Interpretive Plan for the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District

Project No. GA-2255-03-016

Prepared for the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation

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November 2008
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for the
Shenandoah Valley Battlefields
National Historic District
Project No. GA-2255-03-016

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Interpretive Plan Goal

This Interpretive Plan is designed to provide guidance and direction to the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation and its partners on creative and effective means to interpret and coordinate the array of Civil War sites and stories in the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District.

The Plan

The Plan is divided into two parts. Part I, “Context for Interpretation,” discusses the background for the development of the Plan, reviews the existing interpretive sites and partnering organizations in the Valley, lays out the proposed themes of the Plan, and looks at the different media that could be used for interpretation. Part II, “Plan for Interpretation,” details the Plan and its implementation. The Plan also includes two appendices that review the Civil War sites and proposed designated Historic Roadways in the Valley.

PART I: CONTEXT FOR INTERPRETATION

Chapter 1 – Vision, Purpose and Background

At the time of the Civil War, the Shenandoah Valley was a major transportation route, and a region so agriculturally prosperous that it was known as the “Breadbasket of the Confederacy”. Its strategic importance made it the scene of bitter conflict – resulting in more than 300 military actions – with devastating impact upon the lives of its inhabitants. The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District was created by Congress in 1996 to help preserve ten of the Valley’s battlefields and to create programs that would encourage the telling of the region’s Civil War stories, both military and civilian.

The National Historic District encompasses an eight-county area extending from Frederick and Clarke Counties in the north to Augusta and Highland Counties in the south. The purposes of the District are to: preserve, conserve, and interpret the legacy of the Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley; to recognize and interpret important events and locations representing key battles in the Valley; to recognize and interpret the effects of the war on the civilian population of the Valley; and to create partnerships to preserve and interpret the battlefields and related sites associated with the war in the Valley.
An extensive planning process was undertaken through a local, State, and Federal partnership culminating in the publication of a Management Plan and an Implementation Plan for the National Historic District in 2000.

The Management Plan called for the creation of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation as the “management entity” or lead managing partner for the District as directed by the enabling legislation. The Battlefields Foundation works closely with an array of partnering organizations to create programs to implement the Management Plan and the legislation, coordinate and sponsor projects, preserve battlefields, and secure funding from outside the Valley to support these initiatives.

The Management Plan also called for the District to be organized into five geographic clusters. Each cluster includes one or more battlefields, towns, sites, and landscapes that relate to the District. The plan envisions that a Civil War orientation center will be created in each cluster.

This Interpretive Plan, a recommended action from the Management Plan, is intended to provide guidance and direction to the Battlefields Foundation and its partners on creative and effective means to interpret and coordinate the array of sites and stories in the District.

Following the creation of the Management Plan, the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation established an Interpretation and Education Committee to focus on the responsibilities given it by the plan. Following that mandate, the I&E Committee prepared a set of interpretive guidelines for the District. The basic concepts and intentions of those guidelines are the foundation upon which this Interpretive Plan is based.

Implementation of the Interpretive Plan is targeted to the Sesquicentennial Commemoration of the American Civil War in 2011-2015. By the beginning of the Sesquicentennial, the events and experiences of the Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley should be comprehensively interpreted at an array of authentic historic sites and landscapes, as will the culture and heritage of the Valley – and by 2015, the Valley’s interpretive presentation should be fully formed and the region should be renowned for its remarkable “Shenandoah Valley experience.”

Chapter 2 – Existing Interpretation in the Shenandoah Valley

Regional Attractions

There are five regional visitor attractions in the National Historic District that can serve as anchor destinations for interpreting the Valley’s Civil War story. These include:

- Museum of the Shenandoah Valley (Winchester)
- Belle Grove Plantation (Middletown)
- Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park (Middletown/Strasburg),
- New Market Battlefield State Historical Park/Hall of Valor Museum
- Frontier Culture Museum (Staunton)
Interpretive Attractions

The National Historic District is also home to numerous interpretive attractions of local and regional interest that tell stories related to the Civil War or broader themes of the Valley’s heritage. The interpretive attractions in the District include:

- Winchester Cluster: Abram’s Delight, Stonewall Jackson’s Headquarters Museum, the Old Court House Civil War Museum, George Washington’s Office Museum, the Newtown History Center, and the Burwell-Morgan Mill.
- Rockingham Cluster: Hardesty-Higgins House and Valley Turnpike Museum, the Virginia Quilt Museum, the Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center, the Miller-Kite House, the Port Republic Museum, the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society, and the Daniel Harrison House.
- McDowell Cluster: Highland Museum and Heritage Center
- Staunton/Waynesboro/Augusta County: Woodrow Wilson Birthplace, and the Plum House Museum.

Battlefields

Below is a list of battlefields and large battlefield areas that have been preserved or which currently have a high level of interpretation:

- Winchester Cluster – Pritchard-Grim Farm, Rose Hill, Fort Collier Civil War Center, Third Winchester battlefield.
- Signal Knob Cluster – Cedar Creek battlefield, Fisher’s Hill battlefield, Front Royal battlefield
- New Market Cluster – New Market Battlefield State Historic Park
- Rockingham Cluster – Cross Keys battlefield, Port Republic battlefield
- McDowell Cluster – McDowell battlefield

Battlefield Sites

The Valley’s battlefields are divided into the primary battlefields, which are key to the District’s mission, and related battlefield sites. Some of these related sites are currently interpreted by Civil War Trails wayside exhibits.

Virginia Civil War Trails Program

The Virginia Civil War Trails program establishes interpreted driving routes throughout the state. Wayside exhibits are installed at the sites where interpreted events occurred. The Trails program is a key partner in the National Historic District’s interpretive programs.
Battlefield and Other Civil War Related Sites

Battlefield sites and other Civil War related sites have been identified throughout the National Historic District. Interpretive plans and programs to be developed for battlefields, byways, and clusters will determine which sites are appropriate for interpretation. Sites include:

- Winchester Cluster: First Winchester battlefield, Second Winchester battlefield, Stephenson’s Depot, Star Fort, Cool Spring battlefield, Jordan Springs
- Signal Knob Cluster: Banks Fort, Signal Knob, Tom’s Brook battlefield, Overall battlefield
- New Market Cluster: Meems Bottom, Rude’s Hill
- Rockingham Cluster: Turner Ashby Monument, Lacey Springs
- McDowell Cluster: Fort Johnson, Camp Allegheny, Monterey
- Other Battlefield Site: Piedmont battlefield

Marketing Plan Survey and Audiences

A survey conducted during the development of the Marketing Plan for the National Historic District showed that Valley visitors whose experience met or exceeded their expectations were more likely to have experienced the Valley’s historical and cultural resources. Visitors to the Shenandoah Valley usually fit into one or more audience categories:

- Heritage Travelers
- Civil War Enthusiasts
- Families
- Friends and Families: Out-of-town Guests
- Group Tours
- School-age Students

Chapter 3 – Interpretive Themes

A primary goal of this Plan is to establish a framework of interpretive themes that can be used to present stories to visitors at sites throughout the National Historic District. The proposed framework is intended to be broad enough and comprehensive enough to embrace all of the Civil War related attractions and sites within the District. The Plan adopts and develops the three primary themes that were identified by the Management Plan: the Valley (context for war), the Campaigns, and the Battles. These themes provide the basic structure for interpretation.

The Shenandoah Valley – Stories of its Places and People During the Civil War

The Shenandoah Valley is unique in terms of its geography, peoples, and culture. Today, the Valley retains its distinct identity and resonates with the heritage and stories of its past.

The Valley: Context for War – The Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley was shaped by its landscape and its people. Understanding the war in the Valley means
understanding a world characterized by cultural diversity, strong religious conviction, vibrant small communities, and agricultural prosperity.

**The Strategic Valley** – When war came, the Valley played a critical role in the strategies of both armies. Confederate activity in the Valley drew Union troops away from Richmond; mountains, rivers, roads, and other geographical features created tactical opportunities for both armies; and the Valley's agriculture prosperity made it vital to the Southern war effort.

**The Valley: Civilian Experience** – The Civil War caused tremendous disruption of civilian life in the Valley, testing loyalties and beliefs, destroying families and friendships, and devastating and despoiling the countryside.

**The Valley: The War's Presence Today** – Today, the Valley's landscape still evokes that of the 1860s. Its mountains, fields, towns, and battlefields are resources that can be used to illustrate the Valley's history and build support for continued preservation.

**The Campaigns - Strategies and Personalities**

The Valley served as a stage for some of the decisive events and significant leaders of the Civil War:

**Jackson's Valley Campaign: 1862** – Stonewall Jackson's tactics demonstrated how a numerically inferior army can defeat stronger opponents with speed, surprise, deception, intelligent use of terrain, and a willingness to take risks.

**Lee's Gettysburg Campaign: 1863** – The Valley served as a natural corridor for Lee's invasion of the North – and a safe haven for retreat after defeat at Gettysburg.

**Lynchburg Campaign: Spring 1864** – As Union Generals Sigel and then Hunter moved through the Valley in the spring of 1864, the war stood at a crossroads. The Confederate defeats of both incursions frustrated the North and gave relief to the South.

**Early's Maryland Campaign: Summer 1864** – After driving Hunter's army from the Valley, General Jubal Early's Confederate force made a daring march from Lynchburg down the Valley and all the way to the defenses of Washington.

**Sheridan's Shenandoah Campaign: Fall 1864** – Union General Philip Sheridan launched a successful campaign against Early's weakened army, effectively ending the fighting in the Valley. “The Burning” damaged Confederate morale and contributed to the reelection of President Lincoln in November 1864.

**Nature of the Fighting** – Warfare in the Valley provided a preview of 20th century warfare – rapid movement of troops, guerrilla raids, wholesale destruction of private property, and disruption of civilian life. In addition, armies began to prepare for the aftermath of battle – the advent of mobile military hospitals, supplies, and triage operations.
Interpretive Plan Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District

The Battles - Parts of the Whole

Each battle within the District possesses its own significance within the greater Civil War, and each has a different story to tell about strategy, struggle, combat, combatants, and victims.

- First Kernstown – March 23, 1862
- McDowell – May 8, 1862
- Front Royal – May 23, 1862
- First Winchester – May 25, 1862
- Cross Keys – June 8, 1862
- Port Republic – June 9, 1862
- Second Winchester – June 13-15, 1863
- New Market – May 15, 1864
- Cool Spring – July 17-18, 1864
- Second Kernstown – July 24, 1864
- Third Winchester – September 19, 1864
- Fisher’s Hill – September 21-22, 1864
- Tom’s Brook – October 9, 1864
- Cedar Creek – October 19, 1864

Interpretive Connections

The list of themes provides a menu from which sites might select and structure their interpretative materials and link their site to others. The Interpretive Plan includes two matrices that show the themes that are most appropriate to specific attractions and battlefields. The interpretive plans of participating sites should identify which themes they wish to concentrate upon. Together, attractions with shared themes should coordinate which aspects of the themes they can best tell and how they will make reference to each other. The District’s marketing and interpretive materials should clearly convey the interpretive connections.

Chapter 4 – Interpretive Media

A wide range of media can be used to interpret the sites and resources of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District. A mix of traditional media and modern technologies will provide the widest range of accessibility and flexibility for visitors.

Websites afford quick accessibility to information. Through well-considered links, visitors could explore the stories of sites they can visit in the Valley at whatever level of detail they choose. Websites can provide historical and interpretive information, assist with pre-visit planning, and even provide curriculum-related content for educators.

Podcasts offer a way for visitors to access a wide variety of information while at home or away. Podcasts can provide prerecorded tours at battlefields or larger individual sites, and can also supplement interpretive signage, kiosks, printed brochures, walking or driving tours, and guidebooks.

Published materials can be used on site, while visitors are traveling, and while they are at home. Examples of published materials could include brochures (District-wide,
cluster-based, or site-specific), battlefield driving tours, guidebooks (District-wide, site-specific, or targeted for educators), maps, and a “passport” program.

**Audio tours** are narrated tours keyed to printed materials, waysides, or significant landscape or landmark elements. Audio tours may be used for driving tours, walking tours, or indoor exhibits.

**Static Interpretive Exhibits** can communicate information without the necessity of a guide. Static exhibits can include text and relevant graphic information such as maps, drawings, or photos. Examples include indoor exhibits, artifact displays, informational kiosks, placemakers, landscape elements, monuments, public art, viewfinders, and interpretive wayside panels.

**Interactive Exhibits** can adapt to the user’s level of interest, from general knowledge to more in-depth study. Examples include touchscreen presentations, motion detector presentations, push button presentations, continuous loop presentations, and incorporated audio and video elements.

**Guide-Assisted Interpretation** involves the audience in an observational and participatory role. Types of guide-assisted experiences include guided tours, living history demonstrations, reenactments, object theatres, and live theatres.

**PART II: THE PLAN FOR INTERPRETATION**

*Chapter 5 – District-Wide Interpretive Program*

This Interpretive Plan presents a structure for integrating and coordinating interpretation of the National Historic District. Interpretation within the District should focus upon the Valley’s Civil War-related history and culture, which can be experienced by visitors on the region’s landscapes and proposed designated Historic Roadways, in its historic towns, on its battlefields, and at its visitor attractions. This is a Valley-wide presentation that links places on the landscape where stories related to the interpretive themes for the National Historic District can be told.

**Historic Roadways and Valley Towns**

A network of designated Historic Roadways and wayside exhibits should be developed. Partners should consider seeking federal byway status for the Valley Turnpike and state byway status for other key historic roadways. The Battlefields Foundation should encourage and collaborate with Valley towns’ efforts to interpret each town’s unique part of the region’s Civil War story.

**A System of Historic Roadway Exhibits** – Additional wayside exhibits should be planned as part of the expansion of the Civil War Trails presence within the District. A plan should be created for coordinated interpretive exhibits along the Historic Roadways. A driving guide map of the National Historic District should be created.

**Historic Valley Cities and Towns** – The Valley’s towns and cities are places where the civilian perspective of the war can be told. The Battlefields Foundation and its...
partners should encourage and support the efforts of Valley towns to preserve and enhance their historic character.

**Civil War Clusters and Orientation Centers**

The National Historic District is divided into five groupings of battlefields, historic sites, towns and other resources called clusters. The five clusters are Winchester, Signal Knob, New Market, Rockingham, and McDowell. Each of the District's battlefields is associated with a particular cluster, as are most of the visitor attractions. Each cluster is closely associated with one or more historic towns. The Battlefields Foundation should continue to foster cluster-based partnerships as a means of encouraging more coordinated interpretation, collaborative events and activities, and promoting tourism to Civil War sites.

**The Five Clusters** – Each cluster should develop a visitor services plan with its historic town at its core. Clusters should facilitate cooperation among the various battlefields and related historic sites in each area, encourage cooperative interpretation of the area’s Civil War story, and help ensure adequate visitor facilities in each area. Each cluster should have a vision for its overall character and how it wants the public to experience the Civil War sites and battlefields in its area. Each cluster group should take responsibility for organization and enhancement of the visitor experience within its portion of the Valley.

**Civil War Orientation Centers** – Each cluster should establish a Civil War orientation center to guide visitors through the District. The orientation centers are envisioned as starting points for visitors, briefly interpreting the themes and stories of the particular cluster, but with the primary purpose of encouraging visitors to get out into the landscape to experience first-hand the battlefields, historic towns, and other sites within the cluster. Each center should also encourage visitors to explore other areas of the District.

**Battlefields**

An interpretive plan should be developed for each battlefield, coordinating the efforts of multiple partners. The plans should vary according to each battlefield's unique story and landscape, using a variety of interpretive tools appropriate for each. Interpretation should be engaging, illuminating, inspiring, and prompt visitors to seek further information about these pivotal events in American history.

**Battlefield Visitor Experience** – In preparing interpretive plans, partnering entities should determine the type of interpretive experience or experiences that are appropriate to the battlefield. In general, experiences may be classified in terms of full-service, self guided, remote, and low integrity interpretive experiences. The guidelines in the Plan should be used to help assess the appropriateness of the experiences to the portions of the battlefield under consideration.

**Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Battlefield Information** – Each battlefield should have high quality interpretive and visitor information available to visitors as they plan their trips. Websites should provide basic but comprehensive information about the battles, and
should be a primary tool for guiding visitors to more detailed information. Post-trip information should include research guidance for visitors who want to learn more, and who might be interested in a return visit.

**Interpretive Publications** – Interpretive materials should be developed for each battlefield. Publications might include a District-wide guidebook, battlefield interpretive publications, campaign and battlefield guidebooks, and bibliographies for further reading.

**Battlefield Driving Tours** – Because of the size of the battlefields, driving tours are a primary means of interpreting battlefields within the National Historic District. Each battlefield should have a driving tour as a primary component of its interpretive program.

**Battlefield Walking Tours** – Walking tours on publicly accessible battlefields should be at the heart of the interpretive presentation. Visitors should be encouraged to go out into the landscape and see the battlefields first-hand.

**Battlefield Landscapes** – The battlefield landscape itself is the primary interpretive exhibit. Each battlefield within the National Historic District should be interpreted in its entirety.

**Battlefield Exhibits** – To help the landscape come alive, interpretive content is necessary. Orientation exhibits, publications, driving tours, and electronic media will provide an overview of battlefield significance and events.

**Civil War Related Interpretive Sites**

The Shenandoah Valley’s regional and local attractions are critical to the interpretation of the Civil War in the Valley. For the most part, many of the Valley’s battlefields are at present only minimally interpreted. Regional and local interpretive attractions can fill out the visitor experience in the Valley and set the stage for visits to the more passively interpreted battlefields and battlefield sites.

**Regional Attractions** – The Valley’s regional attractions are anchor destinations interpreting the Valley and the National Historic District. The Battlefields Foundation and the regional attractions should develop close partnerships to coordinate their interpretation, mentor and assist smaller sites, and make the National Historic District a major visitor destination.

**Local Interpretive Attractions** – The National Historic District is home to a wide variety of local interpretive attractions that present aspects of Valley history and culture to residents and visitors. The variety and quality of the local interpretive attractions are particular strengths of the Valley’s interpretive presentation. District programs should be crafted to attract the participation of these attractions, and the attractions should coordinate their interpretive themes and stories with the themes of this Interpretive Plan.
Chapter 6 – Implementation

Implementing this Plan will require setting clear goals and establishing a list of priority projects. The overriding goal is to have a baseline of interpretive material and content available at the beginning of the Civil War Sesquicentennial in 2011, then expanding the interpreted sites, materials, and activities throughout the four years of the Sesquicentennial – and beyond.

Priorities and Phasing

The Battlefields Foundation will be responsible for disseminating the Plan, promoting the Plan, and engaging interpretive partners to implement the Plan.

Website and Publications – A high priority should be given to the expansion and improvement of the National Historic District’s website. The District-wide guidebook should echo the structure and content of the website.

Historic Roadways – A historic roadways program should be a key priority that will create an on-the-ground organizational structure for interpreting the importance of the Shenandoah Valley to the war effort.

Clusters – The Battlefields Foundation should encourage the partner sites that have interpretive and/or geographic relationships to begin collaborative efforts using the Plan’s themes and topics.

Battlefield Plans – The I&E Committee should strategically assess the preparedness of the public-trust owners and surrounding communities to develop an interpretive plan and/or program for each battlefield.

Civil War Related Attractions – Existing attractions should participate in cluster groups, work with each other to create mutually supportive interpretive programs, and undertake collaborative marketing efforts.

Role of Partners

Interpretation within the Valley will be undertaken primarily by individual historic sites and attractions. Partnering sites should engage with the Foundation, cluster groups, and other attractions to help shape and implement a Valley-wide vision for interpretation and visitor experience. It is hoped that partnering sites will use this Interpretive Plan to help guide their interpretive programs and to coordinate their story telling other partnering sites.

Role of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation

The Foundation must help coordinate and support interpretation at the Valley’s battlefields, clusters, attractions, and sites. The Foundation should have well trained staff and volunteers to provide technical assistance and leadership to implement this plan. And the Foundation should use its Implementation Grants program to encourage participation in the vision outlined in this Plan.
Board of Trustees – The Board of Trustees of the Battlefields Foundation will be responsible for adopting this plan, approving the implementation steps developed by the I&E Committee, approving follow-up programs and projects, and ensuring that substantial funding is available for the Implementation Grants program.

Interpretation and Education Committee – The Battlefields Foundation’s Interpretation and Education (I&E) Committee is charged with creation, development, and oversight of the Foundation’s interpretive programs and initiatives.

Historical Advisors – A panel of Historical Advisors should be established to review, comment and advise the Committee and partners as the need arises.

Staff – The Foundation’s staff will work with partnering organizations, cluster groups, related sites, and attractions to develop coordinated, high-quality interpretative programs throughout the Valley.

Protection of Battlefield Resources for Interpretation – The Battlefields Foundation will continue to work through its resource protection program to encourage localities to include in their comprehensive plans protection measures for the battlefields and interpretive sites in their areas.

APPENDICES

Appendix A inventories the Civil War attractions in the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District, including both regional attractions and interpretive attractions.

Appendix B discusses the history, current status, and recommendations for historic roadway routes.

A map of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District appears inside the back cover of this plan.
CHAPTER 1

VISION, PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The Shenandoah Valley of Virginia is a distinctive geographical region that has played a fascinating role in the unfolding of our nation's history. Settled by Europeans in the early eighteenth century, the Valley was a natural migratory route from the Pennsylvania heartland southward through the valley of the Shenandoah River formed by the Blue Ridge and Appalachian Mountains. It was a gateway to the south and west.

The people who came to the Valley represented a diverse cross section of cultural groups, and the character of their farms and settlements reflected that strong cultural diversity. By the time of the Civil War, the Valley was agriculturally prosperous, and the people of the Valley identified strongly with their region.

The Shenandoah Valley became a battleground contested by both Union and Confederate armies with devastating impacts upon the lives of its inhabitants. More than 300 military actions took place in the Valley during the four years of the war, 15 of which are classified as full-scale battles by the National Park Service.

The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District was created by Congress to help preserve ten of these battlefields and to create programs that would encourage the telling of the region's Civil War stories, both military and civilian. This Interpretive Plan is intended to assist in that effort. While the Civil War is the main focus of the National Historic District, the broader history and culture of the Valley are essential to an understanding of the significance of the events that occurred here. For the District, the Civil War is the lens through which the broader stories of the Valley can be viewed.

The purpose of this Interpretive Plan is to provide a framework for telling the stories of the Valley throughout the National Historic District. These stories will be told by a large number of independent interpretive partners. While these partners will tell their own stories in their own ways, the Interpretive Plan will facilitate coordination of this storytelling with respect to the Valley as a whole. The Interpretive Plan provides both a thematic framework and a presentation structure into which individual sites may find a place, coordinating their individual stories and presentations with those of other sites. The Interpretive Plan is intended to be flexible and to promote change and phased development over time. A primary purpose of the Interpretive Plan is to facilitate the District's various partners' efforts to create a high-quality interpretive visitor experience that is educational, meaningful, consistent, and engaging.

1.1 SHENANDOAH VALLEY BATTLEFIELDS NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District was created by Congress through passage of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District and
Commission Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-333, Section 606). The National Historic District encompasses an eight-county area extending from Frederick and Clarke counties at the north end of the Valley to Augusta and Highland Counties on the south and includes the region that was the heart of major military action in the Valley during the Civil War. The purposes of the District, as stated in subsection C of the Act, are to:

1. preserve, conserve, and interpret the legacy of the Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley;
2. recognize and interpret important events and geographic locations representing key Civil War battles in the Shenandoah Valley, including those battlefields associated with the Thomas J. (Stonewall) Jackson campaign of 1862 and the decisive campaigns of 1864;
3. recognize and interpret the effect of the Civil War on the civilian population of the Shenandoah Valley during the war and postwar reconstruction period; and
4. create partnerships among Federal, State, and local governments, the regional entities of such governments, and the private sector to preserve, conserve, enhance, and interpret the nationally significant battlefields and related sites associated with the Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley.

An extensive planning process was undertaken through a local, State, and Federal partnership culminating in the publication of a Management Plan and an Implementation Plan for the National Historic District in 2000, as required by the Act that created the District. As a result of the adoption of the Management Plan by the Secretary of the Interior, the District was designated a national heritage area. National heritage areas are landscapes recognized by Congress for their unique contributions to the American experience and are developed around themes that demonstrate their influence upon the culture and history of that region and the country.

The Management Plan also called for the creation of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation as the “management entity” or lead managing partner for the District as called for in the enabling legislation. The Battlefields Foundation, a private non-profit organization, works closely with an array of partnering organizations. It creates programs to implement the Management Plan and the legislation, coordinates and sponsors projects, preserves battlefields, and secures funding from outside the Valley to support these initiatives.

The effectiveness of the National Historic District is dependent upon the active participation of a network of local, regional, and national partners. Partnership projects are undertaken in the areas of resource protection, interpretation and education, and visitor services and tourism. The Battlefields Foundation operates an Implementation Grants Program that helps to fund community-based organizations with projects that implement the recommendations in the Management Plan, thus giving these partners a direct role in the Plan.

This Interpretive Plan, a recommended action from the Management Plan, is intended to provide guidance and direction to the Battlefields Foundation and its partners on creative and effective means to interpret and coordinate the array of sites and stories in the Valley for the benefit of the public.
1.2 MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANS: A COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH

The Management Plan for the National Historic District was completed in September 2000 and approved by the Secretary of Interior the following month. Its companion Implementation Plan was completed two months later. The Management Plan outlines a broad-based program:

- to preserve the District’s historical character, to protect and interpret the Civil War battlefields and related resources in the District, and to increase public awareness of the War’s legacy in the Valley (Management Plan, Executive Summary).

The Management Plan includes policy-level guidance on battlefield and resource protection, interpretation, visitor services, management, and implementation. The Implementation Plan was prepared to supplement and amplify the concepts outlined in the Management Plan and to outline specific actions planned to be undertaken during the first five to seven years of the program.

The District’s legislation calls for the identification of visitor points of contact. To accomplish this, the Management Plan calls for the District to be organized into five geographic clusters associated with ten major battles that occurred in the Valley. Each cluster includes one or more battlefields, nearby towns, sites, and landscapes that relate to the purposes of the District. The Management Plan envisions that a Civil War orientation center will be created in each cluster to introduce visitors to the themes and stories of the cluster area and the District and to encourage visitors to explore the battlefields and other sites that tell these stories.

The clusters’ community-based approach to accomplish the purposes of the National Historic District is dependent upon local initiative and participation; emphasizes local hospitality; and showcases the character, personalities, stories, and attractions of each individual cluster and the entire District. Each cluster is structured in the way its participants choose, while the Battlefields Foundation encourages a baseline level of consistency that knits the clusters and District together. District-wide transportation and interpretive linkages, as called for in the enabling legislation, will serve to weave the clusters together and connect remote sites, towns and landscapes that are not directly related to the ten primary battlefields. Recommendations and directives contained in the Management and Implementation Plans are reflected in this District-wide Interpretive Plan.

1.3 INTERPRETIVE PLAN GUIDELINES, 2001

Following its creation in 2000, the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation established an Interpretation and Education Committee to focus on the responsibilities given it in the Management Plan. One of the first activities of the “I&E” Committee was to prepare a set of interpretive guidelines for the District. Completed in October 2001, the guidelines addressed many key issues, ideas, and themes relative to interpretation of the Civil War in the Valley. Prepared by individuals with an in-depth knowledge of the history and significance of the Valley, the guidelines have provided important baseline...
directives for programs and projects that interpret and coordinate the partners’ actions as well as those of the Battlefields Foundation. The guidelines were intended to be amplified at a later date when the Battlefields Foundation was ready to prepare a comprehensive District-wide Interpretive Plan. The basic concepts and intentions of the guidelines are reflected in this Plan; they are the foundation upon which this Plan is based.

The guidelines describe ways in which Valley-wide interpretation can be provided to visitors, including the creation of standards of professionalism for attractions within the District. The guidelines place particular emphasis on the need to respect local expertise and prerogatives, encourage communities to be stewards of their own histories and stories and support those efforts, and for the Battlefields Foundation staff to provide leadership and technical support to local and regional partners.

1.4 Goals for Providing a Meaningful Interpretive Experience

The Civil War is commonly recognized as one of the pivotal events in American history. Interpretation of the battlefields and sites must be intellectually stimulating, emotionally satisfying, and encourage consideration of their relevance to our contemporary world. These considerations as well as visitor enjoyment and comfort were outlined in the District’s Management Plan as a series of goals (pages 72-73):

- Wayfinding: Visitors will be provided with a clear, easily followed guide to attractions, resources, and activities throughout the District. This guide will be available both within and outside of the immediate District.
- Interpretation: Interpretation will place the Valley into geographic and historical context and explore all themes. Both military and civilian aspects of the Valley story will be told.
- Interpretive techniques: Interpretive media will be designed to acknowledge different learning styles, with a variety of techniques and flexibility in scheduling. Visitors will be encouraged to experience the Valley through all their senses.
- Immediacy: The personal stories of soldier and civilian will be told through a variety of forums, from media to reenactors. Through these stories visitors will experience the personal toll of war.
- Points of view: Visitors will be offered multiple perspectives—soldier and civilian, Union and Confederate, commander and conscript—in order to understand the true human scope of the War.
- Impact: Visitors will leave understanding, and able to explain to others, the Valley’s historical significance and the importance of protecting the lands and resources found here.
- Quality: Visitors will expect and receive high-quality interpretation at District sites. The Foundation will work with partners to define and meet guidelines in offerings at orientation centers; design, install, and maintain a centralized sign program; and provide interpretive media that address context or fill interpretive gaps.
- Geography: Visitors will see (and visit) landscapes that affected military tactics and contributed to pre- and post-war wealth and prosperity. They will travel the same routes once marched by armies, see the Valley’s value as a natural highway protected by mountain passes, and understand the military objectives sought at
the ends of this highway (Washington, D.C., and the east-west railroads of the North and South) and over the mountains (Richmond). They will be encouraged to visit military and civilian sites and will see some portions of the Valley (both battlefield and civilian resources) as they appeared during the War. They will see the connection between the Valley's infrastructure (roads, towns, fields, barns, etc.) and the military struggle.

- **Commemoration:** Visitors will be offered multiple opportunities to contemplate the meaning of the Valley campaigns and of the larger Civil War itself. Where it is not possible to recreate settings, visitors will find respectful commemoration.
- **Opportunities to express support:** Visitors will be invited to contribute to the preservation effort through financial support, membership in protection and preservation groups, and so forth.
- **Variety:** Visitors will be encouraged to enjoy the Valley's many present-day attractions as well as its historical resources. Good food, quaint inns, scenic rivers and trails—all will help foster a positive experience that in turn leads to continued support for preservation, commemoration, and interpretation.

These goals will serve as a guide for the Interpretive Plan and its implementation.

### 1.5 Interpretive Vision and Approach

As directed in the 1996 congressional legislation, the Civil War is the unifying theme of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District. Interpretation of the District will focus on its historic sites: battlefields, related sites, landscapes, geographic features, towns, structures, and historic transportation routes. This resource-based interpretation will be the underlying approach to telling the Valley's stories to the public. Visitor attractions are strongly encouraged to coordinate their interpretation and programming, both within their battlefield clusters and Valley-wide, using the National Historic District's interpretive themes.

#### 1.5.1 Vision Statement

Implementation of the Interpretive Plan will be targeted to the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War, 2011–2015. It is the Battlefields Foundation’s vision and intent that by the beginning of the Sesquicentennial:

- The events and experiences of the Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley will be comprehensively interpreted at an array of authentic historic sites and landscapes, as will the culture and heritage of the Valley.
- Interpretation in the National Historic District will be known for its excellence as an engaging and well-coordinated Civil War heritage experience.
- The Valley's principal battlefields will have a consistent quality of introductory interpretation in place in accordance with the District-wide Interpretive Plan.
- Cluster groups will coordinate the interpretive presentations, visitor experience, and events in their communities while the Foundation will provide District-wide consistency and support.
- Interpretation at partnering sites will be organized around the Valley’s battlefield, campaign, and Civil War-related themes. A variety of types of experiences will be available in accordance with the characteristics and resources of individual sites. The interpretive experiences will feature the Valley’s unique and beautiful landscape.
• Historic roadways will link battlefields, sites and attractions, clusters, and towns with enhanced interpretation using defined Valley themes and stories.

• The Foundation and partner organizations and agencies will plan and unveil enhanced interpretive programs and activities and conduct special events coordinated with their anniversary dates.

• An expanded inventory of interpretive information will be available to the public through a variety of media.

• By 2015, the Valley’s interpretive presentation will be fully formed and the region will be renowned for its remarkable “Shenandoah Valley experience.”
CHAPTER 2

EXISTING INTERPRETATION IN THE VALLEY

2.1 AN OVERVIEW OF EXISTING INTERPRETATION

Interpretation of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District will be accomplished by a wide variety of partnering organizations interpreting their own sites and attractions in accordance with their own missions and interests but in coordination with a District-wide vision.

Over the past five years, a great deal of progress has been made in the interpretation of battlefields and other attractions. Of particular significance has been the adoption of a graphic identity for the District that has been used in the production of a number of interpretive publications, signage, and waysides.

Chapter 2 reviews the interpretation currently offered in the Valley by existing interpretive sites and partnering organizations and summarizes their interpretive interests, missions, available visitor services, and relationship to District-wide interpretation. These are then folded into the thematic framework outlined in Chapter 3 and the proposed structure for a District-wide interpretive program outlined in Chapter 5. The Valley's existing interpretive sites are divided into three groupings, (1) regional attractions, (2) local interpretive attractions, and (3) battlefields and battlefield sites.

The District's many local interpretive attractions give a unique regional flavor to the Valley's interpretive experience and are organized here by cluster. Detailed descriptions of the District's Civil War sites can be found in Appendix A.

2.2 REGIONAL ATTRACTIONS

Regional attractions are identified by the size of their professional staffs, regular year-round hours of operation, significant budgets, and full visitor services. Regional attractions are anchor sites within the District's Interpretive Plan.

Five regional visitor attractions are located within the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District and, as partnering organizations, serve as anchor destinations for interpreting the military and civilian history of the District. These attractions include the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, Belle Grove Plantation, Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park, New Market Battlefield State Historical Park/Hall of Valor Museum, and the Frontier Culture Museum.

• MUSEUM OF THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY, WINCHESTER

Interpretive Themes: the Shenandoah Valley's geography, natural history, Indians, early settlement by Europeans, and historical development over two centuries,
including the region’s distinctive decorative arts, crafts, and furnishings, and its Civil War story.
Ownership: The Glass-Glen Burnie Foundation
Management: Museum of the Shenandoah Valley

**BELLE GROVE PLANTATION, MIDDLETOWN**

Interpretive Themes: 18th century settlement of the Valley, early 19th century Valley plantation life, and the Civil War Battle of Cedar Creek
Ownership: National Trust for Historic Preservation
Management: Belle Grove Inc

**CEDAR CREEK AND BELLE GROVE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK, MIDDLETOWN/STRASBURG**

Interpretive Themes: “the nationally significant Civil War landscape and antebellum plantation…and the story of Shenandoah Valley history from early settlement through the Civil War” (quoting the park’s legislation);
Ownership: land and structures within the park boundary are owned by a variety of private landowners, public trust entities, and the National Park Service—much of the land within the park will remain in private ownership;
Management of visitor-oriented park sites: private organizations and public agencies, including the National Park Service.

**NEW MARKET BATTLEFIELD STATE HISTORICAL PARK, NEW MARKET**

Interpretive Themes: The Battle of New Market, including the experience of the VMI cadets during the battle and the story of the Bushong farm and family, and the story of Virginia in the Civil War;
Ownership: the Virginia Military Institute and the Commonwealth of Virginia;
Management: the Virginia Military Institute.

**FRONTIER CULTURE MUSEUM, STAUNTON**

Interpretive Themes: Virginia’s frontier heritage and settlement.
Ownership: Commonwealth of Virginia
Management: Commonwealth of Virginia

2.3 **INTERPRETIVE ATTRACTIONS**

The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District is home to numerous interpretive attractions of local and regional interest that present aspects of Valley history and culture to the public. The District’s many local interpretive attractions give a unique regional flavor to the Valley’s interpretive experience and are organized here by cluster. (Battlefield-related attractions are addressed in section 2.4.)

Some of these sites tell stories that are related to the Civil War and others tell stories that are related to the broader themes of the Valley’s heritage. Smaller than the larger regional attractions listed above, these sites are vital contributors to the visitor experience in the
Valley. In addition to telling interesting aspects of the Valley story, these interpretive sites convey the flavor and hospitality of the Valley firsthand through their intimate settings and direct personal interactions with visitors.

A primary goal of this Interpretive Plan is to help link the interpretation at the District's smaller sites to each other and to the Valley-wide themes and historic context. Thematically, this is accomplished in Chapter 3 by providing a thematic framework into which interpretive attractions can identify their own parts of the Valley-wide story. Through coordinated interpretation between related sites, through linkages such as thematic or geographically based tours, and through joint marketing, the region's interpretive attractions will work together for their common benefit and the benefit of the District as a whole. Among the benefits for the District's interpretive attractions will be support for their interpretive and visitor service initiatives, joint marketing, and increased visitation.

The organization of the National Historic District into clusters has both interpretive and practical value for the region's interpretive attractions. Most of the District's interpretive attractions are closely related to one of the identified clusters and should be participating members of their cluster groups. Both physical and interpretive linkages can most easily be organized through the development of detailed interpretive, touring, and marketing plans for each cluster. The interpretive attractions participating in the National Historic District are outlined below by cluster. The character and interpretive focus of each site is noted. In addition to the five clusters included in the District’s Management Plan, Staunton and Augusta County are listed under their own heading. While Staunton is not related to a Civil War battlefield, it was an important logistical and command center for the Confederates, somewhat analogous to Winchester’s importance to the Union at the north end of the Valley.

### 2.3.1 Winchester Cluster

The Winchester Civil War cluster is the most complex cluster in the National Historic District, but is well organized, and is home to a number of excellent interpretive attractions. The Museum of the Shenandoah Valley is located in the Winchester cluster and is described above in the discussion of regional attractions and battlefield attractions are described in Section 2.4. The cluster’s other interpretive attractions are listed below.

- Abram’s Delight
- Stonewall Jackson’s Headquarters Museum
- Old Court House Civil War Museum
- George Washington’s Office Museum
- Newtown History Center
- Burwell-Morgan Mill
2.3.2 **Signal Knob Cluster**

The Signal Knob cluster is home to two of the District’s five regional attractions discussed above, Belle Grove Plantation and the developing Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park. The following interpretive attractions are also located within the cluster.

- Stonewall Jackson Museum At Hupp’s Hill
- Strasburg Museum
- Warren Rifles Confederate Museum
- Warren Heritage Society

2.3.3 **Rockingham Cluster**

The Rockingham cluster is home to a range of interpretive attractions spread across Rockingham County, from Elkton and Port Republic on the east to Dayton on the southwest. Harrisonburg serves as the center of the cluster and features three of the cluster’s seven attractions.

- Hardey-Higgins House And Valley Turnpike Museum
- Virginia Quilt Museum
- Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center
- Miller-Kite House
- Port Republic Museum
- Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society
- Daniel Harrison House

2.3.4 **McDowell Cluster**

The village of McDowell is at the heart of the rural McDowell cluster and features the newly opened home of the Highland Historical Society.

- The Highland Museum and Heritage Center

2.3.5 **Staunton / Waynesboro / Augusta County**

Augusta County played an important role during the Civil War as an operations and logistical center for the Confederate army. The Frontier Culture Museum is located just outside Staunton and is one of the National Historic District’s five regional attractions, discussed above. Two other interpretive attractions in Augusta County are potentially significant to the District.

- Woodrow Wilson Birthplace
- Plumb House Museum

2.4 **Battlefields**

Over the past two decades, with increasing national awareness of the loss of the country’s Civil War battlefields, organizations and individuals in the Shenandoah Valley have
worked to save and preserve significant battlefield lands. Through the initiative of local partners and as part of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District, some of those preserved battlefield lands are in the process of being interpreted. The following battlefield lands are located within the core areas of the Valley’s primary Civil War battlefields and take the lead in interpreting the battles with which they are associated.

Descriptions of these sites are contained in Appendix A.

2.4.1 Winchester Cluster

- Pritchard-Grim Farm
- Rose Hill
- Fort Collier Civil War Center
- Third Winchester battlefield

2.4.2 Signal Knob Cluster

- Cedar Creek battlefield
- Fisher’s Hill battlefield
- Front Royal battlefield

2.4.3 New Market Cluster

- New Market Battlefield State Historical Park

2.4.4 Rockingham Cluster

- Cross Keys battlefield
- Port Republic battlefield

2.4.5 McDowell Cluster

- McDowell battlefield

2.5 Battlefield Sites

The Valley’s battlefields are divided into the primary battlefields, which are key to the District’s mission, and related battlefield sites, some of which are merely geographic locations significant to the Civil War events that occurred within the Valley. Many battlefield sites and other Civil War related sites exist within the Valley and are appropriate for site-based interpretation supporting the District-wide interpretive program. Some of these sites are currently interpreted by Civil War Trails wayside exhibits. Others await incorporation into battlefield, cluster, attraction, and historic byway interpretive planning initiatives.
2.5.1 Virginia Civil War Trails Program

The Virginia Civil War Trails program was created in the early 1990's by the Virginia Tourism Corporation, a state-wide non-profit visitors bureau based in Richmond. The Civil War Trails program establishes interpreted driving routes throughout the state featuring campaigns of the Civil War and other themes. Wayside exhibits are installed at the sites where interpreted events occurred, and wayfinding signage helps travelers navigate from site to site along the identified routes or trails. Published brochure maps of each trail show the designated routes and locations of interpreted sites, as well as providing an overview of the particular campaign and background interpretive information. Sites are selected based upon their interpretive potential and the interest of a local partnering entity to take responsibility for the site. Seven specific trails have been created in Virginia. Over the past few years, the program has been expanded into Maryland, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania.

The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation is the primary partnering entity with the Civil War Trails program in the Shenandoah Valley. Local, site-specific partners participate in the program through the Battlefields Foundation. The Foundation has an understanding with the Civil War Trails program that interpretation along its historic roads will be undertaken in partnership with the Civil War Trails program and will use the program's wayfinding signage.

The number of Civil War Trails interpretive sites in the Valley has grown dramatically over the past few years. A new brochure map has been recently published that shows the many sites that have been added to the system. Entitled Avenue of Invasion, the Civil War Trails presentation within the National Historic District is organized into three thematic parts:

- Valley Campaigns of 1862,
- Valley Campaigns of 1864, and
- Other Sites.

Approximately seventy-five Civil War Trails locations are currently featured in the National Historic District. Some locations, such as Winchester, Staunton, Front Royal and Harrisonburg, have waysides at multiple sites. The battlefields at Cross Keys and McDowell use the Civil War Trails program for their wayside interpretation as well.

More than thirty Civil War Trails markers interpret Stonewall Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign. These locations are distributed throughout the Valley along US 11 in the central Valley, US 340 in the Page Valley, and US 250 west of Staunton. Twenty-five Civil War Trails locations are currently featured with respect to the Valley Campaigns of 1864. These locations are distributed primarily along US 11 between Winchester and Staunton. The sites interpret the 1864 campaigns of Sigel, Hunter, Early, and Sheridan.

The designated Civil War Trails roadways within the National Historic District include:

- US 11 between Winchester and Harrisonburg,
- US 340 between Front Royal and Waynesboro (with a gap between Elkton and Port Republic),
- US 250 and Va 254 between Waynesboro, Staunton, and McDowell, and
- Other connecting linkages including Va 55, US 211, Va 253 (Port Republic Road), and Va 42.
The Civil War Trails Avenue of Invasion also includes trails and sites beyond the boundaries of the National Historic District. Hunter’s Raid extends the trail south along US 11 from Staunton through Lexington to Roanoke and east to Lynchburg.

All interpretation at Civil War Trails locations is site-specific. Each location interprets events that occurred at that particular place. Cross Keys, Front Royal, and McDowell have multiple waysides interpreting their battles using Civil War Trails signage in a sequential and coordinated manner. Communities such as Winchester, Harrisonburg, Bridgewater, and Elkton have multiple signs interpreting various themes and subjects associated with specific historic buildings and sites.

Some Civil War Trails waysides are located at cluster attractions and help link the attractions to the Valley-wide Civil War themes and stories. Other Civil War Trails locations are at specific geographic sites associated with the 1862 and 1864 campaigns, such as river crossings and ridge-top defensive positions. Still other sites feature historic buildings and landmarks along the roadways.

The great opportunity of the Civil War Trails program is to bring the Valley landscape alive with Civil War stories. Civil War Trails waysides help visitors learn about the movement of the armies through the Valley and the military and civilian experiences throughout the landscape during the Civil War. They provide something for visitors to do while driving the Valley’s scenic roads. Visitors with an interest in the Civil War have often read or heard about some of the Valley’s well-known stories. The Civil War Trails waysides allow visitors to see the actual places where these events occurred. Examples include the story of the Widow Lincoln house near Dayton and the Davy Getz execution that is interpreted in both Woodstock (where he was made captive) and Dayton (where he was executed). Being able to see the actual sites where these well-known events occurred brings them alive by making them visual, sensible, real, and immediate.

At present, however, the Civil War Trails sites within the National Historic District are not fully coordinated into a systematic presentation. Waysides are not linked thematically with each other or with other battlefield and cluster interpretive sites. Themes and stories are not fully covered. Gaps exist, geographically, thematically, and in terms of strong potential stories that are not yet interpreted. Examples of missing stories include the 1864 engagement at Overall, south of Front Royal, and the widely publicized death of Lieutenant Meigs near Dayton.

Existing Civil War Trails waysides sometimes seem isolated, both thematically and physically with respect to the surrounding landscape. Exhibits at some locations could be expanded to include interpretation and media other than simple waysides. The National Historic District’s proposed historic driving routes, discussed in Chapter 5, provide the opportunity to fill out, build upon, and enhance the existing Civil War Trails system within the Valley.

2.5.2 Battlefield And Other Civil War Related Sites

Battlefield sites and other Civil War related sites have been identified throughout the National Historic District. When incorporated into coordinated District-wide
interpretation, most selected sites will probably feature self-guided interpretation, probably using the Civil War Trails format. Some sites, where land is owned by District partners, such as Star Fort and parts of First Winchester, could be developed with more comprehensive interpretation. Interpretive plans and programs to be developed for battlefields, byways, and clusters will determine which sites are most appropriate for interpretation. A number of battlefield sites are listed below by cluster.

Winchester Cluster
- First Winchester battlefield (part of published District driving tour)
- Second Winchester battlefield (existing Civil War Trails waysides)
- Stephenson’s Depot (existing Civil War Trails waysides)
- Star Fort
- Cool Spring battlefield (existing Civil War Trails wayside)
- Jordan Springs (existing Civil War Trails wayside)

Signal Knob Cluster
- Banks Fort (existing Civil War Trails wayside)
- Signal Knob (existing Civil War Trails wayside)
- Tom’s Brook battlefield (existing Civil War Trails wayside)
- Overall battlefield

New Market Cluster
- Meems Bottom
- Rude’s Hill (existing Civil War Trails wayside)

Rockingham Cluster
- Turner Ashby Monument (existing Civil War Trails wayside)
- Lacey Springs (existing Civil War Trails wayside)

McDowell Cluster
- Fort Johnson (existing Civil War Trails wayside)
- Camp Allegheny (existing Civil War Trails wayside)
- Monterey (existing Civil War Trails wayside)
- McDowell (existing Civil War Trails wayside)

Other Battlefield Sites
- Piedmont battlefield (existing Civil War Trails wayside)

2.6 Marketing Plan Survey and Audiences

Concurrent with the preparation of this Interpretive Plan, the Battlefields Foundation has developed a marketing plan for the District with the Heritage Tourism Program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The marketing plan consultants conducted a survey of visitors to the Valley to help the Foundation and its partners understand visitor awareness and perceptions about the Valley. Several findings in the visitor survey are of particular interest with respect to this Interpretive Plan.

First, the natural beauty of the Shenandoah Valley is the primary attraction for visitors to the Valley. Eighty-eight percent of visitors “completely agree” that the Valley has natural and scenic beauty, and sites of natural beauty are by far the largest type of site visited.
Historic downtowns are also near the top of the list of places visited and appreciated in the Valley, behind only natural sites.

In addition, most visitors to the Valley receive their information about the Valley from friends, family, and co-workers, as opposed to the internet, travel agencies, or travel guides.

Finally, 91 percent of visitors to the Valley said that their experience met or exceeded their expectations—the 21 percent whose visit exceeded their expectations were more likely to have experienced the Valley's historical and cultural resources.

Natural beauty, historic communities, friends and family – these findings highlight the importance of the quality of life in the Shenandoah Valley as a fundamental attraction for visitors. And when visitors explore the Valley's historic and cultural sites, their visits are more satisfying and meaningful. It is the character of the Valley as a whole that visitors find engaging.

2.6.1 Audiences

Market research and information from historic attractions and tourism agencies in the Valley suggest that many visitors to the Shenandoah Valley fit into one or more audience categories. Each key type of audience has different characteristics, interests, and expectations with respect to interpretation and visitor experience. Most of these key audiences appear to have a basic interest and appreciation for the beauty of the Valley's landscape and historic towns, consistent with the visitor survey noted above. For these visitors, the Valley is the primary attraction; the Valley's museums and interpretive sites offer something to do while they are here, rather being a primary reason for their visit.

Heritage Travelers

This group of travelers is generally older, more affluent, and well-educated. They travel by automobile in small groups: as couples, pairs of couples, or small groups of family and friends. They do not usually travel with children. Heritage travelers are an attractive audience for many communities—they generally spend more and stay longer than other visitors.

Heritage travelers are interested in and engaged with the places they visit. They are looking for a high-quality experience. They are capable of absorbing detailed interpretive information, and they are interested in understanding the broader implications of the information presented. They are interested in more than just the Civil War. Civilian themes will be of particular interest.

Authenticity is a key attraction to heritage travelers. They want to see, experience, and appreciate the actual places where things happened. Quality-of-life is of particular interest. They are interested in a holistic experience, not just visiting attractions. They want to be in interesting places, and they want to experience the places that local residents frequent. Heritage travelers are interested in the quality of the experience, the driving, the scenery, the lodging, dining, and shopping. They are willing to spend more
than other types of visitors. They tend to be repeat visitors if they like the place and feel there is more to see and do.

Heritage travelers are a key audience for the National Historic District and for tourism throughout the Valley. If the Valley’s visitor experience is attractive to independent travelers, its attractiveness to other types of visitors groups will fall into place. Preserving the scenic quality of the Valley’s landscape and the character of its historic towns is important in appealing to these visitors. Improving the quality of the Valley’s visitor services is also critical. Wherever possible, lodgings, dining, and shopping should not only be of high quality, but should also reflect the character of the Valley and its cultural heritage.

Flexibility is important in planning trips. A range of short, medium, and longer experiences should be available. Discovery of the unexpected while they are here will cause them to adjust their plans as well as visit again. Interpretation should not only be of high quality, but should be intellectually stimulating and enlightening.

Civil War Enthusiasts

Civil War enthusiasts are a core audience for the National Historic District and have the most interest in its mission of interpreting the Civil War in the Valley and in battlefield preservation. Civil War enthusiasts are knowledgeable about Civil War history. They include re-enactors and history buffs. They are likely to come to the Valley having already studied the battles, and they are interested in seeing and experiencing the actual places where the battles were fought. Civil War enthusiasts will have a primary interest in the District’s Civil War battlefield and campaign themes and less interest in its civilian and broader cultural themes.

Civil War enthusiasts are primarily male but may be traveling with spouses. Like heritage travelers, they tend to travel in small groups of friends and family, sometimes with older children of like interest. Civil War enthusiasts are not as affluent as independent travelers and not as interested in quality-of-life experiences. They are generally more thrifty travelers and are more willing to put up with a lesser quality of lodging and dining. Civil War enthusiasts are a target audience for special events at the Valley’s battlefields, such as re-enactments and special tours. They will spread their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their experience to others by word of mouth and the internet.

With respect to interpretation, depth of information is important to Civil War enthusiasts. Like other visitors, they need to understand the broad context and significance of the battles and the campaigns. But they also need to have the opportunity to delve into historical details and minutia that other visitor groups may find less compelling. Civil War enthusiasts will go directly to the battlefields and skip other attractions. They enjoy spending time on the battlefields and prefer to walk on the landscape if possible. They are open to a more active and demanding experience. The battlefield landscape should be made understandable to them. They will want to know exactly where detailed parts of the battle took place, what conditions were like, and what precisely occurred. Alternative experiences should be available to other members of these enthusiasts’ traveling parties.
Families

Families are a primary audience for visitor attractions within the Valley. They are as likely to be residents of the Valley as they are to be visitors. Residents are an important constituency and should make up a significant proportion of the visitation to attractions. If regional and cluster attractions can draw a substantial number of Valley residents as a visitor base, they are more likely to be successful and to be able to fill out their visitation with travelers from outside of the Valley. Families are an important type of resident group.

This group includes a mix of ages, from children to grandparents. In order to attract and satisfy families, a mix of activities and options is required – something for everyone. Different interests, abilities, and activity levels need to be engaged and accommodated. Family groups may divide up, do different things, and meet back together.

Families tend to have limited time periods for their visits. They require visitor services, such as rest rooms, places for older people to rest, friendly guides, and snacks, if possible. Families are looking for fun. They are often more interested in the experience than in the subject matter. They need quick, easy learning that is visual and experiential, not text based. Only the high points and the basics need be presented. They are more likely to be interested in cultural themes than in Civil War themes. They are more likely to be interested in people's lives than in abstract information.

For battlefields, driving tours with quick stops for exhibits are important for families. Families are hit-and-run visitors. It is likely that the driving tour is the only thing they will do and that they won't stray far from their cars. Walking tour options with varying lengths should be provided to entice the more adventurous. Interpretation should focus upon context, significance, and an overview of events. First hand accounts of the experiences of actual participants help make a presentation accessible, personable, and understandable. Detailed information about units and commanders and military terminology is likely to turn off these visitors. The battlefield landscape should be made understandable by relating action and events to visible landmarks.

Residents have the potential to be repeat visitors to an attraction they like. Changing exhibits and special events such as reenactments, day camps, and living history presentations encourage them to visit. Seasonal presentations draw repeat visitation during the year.

Friends and Families: Out-of-town Guests

The survey for the National Historic District’s marketing plan and other traveler surveys throughout the tourism industry show that most visitors learn about a visitor destination from family and friends. As a visitor group, therefore, friends and families—Valley residents’ out-of-town guests—are a key constituency. Friends and families are a blend of other visitor groups—the can be comprised of heritage travelers, Civil War enthusiasts, and families. Their commonality is their connection to the Valley’s resident base.

A satisfying and high quality experience yields word-of-mouth communication to potential future visitors of all types, whether the communication comes from Valley
residents or from past visitors to the region. When people come to visit friends or family in the Valley, local residents look for something to do with them. They want to show their guests where they live, take them to the best places to visit, and put their region's best foot forward. Valley attractions fill this need in providing something to do with guests.

Group Tours

Group bus tours organized and conducted by professional tour operators are an important constituency for the Valley’s regional attractions. Group tours are lucrative because they combine large volume (and visitation fees) with short time-frames. Bus tours arrive, visit, and leave. A single attraction is usually one stop in a series that are being visited by the tour. Visits are quick, and extensive programming is seldom required.

Group tours can focus on a varied and growing list of themes—and tour operators are constantly seeking new themes for their tours to draw repeat travelers to their product. Some tours focus entirely on the Valley’s Civil War story and some weave Civil War elements into a broader theme.

For the District’s partner attractions, the group tour audience is comprised of two subgroups: the operator who plans the tour and the travelers who will participate in the tour. The people participating in group tours tend to be older. There is some discussion that with the passing of the World War II generation, group touring will tail off, as the baby boomer generation tends to prefer independent travel.

Attractions that wish to draw group tours must first have the level of quality and interest to appeal to those who participate in them. Tour operators will only go to places that make it convenient and easy to plan the tour, and the competition is stiff. High quality and visitor appeal is essential.

Second, attractions that wish to host group tours must have the capacity to accommodate large groups easily. They must be able to accommodate buses and groups of visitors. Attractions must have sufficient quantity and quality of visitor services, especially rest rooms, and they must be accessible to individuals with limited physical capabilities.

School-age Students

In recent years, most large museums and similar attractions have found that student groups make up the largest portion of their yearly visitation. Attracting student groups takes significant planning and effort. Visitation by student groups is regional in nature. Only school districts within a reasonable driving distance will be able to visit as the entire trip must be fit within the time limitations of the school day.

As with group tours, attractions that wish to serve student groups must have the capacity to accommodate buses and a large number of people at one time. They must be safe. Adequate visitor services must be available, including not only rest rooms but meeting rooms, circulation space, and places to eat lunch.
With this audience, programming is the key. Attractions must develop a range of programs of interest to teachers, students, parents, curriculum planners, and administrators. Meeting the educational needs of specific courses and subject matter is essential. Educational programming must be engaging and real. It should be related to the Virginia Standards of Learning. It must not only be interesting and fun for students; it must make the work of the teacher easier and more successful. It must be worth the money for the school district to send their students to these attractions.
CHAPTER 3
INTERPRETIVE THEMES

Interpretive themes are the central concepts or ideas that are important about a subject or resource that gives it meaning and significance. This chapter outlines a framework of interpretive themes that define and categorize the historic significance of the Shenandoah Valley and how its stories should be told in the National Historic District. The themes were determined from past work done in developing the Management Plan to the National Historic District, discussions with historians at local universities and institutions, interviews with managers of historic sites in the District, and a series of meetings with stakeholders.

Chapter 4, Interpretive Media, discusses the range of media through which these themes could be conveyed. Chapter 5, District-wide Interpretive Program, outlines the proposed structure, guidelines, and recommendations for interpretation within the District. Together, these three chapters constitute the core of the Interpretive Plan.

3.1 THE USE OF THEMES IN INTERPRETATION

A primary goal of this Interpretive Plan is to establish a framework of interpretive themes that can be used to present stories to visitors at sites throughout the National Historic District. The themes help link the partnering sites together to help provide a more comprehensive and cohesive picture of the Shenandoah Valley’s history to visitors. The approach is to treat the Valley in much the same way that an interpretive program is developed for a museum: each gallery has a particular theme and purpose of its own, but taken together, all of the galleries (or, in this case, sites) collectively contribute to the overall purpose or mission of the museum. Interpretation within the National Historic District should be organized according to these interpretive themes and use relevant local subjects, stories or objects for illustration – resource-based interpretation.

The proposed framework of interpretive themes is intended to be broad enough and comprehensive enough to embrace all of the Civil War related attractions and sites within the District. Each existing interpretive site should be able to identify the themes to which it best relates and which best convey the ideas associated with its stories and resources. Each site should look at its existing interpretative program, its stories, and its resources to determine how best they relate to these interpretive themes. By comparing proposed stories to the District’s thematic framework, sites can see which of its stories best illustrate the Valley’s attributes and Civil War context and reveal to visitors why the site is significant and worthy of attention.
The goal of interpretation is to convey meaning, not merely information. Exhibits should go beyond the mere statement of facts. Interpretation is only successful when it uses information to reveal meanings and relationships and make them relevant to the audience of today. Good interpretation should stir visitors’ emotions and provoke reexamination of the facts. It should be engaging rather than didactic, dynamic rather than passive.

Themes are the big ideas that communicate the meaning of an event, story, or resource. They make a statement and present a point of view; they are not simply a list of topics. Themes convey to visitors the essence of a site and why it is significant.

The themes outlined in this Interpretive Plan should be used in three ways:

1. Inter-relationships Between Sites: Themes should be used to help relate sites to each other and coordinate their interpretation, where this is appropriate. By working and planning together, sites can develop and illuminate different aspects of the same story. Sites with similar subject matter should identify the themes which they have in common. Site managers should then examine the differing ways in which their stories and resources relate to and can communicate those themes. These relationships should be clearly drawn by the partnering sites and communicated to visitors in ways that they will appreciate and will encourage them to visit those other sites.

2. Interpretive Plans: The themes should be used at battlefields, related sites and attractions, and in District-wide materials as interpretive programs and plans are developed. The interpretive plan prepared for an individual site within the District should identify the District-wide themes to which the site relates. How the site’s stories and resources relate to the themes should be clearly stated. Site-specific sub-themes should be developed that refine the District-wide themes and directly link the site’s stories and resources to the District-wide themes. Those sub-themes should be clearly conveyed through the site’s interpretive exhibits.

3. Interpretive Exhibits: District-wide themes and the site specific sub-themes to which they relate should be used in the development of interpretive exhibits. Each individual exhibit should convey its primary point, idea, or purpose in the context of the entire site and in relation to the other exhibits.

The Management Plan for the National Historic District identified three primary or overarching themes that provide the basic structure for interpretation:

**The Valley** – This theme provides the context for war: the Valley’s historic and economic background, the strategic importance of the Valley’s geography to Union and Confederate armies, and the experience of Valley residents during the war.

**The Campaigns** – This theme links the Valley’s battles to one another--how one battle influences the next--and to the larger objectives of each side during the war.

**The Battles** – This theme includes the stories associated with each battle, the tactical story as well as the personal experiences of the soldiers, and the impact of these military actions on the nearby civilian population.
This organization has been adopted for this Interpretive Plan and further developed as outlined below.

3.2 **PRIMARY THEME: THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY - STORIES OF ITS PLACES AND PEOPLE DURING THE CIVIL WAR**

The Shenandoah Valley is a unique place in terms of its geography, its peoples, and its culture. Immigrants in the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries followed the lead of American Indians and used the north-south Valley corridor extensively, many settling to farm the land and bringing not only their families but also their ethnic traditions and religious beliefs. Today, the Valley retains its unique identity and resonates with the heritage, culture, and stories of its past.

Under this primary theme falls the overarching topic of the strategic value of the Shenandoah Valley to the Union and Confederate armies in the larger war effort.

3.2.1 **Sub Theme: Context For War**

The Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley was shaped by its landscape of mountains, farmlands, rivers, and roads. The people of the Valley had a distinctive culture and perspective based upon their heritage and settlement patterns. Understanding the war in the Valley means understanding the history of an abundantly productive agrarian community blackened and crushed by bloody conflict yet persevering in spirit.

**New Virginia:** In the early-to-mid eighteenth century, the colonial government of Virginia encouraged the settlement of the Valley as a buffer between the Indians and the prosperous Tidewater plantations. Families looking for good land migrated south into the Shenandoah Valley from the cultural heartland of southeastern Pennsylvania resulting in a mix of peoples, settlement patterns, and cultures in the Valley that were markedly different from those east of the Blue Ridge.

**Cultural Diversity:** The peoples migrating into the Valley from Pennsylvania included a diverse range of ethnic groups and religious faiths. In the Valley they established themselves in communities with strong family, ethnic, and religious ties and traditions. This patchwork created a distinct and diverse Valley culture.

**Agricultural Economy:** Wheat was the predominant agricultural product of the Valley and was the foundation of its economic prosperity in the years before the Civil War. The Valley was a landscape of small, independent, family-owned farms, different from the large, aristocratic plantations east of the Blue Ridge. The prosperous farms produced large volumes of grain for export from the region. Other economic ventures including livestock, milling, and industrial activities such as iron production were also vital to the Valley economy.

**Slavery:** Most of the Shenandoah Valley identified itself with the South and believed in and defended slavery. The small family farms of the Valley were not
as dependent upon slave labor as were the large plantations of eastern Virginia and the Deep South. Nonetheless, slaves played an important role in day-to-day life. Some ethnic groups within the Valley were strongly opposed to slavery on religious grounds.

**Everyday Life:** The Valley was a network of local, interdependent agricultural communities with Valley towns serving the needs of the surrounding family farms. Family ties were strong, as neighboring families intermarried through the generations. Work was hard but rewarding, and life was predictable and settled in the years before the war. Many residents had never ventured beyond their local communities.

**Religious Conviction:** Religious faith was strong in the Valley. Mennonites, Brethren, Quakers, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians were among those who worshipped here, and the close ties of the Valley’s religious communities led to a general acceptance of and respect for religious differences. Diversity of religious conviction was fundamental to the Valley’s distinctive culture.

### 3.2.2 Sub Theme: The Strategic Valley

When the war came, the Valley’s blessings made it a magnet for conflict. The Valley played a critical role in the strategies of both armies. Most significantly, Confederate activity in the Valley occupied Union troops, drawing them away from their real objective, Richmond. Within the Valley, the mountains, rivers, roads, and other geographical features created strategic opportunities for both armies.

**Geography of the Valley:** Bordered by the Blue Ridge Mountains on the east and the Allegheny Mountains on the west and divided up its middle by the Massanutten Mountain, the Shenandoah Valley was an arrow pointing at the heart of the North. The Valley’s rolling limestone hills were ideal for concealing military units and their movements. The macadamized Valley Turnpike was a vital north-south artery, facilitating the movement of armies up and down the Valley. Railroads connected the northern end of the Valley logistically to the North and the southern end to the South. Ridges and river crossings offered vital locations for each army’s defense.

**Breadbasket of the Confederacy:** With its agricultural productivity, the Valley became known as the ‘Breadbasket of the Confederacy,’ prosperous in peacetime and filling the stomachs of Confederate forces in war.

### 3.2.3 Sub Theme: Civilian Experience

The Civil War caused tremendous disruption of civilian life in the places where it was fought. Ultimate Union victory resulted in the end of the slave-based economy of the South. Because the Valley’s prosperity was based upon a landscape of small, independent farms, not large plantations as elsewhere in the South, the civilians of the Valley were able to recover more quickly.
War Comes to the Valley: Though many Valley families had migrated from the North, where they still maintained family ties, by the time of the Civil War they considered themselves Virginians and, as a whole, actively supported its defense.

Divided Loyalties: Despite the region’s ultimate support for secession, the Valley’s cultural diversity, family connections, and varied religious beliefs led to varying convictions about union, slavery, and war. Divided loyalties and suspicions shattered many personal relationships among neighbors.

War on the Doorstep: Four long years of conflict increasingly affected the daily lives of Valley civilians. The huge armies, moving repeatedly up and down the Valley, ravaged the countryside and confiscated families’ depleted resources. In the wake of every battle and skirmish, the remaining civilian population struggled to pick up the pieces of shattered lives.

The Burning: In an ominous turn toward total warfare known as ‘The Burning,’ Sheridan ordered the systematic destruction of Valley crops, livestock, mills, and barns following his victory at Fisher’s Hill in the fall of 1864. This Union operation devastated the region and its economy for the remainder of the war and for the years immediately thereafter.

3.2.4 Sub Theme: The War’s Presence Today

Today, the landscape of the Valley still evokes that of the 1860s. Bounded by mountains and still used as a major transportation corridor, its fields still grazed by livestock or planted and harvested, its towns and structures that witnessed Civil War strife, its families that trace their ancestors prior to the Valley campaigns and, of course, its battlefields that have thus far escaped encroaching development – these features are the resources that can be used to illustrate the Valley’s history. Meaningful interpretation of these resources can build support for continued preservation.

3.3 Primary Theme: The Campaigns - Strategies and Personalities

The Valley served as a stage on which were seen some of the decisive events and significant leaders of the Civil War. Campaigns fought in the Valley affected the course of the war and in some cases established or ruined the military reputations of their commanders.

3.3.1 Sub Theme: Jackson’s Valley Campaign - 1862

Stonewall Jackson’s Valley Campaign diverted troops from the Union campaign against Richmond, buying time for an effective Confederate defense of its capital, injecting hope and enthusiasm into the Confederate cause. Widely admired and studied, Jackson’s strategy in the Valley demonstrated how a numerically inferior army can defeat stronger opponents with speed, surprise, deception, intelligent use of terrain, and a willingness to take risks.
3.3.2 **Sub Theme: Lee’s Gettysburg Campaign - 1863**

The Valley served as a natural corridor for Lee’s invasion of the North. The Confederate victory at Second Winchester opened the way. Following the defeat at Gettysburg, the Valley provided protection and support for Lee’s retreating army.

3.3.3 **Sub Theme: Lynchburg Campaign – Spring 1864**

As Union Generals Sigel and then Hunter moved south through the Valley in the spring of 1864 with the objective of capturing and destroying supplies, railroads, and other infrastructure at Staunton and Lynchburg, the war stood at a crossroads, with desperate attacks and counterattacks increasingly affecting Valley civilians. The Confederate defeats of both Sigel and Hunter caused frustration and controversy in the North and gave reprieve in the South.

3.3.4 **Sub Theme: Early’s Maryland Campaign – Summer 1864**

After driving Hunter’s army from the Valley, General Jubal Early’s Confederate force made a daring march from Lynchburg down the Valley and all the way to the defenses of Washington. A shaken North recognized the need to take the Valley out of the war once and for all.

3.3.5 **Sub Theme: Sheridan’s Shenandoah Campaign – Fall 1864**

In response to Early’s raid, Union General Philip Sheridan launched a successful campaign against Early’s weakened army—a campaign that began east of Winchester, took both armies south all the way to Augusta County and then back north again to a dramatic finish at Cedar Creek. The defeat of Early’s army effectively ended the fighting in the Valley. “The Burning” -- Sheridan's systematic destruction of Valley crops, livestock, mills, and barns during the campaign -- damaged Confederate morale and contributed to the reelection of President Lincoln in November 1864.

3.3.6 **Sub Theme: Nature Of The Fighting**

Warfare in the Valley provided a preview of tactics that would be employed effectively in twentieth century warfare – rapid movement of troops on foot and via rail, guerrilla raids, wholesale destruction of private property, and disruption of civilian life. In addition, armies began to prepare for the aftermath of battle—the advent of mobile military hospitals, supplies, and triage operations.

3.4 **Primary Theme: The Battles - Parts Of The Whole**

Each battle within the District possesses its own significance within the greater Civil War, and each has a different story to tell about strategy, struggle, combat, combatants, and victims.

3.4.1 **Sub Theme: First Kernstown – March 23, 1862**

With inaccurate information about the opposing enemy’s numbers, Jackson attacked a larger Union force at Kernstown in his first major battle as an independent commander.
Though a tactical defeat, the battle proved a strategic success, resulting in the diversion of Union forces to the Valley, preventing them from participating in McClellan’s attempt to take Richmond.

3.4.2 Sub Theme: McDowell – May 8, 1862

At McDowell, Stonewall Jackson used deception, the railroad, and fast marching to surprise numerically inferior Union forces – preventing them from entering the Valley through its “back door” – in what would be the first victory of his renowned Valley Campaign. The VMI corps of cadets was at the battle (but did not take part in actual combat) – the first time in history that a college student body was called out for a battle in which their side proved victorious.

3.4.3 Sub Theme: Front Royal – May 23, 1862

Utilizing the screen provided by the Massanutten Mountain, Jackson marched his army rapidly north, down the Page Valley, and surprised a small Union force at Front Royal. Outflanked in his main defensive position at Strasburg, General Banks was forced to quickly withdraw his disarrayed Union army north toward Winchester.

3.4.4 Sub Theme: First Winchester – May 25, 1862

Following the surprise attack at Front Royal, Banks was able to reach Winchester before Jackson, but he could not hold it. The Union army panicked and fled north across the Potomac. In his victory at First Winchester, Jackson threatened Washington and again diverted significant numbers of Union troops from the Richmond campaign.

3.4.5 Sub Theme: Cross Keys – June 8, 1862

At Cross Keys, Jackson split his army, moving portions of it to Port Republic and leaving Major General Richard Ewell to repulse an attack by a Union army under Major General John C. Frémont, ‘The Pathfinder.’ Ewell’s actions prevented Frémont from joining forces with the army of Union Brigadier General James Shields at Port Republic the next day.

3.4.6 Sub Theme: Port Republic – June 9, 1862

Having stopped Frémont at Cross Keys, Ewell quietly withdrew his forces and joined Jackson at Port Republic in time to turn the tide of battle there. In the decisive victories at Cross Keys and Port Republic, Jackson defeated two separate Union armies, successfully completing his Valley Campaign and freeing his army to join Robert E. Lee in the defense of Richmond.

3.4.7 Sub Theme: Second Winchester – June 13-15, 1863

Confederate Major General Richard Ewell’s early victory against Major General Robert H. Milroy at Second Winchester opened the way for Lee’s invasion of the North, culminating in the Battle of Gettysburg. Tactically, the battle demonstrated the inadequacy of Winchester’s earthwork fortifications against a mobile attacker.
3.4.8 Sub Theme: New Market – May 15, 1864

In conjunction with Grant’s Overland Campaign on the other side of the Blue Ridge, Union Major General Franz Sigel advanced up the Valley until he was stopped at New Market by Major General John C. Breckinridge, former senator and vice president of the United States. The Confederate victory was aided by a battalion of cadets from the Virginia Military Institute, who filled a gap in the center of the line and joined in a successful attack on the Union artillery.

3.4.9 Sub Theme: Cool Spring – July 17-18, 1864

As General Early withdrew into the Valley after his raid on Washington, the Confederates pushed the pursuing Union forces back in a battle along the banks of the Shenandoah River in northeastern Clarke County.

3.4.10 Sub Theme: Second Kernstown – July 24, 1864

Believing that Early was no longer a threat in the Valley, the majority of the Union troops withdrew, leaving a small defensive force at Winchester under Brigadier General George Crook. Early, determined to keep the Federals from Richmond, attacked and defeated Crook at Kernstown. This Confederate victory, combined with the burning of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania on July 30, 1864, prompted the diversion of the Union forces into the Valley and the appointment of Philip Sheridan to command a newly unified Middle Military Division.

3.4.11 Sub Theme: Third Winchester – September 19, 1864

While Early’s units were scattered through the northern Valley, Sheridan planned to attack him at Winchester. However, the Federals stacked up in a narrow canyon east of the city, gave Early time to reconsolidate his forces. After fierce fighting on both sides of the Berryville Turnpike, a sweeping cavalry charge turned the Confederates and sent them streaming south through the streets of Winchester. One of the largest battles in the Valley, Third Winchester heralded the beginning of the end of Confederate control of the region.

3.4.12 Sub Theme: Fisher’s Hill – September 21-22, 1864

The Union victory at Fisher’s Hill, “the Gibraltar of the Valley,” was accomplished through a textbook example of a military flanking maneuver. Simultaneously, in the Page Valley, Confederate defense of the river crossing at Overall delayed the advance of Union cavalry and prevented entrapment of Early’s retreating army. After Fisher’s Hill, Union troops had almost free reign to begin the systematic destruction of the Valley’s agricultural economy.

3.4.14 Sub Theme: Tom’s Brook – October 9, 1864

After weeks of harassment by Confederate cavalry during “The Burning,” Sheridan instructed his cavalry commander to “whip the enemy or get whipped” himself. The
battle ended in a rout for the Confederates at the hands of a much improved and increasingly aggressive Union cavalry.

3.4.15 Sub Theme: Cedar Creek – October 19, 1864

The Confederate surprise attack along the banks of Cedar Creek in the early morning hours ranks as one of the most daring and initially successful maneuvers of the war. General Sheridan's arrival on the field of battle to rally Union troops for a massive and successful counterattack provides an excellent example of charismatic leadership and turned him into a national figure. Cedar Creek dealt the crushing blow to the Confederacy in the Shenandoah Valley and buoyed Lincoln's presidential campaign.

3.5 Interpretive Connections

The above proposed themes and sub-themes are ones that relate to one or more sites within the National Historic District. Obviously not every theme relates to every site. However, the list of themes provides a menu from which sites might select and structure their individual interpretative materials and link their site to others that interpret shared or complementary stories. Coordination is the essential goal between sites throughout the National Historic District – certainly within clusters but also District-wide. Individual sites working together can coordinate their interpretation by illustrating the themes from different perspectives using their site-specific stories and resources. By implementing this strategy, historic sites and attractions can make interpretive connections that will be meaningful to visitors.

The matrices on the following pages show the District-wide themes that are most appropriate to specific Valley attractions and battlefields. The matrix showing the shared themes of attractions is interesting in two ways. Under themes for “The Valley,” relationships can be identified that can help attractions partner with each other in coordinating their interpretation of Valley culture and the civilian experience of the Civil war. Under the themes for “The Campaigns” and “The Battles,” it shows which attractions directly support the interpretation of the military themes.

The matrix showing shared themes for the battlefields does the opposite. It shows which battlefields have the capability to support interpretation of Valley culture and the civilian experience in addition to interpreting their battles. It also helps see the organization of the Valley's battles by campaign.

Four attractions within the Valley are uniquely positioned to provide a broad overview of “The Valley” theme and all of its sub-themes related to the history and culture as well as the civilian experience. They include:

- The Museum of the Shenandoah Valley,
- Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park,\(^1\)
- The Frontier Culture Museum, and
- The Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society’s Heritage Center.

All four have broad missions to tell the stories of the Shenandoah Valley. The Museum of the Shenandoah Valley and Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society both have

\(^1\) As noted elsewhere in this Plan, Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park is still in development.
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<th>The Campaigns</th>
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## The Valley

**The Valley**

- **Context for War**
  - New Virginia
  - Old Virginia
  - Apalachicola
  - Stonewall
  - Imports
  - Rappahannock
  - Shenandoah
  - Southside
  - Virginian
  - West Virginia
  - West to the Valley

- **Strategic Valley**
  - New Virginia
  - Old Virginia
  - Apalachicola
  - Stonewall
  - Imports
  - Rappahannock
  - Shenandoah
  - Southside
  - Virginian
  - West Virginia
  - West to the Valley

- **Civilian Experience**
  - New Virginia
  - Old Virginia
  - Apalachicola
  - Stonewall
  - Imports
  - Rappahannock
  - Shenandoah
  - Southside
  - Virginian
  - West Virginia
  - West to the Valley

### The Campaigns

- **Gettysburg Campaign**
  - Sigel and Hunter
  - Early's Raid
  - Sheridan
  - First Kernstown
  - McDowell
  - Front Royal
  - First Winchester
  - Cross Keys
  - Port Republic
  - Second Winchester
  - New Market
  - Cool Spring
  - Second Kernstown
  - Third Winchester
  - Fisher's Hill
  - Tom's Brook
  - Cedar Creek

- **Winchester Cluster**
  - Museums of the Shenandoah Valley
  - Abram's Delight
  - Stonewall Jackson's Headquarters Museum
  - Old Courthouse Civil War Museum
  - George Washington Office Museum
  - Burwell-Morgan Mill (Millwood, Clarke County)

- **Signal Knob Cluster**
  - Belle Grove Plantation
  - Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park
  - Stonewall Jackson Museum at Hupp's Hill
  - Strasburg Museum
  - Warren Rifles Confederate Museum (Front Royal)

- **New Market Cluster**
  - New Market Battlefield State Historical Park

- **Ravensdale Cluster**
  - Henry-Hopkins House and Valley Spelling Museum
  - Virginia Oath Museum
  - Valley Frontier Museum
  - Martin-Kite House (Shenandoah)
  - Port Republic Museum (Port Republic)
  - Frontiersmen-Ravensdale Historical Society (Dayton)

- **Midlothian Cluster**
  - The Daniel Harrison House (Dayton)

- **Front Royal/Augusta County**
  - Frontier Culture Museum
  - Woodrow Wilson Birthplace
  - Pocahontas House Museum (Waynesboro)

## The Battles

- **Winchester Cluster**
  - Museums of the Shenandoah Valley
  - Abram's Delight
  - Stonewall Jackson's Headquarters Museum
  - Old Courthouse Civil War Museum
  - George Washington Office Museum
  - Burwell-Morgan Mill (Millwood, Clarke County)

- **Signal Knob Cluster**
  - Belle Grove Plantation
  - Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park
  - Stonewall Jackson Museum at Hupp's Hill
  - Strasburg Museum
  - Warren Rifles Confederate Museum (Front Royal)

- **New Market Cluster**
  - New Market Battlefield State Historical Park

- **Ravensdale Cluster**
  - Henry-Hopkins House and Valley Spelling Museum
  - Virginia Oath Museum
  - Valley Frontier Museum
  - Martin-Kite House (Shenandoah)
  - Port Republic Museum (Port Republic)
  - Frontiersmen-Ravensdale Historical Society (Dayton)

- **Midlothian Cluster**
  - The Daniel Harrison House (Dayton)

- **Front Royal/Augusta County**
  - Frontier Culture Museum
  - Woodrow Wilson Birthplace
  - Pocahontas House Museum (Waynesboro)
significant indoor exhibit space that provides a great deal of flexibility for interpretive exhibits. Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park is in its early planning stages, and it is not yet clear how it will implement its broad interpretive mission.

The theme “Context for War” lays the groundwork for understanding the distinctive culture of the Shenandoah Valley. Of all the themes, it is the most critical for which to find and implement coordinated interpretation between sites. Most of the District’s historical attractions are able to tell some aspect of this theme. The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation and its partners should focus particularly on coordinating interpretation between sites under the “Context for War.”

For example, among historic sites the “Agricultural Economy” sub-theme is shared by:
- Abram’s Delight,
- Pritchard-Grim Farm,
- Rose Hill,
- Newtown History Center,
- Burwell-Morgan Mill,
- Belle Grove Plantation,
- New Market Battlefield State Historical Park,
- Port Republic Museum, and
- Frontier Culture Museum.

“Agriculture” is a fundamental theme about the prosperity and economy of the Valley and its small family owned farms. Each of the attractions listed above has historic resources that illustrate this theme from varying perspectives. Similarly, each could also touch on the themes “Slavery” and “Breadbasket of the Confederacy,” which are closely related.

“Cultural Diversity” and “Religious Conviction” are also closely related and are also fundamental to an understanding of Valley culture. Interpretive sites that feature these themes include:
- Newtown History Center,
- Belle Grove Plantation,
- Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center, and
- Frontier Culture Museum.

The interpretive plans of participating sites should identify which themes they wish to concentrate upon and which they wish to share. Together, attractions with shared themes should coordinate which aspects of the themes they can best tell and specifically how they will overlap and make reference to each other. The District’s websites, guidebook, and other marketing and interpretive materials should clearly convey the interpretive connections. Interpretation at sites along the District’s Historic Roadways and in the Valley towns will fill thematic gaps and draw thematic connections Valley-wide, bolstering and reinforcing the interpretation at attractions. Specific recommendations for themes appropriate to segments of the Historic Roadways and Valley towns are included in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 4

INTERPRETIVE MEDIA

Given the size, diversity, and scope of the Shenandoah Valley National Historic District, it will be crucial to provide a variety of media to interpret the District's sites, battlefields, communities, and other related resources. Today there are many tried and true means of interpretation, most of which are already being employed at sites in the Valley as well as for the National Historic District by the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation and its partners. The media presented in this chapter includes evolving current technologies as well as more traditional methods of interpretation using exhibits and wayside signage. Each element should be evaluated for its effectiveness in relation to an individual site's educational and visitation goals, as well as available space and accessibility. These options will offer a broad base from which further development and ideas may flourish.

Factors to be considered when selecting interpretive media will include ease of use/audience acceptance, cost, maintenance, staff capacity, and durability, as well as functional practicality. Media should be evaluated objectively, without predetermined guidelines demanding technology for its own sake. Some sites will benefit much more directly from these types of experiences, where visitation quality will be improved by the introduction of planned, intentional technologies. Other sites may alternatively be poor matches for certain elements for a number of reasons. The enhancement of educational value, accessibility, and support of the site's mission should be of utmost concern with any interpretive media considered.

Ideally, a mix of traditional media and modern technologies will provide the widest range of accessibility and flexibility for visitors. Battlefields and other outdoor locations will benefit the most from remote and mobile technologies that allow visitors to plan their trips and learn about their surroundings without needing a large number of static interpretive elements or guide-assisted tours.

4.1 WEBSITES

Websites have become one of the principal means for people to plan their trips. They afford quick accessibility to information, helping visitors build itineraries, comparison shop, and select preferred destinations and do pre-trip exploration. A well-designed website can generate excitement about the District's sites and encourage travelers to visit the National Historic District by providing an overview of what the District is all about, the Civil War and historic sites that are available to visit, and information about other attractions and services.

The National Historic District website, www.ShenandoahAtWar.org, developed by the Battlefields Foundation is a first step in providing pre- and post-travel information.
Recommendations for improvements to the site to make it even more visitor friendly and enable prospective travelers to develop itineraries are included in the District’s Marketing Plan. Beyond trip planning, however, the web can be used to deliver interpretive information at various levels of detail. Through well-considered links, visitors to the District should be able to explore the stories of sites they can visit in the Valley at whatever level of detail they choose – from the Civil War buff’s need for in-depth information to the general visitor who discovers the region’s rich Civil War and folk stories.

Pre-visit planning will be one of the most important elements to consider in developing websites. Visitors should be able to know exactly how to get to each District site, what they should expect upon arriving, if fees are to be charged, what special events are occurring, and whether they will be spending the day indoors or outdoors. Websites can provide a wealth of information, from background knowledge to downloadable maps with or without GPS program technology and podcasts.

While most of the historic sites in the District already have their own websites (as do the tourism agencies and destination marketers, tourist attractions, individual businesses that cater to the traveler, and local governments), very few are interconnected. To help prospective visitors and District residents better understand the wealth of the historic themes and stories that fill the Valley – and how they relate to one another – a concerted effort should be made to interconnect these websites for interpretive content. The most likely organization to assume this task is the Battlefields Foundation as the District’s management entity. Its leadership in this initiative will be crucial.

In addition to travelers and residents interested in their own history, the websites should also have content specifically designed for educators – at the primary, secondary, and advanced levels. While smaller attractions may not currently have the capabilities to devote resources to school visitation, contact with educators, even on a small scale, is almost always beneficial to organizations over time. For larger attractions that can accommodate school groups, effective pre-planning of field trips will directly determine the success of the overall experience. In addition to general pre-visit information, sites might consider the development of teacher resource manuals to help educators plan their trips around current curricula, as well as building upon their experiences after returning to the classroom. An educator section of the website should be considered to make this information easily identifiable and accessible. Attractions that currently have educator-specific programs include the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, New Market Battlefield, Bell Grove Plantation, and the Frontier Culture Museum. The Civil War Preservation Trust also has curriculum materials available at its website. These sites can serve as mentors to smaller attractions considering educator-specific programming. Possible educational efforts include outreach programming, educator guidebooks and website links, and downloadable activities that teachers can perform in their own classrooms.

Visitors should be able to easily navigate their way from the main National Historic District website to those of the individual sites in the Valley. They also should be able to access those websites that offer histories of individual Civil War campaigns and battles, personalities, and information about dates, weapons, etc. Wherever possible, websites should be constructed to provide as much virtual information to the prospective visitor.
as possible so that they are oriented and somewhat familiar with a site prior to arriving there. The website for the Thomas Jefferson Foundation/Monticello is an outstanding example of a virtual tour of an historic site using maps, drawings, and photographs. Such virtual tours will be especially appropriate for battlefields comprised of non-contiguous protected sites, remote battlefields that do not have on-site staffing, and the proposed historic byway drives. A multitude of resources, such as links to books and articles related to information presented by each site would also be beneficial to include so that visitors can easily obtain a wealth of information about their chosen topic.

Similarity in graphic identities and content structure across linked sites would encourage exploration, reduce frustration, facilitate consistency of information, and reiterate the connections throughout the District. Costs for development of a single website can range from $12,000 to $25,000.

Applicable devices and delivery systems for websites are as follows:

- **Computers:** Anything and everything should be accessible from a website on a home computer or portable laptop. A primary goal for all websites is ease of navigation and quality of information. Basic background information should be easy to locate and provide ample links to additional information so that visitors can build on their post-visit experience.

- **Cell Phones:** A designated page on each website could display a standard icon or button for visitors to access information quickly and easily on portable devices. A visitor’s experience can greatly be improved by being able to problem solve quickly and painlessly.

- **MP3 Players:** Image, audio, and video files that are easily accessible from website pages will also prove useful for visitors planning a trip and taking along their MP3 players. They can then access this information while at a particular site to enhance their experience, whether originally downloaded as a podcast or other similar file.

### 4.2 Podcasts

Podcasts offer a way for visitors to access a wide variety of information about District sites while at home or away. Podcasts are digital media (usually audio or video) files that can be accessed via the Internet, and District sites can streamline the process of supplying podcasts by centralizing content on a specific website or distinct URL. The centralization of this information will also reiterate that each individual site is a part of a larger whole. Podcast technology is easily updated and can be quickly and even automatically accessed by applicable devices. A large variety of information may be provided using this technology, such as site updates, special event calendars, teacher resources, audio or video tours, as well as advanced GPS mapping technology and resources. Capabilities range from standard static, predetermined files to automatically updated broadcasts, audio, and video segments. An estimated cost of $500 to $1,500 per minute should be allocated for producing podcasts. Visitors may also post their own narrated tours of District sites as podcasts or on personal broadcasting sites such as YouTube.
Podcasts may prove especially useful as they could provide prerecorded tours at battlefields or within larger individual sites where it is not feasible to have on-call staff. Podcasts can supplement interpretive signage, kiosks, printed brochures, walking or driving tours and guidebooks.

Applicable devices and delivery systems for podcasts are as follows:

- **Computers**: Podcasts can be accessed easily by personal computers, and can then be transferred to other portable devices by users. Visitors who spend a good deal of time pre-planning their trips, such as organized tour groups or school field trip planners, will likely utilize this technology to its fullest prior to arriving. Users may subscribe to receive automatic updates when new podcasts are posted. This information will automatically be loaded onto their computers when uploaded onto the site. Subscriber or membership information may be collected to create strategic marketing lists to potential members or donors for the District.

- **Cell Phones**: Most cell phones are now multi-functional and include capabilities to download podcasts directly from the Internet. People often have cell phones accessible to them at all times, increasing the likelihood that podcasts will be used to satisfy spur-of-the-moment needs. They will typically be used for finding directions from one site to another when visitors are planning customized trips within the District. For more advanced cell phones, GPS technology may also be used to add further customization and mapping resources to users.

- **MP3 Players**: MP3 players have capabilities to download podcasts and store them for future usage. For example, visitors could access audio tours to sync with actual visits to the site. Videos to accompany particular exhibit experiences could also be included, though file size is a consideration and potential limitation for podcasts. Individual sites in the District may want to consider reproducing audio files of significant historical speeches or videos of commemoration ceremonies, reenactments, or other applicable events to help personalize and humanize site visits.

- **PDAs**: Personal Digital Assistants combine multiple technologies into one small portable device. They have features that may include MP3 players, Internet capabilities, touch screens, and word processing and spreadsheet capabilities, to name a few. Visitors with PDAs will easily be able to access the Internet to download podcasts to plan or add to their trips. GPS technology will also be accessible to these users, allowing them to plan detailed tours and trips while away from other more traditional planning resources.

- **All-in-one Devices**: With the continuing introduction of new technologies such as the iPhone, the line between PDAs, cell phones, and other all-in-one devices will be more difficult to define, yet podcast accessibility will still be applicable, regardless of the features offered.
4.3 Published Materials

Printed materials are the traditional means of communicating information to visitors at historic and other sites where providing full-time guides is not feasible. The District-wide Marketing Plan and branding strategy will determine the look and feel of all published materials. The website, as well as exhibit elements, and any collateral materials should easily be recognized as related to the District as a whole. Published materials will require a fair amount of development in the beginning, but should have longevity and not require frequent updates. These items can be used on site, while visitors are traveling, and while they are at home. Individual sites will likely wish to have materials catered to their particular site, though in an effort to promote the entire District, visual elements should be similar in order to accentuate each site's relationship to the whole. The District already has a series of published materials available to visitors, and many of these publications will be featured in the sections below. The cost to design (not including printing charges) new published materials can be estimated at approximately $2,500 per page.

Examples of published materials for the District could include the following:

- **Brochures:** The National Historic District Marketing Plan recommends a District-wide guide that will replace some existing publications and supplement others. A current series of brochures has been planned for the District, some of which have already been developed. In addition, almost every site has a brochure that tells some of the site’s stories, provide hours of operation, and generally promote the sponsoring organization. A concerted effort needs to be put forth to develop a consistency in quality and content throughout the National Historic District. While these brochures are useful to visitors, an examination of pros and cons for current formats will be helpful for the creation of future optimal pieces that inform, interpret, and initiate excitement for the sites featured. A well-designed brochure can communicate a large amount of information in a small space, relying ideally on a mix of visual and textual elements in order to avoid becoming too text heavy and ineffective as a result.

- **District Brochure:** Brochures for the District as a whole offer a fantastic opportunity to tell visitors about the wealth of sites available throughout the Shenandoah Valley. The proposed District-wide guide will provide even greater depth of information. This brochure could be widely distributed and available at multiple points along the District, offering travelers information about sites that are currently near them, as well as those that might be accessible as they travel on their already planned trips. The current District-wide brochure, “Shenandoah at War,” offers background information similar to that found on the website and may be expanded to include more detailed interpretive information related to the District, clusters, and sites.

- **Cluster Brochures:** The Battlefields Foundation worked with partners in three of the clusters to develop cluster brochures following the design format of the District-wide brochure. The cluster brochures will be replaced by the District-wide guide.
• **Battlefield Driving Tours:** The Battlefields Foundation already has developed basic driving tour guides for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Winchester, Kernstown, Cross Keys, and Port Republic. A new driving tour for the Fisher’s Hill battlefield is to be released shortly. These tours consist of standard letter size pieces that fold out to larger tabloid sheets. Additional considerations might include changing these to rack card size pieces that fold out to a tabloid or larger size map. These maps provide opportunity for greater detail, including interpretive summary elements, as well as historic and site markers. Increasing the visual appeal of map pieces will help generate excitement about the many opportunities available for exploration.

• **Guidebooks:** Guidebooks to sites and battlefields offer a means for more depth of interpretation than a brochure or walking or driving tour. The Battlefields Foundation has developed campaign booklets for Stonewall Jackson’s 1862 Valley Campaign and Sheridan’s 1864 Shenandoah Campaign. The Kernstown Battlefield Association has developed a guide of similar format for the Battles of First and Second Kernstown. In addition, several of the larger historic sites in the District have guidebooks. In a similar vein, the Town of Front Royal has a guidebook that supplements the Civil War Trails signage that is used to interpret the Battle of Front Royal. These new bound guidebooks are approximately 35 to 50 pages of 5 inch x 7 inch paper, and are very effective and informative.

Considerations for new pieces might include less textual content in order to increase access to a wide range of potential visitors, from the novice to the expert. The balance of text and graphics is an important mix that professional assistance can help the District to achieve.

• **District-wide Guidebook:** The District, supporting its Marketing Plan, could create a guidebook to promote and detail the sites contained in the District as a whole. This guidebook would communicate to visitors that there are many more opportunities to explore nearby, and would encourage them to view their first destination as part of a larger trip instead of the end in and of itself. Guidebooks can communicate a large range of information, including maps, details for individual sites, items for purchase, special event calendars, teacher resources, background interpretation, etc.

• **Site-specific Guidebooks:** Guidebooks for individual sites may vary in size and scope, depending on financial and staffing resources, target audiences, and expected visitation. Larger attractions will likely benefit from teacher resource guides that are separate from the general visitor guides, while smaller sites will need multi-purpose pieces. Visitor guides may range from a standardized rack card for very small sites, to three or four paneled brochures, to full letter sized booklets in some cases. General background information should be contained on these flyers, ideally containing just enough information to be essential for planning details of a trip, as well as inspiring excitement for the site.

• **Educator Guidebooks:** Teachers need details that other visitors may not, well in advance of their scheduled trip dates. For larger attractions that
might have themed months, special events, theatres, or films focusing on certain historical events, teachers will need to know this information early in the school year. A few of the larger sites already have pieces similar to these in existence and can offer mentoring advice for other sites considering this approach. There are a number of educational organizations competing for school attendance, and a limited budget for schools to spend on field trips. For this reason, information correlating interpretation that supports standardized curriculum should be explicitly detailed as much as possible in these guides. Development of this type of detailed document will take concerted effort by paid staff members, and therefore might not be feasible for each site. A website containing links to teacher resource information is a viable alternative or supplement to published guides.

- **Maps:** Maps are an essential part of travel and a key component of interpreting historic sites, especially battlefields and resources spread over a large terrain. Careful attention should be given to signage and map correlations to make navigation as easy and straightforward as possible. Maps may be produced for the whole District, by cluster, and by individual site as well. Clear visual markers of proximity of destinations by cluster will encourage visitors to extend their trips to include additional sites. To best meet the mission of the Battlefields Foundation, it is recommended that a District-wide map be given a high priority. Ideally the map would be a large fold out piece similar to the existing Civil War Trail Maps. The map should point out driving routes and site attractions in detail with associated interpretive information. Maps for each cluster should also be considered to show regional driving tours and could contain richer interpretive content than the District-wide maps.

- **Passports:** A passport program is relatively easy to initiate, and an effective way to encourage visitors to view each site as part of a larger whole. While encouraging exploration, they can also provide a limited degree of interpretive content, especially for travelers who might be satisfied by a “taste” of the history available rather than a full meal. The National Park Service hosts an outstanding passport program. Because of the National Historic District’s National Heritage Area status, it is eligible to become part of the NPS’ program.

### 4.4 Audio Tours

After more than 30 years of use, traditional mobile audio tours have become a staple in the interpretive toolbox. They involve a narrated tour keyed to waysides, significant landscape or landmark elements, or timing. Typically they involve use of a cassette tape player or compact disk (CD). They allow for manual pacing control as visitors move through exhibit elements. Technology allows for many more options for today’s audio tours, including incorporation of video elements, and all of these options may be considered for the District sites. These tours may either be provided by the host site, available for download prior to arrival, or may be purchased for a nominal fee. Fee based tours may provide a way for sites to generate revenue that otherwise might not occur, or alternatively, admission fees may automatically include tours. Audio tours may be used for driving tours, outdoor walking tours, or indoor exhibit tours.
The benefit of audio tours is that communication can be provided in a real-time fashion without the need of staff or volunteer guide assistance. If flexibility for updating is allowed, tours could be periodically revised to add additional content or to allow for alternate narrators. Producing quality tours can be an intensive process, though unique options can be considered, such as allowing guests to view the same site multiple times from the audio perspectives of different historical characters. Professional production of these tours is highly recommended in order to create a clean, concise, accessible, and effective presentation. These tours generally take many months to produce and cost from $1,500 to $3,000 per minute. Regardless of the preferred delivery method, audio tours should be created in a format that would allow for technological advances and use by other devices. Tours can be keyed to print materials and waysides and can contain changeable number systems to allow for access to specific exhibit elements.

Applicable technology includes:

- **Cassette Tapes:** Cassette tapes and players may be considered for the District sites, though the possible phasing out of this technology should be taken into account. Though perhaps comparatively inexpensive in the short-term, cassette tapes may become obsolete and require upgrades in the very near future. If cassette tapes are used, players should also be provided for visitors if being used to supplement an onsite visit, and will require periodic maintenance.

- **Compact Discs:** CDs offer an alternative source to tapes, and may provide information in a similar manner. Maintenance of these items, if provided free of charge and returned, will involve repairs for scratched or broken CDs and the accompanying players. The Rockingham cluster already has an excellent CD tour, which can be referenced for guidance in development of other similar tours.

- **Cell Phones:** Cell phone dial-in tour technology is currently being used in a number of museums, usually for a nominal fee. The frequency of cell phone availability increases the ease of access, though visitors are required to use their own minutes for a service of this kind, in addition to any fee initially charged. Technology of this sort should allow for easily updating content, if needed, and generally involves the use of an outside vendor to set up and maintain the service. Options may also include allowing visitors to access information on only certain exhibits or a portion of a site instead of an entire overall pre-recorded tour. Cell phones with Internet access could also be used to download digital audio or video tour files from a website during a visit. In addition, cell phone tours can offer promotional information, allowing visitors to participate in sponsorship or donation opportunities during their calls.

- **MP3 Players:** Sites might offer the ability for guests to download audio or video tours onto MP3 players from personal computers. This type of tour could be offered free of charge, or for a nominal fee, and could be accessed from a website before a visit. Content could be updated easily and often if desired for this particular type of tour.
• **Audio Books:** Audio books are ideal for travelers, particularly those drawn to experiencing multiple District sites. They present the opportunity to learn about the history of the region while travelers are concurrently experiencing the landscape. They also allow for deeper exploration upon returning home or for conducting research beyond topics that are featured by one particular site. Audio books may be provided in tape or CD format, though CDs may be preferable due to cassette tapes becoming obsolete. These materials may provide revenue opportunities in gift shops, or an exchange program may also be considered where books are rented or borrowed and then returned in exchange for a new book.

• **Videos:** A variant on audio tours are video tours that combine recorded audio and visual content. With increased availability of reasonably priced portable DVD players as well as vehicles equipped with players, video tours should be considered where sites can afford them and the media is appropriate for the content to be presented.

### 4.5 Static Exhibits

Static interpretive exhibits are a standard in museums and trail sites across the county and the world. Their success is primarily due to their ability to communicate a controlled and desired amount of information without the necessity of a guide being nearby. They are very low maintenance, requiring minimal expense during their life cycles, and are suitable for a wide variety of environments, both interior and exterior. Static exhibits can also be formatted to accommodate changing information so that the structural components of the exhibits remain, while text and images may be removed and replaced periodically. Most static exhibits do not contain this flexibility, but this feature may work well for some of the District sites.

Various types of static exhibits can effectively communicate general knowledge about the information to be conveyed and can include text in contemporary English (or other languages as the need exists) along with relevant graphic information – maps, drawings or photos. Extreme care needs to be taken that the text on exhibit panels is not too extensive and provides a basic level of information. More in-depth written discussions are appropriate for books, booklets, and some interpretive guides. Many of the sites in the District already employ static exhibits, and alternate presentation styles might be considered. For example, technology can be introduced into static exhibits, enabling guests to download information from Bluetooth devices or any other device with wireless connections.

Examples of static exhibits include the following:

• **Static Indoor Exhibits:** Static indoor exhibits are the standard components used in museums and exterior sites across the country for their durability, availability of materials, and predictability with regard to pricing. For the most part, the Battlefields Foundation can expect static indoor exhibit pricing for most sites to be approximately $200 to $350 per square foot. These exhibits should be professionally planned, designed, and produced to ensure longevity and quality appearance. Professional assistance can also help sites to develop themes and storylines in order to balance content and text volume to be most effective for visitors accessing the information.
• **Artifact Displays**: Artifact displays and cases are also widely used, effective methods of conveying information to create personal connections with visitors. Sites with larger collections that are essential to communicating their stories will benefit most clearly from this type of display. Lighting, case, and mount material selection are necessary elements to consider in preparing and presenting these items. Larger attractions and house museums will likely use artifacts more heavily than battlefield sites, due to the limited protection options available to outdoor exhibits. Two types of artifacts should be considered for practicability for each individual site. In either case, for sites utilizing artifacts, from the very beginning stage of collection, sites should decide whether they wish to display a large varied collection, regardless of its content, or if they would prefer to introduce specific items into their collection in order to tell a specific story. Most sites will likely prefer the story approach.

• **Real Historic Artifacts**: Careful consideration should be given to beginning a collection with real historic artifacts, for the amount of time, energy, and money required to manage and maintain these items is significant. For sites considering this option, it would be advisable to speak with larger regional attractions to understand the amount of effort and resources involved. At least one professional staff member would be necessary to perform curatorial services. Two sites that might be consulted for their experience with real historic artifacts include the New Town History Museum and Jackson’s Headquarters Museum. These sites are still in the process of developing the collections support they need, so they would have a fair idea of the amount of time and effort required. For any sites considering this approach, a collections management policy, curatorial capabilities, climate control, and staff members will be the bare minimum requirements to form a successful collection. The Museum of the Shenandoah and New Market both have well-established collections, and can mentor other potential sites for advice as to what it takes to form a successful program.

• **Replicas**: The use of reproductions allows visitors to enter the room with artifacts, as there is nothing truly irreplaceable on display. Replicas are available, though expensive, and they are an effective way to decorate a room to tell a story. For a majority of the smaller sites that are considering artifacts, replicas will likely be the best option, as financial limitations would hinder the ability to hire a full-time curatorial staff member.

• **Informational Kiosks**: Informational kiosks can be incorporated into exhibit galleries, exterior environments, as well as smaller sites. Orientation centers may wish to use these items to help visitors learn about the myriad of sites available in each cluster, as well as to promote general tourism in the local area. Kiosks could also be used to accommodate a passport program, where visitors can “check in” to record that they have visited a particular site. Informational kiosks can take on a wide variety of shapes and designs to make them unique, interesting, and applicable to the topics presented. Interactive components such as quizzes or audio-visual features may be incorporated into kiosks, if desired.
Placemakers: Objects present in the landscape may be used to define locations for interpretation. Exhibits may be built from, around, or into these objects to create an easily identifiable marked experience that effectively complements and conveys information about its surroundings. Placemakers can also help visitors to orient to the landscape by effectively using existing elements such as trees, houses, or tall grass to point out a particular location on a site. A placed object can also serve the same purpose, such as a canon, fencing, or other historically significant element. They essentially offer an identification spot, orientation, and an opportunity to tell a story around an object.

Landscape Elements: Interpretation may occur around existing landscapes, or restorations may be considered to make the environment better suited for interpretation. Restructuring elements of the landscape can create clearly defined paths to lead visitors in a planned experience, or can make significant features more visible from a distance. Each site will decide how to best manage the land for interpretation by determining whether it is better to restore the existing landscape or create vistas to assist with telling a story. The landscape, when used effectively, can become a participant in the interpretation instead of merely providing a backdrop for the rest of the story.

Monuments: Given the nature of the historical interpretive information presented by the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Historic District sites, monuments will be an option easily incorporated into the historical mission of many locations. Sites where particular individuals made significant contributions are of obvious consideration, but general monuments not dedicated to a single individual may also be considered in order to honor the contributions and sacrifices of larger groups of citizens. Some existing monuments can be used as placemakers, though the use of monuments on battlefields might not be as effective as other exterior interpretive options. Other places where monuments might be more appropriate include town plazas and at exterior entry points to larger sites.

Public Art: Public art is a wonderful way to honor the local and regional community's contributions while increasing awareness of District sites among different cultural groups. Considering temporary installations, including works of students in the area, will bring visitors to sites to view the art on display while experiencing the site as a whole. Rotating installations will encourage new visitation during each installation. Public art pieces could include sculpture, murals, statues, relief maps, paintings, drawings, subtly lit nighttime elements, or any number of other media options. These pieces could be displayed in town plazas, parks, along sidewalks, or any other exterior location. The beauty of public art is that it allows the town to interpret itself through the creative work of its citizens.

Viewfinders: Viewfinders are a sturdy and reliable choice for larger outdoor sites, particularly for allowing guests with limited mobility to feel as though they are able to participate more fully in all available experiences. Viewfinders have traditionally been large and clunky and not well incorporated into the surrounding environment. However, these features are easily updated and
Interpretive Plan

changed to create a unique experience that enhances the visitor experience. For example, a unique element to add to traditional viewfinders could include a sheet of vellum or similar material in the viewfinder that would allow visitors to see soldiers or other historical features incorporated into the present landscape. The structure could allow visitors to, in effect, “see through the eyes of a soldier,” or through a device that soldiers might have used historically to facilitate viewing across a battlefield. Viewfinders could be used indoors or outdoors, with potential interactive components being added into those that are protected from the elements.

**Interpretive Wayside Panels:** Wayside panels along trail or battlefield sites or on the grounds of other attractions are a time tested and effective way to combine navigational and historical information. They can be located in remote areas while still providing effective communication of necessary and desired elements. For small house museums, outdoor interpretive signage will provide guests with the ability to learn and experience the site, even if the house itself is not open for tours, which provides an opportunity to turn a potential disappointment into a positive experience. If technological elements are desired on wayside panels, options such as solar paneling may be considered to help provide power to locations that are not near alternate power sources. The National Park Service has a well-established system of wayside exhibit carriers at interpretive sites across the country. Many other sites, including existing sites within the District, use NPS designed carriers. The Civil War Trails System uses NPS carriers as well. Sites within the District should continue using these established NPS carriers because they are inexpensive, easy to create and maintain, and widely recognized and accepted. The carriers come in a variety of sizes, which makes them available and flexible for use by many different sites. For interpretive wayside exhibits, there are also a variety of materials that can be used for graphic panels. Widely used examples include fiberglass, Folia, and porcelain enamel with embedded or offset printed graphics. Longevity issues such as scratching, vandalism prevention, and fading should be well considered before choosing final methods of production. Pricing also varies greatly depending on the embedded material. As a policy, the Battlefields Foundation funds only Virginia Civil War T rails signs for wayside interpretive signage. At the present time these signs cost $2,600.

**Other Types of Exterior Exhibits:** Typically sites tend to use the same exterior wayside exhibit components, but a wide range of additional creative exhibit opportunities exist and should be considered by sites. A few of these options might include a see-through glass etching of historic images that would allow visitors to effectively look through a window to see the landscape as it was historically versus in present day. Artifacts could also be utilized to recreate encampments and other daily scenes in a typical soldier’s life.

4.6 **Interactive Exhibits**

Interactive exhibits can be used in a variety of settings from very basic interactive components to the latest highly technological advances. Different levels of interactivity will be beneficial to different types of sites. Exhibits requiring heavy outdoor use will be best equipped with built-in or external weather protection and limited power requirements. Items for smaller indoor sites will likely focus on incorporating simple video and audio elements into exhibits, while more complex presentations will be more effective and feasible for larger museums and attractions. The benefits of interactive
exhibits include opportunities to incorporate various technologies while accommodating experiential learning styles. These exhibits can allow exploration of general knowledge topics, as well as more in-depth study for those who are interested in learning more. Many larger attractions along the District will already employ some of these technologies and may be used as mentors for sites unfamiliar with the development of these types of exhibit components. Pricing for these exhibits varies greatly, depending on the media used and the complexity of programming.

Examples of interactive exhibits include the following:

- **Solar Paneled Exhibits:** Solar paneled exhibits are a good choice for providing electricity to exhibits that are in remote areas away from standard wiring and other power sources. Trail sites and battlefields might wish to utilize this type of technology for simple, cost-effective, relatively low maintenance interactive experiences. An audio segment describing the area around the exhibit might be a viable example.

- **Touch Screen Presentations:** Touch screen technology will likely be a desired choice for exhibit experiences in larger attractions, and may be considered throughout District sites. Touch screens allow for a high degree of visitor participation by allowing each visitor to have a personalized experience, based on their choices of exploration. These types of presentations span from basic to extremely complex, and can be catered to meet each site's desired goals. The initial set-up of touch screens is relatively expensive compared to other methods of delivery, and professional programming would be necessary. However, this is not to dictate that smaller sites could not benefit from such an experience. In situations where a lot of information is available to explore, but not much space or interaction with staff and volunteers is feasible, touch screens can add a more personal element to the experience. These types of presentations should be considered only for interior exhibits given weather protection concerns.

- **Motion Detector Presentations:** Motion detector presentations will likely also be useful in larger attractions, but will need to be carefully thought out and timed to be effective for each and every visitor. These types of presentations are also nice options for sites where visitation is spread out so that audio and video loops are not running needlessly for hours at a time. A few regional attractions already utilize this technology and can be mentors for those sites also considering motion detector presentations. Smaller sites might benefit from this technology as an add-on to a static exhibit in much the same way as touch screen presentations.

- **Push Button Presentations:** These types of experiences allow visitors to choose their own level of exploration and can be effective in both interior and exterior locations. They are often best utilized as supplemental information on an exhibit, perhaps providing an audio or video segment to build upon other information presented in a more static manner. Basic push button interactive exhibits often include manually revealing previously hidden information using strategic lighting or movable exhibit components. Video presentations will likely be limited to indoor locations, while audio segments could work outdoors as well.
- **Continuous Loop Presentations**: These types of presentations are relatively low maintenance, and can be useful for introductory experiences, such as orientation videos, and can utilize both audio and visual elements. Similar to push button presentations, these loops could be useful both indoors and outdoors, with the corresponding included audio or video elements.

- **Incorporated Audio Elements**: Items such as audio sticks located throughout an exhibit gallery, or on a single exhibit panel, can allow visitors to be given background information about a topic without the added expense of video, though videos may also be considered. An audio stick is similar in structure to a streamlined telephone, where a visitor places the stick to their ear to hear the audio message corresponding to the exhibit. These delivery systems are helpful in spaces where noise overload may become an issue and where exhibits can be experienced easily one person at a time. These can be a cost-effective choice for smaller sites, and would probably work best in indoor surroundings, as they are not quite as durable as some of the alternate methods of media delivery.

- **Incorporated Video Elements**: Video screens mounted into exhibits that play either continuously or on demand can allow for a more exciting visual experience, and can either incorporate audio or captioning elements. These exhibits would be most functional indoors as add-ons to static exhibits.

### 4.7 Guide-Assisted Interpretation

While guides are not necessarily practical for every site, they can often add immensely to a visitor's experience. A person who cares deeply about the material presented, whether a paid full-time staff member, or a volunteer, can often be contagious in his or her enthusiasm, igniting a spark in the visitor. Human guides can respond to the specific interests and questions of individuals or groups and address subtleties in the material being presented that pre-recorded, published, or produced interpretive content cannot attain. Options for guide-assisted experiences are vast and wide-ranging, but a few of the items featured below are included as recommended industry standards. These items offer an experiential approach to learning, involving the audience in an observational and participatory role, and can provide opportunities for development of a volunteer or staff guide program.

Guidelines for each of the following types of guide-assisted experiences should be taken into consideration in forming programs. First, guides should be trained about their roles and receive a script to ensure a degree of consistency for all visitors who choose to participate in the experience. Of course, each guide may add personal anecdotes and point out his or her favorite features, but the basic information presented should be the same. A list of key points should be identified to expedite this process.

Types of guide-assisted experiences include the following:

- **Guided Tours**: Guided tours can be presented in a number of ways, allowing a large degree of flexibility for use by small sites, battlefields, and regional attractions. They can vary from mobile transportation for larger battlefield sites,
to behind-the-scenes tours of larger orientation centers, to historical walking tours. Tours also allow for a personalized audio and visual experience, which appeals to a broad range of learning styles. The human interaction feature, as well as the communication of unique information that might otherwise be overlooked, can often make for a compelling experience.

- **Guided Walking Tours:** Walking tours are popular with groups that desire or require a more structured interpretive experience. Battlefields and towns will likely benefit from this type of offering, whether scheduled on a regular, predictable basis, or offered only during special events throughout the year. Regularly scheduled tours will work at sites where staffing allows, while sites with less manpower may wish to opt for special event offerings only. These may or may not be offered for an additional fee to offer a source of revenue for host sites.

- **Personal Guides:** Personal tours would offer more one-on-one interaction for those who desire a more intimate experience. Traditionally, these programs allow for a trained individual guide to join a person or a small group in the visitor's vehicle, and as the visitor drives around the site, the guide is able to point out unique features and provide historical information related to the surroundings. Gettysburg has a program like this in existence currently. Alternate forms of transport may also be considered, such as golf carts or Segways to allow for a more controlled and slower-paced environment.

- **Step-On Guided Tours:** Step-on tours involve larger methods of transportation, such as buses, to provide a driving tour of a site. Individual battlefields might consider this approach, while an even larger tour could be considered for riding up and down a cluster or the entire District. These tours could begin at one destination and finish at another, or could include multiple entering and exiting points along the route. The ability for visitors to “step-on” at their leisure allows for more flexibility, though some repetition of previously covered information should be expected.

- **House Museum Docents:** The use of docents, whether volunteer or staff members, can offer a completely different experience for visitors to small house museums. The welcoming factor and connection with the personal stories of the site cannot often be reproduced in other interpretive media with the same flare and flavor. It is particularly important that even small sites focus on key points that need to be covered in each tour so that the quality of presentation is consistent, regardless of the individual docent. Interpretive guidelines are also important to guarantee professional presentation, and documented sources are available for public consumption.

- **Living History Demonstrations:** Living history demonstrations allow for guests to experience life in another era. Staff or volunteers, including members of groups similar to those who perform reenactments, can utilize their talents and passion for history to communicate to guests in both a direct and indirect manner. Living history demonstrations allow opportunities for one-
on-one interaction and take-home activities. They also create a connection between individuals and history that static interpretation often cannot. These demonstrations would be most applicable to larger sites and special events. Living history topics often encompass the routine tasks of daily life, or recreate specialized scenes such as encampments. The Belfield Group already has living history demonstrations in progress, and their experience provides a unique opportunity for smaller and larger sites to develop relationships and learn the practical requirements for such a program.

- **Reenactments:** Reenactments are key activities to a large segment of Civil War enthusiasts and are a significant means of generating income for a number of Civil War sites in the National Historic District and elsewhere. Often they are planned around important dates throughout the year, or larger milestone events. Scheduling and publicizing a date for a reenactment event offers the opportunity for increased visitation and revenue generation. Local clubs may exist consisting of historical reenactment enthusiasts who would be more than willing to help make these events a reality. Forming a mutually beneficial relationship with these groups could prove to be a long-term asset to participating sites.

At present there are three regularly scheduled reenactments in the National Historic District. The Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation annually hosts a major reenactment on the weekend close to the anniversary date of the battlefield. This particular reenactment holds the status of being the only one written into the legislation for a national park. Typically, battle reenactments are prohibited by the National Park Service within a park boundary or on federal land. The reenactment of the Battle of New Market is also an annual and much anticipated event. The New Market State Historical Park hosts this event in May as close to the battle anniversary as possible. The third regular reenactment is the Battle of McDowell. Currently this reenactment is held on the first weekend of May of odd numbered years. This may change to put the reenactment in the sesquicentennial anniversary year of 2012.

- **Object Theatres:** Object theatres in general combine traditional pre-recorded audio-visual elements with live action timed object movements, requiring syncing of lights, motion, and sound. These types of presentations might be too large in scale for smaller sites, but could be nice features in larger sites. The amount of maintenance varies, depending upon the complexity of the presentations offered. In general, a guide may be needed to initiate the program so that it is appropriately timed with large groups arriving in the room. These presentations are also relatively expensive to produce, and so might work best for regional attractions, where higher visitation levels can support higher operating and programming costs. For a theatre with ten to fifteen objects, a minimum cost of $50,000 can be expected.

- **Live Theatres:** Live acting provides an opportunity for the community to become more involved in the sites. Local acting companies or troupes may schedule regular shows or smaller mini-shows to help support the topics featured at individual sites. Live theatre adds unique elements of interpretation that can greatly enhance a visitor's learning experience. Other live presentation
opportunities can be offered through smaller demonstrations that volunteers or staff members can perform without the need for professional actors. For sites that choose to use actors on a regular, predictable, scheduled time frame, a rudimentary stage area might be desired. This would not necessarily have to be in the form of a large theatre, but could be considered. In fair weather, any open outdoor area could function well for shorter presentations. Costs vary for this type of offering, depending on whether actors are paid or volunteers, and the level of professional work that is put into scripts, scenery, costumes, and staging areas.
CHAPTER 5

DISTRICT-WIDE INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM

5.1 Valley-Wide Interpretation

As outlined in Chapter 1, the approach for interpretation within the Shenandoah Valley National Historic District is to focus upon the Valley's Civil War-related history and culture, to be experienced by visitors on the region's landscapes, in its historic towns, on its battlefields, and at its visitor attractions. This Interpretive Plan presents a structure for integrating and coordinating interpretation of the National Historic District. It is a Valley-wide interpretive presentation that links places in the landscape where stories related to the identified interpretive themes for the National Historic District can be told.

A network of historic roadways provides the framework for the Interpretive Plan and links the various places that are or will be interpreted. The Valley's historic towns are considered a central component of the visitor experience. The National Historic District's Management Plan organized the Valley's battlefields and interpretive attractions into Civil War clusters that remain a useful and important organizing element for interpretation of the District. The Valley's Civil War battlefields are the featured, though not the exclusive, landscape resources for interpretation of the Civil War in the Valley. In general, battlefield interpretation is still in its early stages in the District and is a particular focus of this plan. In part because of this, the Valley's existing local and regional visitor attractions are critical to the creation of a strong, coordinated visitor experience within the Valley. The existing attractions are places where excellent interpretation of themes related to Valley culture and the Civil War is already available. This existing interpretation is an essential building block in the creation of a coordinated and professional Valley-wide interpretive experience.

Chapter 5 outlines the proposed structure for interpretation of the National Historic District and lists specific guidelines and recommendations for each component of the Plan. Interpretive sites, attractions, battlefields, towns and other interpretive partners within the District are encouraged to review the overall interpretive structure to see how they best fit within it and how they might implement its guidelines and recommendations. The active participation of partners is the only means through which the Plan can be implemented. Chapter 6 will discuss implementation, phasing, and roles and responsibilities. This Plan will be recognized to be an evolving process. It is hoped that the interpretive structure outlined below will be useful in helping partners within the District create a distinctive Valley-wide interpretive presentation.

Finally, it must be recognized that interpretation within the District will never be static but will always be developing and changing. Indeed, over the past seven years
since the completion of the Management Plan there has been significant change, with
the opening and development of new interpretive attractions and the protection of
additional battlefield areas. The Interpretive Plan for the District must embrace change
and flexibility and use such change to strengthen its overall interpretive presentation
and visitor experience. To this end, the Plan presents a vision, initial structure, and
guidelines to facilitate good decision making over time. The participation and role of
partnering sites and organizations in creating and implementing a unified vision and
presentation with a specific, recognizable Valley flavor is essential.

5.2 HISTORIC ROADWAYS AND VALLEY TOWNS

The legislation for the National Historic District and its Management Plan called for
historic travel routes to be identified and used to link the District’s battlefields, related
Civil War sites and the clusters. Where possible, these historic routes were to follow the
roads traveled by armies that marched through the Valley. Over the past six years of the
National Historic District’s development, a partnership has been established between the
Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation and the Virginia Civil War Trails (VCWT)
program. As of the time of this Plan, more than 80 Civil War Trails waysides are being
used to interpret sites along a number of key historic roadways in the Valley as well as in
historic towns. The Civil War Trails brochure entitled “Avenue of Invasion” provides one
of the most useful driving tours, linking Civil War sites in the District.

A more extensive network of historic roadways should be identified, planned, and
interpreted for the National Historic District. This should be done through a partnership
between the Battlefields Foundation, federal, state, and local governments as appropriate,
and other stakeholders. These historic roadways should link battlefields, related sites,
towns, and clusters.

This Plan recommends that certain roadways be designated as Historic Roadways. These
roadways have been selected based upon their appropriateness for accessibility, historic
character, scenic quality, and interpretive potential. Interpretation along the byways will
be enhanced by coordinating themes and stories from site to site, filling in gaps along the
routes, and expanding the nature and quality of exhibits. The Civil War Trails program
will continue to be featured and will provide the core interpretive structure along the
byways.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. **Historic Roadways:** A system of historic roadways should be established in
implementing this Plan: three primary north-south routes along with a series of
east-west connections. These roadways include the roads identified in the Civil
War Trails brochures and expand upon them to create a more complete system.
For interpretive purposes, the three north-south roadways are:
• The Valley Turnpike (US 11),
• The Back Road (Va 628, 623 and 42), and
• The Page Valley Road (US 340).
A complete description of these roadways and the east-west connections can
be found in Appendix B and a map indicating these roadways in the National
Historic District appears inside the back cover of this plan.
B. **National Scenic Byway:** Modern-day US 11 (the historic Valley Turnpike) should be designated a National Scenic Byway by 2011 based upon its historic intrinsic qualities, with the support of local governments and partners. The corridor management plan required for designation as a National Scenic Byway will provide a blueprint for stewardship of the roadway and its associated landscapes for the counties and local communities within the District. Designation of the US 11 corridor north and south beyond the boundaries of the District would be desirable if adjacent governmental entities are interested. Quality interpretation and visitor experience is a key requirement of the National Scenic Byway program and will be readily achievable along the Valley Turnpike within the District. Designation as a National Scenic Byway may help secure funding from a variety of sources.

C. **Virginia Byways:** A number of the roadways proposed as designated historic roadways in this Plan are already recognized as Virginia Byways. Most of these roadways are within Shenandoah and Frederick counties. The complete network of historic roadways identified in this Plan should be designated as Virginia Byways as soon as feasible and included in the state’s A Map of Scenic Roads in Virginia.

D. **Wayfinding:** The Civil War Trails signage should continue to be used as the signature wayfinding device. Enough wayfinding signage should be provided to delineate clearly the historic roadway routes and help visitors easily find their way. Provision of wayfinding signage at all turns and at strategic locations along each route will assure visitors that they are on the correct route. Over time, it may be desirable to enhance the wayfinding signs with customized route names, such as Valley Turnpike, Back Road, the Page Valley Road and other names where appropriate.

### 5.2.1 A System of Historic Roadway Exhibits

The selection of routes that present the landscapes, themes, and stories of the Valley at their best has been a key factor in planning the historic roadways. Additional wayside exhibits should be planned as a part of the expansion of the Civil War Trails presence within the District. These exhibits need to be at key locations where the stories can be told. At some locations, interpretation may need to be more substantial than can be conveyed on a Civil War Trails sign. To accomplish this recommendation, the Battlefields Foundation and relevant stakeholders and partners should undertake the following steps.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

A. **Roadway Exhibit Plan:** A plan should be created for coordinated interpretive exhibits along the historic roadways. The exhibit plan should build upon the existing Civil War Trails signage and should incorporate the Trails graphic.
identity with the National Historic District graphics package and wayfinding signage. It should include input from local historians, attractions, counties, and towns with regard to the themes, storylines, and places to be interpreted. As outlined below, the exhibit plan should establish themes and stories for the roadway, identify potential exhibit locations and desired media and infrastructure improvements for each stop, outline costs and potential funding sources, and lay out a phased plan for implementation. The plan should be implemented by 2011, in time for the Civil War Sesquicentennial.

› Authentic Places: Above all, interpretation along the historic roadways should feature the authentic places where events took place and where there is historical integrity of the surrounding landscape – using resource-based interpretation.

› Historic Themes and Storylines: Within the roadway exhibit plan, interpretive themes and storylines should be identified and established for individual segments of each roadway; these should be based upon the events that occurred in this segment, the historic and landscape resources along it, and the ability of these resources to convey themes and stories to visitors. Suggestions for appropriate themes for roadway segments are outlined in the following sections of this Plan.

› Coordinated Presentation and Itineraries: Once the key themes and storylines for each roadway have been identified, step two will be to determine the places and sites along each segment that can be used to tell individual stories that convey the selected themes. Storylines and interpretive stops should complement each other. Roadway exhibits should be organized into coordinated itineraries that are then made available to visitors. Exhibits should be coordinated with the interpretation of the battlefields and related Civil War attractions along the roadways.

B. **Landscape Enhancements:** Landscape improvements and visitor amenities should be managed to support the authentic historical understanding of the surrounding area and preservation of the landscape fabric. Of secondary importance, exhibit stops can be made into special and inviting places, setting a high standard that visitors will recognize, appreciate, and remember. Such enhancements might include automobile pull-offs and parking areas, gravel walks or gathering areas, benches, waste receptacles, orientation signage and maps, and trees and shrubs, where appropriate. At certain sites, short walking trails may be provided.

C. **Driving Guide Map:** A driving guide map of the Shenandoah Valley National Historic District should be created showing the Valley’s historic roadways, the themes and storylines that appear along these roadways, exhibit locations, battlefields, attractions, and historic towns. The map may be similar to the Civil War Trails brochures but should be limited to the District and should use the District’s logo and graphic identity as well as Civil War Trails. This should supplement the District guide released in May 2008. The map should be available before 2011. Audio tours for the roadway routes should be phased in as appropriate.
D. **Battlefield Driving Tours:** When desirable, driving tours for each battlefield should be developed following the model developed by the Battlefields Foundation and partners.

A detailed explanation of proposed individual historic roadway routes appears in Appendix B.

### 5.2.2 Historic Valley Cities and Towns

The Valley towns and cities are significant historic resources within the National Historic District. Many are integral parts of battlefields, such as McDowell, New Market, Middletown and Winchester. Most are located within designated clusters. Others are located along historic routes. All are significant to identified interpretive themes for the District, especially the non-military themes about Valley life and culture, and have the potential to tell powerful stories related to the Civil War in the Valley. However, interpreting the history of a village, town or city presents significant challenges as compared to a historic site or battlefield.

The National Historic District’s Management Plan envisions that the Valley’s towns and cities will be important places where the civilian perspective of the war will be told. In addition, the historic downtown areas have the potential to provide visitor services, lodging, dining, shopping, and entertainment that will enrich the visitors’ experience in the Shenandoah Valley, mixing learning and leisure together in a pleasant and enjoyable balance.

Most of the District’s historic towns lie along the proposed historic roadways. Several are at the heart of battlefield clusters. All of the towns should be encouraged to participate in the National Historic District’s preservation, interpretive, and visitor services programs. This can best be accomplished through working with the local governments and their planning departments, economic development commissions, redevelopment authorities, and governing bodies to encourage policies and funding that support preservation, interpretation and tourism promotion. In the private sector, local historical societies, preservation and conservation interest groups, chambers of commerce, and relevant businesses should be encouraged to find a role in implementing the Management Plan and this Interpretive Plan.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

A. **Preservation and Stewardship:** The Battlefields Foundation and its partners should encourage and support the efforts of Valley towns to preserve and enhance their historic character. Such initiatives might include creation of National Register Historic Districts, local historic districts, design guidelines to assist property owners in the appropriate maintenance and treatment of historic buildings, and the publication of local histories. These activities should only take place where there is broad community support for such actions.

Other actions could include streetscape improvements, community-based interpretive plans, and visitor services plans. The Winchester/Frederick County
cluster is the first in the National Historic District to draft a visitor services plan and should be considered a baseline model.

› **General Interpretive Themes for Towns:** The Valley towns can be associated with specific historic themes and interconnected through their relationships to organizational tools either in use or proposed for the National Historic District.

› **Specific Themes for Valley Towns:** Interpretation within Valley towns should be based upon the National Historic District’s themes and should be closely linked and coordinated with other interpretation within the vicinity. When interpreting an entire town, several key factors should be considered. Potential stories should be assessed for their interest, quality, extant sites that serve as reference points (resource-based interpretation), and for their ability to convey the themes. Authentic places, buildings, and landscapes should be directly related to the community’s Civil War history and should be used to illuminate that history. Stories, themes, and places that visitors may have heard or read about should be featured. Interpretation in towns should support and encourage visitation to local battlefields and Civil War sites.

› **Interpretive Media in Towns:** The Valley’s historic towns have a unique opportunity to make use of interpretive media that would be less appropriate in more remote settings. These might include Civil War Trails signage. Walking tours can be presented through a variety of published and electronic media formats.

› **Wayfinding and Graphic Identity in Towns:** Some towns within the Valley have developed wayfinding signage with their own graphic identity. Where feasible and possible, efforts should be made to coordinate these programs and graphic identities with those developed for the National Historic District. Wayfinding is particularly important for the larger towns, including Winchester, Harrisonburg, and Staunton. Wayfinding signage should include direction to visitor centers, cluster orientation centers, historic downtown areas and Civil War sites, and battlefields associated with the towns.

### 5.3 Civil War Clusters and Orientation Centers

The National Historic District is divided into five groupings of battlefields, historic sites, towns and other resources called clusters. They are an organizing tool for the District. They also assist the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, as the management entity for the District, to more effectively work with partner sites and respond to local interests and issues. The five clusters are Winchester, Signal Knob, New Market, Rockingham, and McDowell clusters. They are indicated on a map of the National Historic District inside the back cover of this plan.

Over the past six years, most of the clusters have begun to develop their own individual characters that reflect local interests and capabilities. Each of the District’s battlefields is associated with a particular cluster, as are most of the existing visitor attractions within the Valley. Each cluster is closely associated with one or more historic towns while
the proposed historic roadways would provide linkages among the clusters and the battlefields.

The Battlefields Foundation should continue to foster organization of the cluster-based partnerships as a means of encouraging more coordinated interpretation, collaborative events and activities, and promoting tourism to Civil War sites.

5.3.1 The Five Clusters

Each cluster should have a vision for its overall character, how it wants the public to experience the Civil War sites and battlefields in it, and sense of identity. Partners within each cluster have the opportunity and responsibility to organize themselves and work together; the Battlefields Foundation should take responsibility for ensuring that each cluster develops and remains viable. Cluster groups are encouraged to continue to plan, organize, and implement collaborative projects in accordance with their common interests and the heritage area's program. Each cluster group should take responsibility for organization and enhancement of the visitor experience within its portion of the Valley.

Coordinated interpretation and programming between battlefields and related historic sites within each cluster should be encouraged, using the District’s interpretive themes as a common touchstone.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Coordinating Interpretation and Visitor Services Within Each Cluster: Each cluster group should coordinate interpretation between the sites within the cluster by undertaking the following actions:

- Establish a common interpretive vision among attractions;
- Identify common themes and storylines within the cluster;
- Organize visitation and interpretive information available to visitors through websites and publications;
- Establish orientation centers and visitor centers as contact points for visitors;
- Establish driving tours within and among the battlefields and attractions throughout the cluster, as appropriate;
- Coordinate interpretation and programming between attractions within the District;
- Coordinate interpretation with other clusters and with attractions Valley-wide.

These actions should be encompassed in a visitor services plan with its historic town at its core similar to the plan developed by the Winchester cluster. Through the plan, each cluster should assess its readiness to serve visitors to the Valley and take steps to improve its visitor services. Existing services should be surveyed and assessed. Gaps in existing services should be identified and opportunities for expanding and enhancing services sought. Clusters should support and assist individual attractions and sites to become stronger visitor destinations.
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In coordinating interpretation at cluster sites, the partners should look at:

- The interests, needs, and goals of individual attractions;
- How interpretive connections can be strengthened between attractions;
- How interpretation at isolated sites and landscapes can be undertaken;
- Wayfinding and signage needs.

B. Battlefield Interpretation: In those cases where there are multiple owners of sites comprising a particular battlefield, the cluster group may be able to function as a coordinator with the individual sites and the interpretation of the battlefield. Interpretive planning for the battlefields will be dealt with in Section 5.4 of this chapter.

While generally agreed that it is beyond the scope or purview of clusters themselves to own land, preservation of the battlefields and related Civil War sites strengthens the purposes of the cluster, increases the number of interpreted sites in a cluster, and creates a greater visitor draw. Cluster groups should encourage and support the preservation of additional battlefield lands within their vicinity by public-trust owners or units of government.

5.3.2 The Winchester Cluster

The Winchester Civil War cluster is the most complex but also the most evolved cluster in the National Historic District. It is one of two that hosts a Civil War Orientation Center, as prescribed in the District’s Management Plan. The Winchester cluster group has been meeting for years and is formally organized with guidelines for decision-making and a defined membership, though it is not a legal entity. The cluster group has undertaken a number of joint initiatives, including a brochure, driving tours, and annual events.

The city is rich in historic resources and stories to tell. Because of continued growth and development over the years, however, a great deal of the city’s historic landscape character has been lost, especially in relation to its five battlefields (not including Cool Spring, which is also part of this cluster). The telling of Winchester’s stories is complicated by the extent of modern development around the city. In addition to its battlefield resources, Winchester has many other sites of historic interest, some actively interpreted and some passively available for visitor appreciation.

The Museum of the Shenandoah Valley is one of the District’s five regional attractions.

The Winchester area’s attractions are actively and professionally marketed by the Winchester-Frederick County Convention and Visitors Bureau. The Civil War Orientation Center is a joint project of the Visitors Bureau, the cluster group, the city, and Shenandoah University.

Shared themes of The Battlefields (see Section 3.4) that occurred in the Winchester area are the most obvious for cluster-connected interpretation. These themes and the attractions associated with them include:

- **First Kernstown**: Pritchard-Grim Farm, Rose Hill, and Jackson’s Headquarters;
- **First Winchester**: Museum of the Shenandoah Valley and Jackson’s Headquarters;
• **Second Winchester:** Star Fort, Stephenson’s Depot, and the Pritchard-Grim Farm;
• **Third Winchester:** Fort Collier, Star Fort, the National Cemetery, and the trail at Redbud Run.

Shared themes of *The Valley* (see Section 3.2) can also be coordinated within the Winchester cluster. Specifically, the following themes are particularly strong at multiple attractions within the cluster:
- **New Virginia:** Newtown History Center, the Glen Burnie house, Rose Hill, Old Town Winchester, and Washington’s Headquarters;
- **Everyday Life:** Museum of the Shenandoah Valley and Newtown History Center;
- **Agricultural Economy:** the mill at Abram’s Delight and the Burwell-Morgan Mill;
- **Civilian Experience:** the Pritchard-Grim Farm, Rose Hill, the Glen Burnie house, Abrams Delight, Jackson’s Headquarters, Newtown History Center, and Old Town Winchester.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

A. **Winchester’s Battlefields:** All six of the cluster’s battlefields should be interpreted, regardless of integrity. The cluster group should encourage coordinated, cohesive interpretation of each battle among the various public trust battlefield landowners. For instance, the interpretation of Third Winchester is presented through a driving tour and wayside signage at separate sites.

B. **Winchester’s Pedestrian Mall:** The downtown pedestrian mall in Old Town Winchester encompasses what was the town of Winchester during the Civil War. Today, it affords strong potential as a core destination for visitors within the Winchester cluster.

Interpretively, the mall should be the focus for creative and stimulating outdoor exhibits on Winchester’s role and the civilian experience during the Civil War. Exhibits can combine sculpture, artwork, models, interpretive paving, and constructions with exhibit panels and interpretive content. Individual buildings on the mall and on nearby streets can be interpreted through discrete building-by-building exhibits and handsome, illustrated walking tour kiosks and brochures. Exhibits can direct visitors to other cluster sites where the Civil War civilian experience and related themes are also featured. Because of unique interpretive potential of Old Town Winchester’s pedestrian mall, it should be considered an interpretive attraction.

5.3.3 **The Signal Knob Cluster**

The Signal Knob cluster is spread over a broad geographic area and is named for the north end of Massanutten Mountain, which was used as an observation post. It is one of the most prominent landscape features in the National Historic District. The division of the Valley by Massanutten Mountain, the narrowing of the western portion of the Valley, and the high ground created across the valley of Cedar Creek created natural defensive positions that were utilized by both armies during successive military campaigns.
Within the cluster, Belle Grove Plantation is one of the five regional attractions in the National Historic District. The Signal Knob cluster features five significant battles, Front Royal, Overall, Fisher's Hill, Tom's Brook, and Cedar Creek. The historic towns of Strasburg and Middletown are located near the center of the cluster which also includes the communities of Front Royal, Tom's Brook, and Fisher's Hill. All five have strong historic character and are excellent locations for visitor services and interpretation of the civilian experience during the war. The potential for coordinated interpretation of Signal Knob's battlefields, attractions, and historic towns is very high.

The Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park has also been identified as a regional attraction even though it is still in its development phase. The presence of the National Park Service will greatly enhance this cluster and should be helpful in organizing and coordinating the various sites and units of local government. There is a strong potential that a cluster orientation center might be co-located with a visitor center for the park.

Shared themes of The Battlefields and The Campaigns (see Section 3.3) within the Signal Knob cluster and potential interpretive partners include:

- **Front Royal:** Town of Front Royal, Stonewall Jackson Museum at Hupp's Hill, Belle Boyd Cottage, Warren Rifles Confederate Museum;
- **Overall:** Historic Roadway Exhibits;
- **Fisher's Hill:** Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (as a landowner);
- **Tom's Brook:** Historic Roadway Exhibits; Shenandoah County; Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (as a landowner); Civil War Preservation Trust;
- **Cedar Creek:** Cedar Creek & Belle Grove National Historical Park, made up of the National Park Service, Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation, National Trust for Historic Preservation/Belle Grove Plantation, Shenandoah County, and Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (as a landowner);
- **Valley Campaign:** Stonewall Jackson Museum at Hupp's Hill.

Shared themes of The Valley at partnering sites include:

- **Context for War:** Belle Grove Plantation, Strasburg Museum, Newtown History Center, and the cluster’s historic towns;
- **Strategic Valley:** Fisher's Hill, Cedar Creek & Belle Grove National Historical Park;
- **Civilian Experience:** Newtown History Center, Belle Grove Plantation, historic towns.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

A. **Signal Knob’s Battlefields:** The cluster partners should support the interpretation of each battlefield within the Signal Knob cluster. In particular, the partners should support the development of Cedar Creek & Belle Grove National Historical Park as a comprehensive battlefield interpretive experience and a premier battlefield visitor destination. Interpretation at Fisher's

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2 It should be noted that the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation plays a dual role in some cluster areas. In all areas, it serves as a general partner and coordinator of the clusters’ work. In certain clusters where the Battlefields Foundation owns battlefield land, such as the Signal Knob cluster where the Foundation owns land at three battlefields, it also participates in the cluster partnership as an owner and interpreter of specific battlefield sites.
Hill should serve as a model, high quality passive interpretive experience, incorporating the story of Overall. The town of Front Royal should be assisted with the further interpretation of the Battle of Front Royal within the town. The cluster partners should facilitate enhanced and coordinated interpretation of the Battle of Tom's Brook.

B. **Historic Towns:** The cluster partners should provide assistance to Strasburg, Middletown, Stephens City, and Front Royal with the development of appropriate visitor services that will enhance the towns’ historic character and support the local economy. This should only be done at the request of the individual communities.

### 5.3.4 The New Market Cluster

New Market is the location of the 1864 Battle of New Market and home to the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park that interprets the battle. Situated near the center of the Shenandoah Valley, New Market is a convenient stop for visitors who are traveling north or south on Interstate 81 or US 11 as well as east-west on US 211.

The New Market Battlefield State Historical Park is one of the five regional attractions within the National Historic District. Its interpretive and educational programming is highly developed, and programming for school students results in a significant portion of the attraction’s visitation.

Unlike the Winchester, Signal Knob, or Rockingham clusters, the New Market cluster has a single battlefield but a number of related militarily important sites, including the New Market Gap in Massanutten Mountain and its ability to link the Page Valley with the main valley. In addition, the cluster’s towns of New Market, Mt. Jackson, Edinburg, and Luray retain their strong historic character.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

A. **Entire Battlefield:** In partnership with the town and local landowners, the State Historical Park should be encouraged to work with the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation to extend the interpretation of the Battle of New Market beyond the park boundaries to encompass the entire battlefield, the town, and the full range of events associated with the battle. Off-site interpretation may be accomplished by a combination of a driving tour, pull-offs, Historic Roadway exhibits, short walking tours where possible, published materials, audio tour, and placemakers to help visitors read the battlefield landscape.

B. **Model Educational Programs:** The educational programs offered to students at the State Historical Park should be used as a model for other battlefields within the Valley where partners have the capability to conduct similar programs as desired.

C. **Historic Towns:** The cluster partners should provide assistance to the historic towns with the development of appropriate visitor services that will enhance the towns’ historic character and support the local economy. This should only be done at the request of the individual communities.
5.3.5 The Rockingham Cluster

Visitor attractions and historic sites associated with the Rockingham cluster are spread across the city of Harrisonburg, Rockingham County, southern Page County, and northeastern Augusta County. The three battlefields associated with the cluster, Cross Keys, Port Republic, and Piedmont are located near one another southeast of Harrisonburg. All three have a high degree of landscape integrity and are likely to be interpreted with driving tours, exhibit pull-offs, remote interpretation, and short walking tours where possible.

Shared themes of The Battlefields that occurred in the Rockingham cluster area and potential interpretive partners include:

- **Cross Keys**: Civil War Preservation Trust, Lee-Jackson Educational Foundation, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (as a landowner);
- **Port Republic**: Civil War Preservation Trust, Society of Port Republic Preservationists, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (as a landowner).

Shared themes of particular strength within the cluster under the primary theme of The Valley include:

- **Cultural Diversity**,  
- **Agricultural Economy**,  
- **Religious Conviction**,  
- **Breadbasket of the Confederacy**,  
- **Civilian Perspective**,  
- **Divided Loyalties, and**  
- **The Burning**.

The Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center, Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society, Daniel Harrison House, Miller-Kite House, and Port Republic Museum are local interpretive attractions that can share and coordinate presentation of these themes. Exhibits along the cluster’s Historic Roadways should also play an important role in linking the attractions with coordinated interpretation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

A. **Battlefields**: Because of the strong agricultural economy in this area of the National Historic District, the preservation plan for the Cross Keys and Port Republic battlefields contemplates that preservation of these battlefields will be accomplished through the use of conservation easements and that interpretation will take place primarily through driving tours, off-site exhibits, and wayside exhibits at identified vantage points. Strong efforts should be made to link the battlefields with the other military operations that took place in the cluster area, e.g. The Burning or the Battle of Harrisonburg.

B. **Downtown Harrisonburg**: The City of Harrisonburg is undertaking a program to revitalize its historic downtown. A new visitor center has recently been created at the historic Hardesty-Higgins House near the center of downtown. The new visitor center will serve as an interim Civil War Orientation Center, to be developed in 2008 and 2009.
C. **Historic Towns:** The cluster partners should provide assistance to the historic towns—Elkton, Dayton, Bridgewater, and others—with the development of appropriate visitor services that will enhance the towns’ historic character and support the local economy. This should only be done at the request of the individual communities.

### 5.3.6 The McDowell Cluster

Located west of the Valley in the Allegheny Mountains, the McDowell cluster interprets the Battle of McDowell, which was the first Confederate victory during Jackson’s 1862 Valley Campaign. The Highland Museum & Heritage Center, located in a historic house within the village, serves as the cluster’s Civil War Orientation Center.

The remote location of the battle and the mountainous battlefield itself provide unique opportunities in terms of visitor experience and interpretation. While the battle may be quickly understood from selected vantage points near the village, hiking the steep wooded battlefield will be a draw for outdoor-oriented visitors. Today, the cluster and battlefield hold a unique distinction: a higher percentage of the core area has been preserved at McDowell than at any other battlefield in the National Historic District.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

A. **Entire Battlefield:** Thanks to the large extent of public trust ownership of the battlefield landscape, it can be experienced and interpreted through hiking trails, kiosks, interpretive signage, and electronic media such as podcasts. Coordination of a comprehensive interpretive experience among the various public trust owners is highly encouraged. These organizations include the Civil War Preservation Trust, Lee-Jackson Educational Foundation, the Highland Historical Society, and the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation.

B. **Village of McDowell:** McDowell retains much of its 19th century character; it should be integrated into the interpretation of the Valley. The cluster partners should provide assistance with the development of appropriate visitor services that will enhance the village’s historic character and support the local economy. This should only be done at the request of the individual communities.

C. **Adventure Tourism:** McDowell’s interpretive program should include special opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts such as hiking, backpacking, and mountain biking. Interpretive rewards should be available for the hardy souls who undertake such opportunities. Battle lines might be marked out on the mountain with trails and interpretive exhibits.

### 5.3.7 Civil War Orientation Centers

The National Historic District Management Plan proposes that each cluster establish a Civil War orientation center to guide visitors through the District. This Interpretive Plan encourages the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation to work with cluster partners to establish an orientation center in each cluster. Interpretively, these centers will place the Shenandoah Valley into the larger context of the Civil War and introduce the Valley’s major interpretive themes.
Civil War orientation centers will also link each cluster to its historic resources and to the Valley as a whole; each should be planned from a District-wide point of view. In addition to introducing Valley-wide themes, the orientation centers explain to visitors what Civil War sites, resources, and attractions are offered in that area of the District. The orientation centers are envisioned as starting points for visitors, briefly interpreting the themes and stories of the particular cluster within the context of the District but with the primary purpose of encouraging visitors to get out into the landscape to experience first-hand the battlefields, historic towns, and other sites within the cluster. Each center should also encourage visitors to explore the other areas of the District.

Specific guidelines for the creation and content of the Civil War orientation centers may be found in Chapter 3 of the Management Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Creation of Civil War Orientation Centers: Cluster partners, local governments, and the Battlefields Foundation should establish a Civil War orientation center in each cluster. Management of the orientation center should be the responsibility of the local partners with the endorsement and guidance of the cluster group. The Battlefields Foundation should assist the clusters in securing funding for the centers and be an active participant in their planning. Access to the Civil War orientation centers should be free of charge.

B. Orientation Center Content: Orientation centers are not intended to be museum attractions, but rather are intended to (a) provide interpretive context for the District and the cluster, (b) provide information on how visitors can experience the sites in the cluster, and (c) encourage visitors to visit the cluster’s Civil War sites. Interpretive content in the orientation centers should be simple and straightforward and should use the graphic identity of the National Historic District. Exhibits should:
- Introduce the concept and organization of the District as a whole;
- Introduce the primary themes of the District, The Valley, The Campaigns, and The Battles;
- Introduce the shared themes most significant to the individual cluster, including the campaign(s) related to its battlefield(s); and
- Outline the overall context and significance of each battle that took place within the cluster.

C. Additional Interpretive Media: Take-away information in appropriate media formats should guide visitors in touring and experiencing the cluster battlefields and attractions. It should include suggested driving routes, visitor information on each battlefield and attraction, and publications and media that help link and coordinate interpretation at different sites, including themed driving tours.

5.4 BATTLEFIELDS

The Shenandoah Valley’s Civil War battlefields are significant and unique landscape resources which are ripe for interpretation. Preservation and interpretation are the essential purposes of the 1996 legislation that established the National Historic District. Preserved battlefield lands provide an opportunity for residents and visitors to experience
the Valley’s varied landscapes and learn about the crucial events that helped shape our nation’s history. The goal of this Interpretive Plan is to guide the public-trust battlefield owners and partners to interpret these battlefields in a manner that is engaging, illuminating, inspiring, and prompts them to seek further information about these pivotal events in American history.

The Valley’s battlefield interpretation should be known as the best there is. Interpretive material should be consistent and coordinated from site to site and should be tailored to the characteristics of both the site and the partners who are responsible for it. In addition, interpretation should be targeted to the general public and not the Civil War experts. How information is presented – how the stories are told – should make use of a variety of media to make the information easily accessible and provide a variety of learning experiences. Tasteful, creative, and unobtrusive interpretive exhibits available to visitors on the battlefields should amplify information gained at the Civil War orientation centers and other venues and should be designed and installed in a way that enhances the scenic character and historical integrity of these landscapes.

The sheer number, size, and complexity of the Valley’s Civil War battlefields are a particular challenge to both preserving and interpreting them. Battlefields are measured in thousands of acres. Moreover, the battles swept over a landscape without regard to ownership or jurisdictional boundaries. In addition, the landscape and battlefields are divided by varying ownerships, development patterns, and highway construction. The result is that interpretation of the battlefields needs to help overcome these complicating factors. The programs must help the public understand the magnitude of the battles and reach beyond the individual protected and interpreted parcels.

Most of the Valley’s battlefields are currently interpreted to some degree. Each battlefield presents a unique set of challenges because of ownership patterns, amount of development that has taken place or retained integrity, local governing policies, topography, and patterns of protected land. Through effective planning, coordination, and creative interpretive techniques, ways can be found to accurately convey the scale, sequence, and significance of battles in a manner that is memorable despite these challenges.

The goal of the National Historic District is to have a base level of coordinated, high quality interpretation at all of the Valley’s battlefields by the sesquicentennial of the Civil War, 2011, and to continue to build upon that interpretation incrementally over time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. **Battlefield Interpretive Plans**: An interpretive plan—whether formal or informal—should be developed for each battlefield. In almost every case, these plans should be collaboratively developed by the public-trust landowners of the individual battlefield as well as other local stakeholders. The interpretive plans should:
   - Recognize and delineate the opportunities and specific challenges associated with interpretation of the battlefield;
Highlight the key themes and points that all visitors should come away with after visiting the battlefield; Describe the potential visitor experiences that are appropriate to the site, what visitors should be able to do when visiting; Outline a comprehensive vision for interpretation including media and techniques that overcome or minimize challenges, convey key interpretive messages and content, provide a range of opportunities for things to do tailored to the site, and meet the partners’ overall goals and objectives; Structure a phased plan for implementation that is manageable, builds the interpretive experience over time toward the desired vision, and is sustainable by the partners.

B. Principal Components of Interpretive Plans: Battlefield interpretive plans should include:
- Historical overview oriented to the battlefield landscape and places where battle actions occurred;
- Statement of significance of the battle;
- Identification of key sites for preservation that have interpretive significance;
- Development of themes and subthemes based upon the battlefield's significance and the District's thematic structure;
- Analysis of existing condition of the battlefield;
- Interpretive presentation and program tailored to the type of interpretive experience that can be offered in various portions of the battlefield, consistent with NPS stewardship guidelines for historic landscape resources;
- Selected interpretive media;
- Implementation steps and estimated costs.

C. Developing an Interpretive Plan: Development of a site-specific interpretive plan for a battlefield could include the following steps:
- Organize battlefield stakeholders;
- Develop a scope of work for the project;
- Organize an advisory committee of historians knowledgeable about the battle;
- Retain professional interpretive planners to assist the stakeholder team;
- Review the vision and goals of the project and the interests and capabilities of the stakeholders;
- Review the significance of the battle;
- Develop key interpretive themes and subthemes;
- Review with advisory committee of historians;
- Review the existing physical conditions and historical integrity of the battlefield;
- Assess potential visitor experience and develop a conceptual plan for interpretation;
- Review with stakeholders and advisory committee of historians;
- Develop the interpretive plan in more detail;
- Review with stakeholders and advisory committee of historians;
- Finalize the plan, estimate costs, and organize implementation.
5.4.1 Battlefield Visitor Experience

For interpretive purposes, the visitor experience that can be developed at the Valley’s Civil War battlefields can be considered in terms of four general types:

- Full-Service Interpretation
- Self-guided Interpretation
- Battlefields with Dispersed or Limited Accessibility
- Battlefields with Low Historic Integrity

Distinguishing the types of visitor experiences available at each battlefield can be helpful in creating an overall vision for interpretation of an individual battlefield and, through that vision, in selecting appropriate interpretive media for implementation. Visitor experience describes what opportunities will be available for visitors to do when visiting the battlefield. Each battlefield is different, and some battlefields may be able to offer a mix of opportunities and experiences. In developing an interpretive plan, the partners at each battlefield should clearly define goals in terms of the type of experiences they wish to create.

Full-Service Interpretive Site:

A full service interpretive experience can be created at Civil War battlefields that have the potential to develop a full range of interpretive programming and become visitor attractions. This is possible where substantial portions of a battlefield are in public-trust ownership and accessible to the public. It also requires a managing entity or partnership that has the capacity to develop, coordinate, and sustain a high-quality interpretive experience in addition to more extensive visitor services.

The development of full service sites should be encouraged wherever possible and should be supported by the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation and its partners as interest and funding are available. Such sites are complex and costly; the extent to which they are developed is entirely up to the owners and partners. The following components should be considered part of a full-service site.

- **Entrance Fee:** Fees are essential to support maintenance of buildings and facilities, exhibits, staffing, and interpretive materials and trails.
- **Visitor Services:** A range of visitor services should be provided, including parking areas; bus drop-off and parking; walkways; information desk; rest rooms; an orientation, programming or classroom space; lunch area; and landscape amenities such as benches and waste receptacles. Primary buildings and landscape areas should be accessible in accordance with the requirements of Americans with Disabilities Act.
- **Interior Exhibits:** Interior interpretive exhibits should be provided. At a minimum, interior exhibits should outline the significance and context of the battle, provide an overview of events, and describe the outcome and consequences of the battle. Exhibits should be professionally designed and prepared under the guidance of historians familiar with the battle.
Interpretive Plan

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District

• **Publications and Supporting Media:** Brochures and maps should be available to guide visitors through the battlefield. More detailed guidebooks may also be available. Electronic media using CDs, MP3 players, and cell phones should be considered in support of walking or driving tours.

• **Battlefield Landscape:** The entire battlefield should be interpreted to visitors in some manner even if not all of the battlefield is preserved or accessible. Significant portions of the battlefield should be available for visitation.

• **Related Exhibits:** Within the accessible battlefield landscape, related exhibits should be provided. These might include historic buildings, house museums, farmsteads, agricultural exhibits, and historic landscape features.

• **Programming and Events:** Full-service sites are likely to develop programming and events for visitors. Guides and docents may be available for the battlefield, house museums, and specific exhibits, especially during periods of heavy visitation and special events. Living history presentations are especially appropriate.

• **Audience Types:** Full-service sites should cater to a broad range of audience types. In addition to independent travelers and Civil War enthusiasts, these sites should be capable of accommodating tour buses, group tours, and students. Group tours are likely to require battlefield guides and special programming. Student groups require special guided educational programs, study guides, and teacher aids coordinated with state and local curriculum. Local and regional residents will use the sites as places to visit on special occasions and as places to bring visiting friends and relatives.

• **Media:** Interpretive presentations and media likely to be used on the battlefield may include driving tours, a variety of walking tours, guided tours, waysides, media enhanced waysides, themed landscape exhibits, restored landscapes, placemakers, electronic media, and a variety of publications.

• **Managing Entity:** Full-service sites require management by an experienced and responsible public-trust entity or partnership of entities with professional staff. They will need a reliable source of funding from government appropriations and grants, private foundations, individual contributors, earned income, and endowments. The management entities should possess a well-developed fundraising capability. These sites also should have marketing plans and designated marketing budgets.

At present, the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park is the only battlefield within the District that offers a full-service interpretive experience to visitors. Belle Grove Plantation also fits this category, though the Civil War is one segment of its overall interpretive mission. The partnership developing through the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park also has the potential to offer a full-service interpretive experience. It is possible that the Kernstown battlefield (that includes the Battles of First and Second Kernstown) could become an integrated full-service site through a partnership between the Kernstown Battlefield Association (Pritchard-Grim Farm) and the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley (Rose Hill). Other battlefields could also be developed in a comprehensive manner, either as a whole or in part, in the future.
Self-guided Interpretive Site:

Some battlefields are best suited to providing self-guided or unstaffed interpretive experiences. These may be of high quality with rich content and offer trails, parking, kiosks and other amenities, but they would not be staffed on a regular basis. The land is managed by public-trust owners and is accessible to visitors. These sites are not, however, highly developed as visitor attractions.

Self-guided battlefields are important components to interpreting the Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley and reflect the intentions and vision of both the enabling legislation and Management Plan – where the landscape is a major resource. They provide a cost-effective way for land to be preserved and publicly available. The self-guided experience is the hallmark of National Heritage Areas in general and the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District in particular. In the future, the Shenandoah Valley will likely continue to be known and appreciated by visitors for its striking landscape, and the Valley’s passive battlefields will be a central element of the visitor experience.

Characteristics of self-guided sites include:

- **Open to the Public:** These battlefields are open to the public without fees; visitors should be free to explore the battlefield in accordance with their own interests and capabilities.

- **No Onsite Staffing:** These battlefields do not have on-site staff. Battlefields owned by remote non-profit organizations may have no staff presence at all, except for occasional maintenance, while those owned by public agencies may have a more regular, periodic presence or patrolling. Owners and managers of these sites need to closely monitor these areas and be available in some way for general questions from the public regarding policies about relic hunting and recreational activities and what to do if an artifact is washed into the open, violations of easements are found, or disrespect of neighboring landowners occurs.

- **Visitor Services:** Self-guided battlefields should have designated parking areas designed and landscaped to acceptable county standards. Landscape amenities such as benches, waste receptacles, and a small open shelter should be available adjacent to the parking area. Portable toilets may be provided. In general, visitor areas in the vicinity of the parking areas should be ADA accessible.

- **Trailheads and Trails:** Trailheads should be provided at parking areas and provide information about trail systems, site regulations, and how to access interpretive information. Introductory interpretation about the battle should be provided at the trailhead, both for those who will use the walking trails as well as for those who may wait behind. A variety of trails should be provided with varying lengths, required timeframes, and levels of difficulty. Trails should be specifically designed to present the battlefield stories. Trails should be low maintenance, in most cases mown grass or earth. Accessible gravel trails may be provided along primary trails of short distance in the vicinity of parking areas.

- **Publications and Supporting Media:** Brochures and maps should be available to guide visitors through the battlefield. More detailed guidebooks may also be
available at local businesses and visitor centers; information at the site should
tell visitors where these may be purchased. Electronic media using CDs, MP3
players, and cell phones should be considered in support of walking or driving
tours.

**Additional Media:** These may include driving tours linking accessible
landscape areas with other battlefield sites, walking tours, waysides, themed
landscape areas, and placemakers (see Section 5.4.6-H.). Enhanced exhibits
may be provided at special locations, such as vantage points and near parking
areas.

**Programming and Events:** Programming and special events may be provided
at the site on occasion. Trained battlefield guides could be available by special
arrangement.

**Audience Types:** Self-guided battlefields will be particularly attractive to
independent travelers and Civil War enthusiasts. Those who are more physically
able are likely to make fuller use of the trail system and to come back a second
and third time to explore further. Local residents may also use these sites as
public parks and for passive recreation such as walking or jogging. However,
the management entities should provide guidelines for use, so that these
hallowed grounds do not become active recreational areas. Longer, more remote
trails may be appropriate for mountain bikes. Horseback riding may also be
considered as an appropriate use, though trail erosion from overuse could be a
concern. Group tours may visit passive battlefields as one stop in a multi-stop
tour-guide program; they are unlikely, however, to walk the trails or stay long.
Student groups are unlikely to visit passive battlefields with any regularity.

**Managing Entity:** The owners of battlefields with self-guided interpretation
are likely to be non-profit organizations. However, public parkland may also be
passive battlefields. While a staff presence is not required at the battlefields, the
managing entities must be able to provide an adequate level of landscape and
site maintenance. Marketing may be provided through the local orientation
centers, overall marketing for the National Historic District or other partners.

Fisher’s Hill is an example of a battlefield with strong potential to provide a high quality
self-guided interpretive experience. Third Winchester also appears to be developing
along these lines. McDowell likely will continue to depend on unstaffed interpretation,
though the local historical society might choose to provide regular or occasional guides
and certainly the McDowell Civil War Orientation Center provides elements of a full-
service interpretive site.

### Battlefields with Dispersed or Limited Accessibility:

Some of the Valley’s battlefields will remain in private ownership
and will be protected primarily through conservation easements.
They will retain a high degree of historical landscape integrity
but will have limited public accessibility. Because of the size of
the Valley’s battlefields, the use of easements is an appropriate
and effective landscape preservation technique that is strongly
encouraged. Despite the very limited access possible on these private
lands, interesting, thorough, and compelling interpretation of the
battlefields is possible and should also be a hallmark of the National Historic District experience.

In general, interpretation of large battlefield landscape areas that are not publicly accessible can be accomplished by identifying key vantage points from which the battlefield stories can be told, linked through a designated driving tour. Vantage points are places where visitors may stop, get out of the vehicle, experience interpretive content, and relate it to the vistas before them. The Battlefields Foundation has developed preservation plans for four of the National Historic District’s ten battlefields. Each of these identifies sites that should be protected because they offer interpretive vantage points. Plans for the other six battlefields should be developed.

Battlefields that are interpreted from vantage points should have the following characteristics.

- **Driving Tours**: The vantage points should be identified and linked by easy-to-follow driving tours. Driving tour routes should follow a logical sequence both geographically and in terms of storytelling.

- **Limited Public Accessibility**: Public access may be limited to the vantage points themselves. Remote interpretive locations may be combined with more comprehensive and accessible interpretive sites elsewhere on the battlefield.

- **No On-site Staffing**: There will not be on-site staffing. However, through partnership agreements, local attractions might be able to provide the visitor with in-person assistance to supplement the driving tour. Maintenance may be undertaken by the individual owners of the pull-off areas, which may differ from location-to-location.

- **Visitor Services**: Limited visitor services should be provided at pull-offs and vantage points. Pull-offs should be safe in terms of traffic and visibility and should be clearly marked. Parking or vehicular pull-off areas should be delineated and should be paved with pervious surfaces. Locations should be appealingly landscaped. An accessible walking surface should be provided for some portion of the area with interpretive exhibits, benches, and waste receptacles as appropriate. The limits of the accessible area should be clearly marked. A safe area for a bus pull-off and the disembarking of tour groups from buses should be provided.

- **Respecting Adjacent Landowners**: It is important that the interpretation of privately owned lands have the approval and support of the landowners. Landowners should be brought into the planning process, and their needs and concerns addressed. Sites should be selected and interpretive presentations should be designed to protect the privacy of adjacent landowners. After the driving tour and interpretive presentation are established, the conduct of visitors should be monitored by the partners responsible for the battlefield, and a specific contact organization or person provided to landowners should issues or problems occur. Issues should be addressed swiftly, systematically, and responsibly when they are raised.

- **Publications and Supporting Media**: Brochures and maps specifically oriented to the driving tours and a description of battlefield events from selected vantage points should be available to visitors. More detailed guidebooks may also be
available. Electronic media using CDs, MP3 players, and cell phones should be considered in support of the designated driving tours.

- **Additional Media**: Interpretive exhibits or kiosks supplementing the driving tour publications should be provided at pull-offs and vantage points. Exhibits should be discrete and appropriate to the character and design of the particular site. They should be clearly connected and work in sequence with interpretive exhibits at other stops along the driving tour in describing how the battle unfolded.

- **Programming and Events**: Programming and events are unlikely to be provided at battlefield locations that are interpreted remotely. Tour guides should be available by special arrangement for bus tours.

- **Audience Types**: Independent travelers and Civil War enthusiasts are likely to make the most use of driving tours. Guided group tours using buses are also likely to use the driving tours as part of a sequence of visits to sites within the Valley. Student groups are also likely to use the tours.

- **Managing Entity**: These types of battlefields generally have a variety of ownership patterns, some public-trust owners, some private landowners, and, if conservation easements have been used to protect the land, a state or local government easement holder may be involved. Development of driving tour for these sites should be a partnership effort between the various interests and stakeholders.

Cross Keys and Port Republic are outstanding examples of battlefields where high quality remote interpretation of the battlefield landscape is possible. At battlefields such as Tom’s Brook, the landscape could be interpreted from remote vantage points associated with Civil War Trails sites along the Valley’s historic roadways. Because of the size of most of the Valley’s battlefields, remote interpretation is likely to be used for at least a part of the overall experience of most battlefields.

## Types of Visitor Experience

- Full-Service Interpretation
- Self-guided Interpretation
- Battlefields with Dispersed or Limited Accessibility

## Battlefields with Low Historical Integrity:

Almost all of the battlefields within the National Historic District have some level of contemporary intrusion that adversely affects the integrity of the historic landscape, and several have all but disappeared. While loss of integrity is a serious issue for many of the Valley’s battlefields, it is important that all of the battlefields within the National Historic District be interpreted. Generally these low integrity battlefields are found in urban settings.

Interesting and meaningful interpretation can be provided for these battlefields. In most cases, the general topography of the battlefields can still be read, despite the new development. Creative ways should be found to interpret these battlefields using exhibits and media from public right-of-ways and landscaped areas on partnering sites. Exhibits should help visitors understand the character and appearance of the landscape at the time of the battle.

- **Public Accessibility**: Exhibits installed in developed areas are likely to be highly visible, self-guided, and fully accessible to the public. Some exhibits may be
installed within the right-of-way of public streets and sidewalks. Others may be installed in public parks, on other publicly owned land.

- **Driving and Walking Tours:** Self-guided driving and walking tours, as appropriate, should be used to link interpretive locations in developed areas. Tours in developed areas should be designed to be as safe and pleasant as possible. Routes and interpretive locations should be selected not only for their story telling potential and ease of navigation, but also to be as appealing as possible, despite the modern context. Period photographs, illustrations, and illustrative maps will be important in conveying the historic appearance of the landscape.

- **Context Sensitive Design:** Exhibits at selected interpretive locations should be designed to fit in with the surrounding landscape. The exhibits should appear to be a natural part of the community infrastructure, enhancing the local quality of life.

- **Visitor Services:** Where possible, interpretive locations should be designed as small pocket parks. Along sidewalks and adjacent to parking areas, paving can be expanded, benches installed, and trees and shrubs planted to create an appealing context for interpretive exhibits. Other than information and landscape amenities, no specific visitor services within developed areas are anticipated.

- **Publications and Supporting Media:** Brochures and maps of the driving and walking tours should be available to visitors. Coordinated interpretation should be provided in the publications for selected locations along the route. Published interpretive information should be supplemented by site exhibits whenever possible. More detailed guidebooks about the battle may also be made available. Electronic media using CD’s, MP3 players, and cell phones should be considered in support of the driving and walking tours.

- **Creative Exhibits and Public Art:** Contemporary locations provide an excellent opportunity for the installation of a variety of creative types of exhibits. Sculpture, murals and other forms of public art are appropriate in many contemporary contexts and can provide interesting interpretive content. Monuments, statues, flags, and cannons are some of the more common types of public art that have been installed historically in developed areas. Decorative paving, scale models, relief maps, banners, and other creative means can be used to effectively interpret the battle while enhancing the community landscape.

- **Audience Types:** Independent travelers and Civil War enthusiasts will most likely be prominent users of the driving and walking tours in developed areas. It is hoped that local residents will also be aware of interpretive installations and make use of them during the course of their daily lives. Group tours will likely stop at selected locations along the routes for guided interpretation, but they are unlikely to fully follow the tours. During special community events and festivals, guided public tours can be featured along the interpretive routes.

- **Managing Entities:** Interpretation of battlefields in developed areas should be undertaken by local partners coordinating with local municipalities and adjacent landowners. In general, the organization, design, implementation, maintenance, and marketing of the interpretive experience should be the responsibility of designated partners within the regional battlefield cluster with municipalities playing a prominent if not leading role.
Valley battlefields that have lost most of their integrity include First Winchester and Front Royal. Portions of battlefields such as Third Winchester have lost large areas to new development, though other portions remain intact.

RECOMMENDATION

A. **Interpretive Experience:** In preparing interpretive plans for individual battlefields, partnering entities should determine the type of interpretive experience or experiences that are appropriate to the battlefield, are desired by partners, and can be sustained by the partners over time. A mix of experiences may be appropriate, with different experiences applied to different portions of the battlefields. In general, types of experiences may be classified in terms of full-service, self guided, remote, and low integrity interpretive experiences, and the guidelines presented above should be used to help assess the appropriateness of the experiences to the portions of the battlefield under consideration.

5.4.2 Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Battlefield Information

The first step in providing interpretive content for the Valley's Civil War battlefields is to make sure that interesting and appropriate information is available to visitors about the battlefield as they are considering places to visit and planning their trip. The quality of information provided will be a reflection of the quality of the visit they can expect.

For the foreseeable future, the internet is the most likely place that information will be accessed by potential visitors. Each battlefield should have a high quality presentation available on-line. The National Historic District website should be the primary access point for information about each battlefield. This award-winning website is currently in the process of a phased redevelopment. Individual battlefields should either have designated locations within the District-wide website for their own presentations, or they should have their own websites closely linked to the District-wide site. In general, individual battlefield websites should have the same format, structure, design, and graphic identity as the District-wide website in order to create a seamless, well-coordinated presentation. Exceptions will occur, especially where large portions of the battlefields are part of independent regional attractions, such as the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park and the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park.

Battlefield websites should also be useful for introductory research about the battles for students and Civil War enthusiasts. They should provide basic but comprehensive information about the battles, and they should be a primary tool for guiding visitors to more detailed information should they desire it. High quality research guidance should be considered part of post-trip information available to visitors who have seen the site and might be interested in a return visit.

Individual battlefield websites may include the following interpretive information:

- Summary of the context, significance, and outcome of the battle;
- Overview of the campaign of which the battle was a part, setting the battle in context;
- Overview of the battle;
Illustrative map of the battle;  
Order of battle;  
Information on key personalities associated with the battle;  
Collection of first-hand accounts;  
Historic photographs and illustrations with information about them;  
Historic maps of the battle with information about them;  
Selection of contemporary photographs of the battlefield;  
Bibliography for further reading and research.

Visitor information on the website should include:  
Directions to the battlefield;  
Contemporary map of the battlefield showing publicly accessible sites;  
Driving tour that can be downloaded (published version);  
Information about sites that can be visited including additional website links where appropriate;  
Podcasts, audio driving and walking tours, and additional electronic interpretive media when appropriate and possible;  
Contact information.

Battlefield websites can also include or link to areas of the National Historic District website that describe the current preservation status of the battlefield and information about preservation activities underway.

RECOMMENDATION

A. Battlefield Websites: Each battlefield should have high quality, coordinated interpretive and visitor information about the battlefield available online. Battlefields may either have a designated individual location within the District-wide website or an individual website closely linked to the District-wide site. The format, structure, design, and graphic identity should be coordinated District-wide.

5.4.3 Interpretive Publications

To help coordinate and interrelate the battlefields in the National Historic District, there needs to be a defined set of interpretive materials developed for each. These can be in both print and electronic formats. The existing cluster brochures, driving tour descriptions, and guidebooks provide a starting point for creating the District-wide series. Pending further discussion by the various partners, the District-wide battlefield publications might include the following.

- District-wide guidebook;
- Individual battlefield publications, including driving and walking tours (depending on the interpretive approach for a specific battlefield);
- Campaign and battlefield interpretive guidebooks;
- Bibliography of publications about the battle.

Interpretive publications should also convey a unified preservation message, including how visitors should report damage or policy violations as well as ways that they can become involved in the ongoing preservation effort.
RECOMMENDATIONS

A. **District-Wide Guidebook:** The development of a District-wide guidebook is recommended in the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District Marketing Plan. The guidebook would be a concise, graphically appealing visitor guide that could be placed in brochure racks or easily mailed. The guidebook will replace the existing cluster brochures.

B. **Battlefield Interpretive Publications:** Each battlefield in the District may have a series of publications with interpretive and visitor information, depending on the interpretive plan or approach adopted for each battlefield. These publications should be coordinated District-wide and have similar and recognizable design characteristics and a uniform style of narrative. Varying layers and depths of interpretation should be made available to visitors through the publications. The series will build upon the current publications being created within the District and may evolve over time. Specific publications are likely to include driving and/or walking tours, and interpretive guidebooks.

C. **Campaign and Battlefield Guidebooks:** The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation and its partners have begun producing detailed interpretive guidebooks for campaigns and battlefields. The Battlefields Foundation’s interpretive booklets about Stonewall Jackson’s Valley Campaign and Sheridan’s 1864 Shenandoah Campaign, and the Kernstown Battlefield Association’s booklet about the First and Second Battles of Kernstown are models for other publications.

D. **Bibliographies:** Bibliographies of books and articles on each battle and each campaign should be made available. As mentioned above, the guidebooks currently being prepared within the District include bibliographies for further reading. Bibliographies should also be provided online.

5.4.4 **Battlefield Driving Tours**

Because of the size of the battlefields, driving tours are a primary means of interpreting battlefields within the National Historic District. Each battlefield should have a driving tour.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. **Battlefield Driving Tours:** Each battlefield within the National Historic District should have a battlefield driving tour on public roads as a primary component of its interpretive program. In general, a complete overview of the battle as it unfolded should be provided and the entire area of the battlefield should be included in the tour. Tours should link stops where visitors may get out of the cars, view the landscape, and see additional exhibits. Driving tours should be components of each battlefield interpretive plan.

B. **Driving Tour Interpretive Experience:** Depending upon the specific battlefield, a combination of the comprehensive, passive, remote, or low
integrity visitor interpretive experiences described earlier in this chapter (section 5.4.1) may be created linked by the driving tour. In some cases, the entire driving tour may have a single type of interpretive experience.

C. **Driving Tour Routes:** The routes selected for driving tours should be safe, clear, easy to navigate, and should only use public roads. Tour routes should be selected to create a logical sequential presentation of the battle as it unfolded in time. Routes should also be selected to present the scenic quality of the landscape and the community in its best light. The installation of small, unobtrusive wayfinding markers should be considered along battlefield driving tour routes.

D. **Driving Tour Stops:** The driving tours should be designed to link authentic places and include:
- Specific historic locations (places where specific events to be interpreted occurred);
- Vantage points from which the battlefield terrain can be viewed and battle action can be explained and understood;
- Sites where visitors may explore publicly accessible battlefield properties;
- Clearly marked sites that are safe;
- Appropriate site signage;
- Pull-offs and parking areas designed in accordance with county and municipal standards. Provision for bus pull-offs should also be provided;
- Interpretive exhibits at appropriate locations to supplement what is available through published and electronic media;
- Where appropriate, visitor amenities such as benches and landscaping.

E. **Driving Tour Brochures and Electronic Media:** A published brochure should be created for each battlefield driving tour. For the present, the existing graphic format for battlefield driving tours within the District should be used. In the future, the format may be further developed. The published tours should be available for downloading online. Battlefields should consider using electronic media through CD’s, MP3 players, and or cell phones to enhance the driving tours. The electronic formats could also be downloaded, either for free or for a fee.

### 5.4.5 Battlefield Walking Tours

The ability to experience the variety of battlefield landscapes in a variety of different ways should become the hallmark of a visit to the National Historic District. Walking tours on publicly accessible battlefields should be at the heart of the interpretive presentation. Visitors should be encouraged to go out into the landscape and see the battlefields first-hand. The strongest interpretive experience that can be provided on a battlefield is the experience of walking the authentic landscape over which events occurred with information that brings the stories alive and relates it to specific landmarks and places.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

A. **Battlefield Walking Tours:** Walking tours should be provided for publicly accessible portions of a battlefield. The types and characters of walking tours
B. **Varying Lengths:** Walking tours of varying lengths should be provided to accommodate varying interests, the various timeframes available to visitors, and various physical abilities. Five minute, twenty minute, forty-five minute, and longer walks should be available when possible. Short walking tours in the immediate vicinity of parking areas should be gentle and should be ADA accessible. More ambitious walking trails should be created for individuals with more time and physical ability and to encourage return visits to the battlefield for further exploration.

C. **Trail Networks:** On larger battlefield properties, trail networks should be created with interconnecting loops, inviting exploration. It should not be essential that interpretive exhibits and stopping points along trail networks be experienced in any particular sequence. Where possible, battlefield walking trails should be designed to follow the actual lines of advance of units across the battlefield as well as the actual lines of defense. Trails should be designed for their interpretive potential, not necessarily their aesthetic effect as in most parks. Lastly, of great importance, the trails should be designed keeping in mind the need to protect significant and often fragile historic resources, so that public traffic does not exceed the carrying capacity of the resource. Furthermore, each trail or network of trails should have a trailhead at its entrance point with information about the trails, a map, introductory interpretive content, site regulations, and contact information.

D. **Low Maintenance and Limited Visitor Facilities:** In general, walking trails should be low maintenance, mown grass or earth. Compacted gravel or pervious paved trails will be necessary in ADA accessible areas. A limited number of benches should be provided at appropriate stopping places, especially in locations close to parking areas for older walkers. Otherwise, visitor amenities should be minimal to retain the natural and scenic quality of the landscape.

E. **Rich Interpretive Content:** Walking tours provide the opportunity for richly detailed interpretive content that is site specific. In general, battlefield walking tours should relate directly to the specific portions of the battlefield they traverse. Interpretation along the trails should include first-person quotes or accounts when possible and focus primarily upon the action within the visible distance, always relating it clearly to the larger context. Walking tours should use the landscape to tell the story. They should be specifically oriented to visitors with a deep interest in and curiosity about the subject. Interpretive stops should be sequential along the trail system and should closely relate to one another, but may be experienced in forward or reverse order.

F. **Walking Tour Brochures and Electronic Media:** A published brochure should be created for each set or network of battlefield walking tours. Brochures should be high quality pieces in a graphic format consistent with other interpretive publications within the District. Brochures should include:
   - An introduction linking this portion of the battlefield to the overall context of the battle;
A trail map with interpreted sites located;
• Interpretive information for each designated trail stop;
• Brief first-hand accounts related to specific locations on the battlefield;
• Historic photographs and illustrations, particularly of this portion of the battlefield if available.

Walking tour brochures should be coordinated with other battlefield guides. The published walking tour brochures may be made available for downloading online. Walking tours provide an excellent opportunity for the use of electronic media through CD’s, MP3 players, and or cell phones. The electronic formats could also be downloaded, either for free or for a fee.

G. Walking Tour Exhibits: Trails should be simply but clearly marked. The most basic trails could have number posts with interpretive content provided through the tour brochure and electronic media. Most stops, however, should have an interpretive exhibit. Exhibits should clearly identify landscape features to which their stories relate.

5.4.6 Battlefield Landscapes

Whether providing a battlefield overview from vantage points along a driving tour or detailed site specific interpretation at stops along a walking tour, the battlefield landscape itself is the primary interpretive exhibit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Interpret the Entire Battlefield: Each battlefield within the National Historic District should be interpreted in its entirety. Even for battlefields with strong, comprehensive interpretation at specific locations, it is important that more remote and less accessible portions of the battlefield be included in the interpretive materials. Too often a false impression is created that a small protected parcel is “the battlefield” when in fact, it is only a portion. The visiting public needs to understand the vastness of these Civil War battlefields and the sheer number of soldiers who were involved.

B. Scale and Complexity: The Valley’s battlefields are large and can be measured in terms of thousands of acres. Artillery could fire rounds two to three miles, making high points with a view of the surrounding landscape of critical strategic importance. Armies were also large, requiring large areas in which to encamp, maneuver, and deploy. Maps, when available, were often inaccurate and lacking critical details. The rolling landscape frequently made it impossible to see what was happening even a short distance away. Commanders had great difficulty in understanding what was unfolding across the battlefields and communication and coordination were often far less than adequate. In interpreting the Valley’s battlefields, these issues are of fundamental significance and should be made apparent to visitors. Visitors to each battlefield should come away with a sense of the scale and complexity of the battle and the battlefield landscape.

C. Landscape Interpretation: Battlefield interpretation should use the visible landscape to help tell the story of the battle. Battlefield action and events should be related specifically to the authentic places that can be seen and identified.
from interpretive locations. The places in the landscape where actions occurred should be called out in interpretive brochures, wayside exhibits, and electronic media used at specific interpretive stops.

D. **Walking the Battlefield:** As mentioned in the battlefield walking tour portion of this Plan, visitors should, when possible, be encouraged to walk the battlefield and experience the terrain, timeframes, and physical exertion that soldiers experienced as they moved across the battlefield.

E. **Battlelines:** Defensive lines and lines of attack should be made visibly evident in the landscape without having to read interpretive text. This should be accomplished through the use of landscape management techniques, landmarks, and placemakers (see paragraph H below).

F. **Landscape Management:** Portions of battlefields that are protected by public-trust owners should be managed in a way that helps convey the story to visitors. In planning interpretation of the battlefield, planners should make an effort to understand the appearance of the battlefield at the time of the battle and convey this information to visitors. Portions of the landscape can be managed in special ways to convey the locations of historic field lines, crop types, road traces, and the locations of defensive works and strategic points. Tall grass or other plantings, for instance, can be used to show the location of defensive lines across the rolling fields. In some cases, landscape restoration to its appearance at the time of the battle may be desirable. Vistas that were once open can be sensitively recreated through selective thinning of tree branches. Low maintenance and ecologically sensitive landscape management techniques should be used whenever possible. In all cases, the landscape should be managed to support the authentic historical understanding of the battlefield.

G. **Landmarks:** Landmarks on the battlefield should be preserved and used to help tell the story of the battle. Landmarks may be natural features such as hills, ridges, groves, tree-lines, and streams or may be manmade, such as buildings, roads, or stone walls. Landmarks that were present during the time of the battle, such as terrain features, are of particular significance and should be used whenever possible.

H. **Placemakers:** Placemakers are man-made objects that are set in the landscape to mark the specific places where events occurred for interpretive purposes. Cannons are traditional placemakers that are used on battlefields to mark artillery positions. Monuments have been used on some battlefields to mark unit positions. Worm fencing is frequently used on battlefields to make field lines. Exhibits, colored posts, and other objects can also be used as placemakers. A system of placemakers should be developed throughout the Valley to help visitors read the landscape and to be used as reference points for interpretive exhibits.

I. **Sensitive Placement:** Landscape exhibits, landmarks, placemakers, signage, and other interpretive aids should be sensitively placed in the landscape so that they
look like they belong. The landscape should appear as natural as possible and should not appear cluttered.

5.4.7 Battlefield Exhibits

Shenandoah Valley battlefields should be known for the quality and creativity of their exhibits. As discussed above, the primary battlefield exhibit is the battlefield landscape itself. To help make the landscape come alive, however, interpretive content is necessary. Orientation exhibits, publications, driving tours, and electronic media will provide an overview of battlefield significance and events.

Presently the Civil War Trails signage is the standard for the National Historic District; this should continue and be supplemented with other forms of exhibit media.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. **High Quality Exhibits:** Interpretive exhibits on Shenandoah Valley battlefields should be known for their quality, creativity, clarity, consistency, and effectiveness. Exhibit planning should begin during the development of the interpretive plans for each battlefield. Ideas should be tailored to the characteristics of the battlefield and the interpretive experience that is possible there. Graphic identity for exhibits should be consistent throughout the Valley.

B. **Sustainability:** Interpretive exhibits should be durable and should be within the maintenance capabilities of the managing entity on a year-in year-out basis. Annual budgets should allow for regular maintenance and life cycle replacement.

C. **Appropriate Level of Content:** To establish and maintain a high level of quality in its exhibits, the District partners should follow established standards for public history, recognizing that visitors to battlefields are standing on their feet out of doors. Signage and labels need to be concise. They should address the significance, context, and outcome of the battle, an overview of events, and a sense of the character of the battlefield landscape. Publications, tours, orientation exhibits, and trailheads will be places where primary battlefield content is introduced. The character of the battlefield landscape will be communicated by exposing visitors to it and relating it to interpretive content.

D. **Themes and Stories:** Significance, context, and outcome are the primary thematic concepts for each of the battlefields. They should be clearly stated in the development of the interpretive plans for the battlefields, and they should be used as the basis for developing exhibit ideas and content. In developing interpretive plans for the battlefields, themes and subthemes should be delineated and explored for possible interpretation. Battlefield stories that illustrate themes and subthemes should be identified. Stories and places on the battlefield should be linked where possible.

E. **Actual Events:** While significance, context, themes, and subthemes are important, many visitors just want to know what happened and where it happened. Interpret the actual events of the battle as clearly and simply as possible. Link the events to the actual places where they occurred. Avoid
over-dramatization and glorification. Make events real. Communicate the personal experiences of individual soldiers. Help visitors identify with the actual experience of the events.

F. **Logical Sequence:** Present interpretive content in a logical sequence, linking exhibit to exhibit in an easy, informal way. Determine the most salient pieces of information for the visitor to learn from each site.

G. **Relate Parts to the Whole:** While telling detailed stories on various parts of the battlefield, always relate them back to the whole so they can be understood in context.

H. **Limited Timeframes:** Visitors have limited timeframes. Walkers may only spend thirty seconds at a wayside exhibit. Communicate information quickly and efficiently. Use differing type sizes to distinguish primary information from supporting content. Avoid excessive text and unnecessary detail.

I. **Layers of Depth:** Provide ways for those interested in additional detail to obtain it through sidebars, additional exhibits, supplementary publications, guidebooks, websites, electronic media, and bibliographies.

J. **Visual Communication:** Whenever possible, communicate visually rather than through text. Accurate illustrations and historic photographs or sketches depicting events and relating them directly to the visible landscape can communicate immediately, effectively, and thoroughly.

K. **Accurate Maps:** Exhibit maps should be accurate, easy to read, and related to the visible landscape in front of the viewer. The use of landmarks and placemakers can help orient the visitor to locations on the maps.

L. **Limited Text:** Limit the amount of text on wayside exhibits. Tell the story simply and clearly. Convey the primary points. Avoid excessive lists of units and commanders; save the lists for supplementary, more detailed interpretive formats.

M. **Personal Stories and First-Hand Accounts:** Almost all battlefields abound with first-hand accounts and remembrances. Use personal stories and first-hand accounts to make the battlefield events come alive and personable. Seek stories that note recognizable landscape features. Use photographs of the individuals whenever possible.

N. **Pictures and Personalities:** Include sidebars about individuals involved in the battle, where they came from and what happened later. Individual histories help set the battle and Civil War in context in time and in people's lives.

O. **Variety of Viewpoints:** View battlefield events accurately from varying points of view, north-south, white-black, male-female, adult-child, rich-poor, educated-uneducated.

P. **Various Types of Exhibits:** Develop interesting and creative exhibit ideas tailored to particular places, subjects, and goals.
5.5 **Civil War Related Interpretive Sites**

The Valley’s existing regional and local attractions are critical to the interpretation of the Civil War in the Valley. For the most part, the Valley’s battlefields are at present only minimally interpreted; only New Market (an existing regional attraction) is comprehensively interpreted with a full time professional staff, daily hours of operation, and complete visitor services. Other regional and local interpretive attractions are therefore required to fill out the visitor experience in the Valley and set the stage for visits to the more passively interpreted battlefields and battlefield sites.

5.5.1 **Regional Attractions**

As outlined in Chapter 2, there are five regional visitor attractions located within the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District. These include:

- The Museum of the Shenandoah Valley (Winchester);
- Belle Grove Plantation (Middletown);
- Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park (Middletown);
- New Market Battlefield State Historical Park (New Market); and
- The Frontier Culture Museum (Staunton).

The Valley’s regional attractions are important as anchor destinations interpreting the Valley and the National Historic District. Their professional programming and exhibits set a standard for interpretive presentations within the Valley.

All five of the regional attractions interpret themes related to the National Historic District. This Interpretive Plan encourages making these sites key partners in and to the District as they provide national quality visitor experiences. The five regional attractions are encouraged to work together to coordinate their interpretation, programming, and marketing where it is appropriate. The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation should help facilitate and support this collaboration.

The regional attractions should also be encouraged to partner with smaller attractions with similar thematic subjects, sending visitors to each other to experience related themes and subjects from varying perspectives.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

A. **Support Regional Attractions:** The Battlefields Foundation and the regional attractions should develop close partnerships to coordinate their interpretation, mentor and assist smaller sites, and make the National Historic District a major visitor destination.

B. **Coordination Among Regional Attractions:** The regional attractions should work closely with each other to coordinate their interpretation, visitor experience, and marketing. The Battlefields Foundation should participate in the meetings to help coordinate Valley-wide programs and activities.

C. **Feature Regional Attractions:** Marketing and interpretation within the National Historic District should coordinate with and feature the regional attractions as primary places to visit within the Valley. The regional attractions
should be the models for visitor contact and hospitality within the Valley.

D. **Coordinate with Valley Themes:** Regional attractions should identify and coordinate their interpretive themes and stories with the themes of this Interpretive Plan.

E. **Cluster Leadership:** As appropriate, the regional attractions should play leadership roles in the organization, programs, and presentations of the battlefield clusters. Cluster itineraries, tours, and events should feature visits to the regional attractions and be a central part of each cluster's visitor experience.

F. **Mentor Local Attractions:** Regional attractions should mentor local interpretive attractions in organization, management, interpretation, hospitality, and visitor experience. These may be cluster based and/or thematically based. In coordination with the Battlefields Foundation staff, the regional attractions should help local interpretive attractions identify and attain the level of visitor experience of which they are capable and which presents the Valley in a consistent, high quality manner.

G. **Coordinate Interpretation:** Regional attractions should coordinate their interpretation with each other to the degree practical and with the interpretation at other sites. Attractions should identify potential partners with whom it makes sense to partner. Interpretation at partnering sites should use scripts and content that are clearly linked to those of each other site by specifically discussing the overall shared context and theme, by using common terms and language, and by specifically mentioning and drawing relationships to the partnering sites. Such coordination should be encouraged by the Battlefields Foundation, and should be looked upon favorably when attractions apply for Foundation grants.

H. **Coordinate Itineraries:** Itineraries that link attractions together in an interesting and logical manner should be created and made available to visitors. The itineraries should make it clear to visitors how the sites are thematically linked, no matter in what media or form the itineraries are offered. Media presentations may be in print, audio format, or the presentations of personal guides.

### 5.5.2 Local Interpretive Attractions

In addition to the five regional attractions, the National Historic District is home to a wide variety of local interpretive attractions that present aspects of Valley history and culture to residents and visitors. These community-based local attractions are often the “authentic places” travelers say they are seeking. The variety and quality of the local interpretive attractions are particular strengths of the Valley’s interpretive presentation. Existing local interpretive attractions within the District are reviewed in Chapter 2.

Many of the local interpretive attractions tell stories that are specifically related to the Civil War. Others tell stories that are related to the broader themes of the Valley’s heritage. In addition to telling interesting aspects of the Valley story, the attractions convey the local flavor and hospitality of the Valley first-hand through their intimate settings and direct personal interactions with visitors.
RECOMMENDATIONS

A. **Support Local Interpretive Attractions:** The local attractions should be a key layer in the interpretive framework of the National Historic District where the local, and or folk nature of the region’s stories can be told. To the extent possible, District programs should be crafted to attract the participation of local interpretive attractions by providing them with clear benefits and being flexible enough to adapt to their self interests.

B. **Coordinate with Valley Themes:** Local interpretive attractions should coordinate their interpretive themes and stories with the themes of this Interpretive Plan. Attractions should identify the Valley-wide themes to which their resources and potential stories best relate. Interpretive presentations should make clear reference to the District themes and should clearly illustrate the themes.

C. **Interpretive Plans:** Local attractions should develop individual interpretive plans in coordination with the Foundation and other partners as appropriate. Interpretive plans should (a) identify the themes to which the site’s resources and stories relate (as noted above), (b) outline the visitor experience best suited to the site and its capabilities, and (c) describe the interpretive presentation to be implemented at the site, including proposed formats and media. The implementation of interpretive plans will serve as a basis for the awarding Foundation grants.

D. **Cluster Participation:** Each local interpretive attraction should participate in its local battlefield cluster group. Attractions should assist and be part of the development of itineraries, events, and coordinated interpretation for battlefield clusters.

E. **Coordinate Interpretation:** Local attractions should coordinate their interpretation with that at other sites within their clusters and Valley-wide that are thematically related. Attractions should identify potential partners with whom it makes sense to partner. In particular, local interpretive attractions should seek relationships with regional attractions with which they might partner. Interpretation at partnering sites should use scripts and content that are clearly linked to those of each other site by specifically discussing the overall shared context and theme, by using common terms and language, and by specifically mentioning and drawing relationships to the partnering sites. Such coordination should be among the requirements for receipt of Foundation grants.

F. **Coordinate Itineraries:** Itineraries that link attractions together in a logical manner should be created and made available to visitors. The itineraries should make clear to visitors how the sites are thematically linked, no matter in what media or form the itineraries are offered. Itineraries may be presented on websites, in publications, in exhibit materials, or as special guided tours. In particular, the District’s Marketing Plan recommends that the District-wide visitor guide contain suggested itineraries. Media presentations may be in print, audio format, or the presentations of personal guides.
G.  **Hospitality and Visitor Experience:** As local character and flavor are recognized as strengths to be cultivated, hospitality should be central to the experience presented at local interpretive attractions. The intimate settings and personal contact with visitors at local attractions provide the opportunity to make friends of visitors and to help make their visits interesting and pleasant. The volunteers and staff at the Valley’s local attractions are the Valley’s hosts.
CHAPTER 6
IMPLEMENTATION

As stated in Chapter 1 of this document, the District-wide Interpretive Plan fulfills recommendations in both the Management Plan for the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District as approved by the Secretary of the Interior in October 2000 and the Implementation Plan, its companion document. Together, the three plans are guides for fulfilling the mandates in the Congressional legislation (P.L. 104-333, Section 106 of 1996 As Amended) that created the National Historic District.

This District-wide Interpretive Plan provides a vision, background information, and a structure for helping organizations and agencies interpret the history of the Shenandoah Valley through the lens of the Civil War. It is a partnership-based initiative that will require close and on-going collaboration among the interpretive organizations with the leadership and encouragement of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation in its capacity as the “management entity” of the District.

Implementing this Plan will require setting clear goals and establishing a list of priority projects by the Battlefields Foundation for initiatives that affect the entire National Historic District. It will require the Battlefields Foundation and site-specific partners to collaborate on interpretive projects for battlefields or groups of sites that share related themes. It will also assist cluster groups to collaborate in the development of interpretive content for Civil War orientation centers. The overriding goal is to have a baseline of interpretive material and content available at the beginning of the Civil War Sesquicentennial in 2011 and for a schedule of expanding interpreted sites, materials, and activities available throughout the four years of the Sesquicentennial and beyond.

At both the national level and state level in Virginia, plans are being formulated to commemorate the sesquicentennial of the Civil War. Interest groups, agencies, and governmental bodies are recognizing that how the war was interpreted and presented to the public 50 years ago during the centennial may not be as germane to 21st-century public. New interpretive approaches to telling the stories of the war and conveying its impact on American history need to be considered that will be factual, enlightening, and engaging. With so much attention about to be focused on the Civil War, the Shenandoah Valley needs to be prepared to share its history and educate and inspire its visitors. The interpretive program outlined herein is one means.

The Interpretive Plan should be implemented in close coordination with the National Historic District Marketing Plan.

Chapter 6 of the Interpretive Plan presents guidelines for the Plan’s implementation. Priorities and phasing are discussed, and the roles of partnering sites and the Battlefields Foundation are outlined. The final portion of this chapter is an interpretive matrix that
lists each of the recommendations included in the Plan along with the entity that should
be responsible for that recommendation and its priority level. The matrix is intended
to help guide decision-making by the Battlefields Foundation and its partners for
implementing the Plan.

6.1 PRIORITIES AND PHASING

As the management entity for the National Historic District, the Battlefields Foundation
will be responsible for disseminating the Plan, promoting the Plan, and engaging
interpretive partners to implement the Plan. Principal steps include:

• Approval of the Plan by the Battlefields Foundation Board of Trustees.
• Distribution of the Plan by the Interpretation and Education (I&E) Committee plan
to interpretive sites throughout the District.
• Organizing a District-wide meeting or cluster-based meetings to review the
Plan and begin creating priorities with these groups to implement the Plan’s
recommendations.

While these meetings are being organized, the I&E Committee also should be setting
priorities for projects that the Battlefields Foundation will undertake independently
which will form the underlying organizational structure for the interpretive program.

It will be critically important to the success of the program to undertake projects that
can be achieved quickly while fundraising efforts begin for larger and more expensive
projects.

The program needs to be realistic and achievable, but also needs to be strong and of a
high quality to set the Valley apart as a pre-eminent Civil War destination.

6.1.1 Website and Publications

A high priority should be given to the expansion and improvement of the National
Historic District’s website. This is also one of the principal recommendations in the
Marketing Plan for the District. Expansion should include additional interpretive
content for the battles and battlefields, links to history sites that expand interpretive
materials and a variety of levels of detail. The recommended themes and topics should
be woven into the website to help guide visitors planning trips to the Valley and provide
and organizational structure based on related stories.

The proposed new District-wide guidebook should be completed as soon as possible and
echo the structure and content of the website.

6.1.2 Historic Roadways

A historic roadways program should be one of the key priorities that will create an on-
the-ground organizational structure for exploring and understanding the big picture
importance of the Shenandoah Valley to the war effort. This program should also be
a means of connecting the battlefields and related Civil War sites. The Battlefields
Foundation should take the lead in organizing the program and enlist the support and
energy of partners to implement it.
6.1.3 Clusters

Once the Plan has been disseminated and explained, the Battlefields Foundation should encourage the partner sites that have interpretive and/or geographic relationships to begin collaborative efforts using the Plan’s themes and topics and identify what media they will use to present their stories. Much of this structure will naturally flow from the work done to develop the interpretive content for the cluster-based orientation centers.

6.1.4 Battlefield Plans

The I&E Committee should strategically assess the preparedness of the public-trust owners and surrounding communities to develop an interpretive plan and/or program for each battlefield. In some cases, such as Fisher’s Hill, this will be principally the Battlefields Foundation itself. For other battlefields, this will involve a close collaboration among the public-trust landowners. For example, at McDowell, this will include the Highland Historical Society, the Lee-Jackson Educational Foundation, the Civil War Preservation Trust, and the Battlefields Foundation. At others, such as Cross Keys or Port Republic, interpretive partners will include other types of organizations, such as the Society of Port Republic Preservationists, the Ruritan Club, as well as private landowners. In each case, local governments also should play a role in how the battlefields are interpreted and what, where, and how facilities are provided. Each battlefield plan will be unique unto itself thanks to its distinctive partners, landscape, protected lands, and community acceptance.

6.1.5 Civil War Related Attractions

The National Historic District’s existing interpretive attractions that relate to the identified themes are the backbone of its visitor experience. They own the sites and have available the resources, staffs, and volunteers in place to present the Valley’s history and culture to visitors. Existing attractions should participate in cluster groups, work with each other to create mutually supportive interpretive programs and undertake collaborative market efforts. In addition, they should work to the degree appropriate with the Battlefields Foundation.

6.2 Role of Partners

Interpretation within the Valley will be undertaken primarily by individual historic sites and attractions. This Interpretive Plan is intended to help coordinate interpretation throughout the National Historic District. Partnering sites should engage with the Battlefields Foundation, cluster groups, and other attractions to help shape and implement a Valley-wide vision for interpretation and visitor experience. A strong, cooperative, Valley-wide vision and program is in the common interest of all of the Valley’s residents, organizations, and businesses.

It is hoped that partnering sites will use this Interpretive Plan to help guide their interpretive programs and, to coordinate their storytelling with other partnering sites. This begins with identifying common themes. This Interpretive Plan’s thematic structure
has been created to include all of the Valley's existing attractions and sites. Each potential partner should be able to find themes appropriate to its mission, resources, and stories. Implementation of coordinated interpretation may be accomplished in part by using the structure, guidelines, and recommendations of various portions of the Interpretive Plan. The Interpretive Plan is flexible and, again, it is hoped that each partnering site will find its appropriate and desired place.

In order to maintain a high level of quality and consistency throughout the District, partners should use professional exhibit designers and fabricators to plan, design, and install their exhibits. The Battlefields Foundation's group of local Historical Advisors will be available to assist partners in making sure that interpretive content is accurate and expresses appropriate themes.

6.3 Role of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation

The Battlefields Foundation, as the designated management entity for the District has a mission that includes developing and promoting a high-quality, comprehensive, coordinated interpretive program for the Valley. It is to be the leader and coordinator, but it is also dependent upon the willingness of individual sites to partner with it to achieve the vision and high-level purpose of the District's congressional legislation.

The Foundation must help coordinate and support interpretation at the Valley's battlefields, clusters, attractions, and sites so that the overall interpretive presentation within the Valley is of the highest quality possible. It is hoped that partnering sites will take advantage of the opportunities offered by the Battlefields Foundation and the National Historic District.

In addition to being a coordinator, the Battlefields Foundation should continue to perform two important roles in the National Historic District. The first is to have well trained staff and volunteers to provide technical assistance and leadership to implement this Plan.

Secondly, the Battlefields Foundation should use its successful Implementation Grants Program as a catalyst to encourage participation in the vision outlined in this Plan and called for in the enabling legislation and Management Plan. To do this, the Foundation should reassess its application process, grant priorities, funding cycles, and grant pool to encourage as much interpretive activities as possible leading up to and through the Sesquicentennial.

6.3.1 Battlefields Foundation Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees of the Battlefields Foundation will be responsible for adopting this Plan. It holds ultimate authority for approving the implementation steps developed by the I&E Committee and approving follow-up programs and projects. Perhaps most importantly, it will be the Board of Trustee's responsibility to ensure that substantial funding is made available on an annual, reoccurring basis to fund the implementation grants to partners and the Battlefields Foundation's own District-wide interpretive projects and interpretation of its battlefields.
6.3.2 Interpretation and Education Committee

The Battlefields Foundation’s Interpretation and Education (I&E) Committee is charged with creation, development, and oversight of the Foundation’s interpretive programs and initiatives. As a rule, the committee members do not become actively engaged in the implementation of projects unless they are associated with the partners undertaking projects, their assistance is specifically requested, or one of the Foundation’s properties is being interpreted. Foundation staff members are the implementers on behalf of the committee, and keep the committee apprised of the status of projects.

The composition of the committee should include members from a variety of interest groups and experiences. These include interpretive staff from regional attractions; historians from educational institutions; public historians, individuals from the various clusters, though not necessarily representing a cluster per se but knowledgeable of the issues and concerns in a cluster; and people with a knowledge of tourism. Of course, the committee should include individuals who have an abiding love of history and of the Civil War. Above all, the committee should be comprised of individuals who understand how to present historical information to the general-interest public first and then the Civil War enthusiasts.

The committee should be proactive in developing partnerships with individual sites, public-trust owners of battlefields, cluster groups, and towns. It needs to be responsible for ensuring that the Battlefields Foundation’s interpretive programs and actions are consistent with the goals, guidelines, and recommendations of the District’s Management Plan and this Interpretive Plan. On occasion, should serious problems of accuracy or quality develop, the Committee may decide to withhold Foundation support for a project until the problems are resolved.

6.3.3 Historical Advisors

A panel of Historical Advisors, selected by the I&E Committee, should be established to review, comment and advise the Committee and partners as the need arises. These advisors must be trained, academic historians and include public historians. The advisors also should include historians who specialize in cultural history - economic, industrial, religious, geologic, and social history – as well as top Civil War historians. They should be historians from both within the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia, and the nation.

In general, interpretation for an individual site will be developed by that site’s managing entity with the assistance of their own historians and design professionals. When interpretation is receiving Battlefields Foundation support, the site’s proposed interpretation should be presented to the Historical Advisors for review and comment. The Foundation staff is the point-of-contact between sites and the Historical Advisors, and all communications with the Historical Advisors should be conducted through and coordinated by staff.

At the conceptual or schematic design stage, the proposed interpretive presentation should be presented to the Historical Advisors for review, comments, and recommendations on the overall approach to the presentation. Themes, subjects, sequencing, and relationships to other sites and interpretive locations should be considered.
When the final content and design for an interpretive exhibit is prepared, prior to fabrication, the content should again be submitted to the Historical Advisors for review. The Historical Advisors will review the content for accuracy and may provide recommendations to the entity and the Interpretation and Education Committee.

The Historical Advisors’ comments and recommendations are advisory and should be provided in writing to the managing entity and the Interpretation and Education Committee. Action with respect to the recommendations will be up to the managing entity of the site. In extreme situations, however, when there is serious disagreement with respect to the accuracy or quality of the proposed presentation, the Interpretation and Education Committee could decide to withhold Foundation funding for the project.

6.3.4 Battlefields Foundation Staff

The Battlefields Foundation’s staff will work directly with partnering organizations, cluster groups, related sites, and attractions to develop coordinated, high-quality interpretative programs throughout the Valley. The Foundation’s staff has been performing this role for the past six years and will continue it into the future. A primary role of the staff is to serve as a catalyst, supporter, and cheerleader for coordinated interpretation consistent with the goals of the National Historic District. The staff should actively seek out opportunities in collaboration with partners.

The Foundation’s staff is in direct contact with partnering organizations and sites and is the point-of-contact between partnering organizations and sites and both the Interpretation and Education Committee and the Historical Advisors. The staff manages the Committee’s programs and activities on a day-to-day basis.

6.3.5 Protection of Battlefield Resources for Interpretation

The Battlefields Foundation will continue to work through its resource protection program to encourage localities in the National Historic District to include in their comprehensive plans protection measures for the battlefields and interpretive sites in their areas.

The Foundation has to date completed preservation plans at four battlefields, in cooperation with Rockingham and Shenandoah counties. These plans encourage battlefield landowners to explore the listing of Civil War battlefield resources on the National Register of Historic Places. The Foundation will continue to address this through the preservation planning process.
APPENDIX A

CIVIL WAR SITES IN THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY BATTLEFIELDS NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

REGIONAL ATTRACTIONS

A general definition of “regional attraction” appears in Chapter 2.

Museum of the Shenandoah Valley

The Museum of the Shenandoah Valley is located in Winchester and includes the newly opened museum building, Glen Burnie Historic House, and extensive gardens. The museum is open year round, while the house and gardens are open March through November.

The new museum building opened in April 2005 and features a series of highly professionally exhibit galleries as well as visitor information, Museum Store, Tea Room, reception room, and rest rooms. The museum’s Shenandoah Valley Galleries tell the story of the Shenandoah Valley, its geography, natural history, Indians, early settlement, and historical development over two centuries. The museum has a special focus upon the Shenandoah Valley’s distinctive decorative arts, with an extensive collection of historic objects and furnishings created by the Valley’s craftsmen.

An exhibit on the Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley Galleries features an audio visual presentation. The presentation is divided into four segments: War Comes to the Valley which provides an overview of the Civil War events that occurred in the Valley, Divided Loyalties on the different cultural perspectives to the War by the Valley’s residents, War on the Doorstep exploring the civilian experience of the War, and Fiery Finish focusing upon Sheridan’s “burning” of the Valley in the fall of 1864. These themes have been absorbed into the thematic structure of this Interpretive Plan in relation to the civilian experience of the War.

The Glen Burnie Historic House was the home of Winchester’s founder, James Wood and successive generations of his family. The house displays family objects as well as the collection of antiques, paintings, and decorative objects assembled by Julian Wood Glass Jr., the site’s founder and benefactor. The extensive gardens created around the house by Julian Glass have been a regional attraction for many years.

The Museum of the Shenandoah Valley is a key visitor attraction within the District and is well marketed in its own right. Located at the northern end of the Valley, the museum...
is a likely initial destination for visitors. Its exhibits provide an excellent overview of the history and distinctive character of the Valley and are perfectly attuned to the interpretive vision for the District as a whole. The Museum of the Shenandoah Valley is a good first stop to obtain a thorough introduction to the history and culture of the Valley in a museum setting before embarking on visits for more detailed stories at locations (battlefields, towns and other sites) where events actually occurred. The professional quality of the museum and its exhibits establish a high standard of visitor expectations which other presentations within the District should emulate and reinforce.

**Belle Grove Plantation**

Belle Grove is a preserved 18th century grain and livestock farm which in its prime, circa 1815, encompassed about 7500 acres of land. Today the property is part of the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park. Belle Grove is owned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and is one of a number of Trust Historic Sites open to the public nationwide. It is operated as an educational and interpretive site by Belle Grove Incorporated, an independent non-profit organization. The present property includes approximately 300 acres and features a unique limestone house that was constructed between 1794 and 1797 by Major Isaac Hite, who founded and developed the plantation over a fifty-year period.

In addition to the main house, Belle Grove features period gardens, original agricultural outbuildings, a classic 1918 barn, an overseer’s house, a slave cemetery, a heritage apple orchard, fields and meadows, and scenic mountain views. Belle Grove is also renowned as the land over which the Battle of Cedar Creek was fought on October 19, 1864. The house at Belle Grove served as the headquarters of the Union commander, Major General Philip Sheridan. Confederate General Stephen Dodson Ramseur died in the house after being mortally wounded during the battle.

Historically, Belle Grove was an interesting and unusual farm within the Valley. Isaac Hite’s grandfather was Jost Hite, who was instrumental in organizing the early settlement of the Valley in the 1730s. Emigrating first from Bonfeld, Germany and then from the Pennsylvania heartland, Hite was among the first of many waves of German, English Quaker and other cultural groups that spread through the Valley in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and which have given the Valley its distinctive melding of cultures. In 1783, upon returning from service in the Revolutionary War, Isaac Hite married Nelly Conway Madison, James Madison’s sister. Through his close connections with the Madisons, Isaac Hite was a unique bridge between the world of small, culturally diverse, independent farmers in the Valley and the landed gentry of Virginia’s first families on the large slave-dependent plantations east of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Hite’s energy, ambition, and family resources led to the growth of the 7500-acre Belle Grove, with its many entrepreneurial enterprises, including a grist mill, saw mill, distillery, linen weaving operation, and store.

Today, interpretation at Belle Grove focuses upon the Hite family, their social sphere, tenant farmers and enslaved workers, and the plantation’s peak period of significance in the early nineteenth century. It shows the influences that came to the Valley with the early settlers and their contrast to and assimilation with the ideas and influences from the Tidewater and Piedmont regions of Old Virginia, east of the mountains. The unique
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historic house, strongly influenced in its design by Thomas Jefferson, is in the process of being meticulously restored to its early nineteenth century appearance. Interpretation of the wider plantation and plantation life is undertaken in part through the property's fields, garden, orchard, outbuildings and other resources, including the overseer's house and slave cemetery. The property's interpretive focus and presentation provide a strong historic context for the Valley's Civil War story and, with the Battle of Cedar Creek, is an integral part of that story.

Belle Grove is nationally known and serves the Shenandoah Valley and Virginia as an educational center through the many interpretive programs it offers. Its goal is to stimulate both historical and historic preservation awareness among area residents and visitors to the property. Belle Grove is managed by a professional staff that works with a group of trained, volunteer docents. The property is open to the public from April through October, as well as weekends in November. Numerous programs and events are offered through the season, including a living history camp for kids, living history weekends, 18th century encampments, and various festivals. As a nationally and regionally known site, Belle Grove's quality and stature contribute to the overall interpretive character of the District.

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park was created by Congress on December 19, 2002 as a unit of the national park system to preserve and interpret key historic sites and the rich cultural heritage of the Shenandoah Valley. Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park is a partnership park in which the National Park Service works closely with five key partners identified in the park's enabling legislation. The five partners include Belle Grove, Incorporated and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, who operate and own Belle Grove Plantation; Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation, which owns approximately 300 of battlefield land and operates a battlefield visitors center; Shenandoah County Parks and Recreation, which administers 151 acres of county parkland within the battlefield; and the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, which is the coordinating partner of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District and owns several significant parcels of land within the battlefield.

The Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park was envisioned by the commission of federal, state, and local partners that organized the National Historic District. Following designation of the National Historic District, these partners worked on creating the park with the leadership of Virginia's legislative delegation in Congress. Cedar Creek was identified as the most appropriate location for a national park within the District because of the significance of its resources, the integrity of its preserved landscape, and the interest and quality of its partners.

The goals of creating a national park within the District were in part to make the National Park Service's leadership, planning, and implementation expertise available to the site, in part to make federal financial resources available to the site, and in part to bring National Park Service branding to a location within the District. Commission members envisioned that the National Park Service might operate the Civil War orientation center within the Cedar Creek/Fishers Hill/Tom's Brook cluster and provide
leadership, technical expertise, and resources for interpretation and visitor experience, as well as assisting in the preservation and management of battlefield lands. The park’s vision and mission have expanded to interpret a continuum of history in the region, “From Backcountry to Breadbasket to Battlefield and Beyond.”

The boundaries of the national park and the park’s mission and purpose are identified in its enabling legislation. At present there are no National Park Service-operated visitor facilities. Almost all of the park lands and buildings that are open to the public are owned and administered by the park’s partners. 3500 acres are included within the park’s authorized boundaries which include much of the core area of the Cedar Creek Battlefield, and the vast majority of this land is privately owned. The county retains planning, zoning, and land-use authority over this private property, and the national park may only acquire land from willing sellers.

Two major sites within the park are presently open to the public, Cedar Creek Battlefield Visitor Center and Belle Grove Plantation. Each provides programming and interpretation as described in other portions of this chapter independently as organized by their operating entities. There is no coordinated national park or partnership programming or interpretation offered at present.

As one of the newest national park areas, the National Park Service is in the process of developing a general management plan for the park. The National Park Service develops general management plans for its parks to guide decision-making and describe how the park will be managed. General management plans typically take about three years to complete and involve broad-based community participation and input. As a partnership park, the national park’s local partners are also deeply involved in the planning process. The general management plan must be in place before major decisions are made regarding the National Parks Service’s role and activities with respect to the park’s implementation actions. As a result of the completion of the general management plan, it is anticipated that the organization of the national park will be more fully defined and active implementation of the park will be possible.

New Market Battlefield State Historical Park and Hall of Valor Civil War Museum

The New Market Battlefield State Historical Park is a Virginia state park located at the site of the Battle of New Market which occurred on May 15, 1864. The site includes 280 acres of land within the core area of the battlefield. Additional battlefield lands adjacent to the park are owned by the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation.

In addition to preserved battlefield land, the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park features the Hall of Valor Civil War Museum, historic Bushong Farm, and a self-guided battlefield tour. The museum is an independent non-profit organization operated by the Virginia Military Institute and also manages the state park. The Hall of Valor was created by the state as a memorial to the Virginia Military Institute cadets who fought in the Battle of New Market. The museum features exhibits and dioramas conveying the story of Virginia in the Civil War, an Emmy Award-winning film, “Field of Lost Shoes,” on the cadet’s role in the battle, battlefield and other exhibits, and a stained glass window depicting the war in the Shenandoah Valley. The Hall of Valor offers full visitor services,
including information, museum shop, drink machines, and picnic area.

Bushong Farm is a preserved historic farmstead over which a portion of the Battle of New Market was fought. The restored 1818 farmhouse, numerous outbuildings, barn, and farm landscape are open as exhibits and convey the war-time lifestyle of the Bushong family, which operated the farm for 30 years before the war turned their orchard into a battlefield and their home into a hospital. Both guided and self-guided tours are offered.

The state park, Hall of Valor museum, and preserved farmstead are high quality attractions that are professionally managed and together offer a strong visitor experience. The museum and park are open and staffed year round from 9 AM to 5 PM. Student groups are an important part of the site's visitation, and an array of programming options have been developed for student groups customized to curriculum and educational goals. These programs include interactive hand-on activities led by museum staff on themes such as “Equipping the Soldier,” “Join the Army,” “School of the Soldier,” and “Pass the Butter.” Suggested pre- and post-visit activities are provided to teachers.

Though created in the 1960s, the park has been re-invigorated in recent years with the preservation of the farmstead and the creative programming mentioned above. Aside from this programming and the newly created tours, interpretation at the museum has traditionally focused upon the Civil War in Virginia and the role of the cadets in the battle. The exhibits in the museum’s Virginia Room are somewhat dated and, while appropriate to the broad presentation of the Civil War to student groups, the exhibits do not fit well with the District’s focus on the Valley. The Hall of Valor’s older exhibits were more appropriate when the museum was a stand-alone attraction and there were few sites within the state telling the broader Civil War story.

It is possible that the museum could work with District partners on expanding its interpretive focus on the Valley and creating new indoor museum exhibits. The Hall of Valor and state park are in a unique position to tell the story of the Civil War in the Valley during the spring of 1864, including the campaigns of Sigel and Hunter and the full story of the Battle of New Market. Expanded interpretation beyond the immediate site, both related to the battle and the campaigns, could be a part of this presentation. Creation of an expended interpretive focus for the state park and Hall of Valor is among the most exciting interpretive opportunities within the National Historic District.

**Frontier Culture Museum**

The Frontier Culture Museum is located in Staunton and is a state-owned attraction interpreting Virginia's frontier heritage. The Frontier Culture Museum presents compelling living history landscape exhibits on the European precedents that contributed to America's frontier heritage through four reconstructed historic farmsteads moved from their counties of origin and recreated on the museum grounds. The historic landscape exhibits include a German farm circa 1710, a Scotch-Irish farm from the 1730s, a working blacksmith forge from the 1730s, and an English farm from the 1690s. Influences from these European antecedents are brought together in a fifth landscape exhibit of an authentic American farmstead of the 1850s and 1860s. Costumed living history interpreters introduce visitors to each landscape exhibit and demonstrate the life-ways of their period farmsteads.
The Frontier Cultural Museum is a major state and regional attraction offering a unique perspective on Virginia's and the Valley's past. The site is professionally staffed and is open seven days a week, year round. Student groups are an important component of the site's visitation. In addition to the landscape/living history exhibits, the museum has an introductory indoor exhibit, video presentation, and special programming. Full visitor services including a museum store are offered.

To date, the Frontier Culture Museum has not participated as a partner in the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District. Its future participation, however, is an important opportunity that should not be missed. The museum's unique perspective will be an exciting addition to the District-wide presentation of the Valley's culture. Located in Staunton, the Frontier Culture Museum can serve as a southern anchor attraction and gateway to the District. The museum reinforces the importance of Staunton as a destination and as a key Civil War resource, logistically vital to the South's operations in the Valley as Winchester was to the North's. The Frontier Culture Museum is an important attraction that should be integrated into the interpretation and presentation of the District.

INTERPRETIVE ATTRACTIONS

A general definition of “interpretive attraction” appears in Chapter 2.

WINCHESTER CLUSTER

The Winchester Civil War cluster is the most complex and well developed cluster in the National Historic District and is home to a number of excellent interpretive attractions. The Museum of the Shenandoah Valley is located in the Winchester cluster and is described above in the discussion of regional attractions. The cluster's other interpretive attractions are listed below.

Abram's Delight

Abram's Delight, also known as the Hollingsworth House, sits on the First Winchester battlefield. It is the oldest home in Winchester, built in 1754 by Isaac Hollingsworth, son of Abraham Hollingsworth, the first white settler in the area. The site was once the center of an active farming operation and mill. The historic mill building still exists on the property and until recently has housed the area's visitor center. Abram's Delight is open to the public as a house museum with gardens and outbuildings. Volunteer docents provide intimate guided tours of the historic house under the supervision of a professional staff. Special events and exhibits are held periodically, and a gift shop is located in the building's basement. The site interprets the eighteenth century settlement, significance, and historic use of the property.

Abram's Delight is operated by the Winchester Frederick County Historical Society and owned by the City of Winchester. It is open seasonally, April through October, 10 AM to 4 PM. As noted above, a new visitors' center and Civil War orientation center is being constructed near the historic house on the city-owned site. The new visitors' center will strengthen the site as a regional attraction and make the historic mill building available for development as an interpretive attraction or other appropriate use.
Stonewall Jackson's Headquarters Museum

Stonewall Jackson's Headquarters Museum was constructed in 1854 in the Gothic Cottage Style on what was then the edge of historic Winchester. Owned by Lt. Colonel Lewis Moore during the Civil War, the house was used by General Stonewall Jackson as his headquarters during much of the winter of 1861-1862. Here, Jackson planned his Romney Campaign prior to initiation of his famous Valley Campaign in the spring of 1862.

Today, the historic house is operated by the Winchester Frederick County Historical Society as a house museum focusing on its use as Jackson's Headquarters. Portions of the house have been restored to their appearance during Jackson's use, in particular the parlor which served as Jackson's office. Other rooms feature an impressive collection of artifacts belonging to Jackson and others.

The museum is open April through October, 10 AM to 4 PM, and guided tours are provided. Located in a residential neighborhood, much of the original property has been subdivided. Access to the house is from the side, and the front of the house is obscured by other structures, making appreciation of its historic context difficult. Nonetheless, the house is a unique and popular attraction. Its interesting architectural character, high degree of historical integrity, and strong collection of artifacts make it a sought after destination among Stonewall Jackson enthusiasts.

Old Court House Civil War Museum

Built in 1840, the old Frederick County courthouse is located on Winchester's historic downtown walking mall and has been transformed into a Civil War museum. The museum, which is operated by a separate non-profit organization, features a private collection of more than 3,000 artifacts and relics ranging from Civil War buttons to cannonballs. The historic courthouse was used during the War as a prison and a hospital, and museum exhibits interpret the graffiti left on its walls by soldiers and the stories surrounding them. The museum is open year round Wednesday through Saturday, 10 AM to 5 PM. Tours are available by special appointment.

Newtown History Center

The Newtown History Center is located in Stephens City, six miles south of Winchester. Newtown was the historic name of Stephens City at the time of the Civil War. As a classic Valley turnpike town, the Newtown History Center interprets the town's settlement and early development as a regional center of commerce and craftsmanship.

Transportation of peoples and goods along the Valley Turnpike was a major factor in the Valley's early development, resulting in towns being created at regular intervals along the route. Craftsmen developed trades in the towns serving residents as well as travelers. Newtown was well known for its production of the Newtown wagon for hauling freight, as well as for pottery, blacksmithing, fine woodwork, and other trades. During the Civil War, Newtown was frequently a no-man's-land, caught between the Union army in Winchester and the Confederate army near Strasburg.

Owned and operated by the Stone House Foundation, the Newtown History Center is open to the public June through December, Tuesday through Saturday or by appointment. It offers exhibits in the historic Newtown Inn in the center of town.
and its professional staff provides guided tours of the Stone House, one of the earliest
buildings in town. Special programming is provided to student groups.

The Newtown History Center’s developing interpretation of Shenandoah Valley culture
and life in a Valley town is an example of the kind of initiative and programming that
can be offered in other towns down the Valley. Using the historic towns as interpretive
resources and establishing shops and visitor services emphasizing Valley products
and themes will help economically revitalize the historic towns as well as provide a
memorable presentation of Valley hospitality.

**Burwell-Morgan Mill**
The Burwell-Morgan Mill is located on Old Route 50 in the crossroads village of
Millwood in Clarke County, ten miles east of Winchester. The mill is a picturesque
stone and clapboard structure and was an eighteenth and early nineteenth century
milling center when the agricultural economy of the Valley was based upon wheat
production. The mill is an outstanding example of eighteenth century mill technology.
Its mill race, wheel, gears, stones, and other workings have been restored and actively
grind meal and flour as they did two hundred years ago. The Burwell-Morgan Mill
interprets the agricultural economy of the Valley when it was known as the Breadbasket
of the Confederacy. The mill is open May through October, Wednesdays through
Sunday.

**Signal Knob Cluster**
The Signal Knob cluster is home to two of the District’s five regional attractions
discussed above, Belle Grove Plantation and the developing Cedar Creek and Belle Grove
National Historical Park. The following interpretive attractions are also located within
the cluster.

**Stonewall Jackson Museum at Hupp's Hill**
Hupp’s Hill was part of a property established by George Hupp in the 1750’s and is
located just north of Strasburg. The hill was a prominent artillery and defensive position
throughout the War, and Confederate entrenchments and Union gun positions can still
be seen on the property.

The Stonewall Jackson Museum at Hupp’s Hill was established in 1991 by the Wayside
Foundation of American History and Arts to encourage and enhance the public
appreciation, enjoyment, and knowledge of American history and the arts. The museum
is dedicated to interpreting Stonewall Jackson’s legendary Valley Campaign in the spring
of 1862 and three Valley battles from 1864. The story of the campaign is interpreted
through exhibits and collections including original artifacts, high-quality reproductions,
interpretive text, and over 100 photographs of Jackson, his staff officers, and scenes of
the 1862 and 1864 Valley campaigns.

The museum is a hands-on experience catering to young people, and visitors are
encouraged to handle its collection of high quality reproduction artifacts such as
weapons, uniforms, saddles, and toys. Hupp’s Hill also features a children’s summer
camp, folkways workshops, and living history demonstrations. The museum is open year
round.
Strasburg Museum
The Strasburg Museum is located in a historic steam pottery manufacturing building constructed in 1891 in the heart of Strasburg. The museum displays exhibits of eighteenth and nineteenth century artifacts related to Shenandoah Valley and Strasburg crafts and small town industries. Exhibits display local pottery, three period Victorian rooms, antique clothing, agricultural tools, a whiskey still, blacksmith's forge bellows, and a photographic history of local architecture. The museum is open May through October.

Warren Rifles Confederate Museum
The Warren Rifles heritage Museum is located in Front Royal and features relics and records associated with the Civil War. Exhibits include pictures, personal and domestic items, and memorabilia of Belle Boyd, Mosby's Rangers, and Generals Jackson, Early, Lee, Longstreet, and Ashby. The museum is owned and operated by the Warren Rifles Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy and includes a book and gift shop. The museum is open daily from mid-April through October.

Rockingham Cluster
The Rockingham cluster is home to a range of interpretive attractions spread across Rockingham County, from Elkton and Port Republic on the east to Dayton on the southwest. Harrisonburg serves as the center of the cluster and features three of the cluster's seven attractions.

Hardesty-Higgins House and Valley Turnpike Museum
The Hardesty-Higgins House is located near the center of historic Harrisonburg. Constructed circa 1848, the historic house was the residence of Harrisonburg's first mayor, Isaac Hardesty and later served as an inn. During the Civil War, the house was visited by Union Generals Sheridan and Banks. Recently, the historic house has been renovated and transformed into the Harrisonburg Area Visitors Center. In addition to regional visitor information, the visitors center features an exhibit about the Valley Turnpike, exploring the history of the road from its beginning as a buffalo path to Stonewall Jackson's famous Valley Campaign trail, to the toll road era, to the present. In addition, the visitors center provides information on attractions, driving tours, and walking tours within the city and county. The house and visitors center is open daily, year round and features a Civil War Trails exhibit.

Virginia Quilt Museum
Located in historic downtown Harrisonburg across the street from the Hardesty-Higgins House, the Virginia Quilt Museum is a resource center for the role of quilts and quilting in the cultural life of the Valley and American society. The museum is housed in the historic Warren-Sipe House, constructed in 1856 and associated with a number of Civil War related stories. The museum features a Civil War Room which interprets women of the Civil War era, their quilts, and their lives. Like the Hardesty-Higgins House, the museum features a Civil War Trails exhibit on its Civil War history and significance. The museum offers opportunities to view significant work by both early and contemporary quilt artisans. Quilts from the museum's permanent collection are on
display continuously on a rotating basis. The Virginia Quilt Museum is open Thursday through Sunday, year round.

**Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center**
The Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center is located on Garbers Church Road in west Harrisonburg. The Heritage Center is fourteen acres in size and features the 1854 Burholder-Myers House and Whitmer School/Cove Mennonite Church, which have been moved to the ridge-top site. The Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center interprets the lives of Mennonites and Brethren in the Shenandoah Valley and their contribution to the Valley's rich social and religious culture. The Heritage Center provides the background to their denominational histories and illustrates the core faith values that guide their responses to cultural and historical events. The Brethren and Mennonite represent a significant religious minority in the Shenandoah Valley. Their emphasis on pacifism, voluntary service, and international understanding had an important influence in the Valley during the Civil War and continues today. Their story is a central part of the story of the Valley and particularly agricultural region of Rockingham County. The Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center is open Wednesday through Saturday, year round.

**Miller-Kite House**
The Miller-Kite House in located in Elkton in the southern Page Valley. The historic house served as a headquarters for Stonewall Jackson from March 28 to April 30, 1862, during his Valley Campaign. The house is open by appointment.

**Port Republic Museum**
The Port Republic Museum is located in the historic village of Port Republic and is operated by The Society of Port Republic Preservationists, Inc. The museum is housed in the historic Frank Kemper House, where the Confederate Cavalry General Turner Ashby was brought after his death just prior to the Battle of Cross Keys. The museum features exhibits interpreting Turner Ashby’s death and Jackson’s Valley campaign as well as the history of Port Republic as an early river port, industrial town, and residential community. The village played a central role as Jackson’s headquarters during the pivotal Battles of Cross Keys and Port Republic. The Port Republic Museum is open Sundays, April through October and by special appointment.

**Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society**
The Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society is located in Dayton in a museum facility that was expanded in 2000 and features 5000 square feet of permanent and temporary exhibit space, a genealogy library, auditorium, book and museum store, and archival and conservation space. Permanent exhibits tell the history of Rockingham County from Native American times to the present. They also feature exhibits on Shenandoah Valley folk art. The Historical Society’s auditorium is home to the Stonewall Jackson Electric Map, through which the story of Jackson’s Valley Campaign is told through lights, audio, and a multimedia slide show. A Civil War exhibit is also included within the Society’s permanent exhibit on Rockingham County history. In addition to exhibits, the museum features lectures and programs on an ongoing basis. The Historical Society is particularly significant to interpretation of the National Historic District because it is one of the few locations with professional interior exhibit space. It is open year round, Monday through Saturday.
Daniel Harrison House
The Daniel-Harrison House, also known as Fort Harrison, is located in Dayton, southwest of Harrisonburg. A preservation project of Fort Harrison, Inc., the house is a restored 1749 home of Daniel Harrison who founded Dayton. The house is the oldest in Dayton and among the oldest in Rockingham County. Volunteers with the Daniel-Harrison House interpret the Valley’s settlement and 18th century history through the historic building, artifacts, furniture, and tales of the families who lived there. The house museum is open weekends May through October and is available to groups by appointment.

MCDOWELL CLUSTER

The village of McDowell is at the heart of the rural McDowell cluster and features the newly opened home of the Highland Historical Society.

The Highland Museum and Heritage Center
The Highland Museum and Heritage Center is located in a handsome historic brick residence known as The Mansion House in the village of McDowell. The Heritage Center serves as the Civil War orientation center for the McDowell cluster, with exhibits introducing the National Historic District and outlining the background and context of the Battle of McDowell. In addition to its orientation center role, the Highland Museum and Heritage Center interprets the broader history and cultural heritage of Highland County with permanent and rotating exhibits. About 100 yards to the east of the museum is the Hull House, where Stonewall Jackson had his headquarters on the day following the Battle of McDowell. The Highland Museum and Heritage Center is open Wednesday through Sunday, year round.

STAUNTON / WAYNESBORO / AUGUSTA COUNTY

Augusta County played an important role during the Civil War as an operations and logistical center for the Confederate army. The Frontier Culture Museum is located just outside Staunton and is one of the national Historic District’s five regional attractions, discussed above. Two other interpretive attractions in Augusta County are potentially significant to the District.

Woodrow Wilson Birthplace
The Manse is a historic 1846 residence constructed by the Staunton Presbyterian Church in the Gospel Hill neighborhood of downtown Staunton, and was still in use as the church’s manse during the Civil War. Woodrow Wilson, the 28th President of the United States, was born in the house in 1856. The building is a National Historic Landmark and a house museum, interpreting Wilson through period furnishings, Wilson’s household belongings, and guided interpretation. A restored 1933 boxwood garden is associated with the house. Adjacent to The Manse is the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library, also housed in a historic house. The museum and library offer programs tailored to teachers and students and are open to the public daily, year round. Though not associated directly with National Historic District themes, the Wilson Birthplace is an important historical attraction and a potential model for operations and programming.
Plumb House Museum
The Plumb House Museum is located on West Main Street in downtown Waynesboro at the eastern edge of Augusta County, near the Blue Ridge. The Plumb House is a historic residence on a site that was between the lines during the Battle of Waynesboro in March 1865. The house interprets the battle and is a featured site on the walking tour of the location of the former battlefield within the town. The Plumb House is open Thursday through Saturday, year-round.

BATTLEFIELDS

Winchester Cluster

Kernstown Battlefield – Pritchard-Grim Farm
The historic Pritchard-Grim Farm was at the center of the Battles of First and Second Kernstown, just south of Winchester. The Kernstown Battlefield Association has preserved 315 acres of the farm including the historic Pritchard House and surrounding outbuildings, buildings, lanes, and landscape. The farm offers a spectacular view of the core area of the battlefield and features the location of the Union defensive line and key artillery position.

The Pritchard-Grim Farm interprets the two Kernstown battles in its visitors center with interior exhibits in a former farm outbuilding and through exterior wayside exhibits and events. The impact of the battle on the Pritchard family is also interpreted. Monthly programming includes walking tours, interpretive talks, and a summer reenactment. The historic Pritchard House is in the process of a phased restoration. The Pritchard-Grim Farm has the possibility of expanding its interpretation of First Kernstown in association with Rose Hill, discussed below. A guidebook on the First and Second Battles of Kernstown has been published by the KBA in the National Historic District’s graphic format. The battlefield is open weekends, May through October.

Kernstown Battlefield – Rose Hill
Rose Hill is a historic farm located south of Winchester and west of Kernstown. The property is the ancestral home of the Glass family and is a property of the Glen Burnie Historic House and the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley. In addition to its significance to the early settlement history of Winchester, Rose Hill was the center of the most critical fighting during the Battle of First Kernstown. The historic house, outbuildings, and a post-Civil War barn remain along with the historic landscape over which the battle was fought.

A mile-long interpretive trail with seven wayside exhibits currently interprets the battle. The house and outbuildings are secure and await restoration. Expanded battlefield interpretation is possible, as key areas are not yet visible or accessible due to overgrown vegetation. The property is closely associated through the battle with the Pritchard-Grim Farm to the east, though it is physically divided from the farm by a divided highway. Rose Hill’s interpretive trail is open to self-guided tours the third Saturday of each month, April through October. Guided tours are provided each month as well, and group tours may be scheduled by appointment.
Third Winchester Battlefield – Fort Collier Civil War Center
Fort Collier is an earthworks fortification constructed north of Winchester by the Confederates in 1861 to defend the city from Union advances down the Valley Turnpike. The site is best known as the location of a spectacular Union cavalry charge during the Third Battle of Winchester in September 1864 in which Confederate defensive lines were broken and the Confederate forces routed. The property has been preserved by the Fort Collier Civil War Center. The earthworks and a post Civil War house and barn remain on the property. The existing house is on the site of an earlier house that was dismantled for construction of the fort. Fort Collier is currently interpreted through a series of wayside exhibits, tours, and a series of special events. The property is a culminating stop in the interpretation of the Battle of Third Winchester; it is currently included in the Foundation’s Third Winchester driving tour brochure. Fort Collier is also associated with themes of the defense of Winchester and the impact on the civilians who lived there.

Third Winchester Battlefield
The Third Battle of Winchester was among the largest and most significant battles in the Shenandoah Valley. Fought on the northern outskirts of the historic town, the September 1864 battle was the first in a series of dramatic defeats for the Confederates that resulted in an end of the War in the Valley. Today, the extensive Third Winchester battlefield has been largely developed but some important land remains with integrity to the period of the Civil War. Significant preserved portions of the battlefield have been purchased by the Civil War Preservation Trust and the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation.

The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation has developed an interpretive driving tour for Third Winchester that links eleven sites and is published in a driving tour brochure. Two Civil War Trails wayside exhibits contribute to the driving tour interpretation of the battle. The battle portion of the driving tour, encompassing nine sites, ends at Fort Collier (discussed above).

The Civil War Preservation Trust has developed interpretive trails and wayside exhibits on its portion of preserved battlefield land along Redbud Run. The Foundation property which abuts that of the Trust is currently un-interpreted. Despite the lack of integrity of much of the battlefield, Third Winchester has the potential to be a rich interpretive experience using the driving tour and preserved lands. A fully developed and coordinated interpretive plan for the battlefield is, however, required.

Signal Knob Cluster

Cedar Creek Battlefield
The Cedar Creek battlefield is located surrounding Middletown along the Valley Turnpike, north of Strasburg. Though threatened by commercial and industrial development, the Cedar Creek battlefield is one of the best preserved battlefields in the Valley. Cedar Creek was fought in October 1864. After a daring and initially successful morning attack, Confederate forces were broken in the afternoon by a regrouped Union army. Cedar Creek was the culminating Union victory in the Valley and marked the end of effective Confederate activity there.
Preserved battlefield land at Cedar Creek is owned by the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation, Belle Grove Plantation, and the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation. All three are partners in the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park. The largest area of battlefield land, almost 500 acres, is owned by the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, including more than 189 acres that the SVBF protected in Summer 2008. The Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation owns and manages 309 acres of the battlefield and operates the Cedar Creek Visitor Center, which is open daily, April through October. The CCBF has developed a detailed driving tour booklet that interprets the battle. Major reenactments are held on the property each fall at the anniversary of the battle as well as in the spring. Through the collaborative efforts of the various partners in the national park, as discussed earlier in the chapter, the Cedar Creek battlefield has the potential to become a primary visitor destination and model for high quality battlefield interpretation in the Valley. (Belle Grove Plantation is discussed earlier in this appendix.)

**Fisher's Hill Battlefield**

Fisher's Hill was a natural defensive position for the Confederate army thanks to its high east-west ridges and their location at a narrow portion of the Valley south of Strasburg. Known as the “Gibraltar of the Valley,” the defensive position was used repeatedly by the Confederates during the war and figured prominently in the Battles of Cedar Creek and Fisher's Hill.

The Battle of Fisher's Hill was fought in September 1864, two days after the Union victory at Third Winchester. Through a surprise flank attack, the Confederates were again routed at the battle. Today, the Fisher's Hill battlefield retains much of its landscape integrity and has the potential to be a high quality interpreted battlefield. A significant portion of the battlefield has been preserved. The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation owns a portion of the battlefield that was initially preserved by the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites and then deeded to Shenandoah County, which conveyed it to the Foundation in 2007. This preserved battlefield land has a parking area and self-guided walking tour with wayside exhibits interpreting the battle. The Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation also owns additional significant areas of land at this battlefield. Linking these preserved lands could result in a high quality interpretive experience.

**Front Royal Battlefield**

Front Royal was the site of a May 1862 battle in which Stonewall Jackson's army surprised a Union detachment and outflanked the Union army entrenched to the west at Strasburg. The battle took place through the historic town, south to north. Though the Civil War landscape has lost much of its integrity, landforms and topography can still be read, and interpretation of the battle can be appreciated. The Battle of Front Royal is interpreted through a series of Civil War Trails wayside exhibits supplemented by a published driving tour as well as a walking tour in the downtown area.
NEW MARKET CLUSTER

New Market Battlefield State Historical Park
The Battle of New Market was fought in May 1864 and resulted in the retreat of General Franz Sigel's Union army north down the Valley. The battle is interpreted at the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park, which is a significant regional attraction in the Valley and was discussed earlier in this appendix on page A-4.

ROCKINGHAM CLUSTER

Cross Keys Battlefield
Cross Keys is located southwest of Harrisonburg and was the first half of the twin battles that served as the finale to Jackson's renowned Valley Campaign. Today, the Cross Keys battlefield is in private agricultural use and, as a result, has a high degree of landscape integrity. The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation has published an interpretive driving tour of the battlefield that features three interpretive sites with Civil War Trails wayside exhibits. The primary interpretive site is the Carrington Williams Interpretive Site and Kiosk and includes an orientation kiosk outlining the Battles of Cross Keys and Port Republic and interpretive waysides focusing upon the Confederate artillery position visible in the distance.

Port Republic Battlefield
The Battle of Port Republic took place one day after the Union defeat at Cross Keys and resulted in a Union withdrawal north down the Valley. The printed driving tour for Cross Keys and Port Republic takes visitors to the Port Republic Museum, to Civil War Trails waysides in the historic town, and north to the site of the Union artillery position known as “the Coaling.”

MCDOWELL CLUSTER

McDowell Battlefield
The Battle of McDowell was fought in May 1862 and was the first victory of Jackson's Valley Campaign. The battlefield is considered one of the most pristine Civil War battlefields in the country. Located high on the wooded ridge of Sitlington's Hill, 500 feet above the valley below, the area of most intense fighting is not easy to reach. Interpretation of the battle is provided at the Highland Museum and Heritage Center, discussed above, as well as through a series of Civil War Trails exhibits. The top of Sitlington's Hill can be reached by a steep hiking trail.
Proposed Historic Roadway Routes: The Valley Turnpike

Construction of the Valley Turnpike was begun in the late 1830s to provide an all-weather, hard-surfaced, macadamized roadway to facilitate travel north-south through the Shenandoah Valley. The turnpike was constructed along the route of the Philadelphia Wagon Road, the primary north-south road in the Valley, connecting southeastern Pennsylvania to North Carolina. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Philadelphia Wagon Road was a major migration route of European settlers from Pennsylvania, southward through the Valley, to North Carolina and points west. The unique cultural character of the Valley derives from the peoples who migrated down this road and settled in the Valley.

The Philadelphia Wagon Road itself was established along the route of an earlier Native American road. In the late eighteenth century, towns were laid out at regular intervals along the route to provide services to travelers and focal points for the regional agricultural communities. The construction of the turnpike in the late 1830s and early 1840s provided a well-constructed roadway that was not as likely to become impassable during wet weather. The turnpike greatly facilitated commercial wagon traffic, which was the primary means of transportation at the time.

During the Civil War, the turnpike was a critical strategic route. It was the only road in the Valley that could withstand the intense use of the armies, with their thousands of soldiers, artillery, cavalry, and baggage trains. The armies could move rapidly up and down the Valley along the turnpike, and its control was critical to control of the Valley. It is no coincidence that the majority of battlefields in the National Historic District lie in reasonably close proximity to the historic turnpike route. In the early twentieth century, the turnpike was paved and improved for automobile use; in some instances, such as near Harrisonburg, the original route was substantially relocated; and eventually was designated as US 11.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. **Valley Turnpike Themes:** The turnpike should be a central organizing component in presenting the broad themes of *The Context for War*, *The Strategic Valley*, and *The Campaigns*.

B. **Turnpike Remnants:** At some places, the historic turnpike was re-routed in later years when twentieth century road improvements were undertaken. Original portions of the road were abandoned, preserving the character of
segments of the nineteenth-century turnpike. A key preserved segment of the
historic turnpike with respect to Civil War history is located at the crossing
of Tumbling Run on the Fisher's Hill Battlefield. Other preserved segments
should be identified where possible and the segments used as sites to interpret
the themes associated with the turnpike segments and local events. The Civil
War maps prepared by Jedediah Hotchkiss provide an outstanding resource
for identifying those locations as do early photographs and maps of the Valley.
Historic roadway organizers should work closely with the Virginia Department
of Transportation (VDOT) and local governments to identify and protect
surviving segments of the turnpike and/or the road traces and to interpret them.

The Valley Turnpike can be divided into four geographic sections. A map of the road-
ways in the National Historic District appears inside the back cover of this plan.

WINCHESTER TO STRASBURG

From Winchester to Strasburg, the Turnpike crosses an open, rolling agricultural land-
scape and includes the turnpike towns of Stephens City (known as Newtown during
the Civil War) and Middletown. This segment links the Winchester and Signal Knob
clusters. This was the region of most intense Civil War battle activity within the Valley,
and the turnpike passes through six major Civil War battlefields. Five battlefields are in
and around Winchester, and Cedar Creek is located just north of Strasburg.

This segment of road currently features twenty-five Civil War Trails sites, including elev-
en in Winchester and three in Strasburg. Nine are associated with the Valley Campaign
of 1862, and nine are associated with the Valley Campaign of 1864. Of these eighteen
waysides interpreting the 1862 and 1864 campaigns, nine directly interpret battlefields,
including Third Winchester, First and Second Kernstown, and Cedar Creek. The re-
main of nine interpret supporting themes and stories related to the two campaigns.

Despite its historical significance, the Winchester-Strasburg segment of the Valley
Turnpike has lost a great deal of its historic integrity. Because Winchester was essentially
ringed by battles, almost all development that has taken place since the time of the Civil
War has happened on and reduced the integrity of the historic landscape. Especially in
the post World War II era, the landscape has seen dramatic shifts to strip commercial de-
velopment. Today it is not the most scenic road within the Valley. Despite this situation,
there remain sites where interpretation is possible and extremely desirable, especially
individual sites between Stephens City and Middletown, and south of Middletown as the
road passes alongside and through the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Histori-
cal Park up to Interstate 81. In fact, in the last half-mile or so north of the US 11/I-81
interchange can be found some excellent road traces of the original turnpike alignment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Landscape Character and Stewardship: From an interpretive standpoint,
this portion of the Valley Turnpike is critical to the Valley's Civil War story.
Economic growth will continue in this region, and the preservation of
battlefield land and the visual quality of the historic Valley Turnpike corridor
are important quality-of-life issues that need to be addressed on an ongoing
basis by governments and interest groups. Creation of a corridor management
plan for the Valley Turnpike in partnership with the counties and towns can identify stewardship strategies that will help preserve and enhance the landscape character of the roadway while accommodating growth. The Battlefields Foundation and its partners should work with local governments and stakeholders to create and implement a corridor management plan as part of a National Scenic Byway initiative.

B. **Winchester-Strasburg Roadway Themes:** Roadway exhibit locations between Winchester and Strasburg should be tied closely to the interpretation at the battlefields and within the towns, interpreting the themes of “The Battlefields” (see page 3-6) and “Civilian Experience” (see page 3-3).

C. **Coordinated Roadway Exhibits:** There is significant opportunity for enhanced roadway interpretation along the Valley Turnpike between the Winchester/Frederick County and Signal Knob clusters, particularly at Bartonville, Stephen’s City, and Middletown, as well as at other roadside locations. New roadway interpretive sites should be identified and linked into an interrelated sequence of exhibits. Interpretation of the landscape along the roadway will be enhanced as the interpretation of the six battlefields along the route is expanded. Electronic media should be used to link interpretation between the roadway sites, battlefields, and towns.

D. **Landscape and Exhibit Enhancements:** The landscape character of roadway exhibit locations should be enhanced where possible with designed parking and pull-off areas, benches, and plantings as appropriate. Multiple waysides and additional forms of exhibits should be used to strengthen the quality and content of each site.

**Strasburg to New Market**

South of Strasburg, the character of the terrain and landscape of the Valley Turnpike is strongly influenced by the proximity of Massanutten Mountain to the east. Here, the Valley narrows and Massanutten Mountain looms high and close. The topography becomes hillier, and the meandering North Fork of the Shenandoah River is located just east of the historic road. The Valley Turnpike crosses a number of streams that flow into the North Fork. Historically, in this segment the bridges and fords were strategic locations for armies traveling north or south during the war. Because the stream crossings are close to where the streams join the river, the stream valleys at the crossing locations tend to be steep and narrow. At Meems Bottom, just south of Mount Jackson, the turnpike crosses the North Fork as the river turns generally northward and meanders along the western foot of Massanutten. The turnpike follows the eastern side of the river until it reaches New Market, where the main course of the river turns to the west.

The Strasburg-New Market segment of the Valley Turnpike is highly scenic and is perhaps the most characteristic portion of the historic roadway. Woodstock, Edinburg, Mt. Jackson, and New Market are significant Valley turnpike towns along the road and best convey the historic development pattern of towns and villages at five to eight-mile intervals along the pike. Each town has a strong, distinct character and relevant stories to tell. Development continues to creep out of each town, decreasing the historic gaps between them and threatening their distinctiveness. This is an issue that needs close attention by
the local governments and interest groups in Shenandoah County. Most of the towns
have implemented streetscape improvement programs and have created local historic
districts to help preserve their historic buildings.

This segment of the Valley Turnpike links the Signal Knob and New Market clusters.
Just south of Strasburg, the road passes through the Fisher’s Hill and Tom’s Brook
battlefields. A key segment of the original historic roadbed has been preserved by the
Battlefields Foundation where the turnpike crossed Tumbling Run on the Fisher’s Hill
battlefield and wound up through a cut in the ridge. At New Market there is a diversity
of opinion as to the exact location of the original alignment. In some communities, nota-
bly Middletown, the turnpike ran directly through the center of town on what is now
the US 11 alignment. However, in New Market there is a question whether in fact the
turnpike bypassed the village core to the west. This needs further research. In either case,
the Turnpike ran directly through the middle of the New Market battlefield.

Ten Civil War Trails exhibits are currently featured along the Strasburg-New Market
segment of the Valley Turnpike. Three others are associated with the Valley Campaign of
1862, and six are associated with the Valley Campaigns of 1864. Four of the existing ex-
hibits are directly related to The Strategic Valley theme that could be featured here. They
include “The Valley Turnpike” at Fisher’s Hill, “The Stover-McGinnis House (Make Me
a Map of the Valley)” at Narrow Passage (just south of Edinburg), two waysides at Rude’s
Hill (overlooking Meems Bottom to the north), and “DuPont at Rude’s Hill,” near New
Market. Two of the 1864 Civil War Trails exhibits along this route interpret The Burn-
ing, one at Woodstock and one at the Edinburg Mill.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Strasburg-New Market Primary Roadway Theme: The most significant theme
to be interpreted along this stretch of the Valley Turnpike is The Strategic Valley.
Both armies moved up and down this portion of the Valley many times during
the course of the war. Its steep rolling topography, narrowness, and numerous
stream crossings created many points of strategic importance where site specific
stories can be told about advance and retreat along this portion of the Turnpike.
The geographically based Strategic Valley theme ties in well with the scenic
character of the region, which visitors particularly appreciate. Specific stories
related to Fisher’s Hill are particularly related to this theme.

B. Other Interpretive Themes and Stories: Sites along the Roadway in this area
should also be used to tell the story of the Battle of Tom’s Brook as the turnpike
passes generally through the middle of the battlefield and many of the roads
that penetrate the battlefield are narrow and winding. Exhibits to be located
within each of the historic towns should expand upon themes associated with
the civilian experience and the towns’ stories of the movement of armies up and
down the road and The Burning.

C. Landscape Character: The beauty and character of the landscape along this
segment of the Valley Turnpike is an important part of the visitor experience
and should be reinforced in the selection of interpretive sites and stories.
The historic Valley towns along the road have a unique opportunity to take
advantage of both the historic and scenic quality of the landscape to promote
visitation.
D. **Strasburg to New Market Roadway Exhibits**: Roadway exhibits along this segment of the Valley Turnpike should be increased to tell the stories of the battles, topographic sites of strategic value and the civilian character of this heartland of the Shenandoah Valley. The themes and stories of roadside exhibits along the Strasburg-New Market segment should be cohesive and coordinated. Additional exhibits at strategic geographic locations along the road should relate to each other through The Strategic Valley theme as well as with the interpretation of the specific campaigns with which they are associated. The landscape quality of the exhibit locations should be enhanced, and additional types of exhibits and media should be considered, beyond the wayside format of the Civil War Trails program. Exhibits in the towns should tie into other forms of interpretation to be offered in the towns.

**NEW MARKET TO HARRISONBURG**

South of New Market, the Valley landscape begins to broaden out and become less hilly. The picturesque southern end of Massanutten Mountain dominates the landscape to the east, and the agricultural richness of Rockingham County begins to become evident, illustrated in the fertile pastures and expansive cultivated fields as one approaches Harrisonburg.

The towns along this segment of the road, Mauzy, Lacey Springs, and Melrose, are smaller and less intensely developed than those further north – truly villages. The landscape is broad and beautiful, and there are fewer landmarks to inhibit the flow of the roadway. This portion of the turnpike was of less strategic military significance during the Civil War, as there is only one minor stream crossing and fewer points of topographic advantage from a military perspective. Suburbanization becomes an issue as the turnpike approaches Harrisonburg, and the way into the historic center of the town can be difficult to follow. Many historians believe that at the time of the Civil War the Valley turnpike actually swung to the east north of Harrisonburg having had an alignment closer to the Cross Keys battlefield. This question should be researched and settled prior to any extensive planning for this section.

The New Market to Harrisonburg segment of the Valley Turnpike connects the New Market and Rockingham clusters. The Civil War Trails route follows the turnpike south between New Market and Harrisonburg, but only one wayside is located along it. This wayside is located at Lacey Springs and interprets a cavalry engagement in December 1864, a part of Sheridan’s 1864 Campaign. Lacey Springs also played a role in Sigel’s and Hunter’s advances up the Valley in May and June of 1864 and needs additional interpretation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

A. **New Market-Harrisonburg Roadway Exhibits**: Additional roadside interpretive exhibits should be planned and implemented along the New Market to Harrisonburg segment of the turnpike. Exhibits should interpret events leading up to the Battle of New Market from the Confederate perspective, Hunter’s Raid, Sheridan’s 1864 Campaign (including The Burning), and civilian themes associated with the Rockingham cluster. Exhibits should be closely coordinated with other interpretation in the cluster.
HARRISONBURG TO STAUNTON

There is a marked change to the landscape and topographic character of the Shenandoah Valley in Rockingham County compared to the character of the Valley further north. The southern end of Massanutten Mountain is located just east of Harrisonburg and is a picturesque landmark that anchors the terrain and landscape. The Valley floor is broad and rolling – relatively flat compared to the lower Valley. The importance of agriculture is self-evident in the contemporary landscape as it was at the time of the Civil War. Agriculture is a central theme here and lends itself to interpretation. As agriculture continues to be the economic backbone of the county, it is a motivating factor for preservation of the scenic landscape.

The limestone geology of this portion of the Valley is drained by a number of north and east-flowing tributaries of the South Fork of the Shenandoah River, which flows north through Port Republic and up the Page Valley, east of Massanutten Mountain. The Valley Turnpike follows a series of ridgelines between these tributaries with only two significant stream crossings, the North River at Mount Crawford and the Middle River near Verona. Other small towns along this portion of the turnpike include Burketown, Mount Sidney, and Fort Defiance.

There is currently no roadside interpretation along the Harrisonburg to Staunton segment of the Valley Turnpike. The Civil War Trails route south from Harrisonburg does not follow the turnpike but turns east from Harrisonburg toward Cross Keys and Port Republic.

RECOMMENDATION

A. Harrisonburg-Staunton Roadway Exhibits: Roadway exhibits should be added along the Harrisonburg to Staunton segment of the turnpike. Mount Crawford and the North River figured prominently in defense of Hunter’s movement up the Valley in June of 1864. Agriculture, The Burning, and other themes of the Rockingham cluster are potential themes to be interpreted. Exhibits could also support a more comprehensive interpretive presentation within the historic centers of both Harrisonburg and Staunton.

Proposed Historic Roadway Routes: The Back Road

While the Valley Turnpike was the most strategically important road in the Shenandoah Valley, other north-south roads were also used and are associated with interesting themes and stories. To the west of the Valley Turnpike are a series of north-south routes known as the Back and Middle Roads. Strategically, these roads served as alternative and flanking routes traveled primarily by cavalry during their army’s movements up and down the Valley. Because they were not hard surfaced as the turnpike, these roads became muddy and impassable when wet, and were not suitable for the rapid movement and intense usage of the main body of the armies. Campaign-related stories associated with these roads tend to be interesting and evocative sidebars, rich in detail and gripping as small scale Civil War action.
Perhaps most significantly, however, these roads are very scenic and present the historic character of the Valley in a way that is very different from the more built-up segments of the Valley Turnpike. The back roads are worth traveling for the incredible beauty of the landscape they pass through. Some segments of Back Road have already been designated Virginia Byways and provide an appealing alternative route of travel for visitors to the Valley. They feature the Valley landscape that visitors come to see at its best.

For interpretive purposes, the featured alternative north-south routes west of the Valley Turnpike are collectively called the Back Road in this Interpretive Plan. The Back Road interpretive route is comprised of seven segments of similar but varying character. Just south of historic Winchester, Va 628 (called the Middle Road) tracks west from US 11 (the Valley Turnpike). Soon after leaving the turnpike, the road passes through the landscape that saw the two Battles of Kernstown and provides a scenically appropriate access to the Pritchard-Grim Farm. A segment of Rose Hill that is also part of the Kernstown battles is also accessible off of Middle Road. The road courses southwest toward the west side of the Valley, passing through an appealing though somewhat suburbanizing landscape where orchards are being replaced with subdivisions. The road crosses Cedar Creek at Marlboro, a historically significant mill and ironworks site. At Lebanon Church, the road briefly becomes a portion of Va 55.

Va 623 (called Back Road), the second segment of the route, tracks south from Va 55, west of Strasburg. As it does, the Back Road soon passes through the Fisher's Hill battlefield. This portion of the road is particularly significant with respect to the interpretation of the battle, as the Federal flanking attack from the west off the east face of Little North Mountain (the beginning of the Appalacians) and across the Back Road that led to the Confederate defeat. Battlefield Road connects the Back Road to the Valley Turnpike and provides access to the battlefield interpretive sites.

Just south of Fisher's Hill, in the vicinity of Mount Olive, the Back Road was the site of significant cavalry action at the Battle of Tom's Brook during the 1864 campaign. Interpretive sites should be established adjacent to the road and overlooking the battlefield to tell the story of this action. The Back Road continues south along the west side of the Valley to Columbia Furnace, where it intersects Va 42 south and west of Woodstock.

The fifteen-mile portion of Va 42 between Columbia Furnace, Getz Corner, and Forestville is the third segment of the Back Road. It is possibly the most beautifully scenic roadway in the Shenandoah Valley. The winding two-lane road follows a narrow valley formed by Little North Mountain, the west Valley wall, and the foothills located to the east. Visitors will be enthralled with the beauty of this roadway. In addition to Columbia Furnace, Getz Corner, and Forestville, this portion of the Back Road passes through the hamlets of Conicville and Hudson Crossroads, all of which may provide opportunities for limited interpretive roadside exhibits. Other interpretation along this scenic road is not necessary or desirable, the scenic beauty of the landscape is sufficient.

South of Forestville, Va 42 continues as a narrow two-lane road. This portion of road is also scenic and a pleasure to drive. At Timberville, the road crosses the North Fork of the Shenandoah River, following the river immediately west and south again through Broadway. From Timberville, US 211 provides an easy scenic connection to New Market and its battlefield approximately seven miles to the east.
The fifth segment of the Back Road is a primary road in Rockingham County and connects Broadway to Harrisonburg. This portion of Va 42 is a four-lane divided highway. The highway is lightly traveled and is therefore an appealing alternative to the Valley Turnpike and Interstate 81. While there are no battlefields along this segment of the road, there are sites that relate to the broader themes of the National Historic District and the Valley heritage, extant slave quarters, the Lincoln ancestral home, farm and family cemetery, and sites related to the Brethren and Mennonite heritage of Rockingham County that should be woven into the interpretive fabric of the Valley.

Va 42 intersects the Valley Turnpike (US 11) in Harrisonburg just north of the historic center of the town. Just west of the historic core, Va 42 continues south toward Bridgewater as a four-lane divided highway. This portion of the Back Road has also lost its historical integrity, and it is highly developed. However, the historic villages of Dayton and Bridgewater provide significant interpretive opportunities. This stretch of roadway is part of the Civil War Trails system. Interpretive waysides associated with the 1864 and 1862 campaigns are located in Dayton and Bridgewater. Other sites, such as the lane on which Lieutenant Meigs was killed, have interesting interpretive potential. Interpretation in this vicinity is part of the Rockingham cluster and should be closely coordinated with interpretation at other cluster sites. Agriculture, cultural diversity, and The Burning are key interpretive subjects.

The seventh and final segment of the Back Road is located primarily in Augusta County. It follows Va 42 connecting Bridgewater and its crossing of the North River with US 250 near Churchville. McDowell is a probable destination for Civil War visitors using this portion of the driving route. The road passes through the villages of Mossy Creek, Moscow, Parnassus, and Stover. Opportunities for interpretation along this route should be explored. Several sites worthy of interpretation are located along this segment of Va 42.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Back Road Historic Roadway: Create an historic Roadway along the Back Road using the roads described above as part of the National Historic District’s historic Roadway system. Emphasize the Back Road’s scenic landscape character and offer it to visitors as a casual and appealing alternative to the more built-up and busy Valley Turnpike. Establish a series of Civil War Trails exhibits along the Back Road in accordance with a plan as recommended below. Only a limited number of Civil War Trails stops are necessary, but enough should be provided so it can be presented as an interpreted route and so that Civil War Trails signage can be used as the route’s wayfinding system.

B. Back Road Exhibit Plan: As part of an Historic Roadway exhibit plan, a specific plan should be created for the entire length of the Back Road. As outlined above, specific segments of the Roadway appear to lend themselves to specific themes and stories. In particular, the northern end of the Roadway could lend itself to stories of raids and other actions associated with the occupation of and battles around Winchester. The segment adjacent to Fisher’s Hill should be closely coordinated with the interpretive plan for that battlefield. Near Mount Olive, the Roadway should be the principal means of interpreting the Battle of Tom’s Brook. Crossroad villages and the region’s history of iron furnaces provide other opportunities for interesting interpretation.
Proposed Historic Roadway Routes: The Page Valley

The Page Valley is located on the eastern side of the Shenandoah Valley. It lies between the Blue Ridge Mountains on the east and Massanutten Mountain on the west. This valley is about sixty-five miles long and three to eight miles wide. The valley extends from Front Royal on the north to a point half way between Elkton and Port Republic on the south. The South Fork of the Shenandoah River flows north through the Page Valley, meandering back and forth along the valley walls. The South Fork is a substantial river and drains the southern half of Rockingham County and all of Augusta County. The North and South Forks of the Shenandoah River join at Front Royal in their northerly flow.

Like the Back Road, the Page Valley served as an important strategic sidebar to action up and down the Valley Turnpike during the Civil War. The most significant action in the Page Valley was related to Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign and Sheridan's Shenandoah Campaign in 1864. In the 1862 Valley Campaign, Jackson marched quickly north down the Page Valley to surprise and outflank the Federals entrenched in Strasburg. Later during the campaign, Shield's Federal army marched south up the valley parallel to Fremont's army west of the Massanutten. Fremont was defeated by Jackson's army at Cross Keys before he could join with Shields, and Shields was defeated at Port Republic the next day, effectively ending the campaign. Stories related to the movement of the armies during these campaigns as well as and other Civil War subjects and themes can be interpreted in the Page Valley.

The Civil War Trails program features US 340 in the Page Valley between Front Royal and Elkton. Twelve Civil War Trails interpretive locations are on or close to US 340, some of which have multiple sites with wayside signage. In Front Royal, waysides at ten sites tell the story of the Battle of Front Royal, in which Jackson defeated a Federal garrison and outflanked the Federals at Strasburg. Multiple sites between Luray and Elkton have wayside exhibits telling site specific stories related to the 1862 and 1864 campaigns. Waysides at Catherine Furnace and the Shenandoah Iron Works interpret the iron industry in the Page Valley.

This Interpretive Plan recommends that US 340 from Front Royal south to Waynesboro be used as an interpretive driving route called the “Page Valley.” This driving route connects the Civil War Trails route mentioned above with the Civil War Trails route linking Port Republic to Waynesboro.

US 340 in the Page Valley is a scenic driving route. At its northern end, the valley is narrow, steep and wooded. At Luray, the valley widens out, only to narrow again to the south. US 340, despite being a fast-moving, two-lane road, is a pleasure to drive. The larger towns of Front Royal and Luray are handsome and welcoming to visitors. The smaller towns of Shenandoah and Elkton in the southern portion of the valley are also of interest and have used Civil War Trails signage to interpret significant sites.

Though no major battlefields are located in the Page Valley, there are significant campaign related stories to tell here. Locations such as the White House Bridge and Red Bridge were strategically significant, and their stories are featured in the literature about the 1862 campaign. The minor 1864 engagement at Overall was fought in the northern end of the valley. Other similar locations should be identified and a limited number of
additional interpretive sites should be added to the existing system. Interpretive linkages between the sites should be strengthened so that the sites work together in a logical sequence. Interpretation in Luray and Front Royal should be expanded to include other media and types of exhibits, as well as civilian themes.

South of the Page Valley, US 340 continues through Port Republic south to Waynesboro. The road passes through the Port Republic battlefield, and should be used as an organizing element when its interpretive program is planned. The Village of Port Republic is charming; extensive preservation efforts have been taking place in the community for almost three decades; this includes interpreting the town's history. It is part of the Rockingham cluster. The Battle of Piedmont (1864), related to Hunter's Raid, deserves enhanced interpretation over time as opportunities present themselves and the community embraces the concept. Interpretation in Waynesboro could also be expanded to tell the town's Civil War stories as well as the Battle of Waynesboro (1864).

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. **Page Valley Historic Roadway:** Create an historic Roadway through the Page Valley using the roads described above as part of the National Historic District's historic Roadway system. Connect the existing Civil War Trails route in the northern valley with the route that leads to Port Republic. Extend the route along US 340 to Waynesboro.

B. **Page Valley Exhibit Plan:** As part of an exhibit plan to be created for the Historic Roadways as a whole, a specific plan should be created for the entire length of the Page Valley route, from Front Royal to Waynesboro. Additional interpretive sites should be identified that build upon the existing Civil War Trails exhibits; the interpretation should concentrate on Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign and Sheridan's 1864 Campaign. In addition to Civil War Trails, a coordinated series of roadside exhibits that work in sequence and reinforce and relate to the battles fought in the main part of the Shenandoah Valley should be developed. Special attention needs to be given to coordinating exhibits closely with interpretation of the battles at Port Royal and Front Royal. South of Port Republic, roadside interpretation should include information pertaining to Hunter's Raid, make connections to Harrisonburg, and include interpretation of the Battle of Piedmont.

Proposed Historic Roadway Routes: East-West Connections

A series of east-west linkages are proposed to connect the north-south Valley Turnpike, Back Road, and Page Valley driving routes. In essence, the east-west linkages combined with the north-south routes form a ladder scheme overlaying the National Historic District. The east-west linkages include:

**VA 55: Front Royal to Strasburg and the Back Road**

Va 55 is within the Signal Knob cluster and connects downtown Front Royal at the east edge of the cluster with downtown Strasburg, which is generally at the cluster's center. The road links the northern end of the Page Valley interpretive driving route (US 340) with the Valley Turnpike and should extend westward to the proposed Back Road Roadway.
Heading west from Front Royal, the road crosses the South Fork of the Shenandoah River, parallels the North Fork of the river as it passes at the base of the north end of Massanutten Mountain (known as Signal Knob), and crosses the North Fork as the river turns south on the west side of the mountain. It is a visually dramatic location in the landscape.

RECOMMENDATION

A. **Va 55 Interpretation:** Whether or not interpretation is installed along the Va 55 roadway should be determined by the opportunity and need to tell stories related to Signal Knob, the Battle of Cedar Creek, the Battle of Front Royal, and the histories of the two towns at locations along the road. It is not necessary that interpretive exhibits be installed along it. Local historians should determine whether there are significant sites along the road that should be interpreted. They may be able to suggest additional subjects and sites of interest to Valley themes along the route. Any interpretation should be coordinated with the Signal Knob cluster and local interpretive partners, and integrate into battlefield driving tours and other interpretive materials. Even if it is decided that no interpretive exhibits will be installed along the route, additional Civil War Trails signage should be installed to strengthen the storylines between the communities and the military actions.

**Battlefield Road: Fisher’s Hill**

Battlefield Road is located in the heart of the Fisher’s Hill battlefield and is the primary access road to many of the protected battlefield sites. The road follows Tumbling Run, which is in the east-west stream valley that divided the Union forces on ridges to the north from Confederate forces on the south; it passes directly through the middle of the Village of Fishers Hill.

Battlefield Road should be a key factor in the interpretive plan developed for the Fisher’s Hill battlefield. More than likely, it will be the spine interconnecting the various preserved parcels that will comprise the interpreted battlefield.

RECOMMENDATION

A. **Battlefield Road Interpretation:** Battlefield Road should be interpreted as part of a comprehensive plan for the interpretation of the Fisher’s Hill battlefield. Fisher’s Hill has the potential to become a featured interpretive battlefield not only because of its significance but because of its landscape integrity, its relatively small size, the ease with which it can be perceived and understood, and the amount of land that is currently preserved and might be preserved in the future.

**US 211: Luray to New Market to Timberville**

US 211 is a primary east-west roadway that connects Luray in the Page Valley with New Market and Timberville in the central Shenandoah Valley. US 211 enters the Shenandoah Valley through Thornton Gap, a significant Civil War site and intersection with
Skyline Drive, and enters the Page Valley. The historic alignment of US 211 is modern Business US 211 that passes through the center of Luray, while the modern route bypasses north of the town. At Luray, US 211 intersects and joins with US 340 from where the two routes parallel across the Page Valley to the base of Massanutten Mountain. At this point US 340 turns south as US 211 ascends and crosses the mountain through the New Market Gap. It is an important tourist route, linking the valleys to the Piedmont and Northern Virginia regions and interconnecting several of the National Historic District’s largest tourist destinations – Shenandoah National Park, Luray Caverns, and the New Market State Historical Park.

After passing through the New Market Gap, US 211 winds down the mountainside and enters the town of New Market and the New Market battlefield, intersecting the Valley Turnpike (US 11) near the center of town. After a jog through the town, US 211 proceeds west through agricultural land, paralleling the North Fork of the Shenandoah River. It terminates at the Back Road (Va 42) in Timberville.

The portion of US 211 between Luray and New Market is currently part of the Civil War Trails system. Five interpretive waysides are currently featured along it. To the east of Luray, the Chapman-Ruffner House, home of the “Fighting Chaplain” who served with Mosby’s Rangers, and the Pass Run Church, site of an 1863 Confederate encampment, are featured. West of Luray, where 211 and 340 are the same road, Yeager’s Mill, White House Bridge, and Luray Gap are interpreted.

**RECOMMENDATION**

A. **US 211 Interpretation:** US 211 is a dramatically scenic and historic roadway. It should primarily be considered a scenic route that links three thematic interpretive north-south Roadways, the Page Valley, Valley Turnpike, and Back Road as well as the New Market battlefield and events associated with Jackson’s 1862 campaign. Additional interpretation along US 211 should be closely coordinated with interpretation of the north-south routes.

The strategic importance of the Thornton and New Market Gaps should be interpreted if appropriate sites can be found. In the Page Valley, interpretation of the 1862 and 1864 campaigns should be considered in conjunction with other interpretation of the Page Valley Roadway. Between the New Market Gap and the town of New Market, interpretive sites should probably not be installed because of the steep, winding nature of the road and the speed of traffic. It is possible that interpretive sites could be identified along the segment of US 211 between New Market and the Back Road.

**PORT REPUBLIC ROAD**

Port Republic Road extends from Harrisonburg southeast to Port Republic, linking Va 42 (Back Road), US 11 (Valley Turnpike), and US 340 (Page Valley). Port Republic Road is the primary access from Harrisonburg and the Valley Turnpike to the Cross Keys and Port Republic Battlefields, through which it passes. The road is part of the existing Civil War Trails road network. Civil War Trails exhibits are located within the battlefields and are currently the primary means through which the battlefields are interpreted as part of an existing driving tour. In addition, in Harrisonburg, the road provides access
to Turner Ashby Monument, the site where Turner Ashby was mortally wounded just prior to the battle at Cross Keys. The segment of the road from Va 42 through the remainder of Harrisonburg and out into the county is undergoing rapid development. This will only accelerate as the new Rockingham Memorial Hospital campus is developed at an intersection of Port Republic Road.

**RECOMMENDATION**

A. **Port Republic Road Interpretation:** Port Republic Road should continue to be used primarily to provide access to the Cross Keys and Port Republic battlefields. It should be considered one of the transportation spines when interpretive plans are developed for the two battlefields (a majority of present-day Port Republic Road did not exist during the time of the Civil War).

**US 250/Va 254: WAYNESBORO TO STAUNTON TO McDOVELL**

The US 250 Historic Roadway extends from Rock Fish Gap in the Blue Ridge Mountains on the east, across the Valley, and through the Allegheny Mountains to the Virginia-West Virginia border on the west. The road passes through Waynesboro, Staunton, Churchville, McDowell, and Monterey. US 250 is a historically significant east-west roadway. West of Staunton, US 250 and Va 254 generally follows the historic Staunton to Parkersburg Turnpike route into the Allegheny Mountains. Within the mountains, the roads are highly scenic.

US 250 and Va 254 are part of the Civil War Trails road network. Nine Civil War Trails sites are currently located along the roads. Six exhibit sites, west of Staunton, interpret action related to Jackson’s Valley Campaign and the Battle of McDowell. Exhibits in Staunton and Waynesboro have additional themes and stories.

**RECOMMENDATION**

A. **US 250/Va 254 Interpretation:** An interpretive plan should be created for the US 250/Va 254 corridor as part of the larger interpretive plan for the valley’s Historic Roadways. Interpretation should build upon the existing Civil War Trails signage and should concentrate primarily upon Jackson’s 1862 Valley Campaign and actions before and after the Battle of McDowell. Interpretation should therefore be closely coordinated with the interpretive plan for the McDowell battlefield. Fort Johnson, with its April 1862 earthworks, is particularly significant, in addition to being very scenic. Interpretation and visitor facilities at Fort Johnson should be enhanced. Interpretation in Staunton should focus upon the strategic importance of that city as a Confederate military and logistical center. Lastly, interpretation also should be provided for the Staunton to Parkersburg Turnpike as a significant historic resource of the Valley and Virginia.
*It is not possible to indicate every city, town, and village on a map of the National Historic District but each has its own unique Civil War history that can be interpreted for residents and visitors. In Section 5.2.2, this plan encourages this interpretation.