



Public Participation

This Corridor Management Plan was developed under the guidance of the Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee, which includes representatives from the Town of Durham, Town of Durham Historic Preservation Commission, Association for the Preservation of the Durham Valley, and Durham Valley Land Trust. During the planning process, the Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee served as the primary vehicle for public input and the distribution of information. The Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee will likely continue to fill this role during implementation of the Corridor Management Plan.

In addition to the members of the Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee, many agencies and organizations provided valuable input in the development of this Corridor Management Plan. The following agencies and organizations offered assistance and support throughout the planning process: New York State Department of Transportation, New York State Historic Preservation Office, Hudson River Valley Greenway, Cornell University Cooperative Extension, Greene County Planning and Economic Development, Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District, Town of Durham, Town of Durham Historic Preservation Commission, Durham Valley Land Trust, Association for the Preservation of the Durham Valley, Durham Valley Planners, Inc., Durham Center Museum, Open Space Institute, and Catskill Center for Conservation and Development.

Background

The original designation of the Durham Valley Scenic Byway as “Scenic Roads” was implemented by the New York State Department of Conservation

prior to the creation of the Scenic Byways Program. This original designation was as a result of a community-based, grass roots initiative led by the Association for the Preservation of the Durham Valley and supported by local government. The effort was in large part in response to a proposed county landfill in the Durham Valley. Residents felt that the county landfill would be totally incompatible with the Durham Valley’s national beauty, winding and tree-lined county roads, and spectacular views of the majestic Catskills. At that time, more than 20 volunteers from the community evaluated over 21 miles of road and corridor creating an inventory of natural features, structures, and road characteristics.



The Scenic Byway enjoys broad support in the community as evidenced by the makeup of the Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee (Town Board member, Town Highway Deputy Superintendent, members of the board of the Durham Valley Land Trust, members of the Durham Historic Preservation Commission and trustee of the Association for the Preservation of

the Durham Valley), sponsorship by the Durham Valley Land Trust, and endorsement by Resolution of the Town Board. Four of the six members of the Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee reside in the Scenic Byway Corridor.

Subsequent activities by community-based organizations within the Scenic Byway Corridor have resulted in the protection of more than 1,000 acres of corridor viewshed (Durham Valley Land Trust); the creation of the Cornwallville Historic District and a detailed inventory of historic resources (Town of Durham Historic Preservation Commission); and individual efforts to preserve and maintain the natural and scenic qualities of the corridor. The Corridor Management Plan is a project of the Durham Valley Land Trust, Inc.

Public Involvement Actions

At the onset of the planning process, a project brochure was created that introduced the Scenic Byway, goals of the Corridor Management Plan, Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee, Scenic Byway Corridor map, and contact information. The brochure was distributed to stakeholders and members of the public, as well as posted on a website (<http://www.erresources.com/Durham/>) established to host project information. Also, posted on the website for the duration of the planning process were open house presentations, meeting announcements, maps, and additional web links (i.e., to the New York Scenic Byways Program and National Scenic Byways Program).

During 2008, two public meetings were held in conjunction with regular meetings of the Town of Durham Board. An open house was held on September 27, 2008 to present information about

scenic byways, corridor management planning, and existing conditions within the Scenic Byway Corridor. Invitations to the September open house were sent via U.S. Mail to 250 residents along the Scenic Byway. Some of the significant issues identified at these meetings included:

- Advantages and disadvantages of a Scenic Byway
- Types of grants available for the Scenic Byway
- Availability of grants to keep the Scenic Byway clean and scenic
- Different levels of Scenic Byway promotion
- Ways to maintain the number of significant trees along the Scenic Byway
- The need for locations along the Scenic Byway where people can pull off and enjoy the view or have a picnic
- Promotion of bicycle safety along the Scenic Byway and/or potentially the addition of shoulders to the Scenic Byway for bicyclists

Finally, an open house was held for the community on May 15, 2010, to present the Draft Corridor Management Plan.

Ongoing Public Participation

From the beginning of the process to prepare the Corridor Management Plan, the Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee has been interested and concerned about gaining input from the public and grassroots organizations about the Durham Valley Scenic Byway.

Even though the Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee does not have power or authority to regulate or enforce public participation, it has made many attempts to provide the community with information about the corridor management planning process, and opportunities for people to give their input. The biggest obstacle the Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee will need to

overcome with future public participation is the rural nature of the community and difficulties associated with information distribution.

Every opportunity must be taken to generate regional support and commitment to the byway designation during implementation of the Corridor Management Plan. The Scenic Byway's success can only be assured if local residents, business owners, and public officials understand and support the designation, as well as the strategies to maintain the intrinsic qualities. Therefore, management of

the Scenic Byway must include a concerted effort to actively engage the community.

Community participation is an ongoing activity throughout the life of the Scenic Byway. Documented, strong community participation will enhance the Scenic Byway's chances of receiving funding from federal, state, and other sources. The Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee will continue to ask for public comment and update the Corridor Management Plan accordingly, as it is a living document.

