



Vision, Goals, & Strategies

A Framework for Conservation & Improvement

Byway planning was guided by three primary considerations: the Alliance's long-term visions and goals for the Byway, the importance of strengthening the region's unique character and sense of place, and an interest in balancing local conservation and economic development goals.

Vision & Goals

Planning for the Byway was guided by the vision and goal statements highlighted on the following page. These statements were developed and refined during Alliance meetings, Advisory Committee work sessions, and public workshops held in the Summer and Fall of 2000.

The vision statement provides a "big picture" description of the Region. The statement highlights the area's uniqueness and significance, and explains ways the Byway links together Upper Eastern Shore's special places, resources, and experiences. The goal statements establish broad targets to guide the development and implementation of the Plan's strategies. Together, the vision and goals provided a strong foundation for the Plan's evolution.

Hidden Qualities

In different ways and in different settings, people living along the Byway talk about two important issues:

- The lack of opportunities to enjoy and learn about local history and culture.

- The slow erosion of the region's distinct character and sense of place.

In numerous discussions, the word "hidden" was used to describe the Byway's best qualities. People shared concern about the lack of local knowledge of the region's history, culture, or physical setting. People also talked about the quality of the region's landscapes and townscapes, and how the subtle changes are beginning to strip the area of its unique identity.

Perhaps most revealing were descriptions of what people didn't want. People said they did not want to become another Middletown, Glen Burnie, or "like the Western Shore." People have a strong attachment to the qualities that make the region a unique and special place.

To address these concerns, the Plan places great emphasis on the importance of place making and story telling.

Lands along the Byway provide support for a variety of migratory waterfowl.



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Vision for the Byway

The Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway celebrates life on Maryland's Eastern Shore, one of the truly special landscapes in the Mid-Atlantic Region. Curiosity and a sense of discovery bring ample rewards—Byway travelers learn about the region's rich history and culture while gaining an appreciation for the traditions and working life of local watermen, farmers, and merchants.

The Byway links together the Upper Eastern Shore's most unique resources—its working landscapes and waterfronts, historic town centers, and pristine natural areas. Enjoy the beauty, peace and tranquility of Chesapeake Country. Stroll along the Byway's historic main streets, take in the scenery, drop by a local restaurant for crab cakes, pick-up fresh produce at a farm stand, or paddle along an undisturbed stretch of the Bay and its rivers.

Byway management focuses on striking a careful balance between stimulating local economies, celebrating local history and culture, and conserving sensitive natural resources.

Plan Goals

- Promote a safe and pleasant experience for all users of the Byway.
- Expand opportunities for people to experience and learn about the qualities that make Chesapeake Country a truly special place—its historic towns and villages, its working landscapes, and its connections to the rivers and Bay.
- Support projects and initiatives that help strengthen local economies while sustaining traditional economic pursuits—agricultural and fishery-related industries—and protecting the high quality of life of Byway communities.
- Support efforts to conserve and protect the Byway's most important natural, cultural and historic resources.
- Encourage public and private investment that improves the visual quality of the roadside environment.
- Encourage regional cooperation, stewardship and economic development through Byway-related partnerships.

A Hierarchy of Destinations

Byway stakeholders also expressed concern that the Plan might have the effect of attracting people to places with insufficient accommodations or facilities or highly sensitive resources. While interested in promoting heritage and eco-tourism opportunities along the Byway, people shared their concern about “over tourism” and the limited capacity of communities to manage or minimize impacts associated with increases in visitation.

Recognizing the need to strike a balance between improving local quality of life and strengthening local economies, the Alliance has focused attention on methods to direct visitors to places with the capacity to accommodate increases in activity and the desire to attract investment. The Alliance developed the following conceptual framework to guide discussions about how and where to invest its energies and resources. Investment is based on: location and carrying capacity; concentration of resources and services; and local interest in attracting activity.

The framework is designed to serve as a general reference in discussions about proposals and programs designed to shape the Byway traveler’s experience.

Byway Destinations. Byway destinations act as gateways to Chesapeake Country. They are the primary places for orientation and interpretation. Due to limited operational hours of many Chesapeake Country museums and sites, it is especially important for the traveler to develop an understanding of what is available. As a result of the concentration of sites and structures, Byway Destinations are places where travelers are encouraged to get out of their cars, walk around, and ultimately spend more time. Byway Destinations have the necessary

visitor infrastructure, food, lodging, and gas to accommodate visitors and travelers.

Byway Destinations include: Chesapeake City, Chestertown, Rock Hall/Eastern Neck Island, and Kent Narrows

Discovery Stops. The most attractive and interesting places for people to visit and learn about Chesapeake Country are the small towns and villages. The region’s most significant historical and cultural resources can be found in and around these small towns. The stops provide opportunities for walking around town, learning about the history and culture of the place, shopping at unique shops, and dining at local restaurants. The Discovery Stops have modest visitor infrastructure. Discovery Stops include Georgetown/Fredericktown, Galena, Kennedyville, Centreville, Queenstown, and Stevensville

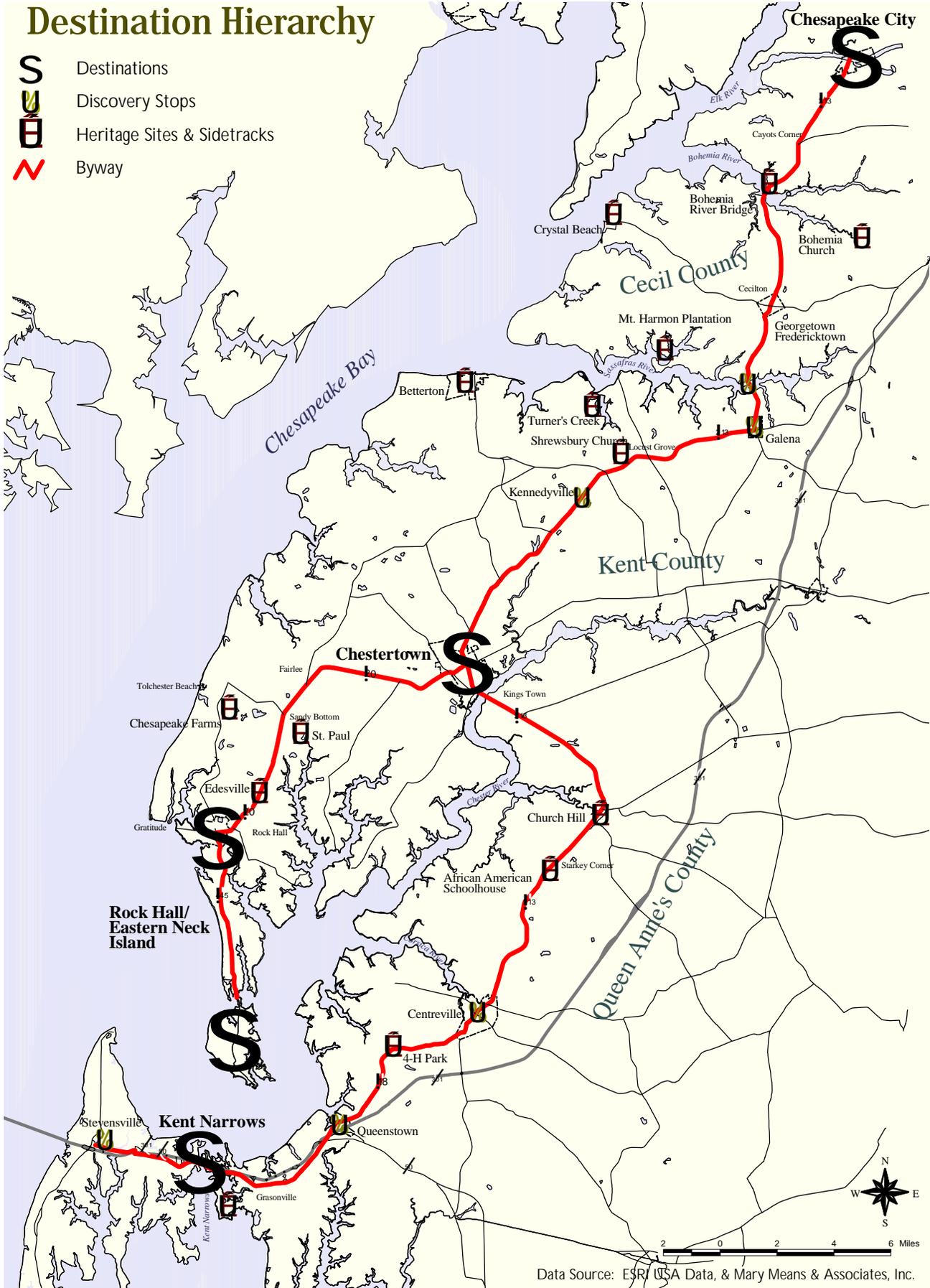
Heritage Sites & Sidetracks. Sidetracks have been developed to promote resources that may not be directly on the Byway, but are important in understanding the special qualities of Chesapeake Country. The region’s history and culture is interpreted and celebrated at these individual sites throughout the region. Many of these sites provide an opportunity to tell important stories but currently lack the visitor infrastructure of the Discovery Stops and Byway Destinations. The Heritage Sites and Sidetracks include a wide range of individual sites and destinations along the Byway.

Tool Kit Approach

In preparing the Plan, the Alliance studied a wide range of planning strategies and tools aimed at encouraging the conservation and improvement of resources and places along the Byway. The following general factors were considered in the evaluation of potential strategies and tools:

Destination Hierarchy

- S** Destinations
- U** Discovery Stops
- E** Heritage Sites & Sidetracks
- W** Byway



Data Source: ESR/ USA Data, & Mary Means & Associates, Inc.

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- Effectiveness in meeting the Plan's vision and goals.
 - Compatibility with local programs, initiatives and policies.
 - Effects on the leadership and management capacity of the Alliance and its partners.
 - Appropriateness given local sensitivities concerning limits on the use of private lands.

Upon careful review, the Alliance determined that the Plan should focus on three kinds of strategies and tools: 1) education and recognition, 2) investment in physical improvements, and 3) incentive-based conservation. While instances are highlighted where regulatory change could result in improved conditions along the Byway, action on these recommendations is not required for the Plan's success.

The Alliance understands that participation in the Plan's implementation is voluntary. Counties and towns will determine which, if any, of the Plan's land use and conservation recommendations best address local needs, and complete appropriate policy and code revisions. The Alliance also recognizes that Byway-related revisions to local comprehensive plans and development regulations require the same level of analysis and public scrutiny as any local decision affecting the use of private property.

To provide a context for understanding the Alliance's approach, a brief description of the full range of available strategies and tools with potential applicability to the Byway are provided below.

Education. Programs and initiatives designed to 1) educate people about local history and the significance of important resources and 2) promote voluntary conservation, preservation and improvement actions.

Recognition. Programs that recognize the actions of individuals, organizations or localities to conserve sensitive resources or improve conditions.

Incentive. Programs and initiatives providing incentives for voluntary conservation, preservation and improvement. Incentives may include the provision of public improvements, grant funds, technical assistance, or other resources in exchange for certain actions.

Investment. Investments in public infrastructure designed to improve the climate for private conservation, preservation and improvement actions. It may also include public funding for demonstration projects or pilot projects designed to illustrate innovative or sensitive approaches.

Acquisition. Programs involving the purchase—by public agencies or non-profit organizations—of full (fee-simple) or partial (easement or specific rights) interest in a property.

Regulation. Initiatives involving the creation and adoption of restrictions on the use of private property through such means as zoning, subdivision, historic preservation, or environmental protection policies and regulations.