

TRAINING MATERIALS

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Whether in the classroom or in the field, byway groups are eager to learn about ways to enhance their corridors. In 2001, byway representatives participated in a mobile interpretive workshop on the McKenzie Pass-Santiam Pass Scenic Byway in Oregon.

Assessing Your Byway's Efforts for Inclusion:

An Organizational Exercise

Overview:

One key to a successful scenic byway project is broad support within the byway's region. Inclusion helps to garner that support. Ensuring that your byway's team represents the varied interests in your region, you increase the likelihood that your plan and its implementation meets the needs and satisfies the concerns of those who can either help or hinder its success.

Objective:

The following process is intended to help you determine and enhance the level of inclusivity of your byway's team.

Time Required:

4 – 6 hours

Materials Required:

- Flip chart and markers
- Copies of the (three) worksheets for all participants
- Copy of the “Community Effectiveness Chart” (pp. 202-206 of this manual) for all participants

Procedure:

Step 1. Assess your environment

Begin by considering the range of geographic areas that your byway intersects, including cities, townships, counties, state lands and federally managed lands. List the geographic regions relevant to your byway on a flip chart or blank piece of paper. Use this list as you brainstorm the many entities and individuals that have a stake in the byway's region.

Now list (in column 1) all of the groups that have some interest in the land, space and outcome of your byway project. Record the names of government jurisdictions (Worksheet #1), business and community interests (Worksheet #2), and other stakeholders (Worksheet #3).

Ask yourself who might feel that they have something to gain or lose from how the byway is developed or marketed. Which regional stakeholders might prefer something else, or that nothing at all be done? The following categories may be helpful as you begin brainstorming possible interest groups.

Step 2. Assess who is on board now

The lists from Step 1 are likely to be quite long. Don't worry, the interest in the byway will range from minimal to considerable. The key is to have a way to maximize the representation of your effort.

Now list the current participants (column 2) next to their affiliations in the categories in column 1. Start with the group that secured the byway's designation for your area and then go on to list others who have been contacted regarding the byway.

Government entities that have jurisdiction over the byway (local, county, state and federal)

Governments (elected officials, staff planners, engineers, etc.)

Tourism agencies

Historical societies

Regional planning organizations

Joint Powers Entities

Federal Highway Administration

USDA Forest Service

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Bureau of Land Management

Bureau of Indian Affairs

National Park Service

State Dept. of Natural Resources

State Dept. of Transportation

State Parks

Business/community interests

Chambers of commerce

Convention and visitors bureaus

Tourist associations

Lodging associations

Local/regional newspapers

Major businesses and employers

Other significant stakeholders

Power elites and key informants

County extension offices

Regional universities

National interest groups/associations

Recreation groups

Major tourism and recreation destinations

Campgrounds

Step 3. Assess the strength of your support and opposition

For each individual in column 2 (or group if there is no identified contact) rate the level of commitment for the byway (column 3). Use the rating system below. You may have a number of 0's for unknown level of support; this is OK, it simply points to some work to be done. It is not necessary that everyone be at a +3. Realistically, for many stakeholders any positive number is fine. You don't necessarily need elected officials pushing for the byway; it might be enough to know that they will not oppose it.

Step 4. Choose your targets

Review the ratings in column 3 and decide for each entity if the current rating is sufficient. In deciding how important a particular person/group is, recall that the unknowns can represent either untapped support or possible opposition. Which they turn out to be is often a matter of how and when they learn about the byway plan. You are not likely to attract all of these groups to your byway's planning and implementation team, though extending the invitation and spreading the word about what you are doing can play an important public relations role.

- +3** = strong advocate, will work to promote the byway and influence others
- +2** = clearly in favor, may contribute in some way to effort, not likely to take the lead
- +1** = has voiced support, but is unlikely to actively contribute to effort
- 0** = unknown regarding support
- 1** = not supportive, but not likely to actively oppose efforts
- 2** = has or may pose opposition, may have an interest perceived to be contradicted by byway
- 3** = has or may pose strong opposition to byway's effort

Also review the Community Effectiveness Chart that identifies various community groups. You clearly want to make sure that you maintain an ongoing connection with the power elites and key informants. Though they are not likely to join your work group, they can spread the good word about your efforts if they are well informed. Active citizens, on the other hand, would be great team members. These individuals are generally quite busy and know how to get things done.

Any group with a negative rating should be considered for contact. It is well worth your time to approach each of those groups directly and solicit ideas/concerns.

Use column 4 to indicate which groups you feel need to be contacted for further inclusion.

Step 5. Set a strategy for inclusion

Now that you know who you want to target for inclusion, you are ready to develop strategies for reaching them. Here again, look to the triangle with the various groups listed. Engagement strategies are based on where the person/group falls on the diagram.

Power elites and key informants are best accessed through personal contacts, people they already know who can keep them up-to-date on the progress of the byway. Elected officials, prominent citizens and businesspersons, and other public figures fit into these categories. The goal is to make sure that they can pass on accurate and positive information when asked about the byway.

Any group whose interests seem to coincide with your own is worth targeting. You can generally identify a contact person and request to speak to the group, put announcements in the group's newsletter, or meet with the governing body to solicit input and support.

The local and regional media will be important resources for reaching concerned public citizens. Try to develop an appropriate contact within the paper, one who can report on the byway or affect the tone/placement of news regarding the byway. Effort spent here clarifying the value of the byway will pay rich dividends.

Lastly, one of the important aspects of building a successful project is addressing potential opposition. Generally, you'll find it much more effective to approach these individuals and groups privately and early in the process. This allows them a chance to have their interests/concerns included in the process and reduces the likelihood that they will react to incomplete information and take a public stand that they can not easily retract. This is a job for your team members or allies with good listening skills and an ability to build trust and rapport. This can be a time-consuming process, but one that will prove worthwhile in the long run.

Use column 5 to identify strategies for reaching out to the various entities you want to include.

Assessment Chart for Inclusion Worksheet 1: Government Jurisdictions

1. Interest Areas	2. Current Participants	3. Level of Support	4. Is Level of Support Acceptable?	5. Comments/Strategy for Inclusion
Government Jurisdictions				

Assessment Chart for Inclusion Worksheet 3: Other Stakeholders

1. Interest Areas	2. Current Participants	3. Level of Support	4. Is Level of Support Acceptable?	5. Comments/Strategy for Inclusion
Other Stakeholders				

Byway Self-Assessment

How does your byway measure up? The following questions will help you start thinking about issues that are important to the success of your scenic byway. Each byway is different and will answer these questions differently. For example, young byway organizations (first-year) will be focused on different projects than more senior byway organizations (twenty-year veterans). There is a wide range of possibilities in each section. There is no one right way to develop and manage a scenic byway program. However, byway organizations should make sure the “basics” are in place before tackling more “advanced” initiatives. Each byway organization will find its own unique approach!

When developing proposed projects and setting priorities, it’s helpful to ask some questions as a starting point:

1. How will your byway travelers benefit from the proposed project?
2. What part of your byway’s story will the proposed project help tell or enhance?
3. How will the proposed project help strengthen your byway organization?
4. To what extent does the proposed project reflect objectives from your corridor management plan?

To use this assessment:

- Ask each member of your group to sort and rank the nine issue areas.
- Compare individual responses.
- Discuss which areas are (or should be) a priority for your byway.
- Consider how your byway can use this information to identify and implement goals, objectives and work plans.

Do you have a plan for your byway?

Basic

- Do you have a current corridor management plan?
- Do you annually review your corridor management plan?
- Do you involve all your stakeholders in byway planning efforts?
- Have you communicated your plans with local agencies, government entities, citizen groups, legislative representatives and partner organizations?
- Do you communicate regularly with your state scenic byway coordinator?

Advanced

- Have you conducted strategic planning sessions?
- Do you have an interpretive plan?
- Do you have a marketing plan?
- Do you have a financial / investment plan?
- Have you conducted a byway resource inventory?
- Do you have a scenic conservation plan?



Who visits your byway?

Basic

- Do you know where your visitors come from? Have you tabulated license plates or asked them? How many visitors are from within the state, a 2-state region, foreign countries, etc.?
- Do local business owners informally query visitors?
- Do you collect and analyze names, home addresses, zip codes from a visitor guest book?
- Do you distribute visitor surveys?
- Have you reviewed state tourism data?
- Do you track visitor information requests (received by phone, mail, e-mail)?

Advanced

- Are you ready to conduct market research?
- Do you employ target-marketing strategies?
- Have you tried to assess markets, purchase byway advertising or make decisions on who your byway attracts?
- Are you familiar with the economic impact research from the America's Byway Resource Center?

Can visitors find your byway?

Basic

- Have you traveled your byway in the role of a visitor—looking for signs, following directions and asking questions?
- Is your byway marked on your state highway map?
- Do you have a byway map (that travelers can follow)?
- Do you have a byway brochure?
- Is current byway information posted on the Web site (www.byways.org, state agency, community Web site or byway site)?
- Do you distribute information through your local chamber of commerce, state welcome center, federal agency visitor centers (National Wildlife Refuge, USDA Forest Service, etc.)?
- Do you have easy-to-follow byway signs along the corridor?

Advanced

- Do you coordinate efforts with state and regional tourism offices?
- Do you have a press kit available?
- Do you have an identifiable logo for your byway?
- Do you have gateway entrances to your byway?
- Do you market your byway regionally, nationally, internationally?
- Do you have a byway Web site?



Is your byway ready for visitors?

Basic

- Are community members aware of your scenic byway?
- Have you assessed if your byway has an adequate infrastructure (hotels, restaurants and visitor services) to handle an increased number of visitors?
- Are there adequate parking areas and turnouts along the byway?
- Are there adequate restroom facilities along the byway?
- Do visitor facilities and attractions meet accessibility standards?
- Are there any safety issues that need to be addressed along your byway?
- Have you identified the attractions along your byway?
- Experiencing the byway like a visitor, have you asked for information or directions at gas stations, restaurants or local businesses to test staff knowledge?

Advanced

- Have you conducted hospitality training for local citizens and businesses?
- Have you offered byway familiarization (FAM) tours for local citizens?
- Are there safe biking and pedestrian trails along your byway?
- Do you plan community festivals and special events to attract people to your byway?
- Can your byway accommodate buses, recreational vehicles and vehicles pulling trailers?
- Have you developed byway itineraries for visitors?
- Do you actively seek motorcoach tours?

How do visitors learn about your byway's story?

Basic

- Have you identified your byway's key stories and the places associated with them?
- Have you identified the themes that connect your byway's stories?
- Do you have an interpretive plan?
- Do you have an inventory of the interpretation that is currently available, such as brochures, wayside exhibits, interpretive trails and visitor centers?
- Do you partner with local museums, attractions and existing visitor centers so they can help tell your byway's story and integrate their opportunities into the byway's interpretive plan?
- Have you considered the wide variety of visitor needs and interests in planning interpretation (children, seniors, international travelers, visitors with disabilities, local residents, etc.)?

Advanced

- Do you utilize a range of interpretive media to reach visitors with varying interests, time availability and familiarity with your byway:
 - Staffed interpretive centers?
 - Byway interpretive publications (brochures, booklets)?
 - Roadside exhibits?
 - Videotape, audiotape, CD, living history demonstrations, step-on programs, restaurant placemats, etc.?
- Do you test the effectiveness our interpretive projects while developing them?
Do you monitor the continued effectiveness of your interpretive opportunities?
- Have you identified a visual theme for your publications and byway facilities to help visitors recognize interpretive opportunities?
- Have you created educational materials for children, local schools and teachers?
- Do you publicize byway stories through local news media?



Who will manage your byway?

Basic

- Do you have a byway organization?
- Does your organization represent a broad cross-section of byway citizens and communities?
- Do you actively recruit new members for your byway organization?
- Do you communicate frequently with your byway stakeholders?
- Do you take advantage of training opportunities from the National Scenic Byways Program (state conferences, regional training events, national conference)?
- Do you make effective use of meeting time?
- Do you recognize the contributions of byway volunteers and other stakeholders?

Advanced

- Do you have a set of bylaws for your organization?
- Do you have a succession plan? Are you grooming new leadership within your byway organization?
- Do government agencies along your byway need your organization to do their work properly or implement policy? Is your organization essential to others' success?

How will you preserve and enhance your byway's intrinsic qualities?

Basic

- Are there adequate trashcans along your byway?
- Do you take advantage of state and federal beautification programs (highway landscaping, wildflower programs, etc.)?
- Do you involve volunteers in an annual byway clean-up?
- Do you educate local citizens about the importance of preserving and enhancing visual quality along the byway?
- Have you built relationships with partner organizations interested in protecting and enhancing intrinsic qualities?
- Do you encourage voluntary measures to protect your byway's visual quality (i.e. donation of conservation easements, voluntary land protection programs)?
- Do you recognize and reward local efforts to improve appearance and visual quality (i.e. awards, news releases, etc.)?
- Have you published visitor rules of etiquette or a tourist's code of ethics for your byway?

Advanced

- Do you have a scenic conservation plan?
- Do you promote context-sensitive design along your byway?
- Are byway resources listed with the National Register for Historic Places?
- Do you employ regulatory measures to preserve and enhance the visual quality of your byway (overlay districts, sign control, design review, historic preservation ordinances)?
- Has your byway organization acquired property or development rights to permanently protect special landscapes from intrusive development?
- Have you developed design guidelines for the byway?



How will you fund your byway needs?

Basic

- Do you have a strong relationship with your byway's fiscal agent?
- Do you work with members of your byway organization and other stakeholders to identify possible funding sources, prioritize projects and grant applications?
- Do you tell people what you are working on and keep them informed of your needs?
- Do you involve members of your byway organization in preparing grant applications (i.e. recruit people to help with writing, preparing budgets, graphics, data entry, proofreading)?
- Do you conduct byway fundraisers (raffles, bake sales, auctions, etc.)?
- Have you applied for grants under the National Scenic Byways Program?
- Have you sought funding from sources beyond the National Scenic Byways grants program? Byway organizations have successfully secured funds from many other public and private funding sources.
- Have you mapped out an "investment plan" for your byway? Do you establish your major goals, prioritize them, and sketch out a year-by-year project strategy? Have you planned ahead to determine which projects can best be accomplished in year one, year two, year three, etc.?
- Have you explored funding options under the Transportation Enhancements program (or other federal programs)?

Advanced

- Do you have a merchandising program?
- Do you have a dues-based membership program?
- Does your byway have a fiscal agent to handle grant money?
- Do you have a regular process of accumulating revenue for match money, promotional purchases or "moments of opportunity"?
- Have you formed a foundation or nonprofit organization to be able to accept charitable donations?

How do you market and promote your byway?

Basic

- Do you have a marketing plan?
- Do you know who visits your byway?
- Do you have a name, logo and sign for your byway?
- Do you have a brochure or other collateral materials?
- Do you have a relationship with local, regional and state tourism offices?
- Do you have a relationship with local media?
- Do you have someone who can write a press release?
- Have you reviewed the marketing section of the www.byways.org Web site that includes information on market research, America's Byways Marketing Plan, downloadable logos, visitor profiles, traveler motivations, etc.?
- Do you have outlets to distribute information about your byway (i.e. travel information centers, visitor booths, etc.)?
- Have you provided your current byway information for the National Scenic Byways Program Web site?
- Have you utilized the services and advice of the National Scenic Byways marketing manager?

Advanced

- Have you established a marketing committee?
- Have you assessed which marketing tools are most effective for your byway (public relations, advertising, events and others)?
- Does the America's Byways logo appear on your byway brochures, newsletters, collateral materials and route signs?
- Do you collect visitor data at locations along your byway?
- Have you identified additional public and private partners to spread the word about your byway?
- Are you coordinating your marketing plan with your interpretive initiatives?
- Do you have itineraries or packages available for travelers?
- Do you have a Web presence for your byway?
- Do you use the information contained in the National Scenic Byways Marketing Tool Kit (available online at www.byways.org)?
- Are you aware of the national marketing plan and how you can take advantage of marketing opportunities?

