

History

For 12,000 years a sparse population of Indians lived in this area, but many more traveled through on the Indian Path from New York and Pennsylvania to winter in Georgia and South Carolina. The first Europeans to come through the Shenandoah Valley were Jesuit missionaries in 1632, and details of this wilderness area were first shown on a map by a Frenchman, Samuel de Champlain.

English ownership of Frederick County was originally by the Virginia Company but was taken over by the Crown in 1624. In 1649, Charles II granted seven royalist supporters the land "bounded by and within the heads" of the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers. By 1681, Thomas, the Second Lord Culpeper, owned most of this original land grant. After he died in 1689, his daughter married Thomas, the Fifth Lord Fairfax, and later, their son Thomas, the Sixth Lord Fairfax, inherited the whole land grant.

By the 1650's various traders, trappers, and explorers were coming to the Shenandoah Valley. Dr. John Lederer from Hamburg, Germany documented his visit to the Valley in 1670 in his diary. An English colonel, Cadwallader Jones, explored the central Valley in 1673, and in 1716, Governor Alexander Spotswood and his fifty "Knights of the Golden Horseshoe" crossed into the Valley through Swift Run Gap and returned with glowing accounts.

Englishmen settled the piedmont, then pushed west by foot and horse through passes in the Blue Ridge, and many more German and Scotch-Irish settlers came down the valleys from Philadelphia and Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Some of the earliest settlers were Quakers who built the Hopewell Friends Meeting House which still stands near Clearbrook. These settlers were attracted by the fertile soils and the abundant forest and water resources.

The Government of Colonial Virginia wanted this wilderness settled as quickly as possible, as a buffer against Indians; but Robert "King" Carter, Lord Fairfax's

History

agent, was settling Fairfax's land slowly in large plantations. The government of Virginia had chartered counties in the land grant as settlement spread up the Northern Neck and west through the land grant. Virginia began to argue that Fairfax's land grant ended at the Blue Ridge, and began granting up to 1,000 acres each to settler families west of the Blue Ridge.

Virginia gave particular developers the right to recruit settlers and sell them up to 1,000 acres per family within a general "grant" area. Each parcel would revert to Virginia unless settled with a house and orchard within two years.

Abraham Hollingsworth settled near the site of Abrams Delight in about 1729. Owen Thomas and Jeremiah Smith came to Back Creek in 1730 and settled on 806 acres granted in Thomas' name. Smith left and returned with a wife before 1741. His log cabin is now part of a house west of Back Creek and south of Route 50. In 1732, Jost Hite settled 16 families on his 5,000 acre "grant" and built Hite's Fort at Bartonsville.

The Indian Path became the Great Wagon Road and Indians were dispossessed westward by treaty and force of arms. Frederick County was created from western Orange County by the House of Burgesses on December 21, 1738 and was named after the Prince of Wales. James Wood, County Surveyor for Orange County, platted a town at the County seat, which he named Winchester, after his birthplace. It consisted of 26 half-acre lots and three streets within 1300 acres, which he claimed as wilderness land owned by Virginia. Those streets are now Loudoun, Boscawen and Cameron.

County government in Virginia was originally by self-perpetuating courts. Frederick County's Court was proclaimed and organized in 1743, and its officials took their oaths of office on November 11 of that year. It first met at the surveying office of its clerk, James Wood, at the site on which he later built his estate, called Glen Burnie.

By 1743, the Frederick County Court admitted that Lord Fairfax's land included the County. At the age of 16, George Washington was a member of a surveying party that came to Frederick County for Lord Fairfax in 1748. In 1749, Lord Fairfax moved to Frederick County and built his home, Greenway Court, at White Post, in present-day Clarke County. He accepted Wood's 1,300 acre claim and other additional lots at Winchester. Eventually, eleven other counties would be created from the 3,824 square miles included in the original Frederick County.

George Washington was associated with Winchester and Frederick County between the years of 1748 and 1765. Early during those years, he maintained a surveying office in Winchester. During the French and Indian War, he was given

History

a Commission and later made Commander in Chief of the colonial forces with headquarters in Winchester. Washington held his first elective offices representing Frederick County, having been elected to the House of Burgesses in 1758 and 1761.

Although there were no battles or military engagements in Frederick County during the Revolutionary War, the area was very important in the effort. General Daniel Morgan, who lived in eastern Frederick County (now Clarke County), and his "Long Rifles" played a prominent role in many battles of the Revolutionary War, including the Battle at Cowpens in South Carolina. Several local citizens furnished the troops with food and supplies, including Isaac Zane who supplied the army with ammunition made at his ironworks in Marlboro. Many prisoners captured during the War were held in Winchester and Frederick County. By 1779, the number of British prisoners held in Winchester had increased so much that it was decided to build a larger prison. A barracks was built four miles west of Winchester to hold these prisoners whose number had increased to 1,600 by the year 1781.

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, life in the current Frederick County area centered around small family farms. Local farms tended to be smaller than farms to the east. During this period, wheat production became the center of the local economy, along with cattle production. In 1820, there were fifty flour mills in Frederick County along with numerous sawmills, tanneries, and other business activities.

Economic life was centered around Winchester and other local towns including Stephens City, Middletown, Kernstown, Gainesboro and Gore. There were a large number and diversity of craftsmen and merchants in these towns. The strongest influence on the local economy was the Great Wagon Road, which later became U.S. Route 11 and which carried settlers and travelers from Philadelphia, south through the Valley and to the west. Activity associated with this road made Winchester one of the largest towns in western Virginia.

Frederick County played a significant part in the Civil War. The northern Shenandoah Valley supplied food, livestock, horses, and soldiers to the southern cause. The Valley was also important because of its strategic location in relation to Washington D.C. The town of Winchester changed hands in the war about 70 times, an average of once every three weeks for four years.

Major local battles included the First Battle of Kernstown in March of 1862, during which General Stonewall Jackson suffered his only tactical defeat during the Valley Campaign but did succeed in keeping Union troops in the Valley from leaving to reinforce McClellan on the peninsula. In May of 1862, Jackson's army

History

defeated the Union troops at the First Battle of Winchester.

In the Second Battle of Winchester in 1863, confederate troops successfully attacked and defeated Union troops occupying forts on the western side of Winchester. Union troops were again defeated at the second battle of Kernstown in 1864.

At the Third Battle of Winchester, General Philip Sheridan's Union troops successfully attacked confederate troops at Winchester. With the high numbers of losses on both sides, a new war of attrition was to begin in the Valley from which the southern forces would never recover. For three weeks in 1864, Sheridan's troops undertook the infamous "Burning" to end Confederate strength in the Valley. Union troops burned 2,000 barns, 120 mills, and a half a million bushels of grain and confiscated 50,000 head of livestock in the Valley. Virginia's richest valley was left desolate.

In October of 1864, Jubal Early's Confederate troops were entrenched south of Cedar Creek. The Union troops were encamped just north of Cedar Creek. A surprise attack by the Confederates drove the Union troops to the north. General Sheridan rallied his troops and attacked, driving the Confederates back across Cedar Creek. This victory helped boost Union morale and helped President Lincoln win reelection.

The Civil War period brought much destruction and economic hardship to Frederick County, due to the county's strategic location in the Valley. Many farms, mills, and dwellings were damaged or destroyed, and the county's economic productivity was greatly reduced. The Reconstruction period was characterized by a slow economic recovery from damages suffered, and by the 1880's economic stability gradually returned. After the war, old economic activities resumed and new activities began. New businesses included a tannery, dairying, farm machinery, and shipping.

There was a tremendous building boom in the county during the period of 1880-1900. In addition to new construction, older structures were often enlarged and "updated" using modern building techniques and styles. This growth occurred in both rural areas and in small communities that had previously developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. New communities were also formed as a consequence of newer, more advanced transportation systems including the automobile and the railroad. Among the communities that experienced growth during this period were Meadow Mills, Hayfield, Gore, Mountain Falls, Mount Williams, Gravel Springs, Gainesboro, Albin, Brucetown, White Hall and Armel.

History

Industrial activity also slowly resumed after the Civil War. According to one source, by 1890, Frederick County had 37 mills, eight woolen factories, a steam elevator, two iron foundries, four glove factories, a boot and shoe factory, ten broom factories, four tanneries, a large paper mill, three newspapers, a book bindery, eight cigar factories, three marble yards, and two furniture factories.

In the early twentieth century, there was rapid industrial growth in Frederick County. There was a phenomenal rise in apple production, with apples replacing wheat as the primary cash crop. Many new facilities were developed relating to apple production and processing. Later in the twentieth century, the local economy had diversified to include a range of different industrial activities. Activities continue to be based on the accessibility of the area and on north-south travel along the route that was once the Great Wagon Road and is now Route 11 and Interstate 81.

History

Historic Preservation

There are quite a few historic sites in Frederick County. The following sites are listed on both the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places:

- *Belle Grove and Cedar Creek
Battlefield*
- *Monte Vista*
- *Springdale House and Mill Complex*
- *Willow Shade*
- *Sunrise*
- *Rose Hill*
- *Hopewell Friends Meeting House*
- *County Poor House*
- *Willa Cather's Birthplace*
- *Newtown/Stephensburg District*
- *St. Thomas Episcopal Church
(Middletown)*

In addition to these, there are approximately 50 sites in the County that have been preliminarily reviewed by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and deemed probably eligible for inclusion on the State and National Registers.

Six battlefields of great national importance are located in Frederick County and Winchester.

Battlefields

- *First and Second Battles of
Winchester*
- *First and Second Battles of
Kernstown*
- *Stephenson's Depot*
- *Third Battle of Winchester*
- *Cedar Creek*
- *Rutherford's Farm*

Fortifications/Entrenchments

- *Star Fort*
- *Parkins Mill Battery*
- *Nineteenth Corps Line*
- *Hilandale*
- *Earthworks/1864-65 Winter
Line*
- *Fort Collier*
- *Carysbrook Redoubt*
- *Zig-Zag Trenches*

There are over 12,000 acres of land in battlefields that maintain high historic character. Without a concentrated and effective effort, most battlefield sites in Winchester and Frederick County will be lost to development during the next twenty years because of their location. Significant efforts are underway on the

History

part of City and County government, the Kernstown Battlefield Association, the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation and others to protect local battlefield sites and create a battlefield park network. The Frederick County - Winchester Battlefield Task Force has produced a plan for a battlefield park network. The Task Force completed the Frederick County-Winchester Battlefield Network Plan in 1996, which was adopted by the Frederick County Board of Supervisors and the Winchester City Council. The plan describes goals for the network and includes strategies and actions to be undertaken to achieve these goals. A battlefield park network in Frederick County and Winchester will provide substantial economic and educational benefits.

In order to take advantage of the potential of battlefield sites, a carefully planned, interconnected network of battlefield sites is needed. Significant, pristine portions of the Cedar Creek, Third Winchester and Kernstown battlefields will provide the "critical mass" and foundation for the battlefield network. Old Town Winchester will play a critical role with its sites and facilities. Other smaller sites will play an important role in the battlefield network as small parks or areas to be viewed along tour routes. Battlefield sites will be connected by carefully planned tour routes that will include vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian routes. Approaches to interpreting the history of the sites for visitors need to be carefully planned and should include a uniform approach and an interpretative center.

Civil War Battlefields And Sites

(As Defined by the NPS
Shenandoah Valley
Civil War Sites Study)


Year Civil War Battlefields

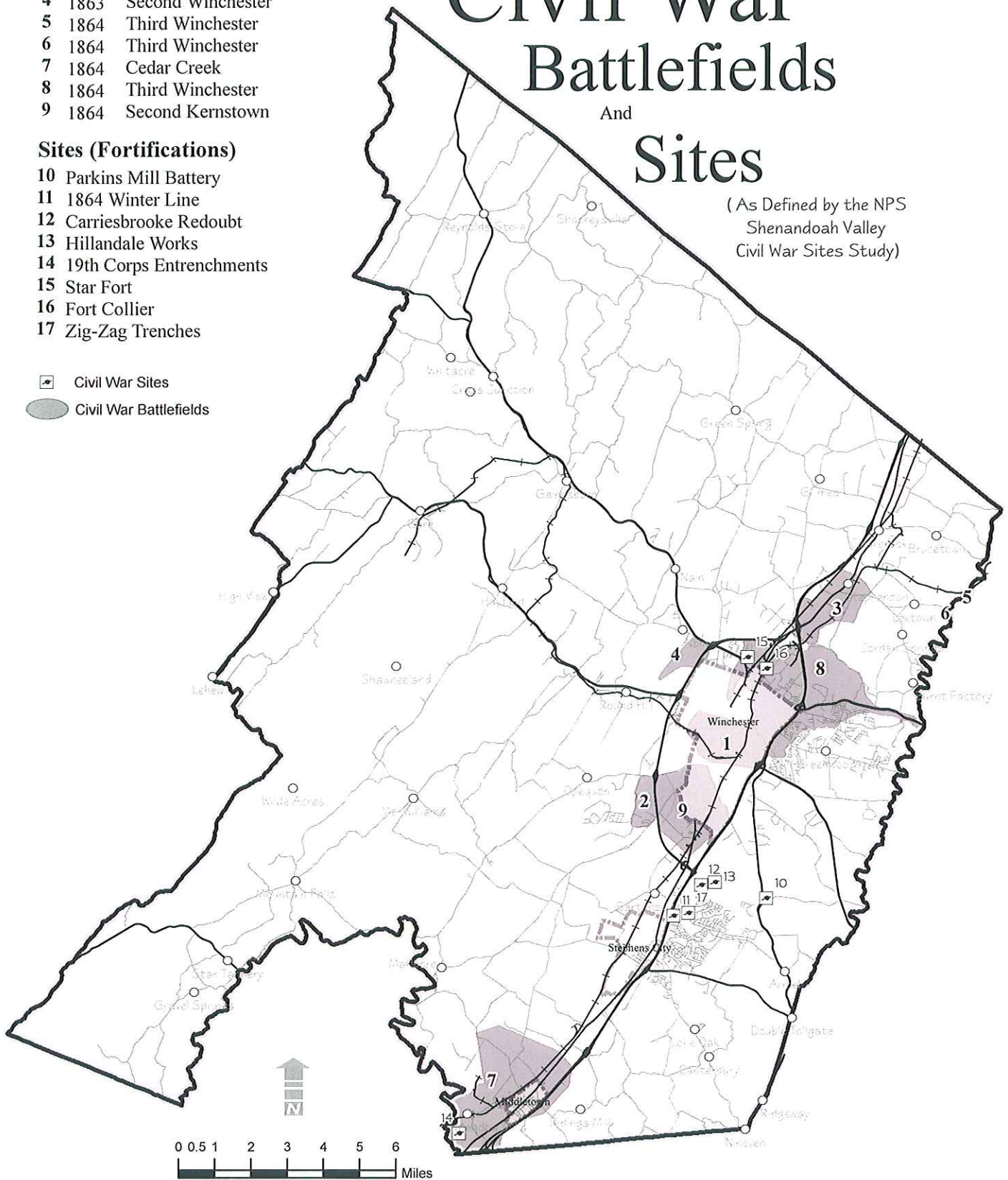
- 1 1862 First Winchester
- 2 1862 First Kernstown
- 3 1863 Stephensons Depot
- 4 1863 Second Winchester
- 5 1864 Third Winchester
- 6 1864 Third Winchester
- 7 1864 Cedar Creek
- 8 1864 Third Winchester
- 9 1864 Second Kernstown

Sites (Fortifications)

- 10 Parkins Mill Battery
- 11 1864 Winter Line
- 12 Carriesbrooke Redoubt
- 13 Hillandale Works
- 14 19th Corps Entrenchments
- 15 Star Fort
- 16 Fort Collier
- 17 Zig-Zag Trenches

 Civil War Sites

 Civil War Battlefields



History

The Plan describes strategies to achieve the goals including:

- *Providing information, assistance, and incentives to landowners*
- *Preparing resource management plans for specific sites*
- *Recommendations concerning local planning decisions*
- *Establishment of an "umbrella battlefield organization" to carry out actions described*
- *Local government assistance and state and federal involvement*
- *Establishing a primary interpretative center*
- *A coordinated sign system for tour routes*
- *Conducting special events for public awareness*
- *Contact and coordination with various interested individuals and groups*

In addition to the key sites at Cedar Creek, Kernstown, Third Winchester/Opequon, and Old Town Winchester, a number of other sites are included in the strategies including:

- *Star Fort and other forts*
- *Stephenson Depot*
- *National and Stonewall Cemeteries*
- *Bowers Hill*
- *Ruthersford Farm*
- *Berryville Canyon*
- *Sheridan's Hospital*
- *1864 Winter Line*

The Plan contains a Battlefield Action Plan that describes the specific actions that will need to be undertaken to achieve the goals of the plan.

History

Table 1: Battlefield Action Program Summary

Battlefield Action Program Summary					
ACTION	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Establish "Battlefield Organization"	★				
Complete Grim Farm acquisition	★				
Acquire Third Winchester key areas	★				
Resource plan for Kernstown	★				
Resource plan for Third Winchester		★			
Resource plan for Star Fort		★			
Battlefield special event		★			
Resource plan for Cedar Creek			★		
Interpretative tour plan			★		
Implement Kernstown plan			★		
Develop interpretative center				★	
Additional acquisition at Cedar Creek				★	
Travel route signs					★
Implement Star Fort plan					★
Implement Cedar Creek plan					★

History

Acquisition of the Grim Farm, as identified by the Battlefield Action Program, continues to be pursued. In joining efforts with the City and the Kernstown Battlefield Association, the County is actively working to acquire, protect, and preserve the 342-acre Grim Farm. This property would be managed by the Kernstown Battlefield Association and opened to the public for Civil War interpretation and preservation of the historic landscape.

The Rural Landmarks Survey of Frederick County, a comprehensive survey of all historic structures and sites in the County, was completed in 1992. It documents over 1800 properties and concludes that many are historically significant. Archaeological sites in the County have also been inventoried in recent studies. Methods to protect, enhance and preserve the especially significant sites are being pursued.

A program for designation of historic properties was adopted in 1992 and is being administered by the Historic Resources Advisory Board. The HRAB is also pursuing an educational program to raise the public awareness about the County's historic resources, which includes a presentation on the Rural Landmarks Survey as a part of the County Schools' history curriculum.

In addition to individual properties and battlefield sites, several areas of the County have been identified as having potential for historic districts. Any development proposal in these areas will need to address the historical significance of the site involved.

Zoning or other regulatory methods can be used to help protect important historical sites. Methods are preferred which allow the property owner to decide whether to participate. In addition, incentives allowed by law for the rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, or restoration of historic structures should be considered.

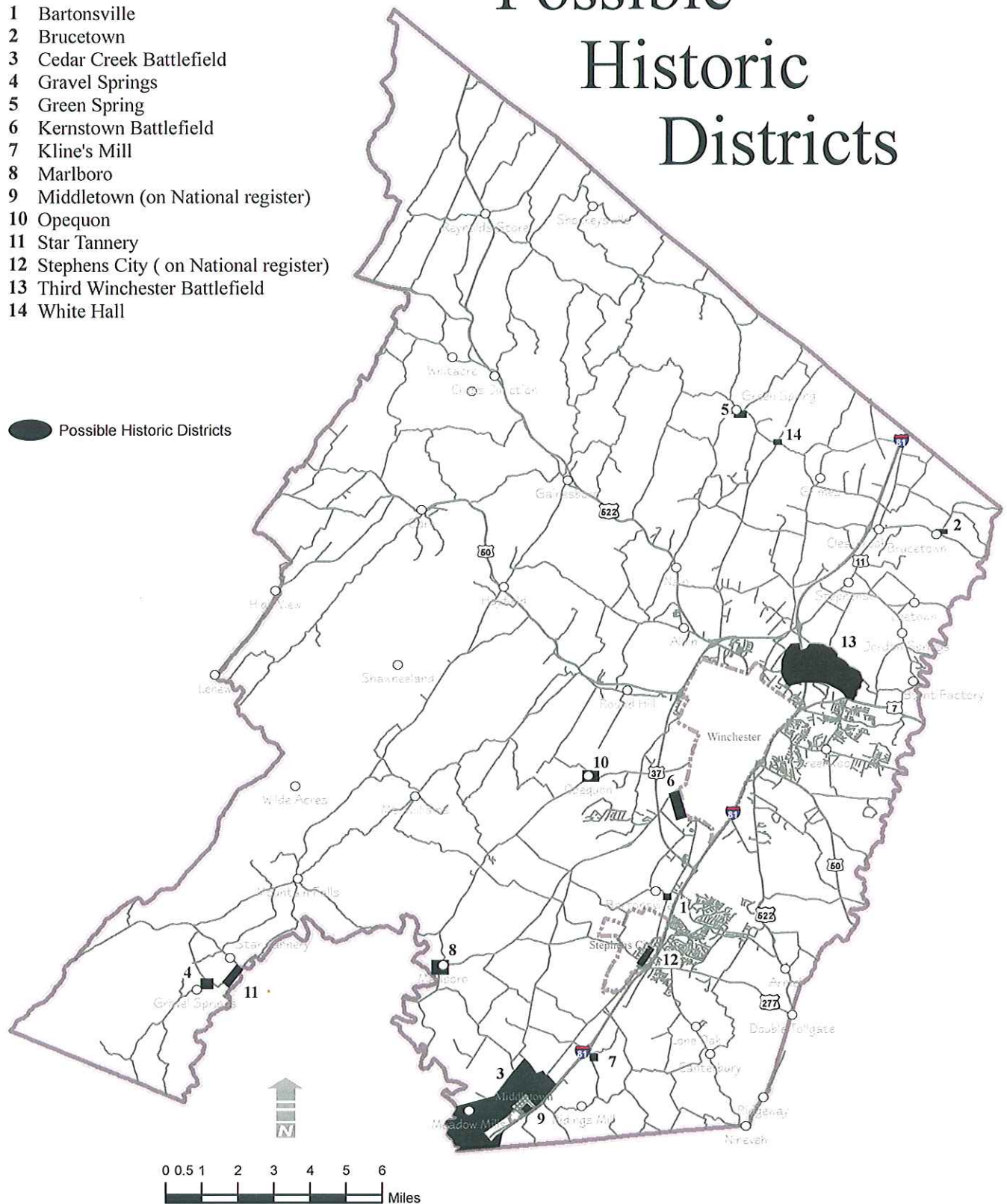
Care should be taken in the design and provision of streets and utilities in historic areas to maintain the historical integrity and character of historic areas. The protection of historic areas should be carefully considered in establishing new roads. Land use patterns should be planned that are harmonious with the historic environment.

Historic preservation can play an important role in economic development. Tourism is an important local industry. The possibility of improving the attractiveness of the area to tourists should be considered in a systematic manner. The protection of historic resources will play an important role in this effort.

Possible Historic Districts

- 1 Bartonsville
- 2 Brucetown
- 3 Cedar Creek Battlefield
- 4 Gravel Springs
- 5 Green Spring
- 6 Kernstown Battlefield
- 7 Kline's Mill
- 8 Marlboro
- 9 Middletown (on National register)
- 10 Opequon
- 11 Star Tannery
- 12 Stephens City (on National register)
- 13 Third Winchester Battlefield
- 14 White Hall

 Possible Historic Districts



Historic Preservation Policy

A number of historic preservation issues have been identified, including the following:

Issues

- *The need to develop methods to protect historic resources.*
- *The need to protect and promote the economic and cultural importance of historic resources.*

GOAL: To Protect the Historic Resources in Frederick County

Strategies:

1. Maintain the inventory of historic sites and potential districts and promote the official designation of significant resources in the County.
2. Study and adopt methods to preserve historic resources.
3. Incorporate historic resources in efforts to promote tourism.

Implementation Methods:

1. Use the Rural Landmarks Survey as a source for determining properties and districts that would qualify for official recognition. Provide positive publicity and education about the recognized sites. Identify those which may be eligible for the State and National register and assist in the preparation and submission of nominations.
2. Develop a method for notifying owners of abandoned historic property of the significance of their property and urge them to maintain it.
3. Develop a mapping system, coordinated with other mapped property information, to assist in determining whether development proposals will impact historic resources.
4. Have the Historic Resources Advisory Board review development proposals which potentially impact significant historic resources. Provide the HRAB's information and recommendations to the

History

Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

5. Develop techniques for protecting and enhancing historic resources including zoning methods, impact analysis, conservation easements, and tax incentives for rehabilitation efforts. Strong support should be given to private initiatives such as voluntary compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
6. Develop requirements and methods for dedication of land and historic districts within significant developments affecting historic resources. Require that open space dedications for developments in battlefield areas be used to create battlefield parks.
7. Encourage the creation and regulation of historic districts. Consider participating in the Virginia Department of Historic Resources' "Certified Local Government" program.
8. Include concerns for historic preservation and tourism in economic development strategies. Promote the concept of a focused events to promote the County's heritage, including reenactments, tours, exhibits, and other activities. Develop ways to publicize sites and routes of interest that will not adversely impact private property owners.
9. Present educational programs, such as slide presentations and lectures, to promote historic preservation.
10. Support the creation of a Battlefield Organization to oversee and coordinate regional preservation efforts. Assist the Battlefield Organization with the implementation of the Frederick County-Winchester Battlefield Network Plan.

GOAL: To Promote the Preservation and Protection of Civil War Battlefield Resources.

Strategies:

1. Develop a comprehensive approach to Battlefield protection and preservation.
2. Develop a comprehensive approach to historic preservation which will result in a system of sites and battlefields dedicated or protected in a coordinated fashion.

History

3. Use the strategies described in the Frederick County-Winchester Battlefield Network Plan to help create a battlefield network that will attract people from around the Nation and the World.

Implementation Methods:

1. Develop a successful battlefield park network that preserves key sites, attracts tourists from around the world, and supports education.
2. Develop a community vision and consensus supporting the preservation and use of battlefield resources.
3. Provide for efficient, attractive and enjoyable vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle travel to, between, and within the key sites.
4. Preserve and protect the historic appearance and character of the key battlefield sites, their viewsheds, and their approaches.
5. Coordinate the battlefield efforts with efforts to protect and use resources from other historic periods.
6. Coordinate the battlefield efforts with efforts to protect and preserve natural, visual and environmental resources.
7. Develop a comprehensive approach to the interpretation and understanding of the sites and their history.
8. Develop long term funding sources for battlefield preservation.
9. Work closely with landowners and find ways to provide preservation benefits to landowners.
10. Encourage and coordinate with regional, state, and federal efforts to preserve battlefield sites.
11. Provide for the long term maintenance of the battlefield park network.
12. Coordinate with the overall planning efforts of the community.
13. Preserve and use key portions of the Cedar Creek, Kernstown, and Third Winchester as the foundation for a battlefield park network.

History
