

4.0 ACTION PLAN

4.1 ORGANIZING FRAMEWORK FOR DECISION-MAKING

The purposes of the Annapolis, London Town, and South County Heritage Area are set forth in the Vision Statement, Mission, and Core Principles set forth in Chapter 2.0. The relationships of the interpretive programs to these purposes are explained in Chapter 3.0. While the interpretive framework proposed in Chapter 3.0 is central to the Management Plan, a number of other strategies, not directly interpretive in nature, are necessary to support the presentation of heritage resources to residents and visitors alike.

A basic strategy informed the design of the recommended interpretive framework. This strategy seeks to enrich the visitor experience and to enhance the appreciation (and participation) of heritage area residents by increasing both the richness of interpretation of the area's existing resources and the density of interpretive experiences, places, and events. The strategy is intended to increase awareness of and pride in the area's rich past and vibrant present among its citizens and to encourage discriminating visitors to extend and repeat their visits.

But residents and visitors to even such a rich heritage area as Annapolis, London Town, and South County do not live by interpretation alone. Heritage tourists shop, dine, rest, and often simply enjoy the special ambiance of both the urban and pastoral environments. These activities combine with the direct heritage experiences to create an overall impression of the area. For heritage tourism to generate a substantial economic return, this impression should be favorable to heritage visitors and residents alike.

In short, the plan must address a portion of the social, physical, and economic context within which heritage area resources and their interpretation exist. To do so, the underlying premises of the above strategy need to be extended to those elements of the heritage area which, if properly designed, will make the delivery of the interpretive message more effective. It must be clear that these two elements go hand in hand to create a seamless whole. The interpretive framework enhances the appeal of the heritage resources; the support framework provides the structure to increase the effective delivery of the interpretive framework. The combination creates a ***Total Experience*** for the heritage audiences (visitors and residents) that allows individuals to partake of the diversity of the area and to participate more fully in the special opportunities afforded by the interpretive themes. For planning purposes the Total Experience is organized into discrete elements, each of which can be addressed with individual actions. However, heritage audiences will evaluate the heritage area based upon their perception of the aggregate of the separate experiences. Decision-makers may choose to implement individual actions, but will

have to refer constantly to the effects of such discrete actions upon the Total Experience.

The parameters of the Maryland Heritage Preservation and Tourism Areas Program call for a broad array of strategies, ranging from capital investments to program planning to regulatory changes, to promote a successful heritage area. Thus a variety of strategies to be pursued by public and private sector agencies and organizations are described in Appendix A. Nevertheless, management of the heritage area resources will be most effective if implementation activities are focused on the most critical items that the heritage area institutions, singly or in concert, can control. Therefore, the actions that follow are considered to be of highest priority for the heritage area. These actions are organized as the following elements in the Total Experience, described in Sections 4.1.1 to 4.1.4 below:

- Interpretation¹
- Physical Facilities
- Reaching Out to Heritage Audiences
- Moving About the Heritage Area

An additional, very important element of the Total Experience – the breadth and quality of the commercial support facilities and services available to the heritage tourist – is less subject to influence by direct action by heritage area partners. This element is more a function of private sector response to the “synergy” created by the entire set of actions, combined with governmental policies and regulations regarding private investment. One important policy tool is the establishment of “Target Investment Zones” as priority locations within the heritage area in which private investment is desired. Section 4.1.5 (Private Commercial Activities) addresses private investment as it affects the Total Experience.

4.1.1 Interpretation

For the heritage visitor the core experience – the reason for coming, staying, and returning – is the heritage resources and their interpretation. Described in full in Chapter 3.0, recommended short and mid-term actions are listed below by name only to complete the framework of the Total Experience. These interpretive projects include:

- Improved Communications Among Heritage Organizations
- Joint Marketing/Passport Program
- Interpretive Planning with Key Sites
- Cooperative Staff Training
- Pilot Foot Notes Projects
- Coordinated Festivals and Special Events
- Self-Guided Tours
- Visitor Orientation

¹ The Total Experience includes the interpretive framework and its recommended implementing programs described in Chapter 3.0. The short and mid-term interpretive programs are referenced in Section 4.1.1 to provide a picture of the full range of recommendations to assist decision-makers in seeing the relationships between all the parts.

4.1.2 Physical Facilities

Capital investment in selected physical facilities will directly intensify or expand the core experiences of heritage audiences or enhance the ease with which the visitor accesses both heritage resources and the supporting framework (shopping, dining, and accommodation facilities). The following three upgraded or new facilities, each to be managed by an existing heritage or related institution, are especially important for the continued success and future growth of heritage tourism in the Annapolis, London Town and South County Heritage Area:

- **London Town Improvements** by Anne Arundel County and the London Town Foundation
- **Capital City Visitors Center** by the Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Conference and Visitors Bureau (AAACCVB)
- **Museum** by Historic Annapolis Foundation (HAF)

The locations of these facilities, along with other physical development projects (transportation-related) described in Section 4.1.4 below, are shown in Figure 2.

Historic London Town and Gardens

The planning for improving the physical facilities and the site of London Town is well advanced and is incorporated in the *Historic London Town and Gardens Master Plan* (August 1999), prepared for Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks and the London Town Foundation by Cho, Wilks & Benn Architects, Inc. Major elements of the plan include:

- Improved vehicular access and parking
- Enhanced on-site pedestrian circulation, including a new Welcoming Plaza
- Renovations to the existing Visitors Center and London Town Foundation offices
- A relocated horticulture complex
- Extensive landscape improvements
- An Archaeology Learning Center – the centerpiece of the new complex

The new facilities and the modified site design will allow the four programs encompassed by Historic London Town and Gardens – History, Archaeology, Preservation, and Horticulture – to be presented and interpreted in a more effective way. One example of this is the design in the plan of visitors’ sequences of movement through the site as they experience several of the different programs. With this capital investment, the London Town Foundation, working with the Anne Arundel County government, will more effectively accomplish its mission of developing Historic London Town and Gardens as an educational resource and heritage tourism destination with the highest standards of historical research, interpretation, preservation, and horticultural and museum programs.

While interpretive programs specific to individual sites are not addressed by the master plan, it is expected the Historic London Town and Gardens will incorporate into its distinctive messages some of the themes of the heritage area described in Chapter 3.0. Thus, London Town can act to increase the linkages within the heritage

area by, for example, presenting the relationship between the historic town and port and the agricultural and pastoral areas of South County.

This investment will assure the continuation of London Town as one of the major heritage resources in the area. It is expected that the current 20,000 annual visitors will, after implementation, approximately double (to 35,000 to 45,000). As the master plan demonstrates, both the physical changes and the increased visitation can be accommodated without deleterious impacts upon the surrounding community.

Because of its location both spatially and in historic time, its educational and interpretive roles which are unique in the area, and its potential for continued growth, the investment proposed in the *Historic London Town and Gardens Master Plan* is considered to be of the highest priority. It is, therefore, proposed that implementation of the plan begin in the current fiscal year.

The Capital City Visitors Center

The AAACCVB has operated a full service Visitors Center at 26 West Street in Annapolis for over six years. As would be expected, a center whose mission is, among other things, to greet and inform all visitors to the City and the County, to promote all aspects of the destination which a visitor might find attractive, and to provide for transient parking needs, serves a large general audience of which the heritage tourist forms but one niche. Therefore, while the objectives and programs of a Visitors Center must consider the full range of their general audience's needs, it is the impact of such a facility upon the heritage tourist's Total Experience of the Annapolis, London Town, and South County Heritage Area that is of primary concern here.

The AAACCVB has made excellent use of the current Visitors Center. The convenience of visitor parking in Gotts Court Garage, the attractive entry courtyard, the excellent service by volunteer information specialists, and the effective use of displays in a limited space have all contributed to steadily increasing use. The success of the center has conflicted with a rising demand for general parking in the Gotts Court Garage. To serve the heritage tourist, the success of the existing Visitors Center could be extended if the following program criteria were met:

- Provide additional space for visitor information displays and for volunteer information specialists.
- Provide expanded restroom facilities.
- Provide a space for group tour orientations, with the possibility of audio-visual presentations.
- Accommodate AAACCVB offices.
- Concentrate all heritage tourism information in one location by incorporating the State House Information Center functions in the same facility.
- Accommodate and encourage a transportation modal shift from auto to alternative forms such as walking, biking, shuttle transit, and local tour bus.
- Provide space for visiting tour bus registration and driver orientation.

- Provide increased visibility from and more direct access to major traffic networks.

The Visitors Center is the first experience of the area for many heritage guests. As the strategy of increasing the length of stay rather than total number of heritage visits begins to succeed, the extended stay visitors will seek more contacts with the source of information regarding location of heritage resources, availability of private sector facilities (e.g., accommodations and shopping), and the scheduling of special events. Thus the Visitors Center, as the source of information, will increasingly shape the heritage audience's Total Experience of the heritage area.

All of the above considerations argue convincingly for an expanded Visitors Center in a new location. While the Steering Committee takes no position on a specific site for the new Visitors Center, a location on Rowe Boulevard seems best to serve the needs of the heritage area. Any site would need to accommodate:

1. The program requirements of the Visitors Center as described above.
2. Replacement of existing on-site surface parking and provision of new parking for visitors, if accommodated in a structure.
3. Space (but not storage) for local and visiting tour buses and for shuttle vehicles, to unload and board passengers.
4. Visual compatibility with the surrounding area.

While a detailed program for the Capital City Visitors Center is beyond the scope of this plan, some very preliminary considerations drawn from the program criteria described above are appropriate. An adequate spatial program for the center itself would require a minimum of 6,000 square feet. Approximately 12,000 to 13,000 additional square feet on the first (street) level should be reserved for the various bus stands. A parking garage or lot should be designed to accommodate approximately 400 spaces, plus at least 140 to 150 dedicated spaces for transient visitors (see discussion of parking in Section 4.1.4 below). The center should be designed with the importance of first impressions firmly in mind. Therefore, maximum use should be made of the amenities of the site.

The functioning of the Visitors Center in a new location would be enhanced by several off-site improvements. These include adequate access into the Center, effective directional signage, and pedestrian improvements between the Visitors Center and downtown Annapolis (see discussion of these elements in Section 4.1.4 below).

It is recommended that a site feasibility/selection study be initiated as a priority short-term action. This study should include diagrammatic design to test the ability of potential sites to accommodate the Visitors Center program. Based upon the results of this study, design development could be initiated for the selected site with the objective of commencing construction within two years of plan adoption.

This schedule can only be accomplished if the AAACCVB, City of Annapolis, Anne Arundel County, and the State of Maryland recognize the extreme importance of the

Visitors Center to the success of a heritage tourism strategy (and, in fact, to the success of any tourist strategy). A close partnership between these three governments will be needed to provide the capital funding to transform this concept into a reality.

Museum

Historic Annapolis Foundation (HAF) is exploring establishment of a museum focused primarily on the history of Annapolis. While the museum may have multiple purposes reflecting the interests of HAF in reaching out to special niche groups within the larger heritage audience, it is the effect of the facility upon the basic heritage area strategy that is of concern here. This strategy bears repeating. The length of stay and the willingness to return of heritage visitors and the appreciation and pride of residents in their community are both enhanced by increasing the awareness among heritage audiences of the extent and variety of the area's resources and the interpretive themes.

The museum can play a major role in accomplishing this strategy by expressing to the heritage visitor the richness and complexity of the resources in Annapolis with suitable references to the whole heritage area. In short, the specific concept of the museum that relates to the overall heritage area strategy is to make heritage visitors aware of the extent of the heritage resources in one venue. The visitors should recognize and respond to the presentation of the multiple sites as being extremely attractive, but much too extensive to experience in one day. Therefore, the stay must be extended or a repeat trip scheduled.

It is expected that this general message can be effectively transmitted to the interested visitor without alienating the enthusiast. Therefore, the challenge to HAF and to the designers will be to create a museum and exhibits that will operate effectively on two levels. In addition, it is important that the interpretive programs and exhibits in the new museum incorporate references and linkages to the interpretive themes described in Chapter 3.0.

Locational criteria for such a museum may be more subjective than objective. The audience of concern will already have chosen to visit the Annapolis, London Town, and South County Heritage Area to experience the available heritage resources. The audience will also include repeat visitors and local residents with an interest in area heritage. For these groups, the ability to walk to the facility from other sites and attractions in downtown Annapolis will be important. It would further be appropriate that a museum concerned with historic Annapolis be fully integrated with its subject matter. The proposed site for the museum, a former school building on Green Street, fits both of these criteria.

The opening of this museum with its exhibits and interpretive programs is one of the three highest priorities for heritage area facility improvements. The museum will contribute to the success of the heritage area strategy by describing for the heritage audience the extensive resources that interested persons can experience. For these reasons it is recommended that planning and design for the museum facility be completed in 2000/2001, with construction to start in the latter half of 2001.

4.1.3 Reaching Out to Heritage Audiences

Reaching out means communicating with the various audiences that are interested in the heritage experience. These include the external audience (the visitors) and the internal audience (the residents). It is recommended that AAACCVB be the lead agency in coordinating what is essentially a marketing and public relations program on behalf of the Annapolis, London Town, and South County Heritage Area. Several aspects require special emphasis.

Heritage Area Website

A website that coordinates information about the Annapolis, London Town, and South County Heritage Area and provides links to heritage-related sites is an important tool for communicating with heritage audiences. Such a website will support and strengthen the heritage area in a variety of ways:

- Visitors will be able to plan trips based on current, accurate site information, from hours of operation to special events.
- Students will be able to use the website to conduct research on the region's resources and history.
- It will provide an alternative for those not able to physically visit the area or individual sites within it.
- It will foster communication between the public and heritage organizations/sites, and among the organizations/sites themselves.
- It will attract visitors who would not discover the region through other media.

An Annapolis, London Town, and South County Heritage Area website is currently under development through a Celebration 2000 Millennium grant received from the State of Maryland. This site will complement and link to the AAACCVB's current, highly successful website (www.visit-annapolis.org).

Audience Identification

This action involves classic market research to refine the target markets and niches for the heritage area discussed in Appendix A, Section 2.1. Target audiences can be classified as a series of niche markets and defined by a matrix that includes type and intensity of interest in one axis and geographic location of residence in another. For example, one audience niche is the heritage tourist with a special interest in historic sites who resides in the northeastern United States. An emerging market niche may be a similar audience residing in the near midwest (Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan). Identifying audiences in this fashion will allow messages and the media used to convey the messages to be targeted, thus increasing the effectiveness of marketing activities for the heritage area.

Visual Consistency Program

This refers to the design of graphic images that are recognizable by visitors and residents alike as representative of the Annapolis, London Town, and South County Heritage Area. While agreement on visual images among a diverse group is difficult in itself, it is complicated in this context by the need to deal with the signage

requirements of, for example, state and local agencies. It is recommended that the program start with the following two elements:

- An identifying logo to be used on heritage area publications, stationary, and (where possible) signs.
- Standard wayfinding map graphics to be used to locate resources or to direct pedestrian or vehicular movement through the heritage area.

If agreements are reached on those items, then more ambitious projects can be undertaken in a later period. These would include such elements as:

- Digital templates of brochure layouts
- Website graphic standards and links
- Standards for identification and information signs at both pedestrian and vehicular scale

Marketing Materials

For selected target audiences, the interpretive themes presented in Chapter 3.0 should be translated into persuasive presentations (print, audio, or visual). These materials should be made accessible to the target audiences through presentations, placed articles, advertisements, etc. This and the audience identification item are simply a continuation of good practices by AAACCVB, with the recommendation that the level of resources available for this effort be increased in upcoming fiscal years.

4.1.4 Moving About the Heritage Area

One of the most distressing experiences for a visitor to a strange area is to become lost or spatially disoriented. Vehicular or pedestrian congestion is another cause of tension for the visitor and the resident alike. A number of proposed actions that would contribute to ease of movement are already under consideration as part of a general upgrading of the area's infrastructure. The Transportation Linkages section of Appendix A identifies additional strategies to facilitate movement in the heritage area, such as the development of expanded water transportation services. Several actions are considered to be particularly important to the Total Experience of the heritage audience.

Wayfinding Signage

A signage program should be instituted at the vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle levels to allow visitors to move with confidence about the heritage area guided by special "trailblazer" signs. At the vehicular level, the "spine" of this system will be US 50-301, MD 2, and Rowe Boulevard connecting to downtown Annapolis. Additional signs should be installed along roads leading from 50-301/MD 2 to sites such as London Town. Design and location of trailblazer signs will need to be coordinated with the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) with respect to the Anne Arundel Colonial Tour (currently under development) and the established "Welcome to Maryland Signing" standards. One of a series of state scenic byway routes, the Anne Arundel Colonial Tour is an auto tour route planned to connect Annapolis with sites and landscapes in southern Anne Arundel County (see Figure

3). SHA is planning to install trailblazer signs at key decision points along the route. These signs will include the scenic byway theme of black-eyed susans, following the black-white color scheme of the Welcome to Maryland signs.

In addition to trailblazer signs for vehicles, a pedestrian signage program should be developed to guide visitors on foot around Annapolis and other walking destinations. In addition, a signage program is recommended for bicycle routes and trails within the heritage area (see discussion of Bicycle Improvements below). Signage design should be coordinated with the Visual Consistency Program described above in Section 4.1.3.

Highway/Roadway Improvements

Designation as a certified heritage area can influence state funding decisions on highway/roadway improvements and other capital expenditures. The following key roadway improvements have been identified as priorities to improve vehicular access within the heritage area:

- Interchange improvements at Routes US 50-301, MD 2 (Solomons Island Road) and 450 (West Street) in Parole.
- Access improvements associated with the new Visitors Center.

Parole Interchange Improvements: Routes US 50-301 and MD 2 are the two principal roadway corridors serving the Annapolis, London Town, and South County Heritage Area. The intersection of these two major corridors in the Parole area is of particular importance to vehicular circulation in the heritage area, functioning to connect Annapolis and the northern part of the heritage area with sites and resources in southern Anne Arundel County. In addition, the Parole area in the vicinity of the intersection contains hotels and other private commercial activities used by visitors.

As currently configured, the US 50-301/MD 2 interchange is confusing for visitors and is constrained by partial access between the two highways. Only the following movements are available at the interchange:

- Westbound on U.S. 50-301 with exits to MD 2 south and Jennifer Road
- Northbound on MD 2 to eastbound US 50-301.

The SHA is currently developing plans to improve this interchange as follows:

1. A new loop ramp will be constructed to allow northbound MD 2 traffic to proceed west on U.S. 50-301.
2. A new roadway connection will be built from MD 2 north to Bestgate Road, making MD 2 directly accessible north/south via Jennifer Road and Bestgate Road.
3. A new loop ramp will be constructed to allow traffic traveling southbound onto MD 2 from the north via the new roadway connection to travel east on U.S. 50-301.

Although these plans will improve the interchange, no eastbound U.S. 50-301 to southbound MD 2 access will be provided. In addition, the plans do not address the current at-grade, signalized intersection of MD 450 (West Street) and MD 2. To enhance circulation for visitors and residents alike, the scope of project planning should be expanded to include long-range provision of grade-separated interchanges on MD 2 at *both* US 50-301 and MD 450, along with accommodation of a full range of movements at both interchanges. In addition to simplifying and enhancing regional circulation within the heritage area, these improvements would provide better local access to visitor support businesses in the Parole area. Thus it is recommended that discussions be initiated with the SHA with the objective of securing a program and funding commitment to a more complete interchange improvement project (including MD 2/MD 450) within two years.

Visitors Center Access Improvements: As noted in Section 4.1.2, Rowe Boulevard is under consideration as the location for the new Capital City Visitors Center. Locating the Visitors Center along this roadway will require access improvements to accommodate vehicles entering and leaving the selected site.

Rowe Boulevard is envisioned as the primary route into Annapolis from US 50-301 for heritage tourists. In addition to any required access improvements to Rowe Boulevard, other initiatives should be pursued to facilitate ease of vehicular movement for residents and visitors alike as part of a comprehensive transportation enhancement strategy (see Appendix A, Section 3.0). As an example, improvements could be made to Aris T. Allen Boulevard/Forest Drive to enhance this corridor's value as an alternate route into Annapolis.

Parking

The major proposed parking improvement is the additional parking for visitors at the proposed Capital City Visitors Center. The parking requirements of the new Visitors Center are a function of the chosen site, the anticipated role of the facility, and potential growth. In order to address the overall functional role of the Center and provide for a doubling of the usage of the current Visitors Center, the site program should provide parking for at least 280 cars, divided into short-term, rapid turnover spaces and longer term spaces for day visitors to leave their cars. The peak demands for these spaces will generally fall on weekends or holidays, so much of this capacity could be included in a shared facility that also serves employees or other day visitors. If the chosen site displaces current long-term parking, additional parking spaces will be needed to make up for the losses. At least half, or 140, of the spaces should be considered as completely new capacity. If the site permits, more spaces should be planned.

The Visitors Center parking facility should also include a substantial tour bus reception area, including loading platforms for six over-the-road tour buses (new ones are 45 feet long). If the Visitors Center is conceived as a first stop in the heritage area for school groups, more bus slip capacity (or a design that can accommodate high operational peaks) will be needed, as these vehicles tend to arrive in groups. Depending on the site chosen, buses can be parked on-site for the duration of the visit to downtown Annapolis or directed to an alternate site such as the Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium lot at Taylor Avenue. It is anticipated

that tour buses will be discouraged from entering the Historic District except on limited routes, and that efforts will be made to have passengers shift instead to smaller shuttle vehicles or walk.

The transition to local shuttles and smaller local tour vehicles will also need to take place at the Visitors Center. Thus it should include loading areas and shelters for at least four 35-foot long transit buses or trolley replica vehicles. This would provide enough capacity for the passengers of two over-the-road coaches to transfer to local shuttles at one time, or for four shuttle routes to meet at one time. However, it is not anticipated that the Visitors Center would be the central transfer point for local transit services. The design should enable these vehicles to pass through or by on a scheduled, high frequency route; depending on the location and site design, these loading positions could be located at on-street bays. These loading areas should not be shared with other tour buses.

In addition, bus slips for local tour operators (such as Discover Annapolis) will also need to be included in the design. These should be on-site waiting areas for “minibuses,” with shelters and information signboards. It is anticipated that ticket sales for these operations would take place inside the Visitors Center. At present there is a single operator with a single bus in this role, but this design should anticipate that at least six small buses might be loading at a time (with additional off-site parking for staging additional vehicles). This would provide capacity for Annapolis tour operators (anticipated to need four spaces), as well as additional capacity for tour vehicles serving the larger heritage area (two small buses or trolleys).

From a transportation linkages perspective, the optimal location for a new Visitors Center is on Rowe Boulevard, as most visitors will be arriving from Route 50-301 and use of this gateway will minimize the need to go through other areas of Annapolis to reach the Visitors Center and the downtown. As previously noted, a feasibility study will be necessary to evaluate the ability of potential sites to accommodate all the elements of the desired program. A parking structure may be necessary.

For the purposes of the Management Plan, the most important parking improvement strategy is to provide additional capacity in conjunction with a new Visitors Center. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the City continues to address the need for additional parking in downtown Annapolis and adjacent areas to support redevelopment. Thus parking associated with the Visitors Center should be coordinated with the City of Annapolis’ overall parking strategy. This should include a comprehensive parking management system developed by the City, so that visitors would have real time information on parking availability at the other city garages. Once parked at the Visitors Center they would be encouraged to leave their cars if they knew that other facilities were full. In addition, moveable message signs visible from Rowe Boulevard would inform inbound visitors about parking availability in the other garages, further encouraging them to stop and park at the Visitors Center.

Transit

As described above, the major facility in this category is the use of the new Visitors Center as a location to induce visitors to shift from autos to local tour buses or shuttles. The Visitors Center would also serve as the registration site for visiting motor coaches.

Currently, rubber-tired trolley-type vehicles are used to provide a shuttle service between the Stadium park-and-ride lot on Rowe Boulevard, Church Circle, downtown, and St. Johns College. The service is provided Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., every seven to ten minutes in rush hours and every fifteen minutes mid-day. Weekend service is offered from May through October from 10:00 a.m. to 6 p.m. A modified downtown routing that includes the existing Visitors Center, Church Circle, the City Dock area, Gate 1 at the Naval Academy, and St. Johns is operated Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., and on weekends from May through October from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. It is funded for the most part through a contract with the State to enable state employees to park at the stadium lot and ride free to jobs in the downtown. Visitors parking in the stadium lot must pay for the parking, plus the standard \$0.75 fare inbound on inbound trips. No fare is charged for boardings in the downtown. The free fare zone in the downtown and the modified routing during the day and on weekends combine to offer a free visitor shuttle between potential visitor destinations in the downtown area, with no charge to ride back to the Stadium lot.

This service could serve the Visitors Center shuttle needs, although some improvements are recommended. When the Visitors Center is put into operation, the hours of the Trolley Shuttle should be extended to include evening hours everyday and additional morning hours on Saturday and Sunday. These additional service hours will add approximately \$120,000 in annual operating costs. The headways (time between buses) should be maintained at the current levels, with buses every seven minutes during peak hours and every 15 minutes the rest of the day. It is recommended that this service be free fare for visitors to encourage use, as is the case on Savannah's CAT Historic Shuttle. Additional funding would be needed to offset this operating loss. This operation should continue to be in the hands of the City's Department of Parking and Transportation, as are the similar shuttles in Charleston, South Carolina and Savannah, Georgia. The service should be operated with specialized transit vehicles. The similar service operated in Charleston uses rubber-tired trolleys of the same type used in Annapolis, and the shuttle in Savannah uses small electric buses – both of which differentiate the service from conventional city bus service.

Annapolis and Anne Arundel County are preparing a Transportation Development Master Plan that is evaluating options for enhanced transit service. The above recommendations for transit service to the new Capital City Visitors Center will need to be coordinated with the results of that study to ensure that all transit services can be adequately linked together. In addition, any changes in the fare structure will need to be coordinated with the Maryland Mass Transit Administration (MTA), as MTA funds a portion of the operating expenses of Annapolis Transit.

Shuttle stops in Annapolis (and eventually at heritage-related stops in Anne Arundel County, such as London Town, if the shuttle service is expanded in the future²) may need to be identified and marked with the heritage area logo and sign developed in accordance with the Visual Consistency program.

Pedestrian Improvements

Design and implementation of pedestrian improvements are proposed to connect the new Visitors Center to Main Street in downtown Annapolis. These improvements should include elements such as new signage, distinctive paving, and signalized crosswalks.

Bicycle Improvements

As the only location where two national trail systems – the East Coast Greenway from Maine to Florida and the American Discovery Trail from California to Delaware – will intersect, the Annapolis, London Town, and South County Heritage Area offers great potential for bicycling to be part of the heritage tourism experience. The priority actions related to bicycle transportation are designed to establish the new Capital City Visitors Center as the bicycling “hub” for the heritage area. These actions are:

- Provide a bicycle connection from the Baltimore and Annapolis (B&A) Trail to the new Visitors Center.
- Plan for a bikepath along Rowe Boulevard from the Weems Creek bridge to connect to the new Visitors Center.
- Establish a bike station at the new Visitors Center.
- Develop map/guide information for bicycle touring of the heritage area.

Bicycle Connection from the B&A Trail to the new Visitors Center: The heavily used B&A Trail and the Colonial Annapolis Maritime Trail (a proposed bicycle network in the City of Annapolis) are designated sections of the “Millennium Legacy Trail” for the State of Maryland, the East Coast Greenway, and the American Discovery Trail. Currently, on-street bicycle lanes extend from the terminus of the B&A Trail along Governor Ritchie Highway (MD 450) to and across the US Naval Academy Bridge over the Severn River. However, no bicycle facilities are provided to connect to downtown Annapolis. As proposed as part of the Colonial Annapolis Maritime Trail, a designated bike route(s) should be established from the bridge to the new Visitors Center. This route could be initially designated with signage, followed by development of dedicated bike lanes.

Rowe Boulevard Bikepath: The Maryland SHA is planning to upgrade the Rowe Boulevard bridges over Weems and College Creeks. Project planning should incorporate provision of a continuous bikepath along Rowe Boulevard, coordinated with the bicycle connection from the B&A Trail to the new Visitors Center.

² Annapolis Transit trolleys are not currently permitted to operate outside of the City. Perhaps a future agreement could be reached to allow them to run to various sites in the County.

Visitor's Center Bike Station: The design of the Capital City Visitors Center should include elements to facilitate the role of the facility as a reception center for visitors who bicycle. Some long-term parking should be included with sufficient overhead clearance to allow vehicles with rooftop bicycles to park. Surface parking would be best. In addition, a "bicycle station" similar to the concept developed in Long Beach, CA would provide an exterior location where cyclists could obtain route maps, information, and refreshments, pump up tires, etc. The prototype developed in Long Beach was developed as a temporary structure that could be dismantled in the off-season.

Bicycle Touring Information: Bicycle linkages in the heritage area would be enhanced by development of map guides and provision of some on-street signing. The "Cycle the City" map/brochure developed by the Lake Champlain Bikeways for the Burlington, Vermont area offers a model of information that includes local history and bicycle/pedestrian connections. A similar brochure could be offered for the Annapolis, London Town, and South County Heritage Area, to include reference to the East Coast Greenway and American Discovery Trail. Route guides could address both City and County destinations. The map/guides should be consistent in design with other heritage area information, while the routes covered by the guides should be developed in cooperation with the City and County Planning Departments and local cycling groups.

4.1.5 Private Commercial Activities

Heritage tourists spend as much or more time shopping, dining, drinking, and resting as they do in structured heritage pursuits. Most of these experiences, including recreational shopping, are provided by private sector businesses; the hospitality industry and the retail sector are especially important. It should be noted that "resting" refers to all types of chosen down time, and may be as extensive as sleeping in a local hotel or as casual as sitting on a bench and eating an ice cream cone. The range of activities, facilities, interests, and involvement is so diverse that only the private sector can respond. The diversity is further increased because both visitors and residents use many of these same facilities with quite different expectations. As stays increase the need for investment to sustain a desirable Total Experience will also increase. How much, where, and in what form the investment takes place are critical issues.

As described in Chapter 5.0, implementation of the full Action Plan is expected to result in increased private sector economic activity generated by the following factors:

- Increased visitor spending on goods and services provided by local businesses.
- Increased business purchases of goods and services from local vendors to meet the demand created by increased visitor spending.
- Associated new jobs and employment earnings created in the local economy.

The increased economic activity will benefit existing businesses that serve the visitor market and provide impetus for the establishment of new businesses in the hospitality and retail sectors. These benefits will be experienced both inside and

outside of the heritage area, for example in the Parole area, which currently has a concentration of commercial development including hotels, restaurants, and shops. In accordance with the guidelines of the Maryland Heritage Preservation and Tourism Areas Program, four “target investment zones” – Annapolis/West Street, Eastport, Mayo Road/London Town, and Deale – have been identified within the heritage area as priority areas for private investment (Figure 4). These zones are briefly described as follows:

Annapolis/West Street

This zone encompasses the Annapolis Historic District, Annapolis National Register District, and the West Street Revitalization Area. It is the current focus of tourism activity in the heritage area, contains numerous historic structures, and provides opportunities for economic revitalization, particularly along Inner West Street.

Eastport

This zone includes the Eastport Residential Conservation Overlay District and the Eastport maritime zones. It affords opportunities for rehabilitation of non-listed and non-historic structures and small-scale commercial development related to tourism activity, such as the initiation of new water transportation services.

Mayo Road/London Town

This zone encompasses London Town, the nearby commercial corridor of Mayo Road, and a site on the South River next to the Route 2 bridge. London Town is the focus of a substantial development program as previously discussed. Mayo Road, along with an adjacent portion of Route 2, is proposed by Anne Arundel County as a revitalization area under Maryland’s Neighborhood Business Redevelopment Program. In addition, the draft *Edgewater/Mayo Small Area Plan* designates Mayo Road for commercial revitalization as the “Edgewater Pedestrian Village.” The Plan also identifies the site on South River next to the Route 2 bridge as a possible staging area for summer ferry service serving London Town.

Deale

This zone includes the Deale town center and maritime uses along both sides of Rockhold Creek. The Deale/Churchton Corridor is proposed by Anne Arundel County as a revitalization area under Maryland’s Neighborhood Business Redevelopment Program. The properties along Rockhold Creek have the potential to support increased water-related investment that contributes to meeting heritage area objectives.

The four target investment zones are more fully described in Appendix B.

4.2 THE MANAGEMENT ENTITY

The implementation programs and priority actions described in this chapter are quite complex, often requiring coordination between heritage institutions and government agencies or private contributions and investors. Several actions fall outside the stated missions of existing institutions. In addition, there are actions or

programs that will require the continued cooperation and involvement of the heritage institutions themselves for their successful implementation. This cooperation, which includes the governments of the City of Annapolis and Anne Arundel, has already begun with the direction of this planning effort.

The management entity for the heritage area initiative will be AAACCVB. Within the AAACCVB will be the Annapolis, London Town, and South County Heritage Area Coordinating Council, governed by an Advisory Board resembling the current heritage area Executive Committee. The Advisory Board will be composed of representatives of private, non-profit institutions, the private investment community, and various levels of government.

The functions of the Council will include the following:

1. **External coordination** with all levels of government that are making capital investments or undertaking relevant programs in the heritage area, in order to align governmental activities with heritage area interests and vice versa.
2. **Internal coordination** with non-profit institutions and private investment interests in the heritage area, to ensure that their activities are mutually supportive in meeting the goals of the heritage area.
3. **Initiation of programs** that transcend the individual missions of heritage-related institutions and agencies, such as joint training and interpretive programs.
4. **Planning** for the on-going implementation and updating of the Management Plan.

The Council should meet on a regularly scheduled basis to set policy, maintain fiduciary oversight, and review progress towards implementing the Management Plan (including periodic revisions of the Plan itself). The Council's Advisory Board will report on a regular basis to the AAACCVB Board of Directors. The Council should also establish staff positions necessary to carry out Council functions efficiently. The staff functions of the Coordinating Council would be handled, initially, by a director and one support staff person. The director should be an administrator with experience in heritage resource management and in fund raising.

As examples of its activities, the Council and its director should represent the interests of the heritage area in coordinating capital expenditures by state agencies (e.g., the Maryland State Highway Administration) within the heritage area's boundaries. In addition, cooperative interpretation and training programs such as those described in Section 3.2.3 could be programmed by the Council. On-going area-wide planning and support for initiatives at individual sites that would advance heritage area objectives would also be part of the Council's role.

Initial estimates of operating expenses for the first year, including payroll cost, are \$125,000. This figure could be expected to rise in the second year to \$135,000. The

obligation for getting the Council organized should fall on the existing heritage area Executive Committee. The heritage area Executive Committee should proceed to confirm the composition of the Advisory Board and seek a director. Recommended target dates are to secure initial funding in Fiscal Year 2000/2001, to hire a director in 2001, and to have by-laws prepared for signature by member institutions by the same time.

4.3 ACTION PLAN

4.3.1 Priority Actions

The actions described in Section 4.1 are those considered to be most critical to the success of the Annapolis, London Town, and South County Heritage Area. In addition, establishment of the Coordinating Council described in Section 4.2 is essential to the success of the heritage area initiative. To provide a guide for decision-making by the Council, a timeframe for implementation of the actions has been developed. This timeframe divides the actions into two categories:

- **Short:** Recommended for implementation within two years of plan adoption.
- **Mid:** Recommended for implementation within two to five years of plan adoption.

Table 1 presents the recommended timeframes for the following five categories of actions identified in Sections 4.1 and 4.2:

1. Management
2. Interpretation
3. Physical Facilities
4. Reaching Out to Heritage Audiences
5. Moving About the Heritage Area

Also presented in Table 1 are potential lead entities and partners for implementation of the individual actions. As noted, it is anticipated that the Coordinating Council will take a lead role in most of the interpretive actions, working with heritage organizations as partners. Most of the remaining actions will be implemented by established public or private sector agencies. The Council can play an important advocacy and coordination role in these actions, with the objective of ensuring that they are implemented in a manner consistent with the Management Plan and heritage area interests.

4.3.2 Cost Estimates/Sources of Funds

Order-of-magnitude estimates of capital and operating costs have been developed for the three major capital facilities proposed by the Management Plan: London Town improvements, Capital City Visitors Center, and HAF Museum. These estimates are presented below along with anticipated sources of funds.

Historic London Town and Gardens

According to the Historic London Town House and Gardens Master Plan, the estimated cost of the London Town improvements is approximately \$6.1 million for

all three phases of work (not including design fees). Phase 1 work – including development of the Archaeology Learning Center, relocation of the horticultural complex, parking lot expansion, and site work – is estimated at approximately \$4.9

Table 1. Priority (Short and Mid-Term) Actions

PROJECT	TIME FRAME	LEAD ENTITY	PARTNERS
1. Management			
1-1. Establish Coordinating Council	Short	Executive Committee	City, County, State
2. Interpretation			
2-1. Improved communications among heritage organizations	Short	Coordinating Council	Heritage organizations
2-2. Joint marketing/passport program	Short	AAACCVB	Heritage organizations
2-3. Interpretive planning with key sites	Short	Coordinating Council	U.S. Naval Academy Maryland State House
2-4. Cooperative staff training	Short	Coordinating Council	Heritage organizations
2-5. Pilot “Footnotes” project	Short	Coordinating Council	HAF, City
2-6. Coordinated festivals and special events	Short	Coordinating Council	Heritage organizations
2-7. Self-guided tours	Mid	Coordinating Council	
2-8. Visitor orientation planning	Mid	AAACCVB, Coordinating Council	Heritage organizations
3. Physical Facilities			
3-1. London Town improvements	Short to mid	London Town Foundation, Anne Arundel County	
3-2. Capital City Visitors Center	Mid	AAACCVB	
3-3. New museum	Mid	HAF	
4. Reaching Out to Heritage Audiences			
4-1. Heritage area website	Short	Coordinating Council, AAACCVB	
4-2. Audience identification	Short	AAACCVB	
4-3. Marketing materials	Short	AAACCVB	
4-4. Visual consistency program	Mid	AAACCVB, Coordinating Council	
5. Moving About the Heritage Area			
5-1. Wayfinding signage	Mid	SHA, Coordinating Council	City, County
5-2. Plan for Parole improvements at US 50-301/MD 2 interchanges	Short	SHA	County
5-3. Access to new Visitors Center	Mid	SHA	
5-4. Parking at new Visitors Center	Mid	AAACCVB	
5-5. Additional transit capacity at new Visitors Center	Mid	AAACCVB, City of Annapolis	
5-6 Pedestrian improvements to connect new Visitors Center to downtown	Mid	City of Annapolis	
5-7. Bike connection from B&A Trail to new Visitors Center	Mid	SHA, City	County
5-8. Plan for Rowe Boulevard bikepath	Mid	SHA	City
5-9. Bike station at new Visitors Center	Mid	AAACCVB	
5-10. Bicycle touring information	Mid	Coordinating Council	AAACCVB, City, County

million (including design fees). To date the County and State have committed \$750,000 each in funding towards the Phase 1 work.

London Town Foundation's current operating budget is approximately \$510,000. It is estimated that approximately \$200,000 in additional operating costs (including two full-time positions, a curator and custodian) will be required to manage programs in the new Archaeology Learning Center. Increased ticket sales are one potential source of revenue to offset the increased operating costs, in addition to continuing Foundation fund-raising efforts.

Capital City Visitors Center

The estimated cost of construction of a new Capital City Visitors Center is based upon the following elements:

- A Visitors Center building of approximately 6,000 square feet including, among other items, an orientation theatre and exhibit space with exhibits and interactive digital monitors.
- Structured parking for 550 cars for both long term users (state employees) and visitors.
- Space for over-the-road tour bus check-in and for local shuttles and small tour vehicles.

The Center building itself with special equipment is estimated to cost \$1,225,000. A parking structure with approximately 20% of the spaces below grade and with bus bays and platforms at grade would cost approximately \$10,000,000. The capital cost of the total complex would be approximately \$11,225,000.

All potential funding sources need to be explored for this project. The success of this effort depends upon an effective partnership of the State of Maryland, Anne Arundel County, the City of Annapolis, and the AAACCVB. Depending upon agreements on a fee structure, part of the costs of parking could be supported by revenue bonds through the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority. If the structure could qualify as an inter-modal center because of transfer to local shuttle services, it may be eligible for funding support from federal programs that allow flexible use of Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds.

An initial estimate of the annual cost of operating the expanded Visitors Center is approximately \$145,000 in salaries and benefits and \$245,000 in other operating and maintenance costs, or a total of \$390,000. These figures are based on current operating expenditures funded by AAACCVB.

Museum

Initial cost estimates by HAF indicate that development of a museum in the former school building on Green Street will cost approximately \$8 million, including construction costs, exhibits, site work and parking, equipment, etc. Annual operating costs of the new facility are estimated at an average of approximately \$670,000 per year for the first five years. HAF expects to fund construction and an endowment for operation of the new facility through a combination of a \$7.5

fundraising campaign from private donors and foundations and \$7.5 million in contributions from the State.

4.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

1. Base decision-making regarding heritage area development on creating a positive “Total Experience” for heritage audiences, both visitors and residents (Section 4.1). Priority actions to achieve this Total Experience include:

Interpretation (Section 4.1.1)

- Improved Communications Among Heritage Organizations
- Joint Marketing/Passport Program
- Interpretive Planning with Key Sites
- Cooperative Staff Training
- Pilot Foot Notes Projects
- Coordinated Festivals and Special Events
- Self-Guided Tours
- Visitor Orientation

Physical Facilities (Section 4.1.2)

- London Town improvements (Anne Arundel County and the London Town Foundation)
- Capital City Visitors Center (AAACCVB)
- Museum (HAF)

Reaching Out to Heritage Audiences (Section 4.1.3)

- Heritage Area website
- Audience identification (research to refine target markets and niches)
- Visual consistency program
- Marketing materials (to translate interpretive themes into persuasive products for target audiences)

Moving About the Heritage Area (Section 4.1.4)

- Wayfinding signage
- Highway/roadway improvements (interchange improvements at US 50-301/MD 2/West Street, access improvements to new visitors center)
- Parking at new Visitors Center
- Enhanced transit service at new Visitors Center
- Pedestrian improvements to connect new Visitors Center to downtown Annapolis
- Bicycle improvements to establish new Visitors Center as the bicycling “hub” for the heritage area

2. Establish four “target investment zones” as priority areas for private investment generated by the heritage area initiative (Section 4.1.5). These zones are:

- Annapolis/West Street
- Eastport

- Mayo Road/London Town
 - Deale
3. Establish within the AAACCVB the Annapolis, London Town, and South County Heritage Area Coordinating Council to manage implementation of the Management Plan (Section 4.2)
 4. Implement the Action Plan over a period of five years, with short-term actions recommended for implementation within two years and mid-term actions within two to five years of plan adoption (Section 4.3.1)
 5. The three proposed major capital facilities are (Section 4.3.2):
 - London Town Improvements
 - Capital City Visitors Center
 - Museum

