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PROJECTS: Accomplished and Current

The Midland Trail Association has been very active the past few years with projects that intend to preserve, interpret, develop, and manage the Midland Trail. Before we look at the priorities for the future, let's pause to examine our accomplishments and projects in progress.

MAJOR PROJECTS ACCOMPLISHED

Our top accomplishment: designation in 1992 as a State Scenic Byway.

1. A strong broad community-based organization has developed. In February 1996, the Midland Trail reorganized and from that point the organization has grown, met quarterly and accomplished many projects.

* 2. Placement of brown informational mile-markers, informational "Travel Info" signs, and directional/informational signs to tourist attractions.

3. Established three non-profit community-based Official Visitor Centers. Centers are located in Malden, Gauley Bridge, and Lewisburg.

4. Kids' Trek. Recreated 365-mile walk of 8-year-old Booker T. Washington and his family as a team of adults and high school students walked from the Burroughs Plantation in Virginia to freedom in Malden, WV and then on to the State Capitol for the official WV Celebration and a welcome from Governor Underwood. U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater was also represented.

* 5. "A Fresh Start" Village. Built the "Salt Village" in Malden, which recreates the boyhood home of Booker T. Washington and interprets the workday environment and living conditions of the post-Civil War African - American salt-worker and embodies or helps teach children about Booker's values.

6. A Destination Guide, "We Have It All", published and distributed beginning October 1998. Contains 64 full-color pages of photos, advertising, and text to explain and interpret the Trail's heritage and amenities. Covers from Charleston to White Sulphur Springs.

7. Creation of a Web-site, with a Midland Trail address designation, which links all advertisers and supporters of the Destination Guide with the Midland Trail site. At this writing, the site is logging over 1000 hits per month.

8. Publicity piece in Spring 1999 West Virginia Quarterly magazine.

PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

* 1. Interpretive and informational kiosks. The Association is currently working to establish kiosks at three sites along the Trail.

2. An interpretive and informational visitor's history audio tape for the car stereo. Called "Stagecoach Stops", this audio tape covers the Trail and is a companion to the Destination Guide. Covers the history of the Trail itself and highlights the towns and industries along the way.

* 3. Determination of pull-offs. Grant money has already been allocated to determine 3 pull-off areas for scenic viewing.

* 4. Interpretive videos. The Association has contracted with WV University Institute of Industrial History, Technology, and Archaeology, (WVUIHTA) to produce interpretive videos of the Trail.

* Funded in full or in part by USDOT and WVDOT

Collaboration and Review

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Strategies and projects described in this Corridor Management Plan include input from public and private groups and individuals from all along the Trail.

In September 1998, the Association held three publicized open houses, one in each of the Trail's segments, and invited the public to express its desires and opinions as to development, preservation, interpretation, and management of Trail resources, qualities, land, views, business opportunity and growth, heritage, and historic buildings. The Kanawha County meeting was held at Malden, the Fayette County meeting at Hawks Nest State Park, and the Greenbrier County meeting at Lewisburg.

Meetings were informal, and consisted of a presentation of the intention for a Plan. Attendees were asked to describe their "wish lists" for the Trail in their area for the next 20 years. Discussion would always begin with a certain town/area near the western border of the relevant county, and proceed eastward, one town or area at a time; participants discussed intrinsic qualities, problems, solutions to those problems, and desired projects.

Participation is ongoing, continuing to the time of this writing. Although the Association's board meetings are for business, meetings frequently include input from members and non-member guests alike.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT JURISDICTIONS

The Midland Trail passes through three county government jurisdictions: Kanawha, Fayette, and Greenbrier. Each county and incorporated town within the county is responsible for providing services to its own residents and businesses.

Incorporated communities along the Trail are as follows:

Kanawha County:

Charleston
Belle
Cedar Grove

Fayette County:

Montgomery
Gauley Bridge
Smithers
Ansted

Greenbrier County:

Rainelle
Ronceverte
Lewisburg
White Sulphur Springs

Top Eleven Priorities of the Midland Trail

- I. Build the Midland Trail organization with a strong management team.
- II. Build partnerships among Trail businesses, governments, and organizations.
- III. Marketing the Midland Trail.
- IV. Western Extension to the Kentucky border.
- V. Strengthening the Trail's identity.
- VI. Enhance the Trail's scenic qualities.
- VII. Create a Byways Study Center.
- VIII. Rural Roads and Visitor Center at Hico.
- IX. Bicycle program for the Trail and Trail region.
- X. Create centralized management and marketing for historic properties in Eastern Kanawha County.
- XI. Interpretive program for industrial heritage.

Several of the priority projects of the Midland Trail Association have been "on the burner" since the mid 1990's. These projects have simmered and have been incorporated into the organizations planning process. Some are presently underway or near completion. Some, such as the single identity Midland Trail Address or joint visitor Center may take many years to accomplish. While others such as the marketing, promotion, management, or extension of the Trail are moving ahead.

Schedule of Project Responsibilities and Recommended Projects											
Legend	Time Frame	Midland Trail Scenic Highway Assoc Board and Committees	Midland Trail Counties	Midland Trail Municipal Governments	Visitors Centers Convention Bureaus	WV Dept. of Tourism	WV Dept of Highways	Private Foundations	Corporate and Small Business	Chemical or Coal Companies	Schools, Non-profits
		◆ Lead	▼ Secondary	◆ Lead	▼ Secondary	◆ Lead	▼ Secondary	◆ Lead	▼ Secondary	◆ Lead	▼ Secondary
Priorities		◆ Lead	▼ Secondary	◆ Lead	▼ Secondary	◆ Lead	▼ Secondary	◆ Lead	▼ Secondary	◆ Lead	▼ Secondary
I. Management Team	S M	◆	▼	▼	◆	▼	◆				
II. Partnership Building	S M L	◆	◆	▼	◆	▼	◆		▼	▼	▼
III. Marketing	S M L	◆			▼	▼	▼	▼			▼
IV. Extending Trail	S	◆	◆	◆			▼				
V. Strengthening Image	S M	◆	▼	▼							
VI. Scenic Character Enhancements	S M L	◆		▼			◆				
VII. Byways Study Center	M L	◆					▼	▼			▼
VIII. Rural Roads & Rivers Center	M L	◆			▼			▼	▼		
IX. Bicycles	S M	◆	▼	▼	▼						
X. Eastern Kanawha Management Program	S M	◆	◆	▼					▼		◆
XI. Industrial History Program	S M	◆								◆	

MTSHA Board of Directors will receive Quarterly Progress Reviews of CMP Priorities from appropriate committees at their regular meetings, with reports to participating agencies and organizations, as appropriate.



**BUILD THE
MIDLAND
TRAIL
ORGANIZATION
WITH
A STRONG
MANAGEMENT
TEAM**

Please See
Chapter 7
for details

MANAGING THE MIDLAND TRAIL

PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT

The Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association has made tremendous strides as a voluntary organization. However, we have encountered management challenges as the number of projects which need attention mount and weigh on the shoulders of a limited number of volunteers over our 120-mile stretch of mountains. It is critical that MTSHA move from an organization of volunteers to one with professional guidance as soon as possible.

To accomplish this transition, the Association must bring together a team with professional leadership that understands the complexities of funding sources and is capable of accomplishing the plans outlined in this document. Suggestions for management development and marketing are discussed in chapters on management and marketing. Additionally, this Plan presents strategies for developing a fully paid professional staff which works with other byways in a circuit-riding manner. Student interns and cost-shares are alternative routes towards full professional management until the Association has resources in place to achieve this project.

MTSHA has won considerable credibility in recent years by accomplishing several Trail-wide projects, including a Destination Guide, "We have It All", and its accompanying publicity campaign. The Trail has also accomplished a number of successful community-based projects.

The Association has learned from experience. We have found that access to state government, media markets, travel and tourism organizations, and good graphic design and marketing professionals are all integral to the organization's momentum. A location close to Charleston and its resources, together with a circuit-riding staff, is most advantageous for accomplishing our goals.

BENEFITS

We expect to realize many benefits for Association activities from paid management. Our work as a volunteer organization has generated enthusiasm and involvement not only from within, but also from outside; government officials from local to federal levels have expressed support, business supported the Destination Guide, and local citizens' groups have embraced the MTSHA's platform of heritage preservation

and development. Continuing this involvement with a professional staff assures that projects in progress can continue in an accountable and effective way. More and better involvement with the tourist industry and state and local entities will result in better communication and coordination of all Trail projects, maintaining volunteer spirit while involving professional support.

RESPONSIBILITY: The volunteer leadership of the MT will have top responsibility of ensuring availability of funds for hiring management. Local and regional government must be aware of the effectiveness of a regional approach, that is, WV Scenic Highway leadership should be involved in resource development.

ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES

Start-Up Cost-Sharing Model

Establishing an office with computers, telephones, utilities, and meeting and working spaces requires a significant investment. A phase-in may involve a project partner in the area which accommodates an incubator or cost-sharing concept for convenience to both ends of the Trail until such times as it can or chooses to be completely independent.

Student Interns Staff Supplement

WVU Tech, University of Charleston, West Virginia State and Marshall University all can provide student interns that benefit start-up projects. Riverside High School Learn and Serve may be extremely helpful here.

Scenic Byway CVB Consortium

The Trail, the Coal Heritage Trail, the Highland Scenic Highway and CVBs in Charleston, Oak Hill, Beckley or South Charleston all can gain from successful coordination and cooperation. Coordinating with the state Tourism and Scenic Byways Offices could result in creative management solutions.

Virginia-West Virginia Connection

At Buena Vista, Virginia the U.S. Forest Service and Buena Vista CVB share staffing responsibilities for a visitor center on Virginia's Trail. Extending the Midland Trail Scenic Byway concept into Virginia could provide an important model and location; whitewater rafting, canoeing, hiking, camping, biking are all available here. The addition of information on the West Virginia Trail at a location such as this will help

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Participation among agencies, organizations and municipalities using the Trail and sharing a common vision will improve its interpretation and local development. A strengthened communication program involving newsletter, press releases, staff and volunteer activities will bring Trail partners together in ways which strengthen the overall effectiveness of the organization and the Midland Trail Region.

Partnerships of this nature will assist with supporting projects of the Midland Trail and its partners. It will smooth the transition from a volunteer-managed to a professionally managed organization. Partnering with other organizations on marketing, management, Visitor Centers, and support of the Trail's projects will be necessary.

Greenbrier, Fayette, Kanawha Counties, with the proposed addition of Putnam and Cabell Counties, will form the new Midland Trail. An approved extension means five separate county commissions, two of the state's largest cities, and a score of city councils, mayors, and other elected officials. Three separate and independent regional planning bodies serve these areas. Dealing with competition between jurisdictions and forming effective partnerships is an essential element for reaching Association goals.

In order to accomplish these tasks, the Association must attract and retain qualified professionals who are able to continue building the organization and remain with it until it is established enough to move into a more mature and independent phase. A professional must be able to manage multi-faceted programs involving government, tourism, business and non-profit sectors. This individual, together with a centralized professional staff (see management plan section), will work with boards and related organizations in partnership with the Trail and intersecting and partnering Trails and groups.

The ability of Trail organization(s) to partner with organizations which can provide rent, utilities, equipment, vehicles, storage, taxes, insurance or any other overhead cost will prove an important benefit. Funding provided through federal or state government is regularly delayed. As such, it would aid the organization's activities to have a line of credit that meets payroll and other necessary expenses.

Over the last thirty-six months the organization has used the equipment and supplemental staff of Cabin Creek Quilts Cooperative, *West Virginia Quarterly* Magazine and the law office of Larry L. Rowe, who serves as MTSHA's President. All of these organizations are located in Malden four miles from the State Capitol. However, a perma-

nent, full-time, paid staff is needed to meet the needs of the Association and Trail activity as it outgrows donated space and services; the staffs and offices which we have been using can no longer accommodate with time, money, or equipment.

COSTS

- * Salary and benefit package for staff
- * Office equipment and supplies
- * Rent, utilities, insurance
- * Office location near Charleston
- * Vehicle (circuit ride for Scenic Byways business)
- * Graphic Design and publishing capability

RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility for successful management and partnership building belongs with the Executive Trail Manager, who works in cooperation with the Board of Directors to oversee operations. The Manager, working hand-in-hand with community-based groups and committees, can watchdog a variety of functions.

Standing Board committees include the following: Communications, Finance, Marketing, Nomination, Membership, Environment. The Association can develop others as needed.

BENEFITS

- * Strong links with and physical proximity to state government, media, business, and tourism-related organizations
- * A "showcase" presence in a historic district with industrial, cultural, racial and artistic diversity at the Kanawha segment
- * Close links between management, board and governmental agencies.

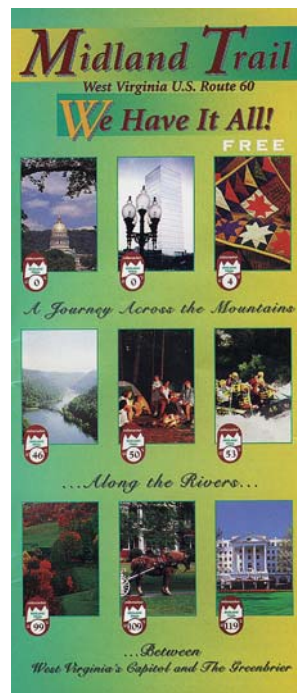


**BUILD
PARTNERSHIPS
AMONG
TRAIL
BUSINESSES,
GOVERNMENTS,
AND
ORGANIZATIONS**



MARKETING THE MIDLAND TRAIL

Chapter 8 details Marketing recommendations and implementation



MARKETING THE MIDLAND TRAIL

1. A single address for the Midland Trail is a community-based goal which will provide marketing benefits and visitor assistance at no cost once it is in place. A name-place address which is recognizable regionally as well as nationally for what and where it is will be very valuable to our group. As an organization, we must acknowledge that many changes require time, and this is one which clearly will require a local initiative involving continuous reminders of the benefits. At this time less than 25% of the Midland Trail uses its name as its mailing address.

2. Continuation of the highly successful "We Have It All" campaign into its second phase for the first 3-5 years of the millennium. This campaign will drive home the concept of the Trail's wide variety qualities. "We Have It All" will accomplish its goals through a mix of strategies:

* New and expanded Destination Guide, with new Gateways.

* Videos and audios which can be used in and from the automobile as well as at home. Also used in visitor/reception center settings or broadcast over TV or radio,

* Promotional tours, Treks, bicycle and special events which targeting markets

* Advertising campaigns in magazines, TV and radio

3. Brochures, maps, and presentations. Includes brochures called "Trail Tracks" listing attractions for specific areas of interest such as whitewater sports, biking, photography, Civil War sites, arts and crafts, and scenic beauty.

4. Hospitality training for volunteers and staff in visitor centers and for those working in our business partners along the Trail

5. Expanded international market base through a selection of materials produced in French and German for Canadian and European markets which are just beginning to explore the Trail.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Midland Trail Marketing Committee has done a significant job thus far. Together with MTSHA's board and staff, the Committee will continue and expand upon this work.

Cooperative agreements with the WV Department of Tourism and Transportation opened up available grants which have been invaluable towards making campaigns successful.

Continuously broadening the base with cooperative agreements and collaborative arrangements will expand further the Midland Trail message. Marketing nationally and internationally will strengthen the Association's relationship with the State and Federal offices of international development. The Association can expand those Trail materials which presently feature sections in French and German for foreign markets.

BENEFITS

Professional marketing materials are indispensable for projecting the message of the Association--"We Have it All". All of these materials, combined with the efforts of a proactive Trail membership, will make the Trail's marketing efforts successful.

Materials and programs will also raise money through advertisements and other revenue-generating sources.

Communicating with foreign visitors in their native tongues is the first step towards extending them a welcome. Multi-lingual signs also communicates to all who see them that the Midland Trail region is looking to attract foreign visitors. The culture of hospitality will take deeper roots with this acceptance and expectation.

Expand the Trail to WV's Western Border

Horace Greeley visited the Norton House on the Trail in Malden. His famous "Go West, Young Man" quote reminds us of the opportunity, adventure and entrepreneurial benefits the West represents. The Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association sees a western extension to the Kentucky border a vital key to the Trail's future development.

The Association has evidence of strong community support for this extension with letters of support from over 50 community leaders. George Washington first embraced the concept of an inland route which would connect the mid-Atlantic region with the Gulf of Mexico. At this time, the Midland Trail Scenic Highway, as designated, ends in front of the State Capitol in Charleston. Without the extension, we lose an opportunity to showcase several properties listed on the National Register. The Western Gateway at the Kentucky border provides an excellent opportunity to introduce the eastbound I-64 traveler to the Trail and other Scenic Trails in West Virginia which intersect or sit near the Midland Trail. The Association's vision is to connect communities on its route from coast to coast, offering an important pioneer-themed option to Route 66.

Extending the Midland Trail to the West Virginia's western border accomplishes several things. First, it completes the story of westward pioneer movement across the Alleghenies both visually and experientially for the tourist, demonstrating the physical challenges that pioneers faced in their westward movement. In this way, the Trail becomes a living portrait of the colonial-age pioneer's route. Moreover, extension provides an expanded story of the Trail's symbiotic relationships between river, road and rail transportation. Third, it expands the original east-west corridor proposed by George Washington and further opens the possibility of connecting Virginia, Kentucky and points west with West Virginia's piece of the Trail. In Huntington the Midland Trail will meet the Ohio River Scenic Route providing a near continuous route from the Virginia border to the Mississippi River. A bicycle trip in Spring 2000 will proceed from Hampton, Va., to Huntington, WV, further linking the states' Midland Trails in spirit. It is our hope this joint effort would offer the opportunity to extend

across Virginia from Atlantic Ocean to Mississippi.

The Corridor Management planning process will provide an important body of knowledge to those western communities which join the Midland Trail. As such, it will catalyze similar processes in Virginia and Kentucky once they see the benefits of a program which connects our borders.

The historic, recreational, scenic, and natural attractions along this stretch will gain a higher community priority, which from all indications is precisely what communities desire. This planning process will build upon community pride and encourage preservation of intrinsic qualities on other segments of the Trail.

Gateways will prepare travelers for the opportunity to use the Midland Trail. These "doors" to the Trail, located in Hico, Beckley, Martinsburg, Parkersburg, Huntington, Charleston, White Sulphur Springs, and Lewisburg, are entry points for tens of thousands of new visitors.

RESPONSIBILITY

In anticipation of the Trail extension, the Association's Board at its 1999 annual meeting voted to create additional seats on the board to accommodate members from Putnam and Cabell Counties as well as a members of the Coal Heritage Trail and Highland Scenic Highway Associations.

The WVDOT and municipalities along the proposed extension of the Trail will be extremely important to this effort.

BENEFITS:

- Completes Statewide Scenic Byway Corridor
- Important Western Gateway access

COSTS

- * Consultants or staff for Corridor Management Plan
- * Extension
- * Signage
- * Transportation Publications
- * Publications



Horace Greeley

MIDLAND TRAIL'S "GO WEST YOUNG MAN": GO WEST 2001





Please See Chapter 9 for Signage details and Chapter 8 for full Marketing Plan

Strengthen Identity and Visitor Communications

SIGNAGE

Signs are the main means of communicating between the Trail and its auto travelers. Community people along the Trail consistently indicated a need for an improved signage program. Trail-traveling is not as clear-cut as superhighway travel. This signage must be clear and must incorporate into its design what the visitor will experience.

Midland Trail members agree that signage along the Trail is a priority and needs improvement. The Trail is not clearly signed in both Charleston and White Sulphur Springs and large Gateway-typed arched signs would clearly explain entry onto the Midland Trail region. Public meeting participants also felt that exits on I64 should provide sufficient information for convenient access to the Trail; at present, they do not.

Existing signage along the Trail needs maintenance and upgrading. The Association will establish a Signs Standards committee responsible for reporting on the conditions of Trail signage, such as for interpretive signs and pull-off markers.

GATEWAY MARKERS

These should incorporate the Midland Trail Logo and greet visitors to the Trail. Other directional information should provide travelers information in a cluster format. Existing signs which compete with these signs should eventually be replaced.

ROUTE AND MILE MARKERS

These signs should identify the Midland Trail name along with the logo for the Trail. Used at intersections, markers can inform travelers that they are on the Trail. Mile-markers assist travelers in using the destination guide as well as other information on the Trail. These signs will need regular and periodic maintenance and upgrades. If the Trail is extended west the Mileage Marker signs will need adapting

PATHFINDER IDENTIFICATION

Visitor Information Centers, Gateways, and pull-offs are examples of locations where clustered pathfinder signs will help travelers negotiate the Trail with ease. All signs should be coordinated with the services of the West Virginia Department of Transportation.

Foreign Language Signage

Welcomes in French and German are in

place at the Malden Visitor Center. Similar signs will go up at the Centers at Lewisburg, Hawks Nest, Gauley Bridge and White Sulphur Springs in the near future, and greeting signs in Spanish and Japanese are forthcoming for all. Meanwhile, pull-offs and Gateways will offer foreign language welcomes.

BROCHURES AND DESTINATION GUIDES

Plans call for expanded as well as new destination guides linking the Coal Heritage Trail and the Highland Scenic Highway with the Midland Trail's western extension and with the existing Trail. Targeted travel brochures for African-Americans, Women, Native American and other specific interest travelers are part of the marketing scheme.

VIDEO

A video is presently in production. An additional video will promote the Trail's qualities and educate the traveler about the western sector of the Trail and the Coal Heritage sector.

ELECTRONIC KIOSKS

Radio-controlled or electronic kiosks and new outdoor traveler technology will figure prominently as a cost-effective means of communicating the Trail's message to travelers. While new technology, this equipment will be useful in the future.

COSTS

- ^ Signage--new and replacement
- ^ Brochure production and printing
- ^ Video production
- ^ Visitor Center operation
- ^ Pull-off maintenance

BENEFITS

- Continuity of message
- Increase name recognition
- Building of sense of community between businesses and centers along the Trail

RESPONSIBILITIES

Design, color, material use, and placement of signs should be in accordance with West Virginia Department of Transportation standards. MSHA's Signage Committee should work with the state and county offices of the Department of Transportation to ensure that signs meet DOT guidelines. Trail representatives from each county can serve on the committee and work in cooperation with their respective county highway departments.

SCENIC CHARACTER ENHANCEMENTS

Capitalizing upon the visual qualities of the Midland Trail's scenery enhances visitor experience. The Association will address and monitor intrusions and distractions along the Trail, particularly those in the industrial or mining areas. An active effort underway in all three counties seeks to remove derelict and dilapidated properties from the Trail and to screen unattractive industrial or storage sites with rows of evergreen trees.

Volunteer groups have worked on pull-offs and overlooks development in the last year. This effort will continue and step up to include ten (10) overlooks and viewsheds and accompanying trash disposal, picnic benches and interpretive signs.

Roadside parks at Cannelton in Kanawha County, at Rainelle, and Lewisburg (Tuckwiller Park) will receive further Association support for maintenance and upgrades.

SAFETY UPGRADES

Industrial Area Signage- HAZARDS!!!

Identification of Trail areas with heavy coal, timber or trailer truck traffic, as well as other potential hazards, is an Association priority.

The increase in visitor traffic to the Trail has presented safety issues as it relates both to particular hazards in specific areas and to inherent characteristics of the Trail. Unregulated auto and truck traffic in the Malden Historic District presents safety concerns to school groups and tourists at cultural sites on the Trail there.

BUSINESS SIGNS

Business signage on and off premises are regulated by the WV DOH for size, height, number and type and limited to a size which is necessary to identify and direct people to points of interest or warn of hazards Also needed are signs that explain points of culture or local history. In general, signs should be as small as possible, but consider the traveler's distance and speed. It is desirable to entice the reader to stop and visit the attraction. Once the traveler adjusts to smaller signs and slower speeds, large intrusive signs are unnecessary. The variety of signs needed along the

Trail requires a standardization of designs, construction, wording and location. This will benefit the traveler and ultimately the overall appearance of the Trail. Since WV DOH enforces signage on-and off business premises, their policies and the *West Virginia Code* will be referenced in questions pertaining to this matter.

RESPONSIBILITY

Together with the WVDOT and district DOTs, MSHA can take a cooperative approach in working with truck drivers, coal companies, timber companies, unions, and state and local law enforcement officials. With cooperative measures by all parties, including travelers, new and repeat users of the Trail can experience safety and comfort in their visits here.

The Association will refer to the West Virginia Code of the WVDOT in questions pertaining to this matter.

BENEFITS

The inherently challenging and even potentially dangerous aspects of the Trail are part of the thrill of traveling the Trail. Freeway rush hour traffic, unfamiliar inner-city traffic, tunnels or detours all present challenges. Cooperation between the Association and its partners will lead to successful management and monitoring of such challenging conditions.

Chapter 9
Driving the Trail
Enhancing the Visitor Experience
Details our Plans in this area



ENCOURAGE TOURIST-RELATED DEVELOPMENT

Create a Byways Study Center

In its commitment to attract serious scholarly study of the Trail, the Association envisions the creation of the nation's first center for the study of scenic byways and highways. The goal of such a Center would be research into improvements in heritage preservation, tourism development, interpretive projects, and management of byways and highways. Scholarly study of byways, rural roads, rural road maintenance and related sustainable economic development projects along Byways will also be the focus of this national and international Study Center. The hallmark of the byways movement is diversity, and the Association has developed projects which interpret a Trail diverse in culture, terrain, and socio-economic status.

The expertise and resources involved in this effort will facilitate long-range West Virginia planning, and national byway goals. The legacy of this Center will be its ability to encourage a new type of traveler back onto old historic routes. Traffic has bypassed many of these roads because of interstate travel, resulting in decline and economic struggle for Trail communities.

Using West Virginia as a laboratory, the Association will develop a strong international focus. The Trail's location, development stage and size are ideal for examination by developing nations. We have learned this fact from experience; the Association will be able to look at tourism from an international perspective. This focus enhances West Virginia's global perspective. The Study Center will also supplement byways development, data, and study in West Virginia. The number and types of professionals which can address the development of Scenic Byways will be significantly greater.

The ideal location would be in Malden, West Virginia. First, Malden is close to the state government and its resources in Charleston. Furthermore, Malden is

developing as a heritage preservation town and with an important legacy of diversity, education, and cultural tourism.

Responsibility

There exists the potential of considerable academic support from four institutions: Montgomery's West Virginia University Institute of Technology, located on the current Trail, and University of Charleston, across the Kanawha River on the viewshed of the western end of the current Trail. Two others are on the proposed extension to the Kentucky border: Marshall University in Huntington and West Virginia State College in Institute.

Costs

Funding is expected to be broad-based, with a lead commitment from the USDOT and with assistance for the state of West Virginia from such organizations as WV Tourism, the WV Development Office, private foundations, WV Roundtable, and the Appalachian Regional Commission Tourism Program. This center will not overlap roles with the National Scenic Byways Clearinghouse.

MIDLAND TRAIL

Priority VII

WEST VIRGINIA

CREATE A
BYWAYS
STUDY
CENTER

(10 yrs: 2000-2010)



Norton House in Malden, possible future site of nation's first Center for Rural Byway Studies.



RURAL ROADS AND VISITOR CENTER AT HICO

RURAL ROADS AND RIVERS VISITOR CENTER

The Midland Trail Scenic Highway Planning Committee and the Fayette County Planning Committee have identified the intersection of Routes 60 and 19 at Hico as a high-priority area. The 60-19 intersection joins the Midland, Coal Heritage and, potentially, the Highland Scenic Highways. Additionally, it is located at the center of the whitewater industry near Hawks Nest State Park and the New River Gorge National Park. The Association envisions attracting tourists to the Trail with a museum/visitors center which will interpret the qualities of West Virginia itself and for which the state is known: recreation; industry; resources such as coal, timber, chemicals, and glass; farming; Appalachian arts and crafts; and the state's history.

At this time, this interchange is still a pastoral and ideal setting for the interpretation of both rural roads and rivers. This location would be a joint venture of National Scenic Highways for the Coal Heritage Trail, the Highland Scenic Highway, and the Trail. Whitewater rafting contributes a great deal to the recreational life and the economy of the region. This site would be ideal for an accompanying

Whitewater Hall of Fame. These partnerships are believed to be an important step towards collaborating and viewing travel in a regional manner.

COSTS

- * Land Acquisition
- * Building
- * Furnishing
- * Operational Costs

BENEFITS:

- * Efficiency of joint operations for tourists and organizations
- * Stronger presentation on rural roads opportunities
- * Preservation of a strategic intersection on Highways
- * Hico is presently the geographic center of the Trail
- * Hico is the center of the whitewater industry in West Virginia
- * Hico is six miles from the New River Bridge and New River National Park
- * Fayette County Planning identified the Hico interchange as very significant to "green" development on the Trail
- * The Midland Trail, Coal Heritage Trail and the nearby National Highland Scenic Highway all can be serviced from a joint interpretive center. Also, partnerships in such an interpretive center would benefit the whitewater industry.

RESPONSIBILITY

- * The Midland Trail, being the lead Scenic Highway in this effort, has the leadership responsibility. This role is one of facilitator, which will set the tone for the success of other collaborative efforts and the success of future partnerships. The Scenic Highways, Fayette County, the whitewater industry, the New River National Park and CVBs all play an important role in developing this joint center.



BICYCLES ON THE MIDLAND TRAIL

Each county on the Trail contains areas for hiking/biking trails, each in a different stage of development. West Virginia's Rails-to-Trails Program has developed a beautiful Trail along the Greenbrier River from Lewisburg to Cass. In Fayette County, a developing Trail will allow bikers and hikers to go from the middle of Ansted to the bottom of the New River Gorge, where they can catch the Hawk's Nest State Park Tram back to the top of the mountain. The Tram will have bike racks.

In Kanawha County, the development of a Share The Road bicycle path between the State Capitol and Riverside High School would open up bicycling opportunities for people of all ages and abilities. This flat twelve-mile ride can be an important new recreational addition for potential commuters or visitors to the Valley. Innovative solutions include pigmented or raised roadways; Share The Road signs would be welcome to the most seasoned riders who now use this route.

MTSHA will serve as an advocate for riding opportunities both on and off Trail. To highlight these opportunities, the Association will sponsor a May 2000 bicycle ride across the Trail. "Ride Across the Virginias" will begin at Hampton University in Virginia and traverse the Trail's entire length through both Virginia and West Virginia over a two-week period. Booker T. Washington's 125th Anniversary graduation from Hampton will serve as the starting-point at the May 14th Hampton graduation. Bicycle clinics at school and public facilities will emphasize safety, maintenance and bikable routes on and around the Trail.

RESPONSIBILITY

Ride Across the Virginias - A committee of the Trail which co-sponsored the 1997 Kids Freedom Trek from the Booker T. Washington Memorial in Virginia to Malden on part of the Midland Trail will lead in organizing this 400-mile ride. Celebrate West Virginia Foundation, the State Bicycle Tourism Coordinator, Rails to Trails and the West Virginia Trails Association will all be involved. Broad-based support will come from businesses, banks, bicycles, community groups and schools.

Partnering with these groups, the Association's Bicycle Committee can lead in Trail development.

BENEFITS

As a recreation and health option, biking reaches a broad base of the population. Further development of this important opportunity will be a boost for residents as well as travelers. Bicycling on and off the Trail provides a close link to rafting, climbing, hiking and skiing enthusiasts whose participants regularly cross over to other sports.

COSTS

Ansted-Planning, design, construction and promotion costs
Eastern Kanawha - Planning, design, acquisition of land easement between Malden and Port Amherst; river access and upgrades at Malden and Belle; and marked bike and hike routes between the Capitol building and Malden Historic District, with a later extension along Route 60 to the new Riverside High School at Quincy; promotion



BICYCLES ON THE MIDLAND TRAIL AND IN THE MT REGION AREA

EASTERN KANAWHA HERITAGE AREA MANAGEMENT CONCEPT

Joint marketing, maintenance, management and fundraising for historic buildings and projects in the Upper Kanawha Valley continues strong at this writing. Through the CMP process, these independent community voluntary groups came together for the first time and acknowledged their shared challenges. Discussion has moved in the direction of coordinating marketing, maintenance, management of tours, and other common expenses and responsibilities in new cooperative ways.

Some of the most significant historic preservation and heritage efforts in West Virginia have taken place east of the State Capitol on the Midland Trail in Kanawha County. These designated heritage areas include the following: Daniel Boone Park, Malden Historic District, Belle Heritage Area and Cedar Grove Heritage Area. This industrial region can claim several pre-Civil War homes, cabins, churches, cemeteries and historic industrial sites. The interpretation of this multi-faceted and historically-layered region has challenged the development of a marketable industrial/historical identity in this area.

The Association took important

steps during the development of this plan to raise the importance of the industrial identity by holding an Industrial Heritage Tourism Conference on the Trail at Montgomery's WVU Institute of Technology. The Association has worked actively to recognize the roles of the historic heritage areas within the Trail's eastern segment. Here historic homes were built in areas of great coal, timber, and salt reserves. Large industrial concerns such as the DuPont and Elkem facilities have joined MTSHA as partners.

COSTS

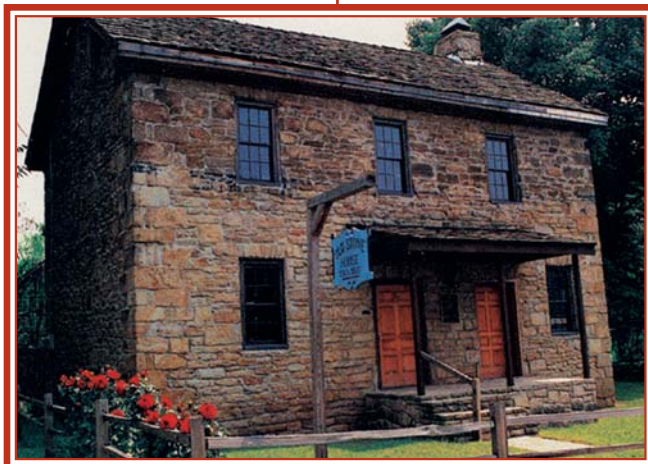
- * Staffing
- * Marketing
- * Fundraising

BENEFITS

- * Coordination
- * Joint Maintenance, Marketing, Presentation
- * Shared staffing, which reduces costs*

RESPONSIBILITY

Craik-Patton Board, Cabin Creek Quilts Cooperative, Belle Historic Society and Old Stone House Board, Virginia's Chapel Board of Trustees, and Cedar Grove Mansion Properties are all important players in management. MTSHA will be the leadership organization, with active participation from Executive Committee members in each heritage area.



Old Stone House



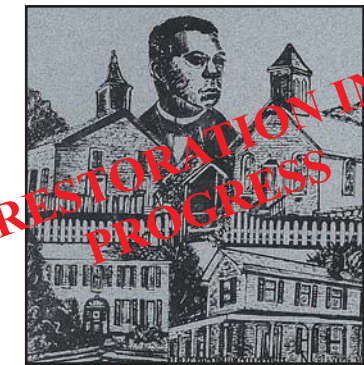
Capitol Heritage Area
 HOLLY GROVE
 MANSION



Daniel Boone Park
 Heritage Area
 CRAIK-
 PATTON HOUSE



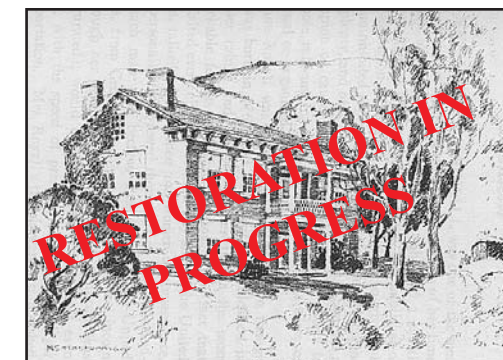
Malden Heritage Area
 AFRICAN ZION
 BAPTIST
 CHURCH



Belle Heritage Area
 OLD STONE
 HOUSE



Cedar Grove
 Heritage Area
 CEDAR GROVE
 HOUSE





INDUSTRIAL HISTORY INTERPRETATIONS FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

The discovery began a parade of discoveries of other natural resources along the Trail. Following salt came the discovery of new technologies and industries. Other resources included oil, gas, timber, coal, chemicals and metals. This is a story of the building of America in the twentieth century. The Midland Trail's version accounts for pioneers in the development process of a Trail and its resources. However, as a reinvention it accommodates both industry and tourism.

Locating an Industrial Heritage Interpretive Center/Museum, possibly near the Montgomery area, site of West Virginia University Institute of Technology and Elkem Metals could promote the Kanawha Valley as one of the nation's foremost industrial tourism regions. Among the area's claims to fame is the development of chemicals to make antifreeze and nylon, a branch facility for the world's largest silicon-producing multinational, the first high-pressure synthetic ammonia production facility in America, and a whole host of products which reach world-wide markets. In addition, the Valley's industry manufactured steel, chemicals, and explosives for the nation's war efforts. At the eastern end of the Valley is the Hawks Nest Tunnel, considered a great industrial engineering feat, but also deemed the site of the state's worst industrial tragedy.

The Tunnel's fascinating history brings into focus another significant aspect of Trail history: labor. The Trail and its surroundings were home to some of America's most violent labor conflicts. Mother

Jones was a noted visitor and activist along the Trail.

One of the Association's priorities is the preservation and development of the Trail's industrial heritage, particularly vital in the face of the increasing popularity of industrial tourism among travelers. DuPont's Belle facility currently seeks designation as an American Chemical Society National Historic Chemical Landmark. Furthermore, the Association supports nomination of the entire Kanawha Valley as a "Chemical Valley" Historic Area.

COSTS

- * Heritage area industrial interpretive kiosks and equipment displays
- * Interpretive kiosks, radio-controlled communication transmissions
- * Marketing industrial tourism

BENEFITS

- * Strengthened relations with chemical, coal, and metallurgical industries
- * Balancing environmental relations between citizens and industrial job development
- * Participation by industries in tourism process--contributions to process
- * Education regarding role of industry

RESPONSIBILITY

Industrial leadership and participation has been included on the Association's board. The concept of Industrial Heritage Tourism grew in viability as a result of a 1998 MT Industrial Heritage Conference. The Trail must continue to be the lead organization in this effort, soliciting participation from an active industry-community-citizen triangle and working closely with Chemical Heritage organizations on the local as well as national level. Labor unions should be included in future organizing efforts.



AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY NATIONAL HISTORIC CHEMICAL LANDMARKS PROGRAM

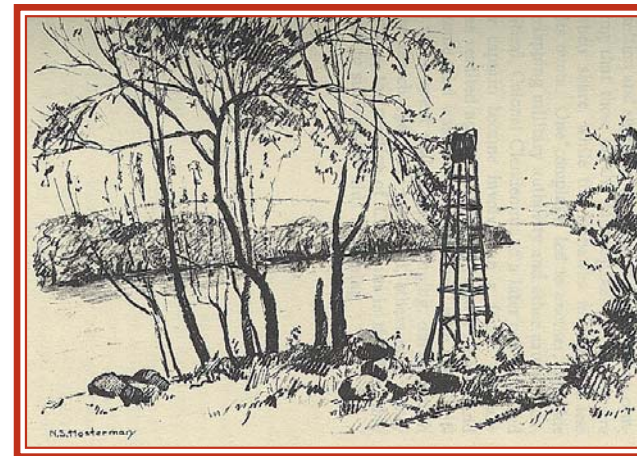
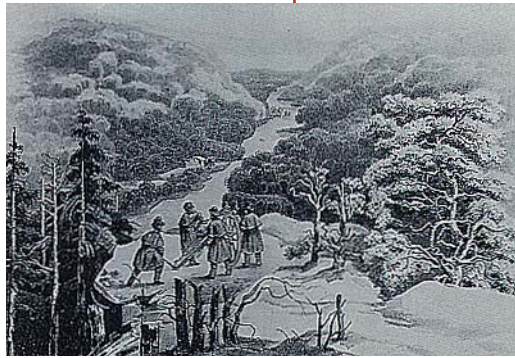
DUPONT PLANT BELLE: WV "Pioneering High-Pressure Synthesis" (first high- pressure synthesis of ammonia from coal in the US, April 1, 1926) Nomination submitted. Target Celebration Date: April 1, 2001

MALDEN SALT WORKS: Site of the largest 19th-century salt-works and last surviving example of 19th-century salt from brine wells. Development of ""jar" drilling bit. Nomination planned 2000.

ELKEM METALS, UNION CARBIDE: No nomination at this time

Responsibility

Dupont Chemical Historical Society has assumed leadership of the nominating process for the Belle Plant. Malden could easily develop nominations for the Dickinson Company or related industrial supporter. Union Carbide and Elkem Metals would be responsible for the development of their own nomination materials and expenses. All sites are on the Midland Trail.



Create an
Industrial
Heritage
Interpretive
Center/
Museum



SECONDARY

PROJECTS

The secondary project list includes proposed concepts from communities along the Trail. Although these proposals have survived rounds of reviews, neither the resources nor the leadership are available to move them at this time. During the past several years, the Midland Trail Association has actively pursued projects that intend to preserve, interpret, develop, and manage the Midland Trail and its many intrinsic qualities. The Association may raise a project in this category to a priority project in the future. As we complete the first round of projects and resources become available, we will bring some of these forward for review.

• Acquisition and Development of Overlook at Lee's Tree Tavern

The Association greatly needs to acquire the highest point on the Midland Trail and to transform it into a beautiful scenic overlook. This pull-off sits near the border between Fayette and Greenbrier Counties and overlooks the broad vista of the Greenbrier Valley. Scenic in quality, the overlook is also a historic point of interest; General Lee's troops quartered here in the 1861 Sewell County Campaign, and Lee found his horse Traveler at this spot. However, the old Tavern stands as a derelict distraction at the pull-off.

• ARTS CORRIDOR TRAIL SHOPS AND A Trail Fair/Festival Program, with annual rotating venues. This program envisions creation of a Pioneer's Festival or Pioneer's Fair which showcases qualities of the Trail; such qualities include Appalachian arts and crafts, drama, and industrial exhibits.

• Income-Producing Project for Trail Association Combined with Tourism/Training Project

In conjunction with Trail high school or university tourism and/or business classes. Motel or bed and breakfast with restaurant and gift shop modeled after Inn and Student Industries at Berea College or Davis & Elkins College.

• ARMSTRONG WALL

Located within the viewshed of the Midland Trail at Falls View, this nationally and internationally significant relic is a reminder of the earliest period of human activity in America. Private ownership by timber and coal companies poses a challenge to interpretation and protection. A kiosk, signage and diligence in watchdogging this premier archaeological attraction are very important.

• Drama Along the Trail

Commissioned skits to be staged in flexible and movable situations and highlighting the Trail's history.

Recommendations have proposed commissioning interpretive dramatic productions for presentation along the Trail. Public input has suggested several themes for Trail dramas: Civil War, the Hawks Nest Tunnel, and Zona (the "Greenbrier Ghost") in Lewisburg.

• Establish "Pioneer's Week"

Pioneer's Week would start at one point along the Trail and move east or west. Could include a Civil War re-enactment, arts/crafts fair, dramatic production, one-day community open house program, tours through area attractions, Sternwheeler Day, Lewisburg's Taste of Our Town, etc.

Conduct Study With Courtesy Patrol Program as possible element of our developing rural economic tourism program.

• Specialized Craft and Outdoor Products:

Programs and/or services which present Trail products, foods, crafts, and services on-line, on the shelf, and in print.

• Interpretive Panels Along the Trail

Panels at designated pull-off areas will tell the stories contained in the "Trail Tales" with artistic renditions and text and even audio messages that can be received thru car radio.

• Golf at Hawk's Nest State Park: Golf on Eastern Kanawha mountaintop along the Trail.

• Mountaintop Hang-Gliding Into the Valley

• Sunday Road Backway:

Signage and surface upgrades for this proposed backway.

• Gauley Bridge Information and Arts Center: Civil War interpretive site.

• Artists' Colony in Gauley Bridge :

The Midland Trail has several outstanding galleries, a fine art gallery in Lewisburg and a gallery near Hico, and the Trail is in the position to offer something which captures the artistic spirit and impulses of its people. Gauley Bridge's proximity to Hawks Nest State Park makes it an ideal half-day shopping and learning jaunt.

• Boat Hotel in Gauley Bridge.

Two factors make this concept a good one. First, public input has indicated a shortage of lodging on the Trail. Additionally, an unusual accommodation such as this, with effective advertising, would add a patina of curious experience for the visitor.

• Monument for Hawks Nest Tunnel

This Tunnel was both an engineering marvel for its time and a great industrial tragedy whose deaths caused workers'

compensation reform in sixteen states.

• Hawks Nest Conference Center Expansion Project: Expanded dining room, meeting and sleeping rooms. Legislative Digest funds allocated in Phase I development

• Women's Interpretive Park in Malden:

Celebrate the achievement of early pioneer women such as Jane Washington (Booker T. Washington's mother), Mary Ingles, Mother Jones and Anne Bailey, all who traveled the Trail. The Association contemplates erecting a series of panels in the Booker T. Washington park in Malden. At this writing, Celebrate West Virginia Foundation is coordinating a sales campaign for engraved bricks which will form a display in the Park.

• Visitor and Interpretive Center Complex and Safety Upgrades for Historic Malden:

This planned project builds upon the cultural and heritage tourism base at Malden. A Visitor's Center at Cabin Creek Quilts; the African Zion Baptist Church; "A Fresh Start Salt Village": Re-Creation of Booker T. Washington's Childhood Home; two restored homes, Historic Norton House and Hale House; Kanawha Salines Presbyterian Church; Malden Baptist Church; and a private "garage museum" which contains buses and old cars are all part of this Historic District. The Association can expand the complex to include tours with historical characters, food service and other amenities necessary to the development of an ongoing tourist destination.

Malden needs a traffic light to improve safety on the Trail for visitors to its various historic sites.



SECONDARY

PROJECTS

- **African Zion Baptist Church**
Needs upgrades to roof, in electrical service, and to hvac.

- **Welcome Sign at the Western End of the Trail:**

The Association would like a sign on Kanawha Blvd. at 35th Street Bridge overpass that reads "WELCOME TO THE MIDLAND TRAIL" as well as other signage around the Capitol Complex to guide visitors onto the Trail from Greenbrier Street in Charleston.

- **Old Stone House (Belle) Heritage Park.**

At this writing, the Belle Historical Society, which serves as the home's caretaker umbrella, has purchased an adjacent defunct business, razed it, and leveled space for a parking lot. Clearing of tenant trailers around the house will create an area for development of a heritage park which contemplates a mock well, reproduction barn (which would serve as a form of community center for local activities), reproduction carriage house, and blacksmith's shop.

- **Daniel Boone Roadside Cave**
Interpretive signage marking the former site of hillside cave overlooking Midland Trail at milemarker 3 above Daniel Boone Park, where Boone actually slept. Highway development removed the cave.

- **Marmet Locks Visitor Center.**
The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers has plans for a visitor's center at this lock on the Kanawha River.

- **A River Museum** The Midland Trail, and in particular the Kanawha River, has a rich transportation history dating back over 200 years. The Kanawha River was a chief route to the western markets of Cincinnati and New Orleans. Even today, coal barges are a common sight on the River, and this body of water is still home to a number of sternwheelers. The Kanawha River contained the country's first movable dams (1880s). Currently, the closest such museum is in Marietta, Ohio. The rise in popularity of industrial tourism argues for a River Museum in the Kanawha Valley.

- **Riverboat Access:** Create river access for tourism development for the area of Malden, Belle, Cedar Grove, and Montgomery; access would benefit smaller power boats for small parties as well as canoes and rowboats. Tours of the historical areas could be offered by river.

- **Entertaining River Interpretation / Tourist Transport:**

Flatboat similar to *Spirit of Kanawha* used to celebrate Kanawha Bicentennial; the flatboat would explain early transportation and could serve as a ticket office at Daniel Boone Park. Small powerboat models for small party pleasure trips would include any of the following: large Indian canoe, flatboat, packetboat, and sternwheeler.

- **Hospitality Training and Expanded Marketing Research**

Who will be are new partners on the existing & expanded Trail How do we best reach our target markets? Which sites are most important to highlight on the existing and expanded Trail? Which information will be shared & how? Market research is and hospitality training are two high priorities as we develop interpretative and marketing materials.

- **Bike and Hikeaway from Historic Malden to the State Capitol:** Bike racks and bike shop desired on Trail. Land easement between Malden and Port Amherst, river access and upgrades at Malden and Belle, and marked bike and hike routes between the Capitol building and Malden Historic District. A later extension would terminate at the new Riverside High School at Quincy.

- **Temple of Traditions:** Located in Eastern Kanawha County, yet accessible to a statewide and national audience, this West Virginia-made building will be a home for the increasingly popular traditional mountain music and dance.

- **Athletic Greats of the Midland Trail**
Recognizing Randy Moss, Jason Williams, Jerry West and other Upper Kanawha Valley standouts in the field of sports at the new Riverside High School.

- **Lewisburg Historic District Interpretive Center:**

A community multi-purpose interpretive center with the following:

- Development of horse-and-carriage stagecoach concept
- Pull-offs
- Park and Interpretive Center
- Stables for the town's horse-drawn carriages and bicycles for rent.

- **Camp Shaw-Mi-Del-Eca**

A 90-acre riverfront site on the Midland Trail and Greenbrier River Bikeway. Once an Indian camp site and later a summer camp, this park and interpretive site affords the Trail direct access to both the Greenbrier River and the Greenbrier Bike Trail, which is presently unavailable to Trail visitors.

- **Eastern Kanawha Pull-offs on the new 4-Lane**
With interpretive kiosks (2)

- **Cedar Grove Heritage Area**
Tompkins House and properties

- **Virginia's Chapel**
Slate roof and shutters

- **Develop School Programs** to educate children about Trail history and tourism possibilities

- **Hospitality Training** for businesses and visitors centers

- **Connect with universities and colleges**

- **Educate elected officials** (continuous)

- **Clear obstructive vegetation** to open up more scenic views

- **Adopt A Highway Program**
Further the develop this existing national program.

- **Plantings** along the Trail to hide eyesores and create more inviting spaces.

- **Fayette County Land Use Study**
Fayette County has a county-wide zoning and is in the process of a county wide land use plan. We need study to identify dilapidated buildings and plan for the use of land in key tourist areas.

