The background is a textured, dark brown color. On the right side, there are several thin, dark brown lines representing grass blades, each with small, dark brown seed heads. The lines curve upwards and outwards. At the bottom of the page, there are several overlapping, curved, dark brown bands that create a sense of depth and movement.

# **KANSAS BYWAYS PROGRAM**

## **MANAGEMENT & MARKETING PLAN 2010–2020**

*Roadmap for Growth and Sustainability  
Of Quality Byway Experiences*

# GUIDING OUR FUTURE

## *The Kansas Byways Program and its collection of designated byways*

### *Inspire residents and visitors to care about Kansas*

The Kansas Byways program inspires residents and visitors to support and engage in stewardship (including conservation and preservation) of the state's natural, historic and cultural assets.

### *Demonstrate a worthy investment in our future*

Through visitor spending and leveraged resources, the Kansas Byways program invests in the preservation, conservation, interpretation and management of its unique assets to produce a positive economic, environmental and social impact on the state and for its residents.

### *Involve partners for quality experiences*

The Kansas Byways program provides a system and forum to engage businesses, government, civic organizations, residents and other stakeholders in the development and management of road-based scenic, natural, recreation, historic and cultural experiences.

### *Interpret authentic Kansas stories*

Kansas Byways collectively identify and share the stories of the state's geology, history, industry, agriculture, ranching and other important and unique assets.

### *Are based on integrity*

The collection of Kansas Byways represents a standard of excellence and quality that is respected and recognized, with specific emphasis on scenic or historic integrity of the road-based experience as defined by the National Byways Program/Federal Highway Administration.

## *2020 Vision for Kansas Byways*

This nationally recognized and valued collection of designated byways empowers Kansas' residents, communities, businesses and government to jointly:

- Preserve the natural beauty and heritage of Kansas,
- Deliver authentic, quality experiences that stimulate economic prosperity from tourism, and
- Enhance the positive image of Kansas.

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## Acknowledgements

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Appreciation is also extended to the national program leaders—including staff at the National Scenic Byways Program Office in Washington, DC and the America's Byways Resource Center in Minnesota—as well as other state byways program coordinators for their generous contributions of additional information on trends, best practices and lessons learned.



LOUISBURG  
CIDER MILL

# KANSAS BYWAYS PROGRAM

## *Background and Milestones*

### Inception

Interest in a “scenic roads” concept began as early as 1964 in Kansas. Representatives from multiple agencies convened to discuss basic parameters for a state program and to identify a list of possible roads that met preliminary criteria. These findings were shared in the report,

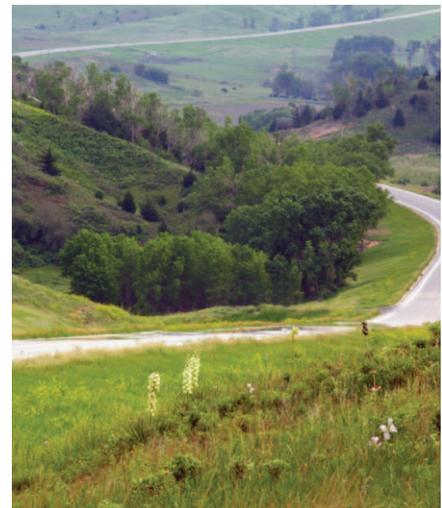


*Scenic Roads and Parkways Study*, prepared by the Kansas State Highway Commission and the Bureau of Public Roads. In 1974, the Kansas Highway Commission produced the *National Scenic Highway Study in Kansas* as an update to the earlier document, in compliance with the 1973 Federal Highway Act. Over the next 20 years, little advancement was made in organizing or formalizing a state scenic byway program, although one road—the Frontier Military Scenic Byway—was designated by legislative action during this period.

With the introduction of the national Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1991, which included dedicated funding for scenic byways, Kansas renewed its interest in establishing a state program. A

1992 grant from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funded the Kansas Department of Transportation’s program conception and development.

In 1993 an advisory committee with representatives from the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), Commerce and Housing/Tourism Development Division (now Travel & Tourism Division), Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) and the Kansas State Historical Society (KSHS), was convened to create the Scenic Roads Program. For more than a year, the committee met regularly to develop objectives, policies, regulations, oversight, designation categories, nomination and selection procedures, and programmatic outcomes. In 1994 a formal plan outlining the State Scenic Byway program and its related policies was created (by Decision Data in Topeka) to instruct KDOT and its advisory committee on the implementation process. The 1992 grant funded two additional reports: *Kansas Scenic Byways Evaluation Report* and an analysis of four potential byway corridors as identified by the advisory committee.



### The State Program: 1994- 2009

With an organizational process and policies in place, KDOT dedicated staff to coordinate and launch the state byway program. Grass roots organizations and local citizens were invited to identify scenic roads for designation. Following the national program, the state effort encouraged local entities to organize and identify the intrinsic qualities along specific roads to emphasize the scenic beauty and diversity of the state. For the first decade, the state program emphasis was on identifying and designating scenic byways.

**As stated in the 1994 plan, key program benefits are:**

- \* System to identify scenic resources in Kansas
- \* Access to national scenic byway program funding
- \* Management of route activities
- \* Education of visitors about history, nature, culture of Kansas
- \* Inclusion on Kansas page of America's Byways website

**The 1994 plan also suggests that, "designation provides the following benefits to byway communities:**

1. Fosters community pride of place
2. Creates partnerships among local, regional, state and national entities
3. Provides route markers along the byway
4. Puts the byway 'on the state transportation map'
5. Provides byway brochures and other promotional materials
6. Increases tourism—national average is 30% increase in traffic
7. Increases economic well-being of the byway communities
8. Provides access to technical assistance through the Kansas Byways Program office"



*SIGNAGE HELPS VISITORS NAVIGATE THE COLLECTION.*

The Kansas Byways Program is designed to work within existing state and local regulations and without infringing on individual private property rights.

Measuring success against the original mission, the state program has accomplished its purpose of "identifying and designating a system of scenic roads in Kansas for the enjoyment of the traveling public." <sup>1</sup> Since the program was initiated in 1986, nine scenic byways and one historic byway have been designated; two of these byways also achieved national designation status.

## **Program Administration**

An advisory committee representing multiple state agencies has oversight for the Kansas Byways Program. Duties of the committee include reviewing nominations, evaluating the current collection, and identifying opportunities to help enhance the program through funding, technical assistance and agency support. Current membership of the Kansas Byways Committee includes representatives from:

- Kansas Department of Transportation
- Kansas Department of Commerce, Travel and Tourism Division
- Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks
- Kansas State Historical Society
- Federal Highway Administration

KDOT operates the state byways program. Initially, KDOT hired an independent contractor to serve as the program's outreach coordinator and to oversee an information clearinghouse. In 2009 KDOT internalized all Kansas Byways program duties, with two departments sharing responsibility for administration and outreach. The Bureau of Design, Environmental Services Section, administers the program and employs the state byways coordinator; the Public Information Office houses the outreach liaison for the program.

1. *Kansas Scenic Byways Program Management Plan, updated October 1996, page 3*

# Current Designation Process

Any citizen, grass-roots organization or local government agency may nominate a Kansas road for byway designation.

The process includes two different stages:

- 1) Completion of a nomination form describing the intrinsic quality/ies and preliminary route's resource inventory, and
- 2) Preparation and submission of a more detailed inventory and corridor management plan articulating the local commitment to preservation, interpretation and promotion of the proposed byway.

The nomination process requires the involvement of communities— government, residents, civic groups, landowners, tourism officials and other stakeholders located along the proposed route—to support the philosophy of the byways program, participate in the corridor management planning process, and commit to maintaining and enhancing the intrinsic qualities of the nominated road and its contributing assets. The designation also requires compliance with the Federal Highway Beautification Act and agreement to prohibit off-premise commercial billboards on the byway.

KDOT's state byways coordinator monitors each stage of the designation process, providing feedback and instruction to the nominating entity.

Initially, only scenic roads meeting certain criteria were accepted for nomination. Due to increased support for expansion of the program to include other types of roads and to showcase the state's diverse history, using designation criteria and processes compatible with the scenic designation, KDOT added two additional designation categories in October 2008:

1. **Historic byways** – Kansas roads with national, regional (multi-state) or state significance because of their association with an historic event, person, use as a previously designated transportation route or representing an important historical story. As stated in the announcement criteria, "the historic intrinsic qualities of the proposed historic byway must be evident and of high quality; detractions from the visitor experience are minimized."
2. **Backroads** – local or more remote roads off the state highway routes that provide travelers a distinctive "off the beaten path" experience. As with byways, local sponsors agree to maintain, enhance and market the designated backroads.

The updated plan (1995 version) identified program goals for three phases:

- 1) Development of policies and processes to administer the program
- 2) Implementation of the program to designate state byways
- 3) Long-term management, including the enhancement of designated byways

The document also listed planning objectives for consideration. The plan outlined the following measurable objectives: 1) raising awareness of the byways; 2) increasing traffic flow; and 3) creating economic development in communities and businesses along the byways. A 2006 marketing plan emphasized the need "to raise awareness" via public relations and promotions.



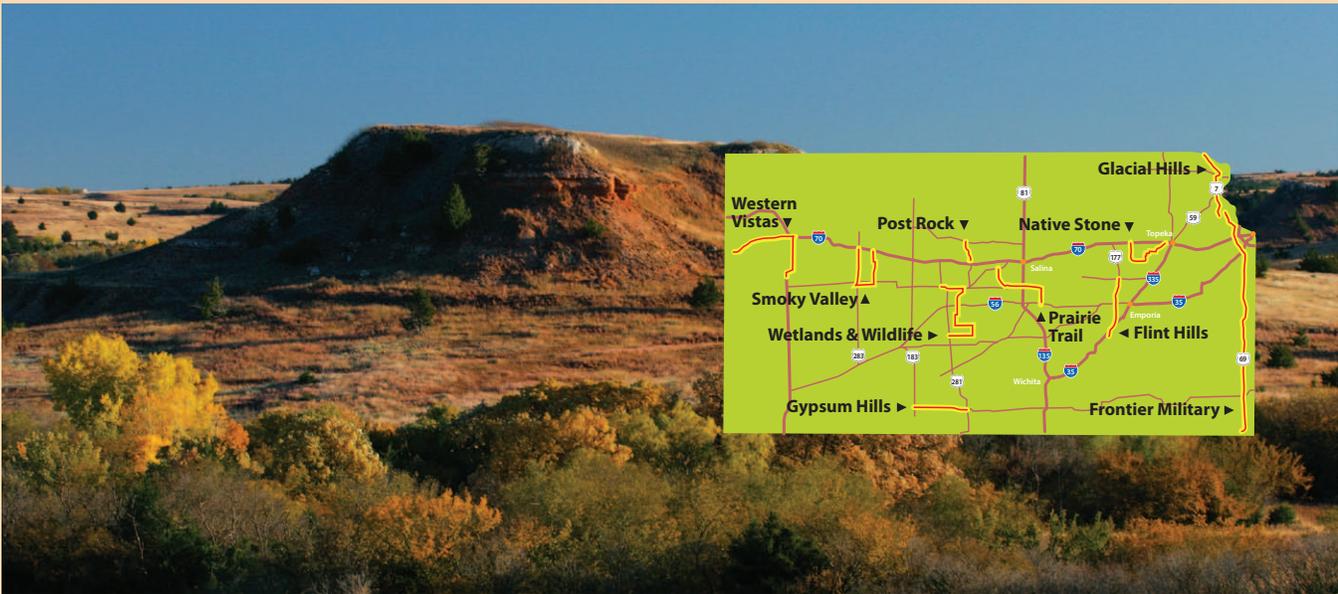
THE 2010 DESIGNATION OF WESTERN PLAINS HISTORIC BYWAY IS CELEBRATED WITH A RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY.

# PROGRAM MILESTONES

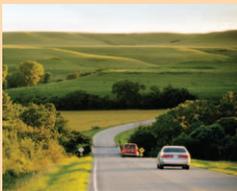
## *Date*      *Significant Event*

<b>June 1990</b>	Frontier Military Scenic Byway designated by special legislation
<b>1995</b>	KDOT designates Flint Hills Scenic Byway for its natural qualities
<b>1998</b>	KDOT designates Post Rock Scenic Byway for its scenic, cultural qualities
<b>1999</b>	KDOT designates Gypsum Hills Scenic Byway for its natural, recreational, historic, scenic, archaeological, cultural qualities
<b>January 2003</b>	KDOT designates Glacial Hills Scenic Byway for its natural, historic, cultural, recreational qualities
<b>August 2003</b>	KDOT designates Smoky Valley Scenic Byway for its natural, scenic qualities
<b>December 2004</b>	KDOT designates Wetlands & Wildlife Scenic Byway for its natural and scenic qualities
<b>October 2005</b>	KDOT designates Native Stone Scenic Byway for its historic, archaeological, recreational, scenic and cultural qualities
<b>September 2005</b>	Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, designates Flint Hills National Scenic Byway for its natural and scenic qualities
<b>September 2005</b>	Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, designates Wetlands & Wildlife National Scenic Byway for its natural and scenic qualities
<b>August 2007</b>	KDOT and Flint Hills National Scenic Byway receive 2007 Scenic Byway Award from AASHTO, FHWA, and America's Byways Resource Center
<b>November 2007</b>	KDOT designates Prairie Trail Scenic Byway for its scenic, natural, historic, cultural, archaeological and recreational qualities
<b>October 2008</b>	KDOT introduces Historic and Backroads recognition program and eligibility requirements
<b>October 2009</b>	Wetlands & Wildlife National Scenic Byway receives 2009 Scenic Byway Award for Planning – sponsored by AASHTO, FHWA and America's Byways Resource Center
<b>July 2010</b>	KDOT designates its first historic byway: Western Vistas Historic Byway





## The Kansas Byways Collection—2010



### Flint Hills National Scenic Byway (47 miles)

*Destinations: Cassoday, Matfield Green, Cottonwood Falls, Strong City, Council Grove*  
 As the Conestoga wagons headed west, endless stretches of prairie and glistening hills lay ahead. Council Grove's driving tour and programs at Pioneer Bluffs tell of early settlers and ranching heritage. Trek to the third floor oval window of Cottonwood Falls' historic courthouse for a view of the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, just a short drive away.



### Frontier Military Scenic Byway (167 miles)

*Destinations: Leavenworth, Olathe, Louisville, Pleasanton, Fort Scott, Pittsburg, Baxter Springs*  
 Dreaming of a better life, pioneers endured the difficult overland trek by seeking rest and supplies at places like Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm in Olathe. Troops from Forts Leavenworth and Scott patrolled the Kansas (free) and Missouri (slave) state borders. Today, museums and historic sites depict these significant events.



### Glacial Hills Scenic Byway (63 miles)

*Destinations: White Cloud, Troy, Atchison and Leavenworth*  
 In 1804, Lewis and Clark explored here, recording a French fort and Kanza Indian village, even firing a cannon near Atchison to celebrate Independence Day. Shops and restaurants now line the brick streets of downtown Atchison and Leavenworth. Trolley tours tell the story of these historic steamboat and railroad towns.



### Gypsum Hills Scenic Byway (42 miles)

*Destinations: Coldwater, Medicine Lodge*  
 Iron-rich soil and white gypsum create the stunning landscape of red rocks, buttes and mesas. After wagon trains, troops and railroads disrupted the lives of Plains Indians, the Medicine Lodge Peace Treaty helped end the conflicts. Museums and kiosks describe the region's history, including the story of local temperance leader Carry A. Nation.



### **Native Stone Scenic Byway (48 miles)**

*Destinations: Alma, Eskridge, Lake Wabaunsee, Keene, Dover*

The many stone fences along this byway are the result of an 1867 law abolishing the open range, offering payment of 40 cents per rod to landowners to build and maintain a 4½ ft. stone fence. Tour Alma, the “City of Native Stone” built by German and Swedish immigrants.



### **Post Rock Scenic Byway (18 miles)**

*Destination: Lucas*

Early settlers discovered that limestone cuts easily and then hardens with air and weather, making it perfect for fence posts. Post-rock fencing frames the rolling prairie and spectacular vistas of Wilson Lake along the byway en-route to Lucas, the Grassroots Arts Capital of Kansas. Don't miss the folk art and local delicacies.



### **Prairie Trail Scenic Byway (56 miles)**

*Destinations: Canton, Lindsborg, Marquette*

Traverse this byway to experience the legacy of early residents. John Maxwell made it possible for generations to experience pre-settlement Kansas, complete with free-roaming buffalo and elk at the Maxwell Wildlife Refuge near Canton. Lindsborg celebrates its Swedish heritage at galleries, inns and restaurants, while nearby Marquette pays homage to motorcycles with a museum!



### **Smoky Valley Scenic Byway (60 miles)**

*Destination: WaKeeney*

This wagon and railroad route to Denver from Fort Leavenworth was once a battleground between Indians and settlers. Now it's a pathway of natural beauty where residents hand-gathered wildflower seeds and re-seeded road shoulders, creating a beautiful spring and summer carpet of color. Enjoy great fishing near the dramatic limestone cliffs at Cedar Bluff State Park.



### **Western Vistas Historic Byway (102 miles)**

*Destinations: Scott City, Oakley, Wallace and Sharon Springs*

The badlands of Western Kansas are breathtaking, with pinnacles of limestone rising above the plains. This geographic area is world renowned for its fossil discoveries. See where the early pioneers traveled the Butterfield Overland Despatch Trail, via railroads and wagon trains on the journey west to Fort Wallace, considered the “Fighten-est Fort in the West”.



### **Wetlands and Wildlife National Scenic Byway (76 miles)**

*Destinations: Claflin, Ellinwood, Great Bend, Hoisington, Hudson, St. John and Stafford*

Although prairie vistas and rural life will charm travelers, wildlife captures the spirit of this byway. Clouds of sand hill cranes descend. Bald eagles, shorebirds and whooping cranes gracefully rest here. The marshes anchoring this drive are international treasures and the seven distinctive communities along the way will enhance your experience.

# THE NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAYS PROGRAM

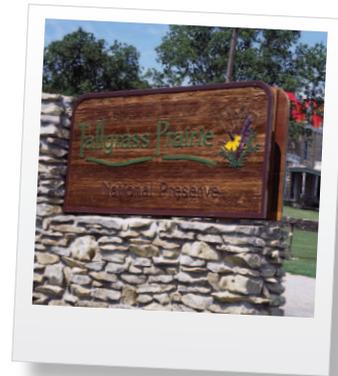
Passage of the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act by the U.S. Congress created the National Scenic Byways Program (under Title 23, Section 162), to “identify and develop scenic byways that offer outstanding scenic, historic, natural, cultural, recreational, and/or archaeological values for the traveling public” throughout America. Reauthorized and expanded in 1998 under TEA-21 and again in 2005 via SAFETEA-LU, the National Scenic Byways Program is a “grass-roots collaborative effort to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States.” (Source: Federal Highway Administration - FHWA)

Designed to “increase tourism and educate the traveling public about our nation’s environment, history and culture”, the National Scenic Byways Program has grown to become a valued marketing brand and strategy for destination stewardship. As of this report, 150 National Scenic Byways or All American Roads have been designated in 46 states to recognize their significant archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and/or scenic qualities. Two of Kansas’ state byways achieved national designation in 2005: Flint Hills National Scenic Byway and Wetlands & Wildlife National Scenic Byway.

## PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

National program oversight and coordination is provided through the Federal Highway Administration’s DC offices. These duties include, but are not limited to:

- Promoting the byways collection
- Administering a grant program to eligible projects such as the planning, design, or development of a State or Indian tribe scenic byway program; development and implementation of a corridor management plan; safety improvements to accommodate byway travelers; facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists; rest areas, turnouts, highway shoulder improvements, overlooks, or interpretive facilities; access to recreation enhancements; resource protection; tourist information; and byway marketing
- Coordinating the solicitation and review process for designation of national byways by the Secretary of Transportation
- Ensuring compliance of designated byways with the criteria and requirements set forth in the FHWA’s May 18, 1995 interim policy
- Overseeing the National Scenic Byways Program website, offering the byways community relevant information on grants and nominations, peer-to-peer forums, marketing materials, and contact lists for State Byways Coordinators, FHWA Division officers, and each of the designated America’s Byways.



### The National Designation Process

The America’s Byways program recognizes important roadways by showcasing significant qualities that are intrinsic to the specific route. Documentation and stewardship of these six intrinsic qualities<sup>2</sup> are the foundation for national designation:

- Scenic Quality—natural and manmade elements enhancing the visual appearance
- Natural Quality—relatively undisturbed landscapes or features in the road’s viewshed

- Historic Quality—built or natural elements that tell the history of the region
- Cultural Quality—elements showcasing distinctive local customs or traditions
- Archeological Quality—physical evidence of historic or prehistoric human life or activity
- Recreational Quality—outdoor activities existing because of the landscape

Eligibility is open to any road that has received state, Indian tribe or federal land management agency designation. To achieve federal designation, a nominating entity must complete seven steps: provision of essential elements (byway name, desired designation category, description of intrinsic qualities, photo), statement of qualification, route information, route conditions, visitor experience, planning/sustainability, and authorization by the state/Indian tribe/Federal land management agency submitting information to the Federal Highway Administration.

Two categories of national designation are available:

- National Scenic Byway—at least one of the six Intrinsic Qualities is regionally significant
- All-American Road—at least two of the Intrinsic Qualities are nationally significant and the road is considered a destination unto itself

In addition, byways may seek:

- Multi-Jurisdiction Designation for routes that extend across state or federal land borders
- Extension of an existing designated byway to add a new section

To ensure that designated byways retain their intrinsic qualities and integrity of experience, a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) is an essential and required tool for every scenic byway proposed for national designation. As stated in the Federal Register, Federal Highway Administration:<sup>3</sup>

*“The CMP should provide for conservation and enhancement of the byway’s intrinsic qualities as well as the promotion of tourism and economic development. The CMP should provide an effective management strategy to balance these concerns while providing for the users’ enjoyment of the byway. It is very important to the designation process, as it provides an understanding of how a road or highway possesses characteristics vital for designation as a National Scenic Byway.”*

Byways seeking national designation must first gain approval and endorsement from the State’s Byway Program, demonstrating compliance with all state policies and national criteria. To streamline the nomination process, many states—including Kansas—use some or all of the federal requirements for state designation.

## America’s Byways Resource Center

Additional technical and marketing assistance is offered to byways via the America’s Byways Resource Center based in Minnesota. The Center provides online training and educational resources to the byways’ community as a strategy to help build sustainable organizations, network with peers, and deliver authentic experiences.

In addition, the Center manages the branded on-line trip planning and informational website for consumers ([www.byways.org](http://www.byways.org)) which connects potential travelers to the collection of designated roads plus research on U.S. Forest Service Byways, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Back Country Byways, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Refuges located along or near America’s Byways.

## The 14 Essential Elements of a Corridor Management Plan

To achieve national designation, each byway must include a Corridor Management Plan that covers the following points and summarizes the key findings or objectives.

1. A map identifying the corridor boundaries, location, intrinsic qualities, and land uses in the corridor.
2. An assessment of the intrinsic qualities and their “context” (the areas surrounding them).
3. A strategy for maintaining and enhancing each of those intrinsic qualities.
4. The agencies, groups, and individuals who are part of the team that will carry out the plan, including a list of their specific, individual responsibilities. Also, a schedule of when and how to review the degree to which those responsibilities are being met.
5. A strategy detailing how existing development might be enhanced and new development accommodated to preserve the intrinsic qualities of the byway.
6. A plan for on-going public participation.
7. A general review of the road’s safety record to locate hazards and poor design, and identify possible corrections.
8. A plan to accommodate commercial traffic while ensuring the safety of sightseers in smaller vehicles, as well as bicyclists, joggers, and pedestrians.
9. A listing and discussion of efforts to minimize anomalous intrusions on the visitor’s experience of the byway.
10. Documentation of compliance with all existing local, state, and federal laws about the control of outdoor advertising.
11. A plan to make sure that the number and placement of highway signs will not obscure the scenery, but still be sufficient to help tourists find their way. This includes, where appropriate, signs for international tourists who may not speak English fluently.
12. Plans of how the byway will be marketed and publicized.
13. Any proposals for modifying the roadway, including an evaluation about design standards and how proposed changes may affect the byway’s intrinsic qualities.
14. A description of what is planned to explain and interpret the byway’s significant resources to visitors.

Source: [http://bywaysonline.org/nominations/2008/guide/guide\\_essentials](http://bywaysonline.org/nominations/2008/guide/guide_essentials)

# Trends and Issues Impacting Byways Management and Marketing

As Kansas identifies future goals and desired outcomes of its state byways program, some national trends and issues are worth consideration.

## 1. Context Sensitive Solutions

Designed to develop appropriate concepts for transportation facilities relative to the surrounding setting, Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) are formulated from stakeholder engagement. According to the FHWA, this inclusive approach preserves the “scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources while maintaining safety and mobility.” For Kansas Byways, CSS provide an opportunity for multi-modal transportation uses and alternatives throughout the management process. CSS can be applied to both existing and new transportation improvement planning and development projects.

## 2. Livability

According to the FHWA, “livability is about tying the quality and location of transportation facilities to broader opportunities such as access to good jobs, affordable housing, quality schools, and safe streets. This includes addressing safety and capacity issues on all roads through better planning and design, maximizing and expanding new technologies.” A key benefit of byway designation is often increased experiences and services that contribute to the quality of life for residents. Byway enhancements, such as new bike and pedestrian paths, appropriate street landscaping and lighting, and interpretive signage contribute to the appeal—and safety—of a byway experience. These enhancements and transportation choices encourage energy efficiency while also expanding the offerings of products and services to visitors.

## 3. Public Awareness and Engagement

Recognizing the importance of visitation to enhancing public awareness and expanding the economic impact from tourism, the America’s Byways Resource Center enlisted Longwoods International to conduct a comprehensive market research process in 2007. In their Image & Positioning Research studies, the research firm provides an “Assessment of Awareness, Familiarity & Appeal of The America’s Byways® Collection”<sup>4</sup> to offer insight into travel motivations and determine the best strategies for branding byways. While Kansas’ byways did not rank among the top 22 nationally designated byways or All American Roads that consumers are aware of, 44% of those surveyed had heard of the Santa Fe Trail in New Mexico/ Colorado and 22% had heard of the designation.

Perhaps more noteworthy for Kansas, 92% of consumers reported that their overall experience of their most recent trip on a designated America’s Byway “had been a memorable experience.” Of the trip experiences selected by travelers on America’s Byways in the past three years, 87% visited a scenic lookout/viewpoint; 75% took pictures/video; 73% visited an historical attraction, visited a National or State Park/Forest, or spent time in a small town or village; 60% stayed in a hotel, motel or bed & breakfast; and 24% stayed at a campground or RV park.<sup>5</sup>



SEASONAL CHANGES MAKE THE BYWAYS  
A YEAR-ROUND ATTRACTION

4. Longwoods International: Image & Positioning Research Studies, 2007

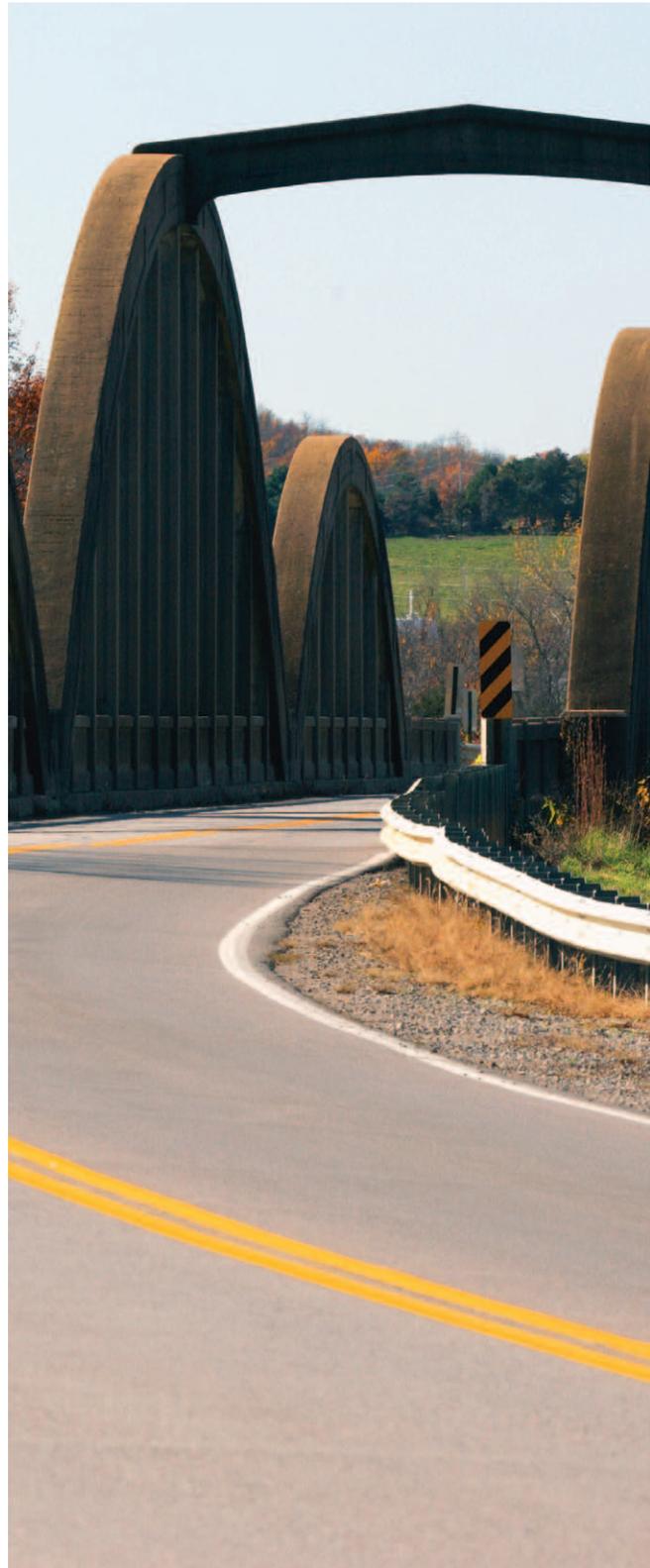
5. Longwoods International: Image & Positioning Research Studies, 2007

National travel motivations for visiting byways, cited in order of importance, include:

- Fun and exciting
- Unique/learning experience
- Ensures a great experience
- Sightseeing and entertainment
- Risk-free planning
- Safe and accessible
- Sports and recreation
- Short getaways

For the Midwest, the top byway attributes/hot buttons for travelers are:

1. Great experience for adults
2. A fun experience
3. A real adventure
4. Lots to see and do
5. Opportunities to learn and discover
6. Interesting small towns and villages
7. Everyone should experience in their lifetime
8. Good family experience
9. Makes trip planning easier
10. Unique scenery
11. Unique vacation experience
12. Good photo opportunities
13. Good for longer trips
14. Great National/State parks
15. Interesting historic attractions
16. Well-known landmarks
17. A uniquely American experience
18. Truly beautiful scenery
19. Easy-to-follow routes
20. Helps select experiences that meet our interests



This national research also emphasizes that, “scenic beauty remains important as it provides the canvas for the ‘totality of the experience’ that visitors desire”.<sup>6</sup> When asked what would make travel on byways more appealing, the top response was “more information/better publicity is needed” (13%). The second most important issue is “scenery/make them more scenic” reinforcing the need to protect the intrinsic quality for designation and showcase the scenery as part of the experience.

# PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The Kansas Department of Transportation secured a grant from the National Scenic Byways Program to update the 1994 management and marketing plans, and contracted with the Kansas Department of Commerce, Travel & Tourism Division to administer the grant. The purpose of the planning process was two-fold: 1) review other state programs and national trends to make the Kansas Scenic Byway program more competitive; and 2) identify the policies, procedures and strategies required to realize the full economic potential of the state byways program.

To assist with the independent analysis, conduct appropriate research and facilitate discussions about the program's future, a consulting team from Hargrove International worked with local and state byway committees to identify needs, opportunities and desired outcomes for the next decade. The 12-month planning process included 16 research and analysis components conducted in three phases from August 2009 to July 2010.



## Discovery Phase:

- 1) Initial meeting with State Byways Committee members and agency representatives to define desired outcomes and key deliverables (August 2009)
- 2) Analysis of existing plans, policies and designated byway corridor management plans (CMPs)— Documents reviewed from August–December 2009 include: Kansas Scenic Byways Program Development & Policies (1994); Kansas Scenic Byways Management Plan (1996, updated 2004, 2005); Kansas Guide to Corridor Management Planning (1999); Guide for Designating Kansas Scenic Byways (1998); Kansas Scenic Byways Enhancement Guide (2009)
- 3) Investigation of national and state best practices, funding and program trends (September–December 2009)
- 4) Facilitated meeting and research with Kansas Designated Byway Coordinators on September 22, 2009 at Maxwell Wildlife Refuge
- 5) On-site assessments and meetings with 10 local committees of designated byways (October–December 2009)
- 6) Consumer Survey conducted on-line to 500 targeted households (November 2009)
- 7) State Stakeholder Survey conducted on-line with 29 participants (November 2009).

## Development Phase:

- 1) Visioning Session conducted with the State Byway Committee (December 2010)
- 2) On-line Survey to prioritize recommendations for State Updated Plan (February 2010)
- 3) Draft Documents, Worksheets, Planning Manual and Calendar (April–July 2010)
- 4) Planning meetings and presentations at Heartland Byway Conference in Great Bend (April 2010)
- 5) Three internal on-site meetings with key executive staff to discuss recommendations and proposed outcomes.

## Marketing Phase:

- 1) Review and analysis of existing marketing materials: Kansas Scenic Byway Program Marketing Plan (2006); Kansas Scenic Byway Program Multi-Byway Marketing Plan (2006); state-produced

- collateral (state byway booklet printed by KDOT and Travel & Tourism, 2009); byway shell and individual byway brochures, Kansas Official State Transportation Map and other byway materials printed by KDOT; official state tourism, state transportation and state byway websites and social media sites); individual byway brochures or locally-produced marketing materials/plans
- 2) Blog entries/Tweets resulting from on-site byway visits (Fall 2009; December issue of “Off the Radar” dedicated to Kansas Byways
- 3) Flickr account established with images from on-site assessment visits (Fall 2009)
- 4) “Tell Me Your Story” Marketing Initiative including creation and production of two print ads, radio copy, four timed itineraries for multi-byway experiences, and a microsite ([www.mykansasbywaystory.com](http://www.mykansasbywaystory.com)) to collect stories from consumers about Kansas Byways experiences (Summer/Fall 2010)

## Summary of Planning Process—Kansas Byways Research Data

Comprehensive research was conducted for this project with consumers, byway committees, and state agency stakeholders (DOT, Commerce, etc.). The following is an executive summary of research findings.

- Study respondents are proud of the Kansas Byways Program and the benefits it provides in tourism, and as a means of depicting the scenery, heritage, and unique aspects of Kansas. However, while pride in the program is high, the consensus is that overall performance is average at best. Consumers rate the Scenic Byways as “comparable with other states”
- Getting the designation as a Kansas Byway was the primary goal for most of the individual byway groups. Once designation was earned, the continuance of the program has varied significantly from one byway to another
- There is little consistency in how the designated byways are managed by the local byway committees
- There is also little consistency in how these individual groups interact with state agencies and insufficient awareness of the issues and progress among the local committees
- Marketing and promotion is inconsistent
- Connectivity between the designated byway coordinators/committees and state coordinator/committee/agencies is limited
- Many local byway committees do not follow/implement local corridor management plans and state program policies
- The local byway committees tend to look to the state for the vast majority of infrastructure improvements, interpretation, and signage, as well as marketing and promotion
- There was good consensus among the various groups and stakeholders that criteria (quality and consistent services) should be established and monitored for the state byway program
- Respondents think new byways can be added, but want the overall total to be limited
- Criteria for designation, as well as possible decertification criteria, should be maintained at the state level
- All respondents hoped that the primary outcome of this planning process would be strategies for “increasing awareness of scenic byways” and “improving the visitor experience”
- The following is the rank order of elements/tools that study respondents felt are needed for each byways:



- |                                       |   |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| › brochures (89.5%)                   | › directional signage (68.4%)                       | › rest stops/public toilets (36.8%)                  |
| › maps (89.5%)                        | › Internet site (68.4%)                             | › visitor centers (31.6%)                            |
| › interpretive signage/kiosks (73.7%) | › lodging, attractions, restaurants, retail (47.4%) | › compliance with criteria for participation (26.3%) |

- The majority of individual byway committees were unsure of how best to improve the overall program other than to seek guidance at the state level. It is felt that the state needs to provide coordination, byway management training, on-line management guidelines and tools, and progress and compliance monitoring. It is expected that these functions would best be conducted between KDOT and Travel & Tourism.



The program was launched more than a decade ago as a bottom-up, grass roots led agenda with voluntary designation to protect, enhance and promote the scenic drives of Kansas. The initial state management plan and subsequent updates (1996, 2004, 2005) focused on developing the system and tools for local entities to attain designation. A dedicated state program marketing plan and guide for multi-byway marketing outlined more specific activities to increase awareness, especially with targeted audiences—mature travelers and niche audiences (cultural heritage travelers, birders, bicyclists, motorcycle clubs, and antique car clubs). These plans also provided instruction for the state committee to facilitate interest in and support of the byways program through public outreach and partnerships, specific signage guidelines and marketing strategies.

*Kansas Scenic Byways renamed Kansas Byways: To represent the quality and diversity of the designated road-based experiences, the state byways committee elected to adopt a name change that is more reflective and inclusive of the various (current and potential) designations – scenic, historic, and backroads. This name change also follows the national program’s evolution.*

### **The Opportunity for the Future**

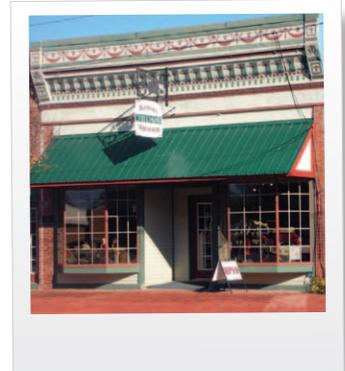
With a collection of both state and nationally designated byways, the Kansas program now needs to focus on maintaining the integrity of the byways brand, strengthening local capacity and marketing the collection. This shift, in part, is due to the need for quality assurance—to deliver the desired experiences along the designated byways—that travelers want and expect. As the program matures, local byway committees need to take ownership of the development, interpretation and stewardship of their byway—using current corridor management plans as their road map for successful implementation and measurement.

With local committees overseeing the responsibilities of byway designation and fulfilling the brand promise, the state byways committee and their respective agencies can focus on leveraging resources to lead the program into the next phase of growth. The byways program can then demonstrate its contribution to the state’s triple bottom line with a positive economic, social and environmental impact for Kansans through increased tourism and stewardship.



# STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN 2020

To move the Kansas Byways Program forward, the state advisory committee has crafted the following mission and decade-long strategy to realize the 2020 vision.



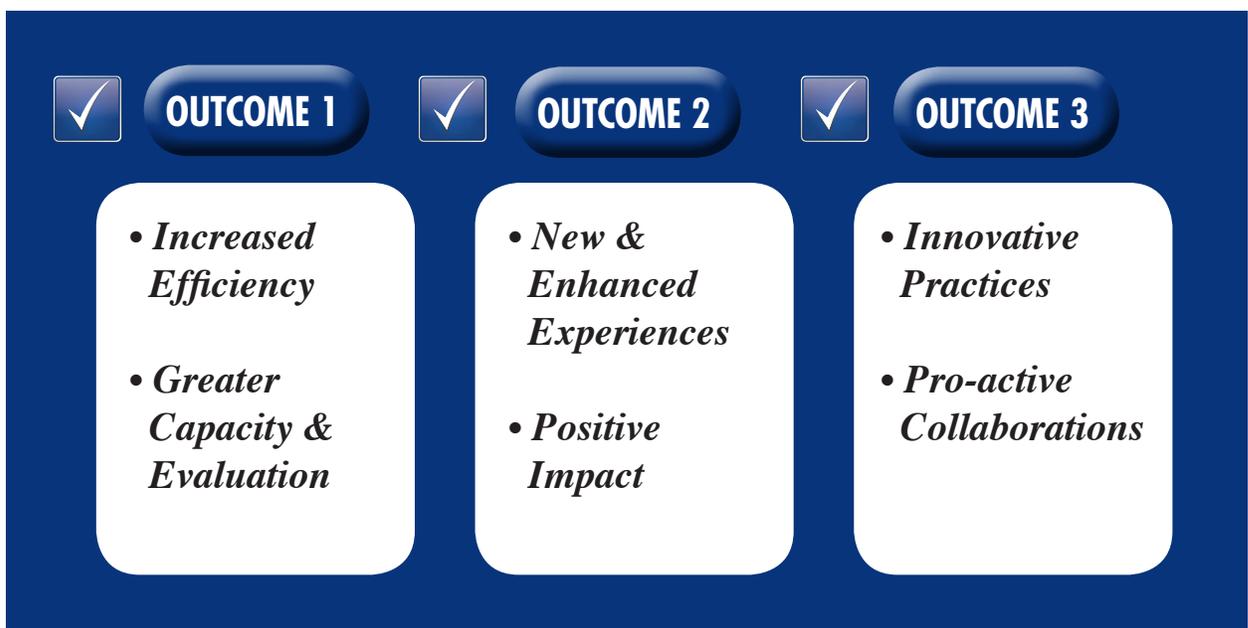
## *Mission:* *Quality Road-Based Experiences*

Following the national model, the Kansas Byways Program preserves, enhances and interprets the intrinsic scenic and historic qualities of the state through a designation system of quality road-based experiences that provide social and economic benefits to visitors, local businesses, government and Kansas residents.

With state and local partners, the program provides leadership and assistance to local byway coordinators and communities to manage, sustain and enhance the byways, their assets and experiences.

## **Managing and Marketing for Program Growth**

Three key outcomes are essential to realize the state byway program vision and focus on the mission. The Kansas State Byways Program Committee and its member agencies, constituent groups, and designated byway committees, will implement specific strategies to help stimulate and sustain the state byway program in the next decade:





## OUTCOME ONE:

*Enhanced efficiency, effectiveness  
and greater capacity*

### Key Actions to Realize Outcome One:

- Streamlining processes and administration into an annual system of deliverables and expectations for evaluation
- Utilizing technology to communicate with and among byway stakeholders (state committee, designated byway committees)
- Demonstrating annual impact of designation and byway program
- Focusing on showcasing intrinsic qualities, particularly “scenic” and “historic,” to articulate the benefit and impact of the state byway program.

A pro-active communication strategy is vital for ensuring collaboration among the byways and with the state byways committee members. The need for better and more pro-active communication with the state, especially since the transition from contract personnel back to KDOT, is a priority identified during the research phase. Explaining the process and schedule for relaying information, identifying roles and responsibilities, and clearly articulating the expectations of each stakeholder is critical to implement and manage a sustainable byways program. The local byways committees and state committee members need leadership and direction to accomplish the tasks at hand, and leverage resources to the fullest potential. Creating and offering tools—such as a listserv, dedicated website, and contact directory—are important to help stakeholders work smarter, more efficiently, and be more accountable. Perhaps most critical to future growth and sustainability of the byway program is evaluation and regular progress reports.

**Deliverables:** The Kansas Byways Program will have a **strong organizational framework** where the entire collection, along with all stakeholders and member agencies engaged in the administration of the program, will work systematically and pro-actively to **accomplish the mission** and realize the vision. **Measurable accomplishments** will be tracked annually and the program’s demonstrated impact will be recognized at the state, local and resident level.

### Key Benchmarks:

- **More efficient use of resources at the state and local level**
- **Greater consistency in designated byway administration and management**
- **More effective communication among state and local byways constituents and partners**
- **Increased recognition for the program’s impact and leadership**



## OUTCOME TWO:

*Enhanced byway experiences  
provide positive impact*

### Key Actions to Realize Outcome 2:

- Enhancing authentic byway experiences to attract visitors and their spending
- Engaging more businesses, partners and other stakeholders in the byways program
- Strengthening the capacity of the byways program
- Attracting new funding to strengthen the byways program and experiences
- Demonstrating national leadership through innovative marketing programs and development initiatives.

**Deliverables:** The Kansas Byways Program will demonstrate an impressive **return on investment (ROI)** through a measureable increase in visitation, an increase in economic impact for local byway communities, and increase in community pride.

To maximize the opportunity of byways designation, strong, sustainable organizations will manage the units of the collection and earn income to independently and collectively enhance local products and services, offering more authentic and diverse travel experiences. The committees of the Kansas Byways will also embrace and enforce destination stewardship as a way to protect, enhance and promote the intrinsic qualities and scenic character of designated byways. The state committee will offer the leadership and partnerships to leverage marketing, management and measurement of byways activities.

### Key Benchmarks:

- **Pro-active implementation of designated byway CMPs**
- **Greater local capacity, leadership, funding and support of the state byways program**
- **Increase in experiences to market to and offer visitors interested in Kansas Byways**
- **Additional benefits and increase in defined impact of Kansas Byways collection**



## OUTCOME THREE:

*A flexible, sustainable,  
and valued program*

### Key Actions to Realize Outcome 3:

- Recognizing innovative programming with incentives
- Expanding program into new state agencies, partnerships and sponsorships
- Increasing funding and support for state and local byways programs
- Evolving and adapting program to address trends, action opportunities, and allow seamless transition across government agencies and administrations.

**Deliverables:** The Kansas Byways Program will have champions at every level of state government and throughout the state due to the **positive image and quality experiences** afforded by its Byways Collection of designated byways. The Collection will become a major asset in **marketing the state to attract national and international visitors**.

Local leaders will utilize updated corridor management plans to pro-actively implement the necessary policies, procedures and programs to **protect, enhance and promote** the byways and intrinsic qualities. The local byway committees will continue to learn and grow, attract new partners and collaborate with business, government, and civic groups to ensure goals are met and outcomes delivered.

Visitors will engage in **destination stewardship**, recognizing the important assets that are offered in Kansas Byways experiences. Residents will value and take pride in these assets, and recognize their contribution to livable communities.

### Key Benchmarks:

- **Additional agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs) and private sector engagement in byways program**
- **Greater recognition for byways program, benefits, experiences**
- **More visitors to Kansas due to quality and diversity of the Byways Collection**
- **Recognized benefits to local residents because of increased spending by visitors along designated byways**

## State Program Leadership

State Byways Committee's Role is to:

- Lead state initiatives that increase experiences, visitation/economic impact, and market position
- Champion state program with partners and stakeholders
- Identify and cultivate partners
- Leverage resources to realize positive impact.

State Strategies must support:

- Byways Program's mission
- Program's competitive advantages (specific to the situation)
- Meeting specified financial criteria (ROI)
- Meeting quality criteria
- Meeting criteria related to the program's geographic and customer scope
- Positioning the state program as a (national) leader.

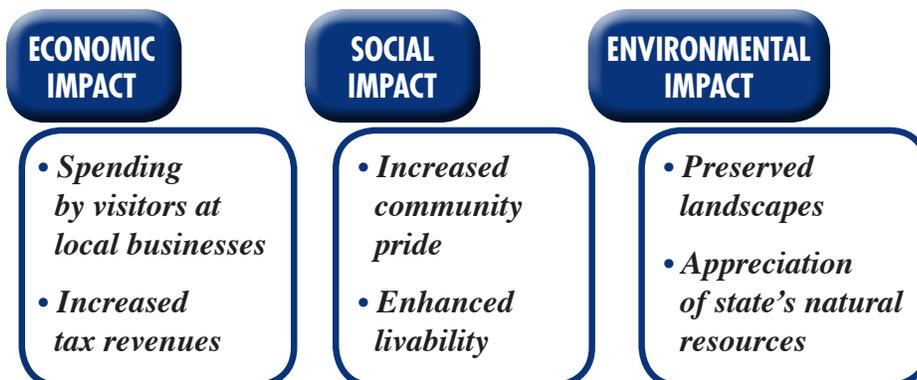
State Byways Committee serves in an advisory role, responsible for:

- Integrating specific technical and financial needs into byway programs and services of their respective agency
- Offering their agency expertise to specific local byway requests and state-led initiatives
- Introducing and engaging their agency network to byway programs and initiatives
- Reviewing and analyzing designation information, applications and performance evaluation
- Ensuring the state program's integrity and compliance with agency and/or federal guidelines and policies.

*"The word government is from a Greek word, which means 'to steer.'  
The job of government is to steer, not to row the boat." – E.S. Savas*

### Assisting Local Byways to Meet Designation Responsibilities:

- Facilitate collection of designated byway baseline data for future comparison and evaluation
- Create an on-line and printed "tool kit" to provide specific forms and program instruction
- Clearly and pro-actively outline requirements for maintaining designation
- Consistently and frequently communicate with local constituents to ensure appropriate program action and engagement
- Provide, and update bi-annually, a Byways Resource Directory as an information source for state, regional and federal financial and technical assistance
- Articulate designation benefits and responsibilities.





# *State Strategies Needed for Program Sustainability, and Increased Impact*

## *A. Pro-Active Program Management*

*A.1 • Fostering Stewardship*

*A.2 • Telling Our Stories: Authentic Interpretation*

*A.3 • Enhancing the Byways Quality*

*Experience Development*

## *B. Funding*

## *C. Protecting Brand Integrity*

*C.1 • Byway Designation*

*C.2 • Byway Signage*

*C.3 • Byway De-Designation*

## *D. Marketing the Collection*

## *E. Measuring Success*

In partnership with the local committees managing the respective Kansas designated byways, the state can advance the program into becoming a national byway leader and model program. With mutual respect and understanding of the important stewardship, experience enhancement and marketing responsibilities, the Kansas byways community will journey together toward realizing the 2020 vision. Recognizing the potential to leverage funding and technical expertise, Kansas and its byways collection can become a national program leader offering superior road-based experiences enhancing the state's image and providing positive benefits to local residents, resources and visitors.

*“Today’s entrepreneurial leaders know that communities are healthy when their families, neighborhoods, schools, voluntary organizations, and businesses are healthy—and that government’s most profound role is to steer these institutions to health.”*

*– From David Osborne and Ted Gaebler,  
“Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit  
is Transforming the Public Sector” (1992)*



# A: PRO-ACTIVE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT



In the past two decades, other states and the national byways program have advanced from merely designating scenic roads to focusing on more comprehensive “preservation, enhancement, and promotion” strategies. Nationally, the grass-roots led program has engaged diverse groups of partners to embrace the concept of byway management and destination stewardship for the enjoyment of current and future generations as well as contributing to the economic vitality of byway communities.

Kansas Byways Management Plans reflect these advancements in program policy and procedures, yet the current byways collection demonstrates little evidence of implementing the broader management and marketing strategies. Most of the tangible products branded along the state byways have been developed by KDOT in the form of signage and interpretive kiosks. The two nationally designated byways—Flint Hills and Wetlands & Wildlife—have enhanced their respective byways with additional interpretive programs, in part due to the availability of federal funding and local resources.

## *Byways Program Structure, Capacity and Responsibilities*

During meetings with local byways committees and through state stakeholder interviews, the consulting team identified a general lack of awareness about the membership, role and contributions of the Kansas State Byways Committee. The recent transition from an outside contractor to in-house KDOT management and coordination of the byways program has created some confusion among byways stakeholders regarding current state program contacts and services.

Some local byways committees viewed designation as the end result, rather than the beginning of a responsibility, and now do not have the capacity to effectively manage the byway program. Other local committees interested in implementing the activities identified in their corridor management plan do not have sufficient resources (time and money). The disparity among designated byway committee structures, membership and participation presents a go-forward challenge for the state program to comprehensively manage byways activities, implement pro-active solutions, market strategically, and measure effectiveness.

## **State Policies Recommended for Byways Program Management**

- Implement a transparent administrative process, including dissemination and documentation of plans and policies, state committee meeting notes and program activities.
- Coordinate a consistent communications exchange posted on a pro-active calendar. Activities include quarterly meetings of state advisory committee, state coordinator conference calls with designated byway coordinators, state visit to and assessment of each byway, annual (virtual or

in-person) meeting with all byways committees, and on-line distribution of materials.

- There is enough content and communication exchange desired by local byways and state partners to provide a dedicated website (or convert the existing one) as a resource portal for byways planning and administration. KDOT should host an on-line resource for the local byways communities, either by special blog or information page on the website. For instance, it would be helpful to be able to download the management plan, other byways documents, applications and/or criteria for new byways, state byways committee meeting notes, and other FAQ such as policies for requesting signage, calendar for grants, etc. Links to state byways committee websites and national agencies and granting information is also a desired component of a stakeholder resource website.

- Training and education is available, along with instructive tools, to help the current collection of byways committees transition to a more structured system of program implementation and evaluation.

*LEARN ABOUT THE INDIAN PEACE TREATY, CARRY NATION AND FRONTIER LIFE AT THE MEDICINE LODGE STOCKADE ON THE GYPSUM HILLS SCENIC BYWAY.*



# A.1: FOSTERING STEWARDSHIP

Ongoing protection and preservation is considered a major goal of the byways program.<sup>7</sup> “To protect and enhance the visual quality of the byway corridor” is also recommended as a component for a management plan.<sup>8</sup> “Controlling development that distracts from the visual quality” is identified as a basic element of the Kansas Scenic Roads Program.<sup>9</sup> As such, conservation/preservation is a key priority for the current state program and local byway communities to understand and address stewardship challenges and needs along designated byways.



The current *Byway Enhancement Guide* does not delve into specific conservation and preservation strategies such as easements, preservation guidelines, Secretary of Interior standards, NEPA guidelines, and other accepted (nationally, state, and contextual) policies and procedures. Guidance and input from the member agencies of the state byway committee, along with other non-government organizations, on best practices and preferred instruction and/or implementation policies, should be considered.

## State Program Policies for Fostering Stewardship

- Current CMPs are used as the benchmark for measuring the designated byway’s stewardship accomplishments and maintaining designation.
- The Kansas Byways Coordinator shall use an annual work plan and evaluation report to monitor the status of the designated byways’ intrinsic qualities and stewardship activities.
- Technical assistance, provided by the state byways coordinator and members of the state byways committee or their respective agencies, will focus on helping local committees of designated byways implement the appropriate conservation and preservation efforts to protect the intrinsic qualities and integrity of the byways.
- State program activities will respect the rights of property owners located adjacent to or on the byway, and support stewardship strategies of local byway committees.
- Where no current state policy exists, the Kansas Byways program will follow the FHWA policy or recommended strategy outlined by the America’s Byways Center until a dedicated state policy is created.
- The Kansas State Byways Coordinator shall maintain a record of the valuable intrinsic qualities in each of its designated byways. If no inventory is currently available for a designated byway, the local committee will submit one as part of their scheduled CMP update.



*ON THE WESTERN PLAINS HISTORIC BYWAY, MONUMENT VALLEY FEATURES STONE WALLS THAT WILL AMAZE ANY TRAVELER.*

## **State Stewardship Strategy**

A holistic approach to preservation and stewardship of the byways collection's intrinsic qualities allow the designated byways to embrace the state philosophy of quality management and marketing while increasing the positive economic and social impact locally. This approach also allows the byways program to apply CSS and livability strategies that further enhance the overall sustainability of byways and contribute to the national agenda.

Using the *10 Pillars of Rural Tourism Market Competitiveness* as a template for the byways program's stewardship strategy, the collection can also strategically and holistically protect, sustain and enhance its intrinsic qualities for current and future generations.

# 10 Pillars of Rural Tourism Market Competitiveness

For byways, the 10 pillars (modified from the original Adventure Travel Development Index<sup>10</sup>) represent the factors necessary to cultivate excellent byway experiences.

## 1. Government Support

*Government policies, which support and foster sustainable tourism development and asset stewardship, are crucial to cultivating an excellent byway experience because they safeguard the destination's natural, historic and cultural resources and provide a positive investment climate for the private sector.*

## 2. Safety and Security

*Traveler and local community safety are at the core of positive experiences. In the byways context safety and security takes into account lighting and zoning, for example, and also focuses on protecting fragile sites from vandalism and respecting private property rights.*

## 3. Tourism Infrastructure

*Byway visitors take advantage of both “hard” and “soft” tourism infrastructure. “Soft” tourism infrastructure can include trail maps, accessible information on heritage and culture, tour operators/outfitters, and training programs for tourism providers including guides/interpreters and lodges. “Hard” tourism infrastructure includes physical products such as roads, trails, hotels and visitor centers. Hard infrastructure may take substantial capital investment and years to develop, while soft infrastructure can be developed with comparatively little capital outlay.*

## 4. Natural Resources

*Byway visitors want untrammled and well-managed natural resources. Byways with unusual or rare natural resources, which are well managed and not exploited, will earn high praise from visitors and result in sustained market competitiveness. Natural resources include geologic formations, scenic views, native flowers and grasses, plants and animals, lakes, rivers and other bodies of water.*

## 5. Cultural and Historic Resources

*Byway visitors are as keen to learn about the culture and history of a place as they are to explore nature. For these travelers, being able to experience local culture and heritage in an authentic way is a sought-after outcome of the travel investment.*

*Local culture includes music, handmade craft, performing arts, ethnic festivals and cuisine. Heritage relates to the people, industry and historical events that helped shape what the byway is today. It is evident in*

*architecture, commerce, commemorations, landscapes and legacies. Destinations encouraging local people to preserve their culture and heritage—even as modern influences continue to shape and evolve local customs and history—often appeal to byway visitors.*

## 6. Activity Resources

*This category recognizes a byway's competitiveness relative to its ability to support a range of activities such as cycling, climbing, hiking or bird watching. With obvious connection to natural resources, the activity resources category identifies specific opportunities for specialized or niche market activities. Byways with unique resources lending themselves to the development of a particular sport—such as cliffs excellent for climbing, or forests with a wealth of bird species—may find themselves with a market opportunity and sustained competitive advantage. Volunteering is another “activity” to consider organizing for visitors.*

## 7. Entrepreneurship

*A key outcome for the state program is increased economic activity along designated byways. Byway communities, which support and engage businesses in development and marketing, and also provide young entrepreneurs with innovative ideas the means to thrive, are more likely to be competitive among byway travelers. Developing policies that support entrepreneurship is therefore very important.*

## 8. Humanitarian/Human Development

*Capacity building, leadership development and community engagement (in volunteer activities and celebrations, for example) are key human development strategies for byways sustainability.*

## 9. Health and Well-being

*The well being of residents is important for two reasons:*  
*a. A healthy local population is more likely to be able to foster and nurture new businesses and to care for its resources responsibly*  
*b. Areas where healthcare is readily available are better able to support visitors and attract potential residents.*

*Using the byway to increase the activity level of residents, interact with nature, and engage in destination stewardship connects local people to place and enhances the overall well being of residents. This category, combined with safety and security, demonstrates the importance of livability to sustaining an attractive byway that is valued by both resident and visitor.*

## 10. Image

*A byway's image can be one of the most malleable aspects of market competitiveness, but it is also frequently managed as a way of guiding sustainable market development. A byway's image for sustainability and activity opportunities will attract travelers who value these aspects. Through their visitation and expenditures, these people will support the destination's ongoing sustainable development strategies.*

# A.2: TELLING OUR STORIES: AUTHENTIC INTERPRETATION



State and national byways are designated on demonstration of intrinsic visual qualities—scenic, natural, historic, cultural, recreational, and archeological. Conveying the unique stories associated with these assets is important to engage visitors and residents. Education is a key strategy to develop partners and supporters in byways programs and activities.

A formal definition of interpretation relevant in the tourism sector is: “a **mission-based communication** process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource.”<sup>11</sup> In the Kansas Byways context, “interpretation” means identifying and sharing the stories of Kansas’ geology, history, industry, agriculture, ranching and other important and unique assets.

An important aspect of the interpretative strategy for the state program will be how the byways are explained for visitors who may not share a common knowledge base with the people of Kansas.

Many of the designated byways have not showcased their intrinsic qualities to the full potential required to attract new markets and repeat customers. Discovering and interpreting local stories, connections to other byways, cultural landscapes, and trivia will allow the byways to link with larger stories (especially for the Kansas 150 celebration). Showcasing new stories, under-marketed attractions, the entire byway collection and personal interests will enhance the appeal of byway experiences. Developing tailored itineraries along these story lines, or via designated periods of time, is another interpretation opportunity to educate potential visitors and engage local residents.

## State Byways Program Guidelines

- *Identification:* Each designated byway shall identify and select a minimum of three distinct stories to describe the intrinsic qualities of the route and its contributing assets. These distinct stories serve as the basis of a dedicated byway interpretive plan or are integrated into the byway’s corridor management plan.
- *Access:* The designated byway’s distinctive stories are used as the foundation for educating travelers and residents and developing/providing byway experiences.
- *Integration:* The designated byways will seek opportunities to link their core messages with other byway messages as a way to: a) promote the overall collection; and b) encourage visitors to stay longer in the state.
- *Monitoring:* Each designated byway committee shall monitor the success of its interpretation plan and implementation.

## State Policies for Authentic Interpretation

- Each byway is required to develop, as part of its CMP or as a stand-alone document, an interpretation plan to demonstrate how and to whom its important stories will be shared. This interpretation component is to be updated at a minimum of every five years, in concert with the schedule for updating the byway’s CMP.

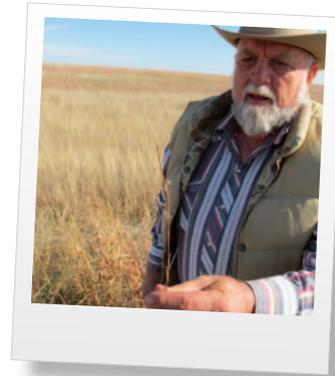
- The State Byways Committee shall offer a bi-annual interpretation tool—training or funding opportunity, program or reference material—for designated byways communities to learn about new interpretation trends or relevant techniques.
- The State Byways Committee will present a menu of potential interpretation training opportunities, activities or reference materials to the Kansas Byways to determine their interests and priorities. This menu will be based on the resources available and offered by the member agencies of the state byways committee. The selected interpretation tool will be integrated into the Kansas Byways’ annual calendar of activities, assignments and deadlines.
- The State Byways Coordinator will oversee the construction and maintenance of at least one interpretive kiosk along each byway.
- The State Byways Committee shall offer assistance, as available, from its respective agencies to help the collection fund and implement its interpretation goals.
- The State Byways Committee shall monitor the effectiveness of the designated byway’s interpretation through review and analysis of the designated byway’s work plan and evaluation (form completed and submitted annually to the State Byways Coordinator.)

## 10 Tips for Telling Your Story

1. Conduct geological, historical or cultural research to obtain documented facts about the intrinsic qualities of the byway. Explore local tax/government records, deeds, and newspapers for information and sources. Use state and national archives to confirm accuracy of information (National Register of Historic Places, State Historic Preservation Office, State Humanities Office, State Arts Council, etc.).
2. Ask “So what?” Define why your story is important, what impact it had and to whom, and why a visitor (or local resident) should care.
3. Define your audience(s): who are you telling your story to?
4. Make the story relevant to the target audience. Connect your story to the desired activities of the audience, and to what is happening today.
5. Research how the audience prefers to receive information—through personal guides, audiotapes, self-guided brochures, interactive exhibits, mobile applications, etc.
6. Define the methods that are best suited for your byway: to enrich the experience, engage the audience, and/or manage capacity.
7. Immerse the senses; how can you taste, touch, smell, see, and hear the story along your byway?
8. Who is the authority to tell the story: Is there an individual or group of characters that bring your story to life, or provide a unique perspective on the story? How can the byway committee become an expert source of information?
9. Make sure locals “get it” and are excited and aware of the story—use them as sources, test audiences and ambassadors.
10. Identify and share where visitors can go to learn more about your stories, including references (such as books, websites), as well as businesses, restaurants, communities and other places along the byway.

# A.3: ENHANCING THE BYWAYS QUALITY EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

To attract visitors and encourage their spending along the designated byways, the state and local committees must focus on expanding existing experiences. Through appropriate cultivation and development of local attractions and businesses, local byway committees and their gateway communities can sustain and enhance the quality and quantity of experiences available along Kansas Byways.



Ongoing byway enhancements are identified as a major goal of the Kansas Byways program.<sup>12</sup> The current *Scenic Byway Enhancement Guide* describes how local committees can organize and prepare for enhancement. The Guide also includes detailed background information on various development and enhancement components as well as comprehensive instruction on how to implement these concepts. Topics such as roadside vegetation, site location guidelines for scenic interpretation, addressing litter and graffiti, rest area and visitor center design, and other development activities are thoroughly detailed in the Guide, along with a comprehensive list of online resources.

This plan supports the tactics outlined in the current *Scenic Byway Enhancement Guide* and offers the following policies and actions to further the quality and quantity of byway enhancements for the next decade.

## State Program Guidelines

Given the diversity of Kansas designated byways' intrinsic qualities and the interdependent way in which they contribute to the overall visitor and local community's experience, the state guidelines for cultivating superior byways experiences through enhancement of intrinsic qualities and supporting visitor services should be:

- Flexible, i.e., not overly prescriptive, allowing individual byway committees to define specific actions for themselves
- Broad enough to accommodate the expansive range of natural, cultural and constructed assets along the collection of Kansas Byways
- Instructional, to help each designated byway understand how the development and management of byway experiences affect the rest of the state collection
- Respectful of the interplay of diverse factors that influence both visitor and local experience of the designated byway.

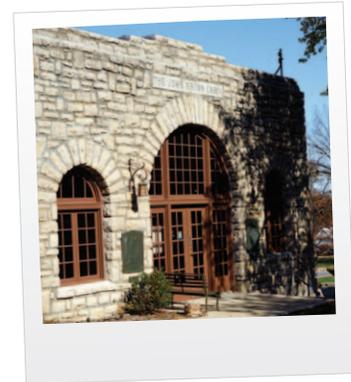
## State Policies Recommended for Developing and Enhancing Quality Byways Experiences

- The State Byways Committee will share information on existing state programs that could be tapped for byway enhancements to foster local committee implementation.
- The Kansas Department of Commerce, Travel & Tourism Division, shall advise local byways on the types of experiences desired by visitors to Kansas, as an opportunity to identify the best product development activities to implement annually.
- KDOT will maintain designated byway roads for maximum safety. At minimum, state and local transportation offices shall collaborate on policies for posting signage at safe zones (schools, churches, gateway communities, and fire/police stations.)
- The State Byways Coordinator will review and monitor development and construction of physical byway enhancements to ensure compatible design and program integrity.
- Historic structures along designated byways should be preserved and maintained according to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s standards. The Kansas State Byways Committee suggests that structures adjacent to historic structures follow state-directed design guidelines for construction compatibility with the byway’s intrinsic qualities.
- Cultural assets and “intangibles”—such as craft, cuisine, music and other performing arts and/or traditions—are recognized and utilized as part of the overall byways experience.
- The state encourages local jurisdictions to provide access to publicly held natural resources located along designated byways. Access features such as pullouts, overlooks or rest areas, which allow road users to pause and interact with the visual features offered by the designated byways will be created and maintained by, or with oversight and approval from, KDOT.
- The state encourages regular access for recreational activities on public-owned resources along designated byways.
- Designated byways shall encourage the engagement of private businesses located along or near the byway and in gateway communities to participate in the offering of products and services that enhance the byway experience and increase visitor spending.
- The state advocates support for local operational and resource enhancements, as recommended in the original plan,<sup>13</sup> modified to respect local land ownership and stewardship:
  - › Roadway improvements should aid vehicle operations without harming the visual character of the scenic byway; improvements may include shoulder widening or repair/replacement of bridges or culverts that may limit access
  - › Landscape management is maintained along the byway right-of-way
  - › Planting of native vegetation is compatible with the area served by the byway
  - › Screening, removal or relocation of visual elements that may distract from the character of the byway, and encourage protection techniques to manage inappropriate development
  - › Restoration or rehabilitation of features that are part of the byway’s intrinsic resources.



# B: FUNDING

The appeal of byways—as evidenced by the increasing numbers of inquiries received by Travel & Tourism—provides a case for investing in the human and financial capital to manage and market these state assets. With two nationally designated byways, Kansas also has the potential to attract additional funding and recognition from other public and private partners, federal agencies participating in and supportive of the byways program, and to leverage resources through networking and peer collaboration.



An important 2020 goal is to identify winning strategies that allow Kansas to bundle its financial needs into national funding packets and applications that can benefit both state and local byways programs. Recent awards—such as the 2009 digital media grant—demonstrate the viability of this approach. It can also enhance Kansas’ ability to capture a greater share of the national funding available and be more competitive among state programs.

TOP 10 STATES TO RECEIVE AWARDS—(2000-2009)	
State	Total Funds
ILLINOIS	12,761,908
WASHINGTON	11,690,728
FLORIDA	11,182,834
MARYLAND	11,110,368
NEW YORK	10,551,569
WYOMING	10,541,400
CALIFORNIA	9,647,144
OREGON	9,535,132
MASSACHUSETTS	8,849,901
ALABAMA	8,399,449
<b>Kansas</b>	<b>2,257,791</b>

Source: FHWA

NEIGHBORING/COMPARABLE STATES:	
State	Total Funds
SOUTH DAKOTA	3,359,514
IOWA	6,850,727
NEW MEXICO	5,048,350
MINNESOTA	6,868,682
COLORADO	6,788,881
NEBRASKA	4,542,646

With byways voicing the need for help with funding and the inability to match grants over \$1000, identifying sources for funding—both at the federal level and as a local/state match—is critical to the continued growth and sustainability of the program. It is also important to identify other technical and human resources that can enhance or offset funding needs for the Byways Collection.



# C: PROTECTING BRAND INTEGRITY

To maintain the quality and integrity of the state's collection of byways and ensure compliance with designation guidelines, specific responsibilities should be regularly articulated to current and proposed byways. The *2009 Enhancement Guide* provides extensive information and detailed instruction for a variety of development and management practices that could be used as part of the criteria for byway performance. Incentivizing designated byway committees to use the instruction outlined in the Guide may help stimulate increased—or continued—quality and consistency of byway management.



“Resource loss” is suggested as a possible reason for designation termination in the Byway System Management and Growth section of the *Kansas Scenic Byways Program Development & Policies Manual*.<sup>14</sup> The manual also suggests “periodic monitoring” and that “each byway designated under the Kansas Byways Program will be field evaluated every five to seven years to assure that visual quality and character are intact”.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, a de-designation process is considered an important quality control strategy to maintain byway integrity and program sustainability.



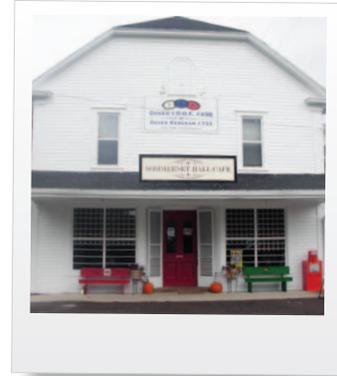
A POST MADE OF  
ROCK IN POST ROCK.

## State Policies Recommended to Protect Byways Integrity

- Minimum standards for maintaining designation are established for all byways. Byways designated prior to June 2010 will have three years to comply with the minimum standards and the state will provide technical assistance to help the designated byways achieve these minimum standards as a strategy to maintain the program's integrity.
- A transparent state program designates and monitors the integrity of qualified byways, historic roads and backroads.
- The state byways program, through the state byways coordinator and its committee, proactively communicates the minimum criteria and responsibilities for current and future byway committees to maintain designation.
- The state offers a de-designation process to allow designated byways to voluntarily withdraw from program participation or the state to initiate the process as a safeguard for the integrity of the overall collection.

# C.1: BYWAY DESIGNATION

The Kansas Byways program is designed as a local collaboration driven by private citizens, civic groups, government agencies, businesses, and other stakeholders. However, the local entity—known as the local byway committee—is responsible for the initial identification of a proposed byway and determining whether the road(s) may be suitable for designation. Local groups, in particular local governments, must also develop a comprehensive corridor management plan (CMP) to address long-term preservation, management, promotion and enhancement of the resources represented by the proposed byway.



GREAT DINING ALONG THE  
NATIVE STONE BYWAY

When a local byway committee considers a road (or roads) for nomination for designation, the SBC serves as an advisor in the process, working with the local group to provide a clear understanding of the timelines, policies and procedures. A local representative is appointed as the initial point of contact for the grass-roots organization seeking byway designation.

As soon as a local interest group indicates they are interested in having a byway designated, the SBC will begin (either by phone, email, mail, in person or combination of communication methods) explaining the benefits of designation and the step-by-step process to reach designation. The SBC should plan to travel the proposed route with the local contact as soon as possible or when appropriate.

A transparent designation process is designed as a series of steps for local groups, KDOT, State Byways Coordinator and Kansas State Byways Committee to complete. In order for the Kansas State Byways Committee to act in an advisory role, complete familiarity with each phase of the nomination and designation process is essential.

*How will designation benefit local stakeholders as well as other residents of Kansas?  
Successful Designation as a Kansas Byway can...*

- Build partnerships among private citizens, local interest groups, local governments, state government and others
- Allow grassroots organizations to identify and evaluate roads suitable for designation
- Inspire residents and visitors to support and engage in stewardship of the state's natural, historic and cultural assets
- Invest in the preservation, conservation, interpretation and management of Kansas' unique assets
- Involve businesses, government, civic organizations, residents and other stakeholders in the development and management of road-based scenic, recreation, historic and cultural experiences
- Interpret the state's geology, history, industry, agriculture, ranching and other important assets
- Provide integrity and a standard of excellence and quality for Kansas' destinations
- Deliver authentic, quality experiences resulting in an improved image of Kansas at the local, state and national level.

After designation, the goal of every local byway committee should be to exceed the minimum criteria for designation. However, to maintain the integrity of the entire collection of Kansas Byways after designation, local support groups must demonstrate or pledge that **all** minimum criteria will be met when actual designation occurs.

### *Minimum Criteria for Designation and Management of Kansas Byways*

#### 1. Significant Intrinsic Quality(ies)

Possess and meet the definition of at least one of the six intrinsic qualities as provided by the National Scenic Byway Program (scenic, natural, historic, cultural, archeological and recreational features).

#### 2. Plan to Support the Preservation, Enhancement and Promotion of the Identified Intrinsic Quality(ies)

- a. A Corridor Management Plan is created and strategies outlined for implementation.
- b. An annual work plan is in place that details specific outcomes for the committee.
- c. Local municipalities must pass a resolution of support and have considered local zoning or other land use strategies to protect, preserve and enhance the intrinsic quality(ies) of the Byway.
- d. Land or space is identified for kiosks, interpretation, pedestrian or bike paths and overlooks. Communities should be prepared to promote and interpret (tell the story of) the Byway's intrinsic quality(ies) to deliver an authentic experience for travelers.
- e. Local ordinance is required from each municipality along the corridor specifying how the placement of new billboards, displays or devices will be prohibited on the byway in conformance with 23 U.S.C. 131 (s). The local municipality(ies) along the proposed byway should enforce its/their own ordinance(s), or address why/when exclusions are permitted.

#### 3. Provides Quality Visitor Experiences

- a. Has a uniformly high visual quality and diversity along its entire length.
- b. Has at least 10 positive visual elements on the final Route Evaluation Form.
- c. Encourages a leisurely pace of travel, as a strategy, to extend the time (and money) spent on the byway.
- d. All roads, with the exception of backroads, are paved and can accommodate tour buses, large recreational vehicles, pedestrian and bicycle traffic.
- e. Major assets and contributing resources should be directly on or near the byway, with businesses, government, civic organizations, residents and other stakeholders involved in the development and management of road-based scenic, recreation, historic and cultural experiences. (For reference, National Designation allows major assets contributing to the intrinsic quality to be located within a mile of the byway.)

#### 4. Sustainability in the Form of Community(ies) and Organizational Support for the Proposed Byway

- a. An individual is named Byway Coordinator and is the state's point of contact for all byway-related activities.
- b. A subsequent Local Byway Committee is designated and responsible for creating, directing and implementing activities related to the protection, management and promotion of the proposed Byway. Committee members should include representatives from the tourism industry, historical society, preservation or conservation organization, business, government, civic organization and community-at-large (see Toolkit for Designated Byway Committee Administration).
- c. Local Byway Committee must meet at least four times a year, take minutes, be able to collect and disperse funds and have a staggered succession plan for committee officers.
- d. Committee must pledge to communicate quarterly with other stakeholders and annually with local government and elected officials. This communication may occur in person, electronically, mail or other appropriate vehicle.
- e. The committee pledges to complete performance evaluations as part of the annual work plan and CMP.

## C.2: BYWAY SIGNAGE

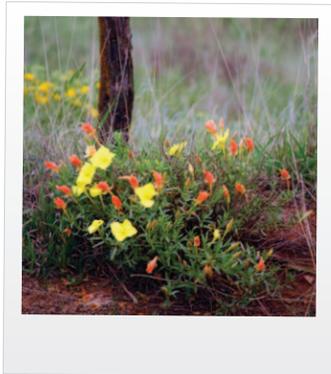
Perhaps one of the most vital aspects—and recognized benefits—of byway designation is signage. Providing sufficient and appropriate identification and directional signage for the designated byways is a major responsibility for KDOT. However, the byway signage policies and procedures must be considered in context with the entire state’s signing strategies and also with regard to the traveler. Understanding and integrating the byway program needs in concert with other transportation and state agency signage projects requires careful coordination and pro-active planning.

### State Signage Policies

- To foster brand recognition for the collection, KDOT will review byway program signage policies and procedures every five years to consider efficient ways to update, integrate and maintain the signage system.
- To maintain a current image for the collection, every 10 years KDOT will review the need to enhance or update the state byway program logo and determine the feasibility of design/production costs for changing the collection’s graphic philosophy.
  - › If deemed appropriate and viable (especially if new signs are required for historic or backroads designations, or to integrate with other designated projects), KDOT will create and distribute new signage and usage guidelines for the collection.
- The Secretary of Transportation, through the state signing engineer, will approve the design and color of the official state byway sign and the local designated byway identification signs prior of production and placement.
  - › Promotion of “Kansas Byways” begins with the initial signing and “opening” of the route.
- Official byway signing is the responsibility of KDOT and local jurisdictions through which the byway travels, accomplished in part with placement of the official Kansas Byways Sign.
  - › Additional directional and informational signs may be erected for each designated byway to help navigate the route from various access points or entryways.
  - › Signs will be installed by KDOT on all state and federal roads.
  - › Signs on roads under the jurisdiction of others will be installed based on interagency agreements that may be reached between KDOT and the appropriate local agency.
- The designated byway sign and sign placement shall be in substantial compliance with FHWA standards and requirements outlined in the current edition of the *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)*; all signs shall be installed consistent with state safety practices and policies.
- If the local byway wants brown attraction signs along the highway, the local committee must fill a Tourism Attraction Signage Application (available from Travel & Tourism, on state website), which is then reviewed/approved by Travel & Tourism and send on to KDOT for processing.
- Until KDOT is able to fund a total replacement of all currently designated byways signs to reflect the “Kansas Byways” name change, existing “scenic”, “historic” and “backroads” signage will be used; Travel & Tourism and other members of the Kansas State Byways Committee will use “Kansas Byways” as the program’s marketing name.
- If a state byway also achieves national designation, KDOT will work with the local byway to erect triple signs (America’s Byways signs, state byway sign, and local byway signs) until a new signage strategy is adopted.

# C.3: BYWAY DE-DESIGNATION

By definition, the Kansas Byways Program is designed to preserve the inherent scenic beauty and qualities of designated byways while providing opportunities for increased tourism and economic development. Local communities and leaders have invested time and resources to go through the



process of applying and securing designation as a demonstration of their commitment to protecting, managing and promoting their scenic, natural, and historic assets. The development of a detailed asset inventory and corridor management plan outlines the unique attributes to the designated byway and how it contributes to the goals/purpose of the overall program.

With designation from the Kansas Secretary of Transportation, the local byway committee is recognized for its successful effort. The local committee pledges to uphold the byway's designation by adhering to and implementing the corridor management plan. The local byway committee has the responsibility to—at minimum—maintain the intrinsic qualities and integrity of the designated byway for a superior visitor experience and

provide benefit to local residents/communities. Sometimes, however, the designation commitment is no longer evident. Therefore, to protect the overall integrity of the program and the marketability of the byways collection, two reasons exist for de-designation.

**1) Involuntary de-designation:** If the byway's intrinsic qualities (scenic, historic or natural intrinsic) or integrity are compromised or destroyed, or if the local committee is no longer able/willing to meet the criteria to administer and implement the byway corridor management plan, de-designation has to be considered by the Kansas State Byways Committee.

**2) Voluntary de-designation:** If the local byway committee is no longer able/willing to carry out the responsibilities of the byway program, the local entity may request to have designation removed.

A transparent and accountable De-Designation Process allows KDOT and the Kansas State Byways Committee to recommend appropriate actions as necessary to protect the integrity of the Kansas State Byways Collection and provide the local byway committees a way to initiate voluntary removal of their designation. Recent de-designations at the national level set a precedent for introducing this process.

## *Research findings regarding “de-designation:”*

- Byway System Management and Growth section of the *Kansas Scenic Byways Program Development Policies Manual* (1994): “resource loss” is suggested as a possible reason for designation termination.

- Top three reasons for decertification: 1) no/poor organizational structure to implement/ manage; 2) misappropriation of state funds/resources; 3) misrepresentation of products, services, experiences.

- Local byways committees concur that de-certification is appropriate if local support is no longer available/evident and/or intrinsic qualities are lost or no longer evident.

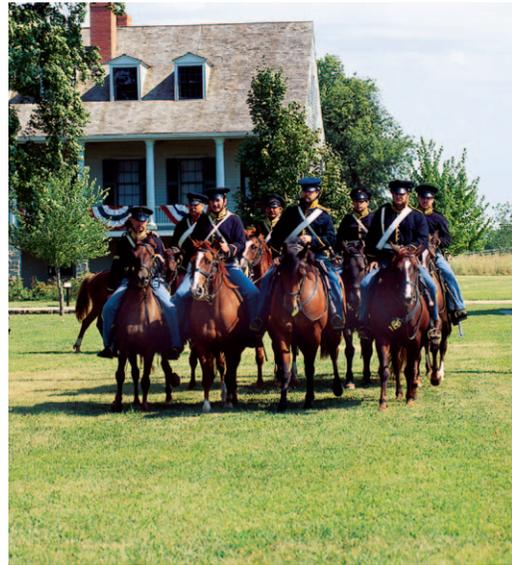
- State Stakeholder Survey: 88.9% favor policy for de-designating byways.

## Involuntary De-Designation

In January 2013, and annually thereafter, the Kansas State Byways Coordinator will evaluate designated byways based on documents submitted by local committees. The documents will verify that each byway meets or exceeds minimum designation criteria and performance-based benchmarks for the local byway committee. Failure to meet the minimum criteria can begin a six-step de-designation process. Yearly meetings with the Kansas State Byways Coordinator, monthly conference calls and other communication and benchmarks are designed to maintain and exceed the local byway committee's commitment to the corridor management plan, thus avoiding the de-designation process.

## Voluntary Request for Byway De-Designation

The local byway committee may determine that it no longer desires state designation. To initiate the voluntary process for de-designation, the local byway coordinator must send a written request for de-designation, outlining the reason(s) why de-designation is sought. The letter must be signed by those entities included in the original application and sent to the Kansas State Byways Coordinator. The Kansas State Byways Coordinator will acknowledge receipt of said request within 30 days and request any additional information needed to process the de-designation request. All written documents are forwarded to the Kansas State Byways Committee electronically for review. The de-designation request will be included on the next Kansas State Byways Committee meeting agenda.



The Kansas Byways Coordinator will notify the local committee and entities included in the original application in writing with the results of the request. If the request is approved, the impact as stated below will be included in the letter. Copies of the de-designation letter are sent to elected officials and entities included in the original application (or those currently in office) as well as local committee members and stakeholders. De-designation will take effect immediately.

## Impact of De-Designation

De-designation will result in a number of lost benefits to both the communities and the sites/attractions located along the designated byway. With de-designation, the byway will:

- Lose eligibility for byway federal and state grants
- Lose eligibility for America's Byway or All-American Road status
- Be removed from all Kansas Byways marketing materials, including printed brochures and website
- No longer be included on Kansas Official State Transportation Map
- Have all designation signs removed within 90 days of de-designation

## Re-instatement of Designation Status

After 18 months from the notification date of de-designation, the local committee may apply for reinstatement of Designated Kansas Byways status. The application must include:

- Evidence of a local byway committee that meets performance measures and designation criteria
- Evidence that the local byway committee is dedicated to protecting, promoting and enhancing the intrinsic qualities of the byway through presentation of support letters from local stakeholders, minutes from at least three meetings and other documents as required to demonstrate sustainable operations and management capabilities
- Current photos or video of the byway to provide evidence that the originally designated intrinsic qualities have not diminished or eroded
- Demonstration (through tangible documents) that the original reasons for de-designation have been corrected or removed
- Evidence of efforts to promote the byway
- Evidence of progress and modifications to the byway's CMP to indicate compliance with designation criteria
- Evidence of destination stewardship to protect, promote and enhance the intrinsic quality(ies) of the byway.



The Kansas State Byways Committee will review the application at the next scheduled committee meeting. Written results of the application review will be provided first to the Secretary of Transportation with instruction on whether the states byway committee is recommending or denying reinstatement. If reinstatement is advised, the State Byways Coordinator will prepare an internal recommendation document for signature/acceptance by all Kansas State Byways Committee members. The recommendation document will then be sent to the Kansas Secretary of Transportation for consideration. Reinstatement of status will restore all the privileges of a designated state byway.



# D: MARKETING THE COLLECTION



The Kansas Department of Commerce’s Travel & Tourism Division reports that “Driving Tours/Scenic Byways” tops the list of interests by requesters of the State Visitors Guide (Source: KT&T, 2009). A conversion study shows that “Driving Tours/Scenic Byways” is also the top activity for people actually traveling in Kansas (52%), followed closely by shopping (51%) and visiting museums (43%). These statistics are good news for byways. The research also demonstrates the need/desire for local communities located along the byways to offer items for purchase as a way to increase the economic impact from tourism.

The volume of requests for driving tours/scenic byways information is also increasing year-over-year. Travel & Tourism shows a steady increase of inquiries from 2003 to 2009:

Year	Contacts with SB Interest	Opting to offer Email Address	Contacts with any Interest indicated	% of Contacts with SB Interest	Enhanced Data Available	% Enhanced
2003	3,342	31	13,419	24.90%	2,030	61%
2004	2,343	19	9,647	24.29%	1,477	63%
2005	1,424	2	6,673	21.34%	997	70%
2006	11,817	40	18,902	62.52%	6,884	58%
2007	18,558	3,215	27,173	68.30%	11,140	60%
2008	16,658	5,171	22,263	74.82%	8,957	54%
2009	17,856	8,412	24,474	72.96%	9,701	54%
<b>Total Contacts</b>	<b>71,998</b>	<b>16,890</b>	<b>122,551</b>	<b>58.75%</b>	<b>41,186</b>	<b>57%</b>

Source: Kansas Department of Commerce, Travel and Tourism Division

In comparison to research reported in the 2006 marketing plan (using 1996 demographic information), the Kansas Byways inquirer is:<sup>16</sup>

	1996 Statistic	2009 Statistic
Age	48% age 45+ 45% age 25-45	37% age 50-64 34% age 35-49 16% age 65+ 13% age 19-34
Income	42% income over \$50,000 29% income \$25,000-\$50,000 20% income over \$100,000	29% income \$50,000 - \$74,999 17% income \$75,000 - \$99,999 15% income \$35,000 - \$49,999
Education	77% some college thru advanced degrees 23% high school or less	33% completed high school 29% completed some college 19% college graduate
Marital Status	72% married	78% married

## Fall 2009 Kansas Consumer Survey Results

In November 2009, a consumer e-survey was sent to more than 15,000 qualified e-mail addresses of households requesting information from the Kansas Travel & Tourism Division with a particular interest in scenic drives and byways. For completing the 23-question on-line survey, the respondents had the opportunity to win a gift basket of Kansas made products. The survey closed on December 1, 2009, and 84.7% of the 522 respondents say they visited Kansas in the past three years. Of these travelers, 38.9% visited a scenic byway.

Top activities engaged in while traveling on Kansas Byways:

1. Driving/sightseeing (80.4%)
2. Dining/eating out (62.5%)
3. Museum/Historic Site/Attraction (40.5%)
4. Wildlife refuge/birding/wildlife watching<sup>17</sup> (35.7%)
5. Shopping (33.9%)

The respondents rated the overall byway experience high, with almost 90% ranking it a 4 or 5 (where 5 was excellent.) Specific contributors to that high rating include overall scenic beauty, hospitality, retail/shopping, byway information and ease of finding the byways. Some areas of improvement include quality of dining options, convenience of rest stops and facilities, and quality of lodging.

The most popular resource for learning about the byways was the Official Kansas Transportation Map (44.7%) although the official state visitor guide (37.3%) was also a valued source.

The most desired trip planning information includes:

- historic sites (63.4%)
- history/background of town (62.1%)
- scenic overlooks (50.9%)
- museums (49.1%)
- state/national parks and monuments (47.8%)
- wildlife/photos and descriptions (46.6%)

More than half of these respondents (56.7%) plan to return to Kansas and visit a byway in the next two years.

### *What is a niche market?*

A niche market—also known as “focused market”—is the subset of the market on which a specific product is focusing; therefore the market niche defines the specific product features aimed at satisfying specific market needs, as well as the price range, production quality and the demographics that are intended to be impacted.



# 2020 Marketing Plan

As demonstrated by the research statistics above, the Kansas Byways represent a collection of unique assets to lure visitors and their spending to the state. Travel & Tourism already markets the Kansas Byways collection through its targeted advertising campaigns, via print materials, media outreach, domestic trade and consumer promotions, and on-line strategies. Several byways are also independently marketing their road-based experiences, gateway communities, thematic activities and itineraries for visitors. These combined marketing efforts have helped Kansas realize a steady growth in interest in and awareness of its designated byways collection.

Strategic marketing plays a huge role in realizing the 2020 Vision for Kansas Byways. Compelling marketing strategies and messages are key to enhancing the positive image of Kansas and stimulating economic prosperity from tourism. Targeting information to the most appropriate audiences is also important to leverage resources for the greatest return on investment (ROI): more visitors spending time and money in Kansas.

As referenced in the existing state byways marketing plan, niche markets provide the greatest potential for increasing visitation and spending. However, as recent market research shows, the traveler profiles for visitors to byways have changed in the past decade. Therefore, the new marketing plan recommends utilizing the following niche market information to make sound research-based decisions regarding advertising, promotions, media/public relations, on-line marketing, and development of collateral materials for Kansas Byways.

## Targeting Niche Markets

Kansas Byways will draw additional visitors to the region most effectively through targeted marketing to niche audiences. This means identifying special interest travel groups whose motivations for travel and desired activities align with the assets and experiences offered by the Kansas Byways collection.

Based on the initial analysis of the current byways collection, the niche markets most relevant for Kansas Byways—the markets that appeal to/are attracted by the assets of more than one byway—are:

- Bird Watching Enthusiasts
- Cyclists
- Cultural Heritage Travelers
- RVers/Campers

Selection of a niche market is based on its ability to help realize the state byways program mission: provide economic and social benefits to visitors, businesses, government and residents. A niche market is selected for statewide promotional activities if it appeals to or can benefit the *majority* of the designated byways (by increasing visitation and spending). For instance, the 150<sup>th</sup> State Anniversary provides a great opportunity to promote the cultural and historic qualities of Kansas' designated byways.

Travel & Tourism, and other members of the Kansas State Byways Committee, will include research and evaluation in its niche marketing process to determine the impact and future opportunities for the byways program. Niche market research may be conducted independently or integrated into other planned or existing research activities, and scheduled at various stages of the process

(baseline, preliminary, response to information, as exit surveys, or after visitation). Evaluation will be based on performance of the niche market against byways program mission and potential for future growth.

## Social Media Research

In 2007, **Forrester Research** published its first study on the usage of what they refer to as social technographics in various parts of the world with a tool called the “**Social Technographics Profile**”. The study is part of a broader research approach Forrester has developed based on what it calls the “Groundswell”: a spontaneous movement of people using on-line tools to connect, take charge of their own experiences and get what they need from each other (information, support, ideas, products, bargaining power, etc.).

Key facts about social media usage:

- A small group of “mass influencers” is responsible for 80% of impressions: 6.2% of online adults generate 80% of influence impressions and 13.8% generate 80% of influence posts
- Based on Forrester surveys, people in the U.S. create 256B influence impressions on social networks each year, with 62% coming from Facebook
- People in the U.S. create 1.64B influence posts on blogs, blog comments, discussion forums, and ratings and reviews each year, with 40% from blogs and blog comments (if 150 individuals view each of these posts, total impressions are another 250B-plus).

Key facts about social media and travel planning:

- Almost one-quarter of U.S. online travelers do not have a specific destination in mind when they start their trip planning
- On average, travelers today use 20 different sites when planning a trip and read about 30 reviews

(Source: TripAdvisor)

- Travelers are no longer asking “closed” questions that can be answered with an easy or direct response (e.g., how much for a flight or what hotel should I stay in); consumers are also asking open-ended questions like “where should I go next?”
- Two-thirds of travelers say that travel-generated content by consumers has an impact on travel purchases (Source: Compete, Inc. study)

- Traveler review sites account for more than 75% of unique visitor traffic to social travel sites

(Source: PCW)

- Nearly half of all online travelers aged 35 to 64 participated in a social network; 29% of seniors have

- 240M used mobile browsers in 2009, surpassing PCs for the first time; 30.8% of smartphone users accessed social networking sites via their mobile browsers in January 2010.

(Source: comScore)

## New Media

Perhaps one of the most landmark changes for the updated Kansas Byways Marketing Plan focuses on the utilization of new media. Since the previous plan was created, new media—particularly social media—have become the primary trip-planning tool for most consumers. The Internet has allowed smaller destinations and individual attractions to reach global audiences and provide real-time information. However, this new media also affords consumers unique opportunities to generate content and offer opinions about particular places and experiences. The Internet is an essential marketing tool that requires constant updates and connectivity. By not being on-line, byways risk loss of market share and missing potential target market opportunities.

Kansas Travel & Tourism currently manages the following social media sites for the Byways:

- Facebook—<http://www.facebook.com/KSByways>
- Flickr—<http://www.flickr.com/photos/Kansasbyways>
- Twitter—<http://twitter.com/ksbyways>
- YouTube—<http://www.youtube.com/user/KSByways>

These new media, and the growth in fans/users to these Internet sites, demonstrate the importance of social networking as a method to increase visitation.

To continue attracting users and friends through social media, Kansas Byways need to sell experiences, dreams and inspiration. A destination's web site should be exciting, engaging, compelling and "colorful" and include high-quality information that is interactive and multimedia-based (not just text such as reviews, but photos/images, maps with filters, videos, audio, radio, music, etc.).

At present, many businesses and destinations approach social computing as a list of technologies to be deployed as needed—a blog here, a podcast there—to achieve a marketing goal. Some of the byways do not even have dedicated websites or post information electronically for visitors. However, the study suggested that a better approach is to start with a profile audience and then determine what kind of relationship is desired with those targeted individuals, based on what they are ready for. As such, Kansas Byways—with leadership from the state byways committee and Travel & Tourism—can collectively brand its experiences with a consistent and pro-active on-line strategy designed to attract and retain target audiences.

The most obvious on-line place for visitors seeking Kansas information is the state's official travel site. As most people will probably find the Byways through the tourism site, a coordinated link is recommended on [www.ksbyways.org](http://www.ksbyways.org) and [www.TravelKS.com](http://www.TravelKS.com) to ensure a seamless trip planning experience. Consistency of the Byways message/information on both state sites, plus tools to make it easier for travelers to plan designated byway trips via the [www.TravelKS.com](http://www.TravelKS.com) site, are crucial to the goal of getting more people traveling Kansas Byways. Dedicated web sites for each designated byway will also allow greater access to official content, news and timely local trip-planning information.

Kansas Travel & Tourism will maintain [www.ksbyways.org](http://www.ksbyways.org) as the consumer site for the byways collection, linking to the state tourism website and individual designated byway websites for additional trip-planning information. KDOT will maintain the back end of the [www.ksbyways.org](http://www.ksbyways.org) platform for the designated byway organizations, committees and partners to share information and access resource materials via a central on-line clearinghouse. The website should be one of the main avenues of communication and information sources for tourism, KDOT, byway program stakeholders, and visitors. The state agencies will collaborate on the architecture and schedule for data updates to ensure the distinct audiences can easily access their information portal, increase content, and encourage repeat usage.

## State Byways Marketing Strategies and Policies

Bundling information into easy-to-use formats, making tools and data more accessible to wider audiences, and designing simple processes for evaluating activities will all contribute to the successful implementation of future byway marketing activities.

Outlining policies and procedures, with a defined schedule of annual deadlines, can also help Kansas' designated byways plan and budget more pro-actively for "collective" state byway marketing. Communicating consistently and frequently provides the greatest potential to leverage resources so that all stakeholders are engaged and informed in the marketing strategies and understand desired outcomes. Targeting niche audiences will enhance the opportunity for matching byway experiences with visitor interests or motivations.

The Travel & Tourism Division of the Kansas Department of Commerce—the state travel office—is recognized as the lead agency to direct and deliver state marketing strategies for the entire byways collection. Individual designated byway marketing efforts should work in tandem with Travel & Tourism's marketing strategies to ensure compatible messages and complementary, rather than duplicative, outreach to external audiences. Working together, the state and local byway committees can leverage resources by identifying focused approaches to increase visitation and tourism spending.

### State Policies Recommended for Marketing the Byways Collection

- At minimum, KDOT will promote its designated byways three ways:
  - 1) Identification on the Kansas Official Transportation Map (beginning with the first map published after the route is officially designated)
  - 2) Production and distribution of a state-branded brochure created jointly by the state and local byway committees
  - 3) Via the state byway website ([www.ksbyways.org](http://www.ksbyways.org)). Additional state marketing efforts will be conducted pending funding and resources.
- All state and local byway program marketing plans should identify goals linked to the state program mission and outline measurable objectives to implement each goal with a target date for completion and evaluation, assigning specific roles and responsibilities for each task.
- Marketing updates are required as part of the designated byway's annual work plan. All state and local byway marketing plans should be maintained by KDOT and available for download as a PDF.
- The state will market the entire byway collection to consumers by leveraging the technical expertise and resources of the Kansas Department of Commerce Travel & Tourism Division.
- Travel & Tourism will offer designated byways' opportunities for marketing technical assistance and funding through several existing state agency programs:
  - › Tourism Marketing Grant



57% of travelers spend extra time in Kansas because of information in the (Kansas Visitors Guide)—*RUF Visitors Guide Conversion Study*<sup>18</sup>

- › Education Scholarships
- › Attraction Development Grant

Designated byways submitting applications for these programs will receive special consideration if they meet all other requirements. *(Note: The Attraction Signage Program also falls under the jurisdiction of Travel & Tourism; signage is addressed in a separate section of this plan.)*

- To enhance the promotion of the overall byway collection, the state byway marketing policy is:
  - a) Inclusive of all designated byways, if marketing activity is paid for by the state; or b) Individual opportunities for designated byways to participate in specific marketing activities (such as state advertising media purchases, public or media relations activities, trade promotions, etc.) as a cost-effective strategy to leverage local resources and complement state marketing efforts.
- KDOT Outreach Liaison will coordinate all in-state byway marketing activities and promotions; Travel & Tourism will oversee the external marketing strategies (cultivating domestic and international visitors from outside Kansas.)
- Where appropriate, the state will leverage resources to market the byway program by fostering collaborations among state agencies (both represented on the state byway committee and others.)

## Market Research

Just as targeting specific audiences that are interested in byways and related activities is a smart strategy, so are understanding the current byways visitor profile and evaluating their experiences. Market research—conducted through surveys, conversion studies, statistical analysis and other techniques—is vital for making informed decisions that will help byways committees and marketers promote and deliver desired experiences. When the state conducts extensive research on its current visitors and the economic impact of travelers to Kansas, the local byways are encouraged to participate in and support these research efforts.



Nine of the 10 byway committees identified the state's byways brochure (of the collection) as the—or one of the—most important marketing piece(s) produced by the state.<sup>19</sup> "Attractive and professionally developed," "wonderful and a great asset," "great promotion for collection" are some of the comments made about the state byways booklet when prompted about program successes (and state contributions).

### Specific State Policies Recommended for Byways Market Research

- Travel & Tourism will include byways on all appropriate state response vehicles (800#, website, visitors guide, advertising) to generate byway-specific inquiries, response to marketing activities, and customer feedback.
- KDOT will work with Travel & Tourism to determine the most appropriate ways to track distribution and obtain user response for all internally produced byway or related information materials (Kansas Official State Transportation Map, individual byway brochures, posters, fliers, etc.)
- KDOT will work with Travel & Tourism to determine the best way to capture, record, analyze and distribute information requested through the KDOT 800# for action by the appropriate local byways and/or state byways committee.

19. Hargrove International, Inc. facilitated Committee Meetings at nine designated byways and one proposed byway, October – November 2009. See Kansas Scenic Byways Program SWOT Analysis Report for details.

- Travel & Tourism will annually inform designated byways of any special market research opportunities planned for the next fiscal year (such as focus groups, exit surveys, custom studies, economic impact analysis, etc.) that may enhance the understanding of the byways traveler and the economic impact of designation.
- The Travel & Tourism research department will also provide consultation on an as requested basis to help the local byways obtain specific market intelligence.
- Travel & Tourism will review each designated byways marketing plan and annual work plan to identify opportunities to accomplish their desired goals through existing state market research.

## *Graphic/Collateral*

One of the most important recognition factors for the Byways Program is its logo. On-site, the Kansas Byways signs and local byway name signs combine to help identify the road-based experiences for visitors. Likewise, a state-directed design philosophy for offline and online collateral materials is important to build consistent visual recognition for the Kansas Byways Collection. Therefore, all state printed and produced collateral materials will follow a specific color palette, type font, and placement of logo for consistency and quality.

### **Specific State Policies Recommended for Byways Graphic Design, Collateral Materials:**

- The state will brand the byways collection via a consistent design philosophy used on signage and printed collateral materials, and on-line; instructions on state logo usage and placement are provided by KDOT as part of the designation packet.
- KDOT will confer with Travel & Tourism when updating the design of the Kansas Byways logo to ensure consistency, quality and appeal to the travelling public.
- KDOT will collaborate with Travel & Tourism to produce an annual state byways program report for distribution electronically to stakeholders, integrated into agency annual reports or other venues to showcase milestones from the Kansas Byways Program and Collection to elected officials, partners, and other byway constituent groups.
- If funding is available, Travel & Tourism will bi-annually produce/update a Kansas Byways brochure to showcase the entire byway collection:
  - › Each designated byway will be represented with—at minimum—a map, a short description of its intrinsic qualities and/or key stories, information on gateway communities and/or major gateway attractions, and individual website or contact information for further reference
  - › A distribution strategy will be defined prior to production, and will include a response mechanism to track interest and impact.
- As resources permit, standardized Kansas Byways marketing tools using branded graphics—such as a powerpoint presentation, a newsletter, press release letterhead, press kit—will be developed



AD PROMOTING "MY KANSAS BYWAYS STORIES."

by KDOT with guidance from Travel & Tourism and use by the entire Byways Collection.

- Travel & Tourism will review each designated byway's marketing plan and annual work plan to identify opportunities to accomplish their desired goals through existing state collateral materials (brochures, rack cards, annual travel guide, special event calendar, etc.)

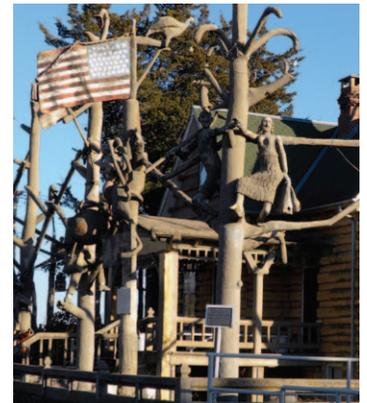


## *Advertising*

Travel & Tourism routinely designs a print/electronic campaign to brand the state's attractions and activities, which includes creative messages and graphics around a central theme or call to action distributed through a targeted media buy. The advertising campaign may include print or electronic media, and/or an on-line strategy to drive interest and stimulate travel to Kansas.

### **Specific State Policies Recommended for Byways Program Advertising:**

- Travel & Tourism will provide an annual advertising calendar to the designated byways with enough lead-time for budgeting/consultation to encourage the implementation of strategic, proactive and complementary local advertising.
- In addition, Travel & Tourism will offer the Kansas Byways Collection the opportunity to participate in the state's media buy or cooperative paid advertising campaigns to leverage local resources and enhance the state marketing strategy.
- Travel & Tourism will work with KDOT to identify and create appropriate advertising campaigns for promoting the entire Kansas Byways Collection with targeted in-state media. These advertising purchases will be paid for with dedicated state funds or grants, as available.
- Travel & Tourism will review each designated byway's marketing plan and annual work plan to identify opportunities to accomplish their desired goals through existing state advertising campaigns.



## *Media/Public Relations*

Third-party endorsement is recognized as a key way to enhance positive awareness and brand recognition for tourism destinations. Targeting travel journalists and relevant consumer media is a cost-effective marketing strategy for Kansas Byways. Several tools are necessary to access and impact media coverage. These media relations activities include, but are not limited to, press releases, press kits, and media familiarization tours.

Separately, enhancing communications with key stakeholder audiences—including consumers—is important to cultivate potential travelers and enlist/retain byway program support. Speaking engagements, special events, and other traditional public relations activities will be considered as part of the state byways marketing strategy.

## Specific State Policies Recommended for Byways Program Media/Public Relations

- KDOT will maintain an in-state media list for use in distribution of news on the Kansas Byways program, the entire Byways Collection and individual accomplishments; the media list will also be made available to the designated byways committees for their use.
- Travel & Tourism will maintain a targeted external media list—including travel journalists, key media contacts for travel trade and consumer publications, on-line media, electronic media (radio, TV) and bloggers—located outside the state of Kansas to generate additional media coverage for the byways collection/experiences.
- Travel & Tourism will maintain and routinely update rights-secured high quality images of Kansas Byways on the media section of its website for use by journalists. As available, video will also be maintained and provided to media.
- Travel & Tourism will review each designated byways marketing plan and annual work plan to identify opportunities to accomplish their desired goals through existing media and public relations strategies.

## *Trade and Consumer Promotions*

Promotions represent perhaps one of the greatest opportunities for byways to engage travelers and track visitation over a targeted period. However, promotions take time to plan, organize, implement and measure. Therefore, Kansas Byways promotions are most appropriately organized at the state level for the entire collection to realize the greatest impact. Enlisting other partners is essential to leverage resources and maximize reach. The State Byways Committee will annually review and prioritize existing or new opportunities to promote the byways collection. If financial resources are available or secured (through public/private partnerships), a lead state agency will be identified to create and implement the preferred promotion.

## Specific State Policies Recommended for Byways Promotions

- Travel & Tourism will consider opportunities to promote the Kansas Byways Collection as part of regularly scheduled promotions and representation at various events for the travel industry (international and domestic tour operators, niche markets, media, etc.) on a case-by-case basis. These promotional activities can include, but are not limited to:
  - › Discover America POW WOW (for access to international tour operators and media)



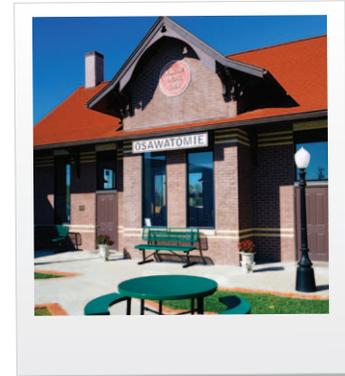
- › National Tour Association (for access to domestic tour operators)
- › American Bus Association (for access to domestic tour operators)
- › AAA.

- KDOT will represent the Kansas Byways Collection at all in-state expositions, events and trade shows where KDOT has purchased promotional space (booth, stand, exhibit, etc.).

These promotional venues include, but are not limited to:

- › Kansas State Fair
- › Kansas Sampler.

- The State Byways Committee will review each designated byways marketing plan and annual work plan to identify opportunities to accomplish their desired goals through the respective agencies' existing or proposed promotions.



ONE OF THE MANY STOPS  
ALONG THE FRONTIER  
MILITARY SCENIC BYWAY

To accomplish the overall marketing strategy, the state byways program will utilize all existing tools including graphic design, collateral materials, public relations, advertising, and trade and consumer promotions. Both on-line and off-line strategies will be developed into an integrated approach to reach the target customer. Market research, conducted on consistent cycles, will allow the program to monitor results and impact.

## *Tourism Product Development*

The concept of product development included in traditional byway CMPs focus on infrastructure and bricks/mortar types of activity or interpretation. However, product development in tourism marketing has a slightly different definition. Traditionally, tourism “product development” is used to address the need to link existing assets into itineraries, to package information into a salable tour “product”, to create theme-based “products” for marketing to a target audience (for instance, specific to the Civil War or the Kansas Sesquicentennial.)

Product development can also include more fundamental elements, such as helping attractions increase their marketability or identifying places to purchase goods and services to enhance the economic impact from tourism. Product development is a way for destinations to increase the critical mass of activities and attractions available for visitors, and a means to enhance year-round visitation and therefore escalate the sustainability of tourism. Without quality product that is constantly changing and updating to meet demands/desires of customers, Travel & Tourism—and the Kansas Byways—have little to market consistently.

Currently, product development has been the responsibility of locally designated byways. As the Kansas Byways program focuses on enhancing the collection’s brand value in the next decade, and the need to offer consistent quality experiences, the Travel & Tourism Division—in partnership with other members of the Kansas State Byways Committee—may need to take a more pro-active role in assisting byways with tourism product development. This assistance can take form as technical assistance, resources and training, on-site assessments, education and building partnerships. Should the state identify the need for greater involvement in developing new byway travel product, additional Travel & Tourism staffing or resources may be required to implement these tourism product development strategies.



LUCAS

GRASSROOTS  
ART CENTER

# E: MEASURING SUCCESS



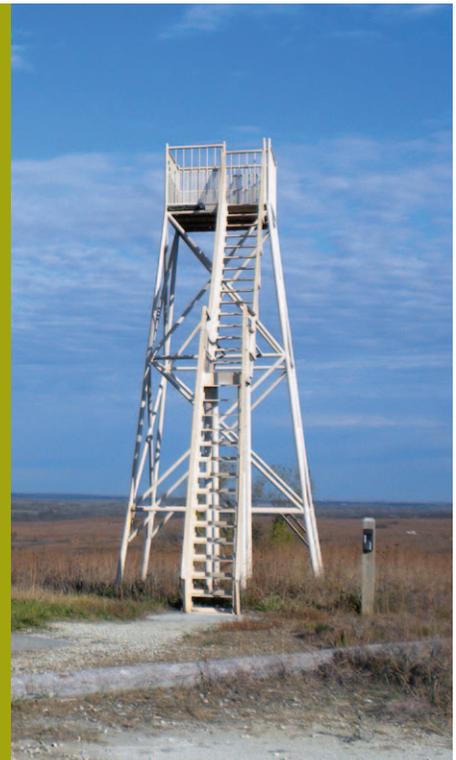
The Kansas Byways Program has accomplished a great deal since its inception, although the specific impact has not been fully demonstrated in tangible terms of resource protection, experience enhancement, visitor spending, business growth, and overall satisfaction. These metrics are important benchmarks for Kansas and its designated byways to track and measure—not only to determine the positive impact of the byways, but also to identify trends and areas for improvement.

Demonstrating an impressive return on investment through a measureable increase in visitation, an increase in tax revenues for byways communities and government, and increased community pride is important to program stakeholders and elected officials. The state byways program can also produce a priceless benefit for the state and future generations through the conservation of Kansas' natural and historic resources.

The 2020 vision focuses on strong, sustainable organizations that are earning income to independently and collectively enhance local products and services, offering more authentic and diverse travel experiences. Periodically reviewing the organizational capacity of designated byways is important to ensure sustainable fiscal management and adequate program leadership to achieve this vision.

*Research identified these success targets to use as benchmarks:*

- *“Scenic” as criteria for designation—even for historic, cultural or other route designations*
- *Be compatible with National Byways Program criteria*
- *Impact of byway designation on visitor experiences and spending*
- *Impact of byway designation on local businesses, tax revenues and resident quality of life*
- *Impact of byway designation on investments—leveraged funds and resources, increase in volunteers or members, earned income, partnership and financial contributions.*



## State Policies Recommended for Measuring and Evaluating Program Performance

- The State Byways Committee will set annual performance targets for the program for consideration and acceptance by the Secretary of Transportation and other member agencies. As approved, the targets will be distributed to the designated byway committees to utilize in preparation and implementation of annual work plans.
- The State Byways Coordinator will provide evaluation forms, instructions and assistance to help local byway committees evaluate their overall performance.
- Designated byways must maintain a current and comprehensive CMP for use as the benchmark for program evaluation.

*Best Practice:  
North Dakota Byways' success is evaluated by maintaining the minimum standards (set criteria). One of the requirements is that each byway submits an annual report. The Coordinator then consolidates all the individual byway information into one large annual report. Success is also measured in the completion of projects.*

<http://www.parkrec.nd.gov/byways/apply/index.html>

- Research collected on the byways program and the collection will be compiled annually for distribution (electronically) to state and local stakeholders—including elected officials, tourism industry representatives, local government, transportation and planning departments, private businesses, media, and preservation and conservation organizations—to demonstrate the positive impact of the Kansas Byways to the state and local economy. Specific successes will be identified and heralded as examples of stewardship, interpretation, experience enhancement, marketing and economic impact.
- Annually review the effectiveness of the byways program leadership, capacity, communications, programs and technical assistance to determine areas of improvement and modifications.
- Conduct a detailed evaluation of the entire byways collection's positive contributions to the state's economic, social and environmental impact every five years.





# STATE BYWAYS PROGRAM ACTION PLAN

The Kansas State Byways Program Committee and its member agencies, constituent groups, and designated byway committees, will implement specific strategies to help achieve three major outcomes in the next decade.



## **Outcome One:**

### **enhanced efficiency, effectiveness and greater capacity**

- Streamlining processes and administration into an annual system of deliverables and expectations for evaluation
- Utilizing technology to communicate with and among byway stakeholders (state committee, designated byway committees)
- Demonstrating annual impact of designation and byways program
- Focusing on showcasing intrinsic qualities, particularly “scenic” and “historic,” to articulate the benefit and impact of the state byways program.



## **Outcome Two:**

### **enhanced byway experiences to provide positive impact**

- Enhancing authentic byway experiences to attract visitors and their spending
- Engaging more businesses, partners and other stakeholders in the byways program
- Strengthening the capacity of the byways program
- Attracting new funding to strengthen the byways program and experiences
- Demonstrating national leadership through innovative marketing programs and development initiatives.



## **Outcome Three:**

### **a flexible, sustainable, valued program**

- Recognize and reward innovative programming with incentives
- Expand program into new state agencies, partnerships and sponsorships
- Increase funding and support for state and local byway programs
- Evolve and adapt program to address trends, action opportunities, and allow seamless transition across government agencies and administrations.

# OUTCOME ONE:

## *Efficient, Effective State Systems Increase Byway Program Capacity*

Research conducted during the planning process identified several opportunities for the Kansas State Byways Program to streamline its processes and better leverage state resources. The research findings demonstrate how the state byway program can enhance communication, provide leadership and expertise, and market the collection to increase desired outcomes.



In light of these findings, the Kansas Byways Program must adopt and adapt policies and procedures that help enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the state program. Central to this effort is the use of technology. Utilizing the [www.ksbyways.org](http://www.ksbyways.org) website as a hub for information and a portal for stakeholder (local committees, coordinators, state personnel) discussions ensures timely access and byways “community” building. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities, timelines for actions, and expected results will also ensure that all entities engaged in the management and delivery of the State Byways

Program can pro-actively engage in the programs and services required to realize the 2020 vision. Specifically, this includes KDOT as byways program administrator, Travel & Tourism as consumer marketer, other State Byways Committee Members as advisors/partners, local coordinators as byways managers, and committees as byways stewards and promoters.

During the planning process, other state byways programs were also reviewed and analyzed to determine best practices. Some of these programs or their respective activities are recommended as strategies for Kansas to adopt as proven policies and procedures. This will also allow the Kansas Byways Program to move quickly into management practices that can be effectively measured.

### **Specific Findings from Planning Research Conducted Fall 2009**

- *From the On-site Designated Byway Assessment Visits:* There is a lack of consistent management, marketing, signage and information among the designated Byways.
- *From the Meetings with Local Byways Committees:* The local byways committee members lack a general awareness about the State Byways program, policies and procedures. Most of the designated byway committees have little understanding about their responsibilities for delivering on the designation promise (and implementation of the corridor management plans.)
- *From the Byway Stakeholder surveys (state committee, regional KDOT and other partner organization representatives):* There is an overall desire to establish consistent criteria applicable to all designated Byways programs.

**Best Practice:** Vermont offers Byway Organizers a downloadable Program Manual (overview), Field Guide (application process), Powerpoint Presentation, Economic Impact Analysis, Scenic Evaluation (process & forms with samples), Evaluating Projects, Managing Projects Effectively, Capacity Planning (NPS) and an annual list of awarded grants.

## Five State Priorities to Realize Outcome One

- Leverage state resources to attract funding and access to other technical assistance available for byways management and marketing.
- Fully utilize the expertise of the State Byways Committee and the talents and assets of member agencies.
- Enhance state-designated byway communication to pro-actively engage in discussions and encourage collaborations, clearly define expectations and deliver consistent messages to and among stakeholders.
- Use technology to enhance efficiency and ensure consistent, comprehensive sharing and delivery of program information, data, and materials.
- Implement a measurement system for all state/national designated byways to report accomplishments and demonstrate program impact.

## Specific State Actions to Accomplish these Five priorities for Outcome One

### MANAGEMENT

- 1.1 Annually identify and prioritize a bundled list of activities that can be organized into a statewide application to attract and secure large funding opportunities including federal and national funding.
- 1.2 Utilize technology for the state to communicate and share information—at minimum monthly—with the designated byways, state committee members and affiliated partners.
- 1.3 Conduct at least one visit to each designated byway annually for an on-site assessment and to meet with the byway committee to review status of corridor management plan.
- 1.4 Systematize the organizational oversight for program. Ensure the following administrative duties are accomplished by each designated byway: a) creation and submission of an annual work plan, b) maintain consistent committee composition, c) fiscal management, d) compliance with CMP, and e) submission of an annual evaluation report. These byways committees' responsibilities serve as the criteria for monitoring performance and maintaining designation.
- 1.5 Connect the Byways Collection with state schools, universities and RC&D offices to increase local capacity by 10%.
- 1.6 Semi-annually, orient new byways stakeholders, state committee members and state leadership to increase awareness and support of byways program.

### MARKETING

- 1.7 Distribute an annual byways program report to announce program objectives for the year, share program progress report/best practices and cultivate new partners.

**Deliverables:** The Kansas State Byways Committee will offer technical assistance and other agency resources to strengthen the preservation, enhancement and promotion of the Collection. The state will leverage its resources to attain federal or other new funding and partnerships to develop and market the byways collection. Kansas' designated byways committees will be strong local entities with members representing multiple stakeholder groups. Armed with tools/instruction provided by the state, the local organizations will provide the necessary funding and technical assistance to implement the goals and objectives outlined in their respective corridor management plans.

# OUTCOME TWO:

## *Enhanced Byway Experiences Provide Positive Impact for Kansas*

The implementation of strong management practices, innovative marketing activities and destination stewardship strategies will position the program as a national byways program leader. Central to this outcome is continued state support, transparent communication and partnership development to leverage resources and enhance return on investment (ROI.)

The interdependency of management and marketing will be demonstrated as the Kansas Byways Program expands its brand awareness. The Kansas State Byways Committee must ensure that the collection utilizes design guidelines, fulfills designation responsibilities, and focuses on fiscal sustainability. More importantly, the Committee must enforce the systems to manage and measure the credibility of the collection to ensure that designated byways retain their unique intrinsic qualities and designation criteria.

As the byways program grows nationally and internationally, Kansas can seek out other best practices to replicate or use to enhance its own management and marketing practices. Sharing this information and encouraging local innovation will help the collection grow and sustain in appropriate, desired ways.

### **State Priorities to Realize Outcome Two**

- Develop new products and services that add value and spending opportunities for visitors.
- Enhance the quality, diversity and sustainability of experiences along designated byways.
- Package and market experiences for niche markets that spend more and stay longer.
- Enhance the aesthetic character, interpretation, and quality of products and services of the designated byways and communities.
- Engage visitors and residents in byways stewardship.
- Enhance the diversity and marketability of the Kansas Byways Collection.
- Consistently market the unique attributes and activities of the byways collection to Kansas' visitors and residents.
- Expand marketing initiatives to attract national media and consumer interest.

**Best Practice:** As demonstrated in its "Detours" case study, Norway's Tourist Driving Routes feature unique and compatible designs for picnic tables, scenic lookouts, and information kiosks. Detour: Architecture and Design Along 18 National Tourist Routes in Norway, can be viewed at <http://www.nbm.org/exhibitions-collections/exhibitions/detour.html>



## State Actions Required to Accomplish Outcome Two

### MANAGEMENT

2.1 Increase technical assistance via one new training program to expand the interpretive and recreational experiences along the byways, to provide new stories and design linkages among the collection.

2.2 Establish criteria for byways' businesses, services and communities to ensure quality and integrity of experiences. Monitor and evaluate performance via the designated byway's annual work plan.

2.3 Establish criteria for and market Kansas-based businesses, services and communities located on or near the byways (and that support the program) to recognize the quality and integrity of products, and encourage spending at local retail, lodging, dining, recreation, tour services and attractions.

2.4 By 2015, the primary stories of each designated byway should be accessible to visitors at a minimum of three locations along the byway. KDOT and other state agencies will assist, as resources warrant and are available, with the development and implementation of this effort.

2.5 Engage visitors in byways/destination stewardship through on-site and on-line donations of time and money.

2.6 Review and revise, as required, the state signage system policies to represent all categories of designated Kansas Byways – including scenic byways, historic byways, and back roads – and demonstrate state signage strategy's compatibility with heritage areas, national trails, multi-state

corridors, commemorative routes and other national designations.

2.7 Upon request of local organization and satisfaction of CMP/nomination criteria, designate Kansas' byways that connect with nationally designated corridors and routes – including the Santa Fe Trail and Route 66.

2.8 Help existing designated byways meet national designation criteria and status.

2.9 Assist the byways collection in developing new products and services annually to enhance visitor experiences.

### MARKETING

2.10 Use the designated byway stories as a vehicle for increasing media coverage, developing itineraries and cultivating tour operator packages.

2.11 Organize special events and promotions to increase visitation to the Kansas Byways Collection by five percent annually.

2.12 Expand media coverage for the Kansas Byways Collection by 10% annually in target market publications and on-line media.

2.13 Systematize current information design and distribution to streamline process and consistently capture visitor information.

*“Social networks are a constantly changing database of consumer sentiment, attitudes and information, and marketers today have only the earliest glimpse of the potential. Companies that want to maximize their presence on the social Web must take advantage of social networks in all stages of the purchase funnel, from awareness to learning to buying to loyalty.”*

-- eMarketer report, “Marketing on Social Networks: Branding, Buying and Beyond,” August 2009



2.14 Implement creative campaigns to highlight the Kansas Byways Collection, enhance positive consumer awareness, build brand loyalty and increase visitation annually by in-state visitors (Kansas residents) by 10%.

2.15 Design, maintain and update semi-annually a user-friendly state byway website to consistently enhance consumer trip planning, increase visitation and build the Kansas Byways travel community.

2.16 Design and grow a social media campaign that builds the Kansas Byways travel community and user-generated content by 500 members/postings annually.

2.17 Secure one private/public partner bi-annually to help promote the Kansas Byways Collection and increase visitation.

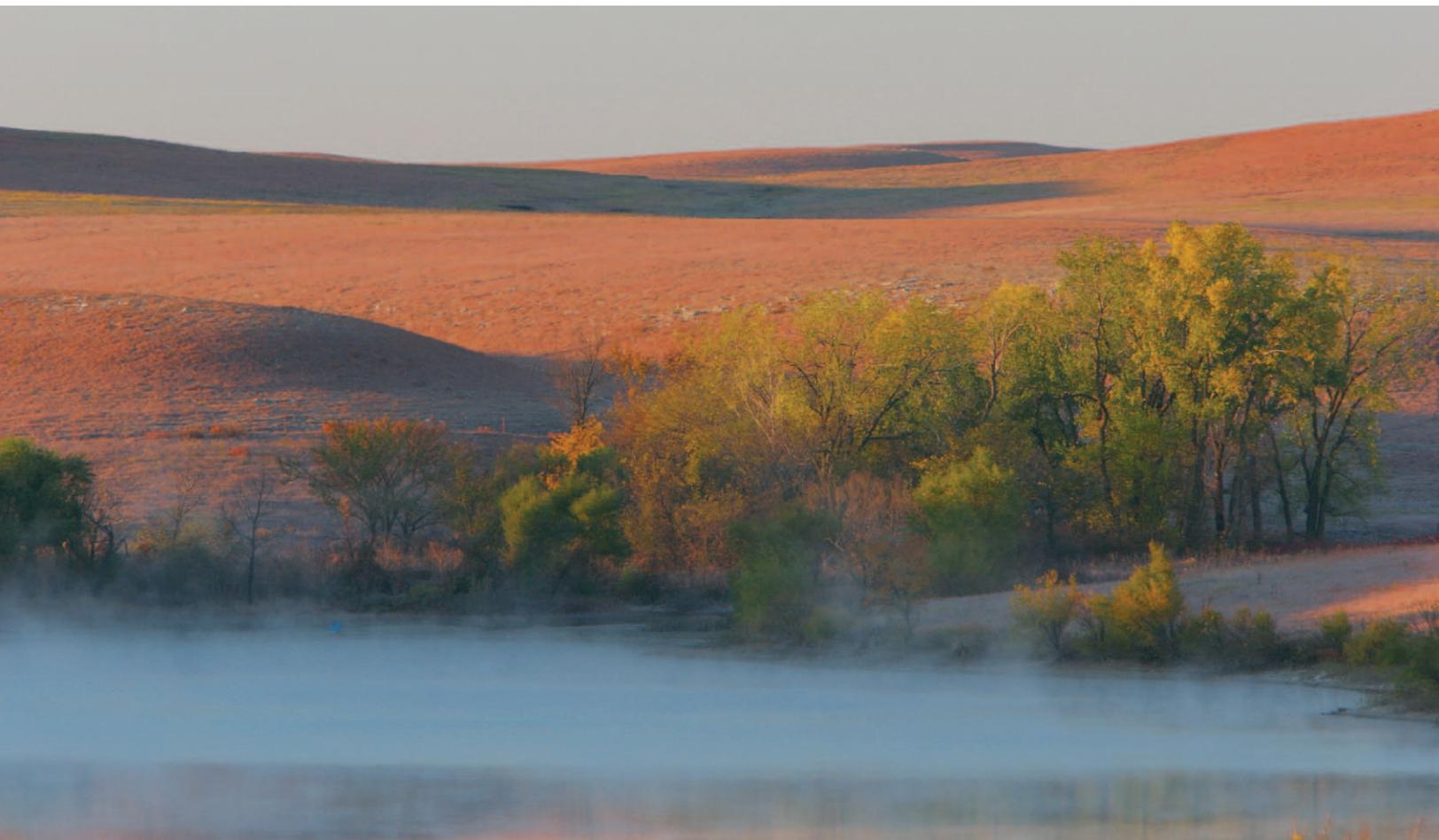
2.18 Design and implement a system for identifying and assessing potential for niche markets, with a new niche audience promotional activity conducted every two years.

2.19 Conduct, at minimum, one trade and/or one consumer promotion annually to increase out-of-state awareness of the byways collection, resulting in at least 10 trade and 200 consumer leads for individual byways follow-up.

**Deliverables:** Kansas will have new and diverse products and services that, when combined along the Byways Collection, offer quality experiences for visitors to linger longer and spend more money in the state. These byway experiences will generate more media coverage in target markets due to their interesting stories and unique assets:

- Increased visitation by five niche markets
- Database of niche market operators developed and maintained
- Specialty operators promoting Kansas Byways to niche markets.

## THE FLINT HILLS NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY IN FALL



# OUTCOME THREE:

## *Innovative, Sustainable State Program and Kansas Byways Collection Lead USA in Best Practices*

If Kansas is to realize its leadership goal as a national model for byways, the state must anticipate trends and adapt to situations that sustain and enhance the potential for marketing and enhancing its byways collection. It also must ensure support at the highest level of government, transcending administration changes because of its valuable contribution to the state's economy and image. Demonstrating the ability to be agile, flexible and pro-active are attributes that will foster growth and sustainability in the state program. Designing a system and mechanisms that allow—and encourage—the byways collection to embrace this adaptability and foresight will foster the appropriate, authentic growth. In turn, the designated byways will realize the potential of offering quality experiences that will entice and encourage repeat visitation that benefits both residents and travelers.



As byways generate an economic impact from tourism, the designation helps realize the potential to attract visitors and new residents for the destinations' livability. Attracting travelers can reinforce the need to provide safe passages and access for pedestrians to access schools, churches, attractions, commerce and other places of interest. Demonstrating the "livability" of places accessible by designated byways can attract new residents, emphasize the value of community for current residents, and emphasize the appeal of the destination to travelers.

### State Priorities Recommended to Realize Outcome Three

- Conduct annual byways award and recognition program.
- Incentive success to encourage innovative initiatives from designated byways.
- Provide leadership and mentoring for smooth state and local administration transition.
- Expand and sustain the leadership and contributions of the Kansas State Byways Committee.
- Kansas State Byways Committee and member agencies provide expertise, funding, oversight and partnerships for the program.
- Foster new pro-active partnerships among byways stakeholders to better leverage the contributions of state and local partners and increase funding for byways activities.
- Systematize operations within state agencies and with designated byway committees to ensure seamless transition and program support through administrative changes.

#### From National Stakeholder

**Interviews:** *"Communities shouldn't be museums or ghost towns but instead viable, vibrant places to live and work. (There is a dual opportunity (with designation and byway management) to attract visitors and money, and attract potential residents ... not just retirees. Make byway community livable, walkable, bikable, and enjoyable on many levels."*

- Demonstrate how byway designation contributes to community livability and sustainability.
- Initiate new or innovative byways programs that become/are recognized as national best practices and enhance the positive image of Kansas.

## State Actions Required to Realize Outcome 3

### MANAGEMENT

- 3.1 Identify and recognize annual contributions of Kansas State Byways Committee and stakeholders.
- 3.2 Focus annual byways work plans, workshops and technical assistance on sustainability and livability to increase resident benefits and greater potential for national recognition/designation.
- 3.3 Provide leadership and expertise to local, state, and national byways constituent groups through two presentations or workshops annually.
- 3.4 Increase designated byways committees' capacity annually by 10%.
- 3.5 Promote the Byways Collections' livability to facilitate relocation of entrepreneurs to byways communities and engage businesses in offering more byways products, services, and contributions.

Best Practice: The Blue Ridge Heritage Area, which uses the Blue Ridge Parkway—an All American Road—as its spine, focuses on four key themes to develop its story and move people around the routes: agriculture, craft, Native American, and music. Each theme has a different icon. Craft is featured in a “Craft Heritage Trails of Western North Carolina” guidebook; agriculture is the focus of the “Farms, Gardens and Countryside Tours” guidebook produced by HandMade in America; Cherokee Trails and the Music Trails are produced by the state of North Carolina.





**Best Practice:** Idaho's State Byway Advisory Committee has 22 members—FHA, DOT, state tourism, state parks & recreation, economic development, agriculture, federal agencies that have land holdings or offices in the state (national forest, national park, BLM), state chamber of commerce, conservation/preservation organization, a byway member representative.

3.6 Each agency represented on the Kansas State Byways Committee includes a line-item responsibility for the byways program (with human and/or financial support) to demonstrate their annual and ongoing commitment to implementation, sustainability of the program.

3.7 Annually, identify and secure one additional public/private partner to deliver programmatic technical assistance and administrative capabilities to designated byways committees.

3.8 Seek and secure a dedicated source of funding annually for the Kansas State Byways Program to offer additional technical assistance and marketing programs.

3.9 Expand membership of the state byways committee to include other key governmental, private and non-profit entities that impact the sustainable growth and promotion of the Kansas Byways program.

#### MARKETING

3.10 Demonstrate year-over-year growth in visitation and economic impact to the byway collections' local businesses, gateway communities and visitor attractions.

**Deliverables:** The Kansas Byways Program will have champions at every level of government and throughout the state due to the positive image and quality experiences afforded by its collection of designated byways. The Byways Collection will become a major asset in marketing the state to lure national and international visitors.

Local leaders will utilize updated corridor management plans to pro-actively implement the necessary policies, procedures and programs to protect, enhance and promote the byway and its intrinsic qualities. The local byways committees will continue to learn and grow, attract new partners and collaborate with business, government, and civic groups to ensure goals are met and outcomes delivered.

Visitors will be engaged in destination stewardship, recognizing the important assets that are offered in Kansas Byways experiences. Residents will value and take pride in these assets, and recognize their contribution to livable communities.



# ADDITIONAL IDEAS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In reviewing state byways programs and national best practices, these strategies surfaced as possible opportunities for Kansas to expand and enhance its current program management and marketing. While the state priorities are listed in the previous section, these additional ideas and specific tasks may enhance or expand the overall Kansas Byways program. Dedicated funding and additional resources may be required to make these viable or impactful.



## MANAGEMENT/PARTNERSHIPS/FUNDING

1. Expand membership on the state byways committee to include other stakeholder groups such as, but not limited to, a byways representative for the collection, private business, elected officials, funding entity, etc.
2. Formalize a relationship with one or more state universities/colleges to provide technical and research assistance for the state program and byways collection.
3. Identify a revenue generation source for the byways program, such as a dedicated income from a standing lottery promotion or license plate sales.
4. Change existing policy to permit use of qualified in-kind contributions for up to one-half of the match requirement for state and federal grants.
5. Enlist administrative and fiscal management support of Resource Conservation Development Program (RC&D) offices to provide local byway administration (where appropriate).

6. Obtain and annually renew memberships in National Association of Interpretation and Travel Industry Association of Kansas (TIAK) to share information with byways and post resources on state byways website.
7. Participate in America's Byways Resource Center telemarketing workshops and conference calls. Distribute information as monthly newsletter to state and local byways committees.
8. Host forums with farmers, ranchers and other landowners to help dispel myths about byways visitation.



9. Identify state businesses and associations—retail, restaurants, lodging, visitor services—to support and encourage participation in implementing byways program goals, corridor management plans, and program measurement.
10. Encourage designated byways committee members to conduct reconnaissance visits to other byways in the collection and volunteer a day of service as part of the learning exchange.
11. Encourage *Friends of Kansas Byways* to offer visitor memberships to increase revenues that can serve as local match for state/federal byway grants.
12. Assist designated byways in organizing as an *Alliance of Kansas Byways* to foster collaboration, initiate collective activities, advocate program, and share information with stakeholders.
13. Expand the research process to mirror the national program values, metrics (including use of economic impact model) to provide overview of Kansas Byways Collection performance and peer comparison.
14. Convene regional meetings (one east, one west) for the Byways Collection to receive programmatic updates, technical assistance and instruction on ways to protect, develop, enhance, market and manage designated byway experiences (can also be scheduled as teleworkshops or webinars).
15. Offer incentives (i.e., grants, technical assistance) for byways going “green.”

## INTERPRETATION, PRODUCT/EXPERIENCE ENHANCEMENT

1. Work with TIAK, National Association of Interpretation, and other hospitality organizations to provide annual training for byways businesses (as dedicated program or part of existing program, with special rate for participation).
2. Contact and recruit local/state bicycle clubs to create new touring itineraries, serve as expert guides or resources for external clubs.
3. Identify local customs—food, music, entertainment, craft—that can be used to celebrate authentic experiences throughout the collection. Compile a list of local customs and post online for each byway.
4. Identify the “local picks” for dining, shopping, lodging, activities, scenic views, and entertainment along each designated byway. Design a decal that can be placed on physical structures and promoted via marketing materials. Connect local byways committees with the business community to promote the visitor experience.
5. Develop recreational (hiking, biking) trails (as appropriate) adjacent to byways to extend accessibility and enjoyment.
6. Work with outdoor recreation, conservation and affinity groups to identify and expert guides that can serve as “byways leaders” for special interest groups and educational tours. Compile the list into a state directory for distribution to tour operators, meeting planners, media and other travel and tourism industry officials.
7. Work with local libraries (through state library system) to share information about byways, sponsor resident education and volunteer orientation programs.
8. In partnership with the Kansas Department of Agriculture and Federal Highway Administration, develop agritourism programs to showcase the farming, ranching and agricultural heritage and current food production contributions along the designated byways.
9. Enlist support of Kansas Main Street program to provide workshop for the Byways Collection on how to enhance vacant storefronts with photo displays and other regional information to improve visual appeal and interest.





10. Create and offer voluntourism programs for the Kansas Byways Collection.

11. Solicit state partnership with garden clubs to develop, implement and maintain beautification programs in byways communities.

12. Work with Kansas Department of Education to determine the appropriate age and curriculum needs for engaging students and teachers in visiting byways as part of a school group tour.

13. Recruit teams of AmeriCorps students each summer to help with specific preservation, conservation or development projects identified as priorities in the byway management plans.

14. Host an annual "Bike the Byways" event.

15. Develop "Kids Guide to Kansas Byways" involving local youth in byways communities selecting the favorite activities and places along their designated road. (The youth could be 4th grade honor students, boy/girl scout troops, junior achievement, or some other designated group.) Youth are provided cameras to record their selections. A "young Kansans editorial board," with assistance from teachers, selects the images, drafts the copy, and provides comment for use on the "kids" guide; can be printed and distributed locally, but also posted on line as a download, images on Facebook, etc.

16. Recruit local artists to paint murals and create public art to help interpret the byways. Seek a grant from NEA, NEH, and other federal agencies to pay for the program. Market the effort similar to the "Quilt Trail" in Ohio, North Carolina and Kentucky.

17. Enlist the National Register of Historic Places to create a dedicated tour itinerary of the designated byways and post on the National Park Service site to help tell the stories (via National Register listed sites) along the Kansas Byways.

18. Work with Freedom's Frontiers National Heritage Area where they overlap with designated byways.

## MARKETING

1. Obtain quotes from stakeholders about the contributions of state technical assistance to sustainability, livability, desired outcomes.

2. Add a line item grant program to award small annual stipends (up to \$5,000 each) to all designated byways for specific project implementation (interpretation, conservation, management, marketing) or as match for non-federal funds/grants.

3. Expand functionality of [www.ksbyways.org](http://www.ksbyways.org) to provide password-protected area for byway stakeholders to share and request information, best practices, and host an on-line forum (listserv/discussion group).
4. Create a PowerPoint presentation to share stories about the byways collection for use at state and local civic club meetings, travel and tourism industry functions.
5. Package and promote Kansas Byways “Best Practices” (example: seed cultivation by Smoky Valley, fence building workshops in Native Stone) to advance state and national awareness.
6. Create a byways collection collage of images that reflect the intrinsic qualities, the livability of gateway communities, and activities that enhance residents’ quality of life. Post as a rotating slide show on [www.ksbyways.org](http://www.ksbyways.org).
7. Enhance the architecture of the current websites to generate user content. Ask residents and visitors to provide on-line quotes or comments (on Facebook page, [www.ksbyways.org](http://www.ksbyways.org)) to demonstrate the positive impact of byways designation for Kansas residents and travelers.
8. Create an annual “What’s New Along the Byways” as a media primer for posting on the website.
9. Recruit local musicians to contribute songs for a Kansas Byways Music CD (series)—downloadable via i-tunes library.
10. Create a “Byways Passport” to encourage multi-byway visitation.
11. Secure a Kansas entertainer as spokesperson to promote Kansas Byways; use in national media campaign—print ads, on-line media, regional radio spots.
12. Contact and cultivate relationship with various military bases (U.S. Army, other branches of Dept. of Defense) around the state to encourage visiting friends/relatives to explore the byways. Place material and day trip itineraries on base in appropriate location; establish unique code on coupon to track visitation.
13. Update individual byways brochures and websites to include businesses with “deal” decals and “local picks.”
14. Create a Wikipedia entry for Kansas Byways and link to Facebook.
15. Use Facebook and Flickr fans to increase attendance at events by publishing online announcements or creating new events like a Byways Photo Walk or Drive where fans meet, take photos over a three-hour period, then post the best results to the Flickr account.
16. Create a smartphone application, in concert with National Byways Program (via [www.m.byway.org](http://www.m.byway.org)).
17. List designated byways and businesses along the byways on Google Maps & Google Earth.
18. Instruct the byways collection on how to develop GPS-based itineraries and organize geocache locations. Market on [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com).



# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Kansas Byways Program was originally designed—and continues—as a collaborative effort between state and local entities engaged in the preservation, enhancement and promotion of scenic and historic roads. The desired outcomes of this program are positive economic, social, and environmental impacts for Kansas, demonstrated through increased visitation and spending, enhanced image of the state, and strong destination stewardship.

As mentioned in the original 1994 *Scenic Byways Program Development & Policies* document, “suggestions on the administrative organization of the Kansas Scenic Roads Program were based on the desire to maintain a long-term involvement between state and local governmental agencies. It was felt that multiple levels of responsibility offered the best approach to program coordination, management and protection.”<sup>20</sup>

This approach continues to serve as a best practice for state byways programs, with defined roles and responsibilities for state agencies and local committees working together to achieve the program mission and vision.

In the past decade, the Kansas State Byways Committee and particularly the Kansas Department of Transportation have focused efforts on creating and developing the program. Much of the state’s focus included hands-on instruction and assistance to local grassroots organizations interested in seeking designation. These efforts resulted in 10 state designated byways with two achieving national designation. Program policies and procedures were developed to guide local and state committees.

*Now, as the Kansas Byways program enters a new chapter of developing and hosting visitor experiences, the state has the opportunity to redefine its traditional role and become more of a catalyst and motivator for success. The state byways program—advised by a representative group from multiple agencies—can facilitate growth and efficiency by leveraging resources, providing leadership, and focusing on program accountability and impact.*

For continued credibility of the state program, the byways collection must offer consistent, high quality experiences and demonstrate an economic impact. Delivering the byways “brand promise” of exceptional travel experiences that result in visitor spending is the responsibility of the local byways. Key to this program oversight is the *empowerment* of local committees to assume the responsibilities of individual byway preservation, interpretation, enhancement, development, management and marketing.

The state’s role has now shifted to ensuring that the byways committees have the tools and ability to carry out these responsibilities. The state’s investment in providing the appropriate administrative, technical and financial assistance should strengthen local committee leadership and result in greater implementation of local byways activities, increased local funding for management and marketing. In partnership with the local committees managing the respective Kansas designated byways, the state can advance the program into becoming a national byways leader and model program.

Strategies must support:

- State Program’s mission
- State Program’s competitive advantages (specific to the situation)
- Specified financial criteria (ROI)
- Quality criteria
- Criteria related to the program’s geographic and customer scope
- State program’s position as a (national) leader

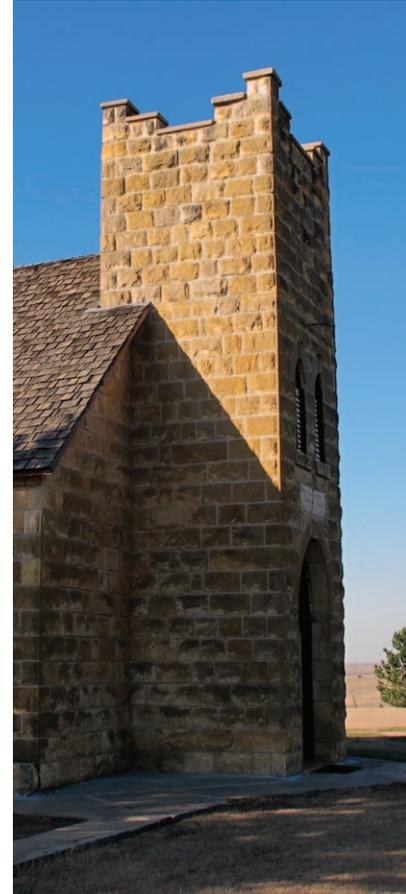
# STATE BYWAYS COMMITTEE

The Kansas State Byways Committee is an advisory group comprised of a senior representative from the following state agencies:

- Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT)
- Kansas Department of Commerce, Travel & Tourism Division (T&T)
- Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP)
- Kansas State Historical Society (KSHS)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

The Kansas State Byways Committee serves in an advisory role, responsible for:

- Serving as “knowledge agents” offering their agency expertise to state-led initiatives and requests from specific local byways or grass roots organizations
- Introducing and engaging their agency network to state byways programs, initiatives
- Leveraging resources for the state program by introducing and encouraging funding, technical assistance, marketing, and other opportunities that enhance byways management, stewardship, interpretation, experience, and impact
- Reviewing and analyzing ‘matters concerning general program development and implementation<sup>21</sup> including designation information, applications, annual work plans and performance evaluation
- Ensuring the state program’s integrity and compliance with agency and/or federal guidelines, policies
- Identifying other public or private partners that can further enhance or provide incentives to advance the state byways program mission
- Additional responsibilities outlined in the original plan<sup>22</sup> include:
  - › Work with local governments and interested groups to enhance the operation along designated byways and improve the visual and cultural resources that define the road’s character
  - › Coordinate efforts of promotion and marketing of the Byways Program among the representative agencies
  - › Coordinate actions necessary for National designation



21. Source: *Scenic Byways Program Development & Policies, November 1994, Decision Data, Inc.*

22. Source: *Scenic Byways Program Development & Policies, November 1994, Decision Data, Inc.*

The officially designated representative of each state agency is considered a voting member of the Kansas State Byways Committee. In addition, the Kansas Byways Coordinator and the Byways Outreach Coordinator are also voting members of the state committee. The representative from the Federal Highway Administration is considered an ex-officio member of the committee, and therefore does not vote on official state byways business. Additional representatives from the state byways committee's member agencies are encouraged to attend meetings and participate in discussions, although they will not have an official role. If senior staff of a member agency (ex: State Travel Director, Department Director, Assistant Secretary) elects to attend/ participate in a State Byways Committee meeting, voting rights for that agency will be decided at the discretion of the most senior staff person.

## *Specific State Agency Roles and Responsibilities*

### **The Kansas Department of Transportation:**

- The Kansas Department of Transportation will continue to maintain overall control of the program and serve as lead agency for the administration, outreach and compliance of the State Byways Program.
- The Secretary of Transportation appoints a “state byways coordinator” as the program manager, with direct responsibilities for administration and evaluation of the Kansas Byways program. In addition, the state byways coordinator serves as the official liaison with the Federal Highway Administration/National Program. Specific duties of the *State Byways Coordinator* include:
  - › Participates in quarterly conference calls and annual meeting of local designated byway coordinators/committees to provide national, state program direction and updates
  - › Oversees all grant, designation, and other program-related applications and makes appropriate comments, recommendations to senior management and local committees
  - › Represents Kansas in all federal and national byways program activities, including conference calls, meetings and conferences



OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES  
ABOUND YEAR-ROUND

- › Ensures compliance of all designated byways with the policies and procedures outlined in the Kansas Byways Program
- › Reviews all Corridor Management Plan updates, Annual Work Plans and Performance Evaluation Reports
- › Oversees administration of [www.ksbyways.org](http://www.ksbyways.org) as the on-line source for program overview and information (downloadable documents), with links to designated byway websites (as available)
- › Maintains all records and reference materials—both as hard copies and in electronic formats—related to the Kansas Byways Program, including state management and marketing plan, policy and procedure manuals, current management plans and other appropriate documents for all designated byways, and minutes of all state committee meetings
- › Coordinates participation and/or involvement of other KDOT departments/personnel to address local activities, promotions, enhancement or management issues.

• The Secretary of Transportation also appoints a “byways outreach liaison” to communicate directly with and provide technical assistance to the designated byway committees. Specific duties of the *Byways Outreach Liaison* include:

- › Organizes and facilitates quarterly conference calls with local byway committees
- › Organizes and hosts annual meeting of local byway coordinators/committees
- › Conducts, at minimum, one visit to each designated byway annually
- › Seeks state partners, sponsors and other collaborators to leverage program resources with new/enhanced technical and financial assistance that accomplishes specific objectives/mission
- › Writes and submits applications, solicitation for funding and/or partnerships (federal or foundation grants, sponsorships, and other sources of revenue)
- › Represents byways at state events and trade shows
- › Maintains byways contact database
- › Assists State Byways Coordinator with specific tasks or assignments, such as recording of state committee meetings, as requested
- › Regularly updates byways program content, links and other information on [www.ksbyways.org](http://www.ksbyways.org) and Kansas Department of Transportation website
- › Write and distribute press releases on notable state byways events including designation, special promotions, and other news related to the byways program, byways collection



MUSHROOM ROCK STATE PARK IS JUST ONE OF THE ATTRACTIONS ALONG THE PRAIRIE TRAIL SCENIC BYWAY

The State Byways Coordinator and Outreach Liaison will work closely together to ensure all program responsibilities are met and avoid duplication of efforts.

- Other departments of the Kansas Department of Transportation including, but not limited to, the Print/Design Shop, KDOT Support Services, Public Affairs Office, Computer Services, District and Area Offices will be deployed to:
  - › Coordinate production and installation of byways signs for state and national designation
  - › Design and print byways specific marketing materials (such as individual brochures, promotional/special event information) for distribution at trade shows, along the designated byways, and for consumer inquiries
  - › Mark designated byways and include website address on printed Kansas Official State Highway Map, and distribute to inquiries
  - › In concert with county, local transportation and planning departments, assist local byways committees with specific needs, concerns, and activities related to road maintenance and protection of intrinsic qualities
- KDOT will strongly encourage & promote District/Area staff participation with the local byway committees with meeting/activity attendance and to contact the State Byways Coordinator or Outreach Liaison with concerns or questions.

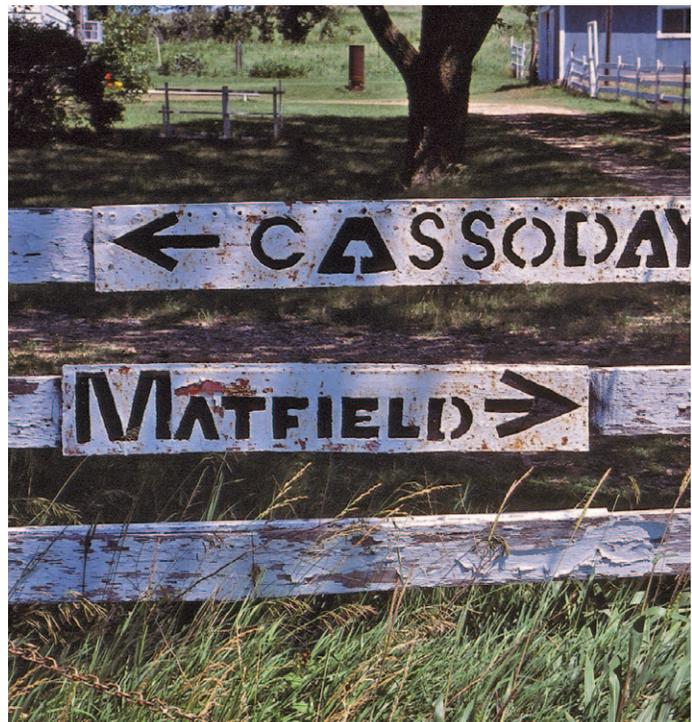
## Kansas Department of Commerce, Division of Travel & Tourism

- Serve as the lead agency for marketing the state collection of designated byways to consumers.
- Include the state byways collection, as appropriate, in its annual promotional activities including on-line and social media strategies, advertising, publications, niche market publications (including dedicated “Kansas Byways Guide”), public and media relations, trade shows, promotions, and familiarization tours for industry and journalists
- Compile a list of annual marketing activities to promote the designated byways collection
- Offer an additional list of opportunities available for individual byways to participate as part of the state marketing strategy “pay to play” partner
- Oversee all consumer research for the program as part of its statewide marketing activities
- Provide technical assistance and consultation on designated byways marketing plans, to ensure consistency of message and outreach to key target markets
- Maintain a consumer website with current byways information and links to other state agencies’ websites, byways’ social media sites, and individual byways websites.

## Other Byways Committee Member Agencies

Other member agencies participating on the State Byways Program Committee are tapped to provide the following resources or contributions, as appropriate and available:

- Review materials and attend, at minimum, quarterly meetings of the State Byways Committee
- Provide instruction and recommendations on actions impacting the byways program —its integrity, compliance with state and federal guidelines, funding, designation, de-designation, and current CMPs
- Link the Kansas Byways website from their respective agency homepage
- Identify and deploy, as available, technical and financial resources to enhance and sustain the management and marketability of the byways collection, such as grants, reference and training materials, promotions through or collaboration/partnerships with state-owned assets (such as historic sites, parks, etc.), sharing of research data, and outreach to member or stakeholder groups.



## Local Designated Byways Program Coordination

Continuing the direction set forth in the original 1994 plan, the new policy of the Kansas Byways Committee (KBC) is to “work with local governments *and grass-roots organizations* to protect and preserve the scenic/historic character of designated Kansas Byways.”<sup>23</sup> The role of the local grass roots organization is defined by the following state policies:

a. The local grass roots organization (byway committee) is the preferred entity to make a formal designation request to the Kansas Byways Committee

b. Local government(s) located along the designated byway route shall demonstrate support of the byway designation with a signed resolution submitted to the local byway committee for inclusion as part of the application, and reconfirmed for inclusion with updated corridor management plans

c. The local byway committee shall operate as a non-profit organization (or secure official partnership with an existing 501c3 or 501c6 organization) to manage receipt and deployment of funds, provide structure and leadership for implementation and sustainability of its byway program

d. The local byway committee will meet minimum organizational criteria to maintain byway designation (*Byways designated prior to August 2010 have until June 30, 2015 to meet criteria*)



e. The local byway committee will complete and submit an annual work plan and an evaluation report to the State Byways Coordinator as part of the designation management responsibilities; these documents, signed by the Committee Chairman and submitted by the local byway coordinator, will be reviewed by the State Byways Committee to identify opportunities for funding, technical assistance and marketing

f. The local byway coordinator will serve as the primary contact for the State Byways Coordinator and Byways Outreach Liaison, and participate as requested in official state meetings and/or other activities (including, but not limited to, quarterly conference calls, annual site visits, etc.)

g. The local byway committee shall monitor the status of the management plan and update the corridor management plan every five years to retain designation.

# *Designated Byway Committee— Criteria to Maintain Designation*

The following metrics are the minimum criteria required for all designated Kansas Byways to maintain designation. *Kansas Byways designated prior to August 2010 have until June 30, 2015 to meet criteria or demonstrate acceptable alternative (based on existing structure and resources).*

## **Administration**

1. An individual is designated as the official *local byway coordinator*. This individual participates in state-organized activities (telephone, conference calls, meetings). The individual is the state point-of-contact for all byway-related activities.
2. A committee is designated and responsible for creating, directing, implementing activities related to the protection, management and promotion of the Byway. The committee is comprised of, at minimum:
  - a. Travel and Tourism Industry Representative (recommended: Destination Marketing Organization—DMO)
  - b. Historical Society or Heritage Representative
  - c. Preservation or Conservation Representative
  - d. Business Representative
  - e. Government Representative
  - f. Civic Organization Representative
3. The committee meetings occur at minimum four times a year with an agenda and minutes (shared electronically, in-person, or via mail to all members).
4. The byway committee has the ability to receive and distribute funds (grant monies, earned income, or contributions) either via dedicated bank account, arrangement with a non-profit or government entity that can receive and hold funds, and pay invoices as directed, on behalf of the byway committee.
5. A succession plan is outlined for rotating slate of elected officers (see “CMP”).

## **Outreach**

1. The local byway coordinator identifies and communicates at least quarterly with a local representative from each county along the designated byway. The local representative disperses information about the byway and secures engagement from county businesses, government, travel and tourism industry and conservation entities.
2. The local byway committee shares byway updates and information at least annually with elected officials located along the designated byway.
3. Members of the local byway committee conduct at least two local presentations annually to civic groups, clubs, organizations or entities located along the byway to share information, encourage support of and participation in byway programs.
4. The local byway committee recruits at least two residents annually to participate in activities and expand the capacity of the byway.

## Implementation

1. The local byway has a current corridor management plan that is used as the blueprint for its annual work plan and activities. The corridor management plan includes specific components and policies to address stewardship, interpretation, experience enhancement and marketing of the designated byway.
2. The local byway committee has an annual work plan that details specific outcomes for the committee to realize during the year. This work plan is submitted to the state byways committee to document proposed activities.
3. The local byway committee identifies and secures funding sources to provide the financial and technical resources to accomplish the annual work plan.
4. The local byway coordinator works with KDOT to ensure maintenance of kiosks, signage and other designated byway elements.

## Marketing

1. The byway committee has a current marketing plan that is used as the blueprint for the annual work plan and activities. The marketing plan includes specific strategies and policies for design standards and graphic materials, promotions, media/public relations, advertising, special events, and on-line marketing.
2. The byway committee works with KDOT to produce and update the current byway brochure.
3. The byway committee distributes designated byway and state-produced byways literature at locations along the byway.
4. At minimum annually, the local byway coordinator provides KDOT and Travel & Tourism current information for inclusion on the state byway and travel websites.

## Measurement

1. The byway coordinator conducts an annual performance evaluation and submits form to KDOT for review/integration into program performance report.
2. The byway committee conducts a survey of byway travelers every five years to measure visitor satisfaction and identify ways to improve visitor experiences. This survey may be conducted in partnership with other organizations, such as the state tourism office, university, private business or convention & visitors bureau.
3. The local byway coordinator works with local businesses, attractions and accommodations located along the byway to determine visitor spending attributed to byway designation.
4. The byway coordinator annually demonstrates the value of byway designation to local residents.

All Kansas Byways will be evaluated using the baseline standard above. Designated byways that do not meet the criteria will be subject to de-designation.

# APPENDICES:

- A. Glossary
- B. Acronyms

# GLOSSARY

**Accessibility**—individuals with disabilities are able to reach, use, understand or appreciate NPS programs, facilities and services, or those individuals have the same benefits available to persons without disabilities. See also, “universal design.”

**All-American Road**—a Byway designated by the Secretary of the United States Department of Transportation that meets the criteria for having at least two of the intrinsic qualities of national significance and that is considered a destination unto itself. It must provide an exceptional traveling experience that is so recognized by travelers that they would make a drive along the highway a primary reason for their trip. The characteristics associated with the intrinsic qualities for an All-American Road are those which best represent the nation and may contain one-of-a-kind features that do not exist elsewhere and are recognized nationally.

**Archeological resource**—any material remains or physical evidence of past human life or activities that are of archeological interest, including the record of the effects of human activities on the environment. An archeological resource is capable of revealing scientific or humanistic information through archeological research.

**Carrying capacity**— the maximum population of a particular species that a particular region can support without hindering future generations’ ability to maintain the same population. A visitor, or user, carrying capacity is the type and level of use that can be accommodated while sustaining the desired resource and visitor experience conditions.

**Corridor Management Plan (CMP)**—a written document that specifies the actions, procedures, controls, operational practices, and administrative strategies to maintain the scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archeological, and natural qualities of the scenic byway, prepared as a requirement for scenic byway designation.

**Corridor**—the right-of-way and the adjacent area that is visible from and extending along the highway. The distance the corridor extends from the scenic byway could vary with the different intrinsic qualities.

**Critical habitat**—specific areas within a geographical area occupied by a threatened or endangered species which contain those physical or biological features essential to the conservation of the species, and which may require special management considerations or protection; and specific areas outside the geographical area occupied by the species at the time of its listing, upon a determination by the Secretary of the Interior that such areas are essential for the conservation of the species.

**Cultural landscape**—a geographic area, including cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with an historic event, activity, or person, or exhibiting other cultural or esthetic values. There are four non-mutually exclusive types of cultural landscapes: historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes, and ethnographic landscapes.

**Cultural resource**—an aspect of a cultural system that is valued by or significantly representative of a culture, or that contains significant information about a culture. A cultural resource may be a tangible entity or a cultural practice. Tangible cultural resources are categorized as districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects for the National Register of Historic Places, and as archeological resources, cultural landscapes, structures, museum objects, and ethnographic resources for NPS management purposes.

**Designation**—the Official declaration by the Secretary of the Kansas Department of Transportation to accord official approval and inclusion of a designated scenic, historic or backroads byway in the Kansas Byways Program.

**Easement**—a legal interest in real property generally established in a real estate document or on

a recorded plat to reserve, convey or dedicate the present or future use of all or a portion of the property, including areas under, on or above the land surface, by a legal person or agency other than the legal fee owner(s) of the property for a specialized or limited purpose without the transfer of fee title. Easements may be purchased from or donated by the legal fee owner(s) of the property, and are considered in the assessment of property value in accordance with State and Federal law.

**Ecosystem**—a system formed by the interaction of a community of organisms with their physical and biological environment, considered as a unit.

**Gateway**—in a visual sense, a point or entrance corridor along a roadway at which a motorist, bicyclist or pedestrian gains a sense of having entered a new landscape and defines the arrival point as a destination as a result of visual cues such as signs, monuments, landscaping, a change in development character, or a natural feature.

**Geologic resources**— features produced from the physical history of the earth, or processes such as exfoliation, erosion and sedimentation, glaciation, karst or shoreline processes, seismic, and volcanic activities.

**Historic property**—a district, site, building, structure, or object significant in the history of American archeology, architecture, culture, engineering, or politics at the national, state, or local level.

**Impact**—the likely effects of an action or proposed action upon specific natural, cultural, or socioeconomic resources. Impacts may be direct, indirect, individual, cumulative, beneficial, or adverse.

**Implementation plan**—a plan that focuses on how to implement an activity or project needed to achieve a long-term goal. An implementation plan may direct a specific project or an ongoing activity.

**Infrastructure**—capital facilities and land assets under public ownership, or operated or maintained for public benefit, that are necessary to support development and redevelopment and to protect the public health, safety and welfare. In general, these include:

- Facilities and assets that are publicly owned or that serve the public.
- Systems of facilities and assets whose needs are generated by and which are necessary to support development and redevelopment.
- Facilities and assets that may influence the form or the location of development and redevelopment.
- Capital facilities with a significant fixed cost and a long service life (> 10 years).
- Facilities and assets that are directly and substantially related to protecting public health, safety and welfare.

**Intrinsic Quality**—scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archeological, or natural features that are considered representative, unique, irreplaceable, or distinctly characteristic of an area.

**andscape**—landform, water, vegetation, and other features of the natural and built environment.

**Leave-no-trace (LNT)**—principles and practices that emphasize the ethic of leaving a place free and clear of the residual evidence of human presence; applied to all forms of recreation management.

**Lightscape management (natural ambient)**—the effective use of good design to appropriately light areas and minimize or eliminate light clutter, the spill over of light into areas where light is not wanted and light pollution, all of which wastes energy.

**Local Commitment**—the assurance provided by communities along the scenic byway that they will undertake actions and protective measures to preserve the qualities for which the byway and its adjacent corridor were designated. The commitment is identified in the CMP.

**Local Byway Committee**—an advisory committee organized and convened to assist in developing a CMP for and managing a designated Kansas Byway.

**Multi-Modal Travel**—the movement of people or goods involving a sequence of two or more modes of transportation, such as driving a motor vehicle to a bus station to board a bus to reach a final destination.

**National Byway**—a route designated by the Secretary of the United States Department of Transportation that has at least one intrinsic quality of regional significance, with characteristics associated with that quality that are distinct and most representative of the region and are recognized throughout the region.

**Stakeholder**—an individual, group, or other entity that has a strong interest in decisions concerning byway resources and values.

**Stewardship**—the cultural and natural resource protection ethic of employing the most effective concepts, techniques, equipment, and technology to prevent, avoid, or mitigate impacts that would compromise the integrity of byway resources.

**Sustainable design**—design that applies the principles of ecology, economics, and ethics to the business of creating necessary and appropriate places for people to visit, live, and work. Development that has a sustainable design, sits lightly upon the land, demonstrates resource efficiency, and promotes ecological restoration and integrity, thus improving the environment, the economy, and society.

**Sustainable Development**—the development of land and provision of infrastructure that maintains or enhances economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Sustainable practices/principles**—those choices, decisions, actions and ethics that will best achieve ecological/ biological integrity; protect qualities and functions of air, water, soil, and other aspects of the natural environment; and preserve human cultures. Sustainable practices allow for use and enjoyment by the current generation, while ensuring that future generations will have the same opportunities for use and enjoyment.

**SWOT Analysis**—The independent review and assessment of a particular product, program, activity or plan to determine **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats impacting implementation or completion.

**Travel writer**—A journalist—employed by a newspaper, magazine, electronic or on-line media, or working independently as a “freelancer”—who specializes in coverage of the business side of the tourism industry or information related to destinations, specific industry categories or components (such as hotels, attractions, tour companies, niche market activities) seeking to increase tourism.

**Universal design**—the design of products and environments to be usable by all people to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

**Visitor**—anyone who travels at least 50 miles away from home.

**Visitor Experience and Resource Protection (VERP) framework**—a visitor carrying capacity planning process applied to determine the desired resource and visitor experience conditions, and used as an aid to decision-making.

**Wilderness (area)**—federal land that has been designated by Congress as a component of the national wilderness preservation system.

Sources: America's Byways Resource Center, Federal Highway Administration, National Park Service

# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AASHTO: American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials

BLM: Bureau of Land Management

CMP: Corridor Management Plan

CSS: Context Sensitive Solutions

DMO: Destination Marketing Organization

FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions

FHWA: Federal Highway Administration

GPS: Global Positioning System

ISTEA: Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act

KBC: Kansas Byways Committee

KDOT: Kansas Department of Transportation

KSHS: Kansas State Historical Society

KT&T: Kansas Department of Commerce, Travel & Tourism Division

NGO: Non-Government Organization

PPT: Power Point Presentation

RC&D: Resource Conservation and Development Program

ROI: Return on Investment

SAFETEA-LU: Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users

TEA-21: Transportation Efficiency Act

TIAK: Travel Industry Association of Kansas

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**KDOT:** Page 7 (Western Plains Designation Ceremony)

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## 2020 Management & Marketing Plan

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