

CASE STUDY

*the*  
**ROAD  
BECKONS**

BEST PRACTICES FOR BYWAYS

**THE BUILT BYWAY ENVIRONMENT**

**TWIGG REST AREA AND TRAILHEAD**

*Indiana*



## TWIGG REST AREA AND TRAILHEAD

Travelers have followed this route for over 200 years. They've arrived on foot, in Conestoga wagons and by automobile. Today the *Historic National Road* is a symbol of our nation's past, present, and future boasting a culture, history, and tradition that are unparalleled in Indiana and the other five National Road states (Illinois, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia).

**L**eft unused for 25 years, the U.S. 40 Twigg Rest Area is being brought back to life as a trailhead and roadside park for the National Road Heritage Trail. Revitalization of the facility will provide travelers a new place to stop and rest along the Historic National Road as well as a chance to hop on the Trail and experience the natural beauty of the corridor at a more leisurely pace. Built along an abandoned railroad corridor that runs parallel to U.S. 40, the Trail eventually will extend from eastern Vigo County to the Wabash River providing a valuable community link and ready access to the area's unique resources.

### WINNING ELEMENTS:

#### TAPPING INTO COMPLEMENTARY

**INITIATIVES.** Located 13 miles east of the Indiana-Illinois border, the Twigg Rest Area and Trailhead is an historic roadside park that, in its original state, was used solely as a rest park for travelers along the Historic National Road in Vigo County. Originally acquired by the Indiana State Highway Commission in 1935, the 1.41-acre site was closed in 1976 along with other rest areas in the state located along non-interstate routes.

Twenty years later, during the planning process for the National Road Heritage Trail, the West Central Indiana Economic Development District (MPO) identified Twigg as an ideal trailhead for the rails-to-trails project. Together these projects presented



The National Road Heritage Trail follows an abandoned east-west railroad line (right). The Twigg site currently consists of a small paved lot, entrance to the trail, bicycle racks and an information board (opposite right).



the opportunity to create an eastern “gateway” into the City of Terre Haute and create a visitor destination worthy of National Scenic Byway and All-American Road status.

**FORGING UNIQUE PARTNERSHIPS.** After a Transportation Enhancements (TE) grant was awarded to fund the first phase of work on the Trail, the MPO worked with the City of Terre Haute and the Indiana Department of Transportation to discuss options for the Twigg site. When it became apparent that the City could not purchase the land due to title issues, the agencies entered into a Joint Use Agreement whereby the owner of the facility (INDOT) would lease the site to the City. In turn, the City agreed to assume maintenance of the site.

**MAINTAINING FLEXIBILITY.** At the outset, the plan was to restore the site to its original (1930s) state. After conducting a thorough site evaluation and needs assessment, however, it was determined that the site did not meet current federal or state

## TIMELINE

- 1992 *Terre Haute/Vigo County Trails & Greenway Committee is established*
- 1993 *City/County Greenway Master Plan completed*
- 1996 *Historic National Road designated an Indiana Scenic Byway*  
*Transportation Enhancement (TE) funding approved for phase I of The National Road Heritage Trail (Twigg to the edge of the Terre Haute central business district)*
- 1997 *Corridor Management Plan completed*  
*(for the Indiana segment of the Historic National Road)*
- 1998 *TE funding approved for phase II of the Trail*  
*(through the Indiana State University Campus to the historic Fairbanks Park and Paul Dresser Homesite on the Wabash River)*  
*Historic National Road designated a National Scenic Byway (Indiana segment)*
- 1999 *Site evaluation and needs assessment conducted by INDOT (Crawfordsville District), the City of Terre Haute, and the MPO completed*
- 2002 *Historic National Road Designated an All-American Road (6 states)*  
*Phase I of the National Road Heritage Trail completed*  
*Phase I of the Twigg Rest Area and Trailhead completed*
- 2003 *TE application submitted to extend the Twigg site half a mile and establish an historical ecological education center*
- 2004 *Anticipated completion date of phase II of the National Road Heritage Trail (through the central business district and Indiana State University campus to the Wabash River)*  
*Anticipated completion date for phase II of the Twigg Rest Area and Trailhead*

standards. To accommodate current speeds and vehicles, changes would have to be made including the creation of a deceleration lane and turning radius improvements. When TE funding for the project could not be secured, the MPO identified a state discretionary fund for maintenance projects as a viable option. When the DOT (Crawfordsville District) agreed to fund the first phase of the project it was with one caveat: construction plans would have to be completed and funds committed within 60 days. Undeterred, the MPO, the City and the DOT worked together to get the job done.



### FINDING COMMON GROUND TO ADVANCE REGIONAL OBJECTIVES.

The Twigg Rest Area continues to be a success story because its objectives are aligned with those of other regional initiatives.

- **The Indiana National Road Association Corridor Management Plan and Interpretive Master Plan.** The Twigg Rest Area and Trailhead project reinforces the “vision” for the Indiana National Road in that it offers a unique heritage tourism visitor experience not found elsewhere along the 156-mile corridor.
- **The National Road Heritage Trail.** Designed enhancements for the National Road and the Trail will serve as the foundational “backbone” for a regional greenway network that will directly link the major economic, educational, cultural, and recreational assets of Terre Haute and Vigo County.
- In keeping with Terre Haute’s **Regional Greenway Plan**, the project is viewed as an economic development/historic tourism initiative to highlight the community’s commitment to quality of life issues, promote business retention, leverage new private sector investments, and support

state tourism and “Main Street” programs.

- The project supports **The Vigo County Long-Range Transportation Plan**, which advocates the use of non-motorized transportation as a viable alternative to reduce congestion, preserve energy and improve air quality.

The Twigg Rest Area and Trailhead will be designed to support pedestrian and bicycle transportation along U.S. 40 and the 7.25-mile National Road Heritage Trail with bicycle racks, drinking water, restroom facilities, sheltered picnic tables, interpretive signage and landscaping. It is the only rest area/trailhead along the entire 156-mile length of the Indiana National Road.

Improvements to the site are guided by the Indiana National Road Interpretive Plan, which identifies learning objectives (information to know and remember), behavioral objectives (desired actions), and emotional objectives (interpretation designed to evoke strong feelings).

### BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO AN EXISTING SITE.

To date, phase I has been completed resulting in the clearing of the property, the restoration of utilities (plumbing and sewer), improved access both to and within the site to address safety and modern vehicle needs, the provision of sidewalks, parking spaces, bike racks and an information/message board. Context sensitive design elements for the Twigg site incorporate 3 major features: (1) clear site views from the roadway for byway motorists not familiar with the location, (2) the retention of a 67-year old mature woodline so that the site is “nestled” on three sides into the natural environment, and (3) the dual role of Twigg as a calm roadside

*Construction of an access lane off U.S. 40 gets underway (above). When complete, the project will include bicycle amenities, interpretation, restroom facilities, a playground area and picnic shelter. (opposite right).*

rest area and as a trailhead for “traditional” (i.e., non-motorized) transportation.

Additionally, an application for Transportation Enhancement funds has been submitted to extend the rest area another half mile to create a new trailhead to complement Twigg. Designed to be environmentally friendly, the site will employ the nationally recognized Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards to create an ecological “one of a kind” national scenic byway facility for the Historic National Road. The expanded rest area will highlight the native plants and wildflowers of the Midwest United States once found centuries ago along the Historic National Road landscape. Multiple goals of the expanded rest area and trailhead include the addition of complementary byway visitor capacity for the Historic National Road and an explicit linkage of environmental education/stewardship for the preservation of the natural byway environment for future generations.

**PARLAYING ONE SUCCESS INTO ANOTHER.**

The rich history of the National Road provided the context and impetus for funding the first phase

of the Heritage Trail in 1996. That then leveraged extension of the Trail in 1998. The success of the Trail initiative provided the impetus for special funding from INDOT (Crawfordsville District) to execute phase I of the Twigg Rest Area and Trailhead. The success of both the Trail and Rest Area projects resulted in the provision of \$100,000 by the Wabash Valley County Foundation to be applied toward Twigg or the development of a new trailhead and ecological education center adjacent to the site.

**MAKING THE CONNECTION.** The historical development and the economic geography of the region can be tied to 3 modes of transportation: river, road and rail. Revitalization of the Twigg Rest Area and the conversion of an abandoned rail corridor into the National Road Heritage Trail provided a unique opportunity to showcase 3 successive generations of transportation history and support ongoing historic preservation efforts along the National Road in Terre Haute and Vigo County. Bordered by the Historic National Road to the north, and a 150-year-old rail corridor to the south, the Twigg Rest Area and Trailhead is ideally situated to serve as a gateway





to provide both a physical and historical link to these modes. Upon completion of the Trail, the Twigg Rest Area and Trailhead will link the “Road that Built the Nation” to the Trail and the Trail to the Riverfront.

#### **TAKING THE TIME TO THANK THOSE**

**WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE.** At the dedication ceremony in September 2003, a brick from the Historic National Road was presented to the Director of the Crawfordsville District to express appreciation for his assistance in securing the initial funding for the project.

| FUNDING SHARE & SOURCES   | DOLLARS          | PERCENTAGE  |
|---|------------------|-------------|
| <b>STATE SHARE:</b>   |                  |             |
| INDOT (Crawfordsville District)—Phase I   | \$225,000        | 41.8%       |
| <b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT SHARE &amp; SOURCES:</b>  |                  |             |
| City of Terre Haute Cumulative Capital Dev. Fund (Design & Construction Inspection) | \$73,000         | 13.5%       |
| City of Terre Haute Cumulative Capital Dev. Fund (Pending NSB Phase II Grant)       | \$48,800         | 9.1%        |
| <b>FEDERAL SHARE &amp; SOURCE OR PROGRAM CATEGORY:</b>                              |                  |             |
| National Scenic Byways Grant (pending) Phase II                                     | \$192,000        | 35.6%       |
| <b>TOTAL COST</b>   | <b>\$538,800</b> | <b>100%</b> |

#### **LESSONS FROM THE ROAD: “IN THEIR OWN WORDS”**

##### *During this project we learned:*

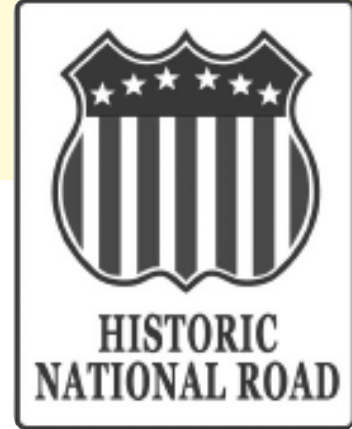
- Do not be afraid to think very big (we intend to win a national design award for this project) or to pursue the cutting edge (no one has ever done a project like this before)
- Meticulous planning and development with multiple partners produces results, but it takes considerable time and a fair amount of old-fashioned good luck
- Market the project concept at every opportunity
- Aggressive funding is absolutely critical
- Conduct a post-mortem for every major setback and adapt quickly

##### **If we were to do it again, we would:**

- Become even more aggressive in the pursuit of funding sources.

# ASSESSING YOUR EFFORTS

*This project was successful because of a number of factors. Is your byway implementing similar best practices?*



Similar signage guides travelers across the six-state Historic National Road.

ASSESSMENT  
1 2 3 4

1: Never 2: Sometimes 3: Frequently 4: Always

1.     We have seized the opportunity to tap into complementary initiatives to advance the objectives of our byway projects and initiatives.
2.     We have identified areas along our byway that would benefit from clean up, beautification, revival, restoration, or enhancement.
3.     Our byway plans incorporate opportunities for multimodal access (e.g., bike trails, walking paths, etc.)
4.     We have researched a variety of funding sources.
5.     We align ourselves with agencies and organizations that will adopt and advance our byway initiatives.
6.     When planning byway facilities, we consider visitor needs for safety, accessibility and wayfinding.
7.     We design byway facilities to complement the surrounding landscape and setting.
8.     We think ahead. We have delineated a detailed list of objectives to guide byway development (e.g., Indiana National Road Interpretive Master Plan).
9.     We honor the historical significance of our road when planning byway projects and initiatives.
10.     We find ways to thank people who have been integral to the success of our byway projects and initiatives.

## CONTACT

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## RESOURCES

Terre Haute/Vigo County Greenway Master Plan (1993)  
 Indiana National Road Corridor Management Plan (1997)  
 Terre Haute/Vigo County Long-Range Transportation Plan (2000–2025)  
 Terre Haute Parks and Recreation Department Master Plan (2000–2004)  
 Indiana National Road Interpretive Master Plan (2001)

# ROAD WORK AHEAD

1. What traveler and visitor facilities or services are needed along our byway?
2. Where are existing facilities or services located? Where do people stop and rest? Get a drink of water? Go to the bathroom? Picnic? Play? Take a walk? Ride a bike?
3. Are the facilities run down or abandoned? Are there plans to improve them?
4. Where do you think is the best place to stop and rest along your byway—whether there is a place to stop there or not? Why is it the best place? What do you do there? What else could people enjoy there?
5. Which of these facilities and locations—existing, abandoned, or your favorite place—are directly related to your byway's intrinsic qualities? How do these locations relate to information in your byway's corridor management plan or interpretive plan?
6. Identify them on a map. Are they too close together? Too spread out?
7. Which facilities should we improve first? What interpretive information is needed for each site? Should we include it in a brochure or an exhibit?
8. What funding sources can we tap to improve traveler and visitor facilities?
9. What can we learn from this case study?
10. Are there aspects of this case study that we would like to incorporate into our byway plans and initiatives?
11. What are our success stories? What physical improvements have we made along our byway?
12. What steps would we like to take to improve and enhance our *byway's built environment and visitor facilities*?
13. What would we like to know more about related to this case study?



An original section of the Historic National Road in Indiana. PHOTO: JOE JAKZEN.



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Case studies are drawn from the 2001 and 2003 Best Practices for Byways competitions.

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