

CHAPTER 2: SCENIC RESOURCES – HAMPSHIRE COUNTY

Introduction

The Route 112 Scenic Byway provides an experience that is shaped, first and foremost, by views—of farmland, village centers, picturesque buildings and bridges, rivers, forests, open meadows, and distant mountains. An inventory and evaluation of these scenic resources is critical to understanding the many values of the Byway. This chapter describes the inventory and assessment methodology and then reviews each of the segments on the 53.4-mile Byway. The corridor study area is defined as Route 112 plus a half-mile wide strip on each side of the Byway.

Scenic Resources Inventory Procedure

To assess the scenic resources of the Byway, staff from the Franklin Council of Governments (FRCOG) and Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) traveled the road and systematically rated the landscape along the Byway corridor and the long range views. FRCOG reviewed the northern 23.5 miles of the Byway, while PVPC reviewed the southern 29.9 miles of the Byway. The scoring system is based upon a very similar landscape assessment procedure used by FRCOG and PVPC to assess the scenic resources along the Mohawk Trail West Scenic Byway and the Connecticut River Scenic Farm Byway. Some modifications were made to suit the different characteristics of the Route 112 Scenic Byway corridor. The assessment procedure is described below, and a sample of the Segment Evaluation Form is included in Appendix B.

Step One

FRCOG and PVPC staff evaluated each 0.5-mile segment within the corridor twice, once driving south and once driving north, using the Segment Evaluation Form. The evaluation included all features, both scenic and detracting, along each side of the 0.5-mile road segment. Scenic features that were present with any 0.5-mile section of a segment received a score of +1, and detracting features received a score of -1. In addition, staff noted all topography that could be seen from the byway, not just topography within the 0.5-mile study area, which accounts for many long range views that can be seen from the Byway. Staff calculated positive and detracting features for either a north or south directional total. The two directional totals were added together and divided by two (2) to give a “segment” score.

Step Two

Staff then divided the entire corridor into “visual segments” based on common visual characteristics as determined while driving the length of the byway. The following five categories were used to divide the byway into “visual segments”: Farmland/Open Land (defined as crop fields, orchards, hayfields, pasture land, and non-forested open land including recreational areas); Forest (defined as forest land including both mature and successional); Village/Town Center; Developed (including residential subdivisions, commercial development and industrial areas); and Farmland/Developed (defined as sparse residential development). For visual segments that have two different characteristics, for example residential development along one side of the road, and agricultural land with a historic farm house on the other side, the evaluator made a judgment about dominant visual feature. Staff evaluated each “visual segment” every 0.5-mile according to the procedure detailed in Step One, and completed a separate Scenic Assessment Evaluation Form for each of these 0.5-mile sections. A new 0.5-mile section was begun at the start of each visual segment, so that the final section in some segments might be less than 0.5-mile long. For the purpose of this evaluation, staff windshield surveyed each section at least once in each direction, north and south, before moving onto the next section.

Step Three

FRGOC and PVPC staff calculated the “visual segment” score by adding the total score from each of the Scenic Assessment Evaluation Forms completed within that “visual segment.” Staff then calculated an average score for the “visual segment” by dividing the total score by the number of 0.5-mile sections within the particular “visual segment.” The “visual segment” then received a ranking based on the following categories:

- Other (score of 4.9 or less)
- Noteworthy (score between 5 and 6.9)
- Distinctive (score between 7 and 9.9)
- Outstanding (score of 10 or greater)

Note

Following this three-step process, modifications to the initial assessment were made based on discussions with the Route 112 Scenic Byway Advisory Committee and additional field verification work. It was determined that there were some errors in the initial assessment on mileage, as well as a lack of staff knowledge on historic structures and buildings. Mileage is based on calculations in the field, as well as verification through GIS, and orthophoto maps. In addition, members of the Hampshire County advisory committee felt it critical to upgrade the ratings on two segments: segment 14 in South Worthington, and segment 17 in Huntington. These upgrades are reflected in the narrative and in Table 2.4.

Scenic Assessment of Hampshire County Area

The Hampshire County section of the Route 112 Scenic Byway is 29.9 miles long, and is divided into 18 visual segments. The segments are described sequentially from north to south, beginning at the Ashfield/Goshen town line, and ending in Huntington at the junction with Route 20. The landscape of the Hampshire County portion of Route 112 is mostly a rural, agricultural landscape, with pockets of village and residential development. Much of the route is forested (11.3 miles), with the largest forested segment in Huntington (4.7 miles). The rest of the route has evidence of active agricultural activity, dotted with low density residential development and vibrant village and town centers. Tables 2.4 through 2.6 below summarize the evaluation of these segments, while the following narrative provides more detail.

Table 2-1: Visual Segment Categorization – Hampshire County

	Total Length (miles)
Farmland / Open Land	3.3
Forest Land	11.3
Village / Town Center	4.2
Developed Land	3.6
Farmland / Developed Land	7.5
Total	29.9

Table 2-2: Visual Segment Evaluation – Hampshire County

	Total Length (miles)
Outstanding	6.2
Distinctive	15
Noteworthy	8.4
Other	.3
Total	29.9

Table 2-3: Segment Category and Evaluation – Hampshire County Area

Segment No.	Starting / Ending Points	Town	Approx. Length (miles)	Segment Category	Segment Evaluation	Most Distinctive Character
1	Ashfield-Goshen town line to junction Rte. 112-Rte. 9	Goshen	1.7	Forest	Noteworthy	Fields and wetlands
2	Junction Rte. 112-Rte. 9 to parking pull off	Goshen	0.5	Village / Town Center	Noteworthy	Historic structures and homes
3	Parking pull off to Spruce Corner Restaurant	Goshen	1.0	Farmland / Developed	Distinctive	Judd Farm
4	Spruce Corner Restaurant to historic residential house	Cummington	1.5	Forest	Noteworthy	Long view of the Berkshire hills
5	Historic residential house to Quigley Woodworking	Cummington	0.3	Village / Town Center	Other	Historic homes and structures
6	Quigley Woodworking to Lilac Avenue	Cummington	1.9	Forest	Distinctive	Westfield River
7	Lilac Avenue to Main Street	Cummington	1.0	Village / Town Center	Noteworthy	Bridge. Historic home
8	Main Street to agricultural Fields	Cummington	1.7	Farmland / Developed	Noteworthy	Long views, Cummington Creamery
9	Agricultural Fields to Trouble Street	Cummington	2.3	Farmland / Open Land	Outstanding*	Panoramic views, active agricultural fields, historic homes
10	Trouble Street to large agricultural field	Worthington	2.8	Farmland / Developed	Distinctive	Historic homes, fields
11	Large agricultural field to Horning Homestead	Worthington	1.7	Village / Town Center	Outstanding*	Historic structures, long views
12	Horning Homestead to Witt Hill Road (Ringville)	Worthington	2.0	Farmland / Developed	Distinctive	Stone walls, architecturally interesting homes
13	Witt Hill Road (Ringville) to Echo Valley Farm	Worthington	1.0	Farmland / Open Land	Noteworthy	Echo Valley Farm

Segment No.	Starting / Ending Points	Town	Approx. Length (miles)	Segment Category	Segment Evaluation	Most Distinctive Character
14	Echo Valley Farm to South Worthington Village Center	Worthington	1.5	Forest	Outstanding**	Forested landscape
15	S. Worthington Village Center to High Hopes Farm	Worthington	0.3	Village / Town Center	Outstanding	Historic structures, view of Little River
16	High Hopes Farm to Knightville Bridge	Huntington	4.7	Forest	Distinctive	Panoramic view of Knightville Dam, Westfield River, waterfall, , and high forested hills
17	Knightville Bridge to Pine Street	Huntington	3.6	Developed Land	Distinctive**/ Noteworthy	Westfield River, Renaissance Revival Norwich Bridge and Norwich Bridge Village
18	Pine Street to junction with Route 20 (Historic District)	Huntington	0.4	Village / Town Center	Outstanding	Historic structures, bridge, and scenic 19 th century commercial district

*Denotes the two highest scoring segments

** The rating on these segments reflects an upgrade from the initial inventory scoring. The upgrades are based on information from the Hampshire County Advisory Committee and field verification.

Segment 1 – Goshen, from the Ashfield-Goshen town line to the junction of Routes 112 and 9



Forest, 1.7 miles

Characteristics: Traveling south from the Ashfield-Goshen town line, this first visual segment in Hampshire County is relatively flat and predominantly forested. Wetlands and fields with grazing livestock can be seen between sparsely settled residential homes. After the entrance to the D.A.R. State Forest and closer to the intersection with Route 9, a cluster of historic structures and barns are visible on both sides of the road.

Most Distinctive Feature: Fields and wetlands

Issues: The Good Time Stove Company could be considered by some to be out of context with the rest of the landscape in this segment. A cell tower becomes a visual focal point at the intersection with Route 9, and conflicts with the surrounding historic structures. In addition, some of the historic homes and structures are in need of maintenance. Road is too wide and does not conform to the landscape.

Scenic Value Rating: Noteworthy

Segment 2 – Goshen, from the junction with Route 9 to parking pull-off

Village / Town Center, 0.5 mile



Characteristics: At the intersections with Route 9, the traveler turns right and begins heading west. This short segment is a mix of forest and concentrated village development, including residential and commercial businesses. This segment provides scenic long range views of the Berkshire hills to the west.

Most Distinctive Scenic Feature: Historic structures and homes

Issues: There is a prominent view of a used car lot that is visible from the road to the south. A large cell phone tower is the visual focal point when traveling east. Utility lines along the road diminish the scenic quality. Road is too wide and does not conform to the landscape.

Scenic Value Rating: Noteworthy

Segment 3 – Goshen, from the parking pull-off to Spruce Corner Restaurant



Farmland / Developed, 1.0 mile

Characteristics: Active agricultural businesses, such as Judd Farm, dominate the landscape of this one mile segment, providing views of rolling agricultural fields and grazing livestock to the south. To the west, views of the Berkshire hills are prominent.

Most Distinctive Scenic Feature: Judd Farm

Issues: There are some out-of-context industrial uses.

Scenic Value Rating: Distinctive

Segment 4 – Cummington, from Spruce Corner Restaurant to historic residential house

Forest, 1.5 miles



Characteristics: The road curves with the landscape in this 1.5-mile segment, taking the traveler through a gently rolling landscape surrounded by forest and the occasional field. On the flat by Loomis Road, there are long views across meadows to the Berkshire hills in the background. About halfway through the segment, the traveler can see a significant stand of hemlocks along the southern portion of the road. Significant boulders and rock outcrops run throughout the length of the segment,

and a small meandering brook criss-crosses the road.

Most Distinctive Scenic Feature: Long view of the Berkshire hills

Issues: None.

Scenic Value Rating: Noteworthy

Segment 5 – Cummington, from historic residential house to Quigley Woodworking
Village / Town Center, 0.3 mile



Characteristics: After leaving the forested segment, the traveler comes upon a small historic village with residential and commercial businesses. The structures here include a barn, small corral with livestock, stone walls and wooded fences. Though picturesque, the poor repair of the historic buildings detracts significantly from the scenic value. The Swift River crosses underneath the road.

Most Distinctive Scenic Feature: Historic structures and homes

Issues: Many of the buildings, while historic, are in poor repair. Some of the commercial buildings are out of context with the historic homes and buildings. The culvert for the Swift River is also large and out of scale.

Scenic Value Rating: Other

Segment 6 – Cummington, from Quigley Woodworking to Lilac Avenue
Forest, 1.9 miles



Characteristics: The road bends with the rolling topography in this forested segment. Prominent views of the Berkshire hills to the west can be seen throughout the segment. The road also runs adjacent to the Westfield River, providing outstanding views of the river in all seasons. About halfway through the segment, a small recreational area and parking lot allows access the river.

Most Distinctive Scenic Feature: Westfield River

Issues: Some of the residential structures that can be seen in this segment are in poor repair.

Scenic Value Rating: Distinctive

Segment 7 – Cummington, from Lilac Avenue to Main Street

Village / Town Center, 1.0 mile



Characteristics: The traveler enters this segment crossing over a bridge and the East Branch of the Westfield River. Here is located the main intersection in Cummington, with civic and commercial uses on both sides of the road, and signs to the Cummington Fairgrounds. To the north, the town center of Cummington can be seen, including a church steeple, a cemetery, and civic and residential buildings.

Most Distinctive Scenic Feature: Bridge, historic house

Issues: Prominent utility lines run along both sides of the road. The design of some of the commercial structures is out of context with the buildings in the town center which can be seen at a distance to the north.

Scenic Value Rating: Noteworthy

Segment 8 – Cummington, from Main Street to agricultural fields

Farmland / Developed, 1.7 miles



Characteristics: The rolling topography of this segment is dotted with fields and pastures, interspersed with forest and low density residential development. The traveler passes the historic Cummington Creamery before taking a hard left onto Route 112 to climb a significant grade into the hills of Cummington. This grade change provides the traveler with significant views to both the north and the south. A higher density of residential homes and cottage industries, such as the Potash Hill Community of

the Arts, complete the segment.

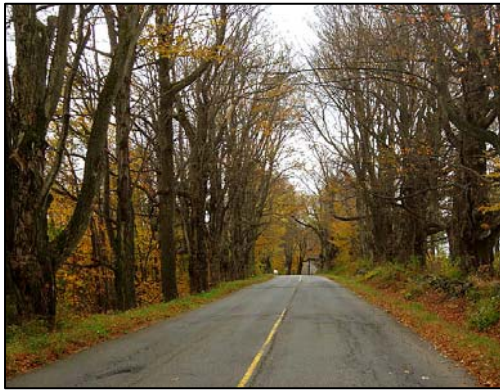
Most Distinctive Scenic Feature: Long views, Cummington Creamery

Issues: Some evidence of lumbering scars or slash

Scenic Value Rating: Noteworthy

Segment 9 – Cummington, from agricultural fields to Trouble Street

Farmland / Open Land, 2.3 miles



Characteristics: The traveler enters the segment at the active agricultural fields at Thayer’s Farm, and continues through a forested tunnel before arriving at the outstanding landscape surrounding the historic Bryant Homestead. One can see the Homestead from the road, and the streets at Five Corners are lined with 200-year old sugar maples. Active agriculture and grazing livestock can be seen throughout the segment, especially at Upland Meadows Farm. An outstanding long, panoramic

view of the east can also be seen from the farm. Several historic structures are in good repair, such as barns and homes. This segment received the highest inventory score in all of Hampshire County.

Most Distinctive Scenic Features: Panoramic views, active agricultural fields, historic homes

Issues: Sugar maple trees are aged and deteriorating.

Scenic Value Rating: Outstanding

Segment 10 – Cummington, from Trouble Street to large agricultural field on east side of roadway on Williamsburg Road in Worthington

Farmland / Developed, 2.8 miles



Characteristics: This segment is primarily low density residential development interspersed with large, active agricultural fields. Well maintained historic homes and barns add high scenic quality to this segment. Stone walls and wooded fences are additional scenic components that can be found along the segment.

Most Distinctive Scenic Feature: Historic homes, fields

Issues: The occasional storage tank can be seen from the road.

Scenic Value Rating: Distinctive

Segment 11– Worthington, large agricultural field on east side of roadway on Williamsburg Road to Horning Homestead

Village / Town Center, 1.7 miles



Characteristics: Large agricultural fields to the east and west serve as the gateway to the Worthington Four Corners and to the historic Town Center beyond. Four Corners, with the historic society and library, and the Town Center, with the town hall and First Congregational Church, involve a mix of historic civic structures, homes and small, family-owned commercial businesses. Structures are well maintained and architecturally interesting.

Most Distinctive Scenic Features: Historic structures, and long views

Issues: The traffic light at Worthington Four Corners detracts from the scenic and historic quality of this area.

Scenic Value Rating: Outstanding

Segment 12 – Worthington, from Horning Homestead to Witt Hill Road (Ringville)

Farmland / Developed, 2.0 miles



Characteristics: This segment is a mix of active agricultural fields, residential homes, and commercial and industrial properties. There are some extraordinary long and panoramic views to the east over Albert Farms, as well as some architecturally interesting homes.

Most Distinctive Scenic Value: Stone walls, architecturally interesting homes

Issues: A prominent utility line distracts the panoramic views over Albert Farm. Large abandoned/neglected commercial and industrial buildings detract from scenic potential.

Scenic Value Rating: Distinctive

Segment 13 – Worthington, from Witt Hill Road (Ringville) to Echo Valley Farm

Farmland / Open Land, 1.0 mile



Characteristics: The segment begins with a very small cluster of homes, leading into a stand of white pines, and then opens up into low density residential homes. Marshes and wetlands dot the landscape throughout the segment. Long views over Echo Valley Farm are seen at the end of the segment. The road also conforms nicely to the surrounding landscape.

Most Distinctive Scenic Feature: Echo Valley Farm

Issues: Prominent guard rails and telephone poles do not blend in with the surrounding landscape.

Scenic Value Rating: Noteworthy

Segment 14 – Worthington, from Echo Valley Farm to South Worthington Village Center

Forest, 1.5 miles



Characteristics: This segment begins at Echo Valley Farm, near Jackson Swamp, and continues through a forested landscape until South Worthington Village. Sparse residential development can be seen in the segment. Wetlands and swamp surround the Echo Valley Farm to the west.

Most Distinctive Scenic Feature: Forested landscape

Issues: Prominent guard rails, utility lines, and large signs do not blend in with the surrounding landscape.

Scenic Value Rating: Outstanding

Segment 15 – Worthington, from South Worthington Village Center to High Hopes Farm
Village / Town Center, 0.3 mile segment



Characteristics: South Worthington Village Center is a traditional New England rural village, with historic mill buildings, churches, and other structures. Currently, the mill building is used by several businesses as office space. The Little River flows through the village center, and a traveler can stand on a bridge and have a scenic view of the river and historic structures. After leaving the historic village, residential homes and small family businesses lead the way to the next segment.

Most Distinctive Scenic Features: Historic structures, view of Little River

Issues: Overhanging phone and electric lines detract from the scenic quality

Scenic Value Rating: Outstanding

Segment 16 –Worthington, High Hopes Farm to Huntington, Knightville Bridge
Forest, 4.7 miles



Characteristics: Beginning at High Hopes Farm, this segment winds through a forested landscape dotted with large rock outcrops and boulders. Committee members have noted that this segment is essentially a “parkway,” with no power lines and few structures. A parking pull-off provides a view of the Knightville Dam. Another parking pull-off allows travelers access to Little River Falls, a waterfall. Route 112 follows the East Branch of the Westfield

River throughout the rest of the segment, and concludes at a large Arte Moderne bridge that crosses and provides northerly and southerly scenic views of the Westfield River.

Most Distinctive Scenic Features: Panoramic view of Knightville Dam, Westfield River, waterfall, and high forested hills

Issues: Steel guardrails detract from scenic quality

Scenic Value Rating: Distinctive

Segment 17– Huntington, from Knightville Bridge to Pine Street

Developed Land, 3.6 miles



Characteristics: While this long segment has patches of strip residential and commercial development (at the intersection with Route 66 and just south of C.M. Gardner State Park), the road runs parallel to the Westfield River providing scenic views to the west. This segment also passes through forested land and by Gardner State Park.

Most Distinctive Scenic Features: Westfield River, Renaissance revival Norwich Bridge, and Norwich Bridge Village

Issues: A strip commercial development at the intersection of Route 66, and a number of standard design ranch homes form a residential strip development. These act as a negative aspect of the segment. The steel guard rails also detract from the scenic quality.

Scenic Value Rating: Distinctive except for the patches of strip development where the rating is Noteworthy (approximately 1 mile of segment).

Segment 18 – Huntington, from Pine Street to junction with Route 20

Village / Town Center, 0.4 mile



Characteristics: The largest of the town centers along Route 112, downtown Huntington has a variety of commercial, residential, and industrial uses. A green bridge spans the West Branch of the Westfield River. Buildings are in scale, well maintained, and are in harmony with the community character. This area also has significant historic buildings, most of which are well maintained. This is a National Historic District with some of the buildings dating to the 18th century.

Most Distinctive Scenic Feature: Historic structures, bridge, and a scenic 19th century commercial district.

Issues: The bridge in town is slated for replacement by the Massachusetts Highway Department.

Scenic Value Rating: Outstanding

Regional Viewsheds

Regional viewsheds are views that show unique and impressive natural or cultural features. These include spectacular agricultural landscapes or regionally significant landscape elements. The predominant landscape features on Route 112 are:

- Westfield Wild and Scenic River and Deerfield River;
- the rolling Berkshire foothills;
- farmland or pasture land; and
- some cultural amenities (i.e., historic buildings, scenic farmsteads, and village and town centers).

In this analysis, a viewshed had to contain at least three of these four features to be considered a regional viewshed. In addition, other criteria were considered to evaluate regional viewsheds. These were:

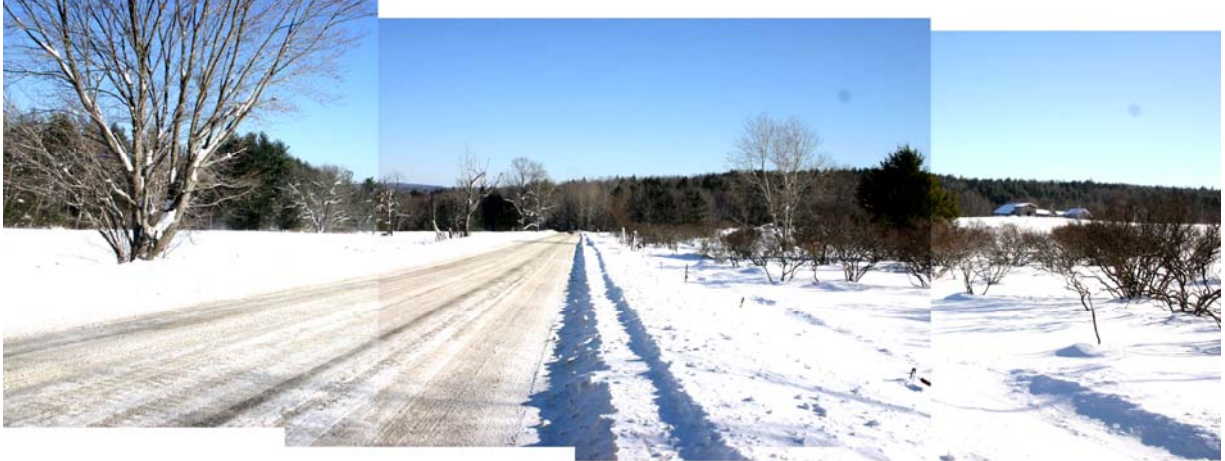
- field of view;
- the width of the scene visible from the observer;
- the depth of view;
- the perception of distance to the farthest element on the horizon;
- variety and contrast; and
- the degree to which the view was compromised (with detractions to predominant landscape elements by features such as a new subdivision in a predominately agricultural area).

To be considered a regional view, the field of vision had to be wide, generally greater than 120 degrees; the depth of view had to be moderate to long; there had to be a sense of variety and contrast; and visual compromises and contradictions had to be minimal.

Hampshire County Area

The following section summarizes four regional views identified in the Hampshire County Area. Locations of these views are also shown on the Scenic Resources Map.

Cummington near Bryant Library



Dense evergreen forests give way to northerly views of agricultural fields, farm buildings, and distant rolling hills beyond.



Cummington at Bryant Homestead

Past Four Corners at the Bryant Homestead, long range views to the east can be seen over active farmland and pastures. The fields are dotted with hay barrels and farming equipment and livestock can frequently be seen grazing. To the west, historical homes and farmsteads provide cultural elements to the landscape.



Worthington, near Four Corners

Just to the north of Worthington Four Corners agricultural fields to the west and east give way to views of forest and distant hills.



Huntington at Knightville Dam

One of the best long range views on Route 112 is of the Knightville Dam in Huntington. Looking east, rolling hills and expanses of forest can be seen in the distance, with the dam and lake in the foreground. Looking north, one can see the Westfield River feeding into the impoundment.

Findings and Recommendations

The scenic resources inventory found that the Route 112 corridor is highly scenic due to active farms and fields, views of the Westfield Wild and Scenic River, varying topography and long views, and for the historic structures and buildings found along the corridor. It is generally not interrupted by inappropriate signage, standardized buildings, clear-cut lots, over-scaled structures, or any of the other ways in which rural corridors are spoiled scenically. In essence, this is an excellent example of the typical New England rural corridor unspoiled by over development. To preserve and maintain the scenic qualities of this corridor, a number of findings and recommendations are made here.

Findings	Recommendations
<p>There is a correlation between scale of the roadway and scenic quality. In those segments with higher ratings, the narrower, rustic road is an important factor contributing to the scenic quality.</p>	<p>Work with Mass Highway District 1 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.</p> <p>For all future Route 112 projects, work with MassHighway and/or local highway departments to ensure that roadway design and development decisions take into account the Byway's scenic values. <i>Context Sensitive Solutions</i>, or <i>Context Sensitive Design</i> as it is also known, refers to roadway standards and development practices that are flexible and sensitive to balancing a community's economic, social and environmental objectives. As described in the <i>Massachusetts Project Development and Design Guidebook</i>, context sensitive design is now a major guiding principle in highway planning and design.</p>
<p>Low density residential sprawl and uncontrolled commercial development, if not controlled, could eventually line the Byway corridor with homes, and businesses, and make open space and views less visible from the corridor.</p>	<p>Emphasize and encourage that development concentrates in village centers rather than spread all along the Byway. Master Plans with a component that focuses growth in the town centers would help in this regard.</p>

Findings	Recommendations
	<p>Encourage communities to adopt “smart growth” tools, including: Open Space Residential Development (cluster) zoning, Village Center zoning, Transfer of Development Rights, conservation restrictions, scenic easements, and greenbelts.</p>
<p>The scenic quality of the Byway is degraded by certain buildings and uses (earth removal operations, parking of vehicles, and cell towers) along the route.</p>	<p>Residential and commercial development should maintain the scale and materials that characterize the best segments along the corridor. To this end, commercial development performance standards within the zoning bylaws should be adopted by Byway communities that include architectural design standards, and landscape standards. Landscape standards can encourage retention of on-site trees and shrubs and might require buffering of unattractive uses such as parking, storage areas, loading docks, and dumpsters to retain, and where possible, improve the scenic values of the roadway.</p> <p>Towns along the Byway should pursue funding for purchase of scenic easements and conservation restrictions from willing landowners to permanently protect important scenic vistas along the Byway. Funding sources for such work might include the National Scenic Byway Program and/or Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services PARC grants.</p> <p>Promote adoption of local telecommunication 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.</p>
<p>In several locations of the Byway, guardrails have not been installed in a manner that is compatible with the scenic nature of the road.</p>	<p>As roadway improvement projects are completed, encourage the use of new guard rails constructed of more aesthetically appropriate design and materials, such as wooden rails or cable, rather than galvanized steel.</p>

Findings	Recommendations
<p>In several segments, stone walls are integral to the character of the byway corridor. Many of these walls are in need of preservation and protection.</p>	<p>Along the segments of Route 112 owned by MassHighway, <i>Context Sensitive Design</i> standards should help in preserving stone walls. (See first recommendation above for explanation of Context Sensitive Design.)</p> <p>For town-maintained segments of the roadway, the Route 112 Scenic Byway Advisory Committee can explore what options there may be to establish local review procedures for alteration of stone walls along Route 112. This might take the form of a general bylaw that prohibits the removal of stone walls or perhaps criteria subject to review under the subdivision regulations (perhaps in the environmental assessment section). Note that MGL, Chapter 40, Section 15c, which enables cities and towns to establish a scenic roads bylaw that could safeguard stone walls, excludes numbered routes or state highways.</p>
<p>Utility lines detract from the scenic quality of the Byway.</p>	<p>Above ground utility lines along the Byway should be buried where feasible.</p>
<p>The overabundance of signs in some segments detracts from scenic quality; other locations lack signage.</p>	<p>Work with MassHighway to develop Byway signage that is consistent with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and helps to provide an identity for Route 112.</p> <p>Work with MassHighway to explore how Byway towns can impact placement and concentration of signs along Route 112.</p> <p>Encourage towns to assess existing sign bylaws to discourage the installation of oversized and inappropriate signs. Also avoid installation of too many signs placed close to one another, which can cause confusion for Byway travelers and detract from the scenic qualities of the corridor.</p>
<p>Vegetation is integral to the scenic value of the Byway, yet it is perhaps one of the most dynamic elements, growing, aging, and at times subject to improper cutting or elimination. Specifically, the sugar maples in several segments are showing signs of aging; the tree canopy and allee pattern</p>	<p>Develop a vegetation management plan for the Byway that guides conservation and enhancement of Route 112 for public highway personnel, and neighboring public and private landowners. This plan should also include immediate action recommendations to protect</p>

Findings	Recommendations
<p>are deteriorating.</p>	<p>some of the most important vegetative features, including preservation and restoration of the sugar maple allees. The plan for Route 112 can be informed by the vegetation management plan that has been done for the Jacob’s Ladder Trail.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>The segment of Route 112 in Cummington that is lined by old sugar maples carries outstanding scenic values, yet local safety officials are concerned about the condition of the roadway and issues related to drainage and snow removal.</p>	<p>Bring public safety officials and local Route 112 neighbors to the table in order to develop a mutually agreeable plan for preserving the scenic values of the roadway over the long term.</p>
<p>Historic homes and other structures in segments 1, 5, and 6 are in poor repair, detracting from the traveler’s experience.</p>	<p>Work with interested communities in passing the Community Preservation Act to establish a funding mechanism that can help to preserve historic properties.</p> <p>Work with owners of historic properties—be they residential, municipal, and income-producing—to prepare nominations and obtain listing on National Historic Register.</p> <p>Once properties are nationally listed, work with owners of income producing properties (including rentals and farm buildings) to enroll in the National Park Service’s Investment Tax Credit Certification Program. Municipally-owned buildings and not for profit historic properties are eligible for historic preservation grants through the Massachusetts Historic Commission.</p>

Findings	Recommendations
Installation of what seems to be an unwarranted traffic light detracts from the outstanding scenic quality of Worthington Four Corners on Segment 11.	Consider conducting a traffic signal warrant analysis at this intersection. Use the results of this analysis to work with MassHighway to explore feasibility of removing traffic light.
Route 112 from Kimball Road to the Knightville Dam has no power lines and may be the longest segment of “wilderness road” in southern New England.	Work with Town of Huntington Board of Selectmen and consult with MassHighway on providing special parkway designation for this segment of Route 112.
In Huntington, the green bridge in town center is slated for replacement by MassHighway.	Work with MassHighway to ensure that a replacement bridge continues to uphold the outstanding scenic values in this segment of Route 112.
Scenic areas along Route 112 and the Westfield River need more protection.	Help to develop a more complete and clear understanding of the bylaws governing the area along the Westfield River through a series of workshops for Byway towns. Follow up to these workshops might include some bylaw recommendations that offer clarification and better protection of natural resources values.
There are too many street lights and too much nighttime light pollution and glare along some Byway segments.	Recommend standards for hooded street lights; explore historic style path lighting; and enforcement of the “no light pollution crossing property lines” principle. Candidate locations for light removal should be first discussed at local board of selectmen meetings. Upon favorable review, a request for removal should be submitted to the appropriate agency.

Remove this page and insert:
Chapter 2 maps (there is 1 @ 8.5x11 and
2 @ 11x17)