

Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Report

# Maryland Heritage Areas Authority



**July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025**  
Maryland Department of Planning

This report is required by the Code of Maryland,  
Financial Institutions Article 13-1108(5)

MSAR #5568



*Front Cover: Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse, Chesapeake Crossroads Heritage Area  
Back Cover: Weinberg Center for the Arts, Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area*

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*James Drane House, Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area*

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# Overview

In a show of unwavering bipartisan commitment, Maryland has protected and proudly shared its collective history for nearly 30 years through the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA), an independent unit of government in the Executive Branch that oversees the [Maryland Heritage Areas Program](#).

The Maryland Heritage Areas Program is housed administratively within the [Maryland Historical Trust](#). The primary activities of MHAA and the program are to:

- Designate, support, and work in close partnership with a statewide network of local certified heritage areas
- Award grants that highlight Maryland's diverse heritage, enhance local communities, and promote tourism and economic development and
- Provide technical assistance and training to heritage partners statewide

Since 1996, [13 certified heritage areas](#) have been designated throughout the state, each distinguished by unique physical and cultural characteristics. Their boundaries include acreage in all 23 counties and the city of Baltimore, and a diverse array of historic, cultural, and natural assets. Through funding from the Department of Natural Resource's Program Open Space, the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority has awarded more than \$74 million in grants to hundreds of organizations in the heritage areas that promote, support, and create place-based experiences for visitors and residents alike. Since its inception, these grants have generated over \$175 million in matching funds. This combined investment contributes greatly to local economies and speaks to the program's remarkable success, impact, and potential.

# New Strategic Plan: A Statewide Vision for Success - July 2025-June 2032 (FY26-FY32)

Recognizing that constituent needs and operations evolve over time, MHAA and program staff embarked on an inclusive strategic planning process in June 2024.

More than 600 participants, including MHAA members, program staff, local heritage area management entities, grantees, and various partners and stakeholders, worked to inform the plan that will guide MHAA and the program at the state level for the next seven years. The plan, approved in May 2025, clarifies the program’s vision and purpose, desired results, guiding principles, and outlines priorities and strategies for success.

This exciting path forward prioritizes impactful grantmaking, increasing support to the heritage areas, and refining governance, operations, and messaging. It also recognizes the central and essential role heritage plays in contributing to tourism, community enhancement, and sustainability.

The *Maryland Heritage Areas Program Strategic Plan: A Statewide Vision for Success* ensures that all elements of the program will continue to bolster communities, attract visitors, and provide residents with experiences that enhance their quality of life while also contributing to the Moore-Miller Administration’s goal of creating an “Equitable, Robust, and Competitive Economy for Maryland.”





*Patapsco Valley State Park, Patapsco Valley Heritage Area*

## Vision

Maryland's rich and diverse heritage is shared and valued, deepening connections to the past, enhancing communities today, and inspiring future visitors and residents.

## Purpose

The Maryland Heritage Areas Program designates, supports, and collaborates with certified heritage areas and their partners to create place-based experiences for the public that preserve and promote Maryland's unique stories and contribute to the well-being of local economies.

# Strategic Plan

# Guiding Principles

## Stewardship

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Ensure the thoughtful and equitable distribution and transparent reporting of state funds.

## Customer Service

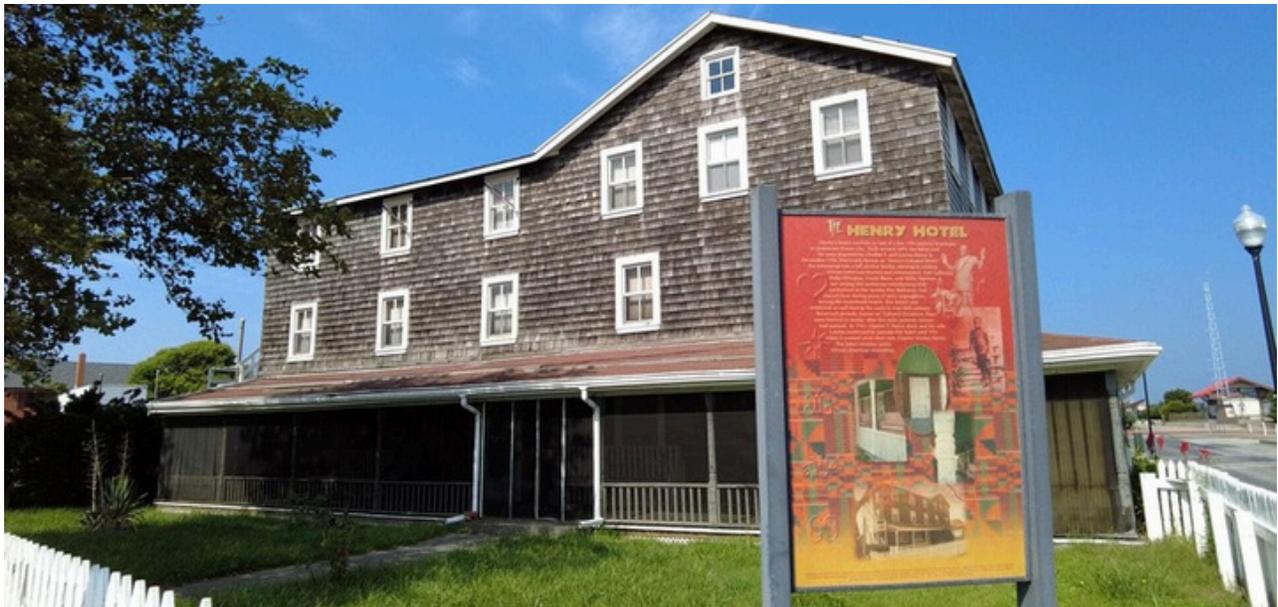
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Deliver excellent service by providing accurate and timely information to partners, stakeholders, and grantees.

## Impact

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Strive for measurable, statewide impact that reflects the cumulative work done across all heritage areas.



*Henry Hotel, Beach to Bay Heritage Area*

## Collaboration

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Build strong, trust-based partnerships that are grounded in transparent and open communication, shared goals, and collaborative action.

## Heritage

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Acknowledge and support the central and important role that heritage plays in tourism, local economic development, environmental stewardship, historic preservation, community enhancement, recreation, and education.

## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access

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Embed practices into operations and grantmaking that support diversity, equity, inclusion, and access.

# Strategic Plan Priorities

Mount Clare Museum, Baltimore  
National Heritage Area



1

Ensure accessible, efficient, and high-impact grantmaking

2

Provide resources and ongoing support to heritage areas to enhance their capacity and impact

3

Assess and refine Maryland Heritage Areas Authority governance and the operational effectiveness of the program

4

Enhance the program’s messaging, outreach, and communication

## Results



Field of Firsts Foundation,  
Anacostia Trails Heritage Area

Maryland’s diverse historic, cultural, and natural assets within heritage areas are enhanced, preserved, and accessible



Heritage areas support equitable, robust, and sustainable local economies



Communities and visitors are connected and enriched by experiencing Maryland’s heritage and cultural traditions



Local partnerships and networks across heritage areas are expanded and strong



# MHAA Highlights

## Quarterly Meeting in Chestertown



In October 2024, MHAA held its quarterly meeting at Sultana Education Foundation's Harwood Nature Center in the Lawrence Wetlands Preserve in Chestertown. Melissa Archer, representing Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development Secretary Jake Day, was elected to serve as Vice Chair of the Authority. In addition to its regular business, strategic planning consultants Due East Partners facilitated a productive strategic framework-building exercise for MHAA members, program staff, and heritage area directors, which was followed by a walking tour of MHAA-funded projects in the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area.

# MHAA Highlights

## MHAA Receives Partner of the Year Award



The Maryland Heritage Areas Authority was honored to receive the Maryland Association of Destination Marketing Organizations' "Partner of the Year Award" at the annual Maryland Travel and Tourism Summit in November 2024. This distinction recognizes the Maryland Heritage Areas Program's significant impact on "history attractions... which share authentic and diverse stories about our people, places, and culture, with visitors." The success of the Maryland Heritage Areas Program—and its contribution to Maryland's thriving tourism sector—is made possible through the collaboration of MHAA, program staff, the Maryland Heritage Areas Coalition, and partner organizations statewide.

# MHAA Highlights

## Anacostia Trails Heritage Area Goes County-Wide



In May 2025, MHAA unanimously approved the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area's (ATHA) amendment request to expand its state-certified geographic service area boundary to encompass all of Prince George's County—making it the first county-wide heritage area in the history of the Maryland Heritage Areas Program.

The expansion removes geographic limitations, unites diverse historical and cultural narratives, and ensures that all nonprofits and municipalities in Prince George's County are now eligible to apply for the financial incentives and technical assistance available through the Maryland Heritage Areas Program.

# FY25 MHAA Grants

MHAA awards capital and non-capital project grants to nonprofits, local jurisdictions, and state and federal agencies located in certified heritage areas. Project grant applications are reviewed by both local and state review panels. Final recommendations for funding are put forward by the state grants review panel to MHAA who determines awards each July. Panelists play a critical role in helping to ensure that project grants are awarded equitably and fairly across the state.

MHAA also provides grants to the 13 organizations that manage the certified heritage areas, which are independent entities that have their own staff and boards and play a key role in fulfilling the vision and results of the Maryland Heritage Areas Program at the local level.



*Clockwise from top right: Canal Place, Passages of the Western Potomac Heritage Area; Dorchester Center for the Arts, Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area; Edna E. Lockwood, Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area; Nepal Education and Cultural Center, Montgomery County Heritage Area*

## Historic Oella Cemetery Restoration and Improvement

### Patapsco Valley Heritage Area

The Oella Historic Society received a \$35,800 non-capital grant in FY25 for the restoration and improvement of the Historic Oella Cemetery, the only known company cemetery in Maryland established by the Union Manufacturing Company in the 19th century that was later sold to the W. J. Dickey and Sons Company. Funding for landscaping, ground clearing, and ground penetrating radar contributed to making the cemetery, the burial place for approximately 380 mill workers, accessible to the general public and ensuring that the stories of Oella’s industrial past and its people live on.



## Spruce Forest Artisan Village: Outdoor Entertainment Facilities

### Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area

In FY25, the one-of-a-kind Spruce Forest Artisan Village was awarded a \$39,500 capital grant for the creation of an outdoor pavilion and an ADA accessible restroom. Located at the base of the historic Casselman River Bridge, the village is

home to a number of artists and artisans, as well as historic structures from across the region, a truly unique heritage tourism site. The capital improvements provided much needed infrastructure for enhanced programming, annual events such as “Christmas in the Village,” and more accessibility for visitors and community members.

## Indigenous Peoples Festival

### Southern Maryland National Heritage Area

After a 10-year hiatus, the Piscataway Conoy Indigenous Peoples Festival was held at the Charles County Fairgrounds in the Southern Maryland National Heritage Area in November 2024. This celebration of heritage showcased indigenous cultures through dance, singing, and artwork and was supported in part by a FY23 \$45,000 non-capital grant.



## The 88 MHAA grantees for FY25, in order by county, included:

County	Organization	Project	Grant Amt
Allegany	Wills Creek Museum	Phase Two of Wills Creek Museum	\$50,000
Allegany	Board of County Commissioners of Allegany County, Maryland	FY25 Marketing Grant	\$23,978
Allegany	Canal Place Preservation and Development Authority	Augmented Reality Experience for the Passages of the Western Potomac	\$14,000
Allegany	Canal Place Preservation and Development Authority	FY25 Management Grant	\$100,000
Allegany	Canal Place Preservation and Development Authority	FY25 Block Grant	\$25,000
Anne Arundel	Annapolis Maritime Museum, Inc.	Renovation of Historic Skipjack Wilma Lee	\$57,095
Anne Arundel	Blacks of the Chesapeake Foundation	Elevating Black Voices & History at the New Elktonia Heritage Park	\$50,000
Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's, St. Mary's	Calvert Marine Museum Society, Inc.	Patuxent: A Pictorial Encyclopedic History of Maryland's Forgotten River	\$50,000
Anne Arundel	Chesapeake Arts Center, Inc.	Signage and Wayfinding for Cultural Arts Experiences	\$50,000
Anne Arundel	Chesapeake Crossroads Heritage Area	FY25 Block Grant	\$25,000
Anne Arundel	Chesapeake Crossroads Heritage Area	FY25 Management Grant	\$100,000
Anne Arundel	Galesville Community Center	From Tragedy to Transformation: Crownsville Hospital Story through Oral Histories	\$50,000
Anne Arundel	Historic Annapolis	Enhancing Cultural Understanding: Interpretive Materials and Video Translation	\$18,750
Anne Arundel	St. James' Episcopal Parish	Repointing the Bricks of Historic St. James' Parish	\$68,682
Anne Arundel	United States Lighthouse Society, Inc.	Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse Structural Repairs and Maintenance	\$70,000

County	Organization	Project	Grant Amt
Baltimore City	Baltimore Heritage Area Association, Inc.	FY25 Management Grant	\$100,000
Baltimore City	Baltimore Heritage Area Association, Inc.	FY25 Block Grant	\$25,000
Baltimore City	Baltimore Operation Sail, Ltd. dba Sail Baltimore	SAIL250 Baltimore - The Maritime Celebration of America's 250th Birthday	\$50,000
Baltimore City	The Heritage Museum, Inc.	'Discover': Storytelling	\$50,000
Baltimore City	The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Maryland, Inc.	Mount Clare's Fence has Fallen Down; the Stairs are Crumbling	\$56,500
Baltimore City	Poe Baltimore	Edgar Allan Poe House Visitor Center Development	\$100,000
Baltimore City	Pride of Baltimore, Inc.	Replanking Pride II Phase 2	\$100,000
Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Cecil, Harford	The National Washington Rochambeau Association	Washington Rochambeau National Historic Trail 250th Trail Town Inclusion and Awareness Campaigns in BNHA and LSHA	\$50,000
Baltimore City	Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore	The Baltimore Blueway Heritage Water Trail	\$100,000
Baltimore	Ellicott City Historic District Partnership	Historic Ellicott City Heritage Tourism Support	\$50,000
Baltimore	Oella Historical Society, Inc.	Historic Oella Cemetery Restoration and Improvement	\$35,800
Baltimore , Howard	Patapsco Heritage Greenway, Inc.	FY25 Marketing Grant	\$17,500
Baltimore, Howard	Patapsco Heritage Greenway, Inc.	FY25 Management Grant	\$100,000
Baltimore, Howard	Patapsco Heritage Greenway, Inc.	FY25 Block Grant	\$25,000
Calvert	Living Classrooms Foundation	Southern Maryland Trail Stewards	\$48,950
Calvert, Charles, St. Mary's	Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland	FY25 Block Grant	\$25,000
Calvert, Charles, St. Mary's	Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland	FY25 Management Grant	\$100,000
Caroline	Adkins Arboretum, Ltd	Indigenous Voices of the Chesapeake	\$38,356
Caroline	County Council of Dorchester County	Revealing the All-American Road	\$50,000

County	Organization	Project	Grant Amt
Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot	Eastern Shore Heritage, Inc.	FY25 Block Grant	\$25,000
Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot	Eastern Shore Heritage, Inc.	FY25 Management Grant	\$100,000
Caroline	Hubbard Leverton Foundation	Save the Underground Railroad Safe House	\$100,000
Carroll	Community Foundation of Carroll County, Inc.	Cemetery Signage	\$7,000
Carroll, Frederick, Washington	Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area	FY25 Management Grant	\$100,000
Carroll, Frederick, Washington	Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area	FY25 Block Grant	\$25,000
Carroll	Historical Society of Carroll County	Mary Shellman Civil War to Suffrage Exhibit	\$15,000
Cecil, Harford	Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, Inc.	FY25 Management Grant	\$100,000
Cecil, Harford	Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, Inc.	FY25 Block Grant	\$25,000
Cecil	University of Maryland, Baltimore	Historic Fountain Restoration at Donaldson Brown Center	\$89,538
Charles	Farm Heritage Conservancy	Southern Maryland Heritage Garden and Pavilion	\$95,000
Charles	The Official Piscataway Conoy Tribe of Maryland, Inc.	Piscataway Conoy Cultural Museum	\$50,000
Charles	Town of North Beach	North Beach: Connecting Natural Resources and Heritage Tourism	\$79,500
Dorchester	Dorchester Center for the Arts, Inc.	Historic Nathan Building Envelope Rehabilitation and Restoration	\$61,605
Dorchester	County Council of Dorchester County	FY25 Management Grant	\$100,000
Dorchester	County Council of Dorchester County	FY25 Management Grant	\$100,000
Dorchester	County Council of Dorchester County	FY25 Block Grant	\$25,000

County	Organization	Project	Grant Amt
Dorchester	The Friends of Stanley Institute, Inc.	Christ Rock United Methodist Church	\$30,497
Dorchester	Groove City Black Heritage & Culture Group Inc.	2025 Groove City Culture Fest	\$25,000
Frederick	Catoctin Furnace Historical Society, Inc.	Restoring and Reopening the Historic F.W. Fraley Store	\$100,000
Frederick	National Museum of Civil War Medicine, Inc.	Museum Upgrade - Schematic and Design Planning	\$50,000
Garrett	Accident Drane House Assn, Inc.	Drane House Restoration Project	\$50,775
Garrett	Property Owners' Association of Deep Creek Lake, Inc.	Deep Creek Lake Centennial Celebration	\$50,000
Garrett	Garrett County Arts Council, Inc.	GCAC \$SMART ART MHAA Capital Project	\$90,000
Garrett	Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, Inc.	FY25 Marketing Grant	\$50,000
Garrett	Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, Inc.	FY25 Management Grant	\$100,000
Garrett	Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, Inc.	FY25 Block Grant	\$25,000
Garrett	Spruce Forest Artisan Village, Inc.	Outdoor Entertainment Facilities	\$39,500
Harford	Harmer's Town Art Center, Inc.	Harmer's Town Art Center	\$100,000
Harford	Susquehanna Museum of Havre de Grace, Inc.	Susquehanna Museum (Lock House) Roof Repair	\$28,450
Howard	Howard County Tourism Council, Inc.	Historic Post Office Interior Renovation Project	\$100,000
Howard	Preservation Maryland	Ellicott City Jail Rehabilitation	\$100,000
Montgomery	The Germantown Historical Society, Inc.	Rehabilitation of the 1922 Germantown Bank	\$94,000
Montgomery	Heritage Tourism Alliance of Montgomery County	FY25 Management Grant	\$100,000
Montgomery	Heritage Tourism Alliance of Montgomery County	FY25 Block Grant	\$25,000
Montgomery	National Capital Historical Museum of Transportation, Inc. DBA: National Capital Trolley Museum	Rehabilitation of Truck #2 for DC Trolley CTCO #1430	\$69,635
Montgomery	Nepal Education and Cultural Center	NECC's Restoration and Preservation of Historical Building and Barn	\$90,945

County	Organization	Project	Grant Amt
Montgomery	Sugarland Ethnohistory Project	St. Paul Community Church/Museum Restoration	\$28,000
Prince George's	City of Greenbelt, MD	Master Preservation Plan for Greenbelt Cemeteries	\$35,000
Prince George's	Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, Inc.	FY25 Management Grant	\$100,000
Prince George's	Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, Inc.	FY25 Block Grant	\$25,000
Prince George's	Field of Firsts Foundation Inc.	The Columbia Air Center exhibition project at College Park Aviation Museum	\$50,000
Prince George's	Gateway Community Development Corporation	Adaptive Reuse of Gateway Arts Center Wing	\$100,000
Queen Anne's	Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development	Working the Waters - Waterman Heritage Deadrise Boat Exhibit	\$50,000
Somerset, Wicomico, Worcester	Beach to Bay Heritage Area, Inc.	FY25 Management Grant	\$100,000
Somerset, Wicomico, Worcester	Beach to Bay Heritage Area, Inc.	FY25 Block Grant	\$25,000
St. Mary's	Historic Sotterley Inc.	Rehabilitation of Existing Structure into a Visitor Center	\$99,720
Talbot	Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum	Renovation of Edna E. Lockwood Deck	\$87,100
Washington	American Battlefield Trust	Acquisition of the Hagerstown Pike I Tract at Antietam Battlefield	\$100,000
Washington	Washington County Historical Trust, Inc.	Saylor House in Kiwanis Park: Restoration & Reuse - Phase 6 main level flooring repairs	\$8,667
Wicomico	Salisbury University - The Museum of Eastern Shore Culture	Interpretation and Accessibility for the MESC	\$35,800
Worcester	Delmarva Discovery Center & Museum, Inc.	Mural Visions: Native Wisdom	\$20,000
Worcester	Furnace Town Foundation Incorporated	Nassawango Iron Furnace Restoration Phase 3	\$38,750
Worcester	Henry Hotel Foundation, Inc.	The Henry Hotel Restoration Project	\$100,000
Worcester	Ocean City Museum Society, Inc.	Museum of Ocean City Exhibit Installment	\$50,000

# FY25 MHAA Impact

## By the Numbers



**197**

grant applications received

**10.9**

million dollars requested from grant applicants



**88**

grants awarded

**5.2**

million dollars awarded in MHAA grant funds

Top: Mildred Belle at Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum, Southern Maryland National Heritage Area  
Bottom: Lock House Museum, Lower Susquehanna Heritage Area

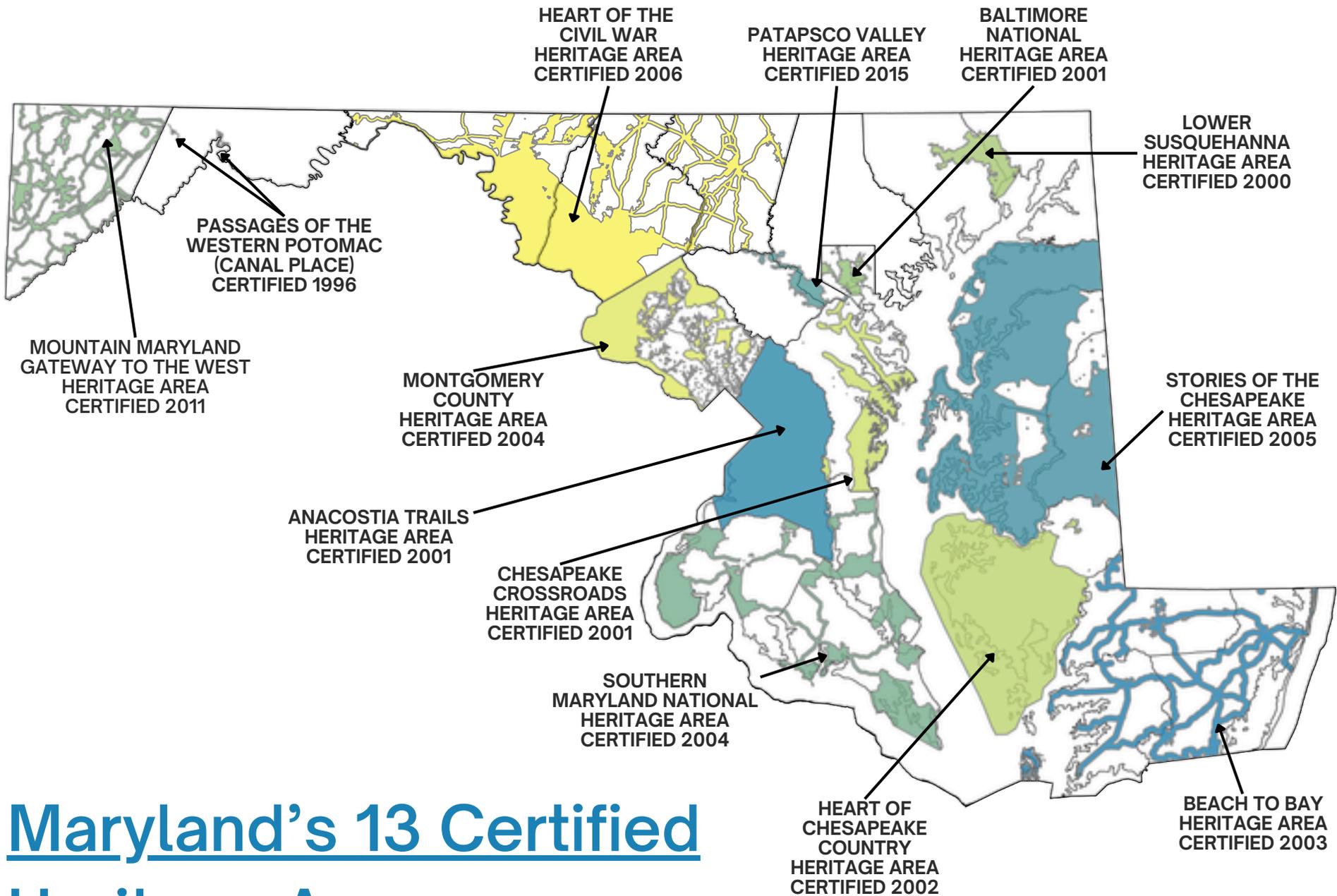
# FY25 MHAA Impact

## By the Numbers

Type of Grant	# of Grants Awarded	Amount of Funding Awarded	Amount Leveraged in Non-State Matching Support
FY25 Project Grants (Capital and Non-Capital)	59	\$3,527,615	\$16,474,986
FY25 Heritage Area Management Entity Grants	29	\$1,716,478	\$3,635,564



*Baltimore Blueway Trail, Baltimore National Heritage Area*



# Maryland's 13 Certified Heritage Areas

# FY25 Members of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority

Rebecca L. Flora, AICP, Secretary, Department of Planning/Chair, Maryland Heritage Areas Authority

Melissa Archer, Representing Jacob R. Day, Secretary, Department of Housing and Community Development/Vice Chair, Maryland Heritage Areas Authority

Julie Schablitsky, Representing Paul J. Wiedefeld, Secretary, Department of Transportation

Luis Cardona, Representing Secretary Harry Coker, Jr., Secretary, Department of Commerce

Hilary Bell, Representing Josh Kurtz, Secretary, Department of Natural Resources

Geoffrey Newman, Representing Dr. Sanjay Rai, Secretary, Maryland Higher Education Commission

Elizabeth Hughes, State Historic Preservation Officer

Rowland Agbede, Representing Kevin Atticks, Secretary, Department of Agriculture (non-voting)

Peter Ramsey, Representing Carey M. Wright, Ed.D., State Superintendent of Schools, Department of Education (non-voting)

Peter Leshner, Maryland Association of Counties Representative

Nathan Brown, Maryland Municipal League Representative

Sandy Turner, Maryland Tourism Development Board Representative

Dennis A. Doster, Governor's Appointee for Heritage Tourism Expertise

Lawana Holland-Moore, Governor's Appointee for Historic Preservation Expertise

Nicholas Redding, President of the Senate Representative

Chief Donna Abbott, President of the Senate Representative

Tara Balfe Clifford, Speaker of the House Representative

Jonathan Hughes, Speaker of the House Representative

## FY25 Annual Report of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority

Wes Moore, Governor

Aruna Miller, Lieutenant Governor

Rebecca L. Flora, AICP, LEED ND / BD+C  
Secretary, Maryland Department of Planning and  
Chair, Maryland Heritage Areas Authority

Maryland Heritage Areas Program  
Maryland Historical Trust  
Maryland Department of Planning  
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Crownsville, MD 21032

[mht.maryland.gov/Pages/MHAA/heritage-areas.aspx](http://mht.maryland.gov/Pages/MHAA/heritage-areas.aspx)

[planning.maryland.gov](http://planning.maryland.gov)



WEINBERG

CENTER FOR THE ARTS

THANK YOU MAMA!

FDC

