

PREFACE



Across the country, byways are finding lots of ways to collaborate—from informal citizen groups to nonprofit corporations to large formal organizations. This group discusses business along Oregon's Cascade Lakes Scenic Byway.

What's so Important about Organizations?

A Message from America's Byways Resource Center

The secret behind most successful scenic byways is the people—the volunteers behind the byway's organization. This is where you'll find the creative energy that sparks new ideas and the willingness to get the job done. When channeled through an effective organization, this energy will focus a byway's vision and goals to assure success.

The byway organization serves as the foundation for all the activities of your byway—the plans and projects, the events and celebrations, the hard discussions on how to balance protection and promotion.

Which type of organization is best for your byway? Each byway is unique. Effective organizations can vary from informal citizen groups to official agreements to nonprofit corporations and large formal structures. Each type offers its own benefits.

Thoughtful discussions and planning help clarify what will work best for you. From the start, make sure that the organization represents the varied interests in your region. Identify and recruit participation from key individuals and organizations, local government officials, state and federal agencies, and others that will help guarantee support and success for your byway initiatives.

“The driving force behind the byways program never ceases to amaze me. It all starts at the grassroots level—that creative energy within local byway groups. These groups, in partnership with the states, FHWA and other national agencies and organizations, provide the foundation for a program that is truly national in scope and impact.”

Gary Tonkin
(Retired) Director,
America's Byways
Resource Center

The best organizations offer all members opportunities to participate. Determining the best role for each member based on special skills and interests will assure that everyone can contribute—from taking notes to writing grants.

This publication is meant to provide you with a wide range of choices. Each type of organization has its advantages and disadvantages. Sometimes the best option is combining the best of two or more organizational types. Whatever you decide, keep in mind that organizations take on a life of their own. Nurture your organization and your diligence will pay off in success.

We hope this resource guide will help your byway group continue to evolve and accomplish even more. ★

The Importance of Grassroots Leadership: *Planting the Seeds of Success*

The National Scenic Byways Program is a community-based, grassroots program. The program's vision is to create a distinctive collection of American roads, their stories and treasured places. It is built on the concept of local leadership for individual byways.



Grassroots leadership is the foundation of the National Scenic Byways Program. In September 1996, the U.S. Secretary of Transportation designated the first All-American Roads and National Scenic Byways. This federal program is unique in that scenic routes are nominated and managed by local communities and state and federal land management agencies.

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Rob Draper
Federal Highway
Administration
National Scenic
Byways Program

Many a byway can trace its origins to a small group of people who shared a grander vision for their region or a road through their area. They knew they had something special—perhaps the road itself, natural features along the road, or the history and culture of the area. They knew other people would recognize the special appeal. They knew the importance of sharing its story with visitors, and building an appreciation and understanding for it.

This small group may have shared leadership collectively, or perhaps one person became the champion of the grand vision. The next step might have been to explore the opportunities for recognition and to identify resources available for achieving their vision. Establishing a byway can follow a long, hard road. Seeking and gaining community support, preparing a corridor management plan, creating the byway’s route and name, linking the byway’s most significant resources as a continuous visitor experience, and nominating the road for designation all take time and effort.

Designation marks the beginning of more challenges and opportunities. People need to know the byway exists. A byway map and brochure help define the route and introduce the byway’s special story. Despite concerns about sign proliferation, clear wayfinding signs are essential for travelers’ safety and awareness of route characteristics. Interpretive kiosks, exhibits, signs, and centers can complement and supplement information on maps or in brochures. People need to know where to find places to eat, rest and sleep.

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However, the enthusiasm sometimes ebbs and flows, leaving the byway leader to bridge the gaps for a while. Leaders supported by a well-formed organization may sustain the byway for longer spans and perhaps encounter fewer gaps.

This guide for effective byway organizations identifies the qualities and principles of both effective leaders and effective organizations. Growing a healthy and viable grassroots organization takes the right tools, information and a bit of the gardener's patience. Use the tips, recommendations, case studies and other insights in this publication to plant the seeds of success. ★



The National Scenic Byways Program supports the efforts of grassroots byway communities to enhance and preserve their individual byway corridors. Recognition, not regulation, is a fundamental program principle. Each byway offers a unique American experience. The Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway in California (shown here) was designated an All-American Road in 2002.

Who's in the Lead?

Byways are managed by a variety of different agencies. The most common administrative entities are nonprofit organizations, the USDA Forest Service, or a local Chamber of Commerce or Convention and Visitors Bureau.

A number of agencies and organizations are currently taking the lead along America's Byways. Utah's Logan Canyon Scenic Byway benefits from strong partnerships between the Cache Valley Tourist Council, the Wasatch-Cache National Forest and others. In 2001, the byway received a *Best Practices for Byways Award* for a comprehensive interpretive project.



Leading the Effort

Percentage of Byways

Nonprofit Organization	23%
USDA Forest Service	16%
Chamber of Commerce or Convention and Visitors Bureau	13%
Regional Planning Organization	9%
Department of Transportation	9%
Regional Tourism Agency	8%
City or County	8%
National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management	6%
Tribal Government	2%
University	2%
State Tourism/Parks and Recreation	2%
Economic Development Agency	1%
Ad Hoc Citizens Group	1%

2001 Survey by America's Byways Resource Center (N=81)

The Role of Your Byway Organization

Your organization is at the center of all byway activities. This chart (pp. x-xi) summarizes the important roles and responsibilities an organization fulfills in the development phases of a scenic byway.



1. Getting Started

- An individual or small group recognizes the benefit in planning for preservation, promotion, recognition or development of a scenic byway.
- Collect information about the scenic byways program. Contact the Federal Highway Administration, state scenic byway coordinator, America's Byways Resource Center or other scenic byway programs.
- Assess your corridor.
- Define vision and mission statements.
- Engage opposition in constructive dialogue.
- Complete a corridor management plan.
- Achieve designation as a state scenic byway or other designated scenic byway (such as a USDA Forest Service Scenic Byway or BLM Back Country Byway).

2. Moving Ahead

- Determine organizational characteristics (organizational type and membership).
- Outline roles and responsibilities of members.
- Seek partners (public, government, other organizations and agencies).
- Clarify processes for communication, meetings, making decisions, and conflict resolution.
- Establish record keeping systems (minutes, grants/contracts, mail list, finances).
- If desired, prepare a nomination for designation as a National Scenic Byway or All-American Road.
- Identify specific leadership roles and plan for leadership transitions.
- Plan local dedication and recognition events.
- Identify funding sources.

- Utilize resources, technical assistance and training from state and federal partners, FHWA and America's Byways Resource Center.

3. Implementing Your Corridor Management Plan

- Involve partners and stakeholders.
- Assess your byway's needs for visitor services, marketing, scenic conservation, signage, interpretation, and funding.
- Set strategies to fund and implement your corridor management plan.
- Create a detailed work plan to reach organizational goals.
- Recruit members for committees and work groups.
- Secure funding.
- Seek new partnerships to help implement your plans.
- Continue to communicate with internal and external entities.
- Revise and modify plans as needed.

4. Maintaining and Enhancing Your Byway

- Assess needs for additional planning (interpretive plan, strategic plan, business plan, marketing plan, long-term financial plan).
- Keep supporters informed of progress.
- Continue to engage opposition in constructive dialogue.
- Recognize volunteers.
- Celebrate accomplishments.
- Anticipate future needs.
- Broaden partnerships.

