

# HSBP-03

## Three Steps to a Scenic Byway

### WHY DESIGNATE A “SCENIC BYWAY”?

The special qualities of many Hawaiian roads are already well known. While many maps and travel guides highlight scenic roads, this is not enough to ensure that these qualities remain intact over time.

Through the Hawaii Scenic Byways Program and the National Scenic Byways Program, there will be greater opportunities to:

- access Federal, State, local, and private resources to preserve, enhance and promote these areas;
- effectively and with fairness address potential challenges that may threaten the use and enjoyment of these areas; and
- ensure coordination among State agencies; among Federal, State, and local government agencies; and between government and Hawaii’s business, cultural, and social communities.

The Hawaii Scenic Byways Program is for:

- roads that “tell a story” that is special in some way;
- roads with outstanding scenic, recreational, cultural, archaeological, natural, and historic qualities that need recognition or protection; and
- roads that will benefit from a coordinated strategy for preservation, tourism and economic development.

The Hawaii Scenic Byways Program will create and nurture partnerships among citizens and all levels of government. These partnerships will:

- anticipate and respond to the opportunities and challenges associated with promoting a byway;
- encourage or, where necessary, manage tourism;
- provide opportunities for commerce;
- improve highway safety and traffic flows;
- enhance quality of life and pride in local communities; and
- yield many other benefits to those who experience the byway, whether as a unique opportunity or as part of their daily lives.

The purpose of the Hawaii Scenic Byways Program is to formally designate Hawaii Scenic Byways and to establish and implement Corridor Management Plans (CMPs). A Scenic Byway is a defined route for passenger vehicles together with the corridor. The corridor includes everything that can potentially be seen from, or is reasonably close to, this route. CMPs inventory and document the unique qualities of the byway and identify actions and responsible parties that will together protect, enhance, or restore these qualities and reduce the impacts of undesired features. CMPs are not limited to preservation of land and structures—CMPs also promote “wise use” economic development and safety improvements for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

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Designation as a Hawaii Scenic Byway does not change or limit the existing responsibility or authority of any state, county, or other jurisdiction that makes decisions affecting the road or its surroundings. Designation of a byway does not restrict highway maintenance or construction of a highway required to meet the traffic needs of the communities it serves, the safety improvements to protect all users, or the recreational and commercial interests of tourists and residents in the corridor. It does not in itself establish or imply greater regulation or funding, but instead coordinates and makes more effective the use of regulations and funding sources already in place.

A successful State byways program can have tangible benefits that support state transportation, natural resource, and tourism goals. A State byways program provides opportunities to apply for byway-specific Federal grants for projects along designated byways, including:

- safety improvements as necessary to accommodate increased traffic and changes in the types of vehicles using the highway as a result of designation of the byway;
- facility improvements (such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, rest areas, turnouts, shoulder improvements, overlooks, and interpretive facilities);
- improvements to the byway that enhance access to an area for the purpose of recreation, including water-related recreation;
- protection of outstanding scenic, recreational, cultural, archaeological, natural, and historic resources adjacent to the byway;
- development of interpretive information about the byway; and
- implementation of byway marketing programs.

## THE THREE STEP PROCESS

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The Hawaii Scenic Byway Program involves three steps to establish and maintain a State-designated Hawaii Scenic Byway:

- Nominating the byway;
- Applying for Hawaii Scenic Byway designation; and
- Preparing a Corridor Management Plan.

This document provides an overview of these three steps. Further information on each step is available from the Hawaii Scenic Byways Coordinator(s) at the Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT).

### STEP 1: NOMINATING THE BYWAY

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The first step is for a potential Scenic Byway Sponsor to submit an application to the Hawaii Scenic Byways Coordinator to nominate a route for approval as a Hawaii Scenic Byway. This step is intended to determine if the byway is eligible for the program and whether a local Scenic Byway Sponsor is qualified to lead the process for the byway.

The nomination application is a form and attachments submitted by an authorized representative of a proposed Scenic Byway Sponsor to the State Scenic Byways Coordinator that:

- States the purpose for the nomination;
- Names, describes, and maps the entire route;
- Describes the ability of the byway to accommodate travelers;
- Proposes the Scenic Byway Sponsor;
- Includes Letters of Support from the roadway manager(s); and
- Documents a public meeting on the nomination.



For the Statement of Purpose, the applicant (the proposed Scenic Byway Sponsor) must briefly describe its priorities to be accomplished for the road and its corridor through the Hawaii Scenic Byways Program. For example, the statement may say that improving safety for pedestrians and bicyclists using the byway, or engaging the community in promoting local history and traditions for residents and visitors, are priority concerns that the Hawaii Scenic Byways Program may help to address.

To name, describe, and map the entire route, the application must:

- Describe and map the extent and end points of the road or roads to comprise the proposed byway;
- Discuss and map the archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and/or scenic intrinsic qualities that make the route unique;
- Provide a video showing the travel experience in both directions along the nominated byway;
- Describe a “theme” for the byway that points to its most important stories (the theme is important for marketing the byway for tourism and economic development); and
- Name the byway based on the theme (while the road name can be included in the name, the theme is more distinctive for marketing the byway).

The ability of the byway to accommodate travelers is a very important consideration in nominating a byway. The nomination application will need to describe how a traveler or local resident can find the byway, and where a variety of traveler services can be found.

The Scenic Byway Sponsor can be a local government entity, a non-governmental organization, a business, or an institution, but not unaffiliated individuals. The key qualification of a proposed Scenic Byway Sponsor is its ability to organize, convene, and facilitate the process for the entire nominated byway. The Scenic Byway Sponsor need not

have legal ownership or jurisdiction over any portion of the byway.

The application must show that the proposed Scenic Byway Sponsor is authorized to submit the nomination by including:

- An authorizing resolution from the government body, if the Local Byway Sponsor is a local government agency; or
- A certified copy of a written authorization for other organizations.

The application must also identify a lead contact individual for the Scenic Byway Sponsor that will sign the nomination form.

The application must provide a letter of support for the nomination from each agency with jurisdiction over the roadway(s). The letter of support establishes that the agency is aware of, and does not object to, the nomination. It provides an opportunity for the agency to be involved in the process, but does not commit the agency to any actions or commitment of resources.

Before submitting the nomination application, the Local Byway Sponsor must host at least one open public meeting in the area of the byway to present the proposed nomination to the community, and to seek input and public support for the nomination. The State Scenic Byways Coordinator must be notified in advance of the meeting. Documentation regarding the public meeting and public notices in advance of the meeting must be submitted with the nomination application.

## **STEP 2: APPLYING FOR HAWAII SCENIC BYWAY DESIGNATION**

If the Hawaii Scenic Byway Nomination is approved by HDOT, the next step is for the Scenic Byway Sponsor to apply to HDOT for approval as a designated Hawaii Scenic Byway.

This application has two purposes:

- to demonstrate that a Local Byway Committee is sufficiently organized, functioning, and inclusive of all community interests and stakeholders.



- to demonstrate that the Local Byway Committee understands the level of commitment required, is ready to begin preparing a Corridor Management Plan (CMP), and is eligible to receive technical and financial assistance (grants) through HDOT for this purpose.

If the application is approved:

- the byway will be designated as a Hawaii Scenic Byway;
- producers of State travel maps will be notified of this action; and
- the Scenic Byway Sponsor will be eligible to access available technical and financial assistance from HDOT and the National Scenic Byways Program, and financial assistance in the form of FHWA grants for up to 80 percent of planning costs, in preparing a CMP which is required to maintain the Hawaii Scenic Byway designation.

The Scenic Byway Sponsor approved in the Hawaii Scenic Byway Nomination is responsible for organizing the Local Byway Committee and signing the application form.

The Local Byway Committee will:

- Commit to working together to protect or enhance the prospective byway;
- Develop a work plan and process for preparing Corridor Management Plan; and
- Convene public meetings and workshops.

The Local Byway Committee does not need to be a formally organized or corporate entity at this stage. To be a qualified as a member of the Local Byway Committee, a member must be:

- a representative of an agency managing a road within the route of the byway;
- a property owner along or near (within view of) the proposed byway route or within the corridor;
- a representative of a major developer or business owner with one or more properties on or near the byway route or within the corridor;

- a representative of a local government unit that includes portions of the byway;
- a representative of a tourism or business (such as local chamber of commerce) promotion group;
- a cultural practitioner familiar with the cultural and archaeological resources in the area of the byway; or
- a representative of a locally situated organization or institution within or near the corridor that reflects one of the intrinsic quality(ies) which the CMP will seek to preserve.

The application also requires a proposed work plan, schedule, and other documents for preparing the Corridor Management Plan. Additional documents may need to be submitted to HDOT if Federal National Scenic Byways Program grant funds are being applied for to support the CMP planning process.

### **STEP 3: PREPARING AND ADOPTING THE CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The final step is for the Scenic Byway Sponsor to prepare and submit a Corridor Management Plan for review and approval by HDOT.

The Corridor Management Plan defines the strategy to protect and enhance the existing qualities of the byway. It is sensitive to local needs, cultures, institutions, and opportunities, and is unique to each byway. It recommends capital improvements, investments, and design considerations. County and local governments, businesses, non-profit organizations, institutions, and individuals are encouraged to coordinate and prioritize their actions and investments with those set forth in the plan to maintain and enhance the scenic qualities of the scenic byway and the corridor. Together, these measures help ensure that the byway serves both as a regional transportation facility and is cared for as a regional treasure into the future.

In general, developing a Corridor Management Plan involves:

- inventorying the intrinsic qualities that define the byway's character;





- engaging the public through outreach, involvement, and participation;
- preparing maps; and
- preparing and publishing the plan and other documents.

The Corridor Management Plan documents consensus on goals and desired actions, and includes official statements of endorsement and commitment to implement the Corridor Management Plan from Local Byway Committee members and their organizations, as well as from agencies and organizations named in the Implementation Agenda. These statements indicate their commitment to implementing the management strategies that fall within their purview.

### **NEXT STEPS: IMPLEMENTING THE CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Congratulations! After HDOT has approved your Corridor Management Plan, the Local Byway Committee should launch local projects and initiatives identified in the approved Corridor Management Plan, to the extent possible. There are usually many actions that can be done with volunteer efforts and limited expenditures of funds, such as holding rallies, posting logos for the byway, and including the byway name and logo in marketing by all businesses and other organizations along the byway.

As the managing organization for the byway, the Local Byway Committee is responsible for ensuring that the actions and schedules in the Corridor Management Plan are followed by the responsible parties. The Local Byway Committee may need to reorganize itself after designation to be better aligned to its change in mission from preparing the CMP to overseeing its implementation. The Scenic Byway Sponsor will have a continuing role in coordinating

implementation with the State Scenic Byways Coordinator through plan coordination, project review, annual reports, and periodic evaluations.

After acceptance as part of the Hawaii Scenic Byways Program, agencies and organizations may apply through HDOT for National Scenic Byway Program grant funds for projects implementing the corridor management plan. These funds provide up to an 80% Federal share of project costs for state and nationally designated scenic byways. Higher priority is given to nationally designated byways.

### **APPLYING FOR NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY DESIGNATION (OPTIONAL)**

From time to time, the National Scenic Byways Program invites nominations for new National Scenic Byways and All-American Roads on [www.bywaysonline.org](http://www.bywaysonline.org). The State Scenic Byways Coordinator will assist the Scenic Byway Sponsor in applying for National Scenic Byway Program nomination, marketing, technical, and financial support as resources are available. As requirements for national nomination are subject to change, it is possible that a Corridor Management Plan approved by HDOT may need to be amended to meet requirements for a national nomination application.

### **STATE SCENIC BYWAYS COORDINATOR**

While some of these steps may seem big, the destination is worthy: the ability to preserve and enhance Hawaii's special places while increasing the safety and prosperity of its citizens. Good luck on the journey, and enjoy the ride – the view at the end is your legacy!

To begin the process, or for further information, contact David L. Zevenbergen, Hawaii's State Scenic Byways Coordinator.

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