

National Scenic Byway Foundation
Strategic Plan
2011-2013

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BACKGROUND

Scenic byways offer glimpses at America. These treasured places are selected based on specific criteria including the development of a corridor management plan outlining the resources, goals and activities of the byway and its managing organization. Routes are recognized for the scenic, historic, natural, archaeological, cultural and/or recreational features that make them distinct and representative of the American experience.

Byways vary in how they protect these resources and promote the routes. Many are non-profit, grassroots organizations led by volunteers or staff dedicated to their communities. Other byways are managed by existing community or regional organizations, state or federal agencies and combinations of non-profit and public partnerships.

The idea of creating a national not-for-profit organization to support scenic byways first surfaced at the 2001 National Scenic Byway Conference. At the 2003 conference in Albuquerque, a group of interested individuals asked for and received input from conference attendees, then filed articles for incorporation and adopted bylaws. The foundation has received its tax-exempt status under section 501(c) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Through its unique ability as a not-for-profit and tax-exempt charitable organization, the National Scenic Byway Foundation aids the successful completion of projects that are not otherwise accomplished by Federal Highway Administration, the Americas Byways Resource Center and byway organizations throughout the nation. The Foundation will assist in defining the Byways “brand,” having the distinctive collection of America’s Byways®, with their stories and treasured places, become as recognized and valued as National Parks, National Forests and National Refuges. The National Scenic Byway Foundation will assist in the current and future development, management, preservation and enhancement of byways through cooperation between units of government, the for-profit, and the not-for-profit sectors.

The Board of Directors of the National Scenic Byway Foundation is responsible for the overall policy and direction of the Foundation. In addition to voting members, the board offers ex-officio membership to the director of the FHWA National Scenic Byways Program and the Director of the America’s Byways® Resource Center.

Funding for the Foundation is being provided by a membership program, corporate sponsorships, grants, private foundation support, administrative fees for specific services, and projects designated as fundraising activities for foundation goals.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The **mission** of the National Scenic Byway Foundation (NSBF) is to foster cooperative opportunities that will grow and sustain byways for future generations.

The **vision** of the National Scenic Byway Foundation is that Byways will be recognized and valued worldwide for their distinctive experiences, stories and treasured places.

In order to achieve the mission and vision of the organization, the Foundation has the following goals:

- Educate the public about byways
- Conduct research to benefit byway programs and organizations
- Develop partnerships with units of government, not-for-profit and for-profit sectors
- Communicate with byway stakeholders
- Celebrate byway achievements
- Ensure fiscal and programmatic accountability of the organization

Committees will be established to perform services for the Foundation, and shall report periodically to the Board of Directors. The Board will designate a member to serve as committee chairman, supervising the committee work. Committee members will include members of the Byway community. Each committee will develop a charter that defines the Committee Objective, Methods, Structure, and role of staff.

In order to implement this strategic plan, the National Scenic Byway Foundation will work with its paid staff, volunteer executive directors and committees and with the FHWA, America's Byways® Resource Center, state DOTs, federal land management agencies, tribal governments and individual byways to attain each of the stated goals.

GOAL: Educate the public about byways
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OBJECTIVE:

- Update NSBF educational materials and website for distribution to the public in print and digital formats

Action Steps:

- Update NSBF logo, text and redesign/rewrite flyer to include more color and photographs
- Develop and adopt a tagline to clarify the organization's purpose
- Update and redesign website

OBJECTIVE:

- Update email mailing list to include byway leaders, state coordinators and conference attendees

Action Steps:

- Review master list and update database for byway leaders and state coordinators
- Contact state coordinators to access state byways list
- Contact America's Byways® Resource Center to obtain conference attendees list from previous two conferences
- Develop byway vendor list to include consultants, contractors, etc.

OBJECTIVE:

- Represent America's Byways® at regional and national trade events using NSBF volunteers and in cooperation with other FHWA and America's Byways® Resource Center awareness building efforts.

Action Steps:

- Contract staff, as needed, to coordinate volunteers over the next three years
- Define a program and criteria for recruiting/training volunteers and byways to promote at such events
- Represent the National Scenic Byway Foundation at state byway events
- Secure displays for trade shows and events

FUTURE OBJECTIVES:

- Foster peer exchanges among byways
- Conduct FAM tours with cooperating byways
- Develop templates for press releases and communications with officials
- Develop webinars aimed at educating the Byway community

GOAL: Research issues of interest to byway programs and organizations
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OBJECTIVE:

- Survey state byway coordinators, byway leaders, and make personal calls to collect data

Action Steps:

- Develop survey questionnaires; purchase analysis tools
- Develop contact list
- Compile, review and disseminate results
- Compile peer successes

OBJECTIVE:

- Identify byway-friendly funders

Action Steps:

- Develop strategies for effective outreach to funders
- Develop list and distribute it to member bywayst

OBJECTIVE:

- Identify potential private sector NSBF members

Action Steps:

- Develop strategies for effective outreach
- Develop list of potential members and recruit them
- Conduct a byway zip code analysis to identify potential national sponsors among retail and service businesses such as gas stations, auto insurance agencies, restaurant chains, etc.

OBJECTIVE:

- Research sustainable funding techniques

Action Steps:

- Develop a menu of fundraising techniques (i.e. Food and beverage tax, lodging tax, byway wine and food labels, marathons, bike rides)
- Update *Financial Sustainability* report prepared by Seaway Trail

FUTURE OBJECTIVES:

- Conduct NSBF/FHWA/America's Byways® Resource Center gap analysis
- Determine and compare how DOTs manage individual state/tribal byway programs.
- Determine motorcoach-readiness of byways
- Research how to use 21st century technology
- Survey byway visitors at welcome centers to determine program and byway awareness

GOAL: Develop partnerships with units of government, not-for-profit and for-profit sectors
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OBJECTIVE:

- Partner with America's Byways® Resource Center to implement the byway public awareness campaign

Action Steps:

- Participate in meetings
- Maintain communication regarding contacts with corporate partners
- Provide non-profit vehicle for partnerships

OBJECTIVE:

- Serve as an equal partner with FHWA and America’s Byways® Resource Center in biennial National Scenic Byway conferences

Action Steps:

- Solicit sponsors for after hours activities
- Host after hour events
- Provide conference services
- Provide awareness of National Scenic Byway Foundation
- Assist in developing program, topics of interest and speakers
- Raise funds to support NSBF

OBJECTIVE:

- Establish strong relationship with national partners

Action Steps:

- Reconnect with key founding partners
- Continue communication with National Wildlife Refuge Association, National Parks Foundation, etc.
- Identify potential new partners

OBJECTIVE:

- Secure multi-state, multi-year grant for implementing key objectives

Action Steps:

- Develop scope of work and budget

FUTURE OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage byways and byway organizations to participate in Adopt-A-Highway Programs
- Explore utilization of all types of media
- Partner with private sector businesses
- Explore low cost or no cost “trade out” partners

GOAL: Communicate with stakeholders

OBJECTIVE:

- Improve National Scenic Byway Foundation’s communication between byway community, members and directors

Action Steps:

- Utilize multi-media – newsletter, website, mailings and email

OBJECTIVE:

- Develop website as a tool

Action Steps:

- Identify information to be made available to byway community on NSBF website
- Link NSBF website to other byway resource sites as needed
- Post resources for byway community

OBJECTIVE:

- Reach out to officials regularly

Action Steps:

- Draft templates for letters and messages to officials and make available to byways
- Develop and maintain list of Congressional committees and staff in appropriate agencies and offices
- Coordinate an annual or biennial Washington fly-in to meet with officials

OBJECTIVE:

- Develop member benefit section on website

Action Steps:

- Develop templates for member byway access
 - Public Service Announcements
 - Philanthropy Days
 - Letters to officials
 - Media releases
 - Peer ideas (including use of America's Byways® brand)

OBJECTIVE:

- Reach out to appropriate media that can educate the public about byways

Action Steps:

- Reach out travel writers with byway messages
- Arrange FAM tours
- Promote local radio interviews

GOAL: Celebrate byway achievements

OBJECTIVE:

- Establish a National Byway Day or Week

Action Steps:

- Contact legislative assistance
- Secure a corporate sponsor
- Develop a media campaign

OBJECTIVE:

- Recognize and showcase byway volunteers

Action Steps:

- Provide NSBF endorsement of state and locally nominated individual awards
- Promote the awards through all channels of communication
- Include periodic newsletter reports that recognize progress
- Showcase award winners at national conferences

GOAL: Ensure fiscal and programmatic accountability of the organization

OBJECTIVE:

- Maintain sustainable fiscal accountability

Action Steps:

- Increase income from memberships, grants and gifts.
- Conduct internal audit annually
- Secure directors and officers insurance when necessary

OBJECTIVE:

- Maintain 501c-3 status

Action Steps:

- Comply with IRS requirements

OBJECTIVE:

- Establish restricted and unrestricted funds to implement organization's mission and vision

Action Steps:

- Create and define use of Richard Haskett Scholarship Fund
- Carry out silent auctions of byway products at conferences
- Conduct annual membership drive recruiting individuals, public, non-profit and for-profit members
- Create and sell logo merchandise
- Establish the vehicle to accept planned giving

OBJECTIVE:

- Develop strong leadership

Action Steps:

- Recruit capable Directors and volunteers
- Educate Directors, staff and volunteers
- Contract or hire for Executive Director services

OBJECTIVE:

- Increase membership

Action Steps:

- Recruit byway organizations, individuals and businesses as members
- Define and emphasize member benefits