Developing a Sustainable Urban Heritage Tourism Approach for Philadelphia - Experiences from National Heritage Areas

Yue Wu

University of Pennsylvania

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Developing a Sustainable Urban Heritage Tourism Approach for Philadelphia - Experiences from National Heritage Areas

Abstract
This thesis proposes a sustainable heritage tourism development approach for large and multifunctional historic cities like Philadelphia. Although Philadelphia is not solely or even largely dependent on tourism, the city nevertheless views heritage tourism as a valuable opportunity to enhance its competitiveness and attract investment. This study explores the challenges in urban heritage management and suggests an approach to integrate community development and heritage tourism development, so as to take advantage of heritage resources for improving quality of urban life while minimizing the negative impact observed in historic cities. One source for this exploration is the successful strategies and practical experience that can be learned from three selected National Heritage Areas (NHA), Baltimore National Heritage Area, Essex National Heritage Area, and Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. The research method adopted in this study is policy and document analysis on NHA’s best practices, and interviews to understand Philadelphia’s heritage tourism infrastructure. The analysis of Philadelphia is conducted on a city and neighborhood level. After comparing the state of heritage tourism industry in Philadelphia and the heritage tourism development strategies adopted by NHA, the paper concludes that a city-wide management entity with grant-making ability is essential for planning and managing sustainable heritage tourism development in the city. This paper has also discussed heritage tourism in two historic neighborhoods in Philadelphia, Old City and Germantown, representing contrasting development stages and needs. The thesis concludes that the NHA framework provides meaningful directions to a sustainable approach for heritage tourism development that respects visitors and residents, heritage and community resources.

Keywords
sustainable tourism development, heritage tourism, historic city, National Heritage Areas, Philadelphia

Disciplines
Historic Preservation and Conservation

Comments
Suggested Citation:


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DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE URBAN HERITAGE TOURISM APPROACH FOR PHILADELPHIA - EXPERIENCES FROM NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS

Yue Wu

A THESIS

in

Historic Preservation

Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION

2018

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David Hollenberg
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Program Chair
Frank G. Matero
Professor
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1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world, and encouraging its development while managing its impact is an increasingly common and demanding challenge for urban planning and heritage management in historic cities. While many urban heritage tourism studies focus on small historic towns with economies that are largely dependent on the tourism industry, this paper looks at heritage and tourism management for Philadelphia, a large and multifunctional city with a varied economic base. Although Philadelphia is not solely or even largely dependent on tourism, the city nevertheless views heritage tourism as a valuable opportunity to enhance its competitiveness and attract investment.

Philadelphia’s tourism industry is growing and has significant economic impact. Leisure and hospitality is the 5th largest employment sector in Philadelphia, following education and health services, trade, transportation, and utilities, professional and business services, and government. It generated 11 billion in economic impact and supported 96,600 jobs in 2017. Heritage tourism has always been an important component of the tourism industry due to the city’s rich historical and cultural resources.

Philadelphia was designated as the nations’ first World Heritage City in 2015 by the Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC). Founded in 1993, the OWHC consists of 280 cities in which UNESCO listed sites are located. Some expect this designation of Philadelphia to enhance the city’s international reputation and drive

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tourism and economic development in the region. Although the Mayor and several local organizations, such as the Global Philadelphia Association and Visit Philadelphia, have shown great interest in this designation, it remains a question whether and to what extent it can benefit local urban communities and preservation of cultural heritage. This study intends to explore the challenges in urban heritage management and suggest an approach to integrate local communities and heritage tourism industry development, so as to take advantage of heritage resources for improving quality of urban life while minimizing the negative impact observed in historic cities.

One source for this exploration is the practical experience that can be learned from National Heritage Areas (NHA), in particular the accumulated experience of the National Park Service (NPS) in working with them. Typically the NPS has partnered with local communities to promote and celebrate heritage-based education and tourism, while enhancing community cohesion, identity, and a sense of belonging. Some may argue that tourism development is unsustainable by its nature, but NHAs have often shown that with effective planning, management, and guidance, heritage tourism can contribute to heritage preservation and benefit local communities.

This paper intends to develop a sustainable heritage tourism development approach for large and multifunctional historic cities like Philadelphia, based on the successful strategies and experience of selected NHAs. Without comprehensive planning and management, the benefits of heritage tourism development are difficult to capture in order to sustain the cultural resources that attract visitors. Including heritage preservation and community development as objectives in addition to economic development, the
approach developed in this paper envisions a more inclusive and sustainable approach to tourism development.

The research method adopted in this study is policy and document analysis combined with interviews. Due to the lack of literature on heritage tourism in Philadelphia, interviews have been conducted for the major organizations with responsibilities related to heritage tourism, in order to evaluate their work on and attitudes towards sustainable heritage tourism development. Through the analysis of three successful NHAs and their strategies based on their management plans, evaluation reports, and annual reports, this paper then develops recommendations for heritage tourism policy and management in Philadelphia. The analysis is conducted on a city and neighborhood level.

The following section is a literature review outlining the issues of heritage tourism observed in historic cities and discussions around sustainable tourism. The next section introduces the tourism industry in Philadelphia, interaction between heritage and tourism development, and issues related to it. In the analysis section, the background of NHAs is first introduced and three are selected for in-depth study. Based on the lessons learned from these NHAs, recommendations are made for the city as a whole, and then for two contrasting neighborhoods, Old City and Germantown.

2. Literature Review

Tourism is one of the world’s fastest growing sectors, and a powerful force in the economic, social, cultural, ecological and political environment in cities. Not surprisingly, many studies are conducted trying to explain, evaluate, criticize, and manage this global
phenomenon. Within the tourism sector, heritage is one of the most significant and fast
growing components, triggering issues that are closely related to cultural heritage
management. As one of the most notable and important types of tourism in terms of
visitors and attraction, heritage tourism is also one of the most studied subjects in the
field. It is also seen by local authorities and public organizations as a means of
economic development to bring benefits to local destinations.

Urban heritage tourism, as a subfield of urban tourism, lacks a multidimensional
framework for exploration and understanding. Most studies focus on either urban tourism
or heritage tourism, instead of the intersection of the two. For urban tourism, although
much of the tourism industry is centered in cities, the study of urban tourism receives
disproportionately small amount of attention from scholars of either tourism or of urban
studies. Some observers suggest that heritage tourism, based on relics, tends to occur in
rural areas. However, urban heritage tourism is an important activity for most historic
cities.

Sustainable tourism, usually treated as a as another topic separated from urban
heritage tourism, has been discussed extensively by tourism scholars. Sustainability has
been closely and carefully discussed for natural resources in ecotourism, but the

\[\text{3 Gregory John Ashworth and J. E. Tunbridge, } \text{The Tourist-Historic City: Retrospect and Prospect of Managing the Heritage City} \text{ (Pergamon, 2000).}
\]
\]
\[\text{5 Dr Dallen J. Timothy, } \text{Cultural Heritage and Tourism: An Introduction} \text{ (Channel View Publications, 2011).}
\]
\]
\[\text{7 Timothy, } \text{Cultural Heritage and Tourism. 4}
\]
urban tourism. To contribute towards filling this gap, this study explores the contribution of urban heritage tourism towards achieving sustainable development in a historic city. The following studies focus on urban heritage tourism and sustainable tourism to develop the basic understanding for sustainable urban heritage tourism.

Although it has been argued that heritage tourism encourages cultural communication, and generates significant amount of income and jobs, few believe the industry is “pollution-free”. The economic benefits generated by tourism have been extensively studied. Much of the research demonstrates tourism’s economic benefits – creating jobs and earning foreign exchange. The positive impact of tourism on local economy becomes one of the major economic justifications for heritage conservation. However, scholars have taken sophisticated positive and negative views about the social and cultural impacts of heritage tourism.

One of the major concerns for heritage tourism is that the large number of tourists increases the management and operation cost of historic sites. De la Calle-Vaquero et al. found out in their recent study that tourism has had a negative local effect and impact on conservation of historic centers in many European cities. The growth of tourism activity has occupied public space and altered the urban landscape, leading to social resistance. Evans’s study on Quebec City reveals that the historic city core has been gentrified and “touristified” without an effective program mitigating the negative impact of heritage.

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8 Geoffrey, “Sustainable Tourism–unsustainable Development.”
9 Geoffrey.
tourism. The characteristics of the city were lost due to the displacement of local communities. Compared to these typical tourist-historic cities, Philadelphia has not experienced overwhelming “touristification”. Large multifunctional cities such as Philadelphia may have the ability to absorb tourists and leaving it largely invisible, which makes the cities more likely to benefit from, instead of negatively affected by, tourism development.

In such analyses, local involvement is consistently seen as the major contributor to the sustainability of tourism development. It is believed that if tourism is based on small-scale, locally owned activities, the use of heritage assets has the potential to serve both conservation and local development. However, a mechanism that ensures access and fair distribution of social and economic resources related to heritage tourism is required.

Sudi’s study on Lamu and Mombasa Old Towns revealed that revenues generated from tourism can be retrieved by the local community with mechanisms that suit the local context. In order to achieve the goal of effective and sustainable tourism management, collaboration between public sectors, public-private and non-profit organizations is necessary.

Sustainable tourism is usually the term used to describe the practice described above. Butler’s definition of sustainable tourism is:

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13 Ashworth and Page, “Urban Tourism Research.”
... tourism which is developed and maintained in an area (community, environment) in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an indefinite period and does not degrade or alter the environment (human and physical) in which it exists to such a degree that it prohibits the successful development and well-being of other activities and processes.\(^{17}\)

However, Geoffrey views tourism as a potential means, rather than an end, to achieve other long-term goals. For instance, a declining industrial area develops industrial tourism in order to improve the neighborhood image and attract investment. He also believes that tourism “must be economically viable, environmentally sensitive and culturally appropriate” to contribute to sustainable development.\(^{18}\)

In more recent studies, Richards and Hall state that sustainable tourism is based on “the assurance of renewable economic, social and cultural benefits to the community and its environment”, and that it is necessary to be conducted in the context of the local community. Therefore, empowering the community is a critical step in most versions of sustainable tourism.\(^{19}\) Stoddard et al. reveal that sustainable tourism is multidimensional, including ecotourism, heritage and cultural tourism, and agritourism.\(^{20}\) Heritage and cultural tourism, as one important dimension of sustainable tourism, is most relevant in the urban context, especially in a city like Philadelphia, with its abundant cultural and historical resources.

One of the most recognized and appreciated sustainable tourism practices in the U.S. are NHA. Although NHAs are designated by the U.S. Congress, each with its


\(^{18}\) Geoffrey, “Sustainable Tourism–unsustainable Development.”

\(^{19}\) Greg Richards and Derek Hall, *Tourism and Sustainable Community Development* (Psychology Press, 2003).

specific legislation, the majority of NHAs show a large degree of similarity in their basic legislative elements.\textsuperscript{21} With the goal of organizing heritage-based tourism and education, NHAs are administrated by a designated local entity with technical assistance by the NPS.\textsuperscript{22}

For more than 30 years, the National Park Service has been providing technical assisting leadership through initiatives such as planning and interpretation within these national heritage areas, working on the community-led conservation and development programs. Barton claims that NHAs are “the best examples of collaborative participation across large landscapes” in the NPS.\textsuperscript{23} With distinctive natural or cultural resources and employing tourism and leisure as a means for economic development, the areas have provided valuable experiences in and models for sustainable heritage tourism. The NHA framework combines culture and leisure through heritage, targeted towards residents as well as tourists and adopting a more democratic management approach. As a result, different stakeholders are involved in the decision-making process, and the local community is encouraged to develop a distinct identity. The program enriches the understanding and recognition by residents of the area’s heritage, which enhances the attraction for tourists and investors.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{21} Brenda Barrett and Mahoney, “National Heritage Areas: Learning from 30 Years of Working to Scale,” \textit{The George Wright Forum} 33, no. 2 (2016): 163.
\textsuperscript{22} Alan W. Barton, “From Parks to Partnerships: National Heritage Areas and the Path to Collaborative Participation in the National Park Service’s First 100 Years,” \textit{Natural Resources Journal} 56, no. 1 (2016): 23–54.
\textsuperscript{23} Barton.
The NPS has hired outside consultants to evaluate the performance of 12 NHAs in 2008, and the results are overwhelmingly positive.25 A large number of case studies on NHAs have emerged and the management structures are well documented, providing a good base from which to draw the experience and best practices of from successful sustainable heritage development practice.

Based on the previous studies on urban heritage tourism, it is apparent that large multifunctional historic cities have the potential to develop analogous practices towards developing sustainable heritage tourism. However, the topic has not been fully explored. This study contributes to the landscape of urban heritage tourism by taking Philadelphia as a laboratory to evaluate and plan sustainable heritage tourism development.

3. Heritage Tourism in Philadelphia: Background, Development, and Issues

As a major and fast growing industry in Philadelphia, tourism’s development is built on a series of efforts over decades and has generated various issues. In Philadelphia, as in any other historic tourism cities, tourism is closely related to heritage preservation. Heritage tourism plays an important role in tourism development. However, the issues of sustainable heritage tourism are specific to the place and vary from case to case. This section introduces the development of tourism industry in Philadelphia, its relationship with historic preservation, and analyzes the issues generated by the current tourism development strategy.

3.1. Background of Tourism Industry in Philadelphia

25 Barrett and Mahoney, “National Heritage Areas: Learning from 30 Years of Working to Scale.”
The development of tourism industry started in post-industrial Philadelphia, when the manufacture industry was declining, accompanied with the significant loss of population. In the 1990s, Mayor Ed Rendell, the State, and the Pew Charitable Trusts together were looking for a replacement industry to revitalize the city’s economy. Research and surveys were conducted by the Pew, which concluded that tourism and hospitality had the potential to create jobs and increase income for the historic city. At that time, its history was seen as Philadelphia’s most important tourist attraction. Surveyed visitors identified historic sites and buildings as the best-liked feature of Philadelphia, with the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall identified as the most popular historic places to visit. However, Philadelphia also had the reputation of being a “stopping-off” point for tourists between New York City and Washington D.C.. Although the total number of leisure visitors was 22.79 million in 1997, among them 68% were day leisure visitors. Since the visitors only spent a short period of time in the city, their visitation was constrained in a small area around the attractions they visit, which were usually the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall. This pattern resulted in a concentration of tourists in a small area, inefficient use of historic resources, and difficulty in capturing broad economic benefits from tourism. The City therefore started a series of projects and programs to improve Philadelphia’s tourism industry and make it a major overnight tourist destination. The major ones include developing a strategic plan,

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26 Meryl Levitz (President and CEO of Visit Philadelphia) in discussion with the author, February 21, 2018.
28 *Destination Philadelphia*. 11.
establishing an independent cooperation for marketing, and improving the visitor center both physically and programmatically.

The Philadelphia City Planning Commission made an early effort towards this objective, developing *Destination Philadelphia: A Strategic Plan for Visitor Industry* in 1993, with the goal to “further develop and better market Philadelphia as a visitor destination.” 30 One of the major strategies proposed for Philadelphia’s tourism development was creating a pedestrian-friendly walking district with concentrated tourism attractions, especially in the Center City district. Although exploiting and preserving Philadelphia’s collection of historic resources were incorporated into the recommendations, the plan focused more on urban image enhancement, improvement of attractions, special events, and hospitality services in the Center City district. 31 It was claimed that the plan was produced not solely for visitors, but for the benefit of residents too. However, neither neighborhood revitalization nor urban community preservation and development received much if any attention in this document.

Three years after the *Strategic Plan* was produced, Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation (currently known as Visit Philadelphia) was founded as the official regional attractions marketing agency by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the City of Philadelphia, with significant support from the Pew Charitable Trusts. The mission of the non-profit organization was to “build Greater Philadelphia’s image, drive visitation and boost the economy.” 32 A second marketing agency, the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau, already existed. It was established in 1940s to bring

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30 *Destination Philadelphia*. 5
31 *Destination Philadelphia*. 1
meetings and conventions to Philadelphia, and then to market the Pennsylvania Convention Center, which opened in 1993 to spur new development and increase visitation. Visit Philadelphia and the pre-existing Convention and Visitors Bureau have overlapping missions but different targets. The Convention and Visitors Bureau markets to meeting planners and tour operators in order to book the Convention Center, and promotes convention center hotels. Visit Philadelphia targets leisure visitors with overall marketing and branding for Philadelphia and surrounding five-county area.\textsuperscript{33}

To improve the tourism infrastructure, a new visitor center was constructed. The city’s old visitor center was located at 16\textsuperscript{th} street and John F Kennedy Blvd, close to the business center but not to tourist attractions. To better serve visitors in the Greater Philadelphia Region, Independence Visitor Center was opened in 2001. Its location was chosen to be within Independence National Historical Park (INHP), the most-visited attraction in Philadelphia, in order to reach the largest audience. It was intended to orient visitors not only to the Park, but to the city as a whole, the Southern New Jersey and Delaware River Waterfronts, and the Greater Philadelphia region.

Founded in 2010, Global Philadelphia Association (GPA) is a more recently established organization advocating for the city’s heritage tourism. In 2015, Philadelphia was designated by OWHC as the first World Heritage City in the US, as a result of the collective efforts of the City and Global Philadelphia Association.\textsuperscript{34} The member-governed nonprofit corporation is the major entity to promote the new international status and manage the World Heritage City Project, which has four major objectives, Preserving

\textsuperscript{33} Levitz.
\textsuperscript{34} Zabeth Teelucksingh (Executive Director of Global Philadelphia Association) in discussion with the author, February 16 2018.
and Celebrating Historical and Cultural Assets, Educating Global Kids with Roots, Building World Heritage City Awareness and Ownership, and Extending Philadelphia’s Global Reach. In GPA’s strategic plan, Tourism and Hospitality is listed side by side with Neighborhood and Community Development as ways to build awareness and ownership of the city. Visit Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau have been actively using the new international status to attract visitors’ attention. The title, World Heritage City, is highlighted on the front page of their websites and in their narrative of Philadelphia. The project is relatively new and it is far too early to assess its impact. However, the objectives and actions proposed by the organization merit discussion since they contribute to with the goals of sustainable heritage tourism.

As a result of the efforts over more than three decades, Philadelphia has become a major destination with 42 million total visitations in 2016. Together with the efforts of marketing agencies and visitor center, increasing number of hotel rooms, improved public space and transportation, opening of new attractions, and an overall better city image, have collectively contributed to the boom of tourism industry. As one of the major goals proposed by both the Strategic Plan and Visit Philadelphia, increasing overnight stays has been achieved, with a rise of 95% compared to 1997. However, the average length of stay in Greater Philadelphia, which is 2.7 days in 2016, is still shorter than the national average of 3.7 days.35

3.2. Interaction between Tourism Development and Historic Preservation

Heritage draws people to visit Philadelphia. The major heritage tourism attractions are listed in Table 1. According to the 2016 total attraction attendance statistics collected by Visit Philadelphia, the most-visited historic sites in 2016 were INHP, Eastern State Penitentiary, Christ Church & Burial Grounds, and the Betsy Ross House. INHP has been the most popular attraction in Philadelphia since the 1990s. Managed by the National Park Service, the park contains the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Independence Hall, Liberty Bell Center, and other colonial landmarks and icons.

Heritage tourism cannot thrive without the preservation of historic resources, and preservation makes it possible to develop new attractions. Compared to the attraction attendance in 1990 (Table 2), a notable change is the rising visitation of Eastern State Penitentiary on the list. As the third most popular site now, Eastern State Penitentiary has been successfully developed as a new heritage tourism attraction. The site was once threatened by demolition and redevelopment in 1970 - 1980s. Formed in 1988, the Eastern State Penitentiary Task Force successfully prevented the site from redevelopment and made it open to the public for tours. 36 The well-preserved and managed historic site promotes cultural and historical values and serves as a heritage tourism resource.

Table 1. Attendance of Major Heritage Tourism Attractions in 2016 (Source: CBRE Hospitality Snapshot)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attraction</th>
<th>2016 Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberty Bell</td>
<td>2,309,247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence Hall</td>
<td>752,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern State Penitentiary</td>
<td>388,995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ Church &amp; Burial Grounds</td>
<td>214,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Betsy Ross House</td>
<td>191,985</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Attendance of Major Heritage Tourism Attractions in 1990 (Source: Philadelphia City Planning Commission)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attraction</th>
<th>1990 Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberty Bell</td>
<td>1,490,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence Hall</td>
<td>753,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Betsy Ross House</td>
<td>456,655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Bank of the United States</td>
<td>127,549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ Church &amp; Burial Grounds</td>
<td>105,530</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite the success of Eastern State Penitentiary, most of the city and region’s numerous other historic sites have low visitation and lack sufficient and reliable sources of financing. Most historic sites are raising funds to support their own capital projects, programming, and marketing. Conserving and managing a historic site is costly. For historic sites, the direct benefit from tourism derives from entrance fees and gift shop sales, which are never sufficient by themselves to support the sites.

3.3. Issues of Philadelphia’s Heritage Tourism

Although history is Philadelphia’s most important tourist attraction and heritage tourism is an essential component in the tourism landscape, heritage tourism is not the

37 Paul Steinke (Executive Director of Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia) in discussion with the author, March 1, 2018.
most popular tourism activity. The most recent survey conducted by Longwoods in 2016 indicates that visiting historic sites is only the fourth popular tourist activity in Philadelphia, following shopping, museums and fine dining (Table 3). However, the percentage of Philadelphia visitors who have visited historic sites in their trips is higher than that of national visitors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Philadelphia</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum/Gallery</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Dining</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Site</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Art</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nightlife</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festival/Concert</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National/State Park</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Top 8 Overnight Visitor Activities (Source: Visit Philadelphia)

The important role of heritage in tourism development is difficult to quantify. In terms of visitor spending, visitors spend most money on lodging and food, taking up 25% and 27% of the $6.83 billion direct spending respectively, compared to the small spending on recreation at 11%, which includes heritage tourism expenditures such as visiting historic sites and museums. As shown in Table 4, the three major visitor expenditures are food services, lodging and transportation for both Philadelphia and the nation. Furthermore, heritage tourism resources not only include historic sites, but also

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38 “Greater Philadelphia Visitor Profile - Overnight Leisure 2016.”
the historic neighborhoods, street form, and intangible assets, which together create an historic vibe, attracting visitors to stay in and explore the city. Recognizing their distinct value, Philadelphia’s historic neighborhoods were named a *National Treasure* by National Trust for Historic Preservation in 2017.\(^\text{39}\) The hotel tax presumably captures the economic value of the historic urban landscape, while it is intended to be used to increase hotel occupancy rate in Philadelphia, instead of tourism resources preservation. The city charges 8.5% hotel tax of the total amount received by the host, which is split among the Pennsylvania Convention Center, Philadelphia Visitors & Convention Bureau, and Visit Philadelphia leisure-tourism group in order to attract more conventions, events, and leisure tourists.\(^\text{40}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Philadelphia</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Services</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>Transportation 37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodging</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Food Services 26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Lodging 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping/Retail</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>Recreation 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>Shopping/Retail 7%</td>
</tr>
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Table 4. 2016 Visitor Expenditures by Category (Source: Visit Philadelphia & U.S. Travel Association, 2016)

Since the economic value of the heritage is hard to quantify, it is difficult to make the argument that heritage preservation merit a bigger share of tourism profits to directly support bricks and mortar preservation of the general built environment. As a result, in


contrast with the investment in tourism marketing, preservation of the important tourism resources, such as urban heritage and neighborhoods, has received small investment. Historic preservation heavily relies on funding, government regulations, and incentives.

In addition to the difficulty in getting a share of tourism profits, the resource allocation is unbalanced geographically. Philadelphia’s heritage tourism is concentrated in Center City, leaving other parts of the city hardly visible to tourists. It may be attributed to the Strategic Plan, which proposed building a concentrated walking district as the major tourism development strategy. The current INHP and the Fairmount Museum district are good examples of the results of the plan.

History is the brand of Philadelphia but is not the focus of marketing. Although Visit Philadelphia has been developing programming around heritage, promoting Philadelphia as a fun and entertaining place to visit, history itself is not the focus of its marketing. In fact, INHP area is the only historical element in Visit Philadelphia’s 2017 marketing campaigns. Consequently, what people learn about Philadelphia’s historic sites from marketing campaigns typically remains the most famous sites, Liberty Bell and Independence Hall, while other historic sites and neighborhoods get little or no attention.

Although the Independence Visitor Center was created to promote tourism in the Greater Philadelphia Region, which includes the areas beyond the Center City and the five counties around Philadelphia, it seems inefficient in achieving this goal. Since visitors need to get tickets at the Visitor Center in order to enter Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell, the promotion at the Visitor Center can reach a large number of visitors.

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41 Levitz.
However, I did not find any promotion for remote neighborhoods and surrounding counties during my visit there, nor did the staff recommend places to visit outside Center City. Despite its founding intention to orient visitors not only to the city as a whole but to the surrounding region, the historic sites and neighborhoods in the outskirts of the city and the broader region are not on the list offered by the Visitor Center staff as suggestions to visitors.

In summary, heritage tourism in Philadelphia has issues with unbalanced resource allocation among stakeholders and among different parts of the city. It is unfortunate that the Strategic Plan has not been updated since the time it was produced. As recognized in the plan, visitor development requires ongoing strategic planning and adjustments, as does any other economic development effort. The concepts about urban heritage and urban tourism have changed a lot, and many recommendations in the document are outdated. Image building for Philadelphia as a safe, clean and fun place is still important in order to attract visitors and residents, but the neglected components in heritage tourism, heritage and community preservation, is key to the future of heritage tourism.


Many NHAs exemplify in their overall framework successful practices of sustainable heritage tourism development, providing inspiring options for heritage

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43 Destination Philadelphia. 2
44 John Haak (Senior Planner at Philadelphia City Planning Commission) in discussion with the author, February 23, 2018.
tourism development and heritage management. Some of the NHAs share similar issues as Philadelphia and have developed strategies to tackle them effectively. Existing NHAs vary in missions, sizes, and types of resources. Therefore, three NHAs have been selected for this paper that are most comparable to Philadelphia, in order to identify best practices in sustainable heritage tourism development. After the background overview of NHA framework and the selected NHAs, the discussion of potential application of the strategies to Philadelphia focuses on city-level and neighborhood-level management respectively. Different scales of analysis are designed to show a complete picture of how effective the NHA approach could be in informing opportunities and challenges of Philadelphia’s heritage tourism development on different levels.

4.1. Background of NHA

The Congress has designated 49 NHAs since 1996. They all adopted different strategies depending on the local conditions under a basic framework. Each NHA has its own specific enabling legislation, which typically designates a local coordinating entity (sometimes called a “management entity”), whose major duties include preparing and implementing a management plan, conducting public meetings, and submitting annual reports to the Secretary of Interior (SOI). The management plans typically were required to be submitted to the SOI for approval within a certain period (typically 5 years) after the date of enactment of the title. The plans were intended to present the coordinating entity’s recommendation for conservation, funding, management and development of the NHA, including specified contents, such as an inventory of resources, existing and potential sources of funding, and an interpretive plan. With the federal funding, the
coordinating entity is able to make grants to the State, political subdivisions of the State, nonprofit organizations, and other persons, so as to support the mission of the NHA. However, each legislation has a sunset provision, terminating the federal funding some time (typically 15 years) after the date of enactment of the title. The legislation requires the SOI to conduct an evaluation no later than 3 years before the sunset date to assess the accomplishments and impacts of the NHA, and a report that includes recommendations for the future role of the NPS. The report may recommend reauthorizing the federal funding for the NHA.

Based on the information provided in evaluations, reports, and economic impact studies, I selected three well-managed NHAs to study in depth, for their potential relevance to evaluating heritage tourism in Philadelphia. To choose from the 49 NHAs, the author developed four primary selection criteria. First, the NHA is located in the Northeast to make sure it is similar to Philadelphia historically and culturally. Second, the NHA shall have been established long enough to evaluate its impact. Third, the evaluation indicates positive impact on preservation, community development, and local economy. Last but not least, heritage tourism should be one important component in the selected NHA’s management plan.

As a result, Baltimore National Heritage Area (BNHA), Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area (HRVNHA), and Essex National Heritage Area (ENHA) were selected, and considered the best comparable to Philadelphia. They are all located along the east coast, have had one or two economic impact studies conducted, and explicitly rely on heritage tourism as a major means for economic development. BNHA is the most similar to Philadelphia due to its urban context, while most NHAs are regional. However,
since Philadelphia is a larger city than Baltimore and the city expects heritage tourism to be developed in the Greater Philadelphia Region, it is beneficial to study the HRVNHA and the ENHA’s experience on building connections in a larger area. Conclusions and recommendation drawn from analysis of these three NHAs with respect to potential lessons for heritage tourism in Philadelphia are contained in section 4.2 and 4.3 of this paper.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BNHA</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>620,961</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENHA</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>County</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>745,643</td>
<td>1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRVNHA</td>
<td>6,023</td>
<td>Region</td>
<td>1,545</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,789,259</td>
<td>1996</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Basic Information and Heritage Resources of the Selected Three National Heritage Areas (Source: Author; data sources: National Park Service/United States Census Bureau/National Park Service)

<table>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,526,006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Basic information and Heritage Resources of Philadelphia

4.1.1. Baltimore National Heritage Area

Designated by Congress in 2009, BNHA is one of a few National Heritage Areas located within an urban context. As one of the competing visitor destinations, Baltimore started tourism development earlier and adopted different strategies compared to Philadelphia.45

Similar to Philadelphia, Baltimore has rich cultural and heritage resources. Located at a harbor at the mouth of the Patapsco River, the city was a world-class port and the second

45 Destination Philadelphia.
largest port of entry for immigrants in the 19th century. It played an important role in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War, and both World Wars. Maritime history, ethnic culture, and military history are among its major cultural heritage components. The most popular neighborhoods to visit are Inner Harbor, Little Italy, and Mount Vernon.

As early as the mid-1990s, the city of Baltimore prepared for the establishment of a heritage area. The new Maryland Preservation and Tourism Areas Program established by House Bill 1 in 1996 led to Baltimore’s designation as a recognized state heritage area in 1997, as a result of the efforts of the Baltimore City Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) and local support.\(^{46}\) Appointed by the mayor, CHAP has the mission to “enhance and promote the culture and economy of Baltimore through the preservation of buildings, structures, sites and neighborhoods.”\(^{47}\) CHAP’s first management plan was produced in 2001, calling for a heritage management entity. Baltimore City Heritage Area (BCHA) was created in its aftermath. As an advisor to the city, BNHA’s office was composed of an executive director and a forty-person advisory committee, housed in a department under the Baltimore Mayor’s Office.

Baltimore and NPS decided to pursue designation of the BNHA in the early 2000s. Following a series of interchanges with NPS, BCHA conducted the *Feasibility Study for a Baltimore National Heritage Area* in 2006, funded by the city government, three foundations, and the NPS. During the same period of time, the BCHA Advisory Committee started to review and revise the strategies of the CHAP management plan in


2005, and the *Management Action Plan Update* was adopted by the city two years later. Major updates of the management plan include expansion of the heritage area boundary and implementation of an interpretive framework with overarching themes. In addition, the plan recommended a NHA designation to acknowledge the city’s nationally significant heritage and to expand the potential sources of funding.

BNHA was officially established by Public Law 111-11 in 2009, including approximately 22 square miles. The boundary of the BNHA followed the one specified in 2007 *Management Plan Update*. (Figure 1) In 2011, BCHA was separated from the Mayor’s Office and created a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, Baltimore Heritage Area Association, Inc. (BHAA), acting as the new local coordinating entity for the NHA. To comply with requirements of the NHA’s enabling legislation, the association started to work on the management plan in 2012, which was approved by the U.S. Department of the Interior in 2013. Five strategic management goals were identified in the management plan:

1. Interpretation–Interpret Baltimore as the unique port city where an American identity was forged and refined.
2. Stewardship–Strengthen support for the preservation of Baltimore’s heritage resources.
3. Heritage Tourism–Increase the economic benefits of heritage tourism in Baltimore.
4. Neighborhoods–Assist neighborhoods to improve their quality of life, become more visitor-ready, and balance tourism and community.
5. Management–Assure a strong, sustainable organization for the Baltimore National Heritage Area.

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48 *Baltimore National Heritage Area Comprehensive Management Plan*. 1-4
50 *Baltimore National Heritage Area Comprehensive Management Plan*. 5-5
Figure 1. Baltimore National Heritage Area Boundary (Source: 2013 Baltimore National Heritage Area Management Plan)
BHAA coordinates with the efforts of various entities in the city that work in the relevant area and share common goals. Apart from having support from both federal and state heritage area programs, the city has the strong presence of NPS, with national historic sites and national historic trails, such as Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine and the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail and Scenic Byway. Working closely with Maryland State Highway Administration Scenic Byways Program, BHAA manages the Charles Street National Scenic Byway, one of the four scenic byways within the heritage area. Being a heritage area within the city, BHAA collaborates with City of Baltimore to identify priorities in the city’s comprehensive master plan while enhancing its own visions. Visit Baltimore, the official destination development and marketing organization, is recognized as a key partner for BHAA to promote tourism in the heritage area. Maryland Office of Tourism Development also serves as a tourism marketing partner. To achieve community development goals, BHAA works with Baltimore Main Street and Maryland Arts and Entertainment Districts for neighborhood enhancement and community revitalization.51

Two economic impact studies were conducted for BNHA in 2012 and 2017 respectively. (Table 7) The three primary measures of economic benefits, economic impact, jobs, and tax revenue, increased significantly over the five years. The growth is attributed to the heritage area’s effort in attracting tourists, growth in operations, investment in community and local projects through grantmaking and capital funding support.52 It is recognized in both studies that BNHA is a catalyst and promoter of

51 Ibid., 1-8 - 1-17
52 Tripp Umbach, The Economic Impact of National Heritage Areas: A Case Study Approach - Baltimore National Heritage Area, 2017. 2
tourism, investment, preservation, and education in the Baltimore region. However, no evaluation on broader community impact is available at present.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Study</th>
<th>Economic Impact</th>
<th>Jobs</th>
<th>Tax Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$318.8 million</td>
<td>4,184</td>
<td>$31.8 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$534.5 million</td>
<td>6,110</td>
<td>$38.2 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 7. Economic Impact Study Results of 2012 and 2017 (Source: Tripp Umbach)

4.2.2. Essex National Heritage Area

In recognition of its early settlement and rich history, ENHA was established in 1996, its boundaries being those of Essex County, Massachusetts. The center of the region’s tourism industry is the city of Salem, a historic harbor city operating international trades in the late 18th century. Driven by the infamous 1692 Salem Witch Trials, tourists come to Essex every October for witch parades, ghost tours, and haunted houses.53 Consistent with New England tradition, most functions usually performed by county-level government are handled by town-level government. The strong local governance in Essex County leads to an uneven economic development across what is a relatively small NHA. The ENHA contains some of Massachusetts’ poorest cities and also wealthiest towns.54

The U.S. Congress designated ENHA’s non-profit management entity, the Essex National Heritage Commission (ENHC) in 1996 to develop and implement the management plan. The Essex National Heritage Area Plan was released three years later, with a mission to enhance recognition and preservation of historical, cultural and natural

53 Tripp Umbach, *Economic and Community Impact of National Heritage Area Sites*, 2014. 10
54 Ibid., 9
resources within ENHA, to improve quality of life for citizens, and to develop the country as an important destination for heritage tourism.\textsuperscript{55} The Management plan comprises five elements, marketing and public outreach, heritage programming, interpretation, and education, preservation and resource stewardship, heritage development and infrastructure, and planning and design assistance.\textsuperscript{56} The management plan outlined the means to achieve these objectives through four categories of actions, actions by the Commission, actions contracted by the Commission, actions in partnership with others, and actions achieved through grants and rewards.\textsuperscript{57}

The ENHA is interpreted under three core themes: Early Settlement, Maritime History, and Early Industrial Era. The framework is flexible and adjusted to suit the needs of local residents in implementation.\textsuperscript{58} The heritage area is initiated by a coalition of community leaders in partner with NPS to use Salem Maritime National Historic Site to enhance heritage tourism across the county. Therefore, the three core themes were designed to match those of Salem Maritime National Historic Site, and to link to the four major natural landscapes (Figure 2).\textsuperscript{59} ENHC’s early unified signage program and educational programs focused on interpreting the three themes to visitors and residents.\textsuperscript{60} As the community interests evolved, ENHC has broadened its scope to stay relevant. The community survey revealed that activities outside the scope of the three themes, such as enjoying natural and recreational resources, were also appealing for residents in ENHA.\textsuperscript{61}

\textsuperscript{55} The Center for Park Management, \textit{Evaluation of the Essex National Heritage Commission Findings Document}, 2010. 16
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 17-18
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 18
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., 20
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 18
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., 20
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., 20-21
While focusing on the three core themes, ENHC has been putting efforts into cultural landscapes management. As part of EHNA’s 20th anniversary of the designation in 2016, the “Scaling Up” symposium organized by EHNC spurred conversation and discussion in landscape-scale conservation.62

Figure 2. Essex National Heritage Area Boundary and Landscapes Map (Source: The Essex National Heritage Area Plan)

The ENHC has implemented a series of strong programs that embody many goals set out the management plan. The ENHC’s flagship event, *Trails & Sails!*, has reached a wide range of audience and is recognized by most community partners as the most impactful of ENHC’s activities. The annual two-day, county-wide program features free events over a number of different locations in Essex Country, highlighting the diversity of natural, cultural, and historical resources in ENHA. The interpretive and educational programs centered on the three core themes were intended to cultivate a long-term appreciation of heritage resources. The ENHC executed various educational programs targeting teachers, through whom the region’s youth is connected to the heritage area.

The ENHC has had significant impact on heritage and community development while promoting economic development through tourism. One of its important accomplishments is the development of the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway, a 90-mile byway that connects 14 communities. It not only attracts visitors to stay longer, but also creates a network for sites and organizations to communicate and collaborate. Through various innovative programming and activities, the ENHA raises local residents’ awareness of natural and historical resources in their own backyard, in addition to its outreach to tourists. According to the community survey, 80% -90% respondents ranked high on the community sense of place scale and believed that the heritage area resources are important to the community. At the same time, tourism has made substantial contribution to the region’s economic development. The annual economic

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63 *Evaluation of the Essex National Heritage Commission Findings Document*. 23
64 Ibid., 22
65 Ibid., 28
66 *Economic and Community Impact of National Heritage Area Sites*. 11
67 *Evaluation of the Essex National Heritage Commission Findings Document*. 46
impact of tourism is $151.4 million, being the major portion of the overall economic impact of ENHA, which is $153.8 million annually.\textsuperscript{68} What’s more, the heritage area creates 1,832 jobs and generates $14.3 million tax revenue annually.\textsuperscript{69}

4.2.3. Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area

The HRVNHA was created in 1996, comprising 250 communities in ten counties. This area is approximately 6250 square miles, within which is a rich array of various cultural and natural resources.\textsuperscript{70} The NPS described HRVNHA as “the landscape that defined America”. The valley was of political and military importance during the Revolutionary War. With possession of the valley, George Washington successfully stopped the British advance. It was a unique showcase for the development of American art and architecture. In the 19th century, a group of some of the most significant painters in American art history, now known as the Hudson River School, were inspired by the landscape and depicted it in picturesque paintings. Industrialists and commercial leaders built great estates and architecture along the valley. This rich history in Hudson Valley left a number of important historic sites, such as Olana House, West Point, Philipsburg Manor, Kykuit, Lyndhurst Mansion, Washington’s Headquarters, Boscobel, and Vanderbilt Mansion.\textsuperscript{71}

\textsuperscript{68} Economic and Community Impact of National Heritage Area Sites. 12
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., 15-16
\textsuperscript{70} Jane Clark Chermayeff Associates LLC and QL Consulting, Inc., Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Management Plan (Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council and Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, Inc., 2002). 15
\textsuperscript{71} Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Management Plan. 17
Figure 3. Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Boundary (Source: Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Management Plan)
HRVNHA is managed by the Hudson River Valley Greenway (the Greenway), which was established in a state legislation, the Hudson River Valley Greenway Act of 1991 (the Greenway Act). Created as a state-sponsored program, the Greenway was responsible for facilitating preservation of various resources in the region while encouraging economic development. The Greenway Act created two organizations to facilitate the process, the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council, and the Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, both of which comprise the Greenway. The Greenway Communities Council is a state agency, coordinating with local governments to enhance planning of the region and providing planning grants, compact grants and technical assistance to enhance local land use planning. The Greenway Conservancy is a public benefit corporation, working with government and various organizations to develop and promote Hudson River Valley as a destination area.

The Greenway implements the HRVNHA management plan through themes, partnerships, site and community enhancements, and identity-building. The Greenway has developed interpretation framework with three themes, Freedom and Dignity, Nature and Culture, and Corridor of Commerce. The development and interpretation of the Heritage Area, Heritage Area Trails, and heritage sites and programs are organized around the themes. Major partners of the Greenway include NPS, state and federal agencies, local governments, foundations, not-for-profits, regional organizations, business partners (such as Hudson Valley Tourism/I Love New York Tourism) and the public. Through grants and partnerships, technical and financial resources are available for assisting sites and communities to achieve regional goals, building a cohesive identity for the Heritage Area.
The evaluation of HRVNHA’s economic and community impact are both positive. The HRVNHA generated annual economic benefits of $585 million, tax revenue of $66 million, and supported 6,530 jobs, according to an independent consulting firm’s economic impact study.72 Westat, as an outside organization, conducted another revaluation of HRVNHA in 2011 as requested by the Congress to review accomplishments made over the fifteen year period. It concluded that the HRVNHA and its management entity had successfully achieved the goals outlined in the management plan. In terms of resource preservation, the partner organizations have leveraged $9 million for preservation and restoration of historic properties through the grants of $2,355,424 awarded by the Greenway between 1996 and 2010.73 The community of heritage sites is also formed and strengthened by conferences sponsored by the Greenway for like-minded organizations to have discussion about their experience and work together.74

Before the NHA designation the Hudson River Valley Greenway program had been established to link communities through trails and other means. HRVNHA strengthened the connection and made the area a more cohesive and distinctive region. Instead of identifying themselves as being from specific areas, local residents, sites, and businesses developed the regional identity through HRVNHA, and more people are referring to the area as “the Hudson River Valley.”75 As the name came to be used more

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72 Tripp Umbach, *The Economic Impact of National Heritage Areas*, 2013. 28
74 Henderson et al. 3-59
75 *The Economic Impact of National Heritage Areas*. 28
and more frequently and broadly, it has created a brand for the heritage area that has benefited and expanded heritage tourism regionally.76

4.2.4. Summary

Although the three NHAs are different in scale and resources, they adopt a similar basic operational and management framework. The major commonality is that all NHAs have a local coordinating entity, as their enabling legislation respectively requires. Each such entity has the functions of making grants, encouraging and forming partnerships, and directing resource allocation. The coordinating entity and the communities develop their own missions and goals, with the financial and technical support from the NPS. The coordinating entity in each NHA adopts locally appropriate and responsive ways to achieve the goals set out in the management plan.

Figure 4. Typical Heritage Tourism Management Structure of NHAs (Source: author)

76 Ibid., 28
Despite their different emphases and strategies of development, all of the three NHAs primarily focus on four core areas of work to achieve sustainable heritage tourism: destination planning and development, community development, heritage management, and marketing. Destination planning and management includes land use planning, community planning, and an interpretation plan for the destination. Successful destination planning guides physical development of the place, including its particular tourism infrastructure, as well as stories to tell about the place. Adopting a holistic approach to plan for the destination as whole, a destination plan with strategies for development and interpretive framework can be very helpful. Heritage management involves both brick and mortar preservation of historic assets, and the use of the heritage. It is essential to not only provide sufficient support to physical preservation of the heritage, but also to encourage sustainable use of heritage by the public. Community development is widely recognized as an important effort towards sustainable heritage tourism development, even if it is usually missing in the practical work. It encourages the community to engage in or initiate heritage tourism development, in a way that promotes pride of place and improves quality of life. Marketing is an essential part of work in tourism industry in general. The branding of the destination attracts visitors, and more importantly, builds identities and the image.

The experience and strategies of the three NHAs are a rich source of reference for Philadelphia’s heritage tourism development from various aspects. Baltimore as a NHA in urban context demonstrates the opportunities and challenges of applying the NHA framework to a city. Essex tackles uneven tourism development in the area, and provides viable options to connect heritage tourism resources. HRVNHA has been very successful
in connecting a very broad array of historic sites sharing a major natural resource and its associated cultural landscape, and building a collective identity in the whole region.

4.3. City-level Management

Thinking about heritage tourism in the city holistically is the first step towards an integral and balanced management structure. The concept of city-level heritage tourism management needs to be supported by solid organizational structures and programs. The following discussion starts with a comparison of the administrative and operational differences of heritage tourism management in Philadelphia and the three NHAs described above. Based on lessons learned from NHAs, recommendations are made for improving the four areas of work to achieve sustainable heritage tourism in Philadelphia.

4.3.2. Comparing Heritage Tourism in Philadelphia and NHAs

In a typical NHA, heritage management and community development is combined with tourism development. The management entity recognizes tourism as one of many important parts of its work, with the ultimate goal to improve the quality of life in the community. Tourism development is rooted in good preservation and community development. HRVNHA holds the belief that “better preservation, interpretation, and development of heritage sites stimulates and sustains appropriate development in the communities in which these resources are located. In this way, the Heritage Area enhances the region’s well-being and supports its economy.”

Interpreting historic sites, improving public access to heritage resources, and engaging community planning and

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77 Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Management Plan.
programming in NHAs are designed and implemented to collectively achieve better preservation, community and tourism development.

In Philadelphia, heritage management and community development is separate from tourism development. Although both sides acknowledge the importance of each other’s work, they are rarely discussed on the same table. As shown in Figure 5, most organizations have separate functions, which is reasonable because they all have their own expertise, grown out of their respective missions. However, without a platform for interaction or cooperation, it is easy for them to develop conflicting goals and interests. The heritage managers and tourism organizations thus often are operating independently to achieve their own goals. Tourism is still seen as primarily a business and an economic development tool, while heritage and community development is in the social and cultural realm. However, as NHAs demonstrate, the could be able to serve the same goals with the proper guidance and framework.
In a typical NHA the local coordinating entity provides the platform for the cooperation between community and tourism development. Through partnerships with various organizations, it fills the gaps between heritage management and tourism development, marketing to both residents and tourists. Philadelphia does not have an organization resembling an NHA’s local coordinating entity. Visit Philadelphia is primarily a marketing agency, even though it includes preservation and community development in its vision. Global Philadelphia is the only organization that includes historic preservation, community development and tourism development simultaneously.
in its strategic plan. However, the organization puts most efforts in branding and advocacy, but is not providing financial or technical support to the ground work.

Philadelphia is also weak in destination planning and management. The City Planning Commission once took on the responsibility to develop and implement the strategic plan for the visitor industry, but the plan has not been updated for 25 years. Although currently the Commission is not directly involved in planning for tourism development, developing heritage tourism is one of the goals specified in the Philadelphia 2035 Comprehensive Plan.\textsuperscript{78} In addition, Visit Philadelphia conducts tourism planning, but for better marketing instead of producing a comprehensive destination plan.\textsuperscript{79} In NHA, the local coordinating entity is the major party to plan heritage tourism development. The management plan is one of the guiding documents. Sometimes it takes the initiative to plan, such as developing trails and routes; sometimes the local community applies for grants for community planning.

Compared to NHAs, Philadelphia’s heritage tourism lacks connections among sites and neighborhoods. NHA encourages communities to tell stories related to the themes developed in the management plan. In this way, the communities as well as the tourism resources are connected together. Although Visit Philadelphia markets historic sites by themes, no guidance or support in interpretation is provided to the sites. Due to the presence of NPS in INHP, the sites within and even around the Park are better connected than those outside the Park. Without support, the connections among and between the neighborhoods are difficult to build.

\textsuperscript{78} Philadelphia City Planning Commission, \textit{Philadelphia 2035 Citywide Vision}, 2011. 6, 7
\textsuperscript{79} Levitz.
4.3.3. Recommendations

Philadelphia’s approach to heritage tourism development results in issues identified in Section 3.3 that are detrimental to sustainable development of heritage tourism. With NHA’s practice as a successful example, Philadelphia can learn administrative and operational lessons to improve the management structure on behalf of the four core areas of work of heritage tourism. This section makes recommendations regarding city-level heritage tourism management to support sustainable development.

4.3.3.1. Establishing Heritage Tourism Management Entity

In order to connect the heritage tourism development efforts in Philadelphia, the city needs a heritage tourism management entity to function like a local coordinating entity in NHA. The achievements of NHAs are in large part due to the grassroots efforts supported by the local coordinating entity. Such an organization in Philadelphia could help the city to develop a comprehensive and integrated heritage tourism development plan. The plan will take into account various objectives with an ultimate goal of improving the contribution of sustainable heritage tourism to the city’s overall quality of life. Instead of being driven by economic profit, the management entity should prioritize caring for heritage tourism resources, which means preserving heritage and developing the community.

The management entity can be newly established, or be incorporated into an existing organization. BHAA in Baltimore was created originally under the Mayor’s Office as a result of the municipality’s efforts to establish a State Heritage Area, and then
operated independently as the local coordinating entity for BNHA. The municipality played an important role in this process. If a new organization were to be established, such political support is absolutely necessary. Considering the existing organizations, Global Philadelphia may have the most similar missions to a NHA’s local coordinating entity. It promotes heritage and community development for economic growth, with one more dimension compared to NHA’s local coordinating entity, global branding. However, it lacks political tools and, among many quarters, the necessary respect to achieve the goals.

The management entity is not viable or functional unless it is supported by stable funding and is able to make grants. The federal funding provided through NPS, modest as it is, is essential for the success of many NHAs. Both HRVNHA and ENHA reported that the program would not be sustainable without federal funding, and requested reauthorization of the funding in the evaluation report conducted before sunset. In Baltimore, BHAA is supported by both State and National Heritage Area funding.

Philadelphia can seek funding through existing programs, such as state and national heritage areas, or the creation of a new local heritage tourism fund. As in Maryland, Pennsylvania has its own state heritage area program. Administrated by Department of Conservation and Natural Resources’ Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, the Pennsylvania Heritage Areas Program has funding available for its 12 state-designated heritage areas, some of which are also NHAs. Therefore, Philadelphia has options to seek designation as either or both a state and national heritage area.

Another way to get financial support is creating a local heritage tourism fund, which requires substantial collaborative efforts. Ideally the major beneficiaries of heritage tourism, such as the hotels, tour operators, and restaurant businesses, would be required to contribute to such a local fund. The fund would be used in such a way that resembles the federal funding for NHAs. Although the local fund would not be primarily used for marketing and activities focusing on increasing the business revenue, it would provide other significant benefits for the contributing parties to the fund, one of which would be the sustainability of the heritage and community resources that are essential for sustainable and profitable businesses related to heritage tourism.

4.3.3.2. Destination planning and management

In comparison to the three NHAs, a major missing component is a heritage tourism destination plan for Philadelphia. Such a plan should include visions for the heritage tourism industry and an interpretive framework. Setting up themes and developing major stories to tell about the city is helpful in guiding both historic sites and visitors. Historic sites will be able to integrate themselves into the story of Philadelphia and make it more relevant to the large context. In this way, visitors will have a well-designed and cohesive experience.

Such planning is important in guiding the future development direction and focus areas for heritage tourism. Potential sites and neighborhoods can be strategically selected for heritage tourism development so that new attractions can be developed while revitalizing local economy. In NHAs, the communities or organizations planning to
develop visitor attractions with its heritage resources can apply for grants and technical support from NHA. The sustainability of the destination is more likely to be achieved through careful destination planning combining with strategies to encourage and assist the implementation, such as grants.

For example, Baltimore’s Heritage Investment Grants program is designed to provide strategic investments in cultural heritage tourism projects and organizations that address the objectives outlined in the 2013 Baltimore National Heritage Area Comprehensive Management Plan.\(^81\) BHAA also assist partners to apply for grants from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority to support heritage tourism-related projects.\(^82\) HRVNHA provides Heritage Development Grants for programming, interpretation and marketing that support the mutual goals of the Heritage Area.\(^83\) In 2015, HRV awarded seven Heritage Development Grants to local historical and cultural institutions to conduct educational and interpretive programs, with the vision to showcase the area's history and contribute to the regional heritage tourism economy.\(^84\)

Apart from interpretive themes, Philadelphia can develop heritage trails to connect sites and communities. One of the issues of heritage tourism in Philadelphia is the disconnection between Center City and the city’s outlying neighborhoods, and the region beyond. Demonstrated by NHAs, heritage trails are a good way to expand the tourism area and attract visitors to explore less-visited neighborhoods. The walking or

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driving tour along heritage trails can be self-guided or led by local tour guides. Although HRVNHA and ENHA have developed successful trail systems, the Urban Heritage Trail Network developed in Baltimore is most directly applicable to Philadelphia. Baltimore’s trails or heritage walks are 2 - 4 miles each, located in the city’s historically vibrant areas in order to encourage heritage tourism in these less-traveled neighborhoods. Three of the four trails start from either of the two visitor centers at the Inner Harbor. 85 Philadelphia’s visitor center would be the ideal place to promote such heritage trail. The major capital investments include improving trailhead, completing wayfinding systems, and installing interpretive signage. 86 In addition, BHAA supported historic sites along the heritage trail for infrastructure improvement and interpretation programs. 87 The development is led by BNHA and is funded by Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, the Baltimore City Department of Transportation, and Visit Baltimore and the Baltimore Visitor Center. 88

4.3.3.3 Community development

In Philadelphia’s heritage tourism development, the importance of community development is acknowledged but not addressed in action. Community development efforts often only see tourism as an economic development tool and overlook its potential to provide more. How can a mutually beneficial relationship between heritage tourism and the community be built? How can the community be made inviting to visitors while improving quality of life and not jeopardizing the sense of place of the neighborhood?

86 Baltimore Heritage Area, Baltimore City Heritage Area Management Action Plan (Update), 2007. 62
87 The Baltimore Heritage Area, Baltimore National Heritage Area Five Year Management Plan (FY 2013 – FY 2018), 2012. 11
88 “Explore Baltimore Urban Heritage Trails.”
NHAs provide potential solutions to achieve such goals through community planning, special events, and working with existing programs.

Community planning is the first step for successful development. A community plan can guide land use, open space protection, cultural and natural resource protection, and economic development. For a community that intends to promote heritage tourism for economic development, the consideration should be incorporated into every aspect of the plan so that the interests of both residents and visitors are addressed and aligned to the extent possible. Hudson River Valley’s Greenway planning approach encourages communities to voluntarily participate in making local plans and programs. Projects that address Greenway criteria are eligible for technical and financial assistance.\(^8^9\) With such support, local issues can be addressed and goals can be achieved more efficiently.

Local residents are not always aware of the cultural and heritage resources in their neighborhoods. Heritage tourism development can help local residents to know more about their place and to develop a constituency for its preservation and care. The Urban Heritage Trail program in Baltimore is a good example. The interpretive signs help local communities to learn about and be proud of the history of the place.\(^9^0\) To encourage the residents to explore the heritage area, Essex holds a variety of programs and special events, such as Trails & Sails and Photo Safaris, which attract both residents and visitors.\(^9^1\)

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\(^9^0\) “Explore Baltimore Urban Heritage Trails.”

\(^9^1\) Economic and Community Impact of National Heritage Area Sites. 11
Baltimore has another way to engage community goals in sustainable heritage tourism. BHAA works with the Baltimore Main Streets program, which aims at revitalizing neighborhoods by providing tailored public resources and support. The heritage area has identified the common goals between the Main Street Program and heritage tourism, and implemented joint projects as a partner. Philadelphia does not lack such community development programs, which are potential partners for heritage tourism development.

4.3.3.4. Heritage Management

Resources preservation is essential for sustainable heritage tourism. The historic buildings, sites, neighborhoods, and urban landscape in Philadelphia are all heritage tourism resources that merit preservation. However, historic preservation and tourism are operated independently in Philadelphia. If a heritage tourism management entity were to be established with heritage area funding or local heritage fund, the city would have many options to realize mutual goals of historic preservation and heritage tourism.

The strategies to allocate the fund can be learned from NHAs. The enabling legislation requires each NHA to prepare an inventory of heritage and natural resources in the heritage area. With the inventory, the management entity is able to identify needs and priorities for preservation, which also guides grants allocation.92 Philadelphia would benefit from an inventory of the city’s historic resources.

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NHAs usually have grants available for preservation and restoration of historic properties. For example, Hudson River Valley awarded $789,723 of Greenway Council Grants to partner organizations for the preservation and interpretation of historic properties, through which the partner organizations leveraged an additional $4,527,839.\textsuperscript{93} The grants awarded to each organization often only contribute a small portion of the total cost of a planned project, but it helps them to leverage a larger amount of money. Baltimore’s Small Capital Grants is more powerful. It supports a wider range of activities, including acquisition of property, development, preservation, and restoration. The projects are eligible as long as they are consistent with the strategies and objectives outlined in the management plan.

Creating a community of historic sites is another innovative NHA practice. In Hudson River Valley, the Greenway regularly holds conferences for like-minded organization to communicate and work together. The topics of such conferences are usually of common interest to historic sites, such as trail planning.\textsuperscript{94} Historic sites in Philadelphia are sometimes competitors and less willing to work with one another.\textsuperscript{95} Forming such communities is beneficial to share experiences and resources of heritage management in the city.

4.3.3.5. Marketing

Philadelphia has a strong marketing team for tourism, but its major efforts are not focused on heritage tourism. According to Meryl Levitz, President and CEO of Visit

\textsuperscript{93} Henderson et al., \textit{Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Evaluation Findings}.3-40
\textsuperscript{94} Henderson et al. 3-59
\textsuperscript{95} Levitz.
Philadelphia, the reason is that the marketing responds to the needs of current travelers, who are drawn by fun and entertaining programs.\textsuperscript{96} The recent marketing campaigns promote Philadelphia as a fun place to stay instead of a historic old city. The purpose behind the strategy is to make people realize that Philadelphia has more to offer than history.\textsuperscript{97} The strategy is effective in attracting more tourists but it has its limitations. The lack of marketing on history limits visitors’ expectation of Philadelphia’s history to only colonial period.

The management entity needs to reevaluate and intervene with the marketing strategy for sustainable heritage tourism. Marketing the city’s overall characteristics and diverse historic charms can be combined with the city-wide interpretative framework. The consistency between marketing efforts and the experience provided at the historic sites requires cooperation between heritage managers and marketing agency. The management entity would play a key role in the process to connect the two parties. Similar to Philadelphia, Baltimore has a tourism marketing agency, Visit Baltimore, and two visitor centers. BHAA offers services to the marketing partners to realize Baltimore’s sustainable heritage tourism program. Partnering with the marketing agency makes the city’s heritage tourism programs more visible to the public.

The name of a respected organization is a valuable brand for heritage tourism destinations. The NHA is benefited by the very recognizable brand of NPS, which represents an image of national treasures. NPS’s logo is a brand. Philadelphia has NPS as a brand for INHP, but not the city as a whole. The new brand names for the Philadelphia,

\textsuperscript{96} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{97} Ibid.
World Heritage City by OWHC, and National Treasures by National Trust for Historic Preservation, can be potentially used to better market the city.

4.4. Neighborhood-level Management

Based on the city-wide management structures recommended in section 4.2, it is necessary to evaluate the potential of adopting NHA framework on a neighborhood level. With a city-wide management entity and stable funding resource, more financial and technical support would be available to the historic neighborhoods that intend to develop sustainable heritage tourism. Due to the uneven development of heritage tourism in different neighborhoods, the issues that need to be tackled vary significantly.

This section is dedicated to the discussion of heritage tourism in two historic neighborhoods in Philadelphia, Old City and Germantown. The two neighborhoods illustrate the imbalanced tourism development in the city, which is a frequent issue for many large historic cities; both of the neighborhoods are rich in cultural and historical resources but INHP brings around 5 million visitors annually to Old City while Germantown has been struggling to attract visitors to the neighborhood for decades. What’s more, Old City has a relatively complete tourism infrastructure, including the one and the only visitor center of Philadelphia in the neighborhood, while Germantown, located more in the outskirts of the city, still lacks efficient public transportation, especially to its somewhat dispersed historic sites. The two neighborhoods are facing different challenges in heritage tourism development, for which the experience of NHAs
in dealing with heritage tourism development in multiple uneven-developed communities in a large area would be helpful.

Figure 6. The Locations of Old City District and Historic Germantown in Philadelphia (Source: author)

4.4.2. Old City

Located in America’s "most historic square mile", Old City is a neighborhood featuring a wealth of historic and cultural attractions. With INHP attracting more than 5 million annual visitors to the area, Old City is the most active destination for heritage

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tourists in Philadelphia. At the same time, Old City has a wide range of business establishments, residential population, and a vibrant art community – much of which is located within adaptively reused historic buildings.

The Old City neighborhood spans from Vine Street to Walnut Street, north to south, and from 7th Street to the Delaware River, west to east.99 It is part of what Visit Philadelphia refers to as Philadelphia’s Historic District, which is the heart of Philadelphia’s original city and the most popular tourist attraction.100 The Old City Historic District is listed as one of the local historic districts on the Philadelphia Register, with boundaries shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Boundaries of Historic District, Old City Neighborhood, and Old City Local Historic District. The core of Old City neighborhood is spatially separated from west and south sides of the neighborhood by Independence National Historic Park. (Source: author; data source: Philadelphia Historical Commission; Old City District; Visit Philadelphia)
With rich historic resources, Old City is the major heritage tourism destination in the city. The neighborhood is the home to four of the five most visited historic sites in Philadelphia (Table 1): Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, Christ Church and Burial Grounds, and the Betsy Ross House. “The nation’s oldest residential street”, Elfreth’s Alley, is a surviving representative of the neighborhood’s cobblestone streets and 18th-century charm.101 Apart from the historic sites, Old City also attracts visitors with its fine museums, theaters, art galleries, and overall urban character.102

The neighborhood also offers excellent hotels, dining, and nightlife establishments, with 1,765 hotel rooms and over 80 restaurants.103 It also has a diverse mix of technology, media, professional and service organizations. Compared to its strong business community, the neighborhood has a relatively small residential population, only 3,478 according to US Census 2010.104 Although the population grew approximately 33% between 2000 and 2014, the population density is still low compared to other parts of the city.105

103 The State of Old City District. 31
105 The State of Old City District. 9; Job Itzkowitz (Executive Director of Old City District) in discussion with the author, March 23, 2018
The heritage tourism management structure in Old City is shown in Figure 8. The Philadelphia City Planning Commission has developed a district plan for the Central District, which includes the Old City neighborhood, but no specific community plan has been developed for Old City. The district plan encourages heritage tourism to celebrate industrial heritage and modern history, to improve the physical signage system, and to create a digital information program.106

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In order to supplement the services of the municipal government, the Old City District (OCD) was established by ordinance of Philadelphia City Council in 1998, with the support of the commercial property owners within its boundaries. OCD serves businesses, residents and visitors by creating a healthy environment for the community. It holds various events, such as Old City Fest, to showcase the businesses in the neighborhood, to build the community, and to attract visitors. In OCD’s *Vision 2026*, it aims at attracting more residents, workers, and visitors to the neighborhood.

The organizations that manage and interpret the historic sites are key players in the heritage tourism industry in Old City, the major ones being the NPS and Historic Philadelphia. The NPS is the steward of INHP, covering almost 54 acres in Old City. Since preservation is a priority, the historic buildings, artifacts, structures and landscapes at the Park are well-preserved according to national standards and guidelines. The NPS also interprets the site to the public through exhibitions and free tours.

As a non-profit organization, Historic Philadelphia maintains historic sites, Betsy Ross House and Franklin Square, as well as providing an interpretation program, Once

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107 *The State of Old City District*. 41
108 Ibid., 41
109 Ibid., 29
110 The RBA Group, *Old City Vision2026* (Old City District, 2016), https://issuu.com/therbagroup/docs/old_city_vision2026_framework_-_iss. 7
Upon A Nation. It focuses on story-telling and is dedicated to “making our nation’s history relevant and real through interpretation, interaction and education, strengthening Greater Philadelphia’s role as the destination to experience American history.”\textsuperscript{113} Historic Philadelphia provides tours, historic reenactment, performances, and family entertainment at the sites it and others maintain, as well as around Old City.

Although the Old City neighborhood has a mature tourism market and adequate supporting infrastructure, it is not free of issues in heritage tourism development. As the most visited neighborhood in Philadelphia, Old City has an important role to play in the city’s heritage tourism landscape. The following section evaluates the issues of heritage tourism in Old City and makes recommendations based on the four core areas of work for sustainable heritage tourism development.

4.4.2.1. Destination Planning and Management

The major issue related to heritage tourism here is the neighborhood’s disconnection to other parts of the city. With strong and stable organizations maintaining historic sites and vibrant community in Old City, heritage tourism in the neighborhood is relatively sustainable. However, the Independence Mall (a three-block section of INHP including the Liberty Bell Center, Independence Hall, and Independence Visitor Center) is isolated from the community and perceived as a mental barrier to the neighborhood.\textsuperscript{114} The Independence Mall and Vine Street Expressway enclose Old City from its surrounding neighborhoods. (Figure 7)

\textsuperscript{113} Web http://www.historicphiladelphia.org/about-us/
\textsuperscript{114} Itzkowitz.
The NPS has put a lot of efforts in interpretation of the historic sites in Independence Mall, but little in interacting with the local community. The creation of Independence Mall has been criticized to be unfriendly to the public use. Jane Jacob described “the city’s grand Independence Mall” when it was originally created as “a new vacuum uninhabited by any recognizable form of society.” The physical restrictions imposed on the Park in large part due to the security barriers imposed after the Sept. 11 attacks. Since then, people could no longer walk freely through Independence Hall’s arcade without authorized tickets and security screening. The fenced Independence Hall separated the north and south sides of it. As a result, the area is not utilized by local residents as much as it was, or as they do at other historic sites in Old City.

For another thing, the historic resources and their interpretation are not linked to the larger story of the city. The interpretation of the site focuses on a specific period of history in Philadelphia without connecting it to other parts and other periods of the city. Independence Mall tells not only nationally significant story of Declaration of Independence, but also the social, political, and economic shifts of Philadelphia. For example, the creation of Independence Mall is the result of urban renewal in 1940s and 1950s. Before the urban renewal, the three blocks in the north side Independence Hall were a mix-use district filled with a wide range of businesses, insurance companies, and light manufacturers. It is not only the birth place of America, but also an organic part

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117 Itzkowitz.
118 Kathleen Kurtz, “The Creation of Independence National Historical Park and Independence Mall.” 79
119 Kathleen Kurtz.15
of Philadelphia, the city. Through the changing relationship between Independence Hall and its surrounding area, stories that are more relevant to both local residents and visitors can be told.

In order to connect Independence Mall with the neighborhood, developing historic trails and improvement of signage system can be helpful. Based on Baltimore’s experience, heritage trails can effectively connect the sites and community along the trail. Essex also successfully implemented a unified signage program to unify the heritage and improve access to historic sites.\textsuperscript{120} The current historic trail only connects the sites within INHP. Enhancing and expanding the existing trail and signage to connect to other cultural and heritage resources in the city can reduce the isolation of Independence Mall.

Old City’s disconnection to the larger story of the whole city will be bridged through a city-wide interpretive framework. Themes are helpful in guiding historic sites to tell the stories and visitors to navigate through the city’s history. For example, one of the five overarching themes in Baltimore is \textit{Shaping a Monumental City}, which covers the maturation of Baltimore as a great city and includes the present.\textsuperscript{121} It connects the Inner Harbor, the important port in the past and the most visited area today, with other industrial and modern heritage in the city. In Philadelphia, developing a theme related to underrepresented industrial history would reveal the untold stories of Philadelphia, and the site before Independence Mall being built as a light manufacture center would be integrated to the city’s larger story. But the framework by itself is not enough. BHAA has also created a grant program to encourage heritage area partners to prepare and

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{120} Henderson et al., \textit{Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Evaluation Findings}.\textsuperscript{12}
\textsuperscript{121} \textit{Baltimore National Heritage Area Comprehensive Management Plan}. 6-1
\end{footnotesize}
implement interpretive plans. The funding is a key for sustainable heritage tourism development.

4.4.2.2. Community Development

The community in Old City has a healthy relationship with heritage tourism. Although Old City attracts millions of visitors every year, the presence of so many visitors is not identified by local residents as an issue caused by heritage tourism. Instead of complaining about tourists, the residents in Old City are inviting to visitors and proud of the neighborhood. For example, Elfreth’s Alley is still a strong residential address despite it being a popular tourist attraction, and the residents are willing to offer access to their private homes on Fete Day in June. Historic sites in the neighborhood are used as heritage attractions for visitors and public space for residents at the same time. For instance, Christ Church received 214,021 visitors in 2016, and hosted Farmers Market May through November to bring fresh food options to the neighborhood. What’s more, many visitors take advantage of the invitation to worship in the historic churches and synagogues near INHP to celebrate and appreciate the valuable religious heritage in Philadelphia, and the direct connection between the heritage and the activities that are interpreted in the Park.

In the Old City neighborhood, visitors are essential supports for local businesses. The relatively small population of residents in the neighborhood is not able to on its own

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122 Ibid., 7-2
123 Itzkowitz.
124 Ibid.
125 Old City District, Old City District Community Report, 2017.
support the many fine restaurants and shops. Old City’s businesses largely rely on tourists and visitors from other parts of the city. In addition, the economic diversity contributes to the neighborhood’s sustainability. The wide variety of businesses serves not only the tourists, but also visitors from other parts of the city and surrounding counties.

4.4.2.3. Heritage Management

Heritage preservation in Old City is in a good state. Most historic sites in Old City are managed by the NPS and paid close attention due to their national significance. With the NPS, Historic Philadelphia, and local tour guides, the sites and the neighborhood are interpreted taking various forms, such as story-telling, walking tours, and reenactment. However, the quality of the interpretation is not evaluated.

Except for historic sites, preserving the historic urban landscape is also important, which requires a balance between new development and preservation. In order to attract more neighborhood-serving retail, such as groceries, OCD is trying to increase the population density in the neighborhood, while high-rise residential towers are not allowed in the historic district. How urban development can be integrated with preservation of historic urban landscape is an important topic for the neighborhood, but is not in the scope of this discussion.

4.4.2.4. Marketing

Since Visit Philadelphia is strong in marketing the Historic District, Old City is not lacking for public exposure. However, the marketing needs to be more strategically promote a more relevant and diverse history of Old City, which ideally would be guided
by the envisioned city-wide interpretive framework. It can also help promoting the
diverse historic resources in Philadelphia. Cooperation among the heritage managers and
marketing agency is very significant. Like a trailer for a movie, the marketing agency
needs to understand the essence of the values of historic sites so as to engage the
audience efficiently and provide them with right expectations for the heritage tourism
experience.

4.4.3. Germantown

Located northwest of downtown Philadelphia, Germantown is one of America’s
most historic neighborhoods. The historically significant neighborhood has played
many roles over the past centuries. It was designated as a National Historic Landmark
district in 1965.

The following very broad overview highlights some significant historic events in
Germantown; its rich history is not the direct subject of this paper. The settlement of
Germantown dates back to 1683. The famous Germantown resident, Francis Daniel
Pastorius, with three other settlers drafted the first public protest against slavery in
1688. During the American Revolution, one of the largest battles of the War for
Independence was fought on the streets of Germantown in 1777. The neighborhood was

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126 David W. Young, “The Battles of Germantown: Public History and Preservation in America’s Most
Historic Neighborhood During the Twentieth Century” (The Ohio State University, 2009). 5
128 Naaman H. Keyser et al., History of Old Germantown (Germantown, Philadelphia: Horace F. McCann,
1907). 21
also a stop on the Underground Railroad before the Civil War. The place is a rich concentration of historic resources in the nation.

It is important to explore the demographics of Germantown and its change over time in order to understand its issues. Germantown was home to German and Dutch immigrants at the beginning of the settlement, while significant demographical shifts occurred in the following centuries. In the 18th century, it was a retreat for Philadelphia’s well-to-do families. George Washington temporarily moved to the summer house in the neighborhood. At the same time, Germantown was the hub of commerce, thanks to an abundance of mill sites along the streams and creeks. By 1900, the population in Germantown was a mix of classes and ethnicity. It was a suburb in the city for middle and upper classes, as well as a stable industrial working class community. After World War II, Germantown experienced significant economic and population decline. However, its African American population grew since the beginning of the 20th century, and by 2017 the community was dominantly African American working class.

Since the early 20th century, Germantown has been relatively economically depressed and isolated from the rest of Philadelphia. In the mid to late 20th century, northern Philadelphia fell into decline during the period of the city’s deindustrialization and suburbanization. Germantown was the most economically depressed among the surrounding neighborhoods, such as Chestnut Hill and Mount Airy, which are more

129 Young, “The Battles of Germantown.”
130 Keyser et al., History of Old Germantown.
131 Young, “The Battles of Germantown.”
132 Ibid., 12
133 Ibid., 19
affluent neighborhoods. Despite its economic decline, Germantown has the richest concentration of historic resources.\textsuperscript{135}

Many of the historic resources in Germantown have been preserved to varying degrees, and tell rich and compelling stories about Philadelphia and the nation. The neighborhood has a large number of cultural and historic resources related to civil war, religious, and architectural history; major historic sites and organizations in Germantown are listed in Table 8. Of note are the sixteen historic sites, museums, historical organizations and an arboretum that have joined together to form a partnership organization, Historic Germantown, in 1983.\textsuperscript{136} They have worked together for decades to build their collective capacity in both infrastructure and interpretation.\textsuperscript{137} (Figure 9) The organization endeavors to “enhance the economic and cultural development of the Germantown community through the collective voice of its member sites.”\textsuperscript{138} The organization has been aiming at community engagement and focusing on public programming and enriching community life. During the Second Saturday series in May, all 16 sites are opened to the public for visits and tours. In order to raise visibility, it reaches out to organizations in Center City, such as Visit Philadelphia, for marketing resources.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Ibid., 8
\item Ibid., 11
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic Site</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Walk-in hours during open season</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACES Museum</td>
<td>The ACES Museum pays tribute to Minority Veterans of World War II.</td>
<td>Open by appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awbury Arboretum</td>
<td>Awbury Arboretum celebrates the Quaker heritage of The Francis Cope House and surrounding 55-acre landscape.</td>
<td>Mon-Fri, 9 am – 5 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cliveden of the National Trust</td>
<td>The site of the Battle of Germantown</td>
<td>Thu - Sun, 12 – 4 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concord School</td>
<td>The Concord Schoolhouse, open from 1775 – 1892, was Germantown’s first English language school.</td>
<td>Second Sunday each month 12 – 4 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germantown White house</td>
<td>The summer home to President George Washington.</td>
<td>Closed except for special events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion</td>
<td>Philadelphia’s only authentically-restored Victorian house museum and garden.</td>
<td>Thu - Sat, 12 – 4 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germantown Mennonite meetinghouse</td>
<td>The 1770 meetinghouse built in the first permanent settlement of Mennonites in America.</td>
<td>Open by appointment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germantown Historical Society</td>
<td>Headquarters for history in Germantown.</td>
<td>Tues, 9 am – 1 pm; Thu &amp; Sun, 1 – 5 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grumblethorpe</td>
<td>“John Wister’s Big House,” a 1744 Colonial German country seat.</td>
<td>Second Sunday each month 12 – 4 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Rittenhouse Town</td>
<td>The site of British North America’s first paper mill built in 1690</td>
<td>Sat &amp; Sun, 1– 5 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hood Cemetery</td>
<td>Revolutionary soldiers and prominent early citizens rest at one of Germantown’s oldest historic sites.</td>
<td>Second Sunday each month 2 – 4 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Salle Art Museum</td>
<td>La Salle Art Museum houses outstanding works from 1400 to the present.</td>
<td>Mon – Fri, 10 – 4 pm; Sun, 2 – 4 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson House</td>
<td>One of the few remaining Underground Railroad Stations in Philadelphia open to the public.</td>
<td>Tue – Sat, 10 am – 4 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stenton</td>
<td>Built in 1730 as a country house by James Logan - Secretary to William Penn</td>
<td>Tue – Sat, 1 – 4 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyck</td>
<td>A National Historic Landmark house, garden, and farm that served as the ancestral home to one Philadelphia family for nine generations</td>
<td>Tue – Sat, 12 – 4 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8. Background and Opening Hour of 16 Historic Germantown Sites (Source: author; data sources: historic Sites’ website & Historic Germantown Brochure)
Figure 9. Historic Germantown area and Historic Germantown Sites. The National Historic Landmark District comprises Germantown Ave. between Windrim Ave. and Upsal St. (Source: Historic Germantown)
Closely working with Historic Germantown is the Germantown United Community Development Corporation (GUCDC), a community-based nonprofit organization. Established in 2012, the GUCDC primarily focuses on the development of Germantown’s business corridors, with a niche in “community-driven planning efforts that highlight the importance of Germantown’s rich history, and bringing alternative financing sources to the business community while encouraging entrepreneurship.”\(^{139}\) The organization has partnered with Historic Germantown to host the annual kick-off of the Germantown Second Saturday Festivals along Germantown Avenue, which showcase the thriving cultural, civic, and business attractions and activities.\(^{140}\) The festival attracted 3000 people in 2016.\(^{141}\) Furthermore, the GUCDC took the lead on various planning projects and created a zero-interest revolving loan fund that targets historic buildings on Germantown Avenue.

The City Planning Commission is currently developing its Upper Northwest District Plan, which includes the Germantown neighborhood. Supporting historic preservation efforts in the district is recognized as one of the key issues. The first public meeting also identified preserving and reusing historic buildings as an opportunity for the neighborhood to provide housing. Heritage tourism, however, did not receive much attention in the discussion.

\(^{140}\) Second Saturday series is an program in May when all 16 Historic Germantown sites are open monthly
Germantown has been trying to use history for economic development during the past years. A lot of efforts have been made towards heritage tourism development. However, the visitation is still low due to a variety of reasons, including but not limited to poor transportation connection to Center City, safety issues, low visibility, and short opening hours of historic sites. Meanwhile, the community has preserved much of its history while other features of the neighborhood have decayed. David Young, the Executive Director of Cliveden of National Trust, identified the “Germantown Problem” to be its overabundance of historic resources, architecture, parks, clubs and activities.

Young, “The Battles of Germantown.” 49
going on with little connectedness or overall coherence."\textsuperscript{143} In the following section, the potential of the NHA framework to mitigate the two major issues in Germantown will be discussed.

4.4.3.1. Destination planning and management

Although the GUCDC and City Planning Commission have conducted planning projects for Germantown, the neighborhood is not considered as a potential tourism destination in the plans. It does not mean that the role of being a destination should overweigh the other functions and features of the community, but Germantown as a potential destination should be acknowledged, especially with local organizations and institutions’ advocacy. In parallel with the other development activities, sustainable heritage tourism can contribute a lot to building a better community.

One of the most distinctive obstacles of bringing visitors to Germantown is the lack of connection to center city, physically and conceptually. Public transportation to Germantown is not very convenient. Visitors have to drive or take a train to the neighborhood. Due to the size of neighborhood, it would be difficult for visitors to explore within and around it without vehicles. Therefore, developing transportation infrastructure among the sites is necessary to attract visitors. To connect the neighborhood with Center City by better transportation is desirable for both local residents and visitors.

\textsuperscript{143} Ibid., 51
The interpretative framework used by NHAs is a potential model for Germantown connecting to established tourism destinations in Philadelphia. Interpretation themes developed for the whole city can act as the thread to connect neighborhoods at city center and urban fringe. One of BNHA’s objectives is to make Baltimore’s less-visited historic neighborhoods feel more inviting to visitors. The objective is achieved by beautification projects, pedestrian improvement, and establishing urban heritage trails.144

Starting at Baltimore Visitor Center at the Inner Harbor, Heritage Walk, one of the four urban heritage trails in Baltimore, connects 20 historic sites and museums. The trail provides guidance on routes and history through distinctive markers embedded into the sidewalk at 20-foot intervals and interpretive storyboard panels.145 Baltimore’s most recently developed heritage trail, the Pennsylvania Avenue Heritage Trail, explores a historic African American neighborhood, with storyboard panels guiding visitors and providing background stories on people who lived and worked in the neighborhood. For residents, displaying the history of the neighborhood in public space fosters local identity and pride of place. A similar heritage trail along and near Germantown Avenue can also strengthen the connection among historic sites within the neighborhood, and help them to develop a cohesive interpretation.

The inspiration for Germantown is taking advantage of the Visitor Center and developing an easy-to-access trail system. In order to bring visitors to the neighborhood, a monthly guided bus tour starting at the Visitor Center would be most helpful at the initial stage. It need not to be frequent but should be able to gradually bring visitors and

144 *Baltimore National Heritage Area Five Year Management Plan (FY 2013 – FY 2018)*. 34
145 “Explore Baltimore Urban Heritage Trails.”
attract attention to the neighborhood. If the bus tour works well and the demand grows, it can increase the frequency. If the tourism market matured in Germantown, people would come by themselves instead of relying on the bus tours. At that time, a shuttle connecting major historic sites and interpretative signage on Germantown Avenue would serve the self-guided visitors well.

4.4.3.2. Community development

Instead of quality-of-life factors, such as historic and cultural resources, the Germantown community is in urgent need of basics such as safe streets and better public transportation, which are also visitors’ concerns. Visitors would not come to the neighborhood unless they feel safe moving around to explore the cultural heritage resources. The GUCDC has been working to make the corridor clean and safe, and to attract new businesses to the neighborhood. Residents are willing to see people come to visit the neighborhood which helps bring life to the commercial corridor. However, NHAs’ tools, such as making grants for improvement of infrastructure and beautification projects, have limited effect on helping a disadvantaged and struggled neighborhood.

4.4.3.3. Heritage management

The major issue in terms of heritage management is lack of funding. As shown in Table 8, most historic sites only open three to four days a week during open seasons, with short daily opening time. Although some sites are open by appointment, visitors generally are not willing to take the trouble to make appointments. The limited walk-in hour is an

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146 “Mission & History.”
important factor that affects heritage tourism development in Germantown. The reason that the sites could not extend the operation hours is the shortage of financial support.\footnote{Levitz.} The small profit made from the entrance fee cannot begin to cover the operational cost.

The historic sites in Germantown will be benefited significantly if Philadelphia was a heritage area or had a local heritage fund, because the sites would be eligible for grants related to heritage tourism development. With integrated interpretation programs and events, the sites and museums are ready for more visitors to come and visit. NHA program’s success has a large part to do with the funding. The funding from national or state heritage area program, or from local heritage fund, will be very helpful to historic site which hope to increase their visitation.

4.4.3.4. Marketing

Although the neighborhood is introduced as one of the oldest Philadelphia settlements on Visit Philadelphia’s website, none of its historic sites are featured on the website’s “top pick” or “must-see” list. The Independence Visitor Center does not provide any promotion for Germantown either. The marketing for the neighborhood is still weak. Therefore, increasing visibility and building better image is essential for heritage tourism development in Germantown.

Visit Philadelphia recognizes that the target group for Germantown is local residents and regional visitors who have visited Philadelphia multiple times and are
looking for unique place to explore, but no actual marketing efforts have taken place. 148

It is a reasonable strategy because Germantown is not able to become a destination like Old City, and nor should it. Despite its national importance, Germantown’s remoteness from city center and dispersion of heritage tourism attractions make it difficult for international and national visitors to navigate to and through the neighborhood.

With the rich and a wide range of important historic resources and the long span of the historic district, it is difficult to identify the marketing focus in the neighborhood. A city-wide interpretative framework would be helpful because the resources contributed to the themes would be picked out and emphasized in marketing. More effective marketing strategy would be city-wide events and programs resembling Essex’s Trail& Sail!, which could bring residents and visitors together to explore the rich cultural heritage resources in the city.

5. Conclusion

After comparing the state of heritage tourism industry in Philadelphia and the heritage tourism development strategies adopted by NHA, the paper concludes that a management entity with grant-making ability is essential for sustainable heritage tourism development. The management entity would have the responsibility to coordinate with organizations and to encourage preservation of resources. Being an important component for the management entity’s successful operation, stable funding can come from designation as a heritage area or establishing a local heritage fund. Sustainable heritage

148 Ibid.
tourism development identifies mutual goals of historic preservation and tourism development. As a result, the destination is able to provide a better visitor experience and improve quality of life in local community.

Planning and managing heritage tourism development in the city holistically is essential for sustainable urban heritage tourism development. A city-wide destination plan has long been absent in Philadelphia. Developing visions and an interpretive framework is important in guiding the future development direction and focus areas for heritage tourism. Programs and events that promote cultural heritage resources in the city should target not only visitors, but also local residents. Many residents are not always aware of the resources in their neighborhoods, and the programs and events would help them build cultural identity and pride of place. The three NHAs in this paper have been especially effective at this. Preserving the historic buildings, sites, neighborhoods, and urban landscape is the shared mission of heritage management and heritage tourism development, to achieve which in turns needs supporting grants and the collaboration of various parties. In terms of marketing, it is necessary to reevaluate the current marketing strategy in order to be consistent with visions of sustainable heritage tourism.

Heritage tourism development is usually uneven in large historic cities, which calls for tailored strategies for different neighborhoods. This paper has discussed heritage tourism in two historic neighborhoods in Philadelphia, Old City and Germantown, representing contrasting development stages and needs in the city. With efficient community development organization, the strong presence of NPS, and a relatively complete tourism infrastructure, Old City has been effective in heritage management, community development and marketing. However, it lacks comprehensive planning for
the neighborhood, leading to a disconnection between the interpretation of its heritage sites and the larger story of the city. The neighborhood needs to build stronger connection with and lead visitors to other neighborhoods. On the contrary, Germantown has been suffering from the difficulty in attracting visitors to the neighborhood, despite its rich and extensive heritage resources. The neighborhood’s major need for sustainable tourism development is infrastructure and image building. Improving infrastructure is a large investment, which the NHA framework has limited tools to deal with. However, NHAs’ successful marketing and programming experience are valuable for Germantown to increase visibility and build a positive image.

It is acknowledged that NHA framework is not a panacea. Some specific issues in the neighborhoods are difficult to solve with NHA’s limited resources and influences. The successful implementation of the framework is built on collaboration of various parties in the area. However, the NHA framework provides meaningful directions to a sustainable approach for heritage tourism development that respect visitors and residents, heritage and community resources.

Future research to be carried out on this topic could further investigate the BNHA in order to identify the challenges and the key components leading to its success, and the applicability of that success to Philadelphia and other historic cities. Site visits would be necessary to closely examine the results of various heritage tourism projects. To establish a sustainable heritage tourism framework in Philadelphia, it is important to identify sources of funding. Therefore, the potential to pursue national or state Heritage Area status and to establish a local heritage fund should be explored.
Bibliography


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## Appendices

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<td>CHAP</td>
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