

CHAPTER 9: ACTION PLAN AND FUNDING RESOURCES

Introduction

The Action Plan charts a course for recognizing and enhancing the Route 112 Scenic Byway's resources and includes the recommendations for both Franklin and Hampshire counties listed in the preceding chapters of this Corridor Management Plan. The Franklin County sections below include all of the recommendations from the preceding chapters, while the Hampshire County sections below represent a consolidation of the recommendations deemed most important by the Hampshire County Advisory Committee.

Developed through discussions with members of the advisory committees in each county along with representatives from MassHighway, the Action Plan is organized by county under 9 of the 11 goals developed jointly by both advisory committees for the Route 112 Scenic Byway. The other two goals identified by the advisory committees are process-oriented and should guide the implementation of all the recommended actions in this plan:

- *Identify, inform, and involve all stakeholders in public discussions of Byway plans in order to promote inclusiveness and collaboration.*
- *Recognize and respect the rights of private property owners along the Byway for all activities related to the Route 112 Scenic Byway Corridor.*

Implementation of the recommendations in this Action Plan could take place in several ways, depending on the nature of the actions themselves. Town-specific actions (such as promoting local farm stands and farmers' markets) could be implemented by local boards and organizations, perhaps with help from regional planning agency staff. Actions that involve multiple towns along the Route 112 Scenic Byway (such as promotion of the Byway's resources, development of signage, etc.) would benefit from the continued involvement of the Franklin and Hampshire counties' Route 112 Scenic Byway Advisory Committees. The Committees should continue to explore potential organizational structures that could be developed to assist the Byway towns in prioritizing and implementing the actions described below. One approach might be for the existing committees to continue to meet separately on an as-needed basis and collaborate with one another and with other relevant parties, where appropriate, on specific action items. Another approach, favored by the members of the Hampshire County Advisory Committee, would be to establish a single advisory committee representing the entire Byway that would meet on a regular basis, perhaps quarterly. Both Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs)—FRCOG and PVPC—will continue to work together and with their member towns to help them further their goals for recognizing and enhancing the sections of the Route 112 Scenic Byway that traverse their communities.

Sources of funding to pursue the work described here in the Action Plan are enumerated in the next section of this chapter. The most important of these resources is the National Scenic Byway Program, a program managed by the Federal Highway Administration, which provides grant monies that can be used specifically for planning and implementing byway projects. See the funding resources section for more detail.

Action Plan

Goal #1: Encourage economic development that is appropriate to the rural nature of the Byway by supporting working forests and farms, farm-related businesses, and cottage industries such as artisans and crafters.

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
<p>Since agricultural businesses in the region sustain landscapes with high scenic value as well as maintain economic activities creating jobs, tax base, and access to fresh produce and food products, towns could consider a number of initiatives to help retain active farm businesses in their community including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop a pamphlet or participate in a Western Massachusetts Scenic Byway website to highlight the locally-grown products and services available at roadside stands and at local retail outlets. ○ Coordinate efforts between B&Bs, agricultural retailers, and bike-touring clubs to promote the region as a destination for sustainable travel and eco-tourism. ○ Encourage the Agricultural Commissions in each town to meet with their Planning Boards to determine how they might work together to support agriculture in a way that would benefit farmers. 	<p>Will be implemented as part of regional byway website</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Short-term</p>	<p>FRCOG</p> <p>SFABA FCCC</p> <p>Agricultural Commissions Planning Boards</p>
<p>Explore options that maximize opportunities for landowners to conserve their forests and agricultural land along the Byway. There are two main options to help conserve these landscapes: 1) economic development measures that result in sustaining agricultural businesses over time and 2) land protection efforts that result in the retention of forest and farmland in perpetuity.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Landowners Land Trusts MDAR</p>

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
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<p>Support local planning boards in reviewing and considering the revision of local zoning tools to enhance and protect the character and resources along the Scenic Byway Corridor consistent with individual community values. These might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ By-right residential cluster developments with Site Plan Review; ○ Cluster developments for commercial uses; ○ Mixed use village centers; 	Ongoing	<p>Planning Boards Select Boards FRCOG</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Back lots with open space set-aside; and ○ Ridge protection or agricultural preservation overlay districts. 		
<p>Enhance public awareness of the importance of agricultural and forestry businesses in the Byway towns and support the purchase of local forest and farm products through the development of a marketing program that focuses on local farm stands and farmers markets, such as in Ashfield and Shelburne Falls.</p>	Long-term	<p>Agricultural Commissions SFABA</p>

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
<p>Promote the economic viability of farms, working forests, and artisans through marketing materials that focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • farm-related businesses (sugarhouses, farmstands, pick your own fruits, etc.); • products from local working forests (furniture, brooms, etc), and arts and crafts (pottery, fiber arts, etc.). <p>These materials can be developed for the Western Massachusetts Scenic Byways website, but might also include published activity guides that describe attractive day trips to the area.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, PVPC, local farms, foresters, and artisans</p>
<p>Collaborate with and support the work of town agricultural commissions in communities where they exist to promote agritourism.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and agricultural commissions with help from PVPC</p>

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
Through the efforts of the Hilltown Community Development Corporation, explore development and establishment of another business association to dovetail with existing organizations. Decide how this can be done in cooperation with the Jacob’s Ladder Business Association, which builds relationships and allows businesses to share strategies, ideas, and resources.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, Hilltown Community Development Corporation, and Jacob’s Ladder Business Association
Help promote the work of local farms and bed and breakfasts to define and develop multi-day tours in the region that could be done on horseback.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and Hilltown CDC with help from PVPC

Goal #2: Encourage consideration of design standards and guidelines for commercial development that will be compatible with the Byway’s historic and rural scenic character.

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Consider adoption of site plan review bylaws in order to support development that is sensitive to the natural and scenic feature of the Byway. Site plan review procedures can address the layout of a development and encourage projects to retain natural vegetation and other landscape features.	Ongoing	Planning Boards
Consider the adoption of voluntary design guidelines that encourage commercial and industrial establishments to have signage, external lighting, building characteristics and materials, parking, and landscaping that complement the scenic, historic, and natural characteristics of the Route 112 Scenic Byway.	Short-term	Planning Boards

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
Adopt a Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee comment process for Route 112 commercial development, whereby applications for development in the corridor area are forwarded to the Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee for review. Suggestions of the Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee are advisory, and are not required to be incorporated into a local board’s final decision. A similar such arrangement has been established through an intergovernmental memorandum of understanding between Southampton, Holyoke, Easthampton, Westfield, and the Barnes Aquifer Protection Committee.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and local planning boards with help from PVPC

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
Incorporate site plan review standards into zoning bylaws to establish and promote commercial establishments that have signage, external lighting, building characteristics, and landscaping that complement the scenic, historic, and natural qualities of the Byway.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and local planning boards with help from PVPC
Promote adoption of local telecommunications bylaws that include siting and design guidelines to minimize the impact of cellular and telecommunications infrastructure on the Byway’s scenic character. Also work with the Westfield Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee to ensure that siting and design guidelines also address visual impacts from the river.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and local planning boards with help from PVPC
Adopt an Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) Bylaw, also known as creative, flexible development, or cluster development, to encourage new subdivisions be built with smaller lot sizes and dimensional standards than what is required in the underlying zoning. By reducing these dimensional standards, development can be built more compactly, and the remaining land can then be permanently protected as open space. PVPC is currently working with the Highland Communities Initiative to develop some new tools that may help in this regard.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and local planning boards with help from PVPC
Encourage development in existing villages in each Byway community through adoption of a Mixed Use Rural Village Bylaw that promotes traditional village center development with a combination of design standards and identification of desirable village businesses that will meet the needs of residents and tourists, including craft stores, coffee shops, restaurants, bookshops, inns, clothing stores, grocery stores, hardware stores, etc.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, local planning boards, and Highland Communities Initiative with help from PVPC

Goal #3: Support willing landowners in their efforts to preserve open space, scenic views, and culturally and historically significant landscapes.

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Work with farmers and landowners interested in protecting their land and pursue funding to purchase scenic easements or conservation restrictions to permanently protect important scenic vistas along the Byway.	Ongoing	Open Space Committees Landowners Land Trusts
Secure funding from the National Scenic Byway Program for scenic easement acquisition and work with willing property owners that have land in areas that have been identified in the Scenic Resources Assessment as outstanding or distinctive.	Short-term	FRCOG Landowners Land Trusts

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Consider adopting the Community Preservation Act (CPA) to assist with the restoration and rehabilitation of historic and architecturally significant buildings and protection of farmland and open space.	Long-term	Select Boards Planning Boards Historical Commissions Open Space Committees

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
Pursue open space protection for important natural and historical resource areas and scenic vistas along the Byway by identifying areas and working with towns and willing landowners to pursue donations or purchase of scenic easements or conservation restrictions.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and PVPC in collaboration with The Trustees of the Reservations, Highland Communities Initiative, local land trusts, local historical commissions, and willing landowners
Improve roadside attractiveness along the Byway through pruning and planting, and, where appropriate, thoughtful selective clearing. Also, improve existing views that have become overgrown by continuing selective pruning along rock outcrops and riverbanks. Conversely, improve existing areas of lesser scenic value by planting programs and encouragement of private owners to beautify these areas. Work with the Westfield Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee where pruning or other management activities are planned for areas adjacent to the Westfield River.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and PVPC, working with MassHighway
<p>To promote the concept of “greenbelts,” areas of land around a village center that helps to preserve the distinction between a village and its surrounding areas, consider using such strategies as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Down-zoning properties in the greenbelt zone to require lower development densities (for example, increasing minimum lot sizes to 5 or 10 acres); • Purchasing publicly owned conservation properties within the greenbelt zone; • Adopting an Open Space Residential Development bylaw that requires clustered residential development with open space preservation; and • Limiting uses within the greenbelt zone to agriculture, ecotourism, working lands, or very low density residential. 	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with town boards and local land trusts

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
Develop a strategy to help Byway residents understand the value of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) and then work with communities to win approval. The CPA enables communities to establish, through a ballot referendum, a local Community Preservation Fund dedicated to open space and passive recreation, historic preservation, and low and moderate income housing.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and local officials with help from Highland Communities Initiative and PVPC
Work with Town of Huntington Board of Selectmen and consult with MassHighway on providing special parkway designation for the segment of Route 112 that runs from Kimball Road to the Knightville Dam in Huntington.	Town of Huntington and Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members

Goal #4: Promote and sustain important wildlife areas and travel corridors, including providing passage under the roadway where necessary.

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
<p>Cold water streams along the Byway should be protected to maintain water quality through the use of BMPs by farmers, highway commissions, and others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Land use planning techniques should be applied to direct development to appropriate areas, preserve sensitive areas, and maintain or reduce the levels of impervious cover impacting cold water fisheries. ○ Road improvement projects should comply with the Massachusetts Stormwater Policy and road runoff should be directed away from nearby waterways and sensitive habitats. In areas with endangered or rare species, additional pollutant removal may be warranted. ○ Managers of state and local road improvement projects should work cooperatively with local Conservation Commissions, the Deerfield River Watershed Team, and the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program to ensure that priority habitat and sensitive waterways are properly identified and protected. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Planning Boards Conservation Commissions Agricultural Commissions</p> <p>Select Boards Local Highway Depts. Conservation Commissions</p> <p>Select Boards Local Highway Depts. Conservation Commissions</p>
Address the need for small mammals, amphibians, and reptiles to cross the road through the construction of safe passageways through culverts under the road in areas where such crossings are common or provide signage warning motorists of mating turtle and amphibian crossings where culvert construction is impractical.	Long-term	Conservation Commissions Open Space Committees Trails Committees Land Trusts

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Approval Not Required (ANR) development may be one of the most serious threats to the natural resources along the Byway corridor. Communities on the Byway may want to consider zoning changes to protect sensitive habitat, preserve natural and scenic resources, and to focus new development into existing village center areas.	Ongoing	Planning Boards
Identify locations of invasive species of plants, particularly where they impact water quality, and undertake appropriate control measures to eliminate them or reduce their coverage.	On-going	Conservation Commissions Open Space Committees Trails Committees NHESP

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
<p>Document key habitat areas and issues by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program to investigate potential vernal pools and apply for certification where eligible; • Mapping invasive plant species to identify species and locations. This is an important first step toward better management. Confer with the Nature Conservancy’s programs called Weed it Now, which focuses on removal of invasives, and Keep it Clean, which monitors areas in the forest core not yet infested by non-native species (several partners in the Westfield River region are talking about creating an invasive species management area that will likely overlap with the Route 112 Scenic Byway corridor); and • Promoting work of people in the region who are mapping animal habitat and travel corridors so that there is a better understanding of how municipalities might avoid fragmentation of these resources (the Westfield Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee, for example, is conducting riparian and species surveys to better document and characterize the riparian corridor and to develop a conservation plan). 	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, local conservation commissions, and regional planning agencies in tandem with Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, The Nature Conservancy. For farmland fields, confer with Natural Resources Conservation Service.
Identify and explore opportunities to preserve the integrity of core and priority habitat areas. For lands adjacent to core and priority habitat areas, consider adopting mandatory by-right cluster zoning bylaws or open-space residential development where development goes on the least ecologically sensitive land and the remainder is preserved for wildlife habitat. Other strategies should include outreach and education to residents about the tax incentives available through conservation restrictions, and such programs as Chapter 61 for forest land.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, local planning boards, and PVPC in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy, The Trustees of Reservations, Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game, and other non-profits, state agencies, or communities

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
<p>The Wild and Scenic Westfield River and its tributaries parallel Route 112 for much of its journey through Hampshire County. It is critical to protect the water of this significant resource by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adopting local stormwater bylaws that require mitigation of stormwater impacts using Best Management Practices (PVPC has sample bylaw). ○ Working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and willing farmers to implement practices that limit agricultural stormwater runoff. ○ Working with MassHighway to pursue upgrades in stormwater management strategies for any road improvement projects proposed along the Byway. ○ Helping communities to better understand the interrelationship of local, state, and federal laws governing river protection and to identify gaps in protection of the Westfield River in particular. This could occur through a series of workshops for Byway towns, involving members of planning boards, conservation commissions, and code enforcement officers, chief elected officials, highway departments, and boards of health. Follow-up to these workshops might include bylaw recommendations that offer clarification and better protections. ○ Researching and developing strategies for managing informal recreation areas, such as highway turnouts along the Westfield River, without toilet facilities that may be impacting water quality. ○ Collaborating with the Westfield Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee to place their signs at all river crossings on the National Wild & Scenic River. ○ Encouraging Byway communities to tap into grant and loan sources to upgrade aging septic systems, such as the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loan Program. 	<p>Local planning boards and conservation commissions</p> <p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and NRCS with help from PVPC</p> <p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, PVPC, and MassHighway</p> <p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, Westfield Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee, Westfield River Watershed Association, PVPC, and officials from Byway communities</p> <p>Local communities and Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with help from PVPC</p> <p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with help from PVPC</p> <p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with help from PVPC</p>

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
Address barriers to terrestrial and aquatic wildlife passage, including dams and roadways. At dams, explore potential for fish passage or removal. For roadways, work to ensure that stream crossings and the associated bridges and culverts are designed so that they do not present obstacles to wildlife movement. Also for roadways, provide safe passage at well used wildlife crossings when possible.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and local conservation commissions with help from PVPC to support work of Massachusetts Riverways Program, Nature Conservancy, Westfield Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee, Trout Unlimited, and MassHighway
Work to protect the Pork Barrel Wilderness area, encouraging low impact passive use, as well as wildlife and forest protection of the roadless valley.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with landowners and public safety officials from Town of Cummington
Promote adoption of ridgeline and hillside protection bylaws to preserve the natural resources and scenic views associated with significant upland areas.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and local planning boards with help from PVPC
Identify environmentally sensitive locations, especially near water supplies, where reductions in the amount of road salt used will be beneficial. Request that MassHighway and local department of public works adopt reduced road salt policies or determine salt alternatives in environmentally sensitive areas.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, local conservation commissions, and boards of selectmen with help from PVPC

Goal #5: Support the protection of the historic character of village centers and other historical resources along the Byway Corridor.

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Work with the owners of historically significant structures to maintain their landmarks. Assist in securing loans, grants or tax credits for restoration of these important structures.	Short-term	Historical Commissions MHC Property owners
Communities could work with individual property owners to determine significant historic structures and develop plans to assist in their restoration and/or preservation. Sponsoring an MHC “On the Road” workshop would be a logical first step to identifying ways to help private property owners maintain historic structures and landscapes.	Short-term	Historical Commissions MHC FRCOG Property owners

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Support the implementation of preservation restrictions or conservation restriction on historically significant structures along the Byway. Work with willing land owners to permanently protect important historic resources.	Ongoing	Historical Commissions MHC Property owners
Work with the towns of Shelburne and Buckland to expand the Shelburne Falls National Register Historic District and to create a Buckland Center National Register Historic District in the Route 112/Upper Street area.	Short-term/ Long-term	Shelburne Historical Commission Buckland Historical Commission FRCOG MHC
Work to protect and preserve important archeological sites along the Byway.	Ongoing	Historical Commissions MHC
Encourage local Historical Commissions to alert and educate property owners about the federal and state tax credits that are available for restoration work that occurs on income-producing properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places.	Short-term	Historical Commissions MHC FRCOG
Support active Historic Commissions to assist in the documentation and preservation of historical resources along Route 112. The Commissions should seek grant funding or volunteer assistance to update the historical resource survey sheets for submission to the MHC and inclusion in the MACRIS system.	Short-term	Select Boards Historical Commissions
Identify funding sources and assist with grant applications to secure funding for redevelopment and revitalization projects in village centers for historic resources such as former mill buildings, churches, etc.	Ongoing	Select Boards Planning Boards Historical Commissions FRCOG

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
Continue work in each of the Byway communities to place historic properties on the Massachusetts Inventory of Cultural Resources. In Goshen, this should include: a cemetery, the landscape of the D.A.R. State Forest, the town’s quarries, and numerous farmhouses, barns, stores and houses. In Cummington, this should include: buildings dating prior to 1968 not currently surveyed in Cummington Center and along the Byway, barns, and adding street addresses to the surveyed properties data base at the Massachusetts Historical Commission. In Worthington, this should include many significant properties, including barns. In Huntington, this should include properties on Worthington Road between Huntington Center and Norwich Bridge, including the barns and carriage barns, several bungalows, as well as the barbershop and adjacent residence. The Knightville Dam should also be included in this inventory.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and local historical commissions with help from PVPC

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
<p>Work to nominate Cummington Center, Thayer’s Corner, West Cummington, Worthington Center, West Worthington, Worthington Corners and the Norwich Bridge Village in Huntington to the National Register of Historic Places as historic districts. Also consider possible nominations from Goshen. Also work to get National Engineering Landmark designation for the Norwich and Knightville bridges.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and local historical commissions with help from PVPC</p>
<p>Prepare historic preservation plans for each of the Byway communities to identify strategies that are most appropriate for each community. Scenic roads bylaw, demolition delay bylaw, Community Preservation Act, local historic districts, zoning overlay districts, greenbelts, preservation restrictions, among other tools, should be considered for the long-term preservation of each town’s many important historic resources.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, local historical commissions, and planning boards with help from PVPC</p>
<p>Pursue options to preserve and promote historic resources along the Byway, such as the development of architectural guidelines for historic structures to assist property owners when completing historic renovation or restoration projects. Also, encourage adoption of demolition delay bylaws on structures over 100 years old.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, PVPC, and local historical commissions</p>
<p>Determine ways to recognize property owners who do sensitive restoration or rehabilitation to their historic buildings.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, PVPC, and local historical commissions</p>
<p>Develop interpretive programs on historic properties, particularly the early industrial water-powered mill sites that are visible from the Byway on the Little River in South Worthington. Also develop interpretive programs in the other Byway towns where appropriate and where there is interest.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and local historical commissions with help from PVPC</p>
<p>Provide educational programs on preservation standards and planning for all Byway communities.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and local historical commissions with help from PVPC</p>
<p>Highlight the rich history of the Route 112 region, including old cellar holes, cemeteries, and other artifacts of former human settlement that are scattered throughout the hillsides. Relating the stories associated with these artifacts along the length of a trail system would enrich the experience of hiking or walking in the region’s woodlands. It would also serve to underscore the importance of their preservation. Collecting oral histories from town elders about the artifacts found in the woodlands would be a first step in this process. This could include mapping, such as the work in Plainfield, and the addition of interpretive signs, such as those recently installed at key historical sites in Northampton.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, senior centers, and historical commissions with help from PVPC</p>

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
Amend zoning Use Regulations tables to promote desirable and discourage undesirable development along the Byway.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and local planning boards with help from PVPC

Goal #6: Explore ways to increase recreational opportunities for Byway residents and visitors that respect private landowners' interests.

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
<p>Evaluate and promote the ways in which visitors can become more aware of the natural resources that can be enjoyed along the Byway. The Byway can become a vehicle to introduce the natural resources within the corridor region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Develop an educational campaign to minimize the potential negative impacts of visiting the great outdoors, by respecting the land and “treading softly.” This is important if the Byway becomes a way to introduce nature to those who are not normally “the outdoor type” and may never have hiked, biked, or snowmobiled in forested areas before. It also must be recognized that much of the land along the Byway Corridor is privately owned and public access may be limited. o To minimize conflicts between humans and wildlife, remind visitors to control food waste and not to purposely feed the animals. Remind local residents to locate garbage bins and bird feeders so that bear, raccoons, skunks and other animals cannot get into them. Animals that become accustomed to people food can become pests and may need to be relocated or destroyed. o Establish educational signs reminding visitors to stay on marked trails. o Local conservation and recreational groups should coordinate recreational tourism efforts with the NHESP and the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to minimize negative impacts to the environment. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Short-term</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>DCR DAR SFABA Land Trusts Open Space Committees Trail Committees</p> <p>Owners of publicly accessible recreation land (DAR, DCR, TTOR, etc.)</p> <p>Owners of publicly accessible recreation land (DAR, DCR, TTOR, etc.)</p> <p>Open Space Committees Conservation Commissions SFABA Trail Committees</p>

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Incorporate suggestions on ways to minimize visitor impacts to the environment in educational materials and tourist brochures and make clear where activities are allowed and where they are not.	Ongoing	SFABA
Promote multi-day tourist packages highlighting outdoor recreational activities.	Ongoing	SFABA FCCC
Explore the possibility of developing a map and guide to bicycle, pedestrian, and horseback riding trails off the road.	Long-term	SFABA FCCC
Develop additional unobtrusive canoe/kayak put-in and take-out areas along the Deerfield River to alleviate seasonal congestion and additional signage to direct tourists to these sites, in order to discourage the use of areas that are located on private property.	Short-term	Select Boards Conservation Commissions Planning Boards Open Space Committees
Support increased funding for staffing at State forests and parks and maintenance of the facilities, as well as for the promotion and further development of significant recreational resources (such as the Mahican Mohawk Trail).	Ongoing	DCR
Investigate the need for additional sidewalk infrastructure and ways to improve the existing infrastructure to bring it into line with current ADA standards.	Long-term	Select Boards FRCOG
Work with state and local emergency rescue agencies, local recreational organizations and recreation-related business operators to develop “safety first” educational material for recreational visitors.	Long-term	Select Boards Franklin County REPC
Work with existing mountain biking groups to develop a series of mountain bike races in the Byway region to capitalize on the popularity of the region among biking enthusiasts.	Long-term	Open Space Committees Trails Committees SFABA

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
Publish itineraries for bicycle rides of varying lengths and abilities, including multi-day rides that include Route 112 and the other byways of the region. Include itineraries for mountain bike rides that make use of the dirt roads and public trails in the region.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and Mass Highway with help from PVPC, and biking enthusiasts in the region
Expand recreational infrastructure in the region for trails by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Extending the network of trails to connect the region’s major trails to nearby village centers. This work will be based on the British model where village centers in the countryside are 	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with help from PVPC

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
<p>connected to one another through a network of trails that are used by locals and tourists alike. Working from existing trails, this could include working with landowners on possible trail easements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exploring the status and use of old roads in the region and determine if there may be an opportunity to expand recreational infrastructure for trails. ○ Working with state agencies to identify areas in scenic yet inaccessible state lands where trails might be built. ○ Researching the status of the AT&T Fiber Optic Corridor, which extends east to west through Chesterfield into Worthington to its terminus (thought to be at the microwave tower in Peru), to determine whether this existing infrastructure could potentially advance recreational linkages. Research the owner’s willingness to work with communities to establish a trail. ○ Proposing locations for more handicapped accessible trails and other recreational facilities, and assist in planning and development. ○ Promoting the work of the Westfield Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee and other partner groups to advance and develop an extended East Branch Trail southward to Huntington center and northward to Windsor and Savoy. ○ Explore feasibility of establishing turnouts and trails on lands with conservation restrictions. ○ Improve trail systems in the Knightville Dam reservoir basin and mitigate all-terrain vehicle (ATV) use and damage. Work with the Western Massachusetts ATV Association to effectively address ATV related issues. 	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, The Trustees of the Reservations, local town boards, and PVPC</p> <p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and PVPC with state agencies</p> <p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and stakeholders with help from PVPC</p> <p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, and Outdoor Access with help from PVPC</p> <p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and Westfield Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee with help from PVPC</p> <p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with conservation agencies, including The Trustees of the Reservations (TTOR)</p> <p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, Westfield Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee, Mass Wildlife, and U.S. Army Corp of Engineers with help from PVPC</p>

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
<p>Enhance infrastructure for cyclists by advocating for bicycle friendly, but low-impact practices in maintaining and re-designing the roadway, specifically: consistent pavement on shoulders (no crushed stone or rumble strips) that allows for safe cycling without destroying the scenic qualities of the road and regular street sweeping of shoulders.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, Mass Highway, and local bicycling enthusiasts with help from PVPC</p>
<p>Improve and promote opportunities for boating in the Route 112 region by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identifying official and unofficial boating and fishing access points along the corridor and make recommendations to Public Access Board at Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game for additional access points. Access points should include parking, if possible, to allow people to park a car upstream and another downstream, and boat from one car to the other. Lily Pond in Goshen is one site that has already been identified. ○ Working with the Appalachian Mountain Club and Westfield River Canoe Club to develop a boating guide to the Westfield River, emulating the format of the Deerfield River Map and Guide developed in 2007 by AMC. ○ Exploring the possibility of regular recreational releases from the Knightville and Littleville Lake dams, determining first what ecological implications might be. ○ Exploring the potential for developing a Whitewater Hall of Fame to promote the Westfield River’s importance to boating. 	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with help from PVPC</p> <p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with help from PVPC</p> <p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, Army Corps of Engineers, Westfield River Canoe Club, Westfield River Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, New England FLOW, and American Whitewater with help from PVPC</p> <p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, Hilltown CDC, local planning boards, Westfield River Canoe Club, and race organizers with help from PVPC</p>

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
<p>Facilitate winter recreational activities in the region by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Encouraging MassHighway to plow turnouts for winter recreational access, particularly the Knightville Dam Recreation Area, and Gardner State Park; and o Promoting recreational access to the old Berkshire Snow Basin in Cummington. 	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and Mass Highway with help from PVPC</p> <p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and Mass DCR with help from PVPC</p>
<p>Consider promoting and marketing recreation along the Route 112 in tandem with recreation along the Jacob’s Ladder Trail Scenic Byway to capitalize on the wealth of open space resources in the entire region. This could also entail the creation of other competitive outdoor recreation events, like the Westfield Wildwater Races to draw visitors to the region.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with help from PVPC</p>
<p>Coordinate agencies and organizations in the region that are managing recreational areas and access points to develop consistent public messages (on rules and regulations, proper etiquette, behavior by all-terrain vehicle (ATV) users, respect for historic features, such as stone walls, and such concepts as “carry in/carry out” or “leave no trace behind”). Work with the Western Massachusetts ATV Association to effectively address ATV related issues.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, Westfield Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee, state and federal landowners, Hilltown Land Trust, and local town officials with help from PVPC</p>
<p>Attract a recreational outfitter to key Byway location that might combine bicycle sales and rentals with sale and rental of skis, canoes, kayaks, and camping equipment.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, Hilltown CDC, local planning boards with help from the regional planning agencies</p>
<p>Publish, distribute, and promote the existing manuscript for a self-guided tour to the region’s waterfalls, including Windsor Jambs, the Chesterfield Gorge, Rocky Brook Waterfall, Glendale Falls, and Sanderson Brook Falls.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with help from PVPC</p>
<p>Work to establish a larger, more accessible town park in Worthington. Possible funding sources might include Highland Communities Initiative for design, and Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services PARC for acquisition and construction.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and Town of Worthington with help from PVPC</p>
<p>Explore pedestrian amenities in the Town of Worthington, including the utilization of existing and possible acquired right of way to develop a pedestrian/bicycle path connecting the Corners (Worthington Post Office) with the Maples Senior Housing Complex to the north and the town center to the south.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and Town of Worthington</p>

Goal #7: Promote the Byway region through a comprehensive and unified marketing and education campaign, drawing on the region’s scenic, natural, historic, recreational, and agricultural resources while reflecting and enhancing the unique character of each individual town.

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Participate in Western Mass Scenic Byway website to highlight important recreational and cultural resources and tourism support services (e.g. lodging and restaurants) within the study area, provide potential connections to other scenic byways, and link to other websites with more comprehensive information about attractions in the region.	Long-term	FRCOG SFABA Select Boards
Promote alternatives to State forest camping areas that are often full, such as local Bed & Breakfasts and motels. Promote visits that would take place during the week and/or at non-peak times of the year.	Ongoing	SFABA FCCC
Investigate the opportunity to establish Scenic Byway informational kiosks to direct tourists to recreational opportunities.	Long-term	Open Space Committees Select Boards SFABA
Increase the number of informational kiosks at strategic locations to make more historical information available to the public.	Long-term	Historical Commissions Select Boards
Implement a plaque program along the Byway in order to recognize the owners of historically significant Byway structures and to educate the public about the architectural resources along the corridor.	Long-term	Historical Commissions
Consider working with existing tourism organizations, such as the Shelburne Falls Area Business Association and the Chambers of Commerce, to develop a comprehensive promotional and marketing plan for the Byway.	Ongoing	FRCOG SFABA FCCC Greater Northampton CC PVPC
Ensure that measures are taken to protect the unique resources of the area that provide great potential for a wide array of economic development and tourist attractions. Incorporate suggestions on ways to minimize visitor impacts to the environment through educational materials and tourist brochures and make clear where activities are allowed and where they are not.	Ongoing	State Agencies (DCR/DFW) FRCOG Select Boards SFABA

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Develop a promotional campaign around a theme or festival to attract visitors to the region during the slower tourist seasons, such as the winter months with skiing (downhill and cross-country) and maple syrup harvest and production. This campaign could promote discounted tourist packages that include accommodation, food and local attractions.	Long-term	SFABA FCCC Agricultural Commissions CISA
Develop a mobile Scenic Byway display that can be brought to county fairs (such as the Franklin County Fair, the Eastern States Exposition, the Hampshire County Fair, the Cummington Fair) and other tourism related conferences (such as the Mass. Office of Travel and Tourism’s annual conference).	Long-term	SFABA FRCOG
Provide promotional materials about the Scenic Byway to organizations and tourist-related businesses and sponsor links to relevant websites.	Ongoing through website	SFABA FRCOG
Contact existing business to discuss advertising in a Scenic Byway website or other marketing outlets in exchange for public use of their bathroom facilities. If existing facilities prove insufficient, explore locations to construct public restroom facilities at convenient locations along the Byway.	Short-term	SFABA FRCOG GBA

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
Develop marketing tools to help unify the Byway corridor, such as a better Byway name, a theme, brochure and logo, and/or common set of signs for the Byway corridor.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with help from PVPC
Work with local communities to develop interpretive material about the cultural, historic, natural, and recreational resources of the Byway for tourists and visitors, through signs, informational kiosks, turnouts at key locations, brochures, and central distribution points for materials on the villages, homes, monuments, structures, and historic landscapes.	Local communities and historical societies with help from Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and PVPC
Participate in developing the Western Massachusetts Scenic Byway website to highlight important recreational and cultural resources and tourism support services within the Route 112 corridor, provide potential connections to other scenic byways, and link to other websites with information about attractions in the region.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with help from PVPC
Identify how Byway communities might work with the major visitor bureaus or define a strategy to promote the Byway through other means.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with help from PVPC

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
<p>Highlight the rich history of the Route 112 region, including old cellar holes, cemeteries, the keystone arches, and other artifacts of former human settlement that are scattered throughout the hillsides. Relating the stories associated with these artifacts along the length of a trail system would enrich the experience of hiking or walking in the region’s woodlands. It would also serve to underscore the importance of their preservation. Collecting oral histories from town elders about the artifacts found in the woodlands would be a first step in this process. This could include mapping, such as the work in Plainfield, and the addition of interpretive signs, such as those recently installed at key historical sites in Northampton.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, senior centers, and historical societies with help from PVPC</p>
<p>Encourage families to explore the open space resources of the Route 112 region through region-wide treasure hunts, be they traditional letterboxing or more high-tech geocaching.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and recreation commissions with help from PVPC</p>
<p>Create activity guides that package together a series of associated cultural and outdoor activities. Activity guides could be created for recreational activities (boating, hiking, cycling, and fishing), cultural activities (farms, history, music, local artisans, architecture), or more general activities.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, Hilltown CDC, and Jacob’s Ladder Business Association with help from PVPC</p>
<p>Explore and take advantage of opportunities to link the Route 112 region with the successes of the Berkshires and the Pioneer Valley, perhaps promoting the Route 112 region as providing a quieter, more rural New England experience.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with help from PVPC</p>
<p>Identify existing lists of attractions, especially internet-based lists, appropriate for Byway attractions, and work to encourage links among these resources. Get listed on existing web sites related to scenic byways and driving vacations.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with help from PVPC</p>
<p>Create audio tours for Route 112, much like the National Park Service does for the National Parks. These tours could be available on CD or downloadable to MP3s from the Route 112 website.</p>	<p>Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with help from PVPC</p>

Goal #8: Cooperate in the development of limited signage that unifies the Byway through the use of an easily recognizable symbol.

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Consider adoption of sign review bylaws to discourage the installation of oversized signs and too many signs placed close to one another which can cause confusion for Byway travelers and detract from the scenic qualities of the corridor.	Short-term	Planning Boards Mass Highway Dist. 1 FRCOG
Request that MassHighway conduct a sign inventory study or work to explore how the Towns can improve the placement and concentration of signs along the Route 112 Byway.	Short-term	Mass Highway Dist. 1 FRCOG
Install markers or signs for individual structures of historic significance along the Corridor such as bridges, houses, and cemeteries. Markers and signs should be of a uniform nature to allow for consistency throughout the Byway Corridor.	Long-term	Historical Commissions
Conduct an evaluation of signage, either as specific improvements are being made or as a separate project to determine whether signage can be consolidated, particularly at intersections.	Ongoing	Mass Highway Dist. 1 FRCOG
Investigate the potential for adopting a unified signage program with a Route 112 logo for traveler services, historic sites, recreational areas, and participating businesses.	Short-term	Mass Highway Dist. 1 FRCOG PVPC
Establish an integrated system of signs to guide travelers that are consistent with the rural nature of the Byway. This system could begin as far away as the Massachusetts Turnpike and from Interstate 91 in Greenfield.	Ongoing	Mass Highway Dist. 1 FRCOG SFABA

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
Develop a comprehensive signage program along the Route 112 Scenic Byway to provide a consistent aesthetic quality along the corridor by first approaching MassHighway District 1 Office to discuss options for consolidating existing traffic signs and using signs that better reflect the historic, rural, and scenic qualities of the Byway. PVPC has already conducted a sign inventory for Route 112 in Goshen, Cummington, Worthington and Huntington.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, local planning boards, and local boards of selectmen with help from regional planning agencies

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
Work with towns to come up with sign guidelines, including size, color, placement, and frequency of occurrence that are appropriate to the Byway.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and local boards of selectmen with help from PVPC
Establish gateways for the Route 112 Scenic Byway and add signage for Route 112 on Routes 90, 20, 66, 143, 9, 116, and 2.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and MassHighway with help from regional planning agencies
Work with Western Massachusetts Scenic Byway program to develop symbol that promotes collection of byways yet identifies Route 112 as unique.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members with help from regional planning agencies

Goal #9: Ensure that roadway safety improvements, signs, and maintenance activities are compatible with the Byway’s historic and rural scenic character, by using context sensitive design and low-impact, environmentally sensitive practices. Where warranted, this shall include the careful analysis and remediation of past projects that detract from scenic value.

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
As roadway improvement projects are completed, encourage the use of roadway features such as guardrails and retaining walls that are sensitive to the scenic nature of the Byway. Consider alternatives such as core ten and steel back timber guardrails as an alternative to the galvanized steel guardrails that are typically used.	Ongoing	Mass Highway Dist. 1 Planning Boards Select Boards
Evaluate the option of maintaining or improving the road shoulders for use by bicyclists, pedestrians, and horseback riders, where appropriate, or explore off road options.	Long-term	Mass Highway Dist. 1 Select Boards Planning Boards Open Space Committees
Commonly used crossings for farm machinery and recreational users, such as snowmobilers and horseback riders, should be adequately marked to warn motorists to be careful.	Short-term	Select Boards Agricultural Commissions MassHighway Dist. 1
MassHighway should work actively with the Massachusetts Historical Commission and local Historical Commissions to ensure that Route 112 road projects preserve historic resources.	Ongoing	Mass Highway Dist. 1 Historical Commissions MHC
Continue to monitor traffic volumes and patterns along the Byway.	Ongoing	Mass Highway Dist. 1 FRCOG

Recommended Actions – Franklin County	Timeframe	Suggested Leadership
Continue to monitor the performance of key intersections along the Byway.	Ongoing	Mass Highway Dist. 1 FRCOG
Conduct a review of the crash history of out of control vehicles coming down the steep hill on Greenfield Road into Colrain Center at the intersection of Route 112 and Greenfield Road. Investigate ways to minimize impacts from such out of control vehicles if deemed a problem.	Long-term	Mass Highway Dist. 1 FRCOG
Ensure that all improvements to the roadway infrastructure are in line with the scenic character of the Byway to the extent possible.	Ongoing	Mass Highway Dist. 1 FRCOG
Investigate the need to add “Share the Road” and other warning signage to notify drivers to expect cyclists, farm machinery, animals such as moose and cattle, snowmobiles and others sharing the roadway.	Long-term	Select Boards Agricultural Commissions
Investigate the need for additional “Reduced Salt Areas” along the Byway.	Long-term	Mass Highway Dist. 1 Select Boards Conservation Commissions FRCOG
Explore locations to construct additional parking facilities at convenient locations along the Byway, especially for vehicles with trailers, that would not detract from the Byway character, would be accessible to public transportation, and would not incur substantial maintenance costs. To avoid new construction, towns could also explore the use of existing parking during off hours.	Long-term	Select Boards Planning Boards Mass Highway Dist. 1 FRCOG
Bury above-ground utility lines along the Byway where feasible.	Ongoing	Mass Highway Dist. 1 Utility companies Select Boards

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
Work with MassHighway to develop a practice whereby the Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee receives sufficient pre-design notice (prior notification) anytime proposed improvements or changes, including signage, are being considered that may affect the Byway. Talk with Executive Office of Transportation about establishing a memorandum of understanding with the Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee and an automatic process whereby preliminary project work forms include a checkbox indicating whether the project is	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, and MassHighway with help from PVPC

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
planned for a scenic byway. This would trigger notification of scenic byway advisory groups.	
Work with Mass Highway to ensure that the <i>Massachusetts Project Development and Design Guidebook</i> (2006) includes provisions that will safeguard the historic and rural scenic character of the Route 112 Scenic Byway and other scenic byways during any improvement projects. This work should be informed by design guidelines used for exemplary scenic roads in the nation.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, Mass Highway, Cummington Highway Department with help from PVPC
Employ at every opportunity <i>Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)</i> , or <i>Context Sensitive Design (CSD)</i> as it is also known, which refers to roadway design standards and development practices that are flexible and sensitive to balancing a community’s economic, social and environmental objectives. Also consult the Design Exceptions section of Chapter 2 of the <i>MassHighway Department Project Development and Design Guide</i> when considering roadway improvement projects along the Route 112 corridor. The design exception allows projects in context sensitive areas to reduce specific requirements when designing projects in those areas. Design exceptions are granted only when there are geometric features that cannot be reasonably corrected or addressed due to engineering, topographic, or construction constraints. Scenic byway designation does not automatically qualify for a design exception. Explore other possible options to the Design Exceptions process.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, Mass Highway, and Cummington Highway Department with help from PVPC
Advocate that MassHighway, District 1, consider evaluating the reduction of lane and shoulder width as appropriate and in accordance with their 2006 Project Development and Design Guide as part of future roadway improvement projects along the Route 112 corridor.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and MassHighway with help from PVPC
As roadway improvement projects are completed, encourage the use of new guard rails of more aesthetically appropriate design and materials, such as wooden rails or cable, rather than galvanized steel. Also explore possibility of guardrail removal, where possible, to maximize visibility of scenic areas.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and MassHighway with help from PVPC
Preserve stone walls and scenic retaining walls through Context Sensitive Design standards where Route 112 is owned by MassHighway. For other segments of the roadway, explore what options there may be to establish local review procedures for alteration of stone walls along Route 112.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and MassHighway with help from PVPC

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
Maintain pavement markings on a regular basis to ensure that maximum visibility is maintained. In areas with no pavement markings, new reflective paint markings should be installed to define travel lanes and passing and no-passing zones. Do not use raised reflectors.	MassHighway and Cummington Highway Department
Bury above ground utility lines along the Byway where feasible.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, utility companies, and MassHighway
Develop a vegetation management plan for the Byway that guides conservation and enhancement of Route 112 by public highway personnel, and neighboring public and private landowners. Vegetation along the entire Route 112 corridor should be maintained on a periodic basis to ensure that good visibility is maintained for all traffic signs and intersections. Any vegetation removal should be done in a sensitive manner in order to avoid over clearing that will result in a reduction in the scenic qualities of the roadway.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members and MassHighway with help from PVPC
Adopt a tree bylaw that will provide some protection for historic trees and tree canopy along Route 112. In addition, an arborist should be consulted prior to redesign of the Route 112 corridor to ensure appropriate measures are undertaken to protect and properly maintain the mature trees that line the corridor.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, local planning boards, and MassHighway with help from PVPC
Because much of Route 112 in Cummington is owned and maintained by the Town, bring public safety officials and local Route 112 neighbors in Cummington to the table in order to develop a mutually agreeable plan for preserving the scenic values of the roadway over the long term, and identify proper caretaker.	Cummington Board of Selectmen and public safety officials with help from PVPC
Conduct a traffic signal warrant analysis at the Worthington Four Corners intersection. Use the results of this analysis to work with MassHighway to explore feasibility of redesigning traffic light.	Worthington Board of Selectmen, PVPC, and MassHighway
Actively pursue upgrades in stormwater management strategies for any road improvement projects proposed along the Byway. Also define an overall river protection strategy where Route 20 parallels or crosses the Westfield River or its tributaries. This work can begin with drainage studies that identify locations for best management practices that will reduce nonpoint source pollution and runoff to the river.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, local conservation commissions, MassHighway, and Westfield Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee with help from PVPC
Ensure that any new construction or bridge improvement along the Byway utilizes bridge railings that are consistent with the character of the Byway, and advocate for bridge design competition.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, MassHighway, and local highway departments with help from PVPC

Recommended Actions – Hampshire County	Suggested Leadership
Request that MassHighway review whether it is feasible to advance toward an improvement project for Norwich Bridge (H-27-007, AASHTO rating of 57.7) and Pond Brook Bridge (H-27-008, AASHTO rating of 48.8), which are both considered functionally obsolete, so that they are restored and upgraded.	Local board of selectmen with help from Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, PVPC, and Westfield Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee
Develop lighting guidelines, including standards for hooded street lights; exploring historic style path lighting; and enforcing “no light pollution crossing property lines” principle, that are appropriate to the Byway. Any candidate locations for street light removal should be first discussed at a local Board of Selectmen meeting. Upon favorable review, a request for removal should be submitted to the appropriate agency. Some of the street lights along the corridor illuminate sections of state-owned highway, in these locations it is recommended that the municipality discuss potential light removal with MassHighway to ensure that safety does not decrease during hours of darkness.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, local highway departments, boards of selectmen, and MassHighway with help from PVPC
Upgrade the intersection of Route 112 with Route 66 to improve sightlines, reducing the existing embankment along Route 112, and moving the existing “STOP Ahead” sign on the Route 66 approach to the intersection approximately 100 to 200 feet back.	Town of Huntington and MassHighway
Consider converting back to “Yield” sign control at the intersection of Route 112, Basket Street, and Maple Street.	Town of Huntington and MassHighway
Perform an analysis to determine if the southbound approach of Route 112 at Route 20 warrants an exclusive left and right turn lane. Traffic from this approach was observed to drive the roadway in this manner; however the designation of actual turning lanes would assist in improving traffic flow along this approach and to guide left turning traffic from Route 20 around the existing median. Pedestrian crosswalks should also be considered at this intersection to connect the existing sidewalks in the vicinity of the intersection. Sight distance from Route 112 to the east could also be improved by removing the existing vegetation along the guardrail.	Town of Huntington and MassHighway
Talk with local officials and residents to examine the possibility of relocating the Route 112 roadway in order to restore the Worthington Town Common.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, Town of Worthington, and MassHighway
Reinstall grass buffers between the roadway and existing sidewalks along Route 112 where practical to allow for the storage of snow.	Route 112 Scenic Byway Committee members, MassHighway, and town highway departments with help from PVPC

Acronyms:

CISA	Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture
DAR	Daughters of the American Revolution
DCR	Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
DFW	Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
GBA	Greenfield Business Association
FCCC	Franklin County Chamber of Commerce
Franklin County REPC	Franklin County Regional Emergency Planning Committee
FRCOG	Franklin Regional Council of Governments
Greater Northampton CC	Greater Northampton Chamber of Commerce
MDAR	Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
MHC	Massachusetts Historical Commission
NHESP	Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program
PVPC	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
SFABA	Shelburne Falls Area Business Association
TTOR	The Trustees of the Reservations

Funding Resources

In moving forward on the Action Plan, it will be important to keep in mind the variety of federal, regional, and state organizations and programs that offer resources and technical assistance. The organizations and programs described in this section have been selected based on their particular relevance to the Route 112 Scenic Byway corridor and the vision of the Corridor Management Plan. Website information is also provided for additional information about these resources.

Federal Programs

Scenic Byway Funding

Within the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) leads The National Scenic Byways Program. The Program is a grassroots, collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States. The Secretary of Transportation recognizes certain roads as America's Byways®—All-American Roads or National Scenic Byways—based on one or more archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic intrinsic qualities.

The Secretary of Transportation makes grants to states and to Indian tribes to implement projects on scenic byways. Federally designated, state-designated, and tribally designated scenic byways are all equally eligible for these grants, with no order of priority. Up to \$43.5 million was authorized for the 2009 fiscal year. FHWA eligibility criteria favor large-scale, high-cost projects that provide strategic benefits to the byway and the byway traveler.

Projects submitted for consideration should benefit the byway traveler's experience, whether to help manage the intrinsic qualities that support the byway's designation, shape the byway's story, interpret the story for visitors, or improve visitor facilities along the byway.

There are eight categories of eligible project activities:

- State and Tribal Programs
- Corridor Management Plan
- Safety Improvements
- Byway Facilities
- Access to Recreation
- Resource Protection
- Interpretive Information
- Marketing Program

Applicants must first consult the State Byway Coordinator about eligibility questions and steps for submitting an application. State byway coordinators establish specific criteria and procedures for making eligibility decisions, prioritizing projects and submitting applications to the FHWA division office. Some state programs set application due dates that are earlier than those set by FHWA. Some programs also limit the amount of funding for which each applicant can apply.

National Scenic Byways Program funds are provided on a reimbursement basis. The maximum federal share is 80 percent. Private, local, Indian tribe and state funds may be used as the match share. Applications are available on the National Scenic Byway website at www.bywaysonline.org. Applicant organizations must also be registered with Grants.gov. The details of this registration process can be found on the Grants.gov website at http://grants.gov/applicants/organization_registration.jsp.

Conservation Tax Incentive

In 2006, Congress passed a law amending 26 US Code 170(h) to expand tax incentives to landowners who choose to donate a conservation easement on their land to a land trust, government agency or publicly supported charity that will permanently protect important conservation land. The 2008 Farm Bill included a 2-year extension of the conservation tax incentives, which now apply to easements donated between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2009. A conservation easement limits the uses of the land for current and future owners. It is an agreement between the donor and the land trust, agency or organization, and can allow for certain uses to continue (such as farming) but may limit other types of development (such as residential or commercial) in the future. Public access may or may not be granted. The incentive:

- Raises the deduction a donor can take for donating a conservation easement from 30 percent of his or her income in any year to 50 percent;

- Allows qualifying farmers and ranchers to deduct up to 100 percent of their income; and
- Extends the carry-forward period for a donor to take tax deductions for a voluntary conservation agreement from 5 to 15 years.

Appraisal of the land must be done by a qualifying appraiser and the land must meet certain conservation purposes to qualify. It is important to note that this incentive is due to expire at the end of 2009. The Land Trust Alliance, a national conservation organization, is working with other interested parties to make the changes permanent and provides additional up-to-date information on the conservation tax incentive on their website at www.lta.org/policy/tax-policy.

Federal Historic Tax Credits

Federal income tax credits are available for income-producing residential and commercial property owners for qualified historic restoration projects. An owner's personal residence is not eligible. Under the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Incentive Program, owners of a property that is listed on the National Register or is within a National Register Historic District may deduct 20 percent of the cost of a major restoration project on their taxes. Restoration must be significant, exceeding the greater of the adjusted basis of the buildings or \$5,000, and work can be phased over a five-year period when there are architect's drawings and specifications prepared for the work. Restoration work must follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The program is administered through the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). A 10 percent tax credit is available for buildings that are not listed in the National Register but were built before 1936.

Regional Programs

Business Technical Assistance

The Franklin County Community Development Corporation (FCCDC) (www.fccdc.org) and the Hilltown Community Development Corporation (CDC) (www.hilltowncdc.org) offer individualized business technical assistance and access to business training and workshops. These services are available to individuals interested in starting a business as well as existing entrepreneurs that have businesses in operation. Other FCCDC programs include a loan program that can provide direct lending to businesses and marketing and business assistance to assist new food based ventures. They also operate the Venture Center business incubator in Greenfield and the Western Massachusetts Food Processing Center in Greenfield. The Center offers the use of their commercial processing facility as an alternate resource for farmers to add value to their agricultural products without having to purchase costly equipment to operate their own on-farm commercial kitchens. The Franklin County Chamber of Commerce (www.franklincc.org), the Greenfield Business Association (www.greenfieldbusiness.org), and the Shelburne Area Business Association

(www.shelburnefalls.com) also provide resources and business assistance to area businesses and help promote the region to visitors.

Brownfields Assistance

The term “brownfields” refers to properties where the reuse or redevelopment of the site is complicated by the presence or perceived presence of hazardous materials or contamination. Brownfield cleanup is regulated in Massachusetts under Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 21E. In 1998, the State Legislature amended Chapter 21E to establish significant liability relief to encourage the redevelopment of brownfield sites, while ensuring that the Commonwealth’s environmental standards are met. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) administers the State’s cleanup laws and regulations. DEP offers technical assistance for the cleanup of brownfields sites.

To promote economic opportunity, revitalize town centers, and protect the health and well being of residents and the environment, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) and Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) encourage the assessment, clean up and redevelopment of these properties. With funding from the Environmental Protection Agency, FRCOG and PVPC provide programs for their respective communities in Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden Counties. Through the regional Brownfields Site Assessment Program, FRCOG and PVPC use Environmental Site Assessment grants to hire an environmental engineering firm to conduct assessments of selected properties that potentially have hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants at no cost to the town or the property owner. In 1999, the EPA awarded FRCOG and PVPC grant money to establish a revolving loan funds. The revolving loan funds provide low interest rate loans to eligible applicants to facilitate the clean-up of commercial or industrial properties contaminated by hazardous substances. Parties responsible for the contamination are not eligible to apply.

The clean-up and reuse of brownfield sites is recognized as a successful strategy to balance natural resource protection with economic development. Often these vacant or underutilized industrial and commercial properties are located in village centers. The reuse of these brownfield sites contributes to community revitalization and makes the most efficient use of existing infrastructure. Redeveloping these sites removes blight and reduces the need to develop forest or farmland. These programs could be of particular benefit to downtowns that have historic mill buildings that are vacant or underutilized and could be redeveloped. The restoration and reuse of these structures is important for the Byway. The Upper Mill in the Town of Colrain, for example, was a brownfield that was cleaned up in 2003 using funds from the Revolving Loan Fund and is now available for redevelopment. The former Swan property in Shelburne, an office building and antique store that had been demolished, was assessed under the Brownfields Program in 2008. The Buckland Rail Yard was assessed in 2005. Contact FRCOG (www.frcog.org) or PVPC (www.pvpc.org) for more information about these programs.

Tax Incentives for Private Investment

Within the Byway corridor, the towns of Ashfield, Buckland, Colrain, and Shelburne are located within the Greater Franklin County Economic Target Area (ETA), administered by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments. Businesses located in an ETA region are eligible to participate in the Economic Development Incentive Program through the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development (www.mass.gov/eohed). The purpose of the program is to stimulate business development, particularly in areas of economic distress, and to increase the overall economic development readiness of individual communities and the region. This is achieved by offering tax incentives that promote job creation and retention, attract new business investment, and encourage existing businesses to expand.

For a business to take advantage of the initiatives offered, they must have a “Certified Project,” which requires approval by both the municipality through Town Meeting and the State. A business that is expanding, renovating, relocating, or building new facilities and creating jobs within an Economic Opportunity Area (a targeted area for economic development within the ETA) may apply to be a Certified Project. Municipalities can offer Certified Projects a local real estate tax incentive, either a Special Tax Assessment or Tax Increment Financing. The terms of this tax incentive are negotiated between the municipality and the business. Additional State tax benefits to Certified Projects include a 5 percent Investment Tax Credit and a 10 percent Abandoned Building Tax Deduction.

- A Special Tax Assessment is a five- to twenty-year program that applies to the entire assessed value of a parcel involved in the business. For example, for a five-year program, in year one, the tax is 0 percent of the existing and new assessed value of the real estate. In year two, up to 25 percent of the assessed value is taxed. In year three, up to 50 percent of the assessed value is taxed. In year four, up to 75 percent of the assessed value is taxed. And in year five and subsequent years, up to 100 percent of the assessed value is taxed.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a tax exemption plan based on a percentage of the value added through new construction or renovation for an agreed upon number of years (from five up to twenty years). The real estate taxes generated by the increased assessed value from new construction are allocated to general revenue or to payment of a betterment fee in lieu of real estate taxes to finance related infrastructure. This is done through a negotiated agreement between the municipality and the developer or business. For a Certified Project to receive a TIF agreement, the project must be approved by Town Meeting or Town Council, and must also be approved by the Commonwealth’s Economic Assistance Coordinating Council.

Since the program began, there has been an increase in the number of service and retail - based businesses participating. Certified Projects in the retail sector have included grocery stores and automobile related sales. Businesses offering services related to the health, financial, and information technology industries have been more common in the past few

years. Certified Projects related to agricultural–related businesses have also increased. For example, the Adams Farm Slaughterhouse in Athol received a TIF after the original facility burned down in 2006 to help provide processing facilities for farmers in the region.

Westfield River Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee

To preserve and enhance the special qualities of the National Wild & Scenic Westfield River, the advisory committee provides funding through three programs. The Riparian Conservation Small Grants Program offers funds to cover transaction costs in the \$3,000 to \$5,000 range for title reviews, appraisals, legal fees and other closing costs, registry fees, surveys baseline reports, monitoring plans and funds, land protection estate planning and other related fees. The Community Grants Program provides funding to each of the communities through which the Westfield River flows: Becket, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Huntington, Middlefield, Savoy, Washington, Windsor, and Worthington. Availability of funding can range from \$1,000 to \$3,000 per community. In addition, the Committee offers a Competitive Community Grant that offers up to \$25,000 in project funding to one to two of the communities each year (depending on the availability of funding). For more information, see <http://www.westfieldriverwildscenic.org/grants.html> and contact Carrie Banks, Westfield River Wild & Scenic Coordinator, at coordinator@westfieldriverwildscenic.org or (413) 268-3129.

Highland Communities Initiative

A program of The Trustees of the Reservations, The Highland Communities Initiative provides awards of up to \$5,000 for projects and programs designed to preserve the natural and cultural landscapes of the Highlands region through land conservation or community preservation. Eligible applicants include non-profits and municipalities. For more information, see <http://www.thetrustees.org/hci/>.

State Programs

There are several state programs that offer loan and grant programs that could be used to support improvement projects along the Byway. The Executive Office of Energy and the Environment (EOEEA) offers a wide variety of programs, focusing on projects that support improvements in the areas of land conservation, water quality protection, wildlife and rare species protection, agriculture, waste management and energy. These programs include the Massachusetts Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND) Program, Massachusetts Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Program, Recreational Trails Program, Farm Viability Enhancement Program, and the Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program. The EOEEA has compiled a useful guide on these programs shown in Appendix K.

Other state programs not covered by the guide are:

Agricultural Business Training Program

Through the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (www.mass.gov/agr), the Agricultural Business Training Program (ABTP) responds to changing needs of Massachusetts agriculture, by providing training and technical assistance to farmers. Examples of business planning programs offered through ABTP include courses for beginning and pre-venture farmers, such as “Exploring Your Small Farm Dream” as well as courses targeted to existing agricultural enterprises such as “Tilling the Soil of Opportunity.”

Massachusetts Farm Energy Program

The Massachusetts Farm Energy Program is a joint two-year project of the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Berkshire-Pioneer Resource Conservation & Development Area and Patriot Resource Conservation & Development Area (www.berkshirerpierrcd.org/mfep). The program provides technical assistance to farmers and agribusiness to increase on-farm energy conservation and efficiency; promote alternative and renewable energy strategies for on-farm energy generation; and reduce agricultural greenhouse gas emissions. Technical assistance includes providing resources about existing programs and financing, obtaining energy audits and renewable energy assessments, the provision of incentives for implementing audit recommendations, and identifying and promoting best management practices for farm energy systems.

Ag-Energy Grant Program

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) funds agricultural energy projects in an effort to improve energy efficiency and to facilitate adoption of alternative clean energy technologies by Massachusetts farms in order that farms can become more sustainable and the Commonwealth can maximize the environmental and economic benefits from these technologies. Reimbursement grants of up to \$30,000 will be awarded on a competitive basis. Farms with less access to Federal, State and electric and natural gas energy efficiency incentive rebate and grant programs are encouraged to apply. For more information, see www.mass.gov/agr.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission

The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) administers two grant programs. The first is the Survey and Planning Grant Program, which provides 50 percent matching federal funds for the preparation of community surveys, preservation plans, preparation of historic district studies and legislation, archaeological surveys, nominations to the National Register, and educational preservation programs. Eligible applicants are local historical commissions, Certified Local Governments, local and state agencies, educational institutions, and private organizations. The second is the Preservation Projects Fund, which serves as the “bricks and mortar” grant program, providing funds for the restoration, rehabilitation, stabilization, and documentation of historic and archaeological properties owned by municipalities or

nonprofit organizations. Through this fund, 50 percent matching grants are available to qualifying properties listed on the State Register to ensure their physical preservation. Scopes of work for projects range from the acquisition of an endangered property to the restoration of an historic building, and to research projects, such as historic structures reports, archaeological data recovery projects, and the study of innovative preservation techniques.

The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development

The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development DHCD administers three grant programs that may be useful to communities along the Byway/

- Community Development Block Grants—Each year DHCD receives Community Development Block Grants money from the federal government to be used for grants to cities and towns for a range of community needs, including business assistance, infrastructure, community/public facilities, housing rehabilitation or development, and downtown revitalization. Grants are available through the Division of Community Services and must meet one of the following National Objectives as defined by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development:
 1. benefit a majority of low- and moderate-income people;
 2. aid in the prevention or elimination of slums and blight; or
 3. meet an urgent condition posing a serious threat to the health and welfare of the community where other financial resources are not available to meet such needs.

All of the towns along the Scenic Byway in Franklin County have received CDBG funds for housing rehabilitation in recent years, including FY 2006 grants to Ashfield and Shelburne/Buckland (combined), and an FY 2008 grant to the Town of Colrain. All of the towns along the Scenic Byway in Franklin County have received CDBG funds for housing rehabilitation in recent years, including FY 2006 grants to Ashfield and Shelburne/Buckland (combined), and an FY 2008 grant to the Town of Colrain. The Hilltown CDC manages CDBG programs on behalf of the Byway towns of Goshen, Cummington and Worthington. The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission manages Huntington's CDBG program on behalf of the town. Recent CDBG grants in Huntington have included funding for housing rehabilitation and septic repairs.

- Massachusetts Downtown Initiative –The DHCD also coordinates the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative, which offers a range of services and assistance to communities seeking help on how to revitalize their downtowns. Through this program's Technical Assistance Site Visit Program, the Initiative provides up to \$10,000 in consultant services to address a specific issue that will support a community's downtown revitalization effort.
- Community Development Action Grant Program—DHCD also oversees the Community Development Action Grant Program (CDAG), which offers funding to

help revitalize disinvested or deteriorated neighborhoods, stimulate new economic development, and leverage private investment in communities. Any Massachusetts city or town is eligible to apply to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development for CDAG funds. CDAG funding is available for publicly-owned or publicly-managed projects. CDAG funds can be used in a variety of ways, including the installation, improvements, repairs, rehabilitation or reconstruction of buildings and other structures, facades, sidewalks, streets, and utility distribution systems. CDAG funds can also be used for the demolition of existing structures and relocation assistance. CDAG applications are evaluated based on the following criteria: the number of jobs created; the current degree of economic distress and physical deterioration of the project area; the extent of committed financial participation by other public and private entities; and the extent to which the project is consistent with the applicant's community development plan(s) and with the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development priorities.

Expedited Permitting Process

In 2006, the State Legislature enacted regulations (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 43D) to support an expedited and streamlined municipal permit process for targeted economic development projects. An established, predictable local permitting process is considered advantageous by potential developers. For towns that choose to enact Expedited Local Permitting, this program gives them the ability to promote commercial/industrial development on pre-approved parcels, known as "Priority Development Sites" (PDS), by offering an expedited, streamlined local permitting process. Towns that participate are eligible for a one-time technical assistance grant to aid them with the creation of a streamlined permitting process and for site specific pre-development work. The goal is to create a transparent and efficient municipal process, which guarantees local permitting decisions on designated PDSs within 180 days. This requires coordination of municipal staff and town boards including the Select Board and/or Town Administrator, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Commission, Fire Chief, the Historic Commission, and Board of Health. With PDS designation and state grants, there also needs to be a single "point of contact" for all questions regarding the site, generally the Town Planner, Town Administrator, or a representative from the Select Board.

Eligible PDSs are sites that have been identified and approved by the town with permission from the property owner(s) that are in a commercial, industrial or mixed use zone and can accommodate the development or re-development of a building(s) of at least 50,000 square feet. Communities with PDSs will receive priority consideration for economic development grant programs such as CDAG and Brownfields funding, as well as marketing assistance for the sites. Through a State grant that began in 2007, FRCOG and PVPC have provided technical assistance to help towns identify possible PDSs.

Transportation Enhancement

The Transportation Enhancement Program, through the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation (www.eot.state.ma.us), is a grant program targeted to provide opportunities to “preserve, restore, and enhance components of the surface transportation system.” Eligible projects include bicycle and pedestrian facilities, scenic easement acquisition, and streetscapes, among other less traditional transportation projects. Municipalities are eligible to apply for these funds, and encouraged to work with their regional planning agency, either FRCOG or PVPC.

Massachusetts Cultural Council

The promotion of creative-economy businesses and those targeting visitors are an important part of creating economic opportunity through the scenic byway program. Like any other business, technical assistance provided by community development corporations is a valuable resource. An additional, potential resource is the Massachusetts Cultural Council (www.massculturalcouncil.org). The Council offers different grant programs available to individuals, schools, cultural organizations, and others through direct programs or through local cultural councils.

Regional Tourism Grant Program

Managed by the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism (MOTT), the Regional Tourism Grant Program provides funds to the State’s 13 Regional Tourist Councils, such as the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce, to aid in marketing efforts for their region. Local business associations are eligible to apply for funding through their regional council. Funds can be used for marketing local businesses and attractions, through efforts such as websites and brochures. Information on the State’s regional councils can be found on the MOTT website at www.massvacation.com/industry/rtc.php.

State Tax Credit Programs

Tax credit programs allow property developers to access capital to fund their redevelopment projects by selling credits to another entity that can off-set their own state tax liability by using them. It is important to note that tax credit programs require significant work in advance for a successful application.

- Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program—The Massachusetts Historic Commission (MHC; www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc) manages the Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program. The use of this program is targeted for the rehabilitation of historically significant properties. The revitalization of historic properties for economic use can be more expensive than other projects, especially when trying to make the property workable for today’s businesses, while maintaining the historic character and quality of the structure. In some cases, these credits can make the difference between a costly building rehabilitation project being economically feasible or not. As a result, these tax credits help to save endangered properties and preserve the character of a community. According to the

Commission, under this program a certified rehabilitation project on an income-producing property is eligible to receive up to 20 percent of the cost of certified rehabilitation expenditures in state tax credits. There is an annual limit on the amount of tax credits available through the Commonwealth's program, so there are selection criteria that ensure the funds are distributed to the projects that provide the most public benefit.

- The State Brownfields Tax Credit—This tax credit allows taxpayers a credit against their tax liability for the costs incurred to rehabilitate contaminated property owned or leased for business purposes and located within an economically distressed area. Recent legislation has extended the State Brownfields Tax to August 2011. More information about this tax credit is available from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (www.mass.gov/dor).

Local Resources

Community Preservation Act

Signed into law in 2000, the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act (M.G.L., Chapter 44B) gives communities a funding source for projects related to historic preservation, open space protection, and affordable housing. Municipalities adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA) on a local basis, through a ballot referendum. Communities that approve the CPA can impose a property tax surcharge of up to 3 percent. Exemptions can be made for the first \$100,000 of residential property value for homes owned by low-income households or seniors of moderate income or for commercial and industrial properties. The funds collected through this surcharge are set aside in a local Community Preservation Fund along with available State matching funds. Monies accruing in this fund are to be spent on historic preservation, open space (excluding recreation), and affordable housing with at least 10 percent of the annual receipts going toward each category. Spending can be deferred until needed. The community determines how it would like to distribute the remaining 70 percent of funds to any combination of the three categories, including public recreation. The maximum potential State match for CPA funds is 100 percent, but can be lower depending on a variety of factors, including the surcharge approved and the available funding. In 2009, 135 communities received matches, with the statewide average being 40.39% of local surcharge revenue collected. As of November 2009, none of the towns along the Route 112 Scenic Byway in Franklin County had adopted the CPA. Buckland rejected adoption of a CPA program with a proposed 2 percent surcharge in 2002. Communities in Franklin County that have adopted the CPA to date are Conway, Deerfield, Leverett, Northfield, Shutesbury, and Whately. In May of 2010, the Town of Sunderland will be voting on a CPA proposal including a 3 percent surcharge. Goshen is the only Byway town in Hampshire County to have adopted the CPA. Other communities in Hampshire County, outside of the Byway region, that have adopted the CPA include: Amherst, Belchertown, Easthampton, Hadley, Hatfield, Northampton, and Southampton.

Local Tax Incentives

Massachusetts Chapter 61 tax abatement programs offer landowners reduced local property taxes in return for maintaining land in productive forestry (Chapter 61), agricultural and horticultural use (Chapter 61A), or open space or recreational use (Chapter 61B) for a certain period of time. These programs are discussed in detail in the Community Planning Evaluation chapter of this Corridor Management Plan.

In addition, some towns offer other local tax incentives. For example, the Town of Ashfield offers a reduced tax on the frontage on permanently conserved land.