

Chapter 3

Step 2 – Corridor Plan

What is a Corridor Plan?

A Corridor Plan is a written document in which the Scenic and Historic Highway sponsor lays out the vision, goals and responsibilities for conserving and enhancing the corridor's most valuable qualities and describes how this will benefit economic development through tourism and recreational opportunities. The Corridor Plan presents a strategy for balancing concern for the intrinsic resources with the visitor's opportunity to experience the Scenic and Historic Highway. It explains how the participants are involved in and responsible for implementing the Plan.

Where does a Corridor Plan fit into the designation process?

A Corridor Plan is required as part of the 2nd Step of the designation process, following the formal designation of a highway as a Delaware Scenic and Historic Highway. The designation as a Scenic and Historic Highway qualifies sponsors for these highways to apply for matching federal National Scenic Byway grant funds to assist in completion of a Corridor Plan. This designation also results in applying to qualifying roads the federal requirement not to allow new outdoor advertising signs to be erected on these roads.

Once a Corridor Plan for the Scenic and Historic Highway has been approved, signs will be placed along the route identifying it as a Delaware Scenic and Historic Highway. It will also be identified on state maps and promoted through the Delaware Tourism Office.

Who is responsible for preparing the Corridor Plan?

The sponsor of the Step 1 – Nomination Application is responsible for preparing the Corridor Plan or for contracting with a consultant to do this. It is the sponsor's responsibility to raise any funds needed to complete the Plan. As stated above, sponsors are eligible to apply for matching federal National Scenic Byway funds for this purpose. Information about these grants is available on the National Scenic Byway Program website, www.byways.org. Further information on sources of assistance is provided in Chapter 6 of this guide.

What information must be included in a Corridor Plan?

- Vision and Goals Statement with objectives and strategies for achieving the goals.
- Documentation of public involvement efforts to illustrate the support the corridor designation has received from the public.
- Stewardship of intrinsic qualities through resource preservation; through enhancing existing development and accommodating new development in a complementary manner.
- Tourism Development, including an explanation of the tourism potential of the corridor and a description of how the visitor's experience will be maximized and enhanced.
- Marketing and Promotion, including a signage plan supportive of the visitor experience.
- Resources Interpretation, including recommended locations for distributing information.
- Support and Implementation, including relationship to local government comprehensive plans.

- Funding Plan for implementing the Corridor Plan.
- Transportation and Safety, including consideration of appropriate design guidelines for Context Sensitive Design in the corridor, accommodating commercial traffic, accommodating multi-modal uses of the corridor to the extent feasible, and complying with outdoor advertising controls.
- Short-term Action Plan for implementation.

An appendix should include the following information from the Step 1 – Nomination Application:

- A physical description of the route.
- Representative photographs.
- A map indicating the boundaries of the route, that locates the intrinsic qualities along the corridor and indicates land uses in the corridor.
- An intrinsic quality resource inventory.
- A written statement that summarizes and evaluates the significance of the primary intrinsic quality for which the highway merits designation and that also describes the significance of any secondary intrinsic qualities present along the route.
- A written description of what a traveler will see when traversing the corridor.
- A description of public involvement conducted to date and the comments and input that have resulted from this process.

Who reviews the Corridor Plan and what is the review process?

The DeIDOT Scenic and Historic Highways Coordinator reviews the Step 2 – Corridor Plan Application and makes a recommendation to DeIDOT's Director of Planning. DeIDOT's Director of Planning submits the Corridor Plan Application to the State Scenic and Historic Highways Advisory Board for review along with his/her recommendation and comments. If the Board recommends approval, the application is submitted to the DeIDOT Secretary of Transportation for review and a final decision.

What are the timelines for reviewing Step – 2 Corridor Plan Applications?

There will be ongoing reviews of Step 2 – Corridor Plan Applications by the Scenic and Historic Highways Coordinator and by the Advisory Board. Generally DeIDOT will respond to the applicant within 90 days from the time that a complete Step 2 – Corridor Plan Application is received.

What is the impact of approval of a Corridor Plan?

If the Corridor Plan is approved, DeIDOT will provide signs for the route to indicate its designated status and will identify the route on state maps. Delaware's Office of Tourism will promote the Delaware Scenic and Historic Highway in accord with the promotion and marketing plans included in the Corridor Plan.

Information about elements that must be included in a Corridor Plan

The major elements that must be included in a Corridor Plan for a Delaware Scenic and Historic Highway are summarized in this section. Guidance on how to develop information on these elements can be found in the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) booklet titled, "Community Guide to Planning and Managing a Scenic Byway." As with the publication, "Byway

Beginnings," referenced in Chapter 3, this publication is available from the National Scenic Byways Clearinghouse by calling 1-800-4byways and selecting #2. Although the booklet was prepared to assist byway sponsors seeking National Scenic Byway designation, the information presented will be of great help to sponsors seeking to develop corridor plans for Delaware Scenic and Historic Highways.

• Vision and Goals Statement with objectives and strategies for achieving the goals

A Vision is a mental image of the condition of the Scenic and Historic Highway corridor and the accomplishments of the Sponsor group in the future (say 20 years from now). It is a corridor-wide expression of how the corridor will be viewed in the future. The Goals Statement elaborates on the Vision by identifying the broad goals that will implement the Corridor Plan. These will likely be oriented towards areas of 1) Resource protection, maintenance and enhancement; 2) Community support and participation; 3) Education and interpretation; 4) Economic development through tourism; and 5) Transportation and safety. An objective is an end that one strives to obtain, or an aim. A strategy is a plan or action to achieve an objective based on skillful understanding of how best to achieve that objective.

• Documentation of Public Involvement efforts to illustrate the support the corridor designation has received from the public

Every opportunity must be taken to generate regional support and commitment to the scenic and historic highway designation and to the development and eventual implementation of the Corridor Plan. A Scenic and Historic Highway's success can be assured only if local residents, business owners and public officials understand and support the designation and have a sense of participation and ownership of the Vision and Goals outlined in the Corridor Plan. Therefore, development of a Corridor Plan includes a concerted effort to actively engage the public throughout the process. This can be done by creating a broad-based steering committee to oversee the development of the Corridor Plan; conducting informative public meetings; involving citizens in small working group sessions to develop elements of the plan based upon their interests and expertise; keeping people informed of the Corridor Plan effort through newspaper articles; and many other techniques tailored to the needs of the specific community or communities.

The Corridor Plan should briefly document public involvement efforts during preparation of the Plan and outline a plan to assure on-going public involvement in the implementation of corridor management objectives.

• Stewardship of intrinsic qualities through resource preservation; through enhancing existing development and accommodating new development in a complementary manner

The stewardship plan should address the strategies, tools and techniques that will be employed to manage, protect and enhance resources that distinguish the route. Specific strategies will vary widely across the state depending on local conditions, population, economic conditions, political climate and the intensity or severity of threats to the resources. Some examples of potential strategies include conservation easements, education programs and historic district designations. Identify the standards and management techniques which will be applied to the significant resources.

The Corridor Plan should describe how existing and new development might be enhanced while managing the corridor's significant resources. For example, are there any major intrusions on

the enjoyment or character of the roadway? If so, describe what could be done to improve these conditions.

Strategies in individual Corridor Plans might recommend design review and such land management techniques as zoning, easements, and economic incentives.

The corridor should be maintained with particularly high standards, not only for travelers' safety and comfort, but also for preserving the highest levels of visual integrity and attractiveness. It may be adequate simply to continue existing regulations and policies or economic incentives, or new policies, programs or regulations may be needed. To determine the appropriate strategies, communities are encouraged to work with local, county and regional planning agencies. College or university landscape architecture, planning and tourism programs may also provide assistance.

• Tourism Development, including an explanation of the tourism potential of the corridor and a description of how the visitor's experience will be maximized and enhanced

Sponsors must provide a basic explanation of the tourism potential for the Scenic and Historic Highway. You should summarize how and to what degree the designation and promotion of the corridor will improve the local economy and indicate whether the area is already serving tourists or if tourism will be a new industry.

Identify visitor accommodations (e.g. gas, food, lodging, restrooms, emergency services, ATMs, phones, parking, etc.) that are available along the corridor. Assess whether the existing supply is adequate to meet the demand to be generated by the Scenic and Historic Highway. In other words, what other services might be helpful to maximize the amount of time a visitor spends along the corridor?

Describe how the visitor's experience will be maximized and enhanced. Explain how intrusions on that experience will be minimized through making improvements to enhance that experience.

• Marketing and Promotion, including a signage plan supportive of the visitor experience

Sponsors must outline the objectives for marketing or promotion of the Scenic and Historic Highway. These goals will vary depending on the comments received during the public involvement process. Such goals may focus on doing a better job of educating residents about the heritage of the area, or may focus on increasing tourism to the area, or include some other objectives. New opportunities for a community may result from the increased exposure a Scenic and Historic Highway receives. This exposure can be gained in a number of ways, such as by distribution of maps and trip planning brochures or developing pre-planned itineraries for bus tour companies, installation of Scenic and Historic Highway signage or targeted advertising campaigns.

The Corridor Plan must include a signage plan covering signs in the right-of-way as well as the corridor as a whole, that demonstrates how public and private interests can work together with a coordinated strategy to make the number and placement of signs more supportive of the visitor experience. Local government officials should play an important role in developing this strategy.

• Resources Interpretation, including recommended locations for distributing information

You need to provide a description of how you plan to interpret the significant resources of the Scenic and Historic Highway. Briefly describe the stories illustrated by resources of the Scenic and Historic Highway that will serve as a basis for interpretation. You should include recommended locations for the placement of visitor centers, interpretive markers, interpretive brochure distribution points and other planned interpretive opportunities.

• Support and Implementation, including relationship to local government comprehensive plans

The continuation of the Scenic and Historic Highway over time will need a capable management entity (or sponsor group) responsible for day-to-day coordination and advocacy of the highway. The Plan should describe the management entity for the Scenic and Historic Highway, identify the principal partners (e.g., highway departments, tourism agencies, chambers of commerce, county government, citizens groups, etc.), and include a list of their specific, individual responsibilities. The Plan should include a letter of intent (i.e., commitment) from strategic partners of support for the Scenic and Historic Highway's designation and their participation in the Plan's implementation.

Obtain a letter of intent or resolution of support by local governments (from the chief elected official or body) with jurisdiction along the roadway that indicates support for the designation and intent to incorporate the following items in local land use plans: a map that shows the Scenic and Historic Highway corridor, the corridor vision statement and the goals, objectives and strategies related to the specific local government.

List all organizations with responsibility for the implementation of the Plan and identify what those responsibilities are. Explain how the implementation will be monitored to verify that those responsibilities are being met and modified, as needed, to incorporate new participation.

• Funding Plan for implementing the Corridor Plan

Develop and include a budget that estimates the costs for implementation of the Plan over a five to ten year period. Address the availability of financial resources needed to upgrade, protect, develop, promote and/or otherwise enhance the corridor and implement the Corridor Plan to make the Scenic and Historic Highway and its corridor available for its intended uses. Indicate funding currently in hand and funds that have been requested, and the sources for these funds. For funding that is presently not available, indicate how you plan to locate funding sources.

• Transportation and Safety, including consideration of appropriate design guidelines for Context Sensitive Design in the corridor, accommodating commercial traffic, accommodating multi-modal uses of the corridor to the extent feasible, and complying with outdoor advertising controls.

The Corridor Plan should identify the potential safety, operational and maintenance impacts of the designation based on available information, their causes, and actions possible to address them. The initial step towards accomplishing this is to contact the agency responsible for maintenance of the highway. This agency can share available information and provide expertise to identify any correctable faults in highway design, maintenance, or operation.

In addition, this agency can describe the types of transportation projects that will likely arise within the corridor over a ten to fifteen year period. The Plan should identify these expected project types and make broad recommendations for general solutions applying the principles of

Context Sensitive Design. This discussion should include an evaluation of how any proposed changes may affect the intrinsic qualities of the corridor.

The Plan should include a narrative describing strategies to accommodate commercial traffic while maintaining a safe and efficient level of highway service and ensuring the safety of sightseers in smaller vehicles, as well as bicyclists, joggers and pedestrians.

The Plan should address accommodating multi-modal uses of the corridor to the extent feasible. The corridor may be served by rail service, car ferries, airports, buses, or bicycles. It may be helpful to contact local or regional transportation planning agencies to help assess the role of all transportation facilities and services for visitor access and use of the Scenic and Historic Highway. Describe in the Corridor Plan any recommendations for improvements and changes to these services and facilities as they relate to visitor access and use of the highway.

The Corridor Plan should describe existing local, state and federal laws regarding the control of outdoor advertising and should demonstrate compliance with these laws.

• Short-Term Action Plan for implementation

The Corridor Plan should include a short-term action plan covering the first two years of implementation of the Plan. The action plan outlines the sequence of actions that the Sponsor will perform or oversee in an effort to meet the goals, objectives and strategies and, ultimately, achieve the Corridor Vision. The Plan should provide specific milestones month-by-month for implementation actions stating who is responsible for each. The action plan should include a schedule and performance measures for the continuing review of how well implementation responsibilities are being met.