



FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN

— FY 2024-2028 —



**“Through interpretation, understanding;
through understanding, appreciation;
through appreciation, protection.”**

- Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage* (1957)

As an organization, Patapsco Heritage Greenway (PHG) works with and encourages all Patapsco Valley Heritage Area (PVHA) partners to explore the region's stories and support broad public engagement. We aim to facilitate partnerships throughout the watershed and build bridges across boundaries, preserve and enhance the physical character and economic vitality of Patapsco Valley communities, improve the visitor experience, foster community participation and reconnect people to the Patapsco River. The stories and experiences we aim to explore and interpret are complex, multi-faceted, challenging and changing. As such, they demand an openness to fresh perspectives and ideas on the region's past, present and future. The epigraph above from Freeman Tilden serves as a reminder of the power and impact of effective interpretation. When we better understand the communities and environments that we inhabit and how they came to be, we can become more effective stewards as well as storytellers. The challenges and opportunities that exist over the next five years draw on several key principles Tilden elucidated over sixty years ago—to relate to the experience of visitors and encourage their participation in the interpretive process, to reveal new possibilities and ideas as well as to inform, to provoke deep thought and contemplation rather than merely instruct, and to emphasize engagement with others and ideas rather than outdated models of outreach or delivery. These principles and approaches are fundamental to providing consistent, thoughtful and meaningful opportunities for education, engagement and enjoyment across the PVHA.

OUR MISSION

As the non-profit managing organization for the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area, Patapsco Heritage Greenway is dedicated to preserving, protecting, interpreting, and restoring the environment, history, and culture of Maryland's most dramatic river valley for all.



OUR VISION

Our vision emphasizes that natural processes, natural beauty, and history combine to create a unique opportunity for neighboring residents and visitors, from across the state and beyond, to understand and enjoy one of Maryland's most dramatic river valleys.

PHG is dedicated to **preserving, protecting, interpreting, and restoring** the environment, history and culture of Maryland's most dramatic river valley for all. PHG continues to focus on developing a visitor-centered and inclusive heritage area through increased engagement with people who live in the region as well as with new and regular visitors. Our programs also aim to model stewardship for residents and visitors, providing examples while developing educational opportunities that contribute to behavioral change and catalyze others. These goals are guided by the expectation that more diverse local audiences will not only see themselves reflected in heritage offerings but also will have the opportunity to actively engage in planning programs and sharing stories that enhance their lives and the lives of others. PHG takes its educational responsibilities seriously in all of its programming and believes that educational initiatives contribute to behavior change that can strengthen our communities. For example, when young people have the opportunity to explore the river or care for artifacts, they have opportunities to become resource stewards of the region's natural and cultural heritage. Since the adoption of the 2015 PVHA management plan, PHG has increasingly looked to expand its reach and impact, engaging residents and visitors in multiple languages, addressing issues of equity and inclusion, and focusing on cultural awareness and sensitivity in its programs and those that it sponsors with partners. The efforts of the last several years provide a starting point as well as a foundation, allowing us to assess best practices as we look to improve our efforts along these lines and continue our work with partners. PHG continues its efforts—embedded in the [2015 management plan](#)—to ensure that PVHA lies at the heart of a network of protected lands along the Patapsco River, representative of Maryland's piedmont forest and industrial heritage. Our vision emphasizes that natural processes, natural beauty, and history combine to create a unique opportunity for neighboring residents and visitors, from across the state and beyond, to understand and enjoy one of Maryland's most dramatic river valleys. Working with our diverse partners, we aim to ensure that the public appreciates the significance of the valley's heritage, understands its rich and diverse history, and enjoys the experiences it has to offer.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

As the managing entity for the newest Maryland heritage area, certified in 2015 and with a boundary addition approved in FY2021, we have focused on building a sustainable organization dedicated to carrying out its mission. With the hiring of a new executive director in FY2021, the organization undertook strategic planning exercises assessing the organization's past while looking ahead to the future. In doing so, we have set organizational goals that are already being implemented at the staff, board and partner levels and are an essential part of this five year plan. We have focused on diversifying and expanding our financial resource base, including more than doubling our annual operating budget while emphasizing financial transparency (e.g. adding 990s and annual reports to our website, completing Guidestar Gold certification, completing multiple clean financial audits and reviews), hired strategically to provide a range of expertise to execute programs and serve partners, undertaken efforts to increase board diversity and embed DEI values in the organization bylaws and in all the work we do, and focused on staff professionalization and development. Our expanded financial support has allowed us to develop new programs with an inclusive focus as well as to provide technical assistance to heritage area organizations. We intend to continue these efforts over the next five years as we further expand our reach and impact in the PVHA and the Patapsco River watershed.

As an organization, we have expanded our service on local and regional commissions and workgroups that directly relate to our mission areas. Not only does this suggest staff and board expertise is valued by our partners but it also provides an opportunity for us to highlight the PVHA and the overall heritage area program to potential new partners. We will continue to stay involved during the next five years. We have also expanded our funding and resource base since certification in 2015, highlighting the overall growth and maturation of the organization. This has allowed us to expand our work across all four of our focus areas and hire strategically to ensure long-term sustainability and continued program diversity focusing on innovation.

PHG'S FOUR FOCUS AREAS



HERITAGE



ENVIRONMENT



ARTS & CULTURE



RECREATION

SIGNIFICANCE AND INTERPRETATION OF THE PATAPSCO VALLEY HERITAGE AREA

The 2015 PVHA Management Plan provides a clear statement of significance that guided the establishment of the PVHA. It offers a foundation for moving forward and opportunities for expansion. The primary components of the PVHA's initial interpretive foundation are places in the Patapsco Valley where natural resources supported industrial development in the 18th and 19th centuries, the communities that developed as a result of industrial development, the adjoining rural lands that supported those communities, and the travel routes that connected the Patapsco Valley to Baltimore and its port. The Patapsco Valley's overarching significance is associated with its vital importance in Maryland's Industrial Revolution, as well as its role in the region's evolving consciousness towards resource stewardship and regional planning to serve present and future generations.

Our goals also address the following three related statements of significance:

The Valley as an Iconic Landscape of an Emerging Nation

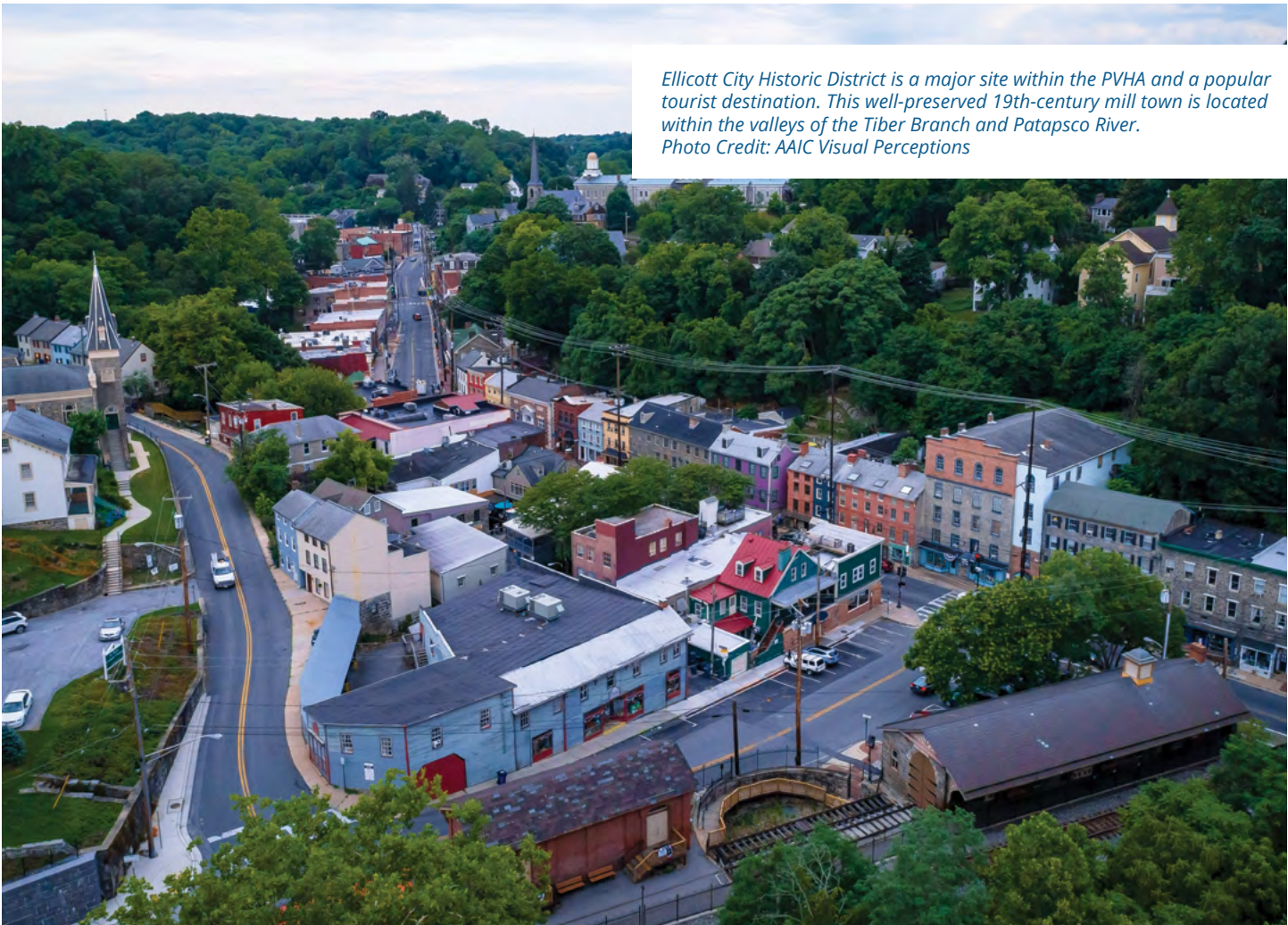
The Patapsco Valley portrays the early history of an emerging nation. It serves as a reminder of conditions, opportunities, and hardships encountered during the American Revolution and as the United States sought its economic independence.

The Valley as a Center for Innovation

During much of the 18th and 19th centuries, the Patapsco Valley distinguished itself as a center for innovation in entrepreneurship, technology, and progressive social change. Its early economic history was associated with enterprises that utilized the valley's resources to produce products that could be shipped to markets at home and abroad.

The Valley as a Forerunner of the Conservation Movement

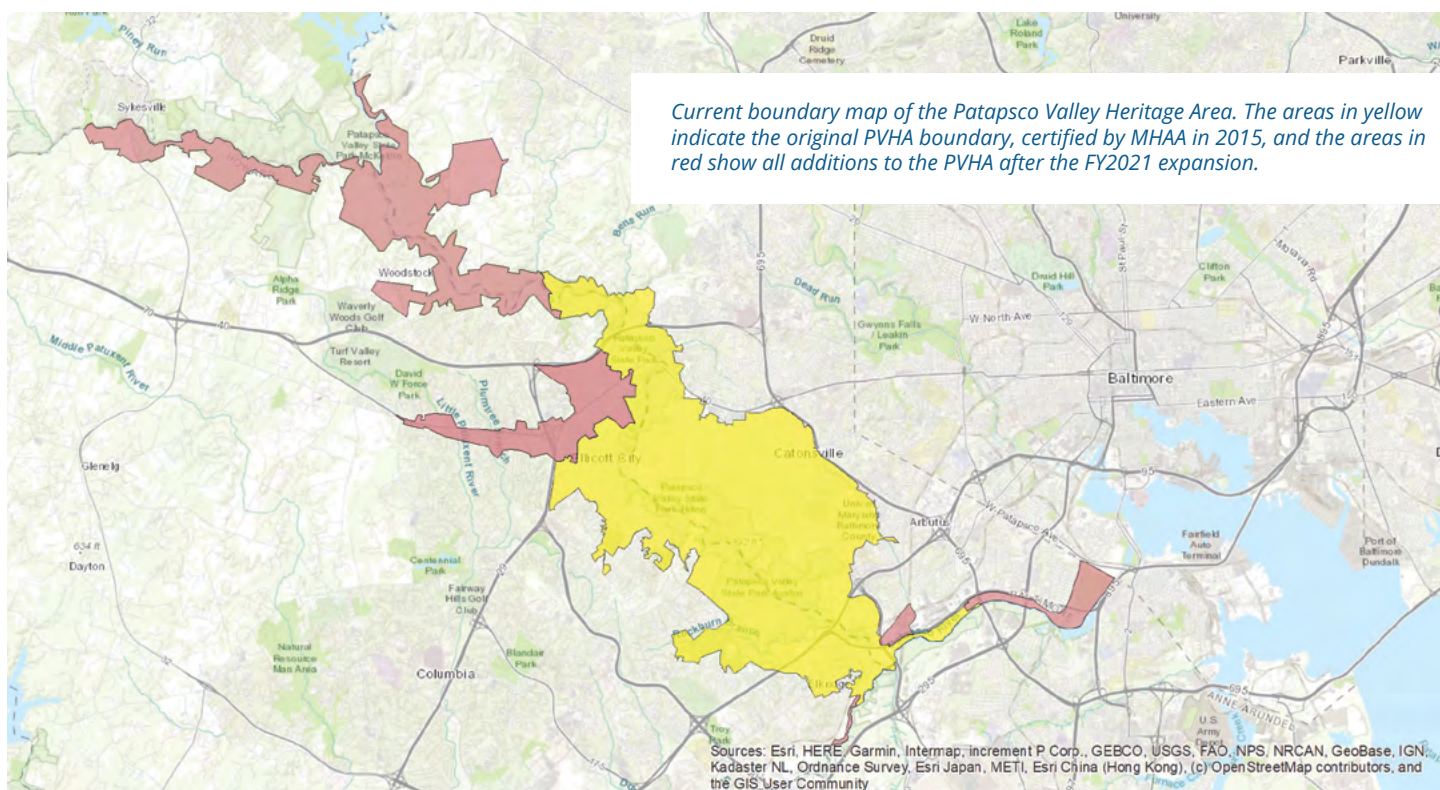
The Patapsco Valley is a noteworthy milestone of the transition that occurred at the turn of the 20th century when Marylanders and the nation began to understand the need to conserve natural resources and provide for the recreation and open space needs of future generations.

An aerial photograph of the Ellicott City Historic District. The town is nestled in a valley, surrounded by dense green forests on the hills. The historic district features a variety of colorful, multi-story buildings, including a prominent white church with a tall steeple on the left. A winding road curves through the town, and a railroad track runs along the bottom right. The sky is overcast with soft, diffused light.

*Ellicott City Historic District is a major site within the PVHA and a popular tourist destination. This well-preserved 19th-century mill town is located within the valleys of the Tiber Branch and Patapsco River.
Photo Credit: AAIC Visual Perceptions*

The original PVHA, certified by MHAA in 2015, included:

- the Patapsco River gorge, extending from below Elkrigde to upstream of the historic community of Daniels and encompassing the remains of the many industrial enterprises that flourished during the heritage area's period of significance
- the Patapsco River's tributary stream valleys draining into the Patapsco Valley gorge
- the historic communities of Elkrigde, Ellicott City, Oella, Relay, Avalon, and Daniels, including places where the valley's business owners, workers, and their families lived
- the historic communities of Catonsville and Lawyers Hill, including the places settled early in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as people moved west from the city of Baltimore along the National Road and the US 1 corridor
- the Historic National Road (All American Road) corridor, including the historic travel route along which raw materials needed for production were transported to the valley's manufacturing facilities and along which its finished products were taken to Baltimore for sale and shipment around the world
- other connecting travel route corridors including the roads connecting historic communities with one another and to the river, and the historic B&O Railroad rail line
- Patapsco Valley State Park and other adjoining lands of conservation interest



In FY2021, the PVHA expanded from 24.6 to 36.2 square miles. This boundary expansion affords opportunities to create a more holistic interpretation of the Patapsco Valley, support important recreational and environmental goals, and build the PHVA's appeal for both visitors and residents, all of which are part of this five-year plan. The PVHA now runs from the Baltimore City line near Southwest Area Park in Baltimore County to the Howard County border with Carroll County near Sykesville, and thus includes a more expansive and diverse landscape and set of stories. We have an opportunity to expand the initial interpretive foundation while also reinforcing the original focus in a more inclusive manner. Since 2015, PHG has developed an active volunteer base while broadening the PVHA's interpretive messages, expanded and cultivated new partners, and supported major trail connections to increase appreciation of the entire Patapsco Valley and to improve connectivity and accessibility. The boundary expansion provides new opportunities along all these lines.

For example, the addition of a portion of Korean Way near Ellicott City can help explore and interpret the story of Korean immigration to the area, an important chapter in the region's history. Korean Way is an example of the region's shifting economics and demographics. Korean immigration has grown since the 1970s and ties directly to PVHA's fifth interpretive theme in the 2015 management plan: "Building on the Past – Visions for the 21st Century." It connects to the story of regional industrialization and deindustrialization, including the closure of the Daniels and Oella mills, and the recent closure and proposed adaptive reuse of the Wilkins-Rogers Mill. Korean Way community organizations and businesses, along with other immigrant groups that live and work nearby, represent the changing face of the region and nation. Expanding the PVHA's narrative to include new immigrant communities allows for a more complete history of the region that connects the region's industrial past and its post-industrial present, although legacy industry still remains. Continuity is an essential tool in engaging the public, providing context and constructing meaning. PHG aims to empower local organizations and communities to tell their own stories for the broader public.



INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSE STORIES

As the non-profit managing entity for the PVHA, Patapsco Heritage Greenway (PHG) fundamentally believes that all stories are worth including as part of the complex and compelling history of the region. PHG also recognizes that structure is important for organizing these stories and engaging the public through effective interpretation. PHG looks to foster a unified image and understanding of PVHA stories through coordinated interpretive messaging and materials produced by PHG and its partners. PHG encourages collaborative efforts to provide an experience for visitors designed to interpret the Patapsco Valley as a cradle of Maryland's industrial revolution, inviting engagement by residents and visitors, and raising the Patapsco Valley's profile as a place of regional, state and national significance. These resources tell a wide-ranging story that includes the nation's first railroad, numerous mills that harnessed the power of the river, and ravages of floods when that power could not be contained. The area, at one time, embodied the driving force behind the beginning of the nation's Industrial Revolution. The cities and towns stretching along the valley from Granite to Baltimore are rich with sites and stories of that era. With the recent boundary addition, we have an opportunity not only to expand this interpretation to new areas but also address the region's complex and rich history and its changing industries and communities through the present. The range of interpretive techniques available to partners throughout the PVHA remains broad. These have included tours, lectures, guided walks/hikes, trail signage, film, photography, podcasts, exhibitions, public art, books, performances, exhibitions, virtual programming, audio tours, interactive maps, events and accessible outdoor recreation.

Expanding our interpretive themes is also an acknowledgment that despite previous efforts to interpret and present an inclusive history of the Patapsco Valley, many important stories have remained understudied and underexamined. Additionally, the natural environment has played and continues to play a fundamental role in the region's development and growth. As such, the PVHA offers compelling opportunities to more effectively integrate environmental history perspectives into public interpretation. PHG's environmental program, which is funded separately from MHAA, has grown substantially since the original management plan and includes a new water quality monitoring program across the Patapsco watershed. The environmental program is unique among heritage area management entities and offers opportunities to engage residents and visitors in the region's rich natural history while exploring connections between culture and the built and natural environment. The program's educational mission also provides a basis for encouraging sustainable practices at the individual and collective level.



*The PVHA has been at the forefront of innovation, including granite production. In this photo from around 1898, quarrymen at Weber's Quarry extract granite from the site, located near Frederick Road.
Photo Credit: Maryland Geological Survey, Volume Two*

Expanding our interpretive themes is also an acknowledgment that despite previous efforts to interpret and present an inclusive history of the Patapsco Valley, many important stories have remained understudied and underexamined.

From the colonial port at Elkridge Landing to modern communities, the region has been at the forefront of innovation, as an early initiator of milling, rail transportation and granite production. Some of the nation's first industrial sites were powered by the Patapsco River. The Patapsco Valley has also long been a place of movement of both people and goods. Experiences of both forced and voluntary migration are interconnected with those of trade and development. Public interpretation must acknowledge that the labor force responsible for the region's growth and development included enslaved individuals, immigrants and free labor. The Patapsco Valley also highlights shifts in the nation's experience from the industrial revolution to today's emphasis on environmental and natural resource conservation. The histories of the PVHA's numerous historic structures, mill towns, museums, and parks contribute to the broader narrative of work, labor and industry in the United States. Major sites include Ellicott City, Daniels, and Oella, all historic mill sites. Ellicott City, in particular, is an exceptional historic district and heritage tourist destination, attracting thousands of visitors each year. Elkridge Landing was an important colonial port and Relay an early railway community. Catonsville was an early community on the National Road that expanded greatly with trolley service from Baltimore. Granite, added to the PVHA in FY2021, highlights the important role that quarrying played in the region's industrial development as well as its impact on the built environment. The southeastern boundary extension includes the current Guinness Open Gate Brewery site, which has a nearly century long history associated with distilling, as well as Southwest Area Park on the city-county line. This extension abuts the project area for the Reimagine Middle Branch project in Baltimore City and offers opportunities for recreational and interpretive land and water trail connections while connecting to PHG's programmatic focus on the health of the broader Patapsco watershed. Protecting the valley's environment, which PHG does through its environmental programs, facilitates historical interpretation. Environmental history—exploring the relationship between humans and the environment and the implications they had on each other—provides both a common historical thread as well as a recognition of the challenges we still face.

INTERPRETIVE FRAMEWORK

As part of our planning process, we have consciously outlined and expanded our existing interpretive framework to further emphasize inclusivity while acknowledging that the framework outlined in our 2015 management plan remains current and viable. The heritage area's interpretive framework provides a means for organizing interpretive experiences that reflect the area's significance. That framework consists of the following "primary themes" or main topics that can be used as a basis for designing interpretive experiences along with subthemes from the 2015 Management Plan as well as new ones highlighted below in *italics*.

Interpretive Objectives

- Assist visitors in developing a keener awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the area to make the visit a rich and enjoyable experience
- Promote the PVHA's vision and management goals and encourage visitors to thoughtfully respect its resources
- Promote visitor understanding of organizations and agencies whose programs are connected to the PVHA

The Valley's Natural Resources and Their Values

In 1608, John Smith briefly explored the Patapsco River and noted its iron deposits. By the end of the 17th century, early settlers had discovered the valley's other resources which provided the foundation for the valley's development as one of Maryland's early industrial centers. Contrary to the Native American perspective, Europeans regarded those resources as consumable and by using them for production risked increasing the valley's susceptibility to damaging floods.

Abundance of Valley Resources

Native American Perspectives

Dams, Waterpower and Mill Sites

Raw Material for Manufacturing and Construction

Resource Depletion-Deforestation Erosion, Siltation

Major Floods and Their Impacts



*The Oella Historic District, including the mill and workers housing, is an example of industrial manufacturing during the 18th and 19th centuries.
Photo Credit: AAIC Visual Perceptions*

Chronicles of Industries and Their Communities

The Patapsco offers a window for learning about the chronicles of Maryland's early industries and the communities that provided their labor and supporting services. Its stories range from a bird's eye view of the valley's development to those associated with individual industries and their businesses. Rather than occurring in isolation, the valley's history is best understood in a larger regional and national political, economic, and social context.

- Ambition for Economic Independence
- Innovation and Growth
- Collaboration Between Civic and Private Interests
- Towards a More Complex Economic System
- Building Communities that Sustained Industry
- Leaders who Pursued Their Ideals for a Better Society
- Laborers and their Lives*
- Religion and Community*

Connectivity as a Key to Prosperity

Connectivity with the outside world was a key to the valley's economic prosperity. Establishment of Elk Ridge Landing in the 1730s, the National Road in the 1790s, and the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad in the 1820s successively offered the means for transporting the valley's products to regional, national, and international markets. The valley's network of roads, waterworks, and river crossings also provided the internal infrastructure that enabled the movement of raw material, products, and local labor.

- The River as a Gateway
- Rolling Roads Connecting Tobacco Crops to River Landings
- A Local Road Network Connecting Mills to Markets
- Connectivity Provided by Early Turnpikes and the National Road
- The B&O Railroad-Its Importance to the Valley

*Winters Lane Historic District, located in Catonsville, is a historic African American community which began to develop after the Civil War.
Photo Credit: Historic American Building Survey, Library of Congress*



Towards a New Identity

In the early 1900s, the valley's declining economic advantages, combined with emerging views towards natural resource values, prompted its slow transition towards a new identity as a major recreation and conservation area in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area. The renaissance of several of its historic communities such as Ellicott City and Oella, which began in the 1950s, reinforced the valley's distinctiveness.

Winds of Change

Birth of the Conservation Movement

Baltimore's City Beautiful and the Olmsted Plan

Establishment of the State Board of Forestry and the Patapsco Forest Reserve

Creation of Maryland's First State Park

Renaissance of Historic Communities

The Patapsco Valley as an Oasis in a Suburban Landscape

African-American Experiences (Including role in industry, labor force and religious institutions-e.g. Fels Lane and Winters Lane communities; impact of segregation and desegregation, suburban development)

Social Inequalities on the Landscape (e.g. summer homes of Baltimore elite in Catonsville; Five Oaks Pool and integration, Housing and Redlining)

Civilian Conservation Corps and Patapsco Valley State Park



Once a trolley line that operated between Catonsville and Ellicott City, the Trolley Trail #9 is a popular recreational trail in the PVHA.
Photo Credit: AAIC Visual Perceptions

Building on the Past – Visions for the 21st Century/*The Past Prepared the Present*

The valley's transformation from an early industrial center to a regional park with adjacent neighborhoods was largely complete by the end of the 20th century. It has entered a new era emphasizing the concept of sustainability and its interwoven components of environment, economy and communities. The valley offers unusual opportunities, particularly for state and local governments and nonprofit organizations, to collaborate in achieving their respective visions for the 21st century.

Towards a Healthy Natural Watershed (*Explores natural resources, social and economic changes and sustainability; highlights stories of depletion of resources and turn to conservation and stewardship; role of agriculture; modern conservation history; explore how changes reflected in art and culture*)

Statewide Vision for Green Infrastructure

Protecting Historic Resources

Managing Resilient and Healthy Forests (*Highlights specific environmental sites, drawing on environmental report card and historical environmental records to explore land use changes*)

Vision for Maryland's State Parks

County Visions for a Sustainable Future

Valley Communities and Their Volunteers (*Emphasis on more recent communities, including Korean and Latinx residents*)

Exploring History Along the Trail (*Highlight how early trails influenced settlement up to present transformation of old railroads into recreational trails*)

Climate Change Action



SHARING AUTHORITY

As we look to continue efforts to increase our audience and impact, engage youth, and connect to with the public through digital media, PHG will work with existing and new PVHA partners to modify, develop and implement updated interpretive themes for the PVHA that provide a coordinated vision for its interpretive and educational programs. Through its programming, PHG has built a substantial community engagement profile across the PVHA and Patapsco River watershed, attracting thousands of volunteers to assist the organization in carrying out our mission. While this has helped raise the organization's profile in the community and provided opportunities to engage new partners, we still face challenges in attracting new visitors to the heritage area. Many of our events and programs are attractive to local residents, but less so to visitors who might be spending a day or weekend in the area. Highlighting inclusive interpretive themes can help PHG work with partners to emphasize and promote regional historical, recreational, artistic, cultural and environmental opportunities and resources that would draw additional visitors to the PVHA. The Patapsco Valley has limitations as a destination for a weeklong vacation, but the stories embedded in the Valley's communities and landscapes are rich and worth exploring for and with the broader public. The interpretive themes and subthemes highlighted above offer a path forward in a more cohesive and inclusive interpretation of the region that will help welcome people to the PVHA and encourage them to contribute their own stories and experiences. One noted challenge involves effectively connecting and synthesizing work across PHG's four major focus areas—Heritage, Environment, Arts and Culture, and Recreation. We launched efforts to better connect these focus areas and look forward to working with partners to highlight interpretive opportunities and programming that extends across boundaries and are inclusive in the fullest sense of the term.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM/ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1: MANAGEMENT

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Manage Patapsco Heritage Greenway (PHG) to effectively and sustainably support its mission and build organizational capacity.

GOAL 2: STEWARDSHIP

OBJECTIVE 1

Promote and facilitate the stewardship of heritage resources to support interpretation and appreciation of the history of the Patapsco Valley, enhance quality of life for residents, and ensure a unique visitor experience, including evaluating current PVHA assets and expanding public engagement.

GOAL 2: STEWARDSHIP

OBJECTIVE 2

Increase, implement and highlight synergies across four focus areas to reduce compartmentalization and work with partner organizations and community members in seeing connections between their daily activities, the surrounding environment, the past on the landscape and the rich cultural resources of the present in an historic and ever-changing watershed where their actions can make an impact and build a more sustainable and equitable future for all. In doing so, develop and provide watershed-wide activities that engage historical understanding, environmental knowledge, regional arts and culture and outdoor recreation access that support overall stewardship goals.

GOAL 3: INTERPRETATION

Provide heritage experiences for visitors focused on interpreting the Patapsco Valley's rich and diverse historical, environmental, cultural, artistic and recreational opportunities, including but not limited to its vital importance in Maryland's industrial revolution and its role in Maryland's evolving resource stewardship ethic, among other interpretive themes.

GOAL 4: HERITAGE TOURISM

Attract residents and visitors to experience the Patapsco Valley's heritage by marketing the heritage area as a destination that showcases its unique and significant historical, cultural, recreational and natural resources.

GOAL 5: HERITAGE & OUTDOOR RECREATION

Collaborate with heritage partners to enhance opportunities for residents and visitors to experience quality heritage recreation experiences in PVHA and learn about the heritage areas through such experiences.

FOSTER PROGRAM SYNERGIES

Emerge as a lead regional and Maryland organization focused on integrating sustainability, environmental history and the arts through diverse programming, partnerships and community engagement that encourage resident and visitor engagement. **This goal is embedded throughout all goals in the five year plan.**

GOAL 1 MANAGEMENT



OBJECTIVE

Manage Patapsco Heritage Greenway (PHG) to effectively and sustainably support its mission and build organizational capacity.

ACTION ITEMS

- 1 Increase organizational effectiveness, staff engagement across programs and areas of expertise, and board/staff interaction
- 2 Increase PHG staff, volunteer and contractor effectiveness
- 3 Continue to develop a sustainable diversified range of financial resources for PHG
- 4 Monitor existing metrics and develop new ones to increase staff, volunteer and contractor effectiveness

REASON FOR PRIORITY

- Ensure all organizational work is conducted in a professional, transparent and effective manner.
- Continue organizational growth in terms of staff expertise/capacity, financial resources and overall impact.
- Continue to provide a positive workplace environment where staff are rewarded, board is engaged and organization is respected across the community and beyond.

A photograph of two volunteers working in a cemetery. They are wearing bright green safety vests and are using long-handled tools to clear weeds from around old, weathered stone grave markers. The background is filled with lush green trees and foliage. The person on the right is wearing a blue baseball cap with a logo that includes the text 'THE PATAPSCO VALLEY HERITAGE SOCIETY' and 'PATAPSCO VALLEY HERITAGE SOCIETY'. The person on the left is wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans. The person on the right is wearing a dark green long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans. They are both wearing gloves. The ground is covered in green weeds and grass. The scene is outdoors and appears to be a sunny day.

GOAL 2

STEWARDSHIP

OBJECTIVE 1

Promote and facilitate the stewardship of heritage resources to support interpretation and appreciation of the history of the Patapsco Valley, enhance quality of life for residents, and ensure a unique visitor experience, including evaluating current PVHA assets and expanding public engagement.

ACTION ITEMS

1

Expand audiences through developing new programs/campaigns and continuing existing ones that focus on engaging Latinx, Korean and African American residents/visitors

2

Integrate partners across mission areas and work to develop new partner opportunities

3

When mission-relevant, engage in public advocacy in coordination with PHG Board

REASON FOR PRIORITY



Expand program reach and impact to ensure inclusivity across all focus areas.



Foster ongoing synergy between PHG's heritage and environmental focus areas, drawing on best practices from hard sciences, social sciences and humanities to ensure mission of preserving, protecting, interpreting and restoring is maintained and upheld.



Ensure PHG continues to serve as a community resource and provides mission-focused expertise and services to local government and fellow non-profits as needed and/or requested.

GOAL 2

STEWARDSHIP



OBJECTIVE 2

Increase, implement and highlight synergies across four focus areas (History, Environment, Arts/Culture and Recreation) and work with partner organizations and community members in seeing connections between their daily activities, the surrounding environment, the past on the landscape and the rich cultural resources of the present in an historic and ever-changing watershed where their actions can make an impact and build a more sustainable and equitable future for all. In doing so, develop and provide watershed-wide activities that engage historical understanding, environmental knowledge, regional arts and culture and outdoor recreation access that support overall stewardship goals.

ACTION ITEMS

1

Develop and utilize a new matrix that allows PHG and partners to assess ways in which programs/activities integrate and emphasize PHG's four focus areas

2

Develop tools for PHG and partners to better integrate all four focus areas in projects

3

As necessary, update relevant Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and policies to account for program synergy approach

4

Continue involving community members in data collection/research process, encouraging engagement and wonder with the natural world as well as historical and cultural resources in the watershed, also ensuring that community input allows us to adjust programs and respond to community needs and interests

REASON FOR PRIORITY



PHG aims to cultivate a better understanding of the deep interconnections between the human and natural world within the Patapsco Valley watershed that can lead to changed behavior that contributes to a more equitable and sustainable future for all.



We believe it is essential to engage and serve our diverse multilingual community, emphasizing the importance of preserving the rich natural, cultural and historical resources of the Patapsco Valley.



PHG takes the vantage point—embedded in our management plan—that natural heritage and cultural heritage are essential elements of the PVHA. In this respect, everything on the landscape is in some way an environmental feature, including the built environment which involved human labor and energy to construct and which draws on the region's natural resources. Human beings and their knowledge, experience and expertise have impacted the Patapsco River Valley for generations but it is also essential to acknowledge that some spaces are best left absent of humans.



Flooding, water quality, open space preservation in a dense and developed urban/suburban area demands attention to issues around climate change and local citizen action. Examining flooding and water quality concerns needs to be done through lens of science, history, past use, community needs, and public engagement if the goal is to build sustainable and equitable future. PHG also recognizes a need to move beyond a "catastrophe" lens to emphasize what we can do together to improve, preserve and restore the environment.

GOAL 3

INTERPRETATION



OBJECTIVE

Provide heritage experiences for visitors, through both PHG-led activities and those of partner organizations, focused on interpreting the Patapsco Valley's rich and diverse historical, environmental, cultural, artistic and recreational opportunities, including but not limited to its vital importance in Maryland's industrial revolution and its role in Maryland's evolving resource stewardship ethic, among other interpretive themes.

ACTION ITEMS

1

Continue to promote a broader interpretive message for the PVHA that fully integrates all of PHG's four focus areas

2

Provide visitor experiences and interpretive programming that help people understand PVHA's significance and stories within the context of its interpretive framework

3

Develop additional presentations of PVHA stories/experiences that connect to interpretive themes and highlight links between past and present, particularly as part of our annual Patapsco Days programming

4

Convey the stories through a variety of interpretive media, programming, and events

5

Use the PVHA's natural, cultural and heritage resources to explore regional, state, national and transnational history and foster environmental awareness

6

Enhance interpretive efforts through PHG conducted research as well as research efforts of partner organizations

7

Provide technical expertise, support and guidance to partners in engaging PVHA interpretive themes and connecting to MHAA grant programs

REASON FOR PRIORITY



Engage new and existing partners in interpretive planning processes and implementation.



Creating and fostering an inclusive approach to interpretive themes/messages across the PVHA is essential for helping people see themselves and their stories in the PVHA.



A more holistic and inclusive approach--stories told, perspectives highlighted, integrated programs--can lay the groundwork for a more equitable and sustainable community that truly serves diverse residents, visitors and users and makes it a welcoming place for all.

A person wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat and a blue patterned shirt is seen from behind, painting a scene of a historic building on a street. The building is yellow with a white door and a sign that reads "The First Museum". The scene is set on a street with a sidewalk and a road. There are green bushes in the foreground on the left. The sky is blue with some clouds.

GOAL 4

HERITAGE TOURISM

OBJECTIVE

Attract residents and visitors to experience the Patapsco Valley's heritage by marketing the heritage area as a destination that showcases its unique and significant historical, cultural, recreational and natural resources.

ACTION ITEMS

1

Continue developing integrated approach to establish consistent PVHA identity and branding

2

Provide technical and financial assistance to partners to expand heritage tourism resources

3

Develop new PHG programs and promote existing PHG programs

REASON FOR PRIORITY



Effective branding and messaging will help people learn more about the PVHA, explore our digital materials and encourage them to visit the PVHA to experience all that it offers.



Desire to create additional content for our updated website, which launched in early FY23, as part of efforts to highlight diverse stories and experiences available in the PVHA for a wide audience.



Continue to expand our use of various digital media platforms to promote the PVHA brand.



Expand program reach and impact to ensure inclusivity across all focus areas.



Foster ongoing synergy between our heritage and environmental focus areas, drawing on best practices from hard sciences, social sciences and humanities to ensure mission of preserving, protecting, interpreting and restoring is upheld.



GOAL 5

HERITAGE & OUTDOOR RECREATION

OBJECTIVE

Collaborate with heritage partners to enhance opportunities for residents and visitors to experience quality heritage/outdoor recreation experience in PVHA and learn about the heritage area through such experiences.

ACTION ITEMS

1

Work to develop trails and spaces linking interpretive sites in the Patapsco Valley and its heritage communities while respecting the Valley's ecosystems

2

Expand recreation vision to include other outdoor recreation activities beyond trails as well as other geographic and demographic groups

3

Formalize partnerships with allied heritage/outdoor recreation organizations in PVHA and support their programs/projects

REASON FOR PRIORITY



Trails remain a draw for many recreational visitors to the PVHA and will continue to be emphasized/promoted but we aim to do so within the context of a broader spectrum of recreational activities that connect people with the rich natural and cultural heritage of the PVHA.



Continue fostering connections between our heritage and recreation focus areas, highlighting linkages for visitors on the landscape, on the web and through programming.



Many visitors visit the PVHA to partake in available outdoor recreation opportunities and new events can provide connections to and information about cultural and natural heritage resources in the PVHA.



With limited staff time devoted to outdoor recreation programs/activities, staff and board are focused on partnership and capacity building in support of outdoor recreation initiatives rather than PHG-led programs.

PHG BOARD & STAFF

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Kyla Cools, Heritage Program Coordinator
Mandy DeLeo, Water Quality Program Coordinator
Gaelyn Mitchell, Marketing Coordinator
Rachel Pierson, Community Programs Coordinator

*deceased

FUNDING SUPPORT

Baltimore County Department of Environmental
Protection and Sustainability
Baltimore County Government
Chesapeake Bay Trust
Forever Maryland Foundation
Howard County Government
Howard County Office of Community
Sustainability

Maryland DNR
(Chesapeake & Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund)
Maryland Heritage Areas Authority
Maryland Humanities
Maryland Urban and Community
Forestry Commission
Preservation Maryland
REI

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**And a special thank you to all of our individual donors whose
continuing support helps sustain and grow the organization.**

PHG PARTNERS

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay	Greater Arbutus Business Association
Baltimore County Arts Guild	Greater Baltimore Wilderness Association
Baltimore County Commissions on Arts and Sciences	Greater Patapsco Community Association
Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks	Historical Society of Baltimore County
Baltimore County Office of Tourism and Cultural Arts	Howard County Arts Council
Baltimore County Public Schools	Howard County Chamber of Commerce
Benjamin Banneker Foundation	Howard County Conservancy
Benjamin Banneker Historical Park and Museum	Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks
Boy Scouts of America (Howard and Baltimore County)	Howard County Historical Society
Catonsville Arts and Entertainment District	Howard County History Day
Catonsville Chamber of Commerce	Howard County Poetry and Literary Society
Catonsville Middle School	Howard County Tourism and Promotion (Visit Howard County)
Catonsville Rails to Trails	Howard County Truth, Lynching and Reconciliation, Inc.
Catonsville Recreation and Park Council	Howard Ecoworks
Catonsville Restaurant Association	Izaak Walton League of America/Save Our Streams
Catonsville Tree Canopy Project	Lurman Woodland Theatre
Chesapeake Conservancy	Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership
Choose Clean Water Coalition	Maryland Civil Air Patrol, Nike Missile Site BA-79
Community College of Baltimore County	Maryland Off-Road Enthusiasts
Community Ecology Institute	Maryland Ornithological Society- Baltimore Bird Club
Defensores de la Cuenca	Maryland State Parks
Diggs-Johnson Museum	Oella Historical Society
EC250, Inc.	Patapsco Valley State Park
Elkridge Heritage Society	Patterson Park Audubon
Elkridge Rotary Foundation	Restoring Bull Branch
Ellicott City Partnership	Rotary Clubs of Howard County
Ellicott City Sunrise Rotary Club	Spring Grove Arboretum
Friends of Patapsco Valley State Park	University of Maryland Baltimore County (Choice Program)
Girl Scouts of Central Maryland	Upper Patuxent Archaeology Group
Granite Historical Society	

Cover Image: 2022 PaSNAPsco Step Back Winner, “Banneker’s Cabin” taken by Andrew Gosden highlights the replica of Benjamin Banneker’s one-room cabin located at the Benjamin Banneker Historical Park and Museum in Oella.

APPENDIX:

Patapsco Valley Heritage Area 5 Year Action Plan FY 2024 – 2028 Template

“Through interpretation, understanding; through understanding, appreciation; through appreciation, protection.” - Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage* (1957)

As an organization, Patapsco Heritage Greenway (PHG) works with and encourages all Patapsco Valley Heritage Area (PVHA) partners to explore the region’s stories and support broad public engagement. We aim to facilitate partnerships throughout the watershed and build bridges across boundaries, preserve and enhance the physical character and economic vitality of Patapsco Valley communities, improve the visitor experience, foster community participation and reconnect people to the Patapsco River. The stories and experiences we aim to explore and interpret are complex, multi-faceted, challenging and changing. As such, they demand an openness to fresh perspectives and ideas on the region’s past, present and future. The epigraph above from Freeman Tilden serves as a reminder of the power and impact of effective interpretation. When we better understand the communities and environments that we inhabit and how they came to be, we can become more effective stewards as well as storytellers. The challenges and opportunities that exist over the next five years draw on several key principles Tilden elucidated over sixty years ago—to relate to the experience of visitors and encourage their participation in the interpretive process, to reveal new possibilities and ideas as well as to inform, to provoke deep thought and contemplation rather than merely instruct, and to emphasize engagement with others and ideas rather than outdated models of outreach or delivery. These principles and approaches are fundamental to providing consistent, thoughtful and meaningful opportunities for education, engagement and enjoyment across the PVHA.

Heritage Area Vision for the Next Five Years: PHG is dedicated to preserving, protecting, interpreting, and restoring the environment, history and culture of Maryland’s most dramatic river valley for all. PHG continues to focus on developing a visitor-centered and inclusive heritage area through increased engagement with people who live in the region as well as with new and regular visitors. Our programs also aim to model stewardship for residents and visitors, providing examples while developing educational opportunities that contribute to behavioral change and catalyze others. These goals are guided by the expectation that more diverse local audiences will not only see themselves reflected in heritage offerings but also will have the opportunity to actively engage in planning programs and sharing stories that enhance their lives and the lives of others. PHG takes its educational responsibilities seriously in all of its programming and believes that educational initiatives contribute to behavior change that can strengthen our communities. For example, when young people have the opportunity to explore the river or care for artifacts, they have opportunities to become resource stewards of the region’s natural and cultural heritage. Since the adoption of the 2015 PVHA management plan, PHG has increasingly looked to expand its reach and impact, engaging residents and visitors in multiple languages, addressing issues of equity and inclusion, and focusing on cultural awareness and sensitivity in its programs and those that it sponsors with partners. The efforts of the last several years provide a starting point as well as a foundation, allowing us to assess best practices as we look to improve our efforts along these lines and continue our work with partners. PHG continues its efforts—embedded in the [2015 management plan](#)—to ensure that PVHA lies at the heart of a network of protected lands along the Patapsco River, representative of Maryland’s piedmont forest and industrial heritage. Our vision emphasizes that natural processes, natural beauty, and history combine to create a unique

opportunity for neighboring residents and visitors, from across the state and beyond, to understand and enjoy one of Maryland's most dramatic river valleys. Working with our diverse partners, we aim to ensure that the public appreciates the significance of the valley's heritage, understands its rich and diverse history, and enjoys the experiences it has to offer.

Heritage Area Mission: As the non-profit managing organization for the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area (PVHA), Patapsco Heritage Greenway (PHG) is dedicated to preserving, protecting, interpreting, and restoring the environment, history, and culture of Maryland's most dramatic river valley for all.

Heritage Area Accomplishments: As the managing entity for the newest Maryland heritage area, certified in 2015 and with a boundary addition approved in FY2021, we have focused on building a sustainable organization dedicated to carrying out its mission. With the hiring of a new executive director in FY2021, the organization undertook strategic planning exercises assessing the organization's past while looking ahead to the future. In doing so, we have set organizational goals that are already being implemented at the staff, board and partner levels and are an essential part of this five year plan. We have focused on diversifying and expanding our financial resource base, including more than doubling our annual operating budget while emphasizing financial transparency (e.g. adding 990s and annual reports to our website, completing Guidestar Gold certification, completing multiple clean financial audits and reviews), hired strategically to provide a range of expertise to execute programs and serve partners, undertaken efforts to increase board diversity and embed DEIJ values in the organization bylaws and in all the work we do, and focused on staff professionalization and development. Our expanded financial support has allowed us to develop new programs with an inclusive focus as well as to provide technical assistance to heritage area organizations. We intend to continue these efforts over the next five years as we further expand our reach and impact in the PVHA and the Patapsco River watershed.

As an organization, we have expanded our service on local and regional commissions/ workgroups that directly relate to our mission areas. Not only does this suggest staff and board expertise is valued by our partners but it also provides an opportunity for us to highlight the PVHA and the overall heritage area program to potential new partners. We will continue to stay involved during the next five years. We have also expanded our funding and resource base since certification in 2015, highlighting the overall growth and maturation of the organization. This has allowed us to expand our work across all four of our focus areas and hire strategically to ensure long-term sustainability and continued program diversity focusing on innovation.

Summary of Program Goals for FY 2024-FY 2028:

Stewardship: Promote and facilitate the stewardship of heritage resources to support interpretation and appreciation of the history of the Patapsco Valley, enhance quality of life for residents, and ensure a unique visitor experience, including evaluating current PVHA assets and expanding public engagement.

Increase, implement and highlight synergies across four focus areas to reduce compartmentalization and work with partner organizations and community members in seeing connections between their daily activities, the surrounding environment, the past on the landscape and the rich cultural resources of the present in an historic and ever-changing watershed where their actions can make an impact and build a more sustainable and equitable future for all. In doing so, develop and provide watershed-wide activities that engage historical understanding, environmental knowledge, regional arts and culture and outdoor recreation access that support overall stewardship goals.

Interpretation: Provide heritage experiences for visitors, through both PHG-led activities and those of partner organizations, focused on interpreting the Patapsco Valley's rich and diverse historical, environmental, cultural, artistic and recreational opportunities, including but not limited to its vital importance in Maryland's industrial revolution and its role in Maryland's evolving resource stewardship ethic, among other interpretive themes.

Heritage Tourism: Attract residents and visitors to experience the Patapsco Valley's heritage by marketing the heritage area as a destination that showcases its unique and significant historical, cultural, recreational and natural resources.

Heritage and Outdoor Recreation: Collaborate with heritage partners to enhance opportunities for residents and visitors to experience quality heritage recreation experiences in PVHA and learn about the heritage areas through such experiences.

Summary of Organizational Goals for 2024-2028:

Management: Manage Patapsco Heritage Greenway (PHG) to effectively and sustainably support its mission and build organizational capacity.

Foster Program Synergies: Emerge as a lead regional and Maryland organization focused on integrating sustainability, environmental history and the arts through diverse programming, partnerships and community engagement that encourage resident and visitor engagement. This goal is embedded throughout all goals in the five year plan.

Goal 1: Organizational

Objective 1: Manage Patapsco Heritage Greenway (PHG) to effectively and sustainably support its mission and build organizational capacity.

Action Items

(For each Action Item include anticipated fiscal year in which the activity will begin):

1. Increase organizational effectiveness, staff engagement across programs and areas of expertise, and board/staff interaction (FY24)
2. Increase PHG staff, volunteer and contractor effectiveness (FY24)
3. Continue to develop a sustainable diversified range of financial resources for PHG (FY24)
4. Monitor existing metrics and develop new ones to increase staff, volunteer and contractor effectiveness (FY24)

Deliverables / Measurable Items:

References in () refer to relevant sections of PVHA management plan

Action Item 1

- a) Integrate staff annual work plans with program committee strategic goals as well as five year plan and provide regular updates and engagement through quarterly meetings with committee chairs/committees (5.1.1d, page 9-2)
- b) Maintain ongoing communication with committee chairs about programs, relevant legislation and new activities, integration with board committee goals, and staff-committee liaisons (5.1.1d, page 9-4)
- c) Update/revise policies and procedures regarding board operations and accountability as needed (5.1.1b, page 9-2)

Action Item 2

- a) Create, monitor and review staff annual plans/goals, hold regular staff meetings, establish accountability and feedback processes through meetings, reviews and assessment (5.1.3a, page 9-5)
- b) Implement existing procedures for selecting contractors and update as necessary, securing contracts and working with community groups, including building on existing pilot efforts with non-501c3 community groups (5.1.3g, page 9-6)
- c) Expand volunteer programs to further engage volunteers in PHG's mission and encourage continued engagement on heritage area, watershed and organizational issues (5.1.3h, page 9-6)
- d) Continue streamlining of financial duties with executive director, treasurer, contract bookkeeper, external accountants, and board finance committee executing designated roles and responsibilities (pgs. 9-7 and 9-8, 5.22a, 5.22b and 5.24a)
- e) Expand existing collaborations with local schools/colleges, interns/classes in support of programmatic initiatives (5.1.3i, page 9-6)
- f) Continue to support staff in pursuing professional development opportunities, courses and conference presentations that bring expertise and knowledge back to the organization and provide opportunities to update existing programs and develop new programs (5.1.3b, page 9-6)

Action Item 3

- a) Implement annual fundraising and development plans in coordination with Board with incremental expansion goals over five years, following the revised membership policy adopted in 2022 (5.3.1c, page 9-9)
- b) Explore new grant opportunities and write additional grants, train new staff in grant writing and submit successful grants (5.3.4a-e, pgs. 9-11,12)
- c) Complete annual appeal campaigns to provide increased unrestricted funds to the organization and streamline and further develop corporate sponsorship/fee for service programs (5.3.1b and 5.3.6b and 5.3.6c, pgs. 9-8 and 9-9 and 9-12)

Action Item 4

- a) Use metrics (overall economic impact numbers, clean-ups, volunteers, survey responses, attendance, social media and website visits, scientific data collection, financial audits) to support efficient organization management and program delivery (5.62e, page 9-19)

Project Lead and Partners:

Lead: Aaron Shapiro, PHG Executive Director

Partner: PHG Program Committees, PHG Administrative and Development Committees. PHG Staff, and PHG Board

Partner: Contract Bookkeeper (Consonance Group)

Categories of Activity

(Bold those that apply)

Heritage Product Development

Partnership building

Sustaining Regional Identity

Organizational

Project Duration:

July 2024-June 2028, assessed annually

Reason for Priority

- Ensure all organizational work is conducted in a professional, transparent and effective manner.
- Continue organizational growth in terms of staff expertise/capacity, financial resources and overall impact.
- Continue to provide a positive workplace environment where staff are rewarded, board is engaged and organization is respected across the community and beyond.

Goal 2: Stewardship

Objective 1: Promote and facilitate the stewardship of heritage resources to support interpretation and appreciation of the history of the Patapsco Valley, enhance quality of life for residents, and ensure a unique visitor experience, including evaluating current PVHA assets and expanding public engagement.

Action Items

(For each Action Item include anticipated fiscal year in which the activity will begin):

1. Expand audiences through developing new programs/campaigns and continuing existing ones that focus on engaging Latinx, Korean and African American residents/visitors (FY24)
2. Integrate partners across mission areas and work to develop new partner opportunities (FY24)
3. When mission-relevant, engage in public advocacy in coordination with PHG Board (FY24)

Deliverables / Measurable Items:

References in () refer to relevant sections of PVHA management plan

Action Item 1

- a) Expand program opportunities for local companies (1.5.2e-h, page 8-12)
- b) Expand cemetery documentation and preservation program (1.2.2.f, page 8-8)
- c) Expand multilingual engagement and programming in PVHA (1.5.2e-h, page 8-12)
- d) Strengthen connections between volunteers and build a strong sense of community among volunteers to continue conversations, open new dialogue and foster/promote a sense of stewardship (1.5.2e, 1.5.2f, 1.5.2g, page 8-12; 5.1.3h, page 9-6)

Action Item 2

- a) Develop and implement programs to educate public about environmental, cultural and economic benefits of historic preservation and conservation to help make informed decisions (1.1.2a and 1.1.2b, pgs. 8-5, 8-6)
- b) Advise, consult and promote historic preservation projects and partnerships in the PVHA that foster connections across mission areas (1.1.2b and 1.1.2c, page 8-6)
- c) Explore potential boundary additions, as appropriate, and continue to provide technical expertise and support to Howard and Baltimore County institutions that are outside PVHA boundaries but are interested in developing and supporting programs within the PVHA (1.1.3h, page 8-6 and 1.1.2c, page 8-7)
- d) Continue to secure and expand grant applications and sponsorships from new organizations in the PVHA, including working with groups to attain necessary non-profit status as needed, building on previous efforts along these lines (5.33a-c, page 9-11)

Action Item 3

- a) Provide testimony, technical guidance and expertise, service on local commissions in support of resource conservation, watershed education and historic preservation and interpretation (1.1.3b-h, page 8-6)

Project Lead and Partners:

Lead: Aaron Shapiro

Partner: Diana Devers (PHG Program Manager), Amanda DeLeo, Rachel Pierson and Kyla Cools (PHG Program Coordinators)

Partner: PHG Board

Partner: Various PVHA partners, including Defensores de la Cuenca, Patterson Park Audubon, Koreatown Planning Committee (Action Item 1A)

Partner: (Cemetery Preservation): Friends of Oella Cemetery, Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites, Howard County Cemetery Preservation Advisory Board, PRINCE program

Partners: Local Colleges and Universities (UMBC, Towson, Goucher, Community College of Baltimore County, Howard Community College)

Partners: Howard County Planning; Baltimore County Planning, Preservation Maryland

Categories of Activity

(Bold those that apply)

Heritage Product Development

Partnership building

Sustaining Regional Identity

Organizational

Project Duration:

July 2024-June 2028, assessed annually

Reason for Priority

- Expand program reach and impact to ensure inclusivity across all focus areas.
- Foster ongoing synergy between PHG's heritage and environmental focus areas, drawing on best practices from hard sciences, social sciences and humanities to ensure mission of preserving, protecting, interpreting and restoring is maintained and upheld.
- Ensure PHG continues to serve as a community resource and provides mission-focused expertise and services to local government and fellow non-profits as needed and/or requested.

Goal 2: Stewardship

Objective 2: Increase, implement and highlight synergies across four focus areas (History, Environment, Arts/Culture and Recreation) and work with partner organizations and community members in seeing connections between their daily activities, the surrounding environment, the past on the landscape and the rich cultural resources of the present in an historic and ever-changing watershed where their actions can make an impact and build a more sustainable and equitable future for all. In doing so, develop and provide watershed-wide activities that engage historical understanding, environmental knowledge, regional arts and culture and outdoor recreation access that support overall stewardship goals.

Action Items

(For each Action Item include anticipated fiscal year in which the activity will begin):

1. Develop and utilize a new matrix that allows PHG and partners to assess ways in which programs/activities integrate and emphasize PHG's four focus areas **(FY25)**
2. Develop tools for PHG and partners to better integrate all four focus areas in projects **(FY25)**
3. As necessary, update relevant Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and policies to account for program synergy approach **(FY25)**
4. Continue involving community members in data collection/research process, encouraging engagement and wonder with the natural world as well as historical and cultural resources in the watershed, also ensuring that community input allows us to adjust programs and respond to community needs and interests **(FY24)**

Deliverables / Measurable Items:

References in () refer to relevant sections of PVHA management plan

- a) Develop and implement program matrix, revise as necessary and assess effectiveness of efforts to improve program synergies **(not in 2015 management plan)**
- b) Continue providing a range of volunteer events, including tree planting, cleanups, invasive removals, water quality monitoring, salt watch, etc. **(new programs, also 1.5.2e-h, page 8-12; 5.1.3h, page 9-6)**
- c) Focusing on inclusivity, provide annual multilingual programs/materials and support similar programs and material development of partners **(not in 2015 management plan)**
- d) Through events, service projects, and scout and school programs, among others, engage residents and visitors in water quality monitoring, environmental history, historic preservation, cemetery and historical interpretation, climate change and sustainability education **(new programs, also 1.2.2f, page 8-8; 1.5.2e-h, page 8-12; 5.1.3h, page 9-6)**

Project Lead and Partners:

Lead: PHG Staff and Board

Partner: See [list on website](#) of existing partners

Categories of Activity

(Bold those that apply)

Heritage Product Development

Partnership building

Sustaining Regional Identity

Organizational

Project Duration:

July 2024-June 2028, assessed annually

Reason for Priority

- PHG aims to cultivate a better understanding of the deep interconnections between the human and natural world within the Patapsco Valley watershed that can lead to changed behavior that contributes to a more equitable and sustainable future for all.
- We believe it is essential to engage and serve our diverse multilingual community, emphasizing the importance of preserving the rich natural, cultural and historical resources of the Patapsco Valley.
- PHG takes the vantage point—embedded in our management plan—that natural heritage and cultural heritage are essential elements of the PVHA. In this respect, everything on the landscape is in some way an environmental feature, including the built environment which involved human labor and energy to construct and which draws on the region's natural resources. Human beings and their knowledge, experience and expertise have impacted the Patapsco River Valley for generations but it is also essential to acknowledge that some spaces are best left absent of humans.
- Flooding, water quality, open space preservation in a dense and developed urban/suburban area demands attention to issues around climate change and local citizen action. Examining flooding and water quality concerns needs to be done through lens of science, history, past use, community needs, and public engagement if the goal is to build sustainable and equitable future. PHG also recognizes a need to move beyond a "catastrophe" lens to emphasize what we can do together to improve, preserve and restore the environment.

Goal 3: Interpretation

Objective 1: Provide heritage experiences for visitors, through both PHG-led activities and those of partner organizations, focused on interpreting the Patapsco Valley's rich and diverse historical, environmental, cultural, artistic and recreational opportunities, including but not limited to its vital importance in Maryland's industrial revolution and its role in Maryland's evolving resource stewardship ethic, among other interpretive themes.

Interpretive objectives for the PVHA aim to:

- Assist visitors in developing a keener awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the area to make the visit a rich and enjoyable experience
- Promote the PVHA's vision and management goals and encourage visitors to thoughtfully respect its resources
- Promote visitor understanding of organizations and agencies whose programs are connected to the PVHA

Action Items

(For each Action Item include anticipated fiscal year in which the activity will begin):

1. Continue to promote a broader interpretive message for the PVHA that fully integrates all of PHG's four focus areas (FY24)
2. Provide visitor experiences and interpretive programming that help people understand PVHA's significance and stories within the context of its interpretive framework (FY24)
3. Develop additional presentations of PVHA stories/experiences that connect to interpretive themes and highlight links between past and present, particularly as part of our annual Patapsco Days programming (FY24)
4. Convey the stories through a variety of interpretive media, programming, and events (FY24)
5. Use the PVHA's natural, cultural and heritage resources to explore regional, state, national and transnational history and foster environmental awareness (FY24)
6. Enhance interpretive efforts through PHG conducted research as well as research efforts of partner organizations (FY24)
7. Provide technical expertise, support and guidance to partners in engaging PVHA interpretive themes and connecting to MHAA grant programs (FY24)

Deliverables / Measurable Items:

References in () refer to relevant sections of PVHA management plan

- a) Utilize interpretive planning documents and processes to engage partners (through group workshops and individual consultations) and use the process to encourage collaboration among PVHA sites in presenting diverse and inclusive interpretive themes (2.1.1, page 8-16)
- b) Lead collaboration among partners by facilitating efforts and creating opportunities to tell PVHA stories via signage, presentations, events, film/video, and preservation efforts (2.2.1, page 8-16)
- c) Expand interpretive presentations on the new PVHA website, which launched in FY23, that connect focus areas (2.3.1, page 8-18)
- d) Enhance social media and digital experience with further development of content for social media platforms and website to convey the heritage area's purpose, regional and national significance, and thematic framework for interpretation (2.3.1, page 8-18)
- e) Support public festivals and events in PVHA communities (2.4.2c, page 8-19)
- f) Work with and encourage partners to develop interpretive media and programs that tell stories of under-represented cultures in the PVHA, including in African American, Latinx, and Korean communities (2.4.3h, page 8-21)

Project Lead and Partners:

Lead: Aaron Shapiro

Partner: All PHG Staff

Partner: Local DMOs (Visit Howard County and Baltimore County Tourism)

Partner: Ellicott City Partnership, EC250

Partner: See [list on website](#) of existing partners as well as intention of engaging new partners

Categories of Activity

(Bold those that apply)

Heritage Product Development

Partnership building

Sustaining Regional Identity

Organizational

Project Duration:

July 2024-June 2028, assessed annually

Reason for Priority

- Engage new and existing partners in interpretive planning processes and implementation.
- Creating and fostering an inclusive approach to interpretive themes/messages across the PVHA is essential for helping people see themselves and their stories in the PVHA.
- A more holistic and inclusive approach--stories told, perspectives highlighted, integrated programs--can lay the groundwork for a more equitable and sustainable community that truly serves diverse residents, visitors and users and makes it a welcoming place for all.

Goal 4: Heritage Tourism

Objective 1: Attract residents and visitors to experience the Patapsco Valley's heritage by marketing the heritage area as a destination that showcases its unique and significant historical, cultural, recreational and natural resources.

Action Items

(For each Action Item include anticipated fiscal year in which the activity will begin):

1. Continue developing integrated approach to establish consistent PVHA identity and branding (FY24)
2. Provide technical and financial assistance to partners to expand heritage tourism resources (FY24)
3. Develop new PHG programs and promote existing PHG programs (FY24)

Deliverables / Measurable Items:

References in () refer to relevant sections of PVHA management plan

Action Item 1

- a) Update, as needed, PVHA/PHG branded materials across all platforms, including website to allow for partner highlights and ensure materials represent the diverse stories, perspectives and experiences found in the PVHA (3.1.1.a & b, page 8-24)
- b) Maintain updated PHG/PVHA calendar of events on the website as well as Eventbrite registration (3.1.3d, page 8-25)
- c) Promote PVHA video content on our YouTube channel and website (2.3.1c and 2.3.1d, page 8-18)
- d) Conduct media outreach highlighting PHG and promoting our work (3.1.2a, page 8-24)
- e) Update marketing plan and implement visual branding guidelines for all media and presentations (3.1.4d. and 3.1.5c, pages 8-26 and 8-27)

Action Item 2

- a) Provide ongoing assistance and guidance for mini-grants and MHAA grants (3.1.6a, page 8-27, 3.3.4a, page 8-30)
- b) Provide heritage tourism and heritage interpretation focused workshops to partners, including continued exhibit consulting (3.3.3a, page 8-30)

Action Item 3

- a) Continue hosting our annual Patapsco Days programs every March and expand audience reach and engagement (1.1.2a, page 8-5; 1.5.2e and 1.5.2h, page 8-12; 2.4.2a, page 8-19, 2.5.1a, page 8-21)
- b) Continue historical and archeological research to provide content for programs, exhibitions (physical and digital), and print and multimedia platforms (1.4.1b, page 8-10; 2.2.1e and 2.2.3d, page 8-17; 2.6.1a, page 8-22)
- c) Expand reach of PaSNAPsco photo contest, highlighting natural and cultural heritage of PVHA and opportunities to educate public (2.5.1b, page 8-21)

Project Lead and Partners:

Lead: Aaron Shapiro

Partner: PHG Staff, particularly Kyla Cools (PHG Heritage Coordinator) and Gaelyn Mitchell (PHG Marketing Coordinator)

Partner: PHG Heritage Committee

Partner: Visit Howard County, Baltimore County Tourism (county DMOs)

Partner: MHAA

Partner: Howard County Parks and Rec-Cultural Resources

Partner: Natural History Society of Maryland

Categories of Activity

(Bold those that apply)

Heritage Product Development

Partnership building

Sustaining Regional Identity

Organizational

Project Duration:

July 2024-June 2028, assessed annually

Reason for Priority

- Effective branding and messaging will help people learn more about the PVHA, explore our digital materials and encourage them to visit the PVHA to experience all that it offers.
- Desire to create additional content for our updated website, which launched in early FY23, as part of efforts to highlight diverse stories and experiences available in the PVHA for a wide audience.
- Continue to expand our use of various digital media platforms to promote the PVHA brand.
- Expand program reach and impact to ensure inclusivity across all focus areas.
- Foster ongoing synergy between our heritage and environmental focus areas, drawing on best practices from hard sciences, social sciences and humanities to ensure mission of preserving, protecting, interpreting and restoring is upheld.

Goal 5: Heritage and Outdoor Recreation

Objective 1: Collaborate with heritage partners to enhance opportunities for residents and visitors to experience quality heritage/outdoor recreation experiences in PVHA and learn about the heritage area through such experiences.

Action Items

(For each Action Item include anticipated fiscal year in which the activity will begin):

1. Work to develop trails and spaces linking interpretive sites in the Patapsco Valley and its heritage communities while respecting the Valley's ecosystems **(FY24)**
2. Expand recreation vision to include other outdoor recreation activities beyond trails as well as other geographic and demographic groups **(FY24)**
3. Formalize partnerships with allied heritage/outdoor recreation organizations in PVHA and support their programs/projects **(FY24)**

Deliverables / Measurable Items:

References in () refer to relevant sections of PVHA management plan

Action Item 1

- a) Work with local partners to encourage development of integrated trail systems across the entire Patapsco River watershed, including areas outside of the current PVHA boundaries **(4.2.1a-l, page 8-32)**
- b) Work in support role through MHAA grant funds and other relevant funding sources for acquisition of properties and creation of new parks **(4.1.1c&d, page 8-31)**
- c) Pilot outdoor recreation events that include heritage programming to draw attention to and support for trail connections to communities while highlighting PVHA boundary expansion **(4.1.1c, page 8-31 and 4.21g, page 8-32)**

Action Items 2 and 3

- a) Engage other user groups (equestrian, fishing, hunting, golf, climbing, paddling, etc.), highlight on new website, and expand community and demographic reach and access to include new heritage area additions as well as Spanish language and Korean language users **(4.1.1.a, page 8-31 and 4.2.1j, page 8-32)**
- b) Create additional content for outdoor recreation modules that are part of new PVHA website launched in FY23 **(3.1.3, page 8-25)**
- c) In addition to supporting the work of partners like Friends of Patapsco Valley State Park's adaptive outdoor recreation programs, expand cooperation with partners to launch and develop outdoor recreation-heritage fundraising events, including potential 5k heritage run at Banneker Park as well as events in Patapsco Valley State Park **(3.3.1d, page 8-29; 4.1, page 8-31 and 8-32)**

Project Lead and Partners:

Lead: Aaron Shapiro

Partner: Rachel Pierson (PHG Program Coordinator)

Partner: PHG Recreation Committee

Partner: Friends of Patapsco Valley State Park, Banneker Historical Park and Museum, Southwest Baltimore Gateway Partnership, Baltimore Metropolitan Council, NeighborSpace of Baltimore County

Categories of Activity

(Bold those that apply)

Heritage Product Development

Partnership building

Sustaining Regional Identity

Organizational

Project Duration:

July 2024-June 2028, assessed annually

Reason for Priority

- Trails remain a draw for many recreational visitors to the PVHA and will continue to be emphasized/promoted but we aim to do so within the context of a broader spectrum of recreational activities that connect people with the rich natural and cultural heritage of the PVHA.
- Continue fostering connections between our heritage and recreation focus areas, highlighting linkages for visitors on the landscape, on the web and through programming.
- Many visitors visit the PVHA to partake in available outdoor recreation opportunities and new events can provide connections to and information about cultural and natural heritage resources in the PVHA.
- With limited staff time devoted to outdoor recreation programs/activities, staff and board are focused on partnership and capacity building in support of outdoor recreation initiatives rather than PHG-led programs.

