

MOVING FORWARD ALONG

ROUTE 6

Executive Summary



Management Action Plan
Corridor Management Plan
Historic Conservation Strategy
June 2016

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Pennsylvania
Route 6 Alliance

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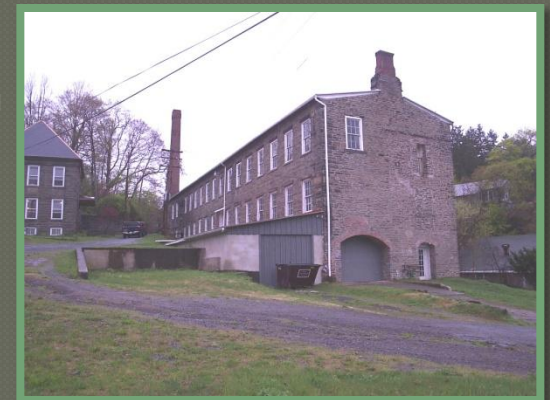
Acknowledgements

Making the Planning Process Possible

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Background

The Planning Process

This entailed the synthesis of three related planning initiatives in a coordinated effort, specifically meeting the requirements of the following:

- ❖ *Management Action Plan (MAP) Update* – a requirement every ten (10) years for State Heritage Areas in Pennsylvania and the guiding framework for activities during the 10-year period;
- ❖ *Corridor Management Plan* – a prerequisite for designation as a Pennsylvania Byway and a Scenic Byway; and
- ❖ *Historic Preservation/Conservation Strategy* – a formal recognition of the role of historic resources within the US Route 6 story.



Background

Interactive and Collaborative Approach

This Plan results from a series of draft documents, reviews and revisions as summarized below:

- ❖ Three (3) interim planning *Technical Memos* that were posted on the Project Website and distributed by the Alliance along with input were all merged into a July 2015 internal Preliminary Draft;
- ❖ Based on staff feedback a revised Review Draft was prepared, posted and circulated in September 2015;
- ❖ The revised Review Draft was subject to review sessions with the Tourism Infrastructure Committee and staff from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation;
- ❖ Based on the comments, three additional revisions were prepared – January, February and April 2016 ; and
- ❖ Approvals were received from DCNR, PHMC & PennDOT



Plan Organization

By Major Topic . . .



I Overview

Background and Plan Context

This includes a review of the past analytical and planning context, which is critical in this integrated process, along with initial input and feedback:

- ❖ *Previous Plans, Initiatives and Studies* – including progress on the prior MAP, including but not limited to the *Mile Marker* and *Heritage Communities* Programs;
- ❖ *Other Allied Heritage and Tourism Areas/Initiatives* – interface and acknowledgement of other state and national heritage areas and tourism regions;
- ❖ *Public Engagement Process* – a description of the multifaceted engagement/interaction initiatives employed; and
- ❖ *Summary of Input Received* – reflecting input on changing conditions, ideas for new initiatives/programs and identity, as received during the engagement process.



I Overview

Focus - Participation Process - meeting the challenge of distance required multi-layered engagement techniques:

- ❖ Four (4) Regional Forums across the Corridor in late-2014 and early-2015;
- ❖ Project website was developed and maintained enabling timely review, comment and dialogue;
- ❖ Five (5) Focus groups sessions were conducted via conference calls – Artisan Trail, Heritage Communities, Tourism Infrastructure, Tourism Promotion & Accommodations groups;
- ❖ Survey of the various local museums across the Corridor;
- ❖ One-on-One Calls to select businesses and attractions;
- ❖ Conference calls with the Route 6 Alliance *Tourism Infrastructure Committee* as the planning committee; and
- ❖ Various special purpose conference calls with State Agencies.



I Overview

Vision Statement - a revised Vision Statement emerged

Pennsylvania Route 6 will be a historical and tranquil highway that expresses and personifies the American Dream, linking small towns, rural landscapes and industrial centers as well as the unique stories, resources and heritage, and the people who call it home. While diverse in nature, this broad swath of northern Pennsylvania offers common denominators of rivers, forests and other natural wonders that inspire and engage both the outdoor enthusiast and the casual explorer. Some occupations, particularly those rooted in the natural environment, supported past generations and are today the work of a new generation. Crafts and arts once lost have been re-discovered by modern day makers and entrepreneurs and are once again thriving in the communities and on the farms along Route 6. Infused into this landscape are also the stories of men and women who have established and defended their way of life, creating the customs and traditions that are today's celebrated heritage and a dynamic visitor experience.



II Issues and Opportunities

The Corridor, Identity and Intrinsic Qualities

After analyzing input, field research and other available information an assessment of the Corridor was carried in terms of the following:

- ❖ Assessing various existing conditions including land use, tourism and the economy, Shale Gas Development activities, traffic accident data, multi-modal transportation considerations and interpretive themes;
- ❖ Localizing the concepts of identity and authenticity in certain common experiential opportunities, while embracing the diversity of the Corridor via the development of the *Character Areas* concept; and
- ❖ Reinforcing scenic conservation and scenic integrity as critical intrinsic qualities of the Corridor, especially important for the scenic byways concept.



II Issues and Opportunities

Focus – Diversity and Identity

- ❖ The “Character Area” concept is proposed as an organizing approach that helps embrace *diversity within a common identity*:
 - *Great Lake Character Area*
 - *Industrial Character Area*
 - *Allegheny River Character Area*
 - *State and National Forest Character Area*
 - *Endless Mountains Agricultural Character Area*
 - *Susquehanna River Character Area*
 - *D&H Character Area*
 - *Conservation Character Area*;
- ❖ Broad and generalized segments of the Corridor are categorized in terms of defining characteristics; and
- ❖ Landing Nodes within each Character Area are proposed as critical points of orientation, hospitality, activity and departure.



Focus – Character Areas

... the identity and sub-identities



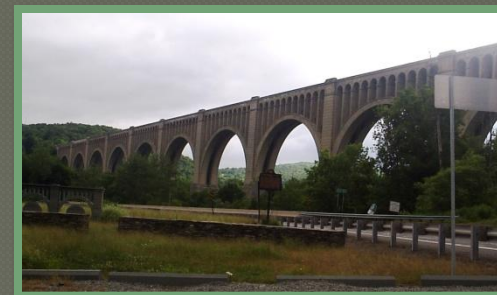
III Interpretive Framework

Revisiting and Updating Themes

Each theme has the potential to inspire itineraries, programs, festivals and other opportunities to engage both resident and visitor. The original six themes were reviewed, discussed and adjusted as depicting the following general storylines:

- ❖ *National Recreation Trail* – year-round recreation;
- ❖ *Creative Genius* - ideas and achievements from arts to industry;
- ❖ *Amazing Prospects* – nature and business adapting;
- ❖ *Lasting Landmarks* – historic buildings, villages and districts;
- ❖ *Warriors Road* – Native American, civil conflicts and World Wars; and
- ❖ *Safe Haven* – escaping persecution, economic dislocations and seeking a way of life.

Topics derived from the themes could become the basis for an annual “Do 6” program that features the best of stories and commerce and blends them into unique experiences.

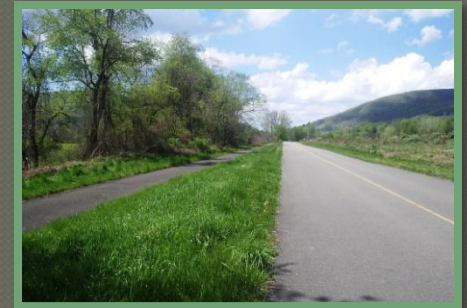


IV Strategic Plan

Strategic Planning Statements

Translating the identified Issues and Opportunities into actions, within the context of the Interpretive Framework, requires succinct planning statements that address the issues, build on the assets and tell the story of the Corridor in terms of:

- ❖ *Scenic/Visual Quality* – guiding concepts keyed to Character Areas;
- ❖ *Interpretive* – interfacing themes with the *Intrinsic Qualities* required for a Corridor Management Plan;
- ❖ *Signage* – from on-/off-premises through wayfinding;
- ❖ *Marketing* – tourism-business retention and development;
- ❖ *Transportation/Traffic Safety* – multi-modal network;
- ❖ *Historic Conservation* – process, tools, design and benefits;
- ❖ *Best Practices* – guiding principles by Character Area; and
- ❖ *Administrative* – funding and management.

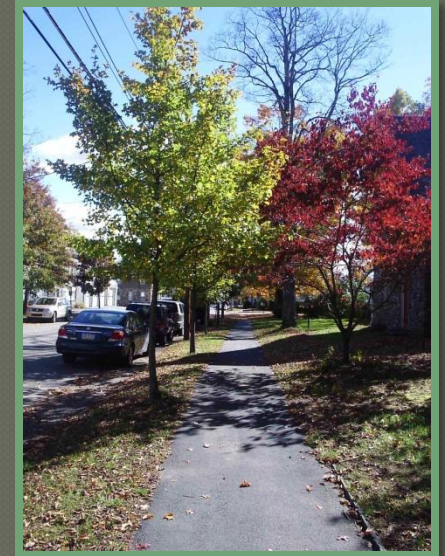


IV Strategic Plan

Focus – Design Considerations

Design guidelines are provided by major resource type, providing concepts and guidance for each in terms of form and use:

- ❖ *Public Spaces and Town Centers* – central places that provide local context and may serve as “gateways”;
- ❖ *Roadways* – improvements, signage and the roadway itself may vary affecting context-sensitivity;
- ❖ *Rural Areas* – encouraging context-sensitive site development while protecting views, viewsheds and resources; and
- ❖ *Within Town Centers* – context-sensitive building setback, building massing and orientation, sidewalk, streetscape, storefront, lighting, window/door opening and traffic/parking requirements for new construction, addition and major rehabilitation activities.



V Implementation Action Plan

Goals - Meeting Planning Statements

The goals are stated within the accepted goal categories for State Heritage Areas in Pennsylvania. The Goals reflect:

- ❖ *Cultural Conservation* - architectural, historical and scenic resource conservation and marketing;
- ❖ *Recreation and Open Space* – nature and recreational tourism via public and private resources/assets at multiple levels;
- ❖ *Interpretation and Education* – from the “message” through the products, experiences and signage;
- ❖ *Economic Development* – from tourism related or oriented business and specialty retail for visitors through economic diversification and choice for residents; and
- ❖ *Partnerships* – with state, federal, regional and local agencies and allied tourism regions and agencies in a multi-state region.



V Implementation Action Plan

Recommendations Implementing Goals

The goals comprise the framework for a series of categorized recommendations:

- ❖ **Scenic/Visual Quality** – visual quality and interpretation initiatives including visual assessment, scenic pull-offs, site planning guiding development, landscape conservation and Byway designation;
- ❖ **Wayfinding and Signage** – initiatives including gateway/welcoming signage, outdoor advertising, and embracing and marketing Character Areas;
- ❖ **Tourism & Marketing** – initiatives that promote the themes and Character Areas, slightly recast the Artisan Trail as a “Made on Route 6” trail, revise and generate greater localization of themes, continue to embrace technology in relating themes to experiences, include the resident and international traveler and emphasize business development along the Corridor;

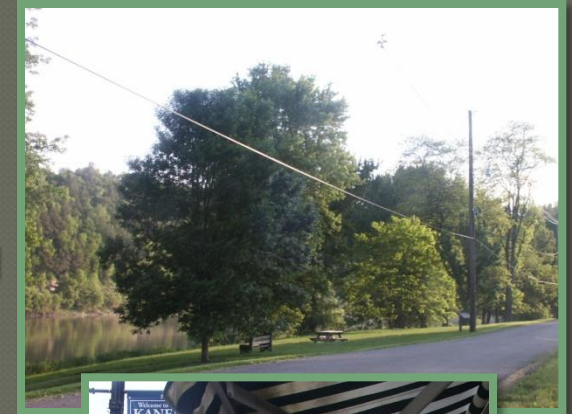


V Implementation Action Plan

Recommendations Implementing Goals (cont'd)

The goals comprise the framework for a series of categorized recommendations:

- ❖ **Transportation/Traffic Safety** – interrelated safety, maintenance and tourism initiatives utilizing the *Tourism Infrastructure Committee* as a linchpin with the regional and local planning and programming of multi-modal transportation enhancements, including roadway, trail, pedestrian, streetscape and bicycle improvements;
- ❖ **Interpretive** – initiatives that continue and focus theme-based itineraries, the maintenance and expanded use of the Mile Marker system for marketing and advertising, engage new audiences and partners, reinforce existing audiences and further apply technology to the Route 6 story;



V Implementation Action Plan

Recommendations Implementing Goals (cont'd)

The goals comprise the framework for a series of categorized recommendations:

- ❖ **Historic Conservation** – initiatives that expand and focus education and outreach on historic resources that help define the Corridor - involving developmental agencies, historical societies and museums, municipal governing bodies and property owners - on the cultural and economic benefits of historic districts, the interface with Character Areas and the reuse of historic properties; and
- ❖ **Management** – initiatives that include membership in the *Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations*, continue coordination with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in furthering their *Strategic Plan*, help diversify agency sustainability and fundraising, and enhance operations of the Alliance Board.

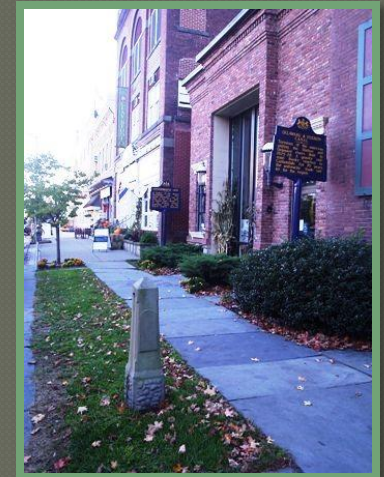


VI Implementation Matrix

Summarizes Implementation Action Plan

A matrix is supplied that summarizes the various recommendations in terms of the following:

- ❖ **Action Plan Categories** – from Chapter V, Implementation Action Plan – Scenic Conservation/Visual Quality, Wayfinding and Signage, Tourism and Marketing, Multi-Modal Transportation and Traffic Safety;
- ❖ **Recommendation** – a brief caption is provided;
- ❖ **Action Steps** – a brief description of implementing steps;
- ❖ **Priority/Timeframe** – ranging from on-going through long-term;
- ❖ **Commentary** – further guidance in implementation measures;
- ❖ **Goal Interface** – related back to the Management Action Plan *Goals* in Chapter V; and
- ❖ **Page Reference** – index by page number for each Action Step.



VI Implementation Matrix

Select On-going/Short-term Recommendations

... Scenic/Visual Quality

- ❖ Update portions of the 2008 *Pennsylvania Route 6 Tourism Infrastructure Plan* for visual assessments of scenic pull-offs and interpretive sites;
- ❖ Establish and maintain relationships with Land Trusts in the conservation of the intrinsic qualities of the Corridor;
- ❖ Continue support of the application of the *PA Wilds Design Guide* in respective sections of the Corridor and working with the planning community to adopt other best practices guiding development and redevelopment activities; and
- ❖ Continue efforts toward attaining *PA Scenic Byways* designation via education, outreach and advocacy.

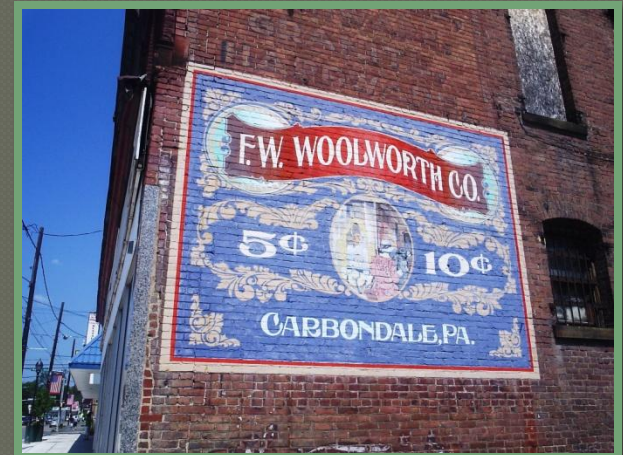


VI Implementation Matrix

Select On-going/Short-term Recommendations

... Wayfinding and Signage

- ❖ Continue and expand outreach on outdoor advertising regulations via a “Fact Sheet” for local governments and continued collaboration with PennDOT;
- ❖ Placement of Gateway signs near the respective state borders on Route 6 and 6N; and
- ❖ Work with multiple agencies for welcoming signs at strategic locations near the interchanges with Interstate Highways and the interchanges or intersections with other US Routes with US Route 6 and 6N.



VI Implementation Matrix

Select On-going/Short-term Recommendations

... Tourism & Marketing

- ❖ Continue and expand efforts towards various niche audiences, including specialized nature- and cultural-tourists, the resident traveler and the international traveler;
- ❖ Continue and expand multi-faceted efforts interfacing nature-tourism themes with experiences;
- ❖ Link resources with “passports” that institutionalize cross-promotion and ultimately encourage cross-visitation;
- ❖ Maintain and update information on visitation patterns;
- ❖ Collaborate with developmental agencies to encourage commercial development at or near strategic tourism assets; and
- ❖ Develop and maintain a “Communities of Interest” network linking Route 6 Heritage Communities.



VI Implementation Matrix

Select On-going/Short-term Recommendations

... Multi-Modal Transportation/Traffic Safety

- ❖ Closer formal partnerships with the respective Metropolitan and Rural Planning Organizations (i.e. MPO's/RPO's) in the multi-year transportation planning and programming process for projects and improvements along the Corridor;
- ❖ Support the preparation and implementation of PennDOT's *Route 6 Bicycle Plan* that addresses highway safety and tourism;
- ❖ Support safety improvements especially in the high-accident areas identified in this planning effort; and
- ❖ Encourage context-sensitive and multi-modal transportation planning throughout the Corridor.



VI Implementation Matrix

Select On-going/Short-term Recommendations

... Interpretive Plan

- ❖ Continue and expand theme-based itineraries and tours such as Civilian Conservation Corps camps/sites/songs, as well as those focusing on stories of local areas and communities such as the local “quirky and unique” stories, cemetery tours that help reveal local history and genealogy, and house of worship tours that help reflect the local faith and ethnic bases of the Corridor;
- ❖ Development of an annual “Do 6” program using stories and photographs by the public to reflect experiences on the Corridor’s lakes, great homes, river journeys, trails, inns, etc.; and
- ❖ Maintenance of close partnerships with the many local museums along the Corridor to relate the Route 6 themes via local stories and connections.

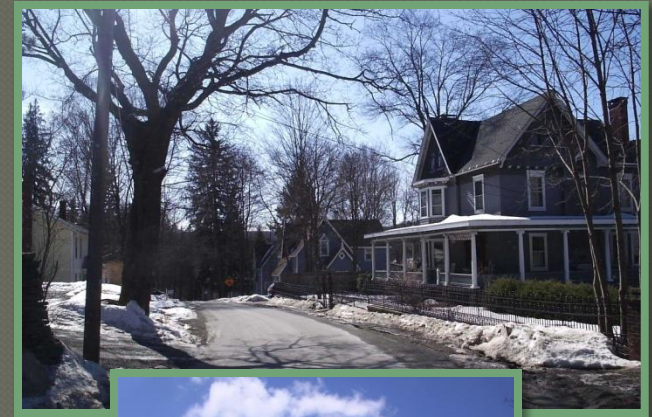


VI Implementation Matrix

Select On-going/Short-term Recommendations

... Historic Conservation

- ❖ Develop and maintain communication and coordination with local history, tourism and related groups as part of a process that links common conservation goals with well-planned local development;
- ❖ Develop or accumulate graphic depictions of successful preservation efforts as an aid in education and outreach activities that reinforce the importance of historic conservation in maintaining both the local and the Route 6 identity; and
- ❖ Collaboration and focus on the preservation and reuse of key properties that depict the themes and respective Character Areas.

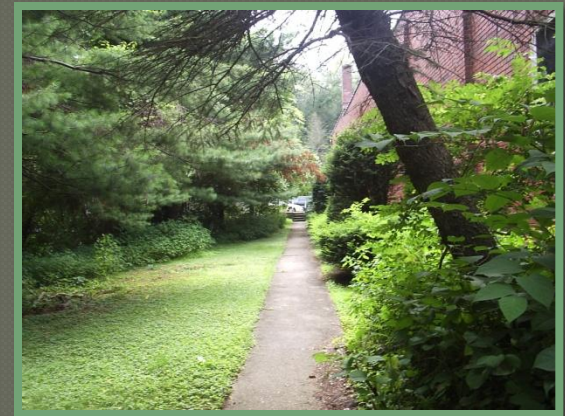


VI Implementation Matrix

Select On-going/Short-term Recommendations

... Management Plan

- ❖ Maintain a dialogue with an array of officials – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources staff, other State Heritage Areas, and the Route 6 Legislative Delegation – to facilitate communication and coordination;
- ❖ Prepare a Communication and Outreach Plan;
- ❖ Standardize orientation for new Board members, providing an informational context – a manual, committee descriptions and minutes from prior year; and
- ❖ Add a face-to-face Board meeting each year in addition the meeting held in conjunction with the annual meeting in May to enhance Board cohesion.



Appendices

Background and Explanatory Information

During the course of this planning process, a considerable volume of input, information and explanatory documentation was received, reviewed and incorporated into the process. This information base was aggregated into nine (9) Appendices:

- ❖ Appendix A - Regional Forums
- ❖ Appendix B - Focus Group Summaries
- ❖ Appendix C - Museum Survey Results
- ❖ Appendix D - Land Trusts in the Corridor
- ❖ Appendix E - Regulatory Framework Summary
- ❖ Appendix F - Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation
- ❖ Appendix G - Scenic Pull-Off Summary
- ❖ Appendix H - Byways/Signage/Regulatory Overview
- ❖ Appendix I - Municipal and Public Outreach Efforts



Summary

Recapping the Planning Context

Taken together, this Plan was designed to meet the needs of a Management Action Plan, a Corridor Management Plan and an Historic Conservation Strategy , specifically:

- ❖ Providing an overview of the US Route 6 Corridor – past planning, progress, changes, relationships with other tourism regions/agencies and feedback;
- ❖ Translating the results of the overview into an analysis of issues and opportunities facing the Corridor;
- ❖ Providing a succinct interpretive framework;
- ❖ Developing a series of categorized strategic planning statements; and
- ❖ Translating the strategic planning statements into an implementation action plan.

The Plan provides the framework for activities and initiatives recommended for the Alliance for the next 10-year period.



MOVING FORWARD ALONG ROUTE 6

The Next 10 Years

