



# ESSEX COASTAL SCENIC BYWAY

## Corridor Management Plan

### Report Summary

March 2011



*Prepared for the  
Essex National Heritage Commission  
by Brown Walker Planners, Inc.*





# ESSEX COASTAL SCENIC BYWAY CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

## REPORT SUMMARY

prepared for

**Essex National Heritage Commission**

by

**Brown Walker Planners, Inc.**

**Gates, Leighton & Associates, Inc.**

**Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc.**

**Wild Water International**

March 2011

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## BYWAY COMMUNITIES

City of Lynn  
Town of Swampscott  
Town of Marblehead  
City of Salem  
City of Beverly  
Town of Manchester-by-the-Sea  
City of Gloucester  
Town of Rockport  
Town of Essex  
Town of Ipswich  
Town of Rowley  
Town of Newbury  
City of Newburyport

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Representative Michael A. Costello  
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## **Table of Contents**

### **Part 1 Byway Overview**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Regional Context
- 1.2 Intrinsic Qualities

### **Part 2 The Byway Vision, Goals, & Story**

- 2.0 A Vision for the Byway
- 2.1 Scenic Byway Goals
- 2.2 Byway Story

### **Part 3 Promotion**

- 3.0 Interpreting
- 3.1 Marketing
- 3.2 Signing
- 3.3 Economic Opportunities

### **Part 4 Preservation**

- 4.0 The Roadway Corridor
- 4.1 Land Management

### **Part 5 Byway Corridor Management**

- 5.0 Public Involvement
- 5.1 Organizational Framework

### **Part 6 Implementation**

- 6.0 Priority Projects

### **Part 7 Maps**

- 7.0 Community Maps



## **Part 1**

### **Byway Overview**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

#### **1.1 Regional Context**

#### **1.2 Intrinsic Qualities**

# BYWAY OVERVIEW

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The 85-mile Essex Coastal Scenic Byway (the Byway) follows state and local roadways between Lynn in the south and Newburyport in the north curving along the coast and looping around Cape Ann. The extensive collection of extant vernacular architecture and the associated cultural resources located along this coastline are set within remarkable natural diversity and beauty. The Byway links the maritime communities of the Essex National Heritage Area (ENHA), demonstrating the pattern of human settlement in this region, as it has been shaped by the natural environment.

The Essex Coastal Scenic Byway passes through the communities of Lynn, Swampscott, Marblehead, Salem, Beverly, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Gloucester, Rockport, Essex, Ipswich, Rowley, Newbury, Newburyport. Collectively, these thirteen communities hold a population of 291,300 and range in size from three (Swampscott) to thirty-three and a half (Ipswich) square miles

## BYWAY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A scenic byway is a road recognized for having special qualities that its local communities wish to preserve and promote. Scenic byways are designated (at both the state and national level) for the defining qualities that make them distinctive and provide a unique (and appealing) travel experience.

The Essex Coastal Scenic Byway is a byway of regional (multi-state) and national significance. This is demonstrated by the collection of natural and historic resources that have received national or regional designations or protections, most notably the federal designation of the Essex National Heritage Area. The Byway connects these resources in a cohesive route that traces historic settlement patterns that began with the First Contact Period and provides access to the naturally defining features



Essex Coastal Scenic Byway



of the area. The Byway's resources attract visitors from outside the region creating an opportunity to use the byway program to reinforce and grow the heritage tourism and recreation-based businesses.

This layered, authentic, and working landscape offers byway travelers a compelling experience of American home life, work, and recreation within the context of our country's early history. From a wealth of First Period architecture, to salt marsh farms and stone walls and jetties, the byway landscape is rich in visual interest and has a diversity that reflects the character of the people of New England.

### NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

The Byway passes through and along resource areas that have been recognized for their regional and national significance. The entire Byway is located in the Essex National Heritage Area, which was designated by the U.S. Congress in 1996 to recognize the quantity and quality of the region's nationally significant historical, cultural, and natural resources. These resources are categorized according to three nationally significant historical themes – Early Settlement (17th century), the Maritime Era (18th century), and the Industrial Revolution (19th century).

These themes were established by the National Park Service, described in the Essex National Heritage Area's Heritage Plan, and approved by the Secretary of the Interior. Each byway community contains historic resources listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the official list of the nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Included are individual properties, entire neighborhoods, and several National Historic Landmarks. There are 25 National Register Historic Districts and 11 local historic districts located along the byway.

Estuaries along the Byway are part of the National Estuary Program, established by U.S. Congress in 1987 to recognize and protect estuaries of national importance. The Parker River National Wildlife Refuge lies adjacent to the Byway in Ipswich, Rowley, Newbury, and Newburyport, was designated as part of the national system in 1942, primarily to provide feeding, resting, and nesting habitat for migratory birds. Portions of four Massachusetts Important Birding Areas (IBAs) about the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway: the Great Marsh, Rockport Headlands and Inshore Waters, Eastern Point/Gloucester Harbor, and Nahant Bay. IBAs are part of an international network of sites that have been recognized as providing critical habitat for endangered species and attracting large numbers of breeding, wintering or migratory species.

## WHAT IS A SCENIC BYWAY?

*A scenic byway is a road with defined special qualities which its local communities wish to preserve and promote. Byways offer driving experiences “off the beaten path” where visitors can explore and experience the scenery, culture, history and special features of an area, that provide opportunities we might otherwise miss. You might think of byways as roads that tell a story—gateways to unique adventures and paths to better understand America's history and cultures.*



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## NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAMS 14 POINTS

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) lists 14 components that must be in any Corridor Management Plan (CMP) and would also be included in a byway's application for national recognition.

*The FHWA requirements for a CMP are:*

1. A map identifying the corridor boundaries, locations of intrinsic qualities, and land uses in the corridor (see Part 7);
2. An assessment of the byway's intrinsic qualities and their context (the area surrounding them). The end product is typically a catalogue of the byway's scenic, historic, natural, archeological, cultural, and recreational qualities (see Part 1);
3. A strategy for maintaining and enhancing each of the byway's intrinsic qualities (see Part 6);
4. A list of the agencies, groups, and individuals who are part of the team that will carry out the plan (see Part 6);
5. A strategy for how existing development along the corridor might be enhanced and how to accommodate new development while preserving the byway's intrinsic qualities (see Part 6).
6. A plan for ongoing public participation (see Part 5);
7. A general review of the road's safety record to locate hazards and poor design and identify possible corrections. Identify ways to balance safety with context-sensitive highway design practices that accommodate safety needs while preserving the road's character (see Parts 4 and 6);
8. A plan to accommodate commercial traffic while ensuring the safety of sightseers in smaller vehicles as well as bicyclists and pedestrians (see Parts 4 and 6);
9. A listing and discussion of efforts to minimize anomalous intrusions on the visitor's experience of the byway (see Part 3);
10. Documentation of compliance with all existing local, state, and federal laws about the control of outdoor advertising. Federal regulations prohibit all new billboards along designated scenic byways that are classified as federal-aid primary, national highway system, or interstate roads. States are free to impose stricter controls on billboards along scenic byways (see Part 3);
11. A plan to make sure that the number and placement of highway signs will not get in the way of scenery, but still be sufficient to help tourists find their way (see Part 3);
12. Plans for how to market and publicize the byway (see Part 3);
13. Any proposals for modifying the roadway, including an evaluation of design standards and how proposed changes may affect the byway's intrinsic qualities (see Part 4);
14. A description of what you plan to do to explain and interpret your byway's significant resources to visitors (see Part 3)



*Sunrise over Great Marsh in Rowley (Essex Heritage / Elizabeth Marshall)*

## PLAN COMPONENTS

This Report Summary is a companion to the comprehensive Essex Coastal Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan. The complete Corridor Management Plan (CMP) is comprised of a series of individual reports -- a compilation of research, inventories, guidelines, and recommendations for each of the elements that will be a part of a successful and sustainable byway program. Each chapter of the



*The Friendship at anchor at Derby Wharf in Salem  
(Essex Heritage / Amanda Levy)*



*Kayaker on Ipswich River (Essex Heritage)*

CMP provides detailed information about specific aspects of the Byway and the components of what will eventually define the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway Program. The Report Summary is a concise document that gives an overview of the main elements of the CMP. It is anticipated that communities and regional partners will turn to the full CMP for more complete information and additional details that will support the recommendations and ideas introduced in the Report Summary.

## BYWAY VISION STATEMENT

*The Essex Coastal Scenic Byway will present the coastal part of the Essex National Heritage Area story and resources in a coherent manner, so that people visiting one part of the Byway will quickly gain an appreciation for the full range of resources offered by the region. People from around the nation and world will be able to learn about and appreciate what makes this place special. The Byway will attract visitors who share an appreciation of the natural environment and will be interested in the region's history, culture, and nature-based recreational opportunities.*





## 1.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Essex Coastal Scenic Byway passes through the communities of Lynn, Swampscott, Marblehead, Salem, Beverly, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Gloucester, Rockport, Essex, Ipswich, Rowley, Newbury, and Newburyport. Collectively, these thirteen communities hold a population of 291,300<sup>1</sup> and range in size from three (Swampscott) to thirty-three and a half (Ipswich) square miles.

The entire Byway is located within the Essex National Heritage Area (ENHA), which was designated to recognize the concentration of nationally significant historical, cultural, and natural resources. Occupying the northeast corner of the state, ENHA abuts New Hampshire to the north and the Atlantic Ocean to the east. Incorporating all of Essex County, the region contains 34 cities and towns and a resident population of 750,000. In partnership with local and regional entities, Essex National Heritage Commission (Essex Heritage) maintains 10 satellite visitor centers throughout the ENHA. Each of these is housed within an existing heritage site or visitor center and provides an assortment of information on unique places and activities in the region.

Five of the Essex Heritage affiliated visitor centers are located along the Byway – Lynn Museum & Historical Society, Salem National Park Service Regional Visitor Center, Gloucester Stage Fort Park Welcoming Center, Ipswich Hall-Haskell House, Newburyport Custom House Maritime Museum.

All the byway communities are part of the North Shore, loosely defined as

region along the Atlantic coast between the City of Boston and the New Hampshire border. Sharing a rich history, significant natural and scenic areas, and located close to Boston, the region is marketed as a tourism destination.

The northern communities of Rowley, Newbury, and Newburyport are located in the lower Merrimack Valley region, defined by the watershed of the Merrimack River, which forms the northern borders of the City of Newburyport and the Town of Newbury. The Merrimack Valley sometimes is referred to as the “Crossroads of New England” due to the proximity to Interstates 93, 95, and 495 connecting to major population centers in New Hampshire and Maine as well as Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Downtown Boston is just 30 to 40 minutes by car from any point in the Merrimack Valley.<sup>2</sup>

For more information about the different features and sites associated with these intrinsic qualities refer to Chapter 2 of the CMP.



*National Park Service Visitor Center in Salem*

<sup>1</sup> US Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, 2009.

## 1.2 INTRINSIC QUALITIES



H.A. Burnham boat yard in Essex (Essex Heritage / June Rhodes)



Boats at dock in Rockport (Essex Heritage / Anthony Spittler)



Spencer-Peirce-Little Farm in Newbury  
(Essex Heritage / Marion Bayly)

*Intrinsic quality of a byway is determined by features that are considered representative, unique, irreplaceable, or distinctly characteristic of an area. A byway's intrinsic qualities are defined by the collection of resources – special places, landscapes, buildings, and other features – that are located along the byway corridor and are immediately accessible or visible to travelers along the byway. These qualities establish the character of the byway, distinguish the byway from other roadways in the region and across the nation, and provide the context for the byway traveler's experience. A byway's intrinsic qualities are the basis for creating a byway's story – “the intentional, coordinated message that the byway conveys to visitors.” Byway Beginnings, 1999*



## HISTORIC QUALITY

Byways that represent historic quality contain physical elements of the landscape, both natural and manmade, that are connected to specific historic events as well as broader movements that relate to the evolution of the American nation and society. Historic quality can be evident in buildings, settlement patterns, or other examples of human activity. A number of factors support historic quality as a defining intrinsic quality of the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway:

- The entire Byway is located in an area that has been designated as a National Heritage Area, acknowledging the quantity and quality of the region's nationally-significant historic resources.
- The historic resources create coherent stories (or themes) that connect all of the communities along the Byway.
- These historic resources possess integrity of location, design, setting, material, workmanship, feeling, and association.
- Along the Byway are over 7,200 sites listed in the Massachusetts and National Historic Registries as well as 25 National Historic Districts and 11 Local Historic Districts.

The history of the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway region is defined by water. All of the communities along the Byway are coastal communities, bordering the



*John Whipple House in Ipswich (Essex Heritage)*

Atlantic Ocean, and most have access to a major river and contain numerous lakes and ponds. These water bodies shaped the geography of the area and have steered the pattern of human settlement and economic development.

Within the Byway's historical theme there are a number of sub-themes that relate to specific historical periods. These themes are closely related to the three primary themes of the Essex National Heritage Area (as identified in the Essex National Heritage Area Plan, 1999). Some examples of the resources that relate to each of these themes are provided below with more details and descriptions provided in Chapter 2 of the full CMP.

### FOUNDING AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

Include resources and sites representing First Period Architecture, town commons and public spaces, locations with political and religious significance, farmland and fishing areas.

- Marblehead Historic District - 15 pre-1700 homes, 250 pre-Revolution structures.
- Salem Common (Washington Square) - A monument in the park commemorates this as the site where the National Guard began in 1637. It was set aside in perpetuity as a training ground for militia in 1714.
- Salem, Burying Point Cemetery - The oldest cemetery in Salem (1637) contains the grave of witchcraft trial judge John Hawthorne (an ancestor of Nathaniel Hawthorne) and the Salem Witch Trials Memorial.
- Beverly, Lynch Memorial Park - Originally known as Woodbury's Point, during the Revolutionary War a fort was located here to protect Beverly Harbor.
- Gloucester, Rigg's Corridor - Located on the east and west side of Washington Street, the Riggs corridor area consists of the Riggs Pasture, which is roughly 33 acres, and two First Period houses, the Thomas Riggs, Sr. house (circa 1640s) and the Thomas Riggs, Jr. house (circa 1690s).



- Essex, John Wise Avenue - The scenic farmland along the long flat stretch of Rte 133 in Essex has been farmed for centuries and is reminiscent of First Period and Second Period farmsteads.
- Ipswich - Largest concentration of First Period houses in the country - 38 houses and an intact First Period streetscape are located within one mile of the Whipple House Museum (on the Byway at the South Village Green). North Green, site of first meeting house (1634), and South Village Green, used as a training field for local militia. For many years the South Village Green also had a meeting house or church at its northern end.
- Rowley Main Street - 17th century houses, Town Common and training field, First Congregational Church.
- Newbury High Road - Lower Green was the original center of the town and may have been the site of the first meeting house. Upper Green, opposite the Town Hall and near the First Parish Church and Burying Ground, was used for military training. Spencer-Peirce-Little Farm has extensive open fields which surround the historic farmhouse and barn and a variety of events and activities are designed to demonstrate specific aspects of life on the farm.
- Newburyport, Bartlett Mall - Once used as a "Trayning Field" and assembly area for Revolutionary War militias, current location of the Superior Court House (1800) and "Frog Pond".



*Haying salt marsh along Newbury Turnpike (Essex Heritage)*

## INTERNATIONAL MARITIME TRADE

Evidence of the marine-based industries is found in many of the byway communities, including custom houses, warehouses, wharves and piers, schooners, boat yards, lighthouses, and historic homes built by sea captains and merchants.

- Swampscott Fish House - Oldest active municipally owned fish house, used by fisherman to store gear and land their catch.
- Marblehead Historic District - Merchant and ship builder mansions, dense and narrow portside streets, active sailing harbor.
- Salem, National Park Service Visitor Center - Start of the Heritage Trail that passes many historic Salem sites, interpretive exhibits about the nearby Salem Maritime National Historic Site (along Derby Street) which includes buildings, relics, and wharves from the shipping trade.
- Beverly, Fish Flake Hill Historic District - This small waterfront neighborhood has historic connections to marine and fishing industries. The name is a reference to the fish flaking tables that were used to dry fish.
- Manchester Village Historic District - Includes historic properties once owned by some of the 45 merchant sea captains who lived in Manchester and commanded ships that traded with Europe and the Far East.
- Gloucester, Harbor Loop off Rogers St. - Gloucester Adventure Schooner, Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center, views of working waterfront.
- East Gloucester Square Historic District - Exemplifies the growth of local fisheries during the 19th and early 20th centuries, notable for its Greek Revival and Italianate style residential architecture and for its collection of intact maritime-related buildings along the waterfront.
- Essex Shipbuilding Museum - Exhibits and the Evelina Goulart schooner.
- Newburyport, Cushing House - Contains exhibits



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on the history of international trade, including documents, furniture and art work.

- Newburyport Waterfront Park - Views of the Merrimack River along which shipping vessels were built. Custom House Maritime Museum provides history of shipping industry. This is the birthplace of U.S. Coast Guard – monument (behind the museum) and active station (visible from the park).

## MANUFACTURING AND INDUSTRY

The story of the Industrial Revolution in America – the conversion from cottage based industries to industrial manufacturing - played out along the byway corridor in the rise and prosperity of the textile and leather industries along with other industries, such as granite quarrying.

- Lynn Heritage Visitor Center and Lynn Museum- The Visitor Center provides information about Lynn's prominence as a shoe manufacturing center and electronics pioneer. Exhibits show furniture, artwork and everyday objects through the 1800's.
- Manchester Village Historic District - The district includes a few commercial buildings associated with the days of cabinet making and furniture manufacturing, at one time mainstays of the Town's economy.
- Halibut Point State Park, Rockport - Once an active quarry pit, now filled in with water, traces of granite blocks scattered around the landscape, historical exhibits at visitor center. Dramatic views of the treacherous waters off Cape Ann and north to New Hampshire and Maine.
- Flat Ledge Quarry / Granite Pier, Rockport - Collection of historic resources associated with the Flat Ledge Quarry and the larger Rockport granite industry.
- Newburyport National Historic Register District - Contains former mill buildings and worker's housing. Mills now are all converted to non-industrial uses.

## SUMMER AND ARTS COMMUNITIES, LAND CONSERVATION, AND PARKS

During the 19th century some of the byway communities developed into the heart of the fashionable North Shore, where wealthy families spent the summer months in Grand Estates built by renowned architects with grounds designed by famous landscape architects. At the same time this area was shaped by the rise of the land conservation movement and the development of the Metropolitan Park System. Artists also discovered these coastal communities, establishing their own residential neighborhoods and creating images that further popularized the area.

- Lynn Shore Reservation - The state acquired private properties along the coast in the early 1900's in order to create the Lynn Shore Reservation. Many buildings were removed in order to assure public access, protect important natural features and provide open space.
- Lynn, Diamond District - Emerged at the turn of the 20th century as an upper class neighborhood of suburban houses on large lots along the shore.
- Swampscott, Humphrey Street - From the mid to late 19th century into the early 20th century, boarding houses and hotels built to accommodate summer residents lined this street. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow reportedly wrote his poem "The Cliff" from the Cliff House which at one time stood along Humphrey Street overlooking the water.
- Marblehead Neck - Visible from Marblehead downtown and accessed by a causeway, the Neck has many large estates (old and new) as well as a number of yacht clubs.

- Beverly, Lynch Memorial Park - Formerly part of the gardens of the Evan's estate (once a summer destination of President Taft).
- Beverly Farms and Pride's Crossing, Beverly - These small villages along the rail line historically provided services and housing for staff to serve the large estates of summer residents. Two campuses located along the byway route, Endicott College and the Landmark School, have converted some of the former grand estate properties to academic buildings and residences.
- Manchester Village Historic District and Manchester Harbor - Manchester's attraction as a summer destination for the wealthy is reflected in some of the fine homes constructed during this period in the downtown area as well as the commercial buildings containing stores and specialty shops to service the summer visitors. Manchester Harbor is still a popular destination for yachters.
- Gloucester, Fitz Henry (Hugh) Lane House – Located on the Harbor Loop is the former home and studio of renowned 19th Century luminist painter Fitz Henry (Hugh) Lane.
- East Gloucester, Rocky Neck Art Colony - Regarded by many to be "America's Oldest Working Art Colony," the artists' enclave at Rocky Neck (1850 to 1950) attracted a number of important Realist painters.
- Gloucester, Beauport Sleeper-McCann House - Built in 1907, the summer home of one of America's first professional interior designers, Henry Davis Sleeper.
- Essex, Cox Reservation - Built in 1785, it is the former home and studio of renowned muralist Allyn Cox and now serves as the headquarters for the Essex County Greenbelt Association.



*Old Town House in Marblehead  
(Essex Heritage / Elizabeth Attardi)*



*Essex River in Essex*



## NATURAL QUALITY

The fascinating interface of land and sea characterizes the North Shore communities of Massachusetts and provides an abundance of natural resources and distinctive landscapes that are the context for the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway. While many of the natural areas show traces of human activity, there are areas along the Byway where land forms and water bodies appear as they may have when early settlers first arrived. The predominant natural landscapes along the byway corridor include water resources (estuaries, salt marshes, mud flats, and sandy beaches) as well as forested uplands.

The rich diversity of landscapes along the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway creates a mosaic of habitats for hundreds of species of birds and a variety of mammals, fish, shellfish, amphibians, and reptiles. Examples of the sites that highlight the byway region's natural quality are provided below, more detail and descriptions are provided in Chapter 2 of the CMP.

### SALT MARSHES

The salt marshes along the Byway are part of the Great Marsh, the largest salt marsh in New England, with over 25,000 acres of marsh, barrier beach, tidal river, estuary, mudflat and upland islands that



*Boardwalk at Parker River National Wildlife Refuge  
(Essex Heritage / Trish McGregor)*

reach from Salisbury, just north of the Byway, to Gloucester.

### ESTUARIES AND MUD FLATS

Estuaries are found along the entire length of the Byway and represent some of the area's most distinctive landscapes. An estuary is a partially enclosed body of water where freshwater from rivers and streams meet and mix with saltwater before emptying into the ocean. Mudflats are frequently found along the estuaries and salt marshes of the Byway and, while connected to each, they possess several unique characteristics that separate them from these other marine communities. Byway estuaries are found alongside and within marshes, bays, and rivers including Forest River in Marblehead and Salem, the Annisquam in Gloucester, Essex River along the causeway in Essex, and throughout the expansive marshes of the Parker and Ipswich rivers within Ipswich, Rowley, Newbury and Newburyport. Mud flats are particularly visible from the byway route along the Annisquam River in Gloucester.

### SANDY BEACHES

Sandy beaches are scattered along the northern coastline of Massachusetts with many on or within easy access from the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway. Beaches have more than just recreational benefits, playing an essential role in marine ecosystems. There are about twenty-five beaches immediately accessible from the Byway. Beaches immediately visible from the Byway include Lynn Shore Reservation in Lynn, Kings Beach in Swampscott, and Back and Front Beaches in Rockport.

### RIVERS AND STREAMS

An extensive network of rivers and creeks can be viewed and accessed along the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway. These water bodies have been transportation corridors, industrial sites and water and food sources throughout history. Today they are still home to numerous fish, bird and other wildlife.





## FORESTED UPLANDS

Portions of the Byway that travel away from the coast pass through upland forests, many of which are part of conservation areas and other protected open spaces. Although undeveloped, most of these lands show traces of human activity in what has been left behind.

## WILDLIFE REFUGES AND PROTECTED LANDS

The rich diversity of landscapes along the Byway creates a mosaic of habitats for hundreds of species of birds, and a large variety of mammals, fish, shellfish, amphibians and reptiles. . The following list of the Byway's protected and accessible lands -- owned and managed by federal, state, municipal and non-profit agencies -- demonstrates the depth and significance of the area's wildlife and natural resources.

- Parker River National Wildlife Refuge (Ipswich, Rowley, Newbury, Newburyport)
- Lynn Heritage State Park (Lynn)
- Lynn Shore Reservation (Lynn, Swampscott)
- Halibut Point State Park and Reservation (Rockport)
- Sandy Point State Reservation
- Forest River Conservation Area and Environs (Marblehead and Salem)
- Powder House Hill Reservation (Manchester-by-the-Sea)
- Cape Pond Reservoir (Rockport)
- Gloucester Watershed Lands (Gloucester and Rockport)
- Delamater Sanctuary and Waring Field (Rockport)
- Dow Brook Conservation Area (Ipswich)
- Ipswich Watershed Lands (Ipswich)
- Coolidge Reservation (Manchester-by-the-Sea)
- Normans Woe Wildlife Sanctuary (Gloucester)
- Ravenswood Park (Gloucester)

- Eastern Point Wildlife Sanctuary (Gloucester)
- Seine Field (Gloucester)
- Goose Cove Reservation (Gloucester)
- Thompson Street Reservation (Gloucester)
- Cox Reservation (Essex)
- Stavros Reservation (Essex)
- Rowley River Salt Marsh (Rowley)
- Old Town Hill (Newbury)
- Joppa Flats Education Center and Wildlife Sanctuary (Newburyport)



*Seal in Marblehead Harbor  
(Essex Heritage / Marissa Mariano)*



*Reservoir in Gloucester  
(Essex Heritage / Mary Fisher)*



## RECREATIONAL QUALITY

The Essex Coastal Scenic Byway corridor's natural resources support a host of outdoor recreational activities. The beautiful and fascinating landscapes of the corridor invite byway travelers to experience it actively and intimately through hiking, swimming, bicycling, paddling, and boating. The wildlife of the region also supports birding, fishing, and hunting. The byway corridor provides settings for both active and informal (sometimes referred to as passive) recreational pursuits. These include:

- Birding and Wildlife Viewing
- Paddling and Boating
- Walking and Hiking
- Bicycling
- Fishing
- Swimming



*Salem Bike Path (Kate Fox)*



*Hikers at Dogtown in Gloucester (Essex Heritage)*

## SCENIC QUALITY

The Essex Coastal Scenic Byway passes through landscapes of great variety and complexity. The eighty-five mile corridor has a common backdrop of visual harmony in terms of integrity, scale, and order. These characteristics can be attributed in part to traditional building practices that worked with the land. The foundation of this diversity lies in the early colonization of the coast and the corresponding land use patterns that unfolded as Americans sought to make a living from where the land and water meet. The byway corridor winds through landscapes with distinct and strikingly different characteristics expressed in water bodies, landforms, and architecture.



*Farm in Manchester (Essex Heritage)*



*Sailboat at marina at Lynn Heritage State Park (Essex Heritage / Jesse Scheinbart)*



## **Part 2**

### **The Byway Vision, Goals, and Story**

#### **2.0 A Vision for the Byway**

#### **2.1 Scenic Byway Goals**

#### **2.2 Byway Story**

# THE BYWAY VISION, GOALS, AND STORY

The Byway's vision and goals, shaped with public input during the corridor management planning process, provide the guiding principles for the development of the byway program. Essential to the byway program will be determining ways to communicate the byway story. A byway's intrinsic qualities are the basis for creating a byway's story – “the intentional, coordinated message that the byway conveys to visitors”.



*Barn at Cox Reservation in Essex*

## **2.0 A VISION FOR THE BYWAY**

The Essex Coastal Scenic Byway links and interprets important natural, scenic, historic, and recreational resources through the coastal communities of the Essex National Heritage Area, demonstrating the pattern of human settlement in this region as it has been shaped by the natural environment.

The Essex Coastal Scenic Byway will present the coastal part of the Essex National Heritage Area story and resources in a coherent manner, so that people visiting one part of the Byway will quickly gain an appreciation for the full range of resources offered by the region. People from around the nation and



**Essex Coastal Scenic Byway**



world will be able to learn about and appreciate what makes this place special. The Byway will attract visitors who share an appreciation of the natural environment and will be interested in the region's history, culture, and nature-based recreational opportunities.

The development and management of the Byway will complement the region's historic and natural qualities and reinforce the sense of being in a special place. More than simply providing access to natural and recreational resources, the byway route will become a distinctive feature within the landscape, and traveling along the Byway will be an integral part of the visitor experience.

The Byway will thus become central to the region's community development, economic development, and natural heritage conservation efforts. In so doing, the Byway will be a model for groups and individuals to work together to create a healthy economy based on heritage tourism and nature-based recreation.



*Quarry stones at Halibut Point State Park in Rockport  
(Essex Heritage / Greg Mazzotta)*



*Fisherman's Wives Memorial (Essex Heritage / Marion Bayly)*



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## 2.1 SCENIC BYWAY GOALS

In order to achieve this vision, the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway program will:

*Help promote the region's resources, by:*

- building local awareness, appreciation, and pride in byway resources;
- bringing an influx of visitors to local businesses and visitor sites;
- marketing and increasing awareness of the byway communities and regional tourism opportunities;
- defining a regional identity;
- improving the overall visitor experience; and
- coordinating wayfinding signage and directionals.

*Reinforce local and regional efforts to preserve and enhance these resources by:*

- supporting community stewardship of byway resources;
- protecting community character;
- encouraging adoption of local policies and regulations to preserve byway resources;
- maintaining the authenticity and character of the route;
- striking a balance between encouraging and accommodating access to historic and natural sites and places and preservation objectives

*Provide a framework within which to coordinate planning efforts and coordinate management of the byway corridor by:*

- striking a balance between encouraging and accommodating access to historic and natural sites and places and preservation objectives;
- improving the roadway corridor through locally appropriate management of streetscapes, increased safety, and accommodation of multi-modal transportation;
- actively encourage travelers to explore the area by walking, biking, boating, or train travel;
- leveraging existing funding and expanding funding for byway initiatives;
- engaging community involvement and local actions to support the Byway;
- encouraging regional collaboration and inter-community communication;
- encouraging adoption of local policies and regulations to preserve and enhance byway resources;
- promoting context sensitive planning and design; and
- forging a connection between byway management and local community goals.



Anchor at Fishermen's Beach in Swampscott (Essex Heritage / Jasyson Mitchell)

## 2.2 THE BYWAY STORY

*Traveling along the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway, whether by auto, train, or bike, is a journey that offers a window on the evolution of people's relationship to the land and sea in this coastal region. This is the byway story - how people have interacted with the natural environment and made a living off the resources of the land and sea and later through innovation and industry. Today, remnants of the early history in maritime trade, shipbuilding, and industry merge with activities that have continued through the centuries – farming, fishing, and the arts. Traces of human interaction with the natural world are evident in today's natural landscapes: drainage channels through the salt marshes, stonewalls and abandoned quarries in the uplands, and waterways and harbors that are still populated with fishing and pleasure boats. The built environment offers different clues -- the farms and first period architecture hearken back to the Early Settlement period, the fine homes and vibrant downtowns represent the booming maritime heritage, mill buildings give evidence of the Industrial Revolution in the urban cores, and the grand estates and art galleries reflect the region's transformation to a summer retreat and artist enclave.*

*The byway story continues today in the collection of diverse and distinctive communities that stretch along the Byway. These communities continue to draw their livelihood and inspiration from the timeless natural resources of the land and sea.*

## **Part 3**

### **Promotion**

#### **3.0 Interpreting**

#### **3.1 Marketing**

#### **3.2 Signing**

#### **3.3 Economic Opportunities**

# PROMOTION

## 3.0 INTERPRETING

Interpretation addresses how the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway story gets told to visitors. An effective interpretative program should support the broader goals of byway promotion, preservation, and management. An effective byway interpretative program can encourage visitors to stay longer and return for multiple visits by telling the byway story in an interesting, concise, relevant, and memorable way. Interpretation also supports the preservation and protection of the Byway's intrinsic qualities by making emotional and intellectual connections with visitors and creating richer meanings for them. Interpretation can be a tool to raise local awareness, support local economies, and encourage regional collaboration.



*Essex Shipbuilding Museum  
(Essex Heritage / Tess O'Connor)*

Fundamental to any successful interpretive program is the story that is being told. One of the outcomes of the CMP planning process is defining a central story of the Byway, which is included in Part 2. The key themes of the byway story will: define the visitor experience; be reinforced at individual interpretive sites; and guide all types of interpretation from special programs to written media. The key interpretive themes of the byway story are drawn from the primary intrinsic qualities represented along the Byway and are also the themes that give the region its national distinction.



**Essex Coastal Scenic Byway**



## EXISTING INTERPRETATION

Many of the visitor destinations and stops along the Byway provide interpretive exhibits and materials about the key historic and natural themes of the byway region. An overview of the types of interpretive materials and activities included at different byway visitor sites is included in Chapter 7 of the CMP, including:

*tours* - self-guided walking tours, home and garden tours, guided boat tours;

*events* - regional and local, multi-day or single day;

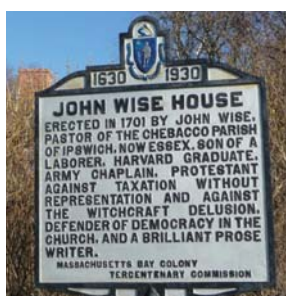
*multi-media* - educational videos, websites, audio tours, and printed publications;

*interpretive signage* - indoor and outdoor displays, exhibits, signs, and panels; and,

*educational materials* - resources and enrichment programs that incorporate local history and the environment.



Aquarium at Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center (Essex Heritage)



Historical marker in Essex



Mural at Lynn Heritage State Park

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTERPRETING THE BYWAY

### DEFINE THE AUDIENCE

The diversity of sites and resources along the Byway has the potential to appeal to a broad audience. Many of the organizations that manage sites along the Byway may have already identified a target audience or may have a sense of their existing visitor base. However, it will be important moving forward to understand some general demographics of the target visitor audience for the Byway in order to design an effective interpretive program. Visitor surveys, records kept by visitor site staff, and research by regional and state tourism organizations and chambers of commerce can help understand the visitor audience. These same information resources can help gather information about the effectiveness of the interpretive programs to engage visitors and encouraging repeat visits.

### COMPLETE VISITOR SITE INVENTORY

Continuing the momentum of the CMP inventory of visitor sites, the byway program will benefit by updating existing inventories to add key interpretive sites, including visitor centers, museums, and places with interpretive panels, programs, or events. Existing inventories include the Salem Plan, the Essex Heritage Plan, the Heritage Landscape Inventory, and the work done for the CMP.

### ESTABLISH GATEWAY INTERPRETIVE CENTERS

Byway gateway locations have high visibility and can be readily accessed from the primary access points to the Byway (see Chapter 4 of the CMP). When a scenic byway route is linear and does not intersect with other major routes, its two endpoints provide

logical locations for gateway areas. However, the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway is more complex; instead of two clearly defined starting points, there are multiple access points to the Byway. Nevertheless, there are a few principal points of entry to the Byway based on prevailing travel patterns and can be classified as the primary gateways – Lynn, Gloucester, and Newburyport. Within each of these communities there are existing visitor sites whose location and facilities have the potential to serve as a kicking off point for byway travelers.

Gateway visitor sites can serve as regional interpretive centers for the Byway, providing key visitor information about the entire byway region and giving byway travelers a point of departure or arrival. In addition to the Essex National Heritage Visitor Centers, which can serve as primary byway information centers along the route, efforts can be focused on existing visitor sites located at or near byway gateway areas. While each site has its own intrinsic historical or natural significance, the byway interpretive program can determine how existing exhibits at each site can be augmented to provide visitors with information about the Byway, including the byway story and themes as well as where to find additional interpretive sites along the route. Visitor sites in each of the gateway communities include Lynn:

- Lynn Museum and Historical Society (Essex Heritage Visitor Center)

Gloucester:

- Stage Fort Park (Essex Heritage Visitor Center)
- Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center

Newburyport:

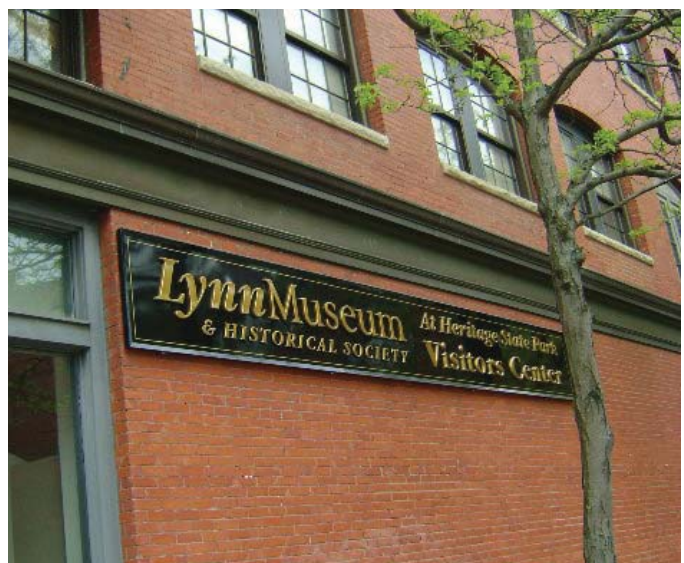
- Custom House Maritime Museum (Essex Heritage Visitor Center)
- Parker River National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center
- Joppa Flats Education Center

## DOCENT/VOLUNTEER TRAINING

One way to help ensure consistency of message at different sites along the Byway (and to help share resources and decrease costs) is to develop a byway-wide volunteer program. Trained volunteers could be shared by multiple sites to supplement existing site staff. A training program could address both interpretive and operational needs for site and trail stewardship.

## INTERPRETIVE PLAN

An interpretive plan clearly identifies the themes and storylines of the Byway and identifies how these are effectively shared. The findings of the interpretive plan will impact advocacy, marketing, partnerships, programs, and management goals. Crafting this plan early in the management process can provide a foundation for development of marketing materials, inform byway program development, identify additional site needs, and help prioritize investment needed to effectively communicate the Byway's stories. More about what should be included in the interpretive plan is included in Chapter 4 of the CMP.



*Lynn Museum & Visitor Center (Lynn Museum)*

## 3.1 MARKETING

The Essex Coastal Scenic Byway benefits from being in a well established tourism region that welcomes over two million visitors a year.<sup>4</sup> Beginning just 12 miles from Boston and accessible by water, train, bus, auto, and bicycle, the Byway has the capacity to draw from a large and diverse audience. The area is promoted by the Essex National Heritage Commission, the North of Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau, regional chambers of commerce and local tourism initiatives, as well as the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism. In addition, owners, partners, sponsors, and other interested parties promote individual sites and events. By all indications, there is not a lack of marketing opportunities for the Byway's resources and events; the challenge that the byway program faces is how to harness the full potential of the varied marketing efforts in the most efficient and effective way while being respectful of the individual organizations involved.

### VISITOR APPEAL

Visitors are drawn to the region for the variety of activities and experiences available, for the convenience of access, and because of the scenic and natural beauty of the area. State and regional tourism organizations and local Chambers of Commerce promote history, local food, shopping, water-based activities, hiking, biking, and arts and culture. The millions of tourists drawn to the region for heritage tourism, ecotourism, shopping, arts and culture, and recreation hold great potential to be encouraged to travel to other destinations along the Byway.

The collection of sites, attractions, and activities means that people might take in multiple sites in their visit rather than just heading to one location. Visitors to the region are encouraged to get out of the car, train, or boat to experience in an intimate way

the intrinsic qualities of the Byway. The following themes describe the types of experiences that entice visitors to the region already and should for the basis for the byway marketing program (see Chapter 5 of the CMP).

### HERITAGE TOURISM

As estimated by the North of Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau, the region already attracts approximately two million heritage tourists annually. Attracted primarily to the principle tourist cities of Salem, Gloucester, and Newburyport, they are drawn by the historic resources that tell the stories of our country's founding and early settlement that are found in each of the Byway's communities: houses, farms, cemeteries, town halls, and town greens. Historic resources are recognized as the primary intrinsic quality along the Byway and will take center stage in byway marketing in order to expand the draw of heritage tourists to the entire region. These make the market ripe for future development of heritage tourism throughout the region.

### ECOTOURISM

With over 400 species of birds living or passing through Essex County, the area in and around the Byway is ideal for year-round birding, attracting both local enthusiasts and professional and amateur birders from all over the world. The Parker River Wildlife Refuge, Joppa Flats Education Center, Ravenswood Park, and Cox Reservation are some of the locations that provide interpretive facilities to serve as a home base for eco-tourists. In addition, birding excursions led by Mass Audubon and whale watching tours run out of Gloucester and Newburyport introduce visitors to the area's wildlife.

<sup>4</sup> Essex National Heritage Area Annual Report, 2009





## SHOPPING AND CULTURE

Clearly, unique and distinctive shopping opportunities and cultural events, including festivals and artistic and musical performances, are effective for drawing visitors into the character of a place. Local art, crafts, books and other wares are strongly linked to the visitor experience and can be encouraged as an expansion of existing services and as new services. Both the process of browsing and selecting and the product charged with meaning as a result of a pleasant experience deepen the visitor's immersion into the Byway's stories. Festivals and performances, already well established in many byway communities, are an excellent marketing opportunity to bring additional attention to the Byway and its intrinsic qualities. Linking existing festivals or creating new ones that engage multiple (or all) byway communities should be considered as part of the byway marketing strategy.

## FOOD

Nothing immerses one in a place quite like "local" food. Already, the North Shore is famous for its seafood, in particular the Essex and Ipswich clams. A coordinated and mapped "cuisine 'capade" (like escapade ie: adventure, jaunt) could draw byway visitor's attention to the incredible variety of eateries along the Byway. Food with a local story could be highlighted: from the obvious seafood (Ipswich and Essex clams), to bakeries, farm products, chocolates (Fannie's), and brews (Cape Ann Brewing Company and Salem Beer Works). Marketing tools could range from low cost placemat maps to digital applications, complete with menus, directions, and the "food story". Coverage of local eateries and breweries is a staple of the growing number of regional and local magazines, marketing to an engaged and interested audience



*Rocky Neck in East Gloucester*



*Clam Box restaurant in Ipswich (Essex Heritage)*

## RECREATION AND BEACHES

Active adventure sports, such as kayaking and bicycling, and more leisure pursuits, such as birding and hiking, are activities that can be greatly enhanced with personalized guiding services. A growing number of these guided tour providers exist along the corridor.

Beaches are a principal attraction along the North Shore and can be found in many of the byway communities. Some represent regional destinations welcoming thousands of seasonal tourists a year in addition to neighborhood residents. Others serve a nearly exclusive local population due to size, amenities, or municipal policy.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKETING THE BYWAY

The Essex Coastal Scenic Byway is uniquely positioned among the National Byways system because it is one of many potential draws for tourism in the region. This attribute has both its benefits as well as its challenges when it comes to promoting the Byway. The Byway can be both a travel experience in and of itself as well as a means to get from one visitor site to another. Byway promotion efforts should consider both how to market to visitors drawn by other regional attractions as well as how to draw new visitors for whom the Byway may have its own appeal. The region's congressional designation (National Heritage Area) should be a focus of its marketing. Additionally, marketing should highlight the different seasonal experiences to appeal to visitors who take advantage of different resources depending on the time of year.



*Yankee Fleet whale watch in Gloucester (Essex Heritage)*



*Fireworks over beach (Essex Heritage / Greg Mazzotta)*



## MOTIVATING TRAVELERS

Marketing the Byway to new visitors should consider what types of experiences appeal to typical byway travelers. Recent research conducted for the America's Byways® Research Studies program as well as information collected by local visitors sites helps understand what attracts visitors. More information about visitor preferences is included in Chapter 5 of the CMP.

## COORDINATING WITH EXISTING AND ESTABLISHED MARKETING

Given the tremendous amount of marketing that focuses on the area and on individual resources around the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway, coordinating existing efforts could be the most cost-effective and productive strategy available. The cornerstone for this effort will be communication and openness to considering a regional approach. Building partnerships to maximize the effectiveness of coordination will increase resources, reduce demands on individual agencies or initiatives, allow sharing of expertise, and increase the variety of services and activities offered. More about the types of regional and national marketing partnerships available is included in Chapter 5 of the CMP.

## WORKING WITH MEDIA PARTNERS

Local media – newspapers, e-mail newsletters, social media networks, radio, community access TV – are all important to marketing the byway program. Regular event listings as well as periodic feature articles or interviews should be part of the Byway's marketing program.

## INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY

Many travelers are researching destinations using new media including blogs, podcasts, smart phone applications, and websites. The byway program should make use of popular communication technology to promote the Byway, relate its stories, and reach out to the “armchair” tourist or those who are limited in their ability to get out and about.



*Art gallery in Manchester-by-the-Sea*



*Artists easel and interpretive sign at Nelsons Island in Rowley*



## HIGHLIGHTING TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Transportation options not only move visitors along the byway corridor or through the byway communities; they also provide visitors with different ways to experience the intrinsic qualities within the byway communities. Alternative transportation allows byway visitors to leave a lighter carbon footprint, benefitting both the traveler and the visited resource. Marketing should highlight these benefits and promote visits as ecologically responsible and healthy travel adventures. Consideration could also be given to the creation of a companion bikeway route to the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway. The bike route could follow byway roads and be promoted through guides and wayfinding.

## DEVELOPING LOCAL MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

Scenic byways, while designated because of the quality of resources immediately along the roadway and visible to the travelers moving along it, can also be defined and remembered for the unique character of the communities they travel through.

This is particularly true when the scenic byway's primary intrinsic qualities are historic or cultural rather than scenic and when the stories of the byway are varied and complex. Some communities along the Byway are well established tourist destinations with natural and cultural resources as well as an abundance of visitor services and amenities. Other communities are blessed with natural and or cultural resources but have not yet developed, or choose not to develop, accommodations for visitors. This diversity should be seen as a positive element of the byway corridor. According to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, one of the reasons cultural heritage tourism is on the rise in the United States is that travelers are seeking out experiences that are distinctive, not homogenized. Travelers want to get the feel of a very particular place or time.

This invites an opportunity for communities to expand the Byway's marketing into their downtowns and beyond. Communities could highlight local art and culture, including antiques, performance venues, museums, galleries and eateries on and off the Byway.



*Tendercrop Farm in Newbury*



## 3.2 SIGNAGE

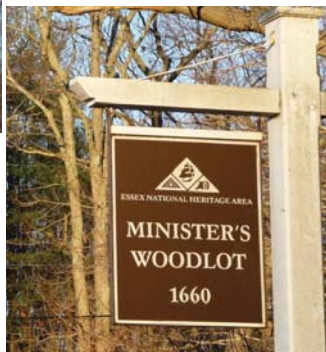
From gateway entry points to byway directions and interpretive panels, signs will be one of the principal methods to welcome, advise, direct, and educate travelers along the Byway. Signage is important not only for conveying information but also for representing the organization of the Byway and the professionalism of its management. More practically a well organized sign system helps create a more pleasurable traveling experience.

### EXISTING SIGNAGE

Existing corridor-wide signage includes state highway standard route and directional markers and tourist oriented destination signs, historic markers, brown historic areas of interest signs, and Essex National Heritage Area site markers. There are a number of site identification signs that are recognizable at locations along the Byway, as well: The Trustees of Reservations, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Historic New England, and Essex County Greenbelt. A few of the local communities along the route have developed a local sign program, including Gloucester, Beverly, and Salem.



*Seine Field in East Gloucester*



*Minister's Woodlot in Rowley*

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND ISSUES

- The byway route is not currently identified with signage.
- Information about distance to communities or destinations is not provided along the entire route.
- The byway route makes numerous turns and follows a combination of numbered highway routes and local roads. Every turn is a potential point for a traveler to get lost or misdirected.
- Some visitor facilities and attractions have independent signage programs and systems.
- Some of the byway communities have local visitor information sign programs and systems, as well.
- Where the Byway follows state highways, route number are posted on signs with white backgrounds and black numerals.
- At junctions or intersections, state signs are mounted on green backgrounds with white letters. These signs may include directional arrows as well as distance to state highways or other landmarks or locales.
- Some intersections lack street/road name signs; there is a noticeable difference among municipalities.
- There is a significant amount of sign clutter along the route, the majority occurring at decision making points or intersections and often at municipal lines.
- There is an inconsistent application of regulatory, safety, and general directional/informational signage along the byway route.
- There are 20 Massachusetts Tercentenary signs (erected in 1930) that are located along the route in eight of the byway communities. These signs are in need of repair in many cases, but upkeep is the responsibility of the municipalities and there is no state funding currently available.

## OUTDOOR ADVERTISING

Outdoor advertising, part of the built environment that is visible within the travel corridor, has the potential to highly impact the character of the roadway and the traveler's experience of the intrinsic qualities along it. For these reasons, as well as to promote safety, outdoor advertising is controlled at federal, state, and local levels throughout the country.

Federal regulations prohibit all new billboards along designated scenic byways that are classified as federal-aid primary, national highway system, or interstate roads. Portions of the byway route are subject to these requirements (see Chapter 6 of the CMP). The state requires all outdoor advertising to be permitted annually; otherwise, Massachusetts regulations generally mimic federal language, thus offering no additional protection.

Cities and towns may further regulate and restrict billboards, signs, or other devices within their jurisdiction by ordinance or by-law. Each of the thirteen byway communities has local regulations regulating outdoor advertising. However, the content of the regulations vary greatly, so while a particular sign may be compliant with local regulations, it may be widely inconsistent with other signs along the Byway.



*Welcome sign in Swampscott*

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BYWAY SIGNAGE

### BYWAY SIGN SYSTEM PLAN

A consistent, integrated, informative, and attractive sign system should be a primary goal for the Byway. Goals of an effective sign system are to:

- assist travelers in locating the Byway;
- provide guidance to multi-modal travelers on the byway route;
- provide information on visitor locations and byway resources;
- maintain visual consistency for all byway signage; and
- help keep travelers safe.

A consistent and integrated sign system provides the traveler with strong visual cues along the byway route and within the byway corridor. The sign system should include:

- recognizable logos;
- recognizable colors;
- consistent fonts (letter styles); and
- uniform installation practices including construction and locations.

An important component of the byway sign system will be the use of byway iconography (signs, shields, logos) to “brand” the Byway. Branding will help create a sense of a comprehensive and unified route that is regularly, if subtly, reinforced by the presence of consistent and high quality signs.

<sup>5</sup> US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, 2000



The Essex National Heritage Area has created a Sign Standard Manual. This manual provides great detail and graphic imagery and should be used to develop a byway sign system. The manual provides well-developed details and offers sign type flexibility to suit varied site conditions. The manual provides recommendations for directional signage, site identification signage, and informational/site interpretive signage.

### COORDINATION WITH LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL SIGN PROGRAMS

The byway sign system must comply with guidance in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)<sup>5</sup> and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Guide Sign Policy for Secondary State Highways and be coordinated with state and local authorities to ensure the greatest level of consistency along the byway route for all types of signs and information.

Byway sign planners should work to ensure that existing state and local signs for route markings (US, state route shields) and directional and distance signs are clear and consistent in information and completeness. Byway sign planning should also address sign issues that may interfere with the aesthetic quality of the Byway (unnecessary signage, sign clutter, repetitive or obsolete signs).

### BYWAY SIGN CLASSIFICATIONS

The byway sign program should include guidelines for a hierarchy of sign classifications, both those that are directly related to the Byway as well as other state and local roadway signs. Descriptions of the different types of signs that comprise the byway sign program are included in Chapter 6 of the CMP, including:

- gateway signs* - located at key gateway points these can provide a clear sense of arrival to the Byway;
- wayfinding signs* - logos or symbols that mark the route and are located at access points, turns and movements, and along the route at regular intervals, could also include byway bicycle route signs;
- identifiers and directionals* - indicate the direction to communities and points of interest;
- tourist oriented destination signs (TODS)* - located in areas with high levels of tourism and visitation to provide traveler information that is reliable and consistent;
- interpretive signage* - provide information to residents and visitors through written text and graphic images;
- historical markers* - include Massachusetts Tercentenary signs and other markers that recognize a significant event or location in history; and,
- regulatory and warning signage*.



Information Kiosk at Coolidge Reservation in Manchester-by-the-Sea

### 3.3 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

The economy of the North Shore region is focused on health care, advanced manufacturing, creative economy, tourism, and biotech business clusters.<sup>6</sup> Two of these industries – tourism and the creative economy - have direct relation to the economic opportunities of the Byway. Furthermore, the extent and diversity of the region's transportation networks, including road, commuter rail, bus, and bike, are highlighted as an economic asset by regional planners and tourism organizations.<sup>7</sup>

#### ECONOMIC STRENGTHS

##### TOURISM

Throughout the region, state, and nation, tourism is recognized as a powerful economic development tool. It creates jobs, provides new business opportunities and strengthens local economies. Tourism can also be a catalyst that helps communities protect natural and cultural treasures and improve the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. In multiple communities along the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway corridor, tourism is the foundation of the local economy. In all byway communities tourism plays some role in the local economy. Different types of tourism prevalent in the byway region is described in Chapter 8 of the CMP, including:

*heritage tourism* - defined by The National Trust for Historic Preservation as “traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present”;

*adventure tourism* - includes a physical activity, along with a cultural exchange or interaction, and engagement with nature; and,

*agritourism* - refers to tourism centered around working farms or any agricultural, horticultural or agri-business operation and may involve educational programs or active involvement in the activities of the farm or operation.

#### CREATIVE ECONOMY

The creative economic cluster refers to the mix of commercial businesses and nonprofit organizations that produce cultural products. On the commercial side, this cluster includes artists and art galleries, graphic designers, architects, advertising, emerging media, and publishing. Nonprofits include museums, performing arts spaces, and art and music schools. The Greater Boston region (including the byway communities) is considered the New England center for this economic sector.<sup>8</sup>

All of these business types are represented throughout the thirteen communities as both small and large employers. Local artists are well-represented in galleries and studios in most of the byway communities and there are regional museums as well as a number of smaller exhibit spaces and collections displayed in historic properties. Larger facilities musical, theatrical and dance performances and art and theatre programs are provided by local universities and colleges.

<sup>6</sup> Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2009 Annual Update) MAPC and Merrimack Valley Community Economic Development Strategy (2008) MVPC.

<sup>7</sup> Merrimack Valley Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2008) MVPC “Existing Conditions”, North of Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau website ([www.northofboston.org](http://www.northofboston.org)).

<sup>8</sup> Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2009 Annual Update) MAPC and







## TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS

The extent and diversity of the region's transportation networks – including road, commuter rail, bus, and bike -- are highlighted as an economic asset by regional planners and tourism organizations.<sup>9</sup> The interrelationship between the adequacy of transportation systems and economic development is widely recognized.

## RESTAURANTS AND LODGING

Restaurants and lodging make a significant contribution to local economies along the Byway (see Chapter 4 of the CMP). For example, an informal count of lodging options along and near the Byway note over 125 hotels, motels, inns, and bed and breakfast establishments. The over 650 restaurants and food services are not only integral to the local economy but contribute to the character and quality of life in many byway communities as well.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEVERAGING BYWAY ECONOMIC STRENGTHS

### LEVERAGING REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Initiatives that bring together business, government, and community groups around regional economic growth and development goals have been noted as a key component of the region's economic prosperity (and a key economic challenge).<sup>10</sup> The byway program is a means to bring together stakeholders and community members representing both the private and public sector to use the Byway as one more tool in the toolbox to support regional economic prosperity, encouraging regional partners to identify opportunities, pool resources, and make coordinated investments.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic preservation is increasingly recognized as a major contributor to tourism, thereby supporting economic development and community quality of life. Support for preservation planning and initiatives, is provided by to agencies such as the Massachusetts Historical Commission and organizations such as Preservation Massachusetts that can support local historic preservation strategies.

## SUPPORT AND PROMOTE CREATIVE ECONOMY AND LOCAL PRODUCTS

An effective way to support the area's creative economy is to enhance quality-of-place and quality-of-life, objectives shared by the byway program. The byway program's economic strategies should include promotion of art, antiques, and food. These are all prominent cultural elements of byway communities, are substantial tourist draws, and are integral to local economies. Byway communities should consider policies and regulations that help grow these businesses as well, including supportive live-work housing, outside dining, and innovative sign ordinances.

## ADVENTURE TOURISM

The growing number of adventure travelers will expand the need for increased services for cyclists and paddlers and other adventure seekers, including retailers, outfitters, and guides. Finding adventures off the beaten path such as paddling the miles of coastal or inland waterways, scuba diving off the rocky Cape Ann coast, or hiking or biking woodland trails can be made more accessible to a wider audience when a guide is part of the experience. An economic strategy for the Byway should encourage local outfitters and area experts to provide guide

<sup>9</sup> Merrimack Valley Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2008) MVPC "Existing Conditions", North of Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau web page ([www.northofboston.org](http://www.northofboston.org)).

<sup>10</sup> Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2009 Annual Update) MAPC



services that can be featured in byway promotional materials. Local colleges or land managers may be interested in creating a certified guide training program to increase awareness of the area's natural resources and to provide technical and leadership training. Communities should seek ways to support adventure travelers by increasing access to and amenities at sites they would visit. Bicycle and paddle clubs as well as local and regional merchants and service providers are potential partners.

### YEAR-ROUND ATTRACTIONS

The byway program should seek to distribute demand across the seasons by working to increase visitation in the fall, winter, and spring. Historic sites are accessible and enjoyable year-round; birding is often at its best outside the summer season; New England's fall and winter holidays offer abundant opportunities for tourism in the out-of-doors and in decorated homes; and art, literary, theater, and music venues are year-round resources..

### ALTERNATIVE TRANSIT

Transportation options should be promoted as an important part of the byway traveler experience, expanding the visitor-base to a broader market. Marketing the Byway as a multi-modal route would be reinforced by increased connectivity between transit locations and visitor locations as well as by provision of convenient parking and shuttle services that enable byway travelers to stop along the way and easily get around without a car.

### TRACK THE BYWAY'S IMPACT

As part of its congressionally-designated function of providing technical assistance to local byway groups, America's Byways Resource Center has developed an Economic Impact Tool that allows local byway staff and/or volunteers to easily measure the impacts of byways and byway-related activities in their communities. Assessing the Byway's economic impact should be a part of any economic strategy.<sup>11</sup>

### ACCOMMODATE COMMERCE ALONG THE BYWAY ROUTE

Commercial traffic along the Byway includes cargo trucks, construction equipment, trucks that transport large boats, and other oversized vehicles. In general, all modes of commercial transportation can be accommodated on the byway roadways without additional separation or restrictions. Consideration should be given to locations along the Byway where non-motorized accommodation is desired for roads or highways. The commonwealth's Complete Streets approach to roadway design begins with the premise that the right-of-way will be designed and maintained to enable safe access for all users. Analyzing byway roadway segments to assess the needs of commercial traffic and other large vehicles focuses on determining if there is a need to provide separation between users and how this could be accomplished if necessary. More about measures for accommodating commerce along the Byway is provided in Chapter 8 of the CMP.

<sup>11</sup> America's Byways Resource Center's Economic Impact Tool can be accessed through America's Byways Resource Center's website: <http://www.bywaysresourcecenter.org/resources/specialprojects/economicimpacttool/>





## **Part 4**

### **Preservation**

#### **4.0 The Roadway Corridor**

##### **4.1 Land Management**

# PRESERVATION

## 4.0 THE ROADWAY CORRIDOR

### LANDSCAPE AREA TYPES AND CONTRIBUTING ELEMENTS

The character of the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway corridor is shaped by the natural landscapes, the land uses, and the built environment that abuts the roadway. There are three primary area types (defined by specific qualities of both the built and natural environment) represented along the byway corridor: Rural, Suburban, and Urban. There is also a sub-area identified as Village/Town Center that is shared by the rural and suburban primary areas.<sup>12</sup> Each area type includes contributing design elements, aspects of the built and natural environment that, together with the land uses, define the character of the area. These design elements include architecture, bridges and guardrails, walls and fences, outcrops, trees, views, roadway edge treatments. A description of each of these area types and design elements is included in Chapter 9 of the CMP.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRESERVING THE BYWAY ROADWAY CORRIDOR

The MassDOT Project Development and Design Guidebook provides designers and decision makers with a framework for incorporating Context Sensitive Design and multi-modal elements into transportation improvement projects. The Guidebook provides a structure for identifying and establishing criteria that will lead to appropriate design solutions. A key guiding principle of the Guidebook is Context Sensitive Design, which is an interdisciplinary approach that involves all constituents or user groups to develop



Essex Coastal Scenic Byway

<sup>12</sup> These area types are defined in the 2006 MassDOT Project Development and Design Guidebook.

transportation facilities or improvements that fit the physical setting and also preserve scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources. Context sensitive solutions that protect the features of the Byway begin with understanding the context (area type) through which the road passes.

In addition to new road design or re-design considerations, there are locations on the Byway that require safety and accessibility improvements as well as physical connections to roadside transportation systems such as sidewalks and bike routes. As these changes are made to the roadway, all communities on the Byway will face certain challenges posed by existing conditions. The previous categories of features all imply that a flexible and sensitive response is necessary when considering both maintenance and modifications to the roadway corridor. Municipalities, using the Context Sensitive design process outlined in the Project Development and Design Guidebook, should seek the best fit and appearance of the necessary improvements without degradation of resources.

Chapter 9 of the Corridor Management Plan outlines a framework for preserving and enhancing the contributing resources of the byway corridor based on area type.



*Sandy Bay Historical Society in Rockport*



*Schoolhouse on Lower Green in Newbury (Essex Heritage)*



*Thomas Lambert House in Rowley*

## 4.1 LAND MANAGEMENT

### OWNERSHIP

The majority of the byway route (80 %) directly abuts land owned by private individuals and businesses, presenting opportunities for both private initiatives and regulatory efforts to protect and enhance the Byway. The balance of the route, comprised of about 20,000 acres of open spaces and historic resources, is owned and managed by a mixture of public, private, and nonprofit organizations. These stewards manage the land and buildings to meet a variety of objectives, including resource protection and preservation, recreation, and visitor attraction.

### LAND USE PLANNING AND REGULATION

Land uses, landscapes, and the built environment will continue to evolve along the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway in response to private and community needs. The responsibility for assuring that these changes do not have a negative impact on the corridor will fall primarily to landowners and local governments. Municipalities are empowered to guide and control development to protect the health and welfare of citizens and the environment. They are responsible for developing effective management tools, including master and strategic plans and land use regulations. They can also offer incentives or become partners with developers, historic preservationists, or open-space conservationists.

Beyond the local level, regional, state, and federal agencies can provide important technical and fiscal support, but these agencies may have less control over land uses and activities (other than wetlands regulations or on properties that they own). These agencies take part in guiding change by developing policies, funding planning and capital projects, and reviewing and permitting projects within their purview.

### LOCAL LAND USE TRENDS

In many communities local regulations have been developed to protect the character of historic commercial areas in the downtown and town centers. The zoning in these areas encourages a mix of uses, small scale commercial businesses, and neighborhood-oriented services. Commercial areas located along the outskirts of the downtowns and town centers tend to be zoned to support auto-oriented uses and uses that are less compatible with residential uses.

Most of the Byway abuts residential areas that are primarily developed with single and two family dwellings in rural and suburban settings. Continued densification of residential development will naturally impact the character of the byway corridor by reducing the amount of open space and natural areas visible. Some byway communities have identified the desire for infill as a way to accommodate new development but recognize that increased density is uncomfortable to many community members. Other communities recognize that existing zoning may be inadequate for, or even discourages, historic preservation, protection of farmland, or redevelopment that would enhance community character and byway resources.



*Beverly Farms Streetscape*



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BALANCING DEVELOPMENT AND PRESERVING RESOURCES

### REGULATORY TOOLS

There are a variety of zoning and land use tools that communities can consider to meet local goals and further protect byway resources. Some have already been implemented in some of the byway communities. These include local historic districts, village center districts, neighborhood conservation districts, and form based codes. There are also examples in some of the byway communities of special overlay districts that have been designed to meet specific preservation and economic objectives. More on these tools and practices is included in Chapter 9 of the CMP.

### SCENIC ROADS AND SCENIC VIEW PROTECTION

The Massachusetts Scenic Roads Act includes provisions that allow municipalities to adopt a bylaw or an ordinance to preserve certain characteristics of roads designated as scenic by the community. The purpose of the local statute is to provide an opportunity for Planning Board review of cutting or removal of trees or the alteration of stone walls within the road right-of-way. Only a few of the byway communities have passed a scenic roads act.

Scenic road bylaws cannot be used to manage development on private land, so some communities have adopted scenic overlay districts. These regulate the development within a certain distance of a scenic road or within view from a certain location. Regulations apply to activities that might impact the appearance of the scenic attributes, including location, height, density, or massing of buildings.



*Manchester Harbor (Essex Heritage / Mary Barker)*

### DESIGN GUIDELINES OR STANDARDS

In Massachusetts, zoning ordinances and bylaws may address aesthetic objectives or the development of the natural, scenic and aesthetic qualities of the community. The goal of design guidelines or standards is to preserve or improve the physical characteristics of an area, neighborhood, or municipality by encouraging or requiring new development to meet certain standards. In the case of signs, regulations can also govern existing signs, provided a reasonable time is allowed for compliance.

Design guidelines or standards can be an effective tool for managing the character of the Byway if they are carefully considered in the context of the community. Guidelines may seek to minimize intrusions that the built environment may have on the natural landscape; or to preserve and enhance established characteristics that define a place; or to create changes over time in an area where the built environment portrays an undesirable image of the community.



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## PARKING REQUIREMENTS

The location and design of surface parking often detracts from the streetscape. Communities may consider adjusting parking requirements to reduce the need for large expanses of paved parking, requiring that parking lots be located behind buildings, or allowing shared parking. Parking lot design can also be improved by requiring shade trees along and within parking areas. In addition to creating a more visually appealing space, adding trees to parking areas lessens the environmental impact of these impervious areas by reducing stormwater runoff, improving air quality, regulating ambient air temperatures, and providing wildlife habitat.

## PUBLIC REALM INVESTMENTS

Improvements to the public realm can enhance existing development by creating a streetscape that is visually appealing and pedestrian-oriented. Street trees and other vegetation can act as a natural buffer and can help soften the streetscape. Well-maintained sidewalks and street furniture encourage pedestrian activity. Public improvements can also encourage greater investment and improvements by abutting property owners.

## INCENTIVES FOR PRIVATE IMPROVEMENTS

Communities can also consider offering incentives for private investment in site improvements or redevelopment of undesirable land uses, including tax-increment financing and Local Option Property Tax Assessment. Tax increment financing (TIF) allows a municipality to use the increased property taxes that a new real estate development generates to finance costs of the development or public improvements related to the development. The Local Option Property Tax Assessment is a local

bylaw or ordinance that rewards historic property homeowners for rehabilitating their properties according to appropriate historic standards. Under this bylaw or ordinance, the increased property tax that results from the rehabilitation can be phased in over a period of five years.<sup>14</sup>

Municipalities can also develop non-regulatory guidelines and best management practices for private landowners. Incentives could include financial support from a partnering nonprofit (chamber of commerce or civic improvement organization), technical assistance, and public recognition.

## CHAPTER 61

Owners of forested, agricultural, or recreational land along the Byway may qualify for enrollment in Chapter 61, 61A, or 61B, a state program aimed at preserving natural landscapes. Property owners with land enrolled in these programs receive preferential tax treatment for maintaining their property as open space for the purposes of timber production, agriculture, or recreation.

## PRIVATE SECTOR CONSERVATION MEASURES

With limited public funding available for land acquisition, private initiatives should be supported and encouraged. Conservation restrictions protect land with significant environmental attributes. Conservation restrictions, also called conservation easements, are voluntary yet binding legal agreements between a landowner and a municipality, state agency, or land trust. While some landowners donate conservation restrictions, others are offered payment and/or other incentives, such as estate tax and federal income tax deductions and property tax relief, to keep parcels in an undeveloped state either

<sup>14</sup> Local option property tax -- MGL Chapter 56, Section 5J.

in perpetuity or for a specified number of years. Conservation restrictions preserve land without public ownership, allow private land to remain on the tax rolls, and, in many instances, allow for public access.

Other types of property restrictions include historical preservation restrictions, agricultural preservation restrictions, and watershed preservation restrictions. Historical preservation restrictions are legal agreements to preserve a structure or site of historical significance. They can be held by a local historical commission, a preservation-oriented nonprofit, or by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC).

Agricultural preservation restrictions (APRs) apply to lands in active farming or forest use and must be approved by the Commissioner of Food and Agriculture. APRs are often held by land trusts or, if soil requirements are met, by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources.

Watershed preservation restrictions are used for the purpose of protecting public water supplies and are approved by the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

## COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL PLANNING

The desire to accommodate new development or redevelopment within byway communities varies with some communities seeking substantial change and others seeking ways to limit development to prevent the loss of open space, cultural resources, and community character. Accommodating development should be based on a community's existing and future needs as represented in up-to-date community plans. Byway communities without current plans should undertake public processes to develop community plans as first steps in managing change.

Community plans should address the physical as well as functional impacts of change. The physical quality of new development or redevelopment is important for preserving and enhancing the visual characteristics of community, and by extension, the byway corridor. Communities should ensure that zoning, site-plan-review regulations, and design guidelines are in place to help create an attractive and appropriate built environment. Model bylaws and guidelines are abundant but should be adapted to the unique circumstances and needs of the community to maintain the diversity of landscapes and neighborhoods found along the corridor.

Using regional planning to support community goals is a benefit of the byway program. Since transportation infrastructure and natural resources cross municipal boundaries, any effective planning in these areas must include a regional component. In addition, shared facilities and development of regional resources can help leverage local funding.



*Inn Street in Newburyport (Essex Heritage / Caroline Stella)*





## **Part 5**

### **Byway Corridor Management**

#### **5.0 Public Involvement**

##### **5.1 Organizational Framework**

# BYWAY CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT

## 5.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

### PUBLIC INPUT TO THE CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Corridor Management Planning process was designed to develop a core group of support within the byway region that would lay the foundation for future public involvement in the scenic byway program. Under the leadership of the Essex National Heritage Commission, a two-tiered advisory group structure helped reach as broad a constituency base as possible.

The Corridor Advisory Group (CAG) served as a regional steering committee for the Corridor Management Plan. At each of its six meetings throughout the process, the CAG focused on corridor-wide issues and collaboration. Membership consisted of representatives from each of the thirteen communities through which the Byway travels plus two regional planning agencies and the regional tourism bureau. In addition, there were representatives from the state's transportation and parks departments. Elected members of the Massachusetts Senate and House representing the byway communities were also invited to participate in CAG meetings and discussions.

In addition to the CAG, Essex Heritage established thirteen Local Advisory Groups (LAG), so each community could focus on local issues and opportunities. LAG members represented municipal boards, commissions, and committees as well as local organizations whose input and feedback was critical for documenting the intrinsic qualities that would be included in the plan: historic resources, natural resources, recreation, economic, arts, and culture. These groups provided the vital link with ongoing planning efforts and other initiatives at the local level.



Essex Coastal Scenic Byway

The consultants interviewed numerous other stakeholder representatives between December 2009 and December 2010 in preparation for drafting and revising the corridor management plan. These interviewees not only enhanced and expanded regional and local information, but also joined the growing ranks of byway program constituents who look forward to sharing in plan implementation.

## SUSTAINING PARTICIPATION AND SUPPORT

An effective management entity needs ongoing participation and support from the public it represents and serves. Opportunities for public participation will occur periodically as byway-focused projects are undertaken and review of projects and progress is requested. Additional opportunities should also be developed to ensure that constituents are kept informed of the Byway's many activities, projects, and issues on a more regular basis.

The framework recommended herein for implementing the strategies of the CMP has been developed through the participation of the Corridor Advisory Groups and Essex Heritage and with guidance by the consultant team. While it represents a solid foundation for managing the Byway, it anticipates and is dependent on on-going public participation and financial support. Funding for byway management and projects must be a focus for the Byway to be sustainable.



*Waves off Lynch Park in Beverly (Essex Heritage / Norm Fusco)*

## 5.1 ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

The measure of success of any plan lies in how well it is implemented, and the cornerstones of implementation are an effective management entity and local grassroots support. Scenic byway status and a corridor management plan do not change the roles or responsibilities of landowners and resource managers along the Byway, but they can help guide decisions. It is imperative that an organizational steward be in place to coordinate, assist, and monitor the efforts of these separate entities and to encourage and support the ongoing grassroots interest and initiatives that will sustain passion and involvement in managing the Byway.

Initially, development of the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway will continue as an initiative of the Essex National Heritage Commission (Essex Heritage), which will provide staff support and office space, subject to the availability of public and private funding to underwrite this function.

### SCENIC BYWAY STEERING COMMITTEE

Essex Heritage has created a standing Scenic Byway Steering Committee as part of its existing corporate structure. The Steering Committee, composed of local and regional leaders, will be responsible for managing the Byway, primarily through the establishment of policy and creation of an annual byway work plan in accordance with the Corridor Management Plan. The Steering Committee can also create ad hoc task forces or otherwise organize its members to develop working groups based on projects or focusing on identified issues.

## SCENIC BYWAY ADVISORY COUNCIL

A Scenic Byway Advisory Council should be established to advise on the management of the Byway and help implement the recommendations of the Corridor Management Plan. The Scenic Byway Advisory Council is meant to be open, inclusive, and representative of its host communities and their citizens and enterprises. It should include both appointed representatives and self-selected representatives and individuals.

## FISCAL AGENT

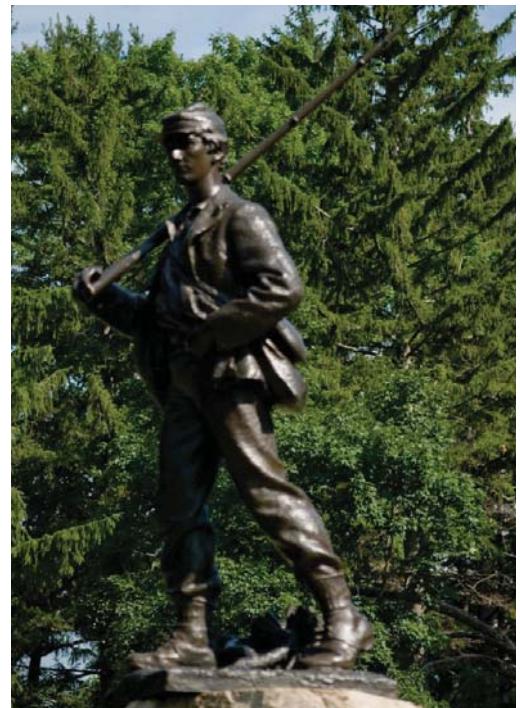
Essex Heritage will be the fiscal agent for the Byway. In this capacity the Essex Heritage will promote the mission of the account, safeguard the assets of the account, and assure the propriety of all expenditures of funds and disposition of account assets. As the fiscal agent, Essex Heritage has the capacity to receive and dispense funds for byway projects and hire personnel as directed by the Steering Committee.

## BYWAY COORDINATOR

A Byway Coordinator will be engaged to coordinate the day-to-day activities of the Steering Committee. For the foreseeable future Essex Heritage has agreed to provide part time staff resources to work with the Byway Steering Committee. Responsibilities will include coordinating specific annual work plan activities, tracking statuses of byway projects, coordinating with fiscal agent(s) as needed for grant applications and fundraising, and preparing meeting agendas and correspondence.



*Ipswich River (Essex Heritage / Tess O'Connor)*



*Statue at Atkinson Common in Newburyport (Essex Heritage / Caroline Stella)*





## **Part 6**

### **Implementation**

#### **6.0 Priority Projects**

# IMPLEMENTATION

## 6.0 PRIORITY PROJECTS

The CMP planning process identified twelve priority projects that should be considered for immediate implementation. The projects represent important structural components of a successful byway system and are realistically possible based on potential funding sources. Together these projects will help ensure that the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway has a defining identity, offers an exceptional visitor experience, and will be sustained by effective grassroots participation and management.

### CREATE A SCENIC BYWAY ORGANIZATION

Putting in place an enthusiastic and committed Byway Steering Committee that can take immediate action on the Corridor Management Plan recommendations will immediately help the byway initiative move forward and take advantage of the energy and interest of the stakeholders already engaged. Established as a standing committee of the Essex National Heritage Commission, the Steering Committee will be representative of the Byway's private, nonprofit, and public sector beneficiaries.

Existing stakeholders, including those in the Corridor and Local Advisory Groups, as well as any others identified during the planning process, should be invited to participate in the larger Scenic Byway Advisory Council. With the establishment of a Scenic Byway Advisory Council and Steering Committee, the framework will be established for effective leadership and grassroots support and participation.



Essex Coastal Scenic Byway

## DEVELOP AN INTERPRETATION PLAN

An Interpretation Plan, introduced in Chapter 7 of the CMP, clearly identifies the themes and storylines of the Byway and identifies how they can be shared effectively. The recommendations of the Interpretation Plan will impact advocacy, marketing, partnerships, programs, and management goals. By crafting this Plan early in the management process, it can become the foundation for developing marketing materials at the outset; it can inform program development; it can identify sites that should be highlighted; and it can help determine the most important capital improvements needed to effectively tell the byway's stories.

## DESIGN A BYWAY LOGO

The Byway will be easily recognized by its logo. For this to occur, the logo must effectively represent the Byway and be used to identify and market it from the outset. Signs and all other identification and marketing collateral (including websites, maps, guides, and brochures) should incorporate the byway logo.

## INITIATE A BYWAY WEBSITE

The Byway's website should be developed as soon as possible as it is the most effective way to share information about the Byway with the broadest audience. It will be the Byway's primary marketing tool and should also play an integral part in its fundraising, public outreach, and interpretation programs.

The website should be developed with user needs in mind: those of travel planners and stakeholders. It should offer stunning visual images and descriptions, interactive maps, itinerary generators, links to service providers, and opportunities for shared stories. It should also be integrated with the Byway's management needs and provide opportunities for readers to contribute to funding campaigns, respond to requests for volunteer services, and learn about participation options.



*Mist over salt marsh in Newbury (Essex Heritage / Adrian Scholes)*





## INSTALL TEMPORARY BYWAY IDENTIFICATION SIGNS ALONG THE BYWAY ROUTE

While a fully developed sign plan would likely take multiple years to complete, temporary byway identification signs that incorporate the byway logo could, at a minimum, assure intentional byway travelers they are in the right place. Such signs would heighten awareness of the Byway's existence to those who travel the route for other reasons. In addition, designation as a National Scenic Byway is dependent on a byway being visitor ready; byway signs would be one indication of readiness.

## DESIGN AND PRODUCE MARKETING COLLATERAL

There are many opportunities to promote the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway through the distribution of marketing products, such as brochures and guides. Early marketing collateral for the Byway should include a high quality byway map that promotes the byway story and highlights its prominent resources. Also, guides that support the byway story and focus on resources that are visitor ready should be developed as well. Guides for recreational activities, such as biking, hiking, birding, and kayaking, have also been identified as important marketing tools.



*Derby Wharf lighthouse in Salem (Essex Heritage / Amanda Levy)*

As an example byway map that tells the byway story and highlights resources, a driving map and guide for the Catoctin Mountain National Scenic Byway in Maryland is illustrated below.<sup>15</sup>

## DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE FUNDING STRATEGY

For the byway program to be successful, it must be able to carry out activities to preserve its resources and the character that makes it a scenic byway, and it must be able to promote the value of the Byway's resources and the opportunities they provide. Funding is a critical component of both preservation and promotion. The Scenic Byway Advisory Council and Steering Committee must work together to develop a funding plan that will allow them to sustain their preservation and promotion initiatives. The plan should estimate costs for implementing the Corridor Management Plan over a period of years and identify sources of revenues to meet those costs. The Plan should include a diversity of strategies that are targeted to secure both general funds and funding for specific projects. Once developed, the plan should be evaluated regularly and updated as needed.

An excellent resource for preparing a comprehensive funding strategy is a CD entitled "Driving Financial Sustainability for Byway Organizations" developed by Seaway Trail, Inc. and available from America's Byways Resource Center.

## IMPROVE BICYCLE AND WALKING TRAILS

Communities the length of the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway have a multitude of bicycle and walking trails. While some of them are well-known, accessible, and signed, many others are known only locally, lack amenities that support wider use (such as parking

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.emmitsburg.net/cmb/docs/15%20on%2015%20Brochure%20Actual.pdf>

or identification), or require improvements to the physical environment for greater enjoyment or safety. Improving bicycle and walking trails provides benefits to residents and visitors alike. Physical investments can bring about greater awareness of the Byway through signage, maps, and guides, and interpretation and can be used to show how the Byway can bring tangible changes to local communities. Signage, trailheads, and improved or new parking are capital investments that will require some level of funding sought locally or regionally through the Byway Advisory Council. Increased trail maintenance may be possible through coordinated



*Parade at Rocky Neck in Gloucester*

volunteer efforts as well as support from nonprofit land preservation agencies or cycling clubs or for-profit bike shops or outfitters. Coordinated improvements to a select number of the Byway's bicycle and walking trails have the potential to create partnerships and bring about real change along the Byway.

## CREATE AND ORGANIZE SIGNATURE BYWAY EVENT

A signature byway event is an idea that has received wide support from Local and Corridor Advisory Group members. The event is seen as a way to heighten awareness of the Byway and its resources, increase local and regional pride, broaden stakeholder participation, and raise funds for byway management. While the type of event is undefined at this point, there is agreement that it should include all the communities of the Byway, it should have a connection to the byway story, and it should be developed as an annual event.

## COORDINATE REGULAR COMMUNICATION ABOUT THE BYWAY PROGRAM WITH RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

Ongoing communication with byway residents, visitors, and stakeholders will help sustain Byway awareness and shows residents and others with an interest in the Byway that their understanding and, if desired, participation and support matter. Residents in particular have a vested interest in what happens along the Byway. It is important that they be informed about initiatives, events, and ideas and be invited to participate in discussions and decisions on a regular basis. Developing a policy and an outreach strategy for communication and assigning responsibility for its implementation will help ensure this important task critical success factor for Byway sustainability is not overlooked.

## DESIGN PERMANENT OR PORTABLE BYWAY INFORMATION EXHIBITS FOR VISITOR CENTERS

Lynn Museum & Historical Society (Lynn), National Park Service Regional Visitor Center (Salem), Stage Fort Park Welcoming Center (Gloucester), Hall-Haskell House (Ipswich), and Custom House Maritime Museum (Newburyport) are the five Essex National Heritage Area Visitor Centers along the Byway where permanent or portable byway information exhibits should be installed. The exhibits will provide general information about the entire Byway and the byway story in addition to site specific information



*Sails of Salem Friendship (Essex Heritage / Rod Parker)*

relevant to the location of the Visitor Center (unless intended to be portable). Byway exhibits are another component of the visitor readiness package that supports designation as a National Scenic Byway.

## BEGIN PREPARATIONS TO APPLY FOR NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY DESIGNATION

There are considerable benefits associated with being designated a National Scenic Byway. The recognition of the importance of a byway's intrinsic qualities by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation can lend support to protect and preserve a byway's resources. In addition, National Scenic Byways are marketed through the National Scenic Byways Program to national and international travelers, and use of the brand and logo can enhance the marketability of a byway. Recognition can also serve to strengthen community pride, involvement, and support of a byway.<sup>16</sup>

While the next nomination cycle for national designation is not expected before 2012, preparing for the application now will bring about awareness of what is required for a successful application. The process can be used to identify any weaknesses the Byway may have and allow time to address them, thereby strengthening the application.



## **Part 7**

### **Community Maps**



