

# **Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Corridor Management Action Plan**

**Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage  
Corporation  
April 2004**

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**The Center for Rural Pennsylvania**

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# **Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Corridor Management Action Plan**

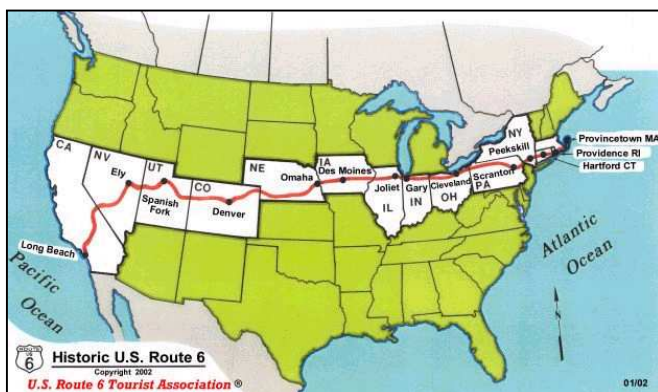
**Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Corporation**

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## Background and Overview

US Route 6 was originally the longest highway ever to exist in the United State – 3,652 miles, passing through 14 States from Cape Cod, MA to Long Beach, CA. By action of the State of California in the mid-1960's, today US Route 6 ends in Bishop, CA making it 3,227 miles long, the second longest US Route. This change has not diminished the Route 6 experience nationwide.



In Pennsylvania, the highway remains a favorite scenic driving route as it weaves through the county seats of 10 northern counties and connects with its earlier terminus (Route 6N) in Erie County. US Route 6 in Pennsylvania contains the stories of how transportation moved across the most rural parts of the state and the country.

As it traverses Northern Pennsylvania, US Route 6 connects New York and Ohio, it connects four designated State Heritage Regions, 19 State Parks, numerous State Forests, five Pennsylvania Historical and Museum sites, several National Park Service Sites, the Allegheny National Forest, and scores of Boroughs and Villages.



While marketing of the scenic route has taken place since the 1920's, a concerted promotional campaign by the county convention & visitors bureaus, organized as the *Pennsylvania Route 6 Tourist Association*, has gained national attention for this historic highway. With the help of state agencies, the *Pennsylvania Route 6 Tourist Association* began a process of evaluating the feasibility of using Route 6 as a conduit for enhancing the economy and quality of life in Pennsylvania's northern tier.

Given its history and potential, US Route 6 is requesting designation as a Pennsylvania State Heritage Corridor.

## The Vision

The Pennsylvania Route 6: Our Heritage and Destination; Framework for Action (Route 6 Plan) planning process has as its hallmark *public participation and consensus building* on the heritage tourism potential of the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania, centered on the Route 6 Corridor. The **Route 6 Plan** was coordinated by the *Route 6 Steering Committee*, a "hands-on" fifteen-member group from various agencies, private businesses, and communities along the Corridor, which guided the consulting team. The Committee received input from the Route 6 Task Force, a much larger group comprised of representatives from businesses, agencies, governmental officials and citizens at-large from the region. The collaborative yearlong process yielded the following *vision* for the Pennsylvania Route 6 Corridor by 2010:

*The Pennsylvania Route 6 Corridor offers a broad range of employment and entrepreneurial opportunities and exceptional experiences. Public and private infrastructure make the corridor accessible and provide economic opportunities for strengthening communities while enhancing natural, cultural, scenic, recreational, and historical resources. A strategic, unified partnership guides the management of these resources, preserving and enhancing the Pennsylvania Route 6 heritage and quality of life throughout the corridor.*

Having established the vision, the Steering Committee and Task Force began the process of carrying out activities that would implement the Vision.

## The Plan

As a means of furthering and ultimately realizing this vision, in late-2001 the *Route 6 Steering Committee* began to implement the recommendations of the **Route 6 Plan** in the same collaborative manner in which the Plan was developed. At that time, the Steering Committee had the added benefit of four separate topical subcommittees – *Business and Marketing, Development, Interpretation and Wayfinding* – in its ambitious efforts. The implementation of the following recommendations began:



Early Planning Meeting

- **Resource Coordination and Management:** There must be a clear mission, focus and consensus, all of which require good communication among stakeholders, a condition reflecting the diversity of the eleven-county region stretching from the Ohio to the New York borders of the Commonwealth. This region includes scores of municipalities, transcends numerous federal and State agency regions, a diversity of resources and businesses, and a myriad of communities and developmental patterns ranging from farms and rural landscapes to quaint and picturesque villages and towns, to large urban areas. Early in the planning process it was recognized that the Route 6 experience is both *corridor-wide* and *resource-driven*. Thus, the preservation and enhancement of resources is a priority throughout the 440-mile length of the Corridor. While local resources, communities and ambiance may vary in the expansive and diverse corridor; it was recognized that local variations such as municipal boundaries and the capacities of those responsible for localized resources should not detract from the experience. Given this daunting task, the **Route 6 Plan** recommended the formation of a *coalition of stakeholders* as a means of providing the coordination necessary for a seamless experience. This coalition has been formalized in the establishment of the *Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Corporation*.
- **Resource Development:** There are numerous and varied developmental opportunities along Route 6 which will benefit visitors *and* residents, encompassing new construction and site development, preservation, renovation and adaptive reuse. Investments should be oriented towards enhancing the scenic, natural, recreational, cultural and heritage experience while strengthening the communities and resisting the negative impacts of over-development. In this regard, heritage development projects were recommended to be of

benefit to residents and visitors alike, reflect the values and heritage of the respective host community, be sustainable resources, contribute to and be integrated into the larger corridor-wide context, and reveal a quality of place.

- **Marketing:** Rural Northern Pennsylvania has a look, feel and image that must be further developed and promoted among residents, potential investors and visitors. The stories and resources must be readily known and available, and economic opportunities in heritage tourism must also be recognized. Simply stated, the competitive niche must be defined, products and services would be developed that create value while reinforcing the Corridor's sense of place, a diversified business base would be nurtured that serves the resident and visitor, an educational process must be carried out, strategic infrastructure improvements should be made that reinforce living and visiting the Corridor, and linkages must be made between tourism and overall economic development goals.



Wellsboro, Tioga County

- **Sustainability:** While ongoing development efforts will effectively utilize public funding sources likely to be available, operations and marketing must seek to be sustained by private sources and be market driven and competitive in the longer term. Sustainability means that the Route 6 heritage program be responsive to changing consumer and market patterns, be sensitive to assistance needs of businesses, utilize creative revenue streams that provide incentives for the reinvestment of a part of the profit into the heritage program, and develop strategies and agendas that help attract private investment. In essence, the Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Corporation plans to function as a Heritage Corridor under the State's program with the PA Route 6 Tourist Association assuming responsibility for product research, marketing, and revenue generation required to sustain marketing efforts.



Lake Wallenpaupack,  
Pike/Wayne Counties

## The Recommended Actions

The **Route 6 Plan** outlined and prioritized certain activities and projects that would implement planning recommendations. These included:

- **Priority Actions** – includes *Heritage Coalition* formation, definition of roles and responsibilities of members, develop consensus on the structure of the Coalition, retain staff as needed, identify immediate- and long-term revenue sources, and consider pursuit of a “National Heritage Area designation”.
- **Early Implementation Projects** – includes continuation and refinement of place audit and resource inventory, evaluation of land use patterns using existing land use plans when available and/or working with appropriate agencies in carrying out such land use plans, creation of a calendar of events along the Corridor, further analyze demographics, perceptions and needs, identification of signature resources and projects deemed



essential to the Route 6 experience, develop the concept of Route 6 as a heritage destination, continuation of the public participation process and further engagement of residents.

- *Phase 2 Planning Efforts* – establishing and working through the four subcommittees, more focused planning and strategies associated with Business and Marketing, Interpretative, Wayfinding and Development would be carried out.



**PA Route 6 Heritage Corporation Officers 2004**

One major outcome of the published **Route 6 Plan** was a recommendation that a “work group” explore the issue of “coalition formation” as a measure of implementing Plan recommendations and creating a sense of permanence and institutional stability. After much discussion and analysis, the *Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Corporation* was established on September 29, 2003. The coalition is a representation of the public and private sectors including tourism promotion agencies from a multi-county area, State agencies and boards, economic development agencies, businesses and industries within the Corridor and local/county governmental officials, and is essentially an expansion of the Route 6

Steering Committee. It is both, a group of stakeholders and the guiding organization for Route 6 Heritage Tourism. Bylaws were drafted and approved and the Corporation is now incorporated as a 501-(C)(3) tax status organization. In essence, this new non-profit corporation will focus on heritage tourism development while the existing *Pennsylvania Route 6 Tourist Association* concentrates on promotion. The institution, the subcommittees and processes are in place and the work continues.

## Implementing the Plan

Achieving the recommendations and recommended actions require the development and implementation of the following major planning efforts identified in the **Route 6 Plan**:

- A **Business Plan** itemizing income/expenses, identifying long-term opportunities, assessing competition, determining the timing and level of funding required, and identifying risks and opportunities. Work on this planning effort was initiated in 2003 and taken to the review draft level, with completion set for 2004.
- A **Marketing Plan** determining the “message” for the Corridor, describing and developing strategies for niche markets, identifying target customers, assessing market opportunities, and developing a destination marketing plan will be completed by the Pennsylvania Route 6 Tourist Association. The Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Corporation will identify developmental issues and impacts of growth on the Corridor that may have implications on the “message”.
- An **Interpretive Plan** identifying themes and stories of Route 6, goals and objectives tailored to target customers, methods of telling the story, coordination with PA Department of Education, and coordination with the related Wayfinding issues. The Interpretive Plan was developed during 2002-03.

- A **Wayfinding Plan** assessing informational needs of corridor users and target customers, identification of decision points and delivery methods, determination of consistent message across Corridor, and identification of user-friendly technology for implementing the Plan. An initial Wayfinding Plan was developed during 2002-03.
- A **Business Opportunity Plan** for the Route 6 Coalition incorporating information on new and existing public/private funding programs and opportunities, identifying merchandising revenue opportunities and options, and proposing the creation of new local loan and incentives programs and packages targeted towards the development of the heritage tourism business by residents of the Corridor. A funding request for the Business Opportunity Plan was submitted under the USDA's *Rural Business Opportunity Grant Program* in 2003, and resubmitted in 2004.



Conneaut Lake, Crawford County

A summary of the suggested role and responsibility for each of the subcommittees follows. In each case, an overview of the committee role is given, along with a review of responsibilities and the status of the subcommittee's work to date.

## Subcommittees: Roles and Activities



Steering Committee Meeting, Ludlow, PA

During the 2002-03, planning activities focused on furthering a number of initiatives developed and recommended in the **Route 6 Plan**. Activities included fostering a sense of permanence, the development of an interpretive plan, the initiation of a Wayfinding effort and thinking through and developing a localized community-oriented heritage tourism process, all within a structured process involving stakeholders in the region. In addition, consensus building and resident engagement were furthered through regular Steering Committee meetings that not only disseminated information on heritage tourism and related topics, but also

provided a forum for local groups to advise the Steering Committee of local heritage tourism initiatives.

During this period the Route 6 Coalition met approximately every six weeks at different locations within the Route 6 Corridor, concurrent with the meeting of four subcommittees on business and marketing, development, interpretation and Wayfinding. The geographic dispersal of meetings allowed greater participation by local groups and individuals in the respective communities and fostered greater understanding of the Route 6 heritage to members of the Corporation and Subcommittees. Steering Committee meetings included time for presentations by local heritage groups, museum tours, etc. The following summarizes these meetings, locations and provides an overview on *non-routine* work items:



<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Overview</b>
November 8, 2001	Ansonia	Review plan recommendations and Phase II
January 17, 2002	Milford	Recap roles and responsibilities
February 27, 2002	Corry	Details of heritage tourism
March 21, 2002	Teleconference	Subcommittee responsibilities/staff
April 10, 2002	Galeton	USDA Rural Business Opportunity Grant Program and informational PowerPoint Draft review
May 15, 2002	Towanda	Byways discussion and final PowerPoint review
June 19, 2002	Conneaut Lake	PennPlan Process/Testimony and distinction between heritage development and heritage marketing
July 30, 2002	Mayfield	Review of PennPlan and alternate funding
September 4, 2002	Smethport	Bylaws discussion and logo conceptual Review
October 24, 2002	Honesdale	Review Draft of Interpretive Plan, signage Alternative and Heritage Communities Program
January 28, 2003	Wellsboro	Finalization of plans reviewed in October and incorporation issues
March 31, 2003	Galeton	Review of State Heritage Plan and National Route 6 issues and opportunities
May 29, 2003	Ludlow	Signage/logo input and approvals
July 28, 2003	Troy	Kinzua Bridge destruction and discussion of revised vision/goals
September 29, 2003	Coudersport	Business strategy discussion and incorporation of the Route 6 Heritage Corporation
December 8, 2003	Mansfield	Results of Heritage Communities Program competition and Business Plan discussion

In effect, this technique facilitated a “hands-on” and pragmatic planning approach at the very local level. The Subcommittees are certainly “working committees”, each of which has developed and refined various initiatives and early-implementation activities during 2002-03. The roles, responsibilities and activities of the respective subcommittees reflect the approach of the Corporation in furthering the recommendations and realizing the Vision.

## **The Business and Marketing Subcommittee**

Role: This Subcommittee is involved in the development of hospitality and a marketing plan for the Corridor, and in developing a heritage-tourism business strategy for the Coalition within the context of the Corridor.

### Responsibilities:

- Develop a Strategic Marketing Plan that determines the “message” and “brand” for the Corridor by building on the Interpretive Plan. The Marketing Plan describes and develops strategies for niche markets, differentiating needs relevant to each. The Marketing Plan also identifies target customers, assesses market opportunities and develops a calendar for advertising and promotion. Ideally, the Marketing Plan must also take growth and development issues into account, since they may affect the resource and ultimately the “message”, and develops appropriate products and services. Therefore, marketing must be flexible enough to respond to changes as may occur along the corridor and adjust its product and service strategies as demand changes.
- Develop a Hospitality Plan for the Corridor that deals with training, education and certification for those in the tourism business, in conjunction with educational institutions along the Corridor. It must first establish standards to be met then establish procedures that provide the necessary training for businesses and staffs, and disseminate information on resources within the Corridor to service providers and attraction sites within the Corridor.
- Develop a Business Plan itemizing income/expenses, identifying long-term opportunities, assessing competition, determining the timing and level of funding required, and identifying risks and opportunities. This is a business plan for the governance structure of the Coalition, focusing on establishing and maintaining the Coalition as a Heritage Corporation. In essence, this is an *operations and maintenance plan* dealing with such subjects as revenue generating projects, identifying responsibilities of the PA Route 6 Tourist Association and the Heritage Corporation, fees and other revenue sources, and state, private or federal funding potentials.



**Presque Isle Lighthouse,  
Erie County**

Summary: The Strategic Marketing Plan deals with further developing the message, the resource and the market, while the Business Plan deals with internal financial and programmatic matters, long-term market opportunities, interrelationships within the Corridor, and competition. The Hospitality Plan establishes standards and procedures implementing these standards for those in the heritage-tourism business. Taken together, these components are critical in marketing the corridor as a regional destination.



**Port Allegheny, McKean County**

Activities Summary: During the 2002-03 period this Subcommittee took the lead in formulating the Corporation, developing Bylaws for the Corporation. Work has been initiated on the development of a Business Plan.

### **The Interpretive Subcommittee**

Role: This Subcommittee has a more focused responsibility on the development and maintenance of an Interpretive Plan that tells the Stories of the Corridor and informs the Wayfinding Plan.

#### Responsibilities:

- Identification and refinement of themes and stories of Route 6, the Corridor and its people.
- Develop and relate goals and objectives tailored to target customers identified in the Strategic Marketing Plan.
- Identify methods for telling, retelling and refining the story, taking into account the needs of visitors and residents.
- Address the needs of educators by incorporating and adapting State educational standards, creative use of media, etc.

Summary: The Interpretive Plan and interpretation process is critical in ultimately defining and maintaining the resource. On the macro scale it establishes the parameters for marketing efforts, yet on the micro scale it is necessary for Wayfinding signage.



**Tiona Engine House, Warren County**

Activities Summary: During 2002-03 the Interpretive Subcommittee developed *Four Hundred Miles of Stories: An Interpretive Plan for the Route 6 Corridor in Pennsylvania* and assisted in the development of six itineraries guiding visitors to the interpreted themes. The itineraries were highlighted in the latest version of the promotional brochure, *Take the High Road*, published by the PA Route 6 Tourist Association and will be available on the Internet. The itineraries will be used in a spring mailing to the travel press.

The Plan identified numerous intriguing local stories, including:

- Various battles and war heroes during the formative years of this country, ranging from the American revolution to the Yankee-Pennamite Wars to the War of 1812;
- The early exploration and use of natural resources including lumber, oil and the only source for anthracite coal;
- Many in a long line of “firsts” including the country’s first streetcars, the first cable television, the country’s first railroad locomotive, and the first oil boom;
- Numerous railroad features including Climax locomotives, the Tunkhannock Viaduct, the Kinzua Viaduct and the Erie Railroad; and
- The home for an assortment of interesting “characters” such as an Indian Queen, French aristocrats fleeing the Revolution, Ole Bull, Stephen Foster, and Gifford Pinchot. The Route 6 stories range from Revolutionary War battles, to the exploitation of resources, to the first streetcars, first train locomotive and cable television, to natural resources, to the development of zippers and rayon.

The Plan then wove these and other Route 6 stories into six major themes summarized as:

- The Warriors Road Theme honoring the epic stories of warriors from many periods;
- The Natural Opportunities Theme focusing on the hunters, farmers, oilmen, lumbermen, tanners, miners and others who have profited from the natural resources;
- The Engineer’s Challenge Theme for those civil engineering feats that helped utilize the natural resources and settle the area;
- The New Beginnings and Safe Havens Theme focusing on the role Northern Pennsylvania had for Connecticut Yankees, French aristocrats, escaping slaves and others who sought haven;
- The Visionaries, Achievers and Social Entrepreneurs Theme honoring people whose ideas and achievements have inspired and transformed others; and
- The Outdoor Enthusiast’s Paradise Theme offering opportunities for outdoor recreation year-round.

The Plan profiled the heritage traveler in Pennsylvania and noted that the heritage market consists of a complex blend of activities and attractions, transcending dates and facts. The Plan differentiates between “one way” and “interactive” interpretive methods as they relate to the effectiveness of Route 6’s six major themes. The Plan also proposes a mix of interpretive recommendations for the Route 6 corridor.



Trolley Museum, Lackawanna County

## The Wayfinding Subcommittee

Role: This subcommittee guides the development of a Wayfinding Plan, monitor and refine the way the message is relayed, and consistently evaluate the condition of the resource.

### Responsibilities:

- Assess informational needs of corridor users and target customers building on the foundation laid by the Interpretive Plan and Strategic Marketing Plan.
- Identify physical, historic, cultural and other decision points along the highway.
- Determine and identify delivery methods, such as signage, CD's, kiosks, etc., including an identification of user-friendly technology for implementing the Wayfinding Plan.
- Determine, refine and maintain a consistent heritage-tourism message across Corridor, representing a consensus over the history and culture of the area.
- Balance the visitor experience along the resource with need to meet the needs of local residents, communities and businesses.
- Assess, monitor and analyze any highway safety issues within the context of diverse users.
- Identify and update highway improvement projects and activities and integrate them with established transportation project programming.



Towanda, Bradford County

Summary: The Wayfinding Plan builds especially on the results of the Interpretive Plan, and wayfinding in general should take into account the target users' needs as identified in the Strategic Marketing Plan. The issue of "condition" adds a dimension to this Committee's role, but is critical since understanding the condition of the resource is a prerequisite for maintaining the highway at acceptable levels, resolving any problems relatively early and maintaining the integrity of the resource in general.

Activities Summary: During 2002-03 the Wayfinding Subcommittee focused on the development of a Wayfinding Plan that focuses on elevating the perception of the Route 6 Corridor and resources via a coordinated signage approach that identifies the Corridor, the Corridor communities, and places milepost signage. The Subcommittee researched the *PennDOT Toolbox for Regional Wayfinding Signage*, and as a result of this research explored alternatives to it specifically eliminating directional information. The alternative chosen essentially focuses on "branding" the long and diverse Route 6 corridor via mile marker and logo signs. The Subcommittee determined that this would provide a framework for the public and private interests along the corridor to incorporate them into their own marking efforts. The Subcommittee first reviewed alternative designs for the signage and is now in the process of implementing the first element of this approach in the





form of the milepost signage program. The resulting signage system would involve over 1,000 signs as delineated below:

- 860 mile marker signs
- 76 Community Logo signs (Cities/Boroughs/Villages with more than 500n people)
- 20 County Welcome signs
- 2 State Gateway signs
- 76 Town Limit signs (Cities/Boroughs/Villages with more than 500 people)
- 132 Highway Intersection signs (US/PA/Interstate Routes)

A sample of other issues to be addressed as noted by the Subcommittee includes:

- Development of support maps with attractions/services tied to the mile markers;
- Themed identification signs keying visitors to common specific types of attractions;
- Wider distribution of information on attractions and services;
- Inclusion of a route planner on Visitors Bureau/Chamber of Commerce web sites;
- Seeking alternative designation of existing "Business Route 6" as "Historic Route 6";
- Continual monitoring of all aspects of the physical condition of the highway;
- Careful planning in relation to roadway shoulders, including condition and uniformity for bicycles; and
- Involvement in PennDOT's 12-year highway planning process.

## **The Development Subcommittee**

Role: This Subcommittee focuses on the development and maintenance of heritage-tourism businesses along the Corridor. The efforts will be channeled to the development of a Business Opportunity Plan, with follow-up implementation activities, and the creation of new incentive programs furthering heritage tourism development.

### Responsibilities:

- Identify and update the array of public and private sources to assist the Corporation in maintaining the necessary mix of businesses along the Corridor.
- Develop a plan for merchandising opportunities and options along the Corridor.
- Identify gaps in commercial and service businesses along the Corridor, and seek to fill these gaps.
- Propose the creation of new local loan and incentives programs and packages targeted towards the development of the heritage tourism business by residents of the Corridor.
- Encourage appropriate development along the Corridor in recognition of and in conformance with local concerns and planning activities.

Summary: This committee starts out with an economic development strategy and approach that identifies problems and opportunities in the heritage tourism business environment, inventories of existing heritage/tourism businesses, determines gaps, and carries out a cluster analysis of

the heritage/tourism business environment and makes developmental recommendations for the Coalition. Follow-up activities of the committee focus on encouraging development within the confines of the vision for the Corridor.



Milford, Pike County

Activities Summary: During 2002-03 the Subcommittee completed an application for a Rural Business Opportunities grant through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, requesting funding for an economic gaps analysis along the Corridor, and developed an entirely new approach for community-based heritage development entitled the *Heritage Communities Program (HCP)*. In essence, the HCP makes the towns and villages along Route 6 better *host communities* for the traveling public, which also makes them better communities in which to live for year-round – current and future – residents. *The Heritage Communities Program is the embodiment of the integration of heritage and economic development planning, providing mutual reinforcement.* Becoming a Heritage Community is a journey and destination for a community within the Pennsylvania Route 6 Corridor destination. It is also a highly unique and individualized process and product developed through partnerships with local communities and the Heritage Corporation. This requires a

planning effort that integrates elements of community planning, economic base planning and heritage planning and synthesizes these levels to include *sustainable heritage tourism and sense of place issues* localized to the community level. The major components of the HCP as developed by the Subcommittee are:

- Identifying, assessing and localizing *heritage themes* (cultural, historical, industrial, etc.) to augment and complement Route 6 heritage issues;
- Local *engagement and consensus building* on the role of heritage to the community and the capacity of the community to sustain it;
- The *relationship* of sustainable heritage development to everyday community life and the local sense of place, and the value and interest afforded to the tourist;
- *Preservation and enhancement* of historical structures and sites, unique architecture, and traditional neighborhoods;
- *Engaging* the local business community in the development, marketing and maintenance of a sustainable local heritage tourism effort, especially retail and service businesses catering to the traveler;
- The preservation and enhancement of the *viability* and *appearance* of central business districts of key nodes along the Corridor area;
- Identifying and enhancing the local hospitality infrastructure to assure that the community is *visitor ready*;
- Inclusion of *community design and aesthetic* (i.e. streetscape, facades, gateways and gateway gardens, developmental standards, etc.) recommendations;

- The encouragement of well-planned development and the avoidance of sprawl and haphazard development in the interest of *preserving the positive characteristics* of Route 6, the Corridor area and the respective communities;
- Treatment of open space, trails, waterways and greenways, and recognition of their importance for heritage-tourism, eco-tourism and alternate transportation;
- Localization of *traffic calming measures* that address traffic safety, traffic circulation and tourism concerns;
- Establishing and maintaining adequate *signage* and information for visitors and identifying the community as an official *Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Community*; and
- Adopting *the PA Route 6 Heritage Community Program* and designating the acceptance of this Program by appropriate signage.

The end result of this is the improvement of *key nodes* along “the PA Route 6 Destination” as *Heritage Communities*, building on the successes of “Growing Greener” and “Growing Smarter” philosophy, but adding a “Going Slower” element as well that will translate to the potential visitor an experience that is different from other destinations. DCNR agreed to participate in a pilot HCP and the Subcommittee conducted a competition for the initial heritage Communities Program in the fall of 2003. As a result of a competitive process, the Borough of Smethport was chosen to be the initial Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Community in December 2003.



**Smethport, McKean County**

## Goals and Strategies

This subsection summarizes the goals and strategies of the Route 6 Heritage Corporation. The overall goal follows the policy framework of the *Heritage Tourism Development* framework for the Commonwealth, namely to provide a quality visitor experience, improve communities along the Corridor and enhance the quality of life they offer residents, and increase resultant economic benefits. The Route 6 Goals and Strategies attempt to embrace the statewide goal, also identified in the *Heritage Tourism Development* framework, achieving the integration of heritage tourism and economic development via achieving four objectives of (1) securing sustainable funding, (2) upgrading heritage experiences, (3) strategic marketing of heritage, and (4) increasing local leadership capacity.

Many of the following were first identified in the **Route 6 Plan**, while some were refined and reformulated to reflect changing circumstances during the 2001-03 period.

## CULTURAL CONSERVATION

- Continue to encourage historic preservation – This is required to address threatened and locally unrecognized historic and architectural resources, building on the preservation theme already common in many communities along the Corridor.
  - ❑ Preserve historic sites and buildings in communities and rural areas along the Corridor.
  - ❑ Preserve unique architectural styles of homes, barns and other buildings visible along the Corridor.
  - ❑ Encourage the rehabilitation and reuse of older buildings that help define the unique qualities of the Corridor.



**Coudersport, Potter County**

- Create, maintain and improve cultural opportunities – This is in recognition of the need to maintain and enhance a varied assortment of resources that will attract, serve and entertain the varied needs of new and repeat visitors and residents.

## RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

- Create and maintain recreational opportunities – This builds on a recognized strength of the Corridor that is inherent to its image.
  - ❑ Advocate the improvement of bicycle safety throughout the Corridor.
  - ❑ Encourage recreational off-road trail development complimentary to the Corridor.
  - ❑ Encourage use of state and national parks and forests along the corridor.
- Provide technical assistance to those municipalities who seek to protect and enhance the existing natural character within the Route 6 Corridor – This is necessary both due to the many scenic, historic and natural resources in the Corridor and the anticipated developmental pressures that are anticipated to occur. Our efforts will be to become a partner with those municipalities who request assistance.
- Encourage well-planned development that protects significant natural resources through partnerships with local municipalities.
  - ❑ Encourage preservation of open and greenspace – This is integral to the relationship and interplay of built-up towns and villages, wooded hillsides and valleys and rural farmland and pasture.
  - ❑ Enhance the appropriate local developmental regulatory framework
- Seek the protection and enhancement of key scenic areas - This builds on an identification of key visual resources in the Corridor natural areas, key attractions/sites, and pastoral environments.
  - ❑ Identify scenic overlooks and their role in kiosk system.
  - ❑ Relate the relationship between intact and compact towns and villages, and the rural/agricultural countryside.

- Establishment and maintenance of Route 6 as a recognizable corridor – Much has been accomplished in the establishment of Route 6 as a heritage Corridor, but this must be further institutionalized and reinforced. This is a two-fold effort, with the Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Corporation focusing on development and retention of resources and the Pennsylvania Route 6 Tourist Association focusing on promotion and marketing.



**Rt. 6, Crawford County**

- Continue the Route 6 branding effort and the establishment and common promotion of Route 6 corridor-wide events in cooperation with the Tourist Promotion Agencies representing the eleven Route 6 counties and the *Pennsylvania Route 6 Tourist Association*.
- Continue to monitor the critical resources existing and being planned in the Corridor via partnerships among the *Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Corporation*, local municipalities, counties and development agencies.

## **INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION**

- Develop and maintain a Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Program – This is a critical on-going process for visitor and resident alike, building on and refining themes, stories and defining characteristics of the Corridor.
  - Compile a collection of oral histories for the corridor.
  - Monitor and update the Interpretive Plan of the Corridor.
  - Develop education programs for schools to be implemented by Pennsylvania Route 6 Tourist Association.
- Coordinate the delivery of information along the corridor – While the individual stories are as distinct as the diverse Corridor, the way the message is delivered should have consistency throughout the Corridor.
  - Design a program to be used by festivals and fairs, including printed materials and/or presence in booths.
  - Establish an interpreters network as a framework for interpretation.
  - Encourage the cross-promotion of activities, events and sites.
  - Coordinate a network of visitor information centers and State Route 6 Welcome Centers near the Ohio and New York borders.
- Improve Wayfinding signage along the Corridor – This involves at first the development of the “Route 6 Brand” and identity, followed by incremental Wayfinding as Route 6 resources and in concert with Wayfinding signage implemented within sub-regions of the Corridor.
  - Implementation of the mile marker plan for identification and marketing purposes.
  - Development a kiosk system at strategic nodes along the Corridor.
  - Updating of the regional resource mapping database.
  - Development of Wayfinding signage in the long-term.
- Enhance and encourage Corridor uniformity – While the various attractions, sites and resources along the Corridor are as diverse as they are vibrant, coordination is essential for a consistent experience.



- ❑ Coordination is required among attractions, sites and resources in days and hours of operation.
- ❑ Encourage and institutionalize cross-promotion.
- Develop interpretive products – As a means of formalizing the identity and sustainability of the Corridor, products must be developed, marketed and available for sale.
  - ❑ Development of a *Route 6 Game* for sale throughout the Corridor.
  - ❑ Establishment of a *Route 6* endorsed product program.
  - ❑ Carrying out certain efforts tailored to youth, such as a Poster contest and a Geography Bee.
- Provide consistent and visitor-friendly signage – This is especially critical given the size and breadth of the Corridor.
  - ❑ Implementation of the mile marker plan for identification and marketing purposes.
  - ❑ Development a kiosk system at strategic nodes along the Corridor.
  - ❑ Development of Wayfinding signage in the long-term.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Encourage economic diversity throughout the Corridor, embracing well-planned industrial, commercial, financial, services, and institutional opportunities catering to the employment and career needs of residents, in addition to tourism-related businesses serving visitors and residents.
  - ❑ Identify economic gaps that may exist along the Corridor and/or segments of the Corridor, as a means of objectively analyzing and identifying areas for new business opportunities.
  - ❑ Initiate programs to help establish new attractions, accommodations and dining establishments, and other business gaps.
  - ❑ Increase exposure opportunities for small businesses through marketing, networking and other means.
  - ❑ Develop and administer a low interest loan fund for small business start-ups in the heritage-tourism sector.
  - ❑ Investigate the feasibility of and, and if found to be feasible, encourage tax incentive programs for new/expanding businesses in the Corridor.
- Promote meaningful planning through partnerships with interested local municipalities throughout the Corridor by communities and multi-municipal regions, downtown business districts, development agencies, transportation agencies, counties and sub-state regions in recognition of the relationship among livable communities, vibrant traditional downtowns and a natural rural countryside.



Tunkhannock, Wyoming County



Warren, Warren County

- ❑ Actively support context sensitive transportation planning that addresses upgrades to Route 6 and intersecting north/south roadways, without diminishing the highway as a heritage resource.
  - ❑ Encourage multi-municipal comprehensive planning between older communities and the surrounding rural townships comprising individual logical region.
  - ❑ Advance the concept of the review and/or establishment and enforcement of design standards via subdivision/land development ordinances and/or freestanding regulations as means of maintaining architectural and site planning integrity, in municipalities who request our help.
  - ❑ Encourage our municipal partners to enact and enforce local land use regulations that promote our goals and objectives and those of the local municipality.
- Promote the developmental approach of in-fill development in older communities and clustered development in newly developing areas – This reinforces the traditional developmental approach, which in turn reinforces the resource.
  - Encourage the removal of blight within the Corridor via locally administered property maintenance codes, housing and commercial rehabilitation, and selective demolition as necessary – This keeps the best possible face to visitors while providing residents with better communities and property values.
  - Pursue the refinement and expansion of the Heritage Communities Program – Building on the experience gained from the pilot Heritage Community Program, the long-term goal is to have at least one heritage community in each County in the Corridor.
    - ❑ Balance the unique demands and qualities of the Heritage Communities Program with existing Federal and State development and preservation programs.
    - ❑ Localize the notion of place-making and economic development, within the context of honoring stewardship.
  - Develop local/community pride – This is critical in creating the backdrop and atmosphere for the heritage tourism culture to flourish.
  - Make residents knowledgeable – This is related to the community pride issue since a deep understanding of local heritage is necessary, along with a context of how the local story interfaces with the regional heritage.
  - Welcome visitors and make them feel comfortable – The message and the quality of the experience should be consistent throughout the Corridor.
    - ❑ Create hospitality-training programs to be implemented by Pennsylvania Route 6 Tourist Association.
  - Make Route 6 an affordable experience – This is especially critical for the attraction of families and older new and repeat visitors and residents.
    - ❑ Develop tour itineraries at various price levels, taking generational and social factors of the likely traveling public into account.
    - ❑ Develop and promote suggested itineraries for individuals



Honesdale, Wayne County

and groups, and encourage and promote accommodation packages by the Pennsylvania Route 6 Tourist Association.

- Enhance vibrant towns – This is in recognition of the special role of the small communities play in the Corridor, with Route 6 comprising the literal and figurative “Main Street” of many picturesque and intact towns.
  - ❑ Revitalize traditional downtowns structurally through streetscape, façade, infrastructure and signage improvements and other components typically part of the *Main Street Program*, and the recently announced *Hometown Streets* initiative.
  - ❑ Enhance existing residential neighborhoods through the approach intrinsic in the *Elm Street Program*.
  - ❑ Revitalize downtown non-structurally through the engagement of business community, promotions, coordination of hours among businesses and other components of a “Main Street” approach.
  - ❑ Enhance the understanding and role of downtowns in the message of the Corridor.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

- Intergovernmental cooperation – This is necessary given the multiplicity of county, municipal and special districts throughout the Corridor.
  - ❑ Maintaining an inventory of political and bureaucratic boundaries and stakeholders
  - ❑ Continue to provide corridor-wide planning with our partners in maintaining the heritage corridor.
  - ❑ Encourage multi-municipal comprehensive planning between older built-up communities and the surrounding rural townships comprising individual logical region.
  - ❑ Work with our partners who request help in developing creative approaches to planning, land development and local heritage appropriate for local needs.
- Establish and maintain interagency cooperation among various agencies – This includes numerous non-profit agencies in the Corridor, including tourist promotion agencies, community and economic development agencies/districts, Chambers of Commerce, and various civic groups, in addition to businesses and business groups, and governmental organizations.
- Maintain cross-corridor thinking and communication – Building on the foundation laid by the Route 6 planning process, cross-corridor communication and planning is required.
  - ❑ Development of a system of gateways and hubs in the next phase of Corridor planning.
  - ❑ Maintenance of a website that acts as a clearinghouse of information.
  - ❑ Development of additional visitor centers and user-friendly stops at strategic locations.
  - ❑ Formulation and formalization of business alliances among similar/complimentary businesses along the Corridor.
  - ❑ Regular updating of the Route 6 Heritage Plan at five-year intervals, including the regular updating of business gaps.
- Creation and maintenance of a management entity – This has been initiated in the formation of the Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Corporation, but requires the development and maintenance of a sustainable heritage development program over the long run.

## 10-Year Plan of Action

Based on the review of goals and strategies as noted above, a 10-year action agenda for the Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Corporation will include the following items and activities:

- a. **Branding Signage Implementation Project:** The Corporation will complete the mile marker phase of the signage program whereby each mile will be marker throughout the length of the Corridor. The project will encompass Route 6 and Route 6N in northwestern Pennsylvania and follow Route 6 through the northern tier. Where a "Business Route 6" exists (i.e. Tunkannock, Scranton area, etc.) the Business Route will receive the mile-markers. This reflects the program focus on business/resource identification for advertising and marketing purposes. The estimated cost of this program is \$250,000, all of which is committed. Future activities involve the refinement of the Wayfinding Plan to address directional signing, followed by implementation.
- b. **Education and Communication Effort:** The Corporation will continue the public engagement effort it embarked on in 2001, and enhance this effort to engage local and county decision-makers and other potential stakeholders along the Corridor. This effort embraces the continuation of Corporation meetings at various accessible locations along the Corridor, as well as special public workshops and more focused meetings with County Commissioners, State-designated Heritage Regions, County Planning Directors, local municipalities, the Local Development Districts (LDD's), and other interested agencies in the Corridor.
- c. **Heritage Communities Program Implementation:** The Corporation has identified one (1) community in 2003 and will identify one more during 2004, and will assist both Heritage Communities and facilitate each community receiving permanent designation under this program. Smethport has already been designated as the first Heritage Community, as a result of a competitive process, and at least one additional community will be designated from this competition. Additional competitions will be required and carried out by the Corporation for the designation of the future Heritage Communities. The required local engagement process and the completion of the Community WorkPlan will be carried out with the assistance of the Corporation. It is envisioned that at least one Heritage Community will be identified in each of the eleven counties along the Corridor by the end of the 2009. The estimated cost for this program is estimated at \$50,000, for the first community, but is expected to decrease per community as the program is refined and local peers are developed.
- d. **Finalization of a Business Plan and Marketing Strategy:** The Corporation will finalize a Business and Marketing Plan that will focus on the development of a sustainable heritage program. The Plan will identify products, sales goals and revenue sources, implementation roles and responsibilities, new subcommittees (as/if required), partnerships. The destination marketing strategy, marketing partnerships and target markets will be identified by the Pennsylvania Route 6 Tourist Association. The estimated cost of this activity is \$45,000, of which \$20,000 has been secured.
- e. **Development of a Hospitality Plan:** The Corporation will develop a plan that creates standards for hospitality services, develops a curriculum, identifies training partners, and

identifies training goals by sector. Proposed training courses will be identified along with suggested course content. The estimated cost for this activity is \$25,000.

- f. Database Update:** The GIS database of resources, businesses and attractions is a good foundation and integral to the entire tourism development and marketing process. The initial database requires periodic updating and field verification to maintain its relevance. The estimated cost of this activity is \$50,000.
- g. User-friendly Tour/Itinerary Packaging:** The Corporation will build on the foundation of the itineraries prepared during the planning process in 2002-03, linking resources with themes and accommodations tailored to meet the needs and expectations of travelers. The packaging will utilize the website of the Pennsylvania Route 6 Tourist Association, building on the Interpretive Plan, Business and Marketing Plan and update of the resource database. This is a dynamic activity requiring monitoring and annual refining, enhancement and expansion of touring opportunities. The estimated cost for this activity is \$20,000.
- h. Development of Visitor Centers:** Initiate planning for the development of Route 6 Welcome Centers near the Ohio and New York borders, and in Central Pennsylvania along the Corridor, and advance planning and implementation on eventual County visitor centers elsewhere along the Corridor so that at least one visitor center will be placed in each of the eleven (11) counties by 2009. Initial planning and design costs are estimated to be \$50,000 with developmental costs estimated to be \$150,000 per center.
- i. Development Opportunities Plan:** The Pennsylvania Route 6 Business Opportunity Planning process will involve the Corporation, the Pennsylvania Downtown Center and the Pennsylvania State University and result in a gaps analysis using economic modeling techniques, completion of a place audit of assets, completion of an impact analysis, and an implementation plan for enhancement of new tourism-related businesses. The estimated planning cost is \$75,000, with future activities involving local business development via the county economic development agencies, chambers of commerce, and LDD's, and the funding and administration of a heritage tourism development loan fund.
- j. Interpretive Plan:** The Corporation will refine and revise the Interpretive Plan based on the collective tourism experiences along the Corridor and the information gained via the Heritage Communities Program. The information will be incorporated into the Wayfinding and Marketing efforts, and will guide refinements in the tour itineraries. The estimated planning cost is \$25,000.



The matrix below summarizes the phasing of the activities of the Management Action Plan, dividing items into early-action, short-term and long-term frames of reference.

## PENNSYLVANIA ROUTE 5 HERITAGE CORPORATION

### Route 6 Heritage Corridor Ten-Year Plan Summary

<b>Early Action Projects 2004</b>	<b>Short-term Projects 1 – 2 Years</b>	<b>Mid-term Projects 3 – 5 Years</b>	<b>Long-term Projects 6 – 10 Years</b>
Corridor receives designation as a Heritage Park	Complete resource database update \$25,000	Maintain/update resource database \$5,000	Maintain/update resource database \$5,000
Apply for and receive a management/administrative grant \$100,000	Apply for and receive a management/administrative grant \$100,000	Apply for and receive a management/administrative grant \$100,000	Apply for and receive a management/administrative grant \$100,000
Conduct Corp. meetings in Corridor	Conduct 3 regional workshops \$6,000	Conduct 3 regional workshops \$6,000	Conduct 3 regional workshops \$6,000
Initiate branding signage project \$125,000	Complete Branding Signage Project \$125,000	Review and revise Wayfinding Plan \$25,000	Continue/maintain Hospitality training \$15,000
Implement Heritage Communities Program in Smethport \$50,000	Update and refine tour and itineraries \$20,000	Update and refine tour and itineraries \$10,000	Update and refine tour and itineraries \$10,000
Identify 1 additional Heritage Community	Identify 4 additional Heritage Communities \$150,000	Identify 6 additional Heritage Communities \$150,000	Identify 10 additional Heritage Communities \$200,000
Complete Business & Marketing Plan \$25,000	Complete Business Opportunities Plan \$75,000	Review and revise Interpretive Plan \$25,000	Implement next phase of Wayfinding signage \$100,000
	Initiate planning/design on visitor centers \$50,000	Locate sites and complete 3 visitor centers \$450,000	Locate sites and complete 8 visitor centers \$1,200,000
	Create Hospitality Plan and training curriculum \$25,000	Implement Hospitality training \$15,000	Maintain Small Business Development \$2,250,000
	Meet with all Boards of Commissioners \$5,000	Implement next phase of Wayfinding signage \$100,000	
	Meet with all County Planning Directors/ \$8,000	Initiate Small Business Development \$2,250,000	
<b>Early Action Projects TOTAL \$300,000</b>	<b>Short-term Projects TOTAL \$589,000</b>	<b>Mid-term Projects TOTAL \$3,136,000</b>	<b>Long-term Projects TOTAL \$3,886,000</b>

## County and Local Support



Potter County Courthouse

Education and communication geared towards County and municipal officials and agencies are critical for the establishment and maintenance of a Route 6 identity. The activities, meetings and discussions that have taken place since 2000 along the Corridor have been greatly helpful in this regard. These educational and communication efforts must be continued and expanded for this wide and diverse Corridor to reach and maintain its potential. As means of addressing this need, the Corporation will develop and maintain creative ways to engage local officials, County Commissioners, county planners, regional and local developmental officials and agencies, and the general public. The Corporation will work through various professional organizations, such as County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Planning Association, and the State Boroughs and Townships Associations. Finally, the

Corporation will convene regional workshops and “summits” at regular intervals at various locations along the Corridor.

## Management of Heritage Corporation

Our choice management structure is for the Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Corporation’s Board to represent each county and several key interests along the Corridor. The president of the PA Route 6 Tourist Association will hold a seat on the PA Route 6 Heritage Corporation and vice versa. There are two other standing board seats, one for a representative from the Heritage Parks connected by the corridor and one from the local development districts.

Because of the unique situation that a promotional entity existed before an economic development organization, there must be special care to continue a beneficial relationship between the two organizations. The PA Route 6 Tourist Association will contract with the PA Heritage Corporation for management services. The Tourist Association will serve as the marketing arm with input from the Marketing Committee. A memorandum of understanding, detailing roles and responsibilities for marketing and management will be prepared.

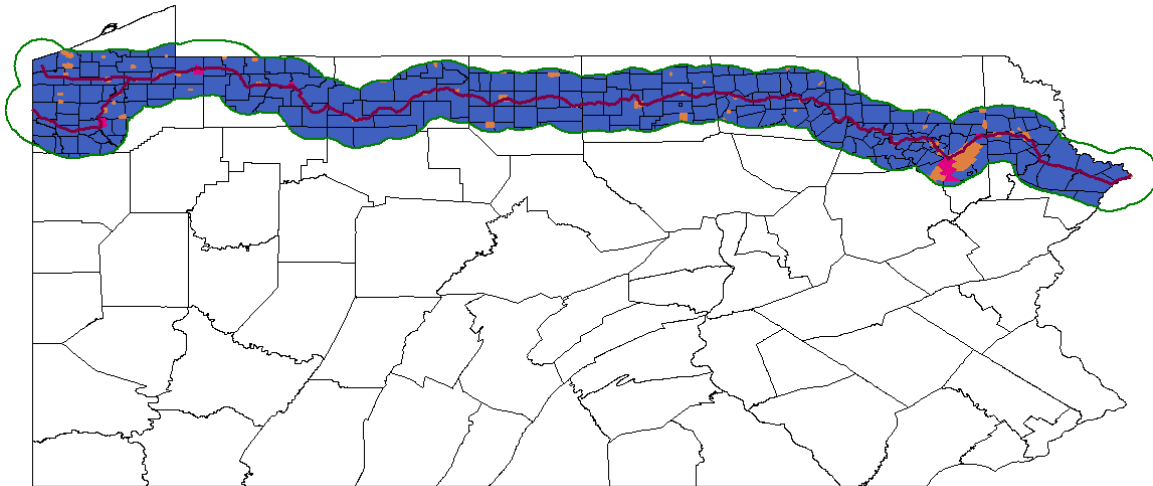
A second management alternative was considered that would have formed a joint venture between the two organizations. After review, both organizations felt that a joint venture at this time was too risky. They agreed to work together on projects that would benefit both organizations and the whole Route 6 corridor.

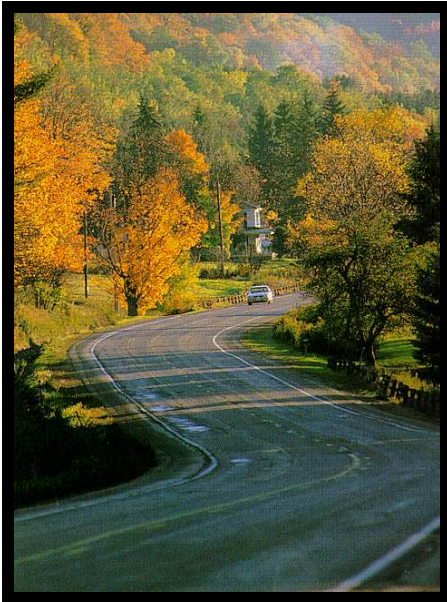
Staffing in the first year will consist of an Executive Director and support administrative help. The second year, a Programming Coordinator will be contracted to implement the marketing plan and merchandise programs. By the 5<sup>th</sup> year, the staff will consist of an Executive Director, Administrative Assistant, Programming Coordinator and Community Development/Public Affairs Manager.

## Corridor Designation

An application is being made with DCNR for designation of the Route 6 Corridor as a Heritage Corridor under the State Heritage Park Program. The designation will embrace several levels of designation within the Corridor:

- a. HUB Communities: Central places along Route 6 determined to be critical nodes in telling the Route 6 story and/or gateways to the Corridor;
- b. Primary Route 6 Heritage Area: Will conform to the definition utilized in the development of the Route 6 Plan, that being within ten (10) miles of the highway (i.e. area in blue below); and
- c. Secondary Route 6 Heritage Area: The remainder of counties touched by the Primary Route 6 Corridor, and future planning needs required for full inclusion of this area.





## **Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Corridor Management Action Plan**

**PREPARED BY:  
The EADS Group, Inc.**

**In Association With:  
The Pennsylvania Route 6 Tourist Association  
Westsylvania Heritage Corporation**

**2004**