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# Chapter 6

## PRESERVING AND ENHANCING THE BYWAY

An historical analysis of the landscape of the Brandywine Valley shows that the Brandywine landscape has changed and evolved over the past three hundred years. Yet the instruments of this change have created a landscape of unique and valuable character within the region. The purpose of the Corridor Management Plan for the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway is to assist stakeholders in guiding future change in a way that preserves and enhances the character defining features of the Brandywine Valley landscape.

The Brandywine Valley is nationally significant for its prominent role in the history of American industry. In many respects, its landscape has been shaped by the affluence its industrial heritage created. From its early days as a utilitarian toll road providing access to the city of Wilmington, Kennett Pike has evolved into an avenue of great trees and grand vistas. As the early nineteenth century agricultural landscape has given way to a mature landscape of country estates, cultural institutions, urban neighborhoods, suburban enclaves, and preserved open space, a complex and diverse landscape has been created that is among Delaware's most significant historic and cultural landscapes.

A central characteristic of the Byway's story has been its long tradition of landscape conservation. This story begins with the creation of a network of country estates expanding out into the agricultural landscape from the city of Wilmington. It is highlighted by Pierre du Pont's purchase and redesign of the Kennett Turnpike as a modern, landscaped roadway in 1919. The donation of large areas of land for the establishment of a broad range of significant cultural and educational institutions along the Byway has become the hallmark of the region and has provided the framework through which the Byway's landscape is most notably recognized.

The efforts of current stakeholders in creating the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway continue and build upon this strong tradition of conservation. Significant issues that could negatively impact the character of the Byway landscape are caused by the continued urban and suburban growth of metropolitan Wilmington. They include the potential for loss of critical remaining open space, insensitive land development, inappropriate roadway improvements, increased traffic and congestion, and the loss of the Byway's special recognition in the minds and hearts of visitors and residents.

Through years of analysis, discussion, and consensus building, Byway stakeholders have developed a comprehensive set of strategies and actions intended to accommodate change while preserving and enhancing the special qualities of the Byway. These strategies are organized around the goals presented in Chapter 2 in eight broad areas of endeavor:

- Landscape Conservation - encouraging the voluntary preservation of open space along the Byway;
- Changing the Landscape - promoting new forms of development that preserve and enhance the visual and environmental characteristics of the land;
- New Design for Roads - using context-sensitive roadway design and multi-modal approaches to transportation;
- Traffic Calming - adopting traffic calming methods along the Byway;
- Roadside Character - preserving significant roadside landscape features;
- Visitation and Tourism - enhancing visitation in support of Byway goals;
- Interpretation and Education - presenting the stories of the landscape to residents and visitors;
- Coordination and Management - implementing the goals of the Byway and guiding change over time.

The preservation and enhancement strategies presented below are based on a thorough understanding of the historic, cultural, and natural processes that have shaped the Byway landscape over time and are intended to address potential issues of common concern. They are intended to help stakeholders within the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway make decisions in harmony with the Byway's character, encourage commitment to stewardship of that character, and respond to changing contexts and stewardship needs.

## 6.1 Landscape Conservation

The Brandywine Valley has a long tradition of private landscape conservation initiatives that have been instrumental in shaping the character of the cultural landscape we see today. Initially, these efforts were led by the affluent owners of the estate landscapes that developed along the Byway in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Today these efforts are continued through the leadership of the land trusts and cultural institutions that were created along the Byway as well as through the efforts of active and energetic land owners, residents, and other stakeholders.

The Resources map included at the end of Chapter 5 shows the extent of land along the Byway that was under some form of legal protection as of the date of recognition of the Byway by the State of Delaware. The Land Use map at the end of Chapter 5 shows existing land uses, identifying lands that have already been developed and lands that are committed to recreational, agricultural, and other existing uses as of 2005.

In general, open space is preserved along the Byway in three important ways. First, land is preserved through some form of public ownership. As discussed in Chapter 5, a large amount of land has been preserved as public parkland, particularly along the Brandywine River. Much of this parkland was donated to public ownership by affluent landowners in the early and mid-twentieth century.

Second, a significant amount of land along the Byway is in the ownership of one of the many prominent cultural institutions that have been created there. Some of these cultural institutions are visitor attractions, such as the Winterthur Museum and Gardens, the Hagley Museum and Library, and the Delaware Museum of Natural History. Other significant institutions include schools and universities, churches, retirement communities, conference centers, and recreational landscapes such as golf courses. Many of these institutions have been identified in the description of the Byway presented in Chapter 3.

Because their land is under private ownership, its preservation is not shown on the Resources map in Chapter 5. Nonetheless, many of these institutions were initially created by the affluent landowners of the estates along the Byway. Over the years they have clearly demonstrated their commitment to landscape preservation and stewardship, and many have been active participants and supporters of the creation of the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway.

Finally, a significant amount of open space along the Byway is being preserved through the voluntary donation of conservation easements. These conservation easements have been donated by both residents and cultural institutions.

One of the most active stakeholders in the creation of conservation easements has been the Brandywine Conservancy. Located in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania just north of the Delaware/Pennsylvania state line, the Brandywine Conservancy was established by private landholders and members to encourage the preservation of open space and to provide leadership in the stewardship of the land in both Delaware and Pennsylvania. It is also the home of the Brandywine River Museum, a major regional attraction. Delaware Nature Society, while focusing their main emphasis on conservation easements in the Red Clay Valley, has been instrumental as well in conserving land in the Brandywine Valley.

The Brandywine Conservancy works with interested private landowners to help them preserve their land through the use of conservation easements and other stewardship techniques. It works with governmental entities and private developers to demonstrate how land can be responsibly developed in ways that preserve its visual character and environmental qualities. The Conservancy has an ongoing, private, behind-the-scenes effort to help fulfill the goals of the Byway by encouraging voluntary, private stewardship initiatives.

A significant event that has taken place during the development of this Corridor Management Plan has been the announcement by Winterthur that they will place a conservation easement on their large landholding. Winterthur is located on 979 acres of land in the heart of the Byway, stretching between Kennett Pike and

Montchanin Road. Visually, its rolling hills, mature woodlands, and grand vistas have been the quintessential image of the Brandywine Valley experience. Winterthur has always been a leader and a model for the goals of the Byway. Its commitment to the long-term preservation of its significant landscape has been a major achievement and event.

The following strategies have been developed by Byway stakeholders to support Goal 1, which seeks to preserve open space through voluntary conservation efforts. The strategies include official governmental recognition of the Byway through comprehensive plans and resource inventories, public recognition for the Byway through special recognition programs, funding support for private conservation easements, and leadership in stewardship initiatives by creation of a Byway Steward and through demonstration projects.

GOAL 1: Preserve and enhance the "green infrastructure" that defines the byway through continued voluntary and private conservation efforts.

#### PROPOSED STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- 1.1 Have city, county and state comprehensive plans recognize the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway to demonstrate the significant public benefit and establish a conservation purpose for the scenic and historic qualities of the open space lands and historic sites along the Scenic Byway. Recognizing the role that comprehensive plans play in directing the activities of city, county, and state entities, these documents should be updated to include the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway as a significant historical, scenic, and cultural resource that should be accommodated when undertaking planning and implementation of projects. The Byway provides a significant public benefit that justifies such preferential treatment. Of particular importance is the preservation of the open space lands, historic sites, and roadside character. The following specific components should be included in comprehensive plans:
  - a. A conservation and preservation priority map showing properties under permanent protection as well as viewsheds on private property.
  - b. An inventory of historically significant sites and viewsheds.
- 1.2 Have city, county and state governmental entities adopt a resolution recognizing The Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway as the First Byway in the First State. Include in the resolution that the Scenic Byway conservation and preservation priority maps should be included in all city, county and state planning, natural resource conservation and green infrastructure maps.
- 1.3 Appoint a Byway Steward to carry out the work of the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway management entity. The Byway Steward will be responsible for monitoring the status of lands and sites identified as conservation and preservation priorities and work with landowners and conservation organizations on a byway specific voluntary conservation and preservation

- easement program. They will monitor development activity and distribute educational materials to developers, businesses and residents.
- 1.4 Develop byway specific educational materials and landowner information packages to facilitate the donation of conservation or preservation easements and/or purchase of conservation or preservation easements for property owners funded through private foundation support. Actively inform landowners of potential preservation opportunities.
  - 1.5 Seek and support opportunities to make funding sources available to landowners for land conservation actions.
    - a. Establish a revolving fund for land conservation actions.
    - b. Utilize the Preservation Delaware Revolving Fund for the preservation of historic buildings.
  - 1.6 Develop a Byway Stewardship Recognition Program to recognize those individuals that donate conservation or preservation easements or otherwise voluntarily protect their lands and buildings in a manner that preserves the byway's intrinsic qualities. Work with existing stewardship programs at Delaware Nature Society and the Brandywine Conservancy to include the Scenic Byway. Landowner participation and permission will be required for recognition.
  - 1.7 Work with the Brandywine Conservancy on a voluntary conservation easement along the roadside on Montchanin Road (Route 100) of approximately 200 feet where feasible.
  - 1.8 Work with the University of Delaware to preserve the view at Goodstay. This view is a significant character-defining view for the byway and should be preserved.
  - 1.9 Implement the landscape demonstration projects identified in the Byway's Landscape Management Plan as part of the implementation of the Corridor Management Plan.

## 6.2 Changing the Landscape

New development will continue to occur within the Byway as the greater Wilmington area continues to grow and change. The purpose of the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway is to help guide growth and development so that it occurs in a way that enhances the character of the landscape. The Brandywine Valley has been a leader in finding new and creative ways to accommodate new development while respecting and preserving the essential qualities of the landscape.

In urban and village areas, this leadership has been demonstrated through high quality commercial and streetscape improvements that set new standards for design and strengthen the visual quality of the community. In rural and suburban areas,

this leadership has been demonstrated through the creative use of open space and cluster development design that preserves large areas of open space and sites buildings and other improvements in ways that respond to the topographic and visual qualities of the landscape. The Brandywine Conservancy has been a regional and national leader in developing and promoting open space design techniques.

The Kennett Pike Association has an active program to purchase and install roadside landscaping in the DelDOT right of way and works with property owners to improve site plans for properties to be developed. The Centreville Civic Association has formulated the Centreville Village Plan to preserve the historic character of the village as development and change takes place. The Delaware Center for Horticulture has helped with the design and implementation of roadside landscaping. Businesses have sponsored the maintenance of the landscaping. Delaware Greenways has been a leader in encouraging context sensitive design and landscaping in both roadway and development projects.

Goal 2 of the Corridor Management Plan seeks to encourage the design of new private development in ways that preserve and enhance the essential character of the landscape, whether located in an urban, suburban, village, or rural segment of the Byway. This goal is achieved primarily through the development and promotion of design guidelines that will assist businesses, developers, and land owners in making good design decisions.

GOAL 2: For properties where conservation or preservation is no longer an option, encourage appropriate design practices that minimize change to their existing scenic and historic character. For properties seeking additional infill or redevelopment, encourage context-sensitive architectural and landscape design that fits within a neighborhood scale and respects the character of its surroundings.

#### PROPOSED STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- 2.1 Develop voluntary conservation-oriented design guidelines for rural, village, suburban and urban sections of the Byway and make the guidelines readily available to landowners.
  - a. Use Scenic Byway's "Character Segments" to define the landscape context within the design guidelines.
  - b. Work with the city and county to encourage the use of conservation design and make the guidelines available to developers and the public.
- 2.2 Develop specific recommendations for the Byway's urban and village sections.
  - a. Recommend sidewalks with street tree plantings where appropriate.
  - b. Recommend the use of signage that is in keeping with the adjacent architecture in color, lighting, scale and materials.
  - c. Use tree and landscape plantings to screen certain areas.
  - d. Add crosswalks and landscaped medians to encourage walking.
  - e. Use native plants to reflect the local context.

- f. Consider off street parking behind buildings where possible.
  - g. In historic villages be sensitive to the specific historic character of buildings in design. Conform to the guidelines in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Resources.
  - h. In villages, site new buildings in keeping with setbacks of existing buildings.
  - i. Include bike lanes whenever feasible.
  - j. Support and conform to the Centreville Village Plan, 8<sup>th</sup> District Neighborhood Plan, Delaware Avenue Gateway Plan, and other regional improvement plans and guidelines.
- 2.3 Develop specific strategies for the rural and suburban sections of the Byway.
- a. Use compact development patterns that preserve the overall form and character of the natural landscape features (good examples include Ponds of Woodward and Williamhurst).
  - b. Retain the pastoral character of open scenic areas.
  - c. Recommend the placement of new homes where they are less visible from the road, avoiding ridge lines and the middle of open fields where feasible.
  - d. Recommend placement of roads, driveways, and homes that respond to and follow the contours of the land.
  - e. Recommend the use of cluster or open space design patterns to retain the character of the open fields and adjacent woodlands while accommodating the same amount of development (or more when considering the use of bonus density).
  - f. Recommend the use of narrow access drives to minimize the amount of tree clearing required for new residential construction.
  - g. Work with developers and community associations to ensure that gatehouses, fences, and other security measures are appropriately scaled, screened where necessary, and otherwise made to fit within the scale and context of this historic landscape.
  - h. Recommend the use of vernacular building forms found in the area that are compatible with the scale and character of nearby buildings.
  - i. Prepare a pamphlet to show these design practices or consider using applicable parts of the Livable Delaware Community Design Manual as a suggested guide.
- 2.4 Establish an incentive program whereby property owners become eligible for certain benefits if they register their property as part of the Scenic Byway corridor and agree to maintain their property according to certain voluntary guidelines.

## 6.3 New Design for Roads

Context-sensitive design in the design and implementation of new roadway projects has become a familiar goal within the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway. Statewide, DelDOT has implemented a Context Sensitive Design Policy as part of Governor

Ruth Ann Minner's 2001 Livable Delaware initiative. The purpose of the policy is to plan and design transportation projects so they fit well into the communities they are supposed to serve. The policy includes setting aside five percent of project construction costs for improvements to the community and environment immediately adjacent in order to respond to quality-of-life issues.

Within the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway, context-sensitive design received broad public exposure during the redesign of proposed roadway improvements in the suburban village of Greenville on Kennett Pike. Local business and community leaders worked closely with state and county agencies in modifying proposed improvement plans to incorporate elements such as landscaped medians, brick crosswalks, and other enhancements. The results have dramatically improved the character and appearance of this critical business and commercial center. And it has served as a model for subsequent projects that are both in the planning stages and which have been recently implemented. The planning for the historic village of Centreville along the byway is an excellent example of how context-sensitive design solutions are being considered to help solve traffic issues while simultaneously improving the appearance of the streetscape and community.

Concurrent with the development of this Corridor Management Plan, Byway partners having been preparing a Landscape Management Plan for the Scenic Byway. As outlined in Chapter 1, this work is being funded through a National Scenic Byway grant. As a part of the plan, the landscape character of each of the Byway's fifteen character segments was analyzed, and specific recommendations were developed for managing and improving landscape design.

The Landscape Management Plan also recommended a series of demonstration projects that could be undertaken along the Byway. Conceptual designs using context-sensitive design solutions were prepared, with illustrations showing how traffic and design issues could be resolved in a way that enhances the character of the roadway. One of the proposed demonstration projects may soon be implemented with the support and assistance of DeIDOT along with a second project at a new development. The Byway's city stakeholders identified additional potential projects, which are included in the strategies and actions outlined below.

GOAL 3: Work with DeIDOT, WILMAPCO, and the City of Wilmington to accommodate and balance the needs of all roadway users including residents, visitors, businesses, public facilities, and institutions by utilizing context-sensitive design and multi-modal approaches to solving transportation issues.

#### PROPOSED STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- 3.1 Establish a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach to developing and implementing all future transportation projects along the Byway, involving all stakeholders to ensure that transportation projects are in harmony with the Byway communities; to preserve and enhance environmental, scenic, aesthetic and historic resources while enhancing safety and mobility; to retain the scenic character of the roadways by maintaining the current width and

alignment; and to encourage multimodal transportation solutions whenever feasible.

- 3.2 The Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway east of I95 to Rodney Square has been improved as part of the Delaware Avenue Gateway Phase I project through Wilmington Initiatives with streetscape and traffic management improvements to greatly enhance the Scenic Byway. To complete the enhancement of the Byway, the following projects were identified by the city's Focus Group and the Advisory Committee as having the highest priority for implementation in the city segment of the Scenic Byway. All of these projects should include context sensitive design solutions; changes to way-finding signs leading to major destinations (building on city funded portion); traffic management strategies that make the best use of available space and recent city signalization work; and aesthetic enhancements such as more attractive medians, crosswalks, sidewalks, lighting, bicycle lanes and streetscape elements.
- a. *Delaware Avenue Gateway Project* - Modify the existing conceptual design for Phase II of the Delaware Avenue Gateway Project between Jackson Street and Harrison Street as a keystone to the Byway effort. Demonstrate the relationship of the project to tourism and economic development and identify the project as a gateway to both the City of Wilmington and the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway. The Phase II package should address:
    - Improved traffic service level/flow.
    - Aesthetic redesign of the I95 bridge overpass walls.
    - Redesign of the jersey barriers along old Brandywine cemetery.
    - Improved access to the Delaware Children's Theater.
    - Pedestrian and streetscape improvements by adding crosswalks, medians, landscaping, brick sidewalks, decorative lighting, bicycle lanes and way-finding signage.
  - b. *Pennsylvania Ave./Union Street Project* - Initiate and implement concept designs and recommendations for the Union Street intersection and the adjoining streetscape from Bancroft Parkway to Scott Street. The character of the area would be undetermined if the project design straightens the existing intersection by removing the Union Street "jog" or if it only increases safety, efficiency and aesthetics through lesser measures. This is a project that has had limited research completed to date, but is acknowledged by all to be worthy of correction.
    - This project can build on the success off the Union/Lincoln Street revitalization project and enhance linkage to Trolley Square and Little Italy retail areas as side trips off the Byway.
  - c. *8th District Neighborhood Plan* - Implement and update this conceptual plan proposed in 2000 by the 8th District Neighborhoods. It includes all intersections between Franklin Street and DuPont Street, begins at the

Delaware Avenue Gateway Project, and ends at the Pennsylvania Ave./Union Street Project.

- This project provides for pedestrian and streetscape improvements. It includes adding crosswalks, medians, landscaping, brick sidewalks, decorative lighting, bicycle lanes and way-finding signage.
- d. *Riverview Avenue to Rising Sun Lane* - This is a new project proposed by the Byway's city stakeholders to achieve consistency along the Scenic Byway by continuing the recommendations of the 8th District Neighborhood Plan westerly to the city boundary.
- This project provides for pedestrian and streetscape improvements including adding crosswalks, medians, landscaping, brick sidewalks, decorative lighting, bicycle lanes and way-finding signage.
- 3.3 Use safety and traffic regulation enforcement efforts to make sure that truck traffic respects the historic nature of properties along the Byway. Post Route 100 for height limitations to keep oversized vehicles from getting stuck under the existing railroad bridge on the north portion of Montchanin Road. Post signs in Chadds Ford telling drivers to turn back if they exceed the height limitation.
- 3.4 Work with DART to promote mass transit access to Byway attractions and events (mass transit information is already on Web for attractions):
- Expand the Wilmington Trolley to reach other attractions along the Byway.
  - List Byway attractions and information on bus schedules and signs, particularly the Route 10 bus line.
  - Use photos of Byway attractions on route schedules for the Route 10 line. See: <http://www.dartfirststate.com/information/attractions/>
- 3.5 Work with the mayor of Wilmington's office, the Delaware Tourism Office, regional visitors' bureaus, Wilmington Renaissance, and riverfront organizations to organize bus service to support the tourism goals for the city and the Byway. The option of establishing a Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway trolley service with DART will be explored. Coordination with Pennsylvania public transportation services will also be pursued.
- 3.6 Consider context-sensitive solutions for intersection issues at the Route 100 and Route 92 intersection. Traffic moves well, but parking on shoulders remains a problem during fishing season. These might include prohibiting parking on shoulders, narrowing the intersection, moving the stop sign location, or creating a small unpaved parking area. The aim of these proposed measures is to keep the intersection at Route 100 and Route 92 from growing larger.

- 3.7 Consider using “Netlon” on shoulders at the intersection of Route 100 and Route 92, as it can be covered with grass and is more aesthetically attractive than current surface. (Netlon is currently used at Boston’s Logan International Airport.)
- 3.8 Develop Biking Guidelines for the Byway. Convey the message to bikers that on Route 100 bikers should use caution due to the narrow winding road. Maintain the designated Kennett Pike Greenway for bikers and walkers along the road shoulders and sidewalks from Greenville to the Delaware/Pennsylvania border.

## 6.4 Traffic Calming

Among the issues identified by owners and residents along the Byway, the volume and speed of traffic was of great concern. This was particularly true in the vicinity of the village of Centreville at the northern end of Kennett Pike, where safe pedestrian and local vehicular use is threatened by the speed and volume of through traffic.

Traffic calming measures are therefore recommended as an integral part of proposed context-sensitive design standards for the Byway. In Centreville, the Centreville Village Plan is considering a number of potential traffic calming techniques in order to positively influence the conduct of through-travelers. Different combinations of traffic calming techniques need to be developed for each segment of the Byway depending upon its character and use.

Some techniques, such as reducing the apparent width of the broad roadway by clearly marking bicycle lanes, might be applicable along long stretches of the Kennett Pike portion of the Byway. In contrast, the narrow width, sharp curves, and close woodlands along Montchanin Road already serve as effective traffic calming measures. Additional new measures and changes that would straighten or widen the roadway are not recommended.

GOAL 4: Adopt traffic calming measures as a means of self enforcing posted speed limits, improving pedestrian safety, and encouraging pedestrian and bicycle use of the Byway

### PROPOSED STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- 4.1 Support the goals and objectives of the Centreville Village Plan in addressing traffic speed and access. Implement appropriate permanent traffic calming solutions in Centreville.
- 4.2 Maintain the scenic integrity of the rural road along Kennett Pike between Greenville and Centreville and between Centreville and the Delaware/Pennsylvania border.
  - a. Consider, as needed, context-sensitive designed intersection improvements.

- b. Introduce measures to give drivers more clues that they are approaching Greenville and Centreville and need to slow down. Consider such measures as gateway designs, road narrowing, bump outs, rhythmic planting, curb transitions, neck-downs, and alignment shifts.
    - c. Maintain the existing alignment and two lane cross section of the Byway roads.
- 4.3 Work with DART and DelDOT to increase the number and physical presence of crosswalks and continuous sidewalk associated with bus stops within the corridor.
- 4.4 Develop urban traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures within the City of Wilmington (see the strategies related to enhancing Roadside Character regarding coordination with priority city projects).
  - a. Narrow the look and feel of those sections of the road with expansive pavement. Consider using pavers or Street Print in parking lanes instead of asphalt.
  - b. Use curb extensions, pedestrian refuges, and other techniques at intersections to shorten the length and improve the visibility of pedestrian crossings. Priority Pennsylvania Ave. intersections from the 8th District Plan include:
    - Delaware Avenue.
    - Franklin Street (refuge)
    - Broom Street. (refuge)
    - Rodney Street
    - Clayton Street (refuge)
  - c. Additional intersections requiring pedestrian safety improvements mentioned by committee members include:
    - Jackson Street (Delaware Children's Theater)
    - Union Street
    - Greenhill Avenue
  - d. Consider reallocating the amount of space used for automobiles versus pedestrians or bicycles without impeding traffic flow (e.g. narrow travel lanes and add space to sidewalks as recommended in the 8th District Plan or convert areas of paving to bicycle lanes). Wider sidewalks are proposed between Clayton and Grant Streets in the 8th District Plan.
  - e. Consider the use of mid-block splitter islands to help slow traffic in the vicinity of schools.
- 4.5 On Montchanin Road, Route 100, do not introduce traffic calming design changes, as this would alter the rural character of the road. Instead, correlate the design speed of the road with the speed limit and increased speed limit enforcement. The winding road itself acts as a traffic calming device. Use signs instead of removing trees when site distance is a problem. Removing

trees may encourage speeding. Maintain Montchanin Road as the slow Scenic Byway route.

## 6.5 Roadside Character

Of primary concern in the implementation of Byway strategies is the treatment of features immediately adjacent to the road that contribute to the character of the Byway. The Landscape Management Plan that is being prepared in conjunction with this Corridor Management Plan and which is discussed in Chapter 1 has reviewed the landscape character of each of the Byway's fifteen character segments and identified many of their character-defining features. The plan provides specific recommendations for the preservation, treatment, and enhancement of these features.

Within urban areas, roadside character is strongly influenced by streetscape design elements. The specific recommendations of the Landscape Management Plan and the broader strategies outlined below are intended to enhance the urban streetscape through good design and the introduction of pedestrian friendly features.

Along suburban and rural segments of the Byway, the preservation of historic features such as remnant stone walls and mile markers and the appropriate maintenance of existing vegetation are of great concern. In business and commercial portions of the Byway, including urban Wilmington, suburban Greenville, and the village centers of Centreville and Montchanin, the enhancement of roadside character is intended to actively engage and support the interests of local businesses, creating a business-friendly environment that strengthens both the local economy and community character.

The preparation of design guidelines for the maintenance of existing vegetation, especially related to pruning by utility companies is among the strategies outlined below. The recommendation of appropriate trees and shrubs for landscape enhancement in specific circumstances along the Byway should be included in the design guidelines. Other strategies include the creation of voluntary maintenance programs, matching grant programs, and other initiatives aimed at stimulating a broad community response in the enhancement of roadside character.

GOAL 5: Conserve and enhance the scenic and historic roadside features of the Byway, especially the many mature trees and stone walls. Enhance the character of Pennsylvania Avenue through the City of Wilmington, Greenville, Centreville, and Montchanin.

### PROPOSED STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- 5.1 Inventory the location of existing scenic and historic roadside features. Develop a local "big tree" and "stone wall" registry. (The county has an existing ordinance that protects big trees if they are 24 inches in diameter and in good health). Recognize voluntary conservation efforts related to these features by property owners.

- 5.2 Work with DelDOT to develop context-sensitive design guidelines for transportation improvements sensitive to the individual segments of the Byway, using the state Context-Sensitive Design Manual adapted to the specific conditions found along the Byway.
- 5.3 Work with DelDOT to preserve the existing alignment and character of Montchanin Road, Route 100. Preserve its two travel lanes without shoulders, narrow intersection widths, stone walls and outcroppings, native plant communities, and minimal signage, preserving the character of the historic road. Do everything possible to preserve the winding road as it is, conforming to and lying lightly on the land.
- 5.4 Work with the Brandywine Conservancy to create a 200-foot wide voluntary conservation easement along the length of Montchanin Road between Route 92 and the Delaware/Pennsylvania line.
- 5.5 Consider following Pennsylvania's example in eliminating the state route designation of Montchanin Road as Route 100.
- 5.6 Work with utility companies to minimize the impact of pruning for overhead utility wires on roadside vegetation. Possible approaches include:
  - a. Place utility wires underground whenever feasible.
  - b. Use alternative spacer bars on wires to reduce pruning requirements.
  - c. Sensitive and selectively prune so that wires can pass through canopy trees rather than simply cutting canopies flat. Consider more frequent pruning to create less of a jarring visual impact.
  - d. Use more appropriately size plant materials when plating beneath a utility line.
  - e. Consolidate the number of poles and utility corridors required by encouraging Connectiv, phone, cable companies to coordinate.
  - f. Prepare landowner/utility company maintenance agreements, if feasible.
  - g. Identify opportunities for utility relocation underground as part of future construction activities, especially in village and urban areas.
  - h. Develop GIS data base so historic trees can be identified to landscape contractors doing pruning.
  - i. Create tree registry based on inventory and require trees be pruned by ISA certified arborist and give three days notice to property owners and the Byway Steward.
  - j. Require utility company to contact Byway leadership in addition to legislators prior to commencing tree work.
  - k. Develop Scenic Byway Maintenance and Pruning Guidelines with Connectiv.
- 5.7 Use the County communication tower ordinance in UDC to regulate placement, style, require co-location, etc. for tower placement within view of historic sites and the Scenic Byway.

- 5.8 Establish a "Good Design-Good Business" program to provide small matching grants (up to \$25,000) for façade improvements, landscaping, and streetscape improvements on private land meeting Byway guidelines. Businesses, institutions, and other types of private owners will be eligible. Provide public recognition for successful partnerships and participation along the Byway.
- 5.9 Work with the City of Wilmington to implement the recommendations of the Delaware Avenue Gateway Project Phase II, 8th District Neighborhood Plan, Pennsylvania Ave./Union Street Plan and Riverview Ave. to Rising Sun Lane Project to improve pedestrian safety and aesthetic character of Pennsylvania Avenue. Consider:
- a. Adding crosswalks and medians without impeding traffic flow.
  - b. Limitations on number and size of curb cuts.
  - c. Control/elimination of billboards.
  - d. Implementing a sign management program.
  - e. Painting and enhancement of the existing railroad bridge.
  - f. More extensive landscaping requirements for new development.
  - g. Street tree planting and median landscaping within the street right of way.
  - h. New upgraded street lighting.
  - i. Redevelopment of underutilized parcels.
- 5.10 Set up a Scenic Byway Landscape Committee to work with DelDOT, civic groups and business owners to encourage the establishment or continuation of volunteer planting and maintenance programs such as Adopt-a-Highway, roadside vegetation management and tree planting (see Enhancing Delaware Highways) and property owner initiated plantings.
- 5.11 Encourage DelDOT to set up a matching grant program to match community and civic associations fund raising efforts for landscaping.
- 5.12 Work with DelDOT and property owners along Montchanin Road and Kennett Pike to identify areas where new plantings should be considered to enhance the roadside and prioritize the areas of greatest need. Include consideration of screening of undesirable views. Identify appropriate plant material using native trees and flowering plants that can be used to beautify the roadside areas. Identify areas where invasive species need to be controlled. Develop a recommended list of plants for specific enhancement uses.
- 5.13 Consolidate the number and placement of signs along the roadway based on MUTCD requirements. Remove old signs no that are longer necessary. Paint the back of all regulatory signs a dark color to reduce visual contrast.
- 5.14 Develop a complementary visitor-oriented signage system in exchange for removal of off-premises signs and voluntary reduction in the size and height of on-premises signs in business districts.

- 5.15 Work with DART to establish transit facility design guidelines for the Byway that reflects the historic context and intrinsic qualities of the Byway's character areas (e.g. bus shelters, signs, park and ride facilities, etc.)

## 6.6 Visitation and Tourism

The Brandywine Valley is among the premiere visitor destinations in the Mid-Atlantic region. Attractions range from the Playhouse Theater (Du Pont Theatre), Delaware Art Museum, and Delaware Children's Theater in downtown Wilmington to the Winterthur Museum and Gardens, the Hagley Museum, and Delaware Museum of Natural History along Kennett Pike. In Pennsylvania's portion of the Brandywine Valley, Longwood Gardens and the Brandywine River Museum are contributing premiere attractions. These and other significant attractions are discussed in Chapter 5 of this plan.

Many of the region's visitor attractions share a common heritage related to their founding and/or support by various members of the du Pont family. They also share a common commitment to the identity, vitality, and character of the Brandywine Valley. These attractions have been working together on marketing, signage, and other issues for many years. They have been active supporters and participants in the creation of the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway.

Visitation is good for the Brandywine Valley. It helps foster the Brandywine Valley identity, which is widely recognized by the traveling public, and instills that identity in the minds of local residents and businesses. Visitation supports the local economy and makes many of the conservation related initiatives of the region's cultural institutions possible.

The principal regional attractions have formed a group called the Discover Brandywine Valley Public Relations Association, known in shorthand as the Brandywine Eleven. The group meets on a regular basis to coordinate marketing, advertising, and representation at national travel and tourism shows. The coordinated marketing efforts focus primarily on group tour providers. Visitors to the Brandywine Valley attractions tend to be older and relatively affluent. Casual visitors traveling by automobile are attracted from throughout the Mid-Atlantic region, Virginia, and New York. These markets are reached primarily through the internet, advertising, and word of mouth. In addition, package tours combining tickets to multiple attractions with lodging, dining, and shopping opportunities are offered through the regional visitors bureaus.

As a mature urban community and significant existing tourism destination, the Wilmington metropolitan area currently has an ample existing supply of accommodations, dining establishments, and other visitor services. These visitor services include a wide variety of types, many of which reflect the local character of the Brandywine Valley. Consequently, visitors to the region have a wide variety of choices in terms of location, character, and price. A list of regional accommodations and dining establishments is included in Appendix E.

Existing regional visitor accommodations and services are marketed through three regional visitor bureaus, the Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitors Bureau, Chester County Conference and Visitors Bureau (Pennsylvania), and Brandywine Conference and Visitors Bureau (Delaware County, Pennsylvania). The two Pennsylvania bureaus have a formal collaborative relationship called the Brandywine Valley Program that focuses on marketing to the motor coach industry. All three bureaus are in close communication and are seeking at ways to better coordinate activities in a regional collaboration.

In terms of marketing and promotion, the goal of the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway is to enhance and better coordinate existing initiatives in order to strengthen visitation at the Byway's many attractions. Through these initiatives, the local tourism infrastructure, services, and economy will also be maintained and strengthened.

Coordinated wayfinding signage has been a strong feature of the Brandywine Valley attractions for many years. In the late 1980s, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) sponsored a pilot program to develop wayfinding signage within the Brandywine Valley. The signage system that was implemented crossed state lines and was paid for by the regional attractions with additional financial support from the DVRPC. Distinctive, colorful signs point the directions to attractions stretching from downtown Wilmington to north of West Chester, Pennsylvania.

The Brandywine Valley wayfinding signage system has served as a model for other regions and for the creation of statewide wayfinding systems. Today, the signage located north of the city line is maintained by the Chester County Conference and Visitors Bureau through a fund into which the participating attractions contribute each year. Repainting and possible additions to the system are currently being planned.

The City of Wilmington has recently adopted a new coordinated wayfinding and signage system that will be installed within the city boundaries, replacing and supplementing the older system. The city's new system responds to the more complex needs of an urban wayfinding system.

The following visitation and tourism strategies have been developed by a subcommittee of the regional attractions and reviewed by the Byway's Advisory Committee and other stakeholders. The strategies and recommended actions build upon existing ongoing partnerships and are intended to strengthen the identity, character, and economy of the Brandywine Valley.

**GOAL 6:** Increase visitation and visitor spending at attractions and shopping areas along the Byway in a manner that is compatible with the preservation goals of the byway. Focus tourism development efforts on the types of visitors that appreciate the historic and scenic qualities of the Byway.

#### PROPOSED STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- 6.1 Build on existing partnerships, such as the Brandywine Eleven, a group of prominent regional attractions that meets regularly to coordinate marketing and other initiatives. Support enhanced coordination of activities and programming among the various attractions and amenities along the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway.
- 6.2 Work to enhance and coordinate existing marketing efforts among the attractions and explore the need to develop a cohesive marketing strategy for the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway that helps further coordinate the efforts of the regional visitor bureaus, attractions, amenities, and other visitor-oriented entities.
- 6.3 Collaborate with partners within the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway to achieve an appropriate balance between increased visitation, economic development, and corridor preservation.
- 6.4 Support the coordination of efforts among the regional visitors bureaus (Greater Wilmington, Chester County, Delaware County, and the Discover Brandywine Valley Public Relations Association) and the state offices of tourism for Delaware and Pennsylvania.
- 6.5 Work to enhance the existing delivery of information about the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway and its attractions, communities, and historic and cultural sites.
  - At each site visitors will find information about the attractions, amenities, and services along the byway; and information about where more information is available.
  - Byway maps and interpretative information will be developed and made available at each site.
  - Brochures, guidebooks, audio materials, and other materials will be developed, as appropriate, to provide information in a variety of formats.
- 6.6 Support the development and maintenance of a master schedule of events for the attractions and communities that is updated continuously and covers events up to five years in advance, but focusing on the upcoming nine to twelve months. One option is to develop an online electronic calendar that could be accessed through the website discussed below and through the websites of the regional visitors' bureaus.
- 6.7 Help coordinate the ongoing efforts to develop and maintain wayfinding signage systems within the region. The state is developing a statewide signage system, the city is developing a new Urban Wayfinding program, and the existing system on the Byway that is sponsored and maintained by the Chester County Conference and Visitors Bureau will be enhanced. Supporting the coordination of these efforts will be important for the Byway, and the systems should be effective and appropriately implemented.

- 6.8 Support and help enhance the development of package tours that are coordinated by the visitor bureaus, attractions, and area amenities.
- 6.9 Work with the regional visitors bureaus to establish and promote gateways into the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway: Wilmington in the south and the Pennsylvania entrances in the north.
- 6.10 Promote Kennett Pike as the primary connecting corridor between attractions and Montchanin Road as the meandering corridor for leisurely scenic drives at a slower speed.
- 6.11 Promote the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway as a part of a larger network of historic sites, attractions, and services located across state lines and beyond the Byway's boundaries.
- 6.12 Work with Byway attractions, businesses, DelDOT and DART to ease access for pedestrians, cyclists, and travelers on public transportation. This may help to reduce traffic loads along the Byway and make the experience of the corridor more enjoyable for residents, visitors, and travelers.
- 6.13 Develop a new website for the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway that provides information and interpretation for visitors. Currently, the WILMAPCO web site is being used for Byway designation. Links will be provided to the websites of Byway attractions, communities, regional visitor bureaus, and amenities. For other information, there will be links to the websites of the National Scenic Byways program, DelDOT, and other websites travelers may find useful. Links to the Byway website will be included on websites of other organizations, as appropriate.
- 6.14 Develop multimedia kiosks for the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway, consisting of a computer unit, monitor, speakers, and an appropriate user interface (such as a touch-screen), and mounted in an attractive housing. The kiosk unit will provide a user-friendly presentation with information on attractions, communities, tour itineraries, tour packages, visitor amenities (restaurants, shopping, and lodging), programs, and events. The presentation will also provide interpretation on a variety of topics and historical themes. The kiosk will be a freestanding unit requiring an electrical source and general maintenance. The unit will be accompanied by printed materials with the same content for visitors to take away.

As a pilot program such kiosks will be installed at regional visitor centers. Additional locations for installation (attractions, train stations, airports, etc.) may be explored in the future. In a more advanced iteration, the kiosk will be linked to the web and the presentation will be the website described above. The kiosk may also be designed to gather information about the users to help tailor marketing efforts.

## 6.7 Interpretation and Education

As a region with a distinct and significant history, interpretation and education are critical components of the Brandywine Valley experience. Because so much interpretation and related educational and cultural activity already occurs within the valley, coordinating and enhancing interpretation and education in a manner that strengthens the regional identity should not be difficult to achieve.

As has been mentioned in previous sections of this plan, many of the Byway's interpretive, educational, and cultural institutions share a common heritage rooted in the affluence created through the region's industrial heritage. The thematic structure for regional interpretation along the Byway will be developed out of the material on historic contexts presented in the discussion of the Historic Intrinsic Qualities of the Byway presented in Chapter 5. This material includes a review of the resources associated with each historic context that might be considered for interpretation. The contexts include:

- Pre-History and Early European Settlement,
- Agriculture and Milling, 1730-1880,
- Industry, 1770-1950,
- Wilmington and Kennett Turnpike, 1811-1919,
- Urbanization, 1870-1950,
- American County Estate, 1900-1950, and
- Rural-Suburban Development, 1950-Present.

Much of the thematic material necessary for interpretation has already been developed by the region's attractions for presentation at their own sites. What remains is to weave these themes and stories together from site to site and community to community, telling a coordinated story and presenting that story throughout the broader landscape, enticing visitors and residents into the attractions for the more intensive interpretive experience.

As with the strategies for visitation and tourism, the following strategies on interpretation and education have been developed by a subcommittee of the regional attractions with input from the Byway's Advisory Committee and other stakeholders. They build upon the interpretation and educational programs that are currently offered at individual attractions and institutions, and they are ripe for implementation. The strategies include development of a more detailed regional interpretive plan, which will determine the specific placement of new interpretive exhibits and materials related to the Byway.

**GOAL 7:** Develop interpretation and education programs for the Byway that connect residents and visitors with the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway, encouraging greater appreciation, understanding, and stewardship. The history and significance of the Brandywine Valley, its attractions, historic sites, landscapes, and communities will be presented as a coordinated story about the region's natural and cultural history.

## PROPOSED STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- 7.1 Develop coordinated interpretation, education, and marketing programs using the heritage area model, viewing the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway corridor as a region sharing a common heritage with multiple facets. Help coordinate the development of collaborative interpretation and education projects between the attractions, historic sites, and communities. Create an integrated interpretive experience for visitors and residents.
- 7.2 Use the du Pont legacy as the broad thematic lens through which to view the dynamic history of the Brandywine Valley with its national and regional significance.
- 7.3 Develop an interpretive plan for the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway, consisting of two parts: (1) an interpretive thematic structure and (2) an interpretive presentation.
  - a. The thematic structure for interpretation will outline the broad themes that have defined historical development and significance of the lower Brandywine Valley. It will focus in particular upon the history, contributions, and legacies of the du Pont family. Sub-themes and key storylines will be identified for each major theme. The thematic structure will be used to support the development of coordinated interpretive presentations and media along the Byway. Each participating attraction will be able to see how its stories fit into the larger thematic concepts that are important to communicate in understanding the history and significance of the valley. Adhering to the structure helps coordinate the development of coordinated interpretive storylines and materials from site to site.
  - b. In the interpretive presentation, the types of interpretive media and materials to be developed, the appropriate locations for installations, and storylines and content for each exhibit will be selected. The development of interpretation and education projects will rely upon collaborative input from attractions, local historians, tourism professionals, community groups, and the regional visitors bureaus. The interpretation should:
    - Link the history to the visible historic landscape and built resources;
    - Demonstrate the relevance of the historical significance of the Byway to contemporary travelers;
    - Coordinate themes, subject matter, and presentations from attraction to attraction, building on the strengths and character of each individual attraction and combining each experience in a complementary and holistic manner;
    - Focus also on the Byway communities (Wilmington, Greenville, Centreville, and Montchanin), developing interpretive media to be embedded into the landscapes and streetscapes in a manner that reveals the corridor's stories, but is designed and installed to be unobtrusive and appropriate in type and size to the location;

- Employ a variety of media and materials;
  - Be developed so that each exhibit also works as a stand-alone experience, allowing travelers to begin at any point and proceed in any order.
- 7.4 Collaborate with attractions and visitors bureaus to integrate interpretation and education materials and educational programs with package tours, such as the Chateau Country and American Art packages.
- 7.5 Support the development of self-guided tour programs for the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway using brochures with maps, audio guides, and other products as appropriate. Tour materials should be made available at each of the attractions, select locations in each community, and the visitor centers within and around the region. The development of tour programs will be coordinated with other interpretation strategies.
- 7.6 Develop a brochure and guidebook for the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway that provides an overview of the region’s history and significance and information about the communities, historic sites and landscapes, and attractions. The brochure will provide a brief overview of the Byway. The guidebook, to be developed later, will provide more detailed information for travelers along the Byway. The development of the brochure and guidebook will be coordinated with other interpretation strategies.
- 7.7 Work with attractions to continue to develop curriculum materials for use by local schools, and to foster the development of materials that focus on the Byway. Such materials will be developed employing existing state education standards. The program, “Teaching with Historic Places,” developed by the National Register of Historic Places may be a model.

Educational content will focus on the Brandywine Valley, its landscapes, historic places, communities, and other resources. The materials should be oriented to a variety of potential areas of study, including history, literature, visual and performing arts, science and technology, mathematics, and others, as appropriate. Field trips organized by schools and coordinated with attractions will be key components of the curricula.

- 7.8 Support the development of additional coordinated education programs for area residents in which the primary attractions share their resources and the expertise of their staff. Potential programs may include:
- a. A revolving circuit of lectures held at the attractions. Lectures could be organized by theme, historical period, or branch of the du Pont family.
  - b. A themed workshop series in which workshops are held on a specific theme with each session at a different attraction. An example may include a perennial gardening workshop series that teaches about native species at the Museum of Natural History, landscape design at Winterthur, ornamental species and care at Longwood, historical

gardening at Hagley, and still life painting of produce and flowers at the Brandywine River Museum.

## 6.8 Coordination and Management

The conservation and enhancement of the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway will depend upon the joint efforts of a range of public and private partners. The people and organizations that will have an impact on the special qualities of the Byway include property owners; businesses; cultural institutions; non-profit organizations; elected officials; and city, county, and state governmental agencies. The implementation of the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway is part of a long tradition of stewardship within the region.

The Brandywine Valley is blessed with a number of preservation oriented organizations that are fully capable of serving as Byway stewards. Chapter 7 of this Corridor Management Plan outlines how these partners intend to implement the Scenic Byway program. It includes plans for creation of a management entity for the Byway using and adapting existing non-profit structures. It identifies potential funding sources and relates those funding sources to the specific strategies and recommended actions presented here.

Finally, Chapter 7 identifies prioritizes recommended actions and identifies which partners will have responsibility for their implementation. This management structure and implementation plan will be based upon the coordination and management strategies outlined below.

GOAL 8: Establish a permanent management entity to implement the plan and to ensure that the rights and responsibilities of individual property and business owners are respected.

### PROPOSED STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- 8.1 Examine alternatives for a permanent management entity to assist in implementing the goals of this plan. Secure funding to operate the management entity. Set up a Board of Directors and hire an Executive Director as the Byway steward. The selected management group will allow for a timely response to major issues facing the Byway and facilitate opportunities for implementing the plan.
- 8.2 Continue to reach out and encourage the involvement of neighborhood and civic associations, property owners, business owners, institutions, attractions, and commuters in the implementation of the plan.
- 8.3 Work within the framework of existing plans and programs to achieve Byway goals as much as possible including:

- City and county comprehensive and sub-area plans (8th District in Wilmington, Brandywine River Scenic and Historic Highway Study, and Red Clay Valley Study in New Castle County)
  - Wilmington Initiatives
  - Kennett Pike Greenway
  - Kennett Pike Association Landscape Fund, "Bike the Pike" event and land use initiatives
  - Brandywine Valley Conservancy conservation easements, video on scenic byway easements and open space design developments
  - Centreville Civic Association Centreville Village Plan and Hometown Overlay (not yet approved)
  - Preservation Delaware Revolving Fund and preserving historic places program
  - Delaware Nature Society conservation and education initiatives.
  - DelDOT traffic calming initiatives, context sensitive design policy and tree, landscaping and forest preservation requirements
  - Delaware Greenways scenic byway, land preservation, biking and hiking and context sensitive design initiatives
- 8.4 Coordinate plan implementation with Wilmington Initiatives Projects and the 8th District Plan to further the potential for leverage of federal and state funding.
- Secure Transportation Enhancement from funds from DelDOT for the Delaware Avenue Gateway/Children's Theatre demonstration project. Work with Centreville School on landscape design and help secure funding for the Centreville School demonstration landscaping project.
- 8.5 Place additional emphasis on local business involvement.
- a. Work with local businesses within commercial segments of the Byway to identify the issues, interests, and needs of businesses along the corridor.
  - b. Tailor polices within commercial segments to support the vitality and success of businesses within the broad goals of the Byway.
  - c. Develop polices and programs within commercial segments that are incentive-based and do not place undue hardship upon businesses along the roadway.
- 8.6 Encourage the participation of all agencies with responsibilities for management, marketing, promotion, and transportation needs within the region.
- 8.7 Establish a process with DelDOT whereby a list of standard maintenance projects, safety projects, and other roadway work is communicated to the Byway leadership far enough in advance so that other Byway initiatives can be coordinated, additional funding can be pursued for enhancements to standard details, and alternatives can be explored to enhance maintenance and safety work.

- 8.8 Keep those who are responsible for implementing the zoning and land use regulations that are currently in force along the Byway involved and informed about the Byway and issues that may arise.
- 8.9 Establish a means of coordinating with Pennsylvania municipalities, organizations, and agencies to extend the corridor planning effort and to implement its recommendations in a bi-state effort.