

**Maryland’s Chesapeake & Ohio (C&O) Canal Scenic Byway –  
Corridor Management Plan & Tourist Information Project**

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## I. Basic Project Information – Project Description, Location, and Parties

1. **Name/title of proposed project:** Maryland’s Chesapeake & Ohio (C&O) Canal Scenic Byway - Corridor Management Plan & Tourist Information Project
2. **State DOT Applying for Funds:** Maryland
3. **Name and contact information for the State DOT or Tribal applicant point of contact:** Maryland Department of Transportation, Christy Bernal, cbernal@mdot.maryland.gov, (410) 545-5659
4. **Name of the byway(s) impacted by the proposed project: and whether the project is a statewide or multi-State project:** Maryland’s C&O Canal Byway is located just west of Washington, DC in four Maryland counties including (from east to west) Montgomery, Frederick, Washington and Allegany counties.
5. **Designation type of the byway(s) impacted by the proposed project:** State Scenic Byway
6. **The primary project type under which the proposed project aligns:** (2) Development and implementation of a corridor management plan to maintain the scenic, historical, recreational, cultural, natural, and archaeological characteristics of a byway corridor while providing for accommodation of increased tourism and development of related amenities.
7. **If applicable, the additional project types identified:** (7) Development and provision of tourist information to the public, including interpretive information about a scenic byway.

### 8. Project Abstract

Work completed under this project includes:

- Development and delivery of a grassroots-driven, collaborative and comprehensive Corridor Management Plan (CMP) addressing all 14 required elements outlined by the Federal Highway Administration and, if applicable, three elements for All-American Road designation.
- Within CMP Element 8, an assessment of Electronic Vehicle (EV) accommodations and a strategy for its maintenance/enhancement.
- Within CMP Element 14, an interpretive plan and NEPA analysis for the design, fabrication, delivery and installation of 10-15 various-sized, static kiosks providing byway-wide and place-based information.
- Development and provision of tourist information through photography, video, printed travel guide/map and domestic and international marketing.

**(a) Project Description** - Maryland’s C&O Canal Scenic Byway is one of the most historic transportation corridors in the nation. Its proximity to C&O Canal National Historical Park (NHP), Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (NST), Appalachian NST, Great American Rail Trail and Potomac River Water Trail provides easy access to world-class outdoor recreation. A grassroots-driven and collaborative CMP that helps recognize, preserve and enhance the byway’s intrinsic qualities is vital to furnishing economic and quality of life benefits to the byway community. A CMP is also instrumental in ensuring enjoyable, sustainable and well-maintained visitor experiences throughout the byway corridor while marketing it to domestic and international audiences delivers economic return-on-investment to the byway community and the governments who invest in CMP implementation. All project components described herein are a strategic approach to maximizing opportunities provided by a National Scenic Byway Program (NSBP) grant.

**Challenges** – The greatest challenge the C & O Canal Byway and its community face is lack of a coordinated approach to strategically protect, manage, enhance and promote the byway corridor. Currently, the byway and byway community are without a singular plan identifying and addressing issues such as sustainable and equitable tourism, recreation and economic development, historic and natural preservation and multi-modal safety. Additionally, there is not an overarching plan ensuring the byway’s unique qualities are maintained, interpreted and enhanced for multi-generational, inclusive traveler enjoyment. This project comprehensively addresses this challenge through a CMP that will:

- protect the natural beauty and cultural significance of the byway corridor through an equitable community-driven approach,
- inventory and assess the byway’s existing features, including natural resources, historic sites, and potential issues like traffic congestion, lack of inclusive interpretation and/or visual clutter,
- develop tactics to address concerns, such as improving signage, enhancing roadside amenities, managing access points, and promoting sustainable development, and
- implement a timeline of proposed actions, along with mechanisms to monitor progress and make adjustments as needed.

Throughout the project lifecycle, quantitative success will be evaluated through on-time and on-budget performance metrics and qualitative success will be measured through community feedback. After the project is completed, quantitative success will be measured statistically through number of visitors, visitor expenditures and length of stay and qualitative success will be measured through community use of and engagement with the CMP.

**Intrinsic Quality Protection** - Currently, the byway’s scenic, historical and recreational qualities are well protected because much of the byway abuts state and federally protected land and water. The byway traverses through three designated Main Street Communities, Cumberland, Williamsport, and Brunswick, through three state certified heritage areas, Heritage Montgomery, Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area and Passages of the Western Potomac and two National Heritage Areas, Journey Through Hallowed Ground and Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area. To maximize intrinsic quality protection, the CMP will inventory preservation and acquisition opportunities, identify gaps and develop an implementation strategy for future preservation and protection.

**Project History and Economic Impact** - The byway was designated in 1999 when Maryland launched its modern iteration of the statewide Scenic Byways Program, including 18 new scenic byways offering 2,487 miles of adventure. Since 2000, the byway has been marketed to travel media, group tours, and visitors nationally and internationally. In 2020, the byway management team conducted a [Visitation Analysis, Visitor Profile & Economic Impact Assessment through Rockport Analytics](#). The study found that in 2019, C&O Canal NHP, which is accessed from the byway, received 1.3M visitors from more than 50 miles away, visitors spent \$309M, which generated \$83M in visitor-initiated taxes and supported 3,902 jobs with \$156M in total wages and salaries paid. The study found the total economic impact of C&O Canal NHP and byway was \$254M annually.

**Marketing** - In 2022, the byway management team formed the C&O Canal Experience Marketing Alliance to promote the experiences, towns and cities along the byway. The Alliance

continues its annual marketing activities through the collective investment of \$40,000/ year (noted in the budget as overmatch). In 2023, the Maryland Office of Tourism Development awarded the Alliance an EDA grant of \$250,000 to enhance its marketing activities. The EDA grant includes funds for a branding/logo project, website development and advertising funds to market the byway through print and digital placements. All EDA funds will be expended prior to the commencement of this project.

**Lead Applicant** - The Tourism Council of Frederick County, Inc. (TCFC) is the lead applicant and will act as the project’s fiscal agent. TCFC is a public-private partnership dedicated to enhancing the economic benefit of tourism for Frederick County's businesses, attractions, local governments, and residents. TCFC’s office and Visitor Center are located at 151 S. East Street, Frederick, MD 21701. TCFC has seven employees, including a Chief Fiscal Officer, who will provide additional fiscal support to the project.

TCFC has a 100% on-time and on-scope project delivery for federally funded projects. Specifically, TCFC was a subrecipient of a FY08 \$736,000 in NSBP funds through the Maryland Office of Tourism Development. In FY21-22, TCFC received \$810,395 in ARPA funds through Frederick County. For FY23-25, TCFC was awarded an EDA grant in the amount \$112,320 for the marketing of Frederick County’s Maryland and National Scenic Byways.

**Other Parties to the Project** - In addition to TCFC, other parties to the project are byway management team member organizations – Visit Montgomery, Inc., Visit Hagerstown and Washington County, Allegany County Office of Tourism and Maryland Office of Tourism Development. Each organization will be on the core project management team, contribute match and bring other technical resources to the project, including but not limited to, their jurisdictional planning, parks and preservation departments. Upon award, each party to the project will enter into a written agreement detailing duties, roles and responsibilities specific to project execution and delivery.

**(b) Project Location** - The project is located entirely in Maryland and includes 236 road miles abutting the C&O Canal NHP and Potomac River. The byway is located just west of Washington, DC in four Maryland counties including (from east to west) Montgomery, Frederick, Washington and Allegany counties with its eastern terminus in Glen Echo and its western terminus in Cumberland. The project affects the following zip codes: 21502, 21555, 21766, 21750, 21711, 21722, 21795, 21782, 21758, 21716, 21777, 21790, 20837, 20839, 20842, 20854, 20859, 20812, 20816, and 20818. The byway stretches along contiguous state roads for 175 miles from Glen Echo to Hancock, MD. The byway then segments for 25 miles onto roads that traverse Maryland state public lands and are maintained by Washington and Allegany counties. State roads again comprise the byway for the remaining 36 miles to Cumberland. MD SHA’s geo-spatial route data was not available at the time of this submission so a route map and description are provided in **Appendix 1**.

Regarding segmentation, FHWA policy states, “When considering dividing a scenic byway into smaller segments, continuity is a crucial factor, meaning that any proposed segmentation should not significantly disrupt the overall visitor experience by breaking up important scenic resources or intrinsic qualities along the route.” The C & O Canal byway’s segmented portion takes visitors through state public lands providing an abundance of access to numerous scenic, historical and recreational opportunities. In this case, byway segmentation does not disrupt the visitor experience but instead enhances it by bringing the visitors closer to the

intrinsic qualities of the byway, including Green Ridge State Forest, Maryland's largest contiguous block of public land.

According to the FHWA digital maps and geographic shapefiles for the 2020 Census urban areas depicted on FHWA HEPGIS maps of MPO and 2020 Census Urban Areas, the City of Hagerstown (50,000 or more) is affected by this project. All other areas of the project are in rural communities. This project includes the following communities located within a federally designated Opportunity Zone: Brunswick, MD, Williamsport, MD, and Cumberland, MD. There are no communities located in Empowerment Zones, Promise Zones, or Choice Neighborhoods.

**Infrastructure Connections** - The byway connects to existing infrastructure including I-68, I-70, I-81 and I-495. Amtrak passenger and bicycle train services connect to/from Washington, DC through Brunswick and Cumberland, MD to Pittsburgh, PA. Airports serving the byway include Dulles International Airport, Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, Thurgood Marshall Baltimore-Washington International Airport, Frederick Municipal Airport, Hagerstown Regional Airport, Greater Cumberland Regional Airport. The byway connects with the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Scenic Byway, the Historic National Road All-American Road, the Antietam Civil War Scenic Byway and the Mountain Maryland Scenic Byway. The byway connects major recreational assets on land and water, including C&O Canal NHP, Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Great American Rail Trail and the Potomac River Water Trail.

## II. Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of all Project Funding

The following chart notes budget phases for all project costs. The budget indicates cost by component including federal share, non-federal share, overmatch and contingency costs. Below the budget chart is a breakdown of match sources and their share of non-federal cash match, overmatch that will be spent on marketing and share of contingency costs. No other federal funds will be used to implement the project and cash match commitment letters are **Appendix 2**.

Sequential Phases: (4 Years Total)	Component:	Federal Share (80%)	Non-Federal (20%)	Grant Funded Cost (100%)	Overmatch & Contingency
<b>Phase 1: (18 months)</b>					
1a	CMP	\$472,000.00	\$118,000.00	\$590,000.00	
1b	Marketing Costs (Overmatch)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$60,000.00
	<b>SUBTOTALS PHASE 1:</b>	\$472,000.00	\$118,000.00	\$590,000.00	\$60,000.00
<b>Phase 2: (2.5 years)</b>					
2a	Kiosks	\$152,000.00	\$38,000.00	\$190,000.00	
2b	Photography	\$48,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$60,000.00	
2c	Video	\$80,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$100,000.00	
2d	Printed Travel Guide and Map	\$120,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$150,000.00	
2e	Marketing Costs (Overmatch)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100,000.00
	<b>SUBTOTALS PHASE 2:</b>	\$400,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$500,000.00	
	<b>TOTALS:</b>	\$872,000.00	\$218,000.00	\$1,090,000.00	\$160,000.00
	10% Contingency Funds				\$109,000.00
		\$872,000.00	\$218,000.00	\$1,090,000.00	\$269,000.00

## Cash Match for Non-Federal Share, Overmatch &amp; Contingency Funds:

Party to the Project:	Non-Federal Share (20%)	Overmatch	Contingency Funds	Total
TCFC	29,500	40,000	27,250	96,750
Visit Montgomery	29,500	40,000	27,250	96,750
Vist Hagerstown & Washington County	29,500	40,000	27,250	96,750
Allegany County Office of Tourism	29,500	40,000	27,250	96,750
Maryland Office of Tourism	100,000			100,000
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>\$ 218,000</b>	<b>\$ 160,000</b>	<b>\$ 109,000</b>	<b>\$487,000</b>

### III. Merit Criteria

The project will advance all four NSBP goals as follows:

**Safety** - The CMP scope of work will include three specific elements that will help make the multi-modal transportation system safer for all as follows:

- A review of the road's safety record to locate hazards and poor design and identify possible corrections.
- The identification of ways to balance safety with context-sensitive highway design practices that accommodate safety needs while preserving the road's character.
- A plan to accommodate commercial traffic while ensuring the safety of sightseers in smaller vehicles, as well as bicyclists, joggers, and pedestrians.

The elements above are required as part of the CMP planning process. They also align with the 2024 [Complete Streets Policy of the Maryland State Highway Administration](#), an update for the [2008 Context Sensitive Solutions](#) policy for Maryland's collection of scenic byways. The Complete Streets Policy specifically states, "Maryland's...PlanMD legislation encourages MDOT and SHA to enhance access to transportation alternatives. SHA's philosophy of developing context sensitive solutions that support pedestrian, bicycle, ADA and transit accessibility has driven our approach for many years. This Complete Streets policy builds upon these efforts so that we continue to be national leaders in safely serving all modes of transportation on Maryland's highway system."

**Climate and Sustainability** - The CMP will address climate and sustainability through the development of a strategy to make the C & O Canal Byway Maryland's first "Electric Byway". According to a [2024 EV Travel Research Study from Longwoods International and Miles Partnership](#), 57% of travelers say that a "wide range of charging stations for EVs that are easy to access and use" is extremely important (**Appendix 3**). The study also notes, "More than four out of five U.S. travelers cite concern over charging as a major challenge when considering an electric vehicle (EV) road trip." Specifically, the CMP strategy will describe and illustrate a plan to ensure there is sufficient charging infrastructure in place for Electric Vehicle (EV) travelers to complete their byway journey. It will also provide a strategy that identifies funding sources that could be used for implementation. As CMP implementation proceeds, digital and print consumer communications will be updated with information to attract more EV travelers while simultaneously reducing EV travel anxieties. As a result, the byway will offer a driving experience that helps tackle the climate crisis by reducing transportation-related greenhouse gasses.

**Equity** - The CMP will address Equity through inclusive stakeholder engagement and inclusive storytelling. Currently, the C&O Canal Byway tells the story of American expansionism through westward migration and there is very little recognition of the Indigenous People who once lived among its lands and waters. Additionally, the byway's eastern terminus is in one of Maryland's most diverse counties. To address these current inequities and avoid future inequities, the byway management team will work with and through the state's [seven ethnic commissions](#) and its [LGBTQ Commission](#) to ensure all stakeholders have a voice in the planning process and their stories are included in interpretive elements and consumer messaging as appropriate. The CMP will also identify visitor experiences and access for persons with intellectual and physical disabilities and for the people traveling with them. Gaps in these offerings will be identified along with a plan to provide additional access and services. As CMP implementation proceeds, digital and print consumer communications will be updated with new information. As a result, past and current historical and cultural inequities can be addressed through collaboration, authenticity and universal access

**Workforce Development, Job Quality and Wealth Creation** - The CMP will address workforce development, job quality and wealth creation through the development of a tourism development and marketing toolkit. According to a 2024 study entitled [Destination Promotion: A Catalyst for Community Vitality](#), "Talent is attracted to destinations that offer a good quality of life, and hence, talent attraction initiatives led by or in collaboration with destination organizations tend to have the most powerful impact" (**Appendix 4, p. 48**). As such, the byway management team will also produce a series of business development workshops that foster economic growth opportunities for businesses within the byway corridor. Additionally, the byway management team will determine if byway stakeholders are in need of customer service training and/or interpretive guide training so they can become independent tour guides for consumers and tour groups visiting the byway. As a result, the byway's stakeholder community increases its marketing savvy, improves its customer service, and accesses business development technical and funding assistance to strengthen economic competitiveness.

**Project Benefits** - The project will benefit the byway community and byway visitors while simultaneously protecting the byway corridor's intrinsic qualities that will support a future All-American Road nomination. The CMP planning process unto itself is a catalyst for providing the byway community its first ever cohesive and comprehensive approach to maximizing economic benefits from increased tourism. By addressing the 14 elements required in the CMP plus the three elements for All-American Road designation, the plan will offer solutions and strategies for advancing historic preservation, improving traffic flow, enhancing multimodal integration, coordinating visitor experiences, increasing environmental sustainability, ongoing community engagement and increasing economic vitality from domestic and international visitors. Byway travelers will benefit because they will be provided with comprehensive and cohesive information about how to best travel the byway corridor which includes the 236-mile byway, C&O Canal National Historical Park and Potomac River Water Trail. For the first-time ever, byway visitors will understand how driving the byway will connect them with world-class outdoor recreation, internationally significant history and unique local hospitality along the byway's main streets and in its towns. As the byway corridor's economy grows and the CMP is implemented, the byway community's efforts to protect and preserve its intrinsic qualities will also grow.

## IV. Project Readiness and Environmental Risk

### Technical Feasibility

The Project's overall technical feasibility is best addressed through examination of each of its components:

**Phase I:** These components will focus on the development and implementation of a community-based plan to maintain the scenic, historical, recreational, cultural, natural, and archaeological characteristics of a byway corridor while providing for accommodation of increased tourism and development of related amenities. The CMP will also address the additional three elements required for All-American Road nomination, an Electric Byway strategy and an interpretive plan supporting the project's Kiosk component.

**a) CMP Development:** The CMP component is Phase One because it will be the overall plan-of-action for implementation of Phase 2 components and other new projects born out of the planning process. The byway management team has significant knowledge of and experience with the development of CMPs and their implementation, including CMPs for the Historic National Road and Journey Through Hallowed Ground. Maryland Office of Tourism team members have participated in the development and implementation of all of Maryland's CMPs to date. As the fiduciary agent and coordinating lead, TCFC has significant experience in grants management and managing multi-jurisdictional, interdisciplinary consulting teams and projects. Each of the byway management team organizations have access to legal and regulatory compliance resources associated with their jurisdictions. Federal compliance, including NEPA, will be addressed during the planning process.

**CMP Cost and Timeframe -** The costs of the CMP and its two sub-plans are based on a cost per mile of \$2500 multiplied by the 236-mile length of the byway for a total cost of \$590,000. The CMP is projected to take 12 to 18 months to complete because of the length of the byway and the scope of work including two sub-plans focusing on interpretation and establishing the byway as Maryland's first "Electric Byway." Upon Notice to Proceed from the Maryland State Highway Administration (MD SHA), the byway management team will develop the CMPs Request for Proposal and Scope of Work documents. The byway management team estimates it will take three to five months to award the contract and 12 to 15 months to complete the CMP, including contingency time.

**b) Byway Marketing:** During Phase 1, the byway management team will simultaneously market the C&O Canal Byway to domestic and international visitors through advertising, public relations, trade and consumer shows and online information found on the byway website (projected launch date Feb. 2025). The annual marketing cost is \$40,000. The total cost for the 18 months it will take to complete the CMP equals \$60,000. All marketing costs are overmatch.

**Phase II:** These components will occur after the completion of the CMP and in an overall time frame of 2.5 years. The components below focus on the development/provision of tourist information to the public, including interpretive information about the byway and marketing as follows:

**a) Upright Orientation/Interpretive Kiosks -** Specifications for the locations, site analyses, design, fabrication, delivery and installation of 10-15 fixed, static two- and three-sided kiosks will be developed during the CMP's interpretive planning subproject. Kiosk content will include orientation information on the byway, specific place-based and thematic information based on the byway's intrinsic qualities and information related to a safe, comfortable, and meaningful multimodal experience. Kiosks will include maps and, in some instances, custom graphics that enhance storytelling. Because the installation of the kiosks will cause ground



disturbance, the byway management team will work with its consultant and MD SHA on NEPA, permitting and other required compliance including ADA. The \$190,000 cost for 10-15 kiosks is based on an estimate developed by the Maryland Office of Tourism's Certified Interpretive Planner and the [National Park Service's Guide to Developing Outdoor Interpretive Exhibits \(Appendix 5\)](#). Once installed, maintenance cost will be paid for by the byway management team. The kiosk component will begin after the CMP process concludes and its completion time frame is 12-18 months.

**b) Photography** - The scope of this component is to acquire new and diverse byway digital images for use across all of byway consumer and stakeholder communication platforms including but not limited to kiosks, advertising, public relations, digital and print content including the Printed Travel Guide and Map. The photographer's contract will be written to allow unlimited, perpetual video use by the byway management team and byway community. The \$60,000 cost is based on similar projects that TCFC has undertaken in the last three years. It also includes costs to hire the diverse talent needed to produce images with people experiencing the byway. The Photography component completion time frame is up to 12 months, and it will run concurrently with the Kiosk component.

**c) Video Content** - The scope of this component is to produce/deliver a series of short-, mid- and long-form videos that will be used across multiple digital platforms including social media, YouTube, Google Business Profiles and online. Footage will also be shown in Welcome Centers and Visitor Centers. The videographer's contract will be written to allow unlimited, perpetual video use by the byway management team and byway community. The \$100,000 cost is based on a similar project completed in 2024 by the Maryland Office of Tourism and it will cover all costs for the production and delivery of 20-30 videos representing the byway's intrinsic qualities. It also includes costs to hire the diverse talent needed to produce video with people experiencing the byway. The Video Content component completion time frame is up to 12 months, and it will run after the completion of the Kiosk and Photography components.

**d) Printed Travel Guide and Map** - The scope of this component is to produce and deliver a byway-wide Travel Guide and Map. Once delivered, the Travel Guide and Map will be used to fulfill advertising inquiries and distributed within the byway corridors and at Welcome/Visitor Centers. The Travel Guide and Map will be written and produced in one contract, and it will be printed under another contract. Content will represent the byway's intrinsic qualities, and it will use images from the Photography component, and it may use graphics created in the Kiosk component. The Travel Guide and Map will also be designed in a downloadable format for use on mobile devices. The \$150,000 cost is based on similar projects completed by TCFC and Maryland Office of Tourism and it will cover all costs for the production and delivery of 50,000 Guides and 100,000 maps, a three-year supply. When the supply is depleted, the cost for new editions will be funded by the byway management team. This component's completion time frame is up to 12 months, and it will run concurrently with the Video Content component.

**e) Byway Marketing:** During Phase 2, the byway management team will simultaneously market the C&O Canal byway to domestic and international visitors through advertising, public relations, trade and consumer shows and online information found on the byway website. The annual marketing cost is \$40,000. The total cost for the 30 months it will take to complete the Phase 2 components equals \$100,000. All marketing costs are overmatch.

**NOTE: Electric Byway Strategy\*** - Pending the outcome of the CMPs Electric Byway strategy, the byway management team will determine the feasibility of implementing the strategy wholly or in part during the project life cycle. The byway management team is currently researching how Oregon and Colorado have implemented their Electric Byway programs.

Oregon’s program includes itineraries built around charging locations whereas Colorado’s program focuses on infrastructure-based designations. A final decision will be made at the conclusion of the CMP process and any additional costs will be absorbed by the byway management team.

### Project Schedule:

Time Frame:	Work Breakdown:
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MOU Signed, Notice to Proceed received</li> <li>- CMP RFP issued/awarded</li> <li>- CMP Process begins</li> <li>- Byway Marketing initiated</li> </ul>
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CMP Process concludes</li> <li>- Kiosk RFP issued/awarded</li> <li>- Photography RFP issued/awarded/concludes</li> <li>- <a href="#">Electric Byway implementation begins*</a></li> <li>- Byway Marketing continues</li> </ul>
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kiosk component concludes</li> <li>- Video RFP issued/awarded</li> <li>- Printed Travel Guide and Map RFPs issued/awarded</li> <li>- <a href="#">Electric Byway implementation continues*</a></li> <li>- Byway Marketing continues</li> </ul>
Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Video component concludes</li> <li>- Printed Travel Guide and Map component concludes</li> <li>- <a href="#">Electric Byway implementation concludes*</a></li> <li>- Byway Marketing continues</li> </ul>
Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Allotted contingency time</li> </ul>

### Required Approvals

**i. Environmental Permits and Review** - All project components, except for the Kiosk component, do not require environmental permits or review. For the Kiosk component, the planning for environmental permits and review will be outlined in the CMP and implementation will begin as soon as it is feasible. It is anticipated that all kiosks will be located on county or municipal land that has had significant past ground disturbance and not on land within state rights-of-way or on federal public lands. The byway management team will work with MD SHA to determine the NEPA approach.

**ii. State and Local Approvals** - The project has broad public support at the local and state level. The project is aligned with missions of multiple state programs including Maryland Main Streets and Maryland Heritage Areas Authority. The Maryland Department of the Environment has expressed interest in working on the CMP’s Electric Byway Plan and the

Maryland Department of Natural Resources has expressed interest in improved integration between the byway, their public lands and outdoor recreation.

**iii. Federal Transportation Requirements Affecting State and Local Planning** - If funded, the byway management team will request the CMP be included in county and municipal comprehensive plans as well as other plans such as those from the three state certified heritage areas along the byway. The byway management team does not anticipate issues with this request because the Historic National Road and Journey Through Hallowed Ground CMPs were added to the plans.

**iii. Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies** - Overall project risk is low because there are no real estate acquisition costs and no uncommitted local match. Environmental uncertainties and procurement issues are minimal. The project's most significant risk is planning for byway management team member succession over the project's four- to five-year life cycle. To mitigate this risk, each byway management organization has assigned two team members to the project to help ensure continuity of operations.

## **V. Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities and FHWA Priority Selection Considerations**

The project described in this application is highly qualified because it will advance all four of the Merit Criteria as described in Section III. Many of the outcomes described in this application will be realized for the very first time. For examples:

- The byway community will have a cohesive and comprehensive plan for preserving, protecting and enhancing the byway corridor to help make it safer for multi-modal transportation and recreation.
- Proposed as Maryland's first Electric Byway, there will be new opportunities to reduce climate change and build EV infrastructure.
- Unserved and underserved populations will have a platform to bring social and economic equity to a region that has been influenced by the history of colonization for centuries.
- The C&O Canal Byway as a tourism attraction will help ignite opportunities for small business development, workforce development, entrepreneurial job quality and private sector wealth creation.

**Scalable Project Options** - This project's scalable funding options include:

- Only funding the \$472,00 for the CMP or
- Funding the CMP, Kiosks and Travel Guide/Map for a total of \$744,000.

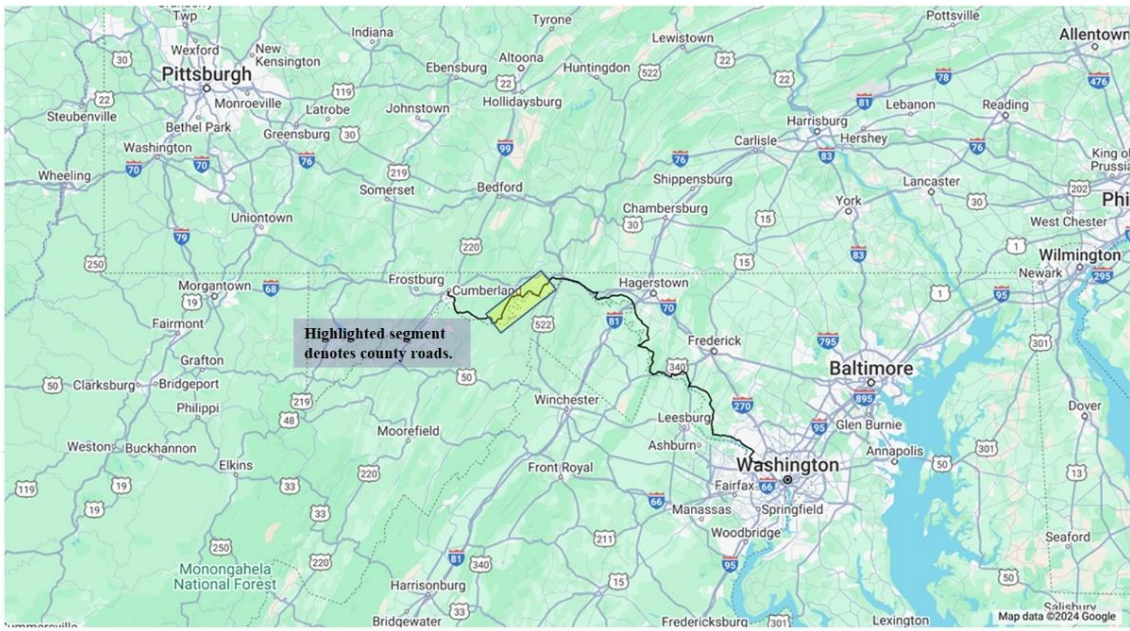
If scaled back, there will be significant detrimental effects because the pace of implementation would slow severely. Additionally, the Phase II collection of components is the backbone of meeting FHWA Administration Priorities and USDOT's Strategic Plan Goals of Equity, Workforce Development, Job Quality and Wealth Creation because it will help create consumer demand for the byway experience domestically and internationally. [Maryland Office of Tourism's FY24 Annual Report](#) indicates that every dollar invested in the Phase II will generate \$34 in revenue (**Appendix 6, p.3**).

## Appendix

### 1. Project Location: Route Map and Description

Description: MD SHA's geo-spatial route data was not available at the time of this submission and this written description has been prepared to provide a general understanding of the route and its roads. From the Washington DC/Maryland state line west to Cumberland, Maryland, the main byway route includes MD 189, MD 190, MD 117, MD 109, MD 28, US 15, MD 464, MD 478, MD 34, MD 65, MD 63, MD 68, MD 56, US 40, I-70, MD 144, Woodmont Road, Pearre Road, Zeigler Road, Oldtown Orleans Road, David Thomas Road and MD 51.

#### C&O Canal Maryland Scenic Byway Route



2. **Letters of Support and Funding Commitment** – These letters represent the support and commitment of 500+ businesses that are members and constituents of the five byway management team organizations.



December 10, 2024

Ms. Cheryl Ladota  
Assistant Division Chief  
Regional and Intermodal Planning Division  
MDOT State Highway Administration  
707 N. Calvert St.  
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Ms. Ladota:

I am writing in support of the Federal Highway Administration's National Scenic Byways Program grant application submitted by the Tourism Council of Frederick County (TCFC). The application requests \$872,000 in funding for the development and implementation of a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) for Maryland's Chesapeake & Ohio Canal State Scenic Byway. The application also requests funding to develop and provide tourist information to the public through the production and delivery of visual assets, travel guide/map and a series of outdoor kiosks.

This letter is confirmation that the Visit Frederick will provide \$29,500 in Matching Funds, \$40,000 in overmatching Marketing Costs, and \$27,250 share of Contingency Funds throughout the project lifecycle. We are looking forward to this partnership with the tourism offices from Allegany, Washington, Montgomery counties, and the Maryland Office of Tourism Development.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dave Ziedelis".

Dave Ziedelis  
Executive Director



December 11, 2024

Ms. Cheryl Ladota  
Assistant Division Chief  
Regional and Intermodal Planning Division  
MDOT State Highway Administration  
707 N. Calvert St.  
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Ms. Ladota:

I am writing in support of the Federal Highway Administration's National Scenic Byways Program grant application submitted by the Tourism Council of Frederick County (TCFC). The application requests \$872,000 in funding for the development and implementation of a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) for Maryland's Chesapeake & Ohio Canal State Scenic Byway. The application also requests funding to develop and provide tourist information to the public through the production and delivery of visual assets, travel guide/map and a series of outdoor kiosks.

This letter is confirmation that Visit Montgomery, MD will provide \$29,500 in Matching Funds, \$40,000 in overmatching Marketing Costs, and \$27,250 share of Contingency Funds throughout the project lifecycle. We are looking forward to this partnership with the tourism offices from Allegany, Washington, Frederick, Montgomery County, and the Maryland Office of Tourism Development.

Sincerely,



Kelly R. Groff, CDME  
President & CEO  
Visit Montgomery, MD

1801 Rockville Pike | Suite 320 | Rockville, Maryland 20852



Visit  
**HAGERSTOWN**  
& Washington County, Maryland

December 11, 2024

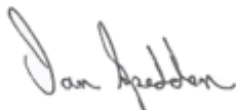
Ms. Cheryl Ladota  
Assistant Division Chief  
Regional and Intermodal Planning Division  
MDOT State Highway Administration  
707 N. Calvert St.  
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Ms. Ladota:

I am writing in support of the Federal Highway Administration's National Scenic Byways Program grant application submitted by the Tourism Council of Frederick County (TCFC). The application requests \$872,000 in funding for the development and implementation of a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) for Maryland's Chesapeake & Ohio Canal State Scenic Byway. The application also requests funding to develop and provide tourist information to the public through the production and delivery of visual assets, travel guide/map and a series of outdoor kiosks.

This letter is confirmation that the Visit Hagerstown will provide \$29,500 in Matching Funds, \$40,000 in overmatching Marketing Costs, and \$27,250 share of Contingency Funds throughout the project lifecycle. We are looking forward to this partnership with the tourism offices from Allegany, Frederick, Montgomery counties, and the Maryland Office of Tourism Development.

Sincerely,



Dan Spedden, President

**Hagerstown-Washington County Convention & Visitors Bureau**  
16 Public Square, Hagerstown MD 21740 | 301-791-3246 | [www.visithagerstown.com](http://www.visithagerstown.com)



Ms. Cheryl Ladota  
Assistant Division Chief  
Regional and Intermodal Planning Division  
MDOT State Highway Administration  
707 N. Calvert St.  
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Ms. Ladota:

I am writing in support of the Federal Highway Administration's National Scenic Byways Program grant application submitted by the Tourism Council of Frederick County (TCFC). The application requests \$872,000 in funding for the development and implementation of a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) for Maryland's Chesapeake & Ohio Canal State Scenic Byway. The application also requests funding to develop and provide tourist information to the public through the production and delivery of visual assets, travel guide/map and a series of outdoor kiosks.

This letter is confirmation that Allegany County Tourism will provide \$29,500 in Matching Funds, \$40,000 in overmatching Marketing Costs, and \$27,250 share of Contingency Funds throughout the project lifecycle. We are looking forward to this partnership with the tourism offices from Washington, Frederick, Montgomery counties, and the Maryland Office of Tourism Development.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashli Workman".

Ashli Workman  
Director of Tourism  
Allegany County, the Mountain Side of Maryland

ALLEGANY COUNTY TOURISM, 701 KELLY ROAD, CUMBERLAND, MD 21502



301.777.5132



[mdmountainside.com](http://mdmountainside.com)





Wes Moore | Governor  
 Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor  
 Kevin A. Anderson | Secretary of Commerce  
 Signe Pringle | Deputy Secretary of Commerce

December 3, 2024

Ms. Cheryl Ladota  
 Assistant Division Chief  
 Regional and Intermodal Planning Division  
 MDOT State Highway Administration  
 707 N. Calvert St.  
 Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Ms. Ladota:

I am writing in support of the Federal Highway Administration's National Scenic Byways Program grant application submitted by the Tourism Council of Frederick County (TCFC). The application requests \$872,000 in funding for the development and implementation of a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) for Maryland's Chesapeake & Ohio Canal State Scenic Byway. The application also requests funding to develop and provide tourist information to the public through the production and delivery of visual assets, travel guide/map and a series of outdoor kiosks.

This letter is confirmation that the Maryland Office of Tourism Development (OTD) will provide \$100,000 in cash match and technical assistance throughout the project lifecycle. OTD is well-versed in collaborations to develop CMPs and we are looking forward to this partnership with the tourism offices from Allegany, Washington, Frederick, Montgomery counties. OTD has awarded the TCFC multiple state and federal pass-through grants, and we acknowledge their expertise in project management and fiduciary matters.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me directly at [liz.fitzsimmons@maryland.gov](mailto:liz.fitzsimmons@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

Liz Fitzsimmons  
 Managing Director  
 Office of Tourism and Film

Cc: Marci Wolff Ross, Senior Assistant Director, OTD  
 Kat Evans, Chief Fiscal Officer, Tourism, Film and Arts  
 Becky Bickerton, Deputy Director, TCFC

3. [2024 EV Travel Research Study from Longwoods International and Miles Partnership](#)
4. [Destination Promotion: A Catalyst for Community Vitality](#) (p.48)
5. [National Park Service's Guide to Developing Outdoor Interpretive Exhibits](#)
6. [Maryland Office of Tourism research indicates that every dollar invested in the Phase II will generate \\$34 in revenue](#) (p.3)