

Chapter 6 • Crossroads Concept & Approach

During the American Revolution, the New Jersey countryside was a battleground across which the fate of the newly founded United States was contested. From June 1776 through November 1783, the British focused upon the occupation of New York City as their primary logistical base and as a wedge by which northern and southern states might be divided and subdued. The adjacent communities and farmland in northern and central New Jersey became a no man's land occupied successively by troops from both armies. New Jersey's diverse population took sides. Differing circumstances in economic interest, national origin, religious persuasion, geographical proximity, and philosophical perspective resulted in civil strife both between and within communities. The rise of a New Jersey militia in response to the British invasion significantly influenced American strategy and tactics. To a remarkable degree, New Jersey both characterized and shaped the American Revolution. And the American Revolution left an indelible mark upon New Jersey.

The Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area was **created by Congress to advance understanding of New Jersey's significance to the American Revolution** and to **benefit residents** of the state and the nation through partnerships and programs anchored in that understanding. Crossroads of the American Revolution is now poised to begin a new era of creative engagement with the residents of New Jersey through the development of this management plan and its implementation in association with local, regional, state, and national partners.

Part 1 of the management plan, including Chapters 1 through 5, documents the background and process through which the future direction of the heritage area was charted. Part 2 of the plan documents the course of action. This chapter presents a programmatic overview for the heritage area as a whole and outlines how its various parts are interrelated and connected under a comprehensive vision and approach.

6.1 The Crossroads Idea: Opportunities and Challenges

The creation and implementation of a national heritage area can be an exciting endeavor. There are few collaborative initiatives as broad in scope and positive enough in intent to embrace the entire array of a region's communities and interests. Through the planning process many opportunities and challenges became apparent with respect to the heritage area initiative in New Jersey.

The Crossroads story is rich and engaging. It has roots in every New Jersey community, and every community can tell distinctive stories illustrating heritage area-wide themes in different ways. Every community has physical reminders of the Revolutionary Era, be they landscapes, historic buildings, monuments, markers, or place and street names. Every New Jersey resident has lived among these reminders of our past and been touched by them in daily life. The American Revolution is strong in the public memory, and the idea that remembrance of the Revolutionary Era can be used to help strengthen the identity and spirit of New Jersey's communities today is a powerful vision.

Yet New Jersey's heritage area faces tremendous challenges. The area encompassed by the national heritage area is large, diverse, and complex. It ranges from beautiful rural countryside to some of the most densely populated urban areas in the nation. It includes rapidly changing suburban communities that continue to grow apace. Its urbanized areas face major challenges in terms of economic decline, social dislocation, and aged infrastructure. The pace and complexity of the region can be intimidating to visitors not familiar with it. The constant pressure simply to meet basic needs can be overwhelming, and competing needs can distract leaders' attention from the needs of the heritage area. There is inconsistency in the strength and direction of regional leadership, and communities sometimes have little experience working together. Recent economic challenges have created new realities for individuals, organizations, and governmental entities alike.

Crossroads can play a **unique and positive role** within this environment. Despite its challenges, New Jersey has a history of innovative, nationally recognized leadership from individuals and organizations promoting conservation, preservation, and stewardship of historic and natural resources. These initiatives have garnered strong support from residents and made a substantial impact upon the state's character and well-being. The Green Acres Program, New Jersey Historic Trust, and Pinelands preservation are examples of such initiatives at the statewide level. The Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area will collaborate with and complement such programs. The overriding goal of the Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area is to become a **strong positive force** within the state of New Jersey in support of the diverse community-building interests of its residents.

A national heritage area is defined as "a place designated by Congress where natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. These patterns make National Heritage Areas representative of the national experience through the physical features that remain and the traditions that have evolved in them." (National Heritage Area Feasibility Study Guidelines, 2) Heritage areas expand on traditional approaches to resource stewardship by supporting large-scale, community-centered initiatives that are supported by residents and that connect residents to the preservation and planning process.

Among its purposes, the enabling legislation for Crossroads of the American Revolution states that the heritage area shall assist communities, organizations, and citizens in preserving the special historic identity of the state; foster close working relationships among all levels of government, the private sector, and communities; and provide for the preservation and interpretation of resources for the educational and inspirational benefit of future generations.

In keeping with these purposes, Crossroads of the American Revolution will **establish programs** that organizations and communities can use **to achieve common goals**. Crossroads programs will forge connections between communities and have tangible community benefits that include preserving historic and natural resources, strengthening community character, supporting local economies, and enhancing local quality of life.

With its legislative purposes in mind, two broad goals were established during the planning process for the heritage area and are presented in Chapter 1 of the management plan:

Goal 1.A Ensure that residents of New Jersey, the American public, and international visitors have ample opportunity to learn about, interpret, recognize, and preserve New

Jersey's sites, landscapes, linkages, and resources related to the State's history and role in the American Revolution.

Goal 1.B: In realizing its mission and goals, Crossroads will foster close working relationships among all levels of government, the private sector, and local communities in the State.

Crossroads will be a **partnership initiative**. It will be implemented, first and foremost, through grassroots interests and initiatives connected through a common vision. This management plan outlines a flexible structure through which individuals, organizations, and communities can realize common goals through cooperative action.

6.2 The Crossroads Approach

During the planning process, the Crossroads Association board, partner organizations, and the interested public explored a range of alternative approaches to the management and implementation of the heritage area. Each considered alternative focused upon a different programmatic emphasis. While there were considerable benefits to each of the alternative approaches, it was ultimately determined that the alternative of 'telling the stories to residents' was most appropriate and would be most beneficial in implementing the heritage area concept. Following public discussion, the Association's board decided this approach would be the best way to initiate the Crossroads program, communicate the Crossroads concept, and encourage community engagement. Through such engagement, the broadest possible range of heritage area goals could be achieved over time.

In its initial stages, the Crossroads Heritage Area will emphasize **presentation of the Revolutionary Era story to residents** of New Jersey in order to raise public awareness. The history of the American Revolution is a key element of the public memory and is memorialized throughout New Jersey communities in place names, road names, monuments, memorials, and preserved sites. However, to a large extent this history is taken for granted, nearly absent in the public consciousness. In telling the story to residents, Crossroads will seek to awaken this consciousness and bring it to the forefront, using it as an active and unifying element for community enrichment and pride.

Through the Crossroads story, the heritage area will develop programming to encourage the preservation and stewardship of historic and natural resources, heritage tourism, community revitalization, and enhancement of local quality of life. The Crossroads Heritage Area will provide a **broad structure of programmatic opportunities** to be implemented through local and regional interest and initiative. **Guidelines** established for each program will ensure that local implementation is consistent with goals and purposes of the heritage area as a whole and are integrated with the initiatives of other communities and partners within a heritage area-wide context. Programs, approaches, and projects will be flexible so that they can be **tailored to the differing interests** and needs of each region, community, and partner organization.

6.3 Crossroads Character Areas

The Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area may be complex, but it is also comprehensible to anyone who takes the trouble to understand its origins and characteristics. It comprises four large-scale landscape character areas that are distinctive in terms of history, geography, and contemporary development trends. These character areas are useful in thinking about visitor experience, programming, and ways regional partners might work together. Only the

terrain within the legislatively authorized heritage area boundaries is included in this assessment of landscape character areas, though geographical connections and extensions beyond the boundaries should be kept in mind. Each of the four large-scale character areas comprises sub-areas that warrant consideration in planning for stewardship issues and treatment approaches as well as interpretive presentation.

6.3.1 The Neutral Ground

The Neutral Ground is a Crossroads character area defined by the Hackensack River on the east, Watchung Mountains on the west, the northeast extension of the heritage area in the vicinity of New Bridge and Fort Lee, and the Raritan River valley to the south. Both historically and today, this distinctive geographical area is oriented to New York City and it is an integral part of the New York metropolitan region.

Physiographically, this character area encompasses the northeast Piedmont region of the lower Passaic and Hackensack River valleys, with their low, northeast/southwest trending ridges and narrow plains. The Watchung Mountains rise abruptly to the west and overlook the area. To the east, the low-lying marshlands, rivers, and bays create a difficult barrier for land travel but provided opportunities for early settlement with navigable access to the Atlantic Ocean.

This portion of the Crossroads Heritage Area includes the northern half of the critical historic land route connecting New York with Philadelphia. In the eighteenth century, this was a region of neat, prosperous farms with a heavy concentration of English, Anglican, and Dutch Reformed communities. It was among the earliest settled regions in the colony. During the Revolution, its population had strong Loyalist tendencies.

Because of its proximity to British-held New York City and its Loyalist tendencies, this area experienced the most violent level of civil conflict among neighbors within the state. In part, civil conflict fell along existing philosophical fault lines within religious communities that had been developing in the years prior to the Revolution. These religious fault lines pitted conservatives loyal to church leadership emanating from Europe with progressive radicals promoting individual self-enlightenment and local self-determination. These differences paralleled those related to support for liberty, independence, and revolution. This area was also within New Jersey's portion of Washington's encirclement strategy focusing upon containment of the British in New York. Civil conflict was enflamed by military raids from both sides that frequently turned the area into a no-man's-land.

Today, The Neutral Ground is the most heavily urbanized portion of the heritage area. As indicated on the Context Map included in Chapter 3, it is characterized by high and medium density development that has evolved and intensified over the decades. Because of this development and redevelopment, landscape integrity to the period of the eighteenth century has been significantly altered, and it is difficult to envision the physical character of its agricultural landscape at the time of the Revolution. Nonetheless, strong physical reminders of the Revolutionary Era remain, even in urban areas, in the form of primary natural features such as ridges, rivers, and marshlands; place names; road and street layouts; buildings, monuments and markers; and the integrity of location in terms of the events that occurred here.

This region includes the heavily urbanized cities of Newark, Elizabeth, and Perth Amboy. It includes ports and areas of heavy industry. Its transportation network is extensively developed and includes northern portions of the New Jersey Turnpike, Garden State Parkway, and other

major highway and infrastructure connections. Smaller communities and residential areas include a wide variety of types of neighborhoods, from urban concentrations, to working-class neighborhoods, to affluent residential areas. As outlined in the socio-economic discussion in Chapter 3, this area includes extensive diversity among racial, social, and economic groups. Most of New Jersey's minority communities are concentrated here. Portions of the area face tremendous challenges in terms of economic and social revitalization.

6.3.2 The High Ground

The High Ground is a character area that has unique geographical and historical significance to Crossroads of the American Revolution. The High Ground encompasses the northwest portion of the heritage area. It is defined by the Watchung Mountains on the southeast, the heritage area's northern and northwestern boundaries, and the South Branch Raritan River valley to the south.

This landscape character area includes the northern portion of the Upper Piedmont and Highlands Provinces within the heritage area. It includes the First and Second Watchung Mountain ranges and the valley between them, the watershed of the Upper Passaic River with its extensive wetlands west of the mountains, and the rugged hills of the Highlands eastern fringe.

Historically, this region was settled later than the plains of New Jersey east and south of the Watchungs. Its settlement was composed primarily of Scotch/Irish ethnic communities, and it was never as agriculturally prosperous or developed as the areas to the east and south. Its agricultural soils were thinner, rockier, and not as fertile. However, the region included extensive natural resources including woodlands, iron ore, copper, and zinc that were valuable during the eighteenth century. Lumbering and mining were principal occupations, with small communities scattered throughout the area.

During the Revolution, this region became particularly significant as a refuge and defensive enclave for the Continental Army. Following the Battle of Princeton and throughout the remainder of the war, Washington used this area as a place where the Continental Army could safely stay. The winter encampments at Morristown and Middlebrook are particularly significant. The region's natural resources provided the army with critical support. From the heights of the Watchung Mountains, the Continentals could observe British movements in the plains below, and they established a ring of encampments and defensive works from which they conducted frequent raids to harass British expeditions and prevent their occupation of New Jersey. Though several significant efforts were made, the British were never able to penetrate the region nor able to draw the Continental Army from its protective cover.

Today, The High Ground area retains much of its rolling, wooded landscape character. Significant suburban areas have developed in the corridor between Springfield and Morristown as well as between the Watchung ridges. This is an affluent commuter suburb connected to New York City by railroad and highways. In the mid and late nineteenth century, this region became a retreat for wealthy New Yorkers, and large estates were assembled through the acquisition of smaller farms. This estate landscape is reflected today in the region's continued affluence; its small, prosperous historic villages; and a continuing stewardship ethic that has resulted in the preservation of large areas of rural and natural landscape.

6.3.3 Central Jersey

Central Jersey is the broad swath of land in the center portion of the state extending from Freehold on the east to the Delaware River to the west. Its northern border follows the Raritan and South Branch Raritan River valleys, and its southern boundary is Crosswicks Creek and its related wetlands separating the Trenton area from Bordentown.

The defining feature of the Central Jersey character area is the northwest/southeast transportation corridor extending from New Brunswick through Princeton to Trenton. To the east of this line is the agriculturally rich Inner Coastal Plain for which the Garden State is well known. To the west are the rolling rural agricultural hills of the Piedmont and the southern tip of the Highlands. A northwest/southeast section through this region, with Princeton at its center, marks a north/south landscape transition, just as the New Brunswick/Trenton transportation route defines an east/west transition. North of this sectional line rivers and streams flow northward to the Raritan River and Lower New York Bay. South of this line they flow to the Delaware River and Delaware Bay. The line dividing historic East Jersey from West Jersey also runs through it, clearly establishing its significant, central, transitional location.

Historically, this area was largely settled by English Quaker, German Lutheran, and Dutch Reform communities. It was an agricultural landscape organized along the southern segment of the critical New York/Philadelphia road corridor. As a transitional zone, however, it was, and continues to be, oriented toward both cities. With a largely different ethnic and religious makeup, however, it had less Loyalist tendencies than the northern portion of the route. Central Jersey saw the most significant and widely known military action of the Revolution in New Jersey. The Battles of Trenton, Princeton, and Monmouth were fought here, and the Forage Wars of the Millstone and Raritan Valleys are also widely known.

Today Central Jersey is a rapidly developing suburban area along the Route 1 corridor that parallels the historic Route 27 roadway between New Brunswick and Trenton. It continues to be a transitional area between the metropolitan regions of New York and Philadelphia. Sub-regions of the character area include the agricultural landscapes of southern Middlesex and Monmouth Counties to the east, urban Trenton to the south, and the affluent rural-suburban hills of Hunterdon County to the northwest. Princeton is located in the approximate center of the character area.

6.3.4 Lower Delaware River Valley

The *Lower Delaware River Valley* includes the southwest extension of the Crossroads Heritage Area along the Delaware River from Bordentown through Burlington to Camden, Gloucester City, and Red Bank. Mount Holly and Haddonfield lie along the southeastern line of this part of the heritage area. Physiographically, the area is part of New Jersey's Inner Coastal Plain and includes landscapes within the watersheds of numerous small creeks and rivers draining west to the Delaware River from a ridgeline or highpoint just west of the New Jersey Pinelands, which drains in the opposite direction toward the Atlantic Ocean.

Historically, as today, the Lower Delaware River area orients toward Philadelphia and is part of the Philadelphia metropolitan region. Like Pennsylvania, it was composed largely of English Quakers during the eighteenth century, a heritage that is still evident in its historic community centers today. The region played key roles in the defense of Philadelphia and the Delaware River

valley as well as roles in the Battle of Trenton and the Monmouth Campaign. Its maritime history associated with the Delaware River creates a strong thematic link between its communities.

The Lower Delaware River region has become extensively suburbanized with a variety of ages and types of residential neighborhoods surrounding historic centers. Trolley lines played a significant role in the region's historic residential development. Six contemporary bridges crossings create strong physical, social, and economic linkages to Pennsylvania. Camden, directly opposite Philadelphia, is a small, completely urbanized area with significant economic and social issues. The New Jersey Turnpike and Interstate 295 create a heavily used transportation route through the region between Wilmington and New York. Significant open space remains within the region, however, in the Burlington/Bordentown area and east of the turnpike corridor.

6.4 Primary Audience

The primary audience for heritage area initiatives is **state residents**, a broad group with many diverse elements. These diverse elements are discussed further in subsequent chapters. A secondary but also significant audience will be **heritage tourists**. In discussing the various alternatives, the Crossroads Association's board felt that creating a high quality interpretive and visitor experience for heritage tourists was an important way of also engaging local residents and providing community benefits. So heritage tourism will be a key component of the Crossroads program.

In considering how to engage New Jersey audiences, it was recognized that a large number of the heritage area's residents live in its most urbanized communities. These communities include residents who may not identify with the stories or resources associated with the American Revolution, by virtue of differing roots and paths taken toward becoming part of New Jersey's constituency. It is important to reach out to these residents, so that the heritage area is as inclusive as possible in spreading its benefits. Crossroads will need to create targeted programs in partnership with local organizations to engage these residents and address their interests.

6.5 Guiding Principles

The policies, programs, and initiatives outlined in this management plan for the Crossroads of the American Revolution are intended to be flexible and to adapt to conditions, experience, and opportunities over time. Each of the chapters of the plan addresses a separate subject relevant to the heritage area's purpose and mission and includes recommendations for implementation specific to that subject. These recommendations are flexible and intended to inform decision-making so that future decisions are consistent with the heritage area concept and program as a whole. The guiding principles presented below relate to the broad, overarching program of Crossroads of the American Revolution as a whole.

1. **Long-term Interests: Crossroads of the American Revolution will work in the best long-term interests of the residents of New Jersey and the physical resources and reminders of the American Revolution** that are a precious national legacy intimately tied to the nation's founding. Investment, planning, and action must all result in the preservation of those resources, the enhancement of New Jersey's identity, and overall a better quality of life for all New Jersey residents, now and for generations to come.
2. **Partnership: Crossroads – both heritage area and Association – will work only through partnerships.** The Crossroads of the American Revolution Association must

wield its bully pulpit and resources in the most effective ways to encourage governmental agencies, sites, legacy associations and historical societies, civic groups, land trusts, and other non-profit and for-profit stakeholders and partners to protect the heritage area. Many of these have worked virtually alone in reaching their present level of success, and must be asked to consider how to work with others and how to enhance the entire heritage area through their actions. For the most part, the Crossroads Association as the local coordinating entity will engage in or support only those projects that include more than one player, and partners should automatically assume that their needs can be met by the heritage area only through coordination with others. “E pluribus unum” (out of many, one) should be a mantra.

3. **Management & Purpose: The federal enabling legislation for the heritage area is the fundamental guide for this plan and all programs and actions deriving from this plan.** The Crossroads of the American Revolution Association, as the local coordinating entity for the heritage area, will provide leadership and guidance for the Crossroads partnership in accordance with the duties and responsibilities outlined in the heritage area’s enabling legislation. Management of the heritage area will work toward fulfillment of the purposes outlined in the heritage area’s enabling legislation.
4. **Planning: Every action supported by Crossroads must be adequately planned.** Such implementation activities as interpretation, site development, or recreational linkages are to be supported only on the basis of a program by applicants that has made a clear statement concerning connection to existing plans for the affected resources, area, site, or town. The heritage area will place a priority on funding such planning as a primary means of supporting partnerships and extending its limited financial resources. Such statements and plans need not be complicated – but they must indicate careful thought, focus, and strategies.
5. **Resource Protection: Conservation and historic preservation initiatives must achieve synergy, not simply overlap.** Crossroads will continue and support the state’s nationally recognized leadership in conservation and historic preservation. State agencies and statewide organizations for either conservation or preservation are accustomed to supporting one another. This approach must also be reflected at the local level, and be regarded as business as usual in the heritage area’s communities. Crossroads will support projects whose planning has accounted for the needs of both historic and natural resources (including scenic and recreational resources as well as land and water resources). **Cultural landscape assessment** – which accounts for both natural and historic resources in a holistic study of the evolution of a given site or area and provides a deeper understanding of all resources beyond simple inventories – is a preferred basis for planning and action.
6. **Communities:** Crossroads will strive to engage and empower communities to help them strengthen community character, identity, and sense of place and to enhance the quality of life of residents.
7. **Property:** Crossroads will respect private property rights.
8. **Authenticity:** Crossroads will support authentic places and experiences significant to New Jersey’s Revolutionary Era history.

9. **Sustainability:** Crossroads of the American Revolution will promote ecological and economic sustainability in its own actions and those of the heritage area's stakeholders. Heritage tourism is an important component of the principle of sustainability, in adding to the economic diversity of communities and regions in the heritage area and yielding economic benefits that help to build partnerships.
10. **Communication & Transparency:** Crossroads will maintain a policy of openness and frequent communication within its partnership, with other organizations, and with the general public.
11. **Hospitality:** Crossroads will encourage a visitor experience where visitors feel warmly welcomed and guided New Jersey's Revolutionary history.

6.6 Crossroads Programs

The following sections summarize the focus and principles in the chapters that follow.

6.6.1 Crossroads Presentation (Chapter 7)

Interpretation of New Jersey in the Revolutionary Era to the state's residents will be the centerpiece of the Crossroads program as a means of **raising public awareness**, building support, and **providing opportunities** for preservation and community revitalization programs. Crossroads will create and coordinate a multi-level interpretive program focused on reaching the broadest possible audience. Elements of the program will be tailored to the character of each portion of the heritage area and the stories they have to tell.

- **Statewide Presentation through Primary Attractions:** Primary Revolutionary Era visitor attractions will be featured in presenting the overall story of the American Revolution in New Jersey to visitors and residents. This presentation will be the core of the heritage area's program promoting **heritage tourism**. It will also establish a level of quality, authenticity, and creative engagement that will be the benchmark for interpretive presentations within the heritage area and the state. In addition, these primary attractions will serve as visitor gateways to regional and local attractions and to interpretation within communities. Together, **visitor gateways and regional attractions** will create an **integrated network** for interpretation and provide the overall statewide context within which the state's many significant local attractions, legacy communities, and historic landscapes and sites can be appreciated.
- **Coordination with State and National Initiatives:** Crossroads will coordinate its interpretive presentation with those of **other state and federal initiatives**, including the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route and National Historic Trail, New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail, New Jersey Pinelands, Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, and Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area. Collaboration with premier attractions such as the National Constitution Center, American Revolution Center, Independence National Historical Park, Valley Forge National Historical Park, and Pennsylvania's Washington Crossing State Park shall also be sought.
- **Regional Storylines:** Particular geographic regions within the heritage area will be identified to present key storylines associated with New Jersey in the American Revolution. These **regional storylines** will feature legacy communities, local attractions, regional attractions, and heritage byways that will work collaboratively on a coordinated

presentation. Together, these storylines will fill out the statewide story with a richness of detail and give visitors and residents **opportunities to explore** stories, sites, and communities at deeper levels. An interpretive plan will be created by participating local and regional partners for each storyline, coordinating interpretive presentations between local and regional sites and attractions.

- **Thematic Presentations:** Sites and attractions that feature interpretation of common themes and stories will have the opportunity to collaborate and be marketed as **linked thematic presentations**. The stories associated with each participating site will be coordinated and presented as aspects of a single subject. Thematic subjects will be based upon the Crossroads themes and sub-themes developed by the National Park Service.
- **Heritage Byways:** Regional touring routes will be identified and developed as **heritage byways** within the Crossroads heritage area. Selected heritage byways will be featured as the primary component of **regional storylines**, discussed above. These historic byways may be marketed to **heritage travelers**. In addition, local heritage byways may be designed as supporting elements within storylines, linking destinations and offering coordinated interpretation presenting a given storyline at publicly accessible sites along the way.
- **Community-based Interpretation:** Communities and sites will be encouraged to **tell their own stories** within the context of the Crossroads interpretive themes. Stories and presentations will be unique from community to community and site to site. Special programs will be encouraged for **'legacy communities'** that existed during the Revolution, which will be encouraged to become gateways for local and regional interpretation. Every community and every site will have the opportunity to participate in the Crossroads presentation in accordance with heritage area-wide interpretive guidelines.
- **Revolutionary Legacies:** Special programs will be developed for the region's heavily urbanized areas where historical integrity has been lost and residents may have difficulty relating to stories of the Revolution. These programs will emphasize the **ideas and ideals** of the Revolution over the interpretation of events. Special programs will be created to engage **minority communities**, especially the young, presenting the principles and ideas of the American Revolution and their relationship to contemporary issues and challenges we face in our communities today.

6.6.2 Welcoming Visitors (Chapter 7)

Crossroads of the American Revolution will spearhead a **heritage tourism initiative** to present New Jersey's Revolutionary Era story to visitors, establishing Crossroads as a high quality, national and international visitor destination. Through heritage tourism, Crossroads will promote economic development within the region and support community revitalization. The heritage tourism initiative will establish high quality standards for visitor attractions, visitor service communities, marketing, and communications. It will set standards that local attractions can emulate for regional interpretation throughout the heritage area. As these attractions present the Crossroads story to visitors, local residents would hear it, relate to it, and appreciate it as well.

Crossroads will orchestrate development of a coordinated, **world class visitor experience** that includes interpretation, visitor services, community character, and communications worthy of a premier destination. The heritage area will implement relevant aspects of the recently completed state heritage tourism plan, making Crossroads a **demonstration project** for the initiative. Led by

an integrated network of visitor gateways and regional attractions, discussed above, interpretation will be enriched and coordinated. Visitor service communities will be selected based upon **criteria for quality** in providing lodging, dining, shopping, and services, and in exhibiting community character and commitment. Hospitality training programs will be developed and maintained. The entire visitor experience will be marketed to heritage travelers as an **integrated package** with consistent and complementary offerings. The heritage area experience will be **supplemented** by the constellation of smaller house museums, historic sites, storyline presentations, and other historic communities for deeper visitor exploration.

6.6.3 Research and Education (Chapter 8)

Crossroads will convene a **committee of scholars** to identify issues and needs associated with research on the American Revolution in New Jersey. Crossroads partners including universities, historical societies, archeologists, and independent historians will continue to lead the research initiative. This will be an endeavor for the **long term**. Its goals will be to

- Review the status of existing research;
- Identify gaps and key research questions;
- Create a research protocol and context statements to guide researchers and promote consistency;
- Encourage, facilitate and support research initiatives; and
- Work to make research available to as wide an audience as possible.

The possibility of creating an **academic center** for the study of the American Revolution in New Jersey will be explored.

Education is at the core of the Crossroads mission. The heritage area's comprehensive interpretive program, as discussed elsewhere, will be its primary educational initiative. A more formalized educational program, however, will also be undertaken. New Jersey's **school students** have been the largest and most important audience at many of the state's Revolutionary Era attractions. Programs oriented toward school students will be specifically created by the heritage area to reinforce school and student participation. Sites that offer programs for students will be supported through heritage area-wide initiatives to **enrich the offerings** and provide specialized staff assistance. Cooperative **outreach programs** will be developed led by interpreters at key attractions. Programs will be closely aligned with the **statewide school curriculum**.

Additional educational programming will be supported through the leadership of historic sites, historical societies, and other organizations. Crossroads will encourage such programming to be initiated primarily at the local level. Crossroads will help coordinate, provide marketing and communications support, and provide programmatic incentives.

At the heritage area-wide level, Crossroads will lead a public information and education initiative that will seek to make educational and interpretive opportunities as widely known, appreciated, and relevant as possible. Crossroads will develop a **comprehensive public communications plan** that will incorporate this goal. Crossroads will encourage, support, and help coordinate a calendar of **public events** led by communities and organizations at the local level and marketed through the heritage area.

6.6.4 Historic Preservation (Chapter 9)

Through its interpretive outreach to residents, Crossroads will help establish a climate that supports public and private historic preservation initiatives. Crossroads will encourage, facilitate, and support **partnerships for the preservation and stewardship** of historic and cultural

resources within the heritage area using traditional preservation programs and developing new programs and incentives where possible.

Crossroads will work to **stimulate preservation action at the local and regional levels**, collaborating with statewide preservation organizations, regional organizations, and county governments. To support historic preservation actions, a broad-based **inventory** of Revolutionary Era resources will be organized through the participation of local organizations and municipalities. Crossroads will establish programs designating **legacy communities** and **visitor service communities**, which will be a focus of its community preservation efforts. Crossroads and its partners will provide **incentives and technical assistance** for municipal preservation plans and programs for resource protection in accordance with established guidelines. Under recommendations included in Chapter 7, key attractions – Revolutionary sites owned by public and nonprofit entities – will receive support for site and management planning to identify critical needs and ways to address them.

6.6.5 Landscapes, Natural Resources, and Community Revitalization (Chapter 10)

New Jersey has a strong background in the protection of open space, farmland, and historic preservation through land conservation and grant programs at the statewide level. Crossroads will actively collaborate with and **support existing and future historic and landscape preservation organizations**. Crossroads will integrate its programs with those of these other organizations, allowing them to continue to take the lead in what they have been doing so successfully for years, but strengthening their efforts with **additional incentives and parallel actions**. In these collaborative efforts, Crossroads will emphasize preservation and stewardship of the **physical presence of the Revolutionary Era**, including buildings, landscapes, archeological sites, historic communities, commemorative markers, monuments, and related natural resources.

Underlying all heritage area efforts will be the goal of having a material, positive impact upon the quality of life of residents. Interpretive programming, resource stewardship initiatives, and work to enhance visitor experience will **promote community revitalization** in ways that benefit local residents. To reinforce the impacts of other elements of the Crossroads program, strong community planning at the local municipal level is essential.

As a densely populated and highly developed state, New Jersey is familiar with sophisticated community planning and revitalization techniques. Local municipalities, however, are in need of incentives and technical assistance for effective use of those techniques in supporting the goals of the heritage area. Crossroads will **collaborate** with county, regional, state, and nonprofit planning entities in developing programs to provide such **assistance at the local level**. In its own heritage area programming, Crossroads will reinforce community planning, policies, and procedures by requiring threshold levels of planning and providing support in achieving them.

Crossroads will actively support planning and best practices initiatives at the county and local levels that strengthen community character. Individual communities within the heritage area will be encouraged to develop comprehensive revitalization programs emphasizing historic preservation, open space, and landscape conservation goals. Crossroads will specifically emphasize **using historic preservation** to support economic revitalization, especially in downtown areas.

Conservation of natural resources will be promoted as an essential element of community planning and key to issues that our communities face. The conservation, development, and recreational use of community **parks and open space** will be emphasized as a component of

strong community character. **Energy conservation** and sustainable systems will be promoted in all Crossroads programming to address community development issues by lowering energy use, managing stormwater, and improving water quality.

Opportunities for **passive recreation** will be featured as an important community amenity using public parks and open space. The development of walking trails and local touring routes binding communities together will be encouraged. Community interpretation of the Revolutionary Era in parks and along trail networks will be encouraged and supported. Family-oriented community activities in public parks will feature community-building themes based on public dialogue and interpretation of community identity. Public events such as marathons and bicycle races will be encouraged and will have a thematic orientation supporting community revitalization.

6.6.6 Crossroads Management (Chapter 11)

The Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area will be a **partnership initiative** embracing leadership and participation from a wide variety of organizations with an interest in its concept and programs. Heritage area policies, programs, and projects will be tailored to the interests, needs, and capabilities of committed partners within the context of the entire heritage area. As designated by Congress, the Crossroads of the American Revolution Association, an independent nonprofit organization, will be the “local coordinating entity” for the heritage area, orchestrating the work of its various partners.

At the state and heritage area-wide level, the Crossroads Association, through its board and staff, will **take the lead** in establishing and implementing programs related to heritage area-wide policy, interpretation, preservation of Revolutionary Era resources, development, marketing, and communications. At the state and heritage-area wide level Crossroads will develop **partnerships with other organizations that are already leading** efforts related to land conservation and stewardship, natural resource protection, recreation, community planning, and historic preservation.

At the regional and local levels, the Crossroads Association will partner with **teams of existing regional organizations that will coordinate with local partners** in organizing and implementing local and regional heritage area projects and programs. In the beginning, initiatives will be organized primarily on a project-by-project basis, with project-specific teams formed for implementation and led by partnering regional organizations. Over time, a more formalized structural relationship may be developed.

Priority projects will be identified by the Crossroads Association in consultation with its partners. Attention will initially be given to heritage area-wide projects that will help establish the heritage area as a whole. Mutually agreed-upon project descriptions will be the basis for each project undertaken, and each partnership team responsible for implementing a project will be expected to develop a work plan, budget, priorities, schedule, and metrics for evaluation.

Partnership teams undertaking specific projects might stand ready to manage a continuing stream of projects as they develop. **Memorandums of understanding** would be used to outline the responsibilities of managing partners for projects and groups of projects. Similarly, local partners will also enter into memorandums of understanding and agreement to clearly delineate responsibilities and expectations in order to receive the benefits of heritage area programming and support. **Crossroads guidelines** for projects will establish criteria for participation in heritage area programs.

The Crossroads Association will establish and implement a **communications and development program** that will raise funds for heritage area programs from federal, state, foundation, corporate, individual donor, and entrepreneurial sources. **Matching funds** will be required for most heritage area projects in order to leverage project support and commitment. Project benefits will be closely monitored in order to both assure that projects are meaningful and worthwhile and to demonstrate their value to residents and communities.

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