



Communities, organizations and agencies that participated in the concept plan include:

Northern Delaware Heritage Coalition

Marshallton
Glasgow
Claymont
Christiana
St. Georges
Delaware Office of Tourism
ShIPLEY Road Alliance
Preservation Delaware
Historical Society of Delaware
Fox Point Association
Delaware City
Cities of Newport, New Castle, Newark
and Wilmington
Wilmington Renaissance Corporation
Greenbank Mill
Friends of Historic Glasgow
Historic New Castle Visitors Bureau
Christiana Heritage Area
Claymont Business Owners Association
Claymont Renaissance Development Corporation
Delaware Greenways
Historic Red Clay Valley
East Coast Greenway Delaware
Greater Brandywine Village Revitalization, Inc.
Greater Wilmington and Brandywine Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau
New Castle County Land Use Department
Pencader Heritage Association
University of Delaware - Center for Historic Architecture and Design
University of Delaware - Department of Health and Exercise Sciences
Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs
Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control - Division of Parks
and Recreation; Division of Fish & Wildlife
Wilmington Area Planning Committee
Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route Association

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For more information about this project, please contact New Castle County Land Use Department - 87 Reads Way - New Castle DE 19720 ... 302-395-5451 or the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program - US Custom House - 200 Chestnut Street - Philadelphia, PA 19106 ... 215.597.6473
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Northern Delaware Heritage Network

This is a place where water flows through rocky landscapes

of quiet beauty towards the shores of the Delaware River

and coastal plain. Its proud heritage is being rediscovered

and brought to light. Its mills provided the flour that kept

the American troops fed during the Revolution. Later its industrial might supported the Union

during the Civil War. Out of the process of shaping industrial America, a unique system of parks

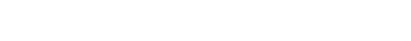
was born. This special place is northern Delaware, an area rich in culture, recreational amenities

and natural beauty. Do you know about it? Do you want to make this exceptional place part of

your daily life? Today, an opportunity exists to link people to their history and heritage in towns

and suburbs across New Castle County, through a system of trails, transit, and auto tour routes...

CONCEPT
CONCEPT
PLAN





The Need

The idea for the proposed Northern Delaware Heritage Network is based on a simple premise: re-connect residents and introduce newcomers to northern Delaware's parks, cultural and historic sites, and natural assets through a complete, coordinated system of trails, transit and auto routes; do it through integrated and organized marketing and communications; and package the resources in a way that enhances their collective value.

Issue #1: Access

There are many types of barriers to the pedestrian and bicycling experience, including psychological and physical, that affect not only access to heritage resources but support for active and healthy lifestyles utilizing outdoor facilities. Some of these barriers include:

- Need for basic infrastructure and signage to help people access resources by trail, transit or road. Trailheads and site entrances are often not marked, and there are gaps in the county's trail network.
- Basic information on trails, related resources and conditions is lacking – e.g., trail hazards, experiences, sites & resources along the way. There is no information on the individual projects that are a part of the Northern Delaware Heritage Network.

Children and families need to be accommodated and encouraged to spend quality time with one another. Primary staging areas with amenities can help make their participation easier.

Issue #2: Marketing and Promotion

Delaware in general is "under marketed." There are few welcome centers, and no readily identifiable "icon," resources or themes that are broadly recognized, although visitors do know about the Brandywine Valley and beaches. There is currently no organized "northern Delaware experience." Visitors do not know where to go or what to see, let alone find out where they can get this information.



- Several communities are working concurrently on trail and greenway development, state scenic byways, and various heritage related activities but not always in a coordinated fashion. Together, these communities can address common issues affecting all localities working on these interrelated projects.
- There is a need for a vehicle to share success stories from other states' heritage tourism programs and well as local success stories that communities of Northern Delaware can benefit from.



The Benefits

LINK COMMUNITIES WITH KEY DESTINATIONS ACROSS NORTHERN DELAWARE AND THE REGION

It will build on existing plans such as the New Castle County Greenways Plan and Wilmapco Pathway Plan to provide safe routes for non-motorized travel. It would provide for short trips between communities and their heritage assets, tying them together socially and economically using alternative modes of transportation. It would connect to the larger region through long-distance trails such as the East Coast Greenway and Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route.

INSPIRE INTEREST IN HISTORY AND CULTURE

It will provide a unique opportunity for current and future generations to learn about and appreciate the rich heritage of northern Delaware. It will be a non-traditional classroom, with heritage assets linked together thematically and enriched by interpretive areas for use by schools and the general public.

PROMOTE AND SUPPORT HEALTH, FITNESS, AND RECREATION

Inviting pathways will encourage residents and visitors to participate in healthy exercise and fitness activities. The network will create more opportunities for recreation and will link parks and facilities.

BOOST LOCAL ECONOMIES AND SUPPORT TOURISM

Around the country, numerous communities are rediscovering the significant economic benefits of heritage tourism supported by a well integrated transportation network and organized, coordinated marketing and promotion. Heritage network users provide a market for food and beverages, lodging, equipment and bicycle sales/rental/repair, clothing, accessories, books, maps, and guides.

BUILD CIVIC PRIDE AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS

As residents help plan and develop the network, pride of ownership develops, creating a new appreciation and understanding of their communities' assets and amenities. This commitment can spark ideas and actions that bring a new unity and pride to the community, and will to preserve the assets that make the community special.



Share Our Vision

This network will provide excellent opportunities to link communities, boost local economies, encourage alternative modes of transportation, support environmental and history education, and reconnect people to their heritage. But it can't happen without you. Forging new partnerships between public and private interests is the only way to make the Northern Delaware Heritage Network a reality.

Please join us!





The Northern Delaware Heritage Coalition: Putting It All Together

The Northern Delaware Heritage Network isn't a completely new idea. Individual communities, non-profit groups, and county and state agencies have been working on transportation infrastructure, signage and other pieces of the network for several years. There have been many successes and new efforts started. Now is the time to bring them all together.

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program of the National Park Service was asked to convene these interested groups to determine if there is public/private support for the development of this heritage network throughout northern Delaware. The proposed network will be a creative cooperative effort and it needs the expertise and talents of local residents and groups.

The informally organized Northern Delaware Heritage Coalition is an advisory body made up of representatives from municipalities, non-profits, state agencies and local citizens which formed to guide the planning process. During the past two years, the Coalition met to develop a vision and goals for the project, collect resource information, develop themes, and package a series of auto loop tours as a first step in promoting northern Delaware's heritage assets. The Coalition also identified priority transportation projects and some potential information hubs within each of the five heritage areas. The most effective way for residents to become involved is by joining the Coalition, advocating the idea to their local officials and informing their neighbors and organizations about the project.

Concept Plan Recommendations: The Future

Although there are many supporters for the proposed Northern Delaware Heritage Network, other people will have questions about the benefits and impacts that such a network will bring to themselves and their communities. The Coalition will focus on the following tasks in the coming years:

- * Meet with citizens and representatives from municipalities, Wilmaco, New Castle County, and Delaware agencies to discuss alternative transportation routes and ideas for connecting heritage assets.
- * Complete production of a demonstration auto loop tour brochure and map, and web site that describes the heritage assets, themes and concept plan and elicits support for the Northern Delaware Heritage Trail Network.
- * Develop a detailed sign plan for the network that builds on existing sign systems such as Wilmington Wayfinding, Pencader Heritage, and state parks.
- * Formalize the Coalition and form partnerships with business and corporations, tourism interests, and civic organizations.
- * Create an action agenda which prioritizes trail and transit projects and the tasks necessary to complete them.
- * Produce an implementation plan including priorities, costs, partners, and funding sources.



Issue #3: Public Awareness and Education

Historic resources are being lost in northern New Castle County, which has seen tremendous growth in new home and commercial development in recent years. In part, this loss of resources is due to lack of knowledge about the state's resources and history.

- Every four years there is a relatively large turnover in Delaware's population that requires re-education to appreciate the state's history and culture and form a common sense of identity.
- There is a need to simplify history and make it easily accessible and understandable.
- Enhancing the delivery of social studies in the schools is essential, and a consequent opportunity to connect students directly with trails and related resources and incorporate them into educational curricula.
- Historic sites need volunteers to maintain them, conduct programs, and educate the public.

Issue #4: Regional Connections

Issue #5: Public Safety and Health

Other?

Northern Delaware Heritage Network





About the Northern Delaware Heritage Network

The proposed heritage network is envisioned as....

GEOGRAPHY & HERITAGE AREAS

City of Wilmington

Brandywine Creek

Red Clay Creek

White Clay Creek / Newark

Pencader/Red Lion

HERITAGE ASSETS

EXISTING & PROPOSED FACILITIES

The Regional Trail Spines - East Coast Greenway and Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route

Off Road Trail Network

On Road Network - Trails, Transit

Trail Heads & Trail Interconnections

Auto Loop Tour Routes, including Scenic Byways



IV. Sign Plan: Towards a Graphic Identity

Analysis of Existing Conditions

Needs and Challenges

Developing a Shared Identity





II. Hubs & Gateways

Definitions & Functions

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Upgrades

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Potential Locations

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III. Themes and Interpretation

Introduction to Themes

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Theme Categories

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Priorities for Theme Development and Examples

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About the Concept Plan

At a series of workshops in each heritage area...



I. Transportation Projects

Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route

East Coast Greenway

Brandywine Scenic Byway

Red Clay Scenic Byway

Coastal Route 9

DeIDOT Proposed Bikeways

Off Road Trail Connections

etc.

Our Vision & Goals

We see the The NORTHERN DELAWARE HERITAGE NETWORK as a means to utilize the Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route (W3R) and the East Coast Greenway (ECG) as the braided spine across New Castle County that directly connects or connects via a spur to each of five "heritage areas." The network of transit, biking, hiking and driving routes would provide alternative transportation connections among historic sites, parks and cultural assets in northern New Castle County.

Access

Provide increased mobility for a broad cross-section of the population. Create a comprehensive, consistent and understandable signage and wayfinding system. Emphasize safe, multi-modal access to historic sites and recreational opportunities throughout northern New Castle County.

Marketing

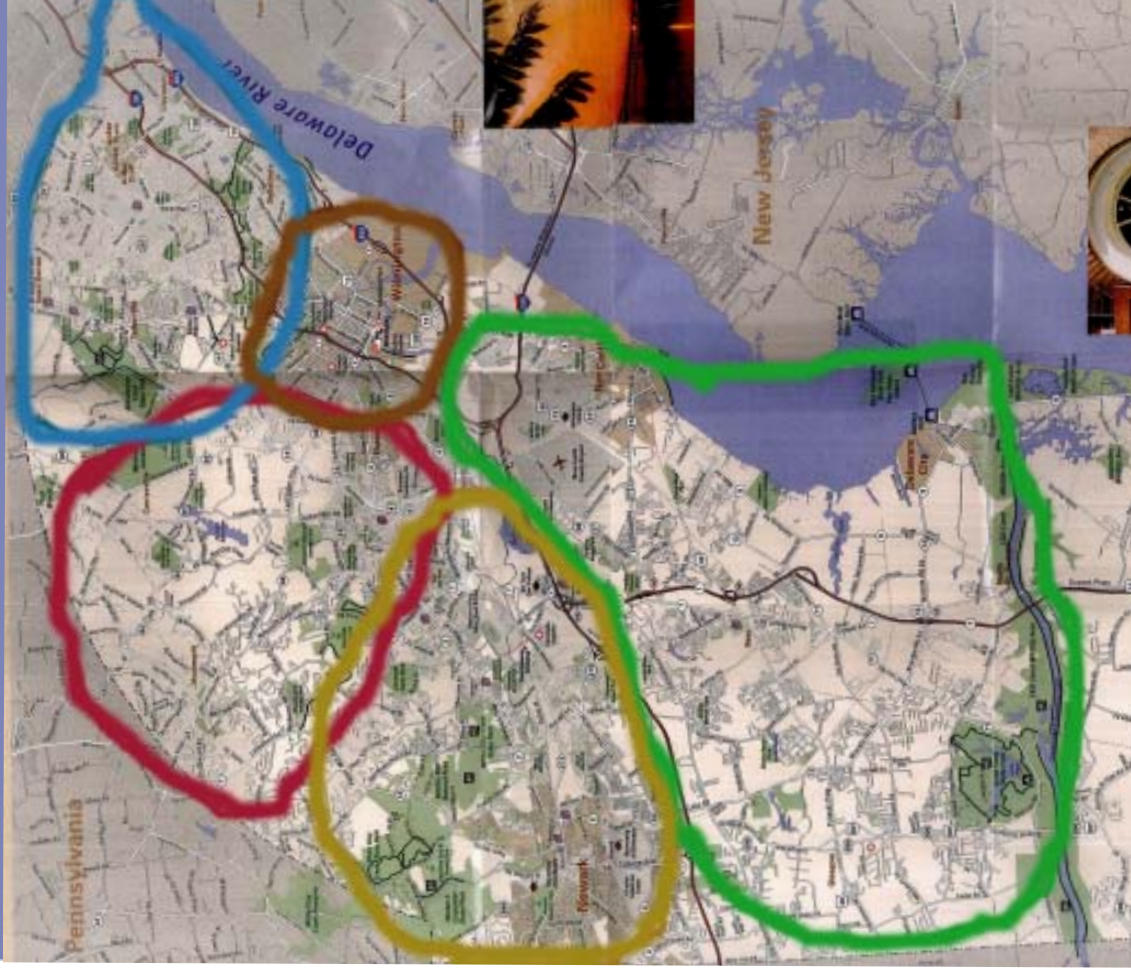
Enhance awareness of and access to heritage resources through coordinated cross-marketing, including virtual information sharing and delivery systems as well as physical media.

Interpretation

Provide a framework and options for incorporating information on heritage initiatives and interrelated stories and themes.

Conservation

Increase community commitment to resource preservation.



Geography:

The Northern Delaware Heritage Network includes Northern New Castle County from Chesapeake and Delaware Canal north to the Pennsylvania border, organized into five heritage areas:

- * City of Wilmington
- * Brandywine
- * Red Clay
- * White Clay / Newark
- * Pencader / Red Lion

Heritage Assets:

- * Major waterways - Delaware River, Brandywine Creek, Christina River, Red Clay Creek, White Clay Creek, Chesapeake & Delaware Canal
- * Parks & recreation areas
- * Cultural and historic sites
- * Educational institutions - libraries, schools

Physical Network Elements would consist of:

- * Regional trail spines - East Coast Greenway, Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route
- * New Castle County trail network from Wilmapca pathway plan, DeDOT proposed bikeways
- * Trailheads
- * Transit routes and stops
- * Auto tour routes
- * Orientation hubs and gateways