



### What:

Heritage Areas are places to experience - to see, hear and even taste - the authentic heritage of Maryland in a unique way that you cannot experience anywhere else. Heritage Areas are where the stories of the people, the land and the waters of Maryland, which have been intertwined for thousands of years, are told. In Heritage Areas individuals, businesses, non-profits and governments form partnerships to preserve the best of Maryland's historic sites and towns, unspoiled natural landscapes and enduring traditions. These tangible links to both place and the past encourage residents to recognize they have a special piece of the American story to treasure and share with others, and that in doing so they create more livable and economically sustainable communities.

Through grants, loans, tax incentives and technical assistance, the Maryland Heritage Areas Program supports the economic well-being of Maryland's communities by preserving and celebrating the State's history, cultural traditions and natural resources through partnerships that promote, support and create place-based experiences for visitors and residents alike.

### Why:

- **SUPPORTING LOCAL PROJECTS:** Since its creation in 1996, the Maryland Heritage Areas program has awarded approximately **\$24.3 million** to governments and nonprofit organizations through a competitive grants process for heritage tourism projects.
- **LEVERAGING FUNDS:** In the last six years, \$14,203,876 in Heritage Area grants has leveraged **\$41,126,235** in non-State matching support – about a **3:1 match!**
- **RETURN ON INVESTMENT:** Every State dollar invested in heritage tourism in Maryland returns **\$4.61 in tax revenues** to State and local governments.
- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** The Maryland Heritage Areas Program provides **loans** and **tax credits** to small businesses, and also **grants** to nonprofit and government run historical, cultural and natural area attractions and activities that draw more visitors to Maryland. Studies show these heritage tourists stay longer and spend more money than most visitors.
- **PARTNERSHIP BUILDING:** Heritage areas support partnership building with regional **joint efforts** and **networking opportunities** that leverage funds and focus resources on community priorities.
- **TARGETING INVESTMENT:** Capital grant funding and other financial incentives are directed to **Target Investment Projects** where there is a high potential to leverage private investment in focused heritage tourism locations with major attractions and clusters of visitor services.
- **SAVING MARYLAND FOR MARYLANDERS AND OUR VISITORS:** Every part of the State has its own unique character, special places and traditions. Heritage areas save and celebrate these one of a kind Maryland treasures for residents as well as visitors – a truly exceptional tool for supporting economic development through tourism while maintaining a high quality of life for all Marylanders!

## **Some Examples of Over 350 Projects Funded:**

### Port Towns Murals Project in Prince George's County

In the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, the Port Towns Murals Program works with schools to provide a hands-on training experience for young artists to create outdoor, public murals that educate visitors and the community about the history of the Port Towns of Bladensburg, Colmar Manor, Cottage City and Edmonston in Prince George's County. The program involves students in community revitalization and informs visitors and residents about their history and the sites they can visit to experience this history firsthand, thus facilitating economic development through heritage tourism.

### Reconstruction of 18<sup>th</sup> Century Carpenter's Shop and Rumney Tavern at London Town, Anne Arundel County

In the Four Rivers Heritage Area, the London Town Foundation used Heritage Area funding for research on and reconstruction of the Carpenter's Shop and the Rumney-West Tavern, two key buildings that, like all but one of the original buildings in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century London Town, had disappeared until rediscovered by archeologists.

### Frederick Visitor Center Visitor Orientation Film

Funds supported the production of a visitor orientation film providing an overview of the broad range of heritage tourism opportunities in the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area. The film is shown in a dedicated theater in the new award-winning Frederick Visitor Center (also supported with Heritage Area Funds), providing visitors with thematic montages of the Heritage Area's Iconic People, Transportation Heritage, Nature/Recreation opportunities, and Arts & Culture.

### Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway Interpretive Plan, Tour Brochure and Audio Guide, Website, and Interpretive Signage, Dorchester and Caroline Counties

In the Heart of Chesapeake Country and Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Areas on the Eastern Shore, grant funds supported the production of an Interpretive Plan, tour brochure and companion audio guide, website, and the installation of interpretive signage along the 125 mile long Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway.

## **Benefits of the Program:**

Nonprofits, governments, and citizens within the 12 State Certified Heritage Areas receive the following benefits:

- **Matching Grants for nonprofits and government agencies**
- **Loans and tax credits for small businesses**
- **Marketing grants for Heritage Areas and local Tourism offices**
- **Support for the operations of local Heritage Area Management Entities**
- **Technical assistance from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority and other State agencies**

## **Funding:**

Funding for the Maryland Heritage Areas Program does not come from General Funds, but from an annual appropriation of Program Open Space funds, which come from the State real estate transfer tax, to the Maryland Heritage Areas Financing Fund.