-preserve/
Stroud Water Research Center	Stroud Water Research Center	970 Spencer Road	Avondale	19311	610-268-2153	www.stroudcenter.org/
Templin Woods Preserve	French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust	343 Templin Road	Glenmoore	19343	610-933-7577	www.frenchandpickering.org/
Thornbury Farm	Thornbury Farm, CSA	1256 Thornbury Road	West Chester	19382	610-587-4516	www.thornburyfarmcsa.com/

Historic Resource/Interpretive Site	Managing Organization	Site Physical Address: Street Address	Site Physical Address: City	Site Physical Address: Zip	Site / Organization Main Phone #	Website
Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center	Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center	226 N. High Street	West Chester	19380	610-356-2787	www.uptownwestchester.org/
Valley Forge National Historical Park	Valley Forge National Historical Park	1400 North Outer Line Drive	King of Prussia	19406	610-783-1099	www.nps.gov/vafo/index.htm;www.vfparkalliance.org/
Warwick County Park	Chester County Parks + Preservation	328 County Park Road	Pottstown	19465	610-469-1916	www.chesco.org/4628/Warwick-Park
Warwick Furnace (Thomas P. Bentley Preserve)	French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust	775 Warwick Furnace Road	Glenmoore	19343	610-933-7577	www.frenchandpickering.org/
Waterloo Mills Preserve	Brandywine Conservancy	830 South Waterloo Road	Devon	19333		www.brandywine.org/conservancy/preserves/waterloo-mills-preserve
Welkinweir	Green Valleys Watershed Association	1368 Prizers Road	Pottstown	19465	610-469-4900	www.greenvalleys.org/; https://welkinweir.org/
West Chester Railroad	West Chester Railroad Heritage Association	230 Market Street	West Chester	19382	610-430-2233	www.wcrailroad.com
Wharton Esherick Museum	Wharton Esherick Museum	1520 Horseshoe Trail	Malvern	19355	610-644-5822	www.whartonesherickmuseum.org/
Willisbrook Preserve	Natural Lands	110 Line Road	Malvern	19355	620-469-1916	www.natlands.org/willisbrook-preserve/
Wolf's Hollow Park	Chester County Parks + Preservation	1399 Schoff Road	Atglen	19310	620-469-1916	www.chesco.org/4629/Wolfs-Hollow-Park