

**The Vermont Byways  
Program**  
*Designating Vermont Byways:  
A Fieldguide*  
**June 1996**

**A COMPONENT OF THE  
VERMONT SCENIC BYWAYS PLANNING PROJECT  
STATEWIDE PLAN Phase II**

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*Economic Impact Analysis:*

*Tim Tyrrell and Maureen Devitt, Impact Research Associates, Inc*

*Scenic Evaluation Method:*

*Harry Dodson, Dodson Associates*

*Highway and Transportation Policy:*

*Kenneth E. Kruckemeyer*

*Ann McKinnon, Howard/Stein-Hudson*

## Acknowledgements

The Vermont Agency of Transportation wishes to thank the citizens, officials and public sector employees who participated in the development of the Vermont Byways Program. The Scenic Byways Planning Project Phase II Advisory Committee consisted of the following individuals:

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# Component Reports for the Vermont Byways Program

- Program Manual
- Designating Vermont Byways: A Fieldguide
- Scenic Evaluation Method
- An Analysis of the Economic Impacts of Scenic Byway Treatments to Vermont: A Pilot Study
- A Workbook & Guide for Valuing Vermont Byway Changes: Pilot Study Application
- Bicycle Touring in Vermont & Vermont's Scenic Byways Program
- Phase I Report
- What's Scenic?

# Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>SCOPE OF THE VERMONT BYWAYS PROGRAM.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>THE PROGRAM'S GENERAL APPROACH.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>PREPARING THE BYWAY NOMINATION.....</b>	<b>10</b>
Organization the Planning Group.....	10
Evaluating the Byway's Scenic Quality.....	10
Assessing the Byway's Intrinsic Qualities.....	11
Preparing the Nomination Package.....	11
Forms.....	11
Photographs.....	12
Maps.....	13
Additional Materials.....	13
Key Points to Keep in Mind.....	13
<b>RESOURCE ASSESSMENT FOR VERMONT BYWAYS:</b>	
<b>WHAT DOES IT MEAN.....</b>	<b>14</b>
How Detailed Should the Assessment Be?.....	14
Natural Resources.....	14
Scenic Resources.....	15
Cultural Resources.....	15
Recreational Resources.....	16
Historic Resources.....	16
<b>ASSESSING AND EVALUATING INTRINSIC QUALITIES.....</b>	<b>18</b>
Byway Planning Issues.....	18
Resource Inventory vs. Resource Assessment.....	19
Inventory Steps .....	20
Corridor Management Strategies.....	20
Conclusion.....	21
<b>NOMINATION FORMS.....</b>	<b>22</b>
Part 1 Forms- Nomination.....	23
Part 2 Forms - Corridor Management Strategy.....	34

# INTRODUCTION

The Vermont Byways Program is designed to help the state's residents and officials promote community and economic development and conserve community character based on locally-defined goals and strategies. There are two basic aspects to the Byways Program. First, it provides a flexible tool that communities can use to organize a local or regional tourism effort based on the special resources along a highway corridor. Second, it continues a long tradition of concern for conserving Vermont's scenic landscapes by allowing communities to designate and manage local scenic roads.

This *Fieldguide* is designed to assist citizens and officials who are interested in participating in the Vermont Byway Program by designating Local Scenic Byways or Vermont Byways. It contains the application forms needed to inventory byways, identify management challenges and prepare a corridor management plan.

The *Vermont Byways Program Manual*, the lead report, gives the overview of what the Vermont Byways Program is and how it can benefit communities and businesses. That document provides guidance on how to think about nominating and managing byways. Additional program information, including definitions of the "intrinsic qualities" or resources upon which byway designation is based, can also be found in the *Program Manual*.

The report, *Scenic Evaluation Method*, contains the detailed scenic evaluation process and forms to be used in rating a road's scenic quality

## SCOPE OF THE VERMONT BYWAYS PROGRAM

In 1977 the Vermont Legislature passed the Scenic Road Law, whose purpose was “to preserve through planning the scenic quality of [the state’s] rural landscape, and enable municipalities to designate town scenic highways which may be improved in accordance with standards combining aesthetic and functional criteria” (Public Act No. 58 of 1977, Section 1). This law established the Scenery Preservation Council to promote scenery preservation and to assist and advise local, regional and state governmental agencies on the designation of scenic roads; and it authorized the State Transportation Board to establish standards for maintenance and reconstruction of scenic roads. Thus, although the concept of a “scenic road” normally encompasses the character of the landscape through which the road travels, the law’s scope, in terms of scenery preservation, was limited to the highway right of way.

Nearly two decades after its enactment, the Scenic Road Law had been applied in a few communities, but revisions were needed to improve the law and help it meet its purpose of preserving Vermont’s scenic rural landscapes. The State decided to use the National Scenic Byways Program, established by Congress in 1991, as a framework within which to restructure the Vermont program. Unlike the Scenic Road Law, the national program was designed to recognize resources along a highway corridor, to conserve those resources, and to promote them for tourism development. The Scenic Byways Program is thus a unique melding of resource conservation with transportation and economic development planning. It offers an alternative to the common conflicts between development and preservation; more importantly, it recognizes that careful management of natural and cultural resources can underpin the economic vitality of a state, region or community. This is especially true for a state like Vermont, where so much of the economy is linked to the image and reality of scenic character, traditional values and a strong environmental ethic.

The Vermont Byways Program provides a formal way for Vermont communities to identify, protect and promote roads that have special qualities. These qualities might be primarily scenic, as the Scenic Road Law recognized; or they might relate to any of five other “intrinsic qualities” defined by the National Scenic Byways Program— natural, cultural, recreational, historic or archeologic. Under the new state program, a “Vermont Byway” is a road that has been designated because of one or more of these special qualities, and for which a management plan has been developed at the local level.

Unlike the previous law, the Vermont Byways Program does not impose uniform requirements on communities as to how designated roads may be improved or maintained, nor is its scope restricted to the right of way. Rather, the Byways Program takes a flexible approach which only requires that the local community define what it is that is special about a byway, and then adopt a strategy for managing the byway in a way that will protect the byway’s critical resources and promote them for tourism. This strategy may be restricted to the right of way, or may extend to encompass public or

private land along the corridor. This does not mean that land adjoining a Vermont Byway will automatically be subject to new regulations. Locally-devised corridor management plans may include strategies for marketing, interpretation and enhancement of resources. Adopting regulations is an optional path that will be decided at the local level based on the types of problems faced and the community’s position on regulation. In some cases the management plan may limit itself to the right of way (as under the previous Scenic Road Law), particularly when adjoining land is primarily in public ownership, such as in sections of the Green Mountain National Forest. In all cases, the strategies adopted in the byway management plan will originate at the local level, and thus reflect a community consensus rather than a mandate.

Some communities may want to consider applying for designation under the National Scenic Byways or All-American Roads programs. These programs give special designation and promotion to roads that offer resources exceptional to the entire country. National Scenic Byways must accommodate normal auto transportation. All-American Roads must accommodate tour bus and recreational vehicle traffic as well as provide substantial visitor services within the corridor. Both National Scenic Byways and All-American Roads will be promoted internationally by national tourism organizations.

Of course, not every community in the state will necessarily want to promote its scenic roads for tourism. For these communities, the Byways Program retains a distinct category of “Local Scenic Byways,” for which only the road’s scenic quality need be addressed (rather than the six intrinsic qualities for full designation as a “Vermont Byway”). These roads will not be eligible for state or federal funding earmarked for scenic byways, but they will be recognized as having a special role in the community and may be protected through regulations adopted as a local option.

In summary, the Vermont Byways Program is flexible in how local communities may participate: the “Local Scenic Byway” option is available for communities that are interested primarily in scenery preservation, while the more comprehensive “Vermont Byway” designation may be pursued where communities are interested in promoting visitation and expanding the tourism economy. Finally, the National Scenic Byways and All-American Roads program offer the most intensive level of tourism promotion, but also require the ability to handle the most intensive levels of traffic and visitation.

<b>Three Levels of Participation</b>	
<b>Levels</b>	<b>Minimum Requirements</b>
Local Scenic Byways	Complete scenic evaluation forms
Vermont Byways	Complete full application- Part I of this Fieldguide
National Scenic Byways or All-American Roads	Become a Vermont Byway and then complete Part II of this Guide

## THE PROGRAM'S GENERAL APPROACH

The procedure for evaluating and nominating Vermont Byways is designed to be comprehensive in terms of the types of information that the nominating group assembles about its byway, but simple enough to be accessible to a group of volunteers. The process ensures that all of a byway's "intrinsic qualities" or resources—natural, scenic, recreational, cultural, historic and archaeologic—are evaluated, along with the impact of designation on the roadway's primary transportation function, the economic development of the region through which it travels, and the working landscape.

In order to provide an easy, step-by-step approach to apply for byway designation, the program uses a series of simple forms.

1. The designation of a Local Scenic Byway only requires completion of the Scenic Evaluation forms included in the document *Scenic Evaluation Method* (Forms A and B, pg. 9-12). That is, the resource assessment forms presented in this *Fieldguide* are not required for the local designation.
2. Participation in the state level Vermont Byways Program requires the completion of the Part 1 forms in this document—Vermont Byways Nomination Forms (pg. 17-40 of this document). For communities interested in applying for federal funds to make improvements or investments along the byway, it is also recommended that the Part 2 forms on the corridor management strategy be completed. By completing both Part 1 and Part 2 of the forms, the local byway nominating group will provide both the justification for designating the road as a Vermont Byway and the outline of a plan for managing the resources along the corridor. This will make funding applications more competitive.
3. Finally, for those communities that wish to apply for National Scenic Byway or All-American Road status, both sets of forms must be completed: Part 1 on Inventory and Assessment and Part 2 on Corridor Management Strategies.

# PREPARING THE BYWAY NOMINATION

## ORGANIZING A BYWAY PLANNING GROUP

Before beginning the process of preparing a nomination for a Local Scenic Byway or a Vermont Byway, a group of interested residents, businesspersons and local officials should be established to coordinate the planning and nominating effort. There are no rules as to the size or composition of this group, but it should have enough members to share the work involved in inventorying and evaluating resources along the proposed byway. The appropriate size for the group will obviously depend on the length and complexity of the highway corridor being considered.

The nominating group should be thought of as the core constituency that will work to conserve and promote the byway once it has been designated. To be most effective, therefore, the group should include a cross-section of the people and organizations that will be affected by a byway designation.

It may be useful to think of the group as representing two types of people:

- (1) those who use and will use the road, and (2) those who have property along the road and will participate in or be affected by the byway programs. Depending on the character of the roadway, the users portion should include or at least consult bicyclists, walkers, farmers, truckers, bus companies and any other groups who use or will use the road. The second portion of the committee (property owners and interested groups) should include chamber of commerce members, farmers, environmentalists, landowners, builders, town officials, public land managers, and lodging and restaurant operators. Reach out to anyone else who can contribute to a high quality nomination, anyone potentially affected by the nomination *and* anyone who will help in managing the promotion or conservation of the byway when it is designated.

Once the local byway group has been established, its members should look over *The Vermont Byways Program Manual* and this *Fieldguide*, and think about the roadway's resources in terms of the concepts presented in these documents. In particular, think about the qualities and experiences that the roadway offers to visitors and travelers, and how existing resources might be built upon to make these experiences even more attractive.

## EVALUATING THE BYWAY'S SCENIC QUALITY

The first step in preparing a nomination for a Local Scenic Byway or a Vermont Byway should be to complete the scenic evaluation process that is described in the report, *Scenic Evaluation Method*. This step will define the road segments that are to be analyzed and will establish the basic eligibility of the road for inclusion in the Byways Program. If the road is proposed as a Local Scenic Byway, this is all the analysis that is needed—the byway planning group may proceed to the final steps of the nomination process, i.e., holding a public hearing and obtaining action by the local governing body.

## ASSESSING THE BYWAY'S INTRINSIC QUALITIES

For designation of a statewide Vermont Byway, the nomination package must be more comprehensive than for a Local Scenic Byway. The Vermont Byway nomination must identify and evaluate resources along the highway corridor which correspond to the six intrinsic resources that the Byways Program is designed to highlight—natural, scenic, cultural, recreational, historic and archeological—as well as the potential impacts of Byway designation on the corridor's transportation function, economic development and working landscape. The Part 1 Forms contained in this *Fieldguide* (pg. 17-40) are designed to help you collect and organize this information and are the core of the nomination package. Completion of the Part 1 forms is the only written requirement for achieving a Vermont Byways designation.

Drive the road in both directions, and complete all the information needed on each of the forms. Unlike the scenic evaluation forms used in the first step, the intrinsic quality assessment forms relate to the entire road. Relevant information from these forms should be keyed to the byway maps, and these maps should be submitted with the nomination.

The group should discuss each form and the person responsible for that topic should take down any ideas or observations. Take photos of all relevant sites and views.

Note: The report, *Scenic Evaluation Method*, presents more detailed instructions for completing the scenic evaluation forms.

## PREPARING THE NOMINATION PACKAGE

A completed Vermont Byways nomination package will consist of a set of Part 1 forms (included in this *Fieldguide*), photographs of resources and features identified in these forms, and maps illustrating the resources along the byway. Byway groups wishing either to apply for federal funds or to apply for National Scenic Byway status should complete Part 2 of the forms—Corridor Management Strategy (pg. 41-52).

Other materials may be submitted if available, and are encouraged if they would provide a more complete understanding of the rationale for designating the proposed byway or the strategies proposed for conserving and promoting the byway's resources.

### A. FORMS

The Vermont Byways nomination consists of two parts: (1) a cover sheet and inventory/assessment of the proposed Byway's resources representing the "intrinsic qualities" described earlier in this *Fieldguide*; and (2) a corridor management strategy that ties together the management issues and opportunities represented by the proposed Byway's resources. These sections of the nomination are completed on a series of forms included at the end of this *Fieldguide*, as follows:

#### **Part 1- Nomination Forms (pg. 17-40)**

- a. Vermont Byway Nomination cover sheet
- b. Natural Resources Inventory

- c. Scenic Resource Inventory
- d. Cultural Resources Inventory
- e. Recreational Resource Inventory
- f. Historic & Archeological Resources Inventory
- g. Transportation Impact Assessment
- h. Economic Development Impact Assessment
- i. Working Landscape Impact Assessment
- j. Intergovernmental Assessment
- k. Nomination Summary

**2. Part 2-Corridor Management Strategy Forms (pg 4I-52)**

- a. Resource Significance Assessments
- b. Byway Interpretation Program
- c. Byway Problem Statements
- d. Byway Management Objectives
- e. Strategy Development
- f. Action Schedule

3. Indications of broad support from the private property owners who would be affected by the designation.

4. A copy of the hearing notice that was published in a local paper, and minutes from the hearing, including a list of those present.

**B. PHOTOGRAPHS**

Backup pages should be provided for each resource form with photographs documenting the important resources and features.

## C. MAPS

The nomination package must also include maps of the proposed byway, showing the locations of important resources, sites and views. A United States Geological Survey topographic map at an appropriate scale makes a good base map. These maps may be photocopied in sections for recording information on features, views and important sites. In most cases, the 1:25,000 quadrangle sheets will provide a good level of detail, although more detailed local maps may sometimes be desirable to show specific resources in villages.

Depending on the length of the proposed byway and the amount of information needed, the information may be shown on one or more maps. If more than one map is used, you may organize the information by segment (showing various types of resources on one map) or by resource category (with one map for each segment). The important thing is to come up with a clear and useful format that will indicate the location of key resources and summarize ideas into a quickly understandable form for the byway planning group, area residents, and state officials.

## D. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

In addition to the application forms, maps and photographs, other materials that would strengthen the nomination or provide additional information are encouraged. These could include photocopies of (or citations to) historic, scientific, journalistic, literary or other documents referring to the significance of resources along the proposed byway.

## E. KEY POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

As you prepare the byway nomination, keep the following guidelines in mind:

1. Complete all sections of the nomination forms that are relevant, but do not be concerned with every little detail of the nomination. The information requested is all important if it applies to your roadway, but a nomination will not be penalized if every line is not filled in.
2. The level of detail that you provide should be driven by the following guidelines:
  - In noting the location of a resource on a map, provide enough information so that someone traveling along the byway could use the map to find that feature.
  - Provide a level of detail that you would typically see if you were reading a general tour guidebook of the area.
  - Provide enough information so that in five years someone else can review the nomination and the roadway and determine whether significant improvement or damage occurred along the road.
3. Have fun and be creative when completing the nomination. Give the Byway Council a sense of the enthusiasm you have for this road and its potential for the future.

# RESOURCE ASSESSMENT FOR VERMONT BYWAYS: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

In order for a road to be designated as a Vermont Byway, the local nominating group must prepare an inventory and evaluation for each of the six “intrinsic qualities”—natural, scenic, recreational, cultural, historic and archeologic. These assessments should identify significant resources along the proposed Vermont Byway in each category, examine the extent to which these resources represent a special opportunity for promoting tourist visitation in the State, and suggest what needs to be done to promote these resources effectively and to protect them from harm.

## **How Detailed Should the Assessment Be?**

It is important to understand the purpose and intent of these resource assessments. The idea is to catalogue those resources that can be easily identified by the local byway planning group. These resources may already be recognized at the regional or state level, or they may as yet only be local “secrets”. They may or may not have been discussed in technical reports, travel articles or guidebooks. What is important, from the perspective of the Byways Program, is that they can be linked to each other and to the road corridor to provide an interesting, educational or entertaining travel experience for potential tourists.

Thus, the resource assessments required for the byway nomination should be understood as frameworks for tying together a variety of elements along a proposed byway in order to tell a story. They are *not* meant to represent original research into the potential presence or absence of resources. These assessments thus contrast with the types of investigations that are often required to identify whether (for example) a road construction project has a potential for adversely impacting historical and archeological resources. Rather than focusing on uncovering hitherto undiscovered resources, the Byways Program is designed to help communities to manage their identified resources as part of a larger tourism promotion strategy.

What this all means is that although the byway nomination addresses issues of aesthetics, history, culture, archeology, and geology (among others), the local byway planning group should not need the services of experts in any of these fields. The byway nomination should arise from a sense at the local level that the corridor contains resources that are special and worthy of promotion to visitors.

## **Natural Resource Assessment Guidelines**

Vermont’s most valuable physical asset is its natural resource base. That base has supported farming, forestry, and outdoor recreation, and provides the backdrop for the state’s exceptional scenery. These natural resources also give the state its special character and maintain Vermont’s high quality of life.

Byways focusing on natural qualities should emphasize activities that allow one to learn about or directly experience the natural environment. This type of byway is distinguished by a theme of “appreciating and understanding” nature and the interactions of people with nature. The types of activities that might be inventoried and included under this theme include access to beautiful

sites (e.g., mountaintops, waterfalls, or old stand forests), interpretation of significant type of wildlife (e.g., watchable wildlife sites), interpretation of natural systems (e.g., how a wetland works), and how humans work with and impact nature (e.g., proper forest management techniques, the interaction of farming with ecosystems, or how development should be managed to minimize environmental impacts).

The “natural” intrinsic quality of the Byways Program focuses specifically on those aspects of the visual environment that are relatively undisturbed by human activity. Examples might include wilderness areas in the Green Mountain National Forest; geological formations such as Quechee Gorge; Lake Champlain and other water bodies; and broad vistas of forested mountains.

### **Scenic Resource Assessment Guidelines**

Scenic quality refers to aspects of the environment that offer pleasing and memorable visual experiences. Scenic resources may be entirely the result of natural forces, or they may arise from human activities—for example, both the rural village and the family farm are classically Vermont scenic elements that were created by people.

Scenic resources are linked to all the other categories of resources recognized in the Byways Program. A landscape’s scenic quality may depend on *natural* features such as landforms, water bodies and vegetation; *historic* buildings, bridges, cemeteries and villages; or *recreational* resources that are dependent on natural and cultural features, such as rivers, lakes and trails. Vermont has a wide variety of vistas and views that define the State’s rural and small-scale character.

Most parts of Vermont are “scenic”, and so the question of significance is an important one in deciding whether a particular road should be designated as a Vermont Byway on the basis of its scenic quality. The Scenic Quality Evaluation forms provide a means to organize our essentially subjective responses to scenery, and to rate it according to whether it is special or unique within the context of Vermont and the Northeast.

### **Cultural Resource Assessment Guidelines**

Cultural activities eligible for inventorying and inclusion in the corridor theme should primarily be those that reflect those aspects of Vermont’s historic and current culture that are significant within the Northeast or the nation. Typical cultural features that might be promoted in Vermont include aspects of immigrant cultures; distinctive food, speech or music from different parts of the state or that exemplify New England; arts and crafts that express Vermont; and historic, current or futuristic buildings or activities that interpret Vermont’s past, present or future. A special festival, a distinctive manufacturer of goods, an unusual farm or village all might be significant cultural resources. Stores or physical features that can be found anywhere or that express a generic American culture should not be considered as significant. The distinguishing

aspect between the Historic theme and the Cultural theme is that the latter involves the active expression and “doing” of something rather than a static site.

Significance will be demonstrated by providing evidence that the resource has been recognized by a professional association, has been studied and found significant, has been extensively written about, represents an under-appreciated resource which the nominating group effectively argues is significant, or by demonstrating that new significance is created by the linking of a corridor's resources into an engaging theme or story.

### **Recreational Resource Assessment Guidelines**

Outdoor recreation should be the primary focus of a recreational byway. Indoor recreation resources are required to involve active sports (i.e., nightclubs, bars, video arcades, etc. are not allowed in the inventory). Typical resources to be inventoried include but are not limited to: camping, baseball, hockey, soccer, other team sports, hunting, fishing, hang gliding, mountain biking, road bicycling, rock climbing, water skiing, canoeing, sailing, beach activities, backpacking, running, rollerblading, skiing, snowmobiling, birding and outdoor photography. Any form of outdoor activity can be included.

This resource category is not intended to be a forum for intensively developed private recreation areas to use the Byways Program as free marketing. There must be qualities to the area that are intrinsically Vermont in nature and which offer an exceptional travel experience for the user. Perhaps more than the other categories, the integration of one or more of the other resource qualities will be important for a successful application.

### **Historic Resource Assessment Guidelines**

Vermont is rich in history and its stories tie closely to the history of the nation in general. This provides fertile ground for communities to coordinate their byways using a consistent or an evolving historical theme. For instance, a byway might interpret the historical development of farming or of industry or of a particular social or political movement. The progression of battles often followed trails and roadways that continue to exist today.

Historical and archeological resources include districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects. The basic measure for inclusion will be listing or eligibility for listing on the state or national registers of historic places. The role of the resources in history or archeology can span the range of human activity. (Note: natural history should be included in the Natural Resources Quality Assessment Form.) Traveling the road should be a part of the corridor's experience. Ideally, the road or an adjacent transportation system should be part of the story.

It would not be appropriate to expect an entire roadway to achieve byway designation based on just one site along the byway having historic significance. Rather, the historic theme should provide a link among resources at various points along the byway, and should provide a means of interpreting these resources to the visitor.

In many cases, the historic quality of a byway will be closely linked to its scenic, cultural or recreational qualities. For example, Vermont's traditional architecture and settlement patterns reflect the State's historical development, but are also expressions of its rural culture and lifestyle as well as being key attractions for visitors. Less obvious example of multiple values are

provided by scenic roads through narrow valleys and mountain gaps: visitors appreciate the beauty of these byways, but may not grasp as readily their historic importance as transportation routes and vital links among Vermont's small communities. Byway planning should recognize these multiple values and incorporate them into appropriate management strategies that accommodate growth and positive change while protecting historic resources from detrimental changes.

# ASSESSING AND EVALUATING INTRINSIC QUALITIES

In order for a road to qualify as a Vermont Byway, it must exhibit exceptional quality in at least one of six areas defined by the national program: natural, scenic, cultural, recreational, historical and archeological. (For the purposes of the Vermont program, historic and archeological were combined into one resource category:

historic.) These “intrinsic qualities” refer to resources found along the roadway corridor that provide special experiences to visitors. As part of the preparation of a Byway nomination, these resources must be inventoried and evaluated for their significance to the state, region or nation. For communities seeking federal funds or national designation status, the Corridor Management Strategy prepared for the Byway will then assess opportunities for promoting the resources and threats to the integrity of the resources, and will set forth a plan of actions for promoting and protecting the byway and its resources.

This *Fieldguide* outlines a process for inventorying and assessing byway resources. Organized around a set of simple forms, the process consists of the steps that a nominating group must go through in order to identify the various resources within its byway corridor and to think about the ways in which those resources might be improved, promoted or protected. This step by step process will help nominating groups be specific about a number of questions:

- Where are the resources located?
- How might the resources be promoted?
- Where might public investments be necessary?
- How will private property rights be protected?
- In what ways should very sensitive resources be protected from increased tourist visitation?

A complete nomination must address all of these questions.

## **Byway Planning Issues**

The following issues shape all the resource inventory and management assessment methods and are included in the specific questions posed in each step of the resource inventory and assessment process.

1. **Significance:** Underlying all the assessment methods is the concept of looking for and managing resources and corridors that are significant at the statewide, New England or national levels.
2. **Seasonality:** Byway resources ought to be available to the visitor for much of the year.

3. **Service Population:** Byway resources should address the needs of as many user groups and segments of the population as possible. In other words, Vermont Byways should not be designed with a narrow target market in mind. People of all ages and incomes should be able to enjoy the resources within a byway.
4. **Connectivity, Length and Involvement Time:** In order to encourage economic impacts, visitors need to spend enough time within the villages and business areas near the byway to purchase goods and services. Short byways that require little time from the visitor will not encourage spending on food or lodging or experiences. Byways that do not connect places and link together resources will also not maximize the time spent by visitors in the corridors. All byways should be of a sufficient length, they should connect sufficient resources and they should involve the visitor in a manner that generates economic impacts. As a general, but not exclusive rule, byways should be able to engage the visitor for at least one half day.
5. **Tell a Story:** Aside from a classically “scenic” byway, all other forms of byways should tell a story by weaving together the resources into an engaging experience for the visitor. Ideally, more than one type of resource should be involved. Loose affiliations of resources that are not deliberately tied together programmatically will receive low scores and may not be eligible.
6. **Working Landscape, Transportation and Economic Impacts:** Separate assessment questions are posed to each applicant to clarify how byway designation may or may not affect each of these issues.
7. **Multiple Themes:** While the resource evaluation and program distinguish the via “intrinsic qualities”, all byways should be encouraged to weave together all the qualities in order to offer the most interesting and appealing byway.

### **Resource Inventory and Assessment vs. Corridor Management Strategies**

The nomination process is divided into two sections:(1) inventory and assessment, and (2) corridor management strategies.

The inventory and assessment phase will identify the resources, locate them on a map, and define their basic characteristics. This part involves answering a series of questions on what resources are present and what characteristics each resource offers. In addition, there are questions on what types of impacts the byway is likely to have on towns, property owners, businesses and the environment.

In all cases, the forms are easy to complete. The questions are intended to provoke careful thought and deliberation, but not to require time consuming research or writing. A completed designation application should be a concise and focused document.

## Inventory Steps

The process of inventorying the non-scenic resources (i.e., natural, cultural, historic/archeological and recreational) can often be accomplished around a table with a map and a group of people familiar with the byway. Site visits might be necessary to clarify whether and what type of improvements might be necessary or whether the sites can really handle increased visitation. The basic inventory steps are as follows:

1. Go through each resource inventory form and identify the resources or resource areas on the map. Use separate colors or symbols to distinguish each type of resource. Put all of the resources on one map (if possible) so that the connections between the resources are easy to see.
2. Answer the questions concerning private property impacts and participation, current status of the resource, fragility of the resource and potential investments necessary for a high quality visitor experience.
3. Complete the forms on transportation, working landscape, economic and intergovernmental issues.
4. Complete the nomination summary form.

## Corridor Management Strategies

The second part of the nomination is to consider the significance of the resources and whether and how the corridor will need to be managed to maintain its Vermont Byway status. Note that the rating or scoring process used to determine significance is not used to deny byway participation to any road, but rather to identify the most significant resources and byways in the state so that those byways may apply to be national scenic byways. To participate in the national program, there must be a defensible argument made for a byway's regional significance.

The corridor management strategy section pertains to how to get the most from the Byways program without damaging the resources that make the road significant in the first place. Roads that deteriorate over time, so that the quality of resources declines and is no longer significant and special, will lose their Vermont Byways designation. The first step laid out in the resource management strategy forms is to think about each resource: How might the resources change or be impacted by designation? How might the natural course of time affect change on the byway? Is it sensitive to change? In what ways is it sensitive? Will the resource be able to handle more visitors? The resource forms ask a series of questions for each resource to help the nominating group identify the critical problems.

Then, a form asks you to consider how the resources will be interpreted. What story can be told about the byway? What theme can engage visitors and make their experience

along the byway memorable? The final set of forms ask the nominating group to identify the central problems and opportunities facing the corridor and to la out an action strategy.

## Conclusion

With the completion of these simple forms, the nominating group will have identified the key resources in the corridor, considered how those resources might need to be managed in the future to ensure the long term viability of the byway, and finally prepared an action strategy for what will need to be done to make the byway a success.

**VERMONT BYWAYS PROGRAM**

**PART 1 - NOMINATION FORMS**

# VERMONT BYWAY NOMINATION

## Submission Date:

1. Road Number: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Road Name <if applicable>: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Use the common local name for the road.)
3. Nominating Group and Contact

4. Governmental Jurisdiction(s) Applicable to the Road:

Town(s):

Region(s):

Federal:

Other:

## 5. Local Government Endorsements

Indicate the dates of local public hearing(s) and action by local governing body(ies) in support of this nomination. Supply copies of minutes, resolutions, or other documentation of endorsement action.

## 6. Private Endorsements

Attach the signed endorsements of any private property owners who will be allowing byway visitors access to their property.

# Natural Resources Inventory and Assessment Form

1. List and briefly describe the natural resources located on public land within the byway corridor and identify the locations of these properties on the resource inventory map. *(Potential sources of information: local comprehensive plans, state forests and park maps, statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan, regional planning commissions, state agency of natural resources and non—government environmental and conservation groups)*
2. List and briefly describe the natural resources located on private land for which owners have expressed their willingness to allow the public to physically access the resource.
3. Provide a general description of the status of the public and private resources. Do people visit the sites today? If visitor levels are easily determined, please provide them. Is the resource healthy? Is it overused?
4. Are these resources physically accessible and of interest to a variety of different users? (Consider people of different ages and different levels of physical mobility.) Describe any factors that limit access or interest to the resource.
5. Are these resources at all fragile or sensitive to use or visitation? If so, in what ways?
6. What types of physical investments may be needed to ensure a high quality experience for the visitor and/or to ensure that the environmental integrity of the site is protected? (Examples: signs, parking areas, bathrooms or trails)
7. Are there any public or private promotion or resource management plans in place for these resources? Are there any organizations that should be included in the byway program?

# Scenic Resources Inventory and Assessment Form

NOTE: This form should reference and summarize the information collected and developed in the *Scenic Evaluation Methodology*. The answers to the following questions should be general in nature and make reference to the other more detailed work performed in the *Scenic Evaluation*. When submitting this section, attach the completed scenic evaluation forms.

- 1 List and briefly describe the distinguishing scenic characteristics of the byway.
2. What types of physical investments may be needed to ensure a high quality experience for the visitor? (Examples: signs, pulloff areas, or parking areas)

## Cultural Resources Inventory and Assessment Form

- 1 List and briefly describe the cultural resources within the byway corridor and identify their location on the resource inventory map. (*Potential information sources: historical societies, civic and cultural organizations~ chambers of commerce*)
2. Do any of these cultural resources or activities take place on private property? If so, have the owners of the property agreed to participate in the byways program?
3. Is there a unifying theme that links together the corridor's cultural resources? Briefly describe that theme.
4. Provide a general description of the status of the cultural resources. Do people visit the sites today (if visitor levels are easily determined, please provide them)? Is the resource healthy? Is it overused? Can it handle any visitation? Can it handle increased visitation?
5. Are these resources physically accessible and of interest to a variety of different users? (Consider people of different ages and different levels of physical mobility.) Describe any factors that limit access or interest to the resource.
6. What types of physical investments may be needed to ensure a high quality experience for the visitor and/or to ensure that the integrity of the resource is protected? (Examples: signs, parking areas, bathrooms or trails)
7. Are there any public or private promotion or resource management plans in place for these resources? Are there any organizations that should be included in the byway program?

# Recreational Resources Inventory and Assessment Form

1. List and briefly describe the recreational resources and activities within the byway corridor that are located on public land and identify their location on the resource inventory map. (*Potential information sources: chambers of commerce, town recreation departments, state natural resource agencies, private recreation associations or recreation businesses*)
2. List and briefly describe the recreation resources and activities located on private land for which owners have expressed their willingness to be included in the byway program.
3. Provide a general description of the status of the public and private resources. Do people visit the sites today (if visitor levels are easily determined, please provide them)? Is the resource healthy? Is it overused?
4. Are these resources physically accessible and of interest to a variety of different users? (Consider people of different ages and different levels of physical mobility.) Describe any factors that limit access or interest to the resource.
5. Are these resources at all fragile or sensitive to use or visitation? If so, in what ways?
6. What types of physical investments may be needed to ensure a high quality experience for the visitor and/or to ensure that the environmental integrity of the site is protected? (Examples: signs, parking areas, bathrooms or trails)
7. Are there any public or private promotion or resource management plans in place for these resources? Are there any organizations that should be included in the byway program?

## Historic & Archeological Resources Inventory Form

1. List the historic and archeological resources within the byway corridor and identify their location on the *resource inventory map*. (*Potential inform at/on sources: state preservation office, local historical societies, local h/story experts, town records, town histories*)
2. List and briefly describe the historic resources located on private land for which owners have expressed their willingness to allow the public to physically access the resource. Are there other historic resources located on private land where physical access will not be allowed?
3. Provide a general description of the status of the public and private resources. Do people visit the sites today (if visitor levels are easily determined, please provide them)? Is the resource healthy? Is it overused?
4. Are these resources at all fragile or sensitive to use or visitation? If so, in what ways?
5. Are these resources physically accessible and of interest to a variety of different users? (Consider people of different ages and different levels of physical mobility.) Describe any factors that limit access or interest to the resource.
6. What types of physical investments may be needed to ensure a high quality experience for the visitor and/or to ensure that the integrity of the site is protected? (Examples: signs, parking areas, bathrooms or trails)
7. Are there any public or private promotion or resource management plans in place for these resources? Are there any organizations that should be included in the byway program?

# Transportation Impact Assessment

This form is intended to encourage applicants to consider how their byway may impact transportation users and the transportation system. It is of critical importance that all current and potential types of users of the road be included and/or consulted during the byway nomination process. (*Potential information sources: state agency of transportation, regional planning commissions, town highway departments~ bicycling clubs, walking or hiking clubs, recreational vehicle clubs, farmers, truckers and tour bus companies or associations*)

1. Generally describe the type(s) of surface on the roadway.
2. What class is the road?
3. Does the byway safely accommodate two-wheel-drive automobiles with standard clearances?
4. Is there pedestrian activity along this road today? Would you like to encourage more or less of this activity? What improvements do you think might be useful to make the byway address the needs of walkers?
5. Is there bicycle activity along this road today? Would you like to encourage more or less of this activity? What improvements do you think might be useful to make the byway address the needs of cyclists?
6. Do tour buses regularly travel this road today? Do you wish to encourage more or less of this type of activity? Are there potentials for safety conflicts between buses and any other users of the road? Are there locations along the byway where bus tour groups can receive services?
7. Are there any concerns with how byway designation may impact other users of the road? What are those concerns, if any?
8. Are sign improvements needed? Do travelers frequently get lost or need to ask directions for certain destinations? In general, what types of signing improvements would be useful?
9. Could road widening, different guardrails or other treatments benefit or damage the scenic, cultural or natural features of the corridor?
10. Indicate on the map any location-specific problems or opportunities identified above.

## Economic Development Impact Assessment

While not all communities participating in the Vermont Byways Program will wish to increase tourism, all nominations should consider how the byway might impact existing economic activity. The following questions address both sides of this issue.

1. Describe in general terms the economic role that tourism plays along the byway. Describe types of businesses and seasonality. Include consideration of sites and motorized activities, as well as non-motorized activities.
2. What types of non-tourism economic activity are important along this byway?
3. Are there opportunities for additional economic development relating to the promotion of the byway for tourism?
4. Could a byway positively impact existing economic enterprises along the corridor?
5. Could a byway negatively impact existing economic enterprises along the corridor?
6. What additional services would help to increase visitation to the byway, extend the amount of time that visitors spend along the byway, and/or increase the amount of money that visitors contribute to the local economy?
7. Could additional economic activity—more tourists and/or more businesses— impact positively or negatively the scenic quality of the byway or the specific intrinsic qualities upon which the nomination is based?

## Working Landscape Impact Assessment

1. Describe the farming, forestry, mining and other working landscape activities along the byway.
2. Does the byway in its current condition adequately accommodate the transportation needs of the existing working landscape activities?
3. Are there existing conflicts between tourist traffic and traffic relating to the working landscape?
4. Will additional visitor traffic create pressures on farms, forestry operations, or other working landscape activities?
5. Does the byway offer opportunities for interpreting the working landscape to visitors?
6. Does the byway offer opportunities to link visitors to farming activities along the byway, and thereby help support local industry? For example—farm tours, farm products sales, farm stays, etc.
7. In order to understand the likely level of impact on the working landscape, the documentation included in the nomination package should identify the general locations of existing farms, quarries, and active logging operations.

## Intergovernmental Assessment

1. Will this byway pass through more than one town?
2. Have all towns been involved in the process?
3. Are all the towns in support of the byway nomination? If not, describe why all towns are not participating.
4. Describe if and how any of the resource management actions may have unequal impacts on some towns over others.
5. Have relevant regional and state agencies been involved from the beginning? Describe how.
6. If relevant, were other states or provinces involved in the process? Are there impacts or issues from this byway that will be important to those other governments?
7. Were there any issues of concern expressed by regional and/or state agencies relative to designating this byway?

## Nomination Summary Form

1. Describe, in general terms, what makes this road so exceptional that it should be designated as a scenic byway.
2. What qualities of this roadway do you think will be most appealing to travelers? What will draw people to drive this road?
3. What communities and what types of businesses do you believe will benefit from a scenic byway designation?
4. Other than the state published advertising and promotional materials that would accompany a scenic byway designation, in what ways do you envision local organizations promoting the road to attract more tourists?
5. When you look into the future, what could occur that would make the scenic quality of this road less exceptional (more buildings, types of land uses, changes in vegetation, etc)?
6. What could make the cultural resources of the road less exceptional?
7. What could make the natural resources of the road less exceptional?
8. When you consider the threats to the road's natural, scenic, cultural, recreational and historic/archeological resources, what steps (if any) do you think should be taken to protect those resources?

## **PART 2- CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

## RESOURCE SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

In order to qualify for National Scenic Byway or All-American Roads status, a byway must meet a higher set of standards than for a Vermont Byway. National status requires a demonstration that the resource is of significance at the regional and/or national level. At the highest level, All-American Roads must offer the traveler an experience that reflects the best of America. The following questions are intended to make applicants consider the significance of their resources and to provide evidence of significance in order to meet federal requirements.

1. Describe the significance of the resources within the corridor. Are they significant nationally, within New England or within the state? If available, provide evidence of significance through awards, published research on the resources, listings by professional associations or other means.
2. List the most prominent resources within the corridor (i.e., the ones that should be promoted to a broad audience) and score them using a 3-point scoring system for significance. (+3 = Unique with Vermont, New England or the Northeast; +2 = Outstanding, superior to most other areas of the state of Vermont; +1 = Positive - even beautiful - but not unlike many other Vermont landscapes or roadways.)

## Byway Interpretive Program

1. Describe how all the resources might be woven together into a theme or story for the byway.
2. Is this story ready to be told today? If it were advertised next year, would tourists find a byway that feels organized and coherent? If not, what needs to be done to get the byway ready for visitors?
3. Are there public investments that will be needed?
4. List the key organizations that will be involved in pulling together the byway's interpretive theme. Have they been involved in the development of this nomination? If not, why not? If not, do they have an interest in participating in the future?
5. List the private property owners that are participating in this program. Describe how their activities will fit with other byway interpretive efforts.
6. Describe the seasonality of the various resources. Will the traveler always find something to do during most parts of the year? Give a general list of "things to do" by month within the corridor.

## Byway Problem Statements

Describe up to ten key problems that your byway faces in the future. In what ways might the byway's resources be threatened or what special management problems exist? List the problems in order of importance, with #~ being the most critical problem.

Problem #1:

Problem #2:

Problem #3:

Problem #4:

Problem #5:

Problem #6:

Problem #7:

Problem #8:

Problem #9:

Problem #10:

## Byway Management Objectives

What are the strategy objectives for your byway? State a realistic objective for each of the problem statements.

Objective #1:

Objective #2:

Objective #3:

Objective #4:

Objective #5:

Objective #6:

Objective #7:

Objective #8:

Objective #9:

Objective #10:

# Strategy Development

For each objective, describe one or more potential actions that might be taken to reach that objective. For each potential action, consider what the greatest barrier would be to implementation and whether it is realistic to think that you can get past that barrier. This exercise is a way to test the practicality of your ideas.

**Actions for Objective #1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Barrier:**

**Actions for Objective #2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Barrier:**

**Actions for Objective #3:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Barrier:**

**Actions for Objective #4:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Barrier:**

**Actions for Objective #5:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Barrier:**

**Actions for Objective #6:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Barrier:**

**Actions for Objective #7:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Barrier:**

**Actions for Objective #8:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Barrier:**

**Actions for Objective #9:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Barrier:**

**Actions for Objective #10:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Barrier:**

## Action Schedule

Review the potential actions for each objective and organize the most important and most feasible into an action schedule. Indicate what the action is, who is responsible~ how much it may cost, and who will pay for it. Also state what the first step must be to get the action moving.

**Action #1:** \_\_\_\_\_

Who's responsible?:

Cost:

Funding Source:

First step:

**Action #2:** \_\_\_\_\_

Who's responsible?:

Cost:

Funding Source:

First step:

**Action #3:** \_\_\_\_\_

Who's responsible?:

Cost:

Funding Source:

First step:

**Action #4:**

Who's responsible?: \_\_\_\_\_

Cost:

Funding Source:

First step:

**Action #5:** \_\_\_\_\_

Who's responsible?:

Cost:

Funding Source:

First step:

**Action #6:** \_\_\_\_\_

Who's responsible?:

Cost:

Funding Source:

First step:

**Action #7:** \_\_\_\_\_

Who's responsible?:

Cost:

Funding Source:

First step:

**Action #8:** \_\_\_\_\_

Who's responsible?:

Cost:

Funding Source:

First step:

**Action #9:** \_\_\_\_\_

Who's responsible?:

Cost:

Funding Source:

First step:

**Action #10:** \_\_\_\_\_

Who's responsible?:

Cost:

Funding Source:

First step: