

APPENDIX B

MARYLAND HERITAGE AREAS AUTHORITY

GUIDELINES

The Maryland Heritage Areas Authority has established a process by which it gauges the potential viability of a heritage area. After examining heritage areas in other states, the Authority identified at least ten attributes common to all successful heritage areas. These attributes were used to develop the selection criteria the Authority employs when analyzing a potential heritage area's application for recognition. This appendix provides both the Selection Criteria and the Ten Core Components of a Successful Heritage Area as published by the Authority.

MHAA SELECTION CRITERIA

The application for recognition from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority requires a potential heritage area to demonstrate its strengths and viability in a variety of aspects. Each application will be measured by the following criteria presented in the application guidelines:

Evidence of the area's heritage. The physical evidence should be available in enough abundance to signal the presence of a distinctive place, though there may be signs of modern occupation and enterprise. Provide a narrative overview description of the historic or architectural character of the area, distinctive cultural landscapes or environmental features, and important recreational resources and museums available to the public. Provide a description of the major non-physical heritage resources in the region. Examples of the latter might include performing and visual arts, traditional arts and folklife, living resources and unique or traditional industries, special heritage events, etc.

Heritage areas proposed for recognition must contain:

- a) resources of statewide significance that have retained integrity of setting and a cohesive character; and
- b) at least one or more:
 - * historic districts either listed in or eligible for listing in the Maryland Register of Historic Properties (contact the Director of the Maryland Historical Trust with questions regarding eligibility, 410 514 7600);
 - * natural or recreational resources determined by the Secretary of Natural Resources to be of statewide significance (410 260 8100).

Please describe how the area meets these requirements.

Economic and community development and tourism. A successful heritage area needs to have a viable economy. Generally describe current and future economic revitalization initiatives in the region and indicate how the heritage area will be coordinated with those initiatives to enhance economic activity and revenues in the area. Provide an overview of the development trends in the proposed heritage area and its vicinity.

Tourists need services -- accommodations, places to eat, drink, and shop. Generally describe the area's tourism industry and the effect the proposed heritage area could have on tourism activity. Please include a brief description of the current visitor services in the region in which the proposed heritage area is located. Generally, describe trends: over the last 5 years, has tourism activity been increasing, decreasing, or stable? What does the future 3-5 years look like? Describe the chief assets for and obstacles to enhanced economic activity.

Interpretative Structure and Programs. The proposed heritage area should hold potential for improving the understanding of visitors and residents of the significance of the heritage resources to the people of Maryland and the nation. Briefly describe the significance of the area, its most distinctive themes in terms of the development of Maryland or the nation. Describe the major resources (people, institutions, museums, publications, historic sites, environmental education centers, etc.) for presenting the stories of the heritage area. Describe any potential for improving or strengthening the interpretive structure and programs.

Linkages. Heritage attractions and programs should invite visitors to explore the area by foot, bicycle, automobile, boat, or other appropriate means. Describe the current patterns of linkage and the potential for enhanced linkages such as scenic byways, tour routes, trails, greenways, and waterways.

Commitment and Local Leadership. Active participation by local leaders, including business, civic, cultural, arts, tourism, museum, environmental, and historic preservation organizations -- as well as local government. Identify all counties and key municipalities. Describe the key organizations that are or will be involved in the heritage area planning, programming, marketing, and management activities. How are heritage initiatives and tourism efforts currently coordinated? Identify all counties and key municipalities, agencies, and organizations that would be part of the heritage area being preliminarily proposed. Describe examples of successful earlier collaborations or successful joint activities involving some of these organizations. Such examples do not have to be related to tourism.

Stewardship. The presence of a public policy framework supportive of preservation of historic resources and conservation of land and natural resources indicates the level of community support for the maintenance of community character and quality of life. Describe the key local policies shaping land use, preservation of historic character, conservation of open space and farmland. Include information about other significant

plans, such as downtown revitalization or neighborhood conservation plans or major proposed developments. Describe the activities of major voluntary preservation/conservation efforts, such as land trusts.

Key Issues for RHA Management Plan Process. For each of the above topics, please provide a brief narrative description of the most critical issues or questions to be addressed in the management planning stage.

Managing the Heritage Area. Describe the proposed organizational structure that will be undertaking the management planning process. Will there be staff available to coordinate the planning effort? In the development of the management plan, what are envisioned as the roles of the management planning organization, staff, and consultants? How will stakeholders and the public be involved,

Vision. Provide a succinct description of what will be different in the proposed heritage area as a result of this initiative.

Return on Investment. The above criteria provide a framework to understanding the resources, issues, and opportunities in the proposed heritage area. The intent of the MHAA is to invest public resources wisely, to spark partnerships that lead to increased private investment, additional jobs, and greater revenues attributable to increased tourism. Describe how this proposed heritage area could reasonably be expected to accomplish such a return on investment (assuming its designation and the participation of MHAA).

TEN CORE COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL HERITAGE AREA

The Maryland Heritage Areas Authority identified these attributes common to successful heritage areas outside of Maryland:

1. **A strong focus or theme(s) that makes this place different of distinctive from the areas that surround it or that are nearby.**
2. **Evidence of the area's heritage.** This can be comprised of historic buildings, structures, districts, distinctive cultural and/or natural landscapes, as well as museums and living resources. The evidence should be available in enough abundance to signal the presence of a distinctive place, though there may be signs of modern occupation.
3. **Enthusiastic and able local leadership,** preferably with a significant civic or community-based level of involvement. Leadership should include business, civic, cultural, arts, museum, environmental, tourism and historic preservation organizations - as well as local government. Public outreach is a priority, especially an effort to involve African-Americans and others who may have played important roles in the history of the area, yet who are sometimes over looked. Finally, leadership also involves a good working relationship with local media - newspapers,

radio and television - to assure that information about the heritage area is available to the residents of the region.

4. **Visitor services:** accommodations, eating and drinking establishments, shopping, and recreational attractions such as golf, tennis, boating, etc. Ideally, the accommodations available to the heritage visitor will have some distinction or local flavor - locally owned/managed businesses, small inns, bed and breakfasts, etc. The restaurants and shopping opportunities for visitors are special, unlike offerings back home.
5. **Ease of accessibility.** Successful heritage areas require appropriate transportation facilities. Within the heritage area, visitors are able to move about easily, whether by automobile, bicycle, foot, rail or boat as appropriate. And, public access is readily available.
6. **Interpretive Structure and Programs.** The visitor is easily able to find the major stories of how the area's heritage came to happen and why it is important in Maryland and the nation's development.
7. **Economic development.** A successful heritage area needs to have a viable economy which recognizes the value of the area's heritage resources.
8. **Leverage.** In creating the Maryland Heritage Preservation and Tourism Areas Program, the state is acknowledging the wisdom of investing public dollars to create value, spark private investment, and motivate local leadership. Successful heritage areas are sustainable over time, requiring less and less public support.
9. **Vision.** Successful heritage areas capture the imagination and commitment of many people, especially local leaders who have the drive, passion, capabilities, and resources to make it happen. Successful heritage areas also capture a larger share of private investment.
10. **Management.** A strong, effective professionally staffed management organization that orchestrates the collaborations involved, actively brokers resources, and otherwise sees to the implementation of the vision embodied in the management plan.