



Action Plan

Prioritized Recommendations and Procedure

Vision Statement

The Mohawk Trail is an historic and scenic travel corridor that provides travelers and local residents access to abundant natural, recreational and cultural opportunities as well as regional commerce. Promoted as a scenic automobile-touring route as far back as the early 1900's, the road was one of the earliest in America to receive a scenic byway designation. Our vision is to expand economic opportunities along the Byway, particularly related to heritage and recreational tourism, while preserving the unique scenic qualities, natural resources, historic structures and communities that prompted its designation as a scenic byway in 1953.

Preserve the rural scenic character of the corridor and important viewsheds

Recommended Action	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Pursue funding to purchase scenic easements, farmland preservation restrictions or conservation restrictions to permanently protect important scenic vistas and agricultural lands.	Long term	Local Planning Boards work with Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs), DEM, the Dept. of Food and Agriculture (DFA) and local land trusts.
Work with communities to revisit zoning bylaws, including review of allowed uses and densities, establishment of a Byway Corridor Overlay District, and review of site plan approval process and criteria.	Long term	Local Planning Boards, with assistance from the RPAs
Prioritize and select areas for vista pruning	Applied for Scenic Byway Grant Fiscal Year 2003	Towns or City, RPAs, Deerfield River Watershed Association
Encourage the use of roadway features such as guardrails and retaining walls that are sensitive to the scenic nature of the Byway.	On-going	Towns or City, RPAs and MHD
Work with local farmers to increase the economic viability of their farms, including promotion of locally grown farm products. Work with Berkshire Grown and Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA) organizations that promote locally raised products and builds partnerships between farmers, chefs and consumers.	Long term	Local Farmers, working with Berkshire Grown, CISA, MA Dept. of Food and Agriculture (DFA), Mohawk Trail Association.
Encourage towns to adopt sign review bylaws to discourage the installation of oversized or inappropriate signs and/or sign clutter.	On-going	Local Planning Board or Selectboard with assistance from the RPAs

Protect the character of historic districts and village centers along the corridor.

Recommended Actions	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Sponsor "On the Road" workshop with Mass. Historical Commission (MHC)	Short term	RPAs, with assistance from Local Historical Commissions.
Encourage the pursuit of National Register nominations, especially for Auto Touring Era properties.	On-going	Local Historical Commissions work with property owners, Local Selectboards or City Council, with assistance from the Mass. Historical Commission (MHC)
Establish a visitor's center with Byway interpretive display and public restroom facility in a historic building in Charlemont.	Applied for Scenic Byway Funding for Fiscal Year 2003	Town of Charlemont with assistance from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG)
Support Williamstown's efforts to establish a National Register District for the Town Common	On-going	Williamstown Historical Commission, with assistance from the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC)
Work with the towns of Shelburne and Buckland to expand the Shelburne Falls National Historic District.	Short-term	FRCOG, Local Historical Commissions of Shelburne, and Buckland
Support the implementation of preservation restrictions or conservation restriction on historically significant structures along the Byway. Work with willing landowners to permanently protect important historic resources.	Long-term	Local Historical Commissions and MHC
Implement a plaque program along the Byway in order to recognize the historically significant Byway structures and also to educate the public about the architectural resources along the corridor.	On-going	RPAs and local Historical Commissions

Preserve and enhance the natural resources along the route.

Recommended Action	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Work with the Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD) and local communities to mitigate stormwater runoff	On-going as projects arise when improvements are made	Local Conservation Commissions, MHD and RPAs
Work with local communities to recognize and protect rare and endangered species habitat	On-going	Local Conservation Commissions (through the permitting process), working with the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program and local naturalist groups.
Work with FROCG and Deerfield River Watershed Team to develop Hazardous Materials Plan	Currently being implemented	FRCOG and the EOEA Deerfield River Watershed Team

Promote a low impact approach to tourism based on recreational, historic and cultural resources that minimizes traffic congestion.

Recommended Action	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Develop a strategic marketing plan, which aims to promote the Byway’s heritage and tourism during the off-peak season.	Applied for Scenic Byway Funding for Fiscal Year 2003	RPAs, working with the Mohawk Trail Association and local Chambers of Commerce
Explore opportunities to develop festivals that focus on activities and attractions along the Byway as a way to promote tourism during the slower tourist seasons.	On-going	RPAs working with local tourist organizations

Promote greater awareness of the Byway and its recreational, historic, and cultural resources.

Recommended Action	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Promote the development of information centers at the mid-point and the western end of the Byway	Applied for Scenic Byway Funding for Fiscal Year 2003	RPAs with assistance from the local communities and tourist interests.
Install information kiosks along the Byway to provide additional information to Byway travelers at locations where information is currently lacking.	Applied for Scenic Byway Funding for Fiscal Year 2003	RPAs, working with local tourist interests and Historic Commissions
Purchase and install a system of historic markers to educate Byway travelers and tell the story of the Byway	Applied for Scenic Byway Funding for Fiscal Year 2003	RPAs, working with local Historic Commission
Design a logo and develop a system of way-finding signs to guide visitors to the Byway.	Long-term	RPAs, Mohawk Trail Assoc., local chambers of commerce, and MHD

Work to enhance the appearance of the Byway through the City of North Adams.

Recommended Action	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Work to further develop and implement the Union Street streetscape improvement conceptual plans	Long-term	City of North Adams

Promote safety measures for roadway users including motorists, pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles.

Recommended Action	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Implement preliminary Access Management recommendations in North Adams and Williamstown	Applied for Scenic Byway Funding for Fiscal Year 2003	Town of Williamstown, City of North Adams and BRPC
Explore options to promote and implement traffic calming wherever possible along the Byway	On-going	Local Communities, RPAs and MHD
Complete improvements to pull-off areas that are in need of repairs to the apron areas.	Long-term	MHD
Develop turn-off areas with a view of the Deerfield River in appropriate locations. In locations where there are several turn-offs located near one another eliminate some.	Applied for Scenic Byway Funding for Fiscal Year 2003	MHD, Local Communities and RPAs
Conduct a more detailed analysis to investigate safety, and possible traffic flow improvements at the traffic rotary in Greenfield.	Long-term	Town of Greenfield, and MHD
Improve turn off area in the Greenfield section of the Byway.	Long-term	Town of Greenfield and MHD
Continue to monitor crash incidences at the three major sites of accidents along the Byway (Rt. 2 & Rt. 2A in Shelburne, Rt. 2 & Rt. 8A in North Adams, and Rt. 2 & Rt. 7 in Williamstown) and explore possible mitigation measures.	On-going	Communities, RPAs and MHD
Explore opportunities to improve the roadway conditions for road cycling on Route 2 between Shelburne and Greenfield as this section of the road is currently being used by local groups of avid cyclists.	On-going	MHD and RPAs

Enhance transportation safety, efficiency and comfort, without compromising the rural qualities of the roadway.

Recommended Action	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Explore options for implementing flexibility in highway design during all roadway projects along the byway in order to maintain the rural and scenic character of the road.	On-going	MHD, Communities, and RPAs
Explore opportunities for alternate transportation, especially in the Shelburne Falls and North Adams/Williamstown area	Long-term	RPAs, working with the Regional Transit Authorities
Support the development of the park and ride lot in Charlemont.	Short-term	FRCOG and MHD

Maintain and enhance the quality of recreational experiences available to Byway users.

Recommended Action	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Develop and publish a comprehensive guide to the Byway's recreational opportunities.	Short term	RPAs and DEM, working with local watershed and recreational organizations
Improve access to the Deerfield River and Mahican-Mohawk Trail	Applied for Scenic Byway Funding for Fiscal Year 2003	RPAs, Deerfield River Watershed Assoc., and HoorWA
Work with DEM to obtain funding for improvement projects at the State Parks along the Byway	Long-term	RPAs
Establish a pedestrian and bike trail between North Adams and Williamstown	Applied for Scenic Byway Funding for Fiscal Year 2003	Berkshire Bike Path Council, North Adams and Williamstown

Increase universal accessibility to recreation areas and associated facilities.

Recommended Action	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Support efforts by state and local entities to improve access to public facilities	On-going	DEM and local communities

Explore appropriate design standards for commercial development along the Byway.

Recommended Action	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Coordinate a workshop for the towns along the Byway to provide information on planning and zoning techniques that could be used to protect the intrinsic qualities of the Byway.	Short-term	RPAs and local Planning Boards
Encourage ANR applicants to develop their lots in a scenic and environmentally sensitive way	Long-term	Local Planning Boards, with assistance from RPAs
Develop design guidelines for rural communities	Long-term	RPAs and local Planning Boards

Promote educational opportunities for students and the general public related to Byway resources.

Recommended Action	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Educational campaign regarding outdoor recreational safety	Short-term	Local Emergency Rescue Squads, with the assistance of DEM and local recreational businesses
Educational campaign regarding natural resources and "treading softly"	On-going	DEM, with the assistance of local conservation groups
Increase availability of historic information	Short-term	Local tourist organizations and Local Historic Commissions