

# John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Element Inventory

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## I. Description of Corridor Program

The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor (BRVNHC) was established by the United States Congress in 1986 for the purpose of "preserving and interpreting for the educational and inspirational benefit of present and future generations the unique and significant contributions to our national heritage of certain historic and cultural lands, waterways and structures" within this area.

The BRVNHC encompasses twenty towns within the Blackstone River Valley and watershed connecting Worcester, Massachusetts to Providence, Rhode Island. It is a "unified, working landscape" tied together by the Blackstone River, Blackstone Canal and Providence & Worcester Railroad which serve as a focus and initiator for the historic forces that have shaped the Valley.

The Valley is historically significant for many reasons. It is the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution, influencing the rest of the country through industrial use of water power and the development of the Rhode Island System of Manufacturing. In addition, it is an area filled with great ethnic and religious diversity. Moreover, the Valley's remarkable history is revealed by the concentration of historic, cultural and natural resources that have survived the past two centuries. Today, it remains unique as efforts are undertaken to preserve and protect these special resources "right where people live and work." The context of a "working valley of mill villages, farms, cities and towns, transportation systems, river and canal... makes the individual elements of the Blackstone River Valley significant."

The Blackstone River Valley is this country's second designated "National Heritage Corridor" and the first to encompass two states. To be successful, coordination and consistency is to be promoted among the Federal government, the states of Rhode Island and Massachusetts, the Corridor Commission, other interested private parties, and the 20 municipalities of Worcester, Millbury, Sutton, Grafton, Northbridge, Upton, Douglas, Uxbridge, Millville, Blackstone, Mendon, and Hopedale, Massachusetts; and Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Cumberland, Lincoln, Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and East Providence, Rhode Island. A Valley-wide commission -- the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission -- was

established by Congress and consists of local and state members nominated by the governors of Rhode Island and Massachusetts, and appointed by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior. The early mission of the Commission was to “assist in the development and implementation of an integrated resource management plan” for the National Heritage Corridor. This resulted in the creation of the Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Corridor officially adopted in 1990.

This element of the Lincoln Comprehensive Plan was prepared by the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission. This document and the materials prepared by the Commission about the river valley were used as a framework for identifying Lincoln's own strategy for the Blackstone River Valley. The potential responsible parties for these strategies are given below. For any given strategy, a cooperative effort between two or more of these groups identified in Table A will be beneficial.

**Table A**  
**Potential Responsible Parties for Implementation Strategies**

PARTIES
<b>Local Government:</b>
Planning Board
Conservation Commission
Zoning Board
Town Council
Park & Recreation Commission
<b>Private Local Groups:</b>
Lincoln Land Trust
Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce
Blackstone Valley Historic Society
Cumberland/Lincoln Lions Club
Keep Lincoln Rural
<b>Regional Groups:</b>
Corridor Commission
Save the Blackstone
Blackstone Valley Tourism Council
Northern RI Planning Officials
Scenic Roads Group
RI Historic Preservation Commission
League of Cities and Towns
Blackstone Valley Development Foundation
Division of Planning, RI Department of Administration

## **II. Goals**

Within the Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan, the Corridor Commission has identified seven action areas which encompass the goals of the Commission, state and local governments, private groups and individuals: coordination and consistency, historic preservation, interpretation, environmental conservation, land use management, recreation, and economic development and tourism. These action areas have been integrated into the following five planning sections:

- Economic Development
- Transportation/Access
- Partnerships and Cooperation
- Natural Resource Protection
- Land Use & the Built Environment

The town of Lincoln supports and adopts the goals of the Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. The town plans to work within the framework established by the Corridor Commission and to develop and implement integrated cultural, historical and land resource management programs for the purpose of retaining, enhancing and interpreting the significant values of the lands, waters and structures of the Corridor. For these purposes the following goals will serve as a guide for the future:

- Protect the town's historical, cultural and natural resources in an integrated manner.
- Achieve an integrated land use management approach to maintain the Valley character.
- Protect the Blackstone River and its tributaries as the primary natural resource in the Valley.
- Encourage cooperation and consistency with other local communities in planning efforts.
- Interpret the Valley's importance and sponsor activities that lead to public education and use of significant resources.
- Participate in Valley-wide planning efforts that link the Valley's resources and communities.
- Support economic development that complements the goals of the National Heritage Corridor.
- Actively engage in partnership projects that are consistent with the goals of the National Heritage Corridor.
- Encourage the development of recreation programs that emphasize Valley resources and provide links to other communities.

## **III. Approach and Recommendations**

Discussing the goals of the National Heritage Corridor as they relate to Lincoln at once prompts a multi-faceted discussion of interrelated planning issues and solutions. For this reason, several key issues have been identified which seem to encompass a variety of intertwined concerns. The following is a report of those issues and a series of policy recommendations with implementation strategies for addressing them.

## **Economic Development**

As the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution, the Blackstone River Valley has undergone constant economic evolution. Lincoln's history reflects these trends; starting as a mining and agricultural-based economy it shifted to industrial mills and finally to service and light manufacturing. Lincoln needs to ensure that business and industry remain and to encourage new industries to locate here, particularly those which are compatible with the goals of the Heritage Corridor. Conflicts over economic issues are bound to occur between municipalities. Regional cooperation is essential to ensure maximum economic gain for all communities. Lincoln, with its many historically significant sites, plays a key role in attracting tourists to the Corridor. Tourism offers the potential for economic development by bringing in additional revenues and creating new jobs. Reference to the Blackstone Valley Tourism Strategic Plan developed in March 2001 will provide the town with specific strategies to encourage tourism-related economic growth.

### **Policy: Promote regional economic development**

#### Voluntary Actions:

- Establish ties with local Colleges such as Bryant College, and the Community College of Rhode Island to utilize the existing base of knowledge.
- Strengthen economic integration with other metropolitan areas such as Providence, Worcester and Boston by encouraging businesses that provide materials or services for these larger metropolitan areas to locate here.
- Support the efforts of the Blackstone Valley Development Foundation to develop a regional economic strategy.

#### Administrative Actions:

Sponsor a series of workshops for realtors to promote real-estate marketing within the Corridor that reinforces the Valley's character.

### **Policy: Incorporate historic preservation and natural resource protection into development strategies for key areas of the town.**

#### Regulatory Actions:

- Explore enterprise zone status and tax increment financing as ways to stimulate business.
- Provide local property tax relief for renovations of old mills.

#### Administrative Actions:

- Schedule special events - both public and private - that will draw people to the village centers.
- Retain current manufacturing activities, and target environmentally sensitive industry and businesses that are compatible with historic surroundings.
- Develop a marketing strategy to encourage businesses to locate in Lincoln.

#### **Policy: Support tourism as a viable route for economic development and preservation within the Corridor.**

#### Voluntary Actions:

- Collaborate with the Corridor Commission to ensure the presence of the Blackstone Valley in the tourism plans for Rhode Island.
- Support inclusion of tourism as a component of the Economic Development Element of the State Guide Plan.
- Collaborate with the Corridor Commission to link local resources thematically, such as Great Road sites and the Kelly house, with other corridor-wide attractions.
- Support the development of a corridor-wide visitor information network in conjunction with the Corridor Commission, the State of Rhode Island and the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council.

#### Administrative Actions:

- Support the Slater Mill Historic Site as the preeminent historic and tourism feature in the Valley by identifying it as a main component in Lincoln's tourism strategy. Reference Slater Mill where appropriate in interpretive exhibits and education.
- Work with the Corridor Commission to develop "loop tour" brochures with other site information as supplements to the Corridor-wide features map.
- Support the goals and objectives of the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council and expand local strategies to include links to the entire Corridor.
- Incorporate Great Road, Limerock's lime quarries and kilns, Albion, Lonsdale and the other villages as key features that should be tied into a larger series of Valley-wide tourism activities.

#### **Transportation/Access**

Transportation and access are key components to the overall success of the Corridor. Historically, transportation has helped to shape the land use patterns we see today. The canal, railroad, river, and roads were important links in the product to market network. Today, the primary means of transportation is the automobile that has allowed new land use patterns to emerge, including sprawling suburban development. The automobile and concomitant need for safe and modern roads; bridges and parking are often in conflict with traditional land use patterns. Moreover, the impacts of increased traffic can be disruptive in some historic areas. Alternative forms of transportation may mitigate some of these impacts, for example, the planned bikeway.

Physical access to special features such as the river, the bikeway, the proposed linear greenway park and various historic sites is a key issue to consider. Possible solutions may include parking, rights-of-way, and handicap ramps. While adequate access may, in fact, be available, potential users may be unaware of its existence. Improving signage is an important component of ameliorating access difficulties, as well as promoting regional awareness and identity.

**Policy: Support the bikeway as an alternative transportation route and recreational feature.**

Voluntary Actions:

- Collaborate with the Corridor Commission to continue a reporting schedule with the Rhode Island Dept. of Environmental Management (DEM) and the Rhode Island Dept. of Transportation (RIDOT) on bikeway progress.

Regulatory Actions:

- Examine and, where necessary, modify current zoning along the proposed bikeway path for compatibility and economic opportunities.

Administrative Actions:

- Examine access to the bikeway from key off-site areas and compatibility with existing street traffic.
- Acquire abandoned railroad rights-of-way for additional trails.
- Link other town open space with the proposed bikeway.
- Explore ways to maintain the integrity of the towpath.
- Collaborate with the state to identify and establish rest stops, picnic areas and sightseeing opportunities along the bikeway.

**Policy: Increase physical access to the river and other natural and historic sites.**

Voluntary Actions:

- Collaborate with and support the Corridor Commission in the development of Corridor-wide signs and logo.
- Collaborate with the Commission in establishing a Greenway along the Blackstone and Mosshasuck Rivers.
- Form alliances with scout troops and outdoor clubs to adopt sections of the bikeway, trails or open space.
- Encourage riverfront recreational activities and events, especially at Ronci Park.

Administrative Actions:

- Incorporate into the capital improvements program projects related to local pedestrian access needs.
- Develop a network of trails linking open space with the River.
- Work with transit authority to establish bus routes that connect significant historic, cultural and natural areas to each other and to residential areas.

- Work with the Tourism Council to develop walking trails along Great Road.

**Policy: Assure that transportation projects are compatible with natural and cultural features and traditional land use patterns (i.e., centralized villages, narrow roads).**

Voluntary Actions:

- Establish a Town liaison during the design and development stage of transportation projects to make federal and state highway agencies aware of local interests concerning historic, cultural, and natural features.
- Collaborate with the Corridor Commission to review federally funded transportation projects.
- Involve town boards, citizen groups, and other interested parties in the review of local, state, and federal projects.
- Generate local support for a Rhode Island Scenic Roads designation program.
- Actively work to preserve notable bridges and stone walls.

Regulatory Actions:

- Develop a strategy to retain trees and other buffers along Route 146 to reduce noise and unsightly views.
- Require a traffic impact study for development that may cause a significant increase in traffic in historic areas and natural landscapes.

Administrative Actions:

- Establish local traffic monitoring programs to protect Lincoln's historic character and to ensure historic areas are not disrupted.
- Establish a transportation network classification to identify functions and uses for each component. Identify ways to improve movement through the Corridor.

**Partnerships and Cooperation**

Not since the Blackstone River Valley was a dominant industrial force have the communities in the Valley seen themselves as a region. The river today can bring communities together through their shared heritage, giving them a sense that the whole valley is greater than the sum of its parts.

Although the Valley is being identified more as a region, more efforts are needed to promote regional awareness through education and valley-wide projects. Citizen involvement is vital to achieve many projects and programs whether it is through their informed input or active participation. Serious steps must be taken to promote cooperation among all levels of government and private interests. The Corridor Commission can be both a catalyst and a center of information for regional efforts. Private groups and public entities can also form partnerships. Without this kind of coordinated action, opportunities may be lost and financial resources unnecessarily diminished. Lincoln will continue to initiate partnership projects that support the goals of the Corridor.

**Policy: Form a network for communication and assistance with federal, state and local representatives.**

Voluntary Actions:

- Utilize the Corridor Commission's assistance, expertise and support.
- Identify future partnerships to pursue.
- Explore alternative funding sources through the Corridor Commission on an information-sharing basis.
- Form alliances with local businesses, landowners, regional foundations and groups such as The Trust for Public Land and The Nature Conservancy to insure that key properties are protected.
- Establish a task force of local, state, Federal, and Corridor officials to identify contacts for information sharing and procedure, and to make recommendations for facilitating development of Corridor-related projects.
- Utilize the coalition of Northern Rhode Island Planning Officials as a forum for discussing inter-agency coordination and to advocate for change at the state level.
- Utilize Dept. of Environmental Management, the League of Cities and Towns and individual town boards to provide technical assistance.
- Coordinate State and Federal regulatory processes, specifically wetlands, Superfund, and transportation policies.
- Utilize the Corridor Commission as an additional liaison to state officials to convey the unique needs of Lincoln.

**Policy: Educate citizens on the historic significance of the area, and encourage them to view the Valley as a region and become actively involved in projects.**

Voluntary Actions:

- Incorporate historical information into the school curriculum.
- Promote regional awareness with local and state historical organizations through lectures, historical artifacts or activities.
- Write articles for local newspapers describing past/present happenings in the Valley.
- Enlist citizens in preservation and conservation efforts via educational forums.

Administrative Actions:

- Sponsor multi-community events to generate support for the linear park concept.
- Print a pamphlet that promotes the region and town's history.

**Natural Resources Protection**

Natural features, particularly the Blackstone River and its environs, enhance and define the region. The river demonstrates the need to think as a region: For example, point and nonpoint sources of pollution continue to contaminate the river and affect its downstream quality.

Fluctuations in water levels can also impact water quality. As Lincoln returns to the Blackstone and its banks, a comprehensive approach must be taken in reclaiming these important lands and waters.

Open space is one of Lincoln's most outstanding resources; it is the reason why many people have settled here. Maintaining and preserving open space is a continuous challenge as development sprawls further out from village centers. Farmland, a legacy of Lincoln's past, is rapidly disappearing. What is left offers historical, as well as visual appeal. Open space is important not only for recreational purposes but also for wildlife and rare plant species habitat, and other conservation purposes.

The Valley's industrial heritage has left behind a slew of environmental woes. Properties containing toxic wastes pose serious threats to reuse and development. Continued dumping of waste in abandoned industrial areas, particularly along the river, requires attention and clean up. The sheer magnitude of the problem mandates regional efforts to reach a solution.

**Policy: Establish local mechanisms to preserve and maintain rural landscapes, special natural features, and open space.**

Voluntary Actions:

- Create an incentive plan for developers that would give them exemptions in exchange for open space.
- Encourage donations and provide incentives for conservation easements.
- Collaborate with and support the Corridor Commission in the establishment of a Greenway along the Blackstone River.

Regulatory Actions:

- Evaluate current zoning and adapt to a more environmentally compatible zoning district where appropriate.
- Explore the option of adopting rural protection zoning.
- Implement a river overlay district for the Blackstone River and possibly the Moshassuck River, with land use controls, construction setbacks and vegetation removal restrictions.
- Implement steep slope zoning to limit development from occurring in areas of high erosion and high scenic values.
- Implement agricultural zoning to preserve the remaining agricultural areas.
- Purchase Agricultural Preservation Restrictions on farms of priority with the state.
- Review the erosion and sedimentation ordinance to determine if it meets new state legislative requirements.
- Implement scenic road designations to preserve historic character of rural roads.

Administrative Actions:

- Identify key parcels for land protection and work with the conservation commission, and the state to develop management plans that are compatible with local needs and goals.

- Determine if recreation areas are where resource protection is required.
- Promote an acquisition/protection strategy that places high priority on lands of regional importance or that have connections with other protected areas.
- Implement creative land development techniques to preserve open space.

**Policy: Educate citizens on environmental issues.**

Voluntary Actions:

- Establish an Earth Day clean up at appropriate sites.

Administrative Actions:

- Establish an Environmental Awareness Week with school and community educational programs.
- Produce an environmental home safety brochure for the general public in conjunction with the Corridor Commission.
- Educate politicians and state officials about ways to fund and centralize disposal of hazardous materials and other items such as tires.

**Policy: Support regional efforts to improve water quality and clean up waste sites.**

Regulatory Actions:

- Restrict expansion of known industrial and commercial polluters. Have the Dept. of Environmental Management (DEM) send a list of violators to the town boards.
- Refuse certain permit approvals for polluters until the situation is corrected.
- Endorse state tax incentives (e.g. tax deferral) for businesses instituting stricter pollution controls.

Administrative Actions:

- Seek assistance through the EPA, DEM, Save the Blackstone and other environmental groups to help with clean up and to acquire funding.
- Support a demonstration project with DEM or EPA to create a water protection plan for the river.
- Support projects to monitor and control water levels in the river.
- Provide incentives for businesses to clean up wastes on their property.
- Examine land use and zoning adjacent to regional water sources for compatibility with water protection and conservation strategies. Discourage new usages of land adjacent to rivers that are incompatible (i.e. landfills, junkyards).

**Land Use and the Built Environment**

Lincoln has an extraordinary diversity of historic structures that have survived to tell the story of Lincoln's past. While many of Lincoln's historic buildings are not significant alone, together they become a three-dimensional portrait of how Lincoln developed and what life was like centuries

ago. Changing needs and patterns of land use are inevitable but they need not occur at the expense of such treasures. Rather, these changes open up new opportunities for improving the quality of life in Lincoln. For instance, it is no longer necessary to locate industry next to rivers for power; rivers now are more valuable as recreation and scenic areas. Preservation can assist growth by suggesting patterns that will keep what is best about the town. Decentralization and sprawl can erase the unique character of Lincoln. Insensitive development can mar the historic surroundings forever.

Lincoln's many villages are also historic resources that deserve recognition. Caution must be exercised so that these villages do not become unaffordable. Local residents take pride in their villages, but they may not be aware of the villages' historic value. Interpretation of these sites should therefore be directed at residents and tourists alike.

The Conklin Lime Quarry, one of the oldest mines in operation, has a limited life expectancy. This quarry has particular historic significance unlike many other quarry operations that leave threatening scars on the landscape. If public funds can be found to purchase this site, it should be considered. Since development is more likely, a sensitive limited housing development should be encouraged.

**Policy: Support land use mechanisms that preserve and feature traditional land uses.**

Regulatory Actions:

- Explore site plan review as a means of preserving the scale and atmosphere of the mill villages and rural landscapes.
- Require developers to submit documentation of environmental impacts and ways to mitigate negative impacts.
- Require developers of large developments to submit scale models of the proposed site.
- Implement exterior site design regulations in historic areas.

**Policy: Educate landowners and citizens on Blackstone Valley history and the importance of historic preservation.**

Voluntary Actions:

- Encourage the Blackstone Valley Historic Society and the RI Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission to take a proactive role in protection through co-sponsored workshops and grant assistance to historic property owners.
- Collaborate with the Blackstone Valley Historic Society to gather public support for preservation.
- Disseminate the Corridor Commission's Design Guidelines and Standards report to landowners and developers.
- Locate signs at historic sites that interpret the significance of the area.

#### Administrative Actions:

- Lobby the Corridor Commission and the U.S. Congress, in conjunction with other Valley communities, for the establishment of valley-wide matching funds for rehabilitation of historic structures.
- Hold seminars for landowners and builders to promote appropriate site design.
- Collaborate with the Corridor Commission and the RI Historical Preservation Commission to create educational programs.
- Target individuals and professional groups that deal with local properties for preservation education.
- Target potential users and appropriate uses of key historic features compatible with preservation concerns.

#### **Policy: Promote better land use planning and integration of traditional land use patterns with current needs.**

#### Voluntary Actions:

Support nominations to the National Register of Historic Places.

#### Regulatory Actions:

- Implement zoning regulations that will create neighborhoods and encourage mixture of compatible uses.
- Implement zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations that discourage residential sprawl and commercial strip development.
- Establish historic districts to preserve special historic areas such as Great Road, Albion, Lonsdale, and Saylesville.
- Revise local zoning and regulations - such as road widths, setbacks, parking requirements - to permit village-style development to occur at appropriate locations.

#### Administrative Actions:

- Create a local historic district commission to study feasibility of designating certain areas of Lincoln as historic district zones.
- Identify historical and natural properties that are threatened by development pressures, deterioration, or inadequate resources.
- Target potential users and appropriate uses for key historic features compatible with preservation concerns.
- Study use for future of Conklin Lime Quarry
- Meet with Cumberland's planning board to ensure uses on both sides of the river are compatible.
- Encourage creative reuse of historic buildings that maintain historic integrity of the building, i.e., restaurants with a historic theme.

# Heritage Corridor Element Strategy Summary

## Status of Corridor Planning in Lincoln

Although the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor is a relatively new entity, Lincoln has worked actively with the Corridor Commission and the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council. This cooperative approach will continue. The major areas of concern for Lincoln are the impacts of tourist traffic on Quinville, pedestrian and bicyclist safety in Lonsdale and general circulation issues throughout town as visitors see Lincoln's natural and historic resources.

## Goal

Help to create and maintain the top national heritage corridor in the nation.

## Policies

1. Identify where and how future tourism development and visitation will impact the town of Lincoln.
2. Seek means to minimize the impact of that tourism activity on the residential neighborhoods.
3. Seek to maximize the benefit to existing commercial areas from tourism activity.
4. Protect Lincoln's natural and cultural character while allowing visitors to enjoy and appreciate those qualities of Lincoln.

# John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Element Actions

## BRV1-Guidepost Actions

- a. Continually work with and communicate with the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council and the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Commission and Park Service.
- b. Promote the concept of the Heritage Corridor to towns' people and visitors.

## BRV2-Townwide. Consider implementation of the Blackstone Tourism Council's Lincoln Element of the Blackstone Valley Tourism Plan.

**Action Agent:** Town Administrator, Town Council, Planning Board/ Planning Department and Public Works Department

**Cost:** Varies, but most are low cost programs

The actions recommended by the tourism plan include the following:

- a. Provide zoning that allows for creative adaptive reuse of historic homes and structures.
- b. Encourage tours of historic homes.
- c. Encourage speedy development of the bike path.
- d. Ensure that minimum business services are available along the bike path.
- e. Encourage land use and zoning strategies that will facilitate effective use of open spaces, river watersheds and water viewsheds.
- f. Enact strong preservation ordinances to protect historic structures.
- g. Develop signage to reflect Lincoln's unique character and features.
- h. Create a walk-in visitors' center at Lincoln Town Hall. Display local manufactured goods in Town Hall.
- i. Recommend that the RIDOT consolidate the two I-295 visitor centers into one center on the median strip of the highway.
- j. Develop river access.
- k. Use a community room tax to accomplish specific community goals.
- l. Develop a walking path along Great Road.
- m. Continue to provide support to BVTC promotional efforts.
- n. Institute a Heritage Corridor Planning and Advisory Commission to encourage inter-community planning cooperation.
- o. Protect and market the Great Road properties as a "slice of New England."
- p. Define the routes that auto visitors should take to see Lincoln with the minimum impact on residents.
- q. Control potentially contaminating land uses along the Blackstone River.

- r. Encourage the reclaiming of the Blackstone, Moshassuck and other water bodies.  
Encourage the reintroduction of salmon and bass to the Blackstone.
- s. Provide a visitors restroom available seven days a week and maintained at a high level of service.
- t. Link the high school recreational facility with the Corridor.
- u. Encourage the protection and enhancement of former lime kilns as tourism sites.
- v. Adopt site plan review as a mechanism to protect environmental and cultural resources.
- w. Protect Lincoln's farms.
- x. Protect Lincoln's roadways.

**BRV3- Lonsdale. In the years ahead, consider and encourage a gradual transition of the industrial uses along Lower Road to uses more compatible or related to the bikepath.**

Provide passive access to Scott Pond from this area. Provide additional parking for bikers. Work with owners to identify alternative zoning designations that would protect current owners' rights while providing them with opportunities for transition to new uses.

**Action Agent:** Planning Board/ Planning Department

**Cost:** Part of zoning revision process

**BRV4- Lonsdale. Work with owners of property in the Lonsdale Industrial Park to consider alternative zoning strategies that would create incentives to restore abandoned or rundown buildings.** Mixed-use concepts should be explored along with the need for road and infrastructure improvements. The Lower Blackstone River Reuse Plan should be used as the basis for beginning the discussion.

**Action Agent:** Planning Board/ Planning Department

**Cost:** Part of zoning revision process

**BRV5-Townwide. The town should consider locations of landings along the entire Blackstone River corridor, most immediately at Quinnville and Manville.**

The villages of Manville and Quinnville should work to create access to the Blackstone River for boat launchings, landings and passive recreation along the river. The landings would be part of a Blackstone River Valley navigation system and would provide recreational fishing and boating access. A riverfront park should be considered on the Cumberland side of the river or behind the old railroad station and should be jointly supported by the towns, the state DEM, and by the National Park Service.

**Action Agent:** Town Administrator's office and Planning Board/ Planning Department

**Cost:** Unknown

**BRV6 – Townwide. Protect the Blackstone River and its tributaries as the primary natural resource in the Valley.** Work to provide maximum access to the river through walkways, canoe launches and views. All town land along the river should be considered for river access. Key views of the river should be identified and protected.

**Action Agent:** Public Works Department and Planning Board/ Planning Department  
**Cost:** Unknown

**BRV7 – Townwide. Interpret the Valley's importance and work with the Tourism Council in sponsoring activities, which lead to public education and use of significant resources.** Educate citizens on the historic significance of the area, environmental issues and encourage them to view the Valley as a region and become actively involved in projects. Educate landowners and citizens on Blackstone Valley history and the importance of historic preservation.

Historic Significance and Preservation:

- a. Incorporate historical information into the school curriculum.
- b. Promote regional awareness with local and state historical organizations through lectures, historical artifacts or activities.
- c. Write articles for local newspapers describing past/present happenings in the Valley.
- d. Enlist citizens in preservation and conservation efforts via educational forums.
- e. Sponsor multi-community events to generate support for the linear park concept.
- f. Print a pamphlet that promotes the region and town's history.
- g. Encourage the Blackstone Valley Historic Society and the RI. Historic Preservation Commission to take a proactive role in protection through co-sponsored workshops and grant assistance to historic property owners.
- h. Collaborate with the Blackstone Valley Historic Society to gather public support for preservation.
- i. Disseminate the Corridor Commission's Design Guidelines and Standards report to landowners and developers.
- j. Locate signs at historic sites that interpret the significance of the area.
- k. Lobby the Corridor Commission and the U.S. Congress, in conjunction with other Valley communities, for the establishment of valley-wide matching funds for rehabilitation of historic structures.
- l. Hold seminars for landowners and builders to promote appropriate site design.
- m. Collaborate with the Corridor Commission and the RI Historical Preservation Commission to create educational programs.
- n. Target individuals and professional groups, which deal with local properties for preservation education.
- o. Target potential users and appropriate uses of key historic features compatible with preservation concerns.

*Environmental Issues:*

- a. Establish an Earth Day clean up at appropriate sites.
- b. Establish an Environmental Awareness Week with school and community educational programs.
- c. Produce an environmental home safety brochure for the general public in conjunction with the Corridor Commission.
- d. Educate politicians and state officials about ways to fund and centralize disposal of hazardous materials and other items such as tires.

**BRV8 – Townwide. Participate in Valley-wide planning efforts, which link the Valley's resources and communities.** Encourage cooperation and consistency with other local communities in planning efforts. The Town of Lincoln should actively engage in partnership projects, which are consistent with the goals of the National Heritage Corridor.

**BRV9 – Townwide. Utilize the Blackstone Valley Corridor to promote local and regional economic growth through the following action items:**

- a. Establish ties with local Colleges such as Bryant College, and the Community College of Rhode Island to develop master plans for nodes along the river such as in Manville, Quinville and Saylesville.
- b. Strengthen economic integration with other metropolitan areas such as Providence, Worcester and Boston by encouraging businesses that provide materials or services for these larger metropolitan areas to locate here.
- c. Support the efforts of the Blackstone Valley Development Foundation to develop a regional economic strategy.
- d. Sponsor a series of workshops for realtors to promote real-estate marketing within the Corridor that reinforces the Valley's character.
- e. Revise the Blackstone River Overlay to incorporate language that encourages tourism support services along the river, such as accommodations, restaurants and visitor-related retail that compliment the existing community. These services provide the most direct economic benefits.

**BRV10 – Townwide. Incorporate historic and cultural preservation and natural resource protection into the development strategies for key areas of the town through the following action items:**

- a. Explore enterprise zone status and tax increment financing as ways to stimulate business.
- b. Provide local property tax relief for renovations of old mills.
- c. Schedule special events - both public and private - which will draw people to the village centers.
- d. Retain current manufacturing activities, and target environmentally sensitive industry and businesses that are compatible with historic surroundings.
- e. Develop a marketing strategy to encourage businesses to locate in Lincoln.

**BRV11 – Townwide. Support tourism as a viable route for economic development and preservation within the Corridor through the following action items:**

- a. Collaborate with the Corridor Commission to ensure the presence of the Blackstone Valley in the tourism plans for Rhode Island.
- b. Support inclusion of tourism as a component of the Economic Development Element of the State Guide Plan.
- c. Collaborate with the Corridor Commission to link local resources thematically, such as Great road sites and the Kelly house, with other corridor-wide attractions.
- d. Support the development of a corridor-wide visitor information network in conjunction with the Corridor Commission, the State of Rhode Island and the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council.
- e. Support the Slater Mill Historic Site as the preeminent historic and tourism feature in the Valley by identifying it as a main component in Lincoln's tourism strategy. Reference Slater Mill where appropriate in interpretive exhibits and education.
- f. Work with the Corridor Commission to develop "loop tour" brochures with other site information as supplements to the Corridor-wide features map.
- g. Support the goals and objectives of the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council and expand local strategies to include links to the entire Corridor.
- h. Incorporate Great Road, Limerock's lime quarries and kilns, Albion, Lonsdale and the other villages as key features that should be tied into a larger series of Valley-wide tourism activities.

**BRV12 – Townwide. Encourage the development of recreation programs, which emphasize Valley resources and provide links to other communities.** One option is to support the bikeway as an alternative transportation route and recreational feature through the following action items:

- a. Collaborate with the Corridor Commission to continue a reporting schedule with the Rhode Island Dept. of Environmental Management (DEM) and RIDOT on bikeway progress.
- b. Examine and, where necessary, modify current zoning along the proposed bikeway path for compatibility and economic opportunities.
- c. Examine access to the bikeway from key off-site areas and compatibility with existing street traffic.
- d. Acquire abandoned railroad rights-of-way for additional trails.
- e. Link other town open space with the proposed bikeway.
- f. Explore ways to maintain the integrity of the towpath.
- g. Collaborate with the state to identify and establish rest stops, picnic areas and sightseeing opportunities along the bikeway.

**BRV13 – Townwide. Increase physical access to the river and other natural and historic sites through the following action items.**

- a. Collaborate with and support the Corridor Commission in the development of Corridor-wide signs and logo.

- b. Collaborate with the Commission in establishing a Greenway along the Blackstone and Mosshasuck Rivers.
- c. Form alliances with scout troops and outdoor clubs to adopt sections of the bikeway, trails or open space.
- d. Encourage riverfront recreational activities and events, especially at Ronci Park.
- e. Incorporate into the capital improvements program projects related to local pedestrian access needs.
- f. Develop a network of trails linking open space with the River.
- g. Work with transit authority to establish bus routes that connect significant historic, cultural and natural areas to each other and to residential areas.
- h. Work with the Tourism Council to develop walking trails along Great Road.

**BRV14 – Townwide. Assure that transportation projects are compatible with natural and cultural features and traditional land use patterns (i.e., centralized villages, narrow roads) through the following items:**

- a. Establish a Town liaison during the design and development stage of transportation projects to make federal and state highway agencies aware of local interests concerning historic, cultural, and natural features.
- b. Collaborate with the Corridor Commission to review federally funded transportation projects.
- c. Involve town boards, citizen groups, and other interested parties in the review of local, state, and federal projects.
- d. Generate local support for a Rhode Island Scenic Roads designation program.
- e. Actively work to preserve notable bridges and stonewalls.
- f. Develop a strategy to retain trees and other buffers along Route 146 to reduce noise and unsightly views.
- g. Require a traffic impact study for development that may cause a significant increase in traffic in historic areas and natural landscapes.
- h. Establish local traffic monitoring programs to protect Lincoln’s historic character and to ensure historic areas are not disrupted.
- i. Establish a transportation network classification to identify functions and uses for each component. Identify ways to improve movement through the Corridor.

**BRV15 – Townwide. Form a network for communication and assistance with federal, state and local representatives through the following action items:**

- a. Utilize the Corridor Commission's assistance, expertise and support.
- b. Identify future partnerships to pursue.
- c. Explore alternative funding sources through the Corridor Commission on an information-sharing basis.
- d. Form alliances with local businesses, landowners, regional foundations and groups such as The Trust for Public Land and The Nature Conservancy to insure that key properties are protected.

- e. Establish a task force of local, state, Federal, and Corridor officials to identify contacts for information sharing and procedure, and to make recommendations for facilitating development of Corridor-related projects.
- f. Utilize the coalition of Northern Rhode Island Planning Officials as a forum for discussing inter-agency coordination and to advocate for change at the state level.
- g. Utilize Dept. of Environmental Management, the League of Cities and Towns and individual town boards to provide technical assistance.
- h. Coordinate State and Federal regulatory processes, specifically wetlands, Superfund, and transportation policies.
- i. Utilize the Corridor Commission as an additional liaison to state officials to convey the unique needs of Lincoln.

**BRV16 – Townwide. Establish local mechanisms to preserve and maintain rural landscapes, special natural features, and open space through the following action items:**

- a. Create an incentive plan for developers that would give them exemptions in exchange for open space.
- b. Encourage donations and provide incentives for conservation easements.
- c. Collaborate with and support the Corridor Commission in the establishment of a Greenway along the Blackstone River.
- d. Evaluate current zoning and adapt to a more environmentally compatible zoning district where appropriate.
- e. Explore the option of adopting rural protection zoning.
- f. Implement a river overlay district for the Blackstone River and possibly the Moshassuck River, with land use controls, construction setbacks and vegetation removal restrictions.
- g. Implement steep slope zoning to limit development from occurring in areas of high erosion and high scenic values.
- h. Implement agricultural zoning to preserve the remaining agricultural areas.
- i. Purchase Agricultural Preservation Restrictions on farms of priority with the state.
- j. Review the erosion and sedimentation ordinance to determine if it meets new state legislative requirements.
- k. Implement scenic road designations to preserve historic character of rural roads.
- l. Identify key parcels for land protection and work with the conservation commission, and the state to develop management plans that are compatible with local needs and goals.
- m. Determine if recreation areas are where resource protection is required.
- n. Promote an acquisition/protection strategy that places high priority on lands of regional importance or that have connections with other protected areas.
- o. Implement creative land development techniques to preserve open space.

**BRV17 – Townwide. Support regional efforts to improve water quality and clean up waste sites through the following action items:**

- a. Restrict expansion of known industrial and commercial polluters. Have the Dept. of Environmental Management (DEM) send a list of violators to the town boards.
- b. Refuse certain permit approvals for polluters until the situation is corrected.

- c. Endorse state tax incentives (e.g. tax deferral) for businesses instituting stricter pollution controls.
- d. Seek assistance through the EPA, DEM, Save the Blackstone and other environmental groups to help with clean up and to acquire funding.
- e. Support a demonstration project with DEM or EPA to create a water protection plan for the river.
- f. Support projects to monitor and control water levels in the river.
- g. Provide incentives for businesses to clean up wastes on their property.
- h. Examine land use and zoning adjacent to regional water sources for compatibility with water protection and conservation strategies. Discourage new usages of land adjacent to rivers that are incompatible (i.e. landfills, junkyards).

**BRV18 - Townwide. Support land use mechanisms and promote better land use planning that preserves and features traditional land uses and integrates traditional land use patterns with current needs through the following action items:**

- a. Explore site plan review as a means of preserving the scale and atmosphere of the mill villages and rural landscapes.
- b. Require developers to submit documentation of environmental impacts and ways to mitigate negative impacts.
- c. Require developers of large developments to submit scale models of the proposed site.
- d. Implement exterior site design regulations in historic areas.
- e. Support nominations to the National Register of historic properties.
- f. Implement zoning regulations that will create neighborhoods and encourage mixture of compatible uses.
- g. Implement zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations that discourage residential sprawl and commercial strip development.
- h. Establish historic districts to preserve special historic areas such as Great Road, Albion, Lonsdale, and Saylesville.
- i. Revise local zoning and regulations - such as road widths, setbacks, parking requirements - to permit village-style development to occur at appropriate locations.
- j. Create a local historic district commission to study feasibility of designating certain areas of Lincoln as historic district zones.
- k. Identify historical and natural properties that are threatened by development pressures, deterioration, or inadequate resources.
- l. Target potential users and appropriate uses for key historic features compatible with preservation concerns.
- m. Study use for future of Conklin Lime Quarry.
- n. Meet with Cumberland's planning board to ensure uses on both sides of the river are compatible.
- o. Encourage creative reuse of historic buildings that maintain historic integrity of the building i.e., restaurants with a historic theme.

**BRV19- Townwide. Initiate a Cultural Development Plan that would encourage and determine the activities and cultural needs tailored to Lincoln.**

The development plan could outline specific actions that would provide a tourist benefit to the community such as developing an arts district at the Bleachery complex and incorporating cultural “pit stops” along the bike path. An internationally renowned artist is currently located at the complex. There is the potential of historic adaptive reuse of these structures with integration of the bike trail. The complex could become a successful, long-term cultural/business center if marketed properly.