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# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION: PLANNING THE BYWAY

### 1.1 Project Overview

The roadways and landscapes associated with the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway routes are among the most beautiful and historically significant in Delaware. The Byway encompasses the Route 52 and Route 100 corridors extending from Rodney Square in downtown Wilmington, Delaware, north to the Pennsylvania state line.

The Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway has national significance with a direct role in three centuries of American industrial history. The lower Brandywine Creek's water-powered mills and proximity to the Port of Wilmington created thriving industrial and commercial markets, and spawned the development of Wilmington and the Wilmington - Kennett Turnpike in the late-eighteenth century (now Route 52) in 1811. A direct outgrowth of the turnpike was the legacy of buildings, parks, and cultural institutions created by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century industrialists. These enduring cultural contributions add to the byway's significance. With the growth of the Du Pont Company in the early twentieth-century, the byway landscape became the site for the family's country estates. The du Ponts created cultural institutions and preserved thousands of acres of public parkland, open space, and recreational lands. The rolling landscape along the Byway, made famous by the Brandywine School of artists and most notably, the Wyeths, is dotted with historic villages, bed and breakfast inns and world renowned museums, gardens, parks and libraries. It is both nationally and internationally known as a world class tourist destination and continues to play an important role in the region's history, culture, and economy.

The Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway is much more than two historic roads; it is a cultural landscape that embodies the region's evolution over three centuries. It has received the imprint of multiple layers of development as represented by its changes as a roadway, from a rough Colonial trail, to a nineteenth-century toll road, to Pierre du Pont's reconstruction of Kennett Pike in 1919 as a modern "highway." These historic roads provided critical linkages between communities within the region; allowed for the transport of goods, services, and ideas; and in a very real sense, embodied the cultural ideals and aspirations of the valley's residents.

The roadways and cultural landscape of the Byway have continuously evolved over the past three hundred years and today represent the accumulated change that has occurred over that time, rather than any particular period in their evolution. In traveling the Byway today, residents and visitors experience the unique communities, vistas, and qualities of the Brandywine Valley landscape. The Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway is special because no other historic corridor in Delaware so clearly and directly depicts the relationships between transportation, road building, the regional economy, and culture. The Byway is a unique resource with the potential to tell the

story of America's transformation from an agrarian to an industrial society with expanding opportunities, increasing diversity, and the many conflicting issues associated with growth and change.

The Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway is a loop with three major sections:

- (1) The City of Wilmington (lower Route 52 from Rodney Square to Rising Sun Lane),
- (2) Kennett Pike (upper Route 52 from Rising Sun Lane to the Pennsylvania border) and
- (3) Montchanin Road (Route 100 from Kennett Pike to the Pennsylvania border).

These roads largely parallel each other and are physically, historically, and thematically linked. Diversity within a unified overall character is a key attribute of the Byway. Within its three major sections the Byway can further be separated into fifteen distinct character-defining areas. Taken as a whole, the City of Wilmington, suburban Kennett Pike, the more rural Montchanin Road, and the villages of Greenville, Montchanin and Centreville provide a complete experience of the Byway and its landscape.

This Corridor Management Plan has been undertaken through the joint leadership of the Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO) and Delaware Greenways, Inc., a nonprofit organization that promotes preservation and conservation throughout the state. In 2002, this partnership successfully completed a nomination application for designation of the byway as a Delaware Scenic and Historic Highway. The goal of the current project is to complete the next step, preparation of a Corridor Management Plan in order to complete formal recognition as a Delaware Scenic and Historic Highway and to obtain designation as Delaware's first National Scenic Byway.

## 1.2 National Scenic Byway Recognition

Achieving recognition as a National Scenic Byways is a central goal of WILMAPCO, Delaware Greenways, Inc., and other project partners. Part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, the National Scenic Byway program recognizes roadways that have outstanding scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archeological, or natural qualities. The National Scenic Byway program offers a number of significant benefits to the Brandywine Valley.

- The national program fosters public awareness and appreciation by drawing connections between the Byway's significance and its historic, cultural, and natural resources. Achieving this prestigious designation will raise local, regional, and national awareness of its special qualities through promotion, programming, signage, and recognition on state and national maps.
- By showcasing the roadway's natural beauty and unique features, the national program in turn fosters the protection of natural, cultural and historic resources while benefiting tourism and recreational economic development. It supports

local efforts to promote stewardship and recognize the roadway as an economic development asset *because* of its special qualities.

- The National Scenic Byways Program provides matching grant funds and technical assistance for projects that help maintain, manage, and enhance intrinsic byway qualities. Unlike some grant programs, byway grants only require a 20% local match. In 2003, the program authorized \$26.5 million for byway projects nationwide. Eligible projects include safety improvements, interpretive facilities, pedestrian and bicycle improvements, recreation, resource protection, and tourism and marketing. Most importantly, this and other state and federal funding programs can be used to leverage private and non-profit sector funding to enhance the quality-of-life within the region.

### 1.3 The Planning Process and Public Involvement

The roadways associated with the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway have long been recognized for their scenic beauty and special qualities. Community interest and involvement in their preservation and enhancement has had a long tradition. These efforts have included:

- 1920 acquisition and reconstruction of the roadway, landscape improvements, and deed restrictions placed by Pierre S. du Pont, (see appendix)
- 1920 through 2005 private land conservation through the creation of cultural institutions, parks, and preserves along the Byway,
- 1950s formation of the Kennett Pike Association,
- 1970 formation of the Centreville Civic Association,
- 1984 Scenic Route designation for Montchanin Road by DelDOT,
- 1987 Brandywine Valley Scenic River and Highway Study by New Castle County
- 1990s state designation of the Kennett Pike Greenway,
- 1999 Scenic America designation of Kennett Pike as a “Last Chance Landscape,”
- 1999 formation of the Friends of Greenville,
- 2000 formation of the Kennett Pike Preservation Committee
- 2000 context sensitive streetscape improvements in Centreville by DelDOT
- 2001 context sensitive streetscape improvements undertaken in Greenville by DelDOT,
- 2002-2005 preparation of the Centreville Village Plan,
- 2005 context sensitive traffic calming planning and Village Overlay currently in process in Centreville

#### DESIGNATION AS A DELAWARE SCENIC AND HISTORIC HIGHWAY

Building upon these efforts, in 2001 Delaware Greenways, the Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO), Kennett Pike Preservation Committee, and DelDOT initiated a nomination process to apply for designation as a Delaware Scenic and Historic Highway. WILMAPCO served as the public sponsor and Delaware Greenways, Inc. facilitated the byway initiative. The consulting team of

John Milner Associates, Inc. (JMA) and Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, PC (Lardner/Klein), were selected to work with the community on the nomination application.

An Advisory Committee was formed with representatives from conservation and preservation organizations, land trusts, civic associations, institutions, visitor attractions, businesses, governmental agencies, and legislative offices. In 2002, this partnership successfully completed the nomination application for designation as a Delaware Scenic and Historic Highway, and in 2002, it received funding, in part through the National Scenic Byway Program, to prepare this Corridor Management Plan.

Additional key groups and partners participating in both projects include the Brandywine Conservancy, Delaware Department of Transportation, state and federal Representatives and Senators, Kennett Pike Association, Centreville Civic Association., City of Wilmington, Delaware Center for Horticulture, Delaware Nature Society, Hagley Museum and Library, Historical Society of Delaware, Kennett Pike Preservation Committee, Longwood Gardens, Delaware Museum of Natural History, New Castle County, Highlands Community Association, Delaware Avenue Community Association, Pennsbury Land Trust, Preservation Delaware, State of Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, Winterthur, An American Country Estate, planning and tourism entities, and steering committees representing the city of Wilmington, Kennett Pike and Montchanin Road. (see appendix for complete list of participants).

During preparation of the application for Delaware Scenic and Historic Highway status, the JMA-Lardner/Klein team assembled data on existing conditions and mapped natural features; natural resources; historic, cultural and archaeological resources; recreational resources; land use; and lands covered by conservation and stewardship agreements. Field review was then conducted to verify the location, character, and quality of the identified resources. An analysis of the existing landscape was undertaken. Components of the analysis included community planning and growth management, traffic, conservation and stewardship, corridor and roadway design, heritage tourism and interpretation, and recreation.

An extensive public participation process was undertaken, led by Delaware Greenways with the assistance of WILMAPCO. Regular Advisory Committee meetings were held throughout the planning process involving the long list of Byway partners. Public meetings were held at points of key decision-making. Private meetings and presentations were held with landowners, businesses, and institutions along the Byway. Government leaders at the city, county, state, and federal levels were both involved and informed about the project, and they provided much of the funding that made the planning possible. This public participation process was fully documented in the application and reinforced with many letters of support from partners and government officials.

## CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

Work on the Corridor Management Plan began in March of 2003. In the spring of 2003, the consultant team facilitated a series of workshops for the Advisory Committee and other participants. In the workshops participants reviewed issues related to the Byway, developed a series of goals and objectives, and prepared an outline of potential management strategies. A public meeting to review the project was held on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

Following the initial workshops, over the course of approximately eight months from June 2003 through January 2004, Delaware Greenways led three separate focus groups through a detailed analysis and refinement of the draft strategies. The three focus groups represented the three major sections of the Byway, (1) the City of Wilmington, (2) Kennett Pike, and (3) Montchanin Road.

The focus groups were made up of Advisory Committee members and other interested partners. Civic associations, governmental agencies, and institutions along the Byway played a strong role. Using the Byway-wide draft list of strategies developed by the full Advisory Committee in the spring, the focus groups expanded upon and refined the strategies in accordance with the interests and issues within their particular section of the Byway. Multiple meetings were held by each of the three focus groups, led by Delaware Greenways. Advisory Committee meetings were held in October and January where each of the focus groups could brief the others on the status and progress of their work.

The draft strategies developed by each of the three focus groups were then recombined and presented to the full Advisory Committee and interested partners for review and comment over the spring and summer. Additional strategies related to tourism, interpretation, and education were developed with representatives of the region's visitor attractions in the spring of 2004. A general public meeting was held in September 2004 to present and receive input on the final strategies and proposed actions. The Corridor Management Plan document was then prepared in the fall and winter of 2004/2005. Final strategies and actions related to the Plan were approved by the Advisory Committee on January 6, 2005.

Concurrent with the development of the Corridor Management Plan, preparation of a Landscape Management Plan was undertaken for the Byway. This work was led by a subcommittee of the Advisory Committee and funded through an FHWA National Scenic Byway grant. In the Landscape Management Plan, the Delaware Center for Horticulture and Lardner/Klein analyzed the existing and historic landscape character of each of the Byway's fifteen character segments and prepared specific recommendations for landscape management and enhancement for each segment.

The Landscape Management Plan also recommended a series of demonstration projects that could be undertaken along the Byway. Conceptual designs for these potential projects were prepared as part of the Plan. Two of these projects are expected to be approved and funded for implementation in the coming year as early action projects.

The Landscape Management Plan was undertaken in close coordination with the preparation of the Corridor Management Plan. Its recommendations are based on the strategies developed for the Corridor Management Plan and stand as examples of how the strategies can be implemented.

Also in coordination with preparation of the Corridor Management Plan and funded by the FHWA Scenic Byway grant the Historical Society of Delaware undertook research and prepared an overview of the Byway's historical development including both historic sites and landscape features. The historical overview reviewed the development and change within each of the Byway's fifteen character area segments and identified existing and lost historic sites and landscape features associated with each segment. While both the Landscape Management Plan and the historical overview were prepared independently from the preparation of the Corridor Management Plan, they contributed significantly to development of its management strategies and provided a solid foundation for potential early action projects.

Active community engagement was a central feature of the planning process for the Byway and featured a public outreach program that contacted organizations, institutions, businesses, interest groups, property owners, and individuals to build broad-based support for the initiative. The various consultations, interviews, workshops, focus group sessions, and public meetings gathered input from a wide range of stakeholders. Ideas were tested, public officials briefed, and presentations were made to interested organizations and groups. The substantial list of Advisory Committee members is included at the beginning of this Corridor Management Plan. Additional supporting information is included in Appendix A. Letters of support are included as Appendix B.

Over an eighteen-month period, Delaware Greenways, the Advisory Committee, and consultants completed the complex Byway planning process, culminating in preparation of a Corridor Management Plan to the level required by the Delaware Scenic and Historic Highway and National Scenic Byway Programs. The following seven components of the corridor management planning process were completed:

1. Formulate a vision, goals and objectives;
2. Engage the public's involvement and support;
3. Define intrinsic qualities and provide stewardship through resource; preservation and development strategies;
4. Create tourism and marketing recommendations;
5. Develop interpretative options;
6. Evaluate transportation and safety issues; and
7. Create implementation, funding, and actions plans.

## 1.4 Delaware and Federal Program Requirements

For a roadway to be eligible for Delaware and/or federal byway designation, it must possess at least one of the National Scenic Byway Program's six intrinsic qualities (scenic, natural, historic, cultural, archeological, or recreational). Chapter 5 provides an in-depth analysis of the representative, unique, irreplaceable and/or distinctive qualities that provide the context for the state and national byway programs. The Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway is primarily associated with its nationally significant historic and cultural qualities, supported by its regionally significant scenic, recreational, archeological, and natural qualities. Section 5.2 "Intrinsic Qualities" provides an in-depth description and evaluation of the Byway's qualities.

Beyond the intrinsic qualities, formal designation by the Delaware Scenic and Historic Highway Program and National Scenic Byway Program requires that the Corridor Management Plan fulfill certain criteria. A comparison of the state and federal programs shows that the Delaware program embodies the same basic criteria as the federal program, albeit in a different order and with some variations.

For ease in understanding how the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan meshes the criteria of both programs, the following organizational methodology has been used. An outline of the Delaware program criteria is presented in the order listed in DelDOT's 2001 Program Guide. The National Scenic Byway program criteria for Corridor Management Plans are then listed as published in Volume 60 of the Federal Register (60 FR 26761).

## DELAWARE SCENIC AND HISTORIC HIGHWAY PROGRAM

The Program Guide for the Delaware Scenic and Historic Highway Program states that "A Corridor Plan lays out the vision, goals, and responsibilities for conserving and enhancing the corridor's most valuable qualities and describes how this will benefit economic development through tourism and recreational opportunities. The Corridor Plan presents a strategy for balancing concern for the intrinsic resources with the visitor's opportunity to experience the Scenic and Historic Highway. It explains how the participants are involved in and responsible for implementing the Plan."

Required information:

1. Vision and goals statement with objectives and strategies for achieving the goals.
2. Documentation of public involvement efforts to illustrate the support the corridor designation has received from the public.
3. Stewardship of intrinsic qualities through resource preservation, enhancing existing development, and accommodating new development in a complementary manner.
4. Tourism development, including an explanation of the tourism potential of the corridor and a description of how the visitor's experience will be maximized and enhanced.
5. Marketing and promotion, including a signage plan supportive of the visitor experience.

6. Resource interpretation, including recommended locations for distributing information.
7. Support and implementation responsibilities, including relationship to local government comprehensive plans.
8. Funding plan for implementing the Corridor Plan.
9. Transportation and safety, including consideration of appropriate design guidelines for Context Sensitive Design in the corridor, accommodating commercial traffic, accommodating multi-modal uses of the corridor to the extent feasible, and complying with outdoors advertising controls.
10. Short-term action plan for implementation.  
An appendix to the plan should include:
  11. Physical description of route
  12. Representative photographs
  13. Map of the byway boundaries, intrinsic qualities and land uses
  14. Intrinsic quality resource inventory
  15. Summary of primary and secondary intrinsic qualities
  16. Summary of visitor experience
  17. Description of public involvement, comments, and input.

## NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM

The Federal Register states that a corridor management plan, prepared with community involvement, should “provide for the conservation and enhancement of the byway’s intrinsic qualities as well as the promotion of tourism and economic development. The plan should provide an effective management strategy to balance these concerns while providing for the users’ enjoyment of the byway...it provides an understanding of how a road or highway possesses characteristics vital for designation...”

The corridor management plan must include the following:

1. A map identifying the corridor boundaries and the location of intrinsic qualities and different land uses within the corridor.
2. An assessment of such intrinsic qualities and of their context.
3. A strategy for maintaining and enhancing those intrinsic qualities. The level of protection for different parts of a National Scenic Byway or All-American Road can vary, with the highest level of protection afforded those parts which most reflect their intrinsic values. All nationally recognized scenic byways should, however, be maintained with particularly high standards, not only for travelers' safety and comfort, but also for preserving the highest levels of visual integrity and attractiveness.
4. A schedule and a listing of all agency, group, and individual responsibilities in the implementation of the corridor management plan, and a description of enforcement and review mechanisms, including a schedule for the continuing review of how well those responsibilities are being met.
5. A strategy describing how existing development might be enhanced and new development might be accommodated while still preserving the intrinsic

- qualities of the corridor. This can be done through design review, and such land management techniques as zoning, easements, and economic incentives.
6. A plan to assure on-going public participation in the implementation of corridor management objectives.
  7. A general review of the road's or highway's safety and accident record to identify any correctable faults in highway design, maintenance, or operation.
  8. A plan to accommodate commerce while maintaining a safe and efficient level of highway service, including convenient user facilities.
  9. A demonstration that intrusions on the visitor experience have been minimized to the extent feasible, and a plan for making improvements to enhance that experience.
  10. A demonstration of compliance with all existing local, state, and federal laws on the control of outdoor advertising.
  11. A signage plan that demonstrates how the state will insure and make the number and placement of signs more supportive of the visitor experience.
  12. A narrative describing how the National Scenic Byway will be positioned for marketing.
  13. A discussion of design standards relating to any proposed modification of the roadway. This discussion should include an evaluation of how the proposed changes may affect on the intrinsic qualities of the byway corridor.
  14. A description of plans to interpret the significant resources of the scenic byway.

## 1.5 Plan Organization

This Corridor Management Plan is organized in seven chapters with accompanying maps and appendices. We have chosen to organize the plan with review for National Scenic Byway designation as a priority. Consequently, the Plan begins with the mission, vision, and goals; presents a description of the byway, its intrinsic qualities, and its resources; and works through to the strategies, implementation, and funding. Though the Plan elements are a different order than outlined in the state guidelines, they seek to address all of the requirements for byway status outlined in the both the state and federal program guidelines.

**Chapter 1, Introduction: Planning the Byway**, of the Corridor Management Plan provides background information on the project, its purpose, and a review of the planning process. The review of the planning process outlines the extensive public participation and involvement that has been an integral part of preparation of both the Nomination and Corridor Management Plans. Additional supporting information on the planning process is included in Appendix A. Letters of support are included in Appendix B. Chapter 1 satisfies items 2 and 17 of the Delaware guidelines and part of item 6 of the federal guidelines.

**Chapter 2, Mission, Vision and Goals**, presents the Byway's mission statement, vision and goals as developed through workshops with the Advisory Committee and the public. The goals listed in Chapter 2 provide the structure for the strategies

presented later in the plan. Chapter 2 satisfies part of item 1 of the Delaware guidelines.

**Chapter 3, Description of the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway**, describes the byway's physical route and features by dividing the byway into character areas or byway segments and providing a description of the character, resources, and historical development of each segment. This chapter is based upon the information included in the Nomination Application, however it has been significantly expanded and enhanced based upon additional research, analysis, and input from Byway partners. Chapter 3 satisfies items 11, 12, 13, and part of 16 of the Delaware guidelines, and item 1 of the federal guidelines. It lays the groundwork for the description of strategies.

**Chapter 4, Transportation and Traffic Safety**, reviews planned and recently completed transportation projects along the byway and presents an accident analysis related to traffic safety. Chapter 4 satisfies part of item 9 of the Delaware guidelines and item 4 of the federal guidelines.

**Chapter 5, Intrinsic Qualities**, provides an in-depth analysis of the representative, unique, irreplaceable and/or distinctive qualities that provide the context for the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway. It includes a statement of significance and a description of the resources associated with each intrinsic quality and, in the case of Historic Quality, each historic thematic context. Chapter 5 satisfies items 14 and 15 of the Delaware guidelines as well as laying the groundwork for items 3, 4, 5, and 6. It satisfies item 2 of the federal guidelines while laying the groundwork for items 3 and 14.

**Chapter 6, Preserving and Enhancing the Byway**, presents the various strategies for preserving and enhancing the Byway. It includes strategies for:

- conservation and enhancement of green infrastructure,
- conservation and enhancement related to new design guidelines
- context-sensitive highway design and multi-modal approaches,
- traffic calming,
- roadside character,
- tourism,
- interpretation and education, and
- coordination and management of the Byway

Chapter 6 satisfies items 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the Delaware guidelines and items 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 of the federal guidelines.

**Chapter 7, Implementing the Plan**, addresses plan implementation. It discusses management of the corridor, provides recommendation for a management entity, identifies byway partners, and reviews potential funding sources. An implementation matrix at the end of the chapter lists each strategy or proposed action, identifies in which phase by the Byway it will be implemented, lists the partners responsible for

implementation, estimates a cost when possible, and lists potential funding sources. Chapter 7 satisfies items 7, 8, and 10 of the Delaware guidelines. It satisfies items 4 and 7 of the federal guidelines.

The table comparing the requirements of the Delaware Scenic and Historic Highways Program and The National Scenic Byway Program is included in Appendix D.